BYZANTIUM ASCRIBED AS THE "OTHER" IN PRIMARY SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS IN LATE PERIOD OF OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to show in which contexts the Byzantium Empire is handled in primary school history textbooks in late period of Ottoman Empire, which kind of negative ascriptions it was targeted with, or how it was ascribed as the *"other"*. Unravelling significant findings regarding the image of Byzantium in late period of Ottoman Empire when important transformations occurred in regard of identity construction, this study also endeavours to cast a light on the meanings and missions ascribed to the concept of *"us"*. Designed as a qualitative research towards this purpose, the primary material of the study consists of history textbooks prepared for use in primary schools of the period in question. 15 of these books were chosen. Criteria for this selection included the books in question being prepared in accord with the curriculum in force at the time as well as being approved by the Ministry of Education. Document analysis method was employed to collect data related to the subject of the study from these textbooks. Collected data were analysed with the content analysis technique. According to the results construed from these data the Byzantium Empire was not a subject of history textbooks in all its aspects. It was brought under attention in the context of Islam and especially in the context of Turkish history, but therein it was attributed with negative qualities in various ways and ascribed as the *"other"*.

Keywords: Late Period of Ottoman Empire, Primary School, History Textbooks and Byzantium.

1. Introduction
1.1. A Theoretic Assessment on "Us" and the "Other"

Ideology remains one of the fundamental concept on which definitional agreement could not be established in social sciences. This concept was formulised differently by Antoine Destutt de Tracy, Karl Marx, V.İ. Lenin, A. Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Max Weber and many others since its initial suggestion, and it was brought into light in regard of various functions. One of these functions relate to identity. In other words, ideology has the function to develop unity, solidarity and consensus between members of a social group and to build an identity in this framework (Gutek, 2014, 178).

This function was brought to like in schools, common and formal educational institution, especially in textbooks prepared in accord with an official curriculum. As sources which determine the lines of *"legitimate knowledge"* and convey and reproduce this knowledge at each use, textbooks are loaded with various messages for the people they address directly with their covers, the images they contain, the language they use and the subjects they include or exclude. Through these messages the textbooks constitute sources which display the codes of dominant and normal discourse in a country, determining which subjects can be discussed and which subjects are relegated as taboo only. More importantly, as one of the fundamental sources telling the *"official story"* of a social group, the textbooks provide a narration of the members comprising the social group, the history of the social group, the current position of the social group and finally the future vision of the social group. In other words, the textbooks position the state and the society in the historical context and create an awareness of *membership/belonging*, i.e. a concept of *"us"* (Çayır, 2014, 1, 9).

The purpose of constructing a concept of *"us"* is to create individuals who think the same way, who holds similar values, and who display common attitudes and behaviours. Display of the ideas, values, attitudes and behaviours in question is aimed to sustain existence in the lines drawn by the dominant discourse. As a matter fact, only those who accept being part of *"us"* can remain in these lines and are generously rewarded by the dominant power. Otherwise they are marginalised as the *"other"* and face being deprived from many rights. In this framework, ideology is not only a way of representing *"us"*, but also a way of representing the *"other"* which gives meaning to the foregoing (Parlak, 2005, 84; Dijk, 2015, 28). In this context, teaching the concept of *"us"* is not sufficient on its own in construction of an identity. It must also be clarified who and what is the *"other"*. As a matter of fact, it is not possible to discuss identity or social groups in a society where the concept of *"us"* exists, but the concept of the *"other"* does not (Tekeli, 2015, 2).

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Zygmunt Bauman also thinks the same. Pointing out that in some cases the distinction between "*us*" and the "*other*" is shaped as *in*-group and *out*-group, the Polish sociologist argues that this couple of opposing positions require each other and therefore are inseparable. According to Bauman the feeling of an *in*-group cannot exist without the feeling of an *out*-group; and of course vice-versa. These two elements of conceptual-behavioural contrast complement and condition each other. Therefore, the concepts of "*us*" and "*other*" can only exist together and in mutual conflict. The concept of "*us*" defines the group we belong to, while in contrast the concept of "*other*" defines the group we do not wish to be part of. The self-identity, integrity, internal solidarity and emotional security of the group we belong to depends on existence of the group we do not belong to. According to Zygmunt Bauman, such a group will be invented even if it does not exist in order to define and protect the border lines of our own group, to ensure loyalty and cooperation in our own group and to maintain integrity, solidarity and superiority of our own group (Bauman, 2010, 51-53).

