

From Scribal Error to Textual Introduction al-Karsi and Minhaju'l-Muzakkirin

¹Ahmet Ekinci, ²Mustafa Çabuk, ³Azime Kelleci

¹Kafkas University, Faculty of Theology Kars/ Türkiye

Orcid: 0009-0008-5840-0441

ahmedekinci@hotmail.com

²Kafkas University, Faculty of Theology Kars/ Türkiye

Orcid: 0000-0002-7921-0312

mustafa.cabuk221@ogr.atauni.edu.tr

³Kafkas University, Faculty of Theology Kars/ Türkiye

Orcid: 0000-0001-7184-3513

azimearslan-316@hotmail.com

HOW TO CITE: ABSTRACT:

Ahmet Ekinci, Mustafa Çabuk, Azime Kelleci (2026). From Scribal Error to Textual Introduction al-Karsi and Minhaju'l-Muzakkirin. International Journal of Special Education, 41(9s), 1062-1074

This study provides a textual analysis of Minhâcü'l-müzekkirîn ve Mi'râcü'l-muhazzirîn, a work written in the genre of sermon and guidance (wa'z and irshād) in 15th-century Anatolia, while also addressing the debates surrounding the identity, nisbah (attributive title), and chronology of its author, Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Karsi. The primary objective of the research is to correct the erroneous information inherited in bibliographic sources since Katib Çelebi in light of manuscript copies, thereby placing the author in his true historical context. In addition to a literature review, the study employs comparative analysis and paleographical examination methods on the copies found in the Manuscript Libraries of Türkiye. Based on classical sources such as Kashf al-Zunun, Hadiyyat al-Arifin, and Mu'jam al-Muallifin, the examinations demonstrate that the common nisbah "al-Farazi" in the literature stemmed from a scribal error, and the correct nisbah is "al-Karsi" (from Kars). This conclusion is supported by the fact that the copies were transcribed in various Anatolian cities. The chronological hesitations in classical sources have been resolved thanks to the oldest manuscript copy dated 840/1436 identified in Niksar, proving the invalidity of the 880/1475 record in the literature and demonstrating that the work was composed at an earlier period. Consequently, this research presents the rich content of the work to the scholarly world while correcting centuries-old chronological and onomastic errors..

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT:

Copyright: © 2026 Authors.

Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY)

license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Karsi, Minhâcü'l-müzekkirîn ve Mi'râcü'l-muhazzirîn, Manuscript, Biography, Scribal Error.

Introduction

The historical development of Sufi thought began with the ascetic practices (*zuhd*) observed in the lives of the Prophet and his companions during the early periods of Islam, and was shaped by tendencies toward individual piety (*taqwa*) and detachment from the world in the early era (Sarraj al-Tusi, 2016; Eraydın, 2017). Under the leadership of Hasan al-Basri (d. 110/728), this ascetic tendency assumed the character of a systematic movement; through his students and followers, asceticism (*zuhd*) began to institutionalize as a moral and spiritual discipline (Knysh, 2011; Karamustafa, 2017; Melchert, 2018). The works on asceticism (*zuhd*) penned during this period formed the foundational sources of Sufi literature in the following centuries (Yalçınkaya, 2020; Başer, 2021; Gündoğdu, 1997).

In the continuation of this developmental process, authors such as Harith al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857), Sahl b. Abdullah al-Tustari (d. 283/896), Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 297/909), Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 320/932), Abu Nasr al-Sarraj (d. 378/988), Al-Kalabadhi (d. 380/990), Abu Talib al-Makki (d. 386/996), Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami (d. 412/1021), and Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072) systematized Sufi thought in both its theoretical and practical dimensions through the works they penned (Demirli, 2007; Karamustafa, 2017; Tek, 2020). This process of systematization culminated in Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's (d. 505/1111) work *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*; thereby, the unshakeable bond of Sufism with the Islamic legal sciences (*shari'at*) and moral teachings was reinforced at an scholarly level, and its central position within classical Islamic thought became even more firmly consolidated (Knysh, 2011, Karamustafa, 2017; Tek, 2020).

The institutionalization of Sufism in the form of Sufi orders (*tariqas*) from the twelfth century onward gained momentum through the practical and theoretical contributions of founding figures such as Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 561/1166), Ahmad al-Rifa'i (d. 578/1182), and Abu Hafs

Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234) (Knysh, 2011). The Anatolian region, where Sufi figures and doctrines established deep roots throughout the historical process, became a vibrant center; on one hand, Sufi thought deepened through names like Ibn al-Arabi (d. 638/1240), Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi (d. 673/1274), Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 672/1273), Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320), and Hacı Bayram-i Veli (d. 833/1430), and on the other, its practical and moral dimensions reached the masses via established lodges (*tekkes*) (Eraydın, 2017; Schimmel, 2017; Tek, 2020). Scholars in Anatolia, who embodied both the *madrassa* culture and *tekke* discipline within their personalities, produced compilation works oriented around spiritual guidance (*irshad*) in Arabic -the scholarly language of the period- with a view to the religious and spiritual education of the masses.

While Sufism is, on one hand, an individual path in which a person focuses on their own soul (*nafs*) to achieve spiritual progress (*taraggi*), on the other hand, it is an activity of spiritual guidance (*irshad*) aimed at warning the public against the enemy that is the *nafs*, instilling moral virtues, and drawing people closer to God. For this reason, it can be argued that in works penned for the purpose of preaching and spiritual guidance, the influential trajectory of Sufism's moral development operates alongside knowledge of Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*) and prophetic traditions (*hadith*) (Yılmaz, 2023). The work titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakkki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhaddhi-rin* (The Way of the Remembrancers and the Spiritual Ascension of the Warner-s), written by Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Qarsi al-Qadiri, is an important book composed for the spiritual progress of the public by a scholar engaged in the profession of preaching (*wa'iz*) within the Anatolian landscape. Although classical biographical sources offer limited information regarding the author's life, the manuscript copies of the work and the colophons (*istinsah* records) indicate that he was active in Anatolian cities and was originally from Kars. The fact that the oldest extant manuscript copy was transcribed in Niksar in the year 840/1436-37

(<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/585716>) demonstrates that the work was composed in the first half of the ninth Islamic (Hijri) century/fifteenth century AD.

