

SHIFTING NARRATIVES OF UNIVERSAL HISTORIES
IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE:
FROM THE “DIVINE” TO THE “SCIENTIFIC”

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Mustafa Akay, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
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ABSTRACT

The Shifting Narratives of Universal Histories in the Ottoman Empire: From the “Divine” to the “Scientific”

This thesis attempts to pursue the changes in the Ottoman world histories by focusing on the divine narratives from the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century. In Chapter 2, the functions of the divine narratives of the Creation and the stories of the prophets in the world history books are discussed. The concept of the chronological universality is utilized to explicate the early modern methods of calculating the age of the world. Chapter 3 introduces the new Ottoman universal histories of the nineteenth century by focusing on the effects of Enlightenment thought and the conditions created by Tanzimat reforms. Lastly, Chapter 4 presents a comparative discussion on the change in themes and debates in the divine parts of the world histories from the early modern period to the late 19th century. Accordingly, the reception and impact of the three sciences; geography archaeology and geology is examined in the Chapter 4. This thesis asserts that the shifting narratives of the universal history books of the Ottoman historians from the divine to the scientific offer valuable source to the discussions of the disenchantment process of Ottoman historiography.

ÖZET

“Kutsal”dan “Bilimsel”e

Osmanlı Evrensel Tarihlerinde Değişen Anlatılar

Bu tez, Osmanlı dünya tarihlerinin ve içerdikleri kutsal tarih kısımlarının on yedinci yüzyıldan ondokuzuncu yüzyıla kadar geçirdiği değişimi ve ondokuzuncu yüzyılda aldığı hâli anlamaya çalışmaktadır. Tezin ikinci bölümü erken-modern dönem Osmanlı tarihçilerinin yazdıkları dünya tarihi kitaplarını ve bunların içerdği Hilkat ve kısasü'l-enbiyâ anlatılarının eserlerin içindeki yerini ve önemini tartışır. Burada kronolojik evrensellik kavramı kullanılmış ve dünyanın yaşı üzerine yapılan tartışmalara karşılaştırmalı bir perspektifle değinilmiştir. Tezin üçüncü bölümünde Aydınlanma düşüncesinin Osmanlı tarihçileri üzerindeki etkisi ve Tanzimat döneminin tarih yazımı ve tarihçi profiline getirdiği yenilikler tartışılmıştır. Son bölüm olan dördüncü bölümde ise erken modern dönemden ondokuzuncu yüzyıl sonuna kadar yazılmış olan Osmanlı dünya tarihlerindeki kutsal tarih kısımları karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmiştir. Bu bölümde dünya tarihi yazımını en çok etkilediği saptanan üç modern bilimin ve/veya bilimsel diskurun nasıl alımlandığı tartışılmış ve modern coğrafya, arkeoloji ve jeoloji bilimlerinin geleneksel tarih yazımındaki hangi temaları veya tartışmaları değiştirdiği veya yok ettiği saptanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu tez Osmanlı dünya tarihlerinin anlatılarındaki kutsaldan bilimsel doğru olan bu değişimin Osmanlı tarih yazımının sekülerleşmesini okumak için zengin bir malzeme sunduğunu savunmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Summary

In this thesis, I will examine the Ottoman historiography from the seventeenth century (starting with Kâtib Çelebi's exceptional work, *Takvîmü't-tevârih*), to the late nineteenth century. My two focal points are the accounts of Creation and the stories of prophets in the Ottoman world history books. To do so, I aim to analyze the Ottoman historiography through looking at these divine narratives of the world history books in a comparative perspective, within two and a half century's modernization period. In order to do so, I will put forward two interrelated questions: First, why were the divine narratives part and parcel of the Ottoman world history books? Second, how did the divine narratives continue and change from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth centuries? Considering these questions in my thesis, I will scrutinize: (1) the specific patterns of the divine historiography in the Ottoman world history books, and (2) the structural, contextual and symbolic changes in divine historiographies, from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century, in a comparative perspective. My argument is a twofold one. In the first phase of my analysis, I focus on the early modern Ottoman writers. They established a canon that legitimized the Ottoman Empire by referring to the genealogy of biblical and/or Islamic prophets, Persian mythical characters, and Greek philosophers. Secondly, I will evaluate how the late Ottoman writers abandoned the conventional approaches and sources and

imitated European historiography to relate the Ottoman Empire to the modern European world.

This study chooses an arbitrary starting point, Kâtib Çelebi's *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* to avoid using an abundance of materials. In this way, it aims to examine the development of the modernization of Ottoman historical writing. Thus, the terminology of the modern and early modern become the very problematic of this thesis. Until recently, contemporary historians have been using the term "modern" exclusively to refer to the Tanzimat period¹. However, what makes the historical productions modern in Ottoman historiography has not been questioned and even until now it has remained a matter of controversy². While the recent studies started to discuss the development and modernization of Ottoman historiography by focusing its own peculiarities, it is still a need to make further readings on the historical texts and to reveal the continuities and changes in comparative perspective.

The primary questions of the thesis are, first, about the importance of the religious Creation account and the stories of the prophets in the early modern world history books. The second question of this thesis is about the continuities and changes in the period of modernization. Both of these questions stem from a problematic: How can we interpret the divine narratives of the world history books in the period of modernization? To respond to such questions, the first step is to determine the modified and unmodified themes, structures, and

¹ Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Kadar Bizde Târihçilik." Arıkan, "Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Târihçilik."

² For some recent studies discussed the problematic in a comparative and contextual framework, see: Aksan and Goffman, *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*. Tezcan, "Politics of Early Modern Ottoman Historiography." Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography." Veyselgil, "Historical Writing In The Late Ottoman Empire: Global Encounters And Historical Experiments Of Hayrullah Efendi". MENCHINGER, *The First of the Modern Ottomans*.

concepts in the world history books within a specific time frame by embracing both the early modern and the modern samples of the genre in question.

Therefore, the former question concentrates on understanding why the Ottoman world historians started to write books beginning with the religious Creation accounts as well as the stories of the prophets.

The latter question, however, is the ultimate aim of this thesis, revealing the effects of the modernization on the divine narratives. For historians of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, the term “modernization” denotes several phenomena such as abandoning the traditional writing styles, understanding of history, and historical topics. The nineteenth-century Ottoman historians were living as a part of a heavy bureaucratic state. Many of them worked as tutors at modern European type of schools brought by Tanzimat reforms. Some of them, like Ahmed Midhat, were experiencing the new strategies to be a part of the pressing market. Moreover, they were witnessing the shift from the traditional systems of knowledge to the new ones brought about by the European Enlightenment. Therefore, they tried to adopt the emerging European sciences (e.g. archeology, geography, geology) in order to be part of the new global world. And for all these reasons, such historians were endeavoring to write divine history both as a Muslim and as a nineteenth-century progressivist. In this thesis, I focus mostly on the last phenomenon by linking it to the other ones and, I question how the historians dealt with the modern-secular discourse, the new positivist historiography and the new sciences by trying not to be contradicted with the Islamic beliefs.

1.1.2 The functions of the stories of the prophets in the early modern world history books

The stories of the prophets were essential parts of the Ottoman world history books in the early modern period. These stories have had a variety of functions in the historical texts. The scholars have been discussing the advisory function of such stories in the context of advice literature.³ Like the other historical writings of the pre-modern era, one of the most important functions of the stories of the prophets was to give lessons to the audience. These stories were suitable for advising the reader by virtue of their didactical contents. Therefore, the writers of the stories suggested that the reader (generally the statesmen) should have behaved according to the way of the prophets.

Nonetheless, I think that giving advises was not the seminal moral of the historical narrations of the prophets. After all, we can say that any historical account has advisory elements in the early modern historical works, let alone those of the prophets. Yet, the prophets stories had an irreplaceable function for world history. As the nineteenth-century historians have frequently remarked, there was no other sources about the creation of the world and how it was in the ancient time except for the religious accounts. Only through these religious stories and interpretations, one could embrace the chronological universality of history.

Accordingly, writing chronologically universal world history provided legitimacy for Ottoman Empire and so the Caliphate. Thus, one argument of this thesis is that the early modern historians used mythical themes of the stories of the prophets to describe how the Ottoman lands are legitimate through being

³ Hagen, "From Haggadic Exegesis to Myth: Popular Stories of the Prophets in Islam."

related to (or founded by) prophets. Accordingly, the absence of the geographical universality in the early modern Ottoman world history books has a meaning in the following way: related with the purposes of writing a world history, the historians were not interested in Europe, not because of sheer ignorance, but because of political needs and the problem of legitimizing the Ottoman Empire. That was done by transforming the biblical narratives into Islamic ones and putting the Ottoman Empire into the chronological context by providing a peculiar Semitic genealogy on the religious and geographical basis.

The stories of the prophets constituted progress by combining the cyclical narrations. These narratives generally “conformed to a certain pattern, according to which a people is sent a prophet, rejects and often attacks him, and ultimately suffers extinction as God’s punishment”⁴. In this pattern, the narrations provided a cyclical progress that made the world prepared for the Islamic state. This preparatory attempt was firstly related to the corporeal world: to the constitution of cities, tools, crafts, customs, and so on. For this reason, themes such as the foundation of cities, inventions of the tools, and practicing different customs occupied a great deal of space in the prophet stories and the mythical ones. Furthermore, the historians defined Islam as an antique ideology that represents a dichotomy between the believer and infidel. That is why this dichotomy was repeatedly stressed in these narratives. In these parts, historians often give some other accounts of antiquity like Persian kings, Greek philosophers or Roman Empire. However, majority of the important figures of these accounts are defined as believer or infidel, and the dates of these accounts are determined according to the prophets.

⁴ Hagen, “From Haggadic Exegesis to Myth: Popular Stories of the Prophets in Islam,” 302.

The narrations of the prophets often came to the Hijrah of Prophet Muhammed that was accepted as the beginning of the Islamic state, and the Hijrah was seen as the turning point in history. From the Hijrah to the time of the book, the genealogy of the Islamic states did not change drastically. In this way, the discipline of the world history was restricted to the geographically defined areas, and so it did not tell about the other parts of the world (e.g. European countries). This helped the Ottoman historians to pave the way for relating the Ottomans to the Prophet Muhammed and therefore legitimize the Caliphate⁵. Accordingly, calculations of the age of the world has been one of the most important elements of the universal history books in the Ottoman early modern historiography.

The early modern Ottoman historiographical tradition based on the chronological universality reached its peak with Kâtib Çelebi's *Takvîmü't-tevârîh*. In the late seventeenth century, some great exceptional works started to be produced (e.g. *Sahâifü'l-ahbar* and *Tenkîhü't-tevârîh*), but in the eighteenth century, the Ottoman historians did not produce such world histories as to their numbers and contents. Therefore, the chronology centered approach continued to dominate the Ottoman historiography until the mid nineteenth century.

In the mid nineteenth century, when the Ottoman historians encountered with the modern European universal history books through translation, they started to make adaptations by taking the Islamic beliefs and Ottoman politics into consideration. However, the basics of the modern European universal history books were adopted by Ottoman historians; throughout the nineteenth

⁵ For the further reading on the efforts of the Ottoman ulema to prove the legitimacy of the Ottoman Caliphate, see: Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought*.

century, they increasingly used the geography, archaeology, and geology in those accounts. Those three sciences had great impacts on the divine narratives of the universal history books in a way that they led to the substitution of the early modern chronological universality with a geographical account of universality. Thus, one of the conspicuous features of the early modern world history books, the calculations of the age of the world lost its traditional importance. Furthermore, the foundations of the cities by the prophets, which used to be one of the most popular themes, disappeared from the universal history books of the nineteenth century. Similarly, archaeological findings shed new light on the development of the ancient civilizations. This insight led to the disappearance of another popular early modern theme, i.e. the inventions made by the prophets. Finally, the geological theories directly affected the religious narratives of Creation (e.g. the world created in six days) and led to new discussions about the formation of the world.

1.1.3 Contribution of existent literature

The historical writings of Ottoman writers have been one of the most important sources for modern scholars. Especially, the chronicles have drawn special attention. However, they have been usually seen as a collection of information concerning the author's era. For example, Münir Aktepe transliterated, alongside many others, the world history of Şem'dânîzâde Süleyman (d. 1779), *Mür'î't-tevârîh* and published it in 1978. Nevertheless, this significant work included only the last parts of the book. For Aktepe, the last parts were the valuable ones of the work⁶. Mücteba İlgürel also claimed that these last parts that covered

⁶ Şamdanîzâde Süleyman Efendi, *Şem'dânî-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür'î't-Tevârîh-I.*, XX-XXI.

Şem‘dânîzâde’s lifetime were significant⁷. Recently, the previous part of the book was also transliterated as an MA thesis by Mustafa Öksüz, stressing that it was also valuable thanks to the information about the events of Şem‘dânîzâde’s father’s life⁸. It is undeniable that all of these studies have made significant contributions to Ottoman historiography, especially to the eighteenth-century historiography. Nevertheless, the main problem in these works is that they approach an exceptional eighteenth-century universal history book only as a chronicle, i.e. a collection of information. Gabriel Piterberg criticized in his *An Ottoman Tragedy* that the modern Ottomanists used Ottoman writers’ texts as narrations providing us with historical facts⁹. If we understand “historical fact” as something that actually happened at a specific time and place, then, according to Gabriel Piterberg, the Ottoman history books were not just a collection of such facts.

Until recently, this was the dominant approach to the Ottoman history books. Yet, along with Pieterberg’s, two major works for Ottoman studies showed the necessity of contextualizing the historical texts by placing them in a broader perspective: First, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: Historian Mustafa Ali* by Cornell Fleischer, and second, *Between Two Worlds* by Cemal Kafadar¹⁰. Recently, there has been an increasing number of studies in Ottoman historiography that are successful at constituting biographies of the

⁷ İlgürel, “Şem‘dânî-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür‘i’t-Tevârih I.”

⁸ Öksüz, “Şem‘dânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi’nin Mür‘i’t-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin (180b-345a) Tahlil ve Tenkidi Metni”, xvii.

⁹ Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*, 5.

¹⁰ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)*. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*.

intellectuals, analyzing their historical texts from a comparative perspective, and approaching the cultural milieu comprehensively¹¹.

There are several similar problems with the scholarship of the late nineteenth-century Ottoman historiography. The majority of modern scholars are interested in the history of Ahmed Cevdet as a reliable source for the real events of that period. When Christopher Neumann wrote his thesis on Ahmed Cevdet in 1996¹², Kemal Beydilli introduced the study as “the first critical work on the History of Cevdet¹³”. It is possible to say that the uniqueness of the work still continues, and that no equivalent study was written for the late nineteenth-century historiography yet. However, in recent years, Meltem Toksöz's works on Mizancı Murad's world history¹⁴ drew the attention of young researchers and new studies emerged in the late Ottoman world history books¹⁵. Using a large number of primary sources, Hakan Karateke pursued the changing periodization styles in the Ottoman world history books from the fifteenth to the late nineteenth centuries in his “the Challenge of Periodization”. He argues that the desire to adopt a tripartite periodization in the nineteenth century was related to the “new notion of universalism and universal civilization” that Ottoman intellectuals would like to be a part of.

¹¹ Apart from abovementioned classics, for more recent examples, see: Menchinger, *The First of the Modern Ottomans*. Yeşil, *Aydınlanma Çağında Bir Osmanlı Kâtibi: Ebubekir Râtib Efendi, (1570-1799)*.

¹² Neumann, *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat: Tarih-i Cevdet'in Siyasi Anlamı*.

¹³ Beydilli, “Cevdet Târîhi Hakkında İlk Ciddi Çalışma.”

¹⁴ Toksöz, “The World of Mehmed Murad: Writing Histoires Universelles in Ottoman Turkish.”

¹⁵ For some of the recent studies, see: Aydın, “Bir İran Tahayyülü: Ömer Hâlis”, 62-69. Baycar, “Modern Zamanı Yazmak: Ali Reşad”, 77-81. Bayraktar, “Arnavut Vasa Efendi'nin Tarih Anlayışı”, 55-61. Köse, “Tarih Öğretmek İçin Yazmak, Ali Reşad ve Ali Seydi'nin Tarih-i Umûmi'si”, 87-91. Erdoğan, “Vakanüvislikle Tarihçilik Arasında: Hayrullah Efendi ve Tarih-i Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmâniyye'si”, 82-86. Veyselgil, “Kutsal Tarih ve Medeniyet Kavramları Ahmed Midhat”, 70-76. Veyselgil, “Historical Writing In The Late Ottoman Empire: Global Encounters And Historical Experiments Of Hayrullah Efendi.” Yıldırım Türk, “An Ottoman Historian's Burden: Ziver History of Cyprus.”

On the other hand, Gottfried Hagen's numerous articles on Ottoman historiography have guided me throughout the writing process of this thesis. I discerned firstly that the early modern Ottoman world history books was "a canon that applied to, and expanded, the Islamic tradition"¹⁶. His approach to different conceptions of time used in Ottoman world history books encouraged me to think about universal and cyclical times¹⁷. Moreover, in his article on the Stories of the Prophets in Islam¹⁸, Hagen read the Stories of Prophets as myth. This approach drew my attention to the Ottoman historians' methods of historicizing these stories.

1.1.4 Structure of the thesis

In Chapter 1, I will discuss briefly the term general history (*târih-i umûmî*) and the reasons for the popularization of this new genre. In this part, I will clarify what features of the traditional world history books were maintained and what type of innovations were introduced with this genre to the Ottoman world history books in the nineteenth century.

For early modern Ottoman world historians, determining dates was of vital importance. The chronological universality was at the center of the narrations and so the calculations of the age of the world gained an essential place in these history books. Dating and calculating the age of the world were the primary concerns that constituted the difference between the other stories and historical ones. In Chapter 2, I will focus on five early modern world history books to discuss their methods of calculation of the age of the world. Three of

¹⁶ Hagen, "The Order of Knowledge, the Knowledge of Order: Intellectual Life," 407.

¹⁷ Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 94-95.

¹⁸ Hagen, "From Haggadic Exegesis to Myth Popular: Stories of the Prophets in Islam," 303.

these books were written in the seventeenth century; Kâtib Çelebi's (d. 1657) *Takvîmü't-tevârih*, Hezarfen Hüseyin's (d. 1691) *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* and Müneccimbaşı Ahmed's (d. 1702) *Jami al-Duwal*. However, in the eighteenth century, alongside the Turkish translation of *Jami al-Duwal*, there was one more significant book written by Şem'dânîzâde Süleyman (d.1779), *Mür'it-tevârih*. Finally, Ferâizîzâde Mehmed Said wrote two volumes of world history in the early nineteenth century that was published in 1836 namely *Târih-i Gülşen-i Maârif*.

In Chapter 3, starting with a discussion on Şânîzâde Atâullah's (d. 1826) famous introduction (*mukaddime*) in the early nineteenth century,¹⁹ I will focus on how the nineteenth-century historians were affected by the positivist historiography of the Enlightenment. Tanzimat reforms had profound effects on social life as well as on the intellectuals' approaches to history. However, I will not try to find a starting point for the modernization of Ottoman historiography, but the continuities and discontinuities of the tradition. In this sense, the discussion on the nineteenth century universal histories in this chapter will begin not with Tanzimat period, but with the earlier writings of Şânîzâde. Nevertheless, I will discuss the importance of Tanzimat as a period in which the Ottoman state and society started to modernize. The historians were undoubtedly in relation to this modernization by way of being parts of the new cultural domains (like schools or newspapers). Thus, in the second part, I will try to shed light on the conditions and needs brought by the Tanzimat period that drive historians to write universal history books. In the third part of Chapter 3, as a conspicuous feature of nineteenth-century universal history books, I will

¹⁹ Şânîzâde, (2008). *Şânîzâde Târihi*, 14-24. Şânîzâde, (1867). *Şânîzâde Târihi*, 6-16.

examine the concepts of civilization and progress. I will question the changes in the instructive role of the universal history books.

In this regard, I will try to reveal the new approaches of historiography through the universal history books of the nineteenth century written by three popular historians. The first is Ahmed Midhat Efendi (d. 1912) who is known for his numerous novels. Apart from his short textbooks on world history, he wrote three great world history books in different styles, namely *Kâinat*, *Târih-i Umûmî*, and *Mufasssal Târih-i Kurun-u Cedide*. The second is Mizancı Mehmed Murad (d. 1917) who is best known for his newspaper, *Mizan*. He wrote a voluminous world history, called *Târih-i Umûmî*. The last one who wrote an voluminous world history in the late nineteenth century is Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa (d. 1891) who is also known for his poetry. Contrary to others, he entitled his world history in a traditional way, *Miratü'l-iber* (The Mirror of Examples).

In chapter 4, I will concentrate on changes in the themes in the divine parts of the universal histories throughout the nineteenth century. The question is how the modern European sciences were adopted by the historians, and hence, how these sciences affected the religious and mythical themes in historiography.

The religious Creation accounts and the stories of the prophets have maintained their presence in world history books until the twentieth century²⁰. However, the meanings and functions of these parts have completely changed. On the other hand, with the evolutionary theories of geologists about the formation of the world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the belief in the Creation of the universe in six days started to be questioned. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman intellectuals started to write on, and discuss

²⁰ Toprak, "Darwinizmden Ateizme: Türkiye'de Tarih Eğitiminin Evrimi."

this particular issue. Among them, the first who addresses the formation of the world was Ahmed Vefik. In his *Hikmet-i Târih*, he summarized the debate among European scholars and brought it to the attention of Ottoman scholars and readers. In this way, the problem of creation became one of the most mentioned issues in the introductions of late nineteenth-century Ottoman world history books.

In Chapter 4, I will analyze three dominant narratives of the prophets in early modern world history books. I will respectively pursue their changes in the late nineteenth-century universal history books under the influence of geography, archaeology, and geology. In the nineteenth-century universal history books, the geographical approach to the world caused drastic shifts within the prophet stories and thereby one of the most prevalent themes of the traditional narrations concerning the constitution of cities by the prophets and mythical characters disappeared. Under the influence of archaeological findings, the narratives of another widespread theme, the prophets' inventions of tools, was also abandoned by the late nineteenth century historians. Lastly, thanks to geology, historians began to also question the age of the world.

1.1.5 Tanzimat and historiography

Tanzimat started a new period for Ottoman state and society. In this era, the Ottomans continued the reforms which had already begun in the late eighteenth century under the title of New Order (*Nizam-ı Cedid*). The New Order was firstly Selim III's project and it pertained especially to military and fiscal reforms²¹. However, at that time, the governmentality of the Ottoman state was

²¹ Fatih Yeşil, *Aydınlanma Çağında Bir Osmanlı Katibi: Ebubekir Ratib Efendi*.

also undergoing some changes. For this purpose, starting from the early eighteenth century, Ottomans appointed ambassadors to European capitals for the first time and expected from them to write their observations about Europe. This development led to a new genre, the *sefaretname*, and the first person to write one in 1721 was Yirmi Sekiz Mehmed Çelebi. According to Tanpınar, these ambassadors gave special importance to the modernization of not only the apparatuses but also of the mentality of the state²². However, with the edict of Gülhane, announced by the Foreign Minister Mustafa Reşid Paşa in 1839, the reforms were both accelerated and expanded. Tanzimat reforms were effective and critical that²³ the administrative, financial, and military structures of the state were totally restructured.²⁴ These structural changes had a huge impact on the life of ordinary people and heavily influenced the judicial system, economics, and so on.

On the other hand, in this period we can witness the transformative innovations in the literary techniques caused especially by the printing house and the newspaper. The print house was at first founded by İbrahim Müteferrika in 1730. Although it had a great influence on the literates, it did not survive for a long time. It showed that the market and cultural situation of the eighteenth century Ottoman Empire was not ready for a new technology like the printing

²² Tanpınar, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Târîhi*, 118-125. Seyitdanlıoğlu, “Sadık rıfat paşa ve avrupa ahvaline dair risalesi”. In this regard, Tanpınar underlines the importance of Sadık Rifat Pasha and Mustafa Sâmî Efendi. According to whom, these two ambassadors signified the shift in the mentality. The former one centralized the individual in the life of the community by speaking of human rights (*hukuk-u insâniye*). Tanpınar, *XIX. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Târîhi*, 120. The later on the other hand, differed from his predeseccors by “writing his book for the people and for the benefit of the country”. Ibid., 123.

²³ İnalçık, “Tanzimat Nedir?.” Here İnalçık, states that “whole Ottoman administrative, financial and military structure rested on the *çift-hane* system”, İnalçık, “Çift-hane system,” 65. And he added that “Çift-hane” system had been as important as lonca until Tanzimat. İnalçık, *Osmanlı ve Modern Türkiye*, 88.

²⁴ İnalçık, “Tanzimat Nedir?.” İnalçık, “Çift-hane Sistemi.”

press.²⁵ However, in the nineteenth century, printing houses spread throughout the Ottoman lands. The second innovation in the literary style of writing happened through newspapers. It was a new disciplinary technique for collecting, recording, and spreading information relatively widely and fast. Thus, it played a vitally important role in constituting a public sphere.

In this period of reforms, the situation of the historian also changed. First, in order to follow the European authors, most intellectuals started to learn French. Ahmed Vefik was one of the earliest cases of an Ottoman intellectual receiving education in France. He gave lectures on the philosophy of history at Dârü'l-fünûn University. His course notes were published under the name of *Hikmet-i Târih* (Philosophy of History) as one of the earliest books in Turkish on the history of modern thought in Europe. Furthermore, the new historians studied at the western type of schools in this period. They were generally lecturers at these schools and the need for textbooks in Turkish was the first motive of writing history books.

In the late nineteenth century Ottoman historians, the effect of the nationalist historiography can clearly be seen. Here, the origins of the races started to be a topic in universal history books. However, the more important effect of the European Enlightenment was the concept of history put forth by it. Early modern narrations of history as a battlefield between the believer and the infidel totally disappeared in the world history books. The new ideology put another dichotomy at the center of the story: the civilized and uncivilized. The civilized/uncivilized dichotomy was centered around the idea of progress.

²⁵ Sabev, "The First Ottoman Turkish Printing Enterprise: Success or Failure?."

“Progress” as an ultimate aim was replaced with the early modern Ottoman historian’s concept of “order” (*nizam-ı âlem*)²⁶.

1.2 General history (*Târih-i umûmî*) as a new genre

Along with other history books, the number of world histories written in Ottoman Turkish increased in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, these works differed from the previous world history books in terms of their sources, structures, themes, focuses, and functions. The new generation of historians tried to combine classical Ottoman and Islamic history books with the European ones and also tried to incorporate the European historiographic styles into Ottoman writings. Since the late-nineteenth century Ottoman world historians were influenced by the birth of modern historiography as a social science, these new works were containing new narrative styles by centralizing the geography, archaeology, and geology. While this, they did not entirely abandon the Creation narrative and the prophet stories.²⁷ A considerable number of historians tried to use a different structure to harmonize scientific and sacred discourses. For that reason, it cannot be possible to say that the history books determined a standardized approach to the sacred parts, but rather different methods were tried to combine modern historiography with the classical divine stories.

One of the common statements presented in the beginnings of the world history books, specifying why the historians use the sacred sources: “There is no other source about the creation and the primeval days that follow the

²⁶ Karateke and Reinkowski, *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*. Hagen, “The Order of Knowledge, the Knowledge of Order: Intellectual Life.”

²⁷ They mostly abandoned the divine narrations and started to give the scientific theories in 1930s. Toprak, “Darwinizmden Ateizme.”

creation.”²⁸. Here, in contrast with the early modern era’s history books, the sacred sources became those that were used only for the lack of historical ones. In this sense, the annotations on the biblical accounts that discuss the different transmissions (*riwayah*) about the issue were also nearly disappeared. The accounts became shorter and the historians did not discuss them in detail. However, referring to the foundational works of early Muslim scholars like Al-Tabari or Ibn Al-Athir, the early modern Ottoman world historians used to discuss the religious (biblical and Quranic) dogmas and narratives concerning creation. In this sense, most of the early modern Ottoman historians applied different mytho-historical sources like Firdawsî’s *Shahnameh* and the Islamic ones to grasp knowledge about the primeval days of the Creation.

In the nineteenth century, the chronological and geographical certainty disappeared from the Creation narrations as well as the stories of the prophets. It was one of the most important characteristics of the early modern world history books to historicize the mythical narrations by founding chronological universality. The basic difference of historical texts regarding the narrations of the prophets was obsessively giving and discussing the dates of the events. Neither *hadith* nor *tafsir* nor the Stories of the Prophets books recognized a significant centrality for the dates of the prophets stories. The *Qur’an* itself speaks about the prophets without specifying any date or place but in a disordered way. The preachers also have used such stories for advisory purposes

²⁸ “Hilkat-i alem ve hilkati müteakip olan ezmine-i mütekaddime hakkında malumat almak için kütüb-ü mukaddeseden başka me haz yoktur [...] Tevrat-ı Şerif târihe müteallik hayli malumat vermiş olub malumât-ı mezkure kütüb-i saire tarafından dahi zikr ve tafsil olunmuştur.” Mehmed Murad, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 13. “Târih lisanından vereceğimiz malumatı dahi kütüb-ü semaviyenin rivayatına bina etmek bizim için zaruridir. Zira târihin doğrudan doğruya kendi ıtılai ibtidâ-yı hilkate kadar veremez.” Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 59. “Târih devrine de ğin ge çen vakitler vukuatına kütüb-i mukaddeseden başka me’haz olmadığından kütüb-i mukaddese müstesna olmak üzere müte’ahhiren fenn-i târihin zuhûrundan beri ge çen ezmine-i tufuliyet ve sabavet ve rüculiyet kısımlarına taksim eylediler.” Said Paşa, *Miratü’l-İber*, 5.

in their sermons.²⁹ Nevertheless, in order to have a chronologically universal book of history, it was vitally important for the historians to date the events from the beginning of creation to their current time. Moreover, in these books, the spatial narrations of the stories of the prophets were also conspicuously more tangible than the other genres. Especially the accounts of founding cities by prophets were one of the outstanding themes.

Furthermore, one of the other dominant themes of the tales of the prophets in the early modern era, the tools, arts and technologies invented by the prophets ceased to be narrated in the late nineteenth century books. All these themes have taken an important place in the works of early modern historians. However, the historians of the nineteenth century centralized the story of progress and started to narrate the progress of humanity from the state of savagery to civilization.

These temporal and spatial precision primarily has a function here to historicize the myth. It was an attempt to land the narrations taking place in extraterrestrial and extratemporal space. The narrations of the prophets' foundation of the cities and their artistic or technological innovations enabled not only the spatial and material conception of the myth, but also bounded the prophets to Ottomans and help to improve the legitimacy of the Ottoman state. The early modern historians applied the earlier Islamic narrations, and if necessary, changed them to establish a genealogy from the Muslim prophets to Ottoman Empire. In this sense, for example, it could be possible to claim that the founder of Constantinople was the Prophet Solomon³⁰.

