An Ottoman Geographer Engages the Early Modern World: Katip Çelebi's Vision of East Asia and the Pacific Rim in the *Cihânnümâ*

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Bir Osmanlı Coğrafyacısı Erken Modern Dünya ile Meşgul Oluyor:
Cihânnümâ'*da Katip Çelebi'nin Doğu Asya ve Pasifik Kıyıları Vizyonu*

Öz ■ Bu makale onbirinci/onyedinci yüzyılda Osmanlı aydını Katip Çelebi'nin kendi çağdaşlarının dünya coğrafyası anlayışlarını nasıl temelden yeniden şekillendirmeyi hedef aldığını anlatıyor. Küresel bir coğrafyayı, Avrupalı yazarlar ve harita yapımcıları tarafından keşifler çağında yapılan buluşların ortaya koyduğu yeni bilgileri bir araya toplayarak okurlarına aktarmayı hedeflemiş olan bitirilmemiş *Cihânnümâ* elyazmasının dikkatli incelemesi yoluyla, dünya tarihinin erken modern döneminde yer alan küresel değişiklikler hakkında Osmanlılar'ın neler bildiğini anlamayı hedefliyoruz. Katip Çelebi'nin Japonya, Güneydoğu Asya'nın adaları ve Çin'in içinde bulunduğu Pasifik Okyanusu hakkındaki bölümlerinin içeriklerini parçalara ayırarak, bu yerler hakkında nelerin yazarın dikkatini çektiğini ve Osmanlı okuyucularına bilgi vermek için çeşitli kaynakları nasıl kullandığını belirleyebiliriz. Katip Çelebi hayatının sonuna doğru Avrupa'da yazılmış coğrafî eserlerin daha çok farkına vardıkça, pek çok çağdaşlarının aksine, kalitesiz diye Müslüman çoğrafyacıları giderek daha çok reddetmiş. Hatta yaptığı bu seçim dünyanın uzak bölgeleri hakkında onu yanlış kararlara sevk etmiş olsa da, o bu yorumunda ısrar etti. Ancak, geçen zaman içinde kusurları ortaya çıkmış olsa da, Cihânnümâ, çağdaşı Osmanlı okuyucularına erken modern dönemde meydana gelen dramatik değişikliklerin bazısını anlatmada son derece etkili oldu.

Anahtar kelimeler: Katip Çelebi, *Cihânnümâ*, Japonya, Çin, Doğu Asya, Osmanlı coğrafyacılığı, Keşifler Devri, Osmanlı-Avrupa etkileşimi.

The recent 400th anniversary of the birth of the Ottoman polymath and intellectual Katip Çelebi (d. 1067/1657) has raised global interest about his

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scholarly legacy, much of which remains untranslated.[1] One of his works, the *Cihânnümâ* ("Cosmography"), was a massive enterprise that aimed to integrate a novel and growing European geographical tradition with the medieval Islamic geographical works to which he was heir. Given recent debates over whether innovation in intellectual life and curiosity about the wider world declined in the Islamic world during the early modern period,[2] this work has not received sufficient attention in the English-language literature. This article aims to correct that deficiency, and reflect on what Katip Çelebi's activities in the field of geography represent.

Katip Çelebi commenced an initial draft of the *Cihânnümâ* at some point between 1055/1645 and 1058/1648, but apparently abandoned it out of dissatisfaction with the Muslim geographical works available to him, which were not sufficient for understanding the new geographical discoveries of the early modern period.[3] Still, his initial research led him to discover works such as an earlier Ottoman attempt at describing the regions of the Western Hemisphere that had been discovered and conquered by Spain and Portugal over the course of the tenth/sixteenth century. This work, the *Târîh-i Hind-i Garbî* ("History of the West Indies"), was compiled for Sultan Murad III in 991/1583-4.[4] Katip Çelebi recognized that the text was based on translations from non-Muslim sources, and resolved on restructuring the framework of the *Cihânnümâ* with an eye toward employing the same strategy. Drawing on the assistance of bi-lingual

1 The notable exceptions to the rule are *Mizânü'l-hakk*, which was translated into English as Geoffrey Lewis, *The Balance of Truth* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957), and *Tuhfetü'l-kibâr fî esfâri'l-bihâr*, which was translated in part as *The History of the Maritime Wars of the Turks: Chapters 1 to 4*, trans. James Mitchell (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968).

2 See, for example, Steve Paulson, "Does Islam Stand Against Science?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education: Chronicle Review*, online edition (retrieved June 19, 2011 at http://chronicle.com/article/Does-Islam-Stand-Against/127924/?sid=cr&utm_source=cr&utm_medium=en).

3 The first redaction of the manuscript has survived as Katip Çelebi, *Cihânnümâ* (Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS Mxt. 389). The table of contents indicates that the work primarily focused only on Muslim regions of the world, and increasingly trailed off in later sections dealing with non-Muslim realms; see the remarks of Gottfried Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit Entstehung und Gedankenwelt von Kātib Čelebis Ǧihānnümā* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2003), 122, 159 and 185.

4 This work has been translated by Thomas D. Goodrich, *The Ottoman Turks and the New World: A Study of Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi and Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Americana* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990).

contemporaries who assisted him in acquiring and translating geographical works from European sources, including some of the more recent Dutch atlases that had become available at the beginning of the eleventh/seventeenth century, Katip Çelebi began a second draft of the manuscript in 1064/1654. He incorporated this new material into a well-established tradition of Muslim geographical literature dating back to the formative period of Islamic history.

However, Katip Çelebi's scholarly career was often diverted into other projects aimed at meeting the pressing needs of an Ottoman state beset by mid-eleventh/seventeenth-century political and economic crisis. In the last three years of his life, he tackled a diverse range of topics in multiple works. These projects ranged from describing new developments in naval technology needed to address the Ottoman failure to capture Crete, to a polemic aimed at stifling growing religious controversy stoked by the intra-Muslim conflict between a puritanical faction known as the Kadizadeli movement and the mystics of the Halveti Sufi order.[5] The division of labor that this required, along with the chaotic environment that Ottoman state and society faced in conjunction with financial crisis and the multiple failed conquests of Crete, was followed by his sudden and untimely death at the age of 47. While he had made great progress in compiling the second redaction of the *Cihânnümâ* (which had extended to approximately 200 folios in his autograph manuscript), he did not live long enough to complete the work, leaving much of the work underdeveloped or unfinished. Beginning the descriptive chapters of his work in Japan and working westward to the eastern Anatolian city of Van by the time of his sudden death in 1067/1657, the work had only broad and vague descriptions of most of Africa, Europe and the Americas.

Despite the imperfections of the extant text of the *Cihânnüma*, however, it is perhaps a testament to the respect in which its author was held that the manuscript draft was later refined and edited by the noted Ottoman printer İbrâhîm Müteferrikâ (d. 1158/1745). It was re-issued with the addition of an introductory section providing updates on some of the new scientific discoveries in Europe as one of the first printed books in the Ottoman Empire. In addition, subsequent sections covering various parts of the Ottoman domains west of Van in the Arab and Balkan provinces from the geographer Abu Bakr al-Dimashqî (d. 1102/1691) were also appended to fill out the work—at least for specific regions of the Otto-

5 For these works, see n. 1 above; for more on the religious conflicts of the age, see Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45:4 (1986), 251-69.

man Empire itself.[6] However, the work has received only limited attention in the available secondary scholarship until fairly recently.[7]

One of the more striking elements that emerged from Katip Çelebi's process of discovery was the periodic outbursts of frustration he directed at his own cultural context, both in its contemporary Ottoman and earlier medieval periods. For example, after examining a number of the European geographical works and describing the principles around which their charts and maps were organized, he wrote:

> In this book, I did not feel compelled to copy all of the maps and have left some things out for conciseness' sake. For it would be a laborious task to copy all the maps from one manuscript to another. And since there is no printing in our country, it would be difficult to illustrate even a single page. So when a copy was made, there would be blank spaces left (where the illustrations would have gone) and the book would be defective….The problem is that there are few scribes who can copy a text with all its illustrations properly in place—in our country there may be none, and the condition of those who can is well known. Nevertheless,

6 The subsequent expanded version published by İbrâhîm Müteferrikâ in 1144/1732 as Katip Çelebi, *Cihânnümâ* (İstanbul: Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Pertevniyal 454); it was subsequently republished in facsimile by the İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi in 2008. However, it contains numerous typographical errors that deviate from Katip Çelebi's original autograph manuscript and is not fully trustworthy. For more on Abu Bakr b. Behram al-Dimashqi and his incorporation into the *Cihânnümâ*, see Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 257-62 and Fr. Taeschner, "Djughrāfiyā: VI. The Ottoman Geographers," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, v. 2, 587-90.

7 The notable exceptions are the work of Gottfried Hagen referenced in n. 3 above; Türk Tarih Kurumu, ed., *Kâtip Çelebi: Hayatı ve Eserleri Hakkında İncemeler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1957); Bilal Yurtoğlu, *Katip Çelebi* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 2009); and the aforementioned *Doğumunun 400. Yıl Dönümünde Kâtip Çelebi*, ed. Bekir Karlığa and Mustafa Kaçar (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009). The initial print copy of the İbrahim Müteferrika text was recently taken up by several editors and republished as Bülent Özükan et al., eds., *Kitâb-ı Cihânnümâ = the book of Cihannuma,* trans. Füsun Savcı (İstanbul: Boyut Yayın Grubu, 2008). Finally, Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and François Lachaud have also produced an as-yet unpublished study of the Japan section of the manuscript entitled "De la Seine et du Bosphore: Regards lointains sur le Japon au 'Siecle Chrétien' (1543-1639)," and Bacqué-Grammont has also collaborated with Jean Calmard, Geng-Shimin and Rui Manuel Loureiro on a further study of the China/Cathay section of the manuscript entitled "La Chine et la Haute-Asie dans la Cosmographie Ottomane de Kâtib Çelebî (milieu du XVIIe siècle)." I thank Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont for sharing these unpublished materials with us.

