

64. China in the 20th century from the perspective of a Turkish traveller, Süleyman Şükrü

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Abstract

Although the first travel books in the Turks correspond to the 16th century, they have been subjected to a lot of examination both because they are the first travel books written on Cathay and for the period they were written. However, it has not gone unnoticed that there are very few studies on the work called Seyahatü'l Kübra, written by Karçınzade Süleyman Şükrü in the 20th century. Şükrü, who travelled after being dismissed from his official duty in the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century, travelled from Anatolia to many countries such as Greece, Iran, Austria, France, Africa, Egypt, India and China and took notes of everything he observed and experienced during his travels. Although it is not as valuable as Evliya Çelebi's "Seyahatname" in Turkey and around the world, Şükrü's "Seyahatü'l Kübra" is one of the most comprehensive travel books that should be examined in terms of its rich content. The Chinese travel chapters in the travelogue are divided into eleven titles including Hong Kong, Shanghai and the details of the outer seas that the traveller crossed before reaching Taku Port, the Pier of Beijing, Pacific Ocean, Tianjin, Beijing, Cancaku, Lancosın, Hoço, Hami, Urumçi. The aim of this study is to examine the impressions of the traveller's journey to China in Seyahatü'l Kübra and to try to analyse the situation in the Qing period according to the work. Therefore, in this study, the historical developments in China in the 20th century will be emphasized and the similar points of the period will be tried to be revealed by giving quotations about how the periodic features of the Qing Dynasty are reflected in Seyahatü'l Kübra.

Keywords: Süleyman Şükrü, Seyahatü'l Kübra, Cathay Travel Books, Travel to China

Türk seyyah Süleyman Şükrü'nün gözünden 20. yüzyılda Çin

Öz

Türklerde ilk seyahatnameler 16. yüzyıla tekabül etmekle birlikte gerek Hitay üzerine yazılan ilk seyahatnameler olması sebebiyle gerek de kaleme alındıkları dönem itibari ile çok fazla incelemeye tabi tutulmuştur. Ancak 20. yüzyılda Karçınzade Süleyman Şükrü tarafından kaleme alınan Seyahatü'l Kübra adlı esere dair çok az çalışma olması dikkatlerden kaçmamıştır. 20. yüzyılda Osmanlı'daki memuriyet görevinden azledildikten sonra seyahate çıkan Süleyman Şükrü, Anadolu'dan yola çıkarak Yunanistan, İran, Avusturya, Fransa, Afrika, Mısır, Hindistan, Çin gibi birçok ülkeyi gezmiş ve seyahati sırasında gözlemlediği, deneyimlediği, duyduğu her şeyi not almıştır. Türkiye'de ve dünya çapında Evliya Çelebi'nin "Seyahatname"si kadar büyük değer görmese de Şükrü'nün "Seyahatü'l Kübra" adlı eseri, zengin içeri bakımından incelenmesi gereken kapsamlı seyahatnamelerden biridir. Seyahatnamede geçen Çin seyahati bölümleri Hong Kong, Şangay (Shanghai), Pekin'in İskelesi olan Taku Limanı'na kadar geçtiği dış denizlerin tafsilatı, Büyük

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Okyanus, Tin-i Çin (Tianjin), Pekin, Cancaku, Lancosin (Lanzhou), Hoço (Hezhou), Hami, Urumçi olarak on bir başlığa ayrılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, seyyahın Seyahatü'l Kübra adlı seyahatnamesinde yer alan Çin seyahati izlenimlerini incelemek ve esere göre dönemsel açıdan Qing dönemindeki durumu tahlil etmeye çalışmaktır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada önce 20. yüzyılda Çin'deki tarihi gelişmeler üzerinde durulacak ve Qing Hanedanlığı'nın dönemsel özelliklerinin Şükrü'nün seyahatnamesine nasıl yansdığına dair örnekler verilerek dönemin tarih ile benzer noktaları ortaya koyulmaya çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Süleyman Şükrü, Seyahatü'l Kübra, Hitay Seyahatnameleri, Çin seyahati

Introduction

Societies' curiosity about the cultures in other societies and their desire to explore the unknown have led societies to gather information about other civilizations in both diplomatic, political and religious contexts. The most peaceful way to gather information is to travel. Thanks to the travelogues of great travellers² who noted everything they saw in their travels, the culture, art and science in places where most people do not dare to go have become known in other countries.

According to the TDK (Turkish Language Association) Contemporary Turkish Dictionary, Seyahatname (travelogue), which is a combination of the Arabic "siyâhat" and Persian "name" words, corresponds to "the work of an author in which he describes his knowledge and impressions from the places he has visited" ("Seyahatname", 2022). In the TDV (Türkiye Diyanet Foundation) Encyclopaedia of Islam, the meaning of the word is given as "travel letter, travel work" (Yazıcı, 2009). Although it is included in the field of literature as a literary genre, it is included in the genre of memoir or diary. According to Asiltürk, although the author's starting point in travel books is geography, "the climate of that geography, its people, historical artefacts, old-new structures, road and transportation features, details that make up daily life, etc. constitute the subject of travel books (2009: 911- 912)". Therefore, travelogues should not be seen as works that require examination in the literary field: they should also be valued as noteworthy documents that contribute to science, as they also include topics in the field of history, geography, sociology, etc.

The earliest Chinese travel books in old Turkish literature are Gıyaseddin Nakkaş's *Acâib'ül-Letâif* and Ali Akbar's *Hitâinâme* (The Khataynameh). *Acâib'ül-Letâif*, known as one of the first travel books, is also called the *Hitay Sefaretnamesi* (Cathay Travel Book). Gıyaseddin Nakkaş, who was among the envoy delegation sent by Timur's son Mirza Şahruh to the Cathay (China) emperor, set out from Herat to China in 1419 and wrote the embassy in 1422 using Persian, the preferred language of the era, by noting everything he saw during his travel (Ozerdin, 1950: 345; Nakkaş, 2013: 3-7).³ Although the work has the characteristics of a travelogue, it is also considered as an embassy⁴ due to the fact that the travel

² The best examples of these travelogues are the *Travelogue of Ibn Battuta* by Ibn Battuta and the *Travelogue of Marco Polo* by Marco Polo.

³ Although the original of the work is Persian, it was translated into Ottoman Turkish by former Şeyhislâm Küçük Çelebizade İsmail Asım Efendi in 1727 during the reign of Ahmet III, by the order of Damat İbrahim Pasha (Özerdin, 1950: 345).