²⁹ Hagen, "From Haggadic Exegesis to Myth: Popular Stories of the Prophets in Islam," 305.

³⁰ See: Chapter 4.1.

In the late nineteenth-century world history books abandoned to tell the accounts on the founding of the cities and inventions. The importance given to the chronological accuracy started to decline, and the dates of the events taken from Torah started to be questioned. The basic motive for this kind of new approach was coming from the modern theories and discourses of the sciences. The modern geography which has started to overtake the chronology for explaining the idea of universal revealed that the traditional narrations of the cities were unreliable. The archaeology showed that the people in the ancient times, lived in a “savagery”, and the people developed the civilization and progress, throughout the history. Therefore, the inventions also were taken from the prophets and attributed to the history of civilization itself. Lastly, the geology which bred some most debated topics of the nineteenth century like the formation and the age of the world caused to lose the historians’ trust in the chronological accuracy of the creation and the stories of the prophets.

CHAPTER 2

MYTH AND THE AGE OF THE WORLD

IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD HISTORY BOOKS

2.1 The stories of prophets between myth and history

The primary aims of the early modern Ottoman history books was to specify the origin of human beings and, through a linear account of time, reaching to the time of author. In other words, for the universal history books, establishing a narrative of beginning and determining the dates of the subsequent events had been two components of writing. For the first one, the historians have had no other sources than the divine narratives and mythical stories, and these stories gained importance in historiography. On the other hand, determining the dates of the events had been significant for historians to present sequential narratives that embraced a chronological universality. An explanation under the title of a book specifying that it has covered history from Adam to the time of writing had been the determinant factor of the universality of a book.³¹ In this regard, the second objective of the early modern historians was to determine the dates of the events and to synchronize different mythical stories and characters in a unified narrative. For these purposes, historians generally found no way but to define time (*zaman*). They attempted to explain the calendar formats of different nations, and in the introduction parts, they elaborate the usage of calendars.³²

On the other hand, the early modern Ottoman historians knew that the Chinese, Persian, Coptic, Turkic, Alexandrian, Israelite, Muslim³³ had different

³¹ Van Kley, "Europe's" Discovery" of China and the Writing of World History," 358.

³² Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 3b-7a.

³³ *Takvîmü't-tevârih*, in the introduction (muqaddimah), introduced different calendars and calculations.

calendars and all of them took different events as the beginning point of history (*mebde'-i târih*). Whether they were solar or lunar, these calendars had different methods of calculation about the age of the world and man. For instance, according to *Takvîmü 't-tevârih*, Turkic calendars argue that the world was more than three million years old, but for the Biblical sources, it could not be more than seven thousand years old.

In respect, Ottoman world history books of the early modern period, following the early and medieval Islamic history books, continued to give the pre-Islamic narrations based primarily on two sources: Biblical narratives and Persian legends. But as distinct from early Islamic sources, they have mostly left out the narrations of the pre-Islamic Arabs (Yemenites)³⁴. Thus, the Iranian mythological history gained a prominent place in the Ottoman world history books. The Persian mythical stories have generally been introduced together with the accounts of the prophet stories through synchronizing between the Iranian characters and the prophets. Although, the Ottoman historians referred mostly to the canonical books of the early Islamic historiography, determining the dates of certain events has always been a matter of controversy, especially when historians attempted to make a parallel between the Persian and the biblical characters.

According to Paul Ricoeur, “myth is a narrative of origins, taking place in a primordial time, a time other than that of everyday reality; history is a narrative of recent events, extending progressively to include events that are further in the past but that are, nonetheless, situated in human time”³⁵. From this perspective, the sections concerning creation and the stories of the prophets can

³⁴ Tayyara, “Origin Narratives and the Making of Dynastic History in Al-Dīnawarī’s Akhbār,” 58-59.

³⁵ Ricoeur, “Myth and History,” 6371.

be regarded as a mixture of myth and history. They were mythical because they were responding to the primordial question of origins but, at the same time, there were historical as well since they were being “situated in human time”. In this respect, the strategies of determining dates of the events and the age of the world have been of crucial importance for historians since they wanted to place the tales of the prophets in human time.

However, in the books of the Stories of the Prophets, the dates and epoch synchronization generally does not appear. In the classical examples of this genre like Al-Thalebi’s *Ara’is Al-Majalis fi Qisas Al-Anbiya*³⁶, Kısai’s *Qisaş al-anbiyā*³⁷, or Rabghuzi’s *Qisaş al-anbiyā*³⁸, the dates of the events are not crucial to the narrative. In this sense, determining the dates of the events and age of the world are the primary differences between the divine narrations of the world histories and the books of the Stories of the Prophets. That’s why, even despite the similarities, the latter genre has been much closer to the myth than the prophets stories of the world history books.

Taking all these considerations into account, I think that the calculations of the age of the world have constituted a basis for universal history books in the early modern era. Furthermore, it was the most fiercely debated issue in the introduction and the prophets stories of early modern Ottoman world history books. In this chapter, I will scrutinize methods that Ottoman historians used to determine the age of the world. These were the primary methods of historians both to embrace the chronological universality and to tackle with the mythical narrations by historicizing and secularizing them. I will first start with one of the

³⁶ Al-Thalabi, *Ara’is Al-Majalis Fi Qisas Al-Anbiya*’.

³⁷ Al-Kisā’ī, *Tales of the Prophets*.

³⁸ Rabghuzī, *Qisaş al-anbiyā*’.

most well-known universal history books of the seventeenth century, *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* (c. 1648) of Kâtib Çelebi to *Gülşen-i Maârif* (p. 1836), written by Ferâizîzâde Mehmed Sa'id in the early nineteenth century.

2.2 The world history books of the early modern Ottoman writers

2.2.1 Takvîmü't-tevârîh

Kâtib Çelebi (d. 1657/ A. H. 1067) was a celebrated bibliographer, geographer, and historian of the seventeenth century. In his youth, he entered the Istanbul bureaucracy as an apprentice and served different positions in different offices of the state. However, his numerous books including his bibliographical encyclopedia *Kashf al-zunûn 'an asâmi'l-kutub wa'l-funûn* brought him fame. In 1648, during his three years of retirement, he prepared *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* that served as an index to his Arabic universal history, *Fezleketü't-tevârîh* (1642).³⁹

The articles of *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* that embraced the events from “Fall of Adam” to 1648 (1058 A. H.) have been written in Persian, but the introduction of the book and the annotations on the articles were generally in Ottoman Turkish. As it is understandable from the title, *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* (*Tables of Histories*) structured as calendars and tables, and thereby centralized the importance of the dates of the events. It has been one of the most well-received world history books among the Ottoman historians. Firstly *Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi* (d. 1732/ AH 1145), the shaikh of Zawiyah of Emir Bukhari, and then Ibrahim Müteferrika (d. 1747/ 1160 AH) wrote addendums (*zeyl*) to this book which

³⁹ Gökyay, “Katib Çelebi.”

include the historical events until 1734 (1146 H).⁴⁰ With the second addendum, Ibrahim Efendi published the book in his printing house which was the first printing house run by a Muslim in an Islamic country. Moreover, besides the book formed the base of *Mür'î't-tevârih* of Şem'dânîzâde, in the nineteenth century, the last attempt of addendum was made by Ali Suavi and published in Paris in 1874-75 (1291 AH).⁴¹

Even though many scholars stressed that *Takvîmü't-tevârih* was an index of *Fezleketü't-tevârih*, the book itself has been one of the most important attempts in Ottoman historiography to establish a unified chronology of events⁴². Apparently, the purpose of the book was to put all the events from the creation to the day of the book composition in chronological order.

The book was constituted by tables. Each table cell stands for certain event date⁴³. "Fall of Adam" is the first year of history and the table ends with 6216th lunar year of the Creation. Like the other early modern Ottoman history books, the book is divided into two main parts, before and after Hijrah of the Prophet Muhammed.

Apart from the table I described above, the book contains two other charts; the first one showed the times between the beginnings of different calendars⁴⁴ that were produced by the author himself. The second chart showed the years between the important events which he used for the periodization of

⁴⁰ Şem'dânîzâde, (1976). *Mür'î't-Tevârih* (Vol. I), XXI.

⁴¹ Babinger, Franz, *Osmanlı Târih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, 216-217. Yurtoğlu, *Kâtip Çelebi*, 94-95. Ali Suavi, (1874). *Takvîmü't-tevârih*.

⁴² Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 94.

⁴³ "Takvim-i mezbur bir kitabe ve nice elvah ve zinabe üzeredir" Katip Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 1b.

⁴⁴ "min ba'd tevârih-i mezburenin biri birine nisbet mabeynlerinde geçen müddeti tayin için bir cedvel vaz' olunub iki târihin miltikasında mestur olan aded geçen vakte işaret kılındı." Katip Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 7a. Appendix, fig. 1.

the narrations before the Hijrah⁴⁵. The second one was the extended version of Abu'l-Fidâ İsmail's famous chart in *Kitab-ı Muhtasar fî Ahbari'l-Beşer*⁴⁶ that had been previously used by Hoca Sadeddin in the translation of the *Mir'âtü'l-edvâr* of Muslihuddin Lârî (d. 1572).⁴⁷ Kâtib Çelebi noted that the right-hand side chart had been made by Melikü'l-Müeyyed and the left-hand side chart is made by himself.⁴⁸

On the other hand, Kâtib Çelebi used the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Torah) for dating the events, arguing that the times difference between the fall of Adam and Muhammad's Hijrah was 6216 lunar years. According to his calculation, Jesus was born in 5584th⁴⁹ lunar year⁵⁰. At this point, he gave the various Bibles' accounts, namely Samaritan, Christian, Jew, and Hebrew, but stressing that the Greek version was the closest to the truth and

⁴⁵ "Cedvel-i ezmine-i gozeşte der-miyan-ı her do vaka" Appendix, fig. 2.

⁴⁶ The world history book of the medieval era covered the period between the creation to 1329 (729 AH).

⁴⁷ "Beher hal nakd-i akvâl ve tayin-i aded-i sâl lazıme-i himmet-i ricâl olmağla e'Allem-i handân ekrâd-ı Eyyûbiye Melikü'l-Müeyyed Muhtasar fî Ahbârü'l-beşer nâm târih-i müteberinde tatbik-i nesh-i Tevrat ve telfik-i rivâyâtda tetkik-i enikden sonra tahrîr-i mesâil ve tenkîh-i delâil idüb ba'de'lletiyen ve'letî Hebût'tan Hicret'e gelince geçen müddet-i muharrere ber muktezâ-yı Tevrat-ı Yunaniye müeddâ-yı delâil-i harekât-ı semâviyye altı bin iki yüz on altı sene olmak üzere vaz'-ı cedvel ve kat'-ı peyvend-i hilâf ve cedel eylemişdir. Ve müddet-i mezkûrede vaki' olan ağreb hâlât ve eşbeh zuhârat-ı evkâtını ve her birinin âhire ve zamân-ı Hicret'e nisbet ile mâbeynlerinde geçen aded-i sâl ve gâyetini bir dâire ve bir cedvelde gösterüb hattâ Hâce Efendi dahi Lari tercümesinde îrâd eylemişdir. Sonra gelen kibâr-ı müverrihîn anları âsârında derc ve nakd-ı tetkik ve tahkiki anın ceyb ve hemmiyatından harc idegelmekle bu takvîmde dahi ol cedvel destûr-u amel kılınub kelâmu'l-mülûk mülûkü'l-keâm fehvâsınca sâir havâdis beyâmı onun üzerine binâ ve câbecâ ana mânend nice cedveller ihtirâ' ve ibda' olunmuşdur şürûhu ile mahallerinde müşâhede olunur inşallâhu teâlâ." Katip Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 2a-2b.

⁴⁸ Abî al-Fidâ', (1870). *Târîh-i Abî Al-Fidâ*, 6. Appendix, fig. 3.

⁴⁹ The calculation of Kâtib Çelebi have become the most accepted versions until the early twentieth century in Ottoman universal history books. *Sahâifü'l-ahbar*, *Mür'i't-tevârih*, Ahmed Vefik, *Hikmet-i Târîh*, Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber*.

⁵⁰ "Bu levhada ibtidâ-i alemden zaman-ı hicrete müntehi olunca altı bin iki yüz on altı sene vakayi'ini beyan için birkaç sahife ve nice cedvel vardır. Vakitler tayininden ekserinde ihtilaf olunmuşdur. Ala külli hal takribden hali değildir" Katip Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 7b. Interestingly Şem'dânîzâde removed these sentences in his *Mürit-tevârih*, Şem'dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür'i't-tevârih*, 95.

could be acceptable for use.⁵¹ Here, in order to strengthen his argument, Kâtib Çelebi suggested that *Almagest*⁵² also agreed with the Greek version⁵³.

Although the tables and charts of chronology were used by historians before *Takvîmü't-tevârih*, the book represented the peak point of the chronological interest in Ottoman historiography. It reflected the chronological interest of the age, which at the end of the previous century took the form of an imperial project, *Tomar-ı Humayun*,⁵⁴ produced by the chroniclers (*şehnâmenüvis*), and completed by Lokman b. Hüseyin (d. ca. 1601).⁵⁵

2.2.2 Tenkîhü't-tevârih

Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi (d. 1691) was a polymath who lived in the seventeenth century. He served as tutor of history to Mehmed IV (r. 1648- 1687) and then entered the patronage of Grand vizier Köprülüzâde Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (d. 1676). He also established good relationships with European orientalisks and ambassadors in Istanbul.⁵⁶ He has been generally known for his interest in Greek and Latin sources, which he used in his well-known universal history, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*.⁵⁷

⁵¹ "Sene-i tufan nasari katında bir iki yüz kırk ikinci sene ve Tevrat-ı Samiriye'de bin üç yüz yedinci sene ve Tevrat-ı İbraniye'de bin beş yüz altmış beşinci sene ve Yehudi katında racih olan bin altıyüz ellinci senedir. Lakin bu cümlemin fesadı mukarrer ve Tevrat-ı Yunaniye tayini sevaba akreb ve muharrer olduğunu mecestide istihrac olunan iki bin iki yüz kırk seneye teyid eder." Katip Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 8a.

⁵² Mecesti refers to "ptolemy's work on astronomy, the *Almagest*". Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 3rd ed., s.v. "مجسطی."

⁵³ Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 8a.

⁵⁴ Tezcan, "The Politics of Early Modern Ottoman Historiography," 173.

⁵⁵ Similarly, in Europe, there was almost fifty different schemes on the universal chronology starting from the mid-sixteenth century, until the mid-seventeenth century. One of the most important works has been done to determine certain dates of the age of the world in Europe by Archbishop James Usher (d. 1656). Usher calculated 4004 solar years in between the creation and the birth of Jesus that has been accepted by the majority of universal history books written in Europe until the nineteenth century. Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, 177.

⁵⁶ İlgürel, "Hüseyin Efendi, Hezarfen," 544-546.

⁵⁷ Bekar, "Hezarfen Hüseyin'in Evrensel Târihinde Yeni Bir Bizans ve Konstantinopolis Algısı," 21.

Tenkîhü't-tevârih was different from all other world history books by its use of a different system of categorization according to which events were a thematically, not chronologically, classified.⁵⁸ In this sense, the book had a highly distinct structure than the traditional Islamic and Ottoman world history books, both in terms of its content and its chronology.⁵⁹

The other difference between this book and the previous world history books was that the book did not give any proper account of the prophets but only mentioned their names as a part of the Persian mythical characters. Thus, the book did not claim to be narrating the events since the beginnings of Creation. In this regard, it was the only exception among the early modern world history books that did not begin from the Creation or the fall of Adam.

Considering all these features of the book together, this approach could be the result of a search for a new historiography. In this sense, it is possible to say that *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* was one of the first attempts to depart from the tradition which embraces the chronological universality and approaches to the geographical universality.⁶⁰

On the other hand, instead of the stories of the prophets, Hezarfen gave the Iranian legends as the earliest accounts of world history and accepted the Persian dynasty of the Pishdadian as the first state (*mülk*) of the world. In the narrations of the Pishdadians, the dates were not given, but the ages of the kings

⁵⁸ İlgürel, "Hüseyin Efendi, Hezarfen," 545.

⁵⁹ The book covers the following topics, respectively: 1. the Persian dynasties and ptolemies: Pishdadian, Kianian, Eshkanian, Sasanian, and the Ptolemies. 2. The birth of Islam, Prophet Muhammad, his holy wars and some characteristics of the sharia. 3. The rightly guided caliphs and the story of Imam Huseyin. 4. The history books of fifty-two Islamic states. 5. The history of Ottomans. 6. The Greek Empire and the city of Rome. 7. The Greek philosophers. 8. The Eastern Roman Empire. 9. China, India, Sumatra, Java and America. 10. The conclusion about the geographical information. 11. On the epithets of the sultans. Hezarfen, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*, 1b-3a.

⁶⁰ *Jami al-Duwal* (or *Sahaifü'l-ahbar*) of Müneccimbaşı that was written in the same decade with *Tenkîh*, has reflected the similar thematic approach, although it embraced the whole chronology starting from the creation and did not exceed his narrations to the New World.

were stressed. Even though Hezarfen referred to the earlier Muslim scholars such as Al-Ghazali (d.1111/505 AH) and Al-Baydawi (d. 1286/685 AH)⁶¹, his main source regarding the biographies or the reigns of the kings was Firdawsi's *Shahnameh*, from which he quoted some verses.⁶²

On the other hand, for the period before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* narrated firstly the Persian mythical and historical dynasties and the Ptolemies, and then gave the accounts of the Muslim dynasties including the Ottomans. After the Ottoman Empire, the narrations continued with other accounts such as the history books of the Roman Empire, China, India, and the Americas. In this way, the purpose of the book shifted from a traditional universal chronology (beginning from Creation to the Ottoman Empire) to a thematic one but reviewed the history of the Ottoman Empire in between the other accounts.

2.2.3 Sahaifü'l-ahbar

Müneccimbaşı Ahmed (d.1702) was a chief astronomer during the last twenty years of Mehmed IV and wrote numerous books including one of the greatest world history books of the early modern period, *Jami al-Duwal*. The book was written in Arabic and translated into Turkish by a group of translators supervised by the poet Ahmed Nedim in the early eighteenth century. The Turkish version of the book was published in 1868-69 (1285 AH) in Istanbul. Interestingly,

⁶¹ "Bazılar demişler ki Keyümers Şah esbat-ı Mehlail'dir yani Mehlail'in oğlu oğludur ama Haccü'l-İslam İmam Muhammed Gazali rahmetullah-i aleyh Kitab-ı Nasihatü'l-mülük'unda Şit Aleyhisselam'ın karındaşıdır deyü buyurmuşlar Kadı Beyzavi Kitab-ı Nizamü't-tevârihi'nde Hazret-i Nuh Nebî evlâdındandır deyü buyurmuşlar mesela Keyümers Şah bin Sam bin Nuh'dur demiştir" Hezarfen, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*, 5.

⁶² "Bazı tevârihlerde müddet-i ömürleri bin yıl, müddet-i saltanatı beş yüz altmış yedi yıldır derler ama şahnamede otuz yıldır saltanatı. Beyt: *Begîti derûn si sal şah bûd / Behûbi çu horşid çon mâh bud.*" Hezarfen, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*, 5-6.

while the Arabic version of the book was known as *Jami al-Duwal*, the Turkish version was known as *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar*.⁶³

In the introduction of *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar*⁶⁴, the concepts of time and history were explained in detail. In this part, day, month, year and the similar terms were described, and the calendars were introduced.⁶⁵ Afterward, Müneccimbaşı firstly defined the lexical definitions of the term “history” and introduces some famous history books. Then he defined the science of history, discussed the scope and purpose of historiography, and talked about the moral requirements for historians.⁶⁶

The general structure of *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar* was not chronological, but all parts of the book were written chronologically. Starting from the creation and the prophets, the book firstly narrated Islamic history until the death of the Prophet Muhammad and then shifted chronologically to Persian history. Systematically, the book continued with the accounts of the Yemenites, Greeks, some of the contemporary European countries, Egyptian, Israelites, Assyrian, Indian, Chinese, Turkic kings and at the end came back to the Islamic dynasties that ruled after the Prophet Muhammad until the Great Seljuk Empire (Xth century).

In the second volume, Müneccimbaşı describes the history of the Anatolian Beyliks and Ottoman Empire. The book ends with a detailed account of Mehmed IV's reign⁶⁷. Even though the book has a systematical structure, if

⁶³ Ağırakça, “Müneccimbaşı Ahmed Dede,” 4-5.

⁶⁴ In this study, I used the Turkish printed edition. Müneccimbaşı, (1868-69). *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar*.

⁶⁵ Müneccimbaşı, *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar*, 16-18.

⁶⁶ “Unvan: Bir mukaddime ve bir maksadı müştemildir; Mukaddime: Zamanın hakikati ve meşhur olan kısımları beyanındadır. Maksad: iki satırı müştemildir. Satr-ı evvel: Lugatte ve ıstılahta lafz-ı târihin manasını ve meşhur târihleri beyan eder. İkinci satır: İlm-i târihin tarifi ve mevzuu ve gayeti ve müverrihin adab ve şeraiti ve müverrihe lazım olan umuru beyan eder.” Müneccimbaşı, *Sahaiñü 'l-ahbar*, 7.

⁶⁷ Ağırakça, “Müneccimbaşı Ahmed Dede,” 5.

the reader skipped the second part of the book, it is possible to read Islamic history chronologically from the Creation to the time of the book.

In the chapters concerning the stories of the prophets, Müneccimbaşı gave the dates and the lifetime of the prophets at the beginning of each story.⁶⁸ In this way, the dates and the synchronization became more clear. However, apparently, the basic purpose of the book was not to put forward the chronological universality but to expand the scope of geography. In this sense, it is possible to say that with Hezarfen Hüseyin's *Tenkîhü't-tevârîh*, the book introduced a different approach to Islamic and Ottoman tradition of world history.

However, by taking the famous table of Abu'l-Fidâ, Müneccimbaşı constituted the chronological structure of his history. Following *Takvîmü't-tevârîh*, he calculated the age of the world according to the Septuagint and accepted that Hijrah happened 6216 years after the Creation.⁶⁹ Although Müneccimbaşı widened his geographical outlook by getting beyond the limits of the traditional world history books, he provided a chronological view with the table that showed all the important turning points of world history by situating them into human time.

2.2.4 Mür'i't-tevârîh

Şem'dânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi (d. 1779) as the son of a merchant, was born around 1730 in the Fındıklı district of Istanbul. Thanks to his father's

⁶⁸ "Hazret-i Şit vefat ettik de Hebût'tan bin yüz kırk iki sene mürur etmişti. Ve Hazret-i İdris 165 yaşına girdik de oğlu Metuşaleh bir rivayette Metuşelh dünyaya geld. Bazılar katında ol vakit Hazret-i İdrisin ömrü üçyüz sene olmak üzeredir. Pes iki kavil beyanında tefavüt-ü fahiş vardır. Metuşaleh'in ömründen elli üç sene geçtik de Anuş bin Şit fevt oldu. Ömrü dokuz yüz elli sene idi. Ve Metuşaleh yüz yedi yaşına girdik de oğlu Lamek vücuda geldi." Müneccimbaşı, *Sahâifü'l-ahbar*, 43.

⁶⁹ Müneccimbaşı, *Sahâ'ifü'l-ahbâr*, 32. See: Appendix, fig. 4.

acquaintances, he succeeded to become a member of the ulema and worked as a bureaucrat throughout his life. When he was a child, Ibrahim Müteferrika's printing house published *Takvîmü 't-tevârih* in 1733, and he obtained a copy of the book in his early youth. During his first appointment, when he was working as a military scribe for court of inheritance (*kısmet-i askeri mahkemesi*)⁷⁰, he started to work on the book, and it became for him an opus maxim that in the last manuscript of the his *Mür 'i 't-tevârih*, he introduced himself with his last title, the qadi of Faiyum.⁷¹ In thirteen years and using over four-hundred books⁷², he wrote an addendum and an exegesis to *Takvîmü 't-tevârih*.⁷³ As we mentioned above, firstly *Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi* wrote an addendum to *Takvîmü 't-tevârih* including the events between 1648 and 1732, and Ibrahim Müteferrika added the events of the two years until 1734. *Mür 'i 't-tevârih* was begun from 1734 and recorded the events until 1773 (1187 AH) at first attempt and then extended the narrations to 1777 (1191 AH)⁷⁴. However, for the parts of the prophets stories, the more important intervention of Şem' dâni-zâde was his exegesis through which he extended most of the articles by consulting numerous books.

Mür 'i 't-tevârih was one of the few world history books of the period between the late seventeenth and mid-nineteenth century. Although the book has

⁷⁰ Şem' dâni-zâde, (1976). *Mür 'i 't-Tevârih* (Vol. I), XXIIIV.

⁷¹ Ibid., XXIII.

⁷² Ibid., XX.

⁷³ The last chapters of the book (from 1143 H. to 1H.) have been transliterated and published by Münir Aktepe in 1980 as four volumes, and the previous parts of the book were transliterated by Mustafa Öksüz as a master thesis. Şem' dâni-zâde, *Şem' dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür 'i 't-Tevârih-I*; Şem' dâni-zâde, *Şem' dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür 'i 't-Tevârih-IIA*; Şem' dâni-zâde, *Şem' dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür 'i 't-Tevârih-IIB*; Şem' dâni-zâde, *Şem' dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür 'i 't-Tevârih-III*; Öksüz, "Şem' dâni-zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi'nin Mür 'i 't-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin (180B-345A) Tahlil ve Tenkidi Metni."

⁷⁴ Babinger, Franz, *Osmanlı Târih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, 334.

mostly been received and used as a chronicle in the following centuries, the narrations of the stories of the prophets included one of the most extensive accounts among the early modern world history books. Moreover, the parts have been written in detail and connected to the other parts of the book. Taking the tables, and so dating all the events in the same order with Kâtib Çelebi, Şem‘dânîzâde broadened the narrations.

Mür‘i’t-tevârih used Kâtib Çelebi’s charts and tables to determine the general structure of his book, but on some specific accounts, he made some changes and added annotations on the articles. Even though the discussions about the age of the world generally has resulted from the earlier prophets like Adam, Seth, Idris or Noah, Şem‘dânîzâde has accepted Kâtib Çelebi’s version for prophets. Şem‘dânîzâde’s corrections were generally about Persian mythical characters. For example, one of the most debated figures was Keyumars who has been described as the first man in the Persian mythical narrations. However, by appropriating these accounts Muslim historians adapted and harmonized them with the Biblical accounts. Keyumars in *Takvîmü’t-tevârih* was narrated as being one of Noah’s sons, stating the other view that Keyumars could be the other name of the Adam.⁷⁵ Şem‘dânîzâde put a note here that there should be a problem with Keyumars. He quoted the opposing views of Al-Ghazali and Al-Beydawi⁷⁶ regarding whether he lived before or after the Prophet Noah and suggested that both have a problem.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ “Keyûmers’den murad Âdem ve hoşeng Nuh’dan mukaddemdir dirler ama ale’s-sahh Keyûmers Nuh evlâdıdır.” Kâtib Çelebi, (1734). *Takvîmü’t-tevârih*, 13.

⁷⁶ These accounts could be taken from *Tenkîhü’t-tevârih* (see: 61st footnote) or had the same source with it, but Şem‘dânîzâde opposed two of the views.

⁷⁷ “Bu iki padişahın saltanatlarında ve adaletlerinde şübhe yokdur. Ancak vakitlerinde ihtilaf muallakdır. Hüccetü’l-İslam İmam Gazali Nasihatü’l-mülûku’nda Keyûmers’i Şis Aleyhisselam’ın karındaşı ve Tahmurs İdris Aleyhisselam zamanı deyü tahrir-i belîğ idüb Kadı Beyzavi kitab-ı Nizamü’t-tevârihi’nde Keyûmers bin Sam bin Nuh deyü terkîm itmekle Tufan’dan sonra olduğunu beyan ider. İkisine dahi sual teveccüh ider. Tufan’dan evvel ise Tufan’da silsile kalmadı. Sonra ise

On the other hand, *Mür'î't-tevârîh* constituted one of the unique structures among the Ottoman world history books presenting a chronologically unified view of the world by taking the articles of *Takvîmü't-tevârîh*, but at the same time, it gave sequentially thematic narrations under specific accounts in order to locate them easily.⁷⁸ In this sense, it followed the traditional styles embracing all the events chronologically with the perspective of Muslim historians⁷⁹, and at the same time, a thematic order was adopted to enable sequential and connected narratives.

2.2.5 Gülşen-i Maârif

Ferâizîzâde Mehmed Said (d. 1835) was born and lived in Bursa. He has worked as a clerk at the court and as a preacher at Emir Sultan Mosque. Mehmed Said was known for his world history, named *Târih-i Gülşen-i Maârif*. He presented his work to Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839) and with his appreciations, the book was published at the imperial press a year after his death in 1836.⁸⁰

Gülşen-i Maârif was a highly Islamicized world history that was almost totally constituted of the history books of the Muslim lands.⁸¹ The introduction

Nuh Aleyhisselam Hoşeng'in vaktinde Keyûmers'in oğlunun oğlu olub ve Tahmurs anın oğlunun oğlu olıcak Tufandan sonra olmak lazım gelir. Nesil nereden ve akib-i Tufanda Tahmurs'a marü'z-zikr tantana ve saltanat nice olur. Velhasıl aslı var faslı müşküldür." Şem'dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür'î't-tevârîh*, 26.

⁷⁸ "Ve bu mahalle gelince zikri mürûr iden selâtinin vakitleri geldikce tafsil olundu. İcmalen iktiza etdikde bulub bilinmesi asan olsun için silsile vechiyle bu mahalle zabt ve kayd olundu." Ibid., 33.

⁷⁹ "İş bu zikri mürûr iden selâtin-i Pîş'in ibtidâsı Keyûmers'den inkıraz Al-i Sâsân Yezd-i Cürd'e gelince dört bin yıl olmuşdur. Ve müluk-u Kıbt ve selâtin-i Kahtan ve hakan-ı Rum ve müluk-u Yunan ve Besriyan zikirleri abes ve sıhhati gayr-i müslim olmağla terk olundu." Ibid., 33.

⁸⁰ Özcan, "Ferâizîzâde Mehmed Said", 366-367.

