

THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN THE NINETEENTH  
CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION  
AND THE DÜZOĞLU FAMILY

by  
BAŞAK YAĞMUR KARACA

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ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY  
OTTOMAN EMPIRE: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE  
DÜZOĞLU FAMILY

Approved by:

Assoc. Prof. AYŞE OZİL .....  
(Thesis Supervisor)

Assoc. Prof. SELÇUK AKŞİN SOMEL .....

Asst. Prof. YAŞAR TOLGA CORA .....

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## ABSTRACT

### THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE DÜZOĞLU FAMILY

BAŞAK YAĞMUR KARACA

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This thesis is a study of the group of leading Armenian moneylenders and officials of the Ottoman state in Istanbul. These prominent individuals, as intermediaries between the Armenian community and the Ottoman state, played crucial roles in the political, social, and economic spheres of the Armenian community and the Ottoman state over the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Also known as the Amiras, they wielded significant power in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Their power began to be challenged in various moments of the nineteenth century and throughout the century they began to disperse among different professions. Approaching these changes from the perspective of transformation rather than a story of rise and fall, is the primary focus of this thesis. In doing so, this transformation is observed through one of these Amira families, the Düzoğlu family. The Düzoğlus, who worked in the Imperial Mint between 1762-1850 and acted as officials in leading Ottoman administrative councils of the second half of the nineteenth century, serves in this thesis as a case study to display the socio-economic transformation of the Amiras in the nineteenth century.

## ÖZET

### ONDOKUZUNCU YÜZYILDA OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NDA ERMENİ CEMAATİ: TOPLUMSAL DÖNÜŞÜMLER VE DÜZOĞLU AİLESİ

BAŞAK YAĞMUR KARACA

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Düzoğlu ailesi, Amiralar, sarraflar, Darbhâne-i Âmire, Ermeni cemaati

Bu çalışma İstanbul'da Osmanlı yönetiminde önde gelen Ermeni sarraf ve devlet memuru grubunu ele almaktadır. Aracı konumundaki bu kişiler, onsekizinci ve ondokuzuncu yüzyıllarda Ermeni cemaati ile Osmanlı yönetimi arasında siyasal, sosyal ve ekonomik alanlarda önemli rol üstlenmiştir. Amira olarak bilinen bu kesimin gücü onsekizinci yüzyılın sonu ile ondokuzuncu yüzyılın başında sürmüştür. Güçleri ondokuzuncu yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren zayıflayan Amiralar çeşitli meslek gruplarına dağılarak faaliyetlerini sürdürmüştür. Bu tezin ana amacı; Amiraların yaşadığı değişimi, yükseliş ve düşüş yaklaşımından ziyade, bir dönüşüm olarak ele almaktır. Bu dönüşüm, bir Amira ailesi olan Düzoğulları perspektifinden gözlemlenmiştir. Darbhâne-i Âmire'de 1762-1850 yılları arasında çalışan ve Osmanlı yönetim kademelerinde ondokuzuncu yüzyılın ikinci yarısında bürokrat olarak görev alan Düzoğulları, bu çalışmada Amiraların sosyo-ekonomik dönüşümlerini yansıtmaktadır.

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*To Zafer, Fatma, Ekin*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

“If you become a *sarraf*, you would be an *Amira*. If you become an *ekmekcibaşı*, you would [would be nothing],” said the people from Eğin.<sup>1</sup>

The Armenian community experienced profound social and political transformations in the nineteenth century due to both changes within the Armenian community and developments in the Ottoman Empire as a whole. As a group of moneylenders, merchant elite and officials of the Ottoman state, the *Amiras* emerged as important agents of these large-scale processes in the late eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, the *Amiras* continued as a powerful moneylender and merchant group that was intricately linked to the Ottoman state elite. Through a series of administrative and bureaucratic reforms on the one hand and economic change on the other hand, a shift occurred in the position of the *Amiras* towards the mid-nineteenth century and eventually they became a part of modern administrative institutionalization. In terms of their economic position, they began to take up professions in different business ventures such as banking and industry. This thesis investigates the emergence of the *Amiras* in the late eighteenth century and the changes they went through during the nineteenth century. From a broader perspective, in an attempt to reimagine the Ottoman Armenian community, this thesis endeavors to integrate the history of the *Amiras* into that of the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

The *Amiras* demonstrate a segment of the multifaceted structure of the Armenian community. The Düzöğlü family, one of the *Amira* families that was of long-term service to the Imperial Mint, will serve in this thesis as a case study to demonstrate the transformation of this socioeconomic elite group. In understanding the role of these actors, the Düzöğlü case sheds light on their significance for the Ottoman Em-

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<sup>1</sup>Hagop Mintzuri, *İstanbul Anıları 1897-1940*, trans. Silva Kuyumcuyan (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1993), 18.

pire and the Armenian community. Through an examination of the Düzoğlu family using both Ottoman archival material and contemporary Armenian sources, the thesis will situate the history of the *Amiras* within broader changes in the Armenian communal and Ottoman imperial spaces.

### 1.1 The *Amiras* as Leading Economic and Social Actors: The Case of the Düzoğlu Family

The *Amiras* were an economically powerful Armenian group in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> They rose to prominence through the accumulation of mercantile capital in provinces such as Eğin, Divriği, and Van. After moving to Istanbul in the early eighteenth century, they began working in service of the Ottoman state in the late eighteenth century. As important moneylenders and merchants, the *Amiras* obtained a pivotal role in the Ottoman economic and financial sector. At the same time, their possession of wealth helped them become powerful actors in the Armenian community.<sup>3</sup>

As this thesis demonstrates through the case study of the Düzoğlu<sup>4</sup> family, numerous families within the *Amiras* held crucial positions in the Ottoman state service. The Düzoğlu family served in the Ottoman upper administration as moneylenders, imperial jewelers, and officials of the Imperial Mint.<sup>5</sup> From 1750 until the second half of the nineteenth century, the Düzoğlu family occupied various positions in the Imperial Mint such as *ifrâzcıbaşılık* and *mübâyaacılık*.<sup>6</sup> The family's capabil-

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<sup>2</sup>There are different interpretations of when the *Amiras* emerged. This shall be addressed in the forthcoming chapters.

<sup>3</sup>Gerard Jirair Libaridian, "The Ideology of Armenian Liberation: The Development of the Armenian Political Thought Before the Revolutionary Movement (1639-1885)" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1987), 96-102; Hagob Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul" (Ph.D. Thesis Columbia University, 1980), vi.

<sup>4</sup>In Armenian, the family name is Düzyan. Since this thesis utilizes Ottoman archives, the name will be referred to as it appears in the Ottoman archives: the Düzoğlu family. I have followed a simplified system of transliteration for Armenian, where appropriate I have preferred the common rendering of Armenian names that have appeared in Turkish.

<sup>5</sup>According to Cezar, the word "sarraf" is explained as "a person who practices the job of exchanging precious gold or silver coins. In the Ottoman Empire, which did not have banks and whose economy was based on precious metals, they played an important role in monetary and financial history." Yavuz Cezar, "Economy and Taxation: The Role of the Sarrafs in Ottoman Finance and Economy in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West.*, ed. Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotaki, and Rhoads Murphey (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 61.

<sup>6</sup>The staff who provide precious metals to the Imperial Mint and process these metals to be minted are categorized as *Darbhane Tüccar Sınıfı* by Bölükbaşı, 18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire. The person who holds the top administrative position in the *tüccar sınıfı* is called *ifrâzcıbaşı*. *Mübâyaacı* is the person who bring the precious metals to the Imperial Mint. They work under the *ifrâzcıbaşı*. It is however important to note that the *Darbhane Tüccar Sınıfı* is not an official rank in the Ottoman Imperial Mint,

ity to mobilize credit during times of crises or economic downturns is considered to be one of the keys allowing for their continuous appointments to the Imperial Mint.<sup>7</sup> A number of features of the Düzoğlu family help shed light on the position of the *Amiras* in the Armenian community and the Ottoman state in the nineteenth century.

First and foremost comes their role in the Imperial Mint and the family's transformation from a family of moderate significance in the early eighteenth century to that of significant prestige in the nineteenth century. The Imperial Mint was considered a pedestal of economic prestige in the Ottoman state, and the fact that they had long occupied various positions in the Imperial Mint placed them in a significant position in the Ottoman state. In terms of their transformation, the Düzoğlu family increased their area of interest by seeking professions outside the Imperial Mint, such as in banking, and family members came into prominence as more economically independent actors from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. At the same time, they went through a transformation as they occupied positions in the top administrative councils of the Ottoman bureaucracy in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The second feature that highlights their position in the Armenian community and Ottoman Empire stems from the fact that they were Catholic Armenians. The first decade of the nineteenth century was a period in which there was an increase in the conversion to Catholicism, as well as one of confessional turmoil. Like many other Armenian Catholics, the Düzoğlu family was also directly affected by the political turmoil. In an attempt to overhaul this plight, the Armenian Catholic Church was recognized by Mahmud II in 1830. The hesitancy but also as the reconciliatory attitude towards the Catholics and the Düzoğlu family sheds light on the empire's political and social life in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Through the lens of the Düzoğlu family, we can observe the way religious identification is intertwined with politics and economic power.

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rather it is a term coined by Ömerül Faruk Bölükbaşı. For detailed information on why he uses this term see Ömerül Faruk Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013), fn. 194.

<sup>7</sup>Şevket Pamuk, "The Evolution of Financial Institutions in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1914," *Financial History Review Cambridge University Press* 11, no. 1 (2004): 23.

<sup>8</sup>For more information on anti-Catholicism in the Ottoman Empire, see Cesare Santus, "Sheikh ül-islam Feyzullah Efendi and the Armenian Patriarch Awetik': a case of entangled confessional disciplining?," in *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th-18th Centuries*, ed. Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlu (Piscataway Gorgian Press, 2022); Sebouh Aslanian, "The Great Schism of 1773: Venice and the Founding of the Armenian Community of Trieste," in *Reflections of Armenian Identity in History and Historiography*, ed. Hourii Berberian and Touraj Daryaei (UCI: Jordan Center for Persian Studies, 2018).

## 1.2 Scholarship on the *Amiras*

Traditional historiography about the *Amiras* has had a tendency to situate them within the frame of their professions and is often silent about including the Ottoman Empire in the picture. While the works written with this approach emphasize their roles in state institutions such as the Imperial Mint, the Imperial Powder works, and architecture, they are devoid of the ways in which the *Amiras* integrated into the Ottoman Empire.<sup>9</sup>

Another tendency is to consider the *Amiras* as paragons of success in the Armenian community by emphasizing their alleged notable origins and prosperity and highlighting their personal ties with the Sultans and their material belongings. Such an approach also considers the *Amiras* as a bourgeois class, a view that fits into the national history paradigm. Nonetheless, this approach fails to analyze the *Amiras* as intermediaries between the Armenian community and the Ottoman state. Works focusing on the *Amiras*' prosperity and lavish lifestyle often bring their princely qualities forward and depict them as well-mannered, educated intellectuals who lived in palace-like mansions by the shores of the Bosphorus.<sup>10</sup> The emphasis on the prosperity did not necessarily have positive connotations. As numerous cases demonstrate, the *Amiras* were condemned for being stalwart servants of the Ottoman state and deriving their power from the Sultans who cared about nothing but their own wealth.<sup>11</sup> The condemnation was not only limited to the traditional Armenian historiography.

The scholarship addressing the interplay of the *Amiras* and the Ottoman Empire

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<sup>9</sup>Such a clear-cut approach towards the *Amiras* can be seen in: Anahide Ter Minassian, *Ermeni Kültürü ve Modernleşme: Şehir, Oyun, Mizah, Aile, Dil* (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2006) 95-115; Pars Tuğlacı, *The Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture* (Istanbul: Yeni Çığır Bookstore, 1990) 5; Harutyun G Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyün Hay Medzadunneru* [Special History of Armenian Magnates] (Constantinople, 1909); H. Gabriel Menevişyan, *Azkapanutyün Zarmın Düzyants* [Genealogy of the Noble Düzyan House] (Venice: Mkhitarian Dparan, 1890).

<sup>10</sup>Arsen Yarman and Ara Aginyan, *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Kazaz Artin Amira* (Istanbul: Surp Pırgıç Ermeni Hastanesi Kültür Yayınları 2013); Richard Hovhannisian and Simon Payaslian, "Armenian Constantinople," in *Armenian Constantinople*, ed. Richard Hovhannisian and Simon Payaslian (USA: Mazda Publishers, 2010), 3; Pascal Carmont, for example, talks about the potential linkage between the *Amiras* and the authentic princely group, the *Nakharars*. While the book places an emphasis on the nobility, even the book's name suggests that the *Amiras* were single-handedly considered to be the leading Armenians. Pascal Carmont, *The Amiras: Lords of Ottoman Armenia* (London: Taderon Press, 2012), 25-26. In line with Carmont, scholars of Armenian historiography refer to the several *Amira* families as "dynasties" who solely lived in mansions and palace-like manors, Ter Minassian *Ermeni Kültürü ve Modernleşme: Şehir, Oyun, Mizah, Aile, Dil*, 95-105; Sarkis Balmanoukian, "The Balian Dynasty of Architects," in *Armenian Constantinople*, ed. Richard Hovhannisian and Simon Payaslian (USA: Mazda Publishers, 2010), 265-86. Such exaggeration sometimes paved the way for entrenched misunderstandings or misuse of certain concepts. For example, numerous studies mistakenly consider the Düzoğlu family as the superintendents of the Imperial Mint. Likewise, some highlight that the *Amiras* were able to construct their own chapels and churches all from the beginning. Minassian, *Ermeni Kültürü ve Modernleşme: Şehir, Oyun, Mizah, Aile, Dil*, 105.

<sup>11</sup>Harutyun Mirmıryan for example, condemns the *Amiras* as being a selfish, self-centered group of people who looked after nothing but their own wealth and power. Quoted in Hayr Simon Yeremyan, *İstanbul İzlenimleri*, ed. Rağıp Zarakolu (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2018).

began to proliferate with the trendsetting work by Hagob Barsoumian. His work follows a comparative approach and integrates the Ottoman Empire within a macro view perspective. His thesis, *The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul*, highlights the importance of the *Amiras*, their forerunners, their emergence, the professions they pursued, and the ways in which they managed to establish their credibility among the Ottoman state elite.<sup>12</sup> Before Barsoumian, several studies had been conducted on the *Amiras* relying on Armenian literature, particularly focusing on their professions and families.<sup>13</sup> However, Barsoumian's work provides one of the first attempts to bring forth a multi-dimensional examination of the *Amiras*.

In his article, "The Dual Role of Amiras," Barsoumian takes his observations one step further.<sup>14</sup> Discussing their role as a bilateral entity between Armenian society and the Ottoman state elite, he concludes that "the trajectory of the rise and fall of the *Amiras* is a direct response to the needs of the Ottoman state" and thus positions the *Amiras* in the political and economic system of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>15</sup> Barsoumian's academic works, one of the most extensive and complete literature on the *Amiras*, further inspired scholars such as Pascal Carmont, Onnik Jamgoçyan, and other scholars who rely heavily on Barsoumian's works and on the same archival material that he used.

Pascal Carmont's book *The Amiras: Lords of Ottoman Armenia* provides a comprehensive treatment of the *Amiras* and an attempt to understand the importance of the *Amiras* in general.<sup>16</sup> In this regard, his work constitutes a timeline for the history of the *Amiras*, where he addresses their emergence from the Eğin region in north-eastern Anatolia, their migration to Istanbul, and the ways in which they obtained their dual role within the Armenian community and the Ottoman state. Apart from this chronology, his book is essential in understanding various details about the *Amiras* from a social and historical perspective. In addition to Barsoumian's account, Carmont provides detailed information of the well-known *Amiras* and some of the *Amira* families.

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<sup>12</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul."

<sup>13</sup>Several examples of the scholarship written on the *Amiras* prior to Barsoumian: Menevişyan, H. Gabriel. 1890. *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*. Venice: Mkhitarian Dparan; Azadyan, Toros. 1930. *Dadyan Kertasdanı*. Viyana; Azadyan, Toros. 1951. *Harüramyä Hopelyan Bezciyan Mayr Varjarani, Kumkapı, 1830-1930*. Istanbul; Pamukciyan, Kevork. 1971. *Harutyun Amira Bezciyani Kertastanı Pazmaveb*. No. 3-4, 303-313.

<sup>14</sup>Hagob Barsoumian, "The Dual Role of the Armenian Amira Class Within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian Millet (1750-1850)," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York, N.Y.: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982).

<sup>15</sup>Barsoumian, "The Dual Role of the Armenian Amira Class," 181.

<sup>16</sup>Carmont, *The Amiras*, 76-112.

Onnik Jamgoçyan’s book, *Les finances de l’Empire Ottoman et les financiers de Constantinople (1732-1853)* [Moneylending in the Ottoman Empire: Greeks, Jews, Franks and Armenians (1650-1850)], provides a general perspective of the activities of moneylenders (*sarrafs*) in Istanbul from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup> From a broader perspective, Jamgoçyan’s book is important because it shows appreciation for how vital moneylenders were to the state economy. Throughout the book, he provides information about their economic activities, their power in the Ottoman state, and their relations with the state elite. His book contributes to the understanding of how power shifted towards the Armenian community after the decline of Jewish and Greek moneylenders in the early nineteenth century. Finally, Jamgoçyan’s study provides further insight into the interdependent relationship between the *Amiras* and the state.

While the literature above does not include the Ottoman state perspective, various more recent studies have laid out a comparative framework that incorporates the usage of the Ottoman state archives. Araks Şahiner’s unpublished MA thesis, “The Sarrafs of Istanbul: Financiers of the Empire,” devotes most of its attention to exploring the role of moneylenders in the Ottoman economy and administration.<sup>18</sup> She builds her research on the moneylender *Amiras* in the Ottoman Empire by utilizing Ottoman state archives and also incorporating Armenian primary sources to provide a multidimensional understanding. Her findings illustrate the ways in which the *Amiras* transformed their wealth into administrative and institutional power. Of particular significance is the transformation from the power networks of the *Amiras* to their rise as a new modern elite in the mid-nineteenth century.

While Vartan Artinian and Aylin Koçunyan’s works are not directly concerned with the *Amiras*, they mention the shifts in the balances of power and transformations of the *Amiras* in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly in the period paving the way for the 1863 constitution.<sup>19</sup> While the *Amiras* actively participated in the constitution-making process at first, as demonstrated by Artinian and Koçunyan, their presence in the constitutional assembly was further outnumbered

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<sup>17</sup> Jamgoçyan’s Ph.D. thesis titled, “*Les finances de l’Empire Ottoman et les financiers de Constantinople (1732-1853)*” (Ph.D. Thesis, Pantheon-Sorbonne University, 1988). The thesis was translated into Turkish and published by Yapı Kredi Publications. See Onnik Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Sarraflık: Rumlar, Museviler, Frenkler, Ermeniler (1650-1850)*, (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> Araks Şahiner, “The Sarrafs of Istanbul Financiers of the Empire” (Unpublished MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 1995).

<sup>19</sup> Vartan Artinian, “A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863” (Brandeis University, 1970); Aylin Besiryan, “Hopes of Secularization in the Ottoman Empire: The Armenian National Constitution and The Armenian Newspaper, Masis 1856-1863” (Unpublished MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2007). Artinian’s thesis was translated into Turkish and published by Aras Publications. See Vartan Artinian, *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Ermeni Anayasası’nın Doğuşu 1839-1863*, (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2004.)

by artisan guilds made up of *esnafs* (artisan and small tradesmen), a body against the *Amiras*' domination over the Armenian community.<sup>20</sup> Artinian and Koçunyan's research demonstrates the separation of the Armenian constitutional process from the *Amiras*.

Richard Antaramian's *Brokers of the Faith: Armenians and the Politics of Reform in the Ottoman Empire* analyzes the state centralization efforts of the nineteenth century and locates the Armenian Patriarchate and the Imperial state as allies in it. He relates to the role of the *Amiras* in centralization and considers the relationship of the *Amiras* with the Church and the guilds—both within the context of their influence in the reform period of the Ottoman Empire and within the perspective of Armenian modernization.<sup>21</sup> Antaramian's perspective is indeed crucial to understand the reorganization of the Armenian community and the separation of the Armenian Patriarchate from the *Amiras*' dominance.

### 1.3 Scholarship on the Düzoğlu Family

Scholarship analyzing the Düzoğlu family often touches upon themes emphasizing the family's institutional roles in the Imperial Mint. The central focus is on the demise of the Jewish and the Greek community and the advent of the Düzoğlu family to the Imperial Mint, as well as the execution of family members in the aftermath of corruption allegations. Another theme revolving around the Düzoğlu family is their creedal controversies.<sup>22</sup>

Several studies of which the main focus is on the economic and financial history of the Ottoman Empire dedicate certain parts to the Düzoğlu family. Yavuz Cezar and Şevket Pamuk's studies on the economic and financial history of the Ottoman Empire include several references to the Düzoğlu family, particularly about the family's roles as moneylenders and their practices in the Imperial Mint during times of

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<sup>20</sup> According to Artinian, the *Amiras* often provided monetary support for schools until the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, the *esnafs* had begun to play an active role in financially supporting educational institutions. For more detailed information on the *esnafs* and their difference from the *Amiras* see, Artinian, "A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863," 24-30.

