FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY – HELLAS
INSTITUTE FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

Halcyon Days in Crete IX

A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2015

Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire

Edited by Marinos Sariyannis

CRETE UNIVERSITY PRESS

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY – HELLAS
INSTITUTE FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

POLITICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Halcyon days in Crete IX

A symposium held in Rethymno
9-11 January 2015

Edited by
Marinos Sariyannis

Crete University Press
Rethymno 2019

CRETE UNIVERSITY PRESS
FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY
HERAKLEION: Nik. Plastira 100, GR-700 13. Tel. +30 2810 391097, Fax: +30 2810 391085
ATHENS: 4 Thoukydidou Str., Plaka, GR-105 56. Tel. +30 210 3849020, Fax: +30 210 3301583

e-mail: info@cup.gr

www.cup.gr

The essays in this volume have been refereed through a double-blind peer review process.

ISBN 978-960-524-553-5

© 2019 CRETE UNIVERSITY PRESS & INSTITUTE FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

Published in Greece by Crete University Press
Printed by Alphabet S.A.

Cover design: Dina Ganti

In memoriam Elizabeth A. Zachariadou (1931-2018)

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements xi

Abbreviations – Note on Transliteration xiii

Introduction: Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire. xv

PART ONE

INTRODUCING POLITICAL THOUGHT

İ. Metin Kunt, Ottoman Political Theory, Reality and Practice 3

Linda T. Darling, Ottoman Political Thought: Towards a Revised History 9

PART TWO

WORDS AND CONCEPTS

Heather L. Ferguson, Ottomans, Ottomanists and the State: Re-defining an Ethos of Power in the Long Sixteenth Century 19

Günes Isiksel, « Le sultan des Deux Terres et des Deux Mers » : représentations diplomatiques de l’espace politique ottoman au XVIe siècle 45

Elias Kolovos, *Istimalet*: What Do We Actually Know About It? 59

Antonis Hadjikyriacou, Beyond the *Millet* Debate: The Theory and Practice of Communal Representation in Pre-Tanzimat-Era Cyprus 71

Marc Aymes, What’s In a Fake? Utterances of Late Ottoman Politicalness 97

PART THREE

AUTHORS AND IDEAS

Linda T. Darling, Ottoman Political Thought and the Critique of the Janissaries 117

Katharina Ivanyi, And the Question of Lands is Very Confusing: Birgivî Mehmed Efendi (d. 981/1573) on Land Tenure and Taxation 137

Derin Terzioğlu, Power, Patronage, and Confessionalism: Ottoman Politics as Seen through the Eyes of a Crimean Sufi, 1580-1593 149

BAKI TEZCAN, The Portrait of the Preacher as a Young Man: Two Autobiographical Letters by Kadızade Mehmed from the Early Seventeenth Century 187

MARINOS SARIYANNIS, Ottoman Ibn Khaldunism Revisited: the Pre-Tanzimat Reception of the *Muqaddima*, from Kınalızade to Şanizade 251

GOTTFRIED HAGEN, The Prophet Muhammad as Model Leader - Ottoman Readings of the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyya 287

PART FOUR

OBLIQUE VIEWS

KONSTANTINOS MOUSTAKAS, Ottoman Greek Views of Ottoman Rule (15th-16th Centuries). The Perspective of the Patriarchate Associates 311

DENISE KLEIN, Negotiating Power in the Crimean Khanate: Notes on Tatar Political Thought and Practice (16th–18th c.) 319

ARIEL SALZMANN, Between Saint-Domingue and the Sublime Porte: A Caribbean Revolution, Ottoman Realpolitik, and the Inter-Hemispheric Contingencies of Modern Political Thought 349

PART FIVE

IDEAS IN PRACTICE

NICOLAS VATIN, Le pouvoir des Barberousse à Alger d'après les *Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa* 391

EUNJEONG YI, Atpazarî Seyyid Osman Fazlı as Portrayed in *Temamü'l-feyz*: a Sufi Text's Relevance to Politics in Late Seventeenth-Century Istanbul 417

VIRGINIA AKSAN, The Ottomans' Military Manpower and Political Bargains, 1750-1850 . . . 435

YIANNIS SPYROPOULOS, Janissary Politics on the Ottoman Periphery (18th-early 19th c.) . . . 449

H. ŞÜKRÜ ILICAK, The Greek War of Independence and the Demise of the Janissary Complex: A New Interpretation of the 'Auspicious Incident' 483

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As the editor of this volume, my gratitude goes to:

Prof. Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, the initiator and for many years the soul of the *Halcyon Days in Crete* symposia, for her constant advice and support. Professor Zachariadou, an outstanding scholar, mentor and friend, passed away just a few months before the publication of this volume; she will be greately missed.

Prof. Christos Hadziiossif, Director of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies at the time the Symposium took place, for his support and constant encouragement.

My colleagues and long-time friends Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos, co-organisers of the symposium which brought forth this volume, who were always willing to offer their experience and help in its editing.

The anonymous referees who contributed greatly with their insightful comments and remarks.

Mr Geoffrey Cox, who copy-edited the texts with his usual meticulousness and consistency.

Crete University Press and, in particular, Ms Dionysia Daskalou, for the excellent work put into the publication process for almost 30 years now.

Ms Marina Demetriadou for her assistance in the organisation of the symposium; Ms Nesli Ruken Han and Mr Ermolaos Karaklidis for their enormous help with checking the proofs of the proceedings. My colleague Yannis Spyropoulos for his assistance in some aspects of the editorial process.

M.S.

The Programme of Turkish Studies
of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FO.R.T.H.
gratefully acknowledges financial support received for the Ninth ‘Halcyon Days in Crete’ Symposium from the Greek General Secretariat for Research and Technology, in the context of the project ‘OTTPOL: A History of Early Modern Ottoman Political Thought, 15th to Early 19th Centuries’, carried out at the Institute within the action ‘Aristeia II’, funded by Greece and the European Social Fund of the European Union under the Operational Program Education and Lifelong Learning (2007-13 Greek National Strategic Reference Framework).

ABBREVIATIONS

BOA:	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Istanbul)
TSMA:	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi (Istanbul)

ActOrHung:	*Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*
ArchOtt:	*Archivum Ottomanicum*
BSOAS:	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
EB:	*Études Balkaniques*
IJMES:	*International Journal of Middle East Studies*
IJTS:	*International Journal of Turkish Studies*
JAOS:	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JESHO:	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JTS:	*Journal of Turkish Studies*
NPT:	*New Perspectives on Turkey*
OA:	*Osmanlı Araştırmaları – The Journal of Ottoman Studies*
RMMM:	*Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*
ROMM:	*Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*
SF:	*Südost-Forschungen*
SI:	*Studia Islamica*
TD:	*Tarih Dergisi*
TED:	*İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*
THR:	*Turkish Historical Review*
TSAB:	*The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*
TSAJ:	*The Turkish Studies Association Journal*
VD:	*Vakıflar Dergisi*
WZKM:	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*
EI:	*E.J. Brill's First Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913-1936*
EI^2:	*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. New Edition (Leiden 1960-2002)
İA:	*İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1940-1979)
TDVİA:	*Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul 1988-)

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

All terms and phrases originally written in non-Latin alphabets have been transliterated into the Latin script. Transcription of texts in Ottoman Turkish follows Redhouse Turkish-English dictionary; for texts written in Arabic, a simple system of transliteration has been adopted. The editor assumes full responsibility for these choices.

No final -s- is added to plural nouns, such as *ayan*, *ulema*, and *reaya*.

INTRODUCTION

POLITICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Marinos Sariyannis[*]

In the wake of the extraordinary emphasis on economic and social history which dominated Ottoman studies during most of the second half of the last century, other aspects of the Ottoman reality were neglected or under-studied.[1] Cultural history, one may say, found its way from the early 1990s on, but political history and the history of ideas (or, as we prefer to say nowadays, intellectual history) were even later to regain the interest they had been attracting in the pre-World War II period.

This was owing to a combination of factors, including source availability and historiographical fashion. Indeed, when the present author was entering the field, in the mid or late 1990s, studying Ottoman history meant mainly studying archives. The *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* roared with scholars, local judicial registers and private document collections were the word of the day, and tax registers were in their heyday; on the other hand, if one had to consult an eighteenth-century chronicle or a travelogue, one had to spend a disproportionally large amount of time in locating and studying manuscripts, use old faulty editions, or else confine oneself to very few sources. Only the fourteenth or fifteenth century expert had the privilege of a solid corpus of more or less fully studied and analysed literary works, since archival documents for this period are just missing. Even authors who relied heavily on archival material had started to speak of ‘document fetishism’ by the early 1990s, stressing the use of documents at their face value regardless of ideological considerations.[2] On the other hand, what can be described as ‘narrative (or, in a broader sense, literary) sources’, such as chronicles and historiography, biographies, fiction, diaries, town descriptions, political essays and so forth, had been comparatively neglected for a long time.[3] The relationship of the neglect of narrative sources (the "fear of the text") with the lack of interest in cultural history is very well expressed in a recent essay by Dana Sajdi on the much-debated notion of 'Ottoman decline':[4]

---

[*] Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, Institute for Mediterranean Studies.

[1] I wish to thank Prof. Efi Avdela for her advice and comments concerning modern European historiography.

[2] See H. Berktay and S. Faroqhi, *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History* (London 1992), 109ff. (on Berktay’s) and 235 (Faroqhi’s) criticism of “document fetishism”. Berktay notes that “the illusion that historical truth can be seized simply by putting documents together has reduced generations of students to document transcribers” (ibid., 157) – of course, the same can be said about literary sources, although to a lesser degree.

> For a long time empirical research was obviated by the fact that the text, which delivered evidence that was anecdotal at best and unreliable at worst, provided the main source for history. The discovery of court records and other official documents was received with relief and excitement, for these sources delivered vast pools of data… and allowed Ottoman history to move from narrative and institutional history to scientifically 'solid' studies… Both Orientalist scholarship and the related civilizationalist narrative had enshrined the text as the central piece of scholarship… Thus, the associations between essentialist methods and the text may have resulted in a general distaste for the latter. But it was not only the text that was disposed of; the associated possibilities of discursive methods and cultural analyses were also ignored… Culture, in other words, seems to have had a bad name.

At any rate, during the last 20 years, *grosso modo*, there has been a remarkable turning of attention towards Ottoman narrative sources.[5] Again, this was a development shared with world historiography, which witnessed (in the words of Cemal Kafadar)[6]

> a renewed interest in such sources, which were once seen as inferior to quantifiable records. Turning the tables around, historians now indulge in the application of literary criticism or narratological analysis to archival documents, to even such dry cases as census registers, which have been seen as hardly more than data banks in previous history-writing.

Indeed, a turn towards a new form of historical narratives in European historiography can be detected from the late 1970s onward, and it was natural enough that it was accompanied by a revival of the use of narrative sources. Lawrence Stone attributed this trend to “a widespread disillusionment with the economic determinist model of historical explanation”, a new visibility for the role of political power in history, and the apparent shortcomings of the once all-powerful quantification, as well as the “quite sudden growth of interest in feelings, emotions, behaviour patterns, values, and states of mind”, i.e., what is known by the French term *histoire des mentalités*. Back in 1979, Stone was stating that “yet historians… still seem a little embarrassed” when they turn “back to the once despised narrative mode”, even though many now classic books in this vein had already appeared.[7] More than three decades later, one may say that ‘narrative mode’ belongs steadily to the mainstream of European historiography. Cultural history as well as political history – in a renewed form – both benefited greatly from and contributed to this turn. Political history in particular, after being scorned as “histoire événementielle” by the first *Annales* generations, regained its visibility as political anthropology, history of structures of power, legitimisation mechanisms, political movements, and so forth.[8]

---

[3] Back in 1989, Cemal Kafadar wrote of "the neglect, I might even say disdain, of narrative and other literary sources, as well as of cultural and intellectual history in general": C. Kafadar, 'Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature', *SI,* 69 (1989), 121-150 at 123.

[4] D. Sajdi, 'Decline, Its Discontents and Ottoman Cultural History: By Way of Introduction', in D. Sajdi (ed.), *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee. Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century* (London and New York 2007), 1-40 at 28-29.

