

Ottoman Authors Revisited: Name Authority Records at the BnF

Yeniden Ele Alınan Şekliyle Osmanlı Yazarları: Fransız Ulusal Kütüphanesi'nin Yazar Adı Alanı Önerileri

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Abstract

Despite the proposals developed by Birnbaum in 1968, rules and practices to establish authority records for Ottoman authors have gaps and / or are still not completely implemented. The diversity of ways in which reference is made to these authors, the lack of patronyms in the sense of a hereditary family name, the range of given names among Ottoman Muslims leading to many homonyms, all add to the confusion of people and their works. If we add to this the question of changing alphabets, of calendars and that of “nationality” as we understand it today, the challenges only increase.

The online cataloguing of manuscripts in 2010 triggered the Turkish office of the French National Library (Bibliothèque nationale de France) to come up, once again, with some recommendations on the subject. If we expect thereby to achieve some resolutions via these recommendations, we hope to do so after having sparked a debate among the community of colleagues in Turkey and elsewhere. The aim being to establish a reliable and coherent Ottoman and Turkish name authority file.

Keywords: *Ottoman names; name authority files; Bibliothèque Nationale de France*

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Öz

Osmanlı dönemindeki yazarlar için kütüphane kataloglarında yazar adı kaydı oluşturmaya yönelik kural ve uygulamalar halen tamamıyla uygulanmamaktadır. O dönemde yazarlara yapılan göndermelerin birçok farklı türde olması, soyadlarının bulunmaması ve Osmanlı Müslümanlara verilen isimlerin eşsesli olması sonucunda yazarlar ve eserleri birbirine karıştırılabilmektedir. Bu duruma alfabenin, takvim düzeninin ve bugün anladığımız şekliyle “milliyet”in değişmesi sorunlarını eklediğimizde zorluk daha da artmaktadır.

2010 yılında el yazmalarının online ortamda kataloglanması sırasında Fransız Ulusal Kütüphanesi (Bibliothèque nationale de France) Türk ofisi konuyla ilgili bazı önerilerde bulunmuştur. Bu önerilerden yola çıkarak bazı çözümlere ulaşmak istiyorsak Türkiye'deki ve başka yerlerdeki meslektaş toplulukları arasında bir tartışma ortamını hareket geçirmek gerekmektedir. Bunun amacı ise güvenilir ve tutarlı bir Osmanlı ve Türk yazar adı alanı oluşturabilmek olmalıdır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Osmanlı isimleri; yazar adı alanı; Fransız Ulusal Kütüphanesi

Introduction

The French national library, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), has its proper authority files for names of persons, of families, of corporate bodies, of places, of musical and literary works, etc. which link as access fields to the various files of the bibliographic records. All records are in local INTERMARC format, very similar to MARC21, and they may be downloaded in UNIMARC by partner libraries.

The Turkish office of the BnF has, since the adoption of the MARC format in the past, established and indexed the Turkey related headings as in-coming materials required them on the on-line catalogue, now available via its website www.bnf.fr under « Catalogue général »¹. Turkish books, and most of the Turkey related items² are thus subject to the rules that render the in-house collections' records accessible.

¹ In September 2012, at the time when this paper is written, the « Catalogue général » hosts roughly 5400 authority records of authors who have written in Turkish (in Arabic, Latin or any other alphabet).

² Periodicals are not subject-indexed and books that were acquired before the OPAC catalogue was operational, i.e. before mid-1980s, have simply been downloaded from old card-catalogues and may be searched by author or title or any other word in the bibliographic record. This is especially important to note while searching material in the digital open-source library Gallica, www.gallica.fr

Although we have been applying these cataloguing standards for the last couple of decades, only recently have we asked ourselves some questions with regard to specific points that make Ottoman names different than contemporary Turkish names. The questioning raised precisely when the manuscripts acquired by the BnF, after the publication of the Blochet³ volumes had to be encoded in the « BnF Archives et manuscrits » (BAM)⁴ catalogue, as the quasi totality of the authors of these documents are pre-Turkish Republic figures.

Review of the Literature

The question as to how to deal with Ottoman authors has been dealt with before and extensively so by Birnbaum⁵ whose article, in spite of its « age », still remains to be the most complete piece of professional contribution to the topic. Other references on rules for drafting Ottoman names include a brief article by Leman Çankaya⁶, equally dating from the second half of the 1960s. Earlier material providing worthwhile recommendations, are in Turkish and intended for national use⁷. Finally the fourth and last edition of *Names of Authors : National usage for entry in catalogues*⁸ barely addresses Ottoman writers in the two pages devoted to Turkey and the reference works cited there require to be updated⁹.

