OSMANLI ARAŞTIRMALARI
XXIII

THE JOURNAL OF OTTOMAN STUDIES
XXIII

İstanbul - 2003

THE OCCULT SCIENCES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN OTTOMAN CULTURE; EVIDENCE FROM TURKISH MANUSCRIPTS IN DUTCH PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

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Introduction

One aspect of Ottoman culture that is almost impossible to overlook, particularly for scholars who work with manuscripts, is the occult sciences. Their existence and their importance in Ottoman scholarly discourse, and also in daily life has been paid hardly any scholarly attention so far and is largely ignored in such works as studies on the history of Ottoman education and learning.[1] In the following I will make what must be an inevitably modest attempt to repair this deficiency and to highlight a few aspects.

What do I mean by the occult sciences? Roughly speaking, these comprise magic and divination, which in turn range from such varying matters as, according to modern scholarship, pseudo-sciences like astrology and knowledge of incantations and talismans, as well as such dubious practices as dice-casting and palmistry. Ottoman manuscripts, particularly those actually read and used (and not kept solely as precious objects in court libraries), more often than not show hints of the genre: formulas for amulets, prescriptions for prayers/incantations for specific purposes, divinatory diagrams and the like.

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1 See, e.g., Aykut Kazancıgıl, *Osmanlılarda Bilim ve Teknoloji*, second impr., Istanbul 2000, which gives the impression that the development of science - exact science - and technology in the Ottoman Empire ran more or less parallel to, even if heavily inspired by, that in the West; there is hardly mention of occult sciences.

The subject is broad and many-facetted, not least because of its long history predating the Ottoman Empire and, indeed, Islam itself. Magic and divination - I have already used the words 'pseudo-science' and 'dubious practices' - may not be taken seriously by many of us now, but they certainly seem to have been important in the Ottoman Empire, and this has certainly also been the case, we should realize, in the Western world even after the Enlightenment had gradually banned them from of the academic repertoire in the eighteenth century. In fact, in Islamic scholarship the occult sciences were traditionally ranged under the rubric of secondary sciences that were closely related to, and actually considered to be derived from, the exact sciences. An authoritative encyclopaedia compiled in Egypt in the fourteenth century, for example, pays due attention to the subject and has brief descriptions of physiognomy, the interpretation of dreams, astrology, magic, talismanic science, '*sīmīya*' (evocation of non-existing images) and alchemy.[2]

Occult Sciences and Islam

A delicate aspect of these sciences was their encroachment on fields traditionally reserved for established religion. The more orthodox element in Islamic society would dismiss them as superstition, or even worse: heresy, and inevitably this problem is touched upon in general works discussing Islamic dogma and morals, and also in encyclopaedic works. In the aforementioned Egyptian encyclopaedia, for instance, the active use of incantations, if not perhaps the knowledge about them, is declared to be illicit under Islamic law.[3] A popular sixteenth-century Ottoman treatise - more than two hundred manuscripts have survived - on Hanefite dogma, Mehmed Birgili Efendi's *aṭ-Tarīqat al-Muhammadīya*,[4] pays brief attention to astrology and magic: these are

2 Jan Just Witkam, *De Egyptische arts Ibn al-Akfānī (gest. 749/1348) en zijn indeling van de wetenschappen*, Leiden 1989, pp. 199-203.

3 *Ibid.* p. 198.

4 A parallel work, entitled *Vaṣīyet[nāme]*, written in simple Turkish by the same author, does not mention science and concentrates on the proper behaviour for Hanefite Muslims; it was even more popular: the Leiden University collection alone preserves twenty-one copies of it, together with four commentaries on it and a rhymed version. In both works, Birgili Efendi, 'founding father of Ottoman fundamentalism', 'attempted to eliminate ambiguities of faith or belief by providing the community with a catechism of fundamentals in simple prose', Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety; The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)*, Minneapolis 1988, p. 144.

declared illicit, belonging to the category *'manhī 'anhā'*. Astronomy, on the other hand, was all right as long as it was practised for useful purposes like spotting the new moon during the month of Ramadan or establishing the prayer direction.[5] A similar argument is found in a treatise on commercial transactions written by a certain Hamza Efendi in 1678.[6] (The *aṭ-Ṭarīqat al-Muḥammadīya* was, not surprisingly, one of his sources.) It is vicious (*Ḥabīṣ*), the author states, to try to make a profit by practising divination (*fāl*) and bibliomancy (*nüsḫacılıḳ*), and in general magic such as ornithomancy. Whosoever believes what a fortune-teller (*fālcı*) says about occult things is an infidel and is denying the revelation of the Koran.[7] The same problem with magic existed in the medieval West where the Christian Church eventually, despite earlier opposition, accepted certain forms of pagan magic, such as lot casting, astrology and certain healing methods, and also absorbed elements of it into its doctrines.[8]

Nev'ī on the Occult Sciences

To get an idea of a more subtle, even if sometimes contradictory, approach to these matters than Birgili Efendi was ready to concede, and perhaps more representative of the broad Islamic tradition and of what educated Ottomans thought, it is necessary to look in an encyclopaedia, only slightly less popular than Birgili Efendi's work, entitled *Netāyic el-fünūn ve maḥāsin el-mütūn*, compiled by Yaḥyā b. Pīr 'Alī b. Nasūḥ, better known as the poet Nev'ī (d. 1007/1598-9).[9] The discourse is punctuated by anecdotes, mostly situated in the lifetime of the Prophet and the early Caliphs, as well as by verses in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, some of them by the author himself. Most chapters contain question-and-answer sections resembling fatwas. Chapters are dedicated to such topics as the science of the interpretation of dreams (*'ilm-i*

5 Bernd Radtke, 'Birgīwīs *Tarīqa Muḥammadiyya*; einige Bemerkungen und Überlegungen', in Jan Schmidt, ed., *Essays in Honour of Barbara Flemming* II, Harvard University 2002, p. 167. The original text may be read in the Cairo edition of 1327, p. 21.

6 For details, see Jan Schmidt, 'Hamza Efendi's Treatise on Buying and Selling of 1678', forthcoming.

7 *Risāletü l-bey' ve ş-şirā'*, Leiden University Library Cod.Or. 11.547, ff. 42b-43a.

8 See Valerie I.J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Mediaeval Europe*, Princeton 1991.

9 See for a description, Jan Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and Other Collection in the Netherlands* I, Leiden 2000, pp. 351-3.

ta'bīr-i ḫ^{v}āb); the science of charms and enchantment (*'ilm-i ruḳā*[10] *vu efsūn*); the science of (demoniacal) incantations (*'ilm-i 'azāyim*); astrology (*'ilm-i nücūm*); and the science of human omens and ornithomancy (*'ilm-i fāl u zecr*).[11]

Of the first science, the interpretation of dreams,[12] it is said that it concerned the 'rulings and qualities of images seen during sleep'; it was an incomparable (*bī-naẓīr*, rhyming with *ta'bīr*) science, already accepted and desired by prophets and saints, beginning with the Prophet Yūsuf. Dreams make it possible to discover past and predict future events, and, more generally, predict good or bad omens. In fact, as a *Hadīth* confirms, this way an upright man is able to partake of a (one-forty-sixth) share in prophethood (the one-forty-sixth referring to that part of MuHammad's life before the Koran had been revealed to him but when he already practised dream interpretation). (The more upright a man is, the more trustworthy are his dreams, as Nev'ī explains in an aside further on - among the people who are not, or less, upright are reckoned poets of unsound metre, hermaphrodites, beggars, liars, gamblers, and women.) One of the first great oneirocritics who unravelled the principles of the science was Ibn Sīrīn [d. 110/728]. Two anecdotes from his *'Ajā'ib-i ta'bīr*[13] are quoted - I summarize the second one: when someone asked the author to interpret a dream in which olive oil had entered an olive, Ibn Sīrīn answered that it meant the dreamer had used his mother sexually, upon which the son said that the matter had been investigated, but that it had turned out that the woman whom he had known sexually was his female slave.

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10 In Arabic pronounced as *ruqan*, plural of *ruqya*.

11 I use here the texts of two manuscripts: the Leiden University Library Cod.Or. 949(1), copied in mid-*Receb* 996 (early June 1588), and the Utrecht University Library MS 16 B 16, undated but probably later (the archaic '*dükeli*' had been changed into '*cümle*').

12 Cod.Or. 949(1), ff. 47a-50b; MS 16 B 16, pp. 91-7. For a survey of the subject, see T. Fahd, 'Ru'yā', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

13 A work with this title is not documented, cf. C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature; A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* II/3, Leiden 1977, pp. 466-7, but perhaps no precise title is meant here. A Turkish translation, entitled *Ta'bīrnāme*, of a Persian version of one of his works, perhaps the *Ta'bīr ar-Ru'yā*, is found in the Leiden University Library Cod.Or. 14.515; cf. T. Fahd, 'Ibn Sīrīn', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

Only one out of three types of dreams, according to Nev'ī, can be submitted to interpretation and reflects God's will; excluded are (1) dreams influenced by illness and the concomitant disturbance in the balance of body fluids, or (2) those which have their origin in day-dreaming and hallucinations. During true, undisturbed sleep, the limbs and senses come to rest. If human reasoning has thus been shut off from external influences, spiritual qualities may prevail. In that state the pressure of bodily needs also tends to be overcome and one is better able to perceive the true form of ideas (*ma'ānī bi-'aynihī*), but because images seen during sleep are only few and disconnected and therefore not readily 'visible' as they would be during full consciousness, one needs to construct their meaning in retrospect. Man in this is unlike a prophet who perceives with undiminished senses as clearly when awake as when asleep. The same is true of sheiks who suppress their physical needs and are able to reinforce their reason with spiritual powers; they are also better aware of past and future events either in a state of sleep or when awake. Finally, Nev'ī discusses the six conditions under which interpretations of an identical image may differ: this depends on language - a word of a certain spelling 'seen' in a dream may mean different things in different languages, which in turn requires a different interpretation - but in the same way also on religion, profession, time, place and circumstances. The section ends with an anecdote: a man dreamed that his penis and testicles were cut off. Interpreters told him that it meant that: (1) he would lose his eyebrows, that is, his honour; (2) that he would not be able to beget male children; (3) that his penis would be cut off; (4) that he would lose his fortune; (5) that he would be far away from his relatives and tribe; (6) that actually both his penis and testicles would be cut off. What happened was this: feeling guilty, the man divorced his wife, departed on a journey, took leave of his son, went to sea, suffered shipwreck, and perished after a swordfish had cut off his manly parts. Indeed, Nev'ī concludes in a verse, the interpretation of dreams is a tricky business!