[5] Cf. the introductory remarks by Nicolas Vatin and Gilles Veinstein in their *Le Sérail ébranlé. Essai sur les morts, dépositions et avènements des sultans ottomans, XIVe-XIXe siècle* (Paris 2003), 11 : « L'ouverture des archives ottomanes a amené depuis un demi-siècle les spécialistes à accorder une importance de plus en plus exclusive aux sources d'archives. Sans sous-estimer l'apport évidemment irremplaçable de celles-ci, nous voudrions contribuer pour notre part, après d'autres, à redonner toute leur place aux chroniqueurs comme source de premier ordre pour l'histoire de l'Empire ottoman. » Nicolas Vatin had also stressed the importance of narrative sources for Ottoman history in N. Vatin, *Etudes ottomans (XVe-XVIIIe siècle). Conférence d'ouverture, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des sciences historiques et philologiques (10 novembre 2000)* (Paris 2001), 58ff. See also C. Kırlı, 'From Economic History to Cultural History in Ottoman Studies', *IJMES,* 46 (2014), 376-378.

[6] C. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds. The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1996), xiii.

If political history began gradually to re-appear with a new sense of interdependence with social developments (especially Janissary rebellions, now studied in the light of more general views on the transformation of Ottoman politics in the *longue durée*),[9] the same – but perhaps to a lesser degree — happened with the history of ideas. Again, Ottomanists were late in following the trends of Europeanist historiography, which from the 1960s onwards, with the 'Cambridge school' (Quentin Skinner, J.G.A. Pocock, John Dunn, etc.), the French *histoire des mentalités* and Foucault's critique, as well as the German conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*), began to react to the traditional history of ideas (as represented by, for example, Arthur Lovejoy, focusing on 'great thinkers' and public debates) by emphasising the social and intellectual matrix from which individual thinkers emerged.[10] As far as Ottoman studies are concerned, we should take note of the new thrust and approach provided by Walter G. Andrews' studies of lyric poetry;[11] of a very recent emphasis on Ottoman philosophy (especially its Arabic part);[12] of a series of important 'intellectual biographies' of Ottoman scholars,[13] and, last but not least, of studies of the circulation of books and manuscripts and their intellectual context.[14]

---

[7] L. Stone, ‘The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History’, *Past and Present,* 85 (1979), 3-24. In his reply to Stone’s article, Eric Hobsbawm added as another factor in this historiographical shift “the remarkable widening of the field of history” (E.J. Hobsbawm, ‘The Revival of Narrative: Some Comments’, *Past and Present,* 86 (1980), 3-8). For a recapitulation of the new trends in historiography, see the studies collected in P. Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives in Historical Writing* (Cambridge 2001 [2nd ed.]); G. G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century. From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Middletown 2005) and esp. 97ff. on Stone’s article.

[8] Cf. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century*, 137-139; J. Le Goff, ‘Is Politics still the backbone of History?’, in F. Gilbert and S. Graubard (eds), *Historical Studies Today* (New York 1972), 337-355 [reprinted in French as « L’histoire politique est-elle toujours l’épine dorsal de l’histoire? » in Le Goff, *L’imaginaire médiéval* (Paris 1985), 333-349].

[9] The first specimen would perhaps be R. Abou-El-Haj’s *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden 1984). Other examples include G. Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 2003) or the relevant part in Baki Tezcan’s *The Second Ottoman Empire. Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge 2010). See also the special issue of the *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol. 8 (2002) and the studies collected in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives from the Bottom-Up in the Ottoman Empire (Halcyon Days VII: A Symposium held in Rethymno, January 9-11, 2009*) (Rethymno 2011), as well as a series of unpublished Ph.D. theses: A. Stremmelaar, ‘Justice and Revenge in the Ottoman Rebellion of 1703’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Leiden University, 2007; A. Danacı Yıldız, ‘Vaka-yı Selimiyye or The Selimiyye Incident: A Study of May 1807 Rebellion’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Sabancı University, 2008; S. Karahasanoğlu, ‘A Tulip Age Legend: Consumer Behavior and Material Culture in the Ottoman Empire (1718-1730)’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Binghampton University, 2009.

Thus, both political history and the history of ideas are now beginning to flourish and are considered by Ottomanists an outstanding vantage point for observing social forces at work. In this context, it is perhaps striking that the history of political ideas, which can be described as a combination of those two fields, was never out of the focus of social historians of the Ottoman Empire (suffice it to remember the work by Şerif Mardin and Niyazi Berkes as early as the 1960s),[15] nor of the few early students of Ottoman intellectual history.[16] After all, political tracts were among the first Ottoman texts translated into European languages.[17] In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the rediscovery of narrative sources and of the importance of political history also brought a wave of pioneering works studying political ideas. Studies of particular works or genealogies of specific ideas went hand-in-hand with attempts at more general surveys of Ottoman political thought, such as Pál Fodor's now classic article (supplemented by Virginia Aksan's on the eighteenth century).[18] With the new millennium, the subject received a remarkable impetus; new approaches and methods of analysis are constantly being applied in this field, as younger and older scholars are turning their attention to this subject, arguably one of the dominant themes of Ottoman studies nowadays.[19] An emphasis on the legitimisation of power has to some extent prepared for this trend.[20] To indicate the present blossoming of the field, suffice it to note that only in the last five years four lengthy monographs appeared on the history of Ottoman political thought in its more or less general aspects.[21]

---

[10] See P. Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca 1997); V.E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley 1999); D. McMahon and S. Moyn (eds), *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History for the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford 2014); cf. also K.W. Martin, 'Middle East Historiography: Did We Miss the Cultural Turn?', *History Compass,* 12 (2014), 178-186.

[11] W. Andrews, *Poetry's Voice, Society's Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Seattle 1985); W. Andrews and M. Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham 2005). Ottoman poetry has been the object of important studies in recent decades, e.g., by Edith Gülçin Ambros or Hatice Aynur. See E. G. Ambros, « Les recherches sur la littérature ottomane dans le monde occidental », in F. Emecen, İ. Keskin and A. Ahmetbeyoğlu (ed.), *Osmanlı'nın izinde: Prof. Dr. Mehmet İpşirli Armağanı* (Istanbul 2013), 1:119-139.

[12] Kh. El-Rouayheb, 'The Myth of the Triumph of Fanaticism in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *Die Welt des Islams,* 48 (2008), 196-201; idem, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (Cambridge 2015); L.W.C. van Lit, 'An Ottoman Commentary Tradition on Ghazālī's Tahāfut al-falāsifa. Preliminary Observations', *Oriens,* 43 (2015), 368-413; E.L. Menchinger, 'Free Will, Predestination, and the Fate of the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 77 (2016), 445-466. Significantly, chapters concerning the Ottoman period have been included in S. Schmidtke (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology* (Oxford 2016).

[13] C.H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton 1986); G. Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit. Etstehung und Gedankenwelt von Kātib Čelebis Ğihānnümā* (Berlin 2003); R. Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality. The World of Evliya Çelebi,* rev. edition (Leiden 2006); E.L. Menchinger, *The First of the Modern Ottomans. The Intellectual History of Ahmed Vâsıf* (Cambridge 2017).

[14] N. Hanna, *In Praise of Books: A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Syracuse 2003); N. Shafir, 'The Road from Damascus: Circulation and the Redefinition of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, 1620-1720', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 2016.

---

[15] Ş. Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton 1962); N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal 1964).

[16] M. T. Gökbilgin, 'XVII. Asırda Osmanlı devletinde ıslâhat ihtiyaç ve temayülleri ve Kâtip Çelebi', in *Kâtip Çelebi. Hayatı ve eserleri hakkında incelemeler* (Ankara 1991; 1st ed. 1957), 197-218; B. Lewis, 'Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline', *Islamic Studies,* 1 (1962), 71-87.

[17] W.F.A. Behrnauer, 'Hâğî Chalfa's Dustûru'l-'amal. Ein Beitrag zur osmanischen Finanzgeschichte', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* 11 (1857), 111-132; idem, 'Koğabeg's Abhandlung über den Verfall des osmanischen Staatsgebäudes seit Sultan Suleiman dem Grossen', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* 15 (1861), 272-332; idem, 'Das Nasîhatnâme. Dritter Beitrag zur osmanischen Finanzgeschichte', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* 18 (1864), 699-740; R. Tschudi (ed.), *Das Asafname des Lütfi Pascha, nach den Handschriften zu Wien, Dresden und Konstantinopel* (Berlin 1910); I. von Karácson and L. von Thalláczy, 'Eine Staatsschrift des bosnischen Mohammedaners Molla Hassan Elkjáfi 'über die Art und Weise des Regierens'', *Archiv für slavische philologie,* 32 (1911), 139-158. Cf. D.A. Howard, 'Genre and Myth in the Ottoman Advice for Kings Literature', in V. Aksan and D. Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge 2007), 137-166 at 142-143.

[18] R. Murphey, 'The Veliyyuddin Telhis: Notes on the Sources and Interrelations between Koçi Bey and Contemporary Writers of Advice to Kings', *Belleten*, 43 (1979), 547-571; H. G. Majer, 'Die Kritik aus den Ulema in den osmanischen politischen Traktaten des 16-18 Jahrhunderts', in O. Okyar – H. Inalcik (eds), *Social and Economic History of Turkey (1071-1920)* (Ankara 1980), 147-155; P. Fodor, 'State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th-17th Century Ottoman Mirror for Princes', *ActOrHung,* 40 (1986), 217-240; A.Y. Ocak, 'Osmanlı siyasi düşüncesi', in E. İhsanoğlu (ed.), *Osmanlı devleti ve medeniyeti tarihi*, Vol. 2 (Istanbul 1988), 164-174; C.H.Fleischer, 'From Şeyhzade Korkud to Mustafa Âli: Cultural Origins of the Ottoman *Nasihatname*', in H.W. Lowry and R.S. Hattox (eds), *IIIrd Congress on the Social and Economic History of Turkey. Princeton University, 24-26th August 1983* (Istanbul, Washington and Paris 1990), 67-77; A. C. Schaendlinger, 'Reformtraktate und -vorschläge im Osmanischen Reich im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in Ch. Franger and K. Schwarz (eds), *Festgabe an Josef Matuz. Osmanistik – Turkologie – Diplomatik* (Berlin 1992), 239-253; V. Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing, 1768-1808', *IJMES,* 25 (1993), 53-69.

[19] C. Kafadar, 'Osmanlı siyasal düşüncesinin kaynakları üzerine gözlemler', in M.Ö. Alkan (ed.), *Modern Türkiye'de siyasi düşünce*, Vol. 1, *Cumhuriyet'e devreden düşünce mirası: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in birikimi* (Istanbul 2001), 24-28; B. A. Ergene, 'On Ottoman Justice: Interp-

Still, the features of a 'late starter' and the heavy dependency on earlier questions of socio-economic history are apparent in the disproportionate interest late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century authors have attracted in comparison to earlier or later ones. The real motive behind the rediscovery of such authors as Mustafa Ali, Aziz Efendi, or Koçi Bey was their crucial role in the creation (and the recent demolition) of the 'decline' paradigm, which, as one may say, had been the central question in Ottoman studies throughout the last decade of the twentieth century.[22] Thus, issues such the role of the Persian tradition of political philosophy, the 'fundamentalist' or, more correctly, 'Sunna-minded' trends of the seventeenth century, or the re-evaluation of innovation and change from the late seventeenth century onwards have remained relatively unstudied, whereas even those 'declinist' authors mentioned above did not get their proper place in this history, as the one side of a debate which was much more than one-sided. Moreover, even as lesser works and authors are beginning to be studied and edited, the discussion remains centred on the major figures, who thus seem isolated from the ideological conflicts they were participating in and from the tradition they were following or responding to. This lack of intellectual context is largely due to the splendour of pre-Ottoman Islamic political thought and the consequent view of the post-medieval period as one of intellec-

---

retations in Conflict (1600-1800)', *Islamic Law and Society,* 8 (2001), 52-87; C. Yılmaz, 'Osmanlı siyaset düşüncesi kaynakları ile ilgili yeni bir kavramsallaştırma: Islahatnâmeler', *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi,* 1 (2003), 299-338; H. Yılmaz, 'Osmanlı tarihçiliğinde Tanzimat öncesi siyaset düşüncesine yaklaşımlar', *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi,* 1 (2003), 231-298; D. A. Howard, 'From Manual to Literature: Two Texts on the Ottoman Timar System', *ActOrHung,* 61 (2008), 87-99; L.T. Darling, 'Political Change and Political Discourse in the Early Modern Mediterranean World', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History,* 38 (2008), 505-531; H.L. Ferguson, 'Genres of Power: Constructing a Discourse of Decline in Ottoman Nasihatname', *OA,* 35 (2010), 81-116.

