

Musical sources in the Ottoman archive

Hikmet Toker*

Corresponding Author:

*Istanbul University State Conservatory, Musicology Department, İstanbul, Turkey.

Email :hikmet_toker@hotmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0337-3825>

Abstract

Although Ottoman Archives consist of many important documents related to music dating back to different historical eras, only a limited number of studies about these documents have been carried out. Several reasons contributed to this. Firstly, the Ottoman archive has a very complicated catalogue system. Additionally, only a limited number of documents are presented with an abstract and a translation. Many documents are in closed cases without an abstract. Because of this, researchers have to know the catalogue system in order to find reliable sources in the Ottoman archive. After a long period of research on musical sources in the Ottoman archive, I have learnt which catalogue titles consist of documents related to music. In this article, I will provide information about different specific catalogue titles that consist of documents related to music. Additionally, I will discuss some characteristics of the catalogue system which are important for music history research.

Keywords

ottoman music, turkish music history, music history of the ottoman era, turkish music history sources

About the Ottoman Archive and Catalogues:

The Ottoman archive holds a variety of documents such as maps, photos and letters... But nearly all of the materials are catalogued under two main titles: books and documents. Millions of documents and thousands of books are stored in the Ottoman archive under several catalogue titles. We are going to examine some special titles that consist of documents about music. Additionally, we will give some information about the contents of these catalogues.

Some documents about music can be found in different catalogues, which I am going to discuss.

The Catalogue of the Hazine-i Hâssa:

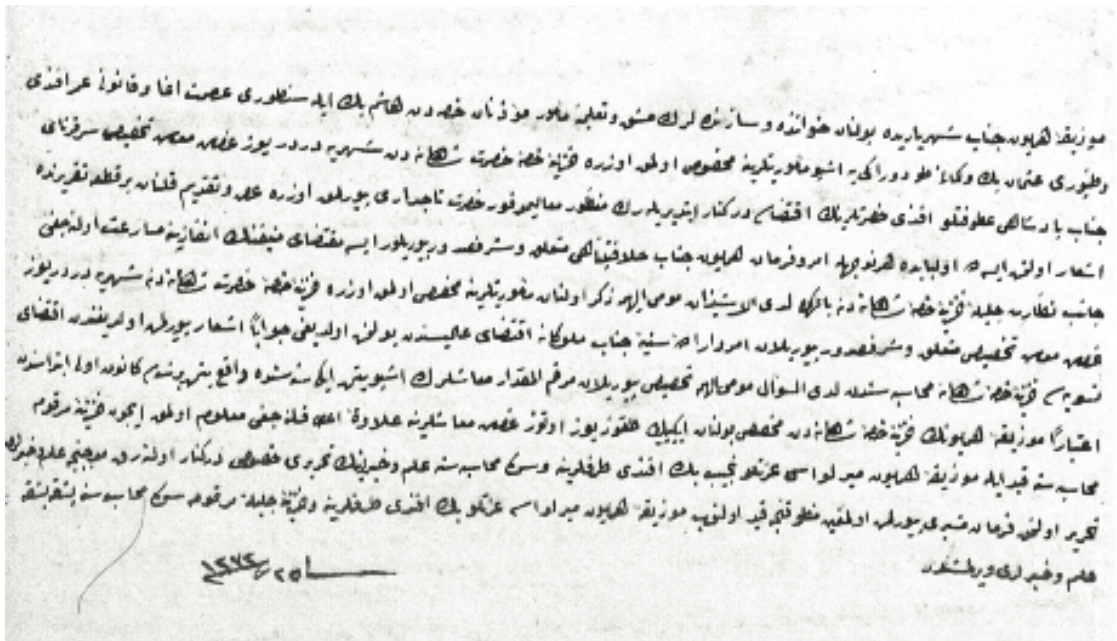
The first two catalogue titles I will discuss are the HH/MH (Hazine-i Hassa Muhasebat- Sultan's Special Treasury Accountant Office) and HH.d (Hazine-i Hassa Defterleri- The books of the Sultan's Special Treasury).

After the Tanzimat, the financial system had essentially changed. In line with this reform, the Sultans'

* I am indebted to Federica Nardella for reading the earlier version of this article and her helpful comments.

special property was transferred to the private treasury and some of the Sultan's payments were paid from this treasury. At first, this treasury was called Ceyb-i Hümâyûn Hazinesi, and its name changed into Hazine-i Hassa after the 1840s. The oldest document from this treasury dates back to 1846. (Terzi, 2000, p. 19) The documents about this treasury were catalogued under the title of Hazine-i Hassa (The Private Treasury of the Sultan). This catalogue contains some subtitles, such as HH.MH and HH.d.

