

**THE OTTOMANS IN THE EARLY ENLIGHTENMENT: THE CASE
OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE REIGN OF MAHMUD I (1730-54).**

by

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Abstract

The thesis explores cultural politics in the Ottoman Empire from 1718 to 1754 by focusing on the patronage activities of a select group of bureaucrats/intellectuals whose careers spanned the reigns of two early eighteenth-century sultans, Ahmed III (1703-30) and Mahmud I (1730-54). It attempts to locate cultural production in the Ottoman Empire within a broader framework of early modern history and re-evaluate the ideologically-loaded concepts that have marked Ottomanist historiography on the period, such as “the Tulip Age,” “westernization” or “modernization.” In doing so, it attempts to answer some challenging questions such as whether it is purely coincidental that the Ottoman network of actors discussed in this thesis invested tremendous time and material into cultural enterprises such as the introduction of the printing press, establishment a productive paper mill in Yalova and founding of multiple *vakıf* (religious endowment) libraries not only in Istanbul but also in Anatolia and Rumelia at the very same time that their European counterparts engaged in similar types of enterprises that are celebrated in European historiography as the Enlightenment. It also asks whether it is possible to dismiss such developments simply as reflections of the personal tastes of the two bibliophile sultans, Ahmed III and Mahmud I, who on several occasions issued imperial decrees about the importance of establishing libraries all around the Empire. Rather, it was the cultural production and personal resources of this network that remained one of the constants in a period of political turmoil that even resulted in the dethronement of Ahmed III.

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Table of Contents

Statement of Copyright.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Table of Figures.....	v
Introduction	1
I. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations	4
I.I Towards a Better Contextualization of Eighteenth Century Ottoman History	4
I.II Literature Survey: The Tulip Age Saga	13
I. III Methodology and Sources: Treating Ottoman Elites as Individuals?	18
II. “Enlightened Ottomans”: Patrons, Intellectuals and Bureaucrats and Their Networks	24
II.I The Actors: The Formation of Ottoman Bureaucracy as a Political Institution	24
II. II Making Knowledge Available: Translation Committee and Printing Press	35
III. Eighteenth-Century <i>Vakıf</i> Libraries as Institutions Disseminating New Knowledge	44
III.I A Survey of <i>Vakıf</i> Libraries	46
III. II The Contents of Book Collections and Readership	55
Conclusion.....	61
Bibliography	64
Appendix	69

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - A Copy of Ahmed III's edict printed in <i>Tercüme-yi Sıhahü'l-Cevheri</i>	40
Figure 2. The list of books printed in the Mütferrika Press	43
Figure 3. The List of Major <i>Vakıf</i> Libraries Established in Mahmud I's Reign	53
Figure 4. The Map of the Major Libraries Established in the reign of Mahmud I	54

Introduction

This thesis seeks to locate eighteenth-century social and intellectual developments such as the introduction of the printing press, organization of various translation committees and the establishment of a paper mill in the Ottoman Empire within the larger framework of the early Enlightenment movement in Europe. The temporal scope of this thesis covers the reigns of the two early eighteenth-century Ottoman sultans, Ahmed III (r.1703-1730) and Mahmud I (r. 1730-54). Intellectual and cultural historians of Ottoman history have traditionally considered the Ottomans outside the scope of the Enlightenment, whereas, Ottomanist historiography has viewed the eighteenth century as a period of internal transitions of governance and central power between the crisis-laden seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. In contrast, this thesis attempts to place the Ottomans within a broader cultural framework of early modern history as well as rethink the ideologically-loaded concepts that have marked the historiography of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire, such as “the Tulip Age,” “westernization” or “modernization.” It will do so by exploring the cultural politics in the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the eighteenth century by focusing on the patronage activities of a specific group of bureaucrats/intellectuals whose careers spanned the reigns of Ahmed III and Mahmud I. This thesis asserts that through a

(the chief religious official) Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, *reîsü'l-küttâb* (the chief clerk) Mustafa Efendi (1735-?), *defter-dâr* (the head of the finance bureau) Âtîf Mustafa Efendi and *şadâret kethüdâsı* (the chief assistant of the Grand Vezîr) Şerîf Halil Efendi (1711-1752), it is possible to detect a team of collaborators who epitomized the imperial agenda of Ahmed III and Mahmud I that aimed at disseminating knowledge through establishing *vakıf* (pious foundation) libraries to each and every corner of the Empire. All of these officials hailed from the learned circle of Ahmed III's Grand Vezîr Nevşehirli Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730) and managed to rise to prominent ranks in the

reign of the ensuing sultan, Mahmud I. Therefore, their participation in intellectual activities also refutes the mainstream assumption that the intellectual investments initiated by Ahmed III came to a halt in 1730 when he was dethroned and his Grand Vezîr İbrahim was killed in a bloody, popular revolt known as the Patrona Halil rebellion.

This thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter attempts to contextualize the thesis within the growing bulk of revisionist historiography. It aims to show the existence of disparate versions of the Enlightenment movement and how the Ottomans were an active part of it. The chapter also deconstructs the idea of “the Tulip Age” which has long been used to refer to the grand vizierate of İbrahim Paşa with false attributions. The chapter ends with an introduction of the sources and the methodology used in the research chapters.

The second chapter sheds light onto the intersecting career lines of the aforementioned protagonists of the thesis. By reconstructing the cultural practices of a network of Ottoman grandees who were brought up and involved with artistic and literary activities in the entourage of the murdered Grand Vezîr of Ahmed III, Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730) and who continued to serve the state in the reign of the ensuing sultan Mahmud I, the chapter presents: (i) the career lines of the bureaucrats in question in the administrative layers of the Ottoman palace; (ii) their cooperation and co-existence in the artistic and literary networks established by Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa; (iii) their ways of maintaining high profiles after the Patrona Halil Revolt in 1730; (iv) and, finally, their pursuit of similar common intellectual interests in the reign of Mahmud I. In light of the patronage activities of these men, this chapter also attempts to answer the question, “Was charity in the Ottoman realm an act of compassion towards the needy, or was there a much more sophisticated network of cultural dependencies behind it?” The chapter further questions if the involvement of these prominent men in the same patronage activity brings

about a new vantage point from which to re-consider the cultural background of the first half of the eighteenth century which is laden with historiographically-loaded appellations.

The third chapter provides an analysis of the *vakıf* (religious endowment) libraries established in the first half of the 18th century with a specific focus on the reign of Mahmud I (1730-54). With reference to the architectural projects patronized not only by the elite network identified in the second chapter but also by the sultan and many other bureaucrats, this chapter examines common book collections endowed in these monumental enterprises and the targeted audience of this enterprise. Furthermore, the scope of the thesis also extends to the public libraries that were not necessarily part of a mosque-complex. The chapter also addresses issues of readership, orality and the transmission of knowledge.

Chapter I:

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

I.I Towards a Better Contextualization of Eighteenth Century Ottoman History

This thesis engages with the revisionist historiography of early modernity in the Ottoman Empire, which has overwhelmingly discredited the overarching decline thesis since the 1980s, when the influence of the Annales school created a world-wide reaction against “old fashioned” history-writing methods that were based on chronologically-ordered narrative modes and a strong emphasis on large-scale politico-military events and personas. The new historical approach required longer-term statistical data on economic and social life of a given community, which coincidentally accompanied the opening of the Ottoman archives.¹ These developments resulted in the formation of a revisionist literature that sought to study eighteenth century Ottoman realities on its own terms and created an innovative vista to observe cultural transfers and exchanges between seemingly unrelated polities. However, the era still remains understudied and proves to be a particularly problematic era in Ottoman historiography. Reduced to being a transition period between the so-called pre-modern and modern ages, the eighteenth century mostly received attention with regards to what happened before and after it.² The conventional outlook regarded the whole period as the direct result of the administrative decay experienced after “the Sultanate of Women,” an oft-repeated label referring to the seventeenth century when a series of weak

¹ Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature," *Studia Islamica*, no. 69 (1989): 122-3. For examples of individual works questioning the decline paradigm, for example see C.H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)* (Princeton University Press, 1986), B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). D. Sajdi, *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century* (Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 6.

² See for example Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire: 1300-1600* (Cambridge University Press, 1997); Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: A the Classical Age, 1300-1600* (Orion Publishing Group, Limited, 2000).

and inexperienced sultans ruled under the direction of imperial wives, mothers, palace functionaries and the *‘ulemâ*.³ Likewise, it long came to be known as the period when Ottoman political and military power declined and European imperial powers manipulated long-standing capitulations to incorporate the so-called sick man of the world into the emerging European-dominated world economy, which gave rise to the emergence of quasi-autonomous provincial power holders, *a‘yân*.⁴

It is possible to locate this thesis in between the growing bulk of anti-declinst scholarship and the emerging field of cultural and intellectual history which was once called “the big lacuna” by Jane Hathaway and is still in its infancy in the historiography of Ottoman early modernity.⁵ I limit the temporal scope of my research roughly to the first half of the eighteenth century, a period marked by specific transformations in the modes of patronage and bureaucratization in the Ottoman Empire. The main actors of this thesis are the *şeyhü’l-islâm* (the chief religious official) Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, *reîsü’l-küttâb* (the chief clerk) Mustafa Efendi (1735-?), *defter-dâr* (the head of the finance bureau) ‘Âtîf Mustafa Efendi and *şadâret kethüdâsı* (the chief assistant of the Grand Vezîr) Şerîf Halil Efendi (1711-1752) who were once minor members of Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa’s entourage and who, later in their careers, turned into active members of imperial cultural enterprises in the court of Mahmud I.⁶ The conventional periodization of eighteenth-century

³ Jane Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 19, no. 1 (2004). Also see K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 197-226., Ethem Eldem, "18. Yüzyıl Ve Değişim," *Cogito Osmanlılar Özel Sayısı*, no. 19 (1999): 189-200. Furthermore, for a recent attempt to re-evaluate the power dynamics in the 17th century see Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*, in which the author scrutinizes the rising political power of the jurists over Ottoman dynastic politics with reference to the specific example of the enthronement of Mustafa I (r.1617-18/1622-23). After discussing the possible reasons behind the survival of Prince Mustafa, Tezcan emphasizes the emerging power of the office of grand *mufti* – the ultimate authority exerting the jurists’ law – by referring to the grand mufti Esad Efendi’s crucial role in bringing the brother of the deceased sultan to the throne. Tezcan regards this event as the triumph of the constitutionalists who aimed at limiting the royal prerogatives as an opposition to the absolutist discourse of the court.

⁴ Hathaway, 31.

⁵ Ibid, 38.

⁶ For the patterns of promotion enjoyed by several bureaucrats of high caliber in the eighteenth century, see, for example, N. Itzkowitz, *Eighteenth Century Ottoman Realities* (Studia Islamica, 1962).

Ottoman historiography tends to assume a sharp break between the so-called Tulip Age, said to have lasted from 1718 to 1730, and the era immediately following it, on the grounds that the Patrona Halil revolt in 1730 dispensed with and invalidated the cultural politics of Sultan Ahmed III (1703-30) who presided over this fabled age of extravagant consumption and flirtation with Western ideals. On the contrary, the common patronage activities of the network of bureaucrats/intellectuals described above whose careers spanned the reigns of Ahmed III and Mahmud I (1730-54) shows that by 1730, Ahmedian regime had taken deep root by 1730 and there was a continuity in terms of courtly practices and investments in the intellectual sphere. By exploring the cultural politics initiated from a network of men from the capital in the first half of the eighteenth century, this thesis points to an autochthonous intellectual awakening co-initiated by a team of collaborators: all of whom stemmed from the learned circle of Ahmed III's Grand Vezîr Nevşehirli Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730) and rose to prominent ranks in the administrative layers in the reign of the ensuing sultan, Mahmud I. One common undertaking of these elites was patronage of *vakıf* (pious foundation) libraries not only in Istanbul but also in the Balkans and Anatolia. These *vakıf* libraries lie at the core of this thesis and will serve as the vantage point from which to observe the extent and scope of this network's intellectual enterprises. The role of such elites in transmitting influential works, and thus knowledge, to different parts of the Empire has not received scholarly attention yet, which leads us to re-consider the contextualization of central and provincial intellectual trends and modes of cultural exchange in the eighteenth century Ottoman history. It also makes us consider the direction of the flow of culture between the center and provinces and its more triangulated nature.

Building on some of the recent comparative works in early modern Ottoman history that examines the notions of an Ottoman "Renaissance," "the Age of Exploration" or

“Confessionalization,”⁷ this chapter critically reviews the theories offered to explain the shifts in the modes of cultural transfers as well as rethinking the scope of ideologically-loaded labels such as “the Tulip Age” and “modernization-cum-westernization” which are often used without much qualification. This chapter also aims at answering whether the intellectual enterprises carried out by specific individuals and institutions such as establishing translation committees, investing in the introduction of the printing-press, establishing a modern paper mill in Yalova and founding multiple *vakıf* libraries in this specific period can be represented in terms of an Ottoman “Age of Reason” or “enlightenment.” However, before delving into the particulars of Ottoman history, it would be appropriate to locate the Ottomans within the varying definitions of the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment was traditionally considered to be a set of responses to a large spectrum of earlier Western European developments such as the Renaissance, the Protestant and Catholic Reformation and the early modern wars of religion. Despite the existence of contradictory views about what constituted the movement, scholars have agreed that the Enlightenment was distinctly a western European phenomenon, and it was indeed responsible for the very idea of Western Europe.⁸ Due to several significant social, cultural and political differences between Western and Eastern Europe, the definition and scope of the so-called “enlightened” individual or society showed substantial differences in the two settings. Based on these differences, Jonathan Israel contests the contextualist commentaries on the Enlightenment and argues that it is only possible to conceive the proper meaning of the movement(s) by focusing on broad controversies rather than individual authors and

⁷ For example see Walter G. Andrews and M. Kalpakli, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Duke University Press, 2005)., Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford University Press, 2011)., G. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2009).

⁸ See for example, L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford University Press, 1994). For a cogent critique on various views on the idea of the Enlightenment, see Harun Bekir Küçük, “Early Enlightenment in Istanbul,” *History and Science Studies* (University of California, San Diego, 2012).

social settings.⁹ Israel puts forward that there were always two concurrent Enlightenment movements which identified themselves against “unenlightened” domains.¹⁰ One such movement was “radical” Enlightenment which is not applicable to the Ottoman case. Under the heavy influence of Spinozism, the radical “Enlightenment” was based on the premise that reason was the mere judge of truth and it asked for questioning the taken-for-granted foundations of religion and monarchy. As Küçük suggests, Spinozism did not merely involve the rejection of the institutions of the *ancient régime* but also required an attempt to find new alternatives, thus excluded a wide array of ideas belonging with the Enlightenment such as Cartesian dualism, Lockean empiricism, Voltaire’s “enlightened” monarchy, Leibnizian monads, Malebranche’s occasionalism, all types of fideism, puritanism and pietism.¹¹ These aspects of radicalism led to a more moderate and mainstream definition of enlightenment movement, which allocated a much more limited role to philosophy and aimed at reconciling reason with faith and tradition.¹² In this sense, “moderate” enlightenment is applicable to the case of the Ottoman intellectual movement pioneered by the court of the sultan, which interestingly displayed a certain amount of radicalism without explicit references to Spinozism. The absence of original skeptical impetus in the Ottoman domains that informed two important thinkers of Europe, Spinoza and Bayle, might be pinpointed as the most important difference between the Ottoman enlightenment and the European enlightenment.¹³ In lieu of philosophers, skepticism towards established religion

⁹ Jonathan Israel, "Enlightenment! Which Enlightenment?," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67, no. 3 (2006)., *passim*. Also see by the same author, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670-1752* (Oxford University Press, 2006). *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790* (OUP Oxford, 2011).

¹⁰ Israel "Enlightenment! Which Enlightenment?," p. 540

¹¹ Küçük, 2-8.

¹² Linda Kirk, "The Matter of Enlightenment," *The Historical Journal* 43, no. 4 (2000).

¹³ Küçük, 11.

and learning was spread by religious movements in Istanbul such as *Salafism* under the leadership of scholars such as Birgili Mehmed (d.1573) and Ahmed Sirhindi (d.1653).¹⁴

In a different context, scholars have already asked similar questions regarding the place of the Ottomans in the Enlightenment. More than fifty years earlier in his seminal article “The Changing Face of the Fertile Crescent in the XVIIIth Century,” Albert Hourani offered an innovative framework to re-evaluate the period by questioning whether the Ottomans were really stagnant and in decay and whether it was possible to conceive of a self-contained Ottoman Muslim society before the long nineteenth century when the full impact of the West was much more profound.¹⁵ As far as the dynamics of change in the eighteenth century were considered, Hourani’s attempt to locate the West not necessarily as a superior and imposing force left a long-lasting legacy in the works of various scholars. For instance, Reinhard Schulze argued for the existence of an *autochtone Islamische Aufklärung* (an autochthonous Islamic Enlightenment) and distinguished the “Islamic eighteenth century” from previous periods in Islamic history. By the same token, he posited that the era was a direct equivalent of the eighteenth century in European and Western history, a period that is commonly seen as the beginning of the modernity with reference to the Enlightenment and political revolutions in America and France.¹⁶ He based his argument on the increasingly anthropocentric, rationalistic and politically emancipatory mystical literature of the eighteenth century. Schulze put forward that the individual exercise of reason replaced scholastic logic, which provided a way to eliminate the established social

¹⁴ For further information on religious skepticism in the Ottoman Empire see for example Khaled El-Rouayheb, “The Myth of the Triumph of Fanaticism in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” *Die Welt des Islams* 48, no. 2 (2008): 196-221., and Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “Xvii. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Dinde Tasfiye (Püritanizm) Teşebbüslerine Bir Bakış: Kadızadeliler Hareketi,” *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları* XVII-XXI, no. 1-2 (1983).

¹⁵ A. Hourani, *The Changing Face of the Fertile Crescent in the Xviiiith Century* (Larose, 1957).

