

ARZU ÖZTÜRKMEN

Boğaziçi University

Istanbul, Turkey

From Constantinople to Istanbul

Two Sources on the Historical Folklore of a City

Abstract

This article explores the folklore of Istanbul at the end of the nineteenth century, based on two written sources: *Folklore de Constantinople* (1894) by Émile Henry Carnoy and Jean Nicolaïdès, and *İstanbul Folkloru* (1947) by Mehmet Halit Bayrı. Focusing on the nineteenth-century Istanbul data, these two sources merge the themes of “Istanbul” and “folklore” from different perspectives. *Folklore de Constantinople* covers an assortment of diverse legends and stories, mostly of non-Muslim origins. These stories are related to different places in Istanbul before and after the Ottoman conquest. *İstanbul Folkloru*, however, gives a survey of a variety of folklore genres from the nineteenth-century Muslim life of the city. It presents a composite picture of the culture of “Istanbulism,” or of belonging to Istanbul (*İstanbulluluk*), when the city made a transition from the late Ottoman period to the early Republican era. The article will first focus on the content of each work, with references to contemporary Istanbul and the concept of Istanbulism. It will then try to evaluate these sources from the point of view of modern folkloristics, suggesting new openings for studying the folklore of contemporary Istanbul.

Keywords: Istanbul—epic—legend—proverb—lullaby—folk medicine—folk religion

THIS PAPER EXPLORES the folklore of Istanbul at the end of the nineteenth century, based on two written sources, which are both out of print. One of these sources is in French, *Folklore de Constantinople* (Folklore of Constantinople), which was published in 1894 by Émile Henry Carnoy (1861–1930) and Jean Nicolaïdès (1841–1891). This book is available in the National Library in Ankara and in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.¹ The other source is in Turkish, and was first published in 1947 by Mehmet Halit Bayrı (1896–1958) under the title of *İstanbul Folkloru* (Folklore of Istanbul).² This work is not easily accessible but does appear in used book stores called *sahafs* and a number of libraries around Turkey. Focusing on the nineteenth-century Istanbul data, these two sources merge the themes of “Istanbul” and “folklore” from different perspectives. *Folklore de Constantinople* covers an assortment of diverse legends and stories, mostly of non-Muslim origins. These stories are related to different places in Istanbul before and after the Ottoman conquest. *İstanbul Folkloru*, however, gives a survey of a variety of folklore genres from the nineteenth-century Muslim life of the city. It presents a composite picture of the culture of “Istanbulism,” or of belonging to Istanbul (*İstanbulluluk*), when the city made a transition from the late Ottoman period to the early Republican era.

This article will first focus on the content of each work, with references to contemporary Istanbul and to the concept of Istanbulism. It will then try to evaluate these sources using the methods of modern folklore studies, suggesting new openings for studying the folklore of contemporary Istanbul. As the content analysis will reveal, both texts document how folklore reflects the construction of the city’s image at a very particular time—the end of the nineteenth century. This image is a problematic issue in the study of Istanbul’s folklore, calling attention to a contemporary tension between the “true Istanbulite” and the immigrants from Anatolia. The elements that made up “old Istanbul,” now idealized as a pure and unpolluted space, are in fact rooted in the folklife of nineteenth-century Istanbul. The history of nineteenth-century Istanbul is well documented and is now imagined as a

past paradise. It is nostalgically missed by many Istanbulites, who now believe that a “peasant culture” invaded the city during the 1950s, when migration from Anatolia began giving rise to the shantytowns (*gecekondu*) in the outskirts of traditional neighborhoods. The contemporary construction of this imagined Istanbulite identity, where the main streets were populated with true gentlemen (*beyefendi*) instead of the ill-mannered newcomers (*ķuro*),³ is therefore rooted in the nineteenth-century image of the city. It is in this sense that this study sees Istanbulism as a binding concept between the folklore of contemporary Istanbul and that of the imagined Istanbul as reflected by the works of CARNOY and NICOLAÏDÈS (1894) and Mehmet Halit BAYRI (1972).

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY “PROTO-ETHNOGRAPHY” OF LEGENDS: CARNOY AND NICOLAÏDÈS’S *FOLKLORE DE CONSTANTINOPLE*

É. Henry Carnoy was a French folklorist, whose works consisted of folklore collections from France, Algeria, and the Ottoman world, and of a series of biographies.⁴ *Contes Français*, which he published in 1885, was a compilation of folk tales collected between 1878 and 1884 from such places as Picardie, Normandie, Artois, Berry, Alsace, Lorraine, and Provence.⁵ Carnoy believed in the deep similarities of the tales across different regional cultures.⁶ In addition to French folklore, he was also interested in the Oriental world. His *D’Algérie traditionnelle: Contributions au folk-lore des Arabes* (1884), co-authored with A. Certeux included legends, tales and songs from Algeria. In 1887, he joined “La Société des Traditionistes” and founded the journal of the society: *La tradition*.⁷

Carnoy’s work on the Ottoman world came out of his cooperation with Jean Nicolaïdès. Together, they produced three books primarily related to folklore: *Traditions populaires de l’Asie Mineure* (1889), *Traditions populaires de Constantinople et de ses environs, contributions au folklore des Turcs, Chrétiens, Arméniens* (1892),⁸ and finally *Folklore de Constantinople* (1894). Jean Nicolaïdès’s own work included two other books on similar themes: one being *Les livres de divination, traduits sur un manuscrit turc inédit* (1889), and the other *Contes licencieux de Constantinople et de l’Asie Mineure* (1906).

In the foreword of *Folklore de Constantinople*, É. Henry CARNOY and Jean NICOLAÏDÈS (1894, vii–viii) inform their audience that their book is a part of a larger project that will research the folklore of the Ottoman Empire in general:

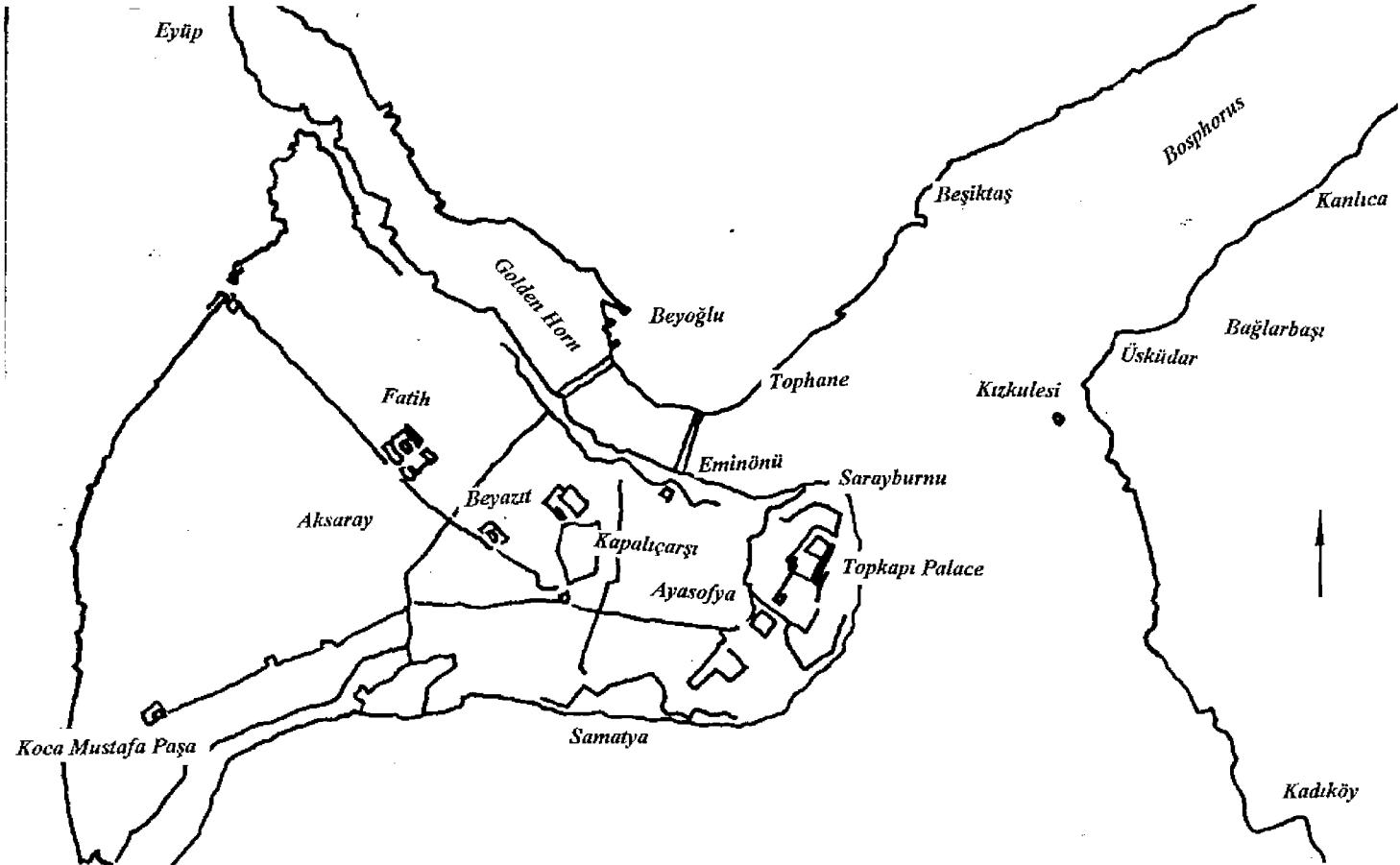
We continue with this volume the publication of the material collected during our research on the folklore of the Ottoman Empire.... We have several volumes under preparation, which will complete the precedent

publications. When our work is finished, we will have the satisfaction of having gathered an ensemble of firsthand material that will make a valuable contribution to our studies of folklore.⁹

The forthcoming works are listed at the beginning of the book (p. vi) as “*Traditions des environs de Constantinople*,” “*La médecine superstitieuse chez les Turcs et chez les Grècs*,” “*Chansons populaires grecques*” and an additional volume of “*Folklore de Constantinople*,” which was to focus on customs and proverbs. The Catalogues of the Bibliothèque Nationale do not cite any of these announced works, listing the 1894 *Folklore de Constantinople* as Carnoy’s last work on the Ottoman Empire. Following *Folklore de Constantinople* it seems that Carnoy shifted his interest toward the publication of his biographical series on internationally known figures, while Jean Nicolaïdès continued his research and published one more work on the Ottoman world: *Contes licencieux de Constantinople et de l’Asie Mineure* (1906).

Carnoy and Nicolaïdès’s *Folklore de Constantinople* is a compilation of stories about places and monuments of Byzantine and Ottoman Istanbul, referred in today’s tourist guides as the “Old City.” For each story, the authors indicate the name of the person from whom the story was collected, his¹⁰ ethnic origin, profession, birthplace, and age.¹¹ These storytellers consist of Turks, Greeks, and Armenians with origins from different parts of the empire, including places like İncesu, Zile, Amasya, Taşköprü, Konya, and Bosnia. They practice a large variety of professions and among them are a pharmacist, muezzin, postman, boat watchman, laborer, money-dealer, and a student. In fact, Carnoy and Nicolaïdès’s approach is rather progressive given the fact that, in their time, the common practice was to consider folklore as consisting of a number of “anonymous” cultural genres. In this sense, their work can be considered as a “proto-ethnography” for having voiced the identity of the storyteller. Their Foreword opens up with a statement, which explains the reasons for their sensitivity on citing names and origins of their informants. According to CARNOY and NICOLAÏDÈS (1894, vii), this was an inevitable thing to do, as the “cultural diversity” of their informants imposed itself upon them during their research:

We paid special attention to indicating the source for everything we discussed. This attention to detail was in fact a necessity. Constantinople is a place where the greatest variety of peoples gathered. Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Kurds, as well as twenty other peoples, maintained their customs and traditions under a more liberal administration than in the old Byzantium.



Map of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area

(Drawn by Selma Özkoçak based on the map published in MÜLLER-WIENER 2001.)

Ironically, this book of oral accounts begins with a section based on a written source—the *Seyahatname* (Book of Travels) of the famous sixteenth-century traveler Evliya Çelebi. Entitled as “The Talismans of Constantinople,” this first section focuses on the talismans that scientists from around the world placed in Constantinople, so that this center of knowledge and culture would not suffer from calamities of earth, sky, and sea.¹² Carnoy and Nicolaïdès select a number of such talismans and the narratives related to them. The talismans related to earth and sky belong to different places of the city, including such sites as Avrat Pazarı (female slave market) and Tavuk Pazarı (“chicken market”) whose names sound unfamiliar to our ears today, or others such as Saraçhane (“harness shop”), Beyazıt Mosque, Zeyrek, and Ayasofya (Hagia Sophia), which constitute the well-known places of contemporary tourism. The talismans related to the sea are about such places as Tophane and Sarayburnu, which are also familiar to contemporary residents as the main ports of the city.

Among such talismans, one is related to the Byzantine emperor Leon. This concerns a fountain that the emperor had made, and from whose faucet wine continually ran. The legend tells us that when the Turks conquered the city they destroyed this fountain because of their religious belief against wine. But at the same time, they were curious about the source of this fountain. Later, they discovered that its source came from a bunch of grapes of which only one single grape was half-cut.

Leaving aside excerpts from Evliya Çelebi, the remaining legends and stories of Carnoy and Nicolaïdès’s book come from the personal accounts of a variety of people that they interviewed in Istanbul. In fact, these stories lay out a continuum that is related to the making of the myth of the city. This continuum ranges from the founding to the conquest of Constantinople, and from the images of the time of Constantine to that of Mehmet II. Given the fact that these two rulers had put their mark on the city’s fate, one can understand why they are frequently referred to in the stories that Carnoy and Nicolaïdès had collected. Three stories concentrate particularly on the time of Emperor Constantine. The first of these is a founding myth of Constantinople, the story of the “Eagle.” Originally, Constantine wanted to set up his city in Chalcedon (today’s Kadıköy). But an eagle transported all the equipment and supplies three times in succession from Chalcedon to where the old city is located today. Another such legend marked the end of the Byzantine era. When the foundations of the city were being laid in the time of Constantine, part of the walls of the city was weakly built because of a mysterious stork’s interference.¹³ According to legend, it was through this weak spot in the ramparts that the Turks were able to enter and conquer the city. The third legend is called “*Çatladı Kapi*” (The Cracked Door), and it

tells about the Byzantines who won a war on account of forty Armenian war heroes. These forty Armenian soldiers later married forty young Greek women. But as soon as the women became pregnant, the soldiers were killed off one by one. Only one soldier managed to escape, which he did by breaking through an iron door. The 57-year-old pharmacist from Eğin, Hacı Artin Kalenderoğlu, who recounted this story to Carnoy and Nicolaïdès, believed that when the seas were calm, the horseshoe prints of this soldier were still visible.

