

ADVICES TO A PHANARIOT CANDIDATE FOR THE GRAND DRAGOMANATE AND  
VOIVODASHIP OF THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES IN THE EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY: BE-NÂM-I HAVÂRİYYÛN-I BÛRÛC-I FÛNÛN OF EBÛBEKİR KÂNÎ  
EFENDÎ

by  
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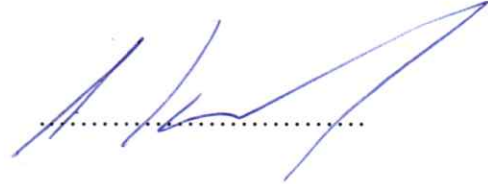
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EBÛBEKİR KÂNÎ EFENDÎ

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## ABSTRACT

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EFENDÎ

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for Princes

This thesis examines *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bûrûc-ı Fûnûn*, an eighteenth-century work of prose, written by the Ottoman literary figure and bureaucrat Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi (1712-1791). It was written for a member of the Mavrocordatos family, one of the prominent Phanariot families, which filled the positions of the grand dragomanate and voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. While the linguistic function of *Bûrûc-ı Fûnûn* has been largely emphasized in the secondary literature, this study explores the characteristics of the text in terms of *nasihatnâme* (book of advice) literature. The thesis also makes assumptions about the authorship of Ebûbekir Kânî based on a newly discovered manuscript of the text which is of the earliest date of issue. The thesis also inquires about which Mavrocordatos *Bûrûc-ı Fûnûn* was written for. Accordingly, it attempts to understand the motives of the Mavrocordatos family within the Ottoman-Phanariot world and the inner dynamics of the Ottoman upper administration. All considered, the thesis will analyse *Bûrûc-ı Fûnûn* in a historical context in order to reveal the wider dimensions of the text.

## ÖZET

18. YY. DE FENERLİ BİR BAŞ TERCÜMÂN VE EFLAK VE BOĞDAN  
VOYVODA ADAYINA ÖĞÜTLER: EBÛBEKİR KÂNÎ EFENDİ'NİN BE-NÂM-I  
HAVÂRİYYÛN-I BÜRÛC-I FÜNÛN'U

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Mavrokordato Ailesi, Kostantin Mavrokordato, Fenerli Rumlar,  
Nasihatnâme

Bu tez, 18. yüzyılda dönemin edebi figürlerinden ve bürokratlarından biri olan, Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi (1712-1791) tarafından yazılmış Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn adlı eseri incelemektedir. Metin, baş tercümanlık ve Eflak-Boğdan voyvodalıklarında bulunan seçkin Fenerli Rum ailelerinden biri olan Mavrokordato ailesinin bir üyesi için yazılmıştır. Bürûc-ı Fünûn, literatürde çoğunlukla Türkçe öğretmek amacıyla kaleme alınan bir kitap olarak ele alınırken, bu çalışma metnin nasihatnâme yönünü inceleyecektir. Ayrıca, bu tez, metnin yeni keşfedilen en erken tarihli nüshası üzerinden Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi'nin müellifliği hakkında bazı varsayımlarda bulunacaktır. Buna ek olarak, Bürûc-ı Fünûn'un Mavrokordato ailesinin hangi üyesi için yazıldığını irdelenecektir. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışma, Bürûc-ı Fünûn metni üzerinden hem Osmanlı-Fenerli dünyası içerisinde Mavrokordato ailesinin motivasyonlarını hem de Osmanlı üst sınıfını anlama teşebbüsünde bulunacaktır. Böylelikle, Bürûc-ı Fünûn, metnin farklı boyutlarının olduğunu da gözler önüne serebilmek adına tarihsel bağlamda bir analize tabi tutulacaktır.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The origins of this thesis lie in one of the revisionist studies on the Phanariot families, Christine Philliou's *Biography of an Empire* which mentions *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* (The Signs of Sciences Entitled Apostles), which was commissioned by an Ottoman Phanariot, Iskerletzade Aleko (Alexandros Mavrocordatos or Alexandru Kallimaki) in 1808. Philliou mentions this *nasihatnâme* in order to demonstrate the Phanariot families' aristocratic ambitions in terms of cultural and artistic patronage while she does not go into the details of the book (Philliou 2011, 30). This reference led me to inquire more about *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, to search for its copies and to examine its content and historical context.

From the mid-seventeenth to the early nineteenth century, members of eleven Phanariot families served as the grand dragoman or chief interpreter (*Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn Baş Tercümânı*) of the Porte (*Bâb-ı Âli*) (1669 to 1821). Some members of these families also had the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia for nearly 110 years, from 1710s to the outbreak of Greek War of Independence in 1821. The Mavrocordatos family was one of the prominent families whose members held both the position of the grand dragomanate and that of the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities for several times. During the first half of the eighteenth century, the family would dominate these positions.

Constantine Mavrocordatos (1711-1769), one of the most prominent figures of the family, ordered Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi (1712-1791), an Ottoman literary figure and bureaucrat, to write a book, which would be titled *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. It was dedicated to a young member of the Phanariot Mavrocordatos family, Alexander Mavrocordatos, who would be the candidate for the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. The book was to teach him the Ottoman language, culture, manners, and customs. It is a prose text and it consists of twelve stories revolving around narratives including various subjects ranging from political advice to moral stories.

Current studies on this work have yet to include a historical approach and analysis as they heavily focus on the linguistic function and importance of the text. This thesis aims to lead an analysis of the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* within a historical and political frame, as well as an examination of the genre of the work and the authorship of Ebûbekir Kânî. This way it intends to understand the motives of the Mavrocordatos family and to present a deeper understanding of the Ottoman Phanariot realities to contribute to this field.

### **1.1 Ebûbekir Kânî's Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn in Historiography**

There are very few studies on *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in the current literature. Muhittin Eliaçık published a short article about it in which he presented a short summary of the book and its narratives and emphasized how valuable it is for teaching Turkish to foreigners (Eliaçık 2007). However, this study falls short as an analysis and it does not provide the historical context of the work. The other study on *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is a conference paper published by İlyas Yazar. In the same vein, Yazar only focused on its linguistic function as a means of teaching the Ottoman language (Yazar 2010). Both studies offered *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* as a manual of teaching Turkish to foreigners.

### **1.2 Historiography on the Phanariots**

The Phanariot period lasted approximately 110 years throughout the Ottoman Wallachia and Moldavia. It was generally associated with moral collapse, intellectual degradation, corruption, exploitation of the land by foreign and native dignitaries, and political instability by mainstream historiography (Papachristou 1992, 8). At the turn of the nineteenth century the anti-Phanariot climate was dominant, understandably so as it was stemming from the accounts of foreign travelers from Europe. In these accounts, the Phanariots were depicted as the representative of “Ottoman yoke” (Papachristou 1992, 8). Some travelers, merchants, and bureaucrats from Europe visited the Danubian Principalities and they mostly depicted the Phanariot voivodas as

tyrants who oppressed the Romanian people and labelled the Ottomans as barbaric people who enslaved the latter (Papachristou 1992, 9).

One of the most influential sources in this regard is William Wilkinson, the British ambassador of Wallachia and Moldavia during the early nineteenth century. In his *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820), Wilkinson describes the Phanariot regime as “ruinous” to the national cause of the Romanians:

“None of the events that had influenced the political existence, and undermined the public spirit of the Wallachian and Moldavian nations, proved more ruinous to them than the system of policy introduced by the Greeks of the Fannar, when they were placed at the head of the Principalities.” (Wilkinson 1820, 99-100).

Ultimately, it was a period of “Ottoman yoke” for him (Wilkinson 1820, 28,35).

Another British traveler, William Macmichael, in his *Journey from Moscow to Constantinople* (1819) also makes derogatory comments concerning the Phanariots. He suggests that the Phanariot voivodas established a despotic rule and corruption system in Wallachia and described the Phanariots as “abject slaves” (MacMichael 1819, 107-108). Thomas Thornton, a nineteenth-century British merchant, in his *The Present State of Turkey* (1809) writes that the Phanariots had the spirit of an enfranchised slave and stated that they used fraud or violence to attain power without any principle of morality (Thornton 1809, vol. 2, 305-306). D. De Peyssonel, an eighteenth-century French diplomat, in his *Observations historiques et géographiques sur les peuples barbares* (1765) describes the Phanariots as “little tyrants” in Wallachia and Moldavia (Peyssonnel 1765, 240). Another important name would be that of Marc-Phillippe Zallony, a Roman Catholic Greek doctor (Papachristou 1992, 9), who wrote *Essai sur les Fanariotes* (1824) after the end of the Phanariot Era in the Danubian Principalities. The book is one of the most significant sources in the field as the author had lived with the Phanariots for a long time (Zallony 1824, 8). Zallony defines the Phanariot reign in the Danubian Principalities as a period of excessive abuse and states that the voivodas acted arbitrarily and exercised a despotic rule (Zallony 1824, 27,38).

The Phanariot rule’s negative perception expanded further, as seen in the work of the Phanariot historian of the nineteenth century, Athanasios Komninos Ipsilantis. He uses a quite derogatory discourse on Phanariot reign in general, Mavrocordatos in particular:

“What harmful innovations have occurred in these unhappy lands ... on account of the Greeks! I pass over in silence all the things I know ... and in particular the innovations introduced by the hospodar Nikolaos [Mavrokordatos] and his son, the hospodar Konstantinos: they form a shameful story. This only I say that the Greeks have destroyed the old privileges of these two Principalities that were beneficial to their inhabitants, and they will surely see at God's tribunal who it is that they have sinned against.” (Mango 1973, 43).

In a similar vein but with different eyes, Phanariots did not have a positive image among Ottoman historians either. The Phanariots were mostly portrayed as “traitors” to the Ottoman Empire. Şanizade an early nineteenth-century historian and the Tanzimat historian Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, both depict the Phanariot rule as a system of corruption, degeneration, and decline (Ahmed Cevdet Paşa 1858-83, vol. 1, 286-287; Şanizade Mehmet Atallah Efendi, 2008, vol. 2, 1061-1063). This adverse perception of the Phanariots in Ottoman chronicles originated from some Phanariot families’, such as members of Aristarchis, Ipsilantis, Soutsos, Callimachi, Ghica, and Mourousi families and involvement in the Greek rebellion (1821) against the Ottoman Empire.

These texts on the Phanariot era in Wallachia and Moldavia were popular during the second part of the nineteenth century, they tended to mostly demonize the Phanariots and fed the anti-Phanariot atmosphere which would prevail in mainstream historiography for a long time (Papachristou 1992, 9). The unfavorable image of the Phanariots also continued within nationalist Romanian historiography for a long period. It encapsulated the important part of mainstream historiography during the period. The Romanian chroniclers disparaged the Phanariot rule and designated them as the representative of “Ottoman yoke” and expressed their yearning for liberation from the Ottoman Empire. The Phanariot rule was viewed as a foreign and hostile rule exercised by the Ottoman government over the local population (Leal 2003, 408). The negative perception concerning the Phanariots manifested itself even in popular songs and legends as seen for instance in a proverb in Romanian “a fura ca pe vremea lui Caradja” (to steal as in the days of Caradja) (Florescu 1968, 301).

Nineteenth-century Romanian historiography follows the same trend that emanated from Romanian patriotism and the Romanian chronicles. Alexandru Dimitrie Xenopol, a prominent Romanian historian, endorsed the negative Phanariot image (Stourdza 1913, 112). For instance,

Constantine Mavrocordatos in particular was depicted as a greedy figure whereas the more recent sources underscored his revolutionary reforms.

However, from the early twentieth century onwards, the anti-Phanariot perception in Romanian historiography began to lose momentum. It was Nicolae Iorga's works and followed by the later revisionist studies which drew a more neutral picture of the Phanariot era (Papachristou 1992, 9). Nicolae Iorga (d. 1940), an early twentieth-century Romanian historian, began to make a breach against the negative attitudes of earlier scholars drawn towards the Phanariots. He focuses on different matters and draws a more neutral image of them. In his book *Byzance Après Byzance* (1935 [1971]), unlike the previous Romanian chroniclers and historians, he does not regard the Phanariots as representatives of the "Ottoman yoke". He suggests that both the institutional and spiritual presence of the Byzantine Empire continued well after the end of the empire (1453). His book also argues that the Byzantine political and cultural legacy survived thanks to the Greeks that were exiled or fled to Europe after 1453. He also emphasizes the role of Wallachia and Moldavia as he claims they enabled the continuation of Byzantine institutions and culture. The Greeks began to settle in Wallachia and Moldavia during the seventeenth century. During the eighteenth century, the Phanariot Greeks became the voivodas of Wallachia and Moldavia. Byzantium spiritually and politically continued thanks to the clerics, scholars, merchants and high officials which maintained it alive. Nicolae Iorga devotes special places for each of them in his *Byzance Après Byzance*, however, due to his political position, he underscores the Romanian cultural and political prestige as well. Although the Byzantine Empire was ended by the Ottomans with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the aforementioned legacies of the Byzantine Empire continued to survive in Romania until the mid-nineteenth century. Iorga's neutral attitude to Phanariots in his works was followed by his pupils who emphasized that the Phanariot rule enabled the spread of Renaissance culture and the Enlightenment ideas as well as the French revolutionary ones (Florescu 1968, 302).

Alexandru A. C. Sturdza (d. 1916), a Romanian historian like Iorga had a more neutral view on the Phanariot families. His book *L'Europe Orientale et le Rôle Historique des Mavrocordato 1660-1830* (1913) differs from other sources in terms of its content as he specifically examines the Mavrocordatos family in detail. It is one of the most valuable sources focusing on the Mavrocordatos family and on the career and life story of Constantine Mavrocordatos. In his writings, the Mavrocordatos family was freed from the previous nationalist prejudices that had glossed over the reality. Sturdza attempts to refute assertions of greediness etc and defends Constantine Mavrocordatos by describing him as a good Romanian patriot (Stourdza 1913,

221). However, it should be remarked that although Stourdza defended Constantine as a good Romanian patriot, some evidence demonstrated that he was dismissed once from the voivodaship of Wallachia due to his favoring Greeks in the bureaucracy of the Danubian Principalities (Sözen 2000, 81). Even though his work certainly deserves a distinct place in historiography concerning the Phanariots, the book suffers from exaggeration and positive bias in some points in its defending of members of the Mavrocordatos family.

In addition to the afore-mentioned historians, Radu Florescu deserves a distinct place in terms of drawing a more neutral image about the Phanariots. In his work, he studies the power groups and political dynamics in Wallachia and Moldavia. In his “The Phanariot Regime in the Danubian Principalities” (1968) he indicates that the ruling Phanariot families tried to consolidate their power in the Danubian Principalities by strengthening their political and social ties with local Romanian boyars. He opposes nationalist Romanian historiography’s approach to the Phanariot period as a period of corruption. For him, the Phanariot voivodas were the most enlightened rulers of the period in the Balkans. In the same article, he states that the Phanariot families did not stifle the Romanian culture, on the contrary he notes that Nicholas Mavrogeni, the voivoda of Wallachia in 1786-90, encouraged the printing of Romanian grammar book while Ioannis Karatzas, the voivoda of Wallachia in 1812-18, started the foundation of St. Sava, the first college in Wallachia with Romanian as language of instruction. He claims that Greek intellectuals of the Danubian Principalities encouraged the Romanians to translate plays from French, German, and Ancient Greek texts. His examples also attest that different from the previous claims of the Phanariot’s favoring Greek, there was no hegemony of this language and culture in the Danubian Principalities during the Phanariot era. At the turn of the nineteenth century, both Romanian and Greek colleges could be found in every town (Deletant 1981, 235).

To sum up, Greek, Ottoman and Romanian nineteenth-century sources offer a generally negative image about the Phanariot rule, though with some nuances. This scholarship has prevailed for a long time and the researches pertaining to Phanariot families have usually been confined to the dichotomies of regressive/progressive and patriotism/treachery. The mainstream scholarship came to be replaced by the revisionist studies which would disperse the negative image of the Phanariots, thus triggering new perspectives that would offer more in-depth knowledge on different issues concerning the Phanariots.



Émile Legrand (d. 1903) in his *Généalogie des Maurocordato de Constantinople* (1900), offers a comprehensive genealogy of the Mavrocordatos family. He studies archival documents belonging to members of the Mavrocordatos family and examines their epitaphs to see the precise dates of their births and deaths with which he creates a detailed and impressive genealogy of the family. He also issues two letters belonging to Alexander Mavrocordatos pertaining to the admission of Alexander Mavrocordatos in the Greek College of Rome.

Mihail-Dimitri Sturdza, in his *Dictionnaire historique et généalogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople* (1913) offers comprehensive encyclopedic knowledge about almost all Phanariot families and the present sub-groups such as those who held high-ranking positions in the Danubian Principalities and created ties by marriage with the Phanariot families. Moreover, he provides genealogy records with regard to the Phanariot families.

Ariadna Camariano-Cioran's *Les Académies princières de Bucarest et de Jassy et leurs professeur* (1970) is also a valuable source to trace the intellectual activities of the Phanariots. Even though the Phanariot era in the Danubian Principalities was delineated as cultural stagnation and intellectual degradation, this book underlines the educational and intellectual activities of the Phanariot families in Wallachia and Moldavia as it examines the academies of Bucharest and Iassy spanning centuries and demonstrates that these academies continued their activity during the Phanariot era.

Paschalis Kitromilides also offered a new perspective concerning the Phanariots. He emphasizes the role of the Phanariots in the Greek enlightenment movement in his work *Enlightenment and Revolution* (2013). In his work, he examines the activities of Iosipos Moisioudax and Dimitrios Katartzis who served to the Phanariot administration in the Danubian Principalities. Both were prominent enlightened Phanariot figures and held judicial and administrative offices at Phanariot courts in Bucharest and Iassy. The latter wrote several pieces on the principles of the Enlightenment and the restoration of Greek education (Kitromilides 2013, 139-166).

In revisionist historiography, the Phanariots' relation with the Ottoman rule is also put under scrutiny. In her *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (2011), Philliou reveals a fresh perspective on the Phanariot identity. She starts with the apologia of an Ottoman Christian regarding his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and his stance against the

creation of a Greek national state and Russia. She examines Ottoman governance by tracing the evolution, destruction, and reconstitution of the Phanariot networks in the early nineteenth century. She seeks to indicate the changes in Ottoman political dynamics and different power groups in Istanbul and inquire how these changes shaped the relationship of Phanariots with the former. Additionally, her book provides an insight into how Phanariots became an integral part of Ottoman governance.

On a different vein, Panayotis Alexandrou Papachristou's MA thesis (1992) offers comprehensive information and analyses of the Phanariots and their integration into Ottoman governance using the Mavrocordatos family as a model. His work reveals a new point of view in historiography with regard to the Phanariot families. He underscores three identities that the Phanariot families had: Ottoman, Ancient Greek and Hellenist, and Byzantine identities. He analyses the motives of the Phanariot families within Ottoman governance where he considers the early Phanariots as loyal Ottoman officials to the Porte however notes the self-awareness of the Phanariots which bore neo-Byzantinist ideals and the desire of reviving the Byzantine Empire in Istanbul instead of the Ottoman Empire. He also examines the Phanariot Hellenism and its relationship with Western influence, especially the French influence, noting that the Phanariots were affected by the international diplomacy and the nationalist ideas coming from the French Revolution, shaping their attitudes towards Greek emancipation from the Ottoman Empire accordingly.

This brief assessment aims to introduce the existing work and approaches with respect to the Phanariots and the Mavrocordatos family as the grand dragoman of the Porte and the rulers of the Danubian Principalities. In contrast to the mainstream literature, it is the revisionist studies which reveal different perspectives pertaining to the Phanariot rule and show their complicated and multi-layered role in history within the context of Ottoman political and cultural history.

### **1.3 Historiography on Advice Literature**

In Persian and Turkish literature, many works on political thought were written to offer guidance to the rulers and bureaucrats and they made considerable use of various historical and

religious sources. *Nasihatnâme*, “Mirrors for Princes” can be described as a treatise or book to offer advices to officers and rulers. The origins of *nasihatnâmes* can be traced back to pre-Ottoman times. The first example of this genre was introduced to the Islamic world by Ibnü'l-Mukaffa' to the Abbasid caliph during the eighth century as he translated *Kelîle and Dimne* to Arabic (Karaismailoğlu 2002, 210). The most important examples of this genre were the *Kabus-nâme* by Kâi Kâbûs ibn Iskender, *Siyâset-nâme* by Nizâmu'l-Mulk and *Nasîhatu'l-Mülûk* by al-Ghazâlî. This genre included the elements of three different political philosophies -the Ancient Persian concept of the ruler, the Greek concept of justice as social harmony and the Judeo-Christian concept of the sovereign being subject to the law of God. (Howard 1988, 55). In this genre, the concept was based on the holy law (*Sharî'a*) which regulated the state affairs and the way of life. The main aim of the rule was to fulfil the holy law. If the law was implemented properly, the ruler would be legitimate and just.

In the Ottoman Empire, there is a considerable *nasihatnâme* literature. The Ottoman authors mostly found it unnecessary to create a new theory in their writings because they made use of the current literature and based their treatises on the existing work. The Persian tradition was frequently used by Ottoman authors who drew from the Aristotelian concept of man, society and state (Sariyannis 2015, 29). Nasreddîn Tûsî, with his substantial work *Ahlâk-ı Nâsiri* (Nasirean Ethics) in the thirteenth century and Celâledîn Davvani, in his *Ahlâk-ı Celâlî*, used al-Farabi's synthesis of Aristotelian and neo-Platonic ethics and politics. They dealt with theoretical issues and offered an understanding of the world through providing human ethics, the components of society and methods of governance (Sariyannis 2015, 29).

We can observe the early traces of Ottoman *âdâb* literature in the fifteenth century. Ahmed bin Hüsameddîn Amasi presented *Mir'atül-mülûk* probably to Mehmed I in 1406 and became the father of the *âdâb* genre. He used a systematization of Aristotelian ethics from Tûsî's *Ahlâk-ı Nâsiri* and Ghazali's *Nasîha al-mulûk* (Sariyannis 2015, 30) as he treated the moral virtues, i.e. wisdom, courage, honesty and justice. It is essential to note that Amasi brought out three ideas to Ottoman political thought, which were then followed by many authors; Firstly, the quartet of virtues (wisdom, courage, honesty, and justice), which would constitute the basic elements of this literature in the late fifteenth and sixteenth century, secondly, the circle justice and thirdly, the separation of society into four classes (Sariyannis 2015, 33). Tursun Bey, in his *Târîh-i Ebu'l-Feth*, introduced the first Persian ethical theory in the Ottoman literature (Sariyannis 2011, 123) as he made use of Tûsî's ideas on political philosophy. He did not only deal with

the theory of state and rulership but also tackled the princely virtues. Moreover, Idris-i Bitlisi, a Persian immigrant in the Ottoman realm, introduced Persian moral and political ideas to the Ottoman literature in the same way as Tursun Beg did. Apart from his outstanding work *Hesht Bihisht*, he wrote *Kanûn-ı sehinşâhî* during the reign of Selim I and his work mostly included the characteristics of mirror for princes or *adab* literature, focusing on practical advice rather than dealing with theoretical issues. (Sariyannis 2015, 35). Tursun Beg, Idrisi Bitlisi, and Amasi's work is based on Tusi and Davvani, albeit causing the emergence of *âdâb* literature in the Ottoman political thought, they did not gain popularity (Sariyannis 2015, 35). It should be also noted that these three works were historiographical works rather than aiming at writing a mirror for princes (Sariyannis 2011, 124).