¹⁶ Reinhard Schulze, “Was Ist Die Islamische Aufklärung?,” *Die Welt des Islams* 36, no. 3 (1996)., Also see for an extensive discussion on Schulze and his critics: Albrecht Hofheinz, “Illumination and Enlightenment Revisited, Or: Pietism and the Roots of Islamic Modernity,” (2009), 1-6. Also see Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World.*, for a critical comparison between the Glorious Revolution in England in 1688 and the Deposition of Mustafa I and the enthronement of Osman II in 1618.

orders. Furthermore, in order to avoid the effects of European triumphalism in historiography, parallel to Wallerstein's world system theory, Schulze referred to the "Islamic eighteenth century" as a point of origin through which he reintegrated the history of Muslim societies into a broader universal history, which provided a framework "less dominated by the idiosyncrasies of the Western experience alone."¹⁷ By a deliberate use of what is widely considered to be Western terms such as "*ancien régime*," "intellectuals" and "Enlightenment," Schulze meant to prove that Islam was an integral part of this universal history.¹⁸

Schulze's definition of "Islamic Enlightenment" was based on four fundamental concepts: *subjectivity* referring to mystical experience of one's self, *anthropocentrism* referring to the creative design of an autonomous and self-conscious human subject, *originality* referring to the evaluation of the new and the old, thus viewing historical process as progress rather than decline, and *emancipation* referring to "the social and economic emancipation of an urban bourgeoisie from those classes that had dominated the state so far."¹⁹ Critics such as Bernd Radtke objected to Schulze's bold claim not only in terms of the meaning he attributed to concepts but also because of the "Western" terminology that he adopted.²⁰ Stefan Reichmuth, on the contrary, claimed that the main reason of criticism by Schulze's critics was related to linguistic aspects; however, those critics did indeed eventually reach concepts very similar in meaning to what Schulze offered.²¹ Regardless of the particular assertions of different scholars, the debate itself was instrumental in the formation of a renewed interest in the early modern period, especially the eighteenth century.

¹⁷ Hofheinz, "Illumination and Enlightenment Revisited, Or: Pietism and the Roots of Islamic Modernity," *passim.*, and also R. S. O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, "Neo-Sufism Reconsidered," in *Der Islam* (1993), 2-8.

¹⁸ Schulze, "Was Ist Die Islamische Aufklärung?," *passim.*

¹⁹ Hofheinz, "Illumination and Enlightenment Revisited, Or: Pietism and the Roots of Islamic Modernity," 4.

²⁰ Bernd Radtke, "Sufism in the 18th Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal," *Die Welt des Islams* 36, no. 3 (1996).

²¹ Stefan Reichmuth, "Murtadā Az-Zabīdī (D. 1791) in Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts. Glimpses of Islamic Scholarship in the 18th Century," *ibid.* 39, no. 1 (1999).

Nelly Hanna's book *In Praise of Books* is one of the most appropriate examples of this newly-found interest in the eighteenth century and constitutes an important building block for this thesis because she, too, discusses the concomitant emergence of a new intellectual group on the other side of the Empire that promoted a new type of book culture. Shifting the focus from the more popular scholarly lenses that focus on courtly and learned classes, Hanna scrutinized the existence of a sophisticated book culture in Cairo, which she evaluated as the reflection of a line of inquiry motivated by secular tendencies of a newly-emerging literate, or modern middle class, which came into being largely due to the Mediterranean trade. Hanna curiously considers these book collectors as a group of progressive and radical intellectuals, which also fits into the category of *emancipation* introduced by Schulze.²²

Hanna's definition of eighteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals in Cairo pushes us to look for similar men in different provinces of the Empire, so that we can question the existence of an Ottoman intellectual awakening initiated by once relatively minor actors, who initially filled scribal posts (*kâtibân*). Shifting Hanna's spatial focus from Cairo to the capital, one can observe changing patterns in the way the cadres of administrative institutions were formed. Norman Itzkowitz, in his famous article "Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Realities," already showed that in addition to the ruling and religious institutions that Lybyer had introduced,²³ there was a third intermediary institution, which he called the "palace institution." The employees of this institution were lower-ranking officials in the Grand Vezîr's chancery and the financial ministry, *defter-hâne*. By tracing the career lines of these men, Itzkowitz concluded that in the eighteenth century, these employees began to

²² N. Hanna, *In Praise of Books: A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Syracuse University Press, 2003). As Hannah shows, Egypt is rich in libraries. Furthermore, the libraries maintained by a number of these officials, as well as the pious foundations (s. waqf, Turkish vakıf) they endowed, must have influenced the intellectual milieu in the provincial capitals. In this case, Egypt is perhaps unusually rich in examples. (see for some thoughtful considerations on book culture in Cairo (Hathaway, "Rewriting Eighteenth-Century Ottoman History.")

²³ A.H. Lybyer, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (Russell & Russell, 1966).

enter the ruling institution by being appointed *defter-dârs* or serving as Grand Vezîrs later in their careers, a pattern which he coined the “effendi-turned-pasha.”²⁴ Almost all of the career trajectories of the actors of this thesis identified at the beginning fit this same pattern, thus providing us with solid grounds to argue that the enterprise of establishing *vakıf* libraries and patronage of other intellectual activities were a conscious imperial agenda that Sultan Mahmud I himself participated in, and that these previously minor *defter-hâne* employees turned into the members of a circle of cultural entrepreneurship later in their careers. In parallel to John Robertson’s emphasis on the Epicureanist nature of the enlightened writers who aimed at human betterment and sociability, “the enlightened” Ottoman elites adopted a common patronage activity fundamentally targeting human betterment and intellectual progress.²⁵

Habermas’ conceptualization of “public sphere” also helps to frame the participation of a new group of intellectuals, which Itzkowitz calls “palace institution,” within Ottoman elite culture. In his *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere – An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Habermas refers to the creation, flourishing and demise of a bourgeois public sphere which came into being due to the need for exchanging news and matters of common concern in the eighteenth century. Habermas states that “in its clash with the arcane and bureaucratic practices of the state, the emergent bourgeoisie gradually replaced a public sphere in which the ruler’s power was merely represented before the people with a sphere in which state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse by the people.”²⁶ In that sense, Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa and his boon companions proved to be the representations of Ahmed III’s power, and they were publicly monitored through not so informed but critical discourses. Habermas also refers to Britain’s

²⁴ Itzkowitz, *Eighteenth Century Ottoman Realities*, passim.

²⁵ J. Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 250-6.

²⁶ J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Mit Press, 1991), xi-xii.

coffee houses, France's *salons* and Germany's *tischgesellschaften* (table societies) as examples of the "institutional criteria" which were preconditions for the emergence of a new public sphere.²⁷ In the Ottoman case, the fact that the actors of these thesis were all part of Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa's famous gatherings (*meclis*) of intellectuals where they exchanged ideas, poetry, and verse— not to mention ubiquitous coffee houses for all groups of Ottoman society- can be considered counterpart to Habermas' observations of Western Europe during this same period.

The practices of the network introduced here also re-confirm Rifaat Abou-El-Hajj's thesis that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were contradictory forces of centralization and decentralization at work that played significant roles in the shifts observed in the composition of the ruling elite and the factionalism within that elite.²⁸ Considering that all of these men were either in the close retinue of the Grand Vezîr or a protégé of him, it is quite curious how they were able to get away with the fatal consequences of the Patrona Halil Revolt in 1730, in which their patron Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa and many of his favorite boon companions were executed and Ahmed III was dethroned. It is most probably through this factionalism that they were able to straddle different factions in order to avoid being harassed because of their connections with the late Grand Vezîr.

I.II Literature Survey: The Tulip Age Saga

In his well-received article about the caveats of studying the Ottoman realities in the eighteenth century, Karl Barbir highlighted two long-lasting historiographical problems.

²⁷ Ibid, *passim*.

²⁸ R.A. Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (State University of New York Press, 1991), 1-3.

The first one was about perceiving the Ottoman world as incommensurable, abnormal and incomparable to other societies, whereas, the second one was about the difficulty of making sense of the persistence of the Ottoman Empire despite all the difficulties it faced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²⁹ The problems that Barbir mentioned indeed epitomize the infamous “Tulip Age” in that the descriptions of this era as the period of “modernization-cum-westernization” led to the idea of a mythical period of pleasure, extravagance and debauchery presided over by Ahmed III’s Grand Vezîr Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa who is traditionally reduced to being a lascivious man with a predisposition towards material pleasures. This notorious image of Ottoman elites during the period was mainly based on the accounts of contemporary observers, court historians and European travelers, whom Karen Barkey criticizes for writing within the confines of Orientalist stereotypes. Like contemporary Ottoman chroniclers whose accounts were laden with nostalgia for the traditional system of rule, European travelers created binary oppositions in which they depicted the Ottomans as barbarians and exotic versus “the enlightened” and civilized Europe; thus, both sets of genres together bequeathed a characterization of the period marked by a moral decay of Ottoman society that twentieth century historians accepted uncritically. It is this combined legacy that informs Ahmed Refik’s ideologically-loaded label of “the Tulip Age,” which is still used today.³⁰ Indeed, Ahmed Refik’s reference points were several chroniclers such as Abdî Efendi, Şemdâni-zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi and Küçükçelevî-zâde İsmail Âsım Efendi who narrated the daily events and palace festivities organized in the grand vizierate of Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa with exaggeration thus making the period vulnerable to several superficial appellations.³¹

²⁹ Karl Barbir, "The Changing Face of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century: Past and Future Scholarship," *Oriente Moderno* 18 (79), no. 1 (1999): 261.

³⁰ Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, 197.

³¹ Ahmed Refik Altınay, *Lale Devri* (Askeri Kütüphane, 1915). For a detailed analysis of the sources used by Ahmed Refik while coining the term “Tulip Age,” see C. Ermitan, *Ottomans Looking West?: The Origins of the Tulip Age and Its Development in Modern Turkey* (I. B. Tauris, 2008).

The notion that the reign of Ahmed III constituted a rupture with Ottoman tradition took its roots in the West. Two entries in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* by Harold Bowen and Irène Melikoff, respectively in 1960 and 1986, asserted that the twenty years following the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 emerged a clear change in the Ottomans' taste of poetry, architecture and literature which also displayed the Grand Vezîr's inclination to "profit by European examples." Melikoff even offered that the era was "a serious movement towards a secular society."³² Tarık Zafer Tunaya was probably the first author to endorse the idea of a "Tulip Age" shaped by Western ideals in Turkish historical consciousness. In his *Türkiye'nin Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri* [Westernization Movements in Turkish Political History], he points to the year 1718 as the beginning of partial transformations towards a Western-model society, which he questionably compared with the military reforms of Selim III, known as *Nizâm-ı Cedîd* (New Order).³³ Similarly, Bernard Lewis popularized İbrahim Paşa's fame as a reformer with Western tendencies, whereas, Niyazi Berkes claimed the existence of secular trends in the period.³⁴ Another champion of "the Tulip Age," Ahmet Evin, with reference to the introduction of the printing press, considers the era as a moment when the idea of progress in the form of European technology was imported into Ottoman dominions. In that sense, he regards Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa and his companions noted above as the agents of what has been accepted as the laxer morals and lascivious mores of their time.³⁵ Regarding the novel architectural fashions of the "the Tulip Age," Fatma Müge Göçek pointed to the construction of *Sa'âdâbâd* (a site containing palaces, gardens, canals and other areas of entertainment on the Golden Horn), as

³² Harold Bowen, "Ahmed Iii," in *Encyclopedia of Islam* (1960), Irène Melikoff, "Lâle Devri," ibid. (1986).

³³ T.Z. Tunaya, *Türkiye'nin Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri* (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2004), 20.

³⁴ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey: Reprinted with Corrections Issued under the Auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* (Oxford University Press, 1965), 45; N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Hurst & Co., 1998), 71-80.

³⁵ Ahmet Evin, "Tulip Age and Definitions of Modernization," in *Türkiye'nin Sosyal Ve Ekonomik Tarihi, 1071-1920: Birinci Uluslararası Türkiye'nin Sosyal Ve Ekonomik Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğleri*, ed. O. Okyar and H. İnalçık (Meteksan, 1980), 134-9.

the direct reflection of French influence in architecture, and she dismissed the whole construction agenda as an imitation of Versailles and Fontainebleau.³⁶

Cemal Kafadar was the first historian who questioned the anachronistic characterization of this period that have been uncritically accepted and passed on from generation to generation. He also indicated the image of “tulip” was also quite common before 1718, which makes it absurd to attribute this symbol to a self-contained period.³⁷ Tülay Artan also criticized the clichés falsely attributed to this era.³⁸ By building her argument on the shifting modes of governance and the changing profiles of the sultans, Artan argued that the lack of military and political legitimation and the absence of the “charismatic leadership of the sultan” was compensated with the power and wealth exhibited in the glamour of architectural monuments. Furthermore, Artan showed that contrary to mainstream scholarship, Mahmud I’s reign also witnessed imperial celebrations on a lavish scale, thus invalidating the claims of modern champions of “the Tulip Age” who asserted that Mahmud I “shunned the experimentation that had characterized İbrahim Paşa’s vizierate.”³⁹ In a different context, Ariel Salzmann evaluated the period between 1550 and 1730 in terms of shifts in consumption patterns and behaviors. By questioning the significance of the “tulip” both symbolically and financially, she concluded that the Patrona Halil Revolt might be regarded as an anti-tulip rebellion.⁴⁰ Fariba Zarinebaf observed that Ottoman princesses became more visible in public life during the grand vizierate of Dâmâd

³⁶ Fatma Müge Göçek, *East Encounters West : France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1987), 75.

³⁷ Cemal Kafadar, "The Myth of the Golden Age: Ottoman Historical Consciousness in the Post-Suleymanic Era," in *Süleymân the Second and His Time*, ed. H. İnalcık and C. Kafadar (Isis Press, 1993), 40.

³⁸ Tülay Artan, "Architecture as a Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth-Century Bosphorus," Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1989); "18. Yüzyıl Başlarında Yönetici Elitin Saltanatın Meşruiyet Arayışına Katılımı," *Toplum ve Bilim* no. 83 (1999-2000); "From Charismatic Leadership to Collective Rule: Introducing Materials on the Wealth and Power of Ottoman Princess in the Eighteenth Century," *Toplum ve Ekonomi*, no. IV (1993).

³⁹ Madeleine Zilfi, "Women and Society in the Tulip Era, 1718-1730," in *Women, the Family and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, ed. Amira El Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse University Press, 1996), 291.

⁴⁰ Ariel Salzmann, "The Age of Tulips: Confluence and Conflict in Early Modern Consumer Culture (1550-1730)," in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922*, ed. Donald Quataert (SUNY Press, 2000), 83-106.

İbrahim Paşa largely due to changing social attitudes and their active participation in the patronage activities, which was an extension of Artan's earlier assumptions.⁴¹ Moving beyond the overarching westernization and modernization discourse of her predecessors writing about this era, Shirine Hamadeh claimed that the architectural and urban form that marked this age really reflected a shifting social order and a significant change in social codes which showed that new architectural patronage agenda might not necessarily be the result of turning toward a "superior West."⁴² Focusing on contemporary historiography, Can Erimtan provided a cogent critique of the scholarship about "the Tulip Age" produced after the publication of Ahmed Refik's *Lâle Devri*. By bringing the Grand Vezîr Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa to the core of his argument, Erimtan presented the shifts in the ways the Grand Vezîr was perceived in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries in order to prove how ideologically-loaded and unconvincing the label "the Tulip Age" is.⁴³ Similar to Erimtan's argument, Selim Karahasanoğlu asserted that the period of 1718-30 is not indicative of a dramatic shift in the norms of wealth and consumption in Ottoman history and that the assertion about the moral corruption does not correlate with shifting patterns of wealth accumulation. Revisiting Ariel Salzman's earlier claim about the financial implications underlying the tulip craze, Karahasanoğlu linked the alleged moral decay with the rise of commercial capitalism.⁴⁴ Apart from scholarship touching on the concept of "the Tulip Age," there were several other contributions on cultural politics and intellectual productions during the eighteenth century. In this context, of particular interest is the work of İsmail

⁴¹Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, "The Wealth of Ottoman Princesses During the Tulip Age," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, ed. Kemal Çiçek (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2000), 696-701.

⁴² S. Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (University of Washington Press, 2008), passim. Hamadeh argues that neither poets nor court historians who devoted a lot of space to Sa'dâbâd offered any clues that the planning of the palace might have been designed by a Western model. Rather, it was in the "East" that Ottoman observers sought to identify architectural models for the palace. Unfortunately, the Sa'dâbâd Palace was totally collapsed and the only information that we have about it comes from Sedat Hakkı Eldem's attempts to reconstruct the building as well as painted illustrations by foreign artists that witnessed the Istanbul of Ahmed III's reign. (S.H. Eldem, *Sa'dabad* (Kültür Bakanlığı, 1977).

⁴³ Erimtan, *Ottomans Looking West?: The Origins of the Tulip Age and Its Development in Modern Turkey*.

⁴⁴ S. Karahasanoğlu, "A Tulip Age Legend: Consumer Behavior and Material Culture in the Ottoman Empire (1718--1730)" (State University of New York at Binghamton, 2009).

Erünsal who extensively studied Ottoman *vakıf* libraries,⁴⁵ whereas, Orlin Sabev asked whether the Ottoman printing press was a failure or success story.⁴⁶ Mehmet İpşirli, Salim Aydüz and Ramazan Şeşen studied the enterprise of translation committees established by Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa and shed light on the members of the committee, some of whom are actors of this thesis, and revealed the book titles that were translated.⁴⁷ In the light of this literature survey, it is possible to conclude that “the Tulip Age” was built upon a superficial paradigm that says little about the early eighteenth century.

I. III Methodology and Sources: Treating Ottoman Elites as Individuals?

By adopting a prosopographical method, this thesis presents (i) the intersecting career lines of the bureaucrats/intellectuals in question in the administrative layers of the Ottoman palace; (ii) their cooperation and co-existence in the artistic and literary networks established by Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa; (iii) their ways of maintaining their high positions and prestige after the Patrona Halil Revolt in 1730; (iv) and, finally, their practice of very similar common intellectual interests in the reign of Mahmud I. Especially for the study of elite households and social networks, the prosopographical method has been used in Ottoman studies since the 1960s.⁴⁸ The method can briefly be defined as group biography and through the medium of fragmental biographical data, for example, can be used to study

⁴⁵ İ.E. Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri: Tarihî Gelişimi Ve Organizasyonu* (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008).