> it is to be hoped that those brethren who make copies of this esteemed book, or employ others to do so, will take pains to include the illustrations in their proper places, so the book will not turn into a boor stripped of his clothes or a bird with plucked tail and wings. That is because fine illustrations are one of the requisites of this science, which traditionally has been expounded by addressing both the mind and the senses. But what can we do about fools who think these illustrations are useless and cut them off when they copy the book? May God bring misfortune on their heads and cut off the days of their lives![8]

Here, Katip Çelebi explicitly notes the grave disadvantage that the lack of printing presses imposed upon Ottoman intellectual life. Yet the criticism goes beyond just lack of access to technology. Katip Çelebi argues that the real problem is a lack of knowledge and openness among his intellectual contemporaries, who would not even recognize the value of the key parts of the work. Moreover, the two were interlinked—copying the maps and charts found in European geographical works would have required a phenomenal amount of work if done by hand. Most copyists seeking a quick payoff for their work would have eschewed such a lengthy job without significant compensation, and even Katip Çelebi did not complete or fill in the maps that he copied into his own autograph manuscript. One wonders whether or not the work's subsequent printer, İbrâhîm Müteferrikâ, grimly nodded his head at this criticism as he prepared the printed text close to a century after its author's death. Even then, the lengthy chronological gap between the autograph manuscripts and printed text meant that the completed maps in the printed text were drawn from later sources, and frequently lack markers to the places that Katip Çelebi discussed in his text.

Therefore, given its structural problems and incomplete character, one of the reasons for the neglect of Katip Çelebi's work in contemporary scholarship may lie in the fact that the *Cihânnümâ* does not provide much in the way of novel geographical information. It represents instead an attempt to compile information from a variety of sources and make it more readily available for an Ottoman audience. Nowhere is this made clearer than in the unfinished seventh chapter on the Americas, a good example of Katip Çelebi's methodology in creating the work. Divided into seven sections, the first section draws on classical geographical

8 Henceforth, all references to the work will be keyed to the folios of the autograph manuscript of the *Cihânnümâ* in the Topkapı Palace Library: Katip Çelebi, *Cihânnümâ* (İstanbul: Topkapı Saray Ktp., MS Revan 1624)—hereafter referred to as KCRV. However, due to its greater ease of access, I will include reference to the page of the 1144/1732 Müteferrikâ printed text (discussed in n. 6 above) in parentheses for specialist consultation; thus, the preceding quote is taken from KCRV, 11a-b (55).

sources such as Diodorus Siculus and Plato's *Timaeus* to speculate on whether the Americas were referenced in ancient times. Subsequent sections draw heavily on the *Atlas Minor* of Gerhard Mercator for geographical measurements and a discussion of the plants, animals, peoples and geographical features of the region. Finally, the concluding section represents a near-carbon copy of several sections drawn from three separate sections of the earlier *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî* produced during the reign of Murad III.[9] The copying of the earlier work was interrupted only briefly by occasional interjections, such as one where Katip Çelebi recognized a discrepancy between his chosen text and information recorded in the *Atlas Minor* of Mercator about the career of Christopher Columbus, and in a closing remark where he criticized the author of the *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî* for incorrectly speculating that a story about a fleet sent by Alexander the Great on an exploratory mission somehow reached the western hemisphere.[10]

We can see from this structure that the *Cihânnümâ* is not likely to reveal new or unique information for the study of world history during the early modern period. Despite its derivative nature, however, the work's true value is that it opens up a revealing window into the formation of Ottoman conceptions of the increasingly globalizing world of the early modern period. It represents an early point of intersection between Ottoman thinkers and a wider geographical discourse that had emerged since the Age of Exploration. The historiography of the Ottoman Empire (and other Asian land empires as well) has traditionally presented its elites as having only limited interactions or understanding of the wider global networks that had emerged from the tenth/sixteenth century onward. The Ottomans (and Muslim-ruled societies as a whole) are portrayed as unable to recognize the opportunities of an expanding global economy and society during this time. A study of key chapters of the *Cihânnümâ*, which broke new geographical ground for many Ottoman readers, may provide important clues as to what interested eleventh/seventeenth-century thinkers like Katip Çelebi and his audience.

The major point of intersection where the early modern fusion of global traditions came together is in the section about the cultures and societies bordering the Pacific Ocean, about which the medieval Islamic geographical tradition was relatively (though not entirely) ignorant. These Pacific Rim regions represent the part of the work where Katip Çelebi made his most extensive use of non-Muslim sources in order to augment the comprehensiveness of his geographical compendium. Thus, this article will examine Katip Çelebi's portrayal of the Pacific Ocean

9 Compare KCRV, 35a-40a (108-15) to Goodrich, *Ottoman Turks and the New World*, 118-19, 149-63, 173 and 206-19.

10 KCRV, 37a (108) and 39b-40a (114-15).

world through chapters describing such key regions as the Americas, China, Japan, Indonesia, and the various islands in their vicinity. Through a complete analysis of these sections of Katip Çelebi's work, we will learn the extent to which an Ottoman intellectual and geographer far from these regions recognized the growing trans-cultural and international ethos that surrounded the early modern period of world history. Moreover, we can also gain insights on how an early modern Muslim intellectual grappled with the religious and cultural diversity that marked the Pacific world as he began engaging with outside perspectives on it for the first time.

Japan: Structuring an Alien Culture for an Ottoman Audience

One of the key regions of the Pacific world that Katip Çelebi addressed in a chapter of his geography was the country of Japan, a chapter which is especially noteworthy in that it commences his east-to-west sweep across the various regions of the globe. It is therefore worth considering the materials and descriptions of Japanese culture and society that he incorporated into his work to form an impression of how he sought to portray this distant part of the world to his Ottoman audience.

In analyzing the political and social structure of Japan, Katip Çelebi described the island as being divided into multiple "governments" (*hükûmet*), which probably indicates his reference point for the feudal prefectures that operated in Japan preceding the consolidation activities of the Tokugawa Shogunate in the early eleventh/seventeenth century.[11] In particular, he notes that some of these "governments" were sovereign entities in their own right.[12]

Katip Çelebi then focuses his attention on three key leadership figures that governed Japanese society. He called the first of these the *Zâzû*, who had authority over all religious matters in the country. Here, Katip Çelebi's comparative reference point for discussing the *Zâzû* was his knowledge of the Catholicism of the Ottomans' enemies. He compared the *Zâzû*'s powers to those of the pope, and also discussed a bevy of sub-officials known as *Tûnî* who played a role similar to that of bishops. This would initially suggest to the *Cihânnümâ*'s audience that structurally-speaking, the Japanese religious system was similar to that of the most prominent religious adversaries of Ottoman Muslims. Unlike the Christians,

11 For more on the evolution of Japan's feudal structures leading up to the Tokugawa Shogunate, see Marius P. Jansen, ed., *Warrior Rule in Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

12 KCRV, 45a (124).

however, the *Zâzû* "does not lie down at night without commending his body to the keeping of a special idol" and "has one idol for every day of the year and rotates them."[13] As an idol-worshipper, the Japanese would now rank even lower than the monotheistic Christians on the scale of Muslim acceptance. However, Katip Çelebi also examines other components of the *Zâzû*'s activities that would have been more familiar to the Ottomans. He explains that the *Zâzû* kept a fast, wore only white clothing, and was abstinent from food and intercourse from the crescent to the full moon. In this case, the Muslim practice of fasting during sacred times would have been a potential point of intersection with which Katip Çelebi's audience could empathize. Moreover, when not fasting, the *Zâzû* donned red and went on the hunt with other government officials. An Ottoman audience could readily recognize some of their own practices in this description. Still, Katip Çelebi found it striking that this official did not have any land grants or salary of his own, and that he was dependent on various Japanese governors for his upkeep despite having many dependents and expenses. This would stand in contrast to powerful Ottoman religious officials, who often managed pious foundations or drew salaries from the state.

The second official of note was called by the term *Wuwâw*, and Katip Çelebi described him as being in charge of the assignment of ranks to the various officials and people of the realm. In contrast to the Ottoman practice of bestowing an official seal upon their officials, Japanese officials received a badge (*'alâmet*) of some kind. Katip Çelebi's description of this figure as having only a minimal salary and dependent upon the gifts of the many visitors he received indicates that he was describing the Japanese emperor. By the time of the late tenth/sixteenth or early eleventh/seventeenth century, the Japanese emperor would have been mostly a figurehead who was subject to the whim of the feudal lords who held the real military power in the country.

This is confirmed by Katip Çelebi's description of the third type of official, whom he calls the *Kûhâqâmâ*. He describes these officials as being fourteen autonomous rulers with the right to carry out military operations and coin money, three of whom acted as the head over all the others. In contrast to the *Wuwâw*, these figures have "pomp and magnificence…of such a degree that [they] resemble the kings of Europe." Katip Çelebi thus describes Japan as being a type of oligarchy rather than a monarchy, noting that if one of the *Kûhâqâmâ* officials steps out of line, the others "act in concert to punish him."[14]

13 Ibid., 45a, margin (124-5).

14 Ibid., 45a, margin (125).

Katip Çelebi goes on to divide Japanese society into five different "levels" (*mertebe*). Three of these pass by with little or no elaboration: the magistrates (*hukkâm*), who he compares to Ottomans holding the rank of *bey* or *beylerbeyi*; and the merchant and peasant classes, who he does not discuss at all beyond a basic identification. On the other hand, the second and third groups in society receive significantly more attention. The lengthiest description describes the "administrators of religious affairs," whom Katip Çelebi calls *bûnzî*, which is a reference to Buddhist monks (*bonze*). However, he also locates the most significant concentration of the religious classes in the city of Fujinomiya, the site of a major Shinto shrine near Mt. Fuji, and a city called Bândû, where their major theological school (*medrese*) was located.[15] The work correctly notes that Buddhism was a notable component of Japanese culture, but seemed to recognize also that Japanese religious life was not identical to Buddhist groups found elsewhere in the world. As Katip Çelebi put it, "[they] are of the opinion (*re'y*) of Brahmans," rather than being Brahmans themselves. An obvious reference point by which his audience could grasp the concept of *bûnzî*s was the "*bey*s of Malta" (i.e., the Knights Hospitaller) who "combined both monkery and warfare." He also noted their great wealth as derived from endowments under their control. Beyond this, the only other group deemed worthy of significant attention was defined as the "urban notables and grandees." This class was fixed in their rank regardless of any fluctuation in their wealth or personal fortune, which was a contrast to Ottoman grandees. Here, Katip Çelebi incorporated, both in this section and elsewhere, the importance of social and political rank for the Japanese elite.