None of the above mention « name authority files » *per se*. The more contemporary papers in English and in Turkish by Meral Alakuş deal precisely with the topic and deserve to be mentioned here as the first, to our knowledge, which address the issues of proper name authority files and also that of Turkish *vs.* non-Turkish « target readership »¹⁰.

³ Blochet, Edgar. *Catalogue des manuscrits turcs*, Paris : Bibliothèque nationale, 1932-1933 (2 vols.). The Turkish manuscripts which entered the collections following the publication of these two volumes have been noted in a manuscript catalogue available in the Oriental reading room. It bears the title of « Nouvelles acquisitions » and opens with Supplément turc 1420. The content is gradually encoded in BAM (see below).

⁴ BnF Archives et manuscrits (BAM) : <http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/>

⁵ Birnbaum, Eleazar. «Ottoman Turkish names : the choice of entry words for alphabetical listing» in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 88 (1968) 228-238

⁶ Çankaya, Leman. «Cataloguing rules for Turkish authors» in *International Library Review*, 8 (1967) 349-352.

⁷ To mention two: Karatay, F. *Alfabetik kataloglama kaideleri*, Istanbul, 1947, pp. 26-27 gives only two rules and the first four pages of *Yazma ve eski basma kitapların tasnif ve işleme kılavuzu...* Istanbul, 1958 are entirely devoted to the topic.

⁸ *Names of persons: national usages for entry in catalogues* / [IFLA universal and bibliographic control and international MARC program]. - 4th rev. and enlarged ed. - München ; New Providence ; Paris [etc.] : G. K. Saur, 1996.

⁹ Section on Cataloguing of IFLA seems to be working on the project of updating the whole volume for the last couple of years.

¹⁰ UNICODE: <http://unicode.org/>

The fact that present databases may have multiple access points, both easily updated, and allowing multiscrypt via UNICODE¹¹, has radically influenced the handling of Ottoman names among other things. A consistent and coherent authority file may now be accomplished collaboratively. Some libraries outside Turkey have authority files of their own and do consequently include Ottoman and Turkish names, However, standardised records with fundamental input from Turkey remain to be achieved.

General considerations

It must be reminded here that a name authority file is more than an index of attested forms or a thesaurus ; it is made up of authority records with content that not only helps to identify the « item » described in the record, but also explains the relationship between all the forms, authorised, or not, and provides information on the sources that cite these forms, all of which may be updated or modified if necessary.

A name authority record may serve for both author and subject access points of a bibliographic record. Furthermore, it interacts with other authority records (works-authors-corporates). The template of these INTERMARC records includes a significant amount of fields to be completed by the librarian¹². We shall be dealing with only a few of them that concern directly our topic.

« Ottoman » authors

A name authority record template requires the coding nationalities (countries) and languages of the author. It specifies biographic dates and the various forms under which the author is cited in his or her works but also in works on him or her throughout time and space. These forms of a name as well as all the rest of the information provided for this name must of course be referenced. The basic aim of a structured record being to distinguish homonyms, to identify pseudonyms and to attribute the proper work(s) to their author(s). One must bear in mind that name authority records are not biographies, but in some cases they do compile a brief notice on the person.

With these general considerations in mind, there are four points that deserve our special attention in reviewing Ottoman authors :

¹¹ UNICODE: <http://unicode.org/>

¹² See http://www.bnf.fr/professionnels/format_intermarc/a.intermarc_a.html

I - Country or Nationality Code

The Ottoman Empire stretched over a vast geographic area, which hosted authors of various *millet*, that is of « peoples » or as some would qualify as « ethnic groups » or religions. Encoding all of these authors' « nationality » with the ISO two-letter country code **tr** for Turkey is, to our view, misleading as Turkey in its present understanding of Nation-State and political borders leaves out the peripheral provinces of the Empire. Thus, it would not be suitable to encode **tr** authors such as Yahya Dukaginzade (14..?-1582) who died in Bosnia and was descendent of an Albanian dynasty, or Karateodori Paşa (1833-1906) who was born in Berlin and died in Constantinople and belonged to a Phanariote family. The examples are numerous in particular with all the persons who wrote in Turkish but evolved in the Arabic peninsula.

