TITLE: ON HURUFISM AND ITS PERIODIZATION

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Abstract

This article discusses the content of a manuscript which is kept in Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, no. 2461. Based on this manuscript, Michael Reinhard Heß reached some conclusions on Hurufism in his article "Qualified heterodoxy in a 17th century Ḥurūfī muḳaddime." Unfortunately, the article features a number of mistakes. The main objective of this present article is to clarify some confusion about the manuscript, in particular, and Hurufism, in general. This article also examines the transformation of Hurufi ideas and offers a periodization of Hurufi history.

Keywords: Hurufism, heterodoxy, mysticism, Ottoman Empire, political critics, 17th century.

HURUFİLİK VE TARİHSEL DÖNEMLENDİRMESİ

Öz

Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Yazma Bağışlar, no. 2461'de bulunan mecmuaya dayanarak Michael Reinhard Heß, "Qualified heterodoxy in a 17th century Ḥurūfī muḳaddime" isimli makalesinde Hurufilik ve politik ilişkileri ile ilgili bazı sonuçlara ulaşmıştır. Bununla birlikte yapılan hatalı çıkarımlar, Hurufiliğin tarihsel olarak doğru bir şekilde dönemlendirilmesini zorunlu kılmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu makalede öncelikle söz konusu mecmuadaki eserlerin tespiti yapılacak, bunun yanında Hurufi düşüncenin dönüşüm sürecine temas edilerek, dönemsel gelişimi ortaya konacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Hurufilik, heterodoksi, mistisizm, Osmanlı Devleti, politik eleştiri, 17. yüzyıl.

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1. Introduction

Michael Reinhard Heß, in his article titled "Qualified heterodoxy in a 17th century Ḫurūfī muḳaddime" twice claims that the text he analyses was "unpublished" previously (p. 151, 155) although Fatih Usluer had published it in 2009 with the title of *Seyyid Nesîmî ve Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık'ı* (Usluer 2009b). What is more, the same text was presented again by Usluer in a symposium called "Azerbaijan is the intersection of various civilizations", with his paper "Hurufism in Azerbaijan Literature: Nesîmî" in Berlin Humboldt University on 3 December 2010, where Heß, too, was a participant.

Heß's article is based on a fundamental mistake about the manuscript he consulted, Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar no. 2461. Although he assumes that the manuscript contains only one text named "*Kitāb Muḳaddimat Kalām Sayyid Nasīmī*" belonging to Veysî (p. 155), this manuscript, in fact, consists of two texts:

The first one is "**Kitâb-ı Mukaddime der kelâm-ı Nesîmî**", with the well-known name *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* of Nesîmî which begins at f. 1b with the words "*Bismillâhirrahmânirrahîm. Kâle'n-nebiyyu aleyhi's-selâm fâtihatü'l-kitâbi seb'a âyâtun*" and ends at f. 28a with the words "*Ol bir fırka-i nâcîdür, bu tâifedür kim elif-lâm-mîmden ulâike hümü'l-müflihûna değin anlarun sıfâtın söyler ve elif-lâm-mîm anlarun*".

Heß, aiming to discover the author of *Mukaddime* says "the author mentions his own first name, which is probably to be read as Veysī/Veysi or perhaps Vīsī/Vīsi." (p. 155). In fact, contrary to what Heß claims, the author of the first text in Yazma Bağışlar, no. 2461 is Nesîmî, as can clearly be read too on the titles of its other copies such as "*Kitâb-ı Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık li-Hazret-i Seyyid Nesîmî*"[*], "*Kitâb-ı Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık-ı Hazret-i Seyyid Nesîmî kuddise sirruh be-zebân-ı Türkî*"[†] and "*Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık li's-Seyyidi'n-Nesîmî.*"[‡]

The title of the text Heß reads as "*Kitāb Muḳaddimat Kalām Sayyid Nasīmī*" (Heß 2011: 155) is actually "*Kitâb-ı Mukaddime der kelâm-ı Nesîmî*" (no. 2461, f. 1b). The true translation of this title is not "Preface (mukaddime) to the theology of Sayyid Nasimi (dated 1623/1624)" (p. 151) as Heß states, but is "A Book of Mukaddime (Introduction) in Nesîmî's words".

