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“The West of the Orient”: The Depiction of the Ottoman Capital in Persian *Hajj* Travelogues

Introduction

Comparing modernization processes in the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Empire, and assuming a similar pattern of development for these two empires are very common in historical and cultural studies.¹ During the second half of the nineteenth century, the period covered by the corpus considered in the present study, the two empires were struggling against the threat from European states and putting all their efforts into technical improvements and political transformation, as they both faced military, economic, and political pressure. This was the direct result of the adaptation and replication of modern Western models within these societies. The more contacts they had with Western civilization, the more they experienced an irrevocable transformation at home. However, the Ottoman Empire surpassed Iran in terms of the time and intensity of their connection with Europe. In most cases, it was an important channel for the transfer of Western ideas and innovations and served for a long time as a gateway to Europe.²

The contact of these two empires with Europe intensified through travel during the nineteenth century. As a result, recording this new type of impression in the form of travelogues (called *siyāḥatnāma* in Turkish and *safarnāma* in Persian) became very popular, especially in the latter half of the century. For Persian literature, the Qajar era is considered the most prolific period with regard to trav-

¹ For some representative works see Nader Sohrabi, *Revolutions and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (Cambridge 2011); Hamid Algar, *Mirza Malkum Khan: A Study in the History of Iranian Modernism* (Berkeley 1973); Fariba Zarinebaf, *From Istanbul to Tabriz: Modernity and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran*, in *Comparative Studies of South Asia and the Middle East* 28/1 (2008), pp. 154–169; Anja Pistor-Hatam, *Iran and the Reform Movement in the Ottoman Empire: Persian Travellers, Exiles, Newsmen under the Impact of the Tanzimat*, in Bert Fragner et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second European Conference of Iranian Studies* (Rome 1995), pp. 561–588.

² Abbas Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe: Nasir Al-Din Shah Qajar and the Iranian Monarchy, 1831–1896* (Berkeley 1997), pp. 13–15.

el accounts.³ Most of the Qajar travelogues narrate journeys to Western Europe in the interests of diplomacy and study, and later for pleasure. There are also a relatively small number of Iranians who visited Russia for the same purposes and recorded their journeys. The authors of these travel accounts were mainly shahs and eminent members of the Qajar dynasty, mostly statesmen, envoys, scholars, and students. They recorded not only their explorations abroad but also comparisons of their experiences to realities in their own country.⁴ It must be noted that an important number of travelogues composed during the Qajar era is related to journeys undertaken for pilgrimage.⁵

Although studies on travel writing have become a fruitful research field in recent decades, scholarly interest has overwhelmingly focused on European travelers within Europe or to the “Orient.” A relatively smaller number have focused on travel accounts written by non-Europeans who visited the West.⁶ At the same time, travels within the Orient in the early modern period have remained funda-

3 Iraj Afshar, *Persian Travelogues: A Description and Bibliography*, in Elton L. Daniel (ed.), *Society and Culture in Persian Iran: Studies in Honor of Hafez Farmayan* (Costa Mesa, Calif. 2002), pp. 145–162, here p. 150.

4 Hafez Farman Farmayan, *The Forces of Modernization in Nineteenth Century Iran: A Historical Survey*, in William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* (Chicago 1968), pp. 119–151, here pp. 133–135.

5 Afshar, *Persian Travelogues*, p. 150. For a general list of pilgrimage travelogues including those written during the Qajar era see Abāzar Naşr İşfahānī, *Fihristwāra-i safarnāma-hā wa khāṭirāt-i ḥajj-i irāniyān* (The Catalogue of Pilgrimage Travelogues and Memoirs of Iranians), in *Kitāb-shināsi-i Mauzūʿī* 25/4 (September–November 2014), pp. 79–103. Thanks to Rasul Jaʿfarian’s scholarly efforts, Persian pilgrimage travelogues from the Qajar era have been published in an anthology of nine volumes. The first eight volumes contain fifty texts, some of which were published separately before; the last volume consists of fourteen texts. Rasul Jaʿfarian (ed.), *Safarnāmahā-yi Ḥajj-i Qājāri* (Pilgrimage Travelogues of the Qajar Period) (8 vols., Tehran 2011); Rasul Jaʿfarian (ed.), *Chahārdah Safarnāma-i Ḥajj-i Qājāri-i digar* (Another Fourteen Pilgrimage Travelogues of the Qajar Period) (Tehran 2013).

6 Here is a selection from an expanding literature on Persian travelogues: Iraj Afshar, *Persian Travelogues*; Hamid Dabashi, *Reversing the Colonial Gaze: Persian Travelers Abroad* (Cambridge 2020); Nile Green, *The Love of Strangers: What Six Muslim Students Learned in Jane Austen’s London* (Princeton 2016); William L. Hanaway, *Persian Travel Narratives: Notes towards the Definition of a Nineteenth-Century Genre*, in Elton L. Daniel (ed.), *Society and Culture in Persian Iran: Studies in Honor of Hafez Farmayan* (Costa Mesa, Calif. 2002), pp. 249–268; Monica M. Ringer, *The Quest for the Secret of Strength in Iranian Nineteenth-Century Travel Literature: Rethinking Tradition in the Safarnameh*, in Nikki R. Keddie and Rudi Matthee (eds.), *Iran and the Surrounding World: Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics* (Seattle 2002), pp. 146–161; Naghmeh Sohrabi, *Taken for Wonder: Nineteenth-Century Travel Accounts from Iran to Europe* (Oxford 2012).

mentally unaddressed.⁷ Likewise, pilgrimage travelogues written by Muslims have been mostly neglected in the field.⁸ Thus, the present study, which focuses on three travel accounts, aims primarily to contribute to the burgeoning study of pilgrimage travelogues by drawing attention to Persian *hajj* narratives as a pre-eminent source for analyzing perceptions of otherness and encounters within the “Orient.”