[20] See H.T. Karateke and M. Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order. The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden and Boston 2005).

[21] L.T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (New York 2013); H. Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought* (Princeton 2018); H.L. Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things: Language, Power, and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* (Stanford 2018); M. Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought Up to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Leiden 2018).

[22] This debate may be said to have been inaugurated with Abou-El-Haj's highly influential *Formation of the Modern State. The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (New York 1991), together with a series of interventions by Suraiya Faroqhi; see e.g. S. Faroqhi, 'Part II: Crisis and Change, 1590-1699', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 411-636. For various assessments of the discussion see D. Quataert, 'Ottoman History Writing and Changing Attitudes Towards the Notion of 'Decline'', *History Compass,* 1 (2003), 1-10; Sajdi, 'Decline, Its Discontents'.

tual decline for Islamic culture. On the one hand, students of Islamic political thought more often than not see Ottoman authors as mere imitators, who either engaged in sterile reproduction of Avicenna's, al-Farabi's, or Nasir al-Din Tusi's ideas, or were restricted to very concrete advice on specific problems of their own state without implying any broader view of political society.[23] On the other hand, Ottomanists usually fail to take into account the pre-Ottoman tradition (despite some efforts, such as by Halil İnalcık on Kınalızade Ali Çelebi),[24] which leads either to texts being glorified as innovative when they are merely adaptations of earlier models, or to innovative breakthroughs to the older tradition, which scholars cannot locate since they ignore the latter.[25]

* * *

This volume has the modest ambition of contributing to this renewal of interest in Ottoman political ideas and their function in practice. It mostly reproduces the papers read in the Ninth Halcyon Days international symposium of the Programme of Ottoman History of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH, which was held in Rethymno on 9-11 January 2015.[26] İbrahim Metin Kunt was invited to be the symposiarch; when he had to decline for health reasons, Linda T. Darling kindly agreed to take his place. Both contributed the introductory texts constituting Part I of the book, which the present short introduction seeks only to supplement with a framework depicting the intellectual genealogy of the history of Ottoman political thought. Metin Kunt, on his part, explores the cosmological origins of Islamic views of political society, namely the theory of the four elements and the way it was applied in fields as different as cosmology, astrology, medicine, psychology, the various arts, as well as political theory. As Kunt shows, the concept of four elements or pillars of society which have to be kept in equilibrium was a constant feature of Ottoman political theories, and one that was combined later on with Ibn Khaldun's concept of historical laws to produce a cyclical view of history. Yet, as he cautiously points out, there were other dominant distinctions in Ottoman worldviews, such as between *reaya* and *askerî* or between Muslims and infidels, which make the study of political ideas more complex and interdependent with historical realities.

---

[23] See, e.g., E.I.J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam. An Introductory Outline* (Cambridge 1958), 224-233; A. Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought. From the Prophet to the Present* (Edinburgh 2011 [2nd ed.]), 216-222, 259-280 (still, Black is to be credited for having included issues such as the Sharia and Kanun conflict or the 'Sunna-minded' trend into the field of study).

[24] See, e.g., H. İnalcık, 'Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire', *The Journal of Economic History,* 19 (1969), 97-140 at 98-99; idem, 'The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 44.

[25] On various problems in the study of Ottoman political thought see the excellent essay by Yılmaz, 'Osmanlı tarihçiliğinde Tanzimat öncesi siyaset düşüncesine yaklaşımlar'. I have also tackled these issues more extensıvely than I do here in Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought*, 1-14.

[26] The Symposium also included papers by Sia Anagnostopoulou, Vasileios Syros, Ekin Tuşalp Atiyas, and Hüseyin Yılmaz, who did not eventually submit them for publication. On the other hand, Heather L. Ferguson, Katharina Ivanyi, and Eunjeong Yi did not participate in the Symposium but were specially invited to contribute to the volume.

Linda Darling, in her turn, focuses on the study of Ottoman political thought and its pitfalls. After remarking that the field has to extend its subject beyond political literature *per se*, she gives a summary outline of trends in Ottoman political ideas, their genealogies and developments, stressing the socio-political context which made authors support 'declinist' or 'reformist' theories. Furthermore, she puts a question which is at the very centre of this volume, namely how we can combine the study of political theory with political practice, in other words, how to put questions in terms of social and political history – and conversely, how to interpret socio-political behaviour in Ottoman sources in the light of the use of political arguments and mentalities. Still, as she carefully notes, one has always to take into account the very strong tradition within which Ottoman authors and statesmen were writing and acting.

Political ideas are, of course, founded on basic concepts, often peculiar to a specific culture which may or may not be confined to the territorial or even temporal borders of a state. These concepts, as shown by several studies, are not static: they change as society changes, in an interaction with political practice.[27] Papers in Part II of this volume examine such concepts, emphasising their semantic shifts according to the political context and the historical circumstances. Heather L. Ferguson takes up the relation (and confusion) between socio-political realities and narratives about them, focusing on the concept of state. She points out that we should study such subjects having always in mind the historical dimension of the Ottoman formation, both in time and in its relationship within the broader Eurasian context. After drawing a chart enumerating and interpreting theories of modern historiography (Europeanist and Ottomanist) on state formation and development, Ferguson explores a series of Ottoman dynastic histories in order to seek the various forms of exceptionalism and universalism prevailing in different stages of Ottoman culture.

In his own contribution, Güneş Işıksel moves into another aspect of the Ottoman world image which is not unrelated to the exceptionalist and universalist claims we have already mentioned: namely, the representation of what we now call the Ottoman realm as constructed by the Sultan's chancellery. Taking as a starting-point the *intitulatio* of international treaties and diplomatic correspondence of the sixteenth century, Işıksel shows that, far from being just a spatial description, this accumulation of titles and places has deep political connotations, since it implies a potential universal dominion, but also that it is liable to changes serving different necessities, which stem either from diplomatic developments or specific needs of the imperial propaganda.

---

[27] See, e.g., G. Hagen, 'Legitimacy and World Order', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 55-83; Ergene, 'On Ottoman Justice'; M. Sariyannis, 'The Princely Virtues as Presented in Ottoman Political and Moral Literature', *Turcica,* 43 (2011), 121-144; idem, 'Ruler and State, State and Society in Ottoman Political Thought', *THR,* 4 (2013), 83-117; idem, 'Ottoman Ideas on Monarchy Before the Tanzimat Reforms: Toward a Conceptual History of Ottoman Political Notions', *Turcica,* 47 (2016), 33-72.

The next two papers deal more particularly with specific terms and the various meanings they acquired in time. Elias Kolovos examines the famous *istimalet*, considered (in the meaning of 'winning over a population through concessions') as a major tool of Ottoman diplomacy and conquest as early as the beginnings of the Ottoman state. By conducting a meticulous study of primary sources mentioning this term, Kolovos shows that, contrary to what one would perhaps expect judging from the rich relevant historiography, *istimalet* is rarely mentioned in early chronicles, whereas it has a frequent presence in later sources, where it is used in a wider sense as a policy against Ottoman officials or soldiers as well, far from being applied only to conquered populations. Thus, what was for half a century conceived of as a special policy tool facilitating conquest of infidel populations proves to be a more conceptualised form of what Ottoman historians refer to as *hüsn-i tedbir*, soft measures aimed at winning over an opponent or a potential enemy.

Antonis Hadjikyriacou's paper deals with another term which commonly forms a subject of heated debate – *millet*. The shifting meanings of this term have attracted the attention of a good many scholars, all the more since (having eventually taken on the meaning of 'nation') it is closely connected with the transformation of ethnic identities into national communities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hadjikyriacou proposes to explore the issue from the other end, that is, taking ethno-religious communities and their organisation as a starting-point. Focusing on the case of Cyprus, and benefiting from discussions of other ambiguous terms as well (notably *vekil*), he reaches the conclusion that institutional identity (and leadership) remained until late a flexible notion, which was not consistently dependent on either religious or ethnic identities.

Finally, Marc Aymes moves into the late Ottoman Empire and the very notion of politics, which he proposes to study through an examination of forgery and the laws concerning it. After an overview of the two terms relevant to politics, *polîtika* which came to mean things pertaining to governmental affairs (and as such, something which was not to be discussed freely in public), and *siyaset* meaning eventually what pertains to the general public, Aymes examines the act of faking state documents and laws prohibiting forgery or the circulation of fake news. In this perhaps oblique way, he highlights the limits between the public and the private sphere and explores the ways late Ottoman government tried to delineate the extent of the subjects' scope for potential interference in state affairs.

The papers presented so far show the flexible and evolving character of Ottoman concepts, especially those present in Ottoman diplomatic or administrative practice and not political theory *per se*. Still, if confined to ideas, a student of Ottoman political thought may get the impression of repetitive loci, commonplaces and tropes without any originality or development. Yet, if we focus in the *use* of arguments, we will see that different socio-political actors use a spectrum of ideas and arguments as an inventory of weapons from which they select those best fitted to their own age in order to defend and promote different political demands. Aspects of this procedure are illuminated in Part III of the book, devoted to authors of political tracts and the ideas they use: how they benefit from earlier tradition, how they adapt to current situations, how they change these ideas in order to render best service to their respective agendas. In her contribution, Linda T. Darling takes as a starting-point one of the most common and well-known *topoi* of political literature, that of the critique of the Janissaries and more particularly of the intrusion of non-*devşirme* recruits to their ranks. Juxtaposing these *topoi* of advice texts (*nasihatname*s) with material from administrative documents and registers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, she finds that "strangers" in the corps were not differentiated at all in state paperwork, and, perhaps more importantly, that authors originating from *devşirme* recruitment were much more adamant in their opposition to outsiders, showing an internal factionalism expressed in political literature. As Darling remarks, it is in government orders and actions that we ought to seek true (or, at least, dominant) Ottoman political thought.

The next three papers in this part deal with various aspects of what has been named "Sunna-minded" or, more particularly, "Kadızadeli" thought: a trend which spoke for a re-assessment of the Sunna and which played a major role in political discussion from the early seventeenth century until the last decade of the same century, if not later. It is a commonplace that the ideological predecessor of this trend was Birgivî Mehmed Efendi, a major opponent of Ebussuud back in the mid sixteenth century; yet scholarship debating the landholding experimentation in the late seventeenth century has been puzzled by the absence of the issue in Kadızadeli texts.[28] Katharina Ivanyi shows that Birgivî, apart from his insistent opposition to against cash-*vakf*s and his emphasis on strict adherence to the Sharia, had also dealt with this issue; he had denounced the legal stratagem used to legitimise land tax from public land (*mîrî*) and was very sceptical about state ownership of the land and the *tapu* system. Thus, Ivanyi's study makes Gilles Veinstein's argument on the role of Kadızadeli thought in the Köprülü reform more convincing, as the main counter-argument was the absence of 'fundamentalist' preoccupation with land and tax issues.

After Birgivî, 'Sunna-minded' thought re-emerged in the early seventeenth century, yet it was by no means absent in the time-span between the two periods. In her paper, Derin Terzioğlu focuses on İbrahim-i Kırımî, a Halveti sheikh corresponding with Murad III. Terzioğlu examines the corpus of Kırımî's letters (heretofore attributed to Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî), which contain a variety of political advice; she shows the complex interplay of the author with the palace and *harem* politics, and highlights his possible relations with different factions as regards external policies. Through this careful analysis, Terzioğlu questions both the presence of marked 'absolutist' and 'constitutionalist' factions at the court[29] and the understanding of 'confessionalisation' as a clear-cut, top-down procedure.[30]

---

[28] M. Greene, 'An Islamic Experiment? Ottoman Land Policy on Crete', *Mediterranean Historical Review,* 11 (1996), 60-78; G. Veinstein, 'Le législateur ottoman face à l'insularité: L'enseignement des Kânûnnâme', in N. Vatin and G. Veinstein (eds), *Insularités ottomanes* (Paris 2004), 101-106; E. Kermeli, 'Caught in Between Faith and Cash: The Ottoman Land System of Crete, 1645-1670', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean Under Ottoman Rule, Crete, 1645-1840: Halcyon Days in Crete VI: a Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 17-48.