Concerning the date of the text, Heß accepts the *terminus post quem*, 1033 A. H. (1623 A.D.) and depending on this date he arrives at some conclusions on Hurufi history, especially with regard to the time they had spent under the Ottoman State. In fact *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* is a book of Nesîmî who lived in the 15th century. And the text that Heß scrutinizes has more than twenty identified copies in libraries. As an example, the copy that

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[*] Süleymaniye Library, Nafiz Paşa, no. 1509, f. 111a.
[†] Millî Library, Osman Ergin, no. 656, f. 73b.
[‡] Millet Library, Ali Emîrî Şer'iyye, no. 946, f. 1b.

can be found in Manisa Public Library, Muradiye, no. 1143/2, ff. 31b-84a was dated as 963 A.H. (1555 A.D.). Therefore, Heß's conclusions on late Hurufi history, based on erroneous assumptions about the date of the text, are invalid.

The second one is "**Vâkı'a-nâme-i Veysî Çelebi**"[§] which begins at f. 29b with the words "*Nesîm-i çimen-ârâ-yı hamd u senâ...*" and ends at f. 49a with the words "*gülbang-ı hurûs-ı subh âlemi bîdâr idüp bu mertebede kaldı kalem încâ resîd ve ser beşikest temmet bi'l-hayr fî sene 1033*".

Heß considers *Mukaddime* as a text of 17th century, written by Veysî, due to the fact that he reads the manuscript as one single text without realizing the two separate texts mentioned above.

Nevertheless in this manuscript, the first text, *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık*, ends abruptly and the missing sentences of the text exist in other copies of *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık*. For instance the text, which is found at Millet Library, Ali Emîrî Şer'iyye, no. 946, ends as follows:

"Ol bir fırka-i nâcî kim yetmiş üç fırkadan nâcîdür, bu tâ'ifedür kim, elif lâm mîmden ulâ'ike humu'l-muflihûna degin anlarun sıfatın söyler ve elif lâm mîm anlarun hâdîsidür. Ve her kimse kim elif lâm mîm ana hidâyet eylemedi, ol kimesne nâcîlerden degüldür ve nâr ehlindendür ya'nî şeytân-ı şûmun tâbi'idür ki Âdem aleyhi's-selâma secde eylemedi ve sûretu'l-lâha ve sûretu'r-rahmâna münkir oldı ve Hakk'dan yüz çevirdi ve müstehıkk-i la'net-i câvîd oldı ve anlarun tâbi'leri nâr ehlinden oldılar. Sübhâne rabbuke rabbi'l-izzeti amme yasifûn ve selâmun ala'l-murselîn ve'l-hamdu li'l-lâhi rabbi'l-âlemîn ve salla'l-lâhu alâ seyyidinâ Muhammed ve âlihî ecma'în temmet." (f. 37b)

Veysî, the author of *Vâkı'a-nâme* (the second text of manuscript no. 2461) was a famous Ottoman writer, poet and statesman of the 17th century. He belongs to the "*ulemâ class*" and especially to "*the top-class münşe'ât writers who worked for the pâdişâh.*" Gibb affirms that he is one of the most brilliant prose-writers of his period. (1904: v. III, p. 208) He was born at Alaşehir in 1561. His real name is Üveys and worked as the Secretary of the Council of the State (*dîvân kâtibi*) and judge. He died in 1627 as judge of Skopje.

However Heß argues the possibility of Veysî's janissary identity due to the language that he uses in the text:

"*(Veysî) has a good, but imperfect command of the orthographic rules of Ottoman. This indicates that he probably does not belong to the 'ulemā class, and certainly not to the top-class münše'āt writers who worked for the pādišāh. For instance, the obligatory marking of the 3rd person possessive suffix murādï "its purpose" is omitted, obviously as a result of a confusion with the identically pronounced iżāfe vowel.*" (p. 156)

The major problem about the argument of "*Veysî has a good, but imperfect command of the orthographic rules of Ottoman*" emerges from the

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[§] This book was published many times. Bulak, 1836; İstanbul, 1846, 1866, 1876 (in Ottoman letters); Berlin, 1811 (in German). Hayriye Dayran, F.A. Salimzyanova and Mustafa Altun are the researchers who transcribed and published this text.

fact that the example with respect to suffix that Heß refers is actually extracted from the first text of the manuscript which is *Mukaddime* written by Nesîmî in the 15th century.

It is known that the orthography rules of Ottoman Turkish were not well established when the texts were written during the 14-15th centuries. It can be easily seen that third person possessive suffix *ye* used to be showed by *kesre* or while making *izâfe*, instead of using *kesre*, *ye* was used. This very common orthography of the 15th century that Heß refers to belongs only to *Mukaddime* of Nesîmî (not to *Vâkı'a-nâme* of Veysî) thereby it is not an evidence to show that Veysî is not part of the "ulemâ class" but that the original text of *Mukaddime* was written in the 15th century. Moreover such words as *bende*, *kul* (slave), *pâdişâh* (Ottoman Sultan) and *fermân olınursa* (if ordered) that Heß believes that the author ascribed to himself, in fact are the words pronounced by Zulkarneyn (Alexander the Bicorned).

