GEOGRAPHY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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Geography, in Ottoman life, was first studied by people from Muslim theological schools for a literary purpose, rather than with a scientific aim, and started with the "Academy al-mubahhat translations, which were written as legends. These translations were formed by including some geographical information, taken from some other Muslim geographers' works of the time, in the loose translations of the books "Academy al-mubahhat of Zekeriyya al-Kazvin" (d.1285) and "Hariri al-casrib of Ibn el-Verdi (d.1349).

The aim of these books was to entertain the reader, rather than to provide geographical information. The number of this type of "Academy al-mubahhat translations is more than twelve. The first one belongs to Ali b. Abûjurâmah (died around 800), and the last book is the "Takwî'î-î Tarihî-î Academy al-mubahhat of Râbi'a-zade (d.1701). The most famous of these translations are the ones by Ahmed-i Bicân (d.1454), Sâdûrî (d.1562) and Mahmûd b. Harât el-Rumi (alive in 1563). Many hand-written copies of these translations have survived until today. Among this kind of works, the work of Ahmed-i Bicân, called "Durr-i Mahfûz" were in demand. The translation and copying of the "Academy al-mubahhat manuscripts continued until the middle of the 18th century.

Ottoman geographers did not make translations from the classic Islamic geographers, like el-Hâremî (d. 847), Ibn Hâkîm (died after 977), el-Madînî (died after 988) and el-Izriji (d. 1165). They only made quotations from these men who were real scientists. An exception, the work of Sipahi-zade (d. 1580), "Academy al-mubâhhat, is mostly based on the work of Ebu'l Fida (d. 1331), called "Takwî'î-î bîldân. Sipahi-zade added to the information he had taken from "Takwî'î-î bîldân some information taken from the classical geography books and some contemporary geographical information he had collected. The book "Manâzîr d'arâbe of Âşık Muhammad b. Ömer (alive in 1613) is also partly a fictional work, with some geography. However, there is valuable information in his work, especially about the Ottoman Rumelia geography of his period. While some people claim that this book was the last one written in the old style in the Ottoman period, this claim is wrong. Geography books of the old style containing fictional information were written until the middle of the 17th century. Again, partly historical and partly fictional geography books that described the geography of Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Damascus and Egypt, and travel books, mostly about the pilgrimage stages, were written by scientists from the theological schools. These were to some extent absurdbiographical works written by the pilgrims. Among these travel books, the "Bayaz-t Manasîl-i Sefar-i İrâdey of Marâcî Nazûh (d. 1564) about the Baghdad and Iraq campaigns are of exceptional importance. Besides the beautiful and detailed descriptions, they include very well drawn illustrations of the cities that constituted the stages of the pilgrimage. These illustrations, of high artistic value, give us information about the castle architecture and town planning styles of that period. This work was published among the publications of the Turkish Historical Society by Hüseyin Yurdakul in Ankara, in 1976.

Moreover, besides the geography books written by the scientists from Muslim theological schools, there were some scientists in the Ottoman Empire who rep-
represented the cartography school, developed in western Europe. The oldest geographers of this kind are Tunuslu Ibrahim el-Kaisib (alive in 1418) and Ibrahim el-Munir (alive in 1461). The maps prepared by these geographers are kept in the Topkapı Palace and the Sea Museum.

In the same century, Sultan Mehmed II had published a map (1474) and his son Mehmed translated the Ptolemaic Geography into Arabic. This work, written in prehistoric times, had been translated from Greek. It does not have any relation to the above-mentioned school that was developed in western Europe. Two copies of this translation are kept in the St. Sophia Museum. One of these is inscribed with the name of Sultan Mehmed II at the beginning, and the other includes maps.

Geography in the Occidental style, in its real meaning, began with Pir Reis (d. 1533), in the Ottomans Empire. This great seaman was at the same time a great geographer. He wrote his geography book Kitab el-Bahrin in plain Turkish, however Kanît Çelebi found his language somewhat rough. There are two editions of this work, the first one in 1521 and the second in 1526. Both of them were dedicated to Süleyman I, Kanuni. The second publishing is more accurate. There have been many studies carried out on this work, of which many manuscript copies have survived until today. The text has been published among the publications of the Turkish Historical Society, by Haydar Alpazar and Ferid Cankaya, as a facsimile, in 1935. The first chapters of this book are about the tides and the harbours suitable for anchoring. In the other chapters, storms, winds, compasses, maps and the conditions of the seas are described. Later on, the fact that the earth has a spherical shape is explained and the discovery of America is narrated. Detailed maps of the Mediterranean and the Aegean Seas are given. The book includes many other maps. These maps are based on the studies of mariners from Venice, Genoa, Spain, Portugal and Ottoman Empire. These maps are absolutely correct. They show the harbours, islands, coasts, and dangerous and rocky places.