<sup>21</sup> Richard E. Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire: Armenians and the Political Reform in the Ottoman Empire*. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2020), 29-32.

<sup>22</sup> Artinian, "A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863;" Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul;" Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453-1923*. (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

financial crises.<sup>23</sup> Ömerül Faruk Bölükbaşı’s book attributes significant importance to the Düzoğlu family in the Imperial Mint.<sup>24</sup> He focuses on the period when the family worked in the Mint and provides details about their professions. In utilizing the Ottoman state archives, he attempts to correct the recurring misconceptions on the context of their work in the Imperial Mint, such as the consideration of the Düzoğlu family as the “directors of the Imperial Mint.” In her thesis, Fatma Nur Aysan focuses on the Düzoğlu family’s property ownership records (*muhallefat defterleri*) in the aftermath of the period when the Ottoman state confiscated their properties.<sup>25</sup> Aysan’s thesis reveals the fact that the property ownership records compiled after the confiscation and auctioning of their properties shows that the family was among the wealthiest families in Istanbul.

Within the framework that challenges the tendency to consider the Düzoğlu family solely as being made up of people who worked in the Imperial Mint, several studies make way for further studies. For example, Edhem Eldem’s book, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, is an important book that reveals another major duty of the Imperial Mint, which is the design and minting of the orders, medals and imperial seals.<sup>26</sup> In his MA thesis, Jacob Olley provides a well-depicted analysis of the transformation of the Düzoğlu family in the Ottoman Empire. Olley discloses a critical role of the Düzoğlu family by delving into the family’s assistance in forming the Hampartsum notation. Additionally, his thesis provides an important account of the Düzoğlu family and their confessional ties with the Mkhitarist congregation. Hence, his study is particularly insightful in understanding the Düzoğlu family, their social activities, and their social ties.<sup>27</sup>

There is a developing scholarship focusing particularly on the confessional ties of the Armenian community, the Düzoğlu family’s confessional ties, and the struggles that evolved around it. These topics have not received the scholarly attention they

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<sup>23</sup>Cezar, “Economy and Taxation;” Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi: XVIII. Yüzyıldan Tanzimat’a Mali Tarih*, vol. 62 (Istanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986); Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Paranın Tarihi*, 3 ed. (Istanbul: Türkiye İşbankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017); Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 8 ed. (Istanbul: Türkiye İşbankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020); Pamuk, “The Evolution of Financial Institutions in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1914.”

<sup>24</sup>Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 40, 54, 55, 57-72, 115.

<sup>25</sup>Fatma Nur Aysan, *II. Mahmud Döneminde Dersaadette Bir Ailenin Muhallefatı: Düzoğulları*, 2013, Unpublished MA Thesis, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İstanbul Araştırmaları Anabilim Dalı, İstanbul Üniversitesi İstanbul.

<sup>26</sup>Edhem Eldem, “Capitulations and Western Trade” in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Edhem Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz: Osmanlı Nişan ve Madalyaları Tarihi* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2004).

<sup>27</sup>Jacob Olley, “Writing Music in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul Ottoman Armenians and the Invention of Hampartsum Notation” (Unpublished MA Thesis. King’s College London, 2018).

deserve until relatively recently. Flora Ghazarian’s forthcoming Ph.D. entitled “On the Edge of the Center of Political Power: Informal Politics of Catholic Armenians in Early Nineteenth-century Istanbul” is a seminal attempt to close this vacuum in the scholarship.<sup>28</sup> In her thesis, Ghazarian attempts to provide a detailed account of the period when the Düzoğlu family’s members were disfavored, executed, and exiled because they were Catholics. By using Armenian and Ottoman archives, Ghazarian’s thesis displays the hesitancies of the Ottoman state toward the Armenian Catholics.

Against the tendency to study Düzoğlus within the confines of the Imperial Mint, the approaches of Ghazarian, Olley, and Eldem expose lesser-known factors about the family. In short, while there is an emerging body of high-quality scholarship on the importance of the Düzoğlu family as well as the politics around Catholicism, the family’s transformation in line with the changes the Ottoman Empire experienced remains largely unexplored in the literature.

Although plenty of works have been conducted on Armenian families such as the Dadyan and Balyan families, the Düzoğlu family has not been given as much consideration in the scholarship.<sup>29</sup> Such a lack of attention is indeed thought provoking because they held leading positions in one of the most prestigious institutions of the Ottoman Empire, and they did so as Armenian Catholics in a time that was politically turbulent for Catholics.

#### 1.4 Research Questions and the Aims of the Thesis

In hopes of understanding what happened after the *Amiras* lost their significance, historiography on the *Amiras* has focused primarily on the decline and fall of the *Amiras*.<sup>30</sup> While acknowledging that the *Amiras* dispersed among different profes-

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<sup>28</sup>Flora Ghazarian, “On the Edge of the Center of Political Power: Informal Politics of Catholic Armenians in Early Nineteenth-century Istanbul” (Ph.D. Central European University, Forthcoming). I would like to thank Flora Ghazarian for sharing her valuable insights, suggestions, and resources about the Düzoğlu family.

<sup>29</sup>Alyson Wharton, *The Architects of Ottoman Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015); Ter Minassian, *Ermeni Kültürü ve Modernleşme*; Tuğlacı, *The Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture*. Büke Uras, *Balyanlar: Osmanlı Mimarlığı ve Balyan Arşivi* (Korpus Yayınları, 2021). Paolo Girardelli, “Religious Imprints Along the Grand Rue: Armenians and Latins in Late-Ottoman Istanbul.” (paper presented at the Christian Art under Muslim Rule, Istanbul, May 11/12 2012).

<sup>30</sup>Barsoumian, “The Dual Role of the Armenian Amira Class;” Carmont, *The Amiras*; Şahiner, “The Sarrafs of Istanbul Financiers of the Empire”; Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Boğos Levon Zekiyan, *Ermeniler ve Modernite: Gelenek ve Yenileşme, Özgüllük ve Evrensellik Arasında Ermeni Kimliği*, (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2001); Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*. Yarman and Aginyan, *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Kazaz*

sions in the latter part of the nineteenth century, such an approach refers to this period as the “decline” or “fall” of the group. As the case of the Düzoğlu family demonstrates, following their long years of service in the Imperial Mint in the nineteenth century, they began to deviate from their traditional role in the Ottoman state and work in different professions such as banking, industry, and bureaucracy. Therefore, this thesis questions the validity of the decline/fall approach, an approach that is commonly employed in the literature. This thesis is primarily concerned with this transformation of the *Amiras* from the vantage point of the Düzoğlu family. In doing so, in the macro view, this thesis is an attempt to better understand the *Amiras* through the changes that took place during the nineteenth century.

The first set of questions that this thesis focuses on revolves around the roles of the Düzoğlu family in the Imperial Mint. Members of the family entered the Ottoman service in 1758 and until the transformation of the institution under the name of *Meskûkât-ı Şâhâne İdaresi* (Imperial Coinage Administration)<sup>31</sup> some of the family members obtained high positions such as *ifrazcibaşıs*,<sup>32</sup> *sarrafs*, and *kuyumcubaşıs*. Given their prominent roles in the institution, would it be possible to place them as influential in the transformation from the traditional period to the modern period of the Imperial Mint? More specifically, how did the Düzoğlu family become essential agents of the change in the Imperial Mint? What were their contributions to the development of the Imperial Mint?

Another related point to consider is that the nineteenth century is considered to be a crucial milestone for the Ottoman Empire and the communities it embodied as a larger unit. Within this period, modern banks and companies were established, the Empire was in search of attaining a position in the developing capitalist system, and steps were taken toward modern bureaucracy and institutionalization. The impact of the Düzoğlu family in setting about these institutional and bureaucratic shifts and transformations is clearly observable within each institution and period. In other words, the impact of these crucial changes can be seen when examining the professional positions the family attained from the early nineteenth century onwards. Hence, the transformation of the Düzoğlu family should be understood alongside the developments within the Ottoman Empire as a larger unit. How did the family’s symbiotic relationship with the Ottoman state and the changing circumstances of

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*Artin Amira*, 47. Kevork B Bardakjian, “Hagop Baronian’s Political and Social Satire” (Unpublished PhD. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1979), 27-28; Libaridian, “The Ideology of Armenian Liberation,” 97.

<sup>31</sup>“Finance in Ottoman Finance,” History of Istanbul, accessed April 3, 2022, <https://istanbultarihi.ist/571-finance-in-ottoman-istanbul>.

<sup>32</sup>“Sorters of metals in the Imperial Mint, makers of coins.” “İfrazciyan,” in *The Redhouse Dictionary Turkish/Ottoman-English* (Istanbul: SEV Yayıncılık Eğitim), 516.

the Ottoman Empire enable the family's transformation? How and in what ways did they place themselves in the Ottoman economic sphere? How did they place themselves in the Ottoman Empire's bureaucratic modernization in the nineteenth century? These are the second set of questions this thesis asks to understand the Armenian community's internal dynamics and the Ottoman state's attitudes towards the Armenian community in the nineteenth century.

## 1.5 Sources

Observing the transformations that took place in the position of the *Amiras* in society and in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century from the vantage point of the Düzoğlu family requires a multilayered outlook and the use of numerous types of sources. To provide the multilayered outlook, the following types of sources compare and contrast the narrations about the family's transformation from simple jewelers to bureaucrats in the second half of the nineteenth century: the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, first-person narratives such as travelogues and *ruznâmes*, and contemporary Armenian sources.

The Ottoman state archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri*, BOA) are of particular importance in tracing the transformation the Düzoğlu family underwent and the family's transformation from the early eighteenth century to the nineteenth century. The Ottoman archives do not only provide formal and professional documents about the family, but it helps to trace the changing dynamics of the family ranging from the social crises they faced to their increasing importance for the Ottoman state. Looking at the archives at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the BOA includes documents written about basic jewelry making, depicting the preparation of precious jewelry for the Sultan's entourage or that of the state elite (children, wives, and other family members). Throughout the century, although they kept their title as *kuyumcubaşıs* (Imperial jeweler), the documents about simple jewelry making are outnumbered by related documents such as *Ceyb-i Hümayun ve Harc-ı Hassa, Müfredat Defteri, Muhalefat Defterleri*,<sup>33</sup> and documents related to *ifrazcubaşılık* and *mübâyaacılık*.<sup>34</sup> These documents often include information about monetary transactions, debt collection, the provisioning of precious metals, and coin minting. From the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century onwards, they were also responsible for the craftsmanship of the gifts intended for the Sultan, foreign kings,

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<sup>33</sup>Documents about the Sultan's personal expenses and the Imperial Palace's expenses.

<sup>34</sup>BOA, C..DRB.7/320, H.20.02.8204/ 1789

or state officials.<sup>35</sup> Through the second half of the nineteenth century, the role of Düzöğlü family members in various other industries can be seen, such as their role in the silk trade and the construction of a paper factory.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, an increase in the documents related to rewards and concessions given to the Düzöğlüs can be observed throughout the nineteenth century.

In addition to Ottoman primary sources, Armenian published books written by Gabriel Menevişyan and Harutyun Mirmıryan provide examples of how the biographies and activities of the Düzöğlü family along with several other important *Amiras* can be understood.<sup>37</sup> *The Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants* [Genealogy of the Noble Düzyan House] is a biography of the Düzöğlü family, including information about the members of the family who served in the Ottoman state as well as the other most prominent family members.<sup>38</sup> The *Masnagan Badmutyun Hay Medzadunneru* [Special History of Armenian Magnates] written by an Armenian historian named Harutyun Mirmıryan covers the biographies of and important information about wealthy Armenian families between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries. Although there are limited references to the Düzöğlü family, the work is still important for obtaining information on other *Amira* families.<sup>39</sup>

One final book that must be mentioned is perhaps one of the most important Armenian published books. The book is authored by Arsen Pakraduni, a Catholic Mkhitarist Armenian historian who was hired by the Düzöğlü family as the children's tutor. During his tenure as the tutor, he wrote the family's genealogy, which is currently located in the Mkhitarist Monastery of Venice, which houses a library.<sup>40</sup>

Additionally, the thesis will rely on eyewitness accounts and travelogues such as

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<sup>35</sup>“Rusya İmparatorlu için Düzöğlü’na imal ettirilen sorgucun yapımında kullanılan elmas ve tüy parasının Laleli Vakfı fazlasından karşılanması” BOA HAT, 1649/18 H.29.12.1205/ 1790; “İrade gereğince İngiltere kralıyla oğullarına Düzöğlü’na yaptırılan meç ve kılıçlar için elmas alınmak üzere iki yüz elli kese akçe verilmesine dair.” BOA, HAT, 113/4511 H.29.12.1201/ 1786; “Fransa cumhuriyeti tarafından gelen bir zabıte verilen ve Düzöğlü marifetiyle iştirak kılınan bir adet mücevher kutunun bahası olan yedi yüz beş kuruşun miriden itası” BOA, C..HR..139/6904, H.29.01.1219/ 1804; “Padişah için Düzöğlü Hoce Karabet bezergan marifetiyle kılıç yapmak için Harbiye anbarında mevcut yumurtalardan yumurta itası” BOA, C..SM..36.1299/1814, H.06.06.1256/1840.

<sup>36</sup>“Hereke Fabrika-i Hümayûn’a lazım olan ipek Düzöğlü Hoce Agob tarafından tedarik edildiği ve bedelinin Darbhâne-i Amire’den ödenmesi” BOA, A.} MKT.19/51 H.129.12.1260/ 1844; “Düzöğlü Hoce Agob’un kurmak istediği kağıt fabrikası hakkında tezkere” BOA, A.} MKT.19/51, H.29.12.1260/ 1844

<sup>37</sup>Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*; Menevişyan, *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*. Although Barsoumian particularly criticized these books for being scattered, disorganized, and superficial, they are helpful for understanding the biographies of the family members (Barsoumian, *The Armenian Amira Class*, 7).

<sup>38</sup>Menevişyan *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*.

<sup>39</sup>Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*.

<sup>40</sup>Arsen Pakraduni, *Azqabanutiun Nshanavor Antsits Aznuazarm Tann Diuzeants* [Genealogy and History of Major Events of the Noble Diuzian Dynasty] (St. Lazzaro Venice: Mekhitarist Congregation 1856).

those written by Georg Oğulukyan and Charles MacFarlane.<sup>41</sup> In his words, Oğulukyan, who provides an eyewitness account, was a scribe in the Imperial Mint working in service of Düzoğlu family: “*Kronolojik sırası ile yazdıklarımın çoğunu ben, katib Oğulukyan Georg, Darbhane’de Düzoğlu Çelebilerin hizmetinde bulunmaklığım sayesinde, gözümle görmüş, kısmen de başkalarından tahkik etmişimdir.*”<sup>42</sup> Throughout the narration, Oğulukyan refers to a period in 1819 in which the Düzoğlu family had experienced a setback. MacFarlane, on the other hand, displays a detailed account of the situation of the Catholics in the first half of the nineteenth century in his eyewitness account. As exaggerated as these accounts may be, they are indeed important to comprehend the approaches towards Catholic Armenians as well as to historicize these approaches.

## 1.6 Overview of the Chapters

This study has three chapters organized based on the changes in the Düzoğlu family’s professional life as well as the Ottoman Empire’s social and political transformations, including numerous bureaucratic and institutional transformations.

The first chapter initially narrates the macro view of the thesis by examining the terms *Amira* and Amiralık and what lies behind these broader terms. It also answers questions such as: Who were the predecessors of the *Amiras*? How did the *Amiras* amass and invest the capital they obtained in a particular region? How did the groups we identify as *Amira* emerge from these coalesce of factors? The chapter narrows the lenses down to solely the roles of the *Amiras* in the Ottoman state service as well as in the Armenian community. One key point on the study of the *Amiras* is the necessity to connect this topic to larger discussions, such as the discussion on the term itself. Therefore, the chapter closes with a discussion section on the term “Amira” and the term’s validity.

The second chapter delves into a narration on the actual protagonists of the thesis, the Düzoğlu family. The chapter attempts to locate the changing professions of the family in the Ottoman state from simple jewelers to Imperial Jewelers and to detail how they eventually became *ifrazcibaşıs* in the Imperial Mint. This chapter

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<sup>41</sup>Charles MacFarlane, *The Armenians: A Tale of Constantinople*, vol. 1 (Carey and Lea, 1830); Charles MacFarlane, *Constantinople in 1828: A Residence of Sixteen Months in the Turkish Capital and Provinces: with an Account of the Present State of the Naval and Military Power and of the Resources of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 2 (Saunders and Otley, 1829).

<sup>42</sup>Georg Oğulukyan, *Georg Oğulukyan’ın Ruznamesi: 1806-1810 İsyamları*, ed. Hrand D. Andreasyan (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1971).

is important for understanding how the contours of this economically independent family began to emerge in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The third and perhaps the most crucial chapter of the thesis tries to delineate the transformation of the Düzoğlu family by displaying the ways in which it managed to separate itself from the Ottoman state service and emerge as an economically independent actor in the mid-nineteenth century. As the Düzoğlus became more economically independent, they managed to channel their wealth into numerous social activities within the Armenian community. The final part of the third chapter delves into their social activities related to Armenian education and the Armenian social sphere.

Lastly, the concluding section tackles the notion of the decline and fall of the *Amiras* and suggests other ways in which the transformation can be understood in the context of the Düzoğlu family's professional standing in the bureaucratic modernization of the Ottoman Empire. As a final remark, the chapter closes with a series of ideas for further research opportunities.

## 2. AMIRALIK AND AMIRAS: SETTING THE SCENE

### 2.1 Armenian Elites and Ottoman Society until the Eighteenth Century

The *Amiras*, a group of Armenian moneylenders, tradesmen, superintendents, and financiers, rose to prominence in the second half of the eighteenth century in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1</sup> The Armenian community itself used *Amira* to refer to the community's chiefs and used the term with an intention on placing an emphasis on the prestige of the role.<sup>2</sup> The Ottoman officialdom also sometimes addressed esteemed moneylenders and merchants as *Amira*. Amiralık was not an official designation of rank—that is, it was not a profession such as *bezirgânbaşılık* or *sarrafbaşılık*. The influence of the *Amiras* lasted until the second half of the nineteenth century. Many *Amiras*, if not all, were originally from *Agn* (Eğin, modern-day Kemaliye) and emerged as an economically powerful group in the eighteenth century by means of engaging in trade. Approximately in the early eighteenth century, they moved to Istanbul, where they used their accumulated capital to initiate business ventures. Engaging in certain occupations ranging from moneylending and trade to architecture, the Amiras maintained their prosperity and emerged as a group with a powerful, privileged identity in the city.<sup>3</sup>

To have a deeper understanding of what the term stands for, this chapter will initially narrow its focus to Armenian elites and their place in the Ottoman state in order to bring their influence on certain professions into sharper view. Here, the central focus will be on the groups considered to be the predecessors of the *Amiras*. Further, the term *Amira* and its historical context will be addressed. Finally, the

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<sup>1</sup>The word *Amira* is derived from the Arabic word *emir*, which stands for a prince, chief or commander in English. “Emir”, in *The Redhouse Dictionary Turkish/Ottoman-English* (Istanbul: SEV Yayıncılık Eğitim), 338.

<sup>2</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 49-50.

<sup>3</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 70-74.

historical context includes their emergence as a group and their services within the Ottoman state and the Armenian community. The final part of the chapter will discuss the term *Amira* within a critical framework, focusing on the controversies the term embodies.

### 2.1.1 *Hocas*

Armenians are often associated with monetary professions.<sup>4</sup> Considering their interest in moneylending, trade, gold/silversmithing and coin minting in the early modern period, such an assumption should not come as a surprise. As predecessors of the *Amiras*, Armenian *hocas* and *çelebis* were dominant actors when it came to trade. Although Barsoumian lists numerous groups as predecessors of the *Amiras*—namely *hocas*, *çelebis*, *mahdesis*, and *iskhans*—he argues that, among these groups, only *hocas* and *çelebis* had maintained an important role within Ottoman governance, albeit a limited one.<sup>5</sup> Although not expressed in precise terms, these were titles granted by the Sultan to individuals who had rendered services to the Ottoman state.<sup>6</sup>

*Hocas* were, first and foremost, a group of merchants most active in the seventeenth century who operated as moneylenders, *kürkçübaşı*<sup>7</sup> and *bezirgânbaşı*.<sup>8</sup> Their wealth was derived from trading silk and other raw materials.<sup>9</sup> Both Armenian and Ottoman archival documents used the term. As documents in the Ottoman State Archives and Court Registers indicate, *hocalık* is often associated with merchants and traders.<sup>10</sup> The earliest encounter of the term *hoca* was recorded in the fifteenth-century Armenian colophons to indicate a group of Armenian merchants.<sup>11</sup> In the case of the Court Registers, the earliest accounts are recorded in the sixteenth

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<sup>4</sup>Sebough Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean* (University of California Press, 2011), 338; Panossian, *The Armenians*, 77.

<sup>5</sup>*Iskhan*, stands for the word prince. *Mahdesi*, is a word derived from Arabic, *mukaddesi* and it is used to indicate a person who went on Hajj. Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 41.