As far as politics and society were concerned, Katip Çelebi's discussion of Japan indicates that he felt his audience would be most interested in its religious aspects, followed by an explanation of whatever resources those groups might control. Katip Çelebi even recorded a central belief of the Pure Land Buddhism that had become dominant in Japan by the tenth/sixteenth century, stating: "It is related concerning some of these *bûnzî*s that when they die, a wind takes their corpse up into the air and it disappears." Unwilling to allow this belief to stand unchallenged, however, the author added in the margin of his autograph: "Clearly this is a superstition; but as the Shaykh [Avicenna] says at the end of the *Shifâ*, 'you will suffer no loss by leaving the extraordinary things that you hear about in the realm of possibility'."[16]

15 The text has Fîyânûmâ, which could also be a reference to the area of Mt. Fuji in general; see ibid., 45a, margin. Bândû may be a reference to the Zenkō-ji Buddhist temple in Nagano founded in the seventh century.

16 Ibid., 45a, margin (125); a key belief undergirding Pure Land sect of Buddhism was that when one died, they would be transported away to the Western paradise.

The interest in religious life extends well beyond the section on political organization, as a subsequent section specifically devoted to the religious life of Japan elaborates further on Japanese religious practices. While apparently unaware of the difference between Buddhism and Shintoism (not surprising due to the syncretism between the two by the early modern period of world history), Katip Çelebi is able to correctly identify the visual representations of both Buddhist and Shinto deities as *fûtûḳî* and *ḳâmî*, respectively. He also identifies the founding Buddhist figures of both Amitabha (*Âmîdâ*) and Saykamuni (*Zâḳâ*, i.e., the Buddha himself) as primary figures in the Buddhist canon, and notes that they produced written laws that the Japanese follow.[17]

Moreover, in a discussion of the various prominent cities in Japan, Katip Çelebi included an accurate description of the shrine near Mt. Kōya to the founder of Shingon Buddhism, Kōbō-Daishi, with whom the Japanese associate the development of the Japanese syllabary and writing system.[18] About him, Katip Çelebi added for the benefit of his Muslim audience that "…they say that, like the expected Mahdi, he has not died; he had a grave dug, entered it and disappeared, and will re-emerge." He also described the burial practices near the shrine, noting that "if [the *bey*s and notables] cannot be buried there, they at least extract a tooth and bring it there for burial from a faraway place, believing that if a small piece of someone is buried there, he shall be resurrected in the afterlife in a good condition."[19] Finally, Katip Çelebi also makes reference to the ancient Japanese sites at Nara, describing the massive statue of the Buddha at Todaiji, along the phenomenon of the tame deer that roamed the area which were forbidden for hunting due to their links to the Kasuga Shinto shrine. He also described a giant fish pond whose fish were considered sacred.[20]

Kâtip Çelebi did not limit himself to the religions of Japan alone. The text exploits European sources to raise awareness of more recent contemporary events in Japan that would have had considerable resonance for his Ottoman audience by focusing on the introduction of Christianity into the region. For example, Katip Çelebi discussed the conversion of one of the *Kûhâqâmâ* to Christianity and the problematic result of that process. According to his account, the other *Kûhâqâmâ*

17 Ibid., 45a (126).

18 For more on Kōbō-Daishi, also known as Kūkai (d. 835), see Yoshito S. Hakeda, *Kūkai and His Major Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) and Ryuichi Abe, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kukai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

19 KCRV, 46a and 46a, margin (128).

20 Ibid., 46a, margin (128).

banded together to battle and kill the new convert, and also wiped out those who were in line to take his place to prevent their succession.[21] Since many of the offices in Japan were hereditary, the conversion of some of the feudal *daimyo* in the tenth/sixteenth century, perhaps as a means to gaining improved access to gunpowder weaponry and supplies, proved extremely disruptive to the political structure by allying whole regions with foreign influences. All of this demonstrates how Kâtip Çelebi had developed an awareness and appreciation of the course of events that took place in Japan from 946/1540 onward, as Portuguese officials and priests had begun to gain converts in Japan over the latter half of the tenth/sixteenth century. Kâtip Çelebi's recognition of the problems that this was causing dates his source material to the period preceding the Tokugawa Shogunate's assertion of power and their closing off of Japan to outside influences.[22]

Other elements of Katip Çelebi's presentation betray the time frame of some of his sources. For instance, he was aware of the development of "an academy of monks known as Cezvîtâ" (i.e., the Jesuits) in a city called Bûnghûm, in which Christians were plentiful. He also noted that "there the Japanese people learn Portuguese and those who come from Europe learn Japanese." He also notes that Latin was a language of study.[23] He then goes on to discuss the peculiarity of the Japanese language, about which he remarks:

> There is much divergence in the Japanese language. It is a single language, but the vocabulary and expressions and script vary widely. They use several expressions for one meaning. There are particular terms and usages for the elite and the poor, for men and women and children. In the written language as well, they have special pens and specific varieties of script for verse and prose, and for books and letters….The characters used in the script are symbolic, as with the ancient Egyptians. These characters do not indicate a word but rather a meaning. There are approximately 5,000 characters that are familiar to the scholars of Japan and

21 Ibid., 45a, margin (125). It is unclear which daimyo is referenced, though it may have something to do with the events surrounding the rise of Hideyoshi Totoyami to power in 1587 that included persecutions of Christians; see Conrad Totman, *A History of Japan* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), pp. 207-8. For more on the topic of the spread of Christianity via the Portuguese, see C.R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549-1650* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1993), and n. 23 below.

22 For more on relations between Christians and Japanese that led to the closing, see Ikuo Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2001).

23 The city of Bûnghûm is described in two places; see KCRV, 45a (126) and 46a, margin (128).

> of China. But the common people do not understand them, because they are difficult to learn; for them there is a syllabary (*hurûf-i tehecci*). It does not resemble the script of any other nation.[24]

Katip Çelebi also noted the beginnings of bilingual books that began to appear on the Kyushu island of Japan by the end of the tenth/sixteenth century, and also that the Japanese were "astonished at lines running right and left." He also noted the growth of trade with Portugal despite the fact that the Japanese did not display any recognition of a wider world outside of China and India. The port of Kagoshima, where St. Francis Xavier had first arrived in Japan, was also referenced as "a city near the coast" whose people "were the first to become Christians."[25]

The focus on the religious practices of Japan is not surprising, however. In addition to being a point of interest for Katip Çelebi's audience, it also reflects the sources on which he drew to construct the majority of his discussion of Japan. For example, Katip Çelebi cites Antonio Galvão (fl. ca. 1544) and his account of the discoverers of the New World to confirm the point that Antonius Mora, St. Francis Xavier and other sea captains discovered Japan for the first time by accident when a storm blew them off course while journeying from the city of Dûdarâ to China in 1542.[26] He also cites an author he calls Mâfeos, by whom he likely means Jean-Pierre Maffei (d. 1603). However, he accesses this writing largely through quotations of it transmitted through his translations of the geographies and atlases done by Abraham Ortelius (d. 1598) and Mercator.[27] In fact, almost all of Katip Çelebi's information on Japan derived primarily from those two sources, as he readily admits at the end of the section.[28]

Thus, in this case, the information that Katip Çelebi compiled on Japan is ultimately the product of a selective use of material from two European geographical works to which he had access. Obviously, the information about the religious traditions of the country, along with the Christian relationship with those regions, was something that the Ottoman geographer felt his audience should be aware of. Yet this also tells us that the author's geographical knowledge for this

24 Ibid., 45a-b (126).

25 Ibid., 46a, margin (128).

26 Ibid., 46b (130).

27 Maffei was identified as the likely reference in the unpublished work of Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and François Lachaud, 128; see also the remarks of Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 193-4.

28 KCRV, 46b (130); see also Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 201-2.

specific country did not extend beyond the final decades of the tenth/sixteenth century. An important clue to this weakness in the author's sources recurs in several places in the chapter, as he notes that some of Japan's key cities, such as Kyoto, are still lying in ruins from the damage wrought by the Ōnin Wars that began during the 1460s.[29]

However, many different observations in these sources caught Katip Çelebi's interest, and he passed them along to his own audience as well. He devoted a substantial section to Japanese customs, examining in particular the militaristic aspects of the society, where the men went around fully armed. He noted that children were often raised purposely in harsh conditions to prepare them better for difficulties in life, and seemed especially shocked that "even in extreme cold, they plunge infants into the river to wash them." Another aspect of Japanese culture that the author found strange was the emphasis on cleanliness in their homes. One of the "marvels" that Katip Çelebi associated with Japan was the fact that all animals, whether wild or domestic, roamed openly in the fields, because their owners were very strict about not allowing them to come anywhere near their homes. For comparison, his other "marvel" was a plant that could not come into contact with any moisture without shriveling up, and whose branches could be nailed back on with iron nails to regenerate themselves.[30] He also correctly notes a number of Japanese customs involving meals, such as the use of chopsticks for eating food and the importance of serving tea to guests among every economic level of society. Finally, although he notes the poor quality of foodstuffs in the region even among the elites, he points out the economic value of Japan's mining industries and the value of the tall trees which can be used for the building of large ships—and also prove useful for large structures in an earthquake-prone area.

Indonesia and the Southeastern Asian Islands: Economy and European Incursion

A caveat is in order before commencing with Katip Çelebi's discussion of the islands of Southeast Asia. Not surprisingly, the modern country of Indonesia did not exist in Katip Çelebi's time as a clearly defined regional unit. Therefore,

29 Ibid., 45b-46a (128). Katip Çelebi may well have included an abridged and garbled version of the origins of the Ōnin Wars on 46b (129-30); for more on the Ōnin Wars and their impact, see Stephen R. Turnbull, *Samurai Armies, 1467-1649* (Oxford: Osprey, 2008).

30 KCRV, 46a-b (129).

he discusses a more broadly defined geographic unit that he presents as a wide-ranging swathe of islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In the chapters that follow, he ranges across an L-shaped geographical zone from the islands of the Philippines in the north to the island of Sri Lanka, lying off the coast of the Indian subcontinent on its far western end. As he moves from east to west across the islands across the region, however, he touches on a substantial number of the islands that comprise modern Indonesia, which constitute the bulk of his description in chapters fourteen through nineteen of the *Cihânnümâ*.[31]

Unlike some of his other sections and chapters in the work, Katip Çelebi informs us about his use of source materials before he commences his description:

> Since there is not very much explanation in this chapter in the geographies of Mercator and Ortelius, and since their maps are limited to this map, we somewhat expanded the map of the third section of Asia that the compiler named Jaqo from Castille drew in the Christian year 1562, and supplemented it from other Muslim books.[32]

In this case, we can identity a primary source from which the author drew the bulk of his information. The "map of Jaqo" referred to in the work is Katip Çelebi's way of referencing a copy of the *Asiae Nova Descriptio* of the Italian cartographer Giacomo Gastaldi (d. 973/1566). However, when examining the manuscript copy of the work, we also find that the author made numerous additions in the margins from sources he discovered while producing his draft, such as the *Fabrica del Mondo Ovvero Cosmographia* of Giovanni Lorenzo d'Anania that was printed in 990/1582.[33] Ultimately, it seems that European geographical works and cartography made up the bulk of the information he chose to include and transmit in this section.