2. *Mukaddime*, A Critique Of Ottoman Political System?

Michael Heß, in his article having confused the two different books asserts that *Mukkadime* "is overtly critical of the Ottoman political system, including the sultan himself... it is contextualized with the almost contemporary treatise of Muṣṭafā Ḳoči Beg." (p. 151) However, in the text of the *Mukaddime*, there is not a single line in which the author is critical of the Ottoman political system. According to Heß the Mukaddime stigmatizes "the temptation and depravity which manifests itself in every pādišāh of the age (her pādišāh-i zamānda ẓuhūr ėden fitne vü fesād)" and this reproach must designate the sultan himself. (p. 160) This quotation is the only seemingly solid support to Heß's thesis. Nevertheless this argument can not hold a proof that *Mukaddime*, a Hurufi text, is the critical of the Ottoman political system since the quotation above is not extracted from *Mukaddime* (the first text of manuscript ends at f. 28a) but from the second text of the manuscript; *Vâkı'a-nâme-i Veysî*, from f. 49a.

The latter text, *Vâkı'a-nâme-i Veysî*, is built on Veysî's dream about a conversation between Zulkarneyn (Alexander the Bicorned) and Sultan Ahmed. Throughout the text Zulkarneyn brings the examples showing that neither at the time of prophets, caliphs nor at the time of old Muslim sultans, the world was far from temptation and depravity (fitne vü fesâd). So he consoles Sultan Ahmed about the circumstances of the country and he advises the Sultan to follow the sharia rules, nominate competent persons to posts and to order judicial representatives to expediently pay judges whatever they deserve, all in order to restore justice. In other words, the sentence "her pâdişâh-ı zamânda zuhûr eden fitne vü fesâd" is spoken by the Sultan himself rather than a reproach to the sultan (as Heß reads it). In the text, the appearance of "fitne vü fesad" (temptation and depravity) refers not to "the sultan (padisah)" but to an enduring condition in human history. In other words, according to the story Veysî tells us in the book, temptation and depravity were unavoidable facts of all times beginning from Adam to the time of Sultan Ahmed.

This is the appropriate place to clarify that Heß's conjecture about the identity of the Sultan is incorrect. He writes, *"Given the dating of the*

manuscript and the historical circumstances, this might be Muṣṭafā I or ʿOsmān II. However, it is less likely to be the sultan who came to power after Muṣṭafā I in the very year the muḳaddime was written down, i.e. Murād IV (1623–1640), even if this is theoretically possible." (p. 160) Veysî, in fact, mentioned clearly the name of Sultan under whom he wrote his *Vâkı'a-nâme* at f. 30a as "Ahmed Han bin e's-sultan Mehmed Han" that is Ahmed I who reigned between 21 December 1603 and 22 November 1617.

It could be thought that by reading *Vâkı'a-nâme* but considering that it is *Mukaddime*, Heß arrived at such conclusions. Even so, *Vâkı'a-nâme* is a book written for consoling Sultan Ahmed and pointing out that "at no time has undisturbed tranquillity been the lot of man" (Gibb 1904: v. III, p. 209). It is more of a book of advice than critique.

Heß also bases his argument that *Mukaddime* criticizes Ottoman political system on his reading of the first text (the Mukaddime itself). However, his reading takes a convoluted path rather than the simplest explanation. Parts of the *Mukaddime* that explain Hurufi philosophy and practices are assumed to "*address the dominating conservative circles of the Ottoman Empire.*" (p. 151). Likewise, according to him, *Mukaddime* "can be characterized as outwardly assimilatory and crypto-missionary" text. It is an outwardly assimilatory text because it addresses to the rituals of Islam, which are important for formalists, vis-à-vis the antinomists. Moreover, as Heß claims, it is a crypto-missionary text because it does not openly challenge the ruling opinion (pp. 158-159). *Mukaddime*'s focus on typically orthodox issues can be "a tactical move" to converge "heterodox" Hurufis and the orthodox Ottoman Sunnis, thereby to combat against "temptation and depravity" in the overall Ottoman political system. (p. 160)

As the title ("Introduction…") explicitly states, *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* is a primer to the fundamentals of Hurufism. *Mukaddime* was written to introduce Hurufism to people, and touches upon the most essential issues of Islam. As discussed below, there are many other early Hurufi texts which address the same issues. While Heß's desire to place theological and pietistic texts in their historical context is laudable, the fact that he inadvertently associates the text with the wrong historical context forces him to see connections to later Ottoman formalist dominance where there are none.

