

Treasures of Knowledge
An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library
(1502/3–1503/4)

VOLUME I

Studies and Sources in Islamic Art and Architecture

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Treasures of Knowledge
An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace
Library (1502/3–1503/4)

VOLUME I: ESSAYS

Edited by

Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar,
and Cornell H. Fleischer



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Group photograph of participants at the Harvard University Workshop (April 4–6, 2014) on “The Ottoman Palace Library Inventory.”

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“BOOKS ON AGRICULTURE (*AL-FILĀḤA*) PERTAINING TO MEDICAL SCIENCE” AND OTTOMAN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AND PRACTICE AROUND 1500

The inventory of the royal library of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), compiled in 908 (1502/3), has nine entries on “agriculture.” Rather than the more accepted term *filāḥa*, the inventory renders agriculture as *falāḥa*, and categorizes books on the subject under the heading “pertaining to” (*min qibali*) “medicine” (*ṭibb*).¹ This section on medicine, which is twenty-one pages long, includes 340 entries, some consisting of multiple volumes and compendiums.² Books on agriculture are listed on the final page. Only one of these books, the *Kitāb Qaṣṭawīs* (Book of Qastawīs), is given a specific title, while the rest are listed with generic names: *Kitāb al-Falāḥa* (Book on Agriculture), or *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-Falāḥa* (Abbreviated Book on Agriculture).

Here, I will try to identify the books on agriculture in the inventory through a study of available manuscripts in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library and in the Süleymaniye Library that bear the almond-shaped seal of Bayezid II.³ I will demonstrate that the library’s holdings on agriculture were dominated by the two earliest known Arabic works on agriculture. The first work, sometimes translated in Arabic as the *Kitāb al-Zarʿ* (Book on Planting) but more commonly known as the “Book of Qastus” or the *Al-Filāḥa al-Rūmīya* (Roman Agriculture), was originally written in Greek by the sixth-century author Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus (Qaṣṭūs b. Iskūlastīka). Though the original Greek version is lost, there are two extant Arabic translations, the earliest dating to the ninth century.⁴ The second major work on agriculture is *Al-Filāḥa al-Nabaṭīya* (Nabataean Agriculture), which was based on earlier Syriac sources and translated in 291 (903/4) by Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Qays al-Kasdani, also known as Ibn Wahshiyya, a scholar from Iraq.⁵

That these two works were or would soon be considered canonical for Ottoman scholars is shown by the fact that they are by far the most cited works in the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān* (Splendor of the Garden), the earliest and most influential book on agriculture written in Ottoman Turkish. The first extant copy of this book dates to 1577, but it may have been composed earlier in the sixteenth century.⁶ In the introduction, the anonymous author states that he “submitted to the opinions of wise men” (*āḳvāl-i ḥukemāya ittibāʿ*) that he found in “books on agriculture” (*kütüb-i filāḥa*), as well as “what [he] had heard from the practitioners” (*ehl-i tecrībeden istimāʿ eyledügüm*). He claims that he decided to write the treatise during the “construction” (*taʿmīr*) of his own “garden” (*ravza*) near Edirne.⁷ Throughout the text, the author relies on ancient scholars also cited in the *Nabataean Agriculture*, such as “Ṣaḡhrīth” and “Yanbūshād”; he further references “Qaṣṭūs.” Whether the author gained his knowledge of Ibn Wahshiyya’s and Qastus’s works from the copies held in the palace library is uncertain. However, the emphasis he places on these works, out of the dozens of agricultural treatises circulating in the Eastern Mediterranean at the time, is striking. It suggests that the royal library may have played an important role in the production of agricultural knowledge and its dissemination, even outside the palace, or that the palace may have collected books that were already part of a wider discourse in the Ottoman learned society. Indeed, members of the palace administration and janissaries—the same kinds of people who may have had access to the royal library—were investing in commercial farming in Edirne and across Thrace by the mid-sixteenth century.⁸

The roots of a burgeoning Ottoman discourse on agriculture can thus be investigated by tracking the acquisition of books on the subject in the palace library. As I will argue, the interest in agricultural works had already been growing among Ottoman scholars and other urban elites: Wahshiyya's and Qastus's works would have been sought after by an audience that, by the first decade of the sixteenth century, was heavily invested in the establishment of new agricultural spaces in and around the capital Istanbul. The Ottoman palace administration itself had a vested interest in agriculture, as it transformed land into royal gardens that grew produce to be sold on the market. By the 1520s, "royal gardens" (*bāğçehā-i ḥāṣṣa*) had proliferated around Istanbul, expanding to other areas outside the city walls and along the Bosphorus. Seven of these royal gardens yielded an income of 150,752 aspers (*aḳçe*) in 1524–25 for the Inner Treasury from the sale of flowers, vegetables, and fruits, presumably on the Istanbul market.⁹ At the same time, produce gardens were becoming standard features of sultanly charitable foundation complexes. Thus, the presence in the royal library of the two "seeds" of a canon on agriculture—texts that the author of the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān* cites alongside what he learned from practitioners—should be seen against the background of an increased interest in commercial farming. At the end of this essay, I will briefly note a parallel process that unfolded in the first two decades of the sixteenth century in late Mamluk Cairo, where manuscripts on agriculture were collected, copied, and written.

