To the loving memory of my beloved and belated father Nazım Aksoy (1928–2006)

and to my dear mother Nuran Aksoy

A STUDY OF PSEUDO-HISTORICAL OTTOMAN NARRATIVES OF THE 17TH–18TH CENTURIES: ENVISIONING AN IMPERIAL PAST AND FUTURE IN THE OTTOMAN SOCIAL IMAGINATION AND MEMORY

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

RUKİYE ASLIHAN AKSOY SHERIDAN

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

THE DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY

İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY

ANKARA

September 2016

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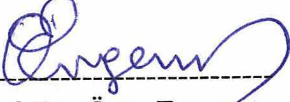

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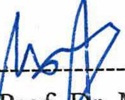

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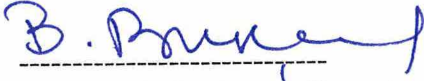

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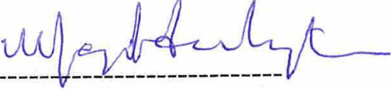

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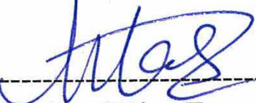

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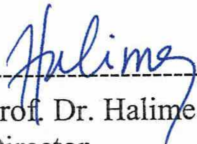

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF PSEUDO-HISTORICAL OTTOMAN NARRATIVES OF THE 17TH–18TH CENTURIES: ENVISIONING AN IMPERIAL PAST AND FUTURE IN THE OTTOMAN SOCIAL IMAGINATION AND MEMORY

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September 2016

This dissertation focuses on a textual and contextual analysis of two previously unstudied sets of pseudo-historical narratives produced and reproduced in miscellanies and fascicles throughout the "post-classical" period of the Ottoman Empire from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. These texts are the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* (The Sea of Mutual Revelations) and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* (The Story of the Rise of the House of 'Osmân), and respectively they deal with an imagined future Ottoman sultanic geneaology and a largely legendary Ottoman imperial past, and as such they—as well as their antecedent texts, the *Papasnâme* and the *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa*—can be read as related to the perennial historiographical questions of the "decline" and "rise" of the Ottoman Empire. The aim of the study is to examine some widely held "post-classical" perceptions, convictions, aspirations, and anxieties concerning the empire and its past, present, and future as they developed in the context of the changes and transformations that began to occur from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. As such, the study will be less of an empirically and positivistically based analysis of data than an examination of cultural history and mentalities in relation to how the aforementioned perceptions, convictions, aspirations, and anxieties came to be translated into the Ottoman popular imagination and social memory in the post-classical period of the Ottoman imperial history.

Keywords: 17th century, Ottoman Cultural History, Popular Imagination, Pseudo-Historical Narratives, Social Memory

ÖZET

17 VE 18. YÜZYIL KURGUSAL OSMANLI TARİH ANLATILARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME: OSMANLI ORTAK İMGELEM VE BELLEĞİNDE İMPARATORLUK GEÇMİŞ VE GELECEK TASAVVURU

Aksoy Sheridan, Rukiye Aslıhan
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Eylül 2016

Bu tez, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun klasik-sonrası dönemi boyunca, onyedinci yüzyıl ortasından ondokuzuncu yüzyıl ortasına kadar çoklu-metin (mecmû'a) ve tek-metin elyazmalarında yeniden istinsah edilmiş olmakla birlikte üzerinde daha önce çalışma yapılmamış İki kurgusal tarih anlatısı öbeğinin metinsel ve bağlamsal incelemesine odaklanmaktadır. Bu metinler *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* ve *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* başlıklı, sırasıyla muhayyel bir Osmanlı saltanat silsileyle belirlenen bir gelecek tasavvuru ve büyük ölçüde efsanevi bir Osmanlı hanedan geçmişi sunan kurgusal tarih anlatılarıdır. Bu biçimleriyle, söz konusu anlatılar böylelikle sırasıyla hem kendi içeriklerinde –hem de öncül metinleri olan *Papasnâme* ve *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa* anlatılarında– ortaya konan kurgusal tarih anlatıları bakımından Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun "çöküş"ü ve doğuş"u biçiminde adlandırılan ve uzun zamandan beri tartışılmakta olan tarihyazınsal iki soruyla ilişkilendirilebilmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı bu bağlamlarda klasik-sonrası dönemde imparatorluk ve saltanatın geçmiş, şimdiki zaman ve geleceğiyle ilişkili olarak ortaya çıkan ve geniş kesimlerde taşınan algı, kanı, beklenti ve kaygıları özellikle de onaltıncı yüzyılın ortasından başlayan dönem içinde yaşanan toplumsal ve politik değişim ve dönüşümler bağlamıyla ilişkili olarak değerlendirmektir. Böylelikle bu çalışma olgusal ve ampirik bilgi yönelim ve temelli bir tarih araştırması olmaktan ziyade bir kültürel tarih ve zihniyet tarihi incelemesi olarak şekillenmektedir ve klasik-sonrası dönemde ortaya çıkan söz konusu algı, kanı, beklenti ve kaygıları Osmanlı ortak imgelem ve toplumsal belleğinde evrildiği biçimiyle araştırmayı hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: 17. yüzyıl, Kurgusal Tarih Anlatıları, Osmanlı Kültür Tarihi, Ortak Bellek, Toplumsal İmgelem

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historiographical Introduction

Any contemporary historiographical work not only provides historians with certain factual details and empirical evidence about the historical period in which they were produced and/or the period(s) that they were compiled to relate, but also constitutes a primary source revealing—albeit often between the lines—the conceptions, perceptions, convictions, inclinations, concerns, and aspirations of the milieux that produced them. This is true for any contemporary chronicle or historical document, so long as it is studied with a historian's discerning eye and mind capable of capturing subtleties in terms of a given document's inherent (mis)understandings, (mis)conceptualizations, and convictions concerning the very historical conditions and environs which they were produced to relate and detail.

Because historians have—until relatively recently—been concerned primarily with retrieving historical facts about the periods under scrutiny, contemporary historiographical works have been treated merely as mines of factual information

about the periods, environs, and events they were conceived in order to relate.[1] As such, textual evidence has been analyzed with a positivist outlook in a tentatively comparative manner so as to be either included among "canonical" historical texts or dismissed altogether as unhistorical. Texts' capacity to reveal conceptions, convictions, and aspirations between the lines has typically been disregarded and neglected by most historians, especially since the period immediately after the turn of the twentieth century was an era of historiographical practice in which the German historian Leopold von Ranke was particularly influential. Due to his influence, and following von Ranke's famous dictum "the historian has not the duty to judge the past, nor to instruct one's contemporaries with an eye to the future, but rather merely to say *how it actually was*,"[2] there prevailed a historiographical practice whereby the utmost importance of "facts" in history writing was almost obsessively emphasized.

As is the case for any historical document, however, contemporary historiographical sources and chronicles are always implicitly conceived and shaped according to their authors' concerns, aspirations, conceptions, and convictions. To neglect this undeniable point by taking these historiographical texts at face value as sources for

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[1] In the Ottoman context, Robert Dankoff criticizes a similar scholarly approach of mining sources for the sole purpose of retrieving relevant information and data while disregarding the rest of the sources' textual and historical context, an approach which he observes in many scholars' treatment of Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatname* as a historical source, a practice he only finds justifiable as regards the massive scope of the work: "The gigantic scope of the work has deterred investigators from analyzing its structure, beyond a mere enumeration of its basic contents. Characteristically, scholars have approached the *Seyahatname* as though it were a huge mine, with numerous unconnected passageways. Looking for what Evliya had to say, for example, about Iznik or Albania, or about Bektashi shrines or Karagöz entertainments, or about Caucasian languages or Sarı Saltuk legends, they have probed the text, found the vein they were seeking, and extracted the ore, leaving all else behind." Cf. Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 9.

[2] Cf. Leopold von Ranke, *Geschichten der Romanischen und Germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1535* (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, 1885), VII, emphasis added: "*Man hat der Historie das Amt, die Vergangenheit zu richten, die Mitwelt zum Nutzen zukünftiger Jahre zu belehren, beigemessen: so hoher Aemter unterwindet sich gegenwärtiger Versuch nicht: er will bloss sagen,* wie es eigentlich gewesen."

compiling “a maximum number of irrefutable and objective facts”[3] that supposedly make up “history” in fact only reveals, in a quite descriptive manner, *one* version of history—namely, the one being auspiciously, and rather conveniently, advertised in these texts. To arrive at a relatively objective basis in historiography, on the other hand, requires far more than a mere attempt to compile facts: instead, it calls for the historian’s active and critical participation in historical texts and documents with the aim of deciphering their ideological and political stance towards the recording of these “facts.” In this regard, E.H. Carr asserts the following:

> No document can tell us more than what the author of the document thought—what he thought had happened, what he thought ought to happen or would happen, or perhaps only what he wanted others to think he thought, or even only what he himself thought he thought. None of this means anything until the historian has got to work on it and deciphered it. The facts, whether found in documents or not, have still to be processed by the historian before he can make any use of them: the use he makes of them is […] the processing process.[4]

As such, it is the historian’s task to work through sources’ convictions, apparent intentions, and genre-related attributes in order to expose what they reveal beyond what their authors meant to adduce about their times. To become a second-hand mouthpiece for historical sources by merely repeating what they intentionally (or unintentionally) set out to convey and neglecting the *how* and *why* that lies behind *what* they convey would amount to a flawed and ultimately fruitless act of historiography. Instead, before processing sources into their own historiography, the historian must first and foremost study and historicize precisely the *how* and *why* of what those sources relate as well as how this connects to *what* they relate.[5]

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[3] E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin, 1990), 15, 16.

[4] Ibid., 16.

[5] Clearly, the question of *how* here implies a close study of the discourse through which historical sources relate *what* happened, rather than a simple repetition of the manner in which the sources relate what happened, while the question of *why* pertains to an investigation into the intricate web of causes and contingencies behind and around any particular historical experience.

Halil İnalcık, in his seminal article "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," sets out to adopt precisely this latter variety of history writing. Studying the earliest so-called *Tevârih-i Âl-i ʻOsmân* (Chronicles of the House of Osman) texts of the fifteenth century by means of a thorough comparison of their content, and with constant reference to the backgrounds of their respective authors, he successfully demonstrates the two stemmas branching out in their historiographical production as manuscripts. İnalcık states that there were undoubtedly "good reasons why Ottoman historiography first produced its general works early in the fifteenth century after the collapse of Bāyezīd's empire and then upon the death of Meḥemmed the Conqueror at the end of the same century,"[6] clearly implying that these earliest works of Ottoman historiography were in fact the products of a deliberate act of officially defining for posterity the genealogy of the dynasty and the past of the newly emerging empire.

Likewise, in his 1924 Arabic-script edition (including the German translation) of the Ottoman section of Şükrullah's chronicle *Behcetü't-Tevârîh* (The Joy of Histories)—one of the first Ottoman histories, written in Persian and completed in 1459 under the patronage of Mahmud Pasha Angelović,[7] who granted the author

[6] Halil İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P.M. Holt. (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 152.

[7] In fact, Mahmud Pasha Angelović, the grand vizier in the years 1456–1468 and 1472–1473 during the reign of Mehmed II, was very active and influential in this process of forging and building a new empire for the Ottoman dynasty and its universal enterprise, and contributed greatly to the cultural, religious, economic, and literary development of the emerging universal empire by promoting a multifaceted program of patronage, especially in the areas of architecture, historiography, and literature: he not only patronized many architectural projects, including mosques, madrasas, soup kitchens, fountains, public baths, inns (*han*s), and bazaars (*bedestan*s) in Istanbul, Edirne, Hasköy, Sofia, Golubac, Bursa, and Ankara through the workings of his pious foundation, but he also personally commissioned and supported the writing of early Ottoman histories, including Şükrullah's *Behcetü't-Tevârîh* and Enveri's *Düsturnâme*, two of the earliest works of Ottoman historiography; cf. Theoharis Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453–1474)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 258–326. Another remarkable point about Mahmud Pasha in direct relation to this dissertation is the fact that the posthumous legend created around his personage would constitute—as an antecedent narrative included therein—a great part of

1,000 *akçe*s upon its completion[8]—Theodor Seif, according to Halil İnalcık, points out that "various *Tevārīkh-i āl-i 'Osmān* were written towards the end of the fifteenth century as a result of the consciousness of having established a great empire."[9] Together with such recognition of having built an empire from a once merely regional power, another possible reason underlying this unprecedented and sudden eruption in the rapid production of history writing around the Ottoman court in the early to second half of the late fifteenth century might also have been mere dynastic rivalry and a feeling of contention with other rival Muslim dynasties. Indeed, around that period the Ottomans certainly tended more than before to generate their own version of an ancestral history of their origins, and of dynastic genealogy, especially against that of the rival Timurid dynasty, which was not only closely linked to the prestigious Chingisid dynastic line but had also recently defeated the Ottomans at the 1402 Battle of Ankara. Upon restoring the cohesion of the land of Rum under their rule after the utter collapse following this defeat[10] and the subsequent interregnum period (1402–1413),[11] both of which were still quite fresh in the memory of the Ottoman ruling class, it was likely imperative for the rulers of the Ottoman entity to assert their own identity through a cohesive representation of a historical past of their own. For instance, the aforementioned

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the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, one of the pseudo-historical narratives focused upon in this study; see Chapter V.

[8] Sara Nur Yıldız, "Şükrullah," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed., Vol. 39 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2010), 257–58: 257. 2014. Accessed July 11, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c39/c390165.pdf.

[9] Cf. İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," 152; Theodor Seif, "Der Abschnitt über die Osmanen in Şükrullahs persischer Universalgeschichte," *Mitteilungen zur Osmanischen Geschichte* 2 (1923–26).

[10] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, ed. Kemal Yavuz and M.A. Yekta Saraç (Istanbul: Koç Kültür Sanat Yayınları, 2003), 143–6; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, ed. Faik Reşit Unat and Mehmed A. Köymen (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2014), I, 349–63; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: TTK, 1972), I, 309–323.

[11] See Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 146–53; Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, I, 325–345, 347–95; Dimitris J. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid: Empire Building and Representation in the Ottoman Civil War of 1402–1413* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

Behcetü't-Tevârîh[12] by Şükrullah exemplifies such early Ottoman historiographical endeavors exercised for purposes of both genealogical and political legitimization and dynastic contestation: he wrote his work of universal history, including a subsection on early Ottoman history and genealogy, in Persian, and in it he represented the Chingisids as "rapacious rulers," while contending in contrast "the political superiority of the Oghuz Turks of the western branch."[13] The fact that Şükrullah, following Yazıcızâde Ali, was the second chronicler to link the Ottoman dynasty through Ertuğrul and his son Osman to the glorious Kayı branch of the children of Oguz Han[14]—a mythic forefather for the Turkic peoples, who seems to have been configured as an adversary to Genghis Khan, the forefather of the Tatar, and thus Kipchak, lineage—also attests to the historical claim for Ottoman dynastic legitimacy and superiority against rival dynasties. Even such a contrast between the representations of two dynasties as expounded in one single work of historiography convincingly demonstrates an underlying dispute between the two and their respective cultural and political spheres, while also revealing the apparent political orientation of the particular chronicle. Moreover, such an example also reminds us how any work of historiography, before any assumptions of or claims to historical veracity are made, first needs to be contextualized so as to tease out its real historical signification.

In line with this instance, Sara Nur Yıldız, in her article "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian, 1400–1600," convincingly argues that the commissioning of historiographical works in Persian by the Ottoman sultan and other élite high

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[12] See Seif, "Der Abschnitt über die Osmanen."

[13] Sara Nur Yıldız, "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian, 1400 –1600," in *Persian Historiography*. Vol. X. *A History of Persian Literature*, ed. Charles Melville, 436 –502: 444. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.

[14] Cf. Yazıcızâde Ali, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Selçuk [Selçuklu Tarihi]*, ed. Abdullah Bakır (Istanbul: Çamlıca, 2009), 872; Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 96.

officials of the state—a very common and frequent practice, as Yıldız's enumeration and study of such works amply illustrates—represents "an attempt to develop an Ottoman imperial discourse by drawing directly upon the prestigious imperial traditions of the Persianate world."[15] According to Yıldız, through such commissions, Ottoman patrons not only adopted "an act of appropriation of the 'transregional culture-power' of Persian" so as to "recast Perso-Islamic cultural and imperial traditions within a specifically Ottoman mold," but also "sought to shape the Persian tradition for their own cultural-political needs and aspirations, particularly in the context of rivalry with various Persianate polities in the greater Islamic Turko-Iranian oecumene."[16] In fact, in the same historical context, the commissioning of historiographical works in Persian flourished in cultural as well as political terms, especially during the reign of Mehmed II (r. 1444–46, 1451–81), who pioneered the project of building a universal empire after the conquest of Constantinople. This commissioning tradition continued persistently through the end of the sixteenth century, only to come to "an abrupt halt" during the reign of Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603).[17] Even such a preliminary outline reveals a definite historical conjunction between patronage leading to an increased production of Ottoman historiographical works in Persian on the one hand and the pursuit of both political and cultural aspirations to fulfill the political venture of building a universal empire on the other hand. In this context, Yıldız correspondingly and succinctly notes as follows:

> Ottoman patronage of historical writing in Persian coincides largely with the period of transformation of the Ottoman polity from a regional power to an early modern empire, with a distinct imperial identity. This process involved considerable territorial expansion and state consolidation, as well as the

[15] Yıldız, "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian," 436.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 437.

> emergence of a growing and centralizing bureaucracy. The political and cultural élite of the rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire likewise sought to develop an imperial idiom in Ottoman letters to convey these political aspirations.[18]

In line with such correspondence between any commissioning of history writing to its period of production, Halil İnalcık, in the aforementioned article, makes likewise an invaluable suggestion to future historians of the Ottoman Empire, and particularly to those who wish to make the effort to regard the historical background of the production of these Ottoman chronicles in historicizing them as primary sources: "The attempt to correlate the phases of Ottoman historiography with the development of Ottoman history itself can shed new light upon various problems."[19]

Following İnalcık's suggestion, this dissertation sets out to examine not the "canonized" Ottoman chronicles as part of an inquiry into political history, but rather, as part of a cultural historical study, to look at two sets of previously unknown and/or understudied pseudo-historical narratives of the Ottoman dynasty found in various single-text (e.g., separate fascicles) and miscellaneous (e.g., *mecmû'a*s) manuscripts produced between the late sixteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries. These particular narratives—entitled *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* (The Sea of Mutual Revelations) and *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* (The Story of the Rise of the House of Osman)—both reveal a common communal concern for the history of the Ottoman dynasty, although they differ in their particular foci. However, this difference in focus in fact only reveals how these two sets of pseudo-historical narratives present versions of a public perspective on the two main historiographical issues in the Ottoman historical context; namely, and respectively, "decline" and "emergence." As a matter of fact, despite having various renditions as well as

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[18] Ibid.

[19] İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," 152.

antecedent narratives specific to themselves, I contend that these two sets of "popular"[20] pseudo-historical narratives both expose a common concern for reinterpreting and reimagining Ottoman imperial and dynastic history in respect to these two issues.

Likewise, Ottoman historiography has indeed been predominantly concerned with these two main questions about the historical trajectory of the Ottoman political enterprise: firstly, the rise of the Ottoman dynasty and the earliest establishment of the Ottoman Empire,[21] and secondly, the so-called "decline" of the Ottoman Empire[22] and the transformations undertaken in the social and political spheres of the Ottoman entity in the "post-classical" period.[23] The most remarkable point about

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[20] The adjective "popular" is used here somewhat tentatively in both senses of the word. As will become clearer in the close examination of these narratives in chapters four and five, these pseudo-historical narratives reveal a textual orientation which is not shaped by or addressed to a clearly well-educated and literate audience, but rather with the aim of appealing more widely to a popular reception. Also, due to the number of known extant manuscript copies, it might also (albeit with reservations) be assumed that these texts, no matter whether they were consumed through communal readings among groups of people or through private readings by individuals, somehow reached that "popular" appeal among a wider cross-section of the Ottoman population over quite a long period of later Ottoman history.

[21] For a detailed outline of the recent modern historiographical debate around the first question, and many of the key secondary studies and texts in dialogue on the issue reprinted in Turkish translation, see Oktay Özel and Mehmet Öz, eds, *Söğüt'ten İstanbul'a: Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kuruluşu Üzerine Tartışmalar* (Ankara: İmge, 2005).

[22] On how some contemporary Ottoman intellectuals interpreted the question of "decline" in the Ottoman context, see Mehmet Öz, *Kanun-ı Kadimin Peşinde: Osmanlı'da Çözülme ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları (XVI. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıl Başlarına)* (Istanbul: Dergâh, 2013), Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline," *Islamic Studies* 1.1 (March 1962): 71–87. The idea of "decline," promulgated and criticized in these contemporary sources in the face of the political transformations and social changes the Ottoman entity had begun to undergo from the latter part of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566), has indeed turned into a dominant and quite readily accepted paradigm in the modern historiography, as outlined in Bernard Lewis' aforementioned study. This paradigm obviously fails to explain and evaluate the last three centuries of the empire, which itself evades the idea of decline due to its sheer longevity, and it also refuses to detail the inner dynamics of the Ottoman social and political entity in its attempts at and frequent failures in transforming in order to survive, but instead, in an uncontextualized and almost ahistorical dichotomy, focuses simply on individual instances of military defeats and the ensuing economic failure the Ottoman state experienced *vis-à-vis* the "progressive" rival powers of Europe.

[23] The periodization of Ottoman history has long been an issue of scholarly debate in modern Ottoman historiography. As might be expected, many differing periodization schemas have been suggested and designated according to the different emphases, foci, and perspectives held by different scholars. Among these alternatives, Halil İnalcık's schema has been preeminent, having been widely adopted in the field due largely to its simple yet substantial configuration and because it presents an important consideration of the *tımar* system's central role in Ottoman economic, social,

these pseudo-historical narratives in relation to Ottoman historiography is the fact that they correspond to these historiographical questions and reveal how these historical issues were actually translated into the Ottoman social memory and imagination. Indeed, on the one hand, the former of the two, *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* (or "The Sea of Mutual Revelations")—which according to its manuscript copies seem to have been produced during the late seventeenth century, earlier than the other narrative—is clearly concerned with the "future" of the Ottoman dynasty, revealing this through its oracular visions indirectly addressing the problem of "decline" in the modern Ottoman historiography.[24] This pseudo-historical narrative thus gives a

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administrative, and military history that depends on the inner workings of the Ottoman state apparatus and society rather than following Eurocentric historiographical contexts. In this schema, İnalcık explains the period of formation of the Ottoman political entity from *beglik* to empire, from the earliest beginnings to the end of the sixteenth century, as "classical," while as "post-classical" he designates the period, from the late sixteenth century onwards, of transformation and change under the external pressures of money-based global economic trends, the emergence of new technologies of warfare in Europe, and internal adversities caused by, especially, rapid demographic change and the ensuing shortage of resources and revenues. According to this configuration, the period of modernization affected by the emergence of mass-produced heavy industry, paradigms of nationalism, and the formation of modern nation states, as well as the emergence of the idea of modern citizenship from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century, is then designated as the modernization or westernization period; cf. Halil İnalcık, "Periods in Ottoman History," in *Essays in Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Eren, 1998), 15–30; Özer Ergenç, "Üretim Süreçleri İçinde Osmanlı Belgeleri," in *Şehir, Toplum, Devlet: Osmanlı Tarihi Yazıları*, 454–67 (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012), 455. Because of this schema's simple yet comprehensive understanding of the general economic framework as well as of the intellectual underpinnings of the Ottoman political sphere prior to the mid-nineteenth century, this dissertation will also follow this periodization, terming the period in which the pseudo-historical narratives under consideration were produced as "post-classical," regardless of the inherently nostalgic referential underpinnings of the term "post-classical" for the "classical" formation of the state. Another, and perhaps more significant, reason for this choice lies in the fact that these pseudo-historical narratives in fact expose or are products of a common concern for the transformation of the empire in the period starting from the late sixteenth century up until or through the mid-nineteenth century, a point of argument that will be illustrated through narrative evidence throughout the study.

[24] The "decline" paradigm, which is essentialist and teleological in its nature as a grand narrative, and fails to explain the longevity of the empire, has also been widely criticized for its inefficacy in explaining the social and political transformations the Ottoman entity experienced within a global context, and some scholars have in fact attempted to provide new revisionist perspectives so as to better reconstruct the Ottoman "post-classical" period in its complexities and contingencies with a substantially new paradigm rather than repeating the "declinist" contemporary Ottoman sources as second mouthpieces. Although the historiographical question of Ottoman "decline" has produced a number of significant studies; in order to get an idea about how the modern Ottoman historiography has interpreted the issue in the first place with reference to the contemporary Ottoman primary sources on the question of Ottoman "decline" in a textbook nature, see Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 1, *Empire of the Gazis. The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280–1808* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). On the other hand, for an important example of the later revisionist approaches that touch upon the same context of sources

glimpse of how the transformations and structural changes experienced in the social and political spheres of the Ottoman entity in the "post-classical" era were understood and interpreted by a wider segment of the society. On the other hand, the second pseudo-historical narrative, *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* (The Story of the Rise of the House of Osman), is—in contrast—more concerned with the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty, and thereby can readily be associated with the problem of the "rise" or "emergence" of the Ottoman political entity and dynasty, revealing how different shareholders in the Ottoman enterprise interpreted the genealogy of the Ottoman dynasty and its earliest rulers' actions in later periods of the empire's history. In their own way, then, these pseudo-historical narratives, which were manifestly not conceived so as to provide factual historical information about the periods they relate, turn out to give a clear picture of *how* these periods were perceived by the social memory and translated into social imagination in the Ottoman Empire both in contemporary and later periods of its history.

In order to decipher the true significance of these pseudo-historical narratives in illustrating how these historical experiences were regarded by the people who experienced and later interpreted them, this study not only historicizes and contextualizes these narratives in terms of their production as texts and as historical evidence, but also situates them within a comparative perspective *vis-à-vis* various other contemporary as well as secondary sources in order to place them into a more conceptualized framework of cultural history. Through preliminary comparison with the "canonized" Ottoman chronicles, which focus on the historical periods also dealt with in these pseudo-historical narratives—but particularly those chronicles addressing the seventeenth-century political and administrative crises and the

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and come up with alternative outlooks on the issue, see Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 4, nos. 1–2 (1997–1998): 30–75.

ensuing attempts at transformation, as well as the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty—the dissertation will duly note where these texts diverge and converge. In doing so, this study further aims to examine the differing renditions and antecedent narratives of these two sets of pseudo-historical narratives in order to configure the historical contingencies these texts and their differing versions present. In this, the primary aim is to better understand how the Ottoman social imagination and memory manifested in these texts worked at devising and revising the origins as well as the contemporary configurations, issues, and problems of the social and political entity of which it was part and parcel. I contend, foremost, that on the whole these narratives illustrate how historical consciousness was not an act restricted to the pale of the élite circles of the Ottoman literati—as has been widely suggested in secondary studies focusing on the Ottoman advice literature of the period—but rather a concern that resonated outside this pale as well, reaching out to wider segments of the population, who seem to have begun, from the end of the sixteenth century onwards, to register in their own *mecmû'a*s and single-text manuscripts, more often than before, an interest in the history and destiny of the Ottoman Empire and dynasty.

1.2 Primary Sources

The dissertation primarily involves a contextualized and concentrated examination of the aforementioned two sets of narratives disseminated across various miscellaneous or single-text manuscripts written in the Ottoman Turkish vernacular. Therefore, the primary sources that will be studied for this research project can be divided mainly into two groups: (1) those entitled *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* or "The Sea of Mutual Revelations," the first set of narratives that will constitute part of the main focus of my research; and (2) those entitled *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, or "The

Story of the Rise of the House of Osman," the other set of narratives of focus in this study.

In conjunction with these two sets of pseudo-historical narratives, a number of additional contemporary or related primary sources will be examined in order to help pinpoint the real historical significance of these narratives. Alongside a number of "canonized" Ottoman chronicles that deal specifically with the seventeenth-century period of dynastic and political crises as well as the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty,[25] these contemporary manuscript sources will include, more importantly, two other groups of narratives, entitled *Papasnâme*[26] and *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Paşa*,[27] both of which make up the antecedent texts which evolved into the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, respectively.

[25] Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Ali Osman* [or *Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi*], ed. 'Ali Beg (Istanbul: Matba'a-ı 'Amire, 1914); Lütfi Paşa, *Tevarih-i Ali Osman*, ed. 'Ali Beg (Istanbul: Matba'a-ı 'Amire, 1922/23); Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, ed. Faik Reşit Unat and Mehmed A. Köymen (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2014); Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ* (*Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn Fî Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-Hâfikayn*). Haz. Mehmet İpşirli. 4 Vols. (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2007); Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul: Çamlıca Basım Yayım, 2008); Mehmed Râşid. *Tarih-i Raşid*. 4. Vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-yı Amire, 1865).

[26] Two copies of the text can be found in Turkey at Kütahya Vahidpaşa Library, Kütahya. Kütahya Vahitpaşa Collection, 43 Va 1545; and Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul. Saliha Hatun collection, no. 212. Two other copies of the text outside Turkey are recorded as housed in Vienna and Tunisia: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS Mixt 689; National Library of Tunisia, MS 1459. 39b–69a.

[27] I have discovered twenty-one extant copies of this widely reproduced popular legend, and these manuscripts are held at various locations and manuscript collections today: Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, 34 AE Tarih 6/1; Millet Library, Istanbul. Ali Emîrî collection, 34 AE Şeriyye 1136; Millî Library, Ankara, Yazmalar collection, no. 06 Mil Yz A 1635/2; Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Supplément turc 1625, 59a–79b; Millet Library, Istanbul. Ali Emîrî Efendi collection, 1136; Millet Library, Istanbul. Ali Emîrî Efendi collection, 6/1; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul. Bağdatlı Vehbi Efendi collection, 2187/3; Millet Library, Istanbul. Ali Emîrî Efendi Tıbbı collection, 43/3; Austrian National Library, Vienna. Han collection, Cod. H. O. 116. 1b–22a; Deutsche Nationalbibliothek. Ms.or.oct.2896. 22b-43b; Deutsche Nationalbibliothek. Ms.or.oct.3487; Hüseyin Kocabaş Kitaplığı, Istanbul. Türkçe Yazmaları collection, S.H.M.H.K.Yaz. 572; Türk Dil Kurumu Library, Ankara. Türk Dil Kurumu Library Türkçe Yazmaları collection, Yz. A 142/5; İzmir Millî Library, Izmir. İzmir Milli Library Türkçe Yazmaları collection, 1662/1; Millî Library, Ankara. Adnan Ötüken İl Halk Library collection, 06 Hk 2432. 1a-6b; Manisa İl Halk Library, Manisa. 45 Hk 5070/1. 1b–22a; Kastamonu İl Halk Library, Kastamonu. 37 Hk 3968/10. 65b–78b; İBB Atatürk Library, Istanbul. Belediye Yazmaları collection, Bel_Yz_K.000270/01. 1b–18a; İBB Atatürk Library, Istanbul. Belediye Yazmaları collection, Bel_Yz_K.000400/01. 1b–20b; İBB Atatürk Library, Istanbul. Muallim Cevdet Yazmaları, MC_Yz_K.000105/03. 152b–166a; İBB Atatürk Library, Istanbul. Muallim Cevdet Yazmaları, MC_Yz_K.000284/01. 1b–23a.

The dissertation will also make note of the court-oriented histories entitled *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s, which were commissioned chronicles focusing on the reigns of Selim I and Süleyman the Magnificent respectively, as well as of the frontier epics and hagiographies of earlier periods entitled *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalnâme*s, and *Saltuknâme*s, in order to pinpoint their textual, genre-related, and orientative similarities and dissimilarities with the primary pseudo-historical narratives under discussion. These supplementary sources will be examined primarily so as to set up the general historiographical scene and historical context within or against which the two primary pseudo-historical narratives were produced. Still, among the supplementary contemporary sources to be covered in the dissertation, the *Papasnâme* and *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Paşa* narratives will constitute a main secondary focus of the study due to their antecedent textual relationship to the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives, in order to trace the processes through which the latters' contextual configuration as well as textual formation underwent, which will allow me to investigate all their contextual and textual contingencies in more detail.

The first set of primary sources, entitled *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* (The Sea of Mutual Revelations)—which is more concerned with its contemporary period of the seventeenth century as well as the "future" of the dynasty—has four known copies in various manuscript archives today.[28] These narratives—as will be argued and elaborated upon in Chapter IV—present the researcher with an example of contemporary Ottoman notions of dynastic history as well as certain communal and political concerns, apprehensions, and aspirations concerning the "future" of the

[28] Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Kemankeş collection, no. 430. 46b–74a; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fonds des traductions, no.44; Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B; Ankara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Ankara, No. 36031, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B.

Ottoman dynasty that emerged in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially during the early part of the reign of Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1640–1648).[29] Constructed as a book of oracles about an invented lineage of the House of Osman extending the Ottoman dynastic line forward into the "future," amounting to a total of seventy sultans, including a retelling of the reigns of six actual sultans at the beginning, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* is thus an aspirational text presenting a vision of the future in which the Ottoman Empire greatly extends its domains, makes unnumbered converts, and consolidates the Islamic faith. This pseudo-historical narrative also displays a clear politics of memory in its gaze towards the immediate dynastic past in its account of the six actual sultans, from Mehmed III up through Sultan Ibrahim, consciously censoring certain parts of that past in line with the narrative's particular aspirational vision, while also suggesting solutions to the problem of succession as well as other contemporary administrative problems of the seventeenth century. Two of the four extant copies, two of which are found in miscellanies, date from the late seventeenth century. The text and its context are therefore illustrative of how the adverse conditions of the seventeenth century left a deep mark on the Ottoman communal imagination and memory, and it is this issue in particular that this dissertation, through a close examination of the four extant copies of the text found in various archives today, will explore in detail, along with an examination of what the narrative's visions for the future manifest.

The second set of primary pseudo-historical narratives, entitled *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* (The Story of the Rise of the House of Osman)—which is more concerned

[29] The text itself does not directly record its actual date of production, but textual analysis reveals that the latest real Ottoman sultan it records is Sultan Ibrahim. Also, various points of reference for the practices of succession in the Ottoman dynastic system also unwittingly reveal that the immediate period of concern for the narrative is the earliest part of the reign of Ibrahim, when the longevity of the Ottoman dynasty became a common concern for people from all walks of life in the Ottoman Empire.

with the earliest beginnings of the dynasty as well as the period up to the reign of Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520)—has eleven known extant copies in Turkish archives today.[30] These narratives reimagine the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty, starting the dynastic lineage with a certain Ahmed Beg, the leader of a semi-nomadic Turkmen tribe called Tîr u Seyf (Arrow and Sword) from Tebriz in Persia. In these texts, this Ahmed Beg is claimed to be the original forefather of the entire Ottoman lineage insofar as he is the father of "Erdoğdu" (not Ertuğrul) who in turn is the father of "Osmancık" (rather than Osman), and he is the one to whom is imputed the well-known auspicious foundational dream ascribed to Osman (in Âşıkpaşazâde's history[31]) or Ertuğrul (in Oruç Beg's history[32]): Ahmed Beg has the very same auspicious dream, involving a tree growing out of his navel to signify the birth of the Ottoman dynasty—a dream that usually serves as a kind of literary topos for the legitimization of the Ottoman dynastic lineage.[33] As will be argued in Chapter V,

[30] These known extant eleven copies of the narrative can be found in various collections today, some of which are under slightly different titles, while two of which are not titled in the manuscript, details which will subsequently be referred to, wherever is needed, in the study: *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i Osman; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144. 1a–51b; *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i Osman; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 11159; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 5444; Untitled, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Tercüman Gazetesi collection, Y189; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1: 1a–76b; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, İbrahim Efendi collection, 670; Untitled, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Yazma Bağışlar Collection, 2981/1 –2; *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Türkçe Yazmaları collection, BEL_Yz_O.000039/02: 69b–174b; *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Muallim Cevdet collection, MC_Yz_K.000084; *Risâle der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-u Âli-i Osmân*, Çorum Hasan Paşa Public Library, 19 Hk 1292. 10b–71b; *Tarih-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Erzurum Atatürk University, Seyfettin Özege collection, 0137897.

[31] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, ed. Kemal Yavuz and M.A. Yekta Saraç (Istanbul: Koç Kültür Sanat Yayınları, 2003), 57–8; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. ʻAli Beg (Istanbul: Matba'a-ı ʻAmire, 1914); reprint: *Āshiqpashazādeh*, *Āshiqpashazādeh Ta'rīkhī: A History of the Ottoman Empire to A.H. 883 (AD 1478)* (Westmead, UK: Gregg, 1970), 6.

[32] Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul: Çamlıca Basım Yayım, 2008), 8.

[33] H.A. Gibbons, basing himself on various early Ottoman accounts but especially on that by Neşri, regards the dreams of Osman (including an earlier one, as described in Neşri's account, in which, after a night of reading the Qur'an during his stay at a pious Muslim's house, he sees an angel saying, "Since thou hast read my eternal word with so great respect, thy children and the children of thy children shall be honoured from generation to generation"), his later meeting with Edebali, and his marriage with Malhatun as events "recording, in a truly Oriental way, his conversion to Islam," and claims that "[i]t was the conversion of Osman and his tribe which gave birth to the Osmanli people,

this set of narratives, presenting a somewhat divergent version of the Ottoman dynasty's earliest beginnings (albeit bearing various convergences with the canonized accounts of the period), brings forth many questions about the genealogy of the dynasty, its confessional as well as successional practices, and several other historical issues concerning the position and involvement of various social groups, such as the *ulema* or converted *kul* officials, in the making of the imperial order. Moreover, the Ottoman and the Safavid political and religious dichotomy, which had become a central issue of concern and contestation, especially from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, is shown in these narratives to have involved the social and political imagination in later periods of Ottoman history as well. Of the eleven known extant copies of the narrative in Turkish archives today, all are found in various separate manuscripts and fascicles or in miscellaneous manuscripts, and most are undated. The dated manuscripts are from a range of different periods, from the late eighteenth (as the earliest extant dated copy of 1792 suggests) through the mid-nineteenth centuries (as shown by the latest extant dated copy of 1848), suggesting that the text exerted some interest on the Ottoman social imagination over a long period of time, with varied individuals finding meaning in the narrative's

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because it welded into one race the various elements living in the north-western corner of Asia Minor. The new faith gave them a *raison d'être*"; cf. H.A. Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire: A History of the Osmanlıs Up to the Death of Bayezid I (1300–1403)* (New York: The Century Co., 1916), 23–7. Contrary to Gibbons' interpretation, which considers these particular dream episodes as a narrative signifying Osman's conversion, Colin Imber claims the episode to be a part of a deliberate act of myth-making on the part of the early members of the Ottoman dynasty, and that because the Ottoman sultans drew their moral authority from this myth, its propagation was essential to the existence of the state: "By the late 16th century the Ottoman dynasty possessed an elaborate myth which legitimised its rule in the eyes of its own subjects and justified its wars against neighbouring monarchs, both Christian and Muslim. The myth had many strands, each of which had developed separately to meet the requirements of a particular time or to appeal to different sections of the population. By the mid-16th century, these strands had united to form a quasi-official account of the origins of the dynasty, which explained and justified its rise to power and described its destiny in terms of the religious and political ideas of orthodox Islam"; cf. Colin Imber, "The Ottoman Dynastic Myth," *Turcica* 19 (1987): 7.

story of the Ottomans' earliest trajectory in history, as well as the genealogy of the dynasty, even in the later years of the Ottoman Empire.

Despite their different dates of production and their differing foci, both of these primary sets of narratives reveal a common social concern for Ottoman imperial history and the Ottoman historical trajectory. What is more, as revealed by their many renditions in various manuscript copies, as well as their largely simple Turkish diction and language use, these narratives indicate a relatively common and "popular"-oriented interest in reimagining, and thus reinterpreting, imperial history. However, as will be argued and illustrated in the dissertation, despite such "popular" interest, their function seems not to have been one of a purely entertainment- and aspiration-oriented nature, as is the case with other such "popular" histories to be referred to in the study.

1.3 Research Questions and Historiographical Approach

In the light of these pseudo-historical narratives invested with a genuine concern for the Ottoman dynastic trajectory, certain historiographical questions arise. Why, for instance, were such pseudo-historical narratives of "popular" orientation (considering also their antecedent texts) produced and reproduced, especially from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and on up to the mid-nineteenth century, a period commonly considered by Ottomanist historiography to be a period of "change" and "transformation," and accordingly denoted the "post-classical" period? What were the earliest sources for these "popular" narratives which "rewrite" Ottoman history? What do these sorts of pseudo-historical narratives that retell history really tell us? Can these narratives be considered products or records of social memory and/or imagination at work, especially during periods of social change and transformation? Are they utterly

imaginary in terms of their time, place, and plotting for the historical contexts that they relate, or do they instead hold a kernel of truth in their representations of history? How do these pseudo-historical narratives represent social conceptions of time, history, and the Ottoman dynastic lineage? In this study, these research questions will be addressed through a close textual and contextual analysis of these sets of narratives, as well as their antecedents, proceeding in an analytical and comparative manner.

In addressing these research questions, the dissertation will *not* aim to attain concrete historical information or to procure certain historical facts about the historical contexts related and retold in these narratives. Instead, I will first and foremost carry out content and discourse analysis of these narratives, deliberating over precisely how imaginary or veritable their retelling of historical events and geographical and temporal markings are. This content and discourse analysis will also make note of how these narratives present—in their own manner—lifestyles, worldview, conceptions of time and history, and people, as well as what conceptions of sovereignty, systems of succession, and notions of political legitimacy they uphold in their accounts. The dissertation will also use onomastics and toponymy to study the narratives' uses of personal and topographical names and the possible reasons lying behind the choices of these names.

Additionally, this study will also examine how these narratives represent in their own way certain Ottoman political and societal institutions and organizational bodies, such as *tımar*, the Janissary corps, the *ulema*, and the Ottoman dynasty itself. I will also concentrate on the narratives' language usage and diction in an attempt to pinpoint practices of communal vs. silent and/or personal readings that these narratives indicate in terms of the history of literacy within the Ottoman cultural

sphere of the period under study. In doing so, I will primarily argue that these pseudo-historical narratives are oriented towards a popular audience, as demonstrated by the diction and forms of address present in some renditions of the two texts. In this respect, I will also question whether the fact that some renditions and antecedents of these narratives were recorded and recopied in miscellaneous manuscripts demonstrates newly emerging tendencies regarding the mechanisms of the accumulation of cultural capital and production/consumption among wider segments of the population during the Ottoman "post-classical" period. In short, the study, in its analysis, will pursue all of the research questions noted above to some extent, but especially the main question of what these pseudo-historical narratives' emergence during the "post-classical" period really *means* and *shows* historically and contextually.

Through such a multifaceted discourse and content analysis, as well as textual and contextual study, the dissertation will ultimately demonstrate that these pseudo-historical narratives can be considered newly emergent cultural products of the societal and administrative changes occurring in Ottoman state and society during the period beginning in the late sixteenth century. As such, I contend that these narratives reveal a kind of social response to these changes through an attempt at reassessment of the historical trajectory of the Ottoman state, and that they demonstrate an immanent sense of agency among wider cross-sections of the Ottoman populace, who were partaking in or being affected by the experience of the formation and reformation of this trajectory.

In its pursuit of the research questions mentioned above, the dissertation will also specify the differing textual and contextual traits these pseudo-historical narratives—particularly the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*—demonstrate in terms of

content and discourse as compared to the earliest Ottoman chronicles of the fifteenth century, generally known as the *Tevârîh-i Âl-i ‘Osmân* (Chronicles of the House of Osman), which were the first “canonized” accounts of the emergence of the Ottoman political entity. The *Bahrü’l-Mükâşefe* narratives, on the other hand, will be compared to those canonized Ottoman chronicles that deal with the period after the second half of the sixteenth century and the advice literature of the same period, in order to pinpoint their narrative divergences as well as convergences in relation to the problems and aspirations of the times. In this context, the dissertation will not only preliminarily compare these two sets of pseudo-historical narratives with “standard” and “canonized” contemporary Ottoman chronicles, but will also cursorily review the different renditions of these two sets of narratives themselves in order to decipher the historical and contextual underpinnings these different versions and antecedent texts reveal. In doing so, the primary aim, as mentioned above, will be to better understand how the Ottoman social imagination and memory worked at devising and revising the origins as well as the contemporary conditions of the Ottoman social and political entity of which they were part and parcel. Through such a preliminary comparative analysis, I will ultimately probe into the reasons and purposes for which such narratives were produced in the first place, while also interrogate their function during the Ottoman historical period of transformation following the late sixteenth century. In thus addressing the reasons, purposes, and functions behind the production of these narratives during the “post-classical” period, this dissertation will effectively consider whether or not these narratives can be regarded as newly emerging texts that record primarily social attempts toward a changed, “new” Ottoman polity, or whether they in fact record such a “new” and transformed empire as envisioned in the minds of the empire’s subjects.

Unquestionably, as the narratives of these pseudo-historical texts demonstrate, the taxonomies of "fact" and "fiction" and the dichotomy constructed between them with the advent of positivist tendencies in historiography, are not fully valid, and certainly bear no insightful outcome in terms of historical inquiries made into the mentalities of the past. In such historiographical inquiries, on the contrary, what matters most is *not* figuring out *what really happened* or *how it actually was*, but rather *how* it was *experienced*, *perceived*, and *understood* or *made sense of* by those who experienced it. As such, the fictive worlds and pseudo-historical narratives produced by the people of the past can actually teach us more about their *experience* of *their own history and times*. I thereby contend, firstly, that these narratives illustrate how historical self-reflection and consciousness was not confined to the upper echelons—as has been widely suggested in most secondary studies focusing on the Ottoman advice literature[34]—but rather extended throughout wider cross-sections of the population, who began from the end of the sixteenth century onwards to reflect more and more upon their common trajectory in history and record their historical interests in their own miscellaneous and single-text manuscripts in the form of pseudo-historical narratives, as well as many other sorts of texts (many of which might well be considered ego documents, since these form recordings of personal interests). Secondly, and more importantly, this study of the aforementioned two pseudo-historical Ottoman narratives will provide us with glimpses of the social imagination and social memory in its work of recording, rewriting, and revaluating the Ottoman historical experience in the "post-classical" era of change and transformation, since these narratives were promulgated in

[34] Cf. Mehmet Öz, *Kanun-ı Kadimin Peşinde: Osmanlı'da Çözülme ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları*, 16–7; Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline," 71–87.

numerous manuscript copies and certainly evince a certain "popular" interest in reassessing imperial history through a somewhat communal perspective.

Overall, this dissertation, in its study of Ottoman pseudo-historical narratives of the "post-classical" period, will attempt not only to show that these narratives reveal a "common" social interest held and cherished by a wider cross-section of Ottoman society in the common trajectory of the empire, but also to reveal how these narratives were precisely products and records of the changing nature of the empire in the period following the end of the sixteenth century. In this regard, it will also be argued that the production and reproduction of these narratives as antecedents or later renditions through a number of manuscript copies—whether in single-text or miscellaneous forms—is certainly not a coincidence of history, but rather an effect of the *Zeitgeist* of the period of the "post-classical" era in Ottoman history.

In this sense, these narratives cannot easily be dismissed, as a more positivist tendency might do, as being unhistorical or merely imaginative and marvel-ridden written accounts of history writing. Instead, these narratives show a social imagination at work in rewriting and retelling Ottoman imperial history, and so they need to be closely analyzed in order to reveal the social perceptions and conceptions of time and history that began to emerge beginning in the "long seventeenth century,"[35] not only in the upper echelons of the Ottoman state apparatus, but also by extension among wider social segments of the Ottoman literati and society in general.

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[35] The term "long […] century" is a frequently used coinage, and presents a traditional practice of periodization of certain eras of *longue durée* in Ottoman history due to certain influential historiographical studies, such as İlber Ortaylı's *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (Istanbul: Hil, 1983), concerning Ottoman modernization and territorial disintegration in the nineteenth century. In some public lectures, Cemal Kafadar has also recognized and designated the period following the last quarter of the sixteenth century and lasting well into the late eighteenth century as "the long seventeenth century" in terms of cultural history, a designation that is also used in this study; cf. Cemal Kafadar, "Osmanlı Dünyasında Kaynak Kullanımı Üzerine" (conference speech at Evliya Çelebi'nin Yazılı Kaynakları Sempozyumu, Istanbul, June 17–18, 2010).

1.4 Literature and Historical Review

Historical periodization, though inevitable in any historical analysis, is yet always problematic in one sense and, to some extent, arbitrary, since designating a certain period of study almost always privileges it over other possible ones. Moreover, periodizations marked off by, for example, economic or sociopolitical or cultural historiography do not necessarily correspond to one another—even though they are always in interplay. Furthermore, for inquiries into the mentalities of the past, social- and economic-based periodizations need to be extended in order to recognize the impact of any changes occurring in these designated periods on contemporary mentalities.

For these reasons, this study will focus on the time period which, as already alluded to above, we might designate the "long" seventeenth century. In this regard, it is not the seventeenth century per se that is meant, but rather a period starting with the turn of the eleventh century in the Hijri calendar—that is, the 1590s—and stretching well into the eighteenth century, up until the end of the so-called "Tulip Age" in 1730, which is roughly the period encompassed by the composition and copying of the first set of pseudo-historical narratives, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. However, the dissertation will further extend the period of study up until the mid-nineteenth century, into the reigns of Selim III (r. 1789–1807), Mahmud II (r. 1789–1807), and Abdülmecid (r. 1839–1861), owing to the period of production of the copies of the second set of pseudo-historical narratives, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*. This is of course a rather long period of study, covering as it does much of the Ottoman Empire's entire history, and the dissertation certainly does not suggest that this period is a homogenous one: on the contrary, it was a manifestly a period during which the empire experienced various and numerous differing aspects and phases.

Even so, there are strong practical as well as theoretical reasons for my taking this particular *longue durée*[36] in Ottoman history under consideration here. Firstly, and more practically, this choice is due to the fact that the primary sources that are the dissertation's focus—that is, the two aforementioned sets of pseudo-historical narratives—were produced, copied, and reproduced all throughout this period. Secondly, and more theoretically, as will be detailed later in the study, the turn of the Hijri eleventh century was more than merely a calendrical issue for the wider cultural circles in the Ottoman lands, thanks to and in terms of this date's apocalyptic connotations. Furthermore, as noted above, starting with the end of the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire began to undergo a long process of change, reconfiguration, and transformation, one which the historiographical paradigm of "decline" fails to explain either in its entirety or in the specific terms of this period's differing phases and aspects as well as its common social and cultural traits. Therefore, the periodization to be followed in this particular study will be the aforementioned *longue durée*, not only because it corresponds to the dates of production and reproduction of these pseudo-historical narratives, but also because it is a valid and effective means of following up on any long-term effects on the Ottoman social imagination and memory caused by the social and political changes experienced in the "post-classical" period, and especially on the social imagination

[36] The historiographical term *longue durée*—a legacy of the Annales School of historiography—designates a historiographical approach where the study of historical structures rather than singular events is prioritized with a focus on the investigation of changes, transformations, and disruptions of social or political structures over a long period of time. Due to these properties, the term and the subsequent approach have long been applied in the fields of economic and political history. Nonetheless, this dissertation suggests that applying an approach oriented towards tracing changes and/or perseverance over time can also be fruitful in the field of the history of mentalities. Obviously, detecting individual historical contexts in which certain historical sentiments, notions, convictions, and (mis)conceptions is the basis on which any intellectual history must be written, and yet tracing shifts and the tenacity, continuation, or perseverance of certain mindsets can also only be made possible through a focus on the *longue durée*.

and memory's reaction or response to the two main questions of "rise" and "decline," which will later be problematized in modern Ottoman historiography.

As suggested by Halil İnalcık,[37] Ottoman historiography needs to pay attention to the periods within which its relevant sources, documents, and chronicles were produced in order to decipher their true significance for the period under study. The same approach needs to be taken when studying historiography as well. Therefore, in line with this suggestion, the remainder of this section will be a more or less detailed and critical literature review on the Ottoman historiography concerning the two main questions that emerge and are addressed in the pseudo-historical narratives that are my primary focus, as well as on numerous important secondary studies of Ottoman history. In this section, firstly, I will briefly but critically engage the earliest secondary studies on the question of the "rise" of the Ottoman dynasty and then those dealing with the question of Ottoman "decline," along with later revisionist historiographical replies to these same questions, with the aim of arriving at an understanding of how these issues have so far been generally handled in the Ottoman historiography.

V.L. Ménage, Halil İnalcık, Paul Wittek, and Cemal Kafadar, in their respective studies of the earliest Ottoman chronicles undertaken in an effort to untangle the web of their narrational convergences and divergences as well as their stemmas of textual formation, and to contextualize these individual accounts of history,[38]

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[37] İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," 152.

[38] See V.L. Ménage, "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1964): 168–179; Ménage, "On the recensions of Uruj's History of the Ottomans," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* XXX.2 (1967): 314–22; İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography; İnalcık, "How to Read Aşık Paşazade's History," in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of V.L. Ménage*, ed. Colin Heywood and Colin Imber (Istanbul: Isis, 1994), 139–156. [Reprinted with Turkish translation. "Âşık-Paşazâde Nasıl Okunmalı?" in *Söğütten İstanbul'a*, ed. Oktay Özel and Mehmet Öz (Ankara: İmge, 2000), 119–145.]; Paul Wittek, "The Taking of Aydos Castle: a Ghazi Legend and its Transformation," in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb*, ed. George Makdisi

suggest on the whole that these mid- to late fifteenth-century chronicles, generally unattributed and generically called *Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*, were written "as a result of the consciousness of having established a great empire."[39] Ménage in particular asserts the significance of these earliest historical texts for the latter Ottoman historiography:

> The importance of these early texts for the historian is patent, but they are of interest also to the student of historiography, for they are the raw material on which later writers relied, directly or at one or more removes, for the history of the first two centuries of the Ottoman state. A high proportion of these texts has survived, so that it is possible to trace the various threads—of legend, tradition, chronicle, and panegyric—as they are woven together by successive compilers and finally embroidered in the artistic histories.[40]

In this regard, Ménage elaborates on the manner of their production and the compositional traits that they thereby reveal:

> This consideration [that their cited dates must be accepted only with reserve] applies particularly to the popular anonymous chronicles, of which very many manuscripts exist in European and Turkish libraries, usually bearing the simple title *Tevārīkh-i āl-i ʻOsmān*, and which, in spite of great variety in their contents, are all ultimately related. These chronicles all begin at about the same point, with the migration of Süleymānshāh to Rūm, but are brought down to different points: one group of manuscripts, whose text contains indications that it received its present form in the reign of Bāyezīd II, relates events down to about 900/1494, another group has a continuation down to about 957/1550, while a few manuscripts are extended into the 11th/17th century.[41]

According to Ménage—who studied these early Ottoman chronicles' codicological and textual properties very closely and published widely on them—even though the various copies of these texts originated from an earlier common anterior, the

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(Cambridge: E. J. Brill, 1965), 662–72; Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*. (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1996), 60–117. The last two of these studies especially focus on the importance of the idea of *ghaza*—which has been a source of great debate and contestation in modern Ottoman historiography, although it lies well outside the scope of this dissertation—in the making of these chronicles. For a general and thorough survey of how the idea of *ghaza* was influential in the larger Turco-Islamic written cultural sphere, see Ali Anooshahr, *The Gazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam: A Comparative Study of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[39] İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," 152.

