

A NEW PERCEPTION OF ROME, BYZANTIUM AND CONSTANTINOPLE IN
HEZARFEN HUSEYİN'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY

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Thesis Abstract

Cumhur Bekar, “A New Perception of Rome, Byzantium and Constantinople in Hezarfen Huseyin’s Universal History”

In this thesis I shall specifically examine the parts in Hezarfen Hüseyn’s universal history, about Rome and Byzantium. Hezarfen Hüseyn (d.1691) was one of the prominent new intellectuals of the seventeenth century. He ventured to write his universal history and prepared many works ranging from medicine books to dictionaries and encyclopedias. While investigating what kind of a perspective Hezarfen offered for world history in his universal history, dedicated to Mehmet IV, and what kind of a historical heritage he drew upon, we can also grasp the intellectual world of his circle. Thus knowing the way an Ottoman intellectual with a wide range of interests conceived world history in this age of crisis and transformation will help us to understand the fundamental dynamics of Ottoman intellectual life in the second half of the seventeenth century.

My primary aim will be to show why Hezarfen followed a different way from previous traditions and narratives when constructing his narrative. Secondly, I shall examine the cultural environment in which Hezarfen lived as well as the intellectual trends of that period. This will help us understand the factors that affected Hezarfen’s narration. In this way we shall see what kind of factors influenced an Ottoman intellectual writing the history of a different culture and world

Tez Özeti

Cumhur Bekar, “Hezarfen Hüseyin’in Evrensel Tarihinde Yeni bir Roma, Bizans ve Konstantinople Algısı”

Bu tez çalışmasında, özellikle, Hezarfen Hüseyin’in evrensel tarih eseri olan *Tenkihü't- Tevarih-i Müluk*'ün Roma ve Bizans tarihine ilişkin kısımları incelenecektir. Hezarfen Hüseyin 17. yüzyılın en önemli yeni entellektüellerinden biriydi. Evrensel tarih yazma girişiminde bulunmuş ve bunun yanı sıra da tıp kitaplarından, sözlük ve ansiklopedilere kadar uzanan geniş bir yelpazede eserler hazırlamıştır. Hezarfen'in IV. Mehmet'e ithaf ettiği bu eserinde, bir taraftan, kendisinin ne tür bir perspektiften dünya tarihi sunduğu ve ne tür bir tarihsel mirastan yararlandığı incelenirken, diğer taraftan da, içinde bulunduğu çevrenin entelektüel dünyasını da kavrayabiliriz. Kriz ve dönüşüm çağında yaşamış bir Osmanlı entelektüelinin, geniş ilgi alanlarıyla birlikte dünya tarihini algılayış biçimini bilmek, 17.yüzyılın ikinci yarısında Osmanlı düşünce hayatındaki temel dinamikleri anlamamıza da yardımcı olacaktır.

Öncelikli amacım, Hezarfen'in anlatısını oluştururken daha önceki gelenekler ve anlatılardan farklı bir yol izleme nedenini göstermek olacaktır. İkinci olarak, Hezarfen'in yaşamış olduğu kültürel çevre ve dönemin düşünsel eğilimlerini inceleyeceğim. Bu bize Hezarfen'in anlatısını etkileyen faktörleri anlamamızda yardımcı olacaktır. Bu yolla, farklı bir kültür ve dünya üzerine yazan bir Osmanlı entelektüelini etkileyen faktörleri göreceğiz.

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To My Dear Brother Özgün Bekar

Never and Ever Leaves Me Alone...

Sevgili Abim Özgün Bekar'a

Hiçbir zaman beni yalnız bırakmadığı için....

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The seventeenth century, which had long been the most neglected period in Ottoman studies, has attracted the interests of many researchers in recent years. Thus, while it had been characterized as a period of stagnation and decline, it is now considered as a century in which important transformations took place in the structure of the society and state. One of the most important of these transformations was that a new type of intellectual emerged. These new intellectuals, with a curiosity that transcended the boundaries of the empire, tried to get acquainted with different cultures. They were ready to acquire new knowledge and offer new interpretations to cope with what they perceived as irregularities in an age of crisis for the Empire.¹ Along with Katip Çelebi (d. 1657), Hezarfen Hüseyin (d.1691) was one of the foremost among these new intellectuals in that he ventured to write a universal history, composed one of the most important books written on law, and prepared many works ranging from medicine books to dictionaries and encyclopedias. While investigating what kind of a perspective Hezarfen offered for world history in his universal history, dedicated to Mehmet IV, and what kind of a historical heritage he drew upon, we can also grasp the intellectual world of his circle. Thus knowing the way an Ottoman intellectual with a wide range of interests conceived world history in this age of crisis and transformation will help us to understand the fundamental dynamics of Ottoman intellectual life in the second half of the seventeenth century.

More specifically, in this thesis I shall examine the parts in Hezarfen Hüseyin's universal history about Rome and Byzantium. The first topic I shall handle here is

¹ Cemal Kafadar "The City that Ralamb visited" in *Sultan's Procession, The Swedish Embassy to Sultan Mehmed in 1657-1658 and the Ralamb Paintings*, Edt: Karin Adahl, Swedish Research Institute, Istanbul, 2006, p. 72

what kind of a history Hezarfen wrote on Rome and Byzantium and in what respects he diverges from previous historians in this regard. My primary aim will be to show why Hezarfen followed a different way from previous traditions and narratives when constructing his narrative. Secondly, I shall examine the cultural environment in which Hezarfen lived as well as the intellectual trends of that period. This will help us understand the factors that affected Hezarfen's narration. In this way we shall see what kind of factors influenced an Ottoman intellectual writing the history of a different culture and world.

This thesis has been profoundly influenced by the changes that took place in Ottoman historiography in the last thirty years.² The chief one among these is the questioning of the decline paradigm that had been influential for long years in Ottoman historiography. Whereas previously historians had assumed that the Ottoman Empire went into a process of continuous decline from the sixteenth century onwards, a spate of revisionist studies have cast doubt on the validity of this paradigm. Scholars nowadays prefer to regard the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a period of transformation rather than decline.³ The scholars who view Ottoman history from this perspective try to explain how the Ottoman state reacted against the changing conditions and attempted to adapt to them by abandoning

² For works written with this new tendency and question former paradigms see *The Early Modern Ottomans, Remapping the Empire*, edited by Daniel Goffman and Virginia Aksan Cambridge University Press, 2007, *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Volume 3, The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, edited by Suraiya Faroqhi, Cambridge University Press, 2006

³ For this discussion of "decline paradigm" see Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline" *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, 4, 1997-1998, 30-75, Linda Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, 1-21, Douglas Howard, "Ottoman Historiography and Literature of "Decline" of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" *Journal of Asian History* 22, 1988, p.52-77, for a new evaluation of decline paradigm, see, Baki Tezcan "Lost in Historiography: An Essay on the Reasons for the Absence of a History of Limited Government in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.45, No.3, May 2009, pp.477-505

former paradigms.⁴ One of these first revisionist approaches has come from the doyen of Ottoman historiography, Halil İnalcık. In his important article published in 1980, İnalcık argued that the transformations that took place during the seventeenth century, especially in the military field, cannot be interpreted as a decline or fall; thus he also revised the views he had put forward ten years earlier. He stressed the Ottomans' need to adapt to the changes around them and the military transformation that they effected under the pressure of this need.⁵ Another important Ottoman historian, Metin Kunt, published in the same years a significant study on the Ottoman provincial system. In this work he demonstrated the transformations like the disappearance of the *timar* system and the monetization of the financial structure. According to Kunt, the transformation of the provincial system from the *dirlik* system to a system that levied cash and transferred it to the treasury was an important stage in the transition to modern state.⁶ From the end of the eighties to our day, especially in the socio-economic field, scholars like Suraiya Faroqhi, Linda Darling and Şevket Pamuk demonstrated the changes and transformation potential in the Ottoman fiscal system through abundant empirical information. Despite this, as Baki Tezcan observes, the revisionist historians avoided constructing a grand narrative and their works stood short of being comprehensive.⁷ In his newly published book Baki Tezcan looks at these transformations from a very wide perspective and offers a

⁴ For a questioning of the main elements of the decline paradigm, being price revolution, debasement of money and demographic crisis, see, Şevket Pamuk, "The Price Revolution in the Ottoman Empire Reconsidered" *International Journal of Middle East*, 33, February 2001, p.69-89 Baki Tezcan "The Ottoman Monetary Crisis of 1585 Revisited" *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52, 2009, p.460-504 and Oktay Özel "Population Changes in Ottoman Anatolia During the 16th and 17th Centuries: The "Demographic Crisis" Reconsidered" *International Journal of Middle East*, 36, 2004, p.183-205

⁵ Halil İnalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700" *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 6, 1980, pp. 283-337

⁶ Metin Kunt, *The Sultans Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983, pp. 95-96

⁷ Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire, Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 10

comprehensive picture including the theses put forward by the revisionist historians. He calls the period in which these transformations took place (1580-1826) as the Second Empire. He shows that in this period limited government replaced the patrimonial state system, economy became market-oriented and the legal system became integrated.⁸ In particular detail, he also examines the processes through which seventeenth century sultans were forced to abdicate.

While social and economic historians have played a pioneering role in reconceptualizing the middle centuries of Ottoman rule, in recent years Ottoman intellectual and cultural history have also gained a new visibility. For instance, new scholarship has cast doubt on the assertion of an earlier generation of scholars that the Ottomans were not interested at all in Europe and that there was an iron curtain as it were between them and Europe throughout much of the early modern era. In parallel with the emergence in world history of a new approach that criticizes the Euro-centered historiography and emphasizes the interaction of different geographies,⁹ a voluminous and profound literature has come into existence in the last twenty years about the interactions and exchanges of the Ottomans with Europe, notably in the field of culture.¹⁰ For example, Gülru Necipoğlu has observed that the crown made for Süleyman during the campaign against Vienna, which was manufactured by Venetian masters and vied with the pope's tiara in pomp, shows how the Ottomans rivalled the powers in Europe in symbolic plane as well, and

⁸ Ibid, p.10

⁹ For new approaches see; *Early Modernities* ed: S.N Eisenstadt and W.Schluster, *Daedalus*, 127, summer 1998, Thus the 15th and 16th centuries have been identified as a period in which the economic, religious and cultural patterns in the late Middle Ages were dissolved and a series of new structural transformations came to form new patterns, rather than a period of sudden transition from the middle ages to modernity.

¹⁰ For a general review see, Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, “ Görsel Kültür ve Sanat Tarihi Yazımında Rönesans ve Osmanlı Dünyası: Genişleyen Rönesans” *Toplumsal Tarih*, Ağustos 2003, pp.74-79 and for a new study, *Harp ve Sulh, Avrupalılar ve Osmanlılar*, Edt: Dejanirah Couto, Kitap Yayınevi, 2010,

constructed this rivalry in European terms.¹¹ Again the same author has attempted to explain the parallels of the Ottoman architectural culture with the Italian Renaissance architecture with reference to the cultural dynamics of the early modern world.¹² There has also been written important studies on visual representation. In a study on the portraits of sultans, the relations and common points between the Ottoman and European art traditions before the emergence of westernization tendencies has been emphasized.¹³ In the same manner, on their studies on maps, Pınar Emiralioğlu and Benjamin Arbel have revealed the strength of these relations and how the Ottomans closely followed the Europeans in this respect.¹⁴ In parallel with the developments in the history of visual culture, important studies have also been made in the history of science. Feza Günergün's article on the scientific translations made from Europe reveals that contrary to the accepted opinion a wide-ranging literature was translated from maps to books of medicine.¹⁵ In the same way, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu has shown that the Muslims in general and Ottomans in particular did not remain unaware of the scientific developments in Europe.¹⁶ Avner Ben Zaken has examined the translation of a book written by a Frenchman called Noel Duret in the

¹¹ Gülru Necipoğlu "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman Habsburg Papal Rivalry" *Art Bulletin*, 61, 1989, pp 401-427

¹² Gülru Necipoğlu. "Süleymaniye Complex in İstanbul: An Interpretation" *Muqarnas*, 3, 1995 pp.92-118, and "Challenging the Past: Sinan and the Competitive Discourse of Early Modern Islamic Architecture" *Muqarnas*, 10, 1993, pp.169-180

¹³ *Sultanın Portresi*, Prep by S. Kangal, İş Bankası Yayınları, İstanbul,2000

¹⁴ Pınar Emiralioğlu, *Cognizance of the World: Visual and Textual Representation in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Empire*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Chicago University, 2006, pp92-134 and Benjamin Arbel, "Maps of the World for Ottoman Princes? Further Evidence and Questions Concerning "The Mappamundo of Hajji Ahmed" *Imago Mundi* 54, 2002 for a general review of Ottoman Cartography, See, Ahmet Karamustafa, "Military, Administrative and Scholarly Maps and Plans" J.M Rogers "Itineraries and Town Views in Ottoman Histories" in *History of Cartography, VII Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asia Societies*, ed: J.B Harley and D. Woodhard, Chicago University Press, 1991

¹⁵ It is important that this article is published in a study which examines European Historiography, Feza Günergün, "Ottoman Encounters with European Science: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Translations into Turkish" in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, Ed: Peter Burke and R.Po- Chia Hsia, Cambridge University Press, 2007

¹⁶ Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, "Introduction of Western Science to the Ottoman World: A case study of Modern Astronomy (1600-1860) in *Transfer of Modern Science and Technology to the Muslim World*, İstanbul, 1992

seventeenth century about the Copernican system and on this basis investigated the reception of the system in the Ottoman world as well as the details of their exchange with Europe in this respect.¹⁷ In short, Ottoman studies have assumed a new dimension in the recent years through works that question old paradigms, emphasize the exchange with Europe, and perhaps more importantly examine Ottoman history by keeping in view its internal dynamics and the conditions prevailing in the period under consideration

This thesis has also been influenced by the studies that focus on Ottoman historiography. The first of these, Cornell Fleischer's study on Mustafa Ali, describes in detail the world of this historian, one of the most productive in Ottoman historiography.¹⁸ The most important aspect of this work for our study is that it examines the writings of Mustafa Ali on the cultures and histories outside the Ottoman world. Twenty years after its first publication; this approach of Fleischer's remains exceptional. Especially, in most of the studies on universal histories made in Turkey (the major part of these are critical editions) the parts except Ottoman history have received little emphasis or discarded altogether.¹⁹ Of course, Fleischer's contribution is not limited to this. His study will remain a basic reference for students of Ottoman historiography as it demonstrates how his reactions against changing conditions and his disappointments were reflected in his work. With his work *Between Two Worlds* published in mid-1990s, Cemal Kafadar brought a profound new insight into the foundation period; perhaps the most discussed and interpreted

¹⁷ Avner Ben Zaken, "The heavens of the sky and the heavens of the heart: the Ottoman cultural context for the introduction of post-Copernican astronomy" *British Journal for the History of Science*, 37,1, March 2004, pp.1-28

¹⁸ Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)*, Princeton University Press, 1986

¹⁹ For Instance, Mehmet Canatar, *Müverrih Cenabi Mustafa Efendi ve Cenabi Tarihi*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Ankara University 1993, Abdurrahman Sağırlı, *Mehmed b. Mehmed er-Rumi (Edirne) 'nin Nuhbetü't-Tevarih ve'l Ahbar'ı ve Tarih-i Al-i Osman (Metin ve Tahlilleri)*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, İstanbul University, 2000

issue in Ottoman historiography²⁰. Kafadar, who, differently from Fleischer, looks into a corpus of diverse works, examines the foundation of the Ottoman state from a historiographical perspective. The most important characteristic of the book is that rather than distinguishing between fact and fiction in a positivist way as encountered so often in Turkish historiography, it sheds light on the chroniclers and the ideological stance of their audience by using literary criticism techniques and also by considering the historical and social context throughout their changes in time. Gabriel Piterberg, who follows the way opened by Cemal Kafadar, brings a new breath to *histoire evenementielle*.²¹ He puts forward a thesis that stimulates theoretical discussion on how rival historical discourses represented the toppling and execution of Osman II and how 17th and 18th state ideology was shaped through the struggle of these discourses. One of the most important approaches put forward by Piterberg is that he places Ottoman historiography in the framework of text-context debates in world historiography and shows how profitable these debates can be for Ottoman historiographers. Thanks to these three scholars, it has emerged clearly that the Ottoman chroniclers were quite conscious and deliberate in their choice of sources and did not content themselves with mere copying.²²

The starting point of this thesis is found in the last sentences of that work by Stefanos Yerasimos on the Turkish traditions about the foundation of Constantinople and Hagia Sofia. Yerasimos states: “Hezarfen Hüseyin became the first historian to

²⁰ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of Ottoman State*, University of California Press, 1995

²¹ Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*, University of California Press, 2003

²² Besides those historians, we should mention other prominent historians who have written important articles and books about Ottoman historiography. see Baki Tezcan “The politics of early modern Ottoman historiography,” in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, Rhoads Murphey, *Essays on Ottoman Historians and Historiography*, Eren Yayıncılık, 2009 Christine Woodhead, *Ta'liki-zade's Şehname-i hümayun: a history of the Ottoman campaign into Hungary 1593-94*, Berlin, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1983

abandon the use of traditions on Constantinople as the single source of Byzantine history. This history of Byzantium written by Hezarfen Hüseyin was the first work to offer sound information about Byzantine history for Turkish readers.”²³ So this thesis sets out to examine why Hezarfen was the first historian to abandon the traditions on Constantinople, which factors were influential on this choice of his, and finally what kind of Byzantine history he wrote.

