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## Romanticizing the Marriage of Mehmed II: A Critical Edition of the *Tahniyat-nāma* of Book VI of *Hašt Bihišt*\*

### Abstract

The student of Ottoman Empire always keeps a watchful eye open for the rare, sometimes unique record which has somehow survived from the heyday of Ottoman historiography or archival treasures and illuminates an aspect of history otherwise unknown to us. One such records concerns is the Book VI of *Hašt Bihišt*, written by Idrīs Bidlīsī (1457–1520), who is undoubtedly one of the most original and important intellectual figures in the Ottoman-Iranian borderland in the sixteenth-century. This paper deals with critical edition and translation of an unpublished *tahniyat-nāma*, given in *Hašt Bihišt* VI, which Bidlīsī dedicated to the first marriage of Mehmed II.

**Keywords:** Idrīs Bidlīsī, *Hašt Bihišt* VI, Persian, Mehmed II, Ottoman, *tahniyat-nāma*, Murād II

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To Vural Genç

ذَلِكَ الَّذِي إِنْ كَانَ جَلَّكَ لَمْ تَقُلْ  
 يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْهُ خَلِيلًا

## Introduction

The study of Idrīs Bidlīsī (1457–1520), the Ottoman-Iranian historian and statesman, and his corpus is a relatively young field of research, hence the large number of unexplored Persian and Arabic sources.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the gap between current research and the potential evidence from his unpublished writings seems to be growing as more and more sources, some of which are quite voluminous, arrive at our disposal. Considering the extreme difficulties of Bidlīsī’s high sophisticated language and hyperliterate interpretation, progress is bound to be slow. Thanks to Turkish scholars,<sup>2</sup> we are now better equipped than ever before to study Bidlīsī’s *magnum opus*, *Hašt Bihišt* (The Eight Paradises), which is dedicated to the history of the first eight Ottoman sultans.<sup>3</sup>

The tradition of translation training in *Hašt Bihišt*, which is still alive in Turkey, is a problematic hub of research into a very sophisticated language immersed in the Perso-Arabic literary tradition of *Hašt Bihišt*. The reader of some Turkish translations of *Hašt Bihišt* should be warned that these translations contain several textual errors. The number of errors renders some of these translations unusable, which is lamentable because the *Hašt Bihišt* includes some evidence not found elsewhere. In order to thoroughly study the *Hašt Bihišt* we must firstly explore the broadest possible spectrum of the textual evidence.<sup>4</sup>

A prominent example of neglected books of *Hašt Bihišt* is the sixth *katība* or book. It is dedicated to the life and reign of Murād II, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire from 1421 to 1444 and again from 1446 to 1451.<sup>5</sup> The daunting size of the work, its notorious difficulty and above all the lack of any edition or translation of its text would make anyone hesitate

<sup>1</sup> For his life and works, see Vural Genç, *Acem'den Rum'a Bir Bürokrat ve Tarihi: İdris-i Bidlīsī (1457–1520)*, Ankara 2019), chs.i-ii, passim; Christopher Markiewicz, ‘The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam: A Study of Idrīs Bidlīsī (861–926/1457–1520) and Kingship at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century’ (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2014), p. 127ff.

<sup>2</sup> See for instance Orhan Başaran, *İdris-i Bitlīsī'nin Hâtıme'si: Metin-İnceleme-Çeviri* (PhD dissertation, Atatürk University, Erzurum 2000); İdris Bitlīsī, *Hešt Behišt VII. Ketibe: Fatih Sultan Mehmed Devri 1451–1481* (trans. Muhammad İbrahim Yıldırım, Ankara 2013).

<sup>3</sup> For its structure and contents, see Mehmed Şükrü, ‘Das Hešt Behešt des Idrīs Bitlīsī’, *Der Islam* 19 (1931), pp. 131–192.

<sup>4</sup> My comments by no means aim at detracting from the scientific value of these works; when the deciphering of a difficult text is involved, it is only natural that better readings (for better translations) can be suggested. For example, the critical edition of Books I-II prepared by Iranian scholar, Mehri Pakzad, adds a “better” textual progress to the text: Idrīs Bidlīsī, *Hašt Bihišt (Bihišt-i Avval va Bihišt-i Duvvum)*, ed. Mihrī Pākzād, Mahābād 2023.

<sup>5</sup> For the life and reign of Murād II, see Oruç b. Âdil, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman (Die frühosmanischen Jahrbücher des Urudsch)*, ed. F. Babinger, Hannover 1925, pp. 18, 51–53, 114; Anonymous, *Gazavât-ı Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân*, eds. H. İnalçık and M. Oğuz, Ankara 1989.

to undertake a study of it. An edition of Book VI is therefore an urgent desideratum for the better understanding of Murād II's reign, and the following small portion of the text, which remains hitherto completely ignored, is only a first step for encouraging younger generations in the direction.