Consequently, and since a code for the various historical and geographical stages of the Ottoman Empire does not exist, the Turkish office of the BnF suggests to use the « **oo** » code¹³ for the author as a person “having existed in a defined geographical area in a historical era that cannot be transcribed by any of the international code tables existing or drafted so far”. Along with specifying (i.e. encoding) the language(s) in which the author has written, the authority record should then justify this choice of “oo” in a brief note such as “Ottoman poet” for Yahya Dukaginzade or “Ottoman Statesman” for Karateodori Paşa as in the following example.

¹³ This is an in-house code which, converted to UNIMARC format becomes « xx » meaning ‘unknown, undetermined’. What is important to recommend is that it is best not to code at all, since coding the country or nationality is not compulsory, than to code a misleading « tr » for Ottomans .

000 c1 ap22 2
001 FRBNF161816955
008 100218120503ootam 14.. ? 1582 ? a 1
045 \$aa
100 \$w.0..b.tur.\$aYahya Bey Dukaginzade\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....f.ota \$a\$مذبحى كين زاد\$مذبحى\$د14..?-1582?
400 \$w....buota.\$aDûqağîn Zâde Yahya\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.....\$aDukakinzade Taşlıcalı Yahya\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.....\$aDukagin zade\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.....\$aYahyâ Şebteví Dûqağîn zâde\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.....\$aTaşlıcalı Yahya\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.....\$aYahya Beğ\$d14..?-1582?
400 \$w....b.alb.\$aDukagjin\$d14..?-1582?
600 \$aPoète ottoman descendant de la famille albanaise
Dukagjin\$a"Taşlıcalı" est un surnom qu'on lui attribue au XIXe s.
603 \$bZvornik (Empire ottoman, actuellement Bosnie-Herzégovine)
610 \$aYahyâ Beğ'in Şehzade Mustafa mersiyesi yahut Kanunî hicviyesi /
Ahmet Atillâ Şentürk, 2009\$aBnF, Manuscrits, Supplément turc 1432 (1) :
Dûqağîn Zâde Yahya\$aBnF, Manuscrits, Supplément turc 1512 (1) : Yahya Bey
610 \$aDergâh, 1998, sous "Yahya Bey" : date de décès 1582\$aOsmanlı
müellifleri, 1917-1926, vol. 2, p. 497 : Yahya Bey "Dukagin zade"
610 \$aBnF Service turc, 2010-05-11

(Record 1) : Nationality code and note in bold

II - Biographical Dates

As is well known, the Hicri (H) calendar was used in the Ottoman Empire until the Rumî (R) or fiscal calendar co-existed for a period of time and then the latter replaced the former, with several successive adaptations, before the Republic of Turkey adopted definitely (in 1925) the Gregorian (G) system. Biographic dates for authors in the BnF name authority records must be given according to the Gregorian calendar and several reliable conversion tables exist for this purpose. Since for the majority of Ottomans biographic sources rarely specify days or even months and give only the year, and since the H. or R. years when converted fall across two successive years of the G. calendar, one must decide which of the two to pick for the record. Contemporary sources do indeed give one or the other in

some cases. Further confusion is possible for the period mentioned above where both H. and R. calendars were used simultaneously¹⁴. We therefore suggest to specify the original source dates and mention the calendars referred to in the note tag of the records. For instance the journalist Süleyman Nazif Güneri's was born in 5.2.1305. If interpreted as a Hicri date, this would give 23 October 1887 when converted to the Gregorian system; but as it is a Rumi date, the correct conversion is 17 April 1889. A more common example is that of poet Aşık Paşa, some sources give G 1271 and others G 1272 as the year he was born in. Along with citing these references, and after having picked the most cited or the most reliable date, it would be best to mention in a note that he was born in H 670 to avoid further hesitation.