⁴ The reports prepared and presented by the ambassadors sent to foreign countries about the impressions they had in those countries, their meetings with statesmen and other official affairs they carried out are called sefaretname (embassy) in Turkish (Mutlu, 2011, p. 125).

takes place through official channels⁵. It was translated into Ottoman Turkish by Küçükçelebizade İsmail Asım in 1728 (Ozerdim, 1950: 345; Nakkaş, 2013: 3).⁶

After Gıyaseddin Nakkaş, another person who wrote his trip to China was Ali Akbar Khata'i. Akbar, who was essentially a merchant, travelled to China between 1500-1510 and published his notes in a book called *Hitâinâme* (The Khataynameh) (Eğri, 2012: 414)⁷. In Eğri's "*The Silk Road Impressions in Hitây Sefâretnâmesi and Kanunnâme-i China u Hitây*" study, there is a possibility that the name "Hitâi" added to his surname was given to him when he returned from his trip to China (2012: 414). Zeki Velidi Togan states that "this travelogue is not of much value in terms of being an original work, and Ali Akbar benefited from the work of Gıyaseddin Nakkaş while writing" (cited in Mutlu, 2013: 4). According to the information cited by Betül Mutlu in her book titled *Hitay Sefaretnamesi*, Lin Yih-Min, who examined the *Hitâinâme* as a doctoral study and compared it with Chinese sources said that "Ali Akbar did not personally travel to China, but benefited from Gıyaseddin Nakkaş's work while writing the work" (Nakkaş, cited in Mutlu, 2013: 4).

Another travelogue that appeared in the 16th century belongs to Defterdar Seyfi Çelebi. In this travel book called *Türkistan ve Uzak Doğu Seyahatnamesi* (Turkestan and Far East Travel Book), China was recorded as "Hitây (Cathay)" (Çelebi, 2014). Since the work has Ottoman Turkish features, it was not simplified in the 2014 edition, probably to preserve the essence of the work. However, with the detailed explanations of Serkan Acar in the work, the historical structure of the period has been clearly revealed. The period of writing the work corresponds to the period of Suleiman the Magnificent in the Ottoman Empire and the Yuan period in China. For this reason, it is historically very important as it depicts the Yuan Dynasty and Mongol emperors who ruled in China.

Other works written on Chinese travel books during the Ottoman period correspond to the 20th century. One of them is *Seyahatü'l Kübra*, written by Karçınzade Süleyman Şükrü, which is the key point of the study, and the other is the travelogues of Abdurreshid Ibrahim called *The World of Islam, The Spread of Islam in Japan*. As it can be understood from the title of Ibrahim's work, the work provides information about the Islamic world between the years 1907-1909, as well as important information about Muslims in East Asian countries and China⁸.

Seyahatü'l Kübra, written by Şükrü, was published in 1907 at the Elektrik Printing House in Petersburg, Russia (Şükrü, 2013). The work was prepared for publication by Hasan Mert in 2013 and reprinted by the Turkish Historical Society. In the foreword written by Mert, a brief biography of Karçınzade Süleyman Şükrü, the starting point of his travels and brief information about the work are included. In the aspect of Mert, although Şükrü's travels do not have an official purpose⁹, they resemble the

⁵ In Turkish history, the travel books written by travellers are divided into various titles. These are 1) Travelogues based on the journey, 2) Esaretnames, 3) Poetic Travelogues Written in Sergüzeştname and Hasbihal Type, 4) Hajj Travel Books, 5) Travel Books in the Qualification of Geography and History Books, 6) Travel Books Written as a Part of History and Biography, 7) Sefâretnames (Coşkun, 2019).

⁶ The work, prepared by Betül Mutlu in 2013, was reprinted by the Turkish Historical Society. In the first part, the analysis of the work, in the second part, the criticism written by Fuat Köprülü in 1913, and in the third part *Hitay Sefaretnamesi* (in Ottoman Turkish) written by Hoca Gıyaseddin Nakkaş are included.

⁷ The original work was written in Persian. The work, which was completed by Akbar in 1515 after returning from the trip, was presented to the sultans of the period, Selim I and Suleiman the Magnificent. Its translation into Turkish corresponds to the period of Murat III. After the work was translated into Turkish, it was published under the name of *Kanunnâme-i Çin ü Hitây* in the Muhendishane Printing House in 1853 (Eğri, 2012: 414).

⁸ For detailed information about the work, see Ibrahim, 2019.

⁹ Born in Eğirdir in 1865, Süleyman Şükrü worked as a civil servant before traveling. However, while he was a civil servant in Pozanti in 1887, he had a disagreement with a colleague. When he went to Istanbul, he could not accept this situation when he saw that this colleague was appointed as the Telegraph Ministry Accountant. For this reason, he was not welcomed in the Ministry and was transferred to another place. Afterwards, he was dismissed from his duty and exiled to

intentions¹⁰ of the great traveller Evliya Çelebi's travels. For this reason, Şükrü, who is predicted to go on his travels with an individual will, left a very comprehensive work behind by telling his own life story and noting the places he visited in his diaries. In the work, after visiting many cities starting from Anatolia, Iran, Ashgabat, Bukhara, Baku, West Turkestan, Caucasus, Austria, France, Marseille, African Continent, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Aden, India, Calcutta, Colombo, Ceylon, he travelled to Singapore and some cities in China and reached Urumqi, and from there he came to Petersburg, Russia. The traveller, who did not limit his travels to only one country, went to many countries and described the cities he visited there in detail. For this reason, he named his work *Seyahatü'l Kübra*, that is, *The Great Travel*. Especially in the China section, he not only described the cities he visited, but also presented ancient information about the Muslim population and mosques living in China.

The essence of the work, which was written in Ottoman Turkish, was preserved in the reprint. Although there are difficulties in the translation of some words since they are not published in today's Turkish, in essence, it conveys the historical features of the period in which it was written. Since the work written by Şükrü covers both European and Asian countries, it will be beneficial to examine the chapters one by one. However, unfortunately, research on *Seyahatü'l Kübra* has remained shallow compared to other travel books.

1. Method

In terms of sinology studies, one of the most remarkable purposes of this study is to examine the Chinese travel part of this work, which best summarizes the situation in China in the 20th century from the perspective of a Turkish traveller, and to introduce the traveller's impressions of China to researchers around the world. Although there are many works and novels on Turkey in Chinese libraries, written in the contemporary period, it is particularly striking that the works of Ottoman travellers who travelled to China are not available. This travelogue, which portrays the last periods of the Qing Dynasty, which is one of the most researched subjects, is of great importance as it depicts China in that period from the perspective of an Ottoman traveller. However, the fact that the name China is not written on the Chinese travel books in Turkey and that the works are not sufficiently introduced in Chinese or other languages cause these works to be ignored. Therefore, it is of great importance that these historical travel books are examined in detail and their contents are translated into other languages and introduced to the academic world. In this regard, the situation in the Qing period will be tried to be analysed by comparing the impressions of Şükrü's trip to China from a periodical perspective. Therefore, in this study, content analysis, text scanning and text analysis methods will be adopted as analysis methods, and historical developments in China in the 20th century will be emphasized and it will be tried to reveal the historical

Zor Sanjak on the grounds that he could not get along well with his superiors, with an investigation opened against him. During his exile life in Zor Sanjak, Şükrü, who was waiting for forgiveness from Istanbul but could not reach his goal, escaped to Mosul, (Göksoy, 2017). Afterwards, he went on a journey to the places he noted in his work *Seyahatü'l Kübra*. Therefore, in his preface, Mert (2013) mentioned that Şükrü was not sent as an ambassador or spy for an official purpose, and that he would not be able to visit other countries comfortably if he was a spy or a suspect, although it is attributed as such in some sources. However, according to Mert, Şükrü's constant demand for amnesty from Istanbul and his inability to return to the country indicates that he was not sent as a spy, as it shows that he is not on good terms with the administration. Therefore, when this study is taken into account, there is an impression that Şükrü's travel did not take place through the official channel.