Turning to the science of charms and enchantment,[14] Nev'ī states that it is known and accepted among all nations of the earth, and is practised by 'ascetics and worshippers'. It is considered to be the spiritual pendant of the science of medicine (*Ṭıbb-i rūḥānī*), which is illustrated by an anecdote about Galen who

14 Cod.Or. 949, ff. 50b-51a; MS 16 B 16, p. 97.

recommended consultation with an ascetic who was able to cure the sick by 'reciting something and breathing' on them (*bīçārelere bir nesne oḳur üfürür...*'). [As such it was a useful practice, part of 'white magic', which does not harm people and was even practised by the Prophet, rather than devilish 'black magic'.[15]]

About the third science, that of incantations,[16] Nev'ī begins by stating that it was found useful by the Imām Rīzā in a work aptly entitled *Sirr-i mektūm*.[17] It is also permitted, as is stated in 'all books and treatises', under Islamic law. What follows, however, is not so much a discussion of demonic incantations (related to black magic) as a continuation of the discussion about the beneficial use of charms and enchantment, particular in medical practice. Nev'ī relates a tradition according to which the Prophet had declared to his wife 'Ā'isha that the use of charms (*ruḳya*) was permissible as long as the texts used were derived from the 'Book of God' (*min kitāb Allāh*). For healing people there are basically two methods: either to utter words and 'breath' them upon the patient, or to write the words on a piece of paper and fasten this onto the sufferer. It is useless to use 'words of blasphemy or obscenities': that is the equivalent of witchcraft (*cādūlıḳ*) and has no effect, at least if not used by infidels (who rely on the power of the Devil). Various anecdotes with examples of medicinal charms and an amulet to ward off enemies are then given.

Much more detailed is the fourth chapter on astrology[18] - in the following I summarize Nev'ī's arguments. '[Astrology] interprets the celestial forms and [their influence on] more humble events, and is, from some points of view, the most noble among sciences.' Thereupon he mentions its three main branches:

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15 See for details, T. Fahd, 'Ruḳya' and 'Siḥr', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

16 Cod.Or. 949, ff. 51a-53a; MS 16 B 16, pp. 97-102.

17 Refers probably to *as-Sirr al-Maktūm fī Mukhātabat an-Nujūm*, by Fakhr ad-Dīn b. al-Khatīb ar-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), a work on astrology, cf. Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* I, 2nd impr. Leiden 1943, p. 507. There may have been a confusion here; one rather expects in view of the context a work by the great ar-Rāzī (Rhazès, d. 313/925 or 323/935), in particular his *at-Tibb ar-Rūḥānī*, which term is also mentioned here, cf. L.E. Goodman in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

18 Cod.Or. 949, ff. 57a-60b; MS 16 B 16, pp. 108-15; for a detailed survey of astrology in Islamic scholarship, see Manfred Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam*, Leiden 1972, p. 271 ff.

Hisābīyāt ('mathematics', the precursor of astrometry); *tab'īyāt* ('physics', the precursor of astrophysics); and *vehmİyāt* ('fantasmagorics', astrology proper).[19] The first two branches are not forbidden under Islamic law, the third is clearly rejected (*merdūd*) by it. There is ample evidence of this both in the Koran and *Hadīth* where it is associated with polytheism and the worshipping of stars.[20] Nevertheless, astrological divination was widely practised in the Islamic East, as it was (and still is!) in the West, and Nev'ī goes into various technical details, mentioning the dominion (*aḥkām*) of the sun, moon and planets over certain days of the week: Saturn-Saturday, Sun-Sunday, Moon-Monday, Mars-Tuesday, Mercury-Wednesday, Jupiter-Thursday, Venus-Friday. Cogently, the Moon affects travel, Mars cupping and bleeding, Mercury the taking of medicine, Jupiter business affairs, and Venus marriage and copulation. Saturn seems to affect hunting and the Sun building, but this is not certain. In fact, there is no solid argument for believing that higher bodies influence events on earth, and divination by observing the positions and progress of these bodies through the celestial constellations is therefore impossible. There is no straight causal relation as there is between fire and smoke. 'There is no indication for [it] that the stars cause fortune or misfortune, either by calculation, by reasoning ['*aḳl*] or through hearing, and from what one feels it is clear that most of these [astrological] rulings [*aḥkām*] are not right.' How is it possible, for instance, that the eclipse of the Sun may predict the death of kings? According to *Hadīth*, the Sun and Moon are signs of God - they were actually created as an adornment for the sky - and are not directly connected to either the life or death of a person on earth. Reasoning like this is reprehensible (*mezmūm*), perhaps even forbidden (*belki memnū'*). There are three grounds on which the practice of astrology should be suppressed: (1) it is incompatible with monotheism and conducive to polytheism; (2) it had its origin in the 'science of miracles' as practised by Idrīs and thereby far beyond the capacity of normal men who cannot work miracles or even observe all the stars - so far only forty-nine have been spotted but many remain undetected; and (3) it is simple impossible to know about events before they have occurred - thus the poet Anwarī vainly predicted a devastating gale in 581 (1185-6), when

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19 Cf. T. Fahd, '(Aḥkām al-)Nudjūm', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

20 Nev'ī quotes *sūra* 37:88: 'And He cast a glance at the stars, then He said: Surely I am sick [of you worshipping these]'.

Saturn and Mars were in conjunction in the Sign of Libra, to Sultan Turıl[21] (Nev'ī adds that thirty years later Chingiz Khān did devastate Transoxania) -; man is powerless against fate: God simply does what He wants.

In a fifth chapter, finally, Nev'ī discusses the science of human omens and ornithomancy.[22] This concerns knowledge about 'things arising from future events' that is obtained, e.g., by opening the Koran and throwing dice. Nev'ī says it is a practice accepted by 'people of perfection' and recommended by the Prophet who reportedly said: What a perfect thing this *fāl*! It makes one think well of God, brings peace and steadiness to the torn hearts of desperate lovers, and brings profit to businessmen. By contrast *zecr* (ornithomancy), *'iyāfet* (zoomancy, in particular ornithomancy), *ṭīre* (a branch of ornithomancy: interpretation of the direction of the flight of birds), *kehānet* (divination, but meant here are offensive forms like *ṭark*: divining by throwing pebbles - a primitive form of geomancy - as is clear from the context) and *ezlām* ([the use of] divining arrows) are things inherited from pre-Islamic Arabian paganism (*cāhilīye*).They lead to 'pernicious ideas' and heresy, and are forbidden under Islamic law.[23] To the same category belongs *'irāfe* (inductive divination by which genies are sometimes conjured up). Nev'ī continues to discuss other practices, some of which were more acceptable (and also popular among the Ottomans): *iḫtilāc* (palmoscopy: the interpretation of convulsions and nervous twitches in human limbs), *'ketfe naẓar etmek'* (scapulamancy: divination by studying shoulder blades), *ḳıyāfet* (physiognomancy) and *firāset* (the same but including the interpretation of behaviour and not only of external indications).[24] Nev'ī adds that palmoscopy in particular was popular and points to the existence of so-called *segir-nāmes* ('twitch books', manuals explaining the prognostic meaning of the convulsions and twitches) 'well-known among the people' and, according to some, based on the wisdom of Alexander (*Ẕū l-Karneyn*) and the Prophet Dānyāl. But this, Nev'ī adds, is only a rumour current among the common people for which there is no reasonable evidence.

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21 A slightly different version is found in J.T.P. de Bruijn, 'Anwarī', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica.*

22 Cod.Or. 949, f. 60b-64a; MS 16 B 16, pp. 115-20.

23 See T. Fad, ''Iyāfa' and 'Kihāna', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

24 Cf. T. Fahd, 'Ikhtilādj', 'Kiyāfa', 'Firāsa', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

Physiognomy and the related *firāset* are harmless and first and foremost of practical value, e.g. when buying slaves. Nev'ī then briefly discusses the phenomenon of *ḫāṣṣīyet*, the special qualities of sympathy and antipathy particular to men, animals, plants and stones, the origin of which is unknown. A good example is magnetism in stones that (sympathetically) attracts metal.[25] At the end op this chapter, Nev'ī returns briefly to the practice of using the Koran for divinatory purposes. He asserts that some people object to it (*ba'ż-i ḳavm ḳatında cā'iz degüldür*): what God has revealed to us is always true and these people are afraid that by opening the book a verse of punishment will be turned up and become reality. (Nevertheless, the practice to use the Koran was highly popular and, not surprisingly, the introductory paragraphs to treatises on bibliomancy seek to remove doubts about it by quoting statements by the Prophet.[26])

The Occult Sciences as Practised in the Ottoman Empire

So much for theory. Nev'ī's survey was, on the whole, clearly based on much older, Arabic and Persian sources, and some aspects of the occult sciences he discusses were only of historical value and apparently no longer practised by Ottomans. Others, however, were, as evidence from many sources show, and these were not restricted to those forms approved of in 'broad' theory, let alone by 'fundamentalist' moralists.