To sum up, Heß assesses the *Mukaddime* as a political critique due to two reasons. First, he considers Veysî, a probable janissary. Second, he refers to a sentence as the main argument of the text even though the sentence does not even belong to *Mukaddime* but to *Vâkı'a-nâme.* Assuming the *Mukaddime* to date to two centuries later than its actual composition he mistakenly reads it within the incorrect historical context, viewing the *Mukaddime* as a "tactical move" to approach the dominating conservative circles of the Ottomans. In fact, the *Mukaddime* should be understood as a text that interprets the essentials of Islam from the Hurufi perspective.

Before moving on to the details of these arguments, we will review how Heß characterizes the historical development of Hurufism.

3. Historical Periodization Of Hurufism

Hurufism is a mystical-philosophical movement established by Fazlullah (d. 1394) in the 14th century under the Timurid Empire. Fazlullah and his disciples, except for Nesîmî, wrote their texts in Persian. However, due to the increasing political pressure on Hurufis and the execution of Fazlullah under Timur's reign, Hurufis felt it necessary to immigrate to Anatolia and the Balkans. Not much knowledge has passed down to us about the Hurufi history in Persian lands. A close look into Hurufi texts reveals that Hurufism was kept alive by certain Ottoman scholars and Sufis until the 17th Century and, according to our recent research, even up until to the 19th Century.

Michael Reinhard Heß points out two potential shortcomings in his summary of the preface of my book "Hurufilik" (Cf. Usluer 2009a: 9-16). According to Heß, the first drawback is the difficulty of discerning a radical shift in Hurufi activity or doctrine after they moved from Timurid lands following the death of Fazlullah (p. 157). However, Usluer does not categorize the Hurufi migration to Anatolia as a radical shift in its history. On the contrary, he mentions the continuity of Persian texts no matter how exceptional they may be. He talks about the 16th and 17th Century Hurufis and the examples of Cavidi Ali and Işkurt Dede who lived in Anatolia and the Balkans and wrote in Persian. He also mentions these details in the following chapters of the book (Usluer 2009a: 96-102).

The second shortcoming, Heß claims, is about Usluer's failure to regard the historical division of Hurufi movement between its open mission and crypto-mission periods. According to Heß, Usluer fails to assess the change from the open mission to the spiritual activity phase. In contrast to what Heß further claimed, Usluer categorized Hurufi history according to geography and language.

In fact, it is difficult to find evidence for periods of 'open mission' or 'crypto-mission' in authentic Hurufi texts. However, if it were necessary to make such a categorisation, it would be better to do it *vice-versa*. In other words the texts of Hurufis written in the second period, under the rule of the Ottomans, were more open, challenging and non-crypto at all.

Now let us focus on the following question: How does Heß categorize the Hurufi history then and where does he locate the *Mukaddime*, whose author he supposes to be Veysî and which he believes to have been written in the 17th century?

According to Michael Heß, the first period of Hurufi history starts with the original revelation of Fazlullah and continues three quarters of a century until the Hurufi executions under the reign of Mehmed II. This initial period is termed as "openly missionary" by Heß. Accordingly, it is concluded that in the first period Hurufis pursued more political ambitions compared to their goals in the second period. They were more "extroverted" and "aggressive" during the first period while the second, "crypto-missionary" period was characterised as "introverted" and submissive to the political authority. According to Heß, Hurufis gave up their open proselytizing activities and they were no longer aiming at the conquest of political foundations. (p. 157)

Contrary to Heß's arguments, one may observe Hurufi political engagement during the later period even more than the earlier one. For instance, a famous Hurufi poet Misâlî (Gül Baba) assisted Suleiman the Magnificent during the conquest of Budin and fell a martyr in the battle. His tomb and a dervish lodge that were built in his name are still in Budapest (Usluer 2009a: 91-93). Moreover, during the later period, relations between Hurufis and governors were not less than they had been in the first period. Even after the reign of Mehmed II, Hurufis' interactions with the upper and political classes were much more extroverted compared to their affairs during Timur's time.

Some scholars suggest that Hurufism influenced famous Ottoman statesmen such as Muhibbî (Suleiman the Magnificent), Bâkî and religious scholars and sufis like Kânî and Usûlî (Cf. Norris 1999: 95, Burrill 1972: 72-84). It is even known that a Hurufi secretary Mir Fuzaylî (d. 1160/1747)[**] was a master in the madrasa of Fatih Mosque (cf. 1054, ff. 112b-113a). How can then we depict the second period as "introvert" while we, in the first period, cannot find as much examples as we find in the second period?