The work titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin* is a classical text that places Sufi doctrine at its center and treats the concepts of remembrance (dhikr) and spiritual guidance (irshad) in depth. The author organized the book into thirty chapters, presenting narrations and commentaries compiled from diverse disciplines -such as jurisprudence (fiqh), Quranic exegesis (tafsir), prophetic traditions (hadith), theology (kalam), history, and ethics- through a distinct Sufi perspective. This work serves as a reliable resource for researchers specializing in Sufi studies, Islamic thought, and classical texts.

The author defined his work not as an original composition (*taliif*) but as a compilation (*darjama*), explicitly stating that he utilized the following sources: Fahreddin al-Razi (d. 606/1210), *Asrar al-Tanzil*; Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111), *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*; Burhan al-Din Abu Bakr al-Haddadi (d. 800/1397), *'Uyun al-Haddadi*; Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072), *Al-Risala*; Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi (d. 373/983), *Tanbih al-Ghafilin* and *Majalis al-'Araiz*; Sulayman b. Dawud al-Saksini (d. c. 580/1184), *Zabrat al-Riyad*; Shaykh Hubi (15th century), *Kitab al-Lu'lu'at*; and Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1201), *Kitab al-Su'alat wa'l-Nukat* (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>). In this respect, the work constitutes a link ensuring the continuity of Sufi literature. In the author's own words: "This book will be a companion to the reader in their solitude, dispel the sorrow in their heart, and incline them toward inner vigilance" (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>). These words demonstrate that the work was designed not merely as a scholarly text, but as a guide offering spiritual support to the reader.

The fact that the extant manuscript copies available today were transcribed in Anatolian cities reinforces the historical value of the work. This study aims to introduce this content-bearing the titles *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-*

Muhadhdhi-rin by Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi- to both the scholarly world and contemporary readers by analyzing it in depth. Consequently, this text reflecting Sufi thought will be made available to contemporary researchers and those with an interest in religious and spiritual knowledge.

1. Ibrahim al-Qarsi and His Work Titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*

1.1. His Life

Although no independent information regarding Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali is encountered in Islamic historical sources, concise data concerning the author is available in biographical dictionaries and catalogs (*fihrist*). The information contained in these works is limited to the author's full lineage (*kunyah*), profession, work, and date of death. The information that can be considered a primary reference about the author was presented by Katib Celebi, and subsequent works compiled later largely inherited these data. The information found in the sources regarding Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali is as follows:

Katib Celebi, in his work *Kashf al-Zunun*, presents certain information regarding the book and its author based on the manuscript copy in his possession. Stating that the author is Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali al-Farazi, Celebi notes that the work is, in essence, a study in the genre of preaching and spiritual guidance (*man'izah*) and that its title is recorded as *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. Furthermore, drawing on the work's preface (*muqaddimah*), Celebi points out that the author was engaged in the profession of preaching, and he draws attention to the Hijri date 880/1475 found in the final section of the text. According to him, this date could either be the composition date of the work or the author's year of death. Celebi expressed hesitation regarding this matter and did not make any definitive choice. (Çelebi, 1941)

Ismail Pasha, in his book *Hadiyyat al-Arifin*, records that Ibrahim b. al-Husayn b. Ali al-Farazi passed away in the Hijri year 880/1475 and penned the work titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa*

Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin (Al-Baghdadi, 1951). Ismail Pasha likewise provided this information presumably based on the manuscript copy in his possession. He accepted the year 880 found at the end of the work definitively as the author's date of death.

Omar Riza Kahhalah, in his work *Mu'jam al-Muallifin*, states that Ibrahim al-Farazi was alive in the year 880/1475, that he possessed a work titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin* containing exhortations and spiritual guidance, and that he completed this study on the aforementioned date (Kahhalah, 1993). Although Kahhalah cites *Kashf al-Zunun* as the source for this information, he did not share the hesitation expressed by Katib Celebi regarding the year 880; instead, he adopted the view that this date marked the completion year of the work's composition.

In the database titled *Khizanat al-Turath*, it is stated that the author of the work named Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin is Ibrahim b. al-Husayn b. Ali al-Farazi, and that he was known by the epithets (laqab) al-Farazi and al-Qadiri. In the aforementioned source, the author's date of death is recorded as 718/1318-19, and his century of death is noted as the eighth Islamic (Hijri) century (*Khizanat al-Turath*).

In light of the information provided above, it is evident that there is a lack of complete consensus among the catalog sources regarding the author's date of death and the composition year of the work. The doubt expressed by Katib Celebi as to whether the 880/1475 record in the epilogue (*batimah*) of the work indicated the date of composition or death was interpreted differently by subsequent authors; Ismail Pasha accepted this date as the author's year of death, while Omar Riza Kahhalah adopted it as the compilation year of the work. On the other hand, the fact that the study titled *Khizanat al-Turath* pushes the author's death back by approximately one and a half centuries to the year 718/1318-1319 further exacerbates the uncertainty regarding both the author's death year and the text's composition period. The fact that Katib Celebi and Ismail Pasha based their evaluations on a manuscript

containing the Hijri date 880 in its epilogue suggests the probability that either alternative manuscript copies were inaccessible at that time, or that Ismail Pasha directly inherited Katib Celebi's data, much like Omar Riza Kahhalah did. This situation has caused the literature on the work and its author to remain limited. Conversely, the recording of the author's date of death as 718 in *Khizanat al-Turath* appears to be a more accurate approach in view of the available data, as will be elaborated under the section 'The Composition Date of the Work'. Consequently, it is observed that while the sources largely inherited the limited data provided by Katib Celebi, a definitive consensus on foundational biographical elements, such as the exact composition date of the work and the author's year of death, has not been achieved.

