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Kanunî Süleyman's Şehzade-Revolts seen in Busbecq's Letters

by Fujio MITSUHASHI

From Anadolu Seljuk period to Ottoman period, many rebellions by Moslem arose in the hinterland of Asia Minor. Those rebellions happened mainly in social economic crisis under the intense influence of the Dervish or Sufi.

Toward the end of Kanunî Süleyman's reign, which marked the zenith of the Ottoman Empire, rebellions having other motives happened, namely—so-called Şehzade's revolts. The later revolts originated from the palace-intrigue intertwined with Ottoman ruling institution or Harem system as a background.

From this view-point, the writer has aimed to indicate the unique character of Şehzade's revolts in comparison with Busbecq's letters. Not to mention, Busbecq was the Hapsburg's Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople (İstanbul) in 1554-1562. Besides much Turkish original materials, a certain number of important chronicles about Ottoman Turks have been compiled by some Western residents at that time. The writings of those men of various Western nationalities are sometimes more helpful for study than the documents of Turkish writers.

Among those, long and interesting letters of Busbecq should be ranked first for Ottoman dynastic history and government itself. The charm of his style should not obscure the facts that he was sharp and exact observer possessing of a true scientific spirit, and that he reflected carefully on what he saw and experienced. He was a diplomatist, traveller, linguist, antiquarian, zoologist and botanist.

Accordingly, modern Turkish historians, for example, such as Prof. İ. H. Uzunçarşılı or Şerafettin Turan, who are scholars in university, and some other scholars outside of university such as Mustafa Cezar or T. Y. Öztuna etc. estimate Busbecq's letters so high.

As a whole this tendency is not altogether without reasons. So the writer tries to translate the original text concerning the above-mentioned subject and to research for the reality of Şehzade's revolts.