The critical edition here presents only the text of *tahniyat-nāma* ('Book of Congratulations'). Certainly, Idrīs (as a poet) himself composed the *tahniyat-nāma* in Persian verse for the first marriage of Prince Mehmed, 'the exalted' son of Murād II and the future Mehmed the Conqueror.<sup>6</sup> The poem is 29 lines, in rhyming couplets (*matnavī*). The meter is *hazağ maḥdūf* (*musaddas*). The source of Idrīs' *tahniyat-nāma*, which is mainly based on his own exaggerated erudite expression, is unknown. The genre *tahniyat-nāma* or *mubārakbād* in Persian literature and its Turkish equivalent (*tehniye*, *tehniyet-nāme*, *tebrik*) is most often applied to remarks by a poet or author to his patron, his children and colleagues, etc., and commonly indicates a congratulation testament. In a particular sense it may be applied as a type of literature which contains congratulations for birth, circumcision, and marriage. Some marriage *tahniyat-nāmas* (both in Persian and Turkish) set a similar scene to what Idrīs composed for the first marriage of Mehmed II,<sup>7</sup> but we may include some elements in the following *tahniyat-nāma* which contain no parallel lines elsewhere. With his eccentric understanding of Persian language and appropriate elegance and wit, Idrīs created a very romantic image of Mehmed II's marriage. By exaggerating the use of rhetorical devices, especially imagery and metaphors, he proved this marriage to be somewhat superhuman.

Towards the end of the life of Idrīs (in the early sixteenth-century) there were several other *tahniyat-nāmas*. The congratulatory and wedding poems and especially verse descriptions of religious and secular feasts were other similar and earlier manifestations of what Idrīs produced in his work. Indeed the list of Idrīs' rich repertoire of images is deduced from the sixteenth-century, fifteenth-century, and earlier Persian literary tradition.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to rhetoric and rhyme, Idrīs had extensively mastered several other authorities such as history, theology, and astronomy. This knowledge enabled him to make his poetry stronger by drawing on conceptions taken from this vast knowledge. However, the *tahniyat-nāma* is mainly based on the social context of Persian poetic imagery in which

<sup>6</sup> For the life and reign of Mehmed the Conqueror who ruled from 1444 to 1446, and then later from 1451 to 1481, see Tursun Beg, *Tāriḥ-i Ebū'l-Feth*, Istanbul 1977.

<sup>7</sup> For both Persian and Turkish instances, see Muḥammad 'Ālī Širāzī, *Mağmū'a*, Tashkent, Uzbek Academy of Sciences Oriental Library (al-Beruni), MS 334/4, fols.251r.-259r.; Anonymous, *Muntaḥab Dustūr al-Inšā'*, Hyderabad, Urdu Manuscript Library, 1123/1598, fol.342v.; Muhammed Nergisi, *Munšeāt*, Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Revan Köşkü, MS 1056, fol.74r.; and Abdülaziz Bey, *Osmanlı Âdet Merasim ve Tabirleri*, ed. Kazım Arısan and Duygu Arısan Günay, Istanbul 2000, pp. 271ff.

<sup>8</sup> If we consider the *dīvāns* of Persian poetry, we can clearly see their influence on Idrīs and his *tahniyat* poetry. See for instance 'Unşurī Balḫī, *Dīvān*, ed. M. Dabīr Sīyāqī, Tehran 1963, p. 180; Abū l-Farağ Rūnī, *Dīvān*, ed. M. Mahdavi Dāmḡānī, Mašhad 1968, p. 30; and 'Alī Anvarī Abīvirdī, *Dīvān*, ed. M.T. Mudarris Raḍavī, Tehran 1997, p. 9.

‘feasting’ is primarily associated with the life at court<sup>9</sup>. Of the various court issues, feasts and especially weddings were the main topic of imagery for Persian poets. They were celebrated as gatherings with music, dancing, and drinking. In Persian classical poetry, feasts are celebrated with some motifs, such as wine, the cup, the candle, the fire, the cupbearer... etc. In Idrīs’ *tahniyat-nāma* its wedding and erotic connotations are exactly highlighted with the same motifs and imageries.<sup>10</sup>

With regard to the much-mentioned words and terms from verse Persian romances, we should remark that Idrīs was given the task of interpreting this *tahniyat-nāma* as a reference to a love story in which the lovers were faced with several barriers including erotic, psychological, and moral. This *tahniyat-nāma* should not be read as history. Rather, it is a panegyric statement made in connection with Idrīs’ techniques of transmitting *history*.<sup>11</sup> In doing so, he changed a ‘reality’ from the historical past to a romantic narrative.<sup>12</sup>