1.2. The Nisbah of al-Farazi

In the biographical sources mentioned above, the author's *nisbah* is recorded as 'al-Farazi'. It is observed that in the catalog entries of the Turkish Manuscript Institutions, the author's *nisbah* is also predominantly recorded as 'al-Farazi'; (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/545355>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/585716>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/422049>) however, it has also been noted with different *nisbahs* such as 'al-Faradi' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/661757>), 'al-Garzi' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/521751>), and 'al-Qarsi' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/386847>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>).

When the manuscript copies of the work are consulted regarding this matter, it has been determined that the scribes (*mustansikhs*) also utilized different *nisbahs*. For instance, while the *nisbah* of the author is explicitly written as 'al-Qarsi' in the Süleymaniye manuscript (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>)

¹ and in another copy (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/661757>),

² it is recorded as 'al-Qarzi' in three other manuscripts

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/521751>.

³ Due to the fact that the initial folios of some of the other six examined copies, or the entire first volumes of others, are missing, the author's name and *nisbah* normally located in the introductory section of the work are absent.

In our opinion, the spelling in the form of 'القرضي' (al-Qarzi) is likely the result of a scribal error. Considering the visual similarities between Arabic letters, it is highly probable that the name, which was originally 'القرصي' (al-Qarsi), transformed into 'القرضي' over time. Specifically, the misreading or miswriting of the *shaddah* (diacritical mark for gemination) over the letter 'Ya' (ي) at the end of the word 'القرصي' may have led to this letter being erroneously recorded as 'Dad' (ض). Once such orthographic errors were committed by a scribe, the same mistake was perpetuated in subsequent transcriptions that relied upon those particular manuscripts.

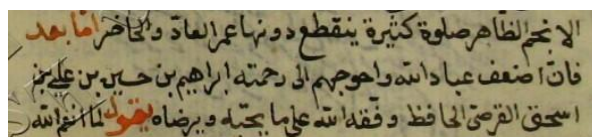
In light of the information provided above regarding the manuscript copies of *Minhaj al-Mudbakki-rin*, it is observed that the *nisbah* 'al-Farazi' recorded in biographical and catalog sources does not appear in any of the extant

(<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/545355>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/88729>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/290542>;

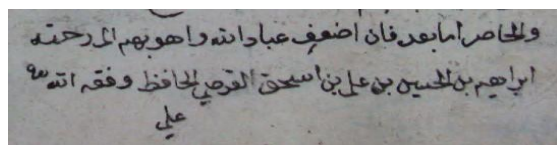
manuscripts. This situation suggests that catalog authors, particularly Katib Celebi, utilized this specific *nisbah* based on the information they transmitted regarding the author, and subsequent writers repeated this data through second-hand transmission. Indeed, despite the absence of the *nisbah* 'al-Farazi' in any of the actual manuscript copies, the inclusion of this *nisbah* in catalog entries by certain manuscript specialists can be evaluated as an indicator of this ongoing chain of transmission. Consequently, the *nisbah* 'al-Farazi' mentioned in biographical works, rather than being directly grounded in the manuscript copies themselves, constitutes a mere repetition of data found in earlier sources, demonstrating that subsequent researchers likewise perpetuated the use of this *nisbah* in the same manner.

As a result of our investigations conducted within biographical and catalog works to attain accurate information on the matter, no instance of the *nisbah* 'al-Farazi' was encountered in the literature, nor could any other author bearing this *nisbah* be identified. In our query targeting the usage of 'al-Farazi' through the catalog search engine of the Directorate of Institution of Turkish

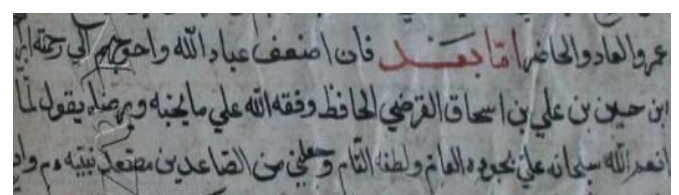
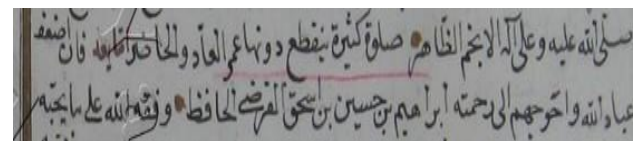
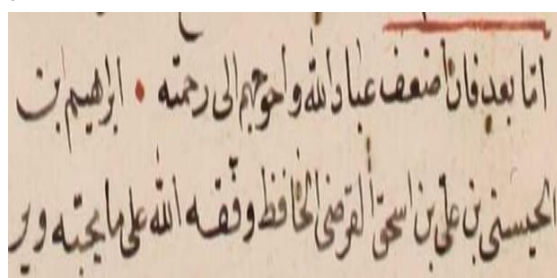
1



2



3



Manuscripts, it was observed that this *nisbah* was assigned to four names. However, it was determined that while one of these *nisbahs* should have been 'al-Farawi', it was erroneously recorded as 'al-Farazi' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/158615>); in three of the names, despite the absence of the said *nisbah* within the actual manuscripts, it was introduced into the catalog by manuscript specialists (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/197778>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/356553>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/33404>); and in only one instance was this phrase utilized directly as a proper name rather than a *Nisbah* (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/146994>; <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/634817>).⁴

