

An Assessment on Balkan Historiography

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Abstract: In addition to their own originality in historiography, Muslims inherited the accumulation of ancient civilizational basins such as Hijaz, Bilad al-Sham, Egypt, Maghreb, Andalusia, Iraq, Iran, Sindh and Mawara' al-Nahr. They created a wide variety of genres by making it more systematic and methodological. The Muslim historiography of the 7th-10th centuries, which harmoniously combines authenticity and heritage, was in contact with the Balkans indirectly through the Byzantine Empire during this period. However, its main impact and contribution to the basin was in the 11th-18th centuries, when it continued its development in historiography. During this period, Muslims, especially the Ottomans, who established political dominance in the region modeled the historiography, which had completed its development and developed a methodology, in the basin and brought an era to the activities of the basin in the field of historiography. The historiography, which was based on the narration of either the history of empires or the history of emperors in the form of special histories, has changed and developed with the methodology and model developed by Muslims. In this regard, they created a great linguistic richness in the basin with Ottoman Turkish, provided diversity through the four main genres of siyar and maghazi, general, special, city and regional histories, and established a close relationship between administrations and historians. As a result, the Balkans have made great progress with the strong contribution and influence of Muslims in historiography. This study deals with the process of historiography in the Balkans in a comprehensive manner. These issues are discussed through more than four hundred historiographers and historical sources, mostly based on historiographical studies available in Turkish and taking into account the activities of the Ottoman Empire, a dynasty of six centuries. The main significance of this study is that it takes the step of presenting the strong contribution and influence of Muslims in historiography in the Balkans, which developed especially until the 19th century, in a holistic manner. The aim of this study is to increase the interest in Balkans studies, which is constantly developing in our country, and to attempt to unearth the huge heritage in the field of historiography.

Keywords: History, Balkans, Ottoman Empire, Historiography, General, Special, City & Regional Histories.

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Introduction

We can divide historiography in the Muslim world into three periods. These are the Formation Period (7th-10th century), the Development Period (11th-18th century) and the Contraction, Transformation and Diversification Period (19th-20th century) (Macit, 2024: 95-120). Within the framework of this periodization, Islamic historiography had a great impact on historical studies locally in Hijaz where it was born, regionally in the Arabian basin where it expanded, and globally in basins such as Greek, Roman, Persian, Sassanid, Indian and Chinese basins by carrying the model it established during its formation period and brought them to a new era. In this regard, the mobility of Muslim historians in a vast geography from the Sindh region to the interior of Anatolia, from the borders of China to the Atlantic Ocean during the formation period of Muslim historiography, and from the Indian Subcontinent to the Balkans, from the Malay world to Dasht-i Kipchak during the development period, has been so intense that it surprises us.

Determining the borders of the Balkan geography, which was one of the important points of this mobility during the development period, is a very difficult issue today as a result of geographical conditions and changes in the historical process. The general view is that the geography we call the Balkans is the southern part of the line drawn from east to west by the Danube and Sava rivers (Vasary, 2018: 11). The name Rume-*lia*, which the Ottomans (1300-1922) gave to the Balkan peninsula, was also the name of the administrative structure in the form of a beylerbeylik/state from the first conquests in the region. In the early years of the Kanuni period (1520-1566) the sanjaks of Rumelia were Pasha, Bosnia, Peloponnese, Smederevo, Vidin, Herzegovina, Silistra, Ohrid, Avlona, Iskodra, Ioannina, Gallipoli, Constendil, Niğbolu, Sofia, Inebahtı, Tırhala, Alacahisar, Vulçitrın, Kefe, Prizren, Karlı-ili, Eğriboz, Çirmen, Vize, Zvornik, Florina, Elbasan, Segedin, Midilli, Montenegro, Musellemân-ı Kırkkilise, Voynuk. With the 17th century regulations, Sofia and Bitola were added to the Pasha sanjak, and new sanjaks named Thessaloniki,

Skopje, Dukagjin, Delvina, Kirkkilise, Akkerman (together with Bender) were also recorded. Likewise, the sanjaks of Gallipoli, Eğriboz, İnebahtı, Karlı-ili and Midilli were transferred to the state of Cezâyir-i Bahr-ı Sefîd, while Kilis (Klis), Herzegovina, Pojega, Izvornik (Zvornik), Zaçana (Zaçasna or Pakrac), Rahovica (Orahovica) and Kırka (Krka) were transferred to the state of Bosnia. Silistra, Niğbolu, Çirmen, Vize, Kirkkilise, Bender and Akkerman sanjaks from Rumelia were joined to the state of Özü or Silistra. The Rumelia region included the sanjaks of Kyustendil, Tırhala, Prizren, Ioannina, Delvina, Vulçitrın, Skopje, Elbasan, Avlona, Dukagjin, Iskodra and Voynuk (İnalçık, 2008: 232-235).

The Balkans, which serve as a crossroads and bridge between the continents of Asia and Europe, have been one of the important basins to be dominated throughout history due to this strategic geographical location. The Balkans, which were under the rule of empires such as Greek (B.C. 756-146) and Roman (B.C. 27/476) before Islam, were within the borders of the Byzantine Empire until the 15th century in the Islamic period. This period of the Balkans was instrumental in the formation of an important accumulation of historiography. Therefore, this basin, which naturally attracted the interest of many societies, has also been the subject of historical studies of Muslims. Muslims were indirectly in contact with the Balkans through the Byzantine Empire (330-1453) during the formation period. However, it reflected its real influence and contribution to the basin in the 11th-18th centuries when it continued its development in historiography. In this regard, the Balkans became a recognized basin first during the Seljuk (1040-1308) and then during the Ottoman periods. Thus, in the geographical perception of Muslim societies, the western horizon of the earth was moved further away. With this widening of the horizon, Muslims ensured the entry of Islam into the region through the activities of both merchants and proselytizers who visited the Balkans, especially by land. Later, during the Seljuk period, with the efforts of Umur Bey (1334-1348), they defeated both Serbs and Bulgarians in the Balkans and made conquests that reached Albania. For the next three centuries, Muslims traveled and settled in

the Balkans as Sufis and merchants. Eventually, the Ottomans ensured the permanent domination of Muslims for about 600 years through regular military activities. In this process, Muslims modeled the historiography, which had completed its development to a great extent and developed an important methodology, to the basin and brought an era to the activities of the basin in the field of historiography. As a result, the Balkans experienced a great development with the strong contribution and influence of Muslims in historiography. So much so that this development in the Balkans after Andalusia formed a very important basis for modern historiography in Europe.

There are numerous foreign and domestic studies on historical sources and historiography in the Balkans (Adanır and Faroqhi, 2015; Todorova, 1997; Fleming, 2000; Lampe and Iordachi, 2020). Many scholars such as Mehmet Hacısalıhoğlu, Neriman Hacısalıhoğlu, Levent Kayapınar, Ayşe Kayapınar and Mustafa Hamdi Sayar continue to work on the Balkans in Türkiye. The book *Historical Sources and Historiography in the Balkans*, to which these names also made strong contributions, has made a valuable contribution to Balkan studies as it deals with historiography in the Balkans from the ancient period to the present day, taking into account the sources and historians of Balkan history (Hacısalıhoğlu, Kayapınar, Sayar and Macit, 2024). We will base this study mainly on the historiographical studies available in Turkish. Although there is literature in English, scholarly contributions to understanding the development of historiography in the Balkans, especially in German-speaking regions, and the Slavic languages and their contributions to the historiography of the Balkans have not been adequately covered in this study. To the best of our knowledge, the State Archive in Dubrovnik, for example, contains thousands of documents in Slavic languages directly related to Ottoman-Balkan relations. And this archive is only one of many in the Balkans. Recognizing the lack of this literature, this text should be taken into consideration.

Following all these studies, in this study, we will explain that the Ottomans, who were established especially in the Balkans during the

development period after the formation period of historiography in Muslims, not only took into account all this accumulation, but also provided an important opening to the historiographical accumulation with their *siyar* and *maghazi*, general, special, and city/regional histories and subcategories. We will argue that the six centuries of the Balkans between the 15th and 20th centuries cannot be written if this accumulation is not taken into account. However, we will criticize that a new and fictional historiography appeared in the Balkans during the period of contraction, transformation and diversification of historiography. In this regard, we can say that historical studies were quite intense, even though there were political borders, dynasty changes, and struggles and wars between dynasties to expand their areas of dominance in the wide geography of the Balkans, which was dominated by Muslims, especially during the development period of historiography. Undoubtedly, the Ottomans, who ruled in the Balkans, made significant contributions to the writing of the history of the Balkans, the basin and humanity in different ways. Although these contributions are known by scholars working on the period, they are not known in a holistic and comprehensive way for scholars who want to study the Balkans. Taking these concerns into account, the main purpose of this study consists of three issues. The first aim is to reveal what kind of processes historiography in the Balkans has been shaped through. The second aim is to introduce the historical sources written in the Balkans as a genre and to evaluate the historical sources accumulated in the basin from the past to the present and the historians who created them in a holistic manner. If a stronger process of recognition and understanding of the Balkans is to be carried out in our country, this cannot be accomplished without comprehending the accumulation of the past. Based on this principle, the third aim of this study is to comprehend the developments, deepening, transformations, expansions or differentiations in historiography in the Balkans.