The clean copy of the inventory from 1503/4 has a subheading: "Description of books on medicine and [what is related to medicine with respect to books on toxicology and agriculture] (*Tafṣīlu al-kutub al-ṭibbiyyati [wa-mā yata'allāqu bi-al-ṭibbi bi-jihatin min al-jihāti kakutubi al-sumūmi wa-kutubi al-falāḥati]*)."¹⁰ The second part of the subheading, indicated above in brackets, is written in smaller letters over the words "Description of books on medicine," in the empty space the librarian had left for additional books in the previous section (on mysticism, etc.). The second part of the subheading, which appears to have been a correction to the first part, is also found verbatim in the table of contents at the beginning of the inventory. This is the only case in the inventory where part of a subheading is written in small-

er letters above the rest of the subheading. It is possible that the scribe transcribing the inventory in a clean copy in 1503/4 made updates to the original version, which was drawn up in 1502/3. The creation of the inventory should therefore not be seen as a finite event, but rather as an ongoing process. Indeed, this is already shown by the empty spaces that were left throughout the inventory, especially the spaces at the end of each section intended for inserting new titles. At the end of the section on medicine, directly after the listing of books on agriculture, there are three empty pages.¹¹ The placement of all nine books on agriculture at the very end of the section on medicine may reflect the physical arrangement of these books in the royal library, where the books on agriculture were most likely clustered in a single shelf that served as the kernel for a growing field of interest.

Extant manuscripts on agriculture held today in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library and elsewhere further indicate that the palace library acquired more works on the subject soon after the inventory was drawn up. For instance, there is a copy of the fourth part (*juz'*) of the *Nabataean Agriculture* now in the Topkapı library that, according to the flyleaf, was created "by order of the treasury" (*bi-rasm khizānati*) of the Mamluk sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri (r. 1501–16).¹² This manuscript may have been brought to Istanbul, together with the third part (*al-juz' al-thalās*) of the *Nabataean Agriculture* now in the Süleymaniye Library's Turhan Sultan collection (which originated in the palace library), by the Ottoman sultan Selim I (r. 1512–20) following the conquest of Cairo.¹³ The Leiden University Library holds the eighth volume (*al-juz' al-thāmin*) from this same copy of the *Nabataean Agriculture*, which is likewise dedicated to Qansuh al-Ghawri.¹⁴ It is part of the collection of books that the Dutch ambassador in Istanbul, Levinus Warner (d. 1665), assembled during his stay in Istanbul. More research should be undertaken regarding which of the books that had been removed from the royal library of Qansuh al-Ghawri were acquired by the royal library in Istanbul, and how such works relate to the specific scholarly interests reflected in the inventory.

As noted above, of the nine books on agriculture listed in this section, the inventory lists only one work by its title: *Kitāb Qaṣṭawīs* (Book of Qastawīs). This

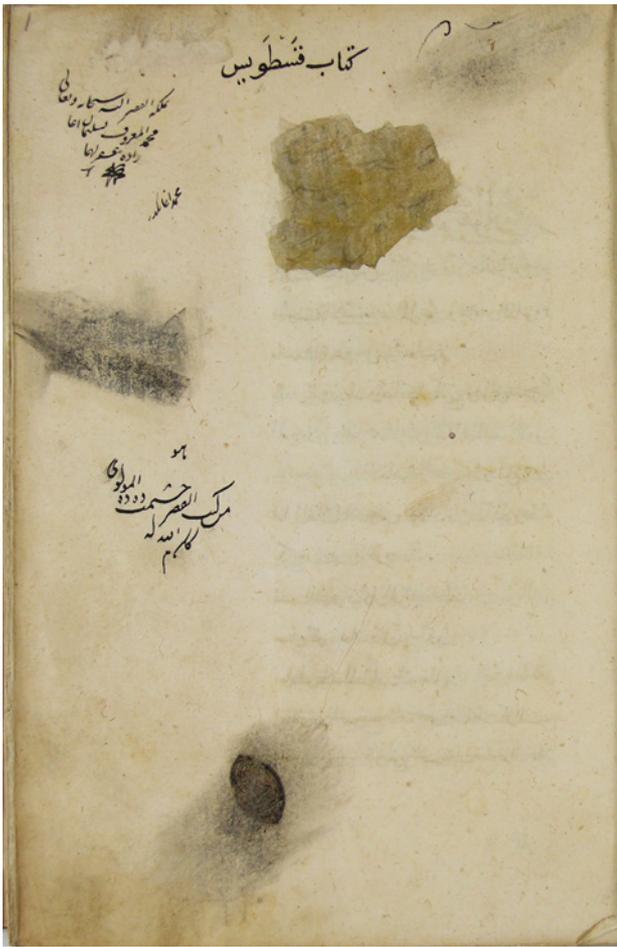


Fig. 1. Flyleaf of the Book of Qaṣṭawīs, recorded in the inventory of 1503/4, TSMK, EH 1700, fol. 1a.

corresponds to the title of a manuscript now held in the Topkapı Palace library collection, which is vocalized in the same distinctive manner: “Qaṣṭawīs” instead of “Qaṣṭūs.” The manuscript also bears an almond-shaped seal that is damaged, as if someone had tried to erase it. What remains of the seal, however, strongly resembles the seal of Bayezid II.¹⁵ The flyleaf also contains two legible ownership notes, of a “Mehmed known as Süleyman Ağazade” and of a shaykh from the Mevlevi order, “Haṣmet Dede el-Mevlevi.” Two further notes have been erased to the point of illegibility, which may represent an attempt to destroy evidence that the manuscript was part of the collection of the royal library, just like the erasure of the seal (fig. 1). It is also possible that these

owners, who have yet to be identified, possessed the manuscript before it entered the royal library. At any rate, the ownership notes indicate that this manuscript had a prior life, or an afterlife, outside of the royal library. Our inventory records several manuscripts that were “given away” (*‘itā’ olundu*), including the *al-Jāmi‘u fī al-mufradāti li-Ibn al-Bayṭār* (Compendium of Ibn al-Baytar),¹⁶ a thirteenth-century Andalusian pharmacopoeia focused on various plants and their medicinal uses. Some of the books on agriculture listed in the inventory may have been borrowed from the library, perhaps by palace gardeners or physicians. Other high-ranking bureaucrats, scholars, or practitioners may have also desired to consult these works. In an entry on the village of Müderris, north of Istanbul, the 1498 tax survey of the Haslar district records eight “farm estates of members of the state council and others” (*çiftlikhā-i şudūr-i ehl-i dīvān ma‘a jāyrihim*). Among these are viziers, a chief judge (*kāzī ‘asker*), a *şeyhülislām*, and a janissary, all of whom may have had access to the royal library.¹⁷