Before addressing these questions in detail, it is necessary to dwell shortly on the Ottomans’ perceptions of Roman and Byzantine identity. For addressing this issue will help us better understand Hezarfen’s work. In fact this perception involved a contradiction: on the one hand, the Ottomans considered themselves the heir of the Roman Empire. But on the other hand, they did not feel any great curiosity about this civilization.

Like the other inhabitants of Asia Minor, the Ottomans called the geography in which they lived as Rum, the lands of Rome.²⁴ As Cemal Kafadar states, this was not merely a geographical appellation, but in contrast, as the travelers of the period observed, a way of distinguishing that region from the rest of the Turkish and Islamic world.²⁵ He remarks: “Namely, being a Rumi Turk also implied belonging to a newly

²³ Stefanos Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya efsaneleri*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1993, translated by Şirin Tekeli, p. 262

²⁴ For Rumi, See, Halil Inalcik “Rumi” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*(2ed) Brill, for an Ottoman intellectual’s assessment of the notion of Rumi, see, Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)*, Princeton University Press, 1986, p.254, for the notion of Rumi’s reflections on architecture, see: Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, “In the Image of Rum”: Ottoman Architectural Patronage in Sixteenth Century Aleppo and Damascus” *Muqarnas*, 16, 1999, p.70-95, for a work which studies the traces of the Rumi identity in the sources of the Ottoman and the Portuguese, see: Salih Özbaran, *Bir Osmanlı Kimliği, 14.-17.Yüzyıllarda Rum/Rumi Aidiyet ve İmgeleri*, Kitapevi Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2004

²⁵ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of Ottoman State*, University of California Press, 1995, p.9 In the following years, Kafadar wrote an article about the identity of Rumi in detail. In his article, Kafadar points out that pre-modern notions cannot be evaluated with a modernist, nation-statist perspective, see “A Rome of One’s Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum” *Muqarnas*, 24, History and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the Lands of Rum”, Brill, 2007

emerging regional configuration of Islamic civilization that was on the one hand developing its own habitus in a new land and on the other engaged in competition to establish its political hegemony over a rival religio- civilizational orientation”.²⁶ The Ottomans were quite aware of the fact that they had founded and expanded their state on the lands they had inherited from Rome. As already indicated, Mehmed had felt the need to add to his already existing titles *Sultanü'l –Berreyn ve Hakanü'l Bahreyn*, “the sultan of the two continents and seas,” the title of “*Kayser-i Rum*. (“Ceaser of Rum”). Although symbolical, this was a declaration of the fact that the Ottoman sultan had annexed the lands of Byzantium (Eastern Rome) and taken over their heritage. It amounted to drawing a new geographical, legal and cultural framework for the empire at the beginning of a new period, in addition to its existing traditions and characteristics stemming from Islam and Central Asia.²⁷ In the next century, Süleyman the Magnificent, who had extended the frontiers of the empire to the Gulf of Iran and the interior of Europe, made clear his claim on world domination in his famous Bender inscription, and in doing so did not only declare that he was mentioned in the holy lands of Islam, had fleets in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, was the shah of Baghdad and Iraq, the sultan of Egypt and the ruler of Hungaria, but also made it known that he had adopted the emperorship of the Roman lands in whose capital he resided.²⁸ What is problematic here is that while on the one hand the Ottomans adopted the concept of universal empire of the Roman-Byzantine civilization, and made it a component of their own imperial ideology,²⁹ on the other hand they remained uninterested in the Byzantines and their history. For example,

²⁶ Ibid.p.10

²⁷ Özbaran, *Osmanlı Kimliği*, p.18

²⁸ Halil İnalcık “State, Sovereignty and Law during the Reign of Süleyman” in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, Ed.H. İnalcık and C.Kafadar, Isis, 1993, p.67-68

²⁹ Hüseyin Yılmaz, “Imperial ideology” *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, Ed: Gabor Agoston and Bruce Masters, Facts on File, 2009, p.272

although the two states shared a common geography between 1300 and 1453, and lived side-by-side, the Ottoman chronicles of the period do not seem to have told much to their readers about their contemporary Byzantines³⁰. In the early Ottoman chronicles no emperor was mentioned by name, all being called “tekrur,” and indeed the only Byzantine individual whose name was indicated was Kir Luka (Loukas Notaras), the last *megas doux* (equivalent to an unofficial prime minister).³¹ By contrast, the medieval Arab historians gave so detailed information about Byzantium that even today these are counted among the important sources of Byzantine history.³² As Stefanos Yerasimos relates in his study, a series of legends on the foundation of Constantinople came into existence after its conquest, targeting the centralist and imperial project of Mehmet II³³. Later, Ottoman historians like Kemalpařazade and Mustafa Ali reproduced these legends as the only information they offered about Byzantium. Commenting on such a serious Ottoman historian as Mustafa Ali, who indicated and discussed his sources, Yerasimos observes that by the end of the sixteenth century, even in the intellectual circles of Istanbul very little was known about Byzantium.³⁴

A critical edition of Hezarfen Hüseyin’s *Tenkihü’t- Tevarih-i Müluk* has not been made until this date. Only a transcription of the chapters, beginning from the emergence of Selçuks to the foundation of the Ottoman State, has been rendered as a

³⁰ Stefanos Yerasimos, “Osmanlı ve Bizans’ın yeniden icadı” *Görüş*, Eylül 2002, p.9

³¹ Stefanos Yerasimos, “Byzance dans les chroniques Ottomanes” in *Byzance en Europe*, p. 21 for a new study, see, Casim Avcı, “ Osmanlıların Bizans’a Bakışı” *Osmanlı Arařtırmaları*, XXXIV, 2009, pp. 17-48

³² See, Nadia Maria El Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, Cambridge, 2004

³³ Yerasimos, *Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya efsaneleri*

³⁴ Yerasimos, *Osmanlı ve Bizans*, p.10

M.A thesis.³⁵The chapters concerning Roman history and the Greek philosophers were published in *Denkwürdigkeiten Von Asien I* in 1815, and the chapters concerning Danishmends were published in *Die Dynastie Der Danischmende*, ZDMG in 1876.

The most profound study on Hezarfen is H. Wurm's work *Der Osmanische Historiker Hüseyin b. Gafer Genannt Hezarfenn, und die Istanbuler Gesellschaft in der Zweiten Halfe des 17. Jahrhunderts*.³⁶ Perhaps because it is German, this important work has not found the attention it deserves. One of the main topics of Wurm's study is the cultural milieu to which Hezarfen belonged, along with the relations of patronage in this milieu. In particular, Wurm dwells on the intellectual exchange between Hezarfen and Europeans in Istanbul around that time.

Significantly, Wurm argues that the interest in the novel and foreign, and the openness towards non-Muslim influences, was not something peculiar to Hezarfen but a feature common to his milieu. Wurm states that Katip Çelebi, Evliya Çelebi, Ebu Bekir El-Dımaşki, Müneccimbaşı and Hezarfen were only the most prominent figures of the circle interested in foreign people, countries and cultures. Many in this circle encouraged each other in this direction. Wurm states that cultural and intellectual connections between Hezarfen's century and the next were much closer than hitherto assumed. She concludes her work by stating that most of the characteristic features of the eighteenth century like the interest in tulips have a long process of development behind them that reaches far back into seventeenth century.

³⁵ Kerim Özdemir, Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi'nin "Tenkihu'T-Tevarih" adlı eserinin Selçukluların zuhurundan Osmanlı Devleti'nin kuruluşuna kadar geçen bölümlerinin transkripsiyon ve değerlendirilmesi, Celal Bayar Üniversitesi, M.A thesis, 2007

³⁶ Heidrun Wurm, *Der Osmanische Historiker Hüseyin b. Gafer Genannt Hezarfenn, und die Istanbuler Gesellschaft in der Zweiten Halfe des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1971,

There is no monograph of comparable detail on Hezarfen Hüseyin in modern Turkish scholarship. The only study is a critical edition of his book on law, “*Telhisül Beyan fil Kavanin Ali Osman*”³⁷. Nevertheless, Hüseyin G. Yurdaydın dedicated an important place to Hezarfen in his study on the intellectual history of the seventeenth century, introducing him as one of the most significant intellectuals of this century. It is clear from Yurdaydın’s examination of Hezarfen that he has read Hezarfen’s works closely.³⁸ Although Yerasimos and Ursinus did not write monographs on Hezarfen, they have pointed out the importance and groundbreaking nature of Hezarfen’s influence on the Ottoman’s perception of Roman and Byzantine history.³⁹ Yerasimos’ book has proved especially useful insofar as it shows Ottomans’ perception of Byzantium until the end of the seventeenth century and the importance of Hezarfen’s work as a turning point.

The main purpose of this study is to shed light on the political and social context and the reasons that led Hezarfen to depart from the prevailing traditions on Roman and Byzantine history and to rely instead on other, more sound sources in an attempt to challenge and reject the anti-imperial attitude that lay beneath and nourished these traditions. In the following chapter, I intend to explore the Ottoman intellectual and cultural world and its tendencies in the latter half of the seventeenth century when Hezarfen produced his works. The problem I address here is in what ways this period differed from those that preceded it and why. In particular, I shall dwell on his connections with the Köprülüs and on his relations with European and intellectuals as well as the influence of these on his personal intellectual

³⁷ Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Telhisü'l- Beyan Fi Kavanin-İ Âl-İ Osman*, Prep by Sevim İlgürel, TTK yayımları, 1998

³⁸ Hüseyin G. Yurdaydın, *İslam Tarihi Dersleri*, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, Ankara, 1982, p.134-140

³⁹ Stefanos Yerasimos, “Byzance dans les chroniques Ottomanes” in *Byzance en Europe*, p. 19-29, Michael Ursinus “Byzantine History in Late Ottoman Turkish Historiography” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 10, 1986, p.237-243

development. In the third chapter I shall investigate what Hezarfen wrote about Roman and Byzantine history and how he wrote it. The most important issue I shall dwell on in this section is whether Hezarfen responded to the traditions about Constantinople. Doing this, I shall try to detect the sources used by Hezarfen as well as the important features of the narrative he constructed. In the fourth chapter I shall focus on the process whereby the Phanariots gained in power and touch upon their cultural activities. In this chapter, my aim is to show how a description of the world of Panaiotis, who provided Hezarfen with his sources on Byzantium, for understanding Hezarfen's depiction of Rome and Byzantium. Here I shall try to demonstrate the parallels between their interests and approaches.

I used the copy of *Tenkihü't- Tevarih-i Müluk*, that is found in Süleymaniye library, Hekimoğlu part, no. 732. It was copied five years after the composition of the text. For comparison I used Hezarfen's work *Tarih-i Devlet-i Rumiye*, the single copy of which is found in İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi.⁴⁰ As Anhegger indicated in his article, this *Rumiye* is almost identical to the relevant section of the *Tenkih*, save for the different orthography or dropping of some words.⁴¹ Apart from these manuscripts, I tried to use the anonymous texts used by Yerasimos and other historical works as far as they were accessible. Especially I used the anonymous history dated 1512,⁴² another history of 1528 prepared as a

⁴⁰ This work was written in november 1671(1081). "Rivayetlerinden bu abd-i fakir yani Hüseyin el-mülakkab bi-hezarfen kütüb-i tevarihde müctemi' ne mufassal ve ne muhtasar zikirlerin görmek ile Girid Seferi münasebetiyle Yunan ve Latin tevarihlerinden icmal üzere intihab ve tercüme idüb bu mahalle kaydolundu ve bi'l-llahi't-tevfik Kütüb-i Yunanda böyle rivayet ederler" *Tarih-i Devleti Rumiye, 1a.*

⁴¹ Robert Anhegger "Hezârfen Hüseyin Efendi'nin Osmanlı Devlet TeskilatınaDâir Mülâhazaları", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, X, 1953, 365.

⁴² *Anonim Osmanlı Kroniği (1299-1512)*, Necdet Öztürk (ed), İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2000

thesis⁴³, and Yusuf bin Abdullah's *Tarih-i Ali Osman* prepared by Efdal Sevincli.⁴⁴ I also used the edition of *Dürr-i Meknun* prepared by Necdet Sakaoğlu⁴⁵. In this study, I have used on a wide basis not only Ottoman chronicles but also the sources of Byzantine history. My aim in doing so was to detect which sources Hezarfen might have used himself. Beside such important Byzantine chronicles as Mallas and Theopenas, I also examined the French translation of the Byzantine *Patria*.⁴⁶ Thus I tried to understand both the circulation of the traditions on Constantinople and to grasp the distinguishing characteristics of Hezarfen.

⁴³ Şamil Can, XVI. Yüzyıla Ait Anonim Bir Tevarih-i Al-i Osman (Gramer İncelemesi- Metin-Sözlük), Unpublished M.A Thesis, Dumlupınar Üniversitesi, 2006

⁴⁴ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Tarih-i Al-i Osman, Bizans Söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi*, Prepared by Efdal Sevinçli, İzmir, Dokuz Eylül Yayınları, 1999

⁴⁵ Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, *Dürr-i Meknun, Saklı İnciler*, Edited by Necdet Sakaoğlu, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999

⁴⁶ *Constantinople Imaginaire, Etudes sur le recueil des Patria*, Prepared by Gilbert Dragon, Presses Universitaires de France, 1984

CHAPTER II

CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

HEZARFEN'S WORLD

*Historical writing is a powerful vehicle for the expression of ideological
assertion*

Gabrielle Spiegel

One of the last and most important universal histories beside the work of Müneccimbaşı was *Tenkihü't-tevarih* written by Hezarfen Hüseyin. This work has had its share from the lack of interest in the institutions and individuals of the seventeenth century, and has either been mentioned in passing or not evaluated at all.¹ The most important reason for this is the paradigm of decline that dominated Ottoman historiography for a long time and still prevails in modern Turkish historiography. The historians who take this paradigm for granted have regarded the distinguished historians of the seventeenth century as a choir affirming that the state was in a state of collapse and continuously repeating Ibn Haldun's views.² But even

¹ In two important studies on seventeenth century historiography, no place has been dedicated to Hezarfen Hüseyin. See Rhoads Murphey "Ottoman Historical Writing in the Seventeenth Century: A Survey of the General Development of the Genre After the Reign of Ahmed I (1603–1617) *Archivum Ottomanicum*, Vol:13, 1994 and March David Baer, "Manliness, Male Virtue, and History Writing at the Seventeenth Century Ottoman Court" *Gender&History*, Volume 20, 1, April, 2008

² The most telling example of this point of view is the fact that we still lack a good biography on Katip Çelebi. Turkish historians have only been interested in Katip Çelebi for his criticisms of the madrasa tradition and salafi thought. It is also worthy of attention that the only study on his most important work, *Cihannuma*, has been undertaken by a German Turcologist. See: Gottfried Hagen, *Ein Osmanischer Geograph Bei Der Arbeit Entstehung und Gedankenwelt von Katib Celebis Gihannüma*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin, 2003. For the view of İbn Haldun among Turkish historians see Ejder Okumuş, *Osmanlı'nın Gözüyle İbn Haldun*, İz yayıncılık, İstanbul 2008 and innovative study see,

these historians who lived in the same century differed from each other in their world views. Just as Mustafa Ali, who wrote in late sixteenth century, cannot be considered from the same point of view as Katip Çelebi, who wrote in the early seventeenth century, Hezarfen Hüseyin cannot be considered in the same perspective with the other seventeenth century historians.

So what are the characteristics of Hezarfen Hüseyin that distinguish him from the other historians of the seventeenth century? Or, to reverse the question, what are his similarities with these historians? What kind of an intellectual environment did he live? What was the intellectual heritage upon which he built his work, and what kind of motives he did possess? This chapter will on the one hand try to understand the world in which Hezarfen lived, and on the other hand trace the new tendencies and outlooks that emerged in the seventeenth century.

Ottoman Historiography in Seventeenth Century

In the seventeenth century, important changes took place in the social profile of Ottoman historians. In particular, the tradition of *şehnameci* which had been set up by Süleyman in the 1550s, to relate recent Ottoman history in literary form,³ came to an end and court historianship as represented by Hoca Sadettin and Celalzade lost its former influence (with certain exceptions such as Karacelebizade Abdülaziz), while important contributions were made by the bureaucrats in the middle and lower ranks of the hierarchy.⁴ These individuals relates the events they had witnessed in their works. For example, the most vivid account of the downfall and murder of Sultan

Cornell Fleischer. "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and "Ibn Khaldûnism" in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1983,18,

³ Emine Fetvacı, "The Office of Ottoman Court Historian" *Studies on Istanbul and Beyond, The Freely Press*, Edited by Robert G. Ousterhout, University of Pennsylvania, 2007, p.7-23

⁴ Gottfried Hagen, " Ottoman Understandings of the World in the Seventeenth Century" in *Ottoman Mentality* by Robert Dankoff, Brill, 2006, p.253

Osman II in 1624 was written- or, as Gabriel Piterberg has argued, told orally in the first place- by a janissary officer, Hüseyin Tuđı, who was clearly not a skilled author but who felt compelled to relate the events because of his first-hand experience of them.⁵ Some of the contributors to seventeenth-century historiography were, as already mentioned, outside the court circle as well as the higher ranks of bureaucracy. Here we have a phenomenon concerning Hezarfen among others, and one that has not received sufficient attention like many others in Ottoman history.

