

The Book Trade and Booksellers of Istanbul and other regions of the Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries¹

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It is well known that no clear political history of the first period of the Ottoman Empire can possibly be established, let alone its cultural history. Historical sources contain no significant information about the few educational institutions which were established in some of the regions conquered during the reign of Orhan Ghazi (1324 – 1360). The leading activity of this beylik* made up of ghazi* communities living along the Byzantine-Seljuk border was “gaza,” that is, military expeditions inspired by religion, and this subsumed cultural activities for a certain period.

However, under Murad I (1362 – 1389), Edirne was conquered and Ottoman rule began to make itself felt in Rumeli; some beyliks in Anatolia were subjugated and others became allies. These developments hastened the influx of ulema* toward centers of learning in regions such as Damascus, Egypt and Khorasan, which had already started under Orhan Ghazi. The addition of cultural centers such as Kütahya, Manisa and Kastamonu to the Ottoman Empire under Yildirim Bayezid (1389 – 1402) further fostered an atmosphere of research and debate.

Madrasah* students of the early Ottoman period most likely procured their school books by copying them. It does not seem possible to claim that the book trade started with the establishment of madrasahs. There were not enough books to establish a trade in cities such as Iznik, Izmit and Bursa, which did not have an Islamic cultural heritage. However, the multiplication of educational establishments and the increase of communication with other beyliks and important Islamic cultural centers led to the flow of both ulema and books into the Ottoman state. It was only natural that booksellers soon appeared in regions housing madrasahs. But as students mostly copied their books instead of buying them, it is likely that these traders started off by selling not books, but materials such as paper, ink and pencils. The historian Taşköprülü-zâde notes that under the administration of Molla Fenari, an intellectual who lived during the reign of Yildirim Bayezid, his students had Fridays and Tuesdays off, to which Molla Fenari added Mondays. The author explains this decision by pointing out that students who wanted to read Sadeddin Teftazani's famous works could either not find copies

1 This is a translation of a chapter from *Osmanlılarda Sahâflık ve Sahâflar* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2013, pp. 54; 81-91) by Emeritus Prof. Dr. İsmail Erünsal, an important scholar in the field of classical Turkish literature, cultural history, history of libraries, books and archives.

of the books or had no time to copy them.² Actually, when looking at book prices from later periods, it is apparent that no madrasah student could ever have purchased a copy of a book prepared for sale. These types of works were mostly bought by rich benefactors who would then donate them to libraries.

From *sahaf* to *kitapçı*

Bookstalls (*sahaf*) functioned in the traditional manner until the end of the eighteenth century, buying and selling manuscripts circulating within the book market. Most bookstalls chose Istanbul as the center of their commercial activity. The nineteenth century was a turning point: the appearance of printed books, reforms within the educational system, the opening of new schools, the increase in literacy and the new readership's rising demand for books led to the transformation of the book trade. Some booksellers switched from their traditional bookstalls to bookstores (*kitapçı*) and then to publishing businesses which also sold books. With the opening of schools in the provinces during the latter half of the nineteenth century, a whole new readership emerged, resulting in the emergence of new bookstores which sold the books printed by publishing companies located in many cities, principally in Istanbul.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, with a handful of exceptions³, the expression *sahaf* (bookseller) was used for the tradesmen who bought and sold manuscripts. Toward the mid-nineteenth century, with the appearance of the first publishing companies and their later expansion, more and more works were printed and sold alongside manuscripts by some booksellers. This was, however, a slow process. The situation gradually changed and some works printed by the Müteferrika, Üsküdar and Mühendishane printing houses began to appear in the estate inventories of booksellers.⁴ Although these book stalls were now selling printed books, they continued to be called *sahaf* [from the Arabic *Şahīfah*, or scroll] and the expressions “bookseller” and “book dealer” (*kitapçı*) began to be used interchangeably. A

2 Taşköprülü-zâde, *Eş-Şekâ'ikü'n-Nu'mânîye Fî 'Ulemâ'i d-Devleti'l-'Osmânîye*, [Biographies of Ottoman Scholars], ed. Ahmed Subhi Furat, Istanbul, 1985, pp. 27 – 28.