As a result, it did not take long for Katip Çelebi to grasp a foundational element of early modern world history. After remarking on the vast expanse of these islands that make them collectively "larger than Europe," he notes that "although gold is found in this group [of islands], the merchants who travel to that district do not condescend to buy gold but load their ships with valuable perfumes and spices."[34] Not surprisingly, given the critical importance of spices to the evolution

31 See the list of islands mentioned in KCRV, 47a (131).

32 Ibid.

33 The identification of this source can be found in KCRV, 4a (13); see also the remarks of Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 202-3.

34 KCRV, 47a (131).

of long-distance trade in the ancient and medieval periods[35], the subsequent descriptions of various islands are suffused with information on the trade in spices.[36] However, Katip Çelebi also quickly informs his audience about the impact of European expansion in this region as well. When discussing a city called Sînk located in the Philippines, he noted that "previously, this island's people used to come to Malacca every year to buy spices, but they have stopped coming since the Portuguese conquered it. Now they go to China and buy spices from the city of Qântâ [i.e., Canton] where the Portuguese bring them." Given concerns over Portuguese and Spanish expansion elsewhere in the world, the Ottoman audience would have quickly recognized the strategic threat posed by European economic success in the spice trade here. As if to underscore the point, Katip Çelebi subsequently adds that the primary islands of the Philippines were captured by Mexico-based Spanish troops in 1601.[37]

Katip Çelebi devotes special attention to the Molucca Islands, in part due to the importance of the spice trade there. Here, not all of the news for his Ottoman Muslim audience was bad, for some of the European sources suggested that Islam had spread to these islands as early as the ninth/fifteenth century. The explorer Ferdinand Magellan, upon his arrival on one of the islands in the region, was greeted and welcomed by a Muslim ruler named Manṣûr. Moreover, a Muslim source even claimed, albeit probably without foundation, that a group of early Shi'ite partisans had fled to the islands to escape the Umayyad Dynasty. However, Katip Çelebi quickly returned to following the lead of his European sources by giving an in-depth description of the critical economic underpinnings of the spice trade, indicating that he found this information to be of critical value for any potential Muslim mercantile expansion in the future.

After explaining that Magellan had traded 30 arm-lengths of linen cloth, 10 arm-lengths of red broadcloth, or 4 arm-lengths of yellow broadcloth in exchange for one bag of cloves, Katip Çelebi describes the economy of the Molucca islands as follows:

> The soil of these islands, being very dry, absorbs the unceasing rains like a sponge and does not let them flow into the sea. But they grow perfumes and spices in

35 For more on the history of the spice trade in the region in the centuries preceding the early modern period, see R.A. Donkin, *Between East and West: The Moluccas and the Traffic in Spices up to the Arrival of Europeans* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2003).

36 See also the remarks of Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 221.

37 KCRV, 47a, margin (131-2).

> abundance, some of which are remedies for fever. These islands are widely famous for that reason….The clove tree is especially common on Ternâta and Mûtîr. It mainly grows on rocks. The tree is large. Its leaf resembles the bay leaf, and its bark is like that of an olive tree. In the fourth year it gives fruit….These clove trees grow so densely that the sun does not penetrate through the branches. The best kind is that which grows at the highest elevation. That which grows in flat places bears little fruit. Some cloves ripen in hard stony ground and, after falling, the rains wash them down and they are gathered, because it is not possible to ascend [to the heights where they grow]. The people of the islands have shared out these trees among themselves. They subsist on them, because the other necessities of life come from other lands and they trade with these cloves.

After reading this description, one is struck by the similarity to later developments involving the islands of the Caribbean during the early modern period of world history, when economies based on sugar production emerged. Since these islands devoted the majority of their agriculture to producing a saleable commodity (e.g., sugar or cloves), they were forced to import food, making the Caribbean islands one of the first examples of a modern economy in global history.[38] The Molucca islands appear to have developed this global pattern of commerce at an even earlier date, since most of Katip Çelebi's sources dated from the tenth/sixteenth century. Despite the Molucca islanders' being linked into a wider global economy, however, Katip Çelebi describes them as "…know[ing] nothing of trade; their boats are all oar-driven and small. They do not sow crops and subsist on very little. Although their lands are fertile, they avoid the trouble of sowing crops." It did not seem to occur to him to question how such an arrangement had developed in the first place—the denizens of the islands most likely had generations of trading knowledge undergirding their economic livelihoods.

Perhaps the most interesting element in Katip Çelebi's presentation of the Molucca spice islands was a final section inserted at the end of the chapter discussing their discovery. By drawing on the text of an earlier translation that he had made of the *Atlas Minor* of Joducus Hondius, he explained how the islands were central to an ugly dispute between the Ottomans' Spanish and Portuguese rivals over who would lay claim to sovereignty over them. Since both countries were engaged in conquest-oriented exploration from the ninth/fifteenth century onward, Katip Çelebi remarked:

38 For more on the importance of sugar as a cash crop in the Caribbean economic system, see Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern* (New York: Verso, 1997), esp. ch. 10.

> …they endeavored to attach the newly-discovered countries to that of their own rulers….Because of that, conflict developed between them. Pope Alexander VI intervened and divided the New World between them lest they not do what is right. He established conditions and laws, and ruled that whatever was found to the east of the islands known as Isperîdes (i.e., Hesperides) would belong to the Portuguese, and whatever was discovered below there to the west would belong to the Spanish. Thereafter, the Spanish undertook journeys from those islands and explored America, while Portugal headed east from there and found and seized quite a few countries. With the passage of time, the Portuguese, out of covetousness for gain and wealth, began to extend their control to the sector assigned to the Spanish. Later, conflict developed once again on a certain issue. Ferdinand Magellan, who was a Portuguese captain but took the side of the Spanish…claimed the Molucca islands for Spain according to the division of the Pope.

It becomes evident to any world historian here that Katip Çelebi had derived a basic understanding of the implications of the Treaty of Tordesillas, signed by Spain and Portugal in 899/1494. Since the Molucca islands lay at the opposite side of the globe from the treaty line in the Atlantic Ocean, disputes over where the Spanish and Portuguese zones would be delineated arose as European exploration extended into that region. Furthermore, given the quirk of a Portuguese sailor discovering a valuable region for global commerce while in the service of his sovereign's Spanish rivals, legal disputes were destined to arise over how to locate the islands vis-à-vis the original treaty. In the end, the result was more of a draw than a clear victory for either side. As Katip Çelebi put it, "…Portugal withdrew from them. But Portuguese ships do not avoid coming and going, because the east is closer to them."[39]

Moreover, as with his discussion of Japan, he goes on to note that the majority of the islanders were polytheists, who believed that the sun and moon were male and female gods who should be worshipped as deities and had given birth to the other heavenly bodies. However, the King of Portugal had also appointed a governor to one of the islands and "had a splendid monastery constructed and supported by pious endowments. Monks lived there, misled the people and invited them to Christianity. Some converted…and others remained in their heathen religion."[40] As with his description of Japan, Katip Çelebi's audience would have found cause for concern at the growing success of their rivals at winning converts to the faith.

39 KCRV, 48b (136).

40 For more on the islands' religious life, see KCRV, 48a (135).

Nevertheless, the occasional Christian presence lay amidst an otherwise heavily polytheistic environment, which Katip Çelebi noted as his geographical description moved westward across the various islands presently located in the modern-day Philippines and Indonesia. On the island of Timor and the immediate islands in its vicinity, he described the trade in sandalwood that attracted competition between Chinese, Arab, and Portuguese traders, but also noted that "the people of this island recite long-established prayers to split open these trees, and some spirits appear and give news about the future."[41] Many of the peoples of the smaller islands were described with terms such as "savage" or "cannibals" that suggested they were best avoided altogether.

Upon reaching the description of the large island of Greater Java, however, Katip Çelebi's audience would have found a reason to take heart. In the process, the author demonstrated his recognition of another world-historical process that had been taking place since the eighth/fourteenth century in the islands of Southeast Asia:

> The local governors of this island are numerous and their religions various. The chief of all of them lives in the city of Maghâpaghâ, which is the capital, in the middle of the island. He wears a jeweled crown on his head and a brocade robe on his back. He is an idol-worshiper. In the past, the others were idol-worshipers also and subservient to him. Then two local governors and the people of several cities on the coast converted to Islam and separated from him.[42]

Katip Çelebi's audience would have been further encouraged by remarks about the military proficiency of the islanders in cavalry, artillery, fortification and use of particularly deadly technology in archery. In addition, Katip Çelebi noted that the port of Singapore was in the process of being revived by Muslim traders in competition with Malacca, which had been captured by the Portuguese in 917/1511 as they sought to impose a chokehold over the trade in spices in the region.[43] The successful resistance of Muslim coastal forces and the spread of Islam into southeastern Asia through the expanding Indian Ocean trade routes had proven critical in checking the power of the Portuguese over the course of the tenth/sixteenth century, and in his description of Java, Katip Çelebi captured a snapshot of the continuing success of this process.

41 Ibid., 50a-b (140).

42 Ibid., 50b (140).

43 Ibid., 50b (140-1).

Surprisingly, given the Ottoman interaction with Muslim polities on the island of Sumatra during the tenth/sixteenth century, his description of the region is surprisingly brief. As with Java, Katip Çelebi notes how Islam was in the process of spreading from the coastlines to the interior, although most in the interior were still polytheistic. Perhaps reflecting Ottoman disappointment with their attempts at expansion in the Indian Ocean region, he remarks that the Muslims of the region and others "learned the art of war from the Turks; because they requested help and brought them to that region on account of the Portuguese invasion and having been defeated many times. Among Portuguese battles, this victory is famous: that in the Christian year 1579 a Portuguese named Menelûîs, with 12 ships, sank approximately 100 galleys of this island's people."[44] The impression conveyed to the reader would be of a weak polity incapable of standing up to a prominent Ottoman opponent. On the other hand, trade and commerce received a more thorough treatment, and Katip Çelebi saw fit to mention the trade of Chinese, Arab, Persian and Indian merchants in the region in various goods, especially camphor, opium, sandalwood and a bird known as *nûrî* that "is the size of a parrot and has feathers of different colors, a pleasant appearance and sings beautifully…it has a high value, each one selling for 100 *guruş*."[45]

Yet after ranging through the regions of Borneo, Sri Lanka, and the islands in their vicinity, Katip Çelebi concludes these chapters of his work with several rather striking observations that illustrates both his methodologies in constructing the *Cihânnümâ* and his frustration with key sources at his disposal. He begins by remarking:

> The islands that were discovered to this point and had their locations determined have been recorded here in accordance with the Frankish geographies and globes. Now I am appending some of the islands that are mentioned in the Islamic sources where the information is in agreement. Because most of these are unknown, I record their names here briefly lest it be thought that they were passed over in ignorance.