These individuals who imprinted their stamp on the intellectual life of the seventeenth century, from Katip Çelebi to Evliya Çelebi, and from Müneccimbaşı to Hezarfen Hüseyin, were different from the intellectuals of the previous century in at least two respects. One, they had acquired their learning through more informal or ad hoc channels rather than through medrese education proper. Two, they were polymaths who were eager to know and understand the outer world. At the same time, they represented a turning point in the intellectual world of the Ottomans. Katip Çelebi was perhaps the first intellectual to try to understand the culture, history and geography of Europe. The translation projects he launched to grasp this world was an important starting point. When preparing his work *Cihannüma* the masterpiece of Ottoman geography, he stopped the work as he noticed that he lacked sufficient information on Britain, Ireland and Iceland. But after translating Mercator's book by the help of a French convert, Şeyh Mehmed İhlasi, he rewrote a second version of his work.⁶ Along with Mercator, he also drew upon a wide assortment of European sources.⁷ As Cengiz Orhonlu states, Katip Çelebi's efforts provided the Ottomans

⁵ Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, University of California Press, 2003 and Baki Tezcan "The history of primary source: The Making of Tughı's chronicle on the regicide of Osman II" *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2009), 72:41-62

⁶ Gottfried Hagen, *Ein Osmanischer Geograph*, pp.192-196.

⁷ Hasim Koç "XVII. yüzyılın ortasında Osmanlı Coğrafyası'ndan Antik Dönemlere Bakış: Katip Çelebi'nin Eserlerinden Seçmeler" *Dođu Batı*, 41, 2007 p.p.257-282

with the new geographical knowledge in Europe, and this knowledge changed the traditional approach in time.⁸ Katip Çelebi also wrote books on European history, made translations, and perhaps more importantly, translated the political terminology in Latin to Ottoman Turkish, seeking corresponding terms in the Ottoman world.⁹ The work *İrşadu'l- hayara ila tarihi'l- Yunan ve r-Rum ve 'n- Nasara*, which he began writing in 1665, constitutes a first step in this respect. Katip Celebi expressed his purpose in writing this work as follows. “Although the Christians of Europe are numerous and powerful, Muslim histories relate only lies and fables about them. In order to rouse his fellow-Muslims from their sleep of negligence, therefore...”¹⁰. Significantly, he states that the information he gave would not be found in the Arabic, Persian and Turkish sources. The work consists of two parts. The first gives information about Christianity and its doctrine. The second offers a short summary of the regimes in Europe and tries to find corresponding concepts from the Ottoman world. For example, he translates status politicus as siyaset-i medeniye, laicus as avamm and clericus as havass. He gives a list of popes and rulers elsewhere in the work.¹¹ He also translates the work he basically used for this list, Johann Carion’s Chronicle, under the name of *Tarih-i Firengi*. This work also contains information about Greek authors and the religion of the Greeks.¹²

⁸ Cengiz Orhonlu “Geographical Knowledge Amongst the Ottomans and The Balkans in the Eighteenth Century According to Bartınli İbrahim Hamdi’s Atlas” in *An Historical Geopraphy of the Balkans*, edited by Francis W.Carter, Academic Press, pp.271-291.

⁹ See, V.L Menage “Three Ottoman Treatises on Europe” *Iran and Islam*, ed. C.E Bostworth, Edinburg, 1971, pp.421-433. also see: Mehmet Aydın, “Katip Çelebi’nin İrşadu’l- Hayara adlı eseri”, *Beşinci Milletler Arası Türkoloji Kongresi*, İstanbul, cilt:III, Türk Tarihi, 1985, p.95-100.

¹⁰ “Furuk-ı nasaranın mülükünü ve her birinin ayin ve bed-sulukin bu cerideye derceyleyem. Ta ki İslamiyan bu ehl-i niranın ahvalinden külliyyeten gafil ve civarlarında olan a’dâ-yi dinin umurunda bi-vukuf ve cahil olmayup hab-i gafletten uyanalar.Zira bu mela’in selefte ehl-i İslam elinden gafletle nice memleket aldılar ve bilad-ı İslamiyyeyi dar-ı küfür kıldılar” in Katip Çelebi, *İrşadu’l- hayara ila tarihi'l- Yunan ve r-Rum ve 'n- Nasara*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Library, y 15, 2b.

¹¹ Katip Çelebi, *İrşadu’l- hayara*, 10b

¹² Orhan Şaik Gökyay, “Katip :Çelebi” in *Katip Çelebi, Hayatı ve Eserleri Hakkında İncelemeler*, TTK yayınları, Ankara, 1957, p.55

Another important work he wrote was *Tarih-i Konstantiniyye ve Kayasire*, a compilation of translations made from various Byzantine sources.¹³ This study is one of the first works based on translations of Byzantine sources. Differently from Hezarfen's work, it does not cover the entire Roman and Byzantine periods. It relates the political and social events from the Byzantine emperor Nicephorus, who acceded in 801, down to Andronicus III (1341).

This change in the social profile of the Ottoman intellectual also impacted upon the language and style used by the writers. A more simple and straightforward Turkish replaced the elaborate, Persian-dominated style of the sixteenth century. As an important example for this change in style, we may compare two authors. Mustafa Ali, writing in the sixteenth century, took as his models Kemalpaşazade and Celalzade, who represented the peak of the elaborate style, and charged the Şehnamecis writing in Persian with lack of literary ability. For Katip Çelebi, in contrast, historical texts had to be easily understood, short, and concise. It was probably also for this reason that he gave great importance to Peçevi, while he criticized Mustafa Ali and stated that some of the information he gave was insignificant.¹⁴ Of course this transformation in style could not be explained solely by the social background of the authors. Changing patterns of royal patronage also played a significant role in the process. Rhoads Murphey remarks: "Gone were the eulogies of the previous century for the eternal state and glorious successes of the sultan, and the authors writing under royal patronage focused instead on seeking

¹³ For a modern edition see, Katip Çelebi, *Tarih-i Kostantiniyye ve Kayasire*, ed: İbrahim Solak, Gençlik Kitabevi Yayınları, 2009

¹⁴ Bekir Kütükoğlu, "Katip Çelebi "Fezleke"sinin kaynakları", *Vekayinüvis Makaleler*, İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1994 p.19. 29

solutions for the difficulties encountered in the military and financial fields”.¹⁵ For writers with such a concern, the understandability of their style and language was of paramount importance. In fact this vernacularization was not only observed in literary and historical products. The increased use of Turkish rather than Arabic in the kadı court records (şeriye sicili) and the appearance of Arabic dictionaries as well as Turkish grammar books in this process provided for the unification, standardization and differentiation of the vernacular code.¹⁶ As Cemal Kafadar states, this process of vernacularization was in fact one of the most important components of Ottoman modernization before the era of Tanzimat.¹⁷ No doubt, Hezarfen Hüseyin, as an important author of this period, also complied with this vernacularization process and wrote his world history embracing a wide geography in the new style. We should not forget that Hezarfen abandoned his career in bureaucracy at midpoint to dedicate himself to a life of intellectual and literary work. Although he wrote his work when acting as a history teacher for Mehmed IV, we cannot hold him equal with the court historians of the sixteenth century.

Moreover, he drew upon the critical perspective evident in the historical works of the seventeenth century in the last chapter of his work, where he put forward his general views on state and society in world history. When we keep in mind these characteristics of his, we better understand why he followed the tradition in question. Of course the information given up to this point may help us better understand Hezarfen’s world. Especially, the traces of this new intellectual

¹⁵ Rhoads Murphey “ Ottoman Historical Writing in the Seventeenth Century: A Survey of the General Development of the Genre After the Reign of Ahmed I (1603–1617) *Archivum Ottomanicum*, Vol:13, 1994, p.279

¹⁶ Kafadar’s lecture in his panel named “Osmanlı tarihinde erken modernite meselesi ve kamusal mekânların dönüşümü” at Hacettepe University, 8 March 2005

¹⁷ For an evaluation of this process over a wider geography see Sheldon Pollock.: “India in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500, *Daedalus*, vol.127, no3, Summer 1998, p.174

movement and the change of mentality in the seventeenth century may be observed in his use of Western sources, his choice of language, and his conception of the world beyond the Ottoman sphere.

But still there are important gaps in our understanding of how he came to write such a comprehensive world history. Particular help for this might be provided by delving into the intellectual circle he moved in, as well into his relations with the Köprülü family, who patronized members of this circle with. In this context we must firstly ask and think about why Hezarfen wrote a universal history, and whether the political actors of the time had any influence on his choice of this genre. Before seeking answers for these questions, we must first consider the Köprülü family, who imprinted their stamp on the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Köprülü Dynasty

Perhaps one of the most important dimensions of seventeenth century Ottoman history is the series of structural transformations undergone by the state, as a result of which the sultan lost power and saw *hanes* emerge as a third focus of power before him, along with the traditional ones of the ulama and the janissaries.¹⁸ The first and most important of these *hanes* was the Köprülü family.

From the year 1656, when the founder of the dynasty, Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, became the grand vizier, up to 1703, his two sons, son-in-law and nephew occupied this position. Apart from their well-known role in the political life of the Empire during the seventeenth century, they also had a profound influence on cultural and intellectual life thanks to their activities of patronage.

¹⁸ Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj, "Ottoman Vizier and Paşa Household 1683-1703, A Preliminary Report" *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 94, 1974, 438-87

The unsuccessful siege of Vienna that brought about a long series of wars and eventually led to the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 represented one of the first and most severe defeats of Ottoman history until then. Under the influence of this defeat, the expansionist and imperial project launched by the Köprülüs has usually been downplayed in the historiography of the Ottoman period. The empire had reached its farthest extent of boundaries with the capture of Crete and a part of Poland which had not been taken for a long while despite all efforts. After these long-awaited conquests, Vienna, which Süleyman had not been able to capture, was besieged for a second time, but again in vain. This setback eventually led to the formation of a European alliance against the Ottomans and a series of defeats and that resulted in the treaty of Karlowitz, which stipulated severe territorial losses for the Empire. This process of defeats and territorial losses served as a reference framework for the evaluations of this period in the historiography.

What is important here is that the defeat following the Second Siege of Vienna played a negative role in our perception of the seventeenth century. It must be underlined that this teleological look backwards from 1683 has created the false impression that the series of defeats suffered by the Ottoman Empire had begun from the start of the seventeenth century. For example, Cemal Kafadar points out the meticulousness and will to rule that is evident in the cadastral surveys prepared by the Ottomans for southern Poland in 1681.¹⁹ In the same way, he asserts that the period of the Köprülüs, from its dazzling military dimension to its more routine

¹⁹ Cemal Kafadar "The City that Ralamb visited" in *Sultan's Procession, The Swedish Embassy to Sultan Mehmed in 1657-1658 and the Ralamb Paintings*, Edt: Karin Adahl, Swedish Research Institute, Istanbul, 2006, p. 72 For Cadastral survey see, Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia(ca.1681): Defter-i Mufassal-i Eyalet-i Kamanıçe*, Two Volume, Cambridge, 2004

bureaucratic aspect, was a success as a whole, almost a return to its former glorious period of expansion.²⁰

The question addressed in this study is whether this new imperial and expansionist policy pursued by the Köprülüs had any reflections in the intellectual and cultural world. Could it have been mere coincidence that the two famous encyclopaedist and historians of the period, Müneccimbaşı and Hezarfen Hüseyin, who were in a close relation with the Köprülüs, were at the same time the authors of the most comprehensive universal histories of Ottoman historiography and unprecedentedly drew upon Western sources for their works? The key question here is whether the writing of comprehensive universal histories during this period was a reflection of the imperial policies followed at that time. If the answer is in the affirmative, how did Hezarfen's universal history differ from the previous works written in this genre as regards the interpretation it offered? And finally, what did the Köprülüs do to grasp the world of Europe as they followed an expansionist policy against the continent, and what kind of a role did Hezarfen play in these efforts at comprehension?

Universal Histories in the Islamic and Ottoman Historiography

The genre of Hezarfen's work *Tenkihü't-tevarih*, the universal history, had a long tradition behind it in Muslim historiography.²¹ Works in this genre first appeared in the ninth century and proliferated in a short time. Muslim scholars in the Abbasid period studied the events of the past from a global point of view, making use of the stories in the Bible as well as information provided by the Hellenic and Persian

²⁰ Ibid, p. 72 also, see, March David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, Oxford University Press, 2008

²¹ Bernd Radtke, "Towards a Typology of Abbasid Universal Chronicles" *Occasional Papers of the School of Abbasid Studies*, Vol: 3, 1990, pp.1-19

traditions. Thus we can say that Muslim historians considered the religion of Islam and the Islamic government from the general perspective of monotheism, and at the same time regarded Islam as the legitimate heir and representative of the ancient religious and political heritage. This historiographical literature also had the purpose of encouraging the Abbasid caliphs to return to their former glorious days. For this reason, universal histories turn out to be an effort for integrating Islam and the caliphate into the history of the world.²²

The universal message of Islam, as well as the political successes of the caliphate over a wide expanse from Spain to India, along with the meeting of the cultures, had a profound influence over the historical susceptibilities of these historians writing about human past. The writers of universal histories, led by Yakubi, Dinavari and a short time later Tabari and Masudi, felt themselves compelled to draw upon a variety of new sources to be able to understand the history of this wide geography.²³

It must not be forgotten that universal history emerged after the great translation movement that transferred the ancient knowledge of the Mediterranean basin and Persia into Arabic.²⁴ In this respect universal history was not the continuation of a certain historiographical tradition, but on the contrary a unified historical narrative that expanded the horizons of history writing in order to cover the history of the

²² Hayrettin Yücesoy “Allah’ın Halifesi, Dünyanın Kadısı; Bir Dünya İmparatorluğu olarak Hilafet” *Divan Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 2007,22, p.92

²³ Hayrettin Yücesoy “Ancient Imperial Heritage and Islamic Universal Historiography: al-Dinawari’s secular perspective” *Journal of Global History*, vol:2,2007,p.13

²⁴ See, Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, Routledge, 1998, for a new study, Hayrettin Yücesoy, “Translation as Self-Consciousness: Ancient Sciences, Antediluvian Wisdom and The Abbasid Translation Movement” *Journal of World History*, Vol.20, No.4 2009

entire known world, and for this purpose brought together the disparate reports in different sources.²⁵

In the same way, the most important universal history of the world of Iran, *Camiül Tevarih*, written in Persian by Rashid al-Din which served as a model for the Ottomans, had come into being in the context of the Mongols project of world domination, and as a result of the new contacts established with the Europeans.²⁶ Thus this work became a history of all the peoples encountered by the Mongols.²⁷

The first universal histories in the Ottoman Empire were written under the patronage of Mahmud Pasha, who was longest-serving vizier of Mehmed II.²⁸ The first of these was *Düstürname* an eclectic universal history of Islam composed in three main parts. Another important work in this genre was a more comprehensive history composed in Persian by Şükrullah, which was entitled *Behcetü't- Tevarih*. In these Ottoman universal chronicles of the initial period, Ottoman history was considered as an appendix to Islamic history and Ottoman sultans as ghazis fighting in the *ucs* of the Muslim world, probably because a consciousness of Empire had not emerged yet.

The sixteenth century the Ottomans discovered their own past and the Islamic past at the same time. The Empire became the sole political system, stretching across the central lands of Islam for the first time since the Abbasids. While in the fifteenth century its size was comparable to territory of the Mamluks and other dynasties in

²⁵ Especially see, Yücesoy, *Ancient Imperial Heritage*, p.139

²⁶ Rashiddün Fazlullah, *Jami'u't Tawarikh I: Compendium of Chronicles a History of the Mongols Part One Cami'i ü Tevarih*, Translated by W.A Thackston, Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures 45, 1998-99 and see, Bernard Lewis "The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources", p. 183-184 *The Historians of the Middle East*, Edited by B.Lewis and P.M Holt, London, 1962

²⁷ Lenn Goodman, *The Islamic Humanism*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p.321

²⁸ See, Theoharis Stavridies *The Sultan of Viziers: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vizir Mahmud Pasha Angelovic (1453-1474)*, Brill, 2001,p.294

the Fertile Crescent in the sixteenth century, The Empire at its zenith was comparable only to the greatest of the past empires such as the Abbasids. This made the Ottoman Empire worthy of scrutiny in the eyes of Ottoman intellectuals who had previously been more interested in the politics and histories of past glorious empires. For the first time in this century elaborate world histories began to be written situating the Ottoman Empire among the greatest empires of the past.²⁹

In this genre, which gained great popularity in the sixteenth century, the common theme was that the Ottoman Empire was the heir of ancient empires and a great empire in their rank. But the position and intellectual background of the authors impacted upon the content of their work. For example, the world history dedicated to Selim II by the Persian émigré Lari (1566) shows the Ottoman Empire more as an heir of the Persian heritage.³⁰ On the other hand, the work *Zübdetü't- Tevarih* was written more with the purpose of instructing the members of the court about the place of the Ottoman dynasty in the history of the world, representing the Ottoman emperors as the final and divinely pre-ordained arbiters of the age with no rivals in the world.³¹ At the end of the sixteenth century, by which time the universal dynastic claims of the Ottomans had been consolidated, Mustafa Ali adopted a more critical approach and drawing upon his comprehensive learning, compared the Ottoman Empire with the other great empires of the time.³²

²⁹ Cornell Fleischer stats that universal histories were also written in the other great two Muslim empires as the muslim calendar approached the year 1000 by the end of the sixteenth century. More research is needed on this subject. Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat*, p.212

³⁰ Sara Nur Yıldız , “Historiography – xiv. The Ottoman Empire,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 12 (2004): 403–411.

