

Turkish Archival Sources: General framework and a case study for «Kharkiv»

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Mehmet Fahri Furat. Turkish Archival Sources: General framework and a case study for «Kharkiv». This article discusses a number of materials Turkish archives. The author gives an overview of the fund, which holds documents relating to the history of Kharkiv.

Keywords: Turkish archives, documents, Kharkiv.

Мехмет Фахри Фурат. Турецкие архивные источники: общие основы для тематического исследования «Харьков». В статье рассматриваются материалы ряда турецких архивов. Автор дает общий обзор фондов, в которых представлены документы, касающиеся истории Харькова.

Ключевые слова: турецкие архивы, документы, Харьков.

Мехмет Фахрі Фурат. Турецькі архівні джерела: загальні основи для тематичного дослідження «Харків». У статті розглядається матеріали низки турецьких архівів. Автор дає загальний огляд фондів, в яких представлені документи, що стосуються історії Харкова.

Ключові слова: турецькі архіви, документи, Харків.

A document apparently insignificant may reveal the most valuable findings in historical research, just as the tiniest information. It might correct mistakes previously considered right, it might make an unpredicted contribution to ongoing work or it might remove a bias. Archives that are one of the major sources of social sciences and fulfill the important function of assessing and keeping the information and documents which concern the life of the state and of the nation, actually serve this purpose. They document and keep the documents concerning international relations. They help us uncover the usages, social structure, institutions of the time and the relations among these. The archives of the Ottoman Empire spread over an area where more than twenty four states were founded upon its disintegration, kept the records of these states over a period of almost five hundred years [51]. They are considered to be one of the archives which match this description the best.

The last three hundred years of Turkish history have been greatly affected by its political, diplomatic and military relations with Russia [52].

The Ottoman archives are the primary source of research in the field of Turkish-Ukrainian-Russian relations. Yet these archives have not been explored much especially by foreign researchers, until recently, mainly due to language problems and inadequate classification. The development of international relations and partnerships in the past years open the way for such works. This article will briefly present the archives keeping the documents concerning Ottoman-Russian-Ukrainian relations, starting with the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive and the research methods to be used by Russian and Ukrainian researchers in these archives. An example of Ottoman archive survey will follow, with the presentation of summarized documents which can be found in the Ottoman archives concerning Kharkiv, the second largest Ukrainian city.

Archives have been of great value in every period of Turkish administration and cultural life. It is well known that one of the civilized nations of the Middle Ages, Turkish Uyghur's (745–840) had cities with rich libraries, government agencies, notaries, customs agencies, courts and archives keeping records of official correspondence [10]. The tradition of record keeping was consolidated with the Islamization of the Turks. All of the written material pertaining to state affairs was kept meticulously since then. This tradition can be found in Seldjukids and other Muslim Turkish states [43]. Anatolian Seldjukids had rich libraries and archives keeping official records.

Ottoman documents were recorded and carefully kept in given books (*defter*) so as to be found easily when needed, since the beginnings of the empire. Few archival documents and material remain from the first 150 years of the Ottoman State [45]. The Mongol invasion, the destruction of the Palace of Bursa, the fights for the throne of the interregnum, wars, disasters are among the reasons for this scarcity. A concentration of documents starts in the Ottoman archives after the conquest of Istanbul. Concentrated and regular archival material is found from Kanuni Sultan Suleiman's reign on (1520–1566), coinciding with the stabilization of the state, the maturation of the institutions, and the end of the fights for the throne [47].

With the *Tanzimat* (Imperial Edict of Reorganization, 1839), the bureaucratic structure of Ministries increased the production of paperwork, thus the number of documents following that era is very high [1]. It should be kept in mind that archives were kept then for bureaucratic reasons, and were not open to the public or to researchers.

Despite the existence of the archival tradition from the early period on, the first archiving enterprise with a modern understanding started after *Tanzimat* with Sadrazam Mustafa Reşit Pasha in 1845. Mustafa Reşit Pasha got the documents of the three main institutions of the central organization of the Ottoman Empire (*Divân-ı Hümâyün*, *Bâb-ı Defter-î* and the *Bâb-ı Âsafî* (*Bâb-ı Âlî*)) aggregated and laid the foundation of the *Hazine-i evrak* (treasury of records/documents) that is the base of the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive. With the transformation of the public institutions following *Tanzimat*, the paperwork of institutions such as *Şûrâ-yı Devlet*, *Hazine-i Hassa*, Ministries of Finances, Foundations, Public Works, Trade, Forestry are also found in this archive [9].