⁸¹ "Ferâ'izîzâde Mehmed Sa'îd, *Gülşen i Ma'ârif* (The Rose Garden of Knowledge), published in 1836. *Volume 1*: Articles of faith in Sunni Islam (p. 2); angels (pp. 4–6); holy books (pp. 6–7); the rest of the articles of faith (p. 8); prophets: Adam, Seth, Idris, Noah, Hud, Salih, Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Suleiman, Jesus (pp. 9–63); life of the Prophet Muhammad (pp. 63–136); companions of the Prophet (pp. 136–175); the imams, sheikhs (pp. 176–223); Pihsdadian, Kayanids, Sassanids, Ashkanids, Umayyads, Abbasids, Samanids, Seljuks, rulers of Khwarezm, Khorasan, Kuhistan, and so forth. Turkish, Circassian, Genghisid, Timurid, Turkoman rulers (pp. 223–411); detailed account of Ottoman history (pp. 411–847). *Volume 2*: Detailed account of

of the book included articles about the Sunni Muslim faith, starting with the creed of Sunni Islam (*amentü*), and continuing with the titles of the faith, information about the archangels, holy books, prophets and an elaborate part on the stories of these prophets⁸². In this sense, the book did not explain science of history or concepts relating to time, as opposed to the other world history books examined here. Instead, it contained extensive information about Sunni Islam. The second volume of the book was dedicated to Ottoman history. In this way, the book obeyed the traditional styles of Islamic historiography regarding that it narrated the history of a limited geography from Adam to 1774, the date of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.

The parts of the prophets stories in *Gülşen-i Maârif* predominantly consisted of disconnected anecdotes. Furthermore, Said was not interested in the dates of the prophets nor the age of the world. In this sense, the book was different from the other world history books written before and after it. The narrations of the prophets seemed to be compiled from the books of the Stories of the Prophets and the writer did not try to date the events. Moreover, the book was not given to the discussions about the age of the world. However, like the books on the stories of the prophets, the stress was on the lifespan of the prophets. Actually, the lifetimes of the prophets were important to connect the events in the sequential order that the estimations of the age of the world has been based on the addition of these lifetimes. Nevertheless, one of the basic aims of the world history books was to historicize the mythical accounts and establish

Ottoman history (pp. 850–1693).” Karateke, “The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography”, 151.

⁸² The content list of *Gülşen-i Maârif*: “Mutekadat-ı ehl-i sünnet ve’l-cemaat,” 2. “melaik-e-i kiram,” 4-6. “kütübullah,” 6-7. “resulullah,” 7. tetimme-i mu’tekadat,” 8-9. and the prophets stories from Adam to Jesus, 9-63. Ferâizîzâde, *Gülşen-i Maârif*.

a unified chronology that had to show the synchronizations of the events. In this regard, the parts of the prophet stories in *Gülşen-i Maârif* are more like the book of the Stories of the Prophets rather than the chapters of world history book.

2.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the early modern world history books had a claim to narrate the historical events from the beginning of creation to their present day. However, there were many different views about the number of years from, firstly, the Fall of Adam to the Flood and, secondly, from the Flood to the birth of Jesus or the Hijrah of Prophet Muhammed. The difficult problem of the historians was to find the most accurate source. Therefore, developing the methods of former Muslim historians of the middle-age, the Ottoman Historians established a strong dating /calendar system. One of the most influential works in this field was Kâtib Çelebi's *Takvîmü't-tevârih*.

The Ottoman historians followed the other Islamic world history books and applied the Biblical accounts.⁸³ Kâtib Çelebi's *Takvîmü't-tevârih* determined the norm of the age of the world according to the Septuagint (the Greek version of Torah) that has become the most prevalent one for Ottoman historians until the late nineteenth century. In this sense, Kâtib Çelebi's tables have had similar

⁸³“Badehû Hebut-u Âdem Aleyhisselam'dan Hicret-i Nebeviyye'ye gelince ne mikdar zaman geçmiştir anda bahs olunub ehl-i târih ve nücum bu müddetde dahi azim ihtilaf idüb te'arız-ı rivayat ve tebayün-ü derayat hasebi ile küreyve-i hilafa gitmişlerdir. Sebebi budur ki zikr olunan müddet zaman-ı Hebut'tan anane-i sikkat ve nakl-i cemaat ile mahfuz ve mazbut olmayub beyne'l-ümem fetretlerde tevârih-i cedide vaz' olunmağla tevârih-i kadîme zevayayı hicranda nesyen mensiyyen kalub muhber-i sadıkdan bir haber katiyyü'l-mefad reşide-i sem'-i ehad olmağla Hebut'tan vefat-ı Mûsa Aleyhisselam'a gelince geçen müddeti Tevrat'dan istilama münhasır olub Tevrat dahi Samiriyye ve İbraniyye ve Yunaniyye unvanıyla biri birine muhalif üç nüsha-i mütenafize idüğü sebut bulduk da bihasbü't-tearız ihtilaf olunmak görünür” *Takvîmü't-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 3. Similarly, in the early modern European world history books, the same confusion about the versions of the Torah could be seen: Van Kley, “Europe's" Discovery" of China and the Writing of World History,” 360-361.

effects on Ottoman historians with Usher's calculations on European ones, so that until the late nineteenth century, two of them accepted as canon in this sense.

Although in the late nineteenth century, some historians maintained to refer Kâtib Çelebi's accounts⁸⁴, some used different versions of Torah consulting European sources, and few of them did not give an exact number for the age of the world. Thus, in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman world history books, no estimation of the age of the world was not wholeheartedly acceptable.

⁸⁴ Kâtib Çelebi was continued to be referred by the late nineteenth century historians, like Ahmed Vefik and Ahmed Hilmi. Ahmed Vefik, *Hikmet-i Târih*, 30. Ahmed Hilmi, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 5. Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography", 141.

CHAPTER 3

UNIVERSAL HISTORY BOOKS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the course of the nineteenth century, historians started to both criticize⁸⁵ the earlier Ottoman history books and offer new definitions of history. The basic common point of these definitions was the stress on the concepts of civilization and progress. Moreover, the geographical approach was becoming a vital part of these historical writings. Accordingly, the idea of global civilization gradually had been turning into a dominant character of historical writings. In this sense, the generality of the world history books was related to the geographical rather than chronological comprehensiveness that made possible to use the word,

“*târih-i umûmî*”.⁸⁶ On the other hand, a more inclusive word, history of

⁸⁵ One of the most severe criticisms was made by Ahmed Mihdat in his *Mufasssal*, so it is worth to quote here the part entirely: “Fakat biz birçok fûnunda olduğu gibi fenn-i târihte dahi en geride kalmış bir millet olduğumuzu biraz tafsillice arz eylersek bunu o kadar beyhude saymaya imkan yoktur. Eski müelliflerimizden birçokları “târih” namı altında birçok kitaplar yazmışlardır. “Münecimbaşı” diye şöhret bulan târih gibi bazıları umûmî ve “Naima” gibi bazıları dahi hususi sûretinde telif olunmuşlardır. Ancak bunlar olsalar olsalar fenn-i mezkurun teracim-i ahval ve şunat-ı sinin ve a’sar gibi kısımlarına ait olabilip yoksa târihten matlub-u asli olan camiiyetten ve hikmetten aridirler. Bunlar zihn-i kariini bir memleketten diğerine sevk ederler ki ne mebde-i azimet ve ne de hedef-i matlub hakkında karilerde bir gûne malumat-ı mahalliye yoktur. Hemen bir ordunun kalkıp gittiğini söylerler. Ne maksat ile gittiğini heman şerh etmezler. Hâlbuki o maksadın derece-i nef’ ve zararını bile muhakeme târihin vezaif-i asliyesindedir. Galebe veya mağlubiyetten sonra ne netice hâsil olduğunu ve maksad-ı asliye o neticenin derece-i mutabakatını asla muhakeme etmezler. Bu sebebe mebnidir ki asıl matlub-u kariin olan hikmet-i târihiyeye hizmet edememiş olurlar. Asar ve elsine ve medeniyet-i kadîme hakkında hemen laldirler. Hazret-i Âdemden bed’ ettirdikleri umûmî târihleri bazı enbiyâyı kiraman teracim-i ahvalinden sonra hemen asr-ı Nebî’ye (a.m.) isâl ediverirler. Bادهû Hulefa-yı Erbaa ve Emeviye ve Abbasiye diye vukuatı acilen zamanımıza doğru isale gayret ederler. Târihte hayali hakikatten fark etmezler. Cüz’-ü taassub veya fikr-i tagallub veya tefahür bunlara pek çok hakayıkı inkar ettirirler. Bir mağlubiyetin esbabını muhakeme edeceklerine bir “bihikmetihi teala” ile geçitiriverirler. Bir galibiyetin tetkik-i esbabına girişmeyip bunu ya bir zata veyahut mahza hükm-ü talih-i mesuda haml ederler.

Bizde fenn-i târihin asıl sûret-i fenniyesini almaya başlaması Kâtib Çelebi merhumdan bed’ etmiştir. Bir papaz ile akd-ı münasebet ederek Avrupa târihini yazmaya başlaması bir mebde-i terakki olmuştur. Ondan sonra Asım Merhum vakayi-i Selimiye’yi muhakemeli ve hususi bir târihçe sûretinde kaleme alarak nihayet Cevdet Paşa Hazretleri Târih-i Osmanilerini gereği gibi usul-u cedideye Tevfik etmiştir.” Ahmed Midhat, *Mufasssal Târih-i Kurun-u Cedide*, 3-4.

⁸⁶ “Târihin Umûmîyet Ve Hususiyeti: Târih’te “umûmî” ve “hususî” denilir başlıca iki sûret aranır. Lakin bu iki sûret öyle kolay kolay tarif ve tayin olunur şeylerden değildir. Evet derler ki “târih-i umûmî umûm milletlerin ve târih-i hususi dahi yalnız bir milletin ahvalinden bahs eder”. Lakin bu

civilization (*târih-i medeni*) started to be utilized by historians in the same period and this word implied that the history was only the story of the progress of humanity from barbarianism to civilization.

In this chapter, I aim firstly to look at the motivations of Ottoman historians during the nineteenth century to write this new type of world history books, and then I will discuss the shift from the traditional style of historical writing to the new conceptions of times and progress in history. By focusing on the compulsory history education in the new European style schools and the possibilities brought by the newspapers, the first part of this chapter will briefly demonstrate the social conditions of the nineteenth century within which the Ottoman intellectuals produced world history books. In the second part, I will discuss the domination of the idea of civilization and progress and how the new regime of historicity was replaced with the old one in the nineteenth century.

3.1 The first effects of Enlightenment and Şânîzâde's introduction

In the early nineteenth century, Şânîzâde Atâullah (d. 1826) an Ottoman physician and historian, who held an office of chronicler for six years, started talking about the validity of the archaeological findings for historical inquiries.

In the introductory part of his famous chronicle, Şânîzâde mentioned the archaeological findings (such as the Arundel Marbles or Egyptian Pyramids)⁸⁷

umûmîyet ve hususiyet şu sûretle alelîtlak bir hükm ile mahkum değildir. Pek çok nispetlere mahkum ve tabidir.

Bir târih binnisbe “umûmî” ve binnisbe “hususî” olur. Umûm milletlerin ahvalinden bahseden bir târih eğer umûm zamanlarda umûm milletlerin umûm ahvalinden bahseder ise vakıa şimdilik umûmîyetin bundan daha geniş hududu olamaz. Ancak bu kadar umûmî olan bir târih “târih-i kâinâta” nisbet edilince yine hususî kalır. [...] Şu kadar var ki müverrihlerin ekserisi indinde “târih-i umûmî” denildiği zaman ondan umûm milletlerin umûm zamanlarda gördüğü inkılabat-ı umûmîye demek anlaşılıp bundan maada târihin kaffe-i aksamı bu esasın fûruatı add olunmak ciheti tercih edilmiştir.”

Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 20-25.

⁸⁷ Şânîzâde, (2008). *Şânîzâde Târihi*, 17. Eldem, “Hayretü'l-Azime Fi İntihalatı'l-Garibe: Voltaire ve Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi.”

and pointed to these findings as a source for historiography. Although it has been newly understood that this introduction was a distorted copy of the encyclopedic article of the French philosopher, Voltaire⁸⁸, it was the first attempt by an Ottoman historian to adopt the new European methods of historiography. Şânîzâde's work remained unique for few decades. As Edhem Eldem has shown, how Şânîzâde's distortion of Voltaire's article domesticated it, and even it was part and self-censored interest in the ideas of Enlightenment, yet there would not be seen any similar interest until 1860s among historians. From a different viewpoint, his approach was so exceptional for the Ottoman historians since until Eldem discerned it, for almost two hundred years no one noticed Şânîzâde's plagiarism and the sources of his writings. However, Şânîzâde's article did not provoke the Ottoman historians of his time to use the new sciences.

Alongside archaeology, Şânîzâde there were other new debates in Şânîzâde's introduction (*mukaddime*), about the definition of history. He defined history as:

“History is the collection of the real accounts and the unreal, fictional stories. And because some history books were constructed on assumptions and according to [the verse of the Qur'an], “...surmise avails naught against truth”⁸⁹, these are mostly inaccurate, unacknowledged imaginations that affected by the faults of human brain.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Eldem, “Hayretü'l-Azime Fi İntihalatı'l-Garibe: Voltaire ve Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi.”, Voltaire, “Histoire” in *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une Société de Gens de lettres*, vol. 8, p. 220-225.

⁸⁹ Qur'an, 10:36, trans. A.J. Arberry.

⁹⁰ Şânîzâde, (2008). *Şânîzâde Târihi*, 14.

By amalgamating Voltaire's various arguments, Şânîzâde changed Voltaire's deliberate distinction between real and unreal.⁹¹ Voltaire on the other hand defined with the following words:

“History is the narrative (récit) of facts presented as true, in contrast to the fable, which is the recitation (récit) of facts presented as false.”⁹²

Although Şânîzâde's definition was borrowed from Voltaire, the meaning of the sentence was opposite of what Voltaire claimed. Doing so, Şânîzâde shifted the definition from the idealized to the practical historiography. The presence of the untruth in the early modern history books was not so problematical for the historians. Majority of the historians have disregarded authenticity for the sake of extensiveness.⁹³ Most of the pre-modern historians quoted different versions of the stories in the name of reports (*riwayah*).⁹⁴

Similarly, the legendary accounts about the origins of the nations were not accepted as authentic by Muslim historians, but as mentioned in *Chapter 2*, most of the pre-modern world history books narrated the legends of the nations. The Persian epics that were based generally on *Shahnameh* of Firdawsi were the most common example of those legends. The reference of Jamshid given by Şânîzâde should be related to those accounts.⁹⁵ It was in the discussion about how the truth was replaced with the legends. He stated:

⁹¹ Eldem, “Hayretü'l-Azime Fi İntihalati'l-Garibe: Voltaire ve Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi.” 23.

⁹² Voltaire, "History."

⁹³ Mustafa Ali (d. 1600) in his *Zübdetü't-tevârih*, criticized this approach by referring to Al-Tabari: “Ehline malum ve kırâat edenlere mefhûmdur ki Tâberî yazdığı gibi mahlût ve kasas-ı enbiyâ u mürselîn hikâyât-ı mülûk-u selâtîn ihtilâtı ile nâ-merbût olmayub mümkün oldukça sıhhatine dikkat ve vâzih yazılmasına bezl-i himmet olunmuşdur. Zîrâ Hakk celle ve alâ alîm ve dâna ve habîr ve binâdır ki bu teliften murâd ve tasnîfden muktedâ-i fevâd müzahrafât-ı dünyeviyyeden olan menâsib ve mefâhirât-ı nefsâniyye ile zuhûra gelen kat-i merâtib ve mübâhât-ı ale'l müeddî olan iftîhâr-ı kâzib değildir.” Duman, “Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali'nin Zübdetü't-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin 1-111 Varaklar Arası Edisyon Kritiği,” 57-58.

⁹⁴ The most known was Al-Tabari, but as a later example, in Şem'dânîzâde's *Mür'i't-tevârih* there were many instances of this type of quotations.

⁹⁵ Şânîzâde, (2008). *Şânîzâde Târîhi*, 15, Eldem, “Hayretü'l-Azime Fi İntihalati'l-Garibe: Voltaire ve Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi”, 24.

“...sometimes an untruthful fable becomes prominent, extraordinariness of alchemy of Avicenna and talisman of the treasures of Jamshid are embodied, the truths are [...] hidden out.”⁹⁶

Continuingly, Şânîzâde told about the legend of Romulus by implying how it is absurd to believe in that “the first of the Caesars, Romulus was the son of the Mars [*kevkeb-i merih*] and his foster mother was a wolf”⁹⁷. In this way, Şânîzâde put a distance between the historical truth and myth. Although he gave an example from the European legends, these statements signaled the end of the other common topics of the early modern Ottoman world history books, namely the Persian myths.

On the other hand, Şânîzâde continued to translate Voltaire’s other definitive statements about the branches of history. He described history under two general categories as sacred and profane.⁹⁸ Yet, he was cautious when he borrowed Voltaire’s definition. He does not use the term “profane”, but he uses general (*‘amme*)⁹⁹. It was new for Ottoman historiography to separate the divine narratives from the other accounts. Such a separation would cause to move away from traditional understanding in which the sacred sources were used in the same vein as the other historical materials. Although he emphasized the authenticity of the religious references such as Qur’an, as Ahmed Midhat also maintained it in the introduction of *Kâinât*¹⁰⁰, the important point here was to distinguish the sacred knowledge from the secular one.

Consequently, Şânîzâde’s historiography was hybrid, oscillating between the modern and the pre-modern understanding of the historiography.

⁹⁶ Şânîzâde, (2008). *Şânîzâde Târihi*, 15.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15

⁹⁸ “L’*histoire* des événemens se divise en sacrée & profane.” Voltaire, “Histoire,” 221. Eldem, 23-24.

⁹⁹ Şânîzâde, 15. The term, general (*‘amme/ umûmî*) started to be used by Ottoman historians in 1860s as a translation of the French term, “*histoire générale/ universelle (târih-i umûmî)*”.

¹⁰⁰ Ahmed Midhat, (1871-72). *Kâinât* (Vol. 1), ج. 1.

Nevertheless, he was the first Ottoman historian who told about the methods and perspectives of the modern-positivist historiography of the Enlightenment.

Although for a few decades, there was no world history in this fashion, Şânîzâde designates the general forms of the late nineteenth-century world history books for the Ottoman writers. Firstly, the coming historians were influenced by the modern sciences (like archaeology or geography). Secondly, they left the mythical accounts of the origins of Persians and other nations. Lastly, even though they remarked that it was an obligation to believe in the sacred stories, they separated the sacred and profane parts of traditional historiography. The only world history written in this period that follows the traditional historiography was *Gülşen-i Maârif*, which was the last example of its kind.

According to the manuscript library catalogs, from the time of *Gülşen-i Maârif* to Ahmed Hilmi's *Târih-i Umûmî*, there is not any world history written by Ottoman scholars. However, in 1863, Ahmed Vefik gave lectures on the philosophy of history at University of Dârü'l-fünûn and published them in a newspaper at first, then as a separate book in the name of *Hikmet-i Târih* (Philosophy of History). However, the lectures and book were rather on the "history of civilizations"¹⁰¹ It was not a voluminous book but has a central importance, since it included the debates of European historiography. In the book, Ahmed Vefik for the first time, talked about the geological findings claiming that the world was formed through an evolutionary process that continued much more than what the different versions of the Old Testament claimed.

¹⁰¹ Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography," 136.

3.2 The first examples of the new genre

3.2.1 The needs and conditions of the nineteenth century

Until the nineteenth century, in any part of Ottoman education system, there were not history courses.¹⁰² As late as the 1860s, in the newly founded European style schools of Tanzimat government, both the Ottoman and the world history courses started to be seen. However, the Ottoman historians' books written and widely read in the pre-modern eras did not satisfy the needs of these European style schools' curriculums. Additionally, these traditional books were not prepared as textbooks. Therefore, it became a necessity to write universal history books for the students of the European style schools.

As *Hikmet-i Târih*, Ahmed Hilmi's *Târih-i Umûmî* was meant to meet these requirements. It was three years later than *Hikmet-i Târih*, in 1866 (AH 1283), Ahmed Hilmi started to translate an English universal history book, in the name of *Târih-i Umûmî*. As Hilmi stated in the introduction, his work was a translation of the book "written by Mister Chambers who were one of the famous English historians".¹⁰³ In this way, Hilmi wrote the earliest example of the modern world history books in Ottoman Turkish, twenty-six years after the proclamation of Tanzimat Edict.

¹⁰² Türk, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Târih Eğitimi*, 29. Yinanç, "Tanzimatta Cumhuriyet'e Kadar Bizde Târihçilik," 578.

¹⁰³ "İngiliz meşahir-i müverrihininden Mister (Çenbırs)'ın telifkerdesi olan târih-i umûmî..." Ahmed Hilmi, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 4. Although Ahmed Hilmi stated the name "Chambers" in the introduction, but he did not specify the source. Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography." 137. However, in the modern literature it was accepted generally as *Universal History* of William Chambers (d.1883). Babinger, *Osmanlı Târih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, 395. Yıldız, "Tanzimat'tan Meşrutiyet'e Osmanlı Tarihyazımında Dünya Algısının Dönüşümü." Cengiz Yolcu claims that it was *Chambers's Historical Questions with Answers: Embracing Ancient and Modern History*. Yolcu, "Ahmed Hilmi Efendi," 44. The structure of the book seems to be similar with *Chamber's Historical Questions with Answers* that both of them included enumerated articles, but I cannot find a parallelism between the contents.

Ahmed Hilmi was chosen as a member of the Translation Committee under the Ministry of General Education in 1865. He translated *Târih-i Umûmî* with the encouragement of the Minister of Education, Ahmed Kemal Paşa (d.1888). Printed in the print-house of the Military College (*Mekteb-i Harbiyye*) and the Ministry, this book was for the use of students at the Military College and the College for Civil Servants (*Mekteb-i Mülkiyye*).¹⁰⁴ The book was published in the state's print house for several times, and Hilmi had taken awards from each edition.¹⁰⁵

With the release of Hilmi's book, the new term, *târih-i umûmî* (general history) came into use among Ottoman historians. After the 1860s, numerous books in this new genre, *târih-i umûmî*, were written by Ottoman scholars, imitating and referring to the European history books but adapting them according to Islamic beliefs and Ottoman ideologies. Although *Târih-i Umûmî* was a translation, the book gained a different characteristic with Hilmi's adaptation.¹⁰⁶ In this way, with this domesticated translation, the new era began for the universal history writing in the Ottoman Empire, where intellectuals at higher education institution led its direction.

This first attempt revealed a new opportunity for the Ottoman literates by way of adapting European sources into Ottoman and Islamic understanding:

¹⁰⁴ Yolcu, "Ahmed Hilmi Efendi," 44.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 44.

¹⁰⁶ Firstly, in the introduction, he gave information about the age of the world and the humanity saying that both the sacred and scientific sources are agree with the fact that the world is much older than the humanity. In addition to this, he gave different opinions on the age of the humanity calculated from different Bible manuscripts. Ahmed Hilmi, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 5-6. These reports were common among the early modern Ottoman history books, but contrary to Ahmed Hilmi, they had chosen one of these calculations. Here, he pointed out the Muslim belief that the Old Testament had been distorted by the ancestors of the Jews. Thus, he could simply pass the problem of incompatibility. Moreover, in the parts that he told about the Islamic and Ottoman history books, he used an early modern world history book of Münecçimbaşı Ahmed, *Jami al-Duwal* as a basic source. Yolcu, "Ahmed Hilmi Efendi," 44.

writing a modern universal history in order to sell to the students. Most of the following world history writers had tried to satisfy this need and benefitted from this group of customers.

The majority of the universal history writers in the late nineteenth century were at the same time giving lectures in Tanzimat schools, and many universal history books were written as textbooks. For example, Süleyman Hüsni's *Târih-i Alem*, was one of these textbooks prepared for the students of the military colleges.¹⁰⁷ Yet, no other historian could be reproduced as Ahmed Midhat and Mizancı Murad's books in the 1870s and 1880s.

In 1875-1876 (AH 1292), while Ahmed Midhat was in exile in Rhodes Island, he has continued to send his writings to the journal, *Kırkanbar* which was actually owned by himself. However, his writings generally published under the name of his nephew, Mehmed Cevdet.¹⁰⁸ In that year, *Kırkanbar* published the text of the inaugural lecture delivered by Friedrich von Schiller (d.1805) at University of Jena. The text of the lecture published as a feuilleton in the 25th and 28th issues of the magazine. The Turkish title of the text was calling the reader for an introduction to the new genre: "What is the universal history? Why do we read it?".¹⁰⁹ The original text of the lecture was firstly published in *Der Teutscher Merkur* in November 1789 as "Was heisst und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?".¹¹⁰ It was one year before the French Revolution has taken place that Schiller published his book, *History of the Revolt of the Netherlands*, and he was recommended to a professorship at Jena

¹⁰⁷ Beydilli, "Süleyman Hüsni Paşa," 92. Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography," 139.

¹⁰⁸ Okay, "Teşebbüse Sarfedilmiş Bir Hayatın Hikayesi," 135.

¹⁰⁹ Schiller, "Târih-i Umûmî Nedir? Biz Onu Neden Öğrenmeliyiz?-I"; Schiller, "Târih-i Umûmî Nedir? Biz Onu Neden Öğrenmeliyiz?-II."

¹¹⁰ Schiller, "The Nature and Value of History: An Inaugural Lecture [1789]", in the *Editor's Note*.

University by Wolfgang von Goethe (d.1832). When he accepted and gave the aforementioned inaugural lecture, he was at the age of twenty-nine. The text of the lecture was instantly translated into many European languages and recurrently reproduced. It was almost a hundred years later than the lecture of Shiller that universal history books started to be popularized among Ottoman intellectuals, and *Kırkanbar* was the first that translated and published this article in the Turkish language. On the Turkish text, there was no name of the translator, but apparently, it was Ahmed Midhat who decided to translate and publish the article in his journal.

Nevertheless, it was not the first step that Ahmed Midhat took into this new genre. Four years before, in 1871-72 CE (AH 1288), he started to write his first universal history book with an assertive attempt by writing and publishing the beginning parts of *Kâinât*.¹¹¹ He was in the age of twenty-eight, when he wrote and printed *Kâinât* with his own printing machine in his house at Tahtakale.

When Ahmed Midhat published his *Kâinât* at first in 1871, it marked the other period. Opposition to Ahmed Hilmi's state-guaranteed publishing, Midhat made his own investment by buying a printing machine. In this way, he started to publish his books in his house. Alongside the earliest modern style storybooks of the Turkish language (*Letaif-i Rivayat*), the first printed copies of *Kâinât* has the same notes showing this situation: "It was published in the print-house owned by the author."¹¹² Orhan Okay suggests with caution that with this

¹¹¹ Ahmed Midhat, (1871-72). *Kâinât* (Vol. 1).

¹¹² Ibid. Okay states that *Letaif-i Rivayat* and few other books printed in this machine in these years and contained the same statements in the cover pages: "muharririn zatına mahsus matbaada basılmıştır." Okay, "Teşebbüse Sarfedilmiş Bir Hayatın Hikayesi," 134.

situation “the first serious and conscious entrepreneurship among the Muslim Ottomans was started”.¹¹³

However, in this first attempt, Midhat could publish the first four volumes of *Kâinât*.¹¹⁴ Four years later, he published the following three volumes in his print house, Kırkanbar¹¹⁵ and then 1878, he started to publish his famous newspaper, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* where he published the following eight volumes as serials¹¹⁶ and then printed each of them separately¹¹⁷. Lastly, in 1881-82 (AH 1299) he published the last volume of the book that covered the history of the Ottoman state. The first fourteen volumes of the book were on the histories of the European countries and the history of the Ottoman state, the last part was presented as the 15th and last volume of the Europe, and at the same time the first volume of the Asia.¹¹⁸ However, the project as a world history could not see its end.

When Ahmed Midhat had embarked on publishing his newspaper, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, from its first issue, he began releasing his second world history, *Târih-i Umûmî* as a serial¹¹⁹. In addition to this, he also published the book as a complete volume.¹²⁰ It is noteworthy that releasing book as a serial was very profitable and useful for Midhat.¹²¹ He asserts in the introduction of

¹¹³ Okay, “Teşebbüse Sarfedilmiş Bir Hayatın Hikayesi,” 134.

¹¹⁴ Ahmed Midhat, *Kainat* (Vol. 1: Mukaddime & İngiltere), (Vol. 2: Danimarka), (Vol. 3: İsveç Norveç), (Vol. 4: Rusya).

¹¹⁵ Ahmed Midhat, *Kainat* (Vol. 5: Fransa), (Vol.6: Peyiba), (Vol. 7: Almanya).

¹¹⁶ Ahmed Midhat Efendi. (1881, March 14) [1298, Rebî’al-âkhir 13]. *Kâinât. Tercümân-ı Hakikât*, p. 3-4.

¹¹⁷ Ahmed Midhat, *Kainat* (Vol. 8: Hükümet-i Cermanya), (Vol. 9: Avusturya), (Vol. 10: İsviçre), (Vol. 11: Portugal), (Vol. 12: İspanya), (Vol. 13: İtalya), (Vol. 14: Yunanistan), (Vol. 15: Devlet-i Osmaniyye).

¹¹⁸ Ahmed Midhat, *Kainat* (Vol. 15: Devlet-i Osmaniyye), cover page.

¹¹⁹ Ahmed Midhat Efendi. (1878, March 14) [1295, Zi’lka’de 12]. *Târih-i Umûmî. Tercümân-ı Hakikât*, p. 2-4.

¹²⁰ *Târih-i Umûmî*.

¹²¹ In this way, Midhat published all his world history books; *Kâinât*, *Târih-i Umûmî* and *Mufasssal Târih-i Kurûn-u Cedîde*, in a similar way. Firstly, as a serial in his own newspaper and then separate volumes in his printhouse.

Kâinât that it was possible to complete this book only through a serial. For him, publishing as a serial was useful in at least two respects. The newspaper was reducing the cost of publishing and it was giving him a writing discipline.¹²²

Even though he seemed to be a successful independent entrepreneur, he also benefitted from the opportunities of the state especially during the era of Abdülhamid II. By this way, he has worked as the directors of both the official newspaper, *Takvîm-i Vekâyî* and the government printing office (*Matbaâ-i Âmire*), until the end of his life. Furthermore, he became member and chief of the Council for Health Affairs (*Meclis-i Umûr-u Sıhhiye*) and gave history, history of religion and history of philosophy classes at the schools like, *Dârü'l-fünûn*, *Medresetü'l-vâizîn* and *Dârü'l-muallimât*.¹²³ Being a professor at university meant that it was possible to write and sell a book to students. Midhat was both the director of the government printing office, and also the writer of the books that were read by students at these schools. Thus, it was highly profitable for Midhat that he at least doubled the gain of Ahmed Hilmi.