In our opinion, although the author's *nisbah* has been recorded as 'al-Farazi' in foundational bibliographic sources such as *Kashf al-Zunun* and *Mu'jam al-Muallifin* since Katib Celebi, and has established a deep-rooted place in the literature, the absence of any academic equivalent for this name -either as a person or a settlement- strongly suggests that the issue stems from a scribal error. Indeed, considering certain graphic similarities in the Arabic alphabet, it is highly probable that the name 'القرصي' (al-Qarsi) transformed into 'الفرضي' (al-Farazi) over time. Due to an orthographic slip, the two-dotted letter 'Qaf' (ق) gradually turned into the single-dotted 'Fa' (ف); likewise, the *shaddah* over the letter 'Ya' (ي) at the end of 'القرصي' was mutated over time into a diacritical dot, giving rise to the letter 'Dad' (ض). Once such transcriptive errors were committed by a scribe, the same mistake was perpetuated in subsequent copies that relied upon it.

Furthermore, when considering the names of the scribes and the epithets used within those names in the manuscripts whose place of writing is unspecified, the premise that the work belongs to the Anatolian region is further reinforced. Especially the 'al-Qarsi' record found in the

Süleymaniye manuscript -which is taken as the basis for our study-and the fact that the manuscript copies were transcribed in Anatolian cities such as Erzurum, Niksar, Çorum, Osmancık, and Akşehir, strongly support our conviction that the author was originally from Kars.

In conclusion, based on the investigations we have conducted, it has been concluded -and further reinforced by our findings- that the *nisbah* 'al-Farazi' was recorded erroneously by certain scribes. When the regions where the manuscript copies were transcribed are taken into consideration, it is understood that the texts were produced in Central, Northern, and Eastern Anatolian cities (such as Niksar, Çorum, Osmancık, Akşehir, and Erzurum). When these geographical data are evaluated alongside the fact that the work was penned in a period close to its composition date and within the borders of modern-day Türkiye, the probability that the author's *nisbah* was actually 'al-Qarsi' (from Kars) gains significant weight. Indeed, the presence of the *nisbah* 'al-Qarsi' in some of the actual manuscript copies strongly supports this conclusion. These findings establish a robust conviction that the author was Ibrahim b. Husayn-a figure originally from Kars who engaged in the profession of preaching (*wa'iz*) within the Anatolian landscape, produced works for the spiritual education of the public, and operated within the scholarly circles of Central Anatolia. This determination rectifies a centuries-old naming error, thereby restoring the work to its true historical and geographical context.

1.3. The Author's Year of Death

There is no consensus in the source works regarding the author's year of death. As previously stated, disparate records exist among biographical and catalog sources concerning the date of Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi's demise. While Katib Celebi, drawing presumably from the 880/1475 record in the manuscript in his possession,

Mustafa" is found in the introductory section of one copy and on the last page of another.

⁴ Although it has the usage of *al-Farazi*, this usage is employed as a proper noun rather than a *nisba*. For instance, the usage "Yâsîn el-Farazî b.

hesitated as to whether this year indicated the author's passing or the completion of the work (Çelebi, 1941), İsmail Pasha presented this date directly as the author's year of death (Al-Baghdadi, 1951). Conversely, Omar Rıza Kahhalah recorded that the author was still alive on this date and that it marked the composition year of the text (Kahhalah, 1993). Completely diverging from all these approaches, *Khizānat al-Turath* has deepened the chronological debate by recording that the author passed away at a much earlier date, specifically in the year 718/1318-1319 (*Khizānat al-Turath*).

As a result of the research conducted, it has been determined that the earliest extant manuscript copy of the work was transcribed by Ahmed b. Omer in Niksar in the year 840/1436-1437 (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/585716>).⁵ Moving from this date, it is understood that the author was alive before this year and likewise penned his work prior to this date. Consequently, it is clear that the year 880/1475 provided in catalog and biographical sources can be neither the author's year of death nor the composition year of the work. Indeed, considering that the oldest copy was transcribed in 840, it is logically imperative that the original composition of the work dates back to a time prior to this year.

In conclusion, this research conducted on the life of İbrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi and the chronological framework of his work demonstrates that the traditional data in biographical sources must be rectified. The year 880/1475, cited by authorities such as Katib Celebi, İsmail Pasha, and Kahhalah as either the composition date of the work or the author's year of death, has lost its historical validity with the identification of the oldest manuscript copy transcribed in Niksar in the year 840/1436-1437. This concrete finding proves, beyond all discussion, that the author's demise and the composition of his work took place at the latest in the first half of the ninth Islamic (Hijri) century (prior to 840). Consequently, the date 880/1475

mentioned in the literature can be neither the compilation year of the work nor the year of the author's death; this date was likely conflated with the record of a later manuscript copy. While this situation indicates that the determination of *Khizānat al-Turath*, which pushes the author's date of death back to the eighth Islamic century (718/1318), could be accurate, this information nonetheless requires further confirmation.

1.4. *Minhācū'l-Mūzekkirīn ve Mī'rācū'l-Muhazzirīn* (The Way of the Practitioners of Remembrance and the Spiritual Ascension of the Admonishers)

There is no definitive information regarding precisely when the work was written. However, the general consensus is that the work was penned in the ninth Islamic (Hijri) century. Nevertheless, if the author's date of death is accepted as 718/1318, the possibility that the work might have been written during the late eighth Islamic century also emerges.