The most important sources for confirming or disproving such a thesis Heß puts forth are the Hurufi texts themselves, which comprise more than seven thousand pages. However, what Heß comes to claim is dichotomous: while he defines Hurufism as a "political religion" he, on the other hand, explains the absence of political tone in Hurufi texts by claiming that Hurufism deliberately tried to gain acceptance on the theological level at first (p. 153). So, then, one wonders why Heß cannot put forth any proof for the political aspects of Hurufi texts.

Heß, in his article, defines the reason of our fragmentary knowledge on the time between the end of the open mission and the 17th century in which *Mukaddime* was written by using the words "the clandestine status" of later period Hurufis. (p. 158) In this sense, it is now time to visit the second period of Hurufism, which, according to Heß, is crypto missionary, introverted, clandestine, etcetera.

Considering their epigraphs, we can easily conclude that almost all Hurufi texts were copied in Ottoman lands. According to research conducted on 107 manuscripts with epigraphs, 104 of them carry the inscription dates as follows: three of them were written in the 15th century, fourteen of them in the 16th century, ten of them in the 17th century, forty-five of them in the 18th century, and thirty-two of them in the 19th century. Among these texts, eighty-nine manuscripts bear the name of the scribe and forty-eight of them note the place of copying (cf. Usluer-Yıldız 2010: 270-271). Regarding these statistics, we may say that the age when Hurufism was very popular was the 18th century. When we take into consideration the eighty-nine manuscripts that obviously carry the name of their scribes and half of them displaying the name of their cities, even of their parishes and neighbourhoods, where they were copied, we need to ask what kind of clandestineness is Heß talking about?

[**] He copied the Hurufi corpus which is found at Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 1054.

It is clear that Heß's categorisation requires more proof. What is worse, assuming that *Mukaddime* was a text written in the 17th century and taking it as a text that exemplifies the so-called crypto-mission period, Heß utilizes *Mukaddime* for understanding the transformation of Hurufism to a state which is "more introvert" compared to the missionary period.

4. A Comparative Analysis Between *Mukaddime* And Other Hurufi Texts

Since Heß considers *Mukaddime* as "belonging to a late form of Hurufism, which both in content and practice diverged from the original Hurufi sect of the 14th-15th centuries." (p. 151), he concludes that "Mukaddime can also be interpreted as a symptom of the decline of Hurufism first as a missionary religion and then as a discernible religious movement altogether." (p. 159)

Even though we know that *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* is an example of the early period of Hurufism and that Hurufism survived four more centuries after *Mukaddime*, we should try to find out what might have made Heß consider *Mukaddime* as an example text of the late period of Hurufism, hence, an indication of the decline of Hurufism.

The first section of *Mukaddime* talks about the daily Muslim prayers which consist of 17 *rek'ats* (17 serial parts of praying), and associates them with the 17 separated letters (*Hurûf-ı Mukatta'ât*) of Koran. According to Heß, "this particular pattern of argumentation is typical of a late period of Hurufi history. It is less emphasized in the initial phases of the religion." (p. 157) Heß also claims that using this dual connotation of the number "17" is a crypto-missionary element and that the writer of *Mukaddime* obviously ignores the ruling opinion. (p. 159)

In that case, let us now examine by comparing the section of *Mukaddime* in question -the so-called "late" Hurufi text- with the early Hurufi texts we will examine within this paper:

First, we will try to answer if this particular pattern of argumentation of *Mukaddime* is a typical characteristic of the late period. Second, we will see if there is a difference in the degree to which the *Mukaddime* "challeng[es] the ruling opinion" in comparison with Hurufi texts of the first period. Third, we will see if *Mukaddime*, in terms of both content and practice, diverges from the original Hurufi sect of the 14th-15th centuries. And last, we will see if there is a "marked change in the Hurufis' attitudes towards their audience" as Heß claims.

At this point, it seems appropriate to give a summary of the passages of *Mukaddime*, which are about the daily prayers to which Heß refers:

There are three kinds of prayers related to the number of the *rek'at*. Someone who is in the land of his residence and is not ill prays 17 *rek'ats* per day. If the person is ill or on travel s/he prays 11 *rek'ats*, and on Fridays s/he prays 15 *rek'ats*. The objective of praying is *secde*†† and the reason for God's order to angels to bow down before Adam is related to the 28 signs

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†† Secde is the act of touching the ground with the forehead during Muslim prayers.

that exist on a human face representing the 28 letters of the Koran. These signs on Adam's face are so important that God decreed that the *secde* be fulfilled the same number of times (28).