1 Persian pilgrims in the Ottoman Lands

We begin the examination of the body of travel narratives in question with a general overview of Persian pilgrims in Ottoman lands. The Persian and Ottoman Empires had a long history of interaction involving diplomacy, trade, military aggression, and invasion. Although the borders between the Persian and the Ottoman Empires continued to be the main controversial issue during that period, there was also an increase in commercial and human exchanges between the two countries. Besides the merchants and political exiles who settled down mostly in Istanbul, there was an increase in the volume of the Persian pilgrimage traffic through Ottoman lands.

Throughout centuries, Persians used four main routes for pilgrimage, all of which partially crossed over the Ottoman lands: the mountain route (through Atabat cities in Ottoman Iraq), the Damascus route (the Syrian caravan route), the sea route (through the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea), and the Istanbul

7 For a valuable exception see Muzaffar Alam-Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800* (Cambridge 2007). A collection of essays on internal travel within the Muslim world was also published by Roberta Micallef-Sunil Sharma (ed.), *On the Wonders of Land and Sea: Persianate Travel Writing* (Cambridge 2013).

8 Over the past decades, much space has been devoted to pilgrimage travelogues and their analysis: Menderes Coşkun, *Ottoman Pilgrimage Narratives and Nabi's Tuhfetü'l-Haremeyn* (PhD thesis, University of Durham 1999); Michael Wolfe (ed.), *One Thousand Roads to Mecca: Ten Centuries of Travelers Writing about the Muslim Pilgrimage*, updated and expanded edition (New York 2015). For a survey of pilgrimage travelogues from the Qajar era see Elton L. Daniel, *The Hajj and Qajar travel literature*, in Elton L. Daniel (ed.), *Society and Culture in Persian Iran: Studies in Honor of Hafez Farmayan* (Costa Mesa, Calif. 2002), pp. 215–237. See also Amineh Mahallati, *Women as Pilgrims: Memoirs of Iranian Women Travelers to Mecca*, *Iranian Studies* 44/6 (November 2011), pp. 831–849; Güllü Yıldız, *İranlı hacıların gözüyle İstanbul'u temaşa* (Contemplating Istanbul from the Point of View of Persian Pilgrims), in *International Journal of Theological and Islamic Studies* 51 (December 2016), pp. 135–160; Güllü Yıldız, *Gardens of Istanbul in Persian Hajj Travelogues*, in Ines Asceric-Todd et al. (eds.), *Travellers in Ottoman Lands: The Botanical Legacy* (Oxford 2018), pp. 57–68.

route (through the Black and the Mediterranean seas).⁹ Persian pilgrims generally preferred the mountain route because it was used by Imam Hussain (d. 680) on his way to Karbala, and the route offered opportunities to visit other holy shrines of Shi'ite Imams. Thus, most of the Persian *hajj* travelogues narrate journeys on this route. But especially during the second half of the nineteenth century, as transportation by steamships and railways started to be used actively for traveling across this territory, the sea and Istanbul routes became the most frequented.¹⁰ According to one account, in 1885 more than thirty per cent of the Persian pilgrims had reached the Hejaz via the Istanbul route.¹¹ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Istanbul route became more popular, especially among political and religious elites, although taking it was more expensive than the other routes. The three travelogues under examination here are the earliest written reports of travels undertaken by Persian pilgrims on the Istanbul route, as far as is known.

2 Muhammad Mīrzā Sayf al-Dawla: An erudite explorer

The first pilgrim whose travelogue is one of the texts examined in this chapter is Muhammad Mīrzā Sayf al-dawla (fl. late nineteenth century). There is an ambiguity about his identity: we do not know whether he is one of the sons of Fath 'Alī Shāh (1772–1834), the second emperor of the Qajar dynasty who ruled between 1797 and 1834, or one of his grandsons, since they both have the same name and the same honorific title. The date of the journey and other details in his travelogue do not help either in determining his exact identity. At least it is clear that he was a Qajar prince, an important figure who had held the honorific title of *sayf al-dawla* (the sword of the state).¹²

⁹ Hossein Kazemzadeh, *Relation d'un pèlerinage à la Mecque en 1910–1911* (Paris 1912), pp. 7–8; F. E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and Holy Places* (Princeton 1994), pp. 172–180.

¹⁰ For the increase in the numbers of pilgrims and its relation to the security of the road and transportation facilities see Daniel, *The Hajj and Qajar Travel Literature*, pp. 225–233.

¹¹ H. Farmayan and E. L. Daniel (eds. and transl.), *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885–1886): The Safarnameh of Mirza Mohammad Hosayn Farahani* (Austin 1990), p. 191.

¹² For the son see Mahdi Bāmdād, *Sharh-i ḥāl-i rijāl-i īrān dar qarn-i 12 wa 13 wa 14 hijrī* (The Biographies of Iranian Elites in the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Centuries) (6 vols., Tehran 1961), vol. 2, pp. 133–134; for the grandson see vol. 2, pp. 99–102.

He began the journey on 25 January 1863 (Saturday, 4 Sha'bân 1279) from Tehran and followed the Istanbul route.¹³ But he returned via the mountain route for the purpose of visiting the holy shrines in the Atabat cities. This journey took about a year, as the last date the author mentions is the day he left al-Kād-himiyya for Karbala on 17 January 1864 (Sunday, 7 Sha'bân 1280).¹⁴

Muhammad Mīrẓā Sayf al-dawla's account, entitled *Safarnāma-i Mecca* (Travelogue to Mecca),¹⁵ seems to have been composed during the journey and then revised, especially with regard to the documentary content. The chapters are devoted to the cities he passed through. From time to time, it takes the form of a diary and records events of the day in question, especially in cities such as Istanbul, because of the relatively long stays. Sayf al-dawla starts his section on Istanbul with the statement that it is impossible to do complete justice to this flourishing city because of its endless beauty and prosperity. He declares that this city is one of the most remarkable cities in the world, among other three or four.¹⁶