As a romantic contribution to the Ottoman sultanate, the *tahniyat-nāma* also constitutes an intriguing issue. Many Persian love stories are deeply connected with the ethics of caliphate and the moral qualities of the sultan, whose personal conduct reflects his capability to rule. According to Islamic tradition, Muslim caliphs and sultans claimed to be the Shadow of God, Vicegerent of God on earth, or descendants of the Prophet. Hence, this metaphor is mentioned in Idrīs’ *tahniyat-nāma* to denote physical and spiritual abilities of his Ottoman patrons which make them both perfect man and perfect sultan.<sup>13</sup>

We may now turn to the historical facts concerning the first marriage of Mehmed II. The central report in Idrīs’ *Hašt Bihīšt* VI derives certainly from an earlier Ottoman Turkish chronicle but he does not specify its sources. A sincere interest in the marriage as Prophet’s tradition, combined with many sophisticate Arabic *ḥadīṡ*s and Persian poems, resulted

<sup>9</sup> It should be highlighted that Idrīs played a significant literary, political, and historiographical role at the Aqquyunlu and Ottoman courts. For this genre, see Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, Princeton 1987; Naṣr Allāh Imāmī & Fāṭima Šādiqi Naqd ‘Ulyā, ‘Barrasī-yi Zamīnahā-yi Siyāsī va Iḡtimā’ī-yi Šī’r-i Fārsī dar Qarn-i Dahum-i Hiḡrī’, *Maḡalla-yi Tārīḫ-i Adabīyāt* 67 (2010), pp. 27–47.

<sup>10</sup> See William L. Hanaway, ‘Paradise on Earth: The Terrestrial Garden in Persian Literature’, in: *The Islamic Garden*, eds. E.B. MacDougall and R. Ettinghausen, Washington, D.C. 1976, pp. 41–67; Maḥdīs Zūrūvarz et al., ‘Isti’ārahā-yi Maḥmūmī-yi Šādī dar Zabān-i Fārsī’, *Zabānšīnāsī va Ġuyīšhā-yi Ḥurāsān* 19 (2013), pp. 49–72; and Zahrā Šāliḫī Sādātī, ‘Ġašn-i ‘Arūsī va Ādāb-i Ān dar Aš‘ār-i Fārsī bā Tikya bar Manzūma-yi Viys u Rāmīn’, *Funūn-i Adabī* 26 (2019), pp. 35–48.

<sup>11</sup> For Idrīs, history is a preeminent literary science in which poetical and rhetorical narratives are very important. See Idrīs Ibn Ḥuṣām ad-Dīn Bidlīsī, *Hašt Bihīšt*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Nuruosmaniye 3209, fol.11v.; and Anonymous, *Faṭḥ al-Bāb*, Tehran, Kitābhāna-yi Maḡlis, MS 5333/6, fol.1r. The folio is entitled as *naql min Hašt Bihīšt min ta’līfāt-i Idrīs Ibn Ḥuṣām al-Dīn Bidlīsī*.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on classical and early modern Persian verse romances, see Michael Zand, ‘What is the Tress Like? Notes on a Group of Standard Persian Metaphors’, in: *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon, Jerusalem 1977, pp. 463–479; Muḥammad Mīr & Zahrā Kīčī, ‘Ġilva-yi Ma’šūq dar Ā’ina-yi Šī’r-i Vaḡšī Bāfqī’, *Pažūhīš-nāma-yi Adab-i Ġanā’ī* 23 (2014), pp. 245–262; and Kīš, Omīd Dākīrī, ‘Taḥlīl-i Vaḡḥhā-yi Ġanā’ī dar Dāstānhā-yi ‘Āšīqāna (Bā Tikya bar Ḥuṣraw va Šīrīn va Laylī va Maḡnūn-i Niẓāmī)’, *Matn Pažūhī-yi Adabī* 78 (2018), pp. 247–272.

<sup>13</sup> See Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, pp. 86–111, 183–192; Meisami, ‘The Body as Garden: Nature and Sexuality in Persian Poetry’, *Edebiyāt* 6 (1995), pp. 264ff.

only in the preservation of some minor historical details, even though they are the same given in previous Ottoman chronicles.

Before presenting his exclusive literary reflection on Mehmed II's marriage, the *tahniyat-nāma*, Idrīs indicates the strong desire of Murād II to make Mehmed a married prince.<sup>14</sup> With the encouragement and help of a grand vizier, Ḥalīl Pasha, Sultan's choice fell on the most beautiful daughter of Suleimān Beg, the sixth ruler of the Turkoman Ḍulqadirid principality, ruling from 1442 to 1454.<sup>15</sup> In other sources we learn of her identity, although here her name, dating, and other details are not mentioned. In brief, the wife of Ḥiḍr Pasha, the governor of Amasya, and a number of other women were sent to Elbistan to bring the chosen bride, named Sitti Mükrimē Hatun or Sittiṣāh Hatun (c. 1435–1484), home. The wedding took place on 15 December 1449 at Edirne and was celebrated with a great pomp for three months. Apparently, the marriage was a childless one.<sup>16</sup>

It seems that we can go some steps further and identify all these data in *Hašt Bihišt* VI. There are, however, no clear and direct references to the names and events here. The key to the importance of Idrīs' report is his emphasis on the political interests of Murād II and the present marriage as a link between Ottomans and Ḍulqadirids. The case of a Ḍulqadir woman marrying an Ottoman prince is of some interest, since, as she was of noble extraction, this pattern of marriage was aimed at forming a solid link between her principality and Ottoman Empire. In addition, the relations with Elbistan were of major importance because of some Mamluk propaganda against Murād II.