⁴⁶ O. Sabev, *Parvoto Osmanskoto Patesestvie V Sveta Na Pečatnata Kniga* (Avangard Prima, 2004).; *idem*, *İbrahim Müteferrika Ya Da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni, 1726-1746 : Yeniden Değerlendirme*, 1. baskı. ed. (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: Yeditepe, 2006).

⁴⁷ Salim Aydüz, "Lale Devri'nde Yapılan İlmi Faaliyetler," *Divan* 1:3(1997): 143-70; "Bilimsel Faaliyetler Açısından Lale Devri," *İstanbul Armağanı* 4, no. Lale Devri (2000): 159-93. Mehmet İpşirli, "Lale Devri'nde Teşkil Edilen Tercüme Heyetine Dair Bazı Gözlemler," in *Osmanlı İlmi ve Mesleki Cemiyetleri, I. Milli Türk Bilim Tarihî Sempozyumu*, ed. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu (İstanbul 1987), 33-42; Ramazan Şeşen, "Lale Devrinde Yenileşme Hareketleri Ve Tercüme Edilen Eserler," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 28/II (2004).

⁴⁸ See for example Norman Itzkowitz and Joel Shinder, "The Office of Şeyh Ü'l-İslâm and the Tanzimat - a Prosopographic Enquiry," *Middle Eastern Studies* 8, no. 1 (1972)., and Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650* (Columbia University Press, 1983).

the function, political and economic power, importance and the social role of a specific group. Basically, it consists of collecting and juxtaposing such data for each individual belonging to a clearly circumscribed group. The difficulty of researching important actors like those of the network discussed in this thesis lies in the absence of self-narratives which would provide the complete life/career-stories written by these men themselves. Furthermore, the focus of the existing sources on the *cemâats* (social groups) rather than the person makes it hard to portray the individual members of the society in their own context. The questions to ask at this point are: Does the “individual” as understood in the European context exist in the Ottoman society? How much of an “individual’s” life story can we truly reconstruct? And can we write the life story of an Ottoman grandee in his own right?

The answer to these questions are ambiguous, because the meaning and scope of “individuality” has never been clear neither in European nor in Ottoman context.⁴⁹ The generally accepted outlook toward individuality in Islamic societies, which regarded the notion of “individual” as absent due to the so-called collectivist human ideals of Islam, is now challenged by recent scholarly attempts that aim to deduce evidence about the concept of individualism from first-person narratives, also called “ego-documents.”⁵⁰ As the name

⁴⁹ Jakob Burckhardt is the first historian to bring the concept of individuality into the spotlight in the context of the Renaissance in 1860. (J. Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (Echo Library, 2006), 88-105.) The two main aspects in which Jacob Burckhardt found the fundamental character of the Renaissance as a new civilization were the rise of individualism and the discovery of the world and of man. He regarded Renaissance individualism as the awakening of man’s awareness of himself, as a being apart from a group or a class, and saw that man’s consciousness of self. Burckhardt’s thesis that depicted the Renaissance separate from the Middle Ages is largely refuted by recent scholarship that puts forward an earlier origin and gradual evolution of certain characteristics of Renaissance culture. For a recent criticism of Burckhardt’s construct see in William Caferro, “Individualism: Who Was the Renaissance Man?,” in *Contesting the Renaissance* (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980); John Jeffries Martin, “The Myth of Renaissance Individualism,” in *A Companion to the Worlds of the Renaissance*, ed. G. Ruggiero (Oxford: Wiley, 2008).

⁵⁰ Ego documents might be regarded as a reply to Cemal Kafadar’s call for a name for “the process of self-consciousness and observation at the levels of both the person and the social order at large.” (Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature,” 126.) See Robert Ilbert and Randi Deguilhem, eds., *Individual and Society in the Mediterranean Muslim World : Issues and Sources, Individu Et Société Dans Le Monde Méditerranéen Musulman : Questions Et Sources* (Strasbourg: European Science Foundation, 1998), which seeks to define the relationship between the individual and society in such a way as to understand, for each period of Islamic history, the organization of interdependent relationships, the position attributed to the individual, and the

implies, these documents include an *ego* writing about himself/herself and giving self-referential information to its audience, which incites us to include different types of documents that possess author-references such as travelogues, autobiographical anecdotes, as well as accounts of entire life stories within the scope of this genre.

In light of the purview of ego-documents, “individuality” can therefore be defined as a sense of self-awareness, the possession of an *ego*, and the ability to locate oneself among the others. Returning to the first question raised earlier about the existence of an Ottoman “individual” as ascertained in the European context, I shall attempt to distinguish between being “*apart* from a group” and being “*a part* of a group.” The former category fits into the scheme of Jakob Burckhardt’s conception of a man’s discovery of his self-awareness, whereas, the latter one conforms to my understanding of what an Ottoman individual might be. I am fully aware that my use of “individuality” alludes to group identity; however, I think that in the Ottoman context, the self-awareness of being a member of a specific social group and producing narratives and patronizing pious deeds in accordance with this group is a display of an ego-oriented action/will. Natalie Zemon Davis’ explanation of the important conditions in fashioning the “self” is applicable to my stance on the Ottoman individual on the grounds that “the exploration of self [...] was made in conscious relation to the groups to which people belonged and that the greatest obstacle to self-definition was not embeddedness, but powerlessness...”⁵¹ That is why the biographical compilations that appeared in the Ottoman cultural context generally specialized on various types of official posts or social groups rather than the individuals, such as *Devhat-ül-meşâyih* on the *şeyhü’l-*

creation of a hierarchy of the values which rule society. Also see R. Elger and Yavuz Köse, eds., *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)* (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), in which Michael Nizri studies the memoirs of *şeyhü’l-islâm* Feyzullah Efendi (1638 – 1703) and Denise Klein presents her findings about the intertextual references to the autobiographic natures of 18th century *sefâret-nâmes*.

⁵¹ After Cemal Kafadar, “Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature,” 135., Natalie Zemon Davis, “Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth Century France,” in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, ed. T.C. Heller and C. Brooke-Rose (Stanford University Press, 1986), 55-63.

islâms (chief religious officials), *Hâmilet-ül-küberâ'* on the *dâr-üs-saâde ağas* (chief eunuchs), *Hadîkat-ül-vüzerâ'* on the *vezîrs*, *Sefînet-ül-rüseâ'* on the *reîsü'l-küttâbs* (chief clerks) and *Tezkiret-üş-şuarâs* on the *dîvân* poets.⁵²

In order to address the persistent problem of the absence of first-person narratives, I propose a close reading of the *vakıf-nâme* (the charter) of the actors of this thesis, which I argue, enables the students of Ottoman history to hear the own voice of the patrons directly. The benefit of using the *vakıf-nâmes* will be in terms of (i) obtaining the list of books endowed/donated to the public libraries as well as classifying them under specific sub-categories to determine if the business of collecting books and endowing them was related to a pre-determined curriculum (why were specific books published and/or endowed more than others? Who might have been their audience?); (ii) observing the impact that the introduction of the printing press in 1729 had not only on book collectors (in our case the bureaucrats) but also on the public; (iii) identifying a broader network of intellectuals who shared common erudite interests by tracing the list of witnesses on the charters (the bureaucrats in question often engaged each other as witnesses). Further questions of interest might concern the position of the librarian and his social prestige as reflected in his salary compared to other functionaries of the pious endowment (working on the premise that the amount of money paid to the librarians is indicative of the significance of the library and the books stored within it).

So as to juxtapose their self-representation with the way they were represented in the chronicles, I shall include some excerpts from histories of several chroniclers such as İzzî Süleyman Efendi (1744-1752), Mehmed Subhî Efendi (1730-43), Anonymous Chronicle

⁵² For a survey of Ottoman biographical chronicles see for example Feridun Emecen, "Osmanlı Kronikleri Ve Biyografi," *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 3 (1999): 83-90.

(1688-1704) and Musâffâ Mehmed Efendi (1736-44).⁵³ Additionally, I will use some archival materials located in the Prime Minister's Archives (hereafter BOA), Sofia National Library "Kiril i Metodi" (hereafter NBKM), and the Archives of General Directorate of Foundations (hereafter VGMA).⁵⁴ Other primary sources that include biographical information about my protagonists are *Tuhfe-i Haţţâtin* (A Treatise on Calligraphers) by Müstakîm-zâde Süleyman Sa'âdeddîn, *Tuhfe-i Naîlî* (A Treatise on Poets), *Sicill-i 'Osmânî* by Mehmed Süreyya and *Fâ'iz ve Şâkir Mecmû'ası* (a collection of poetical works patronized by Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa).⁵⁵ Among these biographical reference books, Mehmed Süreyya's *Sicill-i 'Osmânî* differs from earlier examples in that it has an inclusive approach which does not categorize the individuals according to the social groups that they belonged to and it is not also limited to the biographies of a group of people who lived in a specific time span.

At this point, it should be noted that I am fully aware of the differences between the ways information was exchanged in the Ottoman society when compared with its European counterparts. The prevailing influence of the oral tradition must be acknowledged, and I intend to benefit from the literature on this subject. For instance, the lines quoted below from a riddle-like folk song, which supposedly circulated among the lay people like night watchmen, seems to suggest that the public was aware of the vibrant interests of Mahmud I and his bureaucrats for commissioning libraries:

⁵³Subhî, *Subhî Tarihi: Sâmî Ve Şâkir Tarihleri Ile Birlikte (1730-1744)*, ed. M. Aydın (Kitabevi, 2007)., *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*, ed. A. Özcan (Atatürk Kültür, Dil, ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000)., "Musâffâ Mehmed Efendi'nin I. Mahmud Devri Vakâ'i-Nâmesi," ed. Ahmed Kızılgök (Istanbul University 1964); Süleyman İzzî Efendi, *Târih-i İzzî* (Mehmed Râşid ve Ahmed Vâsıf Matbaası, 1785).

⁵⁴ BOA 810/34403 Cevdet – Askeriye; 541/22232 Cevdet – Maliye; 658/26925 Cevdet – Maliye, 97/4805 Cevdet – Belediye, 12077 Evkaf Defterleri, 66/3285 Cevdet – Belediye, 336/13767 Cevdet – Maliye.

⁵⁵ Müstakîm-zâde Süleyman Sa'âdeddîn, *Tuhfe-I Haţţâtin* (İstanbul Devlet Matbaası, 1928). (a biographical dictionary about calligraphers); Mehmed Nâil Tuman, *Tuhfe-I Naîlî: Dîvân Şairlerinin Muhtaşar Biyografileri* (Ankara: Bizim Büro Yayınları, 2001). (a biographical dictionary about poets); Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i 'osmânî* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı and Tarih Vakfı, 1996)., "Fâ'iz Ve Şâkir Mecmû'ası," (Süleymaniye Manuscript Library). The *mecmû'a*, which comprises of the poetical works dedicated to the grand vezir Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa, was also studied by Metin Hakverdioğlu, "Edebiyatımızda Lâle Devri Ve Damad İbrahim Paşa'ya Sunulan Kasîdeler" (Selçuk University, 2007).

The majesty of the House of Osman/ To which there is no equal state/Praised in every corner the valuable ornamentation of the library/ Worthy of explaining in detail, its ornamentation shed light on the world in the mosque of Hagia Sophia/ He commissioned a sublime work/ God helped him be successful/ Hopefully this building shall bring benefaction/ While looking at the library/ Everybody shall say May God preserve it! ⁵⁶

Such public voices are also paralleled by archival sources penned in Istanbul to inspect and encourage the ongoing practices of founding libraries, thus making the whole enterprise more comprehensible. One such example is an imperial decree directly written by Mahmud I to be submitted to the *kazî* of Kastamonu.

“...The pillar of the world and the religion stands on the value given to culture and sciences. Because earning of skills and virtues is provided with the books and treatises, in every town the owners of *vakıfs*, according to the need, must build and organize some libraries as well as consecrate books for skillful students to read and benefit...” ⁵⁷

The Ottomans themselves did not have a name for peculiar developments observed in the early eighteenth century such as the sultan’s symbolic and material efforts to seek public recognition, more rational interpretations and practices of Islam, the deliberate exercise of religious tolerance and the re-alignment of court practices along more civil – as opposed to military or religious – lines. I suggest that all these developments fit into the scope of what Jonathan Israel termed as a “moderate Enlightenment,” which sought to reconcile a new secular and philosophical outlook on the world with existing but renewed social institutions.

⁵⁶M.Y. Dağlı, *İstanbul Mahalle Bekçilerinin Destan Ve Mânî Katarları* (Türk Neşriyat Yurdu, 1948), 59-60. Original: *Âl-i Osman’ın şevketi/Yoktur nazîr-i devleti/Dört köşede medh olunur/Kütüphânenin zîneti/Zîyneti dehre saldı fer/Vasfa sezâdır serteser/Ayasofya Câmiinde/ Eyledi bir âli eser/Muvaffak eyledi Allâh/Hayr olur makkûl inşallah/Seyr edip kütüphâneyi/Her gören dedi maşaallah.*

⁵⁷ After İsmail E. Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri*, p. 136; BOA, 152 – Mühimme: Original: “Din ve dünyanın kıvâm ve nizâmı, ma’ârif ve ulûmun revâc ve intâcî ile olup ve kesb-i hüner ve fezâ’il, cem’i kütüb ve resâyile mevkûf olmaktan nâsi eslâfdan geçen erbâb-ı hayrât her beldede iktizâsına göre tullâb-ı dirâyet-nisâbın mütâlâ’a ve intifâ’larıçün fûnûn-ı settâdan nice kitâblar vakf ve tesbîl ve bazı kütüphâneler binâ ve tertîb ve hâfız-ı kütübler vaz’ ve ta’yin eylediklerine binâen talebe-i ûlum fukarâsı hîn-i hâcetde mütâlâ’a ve tensîk ile kesb-i melekei tedkîk ve tahkik ide...”

Chapter II:

“Enlightened Ottomans”: Patrons, Intellectuals and Bureaucrats and Their Networks

II.I The Actors: The Formation of Ottoman Bureaucracy as a Political Institution

This chapter attempts to reconstruct a network of Ottoman bureaucrats comprised of the *şeyhü'l-islâm* (the chief religious official) Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, *reîsü'l-küttâb* (the chief clerk) Mustafa Efendi (1735-?), *defter-dâr* (the head of the finance bureau) Âtîf Mustafa Efendi and *şadâret kethüdâsı* (the chief assistant of the Grand Vezîr) Şerîf Halil Efendi (1711-1752) who came into being in the entourage of the murdered Grand Vezîr of Ahmed III (r. 1703-1730), Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730), and continued to serve the state during the reign of the ensuing sultan Mahmud I (1730-54) in various capacities. By tracing their career line formation, the chapter aims at presenting (i) İbrahim Paşa's attempts to create a new Ottoman bureaucracy as a separate political institution;⁵⁸ (ii) the patterns of career line formation in bureaucratic and ecclesiastical hierarchy in the early eighteenth century; (iii) the rise of the bureaucrats in question in the administrative layers of the Ottoman palace; (iv) their cooperation and co-existence in the artistic and literary networks established by İbrahim Paşa; (v) and, finally, their patronage activities after the murder of their patrons in 1730.

What makes these men different from other bureaucrats and religious officers who experienced similar patterns of career line formation in the first half of the eighteenth century? Among other indirect answers, the most direct one is about their embodiment of the bureaucratic and cultural policies of their patron İbrahim Paşa. Despite coming from

⁵⁸ For an evaluation of bureaucratic rise and its earlier patterns, see for example Halil İnalcık, "Decision Making in the Ottoman State," in *Essays in Ottoman History* (Eren Yayıncılık, 1998).; Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)*. What makes this period different from the earlier centuries is the deliberate encouragement for social mobility.

above-average backgrounds, none of these bureaucrats were trained in major vezîr households; thus, they were not part of an already-established faction before their first post in İstanbul. Furthermore, these four men epitomized the notion of “a new Ottoman elite” who sharpened their administrative and intellectual skills within the bureaucratic circles established by İbrahim and who also found the opportunity to display their creativity not only in courtly gatherings but also in the committees organized by the Grand Vezîr. Each of these four men were multilingual and tried their hand at calligraphy and/or poetry. Moreover, even after the murder of İbrahim in 1730, they went on to invest in intellectual enterprises such as *vakıf* libraries, which gives hints about the continuity of cultural patronage aiming at advancing knowledge and transmitting it to each and every corner of the empire. By showing each other as witnesses in the charters of their pious foundations, these four men explicitly displayed their participation in an intellectual clique.⁵⁹

The temporal scope of this thesis begins with the enthronement of Ahmed III in 1703, whose reign proved to be a response to the political and economic crisis experienced in the seventeenth century and who attempted to reconcile the political changes of his time with a strong emphasis on intellectual and bureaucratic renewal and reform. Since the reign of Süleyman I (r. 1520-66), the Ottomans’ rival on the path of world rule had been the Habsburgs and their eventual goal was to conquer, the so-called Red Apple (*kızıl elma*), “an Ottoman symbol for the infidel heartland.” The Ottoman debacle in 1683 at the gates of Vienna demolished the notion of “invincible Ottoman power,” which resulted in the Ottomans’ taking a defensive position.⁶⁰ Twenty years after Vienna, in Ahmed III’s reign, the ancient discourse of holy war with Europe what was conventionally deemed the *raison d’être* of the Ottoman state shifted into a new mentality of generating a functional

⁵⁹ See Chapter 3 for a broader discussion on these men’s patronage activities as a tribute to their murdered patron İbrahim Paşa. For *vakıf-nâmes* see, Âtîf Efendi Kütüphanesi 2858, p. 1b-26b; VGMA. 736; VGMA, Haremeyn: 4 (737); Şumnu Historical Museum, 131

⁶⁰ Cemal Kafadar, “The Question of Ottoman Decline,” *Harvard Middle East and Islamic Review* (1999): 45-6.

administration as a more influential tool for maintaining social order.⁶¹ Contrary to his father Mehmed IV (r. 1648-1687) and his brother Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703) who invested in discipline and punishment as the leading tools of state control and attempted to maintain a single political faction revolving around sultanic charisma while attempting to suppress all others, Ahmed III created an alliance between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations and introduced unprecedented opportunities for social mobility. Similar to the *sacra ligua* initiated by Pope Innocent XI (r. 1676-1689) in 1684, which secured a genuine spirit of Christian unity and cooperation, the Ottomans were also in need of ensuring the survival of their own community through radical commitments.⁶² Ahmed III's policies regarding the non-Muslims was on the core of Ottoman religious pluralism. Ahmed supported the Armenians and the Orthodox in their attempts to centralize their church organizations. The consolidation of different *millets* of the Empire enabled the sultan to establish closer links with powerful Christian spiritual leaderships. A policy emphasizing non-Muslim confessions needed further legislative and religious support. The only office capable of assisting this policy was that of the *şeyhü'l-islâm*. Thus, İbrahim Paşa appointed Abdullah of Larissa (served from 1718 to 1730) as an appropriate man to carry out these reforms. Abdullah propagated the idea of universal Islam that emphasized its traditional claim to proper Abrahamic lineage. From an administrative and legal perspective, the entirety of pious populations of the Ottoman Empire, be it Christian, Jewish, Shiite or Sunni were the true *millets* of Abraham.⁶³ Innovations (*bid'at*) which had been regarded as deviations from the path of Prophet Muhammad frowned upon took up a positive meaning in Ahmed's reign during which novelty in medicine, literature, architecture and philosophy was celebrated and

⁶¹ Küçük, "Early Enlightenment in Istanbul," 42.