To this end, invention of an "*other*" in opposition of "*us*" served to control other people and provided an excuse to exploit them. Those governing the control mechanism or the dominant group(s) did not just pursue the goal of legitimising their control by inventing the "*other*". The "*other*" was also produced for purposes of means to ensure continuity of the control in question. In fact, the famous formula of divide and conquer worked by means of creating the "*other*" (Tekeli, 2015, 2). Representing not only two separate human groups, but also the distinction between two completely different attitudes, empathy and antipathy, trust and doubt, safety and fear, cooperation and conflict (Bauman, 2010, 51) the distinction between the concept of "*us*" and the concept of "*other*" is also related to prejudices. The writers of the study titled *The Authoritarian Personality* define prejudices as "*…an indication of a fundamentally insecure or 'ego-estranged' personality, before anything else*". Gordon W. Allport, writer of the study titled *The Nature of Prejudice*, states that prejudices are reflections of unconscious mental experiences which reveal the childish, repressed, defensive and aggressive aspects of an individual. A deep feeling of insecurity lies under the psychic discretion. This condition may originate from unresolved and therefore repressed conflicts the individual may have with their parents or siblings. Estrangement of the ego pushes the individual to desiring safety and authority. The individual displays rigid lines in regard of ethics and tends to think of the world in dichotomous terms like *strong vs. weak, good vs. bad, us vs. others*. Feeling that they do not control their own fate, the individual looks for the reasons of their inadequacies or lack of success not in themselves, but in others, ascribing the entire responsibility on others. Deeply affecting development of personality due to their roots in unresolved childhood conflicts, prejudices developing at group level is only possible by creating group stereotypes (Tekeli, 2015, 3-4; Schnapper, 2005, 129, 131-132).

Stereotyping can be defined as assuming a certain attitude against an individual or a group who characterise or depict an entire age group, gender, race or religion. Stereotypes generally create a cognitive schema which results in a positive or negative judgement regarding an individual or an entire culture (Manning & Baruth, 2004, 22). Stereotypes based on prejudices regarding various groups do not comprise only cognitive schemas. These also constitute means of social representation. In other words, they are objectified cognitive and emotional structures regarding social groups. Stereotypes constructed on prejudices and attributes ascribed by groups on each other are ideological elements enabling legitimisation and sustainment of the pattern of relationships between the dominant social groups. These ideological elements comprise of images which sublimate "*us*", while reviling, abasing and marginalising the "*other*" (Dragonas, 2015, 119, 123).

The image of enemy is important in this context. The colours of the group the individual belongs to brings peace to the individual without any doubt. Identifying with one's group grants the individual with the feeling of safety and pride. However, the image of enemy is painted with fearful colours which send chills down one's soul and give them anxiety (Bauman, 2010, 57; Schnapper, 2005, 151). According to Carl Schmitt (2007, 28) "*the enemy is not merely any competitor or just any partner of a conflict in general. He is also not the private adversary whom one hates. An enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity. The enemy is solely the public enemy, because everything that has a relationship to such a collectivity of men, particularly to a whole nation, becomes public by virtue of such a relationship*".

The enemy is cunning and scheming. Even though he wears the mask of a friend from time to time or becomes convinced not to bring his plots into fruition, he is remorseless nevertheless. If he is allowed to do what he wants and becomes strong enough he can resort to occupation, invasion, slavery and exploitation. If he is forced to hide his real goals, he works to achieve these by underhanded means. The only way to prevent these is staying alert, or always "*staying sharp*", and being strong, both physically and mentally (Bauman, 2010, 57-58). It is clear that the textbooks, especially those taught in primary steps of education have an almost vital mission in raising awareness of the enemy and his actions in growing

generations (Millas, 1989, 47). The enemy and his actions are so depicted in textbooks, every move he makes further darkens his image. "*No matter what you do, no matter what you say will be dragged through the mud and will be used as evidence against you*", this is principle on which "*malicious*" motives are enacted. Each move of the enemy is taken under a magnifying glass to unravel his "*treacherous*" goals (Bauman, 2010, 58) and he is presented to children in a format allowing them to know their enemy closer. The goal is to put all differences aside and to raise awareness of minor members of the social group, who will be the adult members of future, against the threatening element or "*enemy other*", to instil a feeling of loyalty to them, to bring them together and to unify them into a single body.

In this context, the concept of enemy and therefore awareness of an enemy has an important role in fortification of the concept of "*us*". According to Wilhelm Schmid, providing a real life foundation and inclination before anything else, the concept of enmity proves to be guarantee of continuity by moving through all stages of life as a fundamental path, despite being a negative value. Enmity was an important determiner in strengthening the affection and solidarity between the members of the group, to instil further value into these ties on each occasion, to identify and eliminate weaknesses of these members, and to motivate them towards a certain goal. In some sense, the feeling of "*when we stand together we can overcome those threatening us (and) our uniqueness!*" obtained by the group members gained meaning with existence of an enemy. In this context, enmity taught them "*what they are not*", or vice-versa, "*who they are*"(2017, 16-18).