The Istanbul chapter in Sayf al-dawla's travelogue is full of observations by an erudite explorer. What fascinated Sayf al-dawla most was the prosperity of the city. After praising the city in terms of the quality of the weather and available water, he informs his readers that, even though it depends on external sources of food, one can find every kind of food in marketplaces in abundance: fruit, grain, meat, whatever can be imagined and wanted, regardless of the season. He concludes that the city is abounding in riches and that the prices are not higher than in Iran.¹⁷ Commercial life is also depicted vividly in the words of Sayf al-dawla. He observes that bazaars and caravanserais are full of all kinds of commodities and that merchants from all over the world gather there. As he compares the Beyoğlu district; the "Grande Rue de Pera," to Europe, he concludes that everything is almost as it is in Europe. He emphasizes the mixed-gender interactions of the marketplaces, where women and men walk around together and sit at cafés. He seems surprised to see that it is not forbidden for women and men to wander around together, even during the night.¹⁸ In addition to every

13 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 16.

14 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 140.

15 It was first published by Ali Akbar Khodaparast in 1985 (Tehran) and then republished in the anthology of Ja'farian. See Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 7–176. References to this, as well as the other two travelogues, come from the texts as published in the anthology.

16 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 58.

17 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 58–59.

18 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 61.

kind of craft which he observes to be practiced,¹⁹ the well-decorated restaurants, welcoming everyone regardless of social class, the well-maintained houses made of stone, brick, and wood, the hospitals, public baths, and the landscape of the city, give the impression of a flourishing town.²⁰

Depicting Istanbul as a cosmopolitan city, he informs the reader that, besides the Muslims, there are Christians and Jews who speak Turkish. Residents of the city consisted of people from every nation: Franks, Russians, Arabs, Persians, Indians, Maghribis, Turks, Afghans, Bukharans, Jews, Americans from the new world, and Christian Europeans of every nation. This city, he states, is a summary of the whole world in every respect.²¹ He also highlights the beauty of the residents, stating that they have charming faces, especially the Greeks and Circassians; all were elegant, polite, clever, honest, pleasantly spoken, friendly, and hospitable.²² Thus the most important feature of the city's social life as described by Sayf al-dawla was its multi-religious and multi-cultural structure. He emphasizes the harmonious cohabitation of residents from different ethnic and religious backgrounds in what was a city with a Muslim identity by stating that:

There are large churches here. Europeans and Christians from other nations are in high regard. From clothes to daily behavior, from domestic arrangements to lifestyle, most European customs are known and common in this city. Istanbulites are mostly familiar with French and other European languages and they are very keen on learning foreign languages. They have no reservation against or avoidance of other religions. They live together and have no difficulty at all. There are many mosques and minarets, in keeping with the city's Muslim identity. In fact, no other Muslim country has mosques and minarets in such great numbers. They also take good care to preserve them.²³

During his stay, he visited the most famous of the imperial mosques: Hagia Sofia (Ayasofya), Süleymaniye, Fatih, and the Beyazıt Mosque. Sayf al-dawla qualified Ayasofya as among the most excellent monuments of the world and claimed that it is rare to find a place of worship as exalted in dignity and majesty as Ayaso-

¹⁹ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 67.

²⁰ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 62–63.

²¹ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 58.

²² Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 59.

²³ کلیساهای بزرگ با اوضاع دارد نصارا از طوایف فرنگی و غیره بسیار محترم اند. بیشتر رسوم و آداب فرنگ در این ملک شایع است، از لباس و خوراک، وضع نشست و برخاست، رسومات خانه و معاش. بسیاری از اسلامبول زبان فرانسه و "و متعارف زبانهای دیگر فرنگی را می دانند و در آموختن زبانها اصرار زیادی دارند. از خارج مذهب اجتناب و پرهیزی ندارند. با هم محشورند بلکه درجزو از وصلت با آنها هم مضایقه ندارند. در واقع چیزی که از صورت اسلام دارند مساجد و مناره های بسیار است. در حقیقت هیچ يك از بلاد اسلام این قدر مساجد و مناره ندارد. دقت زیادی هم در خوب نگاه داشتن آنها دارند" Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 64.

fya.²⁴ When it comes to imperial mosques, Sayf al-dawla mentioned how brilliant they were and informed the reader about the roles they played as places of learning endowed with schools and libraries with the support of very rich trust funds. He also ranked pupils who studied in mosques and madrassas very highly.²⁵ He extended his observations to the sultan and the state bureaucrats. At the time of Sayf al-dawla's stay in the city, Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz (1830–1876) had recently ascended to the throne, but Sayf al-dawla used a general discourse about Ottoman sultans without referring specifically to that sultan. According to his notes, sultans always acted in a very modest and unpretentious manner except during Friday ceremonies and religious festivals. In his view, state authorities also acted moderately and treated people kindly, without arrogance. He described this manner as “the highest sovereignty among Muslims.”²⁶ Sayf al-dawla also praised the appearance and behavior of Ottoman soldiers by stating that they were all handsome, very civilized, and disciplined young men, wearing nice uniforms, who did not step out of their barracks unless necessary. From this perspective, the soldiers would not establish an oppressive regime over the subjects, nor would the subjects behave disrespectfully and discourteously towards the soldiers.²⁷

To Sayf al-dawla, there were, however, negative outcomes from living in a cosmopolitan city. He argued that travelers must record the bad things and the negative customs and traditions as well as the good ones to inform the reader. Thus, he reassured his reader on this point²⁸ and indeed shared some of his judgmental observations on religiously prohibited activities such as alcohol consumption and prostitution.²⁹ According to Sayf al-dawla, men and women were very fond of plays and entertainment and there was a lot of drinking. Pubs were supposedly everywhere, without any disguise. He also mentioned prostitution and noted that, although it was forbidden by religion and was largely disapproved of, it was not a crime unless it caused harm and was widespread both among Muslims and Christians.³⁰ Overall, according to Sayf al-dawla, Istanbul

24 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 64. Ya'qūb Mirzā, the second pilgrim who passed through Istanbul five years later, shared Sayf al-dawla's impressions of Ayasofya. See Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 316–317.