As a member of a religious Muslim family, Mizancı Mehmed Murad (d. 1917) was born in 1854 in Dağıstan, a region in North Caucasia. After earning a law degree at the University of Moscow, he came to Istanbul to serve in the Ottoman government. Apart from his official duties, Mehmed Murad wrote numbers articles for the newspapers and gave lectures at some of Tanzimat

¹²²“Nihayet eser-i mezkuru Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesi’ne tefrika sûretiyle derç eyledikten sonra ayrıca kitap sûretiyle dahi tab’ı sûreti varid-i hatır oldu ki bu halde hem mesarif-i tab’iyesi ehveniyet kesb ederek) kitabın tehir-i intişarını icab eyleyen esbabdan bir başlıcası olmak üzere) şu kesat zamanda muavenete yetişeceği ve hem de yevmi bir gazete için her gün müsvedde yetiştirilmesindeki zaruret bu işte devamı dahi taht-ı mecburiyete idhal eyleyeceği görüldü.” (1881-82). Ahmed Midhat, *Kâinât*, ض-ه.

¹²³ Okay, “Ahmed Midhat Efendi,” 101.

schools such as *Mekteb-i Mülkiyye*. Furthermore, Murad was generally known with his own newspaper, *Mizan*.

During serving as a lecturer, he wrote his universal history, *Târih-i Umûmî* that was one of the most appreciated world history books of the late nineteenth century.¹²⁴ The book was reprinted several times throughout the 1880s. When Murad first published his book¹²⁵, he was in a good relationship with Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909), and in this way, the book was taught at *Mekteb-i Mülkiyye*.¹²⁶ However, in the following years, the political situation changed, and Murad became an opponent of the Hamidian regime. In 1895, he had to go to Cairo and then Paris. In the 1890s, the government abolished the history courses from the schools and one of the first banned books has belonged to Murad.¹²⁷

The only exception among the historians introduced here was Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa (d. 1891) who did not become a lecturer or journalist in his lifetime. As a professional bureaucrat in the Ottoman state, he was very curious about history and literature. Apart from his numerous books on the classical poetry, he was the author of a history of Diyarbakır¹²⁸ and a universal history, *Miratü'l-iber*, was published in 1886-89 (1304-1306 AH), in relatively late period.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Yinanç, "Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete...", 580.

¹²⁵ Mehmed Murad, (1879-80). *Târih-i Umûmî*.

¹²⁶ Akçalı and Çam, "II. Abdülhamid ve II. Meşrutiyet Dönemleri Eğitim Anlayışları Bağlamında Mehmed Murad ve Ahmed Refik'in (Altınay) Umûmî Târih Ders Kitapları," 129-130.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 125.

¹²⁸ Said Paşa, *Diyarbakır Târîhi* (1302/1885). Kadioğlu, "Said Paşa, Diyarbakırlı," 450-451.

¹²⁹ Said Paşa, (1886-87). *Miratü'l-iber* (Vols. 1-5). Said Paşa, (1887-88). *Miratü'l-iber* (Vols. 6-7). Said Paşa, (1888-89). *Miratü'l-iber* (Vols. 8-9).

3.2.2 The modern geography and *Kâinât*

The idea of writing *Kâinât* came to Midhat's mind during the school years in his geography class. In the preface of the second edition¹³⁰ of the book, Midhat said that the map of the world which he saw in the geography class fascinated him and asked himself "who knows, until now, who have been lived in all these places?". Later, he started to read history to satisfy his curiosity, but "not only history, even the universal history¹³¹" cannot restrain it.

During this time, he probably was in the secondary school, Rüşdiye that was newly founded schools, modeling the European standards in education. In the school, there were compulsory courses of mathematics, astronomy and geography, and it became possible for Midhat to attain a certain level of Arabic, Persian and French in those years. Furthermore, it was also the period of time that Ahmed Midhat started to read history books with his own efforts¹³².

Kâinât reflects the modern historical understanding of Ahmed Midhat very well. His curiosity about the geography of the world provoked him to write history, and the idea of writing *Kâinât* arose from the desire of geographical universality. However, this was not the geography of the antiquity or classical ages, but the modern one. His geographical perception was deriving from modern world maps, separate nation-states with the nineteenth-century boundaries. Moreover, the book was constituted by five main parts each of which included all countries of a continent.

He tried to put a concept to make reference to the contemporaneous territory as a historico-geographical unit. He called it country (*ülke*),

¹³⁰ "İşbu ikinci taba dıbase". Ahmed Midhat, (1881-82). *Kâinât* (Vol. 1), 1.

¹³¹ Ibid., 1. Probably, the word, history denotes here the history of Ottoman Empire.

¹³² Okay, "Teşebbüse Sarfedilmiş Bir Hayatın Hikayesi," 131.

determining that his *Kâinât* consisted of the histories of countries.¹³³

However, it was an ambiguous concept. Although he started to narrate the accounts from the ancient times, it seemed that the titles of the volumes were determined by the name of the modern nations. It is worthy to quote his discussion about these terms:

“Almost all the lands known as Greece in ancient times were later invaded by Ottoman Empire, and the lands that took the name of Greece in the “modern ages” gained this name fifty years ago. Moreover, what we write in this century is not the history of the states [*devlet*] or the nations [*millet*], but the countries [*ülke*]. Therefore, we should not have dealt with the history of Greece as a separate volume, but as a part of the history of the Ottoman Empire. However, the times passed from antiquity to the invasion of Ottoman Empire were much more than the years that Greece lived under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Additionally, the ancient Greeks provided great services for philosophy and civilization, and [lastly,] according to the modern division of the European continent, Greece is accepted as a separate landmass. Taking all these into consideration, we choose to write the history of Greece as a separate volume.”¹³⁴

According to this part, Greece could be an independent state or a nation, but it was not country. Nonetheless, the reasons for the ambiguity of the concept were about the situation of the Ottoman Empire and newly unified German Empire in the late nineteenth century. By using such a concept, Midhat gave the modern nation-states and empires together. In this sense, Midhat started his book with the history of England and continued respectively from north-west Europe to the south-east until coming to Ottoman Empire. The fifteen

¹³³ Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 14), 2.

¹³⁴“Târih-i kadîmde “Yunanistan” namıyla yad olunan mahallerin hemen kaffesi muahharen Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmaniye’nin hudud-u istilasi altına girmiş olduğu gibi târih-i ceddede “Yunanistan” ismini alan yerler dahi ancak yarım asır mukaddem bu namı tecdid etmiş olduklarından bu asırda bizim devletler ve milletler târihini değil ülkeler târihini yazdığımızıza nazaran Yunan târihini müstakil bir târih olmak üzere kaleme almayarak bunu adeta Osmanlı târihine katmaklığımız lüzumu varid-i hatır olur ise de ezmine-i kadîmden Yunanistan’ın Osmanlılar tarafından feth ve istilasına kadar mürur eyleyen zamana nisbetle bu mahallerin idare-i osmaniye altında kaldığı müddetin azlığıyla beraber Yunan-ı kadîmin medeniyet-ül hükema namına olarak medeniyet alemine etmiş olduğu pek büyük hidematı dahi göz önüne alarak ve bu gün Avrupa’nın taksimat-ı coğrafyası (3) iktizasınca dahi orası kıta-i müstakile sûreti almış bulunmasına nazar olunarak her halde târih-i Yunanistan’ı dahi bir cild-i müstakil sûretinde kaleme almak ciheti tercih olunmuştur.” Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 14), 2.

volumes covered only the independent states. However, for the history of Germany, Midhat gave two different volumes, namely “Almanya” and “Cermanya”.¹³⁵ He explained the former one as country that covered a large area including Austria. In the later volume, he gave the histories of the twenty-five states that constituted the German Empire starting from the history of Prussia.

On the other hand, unlike the concepts of the nation and the state, the concept of country has historical-geographical connotations. By using such a concept, Midhat can narrate more or less the same territory from the antiquity to the modern times. Furthermore, this type of geographical approach made possible for Midhat to give Ottoman history as a part of both Europe and Asia.¹³⁶ As Meltem Toksöz suggested in his article on Mehmed Murad’s *Târih-i Umûmî*¹³⁷, the new self-positioning of the nineteenth-century Ottoman historian “imbued with modern global consciousness”. This type of approach started to be seen in most of the universal histories of the era that they narrated themselves not in the genealogy of Islam, but in the geography of Europe.

¹³⁵ Ahmed Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 7: Almanya), cover page. Ahmed Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 8: Cermanya), cover page.

¹³⁶ Karateke, “The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography,” 143. Hakan Karateke stressed Midhat’s attitude as “manifestation of idea of universalization”, besides, Midhat in his *Kâinât*, presented the history of Ottoman state both as the Asian and European countries: “Birinci kısım olan Avrupa’nın onbeşinci cildi ve ikinci kısım olan Asya’nın birinci cildi: Devlet-i Osmaniyye”, Ahmed Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 15: Devlet-i Osmaniyye), cover page.

¹³⁷ Toksöz, “The World of Mehmed Murad: Writing Histoires Universelles in Ottoman Turkish.”, 350.

3.3. The new regime of historicity

3.3.1 Historical thought in the early modern period

The early modern Ottoman historians had conceived history (*ilm-i târih*) as the narrations of past events that people and especially statesmen could take lessons from and the stories that could give admonition to them. They thought history by emphasizing the instructive role as a second life or source of immortality for the readers¹³⁸. Moreover, for them, history was one of the best sciences to perfection (*kemalat*) human intellect.¹³⁹ What modern scholars called *Historia Magistra Vitae* was clearly reflects the main purpose of the early modern Ottoman historians.¹⁴⁰ Broadly, the early modern historians assigned many things to the benefits of history, which enables oneself to achieve ability to search for events, vision, beatitude, perfection, immortality, triumph, and salvation, increases power of thought and saves from indecision and pain. Studying history gives endurance against violence, protects from anger and helps to make a decision in important affairs.¹⁴¹ All of the benefits mentioned were related to didactic and advisory characteristics of narrations.

In this sense, history was a moral and political science in the early

¹³⁸ Menchinger, “A Reformist Philosophy of History: The Case of Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi,” 39.

¹³⁹ For a broad discussion about the pre modern Islamic philosophy of the moral sciences and the perfection, see: Ibid., 48-53.

¹⁴⁰ Menchinger, “An Ottoman Historian in an Age of Reform: Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi (ca. 1730-1806).” 39. Hagen and Menchinger, “Ottoman Historical Thought,” 102.

¹⁴¹ “Fevaid-i ilm-i târihden saadet-i sermedinin istihsali ve tettebbu-u ahbar, mûceb-i kemalat ve bais-i fevz ve necat olub fikri metin idüb inkıbaz ve inbisat vakitlerinde sahibini televvün ve ıztırabdan ve teessür ve infialden sıyanet ve şiddetlere sabr virüb muazzamat-ı umurda himmet i ali ider.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mûrit-tevârih*, 5. “Târih, faydası herkese şâmil olan bir ilimdir. Ulemânın zekâsını arttırır, ukalâyı uyarak basiret gözlerini açar, avamı eski haberlere, havassı da gizli sirlara vâkıf eder. Bu hudutsuz denizin derinliklerine vâkıf olan kimseler her türlü hakikatleri ve devirlerin değişmesi ile değişen hususların esrarını öğrenirler. Böylece eski milletlerde ne gibi değişiklikler olduğunu, bunların hangi sebeplerle parçalanıp mahvolduklarını öğrenirler. Bu sûretle de vukuatı mukayese ve tahlil ederek, mücerret sözlere kani olmayıp mugalata ve huurafelerin zebunu olmazlar. Gaibi şahitten kıyas ve olmayanı mevcuttan iktibas ederek pek çok tecrübe ve uzun mümarese ile bir işin başlangıcından sonunun ne olacağını idrâk ederler.” Danışman, *Naima Târihi*, 30.

modern Ottoman thought.¹⁴² At the center of this historical thought, there was governmentality. The order (*nizam-ı alem*) was the main purpose of politics and so history, and the fight between faith (*iman*) and “*zulm*” (atrociousness, cruelty, wrongdoing and sometimes, evilness)¹⁴³ were the basic dichotomy of historical narrations. In order to provide the order, the circle of justice (*daire-i adliye*) was suggested by historians which was an idea originating from Ibn Khaldun.¹⁴⁴ The circle of justice was a theory that explained major classes of society as interrelated with one another, and so all of them were vitally important to sustain the order.

Accordingly, the Greek theory of bodily humors has been adopted by many Islamic thinkers like al-Tûsî (d.1274) and al-Ghazali (d.1111), as to explain the organization of society in an analogy with human body.¹⁴⁵ In the early modern Ottoman political thought, the theory has gained great popularity and has been adopted by many Ottoman historians and philosophers such as Kınalızâde Ali, Kâtib Çelebi or Naima.¹⁴⁶ According to the common version that early modern Ottoman historians applied, the four main classes of the Ottoman Empire have been associated with four humors of human body. In this sense, they associated scholars (*ulemâ*) with blood, soldiers with phlegm, merchants with yellow bile (*saфра*) and taxpayers (*reaya*) with black bile (*sevdâ*).

Due to the interlinked relations between history and politics, early modern historians explained the theories about history with a reference to

¹⁴² Menchinger, “‘Gems for Royal Profit’: Prefaces and The Practice of Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Court History,” 135. Hagen and Menchinger, “Ottoman Historical Thought.”

¹⁴³ The *zulm* was one of the significant words that used by Qur’an and has gained further meanings in Islamic thinking, and generally used as the antonym of the justice (*adl*).

¹⁴⁴ Hagen, “The Order of Knowledge, the Knowledge of Order: Intellectual Life,” 451.

¹⁴⁵ Syros, “Galenic Medicine,” 163-164.

¹⁴⁶ Hagen, “The Order of Knowledge,” 436.

theories of state. In this respect, historians were seen as advisors of statesmen. In the eighteenth century, Şem‘dânîzâde went a step further, and define the historian as a doctor for the illness of state.¹⁴⁷ He gave the theory like Kâtib Çelebi and Naima, but he added historian to the theory as a talented physician.¹⁴⁸ However, there was no physician in Kâtib Çelebi and Naima, and in most of the versions of the theory used by early modern historians, the physician was the sovereign¹⁴⁹.

When we come to the nineteenth century, the reference to this theory was given by Mizancı Murad, and explaining the importance of history, he claims that for the statesmen who could have a similar position with the physicians, history was indispensable science.¹⁵⁰ In this definition, there was no single physician, but Murad established an analogy between the physicians and the jurists, politicians and ruling classes that scrutinized social structures of past societies. As well as the apparent stress on the social structure in the conception of history, now the meaning of the physician was also extended in Murad’s definition.

¹⁴⁷ “Çünkü vücud-u devlet vücud-u insaniye müşabih olub padişah ruh, vezir akl, müfti fikr, mide hazine, ulema dem, asker balgam, tüccar safra, reaya sevda mesabesinde olmağla insana hiffet-i sıhhat hususunda tabib ve cerrah lazım olduğu gibi vücud-u devlete gaile ve arıza sudurunda ve muhafaza-i hudud umurunda tabib makamında olan müverrihe muhtacdır ki esatin-i devlet olan müluk ile müdebbiran-ı memleket ve millet olan vüzera ve vükelayı ahval-i aleme dana ve aşına kılub teshir-i bilad ve siyaset ibad ve perureş-i ra’yet ve tamir-i memleket ve sıyanet-i asker ve tahsil-i beytülmal ve hal-i harb ve kıtal ve sair tedbir-i mehamda ebrar-ı salifin ve selef-i salihin üslubuna zihab ve nadanlar amelinden ictinab itdürür. Bu sebebden devlet kâim ve ru’yet ve memleket mamûr ve hazine ferâvân ve asker kavî ve düşmen makhur olur.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i t-tevârih*, 5-6.

¹⁴⁸ “Evsaf-ı mezkure ile mevsuf olub nabz-ı aleme aşına ve sahib-i şuur olan müverrih tabib-i hazık hükmündedir.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i t-tevârih*. 6.

¹⁴⁹ Syros, “Galenic Medicine.” 163.

¹⁵⁰ “Emraz-ı muhtelifenin sûret-i zuhûrlarıyla devamlarına dikkat ve bu vechle tecrübeler icra ile kesb-i maharet ederek ekser emrazın define çare bulmak mertebesine vasıl olan tabipler gibi heyet-i içtimaiye-i beşeriyenin ahval-i maziyesini layıkıyla tetkik ve mütalaa eden erbab-ı kanun ve siyaset ile aştah-ı hükm ve idare dahi gerek bir cemiyet-i beşeriye içinde mevcut ve hazır bulunan gavailin defi, gerek ileride zuhûru mütesavvir olan fenalıkların vakt ve zamanyıla men’i esbabını bulabilirler. Binaenaleyh idare-i mülk ve milelde alakadar olanlar için târih kadar mühim bir fen yoktur denilse becadır.” Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, 5.

3.3.2 The *Magistra vitae* in the late nineteenth century

The traditional understanding was still valid and central in the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁵¹ Yet, in the late nineteenth-century historiography, there was a great change in the ways of writing. However, most modern scholar thinks that the purpose of history writing was not changed significantly in this period.¹⁵² In recent years, on the other hand, the second argument was started to be questioned. Can Veyselgil in his dissertation opposes the mainstream view and argues that the tradition of the *historia Magistra vitae* in the historical works of Tanzimat period was not so persistent¹⁵³.

As all of them, including Veyselgil, accepted that the nineteenth-century historians in their introductions of the books, have given an important place to the traditional argument that one of the most significant benefits of the history was its instructive function, as teacher of life for people and especially for statesmen.¹⁵⁴ Instead of Mizancı Murad, the most known historians of the

¹⁵¹ Menchinger, "A Reformist Philosophy of History: The Case of Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi," 39-40 and 41.

¹⁵² Veyselgil, "Historical Writing In The Late Ottoman Empire: Global Encounters And Historical Experiments Of Hayrullah Efendi," 65-66. Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 104.

¹⁵³ Veyselgil discusses the arguments of Boyar, Hagen-Menchinger, Neumann, and with references especially to the work of Hayrullah Efendi, suggested that if there was not total rupture, yet still the *magistra vitae* was not in use as earlier history books. Veyselgil, "Historical Writing In The Late Ottoman Empire: Global Encounters And Historical Experiments Of Hayrullah Efendi," 66.

¹⁵⁴ "Târihten her sınıf ahali istifade eder. Zira târih gelmiş ve geçmiş âdemlerin etvar ve hareketını tetkik ve muhakeme ederek insana fena âdemlerden nefret ve iyi âdemlere mutabaat etmeyi öğretir. Ve insanın onlara müteallik olan hislerinden ve istidadlarından bazılarını mahv mazılarını dahi kemale tahrik eder. Fakat idare-i memalik ve millet ile mükellef olanların istifadeleri daha ziyadedir. Çünkü heyet-i içtimaiyenin veya bir kavm ve milletin azamet ve ikbale nail ve sezavar ve felaket ve inkıraza vasıl ve duçar olmasının neye mütevakıf olduğu tevârihte mündericidir. Emraz-ı muhtelifenin sûret-i zuhûrlarıyla devamlarına dikkat ve bu vechle tecrübeler icra ile kesb-i maharet ederek ekser emrazın define çare bulmak mertebesine vasıl olan tabipler gibi heyet-i içtimaiye-i beşeriyenin ahval-i maziyesini layıkıyla tetkik ve mütalaa eden erbab-ı kanun ve siyaset ile ashab-ı hüküm ve idare dahi gerek bir cemiyet-i beşeriye içinde mevcut ve hazır bulunan gavailin defî, gerek ileride zuhûru mütesavvir olan fenalıkların vakt ve zamaniyle men'i esbabını bulabilirler. Binaenaleyh idare-i mülk ve milelde alakadar olanlar için târih kadar mühim bir fen yoktur denilse becadır." Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, 4-5.

nineteenth century like Ahmed Cevdet, Ahmed Midhat and Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa were following this idea and made stress in their definitions of the exemplary characteristics of the history.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, in early modern history books, the argument has been completed with the example of the *second life* that the people who read history could experience different lives. However, for the nineteenth century Ottoman historians, history was not cyclical but linear, and so lost its repetitive characteristics. Those historians who repeated this argument in the nineteenth century have given stress to the point that history was not a collection of information but has an aim to narrate the progress of humanity. Ahmed Midhat described history similar to other contemporaries, as the science that narrates the “progress and perfection of the civilization and humanity” (*terakkiyat ve kemalât-ı insaniyye ve medeniyye*).¹⁵⁶ For him, the progress of history can be easily understood by looking at the first and last situation of humanity. The first situation was represented as the speaking animal that did not have any “good things and civilized conditions”, and the last situation was European civilization.¹⁵⁷ He argued that if a human being did not have civilized circumstances, even his speaking ability (*natıkıyet*)¹⁵⁸ had to be questionable.

¹⁵⁵ “Bazı filozoflar “zamanların şahidi, hakikatin nuru, padişahların ve reayanın üstadı, hayatın medresesi” diye ilm-i târihi tavsif eylediler.” Said Paşa, *Miratül-iber* (Vol. 1), 4. Furthermore, the name of the book, *Miratül-iber* also meant the “Mirror of the Examples”.

¹⁵⁶ Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 10.

¹⁵⁷ “[...] Zira Hazret-i Âdem’i insanların birincisi olmak üzere mebd-i şuhudda istikbal edip onun evlâdı neslen ba’de nesl ne kadar inkılabat göyerek bugünkü dereceyi bulmuş ise işte târih kendi ittıla’ı yettiği mertebede inkılabatı zabt ve irae eyler.

Bu inkılabatın derece-i uzmet ve ehemmiyetini anlamak için insaniyet ve medeniyetin ilk haliyle son halini göz önüne getirip de ikisi arasındaki farkı muvazene etmek lazımdır. Buna “muhal” mi dediniz? Hayır! Bu pek mümkün bir şeydir. Hem de rivayet değil müşahadet mümkündür. Bir kere insan denilen hayvan-ı natıkın kaffe-i bedayi ve avarız-ı medeniyeden ari olduğu hali gözümüz önüne getirebiliriz. Ama güzel dikkat etmelidir ki ol hayvan-ı natık kaffe-i bedayi ve avarız-ı medeniyeden ari olacak, o halde onun natıkıyeti bile pek mahdut kalmaz mı? İnsaniyet ve medeniyetin şimdiki hali ise göz önündedir. İşte evelce gözümüz önüne hükmen getirdiğimiz hal ile şimdiki hali muvazene edince insaniyet ve medeniyetin şu şimdiki dereceyi bulması için ne kadar inkılabat görmüş olması lazım geleceği dahi kendi kendisine tahakkuk eyledikten maada bu inkılabatın akıllara hayret verecek kadar büyük ve mühim olduğu da kendiliğiyle tahakkuk eyler.” Ahmet Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 2-3.

¹⁵⁸ Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 3.

Following, he respectively presents “the Aborigines as the state of savagery (*hal-i vahşet*), the Bedouins closer to the savagery, the Bedouins closer to the civilization, Central Asia and African Civilizations, Iran and Ottomans that had developed in the perfection of civilization and lastly the American and European countries that reached to the top level of civilization.”¹⁵⁹

During this period, one of the key terms, history of civilization (*târih-i medeni*) has come into circulation. For the nineteenth century historians, history of civilization was a concept that signifies the new understanding of history, embracing both general (*umûmî*) and private (*husûsî*) history books¹⁶⁰. For them, civilization was a unique process in which each nation had in different phases. In this sense, history for them was basically the space for comparison between the uncivilized and civilized nations. Accordingly, history as a singular word included only the story of progressed civilizations.

Ahmed Midhat’s *Târih-i Umûmî* was well reflected in this perspective.¹⁶¹ Although he did not clearly stated, he translated and adapted the book from the French general history of Levi Alvares, *Nouveaux Éléments D’Histoire Générale*.¹⁶² The tables, periodization, divisions of the parts and most of the narrations directly was translated from this book.¹⁶³ In the introduction of the

¹⁵⁹ Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 4-5.

¹⁶⁰: “İlm-i târih-i medeni ümem ve büldanın vekayi’iyle her türlü havadis-i künyeyi bildirir. Târih-i medeni: Biri umûmî ve diğeri hususi olmak üzere - iki kısımdır. Birincisi büldân ve benî insanın sûret-i umûmîyede vakayi-i mühimmesini ve ikincisi bir devlet ve memleketin veya bir kavmin, yahud efradın vakayi’ ve teracim-i ahvalini beyan eder.” Said Paşa, *Miratü’l-iber* (Vol. 1), 4.

¹⁶¹ “Târih için biz en güzel tarif olmak üzere “terakkiyat-ı insaniyyenin ve medeniyyenin tercüme-i halidir” tarifini tercih ederiz.” Ahmed Midhat, *Mufasssal Târih-i Kurun-u Cedide*, 2.

¹⁶² Alvarès, *Nouveaux Éléments d’histoire Général*.

¹⁶³ Although which edition of the book Midhat used was not known, there were no great differences between three of the editions that I achieved; the editions of 1848, 1860, 1877. Probably the most accessible edition for Midhat when writing *Târih-i Umûmî* which was printed in 1878 was 1877 Paris edition.

Nouveaux Éléments, it was stated that the book was prepared for the use of the professors and the students of the general history.¹⁶⁴

In the introduction of *Târih-i Umûmî*, by borrowing some key terms from Alvares, Midhat gave extra information, especially for issues about the sacred and mythological history. In the original work, Alvares presented a general division of “Primitive Times”, “Mythological Times” and “Historical Times.” He subdivides the Mythological Times (*Temps Mythologique*) into three: Idolatric Times (*Temps Idolatrique*), Heroic Times (*Temps Heroic*) and Poetic Times (*Temps Poetic*).¹⁶⁵ Midhat following Alvares, named these sections as “Evvel Zaman”, “Esatir-ı Evvelîn” and “Asr-ı Târih”. The subdivisions of the parts were made according to the centuries. Moreover, the book included tables of world history showing the years of the births and deaths of Adam and his generation that based on the calculations of Usher by accepting the age of the world was 4004 years.¹⁶⁶ However, the apparent stress of Midhat’s *Târih-i Umûmî* was on the progress of civilization from primitive times to the present. Opposed to the traditional understanding, the exemplary part of history could not be mythologic one¹⁶⁷ but the modern history of the world. In this way, the basic aim was not to take an example, but to place themselves into the last phase of civilization.

For Koselleck, it was the *Neuzeit* that the distance between “the horizon of expectations” and “the space of experience” increased.¹⁶⁸ It explains the late-

¹⁶⁴ Alvares, (1877). *Nouveaux Éléments d’Histoire Générale*, 6.

¹⁶⁵ Alvarès, (1877). *Nouveaux Éléments d’histoire Général*, 18.

¹⁶⁶ See: Chapter 2, footnote 55, in this thesis.

¹⁶⁷ It is noteworthy that the translation of “temps mythologique” as “esâtir-ı evvelîn” made by Midhat, was exactly same with a phrase passed in the Qur’an. It is found in the Qur’an with a negative attribution used by the unbelievers for the Qur’an to claim that it was the fairy tales of the old people. Qur’an 8:31, 16:24, 23:83, trans. A.J. Arberry.

¹⁶⁸ Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, 263.

nineteenth-century Ottoman historians' idea of the future of the global civilization as inconceivable but has infinite possibilities that have to bring better conditions. However, for Ahmed Midhat, as opposed to the global civilization, the nation's future as a unit of the history could be known via history. What Midhat and others have not left in the nineteenth century should be understood as the individual and national perfection, not global.

In this perspective, history could not have exemplary characteristics in the traditional sense in which the past, present and future were taken in a similar vein, and the past events could be light on the present and future events. What the late eighteenth-century chronicler, Vâsîf meant with "awareness of the vicissitudes of fortune"¹⁶⁹ was not could be conceivable in the late nineteenth century. In this regard, while Vâsîf as the earlier Ottoman historians used the same word, perfection (*kemalat*) for the benefit of the history for a reader, Ahmed Midhat was supporting the Enlightened idea that the perfection could be attained through the education of history, but by virtue of understanding the gradual civilization process of the humanity. The concept of the perfection in the minds of the nineteenth-century historians, was not a finite phenomenon, and the future always had to be better than the present, and indicated with Koselleck's term, "the new horizons of future."¹⁷⁰ That's why in his universal history Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa after depicting the history of historiography with a

¹⁶⁹ Menchinger, "An Ottoman Historian in an Age of Reform: Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi (ca. 1730-1806)," 40.

¹⁷⁰ The important point here, the shift in the meanings of the concept passing from the early modern to the modern era: "The theoretical anticipation of the "saddle period" between about 1750 and about 1850 amounts to a statement that during this period the old experience of time was denaturalized. The slow decline of Aristotelian semantic content, which referred to a natural, repeatable, and therefore static historical time, is the negative indicator of a movement that can be described as the beginning of modernity. Since about 1770, old words such as *democracy*, *freedom*, and *the state* have indicated a new horizon of the future, which delimits the concept in a different way; traditional topoi gained an anticipatory content that they did not have before." Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History*, 5.

reference to the human life from babyhood (*sinn-i tufuliyet*), to adulthood (*sinn-i recüliyet*),¹⁷¹ says that “the historiography will extend and perfection as it is seen in the discoveries.”¹⁷² In this sentence, Said Paşa uses the word, perfection (*mükemmeliyet*), in a meaning, embracing the concept of the progress and making reference to the future but not to the aging of the mortal human being.

It was inevitable that sharing the common languages and belief systems, the nineteenth century Ottoman historians had to use similar vocabularies and analogies with the early modern Ottoman historians, but the meanings of the words and analogies substantially changed, in conjunction with a shift in the regime of historicity and by this way the understanding of history. Said Paşa as it can be seen in the references of his book, read and was influenced by Ibn Khaldun and Kâtib Çelebi. The analogy between human life and history was existed in the works of both of them and common among other premodern historians.¹⁷³ However, this type of analogy between the periods of the human life and the epochs of the historiography or history in the Ibn Khaldunian Ottoman historical thought references to the end of the life, that in essence, centralizes the ultimate, inevitable death of human.¹⁷⁴ In Said Paşa’s thinking, the lifetime or death did not become an issue and the progress was expected to continue in future. The new idea of the future was not limited to the Judgment Day, as opposed to the premodern historiography. Interestingly, Schiller, in a speech held in 1789, associated the European civilization envired with the

¹⁷¹ Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 7-11.

¹⁷² “O chemmiyetin eyyama ittiba'ı ile büyümesi fenn-i mezkuru bulunduğumuz asırdaki derece-i ulyaya kadar ileri götürmüştür. Bundan sonra da gittikçe kesb-i vüs'at ve mükemmeliyet edeceğini meydandaki keşfiyat gösteriyor.” Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 5.

¹⁷³ For an article on the European historiography, see: Yılmaz, “Historia magistra vitae” in *Modern Zamanın Târihi: Batı'da Yeni'nin Değer Haline Gelişi*.