The Process of Historiography in the Balkans

Pre-Islamic Preiod

Many historians from Herodotus (BS 484-425/413) to Procopius (500-565) have dealt with the political events that took place in the Balkans during the twelve centuries from the 6th century BC to the 6th century AD. While some of these works have survived in their original texts, others have some parts of their original texts, and some have survived only as copies of their original texts made in the 4th-15th centuries AD. The content of the works, all of the original texts of which have been lost, is known from other sources. The historiography dealing with the historical events that took place in the Balkans during this period was not written by the nations that inhabited the Balkan geography during the Greek and Roman periods, but by the historians who were in contact with them due to political and commercial relations and who saw the Balkan peoples as the other, or largely outside their own cultural basin, and whose origins were in various parts of the Mediterranean geography, in Ancient Greek (Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybios, Diodoros, Cassius Dio) or in Ancient Latin (Titus Livius, Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus, Cicero, Suetonius, Ammianus Marcellinus). For this reason, historical sources written by historians belonging to Balkan peoples are almost non-existent. It is noteworthy that most of the historians who wrote works on the Ancient and Late Antiquity Period of the Balkans were people who lived in regions outside the Balkan geography.

Greek and Roman sources include the *Historiae* by Herodotus, *The Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides, *Hellenika* by Xenophon, *Anabasis* by Xenophon, *Historiai* by Polybios, *Poseidonios* and *Historiai*, *Bibliotheke Historike* by Diodoros, *Geographika* by Strabo, *Chorographia* by Pomponius Mela, *Naturalis Historia* by Pliny, *The Anabasis Alexandrou* by Lucius Flavius Arrianus, *Ab urbe condita libri* by Titus Livius, *Historiae Philippicae* by Pompeius Trogus, *Historia Romana* by Velleius Paterculus, *Orationes* by Dio, *Bioi Paralleloi* by Plutarch, *Annales* and *Germania* by Publius Cornelius Tacitus, *De vita Caesarum* by Gaius

Suetonius Tranquillus, Romanica by Appianus, The Romaike Historia by Lucius Cassius Dio, Tes meta Markon Basileia Historia by Herodian, Skythika by Publius Herennius Dexippus, Liber de Caesaribus by Sextus Aurelius Victor, Breviarium ab urbe condita by Eutropius, Res Gestae by Ammianus Marcellinus, Historika Hypomnemata by Eunapios, Historikoi logoi by Olympiodoros, Fragmenta by Priskos, Nea Historia by Zosimos, De mortibus persecutorum by Lactantius, Historia Ecclesiastica by Eusebius, Historia adversus Paganos by Oresius, Chronographia by Johannes Malalas, De Bellis, Peri Ktismaton by Prokopios, Historiai by Theophylaktos Simokates, Getica and Romana by Jordanes (Sayar, 2024: 13-34).

Historical sources of this period were mostly built on the narrative of either imperial history or the history of emperors in the form of special histories. We may mention the Res Gestae, written by Ammianus Marcellinus of Antioch in accordance with the annual tradition of Roman historiography, as a highly representative example. The work, consisting of 31 volumes, describes the period from Emperor Nerva to Emperor Valens (96-378 A.D.). On the other hand, Oresius, in his 7-volume Latin history work Historia adversus Paganos, which he wrote against those who adhered to non-Christian pagan beliefs, dealt with the events that occurred according to his own definition from the formation of the world until the year 410 A.D. He also mentioned the struggles with the Goths in the Balkans. Johannes Malalas of Antioch lived between 490 and 570 and wrote about the political events that took place until 565 in an 18-volume world chronicle written in Greek. In the work, political events in the Balkans are mentioned several times (Malalas, 1831: v. X).

After Byzantion (Byzantium), a Thracian settlement, was made the capital of his empire by the Roman Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D., the city, known as Constantinopolis / Constantinople now, became a political and cultural center dominating both the Balkan and Anatolian geographies. Constantinople continued to be the most important city in the world as the capital of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire,

where Greek was used as the imperial language instead of Latin after the division of Rome into two. The Balkans was one of the most fertile geographies of the world in terms of historical sources and historians also during the Byzantine period.

Islamic Period

The Formation Period (7th-10th century)

During this period, Muslims were geographically in contact with the Iberian Peninsula, the Mediterranean and the Balkans via Bilad-ı Rum (Anatolia), and they also gained knowledge in historiography through the translation of some important Greek and Roman sources, especially during the Abbasid period. However, the intense influence on historiography occurred largely during the development period.

The Development Period (11th-18th century)

Between the 11th and 14th centuries, the activities of the Turks in the Balkan geography were carried out by the Pechenegs, Cumans and Uzs who crossed from the north of the Black Sea and settled in the regions south of the Danube and entered the Byzantine service, and by the Oghuzs who crossed into Rumelia through Anatolia. The influence of the Turkish communities coming from the north of the Black Sea in the Balkans continued uninterruptedly. These Turks, who came from the north of the Danube and whose activities were mostly looting and plundering, partially settled in the Balkans and permanently entered the Byzantine service when the political situation required it. Turks who chose this option played an extremely important role for the existence of Turkish culture in the Balkans.

It is possible to classify the Oghuz Turks who moved from Anatolia to the Balkans in three groups. These are the Seljuks, the Western Anatolian Principalities and the Ottomans. The first crossing of Anatolian Turks to the Balkans took place in the last quarter of the 11th century (Kayapınar and Ayönü, 2015: 23). We see that immediately after the Battle of Malazgirt (1071 A.D.), the Seljuk Turks made short-term crossings to the

Balkan lands upon the request for help of one of the forces that was a party to the power struggle within the Byzantine Empire. It is clear that the Seljuk forces that crossed into the Balkans to support Byzantium did not stay in the region after completing their mission and returned.

After an interruption of about two centuries for various reasons, the permanent Turkish migration from Anatolia to the Balkans during the Seljuk period took place in the second half of the 13th century. It is understood from the records of Byzantine sources that it is the time when some of them even settled permanently in the region. The occupation of Constantinople by the Latins as a result of the 4th Crusade in 1204 and the relocation of the Byzantine center first to Iznik and then to Nif [Nymphaion-Kemal Paşa] increased the social and political relations between the Seljuk Turks and the Byzantines. However, after the Byzantine recapture of Constantinople in 1261, Byzantium wanted to increase its political influence over the Balkan geography and frequently requested help from the Anatolian Seljuk Turks during its activities.

It will be noticed that the Anatolian Turks, who moved back to the Balkans in the second half of the 13th century, stayed here for a longer period of time and in the first half of the 14th century, the activities of the Turks in this geography increased as a result of the alliances established between the Byzantine Empire and the Western Anatolian Principalities. We understand that the Turks, who frequently crossed into the Balkans to help their allies or to obtain loot, became thoroughly familiar with this geography. It is possible to find information in Byzantine sources from the 11th century about the activities of Anatolian Turks in the Balkans and their settlement in the Balkan peninsula and becoming one of the permanent Balkan peoples. As we have mentioned in the previous lines, the Byzantine sources of the Balkans include *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057* by John Skylitzes; *Epitomê Istorion* by Iôannês Zônaras; *Historia* by Mikhaêl Attaleiatês, Iôannês D. Polemês; *Ylê Istorias* by Nikêforos Vryennios, Dêmêtrês Tsougarakês-Despoina

Tsouglidou, *The Alexiad by Anna Komnena* (Ayönü and Başat, 2024: 59-92).