Shaped along the axis of Sufi teachings and interpretations, *Minhaj al-Mudhakkirīn* is evaluated within the category of hortatory literature (*wa'z*) in terms of its genre. Although the content of the work includes topics from disciplines such as jurisprudence (*fiqh*), exegesis (*tafsir*), prophetic traditions (*hadith*), theology (*kalam*), prophetic biography (*sirah*), history, and ethics, fields outside of Sufism are addressed through a presentation centered around a Sufi perspective. On the other hand, the book functions as a complete handbook for Sufi chapters, profoundly incorporating the most fundamental and core topics of Sufism, such as the stations (*maqamat*) and spiritual states (*ahwal*) within the journey of spiritual path (*sayr wa suluk*). Comprising a total of thirty chapters, the work is organized into two volumes. While the first volume encompasses the first nine chapters, the second volume, which begins with the tenth chapter, concludes with the thirtieth chapter. Nevertheless, the table of contents provided by the author in the preface of the work does not

⁵ See National Library, Ankara Adnan Ötügen Provincial Public Library Collection, No: 06 Hk

1926, Registry No: 585716. el-Farazî, İ. b. H. b. A. b. İ. a. (840).

fully align with some of the chapter titles utilized within the text itself. The thematic titles of the work according to its chapters are as follows.

Chapter One: The virtues of knowledge and scholars, and the hagiographies of the people of merit and virtue.

Chapter Two: The value of preaching and admonition (*wa'z wa nasibah*); the virtue of gatherings dedicated to encouragement and deterrence (*targhib wa tarhib*).

Chapter Three: The virtues of "Bismillahi'r-Rahmani'r-Rahim" and the subtleties of meaning in the names of Allah Almighty: al-Malik, al-Hakim, and al-Rahim.

Chapter Four: The virtue of the declaration of unity (*kalimat al-tawhid*) "La ilaha illallah" and remembrance (*dhikr*) as the most supreme worship.

Chapter Five: The nature of spiritual gnosis (*ma'rifah*) and divine love (*mahabbah*); the servant's love for Allah Almighty.

Chapter Six: The virtues of the obligatory prayer (*fard salah*) and its status as a worship presented daily to Allah Almighty.

Chapter Seven: The virtue of the month of Shaban, the Ramadan fast, the sacred months, the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, and the virtues of the month of Muharram.

Chapter Eight: The virtues of the pilgrimage (*hajj*) and exemplary stories of pilgrims who abandon worldly comfort during their journey.

Chapter Nine: The path of the people of Sufism; the stations of piety (*taqwa*) and the fear of Allah.

Chapter Ten: Supplication (*du'a*), the prayer for rain (*istisqa*), and turning towards the Lord of the earths and heavens.

Chapter Eleven: The censure of the transient world and the explanation of the reality of the everlasting afterlife.

Chapter Twelve: The punishments to be faced by those who oppress servants, incline towards the world, and forget the afterlife.

Chapter Thirteen: Major sins, types of rebellion, and moral defects within the human soul (*nafs*).

Chapter Fourteen: Repentance (*tawbah*) from sins and turning towards Allah Almighty, Who ordains the destiny of humankind.

Chapter Fifteen: Remembrance of death and the regrets felt after death.

Chapter Sixteen: The dread of the Day of Judgment; the exposition of hell and paradise.

Chapter Seventeen: Lessons in the story (*qissah*) of Prophet Adam.

Chapter Eighteen: Subtleties regarding the elevation of Prophet Idris to high stations.

Chapter Nineteen: Lessons in Prophet Noah's admonition of his people.

Chapter Twenty: Subtleties of meaning regarding Prophet Solomon's authority to rule over humans and jinn.

Chapter Twenty-One: Subtleties in the story of Prophet Abraham concerning his nobility and sincerity (*ikhlas*).

Chapter Twenty-Two: Subtleties regarding Prophet Ishmael's candidacy for sacrifice.

Chapter Twenty-Three: The persona of Prophet Joseph, who was subjected to envy, loved, and chosen.

Chapter Twenty-Four: The patience (*sabr*), remembrance (*dhikr*), and contemplation (*tafakkur*) of Prophet Job.

Chapter Twenty-Five: The miracles of the white hand and the staff of Prophet Moses.

Chapter Twenty-Six: Subtleties regarding the elevation of Prophet Jesus to a sublime station.

Chapter Twenty-Seven: The chosen status of Prophet Muhammad and his guidance toward the truth.

Chapter Twenty-Eight: The general virtues of the Community (*Ummah*) of Muhammad; the Household of the Prophet (*Ahl al-Bayt*), the Companions (*Sahabah*), and the community.

Chapter Twenty-Nine: The hagiographies of scholars and the virtues of the sheikhs of the faith.

Chapter Thirty: Narratives concerning the Prophet, who is the master of Arabs and non-Arabs (*Ajam*).

The author offers the following evaluation regarding the nature of the work he penned: 'I swear by my life that whoever constantly gazes upon this work will find within it benefits and subtleties that they would not find even in numerous other works. This book will be a companion to the reader in their solitude, dispel the sorrow in their heart, and prompt them to guard their inner world' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>). These expressions demonstrate that the work was designed not merely as a scholarly text, but as a treatise providing spiritual support, inner peace, and an opportunity for contemplation to the reader.

On the other hand, the author begs for forgiveness from Allah for his potential mistakes in the work and expresses this intention in the preface with the following words: 'I supplicate to Allah Almighty for forgiveness in matters where I have erred, and for pardon in points where I have stumbled. Assuredly, He is the One Who loves pardon, and He is Forgiving and Indulgent regarding errors and lapses. My success is only through the help of Allah; in the completion of this work, too, I seek aid from Him alone.' These expressions reveal the author's awareness of scholarly and spiritual responsibility, demonstrating that he did not view the nature of the work as merely limited to the transmission of knowledge, but rather anchored it within a moral and religious framework.