As an assessment of the collection, one purpose of the inventory may have been to open the way for new acquisitions. At any rate, the moment such a list was drawn up, it must have created a new consciousness or awareness about the state of knowledge in various fields. The 161-page *Risāla fī al-Ṭā‘ūn* (Treatise on the Plague), now in the British Library, has a chronogram on its flyleaf indicating that it entered the Inner Treasury in the year 917 (1510/11). The book bears two seal impressions, and although they are almost completely erased, they appear to reflect the almond-shaped seal of Bayezid II¹⁸ (fig. 2). Since the same title is recorded in the inventory,¹⁹ which was compiled before the date on the flyleaf, this means that the library must have received a second copy of the treatise after the inventory was completed. A work on the plague would have had a special importance in the first decade of the sixteenth century, when the Ottoman administration was attempting to control the spread of the plague, as it continued to do thereafter.²⁰ As previously mentioned, a similar trajectory can be discerned with the arrival of copies of the *Nabataean Agriculture* in the royal library from the newly conquered Cairo in 1517.

How can we identify the other books on agriculture recorded in the inventory whose titles are not given?

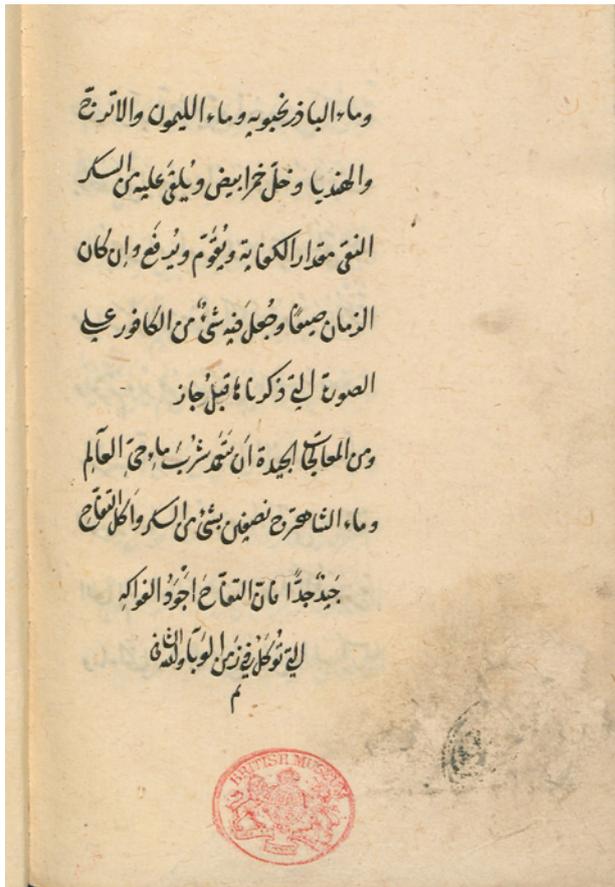


Fig. 2. The last page of *Risāla fī al-Ṭāʿūn* (Treatise on the Plague), which entered the Topkapı Palace Library in 1510/11. British Library, MS Or. 9009, fol. 1a.

Though the first eight entries of books on agriculture have generic names, it is possible to establish that the fourth, an “Abbreviated Book on Agriculture” (*Mukhtaṣaru Kitābi al-falāḥati*), was in fact the book by Qastus. The inventory describes it as being bound together in “one volume” (*mujalladin wāḥidin*), together with an abbreviated work on Shafīʿi jurisprudence and an abbreviated work on physiognomy written in Persian (*Mukhtaṣaru Kitābi al-falāḥati min qibali al-ṭibbi wa-mukhtaṣarun fī fiḥhi al-Shāfiʿī wa-risālatun fārisiyyatun fī al-firāsati fī mujalladin wāḥidin*).²¹ A volume that fits this description and that also bears seals of Bayezid II on its flyleaf and last page is held today in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul (fig. 3).²² A note on the title

page of this work describes it in an identical manner as in the inventory: “abbreviated book on agriculture related to medicine and abbreviated [book] on Shafīʿi jurisprudence and a treatise (*risāla*) on physiognomy (*firāsa*).”²³ The treatise on physiognomy is indeed in Persian. The note on the manuscript may thus have been written by the same royal librarian(s) that drew up the inventory for Bayezid II. This book on agriculture must be identical to the “Book of *Qaṣṭawīs*” now in the Topkapı Palace library collection, which, as we have seen, was recorded in the same distinctive way in the inventory.²⁴ Moreover, that this work was listed among books on agriculture, even though its multiple volumes treat various subjects, is itself significant. In the Ottoman Turkish preface of the inventory, under the “rules of the register and its exceptions,” the librarian notes that, “if there are multiple books in a volume, it is with regard to the book which is more esteemed and whose probability of being requested is higher, or else is rare, that the bound volume is included with books under the aforesaid book’s discipline.”²⁵ Qastus’s volume on agriculture may thus have been the most requested and in demand among readers with access to the royal library.