[29] On this concept see B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge 2010); H. Yılmaz, 'Containing Sultanic Authority: Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire Before Modernity', *OA,* 45 (2015), 231-264.

[30] On 'confessionalisation', a term introduced into Ottoman studies by Tijana Krstić, see D.

Baki Tezcan, in his turn, focuses on Kadızade Mehmed himself, the eponymous hero of the seventeenth-century movement. Like Terzioğlu, he also takes as a point of departure a collection of letters, written by the famous preacher in his youth. Having reconstructed his early life (and also clarifying the authorship of works attributed to a certain Kadızade Mehmed İlmî as probably belonging to his more famous namesake), Tezcan studies the list of books Kadızade records as having deeply influenced his thought, and finds that, contrary to what we could expect, he maintained strong Sufi allegiances and was even sympathetic and respectful towards Ibn Arabi, a major target of Kadızadeli preachers later in the century. Tezcan proceeds to a re-assessment of the movement, interpreting the presence or absence of certain issues in public debates in the light of their own Sufi and palace connections.

Another author whose influence was more and more pronounced in Ottoman political thought from the mid seventeenth century onwards was Ibn Khaldun, the Tunisian scholar who arguably can be credited with the invention of sociology. In my own article, I try to explore the reception of Khaldunist ideas in Ottoman political literature. This influence began earlier than thought, as I argue that it can be detected in parts of Kınalızade Ali Çelebi's mid sixteenth century ethical treatise, but it became really important after Kâtip Çelebi and then Mustafa Naima introduced his theory of stages of rise and decline, through which every dynasty or state must pass. I try to show that, later on, from the mid eighteenth century, it was another part of Ibn Khaldun's perception of history that became more influential, namely the conflict between nomadic and settled life and the association of the former with war and victory.

This third part ends with Gottfried Hagen's contribution, which focuses on a specific episode of Islamic sacred history, the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyya, and its uses in order to legitimise temporary peace with the infidels. Studying a series of prophetic biographies and chronicles, Hagen explores various instances of the Prophet being used as a 'role model' for Ottoman policy-making. Making use of Thomas Bauer's suggestion of ambiguity as a constant feature of pre-modern Islam, he shows that the Prophet's *vita* could be interpreted as an urging for war against the infidels, and Naima's famous treatment of al-Hudaybiyya as an argument for making peace. An argument coming from sacred history, Hagen suggest, has not necessarily the same use when taken up by different authors with different aims and in a different political situation.

The reader may have noticed that up to this point neither the present introduction nor the papers presented have touched upon authors writing outside the imperial capital (Kırımî may be considered an exception, but he was living in Istanbul for a long time and his correspondence is very closely tied to palace politics) or belonging to the non-Muslim part of the imperial subjects.[31] Indeed, scholars defining themselves as 'Ottomanists'

Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization: A Historiographical Discussion', *Turcica,* 44 (2012-13), 301-38.

[31] On the Greek (and Romanian) Phanariot political (often historical-*cum*-political or moral-*cum*-political) literature, see A. Duţu, *Les livres de sagesse dans la culture roumaine. Introduction à l'histoire des mentalités sud-est européennes* (Bucharest 1971); D. Apostolopoulos, 'Quelques

more often than not tend to ignore the fact that Armenian, Greek, or Jewish populations also formed an integral part of not only the imperial subjects, but also of Ottoman culture. And it may be one of the major challenges for future Ottomanist studies to incorporate these populations into their vision (as the issue of the present day is the incorporation of Arab-speaking literary and scientific production into Ottoman intellectual history). True, as far as politics (in theory more than in practice, of course) is concerned, one may suggest that Ottoman political thought is closely connected to the central government, which was overwhelmingly Turkish-speaking and Muslim; still, every study of Ottoman politics is surely incomplete if it confines itself to these circles. Part IV of the volume is devoted to such 'oblique views' of the Ottoman state, coming from its periphery, be it ethno-religious or geographical. Konstantinos Moustakas' contribution takes up the viewpoint of the upper strata of the Greek Orthodox population, and more particularly of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in order to examine their views of Ottoman rule during its early centuries. Analysing some texts and chronicles authored by high circles of the Patriarchate (including the first Patriarch, Gennadios Scholarios), Moustakas indicates the ways in which these texts promoted the Sultan's person as a legitimate ruler, characterised by justice and (at least potential) impartiality, while sustaining a distinct identity of the Orthodox flock as against the Ottoman Muslim establishment and population. Through such techniques, one could suggest, the Patriarchate sought to establish its own position both against co-religionists and Muslim antagonists.

Moving away from the Ottoman borders, Denise Klein examines political theory and practice in a neighbouring and closely related state, one whose dynasty was often seen as the only legitimate alternative to the House of Osman,[32] namely the Crimean Tatar Khanate. Klein studies a series of historiographical works produced in the Khanate, in order to explore the political ideology emanating from them, in many ways reminiscent of (and influenced by) its Ottoman counterpart - and in other ways distinctly different (as in the emphasis on the steppe tradition). Furthermore, Klein examines how these authors bypass or justify Ottoman suzerainty, and analyses descriptions of specific episodes of Crimean history to highlight the interplay between historiography and factionalist politics at the Khan's court.

Ariel Salzmann moves even further, at the same time staying at the very centre of the Ottoman Empire: taking as her point of departure an Ottoman report on Toussaint Louverture's Haitian revolt, she proposes to study a global dimension of Ottoman political culture. Salzmann explores the role of the Caribbean revolutions in the geopolitical considerations early nineteenth century Ottoman administrators had concerning their Eu-

---

hypothèses pour l'étude des origines de la pensée politique grecque post-byzantine (1453-1484). Le processus de transformation du concept de «Bien Commun» en rapport avec l'idéologie née après la prise de Constantinople', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Sorbonne University, 1976; Ş. Costache, 'Loyalty and Political Legitimacy in the Phanariots' Historical Writing in the Eighteenth Century', *SF* 69/70 (2010/2011), 25-50; H.R. Shapiro, 'Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate in Early Modern Greek', *JTS,* 42 (2014), 285-316.

[32] F. Emecen, 'Osmanlı hanedanına alternatif arayışlar üzerine bazı örnekler ve mülahazalar', *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6 (2001), 63-76.

ropean alliances, showing that their view of the world might be broader than we tend to think. She also highlights similarities and analogies between the two hemispheres, calling for a contextualisation of Ottoman realities within the entangled histories of a global dimension.

The papers presented so far study more or less varied aspects of political theory, whatever meaning we choose to give the term (political ideas might be a more appropriate term, since not all Ottoman works imply a coherent set of ideas with a descriptive and interpretative function for society). However, political practice is not only supplementary to theory and vice versa; in fact, in order to fully grasp political imaginary and argumentation we have to *include* political behaviour in it. Rituals, symbols, stories, and 'scripts', or mental blueprints shaping social behaviour,[33] should be seen as parts of a 'political language' or 'political discourse'; and such discourses may be co-existing and in conflict with other discourses at a given moment.[34] Moreover, such conflicting discourses may draw ideas, arguments, and non-textual elements from a common inventory, ascribing different contents and using them for different aims. Furthermore, we should not think of political thought as a privilege of literate, educated scholars or informed Sufis. The very existence of 'bottom-up' political action, culminating in military revolts, is an eloquent witness to the diffusion of political ideas, i.e., visions for the Ottoman polity, to broader strata of the society.[35] As a concrete example, one could cite the argument condemning reforms as innovations (*bid'at*) and its appropriation by the Janissaries, against whom it was first used – a process that must have begun by the end of the seventeenth century and which is fully attested one century later.[36]

Such issues, connecting theory and practice, are studied in Part V, the last of this volume. In his contribution, Nicolas Vatin examines the narrative of the Barbaros brothers' rise to power in Algiers, as contained in a folk text intended as political propaganda. Vatin focuses in the period before Hayreddin Barbarossa joined the Ottoman forces, and shows the various levels on which one can read this narrative, which seeks to conceal Algiers' independent actions under an *ex post facto* superimposed imperial legitimacy. As highlighted by this analysis, the virtues and charisma legitimising Hayreddin’s rule are very similar to those used by the Ottoman Sultans in their own legitimising discourse: victorious battles, piety, justice, and so forth. In addition, Vatin delves into the administration of pre-Ottoman Algiers by Hayreddin and illustrates the fine interplay of individual virtues and geopolitical identities which eventually led to both the establishment of the Ottomans in the Maghrib and the subsequent glorious career of Hayreddin as an Ottoman admiral.

---

[33] Such an array of sources (in a non-political context) is used by D. Ze'evi, *Producing Desire. Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2006). On the 'scripts' concept, Ze'evi quotes J. Gagnon, *Human Sexualities* (Glenview 1977), 6; J. Weeks, *Sexuality* (London 1986), 57-58.

[34] The concept of 'political language/discourse' is that of J.G.A. Pocock: J.G.A. Pocock, 'The Concept of a Language and The *Métier d'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice', in A. Pagden (ed.), *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge 1987), 21-25; idem, 'Concepts and Discourses: A Difference in Culture? Comment on a Paper by Melvin Richter', in H. Lehmann and M. Richter (eds), *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts. New Studies on* Begriffsgeschichte (Washington 1996), 47-58. Cf. also Kafadar, 'Osmanlı siyasal düşüncesinin kaynakları', 27-28.

[35] On the broad array of such initiatives see E. Gara, M.E.Kabadayı, C. Neumann (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011); Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives from the Bottom-Up*.

[36] See Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought*, 422-24 and 444-46.

Eunjeong Yi brings us to one of the instances where we can see in a certain detail ‘bottom-up’ action, and a non-military one to boot: the uprising of large segments of the inhabitants of Istanbul against the military regime which had followed Mehmed IV’s deposition in 1688. Yi focuses on the biography of Seyyid Osman Atpazarî, a prominent Sufi figure who played a major role in this uprising. She thus highlights the role played by such figures as a sort of natural leadership for the urban crowd; furthermore, the vivid description of the events in Atpazarî’s *vita* brings to the forefront the discourse and political aims of this crowd, which seldom find their way into more official chronicles.

The rest of the papers deal with the army, the constant protagonist both of political practice (as an actor, and a rebellious one to boot) and theory (as the usual object of criticism and potential reform). Virginia Aksan addresses a subject which was underlying all reformist efforts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century: the apparent inadequacy of the existing army to wage a successful war and, more specifically, the difficulties of mobilising military manpower at this period. She discusses the various forms this mobilisation took since the beginning of the Ottoman state, always examining them in the context of the political structure of the Empire. Aksan shows the close intermingling of military affairs and warfare with the development of the central state and with its changing relations with the periphery, not only in actual networks of power and interdependence but also in ideological representations.

The last two contributions in the volume focus on the same, late period of the pre-Tanzimat era and on the military corps which played the most prominent role in Ottoman politics: the Janissaries. Earlier on, in her own paper, Linda Darling had shown that the transformation of the corps in the late sixteenth century had come in a swifter way than we thought; Yiannis Spyropoulos, in his turn, studies the final stage of this transformation into a military-*cum*-social-*cum*-economic-*cum*-political organisation. Taking the province of Crete as a case study, he shows through a detailed study of judicial archives and registers that this process was equally, if not more, visible on the periphery as in Istanbul, both in terms of political participation and of economic and social role. Furthermore, Spyropoulos suggests that the networks connecting Janissary units of the various port-cities of the Eastern Mediterranean constituted a means for conducting trade and credit activities. His image of the Janissaries as an overwhelmingly provincial institution by the early nineteenth century calls also for a new interpretation of provincial politics and a re-assessment of socio-cultural exchanges within the Empire.