In Koran *Huruf-ı Mukatta'ât* (separated letters), too, consists of 14 kinds of letters whose signs (the parts of the face where hair grows like eyebrows, eyelids, and so on) can be seen on Adam's face. Likewise, the total number of letters reached after pronouncing each letter separately and phonetically of the word Allah makes 14. Besides, when we pronounce the 14 separated letters (*Huruf-ı Mukatta'ât*), 3 new letters emerge, making the total 17. So, the 17 *rek'ats* of the daily prayer actually equals to these 17 letters.

Someone who is ill or traveling prays 11 *rek'ats* per day. It equals the 11 letters that are left after the subtraction of 17 letters from the 28 letters of the alphabet. It means that the total of the 17 *rek'ats* of daily prayer together with the 11 *rek'ats* of the traveller or the ill person equals the 28 letters of Koran, which are manifest at the same time on the human face. (Nesîmî, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî Şer'iyye, no. 946: ff. 5a-5b-6a)

Now let us have a look at *Muhabbet-nâme* -a work of the founder of Hurufism, Fazlullah- and see what it says about the this subject:

"The sura of Fatiha which has 7 verses, was called by God and the Prophet as *Seb'u'l-Mesânî* (the repeated seven). These 7 verses should be read during the 17 *rek'ats* of the daily prayers that are parallel to the same number of the 17 letters. If you ask about the 14 separated letters visible at the beginnings of some suras of the Koran, (the answer is) when you pronounce these 14 letters, 3 more letters appear: fe, waw and dâl. Thus, it is clear that the 17 *rek'at* daily prayer reflects these 17 letters of the Koran. Plus, the remaining 11 letters which are not found at the beginning of the suras of the Koran as separated letters equal the 11 *rek'ats* of the traveller. To this end, the prayer praises God the same number of times as the 28 letters which make up and are structural atoms of Koran."[‡‡] (*Muhabbet-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî Persian, no. 824, ff. 65a-65b)

"Now, these 28 lines of Adam's face equal to the 28 divine letters, which at the same time equals to the number of the prayer's praying; 17 *rek'ats* as the daily prayer plus 11 *rek'ats* as the traveller's prayer. Without doubt, during ablution, the water should be reached to face (to the 28 lines of the face), which signifies that 28 *rek'ats* of the prayer is parallel to the 28

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‡‡ الحمد را که هفت آیت است و حضرت رسالت او را و حضرت الهی او را سبع المثانی خواند هفده رکعت خواند در هفده رکعت

صلوة حضر در شب و روزی میباید خواند بعدد هفده کلمه که سؤال کردی که در قرآن آمده باشد از اوائل سور حروف مقطّعهء

قرآن که چهارده کلمه است که آمده است و چون آن چهارده در تلفّظ می آید ازو سه کلمهء دیگر که فا و واو دال است ظاهرست

تا بعدد هفده کلمه هفده رکعت صلوة در کلام الهی بر این نهج آمده باشد و یازده کلمه که در اوائل سوره بر نهج حروف مقطعه

نیامده است آنست که در سفر یازده رکعت باید گذاردن تا بعدد (م65ب) بیست و هشت کلمهء الهی که کلام الهی از ایشان

مرکّبست و اصل کلام الهی اند مصلّی پرستش حضرت احدیّت کرده باشد.

divine lines and still to the 28 letters of God, the Eternal."[§§] (*Muhabbet-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî Persian, no. 824, f. 92b)

And in *Câvidân-nâme* of Fazlullah:

"14 letters which are at the beginning of the suras of Koran, with and without repetition, consist of 17 letters. And the 17 *rek'at* of prayer of the resident should be performed the same number of times. And during travel, the 11 *rek'at* of prayer should be performed 11 times, equalling to the same number of letters which do not exist at the beginning of the suras as the separated letters do."[***] (*Câvidân-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 1000, f. 21a)

In his *Nev-nâme*, Fazlullah also writes:

"The essence of the Koran which came to the Prophet is made up of 28 letters. 14 of them arrived separately. When these 14 letters were pronounced, 3 more letters appear and in sum they make 17 letters. The 17 *rek'at* prayer of the resident equals to these 17 letters, which are eternal and exist with the essential personage of God."[†††] (*Nev-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 1030, f. 2b)

Şeyh Ebu'l-Hasan - a disciple of Fazlullah - talks about the same subject in his *Zübdetü'n-Necât*:

"When a believer servant reads 14 lines, it means s/he has read 17 letters of the 28 letters. And 11 letters, by the order of God, were left aside. So, oh believer servant! Look and see that your prayer, according to sharia, is obligatory to perform; sometimes 17 *rek'at* for the resident and sometimes 11 *rek'at* for the traveller. The sum of them is equal to 28 *rek'at*, paralleling the number of the letters of Koran." (*Zübdetü'n-Necât*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 993, f. 79a)

Kemaleddin Kaytag, another disciple of Fazlullah, in his book titled *Itâ'at-nâme*, devotes, just like *Mukaddime*, a chapter, named as "Der-beyân-ı a'dâd-ı reke'ât-ı salât", to the same subject and explains prayers by using the same way. (Cf. Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 1052, ff. 22b-31b).

As it is very evident now, *Mukaddime* neither diverges from the original Hurufi sect of the 14th-15th centuries, nor are its argumentations typical of the late period. What is more, it not quite probable to observe in any of the Hurufi texts of the 14th-15th centuries the element of "challenging the ruling opinion" that Heß claims in his article.

[§§] اکنون این بیست و هشت سطر خط وجه آدم است علیه السّلام در ازاء بیست و هشت کلمهٔ الهی که صلوة بعدد آن بیست و هشت کلمهاست هفده حضر و یازده سفر لاجرم در وضو آب به وجه باید رسانیدن تا مشعر باشد به آن که صلوة بیست و هشت رکعت بعدد این بیست و هشت خط الهی است که در ازاء بیست و هشت کلمهٔ خداست ازلئ ابدی.

[***] چهارده اسم و کلمه که در اوایل سورهٔ قرآن آمده است به تکرار و بلا تکرار مسلّم که او مرکّب است از هفده کلمه و هفده رکعت صلاة به عدد ایشان می باید گذارد در حضر و یازده در سفر به عدد یازده کلمه که در اوایل سورهٔ قرآن بر نهج حروف مقطعه نیامده است

[†††] اصل کلام الهی که بحضرت رسالت ءم آمده است بیست و هشت کلمه است وازین بیست و هشت کلمه چهارده کلمهٔ مفرد آمده استوازین چهارده کلمه مفرد آمده است در وقت قرائت این حروفسه کلمهٔ دیگر حاصل میشود چنانکه هفده کلمه باشد که این هفده رکعتصلوت حضر در مقابل این هفده کلمه باشد که ازلی ابدیست وقایم بذات حقّست.

All these parallelisms between *Mukaddime* and the first period texts of Hurufism derive from the fact that the *Mukaddime* is not a text of the 17th century Hurufism, and even contrary to this, it belongs to the first period.

Hereafter, I will put forward the characteristics of the Hurufi texts of the 17th century and afterwards. I will show that the second period of Hurufism is not "more subdued vis-a-vis the ruling authorities", "introverted", "crypto-missionary", or a "secretly operating religion", as Heß claims, but that, on the contrary, during these centuries Hurufi writers and poets were more courageous and outspoken compared to the writers of the first period of Hurufism.

For instance, Işkurt Dede, a Hurufi writer of the 17th century, in his *Salât-nâme* could write "حضرت ف ربّ العالمين و مالك يوم الدّين" (Hazret-i Fazl, the lord of the worlds and the sovereign of the Day of Judgment") (*Salât-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Persian, no. 1043, f. 31a).

In addition, Muhîtî (b. 1553), the famous Ottoman Hurufi poet and writer, uses expressions in *Keşf-nâme* that are more bold and direct than would be expected from a writer of the early period of Hurufism. Like Işkurt Dede, Muhîtî describes Fazlullah with the attributes of Allah in the Koran: "Hazret-i Fazl-ı Rabbü'l-âlemîn ve mâliki yevmi'd-dîn" (Hazret-i Fazl, the lord of the worlds and the sovereign of the Day of Judgment" (*Keşf-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Şer'iyye, no. 1356, f. 28b). There are many other examples where Muhîtî in his *Keşf-nâme* depicts Fazlullah with the same attributions used for Allah. Here are two examples: "This signifies the emergence of Hazret-i Lord of the lords, who is the Owner of interpretation."[‡‡‡] (*Keşf-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Şer'iyye, no. 1356, f. 45b), and "Whoever rejects and disbelieves in the unity of the Owner of perfection, who is Fazl, the Possessor of glory, and does not know him as truthful God, he has not religion and his faith is not correct."[§§§] (*Keşf-nâme*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Şer'iyye, no. 1356, f. 14b).