1.2. The Narrative of "Us" and the "Other" in Primary School History Textbooks in Late Period of Ottoman Empire

The distinction of "*us*" and the "*other*" we endeavour to describe in this theoretic assessment was found in primary school history textbooks taught in late period of Ottoman Empire, just like it is in today's textbooks. Before the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) textbooks were dominated by an Ottomanism-centric concept of "*us*". The Turkish identity was not very distinct yet. The tragic and traumatic results of these wars were almost a great "*calamity*" for Ottomanism as pointed out by the writers of the textbooks of the time. Despite this calamity and the deep wounds it suffered, Ottomanism continued to have an effect on textbooks in the years following Balkan Wars, even though not as predominantly as before. According to narratives of textbook writers, the bitter results of Balkan Wars have also caused a deep awakening among the Turkish populations. These provided the source for remembrance of the Turkish identity which was set aside to avoid giving umbrage to other social groups, and finally allowing the people to understand they are "*Turk*". These events have unravelled the need to follow a national ideal in order to keep Turkish culture and Turkish homeland. In this context, in contrast to the gradually shrinking scope of Ottomanism in textbooks[1], the Turkish identity has become more prominent in comparison to its reflections before the Balkan Wars. In fact, a newly budding Turkic-Islamic identity can be in question in scope of some of the data identified in these textbooks. In textbooks containing such attempts to build a concept of "*us*" on this axis, it is naturally possible to witness existence of many "*others*". As a matter of fact, the Byzantium Empire is only one of these.

1.3. A Brief Overview of the name of "Byzantium"- "Rûm" and Turkish-Byzantine Relationships

The empire known as Byzantium which endured throughout the Middle Ages was actually nothing other than the continuation of the old Roman Empire. The name Byzantium was ascribed by modern researchers long after collapse of the empire. The people known as Byzantines saw themselves as Romans. At the same time, they thought of their rulers as the Roman Emperor, and their state as the Roman Empire (Daş, 2006, 13). In Arabic-Islamic records they were referred to as "*Rûm*". The word "*Rûm*" was the Arabic borrowed word from the word "*Romaio*", which carries the meaning of "*Roman*" or "*of Rome*". On the other hand, the term "*Bilâdü'r- Rûm*" or "*Arzu'r-Rûm*" was used to describe the Byzantium lands, especially Anatolian territories. In addition to the term "*Kayser*" (*Caesar*), terms like "*Melikü'r-Rûm*" or "*Azîmü'r-Rûm*" were used to describe the Byzantine Emperors. The name of "*Rûm*" which is found in Quran as the name of a sura was again used to describe the Byzantines. Here, the defeat of Byzantines against the Sassanids was discussed and it was foreseen that they would overcome Sassanids in three to nine years. Even in hadith resources the name of "*Rûm*" was mostly used to describe the Byzantines (Avcı, 2008, 222. Also see. El-Cheikh-Saliba, 1992, 42-52).

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[1] The expression of "*gradually shrinking scope of Ottomanism*" is inspired by the following words of Edhem Eldem: "The headiness of 1908 is now passed, and under effect of years of war and ethnic conflict, scope of Ottomanism is now gradually shrinking and becoming seized by a semblance of Turkish nationalism which is predominant if not exclusionary ". See. Edhem Eldem, Aklî Osmanlıcılık (Ottomanisme Rationnel): 1917 Tarihli Fransızca Bir Okuma Kitapçığı, *Toplumsal Tarih*, Vol. 7, No. 38, 1997, p.28.