<sup>6</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 38.

<sup>7</sup>Servant in charge of Sultan’s fur coats. “Kürkçübaşı,” in *The Redhouse Dictionary Turkish/Ottoman-English* (Istanbul: SEV Yayıncılık Eğitim), 698.

<sup>8</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 38.

<sup>9</sup>Libaridian, “The Ideology of Armenian Liberation,” 51-54.

<sup>10</sup>“Kürkçü hoce Kapril,” “cevâhirci hoce Aslan.”

<sup>11</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 39.

century.<sup>12</sup> Although people who came to the forefront with their professional success were addressed as *hoca* by the Ottoman state, the term was also often used to indicate successful merchants.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of the eastern Mediterranean trade, *hocas* actively supplied broadcloth, cotton textile, indigo, raw silk, and woolen textiles to Europe, especially England.<sup>14</sup> *Hocas* were an integral part of this trade route as they set up the infrastructure for long-distance trade.<sup>15</sup> Although merchant-*hocas* often engaged in the textile, silk, and coffee trade, Chaudhuri argues that these people were prepared to deal with any commodity they considered profitable regardless of what type of commodity it was.<sup>16</sup> The *hocas*' competence in trade contributed to expanding Armenian trade networks even further.<sup>17</sup> As noted by the seventeenth-century traveler Tournefort, their web of networks spanned from Livorno to Iran and from the farthest edge of India to the Philippines.<sup>18</sup> At the turn of the nineteenth century, the extensive Armenian trade network began to be replaced by local trade networks, allowing merchants to accumulate their capital in certain regions. Eğin and environs eventually provided a solid ground for the *Amiras*' empowerment since they accumulated a lot of capital through the Armenian merchants' incipient local trade.<sup>19</sup> The localization of trade for the Armenians and the rise of the Eğin region, and environs might be to the growing dominance of the British and French in international trade.<sup>20</sup>

When it comes to the presence of *hocas* in the service of the Ottoman state, they often took roles ranging from personal moneylenders of the grand viziers and Sultans to the chief architect, *hassa mimarı*, or the furrier, *kürkçübaşı*. One of the relatively well-

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<sup>12</sup>Üsküdar Mahkemesi n. 403 v.70, p.114, r.146 (H. 1154-1155 / M. 1740-1742); ÜM, n.403v.70, p. 144, r: 213 (H. 1154-1155 / M. 1740-1742)

<sup>13</sup>According to Redhouse dictionary, Hoca is recorded as Muslim teacher. "Hoca," in The Redhouse Dictionary Turkish/Ottoman-English (Istanbul: Istanbul). On the other hand, TDV Encyclopedia offers an extended definition of Hoca, which includes their association with monetary professions. "Hoca," TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, accessed July 7, 2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hoca>. Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 53.

<sup>14</sup>Vahe Baladouni and Margaret Makepeace, "Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: English East India Company Sources," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 88, no. 5 (1988): xv.

<sup>15</sup>Baladouni, V. Makepeace, Margaret. 1998. "Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," xv.

<sup>16</sup>Kirti N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 49.

<sup>17</sup>Zekiyan, B.L. 2001. *Ermeniler ve Modernite*. Aras Publications, Istanbul 72.

<sup>18</sup>Joseph de Tournefort, *Tournefort Seyahatnamesi* ed. Stefanos Yerasimos (2005), 200-02.

<sup>19</sup>Tournefort, *Tournefort Seyahatnamesi* 200-02.

<sup>20</sup>Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*, 41.

known faces in the Ottoman state was Ruhican Hoca, who worked as the *kürkçübaşı* of Murad IV and *sarrafbası* of Hüsrev Paşa.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, Hoca Asdvadzadur was the personal *sarrafb* of Nasuh Paşa; he was later appointed as the *hassa mimarı* by Murad IV.<sup>22</sup>

Through their success in trade, the *hocas* who often resided in the provinces contributed to Armenian capital accumulation, which also helped them to become prominent figures in Armenian society.<sup>23</sup> They often took on the role of the financial aides of the community by financing educational activities and paying to repair churches and monasteries. *Hocas* endeavored to disseminate new ideas through the printing press, and they also engaged in copying and spreading ancient Armenian manuscripts throughout Anatolia.<sup>24</sup>

### 2.1.2 *Çelebis*

*Hocas* were not the only leading group of the Armenian community in the early modern period. *Çelebis*, too, attained a similar position in the Ottoman state and the Armenian community. *Çelebis* often emerged amongst the artisans and merchants in Istanbul and often engaged in moneylending and banking.<sup>25</sup> Although they often resided in Istanbul, *çelebis* were also proven to be important actors of trade. Perhaps one of the most upfront *çelebi* merchants was Andon Çelebi. As demonstrated by Eremya Çelebi Kömürçiyân, he maintained outstanding success in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean trade and as a result, he accumulated a reputation as well as capital:

Andon Çelebi'nin şöreti o kadar büyüktü ki o. Osmanlı Sarayından başka, Frenk ve İran memleketleri gibi uzak yerlerde de tanınmış bir kimse idi.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Mırmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*,1.

<sup>22</sup>Vartan Artinian, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Ermeni Anayasası'nın Doğuşu (1839-1863.)* (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2004), 35.

<sup>23</sup>Hovhannesyan, A. *Trvagner Hay Azadakragan Mtki Badmutyan*, Yerevan. 1959, 2:38.

<sup>24</sup>Panossian, *The Armenians*, 67-85.

<sup>25</sup>Libaridian, "The Ideology of Armenian Liberation," 53.

<sup>26</sup>Eremya Çelebi Kömürçiyân, *İstanbul Tarihi: XVII. Asırda İstanbul*, ed. Kevork Pamukciyan, trans. Hrand D. Andreasyan (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık, 1988), 236-39.

In contrast to *hocas*, *çelebis* constitute a rather more educated segment of the community who derived their fortunes from their close ties with the Ottoman sultans.<sup>27</sup> At their apex in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, Abro/Abraham Çelebi and Mağakya Çelebi were known to be important figures due to their roles in the Ottoman state and the Armenian community. After 1644, Abro Çelebi was appointed to Crete as the imperial supplier by Sultan İbrahim. In the following years, he continued his service in the Ottoman state under Köprülüzade Fazıl Ahmed Paşa as his personal *sarraf*.<sup>28</sup> In the Armenian community, he was an important figure in terms of his cultural activities. He gathered the other potent *çelebis* of his time and took initiative to accomplish the long-sought wish to make Istanbul the sole religious and administrative center of Ottoman Armenia.<sup>29</sup> He also endeavored to copy Armenian manuscripts and renovate the Armenian churches in his active years.<sup>30</sup> Although the information on Mağakya Çelebi is limited, sources indicate that he worked as the personal *sarraf* of Melek Ahmed Paşa.<sup>31</sup> He was considered to be an important figure for the Armenian community.<sup>32</sup>

## 2.2 The Establishment of *Amira* Communities

The newly emerging Armenian socioeconomic force gained strength in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Subsequently, Istanbul emerged as a permanent center along with Tbilisi.<sup>33</sup> Within these diaspora centers, especially in Istanbul, a moneylender elite—alias the *Amiras*—emerged as the important figures of the Armenian community. The *Amiras*' accumulated capital in the Eğin region and their professional advancement helped them settle and further prosper in the Ottoman capital.<sup>34</sup> When it comes to the eighteenth century, the *Amiras* consolidated their position in Istanbul by means of entering certain business ventures and working as

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<sup>27</sup>Libaridian, “The Ideology of Armenian Liberation,” 53; Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 30-31.

<sup>28</sup>Y. Gamidas Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler* (Istanbul: Köprü Kitapları, 2016), 48.

<sup>29</sup>Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler*, 48.

<sup>30</sup>Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler*, 48.

<sup>31</sup>Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler*, 48.

<sup>32</sup>Detailed information about Mağakya Çelebi can be found in Kömürçüyan, *İstanbul Tarihi: XVII. Asırda İstanbul*, 24, 186-187.

<sup>33</sup>Panossian, *The Armenians*, 77.

<sup>34</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 70-72

benefactors for the well-being of the Armenian community. Upon their arrival in Istanbul, certain families began specializing in numerous professions and some of the families dominated one particular venture for a long time. For example, the Dadyans dominated the Imperial Powder works, the Allahverdiyans (Allahverdioğlu or Hüdâverdioğlu) worked as moneylenders,<sup>35</sup> the Düzoğlus worked in the Imperial Mint for over a century, and the Noradunkyans took control of bread provisioning in the Imperial city.<sup>36</sup>

Consisting of approximately 186 members, most of the *Amiras*, if not all, originated from Eğin.<sup>37</sup> Other regions of origin include Sivas, Divriği, Tokat, Van, and Erzurum, as well as the places surrounding it. The area, which included an abundance of merchants, came into prominence during the early modern period. Even though scholars do not offer a conclusive explanation of the region's peculiarity in terms of trade networks, two arguments are asserted.<sup>38</sup>

Firstly, due to strategic reasons, the first inhabitants of Eğin settled in the mountainous region. Given its geographical disadvantage specifically due to the lack of arable land, the region's economic activities were limited, and the inhabitants often were left needing to engage in trade. The *bezîrgâns* of Eğin often set out on long journeys and supplied the region with goods brought from centers such as Aleppo, Istanbul, and Europe.<sup>39</sup> They brought goods such as silk and cotton and sold them or bartered them in exchange for other goods such as fruits and vegetables or grains.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the *Amiras* accumulated their capital through long-distance trade over a long period of time.<sup>41</sup> In explaining the professions of Armenians, Jean Henry Ubcini notes:

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<sup>35</sup>Tolga Yaşar Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin: The Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City In the Nineteenth Century" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis University of Chicago, 2016) 87.

<sup>36</sup>Artinian, "A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863," 22.

<sup>37</sup>Quoting from Mikayel Çamiçyan, Barsoumian notes that as a village, Eğin became a migration hub for a group of *Nakharar* (Armenian elites) who escaped from the Seljuks at the end of the eleventh century. Çamiçyan Mikayel Batmutyun Hayots [History of the Armenian People], 3 vols. Venice, 1784-1786.

<sup>38</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 70-72; Ali Yaycıoğlu, "Perdenin Arkasındakiler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflar ve Finans Ağları Üzerine Bir Deneme," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 51 (2019): 3.

<sup>39</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 70-72; Zeki Arıkan, "Eğin Kasabasının Tarihsel Gelişimi," *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* OTAM 12, no. 12 (2001): 35.

<sup>40</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 70-72.

<sup>41</sup>Antaramian. R. 2020. *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire: Armenians and the Politics of Reform in the Ottoman Empire*. Stanford University Press. 29.

“[Armenians] are most directly concerned in the maintenance of their empire. Much of the commerce and industry of the country is in the hands of Armenians. Since reform in Turkey, their condition has become greatly improved, their wealth is no longer in danger of spoliation, and [they] are the last to desire a change.”<sup>42</sup>

Secondly, a more recent explanation to the question of what made Eğin the center for the *Amiras* was presented by Ali Yaycıoğlu. Yaycıoğlu has demonstrated the insufficiency of the former explanations by shedding light on the underground treasures of the Eğin region and its surroundings. Namely the upper Euphrates region consisting of Kemah, Erzincan, Divriği, Arapgir, and Harput were well-equipped with gold and silver mines.<sup>43</sup> The *Amiras* played a crucial role in developing and exploiting these resources.

### 2.3 Characteristics of the *Amiras*

From 1750, and especially from 1780 onwards, the title *Amira* eclipsed that of *hocas*, *çelebis*, *mahdesis*, and *iskhans*.<sup>44</sup> The *Amiras* practiced and further developed and changed their professions and duties from those of their predecessors.<sup>45</sup> Their economic, financial, and institutional differences set their predecessors apart from the *Amiras*. The *hocas*' mobile capital enabled them to move around and establish themselves in different places, and due to their long-distance trade, they became known for their mobile characteristics.<sup>46</sup> Although the *hocas* were not held accountable for state institutions, the *Amiras*, who were immobile and located in Istanbul, had ties directly with the Ottoman state. In the Ottoman state service, the *Amiras* worked in prominent state institutions such as *darbhâne* and *baruthâne*, making them responsible for tax collection. Such features made them more stable; thus, they were rather focused on local investment.

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<sup>42</sup>Jean Henri Abdolomyne Ubcini, *Letters on Turkey: An Account of the Religious, Political, Social, and Commercial Condition of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 1 (John Murray, 1856), 341.

<sup>43</sup>Yaycıoğlu, “Perdenin Arkasındakiler,” 6.

<sup>44</sup>Although the usage of these names was outdated by the usage of *Amiras*, archival material suggests that people kept using them, as seen in the examples of Hagob Çelebi Düzyan, Hoca Bedik Çelebi, Amira Hoca Boğos Düzyan, and so on. Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 41-45.; Kevork Pamukciyan, *Biyografileriyle Ermeniler* vol. IV, *Ermeni Kaynaklarından Tarihe Katkıları*, (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2003), 212.

<sup>45</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 47-48.

<sup>46</sup>Panossian, *The Armenians*, 68.

In light of such information, it is crucial to look at the prominent characteristics of the group. The first defining characteristic of the *Amiras* is that they were not an institutionalized group. For example, *Amiralık* constituted a status for Armenians who had proven themselves to be successful moneylenders, state officials, and merchants.<sup>47</sup> Studies highlight that their privileged status can be understood through their exemption from tax obligations, sartorial regulations, and weapon-wielding restrictions.<sup>48</sup>

Secondly, *amiralık* was not a hereditary title where sons inherited the titles of their fathers. For a person to be referred to as *Amira*, that person needed to attain certain accomplishments in service of the Ottoman state. These individuals needed to be leading economic and social figures in the Armenian community, as *Amira* was a title accepted by the community to refer to a person's high-status position in the community.<sup>49</sup> An attainment of the *Amira* title could be the result of a person's responsiveness to community-related matters, which could be in the form of financial support, establishing certain institutions, or looking out for society's interests in other ways. From the Armenian community's perspective, the *Amiras* needed to acquire power by serving the Ottoman state. They needed to use the power they wielded for the well-being of the Armenian community.

## 2.4 The *Amiras*: In the Service of the Ottoman State

The *Amiras* served the Ottoman state in several occupations by administering and working in various state institutions as moneylenders, manufacturers (charged with overseeing essential state industries or overseeing the delivery of public goods), and architects. Apart from their institutional roles, which will be addressed, they managed the state elite's personal savings (*padişah sarrafı*). By virtue of their professions, these people maintained close ties with the Ottoman state elite, and on rare occurrences, even with the Sultans. Hence, they were at the center of the social and institutional sphere of the Ottoman Empire and were at the same time rather marginalized actors. The forthcoming paragraphs will delve into the institutional professions of the *Amiras* in the Ottoman state.

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<sup>47</sup>The member recruitment process worked within a master-apprentice relationship where newcomers from Anatolia were trained to become masters. Panossian, *The Armenians*, 90.

<sup>48</sup>Such as, Artinian, "A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863" 20-24; Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul."

<sup>49</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 49-50.

### 2.4.1 Tax Collection and Moneylenders

Moneylending for tax collection was an important profession in the Ottoman Empire that was conducted heavily by non-Muslims.<sup>50</sup> This role was often reserved for the economic elite and later for the Armenians and Greeks.<sup>51</sup> In the sixteenth century, to regulate the *iltizam* system, the Ottoman Empire relied heavily on the moneylenders.<sup>52</sup> Although they were important economic actors in the Ottoman financial sector, the importance of the moneylenders increased significantly in the eighteenth century.<sup>53</sup> According to Yavuz Cezar, the reason behind their increasing importance was the development of new taxes in cash, increased money circulation, and the Ottoman Empire's inability to cope with the reformation of the financial institutions.<sup>54</sup> Through their European trade network, the moneylenders provided short-term loans at times of crisis and actively sought out trading opportunities on behalf of the Ottoman state.<sup>55</sup>

During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when predecessors of the *Amiras* were active agents of trade, members of other non-Muslim communities, namely Greeks and Jews, mostly engaged in moneylending.<sup>56</sup> These moneylenders crucially supplied the empire's financial system.<sup>57</sup> This period came to be known as the "golden age for the *sarrafs*" in the secondary literature.<sup>58</sup> These moneylenders were responsible for lending money to the Ottoman state stratum.

Due to the close relations Jews had with the janissaries, the influence of the Jews on finance and trade began to decrease as of the late eighteenth century, making way for Greek and Armenian control in the moneylending business. However, both the Jews and the Greeks were caught in between the conflicting expectations of the Ottoman Empire. Together with Greek war of independence in 1821, Armenians

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<sup>50</sup>Minna Rozen, "The Ottoman Jews" in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 256-59.

<sup>51</sup>Rozen, "The Ottoman Jews" 256-59.

<sup>52</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 192; Yaycıoğlu, "Perdenin Arkasındakiler," 5

<sup>53</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation." 61-68

<sup>54</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation." 61-68

<sup>55</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 193.

<sup>56</sup>Since Sharia law formally prohibits moneylending, members of non-Muslim communities were often engaged with moneylending. Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Gayrimüslimler: Kuruluştan Tanzimat'a Kadar Sosyal, Ekonomik ve Hukuki Durumları* (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 2001), 223; Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 32.

<sup>57</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation," 65-66.

<sup>58</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation," 65.

established a monopoly over the finances of the empire.<sup>59</sup> Thus, with the decline of the Greek and Jewish moneylenders,<sup>60</sup> the *Amiras* eventually became the arbiters of the finance and moneylending business.<sup>61</sup>

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the *sarraf-Amiras* were prominent tax collectors who were responsible for collecting the customs duty (*gümrük vergisi*) in Istanbul, Izmir, Aleppo, and Erzurum.<sup>62</sup> After the first abolishment of the *iltizam* tax in 1840 the *Amiras* were brought to the head of tax collecting companies, specifically the Anatolia and Rumelia Companies (*Anadolu ve Rumeli Kumpanyaları*).<sup>63</sup> Each company was assigned the task of collecting the remittance of the revenues of the whole Empire and giving it to the treasury.<sup>64</sup>

Besides collecting the customs duty taxes, the moneylender *Amiras* also worked as the personal *sarrafs* of the Ottoman state elite, namely the Sultans, grand viziers, and pashas. They were responsible for taking care of the personal fortunes of the state elite. Amira Artin Kazzaz (Harutyun Amira Bezciyan), the advisor and personal *sarraf* to Mahmud II, comes first among several other *Amiras* who had personal ties with the Sultans.<sup>65</sup> At times of financial crises, the *Amiras* were present to lend money to the state authorities or to the people serving in the upper echelons of the state.<sup>66</sup>

By serving as tax collectors and personal *sarrafs* to the state elite, the *Amiras* managed to penetrate into state affairs and their influence provided them with a network enabling them to form relations with other high-powered people in the Ottoman state.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 142.

<sup>60</sup>As a result of Greek War of Independence in 1821 and the close relations between Jews and the janissaries, these communities were disfavored by the Ottoman state, elevating the Armenian moneylenders. For further details on the changing balance of power of the moneylending profession, see Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 16, 59-61.

<sup>61</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 142.

<sup>62</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 97.

<sup>63</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 96.

<sup>64</sup>Barsoumian, "The Dual Role of the Armenian Amira class" 174; document about the abolishment of the companies, BOA, İ.MVL.285/11275, H.19.12.1269/ 1852.

<sup>65</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 131.

<sup>66</sup>Perhaps one of the most controversial and well-known moneylending case of an *Amira* was when Mıgırdıç Amira Cezayirliyan lent money to Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa. For detailed information on the issue, see, Erdem Kabadayı, "Mırdıç Cezayirliyan or the Sharp Rise and Sudden Fall of an Ottoman Entrepreneur," in *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Gilles Veinstein (Leuven: Collection Turcica Peeters, 2008).

<sup>67</sup>Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 30.

## 2.4.2 Roles in the Imperial Mint and the Imperial Powder Works

The *Darbhâne* and *Baruthâne* were among the Ottoman state's most prominent institutions. Certain *Amira* families such as the Düzöğlü family and the Dadyan family governed these institutions for generations and thus had a monopoly over them.

The Imperial powder works was among the key institutions of the Ottoman state, as it was the place responsible for providing gunpowder to the Empire. Powder mills during the reign of Selim III became a part of the *Baruthâne Nazırlığı*. Upon its establishment by Selim III, Dad Arakel was brought to the head of the Imperial powder works as the *barutçubaşı*. In the following generations, the Dadyans continued to be in charge of the administration of the Imperial powder works.<sup>68</sup>

The Imperial Mint's organization, governance, and importance varied significantly from period to period. During times of financial and military crises, it acted as a safe to financially support the imperial expenses. In addition, it functioned as a tax-collecting body or the unit responsible for designing the Imperial seal on some other occasions.<sup>69</sup> As the forthcoming coming chapters delve into the details of the role of the Düzöğlü family in the Imperial Mint, it suffices here to say that *Darbhâne-i Âmire* was one of the most important institutions of the Ottoman Empire since it was the place for coin minting and since it represented the prosperity of the state.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, in the eighteenth century, the Imperial Mint became the center for regulating the *mukâtaas*.<sup>71</sup>

Additionally, the Imperial Mint was important for the empire's fiscal policies, such as the debasement (*tağşiş*) of the Ottoman coinage (*sikke*).<sup>72</sup> Engaging in manipulation of the *sikkeler* at times of crisis helped the Ottoman economy to prevent possible economic crises.<sup>73</sup> Up until the Düzöğlü family took over its administration in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was under the monopoly of the Jewish community. The Düzöğlü family worked at the head of Imperial Mint between

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<sup>68</sup>“Baruthaneler,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı, 1994), 68-69.