What follows is an extensive list of islands listed in medieval Muslim geographies that had odd or fantastic characteristics, such as being home to a dragon, or the potential place of appearance for the Anti-Christ, or had sea monsters swimming around them. The comparison with the previous information, which mostly

44 Ibid., 52b (145); see also the remarks of Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 180-5 and 198-200.

45 KCRV, 52a-b (145).

touched on practical matters, could not have eluded Katip Çelebi's audience—nor did he intend it to do so. He remarks, almost bitterly, in his concluding remarks:

> Most of these are lies and fables typical of "Clime Books." The authors of the *'Ajâ'ib al-Makhlûqât* mention these absurd matters simply in order to arouse wonder. Then they get transmitted by shallow-minded authors who take them literally. I mention them here in order to inform readers of the truth of the matter.[46]

Here, we receive our explanation for Katip Çelebi's heavy reliance on European sources for the sections on the Far East and Southeast Asia. However, we also indirectly recognize other biases in the author's presentation as well, in that he presents material primarily from scholarly works; he might well have done better consulting Ottoman merchants from the southeastern regions of the Ottoman Empire about these issues rather than relying on the heritage of medieval Islamic geography. Perhaps he did not have sufficient time to find and interview such people; more likely, he chose to privilege scholarly presentation—whatever the religious or national background of the presenter—over alternative sources of information.[47]

China or Cathay? Tensions Between Katip Çelebi and His Sources

Katip Çelebi's description of China, not surprisingly, struggled with the obstacles that the authors of his sources faced in simply entering the country. Within a century of the consolidation of the Ming Dynasty by the middle third of the ninth/fifteenth century, China had turned inward. Moreover, a period of exploration and discovery initiated by the Yongle Emperor during his reign was subsequently rolled back, and the access of merchants and representatives from distant countries was increasingly limited to carefully managed border entrepots.[48]

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46 For the author's remarks on wonders of nature on these islands, see ibid., 55b-56a (152-4); for more on the *'Ajâ'ib al-Makhlûqât* ("Wonders of Creation"), which was a work by Zakariyyâ b. Muḥammad al-Qazwînî (d. 682/1283), see Syrinx von Hees, *Enzyklopädie als Spiegel des Weltbildes: Qazwînîs Wunder der Schöpfung – eine Naturkunde des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002) and C.E. Bosworth and I. Afshar, " *'Ajâ'eb al-Makhlûqât,*" Encyclopaedia Iranica, published December 15, 1984 at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ajaeb-el-makluqat-the-marvels-of-created-things-the-name-of-a-genre-of-classical-islamic-literature-and-in-part.

47 Noting the remarks of Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph*, 293-4.

48 For more on the transition between the Yüan and Ming Dynasties, see Charles O. Hucker, *The Ming Dynasty: Its Origins and Evolving Institutions* (Ann Arbor: University

However, Katip Çelebi also had to confront another set of issues that proved a bit trickier to resolve, which was that like with the islands of Southeast Asia, he had two sets of sources that discussed the Ming Dynasty. The first of these was the European sources upon which much of his discussion of the Far East had relied. The second was a readily available set of Muslim sources that dated from the rule the Timurids of Iran and Transoxiana in the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century. However, in this case the Muslim sources clearly contained useful information, and could not be speedily dismissed as he had done with the sources on Southeast Asia.

For China, Katip Çelebi drew predominantly on two specific Muslim sources. He deemed the more useful of the two to be a Timurid diplomatic and intelligence report written in Persian under the title *Rûznâme-i Khitây* ("Almanac of China"). It was a product of the early Timurid court based in the city of Herat during the reign of Shahrukh (d. 853/1449). Katip Çelebi describes its contents as follows:

> Shâhrukh…son of Tîmûr, while ruler in Khorasan in the year 822/1419, sent Shâdî Khwâja, one of the notables of his state, as envoy to the Khan of Khitây. He appointed Khwâja Ghiyâth al-Dîn Naqqâsh from among the scholars as a traveling companion, and commanded him to record the affairs and events that he witnessed from his departure until his return to Herât. Khwâja Ghiyâth al-Dîn Naqqâsh wrote it down as he was commanded and presented it when he came back after three years. What he presented was recorded in the *Ḥabîb al-Siyar* as transmitted from the *Maṭla' al-Sa'dayn*[49] and is mentioned here in translation.[50]

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of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1978); for more on the importance of China's abortive naval activities under Zheng He, see Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405-1433* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

49 The *Matla' al-sa'dayn* was a geographical work written by the Timurid scholar 'Abd al-Razzâq Samarqandî (d. 887/1482) which drew heavily on the earlier *Majma' al-tawârîkh al-sulṭâniyya* of Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru (d. 834/1430). In fact, Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru was most likely the true author of the account of Shahrukh's embassy to China, and the account that Katip Çelebi accessed via *Matla' al-sa'dayn* was in fact a less-detailed summary of the earlier account. For more on the transmission of this material, see the remarks of the translator in Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru (d. 834/1430), *A Persian Embassy to China, being an extract from Zubdatu't-tawarikh of Hafiz Abru*, trans. K.M. Maitra (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1970), 1-4; Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 204; and Maria Eva Subtelny and Charles Melville, "Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, published December 15, 2002 at http://www.iranica.com/articles/hafez-e-abru.

50 KCRV, 61b (166).

The second source that Katip Çelebi accessed was 'Ali Ekber's *Khitâynâme*, which he referred to as the "Persian *Qânûnnâme*." It described a journey of a commercial mission that had traveled from Persia to China on the part of a merchant who subsequently made his way to the Ottoman Empire. His journey to the Far East most likely took place sometime around the very end of the ninth/fifteenth century; however, it was not presented to the Ottoman Sultan Selim I until 922/1516, most likely due to the flight of its author from Persia after the rise of the Safavids in the early tenth/sixteenth century. It did not gain its author much recognition or award, for it was resubmitted to Sultan Süleyman I for a second consideration after his accession to the throne four years later. The text then languished until it was subsequently translated into Turkish during the reign of Sultan Murad III in 991/1582; beyond this, the work apparently did not attract any significant attention outside of Katip Çelebi himself.[51]

The recent work of Giancarlo Casale presents this work as being part of a push to generate a radically-improved geographic knowledge base among the Ottomans under Selim I, which coincided with the Empire's rapid expansion into the Arabic-speaking lands of the Middle East and the near-doubling of the size of its territories. An interest in access to new markets and territories, coupled with the growing threat posed by Portuguese incursion into the Indian Ocean, combined to raise Ottoman consciousness about the wider world.[52] The original author of the work likely sought to exploit this trend, perhaps hoping also to direct Ottoman expansionary efforts against the Safavids in the process. Perhaps sensing the distorting potential of its agenda, Katip Çelebi was unimpressed with the work, noting its differences from many of the European geographical resources that Katip Çelebi had been favoring up to that point. He made no secret of where his preferences for source material lay, describing the *Khitâynâme* in the following terms:

> The Persian *Qânûnnâme*, which I think was written by a merchant and presented to Sultan Selim II [*sic!*], records that China and Cathay form a single country with a total of 12 divisions. But as drawn on the globe and as recorded in the geography

51 For more on this work, see Hagen, 95-6 and 205; Yih Min-Liu, "A Comparative and Critical Study of Ali Akbar's Khitaynama With References to Chinese Sources," *Central Asiatic Journal* 27:1-2 (1983), 58-78; and Mevhibe Pınar Emiralioğlu, "Relocating the Center of the Universe: China and the Ottoman Imperial Project in the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of Ottoman Studies* 39 (2012) [*Other Places: Ottomans traveling, seeing, writing, drawing the world: Essays in honor of Thomas D. Goodrich*, Part I, guest ed. Gottfried Hagen and Baki Tezcan]: 161-187, and the sources cited therein.

52 For more on this, see the remarks of Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration,* 22-9.

> books, China and Cathay are independent sultanates and separate countries, each having defined borders. Therefore I have paid no heed to the words of that ignorant person, which is mostly idle talk, nor to the stories connected with the clime of Cathay that are recorded there, nor to the statement that the clime of China is without divisions.[53]

Furthermore, Katip Çelebi also evinces a general pattern of mistrust for anonymous sources whose author could not be identified, which further devalued the information in the *Khitâynâme* in his eyes.[54]

Nevertheless, despite his openly-stated bias, it is clear that Katip Çelebi could not completely dismiss the *Khitâynâme*, and a substantial part of the information contained therein found its way into the *Cihânnümâ*. There were two obvious reasons for this. The first is that Katip Çelebi's European sources did not contain substantial information about some of the parts of China that were extensively discussed in the *Khitâynâme*. More critically, the second reason was that the Muslim source he deemed more trustworthy, the *Rûznâme*, focused primarily on the experiences of Timurid ambassadors traveling from Samarqand to Beijing and back. Therefore, their account primarily discusses their experiences with the post-system of the western provinces of China, the court ceremonial that they encountered both in the provinces and the capital, and the nature of their direct encounters with the emperor and his servants. The *Khitâynâme*, on the other hand, included discussions of issues that did not appear in the account of the *Rûznâme*, such as extensive descriptions of the way in which the Chinese military functioned, its coinage and laws, religious practices of the Chinese rulers and people, and additional descriptions of the ceremonial and administrative structures of the Chinese court, including a detailed discussion of the various parts of the Forbidden City.[55] The result of Katip Çelebi's efforts was therefore an amalgamation of these two major Muslim sources, intersected to a lesser extent with occasional notations from older Muslim writings, and the relevant material from his European sources.