As is well known from historiography, divination, in particular the casting of omens by astrological means, was institutionalised in the Ottoman Empire in the court function of *müneccimbaşı* (chief astronomer/astrologer). This functionary's main task was to establish the propitious hour for various activities like ascension to the throne, the declaration of war and the launching of a new man-of-war.[27] One of the better-known chroniclers of the Empire, Dervīş Aḥmed Dede b. Luṭfullāh (d. 1113/1702), was himself a *müneccimbaşı*

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25 Cf. M. Ullmann, 'Khaṣṣa', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

26 Cf. Mustafa Uzun, 'Falnāme', in *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*; H. Massé, 'Fāl-nāma', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

27 Cf. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilâtı*, 2nd impr. Ankara 1984, pp. 369-71.

between 1078 (1667-8) and 1086 (1675-6), and is simply known as such.[28] That astrology, but also many other aspects of magic and divination, were widely believed in and practised is clear when one reads the work of a great polyhistor of the sixteenth century, Muṣṭafā 'Ālī of Gallipoli (d. 1008/1600). The author had his own horoscope cast and also explains in the introduction to his universal history, *Künhü l-aḫbār*, that whether one became a 'brilliant gem' or, conversely, a 'pigheaded wretch' depended on the hour and the constellation under which 'the penis of one's father entered the womb of one's mother'. The disastrous wars of the last quarter of the sixteenth century were preceded, according to 'Ālī by ominous heavenly portents.[29] In his work we come across such various phenomena in his work as dervishes predicting the death of men, odd dreams that predict future events, and curses that kill enemies.[30] Astrology and, indeed, many other forms of divination were still very much alive - and patronised at various courts - in the West during the same century as the careers of Giralomo Cardano in Italy and John Dee in England show.[31]

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the situation had clearly changed but astrology was still very much alive in the Ottoman Empire, and not only in uneducated circles - where it found asylum in modern Western society - as is clear from the biography of the amateur-astrologer Sa'dullāh el-Ankaravī (d. 1271/1855), during most of his life a *nā'ib* (deputy judge) in provincial towns in the environs of Ankara. He cast horoscopes and performed other services for friends and patrons but not apparently, at least not directly, for money. His biography has recently been written by Gülçin Koç on the basis of the many diary-like annotations he left in the almanacs he used.[32] Sa'dullāh also believed in the prognostic value of dreams and the flight of birds. Exasperated by bad

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28 J.H. Kramers, 'Münedjdjim Bashi', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

29 Jan Schmidt, *Pure Water for Thirsty Muslims; A Study of Muṣṭafā 'Ālī' of Gallipoli's* Künhü l-aḫbār, Leiden 1992, pp. 120-1.

30 See for a survey of these materials, *ibid.* pp. 116-28.

31 See Anthony Grafton, *Cardano's Cosmos; The Worlds and Works of a Renaissance Astrologer*, Cambridge (MA) & London 1999; Benjamin Woollet, *The Queen's Conjuror; The Life and Magic of Dr Dee*, paperback edition, London 2002.

32 Gülçin (Tunalı) Koç, 'Sadullah el-Ankaravi: Daily Concerns of an Ottoman Astrologer', MA thesis Boğazici University Istanbul 2002, esp. pp. 36-54.

luck in 1264 (1848), he expressed his doubts about the real influence of stars upon mankind and the sincerity of astrologers. But this is the only sign - if it is that - that an aspect of the traditional Ottoman world picture at some point had lost its charm for Sa'dullāh Efendi.[33]

Although much of the practice of magic and divination was probably conducted in the private sphere - this was also made easy by the abundantly documented existence of all kinds of almanacs, mostly cheaply produced, in the Ottoman Empire right until modern times (even up to the present) which could be used when practising bibliomancy or, say, composing amulets (I will come back to the codicological evidence below) - a small percentage of the population tried to make a living out of it. Apart from professional astrologers, there were also other types of diviners. Describing the professions of Istanbul in the early seventeenth century, the famous traveller and storyteller, Evliyā Çelebi, mentions astrologers, geomancers and fortune-tellers. (It is rather surprising, in view of its popularity, cf. below, that Nev'ī does not pay any attention to the craft of geomancy, or at least not to its contemporary version, un which from certain marks made on paper or on sand past and future events were to be discovered.[34]). About the astrologers, Evliyā says that, following their patron (*pīr*) the Imām 'Alī, there were seventy of them 'who [during processions] showed off their astrolabes, *ḳıble*-indicating compasses and clocks [*mīḳāt*], as well as their calendars and books of astronomical tables upon palanquins while the chief astrologer [*müneccimbaşı*] with his frilled saddle-cloth and according to the custom of precedence passes along together, cheek by jowl, and in a majestic fashion, with the chief military judge [*Kāżī'asker*]'[35] The geomancers were established in fifteen shops and comprised three hundred persons, and they, too, followed in the steps of 'Alī - in olden times the science had been revealed to the Prophet Dānyāl. During processions, they were, again, ranked among the clerics (*'ulemā*) and led by the *Kāżī'asker*, bringing along their

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33 *Ibid.* p. 37n.

34 Cf. T. Fahd, 'Khaṭṭ', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.; see also M.B. Smith, 'The Nature of Islamic Geomancy with a Critique of a Structuralist's Approach', in *Studia Islamica* XLIX (1979), pp. 5-38; Emilie Savage-Smith & Marion B. Smith, *Islamic Geomancy and a Thirteenth-Century Divinatory Device*, Malibu (CA) 1980, pp. 1-14.

35 Orhan Şaik Gökyay, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi; Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu - Dizini* I, Istanbul 1996, p. 225.

fortune boards (*taḫta-i ṭāli'ī*), dice and geomantic tablets (*remil taḫtaları*)[36] 'while uttering geomantic words saying let us see [whether we get] auspicious good fortune, inauspicious bad luck or a fulfilled desire...'[37] Of the fortune-tellers, Evliyā Çelebi mentions only one, a certain Ḫōca Meḥmed Çelebi who had a shop in the Maḥmūd Paşa Bazaar. He was already very old and had, reportedly, been patronised by Sultan Süleymān the Magnificent. He practised *fāl* by randomly choosing a picture and interpreting its portents. The pictures had been drawn with a reed pen on sheets of paper and had been bound together into a series of volumes that were on display outside the shop for passers-by. If someone wanted to have his fortune told, he gave the old man an asper, and depending on the nature of the picture, say a battle scene or a portrait of Yūsuf and Züleyḫā, the fortune-teller 'recited his assertions in verses'. If, for example, a picture of Ferhād came up, that meant that if the fortune-seeker worked hard he would become happy (*dilşād*). Mimics loved to imitate Meḥmed Çelebi's histrionics and verses, Evliyā adds.[38]

Bibliomancy in its different forms is described in a work by Hüseyn Kefevī (d. 1010/1601-2) entitled *Rāznāme*. One of the early versions of this work, completed in 985 (1577-8), was dedicated by the author to the sons of Devlet Giray Khān. It was written in Kefe (Feodosia), Hüseyn Efendi's hometown.[39] A later version was dedicated to Sultan Meḥmed III (ruled 1595-1603). The books used were the Koran - as we saw above, this was regarded as objectionable by some theoreticians - the *Mathnawī* (by Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī), the collected poems (*dīvāns*) by Jāmī and Ḥāfiẓ, and 'some books of spiritual counsel' (*ba'ż-i kütüb-i mevā'ıẓ*).[40] The work consists of a series of anecdotes in which contemporaries, including the author himself, predominantly figure and the punch-line of the story is the sentence or verse found upon opening one

36 See: Francis Maddison & Emilie Savage-Smith, *Science, Tools & Magic* (*The Masser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art* XII), I, Oxford 1997, p. 148 sqq.; a picture of geomantic dice is found on p. 157.

37 *Ibid.* p. 226.

38 *Ibid.* p. 292.

39 Cf. Manfred Götz, *Türkische Handschriften*, Wiesbaden 1979 (*Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* XIII, 4), p. 478.

40 See the introduction to the later version, the Leiden University Library Cod.Or. 12.405, f. 4b. The copy was completed on 25 *Muharrem* 1010 (26 July 1601). An edition is being prepared by İsmail Hakkı Aksoyak.

of the books at random. Thus, for instance, we are informed that a certain Köseç Muṣṭafā Çelebi, a former *defterdār* of Rumelia, a 'perfectly upright man', told the author that Dervīş Çelebi, a clerk at the Finance Department, harboured a scheme to have himself promoted at the cost of some colleagues and continually quarrelled with them. To put an end to this situation, some wise men intervened during one of these scenes and said, quoting a work on jurisprudence (*kitāb-i uṣūl*): 'What use is strife, why should one quarrel?'[41] Dervīş Çelebi thereupon agreed to be content with what Ḥāfiẓ had to say and they opened the *Dīvān*. They struck on the following verses: 'Neither the life of Khaḍr remains, nor the realm of Iskandar/ Do not engage in quarrels in this lowly world dervish'.[42] Anecdotes like this may be dismissed as literary fantasy, but that bibliomancy was practised in one form or another is also confirmed in travel literature.

Western travellers described the practice of magic and divination in the Ottoman Empire. In early-nineteenth-century Egypt, the British traveller Edward William Lane was struck by the superstitiousness, as he termed it, of the local populace such as the general belief in written charms; he wrote that amulets were composed by 'every schoolmaster in Egypt'. Charms often came in the form of small Korans, or pieces of paper with quotations from that holy book or with the ninety-nine 'beautiful names' of God, worn on one's body - but many other forms occurred - to insure good fortune and ward off evil. Augury was also widely practised, for instance *fāl* making use of tables with letters in squares whereby a series of letters was chosen according to a certain prescription, resulting in five possible answers to a certain question, and drawing omens from the Koran (as described above). 'The Egyptians place great faith in dreams', and works on the interpretation of dreams 'are consulted, even by many of the learned, with implicit confidence'. The days of the week were considered to be either fortunate or unfortunate. Both 'spiritual' (white) and 'deceptive' (black) magic were acceptable to 'the more intelligent of the Muslims' - Lane met a magician, 'Abd al-Qādir al-Maghribī, who practised

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41 *Ne ḥācet nizā' ne lāzim cedel*, Cod.Or. 12.405, f. 42b.

