

INTRODUCTION

The *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman* of Âşıkpaşa-zâde Dervîş Ahmed, completed around 1478, is perhaps the most original historical work produced in the Ottoman realm in the 15th century. What distinguishes it from the works of other historians is first of all the large number of details and original information that it includes. Due to the inclusion of an earlier text, the famous *Menâkıb-ı Âl-i Osman* of Yahşi Fakîh, the son of Orhan's *imam*, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* represents a great originality as compared to the other historical works composed in the 15th century. His work includes, via Yahşi Fakîh, a significant body of earlier traditions concerning the first days of the Ottoman enterprise. Moreover, used exhaustively by Mevlânâ Neşrî as the first source of his *Cihan-nümâ*, most of the anecdotes and stories of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* have been transferred to future Ottoman historians.¹ Thus, in a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work contributed to a large extent to what we may call a "canonical" interpretation of Ottoman history from its beginning to the end of the reign of Mehmed II. İdris Bidlisî and Kemalpaşa-zâde, representing a turning point in Ottoman historiography, perpetuated the anecdotes and stories taken from Âşıkpaşa-zâde via Neşrî, and gave them an authoritative status.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* has been studied extensively by philologists and historians. First of all, the work has been published twice in the first decades of the 20th century. Âlî Bey, from the Ottoman History Association (*Tarih-i Osmânî Encümeni*), and

¹ V. L. Ménage, *Neshrî's History of the Ottomans. The Sources and Development of the Text* (London, 1964), 10-1. For a demonstration of Neşrî's extensive use of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, see the "concordance tables" prepared by Ménage, *ibid.*, 59-69.

Friedrich Giese, prepared two separate critical editions of the text.² Âlî Bey prepared the edition as part of a larger project of the Ottoman History Association, which published a series of the works by Ottoman historians in the first decades of the 20th century. Friedrich Giese, on the other hand, was a representative of the German philological school, and was already interested in old Ottoman texts, as shown by his 1922 edition of the Anonymous *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*.³

After Âlî Bey's and Giese's editions, a small book was published by Ahmet Refik in 1933, including a short biographical notice and some excerpts from the text.⁴ Finally, in 1949, Nihal Atsız published a complete transcription of the *Tevârîh*, by comparing various manuscripts and former editions.⁵

About Âlî Bey's edition of *Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, it may be said that it reflects the concerns of several generations of Ottoman historians, scholars and laymen. Since the "Ottomanism" debate of the Tanzimat era, there was a great curiosity about the foundation, the history, the past events of the empire. The edition of Giese, on the other hand, represents the interests of a number of German and Austrian philologists-cum-historians in Ottoman and Turkish history. It is perhaps better illustrated by the careers of Paul Wittek and Franz Babinger, who served in the Ottoman lands during the First World War. Newly established political ties, a shared military adventure had already created the setting for the emergence of a sense of closeness and collaboration. Thus, it was to be expected that these scholars, with an important philological formation at the background, would be pulled to the study of Ottoman texts and Ottoman history.

² Âlî Bey, *Tevarîh-i Âl-i Osman. Âşıkpaşa-zâde Tarihi* (Istanbul, 1912), hereafter referred to as *Âlî/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*; and Friedrich Giese, *Die altosmanische Chronik des 'Âşıkpaşazâde* (Leipzig, 1929).

³ Friedrich Giese, *Die altosmanischen anonymen Chroniken: Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman* (Breslau, 1922).

⁴ Ahmet Refik, *Âşıkpaşazade* (Istanbul, 1933).

Ahmet Refik's book, on the other hand, was published as part of a series of popular books about Ottoman historians. This small book, including some excerpts from Âşıkpaşa-zâde, was published side by side with similar editions of Nâimâ, Kâtip Çelebi, Peçevî, etc. Ahmet Refik preferred to reproduce some episodes he thought to be critical, such as the coming out of Osman, the battle of Nicopolis, the battles of Varna and Kosovo. With his usual aim of disseminating history to the masses, Ahmet Refik excluded the passages he found to be uninteresting.

Nihal Atsız's transcription is also part of a series of the works of Ottoman historians from the 15th century. He published the *Tevârih* of Âşıkpaşa-zâde together with the works of Ahmedî, Şükrullah, Nişancı Mehmed and Bayatî Hasan. It may be claimed that Atsız's effort of publication was also intended to provide a public, then quite far from any knowledge of the Arabic script, with the transcriptions or translations of the first historical works produced in the Ottoman realm.

All these studies may be situated within a philological tradition. The outlook of this tradition is well illustrated by Franz Babinger, who in the introduction to his book on Ottoman history-writing, claims that his aim is not to analyze the works of Ottoman historians. Quoting Stefan Zweig, he says that he doesn't intend to understand the essence of the universe of thought of these historians.⁶ From these remarks, it follows that Babinger's and other philologists' effort is simply to catalogue the historians and their works, in a form akin to a dictionary.

This philological tradition was eager to prepare catalogues, compose lists, form a body of references. Then, occasionally, a scholar could set on to prepare a critical edition

⁵ *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, edited by Nihal Atsız in *Osmanlı Tarihleri* (Istanbul, 1949), 77-319. Hereafter referred to as Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde.

of one of the items in these lists, or to content himself with reproducing a facsimile of an authentic text, preceded by a short introduction. On the other hand, the merit of this philological approach cannot be denied. A scholarly zeal, a disciplined and categorizing attitude towards ancient texts provided the academic and lay circles with an invaluable knowledge about these texts. In a sense, these philologists unveiled an important body of raw material for future researchers.

On the other hand, other scholars made an extensive use of historical texts dating from the 15th century. The works of the scholars dealing with the emergence of the Ottoman state, or with the problems of early Ottoman history reflect a great interest in these first historical accounts produced in the Ottoman realm. For some historians, these texts provided a certain chronology, a certain sequence of events. Thus, they used these sources in a rather direct manner, without much criticizing the made-up parts of the texts, or their importance for cultural history in general. For instance, Paul Wittek's monography on the principality of Mentеше, Mustafa Akdağ's study on the economic and social history of Anatolia, or Halil İnalçık's early studies reflect such an approach towards these sources.⁷ Fuad Köprülü, with all his reservations about the "naïve anecdotes of early Ottoman chroniclers", has made use of these about the realities of life in the frontier zones, or about the question of the origins of Osman.⁸ In the case of Sencer Divitçioğlu and Rudi Paul Lindner, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* has been consulted in order

⁶ Franz Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri* (Ankara, 1982), x.

⁷ Paul Wittek, *Menteşe Beyliği. 13-15inci Asırda Garbî Küçük Asya Tarihine Ait Tetkik* (Ankara, 1986); Mustafa Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadî ve İçtimaî Tarihi (1243-1453)*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1995); Halil İnalçık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar* (Ankara, 1954).

⁸ Fuad Köprülü, *Les origines de L'Empire ottoman* (Paris, 1935).

to find some clues for the authors' anthropological concerns.⁹ Colin Imber has used Âşıkpaşa-zâde and other chroniclers in order to display the fictions of early Ottoman historians, thus giving an account of the motivations, ideals and expectations of these historians.¹⁰ Finally, Cemal Kafadar, among many other things, has addressed the critical issue of historical consciousness in the Ottoman realm in the 15th century.¹¹

All these interpretations and evaluations of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* in mind, my aim has been to find out what was the political and historical consciousness of him. I think that the first Ottoman historians offer us more than some naïve anecdotes. Or, these naïve anecdotes are in themselves the signs of a political/historical understanding. What a historian chooses to include in his work, or what he prefers to omit may be interpreted as the clues unveiling the outlook of this historian. What I have tried to do has been to analyze the anecdotes of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, his views about individuals, his categorizations of Ottoman sultans, dervishes and ghazis. In this respect, I must emphasize that the works of early Ottoman historians can't be lumped into an amorphous body of court historians, as Lindner suggests.¹² I agree with Lindner, and with Colin Imber, that the works of the early chroniclers should be approached with the utmost suspicion. However, these histories may not be labelled as "court histories". It is true that the works of Şükrullah or Nişancı Mehmed were written by two prominent members of the Ottoman higher classes. Again, the *İskender-nâme* of Ahmedî was written in order to entertain the Germiyanid

⁹ Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Osmanlı Beyliğinin Kuruluşu* (Istanbul, 1996); *idem.*, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumunu* (Kırklareli, 1981); Rudi Paul Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia* (Bloomington, 1983).

¹⁰ Colin Imber, "The Ottoman Dynastic Myth", in *Studies in Ottoman History and Law* (Istanbul, 1996), 7-27; *idem.*, "The Legend of Osman Gazi", in *op.cit.*, 323-31.

¹¹ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds. The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1995).

beg and the Ottoman sultan. However, the Anonymous body and Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* were not written on the request of a patron. Moreover, Lindner assumes that the historical works of the 15th century "hastened to devise a story harmonizing the discordant notes". This may be true of Neşrî who in a sense edited earlier works, erased some criticisms and constructed a harmony between the popular tradition of history-writing and the works of Şükrullah or Nişancı Mehmed. Nevertheless, the works written before Neşrî, and especially the Anonymous body of histories and Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, are far from reflecting a harmonizing attitude. The "discordant notes" are often heard in these two works, who include interesting criticisms that are not found elsewhere.

To sum up, in my thesis, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is not reduced to a simple component of a courtly tradition. The *Tevârih* is analyzed in respect to its difference from other historical works, and there is indeed an important number of divergences to be interpreted.

On the other hand, these divergences and differences should not lead us to think that Âşıkpaşa-zâde represents a radical critical attitude in respect to the works of a tradition of history-writing closer to court circles. For instance, Cemal Kafadar criticizes the approach of Lindner and of other scholars who interpret the works of early Ottoman historiographers as the undifferentiated reflections of a "state ideology".¹³ Even if I agree with Kafadar's criticisms, I think that he stresses too much the critical attitude of Âşıkpaşa-zâde and his relations with the ghazi-dervish milieu.¹⁴ I will demonstrate that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is neither a simple historical work repeating the "state ideology"

¹² Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, 19. Lindner compares the works of early Ottoman historians to Einhard's life of Charlemagne, and he suggests that these histories were written on the request of a patron.

¹³ Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 98-100.

in 15th century, nor a collection of the views of the ghazi-dervish milieu. The *Tevârih* includes both. It is possible to find formulas of praise glorifying the deeds of the Ottoman house together with an emphatic attitude to ghazis and dervishes. Thus, rather than exclusively representing a “conformist” approach or a critical standpoint, Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih* is an intersection point for both approaches. This ambiguity is what makes the work most valuable, and what distinguishes it from similar works produced in the 15th century.

My point view has been largely inspired by a recent study of Halil İncılık on how to read Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih*.¹⁵ In this article, İncılık emphasizes both the dervish-ghazi connections of Âşıkpaşa-zâde and his relations with some members of the Ottoman palace. Thus, İncılık offers a more complete assessment than Cemal Kafadar who ends his interpretation of Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s life and connections with Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s relations to some ghazi circles in the Balkans. However, as İncılık suggests, after going into the Balkans, Âşıkpaşa-zâde returned to the capital and settled there. Thus, he was not only the spokesman of the ghazi-dervish circles, but established some connections with the political center as well. If the life story of Âşıkpaşa-zâde has to be taken into account as one of the important influences behind his *Tevârih*, then his life in the capital city also has to be emphasized. Âşıkpaşa-zâde lived in the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi from his birth to circa 1438. Then, he was in the Balkans from 1438 to circa 1457. After this date, he lived in Istanbul until his death. Thus, he spent approximately 30 years of his life in Istanbul as a sheikh with some connections to the palace circles.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 100-2.

¹⁵ Halil İncılık, “How to Read ‘Âshik Pasha-Zâde’s History’”, in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Professor V. L. Ménage*, edited by Colin Heywood and Colin Imber (Istanbul, 1994), 139-56.

The biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde itself may be accepted as a metaphor of the dual aspect of his *Tevârih*. As I have mentioned above, Âşıkpaşa-zâde praised the rulers of the Ottoman house and magnified the achievements of the ghazi-dervish milieu simultaneously. Thus, any analysis of his work has to take into account this dual aspect, and has to be careful about not putting it into a predefined category.

For the purposes of this thesis, the most valuable approach has been offered by Cemal Kafadar, who has set out to analyze, as one of the sections of his study on the construction of the Ottoman state, the issue of historical consciousness. It may be claimed that the instances of historical consciousness, as observed in the works of 15th century Ottoman historians, represent the various mentalities of the time. The interpretation of a historian's work about the issue of fratricide or succession, the criticisms voiced against some members of the Ottoman administration or the body of religious scholars, provide us a large number of clues about the way history and politics were conceived in the 15th century. Moreover, these earliest historical sources are situated in relation to a critical threshold, symbolized by the development of a central bureaucracy, by the sophistication of administrative technics, by the emergence of a military might, by the appearance of a social differentiation separating the members of the military class from the rest of the population, and the body of religious scholars, the *ulemâ* from the representatives of a *volk* Islam. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and other historians try to make sense of all these dynamics, and interpret them according to their own peculiar concepts and notions.

In my thesis, I have tried to unveil the political mentality and historical consciousness of Âşıkpaşa-zâde as represented by his *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. As

mentioned above, the political mentality of Âşıkpaşa-zâde may not be evaluated by reference to a state ideology or a consistent critical attitude. The work's value lies in the fact that it crystallizes both. It is not totally committed to a certain "state ideology" or "imperial ideology", nevertheless including some signs showing that a new notion of sultanic grandeur comes gradually into place. Again, the work includes some criticisms directed against some new fiscal practices, but these criticisms never go beyond the stigmatization of some individuals and don't concern the members of the Ottoman house. Throughout my study, it seemed important to note the manifestations of this political/historical consciousness without trying to find a definite name to it. The originality of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's, and his contemporaries' political/historical consciousness was that it could include simultaneously seemingly different opinions. Thus, for me, to identify this conflicting body of opinions has been more important than to seek a category, a concept which would inclusively define the consciousness of the time in its totality.

In order to analyze the *Tevârih*, a certain contextualization of the work is necessary. The text has obvious connections with other cultural products of the time, be they written or oral. Moreover, its place among other historical texts of the time needs to be assessed.

After that, the biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde has to be studied. All previous scholars contented themselves with repeating the few biographical references made by the author himself in his work. However, it seems possible to fill the gaps between these scattered

biographical evidences. It may be expected that the biography of the author will provide some clues about his social position and a whole set of aspirations, ideas, and opinions.

To inquire upon the genre features and the sources of the *Tevârih* may help us further in situating it among the general cultural atmosphere of the time. The sources used by an author, and other sources that he ignored or omitted, may be interpreted with reference to his cultural background or literary abilities as well as his connections and social milieu.

After briefly analyzing these points, the idealizations and categorizations of Âşıkpaşa-zâde concerning Ottoman rulers, dervishes, ghazis, Christians, etc. will be brought to the fore. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's political opinions and criticisms are voiced through individuals, and not through processes. This fact may be imputed to an understanding of history not as an interplay of abstract dynamics, but as something created and directed by individuals. Thus, it is evident that some of these individuals are praised for the well-being that they brought, while others will be stigmatized as the agents of evil.

I. LITERARY/HISTORICAL GENRES IN THE OTTOMAN REALM IN THE 15TH CENTURY

Any analysis of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, or of any other text produced in the 15th century in the Ottoman realm requires an understanding of other texts that have circulated at that time, as well as an understanding of the products of a more popular, largely oral literature some of which are known through their written versions created again in the 15th century. Of course, any text from any century is meaningful only within the tight web of other literary, historical, scientific products that led to the formation of a somewhat palpable background dictating common themes, choice of words and motives, and the nature of the seemingly personal judgements. The literary products of any century are worth being examined within this tightly knit structure.

The development of the social sciences in the 20th century brought with it an important body of studies, which may be generally defined as belonging to various currents of literary criticism. Given the degree of sophistication and the erudition of these currents of literary criticism, my analysis of some genres dominant in the Ottoman realm in the 15th century will be much more modest. Moreover, it should be clarified that my aim is not to provide an analysis dealing in depth with the totality of literary production realized during the 15th century in the Ottoman realm. A study concerned with the products of Turkish/Turkic literature has been done with great skill by Alessio Bombaci.¹⁶ A similar analysis, showing to what extent all the sources of a given period

¹⁶ Alessio Bombaci, *Histoire de la littérature turque* (Paris, 1968).

may be explored, has been provided by Fuad Köprülü, in his long article on the possible sources for studies on the Seljuks of Anatolia.¹⁷

My principal point of interest is that some of the works, oral and written, that circulated in the 15th century contributed to some extent to the historical works. My aim is to make a short definition of these genres, and to underline to what extent they contributed to historical works, to what extent they were directly or indirectly quoted by Ottoman historians.

After having laid down some genres with a short definition and with their eventual worth for historians, I will next give a brief sketch about Ottoman historiography in the 15th century. The historical works produced in the 15th century are the first examples of the texts dealing with the deeds of the Ottoman house and the events that took place within the Ottoman realm. These texts represent an important body of material for deducing the idealizations concerning the Ottoman house, for analyzing the discourses on ghazis and dervishes. It has been more than once demonstrated that these historical works may reflect some flaws and inconsistencies in their chronologies. Nevertheless, the images and metaphors used by these historians –and by a whole set of social stratas represented by them- are far more important than the chronological worth of their works.

I. 1. Popular Epics

In the context of 14th and 15th-century Anatolia, there was an important circulation of popular stories concerning the deeds of some prominent dervishes and warriors.¹⁸ For

¹⁷ Fuad Köprülü, “Anadolu Selçukluları Tarihinin Yerli Kaynakları”, *Belleten* 7 (1943): 379-519. An English translation by Gary Leiser has also been published: *The Seljuks of Anatolia. Their History and*

the present discussion, the term of “popular epics” includes on the one hand epic texts such as the *Battal-nâme* and *Dânişmend-nâme*, and on the other hand some narratives which can be classified under the name of *menâkıb-nâme* or *vilâyet-nâme*. Of course, these two cycles shared a similar set of values. The element of holy war, a certain number of fanciful achievements realized by some heroes and dervishes against Christians –and sometimes, as in the *Saltuk-nâme*, against Muslims suspected of heresy- constitute the main thematic structure of these works. However, the *menâkıb-nâmes* and the *Battal-nâmes* should be dealt with separately. The heroic stories and those about the deeds of the dervishes began a life of their own in a separate setting, and the dervish stories only gradually incorporated some of the characteristics of heroic stories.

To begin with, the epic tradition is represented by the *Battal-nâme* and the *Dânişmend-nâme*. Generally speaking, both narratives include an ideal of holy war, and the wonderful achievements of some heroes who held high the banner of Islam. The precedents of the *Battal-nâme* are obviously the Arabic tribal sagas, which were vested with an Islamic ideology during the Islamic expansion. In the process, some themes from Persian historical romances and popular tales were added in to the epic structure. In this sense, the *Battal-nâme* represents an amalgamation of Arabic, Persian, and Turkic elements. Themes from popular tales were added next to each other in order to magnify the achievements of the hero Seyyid Battal.¹⁹ The contribution of tales and popular

Culture According to Local Muslim Sources (Salt Lake City, 1992).

¹⁸ However, before beginning to discuss the popular epics composed by Muslims and/or Turks, it is important to note that the peculiar dynamics of the frontier region led to the production of similar works on the part of Armenians and Greeks experiencing the same tensions and the same struggles. For a comparison of these texts with the atmosphere of Turco-Muslim popular epics, see Anthony Bryer, “*Han Turali Rides Again*”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 11 (1987): 193-206; Paul Magdalino, “Honour among Romaioi: the framework of social values in the world of Digenes Akrites and Kekaumenos”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 13 (1989): 183-218.

¹⁹ Irène Mélikoff, *La geste de Melik Dânişmend*, vol. I (Istanbul, 1960), 44.

stories is evident: the theater of action of Seyyid Battal is an imaginary world, full of devils, genies and sorcerers. Seyyid Battal voyages from a magic island to the mythical mountain of Kaf, he chases his enemies in legendary cities, he dwells in magic forests and gardens.²⁰ It can be said that the *Battal-nâme* is an important testimony to the popular mentality of a given period.

On the other hand, for the concerns of the present discussion, some themes and stereotypes of the *Battal-nâme* are important. The psychological disposition and general behavior of Seyyid Battal are very close to the ideal of dervishes: a contempt towards worldly goods and self-sacrifice in fighting against the enemies of religion.²¹ And just like a *menâkıb-nâme* character, he has a power of sanctity and he can perform miracles. He can speak with non-human creatures, he is immune from magic and sorcery, he is helped by Hızır, whose intervention saves him on more than one occasion. Thus, just like a *menâkıb-nâme* character, he holds a set of supernatural qualities. It may be said that these supernatural qualities are, in a sense, a translation of pagan beliefs into the personality of Seyyid Battal. Thus, he is not only a warrior of Islam but an ideal type of tribal, popular stories.

Another important theme of the *Battal-nâme* is the body of stereotypes concerning Christians. There are some Christians who convert to Islam and who, just like Köse Mihal, who is said to have guided Ottoman forces into Byzantine territory, help Seyyid Battal in Byzantine lands. For instance, Şemmas Pîr, just like Köse Mihal, converts to Islam after Seyyid Battal's father addresses him in his dream.²² Thus, a first

²⁰ Hasan Köksal, *Battalnâmelerde Tip ve Motif Yapısı* (Ankara, 1984), 82.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 67-8.

²² *Ibid.*, 106-8.

stereotype concerning Christians is the “positive” personality, who convert to Islam on the intervention of some divine/supernatural element and become a useful ally.

Then, there is another stereotype concerning the “negative” personality, the perfidious Christian, which is represented by the so-called Akabe Kadı and his son. Akabe Kadı is a false convert who lives in the court of the Caliph in Baghdad, and he informs the Byzantines of the activities of Muslims. However, he cannot escape an exemplary punishment by Seyyid Battal.²³

The peculiar themes of the *Battal-nâme* require a much more detailed analysis. For instance, the link between the *Battal-nâme* and the legends of Turkic peoples, or the common themes between Persian historical romances and the *Battal-nâme* could be examined. However, for our purpose, it suffices to state the general lines of this epic genre. It is obvious that the *Battal-nâme* reflected the stereotypes and idealizations of a given period. Seyyid Battal, in a sense, represented the ideal type of ghazis and dervishes. As mentioned above, the events and achievements took place in a fanciful atmosphere, intermingling religious concerns and popular beliefs together.

Another example of heroic legends is the *Dânişmend-nâme*. However, here, the element of holy war is much more asserted than the *Battal-nâme*. Seyyid Dânişmend appears as a more “serious” warrior than Seyyid Battal, in the sense that the *Dânişmend-nâme* doesn’t include humourous elements. The *Dânişmend-nâme* represents an “edited” form of the *Battal-nâme*. It can perhaps be due to the fact that the written version was produced on the request of Murad II in the 15th century by Ârif Ali, the commander of the fortress of Tokat.²⁴ It can be assumed that Ârif Ali had intended to produce a text like a

²³ *Ibid.*, 118-22.

²⁴ Köprülü, *The Seljuks of Anatolia*, 41-3.

gazavât-nâme, where the element of war, the austerity and dedication of the warrior was more important than anything else. Nevertheless, the *Dânişmend-nâme* is an important constituent part of the epic cycle, widely read throughout Anatolia. The atmosphere of holy war, the themes about dervishes marching in front of the army and about warriors who tirelessly fight against the enemy are reminding the reader of some parts of the Anonymous *Tevârihs*, or some scenes described in *Âşıkpaşa-zâde* about the deeds of the ghazis.

Another body of texts that share common characteristics with these heroic legends is the *menâkıb-nâme* tradition. *Menâkıb-nâmes* were first composed in order to create a coherent discourse woven around a religious order, to re-produce and propagate this discourse, or to gain the approval of the *ulemâ*.²⁵ However, especially during the 15th century, *menâkıb-nâmes* written in the Ottoman realm began to bring together the virtues of a dervish life and the values of the warriors. In the *menâkıb-nâmes* written for dervishes like Seyyid Ali Sultan, Sultan Şucauddin²⁶ and Otman Baba,²⁷ these central figures were presented as charismatic personalities, preaching Islam and fighting the enemies of religion.

The emergence of the dervish-ghazi theme in these *menâkıb-nâmes* may have something to do with the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans. An important number of Anatolian dervishes went over to the Balkans in this process. It can be assumed that some of these dervishes were in search of securing their existence financially, while others

²⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menâkıbnâmeler. Metodolojik Bir Yaklaşım* (Ankara, 1997), 36.

²⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Türk Tarihinin Kaynağı Olarak Bektaşî Menâkıbnâme (Vilâyetnâme)lerinin Mahiyeti", in *IX. Türk Tarih Kongresi. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, vol. III (Ankara, 1989), 1242-3.

²⁷ Halil İnalcık, "Dervish and Sultan: An Analysis of the *Otman Baba Vilâyetnâmesi*", in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire. Essays in Economy and Society* (Bloomington, 1993), 23-5.

were compelled by the central political force to emigrate to the Balkans as an outcome of a certain policy of pacification and control.²⁸ It seems that there is a correlation between this demographic movement and the state of mind of the dervish milieu. For those dervishes who went over to the Balkans in order to preach Islam, or to “colonize” the former possessions of infidels, these *menâkıb-nâmes* represented again some ideal types whose exemplary deeds were a sort of behavioral norm. Again, just as some epic texts were intended to prepare the soldiers for the battle, these *menâkıb-nâmes* may have been composed in order to prepare some dervishes for an eventual immigration to a new area.

In this respect, I think that the perfect synthesis between dervish and warrior values is represented by the Saltuk-nâme, compiled on the orders of the Ottoman prince Cem by Ebu'l-Hayr Rumî, a member of his retinue, in the 1480s.²⁹ Showing that not only dervishes and soldiers but also princes were interested in these popular stories, the Saltuk-nâme is a collection of legendary achievements of a dervish-warrior who wages war primarily in the Balkans, but whose activities well extend beyond this area to reach North Africa and Spain. It is interesting to note that the central figure of the Saltuk-nâme, Sarı Saltuk, is portrayed in this compilation as a Sunnite dervish whose enemies are not only the infidels, but some dervishes who doesn't pray. Sarı Saltuk doesn't like Shiites, and he warns Baba Tapduk who allows women and men together in his religious ceremonies.³⁰

İnalçık emphasizes that “frontier fighting in the path of God, and *mücâhede* of the dervish to conquer the path leading to God, had a common mystic meaning”.

²⁸ For the activities of dervishes in the Balkans, see Ömer Lütfü Barkan, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Vakıflar ve Temlikler”, *Vakıflar Dergisi* 2 (1942): 279-386.

²⁹ Irène Mélikoff, “Qui était Sarı Saltuk? Quelques remarques sur les manuscrits du Saltuknâme”, in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Prof. V. L. Ménage*, 232-7.

³⁰ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “Sarı Saltuk ve Saltuknâme”, *Türk Kültürü* 197 (1979): 273-4.

These texts that tell the deeds of the legendary heroes of Islamic warfare were widely known in Anatolia, first of all due to their quality of being an important part of the oral culture; they were told in market places, hostels, etc. On the other hand, it cannot be claimed that these epic texts are first-hand historical sources. Even if some central figures were historical characters, only a few details were taken from the true biographies, such as Seyyid Battal's life as a Muslim soldier on the frontier, or Sarı Saltuk's immigration to Dobrudja in the second half of the 13th century. First of all, these texts lack a chronology and, if there is any, it is highly unreliable. Second, due to their epic quality, these texts intermingle the deeds of several individuals by melting a number of achievements within the personality of a single hero, thus hindering the possibility of providing information on a given individual, be he an army commander, a leading religious personality, etc.

The interest of these texts is due more to their cultural significance than their historical accuracy. This means that these texts are the result of a situation of cultural and military confrontation, a confrontation that did not always preclude the eventuality of a cohabitation and cultural/religious syncretism. However, when it is considered that this confrontation, which first took place in Syria, and gradually shifted towards the West, defined the everyday life in Anatolia for a very long time, the significance of these epic texts can be recognized: The texts represent a very popular self-image that prevailed in that period: this was, above all, the self-image of the warriors and some zealous dervishes whose mode of existence consisted to some extent of waging war and preaching. In addition, even if one didn't wage war, be it the armed warfare of the warriors or the so-called "war against one's self" of the dervishes, war was an everyday reality at that time, a living memory, a source of edifying examples. To sum up, the interest of these epics is

that they bring together an ethos of war and religious behaviour, heroism and dedication, ideals and a subsequent striving to live up to these ideals. It can be said that this discourse shaped the mentality of individuals belonging to various professions and of different social standings.

Concerning the discussion about Ottoman history-writing in the 15th century, it can be said that these epics contributed some stereotypes to the first histories of the Ottoman house, and especially to the historical works which were written by individuals close to the ghazi-dervish milieu. To be sure, the heroes of these epics were not transcribed by name into these histories. However, a whole ethos of warrior values, intermingled with a zealous discourse on religious behavior, was repeated in all chronicles. While dealing with the genre features of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, I will provide some examples and comparisons to sustain these formulations. Until then, it suffices to say that the aesthetics, contents, ideas, and stereotypes of these epic texts contributed to a great extent to the works of some Ottoman historians.

Finally, as a reservation, it should be underlined that, in Anatolia and the Balkans in the 14th and 15th centuries, the situation was not always as antagonistic as it is described in these texts to be. Besides references to the tolerance of the Ottoman conquerors, it is possible to find some evidence for instances of cohabitation between Christians and Muslims. However, it is obvious that the discourse of legitimation used by the political center always focused on the prominence of the efforts by the sultan and his warriors to raise high the banner of Islam. Moreover, there were some people who liked to call themselves ghazis, and for whom waging war was perhaps the only means to make

a living. Accordingly, it would not be surprising to find out that they were the proponents of a so-called holy war, or that they enjoyed the epic stories of warriors and holy men who, in a sense, represented the ego-ideals for them.

I. 2. *Gazavât-nâmes*

While discussing the sources of Ottoman history-writing in the 15th century, another important genre is the *gazavât-nâme*. Together with the *feth-nâmes*, which are the official reports composed after a victory and sent to various Muslim rulers, *gazavât-nâmes* recorded the achievements of the Ottoman army.³¹ Composed generally on the instigation of the sultan, the *gazavât-nâmes* were in a sense an alternative to, or a continuation of the popular epics. They were of course intended for the enjoyment of sultans and high-ranking members of the military class. However, as *feth-nâmes* were dispatched to Muslim rulers, it can be imagined that *gazavât-nâmes* were also intended to be read by a large public, just as popular epics were.