Piri Reis also prepared two world maps. These maps are kept in the Topkapı Palace, Treasury nr. 1829 and in the Revan Pavilion, nr. 1633. The second map, dated 1919/1513 was taken from the map drawn by Christopher Columbus in 1498, which is no longer in existence, and has been published by the Turkish Historical Society with explorations by Yusuf Algün in 1937. In this map, of which a considerable portion has been preserved, there are places in Spain, West Africa, the Atlantic Ocean and America, which had been discovered at that time. The map kept in the Topkapı Palace includes the northern parts of the Atlantic Ocean and the northern coasts of America, stretching from Greenland to Florida. It was completed in Gêliopoli, in 1538.

The book Kitab el-Muhit i al-ihr al-sudur al-süleyman of Seyfi Ali Reis, who lived at the same time as Piri Reis, is important for the information it gives about astronomical geography and the Indian Ocean. It was written, making use of the works of the Portuguese and Arab mariners. Kanît Çelebi, while writing his book Cihan-nûma, took most of the information about the Indian islands, Ceylon and the other south-eastern Asian islands, from this work. Copies of this book are still available today, but they have not yet been published.

Another important study made in the 16th century was the Alâ'î Mecâr Reis Atlas. This atlas consists of seven maps prepared in about 1567. The work was published by Ferid Cankaya in 1935. The first map in this atlas is a map of the world, prepared in a way similar to that of the Mollweide projection type. The second one is a map of the Aegean Sea. The others are maps showing the coasts of the Sea of Marmara, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, and the islands and the eastern coasts of the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the islands in the Mediterranean Sea have Turkish names in this atlas. The work, entitled Tahâ-i Hind-i Gârâh or Hind-i-no, written by Emir Mehmet el-Subadi (d. 1591) at the end of the 16th century, about America’s history and geography, is important for geographical literature. It includes maps of the American continent. It was published by Ibrahim Muteferrika in 1790. The Ministry of Culture printed a new edition in 1987.

The greatest novelty in Ottoman life began with Kanît Çelebi (d. 1657). Kanît Çelebi gained a passion for the science of geography as a result of the weakness of the Ottoman navy during the Cretan wars, and began writing his book Cihan-nûma. With the help of some converted Europeans, he had the chance to learn about the Atlas Minor of Mercator (d. 1594), the Atlas Major compiled by Wilhelm Blaau (d. 1630) and his son Jean, and some other geography books written in the Occident; he concluded that the geographical studies carried out in the Islamic world were quite insufficient. He called the attention of the Ottoman statesmen and intellectuals to the developments in the area of geography-cartography in the Occident. He claimed that the Occidentals had taken control of the world by means of this knowledge. He also understood that a good geography book could not be written without reference to the European sources. Hence, he put off writing his book Cihan-nûma and translated the Atlas Minor into Turkish, under the name Levnii el-nun, with the help of Mehmed Halil. He later worked on his book Cihan-nûma, making use of many eastern and western sources. Kanît Çelebi also wrote the book Tahâfi-i el-Kharâb about the Ottoman naval war. He included many maps in all three of his books. The Cihan-nûma and Tahâfi-i el-Kharâb were published by Ibrahim Muteferrika in the years 1732 and 1729 respectively. Ibrahim Muteferrika also added some new maps to Cihan-nûma and wrote a supplement called Tayyîl el-tabi. Many copies of these three books by Kanît Çelebi have survived until today, but Levnii el-nun has not yet been published. The work of Kanît Çelebi, Cihan-nûma was truly a detailed and complete study, the like of which had not been carried out before in Ottoman geographical literature. He stressed this point in the preface to the book. As a result of his studies, on the order of Sultan Mehmed IV (d. 1693), Ebu Bekir B. Behram el-Damâki (d. 1691) translated the Atlas Major into Turkish, under the name Nasûr el-Islâm ve-i-cümer, in nine volumes, between 1675-1685. Later he summarised these translations in two volumes.

The abridged version was called Muhaseb Nomâz el-Islâm. This work includes some new information about Ottoman geography. Ebu Bekir Efeński also wrote a pamphlet of geography in Arabic. This pamphlet was concerned with physical and astronomical geography. None of the three books have been published nor have they been the subject of any important studies.