25 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 64–66.

26 “در ملت اسلام سلطنتی از این بزرگتر نیست” Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 68.

27 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. II, 67–68.

28 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. II, 58.

29 Daniel erroneously extends Sayf al-dawla's judgmental comments on specific subjects to the entire text. See Daniel, *The Hajj and Qajar Travel Literature*, pp. 234–236.

30 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. II, 60–61.

bul was a good place for enjoying life for anyone who was not too religious or concerned about the afterlife, and in many respects, it was one of the best cities in the world.³¹

3 Ya'qūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī: A curious admirer of modern civilization and entertainment

The second text in our corpus belongs to Ya'qūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī (d. 1909), about whom we also do not know much. All the information about him was derived from his travelogue. It is worth noting that he came from a family of one of the Qajar princes and was the brother of Sadr al-dawla (around 1900), an important figure in the city of Tabriz. He was an *amīr-zāda* (son of the *amīr*), which means that he was a member of the elite ruling class. He was a devoted Shi'ite and a poet with the pen name Mansūr. The title of his travelogue also refers to his pen name: *Hajj-i Mansūr* (The pilgrimage of Mansūr). Finally, according to a note written by his son at the end of the text, he died in the year of 1909 in Tabriz.³²

Ya'qūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī set off on 9 December 1868 (Wednesday, 23 Rajab 1285) on his pilgrimage and returned after seven months and seven days.³³ He used the Istanbul route both for going to Hejaz and on his return journey. The text reveals that on this journey he was within the entourage of another *amīr-zāda* Hajjī Muḥammad Ṭāhir Mīrzā (around 1900 ?), the son of the Qajar prince Tahmāsp Mīrzā Mu'ayyad al-dawla (d. 1879) and was responsible for making all the travel arrangements.³⁴ Ya'qūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī compiled his travelogue mostly on the road and made some additions after returning to Tabriz.³⁵ He stated that one of his friends from Tabriz asked him to write down an account of his adventures for the purpose of providing information not only about the pilgrimage but also of the current state of the foreign lands he visited. He did not give his friend's

31 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. II, 67–68.

32 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 203.

33 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 232.

34 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 231. On Tahmāsp Mīrzā see I'timād al-Saltana Muhammed Hasan Khān, *al-Ma'āthir wa'l-āthār: Chihil sāl-i tārikh-i Iran dar dawra-i pādishāh-i Nāsir al-dīn Shāh* (Forty Years of the History of Iran in Sultan Nāsir al-dīn Shāh's era), edited by I. Afshar (3 vols. Tehran 1984–1989), vol. 2, pp. 534–535.

35 This text has only one manuscript copy and was first published in 2009 by Rasul Ja'farian and subsequently republished with other *hajj* travelogues in the second volume of the anthology. See Ya'qūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī, *Safarnāma-i Hajj-i Mansūr*, (ed. R. Ja'farian) (Tehran 2009); Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 197–542.

name but referred to him simply as “*jawān*” (young man).³⁶ This is important because throughout the text he addressed this young man at the beginning and at the end of every section. He started the record of each day with the expression of “O my young man! When it was the day of [...]” and ended it with “when the night ended Mansūr completed his words.”³⁷ Jaʿfarian, the editor of the text, commented that this type of address was a reminder of Shahrazad, the famous narrator of *The Thousand and One Nights* tales, although Yaʿqūb Mīrzā Tabrīzī had a comic, even sarcastic, style and was not reluctant to use the occasional vulgar or dirty expression.³⁸ This travelogue has another unique characteristic compared to other similar texts written by Persian pilgrims. As far as I am aware, this is the only text in this genre to be accompanied by drawings of sights and monuments, for example a steamship, the obelisk in Istanbul, the pyramids of Cairo, and sketches of Mecca and Medina, even if they are executed in a primitive style.³⁹

Yaʿqub Mirza’s stay in Istanbul corresponded with the holy month of Ramadan (December 1868–January 1869). The ship he took from Batum arrived in the city on 20 December 1868 (Sunday, 5 Ramadan 1285).⁴⁰ On the return journey, he arrived in Istanbul on 26 April 1869 (Monday, 14 Muharram 1286).⁴¹ In sum, he stayed in the city for twenty-four days in two different caravanserais near the Iranian Embassy in Eminönü.⁴² The Istanbul chapter in his travelogue reads like the explorations of an inquisitive mind and of an admirer of modern civilization and

36 Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 232.

37 “گفت ای جوان من! چون یوم یکشنبہ... چون شب بر سر دست آمد منصور لب از گفتار فرو بست” For an example see Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 310.

38 Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 204–205 (introduction by Jaʿfarian). Roy Mottahedeh, who discusses the wondrous (*ʿajīb*) in *The Thousand and One Nights*, offers an analysis that allows us to draw some correlations between these tales and travel writings. On the one hand, the narrator, in this case Shahrazad, takes the interlocutor on a journey through tales, on the other hand, the traveler himself, in this case the pilgrim, brings the journey to the interlocutor through his travelogue. In both cases the narrative aims to amaze the interlocutor with descriptions of the unheard/unseen/unexperienced wonders of the world. See Roy P. Mottahedeh, ‘*ʿAjāʾib* in the Thousand and One Nights’, in Richard G. Hovannisian and Georges Sabagh (eds.), *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic Literature and Society* (Cambridge 1997), pp. 29–39. Sohrabi points out that “*ʿajīb*” as being out of ordinary and unknown to the observer is the common ground between wonder literature and travel literature, not only in terms of fascination but astonishment in every aspect. See Sohrabi, *Taken for Wonder*, p. 37.

39 For examples see Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 318–319, 443, 456.

40 Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 308.

41 Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 506.