<sup>69</sup>I would like to thank Ömerül Faruk Bölükbaşı for sharing his comments and ideas on the Imperial Mint.

<sup>70</sup>Emre Dölen, “Darphane,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1993), 552; Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 7.

<sup>71</sup>“A farming out of public revenue; rent paid to the *Evkaf* for cultivated land turned into building land or gardens.” “Mukataa,” in the Redhouse Dictionary Turkish/Ottoman-English (İstanbul: SEV Yayıncılık Eğitim), 796.

<sup>72</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 128-29.

<sup>73</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 128.

approximately 1758 and 1880. By bringing new technologies of coin minting from Europe, the Düzöğlü family transformed the Imperial Mint in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>74</sup> Pamuk brings to our attention the devaluation maneuvers of Amira Kazzaz Artin to supply the Ottoman economy during the 1828-1829 Ottoman Russian War.<sup>75</sup>

## 2.5 The *Amiras*: In Service of the Armenian Community

After the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian Patriarchate of Bursa, Hovagim, was appointed as the *milletbaşı* by Sultan Mehmed II.<sup>76</sup> Being *milletbaşı* granted the Patriarchate the jurisdiction and authority over the community and allowed it to preside over a wide range of matters concerning religious to societal issues such as inheritance, marriage, and divorce.<sup>77</sup> Thus in Braude's words, the "patriarch was responsible to the state for his community and to his community for the state."<sup>78</sup> Considering such a sovereign position, it would not be far-fetched to assume that whoever asserted power over the Patriarchate possessed the means to control the society. As the *Amiras* were drawing their power from the Sultans and the Ottoman state stratum, such power brought them the ability to carve their social and economic place in the Armenian community.

Having proven themselves to be the masters of their domain within the state elite granted the *Amiras* a somewhat more prominent and sovereign position in the Armenian community. From the late eighteenth century onwards, the *Amiras* gained power over the Armenian Patriarchate by attaining a prevailing status in the upper echelon of the Armenian community. They attained such power through their services to the Ottoman state and by using their power on the behalf of the Armenian community. Projecting themselves as staunch actors of both the Ottoman state and the Armenian community, the *Amiras* also enjoyed the powerful position they held as intermediary actors. They were successful in encouraging the Patriarchate

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<sup>74</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 74.

<sup>75</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 128.

<sup>76</sup>"İstanbul Ermeni Patrikanesi," TDV İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, last accessed February 10, 2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/istanbul-ermeni-patrikhanesi>; Kevork B. Bardakjian, "The Rise of Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York, N.Y.: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982).

<sup>77</sup>Şahiner, "The Sarrafs of Istanbul Financiers of the Empire." 22.

<sup>78</sup>Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York, N.Y.: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982). 69.

to appoint them as *mütevelli* to the Armenian Church properties in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>79</sup> Up until the second half of the nineteenth century, the *Amiras* asserted significant influence over the election and dismissal of the Patriarchates within the community. The ensuing paragraphs will focus on the role of the *Amiras* in service of the Armenian community, and the major focus will be on their philanthropic activities.

In terms of philanthropy, the *Amiras* took steps to support important institutions in the community such as churches, schools, and hospitals.<sup>80</sup> Religion and Armenian culture historically developed in an interrelated manner. Thus, church construction was of great importance to the wealthy Armenians within the Armenian community. The *Amiras*, as the wealthy part of the society, further maintained the tradition of church construction in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>81</sup>

There were two main obstacles to the construction of the churches. The construction of the new churches could only be achieved by means of reconstruction.<sup>82</sup> Firstly, to put the reconstruction or renovation into motion, one needed the approval of the Sultan, and this process was rather a slow one.<sup>83</sup> At this point, the *Amiras* undertook measures to accelerate the process. The second barrier was the financial burden of this process. Such a process required a labor force and a substantial amount of money; for that matter, certain *Amiras* made donations to the Patriarchate to cover the expenses.<sup>84</sup>

Being aware of the importance of education, they established schools and provided financial assistance to these schools. By establishing a foundation under a specific school, they were able to ensure lasting income for the schools through the association's activities.<sup>85</sup> The number of schools established between 1802 and 1823

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<sup>79</sup> Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 30.

<sup>80</sup> At this point, it is indeed important to think about what philanthropy means. Essentially, and especially in this context, it can be considered a form of social and political control. While philanthropic activities constituted great importance to the Armenian community, it was also critical for seeing the ways in which *Amiras* increased their power. For more studies on non-Muslim community and their philanthropic activities, see: Haris Exertzoglou, *Osmanlı'da Cemiyetler ve Rum Cemaati: Dersaadet Rum Cemiyet-i Edebiyesi, 1861-1912*, (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2004); Ayşe Ozil, "100. Kuruluş Yıldönümünde Zografyon Tarihinden Bir Bölüm," *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 237 (2003).

<sup>81</sup> Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 130.

<sup>82</sup> Gülnihal Bozkurt, *Alman-İngilizce Belgelerinin ve Siyasi Gelişmelerin Işığı Altında Gayrimüslim Osmanlı Vatandaşlarının Hukuki Durumu (1839-1914)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1989), 22.

<sup>83</sup> Alyson Wharton's book gives detailed information about the process of receiving permission from the Sultan. It also gives a number of Ottoman state documents granting permission for renovations. Wharton, *The Architects of Ottoman Constantinople*.

<sup>84</sup> Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 155.

<sup>85</sup> Surp Nersesyan school is an important example of such process. Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 146-47.

reached up to forty-two.<sup>86</sup> However, these activities did not remain limited to Istanbul: the *Amiras* also contributed to the spread of education in Izmir and Izmit.<sup>87</sup> Apart from the construction of schools, the *Amiras* also provided scholarships to bright students in the Armenian community and sent them to Europe in order to receive training in the 1840s.<sup>88</sup>

One of the *Amiras*' most important spheres of activity was care for the sick. As of 1743, the *Amiras* established three hospitals. In 1743, they obtained permission to establish hospitals in Narlıkapı and Pera. In 1832, Surp Pırgiç Hospital<sup>89</sup> (*Surp Pırgiç Azkayin Hivantanots*) was established with the support of *sarrafa* Amira Kazaz<sup>90</sup> (Harutyun Bezciyan) and kalfa Amira Garabed Balyan.<sup>91</sup> The Surp Pırgiç Hospital was of great importance as it included a shelter for the elderly, orphans, and psychiatric patients. Since the *Amiras* endeavored to provide financial assistance to needy people, they also established relief funds for the poor, homeless, orphans, and crippled.<sup>92</sup>

## 2.6 Maneuverings between the Ottoman State and the Armenian Community: *Amiras*' Dual Role

The *Amiras* played a crucial role in the Ottoman state institutions, maintained close ties with the state elite, and also actively sought out ways to provide philanthropic activities within Armenian society. Being favored by the state, their position helped them attain an intermediary role between the Sublime Porte and the Armenian community.<sup>93</sup> As Razmik Panossian notes, “[the *Amiras*]’ wealth was translated into power in the Armenian community.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 146-47.

<sup>87</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 146-47.

<sup>88</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 187-88.

<sup>89</sup>Surp Pırgiç Hospital is still a running hospital today. Arsen Yarman, *Osmanlı Sağlık Hizmetlerinde Ermeniler ve Surp Pırgiç Ermeni Hastanesi Tarihi*, (Istanbul: Surp Pırgiç Ermeni Hastanesi Vakfı, 2001).

<sup>90</sup>In return of his service to the Armenian community during the establishment of the hospital, Artin's picture was printed on the tobacco papers being sold at the Surp Pırgiç Hospital. For the document see, BOA, DH.İD..112/19, H.24.07.1331/ 1912.

<sup>91</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 142-43.

<sup>92</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 140-44.

<sup>93</sup>Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 28.

<sup>94</sup>Panossian, *The Armenians*, 85.

Straddling the thin line between the Ottoman state and the Armenian community, the power of the *Amiras* was essential for the community's needs and for societal matters that required Imperial decrees and the Sultan's approval.<sup>95</sup> Such societal matters often included receiving permission to renovate or construct state institutions such as hospitals, churches, and schools. Having close ties with the state often granted the *Amiras* easier access to make requests to the Sultan or the state elite directly. This increased the dependency of the Patriarchate on the *Amiras*, and by virtue of this mutually advantageous position, the *Amiras'* power increased.

## 2.7 Changing Times, Changing Positions: The Transformation of the Amiras

As linear as the timeline of the *Amiras'* rise to power may appear, the process in which they were weakened was far from being a straightforward process. The status of the *Amiras* throughout the empire and especially in Istanbul began to be challenged because of the changing dynamics of the Ottoman Empire as well as the balance of power in the Armenian community. The *Amiras* may were not a homogeneous group. There was a severe monopolization among the *Amiras* based on their professions and patronage networks. Hence, the power each *Amira* exercised over their profession and network determined which *Amira* would get the largest share of the pie. Often *sarrafi-Amiras* got the biggest share due to their personal relations with the Sultans and state elite. By maintaining close relations with the Ottoman state, these people also became actors for the Armenian Patriarchate since they had the means to provide for the expenses of the Patriarchate.<sup>96</sup> Such unequal power possession eventually caused discrepancies among the *Amiras*. The clear dominance of the *sarrafi-Amiras* over the Patriarchate and over the Armenian community raised concerns among the other *Amiras* such as the Düzöglü family, the Tingiryan, the Dadyans, the Balyans, the Serveryan and the Allahverdiyans.<sup>97</sup>

The establishment of the Cemaran Boys' school in the Üsküdar region of Istanbul in 1838 marks a milestone for the already existing discontent for the *Amiras*. As a result of a gathering that took place in the Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate in 1836,

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<sup>95</sup> Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 28-29.

<sup>96</sup> Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 28-29.

<sup>97</sup> Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 175-78.

the decision to construct a boy's school in Üsküdar had already been agreed upon.<sup>98</sup> The *Amiras* agreed to support the students financially and in 1838, they welcomed the school's first cohort.<sup>99</sup> Nonetheless, upon the opening of the school, the *Amiras* announced that they would cut off their financial support due to financial issues.<sup>100</sup> This unexpected move from the *Amiras* reverberated widespread discomfort among the Armenian community.

Meanwhile, in order to continue to support the education at Ceyhan, a group of *esnafs* gathered and formed an association called *Miagam Ingerutyun* and offered to take over the responsibility of providing the financial support that was abandoned by the *Amiras*.<sup>101</sup> As a result of education acquired through the *Amiras*' endeavors, a new educated group emerged within the Armenian community. This educated group was mostly made up of the students the *Amiras* previously financed and sent to Europe for training, as well as students from the missionary schools established in various places in the Ottoman Empire. Along with *esnafs*, these groups presented themselves as having an allegiance to the *Amiras*, yet in reality actually challenged this notion and endeavored to detach the Patriarchate and the Armenian community from the *Amiras*.<sup>102</sup>

To that end, in 1841, after the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict, the *esnafs* sent a petition to Grand Vizier Halil Rifat Paşa arguing that they would no longer recognize and tolerate the dominance of the *Amiras*.<sup>103</sup> In the forthcoming years, the *esnafs* managed to possess the power the *Amiras* once had and *Amiras* therefore could not increase and further spread their influence. Nonetheless, their efforts and moves to dismantle the *Amiras* clearly demonstrated the economic and social fluctuations the *Amiras* went through.

Apart from the criticism they received from the Armenian community, one of the most important factors paving the way for the weakening of the *Amiras* was the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the promulgation of the Islahat Edict in 1856. Two types of resources had been wrested from the power of the *Amiras* in this period: their intermediary role between the Ottoman state and the Armenian community

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<sup>98</sup>The construction of the school was planned and designed by the *Amiras*. Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 30.

<sup>99</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 175-76.

<sup>100</sup>Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 30.

<sup>101</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 177.

<sup>102</sup>These intellectuals also eventually worked their way to the spread of liberal ideas throughout the society, partaking in the constitutionalization process of the Armenian community.

<sup>103</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 178-79.

and their financial role within the Armenian community, which was replaced by bankers. The outbreak of the Crimean War and the aftermath of the war caused a shift in the balance of power in the Ottoman Empire. With the spread of European financial actors such as moneylenders and merchants and their penetration into the Ottoman economy through banking, the already-delicate position of the *Amiras* was put in jeopardy.<sup>104</sup>

As a result of these changes, the *Amiras* dispersed among different occupations. Industry and bureaucracy are two of the most significant directions the *Amiras* dispersed to. For example, the Dadyans took active roles in the establishment of factories in various locations. On the other hand, the Noradunkyans and the Düzoğlus also occupied various positions related to Ottoman bureaucracy. Therefore, it is important to note that there were numerous families and individuals that one can examine to discern the transformation of the *Amiras*.

## 2.8 A Discussion of the Term “Amira”

This thesis uses the term *Amira* as a general reference to the Ottoman Armenian group of merchants, moneylenders and officials of the Ottoman state. However, *Amiras* were neither a homogenous entity nor a united social class. Furthermore, the term *Amira* is intertwined with controversies and doubts. The controversy associated with the term *Amira* stems from several issues with its definition and its usage.

Such controversy becomes blatant when one examines the conflicting definitions and narratives provided by scholars whose research focused on the *Amiras*. In 1970 in his Ph.D. thesis, Vartan Artinian argues that it was the Ottoman Sultan who bestowed the esteemed individuals with the title *Amira*.<sup>105</sup> In 1982, Anahide Ter Minassian too argued that the Sultans rewarded certain people with the title *Amira*.<sup>106</sup>

Barsoumian, in his Ph.D. thesis, defines *Amira* as a word used by the Armenian community to praise someone for his prominence.<sup>107</sup> In another work, Barsoumian

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<sup>104</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 108; Antaramian, *Brokers of Faith, Brokers of Empire*, 34.

<sup>105</sup>“Beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century, [çelebis and hocas] came to be known as [A]miras, a title given by the [S]ultan only to those Armenians who were financially connected with, or directly employed by, the Ottoman government.” Artinian, “A Study of the Historical Development of the Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863,” 20.

<sup>106</sup>Ter Minassian, *Ermeni Kültürü ve Modernleşme*, 57.

<sup>107</sup>According to Barsoumian, between 1800 and 1850, the title became the highest attainable title in the community and its application became a matter of “tacit communal agreement.” Barsoumian, “The Armenian

notes, “[O]f the great merchants, only those connected with the palace were named [A]mira; [these] merchant [A]miras [were called] *bezirgân*.”<sup>108</sup> As well as Barsoumian, Pascal Carmont too argues that the title *Amira* was granted to individuals by the Armenian community and has the meaning of *vox populi*.<sup>109</sup>

The scholarly works presented above were written in approximately similar periods. Looking at the contrasting descriptions, the question remains as to the origins of the usage of the term *Amira*. In the Ottoman State Archives, these people were registered according to their professions<sup>110</sup> such as “*sarraflar kethüdası* Aznavuroğlu Hoca Karabet” or “kuyuncubaşı Begos Bey”.<sup>111</sup> When examining the Armenian primary sources, it can be seen that the *Amiras* are being addressed as *Amira*, such as in the cases of “Aznavuryan Garabed Amira” or “Garabed Kalfa Amira”.<sup>112</sup> In this case, there are two possible deductions to make. On the one hand, the use of *Amira* in the Armenian primary sources may indicate that the Armenians put forward this usage. On the other hand, the limited reference to the *Amiras* in the state archives does not support the idea that the bestowment of this term by the Sultan had an official and institutional connotation, but rather that it may be thought of as a verbal salutation or as a part of oral tradition.

To follow up on the discussion above, another controversy emerges: looking at the Ottoman archives, one can come across the usage of *hoca* by specific merchants in the Armenian community in the seventeenth century. Thus, the presence of the *Amiras*' predecessors in the state archives adds another dimension to the controversy about *amiralık*. Although further research is needed on this issue, the reasons behind this notion can be traced to the issue of mobility. *Hocas* are known to have maintained a more mobile lifestyle due to their active role in the Indian Ocean trade.<sup>113</sup> For this reason, the *hocas* may not have constituted a threat thought to be able to undermine the Ottoman state authority. As a result, the Ottoman state likely approached this conglomeration over which they did not have control over as a group. Yet, this was not the case for the *Amiras*, as they maintained their lives in Istanbul. In addition to being immobile, *Amiras* were at the head of two of the most prominent

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Amira Class of Istanbul,” 64.

<sup>108</sup>Barsoumian, “The Dual Role of the Armenian Amira Class,” 175.

<sup>109</sup>Şahiner, “The Sarrafs of Istanbul Financiers of the Empire,” 89.

<sup>110</sup>When detecting whether they were called as *Amira* or not, I used the lists provided by Armenian sources.

<sup>111</sup>BOA, 1199/ 55, H.01.01.1222/1807; BOA, İ.DH..558/38903, 21.03.1293/1877.

<sup>112</sup>Mirmiryian, *Masnagan Badmutyun*, 11, 107-08.

<sup>113</sup>Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*, 338.

state institutions, the *baruthâne*, and the *darbhâne*. The institutional relations of the *Amiras* (going beyond the limits of the term's usage as an epithet) might have deterred the Ottoman administration from specifying the *Amiras* as a collective unit or group within the larger Armenian community and Ottoman society.<sup>114</sup>

While *çelebilik* and *hocalık* were of importance to the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire, it should be noted that these terms are not devoid of their own constraints. Barsoumian notes that Catholic *Amiras* often used *çelebi* as their titles. In the case of the Catholic *Amiras*, Barsoumian's list includes both the titles of *hoca* and *çelebi*. However, as Cora demonstrates, the Allahverdiyans were also Catholic *Amiras* and were not referred to as *çelebis* in the Ottoman archives.<sup>115</sup> While Armenian sources refer to the Düzöğlü family as *çelebi*,<sup>116</sup> in the Ottoman archives, members of the Düzöğlü family are only recorded with the title *hoca*. Why then did Barsoumian argue that Catholics were given the title *çelebi*? Such clear-cut assumptions complicate the matters more by creating a discrepancy and creating an implication to assume that *hocalık* is the title solely used by the apostolic community.

The fourth controversy is related to the issue of generational continuity. In her definition, Ter Minassian represents *amiralık* as a hereditary status, whereas Barsoumian argues the opposite.<sup>117</sup> Although several *Amiras* share the same surname, *amiralık* was not an inheritable title.<sup>118</sup> The examples in the literature are either a result of a case where sons happened to earn the same title as their fathers or of a case where sons inherited the same professions as their fathers.<sup>119</sup>

All things considered, a final question arises as a result of the presence of *hocas* in the Ottoman archives while there is limited reference to the *Amiras*. As previously suggested, the forerunners of the *Amiras* held similar professions with the *Amiras* acting as intermediaries between the Ottoman state and the Armenian community. What might set the *Amiras* apart from their predecessors could be that they built their success on the foundation of what their pioneers accomplished (trade networks,

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<sup>114</sup>Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System," 71.

<sup>115</sup>Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin: The Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City In the Nineteenth Century," 42.

<sup>116</sup>According to Mirmıryan: Hoca Mikayel Çelebi Düz. Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*, 34.

<sup>117</sup>There are various examples where both father and son were granted with the status. Such as son of Kaspar Aznavoryan, Garabet Aznavoryan; son of Sarkis Cezayirliyan Mıgırdıç Cezayirliyan; Pilibos Çerazyan and his sons Krikor, Minas, Kevork, Kaspar, Bağdasar Amira. Pamukciyan, *Biyografileriyle Ermeniler*, IV, 78.

<sup>118</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 60.

<sup>119</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 111-20.

commerce, and service for the Ottoman state). As addressed in the previous paragraphs, the *hocas* and *çelebis* were not institutionalized; instead, they were devoid of formal power and therefore did not have accountability in any sort of institutional body. As mentioned in the examples of Ruhican Hoca and Mağakya Çelebi, the predecessors of the *Amiras* were often held accountable to the people they worked for. Hence, their power was often defined within the limits of their personal ties with the state elite such as through their roles as personal *sarrafs*, *bezirgânbaşı*s of the sultans, and viziers, through trade, and through their activities in the Armenian community. Yet, when looking at the position of the *Amiras*, it is clear that they were held accountable for governing several of the most prominent state institutions such as the *darbhâne*, the *baruthâne*, and tax collection. Considering that the *Amiras*' professions were rather institutionalized compared to those of their predecessors, they presented a somewhat more prominent group identity than those who came before them. One can trace the reason behind this prominence back to the transformation period in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire and Armenian community.