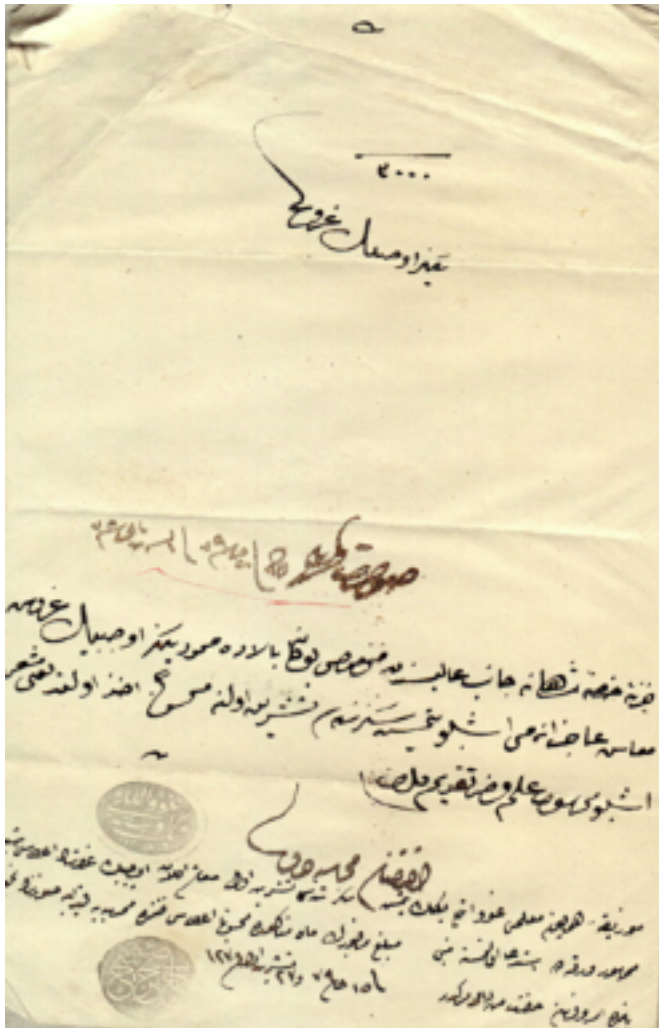
Court musicians received their salary from this treasury, and the catalogue is therefore important for an examination of musical life at court. The aforementioned two types of sources can be found in this catalogue. The first of these sources are books (books were catalogued under the title of HH.d). As to the documents recording the payments and expenses which had court musicians as recipients, these can be found under this title too, such as the receipts for instruments and salaries. Some documents also show the payments received by the musicians for performances organised in the Ottoman Court Theatre.



Document 1: The documents about the payments to the music teachers of the Court Turkish music ensemble (BOA, HH.d. 653,69b.).

HH. MH catalogue includes several documents found in cases. Nearly two hundred documents can be found in one case, without information about their content. In order to obtain information about specific issues, all the documents in the case must be examined. Researchers who want to work on this catalogue must first consider that much time will be required in order to carry out the examination of these sources.

Many bills can also be found under this title, such as musicians' salary invoices and payment receipts for instruments. The chief and first tutor of the Musika-i Hümayun Callisto Guatelli's salary invoice can be shown as an example of the documents found in the HH.MH catalogue:



Document 2: Callisto Guatelli's salary invoice (BOA, HH.MH, 658/93).

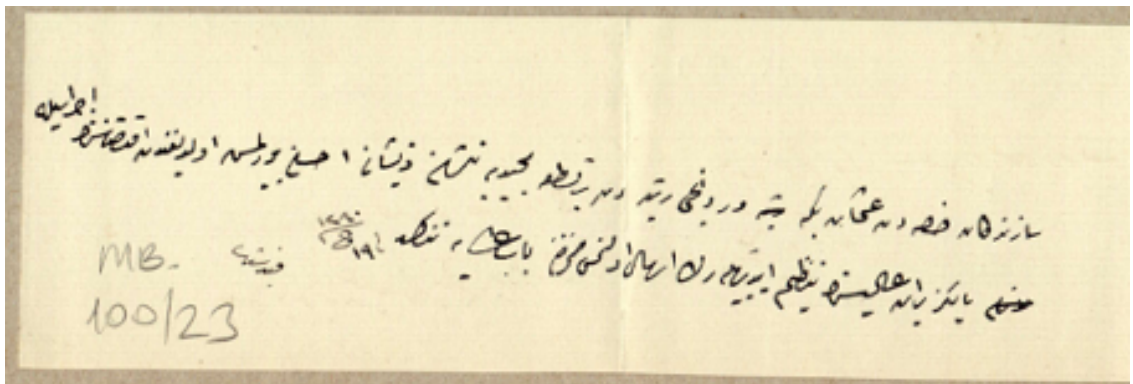
Mabeyn-i Hümâyûn Catalogue (MB):