The richest archive today in Turkey is Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive. Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive which contains today over hundred million historical documents, has a collection of documents which are of interest to the whole world due to public relations with Asian, European, African and American states. All of the archival material held in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive is from the Ottoman era and almost all is in Ottoman Turkish. Some documents are in French for the major part, and other various languages such as Arabic, Persian, Russian and English. The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive also contains material such as maps, plans, projects, sketches, albums, photos and newspaper collections.

It is quite important for the researchers to learn about the Ottoman bureaucratic system, the state organization, public institutions, their functions and mechanisms, and their historical evolution, in order to grasp the archival material kept at the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive and its contents. Otherwise, it is difficult to reach and understand the real meaning of the documents [44]. It is thus useful to know where to find the documents related to the topic to be studied, which procedure the document was produced through. The Ottoman archives periodically publish guides to the archives, in this regard. The last one dates from 2010.

Historical Collection of the Turkish General Staff, the Genelkurmay Harb Tarih Arşivi, now usually referred to as the Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı, or ATESE [56]. The foundation of the ATASE archive which contains precious documents pertaining to Turkish military history was laid with the order to create a "War History Department" which would collect the war records of the divisions, in order to write the history of Dardanelles and the First World War, based on trustworthy sources and documents, on 11 April 1916 [60]. The branch was founded in Istanbul and the Ottoman military history archive immediately started to be put together. The history of wars preceding Dardanelles and the World War was added to the list of wars to study. The war records, document folders and reports pertaining to Crimean, Serbian-Montenegro, Ottoman-Russian, Turkish-Greek, Turkish-Italian and Balkan wars were added to the archives. The "War History Department" continued its work under the Republic. It went through several legal adjustments and its denomination was changed to Genelkurmay ATASE ve Denetleme Başkanlığı in November 2004.

The earliest documents in the archive date back from the Crimean War in 1853-1856. It contains various collections of documents pertaining to battles, campaigns, intelligence and logistic support, of great value for researchers who study Ottoman-Russian-Ukrainian military history and relations. These are:

1. Ottoman-Russian War (Crimean War) (1853-1856)

This collection contains 18,400 documents covering the period between 14 April 1849 and 18 August 1870.

2. Ottoman-Serbian-Montenegro War (1875-1877)

3. Ottoman-Russian War (1877-1878). This collection has a seven volumes catalogue, with 37,019 documents covering the period between 17 May 1833 and 24 March 1885.

4. The Ottoman-Greek War (1897)
5. Ottoman Civil Incidents (1896-1914)
6. The Ottoman-Italian War (1911-1912)
7. The Balkan War (1912-1913) collection contains 902,800 documents covering the period between 21 December 1909 and 25 November 1922.

8. The First World War (1914-1918)
This collection contains 3,671,470 documents covering the events between 20 March 1913 and 5 April 1923.

9. The Independence War (1919-1922) catalogue has 21 volumes of 1,996,694 documents covering the years 1913-1927 [59].

The archive also has a substantial maps and photos collection. The access to the archive is reserved to graduate students and academics and requires the knowledge of Ottoman Turkish.

The archives of the Hilal-i Ahmar Cemiyeti, Turkish Red Crescent Association contains historical documents capable of shedding light onto the Turkish and World histories, due to the function and liabilities of this association during war times [55]. The archive contains approximately 1500 boxes of documents mostly in Ottoman Turkish and French, dating from the foundation of the Turkish Red Crescent in 1868 to the Alphabet Reform (1928) (aid and patient reports, prisoner letters and correspondences, prisoner lists), 550 books (hospital correspondence, protocol, quarantine and communication books) and approximately 300,000 prisoner cards belonging to Turkish and foreign prisoners of the Balkan and World wars. The classification of these documents started in 2007. The classification of the documents pertaining to 1868–1911 (up to the Balkan wars) and the translation of some documents from the 1868–1928 era are completed. The archive also contains visual material (maps, postcards, photos) [49].

General Directorate of State Archives and Republican Archives was founded in 1976. It is in charge of the scientific and technical work and the monitoring necessary to identify, keep, organize and assess the archival material found in the institutions and agencies [48].