³¹ Gülru Necipoğlu, “Osmanlı sultanlarının portre dizilerine karşılaştırmalı bir bakış,” in *Padişahın Portresi: Tesavir-i Al-i Osman* İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2000, 22-61

³² See, Jan Schmidt, *Mustafa Ali's Kühü'l ahbar and its Preface According to the Leiden Manuscript*, Leiden Nederlands Instituut voor her Nabije Oosten, 1987, p, 50-51 and To compare these two books see: Baki Tezcan, “The politics of early modern Ottoman historiography,” in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, ed. Virginia Aksan and Dan Goffman Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 173

We can consider the chronological world history *Takvimü't Tevarih* written by Katip Çelebi in the seventeenth century as a product of his wide-ranging curiosity about history.³³ Hayrettin Yücesoy observes that when the chapter titles in *Takvimü't Tevarih* are brought together they amount to a summary of Katip Çelebi's views on what the chief historical elements inherited from the Islamic and Ottoman past were. For example, Katip Çelebi gives the history of prophets in parallel with the histories of rulers in the East and West, scientists and philosophers, and such important turning points as the emergence of religions. At the same time, the work reveals Katip Çelebi's interest in Greek thought and art. Greek literature receives treatment in such a way as to include Greek poetry and Socrates' criticism of it, while such figures as Pitagoras, Thales, Plato, Oklides, Batlamyus and Galen, as well as other information on Greek culture and history, is covered in the *Takvim* under individual headings.³⁴

In the second half of the seventeenth century, Hezarfen Hüseyin and Müneccimbaşı wrote two comprehensive universal histories. What were the differences between their points of view? Hezarfen wrote his work at a time when the empire had reached its farthest boundaries and there was a good degree of peace and order inside. Moreover, there also began in this period an interest in European culture and history, thanks to the individual efforts of Katip Çelebi, and this interest gained momentum with the support given by the Köprülü family to translations made from Western languages.

³³ Gotfried Hagen, "Katip Celebi", *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, www.theottomanhistorians.com

³⁴ Hayrettin Yücesoy "İslam Tarihinde Evrensel Tarihçilik Geleneği ve Katip Çelebi: Kısa bir Ön Mülâhaza" *Doğumunun 400. Yıl Dönümünde Katip Çelebi*, ed: Bekir Karlığa and Mustafa Kaçar, T.C Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2009, pp. 229-241

Hezarfen's Life and His Chronicle.

Now let us examine the protagonist of this study, Hezarfen Hüseyin. We do not have much information about him as he does not provide autobiographical information in his works and he is not included in the biographical dictionaries of his time.³⁵ He was born on the island of Cos (Istankoy) off the southwestern shores of Asia Minor. We do not know his exact date of birth and details of his education. However he is thought to have completed his primary education in Istankoy, and later he came to Istanbul where he completed his education. After this he became a state official. His learning and curiosity attracted the attention of notable figures in the state bureaucracy and he entered the service of Köprülüzade Fazıl Ahmed, his future patron. With the grand vizier he took part in the expedition against Crete. He remained in this post till 1687. For some time he served under Ali Ufki Bey, the translator of the Imperial Council. While he was head of the office of cadastral registers (defter emini), he left state service and dedicated himself to his studies. His nickname "Hezarfen" means somebody with a wide learning. His rich collection of books and profound learning also attracted the attention of Europeans living in Istanbul at that time. In particular, he established a close friendship with the famous Orientalist Antoine Galland, and was invited several times to dinners in the French embassy. On one of these evenings, he made a gift of his work *Tenkihü't- Tevarih* to the French ambassador. Hezarfen Hüseyin died in 1691.³⁶

Hezarfen Hüseyin was one of the most significant historians and intellectuals of the seventeenth century. He had a very wide range of interests. He produced many important works on subjects from history to medicine, from dictionaries to

³⁵ Heidrun Wurm, *Osmanische Historiker*, p. 73

³⁶ Mücteba İlgürel, "Hüseyin Efendi, Hezarfen", *DİA*, volume: 18, pages: 544–566

encyclopedias. Another important characteristic of Hezarfen was his knowledge of languages. It is said that he had mastered Latin and Greek and, if this is true, he was almost the only Ottoman Muslim scholar beside Katip Çelebi to know these languages. Galland depicted Hezarfen as an intelligent and learned individual who wanted to learn French and visit France.³⁷

He began his universal history, *Tenkihü't- Tevarih*, on 21 May 1670 and finished it on 12 February 1673.³⁸ He presented this work to Sultan Mehmed IV, while he was teaching history to the sultan.³⁹ The work consisted of an introduction, nine chapters and a conclusion. When we consider the work generally, we see that Hezarfen Hüseyin wrote a concise but still multi-faceted world history. It emerges that Hezarfen's main purpose in writing this work was to offer to the sultan and other statesmen of his time a relation of historical facts that would act as a guide for right conduct for them.⁴⁰ This explaining why he treated historical events in a very concise fashion and passed over some which he did not regard to be of the first importance. The focus of his work is on the reigns of the sultans until Süleyman the Magnificent, particularly that of Selim I. From the later period, he only relates in detail the reign of Murat IV and Fazil Ahmed's expeditions against Kandia and Kanicha.

Hezarfen's universal history diverges from similar histories in respect of its composition and form. First of all, it does not follow a chronological order. The universal histories written up to that time began from Adam and touched upon the pre-Islamic states only briefly, after which they handled Islamic history in a

³⁷ Antoine Galland, *İstanbul'a Âit Günlük Hatıralar (1672-1673)*, I, Çev. Nahit Sırrı Örik, Ankara 1949, p.239

³⁸ Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Tenkihü't- Tevarih-i Müluk*, Süleymaniye Library, Hekimoğlu 732, 280

³⁹ Wurm cites Tahir's testimony that Hezarfen gave history lessons to the sultan, though he notes that Hezarfen's name is not found in the official lists of the sultan's teachers and suggests that he may only have read passages from books of history to the sultan. Wurm, p.81

⁴⁰ Wurm, *Historiker Hüseyin*, p. 95 also see, *Tenkih*, 2b,

comprehensive manner and related Ottoman history up to their time. He launches the first chapter with ancient Persian states such as Kevaniyan, Eşkeniyan and Sasaniyan. Later, he tells about Muhammed's birth and his campaigns, the first four caliphs, Muaviye (the founder of Umayyad dynasty) and the stories of Hasan and Hüseyin, Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids and fifty famous Muslim dynasties. From this point onwards, he begins to relate the history of the Ottoman State. Until this chapter he generally uses Cenabi's *el- Aylemü 'z-zahir*, Mirhond's *Ravzatü 's- Safa* and Mustafa Ali's *Künhu 'l- Ahbar* and *Fusulü 'l-hal ve 'l-akd*, as his sources.⁴¹ After this chapter he tells about Roman history and Greek philosophers. The following chapter is a detailed account of Byzantine history since the foundation of Constantinople until the conquest of Istanbul. He states that for the section on Byzantine and Roman history Panaiotis supplied him with sources, and Ali Ufki translated these for him.⁴² This chapter is the most comprehensive history written so far in the Ottoman Empire about the history of Byzantium and Rome, and constitutes a turning point in Ottoman historiography insofar as it was based on the study of primary source material in Greek and Latin. This chapter is also the most detailed chapter up to that point in the work. On the last two chapters, he tells about the traditions of some islands in Chinese and Indian seas and finally the discovery of the Americas and its folks. This is a universal history relating the history and geography of the peoples of the world at that time from a wide, imperial perspective. What he uses as a source for these lands is Katip Çelebi's *Cihannüma*. After his account of

⁴¹ "Bi-kudre Hüseyin eş-Şehir bi Hezarfen tevarih-i bedayi' ve vekayi'den istifsar ve istihbar olundukta hin-i hitapta hazır cevap olmak için ilm-i tarihte murad olan manayı ara eder Arabide Mevlana Cenabi Efendi ve Farisi de Ahund-ı müverrihin Mirhand ve Türki de Ali Efendi'nin Künhü'l-Ahbar tarihlerinden intihap ve ihtisar edüp" Tenkih 2b

⁴² "Tevarih kitaplarına Memalik-i devlet-i âl-i Osmaniye'nin baş tercümanı olan panayot nam mesihiden kütüb-i mezkuru tahsil idüb ve terki tercümesine şevk külli ile semend-i himmet sevk olundu. Harem-i Hassadan sipahilik ile çıkub bade-i tercüman-ı sani olan ali bey-nam kimesne mukarin olub fenn-i tercümede vakıf ve lisan-ı yunanı ve latin de kayıkına arif bir kabil vücud bulub.."Tenkih 192a

the technique of the determination of parallels and meridians, he tells about the *narh* rule (the fixing of the maximum price of various goods by the state) in shopping and he warns to be careful about the application of this rule in the concluding chapter (Hatimetü'l- Hatime) chapter. He ends his book declaring his opinions on the issues of state and society.

These new tendencies and the deployment of new sources can also be observed in the work of Müneccimbaşı, who wrote in the same genre and had the same patronage relationships. His patron was Kara Mustafa Pasha, the son-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed. The author composed the last and most comprehensive universal chronicle in Ottoman historiography,⁴³ to which Bernard Lewis dedicates some space in his examination of the use of non-Muslim sources by Muslim historians: “The general history was written in Arabic under the title *Cami'ül Düvel*, The bulk of the work is concerned with Islamic history. A large of the first volume is, however, devoted to the history of the pre-Islamic and non-Islamic states. The former, as is usual, included the Persians and Arabians on the one hand, and the Israelities and Egyptians on the other, discussed on more or less traditional lines. Müneccimbasi's ancient history, however, goes beyond the common Islamic world and the common Islamic stock. His accounts of the Romans and of the Jews clearly derive from Roman and Jewish sources, already in part available to him in the adaption of Ibn Khaldun. Müneccimbasi has however much fuller information than Ibn Khaldun, and is able to deal with such peoples as the Assyrians and Babylonians, The Seleucids and the Ptolemies, previously barely unknown to Islamic historiography. For these a European source must have been used. This becomes certain when we come to

⁴³ For a new edition of Müneccimbaşı's history see: Hatice Arslan Sözüdoğru, *Müneccimbasi als Historiker: Arabische Historiographie bei einem Osmanischen Universalgelehrten des 17. Jahrhunderts: Gami'ad-duwal*, Klaus-Schwarz, 2009

Müneccimbasi's chapter on Europe, which includes sections on the divisions of the Frankish peoples and on the kings of France, of Germany, of Spain, and of England... Müneccimbasi's outside interests were not limited to Europe. For this account of the kings of Armenia, he tells us he made use of translations of Armenian chronicles. For the ancient history of the Jews, he had recourse to Hebrew sources, made available to him by Jewish informants. From his accounts of his dealings with these informants, and of his painstaking attempts to verify and compare material in languages unknown to him, we may get some idea of the far-reaching curiosity and meticulous scholarship of Müneccimbasi.⁴⁴

Thus Hezarfen Hüseyin and Müneccimbaşı the prime examples of the polymath intellectual typology of the seventeenth century and their use of Western sources and collaboration with a wide intellectual circle in composing their works stands as the culmination of the new tendencies that appeared in the seventeenth century. Now, as a last step for understanding Hezarfen's world, we shall have a look at the circle of Western travelers and converts as well as the undertakings of the Köprülü family in the cultural field.

Orientalists and Converts in Istanbul

The converts played an important role in the cultural relations of the Ottomans with Europe.⁴⁵ The converts played a mediating role in the cultural exchange between the Ottomans and Europeans, thanks to their skills in foreign languages. By virtue of

⁴⁴ Bernard Lewis *The Use by Muslim Historians*, p. 183-184

⁴⁵ For a new study about converts in Istanbul, see Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople, Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, especially, pp.103- 130

these skills, they were usually appointed to posts of dragomanship.⁴⁶ It was a former French Jesuit and a new convert to Islam who helped Katip Çelebi in the translation of Western atlases and books. In the seventeenth century, Ali Ufki or Albert Bobovsky, a Polish-born convert, made an important contribution to these relations in his role as translator.⁴⁷ Bobovski was at the same time a close friend of Hezarfen's, and made number of translations from Latin and Greek for him. At the same time, he prepared a Turkish translation of the Bible in collaboration with the Dutch traveler Lewinus Warner. Beside this he also provided information on Islam and the Ottomans to the English and French diplomats and also wrote works on these subjects.⁴⁸

In addition to these converts, Istanbul also hosted a great number of travelers and scientists in the seventeenth century.⁴⁹ Some of them did not need any interpreters in their dealings with the Ottoman intellectuals of the time, for most of them knew Turkish and some had also mastered other Oriental languages.⁵⁰ Especially, the purpose of most of the travelers who came in this period was to collect manuscripts. For example, it is known that the Dutchman Lewinus Warner, whose collection of manuscripts is in the University of Leiden today, purchased the library of Katip Çelebi⁵¹ Among the Orientalists who came to Istanbul in this period

⁴⁶ Important article about converts as dragoman Pal Acs, "Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad, Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters" in *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*, ed: Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 2000,

⁴⁷ Cem Behar, *Ali Ufki ve Mezmurları*, Pan, İstanbul, 1990 and for his book, *Albertus Bobovius ya da Santuri Ali Ufki Bey'in anıları, Topkapı Sarayında Yaşam*, prepared and edited Stefanos Yerasimos and translated by Ali Bertay Kitap Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2002

⁴⁸ Hagen, *Ottoman Mentality*, p.251

⁴⁹ Especially for French Orientalism and Orientalists a innovative and important study, Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France, Eurasian Trade, Exoticism, and the Ancien Regime*, Oxford University Press, 2008, especially see, also pp.101-163 see, Nicholas Dew, *Orientalism in Louis XIV's France*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp.168-205

⁵⁰ Gottfried Hagen, *Ottoman Mentality*, p.252

⁵¹ See, Jan Just, Precious Books and Moments of Friendship in the 17th Century Istanbul" in *Essays in honour of Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu*, ed: Mustafa Kaçar and Zeynep Durukal, pp.467-74, also see, Jan Schmidt, "Between Author and Library Shelf: The Intriguing History of Some Middle Eastern

and got acquainted with Hezarfen Hüseyin were the following: A. Galland, who was later to acquaint the European readers with the *Thousand and One Nights*, and Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, who wrote many works on subjects relating to Ottoman culture. The voluminous library and wide range of interest of Hezarfen Hüseyin attracted the attention of these Orientalists and they entered into cultural exchange with him. In particular, Galland was closely acquainted with Hezarfen and mentioned him in his diaries. Another traveler in contact with Hezarfen was Marsigli, to whom Hezarfen showed his compendium of official texts that listed the forces of the Ottoman army and navy along with the revenues supporting them.⁵² Similarly, Marsigli exchanged his geographical findings with the other famous historian and astronomer of the age, Müneccimbaşı.⁵³

Köprülü Patronage

In particular, Fazil Ahmed Pasha, the successor of Köprülü Mehmed as grand vizier, acted as patron to an important intellectual circle including Hezarfen.⁵⁴ The Köprülüs were the founders of the first free-standing library in Ottoman History, and owned a very large collection including a wide assortment of Western books in Latin and other languages, which were acquired during the campaign against Hungary.⁵⁵ In addition to acquiring books, the Köprülüs also gave serious support to translation activities. In 1668, Willem Janszoon Blaeuw's monumental, 11-volume work *Atlas Major* had been presented to Mehmed IV by the ambassador of Holland. Although the sultan ordered its translation, as Adnan Adıvar states, it is plausible to suggest

Manuscripts Acquired by Public Collections in the Netherlands Prior to 1800" in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, ed: Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, Bart Westerweel, Brill, 2005, pp.27-52

⁵² John Stoye, *Marsigli's Europe 1680-1730, The Life and Times of Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, Soldier and Virtuoso*, Yale University Press, 1994, p. 23

⁵³ Hagen, *Ottoman Mentality*, p.252

⁵⁴ Heidrun Wurm, *Historiker Hüseyin*, p.36

⁵⁵ *Ibid*,38

that the translation was actually begun on the incitement of Fazil Ahmed Pasha, in 1675.⁵⁶

Moreover, Fazil Ahmed's brother Mustafa Pasha also commissioned the Greek dragoman and scientist Nicousios Panaiotis to translate parts of this work. That Köprülü Mustafa was much interested in European literature and history is also evident from Panaiotis' comment to traveler Marsigli that he feared that if the youth saw a certain book on the hieroglyphs circulating at that time, he would require him to translate it as well.

Ebu Bekir El-Dımaşki, the translator of the entire *Atlas Major*, was also a protégé of Kara Mustafa Pasha who commissioned him to translate the parts showing Hungary and the German lands. The translation was finally completed in an expanded form in 1685.⁵⁷

Basing himself on what he learned from the many converts and Christians around the Köprülü Fazil Ahmed and his brother Mustafa, Galland asserts that they were not only interested in the science of Europeans, but also in their religion. Fazil Ahmed received information on the Old and new Testament from his doctor Tzigala and an Italian convert. Having gained a firm knowledge of the Christian religion, they also read the works of St Thomas from the Arabic⁵⁸. However, Heidrun Wurm states that this interest shown by the Köprülü in Christianity cannot be attributed to their wish to convert to Christianity. What was in question was rather the need felt by the intellectual Muslims to acquire information on the religion of the adversaries they

⁵⁶ Adnan Adivar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim*, Remzi Kitapevi, İstanbul, 2000 s.131

⁵⁷ G.J Halasi Kun "The Map of "şekl-i yeni Felemenk maa İngiliz" in Ebubekir Dimiski's "tercüme-i atlas mayor" *Archivum Ottomanicum* 11, 1986, p. 51–70 also see, Feza Günergün, *Cultural Translations*, p.205

⁵⁸ Wurm, *Ibid*, p.49

had been meeting for hundreds of years in battlefields, diplomacy, and their own country and circle.⁵⁹

In this context, we must look closely into the relation of Hezarfen Hüseyin with the Köprülüs. To begin with, he was an important member of the circle of intellectuals around Fazil Ahmed. In particular, we know that Hezarfen started work on the pre-Islamic history of Istanbul during the campaign of Crete that he joined alongside Fazil Ahmed, and was encouraged by the grand vizier in this study.⁶⁰

Moreover, Hezarfen also established relations with the grand vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha, and dedicated his work *Enisü'l-Arifin ve Mürşidü's-Salikin* to him. Wurm states that Hezarfen also had close personal relations with Mustafa, Fazil Ahmed's brother and a permanent member of the grand vizier's circle.⁶¹

Perhaps Hezarfen's chance was that he was a member of a wide circle of intellectuals led by the Köprülüs, who were interested in Europe, a target of their expansionist policies, as much as in their own history, and sought without any feeling of inferiority to acquire information about this world. Hezarfen's world saw the last bid of the Ottomans for world domination in the ideological sphere, and their last attempts at expansion into the heartlands of Europe. In the process of withdrawal following the debacle before Vienna in 1683, there would be no meaning of writing universal chronicles and showing the Ottoman Empire as a successor of the great world empires of the past.