From Agâh Sırrı Levend's exhaustive study on the *gazavât-nâmes*,³² it can be concluded that the genre first appeared during Murad II's reign. When it is considered that Murad II's reign was characterized by antagonistic struggles as well as by some drawbacks and defeats in the Balkans,³³ the need to compose *gazavât-nâmes* becomes evident. Given the fact that Murad I and Bayezid I were forced to wage war both on Anatolian and Balkan fronts, it can be conjectured that the struggles of these rulers had also incited some people to record the extraordinary achievements, the fabulous military

³¹ Bernard Lewis, "The Utility of Ottoman Fethnâmes", in *Historians of the Middle East*, edited by B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1962), 192.

³² Agâh Sırrı Levend, *Gazavât-nâmeler ve Mihaloğlu Ali Bey'in Gazavât-nâmesi* (Ankara, 1956).

exploits of the time. However, given the lack of any *gazavât-nâmes* from the reign of these rulers, it can be concluded that, if ever composed, such texts are lost.

Another interesting feature of the *gazavât-nâmes* is that their number begins to increase under Mehmed II; the conquest of Constantinople becomes a theme par excellence of the *gazavât-nâmes*.³⁴ It can be suggested that the *gazavât-nâmes* took over the epic cycle represented by the *Battal-nâme* and *Dânişmend-nâme*. It was noted above that an edition of the *Dânişmend-nâme* prepared on the orders of Murad II ignored the humorous element and the themes of entertainment present in the *Battal-nâme*. Thus, as the products of the same period, *gazavât-nâmes* can be said to represent a more “formal”, “official” account of heroic deeds. It can also be due to the fact that sultanic might and imperial design took over the deeds of the ghazis. It will be explained below how the ghazis gradually lose their prominence in Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s account and how their place is filled by the figure of the sultan, who subsumes the military activities of the ghazis under his general command.

The *gazavât-nâmes* also have a relevance for 15th-century Ottoman historians. These texts were largely quoted by historians. Next to the use of historical calendars, a historian, when in need of data which he could not find in other sources, made use of the *gazavât-nâmes*.³⁵ It will be shown that Âşıkpaşa-zâde and/or another copyist later reproducing his text made an extensive use of the *gazavât-nâmes*, especially for the events of the reign of Bayezid II. It can be asserted that, already accustomed to the symbols and metaphors of the popular epics, historians welcomed the *gazavât-nâmes* in

³³ For the tense atmosphere of the last years of Murad II, see Halil İnalçık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, 1-53.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-9. A *feth-nâme*, skipped over by A. S. Levend, has been published by Franz Babinger: *Kivâmî, Fetihnâme-i Sultan Mehmed* (Istanbul, 1955).

their texts. Moreover, the *gazavât-nâme* tradition had an additional superiority over the epic tradition: it was not a pseudo-historical genre telling distant and sometimes unrecognizable events, but instead an immediate account of the deeds of the sultans, completed by the inclusion of a chronology.

I. 3. Historical Calendars

Another important source, directly used by the historians are the annals, or the historical calendars (*takvimler*), which were composed to a large extent for begs and sultans. It can be assumed that the practice of compiling calendars was related to the formation of a court culture. It is known that similar calendars were composed for the use of the Seljuk court.³⁶ On the other hand, two books of Nâsireddin Tûsî on the art of preparing calendars were translated during the reign of Mehmed I.³⁷ Compiling calendars or computing time sequences was crucial for calculating the dates of the month of Ramadan, or the times of prayer. Moreover, it must have been important, within a court, to have a historical list of all past rulers, or to make some predictions about eventual military campaigns.

The historical calendars were originally intended to give some information about the movements of the stars and were used to predict the future, or explain some events.³⁸ For instance, in a historical calendar, Murad II's inclination towards worldly pleasures and wine-drinking was explained by the dominance of the zodiac sign of *sünbüle*.³⁹

³⁵ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography", in *Historians of the Middle East*, 159.

³⁶ Osman Turan, *Istanbul'un Fethinden Önce Yazılmış Tarihi Takvimler* (Ankara, 1984), 1.

³⁷ Ramazan Şeşen, "Onbeşinci Yüzyılda Türkçeye Tercüme", *XI. Türk Tarih Kongresi. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, vol. III (Ankara, 1994), 916.

³⁸ Nihal Atsız, "Fatih Sultan Mehmed'e Sunulmuş Tarihi Bir Takvim", *Istanbul Enstitüsü Mecmuası* 3 (1957): 17-8.

³⁹ Osman Turan, *op. cit.*, 6.

However, beyond such interesting entries, these calendars came to be precious sources for historians due to the fact that they included the names of sultans and princes and some dates of accession to the throne. Moreover, for more recent periods, these calendars included short notes on the events of each year, such as a battle, an epidemics, an earthquake, and the like.⁴⁰

Despite some inaccuracies about chronology, these calendars have been widely used by the chroniclers. Indeed, in some chapters of *Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, the text only includes some dates and some short notes about the events. For these chapters of his text, it can be claimed that he copied a historical calendar, being unable to find a relevant *gazavât-nâme* or another source for the period. This suggestion is supported by some remarks of V. L. Ménage, who notes that borrowing from historical calendars had become a common usage for historians in the 15th century.⁴¹

To sum up, the historical calendars can be accepted as the testimonies to the emergence of a court culture for which the calculation of time, the prediction of the future, the recording of past rulers was important. In addition, these historical calendars provided historians with some chronological lists that included a somewhat solid historical sequence.

⁴⁰ These general characteristics of the historical calendars are displayed in the collections compiled in two studies: Osman Turan, *op. cit.* and Nihal Atsız, *Tarihi Takvimler* (Istanbul, 1961).

⁴¹ V. L. Ménage, "The 'Annals of Murad II'", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39 (1976): 579-80.

I. 4. Ottoman Historiography in the 15th Century

Before dealing with the genre features, stylistic properties and political opinions of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, it seems necessary to give a concise account of the state of Ottoman historiography in the 15th century.

The 15th century witnessed the blossoming of Ottoman historiography.⁴² An important number of texts were produced, and the texts that can be included in this activity of historiography represented different characteristics. There were historical romances like Ahmedî's *İskender-nâme*,⁴³ history books which were only slightly edited versions of popular tales like the Anonymous history,⁴⁴ histories poor in content but written in an embellished style like Nişancı Mehmed's history of the Ottoman house.⁴⁵ Some of these histories were consciously composed in order to praise the achievements of the Ottoman house, while others stemmed directly from the tradition of popular histories and were aimed at entertaining and edifying people. These more popular histories included some interesting criticisms aimed directly at sultans, pashas, and the *ulemâ*. Some of the histories were written in Turkish with a direct, robust style, including "questions-and-answers" parts in a didactic fashion. Other histories, especially those composed by court intellectuals were sometimes written in Arabic or Persian, thus

⁴² This assumption is backed by Babinger's catalogue of Ottoman historians. It appears that there is a sudden growth of interest towards history in the 15th century. See Franz Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, 7-45. In this respect, the articles of H. İnalcık and V. L. Ménage included in *The Historians of the Middle East* are also important: See H. İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography", 152-67; and V. L. Ménage, "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography", 168-79.

⁴³ Ahmedî, *Tevârih-i Mülûk-i Âl-i Osman*, edited by Nihal Atsız in *Osmanlı Tarihleri*, 3-35. Hereafter referred to as Atsız/Ahmedî.

⁴⁴ *Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, edited by Nihal Azamat (Istanbul, 1992). Hereafter referred to as Azamat/Anonim.

⁴⁵ Nişancı Mehmed Paşa, *Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi*, edited by Nihal Atsız in *Osmanlı Tarihleri*, 323-69. Hereafter referred to as Atsız/Nişancı Mehmed.

reflecting, with their style rather than their content, a sense of high intellectual achievement.

It has been emphasized above that some histories didn't go beyond being a praise of the Ottoman house while others reflected some popular criticisms. Indeed, in these histories, it is possible to find the opinions of different strata of the society about the expansion and centralization of the Ottoman state, the emergence of a class of religious scholars, etc. The approval of central policies can be laid down by drawing a portrait of Orhan's reforms as useful practices, or the disapproval can be shown by criticizing the innovations of Orhan's time. Again, the opinions on the issue of fratricide can be expressed by reference to Orhan's good relations with his brother Alâeddin, or Mehmed Çelebi's affectionate attention towards the son of his brother despite the fact that his brother had challenged him. Or, as it is illustrated by Neşrî's passage on the murder of Dündar by his nephew Osman,⁴⁶ some stories that are skipped by everybody else can be introduced in the text (or even made up) in order to normalize the practice of fratricide.

To sum up, it seems possible to categorize historical works of the time in two groups. It can be proposed that the histories of Ahmedî, Şükrullah, Enverî, Karamanî Mehmed Paşa and Neşrî can be placed in one group; then, the histories of Âşıkpaşa-zâde and Oruc, as well as the Anonymous body can be put into another, more "popular" group.

At the beginning of the Ottoman historiography stands Ahmedî, with his *Dâsitân-ı Tevârih-i Mülûk-i Al-i Osman*, which was later appended to the end of his *İskender-*

⁴⁶ An interpretation of Neşrî's inclusion of the story about Osman and his uncle Dündar is given by Cemal Kafadar, "Osman Beg and His Uncle: Murder in the Family?", in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Prof. V. L. Ménage*, 157-63.

nâme,⁴⁷ presented first to the Germiyanid beg Süleyman. The *Dâsitân* was presented, together with the *İskender-nâme*, to Mehmed I after Ahmedî went over to the Ottoman court. At first sight, the text displays all the properties of a legendary tale, composed in verse, magnifying the role of the Ottoman house as ghazis. It is known that the *İskender-nâme* was inspired by Persian historical romances; some verses praising the Germiyanid beg Süleyman were added to the text.⁴⁸ Thus, the text in itself represents the introduction of a Persian element to the court culture of Anatolian principalities. However, Ahmedî has other merits as well: he was the first proponent of the conception of the Ottoman house as ghazis. In a sense, his work constituted a precedent for all later historians who would view the Ottoman house as such.⁴⁹

Beyond these details, Ahmedî appears as a prolific writer, whose interest is not solely directed towards history. As a court intellectual, he has produced a book on worldly pleasures, *Tervîhu'l-Ervah*.⁵⁰ He also composed a long poem, the *Cemşid vü Hurşîd*, based again on a well-known Persian theme.⁵¹ Furthermore, Ahmedî can be accepted as one of the instigators of the *dîvân* poetry in the Ottoman realm. His poems reflect a transformation from a mystical disposition to a lyric one in *dîvân* poetry.⁵² Compared to Âşıkpaşa-zâde's moralistic preoccupations, making use of every occasion to

⁴⁷ For the introduction and influence of a genre of historical romance based on Alexander the Great's deeds into the Arabic cultural sphere, see Toufic Fahd, "La version arabe du Roman d'Alexandre", in *Études d'histoire et de civilisation islamiques*, vol. I (Istanbul, 1997), 231-6.

⁴⁸ Alessio Bombaci, *Histoire de la littérature turque*, 250-1.

⁴⁹ Pfl Fodor, "Ahmedî's Dâsitân as a Source of Early Ottoman History", *Acta Orientaliae Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricum* 41-54 (1984): 54.

⁵⁰ Atsız/Ahmedî, 4.

⁵¹ Nihad Sami Banarlı, "Ahmedî ve Dâsitân-ı Tevârih-i Mülûk-i Âl-i Osman", *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 6 (1936-39): 55.

⁵² A. Bombaci, *op. cit.*, 250-1; Ahmet Necdet (ed.), *Bugünün Diliyle Divan Şiiri Antolojisi* (Istanbul, 1995), 140-3.

criticise wine-drinking and excessive pleasures, Ahmedî represents a new mentality, a new aesthetics, a new world of images, shared by some members of the court as well.⁵³

Şükrullah is another one of these writers of the 15th century who were closer to the court circles. It is known that he was sent by Murad II first to the Karamanids, then to the Karakoyunlus as an envoy. Again, in the wedding ceremony of Mehmed II's sons Bâyezid and Mustafa, he was allowed to take his place in front of the sultan, next to the first kadı of Istanbul, Hızır Beg.⁵⁴

The most distinguishing feature about Şükrullah's *Behcetü't-Tevârih* is that it is written in Arabic. Moreover, the genre features of his work are also interesting. First of all, it is a general history; second, it includes passages on geography and cosmology.

Şükrullah had obviously received a sophisticated education, being able to write treatises on music. He also wrote books reflecting his interest in religious sciences, like the *Kaside-i İmâlî Şerhi*, a book of *kelâm*; *Menhecü'r-Reşâd*, a book on religious sciences written in Persian; and the *Câmîü'd-Da'avât*, a collection of prayers.⁵⁵ Thus, he represented another group among court intellectuals who knew Arabic and/or Persian and whose interest was directed towards religious sciences. Şükrullah's history, poor in details and rich in praising formulas about the Ottoman house, can be placed in the same tradition with Ahmedî.

Another prominent figure who composed a historical work is Enverî, the writer of *Düstûr-nâme*, dedicated to Mahmud Paşa, the grand vizier of Mehmed II. It is written in verse, composed of a prologue, an epilogue and 22 separate books. It is known that books

⁵³ He even goes to make an analogy between Quranic verses and Emir Süleyman's drinking parties. See Alessio Bombaci, *op. cit.*, 251.

⁵⁴ Şükrullah, *Behcetü't-Tevârih*, edited by Nihal Atsız in *Osmanlı Tarihleri*, 39-40. Hereafter referred to as Atsız/Şükrullah.

I-XVII are an adaptation of the Persian historian Beyzavî's chronicle; only books XIX-XX concern the history of the Ottoman house. Moreover, the last two books, numbers XXI and XXII are devoted to the recording of Mahmud Pasha's glorious expeditions.⁵⁶

Enverî's interest for world history is apparent from the nature of his work. Even if he didn't come into contact with the primary sources, he was educated enough to appreciate the value of Beyzavî's chronicle and to use it in his history. Moreover, his relation with Mahmud Paşa, who was a renowned patron of the literati, shows that he was part of the pasha's entourage. Another book of him, the *Teferrücnâme*, which is now lost and is only known by Enverî's own reference at the beginning of his XVIIIth book, shows that he took part in the military expedition to Wallachia in 1462. This book, reflecting the characteristics of a *gazavât-nâme*, another courtly genre, was dedicated to Mehmed II.⁵⁷

For the 15th century, the last representative of this tradition of courtly histories was Mevlânâ Neşrî. He was a member of the *ulemâ*, with some knowledge of Arabic and Persian.⁵⁸ With Neşrî, there is also the emergence of a new understanding of history, trying to bring a new approach, distinct from older texts. In the introduction to the *Cihan-nümâ*, after a prologue praising the prophets, the sultans and the *ulemâ*, he tells that he was interested in history all his life, and that his aim is to recollect and reshape the historical books written before him.⁵⁹ Thus, it can be suggested that his aim was to produce a consistent edition of previous historical texts.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 39-42 *passim*.

⁵⁶ Irène Mélikoff, *Le Destan d'Umûr Pacha* (Paris, 1954), 29-30; Paul Lemerle, *L'Émirat d'Aydin, Byzance et L'Occident. Recherches sur La Geste d'Umur Pacha* (Paris, 1957), 7-9.

⁵⁷ Mélikoff, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁵⁸ V. L. Ménage, *Neshrî's History of the Ottomans*, 5.

⁵⁹ *Kitâb-ı Cihan-nümâ. Neşrî Tarihi*, 2 vols., edited by F. R. Unat & M. A. Köymen (Ankara, 1949-57), 5-7. Hereafter referred to as Unat&Köymen /Neşrî.

Indeed, Neşrî's originality is that he is, in a sense, the editor of the historical works written before him in the Ottoman realm. Basing himself largely on Âşıkpaşazâde's history, he remoulded the popular tradition according to the taste of the court circles, erasing the sometimes sharp criticisms of it and embellishing the text with a more refined language. Thus, as Ménage says, he constitutes the "nodal point" of early Ottoman historical writings: he brings together the traditions of a courtly history which didn't care much about chronology or details, a popular history with its tales about the foundation of the Ottoman state, and a set of historical calendars providing the whole structure with a somewhat rigorous chronological basis.⁶⁰

To sum up, there are two groups of Ottoman historians in the 15th century. The group made up of court historians has distinct features: the majority of the court historians write with pen-names like Neşrî, Ahmedî, Enverî. Again, their aim is to compose a world history, rather than solely the history of the deeds of the Ottoman house. This fact may be due to the attempt of bringing together the general trends of world history and Islamic history, and to offer the history of the Ottoman house as the continuation of a past grandeur.⁶¹ Again, the group made up of court historians makes use of a much sophisticated body of references, like Enverî's use of Beyzâvî for the parts of his work including a world history, Ahmedî's use of the metaphors and symbols of Persian *şeh-nâmes*, Şükrullah's references to Taberî, Beyzâvî and an important number of Arabic books. These references clearly show that court historians were endowed with a certain knowledge of Arabic and Persian, and that they had some knowledge about the

⁶⁰ Ménage, *op. cit.*, xv.

works produced in the Arabo-Persian cultural sphere. In addition, these historians were not only concerned with history. Ahmedî's lyrical historical romance, the *Cemşîd vü Hurşîd*,⁶² Şükrullah's treatises on music or his collection of prayers, the *Câmiü'd-Da'âvat* represent the emergence of prolific writers, whose historical texts are submitted into a larger cultural sphere concerned with *belles-lettres* rather than history.

Compared with these histories, the Anonymous circle, the histories of Oruc and Âşıkpaşa-zâde represent a separate group of texts. In these historical works, especially in the parts describing the early phases of Ottoman history, against the court historians' dominant figure of the sultan and Ottoman family, dervishes and ghazis appear as historical actors, taking part in the battles, realizing miraculous achievements. The stories about a dervish with a wooden sword who conquers a castle,⁶³ or the anecdote about Geyikli Baba who first declines the invitation of Orhan and who then bestows his approval of the Ottoman enterprise by planting a poplar tree in the courtyard of Orhan's residence,⁶⁴ provide a unique flavour to these historical texts. Moreover, there are some criticisms that are skipped over by all court historians. The diatribes in the Anonymous histories against the construction activities in Istanbul during the reign of Mehmed II,⁶⁵ and Âşıkpaşa-zâde's criticisms against Nişancı Mehmed Paşa who is accused of expropriating the endowments and not respecting the rules of Holy Law⁶⁶ are testimony to the existence of a certain reaction against the policies of the political center. It would be unconceivable, for a court historian, to include such remarks in his history.

⁶¹ Maria Kalicin, "Characteristic Genre Features of Neşrî's 'History of the Ottoman Court'", *Études balkaniques*, 15 (1979): 41.

⁶² N. S. Banarlı, *op. cit.*, 55.

⁶³ Azamat/Anonim, 13-4.

⁶⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 122-3. Âşıkpaşa-zâde adds that Geyikli Baba is a follower of Baba İlyas, thus appropriating the credit of the dervish's behaviour to his family.

⁶⁵ Azamat/Anonim, 102.

However, as mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's originality is due to the fact that he offers themes and images that may be found in both groups. First of all, he shares with the popular tradition a set of criticisms directed against some practices or some individuals. On the other hand, like the writers of the courtly tradition, he praises Ottoman sultans and openly declares his loyalty to the ruling family. Thus, among the historians of the 15th century, he represents an original position. This dichotomy of his *Tevârih* should not lead us to conclude that he writes in a confused manner, or that some sections of the *Tevârih* were changed in later centuries. The most interesting feature of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work is that it includes together seemingly contradictory opinions.

⁶⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 244-5.

II. THE LIFE AND WORK OF ÂŞIKPAŞA-ZÂDE

II. 1. The Biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde

II. 1. a. The Historical Background. The Family Legacy

To begin with, the biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde has to be told with reference to one of the most interesting events that took place in medieval Anatolia: the uprising of the Babaîs. The details of the uprising, or an analysis of the importance of this event will not be dealt with here. It suffices to say that the uprising greatly affected the life of the descendants of Baba İlyas, the chief Vefâî sheikh in Anatolia and the religious figure behind the uprising. First of all, the members of the family of Baba İlyas, as well as his followers, were forced to emigrate. Even though they didn't go very far, or abandon Anatolia, the uprising meant that the core constituted by the followers and family members was dispersed.

In a sense, the uprising symbolized a trauma, a breaking point for the descendants of Baba İlyas. In time, the members of the family divested themselves from some religious views of the past, as well as from the political pretensions of the uprising. The flowering of a new understanding of Islam in Anatolian cities in the 14th century, some sort of competition between religious leaders in order to gather followers⁶⁷ may all have conditioned the gradual acceptance of new views, different from those of the past.

The efforts of the family members to reinterpret the memories of the uprising and the family past must have had an important impact on the life of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. This

large effort of re-working the past and creating a new religious/political outlook is apparent in the work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde who, in a sense, transcribes what was transmitted to him through the channel of education in one of the dervish lodges belonging to the descendants of Baba İlyas. It will be shown later to what extent Âşıkpaşa-zâde applied the general lines of these “new”, more “correct” and less “harmful” ideas in his *Tevârîh*. The important thing is that the Babaî uprising and the subsequent developments stand at the backstage of his life and work as an enormous politico-religious influence.

The descendants of the family, and especially Âşık Paşa and Elvan Çelebi were in a sense the creators of this new outlook. We don't have any written works remaining from Muhlis Paşa, the father of Âşık Paşa, and the only information about his life is based on conflicting data given by the writers of later centuries. There are some stories about his political involvement, his punitive expeditions against the Seljuk army, and his reign (*beylik*) in the land around Karaman and Konya.⁶⁸ Even if it cannot be determined to what extent he organized an armed expedition against the Seljuk army, or if he ruled or not over the territories near Karaman and Konya for some time, it can be conjured that he still had the outlook of a dervish sheikh who claimed *velâyet* (sovereignty) and *nübüvvet* (prophethood) simultaneously. The real transformation, the “reform” in the political and religious views of the family came with Âşık Paşa and Elvan Çelebi.

The first element of this reform was, as was told above, the creation of a new religious outlook, distinct from the religious outlook of the past. This new outlook tried, on the one hand, to restore the dignity of Baba İlyas and, on the other hand, to omit any

⁶⁷ For instance, Fuad Köprülü emphasizes that there was a competition between the adherents of Ahi Evran, the adherents of Şeyh Süleyman and Âşık Paşa in Central Anatolia. See Fuad Köprülü, “Âşık Paşa”, *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. I, 702-3.

⁶⁸ Şikâri, *Karaman Oğulları Tarihi*, edited by M. Mesud Koman (Konya, 1946), 16.

pretensions about politics. In the works of the members of the family, the dervish piety was much emphasized. In this regard, Âşık Paşa's *Garîb-nâme*, written in 730 AH / 1330 AD is to be underlined as a work reflecting the emergence of the discourse stemming from the new outlook of the family. The *Garîb-nâme* is written in a didactic style and doesn't offer much to a student concerned with aesthetics. The real importance of the work is that it was widely read and recited in Anatolia, meaning that the *Garîb-nâme* was an influential text. Âşık Paşa's use of Turkish was obviously the first reason behind the introduction of the text to a wider audience. Another work by Âşık Paşa, the *Fakr-nâme*, a long poem also written in Turkish, was an exaltation of the personality of Muhammad as the reservoir of all virtues, and of "fakr" as the ethical ideal of dervishes.⁶⁹

It may be assumed that Âşık Paşa's writings and, more generally, his views and formulas were in vogue in a dervish lodge of his descendants. Thus, Âşık Paşa was one of the important influences behind Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work. This contribution is not impossible to identify, when the immediate content of the *Garîb-nâme* is analyzed. First, there is the issue of the unity of Muslims against the infidels. Once Muslims unite, they handle the "sword of religion" to fight the enemies of their religion.⁷⁰ From this remark, it is not difficult to deduce that those who shatter this unity –like the Karamanids, rebuked for this reason by Âşıkpaşa-zâde, or the Mongols and other centrifugal elements in Âşık Paşa's time- are to be accused of a crime committed against the community.

Next, there is the ethos of heroism which we find in both. Âşık Paşa mentions two types of hero: the hero of religion (*din alpı*), and the "worldly" hero (*zâhir alpı*).⁷¹ The hero of religion is the one who achieves perfect mastery over his own soul, whereas the

⁶⁹ Bombaci, *Histoire de la littérature turque*, 246-7.

⁷⁰ Mehmet Kaplan, "Âşık Paşa ve Birlik Fikri", *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 18 (1973-74): 151.

“worldly” hero is represented by the individual who, like a knight, acts according to a given code and fights for heroism *per se*. What is interesting is that the heroism of the pious individual fighting against his own self and the heroism of the individual who fights with enemies are equated. In his *Garîb-nâme*, Âşık Paşa describes the position of the pious individual by reference to the metaphors of war. Accordingly, jealousy and hypocrisy are the most dangerous enemy soldiers living in the human soul, and the hero of religion is the one who succeeds in extirpating these enemies from the soul after an unescapably long but fruitful combat.⁷² In another section, the virtues of religion are identified with the virtues of heroism.⁷³

It can be said that these metaphors are not an original creation of Âşık Paşa, that they prevailed among various dervish milieus of medieval Anatolia. It is true that the life of a dervish was generally characterized as a tortuous path, full of hardships. But the equation of the life of a dervish with the life of a warrior is quite important, and has obviously much to do with the peculiar political circumstances of Âşık Paşa’s time. The social and political confusion following the fall of the Seljuk dynasty, the Mongol invasion, the existence of different and sometimes conflicting religious attitudes must have led to an overemphasis on some virtues and to the categorization of these virtues into a well-defined web of ethico-religious worldview.

Obviously, Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s views about the necessity to fight the enemies and to be a good Muslim, or his panegyrics about ghazis cannot be reduced solely to the influence of Âşık Paşa’s writings. Any Muslim, and even non-Muslim, living in Anatolia in the 15th century could get informed about the virtues and achievements of ghazis; the

⁷¹ Mine Mengi, “Garîb-nâme’de Alplık Geleneğiyle İlgili Bilgiler”, *Belleten* 48 (1984): 481-2.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 489.

air was filled with stories and epics magnifying the role of the warriors of Islam. However, Âşık Paşa's wit was to give the state of war a coherent explanation, to address both immediate worldly concerns and ontological issues with a swift formulation. Moreover, *Garîb-nâme* was doubtlessly accepted as a family heritage, and it must have been frequently recited in the dervish lodge where Âşıkpaşa-zâde was raised.

As a member of the Baba İlyas lineage, it can be conjured that the thought and reputation of Âşık Paşa was greater than elsewhere in the family. The reverence of Âşık Paşa by Âşıkpaşa-zâde is obvious. For instance, rather than taking a name like "Muhlispaşa-zâde" or "Elvançelebi-zâde", he preferred to identify himself with Âşık Paşa. The degree of his respect is also shown by the fact that when he settled in Istanbul, the dervish lodge and mosque founded by him bore the name of Âşık Paşa.⁷⁴

After Âşık Paşa, the name of Elvan Çelebi should be mentioned as an influence. Elvan Çelebi's importance is that he completed the task of rewriting the family past. The most crucial step of this effort was the writing of the history of Baba İlyas under the form of a *menâkıb-nâme*: *Menâkıbu'l-Kudsiyye fî Menâsıbu'l-Ünsiyye* was the outcome of this effort.⁷⁵ Together with the standard motives of a *menâkıb-nâme* writer who aimed at revering the forefathers of a religious sect and creating a unified religious discourse within the sect, Elvan Çelebi's intention was to rework the memories of the Babaî uprising and show the innocence as well as the greatness of Baba İlyas. It can be conjectured that Elvan Çelebi had the opportunity to use oral reports by Muhlis Paşa and Âşık Paşa concerning the Babaî uprising. But the most important point for the present

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 491.

⁷⁴ Âlî/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, xiii; Köprülü, "Âşıkpaşa-zâde", *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. I, 707.

discussion is that Elvan Çelebi tried to give a reinterpretation of the family's past by writing a coherent history of his forefathers, thus erasing the memory of Baba İlyas as a pretender to worldly power and an element of turmoil.⁷⁶

Thus, after this brief discussion, we can identify two important contributions to Âşıkpaşa-zâde's intellectual formation: the didacticism and original politico-religious outlook of Âşık Paşa, and the reformist attitude of Elvan Çelebi. The first influence may be taken to have instilled a certain moralistic conception about life, war, and religion. As for the influence of Elvan Çelebi, it may be said that it first instilled a sense of belonging to an illustrious family of Vefâî dervishes. Then, next to it, Elvan Çelebi's reinterpretation of the family history cleared off the claims of a dervish family to worldly power. Again, it laid the ground for Âşıkpaşa-zâde's characterization of dervishes as those who prayed for the well-being of the Ottoman house.

Of course, Elvan Çelebi's influence was not limited to Âşıkpaşa-zâde. As a predominant figure of the Vefâî sect, his reinterpretation of the past reached the adherents of the sect as well. Perhaps, the controversy among modern scholars concerning the orthodox or heterodox character of Vefâî dervishes has to do with the intervention of Elvan Çelebi. When the Vefâî sheikhs came to Anatolia, they had obviously some heterodox views and they were able to gather an immense following among the nomadic and semi-nomadic population.⁷⁷ However, they reverted to a more orthodox standing and distanced themselves from the heterodox sects with which they shared the same past.⁷⁸ This also explains why the Vefâîyye, playing so important a role in the first centuries of

⁷⁵ *Menâkıbu'l-Kudsiyye fî Menâsıbu'l-Ünsiyye*, edited by A. Y. Ocak & İ. Erünsal (Ankara, 1996).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, xxxv.

⁷⁷ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Süfilik: Kalenderiler* (Ankara, 1992), 61, 64-5.

the Ottoman state, faded away. With the growing influence of a new religious discourse within the sect and with the limitation of its former political attitude to the reverence of Ottoman sultans, it must not have been difficult for the adherents of the sect to become dispersed among other orthodox sects or to content themselves with an orthodox attitude without joining a sect.

II. 1. b. The Biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde: From His Birth to His Settlement in the Balkans

There are some controversies about the birth date of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. According to Köprülü, he was born near AD 1400.⁷⁹ On the other hand, Halil İncılık suggests that he was born around AH 795/AD 1392-93.⁸⁰ This date is based on two verses by Âşıkpaşa-zâde included in his *Tevârih*.⁸¹

There is a consensus among all scholars that he was born in the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi, located in Mecedözü, near Çorum.⁸² Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself mentions that he lived for a while in this dervish lodge.⁸³ Life in the dervish lodge obviously bore some similarities with the lodges described by Ibn Batûta nearly a century earlier.⁸⁴ The lodge of Elvan Çelebi was situated on a much frequented road, and travelers were surely welcomed in it. Moreover, life in the lodge must have included common religious

⁷⁸ Halil İncılık, “How to Read ‘Âshik Pasha-Zâde’s History”, 150. İncılık’s conclusion that Vefâî dervishes belonged from the very beginning to an orthodox milieu must be due to the activities of those dervishes in later centuries, i.e. during and after the emergence of the Ottoman state.