¹⁷⁴ Yurtoğlu, “Keşfü'z-Zünûn ve Kâtib Çelebi'nin Bilim Anlayışı,” 46.

savage societies as an old man with the children.¹⁷⁵ Similar to Said Paşa, the intention was not pointing out the European civilization was closer to death, but only stressing the experiences and perfection of the European civilization.

¹⁷⁵ Schiller, *What is, and to What End Do We Study Universal History*, 1789.

CHAPTER 4

NEW SCIENCES AND DISAPPEARED THEMES

By the late nineteenth century, Ottoman historiography had undergone significant changes, along with the major transformations in the state and society. The historical thought profoundly transformed in the course of the nineteenth century, especially by the conditions caused by the Tanzimat reforms. By the effects of the Enlightenment, the nineteenth-century Ottoman historians adopted the linear, progressive historical understanding. As the governmentality changed, the historians' central objective shifted from "order" to "progress".

On the other hand, given the new secularized schools started to be seen in the Ottoman nineteenth century, the intellectuals also were in a process of disenchantment. Şânîzâde's well-known introduction, as we discussed in the previous chapter, was an early sign that an Ottoman historian encountered with the new sciences and produced a reception to the positivist discourse of the Enlightenment. The receptions of the Ottoman historians undoubtedly have been changed through the century, but the general approaches of the period can be summarized as firstly the hesitation and then acceptance of the new secular discourse. In a similar way, the historians firstly started to question the traditional religious sources and approaches and afterward abandoned them. Both of the processes, abandoning the conventional and adopting the modern have continued throughout the nineteenth century.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss this period of change, by revealing how the three sciences replaced with the older themes or at least caused them to be questioned and left by the historians. In this sense, basically this chapter

asserts that the two prevalent mythical themes of the stories of the prophets in the early modern world history books, founding of the cities by prophets and the inventions made by the prophets disappeared in the nineteenth century, as a result of the acceptance of the geographical and archaeological discourses. Moreover, the creation of the world in the six days appeared in the *Sahaifü'l-ahbar* only among the early modern world history books but has become an issue in the nineteenth-century history books with the geological theories and brought new discussions.

4.1 The effects of modern geography

The geography as an early modern field of knowledge rarely exists in the Ottoman world history books. In this respect, one of the ambitious work among the books examined here was *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* which narrates the history and geography of the Americas for the first time and gave a piece of detailed information about the early modern geographical knowledge at the end of the book.¹⁷⁶ However, for the early modern Ottoman world history books, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* constituted an exception that geography has not had such a significant place after the seventeenth century until the mid-nineteenth century in those books. In these books, the chronology was the fundamentally more important than the geography was. Despite the fact that some canonical and avant-garde works had been written in the seventeenth century, the historians of the following century were far to be so productive and ambitious in terms of the world history books. In this sense, the geographical universality and narrating

¹⁷⁶ Bekar claims that he greatly benefitted from *Cihannuma* of Kâtib Çelebi. Bekar, "Hezarfen Hüseyin'in Evrensel Târihinde Yeni Bir Bizans ve Konstantinopolis Algısı," 20.

the new world or European regions have not become an issue of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century historians.¹⁷⁷

On the other hand, much like other sciences, geography also went through a process of modernization in the period of Enlightenment, and modern geography was constituted by grounding on the society and the relations of people with the earth.¹⁷⁸ For the universal history books of the nineteenth century, modern geography has become the primary determinant of the generality or universality of the book. As was discussed in the part, “2.1. *Age of the world*”, dating was the main technique of the early modern historians to historicize the events overemphasizing the temporality. However, in the nineteenth century, the geographical descriptions highlighted the other medium of the narrations, i.e. spatiality. The modern geography provided a new spatiality to the narration that / (has) obliged historians to totally abandon the mythical narrations. Periodically, one of the important themes in the early modern world history books, that is, the narration of the prophets and of the mythical figures as the founders of the cities started to disappear.

In this part, I would like to examine the effects of the rise of modern geography on the premises of the stories of the prophets in the Ottoman world history books. In this regard, I will trace the change and the process of disappearance of the popular mythical theme, the founding of the cities by the prophets and other legendary characters from *Takvîmü 't-tevârih* to *Miratü 'l-iber*.

¹⁷⁷ It is important to note that between *Jami al-Duwal* of Müneccimbaşı Ahmed and *Târih-i Umûmî* of Ahmet Hilmi, during almost 190 years, only three world history books I have found, *Sahâifü 'l-ahbar* was translation of *Jami al-Duwal* written in 1730s, *Mür 'i 't-tevârih* was an exegesis and addendum of *Takvîmü 't-tevârih* written in 1777, and *Gülşen-i Tevârih* was very limited with Islam and Ottoman history books written in 1834 and published in 1836.

¹⁷⁸ Tang, *The Geographic Imagination of Modernity: Geography, Literature, and Philosophy in German Romanticism*, 21.

Even though there have been great changes in the thought of Ottoman intellectuals throughout this two and a half centurial period, the nineteenth century included particular triggers and provided a convenient atmosphere for developments led these changes, not only for Ottoman but also for European intellectuals. The roots of modern geography from the early Enlightenment philosophers, experienced with great upheavals in the century. Thus, in this part, specifically and additionally, I will map the shift in the spatial thought as an effect of the modern geography throughout the narrations of the prophets stories in the world history books. In this sense, I will discuss the accounts of the founding of Constantinople as the most detailed city of the early modern world history books.

4.1.1 Spaces of the stories of the prophets and founding of the cities

The world history books begin with the narrations of the Creation or fall of Adam. Therefore, the source of the history is thought to be a form of narrated genesis. The beginnings of the books take enchanted depictions of the Creation and the Fall, unearthly. These stories portray the making of human beings in heaven rather than in the world -the place of punishment of the original sin. While these stories are continued by the information about the fall of Adam into Serendib (Sri Lanka) and Eve into Jeddah, any spatial description does take place in these narratives. Afterward, the people of Ad or Semud, for instance, are narrated as they constructed huge cities, and the cities were destructed by God's torments due to the people's denial of God. The texts set forth all these spatial accounts very briefly and abstractly.

On the other hand, many prophets and emperors were narrated throughout the history books as founders of cities and builders of temples. The stories were changing according to sources, but in pre-modern Ottoman history books, some of them especially was narrated in detail. Apart from Ka'ba which was generally attributed to Adam and Abraham, Jerusalem and the al-Aqsa Mosque (*Beyti'l-makdis* or *Mescid-i Aksa*) that attributed to the Prophet Solomon, narrations of the founding of the Constantinople took significant place among other stories. The legendary stories of Constantinople generally were given as a separate article but under the title of the stories of the prophets. The story of Yanko bin Madyan was the most popular among all these stories. However, in some of the history books, the Yanko bin Madyan narrated as the second founder, but the first one was the Prophet Solomon. In this first part, I attempt to discuss the stories of the founding of Constantinople by comparing different world history books.

4.1.2 Founder of Constantinople

Among the narrations about the founding of the cities, the most noted and considered accounts have been on the building of Constantinople (*bina-yı Konstantiniyye*). It was differentiated from the other cities since it has almost all of the sources by its own account under a separate title. Accordingly, these were much more detailed accounts than those of the other cities were. Additionally, there was generally more than one account issued the founding of Constantinople. The fact is that the story, like the many other stories which were reproduced in each book in line with ideological concerns of the time or the authors, included the timely ideological concerns, too. The legendary narrations

of the Constantinople have popularized among Ottoman intellectuals from the mid-fifteenth century. Stefanos Yerasimos, in his book on these legends, *La fondation de Constantinople et de Sainte Sophie*, discussed the most popular ones, their possible sources and their ideological meanings in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷⁹ Beginning from the seventeenth century, I would like to pursue, here, the functions and effects of these stories in the early modern world history books. Taking into account the centralization of the modern geography in the nineteenth-century Ottoman universal history books, I will trace the disappearance of the myths of foundations.

4.1.3 Yanko bin Madyan or Prophet Solomon

According to most of the sources examined here, the first founder of Constantinople was Yanko bin Madyan. Although some of the authors like Evliya Çelebi or Şem‘dânîzâde counted him as the second founder, they gave also a particular emphasis to this mytho-historical character.¹⁸⁰ Those who accepted him as the first founder based their arguments on the sources that had

¹⁷⁹ Yerasimos, *Legendes d’empire: La Fondation de Constantinople et de Sainte-Sophie Dans Les Traditions Turques*.

¹⁸⁰ Bekar argues that Evliya Çelebi accepted Yanko bin Madyan as a real founder, see: Bekar, “Hezarfen Hüseyin’in Evrensel Tarihinde Yeni Bir Bizans ve Konstantinopolis Algısı,” 29. However, Evliya counted Yanko bin Madyan as the second founder: “Andan bâni-i sâlis Yanko ibn Mâdyân melik oldu kim hûbût-ı Âdem Saff’den dörd bin altı yüz yılda pâdişâh olup İslâmbol’u binâ etdi. Bunun hilâfeti İskender-i Rûmî mevlûdundan dörd yüz otuz sene mukaddemdir. Ve İskender-i Kübrâ [e]vkâtından Hazret-i Risâlet’in velâdetine gelince 882 sene oldu. Yanko ibn Mâdyân Amlâk oğullarındandır. Ays ibn İshâk Nebî’ye müntehîdir. Bir rivâyetde Yanko, kısıraktan tevellüd etdüğüçün Yanko ibn Mâdyân derler. Batâlise-i Yûnâniyân’ın ibtidâsıdır.” Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 14. “Zîrâ bu Yanko ibn Mâdyân, cihângîr-i kübrâ azîmü’ş-şân bir pâdişâh idi. Cümle Yûnâniyân buna Süleymân-ı Sâni derler. [...] Yanko ibn Mâdyân, Hazret-i Süleymân’ın binâsı ve makâmıdır deyü İslâmbol’un sûruna mübâşeret edüp karındaşı Yanıvan Tuna nehrin İslâmbol içinden cereyân etmeğe ta’ahhüd edüp Yanko vezîri Kanator’a Yedikule’yi binâ etmeğe mübâşeret etdi.” Ibid., 15. For Evliya Çelebi’s narration of the Prophet Solomon as the first founder: “Andan İslâmbol zemînine gelüp hâlâ Hünkâr bâğçesi ki Sarâyburnu nâm mahalle gelüp anda serâperde-i Süleymâniyi kurup meks etdükde bir gece hâb-ı râhat edüp âb [u] hevâsından tarâvet kesb edince ol mahalde bir sarây-ı âli ve günâ-gün nûzhet-âbâd maksûreler inşâ etdi kim dillerde dâstân-ı dostân olup inkırâzu’d-devrân ma‘mûr u âbâdân ola deyü İslâmbol zemîni için hayr du‘â etdi.” Ibid., 14.

an aim to link the city to a pagan founder suggesting that the city was cursed¹⁸¹. However, those who have mentioned him as the second founder gave the name of Prophet Solomon as the first founder. According to Evliya Çelebi, both Yanko bin Madyan and the Prophet Solomon were amongst the four world conquerors; alongside Alexander the Great and Nebuchadnezzar II. Here, it is noteworthy to put that Çelebi counted Solomon and Alexander as Muslim, but Yanko and Nebuchadnezzar II as Greek (*Yunaniyyûn*).¹⁸² The importance of this stress was resulting from the fact that Constantinople was the cursed city for the traditional narration, and the founder of the city had to be an infidel.

As a source of the legend, Yerasimos traced the origins of the story and found that firstly by Agapios¹⁸³, in his *Kitâbü'l-Unvan*, Nicomedes I of Bithynia (d. c.255 BC) was narrated as the first founder of Constantinople (in the name of Nicomedia)¹⁸⁴ before the King Byzas.¹⁸⁵ This narration also employed by Arab historians, like Masudi. However, in the Ottoman history books, the name of the Nicomedia turned to “Yanko bin Madyan”. The first misreading of Nicomedia as “Nakmuliya” was made by Ibrahim bin Vâsif Şah who was attributed to writing the book, *Kitabü'l-Acaib* in the 10th or 11th century.¹⁸⁶ Starting from Ahmed Yazıcıoğlu (d. 1466), the first builder of Constantinople was accepted as Yanko Bin Madyan by many Ottoman historians. According to Yerasimos, Ahmed Yazıcıoğlu probably took the story from the book, *Kitabü'l-Acaib*.

¹⁸¹ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, 68-69.

¹⁸² Avcı, “Evliya Çelebi’nin Seyahatnamesi’nde İskender-i Zülkarneyn,” 412. Here, Avcı stated that Evliya Çelebi firstly counted Alexander as “Yunaniyyûn” but, then he determined Solomon and Alexander as “from Islam”, and the other two as “from Yunaniyyûn”, clearly the first “Yunaniyyûn” refers to the origin as Greek, and the second refers to the religion as pagan. Muslim historians generally accepted Alexander as Muslim character of the Qur’an; *Dhul’qarnayn*. Öztürk, “Zülkarneyn”.

¹⁸³ Maḥbûb ibn Qusṭanṭîn al-Manbijî (d. after 942)

¹⁸⁴ Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, 64.

¹⁸⁵ In Greek mythology, Byzas was the founder of the city of Constantinople (Byzantium).

¹⁸⁶ Yerasimos, 67.

However, when he was using the book, probably he made a second reading mistake, and replaced the character, “n” with “y”.¹⁸⁷ In the Arabic script, the name, Nicomedia took its ultimate form as Yanko bin Madyan, as a legendary founder of Constantinople.

Most of the sources examined in this thesis agreed that one of the founders of the city was Yanko bin Madyan, but there were still controversies about when he lived, and whether Prophet, Solomon before him constructed a building in Istanbul or not. According to *Takvîmü't-tevârih*, the first builder of the city was Yanko bin Madyan, but *Mürîr-tevârih* based on Mustafa Ali's *Künhulahbar* argues that the first builder of Istanbul was the Prophet, Solomon. Here, *Takvîmü't-tevârih*'s accounts on the Yanko Bin Madyan were 356 years before the birth of Solomon¹⁸⁸. However, *Mürîr-tevârih* by realizing the problem of the year changed the chronology between Solomon and Yanko bin Madyan, and with a reference to *History of Cenâbî*¹⁸⁹ strengthened the argument of the first founder as Solomon. He propounds that the second builder was Yanko Bin Madyan. However, in time, the earthquakes devastated the city and firstly King Byzas and secondly Constantine the Great rebuilt the city. Thus, the name of Constantine was given to the city¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁷ Yerasimos, 67.

¹⁸⁸ “Gerçi bu tafsil müverrih Ali merhumun Künhulahbar’ından ve ana tab’ olan tevârihden intihab olunmuşdur. Lakin sahib-i metn Rûhü’t-tevârih’den nukela Hazret-i Süleyman’dan üç yüz elli altı sal mukaddem tahrir ider. Bânî-i binada ihtilaf yok. İhtilaf ancak târihindedir. İndimizde ibtidâ-yı bina-yı İstanbul Hazret-i Süleymandan sonra olmak ihtiyar olunmağla Künhulahbar ve min tab’ahüm rahmehümullahın akvalinin hülasaları bu babda sevaba akreb olduğuşün tastir kılındı.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i’t-tevârih*, 64.

¹⁸⁹ Further information about *History of Cenâbî*, see: Mehmet Canatar, “Mustafa Cenabi,” in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Cemal Kafadar, Hakan Karateke and Cornell Fleischer. (<https://ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu/tr/historian/mustafa-cenabi>) retrieved 11-6-2019.

¹⁹⁰ “Bânîsi olan Yanko bin Madyan nesli şeddattan olub tafsil-i terkîm kılındığı vech üzere Aydıncık’da Süleyman Aleyhisselam fermanıyla Temaşalık nam kasr-ı dilara bina olunub ba’d-ba’din Yanko tahtgah edinmişdi. Bu sur şahû’l-erkânı mamur etdikde Süleyman’ı ahcardan nakl ile bünyad eyledi. Cenâbî Târihi’nde mukayyeddîr: Hazret-i Süleyman seyr ü sülukunda bu belde-i latifeye uğrayub seray-ı amire arsasını bir nice eyyam şeref-i nüzullarıyla müşerref kılub mekân-ı şerif-i merkuma hoş ayende-i hazret olmağın tamirine işaret-i aliyeleri südur bulub Süleyman’ı bilmeyenler

Şem‘dânîzâde consciously changed the chronological priority between the Prophet Solomon and Yanko bin Madyan. What he intended with this little change was to attribute the foundation to Prophet Solomon, not to the pagan figure, Yanko Bin Madyan. Here, the problem was directly related to the legitimacy of Constantinople and so Ottoman imperial ideology, and as an eighteenth-century historian, he was on the very side of the Ottoman state elites.¹⁹¹ For him, the founder was significant in two ways; first, the Prophet Solomon has symbolized the worldly power¹⁹², and the second, Yanko bin Madyan was known as pagan.¹⁹³ As a historian vigorously advocating absolutist sultans, Şem‘dânîzâde based the foundation to the Prophet Solomon who represented the powerful and harsh side of Muslim rulers in his narratives. Therefore, he was trying to strengthen the relationship between Solomon and the Ottoman order. In the part of the Solomon, Şem‘dânîzâde established another genealogy from Solomon to the Ottoman Empire by stressing the importance of the use of violence. When he was narrating Prophet Solomon’s answer to Belkıs (Queen of Sheba)¹⁹⁴, he claimed that the Ottoman sultans until the time of

ibret alsun mekânından müedasınca bina buyurulub Galata’nın esamı dahi bu peygamber-i alemgirin ferman-ı alışanı ile olmak rivâyet-i sahîhesi menkuldür. Bu takdirce ibtidâ-yı bânî Hazret-i Süleyman olub sani yanko olur. Badehû hasef ve zelzele ile binalardan eser-i asar kalmayub Bozantin tamir etdi. Badehû Konstantin hala baki olan ebniyeyi bina etdi. Tafsili vakitleri geldikçe imla kılınur. Her biri kendi ismiyle tesmiye olub Konstantin binası baki olmağla Konstantiniyye ile mezkurdur. İslambol tesmiyesi bade’l-feth denildiği gibi bu şehre vasf ve unvan olub giderek Konstantiniyye namına İslambol galebe idüb nam ü ilm olmuşdur.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i’t-tevârih*, 65.

¹⁹¹ As Yerasimos set forth, the myths about the foundation of Constantinople have been changed throughout the centuries, with the changes in the ideological concerns. For the Ottoman cases, the important turning point was Mehmed II’s universal ideology that he has a claim of being the follower of the Roman Emperors, and Constantinople was the sign of this ideology. However, a group gathered around Gazi and Sufi dervishes in Gelibolu was opponent of this ideology and settlement policies done by Mehmed. In this sense, the stories on Yanko b. Madyan were produced by these opponents like Ahmed Yazıcıoğlu. Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, 61.

¹⁹² Yerasimos, *Türk Metinlerinde Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, 49.

¹⁹³ “Bânisi olan Yanko Modan nesl-i Şeddad’dan olub...” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i’t-tevârih*, 65. The word “şeddad” refers to Şeddad bin Ad who was from “the People of Ad”, the Prophet Hud’s people, in Islamic literature. The important thing here is that People of Ad were narrated as trying to construct a heaven (*Iram*) in the world.

¹⁹⁴ “(Fe lemmâ câ’e suleymâne kâle e tumiddüneni bi mâlin fe mâ âtâniyallâhu hayrun mimma âtâkum, bel entum bi hediyetikum tefrahûn(tefrahüne))[Neml, 27:36] âyet-i kerîmesi manasınca siz

Ibrahim Pasha¹⁹⁵ had obeyed the verse of Qur'an¹⁹⁶ about the Prophet Solomon to use the violence against the enemies and they defeated the infidels.¹⁹⁷ In this sense, Şem'dânîzâde was a vigorous advocate of the absolutist sultans and so his attribution of the foundation of Constantinople to prophet Solomon was not only for making the city Muslim but supporting the absolute authority of the sultans.¹⁹⁸

Tenkihüt-tevârih was another world history that gave the story of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia. However, it is interesting to note that Hezarfen Hüseyin started the story of Constantinople, neither Yanko bin Madyan nor Solomon. He gave the story in the part of the “*Roman Emperors in Istanbul*¹⁹⁹” and told about the events that took place in Istanbul.²⁰⁰ Hezarfen's

beni mal ile kendünüze rağbet ider mi sandınız demek ita eylediği devlet her vechle hediyenizden hayırlıdır sizi İslam'a davet ederim itaat ederseniz febihâ ve illa asker irsal edib Belkıs'ın mülk ve askerini berbad iderim buyurub (Irci' ileyhim fe le ne'tiyennehum bi cunüdin lâ kibelet lehum bihâ ve le nuhriceñnehum minhâ ezilleyen ve hum şâgırûn(şâgırüne)) [Neml, 27:37] kavliyle Hazret-i Süleyman elçileri avdet etdiler”. Şem'dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür'i't-tevârih*, 72-73.

¹⁹⁵ Grand Vizier Damat Ibrahim Pasha (d.1730). Şem'dânîzâde was a great opponent of him and his political attitudes. Öksüz, “Şem'dânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi'nin Mür'i't-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin (180b-345a) Tahlil ve Tenkidi Metni.”, xxxi-xxxii.

¹⁹⁶ “Return thou to them; we shall assuredly come against them with hosts they have not power to resist, and we shall expel them from there, abased and utterly humbled.” Qur'an 27:37, trans. A.J. Arberry.

¹⁹⁷ “Ve Selâtîn-i Âl-i Osman devr-i İbrahim Paşa'ya gelince bu âyet-i kerîmenin mazmun-ı münifi üzere salabet-i İslamiyeyi terk itmemele muzaffer ve mensur ve 'uyun-u e'daya mühib görünüler idi.” Şem'dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür'i't-tevârih*, 73. Şem'dânîzâde in his *Mür'i't-tevârih*, recurrently pointed out the importance of the use of violence against both the infidels and inner problems: “Her sabah köşelerde maktûl görünmekle nâsın havfi ve pâdişâhın mehâbeti ziyâde olur idi. Hünkârın [IV. Murad] murâdı men'-i duhân değil tathîr-i bilâd idi. Böyle siyâset muzır değildir. Hıfz-ı bilâd ve sıyânet-i saltanatdır. Dâimâ pâdişâhlara siyâset lâzımdır.” Öksüz, “Şem'dânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi'nin Mür'i't-Tevârih Adlı Eserinin (180b-345a) Tahlil ve Tenkidi Metni,” 119-120.

As advices of Aristotle, he wrote: “Fırka i ulaya şimşir, fırka i saniye lutf ve ihsan gerektir ki firkateyn zabt oluna. Hak budur ki bu taksim hizmetkar sahibi olan efendilere ve asker sahibi olan zabitan ve padişahlara ve saltanat sahibi olan müluka desturü'l-ameldir. Eşraf haya ile itaat ider. Bunlar kılıcdan ve ölümden korkmaz. Ancak lutf ve ihsan ile zabt olunurlar. Ama erazil lutf ve ihsan görse şekavetini ziyade ider. Hiç zabt olunmaz. Anlara daima kahr dahi olmazsa kılıc ve sairine ibreten katl ile zabt olunur. Bu kâideyi bilmeyen vüzeranın zamanında ibadullah rahat itmez.” Şem'dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür'i't-tevârih*, 89-90.

¹⁹⁸ For a reading on the modernization of the Empire and the absolutist tendencies of the eighteenth century historians, look; Tezcan, “The Politics of Early Modern Ottoman Historiography.”

¹⁹⁹ Hezarfen, *Tenkihü't-tevârih*, 129-130.

²⁰⁰ Bekar, “Hezarfen Hüseyin'in Evrensel Târihinde Yeni Bir Bizans ve Konstantinopolis Algısı,” 20-21.

work was an interesting exception that he has not given any separate account on the stories of the prophets. On the other hand, he additionally made an emphasis on the righteousness of the sources.²⁰¹ This emphasis on the reliability caused him to disregard the earlier narrations about both Solomon and Yanko bin Madyan, and to build an acceptable version of the stories of the foundation by Constantine the Great. Apparently, he thought that it was possible to legitimize the foundation of the city with a reference to Christian Byzantine emperors.²⁰² However, by doing so, he for the first time in Ottoman historiography, wrote a world history without referring to the stories of the prophets.

The ideological functions of the legends on the founding of Constantinople were apparent, as explained by Yerasimos. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, one of the basic purposes of early modern historians has been historicizing the legendary accounts. For this purpose, they have discussed recurrently the dates of the events and have not hesitated to assign different dates for the founding. On the other hand, the primary materials beside the rumors have been the artifacts situated in different places of the city like Hagia Sophia or obelisks. Therefore, the job of the early modern Ottoman historians has been to constitute a narration that embraces the legendary accounts and the spaces of the city in a consistent chronological order. In this sense, narrations of the founding of the cities and monuments had to mark a specific time that shows the ideological connotations of the spaces.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 24. Here, according to Bekar, Hezarfen stated that he wanted to take the story of the foundation of Constantinople from the reliable (*dürüst*) sources.

²⁰² Ibid., 33-34. In his article, Bekar questioned why Hezarfen has not used these legends contrary to his contemporaneous historians. Bekar claims that Hezarfen constituted an image of Constantine the Great as a religious Christian emperor using the Greek sources. Accordingly, all the obelisks and temples, like Column of Constantine (*Çemberlitaş*) and Hagia Sophia were narrated as accounts of the Roman emperors enriched with spiritual stories.

4.1.4 The accounts of the nineteenth century

In the late nineteenth-century history books, as the legends losing their places in the historical works, narrations of the foundations of the cities have lost their importance. From now on, the cities started to be taken as the objects of the geographical and archaeological sciences. In this sense, the narrations of Istanbul in the world history books of the late nineteenth century were highly different from the traditional sources. At first, narrations of the foundation of the cities have not had wide coverage in the world history books. Furthermore, when they told about the cities, they have not related them with the mythical stories. Instead, the accounts about Constantinople, for example, has been given briefly in narrations of the Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great and generally with the human-based geographical discourse of modernity by giving accounts on the population. In this sense, the legends of Constantinople, totally disappeared in the universal history books.²⁰³

In the late nineteenth century, the Ottoman world history books took the new sciences at the center of narrations. The historians have started to learn European languages, especially French, and the new tendency was being a part of the global culture²⁰⁴ by applying European history books. As discussed in the previous chapter, Ahmed Midhat's great work, *Kâinât* was an example of this understanding in which Midhat divided the world into five continents and issued

²⁰³ At the end of the century the mythical stories of the Constantinople became an issue of the folkloric tradition, see: Öztürkmen, "From Constantinople to Istanbul: Two Sources on the Historical Folklore of a City."

²⁰⁴ Toksöz, "The World of Mehmed Murad: Writing Histoires Universelles in Ottoman Turkish," 348. Karateke, "The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography," 129.

the Ottomans as the last volume of Europe and the first volume of Asia²⁰⁵. The basic motive of Midhat to write this work was the map of the world that he saw in his school years²⁰⁶. His narrations showed the very significance of modern geography in this new time. Now, the curiosity about the unknown geographies became prominent. In other words, geography became more of an issue than the chronology.

In these Ottoman universal history books, the prophets stories have generally preserved their places. However, as the other narrations, the themes about the spaces changed drastically. The traditional theme on the founding of the cities by the prophets were almost totally disappeared. Interestingly, it was not only in these universal history books, but also *the Stories of the Prophets* of Ahmed Cevdet, this popular theme of the early modern Ottoman historians could not be observed. Cevdet's few narrations on the founding of the cities, the prophets have not been an agent, but the people as an unspecified subject started to be the actor.

In *Kısâs-ı Enbiyâ* of Ahmed Cevdet, there were few narrations of the founding city. However, firstly there was no account of building a city which was attributed to a prophet lived in between the Creation and the Flood, and secondly, a few narrations of cities taken place in the later prophets was not associated with one prophet, but to a group of people by using plural subject. The first narration about the founding a city was in the story of Abraham that:

“The sons of Noah, firstly, settled in the land of Iraq and built the city of Babylon near the Euphrates. Later, a group of them left and built the city

²⁰⁵ Midhat, *Kâinât* (Vol. 15), cover page.

²⁰⁶ Midhat, (1871-72). *Kâinât* (Vol. 1.), 1.

of Nineveh, on the edge of Tigris and on the opposite bank of today's Mosul"²⁰⁷.

Similarly, in the part of "the State of Israel", Cevdet gave an account of the founding of the city of Sebastia as:

"The capital of the states of the descendants [Israelites] was Nablus, and then, they built the Samiria, Sebastia, and made it capital".²⁰⁸

The pluralization of the subject was started to become prevalent among the nineteenth-century historians that has not indicated a prophet, but the ordinary people or ancient civilizations.

In Ahmed Midhat's *Târih-i Umûmî*, similarly, there was not a narration of the founding of a city by the prophets. Here, the spatial accounts were so striking that probably for the first time, a universal history in Ottoman Turkish described this primordial time as depicting their underdevelopment, stressing their living in the forests and caves.²⁰⁹ The accounts were directly taken from the book of Alvares, but, Midhat quoted the statements selectively. For example, from the passage of the Seth, there is only one sentence that Midhat disregarded:

"Cain and his son Enoch built his first city: they called it Enochia".²¹⁰

Apparently, the account for Midhat was not so authentic or meaningful that he

²⁰⁷ "Nuh (as)'nin evlâdî ibtidâ Irak diyarında sakin olmuşlar ve Fırat Nehri'ne karib mahalde Babil Şehri'ni yapmışlar idi. Sonra içlerinden bir taife ayrılıp Dicle kenarında ve şimdi Musul dediğimiz şehrin karşı yakasında Ninova şehrini bina etmişler idi." Ahmed Cevdet, (1867). *Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ ve Tevârih-i Hulefâ*, 7.

²⁰⁸ "Müluk-u esbatın payitahtı ibtidâ Nablus olub sonra Samiriye, yani Sebastiyeye, şehrini bina ettiler ve onu payitaht ittihaz ettiler." Ibid., 43-44.

²⁰⁹ "Sair insanlar ekseriyetle mağaralarda ve büyük ormanlarda beytutet ederler idi." Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 64.

²¹⁰ "Seth: Un troisième fils nommé Seth, consôla Adam: Il se distingua par sa justice et sa piété. Ses fils suivirent son exemple; alors les descendants d'Adam furent divisés *un postérité de Seth* ou enfants de Dieu, et *en postérité de Caïn* ou enfants des hommes. Caïn e son fil Enoch batirent son première ville: elle fut appelle Énochia." Alvarès, (1877). *Nouveaux Éléments d'histoire Général*, 26. In the 1848 and 1860 editions of the book, the same passage had been presented. in *Târih-i Umûmî* the passage was taken as: "Şit: Hazret-i Âdemin üçüncü oğlu olup pederine mûtfi ve münkad olarak pederinin vefatından sonra dahi peygamberlik müşarünileyh Şit'e intikal eylemiştir. O zamana kadar evlâd-ı Âdem çoğaldığı cihetle bir takımı katil Kabil'e ve bir takımı da Hazret-i Şit'in evlâd ve ümmetine "ebnaullah" yani Allahın oğulları namı verildi. İşte insanlar arasında ilk ihtilaf ve inkısam dahi bu yolda zuhûra geldi." Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 61.

has ignored the sentence deliberately. However, what this thesis claim is that the authenticity is directly related to the general discourse of the sciences therefore the modern geography has started to determine even the themes of stories of the prophets.