Turkish-Byzantine relations, which started with the Anatolian Seljuks and after their fall continued with the Turkish principalities, were generally based on Byzantium's requests for help, and some of the Turks who came to help chose to stay in the Balkans. In time, these Turks became a serious threat to Byzantium. In addition to these, frequent internal disturbances in the Byzantine Empire encouraged the Turks and other Balkan nations to take action. Therefore, the activities of the Turks living in Anatolia in the Balkans increased noticeably from the second half of the 13th century onwards. About these activities of the Turks in the Balkans, the Anonymous Chronicle of Peloponnese from the 13th century, *Syngrafikai Historiai* by Yorgios Pahimeris from the 14th century, *Romaniki Istoría* by Nikiforos Grigoras, *Istoría* by Ioanis Kantakuzinos VI and *Istoría* by Ioanis Kananos from the 15th century, *Diigisis* by Ioanis Kananos, Anonymous Tokko Chronicle, *Logos Istorikos* by Simeon of Thessaloniki, *Diigisis peri tis Teleftias aloseos tis Tesalonikis* by Ioanis Anagnostis, *Historía* by Dukas, *Apodiksis Istorion* by Laonikos Halkokondilis, *Istoría* by Mihail Kritovulos and *Chronikon* by Yorgios Sfrancis provide detailed information (Kayapınar, 2024A: 93-160). These works were mostly written in Greek. Among them, it is possible to discuss the work of Dukas in terms of content. This work describes the events that occurred until the death of Çelebi Sultan Mehmed in 1421. The chapter, which is largely based on information taken from the Torah and tells the story of the creation of the world and the Latin occupation of Constantinople in 1204, is the introduction of the work (Karagiannopoulos, 1970: 394-395). Unlike other historians writing in Greek, Halkokondilis, in his work *Apodiksis Istorion*, which can be translated into Turkish as *Documents of History (Tarihin Belgeleri)*, covering the events between 1298 and 1463, he centered his work on the history of the rising Ottoman Empire, not the collapse of the Byzantine Empire (Karagiannopoulos, 1970: 401; Talbot, 1991: 407; Harris, 2003: 158). In this respect, Halkokondilis can be considered an Ottoman historian who

wrote his work in Greek under Ottoman rule rather than a Byzantine historian. To some extent, Halkokondilis' work can be considered one of the earliest Ottoman histories (Kaldellis, 2012: 132-135). These works are also Byzantine period sources that provide information about the foundation of the Ottoman Empire and the reasons that paved the way for the establishment of the Ottoman Empire.

The permanent settlement of Anatolian Turks in the Balkans and the transformation of the region into a Turkish homeland was the result of the systematic conquest and settlement policy of the Ottoman Empire since the second half of the 14th century. As of this time, the Ottoman influence was felt in the Balkans. Up until this time, the Ottoman historiographers in the 15th century were included in the narratives we have mentioned in the historiography of the Balkans. The works of Ottoman chroniclers such as History of Âşıkpaşazâde by Âşıkpaşazâde, Cihânnümâ by Mevlânâ Mehmed Neşrî, History of Oruç Bey by Oruç Bey, History of Hadîdî, History of Tawârîh-i Âl-i Osmân by Ibn Kemal and History of Peçevî-by-Peçevî İbrahim Efendi chronologically describe the events of Ottoman history from the end of the 13th century until the first quarter of the 16th century (Kayapınar, 2024: 163-182).

The works describing Sultan Süleyman's conquest of Hungary (Engürüs/Ungürüs) include Er-Risale el-Fethiyye Es-Süleymaniyye by Tabib Ramazan, Mohaçnâme by Kemalpaşazâde (in Tawârîh-i Âl-i Osmân), Tawârîh-i Âl-i Osmân by Lütfî Paşa, Tabakâtü'l-Memâlik by Celalzâde Mustafa Efendi, Târîh-i Sefer-i Zafer-Rehber-i Alaman (History of the Campaign of Victory - Guide to the Germans) by Celalzâde Salih Çelebi, Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş ve Estergon ve İstolni Belgrad (History of the Conquest of Sikloş and Esztergom and Istoklini Belgrade) by Matrakçı Nasuh, Tarih-i Feth-i Şekloviş ve Estergon ve Ustun-i Belgrad (History of The Conquest of Şikloş, Üstürgon And Üstol-Belgrad) by Seyyid Muradî, Nüzhet-i Esrârü'l-Ahyâr by Feridun Ahmed Bey. The Ottoman-Habsburg war, which started in the 1590s, led to the creation of many gazavatnâme and fetihname (conquest books), the main

setting of which was the Hungarian provinces. These include Tawârîh-i Cedîd-i Vilâyet-i Üngürüs by Cafer İyanî, Şehnâme and Eğri Expedition Şehnâme by Talikizâde Mehmed Subhî, 1596 Expedition Rûznâmesi (Expedition Diaries) by Gâ'ibî, 1601 Kanije Defence by Tiryaki Hasan Pasha, Cihâdnâme-i Hasan Pasha by Cafer İyanî, Hasenât-ı Hasan, Gazâvât-ı Tiryaki Hasan Pasha by Faizî, Târîh-i Peçevî by İbrahim Peçevî Efendi, Zeyl-i Tâcü't-tevârîh by Hasan Beyzade Ahmed, and Târîh by Topçular Kâtibi Abdülkadir Efendi. Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha and the Uyvar Expedition are specifically described in Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh by Mühürdar Hasan Ağa and Seyahatnâme by Evliya Çelebi. The 1683 Vienna Campaign and its aftermath are covered by Vekâyi'nâme (Vekâyi-i Bec) by an Unknown Ottoman Clerk, Mî'yârü'd-Düvel by Hasan Esirî, Feth-i Lipova and Muhârebe-i Lugoş by Sırrı Mustafa Efendi, A Risale Concerning Mustafa II by Hasan Ağazâde Hacı Abdullah Efendi, Vâkı'ât-ı Ruz-merre by Abdullah b. İbrahim al-Üsküdarî, Zeyl-i FİZL-i Fuz-merre by Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, and Vâkı'ât-ı Ruz-merre by Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, and the Anonymous Ottoman History (1688-1704). In addition to all these, there are important explanations about the Ottomans in Hungary in Cevâhirü'l-Menâkıb by Nahîfî Mehmed Efendi, al-Wasfü'l-Kâmil fî Ahwâli'l-Vezîri'l-âdil by Mehmed Nergisî, Târîh-i Vak'a-nâme-i Cafer Pasha by Mühürdar Ali, Esâretnâme by Osman Aga of Tımişvar and Hadîkatü's-Şühedâi's-Serhad and Pendnâme by İbrahim Naimeddin Efendi (Kolçak, 2024: 183-228).

Among the 18th century Ottoman chroniclers are Çeşmizâde History by Çeşmizâde Mustafa Reşid Efendi, İzzî History by İzzî Süleyman Efendi, Hakim History by Seyyid Mehmed Hakim Efendi, Enverî History by Sadullah Enverî and Nurî History by Halil Nûrî Efendi. In addition to the chronicles, some works and authors who draw attention with their historical works written not for an official duty but entirely based on their own intellectual knowledge and who can be considered as complementary to the aforementioned sources also deserve to be mentioned here. Among these are Müri't-tevârîh by Şem'dânizâde Süleyman Efendi and Hadika-i Vekâyi by Ahmed Câvid. On the Peloponnese

Revolt (1770-1779), History of the Peloponnese Revolution and *Esbâb-ı Tedbir-i Nizâm-ı Ekâlîm* by Süleyman Penah Efendi draws attention (Başarr, 2024: 249-278).

Among the biographical works of the period from 1774, which included the Balkans, until the actual collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, are *Sicill-i Osmânî* (Tezkire-i Meşâhir-i Osmânîye) by Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Hadîkatü'l-Vüzerâ* by Osmanzâde Ahmed Tâib Efendi, *Verdü'l-Hadâik* by Rıfat Ahmed Efendi, *Kemâlu's-Sudûr* by İbnülemîn Mahmud Kemal İnal, *Devhatü'l-Meşâyih* by Müstakimzâde Süleyman Sadeddin Efendi, *Devhatü'n-Nükabâ* by Rıfat Ahmed Efendi, *Harîta-i Kapudanân-ı Deryâ* by İzzet Mehmed Bey, *Fatin Tezkire* by Davut Efendi, İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal Bey's *There is Perfection of the Servants*. Bibliographic works include *Ottoman Authors* by Bursalı Mehmed Tahir Bey, *Âyine-i Zürefâ* by Karsîzâde Cemâleddin Mehmed Efendi and *Ottoman History Writers and Their Works* by Franz Babinger. Among the encyclopedic dictionaries are *Lügat-ı Tarihiyye ve Cografîyye* by Ahmed Rıfat Efendi, *Kamusu'l-A'lâm* by Şemseddin Sâmî and *Memâlik-i Osmaniye'nin Musavver Tarih ve Cografîyye Lügâtî* by Ali Cevad. Among the chroniclers, *Tarih-i Enverî* by Enverî Sa'dullah Efendi, *Tarih-i Edîb* by Edip Efendi, *Tarihi Vâsıf* by Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi, *Tarihi Nûrî* by Halil Nûrî Bey, *Tarihi Âsım* by Ahmed Âsım Efendi, *Tarihi Şânîzâde* by Şânîzâde Ataullah Mehmed Efendi, *Tarih-i Es'ad* and *Üss-i Zafer* by Mehmed Es'ad Efendi, *Tarih-i Cevdet* by Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarihi Lütî* by Ahmed Lütî Efendi and *Tarih-i Devlet-i Osmaniye* by Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi were published by chroniclers. Additionally, *Taylesanizâde Hâfız Abdullah Efendi History* by Attarzâde Lebîba, *Câbî Târihi*, *Târihi-i Sultan Selîm-i Sâlis* and *Mahmûd-ı Sâni* by Ömer Efendi, *Work on Nizâm-ı Cedîd* by Mahmud Râif Efendi, *Special histories called Târîh-i Livâ* by Abdülhak Molla, *Gülzâr-ı Fütûhat* by Şirvanlı Fatih Efendi, *Cerîde* by Hâfız Mehmed Efendi, *Hadîka-i Vekâyi'* by Ahmed Câvid Efendi and *İbretnü mâ-yı Devlet* by Mustafa Kesbî were published (Beyhan, 2024: 279-328).