⁶² Rhoads Murphey, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Ottoman Administrative Theory and Practice During the Late Seventeenth Century," *Poetics Today* 14, no. 2 (1993): 427.

⁶³ Victor Roudometof, "From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453-1821," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 16, no. 1 (1998).

heavily patronized by Ottoman elites.⁶⁴ In place of emphasizing the ancient bases of dynastic legitimacy and imposing restrictive discipline, the sultan addressed the necessity of forming an improved administration and a significantly higher level of bureaucratic efficiency.

Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1660-1730), the patron of the actors of this thesis, was the embodiment of the whole framework of bureaucratic innovation and intellectual enterprises. Before taking up the prestigious post of the grand vizierate in 1718, İbrahim had already begun his career in the palace as a young accountant. Later he was appointed as the keeper of the books of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and he travelled with the army during the Venetian campaign as a land surveyor. His experience in the inner circles of administrative layers provided him with invaluable information about the financial crisis of the imperial household, and he was already in the service of Ahmed III as an advisor before 1718. Unlike the majority of the former Grand Vezîrs who had been either graduates or protégés of other vezîr households, İbrahim came from a rather modest background, which provided Ahmed III with a unique opportunity to weaken the already established power networks. The sultan further strengthened their alliance by marrying his daughter Fatma to İbrahim in 1715.⁶⁵

During the peace negotiations at Passarowitz in 1718, by the terms of which the Ottomans lost a substantial amount of territory in the Balkans and Central Europe to Austria, İbrahim was part of the Ottoman delegation as the plenipotentiary. He was aware that continuing wars with the Habsburgs, who were controlling Belgrade at the time, would

⁶⁴ About innovations in architecture, poetry and arts see for example S. Hamadeh, "Ottoman Expressions of Early Modernity and the "Inevitable" Question of Westernization," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63, no. 1 (2004). For innovations in religion see Tülay Artan, "Forms and Forums of Expression: Istanbul and Beyond 1600-1800," in *The Ottoman World*, ed. C. Woodhead (Routledge, 2012).

⁶⁵ Münir Aktepe, "Damad İbrahim Paşa, Nevşehirli," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı, 1993). İbrahim was the son of the *voivoda* of İzdin, Sipahi Ali Ağa. He entered the *helvacılar ocağı* (a part of the imperial kitchen) in 1689.

jeopardize the safety of the Ottoman lands to the west of İstanbul.⁶⁶ After his return from Passarowitz, İbrahim was promoted as the grand vezîr, and his tenure marked the onset of a shift in Ottoman foreign policy that sought to preserve the Western borders rather than expand them. As a first task, he looked for peaceful means to strengthen the central administration and increase the short-term cash needs of the palace by regulating tax rates on agriculture, commerce and pious foundations. He succeeded in stabilizing the value of Ottoman currency by minting new coins, and the year 1720 marked the first occasion when the Ottoman treasury showed a surplus rather than a deficit.⁶⁷ This did not mean that İbrahim had successfully stopped the accumulation of debt but rather that he gave a respite to the central administration to re-establish its power.

İbrahim's tenure also witnessed a deliberate acceleration of cultural exchange between the European and the Ottoman world. The Grand Vezîr sent envoys and agents to European capitals so as to learn about the developments outside the Ottoman world. The reports compiled by Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi about Paris, Nişli Mehmed Ağa about Moscow, Mustafa Efendi about Vienna and Mehmed Efendi about Poland gave İbrahim an insight not only about the streets, shops, gardens, military schools and training grounds but also about the manners and royal ceremonies in which the king and other high officials portrayed their charismatic leadership in different parts of Europe.⁶⁸ These reports were

⁶⁶ Rhoads Murphey, "Twists and Turns in Diplomatic Dialogue: The Politics of Peacemaking in the Early Eighteenth Century," in *"The" Peace of Passarowitz, 1718*, ed. C.W. Ingrao, N. Samardžić, and J. Peaallj (Purdue University Press, 2011).

⁶⁷ İ.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi: XVIII. Yüzyıl*, vol. 4/2 (Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995).

⁶⁸ For the content of "The Sefâret-nâme (Envoy Reports) of Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi," see *Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmet Efendi'nin Fransa Sefaretnamesi*, ed. A. Uçman (Tercüman, 1976). Mehmed Çelebi's appreciation of Paris and the French lifestyle is well-evidenced in his use of language. In many different cases, he uses the following phrases of surprise, admiration and appreciation. "...kâbil-i ta'dâd değildir, tâbir olunamaz, ta'dâdı mümkün olunamaz, ta'dâdı mümkün değildir, nâziri görülmemiştir, görülmedikçe tâbir ve tavsîf ile beyân olunamaz, vasfı mümkün değildir, kâbil-i tahrir değildir, ifâde ve beyân mümkün değildir..."

influential in the genesis of İbrahim's later policies about re-forming the charismatic leadership of Ahmed III.⁶⁹

In every sense of the word, İbrahim was the figure who realized a new "Ottoman bureaucracy." The first and foremost prerequisite for materializing his policies was the creation of a large number of trained personnel who would form a separate political institution completely different from the previous Ottoman bureaucracy, and he realized that the members of this new cadre should not be trained in the palace or within the households of major political players.⁷⁰ In order to separate the operational budget of the Empire from the palace treasury, İbrahim moved his offices to *Bâb-ı ʿÂli* (the Sublime Porte) and established exclusive offices for records. In this new system, the office of the grand vizierate and linked offices at the chancery emerged as the locus of power, and the finance section of the central administration became an unprecedented opportunity for the politically ambitious. By the same token, being successful in the post of bureau-chief (*hâcegân*), in which capacity İbrahim had also served in 1714-5, and being transferred to the chancery section became critical steps for the enthusiastic bureaucrats.⁷¹ With reference to the clustering of offices and the presence of a particular order and hierarchy of office-holding, Joel Shinder comments on the issue of career line formation (not to be confused with professionalization) in Ottoman bureaucratic system. These career lines hinged on specialization and transferability of various skills acquired during in-service training. The office-holders were linked with a full-time service area, achieved tenure and were promoted through various layers and ranks depending on their personal backgrounds, training and modes of recruitment. The essential criteria for recruitment was kinship, patronage (*intisâp*),

⁶⁹ See Appendix, for miniatures depicting the circumcision festival organized by Ahmed III and his pompous courtly celebrations. For the depiction of the whole event, see Vehbî, *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet'in Düğün Kitabı*, ed. Mertol Tulum (Kabalıcı Yayınevi, 2008).

⁷⁰ R.A. Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te İstanbul, 1984).

⁷¹ Joel Shinder, "Career Line Formation in the Ottoman Bureaucracy, 1648-1750: A New Perspective," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16, no. 2/3 (1973): 221-2.

merit and favoritism (*iltimâs*).⁷² In this light, highlighting the career lines of the *şeyhü'l-islâm* (the chief Jurisconsult) Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, *reîsü'l-küttâb* (the chief figure in the chancery) Mustafa Efendi, *defter-dâr* (chief finance officer) Mustafa Âtîf Efendi and *şadâret kethüdâsı* (the chief assistant of the grand vezîr) Şerîf Halil Efendi allows us to observe the shifting patterns of promotion for the uppermost ranks in the bureaucratic and ecclesiastical-juridical hierarchy.

The bureaucrats in the *defter-hâne* (finance office) and *dîvân-hâne* (the Imperial Chancery) frequently remained in their respective spheres of administrative competency. In his prosopographic study, Shinder shows that during the period 1648-1702, six *reîsü'l-küttâbs* came from the finance section and five from the chancery section. Between 1702 and 1750, only one of eleven men who held this office came from the finance bureau and nine from chancery. As for the *defter-dârs* (the chief finance officer), for the period between 1648 and 1700, eighteen of thirty-three *defter-dârs* came from a finance background, whereas, between 1700 and 1750, eighteen of the twenty office holders originally came from the finance section.⁷³ One of these men, Mustafa Efendi, who was the son of a prominent family in Kastamonu (in northern Turkey), entered the chancery through marriage by becoming the son-in-law of the *reîsü'l-küttâb* Tavukçubaşı Ali Ağa. After serving in various scribal duties, he became the chief officer supervising tax farm profits in 1730. Mustafa Efendi, who had previously taken up several *dîvân-hâne* related posts such as *beylikçi* and *defter emîni* took up the prestigious office of the *reîsü'l-küttâb* in 1744.⁷⁴ A similar career line pattern was experienced by Mustafa Âtîf Efendi who started his career as the chief inspector in the finance bureau. He was a protégé of İzzet Âli Paşa, who was the

⁷² Ibid, 223.

⁷³ Ibid, 222-6.

⁷⁴ *Beylikçi* is the chief of the *dîvân* bureau, the central bureau of the Imperial Council maintaining records and preparing all of the edicts, decrees, and international correspondence. He was senior to all the scribes of the *dîvân* and worked under the direct supervision of the *reîs-ül-küttâb*. (G. Bayerle, *Pashas, Begs, and Effendis: A Historical Dictionary of Titles and Terms in the Ottoman Empire* (Isis Press, 1997), 20.

defter-dâr in 1727/8. His proximity to ʿİzzet ʿÂli helped his promotion to the post of *defter-dâr*, especially after ʿİzzet ʿÂli was appointed as a *vezîr*.

Another actor of this thesis who started out as a novice in the *defter-hâne* but rose to the top of Ottoman officialdom is Şerîf Halil. A native of Şumnu (presently in north-east Bulgaria), Şerîf Halil was able to join the *defter-hâne* in 1711, before being transferred to the *dîvân-hâne* as a *hâce* (bureau-chief). Having established a strong position for himself since his entrance to the *defter-hâne* in 1711, Şerîf Halil was appointed to the post of *tezkîre-i sâni* or *küçük tezkîreci* (the minor secretary) in 1730/1 (H. 1143) to serve as the deputy of the *tezkîre-i evvel* or *büyük tezkîreci* (the senior secretary) Şeyh-zâde Nûh Efendi (d. 1738/9, H.1151).⁷⁵ In about a year, he became the *tezkîre-i evvel* and served in the immediate retinue of the grand vezîr Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa.⁷⁶ In 1736 (H.1149), during the grand vizierate of Muhsin-zâde Abdullah Paşa (1737), he was assigned to the post of *şadâret kethüdâsı*,⁷⁷ “the administrative steward” of the Grand Vezîr’s office.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Subhî, *ibid*; İzzî Süleyman Efendi, *ibid*; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, p. 1586; BOA, 15/1653 İE. TCT: “*Tezkîre-i Sani Şerîf Halil Efendilere tevcih kılındığına dair sadır olan buyuruldu...*”

⁷⁶ Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa was a very influential figure in the palace. Having been born in 1699 (H.1110), he established himself a very strong position during the reigns of Ahmed III and Mahmud I and rose up to the office of grand vizierate for three times (in 1732-1735, 1742 and 1755 respectively). Until 1732, he had served in various capacities such as *kapıcıbaşı*, *Türkmen ağası*, *Zile voyvodası*, *Rumeli beylerbeyi*, governor of Adana and Aleppo, *serasker* of Tabriz, governor of Diyarbakir and Tabriz respectively. These posts were followed by his first grand vizierate in 1732 (H.1144), from which he was sacked in 1735 (H.1148). In three years’ time as a grand vezîr, he managed to commission a mosque in Davudpaşa, with a library. His bibliophily and patronage of architecture proved to be a role model for the actors of this thesis. His service to the state went on as the *vâli* of Kandiye, Bosnia and Egypt during which periods he showed many achievements both in bureaucracy and the battlefronts. As a result, in 1742, he was appointed as the Grand Vezîr again and Şerîf Halil was his *kethüdâ* for less than a year. (*Sicill-i Osmanî*, p. 1924)

⁷⁷ Newly established in 1725, this post was hierarchically superior even to the one of the *reis-ül-küttâb*, “the head of the chancery of the *dîvân-ı hümayûn*.” Muzaffer Özcan, “Sadaret Kethüdalığı” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, İstanbul University, 1995), 12.

⁷⁸ Being the son of a prominent merchant named Muhsin Çelebi, Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa had entered the *defter-hâne* one year earlier than Şerîf Halil in 1710 as a *darb-hane defter-dârı* in place of his brother Mehmed Efendi. His rise in official rankings was much faster than Şerîf Halil, which included promotions to very prestigious positions such as *defter-dâr-ı şikk-ı evvel*, *darbhane emini*, *küçük ruznamçeci* and *şadâret kethüdâsı* in a short period of four years. Having married the daughter of Çorlulu Ali Paşa, Abdullah Paşa established an even stronger network which might have probably been helpful in his rise into the position of grand vezîr, after a long career of service in various posts such as *nişancı*, janissary *ağa*, *muhassıl*, and *vâli* of Vidin, Rumelia, Bosnia, Adana, Selanik, Lepanto and Tırhala. When he died in 1749, he is written to have been over 90 years old. Muhsinzâde’s attempts to fortify Şumen was influential in the city’s later prominence as an *ordugâh* town. Şerîf Halil’s official cooperation with Muhsinzâde Abdullah Paşa, as a *şadâret kethüdâsı*,

The career line formation for the office of *şeyhü'l-islâm* was a relatively consistent one which required previous experience in the respective posts of mosque professor, provincial judge, Judge-Advocate for Anatolia (*Anadolu kadiasker*) and Judge-Advocate for Rumelia (*Rumeli kadiasker*). Fitting to the scenario above, the first official duty that Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi is recorded to have been engaged with was his service as a *müderriş* (mosque professor) in 1701/2 (H. 1113).⁷⁹ He later served as the *kadiasker* of Anatolia in 1733 (H.1146) and Rumelia in 1739 (H.1151) and 1743 (H.1156) respectively. After holding the post of *the imâm-ı evvel* (the chief religious consultant) of the sultan, he became the *şeyhü'l-islâm* in 1745 (H.1158). In other words, he climbed up the highest ranks that a mosque professor could possibly hold, starting out as a *kazî* and ending up as the *şeyhü'l-islâm*.

Aside from their common career trajectories under the patronage of İbrahim, another more important common feature they share is their robust presence within the literary and scientific circles of the time. Subhî's chronicle and *Tuhfe-i Nailî* refers to Şâhib Mehmed Efendi as the translator of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*.⁸⁰ Indeed, he translated two-thirds of the book, and his translation circulated in manuscript form before Ahmed Cevdet Paşa translated the final part in 1859. Mehmed Süreyya notes that he was an able man of letters and sciences who could write poetry in the three Ottoman imperial languages (*elsine-yi selâse*: Arabic, Persian, and Turkish).⁸¹ Indeed, Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, similar to Şerîf Halil and Mustafa of Kastamonu, was also one of the poets who wrote *kasîdes* for Dâmâd İbrahim

lasted about one year. However, it would not be far-fetched to deduce that the long existence of Muhsinzâde in the Ottoman palace might have been an advantage for Şerîf Halil. (*Sicill-i Osmanî*, p. 82)

⁷⁹ *Sicill-i 'Osmânî*, p. 1435.

⁸⁰ C. Bosworth, "Pîrî-Zâde Sahib Mehmed," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1960).

⁸¹ Subhî, p. 34; *Tuhfe-i Nailî*, v.2, p.532.

Paşa.⁸² He collected all the poetry that he wrote in Persian, Arabic and Turkish in a *dîvân* (anthology).⁸³

In a very similar fashion, Mustafa of Kastamonu was also an able man of letters who could compose poetry in three languages, and his literary creativity in the Arabic language was his strong asset, which also enabled him to find a place in the translation committee organized by İbrahim.⁸⁴ By the same token, Mustafa commissioned the construction of many *mescids*, *medreses*, *mektebs* and libraries in İstanbul, Belgrade and his hometown Kastamonu.⁸⁵ Like the other members his network, he patronized a library attached to the *medrese* in his hometown Kastamonu in 1741. Furthermore, he constructed another library in the courtyard of Naşrullah Kādî Mosque in his hometown in 1746. He also planned to patronize a third library in İstanbul; however, according to the second *vakıf-nâme* written on behalf of his pious deeds, this building was not built during his life time. In this *vakıf-nâme*, it is shown that Mustafa Efendi consecrated a total of 1,237 books for his library, which was quite a high number in those days.⁸⁶

Another actor of this thesis, Mustafa Âtîf, was fluent in Arabic and Persian and could compose poetry in these languages. His poetic skills were developed under the influence of Nâbî, one of the leading poets of the time, and he wrote a *dîvân* (poetical anthology) which also included elaborate letters (*münşecât*) written to his first patron Âzzet Âli. He mastered the calligraphic writing styles of *dîvânî*, *rik'a* and *siyaqat*, and he supported and offered the adoption of solar calendar in Ottoman financial administration on the grounds that the simultaneous use of the lunar calendar and the solar calendar had

⁸² Metin Hakverdioglu suggests that the content of two of the five *kasîdes* titled *Kasîde-i Şâhib Efendi* is clearly implicative of an authorial intervention when it is considered that these poems mention journeys to Salonika for an official mission.⁸² The fact that Şâhib Mehmed Efendi served as the *molla* of Salonika in H.1135 (1722/23) is supportive of Hakverdioglu's suggestion. Hakverdioglu, "Edebiyatımızda Lâle Devri Ve Damad İbrahim Paşa'ya Sunulan Kasîdeler," 153-7.