42 *Na 'umr-i Khaḍr bimānad na mulk-i Iskandar/ nizā' bar sar-i dunyā-yi dūn makun darwīsh*, cf. Parwīz Nātil Khānlari, ed., *Dīwān-i Hāfiz* I, 1362/1983, p. 586. An English translation is found in Paul Smith, *Divan of Hafiz*, Melbourne 1986, No. 324. On 'Hafiz's Divan as an Oracle and Spiritual Guide', see *ibid.*, pp. 133-9.

both white and black magic, and he witnessed some experiments in which use was made of charms and magic squares. On one occasion, a small boy was successfully hypnotised in this manner and was able to give exact descriptions of persons unknown to him. Astrology was also 'studied by many persons in Egypt'; it was practised by casting horoscopes and used in 'determining fortunate periods &c... and to divine by what sign of the zodiac a person is influenced, which is usually done by a calculation founded upon the numerical values of the letters composing his or her name...' Geomancy (*darb ar-raml*) and alchemy were also studied and sometimes practised.[43]

Fortune-telling in the traditional manner was still practised in Istanbul in 1908. When the Dutch orientalist, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, visited the city in that year, he met a popular *fālcı* named Eşref of Edirne who lived in the Nuruosmaniye quarter. He used, Snouck noted in his diary, '2 copper spindles each encircled by 4 copper dice' which had certain [apparently geomantic] patterns on them. The client was requested to think of a plan or wish and then throw the dice. Thereupon, 'the man writes down in his note-book his calculation consisting of all sorts of numbers and connecting curves in red ink, and officiates as a Delphic oracle... All this for one piastre!'[44]

Documentation in Manuscript Libraries

Apart from encyclopaedias, treatises, and travelogues, there is a third type of source for the occurrence and, apparently, large-scale practice of magic and divination among Ottomans of varying ranks and classes, namely manuscripts not particularly devoted to these subjects - I already mentioned them in the introduction to this paper. Most fruitful to our interests are the miscellanies and scrapbooks they compiled and used. Many items of this type are preserved in the Leiden University Library and other public collections in the Netherlands. These collections of manuscripts have been gathered for more than four centuries from different, highly different sources, and may well be considered to offer a fair sample of Ottoman reading matter during the last centuries of the

43 Edward William Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, facsimile of the 5th ed., London 1973, pp. 247-75.

44 Jan Schmidt, 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje in Istanbul (1908); Letters and an Unknown Diary Preserved in the Leiden University Library', in *The Joys of Philology; Studies in Ottoman Literature, History and Orientalism (1500-1923)* II, Istanbul 2002, p. 173.

existence of the Empire. The Ottoman miscellanies are in very different formats and range - I only mention a few of the manifold combinations possible - from collections of poems and songs, to series of brief treatises and model letters, to administrative tables and personal notes. (We have already come across collections of astrological almanacs with autobiographical annotations by Sa'dullāh Efendi which may be reckoned to belong to the same type.) Particularly this last sub-genre, if it may be called that, which includes personal notes, is interesting because they make it often possible to form an idea about who read or used what text in which historical and geographical circumstances. In other words: such manuscripts have the potential to provide concrete, historical information on the history of Ottoman literary culture that is hard to come by from other sources.

What do the Dutch collections - for practical reasons I will restrict myself to them, and, for the same reasons, mostly to the Turkish items in them - tell us about the occurrence and practice of the occult sciences in the Ottoman Empire? The answer is copious, too copious actually to discuss here in full. In the following I will restrict myself mainly to five, partly related, subjects: (1) astrology; (2) bibliomancy and rhapsodomancy; (3) geomancy; (4) oneiromancy; and (5) the science of amulets and talismans.

Astrology

Various works on astrology and calendars/almanacs (*rūznāmes*) of greatly varying length in which astrology plays an important part are preserved in Dutch collections. They were produced from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth century and are often part of miscellaneous volumes; they are also found in scrapbooks (cf. below). Much of the 'wisdom' expressed in these almanacs is attributed to Sheik Vefā (of Konya, d. 896/1491).[45] Of special note is a rhymed almanac, *Şemsīye*, by Yazıcı Ṣalāuddīn of Gallipoli who flourished in the fifteenth century, two copies of which are preserved in the

45 Cf. Nazif Şahinoğlu in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*. Most substantial are Codices Or. 90, 1259(6,7), 1270(1), 1453, 6238, 14.517, 23.493, 23.637, 25.722; MS Acad. 35(4), 45(2) and 46(1,2), all in the Leiden University Library, and Amsterdam University Library MS Cn. 12. The MSS are described in the four volumes of my catalogue two of which have so far been published.

Leiden University Library.[46] A typical example in the genre is an anonymous almanac of the early seventeenth century, preserved in the miscellaneous Leiden Cod.Or. 1249,[47] in which the 'rulings' (*aḥkām*) of the consecutive (solar) months are given - hence the title *Rūznāme-i istiḫrāc-i şemsīye*. (The work of Sheik Vefā is, among other sources, mentioned in the introduction.) Apart from calendrical facts such as special (Christian) feasts, the length in hours of days and nights, astronomical phenomena (for example 'the sun is situated in the constellation of Pisces') and the weather to be expected, there are also mention of auspicious and inauspicious days, the dominance of one of the body humours, and dietary advice. In the paragraph on the month of January (*kānūn-i ṣānī*), for instance we read that '... During this month the disposition is phlegm. It is useful to eat fatty foods (*semizāt*). It is compatible with having sexual intercourse... The fourth day is to be feared... It is not good to eat onions and garlic...'[48] (Similar, if more elaborate, descriptions and advice are given in the rhymed almanac by Yazıcı Ṣalāḥuddīn: 'In time this [January] is the central month of winter/ Of days there are thirty-one without doubt/ Dominance [*pādişāhlıḳ*] comes from phlegm, that is clear/ The stomach is opened and hunts for food/ ... So do not eat garlic o eminent [reader]...'[49]) These calendars/almanacs also come in the form of scrolls of vellum or glazed paper fairly narrow in width with varicoloured, illuminated tables and attractive, small calligraphy. They are frequently wrapped around an, often ivory, wand, and seem to have been collected by Dutch collectors primarily for aesthetic reasons.[50] In at least three scrapbooks, miscellaneous volumes also used as

46 Codices Or. 14.673 (copied in 1263/1847) and 17.103 (copied in 1089/1687), described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming..

47 Cod.Or. 1259(7), ff. 63b-82b, cf. the description in the first volume of my cataloge, pp. 547-9.

48 Cod.Or. 1259, f. 66b-67a.

49 Cod.Or. 14.673, f. 18b; Cod.Or. 17.103, f. 41b.

50 These are: Cod.Or. 1568 (dated c. 1240/1824-5); Cod.Or. 1569a (dated 1208/1795) in the Leiden University Library - both described in the second volume of my catalogue of the Dutch Turkish collections, comprising acquisitions between 1800 and 1970, Leiden 2002 - Amsterdam University Library MS Dortmond 56 (dated c. 1289/1872-3) and MS Dortmond 291 (c. 1239/1823-4); Leiden, National Museum of Ethnography No. 360-9545 (undated) and No. 360-9546 (undated) - these last four items are described in the fourth and last volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

personal notebooks, in the Leiden University Library collection we find texts/tables of an astrological nature.

The first, Cod.Or. 14.599,[51] 174x120 mm, 46 folios of glazed white paper, contains different notes and text fragments, partly of a magical nature, in a neat *nesḫī* hand. About a quarter of the pages have remained blank. No owner is mentioned, but some notes, curiously, in Persian, refer to contemporary historical events that took place around 1800, for example 'the French ambassador [Ruffin] was imprisoned in Yedikule and they found important papers in the [French] Palace [Embassy]', dated *Rebī'ülevvel* 1214 (September 1799).[52] An administrative note mentions Istanbul,[53] and this enhances the impression that the owner was a resident of that city. 'The village of Arnavud' (Arnavutköy), whence 'our mother' departed, is also mentioned.[54] The owner may have been Ḥüseyn Ẕihnī, cf. below. The scrapbook contains a brief treatise on how to draw a diagram showing the division of the signs of the zodiac - there is also an incomplete prescription for designing a sun-dial and various prescriptions for astronomical calculations (in Arabic).[55] Finally we find three horoscopes (nativities) dated 3 *Şevvāl* 1188 (7 December 1774), 5 *Ẕīlḳa'de* 1220 (25 January 1806) - the birthdays of the 'writer of it', Ḥüseyn Ẕihnī, and a girl called Nefîse - and 22 *Ẕīlhicce* 1214 (17 May 1800): 'a horoscope to choose the time [propitious] for planting the garden'.[56]

The second scrapbook, Cod.Or. 23.493,[57] roughly dates from the period of the first item, described above. It is about the same size as the previous one, measuring 157 by 105 mm, also has glazed paper, and comprises 98 folios. The texts/tables found in the manuscript mostly have a magical and astrological

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51 The MS was acquired from Christie's, London, in April 1979; it is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

52 Cod.Or. 14.599, f. 1a; cf. İsmail Hâmi Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi* IV, Istanbul 1972, p.76.

53 Cod.Or. 14.599, f. 6b.

54 *Ibid.* f. 1a.

55 *Ibid.* ff. 27b-29a, 33b, 31b-33a.

56 *Ibid.* ff. 31a, 41a.

57 The manuscript was acquired by the Leiden library in 1996 - it had belonged to the library of the *Goetheanum* in Dornach (Switzerland) - and is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

content. Various annotations and copies of letters make it clear that the small volume was first owned by a man who, for a certain period around 1216 (1802), was employed by the *ḳā'im-maḳām* Muṣṭafā Paşa (d.1237/1821).[58] He was probably the *divitdār* (secretary) Ḥāfız Efendi, an inhabitant of Süleymānīye, mentioned in the manuscript.[59] Various family events in the life of this man were also noted on these pages; from these it is clear that he had a sister called 'Āyişe who married a Meḥmed 'Aṭā Efendi in 1215/1800; their son Meḥmed was born the next year, 1216/1800.[60] The manuscript contains a collection of calendars in table format, the first of which contains essential data for the lunar and solar years between 1196 (1781-2) and 1281 (1864-50); these also contain astronomical and astrological data, partly added in the margins, of the type found in almanacs as mentioned above.[61] Another series of tables indicates the astrological characteristics for each hour of the year - it is preceded by a brief instruction for their use; there is also a table roughly indicating the portents (e.g. 'great misfortune for [your] enemy', 'great good luck' and so forth) of the possible conjunctions of the sun, moon, and planets, and the various signs of the zodiac.[62] On the following pages, there is a brief manual, *Tabī'atnāme*, for establishing omens by calculating the 'stars' (in fact: sun, moon, and planets) of a person's father and mother; this is done, in turn, by onomantic means: adding the numerical value of the names; from the resulting sum the required multiple of seven should be subtracted ('*yedişer ṭarḥ edüb...*'); the stars are found in a small table with entries from one to seven inserted into the text. Originally the method had, according to the introductory paragraph, originally been explained by ībn 'Īsā of Aḳḥiṣār (d. 967/1559-60)[63] to his friends.[64] A similar relation between astrology and onomancy is found in a table showing the numerical value of the 'stars'.[65] The volume also contains

58 Cf. Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî* (Nuri Akbayar, ed.) 4, Istanbul 1996, p. 1186.

59 Cod.Or. 23.493, ff. 54a, 86a.

60 *Ibid.* f. 53b.