Within this scholarly and spiritual framework, a comprehensive examination of the work and its introduction into the literature carries paramount importance in terms of being presented for the benefit of the scholarly world to serve as a resource for future research on the history of Sufism and the tradition of public spiritual guidance (*irshad*). In the thematic introduction of the work, the manuscript registered at the

Süleymaniye Library, Süleymaniye Collection, No: 00744-001 (Bibliographic Registry No: 144060)- which was transcribed in Çorum in the month of Jumada al-Akhir in the Hijri year 1093 (June-July 1682)- has been taken as the basis. The missing or illegible sections within this primary reference text have been supplemented by cross-referencing and collating it with other manuscript copies.

1.5. The Sources of the Work

The work does not bear the character of an independent, original research; rather, as the author himself states, it functions as a compilation gathered from foundational Sufi sources. The author explicitly declares that his study is not an original composition but a compilation. Indeed, his statement in the introduction of the work- '...Drawing upon these sources, I have compiled a comprehensive work that merges the exoteric (*ẓāhir*) and esoteric (*bātin*) sciences. I aimed to present a concise study that can be utilized by individuals of discernment and reflection' (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>) methodologically attests to the compilatory character of the text.

While the author explicitly mentions some of the foundational sources he utilized in the introduction of the work, he presents another portion of his sources implicitly, using the phrasing '...I examined works such as...' instead of specifying their titles one by one. In this context, limiting the source schema of the work solely to the texts explicitly named would be a methodologically incomplete approach. The author outlines the primary sources he drew upon as follows: '...I scrutinized works such as *Asrar al-Tanzil*, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, *Uyun al-Haddadi*, *al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah*, *Tanbih al-Samarqandi*, *Majalis al-'Arais*, *Zabrat al-Riyad*, *Kitab al-Lu'lu'at*, and *Kitab al-Su'alat wa'l-Nukat*, which are resorted to and accepted as reliable in both the fields of practice (*'amal*) and education (*tahsil*). The foundational works and authors mentioned in the said text are as follows: Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606/1210), *Asrar al-Tanzil*; Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111), *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*; Burhan al-Din

Abu Bakr al-Haddadi (d. 800/1397), *'Uyun al-Haddadi*; Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072), *al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah*; Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi (d. 373/983), *Tanbih al-Ghafilin* and *Majalis al-'Arais* attributed to him; Sulayman b. Dawud al-Saksini (d. ca. 580/1184), *Zabrat al-Riyad*; Shaykh Hubi (15th century), *Kitab al-Lu'lu'at*; and Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1201), or *Kitab al-Su'alat wa'l-Nukat* attributed to him (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>).

1.6. The Treatment of Topics in the Work

The author follows a hierarchical methodology when addressing topics, prioritizing the relevant Quranic verses (*ayat*) and touching upon their brief translations or exegeses (*tafsir*). Following the references to the Holy Quran, he cites prophetic traditions (*hadith*) and holy traditions (*hadith qudsi*) transmitted from the Prophet. Subsequent to these narrations, he resorts to the sayings of the Companions (*sahabah*), if available; in cases where no saying of the Companions is present, he turns to the aphorisms of the Sufi masters -based on the sources specified in the preface- and supports the topic under discussion with exemplary stories (*qisas*). The author's own commentaries and personal views on the subject matter are quite minimal.

The author notes in his work that he adheres to authentic traditions (*sahih hadiths*) and reliable narrations. However, it is observed that certain narrations contained in the text are not considered authentic from the standpoint of Islamic tradition (*hadith*) literature. Some of these narrations are evaluated among weak (*da'if*) or even fabricated (*mawdu'*) traditions. Consequently, although the author's intent was to rely on authentic narrations, it is evident that in practice he also included accounts possessing varying degrees of reliability.

Despite bearing the character of a compilation, the work can be deemed highly successful when its writing style, contextual coherence (*siyāq-sibāq*), and overall structural integrity are taken into consideration. While the author's mastery of the Arabic language and grammar adds a distinct value to the work, occasional grammatical errors,

incomplete sentence patterns, and inverted sentence structures -which are thought to originate either from the author or the scribes- are also noticeable

1.7. The Manuscript Tradition of the Work

As a result of the searches conducted in the catalogs of the Directorate of Institution of Manuscripts of Turkey, the identified manuscript copies of the work titled *Minhaj al-Mudhakkir* are presented below. These copies are listed in chronological order, from the oldest to the most recent, according to their transcription dates.

1. **National Library, Ankara Adnan Ötügen Provincial Public Library Collection, No: 06 Hk 1926, Registry No: 585716.** The work was transcribed by Ahmed b. Omer in Niksar in the Hijri year 840. See Ibrahim al-Farazi, I. b. H. b. A. b. I. a. (840). *Minhaj al-Mudhakkir wa Mi'raj al-Muhaddhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/585716>.

2. **Amasya Beyazit Library, Amasya Beyazit Collection, No: 700, Registry No: 386847.** The work was transcribed in the Hijri year 936. At the beginning, ownership records belonging to Dursun-zade Mustafa b. Mehmed and Halil-zade Mehmed are present. (The manuscript in question is closed to digital access). See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Qarsi. (936). *Minhaj al-Mudhakkir wa Mi'raj al-Muhaddhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/386847>.

3. **Süleymaniye Library, Kadizade Mehmed Collection, No: 00300, Registry No: 290541.** The work was transcribed by Ja'far b. Haji Ilyas in the Hijri year 967. See Farazi, I. b. H. b. A. a. (969). *Minhaj al-Mudhakkir*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/290541>.

4. **Süleymaniye Library, Kadizade Mehmed Collection, No: 00301, Registry No: 290542.** The work was transcribed by Rajab b. Ahmed Shahla-Zade in the Hijri year 1020. See Farazi, I. b. H. b. A. a. (1020). *Minhaj al-Mudhakkir*.

rin.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/290542>.