We are not aware of the precise role of Sitti Hatun at the Ottoman harem of the fifteenth-century, but based on some general conclusions and fascinating studies on the women of the royal Ottoman court, we are able to guess that she played some personal and secondary political roles behind the scenes. According to Idrīs, this marriage was primarily a political marriage by which one may conclude that the daughter of Ḍulqadir ruler exercised a degree of legitimate political power, both behind the scenes and during public rituals. But it is unlikely that her role was very important in the Ottoman court. If it is true that she was not able to give birth to a child, it is evident that this issue also had a great negative effect on her influence.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For Idrīs' report on the marriage of Mehmed II as an introduction to his *tahniyat-nāma*, see Idrīs Ibn Ḥusām al-Dīn Bidlīsī, *Hašt Bihišt*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi 2199, fol.364r. ff.

<sup>15</sup> For Suleimān Beg and the Ḍulqadirids as one of the most successful of the Anatolian Turkoman dynasties, see Refet Yinanç, *Dulkadir Beyliği*, Ankara 1989, pp. 9ff.; Margaret L. Venzke, 'The Case of a Dulgadir-Mamluk Iqtā': A Re-Assessment of the Dulgadir Principality and Its Position within the Ottoman-Mamluk Rivalry', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 43,3 (2000), pp. 399–474.

<sup>16</sup> For these, see Franz Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit: Weltstürmer einer Zeitenwende*, München 1959, pp. 60ff., 499; Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Bu Mülkün Kadın Sultanları: Vâlide Sultanlar, Hâtuñlar, Hasekiler, Kadınefendiler, Sultanefendiler*, Istanbul 2008, p. 151; Mustafa Çağatay Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları*, Ankara 2011, p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> For comparison and wider Ottoman strategies of princely marriages, see Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, New York 1993.

## Text<sup>18</sup>

Apart from the manuscripts which contain the incomplete books of *Hašt Bihīšt*, the history in its entire form has been copied several times.<sup>19</sup> Idrīs completed the history in a short period of about thirty months. The base manuscript in this edition is the autograph manuscript Esad Efendi 2199 (hereafter EE 2199) which Idrīs produced as his draft copy in 1506.<sup>20</sup> Although this very important autograph, including many corrections and marginal comments, works well most of the time, it sometimes does not work as effectively as it should.

Particularly valuable for the *tahniyat-nāma*'s edition is a second autograph manuscript, Nuruosmaniye 3209 (hereafter N 3209), which I have used as the most important variant text, dated 1513–1514. There are some gentle controversial opinions about the autograph N 3209. Accordingly, the manuscript is written in several different styles of handwriting. It is, however, accepted that the manuscript's conclusion is written by Idrīs' hand with a colophon signed by him.<sup>21</sup>

The reader here is also provided with Hazine 1655 (hereafter H 1655) as another variant text which is dated 1513 in the colophon but it seems that the manuscript was produced in 1520 or later during the reign of Süleymān (r. 1520–1566).<sup>22</sup>

The last variant text used in the following edition is Tabriz 1874 (hereafter T 1874), copied in 1560. Apart from a very brief study of its colophon, individual characters of this important manuscript have not yet been mentioned systematically.<sup>23</sup> Here is the reading:

### *tahniyat-nāma*<sup>24</sup>

1. *mubārak bād īn bazm-i humāyūn*
2. *ka šud šam 'aš furūg-i čašm-i gardūn*
  
3. *šabī čun ūrra-yi Laylī dilāvīz*
4. *čirāgāš gām-i vašl-i 'išrat-angīz*

<sup>18</sup> For the whole poem in the original Persian see: Bidlīsī, *Hašt Bihīšt*, fol.367v.

<sup>19</sup> See Felix Tauer, 'Les manuscrits persans historique des bibliothèques de Stanboul, IV', *Archiv Orientalní* 4 (1932), pp. 92–107.

<sup>20</sup> See Koji Imazawa, 'İdris Bitlisi'nin Heşt Bihīšt'inin İki Tip Nüşhası Üzerine Bir İnceleme', *Belleten* 69 (2005), pp. 859–896; Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam*, p. 398.

<sup>21</sup> See Mehrdad Fallahzadeh, 'The Eight Paradises (the Hasht Bihīšt) and the Question of the Existence of Its Autographs', *Der Islam* 91,2 (2014), pp. 287–288.