Finally, H. Şükrü Ilıcak’s paper deals with the abolition of the Janissary corps, the (in) famous ‘Auspicious Event’ of 1826. The angle from which he proposes to view this landmark of Ottoman history is rather unusual, as he sees it as an implication, or at any rate as partially a result, of the Greek War of Independence, which had erupted in 1821. Taking as his main source British Ambassador Lord Strangford’s correspondence, Ilıcak shows that the events in Istanbul following the beginning of the war were at the same time the climax of Janissary power and its destruction: whereas the Janissary leaders took extreme measures in the capital against those viewed as Greek conspirators, the eventual failure of all actions against the insurgency (including Janissary regiments sent to suppress it) undermined the status and the prestige of the corps and prepared the ground for a radical reconfiguration of the Ottoman political and military structure.

PART ONE

INTRODUCING POLITICAL THOUGHT

OTTOMAN POLITICAL THEORY, REALITY AND PRACTICE

İ. Metin KUNT[*]

HOW DID MEN LEARN IN THE PAST, HOW DID THEY KNOW? Usually by trial-error-trial-success. Humankind had millennia of experience; thousands of opportunities to try things, note failures, try other things until success at last. People ate berries and mushrooms and grasses and observed that some were good, some not so good, even poisonous. Some helped with headaches or stomach aches. This lore was handed down from generation to generation.

But this knowledge is not sufficent for the inquiring mind. Humankind is not only *erectus* but also *sapiens*. We have a brain and we use it to understand things. Knowing was not enough for our clever ancestors; they also needed to know *why* things were the way they were, *why* some herbs are good and some not, *why* some plants helped with certain illnesses. Thinking about such things, wise men came up with ideas to explain the observed reality. One type of such effort at giving meaning to natural phenomena was spiritual or religious. Some believed that spirits animated things, rocks, or trees, and that some natural beings had a special relationship with particular groups of people, tribes, or settlements, becoming their totems. Others believed in supernatural beings, gods and goddesses having powers over different aspects of life. They also believed that some of these gods or goddesses, rather like the totems, had a special relationship with groups of people, tribes, and settlements or people of professions and crafts. The idea developed that towns or guilds had patron saints or protecting angels.

There were also attempts at making rational sense of things. In different regions of the world different theories were expounded. In East Asia, where the therapy technique of acupuncture was discovered, how it works, and indeed the whole theory of medicine, was explained by the concept of yin and yang. Beyond medicine, too, all phenomena were conceived in terms of this basic duality.

In our own region of the Eastern Mediterranean, the theory of four basic elements was developed. According to this theory, all matter was made up of earth, air, fire, and water. In the field of medicine, a plant observed to be useful in terms of an ailment was deemed to be so because of its dominant nature. Fever in a person obviously indicated the imbalance of the elements in a body with excessive fire. A plant whose main characteristic was water would counteract the fire of fever. Some elements, water and earth, were cool, heavy, and dense by nature, whereas air and fire were hot, they were also fluid and subtle; air and water were wet, but fire and earth were hot. Again, in medical theory, the human body had four types of functions and fluids corresponding to the elements: fire and the digestive system, yellow bile; air and breathing, blood and mucus; water and the urinary system; earth and the dense parts of the body, bones and nails. In a further elaboration of the body and the four elements, the idea developed that the elements corresponded to four bodily fluids and the chief organs: blood, air and spleen; yellow bile, fire and liver; black bile, earth and spleen; phlegm, water and brain. A physician would treat the body in terms of these substances and organs and the natural plants corresponding to or counteracting them.

---

[*] Professor (retired), Sabancı University.

Furthermore, the basic bodily fluids were also known as the humours corresponding to temperaments. So not only was it physical well-being but also psychology which could be explained in these terms. An excess of blood in a person meant warm and moist, a sanguine temperament, therefore a courageous, hopeful, playful, carefree person; yellow bile corresponded to a choleric temperament, and therefore an ambitious, leader-like, restless, easily angered person; black bile corresponded to a melancholic temperament and a despondent, quiet, analytical, serious person; phlegm to a phlegmatic and a calm, thoughtful, patient, peaceful person.

Finally, the four elements and their characteristics also corresponded to the cosmos as a whole and therefore to the pseudo-science of astrology. The 12 signs of the zodiac were divided into four groups of three according to their essential characteristics: Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius were fire signs; Libra, Aquarius, and Gemini corresponded to air; Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces were watery; Capricorn, Taurus, and Virgo were earthy. With these basic correspondences an astrologer could work out the fortunes of people according to their zodiac signs.

In this sense we can say that the theory of the four elements is truly a theory of everything, from medicine to psychology to the stars and fortunes. Nor is it a theory of the past. In medicine we may now believe in different explanations, as we do in psychology. We now have different classifications of personality types and different causalities for medical conditions. Yet the four elements and humours theory of everything has been so strong that millions of people still read their astrological fortunes in their daily papers. The theory captured the artistic imagination to such a high degree that in the arts too the four elements and humours have continued to inspire master works in music and in painting throughout the ages, all the way up to the twentieth century. We find allegorical representations of the Four Elements in the works of painters such as the Italian Arcimboldo and Flemish Beuckelaer in the sixteenth century to the 'Aryan' four elements of Ziegler in twentieth-century Germany. The four humours or temperaments are also represented in twentieth-century music in the works of of Sibelius, Nielsen, and Hindemith, and made into a ballet by Balanchine. The theory of the four elements has been discarded in all the sciences, in physics, chemistry, astronomy, and biology, and so the persistence of the concept in the arts is all the more amazing.

You may well wonder what all this has to do with Ottoman political theory. The thing is that the theory of the four elements was such a powerful tool of explanation that it also involved social and political theory. Society was conceived of as being made up of four groups, of course corresponding to the four elements. These were not classes or castes and did not form a hierarchical organisation as in the Hindu system. In Ottoman Turkish they were referred to as the four *rükn*, the *erkân-ı erbaa*, that together supported the edifice of society. These were the soldiery, the so-called men of the sword; learned men, men of the pen; artisans and traders, men of negotiation; and, finally, peasants, agricultural producers, tillers, and animal breeders. These four social groups corresponded to the four humours and the four elements and had their characteristics.

This elaboration of the four elements/humours in the social sphere is an Ottoman inheritance from earlier Islamic thought, which in turn was based on the Greco-Roman heritage of the Mediterranean basin. In the mid sixteenth century, Kınalızade Ali used the concepts in his *Ahlâk*. Towards the end of the century there appeared treatises on the causes of the perceived decline in state and society. In the seventeenth century, Kâtip Çelebi explained Ottoman decline in a theoretical framework in terms of the imbalance in the body politic: as illness in humans was conceived as an imbalance of the four humours, so, Kâtip Çelebi wrote, the problems in the Ottoman body politic were due to an imbalance because of the inordinate increase in the size of the military. The correct treatment, not by a physician in this case, but by a strict ruler, a *sahibü's-seyf* in his words, a forceful wielder of the sword of discipline, would be to reduce the military to regain balance. He also added a further feature to his analysis: that at different ages the body had different balances of its humours. In the old age of a body politic it was inevitable that there would be more military than in younger days. In his view, the Ottoman Empire was heading into old age and so the size of the military could not be brought down to the levels of earlier times.

This idea that the body politic ages as the human body does brings up a further elaboration, another view of history, that of cyclical changes in the fortunes of states. As a human body is born, develops, gets older, and eventually dies, so does the body politic. Cornell Fleischer demonstrated many years ago that Ottoman political writers arrived at this idea before they were aware of the writings of Ibn Khaldun, the great historian of the Maghreb, who developed his idea of history as a preamble, the *Prolegomena* to his historical study. The cyclical view of history is now firmly associated with Ibn Khaldun, but Ottomans too had arrived at this idea. Like Shakespeare's seven ages of man, this was indeed a widespread conception. In Kâtip Çelebi this appears as three stages in the life cycle of a state. By the early eighteenth century, Ottoman intellectuals had read Ibn Khaldun himself, and adopted his cycle of five stages. They were so impressed by the *Prolegomena* that the circle of intellectuals around Ahmed III (r. 1703-1730) and his Grand Vezir, Ibrahim Pasha of Nevşehir, which has lately been likened to a royal academy similar to the British and French Royal Societies of a generation earlier, decided that Ibn Khaldun's work should be translated into Ottoman Turkish. The task was taken up by the scholar, later *şeyhülislam*, Mehmet Sahib Efendi (1674-1749). This translation was completed only in the following century and published in Istanbul; by then, Mehmet Sahib's contemporary Gianbattista Vico (1668-1744) had also published a work influenced by Ibn Khaldun.

Already in the seventeenth century, Kâtip Çelebi thought that the Ottoman Empire was in old age; the historian Naima, writing in the early decades of the eighteenth century, was also of that opinion. Some people lived longer, so did some political structures, with clean living and the care of a good physician, but demise was inevitable. But by the nineteenth century, Ottoman political disourse changed: the state was now called *'devlet-i ebed-müddet*', the eternal state. It is a phrase redolent of alliteration and musicality, but no more true than the 'thousand-year Reich'. What is the state in this expression? It is not a realm like China or Iran where dynasties come and go but the *'devlet-i aliyye-i Osmanî'*, the great Ottoman state. Once the dynasty goes, so does the state. Did nineteenth-century Ottomans believe their state could be eternal? Can this notion be considered political theory? Or was it simply propaganda? What is the difference between political theory and propaganda? Who was the target audience? Were Ottomans fooling themselves, or were they attempting to fool others, their bureaucrats, their people or outsiders?

Whatever the political ideas, theory, or propaganda, whether there is a cyclical view of history or belief in the durability of the Ottoman state, there is a basic problem with the notion of the four elements and four humours as an explanation of Ottoman reality. The truth is that there were two different kinds of cleavages in Ottoman society much more important than the four pillars. One was that in fact the Ottomans conceived of their society as being composed of two groups, those that produced and paid taxes, and those who administered and were remunerated. The Ottoman terms for these two groups were *askerî* for the members of the state and *reaya* for the tax-paying subjects. The literal meaning of these terms is instructive: *askerî* means the military and *reaya* means the flock. Military, in this context, does not mean strictly fighters but any state officials, including bureaucrats, lawyers, and teachers. They together tend their flock, the subjects. The imagery might have been the same as in the Christian clerical hierarchy, but here it was the horsemen, the original military who were the shepherds. Two of the four pillars of society, according to the political theory, the fighters and the learned men, made up the *askerî* group, while the two others, artisans and farmers, were the Ottoman *reaya*. In reality, the four pillars were not equal at all. The other cleavage does not even get a mention, but it is at least as serious and in fact in time it became perhaps the more important division. This has to do with religious identity. The four-pillars model does not take into account that there were many non-Muslims in Ottoman society, perhaps as many as there were Muslims. The distinctions in both cleavages were so serious that members of different groups were expected to wear different clothing. In the case of non-Muslims, this is well known, under the rubric of sumptuary laws: different religious groups were to wear different colours in their clothing so they could be immediately identified. These expectations may have been only sporadically observed, in fact more often breached, nevertheless the expectation remained and was renewed in fermans from time to time. It is less well known that there was also an expectation that subjects should not wear opulent clothing. This is in fact the primary meaning of the term 'sumptuary laws', that opulence and ostentation should be curbed. The notion is quite universal; it is observed in many periods of history and in many regions. The most striking example in Ottoman history was when Sultan Suleiman, himself famous as the 'Magnificent', was greeted by the burghers of Bursa when he visited in 1538. To welcome the Sultan to their city, the leading people of Bursa rode out in their holiday best, but they were shocked when the Sultan was not delighted to see them at all, but was outraged, and berated them for their rich clothing and horses. Such opulence was for his officers and officials, he said, not for the commoners. An Ottoman subject could be prosperous but never ostentatious.

How could Ottoman theorists make do with a theory that ignored the *askerî-reaya* distinction and left out half its subjects? What practical conclusions could they draw from their theory to help with practical policies? There was in fact another formulation which may have influenced the behaviour of Ottoman rulers and the ruling elites. This is known as the 'circle of equity' and places the four pillars in relationship with each other. The soldiers protect society, the learned men provide education and the judicial system, with their protection the subjects produce goods and pay taxes, which support the soldiery and the men of learning. In other words they all need each other. The ruler was seen as the centre of this circular relationship, the axle of the social wheel. The Sultan needed to be a just ruler, which meant not only that he should provide justice for all his subjects, but that justice was also keeping the social balance. The different elements should be in equipose, none should gain ascendancy over the others. Here once again the subjects were not differentiated according to religious identity, but this was a positive neglect of confessional reality: the Sultan was the ruler of all and he had to be a just ruler to all. The idea of the just ruler was taken seriously in political commentaries and at least some Sultans tried to live up to this expectation, that he should protect all his subjects and be just to all. To know to what extent they succeeded, one needs to consider not only what Muslim authors wrote, but also what the Christians and Jews thought about their Sultan, whether they considered him their rightful and righteous ruler.