Next to Constantine, Istanbul's other hero is undoubtedly Fatih Sultan Mehmet, otherwise known as Mehmet II. One of the city's legends brings both characters together: One day, a cleric brings Emperor Constantine a sword sent by God. But Constantine, unable to appreciate the protective value of the divine sword, chases him away. The cleric then gives this sword to Mehmet II. It is believed that it is because of this sword that Mehmet II was able to conquer Istanbul. The aftermath of the Ottoman conquest becomes the ground for many other stories. One such story is about the rights granted to the Greeks, which included their being able to walk on their own private sidewalks, to leave the faces of their dead uncovered, and to have the name of Constantine or Constantinople appear on their money. Another story, set in the post-conquest period, tells of a rebellion of soldiers who had kidnapped Greek girls. Families who identified their daughters wanted them back. Facing their reactions, Sultan Mehmet does away with the whole matter by giving the following advice: "If you put the *kafes* (a wooden latticework) on your windows, no one will be able to see who is inside." It is believed that the *kafes* tradition found in houses of Ottoman Istanbul dates back to that day. Carnoy and Nicolaïdès give a narrative that they collected from a 22-year-old muezzin¹⁴ from Amasya. The muezzin, Hüseyinoğlu Süleyman Efendi, tells a story that takes place between the Sheikulislam and Sultan Mehmet. According to him, Sultan Mehmet was having a large mosque built, only to find out that its columns were too short. Dissatisfied with the work, he had his architect's hands cut off. When the architect complained about his punishment, the Sheikulislam called the sultan and told him that Allah needs no such pretentious spaces and that this would constitute a sin. Furthermore, unless he wanted his own arm to be cut off, he had better ask for forgiveness from the architect. The architect forgave the sultan, on the condition that he would guarantee him a livelihood for the rest of his life.

Sultan Mehmet is mentioned in two other stories as well. One of these is related to the new names given to certain places in the conquered city. The neighborhood of Horhor (which today is a haven for antique shops), is said, for instance, to have been named after a fountain. Sultan Mehmet came

across this fountain and noticed that it constantly made the sound “*hor hor*,” hence the name of the neighborhood, Horhor. The other story has to do with a forty-meter-long boat (*kayık*) that the Greeks believed was left by the Venetians while the Turks believed it was built by order of Sultan Mehmet. As stated by the guard of the boat, it is believed that anyone having ill thoughts or expressing negative opinions about the boat suffers disaster.

Another group of legends in Carnoy and Nicolaïdès’s *Folklore de Constantinople* celebrates various places of the city rather than its rulers. Some of these have to do with today’s touristic hot spots such as Hagia Sophia and the famous tower of Kızkulesi. The story about Hagia Sophia is told in 1887 by a 40-year-old public servant, Hristaki Çizmecı, working for the mail and telegraph service. According to his account, during the construction of Hagia Sophia, the architect, who was going home for lunch, assigns the task of guarding his tools to his son. But just then, someone comes and asks the boy to fetch his father and says that he will watch over the tools until he gets back. Upon his insistence, the boy agrees. When he informs his father about this at home, the father interprets this stranger as an angel and renounces to go back to work. It is believed, Hristaki states, that the angel who is waiting for the return of the boy is still watching over Hagia Sophia.

The legend about Kızkulesi was collected from a 26-year-old theology student from Zile, a Muslim by the name of Yusuf Hacızade. Kızkulesi is the famous white tower located at the entrance of the Bosphorus. Giving a rather inarticulate account of the legend, Yusuf Hacızade claims that all the other versions of the Kızkulesi legend are inaccurate, his own being the only correct one. The story takes place once again during the reign of Constantine, when it was discovered that money was constantly being pilfered from the palace treasury. The daughter of the emperor assumes the role of protector of the treasury and one night frightens away a thief with a sword. Nevertheless, this thief finds a way to steal from the treasury. With the money he has stolen, he fulfills all the requests of the emperor and manages to marry the emperor’s daughter. On the wedding night, the princess places a statue of herself capable of movement in her place. Unable to forgive the princess for having previously tried to kill him with a sword, the thief approaches the statue and cuts its head off. Thinking that the princess had been killed, he disappears. Later, he returns to kidnap his still-living wife. He takes her to the mountains and attempts to torture her. However, just when he is about to inflict pain on her, a rabbit appears in front of him that arouses his passion for hunting and distances him from the princess for a while. A villager passing by saves the princess, feigning deafness and tricking the merciless husband. After this incident, the emperor, in order to pro-

tect his daughter, builds a tower, the Kızkulesi, in the middle of the sea, guarded in the front by two lions. The ambitious husband, however, gains access to the tower after distracting the lions by throwing sheep heads at them. When he finds the princess in the tower, he is determined to kill her. He asks her to follow him down the tower, but by doing so gives the princess a chance to escape from him. By staying behind, the princess is able to close the tower's door from inside, leaving the husband outside with the lions who eventually kill him.

The story told by Yusuf Hacızade is a rather controversial account of the known Kızkulesi legends, which usually end with the princess's death. In the most common versions, the emperor usually learns from a fortuneteller how his daughter will die (from a snake, etc.) and tries to rescue her from this fate by isolating her on an island with a tower where she will not be exposed to any danger. The structure of Yusuf Hacızade's narrative leads one to suspect that there was a communication problem between the authors and their 26-year-old Muslim informant. The fact that the story does not follow an articulate narrative structure may have derived from translation problems. But Carnoy and Nicolaïdès do not give any information on how they communicated with their informants, and who their translators were, if any.

Part of the stories and legends covered in *Folklore de Constantinople* are related to the holy places of the city. The authors state that a number of legends emerged from around a tree in Koca Mustafa Paşa, now a lower-middle class neighborhood of Istanbul. They also make an analogy between different faiths and communities by stating "What Balıklı Church is to Greeks, Eyüp is to the Turks; and the Church of Djarhaban-Astfadjadjinn represents the same to the Armenians of Karagümrük." These places are important sites of pilgrimage for different religions. The authors provide their readers with the legends related to these sites, along with many others such as the Saint-Minas churches in Samatya and the tombs of Merkez Efendi and Uyku Dede. It is important to note how these religious sites assumed new meanings in history. While Eyüp continues to be the most visited holy place in contemporary Istanbul, the tombs of Merkez Efendi and Uyku Dede are of lesser importance for today's Istanbulites, who prefer other holy sites such as Yüşa Tepesi or Yahya Efendi Türbesi.

There is one story from outside of Istanbul, which Carnoy and Nicolaïdès put in their book, probably because they found the narrative intriguing. The story concerns a person by the name of Kel Salih Ağa (Salih Ağa the Bald) from Sarajevo. Told by Abdurrahman, a 36-year-old Bosnian born in Montenegro, the story begins by Kel Salih Ağa leaving his home after being constantly made fun of for his baldness. While traveling down

the road, he happens upon a fairy that does him a favor by making his hair thicker, which has the effect of making him even stronger. Once his fame reaches the sultan, he is sent to do battle with the king of Egypt. Upon his return after killing the king, he requests that the sultan exempt his country from taxes. The request is accepted but when he returns, he is shown evidence that his sister has committed a sin and has her killed. Feeling regret, he has two oak trees pulled up from their roots and has them planted at his sister's grave. He asks God that if his sister is innocent, that the two trees take root. The roots of the oak trees firmly rooted into the ground. It is not known what became of Kel Salih Ağa, but these two oak trees are still seen as the most magnificent trees in the Sarajevo cemetery.