The other catalogue title is the MB (the documents of the Mabeyn). This catalogue consists of documents which belong to the Mabeyn-i Hümâyûn. The Mabeyn-i Hümayun managed the organisation of the palace. Additionally, this unit dealt with the demands of the sultans and their families. The first officer of this unity was the Ser-kurena (It means (nearly) the first relative of the sultan) and he exercised power over all of the courtiers. All the musicians in the court were officially members of the Musika-i Hümâyûn (after the 19th century) but they practically worked under the ser- kurena. (Toker, Elhân-î Âziz, 2016, p. 182.) It is therefore possible to find several documents about musicians in this catalogue. Although there are some documents dating back to the time of Sultan Mahmut II., the starting date of this catalogue was some time during Sultan Abdulmecid II's reign. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p. 406) The oldest documents of this catalogue

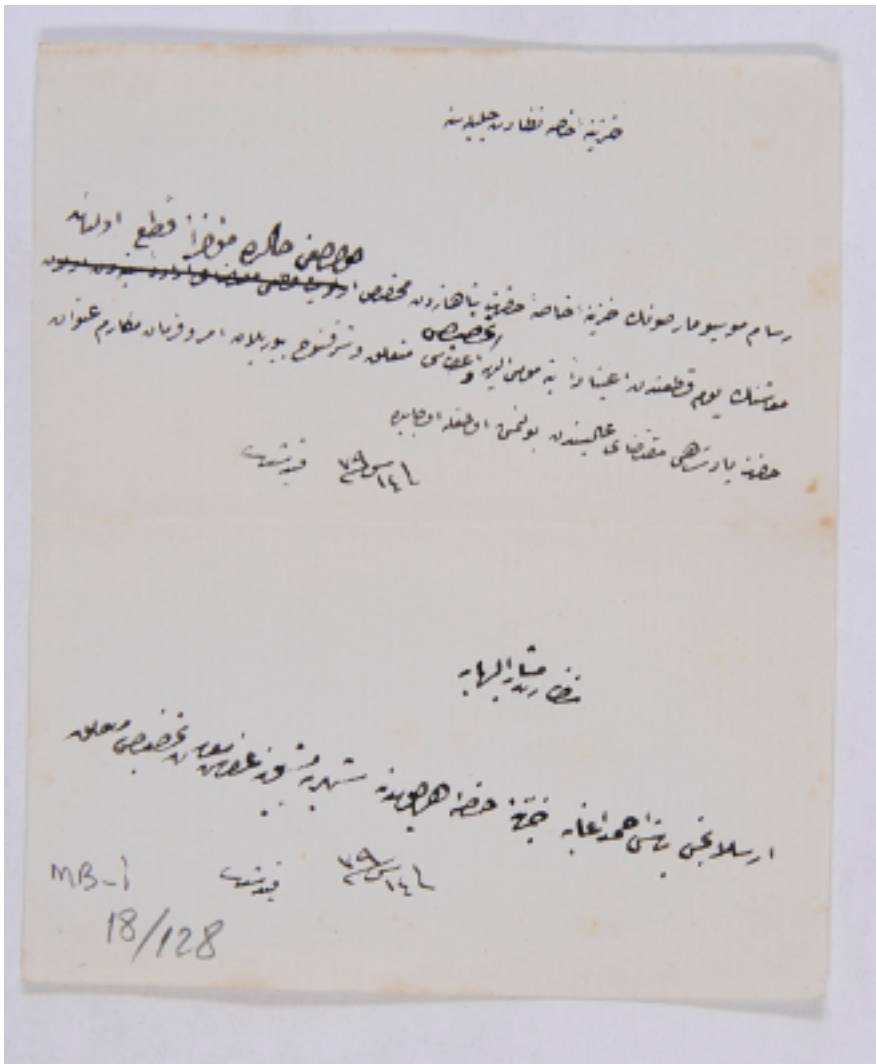
date back to the 1840s, similarly to the Hazine-i Hassa.

The aforementioned MB catalogue title consists of many documents about court ceremonies and invitations, daily court expenses and coronation felicitations, grants to courtiers, and some petitions written to the Ser-Kurena. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p. 406) It is possible to find many documents about the organisation of musical life as well as a list of musicians' names in this catalogue.

Another sub-title that is under the Mabeyn-i Hümayun Documents is the MB.İ (the decrees of the Mabeyn). This catalogue consists of many documents such as petitions written to the Sultan and documents recording the presentation of these petitions to the Sultan by the Ser-Kurena. Many documents about the musical life of the court and the petitions of some musicians can be found under this title. Below are two documents from these catalogues:



Document 3: The document about the medal granted to Ser-Sazende Osman Bey. (MB, 100/23.).



Document 4: Salary receipt of the Court Painter Mason. (MB.İ 18/128).