5. **Çorum Hasan Pasha Library, Hasan Pasha Manuscript Collection, No: 3236, Registry No: 126872.** There is a record indicating that the index (*fibris*) of the work was completed in the Hijri year 1029. However, the catalog information states that it was transcribed in the Hijri year 1239. See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Faradi. *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/126872>.

6. **Sivas Ziya Bey Library, Sivas Manuscript Collection, No: 3863 (Registry No: 145693):** Although a note stating "it is highly probable that the manuscript is an autograph copy (*muallif batti*)" appears in the catalog entry, our examinations have concluded that this determination is inaccurate. This is because the manuscript in question is dated to the Hijri year 1033. However, our research on the work has identified a much earlier manuscript dating back to the Hijri year 840. If the author's probable year of death is accepted as either 718/1318 or 880/1475, it is chronologically impossible for a copy transcribed in 1033 to be an autograph copy.

7. **Since the title *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin* is written on the first page of this (Sivas) copy, it was recorded in catalogs under this name.** Nonetheless, a note marginalia dropped by the scribe on the page margin indicates that this text is actually a commentary (*sharh*) on *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin*. The text begins from the tenth chapter, which marks the start of the second volume. See Isra'il b. Isma'il b. Sha'ban. (1033). *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/145693>.

8. **Beyazıt Manuscript Library, Veliyyüddin Efendi Collection, No: 1962 (Inventory No: 545355).** The copy was transcribed by Dervish Muhammed b. Ahmed in the Hijri year 1048. Based on the note "Erzurum memories" (*Erzurum hatıraları*) located within the text, it is understood that the work was penned in Erzurum. See al-Farazi Ibrahim b. al-Husayn b. Ali. (1048). *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mahaj al-*

Mudakki-rin.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/545355>.

9. **Konya Regional Directorate of Manuscripts, Regional Manuscript Collection, No: 9155 (Inventory No: 88729).** According to the colophon record of the copy, the work was transcribed by Omer b. Ahmed b. Haji Zakariyya in the Hijri year 1070. Endowment seals (*waqf*) demonstrating that Omer al-Aksheri endowed this work to the Akşehir Library are found at both the beginning and the end of the manuscript. See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Farazi. *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/88729>.

10. **Süleymaniye Library, Süleymaniye Collection, No: 00744-001, Bibliographic Registry No: 144060.** The copy was transcribed in Çorum in the month of Jumada al-Akhir in the Hijri year 1093 (June-July 1682). See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali al-Farazi al-Qarsi?, (1093 Jumada al-Akhir). *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>.

11. **Rhodes Fethi Pasha Foundation Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Collection, No: 415 (Inventory No: 661757).** The copy was transcribed by Muallim Osman b. Omer in the Hijri year 1135. An ownership record belonging to Omer b. Hasan dated to the Hijri year 1140 is located at the end of the work. According to this record, the work was purchased at the Osmançık Central Mosque for a fee of 210 *akçe*. See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Faradi, (1135). *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/661757>.

12. **Kütahya Vahid Pasha Library, Vahid Pasha Collection, No: 2587, Registry No: 521751.** See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali b. Ishaq al-Qarzi. *Minhaj al-Mudhakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/521751>.

13. **Süleymaniye Library, Reşid Efendi Collection, No: 00526-001, Registry No: 634582.** See al-Farazi, I. b. H. b. A. a. *Minhaj al-*

Mudbakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin.
<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/634582>.

14. Diyarbakır Provincial Public Library, No: 1862/5 (Inventory No: 422049). Although the copy is attributed to Ibrahim b. Husayn in the catalog records, investigations conducted on the manuscript reveal that the text belongs to a completely different work in terms of content. See Ibrahim b. Husayn b. Ali al-Farazi. *Minhaj al-Mudbakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin.*
<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/422049>.

1.8. Another Work Ascribed to the Author: *Minhacü'l-Müzekkirin (Fezâ'ilü's-Şuhûr)*

During the search conducted in the catalogs of the Directorate of Institution of Manuscripts of Turkey to identify other works attributed to Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi, a record titled *Minhaj al-Mudbakki-rin (Fadail al-Shuhur)*, registered as belonging to the author, was encountered (<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/248515>). However, as a result of the examination carried out on the manuscript, it was observed that the work is of an exegetical nature (*tafsir*) and contains no internal evidence or information confirming the author's identity. Consequently, the mismatch between the content of the work and its title weakens the claims regarding el-Qarsi's authorship of this study. In our opinion, the attribution of the work in question to el-Qarsi was registered perfunctorily by the manuscript experts.

Conclusion

In this study, *Minhaj al-Mudbakki-rin wa Mi'raj al-Muhadhdhi-rin*, which stands as one of the prominent examples of the preaching and spiritual guidance (*irshad*) literature in the fifteenth-century Anatolian landscape, has been examined in terms of its content, sources, and methodology. Furthermore, erroneous assumptions regarding the identity, nisbah (attributive title), and chronology of its author, Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi, have been rectified in light of the manuscript copies. The primary conclusions obtained as a result of the research are as follows:

Rectification of Nisbah and Identity: Starting from Katib Çelebi, foundational bibliographical sources have recorded the author's nisbah as "al-Farazi." However, paleographical examinations conducted on the copies in the manuscript libraries of Turkey have revealed that this nisbah was actually a scribal error originating from similarities between letters and dots in the Arabic script (i.e., *al-Qarsi* → *al-Qarzi* → *al-Farazi*). By certifying the author's correct nisbah as "al-Qarsi" (meaning 'from Kars'), his historical identity has been anchored within its true context.