61 *Ibid.* ff. 3b-8a, 23b.

62 *Ibid.* ff. 32b-35a.

63 Cf. Cemal Kurnaz & Mustafa Tatcı, 'İbn 'Îsâ', in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi.*

64 Cod.Or. 23.493, ff. 35b-38a.

65 *Ibid.* f. 83b.

some tables indicating the astronomical characteristics of (parts of) weekdays, including one covering the consecutive months of *Muḥarrem* for the years 1207 (1792) to 1213 (1798), and another showing the letter symbols used for the 'stars' and signs of the zodiac.[66] Finally, we find a horoscope (nativity) drawn by a certain Yorgaki in 1278 (1861-2) for, most likely, a later owner, born in 1210/1796, with an explicatory text.[67]

A third scrapbook, Cod.Or. 25.762,[68] of a slightly larger format - it measures 210x140 mm - dates from about the same period. It was originally owned/compiled by a sheik of the Rifā'īye and Sa'dīye orders, Aḥmed Rāşid (d. 1245/1829), head of the Fındıkzāde *tekke* in, probably, Istanbul.[69] As is clear from documentation in the manuscript, he succeeded his father, Meḥmed Efendi, who at once was a *ḳāżī* at Yabanābād (Kızılcahamam, near Ankara). The bulk of the scrapbook contains various texts in Turkish and Arabic concerning mysticism and dervish orders, including the Fındıkzāde *tekke*, as well as religious practice and aspects of Islam in general. The volume contains some material related to astrology: a table relating the 'stars' to the hours of each weekday[70] and an Arabic-Persian-Turkish vocabulary with the names of the 'stars' and the twelve signs of the zodiac.[71]

Bibliomanvy/Rhapsodomancy

The Leiden library preserves ten manuscripts that contain one or more texts and/or tables related to what the Ottomans generally used to call *fāl* (see also above), dated from the mid-seventeenth to the nineteenth century. The manuals, *fālnāmes*,[72] concern the bibliomantic use of the Koran, divination by throwing a die (rhapsodomancy) engraved with four letters of the Arabic

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66 *Ibid.* ff. 60b, 73b, 74a, 78b, 79a.

67 *Ibid.* ff. 74b-75b.

68 The manuscript was acquired in January 2001 from the art and book trader, G.J.O. Bouwman; it is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming..

69 Cf. Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî* (Nuri Akbayar, ed.) 4, Istanbul 1996, p. 1353.

70 Cod.Or. 25.762, p. 115.

71 *Ibid.* p. 120.

72 For a survey of the genre, see İ.H. Ertaylan, *Falnâme*, Istanbul 1951; Ayşe Duvarcı, *Türkiyede Falcılık Geleneği ile Bu Konuda İki Eser: Risâle-i Falnâme li-Ca'fer-i Sâdık ve Tefeülnâme*, Ankara 1993.

alphabet and by using a letter table (of the type described by Lane, see above).[73] They are all anonymous, but their origin is mostly ascribed to either the Twelfth Imam, Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq, or to the Imam 'Alī. The omens to be drawn predict good or bad luck, or, in some cases, something falling in between the two. In the more elaborate manuals/tables, it is possible to specify the subject; we find references to such categories as fighting (battles), victory over enemies, health, and (material) fortune.[74] Most interestingly among the manuscripts containing these texts/tables there are four which are of the scrapbook type.

The first is Cod.Or. 12.029,[75] a hefty volume measuring 235x170 mm, of 562 pages of fine glazed paper, mostly filled with devotional texts in Arabic. Almost all of the texts were copied in a calligraphic *nesḫī* hand by Maḥmūd b. Hasan b. Velī during the years 1203 and 1204 (1789-90); in a marginal poem he describes himself as an *imām*. He was probably a resident of the town of Dūrġūd (Turgut, probably one of two towns in western Anatolia), mentioned in a copy of a letter referring to a family member. Seal prints with his name are found throughout the manuscript so he most probably used many of the texts for his work - separate leaves of a smaller format with additional texts in his handwriting were bound with the volume. The volume contains notes dated up to 1230 (1815) concerning family members such as statements on the birth of sons and daughters. It also contains two *fālnāmes* in which omens are cast from the Koran. After a brief introduction, they consist of a survey indicating the portents of the letters of the alphabet, from *elif* to *yā*, first seen in the seventh line of the page randomly opened in a copy of the Koran. This is followed by a similar survey that indicates the portents after a repeated vision of identical letters (*fāl -i tekrār*).[76]

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73 These are Codices Or. 1205 (2,3), 1259(1,2,3), 12.029(7,8), 12.423, 12.441(5), 18.175(3), 23.493, 23.646; MS Acad. 45(1) - these are described in the four volumes of my catalogue.

74 Cf. the categories in Cod.Or. 1259(1), f. 6a sqq.

75 Described in detail in the second volume of my catalogue, comprising the acquisitions between 1800 and 1970, Leiden 2002, pp. 668-80.

76 Cod.Or. 12.029, pp. 139-41.

The second manuscript of this type, Cod.Or. 12.423,[77] is of smaller format, measuring 192 by 130 mm, and looks more like a notebook; it comprises 169 folios of fine glazed paper. It was filled with various tables and texts in identical *ta'lik* script, varying in size, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. As is clear from various texts, the manuscript was owned and used by an Ottoman official who worked for the Financial Department in Istanbul, probably a *ḳassām*, charged with dividing up the estates of deceased members of the military class. For this work a fee, *resm-i ḳısmet*, was received from the heirs, which was entered in the departmental account.[78] Tables documenting the administrative units of the Ottoman Empire with entries on the levying of the taxes concerned occupy the foremost part of the notebook; there are also copies of documents (receipts) with (original) seals and signatures of provincial *ḳāżī* s. The official in question may well have been Meḥmed Bektaş Çelebi, whose name occurs in various administrative notes throughout the manuscript; some of these are related to a pilgrimage undertaken from Edirne by way of Izmir in 1110-1 (1698-1700) - the name Hāccī Bektaş also occurs. According to two separate entries, two sons named Meḥmed were born in, respectively, 1107 (1695) and 1122 (1711). The manuscript contains a *fālnāme*[79] of the letter-table type (cf. above) and attributed to the early mystic Ibn al-'Arabī. It was clearly added in a later stage - some of the original headings on top of most pages had been washed off - and written in a more unlettered hand, and may not have been copied by the original owner but perhaps by one of his heirs. There are twenty-one tables, each devoted to a special subject. By touching thirty-two letters from the table according to a procedure explained in the introductory text, the user finds the text of a Koran verse that prognosticates either good or bad fortune. The subjects - indicated in Arabic above each table - concern business affairs ('is this affair - *fa'l* - good or bad?'),[80] the reliability of news, trust, promotion, war or peace, career, acting as a witness or not, pilgrimage, marriage ('is there profit in concluding a

77 The manuscript came to the library in 1970 from the collection of Franz Taeschner, and is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

78 Cf. Cengiz Orhonlu, 'Kassām', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

79 Cod.Or. 12.423, ff. 62b-72b.

80 The translation into Turkish of this heading has the word '*iş*', cf. Ertaylan, *Falnâme*, p. 20, where a page of a similar table is printed.

marriage or not?'), profits, imprisonment ('will the prisoner be released or not?'), the acquisition of a slave, travel by land and sea (two separate tables), sowing and planting, marriage ('is marrying a lady a good or a bad thing?'), the absence of a traveller, pregnancy ('is this lady pregnant or not?', and: 'is the child in the mother's belly a boy or a girl?'), dream interpretation, acquisition of animals, business affairs ('will the outcome of this affair be good or bad?'), winning or losing, and the payment of debts.

Two other scrapbooks, already discussed above, contain some material of the *fāl* type; Cod.Or. 23.493, which, as we saw, contains considerable magical and astrological materials, also has two letter-tables, the second of which, consisting of twenty-one separate items, is similar to the one found in Cod.Or. 12.423, discussed above.[81] There is another table[82] in which portents and advice (*'tefā'ül'*) are given on the basis of an onomantic method: the person may chose between forty-nine rubrics, the number being determined by calculating the numerical value of one's name and subtracting fifty or its required multiple from the resulting number (as is explained in the introductory sentence). Examples are: '1 - This means that his future is good and happy'; '27 - If you are patient, good things will be there' and '33 - Do not be afraid to consult your brother'. Cod.Or. 25.762, used and compiled by Sheik Aḥmed Rāşid (see the previous section), contains a letter-table preceded by an explanation in which tribute is paid to the authority of the Prophet and Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq.[83] By randomly touching a letter and following a prescribed path through the table, nine given Arabic sentences with predictions (accompanied by Turkish translations in the text) will appear. (If not, a mistake has been committed and the process should be repeated.)

Geomancy

As far as our manuscript evidence goes, geomancy (*reml*) seems to have been a somewhat less popular science/craft among the literate Ottomans than astrology or bibliomancy in its various forms. The Leiden Library preserves only one volume exclusively dedicated to the subject, Cod.Or. 20.405, which

81 Cod.Or. 23.493, f. 9b and ff. 10b-22a.

82 *Ibid.* ff. 26b-28a.