⁸³ *Devhat-ül-meşâyih*, 93; *Esmâ-ül-müellifîn*, v. 2, 327

⁸⁴ *Sicill-i 'Osmânî*, 1179.

⁸⁵ Erünsal, 219-222; Resmî Ahmed Efendi, *Halifetü'r-Rüesâ*, İstanbul 1269, 69.

⁸⁶ Erünsal, 222.

caused severe financial crises.⁸⁷ Prior to his death in 1740, °Âtîf Efendi established a public library in İstanbul and donated a large sum of rare manuscripts, including some transcribed by himself, to the library.⁸⁸

The fourth actor of the thesis, Şerîf Halil, was another bureaucrat who secured himself a place within the entourage of İbrahim Paşa due to his intellectual interests and distinction. İbrahim, an enthusiastic patron of arts, enjoyed attending gatherings of poetry and supported prominent literary figures such as Seyyid Vehbî, Nahîfî, Ahmed Neylî, Nedîm, Raşid the Chronicler and Osman-zâde Tâib. İbrahim also appreciated the *kasîdes* written by Şerîf Halil, mainly as a praise for the patron, which were collected in the *Fâ'iz ve Şakir Mecmû'ası*.⁸⁹ Furthermore, according to the chronicler İzzî, Şerîf Halil composed some chronograms for Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa; however, despite exhaustive research, I was not able to find any of these.⁹⁰ Being a vigilant and ambitious figure who kept an eye open to new developments and trends around him, Şerîf Halil was also an active agent of the fashion of collecting and endowing books. He built a library as a dependency of the large mosque and *medrese* that he built in Şumnu (in modern-day Bulgaria) and entrusted two *hâfız-ı kütübs* (library officers) with specific duties like keeping the library open from the morning until night for four days per week and providing the students with the books that

⁸⁷ For instance, in one of °Âtîf's memoranda, it is stated that the local army that had been levied for the re-conquest of Belgrade were to be paid according to the solar calendar. MS Âtîf Efendi Kütüphanesi No. 2087; Memorandum on the calendar reform printed in *Târih-i Cevdet* (İstanbul, 1891); İstanbul University Library, Rare Manuscripts Collection, T2857; F. Sezgin, "Âtîf Efendi Kütüphanesinin Vakfiyesi," *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi* 6(1954).

⁸⁸ Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri: Tarihi Gelişimi Ve Organizasyonu*, 217.

⁸⁹ Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi, n. 763. The *mecmû'a* begins with the following expression: "Cennet mekân firdevs-âşîyan Sultan Ahmed Han hazretlerinin vezîr-i âzamı merhum İbrahim Paşa hazretlerinin asırlarında olan şûâranın arzettikleri kasâid ve tevârihtir..." Translation: "The *mecmû'a* consists of the eulogies and histories presented by the poets who wrote during the period of the deceased grand vezîr İbrahim Paşa of Sultan Ahmed Han whose abode shall be heaven." Apart from Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa the *mecmû'a* of Fâ'iz ve Şakir includes *kasîdes* written for Ahmed III and some other vezîrs.

⁹⁰ İzzî Süleyman Efendi, *ibid.*

they wanted, as well as keeping them within the library in accordance with the catalogue that had been prepared.⁹¹

II. II Making Knowledge Available: Translation Committee and Printing Press

*Sensin ol zât-ı ‘amîmü’l-lutf-ı ve ‘l-ihsan kim
Cümle dil-şâd oldu rûzında refâh-ı hâl ile*⁹²

This part of the chapter aims at (i) portraying the sorts of intellectual investments that Ahmed III and İbrahim Paşa initiated such as establishing translation committees and introducing the printing press as an extension of their reforms in bureaucratic layers, (ii) locating the actors of this thesis within a broader circle of intellectual bureaucrats and religious authorities whose works epitomized the cultural entrepreneurship of their patron, (iii) contextualizing İbrahim’s project of creating a new bureaucracy, the members of which sharpened their intellectual skills and exhibited them in various literary spheres.

One such sphere in which some of the actors of my work found the opportunity to express their intellectual qualities was the translation committee organized by İbrahim, who was described in most of the translated works with exalting expressions such as “Aristo fîtnât, Felâtun-akl, İbn Sîna-yı hikmet-tedbîr ü ihsan” (the possessor of natural intelligence like Aristotle, wisdom like Plato and auspicious precautions like Avicenna).⁹³ The members of the committee praised each other as “*erbâb-ı dâniş ü irfân*” and “*ashâb-ı istihkak*” (the

⁹¹ Şumnu Historical Museum, 131. For the earlier studies on *vakıf-nâme*, see Herbert Duda, "Moschee Und Medrese Des Şerîf Halîl Pasha in Şumnu," *Balkantürkische Studien* (1949)., Milen Penkov, "Turski Kamenni Nadpisi Ot Kolarovgrad," *Îzveštiya na Narodniya Muzej* (1963)., Osman Keskiöğlü, "Bulgaristan’daki Bazı Türk Vakıfları Ve Âbideleri," *Vakıflar Dergisi*, no. VII (1968); Orlin Sabev, "Džamiyata Na Şerîf Halil Pasha (Tombul Džamiya) V Şumnu: Ot Sledi Dialoga Meždu Zapada I Orienta," in *Balkanlarda Kültürel Etkileşim ve Türk Mimarisi Uluslararası Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, ed. A Yasa and Z Zafer (Şumnu: Atatürk Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Bakanlığı, 2001).

⁹² A couplet from Şerîf Halil’s *kasîde* for İbrahim Paşa. “Kasîde-i Şerîf: Bi’t-Tarîk-i ‘Arz-ı Hâl,” quoted from Metin Hakverdioğlu, p. 268. Translation: You, the bestower of blessings and favors made everyone full of felicity and prosperity.

⁹³ Mehmed Nebîh, *Tercüme-i Tarih-i Alem’aray-i ‘Abbasi*, Atatürk Ktp., M. Cevdet, nr. 57. Mukaddime vr. 2b.

men of science and virtue and the possessors of deserved merits).⁹⁴ The translation committee proved to be a prolific union and translated many renowned Arabic, Persian, Latin and Greek works into Turkish.⁹⁵ *Câmiü'd-düvel* (World History) by Münecim-başı Derviş Ahmed Dede b. Lütfullah (d. 1702), which was a history book depicting a range of events from the time of Prophet Adam until 1673, was the first title assigned to the members of the translation committee. The second title was Aristotle's *Physics*, the first three volumes of which were translated with the title *Tercümet-ü Mücelledi's-Semâniye li Aristetalis*.⁹⁶ The lion's share for this project was Esad Efendi of Ioannina's who explicitly remarks in the preface (*mukaddime*) that before translating the text, he referred to the works of medieval thinkers such as Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas d'Aquinas who all wrote about Aristotle. He also criticized the commentaries of Al-Farabi and Avicenna on Aristotle and praised the commentary of Averroes, which might be considered as his attempt to present the book as a critical volume rather than a mere translation.⁹⁷

The first massive project of the translation committee was the world history of İmâm Każî Mahmud b. Ahmed b. Musa b. Hüseyin b. Yusuf b. Mahmud Bedrüddin el-^cAynî, which is generally known as the ^cAynî *Tarihi*. The work was comprised of 24 volumes, each of which was 800-pages long. Among the thirty men tasked with this project, two were Şerîf Halil and Mustafa Efendi of Kastamonu who actively contributed to the project and whose performance was praised.⁹⁸ The fulfilment of this translation project was expressed by one

⁹⁴ Çelebi-zâde Âsım, *Târih*, pp. 358-9.

⁹⁵ For the content of all the books, see Ayduz, "Lale Devri'nde Yapılan İlmi Faaliyetler."; İpşirli, "Lale Devri'nde Teşkil Edilen Tercüme Heyetine Dair Bazı Gözlemler."

⁹⁶ Copies of this book can be found in İstanbul Üniversitesi Library, AY, nr. 534 (author's copy); Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Esad Ef. n. 1936 and 1939; Hamidiye Library n. 874; Ragıp Paşa Library n. 680 (824); Beşir Ağa Library, n. 414.

⁹⁷ After Ayduz, İstanbul Üniversitesi Library, n. 534, pp. 1b-2a.

⁹⁸ Çelebi-zâde, pp. 358-360. The full list of the members of the translation committee for this project is as follows: 1. Mirza-zâde Mehmed Sâlim Efendi, 2. İshak Efendi, the ex-każî of İstanbul, 3. Medhî Efendi, the ex-każî of Damascus, 4. Mestçizâde Abdullah Efendi, the ex-każî of Salonika, 5. Râzî Abdüllatif Efendi, the ex-każî of Yenişehir, 6. Ahmed İlmî Hâlis Cinân Efendi, the ex-każî of Aleppo, 7. Kara Halil-zâde Mehmed Said Efendi, 8. Neylî Ahmed Efendi, the ex-kadı of İzmir, 9. Mustafa Efendi, the ex-każî of Galata, 10. Yanyalı Esad Efendi, the ex-każî of Galata, 11. Ömer Efendi, the *fetva emini*, 12. Arab-zâde Hasan Efendi, the

of the other translators, Mirza-zâde Sâlim Efendi as “erbâb-ı devlete bir ziyâfet-i cemîle ve hizmet” meaning “a sublime service and feast for the connoisseurs of the state.”⁹⁹ After the completion of the translation of *‘Aynî Tarihi*, the committee was instructed to translate *Habîbü’s-siyer* which covers the Safavid history until the death of Shah Ismail in 1523. One important observation about the date of this project is its coincidence with the onset of several clashes between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires in the last years of İbrahim’s grand vizierate. Furthermore, the choice of personnel for the translation committee reveals the fact that the bureaucratic cadres in which İbrahim heavily invested also provided support for the intellectual enterprises of the patron, considering that the translators of Arabic works were generally old mosque professors or *kazîs* (local judges), whereas, the translators for Persian works were chosen among either the poets or the *hâcegan*.¹⁰⁰ Because İbrahim was referred to as the bestower of generous gifts to the poets and men of letters in each of these translation projects, we can deduce that İbrahim himself paid the salaries of the members of the translation committee. The prominent poet of the time, Seyyid Vehbi, addresses his gratefulness to his patron as follows, “For as long as I have known myself, nobody has shown an interest in the men of letters and virtue as much as my master (effendi) has done.”¹⁰¹

Apart from the titles that the translation committee worked on, İbrahim and Ahmed III admired and encouraged the individual efforts of several other bureaucrats who translated a large spectrum of works such as *Nemçe Tarihi* (the History of Austria)

şeyh of Süleymaniye Mosque, 13. Ali Efendi, the şeyh of Şehzâde Mosque, 14. Yekçeşm İsmâil Efendi, müderris, 15. Ahmet b. Receb Efendi, müderris, 16. Turşucuzâde Efendi, müderris, 17. Seyyid Vehbi Efendi, 18. Nedîm Ahmed Efendi, 19. Arabzâde Sâlih Efendi, 20. Şerîf Halil Efendi, 21. Şâmî Ahmed Efendi, 22. Şâkir Hüseyin Beyefendi, 23. Darendeli Mehmed Efendi, 24. Râzî Efendizâde Abdurrahman Münib, 25. Küçük Çelebizâde İsmâil Âsım Efendi, 26. Hacı Çelebi, mülâzım, 27. Şeyhî Mustafa Efendi, 28. Hüseyin Paşazâde Avfî Mehmed Bey, mevkûfâtçı, 29. İzzet Ali Bey (Paşa), defter-dâr mektupçusu, 30. Mustafa Efendi of Kastamonu.

⁹⁹ Aydın, "Lale Devri'nde Yapılan İlmi Faaliyetler," 145.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 140-8.

¹⁰¹ Ali Canîb, "Seyyid Vehbi," *Hayat* 16(1927). Original: “Ben kendimi bildim bileli etmedi kimse / Ehl-i dil ü irfâna Efendim gibi rağbet.”

translated by Osman b. Ahmed;¹⁰² *Acâibü'l-letâif* (also known as *Hitay Sefâret-nâmesi* in Persian) translated by Küçük Çelebi-zâde İsmâil Âsım Efendi; *Târih-i Âlem'aray-i Abbâsî* (the work of İskender Münşî Türkmen in Persian) translated by Mehmed Nebih; Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* translated by Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi; *Sırrü'l-Esrâr* (also known as *Kitâbü's-siyâse fî tedbîri'r-riyâse*, originally attributed to Aristotle and translated into Arabic by Yuhannâ bin Bitrîk) translated by Muhammed Hamîdî; *Nüzhetü'l-ebdân fî Tercümet-i Gâyeti'l-itkân* (written by Sâlih b. Nasrullah, also known as *Gâyeti'l-itkân fî tedbîr-i bedeni'l-insan*) translated by Ebu'l-Feyz Mustafa b. Ahmed; *Mecmû'a-i Hey'eti'l-Kazîme ve'l-cedîde* (originally known as *Atlas Coelestis* by Andreas Cellarius) and *Târih-i Seyyâh der Beyân-ı Zuhûr-i Ağvaniyân ve Sebeb-i İnhidâm-ı Binâ-ı Devlet-i Şâhân-ı Safevîyân* (*The History of Late Revolutions of Persia* written by Judasz Tadeusz Krusinski in Latin) translated by İbrâhim Müteferrika.¹⁰³

These translations were a means to make knowledge accessible to an audience who were not able to read in Latin, Greek, Persian or Arabic. The sultan's attempt to facilitate access to knowledge became more evident in 1726 when he decided to establish a printing press. The fundamental motivation of the sultan was his strong desire to enhance social mobility and to broaden the sphere of public discourse. Considering that education was the foremost opportunity of the poor for social mobility, providing access to books, in a sense, meant providing access to the elite echelons of Ottoman society. Ahmed realized his plan to introduce the printing press in 1729 and became the founder of the first Muslim and Turkish

¹⁰² Osman b. Ahmed was originally from Temeşvar (modern-day Timișoara in Romania) and fell captive to Habsburgs in 1687. He lived in Graz and Vienna for twelve years before fleeing back to his hometown Temeşvar in 1718. He served as the translator of the governor of Temeşvar before finally settling in İstanbul due to his illness and poverty. Temeşvarlı Osman Ağa, *Kendi Kalemiyle Temeşvarlı Osman Ağa: : Bir Osmanlı Türk Sipahisinin Hayatı Ve Esirlik Hatıraları*, ed. H. Tolasa (Selçuk Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1986).

¹⁰³ Aydıöz, "Lale Devri'nde Yapılan İlmi Faaliyetler.", *passim*.

publishing house.¹⁰⁴ The sultan's edict issued on July 5, 1727 indicated that printing and disseminating knowledge was as equally important as "minting money or imprinting the paper with a signet ring." In parallel to the economic, social and bureaucratic policies co-initiated by his Grand Vezîr, the sultan now turned to sort out low quality and shallow knowledge. The unreliability of earlier European experiments with Arabic prints and the scarcity of Arabic and Turkish manuscripts, which Ahmed thought to be due to "wars and fires," made the enterprise inevitable. Referring to the printing of reliable books as "source of inspiration" for students, the sultan supported the printing not only for preserving Islamic classics but also for creating new types of learning and scholarship. In the edict, Ahmed praised the efforts of the *‘ulemâ* who were tasked with the propagation of the Koran as well as preserving religious sciences, but he found that they were insufficient when it came to secular scholarship. Without giving additional justification, he briefly asserted that printing philosophy books would be an auspicious deed for the Muslims.¹⁰⁵

In this enterprise, Ahmed III and İbrâhim was not alone. The primary agent of the whole project was İbrahim Müteferrika, a Transylvanian convert, (d. 1747) who was originally a Socinian¹⁰⁶ from the Hungarian town of Cluj (in modern-day Romania). In 1710, he penned *Risâle-i İslâmiyye* in which he attempted to show that proper Christianity

¹⁰⁴ Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika Ya Da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni, 1726-1746 : Yeniden Değerlendirme.*, Müteferrika Ve Osmanlı Matbaası, ed. F. Babinger, N.K. Burçoğlu, and M. Kiel (Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2004). There were other presses in Istanbul at the time, but they did not publish in Turkish and did not address a Muslim audience.

¹⁰⁵ Ahmed III's edict is printed in the first title printed in the press, *Tercüme-yi Şihah'ül-Cevherî* (Sûret-i Hatt-ı Hümâyûn (p. [3-4]) translated by Mehmet bin Mustafa el-Vanî. I refer to various expressions in the edict which is unpaginated without further additional footnotes.

¹⁰⁶ Küçük, 160-7: "Fausto Sozzini was the founder of Socinianism, a fifteenth-century religious movement that gained popularity in Poland and Transylvania and rejected the concept of the Holy Trinity. A few narrative sources also identify Müteferrika as a monk, which makes it quite likely that he had not grown up as a Socinian but was an ex-Catholic. He belonged to a demographic that was similar to many other European thinkers of Jonathan Israel's 'radical enlightenment.'" Küçük's suggestion that it was probably Dimitri Cantemir, a Moldavian prince, who was responsible for inducting Müteferrika into the palace is tenable considering that Cantemir had sympathies towards unitarianism and was generally quite sympathetic towards Islam. The fact that Cantemir's Greek rendition of Andreas Wissowatius's anti-trinitarian ethical tract *Stimuli Virtuti* was later rendered into Arabic by Athanasios III Dabbas, the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch suggests that a philosophical anti-trinitarianism was perhaps a fairly popular view.

was closer to Islam than it was to Trinitarianism.¹⁰⁷ Müteferrika became a loyal courtier of Ahmed III, and the sultan appointed him as the personal envoy to Ferenc Rakoczy II, a Hungarian prince who sought asylum from the Ottomans so as to initiate an uprising in Habsburg Hungary.¹⁰⁸ As a convert and men of letters who knew about the printing culture in Europe and Ottoman manuscripts, Müteferrika's perspective on Ottoman culture made him a unique man.