On the other hand, Kınalızade Ali Çelebi wrote *Ahlâk-ı Alâî*, and it became very popular among the Ottoman readers throughout the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. He referenced the work of Aristotle and Plato (Kahraman 1989, 15) but he developed a role of his own. He offered the most prominent theory of virtues (Sariyannis 2011, 125-126) as his remarkable work focused on primarily ethics, moral knowledge and its benefits, the structure and ethical values of the Muslim family, the duties of family leaders and of members, ideal rulership and further on the concept of justice.

The tendency to follow morality issues came to change from the mid-sixteenth century on. The Ottoman political treatises became much more pragmatic (Sariyannis 2015, 36). In contrast to his predecessors, Lütfi Pasha, a competent Ottoman bureaucrat, articulated concrete issues that he observed during his tenure. In one sense, he established the practice of writing an Ottoman mirror for princes or *nasihatnâme* and his successors created accumulated treatises. Lütfi Pasha refrained from treating moral and theoretical issues, instead, he concentrated on his daily experience in the Ottoman administration by focusing on the work of specific institutions (Sariyannis 2015, 56). Sariyannis accentuated Lütfi Pasha's *Âsafnâme* as a new example for the genre and it was further followed by the late sixteenth-century authors.

The *nasihatname* authors of the early modern period saw the changes and transformations that the Ottoman Empire experienced as corruption and turmoil, and sign of decline. Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Âlî was the most outstanding figure of *nasihatnâme* writers of the period (Fleischer 1986, 97). In his *Counsel for Sultans* or *Nushatü's-selâtîn*, completed in 1581, he idealized the period of Suleiman the Magnificent as a Golden Age and lamented nepotism and bribery and

based them on his own experience (Öz 2013, 36-51). The seventeenth century *nasihatnâmes* largely followed the same trend in which they pondered about the current problems and offered solutions in accordance with the “old order” (*kânûn-ı kâdim*) to return to the good old days. The trend initiated by Lütfi Pasha would also give rise to a form of “decline” paradigm.<sup>1</sup>

The eighteenth-century *nasihatnâme* authors would emphasize the return to old days. They, just like their predecessors, offered solutions to the current problems but, they refrained from referring to a “Golden Age” contrary to their predecessors like Mustafa ‘Âlî, Koçi Bey, and Akhisarî and so forth (Sariyannis 2015, 137). Sariyannis emphasizes that the eighteenth-century *nasihatnâme* authors can be described as traditionalist however, they were open to innovative ideas. He stated that there existed a blurred line between traditionalist *nasihatnâme* authors (referring to pre-eighteenth-century *nasihatnâme* authors) and westernized authors (referring to post-eighteenth century *nasihatnâme* authors) (Sariyannis 2015, 143). For example, they might show support to Europeanist reforms when the Sultan embraced this sort of policy (Sariyannis 2015, 138). Süleyman Penah Efendi’s proposal is a fundamental example in demonstrating the mindset of the eighteenth-century *nasihatnâme* authors who were neither fervent supporters of European style reforms nor devotees of the “revival of *kânûn-ı kâdim*” (Sariyannis 2015, 148). They strictly pursued practical solutions and reforms which were able to resolve the current problems. The eighteenth-century *nasihatnâmes* also included a good amount of advice concerning the administration. This indicates that it was the scribal bureaucracy that dominated the creation of Ottoman policies from the late seventeenth century onwards (Sariyannis 2015, 141).

#### 1.4 The Aim of the Thesis

There are three primary objectives of this thesis: (1) a contextual analysis of the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and an analysis of Kânî’s choice of the themes and subjects in the stories, (2) an

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<sup>1</sup> The argument in the *nasihatnâmes* would become a main instrument for the Orientalist writers to predicate the idea of ‘decline’ in Ottoman historiography. A secondary literature which produced a “decline” theory by using the *nasihatnâmes* would emerge. The declinist theory initiated by Bernard Lewis put the last three centuries of the Ottoman Empire into a political, social, military, and economic decline. Bernard Lewis and his followers tended to treat the decline of the Ottoman Empire with a specific reference to the *nasihatnâmes*. However, many revisionist studies have been conducted in order to refute the decline paradigm relying on the *nasihatnâme* literature. For revisionist and critical works, see Abou-El-Haj 1991; Agoston 1994; Çalırsır 2011; Darling 2002; Grant 1999; Howard 1988; Quataert 2003.

analysis of the text in historical context in order to shed light on the motives of the Mavrocordatos family, and (3) an effort to understand the Ottoman-Phanariot world by using *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* as a tool.

The study will aim to explain why this text matters and how it might have served young Alexander Mavrocordatos as a candidate for the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. The text offers significant information about the language of the ottoman upper class and Ottoman customs, manners, and culture. A young, prospective grand dragoman and voivoda had to be familiar with these values. Therefore, the text can be regarded as a guide to making Alexander acquainted with these values. The content of the text also will offer insights into what knowledge and features should a grand dragoman and voivoda have in order to be successful in these offices. Besides, this text will allow us to understand the motives of a Phanariot family. Members of the Phanariot families were competing to take the position of the grand dragomanate and voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. Being familiar with the Ottoman language, customs, manners and, culture was one of the important criteria in order to qualify for these positions. Considering the content of the text, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* constitutes a suitable source in order to shed light on the motives of a Phanariot family in the Ottoman world. Thus, taking a historical approach to *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* allows us to take a glimpse at the multi-dimensional aspects of the Ottoman-Phanariot world.

As to the methodology in studying *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, this work will seek to investigate the manuscripts and copies of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* firstly, and secondly to methodologically offer an examination on the genre of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. There are several copies of the text, all of which date back to the nineteenth century and mostly include the writer's name. This thesis will demonstrate that there exists another copy of the *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* which I located at the Süleymaniye library. This copy is unique since it was of the earliest date of issue (1731) compared to all the other copies. The date of issue of the manuscript at the Süleymaniye library engenders some new questions and possibilities about Kânî and *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* as follows: (1) Does the date of issue of the manuscript located at Süleymaniye library fit the life story of Ebûbekir Kânî in the current sources? Can we make any assumptions about his life story? (2) If the manuscript of 1731 belongs to Kânî, how old and where was he at the time? Consequently, what does the issue of the date of the manuscript tell us about Kânî's authorship? (3) Do the characters in the narratives of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* also give us any clue about Kânî's authorship?

Secondly, this thesis will examine the genre of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. In the secondary literature, there is no analysis or discussion on the genre of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. The studies that put emphasis on the linguistic function of the text regarded it as a manual of teaching Turkish. Besides, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was labeled a *nasihatnâme* by Philliou. However, she does not offer an assessment with regard to the genre of the text. It goes beyond these labels as *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is not only a manual for teaching Turkish and it also differs from the other *nasihatnâmes* in the Ottoman advice literature. In this thesis I will make some suggestions about its genre and I will lay out the similarities and differences between *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and the others *nasihatnâmes* in the Ottoman advice literature.

## 1.5 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis will be composed of six chapters including the introduction and conclusion sections. After the introduction, in the second chapter, I will explain the Ottoman method of ruling the Danubian Principalities in order to comprehend the Phanariot presence and reign in Wallachia and Moldavia. Besides, the chapter will draw a general portrait of the late seventeenth century of both the Ottoman Empire and the Danubian Principalities to demonstrate the political atmosphere in which the Phanariot integration to the Ottoman bureaucracy emerged.

The third chapter will examine the prominent members of the Mavrocordatos family, with a particular focus on Constantine Mavrocordatos, since he was the one to order *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* for his younger brother Alexander Mavrocordatos. Constantine's grandfather, Alexander Mavrocordatos who opened the path to the Ottoman bureaucracy, and Constantine's father, Nicholas Mavrocordatos who was the first Phanariot voivoda of the Danubian Principalities will be examined to understand how they advanced in the Ottoman bureaucracy. I will also demonstrate which tools members of the Mavrocordatos family used to penetrate the latter.

The fourth chapter will be composed of two main sections which are devoted to Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi and *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. First, I will introduce Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi and his literary works. Second, I will examine *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, give a summary of the twelve sections narrated in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and offer an assessment of its manuscripts. I will also discuss why Constantine opted for Kânî to write this text and the role of the Ottoman language. Subsequently, I will

discuss the authorship of Kânî based on the manuscript of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* dated 1731 and a narrative about Mehmed IV in it. Thus, I will try to offer new approaches to Kânî's authorship. In addition, I will discuss Kânî's choice of title since he himself did not explain the meaning of it leaving it open to speculation. I will also discuss a misleading assumption regarding the writing process of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* found in the secondary literature.

In the fifth chapter, my main concern is to analyze the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in order to demonstrate how Kânî introduced Ottoman culture, manners, customs, etiquette, and moral virtues in it. In doing so, I will attempt to understand in which way such a work could have enabled Constantine and Alexander Mavrocordatos and their descendants to achieve their goals with regard to their integration into Ottoman governance.

In the conclusion part, I will offer a short assessment of the findings and assumptions concerning *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, consider the reach and limitations of my study and establish a line on which future work could be based.



## **2. HISTORY OF THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES UNDER THE OTTOMAN RULE**

The Danubian Principalities were gradually integrated into the Ottoman Empire and served as a buffer zone after their annexation by the Ottoman leadership. Until the eighteenth century, the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia remained autonomous provinces. The reign of the indigenous boyars ended with the Brîncoveanu and Cantemir families during the early eighteenth century. The Phanariot integration and rise in the Ottoman ruling class began in the latter part of seventeenth century and lasted until the Greek Revolution in 1821. Their foreign language skills and increasing in diplomatic relations with Europe enhanced their importance and paved the way for advancement especially in the offices related to international relations. Therefore, the Phanariots were integrated to the Ottoman bureaucracy and became the significant part of Ottoman governance throughout the eighteenth century. In this chapter, I will examine the history of the conquest of the Ottoman rule, the boyar period in the Danubian Principalities and finally, the establishment of the Phanariot authority in the Danubian Principalities. I will also address the following questions: What is the grand dragomanate of the Porte? Why does the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities matter for the Phanariot families? Such questions are vital in order to explain why *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* matters and to make sense of the Mavrocordatos family's motives in Ottoman governance.

### **2.1 The Ottoman Conquest of Wallachia and Moldavia and the Boyar Period**

After the Bulgarian conquest in the second part of the fourteenth century, the Ottomans had their eye on the Danubian Principalities. The first military encounter between the Ottomans and Wallachians occurred in 1368 (Karpas 1999, 467). In 1394, Wallachia accepted to pay tribute to the Ottomans (Hitchins 1996, 2). A series of great military campaigns were carried out by

Mehmed I in 1417 and Mehmed II in 1462 against Wallachia, and by Mehmed II in 1476, Bayezid II in 1484, and Sulaiman I in 1538 against Moldavia (Panaite 2013, 11).

From the late fourteenth century to mid-sixteenth century, Wallachia and Moldavia were regarded as lying between conquered territories, which were directly controlled by Muslim sultans and the areas outside the boundaries of Islam. This period is referred to as “acknowledgement of allegiance” or “homage-paying” by the Romanian historians. “Acknowledgement of allegiance” and “homage-paying” indicates some political and diplomatic practices such as the presentation of the voivoda himself or his representative at the porte or an envoy of a prominent boyar, as well as submission to sultan’s will, and payment of tribute (Panaite 2013, 13). During the period of Sulaiman I (d. 1566), significant changes occurred in terms of the political and juridical status of Wallachia and Moldavia. Sulaiman I imposed an absolute Ottoman control over Wallachia and Moldavia, henceforth the two Danubian Principalities were considered as conquered rather than an area between the “House of Islam” and the “House of Infidels”. The seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries documents associated the conquest of Wallachia and Moldavia with the period of Sulaiman I (Panaite 2013, 17).

The Danubian Principalities served as a buffer zone by providing military service and informing the center concerning the move of the opposition army. They were a significant military source for the Ottoman Empire and provided such power during their campaigns (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 99-100). The Danubian Principalities also provided a huge amount of agricultural supply for both the imperial capital and the Ottoman army. As the Ottoman Empire began to lose control of two major grain-producing areas, the Crimea and Egypt during the second half of the eighteenth century, two Danubian Principalities became much more crucial in terms of supply (Chirot 1976, 64). The financial sources from the Danubian Principalities played a significant role for the Ottoman government (Hitchins 1996, 7). They generated a yearly revenue of 600,000-800,000 ducats of which about two-third went to Istanbul; 100,000 was used by the voivodas for their courts and mercenary troops; left about 100,000 was at the latter personal disposal (Sugar 1996, 123). The Danubian Principalities enjoyed their autonomy in return for these services.

The Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas were of boyar origins. Under the Ottoman rule, the boyars, the richest and most powerful members of them, elected a voivoda among themselves

who later had to receive approval from the Ottoman sultan (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 99). Until 1710, the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were ruled by a voivoda of boyar origins who was elected by the boyars themselves. The boyars were also powerful and exercised their power on their own estates, nonetheless, they were restricted by the voivoda of Wallachia and Moldavia. This situation sometimes led to clashes between the boyars and voivodas. The high-ranking boyars dominated the economic life and by this tried to achieve political power. They endeavored onto a form of limited monarchy displaying themselves as the central figure while the voivodas sought to establish an absolutist monarchy. This situation reflected the internal politics in the Danubian principalities. The boyars retained their former social, economic, and to a large extent political power under the Ottoman rule (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 99).

Their political and diplomatic positions enabled the boyar originating voivodas of Wallachia and Moldavia to contact and forge alliances with the foreign states against the Ottoman Empire (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 100). The Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas were eager for liberation from the Ottoman Empire and sought help from the foreign states, especially Russia considering that in the first decade of the eighteenth century, Russia was eager to advance in the Balkans. Peter the Great called on all Christians in the Balkans against the Ottoman Empire. For this purpose, he sought an alliance with the Danubian Principalities. These two families attempted to draw advantage from Russia's aggressive policy in Balkans against the Ottoman Empire. Peter the Great made an alliance with Dimitrie Cantemir, voivoda of Moldavia and Constantine Brincoveanu, the voivoda of Wallachia. When Russia attacked the Ottoman Empire, Dimitrie Cantemir pledged to support Russia. According to the alliance, Peter the Great would recognize and support the independence of Moldavia and a hereditary monarchy would be established by the Cantemir family (Hitchins 1996, 45).

The expansionist policy of Russia in the Balkans led to the conflict between Russia and the Ottoman Empire and this conflict, added to the one between Russia and Sweden, would be the trigger for the Russo-Ottoman War of 1710–11. After the defeat of Sweden by the Russian Empire in the Battle of Poltava, Charles XII of Sweden fled to the Ottoman Empire. Peter the Great demanded the eviction of Charles XII. The Ottoman refusal triggered Peter the Great to declare war against the Ottoman Empire. However, the Russian army was defeated by the Ottoman army. As a result, Dimitrie Cantemir and his followers fled to Russia. Constantine Brincoveanu, voivoda of Wallachia, stayed in his office until 1714 since he did not take any

action against the Ottoman Empire during the war. However, he and his four sons were executed by the Ottoman Empire in 1714, upon suspicion of a possible alliance with Austria on their account (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 101). These events were a turning point for the Danubian Principalities. The Ottoman government lost its trust in the local voivodas of boyar origin and decided to establish a more strict and direct control over them.

## 2.2 The Phanariot Elite

The term Phanariot refers to a quarter of Istanbul where the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate was and is located. It was situated near the docks of the Golden Horn and was broadly populated by Ottoman Greek inhabitants (Decei 1940, 547). The Orthodox Church founded its quarter in the Phanar district in 1601 (Papachristou 1992, 7; Decei 1940, 547). At the same time *Megali tou Genous Scholi* (today's Fener Rum Lisesi) was established to provide a classical education for the elite including classes on philosophy and Greek language among others. Alexander Mavrocordatos too taught physics, philosophy, and theology in this patriarchal academy (Kantemir 1979, vol. 2, 188-89).

The Phanariot families commonly claimed that they were of Byzantine descent. Although they spoke Greek and claimed Byzantine descent, they had Greek, Albanian, Italian and Romanian origins (Sözen 200, 7). They also made a good deal of effort to fabricate genealogies directly tying them to noble Byzantine aristocracy to consolidate their claims (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 56). These efforts to create genealogies were in vain as Byzantine aristocratic families did not exist in Istanbul during the end of the sixteenth century. Rather, a new provincial Greek elite, Phanariots came to emerge in the waning years of the seventeenth century (Mango 1973, 43-4). Mango describes Phanariot's genealogy claims as a myth (Mango 1973, 44). He says the evidences pertaining to the origins of the Phanariot families are palpable and none of them certainly descended from the Byzantine nobility (Mango 1973, 44). That is to say, they were an amalgam of Greeks, Romanians, Albanians, and Levantine Italians whose origins were not Istanbul.

The Phanariot families obtained their power from commercial activities and emerged as local elites in the Aegean Islands and Istanbul during the seventeenth century. Wallachia and

Moldavia increasingly became a good place for Greek entrepreneurs and Greek clergy. The wealthy members of the Phanariot families during the seventeenth century became merchants and carried out imperial-tax farming as they enjoyed their monopoly on some grains, salt and meat, became purveyor for the imperial capital and the army, and acquired control of the Black Sea wheat trade. Thanks to these activities and other connections, they had a close relationship with the West and therefore, gained knowledge of Western customs, manners, and languages (Papachristou 1992, 7). They also gained political experience through the administrative affairs in the Patriarchate (Papachristou 1992, 7). Their administrative experience and knowledge of European languages and customs among others made it possible for them to enter Ottoman governance. The Phanariots obtained four outstanding positions in the Ottoman Empire: the grand Dragoman of the Porte, grand Dragoman of the fleet, the voivoda of Moldavia, and the voivoda of Wallachia.

The appointment of the Phanariot Greeks to these positions was also related to the political atmosphere in Istanbul after 1650s. Positions such as physicians of the grand vizier and political go-betweens were considerably reserved for Jews. However, in 1660s, the Kâdîzâde movement targeted the Jews and one of the prominent members, Vanî Mehmed Efendi was appointed as spiritual adviser to sultan Mehmed IV (Leal 2003, 417). Vanî Mehmed Efendi dramatically targeted the Jews rather than the Christian subjects of Istanbul. In addition to that, Sabbatai Tzevi, a messianic movement, led to a growing antipathy among the Ottomans. Thus, the Jews lost the Ottoman favor (Leal 2003, 418).

The social and economic presence of the Phanariot elites in Wallachia and Moldavia can be traced back to the early seventeenth century. There were already many Greeks among the population in the Danubian Principalities, but the Phanariot families began to settle in Wallachia and Moldavia during the seventeenth century. Both became very attractive for them since they were not able to demonstrate their wealth and prestige in Istanbul explicitly but they could display their status in the two Danubian Principalities (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 102).

Though the Phanariot families were a distinct ruling group appointed directly by the Ottoman Porte, they gradually begin to intermingle with the local ruling elite and the society. They bought land estates and achieved boyar status, and therefore, began to penetrate into the local political, social, economic and religious life (Sözen 2000, 38). Some Phanariot Greek families were Romanized through marriages. During the early seventeenth century, the boyar origin

voivoda of Wallachia, Radu Mihnea, called for Greek elites to settle in Wallachia, and thus the Phanariot families of Rosetti and Ghica settled in Wallachia (Sözen 2000, 38). Alexander Mavrocordatos, who will be discussed in the following pages, also established affinity with the local Romanian Brincoveanu family and he had his son married with the daughter of Brincoveanu (Leal 2003, 411). The Phanariots were very eager to establish strong roots in Wallachia and Moldavia, which sometimes caused resentment on the part of the boyars. Most of the local boyar class started to resent the burgeoning Greek influence, because they were increasingly gaining control of landholdings, public office, and ecclesiastical establishments (Jelavich 1983, vol. 1, 102).

### **2.2.1 The Phanariots and the Porte: Phanariots as Ottoman Elites**

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire came to experience some changes in its foreign policy. It followed an aggressive policy against Europe until the treaty of Carlowitz in 1699. However, the European coalition defeated the Ottoman Empire after long wars. Thus, the Ottoman government agreed to revise its foreign policy and came to follow diplomatic strategies and negotiations with Europe. That is to say, the changing conditions forced the Ottoman Empire to resort to diplomacy and political dialogue more efficiently in foreign affairs, from the late seventeenth century on (Aksan 2006, 107). During the eighteenth century, the two significant developments that occurred in the Ottoman Empire were the bureaucratization of foreign affairs in scribal bureaucracy and the increase of contacts with Europe (Aksan 2006, 108). The office of *Re'îsü'l-küttâblık*, head of the chancery, also carried out foreign affairs and it was regarded as foreign minister by the foreign states (Aksan 2004, 16). It gained importance during the eighteenth century and it became more institutionalized than before with the incorporation of new offices (Ahıskalı 2007, 547-548; İnalçık 1964, 673-675). During this period the grand viziers were selected from the former *re'îsü'l-küttâb*. Instead of the military class, bureaucrats began to dominate the government (Aksan 1997, 21-23). The other demonstration of the rise of bureaucracy and diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth century was that the treaties ending the wars came to be signed by *dîvân kalemleri* instead of military commanders (Aksan 1997, 25). In sum, the change in foreign policy led the Ottoman Empire to reconfigure their interior political structure and foreign policies.

The educated Ottoman class regarded itself as superior and they did not learn European languages and did not speak any of them (Strauss 1995, 191). However, as the diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and Europe intensified from the end of the seventeenth century onward (Mansel 1996, 148), the Ottoman government needed officials who could speak European languages to facilitate the contact with these states. The Phanariots with the credited Mavrocordatos family, were suited to fill the gap since members of the Mavrocordatos family were familiar with European languages, customs, culture, and manners. They were also among a few people who were able to speak at least one European language (Mansel 1996, 148).

As noted above, the Ottoman Empire came to have more contacts with European states from the eighteenth century onwards. Thus, the Ottoman Empire needed the staff who had knowledge of European languages. These developments created a chance for the rise of the Phanariots in the Ottoman bureaucracy. A Polish renegade, Bobovski, was dismissed from the dragomanate due to his lack of qualification and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha suggested Nicousios for the post (Hammer 1983, vol.11, 261). The Phanariot families therefore came to be integrated to the Ottoman ruling class and to spread to several branches of the Ottoman administration.