[40] Ménage, "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography," 168.

[41] Ibid., 171.

divergences in their content and length resulted from the various recensions they had gone through as manuscripts:

> Nevertheless the nucleus of this chronicle must be a much earlier text, composed apparently in the first years of the reign of Murād II. This nucleus is written in a fairly discursive style: it is a collection of tales, many of which are legendary in tone. Several dates are included, but all the same it is a story-book rather than a dry chronicle. Then, with the accession of Murād II, there comes an abrupt change of style: the events of the next twenty years or so are recorded in a series of short, pithy entries, very similar in style to the entries in the Royal Calendars except that the anonymous chronicles conclude each year's entry with a Hijra date.[42]

The layers of recension inscribed on these early historiographical texts in terms of content and diction reveal not only different contexts of production, but also differing content and intent: the style of the texts were accordingly altered with the accession of Murad II, whose reign is recorded to witness frequent production of official *takvîms*[43] at the court. Along with this stylistic change, a definite change in the orientation of the texts was also reflected in the style, in line with the emerging aspirations for an universal empire. In this connection, Ménage also makes an important point about the manner in which these renditions were actually produced, and differentiates them from the later chronicles, which, emulating Persianate written culture, were produced in a much loftier style that started with Mehmed II's reign but did not become especially predominant until the sixteenth century. Due to this style and presentation, these later histories were more carefully copied than the earlier ones, with the later ones' lofty and artistic style also helping scholars to

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[42] Ibid.

[43] After Ahmedî's short section about the Ottoman beginnings, incorporated into his *Iskendernâme* (c. 1390) as the last chapter of 340 couplets, telling the story of the Ottomans from Ertuğrul to Emir Süleyman, and ending in a panegyric mode for the latter, who in fact had been the last patron of the author, the earliest surveying historiographical sources by the Ottoman court circles were the royal calendars, earliest two of which had been produced in the court of Murad II and a later one produced also in the Ottoman court had survived from the reign of Mehmed II; cf. Ménage, "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography," 170. All of these historiographical works had in fact been produced under the patronage of either the Ottoman rulers themselves (or, as in the case of Emir Süleyman, wanna-be rulers), or of their entourage at the court, as in the case of the grand vizier Mahmud Pasha Angelović. They were thus explicitly commissioned enterprises meant for the Ottoman dynastic rule to assert its own version of its history and identity.

decipher them, since their copyists were more reluctant to make any amendments to the texts:

> The change of style had this great advantage for the modern historian that a text written in ornate prose tended to be more faithfully transmitted. A rhyme-word or a punning epithet often prevented the deformation even of an unfamiliar proper name, and the copyist of such a text, feeling that to interpolate or to modify would be to spoil the artistry, hesitated to tamper with it.[44]

On the other hand, in Ménage's view the earlier histories, which directly provided much of the raw material for the later histories in terms of content, did not receive the same privilege in the hands of copyists, which somewhat ironically makes them even more interesting in terms of their historical signification as regards any potential understanding of the mentalities of the period. In fact, these earlier histories, almost like palimpsests, record various layers of time and understanding through their words:

> The copyist of the earlier, more popular, histories felt no such reverence: he felt at liberty to 'correct', expand, abridge or continue model, so that it is often impossible to decide whether a given manuscript represents the author's original work, a later redaction by the author (for many texts were worked over by their authors more than once), or a new redaction by a copyist, who, by the extent of his additions, deserves to rank as an author in his own right.[45]

In fact, all these new renditions (or "redactions" to use Ménage's term), whether produced by the author or a copyist, must be regarded as new products in their own right: almost in the manner of a new performance in oral cultural production, they are products of a new historical context and signify new contingencies regarding the context in which they were produced, and therefore their divergences need to be studied closely and certainly cannot be disregarded in order to arrive back at a rather mythical "original" text. Indeed, Ménage makes the same scientific point:

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[44] Ménage, "The Beginnings," 168.

[45] Ibid., 168–169.

> This fact alone—not to speak of the deterioration in a text produced by normal hazards of transmission—makes it very difficult to edit such works, and in spite of the efforts of modern scholars we have no entirely satisfactory edition of any fifteenth-century history. The growing practice of publishing such texts in the form of a facsimile of a single manuscript has more to commend it than cheapness: the reader may well receive sounder guidance from the one manuscript than from an edition whose readings are a hotch-potch from different recensions.[46]

While thus noting the importance of making every rendition available in its actual form rather than merging many renditions into one new and "ahistorical" recension by applying emendations, Ménage also implies how it is important to study every rendition *in its own context*. Indeed, the methods of recension and emendation commonly exercised on manuscript sources in an attempt to arrive back at the "original" text—typically in line with either nationalistic or rational expectations—erases the true signification and historical context of any copy of manuscript sources upon which these methods are exercised. The different layers of style and content that Ménage discovered and noted also make it clear that these earliest, "canonized" *Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân* chronicles from the mid- to late fifteenth-century are also products of their own contexts, and any divergences in their style and content reveal the differing personal and/or communal intent behind their composition and production, as well as showing much about the political aspirations of the Ottoman political entity at the time of production.

Along similar lines, Cemal Kafadar notes that, unlike the authors of these early chronicles, the composers of the pseudo-histories called *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalnâme*s, and *Saltuknâme*s were people who had previously dwelt in the frontier regions but would go on to make up the bulk of the early Ottoman subjects, did not compose these texts with any personal or political expectations oriented by or for any political entity until the fifteenth century: they had "rather *told* what purported to be historical

[46] Ibid., 169.

narratives woven around legendary warriors and dervishes," thereby promulgating the ideals and formulating the historical consciousness of the people of the frontiers.[47] In contrast to such frontier epics[48] and hagiographies produced predominantly in the period prior to the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty as a claimant for sovereignty in the region, the *Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân* chronicles provided the newly emerging empire with native historical narratives of the earliest beginnings of the empire's trajectory, having, in their different renditions, various differing social segments or historical figures represented as participants in the configuration and success of the developing Ottoman enterprise.

On the whole, these important studies of the earliest Ottoman chronicles thereby represent successful attempts at deciphering and determining the chronology of various important historical events—albeit at times with the differing opinions mentioned—of the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman polity, as well as of the genealogy of the Ottoman dynasty. They also succeed in decoding what these chronicles reveal between the lines concerning their authors' conceptions and aspirations, as well as their political stance toward Ottoman history, both by taking into account the authors' apparent intentions and by figuring, as much as such sources can, the contingencies of these various renditions of the earliest eras of Ottoman history.

Indeed, the earlier chronicles of the Ottoman state reveal various viewpoints flourishing among the various historical shareholders who claimed to have a certain degree of contribution to the Ottoman enterprise. This culminated in the

[47] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 62.

[48] Cemal Kafadar terms these pseudo-historical narratives circling around the "epic" deeds of valor of the ghazi warriors and representing the past as a sequence of heroic exploits in confronting infidels and other enemies as "warrior epics." I choose to call these pseudo-historical narratives—i.e., the *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalnâme*s, and *Saltuknâme*s—"frontier epics" in order to emphasize the fact that they record the ideals and realities of the frontier culture as much as they narrate a hero's story.

historiographically debated ideal of *ghaza*, which, in Anooshahr's words, made these chronicles "one of the chief discursive sites where the state was constructed and reified as an autonomous subject."[49] The modern Ottoman historiography has debated the nature of these sources, their significance, and, as such, the very nature and conditions of the rise of the Ottoman political entity to statehood. The viewpoints introduced in this historiographical debate depended mostly on codicological or philological methods, such as collecting and analyzing these source texts in order to construct the stemmas of their manuscripts leading back to an "original" text, or examining the texts' semantics for certain terms, but especially the term *ghaza*,[50] in order to decipher such terms' true meaning within the contemporary historical context. It is outside the scope and focus of this study to detail the extensive modern historiographical debate on the nature of the rise of the Ottomans, with all the participating scholars' views on the subject. However, from the dead end that this long-pursued debate has reached, it is clear that a close textual and contextual study of the contemporary sources—including those canonized chronicles called *Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân*—within the perspective of contemporary realities of power dynamics and political contestations among the various social groups involved in the making of the Ottoman enterprise, will in fact prove to be more fruitful than either just repeating the content of these sources uncritically as though the historian were a mere mouthpiece, or dismissing them altogether as full of apocrypha.

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[49] Ali Anooshahr, "Writing, Speech, and History for an Ottoman Biographer," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 69.1 (April 2010): 44.

[50] Because it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, this debate around the terms and their relation to the rise of the Ottomans will not be addressed here, but for two very informative and illuminating surveys of this important historiographical debate around the term *ghaza* and its significance in explaining the emergence of the Ottoman polity, see Heath W. Lowry, "The Debate to Date," in *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 5–13 (Albany: State U of New York Press, 2003); Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 29–59.

To the contrary, according to Kafadar, some of the narrative divergences revealed in these sources may have resulted directly from the politics of power—played out in the manner of a contestation over "the appropriation of the symbolic capital embedded in public recognition"—enacted onto the Ottoman past:

> To some extent, the discrepancies in the historical sources written down during the Ottoman era can be read as traces of such competition for the appropriation of past accomplishments.
>
> As some of the small gazi-mercenary bands or Sufi orders expanded their sphere of influence, they also enlarged their claims over the past at the expense of those who were now diminished. This contest over the appropriation of the symbolic capital embedded in public recognition as a gazi implied that the meaning of gaza might also be construed differently by different people or parties according to their backgrounds and needs. Particularly as the nature of the polities changed dramatically with the establishment of sedentary bureaucratic practices and principles, some aspects of the earlier conceptions of gaza looked increasingly primitive and possibly also dangerous if any other sociopolitical forces claimed to present it.[51]

In fact, the symbolic capital attached to the ideal of *ghaza*[52] did become an area of contestation, especially during the reign of Mehmed II (r. 1444–46, 1451–81), with that period's increasing attempts to establish a centralized imperial structure with universal claims gaining momentum. Such claims for symbolic and/or a more literal capital of prestige and wealth in return for earlier military and other contributions made to the Ottoman enterprise instigated many disputes, animosities, and contestations among various social groups. These social groups involved different classes: ghazi warriors vs. centralized state powers or officials, dervishes vs. *ulema*,

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[51] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 92.

[52] The term *ghaza*/*gaza*—the meaning of which, as deployed in frontier epics and early chronicles, has been the topic of much debate in the modern Ottoman historiography due to its changing connotations over time and divergent historical contexts, but can be cautiously and rather literally translated as "fighting for the faith"—as well as the derivative term for the agent of the act, *ghazi*/*gazi*, can be transliterated into English in these two differing forms. The dissertation will follow the first form of transliteration for these terms, but the reader should be made aware that in some of the quotations in the text the latter forms are used, as in the quotation from Kafadar in the previous footnote #51. Also, for a philological analysis of the usage of the term *ghazi* in various early Ottoman chronicles and a stern criticism of earlier interpretations, see Colin Imber, "What does Ghazi Actually Mean?" in *The Balance of Truth: Essays in Honour of Prof. Geoffrey Lewis*, eds. Çiğdem Balım-Harding and Colin Imber, 165–78 (Istanbul: Isis, 2000).

tımar sipahis vs. the *kul*,[53] and others who could voice themselves through such written sources as chronicles. The common feature of all those groups who could voice their concerns, interests, and claims through written sources was the fact that they were almost all of the *askerî* class or other privileged groups who were able to partake directly in the Ottoman enterprise.[54] These groups or individuals would continuously situate themselves either in opposion to or in line with each other in a constantly shifting puzzle of sociopolitical configuration—one which modern historians now must decipher through the evidence of the written sources—according to the changing conjunctures of the politics of power being acted out throughout Ottoman history.

[53] Cemal Kafadar advises against the historiographical tendency to homogenize all the *kul* groups under the designation of Janissaries, who, during the long seventeenth century, grew to be the representatives of this group but at certain points in fact diverged from the rest of the *kul* in terms of their actions and allegiances. For an illuminating survey of the process by which the Janissaries' political sentiments and reactions evolved through negotiations with and oppositions against other groups of the Ottoman administrative body, including their relatively regular opponents, the sipahis, see Cemal Kafadar, "Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul: Rebels Without A Cause?" *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 13. 1&2 (2007): 113–134.

[54] On the whole, in this general picture and with the availability of only such written sources, we might still ask, "can the subaltern speak" in Ottoman history? This question is in a way definitely in relation to the problem of audience and the perpetual question that must be applied to any Ottoman text: who was the intended or actual audience for these texts? Indeed, even in a study in which the social imagination and social memory are being addressed, this question becomes especially crucial since the written sources, such as the pseudo-historical narratives under consideration here, were not and could not really be produced so as to directly voice the otherwise unuttered concerns and viewpoints of the common people in subaltern cultural spheres. If they are studied with the sort of contextual understanding and textual perspective mentioned above in mind, I contend that certain written sources, such as the sets of pseudo-historical narratives under consideration here, might indeed shed light on how privileged groups saw fit to address the general public in their appeal to the audience of these narratives. It is in this way, and by approaching these texts in such a manner as this, that the texts can thereby also be understood as records of the popular imagination and social memory in the Ottoman sphere, since, were they to *lack* appeal, they would simply not have been produced and reproduced in the first place. Even so, it must be stated that there will always be some question as to how to achieve an understanding of such a "popular" appeal and of the formation and/or configuration of the "audience." It is certainly mistaken to make any bold generalizations about any "common" audience or group in any period of history, let alone the "long" seventeenth century of Ottoman history. For the introduction of the idea of unvoiced subaltern cultures and individuals into the social sciences, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Ali Anooshahr, in his important article “Writing, Speech, and History for an Ottoman Biographer,”[55] has uncovered one such particular “late fifteenth-century controversy regarding the nature of the Ottoman state and its past,” enacted by Taşköprüzade (d. 1561) in his monumental biographical work *Şekâ’ikü’n-Nu’mâniyye fî ‘Ulemâi’d-Devleti’l-‘Osmâniyye* (c. 1557/1558) in a textual “dialogue with the chroniclers of the previous century”[56]:

> The *Şekaik* provides an alternative, and somewhat critical, account of Ottoman history—an *ulema* (scholar/jurists) version. On the one hand, this *altèrhistoire* of the House of Osman sets out to answer the charges of corruption brought against the scholarly classes by late fifteenth-century chroniclers (Aşıkpaşazade, Oruç, and the anonymous chronicler) who had belonged to a *gazi*/*derviş* milieu (roughly, religiously inspired raiders and popular preachers) and had written to protest the marginalization of their social group by a centralizing Ottoman state. These men believed that the scholarly/juridical classes (to whom Taşköprüzade belonged) had been the main reason for the (wrong) direction that the Empire had taken after the conquest of Constantinople. On the other hand, and in the same text, Taşköprüzade was also trying to define the proper relationship between the ulema and a dangerously intrusive imperial court that by the middle of the sixteenth century had perhaps reached the climax of absolutism and was threatening the very same scholarly/juridical classes that had supposedly aided its disturbing growth.[57]

The immediate historical context of the text is, of course, the mid-sixteenth century; however, the same double-crossed opposition and pressure had been experienced by the *ulema* ever since the last years of the reign of Mehmed II, and would continue to be experienced throughout Ottoman history. Anooshahr thus detects the viewpoint of the *ulema* at the center of the text of *Şekâ’ikü’n-Nu‘mâniyye*, and in opposition to

[55] Anooshahr, “Writing, Speech, and History,” 43–62.

[56] Anooshahr notes that the *Şekâ’ikü’n-Nu‘mâniyye*—which has been extensively utilized by modern historians of the Ottoman state, especially in the twentieth century, for its treasure trove of biographical information—has more recently, however, begun to enjoy less attention as a historical source, since “the critical positivist method of reading this text seems to have reached a dead-end.” According to Anooshahr, having found “many of its anecdotes unreliable or at least unverifiable,” a scholarly “verdict has been issued to exclude it from serious scholarly consideration”; cf. Anooshahr, “Writing, Speech, and History,” 43–4. In contrast, Anooshahr proposes to focus on the political dynamics and stances exposed in the text by way of a close textual and contextual analysis of the text so as to understand what it really signifies about the *ulema* it presents in its biographical entries.

[57] Anooshahr, “Writing, Speech, and History,” 44.

both the discourse of the *Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*-writing *ghazi*/*dervish* milieu and the centrifugal forces of the centralized state apparatus represented by high officials of *kul* origin,[58] an example of the latter of which can also be seen in the narrative of *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa*.[59] Overall, Anooshahr, in unraveling the different viewpoints, claims, and discourses that emerged in the context of the rise of the Ottoman Empire and made their way into the text of the *Şekâikü'n-Nuʻmâniyye*, not only provides an exemplary close textual and contextual analysis of an important Ottoman written source in connection with its historical contingencies, but also lays bare one important aspect of the inextricable web of political contestations underlying the historical context of not just the sixteenth century, but of the centuries to come as well. Indeed, these political contestations would become even more rigorous and their pangs more frequent and acute as the Ottoman political entity moved well into the "post-classical" era in the historical terms outlined above.

The other major question that has been an area of scholarly debate commonly and widely addressed by modern Ottoman historiography is the question of the Ottoman "decline." It has been suggested that the notion of "crisis" and/or "decline"—which was informed by changes and/or divergence from established ways of conduct, or transformations (*inhitât*, as the Ottomans would put it), and which was not necessarily a positive phenomenon for the premodern mindset—can be understood as connected with the seventeenth-century age of crisis for larger Europe as well, where a rapid rise in population recorded especially around the Mediterranean, as well as in the Ottoman domains, in the sixteenth century[60] led to a "general crisis" in

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[58] Ibid.

[59] See Chapter V.

[60] For a survey of population changes in the Mediterranean and the Ottoman lands, see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Vol. 1. (Berkeley,

the established economic systems in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[61]

The wider economic and social shifts of the seventeenth century underlying various political changes, as well as the ensuing money-oriented economic transformation, led to alterations in terms of policy and systems in different parts of Europe in response. For example, the need to raise and maintain a standing central army for the longer wars being fought in the period prompted France to adopt a more centralized administrative structure and a money-based system of taxation, abolishing various traits of its *ancien régime* and in the process leading to a more centralized state apparatus with less influential provincial bases of authority in the administration of land.[62] On the other hand, in the Ottoman context, the constant need to raise finance and manpower for the military apparatus so as to keep up with the prolonged wars being waged on the European and Persian fronts led to a turn from the "classical" imperial system.[63] A gradual transformation towards a less centralized and more decentralized state machinery came about in the Ottoman Empire through the gradual erosion and eventual dissolution of the centrally governed, agriculture-based, localized, and closed economic and administrative system of depending on the distribution of revenues through *tımar* holdings and titles bestowed by the central

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CA: University of California Press, 1995); Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Tarihi Demografi Araştırmaları ve Osmanlı Tarihi," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 10 (1951–53): 1–27.

[61] E.J. Hobsbawm, "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century," *Past and Present* 5(1): 33–53; Hobsbawm, "The Crisis of The 17th Century—II," *Past and Present* (1954) 6 (1): 44–65.

[62] David Parker, "The Social Foundations of French Absolutism, 1610–1630," *Past and Present* 53 (1971): 67–89.

[63] For comprehensive surveys of the Ottoman imperial system in the "classical age," see Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973); Özer Ergenç, "Osmanlı Klasik Düzeni ve Özellikleri Üzerine Bazı Açıklamalar," in *Şehir, Toplum, Devlet: Osmanlı Tarihi Yazıları*, 329–42 (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012); and Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 40–61.

government. Due to the wider implementation of the tax-farming system—reserved in the "classical" period only for high revenue sources due to its ability to rapidly raise money for an Ottoman administration in need of high and frequent cash flow so to meet the high expenses of the almost constant warfare being waged after the last quarter of the sixteenth century—the classical timariot system became initially ineffective, and afterwards gradually dissolved into invalidity. As part of a gradual process, the effects of the emergence of a universal money-based economic system and the need to keep up with new European technologies of warfare led to a permanent and decisive structural change in the fiscal system of the Ottoman state machinery, invalidating the timariot regime, where taxes were paid in kind and military force and administrative duties were provided by the *tımar* holders in return for revenues received through their *tımar* holdings:[64]

> From the sixteenth century, timars over time gave way increasingly to tax farms because the cash needs of the state were mounting. The state bureaucracy was becoming steadily larger, in part because the empire itself was bigger and also because of changes in the nature of the state […]. Increasingly complex warfare for its part demanded more cash. Until the sixteenth century, the *sipahi* cavalry armed with bows and lances had formed the core of the military, being tactically and numerically its most vital component, and supported by timars. In a development with fourteenth- and fifteenth-century roots, a standing fire-armed infantry replaced cavalry as the crucial battlefield element. Vastly more expensive to maintain, this infantry required large cash infusions that tax farms but not timars provided.[65]

This development had wider long-term repercussions, since it also affected the balance of the Ottoman bipartite system of administration, in which the provincial governing body was organized around the *tımar* system while the central government was run mainly by the *kul* system.[66] Therefore, the dissolution of the economic efficiency of the *tımar* system and the consequent erosion of the authority

[64] See Douglas Howard, "The Ottoman Tımar System and Its Transformation 1563–1656" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1987).

[65] Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 2005) , 30.

[66] Howard, "The Ottoman Tımar System and Its Transformation," 8.

that the centralized administrative machinery had once had on the Ottoman provinces through the *tımar* system that made up the territorial backbone of the Ottoman administration, eventually opened up niches of localized and provincial strongholds of authority and economic power among the emergent class of wealthy tax-farmers in the eighteenth century, thereby leading the whole system to become less centralized. In connection with these fiscal, administrative, and military transformations and structural changes, the overall imperial structure thus diverged from the earlier "classical" one, which had been fully developed up through the late sixteenth century, and this was largely what made the new period a "post-classical" one.[67]

The structural changes and transformations in the state machinery and its administrative procedures—such as tax collection, systems of appointment of official posts, and military recruitment, sometimes enacted due to the irresistible pressures of various historical events—along with the accompanying widespread social repercussions, led contemporary Ottoman subjects themselves to begin to debate the idea of "decline."[68] Cemal Kafadar notes some glimpses of such "a sense of decline" that was vocalized and promulgated via "elaborate discourses which revolve around similar themes" of various social aspects, all signifying the same sense of "decline":

> Influential Ottoman authors, like Gelibolulu Muṣṭāfa ʻĀlī and Kātib Çelebī lamented "the closing of the Ottoman mind" as a result of falling standards in higher education and public letters or a lack of curiosity in the outside world;

[67] For the different phases and aspects of this gradual process of transformation, see Halil İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration," in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History, Papers on Islamic History*, vol. 4, eds. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), 27–52; İnalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980): 283–337.

[68] For a detailed review of the contemporary Ottoman historical texts written in this vein, see Mehmet Öz, *Kanun-ı Kadimin Peşinde: Osmanlı'da Çözülme ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları (XVI. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıl Başlarına)* (Istanbul: Dergâh, 2013).

> many eventually wrote about losing to the Franks [...] who were doing things better and cheaper, taking better care of their currency and educational systems. A chorus of intellectuals complained of an overgrown state and an oversized military. Increasingly vocal segments of the political class felt that the Ottoman identity had become too inclusive and that too many unworthy people of the "wrong ethnic backgrounds" (primarily, and ironically, Turks) had been allowed to enter its ranks. Perhaps the most prestigious argument was that symptoms of decline had arisen because of deviations from "the Ottoman way," or from the norms established by the founding fathers.[69]

On the cultural level, as suggested in both the primary contemporary historical sources and the secondary literature on the Ottoman historiography, the period beginning especially with the last quarter of the sixteenth century was a time of numerous adverse historical and political conditions, which contributed to the emergence of a certain sense of "apprehension" about the present state and future of the Ottoman polity.[70] It was around the 1590s that the Ottomans themselves became apprehensive about the future of their historical enterprise. Some, like the polymath Mustafa Âlî of Gallipoli, had shared a common apprehension about the Hijri year 1000, which previous Islamic literature had recognized as the probable apocalyptic end of the world:[71]

> Year 1000 of the Hijra ushered in a new era for the Muslim world, and brought Âli to a psychological turning point. While he may have intellectually rejected the notion that the world would come to an end, he had at least subconsciously participated in popular expectation that great events and calamitous changes would come about in the year 1000.[72]

These apocalyptic sentiments and millenarian apprehensions were not localized in the Ottoman Empire, but extended throughout Eurasia. With the rapid demographic

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[69] Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," 30–1.

[70] For a survey of these commonly voiced concerns in the "declinist" literature of the period with a keen eye on the economic underpinnings they entail, see Cemal Kafadar, "When Coins Turned into Drops of Dew and Bankers Became Robbers of Shadows. The Boundaries of Ottoman Economic Imagination at the End of the Sixteenth Century" (PhD diss., McGill University, 1986).

[71] See Cornell H. Fleischer, "Shadows of Shadows: Prophecy and Politics in 1530s Istanbul," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 13. 1–2 (2007): 51–52; Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps*, ed. Gilles Veinstein, 159–77. (Paris: n.p., 1992).

[72] Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541–1600)* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 138.

changes rising across the Mediterranean and Europe, the established economic systems, natural resources, and revenues began to fail to support increasing populations, and this in turn led to a rise in eschatological sentiments, on both popular and administrative levels, among Jewish, Christian, and Muslim populations in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These sentiments also affected the rulers of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Habsburg dynasties, who in turn aspired to universal power in relation to their respective imperial bodies so as to be better able to put such contesting claims in messianic terms.[73]

These eschatological sentiments did not end immediately after the Hijri year 1000, but continued well afterwards in popular and intellectual circles alike. Some Ottoman intellectuals, like Mustafa Âlî, in retrospective mode, continued to associate certain structural changes occurring in the Ottoman imperial body and society with these apocalyptic predictions, even after the turn of the Hijri millennium, which led to a certain historical awareness:

> The millennium marked the end of an era, an end that many thought would usher in the apocalypse. But the apocalypse did not arrive, and so the year 1000 also inaugurated a new age. It was a time for retrospection, and perhaps introspection. Âli meditated on the society he had served as a man of learning, a bureaucrat, and a soldier for all of his adult life. He saw it to be in the grip of a moral apocalypse, a cultural and political crisis, a decline from an ideal order that had existed in fact but a few decades before. This retrospective process led Âli to articulate, in his history and social commentaries, the ideals that lay at the heart of Ottoman society at its height; he had to enunciate what he saw as the central, distinguishing features of the Ottoman system in order to analyze their corrosion and failure. Âli thus became perhaps the greatest, if not the first, classicizing formulator of Ottoman tradition. His *Essence of History* is the single most comprehensive source for Ottoman history in the sixteenth century, and it was a literary monument respected and utilized by his historiographical successors.[74]

Although he was perhaps the foremost spokesman of the conservative advocates of classicist sentiments for the political order in the earlier periods represented as "the

[73] See Fleischer, "Shadows of Shadows," 51–52; Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," 159–77.

[74] Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 7–8.

golden age"[75] of the Ottoman empire, Mustafa Âlî was by no means alone in these nostalgic sentiments aroused by millenarian apprehension:

> Âli was an important member of a group of relatively highly placed intellectuals who were gravely concerned over the course their society seemed to be taking in the late sixteenth century, when the rapid changes struck economic, political, and social structures all at once; prosperity had turned to famine, the government careers had become confused, venality was rampant, and the military class was being overrun by upstart *re'âyâ*. Âli was able, well educated, and far more outspoken that most of his peers, and he made himself the indefatigable articulator of the values of a generation. *His Counsel for Sultans*, written in 1581, stands at the very head of what in the seventeenth century became a peculiarly Ottoman literary genre, the literature of reform devoted to diagnosis of the causes of Ottoman decline and prescription of measures to reverse it.[76]

Some others, though, like the historian Na'îmâ (d. 1716)—following another famous polymath, Kâtib Çelebi (d. 1657)[77]—mocked these earlier predictions, omitting some already written sections of his history *Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn fî hulâsati ahbâri'l-hâfikayn* (c.1704) which dealt with earlier periods in order to begin his chronicle exactly in the year 1000,[78] in a clear attempt to underline the fact that the world had not actually come to an end in that year, as well as to criticize short-sighted figures who claimed, even though it was against both the laws of canonical Islam and the rational sciences, that the apocalypse would come either in that year or thirty years afterwards:

> Writers of defective intelligence have introduced a multitude of opinions into their writings, which go on to say, among other things, that when the thousandth year of the Hijrah was once over, the day of the resurrection would immediately arrive, or if it should not then arrive, it would, most certainly, not extend beyond thirty lunar years (*i.e.* the intercalary and other

[75] Cemal Kafadar, "The Myth of the Golden Age: Ottoman Historical Consciousness in the Post-Süleymânic Era," in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, ed. by Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul: Isis, 1993), 37–48.

[76] Cf. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 8; for a survey of the "declinist" sentiments and literature, see footnotes #24 and 34.

[77] Kâtib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey Lewis. London: Allen and Unwin, 1957,

[78] Mehmet İpşirli, "Giriş," in Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ* (*Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn Fî Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-Hâfikayn*), ed. Mehmet İpşirli, Vol. 1, XIII–XXXI (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2007), XVIII – XIX.

> years of that period of time). In this particular they not only assumed weak and ill-founded premises, but, as might be expected, have written incorrectly on the subject. Witness, for instance, their speculations concerning the completion of the moon's revolutions, whence they affirm, that Prophet (on whom be blessing and peace) should not remain in his grave till the thousand years expired, and other similar records, which, however, are at once at variance with true philosophy and sound theology. Several writers not attending to these have, through ignorance or carelessness, given currency in their writings to statements which are utterly without foundation, and therefore contrary to the received canon.[79]

Certainly there was an open debate over such apocalyptic visions and predictions among Ottoman intellectual circles for a long period, starting from the mid-sixteenth century extending into the eighteenth century—basically, during the "long seventeenth century." This prolonged intellectual debate had not only political, historical, and religious aspects, but even some ontological underpinnings as well: for instance, in the seventeenth century, especially with the emergence of the Kadızadeli movement, it inspired harsh disputes around the figure of the prophet Hızır (Khidr), who was popularly believed to have attained immortality.[80] In fact, Kâtib Çelebi critically addresses this debate, rather surprisingly, on ontological grounds in his treatise *Mîzânü'l- Hakk* (*The Balance of Truth*), in a separate initial section devoted to the life of Hızır.[81] Kâtib Çelebi lays out the ontological basis by explaining the nature of "life" as such:

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[79] Naî'mâ Mustafa Efendi, *Annals of the Turkish Empire from 1591 to 1659 of the Christian era*, trans. by Charles Fraser, Vol. I (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1832), x. For the original text, cf. Naî'mâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ* (*Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn Fî Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-Hâfikayn*), ed. Mehmet İpşirli, Vol. 1, XIII–XXXI (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2007), 49: "*Ukūl-i kāsıra ashâbından bir gürûh zu'm ettiler ki, elf-i kâmilden evvel kıyâmet kopa, yahut elfi geçerse tefâvüt-i kameriyye olan otuz seneyi tecâvüz etmeye. Ve bu bâbda ba'zı mukaddemât-ı vâhiye belki kâzibeye temessük ettiler. Devr-i kamerin müddeti tamam olmak gibi ve Peygamber* –aleyhi's-selâtü ve's-selâm– *kabrinde bin yıl meks eylemez deyü rivâyet olunan hadîs-i mevzû' gibi. Ve bu hüküm kavâ'id-i şer'iyye ve hikemiyyeye muhâlif iken nice kimesneler tegāfül edip kitaplarına yazdılar. Kizb-i sarîh idiği zâhir oldu.* Ve'l-ilmü inde'llâhi te'âlâ."

[80] Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, III, 163–164; V, 264–270; VI, 218–225, 226–230; Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Post-Classical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988); Zilfi, "The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45/4 (1986): 251–269.

[81] Kâtib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, 33–7.

> First, although the meaning of the terms “life” and “death” is plain and a matter of common knowledge, let us explain it here for the sake of completeness. Life, then, is the possession by an ensouled being of the attributes of breathing, feeling, and motion. Having the attribute of life, the ensouled being is also called a living thing. Because the beings which exist with this attribute are material, their original matter is composed and compounded of the four elements and principles of the universe. The constitution exhibited by every being is an intermingling of subjugation and being subjugated, of action and passion. [...] The length of days of every species varies with its constitution. This they call the natural life. A constitution, being compounded of conflicting elements, cannot remain permanently in one form; symptoms of disharmony between the constituents, which are of varying natures, are bound to appear in it.[82]

On this basis, which he embellishes with other traits of “the material of life,” Kâtib Çelebi refutes the claim of immortality that some people had made for Hızır through the legends told about him:

> The categories of genus and species are common to all individuals and comprehend them all; they do not differ in anyone, unless a miracle is claimed, outside the order of nature, as in the case of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). Such a claim needs the proof of a decisive scriptural text. It is incontestable, according to the rules of disputation, that no matter of certainty can be validly contradicted on the basis of one single story plus supposition.
>
> Now if by the 'life' of Khidr we are to understand the sloughing of mortality and joining the ranks of the spiritual beings, the kind of evidence submitted in respect of him, as in the case of Jesus, may give validity to the claim. But Khidr must then be in the same state as Jesus was when he was raised up. Jesus held no physical association or converse with the sons of his own kind, and no more could Khidr do so. Association and converse necessitate another claim, which demolishes the former claim.
>
> Someone may ask, Then are these people liars? What is behind these legends?[83]

Despite Kâtib Çelebi’s rational protest, these legends and sentiments relating to immortality as well as apocalyptical visions and beliefs of prognostication survived in the Ottoman cultural atmosphere, since they appealed to the social imagination, particularly during the “long seventeenth century”: the fact that there are numerous *mecmû‘a*s or miscellaneous manuscripts recording the search for immortality by the

[82] Ibid., 33.

[83] Ibid., 34–5.

prophet Hızır and his companion, İskender-i Zülkarneyn, side by side with apocalyptic tales and guides for prognostication (*melhâme*), attests to the longevity of such legends, beliefs, and sentiments in the Ottoman popular imagination.[84] In sum, the cultural environment of the period earlier denoted as the "long seventeenth century" was informed by these historical and apocalyptic, but ultimately political, debates present both in Ottoman intellectual circles and, at least to some degree, among the general public as well.

As indicated above, these intellectual debates were certainly not without cause, having been prompted by certain adverse historical conditions experienced in the Ottoman realm around this time: severe economic problems, growing social atrocities resulting from diminishing resources as against a rapidly growing population, a nearly perpetual series of long wars fought against the Habsburgs and Safavid Iran, repeated outbursts of epidemics, recurrent waves of Celali rebellions (c. 1591–1651),[85] and instances of interference in the dynastic line of succession through rebellious actions and uprisings by Janissaries or sipahis.[86] Ultimately, there was a certain recurrent notion of "crisis" or "emergency" in the Ottoman realm, as can also be traced from the advice literature produced at the time, which puts forth

[84] There are numerous such *mecmû'a*s, all of which cannot be cited here, and indeed it is difficult even to quantitatively calculate their number, even if only those held in the Süleymaniye Library collection are taken into account. However, for a sample of such exemplary *mecmû'a*s that include such kinds of texts from the Süleymaniye Library, see Hacı Mahmud Efendi collection, 02443; Yazma Bağışlar collection, 01459; Fatih collection, 05334; Düğümlü Baba collection, 00523M12; Yazma Bağışlar collection, 07115; Mehmed Zeki Pakalın collection, 00078. Additionally, as will be seen in Chapter V, the prophet Hızır has a very prominent narrative presence in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives.

[85] William J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion, 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Berlin: K. Schwarz Verlag, 1983); Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

[86] Cemal Kafadar, "Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul: Rebels Without A Cause?" *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 13. 1&2 (2007): 113–134; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey Vol. 1: Empire of the Gazis. The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280–1808* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 196–98.

the idea of "decline," a sentiment that never really fully left the Ottoman paradigm throughout this period. This promoted a sense of uncertainty about the future of the empire and an ever growing socially constructed feeling of nostalgia towards "the golden age" represented, especially, by Selim I and Süleyman the Magnificent's reigns.[87] The feeling of uncertainty about the empire's future was also exacerbated by several instances of filicide and fratricide implemented by different Ottoman sovereigns,[88] as well as by one instance of regicide carried out by a rebellious group composed mostly of Janissary soldiers.[89] On top of these royal murders came fears of an unexpected end for the dynastic line, or *inkırâz*[90] as the Ottomans called it—fears experienced upon the successions of both Ahmed I and Ibrahim I.[91] All these events clearly troubled the Ottoman social mind and imagination, creating a feeling of anxiety about the future throughout the long seventeenth century, a feeling widely shared socially in such a way as to form the backdrop of the pseudo-historical narratives which this dissertation sets out to study.

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[87] Kafadar, "The Myth of the Golden Age," 37–48. The resilient nature of the myth of "the golden age" associated with the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent is clear, as it was still vital in Evliya Çelebi's late seventeenth-century *Seyahatnâme*, where Süleyman is portrayed as a ruler who ruled with justice, proved victorious in all the battles he fought, and was wise enough to take council from elder religious officials as well as viziers before taking an official action: "*Ve'l-hâsıl pâdişâh-ı mağfûr kırk sekiz sene saltanatında cihânda adl [ü] dâd edüp memâlik-i Âl-i Osmân'ı pür-dâd [u] ma'mûr [u] âbâd edüp gazâ-yı cihâd etmede mücâhidün fî-sebîlillâh bir pâdişâh-ı Cem-cenâb-ı heft-kişverkeş idi. Bi-emrillâh ne cânibe müteveccih olup mansûr [u] muzaffer, sâlimîn ü gânimîn tahtgâhında karâr ederdi. Zîrâ* وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الأَمْرِ *nass-ı kâtı'ına imtisâlen cemî'i kâr-âzmûde ihtiyâr ulemâ ve sulehâ ve vüzerâlar ile müşâvere edüp andan bir işe mübâşeret ederdi*." Cf. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi 1. Kitap - Topkapı Sarayı Bagdat 307 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu – Dizini*, eds. Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2006), I.47a.

[88] See Halil İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession and its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty," in Halil İnalcık, *The Middle East and the Balkans Under the Ottoman Empire*, 37–69. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

[89] Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

[90] Even this choice of term, "*inkırâz*," by taking a reflexive form implies that the royal murders were commonly recognized as the cause of such a grim probability of the end of the dynasty.

[91] For a detailed but descriptive survey of the historical period in which these alarming social sentiments aroused in relation to the probable ending of the Ottoman dynasty, see Günhan Börekçi, "İnkırâzın Eşiğinde Bir Hanedan: III. Mehmed, I. Ahmed, I. Mustafa ve 17. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Siyasî Krizi," *Dîvân Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi* 26 (2009): 45–96.

Until recently, the question of Ottoman "decline" has been debated in modern Ottoman historiography along similar lines, and, surprisingly, through a repetition of similar sentiments, but historians today no longer take at face value the grand narrative of a "post-classical" period of "decline."[92] Nonetheless, since we still do not have a fully formulated grand narrative to replace it,[93] Ottoman historians today are still at work trying to revise their outlook to explain the "crystallization" of the structural changes and transformations that occurred during this period on the social, economic, and administrative planes of the Ottoman imperial structure, and to recognize how these changes were actually experienced by different groups, especially those outside the pale of the administrative body in the Ottoman realm.

However, these structural changes did not affect only the administrative body of the Ottoman political entity. Modern historiography, typically dependent on state-based historical documents or the advice literature emerging from palace circles, sometimes understandably tends to explain away these changes through the perspective of state formation and transformation, as if such changes inevitably led only to structural alterations in the administrative body. However, the question of what these structural changes or transformations brought about in the lives of those who lived through them, say in the provinces, is perhaps more interesting and

[92] Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," 30–75.

[93] Quite surprisingly and rather unconvincingly, Baki Tezcan, focusing on only one aspect of change—i.e., that centered primarily around the administrative body of the Ottoman political entity—and basing his arguments on a set of historical documents that is by no means exhaustive, reads this historical process of transformation in terms of the advancement of pro-constitutional forces, championed by the democratizing power of the Janissaries and meant to inhibit the absolutist tendencies and authority of the sultan; see Baki Tezcan, "The Second Empire: The Transformation of the Ottoman Polity in the Early Modern Era," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29. 3 (2009): 556–572; Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

significant for understanding their real historical effect and weight.[94] Therefore, the question this dissertation attempts to address on the whole, but through the medium of two particular sets of pseudo-historical narratives originating in the "post-classical" period, is *how* the common folk living in Ottoman lands experienced these changes and interpreted their effects on their lives and on the history of the empire.

The cultural transformations emerging from these structural changes are also significant in explaining this period of social change and transformation, and therefore my study will ultimately be an attempt to further contribute to revisionist historical inquiries concerning the "post-classical" period of Ottoman history, but here with a primary focus on cultural experience insofar as it relates to the historical consciousness, conceptions, and convictions of larger segments of the populace. This is because I consider the Ottoman cultural and intellectual history of the period up until the nineteenth century as inseparable from such historical and historiographical questions raised along these general socioeconomic and political lines, and against such a historical background.

1.5 Methodology

> Anonymity was a great possession. It gave the early writing an impersonality, a generality. It gave us the ballads; it gave us the songs. It allowed us to know nothing of the writer: and so to concentrate upon his song. Anon had great privileges. He was not responsible. He was not self conscious. He is not self conscious. He can borrow. He can repeat. He can say what every one feels. No one tries to stamp his own name, to discover his own experience, in his work. He keeps at a distance from the present moment.
>
> —Virginia Woolf, "Anon."

Ahmed Ateş, in his important but quite overlooked article "Metin Tenkidi Hakkında,"[95] makes very instructive suggestions concerning how to conduct a textual study of numerous copies of the same text in order to decipher their textual

[94] See Douglas Howard, "The Life and Career of an Ottoman *Sipahi*, Second Half of the Sixteenth Century," in *Aspects of Altaic Civilizations III*, edited by Denis Sinor, 47–57. Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1990.

[95] Ahmed Ateş, "Metin Tenkidi Hakkında," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 7–8 (1942): 253–67.

interrelations. In the article, Ateş reveals the unscientific nature of the commonly used, yet misguided, method observed in many "critical" editions produced in the field of Ottoman historical and literary studies: he criticizes the method of making an edition (indeed a new version) of the text by either merging together different recensions or making extensive, and pointless, emendations to the text, and then publishing this new version by simply noting down significant divergences across extant copies through a textual comparison. In the end, such a publication, he claims, not only makes extant copies' textual differences hard to follow for the reader, but also erases any historically significant contextual and performative differences between them.[96]

Contrary to this widely employed erroneous method, Ateş reminds the reader that the purpose of making a critical edition of a text in manuscript form is to provide the readers with a version of the text which comes as close to the original text as possible.[97] In this respect, he severely critiques N.S. Banarlı—a renowned Turcologist who, in his publication of a new edition of Ahmedî's *İskendernâme*, claimed to be producing the most excellent copy (possibly through excessive emendation)—by simply emphasizing that the main purpose of rendering an "*édition critique*" is not to *correct* the text, but to *provide* the text in a form closest to the original as written by the author himself.[98] Here, Ateş defines two methods in the work of "*édition critique*": (1) recension, meaning the process of collecting and analyzing all extant source texts in order to establish a manuscript stemma leading backward to the original text; (2) emendation, which refers to the attempt to

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[96] Ibid., 254–6. As mentioned above, Ménage likewise criticizes the same unsound method of editing manuscripts by merging them together in the same context of rendering critical editions of early Ottoman histories; see "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography," 169.

[97] Ateş, "Metin Tenkidi," 255.

[98] Ibid., 256.

eliminate the scribal errors found in extant copies in order to arrive back at a hypothetical original text.[99] In the rest of his article, Ateş outlines the stages of how to construct a stemma of manuscripts through a hypothetical sum of copies: the scholar will (1) determine the interrelations of newer copies of manuscripts; (2) identify separate groups of manuscripts in relation to each other (thus forming a stemma); and (3) establish their common textual traits. He notes that this process eventually might lead the scholar to a dead end where the relevant original copy is no longer extant, and therefore an "archetype" text, connecting separate copies through common traits, will need to be hypothetically reconstructed in order to make sense of the stemma of manuscripts.[100]

These methodological steps have in fact been employed extensively in the study of canonical written texts of a religious nature with a writerly cultural orientation, where the origin of such texts are significant for theological concerns, particularly in the Western scholarly world, where they are still in use today to some extent. In fact, however, this method of rendering a critical edition fails to provide us with fruitful outcomes when working with anonymous texts recorded in manuscript form, where every rendition itself is a new performance and production, and where different copies do not necessarily breed from a common original. This sort of process is indeed quite often the case given the oral cultural characteristics embedded in Ottoman manuscript culture, where every rendition might show performative traits in line with the context in which they were produced, depending on the temperament or disposition of the copyists at work, who might at times actually "'correct', expand, abridge or continue model, so that it is often impossible to decide whether a

[99] Ibid., 257.
[100] Ibid., 259.

given manuscript represents the author's original work."[101] Therefore, such oral cultural traits definitely need to be taken into consideration, especially when dealing with anonymous texts in manuscript form in the Ottoman cultural sphere, so as not to miss out on the new textual and contextual contingencies of cultural historical importance that various different copies might represent and signify in their textual form.

With these methodological reservations and concerns in mind, this study will not observe the method of rendering a critical edition of the aforementioned pseudo-historical narratives, but will rather respect the anonymous nature and narrational divergences of the extant copies of these texts. As such, the study will take these manuscript copies into consideration in their current form, applying to them neither the technique of recension nor that of emendation. Even so, following Ateş's suggestion, the study will attempt to determine the interrelations between and the stemmas of the extant copies of the pseudo-historical narratives under consideration as soundly as possible given the information at hand. More significantly, the main focus of the study will not be to examine these texts' manuscripts in such a codicological manner, and thus to provide an exhaustive comparison of their different renditions, but rather to carry out, in line with the issues discussed above, a close textual and contextual reading of the pseudo-historical narratives in question so as to help discover an answer to the all-important questions of *how* and *why* such narratives were produced and reproduced when they were.

In pursuit of these questions, the study will make use of methodological tools most often applied in the fields of literature and linguistics; namely, close reading and discourse analysis. In this regard, however, it should be noted here first and foremost

[101] Ménage, "The Beginnings," 168.

that the aim of the study is certainly not to concentrate on the texts of these pseudo-historical narratives as objects of study in themselves; that is, in the manner of a literary analysis. The field of literary studies, especially under the influence of the New Critics of the mid-twentieth century, has indeed long been in the habit of analyzing and judging literary texts as an “aesthetic object”—thereby transforming texts into almost ahistorical entities—with little to no reference to anything outside or beyond the text. On the contrary, the pseudo-historical narratives under consideration will be read and interpreted in dialogue with the probable historical contexts in which or under the influence of which they were produced, while simultaneously being studied through the practice of close reading, which involves an observant and uninterrupted scrutiny of the text in its textual unraveling and unfolding so as to better understand how these narratives developed in terms of narrational practice and narrative mechanisms. Complimentary to this twofold method of textual and contextual analysis of the primary sources, the study will also, as much as it can, undertake a detailed and multifaceted discourse and content analysis in terms of not only the diction and language usage, but also the social configurations and contexts of the discourses performed in the texts. In this way, I will explicate these texts’ historical significance as well as bridge their textual and historical aspects in an effort to understand where they actually and historically stand.

Another methodological problem to consider—and one that is quite specific to this study insofar as it involves an investigation into two sets of narratives promulgated across different copies of composite as well as fascicle manuscripts—is the very question of the dichotomy between fact and fiction. Because these narratives are pseudo-historical texts concerning two different contexts within Ottoman history,

one must remain alert as to just what these narratives are referring to in their plotting; it is only in this way that one might come to an understanding of which particular historical context was the actual incentive behind these narratives' production and reproduction. Ultimately, and with some reservation, it can be argued that every work of differing "factual" and "fictional" configurations can be made an object of historiographical inquiry, as long as the researcher asks the questions needed to open up these texts in such a way as to reveal their true historical significance in regards to the historical context within which they were produced, received, and reproduced. Because such things do actually matter when it comes to the study of the history of mentalities: these narrative texts can potentially tell us more about the people involved in certain historical events and how they interpreted what they were experiencing than the exact factual details and conditions of the events themselves. "What context[s]" actually led the later social imagination to invent and reinvent for the Ottoman dynasty such a future as that imagined in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* or such beginnings as recorded in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*? This is perhaps as important a question as the actual and factual conditions of the relevant Ottoman history itself. Even so, the researcher must necessarily remain on her toes while threading through the very boundaries between fact(s) and fiction(s) in studying these texts to decipher their true historical significance, as she must be careful to avoid the trap of the historian's own self-imagination being rendered into the texts under consideration.

In short, the study will, on the whole, examine the primary copies of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* individually and by tracing the two texts across different manuscript copies, with special attention to their differing textual and historical contexts. In this way, through the use of the methodological

tools briefly outlined above, the study will uncover *how* and *why* these pseudo-historical narratives reify relatively widespread and even “popular” concerns regarding Ottoman origins and/or aspirations for the future of the Ottoman enterprise during the “long seventeenth century,” which corresponds quite closely with the “post-classical” era of the empire and the predominant sentiments of the time.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation: Plan And Approach

This chapter, Chapter I, of the dissertation has been an introduction to the historiographical approach, methodology, and primary sources of the study. Along with a discussion outlining the study’s major research questions, I have undertaken a preliminary review of the literature on the modern historiographical questions of the so-called “decline” of the Ottoman Empire, the transformations experienced during the “post-classical” era, and the “rise” or emergence of the Ottoman dynasty.

Chapter II of the dissertation will, first of all, provide a cursory survey of the general conceptions of time and history that were present in Ottoman intellectual and cultural circles, by means of a critical review of the more significant secondary sources dealing with this subject. This chapter will also suggest certain preliminary insights into perceptions and/or conceptions of history as found in “popular” circles in the “post-classical” era. The rest of the chapter will focus on discussions of the narrative forms and social functions of two types of historical texts. Firstly, popular frontier epics like the *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalname*s, and *Saltuknâme*s will be briefly discussed in terms of their oral cultural properties, historical contexts of production, and narrative functions. Secondly, the focus will turn to a specific type of historiographical work undertaken in Ottoman court circles—namely, *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s—and their historical context of production as well as narrative functions during the so-called “golden age” of the empire.

In Chapter III of the dissertation, I will make some preliminary observations concerning the scope, significance, and methodological ramifications of miscellaneous manuscripts (*mecmû'a*s) as important sources for the history of mentalities during the long seventeenth century.

Following the first three chapters, the study will move on to the examination of two sets of pseudo-historical narratives, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, in relation to the historiographical questions of the "decline" and the "rise" of the Ottoman political and social entity. Although, in terms of foci, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* deals with the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty while the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* focuses on "post-classical" political concerns through the medium of an oracular narrative, the dissertation will follow the temporal order of their historical production, thereby first investigating, through textual and contextual examinations, the earlier *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* in Chapter IV and then moving on to the later *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* in Chapter V.

Finally, Chapter VI, the conclusion, will outline the results of the study, with particular emphasis on how "popular" conceptions and sentiments flourished as a response to imperial and dynastic history in the cultural sphere of the "post-classical" period of the Ottoman political entity.

CHAPTER II

"I SEE NOW THAT THERE IS NO CONSTANCY TO THIS WORLD": OTTOMAN CONCEPTIONS OF TIME AND HISTORY[102]

Today we are living under the rule of ever tightening constraints of time. No day goes by without our checking the time to finish one chore or another by the deadline, or muse or worry about what the future holds for us. But how was it for people living in the Ottoman lands in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries? How did they experience time? How did they perceive, understand, and conceptualize time and history, and regard their historical trajectory? How did they envision their future, or did they envision it at all? How did they experience the long emphasized transient nature of time and its ever faithful partner, change? Did they regard the future as malleable or constructible on a personal, or any other, level? Or did they conceive it

[102] "*İmdi gördüm ki bu dünyanın sebâtı yok*": This quotation expressive of the transient nature of life comes from the last will and testimony of Yunus Beg, a sanjak governor who spent most of his life in Ottoman Balkan garrisons in the mid-16th century, and was the sanjak governor of Köstendil (modern-day Kyustendil) in western Bulgaria upon his death in 1572 CE. See Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Edirne Askerî Kassamı'na Âit Tereke Defterleri (1545–1659)," *Belgeler* 3 (1966): 151; R. Aslıhan Aksoy-Sheridan, "Forms of Literacy: Notes on the Life and Cultural Background of 1 16th-century Ottoman Sanjak Governor," in *New Trends in Ottoman Studies: Papers presented at the 20th CIEPO Symposium, Rethymno, 27 June–1 July 2012*, ed. Marinos Sariyannis et al. (Rethymno, Crete: University of Crete Department of History and Archaeology, Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, and Institute for Mediterranean Studies, 2014), 728–40, accessed July 16, 2016, http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/7/8/e/metadata-1412743543-919456-15948.tkl

only as the purely teleological and unalterable procession of time towards the ultimate and unavoidable end of death? What kind of a notion of existence did they hold for themselves? What was their understanding of the past? How did they understand the future? Did they have any anticipation as to what the future holds for them? How did these people see their future as part of a community, and as somewhat involuntary shareholders in the political enterprise called the Ottoman Empire? Did they hold any notion of agency into the making of history? Or was history, in their view, only a divine outcome regardless of their actions, since Islamic theology holds God as the sole proprietor of any happening, good or evil? Is it only the transient nature of time—as hinted at in the quotation borrowed for the title of this chapter, as well as in various literary and theological works, including Müneccimbaşı's work to be addressed below—that they consciously or unconsciously regarded when musing about time? Did they actually experience only the transient nature of life, or the ephemeral nature of social structures, more intensely than before in the "post-classical" era?