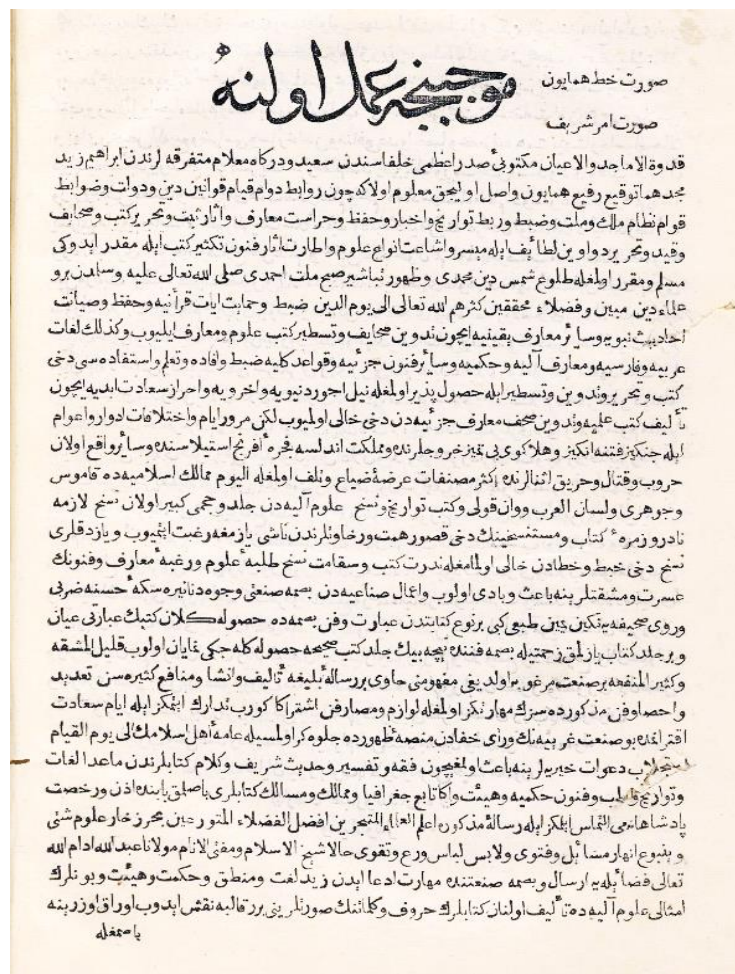


Figure 1 - A Copy of Ahmed III's edict printed in *Tercüme-yi Sıhahü'l-Cevherî*

In 1726, Müteferrika prepared an explanatory booklet titled *Vesilet üt-Tibâ'at* (Virtues of Printing) to be submitted to Ahmed III and İbrahim, which included a well-

¹⁰⁷ Sabev, 78-100.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 121.

written summary of the benefits of publishing books.¹⁰⁹ In his report, Müteferrika referred to books as tools used by societies and communities to organize matters which are important to them. When deployed in the service of monarchies and governments, according to Müteferrika, books would help states become well-ordered, rational and judicious. He also likened books to emerald tables which would exalt the state, order the nation, bring the community to perfection and glorify the Empire by protecting and preserving the arts and sciences until the Day of Judgment.¹¹⁰ Müteferrika seems to have influenced Ahmed III's ideas about the state of Islamic books considering that Ahmed's expressions in the edict issued one year later, echoed Müteferrika's suggestion about the books' role in preserving social and religious order. Müteferrika also pointed to the Muslims' failure in preserving histories, biographies, lexica and other important works.¹¹¹ Müteferrika's report succinctly referred to ten distinct positive consequences that the sultan should expect from the introduction of the printing press, which epitomized Ahmed's emphasis on disseminating knowledge to each and every corner of the Empire:¹¹²

- i. Printing would help the betterment of religious education by producing lexica; books on history, astronomy, geography and logic.
- ii. Printing would refresh and propagate the process of learning. In contrast to manuscript commentaries which were written and taught by the *‘ulemâ*, printed books would restore the splendor of the original as if they had recently been written.
- iii. The volumes would be more beautiful, accurate and durable, which meant easier classification and more accurate spelling.
- iv. Printing would give the rich and the poor access to books. It would also save the time otherwise wasted time in copying and comparing manuscripts, a frequent occupation at *medreses*.
- v. Edited materials could offer new levels of access to knowledge, due to the facts that they came with summaries, indices and appendix.
- vi. Everyone could buy books, thus the printing press would provide a universal access to them.

¹⁰⁹ *Vesilet üt-Tibâ‘at* pp. 18-19, v. 6-8 in *Tercüme-I Sıhahü'l-Cevheri*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, also see Küçük, p. 167, for a close reading of the booklet.

¹¹¹ Stefan Reichmuth, "Islamic Reformist Discourse in the Tulip Period (1718-30): İbrahim Müteferrika and His Arguments for Printing," in *International Congress on Learning and Education in the Ottoman World*, ed. Ali Çaksu (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2001).

¹¹² Serpil Altuntek, "İlk Türk Matbaasının Kuruluşu Ve İbrahim Müteferrika," *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 10, no. 1 (1993).

- vii. The Empire would become stronger since it was easy to disseminate books to towns. Therefore, libraries would be full of books, natural consequences of which were better educated students and more orderly townships.
- viii. Books would invigorate the Muslims, thus awakening their feelings of gratitude to the sultan.
- ix. The press would provide the Muslims with opportunity to trade books with the Europeans, which would make them involved with international book trade.
- x. Books would also accelerate Islamic learning among the non-Arab nations such as Uzbeks, Hindis, Persians, Yemenis, Greeks, Kurds, Tartars, Ethiopians and Maghribis.

When the edict of the sultan is juxtaposed with Müteferrika's *Vesilet üt-Tibâ'at*, it is interesting to note that neither of them addressed the contents of the books to be printed in the press. Instead, they emphasized the instrumental aspects of the books in terms of not only safeguarding Islamic cultural and intellectual heritage but also in terms of reforming the state, the army and higher learning.¹¹³ The books printed in the press targeted a lay crowd who had an interest in secular learning and who had money to spend for collecting books. These were indeed the very people who were associated with the Ottoman court: *paşas*, bureaucrats and other city dwellers. In this sense, the patronage of *vakıf* libraries was a significant step to disseminate knowledge to the use of a much broader audience.

¹¹³ Nadia Al-Bagdadi, "From Heaven to Dust: Metamorphosis of the Book in Pre-Modern Arab Culture," *The Medieval History Journal* 8, no. 1 (2005): 88-90.

January 1729	<i>Tercemetü's-Şîhâhü'l-Cevherî</i> by Mehmed b. Mustafa el-Vânî. (The Translation of Truths of Cevheri)
May 1729	<i>Tuhfetü'l-kibâr fî Esfâri'l-bihâr</i> by Katip Çelebi (A Gift to the Lords about the Naval Campaigns of the Ottomans)
August 1729	<i>Târih-i seyyâh der beyân-i zuhûr-i Agvâniyân ve Sebeb-i İnhidâm-i Binâ-i Devlet-i Sâhân-ı</i> <i>Safeviyân</i> by Judasz Tadeusz Krusinski (1675-1756) (On the Recent Revolutions in the Safavid State)
March 1730	<i>Târih-i Hind-i Garbî</i> , Anonymous. (History of the West Indies)
May 1730	<i>Târih-i Tîmûr</i> by Nazmi-zâde Hüseyin Mustafa (The History of Tamerlane).
June 1730	<i>Târih-i Mîsrü'l-Cedîd ve'l Kazîm</i> by Süheyli (History of Ancient and Contemporary Egypt)
August 1730	<i>Gülşen-i Hulefâ</i> by Nazmi-zâde Hüseyin Mustafa (Rose Garden of the Caliphs)
1730	<i>Grammaire Turque, ou méthode courte et facile pour apprendre la</i> <i>langue Turque</i> by Jean-Baptiste Holdermann (Turkish Grammar for Learners)
February 1732	<i>Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizâmü'l-ümem</i> by İbrahim Müteferrika (Methods of Rule in Various Social Orders)
February 1732	<i>Füyûzât-ı Mîknatısıyye</i> by İbrahim Müteferrika (The Benefits of the Compass)
July 1732	<i>Cihânnümâ</i> by Kâtip Çelebi (Cosmorama)
June 1733	<i>Takvimü't-Tevârîh</i> by Kâtip Çelebi (Chronology of Histories)
June 1734	<i>Târih-i Nâimâ</i> by Mustafa Nâimâ (History of Naima)
March 17, 1741	<i>Ahvâl-i Gazavât der Diyâr-i Bosna</i> (On the ghazas in Bosnia)
October 1, 1741	<i>Ferheng-i Şu'ûri</i>

Figure 2. The list of books printed in the Müteferrika Press

Chapter III:

Eighteenth-Century *Vakıf* Libraries as Institutions Disseminating New Knowledge

1730 was a very long year for the Ottomans. Ahmet III imposed a new set of taxes on the *re'âyâ* and artisans after a series of disastrous defeats against Shah Tahmasb II's Safavid army. This resulted in the outbreak of the bloody Patrona Rebellion named after Patrona Halil, an Albanian who was a former-janissary and officer in the Ottoman navy. Conventional historiography has reduced the revolt to the mischief of riff-raff in Istanbul, whereas, new evidence suggests that the revolt was of an elitist nature and a conflict of different factions.¹¹⁴ Mainly because the uprising resulted in the dethronement of Ahmed III as well as the execution of many bureaucrats and court intellectuals including the Grand Vezîr İbrahim Paşa, the year 1730 has long been pinpointed as the onset of a distinct rupture in Ottoman history, and thus, the end of the so-called Tulip Age. In contrast, this chapter aims to show that that Ahmedian reformism had already taken deep root by this point, and his intellectual endeavors would come to define the remainder of the eighteenth century. This chapter argues that the *vakıf* libraries patronized by the sultan's government were part of the sultan's reformist agenda that were pursued by the actors of this thesis well beyond Ahmet III's reign. This chapter therefore seeks: (i) to trace the continued rise of the four main actors of this thesis after the Patrona Revolt; (ii) to compile a survey of *vakıf* libraries they patronized in the reign of the next sultan, Mahmud I, in order to demonstrate a continuity in an imperial idiom that sought to continue to disseminate a similar type of knowledge; (iii) to reflect upon the book lists endowed in the libraries to detect the common books in libraries; (iv) and lastly to reach conclusions about the targeted audience of such patronage deeds that were practiced in more than 30 cities throughout Mahmud's reign.

¹¹⁴ S. Karahasanoglu, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda 1730 İsyanına Dair Yeni Bulgular: İsyanın Organizatörlerinden Ayasofya Vâizi İspirizâde Ahmed Efendi Ve Terekesi," *OTAM* 24: 97-128.

Although Mahmud had to eliminate the remnants of the uprising for one full year whilst waging war against the combined armies of the Habsburgs, Safavids and Russians, continuing the intellectual investments initiated by Ahmed III and İbrahim Paşa was also one of his top priorities. He established a paper mill in Yalova and supported the re-opening of the printing press, which had been inactive for several years after the rebellion. A record in a *Rûznâme* (a register depicting the events in a specific period on a daily basis) written during Mahmud's reign shows that he was indeed closely interested in the paper mill and invited İbrahim Müteferrika to his court to discuss the production of different kinds of paper. Ultimately, Mahmud commissioned Müteferrika to carry out this project.¹¹⁵ Despite the unexpected and abrupt end of İbrahim's grand vizierate, his administrative reforms and ideal of creating a new Ottoman intellectual/bureaucrat came to fruition in the first years of the reign of Ahmed's cousin Mahmud I. A large number of bureaucrats, including the actors of this thesis, who were once minors in the court of Ahmed moved up to the most eminent positions in Mahmud's court within a few years: °Âtîf Mustafa Efendi became the *defter-dâr* in 1737; Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi became the *şeyhü'l-islâm* in 1736; Şerîf Halil Efendi became *şadâret kethüdâsı* in 1737 and Mustafa Efendi of Kastamonu became the *reîsü'l-küttâb* in 1744. Likewise, several other prominent bureaucrats fostered by the philosophical setting of Ahmed's court enjoyed similar promotions. For instance, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, the son of Nûh Efendi the Court Physician, became the Grand Vezîr in the late 1730s, whereas, Ali Munşî of Bursa who was an alchemist and active translator in İbrahim's entourage became the Chief Physician. These promotions demonstrate that despite the bloody uprising in 1730, Mahmud was able to eliminate the elite faction that was responsible for ousting Ahmed from the throne. Under the leadership of the new sultan, the

¹¹⁵ Özcan Özcan, "Kadı Ömer Efendi: Mahmud I. Hakkında 1157/1744 - 1160/1747 Arası Ruznâme" (Istanbul University, 1965), 41-2. "... ve Basmacı İbrahim Efendi, Yalova'da ihdas eylediği kağıd-hânede âmel eylediği kağıd envândan ityan ve şevketlü efendimize irâât ve keyfiyet-i âmelini tefhim ve pesendide-i hümayun olmakla kendüye bir ceb altun ihsan olunup ve bizzat mükaleme-i şahanaleriyle mahsud-ı akran kılındı."

members of the highest echelons of the Ottoman palace from the previous administration continued to invest in enterprises that aimed to disseminate knowledge for the benefit of a very broad audience.

III.I A Survey of *Vakıf* Libraries

One such imperial investment was *vakıf* libraries, which reached its “golden age” in Mahmud’s reign. ʿÂtîf Mustafa Efendi the *defter-dâr*, Şerîf Halil Efendi the *şadâret kethüdâsı* and Mustafa Efendi the *reîsü’l-küttâb* whose joint career line formations this thesis has traced since their initial appointments in Istanbul in the early 1710s actively contributed to Mahmud’s policy of disseminating knowledge to the distant parts of the Empire. In addition to continuing an imperial idiom predicated on cultivating new types of cultural practices throughout the realm continued from the previous sultan and Grand Vezîr’s administration, the patronage of these officials was also catered to improving the lives and minds of inhabitants and bolstering their own reputations amongst their kin and relations in their hometowns. In parallel with Jonathan Israel’s definition of a *grande bibliothèque* which should be accessible to readers via some crucial facilities such as “a well-planned and conscientiously maintained catalogue and sufficient supervision by salaried assistants to keep regular opening hours,”¹¹⁶ the whole enterprise of investing in Ottoman libraries resulted in the formation of several well-defined employment opportunities such as *hâfız-ı kütüb* (the librarians tasked with protecting books), *mücellid* (book-binders), *müstâhfiz* (library guards), *dersiâm* (teachers) and *buhûrîs* (officers responsible for the nice fragrance of libraries).

¹¹⁶ Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (OUP Oxford, 2001), 121-2.

In a letter sent to the *kazî* of Kastamonu that reflects the content of other decrees and edicts he wrote, Mahmud explicitly articulated his view about books, libraries and their benefits to the students and the greater Ottoman public:

“...The pillar of the world and religion stands on the value and cultivation of the arts and sciences. Thus, because skills and virtues can be earned from books and treatises in every town and help their inhabitants surpass their oblivious ancestors, men of virtue must build and organize libraries and endow books from which skillful students can study and benefit, and these good men must also assign keepers of books. Therefore, when the poor souls seeking learning and the sciences are in need, they can through read in libraries organized well to facilitate their improvement...”¹¹⁷

Mahmud’s encouragement for establishing libraries all around the Empire also caught the attention of his court chroniclers. Subhî, for example, referred to Mahmud as “the sultan who realized the sublime task (of establishing grandiose libraries)” which his predecessors could not.¹¹⁸ The sultan spearheaded his library policy by establishing libraries in Ayasofya, Fâtih, Galatasaray, Belgrade, Vidin and Cairo. He also sent book collections to the libraries which had previously been established such as Gülnûş Vâlide Sultan’s library in Chios and the Selâmet Giray Han II’s library in the Crimea.¹¹⁹ The maintenance and protection of books were also a high priority for the sultan, which can be confirmed in the expressions he used to chide the “impertinent ones” (*kendüyi bilmez kimesneler*) who damaged books. In one of the letters he sent to Kastamonu, he commanded the *mufti* to preserve the books available in the area in one single place and wanted him to compile a report including data about the existing *vakıf* libraries, *medreses*, as well as the number of books and their characteristics.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ BOA, Mühimme no. 152, p.136.

¹¹⁸ Subhî, 617: “zamân-ı yesîrde niçe hayr-ı kesîre mazhar u muvaffak olduklarından gayrı bu âna dek eslâf-ı sa’âdet ittisafı – enâra’llahu ta’âlâ berahinehüm hazeratının pîrâye-i sahâyif-i a’mâl ü âsârları olmayan kitâbhâne-i sâmiye binâsıyla...”

¹¹⁹ Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri: Tarihi Gelişimi Ve Organizasyonu*, 231.

¹²⁰ BOA. Mühimme no. 152, p. 137: “...Kastamonu kazâsında dahî siyâk-ı meşrûh üzere ba’zı ashâb-ı hayrât nice kütüb-i mu’teberân cem’ ve medreselerde dersâhanelerine vaz’ ve vakf idüp tüllâb-ı zev’l-elbâb istifâde ve intifâ’ idgelmişler iken öyle kütüb-i mevkûfe için müte’ayyen kitâbhâne ve muvazzaf hafız-ı kütübler olmamakdan nâşi mürûr-ı eyyâm ile medreseler harâb ve kitâblar dahî kendüyi bilmez kimesneler ahz ve ıstırab ile el-yevm kütüb-i mevkûfe müteferrik ve eyâdi-i nâsda müteşettit kalduğuna ve nicelerinin dahi hâfız-ı kütübleri mefkûd olduğundan talebe intifâ’ idemeyüb bir müddet dahî alâ-hâlihî kalsa mecmû’-i kütüb arza-i

The most monumental library of Mahmud, established in the Ayasofya complex in İstanbul, was a symbol of novelty not only in terms of its rich collection (more than 4000 books, according to Subhî¹²¹) but also due to its architectural design. Located between the two buttresses on the south of the building, the library consisted of a reading room and a storage room. The corridor combining these two rooms is decorated with 18th century İznik and Kütahya tiles, and the interior is ornamented with luxury items such as a number of Koran casings coated with mother-of-pearl and tusk.¹²² Mahmud's investment in this library was not only representative of his strong interest in books: it was also a tool for Mahmud to build up his sultanic charisma, which echoed in the riddle-like folk songs of the Istanbulite at the time:

The majesty of the State and House of Osman/ To which there is no equal /Praised in every corner the valuable ornamentation of the library/ Worthy of explaining in detail, its ornamentation shed light on the world in the mosque of Hagia Sophia/ He commissioned a sublime work/ God helped him be glorious/ May God will that this building bring much benefaction/ While looking at the library/ Everybody shall say May God preserve it! ¹²³

The second library Mahmud commissioned was adjunct to Mehmed II's socio-religious complex (Fâtih Mosque) on the grounds that it would be a "gathering place for prominent scholars and the spring of enlightened sciences."¹²⁴ The court chronicler İzzî Süleyman Efendi who was present in the opening ceremony of the library notes that this library "invigorated and rejuvenated the student body in the city."¹²⁵ The book list attached

telef olacağın mevsukun-bih kimesneler haber vormeleriyle hasbeten lillâhi ve taleben li-merzâtillahi zıkr olunan kütüb-i mevkûfe cem' itdirilüp..."