Panagiotis Nicousios (1613-1673) of Chios was the first Greek Ottoman to enter the Ottoman bureaucracy without converting to Islam. He played a pivotal role in the Ottoman conquest of Crete. Thus, he was favored by the grand vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. He was also the pioneer who paved the way for Phanariots to enter the Ottoman bureaucracy. Nicousios received a high-class education. Having been taught by Jesuits in Chios, he went to Istanbul and learnt Turkish, Arabic, and Persian and studied philosophy. Then, he studied medicine at the University of Padua where he also learnt astronomy, mathematics, French and Italian (Sözen 2000, 45). His epithet was “Green Horse” in Chios, as it was difficult to find an intelligent and wise man in Chios was as much as it was difficult to find a green horse (Zallony 1824, 16). After he returned to Istanbul, he became the personal physician of the grand vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.

Soon after setting into this position, he began to conduct diplomatic exchanges with the foreign states as an agent of the Ottoman Porte. He became a distinguished figure during the long war between Venetians and Ottomans and successfully conducted the diplomatic relations with Venetians (Leal 2003, 35). The grand vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha created the position of the grand dragomanate and the dragomanate of the fleet for Nicousios in 1669 (Sözen 2000, 46) and for the first time the office of grand dragoman gained fully official status within

Ottoman bureaucracy (Janos 2006, 182). The function of the position of the grand dragomanate was similar to that of a deputy foreign minister. It should be noted that the Ottoman state began to employ members of the Greek Orthodox elite in the administration without converting them to Islam (Leal 2003, 399). In 1673, Nicousios passed away and was replaced by his secretary Alexander Mavrocordatos. After the death of Nicousios, members of Phanariot families came to be appointed to the grand dragomanate.

### **2.2.2 A Discussion on the Greek and the Ottoman Language and the Phanariots**

The social composition of the Phanariot retinue was very diverse. They were coming from Greek, Albanian, Levantine, Italian, and Romanian origin. In this respect, Hellenization was an important criterion for them to be involved in the Orthodox Christian clergy. The process of Hellenization consisted of gaining knowledge of the Greek language and the language of the Church and letters (Philliou 2011a, 15). Greek was the dominant language in the bureaucracy of the Patriarchate (Philliou 2009, 157). Orthodox Christians such as Bulgarian, Romanian, Albanian, and Serbian-speaking Christians in Balkans identified themselves as culturally Greek. They also had to know the Greek language in order to enter the Christian merchant network. The Greek speaking Christian merchants and clergy integrated to Ottoman governance through the Phanariot families. Philliou likened the Phanariot administration in the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia to a portal for Greek speaking-Orthodox Christian to enter the Phanariot world, therefore Ottoman governance. Thus, Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians obtained their career path by participating in the retinue of Phanariot voivodas and dragomans (Philliou 2011a, 15-17).

The Phanariots played significant role in the development of Greek language. They kept it alive because Balkan-Orthodox Christians had to learn Greek in order to create a career path for themselves in the Phanariot world. The Phanariots also made a great effort to keep Greek alive by carrying out cultural and educational activities. For instance, Alexander Mavrocordatos, the grand dragoman of the Porte, frequently wrote in classical Greek (Mansel 1996, 158). Nicholas Mavrocordatos also established many schools in the Danubian Principalities whose language of instruction was Greek. Furthermore, Nicholas Mavrocordatos turned Bucharest and Iassy into centers of Greek culture. He also embarked on a mission to introduce Greek culture, manners, customs, and language in Wallachia and Moldavia. He established schools, libraries



in Bucharest and patronized the Greek and Arabic printing presses. He created a rich library by bringing his father Alexander's books in Greek from Istanbul and brought new books from Amsterdam and old manuscripts from Mount Athos to the collection (Mansel 1996, 157). He also wrote the first modern Greek novel, *Leisure of Philotheos* (Henderson 1971, 22).

While the instruction and spreading of Greek language was paid great attention to, Ottoman Turkish was considerably neglected. Most Phanariots had perfect knowledge of Ottoman Turkish, however, they were reluctant to teach it. They did not want to spread the Ottoman Turkish among the Ottoman Christian subjects. They were concerned that the other groups like Romanian boyars who might constitute danger for their power would learn Ottoman Turkish and with this would replace them by taking the dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. That is to say, the Phanariots were focused on and protective of their mission to monopolize Ottoman Turkish (Strauss 1995, 194-195).

As noted above, the language of the Patriarchate was Greek. The Phanariots had to have perfect knowledge of Greek to be involved in the Patriarchate hierarchy. They also had to have perfect knowledge of Ottoman Turkish. Thus, one could say the knowledge of these languages turned into a power instrument for them. Phanariots were connected to the Patriarchate with their knowledge of Greek and became part of the Ottoman ruling elite through the knowledge of Ottoman Turkish.

### **2.2.3 The Relationship between the Phanariot Families and the Orthodox Patriarchate**

After the conquest of Constantinople, Mehmed II had a considerably tolerant attitude towards the Orthodox Patriarchate and would allow it to configure its internal structure on its own. (Runciman 1985, 165). The Patriarchate was bestowed relative autonomy to maintain its own administration. A patriarch was elected by the council of metropolitans, i.e. the Holy Synod (Runciman 1985, 173). Then, the patriarch had to be approved by the sultan. After the approval by the sultan a *berât* was granted to the patriarch for his inauguration. İnalçık pointed out that the *berât* granted by the sultan demonstrated the Ottoman appointment of non-Muslim clergymen to their posts, as the patriarchs were free to appoint and dismiss the clergymen in the church hierarchy (İnalçık 1991, 206-207).

From the seventeenth century onwards the Phanariot families would commonly have a close relationship with the Patriarchate situated in Fener (Mango 1973, 48). During the sixteenth century, the Greek noble families called *archon* had a considerable control and influence on the Patriarchate and its internal affairs. This power and influence derived from their wealth and they obtained it thanks to trade (Tellan 2011, 43). The *archon* families were frequently involved in the affairs of the Patriarchate and the competition between the *archon* families manifested itself during the election of the patriarch. Each *archon* family paid *peşkeş* to the Porte so as to elect their own patriarch (Tellan 2011, 42). For example, Michael Cantacuzenos (1510-1578) appointed or dismissed patriarchs (Mango 1973, 48).

During the second half of the seventeenth century, the Phanariot families rose to prominence and acquired influence on the Patriarchate (Tellan 2011, 43). Mango states that the influence of the Phanariots on the Patriarchate was hard to define exactly and pointed out that it could be seen financially and politically. The Patriarchate needed the cash supplied by the Phanariots and the prominent positions were sold to them in return. They were also politically strong since they earned the credence of the Porte. Thus, these factors enabled the Phanariots to have influence on the Patriarchate (Mango 1973, 48), they both paid the Patriarchate's debt and plotted in Patriarchate's favor at the Porte (Runciman 1985, 362).

It is clear that the Phanariot families established a great deal of influence on the Patriarchate. The prominent positions such as the grand logothete (responsible for composing discourses for the public and carrying the patriarchal seal), the grand Skevophylax (responsible for supervision of all gifts and offerings presented to the Patriarchate), and the grand chartophylax (director of the patriarchal archives and a judge who had large judicial authority) in the Patriarchate were held by the Phanariots and their protégés (Mango 1973, 48). They put their own candidates and protégés to the offices of the Patriarchate and obtained servitude of them (Mango 1973, 48). Even members of some Phanariot families in some cases took the office of the patriarch; Ioannikios Caradja and Samuil Hantzeris served during the eighteenth century (Mango 1973, 48).

The Phanariots also took charge of the education in the Patriarchate. The Phanariot voivodas established religious foundations in Wallachia and Moldavia and they appointed the clergy who were educated by the Patriarchate to the monasteries (Mango 1973, 49). Tellan points out that there was a reciprocal relation among the high clergy of the Patriarchate, the Phanariots, and the Ottoman administrators since, as pointed out previously, the Phanariots were considerably

wealthy thus, were able to make financial aids to the Patriarchate and they were well-educated thus, they were employed by the Ottoman bureaucracy (Tellan 2011, 111). Runciman also states that the Phanariots valued their wealth considerably for this exact reason in that it would enable them to have influence on the Patriarchate and the Porte (Runciman 1985, 363). Besides, Philliou emphasizes that Phanariots took their power from the association with the Patriarchate in addition to voivodaship in the Danubian Principalities and the grand dragomanate (Philliou 2011b, 177) so they were careful of carrying out both these responsibilities.

### **2.3 The Prominent Phanariot Families**

There is a considerable number of outstanding Phanariot families that held the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. During the first half of the eighteenth century, three families rose to prominence and occupied the positions of the grand dragomanate, the dragoman of fleet, and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities that were reserved for the Phanariot families: The Mavrocordatos (will be examined in Chapter 2), Ghica and Rosetti families. The Ghica, Rosetti and Mavrocordatos families' monopoly of the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities relatively diminished during the second half of the eighteenth century. The number of competing Phanariot families increased and among them Racovitza, Callimachi, Soutzo, Ipsilanti, Mourousi, Mavrogeni, Caradja, and Hantzeris grew in power.

The Ghica family was one of the prominent Phanariot families and they were of Albanian origin. The family was related to the renowned Köprülü family. They gave five voivodas to the Danubian Principalities: Grigore II (1733-1735, 1748-1752, 1768-1769 in Wallachia; 1735-1741, 1747-1748 in Moldavia), Matei (1752- 1753 in Wallachia; 1753-1756 in Moldavia), Scarlat (1758-1761, 1765-1766 in Wallachia; 1757-1758 in Moldavia), Alexander (1766-1768 in Wallachia), Grigore III (1768-1769 in Wallachia; 1764-1767, 1774-1777 in Moldavia). Grigore II Ghica was the most prominent voivoda among the counterparts in his family. He took the leadership of both Wallachian and Moldavian Principalities three times. He introduced numerous important reforms in tax-collection methods in Wallachia (Stourdza 1983, 297-298).

The Racovitsa family was from the Romanian nobility that had settled in Phanar and Hellenized. It gave three voivodas to the Danubian Principalities: Michael (1730-1731, 1741-1744 in Wallachia; 1715-1726 in Moldavia), Stefan (1764-1765 in Wallachia), and Constantine (1753-1756, 1763-1764 in Wallachia; 1749-1753, 1756-1757 in Moldavia).

The Rosetti family was a Phanariot family of Italian origins, settled in Istanbul in the seventeenth century. It only gave one voivode to the Danubian Principalities who was Emmanuel Gianni Rosetti, also known as Manolaki (1770-1771 in Wallachia; 1788-1789 in Moldavia) (Stourdza 1983, 403).

The Callimachi family was a Phanariot family of Romanian origins. The family originated from Vasile Calmas, a boyar in the north of Bessarabie. It is also claimed that they were of peasant origin (Stourdza 1983, 245). Vasile's son Theodore became boyar by acquiring land in the Danubian Principalities. Theodor's son Jean Theodor climbed the echelons of the Moldavian nobility and became the *kapı kahya* of the Moldavian voivoda in Istanbul and then he succeeded the grand dragoman Alexander Ghika in 1741. The family gave four voivodas to the Danubian Principalities. Jean Teodor (1758-1761 in Moldavia), Grigore (1761-1764, 1767-1769 in Moldavia), Alexander (1795-1799 in Moldavia) and, Scarlat (1806, 1807-1810, 1812-1819 in Moldavia).

The Mourousi family was one of the leading Phanariot families. They claimed that came from Trabzon and descended from the Byzantine family of Comnenos. However, Stourdza states that this claim was not correct and the Mourousi family articulated this claim in order to flatter the pride of its lineage (Stourdza 1983, 353). The family gave two voivodas, Constantine (1777-1782 in Moldavia) and Alexander (1793-1796, 1799-1801 in Wallachia; 1792, 1802-1806, 1806-1807 in Moldavia). Their brother, Alexander Mourousi was the founder of the Greek academy of Kuruçeşme (Stourdza 1983, 354).

The Caradja family gave two voivodas: Nicholas Caradja (172-1783 in Wallachia) and Jean George (1812-1818 in Moldavia). The first member of the family was assigned to a position of grand *postelnik* (foreign ministry) in Moldavia in 1791. Phanariot voivoda John George Caradja reigning Wallachia during 1812-1818 executed an Ottoman Pasha, Ramiz Pasha, upon the order of the sultan (Stourdza 1983, 258).

The Mavrogeni family managed to give one voivoda to Wallachia, Nicholas Mavrogeni (1786-1790 in Wallachia), despite the gradual elimination of the Phanariot influence in Ottoman bureaucracy due to their active participation in the Greek independence movement. The Mavrogeni family maintained their influence and one of members of this family, Mavrogeni Pasha, became the vizier of Abdulhamid II (Sözen 2000, 139-40, Stourdza 1983, 339).

The Hantzeris family gave two voivodas to the Danubian Principalities: Constantine (1797-1799 in Wallachia) and Alexander (1807 in Moldavia). Their period was credited with high taxation on the peasantry. (Stourdza 1983, 300).

The Soutzo family was of Albanian origin and was related to Diamantakis Drakos of Epirus who was the son of a mill man who lived in the seventeenth century. The family gave three voivodas, Michael I (1783-1786, 1791-1793 in Wallachia; 1792-1795 in Moldavia), Michael II (1801-1802 in Wallachia; 1819-1821 in Moldavia) and, Alexander (1806, 1818-1821 in Wallachia; 1801-1802 in Moldavia) (Stourdza 1983, 417-418).

The Ipsilanti family claimed that they were descendants of Greek Trebizond prince David Comnenos (Sözen 2000, 158). Their members participated in the Greek independence movement and after the Greek Independence from the Ottoman Empire, the family was diminished within the latter. The family gave two voivodas: Alexander (1774-1782, 1796-1797 in Wallachia) and (Constantine 1802-1806, 1806-1807 in Wallachia; 1799-1801 in Moldavia) (Iordachi 2013, 114). During the period of Alexander Ipsilanti, there were crucial attempts towards the centralization of legal codification. (Stourdza 1983, 468-471)

In 1819, with the efforts of Halet Efendi, a *kânûn-nâme* stated that four Phanariot families, of Callimachi, two branches of Soutzo, and Mourousi would have the monopoly of the positions of the grand dragoman, the dragoman of fleet, and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. This *kânûnnâme* was promulgated in order to put an end to inter-familial rivalry and intrigues among the Phanariot families (Philliou 2011, 57).

## 2.4 Conclusion

Phanariot families were integrated to the Ottoman bureaucracy firstly through the grand dragomanate and the dragomanate of fleet and then the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. They played an active role in the Ottoman foreign policy from the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century. Both grand dragomans and voivodas of Danubian Principalities were significant in the management of foreign affairs. They also secured the food provisions for the capital and provided military support when the Ottoman army waged war in the Balkans. Undoubtedly, their knowledge of European languages and excellent education made them distinctive in the eyes of the Porte. They also engaged in commercial activities and they were able to afford the expenses of having the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. All the factors hereby discussed constitute the conditions that led to their rise in power and the following chapter will focus on the most prominent among them, the Mavrocordatos family.

### 3. MAKING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE MAVROCORDATOS FAMILY: VOIVODA AND GRAND DRAGOMAN

Each Phanariot candidate for the posts of grand dragoman and voivoda were expected to be familiar with the Ottoman literary and ornate language used by the Ottoman high echelons, and to have knowledge of Ottoman culture, customs, and manners. As the rest of the Phanariot families of the imperial capital, members of the Mavrocordatos family followed certain strategies to familiarize themselves with Ottoman culture and to flourish in Ottoman governance. Members of the Mavrocordatos family had to be vigilant so as to be promoted as competent, proper, and ideal dragomans and voivodas. The Mavrocordatos family, like other Phanariot families, made a great deal effort to raise members to remain at the offices since the positions were both lucrative and a source of prestige. Constantine Mavrocordatos (1711-1769), a distinguished member of the same family served as both the grand dragoman of the Porte and the voivoda of the Danubian Principalities, several times. Constantine offered patronage to Kânî in his court and the latter's *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* exemplifies was one of these instruments of patronage for the adoption of the Ottoman etiquette. *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and the relationship between Kânî and Constantine manifests Constantines's aristocratic and dynastic ambition. In this chapter, I will offer a close examination concerning the history of the Mavrocordatos family since *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written on the request of Constantine Mavrocordatos and dedicated to Alexander Mavrocordatos. It is also crucial to examine the history of the family in order to understand the strategies of promotion in Ottoman politics, strategies of flourishing among the rival Phanariot dynasties as well as the way they became part of the Ottoman bureaucracy. This chapter attempts to illustrate the Mavrocordatos family in general and Constantine Mavrocordatos in particular, regarding how they advanced in Ottoman governance and which tools they used as an instrument to integrate into it and reach high positions.

### **3.1 Background**

Even though the Mavrocordatos family claimed that they were descendants of a Byzantine family from Istanbul, their origin was from Chios from which they moved to Phanar in Istanbul (Sturdza 1983, 319). They created a genealogy that reached to Justinian (Leal 2003, 410). The Mavrocordatos family also claimed that they descended from a Greek general in Venetian service, called Mavros (Runciman 1985, 367).

The emergence of the family can be traced back to the mid-seventeenth century. The Mavrocordatos family had a commercial base and carried out silk trade between Chios, Venice and Istanbul (Sturdza 1983, 319). Scarlatos Beglitz (b.1570), a wealthy Greek merchant from Istanbul and food supplier for the Ottoman army, started the Mavrocordatos family (Vaporis 1969, 25). Moreover, during the reign of Murad IV (1623-1640), Scarlatos Beglitz had close ties with imperial courts as well as with the Danubian voivodas. Upon the death of the wife of a Wallachian voivoda, Scarlatos tried to establish a marriage alliance by having his daughter, Roxandra marry with the voivoda of Wallachia, Matthew. Considering Roxandra ugly, Matthew refused the marriage proposal and sent Roxandra back to his father. Scarlatos deeply resented it and decided to take revenge from Matthew. However, Scarlatos was killed by a janissary in Istanbul in 1630. Thus, his exorbitant fortune passed to his daughter Roxandra who in turn met Nicholas Mavrocordatos (1599-1653), a Greek merchant from Chios living in Istanbul, and they got married. They had two children: Alexander Mavrocordatos (1641-1709) and Ioannis Mavrocordatos (b.1633) (Cantemir 1988, 939-940; Sturdza 1983, 319; Stourdza 1913, 33-4).

### **3.2 The Mavrocordatos Family and the Ottoman Bureaucracy**

After the conquest of Istanbul in 1453, some Byzantine elite families were exiled or fled to Europe, especially Italy, whereas the others remained in Istanbul. Those who remained in Istanbul engaged in commercial activities or acted as tax collectors for the Ottomans (Extremera 2014, 383-384). The Greek elites integrated into the Ottoman administration in two ways: Islamization and a complete assimilation, as done by some members of Palaeologus and



Cantecuzenus families or adaptation into administration by collaborating and participating in governing posts such as the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities during the second half of the seventeenth century (Extremera 2014, 386).

Members of the Mavrocordatos family established considerable domination on the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia especially during the first half of the eighteenth century. They raised five voivodas to reign in Wallachia and Moldavia: Nicholas Mavrocordatos (1670-1730) voivoda of Wallachia two times and Moldavia two times, his son Constantine Mavrocordatos (1711- 1769) voivoda of Moldavia four times and Wallachia six times and Ioannes Mavrocordatos (1712-1747) voivoda of Moldavia once (1743-1747) and their sons, respectively, Alexander Mavrocordatos or *Deli Bey* (Mad Lord) (1742-1812) voivoda of Moldavia once (1782-1785) and Alexander Mavrocordatos or *Firari* (Fugitive) (1754-1819), voivoda of Moldavia once (1785-1786).

The Mavrocordatos family was ambitious to be part of Ottoman governance. Alexander Mavrocordatos, son of Constantine Mavrocordatos and voivoda of Moldavia (1782-1785) called *Deli Bey* (the Mad Lord) by the Ottomans, sharply rejected an offer by a Russian officer promising an independent Principality saying “I prefer poverty with honor to the riches of Croesus with dishonor. It is better that her majesty (Catherine II) regard me as a friendly Turk, which does not detract from my quality as a Christian, but on the contrary, my Christian faith even orders me to be faithful to my Emperor (Mansel 1996, 161)”. Papachristou reiterated that the early Phanariots such as Mavrocordatos, Racovitsa, and Ghica families were far from the ideal of reviving the Byzantine Empire. They merely aimed to fulfil their duties as best as they could do for the Ottomans (Papachristou 1992, 12). Nonetheless, it must be borne that all Phanariot families who held the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities did not display loyalty to the Ottomans. Even Alexander Mavrocordatos, voivoda of Moldavia 1785-86 cousin of Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Deli Bey*), called “*Firari*” (the fugitive) by the Ottomans, became pro-Russian and the leader of the secret organization of *Philike Etairia* (Friendly Society), thus, he was dismissed and fled Russia (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 82-3) and wrote poetry to encourage the Greeks towards liberty (Mansel 1996, 162).

### **3.3 Members of The Mavrocordatos Family as Ottoman Elites**

#### **3.3.1 Alexander Mavrocordatos “Keeper of Secrets” and His Career in Ottoman Governance**

Alexander Mavrocordatos (1641/1709) was the grand father of Constantine Mavrocordatos. He was the first Mavrocordatos grand dragoman of the Porte. He played an active role in Ottoman foreign affairs during the late seventeenth century. He became an initiator as a grand dragoman and paved the way for his family to integrate into the Ottoman bureaucracy and to advance in it.

He was born in Chios and was named Iskerletzade Iskender Bey by the Ottomans. When Alexander was ten, he lost his father, Nicholas Mavrocordatos, who was engaged in silk trade in Chios (Vaporis 1969, 25; Sturdza 1983, 320). His mother, Roxandra Skarlatos, raised him and played a significant role in his career. She helped her son in receiving his education in Europe. He went to Rome to study at the Jesuit College of Saint Athanasius, a Greek college that was established in the early sixteenth century by the Greeks escaping from Istanbul after 1453 (Stourdza 1913, 35-36; Runciman 1985, 363-64). He initially studied medicine at the University of Padua. Then, he moved to the University of Bologna where he studied both medicine and philosophy. His higher education created a great opportunity to enter the Ottoman bureaucracy since knowledge in medicine and philosophy was a steppingstone for his career to further advance in politics, diplomacy and academia (Leal 2003, 424). Thus, one might argue that Alexander studied medicine and philosophy since he seems to see these departments as a path that would provide the pass and advancement in the Ottoman bureaucracy.

His mother Roxandra arranged a strategic marriage alliance for her son. Alexander got married to the grand daughter of the voivoda of Moldavia, John Chrysocoleos. It was his father-in-law who introduced Alexander to Panagiotis Nicousios, the grand dragoman of the Porte (Leal 2003, 424). Thus, this marriage became one of the steps for Alexander and enabled him to meet people in high echelons. After this marriage, the grand dragoman of the Porte, Nicousios, appointed Alexander as his own private secretary. (Stourdza 1913, 37). This was the first step of the ladder to reach a position in higher echelons. This marriage also seems to be a manifestation of Alexander’ political ambition (Stourdza 1913, 37-38). Therefore, he combined

his good education with a tactical marriage that was one of the facilitating factors for him to enter to the Ottoman bureaucracy.