The current collection in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library has at least six volumes on agriculture that clearly bear the seal of Bayezid II.²⁶ While additional research should be done on these manuscripts, they seem to be abbreviations or selections of the *Nabataean Agriculture* by Ibn Wahshiyya, which traditionally consists of seven parts.²⁷ In each of these six manuscripts, the royal librarian inserted a note on the flyleaf and first page to classify them as volumes of a “book on agriculture pertaining to medicine.” These notes strongly mirror the titles found in the palace library inventory. Four of these notes also specify that the manuscripts are a particular volume of a multivolume work: the second,²⁸ third,²⁹ fourth,³⁰ and fifth “volumes”³¹ of a “book on agriculture pertaining to medicine.” There are also adjacent notes, written in what looks to be a different hand, which specify that the books are “parts” (*juz*) of the *Nabataean Agriculture*. These notes appear to have been made at the time the copies were completed, and to have preceded the information added by the royal librarian. In three cases, the numbers of the parts of the *Nabataean Agriculture* that the notes provide do not

vidually by title, a study of the present-day collection of books on agriculture in the Topkapı Library reveals that these were indeed “abbreviated” versions or selections of the *Nabataean Agriculture*. The absence of Ibn Wahshiyya’s name in the inventory is striking. Yet it may have been that, just as Arabic authors often referred to Aristotle simply as the “author of the Logic” (*ṣāhib al-mantiq*), Ibn Wahshiyya’s work was canonical enough that his name did not need to be specified. The inventory lists several copies of the *‘Ajā’ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā’ib al-mawjūdāt* (Wonders of Creation and the Strange Things Existing) by al-Qazwini (d. 1283), in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian.³⁵ In sections on fruit trees and vegetables, this work notably quotes “the author of the Agriculture” (*ṣāhib al-falāḥa*), a reference to Ibn Wahshiyya.³⁶

When did books on agriculture first enter the royal library? In fact, a written discourse on agriculture had already been emerging in Istanbul during the reign of Bayezid II’s father, Mehmed II (r. 1451–81), who was the founder of the royal library collection at the Topkapı Palace. A copy of the *Nabataean Agriculture* now in the Beyazıt Library in Istanbul has a colophon indicating it was copied for Mehmed II, without specifying a date.³⁷ In the Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Library, there is also another manuscript entitled *Felāḥātnāme* (Book on Agriculture), written in Turkish, whose scribe specifies that he copied it in 1027 (1617) and attributes it to the Timurid astronomer-mathematician ‘Ali al-Qushji (d. 1474), a member of Mehmed II’s court in the early 1470s.³⁸ Only seven pages long, the work is bound together with a copy of the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān*. It treats such subjects as the planting and grafting of trees, and the making of olive oil and vinegar. This short work on agriculture, which was later attributed to ‘Ali al-Qushji, has drawn little attention in scholarship. ‘Ali al-Qushji is not known to have produced a work in Turkish, however, preferring instead Arabic and Persian, which were the main languages of the sciences in the fifteenth century. The scribe, writing in 1617, by which time (following the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān*) there was a tradition of Ottoman Turkish books on agriculture, may have simply invented the attribution.

Yet ‘Ali al-Qushji’s arrival in Istanbul circa 1472 coincided with an increased economic interest in agriculture among the Ottoman administration. The new

mosque complex of Mehmed II, completed in 1470, earned considerable income from fruits, vegetables, and flowers planted in its four gardens, which are referred to in the records as “the garden of the new mosque” (*bāğçe-i cāmi‘i cedīd*), “the garden of the hospital” (*bāğçe-i dār al-ṣifā*), “the garden of the hospice” (*bāğçe-i ‘imāret*), and “the garden of the pantry” (*bāğçe-i kilār*).³⁹ Moreover, in 1465, construction had been completed on the “New Palace” later known as Topkapı, the gardens of which were described by a contemporary historian as “abounding in various sorts of plants and trees, and producing beautiful fruit.”⁴⁰ The 1505 inventory of the Inner Treasury at the Topkapı Palace lists the income of the imperial garden as two coffers of 150,000 and 100,000 aspers each.⁴¹ Another contemporary source states that the gardens’ produce was sold at the piazza in front of the Topkapı Palace’s main gate.⁴² Commercial farming was thus emerging both as a form of royal self-representation and as a means of generating income. The interest in agricultural knowledge at the time also resonates with developments taking place in northern Italy; it is perhaps no accident that a number of artists and scholars from that region rendered their services to Mehmed II.⁴³ In 1472, the Roman-period agricultural works of Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius were edited and published as *Scriptores Rei Rusticares* in Venice.⁴⁴ In such an environment, it is quite plausible that ‘Ali al-Qushji indeed wrote the short work on agriculture that would be attributed to him. Just a few decades later, another Iranian astronomer would venture to write about farming: ‘Abd al-‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Birjandi (d. 1525) wrote a book in Persian at the turn of the sixteenth century entitled *Ma‘rifat-i Falāḥat: Davāz-dah Bāb-i Kishāvarz* (Expertise in Agriculture: Twelve Chapters on Agriculture).⁴⁵ From Italy to Central Asia, then, agricultural knowledge was gaining currency at that time.

If studied on its own, the cross-referential web of books in the palace library inventory and beyond begins to loom so large that it can seem to provide its own context. It is perhaps for this reason that the work of ‘Ali al-Qushji, like that of other scholars, is so often characterized as unfolding in a kind of “ivory tower,” separate from the economic and spatial realities of Istanbul. Likewise, from the inventory alone, one might assume that there was little interest in agriculture in the Ottoman

scholarly world. Yet we should bear in mind that the inventory tells only part of the story. Primary sources, though scattered and still under-researched, imply that there was already an Ottoman written discourse on agriculture at the time.⁴⁶ Earlier Ottoman epistemology had already recognized agriculture as a distinct body of knowledge (*ilm*). The influential Ottoman scholar and statesman Muhammad Shah al-Fanari (d. 1435) includes the science of farming (*ilm al-filāḥa*) in the classification of the sciences in his *Unmūdhaj al-‘ulūm* (Program of the Sciences) of 1424.⁴⁷ He names three fundamentals (*uṣūl*) of this *ilm*: evaluating the soil, protecting grains such as wheat and barley after the harvest, and cultivating a grape with healing properties.

