

The Life of Shaykh al-Islam Ebussuud Efendi

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A. Birth

His real name is Muhammed b. Muhammed b. Mustafa b. İmad el-İskilibî (el-İmadî). He is known by titles such as "Müftiü'l-enam, müftiü's-sekaleyn, şeyhülislam, sultanü'l-müfessirin, hâtemü'l-müfessirin, hitamü'l-müctehidin, muallim-i sâni, allame-i küll, hoca çelebi, Ebu Hanife-i sani." The word "Ebussuud" is not his nickname or alias. It can be said that the word is his name and that his father gave such names to his children based on the names of his two brothers, Ebunnasr and Abdulfettah.

According to one view, he was born on 17 Safar 896 / December 30, 1490. Ayderusi mentions his birthdate as 19 Safar 896 / 1490. There are also sources that indicate his birthdate as 898 / 1492.

There are different opinions about his birthplace. One of them is Müderris/Metris village. It is mentioned that Müderris village was granted to Alaaddin Tusî and took its name from him. Another view suggests that he was born in Sivas Tekke in Fatih, named after his father. However, since the endowment document was written or verified by Ebussuud Efendi himself, it is certain that he was born in İskilip.

Âli and Peçevi state that Ebussuud Efendi is of Kurdish origin. Interpreting these observations within the framework of nationalist ideologies of recent centuries would be historically incorrect. In the traditional sense, words like Turkish, Kurdish, Laz, etc. primarily denoted affiliation and belonging, but they became ideological concepts after the emergence of nationalism. Therefore, after considering Âli and Peçevi's words as a historical observation, their accuracy can be

examined. According to the sources available to us, Ebussuud Efendi comes from a family that has been living in Amasya for two centuries. The oldest known ancestor of Ebussuud Efendi is Necibüddin Musa el-Ahlati (Halati), who was a scholar and died in the early 1300s.

Imber states that the origin of the family name, İmadî, is unknown, while Baysun thinks that the use of the name Mustafa el-İmad for his grandfather, although Ebussuud Efendi is called imadî, is similar to calling Ali Kuşçu as Alaaddin, and suggests that it might have originated from giving the name İmadüddin. However, this view does not seem accurate. Another view suggests that İmad is the old name of Direklibel village in İskilip, which is the birthplace of Ebussuud Efendi. It is more reasonable to assume that the title İmadî is used because of his grandfather named İmad. Moreover, the name İmadüddin is not mentioned in the sources.

B. Ebussuud Efendi's Family

His father, Muhammad b. Mustafa b. İmad al-İskilibi, was known as the "spiritual master" (hünkar şeyhi) due to his closeness to Sultan Bayezid II. It is likely that his father and Sultan Bayezid II met in Amasya through Muayyadzade Abdurrahman. His father is also known as Muhyi'l-milleti ve'd-din and Sheikh Yavsi. He had two sons named Nasreddin (Ebunnasr) and Abdulfettah, and three daughters named Ayse, Fatma, and Rukiye.

According to the same endowment deed, it is mentioned that Sheikh Yavsi had a mansion in Viranseki Village, which was under the administration of Ebunnasr. His daughter Rukiye Hanım married Muayyadzade Abdurrahman Efendi. Unlike Ebussuud Efendi, Ebunnasr (Nasreddin) Efendi chose the path of Sufism and assumed the position of sheikh after his father.

Ali Kushchu is Sheikh Yavsi's teacher and the brother of his father-in-law. Sheikh Yavsi is the disciple of İbrahim Tebrizi. After learning the external sciences from his father Ali Kushchu, upon Ali Kushchu's death, he turned to Sufism and joined İbrahim Kayseri. Sheikh Yavsi's father passed away in İskilip in 920/1514-1515 and was buried in the same place.

According to some sources, his mother, Sultan Hatun, is the daughter of Ali Kushchu. Therefore, Ebussuud Efendi is said to be the grandson of Ali Kushchu. However, in a certificate written by

Ebussuud Efendi, he refers to Ali Kushchu as "my mother's uncle and my father's teacher." Therefore, Ebussuud Efendi's mother is the niece of Ali Kushchu's brother.