Last but not least, some extracts from the verses of Arşî (1562-1621), another famous Ottoman Hurufi poet of the 17th century, will shed more light on our argument. These absolutely non-crypto verses of Arşî's *Dîwân* prove the inaccuracy of Heß's categorisation:

Oh Lord! For the sake of Tâhâ, my request from you is

May all difficulties be solved and all the doors be opened In front of Your door,

Hold his hand, Your poor servile servant Arşî's hand,

Oh Fazl the Lord of the lords[****]

[‡‡‡] Here and in all other Hurufi texts, the expression "the Owner of interpretation" is used to refer to Fazlullah. "Bu beyândan Hazret-i Rabbü'l-erbâb ki Hüdâvend-i Te'vîl'dür, zuhûrlarına işâretdür"

[§§§] "Her kimse ki Hazret-i Sâhib-i Kemâl ki Fazl-ı Zü'l-celâldür celle ismüh anun vahdâniyyetine ikrâr idüp îmân getürmese ve anı Hüdâ-yı ber-hakk bilmese anun dîni yokdur ve îmânı dürüst degül dimekdür."

[****] Yâ rabb be-hakk-ı tâ hâ senden budur murâdım

Hall ola cümle müşkil feth ola cümle ebvâb

Kapında bir fûtâde abd-i hakîrinizdir

(*Diwân-ı Arşî*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Manzum, no. 285, f. 13a)

Read "In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful",

and ask for help from Fazl the absolute, who is that "He is Allah, One"

is that "He never begets", and "he is not born" is his glory

"Nor is there to Him any equivalent" is his attribute

He embraces everything by thirty-two names (letters)

Though there is neither limit nor count to his manifestations[††††]

(*Diwân-ı Arşî*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Manzum, no. 285, f. 18a)

Let it be known that when the absolute Personage

Wears the dress of human

it was Fazl who came and manifested

and ordered the prayer of the fifty[‡‡‡‡]

(*Diwân-ı Arşî*, Millet Library, Ali Emîrî, Manzum, no. 285, f. 83b)

6. Conclusion

Unfortunately, when a researcher mistakes two different texts for one book and hence catalogues it inaccurately, each conclusion at which s/he will arrive will carry a high potential for confusion. What is more, if s/he misunderstands both texts, builds arguments from them and draws many conclusions on the full history of a movement like Hurufism, the natural result is many more mistakes.

Nesîmî's well-known, 15th century work *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* has been analysed by Heß as a 17th century work by Veysî. Veysî, a famous Ottoman officer, historian, writer and poet was also mistakenly hypothesized to have been a janissary who could criticize the Sultan, thereby falsely turning *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık* into a text of political criticism of the 17th century Ottoman State.

Arşîye destgîr ol yâ fazl-ı rabbu'l-erbâb
[††††] Oku bismi'llahi'r-rahmani'r-rahîm iste meded
Fazl-ı mutlaktan kim oldur kul hüvellahu ehad
Lem yelid oldur ve lem yûled onun şânındadır
Lem yekun vasfıdır evsâfı lehû kufuven ehad
Si o do esmâ ile oldu muhît-i külli şey
Gerçi kim yoktur zuhûrâtına onun hadd u add
[‡‡‡‡] Ma'lûm ola tâ ki Zât-ı mutlak
Giydikte libâs-ı şekl-i insân
Fazl idi gelip kılan tecellî
Emr eden ezel namazı elli

In this context, the absence of political ideas in the *Mukaddime* was interpreted by Heß as a "tactical move", which was a part of a deliberate attempt to approach the dominating conservative circles of Ottomans. This was, of course, a natural end result of Heß' mistaking *Mukaddime* as a 17th century example of late Hurufism, an era when Hurufism was at its decline. The core of his mistake lied in his idea that the first period of Hurufism cannot coincide with *Mukaddime*'s time, and that in the beginning, Hurufis were extroverted and experiencing an open-missionary period. But later, he continues to argue, during the second period, after the time of Mehmed II, they became introverted, crypto-missionary, and developed a clandestine character.

In this article, we have rectified the main mistakes Reinhard Heß made in his article. *Mukaddimetü'l-Hakâyık*, as it was written on the epigraphs of all its copies was, within the oeuvre of Nesîmî, who wrote it in the first period of Hurufism. It has the same approach to Islamic rituals as Fazlullah's and his disciples' writings. Therefore, all of what Heß thinks about the late period of Hurufism and his ideas based on *Mukaddime* could have been right only for the first period of Hurufism. Nevertheless, as for the post-16th century history of Hurufism in the Ottoman lands, it should be said that the Hurufis' style was extroverted, bold and direct.

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