83 Cod.Or. 25.762, pp. 139-40.

contains two lengthy treatises and some tables. It was, most likely, produced at the end of the eighteenth century.[84] The two treatises, both translations from the Arabic, seem to be rare and both seem to be based on the work of the most outstanding Arab authority in the field, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad az-Zanātī, of Berber origin but unknown era.[85] The margins of the second treatise contain additions in which elaborate geomantic prescriptions are given for answering specific questions such as: whether a person will turn out to be a friend or a foe, whether an inheritance will materialize or not; and whether an unborn baby is a boy or a girl. More succinct texts, mostly in the form of tables with explanations, are found in miscellaneous volumes[86] and, particularly, in scrapbooks. Geomancy in all our texts/tables consists of prognostically interpreting sixteen signs made up of all possible combinations of four dots and dashes. These were obtained by making dots with ink on paper in a number of consecutive rows (and no longer by throwing pebbles onto sand, as the term *reml* suggests) without counting. (The signs could also be obtained by mechanical means such as, as we saw above, using a die and/or a geomantic tablet.[87]) Afterwards, the dots were added up per row. If the number of a row was even, it counted as a dash; if the number was uneven, it counted as a dot. The result of four lines resulted in the aforementioned sign called a 'form' (*şekl*) or, in a more complex configuration (see below), 'house' (*beyt*, *ḫāne*), which had specific names - the form made up of four dashes, for example, was

84 The manuscript was acquired from the Leiden merchant and book dealer, A.A. Fatatri, in 1987, and is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming. The year 1212 (1797-8) is mentioned on p. 98.

85 The titles of the two treatises are *Şecere-i şemere* and *Kenzü l-ma'ārif*, respecively; the introduction of the second work mentions 'Osmān Zenānī as author, but this probably should be read as ['Abdullāh b. Mehmed] b. 'Osmān Zenātī [el-Maġribī], whose name is found in a manuscript with comparable content preserved in the Copenhagen Royal Library, cf. A.F.Mehren, *Codices Persici, Turcici, Jindustanici Variique Alii Bibliothecae Regiae Hafniensis*, Copenhagen 1857, No. xxiii.

86 Cod.Or. 714, f. 110b (added to a sixteenth-century copy of an Arabic text, cf. my catalogue, Vol. I, p. 215); Cod.Or. 23.639 (an undated quire with a fragment of an Arabic geomantic text and a table with Turkish explanations); and Cod.Or. 25.722 (a late seventeenth-century manuscript with astronomical tables; added are some geomantic tables with Turkish explanations) - the last two manuscripts are described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

87 A most intricate geomantic tablet, dated 639 (1241-2), is described in Smith & Smith, *Islamic Geomancy and a Thirteenth-Century Divinatory Device*, pp. 15-68.

usually called *cemāat*. To do it properly, the geomancer had to form a tableau (*teskīn*) of eight 'houses'. Subsequently, by a process of 'conjugation' (elimination) in sixteen steps, these were merged into one definite 'form', the intermediate forms also remaining part of the tableau.[88] Interpretation of the signs was often combined by making a connection between them and the 'stars', the twelve signs of the zodiac, the parts of the body, the four elements, numbers, letters and so forth[89] - some of the tables found in our manuscripts, in fact, explain these connections precisely. As in the case of astrology or bibliomancy, attitudes towards geomancy were ambiguous, but, as might be expected, practitioners were imaginative enough to find justification for their art in some passages of the Koran and *ḥadīth*, and it became quite popular with the Arabs, only slightly less so than astrology,[90] as it also did in Europe between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries.[91] The introductions to the two aforementioned treatises in the Leiden Cod.Or. 20.405 attribute the origins of the art to secret knowledge imparted by the angel Jabrā'īl to the Prophet Dānyāl. Sometimes the Prophet Muḥammad or his cousin and son-in-law, 'Alī, are given as direct sources (see below). Four scrapbooks in the Leiden University Library collection contain geomantic materials, mostly of a simplified character. The subjects that concerned the users were not unlike those encountered with the bibliomancers.

Cod.Or. 12.029, the hefty volume compiled by the Imām Maḥmūd b. Ḥasan b. Velī, mentioned in the previous section, contains two anonymous treatises on the prognostic meaning of the sixteen 'forms'.[92] The first one is the more elaborate, discussing various possibilities per form; the second one, entitled *Reml-i peyġamber*, only points more vaguely to future fortune or misfortune. It begins with a prescription, not unlike those found in some of the bibliomantic manuals, for some specific pious actions, in this case performing seven prayers and reading the *sūra* Ikhlāṣ three times, to be undertaken before starting to put the required dots on paper. Of the form of *cemāat*, for instance,

88 See for the technical details: Smith, 'The Nature of Islamic Geomancy', pp. 10-4.

89 Cf. *Ibid.* p. 15.

90 Cf. H.Fahd, 'Khaṭṭ', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.

91 Smith, 'The Nature of Islamic Geomancy', pp. 7-8.

92 Cod.Or. 12.029(18,26), pp. 419-23 and 484.

the first treatise says: 'Oh drawer of omens [*fāl issī*] this formal resolve that you made [points to] congress [*cem'īyet*] and [stems] from both your father and your mother... Now all is well because your luck is clear and happiness awaits you but there may be some little conflict or irritation... But God will bless you with much wealth [*māl*]... You should be content with your friends and relations... At the end of a return journey you will see an advantage, even a feast and rejoicing... You will see much profit from a quadruped beast... If you really want something badly... do not despair: your goal will be attained... Find succour in prayer... You will see profit from a man holding a pen; all will work out well...'[93] The second treatise associates the same form, after a quotation from the Koran ('Thou art the best of inheritors', *sūra* 21:89) with, again the attainment of all goals [*cemī'- i maḳṣūda eresin*].[94]

Cod.Or. 14.637[95] is an, only half-filled, oblong notebook, measuring 222 by 155 mm (373 folios of low quality English paper), with nine substantial texts on mysticism and the occult sciences. The texts were mostly, if perhaps not all, copied by a man called 'Abdullāh, member of a *tekke ('dergāh')* in Katerin (Katerini, Thessaly) around 1316/1901.[96] Half of the pages have remained blank. It contains an anonymous treatise on geomancy,[97] entitled *Reml-i ḥażret-i 'Alī*, in which, after a brief introductory explanation, the portents to be drawn from the sixteen forms (to be obtained from four lines of dots) are briefly described. Of the form '*cemā'at*', to give the same example, it, again, says that the right arrow[98] will come to hand for a goal aimed at and that good will be seen from what is desired.[99]

Cod.Or. 23.493, already discussed twice above, also contains a table[100] showing the sixteen geomantic forms in red, to which are added names of

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93 Cod.Or. 12.029, pp. 419-20.

94 *Ibid.* p. 484.

95 The manuscript was obtained from the book dealer Dimitris Stamoulis (of Grenoble) in 1979; it is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

96 See colophon on f. 166a.

97 Cod.Or. 14.637(9), ff. 178a-179b.

98 The text has '*tibr*' (precious metal) instead of the expected *tīr*: '*oḳlamış şeyle tīr eline gire*'

99 Cod.Or. 14.637, f. 179a.

100 Cod.Or. 23.493, f. 1b.

prophets (in red), their names (repeated in black) and one of the two words 'auspicious' (*mübārek*) and 'evil fortune' *(naḥs)*. Underneath the table, there are some further explanation, repeating which 'houses' bring good luck and which misfortune; it also specifies which houses bring consummation in marriage, and which mean 'seeking' *(Tālib)*, 'beloved' *(ma'şūḳ)*, or 'wished for' *(maṭlūb)*.

Cod.Or. 25.762, the scrapbook of Sheik Ahmed Rāşid, encountered twice above, also contains a *Reml*[101] *-i muḫtaṣar-i ḥażret-i 'Alī*; a table relating thirteen geomantic forms to 'stars' and signs of the zodiac; a table relating the sixteen forms to fortune/misfortune and some more specified predictions; a prescription for a geomantic procedure to establish whether a man loves or does not love one; a table relating the forms to the letters of the alphabet and their numerical value; and tables relating the forms to various conjunctions of 'stars' and the signs of the zodiac as well as those heavenly bodies and their geomantic forms to the four elements.[102] On these last three pages there are also elaborate draft tableaux.

Oneiromancy

Dreams and dream interpretation were popular subjects and occur in various literary genres, ranging from *ḥadīth*, historiography, to (auto-)biography and narrative fiction, but were also part, as seen above, of Islamic science.[103] The belief that dreams may predict the future has been - in the West at least since Homeric times - and to a certain extent, still is, universally held.[104] Works on dream interpretation were known by Ottomans as *ta'bīrnāmes*, and the Leiden Library preserves a small collection of them. With a few exceptions - I already discussed a Turkish version of the fundamental work by Ibn Sīrīn in the Leiden collection above - these are all found in

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101 Spelled as *remīl*.

102 Cod.Or. 25.762, pp. 117, 119, 121, 122.

103 Cf. Cemal Kafadar, 'Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature', in Studia Islamica 69 (1989), pp. 121-50, esp. p. 131; Schmidt, Pure Water, p. 57, *passim*.