Among other interesting stories of *Folklore de Constantinople*, there is one related to the relationship between Bekri Mustafa and the devil. Bekri Mustafa is the symbol of drunkenness of the old Istanbul, and is still depicted as a hero in movies and in portrayals about the late Ottoman era, when the public consumption of alcohol was prohibited in Istanbul. Another story entitled "The Lunar Year of the Turks," attributes the use of the lunar calendar by the Ottomans to the Shiite belief in the martyrdom of Hüseyin at the battle of Kerbela. There are also two stories related to Gypsies. The first of these, a legend entitled "The Origins of the Gypsies," explains the roots of the term "*çingene*" (gypsy) in Turkish. According to the legend, collected in 1887 from Hacı Hüseyin, a 52-year-old laborer born in Isfahan, the term is a combination of "Tchin" and "Gulian," a sister and a brother who engaged in incest after being touched by satan. The second story is only an explanation of the formation of the wedding ceremony of the Gypsies in the Sulukule district of Istanbul, where Gypsy culture is still alive and has a touristic appeal.

FOLKLORE OF THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY MUSLIM ISTANBUL: MEHMET HALIT BAYRI'S *İSTANBUL FOLKLORU*¹⁵

While Carnoy and Nicolaïdès's *Folklore de Constantinople* consists of stories and legends about different places in Istanbul that were collected from members of different ethnic groups toward the end of the nineteenth century, Mehmet Halit Bayrı's book *İstanbul Folkloru* marks the transition from the nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul to the beginnings of the Republican era. Bayrı himself stands for a generation of people who were born as the children of the Ottoman Empire and who witnessed the enthusiastic transition to the newly built nation-state, where collecting folklore was valued and promoted as an amateur enterprise.¹⁶ Trained in literature, and a native of Istanbul himself, Bayrı had served as a state employee in the Auctions Directorate and the Children's Welfare Association. His *İstanbul Folkloru* is

the outcome of a hobby that he adopted while working and living in Istanbul, and perhaps while experiencing the city's transition from its imperial status toward a more Republican outlook, a time when the new capital of Ankara overshadowed Istanbul as the blossoming national center of arts and sciences. In contrast to Carnoy and Nicolaïdès's work, which reflected the cosmopolitan nature of the imperial Constantinople, Bayrı's book focused mainly on the Muslim face of the city and those Turkish traditions that would later be associated with the culture of "Istanbulism."

The first part of Bayrı's book opens with a section that explores the history of the city, beginning with the earliest days of settlement in Istanbul and expanding to stories related to the Ottoman sultans. In subsequent sections, just as Carnoy and Nicolaïdès had, Bayrı includes a variety of legends related to Istanbul, including those about Hazreti Süleyman and Yanko Bin Madyan,¹⁷ and other tales of heroic deeds and exploits concerning the conquest of the city and the construction of some of the mosques, as recounted by Evliya Çelebi.

Bayrı's book has a section devoted to the "famous neighborhoods" of Istanbul. Just as Carnoy and Nicolaïdès were, Bayrı was also intrigued by the stories of how these neighborhoods got their names. According to BAYRI, "most of the neighborhoods in Istanbul were given the names of the people who had mosques or *mescits*¹⁸ built in the area" (1972, 27). It is possible to include among these neighborhoods, Abbas Ağa in Beşiktaş, Firuzağa and Pürtelaş Hasan Efendi in Beyoğlu, Tülbentçi Hüsamettin in Eminönü, Fatma Sultan in Fatih, and Cafer Ağa in Kadıköy. Some of these still make up the heart of metropolitan Istanbul, including Caferağa and Abbasaga in the districts of Kadıköy and Beşiktaş, and Pürtelaş street, which is now more reputed for its gay and transsexual population than its mosque.

For researchers interested in Istanbul's folklore within a historical context, one section of Bayrı's book is of particular importance. It contains folk tales and epics about the harsh winters, earthquakes, and great fires that occurred in Istanbul. On the basis of a manuscript dated 1895, Bayrı gives us the text of a rhymed epic (*destan*) about the 1894 earthquake in Istanbul, which was composed by Hüseyin Poyraz, a fireman. It seems that Poyraz still lived at the time Bayrı was writing his book, and resided in Kanlıca, along the Bosphorus. The rhymed epic went like this:

*Just as I was reading the book in my hand
The cry of "earthquake" was heard in the land
Gathering together, friends cried Allah!
May he save us, the great and merciful Allah!*

*My tiny flesh was placed into a grave
 The shroud wrapped about me reddened by my blood
 Many cries of grief were heard when I left
 Resist, though forever will the eyes be tearful (BAYRI 1972, 31)¹⁹*

In contrast to this epic taken from a written text, Bayrı mentions the existence of another epic about the same earthquake, told by a folk poet by the name of Deli Hakkı. In spite of his efforts to locate this poet, Bayrı could not find him or his earthquake epic. Bayrı's earthquake epics have naturally been recontextualized after the 1999 earthquakes strongly felt in Istanbul. Had these epics been made a part of the collective memory of late twentieth-century Istanbulites, the earthquakes of 1999 would have perhaps been less of a surprise. Along with earthquakes, other disasters such as those involving fires became an important topic for poems. Istanbul's fires are an important image of the late Ottoman times, as small and large fires broke out frequently in the city's residential areas, which consisted mainly of wooden buildings. The numerous fires gave the *tulumbacı*, the local fire brigades, an important status, and made them a heroic and powerful social group in the city. While not clearly telling where it was collected, Bayrı provides his readers with an example of one such disaster epic. This is about a huge fire that broke out in Cellatçeşme during Kurban Bayramı, the Holiday of Sacrifice. The epic poem is particularly interesting in that it provides us with particular portrayals of the members of the fire brigade at the time:

*As thin Arab was one of us known
 Another by the name of Hidayet
 Bahadır, extremely young and brave were we all
 Circumstances making us known by all*

*One of our comrades was a courageous Kurd
 The three of us became victims
 In several places were heard the groans of many
 This was such a disaster we found ourselves*

*Our names we declared at first
 Everyone loved us with deep affection
 Happy faced, men both brave and heroic
 We were as esteemed as saints*

*With our colleagues we sat upon a barge
 With the mention of fire, all were prepared
 The lamplighter and leader of the pump squad were in presence
 Traveling with great speed, we forged ahead (BAYRI 1972, 35).²⁰*

Another such epic on fire tells us more about the local fire brigades, and the neighborhoods where they were located around the city. These include today's central neighborhoods such as Galatasaray and Cihangir of the touristic Beyoğlu district, and Aksaray, a center for trade since perestroika:

*Galatasaray is on the lips of everyone
Beyoğlu is well known as the Police Station
Confirmed by people universally
The name has acquired worldwide fame*

*Hendek, Cihangir, and Topçular
The best fire brigade have they
Firuzâğalar too has gained repute
The Voyvoda reigns over even the flying birds*

(...)