3 The word “book dealer” (*kitapçı*) was occasionally used instead of “bookseller” (*sahaf*) in earlier times as well. For an example from 1029/1620, see Galab D. Galabov, *Die Protokollbücher des Kadiamtes Sofia*, Munich 1960, p. 336. The Şeyh Vefa mosque cemetery contains tombstones bearing the inscriptions “Halil Agha, son of book dealer el-Hac Osman. 1154 (1742),” “Book dealer el-Hac Osman Agha. 1157 (1745),” “Osman Agha, son of book dealer el-Hac Ali. 1167 (1753)” and “Book dealer el-Hac Ali's beloved son Osman Aga (1164/1751)”. See Mustafa Sürün, *İstanbul Şeyh Vefa Camii Haziresi*, unprinted PhD thesis, Marmara University, 2006, pp. 50, 60, 88. In the year 1224/1809, “Ohannes, son of Bogos, deceased while established at Vezir Han” is also mentioned as a book trader. KA 861, p. 64b.

4 A document dated 22 Ş. 1211 (25 February 1797) mentions three books printed by the Mühendishane printing house as having been “given to bookstalls to be sold, still in their trust,” from which we gather that by the end of the eighteenth century, printed books were also entrusted to bookstalls. See Kemal Beydilli, *Türk Bilim ve Matbaacılık Tarihinde Mühendishane Matbaası ve Kütüphanesi*, Istanbul 1995, p. 182.

document dating from 18 N. 1264 (18 August 1848) writes of the state employee Ahmed Rushdi Efendi, who sold books printed by Takvimhane-i Amire, as “Ahmed Rushdi Efendi, *sahaf*.”⁵ In the same document, Rushdi Efendi calls himself “Ahmed Rushdi, *kitapçı*.” He also owned a store at the Sahaflar Çarşısı (Book Market). In another document dating from 1279 (1862), a person who is most probably the same Rushdi Efendi is mentioned as “employed as *sahaf* in the service of Tab'hane-i Amire,”⁶ which demonstrates that by that date, the word *sahaf* was used both for those who sold manuscripts and printed books.⁷

The declaration of the Second Constitution following the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 brought freedom of expression, which led to the printing of a large number of books, such that the few existing bookstalls proved insufficient as a distribution network. As a result, the bookstalls⁸ and bookstores at the Sahaflar Market and Hakkaklar (Engravers') Market were joined by paper sellers, book binders, tobacconists, and stalls selling waterpipe tobacco, water, spoons, pictures, essential oils, and newspapers, and teahouses and coffee houses for reading and recitation, which all participated in the book trade.⁹ This change is documented in advertisements in newspapers and magazines for newly published books.¹⁰

In the absence of publishing houses, some writers published, distributed and sold their own books. This explains why they owned numerous copies of their own works. Although we do not know how copyright was applied at the time, it does not seem possible to claim that some of these works could have been sold in exchange for copyright. Elhac Ibrahim Efendi's estate, recorded on 7 L. 1308 (16 May 1891), indicates that he had 7,200 copies of his *Edebiyat-ı Osmani* [Ottoman Literature] and 1750 copies of his *Hikemiyyat* [Aphorisms] and

5 Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives (BOA). A. MKT. Folder no. 144, File no 38.

6 BOA. JJ. VRK. 51/60 and 63.

7 Newspapers published at this time gave the address of bookstalls in advertisements for printed books. A firm engaged in the printed book trade was given the name of *Şirket-i Sahafiye-i Osmaniye* (BOA. Y. MTV. 64/19). For more about this firm, see Fatmagül Demirel, “Osmanlı'da Bir Kitap Şirketi, Şirket-i Sahafiye-i Osmaniye,” *Müteferrika*, no 25, Istanbul 2004, pp. 89-97; Mehmet Ö. Alkan, “Osmanlı'nın Bütün Sahafları Birleşiniz! Şirket-i Sahafiye-i Osmaniye, Osmanlı Döneminde Sahaflar ve Yayınladıkları Kitaplar,” *Müteferrika*, no. 29, Istanbul 2006, pp. 3-44.

8 News articles in *Takvim-i Vekayi* on book sales report that books by Es'ad Efendi, Hacı Akif Efendi, Hacı Hüseyin Efendi, and Misirli Hacı Mustafa Efendi were on sale at Sahaflar Market while those of Bekir Efendi and Ahmed Efendi were available at Hakkaklar. See *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 1178, 1195, 1198, 1200, 1201 and 1204. Necip Asim indicates that bookstall owners refused to sell Ahmet Midhat's plays and novels. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

9 The back cover of *Fatin Divanı* [the Diwan of Fatin] (Istanbul 1288) is a good example. It lists the places where the book is sold: “It is sold in these various places: Ahmed's at Hakkaklar Market and İsmail and Mücellid Hasan's at Sahaflar Market and Toyshop Sezai's at Vezneciler and waterpipe tobacco seller Hasan's at Bağçekapısı and Attar Şükrü Efendi's shop across from Laleli Fountain as well as at public coffeehouses for reading and recitation.”