The Republican Archives contains documents pertaining to War of Independence, Government of the Assembly and the Republican era. Classified documents which are older than thirty years are put at the disposal of researchers. All documents of historical, legal, administrative, political, economic and cultural content and of interest for the Turkish state and nation are classified in catalogues and available for research. Some of these are: bills of law by governments, passing of regulations, codes related multiple ministries, cases of naturalization and denaturalization, nominations of governors, ambassadors and generals, appointments of honorary consulates, employment of foreigners, associations, border incidents, illegal publications, remissions of punishment, international agreements; letters and written documents sent by people and by foreigners to the prime minister and to his office.

The Tahrir registers at the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre Kuyûd-ı Kadime Archive are one of the most valuable collections of

the Ottoman Archives. Tahrir registers are a unique source of detailed statistics on the social, demographic, economic history of the Ottoman Empire. When the Ottomans conquered a place, they sent an "emin" to the area to investigate and record the population and their sources of revenue in detail. They had a different population and revenue registration book for every sanjak. If the tax sources of an area changed in time, the operation of tahrir was renewed every 10, 20 or 30 years [3].

Tahrir Registers are official records of the Ottoman state that both local and foreign historians value. These records contain information concerning almost thirty states of the present day from the Balkans to Caucasus, and to Persian Gulf [53]. The 1100 tahrir registers found at the Ottoman archives, covering the years between 835-1300/1431-1882 are part of a series of 2322 books which are at the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre in Ankara [54]. Tahrir registers are named either Mufassal, İcmal, Evkaf, Ruznamçe, Cebe, Mustahfazat, or Derdest.

Şer'iyye Registers are Ottoman court records under shari'a law. The Şer'iyye registers are no doubt primary sources of Ottoman history.

Registers contain official correspondence between judges and the central state, people's complaints and petitions, fermans and decisions considered as legal arrangements of the provincial administration, and more importantly court decisions which reflect the social and economic life of the area. Without inspecting these registers, it is not possible to properly unveil the Ottoman state's political, administrative and social history. Şer'iyye registers are a valuable source to identify the names of places all over the Ottoman country and even names of neighborhoods. Şer'iyye registers also contain important information concerning the military. When the Ottoman army went on expedition, the Anatolian, Rumeli beylerbeyi and the sanjak beyleri were sent written orders as well as the judges, in order to gather supplies of food, ship, horse, rowers, carriages, ammunitions and alike needed by the army. The enemy and the reason of the expedition were described in the written orders sent, and the fetva of the Şeyhülislam was mentioned to get the people believe in the necessity of the war. It is thus possible to find detailed information on the Ottoman war history from the XVth century on, in the orders addressed to judges, which can usually be found at the end of the Şer'iyye registers*.

Şer'iyye registers were kept regularly from the first half of the XVth century on, until the first quarter of the XX-th century. More than 10,000 of these books remain [46].

A major part of these books can be found at the National Library in Ankara. These are catalogued under the name of Şer'iyye Sicilleri (Şer'iyye registers). Apart from those in Ankara, some Şer'iyye registers are kept in the İstanbul Müftülüğü Şer'iyye Sicilleri Arşivi.

* Şer'iyye Sicillerinin Eski Türk Kültürü Açısından Arz ettiği Önem, <http://os-ar.com/print.php?sid=80>

Many services throughout the country, like religious services, water in cities and towns, bridges, cemeteries, roads, health services, education services, social services which are provided today by ministries, municipalities and private administrations were provided by foundations under Ottoman rule. So to speak, archive documents are valuable not only for foundations law, but also in respect to the Ottoman history, culture and social life [57]. The major archive for the documents constituting the legal base of foundations (from Seldjukid, Beylikler, Ottoman and Republican eras) is the Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Vakıf Kayıtlar Arşivi.

Even though most documents related to foundations can be found at the Vakıf Kayıtlar Arşivi, some vakfiye and similar documents were either transferred to other institutions in their course for various reasons (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre, Topkapı Palace Museum and Süleymaniye Library etc.), gotten hold by private individuals, or even brought abroad into private collections or museums.

Vakıf Kayıtlar Arşivi contains today 2370 vakfiye and registry book. These books contain 27,021 vakfiye and similar documents. Almost all of the vakfiye and similar documents have been transliterated into Latin alphabet, and the remaining is in process. The Vakıf Kayıtlar Arşivi which is used by many researchers from across the world will be available over the internet once the uploading of the documents is completed [50].