As mentioned above, the *waqf* income and expenditure records of Mehmed II’s mosque complex in Istanbul from 1489–90 refer to a garden “of the hospital” with its own gardener named ‘Abdullah, who grew “fruits and roses” (*meyve ve gül*) and was paid two aspers per day.⁴⁸ Yet apparently the produce of the garden was not enough to satisfy the hospital’s needs; the same records note large sums spent by the hospital on fruits, vegetables, and flowers.⁴⁹ The link between agriculture and medicine reflected in the 1502–3 palace library inventory was rooted in actual medical practice and the institutional role that knowledge about agriculture played therein. Indeed, the aforementioned manuscript on the plague that entered the royal library in 1510–11 strongly emphasizes prevention and cure by the consumption of many of the same fruits, vegetables, and flowers that were purchased by the hospital in the complex of Mehmed II.⁵⁰

The two Turkish translations of the endowment deed of Bayezid II’s charitable foundation in Edirne, which was established in 1488, show evolving provisions related to the gardeners. Both state that “someone knowledgeable” (*māḥir kiṣi*) in the “science of farming” (*fenn-i filāḥat*) should be appointed as the gardener in the mosque complex,⁵¹ which incorporated a hospital, a hospice, and a school. The translations also stipulate that two assistants should be appointed for the gardener; they specify that the gardener’s monthly salary would be 120 aspers [twice the salary of Abdullah above] and the salary of the assistants would be 90 aspers. Importantly, the work of the assistants is defined as *bostāncılık*—“gardening,” but specifically in the sense of

working in a produce garden or *bostānlık*. The use of differentiated terms to refer to the different labors of the master gardener and the apprentices—the science of farming for the former, and *bostāncılık* for the latter—is striking. Moreover, rather than the more common *bostān*, “orchard,” the document uses a variant of the vernacular *bostānlık*, which seems to have been specifically connected to produce gardens in urban areas during this period. For instance, the 1455 Ottoman survey of Galata and Istanbul names in the “Quarter of Samona” a poor Armenian named Marko, who rented a “produce garden” (*bostānlık*) from the state treasury in the moat of the Galata city walls.⁵²

We have seen how the inclusion of books on agriculture in the inventory, and the royal library’s ongoing acquisition of such books, shortly preceded the creation of a novel work on the subject in Ottoman Turkish. Interestingly, a similar trajectory can be traced in the first decades of the sixteenth century in Cairo, where the Damascene scholar Radi al-Din al-Ghazzi (d. 1529) wrote a novel work entitled *Jāmi‘ farā’id al-milāḥa ft jawāmi‘ fawā’id al-filāḥa* (Complete Rules for Elegance in All the Uses of Farming).⁵³ Though Ghazzi was renowned as a judge and scholar in Damascus, this manuscript was written in Cairo in 1510–11, according to a colophon in the copy of the work now held in the National Library in Cairo.⁵⁴ The British Library copy of Ghazzi’s book contains an ownership note in Arabic of one Ahmad bin Mohammad bin Hasan al-Samsuni,⁵⁵ most likely the son of the prominent Ottoman scholar and judge Molla Muhyiddin Mehmed b. Molla Hasan el-Samsuni, who died in 919 (1513/14).⁵⁶ Another note at the end of this copy also records that it was purchased in 1551 in Istanbul⁵⁷—clear proof that Ghazzi’s work was available to Ottoman scholars in the first half of the sixteenth century.

In 1503/4—the same year our copy of the royal library inventory was drawn up in Istanbul—the Mamluk envoy Emir Azbak traveled to the Ottoman court to deliver “four prize horses for Ibn ‘Uthman [i.e., the Ottoman sultan], with bales of seeds of Egyptian clover (*bersīm*) for the horses’ fodder.”⁵⁸ It is worth noting that Ghazzi’s treatise on farming, which was soon received in the Ottoman scholarly world, included an entry on Egyptian clover, describing it as a fodder plant for animals such as horses, and specifying that it should be

planted every year.⁵⁹ In the first decades of the sixteenth century, both clover seeds and a book describing methods for cultivating them traveled between Cairo and Istanbul, as did a scholar who was highly knowledgeable about agriculture. Plants were also increasingly on the move within the various regions of the Mamluk state itself. The Mamluk historian Ibn Iyas (d. 1522) states that various fruiting and flowering trees were imported in 1506–7 from northern Syria to Cairo, with their roots earthed in wooden boxes, and were planted in the newly constructed garden beneath the citadel.⁶⁰

Around 1500, a debate was also intensifying between Mamluk Cairo and Ottoman Istanbul over the right to rule the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. The Mamluk envoy Janibak in the court of Bayezid II was told that the Holy Cities should be ruled by someone with royal lineage, “sultan son of the sultan” (*sultān bin sultān*)—that is, Bayezid II—rather than the son of unbelievers, a dig at Mamluk rulers’ non-royal non-Muslim origins. Janibak answered that knowledge was more important than descent.⁶¹ The creation of the palace library inventory may thus have been fueled, at least to some degree, by intellectual competition with the Mamluks. In 1505, Bayezid II and Qansuh al-Ghawri paralleled each other by establishing large charitable foundations in the centers of Istanbul and Cairo. Large Ottoman sultanic foundations had already been established in the late fifteenth century in Istanbul (1470), Amasya (1484), and Edirne (1488). The growth of the royal library of Bayezid II must have been connected to the rise of these sprawling complexes, centers of learning with their own endowed public libraries that probably received books or copies from the royal library.