10 For these types of advertisements which appeared in the newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkar*, see Necdet Hayta, *Tarih Araştırmalarına Kaynak Olarak Tasvir-i Efkar Gazetesi* [*Tasvir-i Efkar* newspaper as a resource for historical research] (1278/1862-1286/1869)]. Ankara, 2002, pp. 229-249. Also see *Takvim-i Vekayi*, nos. 740, 752, 771, 773, 772, 807, 808, 887, 914, 968, 993, 1204, 1397, 1471, 1508, 1675 and *Vakit*, no. 1451.

Hadikatü-l Beyan [The Book of Rhetoric].¹¹ According to an estate recorded on 21 Z. 1280 (28 May 1864), Ahmed Nazim Pasha, son of Keheczade Fuad Pasha, owned 240 printed copies of his grandfather's *Mihnetkeşan* [The Sufferers].¹² Similarly, Muallim Naci, who died on 27 N. 1310 (14 April 1893) and whose estate was recorded one and a half year later, owned numerous copies of his own works. A paragraph in the document indicates that Muallim Naci's books were auctioned in four different places: at his home, at the Sahaflar Market,¹³ at bookdealer Arakel Agha's shop on Babiali Street, and at Hoca Pasha Han. While the auctions at his home and at the Sahaflar Market must have concerned the books in his private library, the ones at Arakel's shop and at Hoca Pasha must have concerned the works he had had printed himself. His estate included the following works which he had authored and printed: 1167 copies of *Sûnbüile*, 1045 copies of *Zatü'n-Nitakeyn*, 238 copies of *Sâ'ib'de Söz* [Collection of Persian Idioms], 536 copies of *Hurde-fürüş* [Salesman], 457 copies of *Osmanlı Şairleri* [Ottoman Poets], 4 copies of *Hikemü'r-Rüfa'i*, 450 copies of *Mektuplarım* [My letters], 770 copies of *Esâmi*, 1000 copies of *Kamus-ı Osmanî* [Dictionary of Ottoman Language] and 1500 copies of *İnşa* [Principles of Writing].¹⁴ Muallim Naci probably stocked his printed works in a room at Hoca Pasha Han. Arakel's bookstore must have been selected for the sale of his printed books¹⁵ since such a great number of books could not have been given in exchange for copyright. This method, which was applied during the first period of transition from bookstall to bookstore, continued for some time before the emergence of publisher-book traders towards the end of the nineteenth century. Another author who published and distributed his own books was Ahmed Hamdi Şirvani. When he died on 12 Ca. 1307 (4 January 1890), his estate¹⁶ held 247 copies of *Teshilü'l-Aruz* [Prosody for Beginners] and 1347 copies of *Hindistan Seyahatnamesi* [Travel to India] written and published by himself.

While some bookstalls¹⁷ also sold printed books at Hakkaklar and Sahaflar Market within the Covered Bazaar, more and more bookstores appeared which sold only printed

11 BK. 77, p. 42a.

12 KA. 1785, p. 55b.

13 The auction of Muallim Naci's books must have taken several days, for *Sabah* newspaper's issue no 1374 published an article to announce that the sale had not yet ended.

14 KA. 1940, p. 49a. *Muallim* (1303/1886) and *İntikad* (1304/1997), two other works of Naci's published by the bookdealer Arakel, do not figure on the list.

15 Editor's note: By the end of nineteenth century, the booksellers (*sahafs*) would refuse to sell new genres like novels and short stories as well as new poetry in print, while new bookdealers (*kitapçı*) would sell almost nothing else.

16 KA. 1917, p. 11a.

17 We gather from documents calling for Iranian bookstore owners to be stopped from selling harmful books (BOA. Y. PRK. BŞK. 66/95; BOA. İ. HUS. 960 BOA. DH. MKT. 521/3) that manuscript dealers worked alongside those who sold printed books.

books, spreading out from the Covered Bazaar to the surrounding *hans* [a combined mosque, shops, stables, barn, and sleeping quarters for travellers] and Bab-i Ali. Selim Nüzhet observed that there were fifty-two bookstalls at Hakkaklar Market, seventeen at the Bedesten, approximately thirty-five book stores around Bab-i Ali and twenty in various spots around Beyazit in 1908.¹⁸ Ahmet Rasim reported that some of the bookstores of Bayezit were within the Mürekkeçiler [Ink Sellers'] Market and others behind the Bedesten covered market.¹⁹ The courtyards of the Faith Mosque, Yeni Mosque and other big mosques also housed bookstalls.²⁰