A book catalogue is also found within the Mabeyn-i Hümayun catalogue, and this is codified as MB.d. Music and musicians related lists can be found here, too.

The Catalogue of the Foreign Ministry Translation Office

Another important catalogue is HR. TO (Foreign Ministry Translation Office). The Ottoman Foreign Ministry was founded in the 19th century. Documents from the era of Mahmut II to the last Sultan Vahideddin

can be found in this catalogue, although it mostly consists of documents dated before 1893. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p. 386) The main document type related to music consists of correspondence about works composed for the Sultan and sent from different countries.

One may wonder about how the scores of these compositions reached the sultans. These scores were first presented to the Ottoman Embassies in the composers'

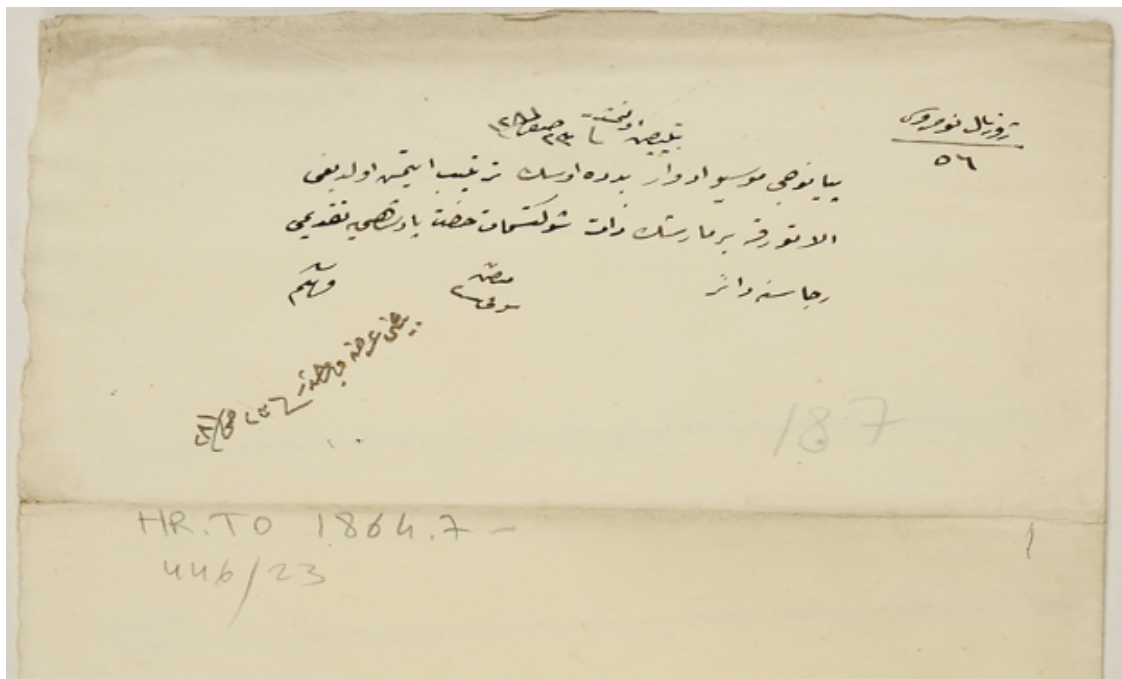
countries. Afterwards, they were sent to the Hariciye Nezareti (Foreign Ministry) with a letter from the composer and from the embassy. The translation office translated these letters before presenting them to the Sultan. That is why many letters from foreign composers can be found in this catalogue. The process by which the music pieces and the composers' letters were presented to the sultans is as follows (Toker, 2016, p. 123):

1. Delivery of the piece to the embassy found in the composer's country.
2. Dispatch of the pieces with the letter to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry.
3. Dispatch of the pieces to the Mabeyn-i Hümayun with the translation of the letter.

4. Presentation of the pieces to the Sultan. (see Doc. 5)

Documents from the Embassies

A few other titles from this catalogue should be mentioned. Two of them are HR. SFR. 3 (Documents of the Ottoman Embassy of London) and HR. SFR. 4 (Documents of the Ottoman Embassy of Paris). There are many documents related to the compositions sent from foreign countries in these catalogues. Another title is HR.MKT (Correspondences of the Foreign Ministry), where several documents regarding the correspondence about musical compositions and the grants bestowed by sultans to foreign musicians can be found.



Document 5: The document about a marche composed for the Sultan.

The Catalogue of the Chancellor's Important Correspondence (A.MKT.MHM)

A.MKT.MHM (Sedaret Mektubi Kalemi Mühimme- Important Correspondence of Chancellor) is another important catalogue for Ottoman music historians. This catalogue contains significant information in the form of correspondence about medals awarded by sultans to composers, as well as some documents regarding musicians. For instance, the document codified as A.MKT.MHM. 806/9 contains information about the medal awarded to Miralay (Colonel) Osman.