104 See on the extensive Greek literature of the first millenium: Steven Michael Oberhelman, 'The Oneirocritic Literature of the Late Roman and Byzantine Eras of Greece', PhD thesis, University of Minesota, Minneapolis 1981.

miscellaneous volumes and are often both anonymous and very brief or in tabular form. Copies date from the sixteenth to nineteenth century. Some of these volumes contain more than one such work.[105] Some of the manuals are attributed to, not unexpectedly, the Prophet Yūsuf, famous for his dreams.[106] An example of a work of that type is an anonymous *Ta'bīrnāme-i ḥażret-i Yūsuf*[107] - the introduction begins by quoting the well-known verse from the Koran in which Yūsuf told his father about his dream of the 'eleven stars, the sun and the moon' bowing down in worship to him.[108] After a discussion of the quality - sound (inspired by way of the Angel of Dreams) and unsound (the work of the Devil) - of various dreams and the pious handling of them, the work consists of sixty chapters discussing, from the third onwards, the various things seen in dreams and their meaning/portents, from (3) seeing God, Angels, Prophets, the Throne, Paradise and the Reckoning, to (58) seeing 'planks, rakes, dishes, saucers, and the cutting of nails', and, finally (59, 60) seeing fragmentary and confused pictures. (In Chapter 58 it is explained that the rake stands for a true friend, the plank for a vain woman, the dish for an ear doctor (*ḳulaḳçı*), the saucer for words, and the nail-cutting for serious words.)[109] A good example of a more succinct work is found in Cod.Or. 1259, the miscellany of astrological and bibliomantic interest mentioned above. The introductory section makes it clear that the contents of the brief manual had been revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad by God. The work proper consists of a list of the days of the month, from the first to the twenty-ninth. The entries for these days, or rather nights, briefly indicate good and bad omens, predict whether enemies will be beaten or wealth will be acquired, but they also give

105 Codices Or. 1259(4) - see the first volume of my catalogue, p. 545 - Or. 1628(1,3), 1634(2), 11.706(6), 11.722(2) - see the second volume of my catalogue, pp. 199-201, 202, 559-60, 564 - Or. 14.566(10), 18.175(4,5), and 25.728(1,3,4,8) - described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming. Cod. Or. 1634(2), a work by Kurd Mehmed Efendi (d. 996/1587-8), is exceptional in that it is not so much a manual for the practitioner of the art as a theoretical treatise in which dreams are discussed as part of a process of mystical enlightenment.

106 Cod.Or. 25.728(1,3).

107 Cod.Or. 25.728(1), part of a miscellaneous volume copied in 1249 (1833); it was at least partly based on a work by Ibn Sīrīn., cf. f. 7a:7 where his name is mentioned. The MS was acquired from G.J.O. Bouwman in October 2000.

108 *Sūra* 12:4.

109 Cod.Or. 25.728, f. 32a.

advice, for example: 'a dream which occurs on the first night points to being happy', and 'a dream which occurs on the third night shows fear; it is necessary to give alms'.[110] The succinct *ta'bīrnāmes* are not only of the almanac format, but also make links to other fields of occult knowledge, like onomancy. The same manuscript that contains the first mentioned *Ta'bīrnāme-i ḥażret-i Yūsuf*, also comprises a section on *ta'bīr-i ḥesāb*.[111] In an introductory section it is explained that the dreamer should ask the name of the person he has seen in a dream and tot up the numerical value of each letter of that name. From the total units of twelve should be subtracted, the remaining numbers giving clues to the future, from one ('one's wish will be fulfilled') to eleven ('one will find greatness and power [*sulṭānlıḳ*]'). We also find references to dreams or their interpretation in a few scrapbooks.

The Leiden Cod.Or. 1676d, a notebook, 208x128 mm, 77 folios, with, mostly, copies of letters and poetry in *dīvānī* and *rık'a* scripts, and apparently compiled by an arsenal official called Meḥmed Emīn Ḫōca, son of a certain Captain Yūsuf, in Istanbul around the year 1810/1225.[112] It contains two succinct *ta'bīrnāmes*. The first[113] is in the form of a table, preceded by an introduction of five lines. In it, an anonymous author states that it originated in the circle of *'ulemā* at the court of 'an Emperor [*pādişāh*]'. Omens were to be drawn from the first letter of the first (Arabic) word seen in a dream - 'water' is given as an example given; it is *mā'* in Arabic, so one should look under the *mīm* in the table. The table explains briefly what each letter means for the future, from 'one's rank will be high' (*elif*) to 'one's prayers and acts of obedience will find acceptance (*yā*)'. The second one,[114] 'authorized by many high-ranking people', is a table in two columns, giving predictions for the first to the thirtieth nights; for instance, under the fourteenth night, one reads: 'after a month one may find happiness'.

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110 Cod.Or. 1259, f. 44a.

111 Cod.Or. 25.728, ff. 33b-34a.

112 Cf. the description in the second volume of my catalogue, pp. 211-9.

113 Cod.Or. 1676d, f. 22a.

114 *Ibid.* f. 25b.

Another *ta'bīrnāme* is found in a miscellaneous work, not in any way dedicated to the subject of dreaming, namely, the Leiden Cod.Or. 1548,[115] copied in the Crimea in 1104 (1692-3), which contains an Arabic work on jurisprudence to which extensive additional text fragments in Arabic and Turkish were added in fifty folios preceding and following the main work by, at least in part, the copyist, el-ḥācc 'Abdürraḥīm; the manuscript could therefore to a certain extent also be considered a scrapbook. (The compiler, by the way, also knew Nev'ī's encyclopaedia, a chapter from which is quoted by him.[116]) Among these additional texts is a (Turkish) *ta'bīrnāme-i muḫtaṣar*[117] in the form of a table, preceded by an introduction of two lines. In it, the anonymous author states that it originated in the circle of *'ulemā* at the court of 'an Emperor [*pādişāh*] of Khārezmia', and apart from this is almost identical with the first one found in the aforementioned notebook Cod.Or. 1676d.

The Science of Talismans and Amulets

Talismans: inscriptions consisting of magical signs, including symbols of the zodiac and 'stars', and amulets with such inscriptions, carried on the body for protection and the warding off evil, had already been in wide use in the Middle East before the advent of Islam. In Islamic times amulets, to which such inscriptions were applied, carried both signs of a magical (among them letters derived from the Hebrew or Kufic alphabets), astrological, or geomantic nature and texts of a pious nature like prayers, the name of Angels, and Koran verses, as well as figures of animals, men, or human hands. At an early stage, they had already become objects of a lively trade, mostly in the hands of dervishes.[118]

Although only little attention was paid, as we have seen, to charms and amulets in Nev'ī's encyclopaedia, and there particularly in relation to healing,

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115 See the second volume of my catalogue, pp. 105-11.

116 Cod.Or. 1548, ff. 203*.

117 *Ibid.* f. 214b*; the text is similar to that found in Codices Or. 1676d, f. 22a, and 25.728(8).

118 See J. Ruska, B. Carra & C.E. Bosworth, 'Tilsam', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. To get an impression of the great variation in format of Middle Eastern/Islamic amulets, see A. Fodor, *Amulets from the Islamic World* (*Budapest Studies in Arabic* 2), Budapest 1988. For Western amulets and talismans, see Liselotte Hansmann & Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Amulett und Talisman; Erscheinungsform und Geschichte*, Munich 1977.

their production and their use seem also to have been widespread in the Ottoman Empire, and, they seem, as Lane found in Egypt, to have been an integral part of daily life. This situation is overwhelmingly confirmed by textual evidence: many Ottoman manuscripts in Dutch collections with texts in any genre: history, jurisprudence, religious dogma, or poetry; contain annotations of a talismanic nature: amulet texts, magic squares, and diagrams, as well as prayer prescriptions, all meant to manipulate fate in some way or another (and thereby approaching, if not transgressing, one suspects, the boundaries of black magic). The Leiden collection also contains an amulet consisting of a folded piece of paper with an Arabic inscription.[119] Much of this material was of a practical nature and intended for specific purposes, but the theoretical side of matters was not completely ignored. In the Leiden University collection a Turkish treatise on talismans is preserved, written by a certain Ahmed b. Süleymān. According to its introductory section, it was composed for a sultan with a view to finding a means to suppress the plague.[120] Having briefly discussed the invisible (magical) influence of both earthly and heavenly elements on 'this world' (examples given are magnetism[121] and the effect of certain stars), the author moves to the hidden power, combining both elements, of talismans,[122] and lists a number of historical examples, often ancient monuments with strange (indecipherable) scripts on them, such as the famous snake charm (obelisk) of Istanbul which had the potential to neutralize the

119 In Cod.Or. 12.583, a collection of photographs and various documents acquired from the estate of Franz Taeschner in 1970; it is described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming.

120 Cod.Or. 12.365(2), ff. 66b-79b, part of a miscellany with two works of history, copied in the mid-seventeenth century - described in the third volume of my catalogue, forthcoming. It was acquired in 1970 from the Taeschner collection. The author mentions himself in f. 77b: 6-7; in several passages he states that he had written a more elaborate work entitled *Kenz-i muṭalsem*. Neither the author or the work seem to be documented.

121 Magic power was ascribed to magnetic steel, as is clear from a brief treatise found in Cod.Or. 23.493, ff. 30b-32, which contains a series of prescriptions involving magnets and, reportedly, based on the authority of Aristotle; the first, for example, explains that anyone who carries a small magnet with him will be vouchsafed free from damage caused by evil *perīs*, witches, and thunderbolts.

122 Cf. Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, p. 374.

effects of snake venom.[123] (Digressions of such kind are also found in general histories, for example, the already mentioned *Künhü l-aḫbār*, particularly in their descriptions of Egypt and its historical monuments.[124]) In a second chapter, the author discusses the science of talismans proper, and states that it is in fact a 'valid [*Saḥīḥ*] science', practised everywhere at all times and should be considered to be part of the science of medicine, but whereas medicine cures the human body, talismans cure the world. It is also part of 'the science of the stars', because without understanding astrology, it is impossible to grasp the working of talismans.[125] The potential of talismans is derived from the metal of which the 'stars' are composed; a good talisman against the plague, for instance, should be composed, for example, of both red and gilt copper, of which, respectively, Venus and Jupiter, known to exert influence on the malady, are made up.[126] Apart from inscriptions and decorations, size and form - three-dimensional or flat, or in the shape of a seal - are also important to the degree of a talisman's potential. Secrecy and abstinence to be observed by the practitioner are even more crucial.[127] Local circumstances - geography, the weather, and local astrological influences also contribute to the effectiveness of talismans, and all things being equal it is, for example, always better to prevent plague in a city by making sure the air is as unpolluted as possible.

All this sounds somewhat vague and generalized, and we get a much better idea of how this sort of magic functioned in daily life from such works as prayer books, quite a number of which are preserved in Dutch collections. A good example is the (undated) Leiden Cod.Or. 1392, of the usual small format (90 by 75 mm).[128] Most of the texts found in it were written in a highly irregular *nesḫī* hand, and are accompanied by prescriptions for their use, for example, for the purpose of finding good fortune in love, the avoidance of pain, and the birth of male offspring. A section of the texts, which at times

123 Cod.Or. 12.365, f. 71a; cf. V.L. Ménage, 'The Serpent Column in Ottoman Sources', in *Anatolian Studies* (*Journal of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara*) XIV (1964), pp. 169-73.