Eisir Hasen Efeński (died after 1729), who lived in the same period as Ebu Bekir B. Behram el-Damâki, wrote a book of history and geography named Mver el-dârât ve niçil el-nilîl. Eisir Hasen Efeński attended the second siege of Vienna in 1683 and was taken prisoner. He collected information about European history and geography, especially the studies of exploratory teams established by John Lenox and Louais XIV, during the two years he was prisoner. As a result, he decided to write a book on geography, and wrote the work Mver el-dârât in the years between 1726-1730. He made use of Kanît Çelebi’s works, Piri Reis’ and Cihan-nûma, the translation of the Atlas Major and his own observations while writing this book. He gave original information about the second siege of Vienna. The copies of his book are still available today.

In the Tulip Era (1716-1730), with the efforts of Sultan Ahmed III and the Grand Vizier, Neryşhi Ibrahim Pasha (d. 1750), the modernisation movement started in the Ottoman Empire. Ibrahim Pasha sent Yirmisixo Mehmed Çelebi to Paris with this intention. The first fire brigade and the first official printing house (by Ibrahim Muteferrika) were established in this period. Interest in geography increased, as a result of the printing of important geography books, such as Hadi-i no, Cihan-nûma and Tahâfi-i el-Kharâb. Some people, impressed by the interest shown in Cihan-nûma, translated or wrote new books. Among these people were Petros Baronian (alive in 1723), Ibrahim Muteferrika (d. 1744), Baruni Ibrahim Hamdi (alive in 1750), Mustafa el-Edernuri (alive about 1770) and Osman b. Abdilkınman (d. 1780). We must emphasise that neither the geographers, such as Kanît Çelebi, Ebu Bekir b. Behram ve Eisir Hasen Efeński, nor other people, such as Petros Baronian and Ibrahim Muteferrika wrote books by carrying out geographical
or cartography studies. They wrote their works by using the results of books and maps on geography studies written before or during their lifetimes, especially concentrating on the studies of the West. While such works were useful to the Ottomans, they did not make any contributions to the science of world geography, except for some local information. People who made original maps, such as Piri Reis, were the exceptions.

Petros Barosian, mentioned above, was from Kayseri and was an official of the Netherlands Consulate in Istanbul. He translated the work of Jacques Rablis, entitled *La Methode pour apprendre facilement la geographie* into Turkish, under the name *Canminas fi izmin al-ınafras*, in 1773. In this work there is information about modern mathematics, physical geography and maritime geography. On the other hand, Ibrahim Müteferrika, as mentioned above, published books and maps about geography, wrote a supplement for *Cihan-n名片* and translated the *Atlas Civilis*, written by Andreas Cellarius, into Turkish under the name *Macuusat el-keyyet el-hadudat el-djundat*. Burunlu Ibrahim Hamdi wrote a detailed work, *Atlas-i Cihan on world geography*. This book, which was an extended version of *Cihan-n名片* does not contain maps. In the writing of this book, the writer made use of Ottoman works, such as *Feszeh, Cihan-n名片, translation of the Atlas Major*, the books of old geographers like Podeyn, Idrisi, Ya'kur el-Hamzavi, Ebu'I Fida, Ibn Macr, the translations of *Fuman el-khor, Atlas el-sabili i Filomih*, *Ciflafa-i ya al*Tul, the Atlas civilis, written by Ibrahim Müteferrika, the work of Mahmud Kara about the art of war, and some European sources, such as the work of Raymond Graf von Montecuccoli, called *Commentari Ballicii*. There have not been any important studies carried out on this work yet.

Ahmed Resmi Efendi wrote the *Ciflafa-i ya al*Tul in addition to his travel books about Berlin and Vienna. In this book, astronomical and physical geography, cartography and the geography of continents is explained. There are also figures about cartography and geography. Mustafa el-Endenemi was another cartographer. He translated maps about Europe and the

and literature in the Occidental style dominated. The number and quality of books written in every area increased. The same was also true of geography. There was a great difference in the number and quality of the books written at the beginning and at the end of the 18th century. In fact, the number of geography books written in the 18th century was more than the total of the books written since the foundation of the Ottoman Empire until 1800. Most of the books written in the 19th century were written in the first quarter of the century. The number of geography books written in the first quarter of the 20th century was equal to the number of geography books written before 1900.