¹²¹ Subhî, 174b: "Hazine-i âmirede mevcud olandan başka sa'âdetlü Sadrazam semâhatlü Şeyhülişlâm Efendi hazerâtı ve bi'l-cümle kibâr-ı 'ulemâ-yı bihâm ve sâ'ir ricâl-i erkân-ı devlet taraflarından âla tariki'l-ithâf cânib-i hümayunlarına ârz ve takdîm olunanlar ile mecmû'e dört bin cild kütüb-i nefise-i bî-hemtâ... vaz' ve ibkâ olunmağla..."

¹²² Azâde Akar, "Ayasfoya'da Bulunan Türk Eserleri Ve Süslemelerine Dair Bir Araştırma," *Vakıflar Dergisi* VIII: 184-6. Subhî narrates the preparations made one day before the inauguration of the library in minute detail. "Bir gün mukaddem kitap-hâne-i merkûme ve bi'l-cümle etrâfi som ve sırma yasdıklar ve mak'adler ile döşenüp ve mahall-i merkumdan kapıya varıncaya etrâf-ı râha perdeler çekilüp her hususu gereği gibi tertib ve tanzim olunduktan sonra..." (Subhî, 174b.)

¹²³ Dağlı, *İstanbul Mahalle Bekçilerinin Destan Ve Mâni Katarları*, 59-60. Original: Âl-i Osman'ın şevketi/Yoktur nazîr-i devleti/Dört köşede medh olunur/Kütüphânenin zîneti/Ziyneti dehre saldı fer/Vasfa sezâdır serteser/Ayasofya Câmiinde/ Eyledi bir âli eser/Muvaffak eyledi Allâh/Hayr olur makbûl inşallah/Seyr edip kütüphâneyi/Her gören dedi maşaallah.

¹²⁴ Süleymaniye Library, *Yazma Bağışlar*, 242., p. 1b: "Mehmed Han Câmi-i Şerîfi mecma'-ı fuhûl-i 'ulemâ ve menba-ı ulûm-ı garrâ olmağla..."

¹²⁵ İzzî, 219b.

to the *vakıf-nâme* of the Fâtih library shows that in its initial phase, the library's collection was not as rich as the Ayasofya library.¹²⁶ The sultan did not also appoint a *dersiâm* (teacher) for this library since the town already had a number of *medreses*, and Mahmud conceived this library as a contribution to the existing educational practices in the Fâtih socio-religious complex.¹²⁷

Likewise, the *vakıf-nâme* written in connection with the pious deeds of ^cÂtîf Mustafa Efendi, one of the main actors of this thesis, clearly states that the intended audience for his library in Vefâ (Istanbul) was the student body (*talebe-yi 'ulûm*).¹²⁸ The library contained numerous invaluable manuscripts and calligraphic texts. Nevertheless, the number of personnel tasked with duties related to the protection and maintenance of the books were not as many.¹²⁹ ^cÂtîf Efendi made sure that the three *hâfız-ı kütübs* earned enough money so that they would not have to supplement their income with other jobs. He also stipulated that these officers were obliged to live in the residential units built nearby the library in order to keep a close eye on the establishment and more easily fulfill the needs of its patrons. There is also a reference to a *şeyh-ül-kurra* (teacher for reading out Koran) in the *vakıf-nâme* which signals the practice of educational sessions within the library. He also highlighted it that the criteria for choosing these personnel was their aptitude and merit, and it was not possible to hand over the posts to the under-aged who had not reached maturity. One strict rule ^cÂtîf Mustafa insisted upon, however, was that the patrons were prohibited from taking out books for any reason.¹³⁰ The *vakıf-nâme* refers to further additions to the initial book collection made by ^cÂtîf's sons Ahmed, Mehmed Emin and Ömer Vâhid. Apart from the standard repertoire of a *medrese* curriculum, the library possessed manuscripts which

¹²⁶ Süleymaniye Library, *Yazma Bağışlar* 242

¹²⁷ Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri: Tarihi Gelişimi Ve Organizasyonu*, 227.

¹²⁸ ^cÂtîf Efendi Kütüphanesi 2858, p. 72b "...şürû' eylediğim kütüphâne-i mevkufeme talebe-i ulûmun ifade ve istifadesi mülâhazasıyle vaz' u hıfzolunmak için..."

¹²⁹ Ibid. Also see Sezgin, "Âtîf Efendi Kütüphanesinin Vakfiyesi."

¹³⁰ Ibid, 104a-109b

displayed ʿĀtîf Mustafa’s bibliophile and personal taste. Some examples of these rare manuscripts were *Tahzîb İslâh al-Mantık* by Abî Zekeriyâ Yahya b. ʿAlî b. al-Hatîb at-Tibrîzî (d. 502 H.),¹³¹ *Kitâb al-Bâdi fî ʿilm al-ʿArabiya* by al-Mubârağ b. Muḥammed b. ʿAbdülkerîm b. al-Aşîr (d. 606 H.),¹³² *Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldun (d. 808 H.) which included corrections by the author’s own hand writing.¹³³

There are also a couple of *vaqıf-nâmes* for the pious deeds of Mustafa Efendi the *reîsü’l-küttâb* who commissioned libraries in Belgrade, Kastamonu and Istanbul. In a document dated August 1741, Mustafa meticulously explains the way the books he endowed for his library in Kastamonu should be stored. He indicates that before reaching their final destinations, these books were to be kept in a depot that he prepared nearby the Rumelia Fortress and that his foremost audience was his descendants who would continue his pious deeds. He allocated some of the books for his library in Belgrade and other for his library in Kastamonu, further specifying that librarians were to be appointed in each library with a daily salary of 8 *akçes*.¹³⁴ Mustafa adds that the depot used for storing the books were later to be transformed into a library; however, as indicated in his second *vaqıf-name*, he did not survive to see the fruition of his charitable act. This document also sheds light onto Mustafa’s ideal of establishing a nearby school so as to complement the functions of the library as “an educational service.”¹³⁵ Before his death, Mustafa managed to endow a total of 1237 books for the library, which were later added to the collection of the library of Âşîr Mustafa Efendi, his son and the *şeyhü’l-islâm* of Selim III (r. 1789-1807), who aspired to realize his father’s ambitions.¹³⁶

¹³¹ Âtîf Efendi Lib., nr. 2712, p. 89b: “Cild-i vahidde 21 mistarlı 207 evrakta fuhul hattı ile muhaşşa Tahzîb İslâh al-Mantık”

¹³² Âtîf Efendi Lib, Nr. 2446, p. 78a

¹³³ Âtîf Efendi Lib., Nr. 1936, p. 91a: “Def’a ı vahidde 25 mistarlı 302 evrakta nesih hatla muharrer ve musannif-i merhûmun kalemiyle musahhah Mukaddimat-ı İbn Haldûn.”

¹³⁴ VGMA, 736, pp. 205-6.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ VGMA 738, p. 142. In the *vaqıf-nâme* of his son, Mustafa Âşîr Efendi who served as the *şeyh-ül’islam* in the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807), it is also stated that he died before erecting the library building: “lâkin

The third actor of my work, Şerîf Halil, built a library as a dependency of his socio-religious complex in Şumnu in 1744 and entrusted two *hâfız-ı kütübs* (librarians) with specific duties like keeping the library open from morning until night four days per week and provide the students with the books that they needed and order the books within the library with a catalogue. In one of the copies of the *vakıf-nâme* which is preserved in the Şumnu Historical museum, the book catalogue is not attached. However, the list of books are appended to the end of the copy in the General Directorate of Foundations in Ankara. The list dated 1744/5 is the original one which allows access to a spectrum of categories such as the subjects, languages and characteristics of the books that Şerîf Halil endowed. Accordingly, there were 198 different titles and a total of 222 volumes that were classified in accordance with the curriculum of the *medrese* attached to the mosque. Like his companions, Şerîf Halil referred to “the ones in need of books for their religious, scientific and literary trainings” as the primary audience of his library.¹³⁷ He also appointed a calligraphy master to teach in the library, which became foundation for Şumnu’s becoming one of the most prolific Koran production centers in the 19th century. Calligraphic books written by the masters of Şumnu, which came to be known Şumnu *işi* (Şumnu style), were in great demand not only from neighboring cities but also from the palace circles.¹³⁸ Reflecting his personal mastery and interest, Şerîf Halil’s *vakıf-nâme* was written in *taliq* calligraphic style. Among the books that he endowed, the most original and valuable one was the famous geographer Muhammad Al-Idrisi’s *Nüzhetü’l-Müştak fî İhtirâki’l-Âfak*, which had been copied by Muhammed b. Ali from Cairo in 1556 and contained 70

kütüphane ve dershanenin henüz bina ve inşasına destres olmaksızın evrâk-ı ‘ömr-i nâzenlerin şîrâze-bend-i hitâm olub...” (Süleymaniye Library, Âşir Efendi, 473)

¹³⁷ VGMA 737, p. 135-6: “Tahsîl-i ‘ulûm-i dîniye ve tekâmîl-i fûnûn-i edebiyeye tâlib ve sâ’î olân erbâb-ı isti’dâd-i kütüb-i tehiyye-i esbâb ifâde ve istifâdesi içün mukarenet-i ‘inâyet ve tevfik-i cenâb-ı mâlikü’l-mülk ve’r-rikâb ile cem’i ve i’dâd kılınûb medine-i Şumnî’de binâsına muvaffak olduğım kitâbhâneye hisbeten lillah ve taleben li-merdâtihi bi-tarîkü’l-vakıf vaz’ olunân kütübün defteridir.”

¹³⁸ For the calligraphy school in Şumnu, see Süheyl Ünver, “Şumnu’da Türk Hattatları Ve Eserleri,” *Belleten* XLVII, no. 185 (1983).; Tim Stanley, “Shumen as a Centre of Qur’an Production in the 19th Century,” in *M. Uğur Derman 65 Yaş Armağanı*, ed. İrvin Cemil Schick (İstanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi, 2000).

illustrated maps.¹³⁹ The book collection also expressed Şerîf Halil's own literary tastes where extra-curricular titles such as *Kasîde-i Bürde* by Şerâfeddîn Muhammed Bûsirî, *Gülistân* (The Rose Garden) by Sa'îdî, *Pend-i 'Attâr* (The Advice by Attâr) by Edirneli Nâzım and *Mantık-ü't-Tayr* (*The Conference of the Birds*) by Farîd al-Dîn 'Attâr are concerned.¹⁴⁰ It is both curious and unexpected that despite being one of its translators, Şerîf Halil did not endow *Aynî Tarihi* to the library, whereas, *Tercemetü's-Şihâhü'l-Cevherî* and *Ferheng-i Şu'ûri* were two of the reference books that he endowed. One might speculate that it was due to the possibility that he did not conceive this collection as his personal library and thus only endowed books compatible with the *medrese* curriculum.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹See for earlier studies on Şerîf Halil's *vakıf-nâme* Orlin Sabev, "Bir Hayrat Ve Nostalji Eseri: Şumnu'daki Tombul Cami Külliyesi Ve Banisi Şerif Halil Paşa'nın Vakfettiği Kitapların Listesi," in *Enjeux Politiques, Économiques Et Militaires En Mer Noire (Xive-XXie Siècles), Études À La Mémoire De Mihail Guboglu* ed. Faruk Bilici, Ionel Cîndea, and Anca Popescu (Musée de Braïla-Editions Istros: Braïla, 2007)., *From the Collections of Ottoman Libraries in Bulgaria During the 18th-19th Centuries: Catalogue of the Exhibition of Manuscripts and Old Printed Books*, ed. Stoyanka Kenderova and Z. Ivanova (Sofia: National Library, 1998).

¹⁴⁰ NBKM, OR 3198. According to Kenderova and Ivanova, some of the books of Şerîf Halil's library were taken from a previously established *medrese* attached to Solak Sinan Mosque commissioned by a certain Edhem Efendi (1671). On the other hand, a record in the BOA indicates that Kesim-zâde Mehmed Efendi, a local of Şumnu and probably the keeper of the library, brought 480 volumes of the collection to Beyazıt Library as he migrated from Şumnu in 1922.

¹⁴¹ The total number of books in Şerîf Halil's library is still entirely unknown to either the scientific circles or the general public. In 1993, the Ministry of Culture reached a decision to have the Şumen collection transferred for safe keeping in the National Library in Sofia. It is estimated that the collection has about 800 manuscripts and 1500 old printed books. (Kenderova and Ivanova, p. 17)

Patron	Place	Date
Mahmud I	Ayasofya - Istanbul	1740
	Fatih – Istanbul	1742
	Galatasaray - Istanbul	1754
	Vidin	1745
	Belgrade	1749
	Cairo	1746
The Grand Vezîr Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa	İstanbul	1734-5
Dar-üs saade Ağası Hacı Beşir Ağa (the chief Black Eunuch)	Cağaloğlu - Istanbul	1745
	Eyüb - Istanbul	1735
	Medina	1751
	Ziştovi (Svishtov)	?
Defter-dâr ʿÂtîf Mustafa Efendi	Vefa – Istanbul	1741
Reîsü'l-küttâb Mustafa Efendi of Kastamonu	Belgrade	1741
	Kastamonu	1744
Şerîf Halil Efendi	Şumnu	1744
Süleyman Paşa El-Azm	Şam	1737
Zehri Ahmed b. Şaban	Selanik	1741
Hıfzı-zâde Osman Faik Efendi	Amasya	1734
Müftü Abdullah Efendi	Kütahya	1737
Çavuş Mustafa Ağa	Belgrade	1736
Cihan-zâde El-Hac Mehmed Ağa	Aydın Güzelhisar	1736
Hacı Mustafa Efendi ve Şeyh Habib	İskilip	1737-8
Dâmâd Süleyman Ağa	Urfa	1737-8
Halil Efendi	Mostar	1738
Babüssade ağası Ahmed Ağa	Bugoyna	1738 – April
Mustafa Efendi b. El-Hac Hüseyin	İzmir	1739
Emir İmam Abdüllatif Efendi	Amasya	1746
Ahmed Paşa	Urfa	1746
Yazıcı-zâde İbrahim Paşa b. Mustafa	Erzurum	1748
Filibeli Osman Ağa	Filibe	1751
Abdülcabbar-zâde Ahmed Paşa	Yozgat	1754
Dâmâd Mehmed Efendi	Yenişehir-i Fenar	1754
Esseyid Mustaf Efendi	Tokat	1754
Ahmed Bey	Yenice	1754
Unknown	Yalova	1733
Derviş Mustafa Efendi	Girit	1733
Yeğen Ali Paşa	Güzelhisar	1752
Mutfak Emîni Halil Efendi	Kayseri	1754
Ahmed Taha-zâde	Aleppo	1754
Ahmed Efendi	Manastır- Kesriye	1744
Şeyhülislam Dâmâd-zâde Ebu'l Hayr Ahmed	Istanbul	1740
Muhammad bin Muhammed el-Halili	Jerusalem	1727-34
Figure 3. The List of Major <i>Vakıf</i> Libraries Established in Mahmud I's Reign		



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Figure 4. The Map of the Major Libraries Established in the reign of Mahmud I

III. II The Contents of Book Collections and Readership

The number of the *vakıf* libraries established in Mahmud I's reign was far greater than the number of libraries patronized in the reigns of any of his predecessors.¹⁴² The collections of these libraries were classified in the following categories: *tefsîr* (commentary on Koran), *hâdiş* (the study of Prophet Mohammad's sayings and deeds), *fıkh* (Muslim canonical jurisprudence), *fetvâ* (rules in accordance with the Islamic religious law); *kırâat* (reading the Koran aloud), *akâid* (tenets of religion), *mesai* (advice), *meânî* (eloquence, rhetoric), *nahv* (syntax), *şarf* (morphology), *âdâb* (spiritual courtesy and manners), *mantık* (logic), *hikmet* (a branch of Islamic philosophy), *heyet* (astronomy), *hendese* (geometry), *hesab* (arithmetic), *tıbb* (medicine), and *coğrafya* (geography) and various dictionaries. Regardless of the region in which they were established, the *vakıf-nâmes* of all the libraries studied in this thesis refer to a common audience: the student body (*talebe-i 'ulûm*). This pushes us to check the traditional Ottoman *medrese* curriculum to see if the endowed books fit with the titles generally used in *medrese* training. In doing so, the remaining part of this chapter benefits from a contemporary treatise entitled *Kevâkib-i Seb'a* (The Seven Stars) which was prepared with the request of the French ambassador Marquis de Villeneuve in 1741.¹⁴³ The treatise includes detailed information about the titles of the books used for various educational fields and levels (beginner=*iktisâr*, intermediate=*iktisâd*, advanced=*istiksâ*). The curriculum for beginners was comprised of short texts on important scientific and religious issues, whereas, for the intermediate level, a more varied schedule and a set of longer texts were assigned. On the advanced level, rare and long texts which aimed at evaluating issues in depth were used. In this sense, a juxtaposition of the common

¹⁴² Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri: Tarihi Gelişimi Ve Organizasyonu.*, p. 206

¹⁴³ See for an analysis of *Kevâkib-i Seb'a*, İhsan Fazlıoğlu and Şükran Fazlıoğlu, "Language as a Road to the Being: Language Analysis and Practice of Arabic in the Ottoman Period " in *MESA* (2002)., Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika Ya Da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni, 1726-1746 : Yeniden Değerlendirme.*

books endowed in the identified libraries with the prescribed curriculum of *medrese* education would be helpful in deciding about the nature and function of the libraries.¹⁴⁴

Educational Level	Field/Subject	According to <i>Kevâkib-i Seb'a</i>		Common Books in the Libraries of the Actors This Thesis
		Level	Author/Work	Author/Work
<i>Preparation</i>	Arabic alphabet			
	Arabic and Persian word		<i>İbn-i Firişte Şahidi</i>	<i>İbn-i Firişte Lügat-i Farsi</i>
	Reading Koran	Beginner	<i>Tecvid Kitabı</i>	
	Memorizing Koran	Intermediate	-	-
	Reading out Koran with rules (<i>ķırâat</i>)	Advanced		<i>Müfredât-ı Nâfi' Kitâbü'l-Kenz</i>
	Tenets of Religion (<i>'akâid</i>)		<i>Birgili Mehmed Efendi'nin 'Akâid Risâlesi</i>	<i>Tarikat-ı Muhammediyye</i>
<i>Rational Sciences</i>	Grammar (<i>şarf</i>)	Beginner	<i>Emsile-i Muhtelif</i>	
			<i>Muttarida</i>	
			<i>Binâu'l- Ef'âl</i>	<i>Şerh-i Lâmiyetü'l-Ef'âl</i>
			<i>Maksûd</i>	<i>Rûhü's-Şurûh 'ale'l-Maksûd</i>
			<i>'İzzî</i>	
		Intermediate	<i>Merâh</i>	<i>Hâşiye-i Merâh</i>
			<i>Şâfiye</i>	<i>Şâfiye</i>
		İstıksa	<i>Şâfiye şerhleri</i>	<i>Râzî 'ale's-Şâfiye</i>
				<i>Seyyid 'Abdullah 'ale's-Şâfiye</i>
			<i>Mufasssal</i>	
	Syntax (<i>naḥv</i>)	Beginner	<i>'Avamîl</i>	
			<i>Misbâh</i>	<i>Evzâh 'ale'l-Misbâh</i>
		Intermediate	<i>Kâfiye</i>	<i>Kâfiye</i>
			<i>Elfiyye-i İbn Mâlik</i>	<i>Şumunnî 'ala Elfiyye-i İbn Mâlik</i>
			<i>Kâfiye'nin Şerhi Molla Câmî</i>	<i>Câmî</i>
		Advanced	<i>Mugnî'l-Lebîb</i>	<i>Şumunnî 'ale'l-Mugnî</i>

¹⁴⁴ Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika Ya Da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni, 1726-1746 : Yeniden Değerlendirme*, 237-41.