¹⁰ While Evliya Çelebi was going to say "Intercession (Şefa'at), O Messenger of Allah" to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), whom he saw in a dream one night, the words "Travel (seyahat), O Messenger of Allah" came out of his mouth. This was one of the important factors in Çelebi's travel. For Süleyman Şükrü, the incident occurred almost in the same way. While he was in Tehran, after he prayed one night and went to istikhara, he saw a person in his dream and said to him, "You will travel to many places, you will go through a lot of things and you will suffer a lot, but your end will be very, very, very good." Thus, he decided to travel (Şükrü, 2013).

similar points of the period by giving quotations about how the periodical features of the Qing Dynasty, especially the situation of the European states in China, are reflected in Şükrü's travel book.

2. China from the 15th Century to the Early 20th Century

The Chinese dominance in Southeast Asian countries, which was strengthened by Zheng He's seven trips to Southeast Asian countries at the beginning of the 15th century, began to weaken as a result of the end of Zheng He's travels and the arrival of the sea ban policy towards the middle of the 15th century. The curiosity of the Europeans who read the *Marco Polo Travelogue* written by Marco Polo, caused the Portuguese to sail towards Southeast Asian countries. In this age called the age of geographical discoveries, the goal of finding new trade routes was at the forefront. Therefore, the Portuguese reached the Indian Ocean and took Goa in 1510 and Malacca in 1511 under their control (Gelber, 2007: 100). Thus, they both took control of the spice trade and got one step closer to China. They even obtained official permission to settle in Macau after challenging struggles in 1535. During their stay here, they were subject to customs duty for rent, ships and commercial goods they bought and sold, and they rented the Macau Peninsula until 1557 in order to clear the region from pirates (Gelber, 2007: 103). In the 15th century, when China's maritime prohibition policy came into force, the end of sea activities increased the number of stray pirates in the seas. In addition to this situation, which shows that China's power in the seas has weakened, the transfer of the task of clearing the Macau Peninsula from pirates to the Portuguese in 1550 is another situation that shows the weakening of China in the seas.

When the dominance of the Portuguese in Asia began to attract the attention of other European states, the Europeans, who did not want the Portuguese to have a single say in Asia, turned their faces to Asia, respectively. After the Portuguese, European traders started to come to Asia: the Spanish, and then the Dutch, French, Russian, Hanseatic, Prussian, etc. (Gelber, 2007). The importance of the Indies in the spice trade was enough to attract the British to these lands.

Although the Europeans first came to Asia for trade purposes, the relations established by the missionaries, not the commercial relations, were more effective in their relations with China. When Christian missionaries Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci, also known as Jesuits, arrived in China in 1577, they got close to the Chinese by keeping up with the Chinese culture and began to gain influence in China by transferring their knowledge in mathematics, astronomy and geography to them. Thus, the Jesuits contributed greatly to the advancement of China in mathematics, astronomy, cartography, geography and other technical and scientific fields (Gelber, 2007: 107). China, which has been superior in almost every field for thousands of years, has now lagged behind the west. Considering that almost all great inventions originated in China, it is unbelievable that the Chinese were behind in developing these inventions. Gelber said the following in his work on this subject:

“In 1621, when the Portuguese offered four cannon to the emperor, they found they had to send cannoneers with them. The following year the court asked Jesuits from Macao to cast cannon for China and twenty years later another of them, Adam Schall himself, was asked to cast more and teach the Chinese how to make them” (2007: 108).

In addition, Professor Temple (2007), who does research on China, made the following comment on this subject:

“From the seventeenth century, the Chinese became increasingly dazzled by European technological expertise, having experienced a period of amnesia regarding their own achievements. When the Chinese were shown a mechanical clock by Jesuit missionaries, they were awestruck, forgetting that it was they who had invented mechanical clocks in the first place. (Foreword)”.

By the Qing period (1644-1911), the rate of settling of Westerners in China increased even more. The desire of Emperor Kangxi (1661-1722) to open China to western science and to strengthen trade relations accelerated the entry of foreigners into China. The reflections of China's wealth in the western world caused even starving Russians to turn to Chinese lands. Accordingly, Şükrü's travel book mentions the wall that Russia made a hole in the Beijing castle during the 1900 turmoil¹¹ during his visit to Beijing and the oppression of the people by Russians (Şükrü, 2013: 502-503).

With the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, a revolution in science began in Europe and radical changes were made in politics. The publication of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789 in France gradually began to affect other countries. In the field of science and education, the Faculty of Science was established at Moscow University (1755)¹² in Russia and Boston University (1839) in the USA, and the first female doctor¹³ was admitted to the university in Germany (Li & Li, 2012: 156). With the Industrial Revolution, machines working with steam power emerged, and thanks to these machines, production and capital increased. Yet, with the increase in production, the search for a market increased in direct proportion, and the Europeans' admiration for Indian fabrics, Chinese silk, porcelain and tea led the trade to Asia. In this process, European states, which tried to establish diplomatic relations with the Chinese, obtained great commercial privileges in return. Although these commercial relations were not mutual at first, trade in China started to strengthen with the silver and opium brought by the Europeans. However, the fact that this trade is not mutual and China's indifference towards the products coming from Europe made the trade of European states in China stay negative. Because China already had everything. However, the entry of silver and opium¹⁴ into China affected the Chinese and increased the Chinese demand for them. The fact that the Chinese constantly demanded silver money against commercial goods brought with it the difficulty of finding silver money in the market. This is where opium came into play. That's when something was found for European states to exchange with China. Due to the increasing population and social problems during the Qing period, the people were already looking for a solution in opium. This led to opium addiction. Although the emperor thought that when he banned opium, it would prevent the spread of opium in China, opium addiction could not be prevented because of smuggled opium into China. The weakness of the Chinese for Indian opium and the silver coins they gave for Indian opium caused the weakening of the Chinese economy, and the weakening economy, trade problems, opium smuggling and China's unstable relations with foreigners dragged the Qing Dynasty towards the collapse.

3. China from the Perspective of Süleyman Şükrü

The Chinese travel chapters in the travelogue are divided into eleven titles including Hong Kong, Shanghai and the details of the outer seas that the traveller crossed before reaching Taku Port which is the harbour of Beijing, Sea to the east of the Indian Peninsula, Pacific Ocean, Tianjin, Beijing, Cancaku,

¹¹ The Boxer Rebellion is mentioned. The difficult situation in China in 1898 caused Emperor Guangxu to support a group led by Kang Youwei, and the Hundred Days Reform came into force. This reform, which included a radical change movement in education, economy, military, industrialization and democracy, was not supported by Cixi and her supporters. For this reason, Cixi, who wanted to get rid of the Westerners and the western influence, gave up the long-lasting policy of suppressing the Boxer's Rebellion and supported their uprising (Li & Li, 2012: 272-279; Kerr, 2021: 132). However, this situation was again in favour of the Westerners.