⁷⁹ Köprülü, “Âşıkpaşa-zâde”, 707.

⁸⁰ Halil İncılık, *op. cit.*, 141.

⁸¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 114. It reads “When this life reached the age of eighty-six/When Mehmed Han settled forth for Moldavia”. The Moldavian campaign took place in 1476. From this data, the birth date can be estimated as 1392-93.

⁸² For a detailed study of the lodge, see Semavi Eyice, “Çorum’un Mecedözü’nde Âşık Paşa-Oğlu Elvan Çelebi Külliyesi”, *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 15 (1969): 211-44.

⁸³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 158.

⁸⁴ Ibn Battûta, *Voyages. II: De La Mecque aux steppes russes* (Paris, 1982), 136-99.

ceremonies. There were sheikhs or *fakîhs*, living together with dervishes with a lesser position in the religious hierarchy. Some prominent men directed religious services, while others worked in the everyday routine of the lodge.⁸⁵

Âşıkpaşa-zâde received his education in the dervish lodge. This education should have included some elements of religion as well as the transmission of the stories about the family. The eventual influence of his forefathers was discussed above. Next to this influence, life in a dervish lodge in 15th century Anatolia must be filled with other popular stories, fanciful achievements of religious men, and with a sense of everyday piety. It would not be much pertinent to speculate upon the education of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, given the fact that he doesn't provide any information about his intellectual formation. On the other hand, it can be imagined that he had accumulated a large body of experience throughout his life, and that these experiences, rather than a solid education, are visible throughout the *Tevârîh*.

The only way to sketch Âşıkpaşa-zâde's biography is to pick up the parts of his *Tevârîh* where he gives some information about himself. Unfortunately, these passages are scattered randomly throughout the work, and are not equal in quality. Some of the information lack chronological data, which makes it impossible to date some crucial instances of his life, like his visit to the lodge of Sadreddin Konevî in Konya. Moreover, the information is of a casual character, and it is very difficult to fill the gaps between two seemingly unrelated information about his life. Thus, much of the life story of Âşıkpaşa-zâde is bound to remain uncovered.

⁸⁵ For an analysis of the life of the dervishes in the lodges, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Zâviyeler", *Vakıflar Dergisi* 12 (1978): 247-69.

Until now, all the scholars dealing with Âşıkpaşa-zâde's life or his work have been obliged to limit their biographical notes on him to the information given by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself, with, in the case of Âlî Bey, some additional information from *Hadikâtü'l-Cevâmî*.⁸⁶ The situation is complicated by the fact that he was not mentioned in the sources dating from the 15th or 16th centuries, which leads Köprülü to conclude that Âşıkpaşa-zâde didn't have an outstanding reputation during and after his lifetime,⁸⁷ which is probably true.

The first information given by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself about his life is his visit to the house of Yahşi Fakîh, near Geyve, in 816 AH / 1413 AD.⁸⁸ While telling the events of Çelebi Mehmed's march from Bursa to Rumeli, he says that he fell ill, thus obliged to remain at Geyve. From this information, it can be imagined that Âşıkpaşa-zâde joined Çelebi Mehmed's army before its arrival in Bursa, perhaps when the prince announced an expedition against his brother Musa and began collecting troops in the spring of 1413.⁸⁹ Considering the fact that the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi is situated on the Amasya-Ankara road. Âşıkpaşa-zâde must have joined Çelebi Mehmed's army during its march from Amasya onwards.

Of course, the fact that he joined the expedition of Mehmed II raises some questions. First, how old was he when he marched together with the army? If Köprülü's suggestion is accepted, Âşıkpaşa-zâde should be thirteen at that time. When it is considered that he read a *menâkıb* about the deeds of the Ottomans during his obligatory

⁸⁶ Âlî Bey, Fuad Köprülü, Atsız, and Ahmed Refik have all preferred to repeat, in a chronological sequence, the information provided by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself.

⁸⁷ Köprülü, "Âşıkpaşa-zâde", 707.

⁸⁸ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 148.

visit to Yahşı Fakîh's house, it is not very plausible to think that he was only thirteen at that time. According to İnalçık's estimate, he must be twenty or twenty-one years of age at the period, which sounds more reasonable.

A second question can be raised about why he joined the army. Can we conceive of this as a kind of sanction bestowed by the family of Âşık Paşa to prince Mehmed? Or did Âşıkpaşa-zâde intend to continue his life as a member of the army? The second option is not very probable, considering that he came back to the dervish lodge just after he resided in Geyve and didn't take part in any armed expedition for a long time. Thus, we can think that his presence in the army reflected a kind of involvement in the party of Mehmed I. As discussed above, such a move was compatible with the family's attitude to pray for sultans and to give their support to them. Moreover, the family members might be on good terms with Mehmed whose provincial holdings in Amasya were not so far from the dervish lodge. It would be too speculative, in the absence of any document, to argue that they were receiving from time to time some gifts from the prince. But it is probable that they knew well about the dynamics of the civil war waging in Anatolia and the Balkans and that they opted for Çelebi Mehmed.

This visit in Geyve provided Âşıkpaşa-zâde with a copy of a *menâkıb*, presumably written by Yahşı Fakîh. The particular aspects of the *menâkıb* will be dealt with in another section; here, it suffices to say that Âşıkpaşa-zâde had the opportunity to read a work written by a prominent religious personality, a *fakîh*. The fact that he remained in the house of Yahşı Fakîh can be imputed to his family's connections throughout the network of the Vefâî sect. It is known that this sect was widespread in Anatolia at that time. Or, even if he was not an adept of the Vefâî order, Yahşı Fakîh

⁸⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire 1300-1481* (Istanbul, 1990), 72.

must have heard about the illustrious ancestors of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, thus welcoming him. To sum up, the fact that he lived for a while in the house of the son of Orhan's *imam* may not have been a sheer coincidence.

It can be concluded that, after recovering from his illness, Âşıkpaşa-zâde returned to the dervish lodge in Mecedözü. It is proven by the fact that, in late 1421, when Mihal-oğlu Mehmed Bey was released from prison in Tokat and was on his way to Ulubad, where the army of Murad II camped, he passed from Mecedözü and took Âşıkpaşa-zâde with him. This time, the Ottoman throne was confronted with the pretensions of prince Mustafa, who had secured the support of Rumelia beys and challenged Murad II.⁹⁰ Mihal-oğlu Mehmed Bey, imprisoned for his involvement with the party of Musa Çelebi, was this time welcomed. It was hoped that his influence over the Rumelia beys would pull back their support from Mustafa.

In a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde was again involved in a dynastic struggle, and it would not be unreasonable to suggest that his presence in the army was again a form of approval of Murad II's claim to the Ottoman throne. This attitude is again in compliance with the family's political outlook.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde remained with the army until the end of the campaign against Mustafa. In his *Tevârîh*, the episodes of the dynastic struggle, Murad's crossing over the straits, Mustafa's execution in Edirne are described in a detailed manner.⁹¹ Thus, in January-February 1422, the dynastic struggle between Mustafa and Murad was resolved with the victory of Murad.

⁹⁰ For the events of this dynastic struggle, see Imber, *op. cit.*, 91-4.

⁹¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 158-9.

After the end of the struggle, Âşıkpaşa-zâde must have returned to the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi or, at least, he must have crossed back to Anatolia. This suggestion is supported by the fact that he doesn't mention in his *Tevârih* the siege of Istanbul of Murad II, laid in June 1422.⁹² He only notes that Murad II took some diplomatic steps to secure pacts with the voivod of Wallachia and the Byzantine emperor after he eliminated Mustafa. It is probable that the source or sources that he later used didn't contain the details about this siege either. Instead, the event that caused the abandonment of the siege, the revolt of Murad's brother Mustafa, which occurred in the second half of 1422, is meticulously reported in the *Tevârih*. It is perhaps because, as mentioned above, he crossed the straits back to Anatolia with some contingents of the army. In any case, it is obvious that Âşıkpaşa-zâde was well informed about the events of the revolt of Mustafa in Anatolia.⁹³ Nevertheless, he must have gone back to the dervish lodge by the end of 1422.

Judging by the entries in the *Tevârih* concerning the activities of Yörgüç Paşa around Amasya and Çorum, we can surmise that he was still living in the dervish lodge by 1427/28,⁹⁴ Later historians like Neşrî and Kemalpaşa-zâde contented themselves with copying the large body of details provided by Âşıkpaşa-zâde on the military activities of Yörgüç Paşa, who was commanded by Murad II to pacify the north-eastern provinces of Anatolia.⁹⁵

For quite a long period, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's activities are not clear. Until he re-emerges in the Balkan region around 1439-40, there is no information in the *Tevârih*

⁹² Imber, *op.cit.*, 94.

⁹³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 160-2.

⁹⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 168-71, 172-3.

⁹⁵ Imber, *op.cit.*, 106.

concerning his biography. Thus, it can only be conjectured that he lived for quite a long time in the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi in Mecidözü. At the end, he was compelled to leave the dervish lodge and live in the Balkans. Such a move could have financial and/or religious reasons behind it.

II. 1. c. Life in the Balkans

As noted above, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's activities are unknown for a long period. After this obscure period, he suddenly re-emerges in the Balkans. Even the date when he went to the Balkans is not clear. For instance, for the year 837 AH / 1433-34 AD, he mentions slave prices in the Edirne market.⁹⁶ However, it is not clear if this information should be accepted as a proof of his presence in Edirne. It is quite possible that he learned about this later, from one of his Balkan acquaintances. That his presence in Edirne is supported by his knowledge of slave prices is only a suggestion.

Concerning his residence in the Balkans, the first precise date is 1438-9, when Âşıkpaşa-zâde went to pilgrimage. The same year, one of the frontier begs, İshak Beg, also went to pilgrimage. Âşıkpaşa-zâde mentions that they returned to Üsküp together. There are two possibilities: either he went to pilgrimage with the entourage of İshak Beg, or he met him in Mecca, returned to Üsküp with him and became eventually involved in the entourage of İshak Beg. It is difficult to determine which one of these options is true, because Âşıkpaşa-zâde doesn't tell anything about his voyage to Mecca.⁹⁷

They were back in Üsküp by August 1439, just before Smederovo was captured by Ottomans. The capture of Smederovo and the subsequent raids into Serbian and

⁹⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 174. Âşıkpaşa-zâde reports that "a Hungarian slave in good condition was sold just for 300 *akçes*", thus indicating that a large booty was obtained during a campaign against Hungarians.

Hungarian lands were a happy source of income for Âşıkpaşa-zâde. His interest in the price of slaves in the market of Üsküp is a testimony to the fact that slave trade was one of the important sources of income for a certain milieu living in the frontier. For instance, during Murad II's campaign of 1439, when he had returned to Üsküp, the raids had produced so much booty that a concubine in good condition was exchanged against a good pair of boots. It seems that Âşıkpaşa-zâde had the opportunity to profit from this campaign: he tells that he first bought a boy for 100 *akçes*. Then, the raiders gave him 7 captives, male and female. Intending to take his slaves to Edirne, Âşıkpaşa-zâde addressed Murad II, asking him for horses and money. The sultan gave him two horses and 5000 *akçes*. With other four horses belonging to him, Âşıkpaşa-zâde went to Edirne to sell his slaves, some of them for 200 and some of them for 300 *akçes*. He doesn't forget to mention that he prayed for the sultan on that occasion.⁹⁸

About the raids following the takeover of Smederovo, Âşıkpaşa-zâde tells that he took part in them with the son of İshak Bey, a certain Paşa Bey, and another frontier warrior, Kılıççı Doğan. Thus, he was then a member of İshak Bey's following. In one of these raids, Âşıkpaşa-zâde joined a cavalry attack against Serbian or Hungarian light infantry which was not able to resist Ottoman horsemen. Âşıkpaşa-zâde tells that he killed many enemies, took 5 prisoners, whom he sold in Üsküp for 900 *akçes*.⁹⁹ However, he hadn't been raised as a warrior. Should we think that he learned how the fight in the Balkans? In this case, he must have been a very keen student of martial arts, given the fact that he began raiding soon after he came to Üsküp. Or, should we accept these pieces of information as the reminiscences of an old man, with a long experience in the Balkan

⁹⁷ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 179.

⁹⁸ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 178-9.

frontier, who wants to present himself to his audience as a former warrior, next to his references as a religious personality? In 1439, he was nearly 45 years of age, and it may not have been very easy for a man of 45 to join cavalry raids.

Nevertheless, one thing is sure beyond speculation: Âşıkpaşa-zâde secured himself an existence among the frontier warriors. He was present in the region during the tumultuous Balkan campaigns of Murad II, and he took his share of the large amount of booty, joined some raids.

These events and the activities of Âşıkpaşa-zâde deserve some interpretations. First of all, when we take into account that he was given some captives as presents to him by the raiders, it can be suggested that he had already established some relations with the ghazi milieus. Again, perhaps due to the reputation of his family, he was able to address the sultan directly and to receive gifts from him. Nevertheless, one question should be answered: Why was Âşıkpaşa-zâde in the Balkans? Did he intend to preach for his own sect, the Vefâiyye? Was he not able to sustain his living in the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi? The answer could be both. Âlî, in his introduction to the *Tevârih*, mentions, quoting *Menâkıb-ı Tâcu'l-Ârifîn*, that Âşıkpaşa-zâde was a disciple of Sheikh Abdüllatif Mukaddesî, the sheikh of the lodge of Sadreddin Konevî in Konya.¹⁰⁰ The date of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's interview with Abdüllatif Mukaddesî cannot be determined with precision. But, it can be imagined that he went Konya on his way to Mecca and visited Abdüllatif Mukaddesî in his lodge.¹⁰¹ If it is added to this fact that, on his way to Mecca,

⁹⁹ *Op. cit.*, 179-80.

¹⁰⁰ Âlî/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, x1.

¹⁰¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 250. It must be on this occasion that he witnessed a debate between Abdüllatif Mukaddesî and Sheikh Cüneyd Erdebilî.

he visited some prominent members of the Bekrîyye sect in Egypt,¹⁰² perhaps with the reference of Abdüllatif Mukaddesî, it can be concluded that he returned from Mecca as an authoritative sheikh, having received the approval of prominent religious men. Thus, his presence in the Balkans may have gained a new significance.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde carved himself a niche in the Balkans, and the most important tenet of his life there was his religious identity. The religious identity provided him with occasional share from booty, and with an obvious reverence on the part of the frontier people. Moreover, for the purpose of history-writing, he was a witness of the Balkan struggles in the time of Murad II. He himself declares that there were many raids during the reign of Murad II, and that he consciously took notice of the events of the time, writing these down.¹⁰³

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's last entry concerning the wars of Murad II is his participation to the battle of Kosovo in 1448. Thus, during all the tumultuous period extending from the Peace of Segedin to Murad's abdication, and then to the events leading to the Battle of Varna, Âşıkpaşa-zâde was still living in the Balkans. The last campaign in which he actively took part was Kosovo, where he, according to his own report, killed an enemy soldier and was awarded a good horse by the sultan. Again, the dynamic of heroic commitment and subsequent gratification was on play.

II. 1. d. The Last Years: A Quiet Life in Istanbul

We don't have any information about Âşıkpaşa-zâde's life from 1448 to 1457. Although Halil İnalçık argues that Âşıkpaşa-zâde was welcomed in Istanbul just after the

¹⁰² Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, *ibid.* Âli quotes from *Hadikâtü'l-Cevâmî*.

¹⁰³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 187-8.

Ottoman conquest, in 1453, we don't have any records to sustain this proposition. İnalçık suggests that Mehmed II would have been particularly content to host a descendant of Muhlis Paşa, who had some links with the Karamanids and thus, to divert the symbolic commitment of the family from the Karamanids to the Ottomans,¹⁰⁴ but this still needs to be proven.

After 1448, after Âşıkpaşa-zâde's display of bravery in the battlefield, the next entry in the *Tevârîh* having some relevance for his biography is his participation in the circumcision ceremony of Mehmed II's sons Bayezid and Mustafa in Edirne. Âşıkpaşa-zâde mentions that he assisted the ceremony among the scholars. However, it is obvious that he was not a member of the highest ranking scholars, given the fact that he didn't take part in the famous discussion among the prominent members of the *ulemâ*. Nevertheless, he was given some confiserie distributed by the servants, and had also the occasion to profit from the grants distributed at the end of the ceremony.¹⁰⁵

As a descendant of an illustrious family of sheikhs, and as a presence in the Balkan front, Âşıkpaşa-zâde was credited enough to be invited to the circumcision ceremony. On the other hand, the description of the ceremony shows that a certain division among men of religion had begun to take place. For instance, Âşıkpaşa-zâde was present in the feast in the same day with a large body of religious scholars. However, he didn't took part in the theological discussion. It may be possible that there was not an yet a critical line separating sheikhs and religious scholars. These people are noted in the *Tevârîh* together as *fukarâ ve sülehâ* (poor/pious men and wise men). Nevertheless, the

¹⁰⁴ İnalçık, "How to Read 'Âshik Pasha-Zâde's History", 141.

¹⁰⁵ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 198.

knowledge and skills of one group had become to supersede the everyday piety of the other.

Even though it is not clear if Âşıkpaşa-zâde settled in Istanbul from 1453 onwards, it is nonetheless known that he was living there by 1457. It is not known when he came to settle in the city but an endowment deed of the Fatih Mosque, dated 861 AH / 1457 AD shows that he lived in a house, and that his neighbour was the *kadı* of Istanbul, Hoca-zâde.¹⁰⁶ A note showing that Âşıkpaşa-zâde went to Üsküb, to his former place of residence, hoping to receive grants from Mehmed II on his campaign to the Peloponnesos in 1460,¹⁰⁷ means that he took part in some military campaigns, but was definitely settled in Istanbul.

The last years of Âşıkpaşa-zâde were obviously devoid of turmoil, in the sense that he seems to have lived a well-settled life of a religious personality. İnalçık's meticulous researches have unveiled that, according to an endowment deed dated 1473, Âşıkpaşa-zâde owned storehouses and shops in Galata, and payed rent to the treasury for one of these shops.¹⁰⁸ In this atmosphere, he started to write his *Tevârih*. He also had the opportunity to found a small mosque, bearing the name of his illustrious ancestor Âşık Paşa. If it is true that the construction was funded by an *ağa* of Babüssaade,¹⁰⁹ it can be conjectured that Âşıkpaşa-zâde had established some links with people living in the retinue of the sultan. Thus, he had become a somewhat well-to-do citizen of Istanbul, finally freed from economic strains.

¹⁰⁶ İnalçık, *op. cit.*, 141.

¹⁰⁷ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 200.

¹⁰⁸ İnalçık, *op. cit.*, 142.

¹⁰⁹ The information is given by Âlî, who again quotes *Hadikâtü'l-Cevâmî*. The name of the *ağa* would be Tavaşi Hüseyin, and he would be buried in the courtyard of the mosque. Âlî, *op. cit.*, xiii.

The date of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's death is not known. İncalcık's estimate about the life span of Âşıkpaşa-zâde is complicated by his giving Âşıkpaşa-zâde's date of death as 1502, basing himself on the fact that the last entry in his *Tevârih* includes the events of the year 1502 AD.¹¹⁰ However, it is possible that a scribe copying the work around 1502-3 AD added the events up to that year. On the other hand, the last entry in the Atsız edition is about Mehmed II's expedition to Scutari of Albania dated 883 AH / 1479 AD. It can be assumed that Âşıkpaşa-zâde lived some time after this expedition, and appended the parts about Ottoman viziers, scholars and prominent religious personalities to the end of his *Tevârih*. Therefore, it can be concluded that he died some time after this date. According to Atsız, who quotes *Hadikâtü'l-Cevâmî*, Âşıkpaşa-zâde died on Muharrem 22, 886 AH / March 23, 1481 AD.¹¹¹

It is easier to accept 1481 AD as Âşıkpaşa-zâde's date of death because, even if the manuscript used by İncalcık, the one called the Istanbul manuscript, includes some entries for 1502 AD, the sequence of events between 1481 and 1502 is not meticulously recorded, and this is not consistent with Âşıkpaşa-zâde's approach. Âşıkpaşa-zâde would rather prefer to continue to record, on a chronological basis, as much as he could gather about the events occurring in the Ottoman realm. Although İncalcık notes that a "veled-i Âşık Paşa" was among the trustees of the Fatih Mosque endowment in 1492 as a proof that Âşıkpaşa-zâde should be alive after AD 1481,¹¹² it is likely that another member of his family would also be named as a descendant of Âşık Paşa.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹¹¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 82.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 143.

Why do we have to deal with Âşıkpaşa-zâde's life? It should be said that it is not only for the sake of convention, for the reason that a biography of the writer of the *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman* should be included in a study trying to unveil the mentality of a period via a critical text belonging to the same period.

While sketching the biography of Âşıkpaşa-zâde against all the gaps and blurred points of its trajectory, my aim has been to find out a relation between the life and the work. As underlined at the very beginning of the discussion, the tradition of a prominent family, with all its contradictions, transformations, political and religious attitudes, was transmitted to Âşıkpaşa-zâde. He was himself well aware that he was a descendant of an illustrious family. And this allegiance towards the family was extended to include other members of the Vefâîyye sect as well. As mentioned above, the fact that he chose to bear the name of an illustrious forefather as an epithete shows the fact that he identified himself with the family. In his *Tevârîh*, Âşıkpaşa-zâde mentions the names of Âşık Paşa, Muhlis Paşa and Baba İlyas, and adds that Baba İlyas was a follower and representative (*halife*) of Şeyh Seyyid Ebu'l-Vefâ.¹¹³ Then, towards the end of the text, when he mentions the names of the prominent religious personalities who lived in the Ottoman realm, he includes the names of Baba İlyas, Muhlis Paşa and Âşık Paşa.¹¹⁴ When we consider the fact that Sheikh Edebalı and the dervish Geyikli Baba, also of the Vefâî

¹¹³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 91. The information about his genealogy was taken from an oral tradition or, more probably, from the *Menâkıbu'l-Ünsiyye* of Elvan Çelebi. Interestingly, there is not any remark about the Babaî uprising and Baba İlyas's relation to it.

¹¹⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 234-5. Elsewhere, he says that Âşık Paşa "prayed for [the success of] Orhan" (*ibid.*, 116).

order, are also mentioned in various parts of the *Tevârih*,¹¹⁵ it appears that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's aim was to invent a role for his family and for his religious order in general.¹¹⁶

The family tradition explains Âşıkpaşa-zâde's religious motifs, and his interpretation of Ottoman sultans. In a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's text is a reservoir of received truths and opinions about religion and politics. It will be demonstrated elsewhere in this study that he sometimes criticized Ottoman sultans, and tried to lay down honoured precedents for the contemporary sultans to follow. However, in the last instance, his criticisms never went beyond a certain limit. The nostalgia for a political leader imbued with nomadic values gradually gave in to the glorified figure of Murad II and Mehmed II, the first true *padişâh*.

Apart from the influence of the family, which must have instilled in him a singular understanding of Islam and a respect towards the wordly ruler, there was doubtlessly the impact of his experiences in the Balkans. He went to the area probably with the aim of preaching and securing himself a living. And the region provided him with what he wanted: a certain reputation as a religious personality who was given presents by the sultan and invited to the circumcision ceremony organized by another sultan. Thus, he had found a certain way of making his living by receiving presents.

His last years were spent in a quiet setting. He was settled in the center of the empire, owned some shops and houses, and didn't need to secure for himself the good will of some frontier warriors who would send him money and slaves. It seems that he was on good terms with some people from the Inner Chamber of the palace, and these

¹¹⁵ Edebalı is first mentioned in the anecdote about the "dream of Osman" (Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 95-6); Geyikli Baba is mentioned in an anecdote from the time of Orhan (Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 122-3).

¹¹⁶ In the *Menâkıbu'l-Ünsiyye*, it is told that Edebalı was a follower of Baba İlyas, thus, a follower of the Vefâî order. Âşıkpaşa-zâde must have learned about him from this work, and he must have underlined his

latter funded the mosque erected in the name of Âşık Paşa. He wrote his *Tevârih* in this atmosphere, his mind filled with the deeds of great men, some of whom were from his own family and sect. His experiences in the Balkans were reflected in the text, and he obviously liked to present himself as a man who didn't restrain himself from fighting the enemy. Again, he was upset by the practice of *mukataa*, which caused some occasional criticisms in the *Tevârih*. However, he was also witnessing the impressive imperial symbolism constructed around the personality of Mehmed II and he was among those who praised the magnificent deeds of the sultan. Over time, he had come to the point of disdaining heterodox dervishes, who had once fought under the command of sheikhs from his own sect, and he had reproduced a mainstream religious outlook, in good terms with worldly power.

II. 2. Genre Features and Sources of the *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*

In this section, there will be a discussion concerning the sources and genre features of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. To identify the sources and genre features of the work will provide further clues helping to identify the position of the work among the historiographical production of the 15th century. Moreover, it will show the work's relations with other literary genres of the period.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is perhaps the most significant production of this historiographical current which, in fact, is constituted by two separate tendencies. The *Tevârih* is, first of all, the longest work of history produced before Neşrî's *Cihan-nümâ*. It includes more details, more chronological information than the works written before it.

role in accordance with his desire to give his family and order an important role in the foundation of the Ottoman state.

Unlike the works belonging to the “courtly” tradition, it elaborates the facts, includes more details, opens up some discussions and asks some questions. For instance, it deals with some critical questions such as the practice of tanistry and the pattern of succession, fratricide, or the legitimacy of the Ottoman house. In addition, it includes some criticisms, which differentiate the *Tevârih* further from the courtly tradition. Moreover, it develops a peculiar interpretation of an “alliance of social milieus” underlying the construction of the Ottoman state; the work includes a portrayal of the harmonious collaboration between the Ottoman house, the ghazis and the dervishes. The criticisms may be said to be related to this concept of an “ideological alliance” which is disrupted and redefined with the development of the Ottoman enterprise. Thus, there is also a peculiar description of the process of Ottoman centralization and bureaucratization.

II. 2. a. Genre Features of the *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*

First of all, it should be said that the *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman* contains three distinct sections, which could be called as three separate “narrative instances”. The first one of these is the part of the work written under the influence of Yahşî Fakîh’s *Menâkıb*.¹¹⁷ This part of the work includes what we may call the narrative of the earlier days of the Ottoman enterprise. The same period is used by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself as a period into which some political aspirations are retrospectively attributed. For instance, the praise of a political enterprise founded with the initiative of the House of Osman, the ghazis and

¹¹⁷ For this work as well as for its eventual influence on Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih*, see V. L. Ménage, “The *Menâkıb* of Yakshî Faqîh”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 26 (1963): 50-4. In another article, Halil Erdoğan Cengiz suggests that Yahşî Fakîh’s *Menâkıb* is the common source of Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the

the dervishes takes place in this section of the narrative. Like the Anonymous, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's sections dealing with early Ottoman history include stories about dervishes or ghazis. In these sections, Ottoman rulers are portrayed like tribal chiefs, who act leniently towards their subjects, who share the booty with the ghazis, who allocate towns to the dervishes. In these periods, the ghazi milieus seem to have a sort of independence; in lack of a formal military force, they act by themselves, open up new terrains of conquest for the Ottomans, act as the agents of the expansion of Islam by conquering new lands. It is possible that these images are to some extent true. More than all, the fact Yahşi Fakîh was the son of the *imam* of Orhan makes him closer than anybody to the core of the Ottoman enterprise and thus to the stories and/or realities of foundation.¹¹⁸

The second section of the *Tevârih* begins where the time span covered by the *Menâkıb*, i.e. the period extending from the political "coming out" of Osman to the end of the Interregnum, ends. From then on, the *Tevârih* becomes a book written by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself, rather than a copy or supplement of the *Menâkıb*. The dominant feature of this second part of the work is that it reflects the personal experiences of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. For instance, the activities of Yörgüç Paşa and of his punitive expeditions against the neighbouring Turkoman nomads in the region of Yozgat and Amasya is included in the work. Moreover, Murad II's campaigns on the Balkans are meticulously recorded. Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself notes that he witnessed these military operations, and that he

Anonymous. See H. E. Cengiz, "Yahşi Fakîh", *Tarih ve Toplum* 71 (1989): 295-7. However, this opinion is convincingly refuted by Ménage, who claims that Yahşi Fakîh's work was only used by Âşıkpaşa-zâde.

¹¹⁸ For instance, Ménage claims that some events of Murad I's reign, or some details about the marriage of Bayezid with a Germiyanid princess, which have no counterpart in the Anonymous, must have been taken from Yahşi Fakîh's work. V. L. Ménage, *op. cit.*, 53.

consciously wrote them down.¹¹⁹ The circumcision ceremony of the sons of Mehmed II, the practice of *mukataa* are also included in the work.

The third section of the work may be called an “addendum” to the text already composed by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. It has been discussed in the first section of this chapter that it is not very realistic to suppose that it was Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself who wrote the work down to 1502. More specifically, it may be suggested that the original work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde ends with the campaign of Mehmed II against Scutari of Albania. In addition, given the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde included after the chapter recording Mehmed II’s campaign some notes about the personalities and achievements of Ottoman sultans, about the viziers, sheikhs and religious scholars who lived in the Ottoman realm, it may be assumed that he intended these chapters to be the end of his work. The supposition of an “addendum” is also supported by the fact that it begins with the following statement: “*Bâb – It Is About What Happened After All These Adventures*”.¹²⁰ Thus, it suggests a new beginning, or a continuation of the work by someone else, given the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself never uses such a statement before the chapters; he always prefers to give a definite action, the name of a battle, or a new policy and application, etc. It is possible that the addendum was appended by one of his disciples or by a member of his family, given the fact that the anonymous writer of this addendum also uses the pseudonym of Aşıkî in the poems added to the end of each section.¹²¹ Moreover, if the work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde was completed in 1502 by himself, it is obvious that Bayezid II’s name, as well as the buildings that he patronized would be recorded with those of the

¹¹⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 190: “Sultan Murad Han Gazi ... saltanatu otuz bir yıl oldu. Ve bu gazâlar ve mâcerâlar cemi’ anun halınun ve kalinün ve ef’âlinün bu ben Âşıkî Derviş Ahmed her birisini gördüm ve bildüm. ... Bu menâkıbda yazdum”.