His grandfather is Mustafa b. Imad. Mustafa b. Imad is incorrectly shown as the father of Ebussuud Efendi in some sources. It is claimed that Mustafa b. Imad, based on the certificate that Ebussuud Efendi gave to Sheikh Abdurrahman al-Merzifoni, is the brother of Ali Kushchu. In the copy of the mentioned certificate in Zeylû's-Şekaik, Ali Kushchu is mentioned as "ammü validi/my father's uncle." However, in the copy of the same manuscript in the Beyazıt Library, the correct phrase is "ammü valideti/my mother's uncle." This confusion led to the misconception that Ali Kushchu was the uncle of Ebussuud Efendi's father. It is evident that this information is incorrect as El-Imad, who is Ebussuud Efendi's grandfather's father, and Muhammad Kushchu from Turkistan, who is Ali Kushchu's father, are different individuals.

His grandfather's father is El-Imad. El-Imad is recorded as his grandfather's name in other sources. However, in his endowment deed, he is mentioned as his grandfather's father. No other information about his grandfather's father has been found in the available sources.

According to the article, it is stated in the endowment deed that Ebussuud Efendi married Zeynep Hatun, the daughter of his mentor Seydi-i Karamani. Some sources incorrectly state that he married the daughter of his mentor Müeyyedzâde, but it is not accurate. It is likely that the confusion arose because he may have married his own daughter to Müeyyedzade Abdülkadir Şeyhi Efendi. The Müeyyedzade family, who originated from Amasya, and the Ebussuud Efendi family are two branches of the Imadiyya. As mentioned above, the oldest known ancestor of the Imadiyya, Necibüddin Musa el-Halati, who died in the early 14th century, was a scholar from Amasya.

According to the endowment deed, the name of the mother of his son Ahmed Efendi is mentioned as Fahrünnisa. Therefore, Ebussuud Efendi must have had another wife named Fahrünnisa besides Zeynep Hatun.

Ebussuud Efendi had four sons named Ahmed, Mehmed, Mahmud, and Mustafa, and three daughters named Hatice, Rahime, and Kerime. It is claimed that there was another son named Mahbub Efendi, based on a document related to the leadership of the Piri Pasha Zawiya Endowment in Tosya. However, the mentioned document does not mention that Mahbub Çelebi

is the son of Ebussuud Efendi. Perhaps Mahbub Çelebi is a descendant of Ebussuud Efendi. Furthermore, although the daughters and sons of Ebussuud Efendi are mentioned in his endowments, there is no mention of Mahbub Çelebi.

The eldest son of Ebussuud Efendi was Meyli Mehmed Efendi, who was a judge, poet, and calligrapher, born in Istanbul in 1524. Mehmed Efendi, who received lessons from his father, studied under Muhyiddin Fenari and also took calligraphy lessons from Sheikh Abdurrahim Bayrami. Mehmed Efendi was appointed to the Kasımpaşa medrese in 1548, the Sahn-ı Seman medrese in 1551, and the Sultan Selim medrese in 1554. In Shawwal 1556, he was appointed as the judge in Damascus. While in Damascus, his relationship with the beylerbey Şemsi Ahmed Pasha soured, and in 1559, both of them were dismissed from their positions. After a while, he was appointed as the judge in Aleppo in 1562 and died at the age of 40 in 1563.

The second son, Şemseddin Ahmed Efendi, was born in Istanbul in 1537. He first studied under Taşköprüzade Ahmed Efendi and later under his father. According to the "ulema evladı" rule, he became part of the religious class. Thus, at the age of nineteen, he became a teacher (müderris) at the Rüstem Pasha medrese in Üsküdar in December 1555. In October 1558, he was appointed to the Haseki Sultan medrese in Avret market, then to one of the Sahn-ı Seman medreses in October 1559, and to the Şehzade Medrese in December 1561. He died at a young age while serving as a teacher.