¹² It is the oldest higher education institution in Russia. It was founded by order of Tsarina Elizaveta Petrovna and was named after Academician Mikhail Lomonosov, who greatly contributed to the founding of the university (see History of Moscow University, 2022).

¹³ Dorothea Lepavin-Erxleben, the first female doctor in Europe with the importance Germany attaches to women's rights, was accepted to Halle University in 1754 and graduated from the Faculty of Medicine. (Shipman, 2017: 18)

¹⁴ There was opium in China before. However, in ancient times, opium was used only as a medicinal material. With the introduction of large amounts of opium into China in the 19th and 20th centuries, the use of opium exceeded its purpose and extended to opium addiction.

Lancosin (Lanzhou), Hezhou, Hami, Urumqi. Şükrü commented on the other places he visited in China under these headings, by opening subheadings one by one. In his work, he noted the outer seas and rivers of China, the extraordinary situations he saw in each city he visited, the people he encountered, the cityscapes, the occupations of foreigners in the cities he visited, and the number of Muslims and mosques in the cities he visited. The cities mentioned in the traveler's Chinese notes are as follows: Hong Kong, Şangay (Shanghai), Tin-i Çin (Tianjin), Pekin (Beijing), Kuvanxi, Nanku, Çada, Tombalı, Pagovan, Şaşan, Huile, Saçın, Çimikpi, Şvanhafu, Cancaku, Luşuncu, Fincin, Taytun, Lancosin (Lanzhou), Hoço, Hami (Kumul) and Urumçi (Urumqi). The traveller, who went to Urumqi for the way back after Beijing, stated in short notes how many days he reached the cities he passed on the way, the castles, plains, valleys in the vicinity and the religion of the population in the city. Since the names of the cities were translated into Turkish by translating the pronunciation heard by Şükrü, it would be necessary to guess exactly which cities, towns and villages the traveller passed through, and the city names given in the study will be handled as they are written in the *Seyahatül Kübra*.

3.1. Impressions from Hong Kong

Şükrü arrived at the port of Hong Kong on the twenty-third day of Muharram. He stated that this place has a population of approximately one hundred thousand and that six thousand of the population is Chinese, eighty-one thousand locals, thirteen thousand Japanese and the rest are foreigners (Christians and Jews). The traveller, who usually visited the Muslims living there during his travels, consulted with them and recorded his impressions about China. In line with the information he received from them, he stated in his notes that Muslims from India were engaged in trade, Muslims from Macau, Canton and Kuiling made good profits by working as bakers, butchers and grocers, European Christians and Japanese were engaged in trade, medicine, art, money changing, hotel management, tavern management, Jews as brokers, locals working in agriculture, boating and factories as porters, workers, labourers and servants, and the newly arrived Chinese were engaged in coaching (Şükrü, 2013: 480). As it can be understood from these notes, in the 20th century, in addition to the fact that a large part of Hong Kong was in the hands of foreign states, trade was also under their control. The natives and the Chinese unfortunately made up Hong Kong's working class.

In describing the city's architecture, the traveller noted that banks, government buildings, customs, quarantine, postal telegraph, government lands, hotels, casinos, expensive department stores, department stores, and similar venues in Hong Kong are lined up along Hong Kong's fourteen-mile quay. Subsequently, the traveller added this point to his observations by emphasizing that there were no large state buildings and mansions in Hong Kong, except for military barracks and police stations.

According to the information Şükrü obtained, there are two mosques (Masjid-i Sert and Masjid-i Pultan) in Hong Kong. Traveller attributed the low number of mosques to the small number of Muslims in Hong Kong (2013: 481). In addition, the fact that Abdullah Sert Sahib, whom he met here, talks about Abdurrahim, the adopted son, and that he is now going to the British School, shows that foreign schools began to rise in the Qing Dynasty, in the same way as the Ottomans.

While he was in Hong Kong, he also included information about the districts of European states and how many soldiers these states had in the region. According to Şükrü, the British had four thousand soldiers (three thousand five hundred Indians, five hundred Europeans) in the region¹⁵. Showing the

¹⁵ In the work, it is stated that the Indians, who are in the infantry class, came from the Afridi tribe between India and Afghanistan and became Muslims. Şükrü stated in his work that "these infantrymen (they had no other demands but a

dominance of foreign states in the seas, Şükrü said that he saw four German battleships, five Japanese, three French and four British flagged, twelve in total, warships while he was traveling from Hong Kong to Shanghai by ferry (2013: 482). When the traveller saw these navies, he wrote the following words and tried to reveal the current state of Indochina:

“While Germany, which is rival to the states of France and England, which share the Indochina among them, wanted to do something critical and tricky around China's "Bakoy" pier and "Lin Teşyo", their battleships, which had been wandering around here for a long time under the command of a great Admiral, were lying in Hong Kong port for three days, the Europeans in the cabin applied this move to many policies without hesitation as soon as they heard that the arrival of the ships of the mentioned great states, which would not hesitate to follow up with the idea of failing this attempt (2013: 484).”

3.2. Impressions from Shanghai

Şükrü reached Shanghai from Hong Kong in three days and four nights. When Shanghai began to appear from the ferry, Şükrü described the situation on the coast as follows:

“The battleships of the states of Germany, France, England, America, Japan, Italy and the Portuguese and Dutch governments were lying in rows... There were two large Chinese battleships standing there, which had anchored after arriving from the American shipyard and their guns looked excellent. China's naval army is in the hands of British-like admirals; company ships are under the command of British, Greek and Dutch captains. The only thing belonging to China is the crew (2013, p. 485)”

As can be understood from these words, European states also have a superior position in Shanghai. China, which made its name in history with the gigantic ships built by Zheng He during his travels to Southeast Asia in the 15th century, and gained superiority in Southeast Asia with the achievements of its admirals, China came to a position in the 20th century, unable to surpass the technology of European states even in shipbuilding with the introduction of the maritime prohibition policy.

According to the information given in the Shanghai section, the population of Shanghai is four hundred thousand. Three hundred commercial ships enter the pier every day. Although the Europeans who migrated here with the ambition of trade have a population of fifteen thousand, this number is increasing day by day¹⁶. There are three thousand seven hundred Chinese Muslims and two mosques here. While describing the place where the mosques are located, Şükrü said: “*One (of the mosques) is located in the district ruled by France, and the other is located in the area occupied by England*”¹⁷ (2013: 486).

He continued his impressions with the situation of the European states in Shanghai:

“Of the four states that share Shanghai, Germany, America and England pay rent to the Emperor in return for the districts they occupy. The French do not pay this rent because they bought the place from China before they rented it. The North was invaded by Americans; the South was invaded by Frenchs; the West was invaded by the Germans. The most beautiful part of the city was taken by the British (2013: 487)”.

raincoat given every two years, a turban, trousers, a jacket and a bootie), they worked with a salary of nine rupees and they served here for four years (2013: 481). This is another piece of evidence supporting Britain's power in East Asia.

¹⁶ As the European states' patronage over China increases, the number of Europeans who come here for trade also increases. The fact that Şükrü specifically stated that the districts where the mosques are located are where other states rule is probably because he is trying to reveal the situation of China. Because Şükrü specifically stated in his notes which district was protected by which state in every city he had been. In fact, while revealing this situation, he sometimes criticized that he could not understand how the empire, which has an ancient history of four thousand years, ended up in this situation.