This chapter aims to address, on a broader level, these general questions and offer a tentative survey concerning the different senses, sensibilities, perceptions, conceptions, notions, or ideas held and reciprocated regarding the experience of time and history in the Ottoman cultural landscape. In this regard, the study, narrowing its focus, concentrates on and broadly deals with the sociocultural atmosphere in Ottoman Istanbul during the long seventeenth century, a period which—as modern Ottoman historiography suggests—was imbued with a feeling of "anxiety" or a mode of apprehensive self-reflection experienced on both societal and individual levels towards the structural changes occurring in the Ottoman Empire's social and political spheres. Against such a historical backdrop, and on a general conceptual

level, this chapter will trace these aforementioned questions, but especially the main one concerning what different perceptions, conceptions, senses, and notions of time and history—in not only genealogical and religious terms, but also political and epistemological ones—that the Ottoman intellectuals of the period produced and exchanged were in fact in circulation among wider segments of the population. Along with this cursory synchronic survey of the intellectual understandings and articulations of time and history, the chapter will also retain a diachronic outlook so as to trace whether any clear changes or nuanced diversifications emerged in these perceptions or conceptions during this period of social change and political transformation, or whether certain older conceptions and perceptions survived in the popular imagination in spite of intellectual efforts towards diversification on the issue.

On the whole, the main research question, which will indirectly resonate throughout the study, is whether we can see any historical or textual traces of a process of "diversification," "pluralization," or "popularization" in these articulations, or any glimpses of an emerging sense of "agency" in the historical or intellectual act being revealed in the newly emergent genres—but especially the pseudo-historical narratives at focus here—compiled in various miscellaneous (*mecmû'a*) and single-text manuscripts produced in the period. On this point, it needs to be remembered that, according to Islamic jurisprudence, the only agent was God, and all human actions were ultimately and fundamentally determined by the will of God. Within such a religious framework, technically any claim for agency was itself blasphemy. However, regardless of how the issue may have been seen at the time, the fact remains that, in the most general sense, every act of recording, noting down, or copying of a text—especially into one's own personal *mecmû'a*—was an act of

agency, whether meant to save or to disseminate an idea. In this regard, in particular, in the following chapter I will touch upon the scope, significance, and ramifications of miscellaneous compilations or *mecmû'a*s produced in the Turkish vernacular, while in this chapter I will first undertake a critical, yet certainly not exhaustive, overview of the aforementioned secondary sources as well as a study of the exemplary contemporary primary sources dealing with and revealing the different conceptions of time and history which emerged and were promulgated in Ottoman intellectual circles throughout the long seventeenth century.

Much has yet to be revealed and brought to light about the cultural history of the "post-classical" period, especially on the issue of perceptions and conceptions of time and history as present in Ottoman "popular" circles—which is indeed among the main interests in this study—through a thorough and sustained survey of the relevant texts recorded in miscellaneous and single-text manuscripts of the long seventeenth century. However, what I propose to present here is only a sketch or outline of Ottoman intellectual articulations of time and history, so as to suggest the ways in which Ottomans imagined themselves and their temporal contexts and experiences, merely as a backdrop for such a future survey of the "popular" cultural landscape on the issue.

2.1 Literature on Ottoman Élite Conceptions of Time and History: A General Overview

Experience in and of time as well as conscious or unconscious participation in the historical act are, unsurprisingly, common and uniform features of social or personal life, and they find very diverse expressions in various texts, as clearly evinced in the previously unknown or understudied, though frequently copied, "popular" pseudo-historical *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* or *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives that are the

primary focus of this study. Despite some interest in the perceptions and conceptions of time and history held in the Ottoman cultural sphere, as can be seen in recent overview studies with a focus on Ottoman intellectuals' or the ruling class's take on these issues,[103] there has quite understandably—considering the nature and definitely not the scarcity but rather the dispersed nature of the relevant sources in miscellanies—hitherto been no detailed diachronic and synchronic study of communal or popular conceptions and understandings of time or history held among the "common people" in the Ottoman realm.

Due to the nature of written sources, indeed, studies focusing on the perceptions and conceptions of time and history that emerged in the Ottoman cultural sphere understandably and unapologetically direct their attention primarily to the intellectual circles' musings and articulations on the issue. As such, Gottfried Hagen and Ethan L. Menchinger, in their recent collaborative book chapter entitled "Ottoman Historical Thought," make an outline of the Ottoman historical understanding, presenting the contours of the Ottoman historical thought landscape of a period vaguely specified as leading "up to the age of accelerated, exogenous modernization and nationalism in the nineteenth century."[104] However, by making no temporal, contextual, or epistemological distinction between various periods and milieux of Ottoman historiography that would more effectively historicize divergent viewpoints, and by fashioning their overall account as a linear process of development implied to culminate in the person of Kâtib Çelebi, the authors'

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[103] Gottfried Hagen and Ethan L. Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," *A Companion to Global Historical Thought*, ed. Prasenjit Duara, Viren Murthy, and Andrew Sartori (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 92–106; Stephen P. Black, *Time in Early Modern Islam: Calendar, Ceremony, and Chronology in the Safavid, Mughal and Ottoman Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Nikos Sigalas, "Des histoires des sultans à l'histoire de l'État. Une enquête sur le temps du pouvoir ottoman (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)," *Les Ottomans et le temps*, ed. François Georgeon and Frédéric Hitzel (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99–128.

[104] Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 93.

approach unfortunately turns out rather “ahistorical” in the end. However, their long-awaited study is still very useful as an outline of the various understandings and senses of time and history held by intellectual circles in the Ottoman lands, and represents a much-needed contribution to the intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire, despite the fact that it would have been even stronger had it been historicized and contextualized at every point in such a way as to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the historical contingencies involved.

Hagen and Menchinger’s outlook, as mentioned, is exclusively concentrated on the historical and temporal conceptions of élite circles, which they consider the “Ottoman proper.”[105] In line with this concentration, they also state that, because Ottoman historiography had its historical locus in and around élite circles was for the most part patronized by these circles, “it naturally appears indebted to a larger Islamic Middle Eastern intellectual heritage.”[106] This generalizing statement makes it clear that they regard the historiographic act in the Ottoman sphere to be generally directed and guided by an élite segment of Ottoman society, and that this act was largely in line with the generalized Islamic understanding of history and time. Following this initial summation, the authors—in order not to “dispute Ottoman originality”—claim that “new historical experiences and new ideas resulted in new solutions based on cumulative heritage” in terms of historiography in the Ottoman example, and they consider this originality to have been “a genre of ‘applied history’” which they recognize as uniquely Ottoman, though they again make the reservation that “it did not include anything that could not resonate beyond Ottoman political boundaries, making Ottoman historiography very much a branch of

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid., 92.

Islamicate historiography."[107] In short, it is in these guidelines that Hagen and Menchinger choose to "concentrate on the élite (Ottoman proper), and focus on historical thought up to the age of accelerated, exogenous modernization and nationalism in the nineteenth century."[108]

In their study, Hagen and Menchinger quote the Ottoman "encyclopedist" Kâtib Çelebi (1609–1657), whom they regard as a culmination figure in Ottoman historiography, in full in his entry on "History" in his magnum opus *Keşfü'z-zünun*, where he first explains the etymology of the term "history" (*târîh*), going back to the Arabic word "to date, to determine a point in time for remarkable events."[109] Later in the same entry, as translated by Hagen and Menchinger, Kâtib Çelebi notes:

> Historiography is concerned with the knowledge about peoples and their countries, their customs, their crafts, their genealogies, and the obituaries (of their great men), etc. it deals with the lives of men of the past, such as prophets, saints, scholars, philosophers, kings, poets, and others. Its goal is an understanding of what the past was like. Its benefit is the lessons and advice to be taken from that past, and the gaining of experience by being aware of the vacillations of the times, in order to avoid events similar to the evil things that are reported, and to bring about more of the positive outcomes. Some have said that this science provides a "second life" for those that observe it, and that it provide benefits similar to those that accrue to the traveller. (*Kashf al-ẓunūn*, cf. Ṭaşköprüzāde, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*)[110]

Hagen and Menchinger recognize that each keyword appearing in this pertinent passage materializes "a vast intellectual baggage of a millennium of accumulated Islamic knowledge," which, as they note, needs to be disentangled for modern readers.[111] As researchers of the field, however, they also point out that they are above all interested in "three interrelated pursuits":

[107] Ibid., 92–93.

[108] Ibid., 93.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

> * the grappling with the unstoppable, irreversible progress of time, and its philosophical concerns;
>
> * the emphasis on individual agents, which […] [the researchers choose to] call personalism, resulting in a strong moralistic dimension of history; and
>
> * the utilitarian approach in considering history primarily a quarry of cautionary tales.[112]

There consequently appear to be other problems of methodology with their announced approach. After stating that these three pursuits are their primary interest, and with yet another generalization, Hagen and Menchinger note that "[a] full-fledged philosophy of history as a distinct field of inquiry has never developed in Ottoman letters."[113] This generalized statement not only implies a progressive understanding of history, one that would expect such a development in due course, but also reveals quite an anachronistic approach to the historical evidence at hand, since it has judgmental undertones that go hand in hand with the apparent expectation for a such a "full-fledged philosophy of history as a distinct field of inquiry." Yet again, according to the two researchers, the lack of such a distinct field of inquiry "does not mean that the Ottomans did not ask such questions, but that they answered them in the pragmatics of historiography, rather than in theoretical discussions."[114] The authors then note that this pragmatic approach on the whole resulted in "not a unified edifice of a philosophy of history, but a fabric of sometimes contradictory threads of ideas" in the Ottoman historiography.[115] Paradoxically, what Hagen and Menchinger ultimately see is a "vast and […] highly variegated body of historical writing, of the practice of historiography as representation of the past, [which] still overall is remarkably homogenous, meaning

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[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

that it is virtually impossible to distinguish different ‘schools’ within it.”[116] The assumption that there might have ever needed to be “a unified edifice of a philosophy of history” or any “schools” of historiography in the Ottoman sphere for any particular period, and the implied criticism of the lack thereof, is itself quite remarkably positivistic, anachronistically erroneous, and fundamentally quite linearly determinist.

The other problem with the scholarly approach recorded here is the fact that the sources, which are not really fully specified, neither cover all the periods of history-writing *leading up* to the nineteenth century, nor necessarily need to have been conceived as part of a cumulative field of historiography at their outset—an expectation which supposes and exposes a linear idea of progression on the part of the researchers. However, another remarkable point in Hagen and Menchinger’s otherwise quite illuminating overview of the pre-nineteenth century Ottoman historiography is the fact that they make their assumptions while only surveying the works of historiography executed or sponsored by the Ottoman élite, which they also imply to have been the sole group from which the proprietors of these works emerged. This generalization itself therefore seems to be quite invalid, since we come across pseudo-historical narratives directed towards the rewriting of Ottoman imperial history during the same period as well.

However, the idea of historiography needs to be further analyzed in order to figure out what it actually entails in the Ottoman sphere. And Hagen and Menchinger, although they only focus on an intellectual version of the idea in their chapter, set out to do exactly this kind of an analysis of the differing understandings of time within the given parameters, with the aim of developing “a typology of different

[116] Ibid.

historiographical genres."[117] Firstly, they emphasize how "[a] deep sense of transience, of the frailty of human existence and the essential futility of worldly endeavors, pervades Islamic intellectual traditions, especially where they are informed by Sufism," by recording Müneccimbaşı's words as exemplary on the subject:

> Historiography is a virtual return, as it brings back past centuries, and brings the people of those centuries, who have long been dead, back to life. It makes a man and his offspring, who have been dead, apparently come to life again so that one can gain instruction from their experience. Without historiography genealogies would be forgotten, and man would not remember that he is made from clay. Similarly, without this science, if the members of a dynasty passed away, the entire state would vanish with them, and posterity would be unaware of the lives of their ancestors. Such is written in every book God Most High has sent down.[118]

Along with this general sentiment about the transience of time, Hagen and Menchinger record that "Ottoman scholars have used different concepts of time in recording and recalling the past, which in different ways emphasize continuity, dynamics, or rupture in the flow of time toward the present, and engender different modes of memory."[119]

In their analysis of these different conceptions of time, the authors recognize three categories, which they term "universal times," "communal times," and "personal time."[120] Under the category of "universal times," they note conceptually two subcategories; namely, "astronomical time" and "revelation history."[121] In this regard, by defining, as a subcategory of "universal times," "astronomical time" as that which "uses the cycles of the celestial bodies, and thus suggests a (potentially) infinite repetitive pattern that encompasses all times and events," the authors

[117] Ibid., 94.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid., 94–97.

[121] Ibid., 94.

construe the repercussions of the universal understanding of time on the Ottoman historiography as such: "The emigration of the Prophet Muḥammad in 622 CE provides the anchoring point, from which Ottoman, like all Islamic historiographers, computed dates in lunar years."[122] Here they point out the fact that even those historiographical works which start their trajectory retrospectively from Adam nevertheless take Muhammed's emigration as their constant anchoring point to calculate the passage of time in the interval. As another example of the repercussions of the universal understanding of time on the Ottoman historiography, Hagen and Menchinger recognize the earliest historiographic Ottoman documents, which are "chronological lists of events attached to astrological almanacs," as suggesting, "together with the validity of astrological predictions, a homogenous flow of time from the beginning of the world to the present."[123]

In connection with their inference that Ottoman historiography depends on the basic premises of "the validity of astrological predictions" as well as "a homogenous flow of time from the beginning of the world to the present," Hagen and Menchinger state that it was not until Kâtib Çelebi's 1648 *Takvimü't-Tevârih* (Tables of History)[124] that "Ottoman historians began to become interested in a unified chronology of historical events that broke down continuity, but at the same time made the

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[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.

[124] *Takvimü't-Tevârih* (Tables of History) (1648) was a famous work of chronology written in mixed Persian and Turkish by Kâtib Çelebi. It includes chronological tables of world history from the early beginnings until the author's own time. Even though it was originally produced as an excerpt from Kâtib Çelebi's own *Fezleketü't-Tevârîh*, a historiographical work of universal history narrating the period up through 1641, the *Takvimü't-Tevârih* continued its chronology further, up until 1648. Because it became very popular as "an easy reference" for historical chronology, various other authors—including Hezârfenn Hüseyin Efendi (d. 1691), another prominent historian of the seventeenth century, and İbrahim Müteferrika (d. 1745), who printed the work as the twelfth publication of his printing press—extended Kâtib Çelebi's chronology long after his death; see Gottfried Hagen, "Kātib Çelebi," http://www.ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu, eds. C. Kafadar, H. Karateke, and C. Fleischer (June 4, 2016).

synchronicity of many parallel historical developments visible."[125] Thus, according to them, and quite surprisingly, in this early modern period "the annual cycle of the stars had become a purely technical measure devoid of deeper meaning,"[126] thereby implying that long-enduring apocalyptic sentiments necessitating the study of the annual cycle of the stars had been abandoned as a sentiment of the past or as an understanding of the universe that was no longer valid by the time of Kâtib Çelebi, whom, as mentioned above, they regard as the culmination figure of Ottoman historiography, thanks to his endeavors to create a more or less objective or rational basis for the understanding of history. However, Hagen and Menchinger fail to note that the objective sentiment of "a homogenous flow of time from the beginning of the world to the present," despite such an eminent figure as Kâtib Çelebi, never really fully prevailed over the practical understanding of a circular time experience and its impact, through astrological events, on human lives. The latter in fact continued to underlie not only common objective practices of tax payment or military recruitment, but also more personal and subjective practices of following prognostications for various life choices and actions. In fact, such guidebooks—variably entitled *Risâle-i İlm-i Tencîm*, *Şemsiyye*, *Melhâme*, *Sa'âtnâme*,[127] *Risâle-i Sa'd u Nahs*[128]—outlining auspicious or inauspicious days for undertaking certain

[125] Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 94.

[126] Ibid.

[127] For an example of the genre under this title which seems to have been quite "popular" given the number of only some of its copies, see Hibetullah b. İbrahim, *Sa'âtnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih Collection 2644; *Sa'âtnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Mesih Paşa Collection 109; *Sa'âtnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Serez Collection 1634; *Sa'âtnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Yazma Bağışlar Collection 3398; *Sa'âtnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Yazma Bağışlar Collection 3693.

[128] For an example, see "Risâle-i Beyân-ı Rûz-ı Sa'd u Nahs," Istanbul, Ayasofya Library collection, 2706/6. The text of this manuscript copy has been transcribed into the Latin alphabet; see Ali Fuat Bilkan, "Uğurlu ve Uğursuz Günler Risalesi: '*Risâle-i Sa'd ü Nahs*'," Folklor/Edebiyat IX, no. XXXIII (2003): 243–248.

actions was a common reference in the Ottoman cultural sphere.[129] The great number of such texts included either in miscellanies or (re)produced as individual texts in manuscript form testify not only to how the annual movement of stars in fact held deeper meaning for Ottoman "popular" mentalities, but also how such prognostic beliefs and practices underpinned by the annual cycle of stars were in fact popularized beyond the pale of intellectual circles out among larger segments of the population.

Indeed, Hagen and Menchinger's general assertion concerning how, by this early modern period, "the annual cycle of the stars had become a purely technical measure devoid of deeper meaning" is itself challenged by the realities of the Ottoman intellectual circles of the time, as revealed in the authors' very next statement: "Starting his chronicle of the Ottoman Empire with the year 1000 H, corresponding to 1591 CE, Kātib Çelebi mocked all those who had imputed eschatological importance to the millennium by pointing to all the other systems of chronology in which 1000 H was a year like any other."[130] This statement, in and of itself, exposes the fact that there were numerous people who ascribed eschatological importance to the millennium and the configuration of stars—which was, of course, exactly the situation. For instance, Süleyman the Magnificent had a companion-diviner officially commissioned to make apocalyptic speculations and engage in prognostication, if not outright eschatological speculation.[131] Indeed, as underlined

[129] Cf. Bilkan, "Uğurlu Ve Uğursuz Günler Risalesi."

[130] Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 94.

[131] For such apocalyptic interpretations made during his reign, see Cornell H. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps*, ed. Gilles Veinstein, 159–77. (Paris: n.p., 1992); Fleischer, "Seer to the Sultan: Haydar-i Remmal and Sultan Suleyman," in *Cultural Horizons: A Festschrift in Honor of Talat S. Halman*, vol. I, ed. Jayne L. Warner (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 150–167; Fleischer, "Shadows of Shadows: Prophecy and Politics in 1530s Istanbul," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 13. 1–2 (2007): 51–52.

by Stephen P. Black, "it was during the first half of Suleiman's reign that the influence of millenarian prophets, portents, and epithets reached their peak."[132] Again, it was also during Süleyman's time that an epithet used earlier for Selim I, *Sahib-Kiran* (Lord of the Conjunction), which refers to "the universal ruler who would inaugurate the domination of a single religion to coincide with the Grand Conjunction" developed into "a characteristically Ottoman imperial title,"[133] reflecting rising Ottoman claims of universal dominion as the champions of Islam. However, these beliefs and practices were not confined to courtly circles only, but were also upheld by wider segments of the population. In fact, the *mecmû'a*s or miscellanies produced especially in the seventeenth century, as will be explained in the following chapter, bear testimony to a common interest in apocalyptic visions, with various texts illustrating apocalyptic beliefs and eschatological speculation were being recorded in and/or circulated across numerous copies, many of which are to be found in the archives today.[134] It was, in fact, precisely this generally held sentiment against which Kâtib Çelebi deliberately took a counterstance by deliberately starting his chronicle with the year 1000 AH. In a roundabout way, this counterstance indicates just how widespread these beliefs were among larger segments of the population living in the Ottoman domains. Correspondingly, following the long tradition of such belief systems in Islamicate as well as Christian cultural spheres, there is a large corpus of literature on the eschatological understanding of time and history, often accompanied by illustrations of apocalyptic

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[132] Black, *Time in Early Modern Islam*, 165.

[133] See ibid., 164–66.

[134] For a sample set of such miscellanies, see footnote #184.

visions.[135] In line with this understanding of time, many apocalyptical works were produced and/or reproduced throughout the long seventeenth century, a historical fact which cannot and should not be overlooked in any overview of the different conceptions of time extant during the period at hand. This, however, is exactly what Hagen and Menchinger's chapter neglects, depending as it does on the sole example of Kâtib Çelebi, apparently for the sake of following the traces of rational and positivist thinking in the Ottoman historiography of the time.

In fact, in connection with this, Hagen and Menchinger's classification of the second concept of universal time was revelation history, an aspect that characterized Ottoman historical thought from its very beginnings.[136] Unlike astronomical time, which entails an essentially infinite nature, revelation history, which the scholars consider in relation to the Qisas Al-Anbiya (Tales of Prophets) tradition, delineates "a series of foundational events and beginnings onto recurring but finite patterns."[137] According to this tradition, "[t]he world was created by God *ex nihilo*, and human history began with Adam, to whom God for the first time revealed His law, making him the first in a series that included most of the biblical prophets, such as Noah, Abraham, and Moses, culminating in Muḥammad."[138] Hagen and Menchinger rightly note that the Ottoman versions of the life stories of some of these prophets are "part of a common Islamicate literature of 'Tales of the Prophets' which were used as 'exempla' for sermons and public edification," since they are mentioned in

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[135] See Mohammad Ahmad Masad, "The Medieval Islamic Apocalyptic Tradition: Divination, Prophecy and the End of Time in the 13th Century Eastern Mediterranean" (PhD diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 2008); Richard Landes, "The Fear of an Apocalyptic Year 1000: Augustinian Historiography, Medieval and Modern," *Speculum* 75.1 (2000): 97–145; James C. VanderKam and William Adler, eds. *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1996).

[136] Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 94.

[137] Ibid., 95.

[138] Ibid.

the Qur'an as "cautionary tales": "Underneath individual variations their stories describe a pattern of a prophet's receiving revelation, rejection, and suffering at the hands of his audience, followed by punishment of their detractors and final vindication."[139] In general, in this tradition of "Tales of the Prophets," and concurrent with revelation, "human civilization progresses as well, as prophets introduce the building of houses, certain forms of worship, and technologies like writing."[140] Therefore, according to this tradition, there was indeed progress in human history, but it was prompted by divine intervention and not achieved through human agency, and moreover history was actually moving towards the apocalypse in its last cycle: "The life and times of the Prophet Muḥammad (typically not included in the Arabic versions, but in most others) constitutes the last cycle in this history, after which there is no further revelation, leaving the subsequent period as a suspension of historical time before Judgment Day."[141] Starting with the sixteenth century, this apocalyptic sentiment was even more eminent, since the century marked the tenth of Islamic times, and therefore was attributed with special significance and expectations of events of an apocalyptic nature.[142]

Given the preceding discussion, although a general apprehensive sentiment for the apocalyptic end, especially in the popular imagination, seems to have been commonly experienced in the "post-classical" period, we can still recognize both diachronically and synchronically that diverse understandings and conceptions of history emerged, especially in response to what the Ottoman society and political entity was experiencing within the given historical context. Indeed, the Ottoman

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," 162.

cultural scene held two primary anchors of reference for their inquiries into time and history, with the second being the outcome of the first in a revelational understanding of time. These two reference points juxtaposed and aggravated apocalyptic notions in the sixteenth century. On the one hand, the first, and more universal, reference point was certainly Muhammed's hejira, which naturally figured as the essential and fixed reference point for any Islamicate historical consciousness inasmuch as it originated centrally from the general cultural sphere of Islam. On the other hand, the second and perhaps more culturally oriented Ottoman reference point—even though other Islamicate cultures shared similar millenarian sentiments—was the Hijri year 1000, which convergently configured both eschatological notions and also, by implication, the social and political changes that began to become clearer to contemporary observers after the "golden age" of the empire experienced in the successive reigns of Selim I and Süleyman the Magnificent and immediately afterwards. Because the idea of a "golden age" remained in the social memory, especially since the structural changes and transformations experienced in the Ottoman social and political spheres were generally interpreted negatively in both élite and popular circles, the Hijri year 1000 remained in the Ottoman cultural understanding as a cultural and symbolic threshold marking the end of "the good old days," even if it was not, as had once been feared, the actual end of times.

The two brief discussions that follow will look at the court-oriented and -authored *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s and the popular and anonymous *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalnâme*s, and *Saltuknâme*s. They will constitute neither a referential survey nor an exhaustive analysis of these sources, but rather aim to illustrate how the conceptions of time and notions of history outlined above were actually configured

in the practice of historiography. These sources—which make use of various registers, are of different genres, and have a diversity of orientations, origins, and functions—clearly evince the diversification of these conceptions and notions as they emerged through the written word.

These historical or pseudo-historical sources of the Ottoman "classical" period have been deliberately chosen, rather than the canonized chronicles and authored historiographical works, as the textual reference points against which to measure the pseudo-historical narratives of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, mainly due to their similar narrational orientations and their particular historical contexts and functions. As such, the brief commentaries on these texts which follow, and which make no claim to be exhaustive, are meant to underline some of the relevant narrational and contextual aspects in regards to where the pseudo-historical narratives that are the main focus of the study were historically, contextually, and functionally located in the Ottoman social imagination. At the outset, it should be noted that I contend that the pseudo-historical narratives of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, despite sharing some common features and functions, as will be explicated below, indeed distinguish themselves from either of the mentioned referential sources in terms of historical context, orientation, or function, and on the whole emerge separately as history-minded "popular" narratives of the "post-classical" era.

2.2 Frontier Epics and Popular Histories

According to Cemal Kafadar, prior to the fifteenth-century *Tevârih-i Âl-i 'Osmân* chronicles, the historical consciousness of the people of the frontier had been shaped by two types of narrative; namely, frontier epics and hagiographies. These were *told* rather than written—indicating an oral medium of transfer in their narrational

properties, although they have of course survived only in written form—and in terms of genre were "what purported to be historical narratives woven around legendary warriors and dervishes" produced in order to promulgate "the ideals and the motives of uc society."[143]

In his survey of the "pseudo-historical" narratives of frontier epics and hagiographies, which he recognizes as being both "interrelated" and "sometimes even indistinguishable" in their narrational properties and orientation, and which "*claimed* to portray the lives and deeds of frontier warriors of post-Manzikert Anatolia," Kafadar first notes that "they were produced and told within milieux that were conscious of earlier layers of frontier traditions."[144] In fact, in his view, because "these were not national epics but epics of a struggle between two religio-civilizational orientations, the Muslim side of which was dominated once by Arabic speakers and later by Turkish speakers," the layered nature of the historical frontier experience in Anatolia did not estrange the late-arriving Turkish-speaking populations, who continued to enjoy stories of the exploits and heroic deeds of various Arab warriors of early Islamic history fighting on the Arabo-Byzantine frontiers;[145] in fact, they perhaps even identified with these Arab warriors. As long as the same religio-historical frontier continued to exist, its pseudo-historical narratives continued to be produced, regardless of whether their heroes were named in Arabic, Persian, or Turkish.

In fact, the oral nature of these pseudo-historical narratives of the Anatolian frontier makes it almost impossible to create a specific timeline for either their production and consumption through reproduction in the region or for their historical and

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[143] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 62.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid., 62–63.

textual contexts of narration. Because of the oral nature of their production and consumption, Kafadar also notes—though he makes no direct initial reference to orality—that "[i]t is impossible to determine when Turkish renderings of such epics started to circulate [orally], but over time [their] translations appeared in writing."[146] This ambiguity in their historical and textual contexts of narration, which makes it harder to historicize them, are due precisely to the oral nature of their production and results from "thematic and narratological continuities," which "indicate [that] some of the later epics simply reworked parts of the earlier ones for new contexts and audiences."[147] Rather than going into detail about the oral nature of these narratives' production and reproduction over a long period, which shaped and determined their narration as well as their plotting as they were later recast in written form, Kafadar initially places these narratives on a somewhat writerly ground of historical consciousness: "In fact, a keen consciousness of a continuum in the frontier traditions is evinced by later works that explicitly refer to earlier ones,"[148] thereby hinting, albeit perhaps unconsciously, at a textual dialogue of intertextuality among them. However, Kafadar's unpronounced but implied initial writerly cultural approach, which may have resulted from a wish to keep these narratives more within the sphere of historical writing, obscures how orality and the narrational logic of telling a story in the context of the reciprocity of oral performance might have determined the narrational configuration of these narratives, which seem, on the whole, to have had other initial and immediate social functions, functions which were probably more pragmatic in nature than the mere recording of any particular

[146] Ibid., 63.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.

historical context so as to commemorate for prosperity or legitimize any particular polity.

Indeed, the more obvious instances of narrational convergences which Kafadar carefully and succinctly notes, including an interrelated cadre of narrative personae, evidence that there was "[a] consciousness of the legacy of earlier gazis," which led to "[an] urge to situate later gazis within the framework of that legacy":[149]

> The *Dānişmendnāme*, for instance, which is set in immediate post-Mantzikert [*sic*] Anatolia and recorded first in the mid-thirteenth century, starts out by telling us of the abandonment of gaza activity since the glory days of Seyyid Baṭṭāl Gazi, a legendary Arab warrior, as recorded in legends about him, before it moves on to the story of rekindling of the gaza spirit by Dānişmend Gazi. The story of Seyyid Baṭṭāl Gazi itself includes characters from the vita of Abū Muslim, such as the latter's comrade and brother-in-law Miżrāb, who also turns out to be Dānişmend's grandfather, thus appearing in all three narratives. *Ṣalṭuḳnāme*, which consists of lore compiled in the 1470s concerning the figure of a dervish-warrior, Ṣarı Ṣalṭuḳ, who seems to have lived in the thirteenth century, begins likewise with references to the earlier layers of the gaza traditions, in this case to both Seyyid Baṭṭāl Gazi and Dānişmend Gazi. [150]

Once again, however, it needs to be noted that these pseudo-historical narratives were produced to transfer or be the vehicle of an *oral folkloric* legacy, not a *written historical* one, a legacy that addressed the formerly experienced but also still currently ongoing religio-political strife on the geographically shifting Anatolian frontier between the various forces representing the two religions of Islam and Christianity. Therefore, the interrelated characters emerging in relation to each other in these narratives do not necessarily refer to or emerge from any historical veracity, but instead simply indicate that these narratives were orally produced and reproduced so as to fulfill a certain initial function of encouragement and entertainment for the Islamicate party of the strife in their repeatedly different contexts of oral performance.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

As a result, the character overlapping and ensuing interrelatedness in several relevant details do not necessarily result from any reference to an actual historical past, but are instead an outcome of the oral tradition of the frontier, which created, perpetuated, and, in certain contexts, bundled them together. These earliest pseudo-historical narratives were thus not written records of any historical truth, as they sometimes are taken to be in modern historiography. Rather, they transmit what the oral tradition that emerged in various historical contexts on the Anatolian frontier found worthy of recording for the social and textual functions of encouragement and entertainment. Thereby, the common traits and interrelations among the narratives culturally emerged layer by layer over the course of differing historical contexts, while continuously serving the same rough social functions.

Their historical register, on the other hand, tactfully remained, in a conscious or unconscious effort to serve the same social functionality but with a stronger appeal, one that might have come about thanks to their reference to a genealogy of earlier Muslim warriors on the same frontier fighting against the Byzantine "other," as is evinced by the interrelatedness of the cadre of warriors of different eras. Some instances of this narrative overlapping, as in the image of 'Aşkar, which Kafadar attributes to "a more poetic formulation," actually themselves reveal and illustrate how they function within the narration for the sake of storytelling, creating an interrelated lore to be circulated through the various pseudo-historical narratives of the frontier epic tradition. In other words, they do not represent a pedigree of historical genealogy:

> The consciousness of the legacy of earlier gazis and the urge to situate later gazis within the framework of that legacy find a more poetic formulation in the image of 'Aşkar, the horse of Ḥamza, the uncle of the Prophet and the protagonist of a cycle of extremely popular narratives called *Ḥamzanāme*. This holy horse, who enjoys a miraculously long life, serves, after Ḥamza, both Seyyid Baṭṭāl Gazi and Ṣarı Ṣalṭuḳ. Around the beginning of the Ṣarı

> Ṣalṭuḳ narrative, he [Ṣarı Ṣalṭuḳ] sees "his ancestor" Seyyid Baṭṭāl in a dream and is instructed as follows: "My dear [literally, "the corner of my liver"]! Go on and make your sortie [*ḫurūc*] .... Go to the bla-bla cave; there you will find 'Aşkar, the horse I used to ride. And also take the war equipment ... all the arms of Lord Ḥamza are there."[151]

By linking these three warriors of differing immediate sociohistorical contexts of the same Islamicate frontier culture through a particular horse and common weaponry, the narrative of *Ṣarı Ṣalṭuḳ* illustrates how these pseudo-historical narratives tie up with each other textually, as well as, contextually, to the wider circle of Anatolian Islamicate frontier literature.

Here, it should be stated that none of these sources—neither the frontier epics described above nor hagiographies—are directly related to the Ottomans themselves, and none really mention the figure of 'Osmân in a way that might be regarded as straightforward historical evidence.[152] Regardless of their focus in terms of subject matter and their claims towards historicity in the narrative circling around that subject matter, these pseudo-historical narratives served obviously different functions than the mere recording of historical context and actuality: they were firstly produced as narratives of encouragement and entertainment in the oral environment, and then recast in writing so as to perpetuate both this function and also so as to be testimonies for the idealized frontier cultural climate of the *ghazi*s. Thus, these narratives which reflect the cultural sphere within which they were produced in the first place were enmeshed with ideals of valor and honor along with pronounced aspirations for both worldly pleasures and otherworldly recognition and entitlement, rather than presenting any verifiable historical evidence in terms of their scope.

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[151] Quoted in Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 63.

[152] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 77–78.

In this manner, inhabiting the same frontier cultural sphere across different historical periods and configurations as a common background, the *Hamzanâme*s,[153] *Battalname*s,[154] and *Saltuknâme*s[155] served the same common function of the perpetuation of the aspirations and ideals of this historio-cultural environment. Against this background, they not only continued to inspire and even co-opt those later generations of individuals who wished to partake in the same epic experience on the frontier, but they also rather indulgently entertained them with the joys of such epic deeds, regardless of whether the audience were subjects of the Ottoman beglik or another Anatolian beglik. In such a cultural sphere, Hamza, the uncle of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and the eponymous protagonist of the popular frontier *Hamzanâme* narratives, was gradually configured as and grew to be the archetypal "convert" warrior of Islamic ghaza culture, which had a strong popular appeal for the Ottoman *kul* soldiers and dignitaries of devshirme origin. On the other hand, as the protagonists of their own respective epic frontier narratives, both Seyyid Battal Gazi and Sarı Saltuk—regardless of their having originally been historical personages—seem to have appealed to certain cultural environs imbued with the religious syncretism of the frontier and found their haven of popular appeal in just such cultural environs throughout the different periods in which their narratives were

[153] Nurettin Albayrak, "Hamzanâme," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 15. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1997. 516–7. 2014. Accessed June 20, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c15/c150295.pdf.

On how folk literature continued to produce heroic account of Hamza, see On Hamzanâme literature, see Lütfi Sezen, *Halk Edebiyatında Hamzanâmeler* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1991).

[154] See Yorgos Dedes, ed., *Battalname: introduction, English translation, Turkish transcription, commentary and facsimile* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1996); Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Battalnâme," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 5. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1992. 206–8. 2014. Accessed June 20, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c05/c050139.pdf.

[155] Ebü'l-Hayr Rûmî, *Saltuknâme*, ed. Şükrü Halûk Akalın, I-III, Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1987–90.

repeatedly reproduced orally before being recast in writing.[156] Unlike Seyyid Battal Gazi—who, despite traveling through the circle of narratives from Malatya to western Anatolia, remained indigenous to central Anatolia, especially its more easterly regions, as a legacy of the earliest Arab invasions there—Sarı Saltuk, being the more westward of the two, seems to have enjoyed popularity across both sides of the frontier, especially in Rumelia. However, they both share the trait of having a high intellectual capacity, meaning that they could not only defeat the infidels on the battlefield, but also in religious debate and practical deceit. In this way, they also served as messengers of a call for conversion to a sociocultural circle that was either prone to such a call or had newly embraced the Islamic ideology.

Not only these pseudo-historical narratives of the frontier, but all historical texts to some degree, appeal to different cultural spheres and serve other functions than the simple recording of actual historical contexts or facts. Functionality, which is so often disregarded in historical and literary-historical studies, is in fact crucial to understanding, especially, the making of such narratives in an oral environment and to deciphering the particular historical contexts within which they were orally produced and later recast in writing. Historical texts are never constructed merely for the sake of recording historical truth: they all serve multiple other purposes and functions as well.

2.3 History-writing in and around the Ottoman Court

During the first half of the sixteenth century, there was a great activity of historical writing focused on the short reign of Selim I (r. 1512–20). Due to the flurry with which they were produced, these texts have been generally recognized and

[156] The *Saltuknâme* (c. 1480) was written down and completed by Ebü'l-Hayr-ı Rûmî, who compiled the circle of orally transmitted epic narratives circling around the figure of Sarı Saltuk on behalf of Prince Cem (d. 1495); see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 71.

categorized in literature by the generic title of "Selimnâme," although they were usually named differently by their respective authors at the time of composition.[157] The fact that several of the historical works dealing with Selim I's reign were written during that reign itself, with a large number of such works being produced in the later reigns of Süleyman the Magnificent, Selim II, and Murad III, demonstrates that the reign of Selim I was recognized historiographically and politically as a significant turning point for the long cherished Ottoman claims to supremacy among the other Islamic ruling dynasties and Islamicate political entities: Selim I's short reign, with its rapid and extensive territorial expansion, certainly buttressed the Ottoman political claims to uphold the flag of Islam, especially thanks to his swiftly executed conquests of Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and the Hijaz, not to mention his earlier decisive victory against the Safavid dynasty. Indeed, some of the *Selimnâme*s were, unsurprisingly, written in Persian,[158] demonstrating once again that they were composed in order to address Ottoman cultural-political aspirations within the greater Islamic Turko-Iranian ecumene and in support of the Ottoman claim to cultural and political superiority over all other Islamicate dynasties, most particularly the Safavids.[159] In short, the *Selimnâme*s of the sixteenth century were produced in this historical context rather expressly in order to make the image of Selim I as a ruler memorable, monumental, and expressive of aspirations to Ottoman prosperity.

What was it that made Selim I's image greater than that of most other Ottoman rulers, and the first subject matter and focal point of this new historiographical genre

[157] Ahmet Uğur, "Selimnâme," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed., Vol. 36 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2009), 440–41. 2014. Accessed July 11, 2016. http://www.tdvislamansiklopedisi.org/dia/pdf/c36/c360290.pdf.

[158] Yıldız, "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian," 462; see Şükri Bitlisî, *Selim-nâme*, ed. Mustafa Argunşah (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1997).

[159] Yıldız, "Ottoman Historical Writing in Persian," 436.

made up of epic accounts of the deeds of single Ottoman sultans, a genre which continued to be produced for much of the long seventeenth century? Perhaps his exalted image as engraved in the narratives of various *Selimnâme*s for commemoration was due to the fact that Selim I had single-handedly "proven" the long claimed Ottoman superiority in the wider Islamicate culturo-political sphere, and moreover during a period like the beginning of the sixteenth century, which was imbued with eschatological beliefs and millenarian expectations:

> This century, moreover, was the tenth of the Muslim era, and learned as well as popular imagination endowed it with special significance and extraordinary expectations of millennialist or apocalyptical character. Yavuz Sultan Selîm (1512–1520) would, with justice, pass into Ottoman historiography as one of the great conquerors. According to later sixteenth-century sources, he would have become a universal conqueror of the stature of Alexander and Chingiz Khan had he lived to continue his conquests and to prove spurious the threatening Safavî claims to divine dispensation.[160]

Defeating two of the rival Islamicate dynasties, the Safavids and the Mamluks, in consecutive campaigns and invading Syria (c. 1514–1516) before conquering Palestine, the Hijaz, and Egypt (c. 1516–1517) definitely marked the paramount moment for Ottoman assertions of universal political superiority, and particularly superiority within the wider Islamic political sphere:

> The most direct attestation to Selîm's cognizance of the religious and ideological currents washing the eastern Mediterranean comes from the Persian prologue to the *Nigbolu kanûnnâmesi*, composed in 1517 immediately after the conquest of Eastern Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt. There the sultan is described as *mu'ayyad min Allâh*, "succored by God," and *ṣâḥib-ḳırân*, "Master of the Conjunction" or World Conqueror; he is the divinely appointed Shadow of God (*zill Allâh*) who has been given dominion over the earth. […] The simultaneous occurrence of these terms in the prologue to an official document, at a time when diplomatic usage was not yet standardized, suggests that in 1517 they were meant to be taken seriously.[161]

[160] Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," 162.

[161] Ibid., 163. Also, for a study that thoroughly examines Selim I's historical legacy and imperial image, see Hakkı Erdem Çıpa, "The Centrality of the Periphery: The Rise to Power of Selīm I, 1487–1512" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2007).

Specifically, with these victories, Selim I indeed not only defeated the religious rival Shiite Safavid dynasty, but also the Kıpchak-rooted Mamluk dynasty, which had long contested the Ottoman dynasty on the grounds of a superior and more prestigious lineage. Therefore, especially during the reigns of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) and his son Selim II (r. 1566–1574), *Selimnâme*s, as epic accounts of Selim I's successful campaigns, continued to be produced under royal commission and patronage,[162] and his legacy as *sâhib-kırân* was taken up and embraced by Süleyman the Magnificent even more vigorously.[163] In addition to these court-originated epic accounts of Selim I, since his influential political legacy towards universal sovereignty and an imperial image reached beyond courtly circles, some "popular" illustrated accounts of his life and campaigns were also produced—beyond the pale of the court circles—for the common people of the empire.[164]

Commissioned historical writing focusing on one particular sultan's reign was a novelty in the period starting with the reign of Selim I, but it went on to be a courtly tradition of historiography. Indeed, the ensuing tradition of writing contemporary or near contemporary chronicles of one particular reign or heroic accounts of a single sultan's campaigns or exploits would remain a common historiographical practice at the Ottoman court throughout "the long seventeenth century," with varying levels of production over time. In such heroic accounts of imperial history narrating, primarily, Ottoman sultans' lives and military campaigns—and sometimes important commanders' campaigns, which became a necessity when the Ottoman sultans ceased to attend military campaigns after the reign of Mustafa III (r. 1695–1703)—

[162] Ahmet Uğur, "Selimnâme," 440.

[163] Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," 165.

[164] For such an exemplary manuscript with a remarkable "popular" reenactment of the iconography of court miniatures, see Tülün Değirmenci, "Geçmişin Yeniden İnşasi: Târîh-i Sultân Selîm Han ve Tasvirleri," *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 18 (2013): 63–82.

in an epic register, the historical veracity or the factual representation of the narrated events was clearly not the main point of composition or authorial intention, because these heroic accounts were more often than not aimed at creating an exalted textual and pictorial image of the sultan whose stories were being told, thus effectively making these usually illustrated "histories" a kind of panegyric. Indeed, they were certainly not written with the purpose of providing prosperity with a historically verifiable account of the period under consideration, but were primarily literary accomplishments in the panegyric mode meant to win the favors of patronage.[165] The same generic denomination for this kind of historical writing in the literature, as it had been experienced in the reign of Selim I, was also exercised during the reigns of Süleyman I[166] and Selim II. These specific historical works, produced mainly to provide an illustrious imperial image and an exalted account of these sultans' respective reigns as the rulers of the Ottoman Empire, were also commonly known as *Süleymannâme*s[167] and *Selimnâme*s (this time referring to heroic accounts of Selim II),[168] respectively, in the literature, although again these works often bore different and more ostentatious titles at the time of their composition.

Indeed, such historical writing produced in and around the Ottoman court starting from the mid-sixteenth century onwards was even less covert about its motives,

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[165] Tûbâ Işınsu İsen-Durmuş, "II. Selim Dönemi Sonuna Kadar Osmanlı Edebî Hâmîlik Geleneği" (PhD diss., Bilkent University, 2008), 41–3.

[166] See Seyid Ali Topal, "Celalzâde Salih Çelebi – Tarih-i Sultan Süleyman" (PhD diss., Ankara University, 2008).

[167] For a survey of the *Süleymannâme*s, see Abdurrahman Sağırlı, "Süleymannâme," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 38. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2010. 124–7. 2014. Accessed August 4, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c38/c380076.pdf.

Also, for a facsimile copy of a renowned *Süleymannâme* with disputed authorship, see Sinan Çavuş, *Süleymanname: Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş, Estergon ve İstol-Belgrad*, ed. Tülay Duran (Istanbul: Tarihi Araştırmalar Vakfı, 1998). On the dispute about authorship, cf. Abdülkadir Özcan, "Murâdî," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 31. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006. 193–4. 2014. Accessed August 4, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c31/c310134.pdf.

[168] For the transcribed edition of a *Selimnâme*, narrating the life of Selim II, see Necdet Öztürk, "Kazasker Vusuli Mehmed Çelebi ve Selim-nâme'si," *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları* 50 (1987): 9–108.

intentions, and aims at functionality in general. Especially after the establishment of the post of *şehnâmeci* by Süleyman the Magnificent in the 1550s, the Ottoman court became officially the greatest patron of historical writing by hiring "a permanent, salaried official whose chief function was to compose literary accounts of contemporary or near-contemporary Ottoman history."[169] As such, under the patronage of Ottoman sultans, many works of historiography that in fact bordered on the "pseudo-historical" through their use of hyperbole and their lavishly prepared miniatures were produced on a regular basis in and around the Ottoman court through the long seventeenth century, following the initial establishment of such a courtly historiography tradition. In short, these epic-like narratives were produced so as to promulgate an exalted image of the current sultan, with the purpose and in the manner of public legitimization or propaganda for his reign—even for those historical occasions which did not necessarily fit the exalted historical representation.[170] In this manner, these epic-oriented historiographical works of the court, starting from the *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s, produced an exaggerated image of the sultans whose life accounts they recorded, making the Ottoman sultans over into legendary heroes, even though some had never seen a battle. In this, if we set aside their more lofty diction replete with Persian phrases and use of the pre-Islamic epic figures of Persian cultural history, they very much resemble the epic accounts of Seyyid Battal Gazi's expeditions.[171]

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[169] Christine Woodhead, "An experiment in official historiography: the post of şehnameci in the Ottoman empire, c.1555–1605," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 75 (1983): 157–82.

[170] In fact, the *şehnâmeci* Talîkîzâde Mehmed Suphi's (d. c. 1599 or 1602) illustrated history of the Egri Campaign of 1596, entitled *Fetihnâme-i Eğri, Şehnâme-i Sultan Mehmed*, duly evinces such a hyperbolic practice; see footnote #270.

[171] See Seyid Ali Topal, "Celalzâde Salih Çelebi – Tarih-i Sultan Süleyman" (PhD diss., Ankara, 2008), 34–84.

2.4 Conclusion

The play then owes its hyperbole to the audience in the penny seats. At their command it is violent; it is coarse; it is, like our own detective stories and best sellers a parody and a transformation of actual fact. It must have [been] a great temptation for the playwright to feed the desire of the audience in the penny seats.

—Virginia Woolf, "Anon."

The court-oriented *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s outlined above might perhaps be considered the "highbrow" literary counterparts of the *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalname*s, and *Saltuknâme*s in terms of their narrational approach, authorial intention, and functionality. While the latter "popular" epic works of anonymous provenance are certainly more audience-oriented in their manner of address, due to the nature of the medium of oral transmission, the former court-based works of historiography, produced under royal patronage, clearly emerge from a writerly culture of image construction as part of a broadly panegyric discourse. However, in terms of their function, both sets of epic-like narratives serve essentially the same function: they advance a particular discourse and propaganda, whether their audience be those immediately and spatially close in the context of oral performance, or those temporally detached in posterity and addressed through the means of written culture. The narrative images they create, whether it be that of Selim I or that of Hamza, are in fact very much like one another in terms of their reception in the popular imagination. Indeed, these ostensibly quite different genres can even come together within the leaves of a single *mecmû'a*: one particular illustrated *mecmû'a* actually demonstrates quite clearly how the Ottoman popular imagination brought together the exalted imagery of several Ottoman sultans with figures from popular folk narratives.[172]

[172] See *Mecmû'a*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Turc 140. For an article introducing this illustrated *mecmû'a* to wider scholarly circles, see Tülün Değirmenci, "An Illustrated *Mecmua*: The Commoner's Voice and the Iconography of the Court in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Painting," *Ars Orientalis* 41 (2011): 186–218.

What is perhaps most remarkable in regards to this study about both the *Hamzanâme*s, *Battalnâme*s, and *Saltuknâme*s and the *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s as discussed above is the fact that the pseudo-historical narratives which are the focus of this study—namely, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*—deal exclusively with the historical periods that lie outside the sphere of the former two sets of texts, which explicitly address the pre-Ottoman period of *ghaza* and the so-called Ottoman "golden age," represented by Selim I and Süleyman the Magnificent. Indeed, as will be discussed in Chapters IV and V, these latter pseudo-historical narratives are significantly more apprehensive concerning what happened to the Ottoman dynasty since and outside the span of these two periods, and are especially uneasy about what the future may hold as time moves forward toward the end of times.

CHAPTER III

FIGURING HISTORY, TIME, AND AGENCY IN OTTOMAN MISCELLANIES

Little that is commonplace registers in history.
—Simon Eliot

3.1. Introductory Remarks: General Overview

Ottoman studies thus far have generally been inclined to focus on either well-known texts of certain authorship or complete works of renowned authors, and usually little scholarly attention has been paid to any texts of anonymity unless they address specific issues of study. As such, pseudo-historical narratives of the Ottoman dynasty or imperial history of uncertain authorship and origin—like the ones under investigation in this dissertation—have usually drawn little to no attention. This is perhaps firstly because they have been outside the established scope of the fields of literary or historical studies; secondly, they were not part of the "canonized" literature of these two fields; and lastly, they generally remained unknown in *mecmû'a*s or little recognized fascicles, which are hardly ever fully recorded in library catalogues.

However, the two pseudo-historical narratives under consideration here, as argued above in the Introduction, actually expose considerably more than any other texts could about social perceptions or conceptions of imperial history, and the fact that

they seem to have been produced and reproduced by way of copying into numerous *mecmû'a*s or single-text manuscripts indeed attests to their popular appeal and reception on that note. Still, there is no mention of them in any historical or literary study dealing with contemporary texts of Ottoman historiography. This is perhaps not so surprising considering how *mecmû'a*s or the previously unknown texts recorded therein are under- or even misrepresented in the archival catalogues, and how these remain largely out of sight and out of mind unless a researcher happens to come across them in the archives by some chance.[173]

Therefore, in this chapter, I will be focusing on Ottoman composite manuscripts, miscellaneous compilations, or what the Ottomans actually called *mecmû'a*s, considering them as both artifacts of material culture, and as a kind of alluring yet unnerving blueprint of the Ottoman cultural topography—especially in the long seventeenth century, a period during which *mecmû'a*s seem to have proliferated more than ever before. The long seventeenth century—with the proliferation of *mecmû'a*s, the pluralization of types of knowledge, and the emergence of new genres such as those under consideration in this study—indeed represents a culmination in cultural pluralization, and perhaps diversification, on a much larger spectrum than before in the Ottoman cultural sphere, with a miscellaneousness of viewpoints, notions, interests, and bits of information being recorded and rerecorded by unnamed, and sometimes common, people into their own personal *mecmû'a*s, thus making it truly an era of *mecmû'a*s.[174]

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[173] On October 4, 2012, such a serendipity came about for the author of these lines while a residential junior fellow at Koç University's Research Centre for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC), when she came across *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* in a *mecmû'a* held in Süleymaniye Library's Kemankeş collection with the item number 430, largely because of curiosity about the term *mükâşefe* in the title of the text.

[174] Cemal Kafadar, "Sohbete Çelebi, Çelebiye Mecmûa…," in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, et al. (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 45.

3.1.1 Definition

What exactly is a *mecmû'a*? How to define a *mecmû'a* is perhaps the first question that needs to be addressed here. A *mecmû'a* is basically a manuscript "notebook" containing a multitude and diverse set of different and/or similar types of texts. Hence, every *mecmû'a* is unique, and therefore, particular to its own recorded experience of cultural consumption in its own right. It is in this sense that they are alluring and yet intimidating as sources for any scholar of the Ottoman history of mentalities because every one of them needs to be studied contextually before and along with any close textual analysis executed: such a contextual understanding would indeed be necessary in order to determine whether these *mecmû'a*s belonged to and were produced by a single owner/holder or a series of owners/holders, whether they were produced over a succession of time intervals as part of a long process or planned out before being recorded in their entirety, and whether the texts they record were intended to be together with a thematic understanding or randomly put together just by chance.

Indeed, as will be briefly outlined in the following section, Ottoman *mecmû'a*s hardly present one standard type. Among the diverse set of *mecmû'a*s found in library archives today, apart from the quasi-unitary *mecmû'a*s containing only similar types of texts, such as poems, letters, fatwas, sermons, or verdict samples compiled mainly for purposes of practical or professional reference, there are also many *mecmû'a*s of a more idiosyncratic kind, which seem to have especially proliferated around the seventeenth century, and are truly "miscellaneous" in nature, compiling a more diverse set of texts—such as medicine recipes, stories, anecdotes, and guides for divination—while at times also recording personal data and experiences, both in narrative and non-narrative form.

3.1.2 Types of *mecmû'a*s

There are numerous types of *mecmû'a*s found in the Ottoman manuscript archives today. Apart from quasi-unitary miscellanies, like the collected works of a poet or collections of letters and poems compiled by an identifiable figure such as those that were put together by Feridun Beg[175] or Pervâne Beg,[176] Ottoman miscellanies hardly present a standard type. Some are collections of poetry ("*eş'ar mecmû'aları*"), while others are manuals of belles-lettres, epistolary collections ("*münşeat mecmû'aları*"); some are collections of stories ("*hikâyât mecmû'aları*"), while some others are of a specialist sort, like verdict writing guides for judges ("*sakk mecmû'aları*") or those focusing on such areas as medicine, humor, or jurisprudence, like collections of fatwas or sermons. In addition, there are a number of *mecmû'a*s of a more idiosyncratic nature, which note down or record various differing genre texts together with or without the scribbling down of personal experiences, both in narrative and non-narrative form, which make them both truly "miscellaneous" in nature, and, in some cases, examples of ego documents.

These *sui generis mecmû'a*s, which are basically compilations or codexes that bring together various different kinds of texts, and which can also be regarded as personal notes or scrapbooks, are in fact concrete examples of cultural consumption in the Ottoman context,[177] since their compilers basically chose the texts that interested

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[175] Feridun Ahmed (d. 1583) compiled and copied in his *Münşaat'üs-Selatin* (The Correspondence of Sultans) a great number of Ottoman official documents (primarily imperial letters) preserved in the Ottoman royal chancery; see Feridun Bey, *Mecmû'a-i Münşeâtü's-selâtîn*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Darüttıbattıl'âmire: 1265–1274).