In Mizancı Murad's *Târih-i Umûmî*, in a similar manner, only the accounts of the Constantin the Great's founding of the city of Constantinople in place of the ancient city of Byzantion can be found and the accounts were given briefly²¹¹. However, the accounts on the founding of Rome were not so short that he gave the mythical narrations about Remus and Romulus.²¹² Murad has not given the mythical narrations of Constantinople, but following the European sources, he gave the foundation myth of Rome, but cynically. It will be seen in the following part that Murad used the word, supposedly (*güya*) when giving the accounts of the ancient Persian dynasties (*Pishdadians*). The same word, in the same manner, was used here two times, and one of them for the Roman god, Mars. Apparently, Murad used this word for showing his disbelief in the narrations. Furthermore, in the later version of the book, he added contemptuous sentence after a detailed narration of the story, Murad summarized; "Rome, the world-conqueror was the work of these bastard brothers and vagabonds like them."²¹³ It is possible to say that Murad acknowledged some parts of the story as real, but by secularizing the legendary characters, not as a heroic form.

²¹¹ Mehmed Murad, (2007). *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 2), 345-346.

²¹² Mehmed Murad, (1879-80). *Târih-i Umûmî*, (Vol. 2), 6-7. Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, (Vol. 2), 7-8. Mehmed Murad, (1891-92). *Târih-i Umûmî*, (Vol. 2), 7-8. In these different versions of the book, there are significant differences. That's beyond the scope of this study, but pursuing this repeatedly printed and changed versions of the book can be a good study for tracing the increasing distance between myth and history.

²¹³ "Cihangîr olan Roma, veled-i zina bulunan işbu iki birader ile kendilerine layık birkaç serserinin eseridir." Mehmed Murad, (1891-92). *Târih-i Umûmî*, (Vol. 2), 8.

Lastly, Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa's *Miratü'l-iber* started with a definition of history by putting the cities as one of the two primary elements of the history. He described the history of civilization as the science that reports the events of the peoples and the cities.²¹⁴ Furthermore, Said Paşa introduced the geography as an auxiliary science of history, under three main titles, mathematical, natural and political geographies. He gave descriptions of each kind and detailed history and developments of the geography. Here, he stated that in each part, he will give a geography of the mentioned countries.²¹⁵ However, in the part of the stories of the prophets, the spatial accounts have almost totally disappeared. Increasing the distance of the narration styles between the other parts of the book and the divine parts, there were not any spatial narrations in the stories of the prophets. Therefore, there was not a narration on the founding of the cities.

All in all, these increasing geographical narrations on the universal history books have not affected the divine narrations in a similar way but contrarily has caused historians to leave the mythic spatial narrations like the founding of the cities. This new type of narration strategy caused the prophets stories to become more separate from the other parts of the books.

²¹⁴ “İlm-i târih-i medeni ümem ve büldanın vekayi'yle her türlü havadis-i künyeyi bildirir.” Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 4.

²¹⁵ “Kitabımızda târihlerini yazacağımız memleketlerin bir dereceye kadar coğrafyaları da tevzih olunacağından bu mahalde fenn-i mezkurun zuhûr ve terakkisine dair malumat-ı icmaliye derciyle iktifa kılındı.” Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 22.

4.2 The effects of archaeology

4.2.1 Early modern prophets as inventors

The early modern history books generally attributed the inventions of tools, crafts, arts or buildings to the prophets, and sometimes to the other mythical characters. As the founding of the cities, these accounts had mythical origins. As mentioned in Chapter 2.1, it was the mythical functions of the tales of the prophets that “cosmicized the chaotic”, uncultivated lands by narrating the founding of the cities by prophets in ambiguous time and space, in Eliade’s term, *in illo tempore*. Moreover, it was not only space that cosmicized by means of myth, but “all the important acts of life were revealed *ab origine* by gods or heroes”²¹⁶. The inventions of the prophets were also reflecting the similar function in these stories. In this sense, by founding an Islamic myth, the stories were not only cosmicized but also Islamized the arts, inventions, figures and the cities. Introducing Alexander the Great as prophet²¹⁷ was the most common example, but the eighteenth-century historian, Şem‘dânîzâde went a step further by portraying Aristotle as a Muslim philosopher.²¹⁸

However, in the nineteenth century, with the effects of the modern scientific discourse, as the Ottoman historians have left the Persian mythical narrations especially those of the Pishdadian Dynasty, some traditional mythical themes of the tales of prophets, besides the cities, the inventions made by the prophets have started to be abandoned. What made these myths Islamic and Ottoman have dissolved with their ideological functions.

²¹⁶ Eliade and Trask, *The Myth of the Eternal Return, or, Cosmos and History*, 32.

²¹⁷ “Ve saltanatı adaletlidir. Ve nübüvvetinde ihtilaf olunub peygamberândan olmak kavli râcihdir.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür‘i‘t-tevârih*, 87.

²¹⁸ “İskender’e üstad olmuştur. Müslimdir.” Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür‘i‘t-tevârih*, 89.

For Ottoman historians, the era between Adam and Noah was one of the most questioned periods of world history in terms of the dates, spaces, names, lifetimes and genealogies of the characters. Furthermore, for the early modern history books that have narrated the Persian legends and placed the first mythical Iranian dynasties in those antediluvian times, the problem has become significant. These uncertainties cause the era to be function as in *illus tempus* with Eliade's term. Thus, the accounts like the founding of the cities or the inventions of the tools and arts were mostly attributed to the prophets that supposed to live in between Adam and Noah. In this regard, I would like here, only to focus on one of the debated characters who was thought to live in this period, Idris who has been equated with Biblical Enoch, Greek Hermes, and Persian Hoshang.

In this part, initially, I would like to show the changing narrations of Idris in the early modern Ottoman world history books. Secondly, I will discuss how this early modern theme started to be left by Ottoman historians as a result of the change in the paradigms, with the adoption of the new sciences, particularly the archaeology via pursuing the change in the narrations throughout the late nineteenth-century universal history books. In this sense, I would like to trace the story of the Prophet Idris through the sources written between the mid-seventeenth century and the late nineteenth century.

4.3.2 Idris (Enoch) in the early modern world history books

The Muslim scholars mostly accepted the Quranic Prophet Idris as the other name of Biblical Prophet Enoch. On the other hand, some have thought him as

the counterpart of the Greek God, Hermes²¹⁹ or Persian legendary king, Hoshang²²⁰. The narrations on Idris have varied in the sources. However, he was mostly known for his inventions of sewing and writing. The similarity with Hermes has been based on his wisdom and inventing the writing. Although the name of Idris could be found in two places in the Qur'an, the Muslim historians firstly al-Tabari using the Biblical and Rabbinical sources, have expanded the stories about him and attributed much more inventions to him. Moreover, because of his wisdom, some thought him as philosopher or "prophets of the philosophers".²²¹

Among the early modern Ottoman world history books, *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* exceptionally did not give any account on the inventions of the prophets. For *Takvîmü't-tevârîh*, the events were important as long as they signified a date. Therefore, in the articles of the book, there were no accounts of the inventions. In this sense, only article about Idris was his ascension to heaven²²². However, in the previous article on the death of the Prophet Seth, there was extra information about the building of the Egyptian Pyramids that in one sentence, summarized the event that the pyramids were built for keeping the knowledge from the Flood with the command of Idris.²²³ As indicated below, *Mûrit-tevârîh* expanded this article. In the printed version of *Takvîmü't-tevârîh*, there were two more sentences saying that there has been a claim that he lived

²¹⁹ Harman, "İdrîs," 479. Vajda, "İdrîs".

²²⁰ Reeves and Reed, *Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, Volume I: Sources From Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*.

²²¹ "Ibn Al-Arabi described him as "the prophet of the philosophers"", Vajda, "İdrîs".

²²² "Sene 1467: ref-i İdris Aleyhisselam besuy-e aseman." Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvîmü't-Tevârîh: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 8a.

²²³ "Sene 1340: vefat-e Anuş bin Şis ve bena-ye Herman-e Mısır der zaman-e surid ez müluk-e Mısır beraye hıfz-e ulûm ez Tufan be Ferman-e İdris Aleyhisselam." Ibid., 7b.

for three hundred sixty-five years, but according to his year of birth, it should be two hundred forty-five years.²²⁴

In *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*, as mentioned earlier, there were a few accounts on the prophets. Idris was also mentioned only in the stories of Pishdadian. The only reference here was a sentence in between the narrations of the great cities built and the inventions made by Tahmurs that “His holiness Idris lived in his time”.²²⁵

On the other hand, in *Sahâif'ülâhbar*, the accounts of the Idris have more place as the inventor of the writing with pen and the sewing and dressing garments.²²⁶ Here, it is important to note that for the first time, we met with an explanation about what the people had made before an invention. The book suggested that before Idris, people “had dressed animal pelts”.²²⁷ Furthermore, it was the only source among the works examined here to say, “his name among the Greeks was Hermes”.²²⁸ On the other hand, when the book was telling about the other sciences of him, having the knowledge of astrology (*ilm-i nücum*) and medicine (*ilm-i tib*) it did not directly associate them with him. The book stressed that the sciences given to him by God. Accordingly, the mysteries of the heavens have been unveiled to him.²²⁹ It will be more apparent in the nineteenth-century history books that the knowledge of the earlier prophets who had to live

²²⁴ “Ömürleri ol zaman üçyüzaltmışbeş sal olmak mervidir. Lakin muktezayı mevlid ikiyüzkırkbeş sal olur”. Kâtib Çelebi, (1734). *Takvîmü't-tevârih*, 21.

²²⁵ “Şehr-i Nişabur ve Kal'a-i Merd cümle-i asarındandır. Hazret-i İdris bunun zamanında idi. Atlara eğer urup binmek ve develere yük urmak ve yünlere eşk çekip astar hasıl olmak bunun işidir.” Hezarfen, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih*, 6.

²²⁶ “Ve Hazret-i İdris kalem ile yazı yazarların evvelidir. Ve ibtidâ esvap tuyup*** esvap giyen onlardır.” Müneccimbaşı, *Sahâif'ül-ahbar*, 43.

²²⁷ “Ol vakte gelince deriler giyerlerdi.” Ibid., 43

²²⁸ “Yunaniyün yanında isimleri Hermes'tir.” Ibid., 43.

²²⁹ “Bazılar der ki onlara nücum ve tıb ilimleri inzal olundu (...) Ve onda esrar-ı semaviye münkeşif olmuştu.” Ibid., 43.

in the savagery, was because they had been exceptionally educated by God as semi-miraculous knowledge.

Şem‘dânîzâde’s *Mür’i’t-tevârîh* has been one of the richest sources in terms of the narrations of the prophets. Apparently, Şem‘dânîzâde used many different sources together and despite the fact that he tried to constitute a holistic and nonconflicting history²³⁰, sometimes he has attributed the same inventions to different prophets or mythical characters. In his story of Idris, he gave various information. One of the different accounts that has not taken place in the other books was about his birthplace, Egypt.²³¹ He continually stated that “he built Egypt”. Interestingly, Şem‘dânîzâde gave another important duty to Idris that the knowledge of him has to be saved from the Flood of Noah. Therefore, he asserted that Idris had been informed about the Flood, so in order to save the sciences from getting lost he wrote them onto the tablets, and by building the Pyramids in Egypt had kept the tablets in the Pyramids. The relationship between Pyramids and Idris has appeared at first in *Takvîmü’t-tevârîh*, and then it was seen in the *Gülşen-i Tevârîh* with the same reasoning.

Gülşen-i Tevârîh with its religious and traditional style gave the prophets stories in the beginning. After this part, Ferâizîzâde Mehmed Said turned back chronologically and gave the accounts of Persian kings starting from Pishdadian Dynasty. Among the world history books studied here, it gave the longest narrations of the prophets that resembled not the historical works, but the genre

²³⁰ *Mür’i’t-tevârîh* is a well coordinated book, and the beginning parts have references to the other parts of the book. Therefore, the prophets stories are not separate from other parts. For example, in the story of the Prophet Solomon, there was a reference to Damad Ibrahim Pasha or in the Lut or Luqman to the religious discussions of the day. In this sense, the author is seen as meticulous when he is quoting from another book. It can be said that generally he used his own words and when he noticed a conflicting information, he changed or discussed that in comparison with the other sources.

²³¹ “Mısırda tevellüd idüb ilm i nücum kendiye vehbi i’ta olunub”, Şem‘dânîzâde, (1919-20). *Mür’i’t-tevârîh*, 22.

of the Stories of the Prophets. Furthermore, as opposed to the other historical stories about the prophets, there was no account on the dates of the prophets. Here, the accounts about Idris were more than a page that almost twofold of the accounts of *Mürit-tevârih* which was the longest among the others.²³² As an invention of Idris, the book gave firstly the accounts of the Pyramids which had taken place in the *Takvîmü 't-tevârih* and *Mürit-tevârih*. Secondly Mehmed Said gave the well-known inventions of Idris, the writing and sewing. Besides that, astronomy, arithmetic, and the science of letters (*ilm-i huruf*) have been attributed to Idris²³³. Moreover, accounts on the Pishdadian Dynasty, in the time of the legendary king, Hoshang, the text mentioned again the prophet Idris by associating him with Hoshang. Mehmed Said narrated the Hoshang as not only lived in the time of Idris, but also as embracing the religion of the Prophet Idris. In this way, the book established a relationship between one of the inventors of the Persian legends and the Prophet Idris.²³⁴

4.2.3 The archaeology in the nineteenth century

When we come to the late nineteenth century, the traditional theme, the inventions of the prophets were started to disappear in the world history books.

Majority of the historians have abandoned the stories of inventions made by the

²³² Respectively, the following information was given in the book: the genealogy of Idris, his real name's being *Hanokh* that was a Syriac word, his building the Pyramids to preserve the knowledge from the Flood, his being a hundred years old in the time of the death of Adam, his given revelation as a holy book (*suhûf*) at the age of three hundred, his appearance, his ascendance to heaven, his inventions, his encountering with Gabriel, and the anecdote on this meeting. Ferâizîzâde, *Gülşen-i Tevârih*, 13-15.

²³³ "Bin yüz kırk târihinde ulumu tufandan hıfz için Mısır'da ehramat bina ettiler." Ibid., 13.

"Dünyada ibtidâ kalem ile kitabet ve esvap dikmek ve ilm-i nücum ve hesap bunlardan zahir oldu. (...) İlm-i huruf dahi onların mucizatındandır." Ibid., 14.

²³⁴ "Hoşeng Hazret-i İdris (as.) zamanında tahtnişîn olmağla Hazret-i İdris'in dini üzerine idi. İbtida imaretler ve haneler ve bağlar ve bağçeler imaret etmek ve sim ve zer ve ahen meadinini peyda etmek ve samur ve sincap ve kakım ve vaşak gibi kürkleri peyda etmek ve tazılara şıkar aldırmaq ve padişahana mahsus olan zib ve arayış ve esbe eğer urmak ve şıtrana yük yükletmek ve Farisi nameleri yazmak bunların ihtiradır." Ibid., 226.

prophets or heroic characters as had done by the early modern historians. Nevertheless, the progress of human civilization as we discussed earlier, became a central topic of all world history books. The basic tool that shows the development was the new science, archaeology. Despite the fact that these historians have not directly narrated the archaeological findings, the significance given to archaeology started to be seen in the introduction parts and as an effect of the disappearance of the older themes at first. Afterward, it started to have more place that Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa gave a separate place to archaeology as an auxiliary science of history. Moreover, he used the archaeological knowledge predominantly in the parts of ancient civilizations.

Ahmed Midhat's *Târih-i Umûmî* was one of the interesting books of the period that used predominantly the book of Lévi Alvares.²³⁵ However, like Mizancı Murad Ahmed Midhat has not told about the archaeology but similarly among the sources of the history, gave the historical artifacts as the most valuable ones. Differently, in Ahmed Midhat, beside the three sources, there was an extra source as the fourth; the sacred books.²³⁶ Yet, the sacred books for Midhat could be changed according to the religion of the nation and all of them could be used for history. At the same time, he warned that “although there is a

²³⁵ Alvares, *Nouveaux Éléments d'Histoire Générale*.

²³⁶ “Menabi-i târihden birincisi kütüb-ü semaviye ve yahut pek ziyade kademinden naşi erbabı indinde kütüb-ü semaviyeden addolunan kitaplar olup Tevrat ve İncil ve Kuran-ı Azimüşşanın kütüb-ü semaviyeden olduğunu ehl-i kitaptan bulunanlar tabii kabul ederler. Kadîm Hindilerin Veda tesmiye eyledikleri kütüb-ü kadîme dahi onlarca kütüb-ü mukaddeseden olup Hind-i kadîm târihi hakkında bir hayli malumatı camidirler. Fers-i kadîmin “zend-i avesta” yahut dezerdeşt denilen kitabı da bu cümledendir.

Târihin ikinci menbaı bir takım eski milletlerin pederden evlâda inkılap eden rivayat-ı sahihe ve hıfz eyledikleri eşyar ve beyat-ı kadîmesi olup balada beyan olunduğu vechle bunların içindeki yanlış veya mübalağalar çıkarıldıktan sonra baki birçok dahi malumat-ı târihiye mevcuttur.

Menabi-i mezkurenin üçüncüsü asar-ı kadîmedir ki meskukat-ı atika ve hutut ve nukut-u kadîme ve eski mezarlardan çıkan tabutlar ve esas beytiye ve hafr olunan mahallerden zuhûr eden kadîm memleketler harabesi ve bunlarda bulunan eşya ve edevat ve sairedir. Târihe cümleden ziyade hizmet eden de bunlardır. Dördüncüsü dahi müverrihin-i kadîmedir ki bunların hizmeti târih için doğrudan doğruya binaen ala zalik menafi-i müstahsalesi dahi pek bedihidir.” Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 28-30.

place to the oral sources in history, it is not possible to claim that these are certain realities”. If a nation believes in those narrations, then the history had to write them as “a certain nation believes in that way”.²³⁷ Here, while Midhat counted the sacred narrations as the fourth source of history, he put a distance between himself and the narration. Accordingly, he was very close to think the sacred sources as a historical artifact that in another place stressed that even Torah had not been present in ancient times.²³⁸

Mizancı Murad on the other hand, has not directly mentioned the archaeology as an auxiliary science. Yet, he grouped the sources of the history under three types; the written documents (*asar-ı mazbuta*), the oral narratives (*asar-ı menkule*), and historical artifacts (*asar-ı atika*). The written documents were the papers and works written by the contemporaneous people.²³⁹ The oral narratives were the stories or rumors that were not so reliable, but still could be useful.²⁴⁰ And thirdly, the historical artifacts were all types of artifacts from

²³⁷ “Fenn-i târih bazı mesail gibi öyle yalnız ma’kulat ve mevhumat üzerine ibtina edemeyip eğerçi menkulatın târih aleminde bir büyük mevkiî var ise de târih yalnız menkulatı dahi hakayık-ı mahza sûretinde bir kimsenin nazar-ı kabulüne arz edemez. Akl ve hikmetin haricinde olan bir takım menkulat hakayık-ı târihiye sûretinde arz edilemeyip evham ve hurafattan ibaret addolunacağı derkardır. Şu kadar var ki bu sûrette olan menkulat eğer bir milletin akâid-i diniyye ve mezhebiyyesinden ise târih onları dahi “filanca millet şöyle itikad ediyor” diye kayda zabt eyler. Mesela evham ve hayalat-ı yunaniye bir takım menkulat teşkil eder ki akıl hikmetin haricinde olmakla beraber târih yine onları hayalat-ı yunaniyeden olmak üzere kayd eder.” Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 24-25.

²³⁸ “Evlâd-ı beşerin işbu evail-i ahvali ve terakkiyat-ı medeniyyelerinin ibtidâsı hakkında bazı müverrihler bir çok tafsilata girmişler ise de bunların hiç birisinin kuvvetli bir mehazı olmayıp cümlesi kendi evham ve hayalat ve tasavvuratından ibarettir. Zira Tevrat’ta buralara dair tafsilat-ı lazime olmayıp Tevrat’tan dahi eski ve kadîm olarak elde hiçbir kitap yoktur. Halbuki Tevrat dahi işbu ibtidâ-yı ahvalden binlerce seneler sonra meydana çıkmıştır.” Ibid., 75-76.

²³⁹ “Ahval ve vukuatın zaman ve sûret-i vukuunu beyan eden ve o ahval ve vukuatı müşahade eyleyen muasırlardan biri tarafından zabt ve tahrir olunup o sûrette yeddimize vasıl olan evrak ve asara “asar-ı mazbuta” ıtlak olunur.

Mesela kütüb-ü mukaddese ve târih, takvim, evrak-ı havadis, evrak-ı resmiye, mahkeme ilamatı, edebiyat, kavanin, muahedat vesaire –asar-ı mazbutadan maduttur.” Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, 7.

²⁴⁰ “Bazı vukuat-ı maziye hakkında ahali içine neşr olunmuş ve kitap vasıtasıyla zabt ve tahrir olunmayıp pederden evlâda nakl olunagelmış olan rivayat ve hikayat ve emsal ve eşar gibi asara “asar-ı menkule” denir. Bu misillü asar-ı tabii mübalağalı olur ise de yine istifadeden hali değildir.” Ibid., 7.

antiquity, like sculptures, coins, paintings and also the cities and castles. Murad thought that this third type was the most valuable source of history.²⁴¹

The archaeology in *Miratü'l-iber* of Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa was one of the primary importance.²⁴² The first part of his book was published in 1886, six years later than Mizancı Murad's *Târih-i Umûmî*. However, in this book, the approach to the new sciences has prominently changed and taken a more grounded form. Instead of giving a huge place in the introduction to the sciences²⁴³, to each part of the ancient history books, he started with the general information about the geography and archaeology.²⁴⁴ However, in the book, the stories of the prophets were totally separated from the other parts. Although sometimes he referred some prophets inside the narrations of ancient Mesopotamia, the parts of the stories of the prophets were given after the Introduction and then the geographical and archeological narrations started to be given with the general view to Asia²⁴⁵. However, there was no geographical or archaeological account in the prophets stories, but detailed chronology.

²⁴¹ "Eski zaman adamlarından kalmış olan şehir, kale ve ebniye-i saire, resm, heykel ve dikili taşlar, meskukat, esliha, melbusat, eşya-yı beytiye ve edevat-ı saire gibi asara "asar-ı atika" tabi olunur. Asar-ı atika târihin en sahih me hazlarıdır." Ibid., 7,8.

²⁴² "Defain-i mutalsama sözünü lisan-ı hakikat o asar-ı garibe hakkında yad edebiliyor ki sonraları tılsımları açılan defineler gibi yerlerin altından çıkarılan geran-kıymet asar-ı atikanın, o meydan-ı ibretde asrımıza kadar asılı muammalar gibi ne olduğu bilinmeyen dikili taşların rumuz ve hututu keşf olundukça -bunca asırlardan beri ne alemde yaşadıkları perde-i mechuliyet arkasında mestur olan-ümem-i maziyenin vekâyi'-i târihiye ve ahval-i garibe-i medeniyelerini öğreniyoruz." Said Paşa, *Miratül-iber* (Vol. 1), 6.

²⁴³ The book covering information about the following sciences: "Geography", 16. "Geology", 22., "Archaeology", 41., "Etnography", 48., "Ethnolinguistic", 60. Said Paşa, *Miratül-iber* (Vol. 1).

²⁴⁴ "İkinci Fasil: Mezopotamya ve merbutatı coğrafyası, Babil coğrafyası, Babil târihi, Babil mezahib ve avaid ve medeniyeti, Asurya coğrafyası, Asur Devlet-i Kadîmesi târihi, Asur Devleti Ahiresi târihi, Asurilerin mezahib ve avaid ve medeniyeti." Ibid., 176

²⁴⁵ "İkinci Kısım: Asya Kıtası'nın coğrafyasıyla kurun-u evveli târihi beyanındadır" Ibid., 166.

4.2.4 Idris and inventions

I would like to leave the analysis of Cevdet's *Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ* to the last part of Chapter 4, but here the accounts on the inventions in the book will be briefly given. Even though Cevdet seems to write his book closer to the conventional forms of the Stories of the Prophets, Cevdet's attitude toward the traditional themes was not so traditional. His primary concern was to preserve the Islamic narrations from the destructive effects of the new scientific discourses and sacrificing the Biblical narrations for this purpose. In this way, he has not given any account on the inventions of the prophets except Idris. He stated in the story of Idris "the first person who had written with a pencil and sewing a dress was him. Before him, the humankind had worn the animal pelts".²⁴⁶ Here, the stress on what humankind before Idris had worn was important that it only be seen before in *Sahâifü'l-ahbar*. This type of emphasis presumes a certain progress of civilization in the primordial times and the similar stresses have increased in the nineteenth century universal history books.

As for the *Târih-i Umûmî* of Ahmed Midhat, he has not given any place to the name, neither Idris nor Enoch. However, the accounts on the inventions have not been totally disappeared in the book. Maintaining the structure of *Nouveaux Éléments*²⁴⁷, he gave the narrations under the title, the "primitive times", not the stories of the prophets or the sacred history. In the book of Midhat, while the Idris has not taken place, the inventions were attributed to the other Biblical characters. Following the Biblical narrations of Alvares, a man named Jobal was told as the inventor of the first musical instruments, Tubal, from the sons of Cain invented the tents for the pastors' house, but the people

²⁴⁶ Ahmed Cevdet, (1867). *Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ*, 4.

²⁴⁷ Alvarès, (1877). *Nouveaux Éléments d'histoire Général*.

had been living generally in the caves and the forests. Lastly, one of the most known inventions of the Prophet Idris was also attributed to Tubal, sewing.²⁴⁸

Here, Midhat gave a detailed narration of the civilization of human societies but putting the prophets into the narrations. Following the book of Alvares, Midhat gave a speculation about the population, the situation of the technology and the social structure of the ancient people.²⁴⁹ However, the information on which he (or Alvares) based his comments, was taken from the sacred sources and with the difference of Alvares, Midhat repeatedly stated that the source of the narrations was the Torah or the ancient books.²⁵⁰ The need to give extra reference to the source was probably about the hesitation about the sources. On the other hand, what the unique feature of this book among the late nineteenth century Ottoman universal history books was that using the traditional theme of inventions of the Biblical characters, Midhat tried to analyze the social structure of the ancient people. In this sense, it can be said that the book has not given a short and uncertain accounts of the antediluvian era as Murad, nor separated the prophets stories from the other parts as done by Said Paşa but established a narration that used both modern narrative strategies and traditional themes. Moreover, in these narrations, although he referred to the

²⁴⁸ Ahmed Midhat, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 63-64.

²⁴⁹ “Hazret-i Âdem’den Hazret-i Nuh’a gelinceye kadar işbu dokuz nefer pederlerin hükümet-i pederaneleri esnasında Seylan ve Hindistan taraflarında evlâd-ı Âdem bayağı çoğalıp adeta cemaatleri milletler teşkil eylemişler ve temeddünde dahi hayli terakki etmişlerdir. Ezcümle kabil evlâdından Tubal hayvan derisinden elbise imalini icat edip bundan dahi anlaşılır ki o zamanlar ba’z ve haşy hayvanları kendilerine alıştırarak çobanlık hayli ileriye gitmiş idi. Hatta yine hayvan derisinden çobanların ikameti için çadırlar imal olunduğu dahi kütüb-ü kadîmede mesturdur. Sair insanlar ekseriyetle mağaralarda ve büyük ormanlarda beytutet ederler idi. Ziraatın dahi imkan ve müsaade eylediği kadar ileriye gitmiş olduğu Tevrat’ta mesturdur. Yine tufan-ı Nuh’dan mukaddem olan bu zamanda Jobal isminde bir adam bazı muzıka edevatı icat eylemiştir.” 63-64. For the original passage, see: Alvarès, (1877). *Nouveaux Éléments d’histoire Général*, 26.

²⁵⁰ While I make a small comparison between the particular parts of the *Nouveaux Elements* and *Târih-i Umûmî*, the scope of this study is limited with the Ottoman history books. However, in my view, as we saw in other historians of the period, Midhat’s repetitious notices about the Torah should be thought as the effect of the decreasing confidence to the Old Testament.

biblical characters, his narrative on the ancient peoples was consistent with the archaeological acceptances of the late nineteenth century.

In Mizancı Murad's *Târih-i Umûmî*, there was no separate account on Idris, but when giving the genealogy of the Noah, he gave the name of Enoch (*Ahnoh*) by indicating that he was Idris.²⁵¹ Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa on the other hand, gave more detailed narration about the Prophet Idris. He particularly stated that his name was Enoch (*Ahnoh*) in Torah and he was ascended to the sky²⁵². Furthermore, referring to his wisdom briefly, Said Paşa stated that he was the recipient of revelation as thirty pages of holy books (*suhûf*) and he was honored with the knowledge of the heavens.²⁵³ Said Paşa in these accounts repeatedly warned that the accounts were taken from Abî al-Fidâ'²⁵⁴ who based the

²⁵¹ "İkinci ebu'l-beşer olan Hazret-i Nuh Aleyhisselam Nuh bin Lamek, bin Metuşaleh, bin Ahnoh (yani Idris Aleyhisselam), bin Barid, bin Mehlaıl, bin Keynân, bin Anuş, bin Şit'tir." Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, 15.

²⁵² "İdris Aleyhisselam'ın Tevrat'ta ismi Ahnoh'tur." Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 85. "Hazret-i İdris üç yüz altmış beş yaşına vardıklarında mekân-ı aliye ref' buyuruldular." Ibid., 86.

²⁵³ "Hazret-i Şis'ten sonra peygamberlikle mebus ve taraf-ı Hak'tan kendilerine otuz suhûf nazil olup esrar-ı semaviyeye mazhar olmuştur." Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 85.