<sup>22</sup> Details in Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam*, p. 399.

<sup>23</sup> See Mīr Waddūd Sayyid Yūnisī, *Fihrist-i Nuṣṣahā-yi Ḥaṭṭī-yi Kitābhāna-yi Markazī-yi Tabrīz*, Tabriz 2014, pp. ii, y.

<sup>24</sup> Missing in H 1655.

5. *šud ān šab čarḥ raqšān bā kavā ‘ib*<sup>25</sup>  
 6. *hazārān šam ‘ dar dast-i kavākib*
7. *sipihr afrūht ān šab gird-i bāgaš*  
 8. *ba ḡā-yi šam ‘ durr-i šab čirāgaš*
9. *ḡavānān-i čaman*<sup>26</sup> *čun šam ‘-i anvar*  
 10. *hama fānūs-i āl az lāla bar sar*
11. *šabī Laylī-šifat turra gušāda*  
 12. *ču ṭāvūsī ba-yaksū*<sup>27</sup> *ḡilva dāda*
13. *kašīda duḡtar-i raz parda bar rūy*  
 14. *ču sāḡar lik*<sup>28</sup> *hamdam gašta*<sup>29</sup> *bā šūy*
15. *fuzūda rawšanī dar māh u ḡuršīd*  
 16. *ka ruḡ binmūd*<sup>30</sup> *šāh*<sup>31</sup> *az ḡām-i Ġamšīd*
17. *šuda ḡusn āyina nāzir Sikandar*  
 18. *ba dastaš āyina az ḡusn-i manzar*
19. *‘arūs-i ḡunča-vaš dar ḡilva-sāzī*  
 20. *darūn-i parda karda dil-navāzī*
21. *darūn-i*<sup>32</sup> *ḡiḡla-yi ālī ču fānūs*  
 22. *čirāḡī ḡilvagar mānand-i ṭāvūs*
23. *falak burd az šafaq ān šām iqbāl*  
 24. *‘arūsī rā darūn-i ḡiḡla-yi āl*
25. *ufuq rā az šafaq zān šādmānī*  
 26. *‘arūsak rusta dar bāḡ-i amānī*

<sup>25</sup> EE 2199 كواكب. Based on N 3209, H 1655, and T 1874.

<sup>26</sup> If we choose EE 2199, that is جمع, this hemistich will be one syllable short, metrically. The edition is based on N 3209 and H 1655 چمن; T 1874 چمن.

<sup>27</sup> EE 2199 بيكسو. The base text seems to be one syllable short and needs to be *ba-yaksū* as suggested in H 1655 بيكسو and T 1874 بيكسو.

<sup>28</sup> This is the short form of *likan/lēkan*.

<sup>29</sup> T 1874 كشت.

<sup>30</sup> H 1655 بنموده.

<sup>31</sup> N 3209 and T 1874 شام.

<sup>32</sup> N 3209 بديرون.

27. *mah-i*<sup>33</sup> *šām-i* ‘*arūsī hāla basta*  
 28. *darūn-i* *killā šab māhī nišasta*
29. *ba bustān-i* ‘*arūsī gul šikufta*  
 30. *taḍarvī dar mīyān-i lāla hufta*
31. *ba gird-i ġunča az gul hiġla-yi nāz*  
 32. *darūn-i lāla žāla gašta gammāz*
33. *ba šām-i vašl*<sup>34</sup> *šāh az baht-i bīdār*  
 34. *šuda hamḥ*<sup>w</sup> *āba bā yār-i vafādār*
35. *nahāda rūbarū*<sup>r</sup> *ḥamčū mir’āt*  
 36. *šab-i vašlaš* ‘*iyān māhī zi zulmāt*
37. *zi vašl-i yār u maḥbūb-i dilārām*  
 38. *dil-i Husraw u*<sup>36</sup> *Šīrīn gašta huḍkām*
39. *ču rūy u*<sup>37</sup> *āyina dar ham miṭālī*  
 40. *ba dilbar gašta šah rā ittišālī*
41. *kašīda gulbunī dar bar šabā-vaš*  
 42. *šikufta ġunča rā yād-i havāyaš*
43. *šabā-sān dar liḥāf-i gul šuda šāh*  
 44. *šikufta ġunča-yi sīmīn saḥargāh*
45. *ču ġūy-i šakkarīn dar ġūy-i šīrīn*  
 46. *hamī amīht ān Husraw ba Šīrīn*<sup>38</sup>
47. *darūn-i gul gulābī*<sup>39</sup> *gašta sārī*  
 48. *ba pā-yi sarv ġū*<sup>r</sup> *ī kardā*<sup>40</sup> *ġārī*

<sup>33</sup> EE 2199 مہ بھی N 3209, H 1655, T 1874.

<sup>34</sup> N 3209, H 1655, T 1874 تخت.