Although the words *sahaf* and *kitapçı* were used interchangeably throughout this period, a distinction began to be made in some documents toward the mid-nineteenth century. A document dated 2 August 1842 mentions the book dealer's rights (*kitapçı gediği*²¹) of Osman Efendi, son of Hüseyin, while referring to his shop at Vezir Han. The same document mentions his bookseller's rights (*sahaf gediği*) in referring to his shop at Sahaflar Market.²² We gather from this that in the mid-nineteenth century, the tradesmen of Hakkaklar Market were still called *sahaf*, while those who had spread to other parts of the city had begun to be described as *kitapçı*. A good example for this distinction can be seen on the shop sign of one of the bookstores right outside the Babü's Selam gate of the Kaaba at Mecca. The owner of this shop reflected the fact that he now also sold printed books by hanging a sign reading "mektebe"²³ (bookstore), "sâbıkan sahaf" [former *sahaf*].²⁴ A record dated 28 S. 1313 (20 August 1895) from the Bâb Courthouse uses both expressions while making a distinction between the two: "*Sahaf* Ismail Efendi, son of Ibrahim and bookseller Münif Agha, son of Sadik and ... *kitapçı* Ali Efendi, son of Tahir..."²⁵ However, this distinction had not yet become a general rule.²⁶ Until the last days of the Empire, shop owners who sold printed books would continue to be called *sahaf* and some saw no harm in calling themselves

18 1933 *Almanak*, ed. Selim Nüzhet, Istanbul, pp. 147-149.

19 Ahmed Rasim, *Matbuat Hatıralarından Muharrir, Şair, Edib*, ed. Kazım Yetiş, Istanbul, 1980, pp. 81-82.

20 BOA. MV. 113/43, BOA. ZB. 373/103.

21 Editor's note: As of 1830s *gedik* "implied the capital assets needed to practise a particular trade, the perpetual usufruct of the work premises where these assets stood, mastership, and the monopolistic privileges enjoyed in association with a group of fellow masters." See: https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/gedik-COM_27391

22 KA. 1528, p. 12b.

23 For use of the word "mektebe" to mean book trader and others, see Ami Ayalon, "Arab Booksellers and Bookshops in the Age of Printing, 1850-1914," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37.1, London 2010, p. 79.

24 Abdülvehâb b. İbrahim, *el-Ülemdü ve'l Üdebâi'l-Verrâkin fi'l-Karni'r-Râbi'aşeri'l-Hicrî*, Taif, 2002, p. 42.

25 ŞS. Bâb Mahkemesi, 523, p. 38.

26 For example, *sahaf* Seyyid Elhac İbrahim Esad Efendi, d. 11 November 1844 is stated to be a *kitapçı* in his estate inventory. KA. 1552, 79a.

kitapçı.²⁷ Furthermore, while selling manuscripts was an exclusively Muslim trade, even non-Muslim traders were sometimes called *sahaf*.²⁸

The number of printed books to be found at bookstalls had increased considerably by the beginning of the nineteenth century. In *sahaf* Hafiz Suleyman Efendi's shop, specializing in Qurans,²⁹ there were 20 *Birgivi* and its annotations, 19 *Amentü Şerhi* [Commentary of Creed], 68 *Amme* [People] and *Elif-bâ* fascicles [Alphabet fascicles].³⁰ The increase in printed books and the fact that they provided a profitable trade meant that some manuscript sellers turned to selling books wholesale or even to printing books. Elhac Huseyin Agha, son of Omer, whose estate was recorded on 10 L. 1257 (25 November 1841), is one such ex-bookstall owners who became a profitable wholesale bookseller, earning a fortune of 104,121 kurush. He had two wives, two slaves and a 6,000-kurush share in a boat. He concentrated on six books, printed in hundreds of copies and sold in bulk, with 156 copies of the *Muhammediye Şerhi* [Commentary of Poem for the Prophet Mohammed], 238 of the *Divan-ı Vehbi* [the Diwan of Vehbi], 72 of the *Hümayun-nâme* [Translation of Kalila and Demna], 123 of the *Ali Efendi Fetvası* [Fatwa of Ali Efendi], 133 of the *Tarih-i Ebu Necib* [History book by Ebu Necib], and 103 of the *Tarih-i Ebu Ali Sina* [History Book by Ebu Ali Sina]. Huseyin Agha must also have been selling books outside of Istanbul, because Ibrahim Efendi from Rize owed him 4,750 kurush and Elhac Huseyin Agha from Damascus owed him 10,250 kurush.³¹ As *sahaf* Ali Efendi from Gerede owed Yasef, a Jewish dealer from the Ceride printing house 4,371 kurush, he must be one of the bookstall owners who also printed books.³²