42 For his stay in the Khan of Mustapha Pasha see Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 311; for his stay in a caravanserai nearby Bahçekapı see Jaʿfarian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 506.

entertainment. Thus, his depiction of Istanbul is dominated by two characteristics. First, he was openly impressed with the technological advances and innovations. He highlighted the Istanbulites' wealth, their standard of living, the local administration system, the cleanliness and brightness of the city. Second, his account is highly descriptive and seeks to give as much detail as possible about leisure and entertainment in the city of Istanbul.

Like Sayf al-dawla, Ya'qūb Mīrẓā started his chapter by admitting that it would take as long as the lifetime of the Prophet Noah (which was believed to have been 950 year, i.e., almost a thousand years) to describe even one single neighborhood of the city.⁴³ However, despite using this caveat, he did describe it in great detail. He wrote of the civilized manners of the inhabitants of the city, at first referring especially to Europeans who mostly lived in Galata and Beşiktaş.⁴⁴ On another occasion he emphasized that all citizens were well-educated, that no one interfered with other people's lives, everyone was independent and minded their own business, claims which he supported with a detailed anecdote about the sultan passing through the neighborhood.⁴⁵ In Ya'qūb Mīrẓā's words, not only were the manners of the locals civil, but their dress and appearance were very striking. He described in detail the European women's clothes: they did not cover their heads and looked like cypress trees because of their long dresses, covering them from the neck down to the feet. He admitted that only now did he understand the poets' descriptions and why they did not describe Iranian women in the same terms as the European ones. Iranian women's height was disguised by their *chador*. He described Ottoman women as wearing robes that came down from their shoulders. They covered their head and their entire face except the eyes, but the white veil would not prevent them from being seen. The most attractive thing to him was the incomparable color of Ottoman women's skin.⁴⁶

For Ya'qūb Mīrẓā, one of the most important manifestations of such a civilized city was the quality of its transport facilities, which is understandable considering that he was on a long and difficult journey. Nevertheless, his inquisitive attention to newly paved roads, railways, and the mechanism of steamships is remarkable. When he first arrived in Istanbul, the newly built Galata bridge instantly turned out to be a great attraction to him. After sharing some information

⁴³ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 328. See also Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 308–309, 510, 513.

⁴⁴ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 311.

⁴⁵ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 510–511.

⁴⁶ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 323. For Sayf al-dawla's description of the inhabitants' attire see Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 60.

about its construction, materials, and measurements, he also noted conversations he had with some of the policemen responsible for securing public order and collection of the bridge toll, and tried to determine the daily revenue. Another issue that he discussed with the policemen was how ferries passed under the bridge. Qualifying it as a wonder worth seeing, he described in detail how the bridge opened to let the ferries pass and then closed again.⁴⁷

Ya'qūb Mīrzā also paid attention to the water supply of the city both for daily consumption and for firefighting, the latter occurring very often because the main construction material in Istanbul was wood. Since there was no running water in the city, drinking water was either collected from rain and carried into the city across aqueducts, or drawn from wells with pumps. He tried to find an expert on the working of water pumps, but was unable to find one. Yet he planned to take a sample of the pumps with him to Tabriz.⁴⁸

He was also very interested in the lighting of the city; especially the illumination of the mosques, the type of building he was most interested in. He claimed that there were ten thousand mosques in the city and that they were crowded all the time with devoted Muslims praying day and night. He describes an Ottoman tradition called "*mahya*," the practice of writing mottos with lights hung between minarets or on the dome of the mosques, and which is still used today during the holy month of Ramadan. He gives examples of mottos such as "*mā shā'Allāh*" (what Allah has willed) because his stay coincided with Ramadan.⁴⁹ He writes that not only mosques but also the streets were lit as daylight. When someone stood on the bridge of Galata looking over the city, he would see a ball of fire (یک پارچه آتش).⁵⁰ He also explained how gas lamps worked, qualifying the invention as one of the wonders of the age (از عجایب روزگار) and drew sketches of the system used for lighting them.⁵¹

Obviously, the discovery of a new city must include not only places and monuments but also people and social life. As an important part of exploring the city, the pilgrims did not abstain from enjoyment and engaged in leisure activities. Although the quality of the enjoyment differed according to the length of their stay, all of them could find some form of entertainment to suit their tastes.

47 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 312–313. Sayf al-dawla also paid attention to the bridges of the city. See Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 63.

48 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 323–324.

49 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 317–318. For more information about the *mahya* see Yusuf Çağlar (ed.), *Göklere Yazı Yazma Sanatı Mahya. The Art of Writing on the Sky Mahya* (Istanbul 2010).

50 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 318.

51 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 322.

The glamour of city life and places of amusement was a crucial part of their experience in Istanbul. Ya'qūb Mirzā, who spent there more days than other pilgrims, and therefore had more opportunities for enjoying the city's pleasures. He was a reveler and an adventurer, and, even though he wrote that the Istanbul route was good for feasting and entertainment, but not for pilgrimage,⁵² he rarely missed an opportunity for enjoying himself. Therefore, his statement about the Istanbul route seems to have been made for the ostensible reason of presenting himself as a pilgrim, but lacks credibility. During Ramadan, almost every night after breaking the fast, he went to see a play in a different theater and described it in detail. He assessed the halls, the spectators, the *mise-en-scène*, and the performance of the actors. He seemed to be a little disturbed because men and women watched the play very intimately from the upstairs boxes, but was very impressed with the size and brightness of the theater house.⁵³ On one occasion he complained about the content of the play and the suggestive costumes of six female actresses on the stage.⁵⁴

On a Friday, Ya'qūb Mirzā went to see the meadow at Kağıthane because of its fame. He boarded a ferry to the Golden Horn and then continued his trip in a small boat. He was surprised to see so many boats on the water and very pleased because of the beautiful female Istanbulites in those boats. He could not help but describe one more time how pretty were the white-skinned ladies with black eyes and eyebrows, in whom he imagined charming, beloved sweethearts. His delight never stopped from his first step into the meadow until the end of the day. He gazed on lovely couples sitting side by side everywhere, holding hands and having fun. Music was playing, songs were sung. At the end of a pleasant day, he agreed with Sayf al-dawla that Kağıthane was a place worth seeing.⁵⁵ On another day he visited a musical café and described it as an intimate, pleasant place for couples to enjoy themselves. He also complained that, as an outside observer, he could not benefit enough from occasions of this kind.⁵⁶

⁵² Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 288.