Seljuks and Ottomans who were their contemporaries have used the name of "*Rûm*". The term "*Selçukiyân (Selâçıka)-i Rûm*" was used to describe the Anatolian Seljuks. The Seljuk rulers İzzüddin and Rüknüddin were referred to as the "*Rûm Diyarı Sultanları*" (*Sultans of the Rûm Lands)* and it was attempted to draw a geographical framework for the "*Rûm*" lands. The name "*Rûm*" also referred to the Greek speaking ethnic group in this geography. In early period of Ottomans the administrative region covering Amasya, Sivas and Tokat was referred to as "*Eyâlet-i Rûm*" (*Principality of the Rûm*). Anatolia was called as "*mülk-i Rûm*", the Ottoman holdings on Balkan Peninsula were called as "*Rûmeli*" and the Ottoman rulers were called as "*Sultan/Padişah-ı Rûm*" (*Ruler of the Rûm Lands*). Mehmed the 2nd who ended the Byzantium Empire has taken the title of "*Kayser-i Rûm*" (*Caesar of the Rûm*) in addition to his other titles. In Ottoman culture the name of "*Rûm*" was also used to describe the Greek speaking Christian Ottoman subjects. This refers to the native peoples of Anatolia who were converted to Christianity and whose language was replace with Greek under rule of Byzantium before arrival of Turks in Anatolia. Transferred from Seljuk and Byzantium rule to Ottoman rule, these societies continued their existence in many parts of Anatolia. In addition, the Greek speaking societies of Greek Peninsula, Thrace and Aegean islands who entered under Ottoman rule later were called as "*tâife-i Rûmiyân*" (*Greek bodies*). The name of "*Rûm*" as enunciative of an ethnic group was used widely in 18th and 19th centuries (Özbaran, 2004, 48-49, 52-54, 99-108; Avcı, 2008, 225; Babinger, 1964, 766). As it is understood from the data gathered from textbooks, this name maintained its place in common use in later years of the Ottomans.

As indicated by this conceptual framework, the Byzantium Empire was a polity which had contacts both with Muslim Arabs and Turks. There were contacts between the Byzantines and the Muslim Arabs shortly after birth of Islam. The Byzantium Empire and the Islamic World under leadership of the Arabs have continuously competed over Anatolian geography until 11th century. This competition was not only limited to the military front. It would be more appropriate to include the political, economic, diplomatic, cultural, scientific and artistic dimensions as well. After this date, arrival of Turks introduced a geographical disconnect between the Byzantines and the Arabs, and the contacts between them became rarer. Thus, the Islamic pressure on the Byzantines switched from Arabs to Turks (Daş, 2006, 173; Bosworth, 1995, 602-605). Without a doubt this was not the first contact between the Turks and the Byzantines. In other words, there had been constant contacts between the Turks and the Byzantines since the time the Roman Empire started to change into the Byzantium Empire. Before the Seljuk Turks' definitive claim of Anatolia as their homeland in 11th century, there have been various contacts between the Byzantines and various Turkic societies including the European Huns, Gokturks, Khazars, Pechenegs, Oghuzs and Cumans. It is clear that these contacts were not limited to war. In parallel to the wars arising between neighbouring countries as necessitated by conditions of the time, some relations including economic, political, social, etc. aspects have also developed. For example, treaties made between the Byzantines and the Huns included trade provisions. The Byzantines have also made alliances with Gokturks and Khazars. On the other hand, it is also known the Byzantine armies included mercenaries recruited from various Turkic elements. The Byzantine army facing the Seljuks in the *Battle of Manzikert* included Pechenegs and Uz soldiers. In short, when the Turks finally established permanent settlements in Anatolia in 11th century, they were not unknown strangers to the Byzantines. The Turks, with their language, culture and lifestyle were known to the Byzantines through centuries of contacts (Daş, 2006, 172-173).

Following the *Battle of Manzikert* the fair, humanitarian and balanced policies followed by Seljuk rulers in Anatolia produced positive results. On the other hand, while there were some struggles between the Seljuks and the Byzantines, good neighbourly relations were also developed to the extent permitted by the conditions (Daş, 2006, 173-181). At the end of 13th century the Anatolian Seljuk State collapsed under Mongolian pressure and various small Turkish principalities were established on their lands. Especially those in Western Anatolia have expanded their territory to the detriment of the Byzantines and defeated the Byzantine armies sent against them. The Ottoman Principality rose to their place on the stage of history during these conflicts between the Byzantines and these Turkish principalities. Swiftly expanding, this principality achieved significant successes against the Byzantines and captured some of their cities. Staying helpless against the Ottoman advances and unable prevent them, the Byzantine Emperors have requested their help against some problems from time to time. Meanwhile, the Ottomans set foot on the Balkans and started to make rapid gains on this geography as well. The Byzantium Empire started to look for help against this advance, but could not reach any substantial result from this effort, having to accept Turkish rule and become a vassal state. The Byzantine lands shrunk further with Ottoman conquests. The hopes for defending the walled city of Istanbul (Constantinople) started to disappear. The Ottoman defeat in the Battle of Ankara granted the Byzantines a fresh breath, but it was short-lived. In fact, the Crusades organised to

push Ottomans out of Balkans had failed, and Istanbul was besieged again, and was finally conquered by Mehmed the 2nd in May 1453 (Demirkent, 1992, 240-243; Ostrogorsky, 1995, 490-526; Lemerle, 2005, 127-131).