Finally, the emphasis placed on the “Book of Qastawis,” the work referred to in at least two of the nine entries on agriculture in the palace library inventory, may have broader significance. The introduction to this work describes its author as a “scholar of Rum” (*‘ālim al-Rūm*), an area the Ottomans associated with the Balkans and Anatolia, lands that had been part of the ancient Roman empire.⁶² To be a “Rumi” was to know, refer to, and implement those compendia of knowledge created by the “ancient” Rumis. An interest in Qastus’s work may thus have reflected particular concerns about geography, identity, and what kinds of agricultural pro-

duction and knowledge were specific to Ottoman regions. The agricultural knowledge of a “scholar of Rum” like Qastus would have been desirable to a new Ottoman elite eager to self-identify as Roman. Qastus had gone into much greater depth than any other author about grapevines: detailing their planting, grafting, tending, and processing into wine and vinegar. Grapevines are the first tree Qastus discusses, and he devotes an entire part (*juzʿ*) to them.⁶³ (By contrast, Ibn Wahshiyā gives the pride of place to the olive tree.)⁶⁴ It is therefore striking that the author of the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān*, too, focuses overwhelmingly on grapevines and discusses them at length. Qastus is the first author he cites, and he refers to Qastus a number of times, particularly with regard to grapevines.

The nine entries on agriculture listed in the inventory may seem minor in comparison to the several thousand volumes listed in total. However, the incorporation of “agriculture” in the name of a subsection on medicine that includes only nine books on agriculture is in itself significant. The royal library’s collection of books on agriculture should be seen in light of the growing interest in agriculture among the palace administration and various urban elites, many of whom by the end of the fifteenth century were already invested in farming operations around Istanbul. By the time the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān* was written in the mid-sixteenth century, this process would accelerate further. The books on agriculture listed in the inventory were the seeds of an agricultural canon that would soon bear fruit in the creation of a novel work in Ottoman Turkish. Numerous copies of the *Revnaḳ-ı Būstān* are found throughout former Ottoman lands in manuscript libraries stretching from Mostar to Damascus.⁶⁵ Thus, the case of books on agriculture suggests that the inventory of Bayezid II’s palace library should be seen as a fascinating record of scholarly interests in flux.

NOTES

1. MS Török F. 59, 172 {1–8}. On the use of both vocalizations, *falāḥ* and *filāḥa* in Arabic medieval dictionaries, see Edward William Lane, “Filaha,” in *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, England: Islamic Texts Society, 1984), 2:2439.

2. MS Török F. 59, 151–72.
3. Several sultans used almond-shaped seals. The seal of Bayezid II bears the inscription “Bāyezīd bin Mehmed Ḥān muẓaffer dāimā” (Bayezid son of Mehmed Han is forever victorious). See Günay Kut and Nimet Bayraktar, *Yazma Eserlerde Vakıf Mühürleri* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1984), 20–21.
4. Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vol. IV (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), 317–18; Julia Maria Carabazo Bravo, “La Filāḥa yūnāniyya et les traités agricoles arabo-andalous,” *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 12, no. 1 (2002): 155–78; and Bachir Attié, “L’origine d’al Falaha ar-rumiyya et du pseudo-Qustus,” *Hesperis-Tamuda* XIII (1972): 139–81; Julius Ruska, “Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus und die arabischen Versionen der griechischen Landwirtschaft,” *Der Islam* 5 (1914): 174–79. There are two editions of the translations: *Qusṭā b. Lūqā, al-Filāḥa ar-Rūmiyya*, ed. Wā’il ‘Abd al-Rahīm A’ubayd (Amman, 1999); and Qastūs Ibn Iskulastiqa, *Kitāb al-Zar’*, ed. Būrāwī al-Ṭarābulī (Qarṭāj: al-Majma’ al-Thaqāfi lil-‘Ulūm wa-al-Ādāb wa-al-Funūn, 2010).
5. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 4:318–29; Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *The Last Pagans of Iraq: Ibn Waḥshīyya and the Nabatean Agriculture* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 10.
6. For an edition and introduction to this work, see Zafer Önler, *Revnaq-i Bustan* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2000).
7. *Ibid.*, 22.
8. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Edirne Askeri Kassamı’na Âit Tereke Defterleri (1545–1659),” *TTK Belgeler* 3, nos. 5–6 (1966): 50–53. See also Aleksandar Shopov, “Between the Pen and the Fields: Books on Farming, Changing Land Regimes, and Urban Agriculture in the Ottoman Eastern Mediterranean ca. 1500–1700” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2016), esp. chapters 1–3.
9. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA), D.BŞM.1/31. For archival sources and historiography related to the royal gardens around Istanbul, see Gülru Necipoğlu, “The Suburban Landscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul as a Mirror of Classical Ottoman Garden Culture,” in *Theory and Design of Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires*, ed. A. Petruccioli (E.J. Brill, 1997), 32–71.
10. MS Török F. 59, 151 {13}.
11. MS Török F. 59, 172–75.
12. Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (hereafter TSMK), A. MS 1989/4.
13. Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi (hereafter SK), Turhan Sultan, MS 264, fol. 1a.
14. Leiden University Library, MS Or. 303d, fol. 1a.
15. TSMK, E.H. MS 1700, fol. 1a.
16. MS Török F. 59, 169 {1}.
17. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA), TT. D. 1086, fol. 88a.
18. British Library, MS Or. 9009, fols. 1a, 2a, 89b. This work was dedicated to Bayezid II: see fol. 8b. The manuscript does not specify the name of the author. According to Michael W. Dols, a book on the plague with the same title was authored by the Ottoman scholar Ibn Kemal (d. 1533–34), who was appointed as *şeyhülislām* in 1526: see Michael W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 333.
19. MS Török F. 59, 169 {4}.
20. Nühket Varlık, *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World: The Ottoman Experience, 1347–1600* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 248–91.
21. MS Török F. 59, 172 {3–4}.
22. SK, Ayasofya MS 3688, fols. 1a, 171b. Qastus’s book is between fols. 1b and 123b.
23. *Ibid.*, fol. 1a: “*Mukhtaşaru Kitābi al-falāḥati min qibali al-ṭibbi wa-mukhtaşarun fi fiḫi al-Shāfi’i wa-risālatun fārisiyyatun fī al-firāsati.*”
24. For an edition of this Arabic translation of Qastus’s (Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus) book on agriculture, see Qastūs Ibn Iskulastiqa, *Kitāb al-Zar’* (see n. 4).
25. See Gülru Necipoğlu, Appendix IV: “Translation of ‘Atufi’s Ottoman Turkish Preface to the Palace Library Inventory,” at the end of this volume.
26. For a description of these volumes, see Fehmi Edhem Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 4 vols. (Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1966), 3:790–92.
27. Tawfiq Fahd, ed., *Al-Filāḥah al-Nabaṭiyyah, Al-tarjamah al-manḥūlah ilā Ibn Waḥshīyah, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ibn Qays al-Kasdānī* (Dimashq: al-Ma’had al-‘Ilmī al-Faransī lil-Dirāsāt al-‘Arabiyyah, 1993), 21.
28. TSMK, A. MS 1989/2–3.
29. TSMK, A. MS 1989/5.
30. TSMK, A. MS 1989/6.
31. TSMK, A. MS 1989/7.
32. MS Török F. 59, 172 {1}.
33. TSMK, A. MS 1989/8, fols. 1b and 172b.
34. TSMK, A. MS 1989/8, fol. 173a.
35. MS Török F. 59, 200 {6–14}.
36. TSMK, H. MS 408, fol. 147b.
37. Istanbul, Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin, MS 2485 fol. 218a.
38. For an introduction to this work and transcription into the Latin alphabet, see Sezer Özyaşamış Şakar, “Anadolu Sahasında Yazılmış bir Tarım Eseri: Felahat-name,” *Türk Kültürü İncelemeler Dergisi* 15 (2006): 97–120.
39. Ömer L. Barkan, “Fatih Camii ve İmareti Tesislerinin 1489–1490 Yıllarına Ait Muhasebe Bilançoları,” *Istanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 23 (1963): 297–341, at 310.
40. Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. from the Greek by Charles T. Riggs (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1954), 208.
41. Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York: Architectural History Foundation, 1991), 203. The facsimile is published in Tahsin Öz, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Kılavuzu* (Istanbul: Devlet Basımevi, 1938), no. 21, fol. 16.