Katip Çelebi's subsequent attempt to harmonize these sources ultimately resulted in a confused and overlapping portrayal of the different regions of China,

53 KCRV, 56b (154); Katip Çelebi errs in attributing the original submission of the work to the time of Selim II.

54 For more on this pattern, see the remarks in Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 298-9.

55 See, for example, the discussion of the Forbidden City in KCRV, 62a (168-9), and the extended description of Cathayan military practices in KCRV, 63b-64b (173-4).

along with the peoples of the steppelands and deserts that surrounded it. The divergent characteristics of his sources led him to divide his discussion of the region into two separate chapters. The first of these dealt with the region that Katip Çelebi believed to be "China" (*Çîn*), and a second, lengthier chapter described what Katip Çelebi called "the clime of Khitây" (which European works rendered as "Cathay," a word that itself likely has roots in the earlier nomadic polity of the Khitan peoples). However, as the contemporary reader begins to correlate the information in the two chapters, it becomes increasingly clear that Katip Çelebi was, at least part of the time, describing elements of the Ming Dynasty from two separate perspectives, while erroneously presenting these perspectives as embodying a description of two separate kingdoms.

The reason for this can be discerned in part through an analysis of the materials that Katip Çelebi uses. In the case of Cathay, his Muslim sources had journeyed overland via the Silk Roads and entered China via its western borderlands during the first half of the ninth/fifteenth century. At this time, the Ming Dynasty was in the process of consolidating its power. Even at the Ming court in Beijing, there were still elements of nomadic predominance lingering from the preceding Mongol Yüan Dynasty; moreover, the Ming borderlands through which the Muslim emissaries passed undoubtedly were home to nomadic peoples affiliated with the Ming Dynasty, but otherwise having considerable autonomy.[56] His European sources, on the other hand, had arrived from the sea nearly one century later, and explored and described China via its eastern seaboard, which represented a different cultural zone that only overlapped partially with the earlier experience of Katip Çelebi's Muslim interlocutors. They had less knowledge of the western borderlands, and bore witness instead to a more mature Ming Dynasty that had long since consolidated its power and legitimacy. The very different geographies and eras within Ming Dynasty history that the European and Muslim sources encountered affected Katip Çelebi's reading of their contents, and led him to conclude that he was dealing with two separate polities.

Yet even leaving aside the obvious discrepancies in periodization and historical experience between Katip Çelebi's Muslim and European sources, it should be noted here that European geographies themselves were deeply divided on the question of how to define Ming Dynasty China and its hinterlands. They, like the Muslims, had inherited a tradition of classical geography going back to Claudius Ptolemaeus in the second century C.E. that posited two nations in the Far East, lying to the north and south. Even after reports from Jesuit missionaries in

56 See the remarks of Shih-Shan Henry Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness: The Ming Emperor Yongle* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 149-50.

the early eleventh/seventeenth century began to confirm that China and Cathay were one and the same, many European geographers refused to accept the discovery. This was in part due to discrepancies in the narratives about the cultures and peoples of the various parts of the vast Ming Dynasty and its hinterlands in Asia, but also due to the continued hope of many European observers that a wealthy trading partner more flexible and sympathetic than the Ming Dynasty might emerge. As a result, over half of the geographical works published between 1608 and 1670 in the Library of Congress continued to maintain an artificial division between China and Cathay, including Mercator atlases that we know Katip Çelebi was accessing in translation. Even as late as 1077/1667, the English writer John Milton, a very well-informed person for his time, maintained the division between the two countries in his *Paradise Lost*.[57]

Therefore, it is not surprising that Katip Çelebi also fell victim to a similar confusion, given the continued controversies over it among foreign geographers in multiple contexts in the eleventh/seventeenth century. A good example of this can be found in Katip Çelebi's attempt to describe the capital of China. After first drawing on the *Atlas Minor* to situate the capital city of China as Kûnîsây and identifying it as the seat of the emperor, he suddenly switches over to the later source of Philippus Cluverius for an alternative point of view:

> All authors are in agreement that this city borders on the north with Tatar and Cathay. It is said to be the throne of both the emperor of China and the khan of Cathay. Its circumference is 100 Italian miles. It has several hundred stone bridges, constructed high enough that large ships with sails spread can pass underneath them. There is a large lake in the interior of the city, seven miles in circumference, with two islands, on each of which a great palace has been built for the emperor. It was related from Mârkûs (i.e., Marco Polo) that 30,000 soldiers are permanently stationed there to guard the city. But these descriptions do not accord with common sense. And some say that after Marcos this city was destroyed and no longer remains in this state.[58]

Here, we see that the record of Cluverius challenged, at least indirectly, the idea that China and Cathay were two different centers of power—how could they be if they were ruled from the same capital? Nevertheless, Katip Çelebi could easily note that Cluverius himself questioned the validity of Marco Polo's record as

57 For a full examination of the debate among European geographers and intellectuals over the artificial division, including Milton himself, see Y.Z. Chang, "Why Did Milton Err on Two Chinas?," *The Modern Language Review* 65:3 (July 1970), 493-8.

58 KCRV, 60a (162).

being both dated and lacking in "common sense," and given his dependence on European sources for much of the Far East, he could not help but be influenced by comments like these. However, the great irony was that in siding with the viewpoints expressed in the European sources, he ignored clues in his Muslim interlocutors who had correctly understood that much of China and Cathay were one and the same.[59]

The result of Katip Çelebi's confusion was that for his first chapter dealing with what he called "China," as approached from its southern and eastern seaborne frontiers, he relied most heavily on his European sources, most prominent among them the version of the *Atlas Minor* published in Holland in 1015/1607, the *Fabrica del Mondo Ovvero Cosmographia* of Giovanni Lorenzo d'Anania published in Venice in 991/1582, and the *Introductio in Universam Geographiam tam veterarum quam Novam* of Philippus Cluverius published in Paris in 1044/1635.[60] All three sources most likely drew on tenth/sixteenth-century information on China then prevalent in knowledgeable European circles, separating them by a century or more from the earlier Muslim sources upon which Katip Çelebi could draw.

In contrast, Katip Çelebi only occasionally referenced the Muslim sources at his disposal for the chapter of his geography dealing with "China." In fact, there were only two subjects that merited references from Muslim sources. The first was a smattering of references from various medieval Muslim geographical works in reference to the location and basic characteristics of the city of Kûnîsây, the aforementioned capital of China (referring to Beijing, which the *Atlas Minor* had labeled as "Quinsay").[61]

However, the second was more extensive and marked an exception to Katip Çelebi's generally negative evaluation of the trustworthiness of 'Ali Ekber's *Khitâynâme* noted earlier. Despite describing 'Ali Ekber's description of China

59 See, for example, KCRV, 56b (154), where he rejects the *Khitâynâme*'s contention that China and Cathay are not separate lands; moreover, in Katip Çelebi's own discussion of the capitals of each, he records that both were located on a river that he calls either Pûlîsânghû, Pûlîs, or Pûlîs-Sânkûs, compare KCRV, 59b (162) and 68b (185-6).

60 Katip Çelebi notes the dates of the originals of the translated works in his introduction; see KCRV, 2b (11) and 4a (13); for more on these works, see Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 190-6 and 201-3.

61 Here, Katip Çelebi saw fit to mention information on the capital city of China from the *Taqwîm al-Buldân*, al-Mas'ûdî's *Murûj al-dhahab*, al-Bîrûnî's *Qânûn*, and additional unnamed works dating from the medieval period of Islamic geography in addition to his European sources; see KCRV, 60a (162).

as "dream and imagination…recorded in nonsensical fashion,"[62] Katip Çelebi nevertheless excerpted a significant section of the work dealing with the making of Chinese porcelain. A section of the *Khitâynâme* described how the Chinese crushed up a "fine white stone" that was poured into a pool of water to be dissolved. The water was then run off into a second pool, and from there, into a third and final pool. After the water was drawn off from the final pool, all of the clays were divided into categories based on the pool they came from and were buried for a long period in the ground. The clay drawn from the third and final pool was deemed of the highest quality, while the clays of the first and second pools were considered to be low and middling quality, respectively. The source goes on to note the high value commanded by the various types of porcelain, noting that the finest of the pieces were acquired by the Chinese Emperor and forbidden to be exported. He concluded by noting the special qualities of porcelain, such as its ability to purify liquids by forcing their dregs to the bottom, its imperviousness to aging, its resistance to scratching by any substance save diamonds, its health value in "increasing the intellect" when drinking wine from it, and its extraordinary artistic properties, notably that painting and designs on it could sometimes be viewed only when held up to the light.[63]

It is noteworthy here that Katip Çelebi retained this part of the work in part because elements in it corresponded to a mention in the *Atlas Minor* that porcelain clay was buried in the earth for nearly a century before being extracted and worked into the final product. Furthermore, the information could be corroborated by simple observation of markets in the Ottoman Empire. By the tenth/sixteenth century, Ming porcelain had begun to make its appearance in royal treasuries and market entrepots of the Ottoman Empire, and Katip Çelebi was well aware of its potential value.[64] Therefore, the discussion in the *Khitâynâme* had the ring of truth, and the discussion of its commercial value was something that Katip Çelebi wanted his audience to note.

In addition to these observations, Katip Çelebi also recorded the world-historical significance of China to the wider world. He correctly identified from his sources the origins of book-printing and gunpowder weaponry in China, and noted also its thriving mercantile culture.[65] He also notes the dependence of the

62 In addition to the reference in n. 53 above, note the remarks in KCRV, 61a (165).

63 Ibid., 57b-58a (157-8).

64 See, for example, Lynda Carroll, "Could've Been a Contender: The Making and Breaking of 'China' in the Ottoman Empire," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 3:3 (1999), 177-90.

65 KCRV, 57b (156-7).

Chinese on Japan for the trade in silver, which was an issue of growing importance by the beginning of the eleventh/seventeenth century as the Ming economy became increasingly dependent on growing monetization.[66] Finally, following along with previous notations on other regions of the world, he notes that the old Ottoman enemy, the Portuguese, struggled to gain access to China. While they were able to take control over an island off of the coast, they were only allowed to trade with a single port despite their best efforts to penetrate the country further inland.[67]

After completing his chapter on China, Katip Çelebi then added a second chapter dealing with a separate region that he called "Cathay" that was nearly three times the length of the section on China. It reads as a kind of mirror image of his chapter on China in terms of its use of sources, with his two Muslim sources of the *Khitâynâme* and *Rûznâme* predominating, although references to the European sources were periodically intersected into sections where he deemed them useful. In this case, however, the narrative quickly reveals itself to be an intermixture of references to the Chinese Ming Dynasty and older references to the centers of the Mongol Empire based in the steppelands beyond China's borders. A good example of this conflation appears in his discussion of the ways in which the Cathayan military operated:

> Their rule in fighting is that when they are one stage away from the enemy, they line up their carts around them and in one hour, dig a trench in front of them. Their combat is very severe. They draw the line [of carts] in front of the soldiers who stand ready with gun in hand. First they fire their cannon, then they fire… the guns. They only suffer defeat when they are making camp or breaking camp. If the enemy attacks then, and they are unable to draw their carts in front of them or to their side, he will achieve victory. In fact, a brave commander of the Kalmyks named Esen Tayşi with 60,000 troops attacked the Khıtây Khaqân Chîn-Khûâr in 854/1450, broke them by this means and took him prisoner. Ever since this battle, the Khaqân has not gone to war in person but sends the army wherever necessary.[68]

66 Ibid., 58b (158-9). For more on the growing importance of the silver trade in China leading up to the collapse of the Ming Dynasty, see William S. Atwell, "Another Look at Silver Imports Into China, ca. 1635-1644," *Journal of World History* 16:4 (Dec. 2005), 467-89.