[176] Pervâne b. Abdullah (d. 1560/61) compiled in his *mecmû'a*—which was specifically designed with this purpose—a great number of *nazire*s ("parallel poems"); see Pervâne b. Abdullah, *Mecmûa-i Nezâir*, TSMK, Bağdat Köşkü, nr. 406; Fehmi Edhem Karatay, ed., *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi. Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 2 Vols. (Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1961), II, 240.

[177] Because of this aspect of *mecmû'a*s, as will be discussed below, they need to be studied as sources for the history of literacy in the Ottoman cultural sphere. As of now, such studies focusing on cultural consumption and literacy have tended to use the book lists recorded in *tereke* records for an

them so as to include them in a bound notebook of their own and through their own initiative. In this regard, *mecmû'a*s are indispensable sources for any study aiming to understand Ottoman cultural practices and notions, and thereby differing mentalities, as each of these compilations of texts provide researchers with a glimpse of a different singular Ottoman mentality from within. Thanks to this attribute, close textual and contextual analysis of these *mecmû'a*s as individual instances of cultural consumption can provide us with insights into not only their compilers' unique personal tastes, cultural needs, inclinations, and interests, but also those of various social bodies as well as notions of social institutions, and communal mentalities therein found in the general Ottoman social context.

In addition, there are a number of such *mecmû'a*s, which are truly "miscellaneous" in nature, which seem to have proliferated especially around the 17th century. These sorts of *mecmû'a* compile a more diverse set of texts—such as medicine recipes, poems, stories, anecdotes humorous and otherwise, chart-like lists of Ottoman sultans, and guides for divination—while also recording personal data and experiences in both narrative and non-narrative form. Such *mecmû'a*s, which are basically personal notes or scrapbooks, can be seen as "personalized" archives of cultural capital, presenting concrete singular examples of actual cultural consumption, and hence are valuable sources for studying actual practices of Ottoman literacy, since their compilers decided to include—in a bound notebook of their own and on their own initiative—whatever texts interested them, with the clear intention in some cases of referring to them in a living social environment. In all their diversity, these *mecmû'a*s, which are not fully recognized and recorded as

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understanding; however, it must be noted here that such *tereke*s including lists of books indicate only ownership of books, not actual consumption.

contexts in the catalogues, represent what types of texts and pieces of information abounded in the larger Ottoman society as a whole.

3.2 Methodological Concerns about Ottoman Miscellanies

Despite increasing scholarly interest in recent times, *mecmû'a*s continue to remain in a liminal space between literary studies and historical analysis, which cultural history as a field of study needs to investigate through a combined perspective of literary and historical studies and a method of analysis utilizing both the close textual study of literary studies and an understanding of historical contextual analysis so as to decipher their true significance. However, *mecmû'a*s or miscellanies, which so far have been given very little scholarly attention in Ottoman studies, are in fact indispensable sources for understanding the diversity of Ottoman mentalities, as each such compilation of various texts draws a picture of a single Ottoman mindset from within, which can then be contextualized and historicized through a concordant historical inquiry into its making and inherent properties. Deciphering the real significance of any *mecmû'a* requires, in fact, close textual and contextual analysis, taking into account both the contents of the texts contained therein and how related texts were disseminated across multiple *mecmû'a*s or single-text manuscripts over time. Such an analysis is vital for any researcher venturing into the history of Ottoman mentalities: which texts were in circulation through reproduction by way of copying in different versions, and what renditions, alterations and updating occurred in various versions produced at different periods and in different *mecmû'a*s or manuscripts? These research questions directed onto different singular examples of *mecmû'a*s provide us with insight into their compilers' personal concerns and interests, and by extension those of wider Ottoman communal sensibilities. In this dissertation, I will therefore address these issues on

the whole by not only studying the aforementioned pseudo-historical narratives about the Ottoman dynasty, which are found in some *mecmû'a*s as well as a number of single-text manuscripts, but also referring to some other exemplary *mecmû'a*s illustrative of these miscellaneous manuscripts' properties as primary sources of Ottoman history of mentalities.

The ongoing digitization of texts in Arabic script in manuscript libraries today has been indispensable to researchers, conspicuously altering the very act of research on manuscripts, since scholars no longer have to confine themselves to accessing only one or two manuscripts during a library visit, but rather can reach several digitized manuscripts at once. It is also very helpful for a scholar venturing into the sheer number of *mecmû'a*s and their crowning diversity. However, it is also true and needs to be noted that by erasing the materiality of the manuscripts at hand and turning them solely into digital files to be be viewed only on a computer screen, efforts at digitization have in some way begun to hinder our understanding of Ottoman manuscript codices as physical objects, and in the process have exposed certain problems, both theoretical and practical.

The present discussion aims firstly to refer to some of these theoretical issues pertaining to our deeply-rooted understanding of manuscripts as products of a written cultural realm, which disregards any oral aspects at play in their production. Following from this, I will refer to the ensuing limitations of established canonical formations through which scholars, especially of the medieval and early modern period, tend to approach and categorize manuscripts mostly at the expense of miscellanies, which constitute a very significant part of the surviving manuscript corpus in libraries and archives today. In contrast, in order to better explicate the inherently diverse and protean nature of textual forms present in Ottoman

manuscripts, especially those of a miscellaneous sort, I will proceed to focus on one particular problem, one that is mainly practical in nature; namely, that there is an apparent conflict between established cataloguing practices and the needs of researchers working on early modern Ottoman history, a time when there appears to have been a proliferation in the production of miscellaneous manuscripts as opposed to manuscripts dedicated to a single text. Indeed, *mecmû'a*s—which stand in their diversity as testimonies to actual practices of cultural production and consumption and intellectual corpora produced through such mechanisms in the Ottoman realm—must be taken as contexts in and of themselves, rather than as simply reservoirs of texts. Consequently, many texts that can provide immense insight into Ottoman mentalities of the time have remained in the margins, with apparently little hope of ever emerging therefrom.

In fact, the very diversity in the types of miscellanies, as briefly outlined in the previous section, draws our attention to the fact that these artifacts need, first and foremost, to be reconsidered as unique objects of material culture, rather than as simple repositories of texts. Furthermore, if we want to understand their real significance, each and every one of these *mecmû'a*s needs to be placed within its own unique historical context through textual, contextual, and even performative analysis. Contrary to this, any simple attempt at categorizing them in all their diverse scope, disregarding what constitutes their entirety in order to pigeonhole such *mecmû'a*s and/or tracking down different versions of the same texts reproduced in different *mecmû'a*s in order to arrive at an *ur*-form, thus overlooking the ramifications of oral culture: all such practices ultimately result in increasing obfuscation and oversimplification, limiting our understanding to already established

canonical boundaries while obliterating these miscellaneous manuscripts' singular significance.

Against this, what a contextual study of miscellanies will enable us to do is understand the tastes and needs of different segments of society, those which have not yet been fully studied in historiography of the Ottoman realm, thereby potentially enabling us to capture a fuller picture of past human experience by manifesting the cultural inclinations of those individuals who compiled various texts for future personal and communal reference, with these texts likely being produced, copied, and used as prompts for consumption in an oral environment centered around Ottoman social gatherings.[178] In this respect, the dissemination of similar or roughly identical texts with variations across multiple surviving miscellanies suggests both repetition and reproduction in an oral cultural environment, as well as intertextual relations in a written cultural sphere. In both regards, *mecmû'a*s were not "end results" or "finished products"—which is how texts tend to be seen in a writerly cultural realm—but were rather embodiments of different processes, or were even themselves processes that occurred in different historical contexts. In short, Ottoman cultural exchange and the terms and conditions within which Ottoman cultural products were produced and consumed require further inquiry in order to understand their writerly as well as oral cultural attributes, since every

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[178] Throughout his seminars on Ottoman cultural history at Bilkent, Mehmet Kalpaklı has continuously emphasized the role of social gatherings, not only on the level of social interaction, but also and especially in terms of the oral cultural production mechanisms of literature. For information on Ottoman social life in the early modern period, and especially on how such cultured social gatherings or salons (*meclis*, pl. *mecâlis*) were held either in well-to-do hosts' kiosks or in coffeehouses, among other places, and thereby played a central role in oral literary consumption and production in the Ottoman cultural sphere, see Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds*: *Love and The Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham and London: Duke University Press: 2005) and Halûk İpekten, *Divan Edebiyatında Edebî Muhitler* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1996). Specifically on Ottoman poetic production's interrelatedness with social life and social gatherings, see Walter G. Andrews, *Poetry's Voice, Society's Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985).

manuscript, but especially those of a miscellaneous sort like *mecmû'a*s, can be thought of as new products at every single instance of copying that took place.

As such, *mecmû'a*s provide an indispensable source for any study aiming to understand differing Ottoman cultural practices and mentalities, both conforming and dissenting, since each of these compilations are pictures of a single Ottoman mindset from within, revealing more about the person or persons who compiled them and the historical contexts within which they were produced. Therefore, I believe that both the method of close textual and contextual analysis of such singular *mecmû'a*s on their own, and that of tracing the dissemination of the same or similar texts across various *mecmû'a*s, while also paying due attention to their new singular textual and contextual contingencies, will provide us with insights into not only their compilers' personal tastes, inclinations, concerns, and interests, but also by extension those of various wider communal sensibilities harbored and fostered in different Ottoman cultural and literary circles.

Indeed, the promulgation of different variants of texts across multiple *mecmû'a*s is something of great interest for any researcher venturing into the Ottoman history of mentalities, reception, and literacy: Which texts were in circulation through reproduction by way of copying, and what conformities as well as variations, changes, and updates occurred at the various instances of copying that took place at different times and in different *mecmû'a*s? These research questions can ultimately provide us with insight into not only *mecmû'a* compilers' personal concerns and interests, but also by extension those of wider Ottoman communal sensibilities, and lead us to distinguish between differing contexts and sensibilities within the diverse set of cultural milieus in the Ottoman realm, as well as helping us to understand the true nature of the cultural and political processes that shaped the early modern

historical trajectory of the Ottoman Empire. Rather than simply categorizing *mecmû'a*s under already established thematic and canonical subheadings as simple repositories of texts to be catalogued at the expense of their individual contingencies, and thereby neglecting the actual actors behind these compilation activities, these miscellaneous codices both individually and as a corpus need to be studied contextually to get to the heart of the felt needs that drove their production.

As outlined above, miscellanies' diverse and unique nature makes them important sources for investigating Ottoman cultural history in the terms described. Therefore, *mecmû'a*s—which stand in their diversity as testimonies to actual practices of cultural production and consumption and intellectual corpora produced through such mechanisms in the Ottoman realm—must be reconsidered as contexts in and of themselves, rather than merely as manuscript sources to be mined for different texts.[179] However, in line with the typical canon formation practices of literary studies, established cataloguing practices commonly classify miscellanies according to some "main text" therein, thereby turning shorter and/or relatively unknown texts into "sub"-texts, if indeed they are even catalogued and mentioned at all. Consequently, many texts that might shed light onto Ottoman mentalities of the time have remained in the margins of archives, with apparently little hope of surfacing back into comprehensive studies of the history of mentalities any time soon given the state of the art in the early modern Ottoman cultural history.

Despite increasing and inspiring scholarly interest in recent times, miscellanies unfortunately are still in a liminal space between literary studies and historical

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[179] Indeed, a long-term research project of broad scope, entitled "Mecmûaların Sistematik Tasnifi Projesi" (MESTAP), creates just such a scholarly concern, as it exhibits some disregard for the inner and outer contextual properties of the *mecmû'a*s sourced in the project; cf. Fatih Köksal, "Şiir mecmûalarının önemi ve "Mecmûaların Sistematik Tasnifi Projesi" (MESTAP)," in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, et al. (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 409–31.

analysis, which cultural history needs to investigate in order to decipher their true significance. Indeed, the diverse nature of the miscellanies requires foremost a contextual understanding of every one of such composite manuscripts along with and perhaps before any textual analysis: What this kind of contextual study of miscellanies will enable us to understand is the tastes and needs of different *mecmû'a* owners, thereby providing us with insight into individuals' personal experiences and a capacity to capture a fuller picture of past human experience by manifesting the cultural inclinations of the individuals who compiled various texts for future personal and communal reference, with these texts likely being produced and used as prompts for consumption in an oral environment. Glimpses of this all-inclusive oral function are apparent, not only, in some of the marginal notes found in miscellanies regarding the manner in which they were communally read,[180] but also, through other and more indirect manifestations of orality, [181] enacted and inscribed

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[180] See Tülün Değirmenci, "Bir kitabı kaç kişi okur? Osmanlı'da okurlar ve okuma biçimleri üzerine bazı gözlemler," *Tarih ve Toplum – Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 13 (2011): 7–43. This important article addresses the relatively disregarded evidence of public readership recorded in the margins of manuscripts, in relation to the history of literacy and with a particular focus on public reading sessions in the seventeenth-century Ottoman cultural sphere. However, in explicating these "reading" testimonies—largely in the form of a survey of these differing testimonies—as evidence of various general aspects of Ottoman literacy, but especially that of public reading sessions, the author fails to recognize the contextual historical significance of the narratives which provide the majority of the codicological evidence she uses as evidence of "readership." I should note, for instance, that the *Hikâyât-i Sipâhî-yi Kastomonî ve Tûtî*, which is at the center of her survey, seems, as the details of the story's narrative plotting evince, to have been deliberately composed so as to make a public mockery of the class of sipahis through the narrative's highly caricatured central figure; namely, Ali the sipahi of Kastamonu. In the narrative, Ali is presented as ignorant of the ways of the city life. In this, he is opposed to the figure of the *kul*, who, as the source's public reading testimonies evince, clearly made up the majority of the actual audience for the story. The actual *kul*s, then, had a good laugh at the expense of the poor, fictive, provincial sipahi who got lost in the big city. In general, Değirmenci makes no note of the fact that practically all of the narratives whose copies she makes use of in her survey for the history of literacy are texts specifically produced to be consumed *not* through private silent reading, but rather through public communal reading; hence the nature of the testimonies found in the manuscripts. One other point that should be made here is the fact that the choice of name for Ali clearly implies an Alevi and thus an unsophisticated, rural background for the caricatured sipahi—who, of course, in the actual Ottoman historical context would never come, as he does in this text, to the capital city to collect his *ulufe*.

[181] For an illuminating study of the function of orality and its divergence from literacy, see Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

onto the word of the text.[182] Yet it has not been until recently that miscellanies have been recognized as an important tool of Ottoman literary studies, let alone given due credit as historical sources for the study of cultural history, and as a result the methodology of how to study these texts is still under construction. This is compounded by the fact that there are many various types of miscellanies found in the archives. Indeed, the diversity in the kinds of miscellanies draws our attention to the fact that, if we want to understand their real significance, each and every one of these texts needs to be placed within its own unique historical and social context.

Therefore, one apparent methodological approach is to focus on one individual miscellany and try to historicize that particular miscellany in terms of its keeper's/s' social and familial background and interests. Given the diverse nature of these miscellanies this methodological approach seem to be more plausible in terms of reaching at any tangible conclusions about the nature of this particular miscellany at hand. Why did it record what it did at that particular historical moment? Perhaps the context is the most important aspect of any historical inquiry. Not just the context of the source material itself which we historians choose to historicize, but also the context in which we place ourselves as inquirers. I have been very much aware from the very beginning that I needed a well-defined conceptual framework of inquiry to legitimize my choice about which source to focus on and which source to exclude in my research. And as has already been mentioned, *mecmû'a*s present us a great diversity of texts with various traits in terms of content. They almost overwhelm us with their versatility and diversity. There thus arises the problem of how to approach them, let alone how to study them. This obvious approach would be the inductive

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[182] Such an orality is indeed inscribed onto the word of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives, as will be referred to in Chapter V.

methodological approach: "Let's look one by one at what these *mecmû'a*s show us and then try to come up with an understanding and explanation as to why they present us with such diversity." It involves focusing on one individual miscellany and trying to historicize that particular miscellany in terms of its compiler's social and intellectual background and interests through a close textual and contextual analysis of this individual *mecmû'a* and its ordering principles. Given the diverse nature of these miscellanies, this methodological approach seems to be more plausible in terms of reaching any tangible conclusion about the nature and historical significance of that one particular miscellany at hand: Especially if the *mecmû'a* belongs to a well-known historical figure, such a study focusing on one particular *mecmû'a* can become a great historiographical tool in understanding the several planes of historical context within which it was produced: Why did it record what it did at that particular historical moment, and so on? At the beginning, I have been more inclined to follow this methodology. However, it is never easy to justify the choice of one such *mecmû'a*. How would one choose that one? As I later also realized, focusing on one particular *mecmû'a* with no certain signification of its compiler/author seems to be quite unjustifiable in itself. Though such individual studies seem to provide us with a growing inventory of various miscellanies upon which historians can wishfully arrive at a more general conclusion at some point in the future, these individual studies themselves seem to be ultimately quite descriptive in themselves. And they perhaps work more in the direction of orienting us to the overwhelming conclusion of the impossibility of arriving at any conceptual conclusion or framework within which these miscellanies would make sense about Ottoman cultural history. They ultimately tend to show us miscellanies as "floating islands" rather than directing any attention as to their connection with the "general"

Ottoman cultural sphere of a given historical period. However, this methodological attitude seems usually to end in bitter disappointment rather than coming to any conclusion about *mecmû'a*s themselves. A survey of as many individual *mecmû'a*s as possible comes to the inevitable conclusion that they represent no meaningful corpus in and of themselves. Studies conducted with this approach thus tend to emphasize what these *mecmû'a*s do not reveal us, such as how they are not diaries in the modern sense of the term, or how they do not record directly expressed emotions over various events that took place in the life of their compilers. In fact, these *mecmû'a*s, if and when they do, tend to dully record only births, deaths, and/or appointments to and removals from posts of various individuals to whom they were somehow related, remaining mostly silent about other personal experiences.

Therefore, one primary methodological problem that I can acknowledge with the utilization of miscellaneous manuscripts or *mecmû'a*s as primary sources is indeed the question of where to start. Methodologically speaking, a researcher has to justify any choice of what to include and what to exclude from the ever growing pool of *mecmû'a*s under scrutiny. Because these manuscripts include a set of many diverse texts within them, the first questions that a researcher has to ask herself are: "Which *mecmû'a* to choose to study?" and "What text to focus on in this diverse set of texts included in one *mecmû'a*?" Among the diverse set of *mecmû'a*s found in the library archives today, the majority are quasi-unitary and contain similar types of texts, but there are also many *mecmû'a*s of a more idiosyncratic nature, those mentioned above that are truly "miscellaneous" in nature and diverse in terms of their texts. Such *mecmû'a*s are invaluable sources for any study aiming to understand differing Ottoman cultural practices, and mentalities, as each of these compilations are pictures of a single Ottoman mentality from within. As a result, close textual and

contextual analysis of these singular *mecmû'a*s on their own provides us with insights into not only the compilers' personal tastes, cultural needs, inclinations, and interests, but by extension also those of various communal mentalities found in the Ottoman context. In fact, every manuscript is ultimately records its own unique experience of cultural production and consumption, and is itself a historical event in its own right, and therefore must be studied on its own terms in order to discern and decipher its true singular cultural historical significance with regard to the role it played in Ottoman cultural history in general. Yet, studying one *mecmû'a* at a time would be extremely time-consuming and less fruitful for a study aiming to try to arrive at a general understanding of the Ottoman cultural history of the seventeenth (or long seventeenth) century. Therefore, the dissemination of similar or roughly identical texts across multiple *mecmû'a*s is something of more interest for any researcher of Ottoman cultural history in general: which texts were in circulation through reproduction by way of copying in *mecmû'a*s, and what variations and changes occurred at the various instances of copying that took place? These research questions can ultimately lead us to pinpoint and gain knowledge about differing contexts within the diverse set of cultural milieus developed and nurtured in the Ottoman realm and help us understand the true nature of the cultural and political processes that took place in the historical trajectory of the Ottoman Empire.

All this may be fine in theory, but the fact that you need to break up the integrity of a *mecmû'a* in order to handpick one particular text from its context in order to study in what other contexts or other *mecmû'a*s it was reproduced remains the same as a methodological problem. In this study, I will be following two sets of narratives disseminated across a number of *mecmû'a*s produced at different dates and centuries, so while trying to pinpoint whether and/or how these narratives evolved

across different *mecmû'a*s, I will also need to keep an eye on how they were produced in the first place within the singular context of their own particular *mecmû'a*s and with which other texts they were put together, by association, so as to truly understand what particular mindset lay behind choosing to record them together and what was their appeal within certain historical contexts and for which particular individuals experiencing these historical moments. Therefore, both the method of close textual and contextual analysis of such singular *mecmû'a*s on their own, and also that of tracing the dissemination of the same or similar texts across various *mecmû'a*s of differing production dates, while also paying due attention to their new singular textual and contextual contingencies, is methodologically speaking very necessary and in fact indispensable for any study of the cultural history of the Ottoman empire.

In short, there are essentially two possible methodological ways and approaches that can be taken when tackling with the *mecmû'a*s:

a) to contextualize one single *mecmû'a*

b) to trace the dissemination of the same or similar texts across *mecmû'a*s

Due to all such methodological concerns, miscellaneous manuscripts or *mecmû'a*s have been correspondingly understudied, either due to the general inclination of focusing on mainstream and/or well-known texts and manuscripts—and leaving these marginal or little to none known sources and texts aside *and* out of any immediate agendas of study—currently prominent in the field of Ottoman studies, or perhaps due to the fact that these miscellaneous manuscripts are still poorly represented in the manuscript catalogues in terms of their full contents and textual properties, and thus also in terms of their promised potential for studying the history of mentalities in the Ottoman cultural sphere. Yet again, the reason for this apparent

lack of scholarly interest might well be the codicological and other methodological difficulties which they quite overwhelmingly present for any scholars of Ottoman culture willing to tackle these pitfalls. Whatever the reason, until recently no comprehensive study of Ottoman *mecmû'a*s has been done, excepting a pioneering publication of compiled conference proceedings, which thankfully introduced this significant codicological form to a wider general audience.[183]

Indeed, ultimately *mecmû'a*s present us with not one but many methodological puzzles. These puzzles not only open up as one goes further along in one's research, almost like a matryoshka doll, but also entail a teleological concern for such an approach of study as well. *Mecmû'a*s involve many pieces which seemingly do not fit into one another, nor do they give even the slightest clue, at first sight, about the general picture into which they would all fit theoretically and historically. Who, for instance, could make sense of the various notebooks that we keep today in a few hundred years' time? What would these random notebooks exhibit about, for example, the cultural life of Istanbul today?

Thankfully, this last rhetorical question is not exactly the case with Ottoman *mecmû'a*s. A number of seventeenth-century *mecmû'a*s found in the archives today seem to have texts united by a certain thematic thread: they expose differing conceptions of and concerns about human experience in time and history.[184] Most of these, for example, take care to record important dates in an individual's life, sometimes as a simple list and sometimes as a verse chronogram. They also include

[183] Hatice Aynur et al., ed. *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı* (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012).

[184] There are numerous such *mecmû'a*s, all of which cannot be cited here, and indeed it is difficult to quantitatively calculate their number, even if one only takes into account those held in the Süleymaniye Library collection. However, for a sample of such exemplary *mecmû'a*s that include such kinds of texts from the Süleymaniye Library, see Hacı Mahmud Efendi collection, 02443; Yazma Bağışlar collection, 01459; Fatih collection, 05334; Düğümlü Baba collection, 00523M12; Yazma Bağışlar collection, 07115; Mehmed Zeki Pakalın collection, 00078.

pseudo-historical narratives about the Ottoman dynasty, which are teleological genealogies and/or universal histories leading ultimately to the Ottoman dynasty, and which form the main focus of this study and of the following two chapters; and sometimes there are humorous "calendar" or *takvîm* texts, too, which are basically humorous books of curses, directing criticism at "social offenders" of their time. In addition, there are many openly apocalyptic tales as well as folkloric popular stories about the prophet Khidr (Turkish: Hızır). There is thereby clearly a common thread connecting these *mecmû'a*s on a discernible conceptual level. To differing degrees, these *mecmû'a*s signify Ottomans' aforementioned varying conceptions of time and notions of history, which surely lie at the very core of their social and political notions of and inquiries into the world they were living in. Keeping these features of *mecmû'a*s in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that some renditions and antecedents of the aforementioned pseudo-historical narratives, the *Bahrü'l-mükâşefe* (The Sea of Mutual Revelations) and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* (The Story of the Emergence of the House of Osman), the two full-text versions of which will be examined as primary sources in this dissertation, are in fact found disseminated in various *mecmû'a*s.

Indeed, after a preliminary survey at the manuscript libraries in Istanbul, I can easily suggest that the long seventeenth century—which, for reasons explained earlier, is the period of focus in this dissertation—seems also to have witnessed an increase in the number of produced and survived miscellaneous compilations or *mecmû'a*s[185]

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[185] Other scholars, including Jan Schmidt, Gisela Procházka-Eisl, and Hülya Çelik, who do extensive archival research on miscellaneous manuscripts, also attest to the fact that the majority of manuscript sources held in archives today are indeed miscellaneous in nature: for instance, Jan Schmidt remarks that "the majority of the manuscripts in our Leiden Oriental Collection are miscellaneous in some way," cf. Jan Schmidt, "First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Miscellaneous Manuscripts," in *Many ways of speaking about the self. Middle Eastern ego-documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th - 20th century)*, eds. Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse, 159–170 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 161. Moreover, Gisela Procházka-Eisl and Hülya Çelik, who have recently completed a research project

even after taking into account repeated fires and earthquakes, and other such related dangers for the survival of manuscripts, such as moths and oblivion.[186] Despite such perils of time and nature, this period of the "long seventeenth century" seems to have coincided with a proliferation in the number of *mecmû'a*s, produced at the time, especially in the Turkish vernacular. The fact that we come across numerous miscellanies—represented in the probate (*tereke*) records of the time as either simply "*mecmû'a*", or, when unbound, as "*evrâk-ı perişân*" or "loose pages"—attests to this phenomenon.[187] As opposed to more "valuable" manuscripts dedicated to single well-known texts of different kinds and genres, *mecmû'a*s are recorded as having very little monetary value in these *tereke* records, and thereby very little reason to be kept and saved for posterity. However, interestingly enough, these *mecmû'a*s still have great prominence in manuscript library archives today.[188]

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entitled "Early Modern Ottoman Culture of Learning: Popular Learning between Poetic Ambitions and Pragmatic Concerns," financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF, project no. P23331-G1) and carried out at the University of Vienna's Oriental Institute in cooperation with Ernst D. Petritsch from the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (State Archive) in Vienna, published in electronic book format the first volume of the outcome of their comprehensive study of six miscellaneous manuscripts (*mecmû'as*) preserved in the Austrian National Library, dating roughly between 1590 and 1680. The digital editions of their research volumes and the facsimiles of the manuscripts will soon be available on the project's website at http://www.acdh.ac.at/mecmua. In the as yet uncirculated first volume of their research, which addresses the question of the "popularization"of learning, Procházka-Eisl ve Çelik make a similar observation about the miscellaneous nature of many of the manuscripts held at the Austrian National Library: "The situation at the Austrian National Library is similar—around 200 of the Ottoman manuscripts can be classified as *mecmūʿa*s." Cf. Procházka-Eisl, Gisela, and Hülya Çelik. "Mecmua online." Accessed on August 31, 2016. http://www.acdh.ac.at/mecmua.

[186] Cf. Mehmed Râşid, *Tarih-i Raşid*, 5. vols. (Istanbul: Matbaa-yı Amire, 1282/1865), vol. 5. 128–9.

[187] For some important secondary studies specifically focusing on the historical significance of book lists found in *tereke* or other kadı records, see İsmail E. Erünsal. "Şehid Ali Paşa'nın İstanbul'da Kurduğu Kütüphane ve Müsadere Edilen Kitapları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Kütüphanecilik Dergisi* 1 (1987): 79–90; Erünsal, "Türk Edebiyatı Tarihinin Arşiv Kaynakları IV: Lami'i Çelebi'nin Terekesi," *Journal of Turkish Studies [Fahir İz Armağanı I]* 14 (Harvard University, 1990): 179–194; Erünsal, "Şâir Nedim'"in Muhallefâtı," *Journal of Turkish Studies [Festschrift in honor of Cem Dilçin I]* 33/1 (Harvard University 2009): 255–274; Ali Hasan Karataş. "Tereke Kayıtlarına Göre XVI. Yüzyılda Bursa'da İnsan-Kitap İlişkisi," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 8/8 (1999): 317–28; Karataş. "XVI. Yüzyılda Bursa'da Tedavüldeki Kitaplar," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 10/1 (2001): 209–230.

[188] It is not yet possible to provide satisfactory quantitative information regarding this proliferation, or even to give an approximate percentage for miscellanies among the manuscripts produced from the end of the sixteenth century onward, due to the fact that manuscript library catalogues do not record these composite manuscripts specifically as such in the details of their entries. However, during my

Here, certain historical questions arise about this presumed proliferation in the number of produced and/or survived *mecmû'a*s of the long seventeenth century: is it simply chance that, as compared to other periods, more volumes of the *mecmû'a*s produced in this period have survived to the present? Or, was it because of the relatively growing literacy among the Ottoman population, or cheaper paper available in the Ottoman lands through import from Europe? Or, does this increase suggest a social tendency to record personal cultural capital on an individual basis? Or, does it reflect a sense of "individualization," especially with regards to the rising number of the self-narratives of narrative or non-narrative forms, which tends to record itself more often in such periods of social crisis, distress, and uncertainty? Does this proliferation, if it actually is a proliferation in production, really signify such a social tendency to record cultural capital and personal experience, and really expose such a notion of "individualization," inclined more than before to register its self in this period of uncertainty in the seventeenth century? If so, what does this suggest in general about the period in question, which historians have merrily come to consider "early modern"?[189] These are all valid questions about the seventeenth-

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stay as a research fellow at Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations in the 2012–2013 academic year, I was able to conduct extensive archival research on the collections of the Süleymaniye Library, looking for the miscellaneous manuscripts contained therein, and according to what I found I can confidently assert that there was indeed just such a proliferation during the period of the long seventeenth century. Such a proliferation around the same period and in other cultural spheres, such as England and Safavid Persia, is also recorded in the secondary literature; see Joshua Eckhardt and Daniel Starza Smith, eds, *Manuscript Miscellanies in Early Modern England* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2014); Iraj Afshār, "Maktūb and Majmū'a: Essential Sources for Safavid Research," in *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period*, ed. Andrew J. Newman, vol. 46 of Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 51–61.

[189] The temporal designation of "early modern," which has been widely used in modern historiography thanks to its practicality, implies a nominal as well as teleological approach, and in fact marks a temporally rather ambivalent period based on essentially a linear and deterministic understanding of how history works. For a critique of the term along these lines, see Jack A. Goldstone, "The Problem of the 'Early Modern' World," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 41.3 (1998): 249–84. With Goldstone's reservations and criticisms in mind, this study will only sparingly make use of the term, primarily so as to link the Ottoman historical experience with the general European context, without any restrictions in regards to temporal and paradigmatic differences, thus allowing a focus on similarities between the two cultural spheres.

century Ottoman context, and all probably have some share of truth. Nonetheless, the last two questions certainly require more research on Ottoman *mecmû'a*s in order to determine their scope, and thereby to ascertain any valid historiographical answers.

In the context of miscellaneous manuscripts produced by professional scribes and copyists, some of whom cannot be identified by real name, H.R. Woudhuysen notes that "the lives and works of all these people[190] tend to show that by the second decade of the seventeenth century entrepreneurial manuscript publication had arrived and was—at least in London—fairly well established."[191] Unfortunately, at the moment it is not possible to come up with such a list of scribes from the same period in the Ottoman cultural sphere, even if we narrow the geographical target to the capital Istanbul and the temporal focus to a shorter period in time. There are two reasons for this shortcoming at the moment: (1) the number of surviving manuscripts even held only in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul today on its own attests to the fact that the miscellaneous manuscript production in Istanbul in the seventeenth century was at a rate excessively high compared to its English counterpart;[192] (2) the catalogue entries provided for these miscellaneous manuscripts have much to be desired. Due to great numbers of miscellaneous manuscripts produced at the time, some of which cannot be recognized as *mecmû'a*s in their entries, and are still

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[190] H.R. Woudhuysen here refers to some known and some unidentified (apart from pseudonyms) scribes of the period, such as Ralph Starkey (d. 1628), Humfrey Dyson (d. 1633), Ralph Crane (fl. 1589–1632), and the still unidentified scribe known as Feathery Scribe (fl. 1625–40); cf. H.R. Woudhuysen, "Foreword," in *Manuscript Miscellanies in Early Modern England*, eds. by Joshua Eckhardt and Daniel Starza Smith (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2014), xvi.

[191] Woudhuysen, "Foreword,", xvi.

[192] In fact, with this statement of comparison, it should also be noted that the higher number of miscellaneous manuscripts produced in the Ottoman cultural sphere, indicating a prominent culture and atmosphere of manuscript production in Istanbul, was also certainly due to the fact that the Ottoman manuscript entrepreneurs, unlike their British counterparts, did not have any rivalry with printing and so enjoyed higher demand at the time.

awaiting initial scholarly attention and paleographical scrutiny, no such lists of professional scribes, prominent or not, can be generated for the Ottoman cultural sphere located in Istanbul or any other city of the empire as of yet. However, the number of manuscripts produced especially in the seventeenth century, which can be estimated depending on the number of surviving copies, proves to a similar entrepreneurial manuscript publication in Istanbul at the same period.

3.3 Orality, Literacy, and Functionality in *Mecmû'a*s

Every study starts perhaps with an inexplicable curiosity. My interest in Ottoman manuscript culture in general and Ottoman *mecmû'a*s in particular has been triggered by some questions I had in mind regarding practices and mechanisms of cultural production and consumption, and forms of literacy in the Ottoman Empire. I had an initial sense that orality was very much centrally at work and was in fact an important factor in these cultural mechanisms.

This sense or sensibility first came about with my realization that even in Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels or *Seyahatname* there appear to be certain oral compositional tendencies, including especially an internalized use of such practices as oral narrative formulae, and other repeated oral patterns at certain narrational points such as ending of a certain subject-matter, or introducing of diversions as well as such practices as relaxed forms of citation, and almost conversational address directed towards its readers.[193] It was surprising to see these oral patterns and practices employed even in the making of this otherwise carefully-designed and, for the most part, chronologically-narrated enormously long "written" text. In this respect, as it includes differing narrative registers, genres, and intentions in its scope

[193] R. Aslıhan Aksoy-Sheridan, "*Seyahatnâme*'de Sözlü Kültür ve Anlatım Etkisi," *Millî Folklor* 92 (Winter 2011): 41–52.

I have regarded Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme* as a "liminal" text between the written cultural tendencies and oral cultural practices.[194] In its making as a text we can trace these differing traits inscribed onto its word: he uses and reuses similar tropes, topoi, and stories in a new contextualization in a performative manner. The *mecmû'a*s in a way have the same trait of recording "work in progress" in the logic as well as diversity of differing genres and texts in their nature. In fact, in these regards, Cemal Kafadar has also recognized the *Seyahatnâme* as a text organized in the manner of a *mecmû'a*.[195]

With this realization, I came to regard Ottoman manuscript texts from a new perspective, taking into account orality. These manuscripts were not in fact "end results" or "finished products" as we tend to see texts in a written cultural realm, but rather were embodiments of different processes of production, or were themselves processes that occurred in different historical contexts. In this regard, they could in fact be thought of as new products at every single instance of copying that took place: no matter whether they record the very same texts to the word, they still register a new context in every instance of reproduction as testimonies to these new historical contingencies. In fact, any changes, alterations, diversions, omissions and even basic mistakes of spelling as well as similarities and conforming repetitions to earlier versions they record are of themselves certainly the greatest importance for us to pinpoint these new contingencies.

On the other hand, Ottoman literary culture has so far largely been understood as a predominantly written cultural realm, with its products studied almost exclusively in

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[194] R. Aslıhan Aksoy-Sheridan, "Sözlü ve Yazılı Kültür Alanları Arasında Eşiksel (Liminal) Bir Metin: Evliya Çelebi'nin *Seyahatnâme*'si," in *Evliya Çelebi'nin Sözlü Kaynakları*, ed. M. Öcal Oğuz and Yeliz Özay, 149–158 (Ankara: UNESCO, 2012).

[195] Kafadar, "Sohbete Çelebi, Çelebiye Mecmûa…," 45.

terms of written cultural practices, focusing on “texts” rather than on the contexts within which these were produced and reproduced. As such, this generally text-oriented and for the most part canonical approach usually disregards the important role played by orality in the mechanisms of cultural production and consumption, denying us any chance of imagining these contexts which these texts were both products and testimonies of. Literary scholars who are usually more likely to study texts tend to focus on the “inside,” textual properties, of the text, and refer to its “outside,” or its historical context, only when and if any need arises. However, when it comes to the study of miscellaneous manuscripts, the context is perhaps as important as, if not more important than, the examination of the various texts they include, if these *mecmû‘a*s are to be studied as concrete examples of cultural consumption. Yet, in spite of increasing scholarly interest in recent times, because *mecmû‘a*s remain in a “liminal” area of study between literary studies and historical analysis, the field of cultural history attentive to both their textual and contextual properties needs to examine them in order to decipher their true historical significance resulting from both these textual and contextual characteristics.

Instead, one of the main uses of such miscellanies in the field of literary studies so far has been to use personal poetry anthologies as primary sources simply in order to establish “dependable” and “complete” critical editions of a given poet’s collected works/poems by compiling as many poems as possible attributed to the given poet from these *mecmû‘a*s of miscellaneous poems.[196] Given the oral nature of production

[196] In fact, in traditional Ottoman studies, this is a common and erroneous “written culture-oriented” practice of research which results only in a “new version” of a poet’s supposed compiled and full *divan*, often with the inclusion of poems of questionable ownership, since these poems on the whole are usually produced through mechanisms of oral cultural production in the Ottoman context. As such, these poems occasionally might well have been produced by different poets and occasionally been recorded as the products of various different poets simultaneously in various *mecmû‘a*s. Therefore, it is important to note that Ottoman poetry production should be understood first and foremost as a sphere of oral cultural orientation which allows variations and versions of versification

of poetry and reproduction of verse in *mecmû'a*s, this method of research is quite erroneous as it attributes poems of dubious and questionable authorship to a single "given" poet, thus making a "new" collection of poems rather than historicizing an actual collection for the historical significance of its compilation of poems. Due to this common and erroneous treatment, these *mecmû'a-ı eş'âr*s are treated in such literary studies merely as mines from which *some* poems by known Ottoman poets are to be taken out while the rest of the material recorded therein, which happens to often be unrecognized prose texts, would be left unattended and remain neglected. Regretfully, because of this now almost conventionalized treatment of *mecmû'a*s of poems, very few miscellanies have been published,[197] and only a few actually studied in detail in terms of their sociohistorical context and significance and their testimonies for practices of literacy in the Ottoman context.[198]

On the other hand, what a contextual study of miscellanies enables us to understand, ideally, is the cultural tastes and needs of the three main Ottoman administrative classes as well as of those other social groups, such as artisans and peasants, who

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in renderings of the same poetic content and employing similar patterns of poetic form, as is best illustrated by the long tradition of writing *nazire*s, which are often recorded in specific *nazire mecmû'a*s, such as the one compiled by Pervâne b. Abdullah (d. 1560-61). For a detailed introduction to the Ottoman *nazire* tradition of writing "parallel poems," see Edith Gülçin Ambros, "'naẓīre', the Will-o'-the-Wisp of Ottoman 'Dīvān' Poetry". *Wiener Zeitschrift Für Die Kunde Des Morgenlandes* 79 (1989): 57–83, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23869061 (accessed April 1, 2016).

[197] See Feridun Bey, *Mecmû'a-i Münşeâtü's-selâtîn*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Darüttıbattıl'âmire: 1265–1274); Ümit Ekin, ed., *Kadı Buyurdu Kâtib Yazdı: Tokat'a Dair Bir Sakk Mecmuası* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2010); Murat A. Karavelioğlu, ed., *Mecmū'a-i Kaşa'id-i Türkiyye* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2015); Ali Ufkî, *Mecmûa-i Sâz ü Söz*, ed. Şükrü Elçin, 2nd edition (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2000); Cem Behar, ed. *Saklı Mecmua: Ali Ufkî Bibliothéque Nationale de France'taki (Turc 292) Yazması* (Istanbul: YKY, 2016).

[198] See Ekin, Ümit, ed. *Kadı Buyurdu Kâtib Yazdı: Tokat'a Dair Bir Sakk Mecmuası* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2010); Meredith M. Quinn, "Houghton MS Turk 11 ve kişisel mecmûaların söyledikleri ve söyleyebilecekleri," in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, et al. (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 255–70; Kerima Filan, "Saraybosnalı Mollâ Mustafâ'nın Mecmûası Işığında Bir Osmanlının Topluma Bakışı," in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, et al. (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 271–90; Derin Terzioğlu, "*Mecmû'a-i Şeyh Mısrî*: On Yedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Anadolu'da Bir Derviş Sülûkunu Tamamlarken Neler Okuyup Yazdı?" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, et al. (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 291–321.

have not yet been fully studied in historiography in terms of their cultural consumption and personal experience, excepting some secondary studies focusing on *tereke* records. A study of *mecmû'a*s in an attempt to historicize these primary sources, albeit sparse in number, might further provide us with historical insights into not just the élite's but also commoners' cultural experiences of the period as well. In fact, such a historicizing approach towards these intricately diverse sources would possibly allow researchers to capture a fuller picture of past human experience by manifesting the cultural inclinations of the individuals who compiled various texts for future personal and communal reference, with some of these texts likely being produced and used as prompts for consumption in an oral environment which members of all those different social groups—whether literate or not—might have attended.

To summarize, *mecmû'a*s until recently have not been recognized as an important tool for Ottoman literary studies, let alone been given due credit as historical sources for the study of cultural history, and as a result the methodology of how to study these diverse compilation of texts is still under construction. This is compounded by the aforementioned fact that there are many various types of miscellanies found in the archives. The diversity in the kinds of miscellanies draws our attention to the fact that, if we want to understand their real historical significance, each and every one of these texts needs to be, first and foremost, placed within its own unique historical and social context, rather than mined out for genre-related interests and concerns. Otherwise, overly zealous generalizations about them, or the pigeonholing of particular examples of miscellanies into various genre-related categories that bear little to no historical basis, can bear no consequential outcome for our understanding of the communal processes of Ottoman cultural production and consumption.

3.4 Conclusion: *Mecmû'a*s as Primary Sources for the Ottoman History of Mentalities

Khaled El-Rouayheb, in his groundbreaking work *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb*, refers to a newly emergent historical phenomenon in the Islamic cultural sphere in the seventeenth century: the rise of "deep reading."[199] In order to expound upon this new development emanating in the cultural environment of the Ottoman Empire, El-Rouayheb first explains the assumed ideal model of pedagogical practices and the educational process of the premodern era:

> Premodern Islamic education has often been characterized as personal rather than institutional, and as oral rather than textual. A student would ideally seek out a respected teacher, become part of his entourage, attend his classes, and "hear" knowledge from him. It is from cultivating this personal, oral–aural relationship with one or more teachers that a student would hope eventually to get recognition as a scholar in his own right and be sought out by a new generation of seekers of knowledge – in effect becoming a link in a chain of transmitters of knowledge extending back to early Islamic times. In this pedagogic model listening, discussing, repeating, memorizing, and reciting were of paramount importance. The private reading of texts, by contrast, played a subordinate and auxiliary role, and was sometimes even the source of anxiety and censure.[200]

Khaled El-Rouayheb himself notes that this education model of premodern times in the Islamic cultural spheres which he outlines was in fact "an ideal type, and the actual process of acquiring knowledge would only have approximated it."[201] After professing its ideal nature and that reality could only approximate it, in reply to a possible but unpronounced question concerning how new knowledge and novel approaches then would come about in areas of study in case this ideal model would actually be performed to its letter and be successful enough to yield the best possible

[199] Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 97–128.

[200] Ibid., 97.

[201] Ibid.

replicas of teachers in students as transmitters of ancient (*kadîm*) knowledge, El-Rouayheb readily replies: "There is abundant evidence for the existence in various times and places of students who were intractable or who by virtue of their intelligence and private reading came to surpass their teachers in scholarly accomplishment."[202] Nonetheless, El-Rouayheb maintains that "as a depiction of a widely held cultural ideal, the model does arguably reflect the character of education in many parts of the medieval Islamic world," and correspondingly notes that a number of modern historical studies focusing on the educational process in Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries also have affirmed the highly personal and noninstitutional character of the pedagogical institutions of the premodern era.[203]

El-Rouayheb further illustrates the personal and noninstitutional manner of educational processes in the premodern Islamic cultural sphere by illustrating other practices informing these processes circulating around the educational institution of the traditional madrasa:

> It was from teachers, and not from any institution, that a student obtained recognition as well as a certificate (*ijāza*) to teach. Contemporary biographers regularly felt it important to indicate with whom a scholar had studied, and almost never in which institutions he had done so. The madrasa functioned as a college that often provided accommodation and food for students, and kept one or more teachers on its payroll. But it did not issue degrees, nor was it a necessary part of the educational process, for some teachers conducted classes in mosques, or Sufi lodges, or at home. The transmission of knowledge and authority from teacher to student was basically face-to-face, with private reading and study playing an unofficial and complementary role.[204]

Noting that this model of education has also been witnessed to be applied by anthropologists in the twentieth century, El-Rouayheb refers to Brinkley Messick's

[202] Ibid.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid., 98.

study[205] in order to explicate various ways in which students and thereby scholars related themselves with texts in this "ideal" model of education:

> Brinkley Messick has distinguished between various ways in which twentieth-century Yemeni students at traditional madrasas interacted with texts: memorization (*ḥifẓ*), recitation (*qirāʾa*), listening (*samāʿ*), and private reading (*muṭālaʿa*). He noted, however, that *muṭālaʿa* was commonly used to describe interaction with books on topics not formally studied at the madrasa, such as history and poetry. The other three modes of textual interaction, by comparison, were central to the pedagogic process, or at least to the ideal-typical representation of that process.[206]

Upon explicating the marginal position of private reading (*muṭālaʿa*), as opposed to memorization (*ḥifẓ*), recitation (*qirāʾa*), listening (*samāʿ*), those manners of interaction with texts which were central to the inner workings of the personal and noninstitutional educational model that depends mainly on an oral and audial manner of transmission of knowledge upheld at traditional madrasas, El-Rouayheb later argues for "the emergence of a more impersonal and textual model of the transmission of knowledge," which he terms "deep reading"—a historical development in the field of transmission of knowledge which he attests to have been experienced in the Ottoman center in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[207]

However, here El-Rouayheb once again notes that "the time-honored, oral-aural ideal did not fully correspond to actual educational realities," and "the ideal itself appears to have been supplemented with a newly articulated ideal of the acquisition of knowledge through 'deep reading'."[208] According to El-Rouayheb, the emergence of what he terms "deep reading" as a regular supplementary form exercised in the otherwise traditional educational processes of the premodern Islamic cultural sphere is the result of two factors: "the increased importance of the instrumental and

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[205] Cf. Brinkley Morris Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 84–92.

[206] El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 98.

[207] Ibid.

[208] Ibid.

rational sciences, especially the discipline of dialectics (*ādāb al-baḥth*), and the far-reaching reforms that the Ottoman learned hierarchy underwent in the sixteenth century."[209]

On historical and contextual grounds, what El-Rouayheb seems to be proposing is, generally speaking, an individualization of the learning and thinking activity in the seventeenth century in the Islamic cultural sphere. This historical process seems to have entailed a move from the public oral transmission of knowledge to a more private written cultural activity of learning and thinking, which depends on "deep reading," which he termed with the Arabic reciprocal verb, "*muṭālaʿa*," in place of private reading, where he still foresees a dialogue with written texts.

Interestingly, El-Rouayheb chooses the Arabic verb *muṭālaʿa*, and not *tetebbuʿ*, as the term for deep reading or private reading. However, it must be noted that this is an insightful choice, given the long established ways of interacting with sources of knowledge, whether they are a teacher talking or a text recast in writing in the Islamicate cultural sphere. Indeed, in this respect, the verb *tetebbuʿ*, even though El-Rouayheb does not name the term, might be regarded as standing for "private reading" or "deep reading" in the written cultural sphere, where the reader is mostly an active recipient for what the texts offer, while the verb *muṭālaʿa* asks for a dialogic conversation, a dialogue with texts, and hence a participant in the conversation. The process about which El-Rouayheb offers historical and oral/literate inferences is actually the long seventeenth century, when *mecmûʿa*s were being produced more often than ever before. On this point, it must also be noted that it is perhaps not surprising—given the textual nature of *mecmûʿa*s, which makes it possible to bring together texts of differing registers, genres, and subject

[209] Ibid.

matter in a kind of textual dialogue—that this period actually paved the way for the diversification of texts and genres, reading audiences, and the pluralization of types of knowledge, all of which *mecmû'a*s, in their very materiality as objects, demonstrate throughout the long seventeenth century.

In conclusion, *mecmû'a*s offer a testimony to the pluralization or diversification of knowledge in the "post-classical" era and provide us with a set of sources that records and testifies to this newly emerging phenomenon of the times. In their diverse and disparate textual nature, the *mecmû'a*s produced in this period make a historical testimony to the very process which itself led to their proliferation.

CHAPTER IV

FABRICATING AN OTTOMAN IMPERIAL FUTURE: THE *BAHRÜ'L-MÜKÂŞEFE* IN A 17TH-CENTURY *MECMÛ'A*

4.1. Introductory Remarks: General Overview

In this chapter, I explore the first primary set of pseudo-historical narratives, entitled *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, or "The Sea of Mutual Revelations," which as a whole relates both to the future of the Ottoman dynasty and to contemporary political issues of the Ottoman entity. Judging from the inscription at the end of one extant version, registering its date of completion as 1685,[210] these texts were written down around the end of the seventeenth century; as such, they present a fortuitous opportunity for the examination of contemporary Ottoman notions and concerns regarding current imperial history as well as certain communal and social political aspirations for the future of the dynasty in the rather turbulent seventeenth century. In fact, the text and its context as found in these narratives, but especially the version inserted in a late seventeenth-century *mecmû'a*, illustrate how miscellanies and the previously unknown texts recorded therein can provide rich sources for exploring different Ottoman mentalities and their conceptions of history, as well as revealing how the

[210] Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Kemankeş collection, no. 430. 46b–74a: 74a.

adverse social and political conditions of the seventeenth century left a deep mark on the Ottoman communal imagination.

There are four known extant copies of the text found in various archives today.[211] These copies, which are inclusive of differing renditions and therefore contexts of the same narrative, will be referred to at various points throughout the chapter in order to expound upon the various textual contingencies emanating from their respective contexts of production. However, the aforementioned version of 27 folios—with 13 lines per page, excepting only the first leaf of 10 lines—of clearly written *nesih* script found in a seventeenth-century miscellany[212] will be the primary source examined here. This is due to this version's particular textual properties, which make it a more complete and thereby preferable version than the others—a point which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter with reference to the differing alternative copies. Since the communal concerns and perceptions circling around Ottoman dynastic history in the empire's "post-classical" period are the main issues that this study will be exploring in detail, the rest of this chapter will be devoted primarily to a textual and contextual examination, as well as partial discourse analysis, of the aforementioned version of the text.[213]

Before moving on to the close examination of the text in this primary copy, it would be prudent to make a cursory review of the other extant manuscript copies of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*—which are housed in different collections in Ankara, Istanbul, and Paris—in particular relation to their codicological properties, so as to provide an

[211] Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Kemankeş collection, no. 430; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Supplement Turc 879 [French translation: Fonds des traductions, no.44]; Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B; Ankara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Ankara, No. 43048/38997, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B.

[212] Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Kemankeş collection, no. 430.

[213] Kemankeş collection, no. 430. 46b–74a.

understanding of how the text was produced and what alterations it went through in its stages of reproduction. Of these three other extant copies, two are fascicles whose versions are excerpt-like shorter versions of the text as compared to the primary copy of Kemankeş 430. These two undated separate manuscript copies consist of 27 folios (19 lines and very wide margins) and 24 folios (16 lines and wide margins) and are held, respectively, in the libraries of the Faculty of Religious Studies in Marmara University and Ankara University.[214] The fourth copy, held in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, was also recorded in a separate undated manuscript; however, the appended French translation of the text, by a M. Roboly, was dated to 1734.[215] The catalogue information noted along with the manuscript indicates that the original Ottoman text had been recorded and taken to France sometime in the early eighteenth century at the latest. From the summary provided in the catalogue, and owing to the lack of information on the number of folios in this copy, it is not clear whether the text here includes visions recorded about the Ottoman sultans, as in the case of the primary copy, or not, as in the instances of the other two copies, which record only much shorter versions of the narrative.

Since only two of the copies (Kemankeş and Marmara University) were available for this study, I will very tentatively attempt to construct the stemma of these four copies according to the codicological information provided above, and below will

[214] Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B; Ankara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Ankara, No. 43048/38997, Item No. 36031, 297.7/MUH.B.