In addition to his duty as a private secretary of the grand dragoman Nicousios, Alexander was actively involved in the Patriarchal hierarchy. He was appointed as the head of the Patriarchal Academy for a few years thanks to his skills in rhetoric, history, eloquence, and syntax and his intellectual curiosity. He became the grand orator (responsible for educational activities of the Patriarchate), carried on significant tasks and occupied the prominent offices in the Patriarchal hierarchy for years.

His career in the Ottoman bureaucracy began with his appointment as the secretary of grand dragoman Panagios Nicousios and as personal physician of grand vizier Fazil Ahmed Pasha. After the death of Panagios Nicousios (1673) he finally became the grand dragoman (Mansel 1996, 149). It was the first time a member of the Phanariot family reached such a high position and the Mavrocordatos family would take to the stage of Ottoman history. The Mavrocordatos family had a tremendous influence in this office and largely monopolized the position of the grand dragomanate until the mid-eighteenth century (Aydın 2007, 57).

Alexander played a leading role in concluding the Treaty of Carlowitz (1699) (Mango 1973, 42) and he was rewarded with the title of “*muharrem-i esrâr*” (Keeper of Secrets) due to his accomplished representation of the Ottomans in it (Vaporis 1969, 25; Leal 2003, 401). Thus, he gained reputation and confidence of the Ottoman administrators and secured his position. Alexander gained considerable experience in the Ottoman bureaucracy during his grand dragomanate and he seemed to meticulously learn how a proper bureaucrat should act in the Ottoman bureaucracy. He wrote *The Opinions* which can be considered as a book of *nasihatnâme* as it includes counsels for his descendants (Henderson 1931, 21). He also authored the book titled *Book of Duties* (Mansel 1996, 158) which shed considerable light on the moral codes and the political mindset of the Mavrocordatos family. By these two books, he had a chance to share his experiences in the Ottoman bureaucracy to his own descendants and offered practical advice for them to be successful. The political pragmatism can be considerably seen in his *Book of Duties*.

“Do not do what you want, nor what you can, but what serves your interest.”

“I have succeeded by dint of great exertion in winning one vizier’s favor; but now he has fallen and another has taken his place and then another. Each time I have to start afresh.”

“If you visit a government office, you should enter blind and leave deaf.” (Mansel 1996, 158)

As seen in the excerpts, Alexander puts emphasis on political pragmatism, the importance of patronage and the keeping of secrets. Alexander’s son Nicholas Mavrocordatos printed *Books of Duties* in Bucharest in 1719 (Henderson 1931, 22). Besides, French orientalist Antoine Galland (d. 1715) states that Alexander Mavrocordatos wrote a treatise in Italian concerning the weaknesses and strengths of the Ottoman Empire (Galland 1987, 205-206).

His elder son Nicholas became the voivoda of Moldavia and his younger son, Ioannes became the grand dragoman of the Sublime Porte. He passed away in 1710 and one of the epitaphs erected in his tombstone says:

“The father of Latins and Greeks,  
The grand oracle of the Ottomans,  
The polestar of the viziers,  
The prototype of Scavans.” (Mansel 1996, 151)

### **3.3.2 Nicholas Mavrocordatos and His Career**

His son Nicholas Mavrocordatos, (1680-1730) carried the success of his father further and he became the voivoda of Moldavia in 1711. This office was the highest-ranking position for the Mavrocordatos family. The voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities was a much lucrative and prestigious position that was almost of the same rank with grand viziership in the Ottoman hierarchy (Mansel 1996, 153).

Following the steps of his father, Nicholas Mavrocordatos initially became the grand dragoman in 1708 (Chisholm 1911, 917). He was multilingual just as his father. He could speak Turkish, Greek, Arabic, Persian, Italian and French. He received a good education in Istanbul. He left the grand dragomanate and he was succeeded by his son Ioannis Mavrocordatos. Alexander secured his son Nicholas’s appointment as voivoda by his influence in the Sublime Porte (Sözen 2000, 70). However, Nicholas’s first reign was short-lived since the Crimean khan, Devlet

Giray, found Nicholas Mavrocordatos's attitudes disrespectful and traitorous for which he complained to the Sultan. It seems that Devlet Giray was bribed by Nicholas's rival Dimitrie Cantemir to suggest Dimitrie to the sultan as the voivoda of Moldavia. Consequently, the Ottoman sultan Ahmed III dismissed Nicholas Mavrocordatos and appointed Cantemir as the voivoda of Moldavia in 1710 (Uzunçarşılı 1998, vol. 6, 70). In 1711, Cantemir was deposed due to his secret alliance with Russia against the Ottoman Empire. Thus, Nicholas Mavrocordatos became voivoda of Moldavia for the second time in 1711 and reigned until 1715 (Chisholm 1911, 917).

The Mavrocordatos family wished to rule Wallachia as well. The Mavrocordatos family used its influence on the Porte to encourage the Ottoman government to appoint Nicholas to the voivodaship of Wallachia. The local boyar voivodas were a potential threat in the eyes of the Ottoman government due to their collaboration with Russia and Austria (Runciman 1985, 372). For this reason, Nicholas was appointed to the voivodaship of Wallachia (1715-16, 1719-30) twice as his reign was distinguished and kept both peasants and boyars relatively content by minimizing the taxes (Uzunçarşılı 1998, vol. 6, 72).

As a voivoda of Greek origin, Nicholas faced some difficulties in Wallachia. Wallachian subjects were not accustomed to a foreign voivoda appointed from the Ottoman imperial center. They did not easily accept Nicholas's voivodaship. The Wallachian boyars took advantage of the ongoing war between the Ottoman Empire and Austria during 1715-1718 and captured Nicholas. They delivered Nicholas to Austria that in turn imprisoned him. When he was in captivity in Austria, he was replaced by his brother Ioannes Mavrocordatos as the voivoda of Wallachia (Uzunçarşılı 1998, vol. 6, 71-72). Ioannes's approach to the relations with Austria leading to and during the time of treaty of Passarowitz were perpetually diplomatic hence he was called the "diplomatic prince" whereas his brother Nicholas became the "administrator prince" (Stourdza 1913, 119). The war between the Ottoman Empire and Austria ended with the Treaty of Passarowitz. Thus, Nicholas was freed and he was reinstated to the Wallachian throne and reigned until his death (1730) (Sözen 2000, 74).

During his second reign in Wallachia (1719-1730), he embarked on reviving the country. Plague had led to socio-economic problems in the Principality, so he diminished taxes and relieved the financial burden on Wallachian people (Stourdza 1913, 126). Although Jean Neculcea, an eighteenth-century Romanian chronicler, made derogatory comments on the

Phanariots in general, he eulogized Nicholas's political acts like those of removing certain customs, prohibiting torture, paying people's salaries in full and minimizing corruption. Neculcea also noted that if Nicholas Mavrocordatos carried on holding the office for a longer time, the Principalities would benefit more (Stourdza 1913, 97).

Nicholas was considerably interested in political philosophy. He translated *Theatrum Politicum* of Ambrosius Marlianus, a treatise on the limits of princely power (Henderson 1931, 22). Moreover, he commissioned a book and offered political advice in it. He delivered *the manuscript of 1727* that included princely advice to his son Constantine (Stourdza 1913, 133). He offered both moral and practical political advice providing his son Constantine with political and moral guidance for his career. He gave practical advice to Constantine for the latter to gain the content of Romanian people.

“Take care, take care that your counselors are greedy, deceitful, flattering, idle, ignorant, vindictive, indiscreet, proud, liars.”, “That state secrets (and still not all) are delivered only to two or three people of proven fidelity.”, “Give your orders with the dignity that befits a prince, but without noise and without radiance.”, “To preserve one's dignity is an indispensable thing.”, “Do your best to make the natives love you.”

“Do not be wasteful, but love savings, do not be greedy, be economical, do not be avid but manage well what you have. Stretch your legs as far as your cover allows.”, ” “Review of revenues and expenses.”, ”Acquire by continual inquiry the knowledge and intelligence of things, of persons, of great ones, of your friends, of your enemies, of those who are indifferent to you.”, “By imposing new taxes, new customs, you would acquire a bad name.”, “Do not promise; but if you make a promise stay faithful to it.”; “Do not violate the word you have given.” (Stourdza 1913, 133-134).

These excerpts reflected the political and economic practices followed by Nicholas Mavrocordatos. He drew a portrait of ideal rulership ranging from emphasis upon the criteria for choosing proper servants, keeping secrets, being economical, and faithful to his word and gaining the loyalty of the subject. In addition to political advice, Nicholas offered some moral virtues and suggested that one should benefit from the advice of experienced people:

“Justice is the virtue best suited to princes.”, “Anger is a fatal passion; gentleness has strength.”, “Moderation is excellent thing.”, “Violence, whether from the prince or those around him, is pernicious.”, “Ask, consult, learn!”, “Ask the experienced people.”, “May the experience of others serve as an example.” (Stourdza 1913, 133-134).

The instructions and advice given by Nicholas to his son Constantine are vital because they shed light on their perspective on ideal rulership and political propriety. They also included very practical advice for voivoda candidates. Both Alexander and Nicholas left a treatise or book to guide their descendants. Constantine followed his father and grand father's strategy and commissioned *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-u Fünûn* in order to offer guidance to his descendants. This is a clear manifestation concerning to what extent the Danubian Principalities were important for the Mavrocordatos family. Undoubtedly, these books or treatises can be regarded as an instrument for members of the Mavrocordatos to achieve their political goals.

### 3.3.3 Constantine Mavrocordatos and His Career

Constantine Mavrocordatos (1711-1769), born in Bucharest, was one of the most prominent Phanariot voivodas, who made numerous reforms in the political, social, and economic aspects of Wallachia and Moldavia. He was raised by his father Nicholas in Wallachia. Nicholas acted sensitively towards his son Constantine, particularly for his political career. Nicholas prepared Constantine for the throne of the Danubian Principalities. He led him to study foreign languages and attain knowledge about politics, hired Démétrius Procopiou as a tutor for Constantine's education. Procopiou had received his education at the University of Padua. He was the personal secretary of Nicholas Mavrocordatos and the doctor of his court (Sturdza 1983, 135). Constantine spent his youth in the Danubian Principalities with his father. Certainly, it was a great advantage for him to gain such deep knowledge about the Principalities, Romanian boyars and peasants (Stourdza 1913, 135).

Before Constantine was appointed as the voivoda of Wallachia, he held the office of *kapı kahyası* or *kapı kethüdası*. The *kapı kahyası* was chosen among the male relatives (sons, brothers and so on) of reigning Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas and were kept hostage in Istanbul to secure the loyalty of the latter. The function of *kapı kahyası* was to represent the reigning voivoda to the Porte and share information coming from them. They resided in Istanbul (Philliou 2011a, 21) at the *Eflak Köşkü* (Mansion of Wallachia) in the Phanar quarter. There was an inscription on the gate of the mansion saying that the mansion was reconstructed by *Eflak kethüdası* Kostantin Mavrokordat (Decei 1940, 548).

When his father Nicholas died as a voivoda of Wallachia in 1730 he was replaced by his son Constantine. In addition to his reforms Constantine's reign was distinguished by his long-termed hold of the office with frequent interruptions. He has reigned Wallachia six times (1730, 1731-1733, 1735-1740, 1744-1748, 1756-1758, 1761-1763) and Moldavia four times (1733-1735, 1741-1743, 1748-1749, 1769). His reign lasted for nearly 29 years, back and forth between Wallachia and Moldavia.

His initial reign in Wallachia in 1730 was short yet it provides some important insight into the relations and the political networks between the prominent actors of the ruling class in Istanbul and the Danubian Principalities. His first reign in 1730 coincided with the turbulence in the imperial center due to the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730. Sultan Ahmed III was deposed and the grand vizier Nevsehirli Damat İbrahim Pasha was executed with the insurgents' influence increasing in Istanbul (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 57). His rival Michael Racovitza gave a good deal of money (150,000 *gurus*) to Patrona Halil in exchange for holding the voivodaship of Wallachia a position which he had been desiring all along (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 57-58; Hammer 1983, vol. 14, 144) and Michael obtained it (Stourdza 1913, 131). Therefore, Constantine's first reign in Wallachia lasted for a month. After the uprising lead by Patrona Halil was suppressed and the Sultan took the control, Constantine was reinstalled to the Wallachian throne (Hammer 1983, vol. 14, 148).

His following reigns coincided with a long peace with Russia and Austria as the treaty of Belgrade (1739) was signed and led to a long peaceful period. The old order was reestablished as the boyars gradually disintegrated. He was a strong and well-disciplined administrator contrary to his brother Ioannes Mavrocordatos (1712-1747). The latter was an apathetic figure who reigned Moldavia once in 1743-1747. The Romanian side complained about him and the heavy taxes he imposed caused his dismissal (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 76). Earning the sympathy and consent of the subjects of their authority was indeed significant to secure the position. In addition, the boyars who lost their power frequently sought to ally with foreign powers such as Habsburgs and Russia against both Ottomans and Phanariots. Thus, making the Romanian subject content was crucial for their lifetime and power in office.

When he died in 1769 as the voivoda of Moldavia, an interval period began for the Mavrocordatos family. No member of the Mavrocordatos family was again appointed to the voivodaship. Wallachia and Moldavia had not been headed by a voivoda from the family for



approximately 13 years already. Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Deli Bey*, 1742-1815), son of Constantine Mavrocordatos, and Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Firari*, 1754-1819), son of Ioannes Mavrocordatos held the voivodaship of Moldavia respectively. Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Deli Bey*) was the only Mavrocordatos voivoda who did not take the position of the grand dragomanate unlike his father, uncle, and cousin. He reigned in Moldavia (1782-1785). He was credited with his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. He was the grand dragoman and carried out diplomatic agency for the Ottoman Empire in Russia before his appointment to the voivodaship of Moldavia (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 82).

Alexander Mavrocordatos (*firari*) was voivoda of Moldavia (1785-1786). Unlike his cousin he had a pro-Russian policy and was dismissed by the Sublime Porte and his property in Istanbul was confiscated (Baycar 1999, 393-394; Özcan 1999, 36). The edict enacted by the Porte concerning Alexander's dismissal laid emphasis on his "treachery". He fled to Russia therefore, the Ottomans called him *firari* (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 83).

Constantine Mavrocordatos's political and economic reforms were remarkable in the history of the Danubian Principalities. His reform policy was likened to that of the Habsburg Monarchy in the period of enlightened despotism (Jelavich 1995, 106). He was credited with tax reform and embarked to centralize the administration at the expense of the power of the boyars. The first tax-reform was carried out in 1740 to increase state revenue. After the introduction of the reforms, the population was registered, thereby the state now could accurately assess taxes. However, the boyars severely opposed the census since some peasants under the service of boyars had full immunity from taxation although they did not have a boyar status. This census and registration both introduced state authority into the relationship between the boyars and the peasants, detected the peasants holding immunity from taxation and made them taxpayers (Jelavich 1995, 107; Zallony 1824, 21-22). Constantine also introduced a code with regard to boyar status. According to this code, blood would not be enough to regard boyars as noble but public service was required for it and subsequently for tax exemption. Thus, Constantine intended both to reduce tax exemption through the boyar status and make his Greek subordinates doing public service superior to the indigenous boyars (Sözen 2000, 82). Hungarian noble Mikes, hosted by Constantine in the Danubian Principalities by the order of the central government states that Greeks monopolized the higher status and the profitable and large occupations from Romanians (Sözen 2000, 80-82). However, his Greek favoritism led to his dismissal from voivodaship of Moldavia too (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 75).

Besides these, his most prominent reform was the abolition of the serfdom. He introduced the abolishment of serfdom, except for gypsies, in Wallachia in 1746 and in Moldavia in 1749 (Sözen 2000, 83). He aimed to restore balance and harmony between classes (Stourdza 1913, 182). The *corvee* was minimized as well and he strengthened the local administrative control by establishing the office of *ispravniks* to enforce the change effectively (Sözen 2000, 83). French journalist Pierre Desfontaines visited Constantine in Bucharest and presented him the translation of the work of Virgil. He described Constantine's social regulations as a "monument worthy of admiration" (Stourdza 1913, 184-185) and eulogized Constantine's personality.

The regulations, particularly in regard to raising tax revenues, were also welcomed by Istanbul (Wilkinson 1820, 68). Nonetheless, Constantine had to overcome the opponents. The political dynamics sometimes forced him to step back. The boyars of Crayova were enraged with Constantine and threatened him of complaining to his personal enemy, Hafiz Ali the Pasha of Vidin. Therefore, Constantine stepped back and minimized the change (Wilkinson 1831, 68). Undoubtedly, his social regulations were outstanding as well. Traditionally, gypsies in the Danubian Principalities were deprived of many rights. An example would be that the ones belonging to different masters could get married only if both masters approved it. Constantine changed this situation and forbade the master from getting involved in the marriage of gypsies belonging to different masters. Besides, if a free Romanian man or woman would marry a slave or gypsy, the free Romanian person would no longer become a slave. Until then the boyars saw the mixed marriages as a tool to raise the number of slaves while the government of the Principalities considered it a loss because free peasants turned into slaves thus they were exempted from tax and *corvee*. Constantine changed this rule so that a Romanian man or woman who married a Gypsy could no longer be made a slave. The free person would protect his pre-marriage status and the children born from this marriage would be free (Achim 2004, 39-40). Viorel Achim states that Constantine aimed at the fiscal, social, and administrative modernization of the Principalities (Achim 2004, 39).

Constantine carried out a series of reforms in the clergy and the monasteries in Romania as well. The laziness, ignorance, and abuse among the clergy had increased and he took strict measures to put an end to this situation. He had forbidden those who did not obtain literary proficiency from entering the ranks of the clergy. He resorted to punishing the priests who refused to learn how to read. Besides, he was interested in the sacred books and supported the Romanian church in printing the books they needed. Constantine made innovations in the

organization of the Greek school in Wallachia which was open to not only Greeks but also Romanians, Russians, Poles, namely to the Slavic world. He introduced Ancient and modern Greek courses and courses in Italian and Turkish. The academies in Wallachia and Moldavia were enriched by the large book collections in the libraries. Constantine granted many books of different contents. In addition, he brought teachers who had received their education in Padua, Venice, and Rome to the schools in Wallachia and Moldavia (Stourdza 1913, 198-200).

### 3.4 The Aristocratic and Dynastic Ambitions of the Mavrocordatos Family

The dynastic ambitions of the Mavrocordatos family manifested itself in various fields ranging from literature to architecture, mostly inspired by the Byzantine and Ottoman political culture. The Phanariot families in the Danubian Principalities largely imitated the Ottomans in terms of manners, way of life, and clothing etc (Sugar 1996, 135). The Köprülü household became a political model for the other prominent families in the ulema class, in regional commerce, bureaucratic offices and the military (Philliou 2011b, 181). Phanariots also took the Köprülü household as a model to create a “hânedân” or household. (Philliou 2011b, 181).

The Mavrocordatos family followed numerous strategies of the Köprülü family. The family made use of the family ties like the Köprülü did. The Mavrocordatos voivoda put his relatives into the offices in the hierarchy of both the Patriarchate and of the Danubian Principalities. They also articulated their authority in the Ottoman idiom (Philliou 2011b, 179). For example, the Mavrocordatos family added Turkish or Persian suffixes, *oğlu* or *zâde*, and preferred to be called as *İskerletzâde* (Philliou 2011b, 186). In his *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, Kânî also preferred to call his patron as *İskerletzâde Konstantin* instead of Constantine Mavrocordatos (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 1). Moreover, when Kânî explains the reason for writing *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in his statement of purpose, he transmits the words of Constantine Mavrocordatos “My brother Alexander from the well-based “İskerlet dynasty” ...” (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 1).

Literature was also a manifestation of aristocratic ambitions for the family and *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* reflected such ambitions of Constantine (Philliou 2011a, 30). He offered patronage to a literary figure, Kânî in exchange for his work. In the statement of purpose of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, Kânî states that Constantine wanted Kânî to write such a book in a *sohbet meclisi* (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 1).

The *sohbet meclisi* (the gathering or party) was organized for eating, drinking, music, pleasant conversation, and poetry and played a significant role in literary production of the time (Andrews 1985, 144-149). This expression in the statement of purpose of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* implies that Constantine must have organized such activities with a literary circle. Equally importantly, Halil İnalçık emphasizes that the patronage of the Ottoman ruling elite considerably contributed to the literary production and artistic works during the period (İnalçık 2003). In this respect, Constantine acted as an Ottoman ruling elite by organizing a *sohbet meclisi* with a literate milieu, offering patronage to the Ottoman poet Kânî and ordering a book from him.

The Mavrocordatos family reflected its dynastic ambition in architecture as well. Nicholas Mavrocordatos built the monastery of Vacaresti, the largest monastery in south-east Europe. It was a complex that consisted of a church, a monastery, a library, and a palace (Mansel 1996, 159). He had himself, his second wife Smaragda, his children and the notables depicted on frescos in the monastery. With the reign of Nicholas, the Mavrocordatos family came to consolidate its power in the Danubian Principalities. Nicholas built an outstanding court in Bucharest just like Byzantine courts (Chisholm 1911, 917). He was also familiar with the Ottoman court organization and manners (Sözen 2002, 32). His own court organization was inspired by the Ottoman court and many service positions such as *kahvecibaşı* (head of coffee making) *çamaşırcıbaşı* (laundryman), *tstonik* or *sofracıbaşı* (head of kitchen), *berberbaşı* (head barber) and so forth were created in his court (Sözen 2002, 31-32). The voivodas also had their own *dîvân* in Bucharest and Iassy, whose members consisted of *Dvornik* (judge), grand logothetes (chief judge), *vestiyar* (responsible for economic and financial affairs), *hatman* (commander), *postelnik* (responsible for foreign affairs), *gramatikos* (Voivoda's scribe), *kamaraşi* (chief treasurer of the voivoda) (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 117-122). Therefore, the Mavrocordatos family created a combination of Ottoman, Byzantine and, Wallachian culture. The voivodas were in the frescos reflecting the Byzantine model, their fur-lined robes were Ottoman and the crown on their heads were Wallachian (Mansel 1996, 159).

### **3.5 The Patronage Relations with The Porte**

The networks and patronage relations with Istanbul played a significant role in the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. In the light of above evidence, it is clear that the voivodas had to have a network with Istanbul and find a strong patron to take the office and consolidate their power. It was indeed compelling to ascend the throne and keep it secure due to inter-familial rivalry. Grigory Ghica, for instance, took the throne of Moldavia by the edict of a new sultan, Mahmud I. However, Patrona Halil wanted to install Yanaki, a Greek butcher, to the throne of Moldavia since Yanaki supplied food to Patrona and his supporters during the uprising in Istanbul and gave a great deal of gold in exchange for the Moldavian throne. With the pressure of Patrona, the Sultan conceded to depose Grigory Ghica who had taken the office and install Butcher Yanaki while Constantine was dismissed from the voivodaship of Wallachia in his first reign in 1730 due to Patrona Halil's compulsion. Besides, Constantine's third Wallachian voivodaship (1748-49) ended with the conspiracies of his rival Michael Rakovica. Constantine was supplanted by Michael Rakovica with fraudulent acts and bribery (Uzunçarşılı 1988, vol. 6, 76). It is claimed that Constantine was dismissed due to his indifferent attitude to his duties in the voivodaship of Moldavia since he felt frustrated about his transfer from Wallachia to Moldavia. Hammer, however, denies it and claims that Constantine was dismissed from the voivodaship of Moldavia because he did not give a sufficient allowance for eid ul-fitr (*Ramazan Bayramı*) to the officer of the court in Istanbul. Hammer bases his judgment on the reports of the Habsburg ambassador, Penkler (Hammer 1996, vol. 15, 135).