67 KCRV, 58b-59a (159-60).

68 Ibid., 64b (174); Katip Çelebi was likely drawing on the work of 'Ali Ekber for this discussion, as noted in Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 205.

This discussion clearly refers to a famous incident in the history of the Ming Dynasty known as the T'u-mu Crisis, when the Oirat Mongol leader Esen Tayisi (d. 859/1455) invaded China and annihilated a massive but poorly-led Chinese army under the command of the young Zhengtong Emperor (d. 868/1464) and his eunuch, Wang Zhen. Even though Esen Tayshi could not capitalize on his victory, the result was a succession crisis in the Ming Dynasty, as a replacement emperor took power and sidelined the Zhengtong Emperor for eight years before he was able to regain his throne in 861/1457.[69] The inclusion of this material represents incontrovertible evidence that Katip Çelebi and his sources were, at least in some cases, conflating a separate entity called Cathay with the Ming Dynasty of China.

Despite this critical geographical error, it should not be said that Katip Çelebi failed to inform his Ottoman audience about the world of the Ming Dynasty under another name—or at least certain specific periods of its ninth/fifteenth-century history. The abridged report of Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru (d. 834/1430), which Katip Çelebi accessed via its abridgment in later Muslim sources in the form of the *Rûznâme*, represented the high point of Ming expansion under the rule of the Yongle Emperor (r. 804/1402-827/1424), who launched a number of initiatives aimed at projecting Ming power into a wider world. His specific interest in acquiring outstanding horses led him to expand contacts with the Timurid ruler Shahrukh shortly after latter's accession to power in 810/1408 and the release of Chinese envoys imprisoned by Temür in the years before his death. Within a few years, the two rulers had reached an understanding that opened the door for reciprocal diplomatic missions traveling back and forth between Beijing and Samarqand.[70] For the Timurids, this culminated in the mission of Shahrukh's son Ghiyâth al-Dîn Naqqash to the Ming court, where both he and Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru recorded their impressions of Ming China in both writing and pictures.

The timing was fortuitous for Muslim audiences, as the members of the mission witnessed the primary stages of the opening of the massive palace complex of the Forbidden City in Beijing, which would be the future center of Chinese government into the early twentieth century.[71] Although Katip Çelebi would get the name of the Yongle Emperor wrong in his account (referring to him as Dây-

69 Frederick W. Mote, "The T'u-Mu Incident of 1449," in *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, ed. Edward L. Dreyer, Frank Algerton Kierman and John King Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 243-72.

70 For more on Yongle's foreign policy and the place of his Central Asian missions within it, see Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness*, 188-90.

71 Ibid., 124-8.

meng, which is a corruption of a Chinese title for a sub-prefect[72]), his audience would nevertheless take away from his account a substantial description of western China and its imperial capital. While Katip Çelebi did rearrange the component parts of the original account to divide the chapters of the *Cihânnümâ* into identical structural components[73], substantial parts of the work were transcribed verbatim into the text. At one point, the *Cihânnümâ* included a detailed description of the process of entering the country and registering with the Chinese authorities. It also discussed the well-organized post-stages necessary to travel to the imperial capital, including its rapid communication networks, along with the names of the major cities encountered along the way and their prominent architectural sites and characteristics.[74] In addition, he also included a substantial description of the Ming Dynasty court and its ceremonial practices as witnessed by the Timurid emissaries. Specific elements within the text corroborate well with known events in Chinese history, such as a fire caused by a lightning strike on the palace in 823/1420.[75]

The picture that emerged from the use of the *Rûznâme* was that of a prosperous, well-administered empire—but the picture was not all rosy in terms of potential Muslim relations with this great power. Katip Çelebi included an incident where a horse that was brought by the emissaries as a gift for the Yongle Emperor ended up throwing him off and injuring him, which nearly got the Timurid emissaries imprisoned and executed. Luckily, their Muslim translators and interlocutors at the Ming court were able to intercede on their behalf, and after explaining that the horse was given because it had once belonged to Temür himself, the emissaries were able to receive gifts and depart.[76]

Interestingly, despite his negative evaluation of the *Khitâynâme* in the aforementioned context, Katip Çelebi drew even more heavily from this source for the Cathay chapter than the *Rûznâme*. This may be because the *Khitâynâme* was more detailed about the religious aspects of Cathayan society; while the *Rûznâme* made only passing references to provincial Buddhist shrines, the *Khitâynâme* was much

72 Compare KCRV, 62b (170) with Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru, 19 and n. 1.

73 About which see Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 220-2.

74 KCRV, 67a (181-2) and 68b-69b (186-8).

75 Ibid., 63a (171).

76 Interestingly, the excuse that the horse had once belonged to Temür and was therefore special in nature did not occur in the original account of Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru, and may have been added later to exonerate the Timurid ruler Shahrukh; compare KCRV, 63a (171) with Ḥâfeẓ-e Abru, 108-9.

more explicit about linking the peoples Cathay to the religion of Buddhism.[77] Moreover, it further developed the aforementioned obvious references in the *Rûznâme* to Cathayan Muslims who could intercede with the court and the emperor, and spun a more positive picture of the relationship between the rulers of Cathay and their Muslim subjects. It is worth noting the following passages that were incorporated into the work:

> They call Muhammad—peace be upon him—*shîn-chîn*, meaning "best of the people." They have an affection for Islam and Muslims. The call to prayer is made five times a day in their lands. The Muslims wear turbans and perform the congregational prayer. One day the commanders assembled and said: "Thousands of Muslim households are mixed with ours. Let us eradicate them. They do not give wealth such that they would be considered beneficial." The Khaqan said: "Our forefathers never acted in this way, so how can we? We judge them according to their manifest behavior. At present, there is no manifest denier among them, and what have we to do with their hidden thoughts?"

The passage concludes with the remark that "the Khitayans are broad-minded in matters of religion and know nothing of fanaticism…whatever their religious belief may be, their effort in this world is to abide by the law," and goes on to note the existence of Jewish, Christian and Muslim places of worship in the realm in addition to those of the Buddhists.[78] Katip Çelebi's audience would undoubtedly have been intrigued by the potential of converting or winning over the sympathetic figure presented in these remarks, along with his people, who were already well-disposed towards obedience to a sophisticated legal code that might bear some resemblance to the *shari'a*.[79]

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77 Compare, for example, KCRV, 67a-b (182) with the less detailed allusions in 69a-b (186-8).

78 Ibid., 67b (182); ironically, this contrasts with the very negative depiction of the Ming Emperor in the China chapter, which portrays him as an arrogant idolater, compare with 57a (155-6).

79 Interestingly, in an earlier section, Katip Çelebi included a selection from the *Khitâynâme* that explained how "in ancient times, out of necessity, a woman named Lûzî of the lineage of Khâqâns became Khân of Khitây and it being necessary to lay down laws in order to administer the territories. A learned sage by the name of Barjîn Kazîn, seeing the helplessness of the woman, presented himself. She appointed him vizier and he busied himself with the administration of affairs and laid down laws according to the principles of wisdom and intellect. He drew up a ledger and laid it down that whoever wished to control the wealth of Khitây must act according to the laws recorded in that ledger. Eventually those laws became precedent and they have been

Interestingly, Katip Çelebi followed up the remarks taken from the *Khitâynâme* with remarks from the European source of Lorenzo d'Anania that offered up a contrasting viewpoint:

> Lorenzo says that the Khan of Cathay is a neo-Christian (*mübtedi' nasrânî*). But the Muslims deny it and claim that he is an idol-worshipper. Most of the people are Christian and Nestorian. A group of them are idol-worshippers. They believe in two principles. One is known as Creator of Souls, whom they worship by burning incense and from whom they seek intelligence and understanding. The other is known as *Nâghây* or Creator of Bodies, whom they worship by making silver and gold statues and from whom they seek matters connected to wealth—whatever it is they want, they sacrifice something of that kind.[80]

Here we can see that both Muslim and Christian writers of those times were projecting their religious preferences onto the Chinese rulers to appeal to their respective audiences, despite recognizing that Chinese society was religiously diverse in nature. Yet perhaps the most noteworthy material incorporated into this section comes at the conclusion of this discusison, where Katip Çelebi combines some striking remarks from both Mercator and the *Khitâynâme* about the advance of Islam in the region:

> According to the *Atlas*, most of the Cathayans accepted the law of Muhammad in the Christian year 1246. But according to the account in the *Qânûnnâme*, Dîn-Ṭây Khân and the people of the palace converted to Islam around the year 900/1495. All of the ignorant Cathayans worship the Khaqan, because it was rumored that he had become a Muslim, and so the majority of them converted to Islam also. The ignorant Cathayans believe that the Khaqan is divine. And they claim that there are 300 gods who do not appear to them; only one of them appears, and he is the Khaqan. They say that the one true deity created these 300.[81]

There are a number of problems with these accounts, and perhaps in recognition of the far-fetched nature of these claims, Katip Çelebi placed them last in the

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carried out for thousands of years, without change or substitution. Opposing them is considered a great crime and offense. Even the Khaqan himself can be removed according to the law." These remarks seem to indicate a garbled reference to Confucius and his works, along with a basic understanding of the political principle of the Mandate of Heaven; KCRV, 61b (166).

80 Ibid., 67b (183-4).

81 Ibid., 67b (184).

sequence. For starters, the date from the remark drawn from Mercator is clearly conflated with the events of the Mongol period, and Katip Çelebi knew full well that this could not have been correct.[82] Furthermore, the identity of the emperor referred to as Dîn-Ṭây Khân is not clear. Yih-Min Liu equates this reference to the Jingtai Emperor, whose interim reign following the T'u-Mu Crisis lasted from 853/1449-861/1457, a connection which seems believable enough based on linguistic similarity.[83] However, this does not correspond to the date given in the text, which would have fallen instead during the reign of the Hongzhi Emperor (892/1487-910/1505). Of course, since Katip Çelebi lacked access to a king-list of the Chinese emperors, he would not have been able to analyze the report in this manner.[84] Moreover, since he declined to omit these accounts from the manuscript, he must have thought that there was some value to his audience in relating them.