*The hearty Sümbüllü is famous throughout the world
Being the nightingale of Aksaray neighborhood
He is the rose of the Square of Talents
Owing their existence to Sultanselim (BAYRI 1972, 36)²¹*

Mehmet Halit Bayrı's *İstanbul Folkloru* continues with the proverbs and sayings used in Istanbul. Some of the proverbs, which he presents in alphabetical order, are still in use today, like "Aç ayı oynamaz" (literally, "you can't get a hungry bear to dance"; meaning, "If you want a man to work well, you have to first feed him") and "Damlaya damlaya göl olur" (literally, "A lake is formed drop by drop"; meaning, "Little by little one saves a lot"). The repertoire of proverbs that Bayrı presents reveals important characteristics of the culture of Istanbulism. A part of these sayings focuses, for instance, on human relations, and reveals a value system within them: "Bilen söylemez, söyliyeni bilmez" ("While the truly knowledgeable has no need to speak to prove his knowledge, can the same be said for the one who speaks all the time?"); "Akrabanın akrabaya akrep etmez ettiğini" ("Even the scorpion does not do the harm one relative does to another"); "Her deliye bir uslu koymuşlar" ("For every crackpot, they have put an intelligent person"); "Dostun attığı taş baş yarmaz" ("The rock thrown by a friend would not harm the head"; meaning, "Friendly criticism does no harm"); "İnsan kıymetini insan bilir, altın kıymetini sarraf" ("Humans appreciate humans, goldsmiths evaluate gold"); or "İyiliğe iyilik her kişinin kârı, kemliğe iyilik er kişinin kârı" ("Goodness to goodness is a profit for everyone, goodness to badness is the profit of the moral man").

Morality and manners were indeed essential values of true Istanbulism.

They functioned to create the boundaries of a moral framework, where the right was distinguished from the wrong, and the good from the bad. Many sayings emphasize the virtues of respect, self-control, patience, honesty, or hard work: “*Lakırdısını bilmiyen çavuşlar, sönmemiş ateşi avuçlar*” (“The soldier who does not watch his words will grasp fire in his hand”; meaning, “One who doesn’t watch his words, will find himself in trouble”); “*Müslümanlığın şartı beş, haddini bilmek altı*” (“The requirements of Islam are five, to know one’s boundaries is the sixth”); “*Devekuşu gibi uçmağa gelince ayağını, yüke gelince kanadını gösterir*” (“Like an ostrich, he shows his feet when it comes to flying, but his wings when it comes to carrying something heavy”; meaning, “Lazy people will always find an excuse to escape work”); “*Sabırla koruk helva olur, dut yaprağı atlas*” (“With patience, sour grapes turn to helva [meaning sweet], and mulberry leaves, to satin”); “*Tembele iş buyur, sana akıl öğretsin*” (“Give a task to a lazy man, so that he will teach you ways of doing it”; meaning, “the lazy person will always come up with easier ways of doing a task”); or “*Uzunçarşı’nın üst başında bir yalan söyler, alt başında kendisi de inanır*” (“He will tell a lie in the upper part of the Uzunçarşı [a market], he will believe it himself when he comes to the lower section”; meaning, “A liar will soon begin to believe in his own lies”).

Some of the proverbs that Bayrı has selected give us an idea about the perception of time among the Istanbulites, which promotes “timeliness” and “efficiency”: “*Terazi var, tartı var, her işin bir vakti var*” (“There’s a time and place for everything”); “*Öğleye kadar dik, öğleden sonra sök*” (“Done until noon, undone in the afternoon”); “*Paran çoksa kefil ol, işin yoksa şahit ol*” (“If you have a lot of money to waste, be a co-signer; if you have time to waste, be a witness”); or “*Gündüz masal söyleyenin hamamda donu çalınır*” (“If you tell tales during the day, you will find your pants stolen from the Turkish bath”; meaning, “if you do things in an untimely manner or at inappropriate time, you’ll have to accept the consequences of your actions”). Some others refer the readers to different notions of “space”: “*Evceğizim evceğizim, sen bilirsin halceğizim*” (“Home sweet home, only you will know my troubles”); “*Fare geçer yol olur*” (“A mice will pass, and it will be a road”; meaning, “even an unimportant person may do something that sets a precedent”); and “*Hakimsiz hekimsiz yerde oturma*” (“Don’t live where there is no judge or doctor”). Bayrı also includes sayings that reflect the subject of folk economy, referring to a world of merchants, market places, and negotiation in Istanbul, famous for its street bazaars: “*Kötü Pazar midayı bozar*” (“Bad food from the bazaar will upset the stomach”); “*Hesabımı bilmiyen kasap, elinde ne satır kalır, ne masat*” (“The butcher who can’t keep his accounts straight, will go out of business losing even his knife”); “*Ucuzdur vardır illeti, pahalıdır vardır lezzeti*” (“If it is cheap, there must be something wrong with it; if it is

expensive, there is a quality in it”); “Zenginın gönlü oluncaya kadar fıkaranın canı çıkar” (“By the time the rich get around to doing something for the poor, the poor will die”).

Another series of sayings comment on particular situations: “*O seller bu kıumları getirdi*” (“These floods brought those sands”; meaning, “the consequences remain”); “*Vardığın yer karanlıksa sen de gözünü kapa*” (“If you walk in the dark, close your eyes too”; meaning, perhaps, “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”); “*Attan düşene tımar, deveden düşene mezar*” (“It’s safer to fall from a horse than a camel”); “*Bu da geçer, ama insanın ciğerini deler de geçer*” (“This will pass too, but it will pass by piercing your lungs”; meaning, “A painful situation will pass in time too, but its pain will leave a trace in you”); “*Balık kavağa çıktığı vakit kösenin sakalı da biter*” (“When the fish climbs the poplar tree, the beardless man will begin to grow a beard”); “*Horoz uctu, kervan göçtü, söz kocakarıya kaldı*” (“The cock flew, the tribe migrated, what remained is the old women’s saying”; meaning, “After all that has happened, only the telling of it remains”); or “*İhtimaldir padişahım belki derya tutuşa*” (“Perhaps, your excellency, it is the sea that burned”; meaning, “When you try to justify yourself in front of your boss, you end up offering grand excuses”).

Another important category contains a repertoire of proverbs that have been used in reference to women and children: “*Bahtım olsaydı anamdan kız doğardım*” (“If I had been fortunate, I would have been born as a girl”); “*Çocuğun yediği helal, giydiği haram*” (“Feeding a child will do more good for him in the long run than dressing him in expensive clothing”); “*Erkek aslan aslan da dişi aslan aslan değil mi?*” (“If a male lion is a lion, isn’t a female lion also a lion”; meaning, “Women are as powerful as men even though men usually are thought of as the most powerful”); “*Kız doğuran çabuk kıcar*” (“Women who give birth to daughters age more quickly”); “*Oğlan yedi oyuna gitti, çoban yedi koyuna gitti*” (“The boy left for seven games, and the shepherd for seven sheep”; meaning, “Everybody found themselves an occupation”); or “*Oynamasını bilmeyen kız yerim dar demiş, yerini bollatmışlar, benim dar demiş*” (“They say to the girl who is not a good dancer, ‘dance!’ She said, ‘I have little place.’ When they gave her a larger place, she said, ‘my dress is tight,’”; meaning, “When someone really doesn’t want to do something, he will always find a ready excuse”).