The Catalogue of the Medal Book of Bab-ı Asafi (A.NŞT.D)

Another book catalogue in which some records about the medals granted to Turks and foreigners are found is A. NŞT.D (Bab-ı Asafi Nişan Defterleri- Medal Book of Bab-ı Asafi). It is possible to find many documents about medals granted by the Sultan to musicians in this catalogue. For instance, book number 15 contains a record about the medal granted to Moris Strauss (BOA, A.NŞT.D. 15).

Catalogues of the Ottoman Ministry of Education

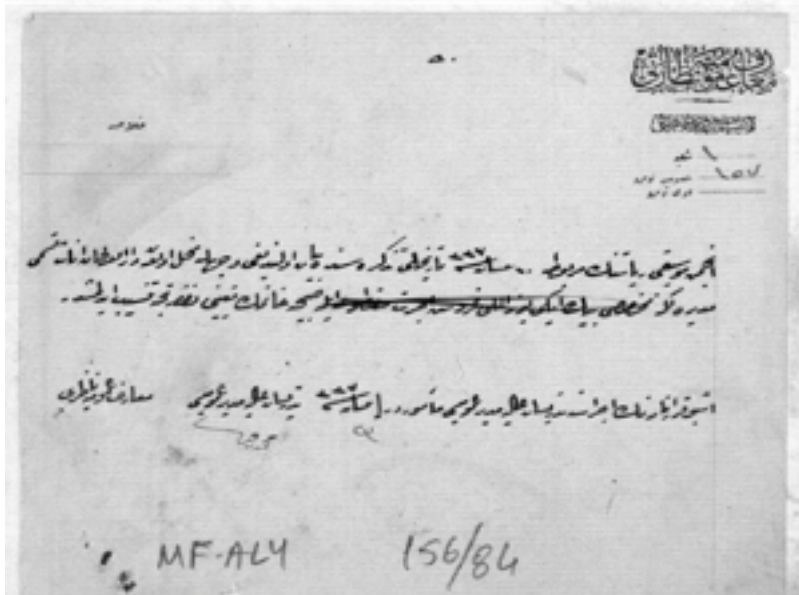
The Ottoman Ministry of Education was founded in 1857. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p. 398) The ministry was divided into three main organisations. The first one was the great council of the Education Ministry (MF.MKB-Meclis-i Kebir-i Maarif). It is possible to find some documents about music lessons in Ottoman public schools, as well as the authorization documents for music education books in this catalogue.

The second catalogue belongs to the Central Organisation of the Education Ministry. The MF. HUS sub-title of this catalogue contains some documents about music schools and societies such as Darül elhan, Darül bedai and Darül Feyz-i Musiki.

The MF. ALY sub-title of this catalogue contains documents about Ottoman colleges and universities. Much information about the first Ottoman Conservatory, the Darülelhan, can be found here. It is also possible to find some documents about the curriculum of the conservatory, the life of the tutors and students and school concerts and so forth (see Doc. 6).

Another sub-title, MF.EYT is important for music history and it contains many documents about Orphan schools and orphanages. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p. 399.) Music lessons were more important in Ottoman orphan schools than in other schools. Music historian Erhan Özden states that some Ottoman officers gave importance to music lessons in Darul Eytams for the specific purpose to train orphans and make some of them professional musicians. Özden highlights this was the same policy found in 16th century Europe. Historical sources show that the students of the first conservatory founded in Napoli were mainly orphans. Özden further states that Darul Eytams were not specifically founded to give music education but providing music education was one of the main purposes of this school. Some important musicians were trained in this school, such as Sabri Bey and the composer İsmail Zühtü Bey (Özden, 2015, pp.93-94).

The last catalogue belongs to the



Document 6: The Document about the appointment of Mrs Sabiha as the manager of the women’s section of the Darülelhan. (BOA, MF. ALY, 156/84).

provincial organization of the Education Ministry. Here, it is possible to find some information regarding music education in the schools found in the provincial cities.

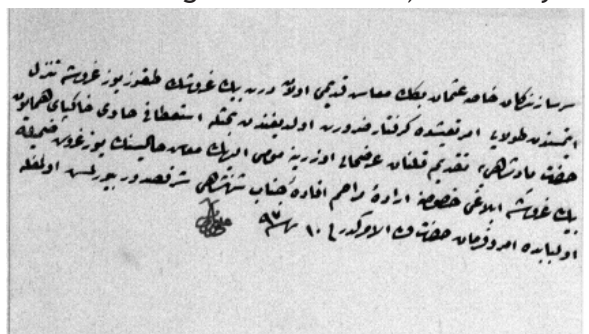
İ.DU.İT (Dosya Usulu İradeler-Cased By-laws)

After the 19th century, the Ottoman government system dramatically changed as well as the number of by-laws. These by-laws are catalogued under the title of İ.DU.İT (Dosya Usulu İradeler- Cased Bylaws) . Some important by-laws of musical foundations such as Musika-i Hümayun and Sazendegan-ı Hassa can be found here. For instance, one by-law of the Musika-I Hümayun is found under this title, catalogued by the number 22/20 (see Doc. 7).