Thus the Byzantium Empire, the resplendent synthesis of Roman and Hellenic heritages with the Christian belief (Daş, 2006, 14) reached the end of its life of more than one thousand years. Of course there are significant studies regarding the history of this long lived empire (Also see. Karakök, 2010, for a detailed bibliography). However, it is not possible to talk of a rich literature regarding how or in which context the Byzantium Empire is handled in textbooks which reflect the official view. Current studies are limited in number, and this subject is mostly studied with a focus on history textbooks taught on various levels of education in years following 1923 (Copeaux, 2000; Millas, 1989, 2008; Durak, 2014; Stathis, 2015). Other than Michael Ursinus' (1986, 1988) notes on the place of Roman and Byzantine history in late Ottoman historiography and an article regarding Ottomans' view on Byzantine written by Casim Avcı (2009), this subject has lacked close attention. This situation was an important impetus for this study without any doubt. Unlike abovementioned studies, the purpose of this study is to show in which contexts the Byzantium Empire is handled in primary school history textbooks in late period of Ottoman Empire, which kind of negative ascriptions it was targeted with, or how it was ascribed as the "*other*". We anticipate that this study, unravelling significant findings regarding the image of Byzantium in late period of Ottoman Empire wherein a serious transformation is experienced in construction of identity, as well as casting a light on the meanings and mission ascribed on the concept of "*us*", will make a contribution to the literature, albeit it might be small.

2. Materials and Method

This study is designed as a qualitative research. Qualitative research is defined as an investigation where a qualitative process is followed in order to reveal perceptions and events in their natural environment or in scope of their unique circumstances with a realistic and holistic approach using qualitative data collection methods such as *observation, interview and document analysis* (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, 45). In this scope, the main materials of the study consist of the history textbooks taught in primary schools in late period of Ottoman Empire. 15 of such books were chosen. Criteria for this selection included the books in question being prepared in accord with the curriculum in force at the time as well as being approved by the Ministry of Education.

These books were procured in result of inquiries made with various libraries, and the *document analysis* method was used to gather data relevant to subject of study. *Document analysis* is a systematic method aimed at review or evaluation of printed and electronic documents. Like other analytic methods used in qualitative research, the *document analysis* method also requires examination and interpretation of data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and finally to produce knowledge (Bowen, 2009, 27). *Content analysis* technique was employed to analyse the data gathered from the textbooks by *document analysis* method. *Content analysis* is a research technique used for deriving replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful mediums) regarding the contexts they utilise (Krippendorff, 2004, 18). The main purpose of *content analysis* is to reach concepts and relationships which can explain the gathered data. While the data is summarised and construed in descriptive analysis, in *content analysis* the data is put through a more detailed process and allow revelation of certain concepts and themes which could not be discovered with a descriptive approach (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, 259). In this scope, subject relevant data gathered from the textbooks were examined in depth and collected under the theme of "*Byzantium as the other*" for interpretation.

3. Findings and Interpretation

3.1. Byzantium as the "Other"

In the history textbooks taught in primary schools in late period of Ottoman Empire, Byzantium was called by three names other than this one. One of these is the "*İstanbul İmparatorluğu*" (*Constantinople Empire*) (Ahmed Rasim, 1327, 26; İhsan Şerif, 1331c, 24). Others were the "*Doğu/Şarkî Roma İmparatorluğu*" (*Eastern Roman Empire*) (İhsan Şerif, 1331d, 41-42) and the "*Rûm*", as seen below. The name of "*Rûm*" used in textbooks did not only depict the Byzantium Empire and the Byzantine Emperors, but also the subjects of this empire. Furthermore, the Byzantium Empire, which existed for more than one thousand years at the crossroads of Anatolia and Balkans, was not a subject of history textbooks with all its aspects. Excluding the passages regarding the Romans, the Empire was only allowed the spotlight in relation to Islam, and especially in the context of Turkish history.

Briefly coming into question in passages on Romans, Byzantium was discussed in the axis of certain wars which occurred in early years of Islam, and it was depicted as the "*defeated enemy*" against the forces of

Islam (İhsan Şerif, 1331d, 41-42; Ahmed Refik, 1332a, 56-57, 70; Ahmed Refik, 1330, 22). Contacts between the Byzantines and Turkic societies like Tukyu, Uz and other were passed over by single lines (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337b, 26-27, 29). However, texts on Seljuk history include important clues regarding the Byzantium in the minds, while not in too much detail. Lacking in information regarding good neighbourhood relations between the Seljuks and the Byzantines, these texts generally focus on the conflicts between these parties. It is well known that the *Battle of Manzikert* constitutes a turning point in this regard. In this battle, the victory achieved by Turkish soldiers against the Byzantine army, which is said to have numerical superiority and positioned as the "*enemy*" against "*us*", is presented with an otherworldly and epic narration:

> The Seljuk Sultan Alparslan had taken many parts of Anatolia from the Rûm. The Rûm Emperor Diogenes gathered a great army of two hundred thousand men to expel Turks from Anatolia. He advanced on the Turks. As Alparslan was not ready for battle, he only had fifteen thousand men with him. It was decided to attack the enemy with a small force while the preachers were at the pulpit on the Friday. At the chosen hour, having prayed with his soldiers, Alparslan wept. The people wept with him. He prayed. They said amen. Then he talked to his soldiers: *Let him who wishes turn back. There is no sultan here. I am just a soldier like you!* He threw his bow and quiver. He picked up his bare sword. He tied the tail of his horse by his own hands. His soldiers followed suit. Then he clad himself in white, saying: *This is my shroud if I become a martyr*, and he wore incense and attar. And his soldiers prepared themselves for death as he did. Sultan moved forward as a soldier. His soldiers followed suit. As they approached the army of Rûm which could not fit into mountains, into the wilderness, Alparslan said Allahuekber and attacked the enemy like a roaring lion. His soldiers followed like tigers straight into the enemy. Right then, a great wind rose, driving dust and soil onto the enemy. No one could see straight. Army of Rûm was routed. Their emperor was taken captive. Turks decimated them until their arms were tired. The wilderness was filled with corpses of the enemy (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 8).

The *Battle of Manzikert* was not the end. It is remarked that after this war in addition to their conflicts with the Byzantines, the Seljuks also had to struggle against the "*Ehl-i Salîb*" (*Bearers of the Cross* or the Crusaders) and provided great services for Islam. Thus, Seljuks were exalted on the pedestal of "*us*", while the Byzantines and the "*Ehl-i Salîb*" were shown as the "*enemy*" (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337b, 79). This approach towards the Byzantines shows no change in the following passages relating that the Seljuks made Anatolia into a flourishing homeland for Turks from one end to the other. As a matter of fact, the Byzantines are decried as the "*ruining, scorching, destroying*" party, while the Turks are belauded on the pedestal of "*us*" as a "*building, flourishing, enlivening*" people, as if to refute the anti-Turkish views espoused in the West in late 19th century:

> At the time of the Anatolian Seljuks millions of Turks emigrated from Turkistan into Anatolia. Anatolia was ruined, scorched and destroyed at the hands of Byzantines, and its peoples had dwindled. These Turks arriving from the Middle Asia re-enlivened this blessed land. Villages, towns, cities were founded anew on all its corners. The old, burned, destroyed domains were rebuilt. The mosques, tombs, inns, caravanserais, madrasas and hospitals built at the time of Seljuks still adorn the lands of Anatolia. The beautiful Anatolia truly became a "homeland of Turks" at the time of Seljuks. Nothing of Byzantine was left behind (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 6-7).

Being relegated to a negative image in these texts on Seljuk history in this context, the Byzantium was reflected in passages on Ottoman history mostly in a similar fashion. Byzantium was one of the most important neighbours of Ottomans, just like it was of Seljuks. In history textbooks it is emphasized that relations between Ottomans and this border neighbour was good at the start. However, it is claimed, these good relations deteriorated due bad actions of these neighbours going as far as border violations and theft, stated as "*transgressing borders of Osman Bey*" and "*pilfering his some herds*". In this context, Byzantines are depicted as the party upsetting the good relations. Moreover, it is argued that Osman Bey started to turn towards Byzantine lands in response to these actions. Thus, Ottoman incursions were tried to be legitimised in some measure (İhsan Şerif, 1331a, 34). This legitimisation is done by belauding Ottoman Sultans as governors who respect fairness and justice, emphasizing that they were in fact needed and welcomed by people of the Byzantine cities. This assertion was accompanied by negative remarks on "*brutal and tyrannical*" nature of Byzantine *takavors* (governors):

> Osman Bey, (…) was greatly wise, prudent and careful. Be they Muslim or Christian, he treated his subjects with great justice, never letting anyone's right left to anyone else.