As it can be understood when the history of China and Europe is examined, the 20th century is a period when China was in a weak position against European states. This situation is actually the same when compared to the Ottoman Empire. The fact that the Ottoman Empire was called the "Sick Man of Europe", in parallel, caused China to be described as the "Sick Man of Asia". These two nations, which passed through almost the same historical stages during the transition period from the reign to the Republic, were exposed to the pressures of the European states throughout this period.

3.2.1. Tobacco Factory in Shanghai

Şükrü mentioned that he met Muhammed Efendi, who came from a large family under the name of "Beytül-Ömeri" in Beirut, and that this person could speak Turkish and English. Furthermore, Muhammed Efendi took him to the tobacco factory built by his uncle, Arif Efendi. The tobacco factory is described by Şükrü as follows:

"The Tobacco Factory is located in the neighbourhood that fell into the hands of the Americans. It is at number 24 Dongshan road. It has five floors. Forty machines are in continuous operation, surrounded by two locomotives, one with 50 horsepower and the other with ten horsepower, eight for cigarettes, two for tobacco and three for keeping cigarettes. One of the tobacco folding machines chops two thousand and the other eight hundred pounds of (tobacco) leaves daily. One pound is 160 dirhams. One of the cigarette filling machines was manufactured in Japan and the other in the USA. Each of the machines made in America produces 140 cigarettes, and the machine made in Japan 260 cigarettes (2013: 487)".

While talking about the machines, Şükrü was amazed by the speed of the Japanese-made machine and added the following: "*The Japanese-made tobacco machine is a wonder peculiar to the Japanese, whose civilization spanned thirty years, in which America grew in four centuries (2013: 488)*"¹⁸.

According to Şükrü's notes, the lower floor of the workshop is reserved for the repair of deteriorated and rusting tools, the second floor is reserved for cigarette manufacturing, and the third floor is reserved for machines that preserve cigarettes. On the fourth floor, two hundred women put cigarettes in boxes. The fifth floor is the document and goods warehouse. The goods chests are lowered from here with a crane. Three hundred and fifty workers and machinists work in this factory built by three members of the Beytül Ömer family. Their fees amount to six hundred British pounds. It was also pointed out that there is a new cigarette factory built by the Americans here in the city (2013: 488).

3.3. Impressions from Tin-i Çin (Tianjin)

Şükrü reached Tianjin from Shanghai in five days and five nights. Here he settled in the Berlin Hotel, which the Germans built on Takirut street. While there are European states in Tianjin, as in other cities, Russians and Japanese were also given a share (2013: 491). Some of the Greeks and Armenians residing in the city are engaged in professions such as casino, grocer and tobacco sales, and their wealth has increased considerably during their stay here. The tenant¹⁹ of the hotel where Şükrü stayed is a wealthy Jew from Thessaloniki.

While describing Tianjin, Şükrü mentioned that the places that fell into the hands of the states of Germany, England and France were reconstructed in a spectacular way, but the districts that fell in favour of other governments were not in the same situation yet (2013: 91). This reveals the fact that

¹⁸ Although it is an island country, it has been one of the really interesting issues that the Japanese were least affected by the arrival of European states and brought the technology to such an advanced level and entered the territory of China.

¹⁹ It is listed as a tenant because they rented from the Qing government.

Germany, England and France settled in Tianjin before compared to other states and took important steps in zoning. It can even be said that one of these important steps is the electric tram²⁰ in the city.

The following words about the tram are included in the travel book:

“Although it consists of only a bridge connecting this big city to another, built on the side of the canal, the electric tram that starts from the south of this new bridge divides into several branches and proceeds up to the pier. When the construction of the large dock opposite the French Consulate is completed, the centre of the tram will be changed and its route will be extended (2013: 491-492)”



Resim 1 Electric trams in Tianjin (Estimated Date 1930)

There are meandering dirty streets, narrow roads without sidewalks, stinky squares that are impassable with mud, houses on the verge of demolition, formless buildings, and smelly shops, the traveller, who stated that in all of the Chinese-only neighbourhoods, mentioned that there are no traces of the buildings in other districts here (2013: 492). This shows that, despite the great influence of the European states, China was less affected by this development.

As stated in the notes, export goods from Tianjin to Shanghai include tea, silk, linen, Chinese porcelain and all kinds of grains and timber; imported goods include works of art and textiles from Europe, America and Japan, and opium collected by the British from all over the world (Şükrü, 2013: 492). According to the information obtained by the traveller through the schools of the Chinese, the Chinese do not have any madrasahs other than the primary school they have built in the courtyard of the temples to teach the children about forty-five thousand characters of Chinese, or any education that will be useful to the current generation (2013: 492)²¹.

3.4. Impressions from Beijing

Şükrü arrived in Beijing on 5-Rabi al-awwal-1324 (Sunday, April 29, 1906). Since the Hijri calendar was used in that period, the time references were transferred according to the Hijri calendar, and the date

²⁰ As a result of the “Compagnie de Tramways et d'Éclairage de Tientsin” investment agreement between the Qing and the Belgian Consortium in 1902, the installation phase of the tram line started (Zhao; Feng; Sun; Song, 2018)

²¹ Although great importance was attached to the education of the noble class throughout the dynasties in China, the education of the poor people was not emphasized at all. It is possible that the traveller was talking about the education people received when he said that there is no school other than the primary school here.

corresponding to today's calendar was presented to the reader in parentheses by Hasan Mert, who later prepared the book for publication (Şükrü, 2013: 494).

The traveller, who set foot on the territory of Beijing, described Beijing as divided into three castles, and stated that ordinary people lived in the first castle, the viziers and nobles lived in the second castle, and the Emperor in the third castle. He tried to compare Beijing with other cities he saw, using the words “*there is no place to be considered other than the strength of the walls and the density of the population, and even a regular street*”. He travelled all over Beijing with Muhammed Mahdi, Hasan, İbrahim and Muhammed Said Efendi, whom he met in Beijing, and said that there are 32 mosques, twenty-five thousand people who believe in the existence of Allah, and twenty Islamic Schools. According to the information he obtained, although there is a library in all mosques, the responsibility of preserving these books belongs to the imams. Islamic disciples, who received their first education in these schools, gather in the courtyards of the mosques and listen to Islamic information from imam masters. One of these masjids is Shafii, the others are masjids of the Hanafi order, and four of them are large and ornate because they were opened with the support of the Chinese emperors. These buildings are “Gingzhensi, Famigsi, Pushou²² and Niujie²³ mosques” (Şükrü, 2013: 495).

The traveller describes the situation of the European states in Beijing with the following expression:

“Even in Beijing, the mindless government that divided Tianjin to foreigners does not have influence in the big districts left to the states of Germany, France, England, America, Japan and Russia. Each state rules the piece they capture and collects taxes on their own account from the people residing in these neighbourhoods that they have drawn around as if they were the borders of their properties. Even the neighbourhood where the Emperor and the ministers' mansions are located is under the protection of the German soldiers, and the fact that not even a member of the public has been sent to these places shows what the great sultanate has become (Şükrü, 2013: 495).”