İ.DH (Internal Decrees)

The catalogue title, codified as İ.DH (internal decrees) contains information

regarding the decrees of the Sultan. This catalogue consists of some records about the sultan’s decrees on some internal issues. It is possible to find records of the petitions of musicians and the sultans’ decrees in response to their requests. Some records about the musical life of the court can also be found in this catalogue. The document, numbered İ.DH. 1291, contains the sultan’s decree about Where the Mevlid (an important religious ceremony which is also a religious music form) ceremony



Document 8: The Document about the salary of Osman Bey (chief of the Turkish Music Ensemble of the Court) (BOA, İ.DH 802).

would be performed.

Yıldız Palace Documents

Another catalogue worthy of attention is the one constituted by the Yıldız Palace Documents. Sultan Abdulhamid II. used Yıldız Palace as the headquarters of the Ottoman Empire. All the documents from his era were collected in Yıldız Palace and transferred to the Ottoman Archive, subsequently catalogued as The Yıldız Catalogue. Two catalogues are particularly important for music history research. The first one is the Y.EE.d catalogue (Yıldız Esas Defterleri-Yıldız main books) and the second one is the Y.PRK.ASK catalogue, (Yıldız Retail (Singular) containing documents about the military. This catalogue contains documents about musicians and the musical life of the court. Y.PRK. ASK is the catalogue related to Military correspondence, and it is possible to find documents about military bands and their members here (see Doc. 9).

İE.SM (İbnülemin Saray Mesalihi-İbnül Emin- Court Businesses)

This catalogue contains the documents that were classified by the classification council, founded under the chairmanship of İbnül Emin (İbnül Emin Mahmut Kemal İnal). İbnül Emin was an important calligrapher and intellectual. The musical meetings organised in his home hold a particularly important place in Turkish music history.

This catalogue contains 47. 125 documents, from the 15th to the 19th century and these are catalogued under 23 titles. One of them is particularly important for music history. This catalogue is the İE.SM (İbnülemin Saray

Mesalihi- İbnül Emin (court affairs) (see Doc. 10).

There are nearly 3000 documents dated between 1496-1844 in this catalogue. Many of these documents were written according to the siyakat writing style. Siyakat was the writing style used for financial correspondence in the Ottoman Era. It is possible to find some of the musicians' salary invoices in this catalogue. The following document is the salary invoice of tanbur tutor Yehudi and it is written in siyakat style.

Cevdet Saray (Cevdet Court)

Another important catalogue is that of Cevdet Saray (Cevdet Court). This catalogue has an interesting story. In 1931, there was an attempt to send some of the documents held in the Ottoman Archive to Bulgaria as scrap paper. This incident was reported by the media and met with a strong public reaction. Consequently, some decisions were taken in order to return the aforementioned documents and to take new conservation measures for the other archive documents. (Necati Aktaş, 1994, p. XIII.)

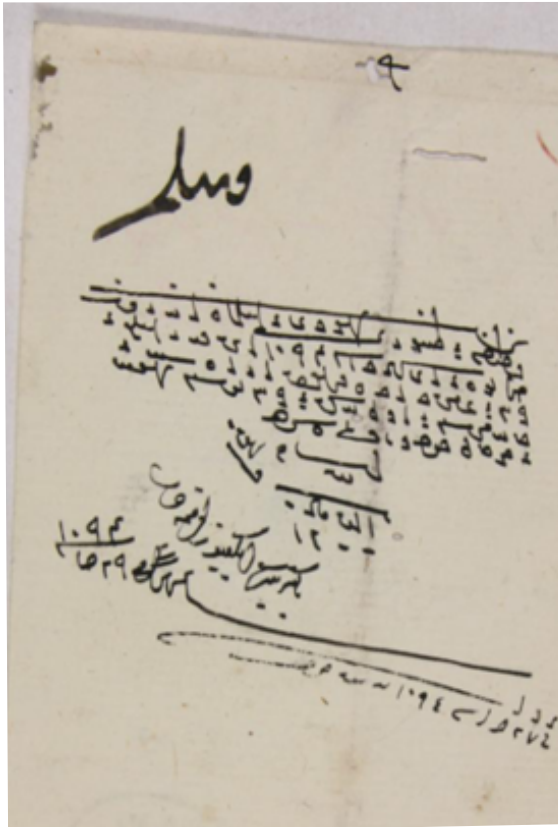
One of these decisions resulted in the foundation of the new document classification council, under the chairmanship of Muallim Cevdet on 8 October 1932. (Yusuf İhsan Genç, 2010, p.420) Afterwards, the documents that were classified by this council were catalogued under the title 'Catalogue of Cevdet'. This catalogue was divided into different titles, one of them being Cevdet Saray. Cevdet Saray contains many documents about courtiers. It consists of documents that were dated between 1593- 1893. It is also possible