¹²⁰ Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 206: “Ânı Beyân Eder Kim Bu Mâcerâlardan Sonra Neler Zâhir Oldı”.

other Ottoman sultans. However, the buildings patronized by Bayezid, as well as the prominent religious scholars having lived in his reign are recorded separately,¹²² suggesting that these sections were added by someone else writing in the reign of Bayezid.

Furthermore, the addendum to the work doesn't precisely follow the pattern of the *Tevârih*. First, it doesn't include the events of each year as comprehensively as the earlier part. Moreover, it has a number of détours where some pages of the history of the Karakoyunlus, or summaries from *gazavât-nâmes* are included. These sources used in the "addendum" will be analyzed below. It suffices to say here that this section is made of summaries of some other works, placed in a kind of historical sequence but not reflecting the real turn of events. In short, it may be said that the "addendum" includes not a real chronological sequence, but a thematic compilation. The center of attention is the Ottoman-Mamluk relations, which had become more and more antagonistic under the reign of Bayezid II.¹²³ Another issue is the Ottoman-Venetian wars, and these wars are recorded by reference to some *gazavât-nâmes*.

After identifying these three sections of the work, a general description of the text is in order. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is constituted of chapters, entitled *bâbs*. These sections include some concrete events, like the takeover of the castle of Aydos, or the submission of the Serbian kingdom. In the first section of the *Tevârih*, the organization of chapters is more blurred, and some stories about dervishes may be included. Moreover,

¹²¹ For example, see Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 217, 222.

¹²² Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 224-5. This separate section is entitled "Sultan Bâyezîd Hân'ın Hasleti ve Ânın Zemânında Olan 'Âlimleri ve Fukarâyı Beyân İder".

one chapter may be conflated to include a series of events, rather than a sole and decisive event. After the Interregnum, this organization into chapters becomes well defined than before, and each chapter is generally devoted to a single event or achievement.

In the *Tevârih*, the chapters are often followed by a short poem. These poems sometimes deal with events already told in the *bâb*, and they have the function of emphasizing some important issues. For instance, after the betrayal of the Karamanids is described, it is followed by a poem dealing with the hypocrisy of the Karamanids.¹²⁴ Some poems remind the work of Ahmedî, the *İskender-nâme* in the sense that they are the reports of some events in a versified form.¹²⁵ On other occasions, these poems are used in order to convey moralistic messages dealing with the futility of worldly life, the passage of time, the virtues of praying and submitting oneself to the will of God.¹²⁶

The moralistic poems may be said to reflect the worldview of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, and it is possible to find out the repercussions of a pious, religious tradition of poetry, symbolized by a set of diverse writers like Âşık Paşa or Yunus Emre.¹²⁷ These poems show how distant Âşıkpaşa-zâde was from the newly developed tradition of poetry,

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 206-17, 226-7, 229-40. Meanwhile, there are some references to the events that occurred outside the Ottoman realm, in Eastern Anatolia and Syria.

¹²⁴ For example, see Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 151. In the related section, Karamanids don't respect their oath given vis-à-vis Mehmed I and claim that their enmity will last forever. Âşıkpaşa-zâde, after the section, underlines the unfaithfulness of the Karamanids:

“Eder kavî ü karâr u ahd u peymân İçer andlar yalan çok eder inkâr
Begi ve kadısı şeyh ü müderris Hiledür işleri hep çâr u mekkâr”.

¹²⁵ For example, see Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 110. In a poem, the campaigns of Konur Alp and Gazi Rahman are recorded in a fashion that reminds Ahmedî's style.

¹²⁶ For instance, in Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 117, there is a short poem about the futility of conceit and haughtiness. In Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 137, there is a lamentation about the arbitrariness of fate and the helplessness of men before it. In page 163, there is a poem about the spuriousness of worldly pleasures.

¹²⁷ A. Bombaci asserts that a mystic dimension dominated the works of poetry written in Anatolia until the emergence of some principalities and the birth of a court culture, inspired by Arabic and Persian examples. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's time, the lyric tradition was obviously the dominant poetic tradition. However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde preferred to follow the moralism of the poetic works of the 13th and 14th centuries. For this mystic direction of Anatolian poetry, see A. Bombaci, *Histoire de la littérature turque*, 225. For the new, “lyric” tradition, see *ibid.*, 243, 273.

inspired by Persian examples, and dealing with the joys and pleasures of life.¹²⁸ In a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde perpetuates the dervish ideal of *fakr*, the notion that life is something to be endured until the real life, the after-world is reached.

The *Tevârih*'s outstanding features include the use of a simple, unsophisticated language. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work doesn't include the embellished formulas of the courtly tradition. Moreover, it also lacks the Arabic formulas, or Quranic verses used in the Anonymous and Neşrî. At first sight, this simplicity of language may be attributed to the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde didn't receive a sophisticated education, that he didn't know much about Arabic literature and the Quran itself. However, when it is considered that he was invited to the circumcision ceremony of the sons of Mehmed II, that he was introduced to some circles close to the Ottoman palace, it may be concluded that he had at least some notions of Arabic and of Islamic literature. However, in the last instance, it should be kept in mind that all his life, he was a member of the dervish-ghazi milieu and that he should have reflected the learning and the level of knowledge of the *fakîhs*. Thus, it may be said that he represented in a sense the *volk* Islam, and that he was not able, for example like İbn Kemal, to write in Arabic and Persian. The fact that his work doesn't include some references to more sophisticated expressions of Islam, and that it is full of more moralizing, pedagogic, handbook-like aspects of everyday piety shows the limits of his skills about religious matters. Moreover, a simple language may have been used in order to reach the ghazi-dervish milieu. Âşıkpaşa-zâde knew these milieus very well, and he was absolutely aware of their level of learning and culture. Thus, even if he knew

¹²⁸ For Âşıkpaşa-zâde's dislike of this new lyric tradition, see his remarks about Ahmed Veliyüddin Paşa, a renowned *divân* poet who wrote under the reign of Mehmed II, in *Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, 243: "Âsâr-ı Ahmed Veliyüddin Paşa: Mahubblarun gözlerini ve kaşlarını ve zülüflerini ve hâllerini ve benlerini medh ede geldi ve anun ile gitti".

more than he seemed to know, he would perhaps have preferred to use a much simpler language.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's language may be taken as an important testimony to the grammatical structure and vocabulary of 15th century Turkish, as it was spoken in Anatolia and in the Balkans. As it has been noted above, this language ignores to some extent Arabic and Persian words. When it is considered that Âlî Bey added a large number of editorial notes to explain some words of Âşıkpaşa-zâde,¹²⁹ it appears that before the nationalist concerns of "Turkifying" the language from 1910's to the 1940's, much of the Turkish words of Âşıkpaşa-zâde were difficult to understand for the learned members of 19th and 20th century Ottoman society.

Another interesting feature of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work is the inclusion of dialogues. In the *Tevârîh*, distinct from the works of the courtly tradition, historical characters speak, discuss, curse, praise, blame. Thus, the inclusion of dialogues becomes one of the critical instances of rendering the characteristics of a person into writing. In the courtly tradition, Ottoman sultans are represented as frozen stereotypes of dynastic virtues, while the popular tradition and Neşrî, following it, make them speak. Osman's speeches are more naïve, more simple. However, Murad II's and Mehmed II's words are given with an air of sultanic superiority. They are portrayed while they are threatening pashas, or while they are proclaiming the beginning of a campaign. Other characters, such as the beg of the Karamanids, Timur, and some pashas are also made to speak.

Another factor that distinguishes Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work from the Anonymous and from the more popular historical epics is the use of a chronology. It cannot be purported

that this chronology is very rigorous and meticulous.¹³⁰ However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde aims often to record the dates of historical events. Especially after the Interregnum, this chronology becomes more detailed. This may be due to the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself was taking some notes, with the aim of writing the events that he witnessed. Or, he was helped by the tradition of compiling historical calendars, which became an important genre under Murad II. It is obvious that he made use of some historical calendars, given the fact that he records some earthquakes, fires, comets at the end of the events of a year, much like in the fashion of a historical calendar. The issue of the sources will be discussed below. What is important about Âşıkpaşa-zâde's use of chronology is that he thus supersedes the concept of epic time, which doesn't recognize time-barriers, which can, for example, make Seyyid Battal ride the horse of Hamza, Muhammed's uncle, or include a companion of the prophet as one of the comrades of the hero of the tale. Thus, despite some entries reflecting the influence of popular tales, the *Tevârih* has a much more realistic understanding of time sequences. It is obvious that a relation of cause and effect is not established between these time sequences, or between the activities of individuals. Nevertheless, the *Tevârih* represents one step forward from the fanciful and unrealistic time conception of popular epics.

Then, there are some entries which reflect *menâkıb-nâme* features. The most obvious example is of course the so-called "dream of Osman", where the family receives its divine sanction. There are other examples as well. For instance, after the death of Sari

¹²⁹ It is interesting to see that Âli Bey, publishing his edition in the first decade of the 20th century, needs to explain words like *savaş*, *iletmek*, *birlik*, *boy*, *kutlu*, *tutsak* in footnotes. See Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 28, 30, 56, 69, 110.

¹³⁰ Nicoara Beldiceanu and I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr show that only important events such as a victory, the birth of a prince, etc. were dated. Moreover, in Âşıkpaşa-zâde, at least until the end of the events of the reign of Bayezid I, only years are given, while days and months are omitted. See *idem.*, "Considérations sur

Yatı, the brother of Osman, his burial site becomes a holy place. At night, by-passers see a holy light flowing from the skies upon the grave.¹³¹ Again, the grave of Osman's nephew Aydoğdu becomes a place of worship. Sick horses are brought to the grave of Aydoğdu with the belief that they will be cured. Thus, a cult is formed around the personality of Aydoğdu.¹³² Again, Murad I is said to destroy castles by praying and cursing. It is said that he has a holy and powerful breath, a *nefes*. All these *menâkıb-nâme* themes are included obviously in order to emphasize the sanctified character of the Ottoman family, whose superior and lesser members similarly possess some spiritual powers. However, these *menâkıb-nâme* themes disappear from the work when the parts inspired by the *Menâkıb* of Yahşi Fakîh end, leaving their place to a more realistic chain of narrative.

Another interesting feature of the work is the peculiar aspects related to toponymy. Criticized by Colin Imber as testimonies to the artificial and made-up aspects of the works of Ottoman historians,¹³³ these toponymical details establish some relations with the names of ghazis and the names of some towns. For instance, the name of the town of Konurpa is said to be inspired by the name of Konur Alp.¹³⁴ Or, the name of the town of Dinboz is attributed to a crushing defeat by Muslims over Christians, whose

la chronologie des sources ottomanes et ses pièges”, in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Prof. V. L. Ménage*, 17, 28.

¹³¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 96: “... ol yerde bir çam ağacı vardır. Şimdiki hinde ana Kandillü Çam dirler. Vakıt vakıt olur kim anda bir şu'le görürler”.

¹³² Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 105: “Mezarına daş çevürübdürler. Ol vilâyetde at sancılansa anun mezaruna iledürler. ... Allâh-u Teâlâ şifa verir”. The legend woven around Aydoğdu follows the criteria of A. Y. Ocak about the formation of a cult of saints: there is a grave where the saint supposedly lies, there are some miracles which are thought to be performed by this saint. See A. Y. Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menâkıbnâmeler*, 9.

¹³³ C. Imber, “The Legend Of Osman Gazi”, in *Studies in Ottoman History and Law*, 327-9. Imber suggests that these naïve toponymic entries reflect the “pseudohistorical” character of the Ottoman historiography in the 15th century.

¹³⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 112.

religion was destroyed (*dini bozuldu*).¹³⁵ Again, some links are established between some events and the names given to those places where the events are said to have occurred. For example, on the orders of Osman, a Christian lord is “killed and buried like a dog”. Thus, the place is named as İt Eşeni after this event.¹³⁶

While such instances are used by Imber to refute the veracity of 15th-century Ottoman historiography, we may accept them as the signs showing how the physical space was interpreted and described by the historians. Accordingly, these toponymical concerns show that physical space, the name of towns, mountain passages and plains were redefined by reference to some historical/legendary achievements, just as the men of the tribe were named after their achievements in Dede Korkut stories. In a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde reflected a set of beliefs which originally tried to understand the world, the geography around them.

II. 2. b. The Sources of the *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*

The most important source of Âşıkpaşa-zâde is obviously the *Menâkıb* of Yahşi Fakîh. In a sense, this source distinguishes the work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde from others by providing him with some original information not found elsewhere.¹³⁷ Moreover, the closeness of Yahşi Fakîh to the Ottoman house via his father makes his work a privileged source. Even if the degree of historical accuracy may be suspect, Yahşi Fakîh’s *Menâkıb* is obviously a precious source for the legends and mental constructs concerning the foundations of the Ottoman state. Moreover, it should be underlined that the work

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹³⁷ For the particularity of Yahşi Fakîh’s *Menâkıb*, see V. L. Ménage, “The *Menâqib* of Yakhshi Faqîh”, 52-3 *passim*.

obviously satisfied the expectations of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, who wanted to assess the contribution of the ghazi-dervish milieu in his work. Added to the evidence in the *Menâkıbü'l-Kudsiyye* about Edebalı's belonging to the sect of Vefâiyye, Yahşî Fakîh's work in a sense corroborated Elvan Çelebi's words and provided the Vefâiyye with a larger framework in which the dervishes of the sect acted together with the Ottoman family.

Next to the influence of the *Menâkıb*, there are what may be called "direct reports" of some individuals. For instance, Bayezid I's battle with the Hungarians near Alaca Hisar is reported by Timurtaşoğlu Umur Bey, who took part in the expedition.¹³⁸ The Battle of Ankara is reported by someone whose name is not given, but who is said to be the commander of the fortress of Amasya in the reign of Mehmed I.¹³⁹ Of course, there may be other direct reports in the work, whose reporters are not identified by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. Again, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's personal experiences added a great deal to the work. The activities of Yörgüç Paşa around Yozgat and Amasya, the dialogue between Abdülkadir Mukaddesî and Cüneyd Erdebilî, Murad II's Balkan campaigns and the general atmosphere of the frontiers, the circumcision ceremony of Mehmed II's sons, the application of *mukataa* were all witnessed by Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself and reported in his work.

Moreover, it is obvious that Âşıkpaşa-zâde made use of some historical calendars in his work. This is shown by the inclusion of some stylistic features of the calendars in the work. For instance, in some sections, it is reported that two comets were seen that

¹³⁸ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 136: "Ve o Kara Temür Daşun oğlu var idi. Ana Umur Beg derler idi. Bu gazâyı fakîre ol habar verdi".

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 145: "O Bayazıd Hanun solaklarından idi. ... Sultan Mehmed dahı Amasiyye hisarınun dizdarlığın vermiş idi. ... Fakîr ... andan nakl etdüm".

year. Again, some fires or epidemics are recorded.¹⁴⁰ Given that Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself lived far from the places where the comets were observed or where the epidemics broke out, it is certain that he had at hand some historical calendars, which recorded such events besides some information about rulers and important battles.¹⁴¹

In addition to all these sources, the influence of *gazavât-nâmes* is obvious. For the Balkan campaigns of Murad II, Âşıkpaşa-zâde didn't use the famous *Gazavât-nâme-i Sultan Murad*. In a sense, he didn't need to, because he was already a first-hand witness of these campaigns and struggles. However, especially in what I have been calling the "addendum", the influence of *gazavât-nâmes* is evident. In some sections, the compiler/scribe copied directly from some *gazavât-nâmes* written under Bayezid II. For instance, it is possible to suggest that the sections about the takeover of Lepanto and Modon were taken from a *gazavât-nâme*, the so-called *Feth-i İnebahtı ve Moton* by Safâî.¹⁴² Again, the sections dealing with a Venetian attack on Lesbos in 1501 are again taken from another *gazavât-nâme*, the *Kutub-nâme* or *Kıssa-i Midilli* of Uzun Firdevsî.¹⁴³

Nevertheless, the list of sources, some which are obviously and others probably used by Âşıkpaşa-zâde shows that he himself was behind a large part of the text. This is one of the most important aspects of the *Tevârih*. Much evidence was taken from some sources, but others were added by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. He grew up with ghazi-dervish stories,

¹⁴⁰ For example, after Mehmed II's siege of Belgrade, Âşıkpaşa-zâde gives the date of the expedition and adds that two comets were observed that year. In Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 197: "Ve bu gazânun tarihi hicretün sekiz yüz altmışında vâki olındı. Ve bu tarihte iki azîm kuyruklu yıldız doğdı. Biri garbda ve biri şarkda vâki oldı". For similar examples, see *ibid.*, 201, 213.

¹⁴¹ For some information about how these historical calendars were used by historians, see Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography", 157-9 and V. L. Ménage, "The 'Annals of Murâd II'", 579-80.

¹⁴² Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 254-60. The use of a *gazavât-nâme* is supported by the fact that the language of the *Tevârih* suddenly becomes more complicated, and the events are told with greater detail. For instance, the movements of the Ottoman fleet are recorded on a daily basis. For some information about this *gazavât-nâme*, see A. S. Levend, *Gazavât-nâmeler*, 20.

with dervish ideals recorded in Âşık Paşa's *Fakr-nâme*, with the handbook-like pedagogic ethics recorded in the *Garib-nâme*, and with the sense of belonging to a great family as told in the *Menâkibü'l-Kudsiyye*. In the world in which he lived, there were some discourses which circumscribed everybody and every human activity, which made sense of the world in which people dwelled. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is constituted by an amalgamation of these discourses, which interacted with each other, disclosed other discourses, and gave a "voice" to the people to interpret their everyday lives. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's case, the discourses about the ideological alliance lying behind the emergence of the Ottoman state, the discourse of heroism appended to the sense of religious duty, everyday piety and abstention from worldly pleasures, the discourse of a puritan religious worldview came together to define the texture, the political mentality visible in the *Tevârih*. This body of discourses, competing and intersecting with each other alternatively, provided the "knowledge of the world" to those who asked some questions about life and death, glory and defeat, reward and punishment.

¹⁴³ Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 263; A. S. Levend, *op. cit.*, 21. Moreover, some evidence about the activities of Kemal Reis, recorded in Âli/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 250-1, may have been taken from yet another *gazavât-nâme* by Safâyî, recording the adventures of this captain.

III. CHARACTERS IN THE *TEVÂRÎH-İ ÂL-İ OSMAN*: SULTANS, DERVISHES, GHAZIS, ADVISORS AND CHRISTIANS

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's opinions on the Ottoman sultans and the history of the dynasty, his categorizations defining sultans as tribal chiefs or ghazis help us find out the clues of his conception of Ottoman history, his political opinions, his moralism and even his longings and expectations. Moreover, the general dynamics of early Ottoman history may be studied through a comparison of the works of the historians writing in the 15th century. This doesn't mean that their works are to be accepted as authoritative sources. The inaccuracies that they include have been the focus of more than one studies, and caused Fuad Köprülü to speak about the legends and made-up stories of early Ottoman historians. However, it is interesting to follow the process of the formation of a central body of advisors, clerks, religious scholars and literati through the repercussions of this process in the historical works. Again, the practice of fratricide and the peculiar dynamics of tanistry are addressed in these works. Thus, these sources offer us important data on how the pattern of succession was viewed by members of different social milieus. It is obvious that what made the happiness of one party was often detrimental to others living in the same social and political realm. Moreover, even though the majority claimed to be the advocates of Sunnite Islam, the religious interpretations, the conceptions about those who carried the message of the religion differed. The cleavage between a dervish-ghazi sensibility claiming its share in the foundation of the Ottoman state and a more rigorous attitude emphasizing the more doctrinal aspects of the religion is visible throughout these historical works. While an experienced administrator like Nişancı Mehmed points at the

necessity of the practice of fratricide as the perpetuation of the political body, Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the writers/compiler of the Anonymous voice more naïve, more moralistic concerns criticising the murder of innocent brothers. The marvellous stories of the ghazis and dervishes, which are dear to Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous, are not at all taken into account by Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed who prefer to single out the greatness of the sultan above anybody living in the Ottoman society.

The *Tevârih* of Âşıkpaşa-zâde can be analyzed only within this tight web made of cross-references, omissions, fictions and projections. Further, in order to understand these implicit political opinions, criticisms, expectations and longings, the historian's views about individuals is crucial. This is because, some remarks found in the Anonymous excepted, there are not many instances of criticism touching upon political processes *per se*. Much is focused on individuals. An individual's given acts may be the symbol of a general immoralism or, again, an anecdote concerning a simple dervish may tell much beyond its immediate significance. Thus, the first key to the mentality of a historian is his characterization of historical figures.

Here, there is an obvious difference between Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous on the one hand, and a group of what we may call "court historians" on the other. This difference stems from the inclusion or omission of personalities of secondary importance in the texture of the work. This means that a set of characters, ranging from frontier begs to Anatolian dervishes, from immigrant religious scholars to dedicated viziers, is found in the more popular histories while the figure of the sultan overwhelmingly occupies most of the work in the court historians. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous are richer in content, while many of their details lack in the works of the "court" historians. Neşrî, on

the other hand, brings together the characteristics of these two distinct approaches of history-writing. He includes edifying stories and formulas of praise in his text, he edits the criticisms of earlier texts and remoulds them in the form of more admissible realities. But, while doing this, he erases the remnants of a primitive, localistic reaction. Thus, Neşrî is in a sense an “acceptable” version of the earlier traditions, and a “detailed and annotated” version of the earlier courtly works whose formulas don’t say much about the turn of the events. Neşrî instructs and corrects, develops some themes and erases others.

In this section, the figures included in the historical works produced in the 15th century are analyzed. The discussion will focus on Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*. However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s characterizations are analyzed in comparison with the works of other historians. Thus, it is hoped that the points of intersection and divergence will be unveiled.

III. 1. The Origins and Members of the Ottoman House

III. 1. a. The Genealogy of the Ottoman House

Not only Âşıkpaşa-zâde, but the majority of the works of Ottoman historians written in the 15th century include some genealogies of the Ottoman house. The common point of these genealogies, which are very similar to each other, is that they claim a descent from the legendary leader of Turkomans, Oghuz Khan. Ahmedî, in his *Dâsitân*, is the first historian to mention a connection with Oghuz lineage. However, writing in the first decade of the 15th century, this work includes only the names of Gök Alp, Gündüz

Alp, Ertuğrul and “some people from Oghuz” in a confused manner.¹⁴⁴ This confusion may be due to the fact that the names of legendary ancestors were circulating in the oral traditions, but the genealogical line was not yet formalized in the first decade of the 15th century.

Before Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Şükrullah,¹⁴⁵ in 1459, and Nişancı Mehmed Paşa,¹⁴⁶ in 1480-1, provided more coherent versions of the Ottoman genealogy, where the lineage begins with Noah and his son Japheth. Âşıkpaşa-zâde gives a more detailed genealogical tree of the Ottoman house, whereas Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed Paşa identify the names of the prophet and his son, together with the name of Oghuz Khan and some of his illustrious descendants. It appears that all the historians in the 15th century, despite their differing opinions, their different concerns, and their different literary tastes, agreed on a descent from the illustrious Oghuz Khan. In this sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde agrees with others that the Ottoman family is a descendant of Oghuz Khan and of Kayı/Kayık Alp, thus holding the key to supremacy over the other Turkoman tribes. The claim of supremacy is visible in an anecdote provided by Şükrullah. In 1449, sent in a diplomatic mission to the Akkoyunlu ruler Mirza Cihanşah, he is shown a book “in Mongol script” dealing with the forefathers of Turkomans. Mirza Cihanşah, perhaps in a mood of diplomatic courtesy, tells that they share the same ancestors with the Ottomans. He adds that the Akkoyunlus descend from Deniz Khan, whereas the Ottoman line goes back to Gök Khan. Thus, adds

¹⁴⁴ Atsız/Ahmedî, 8. These “people from Oghuz” accompany Sultan Alâeddin in a military campaign. Gök Alp, the legendary ancestor, is here described as one of the companions of Ertuğrul.

¹⁴⁵ Atsız/Şükrullah, 51.

¹⁴⁶ Atsız/Nişancı, 343.

Şükrullah, Cihanşah accepts the Ottoman superiority, given the fact that the skies are above the seas.¹⁴⁷

The full version of the genealogical tree, completed by a historical account is given in Neşrî's *Cihan-nümâ*, where the issue is interpreted in greater detail.¹⁴⁸ It seems that the history of the Oghuzes, in a few decades, from the 1450's to the 1490's, had become a necessary introduction to the Ottoman history. It is obvious that these biographies were taken from an *oğuz-nâme*. Moreover, the contributions of the oral tradition, of the stories in *Kitab-ı Dede Korkut* are obvious. Thus, to sum up, what is witnessed in the 15th century is that the stories and genealogical trees about Oghuzes, already found in the oral tradition, are formalized and written down in the Ottoman realm.

Thus, it appears that the Oghuz genealogy had become an important asset in the 15th century, and that all the historians mention some connection to it in their works. But, from which source did they borrow the names of these revered ancestors? In Ahmedî's case, it is obvious that legends and oral traditions make up the references: the chronological sequence is confused and the ancestors are thought as the contemporaries and co-fighters of Ertuğrul. However, in the case of Şükrullah, Nişancı Mehmed, the Anonymous and Âşıkpaşa-zâde, there is a much more elaborate genealogy. The source of this elaborate genealogy may be Yazıcı-zâde Ali's translation of İbn Bîbî's Persian chronicle, *El Evâmirü'l-Alâiyye* under the title of *Selçuk-nâme* in 1425.¹⁴⁹ Yazıcı-zâde adapted, rather than translated the work, and added some passages, favoring the Ottoman

¹⁴⁷ Atsız/Şükrullah, *ibid*.

¹⁴⁸ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 9-21. There is a whole section, "Evlâd-ı Oğuz Han ve Ensâb-ı Oğuz Han beyanındadır".

¹⁴⁹ Köprülü, *The Seljuks of Anatolia*, 10.

family among the other descendants of Oghuz. Another source for historians with a knowledge of Persian and Arabic seems to be Reşidüddin Fazlullah's *Câmîü't-Tevârih*, which is the earliest example of the *oğuz-nâme* genre. It can be argued that Âşıkpaşazâde read the *Selçuk-nâme* of Yazıcı-zâde, or that he was informed by other sources whose common point was the Ottomans' genealogical superiority.¹⁵⁰

Next, we can inquire the reasons for the adaptation of such a genealogy on the part of the Ottomans. When it is considered that similar genealogies were drawn up for the Akkoyunlu family,¹⁵¹ it appears that the problem of lineage and ancestors had more than one facet, and it was not encountered by the Ottomans alone.

The roots of a search of legitimation which would magnify the image of the Ottoman house in the eyes of the Turkoman masses still living in most parts of Anatolia can be dated back to the period that followed the Timurid invasion. It should be kept in mind that the provinces in Rumelia remained at the hands of some members of the Ottoman family or at the hands of some frontier begs whose allegiance, even if it was not a relation of total submission, was nevertheless directed towards the Ottoman house.

The problem was created by the separation of some Anatolian principalities, and by the rise and expansion of the Akkoyunlu power after the invasion of Timur. The "Oghuz revivalism" of the Akkoyunlu ruler Kara Osman (r. 1403-35) who gained considerable lands in Eastern Anatolia and whose pretensions of descent through Bayındır Khan might have provided him with an ideological basis to demand the allegiance of the Turcomans of Anatolia, Syria and Azarbayjan¹⁵² must have formed an

¹⁵⁰ Paul Wittek, in a chapter devoted to source criticism, analyzes the Ottoman effort to carve a superior genealogy. See Paul Wittek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Doğuşu*, 16-23 *passim*.

¹⁵¹ John E. Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu. Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City, 1999), 173-82.

¹⁵² J. E. Woods, *op. cit.*, 56.

important crisis of legitimacy and the prospect of an eventual Akkoyunlu take-over of a large part of Anatolia.

Thus, in a sense, the “Turcoman/Turkic” element was the center of the problem. The anecdotes of Ottoman historians about the perfidious attitudes of the Turkoman contingents who went over to the side of Timur in the Battle of Ankara, and the scenes whereby Anatolian begs who took refuge in Timur’s court complain about Bayezid’s policies, testify to the fact that the Turkoman element, which was never totally controlled, had grown into a real threat for the Ottomans. The accusations against Bayezid who is said to have pursued a cruel policy against Anatolian principalities show that the alienation of the Turkoman element was a source of concern, and even of preoccupation. To understand why the Turkoman element was alienated from the Ottoman house was crucial, and to establish a link between the Ottoman family and the Turkomans was important.

Thus, it seems that it is not very difficult to identify the sources used by the 15th-century Ottoman historians concerning the forefathers of the Ottomans. The important thing is that there was a need to claim that the Ottomans descended from the Oghuzes, and that their clan, the Kayı, had the right to rule over the Oghuz tribes. The eventual need to claim descent from a more recent ancestor, Süleyman Şah, will be dealt with in the next section. Here, it suffices to say that the Oghuz genealogy was in a sense dictated by the turn of the events and that it was unanimously accepted. It is also interesting that Ahmedî’s *Dâsitân*, written c. 1400-1410, does not reflect a developed sense of belonging to the Oghuz line while the works of later historians contain detailed genealogies, going back to Noah. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous, the most original examples of

Ottoman historiography in the 15th century, don't differ from the mainstream versions of the Ottoman genealogy. Of course, the sources included some contradictory themes as well. For example, in Şükrullah, the Ottomans descend from Gök Han while Yazıcı-zâde claims that the Ottoman lineage goes back to Gün Han.¹⁵³ However, what is important is that there was a common theme of Oghuz legitimacy. Yazıcı-zâde's emphasis on Gün Han may be attributed to the fact that Gün Han was said to be the father of Kayı, and that the clan of Kayı was deemed to rule over other tribes.¹⁵⁴

Apart from the genealogical claims, the Ottoman search for legitimacy had other components. These are the family's bid for waging ghaza, and the claim about Ottomans being the heirs of the Anatolian Seljuks.¹⁵⁵ These claims of legitimation will be dealt in the next sections on Âşıkpaşa-zâde's version of Süleyman Şah and Ertuğrul. It should be added that the Oghuz legitimation came later, after the claims of ghaza and a direct transfer of power from the Seljuks to the Ottomans. However, before the advent of Mehmed II, during the major part of the 15th century, it was the main theme in the discussion of legitimacy, as a living testimony to the power of legends and ancestry.