[215] The catalogue entry for the particular manuscript [Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Supplement Turc 879] (French translation: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fonds des traductions, no.44) reads as: "*Mer de la connoissance, traduit par le sieur Roboly, [jeune de langues de France], à Constantinople, 1734», avec le texte turc, intitulé* بحر المكاشفة, *par Mohammed Nani* [?], *lequel raconte, dans son introduction, qu'il trouva un traité, écrit en 1006 (1597–1598), par Dervish Mohammed, dans lequel ce personnage, qui était un religieux chrétien converti à l'Islam, rapporte des prophéties sur l'avenir de la dynastie ottomane, d'après son sheïkh, ʿAbd el-Rahman de Boukhara, d'où il tira la substance du Bahr el-moukashafa; le sheïkh ʿAbd el-Rahman Boukhari, en récompense des services que lui rendit le derviche Mohammed, lui révéla les grands mystères de l'Islam*."

refer to the divergences in the narrative content whenever necessary in such a way as to corroborate the stemma outlined here. In this attempt, following Ahmed Ateş's indications,[216] the probable stemma of the extant copies is reconstructed as follows:

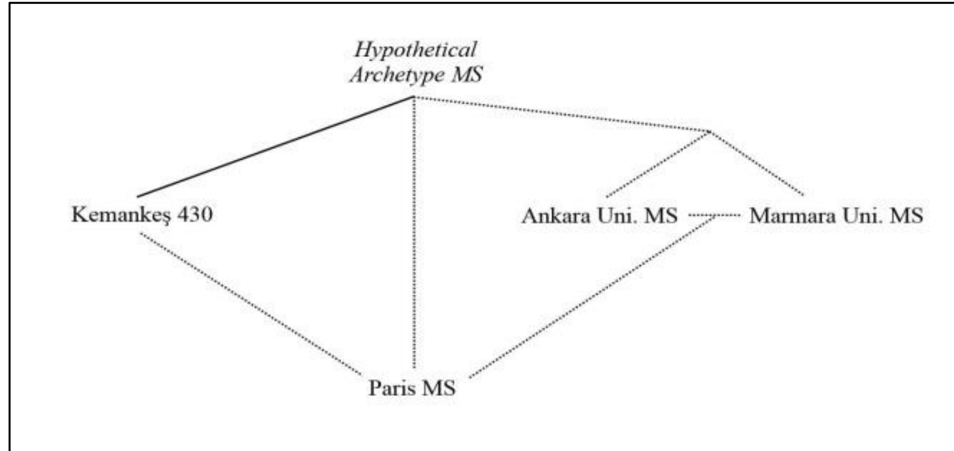

Diagram of Probable Stemma for the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* MSS

Initially, through a preliminary examination of the text, it can be ascertained (as will later be examined in more detail) that the text was written from an apparent Sunni religious stance so as to address one particular contemporary anxiety; namely, social disquiet about the possibility of the extinction of the Ottoman dynasty, which emerged and reemerged at various points in the seventeenth century but was experienced especially strongly in the time of Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1640–1648). However, despite the text's clear Sunni stance, the narrative nonetheless professes to record a Sufi session of revelations wherein visions of an extended lineage of the Ottoman dynasty are made manifest. This invented lineage extends the Ottoman line forward into the "future," amounting to a total of seventy sultans who will ostensibly reign until the end of time. The discrepancy between the Sufi-oriented form and the Sunni-based content revealed in the narrative derives from the fact that the text, as will be discussed later, underwent several stages of reproduction in the course of its textual evolution before arriving at its current configuration in the *Bahrü'l-*

[216] See footnotes #94 through #99.

Mükâşefe. This final textual configuration, which makes up the narrative at hand in the primary copy of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* employed in this study, informs the disparity between the Sufi and Sunni understandings of the world, yet it never swerves from the central concern of the text; that is, the possible end of the Ottoman dynasty.

In reply to this social concern, a particular narrational tactic is deployed in the narration of the extended invented lineage of the Ottoman dynasty. This tactic or ploy involves taking the time period of the narrative back to the earlier date of the reign of Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603), and in this way the narrative records six actual Ottoman sultans, up through Sultan Ibrahim, thereby gaining credibility for the oracular visions of the invented sultans that follow him. Consequently, on the one hand, the bulk of the text is constructed as a book of oracles recording mutual revelations, and as such it is an aspirational text that presents visions of a future in which the Ottoman dynastic line will extend through seventy sultans while the Ottoman Empire greatly extends its domains, makes unnumbered converts, and consolidates the Islamic faith. On the other hand, the narrative also displays a clear "politics of memory"[217] in its gaze towards the immediate actual dynastic past, which registers, in an oracular manner, six real Ottoman sultans while at the same time consciously censoring certain parts of the Ottoman past in line with the text's aspirational visions, thus revealing the text's decisive historical orientation.

The example of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* is thereby of particular interest in terms of Ottomans' concerns and apprehensions about the future of the dynasty during the seventeenth century as a whole, but especially during the early years of the reign of Sultan Ibrahim. Because a preliminary textual analysis reveals that the latest real Ottoman sultan recorded by the text is Ibrahim, the text can readily be assumed to

[217] See the relevant section in Chapter V.

have taken shape during his reign, even though the narrative itself does not openly record its actual date of production, owing to the aforementioned narrational tactic employed for the sake of credibility. Moreover, the text's various points of reference for the practices of succession in the Ottoman dynastic system also unwittingly reveal that the immediate period of concern for the narrative is, in fact, the reign of Ibrahim, when the longevity of the Ottoman dynasty initially became an issue in the Ottoman Empire, due partly to rumors about Murad IV's unwillingness, on his death bed, to leave the throne to Ibrahim, and partly to concerns about Ibrahim's mental health, as he had, ever since his father Ahmed I's reign, been confined to the palace for a long period of time, all throughout the tumultuous reigns of his uncle Mustafa and his brothers Osman II and Murad IV.[218] Also, at the time of his ascension, Ibrahim was the only legitimate successor to the Ottoman throne, since his nephews had died in childhood during their father Murad IV's reign.[219] Finally, for two years at the beginning of Ibrahim's reign there was also some concern as to whether he himself would actually produce an heir to the throne, a fear which was alleviated upon the birth and survival of Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687) in 1642. As such, this narrative, as already mentioned, is of particular interest in terms of the Ottoman history of mentalities, for two reasons especially. Firstly, it is very much informed by immediate contemporary public concerns and anxieties, especially those relating to the survival of the lineage of the Ottoman dynasty around the time of the ascension of Ibrahim as the only—albeit questionable—choice for the Ottoman throne. Secondly, along with such public concerns, the text also reveals Ottomans' visions, yearnings, and aspirations for an extended and triumphant Ottoman imperial

[218] Feridun Emecen, "İbrâhim," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 21. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2000. 274–81. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=210274&idno2=c210224#1.

[219] Ibid.

future in the face of the contemporary social and political problems the Ottoman Empire was undergoing. These communal visions, yearnings, and aspirations for the future of the dynasty as revealed in the text also implicitly expose the particular social and political areas in which the empire, at the time, was facing problems that required solutions.

The narrative is thereby not only illustrative of the kinds of *sui generis* texts contained within idiosyncratic *mecmû'a*s, but also proves to be exemplary of why *mecmû'a*s need to be regarded as important sources for delving into Ottoman cultural and intellectual history to get a glimpse of differing Ottoman mentalities and divergent social and political sensibilities. In fact, upon closer inspection of these albeit currently marginalized primary sources, the glimpse thus provided makes it palpable that the Ottoman mentalities emerging in the long seventeenth century were indeed, contrary to what modern historiography often makes of them, far from homogeneous or monolithic in nature, but were rather a multitude of nuanced social and political sensibilities in terms of their historical understanding, contingent both diachronically and synchronically and emerging in response to what the Ottoman society and political entity was experiencing in its historical trajectory.

As already briefly touched upon in the previous chapter, the full version of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* that forms the basis for this study is found in a miscellaneous manuscript that includes three separate texts. No owner's name is mentioned in the manuscript, so we know little about the actual compiler of the miscellany. However, the interlinear Turkish translations provided for Persian verb conjugations in the first two texts—namely, Feriduddin Attar's book of advice the *Pandnamah*[220] and a

[220] Kemankeş collection, no. 430, 1a–31a.

Persian grammar book written in Arabic[221]—lead to the logical conclusion that the Turkish-speaking compiler knew Arabic as a second language while having relatively little knowledge of Persian. Knowledge of Arabic suggests a religious educational background of *ulema* origin, an idea further supported by the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*'s Sunni religious discourse as well as its political outlook, as will be examined in more detail later in the chapter. The fact that we can clearly decipher the copyist's name in the colophon "*Ve kâtibü'l-'abdi'l-fakîr ilâ rahmet-i rabbihi'l-kadîr Muhammed Mustafâ bin Ahmed el-İstanbulî*,"[222] indicating that the manuscript was copied by a certain Muhammed Mustafa whose father was Ahmed of Istanbul, also adduces the idea of an *ulema* background for the owner of the manuscript.

The text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* in the manuscript is written in a clear *nesih* script, as is also the case with the interlinear translations inserted in the first two texts. The fact that this same *ductus* is found throughout the manuscript further suggests that this manuscript was a miscellany with a single owner, who might be assumed to be Muhammed Mustafâ bin Ahmed el-Istanbulî himself, adding the text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* as an addendum, or, perhaps, someone else who commissioned him to copy these texts and who was himself of an *ulema* background. The text in the manuscript bears no illuminations or ornamentations except for its usage of rubric for a selected set of emphasized phrases in the narrative, as well as occasional gilt inserted into some sentences where the text suggests a semi- or full stop. According to the date at the end of the text, at least this part of the manuscript was written down around the year 1685,[223] and the text is clearly not an autograph of the narrative but rather a copied version of the text, as corrections and the term "checked" (*sahh*) can

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[221] Ibid., 32a–45a.

[222] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, Kemankeş collection, no. 430, 74a.

[223] Ibid.

be seen in the margin in the part where the text deals with the reign of Murad IV: "*zamânında halkın dülbendleri hazret-i resûlillâh* ***sahh***[224] *–sallâh^u aleyhi ve sellem* ***sahh***." [225] Regrettably, the manuscript is significantly water-damaged towards the end, rendering many of the last leaves largely illegible—although this enigmatic aspect of the damaged manuscript certainly does heighten the mystery that the narrative content itself insinuates.

The term "*mükâşefe*" used in the title *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, which can perhaps be best translated as "mutual revelations," refers to an esoteric Sufi practice in which mystics in seclusion would converse about their revelations or reveal their gnosis silently, through a mutual gaze.[226] In line with this Sufist attribute, the narrative accordingly begins with praise for Muhammad, who is termed "the highest upholder of the flags of prophecy"[227] Subsequently, a first-person narrator, terming himself "the humblest slave whose capital in verses is scarce" ("*Bu hakîr-i kalîlü'l-bizâ'at-i mısra' 'abd-i ahkar*"), introduces himself as Mehmed Nâbî. The name Nâbî is suggestive, as it means "herald." The name might also, though doubtfully, be read as Mehmed Nâyî, with the second name in this instance referring to a player of the *ney* flute. Such an ability, however, would seem somewhat less congruous with the *ulema*-oriented nature of the text insofar as it strongly suggests a Sufi narrator. The deciphering of the name of this narrator, in fact, had clearly raised some questions in other manuscript copies as well: for instance, the catalogue record of the copy held

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[224] The parts of the manuscript written in rubric will be indicated in bold in my transliterations from the text.

[225] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 52a.

[226] There was also a traditional practice of recording sessions of this esoteric Sufi practice in writing. I discovered one such text compromising a record of a *mükâşefe* session in the archives: *Risâle-i Mükâşefe*, Millî Library, Ankara, Yazmalar collection, no. 06 Mil Yz A 1244. In order to specify the textual differences or possible rhetorical/formal similarities of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* in comparison to this traditional record, I will also partially refer to this particular manuscript in the dissertation.

[227] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 47a: "*râfi'-i râyâtü'l-nübüvvet fi'l-nefs ve'l-âfâk*."

in Paris registers the name as "Mehmed Nani,"[228] while the catalogue record for the Marmara University copy records the name doubtfully as "Mehemmed Nâmî"—quite understandably so, since the name is virtually illegible due to a narrow binding made in a later period.[229] Nonetheless, Mehmed Nâbî, as I propose this narrator's name to be, records the incentive that led to the "scribbling of the words of good news of these folia" as such:

> *Ammâ ba'dehu bâ'is-i tesvîd-i hurûf-ı beşâret-i zurûf oldur ki bu hakîr-i kalîlü'l-bizâ'at-i mısra' 'abd-i ahkar Mehmed Nâbî ● kütüb-i târîh ü siyer ve sülûk-i tavâ'îf-i 'âlem mutâla'asında hasbü'l-tâka sa'y idüb mülûk-ı mâziyye ahvâline nev'an ıttılâ' hâsıl olub* […][230]

Here, Mehmed Nâbî relates how arduously he studied in examining books on the prophetic biographies and trajectories of the peoples of the world, and how his laboriously acquired erudition eventually came about with the diversity of these trajectories. In this, he reveals that his main concern in his studies on the whole was to reach a historical understanding. As a result, during his examination of various books of history, Mehmed Nâbî reports that he found "a book of prophecy that surely and unquestionably verified the extension of the regency of the Ottoman dynasty—may it never perish—with the affirmation of the divine grace":

> *[E]nvâ'-i tetebbu'-ı tevârîhde imtidâd-ı saltanat-ı 'Osmâniyye lâ-zâlet mü'ebbedeten bi-te'yîdi'l-eltâfi'l-sübhâniyyeti muhakkak ve murassah bir kitâb-ı kerâmet-nisâb buldum.*[231]

Mehmed Nâbî also notes that "this book of prophecy," in which "this immaculate pedigree of lineage [the Ottoman dynasty] was recorded from the emergence of his excellency Osman Khan Ghazi, to be succeeded by and extended to a total of seventy sultans," and which "was written down in [100]6 [1597/1598] by a dignified

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[228] See footnote #215.

[229] Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B, 1b.

[230] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 46b.

[231] Ibid.

holy man by the name of Dervish Mehmed, who was of the men of prophecy and who by way of writing down the pedigree produced a respected work and instructive pleasantries":

> *Bu silsile-i mutahhare zuhûr-ı cenâb-ı Gâzî 'Osmân Hân hazretlerinin neslinden yetmiş nefer pâdişâha varıncaya müselsel ve müntehî idüğüni erbâb-ı mükâşefeden Dervîş Mehmed nâm bir 'ârif-i sâhib-kemâl altı [1006 = 1597/1598] târîhinde silk-i tahrîre çeküb bir eser-i mu'teber ve letâ'if-i pür-'iber komuş.*[232]

However, the first narrator, Mehmed Nâbî, later claims that when he came into possession of this "book of prophecy," its composition and meaning had been altered because it had exchanged hands so many times since being first written down. He then notes that, acting in accord with the saying "everything that is new gives pleasure," all he did was to embellish the diction and expression of Dervish Mehmed and to correct the flow of the narrative: he omitted nothing and added nothing, though he does state that he himself gave the text the name *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*:

> *Lakin eyâde-i* [ایاده][233] *eşhâs-ı muhtelifeye düşmekle halt-ı terkîb-i tagyîr-i terkîb idüb fehvâsı mütegayyire olmağın bu hakîr dâhi "külli cedidün lezze" muktezâsınca 'azîz-i mezbûrun nakl-ı ta'bîri üzere ahsen-ta'bîr ve vecd-i îcâr ile sımt-ı tanzîme muntazam kılub* ***Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*** *ismiyle mevsûm kıldım.*[234]

His initial introduction to the text of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, however, implies that he himself regarded this "book of prophecy" as a historical text, thus significantly marking his own reception of the text as a historical treatise, and his amendments as being unquestionably historical in nature. In fact, as will be discussed later in the chapter when the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* is briefly compared to its antecedent text, the way that he altered the text also clearly indicates that he took the text as primarily a

[232] Ibid., 46b–47a.

[233] Eyâdî: hands, cf. J.W. Redhouse, *Redhouse's Turkish Dictionary* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1880), 442.

[234] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 47a.

historical rather than a religious one, and indeed his amendments demonstrate an orientation in line with the former rather than the latter direction.

Thanks to a comment I received from Günhan Börekçi at an earlier presentation I made at RCAC, where I focused on textual accounts dealing with the "actual" sultans related in the narrative,[235] I was able to make a connection between the *Papasnâme* text introduced and studied by Tijana Krstić as an example of "self-narratives of conversion,"[236] and the "book of oracles" which Mehmed Nâbî claims to have found and revised into *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. The latter, as I later confirmed, is in fact an updated version of the former, yet with many additions and subtractions by Mehmed Nâbî, who actually changed the orientation of the text –despite his claims– so as to accommodate a more *ulema*-oriented outlook rather than a Sufi one—adhering to a Sunni ascetic morality heavily emphasizing the sunna and the example of Muhammed—as well as, perhaps more importantly, to make it a historical text rather than a solely religiously-oriented one. As such, at least, a brief comparison of

[235] During and after the mentioned presentation (entitled "'I See Now That There Is No Constancy to This World': Figuring History, Time, and Agency in Ottoman Miscellanies") of mine in the mini-symposium "Facts and Fictions: Reading 17th-Century Ottoman Manuscripts" at Koç University's the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC), on May 3, 2013, where I introduced the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* for the first time to the Ottomanist scholarly circles by way of focusing mainly on how the narrative of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* retold and rewrote the "actual" sultans' period of reign as reimagined in the social memory, Günhan Börekçi—depending entirely on the textual details given by myself about the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* at the presentation—claimed in his public comment to my presentation that the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* was in fact nothing other than a copy of *Papasnâme*, which he thereby announced to have been working on for some ten years then. In reply to his claim, I thereby pointed out the fact that *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* was devised and revised by another narrator by the name of Mehmed Nâbî, who in fact himself renamed the text and altered the orientation of the narrative to be a political inquiry into the present as well as the "future" of the Ottoman Empire, and that with his updating *Bahrü'l-mükâşefe* became, in fact, no longer a religiously polemical text in support of the Muslim confessional contestation against Christianity as was exemplified by its antecedent text, the *Papasnâme*, which Tijana Krstić duly introduced to the scholarly world in her significant study *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change and Communal Politics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (2011), as a "narrative of conversion." The relevant sections of the chapter will thereby provide some textual evidence supporting my then/already declared counter-point of argument to Günhan Börekçi's postulation as well as refer to further textual cases illustrating how this newly emergent nature/orientation of the text made into *Bahrü'l-mükâşefe* can in fact be regarded as an example of a communal political inquiry into the problem of the Ottoman "decline."

[236] Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change and Communal Politics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011), 116–18.

the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and the *Papasnâme* is crucial to an understanding of the mentality lying behind this reception and rendering of the text.[237] Therefore, such a comparison will be briefly undertaken now in order to give an idea about similarities and dissimilarities between both these texts and their historical and contextual contingencies arisen thereupon in terms of their respective textual orientations as well as contextual formations/configurations.

At the onset, I must note that, contrary to the *Papasnâme*, through this reception and rendition, or even perhaps recension by Mehmed Nâbî, *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* reads less like a religiously oriented conversion-propaganda text and more as a politically motivated one produced in response to the political issues and problems of the period.[238] The *Papasnâme*, its antecedent text, according to Krstić, on the other hand, was a "popular self-narrative of conversion from the mid-seventeenth

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[237] Strikingly, an anonymous entry on the *Papâsnâme*, which is incorporated into the database of the *OTTPOL: A History of Early Modern Ottoman Political Thought, 15th to Early 19th Centuries* project, notes that the editions of the text will be rendered in transliteration and published by Günhan Börekçi and Tijana Krstić in 2015 and lists the copies of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* as versions of the *Papâsnâme*, thus failing to recognize Mehmed Nâbî's new rendition. Moreover, showing a clear scholarly conviction about the pursuit of an *ur*-form for both texts, the entry also makes a striking mistake in its failure to recognize the aforementioned narrational tactic employed in both said narratives, noting the author of both texts as a real "Derviş Mehmed" and the production date as "1597 around [*sic*]," thereby tacitly accepting the narrated visions of the real six sultans as if they were *actual* oracular visions experienced in real life by a real Dervish Mehmed: "Date comments: Possible t.p.q. are Murad IV's victories upon the Persians (S5b); but most probably Murad III and his victories in the Caucasus, Azerbaijan and Tabriz, since the author seems to ignore Ottoman history after the rise of Mehmed III (1595-1603, see below). The Prophet Muhammad is mentioned as having 'come to the world a thousand and six years ago' (S8b, V9a: biñ altı seneden berü ki Ḥażret-i Rasūl ʿaleyhü's-selām dünyāya gelmişdür); according to this the text should be dated in 1550, which seems too early.[1] If there is a misunderstanding of the author and he had the Hijra in mind, the date becomes 1597/8, which is much more sensible. Moreover, the description of Mehmed as a champion against the Central European forces and a reference to the need of inspection of the janissary and the sipahi registers (S23b-24a, V34a-b) could strengthen a dating of the original text just after the battle of Mezö Kerésztés (October 1596). [1] If we accept that Muhammad was 50 years old at the time of the Hijra (see EI2, "Muhammad"). 1006-50=956H." Cf. "Papasnâme (The Priest Book)," *OTTPOL: A History of Early Modern Ottoman Political Thought, 15th to Early 19th Centuries*, accessed on September 2, 2016. http://ottpol.ims.forth.gr/?q=content/papasn%C3%A2me-priests-book.

[238] Such a partial and cursory comparison of the Kemankeş version of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* with the Kütahya rendition of *Papasnâme* has been already presented by myself: see R. Aslıhan Aksoy-Sheridan, "Envisioning an Ottoman Imperial Future: Reading the *Bahru'l-Mükâşefe* in a 17th-century *Mecmua*" (paper presented at "Collected Knowledge: A Symposium on Ottoman *Mecmūʿa*s," Institut für Orientalistik, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria, November 29, 2013).

century."[239] It seems that the *Papasnâme* was indeed a popular text in the seventeenth century since Evliya Çelebi considers it to be recognizable for his readers by its title: he mentions the texts almost as if it was a *genre* on its own as an exemplary which could have been reproduced by imitation in narrating the lives of Christian monks if he would prolonged his words within the context of his description of Mount Athos and its recluse inhabitants:

> *Bîmedh-i papasistân-ı nâhiye-i Aynaroz* [2,5 blank lines]
> *Eğer bu dağlarda [ve] bellerde ve sâhil-i Bahr-i Sefîd'de olan sağîr ü kebîr kılâ'ları ve derelerde ve depelerde olan kenîse ve manastırları ve derûn-ı düyûrlarda olan papasların kemâl-i mücâhede-i riyâzatların bir bir nakl etsek* **Papasnâme kitâbına-misâl bir müsevvedât** *olur. Ammâ haftada bir iftâr eder niçe bin papas ve ladika ve kıssîs ve ruhbân ve bıtrîk ve râhib ve keşîş ve mığdisi nâm palâs-pûşân sâhib-i zünnârlar var kim kemâl-i cû' ile insâniyyetden çıkup gözleri çukur çukur olup Ahlâd vilâyeti kadîdi gibi kadîd-i mahz olup hayâl-i fânûsa dönmüş kefereler var, ammâ ayda bir iftâr edüp beş zeytûn ve beş dâne hurmâ ve beş fincân süd nûş eder pîr-i muğân irşekleri var kim harekâtdan ve kelimât etmeden kalmış kaddi dâl olup belleri bükülmüş ve gözlerinin nûrları dökülmüş kâfirleri var, ammâ yine riyâzat perhîz ile mu'ammer olup iki yü[z] yetmiş yaşına yetmiş muğânlar vardır.*[240]

Tijana Krstić, who interprets the fame of the *Papasnâme* text initially for being another exemplary text produced in the period of ongoing confessional contestations between Christianity and Islam in the early modern age, recognizes that in this contestation " the trope of the converted priest (and less frequently, a rabbi) was prominent in many other Ottoman narratives about conversion from the earlier periods, but it attains particular importance in seventeenth century texts."[241] This renowned *Papasnâme* text, which she asserts to be "self-narrative of conversion from the mid-seventeenth century," which "was authored by a priest-turned-Sufi mystic who experienced premonitions of the Ottoman dynasty's imminent collapse due to widespread bribery and a breakdown in public

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[239] Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 116.

[240] See Evliya Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi* 8. Kitap - Topkapı Sarayı Bagdat 307 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu – Dizini, eds. Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2003), 8.212b, emphasis added.

[241] Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 116.

morality,"[242] in fact, starts with the first person narrator Dervish Mehmed's lament about the widespread moral corruption and bribery taking over the Ottoman land, and his apprehension whether this would bring the end of the sovereignty of the House of Osman:

> *B-ismi'l-lâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*
> *Bir gün 'azîm tefekkürde varmış idim. Hâtırıma geldikim "Bu ümmet-i Muhammed'in hâli neye varır. Bu rüşvet ucundan bir sağ nesne kalmadı, Hakk sübhânehü ve te'âlâ 'âdildir. 'Âdil hod zâlimi sevmez nitekim Hazret-i Resûl –sallâllahu aleyhi ve sellem– buyurmuşlardır ki şunlar ki rüşvet alalar virelere, böyle olunca korkarımki rüşvet ucundan saltanat âl-i 'Osmân âhir vaktin ola" deyü fikr eyledim.*[243]

The second narrator Mehmed Nâbî excludes this beginning in his own recension, and *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* records no such contemporary moral concern, anywhere in the text, as a "cause" for the probable end of the Ottoman dynastic lineage.

While the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* records no vita information in detail about neither Dervish Mehmed nor Sheikh Abdurrahman, the *Papasnâme* text, on the contrary, upon recording visions about seventy Ottoman sultans, which are quite divergent from those recorded in the *Bahrü'l*-Mükâşefe, ends again—since composed to be *read* as a "self-narrative"—with Dervish Mehmed's monologue of such hagiographical nature. Indeed, in a quite long section at the very end of the text, Dervish Mehmed tells about his Sheikh Abdurrahman's life up to the point when they would meet in Mecca, where he would witness the Sheikh's first vision about the Battle of Keresztes—which is, divergently, mentioned as the significant first

[242] Contrary to her mention of "the trope of the converted priest" prominently used in "many other Ottoman narratives about conversion from the earlier periods," it is surprising that Krstić talks about the *authorship* or "self-narrative" nature of the *Papasnâme* by "a priest-turned-Sufi mystic who experienced premonitions of the Ottoman dynasty's imminent collapse due to widespread bribery and a breakdown in public morality," cf. Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 116. This contradictory statements leads to a confusion about the ontology of the narrator Dervish Mehmed, who certainly is incorporated into the narrative as a "trope."

[243] *Papasnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Saliha Hatun collection, no. 212, 2a.

vision at the very beginning of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* narrative, as would be expected from its historical concern and orientation after Mehmed Nâbî's rendition.

Again, in line with their different narrative orientations and motivations; while the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* does not have any such biographical concern for the seer of visions it records, as said, the long section of hagiographical nature seems to have been incorporated both to immortalize Abdurrahman's testimony as a visionary Sufi dervish and also to give him due authority to interpret such visions in the *Papasnâme*.[244] Indeed, as Tijana Krstić observes, the *Papasnâme* text pays great(er) attention to the credibility of the recording of the visions as well as *who* to do the recording:

> When he related these anxieties to his spiritual master, the latter shared with him a prophetic vision of the Ottoman dynasty's future in which seventy more sultans were destined to rule before the Day of Judgment. The master then entrusted the former priest with writing down and communicating this vision to the world in order to stem rumors about the Ottoman dynasty's end. He also insisted that the former priest, as a new convert, was the perfect person to do that because he had seen the Prophet Muhammad in a dream and became a Muslim after forty-seven years of worshipping idols, and because he had left his family, friends, and possessions in order to come to Ottoman lands after a five-month journey.[245]

Understandably, due to its theological concerns and configuration as a call for religious conversion, the *Papasnâme* narrative pays seemingly much more importance to the genealogy of those involved in the experience of visions, and whether there has been a divine intervention that can be regarded as an omen for the credibility and the authenticity of the series of visions, while Mehmed Nâbî, as the first narrator in *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, only shortly notes the background of Dervish Mehmed while introducing the book of oracles, the *Papasnâme*, he found and rendered to be *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. In a similar vein, the Papasnâme does not start the

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[244] See Appendix II.

[245] Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, 116.

recording of the oracular visions until the folio #11a, and prolongs an argumentative dialogue between the two Sufis whether it is possible to see into the future according to the religious doctrines of Islam. During this dialogue, as Krstić rightfully notes, the text is "infused with mystical vocabulary and apocalyptic imagery,"[246] in line with the general sense of the period, as noted above, in the Ottoman social circles in the period of the post-classical era. Such section is nowhere to be seen in Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe recension produced by Mehmet Nâbî, who, as mentioned before, leaves out any section that does not directly registers to the historiographical outlook he is after, and such teleological arguments do not necessarily seem to really concern him. On the other hand, *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*—so long as it fits its historical orientation—follows the narrative recorded in the *Papasnâme* text. Indeed, Tijana Krstić rightfully notes several of the conforming narrative points of significance—which I have separately noticed upon reading the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, and will accordingly note below—about the historical context of the both texts in question:

> This narrative, infused with mystical vocabulary and apocalyptic imagery, is a complex text that engages the real political issues plaguing the Ottoman sultanate in the early to mid-seventeenth century, such as the assassination of Sultan Osman II in 1622; the debate over modes of imperial succession; anxieties about the survival of the dynasty due to Sultan İbrahim's (1640–48) initial inability to produce an heir; the ongoing military rivalry with the Habsburgs, Safavids, and Venetians; and the debate regarding what constitutes Muslim orthodoxy. This debate was part of the broader discussion on "what went wrong" in the Ottoman sultanate that arose in the wake of multifaceted military, financial, and political changes in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[247]

Even though it makes suggestive notes of the same historical contexts in the visions recorded, *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, in its address, does not articulate such a "declinist" sentiment as the *Papasnâme* does very openly through Dervish Mehmed in its text: *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* never mentions any social ills—such as bribery or moral

[246] Ibid.

[247] Ibid.

erosion—as a contemporary issue or concern, while Dervish Mehmed is shown, as mentioned earlier, to worry about their negative effect on the Ottoman historical trajectory in *Papasnâme*. In *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, which does not adhere to such a declinist disquisition, all such social ills are shown to be manifested in the oracular experience and addressed only within the compass of the visions the narrative records. The *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* does not adhere to the same declinist parlance uttered and recorded by Dervish Mehmed especially at the beginning of the *Papasnâme* text, which is, as Tijana Krstić notes, on the whole, not only more in line with some of the advice literature of the period in its orientation towards the Ottoman experience, but also, and more importantly, religion-oriented in its outlook as a text composed for call for conversion.

The change in the text's orientation becomes especially evident in light of its contextual (re)formation arising from another stemma in the process of textual reproduction. As mentioned above, there are three other renditions of the text in three other manuscripts: one in the library of Marmara University's Faculty of Religious Studies, one in the library of Ankara University's Faculty of Religious Studies, and one in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.[248] Exactly how these other renditions record their contextual contingencies, which separate them from the Kemankeş rendition, is significant given the fact that these new contingencies shed light on the textual configuration present in the Kemankeş copy, providing an opportunity to understand its reception. The Marmara and Ankara University copies are particularly notable in this regard, as the copyists of those manuscript copies clearly began to copy the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* text into their manuscripts, likely

[248] Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B; Ankara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Ankara, No. 43048/38997, Item No. 36031, 297.7/MUH.B.; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Supplement Turc 879 [French translation: Fonds des traductions, no.44]

initially assuming, due to the title, that it would be a theologically-oriented esoteric text. However, they apparently ceased to copy after realizing that the text had, due to Mehmed Nâbî's textual intervention, turned into a historically-oriented one, after which they continued on to the part detailing visions of fabricated sultans, which they on the whole omit. Moreover, they leave the textual space blank where the total number of sultans would be written,[249] apparently not adhering to the self-confident prognostic nature of the narrative. Therefore, both the Marmara University and the Ankara University manuscripts make it clear that these copies were produced by copyists more concerned with the theological aspect of the narrative and uncomfortable with the revelations concerning the historical aspect.

Such examples of alteration during the process of manuscript copying show that the pursuit of an *ur-form* with the intent of producing a critical edition of something closely resembling the "original" text—and thereby inevitably disregarding any updating performed on these texts in later versions—is a seriously mistaken scholarly approach that effectively erases historical and contextual contingencies that emerge, or can emerge, at every single act of copying that takes place in the process of the text's evolution. The original context within which a text is produced is certainly of great importance and must be studied so as to decipher where a text originally stood when it was produced; however, new historical and social contexts that found meaning in reproducing the text in new orientations and forms in later versions are also just as significant and should not be dismissed in the rather futile pursuit of the *ur-form* of a text across various manuscript copies. Studying these immanent historical contexts through these newer versions of a text tells us more about the historical process which the text underwent in terms of its reproduction

[249] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, Marmara University Ilahiyat Fakültesi Library, Istanbul, No. 11210/SS0449, Item No. 297.7/MUH.B: 4b.

and reception, shedding light not only on the evolution of the text itself, but also on the epistemological and linguistic aspects of the historical period within which that evolution was experienced.

The remainder of this chapter will effectively be an attempt at a close textual and contextual examination as well as discourse analysis of the Kemankeş version of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. In doing so, however, I will also pay due attention, in a comparative manner, to the text's newer versions as well as antecedents in order to pinpoint where this text stands in its configurations in terms of historical significance it presents.

4.2 Textual and Historical Context of Production

As mentioned above, Mehmed Nâbî acknowledges that the text which he would eventually reorganize and recopy as the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* was in a disorderly state upon its discovery because it had exchanged hands many times after its supposed initial composition in the year 1597/98 by a certain Dervish Mehmed, who had converted to Islam after seeing the prophet in his dream:

> *Mukaddimen ma'lûm ola ki zikr olunan 'azîz Nasârî üzere râhib ve sâhib-i merâhib ve müsta'idd-i feyz-i feyyâz bir zâhid-i mürtâz iken menâmında Hazret-i Cenâb-ı Risâlet-Penâh –sallallahu aleyhi ve sellem– hazretleri naklın şehâdet-i îmân ve ta'lîm-i dîn-i Kur'ân idüb işâret-i 'aliyyeleri ile müteveccih-i Harem-i muhterem olub nice zemân mücâvir-i Beytu'l-lâh olıcak [47b] kutb-ı zamân ve gavs-ı cihân Eş-Şeyh 'Abdu'r-rahmân El-Buhârî hazretlerinin evâdık-ı hâlise ile dört sene kemerbend hidmetleri olub enfâs-ı müteberrikeleri ile vâkıf-ı esrâr-ı ilahî ve vâsıl-ı keşf-i nâ-mütenâhî olmuş. Bu 'azîz-i velâyet-zuhûr der-kaziyye-i âtiyyeden vâki' olan hâlât-ı 'acîbiyyeyi ve kerâmât-i garîbiyyeyi bilâ ziyâdeten ve lâ-noksan nakl u ta'bîr olunur.*[250]

According to this report concerning the text's past, Dervish Mehmed later began to learn the practice of *mükâşefe* from a certain Abdurrahman el-Buharî, the sheikh he had been in contact with, after having seen that the sheikh had had an oracular vision

[250] Cf. *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, Kemankeş 430, 47a–47b.

predicting the unlikely last-minute victory of the Ottomans against a combined Habsburg-Transylvanian force in the Battle of Keresztes (also known as Mezőkeresztes) during the Egri Campaign of 1596, when they both were staying in Mecca. Mehmed Nâbî goes on to report how "the mentioned saint, who is the owner of the book, namely Dervish Mehmed—may God have mercy on him—relates" this first experience of oracular vision in his own words:

> *Sâhib-i kitâb olan ʻazîz-i mezbûrun yaʻnî Dervîş Mehmed –rahmetullahi aleyh– nakl idüb eydür kim "Târîh-i sâlifü'l-beyânda pâdişâh-ı İslâm es-Sultân ibn es-Sultân es-Sultân [sic] Mehmed Hân ibn es-Sultân Murâd Hân ibn Sultân Selîm Hân hazretleri Eğri seferinde iken galebe-i küffâr-ı dûzah-kıran ve zaʻaf-ı cünd-i İslâm ve inhizâm-ı ʻaskerî ebrâr-ı ʻâleme intişâr buldukda fakîr Kaʻbe-i Mükerreme-i Şerif-i Allah Teʻâlâ'da Şeyh hazretlerinin huzûr-ı velâyet zuhûrlarında idüm.*[251]

Dervish Mehmed vividly describes the devastated emotional state he experienced upon hearing the news of the probable defeat of the Ottoman army at the Battle of Keresztes:

> *Bu haber-i ciğer-dûzdan münkesir ve hayli perîşân-hâl olub müstağrak-ı bahr-i hayret oldumki 'Bu saltanat-ı Osmaniyye –el-ʻiyâz bi'l-lâh!– zamânımızda münkariz olub istilâ-ı ehl-i küfr ü dalâl zâhir akreb saʻât dâlldır. Eyâ bu ehl-i İslâmın hâli neye vara' deyü deryâ-ı fikirde dutmada mâl-â-mâl ile dâne-i sirişki riştemiz kâffe muntazam kılub sücced-i âsâkirden şiddet-i bükâ ile zâr u giryân oldu.*[252]

Moreover, in this experience of revelation, the sheikh stated to Dervish Mehmed that this victory proved that Muslim soldiers were "still capable of coping with the infidels,"[253] unveiling, contrary to this statement of openly declared encouragement, a sense of dispirit on the whole:

> *Baʻdehu sâʻat anı gördümkim ve şöyle müşâhede kıldımki fart-ı beşâşetle gül gibi handân olub secde-i şükr idüb Fettâh-ı Mutlak hazretlerine hamd u senâlar eyledi. Eyitdim ki "Ya Şeyh, sebeb-i girye vü zârî baʻdehu âzîn bâʻis-i hande-i şîrîn-kârî nedir." bu zaʻîfe ʻiyân ile eyitdiki "Ey dervîş, hâlâ ʻasker-i İslâm küffâra mukâbil olub ehl-i İslâm'ın şühedâsı*

[251] Ibid., 47b–48a.

[252] Ibid., 48a.

[253] Ibid.: "*Hâlâ ʻasker-i İslâm küffâra mukâbil olub ehl-i İslâm'ın şühedâsı kanlar ile Ravza-i Mutahhara'ya gelüb yüz sürdiler*."

> *kanlar ile Ravza-i Mutahhara'ya gelüb yüz sürdiler* [...] *Nesim-i zafer cânib-i İslâm'dan esüb hâşâ ki küfr ve hizlân berg-i hazân gibi sarsar ma'reke* […] *varan ehl-i İslâm'a mütehammil olmayub lerzân ve her aslan üftâde-i hâk [u] helâk olub serî bî-sa'âdetleri mâlîde sümm-i* [sic] *semend-i gâzîyân oldı ● Fî'l-hakîka ol gün ve ol sâ'at Sultân Mehmed Hân hazretleri feth-i kal'a-i metîn şirzime-i müşrikîn olub der-'akab-ı ahbâr beşâret yetişüb hargâh-ı 'âlem sedâ-ı sürûr u neşât toldı. Bundan sonra şeyh hazretlerine i'tikâdım min evvelâ* […] *etemm ve kümmel oldu.*[254]

In other words, Dervish Mehmed's respect for and confidence in Abdurrahman el-Buharî, whom he had been serving for some time, came to its culmination when he saw that the sheikh had had this oracular vision regarding the Battle of Keresztes.

In Mehmed Nâbî's rendering of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, the choice of the Battle of Keresztes for the first vision to be recorded as a historically significant detail in the oracular narrative, while the same event is not mentioned until the very end of the *Papasnâme* text, is highly indicative of the change in orientation of the narrative from religious propaganda towards the political and historical concerns of the period. This choice also reveals how deep a mark this last-minute victory left on the Ottoman social imagination as a revival of hope in a historical moment of despair on the part of the Ottomans against their then militarily more powerful rival, the Habsburgs, in the west.

The Battle of Keresztes was in fact a moment of culmination in the long struggle for power between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, which turned into open warfare in 1001/1593 and lasted for thirteen years, until 1014/1606. After a disastrous loss at the Kulpa River in 1001/1593, the Ottoman Empire went on the offensive again. This offensive, however, would ultimately result in an increased military advantage for the Habsburgs, since, by 1004/1595, the Austrian armies would subsequently move to capture Ottoman territories along the Danube and later the city of

[254] Ibid., 48a–48b.

Esztergom/Gran in central Hungary.[255] In response to this Habsburg territorial expansion, Sultan Mehmed III's army moved to capture Eger/Erlau in 1005/1596; however, as William Griswold notes, although successful in this occupation, the traditional Ottoman military tactics of deploying lightly armed cavalry against the heavily armed Habsburg forces had already proven to be considerably disadvantageous in this campaign.[256]

Following the capture of Eger/Erlau, the two armies, having avoided a pitched battle for months, eventually faced each other in the autumn of 1005/1596, in the vicinity of the city, on the plain of Mezőkeresztes.[257] Because the Habsburg forces were heavily armed and forceful in their forward march, the recently enthroned Sultan Mehmed III's tent had been set up near the battlefield so as to keep him close enough to his forces that he could provide both protection and the ability to lead the army.[258] The battle, which began on October 24, 1596 CE (2 Rebiü'l-evvel 1005 AH), lasted for three days. During the first two days, the Ottoman forces failed quite decisively against the Habsburg forces, and on the second day, Mehmed III grew so worried that he fled the battlefield, reportedly on an oxcart, leaving behind all his belongings, and leaving command to his brother-in-law Damad İbrahim Pasha, who was then grand vizier.[259] In response to this flight, by nightfall the Habsburg troops had managed to reach the Ottoman pavilions and begun to seize valuable Ottoman booty left behind. However, on the third day the battle's momentum turned when the late arriving commander of the relief armies at Hatvan, Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan

[255] William J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion, 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Berlin: K. Schwarz Verlag, 1983), 14–15.

[256] Ibid., 15.

[257] Ibid., 17.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid., 18.

Pasha, managed to bring his Tatar cavalry onto the field for a counterstrike against the Habsburg forces.[260] Realizing that the enemy soldiers were busily engaged in seizing the Ottoman booty left behind at the sultan's abandoned tents, Sinan Pasha swiftly and directly attacked them with his Crimean cavalry, taking the Habsburg forces completely by surprise, killing thousands, and denying them any chance of regrouping or counterattacking.[261]

Upon Sinan Pasha's success in repulsing the Habsburgs, Mehmed III, shocked by his own narrow escape and the sudden change in the course of the battle, did not hesitate to bestow the pasha with the grand vizierate, which the pasha had himself sternly requested.[262] This, however, did not prove to be the only immediate outcome of this odd denouement to the Battle of Keresztes, a victory which the Ottoman sultan, oddly enough, considered to be the greatest battle of his reign, leading him eventually to be called "the Conqueror of Eger."[263] Indeed, the battle had more immediate consequences that resulted in even more significant long-term effects on the empire's historical trajectory. The newly appointed grand vizier Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha would then, in return for his Tatar cavalry's military efforts, bestow Fetih Giray with the Crimean khanate,[264] an honor which would later prove to unsettle the inner politics in Crimea. The new grand vizier would also subsequently take action against the thousands of Ottoman *askerî* soldiers, and especially *tımar* holders, who had fallen short in their efforts during the battle: he in fact declared all missing cavalrymen in the battle "deserters" (*firari*s), and ordered their land, wealth, and other privileges to be dispossessed.

[260] Ibid.

[261] Ibid.

[262] Ibid., 19.

[263] Ibid.

[264] Ibid.

These immediate consequences would eventually lead to more long-term effects in the empire.[265] Socially, the Battle of Keresztes and Sinan Pasha's order to dismiss those *tımar* holders who had failed to fight or had fled during the battle would have an impact not only on the empire's political landscape, but also and especially on the social and economic landscape of the Anatolian peninsula, in the form of the Celali rebellions (1596–1610). In fact, this policy of confiscation would eventually lead many such *tımar* holders and their soldiers to turn to banditry and rebellion, since many of the dismissed *tımar* holders who had been branded deserters would join the ranks of the Celali bands in Anatolia.

As a result, this rush decision on part of the grand vizier and the ensuing social and political developments have usually been identified historiographically as the outset of the great Celali movement in Anatolia.[266] Additionally, the grand vizier's policy has also been recognized as having had an additional negative impact on the *tımar* system, which had long constituted the backbone of both the central administrative and the military structure of the Ottoman polity.[267] The modern Ottoman historiography considers the Battle of Keresztes a very significant historical turning point in the post-Suleimanic period of the Ottoman Empire due to this long-term sociohistorical impact.

Militarily, on the other hand, the Habsburgs' new warfare technologies—including their possession of superior muskets and cannon, their heavy use of pikes against cavalry, and the better military training they provided for soldiers with firearms[268]—proved, despite their unexpected defeat at Keresztes, to be more effective in the long

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[265] Ibid.

[266] Ibid.; Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 70.

[267] Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, 70–1.

[268] Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion*, 7.

run. In fact, these new military technologies tilted the military balance against the Ottomans, who had previously had the upper hand in terms of military technologies:

> The rising importance of firearms – the product of a remarkable openness to technological innovation – also helps to explain Ottoman successes in the centuries after 1300. For several hundred years Ottoman armies used firearms on a vaster scale, more effectively, and earlier than competing dynasties. In the great Ottoman victories of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and early sixteenth centuries, technological superiority often played a key role. Cannon and fire-armed infantry were developed at very early dates and used to massive technological advantage in the Balkan as well as the Safevid wars.[269]

Due to this rather illustrious past, the apparent failure initially experienced at Keresztes created initially surprise, but then relief when the tide turned, and this prevented a full awareness about the graveness of the situation from arising. Indeed, the fact that the Habsburgs had been unexpectedly defeated in the battle led to a political as well as a social fallacy on the part of the Ottomans.[270] Their last-minute victory prompted them to either deliberately or imprudently fail to understand the real significance of the battle; instead, in social terms, they experienced a powerful sentiment of reinvigorated hope against the Habsburgs' territorial expansion. The failure to understand the inevitable impact of the new military technologies in the short term would actually prevent the Ottomans from making any necessary changes in their traditional warfare in response, resulting in many other military failures in the longer term.[271]

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[269] Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 30.

[270] In fact, the *şehnâmeci* Talîkîzâde Mehmed Suphi (d. ca. 1599 or 1602) was commissioned to author an illustrated history of the campaign, entitled *Fetihnâme-i Eğri, Şehnâme-i Sultan Mehmed*, which he finished within a year and presented to Sultan Mehmed III in 1598. This demonstrated the myopic understanding of the battle on the part of the Ottomans. This lavishly composed *şehnâme*, illustrated with miniatures by Nakkaş Hasan (d. 1622), is held at the Topkapı Palace Library today: cf. TSMK, Hazine, nr. 1609. Cf. Christine Woodhead, "Tâlikîzâde Mehmed Subhi," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed, Vol. 39 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2010). 510–511. 2014. Accessed July 24, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c39/c390337.pdf.

[271] See Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*.

In the narrative of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, we can easily trace this commonly upheld social sentiment of a God-given last-minute victory against the infidels. The fact that the text registers the Battle of Keresztes as both its first vision and as a hopeful, albeit misleading, turning point with lasting historical significance reveals how its social impact was being readily, though not well, understood, or rather conveniently misunderstood at the time of the text's production. After this first vision relating to the Battle of Keresztes, the sheikh directly conveys the intended message of the whole narrative concerning the decline of the lineage of the Ottoman dynasty:

> *Lakin bir gün Şeyh hazretleri vecd hâline gelüb bu fakîre teveccüh-i hitâb idüb eyitdiki "Ey dervîş, kemâl-i mertebe-i i'tikâd eyle kim bu âl-i 'Osmân saltanatı bizim zamânımızda münkariz olmayub bunların zamân-ı devletlerinde nümâyân olasın. Ben putperest iken* [*Hazret-i*] *Cenâb-ı Risâlet-Penâh –sallallahu aleyhi ve sellem– menâmında irşâd-ı râh-ı hidâyet kılub sana telkîn-i îmân-ı şehâdet idüb şeref-i İslâm ile kemâl buldun. Bu cümle 'inâyet-i Hakk ve feyz-i mutlak değil midir. Eyle midir ki bu âl-i 'Osmân dîn-i İslâm'a hususen Haremeynü'ş-Şerîfeyn-i* [sic] *Muhteremeyn'de itdikleri hizmet-i 'inda'l-lâh zâyi' olmaz* […] *ve bi-hamd-ı süccâne ve te'âlâ bu âl-i 'Osmân devletinde* […] *memâlik-i 'Osmâniyyede tarh-ı bünyâd-ı mesâcid ve vaz'-ı menâbir olub şerr'ile icrâ-yı ahkâm bünyân-ı dîn kuvvet ve istihkâmdadır. E*[y] *dervîş, hâlâ pâdişâhımızın tâli'i mes'ûdî değil. Hemân bu âl-i 'Osmânda yetmiş nefer pâdişâhımıza varınca tâli' ve ahvâl-i kıyâm-ı sâ'adete değin imtidâd-ı devlet ve ikbâlini sana idem" dedi.*[272]

In the narrative, after the initial vision concerning victory at the Battle of Keresztes, Dervish Mehmed, more convinced of his sheikh's oracular talents, begins to practice *mükâşefe* under his guidance, and together in the middle of the night they have a "visionary journey" ("*tayy-ı mekân*") from Mecca onto a ruined wall west of Haghia Sophia, which stands near the Ottoman imperial court in Istanbul:

> *Şeyh hazretleri sol eliyle sağ elime başub "Yum gözün" didi. Ben dahî gözüm yumdum. "Aç" didi. Açdım. Hemân sâ'at Darü's-Saltanatü'l-'Aliyye'de Bâb-ı Hümâyûn muhâzîsinde olan Ayasofya'nın cânib-i garbîsinde* [50b] *vâki' küçük civarı üzere nısfü'l-leylde Şeyh ile kendümü gördüm.* ***Ba'dehu*** *Şeyh eyitdi ki "Havf itme. Âgâh ol ki mu'âyeneten*

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[272] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, Kemankeş 430, 49a–49b.

> *olan işâreti zabt idüb tahrîr idesinkim bizden sonra gelen ehl-i İslâm karındaşlara bir beşâret-i ‘azîm ve eser-i velâyet-i a‘lâ kala" didükde* […][273]

Subsequently, their mutual visions are recorded in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* by Dervish Mehmed, who, following the sheikh's instructions, documents in writing the visions that they see, thereby leaving a great work for the brothers of the people of Islam who will come thereafter. These visions, or rather mutual revelations, relate an extended lineage of the Ottoman dynasty, and are recorded in the text in dialogue form. At this point, Mehmed Nâbî has disappeared as a narrator, and it is Dervish Mehmed who continues the narrative, relating the visions he and his sheikh have together and recording their mutual dialogue concerning these visions and revelations.

In these visions as they are narrated, the visual element holds great weight. Correspondingly, the choice of location as the destination of their mutual visionary journey—namely, facing the Gate of Felicity at Topkapı Palace, from which vantage point the sheikh and the dervish can easily observe inside the palace—becomes quite emblematic for the visual aspect of the visions of the sultans, each of whom is listed as emerging from this imperial gate for the ascension (*cülûs*) ceremony. This was the initial official ritual through which new Ottoman sultans were introduced to and beheld by the public eye for the first time. Among those who would be present at the ceremony were the principal officers of the state and the Janissary corps, who would there pay homage (*bi‘at*) to their new ruler.[274]

Accordingly, as the narrative proceeds to list and briefly account the reigns of six actual and fifty-two fabricated sultans, each account first shows the sultan appearing at the gate, just as in the traditional ascension ceremony held before the Gate of

[273] Ibid., 50a–50b.

[274] İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: TTK, 1988), 187–188.

Felicity at Topkapı Palace. This visual aspect of the narrative thus captures the liminal moment of the Ottoman sultan stepping outside the palace and into the public sphere. Each registering of the visions begins with the same phrase repeated by the dervish, which signifies the public's first view of the sultan at the ascension ceremony and underscores how each of the visionary sultans becomes a public image or figure: "then at the gate of the palace I saw this sultan who..." ("*andan gördümki sarây kapusunda* [...] *bu sultân* ..."). Therefore, as these initial images of the sultans at the Gate of Felicity make clear, the location at which the sheikh and the dervish are located throughout their mutual visions is by no means coincidental, but is a carefully calculated choice enhancing the visual aspect of the narrative while also highlighting how the ascension ceremony is the first instance where the public could recognize a new Ottoman sultan as the ruler.

Following the initial visionary journey from Mecca to Istanbul, the narrative of the sequence of visions largely lacks definite markers of time. Besides occasional metaphysical markers like "till the end of the time," the only time markers used regularly in the narration is "*ba'dehu*" ("after that"), rather oddly written with rubric in a few instances. This connects the series of events in a progressional yet indefinite manner, one that is by no means unusual for a narrative recording a series of visions inasmuch as the narrational time is registering an extended revelational time, which is known in Sufi terminology as the "swelling of time" (*bast-ı zamân*). The narrative thus employs the free-flowing time of the visions, and the time markers deployed in the narration call attention explicitly to the series of visions, rather than registering the passage of time in the narrative. Accordingly, the narrative unambigously shifts between the optative and the subjunctive moods to signify that it is narrating revelations or prophecies, rather than actual experiences.

The narrative that follows the visionary journey records a largely invented lineage that extends the Ottoman dynasty up to a total of seventy sultans who would supposedly reign until the end of time. At first sight, then, the text reads as both a Sufist text of oracular prophecies for the future, and as a record of *mükâşefe* experience, of which there are several other examples extant in manuscript form, typically termed *Risâle-i Mükâşefe*.[275] However, closer inspection reveals the historically contingent properties of the narrative: the first sultan to be treated in the narration of these prophetic visions is Mehmed III, who was on the throne during the Eger campaign, and the accounts then continue with five more actual sultans, up through Sultan Ibrahim. Subsequently, however, the lineage continues with invented sultans, yet nonetheless provides them all with accounts that do not differ in terms of style or diction from those of the actual sultans, although some of the accounts are quite short while others are relatively long. As has already been touched upon, this narrational tactic of recording six actual sultans, and moreover of maintaining the same style when recounting the reigns of sultans both actual and invented, gains credibility for the oracular visions of the invented sultans that follow.

In the narrative, the accounts of the reigns of the six actual Ottoman sultans reveals a clear "politics of memory" at play in terms of the text's gaze into the past: there is a conscious censoring or exaggerating of certain events of the Ottoman past and present, such as the assassination of Osman II or Ibrahim I's imagined successes while on the throne. This provides us with an opportunity to understand how these

[275] There was also a traditional practice of recording sessions of this esoteric Sufi practice in writing. I discovered one such text compromising a record of a *mükâşefe* session in the archives: *Risâle-i Mükâşefe*, Millî Library, Ankara, Yazmalar collection, no. 06 Mil Yz A 1244. In order to specify the textual differences or possible rhetorical similarities of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* in comparison to this traditional record, I will also refer to this particular former manuscript copy in the pertinent section of this chapter.

sultans' reigns were perceived and conceived of in the social memory, as well as how they were accordingly altered and related in the social imagination.

The first imperial vision that the sheikh Abdurrahman el Buhârî and Dervish Mehmed observe is that of Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603), who is designated as the thirteenth sultan in the lineage of the Ottoman dynasty:

> ***Ba'dehu*** *Şeyh eyitdi ki "Havf itme. Âgâh ol ki mu'âyeneten olan işâreti zabt idüb tahrîr idesinkim bizden sonra gelen ehl-i İslâm karındaşlara bir beşâret-i 'azîm ve eser-i velâyet-i a'lâ kala" didükde anı gördümki sarây kapusunda* ***On Üçüncü Pâdişâh Sultân Mehmed Hân*** *çıkdı.*[276]

The fact that Mehmed III is explicitly registered as the thirteenth sultan in the Ottoman line—with all the subsequent sultans, both real and imagined, also being designated by their order in the succession—makes it evident that this particular historical mindset as registered in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* recognizes the earlier Ottoman lineage as consisting of: Osman I, Orhan, Murad I, Murad I, Bâyezid I, Mehmed I, Murad II, Mehmed II, Bayezid II, Selim I, Süleyman I, Selim II, and Murad III. This clearly situates the supposedly visionary text within a very particular, and very conscious, historical trajectory for the empire.