مسیقہ ہمایون و خدمت خاصہ حضرت شہان صاحبہ نہ و مقررہ وقت تک کسبہ معنائی میں یکجہ ہوا ہے

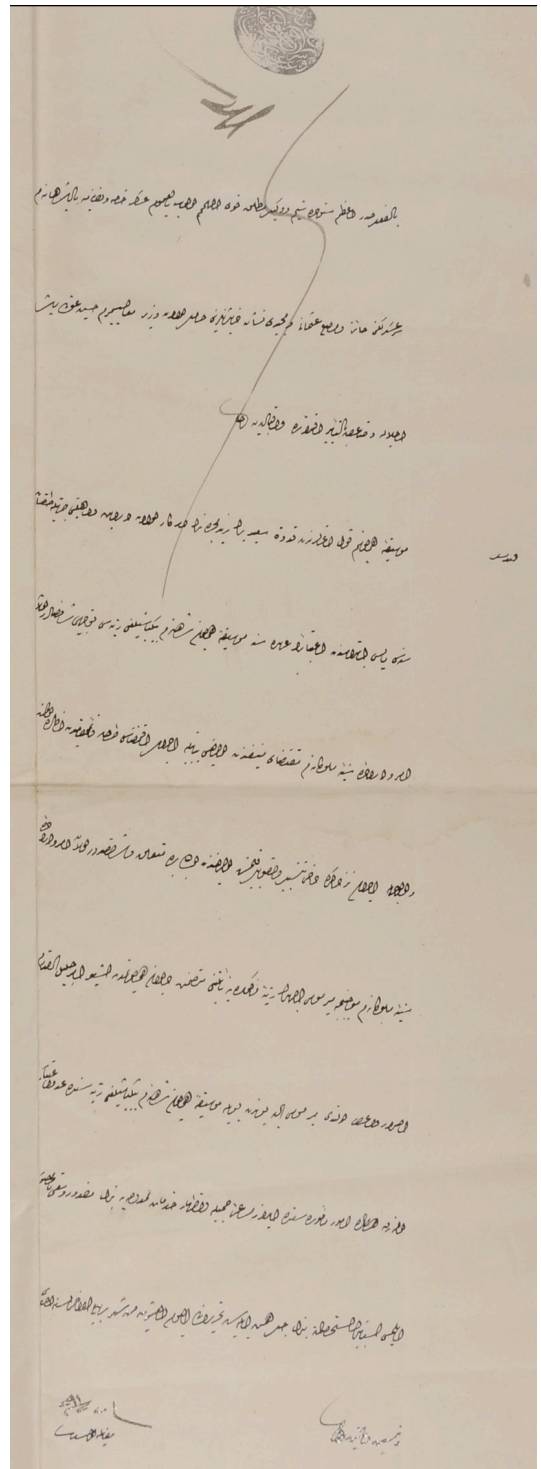
مذہب نام	کسبہ	رتبہ سن	نقارہ	بند بقیات	انفاق	نقارہ
			عہ	عہ	عہ	عہ
شاہین مسیحہ ہمایون اجماعہ راضی المعبود نہ نہ تر بہ خصوص معہ نفسی نظم و نغمہ قریب سنہ ۱۲۴۴ ہجری قمریہ	نجیب پانا قلدی	فرید	۱	۱	۱	۱
	محمد بیگ قلدی	میلاوی	۱	۱	۱	۱
	نور علی بیگ قلدی	میلاوی	۱	۱	۱	۱
	نصرت بیگ قلدی	میلاوی	۱	۱	۱	۱
	محمد علی بیگ قلدی	میلاوی	۱	۱	۱	۱
	رضا بیگ قلدی	فانسیہ	۱	۱	۱	۱
	رضا بیگ قلدی	پیکتہ	۱	۱	۱	۱
	صالح اقصی قلدی	پیکتہ	۱	۱	۱	۱
	لطیف اقصی قلدی	پیکتہ	۱	۱	۱	۱
	احمد علی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	غیردا اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	ابوہریرہ اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	کامران اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	بلد بیگ قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	نور علی اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
	عبدھادی اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱
محمد بیگ قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱	
عالم بیگ قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱	
سید علی اقصی قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱	
زاہد بیگ قلدی	قولا غما	۱	۱	۱	۱	
			۱۹	۶۷۰		

OSMANLI ARSIVI

Document 9: The first page of the list of the members of Musika-i Hümâyûn Orchestra (BOA, Y.E.E, 266, 1b.).