Toward the mid-nineteenth century, the number of *sahaf* who shifted to selling printed books increased. *Sahaf* Elhac Ali Efendi left behind hundreds of copies of printed school books and folk tales, some unbound. It seems that Ali Efendi had them bound only when a buyer came up. Some of the debt owed to him by certain booksellers must have been due to the sale of books he printed himself.³³ *Sahaf* Seyyid Elhac Hasan Efendi was another bookseller who also sold printed books wholesale. His estate document dated 7 B. 1271 (16 March 1855), mentions a “book company entrusted to Huseyin Efendi” which owed him 1,366 kurush. *Sahaf* Suleyman Efendi also owed him 500 kurush. There were around 300 to

27 In a letter the *sahaf* Nasrullah Tebrizi wrote to Franz Taeschner on 20 July 1924, he described himself as “Der-Saadet, *kitapçı* Rıza Nasrullah at Bayezid, Çadırcılar Street 155-157.” See Jan Schmidt: “Franz Taeschner's Collection of Turkish Manuscripts in the Leiden University Library,” *The Joys of Philology, Studies in Ottoman Literature, History and Orientalism* (1500-1923), Istanbul, 2002, p. 243.

28 BOA. DH. MKT. 2349/25, DH. MKT. 2466/32, MF. MKT. 84/66.

29 There were 55 Qurans sold for between 18 and 167 kurush at Suleyman Efendi's shop.

30 KA. 1041, p. 52b. (5 C. 1234/1 April 1819).

31 KA. 1495, p. 90a.

32 BK. 29, p. 16b (29 R. 1269/9 Feb. 1853).

33 KA. 1706, p. 87a (15 Ş. 1271/26 March 1855).

1000 copies of some printed books. He must also have been selling books outside of Istanbul, because after his death, his wife Emine Hanum applied to court to recover 8,510 kurush which Mehmed Efendi of Damascus, son of Mehmed, owed him.³⁴ *Sahaf* Hasan Efendi borrowed money from several people, due to insufficient private funds: he owed *sahaf* Halil Efendi 9721 kurush, paper seller Ismail Efendi 1,254 kurush and William Nosworthy Churchill, founder-owner of the newspaper *Ceride-i Havadis*, 3,598 kurush.³⁵

Mehmed Sadeddin Efendi, the son of bookseller Karahisari Ali Riza Efendi, died on 17 M. 1294 (1 February 1877), leaving a prosperous wholesale book business that distributed 48 different titles. Most of these were books his father had also printed before him, including religious and historical books as well as books on literature and folk tales. He had three hundred copies of the best-selling *Aşık Garip Hikayesi* [The Story of Aşık Garip], two hundred of *Kara Davud* [Black David] and three hundred of *Yıldızname* [Astrology].³⁶ Mehmed Sadeddin Efendi amassed a fortune of 210,025 kurush, a considerable sum for the period, which proves that he was a successful businessman. He was also the brother of *sahaf* Ibrahim Lami and Karahisari-zade Seyyid Mustafa Esad Efendi (died 24 S. 1309 / 24 March 1892), one of the richest booksellers of the time, who we will discuss later.

Another bookseller in the wholesale book trade was Elhac Nuri Efendi, son of Omer. His estate inventory of 14 L. 1313 (29 March 1896)³⁷ provides a list of 4,252 books, some of which are unbound, including 505 copies of *Tercüme-i Mirkat* [Translation of Mirkat], 380 *Hüdayi Divanı* [the Diwan of Hüdayi], 580 *Keşkül*, 1028 *Münşe'ât Aziziye* [Prestigious Letters] and 1000 *Hâbname-i Veysi* [Book of Dreams by Veysi]. Although Nuri Efendi was an important *kitapçı*, his fortune was surprisingly small. What first comes to mind is that these types of books were not sought after at auction and were therefore sold off cheap. *Münşe'ât Aziziye* cost 2.4 kurush, *Hüdayi Divanı* 1.5 kurush and *Hâbname-i Veysi* 0.05 kurush. *Şefik-nâme* [History book by Şefik Mehmed] was sold for 1.27, and *el-Münkizü mine'd-Dalâl* for 0.8 kurush, both sold bound. The broader economic context must also have played a role here, as a similar situation is apparent in the estate inventory³⁸ dated 20 Za. 1320 (18 February 1903) of another wholesale *kitapçı*, Bosnevi Elhac Muharrem Efendi, son of Osman. He owned between 100 and 1,500 copies of somewhere between forty and fifty-nine different titles. Apart from some religious books and school books, most were sold at a very low price.