Women’s folklore is further explored in the book with two important genres: *ninnis*, the lullabies, and *manis*, the rhymed idioms. Among the eight versions of the “Dan dini dan dini” type of lullabies, let us cite two examples:

Dan dini dan dini das dana (the calf)
The calf has entered the garden

*Send, gardener, the calf away
 So that it won't eat the cabbage
 Won't eat the cabbage, but its roots
 My son eats the sweet lokum
 So he sleeps, so he grows ninni,
 So he walks tıpış tıpış ninni²²*

*Dan dini dan dini donatmış (decorated)
 See what God had created
 My baby's chin has a dimple
 He created his eyebrows like a violin's bow,
 His mouth is a box of sweets
 His cheeks are the best smelling apples
 Bring sleep to my baby, his father,
 Ninni my baby ninni²³*

Lullabies naturally reflect the paradoxical world of the mother, praising the child on the one hand, while calling for help or complaining of fatigue on the other. They also refer to fathers, who are missed, feared, or called to bring food and clothes to their children:

*I swing his cradle
 I tie him up, so he won't fall
 Where is my baby's father?
 He left and didn't come back, so I cry.²⁴*

*I say ninni and I swing
 My arms have now fallen down
 Nasty boy will not go to sleep
 So I will send him his father²⁵*

*Merry merry merry baby
 Having a tinned cup baby
 Bring him food his beloved father
 My baby will sleep and grow bigger.²⁶*

Ending with lines like “Don't come” or “I wouldn't give” addressed to fathers, guards, people from the prison, mean neighbors, lame men or shopkeepers, some of these lullabies are aimed to scare children so that they will submit to sleep:

*Hoppala baby hoppala
 I wouldn't give my daughter to a lame
 Let the lame bring some wood*

*So that he'll burn it in winter
So that he'll walk around in summer
So that he'll sleep peacefully.²⁷*

Manis, the rhymed idioms, constitute a characteristic genre of Turkish folklore. They consist of four lines, the first two being totally unrelated to the following ones. Usually, in the first two lines there are references to the context in which the *mani* is told and the last two carry a message of love or political satire (KARABAŞ 1981). Bayrı gives about two-hundred Istanbul *manis*, all of them collected in Istanbul but only four having direct references to the city:

*To market of Istanbul
Rises the sun across it
Would ever a man put his heart
To a neighbor next to him²⁸*

*I put grapes to a basket
My beloved sat on a hill
I married a girl from Istanbul
To impress my own local town²⁹*

*We had desired a community
So we came to Kadıköy
While the mufti takes our money by force
How can he serve Kadıköy³⁰*

*Bağlarbaşı
Üşküdar Bağlarbaşı
Is your chest a mirror
Everyone who comes there tries a scarf on³¹*

Among other folklore genres found in *İstanbul Folkloru*, are jingles, riddles, and what Mehmet Halit Bayrı calls “versified anecdotes” (*ölçülü fıkra*). Bayrı gives two short examples of such anecdotes: “*Mal sahibi, mülk sahibi/Kimdir bunun ilk sahibi*” (“This good’s owner, that house’s owner, who is their first owner?”; meaning, “Don’t be proud of your possessions; in the end they are really meaningless”); and “*Taş gibi yatasınız/Kuş gibi kalkasınız*” (“Go to bed like a stone, and wake up like a bird”; meaning, “Problems always seem more serious at night than they do in the morning”). These can still be heard today. A longer “versified anecdote” that Bayrı reports consists of dialogues between a dirty old man, a young girl drawn into his power, and the girl’s mother. The story reveals many elements concerning Istanbulism,

including details from the daily world of women, such as a warning not to open doors to strangers, waking up early in the morning or asking protection from a brother.

As for the riddles, they are important in two ways: one as forms of oral culture, and another as a demonstration of the material culture of Istanbul. Nature, animals, fruits and vegetables, and objects and furniture make up the world of Istanbul's riddles. Riddles that touch upon objects give us a glimpse on the material world of the Istanbulites at the end of the nineteenth century. They refer to the precious belongings of "the indoor," such as mirrors, wall clocks, embroidery frames, braziers, and waterpipes.

A major part of the book is devoted to folk medicine and healing methods practiced in Istanbul. The first section consists of various forms of folk healing, including "*kırşun dökmek*" (the custom of melting lead and pouring it into cold water over the head in order to relieve negative energy), "*ateş söndürmek*" (putting out a fever), "*şerbet dökmek*" (pouring that which is sweet over a patient), "*sarılık kesmek*" (rituals performed to rid someone of jaundice), "*korğu basmak*" (rituals designed to allay the fears of a patient), "*tütsülemek*" (fumigating), "*kırkılamak*" (the practice of waiting for forty days to pass, such as after the birth of a baby), "*okutmak*" (to have prayers read or recited over the sick person), "*kan aldirmek*" (removing blood from the patient), and "*sülük sülemek*" (applying leeches to the patient). The other section contains a list of folk medicine used among the people of Istanbul to treat a wide range of ailments ranging from beestings, to nosebleeds, from toothaches to the fall of the umbilical cord, and from mumps to the treatment of corns.

Another section related to folk medicine in an indirect way, focuses on beliefs concerning body parts and organs. There are also some proverbs related to death, or others, which emphasize taking care of the sick, a duty which is considered very important for people living in Istanbul. Bayrı also reports that many residents of Istanbul, near to death, procure their shroud and set aside money for their burial expenses, which they give to their relatives for safekeeping. Some even determine their burial sites in advance. Such practices as reciting the "*Yasin*" (the thirty-sixth sura of the Koran) and giving alms to the poor upon return from a funeral are just some of the Istanbul customs related to death. Nevertheless, Bayrı also reports that continual mourning following a death is not well received and frowned upon.

The extensive coverage of genres related to "folk religion" includes sayings and beliefs coming from Istanbul on such topics as creation, this life and the afterlife, and heaven and hell. Moreover, religious days and holidays are explored through the customs practiced in Istanbul. Along with *Şeker* and *Kurban Bayramları* (The Muslim feast following Ramadan and the

Muslim Festival of Sacrifice), there are customs related to significant days such as the first Friday and the fifteenth of the *Recep* month, the twelfth day of the *Rebiül-evvel* month, and the month of Ramadan. While mentioning Istanbul Ramadans, Bayrı underlines the livening up of places of entertainment, and such special foods as “*güllaç*” and other special desserts of the Ottoman kitchen.³² In fact, the image of the nineteenth-century Istanbul Ramadan is a dominant one even in today’s public memory. Recreated in a variety of forms, such as in drama, public shows, and television series, the old Ramadans are represented with images of abundant food, nighttime festivities, the *ķanto*³³ song and dance performances, and the Karagöz shadow plays that are always shown in the intimacy of a small neighborhood culture. This representation is a nostalgic remembrance of a “perfect Ramadan,” which has become an important reference since the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the 1990s, especially in Istanbul.