The developments discussed in this chapter, the changes and transformations in historiography as well as the emergence of a circle eager to know the historical

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.49–52

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.48 and Mücteba İlgürel, "Hüseyin Efendi, Hezarfen", DİA, volume: 18, pages: 544–566

⁶¹ Ibid, p.58

roots of both the Ottoman Empire and Europe may help us to understand Hezarfen's own approach to the genre of universal history in general and his writings on Rome and Byzantium in particular.

CHAPTER III

THE REHABILITATION OF CONSTANTINE AND HIS CITY: A REACTION TO THE OTTOMAN TRADITIONS

Bir okuma hatasından yeni bir kahraman doğdu.

Stefanos Yerasimos

In this chapter I shall examine what Hezarfen wrote about the history of Rome and Byzantium. Firstly, I shall try to give a short summary of the sections where he relates the history of Rome and Byzantium. Then I shall analyze the text and try to answer the question why Hezarfen did not use the texts known as the traditions of Constantinople that were used in Ottoman historiography as a source for the history of Istanbul until his time. More importantly, what kind of a history of Byzantium and Constantinople did he write instead? Moreover, I shall try to detect the sources Hezarfen used, and examine how he used them, what he added and what he omitted. Of course, in order to reach a proper understanding of what Hezarfen wrote, I shall touch upon the reasons why these traditions on Constantinople emerged and how they developed in time. Because without knowing the ideological meanings in these texts and the process they underwent in Ottoman historiography, the precise importance and value of Hezarfen's writings on the history of Constantinople cannot be properly grasped.

The General Summary of Hezarfen's Writings on Rome, Byzantium and Constantinople

Firstly, let us see what is the proportion of this part with respect to his entire work. In my manuscript of Hekimoğlu, which is 280 folios Hezarfen has dedicated 38 folios to the history of Rome and Byzantium. In comparison, he has dedicated 46 leaves to Ottoman history. Differently from the other sections, Hezarfen did not indicate his sources here and only stated that he used sources in Greek and Latin. As I indicated in the introduction, Hezarfen treated the historical events in summary fashion, and only related in detail those events to which he attached importance. These detailed passages became the key points of his narrative.

Hezarfen writes in his chapter capital: “The city of Rome is still famous by the name of red apple.”¹ The red apple, a long-time symbol of world hegemony and sovereignty among the Turks, has been used in Ottoman histories as an ideal to be reached or a place to be conquered, without denoting which city it was.²

Constantinople before its conquest or later Vienna was named as “red apple” by the Ottomans. Red apple was first associated with Rome in the seventeenth century. In fact it is observed that in the seventeenth century the term red apple increasingly spread and was also applied to other Christian cities like Budin. The red apple appeared not only in Ottoman histories, but especially in the sultan portraits painted in the seventeenth century.³ In his world history *Takvimü't Tevarih* Katip Çelebi spoke of Roma as “the beginning of the building of the great city of Rome, or the red

¹ “Vilayet-i Roma hala kızıl elma ile demekle meşhurdur” *Tenkih*, 183

² Orhan Şaik Gökyay, “Kızıl Elma” in *Kim Sana Bu Karı Teklif Etti?*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1997, p.71-153, Stefanos Yerasimos, “De l’arbre a la pomme: geneologie d’un theme apocalyptique” in *Les Traditions Apocalyptiques au tournant au de la chute de Constantinople*, edited by Benjamin Lelleouch and Stefanos Yerasimos, Paris, L’Harmattan, 1999, p.153-202

³ Banu Mahir, “Elinde Altın Küre (Kızıl Elma) Tutan Sultan Portreleri”, *Dördüncü Uluslararası Türk Kültürü Kongresi Bildirileri* 4-7 Kasım 1997, Cilt 2, Ankara, 2000, p. 91-98, 383-388. Portrenin Yeni Bağlamı”, *Padişahın Portresi*, İstanbul, 2000, p.298-313, kat.no.66-84 (p.314-335)

apple.”⁴ The geographer Ebu Bekir El-Dımaşki, of Hezarfen’s intellectual circle, speaks of Rome in his *Coğrafya-ı Kebir* as follows: “the city of Rome is the city of the state of the Roman pope, which is called the city of red apple.” Hezarfen Hüseyin, who was aware of all this, stresses that such similes were “still” (hala).⁵

Hezarfen Hüseyin begins the Roman history part of his work with the Battle of Troy, which does not include much detail. What is interesting here, as J.L.B Grammont point out, is that he fails to mention the Trojan horse.⁶ When we think that Hezarfen was one of the most prominent historians of his age, we can guess that he knew traditions about Constantinople very well. In this context it is significant that he begins this part with Troy, which thus emerges for the first time in the Ottoman texts since the reign of Mehmed II.⁷

As we know, Mehmed II visited the ruins of Troy with the historian Kritobulos during a campaign he made to Lesbos. Kritobulos writes in his work that Mehmed II listened to the stories of Achilles, Aias and others by their graves, and nodding slightly, made the following remark: “It was the Greeks and Macedonians and Thesalians and Peloponnesians who ravaged this place in the past, and whose descendants have now through my efforts paid the right penalty, after a long period of years, for their injustice to us Asiatics at that time and so often in subsequent times”⁸

⁴ Katip Çelebi, *Takvimü't Tevarih*, Süleymaniye Library, Çelebi Abdullah Kısmı, 10a, İbdita-i bina-i Rumiyyetü'l Kebiri yani Kızıl Elma

⁵ Orhan Şaik Gökyay, *Kızıl Elma*, p. 88

⁶ Jean- Louis Bacque-Grammont “Truva Savaşı Üzerine Üç Osmanlı Anlatısı” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, XXII,2003, p.142-151

⁷ For what was written in Ottoman Historiography on Troy: Klaus Kaiser “Troia ve Homeros Destanları: II.Mehmed'den İsmet İnönü'ye kadar”, *Düş ve Gerçek Troia*, çeviren: Selma Bulgurlu Gün, Homer Kitabevi, İstanbul 2001p.282

⁸ Kritoboulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, translated by Charles T.Riggs, Greenwood Pub Group, 1954, p.36

Stefanos Yerasimos states that these words could have been put into his mouth by those Greeks in his entourage who wanted to make of him a continuator of the Byzantine Empire. However, we know that Mehmed II commissioned a copy of the Iliad to the writer Johannes Dokeianosos for the palace library.⁹ Thus we cannot evaluate these words of Kritobulos as a fiction of a sycophant. What is important here is the resemblance between the period of Mehmed II and the mentality of Hezarfen who first spoke of Troy after that period and made it the first element of a process that continued with Rome and Constantine. It is still more interesting that the other two works mentioning Troy were also written in the time of Hezarfen and during the reign of Köprülüs¹⁰. Among the reasons for this was the cultural exchange with Europe that intensified at this time. For all the empires and important cities from the Middle Ages to this time took their past back to Troy¹¹. For example English historians took the fall of Troy and the foundation of Rome as a starting point for themselves in order to create a legitimate basis for the Anglo-Norman aristocracy.¹² Moreover such a start also fitted the Byzantine historiographical tradition. The Byzantine historians of the early period tries to legitimize the new capital of the empire by referring to its alleged roots in Troy.¹³ Sozomen (c.400-c.450) for instance asserts that Constantine decided to found the city on the site of Troy, exactly at the spot where Ajax's tomb was found.¹⁴

⁹ Julian Raby, "Mehmed the Conqueror's Greek Scriptorium" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 37, 1983, p.25

¹⁰ Those are Muneccimbasi and Dimaski. See Klaus Kaiser "Troia Destanları", p.282,

¹¹ Michel Borgolte, "Avrupa'dan hikayeler ve Troy, Ortaçağ'da bir Mit" and Elizabet Lienert, "Bir Ortaçağ Destanı: 12.ve 14.yüzyıllarda Alman Troy Edebiyatı" in *Düş ve Gerçek Troia*, çeviren: Selma Bulgurlu Gün, Homer Kitabevi, İstanbul 2001

¹² See, Alexander Williams Mueller, *Translating Troy: Imperial Historiography and Middle English Alliterative Romance*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Minnesota University, 2007, especilla, pp. 1-9

¹³ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde*, p. 77

¹⁴ See, "He (Constantine) repaired to a plain at the foot of Troy, near the Hellespont, above the tom of Ajax, where, it is said, the Achaians intrenched themselves when besieging Troy; and here he laid the plan of a large and beautiful city." Hermias Sozomen, *History of the Church*, translated by Edward Walford, London, MDCCCLV, 1855, p. 54

It should also be noted that in Renaissance Europe, especially in Italy, there were many historical works written that mentioned the supposed Troyan origins of Turks.¹⁵ The reason why Hezarfen began his history with Troy and seems to have attached importance to this topic may have been his talks with Antoine Galland or with Panaiotis himself, who had studied in Italy. Thus it is evident that Hezarfen had made a conscious choice in writing of Troy and with him Troy again came to occupy an important place in the Ottoman historical traditions.

He relates how a Greek soldier named Aenis went to Italy and founded a city there. Hezarfen states that after this man died, his son acceded to the throne in that part of the world. He in turn had two sons, Romus and Romulus, who were the founders of Rome.¹⁶ Here Hezarfen makes an important addition at this point. He states that Romulus killed his brother and made Rome his capital, after which the people who lived there were called as “rum” (Roman). The people who came with Constantine from Rome to Constantinople were also called rum, since they had come from there, and were still present according to Hezarfen.¹⁷ This is the only place in Hezarfen’s history of Rome where he intervenes to make a comment of his own.

Hezarfen then mentions the names of a few Roman kings and proceeds to speak of the birth of Jesus Christ. He completely passes over the Republican period, and the reigns of Julius Caesar and Augustus. What concern him are the Jewish revolts

¹⁵ See, Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West, Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, pp.43-94 and Margeret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, Harvard University Press, 2008, pp. 117-155.

¹⁶ “bir münasib yerde bir şehri muazzam bina eylediler ve kendilerinin ismini münasib ol şehri roma diye tesmiye eylediler ve mezbur romulus karındaşını katl idüb kendi padişah oldu ve romayı darül mülk eyledi, *Tenkih* 184a

¹⁷ Mezbur Romulus karındaşını katl idüb kendi padişah oldu ve romayı darülmülk eyledi ve anda sakin olan kavme rum derler bade-u Konstantin ile çıkub bu diyara gelen halka romadan gelmekle rum dirler ki élan bu ekalimde mevcudlardır. *Tenkih*, 184

and the events related with the Christianization of the Empire.¹⁸ He focuses firstly on the revolt of the Jews in Jerusalem during which they attacked the Christians and murdered two Christian notables, Petrus and Kalius. This was indeed the first of the three revolts that the Jews made under Roman rule. Then Hezarfen proceeds to relate how the news of Nero's derangement arrived and how Vespesian replaced him as the king (melik) after which he allegedly conquered Alexandria and built a "minaret" here. He sent his son Titus to Jerusalem, and the latter captured the city. Sixty thousand Jews were massacred and another hundred thousand were captured. Then their temple was destroyed and the Jews, whom Hezarfen calls "the remains of sword," were scattered to different countries where they gradually disappeared (nabud).¹⁹ This defeat was one of the severest in Jewish history.

Before going on to relate the second revolt, Hezarfen speaks of the reigns of Titus and Domitian. The most important event in this period was the banishment of the soothsayers from Rome. Moreover he speaks of Apostle John and the spread of Christianity.²⁰ The second revolt related by Hezarfen is what is known as the Kitos wars between Rome and the Jews. He relates briefly that the Jews in Cyprus, Egypt, Syria and Ethiopia revolted but were massacred by Trajan's soldiers. He proceeds to relate Hadrian, and the most important event he dwells on is of course the Jewish revolt called the Bar Kochba revolt. Here he notes the interesting detail that Hadrian had the ears of Jewish corpse cut.²¹

¹⁸ For Jewish revolts see, James J. Bloom, *The Jewish Revolts Against Rome, A.D 66-135, A Military Analysis*, McFarland & Company, Inc Publishers, 2010, especially see, pp. 191-201, also see, Robert Goldenberg "The Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple: its meaning and its consequences", in *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Volume Four, The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, Ed: Steven T. Katz, Cambridge University Press, 2006

¹⁹ *Tenkih* 184a

²⁰ *Ibid*, 184a

²¹ *Ibid* 184b.

After this Hezarfen briefly touches upon the events that till Constantine's reign. In many cases, he only notes the reasons of their death and periods of reign. The only continuous theme through these reports is the spread of Christianity. The persecution of Christians is in most cases the only thing he reports except for the deaths of the emperors.²² The only subject except this is the emergence and spread of Christianity. Again briefly, he relates that Mani was a Christian but was endowed with prophethood and taking his twelve apostles sent them to India and China.²³

So in Hezarfen's relation what is important is not the long political history of Rome per se, but the revolts of the Jews. Hezarfen finishes his Roman history with "Maxientus" He states that this emperor was a very cruel and evil man and inflicted great harm on his people. He relates how the Roman people eagerly summoned the later founder of Istanbul, Constantine, and made him emperor. He indicates that up to that time there had been fifty-one emperors who had ruled for a total period of 605 years. He thus makes clear that a new period had begun in history, that of the Byzantine Empire.

Moreover, it is necessary to point out that because of the brevity and scarcity of Hezarfen's account of Roman history, it is almost impossible to detect his sources for this section. He can have garnered his information from any Greek or Latin forces. Between Roman and Byzantine history, Hezarfen dedicates a chronologically misplaced part to Greek philosophers. Here he provides short biographies of the Greek philosophers and their sayings. After Hezarfen mentions a few characteristics of each Greek philosopher, he gives an example to his wise sayings. After listing seventeen philosophers in this way, he does not go into more detail.

²² Ibid185a

²³ Ibid185b

After giving information on the Greek philosophers, he returns to the story of Constantine he had left aside. In the introduction to this section, he states that his aim is to explain why Constantine came to Constantinople to build the city, how long the Roman emperors reigned, and who built the Hagia Sophia. The events Hezarfen relates in detail in this section are closely related with these questions. Moreover Hezarfen indicates that there reigned ninety emperors from the foundation of Constantinople to its conquest by Mehmed II. Again he speaks of Panaiotis, who procured him his sources, and Ali Ufki, who translated them for him.

Hezarfen begins this section by giving information on Constantine, who holds an important place in his text. He dedicates four folios to Constantine, more than the place dedicated to any other emperor. He relates how Constantine captured Rome, converted to Christianity and on seeing a dream left Rome to found a city. After this, he speaks of how he founded Constantinople and put it into a flourishing city. After this, he mentions the True Cross which Constantine's mother Helena brought from Jerusalem and which was buried under Constantine's column.

After telling Constantine's life, Hezarfen's relation of Byzantine history undergoes a change. Whereas he had related Constantine's life in detail and at relatively great length, he contents himself after that with indicating when each emperor acceded, how long he reigned, and what kind of disasters like fires and earthquakes happened during his reign. Only three episodes are related in more detail. Firstly, he speaks of Justinian's reign and the construction of the Hagia Sophia. The reason why his style changes here is that he draws more upon Turkish than Byzantine sources, as I shall discuss in more detail. The second of the detailed episodes is on the Iconoclastic movement. In this chapter, Hezarfen accuses Leon of

having launched the iconoclast movement upon the urging of two Jews.²⁴ Here Hezarfen probably makes use of a universal history by the twelfth century Byzantine historian George Cedrenus, entitled *Synopsis Historion* and encompassing the events from the Creation to the year 1057.

Although Byzantine historians seek the start of iconoclasm in Jewish sorcerers, the most detailed among such sources is that of Cedrenus on this issue, and also considering that Hezarfen used him also for the life of Constantine, it is very probable that he used the source in question for iconoclasm as well. However, Hezarfen discards most of the details in Cedrenus' chronicle and contents himself with noting that Leon was persuaded by two Jews.²⁵ Hezarfen accuses Leo of betraying Christianity. He goes further and claims that Leo had old and new churches destroyed. He states that books on philosophy and theology in libraries were burnt along with the librarians.²⁶ Thus the Rumis did not have any books left and rebelliousness infected the people according to Hezarfen. In order to make his narration still more dramatic, he states that after the Muslim siege there took place great earthquakes and many people died. This negative evaluation continues with

²⁴ Tenkih, İstanbulda kayzer oldu cülus ettikde iki Yahudinin sözüne uyup her kim ki evinde tasvir bulundursa azim siyaset ederim deyü nida ettirdi onun için ikonoma hos? deyü lakab kodular ümmet-i İsa'ya çok ihanetler etti ve çok kenayis-i kadime ve hadiselerin hedm edüp ve kütüb-i ilahiyye ve sair kütüb-i hikmet ve riyaziyyat ve gayrıyı kitabhane ve hafız-ı kütüpleriyle ihrak binnar eyledi ol ecilden Rumilerde kütüb kalmadı bu sebep ile halk arasında azim ihtilal düşdü bunun zamanında ki hicretin doksan altı senesinde...