### 3. THE ROLES OF THE DÜZOĞLU FAMILY IN THE OTTOMAN STATE

From the late eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century, the Düzoğlu family was made up of people who were important actors in the Ottoman state service. Within this period, they worked as state officials, and they were economically and socially dependent on the Ottoman state. Throughout the nineteenth century, they became more independent as social and economic actors. This chapter devotes most of its attention to portraying the Düzoğlu family's service in the Ottoman state between the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. While doing so, the chapter focuses on the family's arrival in Istanbul and their entrance into the state service. The chapter also seeks to depict the changing balances of power that occurred in the midst of profound changes taking place in the Ottoman Empire and how these changes affected the family's social and professional position.

The Düzoğlu family was a Catholic Armenian *Amira* family who served <sup>1</sup> in the Ottoman state in various positions between 1758-1880, primarily in the Imperial Mint.<sup>2</sup> Although it is far from clear, it is assumed that the family became Catholic in the seventeenth century under the influence of the Catholic Teaten priests. The Düzoğlu family, both through intermarriages and marriages with other Catholic *Amira* families such as the Tingryans and the Allahverdiyans (also known as the Hüdaverdioğlu family) grew as a family throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth

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<sup>1</sup>The Düzoğlu family members are often referred to as “superintendents” of the Imperial Mint with the Turkish translation being *emîn*. However, as Ömerül Faruk Bölükbaşı demonstrates, both *emîn* and “superintendent” are mistakenly used in the literature. According to Bölükbaşı, in principle, the “superintendent” of the Imperial Mint had to be Muslim. Although Düzoğlu family was not at the head of the Imperial Mint on paper, they were indeed very influential in terms of the transformation of the institution. They were often addressed as *ifrazcıbaşı*, *darbhâne mübayaacısı*, *ifraz mukataası mutasarrıfı*, *darbhane ifrazcısı* and *hazine-i âmire mübayaacısı*. In light of the aforementioned caveat, I will be using the term “director” as used by Haris Exertzoglou, “Greek Banking in Constantinople 1850-1881” (PhD. King's College London, 1986), 125. to avoid creating contextual ambiguity. For a detailed analysis of the misusage of the term, see Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 54-58.

<sup>2</sup>Except for the period during which members of the family were exiled.

centuries.<sup>3</sup> As can be seen from the case of the oldest known ancestor Hacı Harutyun (seventeenth century), members of the Düzoğlu family initially began working as jewelers in the seventeenth century. It was later generations that began to work in service of the Ottoman state as moneylenders and subsequently in various positions in the Imperial Mint until the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.1 The Düzoğlu Family Before Becoming *Amiras*

Information regarding the arrival of the Düzoğlus to Istanbul and their service in the Ottoman state is somewhat scattered and limited. However, it is known that the family's oldest known ancestor, Hacı Harutyun, emigrated from Divriği in the seventeenth century and became a jeweler in Istanbul.<sup>5</sup> Jewelry continued to be practiced in the family in the next generations.<sup>6</sup>

Hacı Harutyun's son Sarkis<sup>7</sup> was appointed as the Imperial Jeweler (*kuyumcubaşı*) of the Imperial Palace in 1721.<sup>8</sup> The Ottoman Sultans often cherished the Armenian jewelers and appealed to members of the Düzoğlu family when it came to crafting and engraving presents for foreign state officials, their family, or their entourage. Gold and silver gifts prepared for Napoleon Bonaparte were among the most prominent examples of the Düzoğlu family's work. Selim III himself directly asked the Düzoğlus to prepare these gifts for Napoleon,<sup>9</sup> which were presented to Napoleon Bonaparte during Halet Efendi's visit to France.<sup>10</sup> According to an archival document from 1791, Sultan Selim III gave a certain member of the Düzoğlu family the responsibility of engraving the Russian empress's topknot (*sorguç*) with precious metals, diamonds,

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<sup>3</sup>For a detailed analysis of the Allahverdiyan family and their roles, see Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin: The Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City In the Nineteenth Century," 89.

<sup>4</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 101.

<sup>5</sup>Sivas-Divriği: Divriği is a small town located in Sivas in the Central Anatolia region. *Vahan Zartaryan, Hişadagaran, Hay Yerevelineru, Lusanıgarneri, Tzerakirneri Krutyunneri Yevayln 1512-1933*, trans. Photographs Memoirs: Biographies, Manuscripts and Writings of Famous Armenians, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Kahire: Hagob Papazyan Dbaran, 1933), 33 fn.

<sup>6</sup>Zartaryan notes that the Hacı Harutyun (also known as Kılıcı(?) oğlu, was among the well known jewelers of Divriği. As Zartaryan highlights, he would collect the precious metals and smelt them and further trade the final product. Zartaryan, *Hişadagaran*, 1, 34 fn.

<sup>7</sup>Armenian primary literature addresses Sarkis as "Serkis Mahdesi." See Menevişyan *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants* 55.

<sup>8</sup>Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 61.

<sup>9</sup>Osep Tokat, *Armenian Master Silversmiths* (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2010), 260-61.

<sup>10</sup>BOA, HAT 139/5764, H.29.12.1218/ 1803 "Taraḫ-ı saltanat-ı seniyyeden Fransa cumhuru(?) devleti tarafına büyük elçilik ile gönderilen Mehmed Said Hâlet efendi ile irsâl olunan hedayâ-yı hümayûn [...]"

and gold.<sup>11</sup> In another example, Sultan Selim III asked a member of the Düzoğlu family to prepare swords for the King of England and sons in 1796.<sup>12</sup>

The Düzoğlu family, began working in the Imperial Mint in 1762, replacing the former *ifrazcıbaşı* Yako Bonfil with Devlet and Hovhannes Düzoğlu.<sup>13</sup> Although not much information about Devlet and his profession can be found in the record, Hovhannes, like his father Sarkis, continued to work as a jeweler for the Ottoman state.<sup>14</sup> Sometime after the death of Hovhannes Düzoğlu in 1744, the family members working in the Mint became known as *Amiras*.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.2 The Düzoğlu Family as an *Amira* Family

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were when the *Amiras* began to gain importance in the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian community,<sup>16</sup> coinciding with the period in which the Düzoğlu family began to hold secondary<sup>17</sup> positions in the Imperial Mint as *ifrazcıbaşı*, *sarrafs* and *tüccars*.<sup>18</sup> Onnik Jamgoçyan notes that in the Imperial Mint, six of the directors out of the ten who worked between 1758 and 1890 were from the Düzoğlu family, highlighting that this family served in the upper echelons of the Ottoman state.<sup>19</sup> Hovhannes' children were the first to be

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<sup>11</sup>“*cânib-i hümayûn-ı mülûkânededen hâlâ Rusya imparatoruna olmak üzere Düzoğlu kulları maarifetiyle yapılan sorgucun elmas ve tûy-i bahl ve mesârif sâiresiyle seksenbeş bin dört yüz seksen dört guruşa belîğ olmağla [...]*” BOA, HAT 1649/18, H.29.12.1205/ 1790.

<sup>12</sup>“[...] *İngiltere kralına ve oğullarına Düzoğlu maarifetiyle imâl ettirilmekte olan meç ve kılıç [...]*” BOA, HAT 113/4511, H.29.12.1210/ 1795.

<sup>13</sup>Tokat, *Armenian Master Silversmiths*, 260-61.

<sup>14</sup>Tokat, *Armenian Master Silversmiths*, 260-61.

<sup>15</sup>According to the list compiled by Barsoumian, the understanding of the Düzoğlus as *Amiras* begins with Mikayel Düzoğlu (1724-1783.) Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 225. Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 49-87.

<sup>16</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 49-87.

<sup>17</sup>In the period before the Tanzimat, positions *darbhane emini* and *sahib-i ayar* were the highest ranks in the Imperial Mint, often occupied by Muslims. For more information see, Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*; “Darbhâne-i Âmire’de Ermeniler, “Marmara Üniversitesi Türkler ve Ermeniler,” <https://turksandarmenians.marmara.edu.tr/tr/darbhane-i-amirede-ermeniler/>.

<sup>18</sup>Similar to the way many other occupations were organized, the surety system (*kefalet sistemi*) was often used as the medium of employment in the Imperial Mint. In this system, various generations of the same family continued a craftsmanship. For the document indicating the surety system in the Imperial Mint, see: “... *terbiye kerdeleri olan evlâdları dahi işbu ustabaşları ve babaları mısillü sadâkat ve istikâmet ile fînûn ve sanayilerini tahsil ve gördükleri kaide üzere yoluyla gelüb hidemat-ı lâzîmelerine tâyin ve bu vecihle hidmete dâhil olagelenleri deeb-i kadim*” BOA, D.DRB.d/120, H. 19.2.1259/1843; Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 25.

<sup>19</sup>Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Sarraflık*, 179.

recorded as *Amira* in the list compiled by Barsoumian, as each one of them worked in the Imperial Mint in various positions including those of *darbhâne kuyumcusu* or the *ifrazcıbaşı*.<sup>20</sup>

One of the most critical reasons explaining the Düzoğlu family's rise to prominence stemmed from Ottoman political and administrative changes. The year 1762 can be considered a milestone for the future of the Imperial Mint and the professional careers of the family members. Up until 1758, the *ifrazcıbaşı* of the Imperial Mint had been Jewish, and thus the Jewish community was responsible for provisioning the necessary precious metals to the Imperial Mint.<sup>21</sup> The Ottoman state's perception of Jews, most likely caused by the close relations of prominent Jews with the janissaries led to the replacement of Yako Bonfil, the *ifrazcıbaşı* until 1758, with Mikayel Çelebi Düzoğlu by Mahmud I.<sup>22</sup>

After 1762, various members of the family served in succession as the *ifrazcıbaşı* of the Imperial Mint until 1850.<sup>23</sup> The first holder of this position was Hovhannes Düzoğlu's son Mikayel Çelebi (Hoca) Düzoğlu (1723-1823). Mikayel Çelebi was appointed as the Imperial Jeweler by Mahmud I. What matters the most was his appointment to the Imperial Mint as the *ifrazcıbaşı*. The appointment of Mikayel Çelebi Düzoğlu as the *ifrazcıbaşı* of the Imperial Mint marked the beginning of the influence of the Düzoğlus and the demise of that of the Jews in the Imperial Mint.<sup>24</sup> Mikayel Çelebi Düzoğlu is considered by later scholars to be the first Amira among the Düzoğlu family.<sup>25</sup>

In the ensuing years, Mikayel Çelebi served as the Imperial Jeweler under the Sultans Mahmud I, Osman III, Mustafa III, and Abdulhamid I. Mikayel Çelebi Düzoğlu's son, Hovhannes Çelebi Düzoğlu (1749-1812)<sup>26</sup> who worked as the Imperial Jeweler, was appointed as the *ifrazcıbaşı* of the Imperial Mint by Selim III. G. Menevişyan

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<sup>20</sup> Amira Düzoğlu, according to Barsoumian, Mikayel (1724-1783), Hovhannes (1749-1812), Krikor (1774-1819), Sarkis (1777-1819), Garabed (1779-1855), Mikayel (1786-1819), Hagob (1793-1847), Boğos (1797-1871), Mihran (1817-1877), and Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 225.

<sup>21</sup> Bölükbaşı, "Darbhâne-i Âmire'de Ermeniler." Marmara Üniversitesi Türkler ve Ermeniler, accessed May 1, 2022, <https://turksandarmenians.marmara.edu.tr/tr/darbhane-i-amirede-ermeniler/>.

<sup>22</sup> Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 179.

<sup>23</sup> With the exception of corruption allegations and the execution and exile that came as an aftermath of them. Within this period, Kazaz Artin temporarily took over the positions previously held by the Düzoğlu family in the Imperial Mint. Bölükbaşı 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 56-57; Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 102; Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 57.

<sup>24</sup> According to the lists provided by Jamgoçyan, upon the dismissal of Yako Bonfil from the Imperial Mint, members of the Armenian community worked as the *ifrazcıbaşı* in the Imperial Mint. See Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 179.

<sup>25</sup> Menevişyan, *Azkanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> 1749-1812 according to Pamukciyan, *Biyografileriyle Ermeniler*, IV, 212.

notes that Hovhannes worked closely with Sultan Selim III.<sup>27</sup> After the deposition of Selim III, Hovhannes continued to maintain close relations with the palace, specifically with Sultan Mahmud II.

Hovhannes Çelebi (1749-1812) was a crucial figure for the Imperial Mint, as he was the father of five sons who further improved and changed the technology in the Imperial Mint in the years to come.<sup>28</sup> Among these, three of them, Garabed Çelebi, Hagob Çelebi, and Boğos Çelebi, worked in the service of Sultan Mahmud II. Hovhannes Düzoğlu's son Krikor Çelebi Düzoğlu (1774-1819), along with his brother Sarkis Çelebi (1777-1819), continued working as the Imperial Jeweler and the *ifrâzcıbaşı* of the Imperial Mint under Mahmud II. Boğos Çelebi Düzoğlu was responsible for drawing, designing, engraving, and minting the official seals, and this position put him in a rather particular position compared to other members of the institution.<sup>29</sup>

### 3.3 The Düzoğlu Family, the Armenian Catholic Church, and Falling out of Favor with the Ottoman State

The nineteenth century was a period of immense contrast for the Düzoğlu family. It was a period in which anti-Catholicism became highly pronounced in the Ottoman Empire through deportations and suppression.<sup>30</sup>

Previously, in the aftermath of the controversies between Eastern Christianity and Catholicism in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the state authorities took measures to prevent further conversions.<sup>31</sup> Later, Catholic converts were ordered to revert to their original faith by an imperial decree executed by Sultan Ahmed III.<sup>32</sup> Ubcini describes the milieu as:

“The Porte declared that it recognized only one Armenian nation and

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<sup>27</sup>Menevişyan, *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*, 45.

<sup>28</sup>Krikor, Sarkis, Garabed, Mikayel, Hagob, and Boğos.

<sup>29</sup>Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, 90-110.

<sup>30</sup>Cora, “Transforming Erzurum/Karin: The Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City In the Nineteenth Century,” 64; Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 155.

<sup>31</sup>Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 155.

<sup>32</sup>Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 155.

Armenian religion. All separatists and schismatics were therefore invited to abjure their errors and conform to the laws by returning to the bosom of their church and nation, on which this condition alone they would be pardoned.”<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, until Sultan Mahmud II’s recognition of the Catholic Church in 1830, converts to Catholicism were compelled to conduct Catholic sermons out of sight in private.<sup>34</sup> Once again, the issue of Catholicism erupted in the first half of the nineteenth century. In tandem with the increasing missionary activities in Anatolia and the continuous spread of Catholicism in the Empire, this perceived problem became a matter of exigency both in the eyes of the Ottoman state as well as in those of the Armenian Apostolic Church.<sup>35</sup> Although the Ottoman state took measures to prevent further conversions to Catholicism, there were important moneylenders in the Catholic community who had vast networks and important ties with foreign states.<sup>36</sup>

Therefore, up until 1820, regardless of its antipathy towards Catholicism, the Ottoman state often turned a blind eye to the affiliations of Catholics in order to benefit from the profit they brought to the empire. As the spread of Catholicism continued, the puritan wing of the Apostolic Church became more determined to end the bifurcation in the community and thus, the creedal tension grew within the Armenian community. Played out violently on the streets, the rebellion against the leadership of the Apostolic Church by an anti-Catholic movement made an impact, and antipathy towards Catholics took a stiff turn.<sup>37</sup> A group of staunch anti-Catholics accused the Armenian Patriarch Boğos of developing benign attitudes towards Armenian Catholics. In the light of the ongoing crisis of Catholicism, Mahmud II wanted this matter settled; he took initiative and argued that the rebellion was not something he could disregard: “*Re’âyâ makûlesinin böyle cemiyet ile kenîsa basmaları devletce hazm olunan hâl değildir.*”<sup>38</sup> To surmount this crisis, Mahmud II ordered the exile

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<sup>33</sup>Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey*, 1, 262.

<sup>34</sup>As explained in the third chapter, the Düzoğlu family hired Mkhitarist priests as their personal confessors.

<sup>35</sup>Frazer, *Catholics and Sultans*, 156.

<sup>36</sup>Catholic Armenians were particularly known to have closer ties with the European residents in Istanbul in comparison to their Orthodox counterparts. These ties did not only develop through the means of the roles of Armenian Catholics as translators and traders. Up until the recognition of the Armenian Catholic Church, Armenian Catholics went to church with Europeans. Thus, their relations developed through their overlapping social sphere and their interactions in it. Kemal Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri’nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi’nin Tanınması (1830)*, vol. 24 (Harvard University, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1995), 4-5; Olley, “Writing Music,” 57; Paolo Girardelli, “Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul,” *Muqarnas*, 22 (2005)

<sup>37</sup>Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri’nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi’nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 5.

<sup>38</sup>Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri’nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi’nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 5.

of the Catholics, and likewise, their possessions were seized by the Ottoman state.<sup>39</sup> Hence, the Sultan's actions eventually caused another wave of anti-Catholic sentiment to break out, paving the way for the eviction of Catholic Armenians from the capital:<sup>40</sup> "*Ermeni milletinden katolik takımlarının Dersa'âdet'den def'ine devletçe teşebbüs olundu.*"<sup>41</sup> In his well-known novel *Akabi Hikayesi*, Vartan Paşa touches upon the raging anti-Catholicism of the nineteenth century by bringing up the exile of the Catholics to Ankara and portraying people leaving the Ottoman Empire in desperation:

"Katoliklerin pek çoğu dışarı memleketlere sürgün oldular ise, burada kalanlar dahi Bey oğlunde sakin olmaya ruhsatleri olmayub Samatia, Ortaköy ve Beşiktaşe tevcih olduklarında, [bende] her gün sürülme korkusu eksik deyil idi. Çünkü Katoliklerin pek çoğu Anadolude Engüriye menfi olduler"<sup>42</sup>

Charles Edward MacFarlane provides insight regarding the panorama of one of Istanbul's most important regions, Pera, in his eyewitness account after the dislocation of Catholic Armenians:

"I was astonished at the melancholy, depopulated aspect of the place [...] I observed that nearly every third door had been newly painted red. 'Those' I was told, 'were the houses of exiled Catholic Armenians; they have been sold by the government which permitted none but Turks to become purchasers."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi'nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 180. For a detailed analysis of the archival documents on anti-Catholicism, see Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi'nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 109-280.

<sup>40</sup>In his book, Frazee provides a full-fledged account of the repressive responses to Catholicism. For more information, see Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 214-223.

<sup>41</sup>Ahmed Lûtfî, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi*, vol I, Tarih Vakfı-Yapı Kredi Yayınları (1999), 202.

<sup>42</sup>Vartan Paşa, *Akabi Hikayesi*. (1991, 102) quoted in Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi'nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, XI.

<sup>43</sup>MacFarlane, *Constantinople in 1828*, 2, 293, 493; MacFarlane also includes a conversation between him and a Catholic Armenian: "I praised the beauty of Kiathane: 'Yes', said he, with a long sigh, 'the valley is beautiful, but that won't prevent us all catching the fever!' I did not like this information and generalizing and requested him to explain. 'Why, sir, we are Catholic Armenians, the Turks have shut up about five hundred of us in the miserable little village. We have been driven from our houses in Pera and Galata.' MacFarlane *Constantinople in 1828*, 512.

Robert Walsh's eyewitness account also touches upon the political turmoil caused by the Ottoman state's anti-Catholic actions.<sup>44</sup> In his second visit to Istanbul, Walsh recorded that Mahmud II played an active and brutal role in suppressing any sort of Catholicism, particularly in Istanbul, by allowing for the seizure of property and the exile of Catholic merchants and priests, as well as common Armenians that converted to Catholicism.<sup>45</sup> Walsh goes on to add that the Ottoman state eventually sought reconciliation with the Catholics, albeit unwillingly and due to the ongoing intervention of the English and French ambassadors.<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, the Düzöğlü family, too, suffered their share of problems from this tense political environment. The family's Catholic affiliations grabbed the attention of others, who did not hesitate to spread a rumor aimed to harm the family on the grounds of their conduct of Catholic sermons and their corruption.<sup>47</sup> In response, Sultan Mahmud II appointed a board to investigate the family. Eventually, a chapel was discovered in their house and the individuals involved were ordered to be beheaded.<sup>48</sup>

Corruption allegations added another layer of complexity to this plight. Although there are different interpretations about the actual story of the corruption incident on which the rumor was based, four scenarios on the Düzöğlü family's possible involvement in corruption come to the fore. One suggestion is that it was Halet Efendi who spread the rumor. According to Georg Oğulukyan's *ruzname*, Halet Efendi owed a debt to the Düzöğlü brothers (Krikor and Sarkis). Being unable to pay his debt, Halet Efendi found an alternative to paying, which was accusing the Düzöğlü family of corruption.<sup>49</sup> During one of the regularly held inspections, İbrahim Sârim, who was the surveyor appointed by the state, recorded a budget

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<sup>44</sup>Robert Walsh, *İrlandalı Bir Vaizin Gözüyle II. Mahmud İstanbul'u*, ed. Çağatay Anadol, trans. Zeynep Rona (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2021), 526.

<sup>45</sup>Walsh, *İrlandalı Bir Vaizin Gözüyle II. Mahmud İstanbul'u*, 526-27.