Istanbul’s folk religion is also manifested in certain places of pilgrimage, such as Koyun Dede, Çifte Sultanlar, Piri Paşa Ayazması, Yüşa Nebi, Karacaahmet Sultan, Tuz Dede, and Zembilli Ali Efendi. It is interesting to note that these sites are different from the tombs of Merkez Efendi and Uykü Dede that Carnoy and Nicolaidès documented in their *Folklore de Constantinople*. Bayrı describes these places and provides information on the reasons why the people of Istanbul feel compelled to come to these places. He also gives examples from the magical spells used in Istanbul. These include descriptions of how to perform magical spells devoted to love, souring of relations, separation, childlessness, catching thieves, or blocking talking and sleeping. These are often passed on in written form, accompanied with an explanation on how to implement them. For example, a magical spell related to bringing back someone from a far away land would be initiated with the following wording:

If you want to bring someone back from a far off place, write this spell on seven pieces of paper. For each of seven days, set one of them afire. The person that you want to see so badly will come at once, even if he is in chains! (BAYRI 1972, 191)³⁴

Among the other subjects dealt with in *İstanbul Folkloru* are those concerned with the customs related to adolescence and children’s folklore. Children’s games include universal games such as “puss-in-the-corner,” “hide-and-seek,” and “jumping rope.” Other games that are not being played today are interesting because they inform us about the elements that the children of nineteenth-century Istanbul selected from their material world to use as objects of play. The games such as “*Yumurtalı Tavuk*”

(“chicken with eggs”), “*Ayine-i Devran*” (“wheel of fortune”), “*Altın Beşik*” (“the golden cradle”), “*Ebe Çıldır*” (“tagger goes crazy”), “*Kadifeci Güzeli*” (“the beautiful velvet trader”), and a game played by boys, “*Orospu Bohçası*” (“the whore’s bag”) reveal elements that children heard, saw, and perceived in the world that surrounded them. These games also show how children selectively captured those elements (whores, velvets, or gold) and drew them into their plays. Providing a detailed account and description of who played these games with charts and narrative explanations, this section of Bayrı’s book is an important contribution to the cultural history of Istanbul. Bayrı also explores family folklore with a focus on the kitchen habits and mostly on the manners of hospitality. As a sensitive issue of the culture of Istanbulism, hospitality is looked at in terms of both material culture and behavioral patterns. These include the way in which the guest rooms are designed in Istanbul’s households and manners with which guests are received.

Bayrı’s book ends with a list of sources, written and oral. As “knowledgeable people were consulted in 1946,” Bayrı gives the names of two women and seven men of different professions. Like Carnoy and Nicolaïdès, he also gives the ages and professions of these informants. No profession is cited for the two women (they were probably housewives), but the professions of the nine men cited are doctor, librarian, priest, teacher, military commander, state employee, and two retired state employees.³⁵

TOWARD A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON ISTANBUL’S FOLKLORE: FROM A GENRE-BASED APPROACH TO COMMUNITY ETHNOGRAPHIES

Both *Folklore de Constantinople* and *İstanbul Folkloru* look at the topics of “Istanbul” and “folklore” from a historical perspective. They undoubtedly form a rich source for research on the social history of the late Ottoman and early Republican eras. However, they both represent a genre-centered approach to folklore, looking at various cultural forms rather than at communities and their different ways of life. The survey of a popular genre, the *meydan şiri* gives us an idea of what Bayrı understood to be “folklore.” The *meydan şiri* refers to the public poetry readings in the minstrel coffeehouses of Istanbul. Bayrı distinguishes between the genres of folk tale and *tekerleme* (the rhymed opening of folk tales) and that of the *meydan şiri*, accepting the former ones as folklore and excluding the last one. To Bayrı, the *meydan şiri* is not a folklore genre. Like the *tekke edebiyatı* (literature of dervish lodges) and the minstrels’ folk songs, where the poet is known by name, the public poetry of the coffeehouses can neither be called “anonymous” nor “collective,” and thus it lacks two important characteristics that define folklore. In his approach to folklore, Bayrı reflects the time in which he wrote. This

approach, which has been questioned and discussed in folklore studies since the 1970s, formed in the 1940s as a predominant perspective.³⁶ Bayrı is undoubtedly an insider of the culture of Istanbulism, but he does not give any information on the process of his research. The bibliography he cites at the end of his book reveals that his works on folklore began to be published as early as 1932. Bayrı's sense of rescuing a "dying folklore" by laying out its most important genres is definitely found in his *İstanbul Folkloru*.

Looking at this historical data from the theories and methodologies that the discipline of folklore has adopted since the 1970s makes us think about whether a historical ethnography is possible, and if so, how it can be achieved. Perhaps a historical ethnography could be formulated by using memoirs that date back to the nineteenth century in which we find scenes of how Istanbul folklore was experienced in different communities at that time. Or perhaps through research based on oral histories that reveal narratives of daily life at the end of the nineteenth century. Finally, the genre of the novel of the Ottoman era, however fictional, may also give us glimpses of Istanbulism.³⁷

Regardless of the means used to produce historical ethnography today, the new approach to folklore as "artistic communication" or as "expressive culture" is one that goes beyond the restriction of the "genre" as static cultural forms. Instead, it chooses to study genres in their cultural contexts as produced within historical processes. In other words, the new approach foregrounds how new cultural forms emerge within particular groups. According to this perspective, when we speak of "Istanbul folklore" today, we understand it to mean a much larger area of knowledge on how each of the different class, spatial, social, religious, and ethnic groups express their own cultures artistically. The city now consists of over ten million people whose diversity is representative of Turkey at large. Today's Istanbul reaches from the Black Sea to the Marmara Sea through the Bosphorus, with neighborhoods and settlements far beyond the Byzantine and Ottoman legacies. It offers a multitude of new cultural forms, with its public performances, the interior designs of its grocery shops, minibus decorations, and tales related to bus and taxi drivers. Its traditional street bazaars (*semt pazarları*), religious sites, coffeehouses, tea gardens, billiard houses, folk-song bars, Internet cafés, public baths (*hamam*), women's hairdressers and men's barbershops await new ethnographies. The art of negotiation among the *kapalıçarşı* (covered bazaar) artisans, the gypsy florists, and the salesmen of the city-boats (*şehirhatları*), invite folklorists to intertextual analysis of a variety of genres that are constantly being formed and performed. In this regard, the genres of the oral and material world of the communities now living in Istanbul need to be explored with an ethnographic approach. Researching the modern

genres of Istanbul folklore will undoubtedly open new windows in developing a better understanding of the complexities of today's Istanbul.

In the light of the modern approach to genre research, one should see the works of É. Henry Carnoy, Jean Nicolaïdès, and Mehmet Halit Bayrı within their historical contexts. Nineteenth-century Istanbul also had a complex structure, which needs to be further researched and analyzed. In this respect, the works of Carnoy, Nicolaïdès, and Bayrı offer invaluable data for both historians and folklorists who work on the historical folklore of Istanbul. It is interesting to note that the contemporary study of Istanbul folklore is a more neglected area when compared to the research pursued during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This is why contemporary folklorists should follow the original interest in the city's folklore, which is best expressed in the pioneering research of these three writers, and begin to produce more ethnographies of Istanbul communities, for the folklore of metropolitan Istanbul is still a vast topic, with its diverse communities, and the multiplicity of the genres it embodies.

NOTES

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1. See CARNOY and NICOLAÏDÈS 1894.

2. See BAYRI 1972.

3. The old city and the district of Beyoğlu are placed at the heart of this image, symbolizing the good old times of the cosmopolitan Ottoman Istanbul.

4. The series of "Dictionnaire biographique" compiled biographic data of engineers (1895), politicians (1897), scientists (1899), clergymen (1903), writers (1909) and finally folklorists (1903, *Dictionnaire international des folkloristes contemporains*). For information on place names in nineteenth-century Istanbul, see MÜLLER-WIENER 2001.