²⁵⁴ 'Imâd al-Dîn Ismâ'îl Abî al-Fidâ' (d. 1331), "Syrian prince, historian, and geographer, of the family of the Ayyûbids" Gibb, H.A.R., "Abu 'l-Fidâ", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam. The mentioned book of Abî al-Fidâ' should be *Kitâb al-Mukhtaşar fî akhbâr al-başar* (*The Concise History of Humanity*) which was a universal history printed in Istanbul in 1870 as two volumes. Özeydın, "Ebü'l-Fidâ." Abî al-Fidâ', (1870). *Târîh-i Abî Al-Fidâ*. "aturkkitapligi.ibb.gov.tr", reached online on 19 May 2019. It is also noteworthy that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there seems some early Islamic world history books were also printed by Ottoman scholars. Although in the modern sources, the 1870 version of *Al-Mukhtasar* is accepted as the first printed copy of the book (Gibb, "Abu'l-Fidâ". Özeydın, "Ebü'l-Fidâ"), I saw another copy in the catalogue of Atatürk Library, printed in 1837 in Paris. Abî al-Fidâ', (1837). *Kitâb al-Mukhtaşar*. "aturkkitapligi.ibb.gov.tr", reached online on 19 May 2019. On the other hand, the book was reprinted in 1907 in Cairo. For the pre-Tanzimat world history books printed in Tanzimat period, Can Veyselgil gives names of seven books: *Tarih-i Nişancı Mehmed Paşa* (printed in 1862-63) of Nişancı Mehmed Paşa (d.1571), *Ravzatü'l-ibrâr* (printed in 1832) of Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz (d. 1658), *Mir'at-ı Kâinât* (1852-53 (Bulak); 1873-74) of Ramazanade Mehmed Kudsî (d. 1621), *Künhü'l-ahbâr* (printed in 860-61) of Mustafa Ali (d.1600), *Nuhbetü't-tevârih ve'l-ahbâr* (printed in 1859-60) of Mehmed bin Mehmed Er-Rûmî (d.1640) of *Takvimü't-tevârih* (printed in 1836-37) of Katib Çelebi (d. 1657), *Camii'd-düvel* (printed in 1868) of Münecimbaşı Ahmed Dede Efendi (d. 1702). Veyselgil, "Historical Writing In The Late Ottoman Empire," 117. Besides, Ali Suâvî's work on *Takvimü't-tevârih* printed in 1874 in Paris, Ahmed Tevhid's effort to print *Mür'i't-tevârih* in 1919/20 in Istanbul and similar initiatives should be considered not only as an effect of the increasing interest to the world history but also a reaction against the modern universal histories and at the same time attempts to discover the golden ages of Islamic sciences. In this sense, Ahmed Midhat's critics of the Ottoman history books (Ahmed Midhat, *Mufasssal*, 3-4.) got strong reaction of Ahmed Cevdet (Ahmed Cevdet, *Tezakir* (Vol. 40), 239.) and accordingly, Said Paşa gave a huge place in the history of historiography to Muslim historians as supporting the arguments of Cevdet: "A'lâm-ı İslam'dan nice kitaplar zuhûr etmiştir ki

Septuagint version of the Torah²⁵⁵. These narrations show at first the author's doubts, and the need to base the information on the other sources. Secondly, although the story has more information about Idris, Said Paşa like Mizancı Murad, did not give any account about the inventions of Idris. However, he still needed to say about Idris's knowledge about the heavens.

4.2.5 The accounts of Persian legendary dynasties

The Persian myths, (e.g. Pishdadian Dynasty) as discussed in Chapter 2, constituted the most common mythic narratives, along with biblical ones, in early modern Ottoman world history books. During this period, similar stories about the construction of cities and the inventions of the prophets were narrated on Persian mythical figures. Even, as mentioned in the section on Idris, sometimes the mythical characters of the Persians were identified with the prophets. However, the process of disenchantment caused by the Enlightenment affected these stories earlier than the stories of the prophets. Let alone themes about the construction of cities and invention of tools, the account of Pishdadian Dynasty was not being told by most of the historians. The fact that these stories were not based on Islamic sources such as the Qur'an or the Hadith has led historians to easily disregard them.

Despite this total abandonment of Persian legends, there were still some historians who mentioned them briefly and unbelievably. Ahmed Midhat in his

her biri devr-i İslam'ın ulûm ve fûnûnca parlak asırlar geçirdiğini ve Avrupa'ca sonraları başlamış olan terakki-i maârif devr-i İslam'ca onlardan ne kadar mukaddem başladığını isbata birer burhandır." *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 13-14.

²⁵⁵ "Ebu'l-fidâ'nın Tevrat-ı Yunaniye'den nakl ile beyan eylediği ensab vech-i meşruh üzeredir. Bizim yedimizde bulunan Tevrat tercümesinde "Anuş'un sini doksana baliğ olduk da Keynan'ı ve Keynan'ın sinni yetmiş baliğ olduk da Mehlail'i ve Mehlail'in sinni altmış beşe baliğ olduk da Yared'i tevlid eyledi." diye muharrer olduğundan her isimce iki rivayet arasında yüzer sene ihtilaf vardır. El-ilm-i indallah-i teala." Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 85. "Ebu'l-fidâ Tevrat-ı Yunaniye'den vech-i mezkûr üzere nakl etmiştir." *Ibid.*, 86.

Târih-i Umûmî has not given a place to Pishdadians²⁵⁶. On the other hand, Mizancı Murad and Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa gave little places to them. Murad described Pishdadians as the earliest times of the Iranian states but pointing out “the information about the kings of Pishdadians were so contradictory”.²⁵⁷ Accordingly, he gave a few accounts on the inventions of the Pishdadians like collecting tax by Hoshang, alphabet for Persian language by Tahmurs, the wine and the Newroz Festival by Jamshid.²⁵⁸ However, Murad apparently gave the accounts disbelievingly and with the statement, supposedly (*güya*). He used the word in two times persistently. Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa similarly started to describe Pishdadians that “according to the surmises (*zu'm*) of the Iranian historians the beginning of the Pishdadians had been in the 3825 years before Hijrah”. The time period he gave under the title of Pishdadian was in between 1355 and 3825 before Hijrah. However, he put a quotation mark near the year, 3825 that shows the uncertainty of the date.²⁵⁹ In this way, Said Paşa gave the accounts that he was not sure with references to the Iranian historians²⁶⁰.

Given the process of disenchantment in the nineteenth century harshly affected the religious accounts of Ottoman world histories, it would not be

²⁵⁶ In the *Nouveaux Éléments d'histoire Général*, there was almost no accounts on the ancient Persians.

²⁵⁷“Malumat-ı müteferrika-i mevcudeye nazaran müluk-u İran Pişdâdiyân, Keyâniyân, Eşkâniyân, Sâsâniyân namlarıyla dört tabakaya münkasımdır. Birinci tabaka olan Pişdâdiyân hükümdarları hakkında malumat pek karışıkır. Pişdâdiyân iki bin dört yüz seneyi mütecaviz İran'da padişahlık etmişler ise de içlerinde yalnız dokuz neferinin isimleri mezkûrdur.” Mehmed Murad, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 193.

²⁵⁸ “Güya Hoşeng ahaliden vergi almak usulünü ihdas etmiştir. Halefi Tahmurs lisan-ı farisi için yazı icad eylemiş. Zamanında resimlerini yapıp saklamış olduğundan bu sebepten naşi ileride putperestlik zuhûr etmiştir. Meşhur Cemşid Tahmurs'un haleflerinden olup güya şarabı icad ve nevrız bayramını ihdas eylemiştir.” Mehmed Murad, *Târih-i Umûmî* (Vol. 1), 194.

²⁵⁹ “Pişdâdiyân Devleti: Kable'l-hicre (1355-3825?)

Fers müverrihlerinin zu'mlarına nazaran Pişdâdiyân Devleti'nin zuhûru hicretten (3825) sene mukaddemdir.” Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 286-287.

²⁶⁰ There were many accounts like that, and it apparently comes with an uncertainty. “Müverrihin-i merkume şu devletin mülukunu Keyümers, Hoşeng, Tahmurs, Cemşid, Bevrâsib (Dahhak), Aferidun, Menuçehr, Efrasiyab, Zumer, Kerşasib namlarıyla on mülûkdan ibaret gösterip bunlara (2470) sene raddelerinde müddet veriyor.” *Ibid.*, 287.

plausible to expect to not influence the Persian myths. However, it was one of the most obvious indicators of the distance between myth and history in the nineteenth century that historians abandoned to narrate these stories completely. Like the effects of geography on the spatial narrations of the early modern sacred accounts, the archaeological findings destructed all earlier mythical inventors for the sake of the earlier civilizations like Egyptians and Mesopotamians.

4.3 Different approaches to geology

In the Ottoman world history books, the narrations of the events have begun from the creation of the world (*hilkat-i alem*) or the fall of Adam (*Hebût-u Âdem*). In the early modern examples of the genre, beginning from the creation accounts was not so common, but after a broad introduction part, the historians began to the narrations of the events, mostly with the fall of Adam.²⁶¹ One important novelty of the nineteenth-century world history books included in these books, is one of the conflictual hypotheses of the geologists that started to be discussed. Opposed to the religious dogmas, the geologists have been supporting the evolutionary formation of the world. For the nineteenth century Ottoman historians who have been endeavoring to adopt the new progressive

²⁶¹ This thesis is focusing on and making comments from the five world history books of the early modern era. There have been some well-known world history books written in the early modern period that have begun their narrations from creation including *Bahjat al-Tavârikh* of Şükrullah (d. 1488), *Künhü'l-Ahbâr* of Mustafa Ali of Gallipoli (d. 1600), *Ravzatü'l-Ebrar* of Karaçelebizâde Abdülaziz (d.1958) and *Jami al-Duwal* of Müneccimbaşı Ahmed (d. 1702). Karateke, “The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography,” 148. Karateke, in his article stated that “the narratives of pre-nineteenth-century universal history books began with the Creation”, however, in my sample, only world history started from the Creation was *Sahâifü'l-Ahbar* which was the translation of *Jami al-Duwal*. It needed further studies to make a valid argument, but the narrations of the Creation as a historical theme seems to lose the former popularity with *Takvîmü't-tevârih* of Kâtib Çelebi. It is important to note that, for the purpose of this part, the question has no priority that in the nineteenth century, different from the pre-modern cases, the topic has gained a popularity with discussions of European geologists.

historiography and to be a part of the new global culture, it was indispensable to discuss the issue.

Therefore, in this part, I will not trace the disappearance of a theme as were done in the previous two parts, but rather I would like to discuss a more visible conflict between religious beliefs and modern sciences, the formation of the world, as far as it has been related with the universal history books of the nineteenth century. The main question of this part is how the authors of Ottoman universal history books reacted to the new theories of the evolutionary geologists in terms of the formation of the world. Accordingly, the primary purpose of this part is to show three alternative ways that Ottoman historians have chosen, first one was to receive an old theory of Leclerc Buffon that commentate the six days of the creation as the six ages of the formation of the world. Firstly, Ahmed Vefik and then Ahmed Midhat introduced these explanations to the readers of the universal history. The second way was to give the traditional dogma with an unwilling reference to Torah presumed that the world was created in six days of the week. Mizancı Murad represented this way among the Ottoman historians. Lastly, the third way was returning to the early Islamic sources. Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa was a leading figure who had given a place to these types of explanations in his world history book.

In this part, I would like to show both the vacillation of the nineteenth century Ottoman historians regarding the conflictual problems of the scientific theories and in this situation, how they tried to constitute a new historical discourse that compatible with the new ideological and religious notions of them. In this sense, I will first delve into how traditional Ottoman historiography

has developed an attitude about the creation. And then, I will scrutinize the attitudes of the nineteenth century Ottoman historians.

4.3.1 The faith and the tradition

According to the Old Testament and the Islamic sources, especially to the Qur'an, God created the world in six days. It was a belief that both biblical and Islamic sources have accepted it for centuries. In the Qur'an, there are several verses state that the universe was created by God in six days.²⁶² Among the Muslim *mufasssirs*, there has been a tendency to commentate the statement of the "six days" as the six thousand days referring to the other verse that determines the day of God equals a thousand days of the human. However, some of them based on the *Genesis* book of the Torah, accepted the six days as the days of the week literally, but rejected the further claim of Genesis that in the seventh day the God rested. For most of the Muslim glossators, the problematic part of the Biblical exegeses was not the literal understanding of the six days, but their thought as God was tired of the creation and then He rested²⁶³. Thus, the debate about the duration of the creation has not become as important as the other argument of the Old Testament that whether or not God was tired out after the creation. Nevertheless, until the nineteenth century, the dominant approach to the statements of the creation in the six days has been close to the literal meanings of the verses in two ways; the first as six thousand human days, and the second six days of the week.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Qur'an 32:4, 7:54, 10:3, 11:7, 25:59, 50:38, 57:4, trans. A.J. Arberry.

²⁶³ "Yani onun Arşte istivası, Tevratın zannedildiđi gibi dinlenmek ma'nasına deđil, emri tedbir ile icrayı ahkâm ve saltanat ma'nasınadır." Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, in the verse, 32:5, 3858.

²⁶⁴ For the two types of comments, see: Tâberî, "Secde Sûresi." Tâberî, *Tâberî Tefsîri*, "A'râf Sûresi."

Early Muslim historians used these commentaries in the beginnings of their history books and gave various different comments on the issue. Al-Tabari was one of the earliest Muslim historians who was known with giving a variety of reports for each event. For the creation, he based on the different transmissions of hadith, gave numerous narrations together.²⁶⁵ Beside Al-Tabari (d.923), Al-Thalabi (d.1035) in his *Ara'is al-Majalis*, gave various accounts on which day the earth was created.²⁶⁶ However, for the early modern Ottoman historians, it has not become such an important debate, and even in most of them, the topic has not been mentioned. Neither *Takvîmü't-tevârih* nor *Mür'i't-tevârih* took the issue into hand, *Tenkîhü't-tevârih* did not narrate any story for not only the creation but also for Adam and Eve. In *Gülşen-i Tevârih*, there was no account on the process of the creation. Interestingly, only *Sahaifül-ahbar* used the Biblical narrations directly quoting the verses of the *Genesis*.

4.3.2 Enlightenment and the Creation

In the period of Enlightenment, the topic has created a serious debate between religious groups and scientists in Europe. The evolutionary theories were leading the way to criticize the religious beliefs, and the idea of evolution had a profound effect on the scientific thought of the nineteenth century that had taken place of the idea of the cataclysm and deluge²⁶⁷. Especially with firstly Lamarck, and more importantly Darwin and Spencer's studies, the evolutionary theories threatened the sacred accounts of creation²⁶⁸. However, the earlier

²⁶⁵ Al-Tabari, *The History of Al-Tabari: General Introduction and from the Creation to the Flood*, 213.

²⁶⁶ Al-Thalabi, *Ara'is Al-Majalis Fi Qisas Al-Anbiya'*, 13-14.

²⁶⁷ Akyol, "Tanzimat Devri'nde Bizde Coğrafya ve Jeoloji".

²⁶⁸ Toprak, "Darwinizmden Ateizme: Türkiye'de Tarih Eğitiminin Evrimi."

conflict was started to be discussed in the late eighteenth century. There have been two important debated comments of the geologists on the sacred accounts, the first was about the deluge, and the second was the evolutionary formation of the world and so the age of the world.²⁶⁹ The geological studies about the formation of the world revealed that the world have formed not in the six days, but in a process of evolution in maybe more than millions of years²⁷⁰. In the eighteenth century, Georges-Louis Leclerc Buffon (d.1788) published his 44 volumes of *Histoire Naturelle* between 1749 and 1804, and the most debated parts of the book were seven volumes of *Les Epoques de la Nature* published between 1774 and 1788. Here, Buffon firstly presented his theory about the evolutionary formation of the world²⁷¹. He asserted that the world should be formed not in six days, but in the evolutionary process and before human existence. Buffon suggested that the part of the Genesis in Torah may refer to the six ages of the formation with the statement of six days. These ages according to Buffon had been passed before the human existence²⁷².

In Ottoman Turkish, as far as known, the first study spoken of the geology was *Mecmua-yı Ulum-u Riyaziye* written by Hoca Ishak published in 1831 and 1834.²⁷³ In the fourth volume of the collection, geology at first time was taken into hand as a separate science and was introduced to Ottoman

²⁶⁹ Gillispie, *Genesis and Geology : A Study in the Relations of Scientific Thought, Natural Theology, and Social Opinion in Great Britain, 1790-1850*, 98.

²⁷⁰ Draper, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, 182.

²⁷¹ Sambrook summarized the theory of Comte de Buffon as: "In his *Epoques de la nature* (1779) George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-88), substituted for the six days of creation a scheme of evolution extending over six vast ages: when the planets were formed, when the earth was cooled and consolidated, when waters covered the earth, when tropical animals such as elephants inhabited the Northern Hemisphere, when the continents drifted apart, and finally when man appeared. In print Buffon asserted that the age of the earth must be about 75,000 years, but privately he allowed that to account for the facts of geology its true age must be very much greater." Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature 1700-1789*, 27.

²⁷² Akyol, Tanzimat Devri'nde Bizde Coğrafya ve Jeoloji.

²⁷³ Şengör, "Osmanlı'nın İlk Jeoloji Kitabı ve Osmanlı'da Jeolojinin Durumu Hakkında Öğrettikleri," 122.

scholars²⁷⁴. The other significant study that has been mentioned as the first geology book in Ottoman Turkish was a translation of Nérée Boubée's *Géologie Elementaire*.²⁷⁵ However, until 1863, any of the historians discussed the geological theories about the formation of the world.

In 1863, with Ahmed Vefik's *Hikmet-i Târih*, the new geological theories were able to be topic in Ottoman historiography. The book has for the first time explained Comte Buffon's analogy on the six-days of the creation by reconciling the sacred books and scientists' views. Following Vefik's book, the geology has started to be a subject of the universal history books of the Ottoman historians. Ahmed Midhat for example tried to follow Vefik's thoughts as reconciling the sacred books and scientists in his first history book, *Kâinât*. On the other hand, for Mizancı Murad, the geological theories were not so credible hence he kept a distance from the geology, but he briefly mentioned the biblical narrations on the creation in the six days. However, two of the sides were following the European history books and Biblical accounts. Nevertheless, Said Paşa was using the Islamic sources and he was totally opposed to discuss them together. He separated the divine and profane narrations but did not give a detailed narration of the Creation, but a thorough discussion on the geology which included the formation of the world, the Flood and age of humanity. The last historian that I examined was Ahmed Cevdet who has not entered the discussion consciously and kept his silence against the scientific claims.

²⁷⁴ Akyol, Tanzimat Devri'nde Bizde Coğrafya ve Jeoloji. Ahmed Vefik, *Hikmet-i târih*.

²⁷⁵ Nérée Boubée, *Géologie Élémentaire Appliquée à l'Agriculture et à l'Industrie avec un Dictionnaire des Termes Géologiques ou Manuel de Géologie*. See: Dölen, "İlk Türkçe Jeoloji Kitabı.", Şengör, "Osmanlı'nın İlk Jeoloji Kitabı ve Osmanlı'da Jeolojinin Durumu Hakkında Öğrettikleri."

4.3.3 The historians' views

Among the Ottoman historians, Ahmed Vefik was the first one who took the statement of the six days as six ages, as Comte Buffon had claimed. In his *Hikmet-i Târih*, he accepted the theory and explained it in detail.²⁷⁶ He said that the sacred books had stated, and the scientists proved that the world was created in six days, that is to say in six ages. In the following paragraphs, Vefik relied on the geologists' claims gave more elaborate accounts on the creation of the world in six cycles.

Ahmed Midhat's first universal history, *Kâinât* has been one of the most experimental world history books among all of those published in the nineteenth century. The name of the book implied the *universe* and as he remarked in the introduction, it was a very challenging attempt that reflected the desire of the totality.²⁷⁷ In this regard, it started the book with a detailed analysis of the creation or formation of the world.

Despite the fact that Ahmed Midhat followed the argument of the sacred books and repeatedly pointed out that for the believers, to accept the dogma of the Creation in the six days was obligation, the introduction of *Kâinât* almost

²⁷⁶ "Faslı- Sani/ Fıtrat ve Tufan: Bizim dünyamız mecmû-ı hilkatın gayet küçük bir cüz'ü olup, kütüb-ü kudsiyye müfâdı ve ulum-ı tabiiye erbabının netice-i mücerrebatı muktezasınca, Alem altı günde, yani altı devirde yaratılıp, sûret-i haliyyesine tedricle girmiş ve bu keyfiyyet "Ve lekad halakna's-semavati vel-arda vema beynehuma fi sitteti eyyamin" nass-ı şerifi ve ulema-yı kiramın "ey fi sitteti evkatin, işareten ila sitteti etvarin" tefsiri ile malum olmuştur." Vefik, *Hikmet-i Târih*, 35. For detailed narrations: Ibid., 35-38.

²⁷⁷ "Zira zikr olunan târih-i umûmî gayet mücmel olmaktan kat-ı nazar velev süllem-i mufassal olmuş olsa bile târih-i umûmînin en mufassalı dahi herhalde fihrist makamında kalacağından ve benim târihten almış olduğum lezzet târih-i hususi ile hasıl olacağından ebna-yı vatanıma ancak târih-i hususi yazmaklıkla ber-minval-i muharrer ifa-yı din edebilmiş olurum zannındayım. Fakat bende heves büyük! Öyle bir târih-i hususi iki târih-i hususi yazmakla hevesimi yenemeyeceğimi akıl kestiriyor. Beş on târih-i hususi yazmış olsam da yine yenemeyeceğim. Ne yapalım ayıp değil a hevesim büyük! Öyle bir târih yazmak istiyorum ki şimdiye kadar yalnız lisan-ı Osmani üzerine değil Avrupa lisanları üzerine dahi yazılmamış olsun." Ahmed Midhat, (1871-72). *Kâinât*, (Vol. 1), ط - ح.

totally has been covered by the theory of the six ages. This introduction was a more elaborate version of *Hikmet-i Târih* and probably was the most detailed source on the theory written until its time in Ottoman Turkish. This chapter was firstly published in 1871-72 [H. 1288] with the part on the history of England.²⁷⁸ The Introduction of the book separately published²⁷⁹, according to his claim, it has been sold out and started to be sold in the black market for excessive prices.²⁸⁰

Midhat put a small note in front of the book that “it contains some information about the creation of the world and expansion of human being, reasoning on the opinions of the sacred books and scientists together and the later divisions of the world”.²⁸¹ Here, Midhat has not clearly supported the theory, but given it thoroughly and not criticizingly. He gave the arguments of the scientists a legitimacy for Muslim auditors that if the statement of a day in the sacred books was taken as a symbolic word, then it was possible to accept that the world had been created in a long duration before human existence.

4.3.4 Creation in six days

Târih-i Umûmî of Mehmed Murad gave a very brief account of both the creation and the narrations of the antediluvian era. For the creation he only stated; “there are no other sources about the creation and the period following the creation except sacred books. (...) Among the sacred sources, the Holy Torah gave

²⁷⁸ Ahmed Midhat, (1871-72). *Kâinât*, [Vol. 1].

²⁷⁹ Ahmed Midhat, (1881-82). *Kâinât* (Mukaddime), cover page.

²⁸⁰ “Halbuki ciltlerden bir takımının mevcudu pek az kalıp hilkat-i alem ve intişar-ı beni Âdem hakkında kütüb-ü münzele kavliyle akval-i hükemayı mukayese ve muhakeme eden işbu mukaddimenin hiç mevcudu kalmadığından erbab-ı rağbet dört beş kat ziyade fiyat ile bazı kitapçılardan aramaya başladılar.” Ahmed Midhat, (1881-82). *Kâinât* (Vol. 1), 3.

²⁸¹ “Hilkat-i alem ve intişar-ı beni Âdem hakkında kitab-ı mukaddes ile tabi’iyun-u hükemanın re’yelerini bi’l-muhakeme alemin taksimat-ı ahiresi hakkında ba’zı malumatı camidir.” Ahmed Midhat, (1881-82). *Kâinât*, cover page.

numerous accounts related to history and many history books repeated and detailed these accounts. According to sacred books, God created existing universe in a week. First light, and then heaven, earth with sea, plants, animals and lastly the human were created.”²⁸² Even though it was very short narration, among the five historians analyzed here, Mizancı was only one who gave the story of the Torah directly. By giving the creation account in one sentence, Murad saved himself from joining the discussion. He has not given the accounts in detail, and even not specified as six days but passed over as saying “in a week”. However, he needed to explain the reasons for giving the narrations of the Torah and stressed as the other historians²⁸³ that “there is no other source but the sacred ones”. The accounts are important in two ways; first, Murad showed his negative attitude toward geological and evolutionary theories by ignoring them, and the second, he was not so willing to advocate the accounts of the Torah, in case that it was distorted.²⁸⁴

Murad, in his Introduction, explained the auxiliary sciences of history, and not in the first two, but as a fourth science, mentioned the geology. Among the four sciences that Murad gave as auxiliary, only the geology was not

²⁸² “Hilkat-i Alem: Hilkat-i Alem ve hilkat-i müteakip olan ezmine-i mütekaddime hakkında malumat almak için kütüb-ü mukaddeseden başka me’haz yoktur. Kütüb-ü mukaddese ehl-i kitab için düsturu’l-amel tutulan ve peygamberan-ı kiram hazeratının vesait-i aliyeleriyle benî Âdem içine neşr olunan kütüb-ü münzele-i ilahiyedir. Bunlardan Tevrat-ı Şerif târihe müteallik hayli malumat vermiştir ve malumat-ı mezkure kütüb-ü saire tarafından zıkr ve tafsil olunmuştur.

Kütüb-ü mukaddeseye nazaran cenab-ı halık hazretleri bir hafta zarfında elyevm mevcut olan alemi halk etmiştir. İbtida ziya, sonra sema, kara ile deniz, nebatat, hayvanat, en sonra insan yaratılmıştır.” Mehmed Murad, (1882-83). *Târih-i Umûmî*, 13-14.

As we saw in the other parts, when Murad gave the accounts disbelievingly, he used the word supposedly, (*güya*), but if he was not sure about the source, then, he gave the accounts with stressing the source, as *according to Torah* or *according to the old historians*.

²⁸³ As given in the Introduction, this and similar sentences have been found in the book of Said Paşa, Ahmed Midhat and even in Ali Tevfik. Toprak, “Darwinizmden Ateizme: Türkiye’de Târih Eğitiminin Evrimi,” 3.

²⁸⁴ As we discussed in Cevdet, it was not so rare tendency among Muslim scholars of the nineteenth century.

explained in detail.²⁸⁵ The negative attitude of Murad against geology was probably related to the developments taken from Vefik's and Midhat's works that the evolutionary theories have gained more and more important in the geologists' ideas. Correspondingly, the conflict between religion and geology has decreased in Europe. The six ages theory was forgotten and the new theories about the formation of the world have started to become prevalent among European scientists. The problem for the Muslim historians was not about the formation of the world, but the age of the human being, because the theories of biological evolution has gained strength in the geological theories. Apparently, Murad was not so sure about the theories and was not willing to make a comment about it.

4.3.5 Turning back to the early Islamic sources

The last approach to the geological theories in the nineteenth century was represented by Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa in *Miratü'l-iber* which was published in 1888. His reception toward the new sciences was not negative, but his attitude was cautious. This is because geology started to be more and more dangerous field for the believers due to the evolutionary theories as we mentioned above. However, Said Paşa was able to give the geological theories in detail by separating the sacred narrations and scientific theories.

²⁸⁵ “Bazı fenlerin târihe hayli yardımları vardır. Bunların içinde en mühim olan coğrafya ile takvimdir. Coğrafya bir kavmin yerleşmiş olduğu kıtanın ahvalini ve zuhûra gelmiş olan vukuat-ı târihiyenin mevki-i zuhûrlarını bildirir. –Mevki-i ahval ki- üzerinde oturan kavmin tab' ve ahlakına ve sanat ve meşguliyetine çok tesiri vardır. Takvim dahi vakıa-yı târihiye-i malumenin zaman-ı vukuunu haber verir. “Fenn-i elsine” ve “fenn-i tabakatü'l-arz” dahi târihin muavinleri olan fenlerden maduddur. Fenn-i elsine akvam-ı muhtelifenin esasen birbirine olan karabet ve münasebetlerinin derecesini bildirir.” Mehmed Murad, *Târih-i Umûmî*, 8.

On the other hand, Said Paşa was opposed to the idea that the dogmas and scientific claims could be associated. In the introduction part, Said stated by referring to the Qur’anic verses that all the universe was created in the six days by God²⁸⁶, and then criticized the verse of the Torah on God’s taking a rest on the seventh day.²⁸⁷ Unlike his contemporaries, he appealed to the conventional sources of the Islamic middle-ages and continued with a citation from Ibn Al-Athir regarding the duration of the creation. By attributing to Ibn al-Athir, Said stated that “day” was created after the universe:

“Ibn Al-Athir said that “before the Creation of the Universe, there were no days. It is metaphorical to say that God created the lands in this many days or skies in that many days”. The expressions of days in the Holy Qur’an and Holy Torah regarding the Creation of the Universe do not carry the same meaning as our days, and so only God knows the number of the days.”²⁸⁸

This comment was based on the phenomena that have been known and discussed by most of the early Muslim and Ottoman scholars that day was a relative concept and the scholars determined days according to the position of the Sun, and so it had to be related to the Earth²⁸⁹. For this reason, the Earth should be

²⁸⁶ “Ferman ferma-yı hata-i kaf ve nun teala şanühü ‘inne’l-evham ve’z-zunun hazretleri arz ve semavatı ve onlarda mevcut olan kâinâtı altı günde halk buyurmuş olduğu sur-u kuraniyede sure-i secdenin dördüncü ve sure-i fussiletin dokuz ve on ve onbir ve onikinci ve sure-i (kaf)’ın otuz sekizinci ve sure-i Hadid’in dördüncü ayat-ı kerîmeleriyle mensustur. Arz ve sema ve havi oldukları kaffe-i eşyanın halkı itmam ve sema duhan heyetinde buhardan yaratılıp göklerden her birine ve ehline makam ve hareketlerinin emr ve tedbiri ilham buyurulduğu dahi ayat-ı kuraniye ile sabittir.” Said Paşa, *Miratü’l-iber* (Vol. 1), 74-75.

²⁸⁷ “Tevratta tekvin’ül mahlukatın ikinci babında “imdi semavat ile zemin ve onların kaffe-i cenudu itmam olundu. Vallahi işlediği işini yedinci günde itmam ile işlediği işin kaffesinden istirahat eyledi” diye muharrerdir. Eziyet ve yorgunluk gibi avarızdan istirahata mecburiyet geleceğine nazaran “istirahat eyledi” tabiri bir asl-ı sahihden yanlış tercüme edilerek taife-yi yehud şanü’l-vahye yakışmayan o tabirin hükmünü kabul eyledikleri cihetle sure-i (kaf)’ın otuz sekizinci âyet-i kerimesinde (vemâ messenâ min luğüb(in)) [“and no weariness touched Us”, Arberry, 50:38] kavli-celili ile tabir-i mezkurun hükmü reddolunmuştur.” Ibid., 75-76.