⁵³ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 315–316.

⁵⁴ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, p. 321.

⁵⁵ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 507–509. For Sayf al-dawla's account of this place see Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 66–67.

⁵⁶ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 2, pp. 509–510.

4 Farhād Mīrzā Mu‘tamad al-dawla (1817–1888): A devout politician

The last travelogue we will examine was written by another member of the Qajar royal house, Farhād Mīrzā Mu‘tamad al-dawla (1817–1888) and is entitled *Hi-dāyat al-sabīl wa kifāyat al-dalīl* (Guidance for the road and competency of the guide).⁵⁷ As the fifteenth son of the Prince ‘Abbās Mīrzā (1789–1833), younger brother of Muḥammad Shāh (d. 1848), and uncle of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1831–1896), he is very well known as an educated politician, poet, and man of letters. As an eminent member of the royal family, he was a leading figure, especially in the cultural domain. His outstanding personality was much appreciated by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh on whom he had a strong influence. Besides his travelogue, he compiled several other books and did translations from English to Persian. A successful governor of several provinces, he was known for his highly conservative religious views and for his opposition to reformers who, he alleged, were destroying the foundation of the Islamic law by championing new conceptions of liberty.⁵⁸

He commenced his journey on 8 September 1875 (Wednesday, 7 Sha‘bān 1292) from Tehran and followed the Istanbul route both for reaching and for returning from Hejaz. He first arrived in Istanbul on 11 December 1875 (Saturday, 12 Shawwāl, 1292) and was welcomed with an official ceremony by the Iranian Ambassador Hajji Muhsin Khan Mu‘īn al-Mulk (d. 1899).⁵⁹ During this short stay of only five days in Istanbul, he met Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (1830–1876)⁶⁰ and many Ottoman and foreign (English, Russian, French, German, etc.) politicians.⁶¹ On his return, he arrived in Istanbul on 14 February 1876 (Monday, 18 Muharram 1293))⁶² and stayed there for twelve days, until the end of Muharram.⁶³ He trav-

57 There are several published editions of this text: Shiraz 1877, Tehran 1987 (edited by E. Nawwāb-e Ṣafā), and Tehran 1987 (edited by G. R. Ṭabāṭabā‘ī Majd). In the present study, references are from the third volume of the anthology of Ja‘farian.

58 For his biography see Kambiz Eslami, Farhād Mīrzā Mo‘tamad al-dawla, in *Encyclopedia Iranica* (updated: 15 December 1999), accessed 22 May 2022, <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/farhad-mirza-motamad-al-dawla>>.

59 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 94–96.

60 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 109–111.

61 For a dinner at the Iranian Embassy as an example to these meetings see Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 104–105; also see Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 353–355.

62 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 340.

63 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 381.

eled with Mirzā Faṭḥ ‘Alī Akḥwund-zāda (1812–1878) and a large escort including relatives and servants.⁶⁴

Farhād Mirzā Mu‘tamad al-dawla’s travelogue was compiled in the form of a diary and published immediately after the journey in 1877. It reflects the impressions of a highly conservative, devout politician. His account about his Istanbul days is dominated by open criticism of the Westernization of the Ottomans and serious concerns about the future of Muslim societies in general. Calling Istanbul the “city of the sultanate,”⁶⁵ his travelogue reveals his underlying conservatism and lack of commitment to processes of modernization; even though he had limited access to the city, free time to wander around as a royal guest, and he visited many places including the imperial mosques, libraries, and tombs. Just like the other two pilgrims, his first stop was the Ayasofya Mosque, but his impressions of this holy monument were different. After a few historical observations and a physical description, he shared his own feelings and thoughts. Considering the political situation of the Ottoman Empire and of the European states, he was worried about the future of this monument and prayed to God not to let this place turn back to its former role by quoting two verses of an elegy about the fall of Andalusia.⁶⁶

According to his notes, after Ayasofya, Süleymaniye was one of the most beautiful mosques in the world, and its description provides an occasion for an overview of the sultanate of Süleyman the Magnificent (1494–1566).⁶⁷ In fact, every time Farhād Mirzā Mu‘tamad al-dawla visited an imperial mosque, he introduced the sultan who built it, which was the case with the Sultan Ahmad Mosque,⁶⁸ the Beyazıt Mosque,⁶⁹ and the Fatih Mosque.⁷⁰ One day he also witnessed the teaching circles in the Fatih Mosque: there were approximately five hundred people studying disciplines such as Arabic grammar, logic, and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).⁷¹

64 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 24–25. For Mirzā Faṭḥ ‘Alī Akḥwund-zāda and his role in the modernization process of Iran see Farmayan, *The Forces of Modernization*, pp. 140–141.

65 “دار السلطنة اسلامبول.” Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 94.

66 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 97. Farhād Mirzā mistakenly attributed the elegy to Yaḥyā al-Qurṭubī (d. 1172) instead of the real author, Abu’l-Baqā’ al-Rundī (d. 1285). For the attribution and complete translation of the elegy see R. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young, *Abu’l-Baqā’ al-Rundī and his Elegy on Muslim Spain*, in *The Muslim World* 66/1 (1976), pp. 29–34. For another visit to Ayasofya see Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 346.

67 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 101.

68 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 98, 351.

69 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 351.

70 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 355.