III. 1. b. Süleyman Şah, Ertuğrul, and the Anatolian Seljuks

Before Neşrî, the name of Süleyman Şah is mentioned only in the popular tradition, in Oruc, the Anonymous and Âşıkpaşa-zâde. As the editor of the popular and courtly traditions, it is normal that Neşrî included some episodes about him. But the fact that Süleyman Şah is not mentioned in Ahmedî, Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed shows

¹⁵³ See also Wittek, *op. cit.*, 19. Finally, Hoca Sadeddin, in the 16th century, included both traditions in his *Tâcü't-Tevârih* and solved the question.

¹⁵⁴ Aldo Gallotta, "Oğuz Efsanesi ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kökenleri: Bir İnceleme", in *Osmanlı Beyliği (1300-1389)*, edited by E. Zachariadou (Istanbul, 1997), 44.

that, unlike Ertuğrul, Süleyman Şah was living only in the popular tradition. While all the historians include some episodes about Sultan Alâeddin sending a horsetail standard and drums to Osman as the symbol of the approval of Osman's political existence, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's version of the Ottoman legitimacy also includes a reference to Süleyman Şah as the Ottoman ancestor who came to Anatolia before the Seljuk family.

The versions of the story about Süleyman Şah in Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous are similar. The political situation in Khurasan (in the Anonymous) and in Iran (in Âşıkpaşa-zâde) is confused. In the first version, Süleyman Şah goes out of his own will to Anatolia to wage ghaza, and in the second version, he is sent by some "Persian" rulers (obviously, what is meant is the Great Seljuks) to Anatolia. Then, after glorious battles in Anatolia, Süleyman intends to go to Aleppo. On the way to Aleppo, while crossing a river, his horse falls down and he is drowned.¹⁵⁶

The legend woven around Süleyman Şah represents the amalgamation of two personalities. The first one, Kutalmış-oğlu Süleyman Bey is the so-called founder of the dynasty of the Anatolian Seljuks, and an active military chief in Anatolia in the last years of the 11th century.¹⁵⁷ The ruler who was drowned in a river obviously represents Kılıç Arslan I, who was drowned in the Habur River.¹⁵⁸ Thus, in a sense, the story was founded on some keywords: a ruler who leaves Khurasan to make war with the infidel in Anatolia, a ruler who gets drowned, a ruler who wages glorious battles against the infidels. These clues are amalgamated into a coherent whole, irrespective of chronology, and Süleyman

¹⁵⁵ For a discussion of Ottoman claims to legitimacy, see Colin Imber, "The Ottoman Dynastic Myth", in *Studies in Ottoman History and Law*, 305-22.

¹⁵⁶ Azamat/Anonim, 8-9; Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 92-3. The Anonymous doesn't give a precise reason for this voyage back to Aleppo, while Âşıkpaşa-zâde claims that the nomads had not become accustomed to the physical environment of Anatolia: "Göçer evlerün davarı dereden depeden incinür oldu".

¹⁵⁷ For Süleyman's military activities in Anatolia, see Claude Cahen. *Osmanlılardan Önce Anadolu* (Istanbul, 2000), 7-17 *passim*.

Şah is finally proclaimed the father of Ertuğrul. Thus, a recent forefather of the Ottomans is found. Moreover, like the Ottomans, this forefather is a strong proponent of ghaza activity. It is interesting that the relation between Süleyman Şah and the Seljuk house is not at all mentioned, to the extent that the legacy of Süleyman Şah is used as a proof against the supremacy of the Seljuk family. The stories about Süleyman Şah may be interpreted as a collection of popular stories, that obviously included the battles of Süleyman in a *Battal-nâme* fashion.¹⁵⁹

According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, after Süleyman's death, his sons Sungur Tekin and Gündoğdu left for their homelands while Ertuğrul remained on the spot.¹⁶⁰ After a while, Sultan Alâeddin conquered Anatolia. Ertuğrul, hearing that "someone of his family" had become "sultan of Rûm", sent his son Saru Yatı and asked for lands. Alâeddin sent them to Söğüt, between Bilecik and Karacahisar.¹⁶¹ This version is joined by the Anonymous, where Ertuğrul sends his son to Alâeddin to ask for land.¹⁶² However, Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed claim that Ertuğrul had heard of Alâeddin's campaign against the infidels and that he came to Konya with his following to join the army of the sultan.¹⁶³ Another version is to be found in Neşrî, where Söğüt is granted to Ertuğrul after he

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ According to Wittek, there were many stories woven around the personality of Süleyman Şah in Anatolia. The Ottoman claim to legitimacy appropriated, much like the Oghuz genealogy, these stories and linked them to the history of the Ottoman house. Wittek also finds it significant that Süleyman Şah is told to have lived in Mahan, the legendary birthplace of Ebu Müslim. Thus, the legacy of Ebu Müslim is also linked to Süleyman and indirectly to the Ottoman family. Wittek, *op. cit.*, 24.

¹⁶⁰ Âşıkpaşa-zâde gives the names of the three sons of Ertuğrul; the name of Dündar is omitted.

¹⁶¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 93. It is interesting that Ertuğrul's familial ties with Alâeddin are not mentioned elsewhere in Âşıkpaşa-zâde.

¹⁶² Azamat/Anonim, 9.

¹⁶³ Atsız/Şükrullah, 51-2; Atsız/Nişancı, 344.

intervenes in a battle between Alâeddin and the “Tartars” and saves the Seljuk army from an eventual defeat.¹⁶⁴

Again, there is not a consensus among historians about Ertuğrul’s activities in Anatolia. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s version, Ertuğrul lived peacefully in the region,¹⁶⁵ whereas all other historians claim that all of Ertuğrul’s time was devoted to ghaza. Given the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde makes use of Yahşi Fakîh’s *Menâkıb* for the early centuries of the Ottomans, and if Yahşi Fakîh’s relations with the “core” of the family is taken into account, it can be suggested that Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s version is more reliable. Ertuğrul could indeed be a proponent of the politics of peaceful coexistence with his neighbours. However, to some historians, it could seem more plausible to portray Ertuğrul as a ghazi.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde shares with other historians the opinion that Ertuğrul was a “good” subject of Alâeddin. According to some historians, he was also a loyal commander, fighting under the orders of the Seljuk sultan. Thus, what stems from Âşıkpaşa-zâde and other historians is that Ertuğrul didn’t rebel against the sultan, he didn’t cause trouble, and he was given his lands by the sultan. Thus, the transition from the Seljuk rule to the rule of Osman has been a smooth one: as a son of a father loyal to the sultan, he inherited the lands already given to his family. The figure of a father loyal to the sultan, who didn’t rebel against the sultan and who received his lands in a legal fashion should have been an important discourse of legitimation in post-Seljuk Anatolia living in constant political turmoil. For instance, in Şikârî’s history on the Karamanids, Ottoman independence is described as a betrayal and ingratitude; Alâeddin is advised by the Karamanid beg to organize an expedition into Western Anatolia and to reduce these

¹⁶⁴ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 63-5. The story is reminiscent of an older one, about the Turks helping the Arab armies against the Chinese.

principalities to submission.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, the references to Ertuğrul’s ghaza activities may be proposed as a testimony to the fact that Ertuğrul didn’t waste his time, that he “merited” the grant of the sultan by waging ghaza on neighbouring Christian communities.

III. 1. c. The “Coming Out” of Osman

In Ahmedî, Şükrullah and Nişancı Ahmed, who are interested with the glorified image of the Ottoman house, the Ottoman rulers are not dealt with in detail. In the works of these three historians, the sultans are represented as zealous ghazis. The anecdote, the event don’t occupy much place in these narratives. The sultans’ virtues are enumerated, as well as some important campaigns. On the other hand, the Anonymous devotes a much larger place to the anecdotes; however, these anecdotes don’t include much details about the particular activities of Ottoman sultans. The Anonymous body of texts is a collection of stories, where the deeds of dervishes and ghazis occupy a larger place. Thus, the *dramatis personae* of the Anonymous body of texts is made of sultans, ghazis, dervishes whose stories are given on an equal basis.

One of the outstanding features of Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih* is that it includes an important number of details about the deeds of the Ottoman sultans. There is also room for the anecdotes about the achievements of ghazis and dervishes, but these anecdotes never veil the image of the central figure, represented by the sultan. Thus, for the cluster of traditions about Ottoman sultans, Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s *Tevârih* is perhaps the most

¹⁶⁵ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 93.

¹⁶⁶ Şikârî, *Karaman Oğulları Tarihi*, 64: “Saruhan ve Aydın ve Eşref ve Hamid ve Menteşe ve Osman bunlar vefat idüb oğulları hakk-ı nânı unutup sikke ve hutba sahibi oldular. Asker cem idüb diyâr-ı sâhile var, eğer istikbâl iderlerse her birine hüccet vir safada olsunlar; eğer cidale, cenge çıkarlarsa cenk eyle”.

valuable source. In view of the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's traditions were transferred by Neşrî to the historians of the next century, the need of an analysis of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's text becomes urgent.

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's text, the episodes about Osman have two critical layers. The first one is about Osman's activities, and it tells Osman's relations with his neighbours, Osman's military activities, and the people around him. The second layer is about the discourse of legitimacy woven around Osman. It may be said that this legitimizing discourse emerged before the claims to an Oghuz lineage. These first claims of legitimacy represent the preoccupations of a frontier lord who is not powerful enough to confront a worn-out but still existing political authority. However, the claims of a legitimacy drawn from an allegiance to the Seljuk center are not devoid of tensions. These claims will be analyzed below. Before the discussion, it should be said that there is not any mention of Osman's paying tribute to the Ilkhanids in the *Tevârih*.¹⁶⁷ Thus, the not-so-pleasant memories of subjection to the Ilkhanids are completely erased from the work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde.

To continue the discussion begun in the preceding two sections, I will first deal with the discourse of legitimacy woven around the personality of Osman. This legitimacy has four main components. The first one is Osman's nomination as a beg by Alâeddin, the second one is the theme of divine sanction given in a dream, the third one is Osman's

¹⁶⁷ Ottomans paid a tribute to the Ilkhanids until the second half of the 14th century. See I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Başlangıçlar: Osman ve Orhan", in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, edited by R. Mantran, vol. I (Istanbul, 1995), 33-4. The disappearance of this practice may be due not much to the fact that Ottomans gained power, but to the fact that the Ilkhanid Empire was shattered by internal strife and could no longer impose his power on the Anatolian principalities situated near the Aegean Sea.

activities of ghaza which are instigated by Osman's dream, and the fourth, and perhaps most interesting one is the right of sword.

All the sources claim that Osman was given the symbols of power by the Seljuk sultan Alâeddin. However, in Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed, these symbols are immediately sent to Osman after the death of Ertuğrul. Thus, there is a direct transformation of power from his father Ertuğrul to Osman, under the aegis of the Seljuk sultan.¹⁶⁸

Then comes the intervention of the divine element, the so-called "dream of Osman". Şükrullah doesn't mention the dream anecdote, while in the Anonymous, Ertuğrul, instead of Osman, receives the divine message telling him of the future grandeur of his family.¹⁶⁹ In this version, there are references to Ertuğrul's relation with a Sheikh Abdülaziz. A moon comes out of the breast of the sheikh and sinks into the breast of Ertuğrul. Then, a tree grows out of Ertuğrul's breast, and its shadow clouds all the universe. The primitive metaphors of fecondation and birth are obvious, and the story is an explicit product of popular imagination. As for Nişancı Mehmed's version, what causes Ertuğrul's dream here is his respect towards the Quran. Ertuğrul refuses to sleep before a Quran, and stays awake till the morning. Then, in the morning, he falls asleep for a moment and is told by a divine voice that his family has been entitled to rule over the universe.¹⁷⁰ Âşıkpaşa-zâde's version is the same as in the Anonymous; however, this time, Osman, and not Ertuğrul, receives a divine revelation. It is interesting to note that Nişancı Mehmed prefers a general Islamic legitimacy: Ertuğrul's family is bestowed the grace of God because of a reverence towards the Holy Word. The Anonymous and

¹⁶⁸ Atsız/Şükrullah, 52; Atsız/Nişancı Mehmed, 344.

¹⁶⁹ Azamat/Anonim, 10.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde, on the other hand, relate the divine intervention to the prospect of union with a dervish. Moreover, in Âşıkpaşa-zâde, this is sealed by the union of flesh, by Osman's marriage to the daughter of Sheikh Edebalı who interprets the dream.¹⁷¹ Thus, "the holy man's charisma that is transmitted through his daughter, figures as a necessary element in the dynasty's future success".¹⁷²

To be sure, the theme of divine sanction bestowed in a dream is not unique to the foundation myths of the Ottoman house. Fuad Köprülü asserts that similar stories are told about Sevük Tigin in Cüzcânî's *Tabakât-ı Nâsirî*, and about Tuğrul in Reşidüddîn's *Câmiü't-Tevârih*.¹⁷³ According to Köprülü, the dream theme can be an Oghuz tradition living among Anatolian Turks, or that it may have been taken directly by Reşidüddîn, whose work was widely read in the Ottoman court in the 15th century. Thus, it is possible that the historians made up a dream story they already knew from the popular tradition. Again, the dream's symbolism may be interpreted in different ways. One can suggest, following Gibbons, that it symbolizes a passage from paganism to Islam, when it is considered that Ertuğrul is not aware of the contents of the holy book, but nevertheless shows a respect towards it, and then becomes imbued with the virtues and rewards of a new religion. Or, according to Lindner, the dream's imagery, the theme of a bountiful tree extending its refreshing shadow to everybody, may be thought to symbolize the peace and plenty promised by Ottomans to sedentary peasants. Thus, it may be the expression of the dissolution of the nomadic character of the Ottoman enterprise.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Atsız/Nişancı Mehmed, 344.

¹⁷¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 95.

¹⁷² Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem. Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York, 1993), 16.

¹⁷³ Fuad Köprülü, *Les origines de l'Empire ottoman*, 12.

¹⁷⁴ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, 37-8.

Whatever symbolism the dream may include, it is the most powerful foundation myth of the Ottoman enterprise. It represents the critical point in Osman's political career. Portrayed as a tribal leader with not much military force and compelled to entertain good relations with his neighbours, Osman suddenly becomes aware of his divine mission and begins to wage ghaza. In his activities, he is joined by the Seljuk sultan Alâeddin, who helps him attack the castle of Karacahisar. Alâeddin is compelled to abandon the siege but, before going to attack the "Tartars", he calls Osman and tells him that he displays many signs of happiness/success: "you and your family are unique in their kind. My prayers, God's help, the saints' support and Muhammed's miracles are with you".¹⁷⁵ This is the first occurrence of a legitimation on the part of the Seljuk ruler. Then, after the fall of Karacahisar, Osman sends some presents to Alâeddin who, in return, sends him a horsetail standard. Thus, after the dream episode, Osman secures the approval of the legitimate ruler as well. In these episodes, Osman is called "sancak beği" by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. Thus, even if Osman's authority is acknowledged, he is still defined as a subject of the Seljuk ruler.¹⁷⁶

The next step of Osman's legitimacy is based on his proclamation of authority independently of the Seljuk sultan. Some years after the fall of Karacahisar, a group of fresh immigrants come to Osman to ask him for a judge and an imam for the Friday prayer. Dursun Fakîh claims that Alâeddin's permission should be sought for such a decision. However, Osman's answer is clear:

¹⁷⁵ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 97: "Sende saadet nişanları çokdur. Sana ve nesline âlemde mukabil olıcı yokdur. Benim duam ve Allahun inâyeti ve evliyanun himmeti ve Muhammedin mucizati sentün ile biledür".

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 97-9.

I have taken this city with my own sword. The God, who has given him the title of sultan, has given me the title of khan by my ghaza. ... And why should I be indebted to him because of this standard [that he sent to me], because I myself held it high and attacked the infidels. ... And if he claims that he is the son of the Seljuk family, I claim that I am the son of Gök Alp. And if he claims that he has come to this land before us, I claim that my grandfather Süleyman Şah came here before him.¹⁷⁷

Interestingly enough, Neşrî corrects this story and remarks that Osman, even if he had gained his independence, respected Alâeddin. In this version, coins are minted with the name of Alâeddin, the Friday sermon is given in his name.¹⁷⁸ Minting coins and giving Friday sermons in the name of Osman occurs only after the death of Alâeddin. Thus, while Âşıkpaşa-zâde portrays a self-asserting ruler, Neşrî emphasizes the “legitimist” approach of Osman.

To go back to the discussion about legitimacy, it can be said that these three instances of legitimation, namely the dream, the approval of the Seljuk ruler and the right of sword are supported by many references to Osman’s activities as a ghazi. And he is recognized as such by other ghazis. He is invited by ghazis to command them and to wage ghaza on all fronts: “The adherents of Islam are victorious. Because, in you, we have found a zealous khan”.¹⁷⁹ The image of ghazi is completed by Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 103: “Bu şehri ben hod kendü kılıcum ilen aldum. Bunda sultanın ne dahli var ki andan izin alam. Ona sultanlık veren Allah bana dahi gazâyile hanlık virdi ... Ve ger minneti şu sancağ ise ben hod dahi sancak götürüb kâfirler ile uğraşdum. ... Ve ger ol ben Âl-i Selçukvân der ise ben hod Gök Alp oğlıyın derin. Ve ger bu vilâyete ben anlardan öndin geldüm der ise Süleymanşah dedem hod andan evvel geldi”.

¹⁷⁸ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 109-11: “Osman Gazi dahi Sultan ‘Alâüd-Dîn zamanında eğerçi nev’â istiklâl bulmuşdı lâkin edebe ri’âyet idüben hutbeyi ve sikkeyi yine Sultan ‘Alâüd-Dîn adına kılmıştı”.

¹⁷⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 107: “... ehl-i İslâm galibdür. Çünkü senün gibi hanumuz var gayretli”.

references to Osman's activities in the versified parts of the work. Osman is said to gird on the sword of Islam, and to be the key of the door of Islam's supremacy.¹⁸⁰

Now, I will turn to analyze Âşıkpaşa-zâde's representation of Osman within his environment, within his relations with his neighbours and men, and within his military activities. It should be remarked that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's idealizations of Osman are quite apparent in various episodes about him. It is obvious that the claims of legitimacy are completed by the introduction of a simple, just, courageous leader who doesn't abuse his politico-military supremacy, be it given by the Seljuk sultan or by God.

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Osman is first elected in place of Ertuğrul.¹⁸¹ Then, after his election, he pursues a policy of friendship with the surrounding Christian lords. Âşıkpaşa-zâde describes a tribal life, based on a set of precarious alliances with Christians.¹⁸² There are some references to a nomadic economy, like the production of cheese and carpets. Meanwhile, Osman organizes hunting parties and according to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, these hunting parties are occasions for Osman to gather people around him. It becomes clear from this remark that Osman's first move was to gather people around him, obviously by a display of virtues and courage during these hunting parties, just like a tribal chief.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 94. The original words of Âşıkpaşa-zâde are "Din kılıcın bele kuşanmak", "fırsat-ı İslâm kapısına miftah olmak".

¹⁸¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 94.

¹⁸² In Neşri, there are references to Osman's friendship with Byzantine lords. He drinks with them, he discusses his problems, and he even goes so far as to confide them his love affairs. Unat&Köymen/Neşri, 75.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.* Lindner, basing himself on Âşıkpaşa-zâde and other Ottoman historians, suggests that Osman indeed rose from a tribal basis. However, the "tribe of Osman" was not ethnically defined. As mentioned by Âşıkpaşa-zâde, some people gathered around Osman and formed his tribe, which was based on pursuing a common life and goal, rather than on some ethnical definition. See Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, 32-6 *passim*.

As part of the image of a simple-mannered chief, Osman is represented as unable to write or read. For instance, after the interpretation of his dream by Edebalı, a dervish asks Osman to grant him a village by a decree. However, Osman tells that he cannot write, and he gives to the dervish a sword and a cup as a token to his grant.¹⁸⁴ In another episode, he gets angry when some people from Germiyan tell that *bac* should be taken in the marketplace of Karacahisar. However, other individuals present on the spot claim that it is a custom, and Osman finally agrees that *bac* is to be taken.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the terms of this early body “law” are very smooth. The law is declared as not binding on those who cannot sell anything in the marketplace.

This anecdote has two interesting aspects. The first one, the aspect of historical reality, shows that, in the first days of the Ottoman enterprise, some laws, some formal rules came to the Ottoman realm from outside.¹⁸⁶ The second aspect has to do with Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s political opinions and should be read together with later criticisms on financial measures: Âşıkpaşa-zâde emphasizes Osman’s leniency in financial matters.

Osman’s figure as a tribal leader is completed by an enumeration of the items included in his estate. He doesn’t leave any gold or cash money to his sons. His heritage includes a few horses, a few sheep herds, some weapons, and cavalry equipment.¹⁸⁷ To be sure, this image may have been forged by Âşıkpaşa-zâde, who would obviously prefer to begin Ottoman history with a tribal ruler who would be in good terms with ghazis and dervishes, who would not collect money for the treasury, and would share the booty with

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 104. Osman’s reaction to the proposal is interesting: “Bir kişi kim kazana, gayrının mı olur? Kendünün mülki olur. Ben anun malında ne kodum ki bana akça ver deyem. Bre kişi var git. Artuk bu sözi bana söyleme kim sana ziyânım deger”.

¹⁸⁶ Metin Kunt, “Siyasal Tarih (1300-1600)”, in *Türkiye Tarihi. Vol. II: Osmanlı Devleti 1300-1600*, edited by Sina Akşin (Istanbul, 1988), 34. Metin Kunt tells that one important factor, and perhaps an advantage for the Ottomans, was that the borderland included a great number of Turkish-speaking Muslims.

his men. In addition, Osman's tribal origins were not the only interpretation about him. In Constantine Mihailovic's *Memoirs of a Janissary* and in an Italian work dated 1514, the *Historia Turchesca*, Osman was depicted as a former peasant. However, as Imber suggests, this image may be due to the fantasies of the troops of standing armies constituted most of all by the sons of peasants. These people would like to admire the example of a former peasant whose family had risen to rulership.¹⁸⁸

Another outstanding characteristic of Osman is his equity and tolerance. Whenever a castle or a town is taken over, Âşıkpaşa-zâde tells us how the place was taken with "justice and fairness", about how the Ottomans were welcomed in the area. After the takeover of the castle of Adranos, the counsellor of the lord of the place tells that they preferred Osman's rule after having seen that villages under Ottoman rule were wealthy and living in security.¹⁸⁹ When a Muslim village or town is taken, the previous timar holders are allowed to hold their rights. The population is not deported, and they can continue their activities.

The testament of Osman to his son Orhan, or what Âşıkpaşa-zâde presents as his testament, is a summary of the everyday piety, austerity and comradeship attributed to Osman throughout the *Tevârîh*:

If someone tells you something that God would forbid, don't accept [to do] this... And if you don't know about it, ask those who know the wisdom of God ... And treat your subjects well. ... And give

¹⁸⁷ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 115.

¹⁸⁸ Colin Imber, "The Legend of Osman Gazi", in *Studies in Ottoman History and Law*, 330-1.

¹⁸⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 111.

grants and money to your companions/soldiers (*nökerlerine*) because their living depends on these.¹⁹⁰

The same testament is repeated in Neşrî. However, “those who know the wisdom of God” is changed into “the doctors of Holy Law”.¹⁹¹ It is obvious that Âşıkpaşa-zâde means in this context sheikhs and *fakîhs*, rather than doctors or theologians.

The sections dealing with Osman have, as mentioned above, two distinct layers. First, Osman is represented as the fully legitimate eponymous founder of the Ottoman enterprise. He is supported by more than one discourses of legitimacy, as if these were put together in order to confront any doubt concerning the right of the Ottomans to rule. The Ottomans are entitled to rule by their lineage, the Seljuk sultan approves their political entity, and they have a divine decree. If anyone of these legitimizing discourses is not accepted, the factor of sheer physical force, the “right of the sword” is introduced.

In the narrative, Osman begins his political career in a very limited field of action, and he is obliged to face the petty conspiracys of surrounding Byzantine lords. However, due to his just and fair politics of expansion, his rule is accepted without hesitation by the neighbouring communities. In the process, he consults the sheikhs and *fakîhs*, and he is on very good terms with the ghazis who hail him as their glorious leader. Osman is portrayed as the repository of all the positive virtues attributed to the house of Osman.

About the historical realities concerning Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s version of Osman’s life, it can be said that Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s closeness to the core of the family via Yahşi *Fakîh* may

¹⁹⁰ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 112: “Bir kimse kim sana Tanrı buyurmadığı sözi söylese sen anı kabul etme ... Ve ger bilmezsen Tanrı ilmin bilene sor ... Ve bir dahı sana muti’ olanları hoş dut. Ve bir dahı nökerlerine dâyım ihsan et kim senün ihsanun anun halınun duzağıdır?”

have endowed him with a set of true facts concerning the life of Osman. It is very difficult to edit the anecdotes according to a criteria of veracity. However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative is much more detailed and colorful than the entries in Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed.

III. 1. d. Orhan and Süleyman Paşa

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative on Orhan, some important issues are again addressed. Among these, the first one is the pattern of succession.¹⁹² First of all, Orhan's rulership is in a sense predetermined by Osman. For instance, when asked why he didn't go to the siege of Bursa, Osman answers saying that "he wanted his son to gain strength and power" while he is still alive.¹⁹³ Moreover, Orhan and his brother Alâeddin agree on Orhan's rulership. Alâeddin says that their father had given the soldiers under Orhan's command. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's version, Alâeddin lives a life of isolation in a village. Thus, the problem of succession is solved without there arising a need to eliminate Alâeddin.¹⁹⁴ Curiously enough, Alâeddin is neither eliminated nor shares the power. This situation reflects the singular Ottoman understanding of what Cemal Kafadar calls unigeniture. Thus, as distinct from the other principalities, Ottomans succeeded in "keeping their territories intact in each succession under the full control of a single heir".¹⁹⁵ Osman was elected by a tribal council as the unique leader, Orhan was designated by his father and approved by his brother. Thus, from the very beginning, the

¹⁹¹ Unat&Köymen/Neşri, 145. The exact words are "ulemâ-i Şeri'at".

¹⁹² For a discussion of the issue, see Joseph Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3-4 (1979-80): 236-51.

¹⁹³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 112: "Oğlum Orhan benim zamanumda şevket bulsun der idi".

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁹⁵ Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 120. On Kafadar's remarks about the succession of Orhan as related by Âşıkpaşa-zâde, see *ibid.*, 136-7.

practice of unigeniture is reflected in the work of Âşıkpaşa-zâde as well as in the works of other Ottoman historians. The name of Orhan's brother Alâeddin is not at all mentioned in Şükrullah or Nişancı Mehmed, who only note that Orhan succeeded his father. In the Anonymous, Orhan's brother is identified as someone called Ali Paşa, and the issue of succession is solved in a similar fashion. Moreover, there is a moralizing remark, telling that the practice of fratricide was established by Bayezid I.¹⁹⁶

The figure of Orhan is not much elaborated by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. The conquests continue, the ghazis go on fighting, the privileged relation of the Ottoman house with the dervish milieu is settled by an anecdote between a dervish called Geyikli Baba and Orhan himself.¹⁹⁷ Orhan's reign is dominated by the figure of Süleyman Paşa, the ghazi *par excellence*. Even Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed, who generally focus solely on the Ottoman sultans in their works, mention the achievements of Süleyman Paşa. To be sure, the prospects opened up by the passage to Rumelia have been a turning point in the fate of the Ottoman enterprise. Süleyman Paşa is given all the credit of these new conquests. Âşıkpaşa-zâde contents himself with enumerating which places were taken by the Ottomans under the command of Süleyman Paşa, whereas the Anonymous tells his deeds within an epic form.¹⁹⁸ In all historical works, Süleyman Paşa is praised for his courage and heroism, and the passage to Rumelia is attributed to his military abilities and

¹⁹⁶ Azamat/Anonim, 16-7: "Ol zamanda beğler karındaşlariyle tanışık idüblece olurlardı. Bir arada tururlardı ve birbirin öldürmezlerdi Yıldırım Han zamânına değın. Kartaş kartaş öldürmek Yıldırım Han zamânından kaldı".

¹⁹⁷ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 122-3. It is interesting to note that Geyikli Baba is not mentioned in the Anonymous, which is the source that includes the greatest number of anecdotes about dervishes. Given the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's Geyikli Baba claims that he is a follower of Baba İlyas, Âşıkpaşa-zâde could have preferred to include or make up such a story in his *Tevârih* whereas the Anonymous perhaps represents another set of dervish legends. On the other hand, Neşrî repeats the anecdote word by word: Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 167-71.

¹⁹⁸ Azamat/Anonim, 17-21. In this version, Süleyman dies during a campaign. Before dying, he asks the ghazis not to leave his corpse in the land of the infidels. Meanwhile, hearing of Süleyman's death, a great

excessive bravery. The Ottoman alliance with the Kantakouzenos family, or the impact of the earthquake of 1354 are not recorded.¹⁹⁹

Together with the standard formulas on how the Ottomans waged holy war, how they conquered lands with justice and fairness, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's attention is held by some transformations that occurred during Orhan's reign. The most important is the establishment of the military organization of infantry regiments (*yaya*) and a cavalry corps (*müsellem*). In the infantry organization, twenty-five families had to send one soldier in return for a tax exemption. The same exemption from taxes was applied to those who would join the cavalry corps.²⁰⁰ It is obvious that the Ottoman expansion needed more than the contribution of a fragmented, to some extent unorganized, and scattered military body.

However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde is concerned, and to some extent irritated, by another detail related to the creation of a new military organization: the symbolic link between Hacı Bektaş and the white caps of the new troops. The Anonymous, Neşrî and Âşıkpaşa-zâde agree on the point that Alâeddin/Ali/Alâeddin Ali, the brother of Orhan, tells Orhan about the necessity of founding a new military corps. Orhan, accepting the advice of his brother, seeks the sanction of Hacı Bektaş.²⁰¹ Âşıkpaşa-zâde strongly rejects this point,

number of infidels attack the ghazis. However, a group of men on gray horses, seen only by the infidels, attack Christians and save the ghazis.

¹⁹⁹ For a discussion of the issue, see N. Oikonomides, "From Soldiers of Fortune to Gazi Warriors: The Tzympe Affair", in *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Prof. V. L. Ménage*, 239-47.

²⁰⁰ Gyula Káldy-Nagy, "The First Centuries of Ottoman Military Organization", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 2 (1977): 162. See also K. A. Jukov, "Les levées de troupes de *Yaya* et de *Müsellem* dans l'organisation militaire ottomane aux XIVe-XVIe siècles", in *CIPO VII. Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, edited by J.L. Bacqué-Grammont, İ. Ortaylı, E. van Donzel (Ankara, 1994), 493-500.