### **3.6 The Ties Between the Mavrocordatos Family and the Orthodox Patriarchate**

The Mavrocordatos family owned great wealth thanks to the trade of salt, meat, and grain that was an important part of the provisioning of Istanbul. Thus, they were able buy the prominent offices in the Patriarchate and exert a huge influence on it (Philliou 2011a, 180) which in turn enabled them to form good relations with the Porte. This way, they would create a monopoly on the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities (Philliou 2011, 181).

The documents published by Michael Vaporis shed light on the close relationship between the Mavrocordatos family and the Patriarchate. As mentioned above, Alexander Mavrocordatos had a close relationship with the Patriarchate and took prominent offices such as grand chartophlax, grand skevophylax and grand logothetes in their hierarchy (Vaporis 1969, 25). Particularly, the office of grand logothetes as a part of his job would bring a close relationship with the Porte. The grand ogothetes was charged to translate the document with regard to the enthronement of the patriarch to the Sultan, provide the correspondence between the Sultan and the Patriarch, and to receive the official approval from the Sultan (Vaporis 1969, 44). Alexander served as grand logothetes for a few years thus, he might have obtained the credence and established close ties with the Porte. In addition, during the eighteenth century, some members of the Mavrocordatos family who became logothetes in the Patriarchate were charged with collecting the ecclesiastical taxes. (Tellan 2011, 114). It seems that on the one hand the Mavrocordatos family met the financial demand of the Patriarchate, on the other hand they made use of the offices that they purchased.

These documents provide particular insight into the financial relationship between them. They also shed light on the duties of Alexander in the Patriarchate. A document in Vaporis's book demonstrates that Alexander Mavrocordatos as Grand Rhetor was kept as witness to an agreement between Grand Skevophylax of the Patriarchate and two bakers, with regard to a loan (Vaporis 1969, 26-27). It is possible to see the name of Alexander Mavrocordatos and his mother Roxandra Mavrocordatos in various documents belonging to the Patriarchate. Most documents tied to members of the Mavrocordatos family in the Patriarchate also illustrate the financial agreements. In one of the documents, Alexander Mavrocordatos is observed lending money without interest to the former patriarch in 1677 (Vaporis 1969, 49-50). There are also some documents with regard to business, deeds of transfer and so forth (Vaporis 1969, 57). Having been appointed as the grand dragoman, Alexander maintained his close relation with the Patriarchate even more securely.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

The integration to the Ottoman bureaucracy through the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities was significant for the Mavrocordatos family.

Each member of the family followed various strategies to secure their positions. Throughout the chapter I looked at the strategies that Alexander, Nicholas and Constantine followed to reach the positions in higher echelons and secure them. Furtherly I illustrated their network and patronage ties with the Ottomans and the Patriarchate. I also conducted an examination of the history of the Mavrocordatos family in order to understand how they became a part of Ottoman governance. After this analysis, one can better understand why Constantine wanted Kânî to write *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. The work itself was also examined in the context of patronage and regarded as a manifestation of the aristocratic ambition of Constantine Mavrocordatos. The author Kânî and the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* will be presented in the following chapter.

#### 4. EBÛBEKİR KÂNÎ EFENDİ AS A MAN OF LETTERS AND HIS TEXT: “BE-NÂM-I HAVÂRİYYÛN-I BÛRÛC-I FÛNÛN”

“Gitti gevher idi güya o ma’arif Kânî.”<sup>2</sup> (Sünbülüzâde Vehbî)

In the previous part of this thesis, I discussed the integration of Mavrocordastos family to Ottoman governance through the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities and I observed that the prominent members of the family followed some strategies in order to be part of Ottoman governance. I came to the conclusion that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was one of the tools used by the family.

*Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written by an Ottoman man of letters and bureaucrat, Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi to promote the interest of the same family, particularly in order to train a young member for the future posts of the grand dragoman and voivoda. *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* offers advice to young Alexander Mavrocordatos (1720-1790) in order for him to become acquainted with the Ottoman moral values and political culture as well for him to refine and polish his linguistic skills in Ottoman Turkish. This chapter attempts to examine the life and literary works of the author of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi in terms of his career, literary works and connections with the Mavrocordatos family and his text *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. I will also discuss the authorship of Kânî regarding *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. At the same time, I will revise a misleading assumption in the secondary literature regarding for whom *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written. Finally, I will offer the summary of the twelve narratives of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*.

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<sup>2</sup> The so talented, knowledgeable Kânî passed away.



#### 4.1 Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi's Life and Career

Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi (1712-1791), from Tokat, was an eighteenth-century Ottoman poet and man of letters (Edib Efendi 1999, 256). The information about his life comes from some Ottoman collection of biographies and chronicles. However, the available literature offers limited information. He seems to have some connections with the Mevlevi order in Tokat. The Ottoman chronicler Edîb Efendi (1746-1802), in his *History*, informs that Kânî belonged to Mevlevi order in Tokat (Edîb Efendi 1999, 255). It is also stated that he served Abdulahad Dede, the Sheikh of Mevlevi order, until forty years of age (Şehabettin Süleyman 1328/1910, 235).

The turning point in Kani's ordinary life was his meeting with Hekim-zâde 'Ali Pasha.<sup>3</sup> The latter was called by the Porte, from Trabzon to Istanbul to take the office of grand vizierate for his third time in 1754. When Hekim-zâde 'Ali Pasha was passing through Tokat, Kânî presented him an ode (*kasîde*) and *History (Târîh)* which impressed Hekim-zâde 'Ali. He obtained the permission of the sheikh of Mevlevi order to take Kânî along with him to Istanbul (Edîb Efendi 1999, 255). Kânî became a protégé of 'Ali Pasha in Istanbul. During his stay in the capital, he gained reputation in Istanbul particularly in *sohbet meclisleri* (Akıncı, 1971, 17).

His patron also aided him in entering the bureaucratic cadres in the imperial center. He became a scribe in the imperial Dîvân (*Hacegân-ı Dîvân-ı Hümayûn*) which in turn would pave the way for higher positions. This position was quite important within the rankings of *kalemiyye* and he obtained it thanks to his patron 'Ali Pasha (Ebüzziya Tefvik 1890, 45). 'Ali Pasha's third tenure of the grand vizierate was short-lived and it lasted for just three months. Kânî was also unable to adapt himself to the routine of the official life in the capital. Therefore, he was dismissed from his post and left Istanbul with Hekim-zâde Ali Pasha in 1755. He went to Silistria and served as dîvân secretary to the governor of Silistria some time after 1755 (Ebüzziya Tefvik 1890, 46; Gibb 1905, 160). He also served as dîvân secretary (*Dîvân katîbi*) to Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas. During his stay in Balkans, he became dîvân secretary of Yeğen Mehmed

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<sup>3</sup> Hekim-zâde 'Ali Pasha (1100/1689-1171/1758) was an important Ottoman bureaucrat who has occupied the office of grand vizierate for three times (1732-1735, 1742-1743, 1755). See: Akıncı 1971, 14-17; Çolak 1997.

Seyyid Pasha<sup>4</sup> in Silistria, Varna and Trikala between 1755 and 1782 (Kayaalp 2001, 307; Batislam 1997, 33). The grand vizier Yeğen Mehmed Pasha invited Kânî to Istanbul in 1196/1782, (Eliaçık 1992, XI). His close friendship with Yeğen Mehmed Pasha started in Balkans (Eliaçık 1992, XII). Yeğen Mehmed Pasha advised him on matters needed to be a serious statesman. Kânî became resentful of his close friend's advice and wrote a pejorative text about Yeğen Mehmed Pasha (Eliaçık 2001, 592-95). Due to that, Yeğen Mehmed Pasha ordered Kânî's execution. Reiusu'l-küttab Hayri Efendi (1734-1789), however, saved him from the execution and he was sent to exile in the island of Lemnos and all his property was confiscated. He suffered during his exile and articulated his distress in his letters (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 46).

Overall, we do not have much information concerning Kânî's approximately thirty years in the Balkans. Very limited information is available about his connections with voivoda Constantine Mavrocordatos. The only source showing the connection among them was the statement of purpose of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*.

Figure 1. The depiction of Ebûbekir Kânî from Numune-i Edebiyat-ı Osmaniye of Ebüzziya Tevfik. Ebüzziya Tevfik notes that this picture was drawn when Kânî was in Wallachia with voivoda Alexander (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 45).



<sup>4</sup> Yeğen Mehmed Pasha (1726-1787) was an Ottoman grand vizier in 1782. He carried out some duties such as governorship of Silistria, Vidin, and Kırşehir Mehmed Süreyya 1996, vol. 4, 1076-1077.

## 4.2 His Personality and Literary Works

Kânî was familiar with Arabic, Persian, and Turkish prose and verse at a very young age and he was very skilled in the Arabic and Persian languages (Edîb Efendi 1999, 255). He was an intelligent poet and satirist (Akıncı 1971, 17). He was credited for his peculiar playful humor in the Ottoman literature (Gibb 1905, 159). Bursalı Mehmed Tahir Bey (1861-1928), an Ottoman writer and researcher specially celebrated for his biographic and bibliographic works, expressed that his nature was inclined to humor and wit, and likened him to Abû Nuwâs<sup>5</sup> and Ubeyd-i Zâkânî.<sup>6</sup>

He was also compared to François Rabelais, a French Renaissance writer, physician and scholar (Menzel 1993, 716). Ebüzziya Tevfik, an Ottoman journalist and writer, praised Kânî and emphasized that he was among the sui generis poets with his humorous and witty style. He was master at combining both humorous sayings and serious attitude (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 43). His unique and colorful personality can be also seen in his daily life. Gibb stated that even when he was on his deathbed, he made his miserable friend laugh (Gibb 1905, 162). He did not want to let the word of *Fatiha* to be carved on his tombstone by saying “I am no beggar of Fatihas” (Gibb 1905, 162). There is an anecdote which provided some clues about the character of Kânî. “Will Kânî of forty-years become a Yani?” is a popular Turkish proverb that belongs to Kânî. He articulated this phrase when a Christian woman wanted him to convert to Christianity while he was in Bucharest, implying the difficulty to change a habit (Gibb 1905, 163).

Kânî was in the service of Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas as personal scribe (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 44). However, we do not have any information about the time he served the Wallachian and Moldavian voivodas. Ebüzziya Tevfik noted that he was portrayed along voivoda Alexander in a painting that is now at the Museum of Sinaia in Romania (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 44). Furthermore, when he was in exile in Lemnos he wrote a *hasbihâl* to voivoda Alexander and complained that all his property and concubines were confiscated by the Ottoman government and went on to say that he missed tobacco and water pipe (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 46). However, Ebüzziya Tevfik did not give any precise date about Kânî’s stay in

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<sup>5</sup> Abû Nuwâs (756-814), an Arabic poet, was celebrated with humour in his poetry.

<sup>6</sup> Ubeyd-i Zâkânî (d. 1371), a Persian poet, owed his fame to his ironic, satiric work and humoric character.

the Danubian Principalities or any detail of which voivoda Alexander was referring to. Given the fact that Kânî returned Istanbul in 1782, there are three possibilities about the precise identity of voivoda Alexander. Kânî could have written the *hasbihâl* to voivoda Alexander Ipsilanti, voivoda of Wallachia (1774-1782); Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Deli Bey*) (1782-1785), son of Constantine Mavrocordatos and voivoda of Moldavia; or Alexander Mavrocordatos (*Firari*) (1785-86), nephew of Constantine Mavrocordatos. However, there is no certain evidence precisely demonstrating who voivoda Alexander is.

Kânî never preserved or collected his works. His collection of poems (*Dîvân*) and his several letters were compiled by the Ottoman chronicler Nuri Halil Efendi (d.1799) at the request of Kânî's friend Reisu'l-kuttâb Mehmed Râşid Efendi (1753-1798). Nuri Efendi stated that most of his works were lost since he did not preserve or collect them. He stated that if he was able to gather Kânî's complete works, it would be larger than the whole repertoire of Nâbî (Eliaçık 1992, 1).

Kânî had many literary works. His *Dîvân* consisted of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish poems (Eliaçık 1992, 1-2), *Münşeât* was composed of around 120 letters and *Letâif-nâme* was composed of two sections as prose and verse (Batislam 1997). One of his most famous works is *Hirre-nâme*, penned by the words of the cat "Tekir Binti Pamuk". It was published by Ebüzziya Tevfik in his *Numune-i Edebiyat-ı Osmaniye* (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1890, 56-57).

#### **4.3 *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* (The Signs of Sciences Entitled Apostles)**

*Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is one of the most distinctive works of Kânî. *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written to teach Ottoman Turkish as the author stated in his statement of purpose. However, it would be misleading to argue that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was a book of introduction to the Ottoman language since it is necessary to have solid knowledge of the Ottoman language in order to understand the text. Kânî preferred to use the courtly language of the Ottoman upper class in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, rather than the language used by common people (Eliaçık 2007, 48). The Phanariot elite had to have knowledge of literary and ornate language used by the Ottoman high echelons and therefore, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* seems likely to aim at teaching upper literary

language. That is to say, Kânî intended to teach Ottoman Turkish spoken by the Ottoman ruling elite to Alexander Mavrocordatos by using ornate and literary language throughout the text.

In addition to Kânî's aim of teaching the language of upper class, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* can be also regarded as a book dealing with Ottoman culture, customs, manners, and moral and religious values. It should be noted that the knowledge of the language of the Ottoman upper class and the Ottoman etiquette were interconnected. The book includes elements of etiquette and political and moral advice. It can be regarded as a book of counsels that includes these elements and aims to imbue the readers with Ottoman moral, political, cultural, and religious values. The book intended to teach these values to the candidate members of the Mavrocordatos family for both the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship. Thus, it offered significant advice to members of the Mavrocordatos family in order to be part of the Ottoman elite. As already touched upon in the previous chapters, the primary intention of members of the Mavrocordatos family as a grand dragoman and voivoda was to achieve success in their duties as Ottoman officials as best as they could<sup>7</sup> (Papachristou 1992, 12). Therefore, each member of the Mavrocordatos family had to be qualified and acquainted with the Ottoman moral values, language of Ottoman chancery and political strategies to eliminate rival families. The Ottomans followed a strategy of training candidate voivodas. The male relatives of reigning voivodas were kept as hostage in Istanbul before the Phanariot period. Even, Vlad Tepeş<sup>8</sup> (1431-1476) was among those who were kept as hostage in Istanbul to secure Wallachian and Moldavian loyalty (Sözen 2002, 27). This practice continued when members of the Phanariot families were appointed to the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities (Philliou 2011, 21). With this practice, the Ottoman ministers did not aim at solely ensuring loyalty, but also teaching them the manners of the upper class (Sözen 2002, 27). Therefore, the training of any candidate voivoda and gradoman was important for the Ottoman government. Constantine Mavrocordatos took this into consideration thus requesting Kânî to write such a book, teaching the Ottoman culture.

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<sup>7</sup> While the Phanariot families such as Ipsilanti, Mourousi, and Soutzo who dominated the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries aimed to revive the Byzantine Empire and/or independent Greek state, members of the Mavrocordatos family were away from the idea of liberation from the Ottoman Empire and such revival ideas.

<sup>8</sup> Vlad Tepeş or Vlad the Impaler was the voivoda of Wallachia (1456-1462) who denied to pay tribute to the Ottoman Empire and fought against it. See Hitchins 2014, 26-27.

### 4.3.1 The Role of the Ottoman Language: Ebûbekir Kânî and *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn*

Members of the Phanariot families had to have perfect knowledge of the Ottoman language in order to properly fulfil their duty as a grand dragoman of the Porte. The knowledge of the Ottoman language became one of the most important tools for the Phanariots to reach high positions in Ottoman governance. However, the study of this language was not an easy matter. The Ottoman language textbooks and grammar books did not exist in Greek and it was also quite difficult to find a *hoca* (instructor) who would teach Ottoman literary language because the Islamic educational institutions were not open to the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire (Strauss 1995, 195). Those who wished to acquire the knowledge of the Ottoman literary language had to convince a *hoca* by promising him a secretarial job if his student reached the position of the voivodaship (Strauss 1995, 195). Even though the Phanariot voivodas, specially Nicholas Mavrocordatos, also founded many academies in Bucharest and Iassy that taught Greek language, they were reluctant to establish schools and academies to teach the Ottoman language. The reasons for this were simple, firstly they were reluctant about the Ottoman language use itself and they did not want the others, especially Romanian boyars, to learn it considering the Phanariots were concerned that if the Romanian boyars learnt the Ottoman language, they could replace the former as grand dragomans and voivodas of the Danubian Principalities (Strauss 1999, 218-219).

The Phanariot families had to find a *hoca* to teach the Ottoman literary language to them. The candidate for the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship should be instructed by a *hoca* in the Ottoman language. Constantine Mavrocordatos's brother, Ioannes Mavrocordatos (1712-1747), was instructed by Yanyalı Hoca Es'ad Efendi (d. 1731) who was a member of the Grecophone Muslim community of Janina. He received his education in Istanbul and was interested in philosophy, mathematics, Persian, and astronomy. He worked as a *müderriş* (professor) in some medreses. He translated some of the works of Aristotle from Greek to Arabic. He was also a member of religious order of Nakşibendi (Sarıkavak 2013, 322-323; Strauss 1999, 222). Considering Yanyalı Es'ad Efendi's knowledge of both Greek and Ottoman literary language, and his career, he was a very suitable *hoca* to teach the Ottoman literary language.

Constantine Mavrocordatos preferred Kânî to write a book to teach the Ottoman literary language. Like Yanyalı Es'ad Efendi, Kânî was also a suitable person to teach it, possessing qualities that made Constantine take him into consideration. He was acquainted with Arabic, Persian, and Turkish prose and verse at a very young age and he had perfect knowledge of Arabic and Persian languages (Edîb Efendi 1999, 255). He also served as scribe in the imperial Dîvân (*Hacegân-ı Dîvân-ı Hümayûn*) (Ebüzziya Tefvik 1308/1890, 45). The latter might have been the factor that pushed Constantine to have considered Kânî familiar with the Ottoman manners too. It was also good opportunity for Kânî as well as he acquired the patronage of the Mavrocordatos family. Constantine or his brother Alexander might also have promised Kânî a position if Alexander took the position of the grand dragomanate or voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities. Considering the difficulties to find a *hoca* to teach the Ottoman literary language and Kânî's background, the latter was a very suitable person for the Mavrocordatos family.

The dragoman of the Porte was not only an interpreter, his power and responsibilities were much more far-reaching (Janos 2006, 183). The grand dragoman, together with *reîsü'l-küttâb*, conducted the main diplomatic link between the Porte and foreign ambassadors from Europe and local consulates of European states based in Istanbul (Janos 2006, 177). The grand dragoman had a small room in the grand vizier's palace (Philliou 2004, 26). He was responsible for translating documents to and from other states, as well as interpreting during ambassadorial audiences with the sultan (Philliou 2004, 26). He also supervised negotiations or the signing of a treaty (Janos 2006, 183). For instance, the grand dragoman Panagiotis Nicousios and then Alexander Mavrocordatos played a significant role in concluding diplomatic negotiations with the foreign states (Stourdza 1913, 30). The voivodas of the Danubian Principalities also had similar duties and they were charged with translating and conveying news between foreign states and the Ottoman imperial center (Philliou 2004, 27; Sözen 2000, 49-50). Therefore, the Phanariot grand dragoman and the voivoda had to adopt the Ottoman manners and customs as well. In this respect, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* offered the knowledge of Ottoman customs and manners to Constantine Mavrocordatos's younger brother Alexander Mavrocordatos. Considering that it was difficult to find a *hoca*, grammar texts and textbook in order to teach the Ottoman literary language, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* would have been used by the future generations of the Mavrocordatos family and thus, the knowledge of the Ottoman literary language, customs and manners would be transmitted through *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*.

### 4.3.2 A Speculation on the Name of *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn*

The title of the book prompts some questions, first of which is why Kânî preferred to title it “Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn”. He did not explicitly state why he preferred to title the text so. In his introductory part, he just states that Constantine Mavrocordatos encouraged Kânî to write a book entitled “Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn” (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 3). In the secondary literature, it is claimed that Kânî preferred to use “havâriyyûn” (Apostles) in the title of the book in reference to the twelve apostles of Jesus as the book was written for and dedicated to a candidate Christian prince. The secondary literature also claims that the book consisted of twelve sections, thus also referred to the twelve apostles of Jesus (Eliaçık 2007, 50; Yazar 2011, 994).

Another point to consider about the title is the usage of “Bürûc-ı Fünûn”. Why Kânî opted for title “Bürûc-ı Fünûn” seems uncertain; he himself did not explain the meaning of the title in the book. *Fünûn* (فنون) is of Arabic origin that means sciences; it is the plural form of *fenn* (فن). Moreover, the word *burc* (برج) is of Arabic origin that means a round or square tower in old castle walls as well as a sign of the zodiac (Redhouse 1890, 458). *Bürûc* (بروج) is plural form of *burc*. Considering that two meanings of the word and Kânî’s silence about the meaning of the title, we can only speculate some possibilities about the meaning of “Bürûc”.

*Burc* is also mentioned four times as its plural form *bürûc* in Quran, one of which refers a sign in the zodiac while the rest stand for the towers in the castles. There is also a *sura* in Quran called *Bürûc* (Mansions of the Stars) (Kutluer 1992, 422).

The first possibility concerning to *Bürûc* is that it means “towers”. However, there is no available evidence to strengthen this implication. The second possibility is that *Bürûc* might refer to a sign of zodiac. The Ottomans were quite interested in astrology and astronomy. The office of *müneccim-başı* was established sometime between the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in order to observe astronomical events such as the passage of comets, earthquakes, lunar eclipses as well as preparing calendars, fasting timetables, and horoscopes for the palace and bureaucrats (İlhan and NCGR 2007, 22). *Burc* is also frequently mentioned in the Ottoman astronomical works. İbrahim Hakkı Erzurumî (1703-1780), an established Ottoman scholar, wrote his *Mârifetnâme* that was composed of various subjects. He devoted a great space to astrological and astronomical topics. He mentions the name of each sign (*burc*) in the zodiac



and explained them in detail (İbrahim Hakkı Erzurumî 1980, 101-104). The dîvân poets also used the name of *burcs* as a symbol in their poetry (Uzun 1992, 425).