34 ŞS. Rumeli Sadareti 526, pp. 19b-20.

35 KA. 1706. p. 92a.

36 KA. 1846. 8b.

37 BK. 83. p. 33a.

38 BK. 96. P. 90b.

Bosnevi Elhac Muharrem Efendi also ran a printing house and kept his books not in a shop at Sahaflar or Hakkaklar Market, but in an unnamed warehouse.

Some booksellers focused on selling school books or books popular with readers. *Sahaf* Ahmed Efendi, son of Mustafa, had twenty to fifty copies of hundreds of titles.³⁹ *Sahaf* Mustafa Efendi, son of Abdullah, had 920 copies of *İbn Akil* and 135 copies of *Adalı*, two books on Arabic grammar, alongside his other books.⁴⁰ Hüseyin Hilmi Efendi, son of Kürtoğlu Abdullah, sold mostly printed school books. His shop held 362 copies of *Kava'id-i Farisî* [Persian Grammar Book], 313 copies of *Kava'id-i Sarfiyye* [Grammar Book], 828 copies of *Surût-ı Salât* [Surahs for Prayer] and 439 copies of *Ta'limû'l Evzân* [Exercises for Meters].⁴¹ The imam of Kasab Ivaz neighborhood, *sahaf* Elhac Omer Efendi, son of Omer, had 1,000 copies of *Baytarnâme* [Handbook of veterinary medicine], 70 of *Kısas-ı Enbiya* [Anecdotes of Prophets] and 176 of *Hediyetü'l-Kudât* [Gifts from Judges], alongside other printed works.⁴²

An entry reading “printing block 7 for book: 1,442 kurush” in *sahaf* Hafız Ahmed Efendi's estate inventory dated 23 C. 1309 (24 January 1892) indicates that he both sold and printed books. Ahmed Efendi had up to two thousand copies of some works in his shop at Hakkaklar Market, such as 2,090 copies of *Dürr-i Yekta* [Heavenly Pearl], 960 of *Mecmu'atü'l-Mühendisîn* [Journal of Engineering], 631 of *Telhis Metni* [Translation of Telhis], 1,495 of *Tuhfe-i Vehbi* [Gift by Vehbi] and 1,200 of *Eyyühe'l-Veled* [Oh! Son!].⁴³ *Sahaf* Karahisari-zade Seyyid Mustafa Esad Efendi, who died on 24 Ş. 1309 (24 March 1892), owned a printing house across from his home in Molla Gürani. In addition to hundreds of copies of many titles, he also possessed a printing case and printing blocks. He sold both the books he printed here and some historical works:

Printed, *Tarih-i Râşid* [History book by Râşid] set 363: 5,124 kurush; Printed *Tarih-i Râşid* fourth volume unbound 150: 300 kurush; Printed unbound *Tarih-i Râşid*, set 95: 1,420 kurush; Printed *Tarih-i Ali* [History Book by Ali], set 324: 3,240 kurush; Printed *Tarih-i Taberi* [History book by Taberi], set 780: 15,600 kurush.

By the end of his life, Mustafa Efendi had amassed a very considerable fortune of 795,343 kurush.⁴⁴

39 KA. 1846, p. 58b.

40 BK. 59, p. 48b.

41 BK. 73, p. 21a.

42 KA. 1904, p. 26a (22 Ş. 1305/4 May 1888).

43 KA. 1934, p. 12a.

44 KA. 1934, 28a.

The imam of Hacı Küçük Mosque, *sahaf* Elhac Mehmed Efendi, who died on 6 Z. 1327 (19 December 1909), had a shop at Hakkaklar Market. Although some manuscripts were still to be found, by the twentieth century, printed books had nearly entirely taken over the book market. The printed books in Mehmed Efendi's shop existed in numerous copies.⁴⁵