124 Cf. Schmidt, *Pure Water*, pp. 118-9.

125 Cod.Or. 12.365, f. 71b.

126 *Ibid.*, f. 73b.

127 *Ibid.* ff. 73b-74b.

128 Described in the second volume of my catalogue, pp. 73-5.

(partly) consist of endlessly repeated invocations of the name of Muḥammad, but mostly of illegible symbols, seemingly rows of variously contorted *mīm*s,[129] are explicitly designated talisman inscriptions.

Such texts, and also related phenomena like magic squares (in which onomancy - particularly the numerical value of the names of God - and astrology play an important role)[130] are found in almost all our scrapbooks. Among them is the collection of text fragments added to the Arabic work on jurisdiction which had its origin in the late-seventeenth-century Crimea (Cod.Or. 1548, mentioned in the previous section): a drawing of two slipper-like shapes with magical script ('anyone who sees these will be safe from disaster and will not pass away'), a prescription for an invocation (luck for those who say *yā salām* 131 times), and a drawing of two amulets with magical symbols.[131] The early-nineteenth-century notebook filled by the arsenal official (the aforementioned Cod.Or. 1676d), contains a magic square consisting of drawn-out words around a central '*olursa*'; two series of pious texts written in irregular crossed and circular lines (and, it appears from an introductory line, partly illegible, to be attached to an egg buried in a burning hearth [?]); and prayer prescriptions ending with a circular diagram around the name of Muḥammad with a pious text in Arabic as well as series of letters and magical symbols.[132]

Another scrapbook, not yet encountered, the Leiden Cod.Or. 11.539[133] (measuring 175 by 114 mm, 138 folios) contains mostly copies of *fetvā*s and letters, and was, it seems, first compiled by 'Abdullāh İmāmzāde, a *nā'ib* at Kuşadası - his name occurs in two colophons dated 1096 (1684-5) and 1102 (1690), but there are also later additions by different men. Among the plethora

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129 These are the so-called *Kalfaṭirīyāt*, '*Brillenbuchstaben*' in German; their origin is pre-Islamic and also occur in, e.g., Hebrew magic texts. See for details, H.A. Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der Muhammedanischen Zauberei*, Berlin & Leipzig, 1930, esp. pp. 150-67.

130 See for details, particularly on squares with letters and numbers: H.S. Schuster, 'Magische Quadrate im islamischen Bereich; Ihr Entlehnung ins Abendland im Mittelalter sowie ihre Vorstufen', in *Der Islam* 49 (1972), pp. 1-84.

131 Cod.Or. 1548, ff. 215b*, 216a* and 218a*.

132 Cod.Or. 1676d, ff. 7a, 32a, 45a-47a.

133 Described in the second volume of my catalogue, pp. 511-6.

of texts there is also a prescription for an amulet with a prayer text to ward off plague (the text was to be tied to the right arm in the case of a man, and to the left arm in the case of a woman - it was written by a mollah called Muṣṭafā Ṣadrullāhzāde); various prayer prescriptions, among them for the purposes of widening the urinary tract, the avoiding of poverty and the chasing away of genies; a prescription for a talisman text (to prevent theft; to be written on a piece of paper and put into one's turban; attributed to Sheik Sivasī Efendi); and a prescription for keeping hold of a person (by having that person washed in water of the same weight as a Koran on which forty *fātiḥa*s had been said).[134]

The hefty volume compiled by the İmām, Maḥmūd b. Ḥasan b. Velī (Cod.Or. 12.029), contains a plethora of talisman texts and diagrams, with, often, elaborate prescriptions,[135] ranging from prescriptions for the purpose of 'conquering hearts' (which includes the recitation of prayers and the manipulation of a magic square - explicitly authorized by Maḥmūd Efendi in 1206/1791-2)[136] to succinct prescriptions with drawings for amulets.[137] The scrapbook compiled by, probably, Ḥüseyn Ẕihnī around 1800 (the aforementioned Cod.Or. 14.599) also contains many items in the same genre,[138] from prescriptions for a talisman to avoid magic spells and the influence of genies (to be written on a piece of paper, to be put in water, that, in turn, was to be drunk)[139] to the magic use of a Koran text (in order to have someone removed from one's neighbourhood - it includes, among other procedures, the burial of the text in an old graveyard in the course of an afternoon).[140] The aforementioned Cod.Or. 14.637, produced in Thessaly around 1900, contains a fragment of a treatise on talismans;[141] it consists of a number of chapters each dedicated to a specific purpose, from divorce to the suppression of pain, with prescriptions accompanied by a few drawings; it ends with a survey of the

134 Cod.Or. 11.539, ff. 29a, 58b, 59a.

135 Cod.Or. 12.029, pp. 3-4, 17-8, 20-4, 26-8, 30, 34-5, 38-9, 191, 283, 484.

136 *Ibid.* p. 3.

137 *Ibid.* pp. 283, 484.

138 Cod.Or. 14.599, ff. 4a-5a, 11a, 12a-16a, 21a.

139 *Ibid.* f. 4a.

140 *Ibid.* f. 21a.

141 Cod.Or. 14.637, ff. 1a-4b.

portents associated with the sun, the moon, and the planets. The scrapbooks of, probably, Ḥāfız Efendi (the aforementioned Cod.Or. 23.493), and that, finally, of Sheik Aḥmed Rāşid (Cod.Or. 25.762), that both were compiled around 1800, are extraordinarily rich in materials on magic and talismans. The former notebook in particular contains illustrations, often finely done, of magic squares with accompanying instructions for their use[142]; the latter contains, in particular, a plethora of prayer prescriptions, many of them for magic purposes[143] - there are also prescriptions for talismans with drawings,[144] including, as a last item, one of a human being with a knobbed pin in his hand. It is part of an elaborate prescription for anyone who wants 'to beat a person'; the figure with the pin had to be drawn, magic words had then to be written on his limbs, and the *sūra* al-'Ādiyāt to be recited seventy times.

Conclusion

Thus far my survey of documentation provided by Dutch mar uscripts: as I said, it is not all-inclusive and is meant to highlight only some of the more frequently encountered, and therefore perhaps most popular, aspects of our subject. Excluded were fields like alchemy, chiromancy, palmoscopy, and physiognomy - but these, although quite prominent in Ottoman literature, do not figure, perhaps not by coincidence, in the texts in our scrapbooks - and my survey only touched, as we saw, in passing at other fields of hermetic knowledge like onomancy. (Some other magic practices mentioned by Nev'ī, like ornithomancy, do not seem to have been current among the Ottomans - at least, I have not come across texts in that genre.) Even with these restrictions, and the restriction that any choice of materials - in our case: the Dutch Turkish collections - imply, this survey allows us nevertheless, I think, to draw some tentative conclusions on the role the occult sciences - and even more: the resulting practice - in Ottoman culture.

There is no indication that the occult sciences, and hence, the practice of magic and divination, were considered by the Ottomans to be doubious; on the contrary, manuals, treatises and more general works approached both

142 Cod.Or. 23.493, ff. 30a, 46a, 51a, 51b, 54a, 78a, 79b, 83a-84a, 86b, 91b-95a, 96a.

143 Cod.Or. 25.762, pp. 4, 5-6, *passim*.

144 *Ibid.* pp. 8, 79, 97, 136, 138, 139, and the inner back-board.

seriously, although not all aspects of the matter were seen by all authors as desirable or even legitimate. As we saw, there was resistance to the practice of 'black magic' and there were also reservations about astrology. On the other hand, no such inhibitions or doubts are encountered in our scrapbooks. These in particular have the potential of illuminating unsuspected corners of private life, often on a day-to-day basis not found in literature written for a readership and multiplied for general use. Their compilers/owners, indeed, must have often used them as practical manuals that were consulted when applying these arts, no less than when they, for example, were preparing pills on the basis of the many prescriptions for them also found in these volumes. The more theoretical interest in hermetic knowledge was, it seems from our scrapbooks at least, only small, and people seem to have been far more interested in essentials like the fate of their own love life, offspring, wealth, and friendships. The scrapbooks in particular seem to indicate that literary Ottoman culture as it was absorbed and passed on by such varying figures as a provincial substitute judge, an imam, or a capital-based state official from, say 1680 to 1835, and perhaps even as late as 1900, was still to a large extent of a mediaeval nature as we understand the term from the context of Western history, and uninfluenced by the notions fostered by the Enlightenment which had become current in the West by, about, 1750, even among the less well-educated classes in Europe and America. There is no development or change in the texts encountered in our manuscripts, nor do they disappear, and identical letter-tables or magic squares can be found in volumes produced in the seventeenth or the nineteenth century. Magic and the belief in divination were part and parcel of a closed, some would even say claustrophobic, world picture in which God and His finite Creation, including an intricate system of strange, magical forces, dominated by God but perhaps not completely out of reach of the adroit faithful! Attention paid to these magical forces, and the resulting possibilities to manipulate or predict one's fate, the scrapbooks seem to show us, was and remained wide-spread, not only among uneducated 'folk', but also among what may be defined as the middle classes, both in the Istanbul and the provinces, who must, at least in some cases, have received *medrese*- and later perhaps also sometimes Western-style educations, being able as they were to read, reproduce and write texts in at least three languages: Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish.

Objections could be raised that the analysis of only a limited number of scrapbooks does not allow one to jump to conclusions - and it is of course desirable that greater numbers of such manuscripts will be studied in the future. Nevertheless, the fact that none of the scrapbooks in our collections - with, sometimes, the exception of miscellanies compiled with a specific purpose like anthologies of poems or exercise books with copied lectures (but these belong to a related but essentially different genre) - is completely innocent of these is telling. The importance of the role of the occult in Ottoman culture until, it seems, the end should also lead, I would suggest, to a re-appraisal of the subject, still often dismissed as ephemeral nonsense - which perhaps it was but which was not regarded as such even by well-educated Ottomans. Such a re-appraisal would help us to understand more about what the Ottomans thought and did.