However, the Byzantine *takavors* were greatly brutal and tyrannical, committing great injustices and wrongs against their own Rûm subjects. Therefore all Rûms had the heartfelt wish to be rid of their Byzantine *takavors* and enter his rule (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 11-12). The swift progress of Ottomans alarmed the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople. At the time the Byzantine Emperor was Andronikos the Third. The Emperor wished to stop advance of Orhan Ghazi. He moved up to Maltepe. There, Ottoman and Rûm met in combat. Ottomans won a brilliant victory. In result of the Battle of Maltepe the city of İznik also surrendered. Orhan Ghazi entered the city with a glorious procession. All the people, including women and children, welcomed Orhan Ghazi. They were all tired of unjust governance of the Rûm. Orhan Ghazi won the hearts of people. Peace was made with the enemy (Ahmed Refik, 1336, 15-16).

The joyous welcome of Ottomans by Byzantine subjects almost as a "*saviour*" was made apparent using visuals. A clear example of this can be found in Image-1.

Image-1: "The Entry of Orhan Ghazi to Rûm Cities" (Ahmed Refik, 1330, 37).

Harsh comments are made with the argument that Byzantine *takavors* "*knew very well they could not overcome with bravery and strength*" and they attempted to kill the Ottomans "*by traps*" or "*with deceit*" and "*made treacherous covenants*" to this end, and they are depicted as "*scoundrels*" and "*enemies scattered*" before the charge of Ottomans (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 12-13; İhsan Şerif, 1331b, 6-7). In addition to these characterisations Byzantium was also depicted as a "*helpless*" and "*powerless*" empire unable to solve its internal problems and thus "*in need of help*". In contrast Ottomans are introduced as a "*great*" force who solved the internal problems of Byzantium, imposed taxes on them, an even designated the Byzantine Emperor (Ahmed Refik, 1336, 25).   In this context, it was alluded Byzantium owed its existence to Ottomans, and in contrast Byzantium was depicted as an open "*enemy*" who prepared the ground for creation of Western "*Ehl-i Salîb*" armies, who does not wish Ottomans to overcome their problems and strengthen, and who even exploits internal problems of Ottomans to their advantage towards these goals (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 22, 27).

It is stressed with every opportunity that despite ongoing enmity of Byzantines, the Ottomans maintained their friendly disposition, their devotion to justice, and their tolerant, compassionate and charitable demeanour. A significant example of this approach can be seen in the narration of the conquest of Constantinople and the following process. Firstly, it must be pointed out that the depiction of Byzantium before the conquest resembled a dark tableau in many aspects. According to this picture, Byzantium was deep in disgrace and debauchery. The people were divided into many sects and steeped in depravity. No one had a drop of love for their homeland and nation. Everyone sought after their own interest. No trace of the old Byzantine civilisation was left. The city had shrunk and half of it had deteriorated into ruins. Even the Emperors started to only think of how to protect their position against various schemes, rather than thinking of their land. Thus, they failed to protect this precious land. The force protecting Byzantium only

consisted of the thick walls surrounding the city (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 29-30; Midhat Sadullah *et al..*, 1334a, 43; Ahmed Refik, 1336, 37).

It is recorded that in fact Byzantium has collapsed from the inside. Conquest of Constantinople was deemed necessary to remove this wreckage of Byzantium and to establish Ottoman territorial integrity. As a matter of fact, Constantinople stood right in the middle of Ottoman holdings in Anatolia and Balkans, at a point connecting these lands. On the other hands, residents of the capital were qualified as *"foreigners"* or *"foreign people"*. This is without a doubt a significant indication of to how high a degree the city was already appropriated. In this context, the writers of textbooks could not think that the city could *"belong to foreigners"* even before the conquest, and thus saw Byzantine existence on the Straits as illegitimate. It is stated that Constantinople was previously sieged by some Ottoman Sultans, but could not be taken due to uprisings in Anatolia or failure to collapse the walls of the city, and that finally the honour of becoming the recipient of the prayer of His Holiness the Prophet Muhammad[2] fell to Mehmed the 2nd. This success was ascribed to Mehmed the 2nd taking past sieges into consideration and making necessary preparations, as well as his resolute attitude and his determination against challenges. This assessment also points out the measures taken by Byzantium to defend the city had failed to produce results. The fate of Constantine, last emperor of Byzantium, was expressed with the phrase *"telef oldu"* (*He perished*)" and it is emphasized that his body was interred with honours on order of Mehmed the 2nd (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 30; Ahmed Refik, 1336, 37-41; Copeaux, 2000, 187).

Construed as the beginning of a new era in Ottoman history, this conquest was also counted as one of the developments leading to the *revival/renaissance* era in the West (Ahmed Refik, 1336, 41; Ahmed Refik, 1332b, 8). The writers agree that the period starting with this conquest and going until the French Revolution was referred as the *Kurûn-ı Cedîde* (New Age) (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337c, 3; Ahmed Refik, 1332b, 3; Midhat Sadullah *et al..*, 1334b, 2). This, without a doubt, reflected the justified pride of becoming part of the world history, pioneering events causing global shocks, closing and opening historic eras (Copeaux, 2000, 191).