Moreover, in the dîvân literature, the poets use the phrase “burc-ı evliya”. The position of each *burc* (sign) was certainly/properly adjusted on the zodiac and therefore, the *bürûc* on the sky represent cities on earth. For instance, *burc-ı evliya* mostly refers to Baghdad. (Uzun 1992, 426). The poets use this phrase in order to praise the cities in their poems. For instance, Fuzûlî (1483-1556), a renowned dîvân poet, praises Baghdad as *burc-ı evliya* because there were many tombs or shrines of Islamic scholars in Baghdad including Ebû Hanîfe (677-767), one of the most important ones (Hammer 1983, vol.1, 174-175).

In this respect, Kânî might have used “Bürûc-ı Fünûn” as the title for his book in order to imply a source including great deal of knowledge or science considering that in his introductory part, he stated that the word and literature provide people with knowledge.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, it is likely that Kânî might have offered his book as a source of a great deal of knowledge by referring to *burc*.

On the other hand, another possibility for the implications of the term *Bürûc* is the reference to “âlem-i mülk” (the visible world) in Islamic mystic texts (Seyyid Mustafa Rasim Efendi 2008, 276). Therefore, Kânî might have also wanted to give the meaning of the world or the realm of sciences to his book. Nevertheless, these possibilities are purely assumptions. In my opinion, the second possibility offers the most likely assumption among the others because Kânî, in his introductory part, states that the literary works were rich sources of knowledge and that they make people gain knowledge. Therefore, the first and third possibilities seem less possible in comparison.

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<sup>9</sup> “Derârî-i sipâs bisyar u garrâ-yı senâ-i bî-şümâr be-dergâh-ı icâbet penâh-ı cenâb-ı kirdigâr ihdâ şoden ihrâ ve seza-vâr rast ki vüçûd-ı beni adem râ menba’-ı cuybâr kelimât ve matla’-ı envâr-ı edebiyât kerde est ve ez her yeki işâ’a nefside-leyân beyâbân-ı ne-dâmî râ sirân ve be-tahsîl-i leme’ât-ı âdâb-ı kâm-bîn ve kâm-yâb nâil-i derecât-ı aliyât kerde-est emmâ ba’d hâlâ ümerâ-yı nasârânın mu’teber nâm-veri şerzime-i zürefânın serveri hüner-mendân-ı zamânın dilâveri mültefit-i şahinşâh zamân-ı bi-sadâkâtini ve mu’teber-ı vükelâ-yı izâm devrân-ı bi-istikâmetini a’mi bihi kûdvetü ümerî-l-milleti’l-mesîhiyye umdetü küberâü’t-tâifetü’l işeviyye voyvoda-i Eflak emîrinin ahlâk-ı İskerletzâde Kostantin beg dâme ikbâlühü ve mâlühü âmâlühü.” Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 1.

### 4.3.3 To Whom Was *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* Dedicated?

There are some points that have to be clarified and revised about *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in the current literature. The first point is to revisit for whom *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written. Even though Kânî expressed explicitly to whom he dedicated the book, the available literature produced some misleading assumptions about whom it was dedicated or presented to. In his *sebeb-i telif* of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, the author expresses that he wrote it upon the request of Constantine Mavrocordatos for his brother Alexander Mavrocordatos in order to teach him Turkish<sup>10</sup> (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 2). Nevertheless, the various sources in the secondary literature put forward that the book was written on the request of Alexander Mavrocordatos, the voivoda of Wallachia, for his nephew, to teach him Turkish, while others claim it was written on the request of Constantine Mavrocordatos for his nephew Alexander (Batislam 1997, 33; Eliaçık 2007, 48; Horata 2006, 474; 2009, 90; Yazar 2010, 994; 2012 16-17; Kelemci 2018, 5; “Kânî” 2004 in Ana Britannica vol. 12, 525). Some even assert that it was written for the son of Wallachian voivoda (Eliaçık 1992, V). Kânî expressed that he wrote it on the request of Constantine for his brother Alexander as he used the phrase “li-eb karındaşım” (a brother from the same father). The genealogy provided by Mihail-Dimitri Sturdza demonstrated that Constantine (His mother Pulcherie Tzoukis) had a brother from the same father named “Alexander” (1720-1790) (His mother Smaragda Cantacuzene) (Stourdza 1983, 324-325; Legrand 1900,14-15,18). Therefore, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to Constantine Mavrocordatos’s younger brother, Alexander Mavrocordatos.

Even though Kânî explicitly stated that to whom the book was dedicated, the current literature claims that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to the son or nephew of Constantine Mavrocordatos. The misleading assumptions might have stemmed from the fact that the nephew Alexander

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<sup>10</sup> “Derârî-i sipâs bisyar u garrâ-yı senâ-i bî-şümâr be-dergâh-ı icâbet penâh-ı cenâb-ı kirdigâr ihdâ şoden ihrâ ve seza-vâr rast ki vücûd-ı beni adem râ menba’-ı cuybâr kelimât ve matla’-ı envâr-ı edebiyât kerde est ve ez her yekî işâ’a nefside-leyân beyâbân-ı ne-dâmî râ sirân ve be-tahsîl-i leme’ât-ı âdâb-ı kâm-bîn ve kâm-yâb nâil-i derecât-ı aliyyât kerde-est emmâ ba’d hâlâ ümerâ-yı nasârânın mu’teber nâm-veri şerzime-i zürefânın serveri hüner-mendân-ı zamânın dilâveri mülteft-i şahinşâh zamân-ı bi-sadâkâtini ve mu’teber-ı vükelâ-yı izâm devrân-ı bi-istikâmetini a’mi bihi kıdvetü ümerî-l-milleti’l-mesîhiyye umdetü küberâü’t-tâjîfetü’l işeviyye voyvoda-i Eflak emîrinin ahlâk-ı İskerletzâde Kostantin beg dâme ikbâlühü ve mâlühü âmâlühü. Bir rûz-ı firûzda bezm-i nüşânûş sohbetlerinden neş’edâr ve envâ-i va’d-ı kerem-i lâzımı’l-incâzlarıyla kâm-kâr olduğumuzda bu fakîre teveccüh edip hâlâ hânedân-ı sadâkat-bünyân-ı İskerletten li-eb karındaşım olan aleksandr bezgâde bu ana gelince isti’dâd-ı mâderzâd-ı haysiyye ile kendüye iktifa edecek mertebede ba’zı kütübü’l sine-i muhtelifeyi tahsil eyledi lâkin min-ba’d kendüye ba’zı fevâid-i hikâyât-ı nâdirâtü hâvî ve nesâyih u nikât-ı mürisü’l berekât-ı muhtevi lisân-ı türkide benâm-ı havâriyyûn bürûc-ı fünûn namında bir risale-i düvâzdeh makâle-i tasnîf ve hâme-i meymenet- hitâmemiz ile sahîfe-i hâtırımı te’lif eyleseniz enseb ve mazhar-I du’â-yı telâmiz olmanıza sebep olur idi deyü tergîb ü teşvîk etmeleritile binâen-aleyh telif-i ihtimâm-ı bi-availlahi’l-meliki’l-allâm hitâmına küşiş-i tâm eyledim ve billahi’t tevfik” Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 1-2.

(*Firari/fugitive*) and the son Alexander (*Deli bey/mad lord*) were much more popular in Ottoman historiography, because they both were appointed by the Ottoman government as both grand dragoman of the Porte and voivoda of Moldavia. The brother Alexander, however, has never taken the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities.

#### 4.3.4 Was Ebûbekir Kânî the Author or the Copier of the Text?

Another point to revisit concerns the time *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was written. The secondary literature does not say anything about the precise year in which it was written. I have for the first time discovered *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in Philliou's *Biography of an Empire*. Her reference is to book's Princeton copy and she notes that a *nasihatnâme* was commissioned by Aleko Iskerletzade (Alexander Mavrocordatos) in 1808. However, 1808 is too late to be authored by Kânî because Kânî was not alive by then. The Princeton copy of 1808 was a copy written by Genç Mehmed Payzade el-hac İbrahim and not the original manuscript written by Kânî. There are some manuscripts and copies of *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in addition to the Princeton copy:

Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmut (HM) 1871, Print date: 1262/1846 (Title: *Bürûc-ı Fünûn, Kânî Efendi*)

Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, A. Nihat Tarlan (T) 36, Print date: 1144/1731

Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Emanet Hazinesi (EH) 1158 (No title, scribal and date record)

Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, (H)1165 (No title, the scribe: Abdurrıza, Print date: 1247/1832, Ayasofya-yı Kebir)

Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Manuscripts Collection. Islamic Manuscripts, Third Series no. 266 (El-hac İbrahim, 1223/1808)

Aleksandri Beyzade, *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünun*, Imprint: Mehmed Recai Istanbul: Tabhane-i Amire 1273. Available in both Boğaziçi and Princeton University libraries.

I would like to examine the manuscript that I have found in the Süleymaniye library. This manuscript has never been mentioned in the current literature while the other copies were mentioned. The other copies of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* mostly include the scribal names and a precise date in which they were written, this manuscript does not include any authorial or scribal name. What is interesting is that at the end of the manuscript, there is a note that demonstrates that it was completed on 15<sup>th</sup> Safer 1144/ 19<sup>th</sup> August 1731. This date coincides with Constantine Mavrocordatos's second reign in Wallachia (15<sup>th</sup> Ramazan 1143/24<sup>th</sup> March 1731-1145/1733) (Hammer 1983, vol. 14 148). This was the earliest among the other manuscripts meaning it might be the first manuscript of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* because it has had the earliest date of issue among all the existing ones and the completion date of the writing of the manuscript coincides with the time period in which Kânî was alive. However, this date does not fit the timeline of Kânî's life because Kânî was very young and he had not left Tokat yet in 1731.

Edîb Efendi, in his *History*, recorded the events during the late eighteenth century and noted that Hekim-zâde Ali Pasha took Kânî along with him to Istanbul to take the office of grand vizierate (Çınar 1999, 255). However, he did not give any precise date with regard to Kânî's arrival in Istanbul. Ebüzziya Tevfik identically quotes the event of Kânî's arrival in Istanbul with Hekim-zâde Ali Pasha from Mehmed Emin Edîb Efendi's *History*. However, he gives a precise date for Kânî's arrival at Istanbul: 1168/1754-1755 (Ebüzziya Tevfik 1308, 45). Ebüzziya Tevfik's also noted that Kânî left his hometown Tokat in 1168/1755 for Istanbul and set for the Balkans after 1755. The later sources identically quote Mehmed Emîn Edîb Efendi's *History* and Ebüzziya Tevfik's *Numune-i Edebiyat-ı Osmaniye*. Therefore, the facts about Kânî's life story virtually derive from both sources. The later sources repeated them.

In this regard, considering the manuscript of 1731, we can make an assumption that Kânî could have left Tokat earlier than 1755 and could have come to Istanbul. Thereafter, he could have set for Balkans and presented *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* to the voivoda Constantine Mavrocordatos who ruled Wallachia in 1731. However, we do not have any other strong evidence to support this claim, and he was very young at this time, therefore, this claim remains an assumption.

The other issue that should be pointed out is the authorship of Kânî. There is an ambiguity about whether Kânî himself wrote this text. When we assume that the manuscript dated 1731 located at Süleymaniye library belonged to Kânî, it does not necessarily mean that Kânî was author of

*Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. That is to say, all stories or some of the stories in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* might have been borrowed by Kânî and he might have compiled a collage text. There are some reasons for us to assume that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* might be a collage text. The tenth section titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden-i yekî ez-a’yân-ı devlet-i ‘aliyye-i ebediyyü’ d-devâm be-ziyâret-i yekî ez-mevâlî-i ‘azâm ve mübâhase işân der-fasl-ı azmâyiş be-dikkat-ı tâm*” (A prominent administrator pays visit to one of the great mollas in order to talk about examining the servants heedfully) can be an evidence for that. In this narrative, the Ottoman sultan Mehmed IV (d.1693) was one of the main characters and he was presented as an ideal ruler. Even though it seems quite impossible to detect the precise time period in the other sections, the incident in the tenth section took place during the period of Mehmed IV (1648-1687). Moreover, historical figures such as the sultan Mehmed IV’s grand vizier Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha, his wife Gülnuş Emetullah, his dârû’s-sa’âde ağası Yusuf Ağa, and his mir-ahûr Sarı Süleyman were involved in the narrative. Kânî’s choice of Mehmed IV and his retinue suggests that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* might be a collage text consisted of the narratives by Kânî because Mehmed IV’s rule was much earlier than the completion of the text dated 1731. Therefore, we can assume that the narrative about Mehmed IV might have been borrowed. Kânî was also not in Istanbul at that period. Moreover, considering that Kânî was at his very young age to write such a book, we can assume that all narratives in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* might have been borrowed and that he might have compiled an eclectic text instead. However, this possibility does not go beyond an assumption. The linguistic and stylistic characteristics of the whole text should be meticulously examined in order to support this assumption. However, such an examination remains outside the scope of this thesis.

#### **4.3.5 The Basic Structure and Organization of *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn***

*Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is composed of a prose text in which all sections consist of dialogues and incidents are recounted throughout the questions and answers between two or more people. After a statement of purpose (*Sebeb-i Telîf*) the book is divided into twelve sections (*makâle*). The individual sections dwell on various themes and subjects; they consist of narratives. Some of them include related anecdotes that offer moral and political guidance while others concern commerce, dream interpretation, and so forth.

The first section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden âşinâ-be-âşinâ der-fasl-ı hâsıl şoden merâm ez cüst u cüy-ı tâm*” (After seeking heedfully, a man goes to his friend and listens to his wishes).

This section is based on dream interpretation. Two friends who have not met for a long time appear in the narrative. It begins an encounter of two friends on the street and one of the characters reproaches his friend for neglecting him. The other excuses himself by noting that he experienced a strange event which made him feel that he was in trouble. In his dream, his friend offers something to eat from a bag. He assumes that there were some fruits inside. He puts his hands into the bag and snakes attack his hands. He awakens scared and being paralyzed. He goes mad for a while and seeks a dream interpreter to figure out the meaning of the dream. The dream interpreter tells him that his dream did not refer to bad things as he assumed; and on the contrary it would bring good luck and he would obtain plenty of food. Soon afterwards, he is given great deal of food that met his needs for a long time. The other character tells his friend who had dream that he was content with the outcome of the dream and the narrative ends with mutual prayers.

The second section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı müsâdif şoden-i âşinâ-be-âşinâ der-fasl-ı me(a)hâsinin der-fasl-ı hâsin-i nîk hasleti ve ilzâm şoden bed hilkatı*” (A friend happens to meet his friend and their praise of good-naturedness and rejection of wickedness). In this section, Kânî presents a narrative about the importance of generosity. Two friends have an encounter on the street. One of the characters took offence at his friend’s disloyalty just as in the previous narrative. The character who had not visited his friend for a long time apologizes to the other yet, he the latter does not excuse him. Then, he asks the purpose of his friend’s visit and explains his: One of his friends wants his horse. However, he denies his request since the main character received the horse as a gift from his other friend. However, he feels sorry and expresses his regret for his attitude. The other condemns his friend’s attitude and advises him that he should be generous and avoid making people resentful due to material possessions.

The third section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden-i nâsîh-ı sâlih be-hâne-i ‘ayyâş-ı talih der-fasl-ı te’sîr-i nasîhat ve tevbe-kerden ez ‘işret*” (The pious man who gives advice goes to the drunkard man’s home and makes him vow to renounce drinking and carefree life). The section concerns prohibition of consuming alcoholic beverages in Islam. In the related anecdote, the pious (*sâlih*) man goes to a drunkard man’s home to make him quit drinking. However, the other states that drinking is an obstacle for the worship. At the first stage, the drunkard man objects and asks the reason for it being an obstacle for worship. The pious man recites a Quranic verse that forbids drinking and considerably convinces him to quit. Nonetheless, the drunkard man tells that drinking is essential for his life and goes on to say that he is not able to desist

from drinking. The pious man states that to quit drinking is quite possible and states that the intelligence is the way to obtain pleasure and enjoyment and gave an example. He notes that an ignorant merchant without intelligence, even if he became as rich as Croesus, he would be unable to obtain happiness and enjoyment. Thereupon, the drunkard vows not to drink again. The fourth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden hasmeyn be huzûr-ı kâdî-‘asker-i rûm der-faslı makbûli-i ashâb-ı edeb ü merdûdî-i erbâb-ı gazab*” (The two adversary men come into presence of the Rumelian kâdî-‘asker with regard to the approval of those who have modest and good manners and rejection of those who have indignation). In this narrative, on the contrary to the previous stories, two enemy characters appear in the court and at presence of *Kazasker-i Rum* together with by some judicial witnesses. A debtor man applies to *kazasker* and complains about his payee. The debtor has 250 *guruş* debt and he is unable to pay his debt. The payee harasses and attempts to jail him though the debtor has 15 days to pay his debt. Thereupon, the debtor man puts forwards that he pledges his gold materials valued 500 *guruş* to his payee man. However, although he is prepared to pay his debt to take his gold materials back, the payee denies returning the pledged materials. Thus, the debtor applies to the court. There are two witnesses who confirm the debtor’s claims. The testimony of the first witness is accepted while the testimony of the second witness is rejected since the first witness is of eloquence yet, the second one’s testimony is rejected, although he is a wise and learned man, because he exhibits aggressive attitude towards the *kazasker* and his speech is lacking of eloquence.

The fifth section is titled “*Âmeden -i da’vâ be-huzûr-ı kâdî-‘asker der-dîvânı sadr-ı ‘âlî der-fasl-ı halâs-yâften ez-âfat ü beliyyât be-i’tâ’-yı zekât ü sadakât*” (In the grand vizier’s council Kâdî-‘asker tries a case pertaining to being saved from troubles and calamities thanks to canonical alms and charity). This section dwells on one of the Islamic virtues, charity. The *kazasker* hears a case about debt. Four men complain about a merchant called *hacı* and claim that he did not pay his 4250 *guruş* debt to them. The four payee men offer a title-deed note that belonged to *hacı* and some witnesses verify the men’s claim. However, the title-deed note was unsigned by the *hacı*. The *kazasker* asks the *hacı* whether he is indebted to the four men or not. The *hacı* denies their claims and puts forward that he has no debt to them, yet, he tells the event in detail. The witnesses, *çukadar*, and *çavuşbaşı*, confirm the claims of the debtor man and they claim that they saw *hacı* take the debt and put an emphasize that the *hacı* put *akçes* into his box. The *hacı* denies the claims again and defends himself by telling that the *akçes* he put into the box do not belong to those men. Then, the *hacı* requests to see the title-deed note. When he

checks it, he remembers all the detail and tells the *kazasker*. He expresses that the men who claim to be debtors asked the *hacı* to read a title-deed note and tell them, as they told the *hacı* that they were illiterate. Thereupon, the *hacı* reads out the title-deed note, and he receives no *akçe* from them. The men who claim to be the debtor and the witnesses reject the *hacı*'s word and disrespect the *kazasker*. The *kazasker* decides that the witnesses are false witnesses and finds the *hacı* in the right. Therefore, the *kazasker* decides that those who claim to be debtor of the merchant *hacı* and the false witnesses be exiled.

The sixth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı mu’âraza-i tabîb be-seyyâd-ı garîb der-fasl-ı rubûdan-ı hisse ez-kıssa*” (A squabble between a strange fisherman and a doctor pointing to a moral). This section includes a dialogue between a fisherman who lost his all property and a doctor who advises the fisherman in various subjects. A man lost his shop and capital in a fire therefore, he has to fish on shore to feed his family. A doctor sees the fisherman and the narrative begins with their dialogue. The doctor warns the man of fishing on that shore being a potential danger to his health due to the upwind of southwest and northeast and bad smells. The doctor advises him to quit fishing there. However, the fisherman denies his advice and tells him that he has to provide the survival of his family. This narrative is focused on the gaining of livelihood.

The seventh section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden-i muhtesib be-savmâ’a-i şeyh-i murâkib be-istid’â-yı ‘ulüvv-i merâtib der-fasl-ı husûl-ı murâdât be-murâkabe-i riyâzât*” (A *muhtesib* comes to a sheikh who secludes himself in the shrine to request high offices and to attain his desires thanks to worship and mentally and bodily self-discipline). It puts emphasis on the desire for earthly materials and the significance of the worship. In this section a *muhtesib* (Chief officer having a supervision over merchants and shop-keepers) comes to a sheikh lives in isolation in his shrine. The *muhtesib* apologizes for not paying visit the sheikh for a long time, the sheikh tells the *muhtesib* that he has many mistakes and goes on to say that it is not quite possible to forgive the *muhtesib*'s mistakes. The sheikh questions the *muhtesib* whether he has acquired any money illegally and whether he accepted the bribe or not. Furthermore, the sheikh suggests the *muhtesib* that he should give less importance to earthly things and turn his heart to God through worship and asceticism (*riyâzât*). The sheikh adds that he should be very sensitive towards the rightful due. Through the narrative the author stresses the idea that if you fulfil your duty rightfully, do not value earthly things and turn to God through worship, God provides you with livelihood. The moral of the narrative itself is modesty.



The eighth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden-i mir-ahûr-ı evvel-i şehriyârî be-huzûr-ı musâhib-i hazreti tâc-dâri der-fasl-ı kadr-i âşinâyî etbâ’ ve kıymet-dânî-i ‘ibâd metâ’*” (The sultan’s headmaster of the horses comes to the presence of the sultan’s companion to talk about being aware of the precious items, the servants, and the subordinates). The Sultan’s *musâhib-i hazreti tâc-dâri* (boon companion) and *mir-ahûr-ı evvel şehriyârî* (head-groom of the horses of the sultan). They discuss about how a proper *kûl* (servant) of the sultan and of high-ranking bureaucrats should be and how the masters (sultan or high-ranking bureaucrats) should behave to their servants. The *mir-ahûr* praises the boon companion of the sultan because he is a good state servant and has established good relationship with the sultan. The *mir-ahûr* stresses that when the servant receives praise from the sultan, he should not become arrogant and should not humiliate and insult his counterparts and peers. The boon companion of the sultan also points out that he behaves mildly and pays respect to his counterparts’ and peers’ ranks and wealth and he suggests that an individual should give priority to those. Thus, he could achieve praise from the sultan due to his good work. The *mir-ahûr* also warns the boon companion against the rivalry, grudge, and jealousy among his counterparts and other servants. In this section, Kânî offers a portrait concerning how a proper *kûl* should be. Moreover, he dwells on modesty and condemns covetousness and grudge. Thereupon, *mir-ahûr* tells the *musâhib* that he experienced a bad incident with the grand vizier. The *mir-ahûr* was a close companion of the grand vizier. However, the latter decided to execute the *mir-ahûr* for a reason. The *mir-ahûr* was informed by his agents in the Porte. When the grand vizier delivered his request to the sultan for the execution of the *mir-ahûr*, the sultan denied the request of the grand vizier to execute the *mir-ahûr*. The sultan reconciled the *mir-ahûr* with grand vizier thus, the sultan saved the *mir-ahûr*. At the end of the narrative, both the *mir-ahûr* and the *musâhib* praise the sultan and described him as a just ruler.