As it can be noticed, the Balkan geography, which came under the control of the Ottoman Empire starting in the 14th century with the conquest of Istanbul in 1453, was one of the luckiest regions of the world in terms of historical resources, as in previous periods. A significant portion of the more than 90 million documents and hundreds of thousands of record books in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul constitute the sources of Ottoman-era Balkan history. In addition to these official documents produced by the Ottoman imperial institutions, the historians whose names we have mentioned in this study and the chronicles and other works written by them are also of great importance for the history of the region.

The Contraction, Transformation and Diversification Period (19th-20th century)

The 19th century can be understood as a period that, in a way, marked the social and political transitions that began with the French Revolution in the 18th century and brought significant transformations and events to the Ottoman Empire, which at first glance stood on the sidelines and did not get involved in the political and military conflicts between the leading political powers of Europe. All of these fundamental changes began in the 18th century and gradually made their way to the Ottoman Empire. The revolutions that lasted more than a century in the formation processes of Western European states, the emergence of new elites dealing with administration, social transformations and the changes that continued with all these events created a tremendous impression in the Ottoman Empire and deeply affected the population living within its borders, especially in the Balkans (Mantran, 1989: 439-460). The era of ongoing reforms made it more than ever a “bridging” state between Europe and Asia, serving as a gateway for ideas and adapting and transforming new political and social changes into an imperial form of political existence (Quataert, 1994: 761-777).

Even in the 19th century, which was a critical period for the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans, Ottoman archival sources provided a

relatively large wealth of resources for Balkan history. However, in the nation-building process that began in the Balkans, the wealth and privilege offered by these resources were not realized or were deliberately ignored. Many ethnic groups that were able to survive under Ottoman rule without being completely assimilated needed historical sources and historiography to support this process after they entered the process of becoming a nation. In this period, historiography was seen not as an attempt to understand the past, but as a tool to legitimize the developing national movement, mobilize the masses, and build a nation-identity (Hroch, 2015: 13-28). Moreover, historical sources were also produced for this purpose and many historical legends (historical sources, folk songs, etc.) about the past were produced in this period (Kiel, 1998: 56-126; Kayapınar, 2012: 112-113). This instrumentalization of history for the Balkan Reconquista (the expulsion of the Turks from the Balkans) (Holt, 2019) was also supported by the European great powers of the period – in contrast to the scientific historiography trend that was developing within them. These powers also supported instrumental historiography that served politics instead of scientific historiography of the Balkan communities, which they saw (or wanted to see) as a kind of “Proxy” in today’s terms, in their imperial struggles. During the period of the national independence struggles of the Balkan nations, a large corpus that provoked a war against the Turks in European countries and called for a conflict was formed. As an example, the Philhellens (Friends of Hellenic) movement that emerged during the Greek war of independence can be seen (Vöhler, Alekou and Pechlivanos, 2021). Furthermore, the treatment of contemporary historiography on the Balkan geography is sometimes discussed in the context of nationalist movements, and researches are carried out around various arguments such as identity, nationalism, legitimacy, and the role of Christianity, and conclusions are reached in various dimensions.

The political conflicts, regime changes, internal crises and identity conflicts experienced by the Balkans, which have a multi-national structure, during the nation-building process we are focusing on, have also

deeply affected the relationship towards history and historiography in the region. Just as in the nation-building process, history and historiography continued to be the tools of political regimes and governments or different political movements in the 20th century. So much so that, in the conflicts that occurred during the collapse of the Socialist regimes and the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the late 20th century, the most important argument used was history – as can be seen in the forced assimilation and ethnic cleansing policies implemented against the Turks in Bulgaria between 1984 and 1989 and in the use of the myth of “forced Turkification” used in the 1995 Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Based on what we have said so far, 19th and 20th century Balkan historiography has been seen, above all as the main tool of political sharing struggles, identity politics, the desire to assimilate or the struggle not to assimilate (Hacısalıhoğlu, 2019: 47-74).

In this respect, in the contemporary history textbooks of Greece, the sequence of national history is Ancient Greece, Byzantium, Turkokratia (Ottoman rule), Hellenic Revolution (1821-1830) and Modern Greece. The official perception of Greek history is dominated by the stereotype of an uninterrupted struggle between “us” and “the other” from antiquity to the present day. The “us” refers to the “civilized” and culturally superior Hellenes fighting for “freedom”. “The other” refers to the “barbarians”. This Hellenic-Barbarian conflict-oriented understanding of history, which includes many mythological elements, continues in Greek history textbooks. The barbarians are Persians, Romans, Arabs, Avars, Turks, etc. who have attacked the Hellenic lands since antiquity. The sovereignty established by the barbarians in the Hellenic country is expressed by the concept of “kratia”. According to the Greek perception of history, the Hellenes put up a permanent resistance against these “kratia”. In chronological order, the Romans, Crusaders and Turks were the foreigners who invaded Hellenic lands. Among them, the worst “Barbarians” were the Turks and the cruellest Barbarian domination was the “Turkokratia” (Turkish domination) (Koullapis, 1993: 11).

For Bulgarians, the 19th century included major changes, such as the establishment of the Bulgarian Diocese, the April Uprising, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the struggle for the recognition of a separate Church which led to liberation. Taking these changes into account, the formation of modern Bulgarian historiography owes much to the works of Vratsali Sofrony, Benyo Tsonev, Vasil Aprilov, Ivan Seliminski, Georgi St. Rakovski, Spiridon St. Rakovski, Spiridon St. Rakovski, and others. Rakovski, Spiridon Palauzov, Petko Rachev Slaveykov, Lyuben Karavelov, Stedan Zahariev, Pandeli Kisimov, Marin Drino, Zahari Stoyanov, Stoyan Zaimov, Svetoslav Milarov, Vasil Hadzhistoyanov Beron, Georgi G. Dimitrov and Konstantin Jireček, etc. (Petkova, 2024: 499-518). Among the historians of the 20th century are Gavril Katsarov, Vasil Zlatarski, Petar Mutafchiev, Petar Nikov, Ivan Sakazov, Nikola Milev, Ivan Duychev, Ivan Shishmanov, Boyan Penev, Petar Dinekov, Hristo Gandev, Yordan Ivanov, Zahari Stoyanov, Todor Burmov, Dimitar Strashimirov, Gavril Katsarov, Hristo Danov, Alexander Fol, Dimitar Angelov, Vasil Gyuzelev, Galab Galabov, Bistra Tzvetkova, Tzvetana Georgieva, Dimitar Kosev, Nikolay Genchev, Ilcho Dimitrov (Popnedelev, 2024: 519-556).