Ahmed Efendi was a knowledgeable person and highly skilled in writing Arabic poetry. He was superior to his contemporary scholars. He personally engaged with Kanuni (Suleiman the Magnificent) in his education and a biography was written about him. However, he had bad habits such as excessively insulting other scholars of the time, making bad friends, being harsh, arrogant, heartless, and using opium. Because of these habits, his father wrote him a beautiful advice letter starting with "My Master!" According to this letter, his son's behavior greatly saddened Ebussuud Efendi. Although he thought his son could become a Shaykh al-Islam (highest religious authority), Ahmed Efendi's selfish, arrogant, and blasphemous behavior deeply saddened Ebussuud Efendi. Due to his use of opium and opium syrup, his stomach and intestines were damaged. He died at the age of only 26 on 19 Jumada al-Awwal 970/15 January 1563 and was buried in the cemetery of the primary school his father had built in Eyüp.

His third son is Mahmud Efendi. According to the inscription on his grave in Eyüp, Mahmud Efendi died in Ramadan 963. His fourth son, Mustafa Çelebi, was born in 965/1557. He received education from his father and became a mülazım (junior officer). He was appointed to the Sahn-ı Seman madrasa in 982/1574, and after the death of Ebussuud Efendi, he was dismissed in 984/1576 due to complaints from those who envied him. Feeling offended by the statement of the contemporary Shaykh al-Islam Kadızade, "You are not worthy of being among your scholar community; it is appropriate for you to be a commander with a flag and world owner," Mustafa Çelebi went to İskilip and surpassed his peers in knowledge after a few years of study there. He returned to Istanbul and became the Sahn müderris (chief instructor) for the second time on 986/December 1578. In Rebiülevvel 990/March 1582, he was promoted to the Edirne Selimiye madrasa. In Shawwal 992/October 1584, he was appointed as the qadi (judge) of Thessaloniki but left his post in Jumada al-Awwal 994/April 1586. In Rebiülevvel 995/February 1587, he became the qadi of Thessaloniki again. In Rajab 995/June 1587, he became the qadi of Galata, and in Sha'ban 996/June 1588, he became the qadi of Bura. In Rajab 1001/April 1592, he became the qadi of Istanbul, in Jumada al-Awwal 1003/January 1595, he became the qadi and military judge of Anatolia, and in Muharram 1007/August 1598, he became the qadi of Rumelia. Mustafa Çelebi died on 15 Safar 1008/7 September 1599.

He married one of his daughters to Şeyhülislam Müeyyedzâde Abdulkadir Şeyhi Efendi, who was the son of his sister, and another daughter to Şeyhülislam Malulzâde Mehmed Efendi. His other daughter married Fudayl Çelebi, the son of Ali Cemali Efendi.

According to the endowment document dated 977/1569-1570, it is understood that Ebussuud Efendi, who had a long life, lost his mother, father, daughters Hatice and Kerime, sons Mahmud, Ahmed, Mehmed, and his wife Zeyneb Hatun before him. Therefore, at that time, his son Mustafa Çelebi had a daughter named Rahime and another wife named Fahrünnisa who were still alive.

D. Education

Ebussuud Efendi began his education alongside his father. He studied his father's works, such as "Muhtasarât," "Şerh-i Miftah," "Haşiyetü't-Tecrid," and "Şerhu'l-Mevakif." After his father,

Seyyid Mehmed is mentioned as one of his teachers. He does not mention any other teachers besides them. One of his first teachers after his father was Müeyyedzâde Abdurrahman Efendi. He also received lessons from the famous Shaykh al-Islam İbni Kemal.

Ebussuud Efendi's educational life, as indicated by the presence of his teachers, took place in Istanbul. However, according to a letter he wrote to Sultan Bayezid II, it is understood that he also studied in Edirne. In this letter, he expresses his gratitude and thanks to Sultan Bayezid II for his support when he arrived in Edirne.

He also mentions that he studied under the Anatolian Qadi Mevlana Seydi-i Karamani and received a degree from him. Another source mentions that he received a degree from Qadi Seydi Süleyman Efendi, but it is understood that this is a misinterpretation of the terms "Anatolian Sadr" and "Seydi Efendi" in Ataî's work. During his student years, Ebussuud Efendi attracted the attention of Sultan Bayezid II, who granted him a special stipend of 30 akçe. This special attention can be attributed to his father's closeness to Sultan Bayezid II, as well as Sultan Bayezid's known support for scholars and artists, indicating his recognition of Ebussuud Efendi as a future great scholar.