²⁰¹ Azamat/Anonim, 16; Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 155. The Anonymous calls Hacı Bektaş "Hacı Bektaş Hünkâr", while Neşrî calls him "Hacı Bektaş Horasânî".

and he says that the white caps were chosen in order to distinguish Ottoman soldiers from the men of the neighbouring Turkoman begs who were wearing red caps.²⁰²

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's criticisms are also directed at the new ways and manners introduced during the reign of Orhan. He complains about the fact that people began to have their beard shaved. Âşıkpaşa-zâde tells that the custom was to have imposing beards, and says that these new usages were introduced by the "Franks".²⁰³ Neşrî only notes that new manners were introduced at that time, and adds, as if he was giving a direct answer to Âşıkpaşa-zâde's complaints, that every century has its own manners and usages, by emphasizing that there is nothing to complain about it.²⁰⁴

To sum up, Âşıkpaşa-zâde doesn't construct an elaborate discourse around the personality of Orhan, who is described as a holder of the characteristic virtues of the Ottoman house. He continues the activity of ghaza, he gives grants and lands to the dervishes, he is just and fair. However, some of the innovations introduced under his reign merit the critical remarks of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. To be sure, new institutions required new personnel and manners, but Âşıkpaşa-zâde's opinions seem to be shaped by the realities of the reign of Osman, and anything new is regarded with suspicion. Another important point is that the introduction of the "court advisor", the *bête noire* of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, namely, Çandarlı Kara Halil, occurs during Orhan's reign. While Şükrullah, Nişancı Mehmed and Neşrî praise Orhan by saying that he protected religious scholars, Âşıkpaşa-zâde still insists on the dervish-*fakîh* factor as the sole agent of religious wisdom in the Ottoman realm. In a sense, Orhan's reign symbolizes the waning of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's and other dervishes' ideal epoch, the reign of Osman, when the chief of

²⁰² Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 117.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

the community, the dervishes and the ghazis acted together without the intervention of some intermediaries.

III. 1. e. *Sultanü'l-Mücahidîn: Murad I*

While trying to make sense of Âşıkpaşa-zâde's categorizations of Ottoman sultans and of his criticisms directed towards the dynamics of change and transformation, it should be made clear that the figure of the Ottoman sultan never loses its centrality in the narrative. If we compare the "courtly" group with the "popular" one, one of the most outstanding differences is that the court historians deal only with the sultan, and occasionally with some other personalities, like Süleyman Paşa. However, secondary personalities, even though their names are mentioned, are never included as autonomous actors in the narrative. On the other hand, the popular tradition includes the deeds, lifes and adventures of a certain number of secondary actors. Of course, this may be due to the authors' preoccupation with including dervishes of their own sect with the history of the Ottoman house. On the other hand, the inclusion or exclusion of secondary actors is dictated by the inner rules of the respective literary traditions. The courtly tradition, inspired by the Persian precedents, never includes another figure that could shadow the sultan. However, the popular tradition continues to apply the stylistic features of folk tales, legends and epics.

However, whatever the criticisms, preoccupations, and opinions of the historian may be, whoever the secondary characters included in the narrative can be, the figure of the sultan is nevertheless at the center in any kind of narrative. The sultan is only slightly criticized, the faults are always attributed to the retinue of the sultan. Thus, the integrity

²⁰⁴ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 157.

of the sultan is always preserved. It may be said that Bayezid I is an exception. However, even in his case, the diatribes against his manners and lifestyle don't prevent the historians from enumerating the virtues of the sultan.

In later periods, there is not much room for the tribal virtues of the earlier Ottoman rulers. The state develops and gets sophisticated, some social strata are alienated from the alliance of the earlier days, Âşıkpaşa-zâde criticizes the emergence of a new class of men who work close to the sultan and instigate new ways. Therefore, there is a transition from the environment of the earlier days to a new atmosphere. The theater of action of the Ottoman troops gets wider and wider, the problem of fighting other Turkic-Muslim principalities emerges, the army advances in the Balkans, a new administrative and economic structure is incrementally coming into place. What we may call the "ambiguous attitude" of Âşıkpaşa-zâde appears simultaneously with the emergence of this new process of centralization. However, as mentioned above, the reverence of the sultan never disappears. Analogies are always dangerous, but Âşıkpaşa-zâde's attitude is similar to that of Russian peasantry whose image of an infallible tzar is accompanied by a set of criticisms against the wicked and unworthy retinue of the tzar.

Murad I is again described as a ruler who respects ghazis, who gives them the opportunity to plunder castles and towns. For instance, when the castle of Çorlu is taken, Murad I permits ghazis to plunder the town. Again, when the lord of the castle of Misini brings the keys of his castle with many presents to Murad I, Murad orders that the presents be distributed to the ghazis.²⁰⁵ During the events of Murad I's reign, the ghazis as historical actors are still very visible. Despite the establishment of new infantry and cavalry contingents, Âşıkpaşa-zâde still speaks about ghazis accompanying the sultan in

his campaigns. The intensive military activities in the Balkans, Murad I's good relations with the ghazis entitle him to the epithete of the "sultan of the warriors of faith" (*sultanü'l-mücahidîn*).

Âşıkpaşa-zâde depicts the Anatolian conquests of Murad I as the compliance of the surrounding begs. For instance, the Germiyanid ruler advises his son to act in unison with the Ottomans and marries one of his daughters off to prince Bayezid.²⁰⁶ On the other hand, some towns of are bought from the beg of Hamid.²⁰⁷ However, Nişancı Mehmed claims that the Germiyan and Hamid lands were "taken", without specifying if these were taken by force or not.²⁰⁸ In brief, the Anatolian campaigns of Murad I are not recorded in detail. Again, Murad's struggle with the house of Karaman is not mentioned by Âşıkpaşa-zâde. This lack of data can also be due to lack of source material. Given the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde copied these periods from Yahşi Fakîh, factual flaws of his source material would have been directly transferred to his *Tevârih*. On the other hand, Neşrî deals with the Karaman campaigns in great detail.²⁰⁹ Neşrî's Murad I is the first example of an Ottoman sultan. He is advised by the *ulemâ*, he consults his viziers before battles,²¹⁰ he is respected by the sultan of Egypt who announces his admiration for and submission

²⁰⁵ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 126.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

²⁰⁸ Atsız/Nişancı Mehmed, 346.

²⁰⁹ Unat&Köymen, Neşrî, 215-35. The Ottoman claim that they were forced to wage war on Karaman because they hindered them from fighting the infidels appears in Neşrî during the events of the rule of Murad I, a claim used by Âşıkpaşa-zâde about Bayezid's and other rulers' Karaman campaigns. In Neşrî, Murad's answer to the Karamanid envoy is significant: "Bire hey müdbir ve müfsid ve zâlim, benüm kasdum ve işüm gice ve gündüz gazaya dürüşmekdür. Benüm gazama mâni' olub Müslimanları ben gazada iken incidürsün. Ahd ü aman bilür âdem degilsin. Seni kam itmeyince ben huzur ile gaza idemezsin. Nice barışmak ki mâni'-i gazaya gaza, gaza-yı ekberdir" (*Ibid.*, 219). In another episode, the *ulemâ* proclaims that it is an impending duty to save Muslims from persecution, i.e. from the oppression of the Karamanids: "Küffâra gaza nefir-i 'âm olmasa farz-ı kifâyedür. Ammâ müminlerden mezâlimi def' itmek farz-ı 'ayndur" (*Ibid.*, 191).

²¹⁰ The section entitled "Müşaveretü's-sultan ma'a Vüzerâ'ihî", Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 271-3. For the council of war before the Battle of Kosovo, *ibid.*, 283-5.

to Murad I.²¹¹ Âşıkpaşa-zâde's version of the events of Murad I's reign is much more modest: Murad I is a leader of the ghazis, and the activities of Evrenos and other ghazis in the Balkans have an important place in Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative. Murad's most outstanding feature is perhaps his sanctity, the miracles performed by him. Like a *menâkıb-nâme* character, he curses the castle of Pulunya which resists the Ottomans for a long time and causes the walls of the castle to fall apart.²¹²

The continuing process of Ottoman centralization and institutionalization finds some repercussions in Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous. As always, the introduction of new usages are imputed to the intervention of some court advisors. The sultan is portrayed in an aura of naiveté: he approves the practices of the advisors because these are said to be the rule of God. Âşıkpaşa-zâde doesn't criticize the institution of *pencik*, the sultan's right over the 1/5 of the booty. However, he emphasizes that this institution is instigated by two advisors, Çandarlı Halil and a certain Kara Rüstem "who came from Karaman".²¹³ When Âşıkpaşa-zâde's general opinions about Çandarlı Halil and the Karamanids are considered, it is possible to find out a hidden stream of criticism in Âşıkpaşa-zâde's fashion of telling the event.

The foundation of the corps of janissaries is also attributed to the beginning of this practice. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and Neşrî seem to approve of a military corps entirely devoted to the sultan.²¹⁴ On the other hand, the process of building a central treasury is the target of

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 217: "Sultanü'l-guzzât ve'l-mücahidîn Hünkâr hazretinün duacısıyam. Beni oğullığa kabul idine. ... anlara muhabbetüm ve iştiyakum bir haddedür ki eğer elimden gelse varub anlarunla gazada bile hazır olurum".

²¹² *Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, 132. The episode is followed by a poem, whose theme is the sanctity and power of the "sultan's breath".

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 128.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 197-9. For a discussion of the issue as well as the interpretations of the historians, see V. L. Ménage, "Some Notes on the *Devşirme*", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 29 (1966): 64-78.

very harsh criticisms in the Anonymous. The advisors and religious scholars are accused of destroying the purity and innocence of an illiterate people who lived in its own ways before they came to spread bad ways. Interestingly, the question of the plight of the Christian subjects is also addressed in the Anonymous. Accordingly, the advisors and religious scholars tricked the Ottoman sultans, brought oppression, sodomy and adultery to the Ottoman lands.²¹⁵

To sum up, Âşıkpaşa-zâde portrays Murad I as a just and fair ruler, respectful of ghazis. The new usages and applications are attributed to the negative influence of some court advisors. Obviously, as the process of centralization goes on, there emerges a kind of split, a break in Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative. The figure of the just, ghazi ruler is preserved, and anything that doesn't suit the opinions of Âşıkpaşa-zâde is attributed to some cunning, perfidious figures in the sultan's retinue. As mentioned above, Murad I is revered in all the historical works of the 15th century as a dedicated fighter of Islam. It is interesting to note that Neşrî welcomes the moves towards the formation of a powerful political center, while Âşıkpaşa-zâde makes some reservations about these developments and the Anonymous severely criticizes the process.

III. 1. f. Bayezid I

The reign of Bayezid I opens up with the murder of Yakub Çelebi, Bayezid's brother, in Kosovo. The event is interpreted in different fashions in the sources.

²¹⁵ Azamat/Anonim, 27-8: "Ol zamanlarda pâdişahlar tama'kâr degüllerdi. Her ne ellerine girürse yigide yigüle virirlerdü. ... Heman kim Hayreddin Paşa kapuya geldi, pâdişahlar ile tama'kâr dânişmendler musâhib ol[dular] ... Ol zamânda pâdişahları kendülere döndürdiler ... Bu memleketlerde ne kadar zulüm ve fesâd olsa dânişmendlerendür, sebeb anlardur. Eđer anlar ilmile amel eyleseler *ümmî halk* dahî anlara tâbi' olurlardı" (italics mine). The anecdote relating the discussion between Akbıyık Dede and Mevlânâ Yiğen is also very significant, because it portrays the accusations of a simple dervish against a religious scholar, see *ibid.*

Âşıkpaşa-zâde claims that the soldiers were very distressed by the news of the murder of Yakub Çelebi.²¹⁶ Interestingly, Neşrî also notes that the soldiers were worried by the murder of Yakub.²¹⁷ The Anonymous only records the event, and doesn't express an opinion on the issue. However, it has been noted before that the Anonymous includes a passage where there is an open nostalgia for those times when the rulers didn't murder their brothers. However, the most original remark on the issue is to be found in Nişancı Mehmed. Nişancı Mehmed says that, for Bayezid's succession to the Ottoman throne, his brother Yakub was murdered. He adds that, due to this murder, the land inherited from the ancestors was preserved from confrontation and enmity.²¹⁸ As a prominent vizier of Mehmed II, it is not astonishing that he fully acknowledges the murder of Yakub Çelebi; the *raison d'état*, as conceived by Nişancı Mehmed, dictates the necessity of murdering the rivals and potential pretenders, even if the act in itself is bad and wicked.

Bayezid is depicted as a controversial figure among the pantheon of early Ottoman rulers. On the one hand, the impressive military campaigns on both fronts continue. Bayezid is again portrayed as a proponent of ghaza. On the Anatolian front, his campaigns are described as an attempt to free Muslim folk from the oppression of their former rulers. Bayezid conquers these new lands with justice and equity, he forbids his soldiers to plunder the property of Muslims. Bayezid and his army are welcomed in the new lands.²¹⁹ Âşıkpaşa-zâde is joined by Neşrî, who asserts, in an embellished language, the prosperity and happiness created by Bayezid's policies.²²⁰

²¹⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 134.

²¹⁷ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 305-7.

²¹⁸ Atsız/Nişancı Mehmed, 347.

²¹⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 136: "Cemi'isini adl ile feth etdi. Anun için kim evvelki begler halkını zulum ile incitmişler idi. Bayazid Han kim her vilâyete kim vardı, halkı karşı geldiler".

²²⁰ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 333: "... *icra-yı şer'-i kavim üzre müstakim olub* âlemi mezâlimden hâli kılub bir vechile 'adl itdi ki, gani ve fakir, aziz ve hakir, vazî' ve şerif, kavî ve zaif heb anun zıll-i himâyetinde âsûde

On the other hand, Bayezid is portrayed as a sultan under the spell of his wife, the daughter of the Serbian despot, and Çandarlı Ali Paşa. It is reported that the daughter of the Serbian despot, one of Bayezid's wives, introduced the practice of debauchery and wine-drinking, which was then perpetuated by Çandarlı Ali Paşa.²²¹ According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, former Ottoman sultans didn't drink wine, and respected the advices of religious men. The practice of debauchery in Âşıkpaşa-zâde, as well as in the Anonymous, is attributed both to Bayezid and to the influence of court advisors. Thus, in both works, Bayezid's fall appears imminent: even if he didn't intend to indulge in wine-drinking and other bad ways, he would nevertheless be initiated to those things by his viziers and advisors.²²² Thus, on the eve of the attack of the Timurid army, the primary reasons of the defeat are established: debauchery and bad manners, and a lack of respect towards religious men. These criticisms may be due to the development of a courtly life under Bayezid, with all its everyday rituals. It is a world of fancies and pleasures, sung by Ahmedî. However, for the austerity of Neşrî, the alienation of the compilers of the Anonymous, and the puritanism and particular opinions of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, this life of pleasures is too much for a ruler who has some duties towards his subjects, towards ghazis and dervishes, and towards the religious scholars.

olub memleket-i Osmaniye bir vechile âbâdan oldu ki etraf-ı memâlik vilâyet-i Osman'a hased iderlerdi (italics mine). Neşrî establishes a connection with Bayezid's respect of the holy law. Besides, unlike Âşıkpaşa-zâde, he uses words such as "the land of Osman", "the realm of Osman".

²²¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 138: "Bayazid Han sohbet esbâbın Laz kızı elinden öğrendi. Ali Paşa mu'âvenetiyle şarab ve kebab meclisi kuruldu".

²²² Âşıkpaşa-zâde-Atsız, 138-9. The same interpretation is found in Neşrî (Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 337-9) and in the Anonymous (Azamat/Anonim, 31-4). However, the critical tone in Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous is much more asserted. While Neşrî –perhaps reluctantly- accuses Rüstem and Çandarlı, a whole body of advisors and scholars is criticized in Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous: "Elhâsılı Âl-i Osmanun günah etmesine sebep Ali Paşa olmuş idi. Zire anun yanına hile eder Acem danışmendleri çok gelürler idi" (Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 139); "Heman kim Osman beğlerine Acem ve Karamâniler musâhib oldu, Osman beğleri dahi dürlü dürlü günahlarla mürtekib oldular" (Azamat/Anonim, 33).

These criticisms may have another aspect, beyond the specific opinions of the historians. They all share a common question: how did the catastrophe of the Timurid invasion come to happen? How was the glorious Ottoman army reduced to a humiliating defeat? Şükrullah explains the defeat of the Ottomans by the treachery of the Turkoman contingents, while Nişancı Mehmed refuses to inquire upon the issue by saying that he leaves aside the various reasons that stood behind this defeat. The interesting fact is that the answers of those historians who confront this question are similar: Bayezid's bad ways, his bold and direct manners, his cruelty and severity, his hot-headedness, and the corruption of the advisors.

Thus, Bayezid's tragic end is brought with his own hands and the contribution of his retinue. Âşıkpaşa-zâde preserves a semi-explicit reference to Bayezid's cruelty towards Anatolian begs, who can do nothing but take refuge in the Timurid court.²²³ In the Anonymous, the same theme is repeated, together with references to Bayezid's harsh answers to Timur's letters. Moreover, Bayezid is accused of not consulting his commanders, and of waiting until Timur's army takes an advantageous position in the battlefield.²²⁴ In Neşrî's version, Timur is first reluctant to attack Bayezid. However, he is misled by the Anatolian begs, who provoke him against Bayezid by claiming that the Anatolian lands are worthy of a lord like Timur himself.²²⁵

In the battlefield, when it appears that Bayezid is defeated, when some contingents begin to leave, a soldier named Karaca addresses Bayezid and asks: "Where are your sons, your begs, your drunkard viziers?"²²⁶ In Neşrî, the references to drunkard

²²³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 141-2 *passim*.

²²⁴ Azamat/Anonim, 38-42 *passim*.

²²⁵ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 343-5.

²²⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 144.

viziers are omitted. The same soldier tells Bayezid that his sons left the battlefield because they wanted to proclaim themselves sultan after the death of their father.²²⁷ Thus, the emphasis is shifted from the drunkard viziers to unfaithful princes. Moreover, in *Âşıkpaşa-zâde* and *Neşrî*, Bayezid is denounced by the beg of Germiyan while the Anonymous argues that Bayezid himself, in his fury, attacked the soldiers of Timur and was thus captured.²²⁸

The tragic end of Bayezid is sealed by his captivity. According to the Anonymous, nobody cared for Bayezid's fate. It is told that nobody wanted him to be freed, because, it was thought, he would kill all the Anatolian begs if he had the occasion to do it. Thus, in this version, Bayezid dies in solitude and destitution.²²⁹ *Neşrî*'s version is quite different. First of all, *Neşrî* tells that prominent begs of Anatolia and Rumelia wanted to free Bayezid by paying a ransom, but that he died while they were still trying to collect the necessary sum.²³⁰ In another passage, he tells that an armed contingent sent by Mehmed Çelebi first succeeded in rescuing Bayezid, but that the soldiers of Timur joined Mehmed's soldiers with Bayezid and recaptured the Ottoman sultan.²³¹ Thus, as a faithful son, the future Ottoman ruler tries to save his father but his men are butchered by Timur's soldiers and Bayezid is taken back to the Timurid camp.

To sum up, Bayezid is indeed the most criticized Ottoman sultan. It can be suspected that his harsh centralizing measures, his financial policies, and the creation of a court culture led to the emergence of a certain reaction against him, as reflected in *Âşıkpaşa-zâde* and the Anonymous. Moreover, the greatest crisis of the Ottoman

²²⁷ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 353.

²²⁸ *Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, 144; Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 353; *Azamat/Anonim*, 43.

²²⁹ *Azamat/Anonim*, 49-50.

²³⁰ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 359.

enterprise in its earlier years was experienced during the reign of Bayezid, and earlier references to him as a just and heroic ruler are not sufficient for the historians who are seeking the eventual causes of the defeat. In a period when the positive and negative achievements were imputed to individuals and not to the interplay of a set of complex dynamics, it is understandable that Bayezid was stigmatized as the person responsible of the crisis.

III. 1. g. The Interregnum and Mehmed Çelebi

All the chronicles examined here agree that Emir Süleyman ascended the Ottoman throne in Bursa. Again, they agree that Mehmed recognized the rulership of his brother. On the other hand, they don't deal with the issue of vassalage, the relations with Timur. Şükrullah, well aware of the legitimation crisis of the 15th century, ignores that the Ottomans were for some time the vassals of Timur. Again, the same issue is not compatible with Nişancı Mehmed's concept of imperial grandeur. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous don't mention any relation between Timur and the Ottomans after the defeat, but this may be due to the nature of their source material. Thus, in Şükrullah and Nişancı Mehmed, it is possible to see the attitude of scholars and statesmen dedicated to the Ottoman enterprise who would not like to preserve the memories of vassalage and submission.

Interestingly, Neşrî records some relations between Timur and Mehmed Çelebi. In this version, Timur hears that Mehmed is a courageous and able beg, and that he will possibly take the place of his father. Thus, Mehmed is invited to join Timur in his court. Advised by the members of his retinue, Mehmed declines the invitation of Timur.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 369.

However, he sends him an envoy with some presents and expresses his pretext for not joining him. Meanwhile, he takes some armed contingents and hides in the mountains, fearing that Timur could attack him.²³² The imminence of the return of the Timurid troops, the atmosphere of fear and prudence is only described in Neşrî. There is another source, dated 1414, on the events of the Interregnum. However, written by Abdülvâsî Çelebi, this is a long poem, very much like Ahmedî's *Dâsitân* and it is concerned with the heroic acts of Mehmed Çelebi and the description of battles, rather than the political affairs of the period.²³³

During the Interregnum, Süleyman Çelebi is accused of perpetuating the practice of wine-drinking. Assisted again by Ali Paşa, he forgets that he is threatened by his brother Musa. He is so much occupied with leisure and wine-drinking that, when Musa and his army appear before the walls of Edirne, he is drunk and he can't realize that he is defeated.²³⁴ In the Anonymous, Süleyman's defeat is explained by a kind of popular reaction against him. It's argued that he lacked support because his subjects were irritated by his excessive drinking habits.²³⁵ Thus, Süleyman Çelebi is the symbol of the ruler who doesn't care about his rivals (like Bayezid, who didn't take Timur's might into account) and who indulges in debauchery. Accordingly, his defeat is linked to the perpetuation of these vices. Neşrî joins these criticisms and complains about Süleyman's vicious habits.

²³² Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 407-19.

²³³ For the transcription of this long poem, inserted in the *Halil-nâme* of Abdülvâsî Çelebi, see Ayhan Gültaş, "Fetret Devri'ndeki Şehzadeler Mücadelesini Anlatan İlk Manzum Vesika", *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları* 72 (1991): 99-110.

²³⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 146: "Emîr Süleyman dahı mahmur yatur idi. Güc ile kaldurdılar. Eyidür kim benüm memleketümde anun ne hükmi vardur ve kim ne ister der. Hemin böyle deyince hay Musa geldi dediler. Kaçdı".

²³⁵ Azamat/Anonim, 52: "... cümle halk o huyundan incindiler ... Şöyle rivâyet ederler kim bir arada içmeğe otursa birkaç ay anda kalurdu. Şaraba çok meşgûl oldugiyiçün ol hâle ugradı".

The traditions concerning the death of Süleyman are different. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde and the Anonymous, Süleyman is killed by the people of a village where he had taken refuge after he had escaped from Edirne.²³⁶ According to the Anonymous, Süleyman was killed by the villagers because they were weary of living under the strain of war and strife and they wanted to take their revenge on Süleyman. Of course, such an interpretation is inadmissible for Neşrî. Similarly, Âşıkpaşa-zâde doesn't say anything about the reaction of the villagers who dare to commit an act of *lese-majesté*. He doesn't give any reasons for Süleyman's murder, but adds that Musa set this village on fire when he heard that his brother was killed by the villagers. In Neşrî, Süleyman is murdered on the orders of Musa.²³⁷ Thus, the three historical works give different versions about the elimination of Süleyman.

It is interesting to see that Âşıkpaşa-zâde, despite his criticisms about fratricide, acknowledges the necessity of the final war between Mehmed and Musa. In his work, Musa and Mehmed are described in neutral terms, as the equal parties in a necessary struggle. The one who wins is to be the ruler, and has also the right to eliminate the leader of the other party.²³⁸ As İnalçık emphasizes in an article on the Ottoman practice of sovereignty, if the solution of a political crisis was tied to a state of war between two brothers, the practice of fratricide could be viewed as an ultimate solution.²³⁹ Thus, with regard to Âşıkpaşa-zâde's earlier criticisms on fratricide, it can be maintained that what he complains most is the murder of brothers who are not yet constituting any threat to the

²³⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 146; Azamat/Anonim, 53.

²³⁷ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 487.

²³⁸ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 147. The section dealing with the battle between Musa and Mehmed is entitled "Bu Bâb Anun Beyanındadır Kim Sultan Mehmed İbn-i Bayezid Han Diler Kim Kardaşı Musayilen Buluşa, Bu Vilâyeti Çekişeler, Devlet Her Kankısınun İse Ol Vara, Hâkim Ola".

²³⁹ Halil İnalçık, "The Ottoman Succession and Its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty", in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire*, 56-61 *passim*.

political body, who are not yet in a state of armed rebellion. Âşıkpaşa-zâde seems to be against the practice of fratricide only when it becomes simply a way of eliminating potential rivals to the throne. Neşrî adds an anecdote about the people of Edirne, who declined to surrender the city to Mehmed Çelebi. According to Neşrî, the inhabitants of the city claimed that the city would be surrendered without resistance to the winner of the struggle between Mehmed and Musa. Mehmed agrees with them and lifts the siege of Edirne.²⁴⁰

In the works of the historians, there are not many references concerning the personality of Mehmed I. However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde records that Mehmed didn't murder the son of Süleyman, but that he settled him in Bursa. Despite the fact that he was compelled to murder Musa, Mehmed doesn't extend this to all the members of the ruling family.²⁴¹ In the Anonymous, in the section about the rebellion of Bedreddin and the sheikh's murder, Mehmed is praised for having asked for a *fetvâ* to execute Bedreddin, thus showing his respect for religious principles.²⁴² After the end of the civil war, the main theme of the historians is the policies of reconstruction and reconquest pursued by Mehmed Çelebi. In accordance with Mehmed's Anatolian policy, Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Neşrî and the Anonymous include several anecdotes about the treachery, perfidy, and cowardness of the Karamanids.

To sum up, the defeat before Timur and the subsequent civil war was an important break in the historical narratives of the 15th century. Opinions about Ottoman

²⁴⁰ Unat&Köymen, 507-9: “Şehir halkı cem’ olup Sultan’a eyittiler: ‘Biz sana şimdi hisarı vermeziz. İnşallah ü Tealâ biri birinizle buluşup bir yana olup devlet her kanginizin başında ise hisar dahi bilâ-minnet anındır’ dediler”.

²⁴¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 150: “Her vaktin kim Sultan Mehmed Bursaya gelse Süleymanın oğlını getürdür idi. Haylı nesnelere ‘atâ eder idi. Kardeşüm oğludur der idi. Dâyim hoşça görüb gönülcüğün ele alur idi”.

²⁴² Azamat/Anonim, 59: “Ol zamânun pâdişahları şöyle müslüman idi kim şunculayın fesâd idüp âsî olanları öldürmeğe kıyamazlardı”.

princes are confused and ambiguous. For instance, the one who manages to rule over a certain territory is nevertheless praised. Despite his moralistic criticisms against Süleyman Çelebi, Neşrî nevertheless praises his virtues. The same thing is true for Musa, whose positive attributes and efforts for re-creating an Ottoman might are welcomed. Despite his criticisms on the issue of fratricide, Âşıkpaşa-zâde seems to approve the battle between Mehmed and Musa on the grounds that it will finally solve the political crisis, in a way compatible with the practice of unigeniture. Thus, a search for a political settlement seems to be the unique concern of the historians. In these sections, Mehmed Çelebi's personal attributes are not dealt with in detail. On the other hand, he is not hailed as a ghazi, perhaps due to the fact that he generally fought in Anatolian lands and went into the Balkans only occasionally. Mehmed Çelebi is, in this sense, much less represented in the historical texts. He is not blamed for drinking, his ghazi activities are not emphasized, his just and fair manners are not much underlined. As a proponent of a policy of gradual reconstruction and as a prudent politician, he doesn't offer much to the fantasies or to the moralism of the historians.

III. 1. h. The Return of the *Sultanü'l-Mücahidîn*: Murad II

After the settlement of the civil war and the Ottoman restoration in Anatolia, a stylistic break occurs in the *Tevârih* of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. The sultan becomes a quite distant figure in the narrative. Murad I is also described by reference to his majesty; however, the earlier sultans' everyday lives and personal attributes are more openly displayed in Âşıkpaşa-zâde, as well as in Neşrî and the Anonymous. While the Anonymous turns into a simple list of events from the reign of Murad II on, Âşıkpaşa-zâde and Neşrî begin to

describe the sultan within a web of rituals. While Osman and even Murad I are speaking with daily, simple words, Murad II and Mehmed II are portrayed like theatrical characters, whose rulership is skillfully displayed.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde is especially charmed by the intensive military activities of Murad II on the Balkan front. These activities, in which he was to some extent involved, provided him with the occasion to realize the ideals of the ghazi-dervish milieu, in both senses of the term. First, he was able to take part in the raids and, in his own words, he killed enemy soldiers. Second, he took his share of the large booty obtained in those raids. Moreover, Murad II gave him slaves and money, showing his respect towards the member of an illustrious dervish family. During the reign of Mehmed II, he settled in the capital. He was invited to the circumcision ceremony of the sons of Mehmed II, and this is again a sign of recognition on the part of the ruling sultan. Finally, he was able to found a dervish lodge, build a small mosque, own some shops and houses. Thus, at the end of a life which had begun in material deprivation, after the adventure of going over to the Balkans, he had reached a pacific and to some extent wealthy life.

The feelings of gratitude of Âşıkpaşa-zâde are expressed in more than one place in the form of prayers or eulogies for Murad II and Mehmed II. Of course, the *Tevârih* is not devoid of criticisms, especially for the reign of Mehmed II. However, it may be said that these criticisms are formulated under the more reformist reign of Bayezid II. The occasion created by Bayezid II's policies of reconstruction is also shown by the fact that Neşrî shares the same criticisms with Âşıkpaşa-zâde. While more substantial criticisms, like accusations against deportations and the plight of the working people are voiced in the Anonymous, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's criticisms are centered around the personality of Rum

Mehmed Paşa, who is accused of introducing the practice of rent on property (*mukataa*) in Istanbul. Âşıkpaşa-zâde is especially keen on discussing financial matters, such as the expropriation of the endowments. It is obvious that an important number of sheikhs and dervishes living on the endowments had suffered by this measure of centralization. In a sense, Âşıkpaşa-zâde seems to be the spokesman of this social milieu. Mehmed Paşa's policies are interpreted in a standard fashion, according to a theory of conspiracy where a renegade tricks the sultan and makes the Muslim folk suffer.