The Bulgarian national historiography was written in a cumulative manner by these representatives, whose names we have mentioned. The first attempt was made to dilute the contribution of the Bulgarian tribe, which is a Turkic tribe in Bulgaria and which gave its name to today's Bulgarian people, in Bulgaria. In this way, any traces of kinship with the Turks - who were deeply hated - were erased. The second important phase in the Middle Ages was the Christianisation of the Bulgarian Empire and its major political activities. It covers the conquest of Bulgaria by the Turks and the Turkish rule in Bulgaria (Türkenherrschaft) and Bulgaria in the 15th century. It is positioned as a less important period of Bulgarian history. In terms of content, this less important status has contributed to the perception of a dark period with negative descriptions. In this regard, Jireček also gives here the basic judgements/negative stereotypes about the Ottoman period: The relationship of the Bulgarians with the developing European civilization

was cut off by the Turks. Bulgarian lands were turned into farms by rich lords. Muslims were in the privileged class. While as “*rayah*” (*reaya*), Christians were oppressed anyway. This is the emphasis on the “exploiting/feudal” Turk and the “exploited/*rayah*” Bulgarian. In this process, they were not allowed to build churches and their bells were removed. Their clothes were restricted. “Kidnapping of Christian girls was commonplace and still is.” Tribute and other heavy taxes, arbitrary taxation, forced recruitment of children aged 10-12 for the Janissary Corps, the dreadful conditions of villages and cities during campaigns, the invalidity of Christian testimony, the frequency of brutal executions, and many other negative stereotypes appear in Jireček’s description (Jireček, 1876: 448-450). The fourth link is the rebirth of the Bulgarian people. It is devoted to the Bulgarian national movement and the struggle for independence. Since the political developments leading to autonomy had not yet taken place, Bulgarian history is covered until 1875 (Hacısalihoglu and Hacısalihoglu, 2024: 373-376).

The first emergence of the Romanian nationalism movement was the “*Dacianism*” movement. This movement developed in the 19th century and resulted in the unification of the principalities of Wallachia and Taurus under the name of Romania after the Crimean War of 1853-1856, and the language of this new state, whose official name was Romania, began to be called Romanian and its people began to be called Romanians. The unification of Wallachia and Bogdan and the declaration of independence in 1878 stand out in this context. In this sense, we can say that there has been a return to the ethnic nationalist understanding of history (Hacısalihoglu and Hacısalihoglu, 2024: 373-376).

When constructing the chain of national history in Albania, the main skeleton of the work *Shqipëria ç’ka qënë, ç’është e ç’do të bëhet?* by Şemseddin Sami Frasheri has been preserved: Illyrians in antiquity, Arbërs in the early Middle Ages, then Alexander Bey and the “Albanian Resistance”, then Rilindja (Albanian Rebirth), i.e. the Albanian national movement and the Union of Prizren, the independence process, the

“War of National Liberation” (World War II) and the establishment of Socialism in Albania and the partisan struggle of Enver Hodja, which led to the Socialist period. The most important change in the official understanding of national history in “Enver Hodja’s Albania” or Socialist Albania is the further sharpening of pre-existing clichés. This is particularly reflected in the narrative of the Ottoman period. The pre-existing stereotype of “Albanians who contributed to the Ottoman Empire” has been blurred, and stereotypes such as “Turkish occupation” and “forced Islamisation”, which are also present in other Balkan countries, have been sharpened. In this process, a great destruction of the Ottoman heritage (especially religious manuscripts, etc.) was carried out, and Albania became the first Socialist country to ban religion (Hacısalihoglu and Hacısalihoglu, 2024: 376-386).

As it will be noticed, every nation in this period was, to a certain extent, a product of the nation-building process. The example of the Macedonian nation is the model of nation-building with which the concept of “nation-building” is most compatible, at least in the Balkan geography. As we have stated in the examples above, a national history thesis has been shaped in every nation-building process. In the case of Macedonia, it would almost be more appropriate to say a nation produced by the history thesis rather than a national history thesis produced by the nation. There is no doubt that the main factor that led to the emergence of the nation-state was political developments and decisions. Based on these points, Mehmet and Neriman Hacısalihoglu state that the formation of the Macedonian national history thesis and its reflection in history textbooks is one of the most striking examples of this issue that can be analyzed worldwide. According to them, the following six questions make the Macedonian national historiography remarkable:

“First of all, the name “Macedonian” is the name of a tribe that lived in antiquity and is known for Alexander the Great and that has disappeared into the pages of history. Today’s Macedonians, on the other hand, are a Slavic tribe that was known as Bulgarians during the

Ottoman period with the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870. How are these Bulgarian-Slavs and the ancient Macedonians to be reconciled? This is the first question. The second question is, how can the history of this tribe be continued in a period starting in the early Middle Ages and extending until the end of the Middle Ages with the identification of these Bulgarian-Slavs as Macedonians? In other words, which kingdoms, principalities, heroes and events will be categorized as “Macedonian”? Third question is, this definition, which will of course be made primarily for the principalities and kingdoms that have established sovereignty in the geography defined as Macedonia, will naturally include the subjects that Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek historiography define as their own history. How will the reaction of Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek historiography be dealt with in the face of defining them as “Macedonian”? Fourth question: When will the foundation of the modern Macedonian nation-state and the nationalist movement be dated? Among the political organizations and actors that emerged in the framework of the Macedonian Issue, which ones will be selected as representatives of modern Macedonian nationalism and which ones will be rejected? Since it is a recent period, how will the thesis that they are “Macedonian” and anti-Macedonian continue to be defended against the documents and opinions that emerge about these actors defined as “Us” and “Other”? Fifth question: Which attitude and thesis will be taken against the claim that the so-called Macedonian language is “a dialect of Bulgarian”? Sixth question: How will a thesis be formulated against the claim that the modern Macedonian nation-state is “an artificial state created by Tito?” (Hacısalıhoğlu and Hacısalıhoğlu, 2024: 399-406).

During this period, educational institutions in the Principality and Kingdom of Serbia and scientific institutions such as the Velika škola (Great School), the Serbian Historical Society, the Central State Library of Serbia, Društvo Srpske slovesnosti (Serbian Literary Society), the Royal Serbian Academy and the State Archive of the Kingdom of Serbia performed important functions. Serbian historians who were educated and worked in these institutions include Jovan Rajić,

Dimitrije Davidović, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, Jovan Ristić, Ilarion Ruvarac, Ljubomir Kovačević, Panta Srećković, Čedomilj Mijatović, Dimitrije Ruvarac, Stojan Novaković, Mihailo Gavrilović, Jovan Tomić, Ljubomir Kovačević, Ljubomir Jovanović, Stanoje Stanojević, Konstantin Jireček, Đorđe Nikolajević, Medo Pucić and Ljubomir Stojanović (Krešić, 2024: 429-458). Serbian historiography has largely been shaped by the same ideological and identity perspectives of the modern Serbian nation and state. In this context, the work entitled *History of Slavic Peoples*, especially *Croats, Bulgarians and Serbs* written by Jovan Rajić in the late 18th century can be considered as the beginning of modern Serbian historiography. Since the second half of the 19th century, there has been an increase in Serbian historical studies, and this process has led to the emergence of new schools of thought. Due to reasons such as independence, constant changes in the borders of the Serbian State, migrations, coexistence of religious and cultural groups of different ethnicities and sects, ideologies, wars, pressure from international institutions, it is possible to see that a wide variety of historical perspectives have emerged in Serbian historiography both in terms of method and approach. Serbian historiography is a battleground of the struggle between the use of history for power and ideology and the scientific understanding of history. While the romantic nationalist school, the Marxist school, the postromantic nationalist school are reflections of the intertwining of historiography with power and ideology within the framework of the positivist scientific paradigm, the Ruvarac school, the Annales School and post-2000 social historiography represent the post-positivist scientific paradigm. While the role of enlightenment and positivism was dominant in the beginning of Serbian historiography, the Annales and Marxist school gained strength over time. However, postpositivism has also started to be seen in Serbian historiography within the framework of social historiography and common history studies after 2000 (Abdula, 2024: 459-498).

When we look at the process of Bosnians becoming a modern nation, we see that after the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the

Austro-Hungarian Empire on the basis of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 - especially during the reign of Kallay, the finance minister of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, who ruled Bosnia-Herzegovina between 1882-1903 - Bosnian identity was recognised and even supported as a counterweight to Serbian nationalism. In this framework, a national Bosnian history also began to take shape. Kallay wanted to create a territorial "Bosnian nation" and saw Muslim Bosnians as the most suitable community to support this (Hacısalihoglu and Hacısalihoglu, 2024: 406-414; Babuna, 2006: 406; Babuna, 2013).