42. Giovanni Antonio Menavino, *Trattato de costumi et vita de Turchi* (Florence, Con privilegio, 1548), 129.
43. Gülru Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversation with Renaissance Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople," *Muqarnas* 29 (2012): 1–81.
44. Georgius Merula and Franciscus Colucia, eds., *Scriptores rei rusticate* (Venice: Nicolaus Jenson, 1472).
45. 'Abd al-'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn Birjandī, *Ma'rīfat-i Falāḥat: Davāzdah Bāb-i Kishāvarzī* (Tehran: Markaz-i Pizhūhishī-i Mirās-i Maktūb, 2008).
46. Catalogues of endowed public libraries in Istanbul from this period, such as those at the mosque complexes of Mehmed II and Bayezid II, as well as those of other patrons, have yet to be systematically studied with respect to their holdings of agricultural works, or lack thereof.
47. SK, Hüsrev Paşa, MS 482, fols. 147b–148a.
48. Barkan, "Fatih Camii ve İmaretı," 310 and 318.
49. *Ibid.*, 328–33.
50. British Library, MS Or. 9009, fols. 52b–54a.
51. Tayyib M. Gökbilgin, *XV.-XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livâsı: Vakıflar, Mülkler, Mukataalar* (Istanbul: Üçler Basımevi, 1952), appendix 126–27 and 180.
52. Halil İnalçık, *The Survey of Istanbul 1455: The Text, English Translation, Analysis of the Text, Documents* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), 255.
53. Sami K. Hamarneh, "Medicinal Plants, Therapy, and Ecology in Al-Ghazzi's Book on Agriculture," *Studies in the History of Medicine* 2 (1978): 223–63.
54. Dār al-Kutub, Cairo, Zirā'ah Taymūr, MS 42.
55. British Library, MS Or. 5751, fol. 1b.
56. See Tāshkubrī'zādah, Aḥmad ibn Muşţafā, *al-Shaqā'iq al-Nu'māniya fi 'Ulamā' al-Dawlat al-Uthmāniya* (Istanbul: Jāmi'at İstānbül, Kulliyat al-Ādāb, Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Sharqīya, 1985), 157–59 and 295–96.
57. British Library, MS Or. 5751, fol. 102b.
58. Elias I. Muhanna, "The Sultan's New Clothes: Ottoman–Mamluk Gift Exchange in the Fifteenth Century," *Muqarnas* 27 (2010): 189–207, at 195.
59. British Library, MS Or. 5751, fol. 61a.
60. Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-Zuhūr fi Waqā'i' al-Duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muşţafā, 7 vols. (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Mişriya al-'Āmma lil-Kitāb, 1982), 4:102.
61. 'Abd al-Wahhāb 'Azzām, *Majālis al-Sultān al-Ghūrī: şafaḥāt min tāriḫ Mişr fi al-qarn al-'āshir al-Hijrī* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Lajnat al-Ta'lif wa-al-Tarjama wa-al-Nashr, 1941), 134–35.
62. Cemal Kafadar, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 7–25, at 20; see also this volume as a whole, which is subtitled "History and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the 'Lands of Rum'," ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Gülru Necipoğlu.
63. TSMK, E. H. MS 1700, fols. 33b–70b.
64. Fahd, *Al-Filāḥah al-Nabaṭiyah*, 1:36.
65. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *Osmanlı Tabii ve Tatbiki Bilimler Literatürü Tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2006), 2:1216–20.

