

*rafs*, *i.e.* bankers, and gave details which Armenian writers either did not know (which would be surprising) or, more probably, shied away from. Among these writers the most important for this study are Charles MacFarlane,<sup>35</sup> R. Walsh,<sup>36</sup> Charles White.<sup>37</sup> The accounts of A. Ubicini<sup>38</sup> and David Urquhart<sup>39</sup> contain valuable data and analyses, but are not devoid of powerful prejudice. A much larger number of other European travelers and historians have written on the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, but most have only a few lines on the *sarrafs* and other wealthy individuals, and they tend to repeat what others had already recorded before them.

Ottoman archives will certainly contain a great amount of data and yield information not found elsewhere. However, without having had the opportunity to examine them, we can hazard no guesses here at this time.<sup>40</sup>

Among Ottoman official court historians, only Ahmet Cevdet had a couple of paragraphs on the Armenian *sarrafs*; the others have written about Armenians in general, but have nothing on the class of men which is the focus of this study.

Modern Turkish historians, not surprisingly, have no knowledge of the *amiras*. Many Turkish scholars have written serious works on Ottoman finances and the empire's economy. Only one, Mehmet Zeki Pakalin, mentions the Armenian *sarrafs* in his three-volume work, under several entries.<sup>41</sup>

As noted earlier, many studies have been written on the Armenian *millet*, in general, and the community of Istanbul, in particular; thus, a hurried synthesis has preceded the specialized and monographic studies. This monograph follows the prosopographic approach,<sup>42</sup> in that it emphasizes the dynamics of the social, economic and political features of *amiras*, a small but

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<sup>35</sup> **Charles MacFarlane**, *Constantinople in 1828*, 2 vols. (London, 1829).

<sup>36</sup> **R. Walsh**, *A Residence at Constantinople*, 2 vols. (London, 1836).

<sup>37</sup> **Charles White**, *Three Years in Constantinople*, 3 vols. (London, 1845).

<sup>38</sup> **A. Ubicini**, *Lettres*.

<sup>39</sup> **David Urquhart**, *Turkey and Its Resources* (London, 1833).

<sup>40</sup> Turkish authorities refused to grant me permission to examine the financial records –*maliye defterleri*– for the period 1750-1860.

<sup>41</sup> **Mehmet Zeki Pakalin**, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü* [Dictionary of Ottoman Historical Sayings and Terms], 3 vols. (Istanbul, 1971).

<sup>42</sup> **Lawrence Stone**, “Prosopography,” *Daedalus* 100 no. 1 (Winter 1971): 46-79.