²⁸⁸ “İbn-i Esir der ki “alem halk olunmazdan mukaddem eyyam dahi yoğidi. Cenab-ı Hak arzı filan günde semayı falan günde halk buyurdu diye ahbarda varid olan kelim mecaza muhavveldir.”. Hilkat-i alemce gerek furkan-ı kerim gerek Tevrat-ı Şerif’te münderic olan günler bizim günlerimiz gibi olmadıgından miktarı allam’ul-guyub hazretlerinin malumudur.” Said Paşa, *Miratü’l-iber* (Vol. 1), 76.

²⁸⁹ “Malum olsun ki zaman hükema katında felek-i i’zamin hareketinin miktarıdır ama mütekellimün katında zaman bir emr-i müteceddit mevhum takdir olunur. Mesela güneş doğduk da sana varırım denilir pes güneş doğması malum lakin varmak mevhumdur. Kaçan ki mevhum maluma mukarin olsa ol dahi malum olur. Bazı kimesneler der ki zaman kismetle kabil bir müddettir ki aza ve çoğa itlak

created before the day, and so the statement of “the six days” had to be understood metaphorically. In this way, Said used this reference to claim that Islam did not postulate the belief in the creation in literally six days.

However, Said Paşa criticized the six-ages theories supported by Ahmed Vefik and Ahmed Midhat. In this regard, he claimed that it was inappropriate (*caiz değil*) to investigate this kind of truth by establishing an analogy between geologists’ theories and Qur’anic verses, because these were incomparable categories of knowledge. He continually asserted that even a dogma which perfectly fits the explicit discoveries of the scientists,²⁹⁰ this dogma must not be explained by the analogy with the scientists’ estimations and presumptions.²⁹¹

olunur. Sana gizli değildir ki zamanın vücuduna kâil olanlar yanında zaman mevcut fakat an-ı hazır seyyaldir. Lakin ve hem de mevcut bir emr-i muttasıl olup mazi ve müstakbel tarafına ila hayre’n-nihaye mümted olmakla an-ı hazırdan mazi ve müstakbele istedikleri gibi taksim ederler. Türlü türlü taksimler ile mesela yıllar ve aylar ve günler ve saatler ve saatlerin eczası olan dereceler ve dakikalar ve saniyeler ve dahi gayrıları gibi bunlara marifet hasil ettik de malum olsun ki bir gün gecesi ile ehl-i nücum katında şems nısf-ı neharın kutbeyn-i alem ile mütehaddid olan nısfından ayrılıp yine ol mahalle gelince geçen müddettir. Bu müddet muaddelü’n-neharın bir devrinden şemsin muaved[ete]ye değin seyr ettiği mahallin metâlii miktarı ile zibadedir. Ve bilcümle arap taifesi ve ekser şeriat sahipleri yanlarında bir gün ve bir gece güneşin gurubu vaktinden yine gurubuna dektir. Ve onların bazı yanında güneşin bir defa tuluundan ikinci tuluuna dektir. Bundan sonra müneccimun günleri yirmi dört kısma beraber taksim edip saat-i müsteviye ve saat-i mutedile diye isim koydular ve gündüz ile gecenin her birini on ikişer kısma beraber taksim edip saat-i zamaniye diye isim koydular. Ve gökteki ecramin cümlesinden aşikare güneş ve ay olmağla ekser ümem yıllar ve aylar vaz etmekte onlara itibar ettiler.” Müneccimbaşı, *Sahâifülahbar*, 16-17. “Malum ola ki kaşifan-ı esrar-ı a’raz ve a’yan-ı a’zam-ı hakayık-ı künye olan mahiyet zamanı birkaç vechile ta’riz idüb ulema-yı eş’eriye dediler ki zaman bir müteceddid-i malumdur ki anınla müteceddid müphem takdir olunur. Ve hükemadan zamanı bizzat felek i a’zam yahud hareket i felek i a’zam ya mikdar-ı hareket-i felek-i azam olmak ta’rifleri şüyu’ bulub beher hal bir niçe inkisamat-ı itibariyye ile taksim olunmuştur. Evvela şems hareket-i zatiyyesi ile haml olandan gerü hamle gelüb devresini tamam etmek itibariyle seneye ve sene dahi vech i meşruh üzere tamam devre-i kamer itibari ile on iki şehre ve şehir devre-i kamile-i felek-i azam ile gah yirmi dokuz ve gah otuz şeb ve ruza ve ruz-ı nısf büruc-u felek-i samen itibariyle on iki saate ve saat ekser küsur-u hesabiyeye muvafık olmak itibariyle altmış dakikaya ve dakika dahi kezalik saniyeye ale’l-aşere devair-i eflakın büruc ve derecata inkisamı hasebi ile mütecezzi kılınur.” Kâtib Çelebi, *Takvîmü’t-Tevârih: İndeksli Tıpkıbasım*, 2b.

²⁹⁰ “Hilkat-i alem hakkında Jeoloji ulemasının sözleri ayat-ı Kuraniye ve nusus-u şeriye ile bilmuhakeme ikisinden bir netice çıkarmaya çalışılması iki kâilin hakikati beyninde malumatça nispet-i akliye tasavvur ve şu nispetten bir netice çıkarmaya tecasür demek olacağından Jeoloji ashabinın astronomilerin ve sair hükemanın kavliyat ve keşfiyat-ı malumelerine tevafuk edecek nususun bile onların tahminat ve zanniyat-ı vakıalarına kıyas ile tatbikata girişilmesi caiz görülemez.” Said Paşa, *Miratül-iber* (Vol. 1), 76-77.

²⁹¹ This attitude was not very popular among the nineteenth century historians. It is related with an interesting discussion among the religious scholars and commentators. This attitude would prevent commentators to use all kind of secular sources while revealing the transcendental truths. This kind of approach was deliberate attempt to separate the secular and sacred sources. For the comprehensive

On the other hand, in this introduction part, Said put a new title, geology, as well as geography and archeology. Until this book, the historians used the Ottoman version of the word, geology as “*ilm-i tabakatü'l-arz*”, and none of them gave the geology under a separate title as an ancillary science of history. Here, Said Paşa gave the accounts of the geologists in detail and stated that the world was formed in four eras and as late as the fourth era, the human being was created. The older questions about the age of the world were now categorically given up for the sake of the geologists' claims.²⁹²

It was interesting that while Said Paşa objecting to the theories put forward by Ahmed Vefik and Ahmed Midhat, he gave the latest accounts of the geologists in detail. His approach was a sign of new understanding that was similar to Ahmed Cevdet. He was open to modern scientific knowledge but at the same time, cautious about the profane discourse of modern scientists. He was aware of the fact that the scientific theories were changing and so falsifiable, but the religious dogmas could only be expounded. Thus, he based his thoughts on the Qur'an, and especially to the metaphorical commentary of Ibn Al-Athir. In this sense, what Said Paşa directly opposed in Vefik and Midhat was that they adopted European-Christian interpretations relying on the reconciliation of Torah with the scientific discoveries. However, like Cevdet, Said Paşa thought

discussion on the approaches to the science and religion in Islamic history, see: Dallal , *Islam, Science, and the Challenge of History*, 2010.

²⁹² Yet, the age of the humanity has still been questioned. According to Said Paşa, most of the European geologists also thought that the age of the humankind could not be more than ten thousand years. Apparently, the new discussion was about the human evolution, although he has not mentioned the evolution. Opposed to the arguments of “minority” of the geologists, he gave the other arguments, and sometimes found his own responses by stressing that these claims were nonsense: “Avrupa jeoloji uleması beyinlerinde insanın yeryüzünde ne vakit zuhûr eylediğine dair hayli ihtilaf cereyan ediyor. Bazıları insanın bidâyet-i zuhûru on bin seneyi geçmeyeceği ve bazıları pek eski ve belki milyonlarlarca senelere baliğ olduğu iddiasındadır. İnsanın öyle kademi iddiasında bulunanların itimada şayan ve fenne müstenid bir güne senetleri olmayıp delilleri, hüccetleri, şahitleri “şöyle böyle insan kemikleri falan devre münkarız hayvanların kemikleri aralarında bulundu. Felan nehir senede şu kadar yer sökerken yerin şu kadar derinliğinde felan tabakada şöyle bir insan eseri zuhûr eyledi” gibi sözlerden ibarettir.” Said Paşa, *Miratü'l-iber* (Vol. 1), 34-35.

that Islamic sources had not been as strict as Torah in terms of historical information.

Regarding the narrations of the Creation, the universal history writers of the late nineteenth century had taken different stands. While these approaches have been greatly influenced by the modern scientific discourse, they have not only been the direct receptions of the productions of the European historians. Moreover, the adaptations of them have not been limited to the political and religious concerns that determined by the government but reflected an effort to put a new way of understanding the new globalized world and its inner conflicts. In this sense, starting from Vefik's acceptance to the European theory of the six-ages to Said Paşa's new Islam-centric approaches, these historians -even if they published a direct translation of a work produced in Europe- were active producers of the modern Ottoman thought.

4.3.6 Different strategies: Ahmed Cevdet and early example of the “demythologization”

In Ahmed Cevdet's *the Stories of the Prophets*, the narratives were too short in comparison to the earlier examples of the genre. Here, what Cevdet was doing certainly was to separate the Biblical knowledge from the stories of the prophets. Therefore, Cevdet's book was heavily established in the authentic Sunni Islamic sources. He especially was careful about keeping away from the information coming from *Israiliyyat*. Thus, only about one-tenth²⁹³ of his book was constituted by the prophets stories. He divided the book into two general parts as before and after the

²⁹³ Ahmed Cevdet, (1874). *Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ ve Tevârih-i Hulefâ*.

Prophet Muhammad. The book was a unique example of the genre that the first part was called “the Stories of the Prophets” (*Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ*) and the second part as “Histories of the Caliphs” (*Tevârih-i Hulefâ*). While the book was reflecting the traditional Islamic genres, but here in a unified volume, two different genres were given for the same purpose; to write a chronologically universal and genealogically Muslim world history.

It was not a world-history in terms of its scope that embraced only the genealogy of the caliphate. However, as we discussed in the earlier chapters, in the traditional Islamic and Ottoman world history books, the basic purpose has not been to embrace all the territories of the world, but to establish a historical genealogy from the first human being, Adam²⁹⁴. In this regard, even though Cevdet left most of the themes and techniques of the pre-modern Islamic and Ottoman historiography, the basic aim of the traditional world history books was still preserved in this book. Furthermore, adapted to the new ideological perspective of the Empire, the space of hegemony of the history was limited to the unique authority of the Caliphate. As the ultimate purpose of the history, strengthening the legitimation of the Empire was continued in this sense, but here the respondent of the history was not only the state elites, but also the ordinary Muslim populations of the Empire and other Sunnite Muslim countries.

The other significance of the deliberate division of the stories (*qisas*) and histories (*tevârih*) was about the connotations of the words. The word, *qissa* was a word rooted in Arabic, has a meaning of fiction or story.²⁹⁵ Among the early modern Ottoman history books, the word, history has not had such a claim on to separate the

²⁹⁴ Ferâizîzâde’s *Gülşen-i Tevârih*, for example was not much broader than Cevdet’s *Kisâs-ı Enbiyâ ve Tevârih-i Hulefâ* in terms of its scope. For the detailed content list of *Gülşen-i Tevârih*, see: Karateke, “The Challenge of Periodization: New Patterns in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Historiography,” 151.

²⁹⁵ Şengül, “Kıssa.”

real and unreal accounts. The history as a science, both included the real accounts and unreal stories for traditional historians. The fundamental quality of the history was its exemplary characteristics. In the late nineteenth century, as it was mentioned before, the fictional or mythical stories started to be removed from the histories with the effects of the new discourse of the reality²⁹⁶. However, most of the Ottoman historians were still giving the stories of the prophets as some European counterparts were done. The basic difference of Ahmed Cevdet was that by giving up the Biblical narrations, he tried to save the Islamic belief from the destructive effects of the scientific developments. In this sense, it was an early attempt to separate the narrations according to their sources.²⁹⁷ The primary distinction of the book of Cevdet was that the authenticity of the sources for the first time gained such significance and the stories were separated from the histories by stressing the names of the genre.

In the same period of time, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1897) in India, his student, Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) in Egypt and afterwards Muhammad Iqbal in India and later in Pakistan and lastly in the mid-twentieth century, Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah in Egypt questioned the historical characters of the stories of the Qur'an with different perspectives. None of them rejected the historical reality of all the Quranic stories, but they gave symbolical and mythological meanings to specific stories. Especially, Muhammad Khalafallah in his dissertation written in 1947 on the mythological characteristics of the Quranic stories, discussed the chronological

²⁹⁶ That's beyond the scope of this study, but it is important to note that with the change of the mentality, the meaning or the sense of the fact or objectivity also changed. See: Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*; Galison and Daston, *Objectivity*.

²⁹⁷ There were significant tradition based on determining the authenticity of the sources, esp. in the science of Hadith, but here, for the historiography of the nineteenth century, the novelty was the suspicion against the already accepted knowledge of the Torah with the developments of the scientific discourse.

uncertainties about some of the specific stories and classified the stories under three categories as historical, symbolical and mythological.²⁹⁸ In 1941, six years before Khalafallah, Rudolf Bultmann had held his well-known presentation, *New Testament and Mythology*, and offered the term, Demythologization (Ger. *Entmythologisierung*). In his 1948 book, *Kerygma and Mythos*, he furthered his ideas.²⁹⁹

It was called as demythologizing, a current of the nineteenth century that supported the claim that the stories of the Old Testament do not have to be the real historical accounts, but the common stories or myths of the humanity and God told these stories in order to be taken lessons. However, the earlier signs of this current can be seen in the Muslim historians of the nineteenth century like Ahmed Cevdet. It is not to say that Cevdet saw the stories of the prophets as myths, but he put a distance between the narrations based on historical evidence and those based on the divine books. As we saw in the cases of Ahmed Cevdet and Diyarbakırlı Said Paşa, abandoning the use of the Biblical sources in history has not created such great difficulty for Muslim scholars.

²⁹⁸ Öztürk, *Kur'an Kıssalarının Mahiyeti*, 123.

²⁹⁹ Öztürk, "Demitolojizasyon ve Kur'an"; Bultmann, *New Testament Mythology and Other Basic Writings*.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have tried to evaluate the change in the historical writings of the Ottoman authors of world history books from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century. I analyzed those that were written before the Tanzimat as examples of early-modern Ottoman historiography, and I considered the books of the late nineteenth century as products of the modernization period. In this way, I primarily aimed at discussing the secularization of Ottoman historiography by examining certain parts of the universal history books of the period under study, which included religious history, such as the narratives of Creation and the stories of prophets.

I had two primary questions: First, why did these divine narratives have such a significant place in early-modern Ottoman universal history books? Second, how did this change throughout the modernization period of the nineteenth century? Thus, in the second chapter, I tried to analyze the early modern historians' works on universal history and discuss the importance they gave to the calculation of the age of the world, as well as the dating strategies of the time. In this sense, I argued that the Creation and stories of prophets were used by historians in their universal histories in order to tell about the beginning of the world and ensure chronological legitimacy. Although Ottoman world historians gave the largest place to the accounts of the Ottoman sultans, the basic difference of these works from particular history books like the "history of the house of Osman" (*Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*) was the former ones' claim to chronological universality. In this way, Ottoman world historians attached special importance to the narratives of the beginnings and to the chronological accuracy of events. In this sense, these divine narratives were a

mythical element that offered answers to questions about the origins of mankind, while providing legitimacy from connections with the prophets. However, chronological accuracy set these works apart from mythical narratives and the Stories of the Prophets (*Kıssas-ı Enbiya*) genre, where earthly time could not be perceived and where events occurred in *illo tempore*.

In the third and fourth chapters, I have tried to analyze the modernization of historiography in the nineteenth century. The main purpose of the third chapter was to understand nineteenth-century historians as active agents of modernization. Therefore, I first reviewed the social conditions of the period, especially with respect to the transformation of education and printing technologies during the reforms of the Tanzimat. In this part, the historian was examined as both a tutor in the European-type schools and as a journalist writing in the press. Secondly, in the same chapter, I discussed how nineteenth-century historians approached the science of history and how they understood the concept of time. My primary argument here was that along with the other distinct features that characterized traditional historians, the late nineteenth century historians were mostly concerned with the idea that history was exemplary. It is generally accepted by modern scholars that Ottoman historiography throughout the nineteenth century changed by adopting many of the characteristic features of positivist European historiography, but they were still focusing on the exemplary functions of history. By borrowing the term regimes of historicity from François Hartog, this thesis argues that in the nineteenth century, in the modern regime of historicity, the exemplary functions of historical narratives started to lose their function.

The purpose of the last chapter was to reveal the nature of the process of change in historical writing in the nineteenth century. The Ottoman world histories

written until the beginning of the 20th century embraced the accounts of the Creation and stories of the prophets. However, the shift in the traditional themes, writing styles, discussions, and understanding had already started to be seen in the early nineteenth century, with Şânizâde's introduction. With an increasing interest in modern sciences, the traditional themes of the stories of the prophets started to be mentioned less frequently, and some were simply left out. This corresponded to a growing distance between myth and history. The historians no longer used with conviction the accounts of mythical Persian kings and the word myths/legends (*esâtir*) started to be used by historians to underline their differences from history.

Therefore, in Chapter 4, I explained how three modern sciences helped displace the traditional themes throughout the nineteenth century. The development of archaeology caused Ottoman historians to question the traditional theme of the inventions attributed to the prophets. The new geographical discourse had a great impact on historians, who ceased describing prophets as city founders. Lastly, geology had a major impact on their convictions about the Creation of the world in six days and the age of the world.

This study is not only a genealogy of the genre, but also a discursive attempt to analyze the secularization of Ottoman historical thought. I tried, here, to tell an alternative story of the process of modernization by focusing on the transition from enchantment to disenchantment, or in other words, from a sacred to a secular narrative of universal histories penned by Ottoman historians.

The process of secularization throughout the nineteenth century Ottoman historiography was undoubtedly incomplete and in certain ways unintended. In the nineteenth century, Ottoman historians wrote a number of universal histories modeled on European examples, especially in order to meet the requirements of the

newly founded modern schools. However, their works apparently adopted a new approach and included the criticism of earlier Ottoman historical writings. Even though the historians of the nineteenth century did not give up the divine narratives altogether, they started to put a distance between the sacred and the profane. Thus, what I presented in this thesis as signs of the secularization and modernization of historiography were based on partly deliberate and partly unconscious efforts by the writers, but served, here, to study a discernible shift in their language.

I would like to conclude by exposing two major weaknesses of the thesis. Firstly, in particular points, I utilized the concept of disenchantment in this thesis as an alternative of secularization or growing scientism. The concept was used by Max Weber to underline the contradictory roles of the religion and science in the modern societies. According to Weber, with the use of enlightened reason, the divine accounts about the world started to be displaced by scientific and formal rational explanations. I used the concept to describe the increasing demystification of historical accounts. I am aware of the fact that we do not have sufficient sources to set out a fully-fledged argument about the disenchantment process of the nineteenth century Ottoman historiography.

On the other hand, in order to come up with a general and inclusive argument about historiographical narratives, I may have disregarded the uniqueness and exceptionality of singular works. While I put forward a model to understand the functions of the stories of the prophets in early modern universal histories, I had to leave aside many of the peculiarities of the books. Similarly, the secularization of nineteenth century Ottoman historiography was not a linear, nor a calculated movement, but undoubtedly an uneven and somewhat erratic process. However, in

order to figure out the strength and extent of change in the nineteenth century, I tried to focus mostly on the most visible clues of this shift.

My translation of the text in Fig. 1:

Upper side:

“[...] dediler. Ve her dört veya beş senede bir kebise için hamse-i müsteraka ahirine bir gün ziyade kılıp sabıkan mezkur olan şuhûr-u fers isti'malini ihtiyar ettiler. Bu makamda zikr-i tevarih encama erip min ba'd tevarih-i mezburenin biri birine nispet mabeynlerinde geçen müddeti tayin için bir cetvel vaz' olunub iki tarihin miltıkasında mestur olan aded geçen vakte işaret kılındı.

Cedvel budur:”

Târih-i Celâlî	Târih-i Fûrs-i Kadîm	Târih-i Hicri	Târih-i Kıbtî	Târih-i Rûmî	Târih-i Tûfan	Târih-i Hebût
6695	6248	6216	5877	5281	2242	Târih-i Hebût
4453	4006	3974	3635	3039	Târih-i Tûfan	
1414	967	935	596	Târih-i Rûmî		
818	371	339	Târih-i Kıbtî			
469	32	Târih-i Hicri				
447	Târih-i Fûrs-i Kadîm					
Târih-i Celâlî						

Upper right-hand corner:

“Ta'yin-i tarih-i vaz' Cenâbi'de [vech-i] meşrûh üzeredir. Lakin Uluğ Bey zîci evvelinde demiştir. Bu tarihin mebde'i bazılar katında dörtyüzyetmişbir ramazanının onu ve 'inde'l-ba'z altmış sekiz şabanının beşidir. Beynehumada tefavüt bin beş yüz doksan yedi gün olur ve bu ihtilafın sebebi malum değildir.”

Right side:

“Bu cetvelde mestûr olan erkâm ihtiyâr-ı müverrihîne göre olmakla takvim şurûhu tebyîne nev'an mugâyirdir.”

Bottom left-hand corner:

“Cedvel-i mezburda mesela tarihi hicret ile tarih i rumi mabeyni istilam olunsa ikisinin mültekasında olan adede nazar oluna. Ve rûtbe-i satırda olan tekaddümü hasbi ile tekaddüm ü zamana hükm olunur. Evvela satr 1 balada tarihi hicret hanesini bulub aşağı hanelerine nazar eyledik tarih i rumi hizasına gelen hanede dokuz yüz otuz beş aded gördük ve rumi, hicriden satırda mukaddem olmağla tarih i rumi hicretten dokuz yüz otuz beş sene mukaddemdir deyü hükm eyledik. Ve kis aleyhil bevaki. Kitabe bu makamda tamam oldu. Minba'dilvah* vakayi' vazına şuru' olundu.”

My translation of the text in Fig. 2:

Header:

“Cedvel-i ezmine-i gozeşte der-miyan-ı her do vaka”

Upper left:

“Cedvel-i mezbûrun karşı tarafı Melikü’l Müeyyed üzerine ziyade-i hakîrdir.”

		Tufan-ı Nuh	Mevlûd-ü İbrahim	Vefat-ı Mûsa	İbtida-i Mülk-ü Buhtunnasır	Galebe-i İskender ber Dara	Galebe-i Augustus ber kavli Butra	Mevlûd-ü İsa	Vefat-ı Dakletyanus	Hicret-i Nebî
	Hebûtu Âdem	2242	2324	3868	4847	5281	5563	5584	5876	6216
		Tufan-ı Nuh	1081	1626	2605	3039	3321	3341	3634	3974
Helak-i Kavmi Ad	3044	802	Mevlûd-ü İbrahim	545	1524	1958	2240	2261	2553	2893
Bina-i Kabe	3423	1181	100	Vefat-ı Mûsa	979	1413	1695	3716	2008	2348
Gark-ı Firavn	3828	1586	505	40	İbtida-i Mülk-ü Buhtunnasır	435	717	738	1031	1369
Bina-i Mescid-i Aksa	4407	2165	1084	539	440	Galebe-i İskender ber Dara	282	303	595	924
Nevm-i Eshab-ı Kehf	5820	3580	2498	1953	2498	540	Galebe-i Augustus	21	313	652
Binay-ı sur-u Konstantiniyye	5879	3637	2556	2012	2556	3637	316	Mevlûd-ü İsa	282	631
Vaka-i sahhab-ı fil ve mevlûd-ü Nebî Aleyhisselam	6160	3921	2840	2296	1017	882	600	578	Vefat-ı Dakletyanus	393
Meb'as-i Peygamber Aleyhisselam	6203	3961	2880	2335	1357	922	640	618	286	Hicret-i Nebî

The table shows the time passed between each two events.

Left side: “Cedvelin bu cânibi Melikü’l Müeyyed’indir. Hoca Sâdeddin Efendi dahi Tarih-i Larî tercümesinde derc eylemiştir.”

Bottom left-hand corner: “Tevellûd-ü İbrahim ile Hicret mâbeyni müverrihler muhtârı üzere ikibinsekizyüzdoksanüç sâldir. Müneccimler kavlince ikiyüzkırkdokuz sâli noksan üzere olub noksan-ı mezkûr ihtilâfı Buhtunnasır’a gelince mestûr olan vakâyî’de beyne’l-ferîkayn caridir.”

Bottom: “Müneccim mezhebinde takvîmler, zîcler mûcibince Tûfan ile Hicret meyâmı üçbinyediyüzyirmibeş sene olub müverrihler ikiyüzkırkdokuz sene ziyâde olmak üzere ihtilâf itmişlerdir.”

Bottom right-hand corner: “Tevrat-ı Yunaniyye ve muhtâr-ı müverrihinde meyan-ı Hebût ve Hicret altıbinikiyüzoniki senedir ki Tevrat-ı İbraniyye ve mezheb-i müneccimîn üzere ikiyüzkırkdokuz sâl noksan ve Tevrat-ı Samiriyye mûcibince binyetmişdokuz sene lazım gelür.”

سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة	سنة
٦٤١٦	٥٨٧٦	٥٥٨٤	٥٥٦٣	٥٢٨١	٤٨٤٧	٤٨٦٨	٤٤٤٤	٢٢٤٢	ساقط	سنة
٤٩٧٤	٤٦٢٤	٤٢٤٢	٤٢٤١	٤٠٤٩	٣٦٠٥	١٦٤٦	١٠٨١	ساقط	سنة	سنة
٤٨٩٢	٤٥٥٣	٢٢٦١	٢٢٤٤	١٩٥٨	١٥٢٤	٥٤٥	ساقط	١٠٨١	سنة	سنة
٢٤٤٨	٢٠٠٨	١٧١٦	١٦٩٥	١٤١٤	٩٧٩	ساقط	٥٤٥	١٦٤٦	٤٨٦٨	سنة
١٩٦٩	١٠٤١	٧٤٨	٧١٧	٤٤٥	ساقط	٩٧٩	١٥٢٤	٢٦٠٥	٤٨٤٧	سنة
٩٢٤	٥٩٥	٤٠٢	٢٨٢	ساقط	٤٤٥	١٦١٢	١٩٥٨	٤٠٤٩	٥٤٨١	سنة
٦٥٢	٤١٢	٢١	ساقط	٢٨٢	٧١٧	١٦٩٥	٢٢٤٠	٤٢٦١	٥٥٦٣	سنة
٦٢١	٢٨٢	ساقط	٢١	٤٠٢	٧٤٧	١٧١٦	٢٢٦١	٤٢٤٤	٥٥٨٤	سنة
٤٢٩	ساقط	٢٨٢	٤١٢	٥٩٥	١٠٤١	٢٠٠٨	٢٥٥٢	٤٦٢٤	٥٨٧٦	سنة
ساقط	٤٢٩	٦٢١	٦٥٢	٩٢٤	١٩٦٩	٢٤٤١	٢٨٩٢	٤٩٩٤	٦٤١٦	سنة

Fig. 3 The original of the second table of Kâtib Çelebi. Abî al-Fidâ', (1870). *El-Mukhtasar*.

میر طاهر	۶۷۱۶	۵۸۷۶	۵۵۸۴	۵۰۹۴	۵۰۸۱	۴۱۴۷	۵۸۹۸	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
طوفان	۴۴۴۴	۴۶۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۰۴۹	۴۹۰۰	۱۶۲۶	۱۰۸۱	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
مولد ابراهیم	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۰	۱۹۸۴	۱۰۴۴	۵۴۰	۱۰۸۱	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
وفات ابراهیم	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۱۷۴۶	۱۶۷۵	۱۴۱۴	۹۷۹	۵۴۰	۱۶۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
مولد ابراهیم	۴۴۴۴	۱۰۴۱	۷۲۸	۷۱۷	۴۴۰	۹۷۹	۱۰۴۴	۴۹۰۰	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
طوفان	۷۳۴	۵۷۰	۴۰۴	۴۸۲	۴۰۴	۱۴۱۴	۱۹۰۹	۴۰۴۹	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
مولد ابراهیم	۶۰۲	۴۱۴	۴۱	۴۶۱	۷۱۷	۱۶۷۵	۴۴۴۰	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
وفات ابراهیم	۶۴۱	۴۸۴	۴۱	۴۰۴	۷۸	۱۷۱۷	۴۴۴۱	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴	۴۴۴۴
مولد ابراهیم	۴۴۹	۴۸۲	۴۱۴	۵۷۰	۱۰۴۱	۴۰۰۹	۴۰۰۴	۴۶۴۴	۵۸۷۶	۶۷۱۶
طوفان	۴۴۹	۶۴۱	۶۰۲	۴۴۴	۱۴۶۶	۲۱۴۱	۴۸۷۴	۴۷۷۴	۶۷۱۶	۶۷۱۶

(عنواندین ایکی سطر) علم تاریخک تعریفی و موضوع و فایدهک بیان
 و مورخک آداب و شرایطی دخی مورخه بلسی لازم اولان امور بیاننده در
 (علم تاریخ) طوائف و بلدانک احوالی و رسملرینی و عادتلرینی و اشخاصک
 صنعتلرینی و نسبیلرینی و نه وقت وفات ایتدک لری و دخی غیر شیری بلکدر
 (و موضوعی) انبیا و اولیا و علما و حکما و شعرا و ملوک سلاطین و غیر یلدرن
 بکن شخصلرک احوالدر و علم تاریخدن غرض بکن احواله و قوف تحصیلدر
 فائده اول احوالدر عبرت الوب نصیحتلرکم و تقلبات ازمانه و قوف ایله

Fig. 4 Abu'l-Fidâ's table in *Sahâifü'l-ahbar*. Müneccimbaşı, *Sahâ'if-ül-ahbâr*.

My transcription of the bottom: “(‘Unvandan ikinci satır) İlm-i tarihin tarifi ve mevzu ve gayetinin beyanı ve müverrihin adab ve şeraiti ve müverrihe bilmesi lazım olan umur beyanıdır. (ilm-i tarih) Tevaif ve büldanın ahvali ve resimlerini ve adetlerini ve eşhasının sanatlarını ve neseplerini ve ne vakit vefat ettiklerini ve dahi gayrı şeyleri bilmektir. (ve mevzu’u) Enbiya ve evliya ve ulema ve hükema ve şuaara ve müluk-u selatin ve gayrılardan geçen şahısların ahvalidir. Ve ilm-i tarihten gazez geçen ahvale vukûf tahsilidir. Faide ol ahvalden ibret alıp nasihatlenmek ve takallübât-ı ezmâna vukûf ile [...]”

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