| | |
|-----|---|
| 000 | c1 ap22 2 |
| 001 | FRBNF143495227 |
| 008 | 050210120731oootam 1272 13321103 a 010 |
| 045 | \$aa |
| 100 | \$w.0.2b.tur.\$aÂşık Paşa\$d1272-1332 |
| 400 | \$w...2f.ota.\$aعاشق باشا\$d1272-1332 |
| 400 | \$w...2bxota.\$a' Aşık Pâşâ\$d1272-1332 |
| 400 | \$w...2b.....\$aÂşık Paşa-yı Veli□\$d1272-1332 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$aAli bin Baba Muhlis bin Baba İlyas\$d1272-1332 |
| 600 | \$aPoète soufi et savant ottoman\$aNé Ali, Âşık est son nom de plume\$aSon surnom Paşa serait signe qu'il fut le fils aîné de son père\$a Dates biographiques selon le calendrier de l'Hégire : 670-13 safer 733 |
| 603 | \$aArapkir (Kırşehir, Turquie)\$bKırşehir (Turquie) |
| 610 | \$aGarib-nâme : tıpkı basım, karşılaştırmalı metin ve aktarma / Âşık Paşa ; Kemal Yavuz, 2000\$aBnF, Manuscrits, Supplément ture 1471 |
| 610 | \$aTDV İslâm ansiklopedisi, 1991 : Âşık Paşa (1272-1332)\$aLC authorities\$a <u>http://authorities.loc.gov</u> \$d2008-04-17 : Âşık Paşa-yı Veli (1271-1332) |
| 610 | \$aBnF Service ture, 2010-05-07 |
| 624 | \$a800 |

(Record 2) : Notes and references with regard to biographic dates in bold.

¹⁴ This lasts about thirty years, beginning with 1256 (H & R). The dating systems in the Ottoman Empire of the 19th and early 20th century of our era is a very complex issue that cannot be summarised here.

With regard to this issue, *Yazma ve eski basma kitapların tasnif ve fişleme kılavuzu*¹⁵ even suggests to distinguish between the lunar *Hicrî kamerî* (H.) from the solar *Hicrî şemsî* (Hş.) but we believe this is both unnecessary for our purposes and difficult or very time consuming to accomplish.

III - Romanisation

This point has been a much discussed and debated issue especially outside Turkey in the past: the Turkish Republic changed its alphabet from Arabic script to Latin script in 1928 but the orthographic rules of the new alphabet were not satisfactory for the reconstitution of texts written in old script. Various academic schemes were drafted to address this requirement. Thus Ahmed Cevdet Paşa may be encountered in a variety of forms in different sources, beginning with the most widespread Ahmet Cevdet Paşa referred to in Turkey. Equally widespread is the variant Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, but we also come across Aḥmed or Ahmad for the first element and □evdet, Dževdet, Djevdet, □awdat, etc. for the second, with Pacha, Pasha, Pascha, Paşa for the last element. If all these observed /witnessed forms need not be cited in order to identify the author and link all the documents by and on the person in all cases, the form in original script provides the safest guarantee and must be included either as a parallel authorised heading or as referred from form since catalogues now do support multiscript. The Turkish office of the BnF considers that these authors are part of Turkish cultural heritage and thus picks on the Turkish form as the authorised heading, but unlike libraries in Turkey who have omitted indexation in the original Arabic script for social and technical reasons, it endeavors to provide it when possible¹⁶.

| | |
|-----|---|
| 100 | \$w.0..b.tur.\$aAhmed Cevdet Paşa\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....f.ota.\$aأحمد جودت باشا\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$aAhmet Cevdet\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$aCevdet Paşa\$aAhmet\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$aDjevdet\$aAhmed\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$aDževdet\$aAhmet\$d1822-1895 |
| 400 | \$w....b.....\$a□evdet Paşa\$d1822-1895 |

(Record 3) : « b » for Latin script ; « tur » for Turkish ; « f » for Arabic script and « ota » for Ottoman Turkish

¹⁵ *Yazma ve eski basma kitapların tasnif ve fişleme kılavuzu ve İslâm dîni ilimleri tasnif cetveli*. İstanbul : Maarif vekâleti, 1958, pp. 7.

¹⁶ The BnF began to introduce non Latin script to its online catalogue only in 2004. The test began with Arabic and Chinese and soon included Hebrew, Cyrillic, Greek, Japanese and Coréan. However, records books and journals printed in Turkish before 1928 held by the BnF were « converted » to modern Turkish in the same catalogue before it was possible to enter non Latin in the system.