The ninth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden -i peder-i harâmî üstâdân-ı şehri-i ‘âli âbâd be-tebrîk câh-ı gencûrî-i halîfe-i Bağdâd der-fasl-ı muhakkar-şoden-i kâfiru’n- ni’am be-tama’-i hâm ve mu’teber-şoden-i şâkirü’n- ni’am bi-kanâ’at-i tâm*” (The Baghdad caliph to celebrate his office; ingratitude stemming from pure covetousness is condemned while gratitude with full modesty is praised). The narrative is a dialogue between a father and a son. The general theme of the ninth section is the condemning of covetousness and praising of the modesty. The father of the head treasurer of Baghdad caliph comes to Baghdad from Aliabad to celebrate to his son’s new office. He advises him in various subjects and praises his son for his modesty. The characters constantly lay emphasis on the avoidance of earthly things, not coveting material

things, righteousness, and the importance of afterlife. It is recommended that the administrator should be meticulous and selective when choosing his servants. Since there are many disloyal servants who have great deal of ambition to advance rapidly in their career and obtain fortune and wealth. It also advises that the administrator should be generous towards his servants to make them loyal and modest.

The tenth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden-i yekî ez-a’yân-ı devlet-i ‘aliyye-i ebediyyü’ d-devâm be-ziyâret-i yekî ez-mevâlî-i ‘azâm ve mübâhase îşân der-fasl-ı azmâyiş be-dikkat-ı tâm*”. (A prominent administrator comes to one of the great *mollas* for a visit and friendly talk on examining the servants heedfully). This section is devoted to the sultans’ *nedîms* (boon companion). As stated, the dialogue is between a high-ranking administrator and a *molla*. The *molla* asks the administrator the reason why he has not visited to him for a long time. The administrator replies him that he dealt with the restoration of his home therefore, he was unable to visit the *molla*. The *molla* accepts his excuse. They discuss about how a proper servant should be. The Ottoman sultan Mehmed IV was also presented as an ideal sultan in this part.

The eleventh section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden yekî ez-yâr-ı kadîm be-hâne-i yekî dost-ı müstedîm mübâhese-kerden îşân der-fasl-ı sû-i zan ve bühtân be-mülâhaza-i mefsedet- ‘ünvân ve müteneffir-i şoden-i yârân ez-yekî zübde-i ‘irfân ve ilzâm şoden be-pend-i dil-pesend yekî ez-ihvân*” (Maliciousness and the calling of a friend who had felt disgusted of a wise men to persuade the former of the opposite through good advice). This section concerns about calumny, sedition, and troublemakers and misunderstandings among friends. These negative elements create trouble and corrupt the society. Kânî ingeniously deals with the issue and reflect derisively and ironically on relations among the people and condemns these negative elements.

The twelfth section is titled “*Der-beyân-ı âmeden bâzîrgân-zâde Cidde-i ma’mûre bâ-cüнді erbâb-ı ticâret be-keş-i muhîr ez bender sûret-i der-fasl-ı fevâ’id ketm-i esrâr-ı hód ez-rüfekâ ü hizmetkâr hód*” (A wise merchant who came to Jeddah talks about his profession pertaining to keeping secrets about his profession from his friends and servants). One of the unique subjects in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is commerce. In section twelve Kânî mentions a successful merchant who tells his experience in commercial activities and shares his opinions on how to be a successful *bâzîrgân* (merchant) and how to struggle against the difficulties. At first the merchant remains reluctant to share his experience with his friend because secrecy was vital in

order to be successful in commercial activities so naturally he wants to keep them a secret. However, on a second thought he decides to tell his experiences since his friend insists on it. Firstly, he tells how he buys a product at a cheap price. He suggests that a merchant should act early to buy the product before other merchants. In addition to that, the *bâzîrgân* emphasizes the importance of keeping secrets in order to be successful in commercial activities. For example, the *bâzîrgân* tells his friend how he dealt with the issue arising when he did not have enough cash to pay a tariff in Cidde. He suggests that the *bâzîrgân* should not be aggressive towards customs officers. The custom officers were also the viziers of the Sharif of Mecca and checked the *bâzîrgân*'s goods. The *bâzîrgân* tells he deliberately dropped the luxury fabrics on the ground to make them visible to the viziers of the Sharif of Mecca. When the Sharif of Mecca asked the *bâzîrgân* where he is headed to, the *bâzîrgân* replied that he will set out for Istanbul. Thereupon, the Sharif wanted to send the merchant's luxury fabric to the head of *darü's-saadetü'l-şerife* in Istanbul and so he bought the luxury fabrics of the *bâzîrgân*. Thus, the merchant got rid of having to pay the tariff in cash. The *bâzîrgân* also suggests that "the merchant should not admiringly look at the products of the seller, if he does so, he could not purchase it at cheap price". Thus, overall this narrative provides the reader with beneficial advice on commercial activities.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the life and works of Ebûbekir Kânî Efendi, put the text into a historical context to look at the work in the following chapter, and discussed previous misleading assumptions concerning to *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in secondary literature. I attempted to speculate about the meaning of the title. I asserted that there are three possible meanings of the title and argued which of them was the more likely title. I suggested that Kânî seems to use "Bürûc-ı Fünûn and "burc" as and in the the title for his book in order to imply a source including a great deal of knowledge or science considering that in his introductory part he stated that the word and literature provide people with knowledge.

Moreover, in the secondary literature, there were misleading assumptions with regard to whom *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated. I tried to show that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to Constantine Mavrcordatos's brother Alexander Mavrcordatos. Besides, I have found a manuscript of

*Bürûc-ı Fünûn* dated 1731, which is of the earliest date of issue and I discussed the authorship of Kânî based on date of issue of the manuscript. I also made numerous assumptions about Kânî's authorship based on one of the narratives in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*.

Thereafter, I discussed the reason for Constantine's choice of Kânî and the role of the Ottoman language. The Phanariots had to have perfect knowledge of Ottoman language in order to get involved in Ottoman governance. Kânî was both a bureaucrat and knowledgeable of the Ottoman language so his work gains significance in this aspect. Lastly, I offered the summary of the twelve sections in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. In the next chapter, I will offer a close reading of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* to conduct an analysis and illustrate how this text might have served the aims of a member of the Mavrocordatos family.

## 5. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS ON *BE-NÂM-I HAVÂRIYYÛN-I BÜRÛC-I FÜNÛN*

The main purpose of this chapter is to analyze *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in a historical context. Kânî's work includes various narratives to offer moral guidance and political advice, as well as to introduce people to the Ottoman culture. This is an attempt to study *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* from the angle of its presentation of moral and political advices through the narratives in the text. I intend to focus on *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* itself with the aim of offering a structural and contextual analysis of the content. To this end, I will attempt to demonstrate how *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* aimed to help members from the Mavrocordatos family, a candidate to the position of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities, to become familiar with the Ottoman political and moral values. In addition, I will also discuss the nature of text and demonstrate the similarities and differences with the Ottoman advice literature.

### 5.1 Themes in *Be-Nâm-ı Havâriyyân-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn*

There are diverse themes and topics in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and Kânî does not refrain from making use of Islamic motifs. The first section is devoted to dream interpretation. The second section emphasizes generosity. The third, fifth, and seventh sections dwell on Islamic motifs and virtues. The fourth section proposes etiquette, the significance of eloquence, and moral values. The eighth, ninth, and tenth sections seem to reflect the characteristics of mirror for princes as they include political advice deemed necessary to be a proper ruler and a servant of the state.

## 5.2 Dream Interpretation

Dreams, of course, belong to the metaphysical realm and it might seem ahistorical as a motif (Niyazioğlu 2010, 71). However, dreams and dream interpretation reflect people's anxiety, fear, longing, and so forth. Therefore, they might shed light on Ottoman people's cosmos. Examining Kânî's dream narrative is significant in order to reveal the importance of both dreams and dream interpretation in the Ottoman world.

The author writes about dream interpretation in the first section of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and it is one of the most distinctive subjects that was offered in it. Kânî commonly states what moral lesson should be taken at the end of the sections yet, he did not point any moral advice at the end of this section. In this part of my thesis, I will try to address what this dream narrative could have implied and why Kânî would have preferred to utilize such a subject.

Dream interpretation had a special place in Islam. From the early period of Islam onwards dreams and dream interpretation were paid great attention and a great deal of literature on them existed (Sviri 1999, 252). On wider terms, dream interpretation was a universal practice. It was common in Europe as well and there were many dream narratives (Schmitt 1999, 276). The dreams and their interpretation were closely associated with religious culture as it produces meaning to them (Schmitt 1999, 275). Just like in the Islamic culture, in Europe dreams were used as a medium to access hidden forces and gain knowledge and prediction of the future (Schmitt 1999, 274) (Rivière 2013, 5). For instance, in the early modern England, dream interpretation was very common. People recorded their dreams and discussed about them (Rivière 2013, 1). Many manuals for dream interpretation were written and most importantly, in addition to short dreambooks, scholarly texts were published. Renowned intellectuals and philosophers such as Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and David Hume devoted a place for discussion on dreams and Thomas Hill and Philip Goodwin wrote treatises to understand the meaning and interpretation of them (Rivière 2013, 1-2).

The Ottomans were also considerably interested in dream interpretation (Yazıcı 2016, 123). It was significant because it was believed that it could have a predictive message about the future (Şen 2008, 81). It was a very common practice in the early modern Ottoman realm (Yazıcı 2016, 123) a good deal of dream manuals (*tâ'bîrnâme*) were written to interpret the dreams

alongside other kind of sources in the Ottoman literature that included dream narratives (Gökyay, 2010, 331). Even, the foundation of the Ottoman state was associated with a legendary dream that attributed a divine rule to Osman by God (Kafadar 1995, 30). Osman had a dream and told the story to Sufi sheikh Edebali. Edebali interpreted Osman's dream and told that God bestowed Osman and his descendants the right to rule. His dream and its interpretation by sheikh Edebali became one of the most important foundation myths of the empire (Finkel 2007, 2-3). Murad II (d. 1451) commissioned to translate *Kâmilü't-ta'bîr*, which had been attributed to Seljuk Sultan of Rum, Kılıcarslan II, from Persian to Turkish (Gökyay, 2010, 332). In addition to *tâ'bîrnâmes*, other sources such as chronicles, hagiographies, and literary works included many dreams belonging to the Ottoman sultans and the bureaucrats and the interpretation of these dreams (Yazıcı 2016, 124).

There were also some dream-logs recorded by Ottoman bureaucrats (Şen 2008, 77). Dreams and dream interpretation had a leading impact on some careers in the Ottoman Empire. A sixteenth-century Ottoman *kadı*, Nihânî had a dream about his afterlife punishment due to his unjust attitude in his profession (Niyazioğlu 2007, 133-134). After seeing this dream, *Kadı* Nihânî left his job (Niyazioğlu 2007, 136). However, this case was not a singular example. Three scholars from the *Ilmiye* class who dreamed just like Nihânî and left their jobs to turn to the Sufi path during the early modern period (Niyazioğlu 2007, 137). Furthermore, Evliya Çelebi the prominent Ottoman explorer started a long journey after seeing a dream in which he dreamt that the Prophet suggested the travel for Evliya Çelebi (İlgürel 1995, 530). These cases are significant in order to demonstrate the distinctive position of dreams and dream interpretation for the Ottoman high echelons and intellectuals and their position to provide moral advice.

Dream interpretation was common among the religious Sufi orders as well (Gökyay 2010, 332). As mentioned above, it was the religious Sufi sheikh Edebali interpreted the founder of Ottoman State, Osman's dream. Members of Halveti religious order also told their dreams to their sheikh and received interpretation from them. Thereafter, they wrote *tâ'bîrnâmes* composed of their dreams and interpretations (Gökyay, 2010, 332). A Sûfî Ottoman woman from the Halveti religious order called Asiye Hatun recorded her dreams and she sent them as letters to her sheikh for him to interpret (Kafadar 2014, 127-128). A Sufi of Ottoman Syria of the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century, Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulisi's dream manual *Tatîr al-anam fî Tabîr-al Manam* was very popular in Ottoman book market (Şen 2008, 77-78). Given the fact

that Kânî belonged to the Mevlevî religious order when he was in Tokad, he may have been familiar with the practice of dream interpretation. Therefore, he might have been inspired by the tendency for dream interpretation in the Sufî orders in conceiving this part of his work.

Kânî did not explain why he wrote such a narrative unlike he does in other sections. However, he seems to aim at illustrating that the dream interpretation had a significant place in the Ottoman culture and dream interpretation could be used for practical purposes such as obtaining knowledge about the future. Hence, in Kânî's dream narrative, the *mu'abbir's* (dream interpreter) interpretation of the dream of the character in the narrative turns to reality, therefore, the prediction about the future turns to reality. Considering that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to Alexander Mavrocordatos as a voivoda candidate, Kânî seems likely to advice Alexander to become familiar with dream interpretation and make use of it.

### **5.3 Becoming Familiar with Ottoman Political Culture, Ahlâk, and Âdâb (Morality and Etiquette)**

#### **5.3.1 Etiquette**

The books, manuals, and treatises on morality and etiquette and mirrors for princes occupy a special place in the Ottoman literature. The so-called *nasîhatnâmes* were written to offer guidance to the rulers and bureaucrats. *Nasîhatnâmes* that include advices for rulers and bureaucrats would be called mirror for princes. Matters concerning to morality and etiquette were sometimes discussed as a part or chapter within the *siyâsetnâme-nasîhatnâme* literature (Yaşar 2016, 38). Although the *nasîhatnâme* literature included advice for rulers and bureaucrats, some works under the genre of *siyâsetnâme-nasîhatnâme* offered moral, manners and etiquette that regulated familial and social relations and/or advised a proper way of behaviour. Some books combined the principles of two traditions: *adâb* and *ahlak*. Kınalızâde Ali's *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* focused more on morality while Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Âlî's *Mevâ'idün-Nefâis fi-Kavâ'idü'l-Mecâlis* was one of the most prominent etiquette books (Öz 2006, 358). However, both morality and etiquette (*adâb-ı mu'aşeret*) were intermingled in them.



The Ottomans put special emphasis on etiquette, politeness and manners. The books and booklets on etiquette and manner were very popular during the late nineteenth century and a great deal of them were being written. However, that does not mean that the Ottoman's interest in politeness, manners, and propriety began during the nineteenth century on the contrary, Ottomans began to deal with these values long time ago. Although amount of books with a specific focus on *adâb-ı mu'aşeret* were very limited before the nineteenth century, the subjects on manners, etiquette and morals by referring to the term *adâb-ı mu'aşeret* as the summary of rules that regulated the familial and social relations were common. (Yaşar 2016, 37-39). Kınalızâde Ali's famous *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* in the sixteenth century was one of the most remarkable examples which devoted a considerable place to morality and etiquette. Kınalızâde Ali regarded proper manner and politeness within the moral framework (Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi 2007). Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Âlî (1541-1600), a sixteenth-century Ottoman bureaucrat and intellectual, also wrote an etiquette book titled *Mevâ'idün-Nefâis fi-Kavâ'idü'l-Mecâlis* that was the most prominent account of this genre. This book was written for the upper class and Mustafa 'Âlî explained the improper attitudes of *nedîms* and criticized their arrogant attitudes (Mustafa 'Âlî 1978, vol. 1, 162).

Kânî also devotes considerable place to Ottoman etiquette and morality. The fourth section deals with testimony in the Ottoman court, the significance of eloquence and politeness, and how a *kazasker* manages a case. The narrative includes the intermingled moral codes and etiquette within the Ottoman context (*adâb-ı mu'aşeret*).

At the end of the narrative, Kânî notes that although the first witness was a swindler and a liar, he was very skilled at expressing himself in a proper manner. Thus, his testimony was affirmed. On the other hand, even though the second witness was *fakîh* (a person versed in the law) and *danîş-ver*, (learned person) he was deprived of expressing himself and he had an aggressive attitude during the court (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 16-17). Thus, his testimony was dismissed. Kânî attempts to demonstrate how a witness or anyone in general should behave in a proper manner before the *kazasker* or any bureaucrats from any level; They should be respectful and express themselves politely.

In this narrative, Kânî also points out to what extent the eloquent use of language and politeness was of significance within Ottoman context as the emphasis was put on this issue at the end of the narrative. As mentioned, he illustrates the significance of eloquence by the example of

witnesses at an Ottoman court through which Kânî suggests the readers to curb anger and rage and praises politeness (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 16-17). This narrative primarily dwells on the politeness and respect, as a principle of the Ottoman etiquette (*âdâb-ı mu'âşeret*).

Another point I would note on the narrative is that the *kazasker* rejected the testimony of the second witness due to his profession while he found the first witness eligible for testimony in the court. The second witness found it unusual and mockingly asked the *kazasker* why *cibâyet* created an impediment to the witness. However, the *kazasker* did not explain it. On the other hand, the *kazasker* confirmed the testimony of a *mutasarrıf*. However, I did not find any evidence that *cibâyet* (the office of collector of rents to property in mortmain) was an impediment to testimony in the Ottoman court. Even in a court record (*Şerîyye sicili*) a *câbî* became a witness in a debt case that was similar to the case in Kânî's narrative (Yıldız 2010, 107). There is also no evidence in Islamic jurisprudence that *cibâyet* constitutes an impediment to testimony in court (Bilmen 1968, vol. 8, 167-174; Apaydın 2010, 278-283; Çolak 2016, 91-100). We can speculate that if the case was associated with a pious foundation, it would render the rejection of testimony intelligible. However, there is no sign to show that the case was related to a pious foundation. Already, the second witness found it unusual and mockingly asked the *kazasker* why *cibâyet* created an impediment to the witness. However, the *kazasker* did not explain it. On the other hand, the *kazasker* confirmed the testimony of a *mutasarrıf*.

### 5.3.2 Generosity

Kânî devotes his second section to the significance of generosity (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 9). In the narrative, he suggests that an individual should be generous for his companions and that the horse given as a gift by a friend should be given as gift to the other friend who wanted the horse (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 10). The character who rejected to give his horse to his friend who wanted it regretted it and decided to give his horse to his friend as a gift.

Generosity was one of the most prevalent virtues in various works written by Ottoman authors. Many Ottoman authors, albeit with works written in different periods, broadly emphasize the significance of generosity for both sultans and high-ranking bureaucrats. (Sariyannis 2011, 121). Generosity was also an integral part of the qualities of leadership. Sariyannis states that generosity is a major virtue for Ahmedî (Sariyannis 2011, 123). Ahmedî (d. 1413), in his

*İskendernâme*, he eulogizes Ottoman Sultans Orhan, Murad I and Bayezid I for their generosity. Moreover, he praises his patron Emir Süleyman due to his generosity. Tursun Bey, one of the historians of Mehmed II (d.1499), in his *Târih-i Ebü'l-Feth* states that there were four types of virtues: wisdom (*hikmet*), courage (*şecâ'at*), honesty (*'iffet*), and justice (*'adalet*) (Tursun Bey 1977, 17) and generosity was a part of honesty, one of the four virtues, (Tursun Bey 1977, 17, 22). Besides, İdris b. Hüsameddîn Bitlisî (1420-1520), an Ottoman bureaucrat and author, in his *Kanûn-i Şehinşâhî*, categorizes human virtues into two parts: the innate and acquired ones (Sariyannis 2011, 124). He puts generosity into the category of acquired virtues as a part of honesty (*'iffet*) and suggests that the kings should be generous towards their officials and subjects (Sariyannis 2011, 125). Kınalızâde Ali makes the same categorization of Tursun Bey and states that there are four types of virtues. He states that generosity is a component of the kingly virtue *'iffet* (Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi 2007, 111-112). Aşıkpaşazade (d.1484), the Ottoman chronicler, puts emphasis on generosity by referring to Ottoman rulers. He offers some examples concerning Ottoman rulers' generosity. He lists the charitable work and good deeds of Osman I, Orhan, Murad I, Mehmed I and Murad I. He claims that they created charity foundations and helped the poor people, (Aşıkpaşazâde 2003, 293-294). Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Pasha in his *Nesâyühü'l-vüzerâ ve'l-ümerâ* (The Advices for Viziers and Statesmen) written during the early eighteenth century devotes a chapter to giving moral advice. To do so, he condemns greediness, stinginess, over-ambition, arrogance, and jealousy while he eulogizes generosity and modesty (Uğural 1969, 96-103).

### 5.3.3 Islamic Motifs

The Islamic element was broadly treated in *nasihatnâmes*. Namely, the *nasihatnâme* authors dealt with the Islamic acts on worship and prohibitions. İdris b. Hüsameddîn Bitlisî in his *Kanûn-i Şehinşâhî* states that the ruler must be pious and devout so that he can set an example for his subjects and is divinely rewarded (Akgündüz 1991, 28). Kınalızâde Ali also articulates that the ruler should serve for the best of both the religion and his community, and he should avoid drinking wine (Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi 2007, 463). Therefore, religiosity and Islamic prohibitions were articulated in the Ottoman moral books. Besides, the religiosity of the rulers had great importance in the eyes of the Muslim subject because the ruler was viewed as an intermediary between God and the subject and the ruler gained acceptance by the Muslim

subject by using religious concerns (Karateke 2005, 112). Therefore, the Ottoman authors attributed great importance to the religiosity of the rulers.

Kânî does not directly refer to the religiosity of the ruler. However, he seems to present his moral advice by making use of Islamic motifs. He prefers to deliver his advice and messages through the Islamic themes. He addresses two interrelated issues: Islamic charity and generosity. In the third narrative of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, a pious man seeks to dissuade his drunkard friend from drinking wine (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 11-14). The pious man stated that only intelligence “*akl*” could bring joy and happiness and those do not have intelligence could not find happiness even if they were as wealthy as Croesus (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 14). Upon this, the drunkard man pledged not to drink wine. As is seen, Kânî dwells on the significance of intelligence by giving reference to Islamic prohibition of alcoholic beverages. Thus, he seems to aim at convincing the reader that both drinking alcohol was strictly prohibited by religion and also notes that neither drinking nor wealth could bring happiness and joy yet, the intelligence solely could bring happiness and joy.

Besides, Kânî’s fifth narrative dwells on Islamic charity by giving reference to *zekât* (canonical alms) and *sadaka* (Alms or charity) as they encourage generosity. In the narrative, Kânî emphasizes that one could get rid of their trouble by giving obligatory canonical alms to the poor (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 21) and states that those who give obligatory canonical almsgiving every year to the poor will be rewarded thus, their health and property would be never damaged (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 22). Therefore, Kânî points out both one of the Islamic rules and generosity as a moral behaviour that was frequently treated by the Ottoman authors and intellectuals.

Defterdar Mehmed Pasha, just like Kânî, states that if someone gives *sadaka* (alms) to needy people, God protects him from trouble and prolongs his life (Defterdar Mehmed Paşa 1969, 96). When Kınalızâde Ali gave advice about the craftsman, he emphasizes that making luxury goods was a waste of time for the Muslim craftsman and he should devote time to charity instead (Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi 2007, 337). Kınalızâde Ali also notes that a Muslim should not neglect *zekât* (canonical alms) (Kınalızâde Ali çelebi 2007, 340). Tursun Bey also noted that the ruler should make charity (*sadakât*) due to his great deal of wealth (Tursun Bey 1977, 25). Aşıkpaşazade also devotes a chapter and enumerates the deeds of the ungenerous sultans suggested that the wealth should be granted to charity (Aşıkpaşazâde 2003, 295-296). Canonical

alms and charity were major topics in the Ottoman chronics and *nasihatnâmes*. So, Kânî exemplifies charity as an Islamic act and generosity, thus blending religious and moral values.