According to Peçevi, no scholar ever spoke ill of Ebussuud Efendi; only Âli considered his lack of affiliation with a Sufi order as a shortcoming. It is also said that he was from the scholars of the apparent knowledge. His character, works, and being the son of a shaykh indicate that Ebussuud Efendi had a Sufi inclination. He refers to his father as "my shaykh and teacher," indicating that he received Sufi teachings from his father.

He was considered the greatest scholar of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence in his time. Along with his predecessors Molla Fenari, Molla Hüsrev, Zenbilli Ali Cemali Efendi, and İbni Kemal, Ebussuud Efendi is considered one of the greatest scholars of their time. However, they primarily stood out for their services in political and administrative fields. For this reason, it has been argued that Ebussuud Efendi and the mentioned scholars were not at the level of scholars such as Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun, and Farabi. Leaving aside other scholars as they are beyond the scope of our discussion, it can be said that this is a harsh judgment for Ebussuud Efendi. Comparing Ebussuud Efendi to the Islamic scholars mentioned above would be incorrect. He is primarily a commentator (mufassir) and jurist (faqih). He also played a significant role in embodying Ottoman customary

law in a legal framework compatible with Islamic law. His tafsir (Quranic exegesis) is considered one of the three great tafsirs along with Keşşaf and Beyzavi's tafsirs. In the field of fiqh (jurisprudence), he was regarded as the greatest jurist of his time.

Ebussuud Efendi is influential not only in jurisprudence and exegesis but also in other sciences. Similar to the symbolic metaphor debate between Seyyid Şerif Cürçani (d. 1413) and Sadeddin Ömer Teftazani (d. 1395) in the presence of Timur, a similar discussion took place between Ebussuud Efendi and Hoca Hafız Taşkendi in the years 950/1543 and lasted for five hours.

Besides other sciences, he was also interested in literature and eloquence. Although he was not born and raised in Arab lands, his proficiency in Arabic was very high. When Kutbuddin al-Makki al-Nehrevi (d. 990/1582), the mufti of Mecca and the teacher of Medrese-i Erbaa in Mecca, came to Istanbul, he met with Ebussuud Efendi and was amazed by his beautiful and eloquent Arabic speech. En-Nehrevi was also greatly impressed when Ebussuud Efendi respectfully read the letter of the Sharif of Mecca while standing and this led him to compose a qasida about Ebussuud Efendi. His place in Arabic literature has been confirmed by Arab poets. His poems have been edited and explained by various poets.

In addition to Arabic, he had advanced knowledge of Persian. His fatwas about the divan of Hafiz and about Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi and Molla Cami are evidence of his knowledge of Persian poetry. In fact, Goethe wrote a poem about Ebussuud Efendi because he saved Hafiz's divan from condemnation.

Ebussuud Efendi, who wrote poetry in three languages and had a literary taste, also supported the poets of his time. He showed kindness to many people who were engaged in poetry, such as Baki, Hüsrevzade Hüsrev, Mecdi, Muhyi, Üskübi Vahi, Hoca Sa'deddin Efendi. Some of them were also students of Ebussuud Efendi.

Almost all of Ebussuud Efendi's fatwas are in Turkish. It is also seen that he occasionally gives Turkish answers to Arabic questions. The language of the fatwa varies according to the knowledge and social group of the person requesting it. However, the answer is given in the same language as the question. In his treatises, he used Turkish alongside Arabic. Two examples of treatises written in Turkish are those related to harvest and the registration of waqf.

Hoca Sadeddin Efendi (943-1536,1537/1008-1599) compares Ebussuud Efendi to Celaledin Devvani (1425-1502) to demonstrate his level of knowledge in philosophy. According to Hoca Sadeddin, the Grand Mufti is far superior to Devvani.