I am confident that the papers presented at this conference will be of great help in answering such fundamental questions. In human history, theory may have followed reality, but once it took hold of people's imagination, it in turn had an impact on reality. This interplay is an eminently worthy theme.

OTTOMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT:
TOWARD A REVISED HISTORY

Linda T. Darling[*]

Ottoman political thought has long been viewed in contrast with that of Europe. European studies of political thought have concentrated mainly on the questions of the development of concepts of democracy and limited monarchy, and the reasons why such ideas did not develop in other world areas.[1] European writing on Ottoman political thought has targeted the dependence of sultanic autocracy on Islamic or Persian political ideas, the failure of political thinkers in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries successfully to 'reform' Ottoman governance, and the adoption of Western political concepts during and after the Tanzimat.[2]

In recent years, however, interest in Ottoman political thought has escalated in many disciplines and periods. Its significance now extends outside Ottoman history, as world historians and students of empire include the Ottomans in their comparative purview, and as the perennial appeal of mirrors for princes intensifies.[3] Scholars now go beyond the standard literature and the standard narrative to study neglected works, revise the narrative, and compare it or connect it with narratives of European and Eastern political thought.[4]

---

[*] University of Arizona.

[1] For example, J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge 1985). For the Middle East see A. Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York 2001).

[2] C. H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton 1986); B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford 1961); N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal 1964; rpt. New York 1998).

[3] P. F. Bang and D. Kołodziejczyk (eds), *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History* (Cambridge 2012); V. Syros (ed.), *Well Begun Is Only Half Done: Tracing Aristotle's Political Ideas in Medieval Arabic, Syriac, Byzantine, and Jewish Sources* (Tempe 2011); P. Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York 2004); A. al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian, and Pagan Polities* (London 1997).

[4] B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early*

As a number of the papers in this volume show, however, our concept of Ottoman political thought needs to be based not only on the thinking of elite political writers but also that of rulers and their mostly non-literate subjects, as far as it can be determined from their actions.[5] For this we need sources beyond formal political literature. Too much reliance has been placed on the literature of advice, which represents only the opinions of a minority faction within the elite and not the directions taken by the state. One of the intriguing things about these papers, as well as much of the recent work on Ottoman political thought, is the way they expand the source base. Beyond the traditional histories, mirrors for princes, and literature of advice, political thought is being traced in documents, law codes, poetry, miniatures, petitions, architecture, and a host of other types of sources. Different genres of writing served different functions and reflected the political ideas of different social groups. Moving outward from the traditional literary sources enables us to study the political thought of state officials and of wider groups in society.

Ottoman political thought often appears reactive, a response to circumstances perceived as threatening the status quo, which caused a re-assertion or a rethinking of institutions, relationships, and what we would today call ideologies which were taken for granted most of the time. Much of the earliest Ottoman political literature was an adaptation of the works and ideas of the past, and it was apparently when the Ottomans faced new challenges that they engaged in original political thought. Thus, to be properly understood, works of political thought must be contextualised in their historical setting; also significant are the authors' personal concerns and position in society, as well as the works' relationship to one another. The detailed study of individual works, therefore, must be accompanied by efforts to construct and refine a broader history of Ottoman political thought. Such an effort is outlined here.[6]

The Ottomans worked within a political tradition inherited from the Seljuks and Ilkhanids which was composed of three interpenetrating strands; one may be called Islamic, in that it was drawn from the experience and writings of the early Muslim community; another Near Eastern, the inheritance of the pre-Islamic empires of the Middle East and Persia, developed further by the Umayyads, the Abbasids, and their successors; and the third Turco-Mongol, founded on steppe tribal governance and law.[7] To this inheritance

---

Modern World (New York 2010); H. Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought* (Princeton 2018). Comparisons with other literatures often encounter severe difficulties; see L. T. Darling, 'Mirrors for Princes in Europe and the Middle East: A Case of Historiographical Incommensurability', in A. Classen (ed.), *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World* (Berlin and Boston 2013), 223-242.

[5] On this subject see further L. T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (London 2013).

[6] The essay which follows is based on L. T. Darling, 'Ottomans (1299-1924)', in G. Böwering, P. Crone, W. al-Kadi, D. Stewart, and M. Q. Zaman (eds), *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought* (Princeton 2012), 402-403.

[7] H. İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age*, trans. N. Itzkowitz (London 1973), 65-69; Darling, *Social Justice and Political Power*.

they added elements of Byzantine political thought, acquired through a long period of interaction and conquest and especially relevant after their conquest of Constantinople in 1453. The Ottomans, like the Mongols, saw world conquest as the main purpose of rule. Despite rhetorical differences, this purpose was generally in harmony with Islamic monotheism's goal of world domination and conversion as well as Near Eastern royal authority and bureaucratic governance. Like the Ilkhanids and other Mongol polities, they also found that ruler's law and the practice of justice, reconciled with Islamic law and implemented in state courts, could create a political community that went beyond the Muslims to include the ruler's subjects of all faiths. By the sixteenth-century reign of Sultan Süleyman (1520-1566), the author Kınalızade and many others apparently believed that the Ottomans had succeeded, or were about to succeed, in creating the just and virtuous government recommended by the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle.[8]

Two major tensions modified this fairly straightforward development. First, the initial Ottoman conquests were made in Byzantine territory, and for over two centuries Muslims were in the minority in the empire of the Ottomans. Gaining non-Muslim loyalty and co-operation was necessary for survival and growth, and early rulers allied with Christian powers, created non-Muslim military units, and brought non-Muslims into the palace and the central administration.[9] Many of these non-Muslims converted to Islam, but nevertheless some Muslims blamed them for the ostensible 'corruption' that they introduced into supposedly pure 'Islamic' politics.[10] For such critics, the assimilation of ideas and institutions from non-Ottoman, non-Turkish, or non-Muslim sources became an excuse for the rejection of state policies. As in earlier Muslim politics (the Abbasid period is an example), an opposition strain developed in Ottoman politics which used Islamic piety and an abhorrence of outside influences to critique the state and condemned rulers' pragmatic politics of incorporation as the source of all political problems besetting the Empire. This opposition strain re-appeared again and again in different forms.

The other main tension within political thought derived from the Ottomans' transition from the conquest state and expanding economy of the early centuries to the stable geography and challenged economy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and then to the shrinking Empire and modernisation efforts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The turmoils and re-adjustments generated by these changes were seen as a decline from an initial state of purity and obedience, when the Ottoman *gazi*s under the early Sultans created and expanded the Empire.[11] In European Orientalist thought this became a decline from a strong, successful state to a weak and decadent state, a reduction of the

---

[8] Kınalızade Ali Çelebi, *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* (Bulaq H.1248/1832), 2:105-106.

[9] See H. W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany 2003); C. Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London 2011).

[10] For example, F. Giese, *Die altosmanischen anonymen Chroniken = Tevarih-i Âl-i 'Osman: Text und Übersetzung*, pt. 2 (Leipzig 1925), 27-33.

[11] See C. Kafadar, 'On the Purity and Corruption of the Janissaries', *TSAB*, 15 (1991), 273-274; idem, 'The Question of Ottoman Decline', *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, 4 (1997-1998), 43.

Empire's original potential for world conquest (thankfully!) and a growth of corruption and inefficiency.[12] This change, however it should be interpreted, generated a literature of advice and repair of the state that became the most prominent strand of Ottoman political thought, especially in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and was among the earliest types of literature to be published and translated in the West.[13] On the basis of these works, both Ottoman thinkers and later scholars concentrated on decline and decline consciousness, paying little or no attention to aspects of Ottoman history and society that pointed in other directions.

These works of advice, the *nasihatname*s, are often taken as equivalent to Ottoman political thought, although, as has been pointed out, they represent the thought of only one class of Ottomans, the literate elite.[14] The history of political literature, however, is broader than these advice texts. The earliest Turkish and Ottoman political works, appearing in the fourteenth century, were translations and adaptations of Seljuk and Ilkhanid mirrors for princes. The first original works were composed in the fifteenth century within that literary tradition, but in varied genres.[15] In addition to mirrors for princes, histories and historical epics, poems, letters, and ethical works also conveyed their authors' attitudes toward the state, individual rulers, and specific policies. In the early sixteenth century, the Ottoman prince Korkud and the Grand Vizier Lütfi Pasha wrote political works in new styles outside the mirror for princes, Korkud in the genre of Islamic argument, and Lütfi Pasha in the new manner of candid political advice.[16]

Several of these works, even some of the earliest, exhibited a theme that would become characteristic of Ottoman political writing: the greatness and virtue of government in the past (the Ottoman past or even the distant Muslim past) and its sad decline in the present. This theme has nothing to do with what has come to be known as 'the decline of the Ottoman Empire', although it has often been taken as a representation of it. Writers in the first decade or so of the fifteenth century, such as Ahmedî, Yahşi Fakih, and the anonymous author of the recently-discovered *gazaname* of Murad I (1362-1389), already sounded this note, claiming that the 'Byzantine' administrative complexity introduced by Bayezid I (1389-1402) corrupted the purity of the nomad conquerors and caused them to lose divine favour, permitting the defeat by Timur in 1402.[17] Each subsequent era was seen as worse than the one before, even that of Süleyman the Magnificent, despite the eulogistic gloss of the official histories. Measured against the ideal state of these writers’ imaginings, real political life repeatedly demonstrated the validity of this theme.

---

[12] B. Lewis, 'Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire', *SI*, 9 (1958), 111-127.

[13] B. Lewis, 'Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline', *Islamic Studies*, 1 (1962), 71-87.

[14] R. A. Abou El-Haj, 'The Expression of Ottoman Political Culture in the Literature of Advice to Princes (Nasihatnameler): Sixteenth to Twentieth Centuries', in R. K. Bhattacharya and A. K. Ghosh (eds), *Sociology in the Rubric of Social Science: Professor Ramkrishna Mukherjee Felicitation Volume* (Calcutta 1995), 282-292.

[15] Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*, trans. K. Silay, 'Aḥmedī's History of the Ottoman Dynasty', *JTS*, 16 (1992), 129-200; Şeyhoğlu, *Kenzü'l-Küberâ ve Mehekkü'l-Ulemâ*, ed. Kemal Yavuz (Ankara 1991); Ahmed b. Hüsameddin el-Amasî, *Mir'atü'l-Mülûk*, MS Süleymaniye Esad Efendi 1890; Sinan Paşa, *Maarifnâme*, ed. İ. H. Ertaylan (Istanbul 1961).

[16] N. Al-Tikriti, 'Şehzade Korkud [ca. 1468-1513]', in K. Çiçek (ed.) *Pax Ottomana: Studies in Memoriam Prof. Dr. Nejat Göyünç* (Haarlem and Ankara 2001), 659-674; M. S. Kütükoğlu, 'Lütfi Paşa Âsafnâmesi (Yeni Bir Metin Tesisi Denemesi)', in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* (Istanbul 1991), 49-99.

This argument suddenly became politically relevant in the disturbed conditions of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when Sultans were young, uninterested, or mentally deficient, and governance was in the hands of palace personnel and women. No longer just an antiquarian musing on the past, it became a weapon for factional infighting in the form of a veritable outburst of political writing in the new style of ‘honest advice’ introduced by Lütfi Pasha. Officials and administrators, such as Mustafa Ali, Koçi Bey, Kâtip Çelebi, and others less well known or still unpublished, censured the government’s inability to cope with drastic climatic, economic, technological, and geopolitical changes and blamed it on a loss of administrative ethics and a collapse of the social structure.[18] They wanted either to restore the governing effectiveness of the Süleymanic period or to impel the Sultan to seize the reins of government and eliminate bureaucratic corruption and the crossing of social class lines by force. Meanwhile, the Kadızadeli opposition, mainly critics in religious positions, complained in Islamic terms about sins and ethical deviations in the body politic, such as Sufi worship, coffee and tobacco consumption, and peace with Christian states.[19] They wanted to convert the ruler and his entourage to a more pious and traditional Islam and thus activate God’s approval in support of the Ottomans on the world stage. The Ottoman defeat at Vienna in 1683 ended the debate between these two positions as to the real cause of the Empire’s woes in favour of the former position. The question was not really resolved, however, as evidenced by eighteenth-century governmental efforts to address both sets of concerns through military-political reform and the preaching of Islam. In that century, politics also spread beyond the elites; a popular politics of artisans, urban migrants, and their Janissary and ulema protectors developed in the cities, and at the same time a politics of rural notables and tax-farmers emerged in the provinces. Our consideration of Ottoman political thought needs to take account of this broadening of the politically relevant population, which undoubtedly had political ideas as well.