				<i>Tuhfetü'l-Garîb Şerh-i Mugnî'l- Lebib</i>
	Logic (<i>manṭıq</i>)	Beginner	<i>İsâgôcî</i>	<i>İsâgôcî</i>
			<i>Hüssâm Kâtî</i>	<i>Hüssâm Kâtî</i>
			<i>Muhyiddîn Risalesi</i>	<i>Muhyiddîn</i>
			<i>Fenârî ve Hâşiyesi</i>	<i>Fenârî</i>
		Intermediate	<i>Şemsiye</i>	
			<i>Tezhîb Talik ve Şerhleriyle Kutbuddîn-i Şirazî</i>	<i>Hâşiyeye-i 'İmâd ve Sultânşâh 'ala Kutbuddîn</i>
			<i>Seyyid</i>	
			<i>Kara Dâvûd</i>	
			<i>Sa'deddin</i>	
			<i>Şerh-i Matâli'</i>	
		Advanced		
	Spiritual Courtesy and Manners (<i>âdâb</i>)	Beginner	<i>Taşköprü Şerhi</i>	
		Intermediate	<i>Mes'ûd-ı Rûmî</i>	
			<i>Hüseyin Efendî kitabı</i>	<i>Hüseyin Efendî Risâlesî</i>
				<i>Hâşiyeye-i Hüseyin Efendî</i>
			<i>Kâdî Adud</i>	
			<i>Şerh-i Haneîyye</i>	
			<i>Mîr</i>	
	Advice (<i>meânî</i>)	Beginner	<i>Telhîs</i>	<i>Telhîs</i>
		Intermediate	<i>Şerh-i Muhtasar</i>	<i>Hâşiyeye-i Muhtasar</i>
		Advanced	<i>Mutavvel</i>	<i>Mutavvel</i>
			<i>İzah-ı Me'âni</i>	
			<i>Elîyye-i Halebi</i>	
	Spiritual Virtues (nazâri Hîkmet)	Beginner	<i>Hidâye</i>	
		Intermediate	<i>Kâdîmîr</i>	<i>Kâdîmîr</i>
			<i>Lârî</i>	<i>Lârî</i>
		Advanced	<i>Hikmetü'l-Ayn</i>	
	Geometry (<i>hendese</i>)	Beginner	<i>Kütüb-i Şeyhâyn</i>	
		Advanced	<i>Eşkâl-i Te'sîs</i>	<i>Eşkâl-i Te'sîs</i>
	Calculus (<i>hesab</i>)	Beginner	<i>Öklides</i>	
		Intermediate	<i>Bahâyîyye</i>	<i>Bahâyî</i>
			<i>Ramazan Efendi</i>	
	Astronomy (<i>heyet</i>)	Intermediate	<i>Çullî</i>	
			<i>Şerh-i Çağmûnî</i>	<i>Kâdîzâde 'ala Çağmûnî</i>
		Advanced	<i>Bircendi</i>	
Religious Sciences	Islamic Theological Philosophy (<i>kelâm</i>)	Intermediate	<i>Ömer-i Neseî</i>	
			<i>Şerh-i - 'Akâid</i>	<i>Şerhü'l-'Akâid</i>
			<i>Hayâlî</i>	<i>Hâşiyeye-i Hayâlî 'ale'l-'Akâid</i>
			<i>İsbât-ı Vâcib</i>	
			<i>'Akâid -i Celâl</i>	
			<i>Mevâkıf</i>	
			<i>Şerh-i Makâsîd</i>	
		Advanced	<i>Şerh-i Mevâkıf</i>	<i>Şerh-i Mevâkıf li-Seyyid Şerîf</i>
	Practice of Islamic Jurisprudence	Intermediate	<i>Tenkîh</i>	
			<i>Tavzîh</i>	<i>Tavzîh 'ale't-</i>

	(fıkh usûlü)			Tenkîh
			Muhtasar-ı Münteza	
			Şerh-i Adud	
			Seyyid	
		Inter-Advanced	Telvîh	Telvîh 'ale't-Tavzîh
		Advanced	Fusûl-i Bedâyi'	
	Islamic Jurisprudence (fıkh)	Beginner	Halebî	Multeka'l-Ebhur
				Halebî 'ale'l-Multeka
			Kudûrî	
		Intermediate	Hidâye	Hidâye
		Advanced	Kâdîhân	Kâdîhân
			Bezzâziyye	
	Practicing Hadith (hâdis usulü)	Beginner	Elfıyye	
		Intermediate	Nuhbetü'l-Fiker	
			'Alî el-Kârî	
	Science of Hadith (hâdis ilmi)	Beginner	Buhârî	Sahîhü'l-Buhârî
			Müslim	
		Intermediate	Bazı müsnedler	
		Advanced	Daha fazla müsnedler	
	Commentary (tefsîr)	Beginner	Vâhidî's Vecîz	
		Intermediate	Vâhidî's Vasîf	
		Advanced	More comprehensive works	
			Kâdî Beyzâvî	Tefsîrü'l-Kâdî Beyzâvî
Unclassified / Extra-curricular	Poetry (şiir)			Kasîde-i Bürde
				Şerh-i Kasîde-i Bürde
				Şerh-i ... S'adî
				Şerhü'l-Gazeliyyât-i S'adî
				Tercüme-i Kelâm-ı Cihâr Yâd
				Mesnevî-i Şerîf
				İntihâb-i Mesnevî
				Şerh-i Mesnevî
				'Ukudü'l-...
				Gülistân
				Lâmî, Şerh-i Gülistân
				Bôstân
				Pend-i 'Attâr ve Tercüme
				Dustûrî'l-'Amel li-Riyâzî ve ...
				Mantukü't-Tayr

	Prosody (‘ <i>aruz</i>)			<i>Manzume fî’l- ‘Aruz ve’l- ‘Avâmmî</i>
	Anthology (<i>dîvân</i>)			<i>Şerh-i Dîvân-i ‘Ömer al-Karzî (?)</i>
				<i>... ‘ala Dîvân-i Hazret-i ‘Alî Keremullah Vechiyye (?)</i>
				<i>Dîvân-i Sâib (?)</i>
				<i>Dîvân-i Hâfîz</i>
				<i>Sâdi, Şerh-i Hâfîz</i>
	History (<i>târih</i>)			<i>Târîh-i Hoca Cihân</i>

What does this table teach us in terms of the characteristics of *vakıf* libraries established by three of the actors of this thesis, the profile of books in their libraries and the enterprise of establishing *vakıf* libraries in general?

The patronage of *vakıf* libraries in Mahmud’s reign, which took the form of an imperial idiom expressed in more than thirty cities, rested on the defining features of Ahmed III’s regime: cosmopolitanism, sociability, and the valorization of philosophy and social mobility. The compliance of the book categories with the well-defined curriculum outlined above proves that *vakıf* libraries established in Mahmud’s reign primarily targeted *medrese* students, which was also explicitly indicated in each of the *vakıf*-nâmes. In this respect, the role of these libraries were quite similar to their counterparts in Europe and America in the first half of the eighteenth century: “spreading knowledge and culture broadly to the people.”¹⁴⁵ As for extracurricular categories, the profile of the books varied depending on the tastes and wealth of the patrons. For example, Şerîf Halil preferred to endow various

¹⁴⁵ W. Bivens-Tatum, *Libraries and the Enlightenment* (Litwin Books, LLC, 2012), 133. In parallel to the fundamental motivation of Ottoman *vakıf* libraries, which targeted human betterment, specifically student body, the motto of America’s oldest cultural institution, Franklin’s Library Company (est. 173) was as follows “Communiter bona profundere deum est.” meaning “To pour forth benefits for the common good is divine.”

contemporary manuscripts written in calligraphic style, whereas, ^cÂtîf Efendi and Mustafa Efendi collected ancient and rare manuscripts.

Conclusion

Comprised of three chapters, this thesis merely attempted to propose a new framework for the cultural and intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the eighteenth century. The first chapter aimed at locating the Ottomans within the Enlightenment movement which is conventionally considered to be a phenomenon peculiar to Europe. With reference to revisionist approaches by scholars such as Jonathan Israel, the first chapter contextualized the intellectual developments in the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the eighteenth century as an extension of “a moderate Enlightenment” movement. Furthermore, the chapter showed that “the Tulip Age” is an ideologically-loaded term and does not inform much about the cultural life in Istanbul during the grand vizierate of Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730). In contrast to the taken-for-granted implications of “the Tulip Age” as well as the beginnings of “westernization” in the Ottoman Empire, the chapter proved that the Ottomans actively participated in cultural exchanges not only with European states but also with the neighboring Safavid state. Likewise, by introducing the main actors of the thesis, the *şeyhü'l-islâm* (the chief religious official) Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi, *reîsü'l-küttâb* (the chief clerk) Mustafa Efendi (1735-?), *defter-dâr* (the head of the finance bureau) Âtîf Mustafa Efendi and *şadâret kethüdâsı* (the chief assistant of the Grand Vezîr) Şerîf Halil Efendi (1711-1752), this chapter explored the existence of “an Ottoman individual” as understood in the European context. A close reading of their *vakıf-nâmes* (pious foundation deeds) showed that their expression of individuality was rather expressed in a group identity. In this sense, the Ottoman individual identified himself as “a part of a larger group” rather than “being apart from that group.” The similar interests and patronage activities of the actors of this thesis were an indication of this tendency.

The second chapter traced the career line formation of the main actors identified above. Their patterns of bureaucratic rise epitomized the administrative reforms carried out

in the Ahmedian regime. The chapter also introduced Dâmâd İbrahim Paşa, whom the thesis depicted as a cultural entrepreneur who invested heavily in intellectual enterprises as well as patronizing a large group of bureaucrats and artists for their artistic and literary productions. Another aim of the chapter was to show how the Ahmedian regime differed from the previous ones in terms of how it legitimated its reign. In contrast to the conventional *ghazâ* ideology, Ahmed III propounded the necessity of establishing an efficient bureaucracy in order to maintain social order. This mentality supported the formation of a new intellectual elite cadre who did not come from previously-established strong factions. Indeed, these elites who rose up to prominent ranks in the grand vizierate of İbrahim were the very ones who realized that intellectual enterprises such as establishing the printing press and translating Arabic, Persian, Greek and Latin works into Turkish were worthy enterprises that brought them much esteem whilst benefitting young scholars and the general public. In short, the chapter showed that İbrahim created an efficient bureaucracy that fulfilled not only administrative tasks but also adopted the mission of producing and transmitting knowledge to each and every corner of the Empire.

The third chapter began with revisiting the year 1730 when the aftermath of a popular uprising dethroned Ahmed III claimed the lives of his grand vizier İbrahim Paşa along with many of the latter's protégés. In contrast to mainstream historiography, by following the career lines of the main actors of this thesis, the chapter asserted that the reign of Mahmud I, the ensuing sultan, did not form a rupture in modes of governance and patronage. Rather, the chapter suggested that the Ahmedian regime and its philosophical setting had taken deep root especially in response to the Patrona Revolt, and the intellectual enterprises initiated by the elite in Istanbul went on in the reign of Mahmud I. The widespread patronage of *vakıf* libraries was the main point of departure of this chapter so as to stress the scope of intellectual investments as an imperial idiom. The chapter went on to

study the profile of books endowed by three of the main actors of this thesis and reached the conclusion that the main audience of the libraries was *medrese* students. This was reflected in the expression of the patrons themselves in the *vakıf*-nâmes and in the categories of classification for the books which displayed total compatibility with the traditional *medrese* curriculum.

When all the reference points of these three chapters are taken into consideration, it is possible to conclude that the Ottomans underwent a spectrum of bureaucratic and intellectual reforms which displayed similarities with European states in the early Enlightenment period. However, the true legacy of the Ottoman early modernity is still understudied and the Ahmedian regime needs further research so as to come up with concrete conclusions about the intellectual investments initiated in the capital. In the near future, I hope to broaden my scope and analysis by incorporating additional manuscripts, private correspondence and inheritance records (*tereke*). In this way, it will, for example, be possible to measure the success of the printing press by checking the number of the sold books. That will give further information on the profile of the readers (apart from the *medrese* students), owners and buyers of these books.

I hope that my research will be a contribution for further investigation into this topic. Most of the questions, problems and limitations that I mentioned in the introduction already anticipated the conclusions to be made here, and it is only left to the author to hope that the arguments and information gathered have been convincing. However, it is not a good sign to have a conclusion without questions, thus I also hope to have raised new questions in the minds of my readers throughout the text.

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Appendix



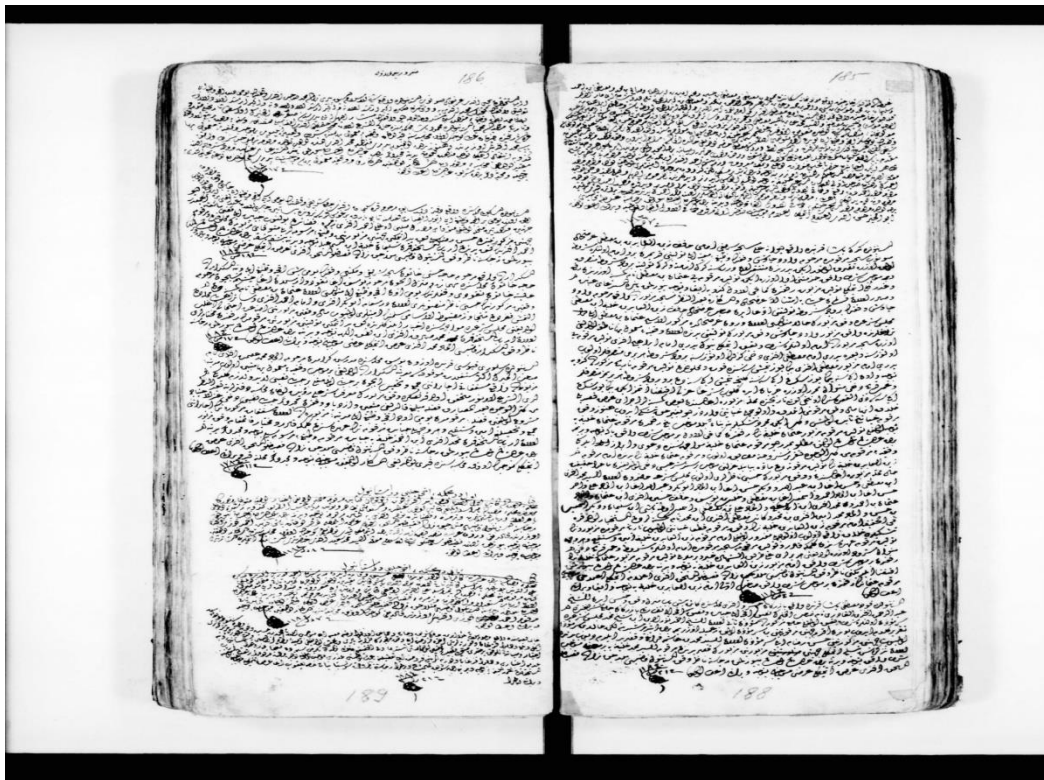
These miniatures show the way Ahmed III and the courtly gatherings in his reign were depicted by Levnî. (from Vehbî. *Sûrnâme: Sultan Ahmet'in Düğün Kitabı*. (ed.) Mertol Tulum: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 2008., from right to left: 174a, 131b, 123a)



Anonymous garden scene at Sacdâbâd, from a copy of Enderunlu Fazıl's *Hûban-nâme ve Zenân-nâme*. İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, TY 5502, fol. 78



The first page of the *vakıf-nâme* of Şerîf Halil



The first page of the *vakıf-nâme* of Pîrî-zâde Şâhib Mehmed Efendi



Âtîf Mustafa Efendi Library, modern-day appearance.



Patrona Halil as depicted by Jean Baptiste Vanmour