Ebussuud Efendi did not show much interest in producing works on philosophy. However, there are anecdotes that indicate his knowledge of philosophical matters. According to Hammer, when Almosnino visited Ebussuud Efendi, they had a conversation about Aristotle and Galen. In Ottoman scholarly life, starting from the 15th century, Ebussuud Efendi is considered one of the representatives of the tradition established by Fahreddin Razi. This tradition focuses on kalam (Islamic theology) rather than philosophy and aims to protect Islam from the harms of philosophy. Ebussuud Efendi states in his fatwas that studying philosophy is necessary for the development of scholarly skills in the field. It can be understood from the fatwas that there is a debate about which should be taught, religious sciences or rational sciences. In fact, there are some individuals who are opposed to philosophy. In this debate, it is clear that Ebussuud Efendi supports the inclusion of philosophy alongside religious sciences. However, he believes that philosophy alone is not sufficient to attain knowledge of God and knowledge of attributes, and that the guidance of prophets is needed for this. According to him, this is why Ibn Sina, who did not seek the guidance of prophets, could not find the right path.

Ebussuud Efendi educated many students throughout his long life. Among them are grand muftis, scholars, famous poets, and judges. Some of them are Sheikh-ul-Islam Malulzade Seyyid Mehmed, Abdulkadir Şeyhî, Hoca Sadeddin, Bostanzade Mehmed, Sun'ullah Efendi, Bostanzade Mustafa, Cenabî Mustafa Efendi, Molla Hasan, Molla Ali, Sa'di b. Mahmud, Abdulvehhab Çelebi, Qadi Mehmed b. Abdulvehhab b. Abdulkerim, Shamsuddin Ahmed b. Bedreddin Mahmud, Emir Hüseyin b. Sinan, Ja'far b. Abdunnabi, Lütfullah b. Abdunnabi, Abdulkerim b. Mehmed, Abdulfettah b. Sheikh Nasruddin, Shah Mehmed b. Sinan Yegani, Molla Musaca, Molla Nureddin, Molla Taceddin, Molla Sinan, Mehmed b. Mustafa, Poet Baki, Hacı-i Sultanî Ataullah, Tezkireci Aşık Çelebi, Ebülmeyamin Mustafa Efendi, and Fudayl Çelebi, son of Ali Cemali Efendi. These students served as grand muftis, qadis, and held other scholarly positions during the reigns of Suleiman the Magnificent, Selim II, Murad III, and Mehmed III.

E. Professional Career

After completing his education, Ebussuud Efendi was appointed to the Çankırı Medrese by Ibn Kemal in 922/1516 with a salary of 25 akçe. However, it appears that he declined this position as he did not consider the Çankırı Medrese suitable for his level. During that period, higher-ranking madrasas were given to some children of scholars. For example, the Fenarizade family could start with a 40 akçe medrese. It is possible that Ebussuud Efendi, even during his student years, did not find the 25 akçe medrese suitable for himself, as he was already receiving 30 akçe as a stipend. As a result, he was sent to the İnegöl İshak Pasha Medrese with a stipend of 30 akçe. In 926/1520, he was dismissed from this position, which was the only dismissal he experienced in his life. After staying in exile for 10 months, he was appointed to the Davud Pasha Medrese in 927/1521 with a salary of 40 akçe.

In 928/1522, he was transferred to the Mahmud Pasha Medrese. In 931/1525, he was appointed to the medrese built by Vizier Mustafa Pasha in Gebze. In 932/1526, he was granted the title of Bursa Sultaniyye. In 934/1528, he became a lecturer at the Müftü Medrese, part of the Semaniye Medreseleri, where he remained for five years.

In the month of Shawwal 939/1533, he was appointed as the Qadi of Bursa, a position he held for six months. In the month of Rabi' al-Awwal 940/November 1533, he became the Istanbul Qadi, replacing Sadi Efendi. In the month of Rabi' al-Awwal 944/August 1537, upon the dismissal of Rumeli Kazasker Muhyiddin Efendi and Anatolian Kazasker Kadri Efendi by the Sultan due to their mention of the case of the slain Ibrahim Pasha during the Corfu Campaign, Ebussuud Efendi was appointed as the Rumeli Kazasker. He accompanied the Sultan during the campaigns in Karaboghaz (945/1538), Buda (948/1541), and Esztergom (950/1543). After the conquest of Buda, he led the first Friday prayer in the city. He served as the Rumeli Kazasker for eight years (944-952/1537-1545).