LIST OF ENTRIES

BOOKS ON AGRICULTURE

(*Tafṣīlu ... kutubi al-falāḥati*)

1. “*Kitābu al-falāḥati*” (Book on Agriculture). MS Török F. 59, 172 {1}; Arabic. According to the inventory, this book contains five volumes (*fī khamsi mujalladātin*). It is possible that the four volumes in the Topkapı Palace Library (Karatay, A 1989/2–3; A 1989/5; A 1989/6; and A 1989/7) were part of this five-volume set. Each bears the seal of Bayezid II. On the first pages, the royal librarian numbers them as volumes two, three, four, and five, respectively, of a “book on farming pertaining to medicine.” For instance, the royal librarian describes one of the Topkapı Palace Library manuscripts (A 1989/2–3) on its flyleaf as “Second volume from the Book on Agriculture, pertaining to medicine” (*Mujalladun thānin min Kitābi al-falāḥati min qibali al-ṭibbi*); A 1989/5 is described as the “third volume”; A 1989/6 as the “fourth volume”; and A 1989/7 as the “fifth volume” of “The Book on Agriculture, pertaining to medicine.” These four volumes are abbreviations of Ibn Waḥshīyya’s *Nabataean Agriculture*. Another hand on the flyleaves describes the volumes as “a part” (*juzʿ*) of the *Nabataean Agriculture*: A 1989/2–3 as the “second” part, A 1989/5 as the “third,” A 1989/6 as the “sixth,” and A 1989/7 as the “seventh.”
EDITION: Tawfiq Fahd, ed., *al-Filāḥa al-nabaṭiyya: al-Tarjama al-manḥūla ilā Ibn Waḥshīyya, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Qays al-Kasdānī* (Damascus: al-Maʿhad al-ʿIlmī al-Faransī li-l-Dirāsāt al-ʿArabiyya, 1993).
- 2–3. “*Kitābi al-falāḥati*.” MS Török F. 59, 172 {1–2}; two copies, Arabic.
4. “*Mukhtaṣaru Kitābi al-falāḥati*.” MS Török F. 59, 172 {2}; Arabic.
5. Same as above. MS Török F. 59, 172 {3–4}, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya 3688; Arabic. The inventory describes it as bound together in “one volume” (*mujalladin wāḥidin*) with an abbreviated work on Shafiʿi jurisprudence and an abbreviated work on physiognomy in Persian: *Mukhtaṣaru Kitābi al-falāḥati min qibali al-ṭibbi wa-mukhtaṣarun fī fiqhi al-shāfiʿī wa-risālatun fārisiyyatun fī al-firāsati fī mujalladin wāḥidin* (“Abbreviation of The Book on Agriculture, pertaining to medicine; and abbreviated [book] on Shafiʿi jurisprudence; and a treatise [*risāla*] on physiognomy in one volume”). A volume that fits this description and that also bears the seal of Bayezid II on its flyleaf and last page is held in the Süleymaniye Library (Ayasofya 3688). On its title page, it is identified similarly (and probably by the same librarian) as *Mukhtaṣaru Kitābi al-falāḥati min qibali al-ṭibbi wa-mukhtaṣarun fī fiqhi al-shāfiʿī wa-risālatun fārisiyyatun fī al-firāsati* (“Abbreviation of the Book on Agriculture, pertaining to medicine; and an abbreviated [book] on Shafiʿi jurisprudence; and a treatise on physiognomy in Persian”). The book on agriculture is identical to one of the Arabic translations of the *Filāḥat al-rūmiyya* (Roman Agriculture), a sixth-century work by Qastūs Ibn Iskulastīqa (Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus). Rather than Iskulastīqa, the introduction to the Süleymaniye copy states that the work was authored by “Qastūs b. Iskūrāsribka,” the “scholar from Rūm,” whose work was “known as *Warznāma* [Book on Planting] in Persian and [likewise] as *Kitāb al-zarʿ* in Arabic.”
EDITION: Qastūs Ibn Iskulastīqa, *Kitāb al-zarʿ*, ed. Būrāwī al-Ṭarābulṣī (Qarṭāj: al-Majmaʿ al-Thaqāfi li-l-ʿUlūm wa-al-Ādāb wa-al-Funūn, 2010).
6. “*Kitābu al-falāḥati*.” MS Török F. 59, 172 {4–5}.
7. Same as above. MS Török F. 59, 172 {5}.

8. Same as above. MS Török F. 59, 172 {6–7}.
9. “*Kitāb Qaṣṭawīs fī al-falāḥati*.” MS Török F. 59, 172 {7–8}, Karatay, E.H. 1700. A book with the same title is held in the Topkapı Library, whose title is vocalized as *Kitāb Qaṣṭawīs* on the flyleaf, as in the inventory. In the introduction, the sixth-century author Cassianus Bassus Scholasticus is identified as Qaṣṭawīs bin Iskūrāsribka (Qaṣṭūs bin Iskūlāstīka), as in the Süleymaniye volume (no. 5 above), and he is described as a “scholar from Rūm,” with the title of his work given in Persian as *Warznāma* and in Arabic as *Kitāb al-zarʿ*. The Topkapı copy is identical in content to the one held in the Süleymaniye. It bears an illegible almond-shaped seal, most likely that of Bayezid II, on fol. 1a. There are two legible ownership notes, one of “Muḥammad known as Süleymān Ağāzāde,” and another of “Ḥaṣmet Dede al-Mawlawī,” a shaykh from the Mawlawiyya order.

EDITION: Qaṣṭūs Ibn Iskulastīqa, *Kitāb al-zarʿ*, ed. Būrāwī al-Ṭarābulī (Qarṭāj: al-Majmaʿ al-Thaqāfi li-l-ʿUlūm wa-al-Ādāb wa-al-Funūn, 2010).