The traveller knows a great deal about the long history of China. For this reason, he does not understand how China allows the European states to make their ambitions happen on China and attributes this situation to the administration by calling it “a mindless government”. In fact, the traveller, who gave detailed information about the emperor of the period in his impressions, describes Guangxu (1875-1908) and his government as follows:

“Guangzu, who turns 33 today, is naturally insane, but is naturally a ruler. When this poor man, who is deprived of intelligence and children, is enthroned while being breastfed, his mother, who was made a regent, can only handle the reign that way. The great states that were ready to share the reign of China, which would be deprived of the heir in the event of the death of the Emperor, who was considered the end of the twenty-second monarch of the family, besieged the brothers of the emperor and everyone related to this family. Because they are surrounded by the soldiers that the Europeans have filled around them, these wretched men cannot leave their homes and cannot hear about the conditions of the others. Thinking that this unique sultanate, which had 11,500,00 kilometres of fertile and rich land and a population of four hundred and forty million, could avert the following disasters due to a single disorder, the opium-hungry ministers, knowing that there were foreign commanders in the palace, agreed to communicate not by speaking but by writing in their palms and

²² Pushou Mosque (普寿寺): Located at number 63 in Beijing's Xicheng district. There is no clear information about the period of its establishment. It has an area of 4000 square meters. It has three gates. Above its door is written “Xiaoci Pushou Si (效赐普寿寺)” (Pushou, 2022)

²³ The Niujie Mosque (牛街清真寺) began to be built in the Liao period in 996 for the Arab educator Nasuluding (纳苏鲁丁), who came from the Western Region. In 1427, during the Ming Xuande period, the mosque was expanded, restored again in 1442, and renamed as “place of worship 礼拜寺” in 1474. Later, it was restored many times from 1496 to 1921, and finally it began to reach its present form. The mosque, which was restored several times after the founding of the People's Republic of China, was taken under protection by Beijing and the whole country on August 21, 1979 and January 13, 1988 (Yang, 1995:119).

they would start to disperse by rubbing their two hands together to destroy the writings in their hands. For this reason, the Europeans, who cannot get news about politics from the Chinese, want to increase the number of revolutionaries to take over the administration. The fact that a four thousand-year-old state still does not have four battalions of soldiers strengthens the Europeans (Şükrü, 2013: 495).”

The traveler’s impressions of Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tianjin, Beijing are in parallel with the periodical features of the Qing Dynasty. Although the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution that took place in Europe in the 18th century did not directly affect the Qing Dynasty, which was geographically far from Europe, the impact of the modernization and nationalism movement that spread to the world with the revolution and revolution towards the middle of the 19th century appeared in China as well. The effect of the search for the market that came with the industrial revolution has been great in this regard. It is observed that the Qing Dynasty has no power to resist the West in the 20th century, as Western states turn their faces to Asia in search of markets. Şükrü tried to draw attention to the excess of foreign population in Beijing, the capital of the Qing Dynasty, and in the commercial ports of Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tianjin. Şükrü tried to draw attention to the excess of foreign population in Beijing, the capital of the Qing Dynasty, and in the commercial ports of Hongkong, Shanghai and Tianjin. In the travel book, the architectural development of the regions under the protection of foreigners and the fact that the regions where the Chinese lived were not affected by this development again shows how weak the Qing Dynasty was in the face of the West. Şükrü sometimes reproached the fact that the Chinese civilization, which has a tremendous history of four thousand years, did not have enough soldiers to oppose the Europeans. In fact, he said, "Isn't it the long sleep that we Orientals fall into that pampers the West so much? When we slept they roused up. They were unrivalled and they started to attack everywhere (Şükrü, 2013: 496)”, and actually referred to the weakness of both the Qing Dynasty and the Ottoman Empire against the West. With the words “Let's wake up from the evil of these looters (Şükrü, 2013: 496)”, he draws attention to the fact that it is time to resist the West.

In the 20th century, the fact that the Qing was underdeveloped compared to the West in science and technology, the introduction of opium to China, and the Chinese dependence on opium led to a great destruction of the Qing Dynasty. Although the Qing Dynasty took measures against them, their measures were insufficient.

The innovations made by Europeans in the field of architecture are examples of the colonization of the Qing. Today, the existence of many European-style architectures from that period is still seen (Xue, 2010; Kneitz, 2017). The conditions under which the Chinese as well as the Europeans lived are also revealed in Şükrü’s travel book. The fact that dynastic conditions were still valid in the Qing period, the people were subjects of the emperor and did not have human rights unlike the people in Europe, led the people to accept the situation blindly. Although the intelligentsia is in an effort to get rid of the situation, the ideas do not seem to have been accepted much in the period²⁴. Thus, Şükrü stated that the people hoped for help from the Westerners for salvation.

Impressions from Cancaku

²⁴ One of these intellectuals, Kang Youwei, conducted research on how other countries struggled with imperialism and presented them to the emperor in a report. The implementation of these reform proposals corresponds to the year 1898. This movement, also known as Wuxu Reforms (戊戌政变), announced by an edict (明定国是诏) on the twenty-third day of the fourth month of Emperor Guangxu’s twenty-fourth year (1898), or 100 Days Reforms (百日维新) because it lasted 103 days. However, as a result of this reform movement, which was stopped by Emperor Cixi on the one hundred and third day, it was decided to arrest the reformists who supported this movement. As a result, captured reformists were killed, while some of the surviving reformists sought help from the British, Japanese, or American Consulates (cited by Ceylan, 2023: 95-96).

Explaining which words Cancaku's name²⁵ corresponds to in Chinese, the traveller stated that "can" means plant, "ca" means "range", "ku" means "mouth", and because it is located at the opening of a wide plain, it means "mouth of the plant range". There are four mosques and more than four thousand Muslims in this city. The mountain seen from the Cancaku plain is located in the east of the city, but the white fish semblance on the surface of the mountain can also be seen from here. The mountain was named Fish Mountain (Huwo Mountain) because of this talisman on it. As the traveller stated, this plain, which is known as the "Fish City" in Turkish history, is more suitable for pasture, although it is strong in terms of soil. For this reason, there are sheep rather than crops here (Şükrü, 2013: 506).

2.5. Impressions from Lancosın (Lanzhou)

The traveller arrived in Lanzhou on August 19, 1906. He mentioned that he met Maksud Can from Tařkent, Mahmud of Kařgar, Rıza Bey, Hamidullah of Turfan, İbrahim from Encan, Burhan Efendi from Kazan, that these people had big business houses in the city and they sold Russian fabric (Şükrü, 2013: 510). The walled city of Lanzhou has two hundred thousand households and a population of one million. The Yellow River runs under the castle wall. Many neighbourhoods on the east coast have a wooden bridge over the river to which boats are attached, like Mosul's bridge. There is a Muslim population of five thousand with ten mosques in the city (Şükrü, 2013: 512).