²⁵ Cedrenus' narrative agrees to a certain extent with that of Theophanes. Both relate that Jews went to a certain Arab prince and persuaded him to destroy icons, in return for which they promised him forty years on the throne. The prince died however before he was able to realize his promise. Theophanes' story ends at this point, while Cedrenus proceeds to relate how the same Jews met Leo while was a lad in Isauria and predicted that he would be emperor. In return, they made him swear on oath that he would do whatever they would demand once he was on the throne. Thus, after his accession, he launched the iconoclastic movement on their demand. Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, ed.I.Becker, 1.vol, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, p.788-793 *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor, Byzantine and Near Eastern History*, Translated with Introduction and Commentary by Cyril Mango and Roger Scott with the assistance of Geoffrey Greatrex, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp.555-558.

²⁶ *Tenkih 205b-206a*

Leon's son Constantine V.²⁷ He says that the latter emperor followed his father in betraying the Rumis and paid no heed to the Christians. It is interesting that here Hezarfen used the Byzantine sources with the most critical tone and sharpened their tone still further. The last important theme Hezarfen addressed was the Fourth Crusade and the Latin Conquest of Constantinople. Here Hezarfen relates the developments shortly, and differently from the case of iconoclasm, approaches the events more mildly. Here he especially dwells on the plunder carried out by the Venetians.²⁸ He only expresses a negative view about Emperor Michael VIII, who had come to terms with the Latin Christians, and notes that he was not buried on Church ground.²⁹ After this, Hezarfen speaks of the relations between the Ottomans and Byzantine rulers. He concludes this part of his work with the conquest of Constantinople.

A Reaction Against the Imperial Project: the Traditions on Constantinople

As I have discussed in the Introduction, after the conquest of Constantinople the Ottomans attempted to realize their project of universal empire and adopted the Roman conception of universal empire; they regarded themselves as the only heirs of Rome. The first implementer of this project, Mehmed II, chose as his capital the center of this universal empire, and tried to renovate it as best as he could by drawing upon all the resources of this empire.³⁰ Of course there was bound to appear reactions against this conception of universal empire and the centralist project Mehmed II

²⁷ *Tenkih* 206a

²⁸ *Tenkih* 217a “vesâir kilisalardan ne kadar zî-kıymet eşyâ’ var ise kaldurub Venedik’e gönderdiler ve saray-ı pâd-şâhide cümle pâd-şâhların murassâ’ tâcirlerini ve bil-cümle zî-kıymet şeyleri França’ya gönderdiler”

²⁹ *Tenkih* 218a Rûmîler kesret-i adâvetden meyyitini kilisa mezârına komayub kimse varmadı *Tenkih*,

³⁰ See, Halil İnalçık, “The Policy of Mehmed II toward the Greek population of İstanbul and the Byzantine buildings of the city”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 23-4, 1969-1970, pp.231-49, Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinopolis/İstanbul: Cultural Encounter Imperial Vision and the Construction of The Ottoman Capital*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010

pursued to build a great empire. At this period there appeared texts presumably written by those opposed to this imperial project, which tried to show how “cursed” and “ominous” a place was the newly captured city of Constantinople.

In these texts called as the traditions of Constantinople, the history of the city from its legendary founders to its capture by the Ottomans was told by drawing upon a wide range of sources from Byzantine to Arabic sources, and with the addition of various legendary elements. Again in the same period, court historians like Neşri (d.1530 ?) did not use these texts and developed a new, pro-imperial discourse against them. Also after the end of the debate about the empire, historians used these texts and shaped it according to their ideological stance. What is important here is that all the Ottoman chroniclers after the fifteenth century, whether they were pro-imperial or not, wrote the entire Byzantine history by drawing upon these traditions and as Yerasimos states, did not even bother to look into the Arabic sources while doing so.³¹

Hezarfen Hüseyin was the first to leave these traditions and to write a new history of Byzantium and Constantinople instead. In this chapter, after we briefly examine the formation and development of these texts, we shall investigate how Hezarfen established a new narrative instead of these legends.

The Formation of the Traditions.

In fact the handling of such an important and ancient city as Istanbul by many legends and its constant reformation as a theme in literary texts was not something peculiar to the Ottoman period. When writing the traditions about this city, the Ottomans drew upon a wide range of Muslim and Byzantine traditions,

³¹ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde*, p.262

whether pro-empire or not. Those who wrote the history of Constantinople compiled their material from a very wide assortment and later brought these together in accordance with their aims.

The first work to comprise the various elements that would go into the making of the Turkish traditions on Constantinople would be *Dürr-i Meknun* by Yazıcıoğlu of Gelibolu.³² In fact it is not a coincidence that the first text in opposition emerged in the intellectual circles of the Bayrami order who objected to the bureaucracy that had begun to form around the Ottoman sultan.³³ Another characteristic of *Dürr-i Meknun* was that it was the first text to mention the legendary founder Yanko bin Medyan.³⁴ Moreover, it is first here that it is asserted that the city was cursed.³⁵

The story is yet in a raw state here, but it is elaborated in the anonymous text dated 1491, and the traditions of Constantinople were thus formed. Although some parts of the original text were used in the anonymous histories before 1491, these did not display an anti-imperial stance.

The first historian we know to have dedicated a place to this anonymous history in his work is Oruc Bey of Edirne.³⁶ What is interesting is his place of origin, Edirne. Indeed this is understandable given the hostile stance of Edirne against Istanbul.³⁷

Here it will be relevant to speak of a historian not mentioned by Yerasimos. Kivami, who wrote during Mehmed II's reign, is perhaps the only historian who does

³² Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, *Dürr-i Meknun, Saklı İnciler*, Edited by Necdet Sakaoğlu, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999

³³ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde*, p.61

³⁴ "Ol Şehri Yanko bin Medyan Bünyan etmiştir". *Dürr-i Meknun* p.73

³⁵ Pes ol vakitden beri ol şehre nice kere bela ve kaza, kah taun ve zelzeleden harab olup viran olmuştur. Ceng-ü aşub dahi eksik olmaz. Yazıcıoğlu, *İbid*, p.73

³⁶ *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, prepared by Necdet Öztürk, Çamlıca Basım Yayın,2007

³⁷ Cemal Kafadar, *Between two worlds*.p.147-148

not fit the framework drawn by Yerasimos. While he dedicated a place to the traditions in his work, he still related Mehmed II's campaigns in a eulogistic vein in his work *Fetihname*.³⁸

While it was yet in the stage of formation, the traditions of Constantinople were overlooked by the court historiography. However it was not late in responding as the traditions spread. In the introductions of the anonymous texts and others, it is asserted that Mehmed II desired to receive information about the city from that Greeks and patriarchs. Thus Mehmed II is accused of having been attached to Byzantine tradition.³⁹

This accusation is in fact true, for Mehmed II indeed commissioned a history of Constantinople toward the end of his reign, upon which the description of Hagia Sophia in the Byzantine Patria was translated. As Yerasimos indicates, there lay behind this move of Mehmed II not a particular desire of acquiring information about it, but his wish to present his imperial project as a continuation of the Byzantine Empire.⁴⁰ One of the most important signs of this is that the name of that symbol of Byzantium, Hagia Sophia, was preserved unchanged. Thus Yusuf bin Musa of Balikesir prepared a Turkish abridgement of the Greek work *The Story of the Construction of the Great Church Called Hagia Sophia*.⁴¹ After a year a dervish named Şemsüddin made a Persian adaptation of a Greek original, *The Foundation History of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia*.⁴² What is important here is that both

³⁸ Kivami, *Fetihname-i Sultan Mehmed*, Edited by Franz Babinger, Maarif Basımevi, İstanbul, 1955

³⁹ *Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, edited by Nihat Azamat, Marmara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1992, p.44 and *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*

⁴⁰ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde*, p. 118

⁴¹ Yusuf bin Musa, *Tarih-i Ayasofya*, Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, 2057

⁴² Şeyh Semsüddin Harabati, *Tarih-i Bina-i Ayasofya*, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya 3025, I used french translation F.Tauer "Les Versions persanes de la legende sur la construction d'Aya Sofya" *Byzantinoslavica*, XV, 1954, pp. 1-20

texts were written before the completion of the formation of the anti-imperial text in 1491.

The official acceptance of these pro-imperial texts took place with their inclusion in *Heşt Behişt* of Idris-i Bitlisi on the orders of Beyazid II. In 1508 Ibn Kemal spoke of the Persian translation in his *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, but composed a Turkish text that had probably been retranslated from Greek.⁴³ Although an official interpretation emerged in this way, the story dated 1491 is found in many works, especially the various anonymous copies of *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*. But in time the attacks in the text were softened and many such elements were discarded. In a work published after the publication of Yerasimos' book, *Tarih-i Al-i Osman* dated 1516, the attacks on the sultan and his policy of forced settlement were reduced.⁴⁴

After this, a much more radical process of official digestion was launched with a series of Ottoman historians bearing the names of Ayas Pasha(1536-1539), Lütfi Pasha(1539-1541) and Rüstem Pasha (1544-1553, 1555-1561).⁴⁵ What is important here is that in all three texts the format of popular anonymous histories was preserved, but through their attribution to these statesmen, they were endowed with an official character. Another purpose in taking up the anonymous histories in this way was to get rid of the anti-imperial elements in the traditions included in them. But there was the fact that the traditions became so firmly rooted in the histories of the period that the heroes of the tradition like Yanko bin Medyan became a part of folklore that could not simply be erased with rewriting.

⁴³ See, Ibn Kemal, *Tevarih-i Ali Osman* , edited by Şerafettin Turan, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1957, p.80-89

⁴⁴ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Tarih-i Al-i Osman, Bizans Söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi* , Prepared by Efdal Sevinçli, İzmir , Dokuze Yayımları, 1997, p.19

⁴⁵ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde*, p. 230

Another important factor that contributed this development was that the official version of history remained confined to *Heşt Bihîşt* and Ibn Kemal's *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*. The result of the absorption of the traditions into official history was that they were purged of their anti-imperial elements and presented in Ottoman books of history as if they were historical fact.

From the works of the important historians of the sixteenth century, Hoca Saadeddin and Mustafa Ali, down to the works of Evliya Çelebi, the traditions were treated as historical fact. For example, although Mustafa Ali viewed the traditions from the point of view of a historian and drew upon a wide assortment of resources, he does not neglect to mention Yanko Bin Medyan along with Constantine. For example, in his version Yanko is the real founder of the city and gives his name to it: "Vakta ki şehir binası tamam oldu, ismi Yanko konulup, banisi şöhretiyle be-nam oldu"⁴⁶. In another sixteenth-century work, Latifi's eulogy of Istanbul entitled *Evsaf-ı İstanbul*, Yanko bin Medyan is again indicated as the founder of the city. Because of the work's genre, İstanbul is depicted as completely free of idols and idol worship.⁴⁷

The tradition continued its existence in the seventeenth century works as well. Hüseyin Bosnavi makes an inventory of all these traditions in his work *Beda'i ül veka'i*.⁴⁸ A good deal of confusion seems evident in Evliya Çelebi's work. On the one hand he relates Constantine's life at great length, and on the other hand he continues to provide extensive information on Yanko bin Medyan. Evliya Çelebi not only extends Yanko bin Medyan's family, but makes him the founder of many other

⁴⁶ Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *Künhül Ahbar: II.Rüknü : Fatih Sultan Mehmed Devri*, Prepared by Hüdai Şentürk, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 2003,p.28

⁴⁷ Latifi, *Evsaf-ı İstanbul*, Prepared by Nermin Suner Pekin, İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1977, p.11

⁴⁸ Hüseyin Bosnavi, *Beda'i ül veka'i*, Moscow, 1961, 206b-227a

cities as well.⁴⁹ He also offers a spurious genealogy for the latter⁵⁰ Now let us look briefly into the contents of these traditions.

The Content of the Traditions

The basis of these traditions was their effort to show what a cursed city Constantinople was and to prove the great mistake involved in its selection as the new capital. From this point of view, the city of Constantinople was thrice destroyed by God because of its sins, and thrice founded again on those very sins.

The starting point of the traditions is the worshipping of an idol by Şemsiye, a wife of Solomon the Wise. This idol constitutes the basis of the entire story and is a sign of the sinfulness of the city. After this the legendary founder of the city, Yanko bin Medyan emerges. He finds the icon hidden by Şemsiye. He consults his viziers about what to do with it, and vizier Kantur gives the following response: “O ruler of the universe you are a Solomon and just as every age has its own Solomon, you are the Solomon of this present age. Build a great city so that you may be mentioned in the world just as Solomon was.”⁵¹

That the story begins with the discovery of the idol by Yanko is meant to underline the close relationship between the idol and the foundation of the state. The story about the foundation of the state is one of those sections that best reveal the resentment against the forced settlements and the imperial project. According to this, a snake that falls from the beak of a stork hits a bell which rings. Upon this the

⁴⁹ *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi 1.Kitap, Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 yazmasının Transkripsiyonu*, Prepared by Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, YKY yayınları, p.76

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.14 “Yanko ibn Mâdyân Amlâk oğullarındandır. Ays ibn Ishâk Nebî'ye müntehîdir. Bir rivâyetde Yanko, kısraktan tevellüd etdüğüçün Yanko ibn Mâdyân derler. Batâlise-i Yûnâniyân'ın ibtidâsıdır”

⁵¹ Ey Şah-ı Alem şimdiki zamanda sen dahi bir Süleyman'ın her zamanın bir Süleyman'ı olur sen dahi bu zamanın Süleyman'ısın nola sen dahi bir ulu şehir bünyad eyle kim Süleyman gibi alemde anılasın. *Anonim,p.82*

soothsayers come together and advise the emperor to postpone the foundation, but he refuses. Thus he becomes directly responsible for the inevitable destruction of the state. The author becomes most indignant when relating the forced settlements, and asserts that the ruin of the city would be due to the curses of these people brought for forced settlement.

He proceeds to relate that Yanko, taking up the idol hidden by Şemsiye, began to force the populace to worship it; he even states that those who refused were burnt by fire.⁵² Of course all this infidelity results in the punishment of the city by God and Yanko and his infidel companions die. Another cycle of similar events begins with Yanko's son Byzas, who displays the same infidel acts after assuming the rule of the city. Upon this God sends forth a plague epidemic and the survivors abandon the city. Then the story comes down to Constantine himself. After this the traditions diverge completely from historical fact and take on a very complicated appearance. Constantine is called as "Constantine ibn Alanya" and "Alanya" (Helen), actually Constantine's mother, becomes his father instead. The author also confuses the words "Kaysar" (Caesar) and "Kayseriya" (Caeserea, Kayseri), and accordingly presents Heraclius as the ruler of Kayseri. Thus we can see the level of historical knowledge in the milieu of the writer.⁵³ What is important here is that Constantine is portrayed as trying to re-establish the cursed city. Moreover, it is noted that Constantine came from the Hungarians, a nation not liked very much by the Turks at this time.⁵⁴

Constantine is also presented as the founder of the Hagia Sophia, so Justinian finds no mention in the text. Then the traditions speak of the Muslim sieges of

⁵² Ol Puta tapmayanı oda yakarlardı.p.86-87

⁵³ Yerasimos *Türk Metinlerinde*, p.132

⁵⁴ *Anonim*, p.41

Constantinople. It is claimed that the city was captured no less than eight times by the Muslims and destroyed. Thus there is no significance left for Mehmed II's capture of Constantinople.

A Response to the Traditions?

At this point it is necessary to ask whether it is possible to characterize Hezarfen's narrative of Roman and Byzantine history as a response to the traditions. We can find the answer to this question in the section where Hezarfen relates the life of the city's founder Constantine. This section is the longest and most detailed part of the history. Here no mention is made of the legendary founders who appeared in the previous Ottoman texts. But even more important is Hezarfen's relation with the source he used for Constantine's life. Firstly, because the narrative of Constantine's life is detailed enough, it enables us to detect the source used for it. This is Cedrenus' *Synopsis Historion*, mentioned before.⁵⁵ Why did Hezarfen prefer to draw upon a different cycle of traditions? At which points he did make additions to the passages he cited verbatim? Did he use the chronicle in question continuously, or switch to others? Seeking to answer these questions reveals that he was indeed consciously responding to the traditions used by previous chroniclers.

Constantine in Ottoman Text

Constantine is a figure between fact and fiction in the Ottoman texts. Together with the legendary founders, Ottoman chroniclers also try to give information about

⁵⁵ His biography is unknown, see, Alexander Kazhdan, "George Kedrenos" *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* Volume:2, Oxford University Press, 1991, p.1118.

