

## THE FOUNTAIN AT HADII MUSTAPHA

(PLATE 56)

THE Turkish fountain at the edge of the slope of Acrocorinth, where the road begins the long climb to the western gates, is a familiar landmark to every member of the American School who has visited Corinth (Pl. 56, a). Its source, moreover, forms the water supply for the Corinth excavation house. It is slightly damaged at the top, but still shows all the features of its extremely common type. A collecting tank has been built against the hill, and a slightly larger façade of limestone and re-used marble delivers the water into a basin cemented together out of marble spoils and set under an arched recess. The jutting wings of limestone, which support the arch, rest on Byzantine window pillars laid sideways, and rise to a pair of ornamental marble blocks at the springing. Both of these are spoils at second hand, and show signs of their original use in some classical building as well as the Christian monograms which decorate their sloping inner faces, looking down into the water basin.

The back of the recess is built chiefly of marble. In the large block over the basin there is the trace of an ornamental central spout, since blocked up. Crude holes were cut on either side of this original spout, of which only the right hand one still functions. It is presently provided with a heavy modern faucet. Above this, a long block with a rather well-cut scale pattern runs the full width of the recess, and above this again, on a marble block 0.940 x 0.580 m., is the donor's inscription (Pl. 56, b).<sup>1</sup>

امرابناء هذا لموي جاري عن خالص

ماله يوسف الخياط حسبة لله تعالى

و طلبا لمرضات رب الرحيم سنة احدى وعشرين وتسعمائة

amara binā'a hadhā li-may-i djārī 'an khāliṣ  
mālihi Yūsufu 'l-khayyāṭu ḥasbatan li-'llahi ta'ālā  
wa ṭalaban li-marḍāt-i rabb-i 'l-raḥīm sanata 921

<sup>1</sup> In the transcription into Latin letters I have given a value to the Arabic case-endings where relevant. This is not standard practice, but seems necessary in this instance in order to indicate the syntactical peculiarities of the text. It is likely that whoever composed the text was unfamiliar with the sound of anything but fully vowelled Koranic Arabic.

“Joseph the tailor ordered the construction of this [fountain] for flowing water entirely at his own expense, for the love of God, let Him be exalted, and desiring to please the Merciful Lord, in the nine hundred and twenty-first year [of the Hegira (1515 A.D.)].”

The inscription intends to represent Arabic, but does not do it very well. In line 1, the *alif* following *amara* is at best otiose, whether it be joined to the preceding or the following word. The stonecutter seems to have intended that it be taken with *binā'*, which would create the pattern of a IVth form verbal noun, not used from this root. (The non-personal object of *amara* should take the preposition *bi*, but this is a trivial error.) The curious spelling of the following word, which I have rendered *may*, “water,” appears to be an attempt to represent a colloquial form in classicizing orthography. The *wāw* in this form is etymologically correct, but may also reflect the tendency, audible in the dialects of both Syria and Egypt, for the *a* in the word to shade off into an *o* sound. The *yā'* is more problematical. It may in part have been introduced on the analogy of the Arabic diminutive pattern, which would give *muwayh*, as attested in *Lisān al-'Arab*, Beirut, 1956, XIII, p. 543, line 16, column 1. A somewhat similar form, lacking the radical *hā'*, and having<sup>1</sup> exactly the appearance of what is on the stone, is noted in Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes*, 1927, II, p. 626. I cannot be certain what phonetic value should be given the word in the inscription, but something approaching the modern colloquial pronunciation is very likely. The final *yā'* may also represent in part a compromise between the Arabic case-ending and the Persian *izafet*. It is clear that the inscription has abandoned Classical Arabic syntax, since *djārī*, which modifies an indefinite noun, is given in the definite form, although without the article.<sup>2</sup>

The following phrase, ‘*an khālīṣ mālihi*, which I have rendered “entirely at his own expense,” is difficult Arabic. It could be taken as a variety of the *status constructus* which occurs as a legitimate stylistic device in sophisticated Arabic, but in the context it seems more likely that *khālīṣ* has been treated as an adjective in Turkish syntax. I imagine that it was intended to convey approximately the meaning “entirely, absolutely,” as in its adverbial uses in modern dialects of Arabic. *Ḥasbatan li-'llahi tā'ālā* is about the only correctly assembled phrase in the inscription. The ensuing pious formula, *ṭalaban li-marḍāt*, is familiar enough, although the spelling of *marḍāt* is Turkish, but *rabb*, without the article, requires the use of the Persian *izafet* again. Nevertheless, a Koranic echo brings back the Arabic article on *al-rahīm*, modifying *rabb*.

The dating formula is correct except for the final syllable. I cannot be positive what was intended on the stone, but it was certainly not either of the standard spellings of *mī'a*.

<sup>2</sup> The immense Arabic contribution to the lexicon of Ottoman Turkish came rather through Persian than directly, and the sound of Arabic words in Persian syntax would be far more familiar to a Turkish ear than correct Arabic.

Evliya Çelebi, on a visit to Corinth in A.D. 1669, saw and recorded this inscription. He was profoundly impressed by the water supply both on Acrocorinth and in the lower town, but he does not seem to have thought especially highly of this source. After describing the water from two, now vanished, fountains halfway down the road from the citadel as the best water in Rumeli, he dismisses this rather abruptly, "the date of a fountain close to the lower city is as follows . . ." (*Seyahatname*, VIII, 279). In the study of the manuscript tradition of the *Seyahatname*, surviving inscriptions of this sort will be of great importance. Learned copyists in Istanbul have tended to edit out the more egregious errors in the Arabic, and it is likely that the various manuscripts will show different stages in the editing, from which evidence of their relationship to each other can be derived. In the only publication of this text, by the Turkish Historical Association in 1928, the inscription has been quite transformed.<sup>3</sup> Not only have articles been supplied to the Arabic words that needed them, but the phrase 'an *khālīṣ mālihi* has been replaced by the cliché *khālīṣan li-'llah*, "dedicating[it] to God," a drastic substitution that confirms the strangeness of the original.

Past residents of Old Corinth may learn with some surprise that the inscription makes no mention at all of Hadji Mustapha. The fountain has acquired his name solely from its proximity to the village. It is scarcely desirable, let alone likely, that the euphonious tradition should now be changed, but it is pleasant to restore in print the credit that is due him to Joseph the Tailor.

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<sup>3</sup> The 1927-1928 publication of volumes VII and VIII of the ten volume *Seyahatname*, although vastly superior to anything before or after, is a transcription rather than an edition. It represents the text of the excellent Beşir Ağa manuscript, uncorrected, with apparatus restricted to variant readings from the other manuscripts given only where the text in Beşir Ağa is incomprehensible.



a. The Fountain



b. The Donor's Inscription

PIERRE MACKAY: THE FOUNTAIN AT HADJI MUSTAPHA