Most of the maps and book written in the 19th century were translations from French, English, German and Italian. The most important works from the beginning of the 19th century were, *Uzaat el-ınafras*, by Raif Mahmud Efendi (d. 1807), the maps of Konstantin Kampor (alive in 1813), el-Mahdis fil-ınafras, by Hisiyan Rifat Tamani (d. 1817) and Mohdi el-ınafras, by Bogos Tiqrakoglu. Raif Mahmud Efendi added the translation of the modern atlas, formed of 24 maps, to the end of his work, published in 1804. He described the earth as the centre of the solar system, in accordance with Ptolemy. He did not even make use of the *Cihan-n名片* published by Ibrahim Müteferrika. On the other hand, el-Mahdis, written by Hisiyan Rifat Tamani, is about mathematical and natural geography, and can be considered as a beginners book for people dealing with geography. The work of Bogos Tiqrakoglu is a translation of the abridged book of the French geographer, August Michelot, about the geography of the five continents. In this period Theogon Aleko (alive in 1829) translated the *Corina ortografyes* and Seyyid Ali Pasha (d. 1846) translated the *Atlas de Zemfira* from the French. The number of geography books written after 1850 increased greatly, and it becomes difficult to evaluate these books one by one. At the same time, there were people from the engineering schools and high schools who made original studies of Ottoman cartography and geography. Most of the important geography books, travel books and autobiographies of explorers, written in Europe, were translated into Turkish. The famous geographers of the early times of the Republican period, Faik Sabri Duran and Osman Sever Gezﺎyli, can also be counted among the geographers brought up by the Ottomans at the beginning of the 19th century.

The geography books written in during the time of the Ottomans can be divided into subjects of general geography, continental geography, Ottoman Geography, cartography, maritime geography, and the geography of countries and cities. There are also hundreds of maps and sketches, and many travel books were written. The most famous travel book is the one written by Evliya Çelebi. This is a monumental work describing the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. There is not another example of this kind in Ottoman literature.

As a consequence, there were two types of geography that existed from the beginning of the Ottoman Empire. One of these was the geography works of people from theological schools, based on classical Islamic geography and the fictional geography of the type found in *Achab el-mubaddib*. The other was geography works based on cartography, developed in Europe as a result of the age of exploration. The first representatives of the Occidental type of geography were the African cartographers, Piri Reis and Mecar Ali Reis. Attention was drawn to the Occident after Kâtip Çelebi wrote *Cihan-n名片* in the 17th century. Many geography books and maps were written as loose translations. With time the subjects of these books extended. By the time of the opening of engineering schools in the 17th century and schools in the 19th century, geography had been included in education curriculum. People graduated from these schools having carried out original studies on geography.

Another important point is that, except for a few, most of the geography books were written in Turkish. Most of them include both historical and geographic knowledge. The centre of the geographic studies was Istanbul. There was not another centre that could compete with Istanbul.
The Great
Ottoman - Turkish
Civilisation
The Great
Ottoman Turkish Civilisation

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PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE AND INSTITUTIONS

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YENİ TÜRKİYE
The incredible fact that the Ottoman frontier beylik became an Empire over such a short period of time has attracted many Western researchers and scholars to delve into the history of the Ottoman State. It could be argued that there are many determinants and dimensions that actually created the possibility for such an incredible feat to be accomplished. This volume has been edited with the aim of focussing on the main factors that gave rise to such a great civilisation. In the first place, the institutional character of the Ottoman State is of utmost importance. In order to understand the basis of Ottoman civilisation, the different patterns of its institutions should be studied, as the comprehensive analysis of the institutional structure of the Ottoman Empire might enable us to conceive how a small beylik was able to turn into one of the greatest Empires in the world. In this volume, the administrative, judiciary and military institutions of the Empire are set out as the main subject titles. In addition, there are various subjects which have been analysed, under such subtopics as bureaucracy, religion and law, shedding light on the main characteristics of Ottoman institutions.

In appreciation of the highly developed institutional structure of the Ottoman Empire, the ideational and philosophical sources cannot be underrated. Unless these sources are taken into consideration, it is impossible to grasp the various dynamics of Ottoman institutions. Therefore, this volume is entitled “Philosophy, Science and Institutions”, due to the close correlation and importance of these subjects to one another.

Contrary to conventional Euro-centric and Orientalist assumptions, which hold “science” as the peculiar praxis of the Renaissance and Enlightenment in
the West, in this volume it is generally argued that the Ottomans had a number of successes in scientific activities (ilhām ve fikr). The Ottoman State not only promoted the development of science within the borders of the Empire, but also facilitated several interactions with scientific activities outside of its territories. During this interaction, it both benefited from and contributed to the scientific improvements made in Europe.

Additionally, this volume dedicates an important place to the development of philosophy and thought in the Ottoman Empire; although in the Ottoman Empire such major philosophical écoles as developed in Europe were not formed, rather the Ottomans focused mainly on Islamic philosophy. Yet this situation does not arise from the fact that the Ottomans lagged behind in speculative matters. On the contrary, they were not interested in philosophical issues that were outside the realm of Islamic tradition. From their point of view, Islam encompassed all ontological and epistemological matters, making any other philosophical concern dysfunctional.

Yeni Türkiye

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