---

[17] See Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*; D. J. Kastritsis (ed. and trans.), *The Tales of Sultan Mehmed, Son of Bayezid Khan* (Cambridge 2007), 1-39; Aşıkpaşazade, *‘Āshıkpashazādeh Ta’rīkhī: A History of the Ottoman Empire to A.H. 833 (AD 1478)*, ed. Ali Bey (Istanbul 1914; rpt. Westmead 1970), 54, 70.

[18] The classic works are: Mustafa Ali, *Nushatü’s-selâtin,* ed. and trans. A. Tietze as *Muṣṭafā ‘Ālī’s Counsel for Sultans of 1581: Edition, Translation, Notes,* 2 vols (Vienna 1979, 1982), hereafter Mustafa Ali, *Counsel for Sultans*; Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risalesi,* ed. A. K. Aksüt (Istanbul 1939); idem, *Koçi Bey Risalesi*, ed. Y. Kurt (Ankara 1994); Kâtip Çelebi, *Düstûrü’l-amel li-ıslahi’l-halel*, in Ayn-ı Ali Efendi, *Kavânîn-i Âl-i Osman der hülâsa-i mezâmin-i defter-i dîvân*, ed. M. T. Gökbilgin, 119-140 (Istanbul 1979); trans. A. Can as *Bozuklukların düzeltilmesinde tutulacak yollar (düstûru’l-amel li-ıslahi’l-halel)* (Ankara 1982).

[19] M. C. Zilfi, ‘The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul’, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 45 (1986), 251-269.

Nineteenth-century European political ideas appeared to offer a way out of this endless spiral through their assumptions about progress and development. They were therefore embraced with enthusiasm, especially by Tanzimat officials responsible for the Empire's survival. These officials instituted regulatory changes backed by ruler's law, with provisions treating non-Muslims equally with Muslims and bringing them into the government. The Islamic tradition also offered traditional ideas re-interpreted to support aspects of modernisation, such as protection of the Empire's subjects, the Sultans' power as Caliph of the Muslims to order society and government for the benefit of his people, adherence to law, especially Islamic law, and fairness of taxation. An opposition strain dismissed European ideas as one more foreign intervention or wielded Islamic concepts in rejection of the 'corruption' of Westernisation. While reforming officials laboured to implement bureaucratic modernisation, the Young Ottomans generated a new political literature advocating limited monarchy and individual rights, often with Islamic ideas as justification. In turn, the Hamidian period saw Islamic concepts used to justify top-down modernisation and sultanic absolutism. All these ideas prepared the way for the republican government and popular politics of the twentieth century.[20]

Would a history of political thought based on practice rather than precept have the same trajectory? The papers in this volume are part of an effort not only to expand our understanding of Ottoman political thought, but also to interpret it in the light of Ottoman political behaviour. We must do intellectual history with social history always in view. Even with respect to political ideals, and still more so regarding reports of political actions, we need to ask, out of what situation and social configuration did this work arise and what effect did it have on Ottoman political and social life? Did people believe these statements and did they attempt to act accordingly? Is there any way to check what the political writers reported about the conditions of their day? The question of what specific terms meant usually means 'in political argument', but we also ought to try to determine what they meant in Ottoman society more broadly. We should investigate how a specific work interacted with other works; did it agree or disagree with those written before or after it? We also ought to look for its role in society, who read it and how it was used. Most of the authors were members of the political elite, in or out of office, successes or failures, satisfied or disgruntled, often unhappy with what was going on around them. As has been pointed out, they all had their personal agendas, and we cannot interpret their works rightly without knowing those agendas.[21] Even though they wrote in general terms, they were often addressing specific conditions, and to understand those conditions we need to read the chronicles and study the archival documents and other sources that reveal the political thought of those who did not write literary works.

---

[20] H. İnalcık, 'The Nature of Traditional Society: Turkey', in R. E. Ward and D.A Rostow (eds), *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton 1964), 42-63; Darling, *Social Justice and Political Power*, 158-166, 171-177.

[21] R. A. Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany 1991), 22.

Most importantly, we need to free ourselves from the standard narrative of political thought and from the temptation just to add more details without rethinking the whole. Those who wrote the texts of Ottoman political thought wrote within an extremely robust tradition that shaped and limited what they said and how they said it. Attention to political practice, to the ideas of those who did not write or could not write, or who wrote what is not commonly considered political literature, enables us to bypass the stereotypes and understand Ottoman society afresh.

PART TWO

WORDS AND CONCEPTS

OTTOMANS, OTTOMANISTS AND THE STATE:
RE-DEFINING AN ETHOS OF POWER IN THE LONG SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Heather L. Ferguson[*]

Scholars attentive to Ottoman trends in history writing over the past decade have produced rich, and richly illustrated, analytical frameworks for assessing the linkages between historical narratives, political ideologies, and the operations of the Ottoman establishment.[1] One consequence of this newly-defined research agenda has been a reassessment of the Ottoman state as an object of historical inquiry. Thus, from the early attempts to invest Osman's dynasty with legitimacy,[2] to the seventeenth-century controversies that led to new manuscript production agendas and ultimately disseminated competing visions of Ottoman authority,[3] this wellspring of scholarship on history and statehood has all but re-defined the field of Ottoman studies. In part, this is due to a generalizable effort to delineate Ottoman state dynamics in relation to discourse, and to the way in which structures of thought and modes of practice play a role in both defining and dispensing

---

[*] Claremont McKenna College.

[1] Emine Fetvacı's masterpiece demonstrates this trend: *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington 2013). I would like to thank Marinos Sariyannis for his patient and gracious guidance through the publication process. The inspiring and productive comments from the anonymous reviewer also enabled me to reframe some of the arguments presented here and for this I am also grateful. Of course, all errors of fact and judgment are my own. I should also note that my effort here to reflect on the interplay between state and *state* also formed the theoretical backdrop to my book *The Proper Order of Things: Language, Power and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* (Stanford 2018). For a slightly different approach to the historiographic topics and historical personages addressed here, see the introduction and chapter four.

[2] See the oft-cited, C. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley 1995).

[3] For a less obvious example, consult J. Pfeiffer, 'Confessional Polarization in the 17th Century Ottoman Empire and Yūsuf İbn Ebī 'Abdü'd-Deyyān's Keşfü'l-esrār fī ilzāmi'l-Yehūd ve'l-aḥbār', in C. Adang and S. Schmidtke (eds.), *Contacts and Controversies between Muslims, Jews and Christians in the Ottoman Empire and Pre-Modern Iran* (Würzburg 2010), 15–55. Further, the collected essays in H. E. Çıpa and E. Fetvacı (eds), *Writing History at the Ottoman Court: Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future* (Bloomington 2013) indicate the expansive cohort of scholars attentive to the intersection between narrative and historical processes.

authoritative claims and positions across the imperial domains. However, as this essay seeks to demonstrate, Ottoman studies as a whole still grapple with a basic conundrum that often undermines even the most innovative scholarship: how should Ottomanists assess the difference, if indeed there is one, between narratives *about* the state (referenced here onward as 'state', in scare quotes) and the state *in itself* (referenced as *state*, in italics, so as to simplify the methodological distinction between the two).[4]

Like most conundrums, this 'state'/*state* distinction and its varied entangled problematics possess many, often hidden, internal complexities that shadow research into Ottoman imperial dynamics. Only four of these complexities will be fully addressed in the sections below, with the intent first to provide a distillation of trends and then to serve as a potential stimulus for future discussion. First, questions concerning the 'state'/*state* require a reassertion of commensurate AfroEurasian histories, a point Marshall Hodgson definitively made in the 1970s, but one which Ottomanists often lost sight of when delving into the intricacies of politics and administration under the auspices of the House of Osman.[5] Second, within the shared environment of centralizing early modern courts, the relationship between absolutist and universalist *claims* of rulers and the quite obviously mediated and fragmented *nature* of their rule, also requires careful disambiguation. Third, and perhaps most purposefully, attention should be paid to the conjuncture between the methods by which scholars and bureaucrats conceptualized imperial power and prescribed formal rubrics for articulating political thought and the varied modes of administrative practice adhered to within Ottoman domains. This last point also draws attention to the intersection between a potentially 'Ottoman' mode of understanding and practice and the efforts by 'Ottomanists' to assess these dynamics in current scholarship. Hence the essay's title and intent to identify efforts by both Ottomans and Ottomanists to measure and define a political ethos associated with the 'state' and with state-making projects within the imperial domain. Finally, discernable within each of these three points are the questions of periodization that remain unresolved despite the post-declensionist nature of Ottoman imperial scholarship.[6] Lacking a clear substitute for the 'post-classical' framework established by the doyen of the field, Halil İnalcık, this essay adopts a trick of the trade, by elongating the timescape of analysis. While the "long sixteenth century" may seem glib, the titular small gesture is also purposeful: it connects the centralizing trends of the sixteenth century with discourses of imperial power and the reformulation of administrative structures extending into the new geopolitical environments of the mid-seventeenth century.[7] The essay thereby presumptively moves beyond approaches that suggest ruptures and/or continuities, or amorphous 'transformations' as decline alternatives. The section which follows delineates how each of the above conundrums become intertwined in both historical and historiographic treatments of the Ottoman 'state'/*state*.

---

[4] Gabi Piterberg pointedly asserted this problematic in his cursory, yet pithy, foray into seventeenth-century chronicle writing: G. Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley 2003).

[5] M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago 1974); and E. Burke (ed.), *Rethinking World History: Essays on Europe, Islam, and World History* (Cambridge 1993).

[6] The literature germane to these opening claims will be addressed in detail below; however, it bears noting that two of the most significant efforts to address problems of periodization are now decades old: J. Hathaway, 'Problems of Periodization in Ottoman History: The 15th through the 18th Centuries', *TSAB* 20, (1996), 25-31, and L. Peirce, 'Changing Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire: The Early Centuries', *Mediterranean Historical Review,* 19 (2004), 6-28.