<sup>35</sup> Based on N 3209 and T 1874. EE 2199 روی بر روی H 1655 پروبروتی.

<sup>36</sup> H 1655 and T 1874 ز.

<sup>37</sup> Missing in T 1874.

<sup>38</sup> Based on N 3209, H 1655, and T 1874. EE 2199 وشیرین.

<sup>39</sup> Based on N 3209, H 1655, and T 1874. EE 2199 کلامی.

<sup>40</sup> N 3209, H 1655, and T 1874 کشته.



49. *bulūrīn kāsa-yi dildār-i šīrīn*  
 50. *ba ġām-i ‘ayš-i ḥusraw gašta rangīn*
51. *hayūlā-yi ḥilāfat būd dāmād*  
 52. *ba ḥusn-i šūratī ham ġuft uftād*
53. *Sulaymān-vār Bilqīsī dar āġūš*  
 54. *zi ḥusnaš ins u ġin<sup>41</sup> ḥayrān u madhūš*
55. *‘arūs-i šāhī u mulk-i Sulaymān<sup>42</sup>*  
 56. *šuda dāmād šāh-i mulk-i ihsān*
57. *ġavānbaht-i zamān Sulṭān Muḥammad*  
 58. *murādaš ḥāšil az baht-i<sup>43</sup> mu ‘ayyad*

### Translation

Faithfulness and equivalence are two issues that gained my attention in the following translation. It has always been presumed that a faithful translation is the one that could achieve equivalence at its maximum level. As equivalence sometimes does not mean sameness (it rather means achieving the least dissimilarity), my translation is also based on Idrīs’ target. In addition to providing some contextual information, a simple method is used. The original text contains some expressions that create a strong cultural atmosphere of the marriage ceremony. These expressions are mainly translated literally to present the meanings. Where it is possible, however, a somewhat simplified translation (with great fidelity to the language and feelings of Idrīs) is produced.

#### Book of Congratulations

1. May this auspicious celebration be blessed
2. whose candle<sup>44</sup> became the twinkle of the heavens’ eyes

<sup>41</sup> Technically, for the meter, we need to read *ġinn* here without *šadda* (i.e., *ġin*).

<sup>42</sup> N 3209, H 1655, T 1874 عروس سلطنت ملک سلیمان.

<sup>43</sup> Based on N 3209 and T 1874. EE 2199 تخت.

<sup>44</sup> The candle (*šam*) is one of the favourite standard metaphors in Persian poetry. What Idrīs referred to hear is the light of the candle which is symbolic of physical beauty and, on another level, of spiritual radiance. See A.A. Seyed-Gohrab, ‘Waxing Eloquent: The Masterful Variations on Candle Metaphors in the Poetry of Ḥāfiẓ and his Predecessors’, in: *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry*, ed. Ali Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, Leiden 2011, pp. 81–123.

3. Charming like the locks<sup>45</sup> of Laylī<sup>46</sup>
4. Its lamp<sup>47</sup> is the cup of pleasurable union
5. That night the [celestial] sphere danced with swollen-breasted young women<sup>48</sup>
6. [There were] thousands of candles in the hands of the stars
7. That night the heavens lit up around his garden
8. His lamp, instead of a candle, was the pearl<sup>49</sup> of night
9. The young plants in the garden were like bright<sup>50</sup> candles
10. All had a red lantern<sup>51</sup> of tulip on their heads
11. A night like Laylī with hair let loose
12. Like a peacock that has shown itself in a corner<sup>52</sup>
13. The daughter of the vine [i.e. wine]<sup>53</sup> covered her face with a veil
14. [It is] like a cup of wine which is accompanied by her husband
15. It has increased the brightness of the moon and the sun
16. That [means] the king showed his face from the Cup of Ğamšīd<sup>54</sup>

<sup>45</sup> The word *turra* is a widely used terminology in Persian literature which denotes different symbolic meanings, especially the darkness and difficulty in Sufi's path to God. See Hiydar Qulizāda, 'Zulf va Ta'ābīr-i 'Ārifāna va 'Āšiqāna-yi Ān dar Ši'r-i Fārsī', *Našriya-yi Dāniškada-yi Adabīyāt va 'Ulūm-i Insānī-yi Dānišgāh-i Tabrīz* 192 (2004), pp. 149–195.

<sup>46</sup> This refers to the story of Laylī and Mağnūn, the classic love tale of the Middle East which is also prized by Sufi mystics as a profound spiritual allegory of the soul's search for and ultimate union with God.

<sup>47</sup> This stands for *čirāğ* which has a symbolic nature in Persian literature. It is normally the symbol of the guide and mentor. See Sayed Noor Mohammad Abedi, 'Symbolism in Biddle Poetry', *International Journal of Advanced Academic Studies* 3,1 (2021), p. 455.