71 Ja‘farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 355.

Social encounters play a crucial role in Farhād Mīrẓā's text as he received visits and invitations from Ottoman officials and representatives of other, especially European, countries. Throughout his account, he was acutely sensitive to his treatment by his Ottoman hosts and took care to record the respect shown to him by the sultan, the Ottoman officials, and envoys of European countries in Istanbul. He states that not only high officials of the state, but also common citizens minded their manner and the tone of their conversation and that they were highly civil to the Iranian people who, on the contrary, were more careless with their manners.⁷²

Even though Farhād Mīrẓā never attended public entertainments such as park picnics and never went to musical cafés and the theater, he presented other facets of social life in the city. As a prince, he attended soirées, exclusive dinner parties, and balls with eminent guests, including Ottoman political elites and representatives of European states. Besides lavish banquets, good music, dance, and courteous or political conversations, he also mentions other events such as, for example, a magic show presented by an illusionist.⁷³

What Farhād Mīrẓā saw in Istanbul's high society made him reflect on Muslim societies and share some of his insights about their common future. For instance, he wrote about the European women who attended the dinner party organized by the Ambassador of Iran in honor of the prince. He gazed at the women, very elegant in their décolleté dresses, and dancing with men, wondering when these customs would infect the Ottomans and the Iranians.⁷⁴ On another occasion, he asserted that he would probably not live long enough but that the next generations would see his predictions come true, and in Iran, and across all Asia, barefaced women would wander around, in bazaars and along the streets.⁷⁵ At the end of this section, he quoted partially a *hadith* of the Prophet Muḥammad (*pbuh*) in Arabic without referencing it as a *hadith*: "Nothing will remain of Islam except its name and the inscriptions of the Qur'an."⁷⁶ He also predicted that "civilized women"⁷⁷ would stay in the marriage

72 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 366.

73 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 105–107.

74 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 107.

75 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 108.

76 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 107–108. Regarded as a weak *hadith* in the sources, the full text is as follows: "Ali narrated that the Messenger of Allah (*pbuh*) said: 'There will come a time upon the people when nothing will remain of Islam except its name and nothing will remain of the Qur'an except its inscription. Their mosques will be splendidly furnished but destitute of guidance. Their scholars will be the worst people under the sky; strife will issue from them and revert to them.'" See al-Bayhaqī, *al-Jāmi' li-shu'ab al-imān* (The Collection on the

for the sake of reputation and honor only, that they would send very young children to learn French, while learning the recitation of the Qur'an would decline to such a level that if someone wanted to learn it, he or she would have to go to Mecca or Medina.⁷⁸

He was also very critical of the meals and drinks served during the soirées he attended, as intoxicants and Western-style dishes were mostly served. His most striking example is a dinner party hosted by the Ottoman Grand Vizier Maḥmūd Nadīm Pasha (d. 1883). Farhād Mīrẓā was asked to inform the host about his wishes for that night and he only requested not to be served any kind of intoxicants. This request was not taken well by the plenipotentiary, who said that they had abolished that habit many years before. Farhād Mīrẓā insisted on his request by stating that: "I am the special guest and I just returned from visiting the Sacred House of God. Consuming intoxicants around a table full of Muslims is an abomination according to both Islamic and common law. Of course, since the guests are mostly foreign state envoys, it can be regarded as excusable but they can delay drinking for two hours as this is a special party."⁷⁹

In the end, his request was approved by *Tashrifātchī-bāshī* (grand master of ceremonies) Kāmil Bay (d. 1879).⁸⁰ Farhād Mīrẓā also disclosed what happened on the night of the party and quoted the grand vizier's words about the dinner. According to the text, the grand vizier said that he ordered the kitchen staff not to cook European dishes, being aware that Farhād Mīrẓā liked Turkish food. Farhād Mīrẓā supposedly responded that: "I also like some of the European meals, however, I dislike abandoning one's own customs and insisting on acting like others. Europeans also like our meals, yet they never eat them at their homes. On the contrary, Muslims, to imitate Europeans, eat soup and salad every night at their homes."⁸¹ He noted that his request was approved by the

Branches of the Faith), edited by Muḥtār Ahmad al-Nadwī-Abd al-ʿAlī Ḥāmid (14 vols., Riyad 2003), vol. 3, pp. 317–318.

77 "سویلاسیون شده اند"

78 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 108.

79 "چون مهمانی مخصوص من است و از بیت الله الحرام آمده ام صرف بعضی منهیات در مجلسی که مسلمانان باشند شرعاً و عرفاً قبیح است. در شب مهمانی چون سفرای خارجه بودند معذور بودند، در این مهمانی چون اختصاص دارد دو ساعت اگر به تأخیر بیندازند گناهی ندارد."

Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 363.

80 Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 364.

81 "من از بعضی غذاهای فرنگی خوشم می آید ولی ترک عادت خود کردن و اصرار در کار دیگری کردن خوب نیست. اهل اروپا هم از غذاهای ما خیلی خوششان می آید، ولی هرگز در خانه خودشان از غذاهای ما نمی خورند، به خلاف، اهالی اسلام هر شب در خانه خود به تقلید اهالی اروپا سالاد و سوپ میخورند."

Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 365.

grand vizier and, according to his wish, no intoxicant was served and thus no unlawful act was committed that night.⁸²

In addition to these visits and dinner parties, Farhād Mirzā's travel account is replete with descriptions of his visits to various technical institutions and places such as schools, libraries, the arsenal, and the armory, the waxworks museum of the Janissaries, etc., with supplementary information about the historical development of these institutions.⁸³ One of the interesting observation tours was to see a newly imported ironclad called *Mas'ūdiya*, which was constructed in Britain and arrived in Istanbul in the early days of 1876. Farhād Mirzā gave detailed information about its construction, price, and equipment, especially its armament.⁸⁴ He also visited the most famous photograph studio in the city, the Studio of Abdullah Frères, and he informs us that in some photos he was in official dress and in others he was in informal clothes.⁸⁵

As a well known collector of Persian and Arabic manuscripts and owner of one of the finest libraries in the country,⁸⁶ another place Farhād Mirzā visited was Sultan Ahmad III's library, which, according to him, comprised approximately six thousand manuscripts. There he examined many valuable manuscripts such as a Qur'an manuscript written in the 29th year of *hijra* by 'Ali (c. 600–661), son-in-law of the Prophet and first imam for Shi'ites.⁸⁷

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the examination above. First, all three pilgrims, despite differences in their personalities and tastes, depicted Istanbul

⁸² Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 365.