According to the vision of Mehmed III, upon appearing at the gate of the imperial court, the sultan took three flags (*sancak*s), which he then tore to pieces. Then he was given five keys, after which he returned, performed his ablutions and prayers, and slept. Upon seeing this vision, Dervish Mehmed asks his sheikh about the vision's significance:

> *Sarây kapusunda* ***On Üçüncü Pâdişâh Sultân Mehmed Hân*** *çıkdı. Üç sancak eline alub pareledi ve başı aşağı yerlere sürdi.* ***Ba'dehu*** *eline beş miftâh virdiler. Anda* [*geri*] *dönüb âbdest alub namâz kılub uyudı. Eyitdimki "Ya Şeyh, bu ne 'alâmetdür ve ne ahvâle delâletdür."*[277]

[276] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 50b.

[277] Ibid.

The sheikh then interprets the vision; this is a narrative structure that will repeat throughout nearly all of the subsequent sultanic visions. According to the sheikh's interpretation here,[278] during his reign Mehmed's father, Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595), had succeeded in subjugating three "sanjaks" to his rule; however, in Mehmed's reign of Sultan Mehmed, these states—Hungary, Wallachia, and Poland—deviated from their submission to the sultan. In response, Mehmed would, with the help of God and by the force of his sword, take their land, and subsequently these states would stay obedient to the Ottomans till the end of days, with *kadı*s and *beg*s being appointed in the Hungarian provinces to put sharia law into effect there. Also, according to the sheikh, the five keys in the vision signified how Mehmed would conquer five provinces which were under the rule of a king of wicked deeds, refering to the Habsburg emperor, after which the sultan would depart this world and move on to the afterlife.

Clearly, many important factual and historical omissions occur in the sheikh's interpretation of the vision about the reign of Mehmed III because the historical realities of his reign was certainly not a rose garden full of victories as it was made to be seem in the oracular vision. This period was imbued with social strife in the form of Celali rebellions in 1596 as well as military problems as in the case of erruption of wars fought against the Safavid Iran for a long period to come between 1603–1639,[279] and it actually aggrevated the notion of a "crisis" amongs the larger

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[278] Ibid., 50b–51a: "*Şeyh eyitdi 'Ey dervîş, bu Sultân Mehmed Hân'ın babası Sultân Murâd Hân zamânında üç sancak 'âmmî olub itâ'at-ı pâdişâhda inhirâf gösterdiler. Macar ve Eflak gibi –sâ'irin dimem, disem hatâdır– ve Leh gibi ammâ Sultân Mehmed Hân bi-emri'l-lâh te'âlâ kılıc ile feth idüb kıyâmete değin bu âl-i 'Osmân devletinde zebûn olub Macar vilayetlerinde kâdılar ve begler ta'yîn olunub icrâ-yı şer'iat ve* [*a'lâm*]*-ı dîn* [*ü*] *devlet ideler. Ve ol beş miftâh delâletdür ki ● bu sultân beş vilâyet feth ide ki her biri kral-ı bed-fa'âlın tahtı ola. Ba'dehu zamân bu sultân hastalıkda dünyayı terk idüb âhirete gide.'*"

[279] Feridun Emecen, "Mehmed III," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed, Vol. 28 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2003), 407–13. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=280407&idno2=c280229#1.

segments of the population living under his rule at the time. After Mehmed III, the narrative continues with Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617):

> ***On Dördüncü Pâdişâh Sultân Ahmed Hân*** *Andan gördüm ki sarây kapusunda bir gemiye yetmiş bir hûb-cemâl kimesne çıkub eline bir salb almış, pâre pâre eyledi ve bir mühîb arslana oyan urub deryâ sâkir oldı. Ve bir kartalın tüyün yoldu ● Ve eline Kur'ân-ı 'azîm-i âlişân* [sic] *alub gitdi. Eyitdimki "Ya Şeyh, bu neye 'alâmetdür?" Eyitdi "Dervîş, sancaklar* [marginal: *-nda*] *sûret-i arslan ve şekl-i kartal getüren ne ke[fe]re-i dâlldır." Ben eyitdimki "Malta sancağı salîb, Venedik arslan getüren."* [51b] *Şeyh eyitdiki "Bu sultân Malta'ya ıztırâb u elem vire. Ve Alamanda Venedik'de[n] harâc ala. Ve ol tüy ki kartalda yoldu delâletdür ki kral-ı bed-fa'âlın 'askeri cem' olub bu sultânın feth ittiği yerleri almağa cehd eyleyeler. Ammâ bu sultân kralın 'azîm 'askerin kırub üç bölükde bir bölüği ancak halâs ola ● Bu minvâl üzere iken 'ömri vefâ eylemeyüb vefât eyleye.*[280]

According to the oracular vision, Ahmed I brings great suffering to the knights of Malta, and later exacts tribute from Venice. In a military reply, the Austrian emperor attempts to take back conquered lands but Ahmed defeats them. In historical context, his period was relatively well-administrated than his father's reign. The Austrain defeat recalls the 1606 Peace of Sitva-Torok with the Habsburgs, although it is represented as a victory in the oracular vision recorded in the narrative. Although the oracular vision does not mention it, his reign was also tinged with the ongoing social problems caused by repeated and aggraveted Celali uprisings. With efforts of Kuyucu Murad Pasha, these uprisings were suppressed with huge bloodshed in 1609. However, the rebellion instigated by Manoğlu Fahreddin proved to be harder to subdue and remained a problem for the Ottoman Empire for more than twenty years between 1613–35. The peace treaty signed with Iran in 1618 brought a halt to the ongoing war, albeit temporarily, and with the Ottoman withdrawal from Azerbaijan.[281]

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[280] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 51a–51b.

[281] Mücteba İlgürel, "Ahmed I," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 2. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1989. 30-33. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=020030&idno2=c020017#1.

After Ahmed I, the narrative moves on to relay its vision of the reign of Sultan Mustafa I (r. 1617–1618, 1622–1623). As might be expected, the vision of this briefly reigning sultan's time on the throne is quite short:

> ***On Beşinci Pâdişâh Sultân Mustafâ Hân*** *● Andan gördümki sarây kapusunda bu sultân-ı melik-sâret çıkdı ● Şeyh eyitdi "Ey dervîş, bunlar iki karındaşlar olub bu sultân tahtını karındaşı oğluna virüb kendüsi ihşâ' eyleye.* ***Ba'dehu*** *gine tahta geçüb Maskov'dan elci gelüb itâ'at göstere. Ve bu sultân-ı 'âlîşân namâz kılarken teslîm-i rûh eyleye.*[282]

Contrary to the typical contemporary and subsequent view of Mustafa as an ineffective simpleton, the narrative instead recasts him as a pious and humble sultan who leaves his throne to his brother's son (i.e., Osman II). Even so, given that the antecedent *Papasnâme* text deliberately leaves Mustafa unnamed in its own narrative,[283] it is especially interesting that the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* does refrain from naming and describing him. In fact, both narratives note that at his time an envoy comes from Moscow expressing obedience to the Ottoman ruler. He dies while performing prayers in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. What is also interesting in terms of the "politics of memory" is the fact that both narratives show him as coming to the throne before Osman II, and certainly in no such tumultuous period for the politics of power at the court as it actually was during this short period of royal strife in the imperial history.[284]

Following Mustafa, the narrative continues with a rather remarkable account of the eventful reign of his nephew Osman II (r. 1618–1622):

> ***On Altıncı Pâdişâh Sultân 'Osmân Hân*** *Andan gördümki sarây kapusunda ak libâslar giymiş bu Sultân 'Osmân çıkdı. Ve bir akçe kîsesin pak yudu. Ve şöyle tenbîh eylediki "Zinhâr şimden girü bu kîseye hurde akçe komayasız"*

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[282] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 51b.

[283] *Papasnâme*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Saliha Hatun collection, no. 212, 12a.

[284] Feridun Emecen, "Mustafa I," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 31. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006. 272-75. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=310272&idno2=c310185#1.

> *didi. Ve elinde bu sultân kan yere dökdi. Fî'l-hâl ol kan altuna tebdîl oldı. Halk anı görüb ittifâkile ağladılar ve eyitdiler "Hakk Te'âlâ bu saltanatı saklasun" deyü* […] *bî-niyâze tazarru' eylediler.* ***Ba'dehu*** *bu sultân dönüb bu yarâna karşu bir sancağı üç pâre eyledi. Fî'l-hâl yine sarâyına dönüb uyudı. Eyitdimki "Ya Şeyh, bu ne 'alâmetdür ve neye delâlet, bana 'ayân eyle." Eyitdi ki "Ey dervîş, bu Sultân 'Osmân rüşveti kaldırmağa sa'y eyleye zirâ zamânında rüşvet çok ola. Ve 'azîm yasak eyleye ki zinhâr mansıb akçe ile virilmeye. Ve bunun zamânında çok kan döküle. Ve karındaşına recm eylemeye. İskele ve gümrükler bu pâdişâha ziyâde mahsûl vireler ● Ve ol üç pâre eyledüği sancak delâlet ider ki bu sultân ol cânibe sefer eyleye ve ol vilâyeti harâb eyleye ve ol kâfir kim sancağında üç kaplan görürsen binde bin bilürsin kimdir" ● Ben eyitdimki "Eflakdır" Şeyh eyitdi "Bi-hamdi'l-lâh te'âlâ ol Eflak kralı bu pâdişâha zebûn olub harâc vire. Ve ba'dehu bu sultân bağteten vefât eyleye.*[285]

Osman is the only sultan in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* shown in white garments when he appears at the Gate of Felicity: this seems likely to be suggestive of a burial shroud and to imply his death at the hands of his *kul*s. In the vision, he orders that no debased coin will enter into circulation or into the purse that he holds in his hands, and then the blood that he pours on the ground itself turns to gold, leading the onlookers to cry out together and pray for his sovereignty. The sheikh goes on to say that Osman intends to abolish taxes, as there was a great deal of corruption in his reign, and he forbids using money to purchase government posts. The sheikh also mentions that there much blood will be shed during his reign. However, according to the narrative, he would not have his brother stoned to death—which was directly contrary to fact, as Osman had in fact had his brother and potential rival Mehmed killed before embarking on his campaign against Poland.[286] Ports and customs would bring Osman great income, and he would subdue Wallachia and extract a yearly tribute from them. Then, however, he would die suddenly and unexpectedly ("*bağteten*"); this is a term used only once in the narrative, and in this vision, clearly suggesting, without openly stating, Osman's execution at the hands of his *kul*s.

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[285] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 52a–52b.

[286] Emecen, Feridun. "Osman II," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 33. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2007. 453-56. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=330453&idno2=c330277#1. 454.

Another suggestive phrase used in the narrative is the time marker "*fi'l-hâl*"—meaning "right now," "at once," or "instantly"—which brings a particular immediacy to the narration. These aspects of the narrative, along with its overt silence about the fact that Osman II was killed by his own *kul*s, might be read as signifying a certain embarrassment about this traumatic event in the Ottoman imagination.

After Osman II, the narrative continues with its vision of Murad IV (r. 1623–1640):

> ***On Yedinci Pâdişâh Sultân Murâd Hân*** *Andan gördümki sarây kapusunda ol gül yüzlü Sultân Murad Han çıkageldi ki Sultân Ahmed Hân oğlidi ● Uzun boylu tolgasın sokunmuş kolçağın giymiş. Bir heybetle çıkdıkim Kızılbaş havfinda ditredi.* ***Ve ba'dehu*** *kıble tarafına dönüb yalın kılıc eyleyüb üc kere saldı. Ve na're urub eyitdi "Ey Kızılbaş-ı bed-ma'âş* [...] *döğündi ● Şimden gerü min ba'd* [53a] *hîle ve mekre kâdir olmazsın" ● Ve hazret-i resûl-i 'aleyhü'l-İslâm'ın dülbendini kulac ile ölcdi. Sekiz kulac iki yedi eyledi. Ve serâseri ve dünyayı âteşe bırakdı. Ben eyitdimki "Ya Şeyh, bu Kızılbaş üzerine na're uran pâdişâh kimdür?" Şeyh eyitdiki "Bu sultân hazretlerinin şöyle nâmı dâstân ola kim ● uzak yerlerden adın işide. Cemâlin görmek içün ziyârete gelir ve kendü b-i'z-zât Kızılbaş üzerine sefer eyleye. Ve cümle Kızılbaş bu pâdişâhın havfından çehâr diyârı dost tutalar. Ve kılıcı korkusundan Kızılbaş-ı bed-ma'âşın nâmı nâ-bûd ola. Ve'l-*[...] *isti'mâl eyledüği büyük dülbendleri terk itdire zirâ eger İmâm-ı A'zam hazretlerinin ri'âyetini* [ye]*rine getürmezler deyü ve bu pâdişâhın* [marginal: *zamânında halkın dülbendleri hazret-i resûli'l-lâh* ***sahh*** *sallahu aleyhi ve sellem* ***sahh***] *zamânında küçük ola. Ve dîbâ ve serâser makbûl olmaya. Ve kimse rağbet* [53b] *itmeye. ve halkın en eyüsi libâsın fenâsın giye.*[287]

According to the oracular vision, Murad IV achieves great fame by personally leading campaign against the Kızılbaş, whom he decimates. During his reign, in accord with Abu Hanifa, large turbans will be replaced by small turbans made of modest fabric, a point which is in fact similar to what actually had been experienced because Murad IV actually had such a decree about a certain kind of clothing. His image in the oracular vision actually fits to the one in the oracular vision as he is

[287] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 52b–53b.

shown in full charge of the state and country, which was actually the case in the second half of his reign.[288]

Finally, after Murad IV, the narrative continues with a vision of Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1640–1648), the last actual sultan to occur in the text:

> ***On Sekizinci Pâdişâh Sultân İbrâhîm Hân*** *Andan gördümki sarây kapusunda karakuru benizli ve kumral sakallı bu sultân çıkdı. Elinde bir zincîr ve yedi miftâh ve beş sancak pareledi. Ve ba'dehu iskeleye inüb kadırgaya yetdi. Ve ol zincîr ile deryâyı kuşatdı ● Ve altun içün tenbîh eyledi ki mustaf-ı şerîf ile câmi'lerden gayrı yerde ziynet içün isti'mâl olunmaya. Ve halkı ziynetden terk itdüre çünkü bu hâli müşâhede eyledim. Eyitdim ki "Ya Şeyh, bu sultân-ı melik-haslet ahvâli nedir ki sünnet-i resûlu'l-lâh yerine icrâ eyledi?" Şeyh eyitdi ki "Ey dervîş, bu Sultân İbrâhîm Hân cümle Akdeniz adaların feth idüb leb-i deryâda ne kadar kal'a var ise tâ Hind boğazına varınca dâ'ire-i teshîre* [54a] *çıkub kâfir-i hâzıra şöyle ıztırâb vire ki kendi deryâlarında bile gezmeğe havf ideler. Ve min ba'd bizim deryâlarımızda çıkarub gezmeğe kâdir olmayalar. Ve ol zincîr ile beş sancak ki gördün delâlet ider ki papaya ve dukaya* […] *Yedi miftâh delâlet ider ki yedi kal'a-i 'azîme feth ide ki her birisinin bir pâdişâhı ola ● Ve İspanya vilâyetinde olan müdecceller ve yeraltında namâz kılanlar bunun zamânında havfsız âşikâre salavat-ı şerîfe getürüb sayyıt-ı nâkûs ile pür olan yerler zemzeme-i ezân ve sedâ-yı* ***lâ ilâhe illallâh Muhammeden resûlul'lâh*** *dolu ola. Ve Kızıl Elma'yı bu sultân darb u dest-i* [*h*]*arâca kese. Ve çok zamân ehl-i İslâm bu sultân devletinde asûde-hâl* [marginal: *ola*]. *Ve ba'dehu'l-feth tenbîh eyleye ki Mushaf-ı şerîf ile câmi'lerden* [54b] *gayrı yerde altun ziyneti olmaya. Halk toprak ve ağaç çanaklardan ta'am yiyeler. Ey oğul, devlet ve sa'âdet yeter ol zamâna kim sünnet-i resulu'l-lâh aleyhü's-selâm icrâ ola.*[289]

Here, Sultan Ibrahim is praised to the skies, with the sheikh foreseeing that he will capture all the islands in all the world's seas, even the Indian Ocean, and will force the so-called "Golden Apple" (i.e., Vienna) to pay yearly tribute. Though this is clearly exaggeration, the narrative's recording of such events may well also imply the 1645 capture of the Cretan port of Chania in 1645.[290] There is, however, no mention of Ibrahim's mother Kösem Sultan, who historiography both contemporary

[288] Ziya Yılmazer, "Murad IV," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 31. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006. 177-83. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=310177&idno2=c310123#1.

[289] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 54a–54b.

[290] Feridun Emecen, "İbrâhim," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 21. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2000. 274–81. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=210274&idno2=c210224#1.

and modern has considered the real power behind the throne at the time; as a matter of fact, no woman is mentioned anywhere in the text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*. The narrative also does not record the deposition of Ibrahim in 1648 and his eventual murder, indicating that the text was likely produced between about 1645 and 1648. All such choices regarding what to include, what to exclude, and what to reorient within the fiction of the narrative signify a clear politics of memory at work in the text. However, as Ibrahim seems to have been the reigning sultan at the time of the text's production, this recasting of contemporary history—almost in the manner of the hyperbolic representation of the current sultan recorded in the *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s[291]—also turns directly aspirational when imagining what what was yet to come. This is clear enough from the great extent of Ibrahim's conquests mentioned above, but is made even more interesting, and perhaps more clearly revealing of the text's stance, when the Moriscos (*müdeccel*s) still living in Christian Spain are rescued by this real Ottoman sultan, Ibrahim, who is of course entirely fictionalized in this regard. However, the oracular vision indeed reminds and is in line with the historical fact that one of the greatest conquest, that of Candia, in the Mediterranean was in fact achieved during his reign. The narrative understandably, as it was most probably produced during his reign, say nothing of his deposition and assasination in the actual historical end of his life.

4.3 Pragmatics of Prognostication: The Future as a Category of the Past

The aspirational aspect seen in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*'s fictionalized account of Sultan Ibrahim becomes the dominant mode of the text with the next sultan, the nineteenth and the first imaginary sultan, Ibrahim's son Yusuf. The text claims him to be "a good son of a good father," before describing how he would kill all the Jews

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[291] See Chapter II.

living in Istanbul owing to a rumor they had started about the coming of the Antichrist (*Deccâl*) during his father's reign:

> ***On Dokuzuncu Pâdişâh Sultân Yûsuf Han*** *Andan gördüm ki sarây kapusunda bir müzellef sakallu sultân çıkdı ki Hakk üzere idi. Ve eline iki miftâh virdiler. Ve şehirde bir 'azîm yangın peydâ olub bu sultân tenbîh sebebden* [?] *Ve ba'dehu gördüm ki* ***hazret-i resûl-ı ekrem –sallallahu aleyhi vessellem–*** *hazretlerinin karşusuna gelüb taht üzere uyudı. Eyitdim ki "Ya Şeyh, bu ne 'alâmetdür ve neye delâletdür." Eyitdi "Ey dervîş, âgâh ol ki bu Sultân Yûsuf cümle gelen âl-i 'Osmânda hubb ve 'âdil padişâhdır ● Şöyle kim 'adâletde Nüştirevân'ı unutdura ● Eyü babadan eyü oğul gelür. Evvelâ bu sultân* [55a] *İstânbul'da olan Cehûd tâ'ifesin şerr'ile cümle katl eyleye. Şol sebebden ki 'Babam Sultân İbrâhîm Hân zamânında "Deccâl bu zamânda çıkar" deyü zu'm kâsd idüler idi ● Ve bi'l-cümle katlleri îcâb ider" töhmetler ile şerr'en katl eyleye. Ve hükm itdüği harâb idüb halkını esîr eyleye.*[292]

This particular episode about the fictive nineteenth sultan needs to be interpreted in light of the messianic figure of Sabbatai Zevi, who, in historical reality, had a huge following among the Jew population living in Izmir, not in Istanbul. However, at the time his adherents believed and started a rumour that "the messaih would appear in the year 1648."[293] They also claimed that he would attempt to dethrone the sultan in the 1660s:[294]

> *Ve bu pâdişâhın zamânında bir Müslümân ki şarâb içe veyâ evinde buluna katl ideler ve papanın 'askerin kılıçdan geçüre ● Ve bu sultân Medine-i Münevvere'ye ve 'Arabistân'a varub 'amme-i 'Arab'ı kırub Şâm ve Haleb'e müsâfır başında altun getürüb havfi olmaya ● Ve bu sultân vefat ittüğünde nûr inüb ve melekler tekfîn idüb defn eyleyeler.*[295]

In the narrative, according to the treatment he receives from Yusuf is apparently approved by the Sunni orthodox standpoint and *ulema* outlook of the text. This account of the fictional sultan Yusuf shows how the rest of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* will balance fictional details of the imaginary sultans with a clear Sunni stance in order to present its communal, aspirational vision. But this is a vision strongly

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[292] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 54b–55a.

[293] Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2008), 124.

[294] Ibid., 125.

[295] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 55a.

marked by the adverse concerns and adverse historical experiences of the time that the text was produced: the long seventeenth century was characterized by epidemics, fires, famine, struggles against the Celali rebels, and revolts, and all of these left a mark on the Ottoman imagination of the time. But as an aspirational text, the narrative also provides insights into communal aspirations about the Ottoman Empire's future as well. For instance, most of the fictive sultans ascend the throne without practicing fratricide or falling victim to any other succession troubles, and at the same time the empire manages to greatly extend its domains through the subjugation and/or outright conquest of Christian lands, thereby consolidating the Islamic faith under its rule. This is an aspiration, then, informed by communal memory and the frustrations of historical experience.

This aspect of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* raises the question of how people of the early modern era thought and conceived of the future. In the European context, scholars like Koselleck and Hölscher arguably claim that it was only after the French Revolution that people of the past discovered the future, and not before. In addressing their claim critically, Peter Burke, on the other hand, recognizes that even though "the pragmatic senses of future" were an earlier phenomenon, the early modern period in Europe was necessarily more affluent with such historical evidence as well as examples of institutionalized support for any future-oriented practices than earlier periods:

> An examination of the pragmatic senses of the future in the Middle Ages would also be illuminating, but the early modern evidence is richer, and the institutional supports for future-oriented practices were considerably stronger in the early modern period than in the centuries preceding it.[296]

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[296] Peter Burke, "Foreword: The History of the Future, 1350–2000," in *The Uses of the Future in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Andrea Brady and Emily Butterworth (New York: Routledge, 2010), xii.

Whatever the case may be there, how was it in the Ottoman context? Hagen and Menchinger make the point that the revelation history of the (Sunni) Ottoman Muslim population had no prospect of a "second coming," and so for them time was in a kind of suspension following the advent of Islam, to continue as such until a final apocalypse, or the end of the world as we know it.[297] Indeed, according to Islamic jurisprudence, as noted before, the only agent is the God and human acts are ultimately already determined by his will and to claim agency is itself blasphemy. Yet even so, the Ottoman literati, at least, were quite aware of the changes or divergences occurring from the established forms of administration of the "classical" era, as is clear from the advice literature of the late sixteenth century onwards. Predicting the actions of the future members of the House of Osman as lasting to an extended succession of 70 different sultans and presenting the Ottomans under their rule as invading all lands and solidifying Islam in those lands conquered as well as against the ruptures that emerged between different sects, and the conquer and defeat dynamics of the worldly politics were always in charge of history. In such a historical context, however, in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* narrative we see almost an act of partaking "agency" in the making of the future through the pseudo-historical prognostics on part of the *ulema* as has been and will further be argued through illustrations of the examples of such actions and intervention depicted in the oracular visions of the text.

4.4 Close Textual and Contextual Analysis

In the following sections, a survey of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* narrative through the lens of certain aspects of concern in relation to the Ottoman dynastic history will be briefly undertaken so as to explicate how the pseudo-historical narrative reveals its

[297] Hagen and Menchinger, "Ottoman Historical Thought," 92.

historical outlook in terms of these actual historical issues and where it stands in terms of these issue.

4.4.1 On Naming and Genealogy: Onomastics and Political Legitimacy

Names are not always what they seem.
— Mark Twain

The narrative records a mostly invented lineage extending the Ottoman dynasty to a total of seventy sultans who would supposedly reign until the end of time. These fictive sultans are commonly named Ahmed, Mehmed, İbrahim, Murad, Mustafa, Osman, Orhan, Selim, Süleyman, Beyazid, while several others are called Yusuf, Alaeddin, Yıldırım, Edhem, Azim, Ömer, Ali, Hasan and Hüseyin, yet some are mentioned only as "Name unknown" ("*ismi nâ-ma'lûm*"). All the while, those fictive sultans who are "the bad apples" of the bunch due to attempting fratricide and other wicked deeds, end up being punished for their deeds in the end, and are mentioned as "name unknown" ("*ismi nâ-mâ'lûm*") with added emphasis, unlike in the *Papasname* text, which just goes on without naming them. As the list of name choices made in the narrative illustrates the narrative indeed supports the idea of the consolidation of Islam under the jurispredencial tenets of the Sunni sect as well as under the political sovereignty of the Ottoman dynasty. The names reminiscent of a Shiite background, such as Hasan, Hüseyin, and Ali was not something unseen in the Ottoman dynasty as is revealed through a cursory review of the names of the sons of sultans. Perhaps because the Ottoman dynasty had also the same sentiment and aspiration for a Sunni orthodoxy consolidating all different sects of Islam. However, what is intersting is the fact that while in real historical context no Ottoman sultan ever came to throne with such a name the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* narrative is actually teeming with such sultans. Because even a cursory survey of the pedigree of the Ottoman dynasty reveals that Ottoman sultans themselves named their sons Hasan,

Hüseyin, and Ali, although none of these *şehzade*s ever actually came to the throne. Perhaps this is also in line with the claim of consolidation of Islam under Ottoman rule that we see in the text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, which may have been used to illustrate this common sentiment in both the Ottoman administrative and popular body."

4.4.2 On Methods of Succession and the Dynastic Line

I am not at all joking. My name is Achmet III. I was Grand Sultan many years. I dethroned my brother; my nephew dethroned me, my viziers were beheaded, and I am condemned to end my days in the old Seraglio.
— Voltaire, *Candide*

In line with its general political agenda, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* also gives glimpses into aspirations concerning the future of the Ottoman dynasty and conceptions regarding how the process of succession should proceed. In the text, the majority of the fictive sultans ascend the throne without practicing fratricide or indeed falling victim to any other troubles: instead, some are shown coming to the throne by a manner reminiscent of the principle of consensus (*icma*),[298] with the *ulema* taking the lead in achieving this consensus. In turn, they also appoint their own brothers to protect and govern different parts of the empire or to serve in various posts, such as Janissary aghas or, quite tellingly, as *şeyhülislam*s.

The narrative deliberately rejects an alternative lineage, such as the Tatar one, as a potential substitute to replace the Ottoman lineage from beyond the Ottoman realm proper. At the same time, however, the narrative also unwittingly reveals how such a potential dynastic replacement was an open communal consideration around the time the narrative was being produced. As mentioned above, the approximate actual date for the composition of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* seems to have been sometime during

[298] See İbrahim Kâfi Dönmez, "İcmâ," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 21. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2000. 417–31. 2014. Accessed July 7, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c21/c210308.pdf.

the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, which, if true, would make the matter of dynastic continuance and succession a highly political issue as well. The narrative is clearly very much informed by contemporary concerns and anxieties regarding the end of the lineage of the Ottoman dynasty around the time of Ibrahim's ascension to the throne in 1640. At this time, Ibrahim was the only option for the survival of the Ottoman lineage because his half-brother Murad IV had no living heir; however, Ibrahim's potential competence as a sovereign was initially questioned due to his long period of captivity within the walls of the palace. Indeed, it was reported that, as he was nearing death in 1640, Murad, lacking his own living heir yet purportedly unwilling to leave the throne to Ibrahim, instead intended to pass it on either to one of his favorite companions, Mustafa Pasha, or to the Tatar lineage.[299] This was an ongoing debate at the time of Ibrahim's succession, yet the narrative both directly and indirectly refuses such a potential change in the lineage. In the text, the Tatars are rather directly presented as an unsuitable potential alternative to the Ottoman line inasmuch as they are shown being "rescued from their sinful ways and wrongdoings"[300] by the invasion of their land. This was accomplished by the fictive twentieth sultan, whose name cannot be read due to a piece of paper stuck on the first two lines of his account, almost as if were a kind of censorship applied to the manuscript.[301]

Furthermore, the narrative's continuing account of the fictive sultans also makes a point to strike down any possibility of any other lineage, even from within the Ottoman realm, replacing the Ottoman line. For instance, in the account of the

[299] Feridun Emecen, "İbrâhim," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 21. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2000. 274–81. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=210274&idno2=c210224#1

[300] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 56a: "*Ey dervîş, bu sultân Tatar Hân ile ceng idüb yerinden kaldıra ● Ve halkı günâhdan ve yaramaz işlerden be-gâyet sakundura*."

[301] Ibid., 55a.

fictive fifty-sixth sultan Ali, the text records his wish to remove half of the *kul* servants from the imperial ranks owing to their large number. This was an action he had already taken earlier with the *sipahi*s, as there were no wars to be fought at the time. He thereby ordered a reduction in *kul* numbers and demanded that they take up a profession, which led to a revolt by the *kul*s, who aimed to bring the grand vizier to the throne in Ali's place. This results in great bloodshed and the murder of various viziers, and when the fictive Sultan Ali eventually reconsolidates his power, he issues an edict limiting the number of servants a household can have according to its status: ordinary households may have no more than two or three servants, viziers no more than ten, and the royal household no more than fifty servants and twenty horses:

> ***Elli Altıncı Pâdişâh Sultân 'Alî Hân*** *ola. Andan yine gördüm ki sarây kapusundan dört karındaşile bu sultân çıkdı ● Birin Hind'e ve birin Çîn-i Mâçîn'e ve birin Rumili'ne ● ve birin Mağrib eyâletine zabta gönderdi. Şeyh eyitdi "Çünki bu sultân göre ki sipâh tâ'ifesi ziyâde ola. Sâ'ir kul kezâlik sefer dahî olmaya. Yoklama idüb* [*70a*] *nısfını defterden ihrâc idüb san'at fermân eyleye. Ve bâkî kalan muzâfâta dahî 'ulûfe müyesser eyleye. Fî'l-mâ kul serkeşlik idüb dahî vezîr-i 'azamı iclâs kasd ideler* […] *Vüzerâyı katl ideler ● Ba'dehu bu sultân emrile kimesne iki üç hidmetkârdan gayrı istihdâm itmeye ●* […] *Ve sâ'ir vüzerâ on hidmetkâr fermân oluna ● Ve hadem-i pâdişâhîde elli nefer hidmetkâr ve yiğirmi atdan ziyâde olmaya.*[302]

In this oracular vision, the fictive fifty-sixth sultan Ali is shown to have different and more humble understanding of an Ottoman ruler which fits probably very well with the expectations or spoken aspirations of a religious group such as the *ulema*. Just like in the manner of what Halil İnalcık has observed as the traditional concept of statehood in which "the state [was] thought of as the joint property and inheritance of the dynasty,"[303] he does not refrain from sharing his authority as a ruler: he sends

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[302] Ibid., 69b–70a.

[303] Halil İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession and its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty," in Halil İnalcık, *The Middle East and the Balkans Under the Ottoman Empire*, 37–69. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 44.

one brother to the province of India, one to China, one to Rumelia, and one to Africa to maintain order. In his abstinent nature he gives the *ulema* a perfect model of a ruler: he issues edicts such that viziers can have no more than 10 persons in their retinue, while the imperial retinue is reduced to no more than 50 persons and 20 horses. He orders that bachelors must be trained in crafts or else they will be beaten with 40 blows. He does not forget the Kaaba in Mecca and makes it covered with satin cloth. In every aspect, he fits well in the *ulema* aspirations of a ruler, quite an opposite character he presents to the one they experienced in the person and the reign of Mehmed II. The fictive fifty-seventh sultan Süleyman also is interesting in this respect: he is shown to possess the virtues of a ruler but his reign lasts only nine months. But more interestingly, he is buried in Medina fittingly for the Sunni outlook of the narrative. No son survives him, so the lineage breaks after his reign. After him, fictive fifty-eight sultan Selim comes to throne. The fictive lineage of the Ottoman dynasty is indeed full of Selims and Süleymans as they were the sultans of the "golden age" after all. However, the narrative constantly plays around with the historical order of their coming to the throne as can be detected here as well. According to the oracular vision about fictive Sultan Selim, after Süleyman's death, the throne is to go to the grand vizier, but the *ulema* objects; then Süleyman's four brothers are requested to take the throne, but all refuse and without explaining how the text attributes the rulership to Selim. Perhaps the more interesting aspect of the episode is not the logical problem it exhibits but the power of agency it attributes to the *ulema* in exerting authority in running the state affairs. Indeed, this example once more demonstrates that an *ulema* outlook runs throughout the narrative.

4.4.3 On Political Institutions and Societal Bodies

The *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*'s antecedent text, the *Papasnâme*, is heavily informed by the contemporary (i.e., mid-seventeenth century) conflict between Sufi mystics and the Kadızadeli-affiliated members of the *ulema* class, and it comes out firmly in favor of the former, effectively blessing them due to their supposed oracular ability to foresee the Ottoman dynasty's future. The *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, on the other hand, represents a more trimmed Islamic discourse, imposing a singular voice on the narrative by simply omitting the related long section of the *Papasnâme* that deals with such arguments. In this respect, unlike its antecedent, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* is effectively a rewriting that consciously imposes a unitary outlook onto the Ottoman religious landscape, avoiding any direct mention of such contemporary political and religious factionalisms. In its monologic discourse, it dispenses altogether with Sufi-oriented terms like *evliya*, always preferring the term *ulema* instead.

In line with this, the Islamic discourse evoked in the narrative on the whole depicts an overarching consolidation of Islam itself. This is obliquely hinted at through certain fictive sultans being named Ali, Hasan, and Hüseyin, an issue already touched upon above. Another such unifying tendency is illustrated in the case of the fictive twenty-second Sultan Selim Han. According to the sheikh's vision, Selim combines the *fiqh*s of the four schools (*madhhab*s) of Islamic jurisprudence into one book that he himself prepares. In his interpretation of the vision to the inquistive Dervish Mehmed, on the other hand, he declares that the meaning of this aspect of the vision is that the sultan will decree that all of the people must adopt the Hanafi *fiqh*.[304] Such consciously used examples of a unifying Islamic discourse and rhetoric multiply throughout the narrative of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, reflecting and promoting

[304] *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, 57a.

what might be termed a more "fundamentalist" and even ascetic morality that heavily emphasizes the Sunna and the example of Muhammad. For instance, all the fictive sultans who act especially piously, including the aforementioned Selim, and/or who ban wine and opium are glorified at their death, often with angels coming down to earth to bury them.

In fact, the deaths and burial places named for many of the fictive sultans also accord with the narrative's consciously enacted consolidation of Islam: starting with the twenty-fifth fictive sultan, the pious Bayezid, a great many of the sultans are buried in Medina. Moreover, several of them also die while performing the prayer, such as the forty-third sultan Hüseyin and the sixtieth sultan Bayezid, or even, like the thirty-sixth sultan Hüseyin, die while they are at the Kaaba in Mecca.

Such features as these, which are repeated throughout the narrative for various fictive sultans, illustrates how at least one variety of the social imagination aspired to a consolidation of Islam that would incorporate the very center of the Sunni variety of that faith into the heart of the Ottoman enterprise, from where it would spread to encompass the whole of the Islamic sphere and even, through conquest and conversion, beyond.

4.5 Conclusion: In Response to the Question of Ottoman "Decline"

In conclusion, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* narrative and its context are illustrative not only of how the adverse conditions of the seventeenth century left a deep mark on the Ottoman imagination, but also of how miscellanies can potentially offer a rich source for the exploration of different Ottoman mentalities. In the text, the narration of an oracular experience provides us with glimpses of contemporary social responses to the current affairs and problems of the Ottoman political and social entity, which both contemporary and modern historiography have considered to be

the problem of the “decline” and transformation of the Ottoman state. Yet, parallel to this, the text also records a seventeenth-century aspirational envisioning of the future of the empire, which is, in its own albeit roundabout way, highly illustrative of contemporary social concerns and fears.

The text thus demonstrates how, following positivist tendencies quite prevalent in historical inquiry, the practice of employing taxonomies of “fact” and “fiction” and maintaining the dichotomy constructed between the two as a working categorical partition can be quite detrimental to research into the mentalities of the past. In any historiographical inquiry into past mentalities, what matters most is not figuring out what happened factually, but rather trying to understand how it was experienced and interpreted by people actually involved in the process. In short, a fictive world produced by people of the past—as in the example of *Bahrü’l-Mükâşefe*—can indeed provide us with a great deal of information about their experience of their own history.

Finally, the ultimate question that needs to be addressed here in relation to the *Bahrü’l-Mükâşefe* is whether or not, and to what extent, the pseudo-historical narrative produced in the recension by Mehmed Nâbî fits into the concept of the “popular.” The text, in his configuration of it, clearly evinces a much more elevated diction than its antecedent, the *Papasnâme*, which, as Evliya Çelebi’s testimony reveals,[305] seems to have enjoyed a good deal of “popularity.” The rather highbrow diction of Mehmed Nâbî’s version, on the other hand, indicates that the text was, as suggested above, explicitly rendered so as to fall in line with an *ulema* outlook, and also to accord more with a written cultural milieu, in that the text at hand in the Kemankeş 430 manuscript does not indicate a textual formation and configuration

[305] See footnote #240.

that could and would have been reproduced in an oral environment. Moreover, the fact that the text has marginal corrections often marked with the term “checked” (*sahh*)[306] also attests to its having been reproduced on a writerly cultural plane. However, even though this recension of the text does not thus adhere to an oral cultural environment, the fact remains that this narrative was reproduced, in full or in part, across several manuscript copies, at least four of which are still extant in the archives today. This demonstrates that although the text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* did perhaps not have such a wide “popular” appeal as the antecedent *Papasnâme*, it nevertheless did appeal to certain circles of the population, especially among the *ulema*, as indicated by the fact that it did not remain a solitary autograph copy after Mehmed Nâbî’s rendition but was rather reproduced in various manuscript forms. All in all, then, the social interest this narrative might have potentially aroused among wider segments of the population indicates that some degree of “popular” interest in contemporary Ottoman dynastic history and its future trajectory occupied the social memory and popular imagination in the “post-classical” period of the empire, as the text of the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* correspondingly records.

[306] See, for example, footnotes #224 and #225.

CHAPTER V

AN IMAGINARY JOURNEY INTO THE OTTOMAN PAST: A STUDY OF THE PSEUDO-HISTORICAL *HİKÂYET-İ ZUHÛR-I ÂL-İ ‘OSMÂN* NARRATIVES

“But history, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in. Can you?”
“Yes, I am fond of history.”
“I wish I were too. I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all—it is very tiresome: and yet I often think it odd that it should be so dull, for a great deal of it must be invention. The speeches that are put into the heroes’ mouths, their thoughts and designs—the chief of all this must be invention, and invention is what delights me in other books.”
—Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*

5.1. Introductory Remarks: General Overview

In this chapter, I examine the different versions of the second set of pseudo-historical narratives that are the focus of my study, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* or “The Story of the Rise of the House of Osman,” in an attempt to demonstrate how Ottoman social memory and imagination at work retold the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty. In this, my aim is to further investigate *what* these pseudo-historical narratives of anonymous authorship reveal about *how* the later Ottoman social imagination, starting from the late sixteenth and continuing through the mid-nineteenth century, worked to devise and revise the origins of the social and political entity that was the Ottoman Empire.

The pseudo-historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*[307] narratives examined in this chapter are also alternately entitled *Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* or "The Legend of the Rise of the House of Osman" (in two renditions), *Risâle der Beyân-ı Menâkib-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* or "The Treatise Concerning the Legend of the Rise of the House of Osman" (in one rendition), and *Târîh-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, or "The History of the Rise of the House of Osman" (in one rendition).[308] These changes essentially concern the genre attribution of the text in these various renditions. Thus, this volatility in terms of genre attribution as reflected in the variant titles suggests that the nature of this narrative, shifting between the purely legendary and a somewhat historical claim, was also a concern for the copyists who reproduced the text. In fact, on the whole, the text *itself* shifts registers constantly, moving from the purely and clearly legendary to a somewhat more historical mode at various points in the narrative: it records wholly legendary tales about the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman while also taking pains to provide seemingly exact—and sometimes correct—dates for various events, such as the dates of certain Ottoman conquests, royal deaths, and accessions to the Ottoman throne. However, throughout all the varied appellations of the text, the phrase emphasizing the "emergence" or "rise" (*zuhûr*) of the Ottoman dynasty in the title remains the same, indicating that these

[307] In some manuscript copies, the title *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* is spelled slightly different, alternately as *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* or *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*.

[308] Some of the known extant eleven copies of the narrative are written under different titles, with only two of them untitled in the manuscript; these details will be duly referred to in the study: *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i Osman; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144. 1a–51b; *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i Osman; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 11159; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 5444; Untitled, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Tercüman Gazetesi collection, Y189; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1: 1a–76b; *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, İbrahim Efendi collection, 670; Untitled, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Yazma Bağışlar Collection, 2981/1 –2; *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Türkçe Yazmaları collection, BEL_Yz_O.000039/02: 69b–174b; *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Muallim Cevdet collection, MC_Yz_K.000084; *Risâle der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-u Âli-i Osmân*, Çorum Hasan Paşa Public Library, 19 Hk 1292. 10b–71b; *Tarih-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Erzurum Atatürk University, Seyfettin Özege collection, 0137897.

narratives were pointedly conceived so as to focus, in an imaginative fashion, on the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty.

Although the topic of the rise of the Ottomans in history has remained a major focus of Ottoman historiography for many decades, these particular pseudo-historical narratives—perhaps, though not surprisingly, due to their imaginative manner of retelling—have not yet attracted any scholarly attention. This lack of academic interest in these particular pseudo-historical narratives may derive, at least in part, from the aforementioned ambiguity that they exhibit in terms of genre. As already indicated, these texts are neither purely fictional, since they purport to relate nothing but the beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty and polity through to the ascension of Selim I (r. 1512–1520), nor are they wholly factual or fact-oriented histories, despite the fact they do take care to provide exact dates for sultans' reigns and their various conquests, in a manner somewhat reminiscent of official or canonized Ottoman chronicles arranged according to sultans' reigns. Instead, these narratives are simultaneously both factual *and* fictional in their retelling of the earliest period of the Ottoman dynasty, and at times to differing degrees.

The scholarly disinterest on part of the historians, however, may also have been due to a certain positivist disregard, one which is rather clearly revealed in a catalogue note written in the Millet Library copy doubly entitled *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*.[309] This note may have been written by the bibliophile Ali Emîrî himself, as the copy is held in the collection personally arranged by him. The note reads: "This is *an Ottoman quasi-history* spanning the period up until the ascension of Sultan Selim the First, yet from beginning to end

[309] *Hikâyât-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i Osman; Der Beyân-ı Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144. 1a–51b.

and from top to bottom it consists of a series of spurious and fabricated lies. Its author is unknown."[310] In this connection, we might refer to "a curious conflict" which the historian Marc Bloch once observed emerging in the attitudes of many historians:

> When it is a question of ascertaining whether or not some human act has really taken place, they cannot be sufficiently painstaking. If they proceed to the reasons for that act, they are content with the merest appearance, ordinarily founded upon one of those maxims of commonplace psychology which are neither more nor less true than their opposites.[311]

The apparent dismissal of the pseudo-historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives in Ottoman historiography indeed suggests a similar scholarly attitude. Some Ottoman historians have been primarily concerned with the factual details of events such as extracting (and/or correcting) the date of a particular event by means of a thorough study of a multitude of possible narrative sources, such as the widely accepted and "canonized" chronicles of the period, along with other historical documents and sources. On the other hand, many such scholars readily avoid any questioning of the actual *incentives* that might have led to the continual production and reproduction of sources like the *Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, although it is apodictic that such questioning would, in fact, tell *more* about just what kind of a historical experience had been undergone, as well as how it was understood, responded to, and expounded upon by contemporaries. It is especially intriguing to see in how divergent a manner people of the time told and retold the history of the emergence and earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty in the pseudo-historical narratives produced between, at least, the late eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries.

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[310] Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144, 1a, emphasis added: "*Sultân Selâm Hân-ı evvelin cülûsuna kadar olan* gûya bir 'Osmânlı târîhidir *fakat ibtidâdan intihâya kadar serâpâ birtakım düzme ve koşma yalanlardan 'ibârettir. Mü'ellifi ma'lûm değildir.*"

[311] Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2004), 161.

The aforementioned rather dismissive remark in the Millet Library catalogue, by contrast, reveals just such a vehemently positivist outlook, one that is reluctant or unwilling to make an effort to understand, let alone question, why and in what historical context such narratives—which in many ways diverge quite sharply from the commonly accepted historical "facts"—might have been produced and continually reproduced in the Ottoman realm in first place. Remarkably, the same positivist scholarly outlook has also never attempted to historicize these texts or even question why such pseudo-historical narratives might have had such a "popular"[312] reception leading to their recognition as being worthy of reproduction in multiple manuscript copies over a very long period of later Ottoman history.

Such a scholarly investigation will, however, be the main objective that this study will pursue in this chapter. This is because it is imperative to question what appealed to the Ottoman audience in these pseudo-historical narratives so as to attract such a reception, which both led to the production of, and indeed is manifestly demonstrated by, the eleven known extant manuscript copies found in various collections in Turkey today.

Some of these eleven copies of the narrative are recorded together with a few other texts in composite or miscellaneous manuscripts, while some others are recorded in separate manuscripts and fascicles, several of which prove to be finely-made later copies devoted entirely to this one narrative. This fact also indicates a popular appeal to the narrative, especially in the later periods of the empire, as the remaining copies produced in the period suggest. This may also point to a communal manner of consumption, since the composition of some of these fascicle (or single-text

[312] On the term "popular," its use in the study, and its properties as detected in the pseudo-historical narratives of *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, see footnote #20.

manuscript) copies, as well as the cheap quality of the material, also hints at a public rather than a private functionality. Indeed, these copies seem to have been made solely so as to record this one text, quite possibly reproducing an oral performance or else meant to be used as a prompt for public consumption in an oral environment, as opposed to being produced to provide the aesthetic appeal and cultural cachet of a material object in the form of a manuscript.

However, before jumping to conclusions about these copies and their manuscript relations, we should recall certain aspects of Daniel Starza Smith's study of different renditions of John Donne's *Satyres*. Tracing these renditions as they were recorded in both miscellanies and fascicles alike, with the aim of reconstructing both the making of the texts and the interrelations among their copies, Smith focuses particularly on a booklet (i.e., a separate fascicle) manuscript copy attached to a larger volume. Having realized its significance in the chain of reproduction of the differing copies he studied, Smith notes the following important inferences about the miscellany-fascicle relationship:

> What can this study of a manuscript booklet tell us about miscellanies? Placed at the outset of an essay collection about larger manuscript volumes, it draws attention to the process by which the components of miscellanies circulated before coming into the hands of collectors and scribes. It further illustrates […] that a personal anthology does not necessarily mark "the terminus of a chain of acts of publication," and demonstrates how miscellanies were used as sources for separates and fascicles as well as other composite volumes. The circulation of Donne's *Satyres* in fascicle form shows a seventeenth-century continuity of Alexandra Gillespie's argument about medieval scribes, who "made booklets because this flexible format allowed for dynamic and restless circulation of texts. Small *libelli* could be more easily corrected and recopied at a patron's … request than could large collections."[313]

According to the material logic of how manuscripts typically work, we might sensibly assume that separates/fascicles are made into miscellanies in terms of their

[313] Daniel Starza Smith, "Before (and after) the Miscellany: Reconstructing Donne's *Satyres* in the Conway Papers," in *Manuscript Miscellanies in Early Modern England*, edited by Joshua Eckhardt and Daniel Starza Smith (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2014), 35.

material production, in temporal sequence. However, upon more thorough study we learn that the practical aspect, or the tricks of the trade of copying, might sometimes demand just the opposite. In constructing manuscript stemmas, It is important to trace the text, to follow its codicological and/or textual divergences carefully, in order to arrive at the right sequence of events. Due to the practical problem of not having had access to all the copies of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* during this study, I will refrain from attempting to construct their stemma here. However, given the fact there are many extant copies of the text, we can easily assume that these narratives entertained some "popular" appeal in their time, and it is also possible to argue that these narratives may have been shaped, at least partly, by such a "popular" imagination in order to have actually attained such an appeal among a general Ottoman audience.

Now, it is also crucial to ask why these "popular" narratives narrate the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty in the way that they do; that is, with numerous quite remarkable divergences from the generally accepted and upheld versions of historical events and figures from the earliest episodes of Ottoman dynastic history. In an attempt to understand what these pseudo-historical narratives signify in terms of the Ottoman social imagination and popular historical consciousness concerning the earliest period of the Ottoman dynasty, the rest of the chapter will raise these questions through various textual references to the narratives and to the divergences they display in terms of their historical content.

Firstly, the most striking of these divergences that is worth initially mentioning is the fact that these pseudo-historical narratives identify the earliest ancestor of the Ottoman line as an Ahmed Beg, who is a vassal of the Persian (*'Acem*) shah of the time. Thus, contrary to the semi-official accounts of Ottoman dynastic history seen

in the histories of Oruç Beg, the anonymous chronicler, Âşıkpaşazâde, and Neşrî, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives predicate and designate the forerunner of the Ottoman dynasty neither as Osman's mythical grandfather Süleyman Shah, who supposedly led his followers into Anatolia,[314] nor as his still more mythical grandfather Gündüz Alp,[315] nor as Ertuğrul, who was said to have been granted Söğüt as a homeland by the Seljuk sultan Alaeddin,[316] nor even as the eponymous founder Osman himself.[317] Contrary to the "canonized" accounts of Ottoman dynastic history—i.e., the histories of Ahmedî, Enverî, Oruc Beg, the anonymous chronicler, Âşıkpaşazâde, and Neşrî—the pseudo-historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i*

[314] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, ed. Kemal Yavuz and M.A. Yekta Saraç (Istanbul: Koç Kültür Sanat Yayınları, 2003), 54; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. ʻAli Beg (Istanbul: Matba'a-ı ʻAmire, 1914); reprint: *Āshiqpashazādeh*, *Āshiqpashazādeh Ta'rīkhī: A History of the Ottoman Empire to A.H. 883 (AD 1478)* (Westmead, UK: Gregg, 1970), 3; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul: Çamlıca Basım Yayım, 2008), 3–4; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*, ed. Nihat Azamat (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1992), 8–9; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, ed. Faik Reşit Unat and Mehmed A. Köymen (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2014), I: 59–61.

[315] Kemal Sılay, "Aḥmedī's History of the Ottoman Dynasty," *Journal of Turkish Studies / Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 16 (1992): 129–200, 136, 146; Enverî, *Fatih Devri Kaynaklarından Düstûrnâme-i Enverî: Osmanlı Tarihi Kısmı (1299–1466)*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), LXXIX, 21. In Ahmedî's short Ottoman history, although the text names Gündüz Alp before Ertuğrul, it remains vague as to their relationship, specifically whether or not Gündüz Alp is Ertuğrul's father, while Enverî names Gündüz Alp as Ertuğrul's father without any reservation. Some later historians, such as Rûhî Çelebi, also adopted the same information in their accounts; cf. the aforementioned sources; Rûhî Çelebi, "Rûhî Târîhi," ed. Yaşar Yücel and Halil Erdoğan Cengiz, *Belgeler* XIV.18 (1992): 379. On the other hand, Şükrullah, Âşıkpaşâzade, Neşrî, Oruç Beg, the anonymous chronicler(s), and some later historians including İdris-i Bitlisî, all of whom used the even earlier histories as primary sources, show Süleyman Shah as Ertuğrul's father; cf. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: TTK, 1972), I, 100, footnote #2. Excepting Şükrullah, these chroniclers all state that Süleyman Shah died on his horse while crossing the Euphrates, and was buried in a nearby place, later called "the Turkish Tomb," in the vicinity of the Qal'at Ja'bar. However, as Uzunçarşılı points out, the same story had also been told about the death of Suleiman ibn Qutulmish, the founder of the Seljuq Turkish state in Anatolia, who ruled it as Seljuq Sultan of Rûm from 1077 until his death in 1086, thus making these events as told regarding Süleyman Shah's death quite unreliable in terms of historical accuracy; cf. Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, I, 100, footnote #2. In the light of all this conflicting information, Uzunçarşılı claims that it might be more plausible to accept Gündüz Alp as Ertuğrul's father; see Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, I, 100, footnote #2.

[316] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 53; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, 4; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 7; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*, 9; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, I: 65.

[317] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 53; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, 2; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 7; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*, 9; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, I: 71–79.

'Osmân narratives start the lineage not with any of these "established" (if largely mythical) figures, but rather with the new figure of Ahmed Beg.

According to the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, Ahmed Beg is the leader of a semi-nomadic Turcoman tribe, the Tîr u Seyf (Arrow and Sword), and he commands ten thousand soldiers. He dwells on the land of the Persian shah, whose name is given as Muhammad and who, as directly and quite tellingly declared in the text, was not a Kızılbaş at the time. Every summer, Ahmed Beg and the Tîr u Seyf settle in whatever pasture they wish in return for paying the shah a tribute of forty sets of horse tack every Nowruz:

> *Râvîler şöyle rivâyet iderler ki 'Acem iklîminde Tebriz havâlîlerinde Türkmân Tîr ü Seyf kabilesinin bir begi var idi. İsmine Ahmed Beg dirler idi. Ve gâyet nâm* [u] *sân sâhibi ve on bin mikdârı güzîde 'asker sâhibi idi. Kutlu ve şecâ'atlü ve sâhib-kerem ve 'aklı evvel ve tedbîrde yektâ idi. Ol zamân 'Acem şâhı Kızılbaş değil. İsmine Muhammed Şâh dirler idi. Ahmed Beg anın toprağında olurdı. Be-her sene vakt-i Nevrûzda Muhammed Şâh'a kırk 'aded at çulı virir idi. Gayrı bir şey virmezdi. Beğendiği yaylada ve beğendiği kışlakda eğlenürdi.*[318]

In this introduction to the figure of Ahmed Beg, he is described as already being renowned, as well as being blessed, brave, generous, wise, and uniquely cautious in his actions. Later, particularly due to the attribution to Ahmed Beg of the auspicious dream signifying the emergence of the dynasty, it will emerge that this Ahmed Beg is in fact designated as the original forefather of the entire Ottoman lineage: he will prove to be the father of "Erdoğdu" (not Ertuğrul), who in turn will be the father of "Osmancık" (not Osman).