Constantine. For this reason, most of the Ottoman authors were rather confused about Constantine. For example, Kivami represents him as a Muslim.⁵⁶

The anonymous text of 1491 shows him as an idol worshipper, placing him on the same rank as the previous legendary founders: “Constantin bin Alanya was of the religion of the prophet Jesus. But then he too went astray and a column made. He had a bronze horse mounted on it, and having an image of himself sculptured, had it placed on this horse” (Konstantin bin Alanya İsa peygamber dini üzerinde idi. Sonra Kostantin dahi azdı, vardı bir mil yaptırdı. Üzerine bir bakır at kodurdu ve kendi suretin düzdürüb üzerine kodurdu.)⁵⁷

What is still more interesting is that also in the texts of the pro-imperial circles no important place is dedicated to Constantine. For example, Ibn Kemal’s description in *Tevarih-i Ali Osman* is very short and a-historical. He asserts that Constantine had taken the city from the tribe of “Vezendu” and worshipped idols in the idolhouse.⁵⁸ In the history of Lutfi Pasha Constantine is Christian but only the third founder of the city. He dies after having named the city as Constantinople and his son is again a non-historical character, “Mihran Bey.”⁵⁹ Again in Latifi’s work *Evsaf-ı İstanbul*, which can be regarded as a pro-imperial text, Constantine is first shown as a general of Alexander. But Latifi implies that this is not true by stating that it is told by some people to show him in a lesser status with regard to Yanko bin Medyan as well as to establish a relation with the name of the city.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Kivami, *Fetihname-i Sultan Mehmed*, prepared by Franz Babinger, Maarif Basımevi, 1955, p.46

⁵⁷ *Anonim* p.43

⁵⁸ Ibn Kemal, *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* p.81

⁵⁹ *Lütfi Paşa ve Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, Prepared by Kayhan Atik, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara, 2001, p.185

⁶⁰ Latifi, *Evsaf*, p.11

Another work to give information about Constantine is the universal history of Mustafa Ali. Although Mustafa Ali was a historian who used a great number of sources and who had a critical mind, he was one of the most confused historians about Constantine. The part of his work about the history of Rome and Byzantium exists in two versions. In some passages Constantine battles with Heraclius for his throne, while in others he appears as a contemporary of Christ who directly descended from Augustus. While in the first version Constantine is the founder of Hagia Sophia, in the second it is Justinian.⁶¹ Thus while on the one hand Mustafa Ali draws upon the traditions, on the other hand he shows himself as trying to be somewhat more historical.

In the seventeenth century, Constantine was placed more firmly in his historical context. While Evliya Celebi, in his long narration of Constantinople, does draw upon the traditions, he does not entirely remain loyal to them in his story of Constantine. For instance, Evliya defines Constantine as the ninth founder of the city.⁶² In fact what is interesting here is the emergence of the similarity between Hezarfen's narrative and Evliya's relation of how Constantine converted. However, some differences in details will show us that Hezarfen's source was different and he was quite aware of the fact that Yanko bin Medyan was a legendary character.⁶³

Constantine and His Conversion in Hezarfen Hüseyin's Narrative

After Hezarfen established the relation between Troy and Rome, he eventually came to tell of Constantine. In his version, Constantine, who is shown as the son of the idol worshipping king of Spain, Portugal, France and England, ascends to the throne of

⁶¹ Jan Schimidt, *Pure Waters for Thirsty Muslims, A study of Mustafa Ali's Künhül Ahbar*, Leiden, 1991 p.176

⁶² Evliya Çelebi, p. 24

⁶³ The source of Evliya is Kitab-ül Unvan of Agapiou. Evliya mentions source as a Tarih-i Yenvan . See, Yerasimos, p. 90

Portugal at the age of 23. After this, the people of Rome request help from him against the allegedly fifty-first emperor, “Maxentius,” who confiscated their properties and inflicted other harms upon them. After a formidable struggle on the Tiber River, he defeats Maxentius and enters Rome, where he becomes the “Padişah of Rum.” Indeed Constantine is the second ruler after Romulus who is called as “padişah” by Hezarfen.⁶⁴

The introductory part of the story is interesting. Firstly, Constantine is shown as an outsider to the Roman dynasty of emperors, but this is not corroborated by any Byzantine chronicle. In actual history, Constantine is not the ruler of the city of Rome but he is an emperor. The battle with Maxentius is the famous Battle of the Milvian Bridge with Maxentius. Here Hezarfen offers a fairly accurate account of the course of the battle and Constantine’s tactics. But he skips over the famous appearance of the cross before the battle.

In his version, Constantine contracts leprosy (beras) and all the doctors of the city convene for a consultation. The remedy they decide upon is that all the suckling babies in the city be collected and slaughtered. Constantine would then sit in a tub containing their blood. Upon this, Constantine orders all the babies in the city to be gathered. But when he hears the cries of their mothers, he gives up the idea and remarks: “even if I die of this illness I should not unjustly kill all these innocent babies” (ben bu marazdan helak dahi olursam ölümüm nahak yere bu kadar etfal-i bigünah kanlarına girmeyüm)⁶⁵. Thus he gives instructions for the release of the babies and the distribution of two gold coins each to their mothers. In the same night, he is told in his dream to call a certain saint called Sylvester who would heal him.

⁶⁴ *Tenkih* 191b

⁶⁵ In Cedrenus, “praestat me solum male mori quam istos infantes, praesertim incerto rei exitu”p. 475

Upon waking up in the morning, he immediately orders this doctor to be summoned. When Silvestros arrives, he says: “If you abandon your idols and confess that God is one and Christ is his prophet, conforming with His laws, I shall heal you.” (Eđer putlarını terk idüb Allah’ı bir, hazret-i İsayı hak peygamber bilüb şeriatına tasdik edersen ilaç ederib) Thus Constantine immediately converts to Christianity and orders the idols to be forbidden and destroyed. Silvestros accordingly prepares the medicine and Constantine is healed of leprosy.⁶⁶

Now let us analyze this account. To begin with, let us see where Hezarfen departed from his source, which I suspected Cedrenus’ chronicle. The part from Constantine’s contraction of leprosy to his dream is almost exactly the same. The only difference is that the doctors who advised the blood bath are indicated to be Jews in the original text(*ecce autem Iudaei quidam imperatorem accedunt*). In fact Jews hold an important place in the narrative of Cedrenus, who relates in detail the religious debates between them and Constantine and Pope Sylvester, from which the latter reportedly emerged victorious. Perhaps this situation also explains why Hezarfen dedicated so much place to the Jews. Nevertheless, he makes a change in the dream. Whereas Cedrenus indicates the persons in Constantine’s dream as Petrus and Paulus(St.Peter and St. Paul), Hezarfen gives no names; only the summons of Sylvester is common to both accounts.⁶⁷

Here looking at Sylvester and his legend more closely might provide us with important information about Cedrenus’ text. Sylvester was pope from 314 to 335, during which important events took place in the history of Christianity. Firstly, Constantine assembled the Council of Nicaesa without submitting to Sylvester’s

⁶⁶ *Tenkih*, 192a

⁶⁷ Cedrenus, *Compendium Historiarum*, p.475-476

authority (May 325). According to Samuel N.C Lieu, “the establishment of Constantinople as the new capital undermined further the importance of both the city of Rome and its bishop.”⁶⁸ Especially, the baptizing of Constantine by Eusebius, a bishop with Arian sympathies, was not something that could be accepted by the Pope. Later generations found it difficult to accept that the papacy could have played such a minor role in the reign of the first Christian Emperor, and before the end of the fifth century a romantic account of Sylvester’s life had emerged in which he was portrayed as a key figure in both the conversion of Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire.⁶⁹ Thus this tradition, which first emerges as propaganda material in the fifth century, was translated sometime later into Greek and Syriac.⁷⁰ Different versions emerged and in most of them the stories were told in different ways.

The first account about Constantine being baptized by Saint Sylvester is found in the sixth-century work of Malalas.⁷¹ Church historians before Malalas, such as Sozomen and Theodoret, had correctly reported that the emperor was baptized by Eusebius. But Malalas’ version struck roots in Byzantine thought and chronicle tradition.⁷² However, the issue of Constantine’s baptism continued to be discussed in chronicles. In the ninth-century chronicle written by Theophanes Malalas’ story is embellished still further, and Constantine is depicted not only as a Christian, but also

⁶⁸ Samuel N.C Lieu, “Constantine in Legendary Literature” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, Edited by Noel Lenski, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p.298

⁶⁹ Ibid, p.299

⁷⁰ See, Abed el-Rahman Tayyara, *The Reflection of Non-Islamic Cultures in Early Islamic Universal Histories*, Unpublished Ph.d Thesis, New York University, 2005, pp.376-383 and *From Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views a Source History*, Edited by Samuel N.C Lieu and Dominic Montserrat, Routledge, 2003, pp.97-142

⁷¹ John Malalas, *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, A Translation, Edt by E.Jeffreys, M.Effreys and R.Scott, Melbourne 1986, p. XIII.2 “after facing and having taken instruction, Constantine was baptized by Silvester, bishop of Rome, he himself and his mother Helena and all his relatives and his friends and a whole host of other Romans. And so the emperor Constantine became a Christian”

⁷² Roger Scott, “The Image of Constantine in Malalas and Theophanes” in *New Constantines, The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th- 13th Centuries*, Edited by Paul Magdalino, Variorum, 1994, p.60

as orthodox, anti-iconoclastic, and anti-Arian.⁷³ Although Cedrenus' relation is based on basically the same story, it diverges radically at some points. To begin with, most byzantine chronicles do not speak of Sylvester in detail. Moreover, there is no mention of the blood-bath in Malalas or Theophanes. None of Constantine's and Sylvester's long diatribes against the Jews after the emperor's baptism is reported. The reason for this is that Cedrenus apparently drew upon hagiographical texts on Saint Sylvester as a part of his sources. Cedrenus' criticism of Eusebius by name, after his relation of Constantine's baptism by Sylvester, also demonstrates the apologetic bent of his work.

What is important here is that Hezarfen's own text strives to portray Constantine as an orthodox Christian, in the manner of a hagiographic text. Of course it cannot be expected of Hezarfen that he would include the detailed narrative of Constantine's baptism in his work. In fact he does not mention baptism at all and instead relates it in a way resembling the conversion procedure to Islam. The words uttered by Sylvester during the baptism ceremony remind one of the Islamic confessions of the faith. Thus the story assumes the shape he would have liked. One thing is missing, however: iconoclasm. the most significant feature of it is that Sylvester demands Constantine to destroy the idols. "Idol" is indeed the central theme of Hezarfen's entire story of Constantine.

Thus Hezarfen responds to the Ottoman traditions about Constantine's conversion not by stating the historical facts, but by drawing upon a different set of traditions. What is important here is that this particular set was the most appropriate

⁷³ Ibid,p.71 the same view can be found another Byzantine Chronicle, *Symenios Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, Edited by H.G Beck, A.Kambylis, R.Heydell, Corfus Pontum Historie Byzantinae, Volumen XLIV/I, 2006, p.97

for his purposes and the points he wanted to emphasize —and let us not forget that a very Christian story was “Islamicised.”

The Foundation of Constantinople

As we have seen, in the legends of Constantinople there are three founders of Constantinople. Because of their infidelity and icon worship the city is destroyed and rebuilt every time. Of course this has no place in Hezarfen’s work. After making Constantine a Christian, he must be represented as the first founder of the city. How did Hezarfen do this?

To begin with, Hezarfen discards a big chunk from Cedrenus’ work and comes immediately to the foundation of Constantinople. This foundation story is in fact one of the most important evidences suggesting that Hezarfen used Cedrenus’ work. For it is not found in most other Byzantine chronicles. He is told in his dream to found a great city. Thus he sets out from Rome and comes to Salonica. Here he founds his city, having churches and baths built and aqueducts. But the site is wrongly chosen and in a plague outbreak two years later the great majority of the soldiers die.⁷⁴

When Constantine is crossing the Bosphorus for his campaign to Persia , he sees Chalcedon devastated by Persians and demands a city to be built there. At this point a soothsayer named Eupharates appears⁷⁵ and tells Constantine that it would be a better idea to build it at the place called “Vizantion.” Constantine crosses back the

⁷⁴ *Tenkih 193a* in Cedrenus, When he (i.e Constantine) saw that a plague was impending, he left this city(i.e Thessalonica) and went to Chalcedon in Bithynia. Finding that it had been desolated by the Persians, he began to rebuild it. Immediately eagles snatched up the stones of the workmen and hurled them in the direction of Byzantium. When this had happened many times and everyone was perplexed, one of those serving the emperor by the name Eupharates explained that it was God’s wish that a city be established there for his mother . And so he immediately crossed over and, when he had looked over the site and given it his approval, he left Eupharates with a mighty power and much money to oversee the work. Cedrenus, p.496

⁷⁵ For Eupharates see, Samuel Lieu, “From History to Legend and Legend to History, The Medieval and Byzantine transformation of Constantine’s Vitae” in *Constantine, History, Historiography and Legend*, ed by Samuel Lieu and Dominic Montserrat Routledge, 1998, pp.160-167

Bosphorus and orders his city to be built here, in 324. In the next four years palaces and castles are built and the city is called “Constantinople.” After the city is given its name, it is rebuilt on a grand scale and merchants and other people are brought from Rome.⁷⁶

At this point Hezarfen makes an interesting change in the story. He relates how another soothsayer appeared to predict that Constantine’s throne and reign would be blessed for his posterity until “ships would move over the land.” The notables interpret these words to mean that Constantine would be happy till the end of time, supposing that such a thing was impossible.⁷⁷ Here Hezarfen seems to have pointed forward to the conquest of Istanbul.

A Brilliant Response: Çemberlitaş

The story Hezarfen tells after Constantine’s foundation of the city is the tale of Çemberlitaş. This brief section includes the most detailed information in the Ottoman sources about this stone. The reason why Hezarfen included it in his work that it formed one of the most original responses to the traditions on Constantinople. The first thing done by the founders of the city in those traditions is to have an idol built and to worship it, whereby they attract the wrath of God upon themselves and the city. Constantine is among these, and this act is accepted as the most unmistakable sign of infidelity.

Hezarfen does the exact opposite, and uses this great monument in the center of the city as an evidence for Constantine’s great faith. The story begins with the visit of Constantine’s mother Helen to Jerusalem. Here she builds a church named Kameme. After this she takes the Holy Cross and the nails from the Jews and takes

⁷⁶ Bade Romadan ekabirler ve tüccarlar getürüb, mamur eyledi. Tenkih, 193a

⁷⁷ *Tenkih 193a*

these as a gift to Constantine. Constantine first deposits these presents in his treasury, but issues an order on thinking that they could come to harm in the future. In the order, he demands a cell to be made under the ground and Helen's presents to be stored there. Upon them a red obelisk is erected as a monument. This is the story of what we call Çemberlitaş according to Hezarfen.⁷⁸ Thus he replaces the idols in the traditions with a holy monument housing invaluable Christian relics associated with Christ himself. Thus he underlines Constantine's Christianity.

Nevertheless, Hezarfen makes an addition here as he had done in the case of the foundation of Constantinople. According to him, Constantine issued an edict ordering all the idols to be smashed and idolhouses to be converted to churches. Thus the basis of the traditions, the theme of the idol, is completely removed. Thus Hezarfen proves how Christian Constantine was and how clean of pagan worship the city he founded was. At this point, his relation of Constantine's life comes to an end.

The Construction of Hagia Sophia

It was unthinkable that Hagia Sophia, one of the greatest and most important monuments of Istanbul and the world, should have been skipped over in these texts. Indeed the construction of Hagia Sophia holds an important place in the anonymous texts and the first response of the official historiography was to be on this point. Indeed while Hagia Sophia was one of the most important representatives of Byzantine culture, it was also a very important temple for the Muslims.

Hezarfen's task was perhaps the easiest when it came to the construction of Hagia Sophia, because the official history had developed its answer to the traditions on this subject. The Ottomans followed the tradition of the Byzantine Patria and

⁷⁸ *Tenkih 193b*

translated it to Turkish and Persian. However, they underlined the imperial ideology that was not so clear in the Byzantine texts, and for this purpose even assumed a more pro-Christian stance than them.⁷⁹ Another important factor that directed Hezarfen to Turkish sources was that Cedrenus's chronicle, his source for Constantine's life, gave extensive information on the foundation of Hagia Sophia and indicated Constantine as its founder. For this reason, Hezarfen resorted to Turkish texts that accorded better with his agenda on this point. Although his version is not the same as that offered in these texts, it displays important parallels with them

For Hagia Sophia was the symbol of universal power, and the re-foundation of the empire under Mehmed II would be made possible by this temple of God's.⁸⁰ Perhaps one of the most important signs of this consciousness of continuity was Hezarfen's explanation of the purpose of Hagia Sophia as "Allah'ın hikmeti" (the wisdom of God)⁸¹

The founder of Hagia Sophia according to Hezarfen, as according to the previous official historiography, was Justinian. In all these, the decision is taken by means of a dream. In Hezarfen's version too Justinian decides to build a temple worthy of Christianity after a dream he sees. Necessary orders are given for its construction. Unlike the traditions and official historiography, Hezarfen does not touch upon its materials or its architect. He also offers a different account of the choice of a name for it. According to Hezarfen, when Justinian is watching the building, a man comes running and looking at it, shouts "Hagia Sophia!" hearing this, Justinian orders the church to be named accordingly.⁸²

⁷⁹ Yerasimos. *Türk Metinlerinde*, p. 124

⁸⁰ Ibid p. 124

⁸¹ *Tenkih* 199b

⁸² Ibid, 199a

However, both in the Byzantine story and the Ottoman traditions the name of Hagia Sophia is selected as the result of a common dream seen by Justinian and the architect. Probably because Hezarfen does not mention the architect, he does not mention the dream either.⁸³ However, he includes another dream sequence which seems to have been borrowed verbatim from Şemseddin. After the construction is begun, the treasury is depleted and the work stops. Having a dream under these pressing circumstances, Justinian sees somebody named Pir-i Nurani in his dream. This man tells Justinian: “Allah’a bu kadar riyazet ettin, meraklanma bu kadar mal ve hazine boşuna gitmez. Saltanatının batı tarafına git ve orada bir hazine göreceksin”

In the morning the sleepless Justinian goes to Silivri and sees Pir again. Pir shows the place of the treasure, instructs its to be accepted, and suddenly disappears. Justinian finds eighty *qantars* of gold, and thanks to it finishes Hagia Sophia.⁸⁴ This story bears resemblances on certain points with that told by Şemseddin. In the latter Pir introduces himself as Khidir. And states that his task is to protect the church. But although Silivri is mentioned in both texts, Pir does not mention for a second time in Şemsettin’s story.⁸⁵ Hezarfen chooses the most pro-imperial version to tell the story of Hagia Sophia. Thus the response given to the traditions on Constantinople is brought to its fullest stage of development.