<sup>46</sup>Walsh, *İrlandalı Bir Vaizin Gözüyle II. Mahmud İstanbul'u*, 526-27. A similar observation was also made by Ubcini, who notes that "the Roman Catholic powers of Europe did not remain indifferent spectators of this attack on their co-religionists. M. Guilleminot the ambassador of France, interfered most energetically on behalf of the united-Armenians, and by pointing out the loss, not to say ruin, which must ensue to commerce, and indeed to government itself, if this proscription of so many of its wealthy subjects, especially the Armenian bankers, should be persevered in, succeeded at last in producing in the mind of the Sultan convictions." Ubcini, *Letter IV*, 262.

<sup>47</sup>Ubcini *Letter IV*, 262.

<sup>48</sup>"*Darbhane'den yirmibin keseden fazla akçeyi zimmelerine geçiren ve evlerinde hususi kiliseler inşa ederek alenen icra-yı ayın eden Düzöğülleri'nden Kırkor, Sarkis ve Mikail ile kardeşlerinin oğlu Muğırduç'ın katli ve idamları.*" BOA, C..ML..468/19037, H.13.04..1235/ 1819; Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul," 102-06.

<sup>49</sup>Oğulukyan, *Georg Oğulukyan'ın Ruznamesi*, 15; Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 257.

deficit in the treasury of the Imperial Mint.<sup>50</sup> Another narration suggests that a particular Jew started the rumor due to being resentful that the Düzoğlus were prosperous in the positions that Jews used to hold.<sup>51</sup> Also, Lütü Efendi suggests that it was Kazzaz Artin (Harutyun Bezciyan) who spread such rumors against the Düzoğlu family so that he could secure his own position in the Imperial Mint:

“Bunların yerine Ermeni milleti mutaassıplarından Kazaz Artin darb-hâne ve ceyb-i hümayûn sarraflığını yakalayarak zahirde devlete sadâkat ma'nâda hem-mezheblerine hizmet ve hem de mesnedini tekrâr Düzoğulları familyasından teb'îd fikri ile o esnâda Memâlik-i Mahrûsa'da baş göstermekde olan katolik âyinine giren Ermenilerin altından girip üstünden çıkmağa sermâye-i makderetini sarf eyledi.”<sup>52</sup>

MacFarlane also considered Kazzaz Artin to be the person of interest in terms of understanding the origins of the corruption allegations.<sup>53</sup> However, on a different occasion, he tellingly corrects himself and argues that it was the Tingiryan family, a fellow Catholic Armenian *Amira* family, who set the rumors against the Düzoğlus out of competing interest:

“I have stated that the ruin of the Tinghir-Oglus [Tingiryan] had been hastened by the intrigues of Cazes-Artine [Kazzaz Artin], but I have been recently informed by a friend who resided many years in Constantinople, and was intimately acquainted with the parties, that this was not the case, and that Cazes-Artine is innocent of the charge. I correct my mistake with that willingness with which I would correct any other, particularly when personal character is implicated.”<sup>54</sup>

As limited as the evidence may be, archival evidence affirms that the Düzoğlus fell into disgrace and lost their esteemed positions in society and the Ottoman state. Mahmud II found the family members guilty of corruption charges; three

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<sup>50</sup>Oğulukyan, *Georg Oğulukyan'ın Ruznamesi*, 15; Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 257.

<sup>51</sup>Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler*, 73.

<sup>52</sup>Lütü, *Lütü Tarihi*, I, 202.

<sup>53</sup>MacFarlane's consideration of Kazzaz Artin as person of interest is indeed interesting because as Oğulukyan narrates, Patriarch Ormanian believed it was Kazzaz Artin who saved Hovhannes Düzoğlu during the Kabakçı Mustafa Revolt. In light of the given scenarios, it may be misleading to assume that there was hostility between the two of them. For detailed information, see Mağakya Ormanyan, *Azkabadum Hayots Yegejetsin* vol. 3 (Yerusalem: Surp Hagopyants Matbaası, 1927), 1912-27, 3436.

<sup>54</sup>MacFarlane, *Constantinople in 1828*, 2, 145-46.

of them—Krikor, Sarkis, and Mikayel—were sentenced to death, and the rest of the family members were exiled in 1819.<sup>55</sup> When their punishments were executed, all their personal belongings and possessions were retained and further seized by the order of Sultan Mahmud II.<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, although Mahmud II managed to execute his plan to prevent the spread of Catholicism, his further plans were interrupted when in 1828, a war broke out with Russia. On the onset of the Ottoman-Russian War, France articulated its concerns regarding the situation of Catholics in the Ottoman Empire through the French Embassy.<sup>57</sup> Mahmud II was left in a position in which the Ottoman Empire had to seek reconciliation with France.<sup>58</sup> Due to consecutive warnings coming from both France and Austria, the Ottoman Empire was compelled to end its persecution against Catholics.<sup>59</sup> This reconciliation paved the way for the official recognition of the Armenian Catholic Church in 1830.<sup>60</sup> Thus, the establishment of the Armenian Catholic Church was a byproduct of the necessity of allying with France.<sup>61</sup> As archival evidence suggests, in 1822 and 1823, just before the establishment of the Church, the incriminated members of the family were pardoned<sup>62</sup> and restored to their positions in the Imperial Mint.<sup>63</sup>

After the Düzoğlu family members were pardoned and the Armenian Catholic Church was officially recognized by Sultan Mahmud II, Hovhannes' (1749-1812) children (Hagob and Garabed) and Sarkis Çelebi's (1777) son Mihran Bey continued their family business as the *ifrâzcıbaşı* at the Imperial Mint.

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<sup>55</sup>MacFarlane, *The Armenians*, 1, 146; BOA, C..ML..468/19037,H.13.04.1235/ 1819

<sup>56</sup>BOA, C..ML.396/16239, H.29.04.1235/ 1819.

<sup>57</sup>“*Françe devletinin dahi bu bâbda cevâbı şu vechledir ki, bir iki-üç Katolik kabahat etmiş olsun, iki bin, on bin, beş bini birden kabahatlı olur mu? Devlet-i alîyye Françe devletiyle akdeylediği mu’ahedâtta yalnız menâfi-i aslıyye müşâhedesini iddia ve usûlünde ısrâr eylediği hâlde Françe devleti beyn-e’n-nas aziz olan mevâdi verüb, mu’âhede etmediğini âleme isbât için bilâ-îfâte-i dikkat o makûle mu’ahedâtını fedâ edeceği muharredir.*” BOA, HH. 32/ 43280-C, M. 28.05.1828; Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri’nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi’nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 197.

<sup>58</sup>Fraze, *Catholics and Sultans*, 258.

<sup>59</sup>For the letters written by Austria, see BOA, Ali Emirî. II. Mahmud 9973, quoted in Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri’nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi’nin Tanınması (1830)*, 24, 203. On the complete and official restoration of the Catholic Church in the Ottoman Empire, see Fraze, *Catholics and Sultans*, 259.

<sup>60</sup>The reason why Catholicism was legalized only for the Armenians is indeed noteworthy, considering the presence of Melkites (Greek Catholics) and Syriac community. This requires further study. For a recent study on the Syriac community and its relation with the Armenian community, see Henry Clements, “Documenting Community in the Late Ottoman Empire,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 51, no. 3 (2019).

<sup>61</sup>Fraze, *Catholics and Sultans*, 259.

<sup>62</sup>“*İşledikleri suçlar dolayısıyla ileri gelenleri idam edilip taallukatı da çeşitli yerlere sürülmüş olan zimmi âilelerden Düzoğulları ailesinin cezalarını yeteri kadar çektiklerinden affedilmeleri*” BOA, HAT1562/16, H.10.09.1238.

<sup>63</sup>Barsoumian, “The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul,” 102-06.; BOA, HAT1563/4, H.10.01.1239/ 1804.

### 3.4 A New Period for the Düzöğlü Family after the Gülhane Edict: Directors of the Imperial Mint

As a part of the reform period after the promulgation of the Gülhane Edict, the Imperial Mint underwent administrative and bureaucratic revisions that enabled non-Muslims to hold administrative positions in the top echelons of bureaucracy regardless of their ethnoreligious affiliations.

Thus, the promulgation of the Gülhane Edict marks another milestone in Düzöğlü family's professional career in the Imperial Mint, as it caused an essential shift in the balance of power.<sup>64</sup>

The Ottoman Imperial Mint was indeed a crowded institution. Although far from clear, it is estimated that the population in 1843 was over 1,300 people.<sup>65</sup> When Hagob Düzöğlü was active in the Imperial Mint as *ifrazcıbaşı* in 1844, a revision took place in the administration of the Imperial Mint. The main reasons for this change were to speed up the money printing process and to cut back the expenses made for the workers.<sup>66</sup> Upon Abdülmecid's request, Hagob Çelebi Düzöğlü gathered a committee and sent them to London so that they could return with information on the British money printing procedures. Therefore, with the help of the examination committee, the Düzöğlü family adopted the English technology of steam power to meet the Sultan's requests to accelerate the money printing process with fewer workers.<sup>67</sup> Krikor's brother Garabed was the Imperial Mint's moneylender, and he was responsible for registering all the expenses made under the body of the Imperial Mint.<sup>68</sup> Towards the end of his career, he was granted *beylik* in 1850 and worked as *sarraf* of the Sultan's mother until his death.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Bölükbaşı "Darbhâne-i Âmire'de Ermeniler" <<https://turksandarmenians.marmara.edu.tr/tr/darbhane-i-amirede-ermeniler/>>

<sup>65</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 24.

<sup>66</sup>Menevişyan, *Azkanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*, 36-39.

<sup>67</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 24.

<sup>68</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 62.

<sup>69</sup>Menevişyan, *Azkanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*, 41-42.

The efforts of the family to develop the Imperial Mint were seen as worthy of respect and thus, Abdülmecid granted them an imperial medal, *nişan*, and order of distinction, *imtiyaz nişanı*.<sup>70</sup>

Upon Hagob's death and Garabed's retirement in 1847 and 1848 respectively, Sarkis Düzoğlu's son Mihran was appointed as the *ifrazcıbaşı* to the Imperial Mint. Mihran Düzoğlu received chemistry education in France and therefore was able to implement new practices and methods of money printing.<sup>71</sup>

Mihran Bey's term in the service of the Imperial Mint can be divided into two periods: initially he served as *ifrazcıbaşı*, and later as of March 3, 1850, he became the director of the Imperial Mint.<sup>72</sup> In 1850, the professions of *ifrazcıbaşılık* and *mübayaacılık* were gathered under one larger, all-encompassing role, *Meskûkât-ı Şahâne Müdürlüğü* (Imperial Coinage Administration.) Therefore, the Düzoğlu family's former titles of *ifrazcıbaşı*, *mübâyaacı*, or *darbhâne sarrafı* during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, began to be recorded as the director of the Imperial Mint (*darbhâne müdürü*) in the Ottoman state archives from the February 1, 1850 onwards.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, until 1850, Mihran Bey worked as the *ifrazcıbaşı*, and in the latter period, he became the first director of the *Meskûkât-ı Şahâne İdaresi*.

With this new arrangement within the Imperial Mint, the money printing procedure, which was formerly a much slower process that required more human power, became a more dynamic and less costly process.<sup>74</sup> Upon Mihran Bey's retirement, the Düzoğlu family's 118-year-old career in the Imperial Mint reached an end.

In light of the previously stated information, it can be concluded that the Düzoğlus, who formally held secondary positions at the Imperial Mint as *ifrazcıbaşıs*, *ameles*, *sarrafs*, and *tüccars* in the second half of the nineteenth century, made their way to the upper echelons of the hierarchy within the Imperial Mint. While this major change took place, family members also began to direct their attention to different professions.

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<sup>70</sup>BOA, A.}DVN.MHM.10/44, H.20.08.1269/ 1852; BOA, İ..DH..66/8708, H.08.03.1264/ 1847; A.}AMD.11/60, H.05.12.1265/ 1848.

<sup>71</sup>Bölükbaşı, "Darbhâne-i Âmire'de Ermeniler," <<https://turksandarmenians.marmara.edu.tr/tr/darbhane-i-amirede-ermeniler/>>

<sup>72</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 55.

<sup>73</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 55. "Hazine-i Hâssa," 1998, accessed 25.02.2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hazine-i-hassa>.

<sup>74</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 55.

#### 4. A BREAK FROM THE PAST: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DÜZOĞLU FAMILY

As much as the nineteenth century was a period of major change for the Ottoman Empire, economic activities likewise accelerated and diversified throughout the century.<sup>1</sup> The previous chapter already noted the importance of the moneylenders in supplying the empire's financial system. Through the course of the nineteenth century, their role and importance was transformed into banking. In this period, the Düzoğlu family began to disperse among different professions, such as bureaucracy and industrialization. After their long-term service to the Imperial Mint, in this period, they began to project themselves as more economically and socially self-sufficient actors. As a part of their economically independent position, they also intensified their social activities. Thus, their economic capital began to manifest itself as social capital.

This chapter will focus on the changes in the Düzoğlu family's established pattern of activities to depict their transformation in the nineteenth century, a period when the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian community experienced significant milestones. Initially, the chapter provides information about the organizational and institutional changes that took place in the Imperial Mint as a part of the reform period after the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict. While doing so, it devotes most of its attention to the ways in which the family adapted to the new system. Secondly, this chapter will address the changing professions of the Düzoğlu family by focusing on the circumstances that helped them separate themselves from state service. Finally, reaching a certain economic standing and focusing on social activities are important patterns that must be noted in order to comprehend the trajectory of the Düzoğlu family's transformation. Therefore, the chapter will be concluded with the social activities of the family.

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<sup>1</sup>Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert ed, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1924* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 759-61.

## 4.1 Enduring Services from the Past: Directors of the Imperial Mint

One of the major catalysts of the transformation of the Düzoğlu family was tied to the Ottoman Empire's administrative, political, and institutional trajectory in the nineteenth century. On the one side of the coin, together with the widespread global changes that caused a gradual increase in worldwide European influence, the nineteenth century was renowned for the major restructuring of the Ottoman institutions that took place, especially those that were brought by Tanzimat and Islahat Edicts. A series of administrative, legislative, and educational reforms aiming to create a more powerful and expanded central state apparatus were among the profound impacts of the reform process of the nineteenth century. The other side of the coin, however, displays yet another picture. Ever-changing institutional organizations, continuous wars, and economic constraints created an economically and socially turbulent period in the nineteenth century.

In this period, as a part of the modernization process and in response to the economic crises, important regulatory and administrative changes took place in state institutions as well as in the Imperial Mint. Regulatory changes were related to the adoption and implementation of new techniques and practices, whereas the latter focused on the administrative structure of the institution.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most crucial changes for the Imperial Mint was the debasement (*tağşis*) practice.<sup>3</sup> The debasement practice became widespread in the Ottoman state to be able to finance wars in the second half of the eighteenth century. The practice continued during the reign of Selim III and intensified even more during the reign of Mahmud II (known as the great debasement).<sup>4</sup> However, with each debasement, monetary problems of the empire that were already concerning intensified, causing inflation and triggering further economic and political crises in the 1830s. The problems debasement caused were not only limited to internal financial crises. Since debasement caused instability in the Ottoman economy, trust in the Ottoman coinage also decreased, which eventually deteriorated trade relations with European states concerning their investments in the empire.

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<sup>2</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*; Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalm*, 62; "Darphâne," TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, accessed April 19, 2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/darphane>; Terzi, "Hazine-i Hâssa," TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, accessed April 19, 2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hazine-i-hassa>

<sup>3</sup>Changing the silver content of the coin. For more on reasons and consequences of the debasement see, Pamuk, *The Evolution of Financial Institutions in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1914*, 103.

<sup>4</sup>Pamuk, *The Evolution of Financial Institutions in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1914*, 19.

Hence, Europeans urged the Ottoman state to terminate the debasement practice for the good of their bilateral relations as well as for the good of the future of the Ottoman economy.<sup>5</sup> As of 1844, the debasement practice was terminated with the Correction of Standards (*Tashih-i ayar* or *Tashih-i Sikke*) regulations.<sup>6</sup>

*Tashih-i Sikke* brought several changes to the Ottoman monetary system, including changes in the minting technology. Edhem Eldem notes that 1844 was “revolutionary” from the perspective of the quality of coinage.<sup>7</sup> One of the important factors affecting the quality of the coins was the technology brought from London ahead of the implementation of the *Tashih-i Sikke* regulations. As mentioned above, in the 1840s under the direction of Sultan Abdülmecid, Hagob Çelebi Düzoğlu was sent to England to bring and implement steam-powered machinery (*vapur çarha*) in the Imperial Mint.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, a mechanical engineer from the Imperial Mint of London was invited to Istanbul to operate the machinery.<sup>9</sup> The introduction of this technique to the Imperial Mint escalated the coin minting process, and the coin minting process became much easier and quicker.

Differences in coin minting techniques and procedures brought certain changes to the responsibilities of family at the Mint.<sup>10</sup> The eighteenth- and the nineteenth-century Ottoman wars brought frequent military defeats and financial impediments caused by the need to fund the wars. The Ottoman Empire began to drain most of its resources to finance the wars, even during times of economic crises, and to develop solutions for the financial repercussions of the wars.<sup>11</sup> In doing so, the Imperial Mint often undertook the role of *ih̄tiyat hazinesi*, the status of the Treasury of Capital Reserve, leaving the family responsible for various activities outside of coin minting.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Sevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 88.

<sup>6</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, 120-29.

<sup>7</sup>Edhem Eldem, “Chaos and Half Measures: The Ottoman Monetary ‘System’ of the Nineteenth Century,” *The Economic Development of South-Eastern Europe (1830–1914)* (2006): 251-305.

<sup>8</sup>BOA, HAT596/ 29288, H.29.12.1249/ 1833; Menevişyan, *Azkanunîyün Zarmin Düzyants*, 37; “Darbhane-i Amire,” *Büyük İstanbul Tarihi*, accessed April 1, 2022, <https://istanbultarihi.ist/208-darbhane-i-amire>.

<sup>9</sup>Metin Erüreten, *Osmanlı Madalyaları ve Nişanları* (Istanbul: Destination Management Company 2001,) 55.

<sup>10</sup>Bölükbaşı, “Darbhane-i Amire.” *Antik Çağ’dan XXI. Yüzyıla Büyük İstanbul Tarihi*, accessed 01.04. 2022, <https://istanbultarihi.ist/208-darbhane-i-amire>.

<sup>11</sup>Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 45-46.

<sup>12</sup>Bölükbaşı, *18. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 10.

Within this period, the institution was also responsible for administering the personal treasury of the Sultans, *ceyb-i hümayûn*.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, while technological developments made the Mint more efficient, these regulations expanded the responsibilities of the Mint, as well as the workload. The Imperial Mint continued as an *ih̄tiyat hazinesi* after the *Îrâd-ı Cedîd* treasury was abolished in the aftermath of the dethronement of Sultan Selim III, which led to the Imperial Mint collecting the revenues of the treasury. Additionally, the Imperial Mint also became responsible for organizing the *hazine-i amire* and *tershane hazinesi*.<sup>14</sup>

Thereby, the Imperial Mint not only became an important agent of coin minting but also became an important actor in countering the financial inefficiencies of the Ottoman financial sector.<sup>15</sup> Although within this period the Imperial Mint became a very crucial and important institution for the Ottoman Empire, the responsibility of organizing various treasuries and fulfilling coin minting duties at the same time was not easy and created instability in the institution.<sup>16</sup> In this regard, in 1844, activities other than coin minting and administering the *mukâtaa* ceased to exist in the Imperial Mint.<sup>17</sup>

In terms of the administrative changes, the institutional body of the Imperial Mint was reorganized. In 1850, *ifrazcibaşılık* and *mübâyaacılık*, which were in charge of bringing the precious metals to the Imperial Mint, became a subdivision of the newly established Imperial Currency Administration (*Meskûkat-ı Şâhâne Müdürlüğü*)<sup>18</sup> that was a Directorate of the Ministry of Finance (*Maliye Nezâreti*).<sup>19</sup> These changes were among the bureaucratic and institutional reform processes that took place in the Ministry of Finance in the aftermath of the Tanzimat Edict. This administrative change in the Imperial Mint eliminated the rule that necessitated the directors to be Muslim, therefore making it easier for the Düzoğlu family to become

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<sup>13</sup>Halil Sahillioğlu, “Ceyb-i Hümayun,” (TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi.) <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ceyb-i-humayun>.

<sup>14</sup>Bölükbaşı, 18. *Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Darbhane-i Amire*, 10.

<sup>15</sup>Ali Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1993), 97-98.

<sup>16</sup>Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)*, 97-98.

<sup>17</sup>Bölükbaşı, “Darbhane-i Amire.” *Antik Çağ’dan XXI. Yüzyıla Büyük İstanbul Tarihi*, accessed April 1, 2022, <https://istanbultarihi.ist/208-darbhane-i-amire>.

<sup>18</sup>“*Darbhâne mubâyaacılığın isminin değiştirilerek Meskûkat Müdürlüğü’ne çevrilmesi ile orada çalışan Mihran ve Bogos’a nişan ihsânı.*” BOA, A.}AMD.22/57, 29.11.1266/ 1849; “*Darbhâne-i amire mubâyaacılığının meskûkat müdürlüğüne tahvili ile Düzoğlu hocesinin Mehran ve kuyumcubası ihsan olunması.*” BOA, A.}AMD.22/ 64, 29.11.1266/ 1849.