### 5.3.4 Fidelity and Modesty in Friendship

Fidelity in friendship was treated in the Ottoman *nasihatnâmes* and Kınalızâde Ali remarked loyalty in friendship as well. He stated that fidelity in friendship and visiting one's relative were part of the virtue of justice (Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi 2007, 108). With this he also emphasizes the importance of friendship overall (518,520). Defterdar Mehmed Pasha suggests that one should be careful choosing his friends and to form a strong friendship by appreciating their w (Defterdar Mehmed Paşa 1969, 104, 106).

The subject of fidelity in friendship is also largely emphasized by Kânî. At the beginning of the section one, two friends came across and, one of the character reprimands his friend since his friend has not paid the former a visit for a long time. The other presented a convincing explanation and apologized to his friend (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 4-5). In the following narrative, the same situation appears; One of the characters neglects his friend and makes some excuses then, apologizes to him. However, the other does not accept his friend's apology (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 7-8). Moreover, in the seventh section, the sheikh tells his *muhtesib* friend that it has been long time since they met and the muhtesib apologized to the sheikh (Ebûbekir Kânî 1144, 17). Kânî also reiterates it in tenth section (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 65) as well as in the eleventh section, where he conveys a message concerning disorder among friends as well in which he speaks of misunderstanding, resentment, using bad words among the friends and puts an emphasis on how this sort of bad acts were improper for the *zarîf* (elite), thus demonstrating the existence of an Ottoman etiquette concerning friendship (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 73-81). Additionally, Kânî implies that one should not neglect his friends and regularly remain in communication with them putting an emphasis on fidelity in friendship. As shown in his narrative, he implies that when someone faces such a reproach from his friends one can politely express his excuses and redeem himself.

Modesty in friendship is among the issues treated in the Ottoman *nasihatnâme* genre. Defterdar Mehmed Pasha condemns greediness, arrogance, ostentation, and jealousy (Defterdar Mehmed Paşa 1969, 102). He states that one should not lust for earthly things and when one obtains a

position, he should keep away from arrogance. Defterdar Mehmed Pasha also conveys a similar warning: anyone who took any position in the bureaucracy should be modest and take the afterlife and the potential punishment into consideration (Defterdar Mehmed Paşa 1969, 36,38). Kânî criticizes greed for earthly wealth as he praises modesty and justice by referring to religious motifs in the dialogues within several sections. In the seventh narrative, the greedy is criticized and it is suggested that if someone approaches God and performs his worship, God helps him and provides his livelihood (Ebûbekir Kânî 1144, 17). He also suggests that the *muhtesib* should not be involved in the activities forbidden by the religion in order to make money (Ebûbekir Kânî 1144, 18). Besides, in the ninth section, Kânî lays emphasis on modesty making the moral advice of the section be avoidance of earthly things and greed (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 48).

In Kânî's seventh narrative, a number of moral advices is intermingled. However, the dominant theme in the narrative is modesty. Kânî emphasizes the importance of austerity to point out modesty. He eulogizes otherworldly acts by condemning earthly ambitions, particularly the aspect of putting forth effort for wealth. In a sense, by emphasizing asceticism (*riyâzât*) and worship, austerity and modesty he seeks to moral give lessons. He imbues the reader with moral and ethical values as well as a religious element.

Kânî also points out that the officers should be careful about their source of income and implies that although the tax was legal by law, it did not mean that it is permissible (*helâl*) canonically (Ebûbekir Kânî 1144, 18). Thus, Kânî delivers a message in which the sheikh convinces the *muhtesib* that God provides livelihood to people if they worship and abstain from anything forbidden by God (Ebûbekir Kânî 1144, 18).

At the end of the narrative Kânî also dwells on the idea that a *mürşid-i kâmil* and *rehber-i hakikat* should exist as moral guidance in each profession. This subject that Kânî pointed out is very significant. On the one hand Kânî draws moral lessons in combination with religious elements while on the other he delivers a message in which an individual in any profession should have a moral guide to lead him the right path. Namely, he demonstrates how important consulting a master and receiving advice was. In a similar manner, Nicholas Mavrocordatos suggested to his son Constantine Mavrocordatos that: "Ask, consult, learn!", "Ask the experienced people." (Stourdza 1913, 134).

### 5.3.5 Being A Proper Ruler and Servant

The section eight, nine, and ten are primarily devote to political advice offered to Alexander Mavrocordatos. These three sections reflect the characteristics of the mirror for princes written from the late sixteenth century to mid-eighteenth century. These political treatises initiated by Lütfi Pasha's *Âsafnâme* deal with the current problems that the Ottoman Empire faced and offered solutions rather than moral issues. The prevalent themes discussed in these political treatises are largely consisting of proposals on issues ranging from restoration of the army, of the land system, treasury, nepotism and meritocracy, to functions of the high-ranking bureaucrats, the appointment of competent grand vizier, provincial and judicial officers, *defterdar* (head of treasury), *nedîm*, and so forth. Ottoman authors mostly discussed these matters.

In the eighth section, Kânî aims to delineate how the ideal relationship between the master (the sultan or high-ranking bureaucrat) and the servant (*kûl*) should be in the Ottoman Empire. In the narrative Kânî draws a portrait concerning to an ideal servant as the Sultan's *mir-ahûr* (responsible for caring the horses of the sultan) and *musâhib* (boon companion) starts a discussion on how that the servants of the sultan and of high-ranking bureaucrats should be and how the master (sultan or high-ranking bureaucrats) should behave to his servants. He lists a series of advice to the servants. He points out that the servant should never be arrogant and not humiliate and despise his counterparts and peers when he receives praise from the sultan (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 35). The servant should behave mildly and pay respect to his counterparts' and peers' ranks and wealth (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 35).

Kani also dwells on the bitter rivalry and grudge among the servants, and thus advises that the subordinate should stay away from rivalry and grudge. The *musâhib* is presented as an ideal servant because he does not attempt to supplant his counterparts/rivals showing respect to them instead. Even when the sultan appoints him as his grand vizier, the *musâhib* kindly rejects it since he finds himself inadequate and unqualified for the grand vizierate. Hence, he suggests the sultan that another servant (*kûl*) was much more qualified for the grand viziership and deserved it (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 35). By this example, Kânî presents the *musâhib*'s attitude as correct where he portrays the ideal *musâhib* by describing him as a good state servant and stresses his good relationship with his sultan. Moreover, he offers advice to the master advising him to do favors and show generosity to his servant he would gain the loyalty of his servant

increasing the latter's motivation and will to protect his master's life and property (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 45). Therefore, he condemns over-ambition, jealousy, and grudge while he praises modesty.

Kânî lists a number of criteria needed in order to be proper servant through the narrative. The Sultan in the narrative states he had had a number of servants for his approximately forty-years-long reign, yet, he could only have four real servants: his grand vizier Fâzıl Ahmed Pasha, his *dâru's-sa'âde ağa* Yusuf Ağa, the *mira-hûr* Sarı Süleyman and his wife Gülnuş (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 71). Besides, the sultan explains the reason for choosing four of them as ideal servants stating he examined his subordinates in order to find an ideal servant and chose anyone who endured the sultan's rage and did not become arrogant when receiving praise from him (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 71-72). Thus, Kânî seeks to demonstrate both how a servant should behave to his sultan and how the sultan should choose his ideal servant. At the end of the narrative, one of the characters praises the method used by the sultan in order to find the ideal servant and Kânî also emphasizes that the sultan could have the ideal subordinates because he had *fetânet* (intelligence) and *kiyâset* (soundness of understanding and judgment) (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 74). In this respect, he provides clear and significant advice for Alexander Mavrocordatos and the other members of the Mavrocordatos family as both a ruler in the Danubian Principalities and a servant of the sultan in the Ottoman government.

The other issue that should be pointed out here is why Kânî wrote a story in which Mehmed IV and his retinue were the main characters and presented him as an ideal sultan. Kânî's choice of Mehmed IV can provide some insight into the eighteenth-century Ottoman elites' perception of history. Mehmed IV was highly interested in hunting and was rather indifferent to state affairs as stated by an anonymous source and Musavvir Hüseyin's *Silsilenâme* during Mehmed IV's last years in the Ottoman throne (Baer 2011, 234-235). However, this negative attitude towards to him in Ottoman historiography changed shortly after his death and Mehmed IV came to be described as *ghazi* (Baer 2011, 240-243) For instance, in his *History*, Müneccimbaşı Ahmed Dede (d.1702), a seventeenth-century Ottoman astrologer and historian, praises Mehmed IV as *ghazi*, the pious and god-fearing sultan (Baer 2011, 243). The tenth narrative about Mehmed IV in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* also presents Mehmed IV as an ideal ruler. There is also a trend that Mehmed IV comes to be depicted as not extravagant, indifferent to state affairs, and addicted to the hunt in Ottoman historiography with Ahmed Dede Efendi's *History*. The story about Mehmed IV in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* follows this trend. Therefore, the narrative about Mehmed IV



seems to provide some clues about the eighteenth-century Ottoman elites' perception of history since Kânî's choice of Mehmed IV seems likely to be intentional regardless of whether he borrowed this narrative or wrote it himself.

In the section eight, Kânî had explained how the master gain fidelity of his servant. He reiterated this advice in section nine. In addition to that, section nine includes criticism of nepotism and particular emphasis on competence and meritocracy (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 64-65). He implies that the ruler should employ competent servants instead of his relatives. Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Pasha (d. 1717), the Ottoman bureaucrat and historian, also criticizes nepotism and states that some wealthy people and the children of the ulema class, albeit their incompetence, took the positions in defiance of *Sharia* (Holy Law). He also suggests that these people should be dismissed (Defterdar Mehmed Paşa 1969, 62). In section nine, the moral and political advice are also intermingled. The narrative includes significant advice for both the master and subordinate. Kânî reiterates the similar advice mentioned previously again in this section. Robbery, banditry, covetousness of the servants and ambition for wealth were condemned. He also reiterates that if the officer is generous to his servants, his servants would display more loyalty to their master (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 64).

Kânî goes on to offer political advices for both ruler and servant in the tenth section. In it, he condemns servants who do not properly fulfil their duties (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 65). A *nedîm* called Ishak Efendi is presented as an ideal figure. Ishak Efendi was one the favourite *nedîms* of the sultan, but even so, he did not have great property (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 66-67). Using this, Kânî points out that the competence and success could not be evaluated by the amount of property one owned. He also put an emphasis on the fact that the sultan should have *fetânet* (intelligence) and *sehâvet* (generosity) if so, he could have the ideal subordinate (Ebûbekir Kânî 1273, 66).

Considering that the Phanariots established their own administration and institution in the Danubian Principalities, this sort of political advice was very practical for the Mavrocordatos voivodas of the region. After having been appointed, the new voivoda would appoint the *postelnik* (responsible for foreign affairs), and then the *postelnik* would appoint the *Vestiar* or treasurer, who would appoint the *Bano* (governor of lower Wallachia) and *Vornik*, who was in charged of internal affairs. The other offices in the Phanariot administration in the Danubian Principalities were *Logothete* (chief judge) and *Spravnik* (responsible for caring of voivoda's

horses) (Florescu 1968, 305). As seen, the Phanariots had their own institutions, administrators, and servants in the Danubian Principalities. Alexander Mavrodatos or any members of the Mavrodatos family, as a voivoda candidate, needed this sort of advice because when he ascended the throne of the Danubian Principalities, he would have a number of servants under his rule. Thus, he had to know how to make the servants loyal and trustable. On the other hand, the voivoda of the Danubian Principalities was a subordinate to the Ottoman sultan, he was one of the servants of the latter and in this respect, Kânî offered practical advice for a candidate voivoda on to how to behave towards his Ottoman master.

Those who wanted to be a grand dragoman and then voivoda would necessarily have to know the bureaucratic, juridical, social and economic terms and concepts concerning to the Ottoman Empire. Kânî was familiar with the terms and concepts used in the Ottoman bureaucracy because he served as a scribe in the imperial Dîvân (*Hacegân-ı Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn*). In section eight, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* also fulfills its function to introduce some special terms used in the Ottoman bureaucracy and culture. Kânî, for example, uses the terms *Rikâb-ı Hümâyûn*, *Musâhib*, *mîr-âhûr*, *hünkâr*, *telhîs*, *beytü'l-harâm*, *nedîm vezîr-i a'zam*, *dârü's-sa'âde*, *huzûr-ı hümâyûn*, *ağavât*, *harem-i hümayun* and so forth. Kânî does not provide a glossary of the Ottoman political terminology. However, it seems his goal is to make the reader become familiar with this political terminology used frequently in the Ottoman bureaucracy.

#### 5.4 The Nature of the Text

The genre of the text has hitherto not been significantly studied. Philliou describes the text as a *nasihatnâme* while others regard the text as a guidebook to Turkish (Philliou 2011, 30; Eliaçık 2008; Yazar 2011). The Ottoman *nasihatnâme* genre included mirror for princes, moral and etiquette books (Öz 2006, 358-359). While some books such as *Ahlâk-ı Alai* primarily focused on moral values rather than down-to-earth political advices, the others such as Lütî Pasha's *Âsafnâme* offered concrete political advice. Some of them such as Mustafa Ali's *Mevâ'idün-Nefâis fi-Kavâ'idü'l-Mecâlis* also focus mostly on the Ottoman etiquette. *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* offers similar advice through the narratives as the *nasihatnâme* books did. Some narratives deal with the moral issues while others offer the characteristic of *âdâb* (etiquette) and mirror for princes. However, *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was much simpler than the *nasihatnâmes* in the Ottoman advice

literature since Kânî neither took a discussion in theoretical level, nor gave advice for solving specific problems. *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is a practical text rather than a *nasihatnâme* thus it can be described as a conglomeration of suggestions.

## 5.5 Conclusion

In this section, I aimed to offer *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* with a broader historical perspective by examining the political and cultural context that the text referred since the text suffers from both lack of scholarly attention and of insufficient analysis of its content. The analysis of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* from a historical perspective allows us to understand the Ottoman-Phanariot world. Thus, we are able to discuss why this text matters and how it might have served to the purpose of the Mavrocordatos family. In addition to that, I attempted to examine the nature of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*. I asserted that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was a simple and practical conglomeration of suggestions.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Mavrocordatos family achieved dominance in the grand dragomanate of the Porte and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia during the first half the eighteenth century. There was bitter rivalry among several Phanariot families for these posts. Members of the Mavrocordatos family had to be vigilant against their rivals in order to ensure their positions in Ottoman governance and they had to train members of the family well for this. They had to master not only basic Ottoman Turkish but also the literary and ornate language used by Ottoman high echelons. Considering that language and culture were intertwined, the family also had to be familiar with Ottoman customs, manners, and culture. *Be-nâm-ı Havâriyyûn-ı Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was intended to teach these necessary values in order to obtain the position associated with the Phanariot families.

Having examined the literature with regard to *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, the Phanariot families, and the Ottoman advice literature, the second chapter depicts the political atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire in which the Phanariot families lived and worked, and how the latter were integrated to Ottoman governance. The third chapter offers the history of the Mavrocordatos family as *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to one of their members. In this respect, I examine the strategies of the prominent members of the Mavrocordatos family in order to demonstrate their efforts for the rise of the family in Ottoman governance. In the fourth chapter, I examine the structure of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* and the copy of it which was of earliest date of issue. Against this background, in the fifth chapter I primarily focus on the content and context of the text which is crucial for us to make sense of its multi-dimensional character. I examine *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in a historical context through which, I attempt to understand the Ottoman-Phanariot world.

In considering the nature of text, I suggest that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is a conglomeration of advice literature and other elements, it is a more simple and practical text in comparison to the other *nasihatnâmes* in the Ottoman advice literature. I argue that considering that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was

dedicated to Alexander, a young candidate for the positions of the voivodaship and the grand dragomanate, Kânî might have opted for preparing a text composed of stories rather than taking a theoretical discussion on political and moral matters. In the fourth chapter, I revisit a misleading assumption of the secondary literature with regard to whom *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to. I demonstrate that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* was dedicated to Constantine Mavrocordato's brother, Alexander Mavrocordatos in reference to Kânî's dedicatory part in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*.

This thesis brings up the existence of another copy of the *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* which I located at the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library. This copy is unique since it is of the earliest date of issue (1731) compared to the other known copies and it has never been mentioned in the current literature. Besides, the fact that 1731 appears as the first year of the composition of the book raises another hypothesis about the authorship of Kânî. Kânî was at very young age in 1731 therefore, we can assume that he might have compiled a collage text by borrowing from various narratives. Besides, one of the narratives in *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* with a reference to Mehmed IV can be an evidence that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* might have indeed been a compilation since Mehmed IV's rule (1648-1787) was much earlier than the composition of the book itself and Kânî was not in Istanbul at the period. 1731 as the first year of the composition of the book is not compatible with Kânî's life story. According to the current sources, he left Tokat around 1755. Therefore, relying on the year of 1731, it is possible to consider that he left Tokat some time before 1755 and then presented *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* to Constantine Mavrocordatos in 1731. Yet, this remains an assumption. Ultimately, the first year of the composition of the book remains to be further examined.

I focus on the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* in detail in the fifth chapter. I emphasize the neglected aspects of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* as the volume of academic work about it is scarce and only focuses on the linguistic character of the text. For this reason, I try to analyze the content of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* by addressing the question "How could *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* help a member of the Mavrocordatos family to achieve their goals?" I argue that as *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* includes etiquette and moral advice, and offers political advice just like a mirror for princes, having it would prove beneficial to a candidate for the positions of the grand dragomanate and the voivodaship of the Danubian Principalities.

Further in the thesis, I focus on the reason for Constantine's choice to order a book from Ebûbekir Kânî. It is important to know why Constantine, the head of such a prominent family, might have opted for Kânî to write such a book. The available primary and secondary sources

provide no information on this matter. The dedicatory preface of *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* is the only evidence pointing to the fact that Constantine wanted Kânî to write this book, not providing further details. Thereby, I speculate on the reasons why Kânî might have been preferred. He seems to be one of the suitable candidates to teach Ottoman literary language, manners and customs since he was a man of letters and he had knowledge of Arabic and Persian that were necessary for the Ottoman literary language. He also held a prominent position in the Ottoman bureaucracy as a scribe in the imperial *Dîvân* (*Hacegân-ı Dîvân-ı Hümâyûn*). Besides, it was difficult to find a *hoca* who taught the Ottoman literary language and Ottoman grammar and textbooks were not available in Greek. With all this under consideration, it seems highly plausible that Kânî was one of the best candidates to compile such an important book.

Overall, I would argue that *Bürûc-ı Fünûn* creates a connection between the Ottoman administration and the Phanariots and can be seen as a tool to generate and strengthen the ties between two worlds by introducing the detailed culture, customs, manner, and language of a social circle to their counterparts.

This study can further be extended by using archival sources and manuscript collections available in Greek and Romanian to search if there are other texts similar to *Bürûc-ı Fünûn*, and to reveal broader issues of the Ottoman Phanariot world deducing from these accounts.

Figure 2. Genealogy of the Mavrocordatos Family

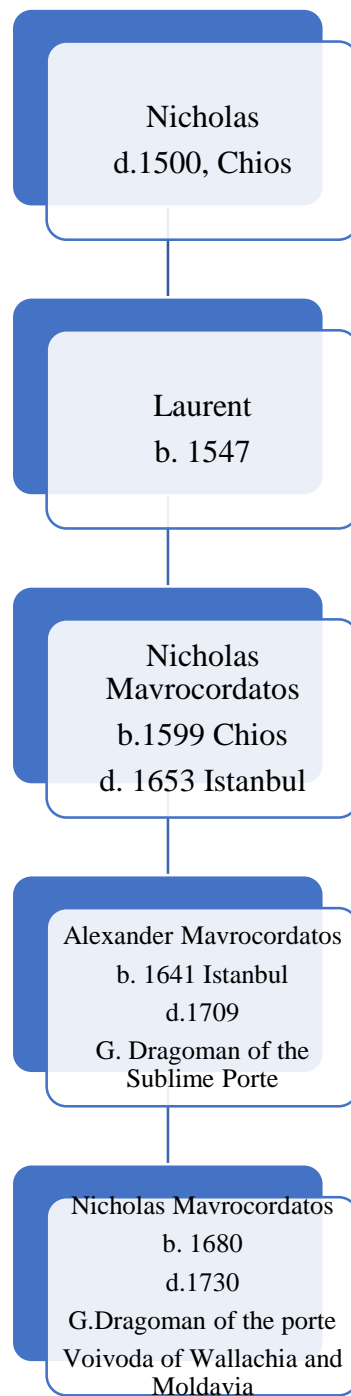
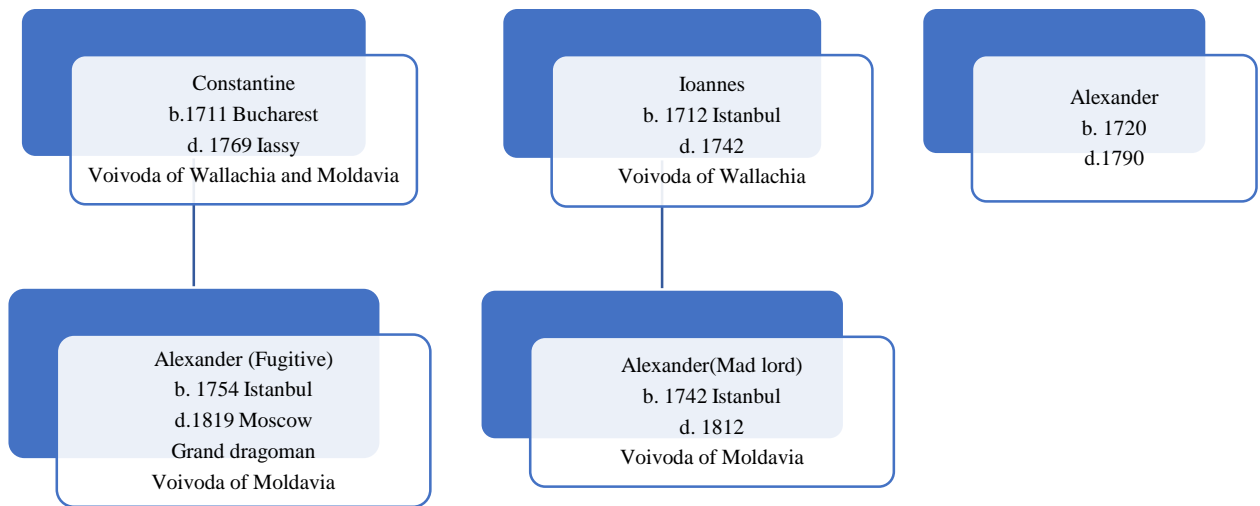


Figure 3. Genealogy of the Mavrocordatos family. Adapted from (Sturdza 1916, 324-325) and (Legrand 1900, 62)





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