The Ottoman Empire, as is well known, is said to have begun, quite literally, with a dream.[319] The dream, as related in the best-known accounts recorded in the

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[318] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osman*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1, 1b –2a.

[319] Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2007): 2.

"canonized" chronicles of the rise of the Ottomans, runs as follows. One night, Osman had an auspicious dream, either in the house of a holy man named Edebali or elsewhere, and he had Edebali interpret the dream.[320] The basic outline of the dream proved resilient enough to be repeated in most of the early Ottoman chronicles:

> He saw that a moon arose from the holy man's breast and came to sink in his own breast. A tree then sprouted from his navel and its shade compassed the world. Beneath this shade there were mountains, and streams flowed forth from the foot of each mountain. Some people drank from these running waters, others watered gardens, while yet others caused fountains to flow. When Osman awoke he told the story to the holy man, who said "Osman, my son, congratulations, for God has given the imperial office to you and your descendants and my daughter Malhun shall be your wife."[321]

This apparently divinely inspired mythical "founding" dream involving a tree growing from the navel to signify the birth of the Ottoman dynasty is usually ascribed to Osman himself, or to his father Ertuğrul,[322] and effectively serves as a topos for the legitimization of the Ottoman dynastic lineage. In the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives, on the other hand, it is Ahmed who has the dream. This choice in the narrative makes it clear that Ahmed Beg is deliberately inscribed as the forefather of the lineage:

> *Ahmed Beg bir gîce rü'yâsında gördi ki kendü göbeğinden bir müntehâ direht zuhûr idüb 'âleme sâye saldı. Ve herkes sâyesinde metâ'ını bâzara koymuş alış veriş iderler. Hâbdan bîdâr olub kendü kendiye mülâhazâ idüb "Bu rü'yâyı bir 'âlim-i fâzıl kimseye ta'bîr itdirmeli" diyüb* ***ol***[323] *zamân Tebriz'de bir gâyet 'âlim müfti var idi. Herkes rü'yâların ana ta'bîr itdirirlerdi. Ahmed Beg Müfti Efendi'ye varub gördiği rü'yâyı söyledi.*[324]

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[320] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 57–8; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, 6; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân*, 10.

[321] Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 2.

[322] Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşri's versions attribute the inaugural dream to Osman, while Oruç Beg and the anonymous chronicler of the *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân* impute this episode to his father Ertuğrul. Cf. Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 57–8; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, 6; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 8; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân*, 10; Mehmed Neşri, *Kitâb-ı Cihan-Nümâ - Neşrî Tarihi I-II*, I: 81–3.

[323] The parts of the manuscript written in rubric will be indicated in bold in my transliterations from the text.

[324] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osman*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 2a.

The fact that, in these narratives, this all-important auspicious dream so commonly deployed in the earliest Ottoman chronicles as well is specifically attributed to Ahmed Beg is quite striking and significant. In this way, the text simultaneously converges with and diverges from the commonly upheld, "canonical" versions of the history of the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty. Thus, this Janus-like textual feature might be regarded as an example of how these pseudo-historical narratives—which are otherwise based largely on imaginative and fictive grounds in terms of the events they narrate—might hold in their composition a kernel of truth, or a figment of rationality among their many irrationalities, not about any historical events as they "actually" happened, but rather about *how* the canonized histories were received and adopted by the Ottoman social memory and imagination as their common version of history. Accordingly, my study of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* texts will be primarily concerned with this variety of feature. In this, my aim is to get a glimpse of the workings of the Ottoman social memory and imagination in its address to, and reception of, factual Ottoman history.

The use of this in/augural dream episode in these pseudo-historical narratives shows that they remained close to the narrational patterns and traditions of the canonized chronicles. Because this study does not focus on these chronicles, which are generally known as *Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân*, I will refrain from noting any further particular narrational convergences or divergences that they display as compared with one another. However, suffice it to say here that their accountability in relaying the historical events of the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty on the basis of historical veracity depends very much on the convergences and narrational affinities that they share in their versions, and the modern Ottoman historiography has in fact emphasized these shared grounds in a more or less explicit attempt to arrive at one

“true” version of the history of the period, in the process largely discarding these chronicles’ less pronounced, but still present, divergences.

The scholarly practice of stitching together a critical edition of these canonized chronicles may have been the reason behind this historiographical approach. However, the convergences among the various chronicles might also very well have been the result of the stemmas through which they were produced as manuscripts, inasmuch as they had been in intertextual dialogue during their processes of manuscript production, and thereby ended up repeating verbatim many parts of their narratives. In short, when studying the canonized chronicles of early Ottoman history, two parameters of investigation need to be taken into account: first, their production as manuscripts, along with its accompanying perks and pitfalls, and second, the particular sociohistorical contexts within which they were produced. It is only in this way that we can arrive at an understanding of their textual convergences and divergences in terms of how these canonized works of historiography relate the same period in Ottoman history and what they actually signify in these particular textual configurations.

This study of the pseudo-historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* narratives, on the other hand, will refer to these canonized chronicles’ relevant sections only in so far as they will help to shed light on how the Ottoman social memory and imagination had been in contact with the canonized versions of history during the shaping process of these pseudo-historical narratives. In short, the main object of study in the chapter will remain the pseudo-historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* narratives in terms of what they reveal concerning *how* and *why* the Ottoman social imagination and memory pictured the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty. To this end, the rest of the chapter will undertake a close examination of these narratives’

features in terms of form and content, as well as looking at their narrational characteristics and contextual contingencies.

5.2 Textual and Historical Context of Production

As has already been mentioned, there are eleven known remaining copies of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, eight of which are currently accessible in digital form in the manuscript archives in Turkey.[325] Two of the three undated but possibly early copies, which have not yet been digitized, are located in the aforementioned Ali Emîrî history collection of the Millet Library. It may be partly due to the dismissive note mentioned earlier[326] that these particular manuscripts have not yet been digitized, a possibility which gains credence when we consider that all of the collection's other histories of the Ottoman dynasty have been digitized. The fact that there are eleven copies of this narrative disseminated across different collections and libraries in cities at some distance from the center in Istanbul—such as Çorum and Erzurum, for example—can be seen as a kind of testimony to these narratives' holding a certain degree of "popular" interest among an Ottoman audience over a long period, beginning, at the latest, after 1792, the date of the earliest dated copy.

Based on the fact that there are many undated copies as well, and on the speculation that there may well have been more copies that have not survived or remain undiscovered, it might be argued that this narrative first came into being even earlier

[325] See the relevant section "Primary Sources" in the Introduction for differences in terms of form and content among the manuscript copies. As noted earlier in footnote #308, the eleven known remaining copies are located in various collections, the last eight of which recorded here are accessible in digital form, while the first three are not: Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144. 1a–51b; Millet Library, Istanbul, Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 11159; Erzurum Atatürk University, Seyfettin Özege collection, 0137897; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 5444; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Tercüman Gazetesi collection, Y189; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1: 1a–76b; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, İbrahim Efendi collection, 670; Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Yazma Bağışlar Collection, 2981/1 –2; İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Türkçe Yazmaları collection, BEL_Yz_O.000039/02: 69b–174b; İBB Atatürk Kitaplığı, Muallim Cevdet collection, MC_Yz_K.000084; Çorum Hasan Paşa Public Library, 19 Hk 1292. 10b–71b.

[326] See footnote #310.

than the end of the eighteenth century. The fact that some copies of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* include within their narrational scope versions of the earlier narrative called the *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Paşa*—a posthumous legend about Mehmed II's executed grand vizier Mahmud Pasha Angelović (d. 1474)[327]—also suggests both a potential earlier date of production and a degree of "popular" appeal, since the legend of Mahmud Pasha had in fact been very popular, and was reproduced widely from the sixteenth century onwards, being present in twenty-one known extant manuscript copies.[328]

Another feature of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives that suggests a strong "popular" appeal is their usage of a relatively simple, common Turkish diction. At times, the texts exhibit certain archaic Turkish words and forms, but there are hardly any words of Arabic or Persian origin, with the exception of some clearly deliberately chosen Persian words at the beginning of the narrative, relating Ahmed Beg's time as a vassal of the shah in the vicinity of Tabriz. Indeed, on the whole these narratives bear a distinctly ordinary Ottoman Turkish daily language usage, suggesting again that they addressed, and were meant to address, an audience of ordinary people, very likely in an oral environment, rather than aiming to appeal exclusively to an educated clientele or patronage. Also supporting the idea that these narratives were intended for, or resulted from, performance and reception in an oral environment are the facts that, firstly, at several points in the text, the narrative voice directly addresses its audience with salutations such as "My dear!" ("*Benim*

[327] Theoharis Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453–1474)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 356–396.

[328] The narrative content as well as historical significance of *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Pasha*, and *how* and *why* it was incorporated into the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives will be important points of consideration that will be investigated in due course and in detail in this chapter. For the locations where the twenty-one known extant copies of the legend are held, see footnote #27.

canım!") or "O Brother!" ("*Ey Karındaş!*"),[329] and, secondly, when Mahmud Pasha and Mehmed II die within the narrative, the narrator directly requests the audience to pray for them.[330] Another related point is that, although specific Hijri dates are given in the text in a manner that effectively emulates a historical or historiographical register, the text's narrating voice nonetheless continues to address the audience directly, actively changing the story's focus by saying, "Our story now turns to..." (just as a *meddah* might do during an oral performance).[331] Along with such an oral function, if we consider the codicological nature of some of the copies—i.e., the fact that some of them are extant in clearly hastily prepared fascicles or miscellanies, while others are extant in carefully prepared and neatly written manuscripts—everything points to a particularly complex web of reproduction of the text, most probably through both oral cultural spheres and written cultural contexts, thus testifying to a "popular" past for the narrative that is quite unlike its more recent history.

Along with such codicological evidence, the long timespan over which the text was reproduced in many miscellanies as well as single-text manuscripts and fascicles also attests to a popular appeal for these pseudo-historical narratives. Some of the undated copies may well be of an earlier date—a matter requiring more extensive and specialized codicological investigation to substantiate—and there might just as well have been earlier copies that are lost to us or remain unearthed. However,

[329] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1: 16a, 59b.

[330] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 63b, 67a.

[331] There are many instances of such immediate focus or episode change in the narrative executed directly by the narrative voice as an external focalizer; for the examples of this oral narrative tactic in the text, see (each line number info can be seen after the comma): *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Fatih No. 4206/1: 4b.9; 13b.12–13; 14a.9–10; 14b.3–4; 15a.4–5; 16a.7–8; 16b.7–8; 18a.11–12; 39a.10–11; 39b–40a.13–1; 44a.1–2; 44a.11; 45a.1–2; 45b.9; 46b.12; 50b.13; 52a.1–2; 53b.6; 56b.6–7; 58a.4–5, 10; 59a.8; 63a.3–4; 63b–64a.13–1; 64b.1–2; 65a.6–7; 66b.4; 68a.2–3; 68a–68b.13–1; 73b.6; 75a.5.

beyond these speculations and given the manuscripts that are indeed extant, the fact remains that the earliest dated surviving manuscript of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* is an untitled single-text copy completed on Zilkade 15, AH 1208 (June 14, 1794 CE).[332] Alongside the colophon, the copyist of this earliest known dated copy records “*Eser-i hâmeü’l-fakîr Mustafâ bin İsmâ‘îl ‘afâ ‘anhu*,” marking the text as the penwork of Mustafa bin İsmail, the manuscript’s copyist.[333] The date of completion for this particular copy suggests that the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* narratives were in circulation in the Ottoman cultural sphere from at least the end of the eighteenth century onwards, with this copy dating specifically to the reign of Selim III (r. 1789–1807). They then remained in circulation for quite some time, as the latest known surviving dated copy of the narrative was recorded as having been completed on Muharrem 9, AH 1264 (December 17, 1847 CE),[334] thus taking the full verifiable timespan of consumption and reception for these pseudo-historical narratives up to at least 50 years.

This latter and latest dated copy of *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osmân* is paired in a composite manuscript[335] with *Hikâyet-i Şirvân Şâh ve Şemâ’il Bânû* (The Story of Shirvan Shah and Shema’il Banu).[336] This romance is recognized as being either a semi-original “freestyle” Turkish translation of a hitherto unidentified sixteenth-century Persian story, or else possibly an original rendering of a love story between Shirvan Shah and Shema’il Banu.[337] In the context of this study, the most notable aspect of the story, one that might in fact shed some light on the *raison d’être* of its

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[332] Untitled. Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul. Tercüman Gazetesi collection, Y189, 34b.

[333] Untitled. Y189, 34b.

[334] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ‘Osman*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 76b.

[335] Ibid.

[336] Ibid., 77a–139b.

[337] Selami Ece, “Şirvan Şah ve Şemail Banu,” *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 22 (2003): 79–88.

pairing with the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narrative, is the fact that, even though this is a Persianate romance concerning the trials of love endured on the journey to union by Shirvan Shah and his beloved Shema'il Banu—both of which are symbolically generic names for the characters—the name Shirvan Shah itself suggests a long historical background hinting at the Sunni Shirvanshah dynasty, which endured in the eastern Caucasus region between the late eighth and the mid-sixteenth centuries CE, while Shema'il (an Arabic-rooted word which literally means "appearance" and therefore connotes a beautiful countenance) when paired with Banu (a Persian-rooted word which indicates a woman of high birth) also suggests a dynastic or at least an aristocratic background. In fact, many of the trials these two lovers face on their journey toward love and union are the result of agreements and disagreements between various dynastic entities in the Caucasus and Transoxiana, an area that had long been a region of contestation, from the first centuries of Islamic expansion on through the time of such dynasties as the Mongols, the Safavids, and the Ottomans.

As for Shirvanshah, this was a generic title in the medieval era for the rulers of Shirwan in the eastern Caucasus, as well as being the name of the dynasty that ruled this political entity.[338] This historical and geographical context was by no means foreign to the Ottoman cultural sphere: for instance, the no longer extant anonymous *Târîh-i Bâbu'l-Ebvâb*, recounting the earlier history of this dynasty, was preserved in the chronicle *Câmiü'd-Düvel*[339] by the late seventeenth-century Ottoman historian

[338] W. Barthold, "Shīrwān, Shirwān or Sharwān" and "Shīrwān Shāh," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 488.

[339] Müneccimbaşı, *Câmiü'd-düvel: Osmanlı Tarihi, 1299-1481*, ed. Ahmet Ağırakça (Istanbul: Insan, 1995).

Müneccim Başı (d. 1702).[340] The fact that this Sunni dynasty and its subjects were later forced to convert to Shi'ism after Shah Ismail I, the founder of the Safavid dynasty, invaded Shirwan in 1501[341] was highly relevant to the Ottoman administration and public, which from the later part of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent underwent a Sunnification process that was in some ways explicitly meant to counter the rising power of the Safavids.[342] The political entity of Shirwan, which continued as a Safavid vassal state through 1538, when, following an uprising, it was annexed as a province of the Safavid state under the rule of Tahmasp I (r. 1524–1576), who thereby ended the Shirvanshah dynasty.[343] Following the annexation, the Shirwan region became an area of contestation between the Ottomans and the Safavids: in 1578, the Ottomans invaded and occupied Shirwan, and the Safavids retook it in 1607.[344] This contested character of the region of Shirwan continued between the Ottoman and Persian polities, and their Sunni-Shiite confessional tendencies, through the late nineteenth century.

Considering how early a date, in the early sixteenth century, Shirwan had become a political concern for the Ottoman polity, and how long it remained so both politically and culturally, makes sense when considered alongside the fact that the

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[340] W. Barthold, "Shīrwān, Shirwān or Sharwān" and "Shīrwān Shāh," 488.

[341] Ibid., 489.

[342] See Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Suleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. Şahin refers to "a war of letters" between the Ottoman and Safavid rulers, based on the hostile sentiments and arguments affected by the dichotomy present in the Sunni-Shiite strife. Şahin notes how, on one occasion in 1555, the Ottoman side replied to a letter by Shah Tahmasb—who had put an end to the Sunni Shirvanshah dynasty—with "a pro-Sunni and anti Shiite discourse," one much beyond the more regular claim that "the Ottomans represent Islam and the Muslims as a whole"; see Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Suleyman*, 134. For the later cultural infiltration of Sunni orthodox sentiments and practices into the Ottoman social and political spheres, see Derin Terzioğlu, "Sunna-minded sufi preachers in service of the Ottoman state: the naṣīḥatnāme of Hasan addressed to Murad IV," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 27 (2010): 241-312; Terzioğlu, "Where ilmihal meets catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization," *Past and Present* 220 (2013): 79–114.

[343] W. Barthold, "Shīrwān, Shirwān or Sharwān," 487.

[344] Ibid.

Hikâyet-i Şirvân Şâh ve Şemâ'il Bânû was first rendered into Turkish under the patronage of Murad III (r. 1574–1595), in Manisa, by Bekâyî of İznik.[345] The date of completion recorded in the colophon of the *Hikâyet-i Şirvân Şâh ve Şemâ'il Bânû* in the aforementioned miscellaneous manuscript that also contains the latest known dated copy of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, is Muharrem 19, 1264 AH (December 27, 1847 CE); that is, it was copied into the manuscript only ten days later.[346] Given this short interval of time between the completion of the two texts in the manuscript, and given the fact that they are clearly written in the same *ductus*, confirms that these two texts were deliberately put together in the manuscript, and thus that this particular miscellany was produced as a premeditated manuscript project.

There is also further evidence indicating the premeditated quality of the miscellany in question. The manuscript is noted as an endowment made to the Fatih Library collection by the Chief Black Eunuch (*darüssa'ade ağa*) Tayfûr Agha,[347] thus demonstrating that the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* had some appeal in the palace quarters in the mid-19th century. This manuscript commission was a deliberate act on the part of Tayfûr Agha, who in the same year (AH 1264), immediately endowed

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[345] Cf. Selami Ece, "Şirvan Şah ve Şemail Banu," 80–84; Hasan Kavruk, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Mensûr Hikâyeler* (Istanbul: MEB, 1998), 26.

[346] Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1, 139b.

[347] Tayfûr Agha was in the service of Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61) as the chief black eunuch between 1844 and 1850, and in 1844, very soon after his appointment and as a sign of appreciation to the sultan, he patronized the construction of a public fountain in Acıbadem, Kadıköy called the "Baba-Oğul Fountain," together with his adopted son Besim Agha, who was then the head royal companion. The inscription of this public fountain (which is serendipitously very close to my mother's home in Istanbul), reads: "*Hazret-i Abdülmecid Han'ı meali menkıbet / Âl-i 'Osmân, Han-ı Gazi'nin o şehdir ekremi / Yani kim Darüssaade Ağası Tayfur Ağa / Ol veliyyün ni'metin mesrûr u şâd hürremi / Sermusâhib ma'nevi oğlu Besim Ağa ile / Kıldılar bünyad bu nev çeşme-i müstahkemi / Hak veli-ni'meti nusratla kılsun dâima / Hızr u İskender gibi âb-ı hayatın mahremi / Tarihin bende Nazif cevherdedir amber gibi / Kıldı irvâ yek-kadem baba oğul bu zemzemi / 1260* [1844/1845]." For the biographical information provided here, see Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, Vol. 6, ed. Nuri Akbayar (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996): 1731. For reference to the fountain in question, cf. Semavi Eyice, "Çeşme," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1st ed, vol. 8 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1993): 277–87, 285, accessed July 22, 2016.
http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c08/c080203.pdf.

the manuscript to the library collection as a charity, as is made clear by the endowment note: "This esteemed chronicle is an endowment and charity of the great and wealthy Chief Black Eunuch, the respected Tayfûr Agha—may God have mercy on him—and for that reason those who read it must make sure to keep him in their prayers of blessing. AH 1264 [1847/1848]."[348] This deliberate act suggests that there may have been some sort of political incentive behind the making of this manuscript, a point which will be investigated later in the chapter through textual and contextual analysis of the manuscript as a whole.

The period of almost fifty years between the two dated copies of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* does not, on the surface, seem to represent an especially long timespan. However, this fifty-year period of Ottoman history between 1794 and 1847—which was encompassed by the reigns of three sultans; namely, Selim III (r. 1789–1807), Mahmûd II (r. 1808–1839), and Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61)—experienced a great deal of quite rapid change in both political and social terms. As such, the production, in a still manuscript culture, of multiple copies of a pseudo-historical narrative over this particular period of fifty years might very well be considered a long timespan, further hinting at a particularly significant popular appeal for the text. For such a thing to have happened, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* needs to have served some particular social function beyond mere entertainment; otherwise, it would not have been considered worthy of continual reproduction in numerous manuscript copies. Indeed, the reform program for military, social, and administrative modernization of the empire enacted during the

[348] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Fatih collection, Fatih No. 4206/1, 1a: "*İşbu tevârâh-i mu'tebere devletlü Dârü's-sa'âde Ağası Tayfûr Ağa hazretlerinin –hasbeteni'l-lâh te'âlâ– vakf ve hayratıdır kim kırâ'at idenler müşârünileyh hazretlerini hayr du'âdan ferâmûş buyurmayalar ... 1264* [1847/1848]."

reigns of Selim III[349] and Mahmud II,[350] which would culminate in the reign of Abdülmecid in the Tanzimat reforms that pushed the empire toward a more decisively modern state structure with social rights of citizenship provided for all subjects of the empire,[351] is precisely the historical context within which the reproduction of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives was undertaken. With the emergence of a new type of ruler in the historical figures of these three Ottoman sultans, the trajectory of the empire as it moved forward in history became something of a public debate. In this regard, the popular appeal of such pseudo-historical narratives looking back at the earliest beginnings of the dynasty was by no means simply a coincidence, but must instead be considered a historical contingency: going back to the beginnings or roots as a reference point in times of reformation (or crisis) is a common tendency found in both social groups and political entities.[352]

In short, the fifty-year timespan of consumption and reception between these two dated copies of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*—which may well be longer if we take undated copies and possibly lost or undiscovered ones into account—as well as

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[349] Stanford Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire Under Selim III 1789-1807* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); Kemal Beydilli, "Selim III," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 36. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2009. 420–25. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c36/c360279.pdf.

[350] Kemal Beydilli, "Mahmud II," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 27. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2003. 352–57. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c27/c270244.pdf.

[351] Cevdet Küçük, "Abdülmecid," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1989. 259-63. 2014. Accessed June 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c01/c010312.pdf.

[352] In the same vein, it must be remembered that Feridun Bey's collection of royal correspondences of the Ottoman administration entitled *Mecmûʻa-i Münşeâtü's-selâtîn*, which had been compiled in the mid-sixteenth century and presented to Mehmed III in 1575 *w*as published twice in the mid-nineteenth century: cf. Feridun Bey, *Mecmûʻa-i Münşeâtü's-selâtîn*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Darüttıbattıl'âmire: 1265–1274). The same sentiment and another nineteenth-century instance of "going back to the roots" in search of the origins was recorded during Abdülhamid II's reign (r. 1876–1909) when he built a mausoleum for the father of Osman, Ertuğrul Ghazi, in Söğüt, which is the assumed birthplace of the Ottoman state, cf. Can Eyüp Çekiç, "Hamidian Epic: War Literature In The Late Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire," (PhD diss., Bilkent University, 2016), 36.

the high number of similar redactions repeatedly produced over relatively short intervals during the same period, indicate that the text had a hold on the Ottoman social imagination as well as the ruling political mindset in this particular historical context, with various individuals finding meaning in the narrative's imaginative retelling of the Ottomans' earliest historical trajectory and the genealogy of the dynasty and the empire. The nature of and the reasons behind this social and political appeal will be the main point of focus for the rest of the chapter.

5.3 Politics of Memory

Remembrance of things past is not necessarily
remembrance of things as they were.[353]

Memory works in mysterious ways: it not only continuously affects ongoing life experience but is also at work providing a sense of selfhood or identity, bonding past to present, and lending a framework for the future. In an underlying manner, collective sets of memories—or "memory" as a whole—make people who they are. In this manner, although memory as a concept refers mainly to the process of remembering and/or being remembered, it is incorporeal unless recorded in written form, as in the case of historiography. Indeed, memory and history are indistinguishably intertwined at a multitude of nodes, and not only in a continuously perpetuated as well as simultaneous nature, but also in a diachronic as well as synchronic manner. It is due to this mutual relationship of co-interdependence that John Tosh, in his definition of the discipline, assuredly asserts that "[h]istory is both a form of memory and a discipline that draws on memory as source material."[354]

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[353] This quote, which recalls a Proustian sentiment about how remembrances configure and memory works on a personal note, is actually attributed to Marcel Proust by the character David Rossi (played by Joe Mantegna) in *Criminal Minds*, season 6, episode 3: *Remembrance of Things Past*, The Mark Gordon Company and CBS television, first broadcast October 2010.

[354] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of History*, 6th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 254.

Memory therefore dwells not only at the roots of history-making, but also lingers on in the branches of history-writing, and personal memory is an island separate only on the surface, but underneath is closely linked to particular socially constructed patterns of remembrance and commemoration. In this manner, history has a double relation to social memory: it is produced by social memory, while it in turn perpetuates social memory. R.I. Moore enunciates these points eloquently:

> For students of society, past or present, memory is everything, both tools and material, both the means and the goal of their labour. But even individual memory is not simply personal: the memories which constitute our identity and provide the content for every thought and action are not only our own, but are learned, borrowed, and inherited – in part, and part of, a common stock, constructed, sustained, and transmitted by the families, communities, and cultures to which we belong. No human group is constituted, no code of conduct promulgated, no thought given form, no action committed, no knowledge communicated, without its intervention; history itself is both a product and a source of social memory.[355]

Correspondingly, despite recognizing that it is individuals who are the true agents of "the act of remembering," James Fentress and Chris Wickham readily suggest that all memories are "structured by group identities," in compliance with the viewpoint of Maurice Halbwachs—who was the first theorist of his own coinage, "collective memory"—that "memories are essentially group memories, and that the memory of the individual exists only in so far as she or he is the probably unique product of a particular intersection of groups."[356]

Moreover, Fentress and Wickham also accede to Halbwachs' view that "social groups construct their own images of the world by establishing an agreed version of the past."[357] Thus, focusing on the more public and social side of memory within this

[355] R. I. Moore, "Editor's Preface," in *Social Memory*, by James Fentress and Chris Wickham (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), viii.

[356] Cited in James Fentress and Chris Wickham, "Foreword," in *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), ix; cf. Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. M. Halbwachs (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

[357] Cited in James Fentress and Chris Wickham, "Foreword," in *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), x.

social perspective, they also underscore an important distinction between memory as action and memory as representation: the first involves remembering as a type of behavior, while the latter encompasses a cognitively developed network of ideas.[358] Fentress and Wickham thereby declare their principal concern to be with "thought that explicitly refers to past events and past experience (whether real or imaginary)," since, in their view, "recalled past experience and shared images of the historical past are kinds of memories that have particular importance for the constitution of social groups in the present."[359]

In this context, they assert, according to the doctrine of objective knowledge, that memory may be regarded as "naturally divided into two segments":

> There is an objective part, which serves as a container of facts, most of which might be housed in a variety of other locations [by way of writing]. There is a subjective part, which includes information and feelings that are an integral part of us, and which thus are properly located only within us. The first part of memory is comparatively passive; it simply holds knowledge. The second part is more active; it experiences and recalls to consciousness. In this way, a distinction between objective fact and subjective interpretation is posited in the structure of memory itself.[360]

Upon making this distinction between objective fact and subjective interpretation, which together make up the memory itself as a whole, Fentress and Wickham further note that memories tend to be shaped in a way that is congruous with the meaning they are given, and that the social meaning of a memory in fact has little to do with its truth value: "The social meaning of memory, like its internal structure and its mode of transmission, is little affected by its truth; all that matters is that it be believed, at least at some level."[361] In this context, Fentress and Wickham assert that what makes a social memory viable does not necessarily depend on whether or not it

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[358] Fentress and Wickham, "Foreword," in *Social Memory*, x.

[359] Ibid., xi.

[360] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 5.

[361] Fentress and Wickham, "Foreword," in *Social Memory*, xi.

has any factual basis to it (even though it might do so at some level), but rather whether or not it is socially believed to be true—again "at least at some level"—and whether it is socially relevant to be kept intact as a memory for generations to come. What they emphasize through this assertion is the fact that social memory is very much shaped by the social context within which it was once shaped and has subsequently been repeatedly reshaped:

> Social memory is, in fact, often selective, distorted, and inaccurate. None the less, it is important to recognize that it is not necessarily any of these; it can be extremely exact, when people have found it socially relevant from that day to this to remember and recount an event in the way it was originally experienced. The debate about whether it is inherently accurate or not is thus sterile; and it will remain so as long as memory is treated as a "mental faculty" whose workings can be described in isolation from social context.[362]

Therefore, according to Fentress and Wickham, any debate about the accuracy of any commonly upheld collective memory is ultimately futile. They suggest, on the contrary, that social memory should not be regarded as if it were a mental faculty which can be examined or questioned on the grounds of soundness or accuracy, and that its workings should not be understood in isolation from the social context which created it in the first place.

From this perspective, exactly *what* the pieces of social memory recorded in both historical and pseudo-historical narratives illustrate—in their own contingent manner, and through their narrative conceptualizations—is *how* a certain community visualizes or presents its past or present conditions, its understanding of society and history, and thereby its historical consciousness. Indeed, John Tosh notes in agreement with such a conception that the social memory of any community relies on memories that go further back than the lifetime of any present-day members, and yet these memories are not confined to works of historiography or archives, but are

[362] Ibid., xi–xii.

also present in popular consciousness, which is either reproduced through an array of commemorative rituals or recorded in a range of media, such as historical or pseudo-historical narratives, which in turn come to constitute the social or collective memory of that community.[363]

Therefore, according to John Tosh, the relationship between past and present in the way sociohistorical consciousness works and/or is constructed takes two complementary forms. On the one hand, social memory provides at least partial access to what actually happened in the past, and at the same time, through the fragmentary historical knowledge thus provided, it instructs popular understanding of the present. On the other hand, social memory provides a reflection of the present, disclosing present concerns and subtly (or sometimes not so subtly) modifying these historical or contemporary concerns over time.[364] Here, John Tosh makes it clear by implication that an attempt at a history of mentalities, in order to understand the inner workings of any social memory, should therefore be willing to delve into these subtle or less subtle modifications as they are implemented onto historical memories over a period of time. Tosh asserts that historians need to welcome these modifications, which usually result in narrational divergences that emerge in social memory, into their professional understanding or version of the past that is presumably based on factual information, and only in this way can they come to an understanding of any collective memory and its written or non-written representations resulting from that very past:

> Historians' study of social memory starts from the assumption that its content will diverge from their professional understanding of the past, but that that very divergence provides clues about the construction of popular memory. If written history represents a selection of the past thought worthy

[363] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 255.

[364] Ibid.

> of recall, collective memory is an even more drastic simplification, designed to reinforce a cultural identity or a potential for agency in the present.[365]

Therefore, the narrational simplifications that are observed more often and more powerfully in constructions of popular or collective memory—as well as in anonymous pseudo-historical narratives, which I consider to be more direct representations of this popular collective memory—when describing their past and/or present cannot and should not be easily dismissed, nor, for that matter, should these pseudo-historical narratives be so readily disregarded.

On the contrary, it is precisely through such narrational simplifications—which potentially, in some versions, involve irrationalities or factual disruption—that it becomes actually possible to get a glimpse of how people in the past understood and interpreted their past or their present in the process of constructing a social and historical self-identity in different historical contexts and under different social conditions. In fact, these recorded pieces of social memory should always be historicized and contextualized, rather than dismissed, in order to be fully understood for their signification as related to collective memories and historical sentiments. This is because, as Fentress and Wickham put it:

> The process of conceptualization, which so often disqualifies social memory as an empirical source, is also a process that ensures the stability of a set of collectively held ideas, and enables these ideas to be diffused and transmitted. Social memory is not stable as information; it is stable, rather, at the level of shared meanings and remembered images.[366]

As a result, social memory is necessarily elusive and manifold. Politics affects social memory in convoluted ways which can only be deciphered through "the processing process"—to reiterate E.H. Carr's phrase[367]—which the historian must take into account when studying the past. As already hinted at, there are many social and

[365] Ibid.

[366] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 59.

[367] Carr, *What is History?*, 16.

historical dynamics at work affecting how social memory functions and how it is historically and/or contingently constructed and reconstructed over time. In this connection, the "politics of memory" refers to the political mechanisms as well as historical constructions by and through which historical events are remembered, recorded, and/or discarded in historical or pseudo-historical writing. In short, the term addresses the part that politics plays in shaping collective memory, and also how social memories can markedly differ from the objective basis of the events as they actually happened. Therefore, the influence of politics on memory can be traced in the way history is written and passed on.

5.4 Close Textual and Contextual Analysis

This long section of the chapter will trace the narrative of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* through the outlook outlined above and in relation to certain aspects revealed in the narrative so as to discover the historical context within which it was produced and reproduced and what these contexts reveal about the Ottoman social memory in the "post-classical" era.

5.4.1 On the Origins of Ottoman Identity

In this section, in order to maintain the focus on how later Ottoman social imagination and memory reinvented the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty, I will not dwell in detail on each and every episode in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, which includes many remarkable and significant stories in its imaginative retelling of the period. Instead, I will more generally try to problematize certain historical issues that arise from the narrative, and in doing so, as points of comparison and counter-reference, I will also occasionally refer to earlier Ottoman chronicles' stance on these issues. On the whole, I will not attempt to arrive at definitive conclusions concerning the narrative itself or why it was produced in the

first place, but will rather put forward historiographical suggestions towards possible interpretations in relation to the historical context within which these narratives seem to have emerged.

As mentioned towards the beginning of the chapter, in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*'s pseudo-historical account of the rise of the Ottoman dynasty, the forefather of the line is presented as Ahmed Beg, the ruler of a semi-nomadic Turcoman tribe called *Tîr ü Seyf* ("Arrow and Sword"), based around Tabriz in Persia. According to the narrative, Ahmed Beg commands ten thousand soldiers and dwells on the lands of the Persian shah, settling every summer in whatever pasture he wishes in return for paying the shah a tribute of forty sets of horse tack on Nowruz. It is also Ahmed Beg who, as detailed earlier, has the divinely inspired mythical founding dream involving a tree growing out of his navel, signifying the birth of the Ottoman dynasty—a dream that the canonized chronicles of early Ottoman history ascribe either to Osman himself or to his father Ertuğrul. The dream serves as a topos for the legitimization of the Ottoman dynastic lineage against any other claimants to dynastic sovereignty both in the geographical region of Anatolia and in the broader sociocultural realm of Islam.

To return to the dream topos, as it configured in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives, Ahmed Beg has substantially the same dream as the one related for Osman in Âşıkpaşazâde's history,[368] but in this case there is no mention of a dervish named Edebali, in whose house Osman (or, in other versions, Ertuğrul) supposedly had the dream. Instead, Ahmed Beg is in his own quarters when he has the dream; however, according to the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, there does happen to be an

[368] Âşık Paşazâde, *Osmanoğulları'nın Tarihi*, 57–8; Âşıkpaşazâde, *Tarih-i Âl-i Osman*, 6; *Anonim Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân*, 10.

unnamed mufti nearby, one who is respected among men and is well known for his ability to interpret dreams. Ahmed Beg tells the mufti of his dream, which contains the same elements as the canonized chronicles' version, except that there is no moon arising from a dervish's breast. A tree grows from Ahmed Beg's belly on its own to cover the world, and underneath its shade there arise mountains with streams flowing from them:

> *Ahmed Beg bir gîce rü'yâsında gördi ki kendü göbeğinden bir müntehâ direht zuhûr idüb 'âleme sâye saldı. Ve herkes sâyesinde metâ'ını bâzara koymuş alış veriş iderler. Hâbdan bîdâr olub kendü kendiye mülâhazâ idüb "Bu rü'yâyı bir 'âlim-i fâzıl kimseye ta'bîr itdirmeli" diyüb* ***ol*** *zamân Tebriz'de bir gâyet 'âlim müfti var idi. Herkes rü'yâların ana ta'bîr itdirirlerdi. Ahmed Beg Müfti Efendi'ye varub gördiği rü'yâyı söyledi.*[369]

The unnamed mufti offers to interpret Ahmed's dream, but only on the condition that Ahmed Beg take his daughter's hand in marriage, and not before. Ahmed Beg accepts, immediately marries the mufti's daughter, who also goes unnamed in the text, and then spends the nuptial night with her:

> *Müfti Efendi Ahmed Beg'e cevâb eyledi ki "Ben bu rü'yâyı sana ta'bîr iderim. Benim de senden bir ricâm var. Eger kabûl idersen öyle ta'bîr iderim" didi. Ahmed Beg "Buyurun, ricânız her ne ise baş üstüne" didikde Müfti Efendi eyitdi "Benim bir kızım vardır.* ***Allâh Te'âlâ*** *hazretlerinin emriyle alursan ben de rü'yâyı ta'bîr iderem" didikde Ahmed Beg kabûl idüb o sâ'at nikâh idüb önice Ahmed Beg gerdeye girüb sabâh oldıkda Müfti Efendi'nin yed-i şerîfin bûs idüb rü'yânın ta'bîrin istedi ve niyâz eyledi.*[370]

After the wedding night, Ahmed Beg kisses his father-in-law's hand and requests the interpretation of the dream. Because his condition was fulfilled, the mufti proceeds to interpret the dream:

> *Müfti Efendi buyurdılar ki "Lâ-ya'lem-ü'l-gaybe illallâh senin rü'yânın ta'bîri şöyledir ki göbeğinden zuhûr iden diraht evlâddur. 'Âleme sâye saldığı dallar pâdişâhlardır. Nice zamân anın sâyesinde 'âlem emn ü âmân olub ve nice şehirleri feth idüb ve kâfir beglerine sefer idüb ve nice kal'alar zabt eylese gerekdir" diyüb ta'bîr eyledi. Ve "Sana kızımı anınçün virdim ki*

[369] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 2a–2b.

[370] Ibid., 2b.

> *bil ki şâh olan evlâd kızımdan olub hayr du'âya mazhar olub kıyâmete kadar benim de ismim yâd olsun" deyü medh-i senâlar eyledi.*[371]

First, he puts forward the reservation that "only God knows the hidden things" (*la yalem-ül gaybe illallah*), after which he nonetheless continues with his interpretation:

> The tree that rises from your belly is your offspring; its branches which provide shade onto the world beneath are sultans. For a long time the world will be secure and content beneath its shade, and for that matter many cities will be conquered, campaigns will be held against many infidel *beg*s, and many fortresses will be seized. For this reason I have given my daughter to you as wife. Know that the son who will become the shah will be from my daughter. May I be honored with blessings and my name be remembered till the end of time.

Thereby, the mufti gives Ahmed the prognostication that his descendants will be rulers of the world. At the same time, though, he implies that, thanks to his daughter marrying Ahmed Beg, his *own* name will also be known for generations to come. The text itself, however, never even honors him with a name, simply calling him "Müfti Efendi" according to his title. This, of course, is a clear indication that this figure holds an *ulema* position and is authorized to give fatwas; he is not, like Edebali in the canonized chronicles, a Sufi dervish.

If we except the ironic note about the mufti's name being remembered till the end of time even though the text never names him, overall the narrative clearly seems to emphasize the authority of the *ulema*, at least in the spiritual realm, as the dream interpretation episode suggests. This is in contrast to the accounts of Âşıkpaşazâde, Oruç Beg, and the anonymous chronicler, all of which, as Anooshahr notes, emerged from a ghazi/dervish milieu rather than an *ulema* one.[372] By contrast, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives make absolutely no mention of any Sufi connection or any dervishes. What is more, the authors of the "canonized" chronicles, such as

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[371] Ibid.

[372] Anooshahr, "Writing, Speech, and History," 44.

Âşıkpaşazâde, were writing, in part, "to protest against the marginalization of their social group by an increasingly centralizing Ottoman state," hence their incorporation of dervish figures like Edebali as interpreter of the auspicious dream in contrast to the unrepresented scholarly/juridical classes of the *ulema* in these chronicles.[373] The *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* in fact recognizes the *ulema*'s authority and is fully invested in supporting the *ulema*, so long as they are of the Sunni denomination. On the other hand, the text also denies any and all authority to *ulema* of a Shi'ite cast. This dichotomy will be further explored in the next section through a discussion of another narrative episode, which provides insight into the narrative's stance towards the authority of the *ulema* in conjunction with its explicit stance on the Sunni-Shi'ite divide. A preliminary examination of name choices will also expound not only on how this strong Sunni-Shi'ite dichotomy unfolds within the narrative, but also on how an Ottoman imperial identity is thereby forged against the rival Safavid dynasty in terms of the religious divide, since this particular narrative configuration recognizes no genealogical basis for such a dichotomy.

5.4.1 On Names, Religious Authority, and the Political Legitimization of Sovereignty: The Sunni-Shi'ite Dichotomy

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name?
—William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

Naming or, for that matter, not naming is an important issue in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives. Indeed, this is the case for any medieval to early modern historical mindset, since the social status or prestige of any given historical persona

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[373] Ibid.

depends largely on their genealogy and lineage as asserted through an array of names linked together for the purposes of legitimation or proclamation in the present.

In this context, Roni Zirinski notes how the "historical moment" of naming—and, I must add, not naming—embodies "an act of self-definition that indicates, simultaneously, both the center as well as the limits and margins," and is especially crucial in the process of defining "the other" and "delineating the primary and ultimate border," which thereby sets a distance and marks some differentiation between the self and its constructed other.[374] In the same respect, he asserts: "In choosing a name, whether consciously or unconsciously, a great deal of symbolic energy is invested."[375] In this respect, the fact that Ahmed, an alternate name for the prophet Muhammad, is chosen for the Ottoman forefather brings to mind a strong Sunni background claim, even though Ahmed Beg is shown to be living under the authority of the Persian shah, to whom he pays a yearly tribute.

Against the historical background of the Sunni-Shi'ite dichotomy and the ensuing sectarianism between the two rival confessional spheres of Islam that became especially prominent in the sixteenth century with the rise of the Safavid dynasty,[376] this choice of origin for the forefather of the Ottoman dynasty, even regardless of the name choice, is striking. However, as the narrative takes care to note, at the time the Persian shah was not a Kızılbaş, and was even named Muhammed himself: "*Ol zamân 'Acem şâhı Kızılbaş değil. İsmine Muhammed Şâh dirler idi.*"[377] With this in mind, we can say that both Ahmed and Muhammed as naming choices implicitly

[374] Roni Zirinski, "How did the Ottomans Become Ottoman?: The Construction of Imperial Brand Name in the Time of Cultural Big Bang," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 22 (2004): 127.

[375] Ibid.

[376] See footnote #342.

[377] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 1b.

hint at a Sunni orientation to the text, delineating a border against a Shi'ite cultural and confessional sphere. In fact, the narrative later recounts an episode where the son of the shah, who comes to the throne after his father's death, is called Hüseyin, a name with strong Shi'ite connotations.

The narrative's Sunni-Shi'ite stance becomes even more clear in an episode where the new shah Hüseyin deposes a mufti appointed by his father. The deposed mufti then takes a copy of the Qur'an, changes its wording, and hides this altered copy in the branch of a tree that he cuts open and then covers with mud. He then waits for a long while for the branch to grow and seem as if it had never been altered, so that it would appear as if this altered copy of the Qur'an had been there all along:

> *Bundan üstün bir zamân gecdi. Ahmed Beg merhûm oldı. Yerine oğlu Erdoğdu Beg oldı. Ve bi-izn-i Hüdâ 'Acem şâhı Muhammed Beg merhûm olub yerine Hüseyin şâh oldu. Ve bu Hüseyin Şah gâyet meyyâl bir kimesne idi. Ba'zı âyetlerini ve harflerini tagyîr idüb sahrâda bir büyük dirahtın bir dalına şakk idüb o tahvîl eylediği Mushaf-ı Şerîfi dalın arasına koyub muhkem bağlayub ve biraz çamur sarub bir zamân mürur eyleyüb ol dal yekpâre olub evvel yaradılması gibi oldı.*[378]

Subsequently the mufti visits the young shah's court and tells Hüseyin that he has had a dream where he was told that they were reading the wrong Qur'an, and that the true and sound Qur'an could be found inside a particular tree. The *ulema* then checks the tree that the mufti shows them, finds the hidden copy, and checks it against their copies. Seeing the differences, they accept the fake copy as sound and change their Islamic practice accordingly:

> *Bir gün Şâh Hüseyin katına gelüb eyitdi "Padişâhım, ben bir rü'yâ gördüm. Bu yerde olan ve hâlâ okudığımız Mushaf-ı Şerîf yanlış ve galat imiş. Lakin şu fulân sahrâda olan dirahtda bir sahîh Mushaf-ı Şerîf var imiş" diyüb Hüseyin Şâh'ı izlâl eyleyüb kerâmete haml eyleyüb Hüseyin Şâh o sâ'at dîvân eyleyüb vezîr-i vüzerâsına ve kibâr 'ulemâsına Müfti Efendi'nin rü'yâsın ifâde eyledi. Ve cümlesi ta'accübe düşdiler ve eyitdiler "Buyur Pâdişâhım, cümlemiz oraya varub bakalım. Belki Müfti Efendi'nin işâreti hakk olmuşdur" diyüb şâh ve ehl-i dîvân cümlesi ol mahale varub ol dirahtı*

[378] Ibid., 3a–3b.

> *kesdiler. Ol tagayyür olan Mushaf'ı çıkarub Mushaf-ı Şerîfler ile mukâbele eylediler. Gördiler ki vâkı'â ba'zı yerleri ve ba'zı kelimâtları uymayayor* [sic]. *Hüseyin Beg 'ulemânın beynlerini ihtilâfa düşürüb ekserisi hilâf yol tutdılar. Hasan-ı Kâşî didikleri hâ'in müfti böyle böyle Hüseyin Şâh'ı izlâl-ı devletini ve kendini hizlâna düşürdi.*[379]

This episode has a twofold function: it both discredits the *ulema*'s competence, once again showing the text's rather ambiguous attitude towards the *ulema*, and it also establishes a legendary origin for the Sunni-Shi'ite split and the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry, further illustrated by the fact that Ahmed Beg disdains the new religion of Shah Hüseyin's land and leaves Persia for Anatolia:

> *Çünki 'Acem Şâhı ve devleti bu gûne oldu. Erdoğdu Beg bu hâli görüb kavmini başına cem' idüb "Böyle pâdişâhın memleketinde hayr yokdur ve durmak câ'iz degildür. Lakin sizler nedirsiz ve münâsib olan kankı memlekete 'azîmet idelim" diyü su'âl eyledikde cümlesi meşveretde "Rûm memleketinde bir mahalde mesken eyleyelim" didiler. Kendi de münâsib görüb ve sekiz beg 'asker ile Rûm memleketinde bir yere geldiler. Bir düz sahrâ orta yerinde bir dağ üstünde kudretden çevrilmiş bir kaya a'lâ kal'a olmuş. Ol sene anda sâkin oldılar.*[380]

Effectively, then, the Sunni-Shi'ite split and, by implication, the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry are resituated at the very beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty. Here it should be noted that it is the *ulema* of the Persian or 'Acem lands who are discredited in the narrative. Additionally, the fact that, in the text, the mufti who destroys the integrity of the Qur'an through mischief in the Persian realm is actually named, as Hasan-ı Kâşî or "Hasan of Kashan," further advances the irony about the unnamed status of the mufti who interprets the auspicious dream: they may or may not be the same figure, but the narrative never makes this clear. As a result, the status of the Persian *ulema* is made even more doubtful in relation to the Sunni *ulema* of Anatolia. All in

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[379] Ibid., 4a. Historically, Hasan-ı Kâşî is a sixteenth-century poet of the Safavid Iran, and he was especially known for his poems about the Karbala incident (680 CE), cf. Rıza Kurtuluş, "Kerbelâ: Arap, Fars Edebiyatında Kerbelâ," in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1st ed. Vol. 25. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2002. 272–74. 2014. Accessed August 14, 2016. http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/pdf/c25/c250189.pdf.

[380] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osman*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 4a.

all, the introduction of mufti Hasan-ı Kâşî's mischief as the source of corruption in the version of Islam practiced in Persia proves to be highly functional, not only for the religious standpoint of the text, but also for the identity politics configured therein: this episode both sets absolute and essentialist confessional boundaries between the Sunni and the Shi'ite denominations and configures the Ottoman dynasty as Sunnite from the very beginning, thus constructing Sunnism as an essential part of the original identity of the dynasty. Indeed, there will later be another religious authority in the narrative: Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, who is called "Monla Hünkâr" in the text. This appellation that the text employs for the founder of the Mawlawīyya Sufi order again resonates with an established Sunni religious order in Anatolia, where the Ottoman dynasty had founded its identity on such Sunni grounds. The idea of an originally Sunni religious background for the Ottoman dynasty will thereby be further advanced, with Monla Hünkâr playing a very crucial role in the establishment of Ottoman sovereignty, as he will be shown instructing the Seljukid ruler Alaeddin to leave sovereignty to Osman, who will thereby become the legitimate ruler of Anatolia.

Even beyond the Sunni-Shi'ite dichotomy, names play an especially significant role in the narrative. Apart from Ahmed, Muhammed, and Hüseyin, there are other remarkable choices of name in these pseudo-historical narratives as well. As briefly mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, there is for example the name "Erdoğdu," rather than the canonized chronicles' Ertuğrul. Here, the narrator seems to be playing with words in the guise of folk etymology: when Ahmed Beg's third wife, the dream interpreter mufti's daughter, gives birth to his only male son, they name him "Erdoğdu," meaning "one who was born a man." Because of this, the Ottoman line is, according to the text, also called "the sons of Erdoğdu": "*Türkmân arasında*

ismini Erdoğdı kodılar. Ol ecilden Âl-i ʻOsmâna Erdoğdu oğlanları dirler."[381] After Ahmed Beg leaves Persia for Anatolia, Erdoğdu himself has a son—Osmancık. The choice of Osmancık instead of Osman as a name may seem somewhat unusual to a modern audience inasmuch as the diminutive suffix *-cık* might be regarded as a lightly mocking way of designating the eponymous ancestor of the Ottoman dynastic line. However, as Roni Zirinski notes, the Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta, in the famous account of his travels during which he travelled through Anatolia between 1330 and 1332, mentions that Osman was actually, during his son Orhan's (r. 1326–1362) rule, called "Osmancuk" ("Osman the Little") in the diminutive, in order to distinguish him from the seventh-century caliph Uthman.[382] In the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* texts, however, Osman is shown becoming the ruler, initially with the approval of his people, as "*Erdoğdu oğlu*" or "son of Erdoğdu," and then, following the death of the Seljukid ruler Alaeddin, through the intervention of Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, who is called "Monla Hünkâr" in the text. As soon as he becomes ruler, the text changes his appellation, dropping the diminutive so that the name is now simply "Osman," thus signifying his change of status to a sovereign position:

> *Sultân ʻAlâeddîn gâyetde pîr olmuşdı. Bir gün hasta olub bildi ki vakt-i mevt geldi. Monla Hünkâr'ı ve sâ'ir ʻulemâyı yanına getürüb cevâb eyledi ki "Allah-ı ʻâlem benim mevtim karîb oldu. Lakin sizden ricâm budur ki yerimize kimi beg eylemek münâsib ise bana haber verin" didikde cümle ʻulemâsı eyitdiler "Padişâhım, şimdiki hâlde İslâm beglerinden cümlesinden kuvvetli ve kâfirlere mansûr hâlâ Şevket dağında olan Erdoğdu oğlu ʻOsmâncık Begden gayrı müstehakk ve sizin yerinize lâyık beg yokdur" didiler. Sultân ʻAlâeddîn o sâʻat bir mektûb tahrîr eyleyüb ve kendi yakın adamının eline virüb ʻOsmân Beg'e irsâl eyledi. ʻOsmân Beg'e mektûb vüsûl buldukda açub okudı. Öyle tahrîr eylemiş ki "Mektûbım vüsûl buldukda eğlenmeyüb bu tarafa gelesin." ʻOsmân Beg "Baş üstüne" deyüb ʻaskerin*

[381] Ibid., 3a.

[382] Cf. Roni Zirinski, "How did the Ottomans Become Ottoman," 140–141; ibn Battūta, *The Travels of ibn Battūta, A.D. 1325–1354*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb, vol. 2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1962), 450–455.

> *alub yola revân oldı. ʻOsmân gelmede iken bu tarafda Sultân ʻAlâeddîn merhûm oldı. Ve yerine Monla Hünkâr'ı kâʻimmakâm eylediler. Bir gün ʻOsmân Beg Konya'ya dâhil olub Monla Hünkâr ʻOsmân Beg'in elin tutub tahta cülûs itdirdi. Ve cümle ʻulemâ efendiler "Mübârek ola" didiler. Hazret-i Fahr-i Kâ'inât efendimizin hicret-i şerîflerinden altı yüz doksan dokuz* ***sene mürûr eylemişdi*** [1299/1300]. *Bir zamân etrâfda olan kâfir beglerine kılıc urub gâyet kâfirler havfa düşüb ʻOsmân Beg'e bâc harâc virir oldılar. Ve nice zamân küffâr ile* [sic] *harâb idüb nice memleketlerden ve nice şehirlerden feth kendüye müyesser oldı.*[383]

In this manner, the idea of an originally Sunni background with semi-nomadic Turkmen roots as the fundamental identity for the Ottoman dynasty is further advanced, but not specifically in regards to Ottoman genealogy, for, unlike some other "canonized" accounts of Ottoman origins, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* texts make no note of any Oğuz, Kayı, Ilkhanid, or Mongolian ancestry in the Ottoman lineage. This pseudo-historical narrative thus cuts the Ottoman identity off from all other contesting genealogical lineages, instead resting the legitimization of the Ottomans' rise to sovereign status on an entirely religious basis. In this regard, the scene where Osman is chosen as the next ruler of Anatolia at the court of the Seljukid ruler Alaeddin, at the suggestion of the Sunni *ulema* of Anatolia and especially Monla Hünkâr, is highly significant. Indeed, this episode also highlights how the Ottoman dynasty came to be regarded as the legitimate sovereignty in Anatolia after the Seljuks, because, just as in Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşrî's histories, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives depict Alaeddin granting Osman Beg the right to rule over the other *beg*s of Islam. Halil İnalcık interprets this version of the origin of the legitimization of Ottoman sovereignty in terms of "the Islamic conceptions of caliphate (*khilâfa*) and public guardianship (*wala'*)."[384] Unlike the other two chronicles' versions, however, in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*

[383] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsman*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 6a–6b.