<sup>19</sup>Cezar, “Economy and Taxation,” 67-68.

the directors of the *Meskûkât-ı Şâhâne*.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the transition from Imperial Mint to *Meskûkât-ı Şâhâne Müdürlüğü* and changes in technology decreased the workforce. The number of workers in the institution was reduced significantly and mostly only workers who were close to the family or family members maintained their jobs in the institution.<sup>21</sup> Eventually, this facilitated the Düzoğlu family's dominance in the institution. Hence, the family's former secondary positions in the Imperial Mint as *ifrazcıbaşı* and *darbhane sarrafı* acquired another dimension in the mid-nineteenth century as they reached the hierarchically highest possible rank.<sup>22</sup>

In 1847, Mihran Çelebi Düzoğlu began his service as *ifrazcıbaşı* in the Imperial Mint and continued working from where Hagob Çelebi Düzoğlu left off to apply European techniques to the coin minting process. Upon the newly established administrative body, in the midst of his career as *ifrazcıbaşı*, Mihran Bey became the first and the last Düzoğlu to be employed as director of the *Meskûkât-ı Şâhâne Müdürlüğü*. As will be given in more detail below, after Mihran Bey, members of the Düzoğlu family often sought various other professions within the Ottoman bureaucracy, and more members of the Düzoğlu family could be traced within the lists of bureaucratic positions throughout the century.

Although the administrative body of the Imperial Mint changed with the introduction of the *Meskûkat-ı Şâhâne*, some of the family members maintained their positions as the Imperial Jeweler (*kuyumcubaşı*), such as Boğos Bey Düzoğlu who was working as the Imperial Jeweler in the Mint, particularly engaging in drawing, designing, and minting medals (*nişan*).

As the previous paragraphs emphasized, during the transformation of the Imperial Mint and changes in the Ottoman financial system, the Düzoğlu family not only adapted to the changing circumstances but also contributed to the changes. Considering the continuous changes taking place in the Ottoman state, the Düzoğlu family maintained their influential positions.

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<sup>20</sup>Bölükbaşı, "Darbhane-i Amire."

<sup>21</sup>For a detailed analysis of the surety system (*kefalet sistemi*) in the Imperial Mint, see chapter 2.

<sup>22</sup>Bölükbaşı, "Darbhâne-i Âmire'de Ermeniler," accessed May 1, 2022

## 4.2 Departure from Tradition: The Düzöğlü Family as Galata Bankers

In the meantime, while the changes were taking place in the Imperial Mint and throughout the Ottoman state bureaucracy, the Düzöğlülüs did not remain in the confines of the Imperial Mint and managed to expand their area of influence by participating in and pursuing other professions. They became involved in trade, bureaucracy, banking, and industry.<sup>23</sup>

One of the other changes the nineteenth century welcomed was the advent of the banking system, which was a novelty for Ottoman finance. Before the introduction of banking to the Ottoman financial system, the *sarrafs* were among the actors managing the economy of the empire. More specifically, from the eighteenth century onwards, critical financial operations of the state were entrusted to the *sarrafs*. Ottoman society, especially high bureaucrats, relied on the skills of the *sarrafs* for any sort of monetary matter.<sup>24</sup> Such dependency led to the emergence of the *sarrafs* as important actors in the money market in the eighteenth century. However, due to the changing dynamics of the Ottoman economy, the *sarrafs* no longer managed to meet the needs of Ottoman finance. Instead, the European bankers in Istanbul worked their way into the monopoly of the *sarrafs*.<sup>25</sup> The *sarrafs* of the eighteenth century transformed into *Galata bankerleri*, bankers in the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> The *Galata bankerleri* were basically a group of non-Muslim bankers—mostly Greek, Armenian and Jewish—who had offices in and around the Galata region from the 1850s onwards. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the *Galata bankerleri* were the actors who maintained the financial relations with the West in cooperation with the demands of the Ottoman financial system. In tandem with increasing budget deficiency, the government's reliance on the Galata bankers increased. The Galata bankers followed the Western stock markets in Paris and London and maintained personal ties with those who worked in those institutions. The empire's integration into the capitalist world economy, the introduction of foreign loans, the expansion of cultivation of certain cash crops, and the breakout of the Ottoman financial crisis of the 1840s required a more complex financial system which acted

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<sup>23</sup>The information known about Boğos' activities outside the Imperial Mint is limited aside from the fact that he worked at the council of Bank-ı Osmanî and that he was a silk merchant. "Hereke Fabrika-i Humayun'a lazım olan ipek Düzöğlü Hoce Agob tarafından tedarik edildiği ve bedelinin Darphane-i Amireden ödenmesi." BOA, HAT 38/1931, H.29.12.1221/ 1806; Also Boğos Bey Düzöğlü, was granted with the achievement medal by the Prussian state. BOA, HR.SYS 1896/ 34, M.26.04.1858/1274.

<sup>24</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation," 67-68.

<sup>25</sup>Cezar, "Economy and Taxation," 61-68.

<sup>26</sup>Pamuk, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Paranın Tarihi*, 140.

as an important catalyst leading to the introduction of banking.<sup>27</sup>

The first initiation of banking in the Ottoman Empire under the leading role of Emmanuel Baltazzi began in 1847 and lasted until 1852.<sup>28</sup> Despite its insufficient capital, the bank managed to stabilize the value of the money against the pound; this early attempt, however, was followed by bankruptcy of the bank in 1852.<sup>29</sup> As a result of this initial experience, under the initiation of a Parisian banker Trouve-Chauvel, banking in the Ottoman Empire moved into another era. Under the leadership of Trouve-Chauvel and the twelve local bankers and capital owners who became members, the Ottoman Bank (*Bank-ı Osmanî* or *Banque Ottomane*) was established in 1856.<sup>30</sup> Compared to the former banking attempt, the *Bank-ı Osmanî* had more capital and power.<sup>31</sup> The founders and council of the *Bank-ı Osmanî* were limited to twelve members and the foreign partners were limited to only three.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, among this cadre of twelve people, there were the most prominent members of the financial affairs, including the Düzöğlü family. As Jamgoçyan notes, the family members involved were Mihran Bey Düzöğlü (Head of the Imperial Mint, *Darb-hane Müdür-i Umûmîsi*), Boğos Düzöğlü (Imperial Jeweler of the Sultan, *Sultan Kuyumcubası*) and Diran Aleksanyan-Düzöğlü, the Mint's director responsible for the supply of gold and silver.<sup>33</sup>

Although the first banking attempts were unstable and insufficient for the modernization of the Ottoman financial system, Mihran Bey's influence in the institution mattered. Edhem Eldem highlights Mihran Bey's significance in the establishment of the Bank-ı Osmanî in 1856.<sup>34</sup> According to Eldem, Donon and Co., a French bank that was one of the *Bank-ı Osmanî*'s potential founders, wanted to get to know Mihran Bey Düzöğlü and insisted on his presence in the project.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Eldem, Edhem. *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000. 108-109;119-120; Kazgan 1997, 36-41; Eldem, Edhem. "The Imperial Ottoman Bank: Actor or Instrument of Ottoman Modernization." In *Modern Banking in the Balkans and West-European Capital in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, edited by Kostas P. Kostis. (Ashgate 1999); Pamuk, Şevket. *Osmanlı Ekonomisi Ve Kurumları*. Istanbul: Türkiye İşbankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020.

<sup>28</sup>Edhem Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 21-23.

<sup>29</sup>Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 23.

<sup>30</sup>Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 23.

<sup>31</sup>Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 24.

<sup>32</sup>BOA, A.}DVN.MKL.72/30, H.29.12.1269/ 1852; BOA, HR.MKT.578/21, H.12.02.1284/ 1867; Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 24.

<sup>33</sup>Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 107.

<sup>34</sup>Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 59.

<sup>35</sup>Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 59.

### 4.3 Commercial and Industrial Activities of the Düzoğlu Family

One of the earliest ways to trace the Düzoğlu family's activity outside the Imperial Mint at the beginning of the nineteenth century was to examine their commercial and industrial activities. In terms of their commercial activities, the Düzoğlu family maintained trade relations with Baghdad, Trieste, Venice, Livorno, and India (through their trading partners the Babikyan.<sup>36</sup> In their commercial building Serposyan *Hanı* located in Galata, the Düzoğlus worked with the Levant Company, one of the major English trade companies and particularly worked with the English ambassador Robert Adair.<sup>37</sup>

According to Pascal Carmont, Hovhannes Çelebi Düzoğlu had a monopoly over the silk industry of the empire and Artin Bezciyan (who later became a person of interest when the family were disfavored) worked under him.<sup>38</sup> In 1802, Hovhannes Çelebi Düzoğlu was responsible for collecting custom dues from the Istanbul silk trade.<sup>39</sup>

In the first half of the nineteenth century, in terms of their industrial activities, Hovhannes Çelebi Düzoğlu's son, Hagob Çelebi, also participated in the industrial sector and pioneered opening up a cloth and paper factory in Istanbul and Izmir. Although archival evidence is limited on the cloth factory, considering the involvement of Armenian traders, *hocas*, and *çelebis* in the textile trade in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, it would not come as a surprise that they maintained their engagement with the textile trade and industry.<sup>40</sup>

When it comes to the establishment of the paper factory, it can be seen in the archival material in the Ottoman state archives that the factory was constructed and opened under the initiation of Hagob Bey and the financial assistance of Mihran Bey and Garabed Düzoğlu in 1843.<sup>41</sup> The paper produced there was named *eseri cedîd*, and beginning in 1848, the usage of paper made in Izmir was required

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<sup>36</sup>Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 73-74.

<sup>37</sup>They maintained their trade networks through the commercial houses they owned in the Galata region. According to Schmitt, the Düzoğlu family owned a commercial house called "Kievork bey Han" located in *Yüksek Kaldırım*, Galata region. Baruh, Lorans Izabel. "The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul: Property, Investment and Elites From Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station" Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Boğaziçi University, 2009) 251; Olley "Writing Music," 62; Jamgoçyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sarraflık*, 73-74.

<sup>38</sup>Carmont, *The Amiras*, 106.106

<sup>39</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 60.

<sup>40</sup>Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Kültürü ve Gündelik Yaşam* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları 2002 ), 82.

<sup>41</sup>The *tezkiye* about the opening of the paper factory is located at BOA, A.}MKT.19/51,H.29.12.1260/ 1844

for official correspondences.<sup>42</sup> In 1851, due to the decrease in the quality of the paper, the factory received a warning from the Sultan.<sup>43</sup> Presumably the regulatory and economic problems of the factory increased, which led to the factory's owners changing and the factory later being shut down.<sup>44</sup>

According to the nineteenth-century court historian Ahmed Lütü Efendi, the opening of this factory by Hagob Bey Düzođlu was crucial as it decreased the dependency of the Ottoman Empire on foreign capital.<sup>45</sup> However, the factory was established when the cost of paper production decreased radically in Europe. Therefore, being unable to compete with the lower prices, the factory could not maintain itself and was shut down due to economic shortages. As non-durable as it may be, Ahmed Lütü Efendi also contends that although the factory failed to compete with European capital and paper factories, for a while it played a role in helping the Ottoman state with its financial upkeep.<sup>46</sup>

#### 4.4 The Düzođlu Family in the Ottoman Bureaucracy

Ottoman bureaucracy underwent a period of reform in the early nineteenth century, paving the way for the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict and its aftermath. The changes affecting the Düzođlu family often took place in the Ministry of Finance (*Mâlîye Nezâreti*), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezâreti*), and the Legislative Council (*Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*).

In 1843, the *Zirâ'at Meclisi* was established. The formation of a *Zirâ'at Meclisi* was requested by the Ministry of Finance in 1843 in order to encourage agriculture and trade and to increase production in the Ottoman Empire. Hagob Çelebi Düzođlu was among the members of the unit.<sup>47</sup>

*The Hariciye Nezâreti* was one of the initial positions highly occupied by Düzođlu family members outside the Imperial Mint. As the archival evidence suggests, Serpus

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<sup>42</sup>BOA, A.}AMD. 2/92, H.03.01.1264/ 1848

<sup>43</sup>BOA, A.}MKT.MVL45/85, H.28.11.1267/ 1850.

<sup>44</sup>BOA, A.}MKT.UM..392/7, H.29.06.1276/ 1859

<sup>45</sup>BOA, A.}MKT.UM..392/7, H.29.06.1276/ 1859.

<sup>46</sup>BOA A.} MKT.19/51 H.29.12.1260/ 1844; "Kađıt," TDV Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi, 2001, 2022, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kagit>.

<sup>47</sup>Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)*, 282.

Düzoğlu began working as a dragoman in the *Tercüme Kalemi* in 1839.<sup>48</sup> Looking at another archival document, in 1840, he was working in the *Meclis-i Tahaffuz*<sup>49</sup> as a dragoman.<sup>50</sup>

In 1837, the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* was established as a higher legislative body.<sup>51</sup> Including the president, the members of the body were often required to be former members of the state elite.<sup>52</sup> Starting in January 1856, in order to be able to discuss matters concerning non-Muslim communities, non-Muslim members were appointed to the body, with the limitation of only being able to serve one year. The selection criteria of the body required applicants to be successful, reliable, loyal, and staunch defenders of the Tanzimat regime. Since Mihran Bey Düzoğlu was one of the members of the body, it can be argued that he managed to attain a high position in the Ottoman bureaucracy due to his status as a member of the Düzoğlu family.<sup>53</sup>

In 1868, *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* was divided into two branches. One of its branches, the *Şûra-yı Devlet* (Council of State), had many non-Muslim members. Armenian Catholics were well represented in the *Şûra-yı Devlet*, making up the largest group of non-Muslim councilors.<sup>54</sup> Members of the Düzoğlu family were also among the council of *Şûra-yı Devlet*. Archival material includes documents related only to Mihran Bey's positions in the Ottoman state bureaucracy. Nonetheless, as the forthcoming paragraphs will display, there are several indications that there were several lesser-known members of the family who worked in the Ottoman bureaucracy.

Mihran Bey Düzoğlu was a member of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* before the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict. Upon the division of the council into two, in 1873 Mihran Bey Düzoğlu was appointed as a member of the *Şûra-yı Devlet* during the presidency of Yusuf Kamil Paşa.<sup>55</sup> From 1868-1874, Mihran Bey's son, Sarkis Düzoğlu, occupied the same position as his father did as a member of the

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<sup>48</sup>BOA, HAT 647/ 31727, H.15.10.1254/ 1838.

<sup>49</sup>For detailed information on Meclis-i Tahaffuz, see, Gülden Sarıyıldız, "Karantina Meclisi'nin Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri," *Bellekten* 58, no. 222 (1994), <https://belleten.gov.tr/tam-metin/2303/tur>.

<sup>50</sup>BOA, İ.MVL.13/204, H.24.10.1256/ 1840.

<sup>51</sup>Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)*, 189-92.

<sup>52</sup>Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)*, 210.

<sup>53</sup>Akyıldız, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Merkez Teşkilatında Reform (1836-1856)*, 210.

<sup>54</sup>Roderic H Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876*, (Princeton University Press, 1968), 104.

<sup>55</sup>"*Mihran Bey'in şûra-yı devlet azalığına dair*" BOA, İ.DH..658/45763, H.10.08.1289/1872 Şûrâ-yı devlet, Council of State, established in 1868. See "Şûrâ-yı Devlet," 2010, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sura-yi-devlet>.

*Şûra-yı Devlet*.<sup>56</sup> From a petition written by Sarkis to the Sultan in 1891, it can be understood that Sarkis continued working in the *Şûra-yı Devlet*.

The nineteenth-century Ottoman reform period took yet another turn with the promulgation of the Reform Edict in 1856. The reform process, which was stimulated by the Islahat Edict, included reforms on the education system of the empire. Up until the promulgation of the Islahat Edict, the education sector was under the domination of the clergy, which was the case for both Muslims and non-Muslim communities.<sup>57</sup> The promulgation of the Islahat Edict created a broad legal and administrative space for non-Muslim communities to establish their own schools in an effort to liberalize and modernize education.<sup>58</sup> Such novelty in the education system necessitated the creation of a mixed council to serve as a body to bring together the representatives of the non-Muslim communities. To that end, a body called the Mixed Educational Council (*Meclis-i Muhtelit-i Maârif*) was established in 1856. This council reserved the rights to determine the quality of the schools, formulate the schools' curriculums, and appoint professors.<sup>59</sup> Mihran Bey was appointed as a member of the *Meclis-i Muhtelit-i Maarif* on behalf of the Armenian community in 1857.<sup>60</sup>

After the presence of Mihran Bey, the archival material does not provide any hints to trace any other forthcoming members of the Düzoğlu family. It is known that Mihran Bey Düzoğlu had six children and that three of the last descendants of Mihran Bey were his sons Sarkis, Herasez Bey, and Hrand Bey. According to Carmont, Sarkis was born in Istanbul in 1889 and died in Paris in 1982,<sup>61</sup> whereas based on the limited information available, it is only known that Herasez Bey was born in Istanbul in 1862.<sup>62</sup> Hrand Bey Düzoğlu also was born in 1861 in Istanbul, but again, the time and place of his death is unknown.<sup>63</sup> Upon completing his high school education in

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<sup>56</sup>Çarkçıyan, *Türk Devleti Hizmetindeki Ermeniler*, 160-61.

<sup>57</sup>Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Kırım Savaşı Islahat Fermanı ve Osmanlı Eğitim Düzeninde Dönüşümler" (Savaşın Barışa: 150. Yıldönümünde Kırım Savaşı ve Paris Antlaşması (1853-1856), Istanbul, 2006), 62.

<sup>58</sup>Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Osmanlı Ermenilerinde Kültür Modernleşmesi, Cemaat Okulları ve Abdülhamid Rejimi," *Tarih ve Toplum* 5 (2007): 70-71.

<sup>59</sup>Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Brill, 2021), 43.

<sup>60</sup>BOA, A.}DVN.122/85, H.20.08.1273/ 1856. In the aftermath of the promulgation of the Islahat Edict, a council called the Meclis-i Muhtelit-i Maarif was formed to improve the education throughout the empire regardless of religious and ethnic differences within society.

<sup>61</sup>Carmont, *The Amiras*, 110.

<sup>62</sup>BOA, DH.SAİDd...89/155, H.29.12.1278/ 1861.

<sup>63</sup>Tacettin Kayaoğlu, *Osmanlı Haricîyesinde Gayr-i Müslimler (1852-1925)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2013), 131.

Paris, he continued his studies in Agricultural Engineering in Paris.<sup>64</sup> In 1897, he worked in *Matbûât-ı Ecnebiye Kalemî* and in the following year, he entered *Hâriciye Nezâreti Umûr-ı Şehbenderî Kalemî* where he eventually became *Baş Şehbender* for Mesenye (now Kalamata, Greece).<sup>65</sup>

#### 4.5 The Düzoğlu Family in the Social Sphere and their Cultural Activities

The Düzoğlu family channeled their interests to enhance their living standards as well as to benefit the social and cultural sphere of the Armenian community. Seeing the family's presence in the social sphere is important to understand how the family was perceived in society. In terms of the social sphere, the Düzoğlu family maintained close ties with the Sultans, facilitated by their roles as officials of the Ottoman state.<sup>66</sup> The Düzoğlu family rose in rank from being simple jewelers to eventually enjoying the privilege of being directly in touch with the Sultan himself. Cevdet Paşa provides a typical example of such a relationship in a segment of Boğos Bey Düzoğlu's dialogue with the Sultan Abdülmecid. According to Cevdet Paşa's narration, Düzoğlu Boğos was summoned before Sultan Abdülmecid, and assigned to fix his dagger:

“Düz-oğlu Deli Boğos'u çağırıp ‘bunu çabuk aptır. Zirâ benim beşinci kadına emniyetim yoktur. [Anın için] bu kamayı taşıyorum’ dedikte Deli Boğos ‘efendim o dağdan gelmiş [niçin] size ha'in olsun. Hem kimin ne haddine size su'-i kasd eylesin. Siz padişahsınız’ demek Hünkâr ‘sen kadının tarafındasın’ gibi sözler söylemiş. [Sonra] Hünkâr beşinci kadının yanına varıp ‘sen ne kâfiresin. Deli Boğos bile bugün geldi. Bir kama var idi sivriltti. Beşinci kadına emniyet olunmaz [deyu] bana nasihat etti’ demiş. Binâen-aleyh Kadın efendi Deli Boğos hakkında kin bağlayıp [ona] Düz-oğlu kamayı iyi sivrilttin mi. Bunu iyi belle. Bu senin yanına kalmaz.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Kayaoğlu, *Osmanlı Hariciyesinde Gayr-i Müslimler (1852-1925)* 131.

<sup>65</sup>Kayaoğlu, *Osmanlı Hariciyesinde Gayr-i Müslimler (1852-1925)*, 131.

<sup>66</sup>With the exception of the period when they were disfavored.

<sup>67</sup>Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, ed. Cavid Baysun, vol. 13-20 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), 132.