In the month of Sha'ban 952/October 1545, he became the Sheikh-ul-Islam, succeeding Fenarizade Muhyiddin Efendi. According to Ataî, no one had fulfilled this position properly after Sadi Efendi's tenure as Sheikh-ul-Islam. Finally, Ebussuud Efendi, more deserving than Sadi Efendi, assumed this position.

After becoming Sheikh-ul-Islam, Ebussuud Efendi's position surpassed that of the Kazasker. Previously, Sheikh-ul-Islams received lower salaries compared to Kazaskers. During Ebussuud Efendi's tenure as Sheikh-ul-Islam, in 972, the Sultan sent his doorkeeper steward with a request for his tafsir called "İrşadü Akli's-Selim." Upon presenting the portion of the tafsir up to Surah Saad to the Sultan, and upon the Sultan's appreciation of its value, his salary of 200 akçe was increased to 300 akçe (six altun), along with the Bayezid lecturership, making his total salary 500 akçe (ten altun). Additionally, various gifts were given, and all of his students were appointed as assistants. Two copies of the tafsir were sent to the scholars of the Haramayn Sharifayn, and permission was granted for the students to copy it. When he presented the continuation of his tafsir in the month of Sha'ban 973, his salary was increased by 100 akçe (two altun), making it 600 akçe (12 altun).

As Sheikh-ul-Islam, Ebussuud Efendi also reorganized the fatwa institution. For example, during his time, the position of "fetva eminliği" (fatwa supervisor) was established. Furthermore, he determined the methods of writing fatwas for the fatwa clerks. The rules he established regarding fatwa procedures became the basis for writing fatwas and continued to be implemented.

From 982/1574 onwards, the responsibility of preparing the "telhis" (summary) for the appointments of lecturers, muftis, Mevlevi judges, and Kazaskers, whose daily salary exceeded forty akçe, was proposed to be taken away from the Grand Vizier and entrusted to the Sheikh-ul-Islam. However, Ebussuud Efendi did not want to accept this and wrote a letter to Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, stating, "Engaging in fatwa work already burdens our time, and burdening us with this task is a hardship for us." Ebussuud Efendi was already complaining that the workload during his tenure as Sheikh-ul-Islam was much higher than during his Kazasker period. It is natural for him to object to additional tasks being assigned.

Although there are opinions that accept Ebussuud Efendi's objection and acknowledge that this proposal was made, there are some doubts regarding the timing of this proposal, as it coincided with Ebussuud Efendi's death and the execution of Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, who was the Istanbul Qadi during Ebussuud Efendi's time. Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi's statements in Telhisü'l-Beyan also indicate that this view is quite weak. Therefore, according to these accounts, the proposal was first made to Sheikh-ul-Islam Bostanzade Mehmed Efendi (942-1006/1535, 36-

1598), and it is possible that it was initially offered to Ebussuud Efendi, who declined it due to his heavy workload, but was later reintroduced and implemented during Sheikh-ul-Islam Bostanzade's time.

The mentioned appointments were proposed by Sheikh-ul-Islams and presented to the Sultan by Grand Viziers even after the increasing importance of Kazaskers and Sheikh-ul-Islams. This is clearly stated in the Tevkii Abdurrahman Pasha Kanunname.

Before Ebussuud Efendi, the appointments of Kazaskers were made by Grand Viziers. However, it is rumored that since the time of Sheikh-ul-Islam Zenbilli Ali Efendi, the opinions of Sheikh-ul-Islams started to be taken into account regarding the appointment of Kazaskers.

After becoming Sheikh-ul-Islam, it became a tradition to serve as the Rumeli Kazasker before being appointed to this position. It can be understood that Ebussuud Efendi's appointment as Sheikh-ul-Islam was considered after his tenure as Rumeli Kazasker. Almost all Sheikh-ul-Islams after Ebussuud Efendi were appointed to this position after serving as Kazaskers. Thus, Sheikh-ul-Islam surpassed Kazasker both in terms of material benefits and in terms of status and position.

The formal establishment of Sheikh-ul-Islam as an official institution predates the time of Sultan Fatih. Sheikh-ul-Islam became an official state institution with Fahreddin Acemi's appointment during the reign of Sultan Murad II.