Everything was not limited to these, of course. Another point of focus was the attitude displayed towards residents of Istanbul after the conquest. The writers unanimously agree that Mehmed the 2nd had a very positive attitude towards these people. One of these writers, Köprülüzâde M. Fuad Bey, makes a comparison between this attitude of Mehmed the 2nd and the actions of Byzantines, Serbians and Wallachians against Turks with the following lines, lauding the friendliness, justice, tolerance, compassion and charity of Ottoman Turk as mentioned above:

> At the time, it was customary to kill or enslave the people of a city conquered in battle. In fact, Byzantines, Serbians and Wallachians would kill the Turks they captured with a thousand kinds of torture. Sultan Mehmed could not push away his Turkish compassion and charity. He did not let anyone touch lives and worldly possessions of the people. He paid respects to Rûm Patriarch Gennadius. He left Rûm subjects completely free in their religious affairs (Köprülüzâde M. Fuad, 1337a, 31).

Finally, frequently reviving the oversight displayed by Byzantium's failure to protect its centre of government, the writers praise Istanbul to their little readers by saying there is no peer of the city in the world and everyone wants to own it, and they do not neglect to suggest the city should be protected even at the cost of their lives and the sultan who conquered the city should be showered with prayers day and night (Ahmed Refik, 1330, 44; Midhat Sadullah *et al..*, 1334a, 44-45).

4. Conclusion

Byzantium is an empire who left their mark in history of the world through a life of more than a thousand year which contains various crises and successes. In this long period of time, the culture and civilisation built by them have become an example to many societies. They had mutual contacts with many nations. It is clear that these contacts were not limited to military actions. The long history of Byzantium became the stage for diplomatic, political, socio-cultural, artistic, scientific and economic relations with different nations as well. The Byzantium Empire was subject to many studies and was deeply studies in all these aspects. However, the matter of how and on which aspects this empire is described to new generations, in other words, how this empire takes a place in history textbooks has not been sufficiently analysed until

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[2] The Prophet Muhammad's saying regarding conquest of Constantinople is not found in textbooks verbatim. A phrase stating "*His Holiness the Prophet prayed for grace of the emir who would conquer Istanbul and the mujahedeen in his retinue*" was used instead. For an example see. İhsan Şerif, *Çocuklara Târih Dersleri*, (Devre-i Evvelî-2. Sene), (2. Tab'ı), Kanâat Kütübhâne ve Matbaası, Dâr-ül-Hilâfet-ül-Aliyye, 1334, p.42.

today. It is only possible to talk of limited interest on this subject. In case of the history textbooks of late period of Ottoman Empire, it is even harder to determine the existence of this limited interest.

However, understanding and interpreting how did the Ottomans, having been border neighbours almost 5 centuries prior, having had important contacts, and having captured its centre and ended it, saw the Byzantium Empire from an official point of view at a period of time when the Ottoman Empire passed its last turning point and experienced a significant transformation in regard of identity structure can be possible by analyzation of history textbooks, like other official sources of the time. In this context, primary school history textbooks were subjected to content analysis based on the fact that they addressed large audiences and carried importance in regard of permanence of their effect.

In result of this analysis, it was found that while many civilisations such as Egyptians, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Romans, etc. are discussed in detail, the Byzantium Empire was only discussed in a limited context despite being a close neighbour at one time. Comprising only a small part of details regarding Romans, the Byzantium Empire was discussed to the extent of their relations with Muslim Arab to some extent, and their relations with Turks in particular. In other words, the Byzantium Empire could only find a place in history textbooks in the context of impact of Muslim Arabs and most important of Turks on the stage of history. In this case, the military conflicts between the parties constitute the focus.

Putting Muslim Arabs aside, Turks are depicted and belauded as a fundamentally friendly, brave, stoic, resolute, people of great military geniuses, and servants of Islam, who built up and increased the welfare of the lands they conquered, who followed fairness and justice, who are tolerant, compassionate, and charitable, and who protected and looked after their subjects without discrimination between religion and nationality. In contrast, the Byzantium Empire was disparaged and marginalised as the "*other*", being depicted as the enemy, who ruined, scorched and destroyed, who deteriorated good relationships, who oppressed and persecuted even their own subjects, who is treacherous and vile, prone to fighting for the throne, weak and helpless, needing outside help to solve its internal problems, responding to kindness by malice, steeped in disgrace and debauchery, morally depraved, scene to various schemes, lacking in love for their homeland and nation, and even unable to protect their centre of governance.

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