Having close ties with the Sultans should not necessarily be portrayed as solely positive, as they had to be aware of and watch out for the delicate power relations within the dynasty. On a different account, Sultan Abdülmecid reflects his dispraise for Boğos as he prepared an engraved the design of a pistol for Aziz Efendi:

“Ben seni şimdîye kadar kendime sâdık ve hayr-hâh bilirdim. Sen ise Aziz efendi’ye bir çift tabanca yaptırvermişsin. Ol tabancaları o beni öldürmek için yaptırıyor biliyor musun’ diyicek Deli şaşırmış hemen and içerek vuku’u hâli beyân u îzâh ederek güç hâl ile kandırmış olduğu mahremâne haber alınmıştır.”<sup>68</sup>

As the excerpts above suggest, members of the family managed to carve a place for themselves in the social sphere, which was facilitated by their ties to the state elite. In time, the family’s connection with the Ottoman state and their economically powerful position raised the issue of their social position *vis-à-vis* the Armenian community starting in the late eighteenth century. The position they held in the eyes of society was not always one of praise; in fact, their lifestyle often grabbed people’s attention in a negative way. The nineteenth-century court historian Şânîzâde Mehmed Atâullah Efendi displays their prosperity as follows:

“Üç mâh ‘ale’-d-devâm Bey-oğlu ve Boğaz-içi’nde menâzil-i müte’addide ve İstanbul’da ekser hânlarda büyü-t-i müteferrikada muhalledâfât fürûht olunarak, her birinde zuhur eden eşyây-ı nâdîde-i behâ-dâr ve tuhaf u tefârîk-ı naşenîde-i bî-şümâr ilâ hâze’l-vakt ne bir vezîr ve ne bir kibâr metrukâtında müsâdif-i a’yün-i nüzzâr olmuş [...] Düz-oğulları’nın her birinin mute’addid hâne ve sâhil-hâneleri derûnlarında cemî’ âlât ve mâlzeme ve üstâd ve hademesiyle birer mahsûs ütücü dükkâmı mevcûd ve hammâm ve memşâ na’leynlerinin tasmaları a’la ve zümürüd ve yakut ile müzeyyen idüğü, merûkâta gidenlerin cümlesine re’ye’l-‘ayn meşhûd idi.”<sup>69</sup>

According to Şânîzâde, members of the Düzöğlü family had many possessions ranging from a house to a bathhouse (hamam) to an ironing shop (*ütühâne*), and one could see their fondness for luxury even by simply looking at their emerald- and ruby-engraved shoes.

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<sup>68</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, 13-20, 132.

<sup>69</sup> Şânîzâde Mehmet Atâullah Efendi, *Şânîzâde Tarihi: 1223-1237/1808-1821*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Çamlıca, 2008), 943.

Şânizâde’s account may not be an exaggeration; in fact, in agreement with Şânizâde’s narration, a yearbook of Kuruçeşme Surp Haç Church also confirms that the Düzoğlu family often threw crowded balls and gatherings in their mansion in the Kuruçeşme region that members of Ottoman state elite (such as Halet Efendi), as well as well-known figures from the Armenian community (such as the Allahverdioğlu family), attended.<sup>70</sup> According to Boré, “The family entertained with splendid parties, illuminations and feasts, [and] an unprecedented luxury of etiquette.”<sup>71</sup> Another account notes that the “Dooz Ouglou’ [Düzoğlu] family ’built splendid palaces on the Bosphorus, laid out magnificent gardens, [and] gave large festivals to his numerous connections, thirty or forty boat loads at a time.”<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, the Düzoğlu family did not only use the power they attained to enhance their living conditions and have a prosperous lifestyle. Alongside their attention-grabbing lifestyle, their benefaction and their cultural and social commitments were also exclusively noteworthy. The Düzoğlu family’s economic and institutional power enabled them to create cultural capital by means of investing in printed material and circulating knowledge.

As Olley notes, the Düzoğlu family acted as the patrons of education and Armenian culture in Istanbul and the wider Armenian diaspora by “[using] their economic and social capital to support intellectual activities throughout the Armenian community.”<sup>73</sup> As Catholics, their cultural and social activities had socially entrenched motivations.

The Düzoğlu family contributed to the activities of the Catholic Armenian community, the Mkhitarist Congregation, through financially supporting schools and publications. The schools they financially supported included the ones in Galata (*Lusavorçyan Mektebi*), Kartal, and Moda.<sup>74</sup> The family’s support for the Mkhitarist Congregation was not limited to solely financial assistance, but rather the family also employed numerous Mkhitarist scholars as personal confessors or tutors. As Menevişyan notes, historian Arsen Bagraduni and Minas Pjikian worked as the private tutors of the family.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Badmagan Hişadagaran Yerevman Surp Khaç Yegeğetsvo Kuruçeşmei*, [Yearbook of the Surp Haç Church, Kuruçeşme] (Istanbul: H. M. Setyan Matbaası 1934).

<sup>71</sup> Boré 1838, 58. Quoted in Olley, “Writing Music,” 69; BOA, HR.MKT.138/15, H.26.06.1272/ 1855.

<sup>72</sup> Porter 1835, 128. Quoted in Olley, “Writing Music,” 70.

<sup>73</sup> Olley, “Writing Music,” 48.

<sup>74</sup> For detailed archival documents on the Mkhitarist school (Muhitarist Mekteb, as used in the Ottoman Archives) established in Moda, Kadıköy, see BOA, Y..PRK.ZB.18/111, H.30.12.1314/ 1896; BOA, MF.MKT.503/30, H.13.01.1318/ 1900. 503-30; BOA, DH.TMIK.M..27/16, H.23.08.1314/ 1896.

<sup>75</sup> Rouben Paul Adalian, *From Humanism to Rationalism : Armenian Scholarship in the Nineteenth Century*,

One of the most prominent social activities of the family was their support of the establishment of the *Arşarunyants Ingerutyun* or the Arşarunyants Association. Established by the Armenian Catholic historian Hayr Vartabed Ğugas İnciciyan in 1802 in Venice, the *Arşarunyants Ingerutyun* was a cultural association with an aim of disseminating knowledge about Armenian history through a publication campaign.<sup>76</sup> The publication campaign aimed to spread literacy among the Armenian community, most often through books and newspapers.<sup>77</sup> In 1812, Hovhannes Ğelebi, Hagob, and MıgırdıĞ Düzoĝlu financially supported the association.

In 1812, the association published a weekly newspaper called *Tidak Püzantiyon* (the Observer of Byzantion 1812-1816).<sup>78</sup> Hagob Düzoĝlu also financially supported the publication of a journal called *Evropa* (Europe).<sup>79</sup> Additionally, the association also published *Yeĝanak Püzantiyon* (the Season of Byzantion) as a yearbook including prominent political and social events in the Armenian community. In addition to journals, Hagob Düzoĝlu and his brother Garabed had several other linguistic projects, such as the compilation of a Persian-Armenian dictionary, *Pararan Parsegeren-Hayeren* (1826), and a French-Armenian dictionary.<sup>80</sup>

Perhaps one of the most enduring cultural activities of the Düzoĝlus, apart from their involvement in the Mkhitarist community and the *Arşarunyants Ingerutyun*, was their contribution to the composition of the *Hamparsum* notation. The Düzoĝlus, especially Andon and Hagob Ğelebi Düzoĝlu, exerted a strong patronage influence on the ability of Hamparsum Limonciyan's reputation to spread nationwide.<sup>81</sup> Olley notes that during the festivities organized by the family in their mansion in Kuruĝeşme, Limonciyan was brought to perform for the guests. After his reputation grew in the Armenian community, Limonciyan was also summoned before Sultan Selim III, who allegedly claimed patronage over the works of Limonciyan. Their assistance to Hamparsum Limonciyan was exclusively essential for theorizing and disseminating the Hamparsum notation throughout Istanbul and Venice.<sup>82</sup> The

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University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies, (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1992), 41.

<sup>76</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 67.

<sup>77</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 67.

<sup>78</sup>The Mkhitarist library of Vienna recently (from December 2021 onwards) shared their digital library with open access at <https://mechitaristlibrary.org>.

<sup>79</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 67.

<sup>80</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 66-67. Teotoros Lapĝinciyan, *Baskı ve Harf: Ermeni Matbaacılık Tarihi*, ed. Osman Köker, trans. Sirvart Malhasyan and Arlet İncidüzen (İstanbul: Birzamanlar Yayıncılık, 2012), 93.

<sup>81</sup>Repertoire of Hamparsum Limonciyan can be found at BOA, TRT Müzik Dairesi Defterleri (TRT.MD.d.)

<sup>82</sup>Olley, "Writing Music," 73.

Hamparsum notation brought a novelty to Ottoman music, as well as to Armenian music.

The Düzoğlu family's sociocultural activities were indeed remarkable and had a long-lasting effect on both the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian community. Recalling the tensions against the Catholics at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the family formed ties with the Mkhitarist Congregation and partook in establishing the *Arşarunyants Ingerutyun*. The beginning of the nineteenth century also corresponds with period of the family members' execution and exile, which lasted until 1820. Conducting such activities presumably at the period where tensions culminated towards Catholic Armenians of the empire opens the ground for further research with regard to the Catholicism of the family and its political and cultural effects.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The *Amiras* emerged as a mixed group of moneylenders and craftsmen in the eighteenth century. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the *Amiras* occupied various positions in the Ottoman state service. Though they were barred from wielding formal political power, their role was pivotal for the exercise of state power, arguably until the beginning of the Tanzimat era. The *Amiras* did so primarily as important actors who strengthened the domestic economy while financing state policies. Within this period, they became a group of leaders in the Armenian community. Through the power they attained in the state service, they managed to place themselves as crucial intermediaries between the Armenian community and the Ottoman state.

The *Amiras* were witnesses of the broad changes that took place in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire and Armenian community. They were affected by these changes as they themselves contributed to them, more specifically to new economic and administrative developments. This thesis endeavored to display the shifting trajectories within the *Amiras* and highlight that they did not lose their significance by the mid-nineteenth century as historiography often claims. I argue that the changes the *Amiras* experienced can be understood as a transformation rather than a decline or a sudden disappearance. This thesis intended to display the trajectory of this transformation through the case of the Düzöğlü family.

First, the *Amiras* amassed their capital in the provinces in the eighteenth century and later migrated to Istanbul. Upon their arrival, they projected their long-pursued interests and skills in certain business ventures ranging from jewelry, trade, and moneylending to administrative professions such as those in the Imperial Mint and the Imperial Powder works. The Düzöğlü family's case provides an example of an *Amira* family involved in craftsmanship, monetary-lending activities, and commercial pursuits that connected the family to the Ottoman state since they held these positions in the service of the Ottoman state.

Second, how did these *Amiras* transform themselves to be able to work in state positions? The moment Greek and Jewish moneylenders were pulled back in the 1820s, the Düzöğlus as an *Amira* family began to replace them as moneylenders, through which they were able to increase their pivotal role in the Ottoman economy.

Third, the role of the *Amiras* as well as that of the Düzöğlü family in the Ottoman economy weakened following the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict and the Crimean War (1854-1856) with the advent of European bankers and moneylenders to the Ottoman economy. However, the Tanzimat marked the beginning of a series of administrative and bureaucratic reforms in which the Imperial Mint became the Meskûkat-ı Şâhâne Müdürlüğü. As a result of these modernization and bureaucratization efforts, the Düzöğlü family also came to the forefront in these transformations and obtained the highest ranks that were possible to obtain.

Fourth, around the mid-nineteenth century and afterwards the family members began to disperse among different professions such as industry, banking, and modern administrative bureaucratization.

In tracing and contextualizing the transformation of the *Amiras*, the Düzöğlü family is situated as a case study that offers a complicated, multidimensional approach that allows one to observe the internal dynamics and complexities of the *Amiras*. The case of the Düzöğlü family contributes to our understanding of the *Amiras*, as well as their transformation in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

Indeed, one of the outcomes of this thesis is to demonstrate the overlapping worlds the Düzöğlü family belonged to. Starting out as simple jewelers, the Düzöğlü family rose to prominence upon their entrance to the Imperial Mint. Due to their identity as Catholics, the Düzöğlü family also experienced a setback in 1819, one from which they recovered from when they were restored into their previous positions. Subsequently, as a result of changing circumstances in both the Armenian community and the Ottoman state, they separated themselves from the Ottoman state and emerged as more socially and economically independent actors. This transformation can be observed through their banking and industrial activities and their roles during the bureaucratic modernization of the Ottoman Empire.

This thesis has touched upon a topic that requires further research. The Düzöğlü family was not the only family through which the transformations of the *Amiras* can be discerned. The notion of transformation can be observed in different families and individuals. Considering their long service to the Ottoman state in one of the Empire's most prestigious institutions, this study approached the transformation from the viewpoint of the Düzöğlü family. Observing the other *Amira* families such

as the Dadyans, the Tingiryans, the Bilezikçiyans, and the Noradunkyans in parallel with the notion of transformation requires further studies to understand the *Amiras*. From a broader perspective, these studies would also shed light on elite groups, as well as the administrative and economic networks in the Ottoman Empire.

Yet another important aspect that needs further clarification is the Düzoğlu family's Catholic identity and ties with the Mkhitarist Congregation. The fact that they were Catholics also necessitates further research on family's relations with France and cultural, political and economic implications of such relation.

More broadly, an exploration of the family's intellectual engagements would demonstrate that there was an entanglement between Venice, Vienna, and Istanbul as the family searched for a broader audience to disseminate their publications. Such an exploration would also add yet another dimension to the scholarship on the literacy culture and intellectual history of the Armenian community. Employing these studies would help scholars gain a fuller picture of the Armenian community and lesser-known aspects of the Ottoman state.

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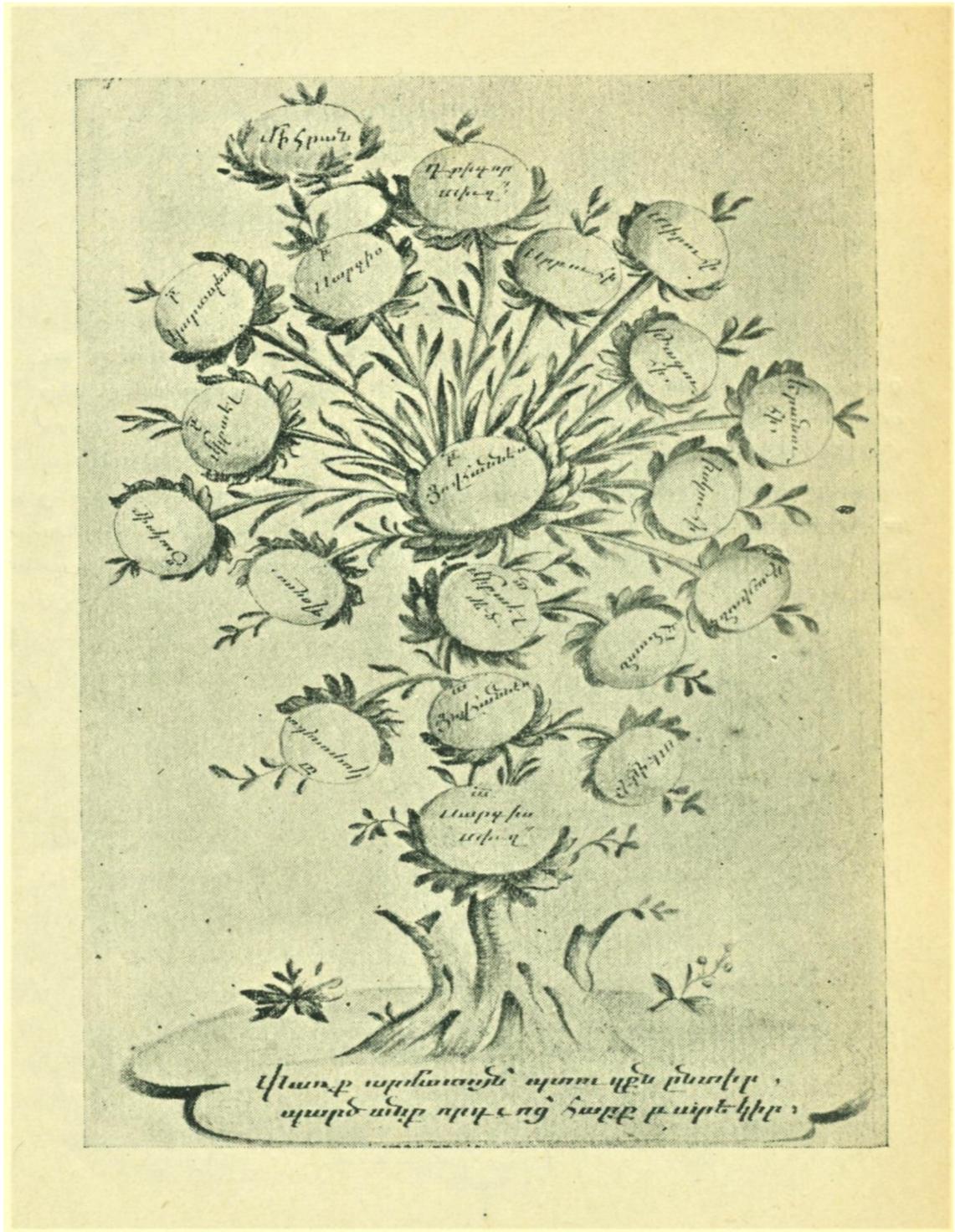
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APPENDIX A

Figure A.1 The Düzoğlu Family Tree



## Compilation of the Prominent Düzöglü Family Members.

Figure A.2 A list is compiled with biographical information provided in Mirmıryan, *Masnagan Badmutyun*; Menevişyan, *Azkapanutyun Zarmin Düzyants*; Barsoumian, "The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul;" Pamukciyan, *Biyografileriyle Ermeniler*, IV; Ottoman Archives (BOA).

Name	Title	Born	Death	Period Active	Profession	About
Harutyun	Hacı	17th c	?		Jeweler	Sarkis Düz's father
Sarkis	Mahdesi	?	1721	Ahmed III	Imperial Jeweler	Hacı Harutyun's son Was given surname "Düz" by Ahmed III
Devlet						Mahdesi Sarkis' son
Hovhannes	Ağa	?	1744	Mahmud I	Jeweler	Mahdesi Sarkis' elder son Had personal ties with Mahmud I
Mikayel	Hoca Çelebi Amira	1724	1783	Mahmud I Osman III Mustafa III Abdulhamid I	Sultan's moneylender Imperial Jeweler İfrazcıbaşı (1762-1783)	Hovhannes Ağa's son Had personal ties with Mahmud I
Hovhannes	Çelebi Amira	1749	1812	Selim III Mahmud II	Sultan's moneylender Imperial Jeweler İfrazcıbaşı (1783-1812)	Mikayel Amira's (1724) son Financed <i>Tidak Püzantiyon</i> journal
Andon	Çelebi	1765	1814			Hovhannes Amira's (1749) younger brother
Krikor	Çelebi Amira	1774	1819	Mahmud II	Imperial Jeweler İfrazcıbaşı (1812-1819)	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) son Executed
Sarkis	Çelebi Amira	1777	1819	Mahmud II	Sultan's moneylender İfrazcıbaşı	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) son Executed
Mikayel	Çelebi Amira	1786	1819	Mahmud II	İfrazcıbaşı	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) son Executed
Garabed	Bey Amira	1779	1855	Mahmud II Abdülmeçid	Imperial Mint Jeweler	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) son Exiled to Kayseri (1819?) Pardoned in 1823 by Mahmud II Had personal ties with Abdülmeçid. Was given "İmtiyaz Nişanı" and title "Bey" in 1849. Abdülmeçid's mother's moneylender in 1850.
Hagob	Çelebi Amira	1793	1847	Mahmud II Abdülmeçid	Sultan's moneylender Imperial Mint Jeweler İfrazcıbaşı (1823-1847)	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) son Exiled to Kayseri (1819?) Pardoned in 1823 by Mahmud II Financed the paper factor in Izmir
Boğos	Hoca Amira	1797	1871	Mahmud II Abdülmeçid Abdülaziz	Imperial Mint Jeweler	Hovhannes Amira's (1749) oğlu. Exiled to Kayseri (1819?) Pardoned in 1823 by Mahmud II Was given "İmtiyaz Nişanı" (1849) Among the founders of the Ottoman Bank. Was given Prussian Imperial seal (1858)
Mihran	Bey Amira	1817	1891	Mahmud II Abdülmeçid Abdülaziz Murad V	İfrazcıbaşı (1847-1850) Meskukat Müdürü (1850-1880) Imperial Mint jeweler	Sarkis Amira's (1777) son. Was given "İmtiyaz Nişanı" in 1849 and title "Bey" in 1855 Was a member of the Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye Went to Paris with Sultan Abdülmeçid for an economy related correspondence (1867) Was given rank "Bâlâ" (1872) Elected to Council of State (1872) Elected as member of Meclis-i Ayan (1877-1878)
Sarkis	Bey	1851	?		Worked in the Imperial Mint	
Hrand	Bey	1861	?		Woked in the Ottoman Bureaucracy	Studied agricultural engineering in Paris Worked in Matbuat-ı Ecnebiye Kalemî (1897) Worked in Nezaret-i Umur-ı Şehbenderi Kalemî (1898) Became Baş Şehbender for Mesenye (Kalamata, Greece)
Herasez	Bey	1862	?			