⁸³ For Farhād Mirzā's visit to the waxworks museum of the Janissaries see Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 101–102.

⁸⁴ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 349–350. For another official visit to the arsenal and the armory see Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, pp. 98–99.

⁸⁵ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 101.

⁸⁶ Kambiz Eslami, Farhād Mirzā Mo'tamad al-dawla, in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed 4 April 2022, <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/farhad-mirza-motamad-al-dawla>>.

⁸⁷ Ja'farian, *Safarnāmahā*, vol. 3, p. 99. Tayyar Altıkulaç, who published the San'a manuscripts of the Qur'an related to 'Ali, also examined other manuscripts related to him, including three different manuscripts preserved in Istanbul; two in the Topkapı Palace and one in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum. However, because he gives different dates rather than the year CE 29 (649) for these manuscripts, it is not clear which manuscript Farhād Mirzā saw in the library or whether the manuscript he saw is a different one. For details see Tayyar Altıkulaç (ed.), *al-Mushaf al-Sharīf al-mansūb ilā 'Alī b. Abī Tālib: Nuṣṣatu San'a'* (Istanbul 2011), pp. 161–191.

as a cosmopolitan and modern city with civilized and Westernized residents, a place full of innovations and culture. They also emphasized its Muslim identity with reference to the mosques and the minarets, which dominated the cityscape. However, it must be noted that, by the end of the nineteenth century, Persian pilgrims started to express less complimentary, more critical, views of the city. Over the years, not only travelers and their taste changed, but also their origins and destinations. This shift becomes perceptible even in the comparatively early travelogue of Farhād Mirzā. The excerpt below, relating a dialogue between Farhād Mirzā and *Tashrifātchī-bāshī* Kāmil Bay, illustrates not only Farhād Mirzā's concerns about the future of Muslim societies, but also the idea that the process of modernization was directly related to European influence. When asked by Farhād Mirzā about the mosques, Kāmil Bay replies that "in our country there are so many mosques but very few prayers." Farhād Mirzā answers back that this is not far from saying that "there are so many mosques but no prayers". Kāmil Bay laughs and confirms that this prediction might prove right: increasing links with Europe, facilitated by railways and steamships, mean that everything is almost like in Europe. He also warns that the expansion of railways in Iran will lead to a greater European influence, just like it had in the Ottoman lands.⁸⁸

A comparison between the Istanbul narratives of Persian pilgrims and the narratives of Persian travelers wandering in European capitals such as Paris and London during the nineteenth century is even more revealing and shows why Istanbul was "the West of the Orient" in their eyes.⁸⁹ Of course, one must also remember that the geographical proximity of the Ottoman Empire to Europe had an impact on this perception. Another point to be highlighted is that the Persian pilgrims' impressions about the Istanbulite women, Muslim or non-Muslim, who were becoming very visible in the city's modern social life, are not unlike their impressions of European women. Therefore, discourses on women are an important marker distinguishing the modernist and counter-modernist camps in the period considered here.⁹⁰

88 "در میان کالسکه با کامل بیک صحبت ها شد . جوامع را از او پرسیدم، گفت در ولایت ما جامع چوق نماز قیلان از یعنی مسجد بسیار است و نماز خوان کم است. گفتیم دور نیست چندی بگذرد، بگویند جامع چوق نماز قیلان یوق؛ یعنی مسجد بسیار و نماز خوان هیچ خیلی خندید و گفت درست فرمودید . از اتصال اروپا و راه آهن و واپور همه چیز نزدیک است مثل اروپا بشود، اگر در ایران هم راه آهن باز بشود آن جا. هم رفته رفته از اتصال اروپا به صورت ما خواهند شد"

Ja'farian, *Safarnāmāhā*, vol. 3, pp. 108–109.

89 For a comparison see Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's description of Paris during his first journey to Europe: Nāṣir al-dīn Shāh, *Safar-i awwal*, p. 215.

90 Tavakoli-Targhi elaborates on this issue in the context of Persian travelers to Europe: Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Eroticizing Europe*, in Elton L. Daniel (ed.), *Society and Culture in Persian Iran: Studies in Honor of Hafez Farmayan* (Costa Mesa, Calif. 2002), pp. 311–346. See also Mo-

Persian modernization discourses also have an undeniable effect on these travelogues and on how they depict the Ottoman capital. The attitude towards modernization comes to the fore when evaluating the Ottoman Empire, which is seen as one of the most important channels. However, as the Ottomans' carrier function between the West and Iran weakened or transformed, this perception also changed. Therefore, while elaborating the nuances and opposing attitudes towards Istanbul that became evident in these travelogues, the change in the dynamics of interaction between the two countries should be taken into account as well as the discourses of modernization.

One question that remains unanswered is: how widespread was this perception among Persians? This brings us to the issue of readership: were these texts actually read immediately after they were produced? And how large was their audience? The first two texts remained in manuscript form until recently, each one surviving in single copies, and appeared in print more than a century after they were written. Even though it is hard to be certain about the manuscripts' adventures, it is likely that they were kept in their authors' personal collections and inherited within the family before somehow entering a library collection. This means that they were read, maybe listened to, and circulated among extremely limited readerships. The last text discussed here, thanks to the author's prominent political and intellectual position, was printed just two years after the journey and had multiple editions. Thus, it was more fortunate with regard to disseminating the author's ideas and perceptions about Istanbul and the Ottomans. Nevertheless, at this point it is problematic to assume that the authors' views were widely circulated and became representative for society in general.

hamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography* (Oxford 2001), pp. 54–76.