In the early periods, the positions of Kazasker and Muallim-i Sultanî were superior to Sheikh-ul-Islam. Sheikh-ul-Islam, which emerged as a modest institution, gained importance with scholars like Zenbilli Ali Efendi (d. 932/1525-1526), İbni Kemal (d. 940/1534), and Ebussuud Efendi holding this position. Therefore, Sheikh-ul-Islam began to gain importance from the reign of Sultan Yavuz. In the Yavuz and Kanuni periods, the fact that Sheikh-ul-Islams were more knowledgeable and prestigious than Kazaskers led to this change. Previously, Sheikh-ul-Islams, who were only authorized to appoint muftis, became responsible for the appointment of Mevlevi judges, lecturers, and even Kazaskers due to the increase in their importance and prestige. Thus, Sheikh-ul-Islams reached a position equivalent to the Grand Vizier as the minister of the religious class and the Sharia courts.

The tradition of granting summer and winter robes to Sheikh-ul-Islams started during the tenure of Ebussuud Efendi as Sheikh-ul-Islam. The prestige gained by Sheikh-ul-Islam continued thereafter. In the *Telhisü'l-Beyan* written in the 17th century, Sheikh-ul-Islam is considered equal to the Grand Vizier and superior to him in certain aspects. The aspects in which Sheikh-ul-Islam is considered superior are related to religious matters. Because the state is founded on religion, and religion is the essence while the state is the subsidiary. The leader of religion is Sheikh-ul-Islam, the leader of the state is the Grand Vizier, and the leader of both is the Sultan. Apart from that, Sheikh-ul-Islams have a kind of immunity that Grand Viziers do not possess. According to this, Sheikh-ul-Islams are not subject to punishment or confiscation of property, except for removal from office.

During the tenure of Ebussuud Efendi, the institution of Sheikh-ul-Islam completed its development. Initially, Sheikh-ul-Islam was merely a mufti, but during his tenure, he became the head of the religious and judicial organization. Sheikh-ul-Islam did not lose this characteristic until the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Ebussuud Efendi remained in the position of Sheikh-ul-Islam for 30 years according to the Hijri calendar and 28 years and eleven months according to the Gregorian calendar. The fatwas he issued in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian spread throughout the Islamic world and were used as a reliable source.

Ebussuud Efendi is one of the longest-serving Sheikh-ul-Islams. Before him, Zenbilli Ali Cemali Efendi also served as Sheikh-ul-Islam for 26 years. During the first 25 years of Sultan Kanuni's reign, 6 different individuals held the position, but in the last 21 years, only Ebussuud Efendi served as Sheikh-ul-Islam. This means that Ebussuud Efendi gained Kanuni's trust and maintained it. The most important reason for his long tenure is the trust Kanuni had in him. The reasons for gaining this trust include his detachment from daily politics, always prioritizing the interests of the state, and not conflicting with state officials.

F. Death

According to the majority of sources, Ebussuud Efendi passed away on Sunday, 5 Jumada al-Awwal 982 (August 23, 1574) at the age of 87. However, his tombstone incorrectly states the month of his death as Jumada al-Akhir. In the Sicilli Osmani, the date of his death is recorded as 983/1575.

The funeral prayer was conducted at the Fatih Mosque, led by Muhaşi Sinan Efendi. The funeral was attended by contemporary scholars, viziers, members of the council, and a large crowd of people. Upon hearing the news of his passing, scholars from Mecca and Medina also performed the absent funeral prayer. He was buried in the cemetery of the elementary school (sıbyan mektebi) he had built near Eyüp Mosque. Hamid Efendi, who held the position of Rumeli Kazasker, succeeded him as the Sheikh-ul-Islam.

References

I. Archive Documents

1. Unpublished

" Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi: 571. Vakfiye defterinin 266. sahifesinde ve 94. sırada kayıtlı Ebussuud Efendi Vakfı'na ait 977 tarihli vakfiye tercümesi.

Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi: 633 numaralı vakfiye defteri, sahife 286, sıra 101'de kayıtlı 973 tarihli diğer bir Ebussuud Efendi vakfı'nın vakfiyesi

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