5. See <http://www.arbredor.com/titres/contesfr.htm>, 12.6.2002.

6. He says "Que des provinces soient plus riches que d'autres au point de vue légendaire, nous le comprenons, les conditions de milieu, les relations, l'ignorance, les croyances étant des facteurs essentiels avec lesquels il faut compter ; mais qu'on pense différencier les contes de Haute Bretagne de ceux de la Bretagne bretonnante, de la Normandie ou du Berry et de la Provence, nous ne l'admettons pas, la comparaison des récits puisés dans les diverses collections nous les montrant identiques de fond quand ce n'est pas de forme." See www.arbredor.com/commande.htm, 13.6.2002.

7. See <http://gallica.bnf.fr/VoyagesEnFrance/themes/ChansonsCh.htm>, 12.6.2002

8. This work focuses on beliefs and superstitions. Its year of publication is unclear. The year given in the Catalogues of the Bibliothèque Nationale, France, is 1892 while in *Folklore de Constantinople* 1891 is given (p. vi).

9. Translations from the original work in French are mine.

10. The informants are all male.

11. Carnoy cites this kind of information in *Contes Français* (1885) as well, indicating the

name of his informant along with the date and place of his collection.

12. To give one example of such talismans, one can cite a philosopher who inscribed an image of insect on one of the six marble columns in *Altı-Mermer*, which was thereafter said to prevent harmful insects from entering the city (CARNOY and NICOLAÏDÈS 1894, 4).

13. The story tells us that Constantine encircled the area of the city walls with a string carrying little bells. His idea was to touch the string, so that all the workers dispersed around the city would start the foundation at the same time. But while the ceremony began with prayers, a serpent caught by a stork fell down and caused the bells to ring in some parts. Some workers mistakenly began their work earlier than others, and it is believed that where the work first began on the wall is where the Turks entered the city in 1453.

14. A muezzin is a Muslim crier of the hour of prayer.

15. The first printing of Bayrı's book was in 1947, followed by a second printing 25 years later in 1972. For this paper I used the second edition.

16. For a history of folklore in the early Republican Turkey, see Arzu ÖZTÜRKMEN 1994.

17. According to Stefanos Yerasimos, after the 1453 conquest of the city, Turks have based their foundation myths upon two figures, namely Hazreti Süleyman and Yanko bin Madyan. Hazreti Süleyman is King Solomon, respected by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as the first founder of an earthly order. Yanko bin Madyan, however, is an invented character, who is framed as the first who pointed to the place of the city, the emphasis being that he did so before Constantine, after whom the city is named, had established it. See YERASIMOS 1993, 49–97.

18. *Mescit* is a small mosque.

19. The original Turkish version is as follows: Elimde kitabım okur iken ah/Hareket oluyor dediler evvah/İhvan ile bağırarak derlerdi Allah/Bize imdat etsün ol Ulu Sübhan/Konuldu mezara kuş kadar tenim/Boşanan kanımdan kızıl kefenin/Çok oldu arkamdan evvah diyenim/Dayanın dü-çüşmi daima gıryan. Translations from the vernacular texts are mine and Sylvia Zeybekoğlu's.

20. Original Turkish version is as follows: Birimizde ince Araptı şöret/Birimizin ismi idi Hidayet/Bahadır, tuvana, genç idik gayet/Ahvalimiz halka ilana düştük//Bahadır Kürt idi refikin biri/Üçümüz kazaya uğrattık seri/İşiten ah etse vardır çok yeri/Böyle acııp tufana düştük/Namimiz iptida eyledik beyan/Candan sever idi cemii ihvan/Güler yüzlü hem de yiğit, kahraman/Aziz gibi zişana düştük/Arkadaşlarile bir şep oturduk/Yangın var dediler hep hazır olduk/Fenerci, borucu mevcut bulunduk/Sürat ile rahi revana düştük.

21. Original Turkish version is as follows: Galatasaray dilde destandır/Beyoğlu Zaptiye adıyla şandır/Bunu tasdik eden halkı cihandır/Şan verdi cihana bu ismi bala/Hendek'le Cihangir bir de Topçu'lar/Bunlar da en iyi tulumbacılar/Firuzagalılar oldu namdır/Uçan kuşa eder hüküm Vövoda/(...) Şan verdi cihana yaman Sünbüllü/Aksaray semtinin odur bülbülü/Meydanı hünerin işte bir gülü/Sultanselim diye oldu hüveyda.

22. Dan dini dan dini das dana/Danalar girmiş bostana/Kov bostancı danayı/Yemesin lahanayı/Lahanayı yemez kökünü yer/Benim oğlum lokum yer/Uyusun da büyüün ninni/Tıpış tıpış yürüsün ninni. *Loğum* is a jelly kind of candy.

23. Dan dini dan dini donatmış/Allah neler yaratmış/Çenesi çukur yavrumun/Kaşları keman yaratmış/Gözleri kuvvet halkası/Burnu kabe hurması/Ağzı şeker hokkası/Yanakları misk elması/Uyku getir yavruma babası/Ninni çocuğuma ninni.

24. Beşğini sallarım/Düşmesin oğlum bağlarım/Babası nerde yavrumun/Gitti de gelmez ağlarım.

25. Ninni derim sallarım/Artık düştü kollarım/Uyumuyor yumurcak/Şimdi babasını yollarım.

26. Alaylı alaylı alaylı bebek/Maşrapası kalaylı bebek/Mama getir beybabası/Yavrum uyuyup büyüyecek.

27. Hoppala yavrum hoppala/Ben kızımı vermem topala/Topal odun getirsin/Kışın yaksın otursun/Yazın gezsün yürüsün/Rahat rahat uyusun.
28. İstanbul çarşısına/Gün doğar karşısına/Adam gönül verir mi/Kapı bir komşusuna.
29. Üzüm koydum sepete/Yar oturmuş tepede/İstanbul'dan kız aldım/Şan olsun memlekete.
30. Arzuladık ihvanı/Geldik şu Kadıköy'e/Müfti haraç keserken/Ne yapar Kadıköy'e. *Müfti* is an expert of Islamic law.
31. Bağlarbaşı/Üsküdar Bağlarbaşı/Senin sinen ayna mı/Her gelen bağlar başı. Bağlarbaşı is a neighborhood in the district of Üsküdar in Istanbul. Literally it means tying the head, meaning either to put a scarf on or to take somebody under his or her power.
32. *Güllaç* is a dessert, special to the holy month of Ramadan, consisting of sheets of dough sunk into sweet milk, aromated with rose water.
33. *Kanto* is a genre of music and dance special to nineteenth-century Istanbul Ramadan entertainments. It is characterized by its lively and joyful rhythms and humoristic lyrics.
34. Original Turkish version is as follows: "Eğer dilersen ki bir kimseyi raktan getiresin, bu tilsimi yedi pare kağıda yaz. Yedi gün her birini ateşe bırak. Dilediğin, ayağında zincir varsa dahi gele."
35. The names and ages (in 1946) of these informants are Cevat Alp-Er (66), Firdevs Bali Bey (26), İbrahim Ethem Ögütçü (72), Maide Bayrı (68), Mehmet Süüt (62), Melahat Sabri (44), Naci Ayral (33), Şevket Salih (61), Vahdi Kurt (56).
36. Although he expresses his reservations on the matter, Bayrı cannot help, however, providing examples from different genres including mystical poems, minstrel's songs and legends, all publicly recited in coffeehouses.
37. For a memoir on Istanbul's *konağ* (large mansion) life, see AYVERDİ 1964. For a novel on nineteenth-century Istanbul family life, see UŞAKLIGİL 1939.

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