IV - Choice of the “authorised form”

Last but certainly not least is the most complicated issue, i.e., the choice of entry or entries of an Ottoman name. The law on a lasting and “hereditary” family name in the Republic of Turkey passed only in 1934. Beforehand, names could include a number of elements, some of which were multiple, some changing through the author’s career. Most, if not all, given proper names were of a limited Islamic stock and homonymy was thus widely spread. To distinguish homonyms, physical or professional qualifiers, geographic or corporate affiliations, father’s or son’s names were added before and/or after the name given at birth ; in many cases religious or other official titles were affixed, and finally, a pen name (in many cases, a nickname affixed to the given name) was a must for literary figures and statesmen were almost all poets to some degree! As said before, these nominal compounds did not have a rigid structure although the 3rd rule of the 1958 recommendations suggests there is one¹⁷. A rich literature deals with this issue mainly from the historian’s point of view¹⁸ where Ottomans are concerned¹⁹. Bibliographers have also written extensively but the “solutions” they offer do not always overlap. Contradictions and inconsistencies persist. This only points at the complexity of the issue and not at the quality of the recommendations made by otherwise esteemed professionals.

Some rules may be easily worded and seem applicable, such as the following :

1. Sultans with special epithets : Mehmed II refers from Fatih Sultan Mehmed
2. Titles following the names or at the end of a name : affixed to the whole entry as in Akif Paşa,
3. Poets known only by their pen names such as Bâkî or authors known by their qualifiers as Kâtib Çelebi : the given names and the variants refer to these authorised forms
4. Especially late 19th and early 20th century authors holding two names²⁰ are

¹⁷ *Yazma ve eski basma...*, p. 2 : « önce şöhreti yazılır. Şöhret bir virgül ile ayrıldıktan sonra lakabı, öz adı, baba ve dede adlarıyla birlikte varsa nispeti sırayla yazılır. » which roughly translated says : first comes the fame name (ie the name the author is known by) followed by a comma. Then come his nickname, his proper (ie given) name, his father’s and grandfather’s names, and if there is one, his relationship.

¹⁸ See for instance Bouquet, Olivier « Onomasticon Ottomanicum : identification administrative et désignation sociale dans l’Etat ottoman du XIXe siècle » *RMMM*, juillet 2012, 213-235. *Other references will be available at the end of the article.*

¹⁹ Extensive essays exist for Islamic or Arabic names however. They are valuable reading for Ottoman names of course . Cf. Jacqueline Sublet’s *Le voile du nom* on Arabic names and Annemarie Schimmel’s *The Islamic name*.

²⁰ It requires research to know if the second name is that of the father or a lakap (nickname) therefore we shall not linger on this issue.

given as such : Namık Kemal, Ahmed Midhat... As most non specialist non-Turkish and probably younger generation Turkish patrons might hastily think that the second element is a family name, a « see also » entry should be made to these names by inverting them : Kemal, Namık for Namık Kemal. This should be extended to those who have been active both before and after having adopted a family name such as Sait Faik Abasıyanık as follows :

| | |
|-----|--|
| 100 | Sw.0.b.....\$aAbasıyanık\$mSait Faik\$d1906-1954 |
| 400 | Sw....b.....\$aSait Faik\$d1906-1954 |
| 400 | Sw....b.....\$aFaik\$mSait\$d1906-1954 |

Record 4 : *An author who published both before and after the Family Name Law of 1936, thus both as Sait Faik and Sait Faik Abasıyanık.*

The above recommendations seem to be straight forward to follow even if they may not always be consensual. There are a number of other cases which lead to « divisions » as for instance whether or not to consider titles preceding names or prefixed qualifiers, as items part of the name. While some rightly argue that they be rejected for easier reading of indexes²¹, the Turkish office at the BnF suggests that they be kept and considered part of the name as in **Aşık** Mehmed (geographer, 1556?-1613?), **Kul** Hasan (poet, 18th C.) or **Hoca** Ishak Efendi (mathematician, 17..-1834). However, this as well as other cases may be listed and debated in order to reach common standards or rules.

There still remain situations that appeal to purely subjective evaluation with regard to which component of a long chain of a « name » one picks up as « significant » for an authority record. The criteria of « the most widely known » –as Birnbaum suggests– is not an easy one to follow. How does one decide on the authorised heading for Molla Sâlih ibn Celâl er-Rûmi alias Celâlzâde Sâlih Çelebi (1485-1565)? Or which nominal element(s) can one claim to “highlight” as the authorised form for Ebû'l-Fazl Musa bin Hüseyin bin İsa İzniki (13..-1431)? Or how to pick among the three synonymous affiliations for the author referred to as Eşrefoğlu, or Eşrefzade or İbnüleşref for Abdullah Rumi (?-1469)? With all the search possibilities offered in electronic databases, the Turkish office of the BnF concludes that where doubt exists, as in the above cases and many more alike, the record should probably begin with the most complete compound, the name *in*

²¹ The 1957 rules of the Milli Kütüphane argue this only for religious titles like *imam, hoca, molla...*

*exen*so so to speak²², and refer to each single significant element in order to ensure access to the right “person”.