Despite some limitations, a view of history in the field of Bosnian history, albeit not as "Bosnian/Bosniak history", has been well shaped since the middle of the 20th century. In particular, the concept of Bosnian identity and *Bošnjaštvo* (Bosnianness) was debated among historians in this period, whether it should be understood as a regional identity or an ethnic identity. Since 1963, historians and writers such as Muhammad Filipović, Avdo Sućeska, Avdo Huma, Atif Purivatra, Enver Redžić and the exiled Adil Zulfikarpašić have continued these debates. With the influence of these historians, the first main link in Bosnian national history (Malcolm, 1994) is the Kingdom of Bosnia in the Middle Ages. The emphasis in the narrative of this period is that Bosnia was neither subject to the Eastern Church nor to the Western Church, and as such was neither Serb nor Croat, but was a separate people from the beginning. The Kingdom of Bosnia and the Church of Bosnia constitute the two main themes. Another important issue is the Ottoman period and the process of Islamization. While the process of conversion to Islam is treated as a very negative phenomenon in all other Balkan national history narratives, the conversion of Bosnians to Islam is explained with the development of the historical process, for example, points such as the Bogomil Church and the similarity between the principles of this church and the principles of Islam (Hoare, 2019: 42-43). In this way, becoming a Muslim is described as a natural process. While portraying the Ottoman rule, the continuity of Bosnians' identity and existence as a separate nation is emphasized. For this reason, Ottoman rule is defined

as a foreign sovereignty. However, the clichés about the Ottoman Empire do not contain as much extreme negativity as in other Balkan countries. After the 1699 Treaty of Karlofça, the perception of the Ottomans as “the Ottomans who left Bosnia defenseless” against Austrian attacks is the first important negative cliché in the textbooks. Although the perception of the Ottomans was negative, it is considered that this situation contributed to the development of Bosnians’ consciousness of defending Bosnia. The implication here is a positive impact for Bosnianness (Muhasilović, 2020: 90-92). We can follow Bosnian historiography in the late 20th century through *Stvaranje Jugoslavije* by Milorad Ekmečić, *Historija Bošnjaka* by Mustafa Imamović, *Dve kulture i ponovo o njima* Čarls Snou, *Historiografija u Bosni i Hercegovini u službipolitike* by Husnija Kamberović (Younis and Bešlija, 2024: 557-580; Duranović, 2024: 581-596).

Genres in Historiography in the Balkans

It is possible to say that the historiography that revived in the Balkans, especially during the Ottoman period, began to form a rich corpus based on chronicles, gazavatnâme-type works, cadastral record books, mukhimma books (notebook for recording important decisions), law books (kanunnames), foundations certificate-charter (waqfname), shar’iyye registers and, of course, public and private political histories. Here, we will explain that the four main genres of Islamic historiography, which were formed in the 10th century and evolved as general, special and city & regional histories, were developed and continued on the continent.

General History

In the pre-Islamic period, general histories in the Balkans were written during the Byzantine Empire, especially as from creation, inspired by the Torah or the Bible. In this context, the oldest surviving Byzantine chronography is *Chronograph* by Johannis Malalas’s which is a general history of events from the creation of the world to the time of Justinian, divided into eighteen books and written before the year 565. Similarly,

the work titled *Historia* by Dukas, one of the historians of the Byzantine period, is the introduction of the study with the first subtitle, which is based largely on information taken from the Torah and tells from the creation of the world to the Latin occupation of Istanbul in 1204. Manuel Malaxos also presented an example of general history by narrating the events from the creation of the world until 1577 AD (Vasilikiotou, 2024: 45-46; Kayapınar, 2024: 106-109).

In the Islamic period, among general (universal or world history) histories, *Behcetü't-tavârîh* by Şükrullah-ı Şîrvânî, *Düsturnâme* by Enverî, *Mecma'ü't-tevârîh* by Matrakçı Nasuh, *Künhü'l-ahbâr* by Gelibolulu Mustafa Âlî, *Takvîmü't-tevârîh* by Kâtib Çelebi, *Tenkîhü't-tevârîhü'l-mülûk* by Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Mi'yâr'd-düvel* and *Misbâhü't-tevârîh* by Esîrî Hasan, *Târih-i Gülşen-i Maârif Ferâizîzâde* Mehmet Sadi Efendi are some of the works discussed from the creation to the period in which the author lived (Özcan, 2020: 22-24, 54-56, 108-115, 172-175, 240-242).

Special History

In the genre of special histories, we will deal with *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman* (dynastic histories), *ruznames* (journals), *salnames* (yearbooks), *cadastral record books*, *kanunnames* (law books), *mukhimma books* (notebook for recording important decisions), *shar'iyye registers*, *fetihname* (conquest books), *gazavatnâmas*, *biographical and bibliographical works*, *memoirs*, *travel books* and *periodicals*. Of course, there are many other sub-genres within this genre such as *şehnâme*, *münşeât compilations*, *Selîmnâmes*, *Süleymannâmes*, *seferatnâmes*, *monographs*, *vefeyât* (biographical works) and *silsilenâmes* (the works showing and explaining family trees). Here, we will make an introduction to the explanations of this genre by particularly focusing on the ones directly related to the Balkans. Dynastic histories, the first example of this genre, include the histories written from the foundation of the Ottoman Empire until the author's lifetime. Among these, as they directly concern the Balkans, due to their importance, it is possible to mention chronicles such as *History of Âşıkpaşazâde* by Âşıkpaşazâde, *History*

of Hadîdî by Hadîdî, History of Oruç Beğ by Oruç Bey, Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osmân by Ibn Kemal, Tâcü't-tawârîh by Hoca Sâdeddin, Tarih-i Selânikî by Selânikî, History of Solakzâde-by-Solakzâde Mehmed (Babinger, 1992: 60-191; Özcan, 2020: 24, 56-59, 115-119, 175-178).

As a term of history, ruznâme (Pakalın, 1971: 62), which is among the special chronicles, is the name of the works created as a result of the records kept by privy secretaries about the daily lives of the sultans they served. In this sense, ruznâme means 'journal'. In the journals, the daily life of the sultan like how they spent their time every day and their activities are briefly described, as well as the historical events that took place are also recorded. Examples of such works in Ottoman History can be found in the early 16th century, and the Ruznâme by Haydar Çelebi, which describes the events of the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim II, is considered to be one of the most important examples of the 'rûznâme genre' (Emecen, 2003: 1-2). Although it is said that rûznâmes were divided into two, 'one pertaining to the personal and the other to the state affairs of the sultans' and that the personal rûznâmes were classified as internal ruznâmes and the rûznâmes pertaining to state affairs as external ruznâmes (Uzunçarşılı, 1973: 607), it is observed that both state affairs and the private life of the sultan were recorded together in the existing rûznâmes. The rûznâmes kept by the privy secretaries of three Ottoman sultans are an important source for recent Ottoman history. The Ruznâme by Ahmed Fâiz Efendi, the privy secretary, covers Selim III's reign from 25 December 1802 to 26 July 1806; the Ruznâme by Ârif Muhîr Bey, the privy secretary, covers Mustafa IV's reign from 21 February 1808 to 26 July 1808 and Mahmud II's reign from 28 July 1808 to 24 January 1809 (Beyhan, 2024: 315-318).

Salnâmes/yearbooks constitute an important corpus for the Ottoman Empire. They are books containing information on the administrative organisation and institutions of the Ottoman Empire, economic, political, military and cultural fields and published every year with new information. Salnames were published in four types: state, province,

official institutions and organisations, and private individuals or organisations. In this context, the first Ottoman provincial *salnâme* was the Bosnia Sanjak *Salnâme* published in 1283/1866 (Beyhan, 2024: 321).

Ottoman cadastral record books (*tahrir* books) are one of the essential source groups for the history of the Balkans, the Balkan nations and the territories within today's national countries, and the Turkish presence in the Balkans. Cadastral record books provide important and irreplaceable information on both the surviving settlements and the implementations of the manorial system, and also demographic and socio-economic structure. We can include *mufassal* (detailed), summary, *timar tevcih* (promoting records in manorial system), pious foundations, *nomadian*, *voynuk* (a military grade who are like lads), *çingane* (gypsy), *filurci*, *jizya* and raider books in the series of cadastral record books. The series of cadastral record books are mainly found in the collections of the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, which include the collections of the financial records (e.g. the Niğbolu *Livası mufassal* (detailed) book numbered BOA MAD 11 and dated 1516/1517) and the land registry and cadastral record books (e.g. the Çirmen *mufassal* (detailed) cadastral record book numbered BOA TT 50 and dated 1515/1516) (Kayapınar, 2024: 164-165).

Cadastral record books also contain another type of source. These are lawbooks (*kanunnâmes*). Law books, especially since they are included at the beginning of the detailed cadastral record books, they provide important information on different population categories based on sanjak, township and district, on the crops produced, livestock and trade. Among the Ottoman *kanunnâmes* published by Ahmet Akgündüz, especially those concerning the Balkans, the *kanunnâmes* of the sanjaks of Avlona, Bosnia, Dubrovnik, Gallipoli, Peloponnese, Niğbolu, Semendire, Silistra and Çirmen are included in Volume 3 (Akgündüz, 1991-1994: 3, 369-475). Other *kanunnames* (law books) of Balkan sanjaks can be found in the 7th and 8th volumes of the same series. These volumes contain laws on the sanjaks of Alacahisar, Albanian Province, Bakriç, Bosnia, Çirmen, Edirne, Herzegovina, Alexandria, Montenegro, Kırk Kilise, Bitola, Peloponnese, Niğbolu, Salonica, Silistre, Sofia, Tırhala, Vize and Vulçitrın (Akgündüz,

1991-1994: 7, 401-407; 8, 259, 508). Indeed, many detailed cadastral record books of the sanjaks in the Balkan region have a sanjak kanunnâme (law) at the beginning of the book, usually after the page with the tughra of the sultan who was on the Ottoman throne at the time the book was kept (e.g. the Silistre detailed record book dated 1597 and numbered TKGMA TT 83). Sanjak kanunnâmes (law books) provide vital information on the explanation of many terms used in the cadastral record books and the tax system applied locally (Kayapınar, 2024: 176-177).