There is one point of interest in the publishing policies of *sahaf* turned *kitapçı*. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the works they published followed the traditional line of their trade. They printed theological works, which they had been selling for centuries, as well as some popular works and a few historical books. They did not print many poetry books, stories, novels or plays. For much of the period, they did not agree to sell works printed by other publishers. Such works were sold in bookshops in the city's other neighborhoods or in shops belonging to other types of traders. However, the increasing access to education created a new readership, which in turn forced the *sahaf/kitapçı* to change their publishing policies.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, bookstores selling printed books had extended beyond Bab-i Ali (formerly the Sublime Porte) to other parts of the city. The newspapers write of “bookstalls and stores in the quarters of Beyoglu, Galata and Uskudar,” which indicates that the number of dealers engaged in the book business had increased to such an extent that they felt the need to be registered as such.⁴⁶ Nearly all of the bookstores in Galata and Pera (Beyoglu) were managed by non-Muslims and some had been established only in the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ The French ambassador, Choiseul-Gouffier, wrote of a bookstore selling books in Western languages in Galata in the beginning of the nineteenth century:

If you wish to buy a book in Greek, Latin or in a European language, you should not go to the Turkish shops at the Bazaar. There is only one shop that sells books in Western languages in Istanbul. I have been to this shop at Galata many times. It is a small place, two meters square. You have to jump over piles of books to enter. There is no place to sit so you must sit on the books. There

45 KA. 2000, p. 86a.

46 *Sabah* Newspaper, 9.3.1315, p. 2; 28.2.1315, p. 3. *Büyük Ticaret Salnâmesi* [Great Trade Almanac], published in 1928, provides a list of bookshops selling printed books in Istanbul's various quarters. It includes several non-Muslims who owned stores in Beyoglu and Bab-i Ali: see pp. 1323-1325. Archival documents indicate the names of many bookstore owners of various origins, mainly Ottoman Greek and Armenian, working in Beyoglu and Galata. They include some English traders (BOA. MF. MKT. 560/22; MF. MKT. 967/48), Greeks (BOA. DH. MKT. 2415/39; DH. MKT. 1072/51) and Russians (BOA. MF. MKT. 670/11).

47 Johann Strauss observed that the book trade in Beyoglu was managed by two non-Muslims in 1847. Of these, Wick sold only some French novels, while the Armenian Iskender sold science books and was careful not to sell any religious works. “Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th - 20th centuries)?,” *Arabic Middle Eastern Literatures* 6.1 (2003), pp. 46-47.

are French, Italian, German and English works here that you can find nowhere else. This is a shop that caters exclusively to foreigners.⁴⁸

The Canadian-British traveler John Auldjo also went to the shop at Galata but was unable to find a book worth his money.⁴⁹

There were probably many non-Muslim *kitapçı* at Eminonu and Galata who imported foreign books and stationery materials. At the turn of the twentieth century, H.T. Kelleciyan had a shop at Buyuk Yeni Han at Chakmakcılar Yokushu, G. Pischtoff at Serpus Han at Pershembepazari, Misakyan and Garipyan at Buyuk Adud Efendi Han on Marpuchcular Caddesi, C. Sphyra Frères at Zindan Han at Zindankapi, Z. Sismanyanyan at İsmirlioglu Han at Yuksekkaldirim, and Depasta-Sphyra-Gerard at Saint Pierre Han on Banka Sokak.⁵⁰ Armenian book traders had settled at Vezirhan in the 1840s.⁵¹ Markar (1789-1845) at Mercan Market was a very well-known *kitapçı* in the early nineteenth century.⁵²

Azeri (also described as Iranian) book traders also held a place of some importance on the Istanbul book scene. Some Iranians owned books stalls before printing became widespread in the city. However, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, with the expansion of privately-owned printing houses,⁵³ the number of Iranian book traders also increased. These were mostly in the business of printing the Quran and other books, but without a license to do so.⁵⁴ There are numerous archival documents on Iranian book dealers' activities in this area.⁵⁵ Most of the Iranian book dealers were to be found at Hakkaklar Market,⁵⁶ some at Valide Han, Vezirhan and Kitapçı Han. Some also opened stalls at Cemberlitas⁵⁷ and in the courtyard of Yeni Mosque.⁵⁸

48 Le Comte de Choiseul-Gouffier, *Ambassadeur de France à Constantinople, Voyage Pittoresque dans L'Empire Ottoman*, vol. IV, second edition, Paris 1842, pp. 103-104. Joseph Michaud, who was in Istanbul in 1830-1831, repeats the Ambassador's observation word for word in his own book. See M. Michaud and M. Poujoulat, *Correspondance d'Orient 1830-1831*, vol. II, Brussels, 1835, p. 243. Although Choiseul-Gouffier was in Istanbul earlier than Michaud, Choiseul-Gouffier's editor may have taken this excerpt from Michaud's work.