Conclusion

In this section we have seen how Hezarfen responded to the traditions about Constantinople and how he used a Byzantine source. His most important purpose in

⁸³ Tauer “Les Versions persanes de la legende sur la construction d’Aya Sofya” *Byzantinoslavica*, XV, 1954,p8-9

⁸⁴ *Tenkîh* 199b, ,in Hoca Hüseyin’s *Beda’i ül veka’* there are seven qantars of gold. See, 223a

⁸⁵ Tauer p.8

this section was to demonstrate that in contrast to the traditions about Constantinople, the city was founded by a pious man and was a place where holy relics were kept, idols, as a symbol of sin, were destroyed, and a big temple was built through the intermediacy of holy people. While constructing such a narrative, Hezarfen purged the passages in Cedrenus' work which would be unpalatable to Muslim readers and replaced them with his own thoughts. For example Hezarfen made no mention of Church councils despite relating Constantine's life in so much detail. What we see here is that Hezarfen did not always cite his source verbatim, but where necessary resorted to Turkish sources as well to bolster his narrative.

CHAPTER IV

THE PHANARIOT CONNECTION

It will help us to understand Hezarfen's narrative better if we investigate what kind of an influence was exerted on it by Panaiotis Nicousios, who provided Hezarfen with the sources for the most detailed Roman and Byzantine history written so far, and by the Phanariot families of which he was a member. My purpose here is not to present Nicosios as a co-author, but only to demonstrate that knowledge of these families' interest in Byzantium, and of the way in which they constructed their identities and historical understanding, might provide us with a new insight into the Roman and Byzantine history he wrote.

The identity of the Phanariots

The Phanariots derive their name from district with this name where the Greek Patriarch resided. Fener district was close to both the Haliç shipyard and the imperial arsenal and shipyard as well as the Topkapı palace. Due to its convenient location, the Phanariots were able to establish right connections and acquired power.¹

Especially beginning of latter half of seventeenth century, the Phanariots assumed the former active role of Jews in Mediterranean commerce and established a monopolistic network with the Greek merchants active in Balkan and Anatolia. Especially, their monopoly over the trade of salt, grain and meat provided them with a great wealthy and political influence. In order to maintain this political influence, they made a great investment in education and before long became indispensable actors in the foreign relations of the Ottoman Empire.

¹ Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", in *Between East and West*, Vol:2, New Rochelle, p.32

As Christine Philliou has pointed out, it is very difficult to define the ethnical identity of Phanariot. They were hodgepodge of Greeks, Albanians, Rumanians and Levantines.² For example, the family of Ghikas who had come from Albania had attained political and commercial successes with the support of Köprülüs..³ But they mainly spoke Greek and whatever their ethnical origins might be they saw themselves as Greeks. Many Phanariot families claimed that they descended from Byzantines and to prove this they spent great efforts.⁴ The intellectuals in their circle constructed fake genealogies that connected them with the Byzantine dynasties.⁵ What is important here in any case is that the Phanariot tried to propagate the myth of their Byzantine ancestry. This effort demonstrates their sensitivity towards the memory of Byzantium and their desire to be associated with the Byzantine governing elite and its culture.⁶

This interest in Byzantine origins was also something visible in the Greek Orthodox Church. The Greek patriarchs assumed certain pieces of clothing that had been preserved for the emperor in Byzantium. Beside the influence exerted by the rich and powerful Phanariot families over the Greek Church, another reason for this development was that with the Ottoman conquests the patriarch's area of jurisdiction came to include all the lands over which Byzantine emperors had ruled. The

² Cyril Mango "The Phanariots and the Byzantine Tradition" in *The Struggle for Greek Independence. Essays to mark the 150th anniversary of the Greek War of Independence*, ed. by R. Clogg, London, p.41-66

³ Christine Philliou "Communities on the Verge: Unraveling the Phanariot Ascendancy in Ottoman Governance" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2009, 51, 171

⁴ Damien Janos, "Panaiotis Nicousios and Aleksander Mavrocordatos: The Rise of the Phanariots and the Office of Grand Dragoman in the Ottoman Administration in the second half of the Seventeenth Century", *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 23, 2005, p.190

⁵ Stefanos Yerasimos, "Osmanlı ve Bizans'ın yeniden icadı" *Görüş*, Eylül 2002, p.15

⁶ Panayotis A. Papachristou, *The Three Faces of the Phanariots: An Inquiry into the Role and Motivations of the Greek Nobility Under Ottoman Rule*, Unpublished M.A Thesis, Simor Fraser University, 1988, p.42

patriarchate saw itself as the heir of the ecumenic authority that the empire was believed to have exerted over all the Orthodox populations.⁷

Now let us look into the influence and reflection of these developments on the intellectual world of the Greek population in the seventeenth century. There took place in these period important developments in the Greek cultural movement known commonly as the Hellenic renaissance.

Hellenic Renaissance

The seventeenth century witnessed a bloom of the Greek population in cultural and intellectual fields in which the Phanariots played a prominent role. Firstly, important steps were taken in the educational institutions. Patriarchal Academy in Istanbul and Academies in Bucharest were improved, an important place was given to philosophy in the curricula and the secular elements were emphasized in education field.

Theophilos Korydaleas and Cyril Loukaris revived the Patriarchal Academy, which had been founded by Jeremias II in 1593, and transformed its curriculum by incorporating intellectual influences from Europe. The Reformation and Neo-Aristotelianism deeply influenced the Phanariot scholars.⁸ Thus from amongst the ranks of the Phanariots there emerged in the seventeenth century individuals who had mastered the Islamic and Ottoman culture and had a wide range of interests just like the other Ottoman intellectuals of the time.

Beyond these, important developments took place in the literacy levels of the Greek population of the Empire. A Greek printing press was established in Istanbul

⁷ I thank warmly Buket Kitapçı for this important and indispensable reference. See, John Meyendorff, "Universalist Ideologies and Historical Realities in the Orthodox Church". *To Ellenikon. Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis*, ed. J.S.Langdon, S.W.Reinert, J.S.Allen, C.P.Ioannides, Vol.1 (NY,.), pp.229-252

⁸ Damien Janos, *Panaiotis Nicousios*, p.191

as early as 1627 by Nicodemus Metaxas and Cyril Loukaris, and there were important Greek printing centers in Ancona, Venice and other European cities as well. Besides Venice and Padua, the main European centers of Greek printing and culture during this period, Leipzig, Vienna and Trieste also contained considerable Greek communities that were responsible for promoting European culture and ideals and transmitting them to the Greeks of the Levant.⁹ Moreover, even before Wallachia came to be administered by the Phanariots in 1711, already in the seventeenth century, it played an important role in the resurgence of Greek language and culture. In a recent PhD dissertation on the cultural activities in the region reveals that beginning from the early seventeenth century many works of Byzantine history were published and re-interpreted.¹⁰ Most of these re-interpreted and re-circulated texts were about Byzantine imperial ideology or belonged to the genre of mirrors of princes. The Phanariots were also aware of these activities and influenced by them.

Panaiotis: A Leading Phanariot

Nicousios Panaiotis was born in Istanbul 1603. After he received primary education from Jesuit priests Chios, he continued his studies under Meletius Syrigus in the Patriarchal Academy in Istanbul. Then he completed his education in medicine at the University of Padua in Italy to which the Phanariots families sent their sons.¹¹ By the time he completed his studies in Europe, he had added Italian, German and French to his already existent knowledge of the eastern languages. When he returned to Istanbul, he functioned as translator in the diplomatic negotiations with Austria

⁹ Ibid 191 and for a detailed study see, Nicolae Iorga, *Byzantium after Byzantium*, Translated by Laura Treptow, The Center for Romanian Studies, 2000, p. 195- 29

¹⁰ Nikolaos Panou, *How to do Kings with Words: Byzantine Imperial Ideology and the Representation of Power in Pre-Phanariot Admonitory Literature*, Unpublished Ph.d Thesis, Harvard University, 2008

¹¹ University of Padua was founded in 1222. The Venetians occupied Padua in 1405, and the Venetian Senate had promptly confirmed the autonomy and the privileges of the University. A chair of Greek was founded in 1463 and Padua became attractive center for young greek students. Runciman, p. 212

and attracted the attention of the grand vizier Köprülü Mehmet Pasha.¹² Mehmed Köprülü established the post of grand dragoman for his sake and he was appointed as chief dragoman in 1669.

Panaïotis's relation with the Köprülüs continued with Mehmed Pasha's son Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. He even acted as the private physician of Ahmed Pasha and took part in his expedition against Crete. Thus he managed to establish close friendship with the notable figures in the palace. He was especially in the close circle of Ahmed Pasha. It is even said that Ahmed Pasha "loved him as a brother and respected him as a father and hoped that Nikosious would convert to Islam."¹³

Most probably, Panaïotis came to know Hezarfen during the expedition against Crete. Both were in the retinue of Fazıl Ahmed. In his work *Tarih-i Devlet-i Rumiye*, Hezarfen makes it clear that he wrote the work on account of the expedition to Crete. Here it is necessary to dwell on an important point: has the newly developed Hellene identity and the resuscitation of Byzantine culture exerted any influence on Hezarfen's work? It does not seem possible to give a certain answer to this question, one that goes beyond the level of speculation, unless new documents are unearthed that prove the existence of a close relationship between Panaïotis and Hezarfen.

The Roman-Byzantine discontinuity and the important place dedicated to Greek philosophers in Hezarfen's work

Hezarfen finishes his Roman history with "Maxientus" He states that this emperor was a very cruel and evil man and inflicted great harm on his people. He relates how the Roman people eagerly summoned the later founder of Istanbul, Constantine, and

¹² Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton University Press, 2000p. 178

¹³ *Ibid*, p.179

made him emperor. He indicates that up to that time there had been fifty-one emperors who had ruled for a total period of 605 years. He thus makes clear that a new period had begun in history, that of the Byzantine Empire. Thus he draws a sharp line between Roman history and Byzantine history.

In fact Byzantium had first begun to be thought as distinct from Rome during the sixteenth century, and it was Chalkokondyles, the last great representative of Byzantine historical tradition, who had pioneered this development. He was the first historian to distinguish between Roman and Hellene, and to represent Byzantium as a distinct culture and civilization from the Roman Empire. In his view Byzantine Empire was a Hellene state that had continued from the fourth century to 1453. For instance, Chalkokondyles remarked that “The Romans and their bishop were divided from the Hellenes on many issues, no less than over various religious matters for a long time. They diverged from the Hellenes in other aspects, in particular since they elected an emperor of the Romans sometimes from among the Gauls and sometimes from among the Germans”.¹⁴

This conceptual framework was developed by western authors in the sixteenth century. For example, Wolf was the first western author to relate Byzantium as a distinct entity from Rome, and this approach quickly spread in Europe.¹⁵ The distinction in question must also have appealed to the Phanariots who received their education in Italy and emphasized their Byzantine origins in an increasing proportion to their richness. In fact from the end of the sixteenth century other important changes were observed in the European perception of Greek culture.

¹⁴ Laonios Chalkokondyles, *A Translation and Commentary of the Demonstrations of Histories*, prepared by Nicolaos Nicoloudis, Historical Publications, Athens, 1996, p.93

¹⁵ Aslıhan Akışık, “Halkondil Tarihi”, *Son Dönem Bizans Tarihleri ve Osmanlı Anlatımları, Notlar:16*, Bilim ve Sanat Vakfı, March 2009,

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the classical knowledge of most Europeans was shaped in terms of Roman history, literature and art. However, it was beginning from the second half of the sixteenth century that the place of classical Greek culture in the culture of Europe was fully perceived. All these developments profoundly influenced the new Greek elite who had begun to seek their roots and received the major part of their education in Europe. And this was reflected via Panaiotis in Hezarfen's distinction between Rome and Byzantium.

Between Roman history and Byzantine history, Hezarfen dedicates a chronologically misplaced part to the Greek philosophers. We must ask the reason why such a section was included at this point in a universal history. Indeed it is a significant chapter in Ottoman historiography with its listing of the short biographies of Greek philosophers and their sayings.

Here he gives information about seventeen philosophers. They are:

Askilînûs (Esculapios or Aeselepius)

Fisâgõris (Pythagoras)

Sokrat (Socrates)

Bukrât (Hippocrates)

Solon (Solon)

Eflâtûn (Platon)

Aristo (Aristotales)

Batlamyûs (Ptolemaios)

Cālinûs (Galenus)

Dimekrātis (Democritus)

Diyûcānis (Diogenes)

Enkyisānis (Anaximenes)

Efritûn (probably Orpheus)

Zitōn (perhaps malchus Sidon, or Simon Atheniensis)

Enkisāgōris (Anaksagoras)

Bāsilinûs (Belinas, also known as Apollonius)

Sāles (Thales)

Sāfertis, Saferistis (Theophostus)

Ferfōryōs (Porphyrius)

After Hezarfen mentions a few characteristics of each Greek philosopher, he gives an example to his wise sayings. After listing seventeen philosophers in this way, he does not go into more detail. What is important here is that the Greek philosophers were probably thought of as a link between Roman and Byzantine histories. Heidrun Wurm states that this section is a kind of political criticism drawing upon the sayings of Greek philosophers.¹⁶ Although I agree with this view, I also think that this section is mainly an emphasis on the essentially Hellenic character of the Byzantine Empire. Hezarfen may have wanted to point out that Byzantium, with its Hellenistic character, was an heir of Greek philosophy. This was

¹⁶ Wurm, *Historiker Hüseyin*, p. 95

also relevant for the Ottoman Empire, insofar as it was seen as a continuation of Byzantium by its leading Greek Orthodox subjects. While these had developed a sense of being Hellenic and Greek, they had also become leading Ottomans. For this reason, they regarded the Ottomans as continuators of this heritage. For instance, in a work written twenty or thirty years after Panaiotis's death, Nicholas Mavrocordatos regarded the Ottoman sultan as the master of the nations of Hellenes. Moreover, he called them the true heirs of antiquity.¹⁷

If Panaiotis, as a member of the Phanariot society, was in search of an identity in the Byzantine and Hellene past, it was only natural for him to try to alter the perception of the Ottomans about Byzantium. And what better way there was to do this than to contribute to the composition of a brand new history of Byzantium in Ottoman Turkish?

¹⁷ Karen Label, "Ancients, Moderns, Ottomans, Romans, Turks, Greeks and Hellenes: The Classical Canon and Communal Identity in Turn of the 18th Century Ottoman Empire" in *Medeniyet ve Klasik*, Klasik Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007 p. 372

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I tried to show why and how an Ottoman intellectual wrote the history of different culture and civilization. My main purpose was to demonstrate that while doing so he did not function as a mere transmitter, but made quite conscious choices when selecting his sources and deciding what to include and what to leave out, perennial problems faced by historians. Hezarfen Hüseyin turned out to be an especially apt example to illustrate these points. While writing the most comprehensive Roman and Byzantine history so far, he drew upon Byzantine as well as Ottoman sources, and in doing so he also established contact with the Phanariots, who claimed themselves to be the direct inheritors of the civilization he described. He left aside a whole historiographic corpus interwoven with legendary material, but in turn picked up another set of traditions and adapted these for his own purposes. In my researches, I found that Hezarfen may have drawn upon the twelfth century Byzantine chronicler Cedrenus as a source. In particular, I tried to show what kind of a relationship he established with Cedrenus' text when relating Constantine's life, a very important topic in his narrative, in what different ways he used the source, and how and why he drew upon different sources about certain subjects like the building of Hagia Sophia. Thus I strove to ground one of the most important arguments of this study, namely that Ottoman historians could be very conscious in the choice of their sources, and did not simply function as transmitters. I tried as best as I could to show an Ottoman historian's concerns, ideological background and the relations he established with his cultural milieu.

Another purpose of mine was to gain insight into the complex world of the seventeenth century which has been rather neglected by modern Ottoman historiography. One of the central issues of the thesis in this connection was to offer a portrait of the new type of intellectual that emerged in this century as well as his interests. Especially in the second chapter I depicted the characteristics of this type and the general intellectual trends of the period. At the same time, I stressed the importance of the Köprülü family, who patronized most of the intellectuals in this period an important condition to understand the cultural life of the latter half of the seventeenth century is to be aware of their role in this field.

Without doubt, looking closely into the writings of Hezarfen Hüseyin and other intellectuals to see what they wrote and how promises new insights into his complex world. Precisely in this context, Hezarfen's relatively short but highly significant text provides us with a wide perspective. It is also possible to encounter in this thesis many individuals who played a role of lesser or greater significance in Ottoman intellectual life in the second half of the seventeenth century: The Köprülüs, the Phanariots, Orientalists like Galland and converts like Ali Ufki Bey. They not only inform us better about Hezarfen's world, but also offer vignettes from the world of the seventeenth century. And they are not the only ones from this age who await scholarly attention.

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