

arriving to Izmir from Europe.²⁹ Unlike most other individuals known as *çelebi*, he never became a benefactor of his people, and showed little interest in Armenian community life. His brother, a shadowy character who was in financial difficulties much of his life, appears to have escaped retribution by converting to Islam.³⁰

The sources are scant about another prominent *çelebi*. Maghakia, son of *Hoca* Eremia of Amit (or Diyarbekir), who was able to obtain a reduction of the tax levied for exemption from galley slavery, the *külrekci akçesi*, in 1649, during the grand vezirate of Melik Ahmet Pasha.³¹ The Armenian churches in the capital were normally obliged to pay this tax. Furthermore, with his father's help, Maghakia Çelebi was able to obtain the freedom of 25 Armenian young men from galley slavery, again thanks to his close relations with the Grand Vezir.³² As to what the nature of these relations was, the sole source of information fails to shed any light on these points. Nor does the source discuss the occurrence of the titles *hoca* and *çelebi* in the same family. As we shall see later, such incidents increase in the course of the seventeenth century, when *hoca* becomes the more devalued and frequent honorific, and *çelebi* retains its distinction.

The seventeenth century Armenian historian, Davrijetsi, describes still another figure, Shahin Çelebi, as one of "the notables well-known at the king's Porte."³³ Like all the other Armenian *çelebis*, he was a wealthy and influential person. An exception to this rule of title and wealth was Eremia Çelebi, who was apparently neither wealthy nor influential in governmental circles, but was, nevertheless, called *çelebi* by the Armenian community. Eremia was a writer and a civic leader of the Armenian *millet*, who is unanimously acknowledged as an early intellectual. The son of a priest, he was not a cleric; he remains one of the very few, if not the only, non-clerical learned figures in early modern Armenian history. He wrote many works of histori-

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ **Torkomian**, *Eremia Tchelepii*, 2:547-548, 574-575, and 3:198-199.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1:51-52, 388-389.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ **Davrijetsi**, *Patmutiun*, p. 287.