<sup>48</sup> The 'very young women' stands for *kavā'ib* (pl. of *ka'ib*) which literally means women whose breasts have just come out (Pr. *nār-pistān*) and who have recently reached sexual maturity. Maybe we are here supposed to think of round celestial bodies as being similar to round breasts.

<sup>49</sup> There is a rich body of symbolic, metaphorical and realistic references to pearl in Persian poetry. The term *durr*, *murvārīd*, *lu'lu'*, and *marğān* were frequently cited in Persian literature to symbolize the beauty, perfection, and purity. See Mohammad Mokri, 'Le symbole de la perle dans le folklore persan et chez les Kurdes fidèles de Vérité (Ahl-e Haqq)', *Journal Asiatique* 248–249 (1960/1961), pp. 463–481; I. Gershevitch, 'Margarites the Pearl', in: *Études irano-aryennes offertes à Gilbert Lazard (Studia Iranica, Cahier 7)*, Paris 1989, pp. 113–136.

<sup>50</sup> Lit. 'brighter'.

<sup>51</sup> *fānūs* 'lantern' is mainly the symbol of truth. See Hamīd 'Abdullāhīyān and A'zam 'Abdullāhīyān, *Fānūs-i Sihrangīz-i Hīyāl. Ri'ālism-i Ğādū'ī dar Adabīyāt*, Tehran 2021.

<sup>52</sup> This is probably a reference to how a peacock opens its plumage in one direction, i.e., as the beautiful night sky shows its adornment to the earth below.

<sup>53</sup> This stands for *duhtar-i raz*, lit. 'the daughter of vine', i.e. 'wine'.

17. [His] beauty is like a mirror<sup>55</sup> that looks at Alexander the Great<sup>56</sup>  
 18. He is holding a mirror because of the beauty of his face
19. A bride [which is] like a bud in appearance [for the nuptials]  
 20. Behind the curtain of the bridal chamber
21. Inside a chamber<sup>57</sup> as red as a lantern  
 22. A shining lamp as ornamented as a peacock
23. In that evening, the [celestial] sphere took the luck away from  
 [the redness of] twilight  
 24. To a bride at the inside of the red room<sup>58</sup>
25. From that happiness [of the wedding], on the horizon at twilight  
 26. A very beautiful woman has grown in the garden of dreams
27. The moon of the wedding's evening has a ring of light  
 28. Inside the room<sup>59</sup>, [a woman like] a moon is sitting
29. The rose<sup>60</sup> bloomed in the bridal orchard  
 30. A cock pheasant slept among the tulips<sup>61</sup>

<sup>54</sup> This has to do with a reflection appearing in the Cup of Ğamšīd, due to the aforementioned brightness of the moon and sun. The Cup of Ğamšīd is a cup of divination, which in Iranian mythology was long possessed by the rulers of ancient Iran. Its name is associated with Ğamšīd or Ğam, a mythological figure of Iranian tradition who, according to tradition, discovered wine. Details in Zipoli, 'Poetic Imagery', in: *A History of Persian Literature I, General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn, London & New York 2009, p. 208.

<sup>55</sup> One of the symbolic and thematic words in Persian poetry is *āyina* 'mirror'. It is normally used by its real meaning, however with the prevalence of Sufi beliefs. The word also refers to the heart and inner spirituality of the person and the beloved face. Here, Idrīs has actually compared the positive face and fame of Prince Mehmed to Alexander the Great. Riccardo Zipoli, *Ā'ina dar Ši'r-i Farruḡī, Sa'dī va Ḥāfiẓ*, Tehran 1988, pp. 1–77; Tāhira Haqqarast, 'Āyina va Āyina-dārī dar Adab-i Fārsī', *Rušd-i Āmūziš-i Zabān va Adab-i Fārsī* 97 (2011), pp. 22–25.

<sup>56</sup> Both reading and translation of this hemistich are doubtful. Alexander the Great, the Macedonian conqueror of Iran, was adopted by the Persian literary tradition through the Alexander romance (based on Pseudo-Callisthenes's account), in which Alexander was transformed from a foreign conqueror into a scion of the Kayanid King Dārā the Elder and a positive hero as mentioned by Idrīs. For more information, see Zipoli, 'Poetic Imagery', pp. 220–221.

<sup>57</sup> This stands for *hiġla* (also known as *hiġla-ḥāna*, *hiġla gāh*, *zafāf-ḥāna*) which is a room where the bride and groom spend their first wedding night. For details, see Sayyid Muḥammad Kāzim Mūsavī Buġnūrdī, *Dānišnāma-yi Farhang-i Mardum-i Īrān*, Tehran 2014–, s.v. '*hiġla-yi 'arūs*'.

<sup>58</sup> This is possibly a reference to the *iqbāl* that *falak* took from *šafaq* that evening was given to the bride.