Besides, while in Lanzhou, Şükrü made attempts before the Chinese Governor to release the two sons of former Kashgar Emir Yakup Bey from prison, where they had been held for 30 years. After the sons of Yakup Bey, Isa and Iman were released, they came to Şükrü and shed tears of joy and thanked him by falling at his feet (Şükrü, 2013: 511-512; cited in Göksoy, 2017: 23).

3.6. Impressions from Hoço

The traveller arrived here on Tuesday (August 21, 1906) Rajab 1, 1324 AH. After mentioning that the city was named after the Yellow River, the traveller mentioned that "huanç" or "hıvanç" means "water" and "cu" means "big" while describing the characters found in the name of the city. As can be expected from this character description, this city is likely to be "Hezhou (河州)". The city of Hezhou is located in the Gansu province, as is Lanzhou today.

According to the traveller, thirteen mosques and seven thousand Muslim households in the Hoço castle; There are thirteen mosques and thirty thousand Muslim households (two hundred and ten thousand population) in the whole city. Three large ebony trees in the village of Cico, two hours away from Hoço, attracted the attention of the traveller. According to the traveller, the leaves of this tree resemble juniper leaves, the bark resembles pine bark, and its length and branches resemble cypress (Şükrü, 2013: 514).

3.7. Impressions from Çakubi Plain

The traveller, who was trying to reach the way back from Beijing, added this to his notes because a mill he saw while passing through the Çakubi Plain caught his attention:

²⁵ Since all Chinese words are written with their pronunciation in the traveller's work, most of the words cannot be compared. However, if we evaluate the regions that the traveller visited for his return from Beijing on the current map, there is a possibility that this city is "张家口". Because the city depicted by the traveller at the mouth of a plain has the same characteristics as Zhangjiakou. In Zhangjiakou, which stretches between the Mongolian plateau and the North China plain, is the Fish Mountain (鱼儿山), also described by the traveller, visible from Cancaku.

“On my way to Pingfan, I saw the watermill here for the first time in China. The upper stones in the mills of these Chinese, whose art is as strange as their image, are suspended and fixed. The rotating stones are the lower stones. The grain, which is wetted with the water poured from above, is first crushed, then when it is thrown into the funnel for the second time, it comes out as very white flour.” (Şükrü, 2013: 517)

3.8. Impressions from Hami-Kumul

The traveller reached Hami on Friday (October 26, 1906) which was the eighth of Ramadan, 1324 AH. Hami is two towns side by side, known as the Islamic town and the Hitay (Cathay) (Chinese) town. Hami is under the administration of a person named Shah Maksud, and the town of Hitay, called Pazar, is under the administration of a Chinese district governor named Hamitin. While there is a market in the town of Hitay, there is no bazaar in Hami, which is surrounded by a clay wall. There are six thousand Muslims in Hami and the surrounding villages. According to the traveller’s comments, Muslim women in and around Hami do not know how to wear hijab, but they also walk around in the bazaar without wearing a hijab. In addition, their clothes are indistinguishable from men’s²⁶. Everyone, from the poor to the rich and the old, drinks wine here. Only Dungan Muslims do not drink alcohol. Moreover, the traveller condemns them for entering the mosque with their shoes on (Şükrü, 2013: 523-524).

The biggest thing that attracted Şükrü’s attention here was that the Muslims living here did not comply with the rules of Islam as they should. Because in Islamic countries, women generally wear headscarves and drinking alcohol is haram²⁷ according to the rules of Islam. Hence, this incident that he experienced surprised Şükrü.

Another criticism about Muslims in the travelogue is that Chinese Muslims have long hair and cut their moustaches and beards. Şükrü complained that Muslims and non-Muslims could not be distinguished from each other in this way (Şükrü, 2013: 501). In Palabıyık’s work titled “*The Ottoman Travelers’ Perceptions of the Far East in the Early Twentieth Century*”, it is stated that Abrurreşid İbrahim, who went to China in the 20th century, also complained about the same situation (2013: 298).

3.9. Impressions from Urumçi- Sincan Sin (Urumçi-Xinjiang)

Explaining that the character “sin” in Sincan means “new” and the character “can” means “province” in Chinese, the traveller stated that the name of the city means “new province” in Turkish (Şükrü, 2013: 526). According to the information obtained by the traveller, there are forty soldiers of Russian cavalry in the presence of the Russian Consulate in Urumçi.

When the traveller came to Urumçi for the first time, he talked about coins and measurements in detail:

“Although the Chinese government has just started monetising coins in Beijing, the east of Turkestan and around Mongolia, the people are not used to it yet, so they give and take it with measure. In the time of Hüdayar Han, they even get the countless stamped money minted in Kashgar in the name of Sultan Abdulaziz Han, may his place be in heaven, in this way... The measurements used by the Chinese for gold and silver are called “ser, miskal, puk”. One ser is ten miskals, one miskal is ten püks. One ser is worth two Russian manats. There are stamped silvers in the names Nukre and Yinbiğ, and metal bronze minors with a hole in the middle and in the name of Çin. Silvers less than five ser are

²⁶ According to the Islamic belief, every Muslim woman should wear hijab outside.

²⁷ The prohibition of alcohol is verified from following verses of the Holy Quran: “O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination,- of Satan’s handwork: eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper (Maide, 3/90). “Satan’s plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: will ye not then abstain? (Maide, 3/91)”.

not stamped. Less than five silvers are not stamped. Yinbiğ equals from fifty sers to fifty-three sers. One puk rises to eleven sers with silver bronze, and from one thousand to one thousand five hundred çin with a thousand "çin". The unit of measurement used for meat and bread in Chinese grocers is called "çin" and it amounts to sixteen sers, or thirty-two manats. They call the unit of measurement they use in cereals as "şın". Our word "şink" must have been taken from Chinese or the Chinese must have taken it from Turkish. Ten şıns are the price of one sphere, and ten spheres are a "dadan". One "şın" is eighty dirhams, one sphere is eight hundred dirhams, ten spheres are eight thousand dirhams. The measure used by the fabric manufacturers is the same as the Istanbul archine. (Şükrü, 2013: 528)."

The fact that the people living in Xinjiang are Uighur Turks, in this context, draws attention with the similarity of the names of the currencies used in Xinjiang to the Ottoman currencies.

While putting an end to his impressions of China in his notes, the traveller did not forget to mention that the wealth of Urumqi is coal.

After Beijing, Şükrü stated that he wanted to visit the Great Wall of China, and on his way to Xinjiang, he stopped by areas with a high concentration of Muslims on the way. One of the most important issues that Şükrü paid attention while writing his travel book was to reach the Muslim population, the number of mosques and madrasahs in the places he visited. The fact that Şükrü portrays the Muslim population in the world at the end of the travel book is another point that makes Şükrü's travel book significant. Şükrü, who prioritizes his Muslim identity as well as his Ottoman identity, frequently talked about his dialogues with Muslims he met in places he visited, the number of mosques and madrasahs in the region, and what Muslims were busy with.