All these details will be dealt with in another section. Here, it suffices to say that Murad II and Mehmed II have a distinct place among the Ottoman sultans described in the works of 15th-century Ottoman historians. Murad II emerges as the leader of the warriors of faith, and he becomes a mighty sultan. Mehmed II is the symbol of majesty and power from the very beginning. After the conquest of Constantinople, his might grows more and more. Murad II and Mehmed II are the symbols of the Ottoman rulers who are less dependent on the help and assistance of begs and pashas. Bayezid I, Murad I and Mehmed I were not tied so much to their family; however, they needed and received the assistance of others. This is shown by the entries about Lala Şahin's or Evrenos Beg's military activities. Again, Mehmed I's accession to the throne is made possible by the intervention of Rumelian begs. However, where Murad II and Mehmed II are concerned, these begs are described as mere vassals of the sultan. It may be said that the historians reflect historical realities, that the influence of the frontier begs was indeed reduced by the time of Mehmed II. However, what is interesting is that Âşıkpaşa-zâde, who lived nearly ten years in Rumelia, doesn't seem to be a defender of the semi-autonomy of the frontier begs, and opts for Mehmed II's control over them.

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde, as well as in Neşrî, Murad II is designated by Mehmed I to take his place after his death. Even if this is not in accordance with the practice of tanistry, the succession of Murad is generally acknowledged in the chronicles.²⁴³ In this anecdote, Mehmed I declares Murad as his successor but he dies before the arrival of Murad to the capital city. The death of the sultan is kept secret by the pashas, who fear that the janissaries and the Anatolian begs may rebel.

The events following the death of Mehmed I show that he was right in his fears. First, someone called Mustafa, pretending that he was the lost son of Bayezid, rebels. The pretender to the throne is called “the Impostor” in Âşıkpaşa-zâde and Neşrî. The pretender is immediately supported by the begs of Rumelia, and by İzmiroğlu Cüneyd Bey, one of the most obstinate rivals of the Ottomans. However, the allegiance of Rumelian begs is won over to Murad II’s side by Mihaloğlu Mehmed Bey, who is released from prison in Tokat. Here, again, the theme of the Rumelian begs reappears. Thus, given the influence of Rumelian begs, it is not difficult to understand why Murad II and Mehmed II tried to curtail their sphere of influence.

After he is defeated, Mustafa flees to Edirne. However, according to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, the people of the city doesn’t submit to him, hearing of the news of Murad’s victory. Finally, Mustafa is caught and executed. His corpse is hung up on a tower of the fortress of Edirne. Neşrî and Âşıkpaşa-zâde state that the inhabitants of Edirne were relieved of strain and fear when they saw the dead body of Mustafa.²⁴⁴ The Anonymous includes some original remarks on the issue. For instance, Murad II’s victory is explained by the intercession of Emîr Süleyman, whose prayers strike Mustafa and make him fall

²⁴³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 156.

²⁴⁴ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 565; Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 159.

ill. Moreover, the Anonymous notes that the enmity between the janissaries and the infantrymen (*azab*) dates back to the clash between Murad and Mustafa. The janissaries are accused of having insulted the infantrymen of Mustafa.²⁴⁵

After Mustafa “the Impostor” is eliminated, Murad II has to face another rebellion, this time by his younger brother, who is supported by the eternal rivals of the Ottomans, the Germiyanid and Karamanid begs. However, the preceptor of Murad’s brother Mustafa, a certain Şarabdâr İlyas, surrenders him to Murad. Mustafa is murdered and the issue is solved.²⁴⁶ Thus, the issue of fratricide is addressed twice for the events of Murad II’s reign. Âşıkpaşa-zâde and Neşrî don’t openly criticize the murder of Mustafa. However, in an indirect manner, they criticize the treachery and perfidy of Şarabdâr İlyas who surrendered the prince to his brother. On the other hand, when asked why he handed over the prince to his brother, he answers that two rulers in one country would be detrimental to everybody. Moreover, he adds that he is not the only one responsible of the act, and that he respected ancient rules and principles.²⁴⁷ Şarabdâr İlyas is the representative of a type of individual: one who has to comply to the rules concerning the perpetuation of the political body, but is simultaneously the center of contempt and accusations. This complex, “tragic” attitude about fratricide is again displayed in an anecdote by Neşrî, where Murad II remembers his dead brother when he is drunk and threatens the members of his retinue who were involved in the affair.²⁴⁸

With Murad II, the Ottoman ruler, as a figure in the narrative, begins to speak more often than before. Moreover, these are the words of an individual who is sure of

²⁴⁵ Azamat/Anonim, 61-2 *passim*.

²⁴⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 161-2.

²⁴⁷ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 573; Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 162.

²⁴⁸ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 573-5.

himself and of the support of others. This is a lonely, imposing figure who gives clear orders, who threatens his pashas and begs, who makes decisions himself about the things to be done. Thus, from Murad II on, the image of the sultan grows ever greater in the historical texts of the historians of the 15th century.

The episode where Murad II's decision to attack the voivod of Wallachia is described may be given as an example. Murad says that, with the help of God, the miracles of Muhammed and the intercession of the saints, he is bound to take the revenge of the Muslims killed by the voivod. Then, he orders his men to attack immediately the provinces of Wallachia, to devastate their lands, to capture any men and women that they would find there.²⁴⁹ Again, about the trouble caused by İzmiroğlu Cüneyd Bey, he threatens his pashas that he will murder them if they cannot eliminate Cüneyd.²⁵⁰ The military operation, which aims at defeating an important source of trouble for the Ottomans, is legitimized on the grounds that the Ottomans wanted to relieve the inhabitants of the lands of Aydın.²⁵¹

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde, there is a privileged relation between Murad II and the ghazis. For instance, after Salonica is taken, Murad II declares that it is a great happiness to see the ghazis plunder the fortress and convert the infidels to Islam. He adds that he will continue to fight together with those ghazis.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 163: "Hele şimdi sefere gide yürürin. Ol mel'un her ne ider ise yanına kalmaya. Allahun inâyetinde ve Muhammedün mu'cizatında ve evliyânun himmetinde ben sebep olam. Anların masâlihlerin görem. ... Şimdi kulum Firiz gaziler ilen fırsat bulduğunca geçsün. Vilâyetini ursun, yıksun ve yaksun. Ve buldukları dışiden ve erkekden esir etsünler".

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 165-6: "Şol İzmiroğlu tâ niceye degin ol vilâyetde hanlık etse gerekdür? ... Muhammedün pâk, münevver, mutahhar rûhiyiçün anun masâlihini görün yohsa ben sizün masâlihiniği görürin".

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 165.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 173: "Hay gaziler! Bundan ulu ni'met olmaz kim gaziler hisarı yağma edeler, ehl-i şirki cebir ile islâma getüreler. İmdi gayet ben bu gazileri sevdüm. İnşallah sizün ile ben şimdengerü gazâ etsem gerekdür". The same episode is told with similar words in Unat&Köymen/Neşri, 613.

The events of Murad II's reign include the war with Karaman. Obviously, the Karamanids make use of Murad II's campaigns on the Balkans for attacking Ottoman provinces in Anatolia. In *Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, Murad's violent replies to the attacks of the Karamanids are recorded together with the claims that the cause of this violence is the activities of the Karamanids.²⁵³

Like the ghazis, Murad II is a pious Muslim. For instance, in the battlefield of Kosovo, he repents for his sins, he prays God not to defeat his men because of his own sins.²⁵⁴ The imminence of his death is declared to the sultan by a dervish, a disciple of Emîr Sultan who had supported Murad against Mustafa, the Impostor. Up on the words of the dervish, Murad II asks God for his redemption. Then, as soon as he returns to his palace, he falls ill and dies. In a sense, in the narrative of *Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, he is described as somebody who died just after his sins were remitted, thus as somebody whose soul will rest in paradise.²⁵⁵

Finally, *Âşıkpaşa-zâde* claims that Murad II waged a great number of battles against the infidels. He says that his intention is to record what happened during his reign. However, he declares that Murad II's battles are wonderful achievements, and that it is very difficult to render their greatness into writing. He compares his narrative to a handful of grains, which is offered to the reader in order to give him a sense of the grandeur of Murad's battles.²⁵⁶ Thus, Murad is again an Ottoman sultan praised for his ghazi activities. However, this time, Murad II is described not as a sultan assisted by the

²⁵³ *Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, 183: "Osmanlunun memleket urub müsülmanlığa zulüm etmesinün sebebi Karamanoğlu İbrahim Beg sebebinden olmışdur. Ve illâ tâ bu güne dek Osmanludan kimsenün hakkına zulüm gelmemiş idi".

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 187: "Bu bir avuc ümmet-i Muhammed'i sen sakla! Ve bunlara sen 'avn, inâyet et! ... Benüm günahum çok! Benüm günahum için bu müsülmanları küffâr elinde sen zebun eyleme ve zebun etdürme".

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 187-8.

ghazi begs, but as a sultan who takes the ghazis directly under his command and leads them to victory.

III. 1. i. The Emergence of the *Padişah*: Mehmed II

In a sense, Mehmed II was already designated by his father as his heir to the throne when his father abdicated in his favor. Thus, the historians can not be accused of making up facts, or creating stories about Mehmed II's rulership. It seems that the solution to the tensions of succession is found by Murad himself.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde expresses his personal feelings of gratitude towards Mehmed II. It is known that, as a family tradition, he prayed for all the members of the Ottoman house and all the rulers who were his contemporaries. On the other hand, it appears that the members of the Ottoman house always cared for dervishes who prayed for them. It has already been noted that Murad II gave money and slaves to Âşıkpaşa-zâde on more than one occasion. It seems that this relation continued under Mehmed II. In a short poem appended to the end of a section, Âşıkpaşa-zâde says that he has to tell the deeds of this sultan (of Mehmed II) who gave him much gold and precious cups.²⁵⁷ On another occasion, he goes with the imperial army to Üsküb, hoping that Mehmed II would give him money and/or presents. In Üsküb, the wish of Âşıkpaşa-zâde was satisfied. In his own words, he prayed for Mehmed II in return for his favors.²⁵⁸

In the sections concerning Mehmed II, there is again an important change in the vocabulary, the dialogues and the orders of the sultan. The sentence for relating Mehmed

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 195: “Âşıkî yaz menâkıbın bu hanun
Ki vermişdür sana çok zerr ü mücüş”.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 200: “Bu hana kim muti’ oldı cihanda
Sa’âdet buldı, tâli’ meymun oldı

Âşıkî Âl-i Osman’a du’âcı
Du’â ehli cihanda makbul oldı”.

II's expeditions is formalized: "Sultan Mehmed gathered the soldiers of Islam, he marched forward with the intention of waging the holy war".²⁵⁹ Sometimes, it is told that "the warriors of faith were made ready on the orders of the sultan".²⁶⁰ Or, while describing the Ottoman fleet on the way to Caffa, Âşıkpaşa-zâde says that the sea was enlightened by the light of Islam.²⁶¹ For the period of Mehmed II, terms like "imperial drums" (*nevbet-i sultani*), "imperial war/great war" (*ceng-i sultani*) are used.

Moreover, for the Anatolian conquests realized under Mehmed II, it seems that the need to provide a discourse of legitimation is not taken into account as much as before. This time, Mehmed II tells his grand vizier that he desires to take this or that castle, and the grand vizier complies with the plans of his sultan. For instance, before the Black Sea campaign, Mehmed II calls Mahmud Paşa and tells him that the dream of conquering Kastamonu, Sinop and Trabzon has haunted him for a long time. Mahmud Paşa answers him by saying that what they need is to take the army and go to these lands; the rest will be realized by God's help and the miracles of Muhammed.²⁶² Of course, the attack against Trabzon is not explained just in terms of the requirements of an empire, or of Mehmed II's greed for new lands. When asked by the mother of Uzun Hasan about why he tries to take the city, Mehmed II replies that his real intention is ghaza. Thus, the conquest of Trabzon and other infidel cities is nothing but a pretext for waging ghaza.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ For example, see *ibid.*, 196. The sentence is "Sultan Mehmed leşker-i İslâmî cem' edüb niyyet-i gazâ deyü yürüdi".

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 228: "Heman padişahun kim emri olındı, esbâb-ı gaza müheyâ bulındı".

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 226: "Deryânun yüzi envâr-ı İslâm ile münevver oldı".

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 203: "Bu benüm hatırumda bir nice nesnelere vardur. Anı umarın kim Hak Ta'âlâ bu ben zayıfına anı dahı nasib ede. ... Biri bu kim şol ... Kasdamonı ve Sınabdur. Ve biri dahı Koylu Hisardur. Ve biri dahı Durabuzundur. Bunlar benüm begâyet huzûrumı giderürler. Dâymâ bunların hayali gönümde, gözümde müntakiş olmışdur".

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 208: "Ana! Bu zahmatlar Durabuzunçün degüldür. Bu zahmatlar dîn-i İslâm yolınadır kim ahretde Allah Hazretine varıcak hacil olmayavuz deyüdür. Zîrâ kim bizüm elümüzde İslâm kılıcı vardur ve eger biz bu zahmatı ihtiyar etmesevüz bize gazi dimek yalan olur".

On other occasions, Mehmed II is himself described as a holy power, who is respected by angels, djinns and humans at the same time.²⁶⁴

About the Anatolian conquests of Mehmed II, there is even a sense of political opportunism in Âşıkpaşa-zâde. For instance, during the campaign against Uzun Hasan, it is told that some Ottoman infantrymen pillaged some villages, and raped women. Âşıkpaşa-zâde, who was very prudent about the Anatolian conquests of former rulers, seems no longer concerned with the legitimization of the Ottomans' Anatolian policies. He argues that it was these soldiers' duty to attack and suppress a people who acted against their sultan's will.²⁶⁵ Thus, the subjects of the surrounding Turkic political formations are no more defined as poor Muslims persecuted by their bad rulers, but as the collaborators of the policies of these rulers. To sum up, it seems that the consciousness of a *raison d'état* appears in Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* as well.

The first criticism regarding this period concerns the imposition of rent (*mukataa*) on the houses and shops of newly-conquered Istanbul. Indeed, it is known that the re-population of the city was prevented to some extent by the application of this rent, and the first wave of immigrants and deported people had fled the city.²⁶⁶ In Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Muslims who come to the city after the conquest complain about the rents, and they refuse to pay money for the use of the houses and shops of the infidels. Thus, on the intervention of Kula Şahin Paşa who reminds the sultan that his ancestors have done no

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 210: “Zehî sultan ki hükmine müsehhar oldu âlemler
Cemî’i meddahı ânun melekler, cinn ü âdemler”.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 207: “Bu azab tayfası her vilâyete kim varsalar bunlara yasak yokdur. Anun için kim bunlar padişahun ulûfesiyle varurlar. Her yerde kim varsalar kendü padişahlarına hîle ve bedbahtlık eden kavımı kendü muradlarınca incidürler tâ kim Âl-i Osman varduğı iklim padişaha muti’ ve münkad olalar”.

²⁶⁶ See Halil İnalçık, “The Policy of Mehmed II towards the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23 (1970), 231-49.

such thing, Mehmed II renounces this policy. Thus, the city is repopulated.²⁶⁷ However, with the intervention of Rum Mehmed Paşa, the rent is again put into effect. Rum Mehmed Paşa is, according to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, also responsible for the annulation of an important number of endowments.

This is the only criticism Âşıkpaşa-zâde directs against the reign of Mehmed II. As always, the Anonymous includes more substantial criticisms about the reign of Mehmed II. Where Âşıkpaşa-zâde finds a guilty individual, a hidden conspiracy, the Anonymous identifies a process and criticizes it. For Mehmed's policies of reconstruction in Istanbul, the Anonymous claims that working people were deported to Istanbul and forced to work in the construction of the city. Mehmed is compared to the past rulers of Istanbul who constructed imposing churches and other facilities. It is noted that these past rulers didn't make people work by the use of physical force. It is claimed that they used to pay people the worth of their work.²⁶⁸ With the political nostalgia seen in most parts of the Anonymous, it is claimed that the situation is caused by those who came from other lands, and businessmen who came to dominate the sultan's entourage.²⁶⁹

Neşrî, much like Âşıkpaşa-zâde, accuses Rum Mehmed Paşa of plotting against the Muslim folk, of instigating some financial measures on behalf of the Greeks. Thus, he is said to plan an eventual transfer of power to the Greeks by impoverishing and oppressing the Muslim folk.²⁷⁰ However, while Âşıkpaşa-zâde's criticisms are much consistent throughout his *Tevârîh* in the sense that Rum Mehmed Paşa is not the only

²⁶⁷ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 193.

²⁶⁸ Azamat/Anonim, 102: "Ol zamânda zulm ile binâ yapırmazlardı. Cümle ücret ile işledürlerdi. Şimdiki zamânda binâ yapırmalı olsalar illerden ve şehirlerden akça değüştürüp hem bennâyı ve ırgadı dahi ilden çıkarup sürerler".

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: "Ammâ pâdişahlar kapusuna ehl-i mu'âmele bâzürgân kim hâkim ola, bu kadar olduğına dahi şükürler itmek gerekdür. ... Yabandan gelenün ragbeti ziyâdedür. Anınçün ilerü zamândaki bereket yokdur. Andan hüner ehline dahi ragbet az kalmışdur".

example of the bad and wicked vizier/advisor, Neşrî exceptionally accuses him. It may be said that Neşrî's criticisms may be due more to the atmosphere created by Bayezid II's reconciliatory measures which inculpated the reign of the former ruler to some extent, while Âşıkpaşa-zâde in a sense continues to dwell on the stereotype of the bad foreigner/convert-cum-vizier/advisor.

III. 2. Secondary Characters in the *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*

Secondary characters in the *Tevârih* have a crucial importance in the sense that they provide some further clues about Âşıkpaşa-zâde's political opinions and conceptions. For instance, his conception of ghazis and dervishes reveal Âşıkpaşa-zâde's peculiar interpretation of the foundation of the Ottoman state. It may be asserted that the contribution of ghazis and dervishes may be an historical fact, and that Âşıkpaşa-zâde's idealizations are the reflections of a real situation. Even if this may be true, and even if Âşıkpaşa-zâde may be accepted as a reliable first-hand historical source, a comparison of his *Tevârih* with the works of other historians shows that a consensus was not yet formed among these writers. The consensus, as already mentioned, comes with Neşrî and flows through Kemalpaşazâde. The historiography of the 15th century presents a much varied and colorful spectrum. Thus, the discussion about historical veracity aside, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work contains interesting idealizations about what we may call the "social types" of the time, as well as his categories of friends and foes.

²⁷⁰ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 711, 789-91.

III. 2. a. Dervishes

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative, dervishes have a privileged place. This is to be expected, in view of the fact that Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself is the member of a dervish family and calls himself "Derviş Ahmed Âşıkî". At the beginning of the *Tevârih*, he describes himself as someone in a state of renunciation, devoting his life to patience and prayer.²⁷¹ Thus, he presents himself in accordance with the dervish ideal of *fakr*. Dervishes are among the figures of his *Tevârih*, especially in the first part of the work, inspired by Yahşi Fakîh's *Menâkıb*. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's work, dervishes are portrayed as people who pray for the success and well-being of the house of Osman. From the very beginning, they express their approval of the members of the family of Osman. It may be said that they are the ones who recognize the divine sanction bestowed on the house of Osman, who validate this sanction and reproduce it. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's interpretation of the foundation of the Ottoman state, dervishes are placed on an equal footing with the ghazis and the members of the Ottoman house.

At the very beginning of the Ottoman power, there is a critical event about the unity between the dervishes and the Ottoman house. As mentioned before, it is a marital union between a prominent dervish and the founder of the Ottoman state. After the interpretation of Osman's dream, Sheikh Edebalı marries his daughter to Osman.²⁷²

There is some confusion about the name of Osman's wife; the name of the wife is identified either as Mal Hatun or Malhun. Neşrî, with his usual tactfulness, solves the question by proclaiming that Mal Hatun and Malhun were both the wives of Osman.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 91: "Fakîr dahı kûşe-i ferâgatda teslîm, rızâ gencinde fenâ ve sabır hırkasın geyüb otırmış idim ... Ve dua sofrasıyle mütenâ'im olmuş idim".

²⁷² Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 95.

²⁷³ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 79-83.

However, in other sources, both names are used to describe the daughter of Edebalı. This confusion means that the names of Mal Hatun or Malhun circulated in popular traditions. It is possible that two different stories in the popular tradition were brought together, and that Malhun was later identified as the daughter of Edebalı. Beyond historical facts, what is important is that Âşıkpaşa-zâde prefers to place a marital union at the beginnings of the Ottoman state. The union of the flesh signifies in concrete terms the collaboration between a dervish and a divinely sanctioned ruler. Thus, the children that are born out of this union symbolize this perfect alliance.

After this marriage, the privileged relation between the Ottoman house and the dervishes continue. In these days, dervishes are invited by begs to take part in their raids. For instance, in his first military expedition, Orhan invites Sheikh Mahmud and the nephew of Edebalı, a certain Ahi Hasan, to assist him. After the death of Osman, sheikhs and dervishes (*azizler*) are said to have gathered to distribute Osman's property to his sons.²⁷⁴ As shown by the anecdote between a dervish called Geyikli Baba and Orhan, dervishes continue to bestow their sanctions on the Ottoman house. One of the most interesting features of the anecdote about Geyikli Baba is that the dervish first refuses to accept the invitation of the sultan, by claiming that he is waiting for a favourable time. Finally, he plants a poplar tree in the courtyard of Orhan's residence by proclaiming that it is a symbol of the support of the dervishes for Orhan.²⁷⁵ Moreover, Geyikli Baba claims that God has given the right to rule over the land to the Ottoman family, while dervishes don't deal with worldly matters.²⁷⁶ In a sense, these words symbolize that dervishes don't have a pretention over worldly matters. Thus, Geyikli Baba acknowledges

²⁷⁴ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 115.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 122: "Teberrükümüzdür. Oldukça dervüşlerin du'âsı sana ve nesline makbuldür".

that the direction of political matters is delegated to the Ottoman house, implicitly telling that the dervish community doesn't have any pretention to control politics. Compared with the figure of Otman Baba who is claimed by his disciples to be the ruler of the whole universe, Geyikli Baba is content with a life of seclusion and prayer.

Thus, as noted above, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's dervishes are among the most dominant characters of the early years of the Ottoman enterprise. However, Âşıkpaşa-zâde has a bias concerning dervishes. His examples are mostly taken among the members of the Vefâî sect. Edebalı, Geyikli Baba, Ahi Hasan are always mentioned with their adherence to the Vefâîyye.²⁷⁷ He seems to ignore or omit the dervish stories included in the Anonymous, such as the story of the dervish with a wooden sword who conquers a fortress.²⁷⁸ In the Anonymous, the dervishes' loyalty towards a sheikh or their membership of a given sect is not dealt with. What is important is the activity, the miracles of a given dervish. Thus, the word "dervish" has a much more general sense in the Anonymous, whereas for Âşıkpaşa-zâde it means exclusively a member of the Vefâî order, a follower of Baba İlyas. This inclusivism of Âşıkpaşa-zâde goes so far as to condemn those who claim to have established a Bektaşî sect. Given the fact that Hacı Bektaş is identified as a disciple of Baba İlyas, Âşıkpaşa-zâde refuses that he or his followers could establish a separate sect of their own. To be sure, what is at stake is the appropriation of a symbolic capital vested with the Ottoman house. Against the Bektaşî claims that Hacı Bektaş sanctioned the newly established janissary corps, Âşıkpaşa-zâde

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: "Mülk, mal Hakkundur. Ehline verür. ... Hak Ta'âlâ dünya mülkini sizin gibi hanlara ısmarladı".

²⁷⁷ It may be true that Vefâî dervishes entertained a close relation with the Ottoman family, as proposed by Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 128-9. However, it is obvious the Vefâîs were not the only dervishes dwelling in the Ottoman realm, as demonstrated by Ahmet Yaşar Ocak in his *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*. Nevertheless, the memory of the Babaî uprising and the identification of more than one group with Baba İlyas may have led Âşıkpaşa-zâde to assume, as a member of the family, that all these dervishes who dwelled in the Ottoman realm were in reality the adherents of his own sect.

says that this is a made-up story. He even claims that Hacı Bektaş didn't hold enough charisma to establish a sect.²⁷⁹ Moreover, Hacı Bektaş's followers are identified as pagan dervishes whose faith and reverence for Islam is suspicious. Moreover, he refuses the existence of any relation between the house of Osman and Hacı Bektaş.²⁸⁰

Thus, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's dervishes are all said to be of the Vefâî order or Âşıkpaşa-zâde prefers to include the anecdotes of these dervishes into his narrative. However, after the reign of Murad I, the dervishes as characters in the *Tevârih* appear less and less in the text. With the exception of the story of the dervish announcing Murad II that he is soon to die,²⁸¹ anecdotes and episodes concerning dervishes disappear from the text. This feature reflects the nature of the source material of Âşıkpaşa-zâde. The first part of the *Tevârih*, inspired by Yahşi Fakîh, normally includes many entries about dervishes. Moreover, there is the need to show that dervishes are one of the constituents of the Ottoman enterprise.²⁸² However, with the development of the sultanic figure in the narrative, the dervishes' autonomy and their activities disappear from the text.

III. 2. b. Ghazis

To be sure, ghazis, like dervishes, are presented as privileged members of the Ottoman society, witnessing the establishment of the Ottoman state and fighting

²⁷⁸ Azamat/Anonim, 13-4.

²⁷⁹ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 238: "Hacı Bektaş ... bir meczub, budala aziz idi. Şeyhlikden ve müridlikden fârig idi. ... Ol zamanda şeyhlik ve müridlik igen zâhir degül idi".

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: "Bengi ve zankı, dobalak ve zobalak ve şeytânî âdetler bunlarda çokdur. Ve bu halk bilmezler ani şeytânî midür ve yâ rahmanî midür. Ve her kimse kim Hacı Bektaş Âl-i Osmandan kimse ile musâhabet etdi der ise yalandur, şöyle bilersiz".

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 190.

²⁸² In this respect, it seems important to note a remark of Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, who claims that the Ottoman polity, due to its quality of being constituted by nomads and semi-nomads, would be more open to the influence of wandering dervishes rather than the more sophisticated orders like the Mevleviyye or Rifaiyye whose adherents lived predominantly in towns and cities. See Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "Osmanlı Beyliği Topraklarındaki Sufi Çevreler ve Abdalân-ı Rûm Sorunu", in *Osmanlı Beyliği (1300-1389)*, 164.

staunchly in order to hold high the banner of Islam. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative, there are two discourses about ghazis. One of these concerns the virtues hold by these warriors of the faith. Ottoman begs and sultans are also described as ghazis. This first discourse is full of Islamic images and moralistic concerns. The second discourse reflects the realities of a ghazi life. In these portraits, ghazis are supported by Ottoman begs and sultans, they share the large booty obtained in raids, they acquire slaves, and especially women. It may be said that the descriptions about booty and women are in a sense overemphasized, perhaps with the aim of inciting people to take part in the raids and campaigns.

Ghazis are especially described with their fervour, and their dedication to the Ottoman house. Gathered around Osman, they gain strength and power.²⁸³ Ghazis dedicate all their time to ghaza, and uphold the mission of expanding Islam.²⁸⁴ In the episodes related to the earlier years of the Ottoman enterprise, the names of Akçakoca, Evrenos, Konur Alp are often mentioned. However, in these episodes, ghazis never act by themselves; they are always portrayed in relation to the Ottoman ruler, who gives his approval to the ghazis. By contrast, in the Anonymous, ghazis are described as independent actors: they themselves conquer lands, design policies against Christian lords, and make peace with the lord of Ulubad, Christian lords plan to attack "the ghazis" themselves, not Osman or Orhan.²⁸⁵ In the Anonymous, there is even a sense of nostalgia for those periods of free action and heroism.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 106-7: "Osman Gazinün yanındağı gaziler kuvvetlendiler. Dâyıma gazâ etmek isterler idi. ... Gaziler gördiler kim her tarafa kim yürüdiler, mansur ve muzaffer oldılar".

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 109-10: "Bu gaziler şöyle dürüşürler kim fetihler mukarrer olına. Geceler uyku uyumazlar. Gündüz at arkasından inmezler. Kayım dururlar. ... Bu uclarda bunlar dürüşürler kim bu iklimleri müsülmanlık edeler".

²⁸⁵ Azamat/Anonim, 14.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 11: "Ol vakit kim gâziler iyiyüdi. Her biri bir ejderhâyidi, eğer adam başına bin kâfir gelse yüz döndürmezler idi. İ'tikadları muhkem idi. Hak te'âlâ onlara dahi fırsat virürdi i'tikadları berekâtında".

Besides this emphasis on the heroism and religious mission of the ghazis, there are many references to booty and material gains in the narrative of Âşıkpaşa-zâde.²⁸⁷ At the very beginning of the *Tevârih*, it is told that ghazis gathered around Osman, who was acknowledged as a ghazi leader. Osman led ghazis into raids, and ghazis had the opportunity to gain much booty.²⁸⁸ It is interesting that women are especially mentioned among the booty obtained in these raids. Was this dictated again by the realities of a nomadic life, with high mortality rates and a small number of women? Or, did the tribal rules build rigid barriers on the relations between men and women? Both arguments may be valid. What is obvious is that the obtention of women was used as a strong incentive to attract young people into the ranks of the ghazis.

The theme of women reappears in the story about the takeover of the fortress of Aydos. The daughter of the town's lord dreams that someone washes her and gives her new clothes. When the Ottomans come before the walls of the town, she realizes that the man in his dream is the commander of the soldiers, a certain Gazi Rahman. Thus, she sends him a letter, and opens the gates of the fortress. At the end, Orhan marries Gazi Rahman with the daughter of the lord.²⁸⁹ In another episode, after İznik is taken, ghazis are married with the widows of the town. Moreover, they are given plots and houses.

²⁸⁷ It seems that the activity of ghaza had already become a way of making a living, as demonstrated by a study of Şinasi Tekin, "XIV. Yüzyılda Yazılmıř Gazilik Tarikası. 'Gâziliđin Yolları' Adlı Bir Eski Anadolu Türkçesi Metni ve Gazâ/Cihâd Kavramları Hakkında", *Journal of Turkish Studies* 13 (1989): 144. The overall importance of the work is that it symbolizes to what extent ghaza had become a widespread practice, to the extent that manuals and handbooks were needed in order to categorize and define it.