Another group of sources containing information about the Balkans are the mukhimma books (notebook for recording important decisions). Mukhimma books contain orders sent to different regions of the Ottoman Empire on various issues. Mukhimma books are also kept in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive. Shar'iyye registers are also an important source group for Balkan historiography. There are also mukataa and iltizam books for tax farming system, which are especially important in economic and financial terms, and a large part of which is kept in the circular collection from the finance department (Günay, 2003: 71-82; Nuro, 2016: 82-91).

The other subgenres that should be considered in the category of special histories are conquestnâme (conquest books) and gazavatnâme. In the conquest book category, we can show the examples of Fetihnâme-i İnebahtı and Modon and Fetihnâme-i Belgrad (Bayrak, 2002: 110, 132; Afyoncu, 2007: 24-29; Özcan, 2020: 43-82). In the genre of Gazavatnâme, Mihaloğlu Ali Bey's Gazavatnâme written by Sûzî Çelebi of Prizren is an exemplary work in terms of its contribution to Balkan history (Levend, 2000).

Some of the authors of biographical and bibliographical works written in the recent Ottoman period are of Balkan origin. For example, the birthplaces of authors such as Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, who wrote valuable works on Modern Ottoman History, Davut Efendi, the author of *Hâtimetü'l-Eş'âr*, one of the representatives of the Tezkire (collection of biographies) tradition, and Şemseddin Sâmî, the famous encyclopaedist and lexicographer,

are today within the borders of Albania and Bulgaria. Many of the 672 poets as well as statesmen and scholars whose biographies are included in Davut Efendi's *Tezkire* (collection of biographies), and many of the grand vizier, shayk al-Islam, chief admiral, and ministerial officials whose life stories are described in other biographical sources were born in Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania. *Âyine-i Zürefâ*, the famous work of Cemâleddin Efendi, a poet and scholar, which gives information about the lives and works of Ottoman historians, is one of the important examples of this genre.

The memoirs, those related to the Constitutional Monarchy Period and the Committee of Union and Progress, are more specifically related to Balkan History. As it is well known, most of the leaders of the Union and Progress were of Balkan origin and the committee completed its development process in Thessaloniki. The Balkans have an important place in the memoirs of Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri, Cavid Bey, Galip Vardar, Hüsamettin Ertürk, Mustafa Ragıp Esatlı and Kâzım Karabekir. The memoirs of Sultan Abdülhamid II include 'Yıldız Memoirs' by Tahsin Pasha, 'The Diaries' by İzzet Pasha, 'The Memoirs of Küçük Said Pasha; "My Father Sultan Abdülhamid" by Sultan Abdülhamid II's Grand Vizier [Küçük] Mehmed Sa'îd Pasha, and "My Father Sultan Abdülhamid" by Sultan Abdülhamid's daughter Ayşe Osmanoğlu, Memoirs by Atıf Hüseyin Bey who was Abdülhamid's private doctor, Fizan Memoirs by Mahir Said Pekmen, an opponent of Abdülhamid, 31 March Memoirs, A Dissident in the Days of Rebellion. Additionally, there are also Ali Cevat Bey's memoirs; The Proclamation of the Second Constitutional Period and the March 31 Movement, The Memoirs of Ali Cevat Bey who was the privy secretary of Abdülhamid II in the palace, etc. (Beyhan, 2024: 322-324).

In the genre of *seyahatnâme* (travel books), *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi* (The Travel Book by Evliya Çelebi) is one of the most important sources for 17th century Ottoman historiography. Especially within the scope of Balkan studies, Evliya Çelebi's adventure, which started with his first journey to Rumelia in 1651, continued with his repeated visits to the Balkan geography over the years and provided us with very valuable

information about the Balkan geography and peoples of the 17th century. In the 3rd volume of his 10-volume work, the traveller describes his first trip to Rumelia and then provides extensive information about the Balkans in the 5th, 6th and 9th volumes (Bakkaloğlu, 2024: 229-248).

As the last example of this genre, starting from the publication of *Takvîm-i Vekâyi* periodicals such as *Cerîde-i Havâdis*, *Tercümân-ı Ahvâl* and *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* are among the indispensable sources for those working in the field of Balkan history.

City and Regional Histories

These works, which deal with the history, topography, architectural structures, neighbour towns and famous people who grew up in the city or came here, are important works that serve as a source for us about the Balkans today. This is because it is possible to find many things about the sociocultural history as well as the political history of the Balkans in these works. Travel books, which are one of the main works mentioning the historical geography of the Balkans, should be mentioned here. Due to the fact that travel books show the routes of important transport routes passing through the Balkans and the settlements on them, they are the main sources used in understanding the historical geography of the region. In this context, two of the road routes in the Balkans are important as they are frequently discussed in the travel books. One is the *Via Egnatia*, which connected the Italian peninsula from Brindisium (Brindisi) to Istanbul via the city of Dyrrachium (Drac/Durres) on the Adriatic Sea coast, and the other is the *Via Diagonalis* or Ordu Road, which connected Istanbul to Central Europe and was used for ages (Cuntz, 1929: 20-99). For both routes there is a travel book, the *Itinerarium provinciarum*, which seems to have been prepared in the 2nd century AD during the reign of the emperor Antoninus Pius. *Antonini Augusti* and the *Itinerarium Burdigalense/Hierosolymitanum*, which lists the stations along the way, should be consulted by a person travelling from Bordeaux to Jerusalem in 333/334 AD. In addition to these travel books, Klaudios Ptolemy, who is estimated to have lived between 100

and 175 A.D., wrote *Geographika Hyphegesis* (Introduction to Geography) in the middle of the 2nd century A.D. The 4 map sheets attached to his work titled *Geographika Hyphegesis* (Introduction to Geography) cover Raetia, Noricum, Pannonia, Illyricum, Dalmatia, Dacia, Moesia, Thracia, Macedonia and Arladia regions and Crete (Sayar, 2024: 7-28). On the other hand, in the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (Description of the Whole World and Peoples), whose author is unknown but who is presumed to have lived in the Greek-speaking Eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans are again described between chapters 50 and 53.

One of the historical-geographical works in this genre that we should definitely emphasise here is *Tabula Peutingeriana* dated to the 4th century AD. In the work, the road connections and distances between the cities of the Balkan geography in ancient and late antiquity, which are included in the Roman road map, are given in Roman miles. The *Tabula Peutingeriana*, originally thought to have been made in the 2nd century AD for the Roman postal organisation (*cursus publicus*) and last revised in 435 AD, has survived to the present day thanks to a copy made by a monk named Peutinger in the 13th century. This work, which is preserved today in the Manuscripts section of the Austrian National Library in Vienna, was probably taken from one of the libraries in Istanbul in 1204 as a result of the looting of Istanbul during the 4th Crusade and brought first to Venice and then to Vienna (Weber, 1976). *Tabula Pautingeriana* is a very important source for the historical geography of the Antiquity since it is the only map surviving from the Antiquity despite the errors in the place names during the copying.

At the end of the 3rd century AD, new administrative units were formed within the scope of the new state system formed with the state reform of the emperor Diocletian in the late antique period. Taking this system into account, cities in the states were also formed at the beginning of the 5th century AD. The relevant chapters in *Synekdmos* (Road Accompaniment Document) by Hierocles, which deals with this process and was published in the 6th century AD, provide information about the historical geography of the Balkans in the Late Antique Period.