Document 10: The Salary invoice of Tanburi Yehudi (BOA ,İE. SM, 1002).



Document 11: The document About Medals That Were Granted to Some Musicians (BOA , Cevdet Saray 5817).

to find some documents about court musicians in this catalogue (see Doc. 11).

The books of Topkapı Palace:

The Ts. Mad (The books from Topkapı Palace) is a catalogue in which we can find several sources on Ottoman history. These books were transferred from the Topkapı Palace Archive to the Ottoman Archive. In the catalogue we can find the lists of the Enderun Rooms, which provided accommodation to court musicians before the 19th century. During that period, musicians lived in some of the rooms of the court, as they began their apprenticeship with their master. They stayed in their room during and after their education. There were special rooms for artists, such as the Kilerli Room and the Seferli Room. It is possible to find the name list of those who lived in these rooms in this catalogue. Additionally, it is possible to find documents such as grants, musicians' petitions (see Doc.12).

Conclusion

Carrying out research on musical sources in the Ottoman Archive requires much time due to the complexity of the archive. It is therefore important to know which catalogues should be consulted. That is why I have provided information about the catalogues consisting of documents about music.

Some catalogues consist of files only and there is no explanation about their content. Due to this, the main document types that these catalogues contain must be known to the researchers. This study therefore provides important pieces of information that can be useful for researchers.

I have also given information about the catalogues that contain an explanation about their contents in the Ottoman Archive's digital search system. Familiarity with the main entries of the catalogue is also useful for researchers.

Finally, it should be said that some music documents can be found in catalogues which I did not mention in the text. I have just given information about the catalogues in which music documents can most likely be found. That's why every researcher must find the most appropriate catalogue for his or her research. They must spend time in the archive and develop their own methods in order to find and access the right catalogues.

References

- Necati Aktaş, S. A. (Dü.). (1994). *Bulgaristandaki Osmanlı Arşivi*. Ankara: TC. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü.
- Özden, E. (2015). *Osmanlı Maârifinde Mûsikî*. Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu .
- Terzi, A. (2000). *Hazine-i Hassa Nezareti*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu.
- Toker, H. (2016). *Elhân-ı Âziz*. İstanbul: TBMM. Milli Saraylar Daire Başkanlığı .
- Toker, H. (2016). *Marş-ı Hassa* . İstanbul: Dört Mevsim Kitap.
- Yusuf İhsan Genç, M. K. (Dü.). (2010). *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri Rehberi*. Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü.

Archive Documents

BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 806/9

BOA, A.NŞT.D. 15

BOA, Cevdet Saray 5817.

BOA, HH.d, 653, 69b.

BOA, HR.TO 446/23

BOA, İ-DU-İT, 22/20.

BOA, İ. DH, 802.

BOA, İE. SM, 1002.

BOA, MB, 100/23.

BOA, MB.İ 18/128.

BOA, MF. ALY, 156/84.

BOA, Ts.Mad, 304.

BOA, Y.E.E, 266, 1b

BOA, HH.MH, 658/93

Osmanlı Arşivinde Müzik Tarihi Kaynakları

Özet

Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivinde müzikle ilgili birçok belge bulunmasına karşın bu belgeleri kaynak olarak kullanan çalışmaların sayısı oldukça azdır. Bu durumun bazı nedenleri bulunmaktadır. En mühim neden ise mezkur belgelerin (kapalı) dosya envanter sistemine göre tasnif edilmiş olması ve bu dosyaların içerikleri hakkında herhangi bir bilgiye ulaşmanın mümkün olmamasıdır. Arşivde bulunan doküman tiplerinin çeşitliliği ve tasnif sisteminin karmaşıklığı diğer bazı nedenlerdir. Bu nedenlerden dolayı bahsi geçen belgelere ulaşmak zorlaşmakta ve arşivde çalışma süreleri artmaktadır. Bu sorunun çözülmesi ancak, arşiv tasnif sisteminin iyi tanınması ve araştırılan alanla ilgili en fazla sayıda belge bulunabilecek fon kodlarının bilinmesi ile mümkün olabilmektedir. Bu makâlede, Osmanlı arşivinde yer alan ve içeriğinde müzik tarihi ile alakalı belgeler bulunan fon kodları hakkında bilgiler verilmektedir. Ayrıca, Osmanlı Arşivi belge tasnif sisteminin karakteristik yapısı ve bahsi geçen fon kodlarında bulunabilecek müzikle ilgili belgelerin özellikleri ele alınmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler

osmanlı müziği, türk müzik tarihi, osmanlı dönemi müzik tarihi, türk müzik tarihi kaynakları