In fact, since many of the Central Asian nomadic peoples had initially been converted to Islam in much the same way as portrayed in the account, i.e., their ruler converted and brought along his whole following with him, the narrative may have had the ring of plausibility to a knowledgeable historian like Katip Çelebi.[85] Furthermore, he drew accounts from both European and Muslim sources that clearly conflate the nomadic peoples of the northern and western steppelands and deserts that surrounded China as being under the rule of "Cathay," which may have made a further connection for him. For example, at one point he draws on the work of Mercator to describe the peoples of the region and their relationship to the ruler of Cathay:

> Usually, when [the Cathayans] go to any country but their own they consider the rest of the world to be empty and a wilderness. That is because most of the people who come to the Khaqan by way of a truce are desert dwellers. Any tribe that comes to their country to settle, their wealth is not confiscated….Everyone wears

82 See, for example, KCRV, 61b (166), where Katip Çelebi noted that "the laws laid down by Chinggis Khan, which are termed *yasa*, were generally accepted among the idol-worshippers dwelling in Tâtâristân and Khitây and most people follow them."

83 Yih-Min Liu, 62-3; it should be noted that Liu does not find the *Khitâynâme*'s account on this matter convincing.

84 See, for example, his limited list of rulers for Cathay in KCRV, 71a (192-3).

85 See, for example, the remarks of Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University State Press, 1994), 22-7, along with the account of the Kirghiz ruler Almambet on 55-66, and Carter V. Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 61-4.

> sables or other furs according to their rank. And they wear long clothes, because Cathay is part of the clime of Tataristan….The men bear up under hunger and fatigue. When thirsty, they pierce the veins of their mounts and drink the blood. The common people are mostly dirty and uncouth, knowing nothing of God and divine law. They rely on their weapons and their strength. Most of them are desert-dwellers and migrate from place to place with tents (*oba*)….They eat foul foods, especially half-cooked meat and cheese, and drink mares' milk. From (this) milk they make a kind of intoxicant called *kımız*, which is like white wine but very flavorless, and from millet they cook *boza*.[86]

It is clear that this description references the practices and customs of the Turco-Mongol nomadic peoples of Central Asia. Interestingly, Katip Çelebi draws most heavily on his European sources, such as Lorenzo and Phillippus Cluverius, to discuss the nomadic peoples of Central Asia. Special reference is made to the Kalmyks, who either fought against or submitted to the ruler of Cathay depending on circumstances. The old Mongol capital of Karakorum was also mentioned as being under the rule of Cathay as well.[87]

Katip Çelebi therefore presented his Ottoman audience a portrayal of a second polity—Cathay—that intersected to areas to the north and west that were better understood and described by his Muslim sources. The existing geographical confusion among his European sources over the existence of Cathay could only contribute to the error of mistaking the Ming Dynasty for two separate polities. From a contemporary perspective, we can clearly see references to unmistakable components of Chinese history and infrastructure in the chapter on Cathay, such as a reference to the Grand Canal linking northern and southern China as "a canal to be dug from Khanbaliq to the canal that flows to the city of Zeytûn, the entrepot of China and India, 40 stages away, so that ships could come from the sea of India and China to the middle of the city…. [the] canal is 30 cubits wide…[and] the road that goes along its bank extends to the capital of Mâchîn and is completely paved with stone for 40 stages."[88] However, the tensions between Katip Çelebi and his sources, whether European or Muslim, combined with the awkward timing of his work in the mid-eleventh/seventeenth century when the geographical sciences were in transition around the globe, led him to provide included misleading or even out-of-date information about the conditions prevailing in China at the time. Ironically, since his

86 KCRV, 68a (184).

87 Ibid., 70a (189).

88 Ibid., 68b (185).

writing would be transcribed mostly verbatim into the printed text promulgated in 1144/1732, his Ottoman audience may have been saddled with these misunderstandings long after European geographers and thinkers had definitively abandoned them.

Conclusion: What Does Katip Çelebi's Work Mean For World History?

While my remarks on the relevant chapters of the Pacific and East Asian world in the *Cihânnümâ* cannot fully do justice to the extent of Katip Çelebi's presentation, some important conclusions can nevertheless be reached about his approach to the geography and historical context of these regions in the early modern period. First of all, we can see that Katip Çelebi frequently privileged his European sources over his Muslim ones when it came to areas of the Pacific that were accessed primarily via oceanic travel and commerce. In several cases, this extended to the point of potentially controversial commentary dismissing Muslim geographical scholarship out of hand as lacking in sophistication and useful information. Yet despite the fact that many of the Ottomans that Katip Çelebi sought to address were probably unwilling to countenance the implications of this message during his lifetime, this did not mean his work had no impact. No less a figure than Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1058/1648-1099/1687) was attracted to the *Cihânnümâ*'s portrayal of the countries and islands of the Far East in the latter half of his reign. However, the long-delayed printing of the work clearly limited its potential to influence Ottoman intellectual life, as subsequent Ottoman thinkers influenced by the work cluster much more heavily in the twelfth/eighteenth century.[89] It might also be hypothesized that the tensions inherent over the use of European non-Muslim sources may have led some to distance themselves from the work, until later periods when the growing weakness of the Ottoman Empire had become more apparent. By that point, even the Ottoman scholars who were benefitting from the work were accessing rather dated information that had long been superseded in Europe, as seen by the artificial division between China and Cathay.

Nevertheless, we can discern from Katip Çelebi's presentation that he had been deeply affected by his encounter with the non-Muslim sources available to him in translation, and had strategically integrated key parts of those works into his own. The result was a portrait that focused heavily on three critical aspects

89 For more on this point see Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 270-3, which meticulously catalogues the Ottoman writers who made reference to the *Cihânnümâ* after the death of its author.

of Far Eastern polities: commerce, religious issues, and political leadership. From a commercial standpoint, Katip Çelebi was quick to identify commodities such as fine timber, various kinds of spices, silk, and porcelain as valuable sources of potential wealth for his Ottoman audience. However, an implicit message lurking within his presentation was religious developments in the region—or more accurately, the rising influence of European Christian powers in places like Japan and the islands of Southeast Asia. What may have influenced Katip Çelebi the most was the degree to which his European sources were aware of the massive potential sources of wealth that could grow out of Far Eastern commerce—such as the 166,000 *batmans* of silk reportedly loaded onto boats over the course of three months in one Chinese coastal port.[90]

Working in an era where maritime conflict with Christian powers was a fact of everyday life in the form of the Ottoman campaign to conquer Crete, Katip Çelebi's reading of the European sources left him sensing the potential for the empire to lose ground, as European powers had already established contacts with many of the rulers and peoples of the region. As a result, Katip Çelebi also focused closely on the indigenous political leadership and religious characteristics of Far Eastern societies. He made careful note of any Muslim communities in the region that might serve as potential allies, along with any indications that the political leadership might be vulnerable to conversion activities. Ironically, in the case of Cathay, this led him to make a mistake analogous to that of many European geographers in positing a second and potentially more amenable polity of Cathay that might be more receptive to outside religious influences and trade relations. The chronological gap between the production of key Muslim sources such as the *Rûznâme-i Khitây* and *Khitâynâme*, which recalled the more open and expansionist-minded Ming Dynasty of the ninth/fifteenth century, and his European sources which dated from over a century later when access to China was severely restricted, only encouraged this view.

Yet lest we dwell only on the shortcomings of Katip Çelebi's work, it should be said by way of conclusion that it is quite striking the degree to which he was able to grasp and convey the changing historical currents of the early modern period of world history to his Ottoman audience. In his writings on East Asia, find ample references to the key role played by spices and silk in the global economy and the tensions spawned by the Age of Exploration between Europeans and various Asian peoples. His audience would have understood the basic outlines of the religious and cultural traditions of many East Asian regions from his account,

90 As noted from a reference that Katip Çelebi extracted via the *Atlas Minor* from the *Décadas de Ásia* of João Barros (d. 1570); see KCRV, 59a (160).

which appear in recognizable outlines even to the contemporary world historian. It is therefore tempting to view Katip Çelebi's ambitious geographical project not so much as failed attempt, or even a "road not taken" by the contemporary Ottoman intellectuals of his time. Instead, we might instead see the project as a pioneering advance in Ottoman intellectual life[91] that fell victim to unfortunate circumstance—after all, had Katip Çelebi not died so abruptly at a comparatively young age, he might have realized the ambitions embodied in the structure of the work, and seen it gain far greater impact among his immediate contemporaries than it did. The *Cihânnümâ* and its presentation of the eastern regions of the globe must be taken seriously as a forerunner to the intellectual reform movements of the Muslim world that are usually confined to a period that only begins with the latter half of the twelfth/eighteenth century.

An Ottoman Geographer Engages the Early Modern World: Katip Çelebi's Vision of East Asia and the Pacific Rim in the Cihânnümâ

Abstract ■ This article examines how the Ottoman intellectual Katip Çelebi sought to dramatically reshape his contemporaries' understanding of world geography in the eleventh/seventeenth century. Via a careful examination of the unfinished manuscript of his *Cihânnümâ*, which aimed to compile a global geography by incorporating new information taken from European writers and map-makers about discoveries made during the Age of Exploration, we can gain insights about the extent of Ottoman knowledge about the global changes taking place during the early modern period of world history. By dissecting the components of Katip Çelebi's chapters on the lands of the Pacific Rim, such as Japan, the islands of Southeast Asia, and China, we can identify both what interested the author about these places and how he used various sources to provide information about them to his Ottoman audience. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, as Katip Çelebi became aware of various European geographical works in translation at the end of his life, he increasingly rejected Muslim geographies as lacking in quality. He persisted in this interpretation, even when that choice led him to erroneous conclusions about distant regions of the world. Despite the obvious flaws of the work in hindsight, however, the *Cihânnümâ* proved surprisingly effective at informing its contemporary Ottoman audience about some of the dramatic shifts that had been taking place during the early modern period.

Key words: Katip Çelebi, *Cihânnümâ*, Japan, China, East Asia, Ottoman geography, Age of Exploration, Ottoman-European interaction.

91 See also the analogous remarks of Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph,* 273.