<sup>59</sup> This stands for *killa* which is a classical word for *hiġla*. Idrīs has used both words for the same meaning. For *killa*, see for instance Marzbān Ibn Rustam, *Marzbān-nāma, Tarġuma-yi Sa'd al-Dīn Varāvīnī*, ed. Ḥ.Ḥ. Rahbar, Tehran 1984, p. 185.

<sup>60</sup> This stands for *gul* (-i *surh*) which is the typical image for the beloved's cheeks, wine, blood, gem, and fire. The rose sometimes represents infidelity because of its ephemeral life. Details in Zipoli, 'Poetic Imagery', p. 188.

31. A cute room is made of flowers around the bud  
 32. The dew inside the tulip [of the bride] divulged her secret<sup>62</sup>
33. On the evening of the marriage, because of his wide-awake fortune<sup>63</sup>,  
 the king  
 34. has slept with [his] loyal beloved
35. Like a mirror placed in front of him<sup>64</sup>  
 36. The night of his marriage is clear as the moon from darkness
37. Because of the marriage of beloved and enchanting lover  
 38. The hearts of Ḥusraw and Šīrīn<sup>65</sup> were satisfied
39. [The two were] intertwined like a face and a mirror  
 40. The king became linked<sup>66</sup> to his beloved
41. He took in his arms the rose bush like a gentle breeze  
 42. The now-blossomed bud remembered his love<sup>67</sup>
43. The king has entered the quilt of flower like a gentle breeze  
 44. The white bud has blossomed at dawn<sup>68</sup>
45. Like a sugar brook in a sweet brook  
 46. That Ḥusraw mixed with Šīrīn [like streams flowing together]
47. Rosewater flowed into the rose<sup>69</sup>  
 48. As if to make a stream at the foot of a cypress

<sup>61</sup> This stands for the term *lāla*. It had originally the general meaning of a poppy-like wild spring flower but later it was specifically associated with the tulip. Because of its red color, it is mentioned by Persian poets in association with the beloved's cheeks or lips, fire, ruby, wine, blood, and coral. See Zipoli, 'Poetic Imagery', p. 190. It should be here added that the imagery of the poem becomes more and more sexual from this hemistich on.

<sup>62</sup> That is, it became clear that the bride's body was ready for consummation.

<sup>63</sup> This stands for *baḥt-i bīdār* which is a typical Persian idiom, meaning good fortune in contrast to *baḥt-i hufta* 'sleeping luck', that is ill-fortune. See Buḡnūrī Mūsavī, *Dānišnāma-yi Farhang-i Mardum-i Īrān*, s.v. 'baḥt'.

<sup>64</sup> It seems that Idrīs is trying to say here that were husband and wife facing one another like a mirror image.

<sup>65</sup> This refers to the first of Niẓāmī's romantic epics. It portrays the romance between the last great Sasanian king, Ḥusraw II (590–628), and his mistress Shīrīn.

<sup>66</sup> This stands for *ittiṣāl* which is the final stage of the mystic's journey. Idrīs' terminology of union enables a symbolism of how Prince Mehmed's soul undergoes a process of universalization by his marriage becoming one with the divine Nous. See Sumayyah Ḥādīmī and Muḥammad S. Mulā'ī, 'Fanā va Baqā va Ittiḥād va Ittiṣāl dar Dīvān-i Bīdil-i Dihlavī', *Adabīyāt-i Īrfānī* 8 (2013), pp. 65–92.

<sup>67</sup> That is, when the king embraced his no-longer-virginal wife, she was reminded of their consummation.

<sup>68</sup> It is hard to say that what is this line supposed to imply. That they made love again at dawn?

<sup>69</sup> This could be a reference to ejaculation.

49. The crystal bowl of the sweet beloved  
 50. Colored by the cup of the king's pleasure
51. The bridegroom was the Matter<sup>70</sup> of the caliphate  
 52. [who] mated with the beauty of a Form
53. Like Solomon, he held a Bilqīs (i.e. the Queen of Sheba)<sup>71</sup> in his arms  
 54. The human beings and jinns were amazed by her beauty
55. The royal bride and the kingdom of Solomon  
 56. The ruler of the kingdom of munificence became the bridegroom
57. The lucky of the age, Sultan Mehmed  
 58. Because of the good luck<sup>72</sup>, he acquired his wish

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<sup>70</sup> *hayūlā* is a technical term taken from the Greek “matter” as opposed to “form”, *šūra*, or more precisely “primary matter” in the philosophical sense.

<sup>71</sup> In Persian literature, Solomon is celebrated for his extraordinary powers. Thanks to his magic seal, he commanded the winds, men, beasts, demons, and jinns. An element connected with Solomon is Bilqays, the Queen of Sheba, whom he conquered and converted. See Zipoli, ‘Poetic Imagery’, p. 224.

<sup>72</sup> This stands for *baht-i mu‘ayyad*, lit. ‘the luck that keeps him steady’.

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