[384] Halil İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession and its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty," in Halil İnalcık, *The Middle East and the Balkans Under the Ottoman Empire*, 37–69. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 44.

Alaeddin, upon the suggestion of the *ulema*, passes on sovereign status by sending Osman a letter while on his deathbed. On receiving the letter, Osman comes to Konya, but according to the narrative he arrives only after Alaeddin's death, after which he takes the throne—significantly, again with the approval of all the *ulema*. This once again demonstrates how the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narrative understands the political legitimization of the Ottoman dynasty on the grounds of religious affiliation to the Sunni denomination, and through the sanction of the Sunni *ulema*, and not on any genealogical characteristics of the dynasty. In this regard, it is worth recalling the following insightful observation by İnalcık:

> Among the Ottomans, various views prevailed regarding the origins of the dynasty and its sovereignty. As expressed in various historical narratives, each interpretation naturally bears the mark of a certain environment, period, or political viewpoint. In spite of their legendary character, these narratives are important for the particular traditions and biases they express.[385]

5.4.2 On Methods of Succession and the Dynastic Line

Unlike many of the "canonized" histories of the Ottoman dynasty, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*—which, as has been argued, is configured from an *ulema* standpoint—advances no claim for legitimization through a prestigious genealogical lineage. Indeed, in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, other than an imaginative Turkmen clan being mentioned as the background of Ahmed Beg, and thus for the origin of the Ottoman dynasty, there is no reference to any other lineage in the text, excepting one brief reference to the Mongol dynasty. This sole reference to the Mongols is the episode where Bayezid, who is depicted as an obstinate ruler who refuses to listen to advice, is taken captive by Timur, who is called "Timurlenk" in the texts. The narrative records a conversation between the two, where Timur asks Bayezid what he would do to him if he had been taken captive, and Bayezid replies

[385] İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession," 43–4.

by saying he would make an iron cage to keep him in, and so Timur constructs just such a cage for Bayezid. After Bayezid's capture, there is no struggle for the throne among his sons, as there was in reality in the interregnum period between 1402 and 1413 CE: instead, Bayezid's three sons agree to succeed each other according to age, so that first Süleyman, then Musa, and finally Mehmed come to power:

> *Bâyezîd Hân kendi bildiğini idüb sohbet kabûl eylemezdi. Ve kendiye iki nasîhat derlerse anın 'aksini işlerdi. Ve gününde 'azîm zahmet ve fitneler zuhûr eyledi. Ve üc dâne evlâdı oldı. Birinin ismi Süleymân ve birinin Mûsâ ve birinin Muhammed Beg dirler idi. Ve kendinin bu yola bi-lâ-kayd oldığından başında olan 'asker perîşân oldı. On dört sene saltanat sürüb her güni gamm ile geçdi. O senede Timurlenk zuhûr idüb 'askeri olmadığından Sultân Bâyezîd'i tutub esîr eyledi. Ve kendiye su'âl idüb "Eger sen beni tutub esîr ideydin bana neylerdin" didikde Sultân Bâyezîd cevâb "Bir dâne demür kafes yabdırub seni anın içine kordum" didi. Timurlenk emr eyledi, bir demûr kafes yabdırub Sultân Bâyezîd'i kafese koyub habs eyledi. Sultân Bâyezîd'in oğulları 'asker ile Rumili'nde bulundılar. Bu havâdisi işidüb Süleymân Beg'i kendilerine baş eylediler.* ***Sekiz yüz beş tarihinde*** *idi* [1402/1403]. *Sekiz sene beg oldı. Ve Edirne*[*'yi*] *girü kâfirler taleb eylediler. Kırk sene İslâmda kalmış idi. Üc sene kâfirlerde kaldı. Sonra Süleymân Beg feth eyledi. Süleymân Beg sekizinci sene Samokov'a* [?] *gelüb orada vefât eyledi. Yerine Mûsâ Beg cülûs eyledi.* ***Sekiz yüz on üc*** *senesinde* [1410/1411] *idi. Üc sene saltanat sürüb Gelibolu'da vefât eyledi. Yerine Muhammed Beg cülûs eyledi. Gine Edirne*[*'yi*] *kâfirler zabt itdiler. Dokuz sene mutasarrıf oldılar. Bir gün haber geldi ki Sultân Bâyezîd Timurlenk habsında vefât eylemiş.* ***Sekiz yüz on altı târihinde*** *idi* [1413/1414]. *Sultân Muhammed Hân'ı tekrâr asıl tahta cülûs itdirdiler.*[386]

The narrative also notes that, because Mehmed came to power after receiving news of Bayezid's death in Samarkand, his reign was the real sultanate, unlike the reigns of his two brothers:

> *Bunun içün Süleymân Beg ve Mûsâ Beg pâdişâh olmadı. Zîrâ Sultân Bâyezîd sıhhatde idi. Sultân Muhammed Hân'ın bir oğlu var idi. İsmini Murâd Hân komuşlar idi. Bir gün Sultân Muhammed Hân hasta olub vefât eyledi.* ***Sekiz sene on gün saltanat*** […][387]

This omission of the most vigorous dynastic strife in Ottoman history clearly results from an act of "politics of memory" in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, and such a lacuna might be interpreted as evidence of the narrative's lack of historicity, and as

[386] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osman*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 12a–13a.

[387] Ibid., 13a.

such be considered a potential reason to disregard the narrative as historical evidence. However, the exact same taciturnity on the interregnum period is also seen in Celâlzâde Salih Çelebi's (d. 1565) sixteenth-century history, the *Hadîkatü's-Selâtîn* (c. 1562), which retells, in an autograph copy, the earliest beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty up through the death of Mehmed I.[388] Celâlzâde Salih Çelebi authored several other earlier histories, which might be categorized as *Süleymannâme*s in that they focus exclusively on Süleyman the Magnificent's reign and campaigns; among these are the *Tarih-i Sultân Süleymân* (c. 1528) and its appendix the *Tarih-i Budin* (c. 1530), as well as other shorter narratives on Süleyman's various campaigns, entitled the *Mohaç-nâme*, *Fetih-nâme-i Rodos*, and *Belgrad Fetih-nâmesi*, the last two of which are included in two different miscellaneous manuscripts that also contain the author's letters and *belles-lettres*.[389] Another remarkable point about the *Hadîkatü's-Selâtîn* is the fact that, although the author claims to write about the reigns of eight Ottoman sultans, he in fact only relates the reigns and historical vitae of Osman I, Orhan, Murad I, Bayezid I, and his rival sons İsa Çelebi, Musa Çelebi, Emir Süleyman, and Mehmed I, all following a section on the emergence of the Ottoman dynasty and their settlement in Anatolia.[390]

Just as in the example of the *Hadîkatü's-Selâtîn*, which omits the historical dynastic strife between Bayezid I's sons for the Ottoman throne in the interregnum period of 1402 to 1413 CE, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narrative also chooses to "forget" that rather gloomy episode in Ottoman imperial history, instead advancing an idea of a peaceful and negotiated ascension to the throne among the contending

[388] Celâl-zâde Sâlih Çelebi, *Ḥadîḳatü's-Selâṭîn - İnceleme – Metin*, ed. Hasan Yüksel and H. İbrahim Delice (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2013).

[389] "Giriş," *Ḥadîḳatü's-Selâṭîn*, xxix–xxxii.

[390] Ibid., xvi–xvii.

princes, in line with what Halil İnalcık has observed as the traditional concept of statehood in which "the state [was] thought of as the joint property and inheritance of the dynasty," as indicated in the practice of choosing the next ruler for the state through a *kurultay*.[391] This outlook, which İnalcık notes had become invalidated "[b]y the fifteenth century, as a result of particular circumstances" with the establishment of "the concept of royal authority as absolute and indivisible," thus seems, in the configuration of the narrative of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, to have been resurrected by an *ulema* outlook on the subject of Ottoman succession, as revealed in this episode recasting the interregnum period of 1402–1413 as a peaceful succession of princes following one another up onto the throne.

5.4.3 On Literary Topoi and the Oral Nature of Narrative Performance

In what seems to be in line with such an *ulema* outlook, and in contrast to earlier "canonized" histories of the Ottoman rise, which were produced in an attempt to advance the interests of the ghazi milieux that included both converted and still Christian warriors of the Ottoman enterprise, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* makes no mention of Köse Mihal, or indeed of any close contact with any other Christian companion in the early years of the dynasty, until the long episode on the conversion and subsequent appointments of Mahmud Pasha, whose posthumously produced legend will be addressed in the next section, in the service of the dynasty during the reign of Murad II (r. 1421–1451). This long episode actually In this manner, these narratives set a distance between the conquering ghazi begs and any local Christian people of the conquered land. In fact, the existence of such locals does not even become clear until after Orhan has captured Bursa and made it his capital, during a later episode concerning the conquest of Kazdağı, where the

[391] See İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession," 60–1.

soldiers of Islam capture, cook, and eat an infidel. In the episode, two Christian shepherds are captured by the ghazi Ottoman soldiers: one of them is made into a shish kebab, while the other escapes after hearing that he will be eaten for breakfast the next day. When this shepherd arrives in his village, he warns the other Christian locals that "the man-eating Turks are coming!" ("*adam yiyici Türkler geliyor*").[392] This narrative episode may have functioned as a kind of comic relief for the audience in a living oral performance environment.

Another oral performative element in the texts are their new renditions of some of the better-known topos-like episodes of the earlier "histories." One example of such a rendition in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives is the conquest of Gelibolu by an Ömer Beg sent by Orhan, which reads much like the episode relating to the capture of Aydos castle by Gazi Rahmân as told by Âşıkpaşazâde and also—based on him, though with considerable alterations—by Neşrî.[393] Cemal Kafadar notes two variants of the same narrative episode recorded elsewhere: one is in the *Düstûrnâme* and involves Umur Beg and the baroness of Bodonitsa, who offers him help as well as love in his attempt to capture the castle of Bodonitsa,[394] while the second is one recorded much later, in the 1930s, about the capture of Birgi, again by Umur Beg, who receives help from a Byzantine lady named Sofia, who gives him the keys to the castle.[395] While in the latter version by Âşıkpaşazâde, and also by Neşrî, Aydos, which is a steep hill known to the Greeks as *Aëtos* ("Eagle"), just to the north of Pendik, near Istanbul, serves as the scene of the story, the pseudo-

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[392] *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, Fatih No. 4206/1, 7b.

[393] Paul Wittek, "The Taking of Aydos Castle: A Ghazi Legend and Its Transformation," in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A.R.Gibb*, ed. George Makdisi (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 662.

[394] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 70.

[395] Quoted in Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 170, endnote #24, and cf. Himmet Akın, *Aydınoğulları Tarihi Hakkında Bir Araştırma* (Ankara, 1968), 26.

historical *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives situate the same topos of a Christian girl falling for the ghazi warrior to the point of betraying her own people in Gelibolu.[396] Despite change of scenery, this recurrence of the same literary topos over many different narrative episodes of ghaza proves that all of these narratives through which roughly the same episode can be traced cannot simply be explained away by the tenacity of memory concerning some significant historical event, but, on the contrary, need to be understood in terms of narrative logic and functionality. Differing toponyms are provided for what is effectively the same sequence of events in which this literary topos, rather than being a clearly identifiable historical event, occurs. This practice is in line with oral functionality, whereby the same topos is relocated into different locations, often under the contextual influence of different instances of oral performance.

In the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives, the story circling around this literary topos clearly exhibits divergences from the "canonized" version of the same topos. On the whole, however, it seems that the immediate function of the episode in terms of oral performance remains the same in all versions. The *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* version runs as follows: a castellan's daughter falls in love with Ömer Beg after seeing him from the castle during the siege. She sends him a letter offering to tell him about a secret passage into the castle. There is no mention of a dream with the prophet here, thus handily creating a non-religious context for the erotic scene that will follow in the narrative. Indeed, the nighttime scene with the two in

[396] It might be noted here that the ancient toponym for Çanakkale, which is in the vicinity of Gelibolu, is actually Ayedos. It might even be suggested that perhaps the social memory misguidedly relocated the attribution of scenery for the same topos in this instance. Another point that needs to be noted in support of the previous suggestion is the fact that in the text of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, Gelibolu mistakenly comes up twice as the target of ghaza, suggesting either a result of this misguidance on the part of the social memory for the toponym of the earlier location of the literary topos, or a certain fixation on Gelibolu, which as a passage across the straits was in fact very important for the Ottoman expansion into Europe.

bed is highly sensual, focusing heavily on and describing the woman's breasts, making it quite likely that a male audience was intended for the composition in terms of oral performance. What follows after is indeed rather melancholic: Ömer and the girl are soon married, and after two years of bliss the girl experiences discomfort beneath one of her breasts—hence the aforementioned erotic scene. When Ömer Beg reveals that there is a rose leaf hidden under her breast, he also realizes that she is suffering from a canker sore there. During their dialogue about how she can be hurt so easily, the girl asserts that her father, whom she readily betrayed, took good care of her, having her eat nothing but marrow. Subsequently Ömer Beg, thinking that she would be no good for him because she had not shown loyalty even to her own father, suddenly kills her. However, regretting what he has done, he soon kills himself as well, and they are both buried in the same tomb. In this configuration, without the earlier dream detail and with the moralistic addition of death at the end, the same topos employed earlier by both Âşıkpaşazâde and Neşrî nevertheless still serves two functions within the context of oral performance (and perhaps also in the context of written cultural consumption as well). Firstly, it entertains before later teaching a moral lesson about loyalty. Here, however, it should be noted that all versions making use of this same topos in fact signifies something similar, which Cemal Kafadar recognizes as a ghazi fantasy serving a practical function: "In fact, such help (and love?) offered by Byzantine women who are incited in their dreams to fall for warriors of Islam seems to have been a fantasy of the gazis, and such narratives may well have served to attract adventuresome young men into the armies or to keep them there."[397] Indeed, in addition to serving various performative and other functions, all literary topoi, whenever and wherever

[397] Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 70.

applied, signify a culturally constructed mental framework, or even a mindset, that reveals those—sometimes archetypical—aspirations, fears, and taboos embedded deep in the popular imagination and social memory. Therefore, these literary topoi as revealed in such pseudo-historical narratives are perhaps more important than any verifiable historical facts when it comes to the study of the history of mentalities. Indeed, these are literary topoi or narrative episodes used and reused in various chronicles as well as in pseudo-historical narratives like the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, and though they may in fact tell us little to nothing about the actual conquest of a given place or any other historical event, they certainly do shed light on how such conquests, incidents, and events were viewed by both the people who witnessed them as contemporary historical experiences and by those looking back retrospectively on the history (or legends) of the Ottoman polity.

5.4.4 On the *Kul*, the Devshirme, and the *Ulema* in the Making of the Empire: The Case of Mahmûd Pasha

Despite such already noted differences, the use of such well-known episodes in these texts shows that they are closely linked to the long tradition of earlier histories of the Ottoman dynasty, which have mostly been treated as histories proper. Contrary to the lack of scholarly interest shown in the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives, modern historians, especially in the twentieth century, have extensively utilized the semi-official accounts of the rise of the Ottomans recorded in Âşıkpaşazâde, Oruç Beg, the anonymous *Tevârîh-i Âl-i ʻOsmân* chronicles, and in Neşrî. More recently, however, the positivist critical method of reading these texts in order to distinguish fact from fiction seems to have reached a dead end, as more and more of their anecdotes have been found unreliable, nonfactual, unverifiable, or at least incompatible with each other. On this point, it is again necessary to refer to the

historical context within which they were individually produced, rather than trying to test them solely on the grounds of historical veracity.

Indeed, such an outlook on these early chronicles, as well as pseudo-historical narratives, has begun to bear fruitful results in regards to their historical significance in terms of the history of mentalities in the Ottoman cultural sphere. One important study undertaken with this variety of outlook was Stefanos Yerasimos' *Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*,[398] which traces the different manuscript renditions and recensions of the legendary narratives produced during the reign of Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512) on the subjects of the history of the foundation of Istanbul and of the building of Haghia Sofia. Just prior to Bayezid's assumption of the throne, the end of Mehmed II's reign instigated a reaction among the *ulema* of the period due to Mehmed's excessively centralist policies, which were undertaken so as to further his agenda for an universal empire. Specifically, he confiscated property owned by the *ulema* and even property secured by *vakıf*s.[399] Yerasimos, through a close textual analysis of legends that were recast in manuscript form during the subsequent reign of Bayezid II, demonstrates how a common "anti-imperial" sentiment runs through popular legends about the foundation and history of Constantinople and the construction of Haghia Sophia, resulting from a reaction against Mehmed II's imperial project and his status as an absolute ruler. Yerasimos thus rightly reads these pseudo-historical narratives as anti-imperial legends produced during Bayezid's reign as reactions in implicit opposition to Mehmed's earlier centralist policies. As is noted by Yerasimos, similar episodes and sentiments in relation to Mehmed II are also found in the *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa* legends. However,

[398] Stefanos Yerasimos, *Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, trans. Şirin Tekeli (Istanbul: Iletişim, 2010).

[399] See Halil İnalcık, *Fatih devri üzerinde tetkikler ve vesikalar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1954).

despite being critical of Mehmed II, this legend, according to Yerasimos, cannot be regarded among the cycle of anti-imperial legends, which he studies because Mahmud Pasha was the first historical personality who contributed greatly to Mehmed II' imperial policy: he was not only instrumental to its implementation, but also was recognized as one of the very symbols of the policy.[400] However, the fact that one of the renditions of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, entitled *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*,[401] is paired in a *mecmû'a* with another hitherto unstudied example[402] of the "anti-imperial" legends that Yerasimos examines in his study suggests that, in the Ottoman social memory and popular imagination, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* and its antecedent text—that is, the posthumous legend entitled *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Paşa*—are not at all far from this cycle of anti-imperial legends and pseudo-historical narratives, and perhaps Mahmud Pasha's historical personality had been appropriated by such "anti-imperial" sentiments as well.

In his extensive monograph on Mahmud Pasha entitled *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453–1474)*, Theoharis Stavrides also claims that Mehmed II's reign (r. 1444–46, 1451–81) was "a turning-point in Ottoman history, marking the definitive transition of the Ottoman State from a frontier principality to an empire and giving it the form that it would essentially maintain for the next four and half centuries."[403] According to Stavrides, Mehmed II, being "the dominant figure in the Ottoman State during this period," "influenced all aspects of life" with his "forceful personality and policies aiming at

[400] Yerasimos, *Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, 228, footnote #163.
[401] *Der Beyân-ı Menâkıb-ı Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, İBB Atatürk Library, Türkçe Yazmaları, BEL_Yz_O.000039/02: 69b–174b.
[402] *Tevârih-i Şehr-i Kostantiniyye*, İBB Atatürk Library, Türkçe Yazmaları, BEL_Yz_O.000039/02: 1a –67b.
[403] Theoharis Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453–1474)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 3.

the creation of a great sedentary, bureaucratic and world-conquering empire," and one of the greatest novelties implemented in the state machinery by his initiative at the time was "his use of men of non-Muslim origin at the highest offices in the state."[404] One of these men of the empire, Mahmud Pasha Angelović, whose fame led to a posthumous legend entitled *Menâkıb-ı Mahmud Paşa*, which is incorporated into the narrative of *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, was one of the *kul* of non-Muslim origin, and in fact "one of the very first converts to occupy the office of Grand Vezir among the Ottomans."[405] According to Stavrides, he descended from "a Byzantine aristocratic family residing in Serbia," and "became the second most important figure in the state during a large part of the reign of Mehmed II."[406] In fact, the posthumous legend that developed around his figure corresponded to this historical reality, illustrating him as the main advisor to the sultan. However, the legend greatly augments his influence on the sultan, claiming him to be the real mastermind behind the whole enterprise of the conquest of Istanbul. In this legendary configuration, he is shown as, in many respects, a better example of a man of the empire than his own sovereign:

> The legend presents Mahmud Pasha as the main guiding force behind Mehmet II, while it makes the Sultan appear as a weak figure who merely follows his Grand Vizier's lead. An example of this is the fact that in the legend Mehmet II decides to build Rumeli Hisar and to conquer Constantinople only after the advice of Mahmud Pasha. […] Also, the legend attributes to Mahmud Pasha the idea of taking the ships overland into the Golden Horn […], which all historical sources ascribe to the Sultan himself. By taking away from Mehmet II all the decisions that led to the conquest of Constantinople, which are traditionally attributed to him, and assigning them to Mahmud Pasha, the legend diminishes the glory of the Sultan and exalts the Grand Vizier.[407]

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[404] Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs*, 3.

[405] Ibid. For a narrative outline of the legend, *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa*, see ibid., 369–78.

[406] Ibid., 3.

[407] Ibid., 385–6.

In historical reality, Mahmud Pasha Angelović, thanks to his military skills as well as his diplomatic and administrative abilities, was, in fact, very influential in state affairs, and he occupied the office of grand vizier and *beylerbeyi* of Rumeli (commander of the army of the Balkans) for twelve consecutive years (1456–1468), the office of *sancakbeyi* of Gelibolu (commander of the Ottoman fleet) for three years (1469–1472), and the office of grand vizier again in 1472–1473, before his execution by order of the sultan in July 1474.[408] However, again, in the legend, Mahmud Pasha's success in holding all these high posts in the machinery of the state is highly exaggerated, with the legendary version of the pasha occupying four different posts, including the grand vizierate, *at the same time*, much to the envy of other high-ranking state officials with lofty ambitions of their own. In the narrative, this ultimately leads to the pasha's demise, on the grounds of unfounded accusations by another vizier who was plotting against the pasha. This conspiracy also shows Mehmed II in an especially poor light: he is depicted as being easily manipulated by such plotting, leading him to order Mahmud Pasha's execution, a decision which he regrets almost immediately but still proves unable to stop.

Yerasimos argues that this unflattering representation of Mehmed II as produced in the posthumous legend resulted from the fact that the legend was not only produced so as to advance the prestigious status of Mahmud Pasha, but was also an indirect assault on Mehmed's image. The popularity of this legend shows how deep this sentiment against Mehmed II ran in wider circles of the population in the period following his reign. As already noted above, there are twenty-one manuscript copies of the popular legend, the *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa*, extant in the archives today.[409]

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[408] Ibid., 3.

[409] See footnote # 27.

However, beyond these known and accessible copies, a number of important studies[410] undertaken on other manuscripts containing the legend and held in private collections demonstrate that the legend was in fact reproduced even more extensively than what public collections indicate. Among all these copies, perhaps the most remarkable are the excerpted version recorded in a (presumably) fifteenth-century *mecmû'a* containing the "Gazavât-ı Sultan Murad"[411] and the rendition recorded in a late eighteenth-century miscellaneous manuscript made up of texts written in Armenian on Ottoman history.[412] As mentioned earlier, this popular legend was not only reproduced as an individual narrative on its own, but was also, as I have discovered, reproduced several more times within the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, being incorporated into the full length of its narrative configuration. Despite a few slight divergences in the details, overall the legend runs along similar veins in these copies, always making Mehmed II a foil to Mahmud Pasha, casting the former in a very unflattering light while the latter is in all senses the hero, and is even accompanied by Hızır whenever he requires assistance to save himself, right up until his execution from the wrath of an insensible Mehmed II.

What, then, was the historical context that ultimately prompted this legend to be incorporated into the much wider scope of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, to the point where it makes up a very sizeable portion of the whole this pseudo-historical

[410] Halil İnalcık, and Mevlûd Oğuz, "Yeni Bulunmuş Bir "Gazavât-ı Sultan Murad," *A.Ü.D.T.C.F. Dergisi* 7/2 (1949): 481–95; İlber Ortaylı, "Osmanlı Toplumunda Yönetici Sınıf Hakkında Kamu Oyunun Oluşumuna Bir Örnek; Menakib-i Mahmud Paşa-i Veli," *Prof. Dr. Tahsin Bekir Balta'ya Armağan*, 459–81 (Ankara: AÜSB Fakültesi & Türkiye ve Orta Doğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 1974) Accessed May 18, 2016. http://www.todaie.edu.tr/resimler/ekler/c6e7721b2b5559c_ek.pdf.; Kevork Pamukciyan, "Ermenice Bir Elyazmaya Göre Vezir-i Âzam Mahmud Paşa (?–1474)," *Tarih ve Toplum* VI (1986): 9–13; Mustafa Şahin, "Mahmud Paşa Menâkıbı: Kostantiniyye Fethi," *Toplumsal Tarih* III/17 (1995): 15–21.

[411] Cf. Halil İnalcık, and Mevlûd Oğuz, "Yeni Bulunmuş Bir "Gazavât-ı Sultan Murad," *A.Ü.D.T.C.F. Dergisi* 7/2 (1949): 481–95.

[412] Kevork Pamukciyan, "Ermenice Bir Elyazmaya Göre Vezir-i Âzam Mahmud Paşa (?–1474)," *Tarih ve Toplum* VI (1986): 9–13.

narrative? As suggested above in the context of discussions on certain other aspects of the narrative, it must have been an *ulema*-oriented cultural and political environment, one which refused to forgive and forget the old grudge held against the absolutist sultan Mehmed II. This orientation of the *Menâkıb-ı Mahmûd Paşa* was very likely the reason that this particular piece of social memory was first produced and reproduced in the numerous manuscript copies of this legend, and the tenacity of this social memory was also the reason that the legend, as a partial antecedent text, came to be latterly reproduced within the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* as well.

5.5 Conclusion: In Response to the Question of the Rise of the Ottoman Dynasty

This chapter has examined the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives in terms of their particular historical contingencies so as to better understand how the later Ottoman social imagination worked to devise and revise the origins of the social and political entity of the Ottoman Empire. On the whole, I contend that these once "popular" narratives illustrate how historical self-reflection was not confined to the upper echelons, but rather extended throughout wider cross-sections of the Ottoman population. In this connection, I would like to pose a series of questions. Should we also disregard the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives because they are not "works of factual history," as some researchers now do for the histories of Âşıkpaşazâde, Oruç Beg, and the anonymous chronicler? Or should we not take them into account as sources just because they might not be as historically near to the events they recount as such semi-official histories were? What should be the limit and criteria for any work to be included as a source for historiographical inquiry? And should this decision be made on the grounds of genre classifications, or of temporal proximity? I argue that every work of differing "factual" and "fictional" configurations can be made an object of historiographical inquiry, as long

as the researcher asks the questions needed to open up these texts so as to reveal their true historical significance in regards to the historical context within which they were produced, received, and reproduced. Because these do actually matter when it comes to the study of the history of mentalities: these texts can potentially tell us more about the people involved in certain historical events and how they interpret what they experience than the exact factual details and conditions of the events themselves. What context actually led the later social imagination to invent and reinvent such beginnings for the Ottoman dynasty? This is perhaps as important a question as the actual and factual conditions of this beginning itself.

The *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* narratives demonstrate how the later Ottoman social imagination worked to devise and revise the origins of this social and political entity on the grounds of an overtly Sunni religious stance, in opposition to the Shi'ite denomination, thereby laying the ground of the legitimization of Ottoman sovereignty on this religious basis by providing the *ulema* with an especially authoritative status in the making of the dynasty. In this connection, even an obviously devshirme figure like Mahmud Pasha becomes an accomplished *ulema*, advancing, after conversion and religious instruction, all the way up to the post of *şeyhü'l-islâm*, thanks chiefly to his natural disposition towards theological studies. In short, the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* recasts and retells the origins and legitimacy of the Ottoman dynasty on the grounds of an inclusive culture of a necessarily Sunni outlook.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Ali Emîrî's catalogue note dismissing the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* as "from beginning to end and from top to bottom […] a series of spurious and fabricated lies"[413] was possibly, as mentioned earlier, not only what steered historians away from these particular pseudo-historical narratives, but is also indicative of a mindset that has led to a broad dismissal of many pseudo-historical texts which have the same basic narrational traits and textual characteristics in terms of content.[414] Indeed, this positivist mindset behind Ali Emîrî's note could equally well have led to a decisive dismissal of a text like the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, which seems, on the surface, to be so fictive, with its long list of imaginary sultans. However, regardless of what modern historiography may make of them, the fact remains that the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* were produced and reproduced, copied and recopied, rendered and rerendered—even at the behest of such a high official figure as the Chief Black Eunuch Tayfûr Agha, who even endowed and gifted the copy of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* he had made—over a period of

[413] Ali Emîrî collection, AE Mnz 144, 1a.

[414] It must be stated here that these two sets of pseudo-historical narratives do not necessarily fit within a basic literary genre, but were produced within certain historical contexts of their own at different periods of Ottoman cultural history.

two centuries, from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. This is a historical phenomenon that cries out for explanation. Why did such pseudo-historical texts attract such "popular" interest? Why did they have such an appeal to the public in the "post-classical" era of the Ottoman Empire? Keeping these questions in mind, in this conclusion I will explore the historical significance of these pseudo-historical texts.

No matter how fictive and imaginary they may look at the outset, and regardless of whether they were reproduced from oral tradition or recast from written manuscript sources, these pseudo-historical narratives certainly seem to have served a function in the historical contexts in which they were produced and reproduced. This function might have been to impart, perhaps rather innocently, a sense of history and a historical understanding, or else, and more deliberately, to pass on a particular political agenda or standpoint to a wider segment of the Ottoman population. Otherwise, without such an intended purpose or function, they would simply not have been produced and reproduced across numerous copies in the first place. Through their narrative configurations, these pseudo-historical narratives not only imparted such a sense of history, but also provided a political and historical perspective onto the past, and sometimes a vision of the future as well. For the modern historian, these traits in these pseudo-historical narratives orient us and grant us a view onto the Ottoman experience in the "post-classical" era.

In this context, what we really should ask is this: what is our perspective when we question such pseudo-historical narratives historiographically? Typically, the perspective adopted is one wherein the historian foists his or her own modern mentality and epistemological understanding onto a text of such an imaginative nature, quite often dismissing it without so much as a second thought. However, in

the history of mentalities, this positivist approach leads to misguided, anachronistic, and ultimately fruitless results. In order to make sense of pseudo-historical narratives like those under consideration in this study, no matter how irrational they may seem, first of all, the historian must recognize that such narratives have an intimate relationship with the particular historical mentalities from and within which they emerged, mentalities which include not only the epistemological orientations but also the historical sensibilities of their producers and consumers. Secondly, and resulting from just such a reorientation in historiographical perspective, we must connect these texts and their accompanying contemporary mentalities to the understanding of knowledge that was prevalent at the time of their production.

At the time these pseudo-historical narratives were being produced, there was a clear and well-categorized differentiation among the different types of knowledge (e.g., *ʻilm*, *maʻrifet*, *hâl*, *edeb*, *hüner*, *fenn*, *sanʻat*, and *haber*)[415] in the Ottoman epistemological and cultural understanding. However, this formal differentiation of knowledge simply does not apply when we move to the realm of narratives. In narratives, particularly those produced so as to have a certain "popular" appeal, knowledge of all sorts—whether it be *ʻilm*, *hâl*, *haber*, or whatever—is all bundled together in the plotting of the story so as to be more easily absorbed into the social consciousness. Advanced learning in the sphere of formal education could leave pupils with a sour taste in their mouths, while the introduction of knowledge through narrative form could make that knowledge much more easily digestible, like beneficial but repulsive pills sugar-coated with entertaining digressions in between, or even simultaneous with, the acquisition of moral lessons, esoteric and Sufi

[415] See Nil Tekgül, "Reflections of An External World In the Ottoman Mind: The Production and Transmission of Knowledge in the 18th-century Ottoman Society" (MA diss., Bilkent University, 2011), 19–29.

wisdom, customary knowledge, and bits and pieces of fact. This is exactly how such imaginative narratives—such as, for example, those dealing in visions of the apocalyptic end of times, or those relating tales of Hızır—might have worked: they served the function of indoctrinating, albeit in a rather roundabout and disguised way, larger segments of the population into the realm of morality, civility, and social discipline.[416]

On the other hand, instruction through "popular" and anonymous pseudo-historical narratives was exercised not only for the sake of learning, but also, more significantly and indeed more often, so as to advance either consciously or unconsciously certain political or historical agendas of the milieux within which they were produced, and to promulgate these agendas through the reproduction of these narratives in numerous manuscript copies. As Halil İnalcık claims, "[a]s expressed in various historical narratives, each interpretation [of Ottoman dynastic history] naturally bears the mark of a certain environment, period, or political viewpoint," and "[i]n spite of their legendary character, these narratives are important for the particular traditions and biases they express."[417] What a positivist outlook on history, such as that seen in the note by Ali Emîrî, misses out on about these pseudo-historical narratives is exactly what İnalcık declares: these narratives, whether legendary or not, all represent a certain historical milieu within the very configuration of their version of history or their historical context, and these milieux necessarily worked their way into, or were made to work their way into, the narration in such a way that this outlook or version was conveyed to the public—i.e.,

[416] See Özer Ergenç, "'İdeal İnsan Tipi' Üzerinden Osmanlı Toplumunun Evrimi Hakkında Bir Tahlil Denemesi," in *Şehir, Toplum, Devlet: Osmanlı Tarihi Yazıları*, 423–28 (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012).

[417] İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession," 44.

in this case, to the manuscripts' potential audience(s)—within the Ottoman cultural sphere.

Indeed, in this regard, these pseudo-historical narratives are ultimately not much different than any other historiographical work. Whether the work in question is a "canonized" and frequently utilized one or not, and whether it is largely factual or primarily legendary, the fact remains the same: every historical or pseudo-historical text brings with it a certain outlook onto the subject matter that it deals with. And it is precisely in the study of this outlook that we can find glimpses of the mentalities that brought these texts forth. Every writing of history is a rewriting of history. John Tosh asserts this point eloquently: "The word history carries two meanings in common parlance. It refers both to what actually happened in the past and to the representation of that past in the work of historians."[418] And indeed, all historical writing, to different degrees, is tinged with the authors' aspirations, concerns, convictions, and prejudices.

In this dissertation, two pseudo-historical narratives of the "post-classical" era, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, have been studied through the perspective of the historiographical outlook and understanding outlined above. As a result, it has been argued that both of these pseudo-historical narratives were produced so as to address, separately and in their own way, the historical contexts of two important issues that have been much problematized in modern Ottoman historiography; namely, those rather bluntly formulated "decline" and "rise" historiographical paradigms of Ottoman dynastic history. While the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, with the earlier date of production in the mid-seventeenth century, deals with the period starting with the reign of Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603)—specifically

[418] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, xiii.

with the Battle of Keresztes during the Egri Campaign of 1596—the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân*, which as far as is possible to know given the copies available for this study had a later date of production in the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, looks back at the earliest beginnings and the origin of the Ottoman dynasty.

In this temporal outline of their subject matter, one of the most remarkable points about these two pseudo-historical narratives is *how* and *why* they, together and almost as if calculatingly, retold the story of the Ottoman dynasty with the period addressed by the *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s, representing the "golden age" of the empire as historiographical works, left out. While most of the manuscript versions of the *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i ʻOsmân* end abruptly as soon as Selim I (r. 1512–1520) comes to the throne, with some actually ending well before he could appear in either history or in the narrative, the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* starts its oracular narrative with Mehmed III's reign; i.e., well after the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) and his son and grandson, respectively, Selim II (r. 1566–1574) and Murad III (r. 1574–1595). Thus, these two pseudo-historical narratives respectively relay only the period from the beginnings of the Ottoman dynasty through the ascension of Selim I, and the later "post-classical" period wracked with structural changes and overwhelming social and political problems, leaving untouched the so-called "golden age" of imperial history, which is usually recognized as encompassing the reigns of Selim I, Süleyman the Magnificent, and often Selim II and Murad III as well. This fact indicates that this period, situated precisely at the center of nostalgic sentiments concerning the empire's trajectory, did not constitute a real historical concern or problem for the Ottoman social memory and imagination. It should also be noted that the *Selimnâme*s and *Süleymannâme*s told their versions of the history of their respective regnal periods in a highly

hyperbolic manner: this might well have affected this result inasmuch as these historiographical works were explicitly commissioned as panegyrics and thus meant to serve a broad social function. As such, they could well even be recognized as having proven to some extent successful in their commissioned purpose and execution, for the nostalgic sentiment surrounding the myth of the "golden age" seems to have become rather deeply embedded in the Ottoman popular imagination and social memory by the early seventeenth century at the latest, as is demonstrated, albeit in a somewhat roundabout way, by the fact that the pseudo-historical *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* and *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân* narratives overtly refrain from rewriting these "golden" years of the empire.

Additionally, both of the pseudo-historical narratives under consideration share certain similar concerns about and general standpoints towards Ottoman dynastic history. To their differing degrees, these two sets of narratives are especially concerned with the methods and practices of succession in the Ottoman political entity. The *Hikâyet-i Zuhûr-ı Âl-i 'Osmân*, as outlined in Chapter V, refuses to address the conflicts of the interregnum period of 1402 to 1413 CE, while the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe*, as detailed in Chapter IV, begins its visionary relation of Ottoman imperial history and the future—which was very clearly composed out of a fundamental concern for the dynasty's longevity—from the unexpected victory at the Battle of Keresztes in the Egri Campaign of 1596.[419] This dramatic battle, which

[419] Interestingly and tellingly, Gisela Procházka-Eisl and Hülya Çelik also make a note of six different texts concerning the conquest of Eger/Egri, including a *fethnâme*, a long report on the event, which was called a "*mektûb*" by the scribe/owner—whom Procházka-Eisl and Çelik identify as Meḥemmed Kemālī—in a *mecmûʿa* (Ms. A.F. 268) dated to 1599 in one colophon, in the final section, and produced with different scripts throughout. The other four shorter texts are also in relation to the Egri campaign, being chronograms written in the *gazel* and *qıtʿa* verse forms. For information on these texts and the *mecmûʿa* in the digital edition of the first volume of their study—which will soon be digitally published as part of the research project "Early Modern Ottoman Culture of Learning: Popular Learning between Poetic Ambitions and Pragmatic Concerns"—see Procházka-Eisl, Gisela, and Hülya Çelik. "Mecmua online." Accessed on August 31, 2016. http://www.acdh.ac.at/mecmua. For another illuminating article on the importance and textual reflections of the conquest of Eger/Egri

occurred during the reign of Mehmed III, who was the first sultan to personally take part in battle for 30 years, since the 1566 Siege of Szigetvár, during the course of which Süleyman the Magnificent died. As this study has outlined, it is clear that this battle and its striking results became intertwined with the apocalyptic anticipation that emerged around the Hijri year 1000, with the results of the battle being interpreted as a good omen for the Ottoman dynasty's future in the Ottoman popular imagination. Correspondingly, this choice of a first vision in the *Bahrü'l-Mükâşefe* is interesting not only in terms of underlining how this last-minute victory left a deep mark on the popular imagination, but also in terms of the focus on Mehmed III, whose ascension and reign were significant for the never-ending problem of succession in the Ottoman dynasty owing to the fact that, after he took the throne, he had all nineteen of his living brothers killed. In this respect, it was historically significant that Mehmed III followed, to the letter and with no reservations, Mehmed II's *kanunname* justifying fratricide, which reads, "And to whomsoever of my sons the Sultanate shall pass, it is fitting that for the order of the world he shall kill his brothers. Most of the Ulema allow it. So let them act on this."[420] Indeed, Mehmed III's reign would mark the zenith of the concerns and unspoken debates on the issue of succession that were already beginning to boil over:

> This method of succession changed abruptly when Sultan Selim II (1566–1574) sent out only his eldest son (the future Murat III, 1574–1595) to a provincial administrative post, Manisa in western Anatolia. Murat III in turn sent out only his eldest son (the future Mehmet III, 1595–1603), again as governor of Manisa. Mehmet III in fact was the last sultan who actually administered as a governor (for another fifty years, eldest sons were named as governors of Manisa but never served). Thus, during those reigns, the Ottomans *de facto* conformed to the practice of primogeniture.[421]

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in different sources of the period, cf. Jan Schmidt, "The Egri campaign of 1596. Military history and the problem of sources," in *The Joys of Philology. Studies in Ottoman Literature, History and Orientalism (1500–1923)*, ed. Jan Schmidt (Istanbul: İsis, 2002), 107–122.

[420] Quoted in Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, 91.

[421] Ibid.

In connection with this concern with the method of succession and an implied expectation of resolving the issue without bloodshed, both of the pseudo-historical narratives that I have studied here either maintain silence on the issue or openly suggest a method of consensus (*icmâ'*) for making and effecting decisions concerning succession issues.

Additionally, another common narrative trait discernible in both narratives is the strong Sunni and *ulema*-oriented standpoint that they share, especially when dealing with the issues arising from Ottoman dynastic history. To differing degrees and in different instances of narration, they either imply or directly demonstrate the idea that the *ulema* must have agency in regards to dynastic and state issues, and even must be granted the authority to guide the imperial entity towards the right and unwavering path that it would need in the troubled "post-classical" period of Ottoman history. This common feature of the narrative outlook, glimpses of which can be caught at various points in both narratives, attests to the fact that these narratives were the products of a period when the orthodox Sunni culture had become fully established to such a degree that members of the *ulema* could take the initiative to claim a certain level of agency in state affairs within the context of this period of structural changes and social transformations.

To conclude, every text and every manuscript ultimately serves as a testimony to its own unique experience of cultural production and consumption, and to its historical context, and therefore must be studied on its own terms in order to discern and decipher its true singular cultural historical significance with regard to the role it played in the general scenery of the Ottoman Empire of its time. Therefore, I consider the dissemination of similar or largely identical texts across multiple manuscripts, whether single-text or miscellaneous, over a period of some two

centuries, as is the case in this study, to be something of great interest for any researcher into Ottoman cultural history in general. Which texts, the historian must ask, were in circulation through reproduction by way of copying, and what variations and changes occurred at the various instances of copying that took place? These research questions can ultimately lead us to capture glimpses of and gain insight into the differing contexts surrounding the diverse set of cultural milieux that developed and flourished in the Ottoman realm. Moreover, they can also help us to better understand the nature of and even the reasons behind the multiple cultural and political processes that took place as part of the historical trajectory of the Ottoman Empire.

As such, in the future an even more exhaustive survey and comparison of the different renditions of these two pseudo-historical narratives might bring forth an even deeper and more nuanced understanding of the social and political dynamics lying behind the production and reproduction of such texts in the "post-classical" era. Such a general survey also needs to be undertaken so as to discover, as far as possible, for other instances of pseudo-historical narratives produced and reproduced in miscellaneous and single-text manuscripts in the "post-classical" period. In this way, historians will be better enabled to paint a wider and more variegated canvas of the Ottoman cultural panorama.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF SULTANS DESCRIBED IN THE *BAHRÜ'L-MÜKÂŞEFE* (KEMANKEŞ 430)

No. of sultan (as given in MS)	Name of sultan	Regnal dates (if real)	Events of reign according to the text
13	Mehmed [III]	1595–1603	given five keys in Sheikh's vision, indicating that he will conquer five provinces (*vilayet*); dies of illness
14	Ahmed [I]	1603–1617	brings great suffering to the knights of Malta; exacts tribute from Venice; Austrian emperor attempts to take back conquered lands but Ahmed defeats them
15	Mustafa [I]	1617–1618, 1622–1623	humbly grants the throne to his brother's son; later returns to the throne, at which time an envoy comes from Moscow expressing obedience; dies while performing prayers
16	Osman [II]	1618–1622	appears in white robes; in Sheikh's vision, his blood spills on the ground and turns to gold, upon which the people weep; struggles to exterminate corruption and the purchasing of state posts; subdues and extracts tribute from Wallachia; dies suddenly (*bağteten*)
17	Murad [IV]	1623–1640	achieves great fame by personally leading campaign against the Kızılbaş, whom he decimates; during his reign, in accord with Abu Hanifa, large turbans will be replaced by small turbans made of modest fabric
18	İbrahim	1640–1648	conquers all of the Mediterranean islands and all the fortresses along the coasts as far as the Straits of Hormuz; conquers seven other fortresses, each

			representing a foreign ruler; liberates the Moriscos of Spain and replaces the sound of church bells with the sound of the call to prayer; fights against, defeats, and extracts tribute from the Austrians; decrees that Qur'ans not be decorated with gold except for those found in mosques
19	Yusuf		a great fire; kills Jews of Istanbul; defeats Arab bandits; secures roads to Damascus and Aleppo
(20)	(name censored in text)		defeats Crimean khan and removes him from throne; many infidels convert to Islam; outlaws and ends use of *barsh* and opium
21	Orhan		conquers the Pope, Europe (*Frengistan*), and Vienna (*Kızıl Elma*, "the red apple"); appoints muftis to Istanbul, Vienna, and Baghdad; appoints *kazasker*s to Rumelia, Anatolia, Germany, Persia, Africa (*Mağrib-i Zemin*), and Istanbul
22	Selim		declares that all the people will follow the Hanafi *fiqh* and accordingly prepares a comprehensive book of jurisprudence; those who do not wish to submit to this go into hiding; when he dies, angels descend and shroud his body; buried at Hagia Sophia beside his father
23	Murad		conquers 1,200 fortresses; defeats most of the Celali rebels; grows haughty but repents, leaves throne to son and becomes a dervish; a great earthquake; dies while reading the Friday oration from the minbar
24	Mehmed		has five brothers, two of whom appear in Mevlevi attire, one of whom appears as a Halveti, and two of whom appear to be sipahis (!); sends them all away, but infidels kill the latter two in India, and he mounts a campaign against India to avenge them
25	Bayezid		conquers Spain; constructs five great canals in Arabia; respects and

			converses with the poor; buried in Medina
26	Azim		no campaigns; peace among the people of Islam; remaining rebels surrender; buried in Medina
27	Süleyman		constructs 1,000 bridges in Arabia; transforms the Arabian desert into a well-watered and forested land
28	Yıldırım		one of a set of quintuplets who never quarrel and agree that Yıldırım is the brother who should take the throne; decrees that the punishment for oppression/corruption (*zulm*) is forced retirement and seclusion; dies while putting together a large navy
29	Selim		buried in Damascus; the Sheikh requests that Dervish Mehmed not write what he has seen regarding this sultan
31 (!)	Ömer		state positions no longer given to the ignorant but to people of piety and knowledge; those without talent made to become farmers; buried in Medina
31 (!)	Mehmed		has five brothers who go to dwell in solitude in the mountains, receiving knowledge in *fiqh* from the unseen world
32	Ali		campaigns on land and sea against the Pope, capturing 12 fortresses; levies large taxes on Europeans (*Freng*)
34 (!)	Hasan		continues campaign against the Pope, capturing all his lands; establishes 100 provinces with governors on these lands; admired by the people and on good terms with the *kul*s
35	*ismi nâ-ma'lûm*		ugly and irritable; plague and famines
36	Hüseyin		conquers many lands; constructs 6,000 madrasas, 6,000 mosques, and 6,000 dervish lodges in Medina and Arabia; dies at the Kaaba
37	Süleyman		personally cooks and distributes food to the poor; unprecedented agricultural abundance
38	Murad		conquers 60 parasangs of lands

			overseas; converts many to Islam; acts in full accordance with Sharia and the traditions of the Prophet
39	Osman		defeats a much larger force in battle, during which his son or sons are killed
40	Orhan		older brother of Murad (*v*. #38) and paternal uncle of Osman (*v*. #39); crosses the sea to capture 10 lands and 44 fortresses; becomes a *pir* before death
41	Alaeddin		campaigns against Europe (*Frengistan*)
42	Bayez[id?]		constructs a great building between Mecca and Medina; conquers many provinces in China
43	Hüseyin		conquers China with seven fleets; the Pope is captured, sent to Istanbul in chains, and displayed in the Hippodrome; Hüseyin dies while performing prayer
44	Osman		[*largely illegible due to water damage*]
45	Mahmud		one of seven brothers, three of whom become *şeyhülislam* and three of whom become military commanders; 40 years of conflict with Hungary, with four *kazasker*s appointed to the lands conquered from Hungary
46	Süleyman		one of seven (!) brothers: one is sent [as *kazasker*] to China, one to India, one to Rumelia, one to Anatolia, one to Crimea, one to Germany, one to Spain, one becomes *şeyhülislam*, one becomes grand vizier, and one becomes admiral of the navy; a treacherous priest in Hungary arranges an explosion that leads to the death of 140 provincial governors and their soldiers before he himself dies
47	İbrahim		[*illegible due to water damage*]
48	Edhem		makes many conquests in China with a fleet of 5,500 ships; conquers a city at the furthest edge of Hungary, all of whose residents convert to Islam

49	Selim		has passage dug through a mountain to allow easier access for pilgrims to Mecca; has 2,000 galleons constructed, with 500 of them sent against China, 500 against Europe, and 500 against India; dies early
50	Yıldırım		makes many conquests against the infidels, many of whom convert to Islam
51	Mustafa		sends one of his brothers to Hungary, one to China, and one to Mecca
52	*ismi nâ-ma'lûm*		sickly and deformed; buried in Üsküdar
53	Orhan		despite certain faults [*unclear due to water damage*], repents and hears a voice saying that he is excused
54	Yıldırım		during his reign there are 300 viziers, 70 muftis, and 60 *kazasker*s; his reign lasts 60 years
55	Kerim		[*largely illegible due to water damage*]
56	Ali		sends one brother to the province of India, one to China, one to Rumelia, and one to Africa to maintain order; issues edicts such that viziers can have no more than 10 persons in their retinue, while the imperial retinue is reduced to no more than 50 persons and 20 horses; bachelors must be trained in crafts or else they will be beaten with 40 blows; the Kaaba in Mecca is covered with satin cloth
57	Süleyman		possesses the virtues of a ruler but his reign lasts only nine months; buried in Medina; no son survives him
58	Selim		after Süleyman's (*v*. #57) death, the throne is to go to the grand vizier, but the *ulema* objects; then Süleyman's four brothers are requested to take the throne, but all refuse
59	Hasan		sends one brother to India, one to Hungary, and one to Spain; declares servants and concubines will serve seven years and then be manumitted or else their owner's possessions will be confiscated by the state

60	Bayezid		reigns for 40 years; dies while performing prayers
61	*sultân ismi nâ-ma'lûm*		keeps his two brothers at his side at all times; buried beside his father in Medina
62	*sultân ismi dahi nâ-ma'lûm*		sends one brother to India, one to Hungary, one to the Kızılbaş country, one to Spain, and one to Africa; plague and famines and many deaths; flees to Medina, where he dies
63	*padişâhın ismi dahi nâ-ma'lûm*		a filthy character; envies his paternal uncles serving in far-off lands (*i.e.*, #62's brothers) and plans to campaign against them when his *kul*s stop him, saying swords must not be drawn against Muslims; after this, becomes ill from resentment and dies
64	●		[*illegible due to water damage*]
65	Ömer		receives letters from his brothers [appointed to distant lands?] acknowledging his sovereignty; writes back stating (?) that his son Ali (*v.* #66) will assume the throne after him; his reign lasts 40 years
66	Ali		appoints his seven brothers to different places; travels to the Kaaba, where like his father he receives letters from all the governors; when he dies, divine light descends upon him
67	Orhan		[*mostly illegible due to water damage*]
68	Mehmed		appoints his 10 brothers to different places; has great esteem for the *ulema* and does not act without first consulting them; greatly respects the traditions of the Prophet; the people are joyous during his reign
69	Edhem		has four brothers, one of whom he appoints as grand vizier and one of whom he appoints as agha of the Janissaries; every year receives 1,200 shiploads of gold and silver, which he freely distributes to the poor
70	Selim		[*illegible due to water damage*]

APPENDIX B

EXCERPT FROM HAGIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT, RELATED BY AN ‘ABDU’L-GAFFÂR AND RECORDED BY DERVISH MEHMED, THE FIRST-PERSON NARRATOR OF THE *PAPASNÂME*

FROM SÜLEYMANIYE LIBRARY, ISTANBUL, SALIHA HATUN COLLECTION, NO. 212, 27A–27B

Bu şeyh ‘Abdu’r-rahmân kim olduğın ve nice İstânbul’a gelüb ve bizim ile nice mukârin olmuşdır beyân ide. Bu kişinin evvelinde sizlere ikrâr etmiş idük. Bu Şeyh ‘Abdu’r-rahmân kim olduğın bildire […] *işlerinden ve kendüden her ne işidüm ise bir bir sizlere ‘ayân ideyim ki bizim şeyh ne velâyetler dedü ne yerden gelmişdir. ‘Abdu’l-gaffâr* [?] *cevâb virdi ki, şeyh Tatar tâ’ifesindendir* […] *dokuz yüz on târîhinde Ramazân-ı Şerîfin on beşinde dünyâya gelmişdir. Ve doğı gice babası gâ’ibden bir âvâz işidüb ‘Abdu’r-rahmân deyü âvâz gelürdi. Anınçün adını ‘Abdu’r-rahmân kodılar. On altıncı yaşında iken babası ve vâlidesi vefât eylediler. Hısımları bu şeyh üzerine düşüb evlendirdiler. Ve ol hâtûn ile otuz üc sene hoş gecinüb on sekiz erkek oğlanları dünyâya geldi. Ba‘dehu hâtûnı dünyâdan sefer kıldı. Ve hâtûn fevtinden sonra dünyâyı terk idüb dervîş olub ve Ka‘be’ye sefer kılmak niyyet idüb evi büyük oğluna ki Muhammed’dir ana sipâriş eyledi. Ve Ka‘be’ye revân oldı. Ve dâhil oldukda anda bir pîr doksan altı yaşında buna hidmet idüb ve bir gün bir pîr olub mertebesine vardıkda bir bülend âvâz ile didi ki, zîrâ ki sen Allâh te‘âlâya hidmetkâr olursın. Ve pîr vefât idüb ol gice üzerine nûr indi ve gice vâkı‘asında Hazret-i Resûl’i düşünde görüb nice etmek kırk ta‘lîm eyledi. Andan Ka‘be’ye gönderdi. Ve bu ‘Abdu’r-rahmân karşusına gelüb ol zamândan berü bir yerde yüz tutub ve ol zamândan berü Hakk’ın bir sevgili kulı olduğun bildik. Şeyh cevâb virdi ki, ta‘accüb bana bir mertebede acılmışdır. Dahî cevâb virdi ki, kaçan bir kimesne Müslümân olsa Hakk te‘âlâ ol kula ziyâde muhabbet idüb* […] *meselâ bir* […] *nice ki yeni doğurmuş ola ol ma‘sûmı nice ki severse Hakk te‘âlâ dahî ol yeni Müslümân*

böyle sever. Şeyh korkdığı sen bu riyâzeti ve bu fakîrliği çekmeyesin. Pişmânlık çekesin. Şeytân seni başdan çıkara göstermek isterdi, tâ ki seni bilesin ki bu dünyânın hâlinden nesne yokdır, kânîdir, kânî olan nesneye kişi gönül bağlamak gerek. İnsân olan insân 'Abdu'l-gaffâr bu şeyh içün bu kadar bildürdi.