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000  c1 ap22  2
001  FRBNF161814235
008  10021812080oootam      1377  ? 1469  ?      a 1
045  Saa
100  Sw.0..b.tur.$aEşrefoğlu Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....f.ota.$aاشرف رومی$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.tur.$aEşref-i Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aAbdullah Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aEşrefoğlu Abdullah Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aEşrefzade Abdullah Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aİznikli Eşrefoğlu Rûmi$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aEşref-i İzniki$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aPîri Sâni$d1377?-1469?
400  Sw....b.....$aİbnü'l Eşref$d1377?-1469?
600  $aPoète mystique ottoman$aFondateur de la secte Eşrefiye$aNé Abdullah,
son nom complet serait : Abdullah Rûmî bin Seyyid Ahmed bin Eşref bin Seyyid
Muhammed Sürûfî (ou Mısrî)$aDates biographiques incertaines selon le
calendrier de l'Hégire : 779-874
603  $bİznik, Turquie
610  $aMenâkıb-ı Eşrefzâde : Eşrefoğlu Rûmî'nin menkıbeleri / Abdullah
Veliyuuddin Bursevî ; haz. Abdullah Uçman, 2009
610  $aTDV İslâm ansiklopedisi, 1995 : Eşrefoğlu Rûmî$aOM, I, 17 : forme en
caractères arabes
610  $aBnF Service turc, 2010-07-13
http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb16181423t/INTERMARC

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Record 5 : *Eşrefoğlu, or Eşrefzade or İbnüleşref all meaning son of Eşref have all been used for and by this author*

To Conclude

Hüseyin Türkmen, author of *Türkiye kütüphaneleri yazma eser katalogları*²³ where he describes, comments and analyses all the manuscript catalogues published in Turkey from 1923 until 2006, notes that one of the main findings of his work is the inconsistency of the authors' names in these numerous catalogues he examines. He then suggests that a dictionary of authors' names be written taking *Tezkirelere*

²² Terminology borrowed from Jacqueline Sublet : « le nom in extenso ». *Op.cit.*

²³ Türkmen, Hüseyin *Türkiye kütüphaneleri yazma eser katalogları: 1923-2006*. İstanbul : Kitabevi, 2010, pp.206-207.

göre *divan edebiyatı isimler sözlüğü* compiled by a team of specialists as a model. Another reference would be *Türkcshes biographisches Archiv*²⁴ published by K.G. Saur at the turn of the last century and its 3-volume index²⁵. *Onomasticon Arabicum*²⁶ which helps identify authors from the Arabic speaking world who have lived during the first ten centuries of the Hicri calendar is a successful enterprise initiated by European researchers. As Alakuş claims, it would be most appropriate for the National Library of Turkey, Milli Kütüphane (MK) to launch and undertake the project as a leading institution with foreign partnership²⁷. The data combined and formatted for exchange and mutual download would in turn allow the MK to join VIAF²⁸ Virtual International Authority File, a fundamental contribution to the identification of Ottoman and Turkish authors, serving thus both librarians and Turkish scholars not only in Turkey but also worldwide.

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²⁴ *Türkcshes biographisches Archiv*, München : K. G. Saur, [1999-2001]. - 437 microfiche.

²⁵ *Türkischer biographischer Index = Turkish biographical index*. München : K.G. Saur, 2004 (3 vol.)

²⁶ <<http://aedilis.irht.cnrs.fr/onomasticon>>

²⁷ For a list of libraries with authority files, check the links provided by the discussion list dedicated to authors having written in Arabic script, AuteursArabes: http://liste.cines.fr/d_read/auteursarabes/CATALOGUES_AUTORIT%C3%89S%20%3d%20AUTHORITIES/

²⁸ <http://www.oclc.org/viaf/>

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²⁹ This list should be reviewed and commented by professionals ; the present one is only a suggestion that we hope may lead to launch a discussion.

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