Turkish or foreign real and legal persons who want to research, investigate or sample archival material older than thirty years at the General Directorate of State Archives or other archives open for research, shall file the “Application Form to Conduct Research at the State Archives and Taahhütname” and apply either directly to the archive in question, or to Turkish embassies or consulates abroad through mail or in person. Applications in Turkey will be considered within two work days by the ministry or institution that the archive in question is affiliated with. It shall take up to thirty days for applications abroad. Applications to the archives of Turkish General Staff (ATESE) shall be considered within thirty days. Research requests in archives may be accepted as is, restricted or rejected.

Documents which are damaged or not yet classified cannot be used. Yet, they can be consulted under special circumstances under the supervision of authorized personnel. Researchers can use the material pertaining to their topic but they cannot reserve all the archival material of relative topics to their name. Turkish or foreign researchers are liable for providing a copy of the publication which is the outcome of their research to the related archive administration. Foreign researchers are also liable of providing a copy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*.

* Devlet Arşivlerinde Araştırma ve İnceleme Yapmak İsteyen Türk ve Yabancı Uyruklu Gerçek veya Tüzel Kişilerin Tabii Olacakları Esaslar Bakanlar Kurulu Kararı:31.1.2002-2002/3681 Resmî Gazete:1.3.2002/24682

KHARKIV** IN TURKISH ARCHIVES***
DOCUMENTS IN OTTOMAN ARCHIVES****

1. About the cruel treatment of our prisoners in Kharkiv, their denial of the slanders and their defense [39].
2. Deciphered message by Delegate Galib Efendi giving the news received by the Russian Consul in Bucharest about the victory of Russians over France and stating that the answer to Admiral Çiçakof's letter concerning the Kharkiv event is attached [33].
3. Imperial order (ferman) to the district governor by Sadrazam Hurşid Paşa concerning the news received by his chamberlain (kethüda) in Bucharest Galib Efendi of the victory of the Russians over the French, stating that the letter sent by Galib Efendi to Çiçakof about the Kharkiv event was answered and that it is attached [14].
4. Proposal (motion) sent by İpsalalı Ahmed Paşa in charge of sending the prisoners in Russia to the Ottoman territory, to the Sadrazam, including details about the misdoings occurred in Valki, Kharkiv and the killing of Muslim prisoners [26].
5. A copy of the letter sent to Admiral Çiçakof about the investigation of the assault of the Muslim prisoners settled at an eight-ten hours distance from Kharkiv and the killing of many of them [40].
6. Letters by Sadrazam Hurşid Ahmed Paşa referring to consulting the Ambassador İtalenski in Istanbul, even though —Sadret Kethüdası” Galib Efendi complained to Çiçakof about the kidnapping of two Muslim girls in Kharkiv by Muscovites, their rescuing by about thousand prisoners settled there upon their calling for help, the firing by the local armed forces resulting in the killing of about five hundred of them [36].
7. Cypher message by Galib Efendi about the news of the kidnapping of two Muslim girls by Russian soldiers in Kharkiv, the attempt by Muslim prisoners to rescue them, the firing by Russians and the killing of more than five hundred Turkish prisoners [21].

** In Ottoman Turkish, vowels are not used in writing, only consonants are written. This makes it difficult to read, especially proper names and names of places. Also as communication means were limited, it was impossible for writers not to make mistakes when writing proper names of subjects thousands kilometers away. Thus, the word Kharkiv written with the sole consonants H/R/K/V can be found written as Harkof, Harkova, Harkov, Harkav in Ottoman documents. Researchers who consider research in Ottoman archives need to assess all these alternative ways of writing/reading in their work. All alternatives have been considered in our work, when surveying documents.

*** The listed documents from Ottoman Archive have been presented in Archival exhibition —Fravel Back in Time”, 16-20 December 2010 in Kharkiv, by the permission of Ottoman Archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry.

**** T. C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter will be cited as BOA) (Ottoman Archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry).

8. Kaime sent by Sadrazam Hurşid Paşa to the district governor concerning the details of the massacre of the Muslim prisoners in Kharkiv and the appropriate line of conduct [27].

9. Letter by Sadaret Kethüdası Galib Efendi stating that Voyvoda İskerlet confirmed the event in Valki town in Kharkiv, that he approves the statement of Sarigöllü Ahmet Bey, and that he sent a copy of the letter of complaint sent by our prisoners in Valki to the governor of Kharkiv, and the statement of Ahmet Bey [31].

10. A copy of the letter sent by some Muslim prisoners settled in Valki town, Kharkiv to the governor of Kharkiv, about the killing of the other Muslim prisoners, acquired by Ahmed Paşa and sent to Sadaret [16].