Chronological Framework: Relying on a record dated 880/1475 in one of the manuscripts, classical sources advanced contradictory views regarding the composition or death date. However, the discovery of the oldest manuscript copy in Niksar, dated 840/1436–1437, has completely invalidated the relevance of the 880/1475 date. This finding conclusively proves that the work was composed at the latest during the first half of the fifteenth century (prior to 840 AH).

The Nature and Source Value of the Work: Comprising thirty chapters, the work is a compilation for public spiritual guidance that blends topics of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), exegesis (*tafsir*), prophetic traditions (*hadith*), and prophetic biography (*sirah*) filtered through the works of authorities such as al-Ghazali, al-Razi, al-Qushayri, and al-Samarqandi under a Sufi perspective. Incorporating spiritual stations (*maqamat*) and states (*ahwal*), the text functions as a complete Sufi handbook. The transcription of the manuscript copies in diverse Anatolian cities such as Niksar, Çorum, Erzurum, Osmancık, and Akşehir confirms that the work enjoyed widespread reception across a vast geography.

In conclusion, this study puts an end to a centuries-long onomastic and chronological confusion, restoring Ibrahim b. Husayn al-Qarsi to his rightful historical place. By comprehensively introducing and bringing this work into the literature, it has been presented for the benefit of the scholarly world to serve as a cornerstone for future research on the history of

Sufism and the tradition of public spiritual guidance.

References

- Al-Baghdadi, I. P. (1951). *Hadiyyat al-arifinin asma al-muallifin va athar al-musannifin* [Gift of the gnostics: The names of authors and works of composers] (Vol. 1). Maarif Vekaleti.
- Al-Farazi, Abu Ahmed Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ahmed. (n.d.). *Al-Muntaqa min Hadithi Abi Ahmed al-Farazi* [Selections from the Hadiths of Abu Ahmed al-Farazi]. Turkey Manuscript Institutions Portal. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/158615>
- Al-Karsi, Ibrahim bin Hussein bin Ali al-Farazi. (1682). *Minhaj al-Muzakkirin va Miraj al-Muhazzirin* [The path of the reminders and the ascension of the cautioners] (Manuscript No. 144060). Turkey Manuscript Institutions Portal. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>
- Al-Majriti, A. M. b. A. b. K. (n.d.). *Risala fi al-Hayula* [Treatise on prime matter]. Turkey Manuscript Institutions Portal.
- Başer, H. B. (2021). *Seriat ve hakikat: Tasavvufun tesekkül süreci* [Sharia and truth: The formation process of Sufism]. Klasik Yayınevi.
- Demirli, E. (2007). Zahiri ilimlerin otoritesi karşısında Tasavvuf'un mesruiyet arayışı [Sufism's search for legitimacy against the authority of exoteric sciences]. *Istanbul University Faculty of Theology Journal*, (15), 220–234.
- El-Farazi, I. b. H. b. A. b. I. (1436). *Minhaj al-Muzakkirin va Miraj al-Muhazzirin* [The path of the reminders and the ascension of the cautioners] (Manuscript No. 06 Hk 1926, Record No. 585716). Ankara Adnan Ötügen Public Library Collection, National Library of Turkey.
- Eraydın, S. (2017). *Tasavvuf ve tarikatlar* [Sufism and Sufi orders]. Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları.
- Gündoğdu, C. (1997). Dogus dönemi zühd ekolleri ve tasavvuf ekolleri [Asceticism schools and Sufism schools of the nascent period]. *Ekev Academy Journal*, 1(1), 41–61.
- Kahhalah, O. R. (n.d.). *Mu'jam al-muallifin* [Dictionary of authors] (Vol. 1). Muassasat al-Risalah.
- Karamustafa, A. T. (2017). *Tasavvufun olusumu* [Sufism: The formative period] (N. Doğan, Trans.). İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Katib Celebi (Hajji Khalifa). (1941). *Kashf al-zunun 'an asami al-kutub va'l-funun* [The removal of doubt from the names of books and sciences] (Vol. 2). Maktabat al-Muthanna.
- Knysh, A. (2011). *Tasavvuf tarihi* [Islamic mysticism: A short history] (I. Durdu, Trans.). Ufuk Kitapları.
- Melchert, C. (2018). *Sünni düşüncenin tesekkülü: Din, yorum, dindarlık* [The formation of Sunni schools of law] (A. H. Çavuşoğlu, Trans.). Klasik Yayınevi.
- King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies. (n.d.). *Khizanat al-Turath: Fihris al-Makhtutat* [The treasury of heritage: Index of manuscripts] (Catalog No. 47/581). Riyad.
- Sarradj al-Tusi, Abu Nasr. (2016). *Islam tasavvufu* [Al-Luma] (H. K. Yılmaz, Trans.). Erkam Yayınları.
- Schimmel, A. (2017). *İslamin mistik boyutları* [Mystical dimensions of Islam] (E. Kocabıyık, Trans.). Alfa Yayınları.
- Tek, A. (2020). *Tarihi süreçte tasavvuf ve tarikatlar* [Sufism and Sufi orders in the historical process]. Emin Yayınları.
- Vahdi-i Rumi, I. b. M. b. M. (1701). *Sharh al-Shamail* [Commentary on the Shamail]. Turkey Manuscript Institutions Portal. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/197778>
- Yalçinkaya, A. E. (2020). İlk dönem tasavvuf klasiklerinde zühd kavramı üzerine [On the concept of asceticism (zuhd) in early Sufi classics]. *BUE Faculty of Theology Journal*, 7(1), 1–18.
- Yılmaz, H. K. (2023). *Tasavvufta irsad* [Guidance in Sufism]. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/356553>.
- <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/144060>.
- <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/146994>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/248515>

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/290542>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/33404>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/386847>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/422049>. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/661757>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/521751>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/545355>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/565538>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/585716>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/634817>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/661757>.

<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/88729>.