49 J. Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Costantinople*, London 1835, p. 76.

50 M. Sadettin Fidan, *Geçmişten Geleceğe Istanbul Hanları*, Istanbul Ticaret Odası, 2009, pp. 32, 55, 65, 189, 246, 277.

51 Yahya Erdem, *ibid.*, p. 729.

52 Strauss, *ibid.*, p. 46.

53 Ali Birinci, "Osman Bey ve Matbaası: Ser-kurena Osman Bey'in Hikayesine ve Matbaa-i Osmaniye'nin Tarihesine Medhal," *Müteferrika* 39, Istanbul 2011, pp. 5-6.

54 Ali Birinci, *ibid.* pp. 23-25.

55 BOA DH. MKT. 2437/21, BOA DH. MKT 2745/12, BOA. MF. MKT. 387/62; BOA. MF. MKT. 392/2; BOA. MF. MKT. 407/31; BOA. MF. MKT. 433/50; BOA MF. MKT. 434/35; BOA. MF. MKT 628/41; BOA. MF MKT 629/5; BOA MF. MKT 629/52, BOA. MF. MKT. 647/6, BOA. MF. MKT. 845/8.

56 An advertisement in *Rûznâme-i Cerîde-i Hâvâdis* (13 Şevval 1277, no. 123, p. 4) about the points of sale for a new book writes: "At Ahmed Efendi's shop at Sahaflar Market and at the Iranian bookstores at Bayezid," which indicates that Iranian book dealers had opened a shop in the Bayezid quarter in the mid-nineteenth century.

57 BOA. MF. MKT 411/10

58 BOA MF. MKT. 434/21.

The book trade in Istanbul was severely affected by the economic depression engendered first by the Balkan Wars, then by World War I. The journalist Ahmet Rasim related that with the loss of the provinces in Rumelia, Istanbul's five or six leading bookstores closed down and some of the bookstores at Bab-i Ali were turned over to cooks, meat restaurants and convenience stores.⁵⁹ After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the booksellers continued their trade at the old Hakkaklar Market. "After the fire of January 1950, which burnt down fifteen of these shops, the Municipality of Istanbul dismantled the remaining wooden structures and constructed a book market in the Turkish style. Book dealers were once again established in the twenty stores, of which twelve were built on two floors."⁶⁰

59 Ahmed Rasim, *Muharrir Bu Ya*, ed. Hikmet Dizdarođlu, Ankara, 1969, pp. 153- 155.

60 Haluk Y. Şehsuvarođlu, *Asırlar Boyunca İstanbul*, İstanbul, 1953. p. 90; Aslan Kaynardađ, "Çeşitli Yönleriyle İstanbul Sahaflar Çarşısı," *Tarihte Dođu-Batu Çatışması: Semavi Eyice'ye Saygı*, ed. Ertan-Ufuk Özcan, İstanbul 2005, p. 606.

Abbreviations

Archives

A. MKT.	Bâb-ı Âsafi Mektubi Kalemi Evrâkı ()
BK.	İstanbul Müftülüğü Arşivi, Beytülmal Kassamlığı
BOA.	Basbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul
DH. MKT.	Dahiliye Mektubi Kalemi
İ. HUS.	İrade Hususi
KA.	İstanbul Müftülüğü Arşivi, Kismet-i Askeriyye
MF. MKT.	Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi
MV.	Meclis-i Vukela Mazbataları
ŞS.	Şer'i Siciller
Y. PRK. BŞK.	Yıldız Perakende Başkitabet Dairesi Maruzatı
ZB.	Zabtiye

Months of the Islamic calendar

B.	Rajab (the seventh month)
C.	Cemazielâhir (the sixth month)
Ca.	Cemazievvel (the fifth month)
L.	Shawwal (the tenth month)
M.	Muharram (the first month)
N.	Ramadan (the ninth month)
R.	Rebiulahir (the fourth month)
Ra.	Rabī' al-Awwal (the third month)
S.	Safar (the second month)
Ş.	Sha'ban (the eighth month)
Z.	Zil-Hajj (the twelfth month)
Za.	Zulqida (the eleventh month)

Translated by Başak Balkan