11. Letter sent by Sadrazam Hurşid Paşa to the district governor about the necessity to correspond with the ambassador and the necessity for the ambassador to write to Russia to ask the appointment of a Russian officer, to investigate the killing of the Muslim prisoners in Kharkiv, despite the appointment of "Murahas-ı Salis Abdülhamid Efendi" [14].

12. About the handing of a document by the translator Fonton stating that the Russian ambassador communicated the notification about the execution of the Russians who got involved with the killing of the Muslim prisoners in Kharkiv, as a retribution [20].

13. About the need for the retribution of the execution of the Muslim prisoners in Kharkiv [41].

14. About the declaration of martial law in the regions of Petersburg, Kharkiv, Hocabey, Kefe and Warsaw and the accompanying of the emperor by two Cossacks since the civil incident which caused deaths and injuries among people [29].

15. The Repeal of the temporary governorates of Petersburg, Kharkiv and Hocabey [42].

16. About the reading of a speech by the pontiff of Kharkiv before the Russian Emperor [22].

17. Telegram sent by Kalast Paşa Ranipanç to the Ministry of Interior on behalf of laborers named Mahki, Nikolayev, Kharkiv Gerson, Gozleva, stating their intention not to return to their village and even to take their family away in case the director of the Hodiçor district is not granted a lasting office [30].

18. About the notification of Taygan Şehbenderliği that the "Yujniy Kıray" newspaper of Kharkiv releases publications harmful to the Ottoman State [15].

19. Expressing that the "Youzny Kray" newspaper lately shows sympathy to the Armenian problem, tries to discredit Ottoman officials, that the local administration in Kharkiv does not care about the affairs concerning the Consulate and acts slowly, that the translation of the latest article named "Turkey" which appeared in that newspaper is sent, that in this part of Russia articles are controlled before publication, that this kind of articles should be stopped using this practice [12].

20. About the authorization of the transit of the Arabian horse bought to improve the horse breed at the stud farm of Kharkiv city under the supervision of Grandük Nikola Petroviç, the cousin of the Russian emperor [38].

21. About the authorization of the transit of an Arabian horse bought to improve the horse breed at the big stud farm located in Kharkiv, Russia [17].
22. The article which appeared in *Novie Vremya* newspaper concerning the assault of the Volga Bank in Kharkiv [28].
23. Telegram by the governorate of Aynaroz requesting the investigation of the death of Dmitri son of Yovan of Kharkiv town, Russia, who died at the monastery of Rosko and who has a Russian passport [35].
24. Decoration of Kravz who went from the Consulate of Sofia in Germany to Kharkiv, with an Ottoman medal of third rank [23].
25. Travel allowance of the Consul of Kharkiv Rumi Bey [32].
26. Petition by nine Ottoman officers held prisoner in Kharkiv, Russia [34].
27. Request by Fatma Hanım living in Üsküdar of information about her son Ahmed Raci Efendi who is held prisoner in the Military Hospital of Kharkiv Russia [19].
28. Appointment of the Consul of Kharkiv, Ukraine Ruhi Bey [18].
29. About the decoration of Ruhi Bey with the (Kharkiv Şehbenderi) Mecidi Medal [25].
30. The exchange of the Ottoman war prisoners in Ukraine with the Ukrainian prisoners held by the Ottomans. The question of the travelling of the Ottoman Şehbenderi of Kharkiv Ruhi Bey to his place of duty [11].
31. A telegram originated from Petersburg about the occupation of Kharkiv by the Germans and their cruelty [24].
32. Request by the people of Atina town and various villages in the Hemşin area in the state of Trabzon, of the reimbursement of their damages due to the confiscation of their workplaces and their belongings in various Russian states such as Varonis, Kharkiv and Horsun and cities like Heysen, Kersun, Bahçesaray, Sivastopol and Kiev [37].

Republican archive [2]

1. According to the last article of the treaty a delegation headed by Riza Nur will be sent to Kharkiv/Ukraine to sign the certificates [4].
2. The reason for carrying the center of the Republic of Ukraine from Kharkiv to Kiev is to reinforce industrial centers and to make administration closer to agricultural lands [6].
3. According to the treaty with Ukraine, determination of per diems for delegation of Kharkiv [7].
4. Providing political passports to the delegation led by Mayor Muhittin Bey on behalf of Istanbul Municipality for attending the technical Congress organised by Kharkiv Oblast Municipality [5].
5. Wishes of success to Mayor of Istanbul, Muhittin Bey in Kharkiv trip [7].

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