In the Chinese impressions part of Şükrü's travel book, first of all, geographical information about the cities is provided along with some historical information given occasionally. There is no information about where Şükrü reached the given information. However, he constantly stated that the Muslims he met in the cities he visited gave him detailed information about Chinese history. Henceforth, it is useful to remind that some of the information in the travel book is hearsay. Moreover, when Şükrü faced situations that he did not like, he preferred to criticize this situation with abusive words instead of criticizing it with a proper manner. Against the problems he identified, he offered suggestions by using a constructive language. Besides, a clear and understandable language was used in the travel book. However, Şükrü's transfer of place names according to pronunciation in the Chinese impressions part led to the inability to determine which city these place names correspond to. This is also one of the major problems that arise in the analysis of the travelogue.

Conclusion

Şükrü, who devoted himself to travels with the effect of his dream after being dismissed from his job, visited European cities such as Greece, Austria, France, Iran and western Turkestan in the Asian Continent, Tunisia, Algeria, Tripoli, Egypt, the African Continent, and India, Singapore, China and his last stop, Petersburg. In his work, he aimed to obtain information about the Muslim population and mosques, especially in the regions he visited. The fact that he presents a table showing the Muslim population of the world and the continents covered by Muslims, according to the information he obtained during his journey from Gibraltar to Petersburg, while concluding the travelogue, again shows how much the traveller attaches importance to the policy of spreading his own religion. However, the fact that the traveller does not limit the basis of his work only to Islamic studies is one of the features that makes the work significant. The traveller, who conveyed important information to the reader about the geography, history and architecture of the countries he visited, left behind a work of great historical

value, although some of this information is hearsay. The fact that *Seyahatü'l Kübra*, which means “Great Travel”, is the most comprehensive Turkish travel book after Evliya Çelebi’s *Seyahatname*, is perhaps due to its rich content.

The traveller recorded his observations about all the cities, towns, villages, mountains, plains and rivers he travelled in China in 1906. Despite his Muslim identity, he was not only interested in the history of Islam in China, but also wrote down the situation of the Chinese, their temples, their beliefs, the situation of the Europeans in China, and what they were busy with. These travels, which coincided with the Emperor Guangxu period of the Qing Dynasty, are indications of how weak the Qing Dynasty was under the control of European states. Port cities such as Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tianjin, which were important in terms of foreign trade, were under the protection of European states, as stated in the history of the Qing Dynasty, which was described as the “Sick Man of Asia” in the period and as Şükrü observed. While the cities under the auspices of European states and the districts where Europeans stayed showed great development in terms of architecture, the lack of development of the districts where the Chinese stayed drew great attention. As Şükrü stated in his Beijing impressions, in this period, the Chinese did not even know the custom of lighting a lantern when it got dark (Şükrü, 2013: 500). Since the traveller knows the great history of China, he sometimes praises the history of China and sometimes criticizes the situation of the Qing Dynasty. Because, the fact that a civilization with an enormous history of four thousand years and such a large population does not even have four battalions to defend itself confuses the traveller (Şükrü, 2013: 496). Because this situation pushes the Qing to an inextricable situation and leaves it defenceless against European states. In fact, although the people could save China from this challenging situation, the opium addiction of the people and the help they hoped for the European states dragged them into a dead end. Throughout the history of the dynasty, the fact that the nobles and intellectuals received education and the other segments of the society remained shallow in education may prove once again how important education is at the moment. Şükrü also mentioned this issue in his Tianjin impressions and emphasized that “the Chinese do not have any madrasahs other than the primary school they have built in the courtyard of the temples to teach children about forty-five thousand characters, or any education that will benefit the current generation” (Şükrü, 2013: 492). Again, the fact that the streets where the Chinese lived mentioned in the work were not suffocated, the stench was emitted due to the Chinese defecating on the streets, the dog carcasses were not removed from the street but taken to the corner of the street and covered with a few shovels of mud, these districts were not developed at all (Şükrü, 2013: 496) next to the districts where the European states lived, reveals that the Chinese people were closed to development in the period.

The fact that the traveller traveling from Hong Kong to Xinjiang arrived Xinjiang, talking about the Russian Consulate, the persecution of the Muslims by the Russians, and the silence on this issue after the Russians were silenced by Japan (Şükrü, 2013: 526-527) are also indicators that the Qing Dynasty gradually lost control even at the borders.

The geographical details that the traveller included in his China observations and the situation of the port cities match the period of the Qing. However, examining the work by Sinologists and periodically subjecting it to deeper research will better reveal the right and wrong impressions in the work. For example, one of the points that attract attention as an error in the research is that the table given about the reigns of the emperors in the Qing Dynasty is wrong. While ending the Xinjiang impressions section, the traveller stated that, apart from Emperor Xianfeng and Emperor Guangxu being brothers, other reigning emperors were the sons of their successors. However, when the sequence is compared with the sequence of the period, the errors in this information given by the traveller stand out. One of these

mistakes is the information that Emperor Xianfeng did not have a son, and instead his brother Guangxu became the emperor (Şükrü, 2013: 528). However, the traveller confused the order of Emperor Tongzhi and Emperor Xianfeng in his table. Although Emperor Xianfeng had an heir from Empress Cixi, this heir ruled between 1861 and 1875 under the name of Emperor Tongzhi. However, since Emperor Tongzhi had no heir in history, his cousin Emperor Guangxu succeeded him. The traveller probably confused the information of the two emperors because he could not get this order correct. Apart from this, another mistake in the table is the incorrect reporting of the reigns of other emperors²⁸. The traveller did not specify from which sources he obtained this information. Most likely, he has compiled all the information he had learned from what he had heard. For this reason, the historical sequence and the periods in which the emperors ruled do not match. Therefore, the periodical accuracy of the details (population of the people, Muslim population, etc.) given by the traveller, who received most of the information about China from his conversations with other people, should be subjected to a more detailed study. However, the detailed description of the traveller's own observations (Chinese streets, temples, Forbidden Palace, etc.) shows that the travelogue is one of the important documents reflecting the historical texture of the period.

Esami-i Hükümdâr	Müddet-i Saltanat	Mülâhaza
Shun Chih	20	
K'ang-Hsi	20	
Yung-Cheng	3	
Ch'ien Lung	20	
Chai-Ch'ing	18	
Tao-Kuang	30	
T'ung Chih	13	
Hsien Feng	11	Min cihetü'l-ümm ü eb biraderdirler
Kuang-Hsu	33	

Table 1 List of Sovereigns from Seyahatü'l Kübra (Şükrü, 2013, s. 528)

²⁸ See Table 1 List of Sovereigns from Seyahatü'l Kübra, also see Table 2 Qing Dynasty Genealogy for comparison.

List of The Emperors of The Qing Dynasty	Reign Period
Huang Taiji Emperor 皇太極	1636-1643
Shunzhi Emperor 順治帝	1643-1661
Kangxi Emperor 康熙帝	1661-1722
Yongzheng Emperor 雍正帝	1722-1735
Qianlong Emperor 乾隆帝	1735-1796
Jiaqing Emperor 嘉慶帝	1760-1820
Daoguang Emperor 道光帝	1782-1850
Xianfeng Emperor 咸豐帝	1831-1861
Tongzhi Emperor 同治帝	1856-1875
Guangxu Emperor 光緒帝	1871-1908
Xuantong Emperor 宣統帝	1906-1967

Table 2 Qing Dynasty Genealogy

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