Ottoman cartographers and geographers in the Islamic period started their pioneering works for the Balkans in the 16th century by counting the newly conquered Hungary among the properties of the Ottoman sultan. In 1555 or 1559, the text attached to the margin of the world map drawn by Hacı Ahmed from Tunisia reported that the Ottomans, whom he resembled to the sun, had ‘conquered and captured’ Hungary, among many other provinces, with their ‘courage and bravery’. In this context, Ali ‘Hungarian’ Reis, who joined the Ottoman administrative system through devshirmeh and found a place for himself in the palace nakkashane (art worksop), was able to make notes on the world map he drew about the expeditions the Ottomans planned to undertake in the Far Eastern waters. Geographical works of this period include *Evza-hu’l-Mesâlik ilâ Ma’rifeti’l-Büldân ve’l-Memâlik* by Sipâhizâde Mehmed, *Menâzirü’l-Avâlim* by Trabzonlu Âşık Mehmed, *Cihannümâ* by Kâtip Çelebi, *Levâmi’u’n-Nûr fî Zulmet-i Atlas Minor* by Gerardus Mercator and Jodocus Hondius, *Atlas Maior* by Joan Blaeu and *Mi’yârü’l-Düvel ve Misbârü’l-Milel* by Hasan Esirî. Among these, Kâtip Çelebi, who rolled up his sleeves in 1648 to compile the first systematic work of Ottoman geography, *Cihannümâ*, included the Hungarian lands first to the south and west, then to the north and east of the Danube in his geographical descriptions in the first composition of his work, which he never completed. In this way, Kâtip Çelebi covered a wider area than Âşık Mehmed. This is because the Ottoman administrative borders in Hungary had expanded relatively over time, and Kâtip Çelebi’s ambitious attempt was the most comprehensive geographical study up to that point (Kolçak, 2024: 191).

In this category, we should also mention the works written by the chroniclers in the Ottoman Empire because of their importance as they may contain details down to the smallest town or village. Thus, it was possible to see political, social and economic issues, especially place names, through these works and to access some continuous data for city histories thanks to the successive series.

Sultan and Historian Relationship in Balkan Historiography

There is no doubt that historiography should be understood together with historical events. We can explain this situation by considering Carr's following assessment: "In my first lecture: I said: 'Before researching history, research the historian.' Now I would like to add the following: Before researching the historian, research his historical and social environment." (Carr, 1990: 44). Accordingly, the historian should be regarded as a part and result of the age and society in which he was born. In the periods of historiography in the Balkans that we have discussed, the sultan's support for the chronicler was expressed in the term 'protectorate' or "patronage". This is essentially 'official or court historiography'. Court chroniclers played the most important role in the historical studies of the period. Many chroniclers used the resources of the state to prepare their works and to develop their own historical narratives. In this respect we can give some examples among the histories written with the assignment or request of the sultans in order to reveal the patronage of chroniclers in the Balkans: *Hadikatü'l-Vüzerâ* by Osmanzâde Ahmed Tâib Efendi was written with the encouragement of Grand Vizier Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Pasha (1717-1730). Cemâleddin Efendi, a poet and scholar, wrote his famous work *Âyine-i Zürefâ*, which provides information about the lives and works of Ottoman chroniclers in 1843 with the encouragement of Sultan Abdülmecid during his tenure at *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*.

In addition, the patronage system was also seen as a means of conveying the legitimacy of power to the masses. We can explain this legitimacy through the poems written by Georgios Pissidis for Heraclius (610-641). The poet briefly explains why Heraclius deserves praise as follows: "Heraclius burnt him (Hosroes) in the fire, just as Hosroes brought into the balance and burnt the houses of the people. Thus, justice was resecured, Heraclius became the saviour of oppressed peoples and Byzantine emperors, proving that he could resort to violence, even death, against anyone who did not accept their demands" (Psellus, 1986:

25). Johannes Malalas, in his work entitled *Chronograph*, was also a supporter of Justinian's absolute monarchy and praised his policies (Vasilikiotou, 2024: 45-46).

The position of official chronicler, which is the equivalent of patronage in the eyes of the state, is expressed by the terms *vekâyi'i-nüvis* and *vak'anüvis*. The profession of *vakanüvis* (chronicler) is the name of the civil service that took its place in the Ottoman central organization from the beginning of the 18th century and whose duty was to record the events of the period or before. The person performing this duty was called *vak'anüvis* or *vekâyi'nüvis* which is the plural form of the word *vak'a*. Although there had not been such an office before, there were individuals who performed this task and they were called *şehnâmeçi* or *şehnâme-nüvis*. At the beginning of the 18th century of the Ottoman Empire, the function of the office of *vak'anüvis*, which was created as a state chronicler in charge of the central organisation, was defined as compiling the previous writings and recording the events of the period in which they lived (Kütükoğlu, 1994, p. 103). To give some examples, names such as İzzî Süleyman Efendi, Seyyid Hakim Mehmed Efendi, Çeşmizâde Mustafa Reşid Efendi, Musazâde Mehmed Ubeydullah Efendi, es-Seyyid Behçetî Efendi, Ömerzâde Süleyman Efendi, Sadullah Enverî, Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi, Teşrifâtî Hasan Efendi, Mehmed Edib Efendi, Halil Nûrî Efendi served as chroniclers in the second half of the 18th century. Although chroniclers were generally chosen from among the ulema (pundits), there were exceptions to this generalisation and some were appointed to this position among other civil servants of the state. Among the modern age chroniclers, Enverî, Edip, Vâsîf, Mehmet Pertev, Mehmet Şakir Efendi, known by the pseudonym *Recâî*, and Ömer Âmir, Halil Nûrî and Âkif Paşazâde Nâil Mehmet Beys were appointed to this position from bureaucracy. Âsım, Şanizâde, Esat, Lütî Efendi and Cevdet Pasha were members of the seminary. Although the last chronicler Abdurrahman Şeref Bey was not a member of the *madrasah* (Muslim theological school), he was considered a member of the seminary class because he was engaged in teaching for a long time (Beyhan, 2024: 297-308).

The Findings

Muslim historiography in the Balkans has accumulated a wealth of experience for both the basin and Muslims and also for European societies. So much so that the Ottoman experience had a great impact on the formation of modern historiography in Europe through the Balkans. However, as of the 19th century, both in the political arena and in historiography, the Ottoman Empire faced a weakening due to the loss of its central position. In this regard, first the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and then the efforts of the nation states established in the 19th and 20th centuries to further this weakness plays a vital role. In this process, the main goal of historiography in the Balkans was to divide the addressee population and atomize history in a systematic way. For this purpose, they created a new and fictional historiography centered on the nations in the Balkans and reduced to these nations by fragmenting the almost seven centuries of background that communities belonging to very different ethnic identities in the Balkans built together. In addition to the fragmentation of the target group, a relationship based on conflict was also created between them. In this fragmentation and conflict, Muslims, especially the Ottomans, were “otherized” in the 19th century and moved to the position of invaders (!) for the Balkans and pushed out of the newly written history of the Balkans.

Although this is the case, when we turn our attention to the period when the Ottomans, i.e. Muslims, dominated the historiography of the Balkans, we can clearly see that Muslims have made very important contributions to the Balkans in terms of content, genre and method in terms of historiography. Therefore, if scientific historiography (i.e. historiography that seeks to understand and explain the past as it was) had prevailed in the Balkans in the last two centuries, all of the specialists in Modern and Contemporary History would have been competent to use Ottoman sources in each Balkan country. In fact, the sources of Greek, Bulgarian, Albanian, Serbian, Macedonian, etc. history from the 15th century to the early 20th century at the latest are Ottoman chronicles, *gazavatnâme* (conquest

books), cadatral record books, mukhimma books (notebook for recording important decisions), law books, official documents and registers such as foundations certificate-charter (waqfname), shar'iyye registers, and of course general and special histories and city-regional histories. Even today, many chroniclers in the Balkans try to write city histories based on travel reports written by a few European travelers, which are based on estimates, rather than using first-hand and very rich Ottoman sources. It is still not accepted by Balkan historiography that one cannot write Balkan history of the Modern and Contemporary Age without Ottoman, just as one cannot write Roman history without Latin or Byzantine history without Greek. For this reason, modern Balkan historiography has not gained a respectable position in world historiography in general.

Based on this study, it should be noted that the history of the Balkans, especially the 6-century period from the 15th century to the 20th century, must be looked at through its own resources, experience and accumulation, and its history must be reconsidered through these. This study is important in that it touches upon the basic points of its follow-up, and noteworthy in that it provides a holistic developmental trajectory of the historiographical process in the Balkans based on the historiographical studies available in Turkish. Moreover, this study is remarkable for showing that Muslims living in the Balkans were important inhabitants of the basin and made vital contributions to the basin through their historiographical journeys. In this respect, as there is a renewed interest in the Balkans in our country, this study is a candidate to make a contribution to sustain this interest in a healthy and authentic manner. While there are relatively more studies on the Balkans focusing the Ottoman period in our country, there are almost no studies on the historiography of Serbs, Bosnians, Albanians, Macedonians, Greeks, Bulgarians, and the nation states they established. This study promises to provide an important perspective on these issues as well.

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