²⁸⁸ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 100: "Sebebi duydu Osmandan ve guzzât Kimi begendügi kızlardan aldı
Kimi altun gümüş aldı kimi at Gazilerün idi o demde fırsat".

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 113-4.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's remark about the event is very interesting: he says that anybody would welcome these houses and women.²⁹⁰

In the narrative, there are various episodes describing how the Ottoman rulers gave money or presents to the ghazis, and how they permitted them to plunder the towns and cities that were taken. For instance, the presents given by the lord of the fortress of Misini to Murad I are all given to ghazis,²⁹¹ In another instance, Evrenos spares a part of the booty to the ghazis after extracting the share of the sultan.²⁹² The theme of booty is again repeated for the Rumelian campaigns of Murad II. As an eyewitness, Âşıkpaşa-zâde records the huge amounts of booty obtained in these.²⁹³ Thus, the life of the ghazis is described as a bountiful one, full of booty, slaves, and women.

However, like the dervish theme, the prominence of the activities of the ghazis declines in later episodes. In the parts relating the events after the Interregnum, ghazi begs and frontier lords lose their prominence. It has been said that sultanic might takes over that of the begs and ghazis, and the figure of the sultan gradually occupies the forefront. Thus, in later episodes, the names of ghazi begs and other frontier lords are often skipped, some remarks about Âşıkpaşa-zâde's Rumelian acquaintances excepted. In time, all the soldiers of the Ottoman army are called ghazis. Those who take Caffa, those who campaign against Trabzon with Mehmed II are identified as ghazis. Thus, a social milieu with its peculiar features disappears from the narrative, and the epithete of ghazi begins to apply to all the soldiers of the army of Mehmed II.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 119: “Ve illâ hatunlar çok geldiler. ... Ve illâ gayet mahubları çoğ idi. ... Hazır avrat ve hem evler ola, kim kabul etmeye?”.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 126.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 132.

III. 2. c. Christians

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, at first sight, includes a straightforward image of the Christians: these are infidels, whose property is open to plunder for ghazis.²⁹⁴ However, in the context of the dual structure of the work, one easily detects that some Christians are represented as the allies and collaborators of the Ottomans in the earlier episodes. In the parts depending on Yahşi Fakîh's work, the semi-tribal world of the first days includes an important number of Christian lords and soldiers. In these episodes, Christians are described more vividly. First of all, Osman lives in an area populated by Christians, and he is said to pursue a policy of "feigned friendship" (*müdârâ*). Against his brother Gündüz's proposal of attacking the neighbouring Christians, Osman states that a policy of enmity would be detrimental to their possessions.²⁹⁵ The Christian folk of these earlier episodes are not enslaved, they are allowed to plough their land and continue their commerce. In an episode, Osman punishes someone who takes a cup from a Christian peddler by force.²⁹⁶ To be sure, if references to the Ottomans' enmity towards the Germiyanids are taken into account, Osman may be said to have avoided the prospect of fighting on more than one front. Nevertheless, the atmosphere of these earlier periods is one of leniency. Ottomans are said to bring well-being and security to the Christian folk, thus causing a wave of immigrants to the lands under their control.²⁹⁷

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 178-9: "Gazılar şöyle doyum geldiler kim bir cizmeye bir nefis câriya verürler idi. ... Ve dahi şöyle olmuş idi kim leşker göcse esir galabası kim leşkerden ziyâdeydi".

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 173: "Sakın kâfirün ahdına inanma Velî kâfirin iki nesnesin al
Yele arkan verüb muhkemsin sanma Biri kızın biri malın usanma".

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 98: "[B]u nevâhilerümüzi yıkub yakıcak, bu şehrimüz kim Karaca Hisardur, ma'mur olmaz. Olası budur kim konşılarumuz ile müdârâ dostlukların edevüz".

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 102: "Ve cemi' köyleri yerlü yerine gelüb mütemekkin oldılar. Vakıtları kâfir zamanından daha eyü oldi belkü. Zirâ bundağı kâfirlerin rahatlığın işidüb gayrı vilâyetden dahı adam gelmege başladı".

Among the figures of the earlier days of the Ottoman enterprise, there are some Christian collaborators of Osman, who tell him about the plots of Christian lords,²⁹⁸ who guide Ottoman raiders, act as translators between Ottomans and Christians.²⁹⁹ Süleyman Paşa is also assisted by some Christians who help him while crossing over to Gelibolu.³⁰⁰ The most prominent example of a Christian who helps Ottomans is Köse Mihal. At the beginning of this collaboration, Mihal is not yet converted. Ghazis decide to invite him to the message of Islam. Meanwhile, dreaming of Muhammad, Mihal himself volunteers to be converted to Islam. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's words, he thus abandons a false and absurd creed and becomes a Muslim.³⁰¹

After a while, and especially with the Balkan campaigns of Murad I, this visibility of Christians within the narrative diminishes. After these episodes, the infidels are mostly mentioned when they are captured or killed, or when they commit an act of treachery. The Christians of these later episodes are the Serbian despot, the voivod of Wallachia, the king of Hungary, and the king of Bosnia. These Christians are called with contempt "the auxiliaries of the sultan" (*martalos*). Even Hunyadi Janos, the great Hungarian commander, is mentioned with this epithete.³⁰² This contempt is again displayed in the context of Murad II's marriage with the daughter of the voivod of Wallachia. To make peace, the voivod wants to marry his daughter to Murad II. Murad II accepts to marry the girl but he refuses to organize a wedding ceremony saying that the daughter of an "infidel servant (of him)" is not worth it.³⁰³ These episodes clearly reflect the relations of the Ottomans with various Balkan lords. Locked into a relation of submission, but always

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 110.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 124, 125.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 107: "Ve ol bâtul dinü terk edüb hâlis müsülman oldı".

waiting for the favourable occasion to rebel, these Christian lords are stigmatized by Âşıkpaşa-zâde as unfaithful and treacherous subjects. In these episodes, the voivod of Wallachia is portrayed as someone who doesn't keep his oaths and the sultan is portrayed as someone who always allows the voivod some independence, believing that these promises will be kept. However, when it becomes apparent that the voivod will not respect these, then the Ottoman army goes to campaign against him for an exemplary punishment.³⁰⁴

The most negative assessment concerning Christians that one encounters in the *Tevârih* targets the Christian wife of Bayezid I, the daughter of the despot of Serbia. According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, the custom of wine drinking and organizing sumptuous feasts is introduced by her. Before her, it is told, the Ottoman rulers didn't drink wine, didn't organize feasts and parties in the palace. Thus, the purity and simplicity of the earlier Ottoman rulers is destroyed by the daughter of the Serbian despot, who is the collaborator of the Persian advisors in bringing new, evil ways.³⁰⁵

The Anonymous, on the other hand, especially in parts concerning the earlier years of the Ottoman enterprise, has a much more pronounced bias against Christians. From the very beginning, Christians are represented as a mass of coward drunkards.³⁰⁶ While telling the death or murder of a Christian, it is always remarked that the soul of the infidel thus went to hell.³⁰⁷ As a work closer to a dervish-ghazi outlook, it is normal that

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 182: "Ol Yanko deyen martaluz...".

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 176: "Bir sipâhi kâfirün kızına dahı ne düğün gerek dedi".

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 209-10.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 138: "Bayazıd Han sohbet esbâbın Laz kızı elinden öğrendi. Ali Paşa mu'âvenetiyle şarab ve kebab meclisi kuruldı".

³⁰⁶ Azamat/Anonim, 13: "Kâfirler cümle sarhoş olur".

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 14. Sometimes, it is simply told that the infidel's soul went to hell ("... heman canı cehenneme ısmarladı"). In other occasions, an Arabic formula, with a similar meaning, is used ("fi'n-nârı fi's-sakar / [He went] to the fires of hell").

the Anonymous reflects negative opinions concerning Christians in a more pronounced way. Neşrî, on the other hand, mentions the same anecdotes with Âşıkpaşa-zâde. Thus, his narrative doesn't differ much from Âşıkpaşa-zâde in what concerns Christians. Neşrî also records a period of friendship with Christians, prior to Osman's receiving the divine message. From then on, the image of Christians becomes more and more distorted, to the extent that they are finally described as an amorphous mass, subject to the will of the Ottomans.³⁰⁸

III. 2. d. The “New Class”: Court Advisors and Immigrant Scholars

It has been already mentioned, while dealing with Âşıkpaşa-zâde's characterizations of Ottoman sultans, that he often criticizes some new processes, some moves of centralization by reference to some individuals whose dedication and integrity is questioned, who are accused of taking bribes, who are blamed for introducing evil ways.

One of the scapegoats of Âşıkpaşa-zâde is the Çandarlı family,³⁰⁹ which appears on more than one occasion in his narrative. There are others, like Kara Rüstem, an immigrant, and Rum Mehmed Paşa, a convert, who assist the Çandarlıs or contribute to the process of alienating people and the simple folk from the Ottomans. Notably, in Âşıkpaşa-zâde, individuals are spelled out for being the responsables for these wicked processes, while the Anonymous develops a criticism focusing on the processes

³⁰⁸ Of course, the representations of the historians are far from reflecting all the attitudes concerning Christians. It appears that some Christians and converts provided the Ottoman polity with a precious human capital since the time of Orhan. See Michel Balivet, *Romanie byzantine et pays de Rûm turc* (Istanbul, 1994), 97-8. For the variety of attitudes towards Christians, see G. G. Arnakis, “Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of His Captivity as Historical Sources”, *Speculum* 26 (1951): 104-18.

³⁰⁹ For an examination of the career and activities of the family, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Çandarlı Vezir Ailesi* (Ankara, 1988).

themselves, or on a sizeable group of people rather than individuals. Neşrî, on the other hand, erases most of the criticisms of Âşıkpaşa-zâde but preserves the condemnation of Rum Mehmed Paşa. This is not surprising, due to the fact that Mehmed Paşa was killed up on the news of Mehmed II's death. Moreover, in a sense, he symbolized the party of Cem against Bayezid II. Thus, Neşrî's criticisms about Mehmed Paşa may be attributed to his desire of pleasing his patron Bayezid II.

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative, the Çandarlı family first appears in the context of the episodes concerning the formation of a military corps based on infantry and cavalry forces. While discussing the issue of the establishment of a new military corps, Âşıkpaşa-zâde tells that Çandarlı Karaca Halil was the judge (*kadı*) of Bursa at that time, and that he was given the duty to recruit new troops. Thus, according to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, he had the occasion to take bribes from those who wanted to be enlisted in the new troops, and thus to be exempt from taxation.³¹⁰ Neşrî only mentions that some people intended to bribe Çandarlı Halil, but he doesn't note if he has taken these bribes or not. Moreover, Neşrî claims that the decision to enlist new troops aroused a wave of joy among the subjects of the sultan who thus had an occasion to serve their sultan.³¹¹ However, there isn't such a remark in Âşıkpaşa-zâde. Moreover, in an episode, he mentions that there was even a tension between the settled population and the new troops, which were called "pups on foot" (*enük yaya*) by the peasants.³¹² In the process, it is told, Çandarlı Karaca Halil, the judge of Bursa, is bribed by those who want to be enlisted in these forces.³¹³ Again, Çandarlı Halil and another court advisor, Kara Rüstem are shown to be responsible for

³¹⁰ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 118.

³¹¹ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 155.

³¹² Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 118.

the institution of the practice of giving one-fifth of the booty to the ruler's treasury. In another episode, Çandarlı Halil and Kara Rüstem are again said to be the responsables for the corruption of old ways and the introduction of new, evil ways. According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, they introduced the fraudulent Persian advisors to the court circles, issued ruseful *fetvâs*, abolished the piety of old days.³¹⁴

The diatribes against Çandarlı Halil and Kara Rüstem are again told in relation with an anecdote concerning judges. According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Bayezid I, weary of the bad ways of the judges, gathered them in a house and wanted to set the house on fire. However, Çandarlı Ali, the son of Halil, saved them saying that the reason behind the corruption of the judges was that they were not allowed to take a share on their transactions. Thus, according to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, judges were allowed to charge fees.³¹⁵ In the Anonymous, this new practice is labelled as a wicked innovation, a *bid'at*.³¹⁶ Moreover, as already mentioned, the Anonymous includes a set of criticisms directed not only against individuals, but a whole class. The criticisms are voiced by a certain Akbıyık Dede, in a conversation with Mevlânâ Yiğen. In the dialogue, the advisors and scholars are accused of influencing people with their bad ways, of taking bribes, and disrupting the simple and pure customs of the natives.³¹⁷ Moreover, Çandarlı Ali Paşa's applications

³¹³ *Ibid.*: "Ol vakit adamlarun çoğı kadiya rişvet iletđi kim beni yaya yazdurun deyü. Ve hem anlara da ak bürk geydürdiler". Neşri mentions that money was proposed to Çandarlı Halil by those who wanted to be enlisted, but he doesn't specify if these bribes were taken or not.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 138-9: "Orhan zamanında ve Gazi Murad Han zamanında ulema var idi. Ve illâ müfsid degüller idi. ... Anlar kim geldiler, fetvâyı hîle etdiler. Takvâyı götürdiler. ... Elhâsılı Âl-i Osmanun günah etmesine sebep Ali Paşa olmuş idi. Zire anun yanına hîle eder Acem danışmendleri çok gelürler idi".

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 139.

³¹⁶ Azamat/Anonim, 36. In *ibid.*, 33, there is a lamentation blaming the fact that the Ottoman land is full of unworthy judges: "Vay ol iklîme kim şimdiki zamânda dânişmend dirilenler kadı olup hükm-i şerî'at icrâ ide".

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 27-8: "Andan ötüri kim sizler zinâ itdüğünüz ve akçayı ribâyâ virdüğünüz, harâmı ve halâli fark itmediğünüz ümmî kavım dahı sizden gördi. Anlar dahı eyle iderler. ... Şimdiki halde hiçbir ehl-i ilm var mıdır kim bu harâmdur diye bir nesne kabûl itmeye. ... Bâri ömrinde birin reddideydi. Redditmek ne mümkün? Harâm olsun halâl olsun, tek eline girsün" (italics mine).

about giving positions to the members of his own retinue is severely criticized.³¹⁸ In a sense, the Anonymous reflects in these matters what may be called a “localist” reaction, longing more than Âşıkpaşa-zâde for the perfect harmony, the atmosphere of heroism and piety of the earlier days. It may be proposed that Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s criticisms were curtailed by the relations he established later in his life, when he came back from the Balkans to settle in Istanbul. Thus, while preserving some examples about what should not be done, he restrained himself from producing a general criticism of religious scholars and court advisors.

After the theme of corrupt advisors, there are criticisms directed against pashas who take bribes, or forget their missions by indulging into wine-drinking. For instance, Oruc Bey, the *beylerbeyi* of Anatolia, is accused of wine-drinking and living a life of luxury and pleasures.³¹⁹ Again, Kula Şahin Paşa neglects his duties and devotes his time to worldly pleasures. In his drunkenness, he can’t realize that the enemy soldiers are a real threat to his troops.³²⁰ Thus, one night, Hungarians raid his forces and Kula Şahin is compelled to escape.

Again, on many occasions, pashas and begs are accused of taking bribes from the voivod of Wallachia or from the Byzantine emperor. For instance, in order to recover some castles taken by Ottomans, the voivod sends many presents to the pashas, who then convince Murad II to surrender some castles to the voivod.³²¹ Again, when Murad II lays

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 34: “Heman ki Kara Halil oğlu Ali Paşa vezîr oldu, fisk u fücûr ziyâde oldu. Mahbûb oğlanları yanına aldı, adını iç oğlanı kodi. Bir nice zaman ne gerekse idüp çıkarub mansıb viridi. ... İç oğlanına ragbet itmek Ali Paşa’dan kaldı”.

³¹⁹ *Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde*, 166: “Ve Oruc Beg dâymâ sohbe ve tena’uma meşgul idi. Ve her yere kim varsa duşmanı gidermege meşgul olmaz idi”.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 182: “Yüridi, Eflâk vilâyetine geçdi. Dahı şaraba ve kebaba ve tena’uma meşgul oldu. Begler eyitdiler, ‘Hay begüm! Bu durduğumuz tena’um edilecek yer degüldür, bunda duşman vardur’ dediler. Bu Kula Şahin ser-i hoş ile eyidür. ‘Ol duşman benüm borkümi görse bir nice günlük yol kaçar’ der”.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 172: “Paşalara dahi mebâlig-i azim göndürmiş idi. Paşalar dahi hünkârı razı eylediler”.

siege to İzladi, the voivod sends money to the pashas who, in turn, prevent the sultan from attacking the fortress.³²² Not only Christians, but also Karamanids are represented to bribe Ottoman pashas.³²³

The most dramatic anecdote about bribe-taking concerns Çandarlı Halil Paşa, who is said to have received a fish full of golden coins from the Byzantine emperor before the siege of Istanbul. The emperor says that they have to implore their friend Halil Paşa so that the Ottomans give up the siege.³²⁴ Finally, after the siege, Halil Paşa is executed.

Neşrî gives a different version of the story. First of all, Halil Paşa's taking bribe from the Byzantines is not at all mentioned. Then, Neşrî also avoids to express his opinions about the execution of Halil Paşa. He only notes that this is a long story, that Halil Paşa's fate is known by everybody.³²⁵

In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, Rum Mehmed Paşa's deeds are dealt with in detail. Rum Mehmed symbolizes the perfidious convert, who abuses his power in order to oppress Muslims. Interestingly, Mehmed II's harsh policies of centralization, deportation and fiscal restructuring are imputed to the influence and activities of Rum Mehmed and Nişancı Mehmed. For instance, the revival of the practice of rent for the houses of Istanbul is imputed to Rum Mehmed Paşa who, on the advice of some infidels, friends of

³²² *Ibid.*, 183: "Vılakoğlu Rum Eli beglerini filöriyile konukladı. Hündkârı kâfir ile uğraşmaya komadılar". In reality, this event has to do with the reaction of some frontier begs, who often confront the policies of Murad II and act as centrifugal forces. See Halil İncelik, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, 16.

³²³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 191: "Karamanoğlu İbrahim Beg ... paşalara dahi dudu filörisin göndürdi. Ve ol filörüler gayet udlu kişilerdür. Şeyhler ve dânişmendler ve paşalar anun yüzün görücek utanurlar. Utandukları sebebden paşalar hünkâra gelip eyittiler. '... İmdi ümiddür kim devletlü sultanum dahi marhamet ede' didiler" (italics mine).

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 192: "Tekvür ... 'Eger bu Türkdən bize kurtılmağa çâre olur ise dostumuz Halil Paşaya gene yalvarmak ... balıcaklar göndürmek gerekdür' didi. ... Halil balığı yedi, karnını sanduğa koydı. Kâfirlerün sözünü dutdı".

³²⁵ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 707: "Bunların hikâyetleri tavîldir ve kaziyeleri malûmdur. Zirâ vâkı'a-ı Halil Paşa âlemde meşhurdur".

his father, tries to prevent Muslims from settling in the city.³²⁶ Again, he is accused of applying a very harsh policy of deportation against Karaman. According to Âşıkpaşa-zâde, his aim was to destroy the houses and families of Muslims.³²⁷ Rum Mehmed Paşa is also accused of preventing the sultan from giving alms and goods to dervishes and sheikhs.³²⁸ However, at the end, he meets the death he deserves. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's words, he is "strangled like a dog". In Neşrî, the murder of Rum Mehmed Paşa is presented as the revenge of the sultan who punishes him because of his acts against Muslims.³²⁹

Like Rum Mehmed Paşa, another vizier of Mehmed II, Nişancı Mehmed Paşa, is also criticized for acting against the holy law and abrogating the foundation deeds given under the reign of former sultans. Âşıkpaşa-zâde says that he attacked the property, honor and life of the Muslim folk.³³⁰ He also mentions having addressed Nişancı Mehmed in person and asking him why he acted against the rules of the holy law. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's anecdote, Nişancı Mehmed gives him a sarcastic answer by asking if Âşıkpaşa-zâde's rights were also abolished.

Thus, the responsibility of some policies of Mehmed II is attributed to his viziers, to some individuals who, due to their perfidy or personal wickedness, abolish endowment deeds, and oppress innocent Muslim folk. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's stories about Rum Mehmed

³²⁶ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 193: "... İstanbulun eski kâfirleri ... 'İmdi cehd eyle kim bu halk bu şehirün imâretinden el çekeler ve gerü evvelki gibi bu şehir bizüm elümüzde kala' dediler. ... Bir gün bu vezir padişahun kalbine bir münâsebet ile ilka etdi. Gene mukata'a ihdas etdüdü".

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 216: "Bu Rum vezir İstanbulun intikamın almağa gayetde müştak idi kim ehl-i islâm inciteyidi. ... Elhâsıl-ı kelâm Lârendede ve Konyadan ziyâde evler almakdan muradı Rum vezirün buyidi kim ehl-i islâmın evlerin yıkdurub ve rızıkların ve düzenlerin bozdurmak idi".

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 243-4: "Âl-i Osman kapusunda ol vezir oluncaya degin 'atebe-i ülyâya gelen ulemâ ve fukarâyâ padişahdan teşrîf-i sadaka olur idi. ... Heman kim Rum Mehmed geldi vezir oldu, bu sadaka kesildi".

³²⁹ Unat&Köymen/Neşrî, 789.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 244: "Kim ol nesli bühtândur. Allahun kullarınun malına ve kanına ve ırzına tama' etmiş idi. Ve her ne kadar kim padişahun vilâyetinde şer'-i Muhammediyidi ve vakıf idi ve mülk idi, cemi'isini bozdu".

Paşa's conspiracys also reflect to extent of the dissent caused by the application of rent. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's account may be regarded as a testimony of the reaction among the inhabitants of Istanbul.

To sum up, Âşıkpaşa-zâde's criticisms are generally directed towards individuals, and not concrete processes or social milieus. For instance, Kara Rüstem and Çandarlı Halil are blamed but these criticisms don't go so far as to include a whole social milieu.

III. 2. e. The "Other Turks": The Karamanid Example

It has been noted, throughout this thesis, that Âşıkpaşa-zâde depicts the Karamanids in an aura of treachery, cowardice and hypocrisy. The ultimate reasons behind these diatribes have also been analyzed. The Karamanids were the biggest threat to the establishment of the Ottoman rule in Central Anatolia. Their principality was based mostly on the force of Turkoman horsemen, whose extreme mobility made it very difficult for the Ottomans to overcome them. Moreover, they always had the option to take refuge in the mountainous area south of Konya. Thus, even if the Ottoman army could occupy the plains during the summer, the forces of the Karamanids could live in the mountains waiting for a favourable occasion to recapture their lands.

Moreover, the war with the Karamanids and other Anatolian principalities obviously created a certain confusion. It was an act against not only the principles of Muslim law but also against the ghazi ideal. Thus, Âşıkpaşa-zâde always claims that Karamanids hindered Ottomans from ghaza, or oppressed Muslims, thus making it permissible to wage war against them. This discourse of legitimacy disappears only towards the end of Mehmed II's reign. The confidence brought with the capture of

Istanbul and other impressive military achievements dissipates the need to legitimize the Anatolian campaigns.

Meanwhile, other Anatolian begs and rulers are also depicted in a critical tone. They are not very visible in the *Tevârih*, and appear only when they surrender their lands to the Ottomans, or when they plot against them. For instance, it is told that they provoked Timur against Bayezid. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde's narrative, Anatolian begs dispossessed by Bayezid take refuge in Timur's camp. Âşıkpaşa-zâde mockingly tells how these begs went to Timur's headquarters. Thus, the Germiyanid beg hides near bear keepers, the beg of Menteşe cuts his hair and beard, and the beg of Aydın travels like peddler. In Timur's court, they provoke him by saying that Bayezid oppressed them.³³¹ Thus, they are imputed to be responsible for Timur's Anatolian campaign. On the other hand, in Şikârî's *Karamanoğulları Tarihi*, the issue of addressing Timur is interpreted on a legitimist basis. According to Şikârî, the Anatolian begs went to Timur because Bayezid deprived them of their legitimate rights of rule. In a letter to Timur, the beg of Karaman stated that Osman was given the title to rule by Karaman, but that he attacked and oppressed all Muslims.³³²

The Karamanids are always singled out among Anatolian begs as the most serious enemies of the Ottoman house. In Âşıkpaşa-zâde, the stereotype Karamanid is someone who waits for the occasion to attack the Ottomans from behind. However, when faced with a strong Ottoman army, the Karamanid abandons the battle and escapes. For

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 142: "Germiyanoğlu ... (a)yıcılara, maymuncılara uydu. ... Menteşeoğlu saçın sakalın yolıtdı. İşık olup vardı. Aydın Beg oğlu çerçilik ede ede vardı. ... Heman bunlar kim Temüre vardılar, halların arz etdiler. Ve hem yalvardılar ... Temür bedbahtı kendülerine uydurdılar".

³³² Şikârî, *Karaman Oğulları Tarihi*, 182: "Osman'a tabi u alemi biz virdik, akıbet yine dönüb bize düşman oldu. Hâk-i pâye varan beş Bey'in kılıçlarıyla feth eyledikleri vilâyetleri ellerinden alub muhkem zulmeyledi. Zulmü cihanı tutmuşdur, kavli sahih değildir". Moreover, while Ottoman historians describe

instance, while Mehmed I is in Rumelia after Musa, the Karamanid army lays siege on Bursa. However, when Musa's corpse is sent to Bursa, the Karamanids realize that Mehmed has won the battle against his brother and is soon to attack them. Thus, they abandon the siege and go back to their lands, tail between legs.³³³ Again, during the reign of Mehmed I, a treaty of peace is signed with Karaman. Mehmed I sends a diploma to the beg of Karaman, giving him the title of governor. However, the beg of Karaman doesn't accept this title and proclaims that he will be the enemy of the Ottomans forever.³³⁴ Of course, the diploma sent by Mehmed I to the beg of Karaman is not mentioned in Şikârî.

In other episodes, the Karamanids are said to collaborate with Christians. Âşıkpaşa-zâde claims that they plan to attack Ottomans in collaboration with Wallachians and Hungarians. However, when Murad II campaigns against Karaman, the Karamanids claim that they regret this alliance and ask for mercy.³³⁵ But the treachery of the Karamanids continue. They again send an envoy to the voivod of Wallachia and renew their proposal of attacking Ottomans in concert. Nevertheless, Ottomans sign a treaty with the voivod and the plans of the Karamanids are not realized.³³⁶

Moreover, Karamanids' ruthlessness against Muslim folk is also severely criticized. On more than one occasions, they are said to attack "Ottoman" Muslims, rape "Ottoman" Muslim women, and capture boys.³³⁷ Thus, given the fact that they dare attack

the victories of Ottomans against the Karamanids, Şikârî mentions various victories of the Karamanids, together with a discourse of heroism.

³³³ Atsız/Âşıkpaşa-zâde, 149. In this passage, the Karamanids are compared to a beaten dog: "Karamanoğlu vardı, öliyi gördi. Heman ol gece kuyruk göte kısıdı, kaçdı".

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 151: "Ve eyitdi kim 'Adâvetüm tâ kıyâmete degin bâkîdür' dedi. Ve hem haylı bedbahtlık dahı etdi".

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 175.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 181.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 182: "Hündkâra habar geldi kim Karamanoğlu ahdını sıdı ve müsülmanların avratın ve oğlanın zâlimlere nâmeşrû' işler etdüdü".

Muslim folk, they deserve to be punished by Ottomans who thus take avenge those poor folk.³³⁸

It may be strange that Âşıkpaşa-zâde, whose family was involved in the first days of the Karaman principality, develops such a negative attitude towards Karaman, blaming Karamanid raids into Ottoman territory while legitimizing the ruthless policies of Ottomans. There is one exception to his attitude, and it is about the deportation policy of Mehmed Paşa. However, what is at stake in this criticism is not Ottoman politics against Karaman *per se*, but the wickedness of a convert vizier.

It may be said that Âşıkpaşa-zâde, whose allegiance was vested with the Ottoman house from the very beginning, appropriated and applied the standard Ottoman view about Karaman. Moreover, the sense of Ottoman supremacy, the “psychology of the victorious” may account for his assessment of the Karamanids. Âşıkpaşa-zâde himself states that he has been praying for the Ottoman house all his life. The presence of Vefâî dervishes at the beginnings of the Ottoman enterprise, the force of the Ottoman claims of supremacy and their compatibility with Âşıkpaşa-zâde’s worldview have strongly engaged him to the cause of the Ottomans, which was finally defined by Âşıkpaşa-zâde not as the venture of a sole family, but as the glory and victory of Islam.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 183: “İmdi ay aziz! Osmanlunun memleket urub müsülmanlığa zulum etmesinün sebebi Karamanoğlu İbrahim Beg sebebinden olmışdur. Ve illâ tâ bugüne dek Osmanludan kimsenün hakkına

zulum gelmemiş idi nâ-hak yere. Meger ki bilmeye”.

CONCLUSION

Âşikpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman* may be read in different fashions. First, it displays the worldview of an individual who liked to call himself a dervish, and felt pride for having killed enemies and taken part in raids. Or, the text may be said to portray, among other things, the gradual rise and development of a sultanic might that brings in a new political structure. The *Tevârih* may be analyzed to find out the criticisms, the points of dissent vis-a-vis the process of centralization and political/social sophistication. As a whole, it may be said to reflect the concerns of a "pre-classical" Ottoman world where the boundaries between religious orthodoxy and heterodoxy, high and popular cultures, dervishes and religious scholars, rulers and subjects were yet not strictly drawn. Finally, Âşikpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* may be studied by comparing it with other historical works dating from the 15th century.

What is most striking about Âşikpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is the ambiguity that is seen throughout the text, the existence of some dichotomies, such as the juxtaposition of worldly concerns with a discourse of religious purity, or the inclusion of some criticisms about the process of centralization together with praises about Ottoman rulers. In a sense, the text is a repository of the contradictions which may be assumed to have existed in the 15th century. Moreover, these contradictions are important components of what we may call the political/historical consciousness of the time.

The significance of the Ottoman historiography of the 15th century comes from the fact that these histories were the first examples of their kind in the Ottoman realm.

Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih*, among them, stands out by its originality due to the fact that it has a hybrid character. It is possible to find side by side the expressions of an imperial consciousness and the aesthetics of a popular epic or of a hagiography. This hybrid character, which first seems to be an ambiguity, a contradiction to the modern scholar, reflects in fact the state of mind of a transition period. Some institutions are not abolished yet, but they are on the way to disappear; some new institutions are put in their place, but they are not yet totally accepted. Âşıkpaşa-zâde's *Tevârih* is a perfect example of the coexistence of seemingly contradictory ideas, styles, images in the Ottoman realm.

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