Contrapuntal Histories: Alternate Pathways to the 'State'[8]

Cornel Fleischer's customarily portentous insights into the "Ibn Khaldunism" of Ottoman litterateurs provides a superb framework for integrating Ottomans with Ottomanists, political thought with administrative practice, the House of Osman with surrounding dynastic and monarchical lineages, and epochal with synchronic methodologies.[9] Debates concerning how Ibn Khaldun's (d. 1395) cyclical universalism traversed Ottoman intellectual domains continue, yet notable indeed is how the self-trained polymath Kâtip Çelebi came to embrace a life-cycle approach to assessing historical change.[10] His short tract, *Düstûrü'l-amel li-ıslahi'l-halel* or the *Guiding Principles for the Rectification of Defects,* singularly condenses a range of concerns pertaining to the presumed 'corruption' of the Ottoman state in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and proposes a reformist goal to ensure the continued durability of the Ottoman Empire.[11] He does so by placing the Ottoman establishment within Ibn Khaldun's life-cycle mapping of imperial trajectories, and thus within the legacy of late antique and Islamicate philosophies of the 'embodied' politic. Kâtip Çelebi ultimately identifies strategies so as to extend the Empire's 'age of maturity' and in the process articulates a distinct notion of Ottoman power, separate from the Sultan yet evocative of a hierarchical state ecology. Scholars of the Ottoman Empire have also long sought to understand the 'middle years' of the dynasty, when victorious battles could no longer serve as signposts for imperial success. They have further debated the nature of Ottoman power, its relationship, or lack thereof, with contemporaries, and the best means to articulate a narrative of *state* transformation from conquest to consolidation. Confusion over how best to characterize the relationship between centralized courts, the population they managed, and the tactics deployed to ensure longevity is not unique to the Ottoman case. In fact, one of the most compelling debates in historical studies concerns the relationship between *state* formation and standards for periodization. Triggered by Norbert Elias's *The Civilizing Process*, a broad analytical effort to re-define court politics in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries also foregrounded a historiographical 'middle period' between fragmentary medieval kingdoms and the formation of the modern state.[12] The coincident creation of centralized courts with established seats of power across Eurasia was dramatic, and inspired historiographical efforts to assess a comparative politics of state-making that began in the fifteenth century. The list is geographically diffuse, with the Ming Yongel Emperor (r. 1402 1424), Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-46 and 1451-81) joined by Philip the Good (r. 1419-67) and Charles the Bold (r. 1467-77) in Burgundy, Matthias Corvinus in Hungary (r. 1458-1490), along with Louis XI (r. 1461-1483) in France, Henry VII (r. 1485-1509) in England, and Ferdinand of Aragon (r. 1468-1516) with Isabella of Castile (r. 1468-1504) laying claim to ever more territory in the Iberian Peninsula. The trend continued in the early sixteenth century, with the establishment of the Safavid (1502) and Mughal (1526) Empires. Deemed by Randolph Starn "the early modern muddle", initial efforts to characterize the period tended toward developmentalist models that presumed the teleology of the nation-state and reinforced Eurocentric narratives of modernity.[13]

---

[7] After writing this article and completing final updates to footnotes and commentary, I fortunately happened upon Kaya Şahin's superb review essay K. Şahin, 'The Ottoman Empire in the Long Sixteenth Century', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 70 (2017), 220-234. This coincidence in an 'elongating effort' indicates a clear trend toward unseating 'rise and decline' tropes in the field.

[8] "Contrapuntal" as a mode of critical analysis derives from E. Said's effort in *Culture and Imperialism* (New York 1993), 51 to form what might be termed a 'simultaneity of analysis' between literary works produced in the metropolis and those in the colonies. This simultaneity of analysis, and the productive dissonance and revelatory insights achieved through interweaving sources, timescapes, and cultural zones, can arguably be adapted to address potential intersections between Ottoman scholar-bureaucrats and Ottomanist practitioners in the present

[9] C. H. Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and 'Ibn Khaldûnism' in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18 (1983), 198-220.

[10] See Marinos Sariyannis' contribution to the present volume and comprehensive assessment of key shifts in conceptual and political treatments of state and statecraft in *Ottoman Political Thought up to the Tanzimat: A Concise History* (Rethymno 2015). My historiographic arguments owe much to the work of N. Sigalas, 'Devlet et état: du glissement sémantique d'un ancien concept du pouvoir au début du XVIIIe siècle ottoman', in G. Grivaud and S. Petmezas (eds) *Byzantina et Moderna: Mélanges en l'honneur d'Hélène Antoniadis-Bibicou* (Athens 2007), 385-415.

[11] There are several preserved manuscripts of this pamphlet. The Süleymaniye Library contains four: Esad Efendi, No. 2067-1; Hıdiv İsmail Paşa, No. 142; Hamidiye, No. 1469; Lala İsmail, No. 343. There is also one held in the Nuruosmaniye Library, No. 4075. A printed copy of the pamphlet was also appended to two works of Ayn-ı Ali Efendi, *Kavanin-i Al-i Osman der hülâsa-i mezamin-i defter-i divan* and *Risale-i vazife-horân ve meratib-i bendegân-ı Al-i Osman*. This manuscript is also contained in the Süleymaniye Library, İzmirli İsmail Hakkı, No. 2472.

This printed manuscript copy was also published in the late nineteenth century, *Kavanin-i Al-i Osman der hülâsa-i mezamin-i defter-i divan* (Istanbul 1864), 119-140.

[12] N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (New York 1978).

[13] R. Starn, 'The Early Modern Muddle', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 6 (2002), 296-307. Dipesh Chakrabarty, in a more recent review of the politics and biases of periodization, suggests the term acts as a form of intellectual laziness, although he is more troubled by the distinction between modernization and modernity than by the 'early modern' compound phrase, 'The Muddle of Modernity', *The American Historical Review,* 116 (2011), 663-675. The special issue of *Daedalus* devoted to early modernities includes scholars who argue for the importance of terms like state, nation, community, and public sphere for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries across the political and geographical range of Eurasia, such as Tokugawa Japan, Korea, Ming China, Spain, France, and India. See 'Early Modernities', *Daedalus*, 127 (1998). Kathleen Davis applies the most trenchant critique of historiographical assumptions contained in periodization schemes and categories such as 'early modern' and 'feudal' in K. Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia 2008).

Norbert Elias suggested that the court served as an agent and expression of monarchical absolutism, as it sublimated the nobility to play a high-stakes game for favor within the ambit of absolutist courts. He further argued that this game, and the military, fiscal, and ethical norms associated with it, marked a transitional phase between feudal, decentralized politics and the democratic centralization of the modern liberal state. He insisted that the formation of an established court, polite culture, and bureaucratic rule in combination yielded an alliance between an emergent bourgeoisie and the princely ruler, and was the key conjuncture leading toward the development of a modern nation state.[14] Perry Anderson, by contrast, understood the absolutist states of the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries as transitional phenomena, allowing for the growth of the bourgeoisie while concentrating feudal power and privilege in the state apparatus.[15] Eugene Rice and Anthony Grafton sum up this approach by rather blandly stating that before the early modern period European states were more feudal than sovereign and after it more sovereign than feudal.[16] While for Elias, the "transformation of the nobility from a class of knights into a class of courtiers" was a prime example of the "civilizing process", for more recent analysts, the court was neither a monolithic entity, nor an instrument of autocracy, and Louis XIV's Versailles, often proffered as the ultimate site of domestication, stands instead as an exemplar of its ambiguous and porous existence.[17]

This move, from absolutist and centralized to ambiguous and porous, also marked a shift in the field of Ottoman Studies from idealist and developmentalist models of the 1970s and 80s to a new literature that emphasized the way in which the *state* was itself historically constructed. The most influential historian of the Ottoman *state* in a developmentalist mode is Halil İnalcık, whose sweeping work on *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600* remains a landmark in the field. İnalcık depicted the *state* as a set of autonomous institutions that were intentionally generated, revelatory of an ideological essence, and clearly divided between an imperial core and a provincial periphery.[18] This *state* also had a before and after, a 'classical age' defined by an expansionary ethos heralded by campaigning Sultans and loyal servants who defended the realm and produced systematic cadastral surveys of incorporated regions. It further had a post-Süleymanic era characterized by weak Sultans, rebellious officials, palace factions, and a land regime in disarray. İnalcık's 'classical age' thus spawned a 'middle child' out of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[19] This ‘middle child’ in turn produced historiographical assumptions of imperial decline, when the Empire presumably no longer exhibited the ‘classical’ coherence of the early *state*, but also was not yet a part of the nineteenth-century generation of reforms that re-defined its management of human and material resources. These historiographical assumptions ignored the rather inconvenient truth that authors such as Kâtip Çelebi had themselves reified the *state* and generated this vision of corruption from an ideal. Ironically, then, a nostalgia of both Ottomans and Ottomanists alike for a coherent, idealized *state* haunts the work even of those scholars intent on eschewing developmentalist models.

---

[14] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*.

[15] P. Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London 1974).

[16] E. F. Rice and A. Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460-1559* (New York 1994), 110.

[17] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 236; J. Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court,* (Amsterdam 1994). For an excellent comparative perspective, consult J. Duindam, T. Artan and M. Kunt (eds.), *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective* (Leiden 2011); and S. Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge 2012).

[18] H. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600* (New York 1973). The analysis which follows is indebted to G. Piterberg's historiographical review in Chapter Seven - 'The Early Modern Ottoman State: History and Theory' of his *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 135-162.

Alternative periodization schemas and approaches to imperial processes of management and control now provide new baselines for the “early modern muddle”. Halil İnalcık himself quickly became uncomfortable with the declensionist assumptions inherent in ‘classical age’ treatments. His research on the fiscal and military transformations of the seventeenth century reinforced mono-causal explanations of the price revolution, yet also emphasized the ‘naturalness’ of the crisis and the innovative efforts to link technological and administrative reforms.[20] Jane Hathaway, in an article that pointedly set a new agenda for seventeenth and eighteenth-century Ottoman studies, also highlighted the ways in which İnalcık’s research quite early drew attention to Süleyman’s rule as a golden age constructed in retrospect.[21] Laws dedicated to Süleyman had actually been part of his predecessor’s campaigns of legal codification, and political factions in the court had already acquired enough power in the sixteenth century to secure the execution of the popular Crown Prince Mustafa.[22] Leslie Peirce demonstrated that these palace factions emerged when dynastic reproduction strategies shifted from fratricide to seniority owing to exigent circumstances of youthful princes in the late sixteenth century. This move toward seniority also accompanied the transfer of female quarters to the internal domain of the Topkapı Palace. The elaborate hierarchical structures, accumulation of wealth, and dispersion of power achieved from within these quarters together yielded a new set of parameters for advisorial influence. Therefore, when a succession of young Sultans threatened the realm’s stability at the turn of the seventeenth century, these combined spatial and political factors shaped successive reigns.[23] Peirce thus challenged discriminatory aspersions against the rising power of women, acting as wives, concubines, and mothers of Sultans, by both Ottomans and Ottomanists alike, and also undermined a scholarly norm that equated Ottoman strength with a decisive sultanic decision-maker.[24]

---

[19] “Middle child” is Piterberg’s term for this persisting method of periodization: *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 147.

[20] H. İnalcık, ‘Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700’, *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 283-337.

[21] J. Hathaway, ‘Problems of Periodization in Ottoman History’, 25-31. For other key efforts to re-set Ottoman historiographical agendas, see H. Islamoğlu and Ç. Keyder, ‘Agenda for Ottoman History’, *Review*, 1 (1977), 31-55, and L. Peirce, ‘Changing Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire: The Early Centuries’, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 19 (2004), 6–28.

[22] İnalcık addresses these dynamics in a series of works; H. İnalcık, ‘Suleiman the Lawgiver and Ottoman Law’, *ArchOtt*, 1 (1969), 105-138; idem, ‘State, sovereignty and law during the reign of Süleymân the Second and his time’, in H. İnalcık and C. Kafadar (eds), *Süleymân the Second and His Time* (Istanbul 1993), 229-248, and idem, ‘On the Social Structure of the Ottoman Empire, Paradigms and Research’, in idem, *From Empire to Republic, Essays on Ottoman and Turkish Social History* (Istanbul 1995), 17-60.

Hathaway also noted that priorities necessarily shift when expansion was no longer the primary mechanism for the dispersal of wealth and duties. While the Ottoman realm "continued to expand for some time [after Süleyman's reign], yet a sprawling world empire could be expected to have different priorities from those of a *gazi* state".[25] Baki Tezcan and Guy Burak both published monographs that argued for a second period of formation in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This second formation generated new bureaucratic and jurisprudential orthodoxies capable of shaping the responsibilities of a mature state. Perhaps the most striking attempts to re-think the 'middle years' therefore attend to the dynamics of this transition, and to the enumeration of alternating *state* priorities. Initially, this meant exploring the vagaries of decision-making practices within the Imperial Council (*Divan*).[26] However, this trend still characterized the *state* as an autonomous actor, with identifiable intentions that were enacted on the inhabitants of the realm. Efforts to manage intermediaries and create legible administrative structures for the incorporation of conquered territories were thus explained as unidirectional: the *state* 'acting upon' the provinces. Three trends emerged to counter this rigid distinction between *state* and society: regional studies that highlighted diversity and contestation; analyses of the 'center' that attended to the, often distressed, claims to legitimacy and authority by the Ottoman regime as a whole,[27] and models for interdependencies that fitted established courts, imperial representatives, provincial elites, and ideological productions into a composite and evolving mechanism that secured *state* stability.

Regional case studies offset *state*-centric biases, deployed alternative archival records such as those from local sharia courts, and emphasized the particular over the imperial.[28] Authors of the particular pointed to the myopia of state-generated documents and their inability to reveal 'facts on the ground' in daily provincial lives. Together, they argued that the Sultan and the imperial apparatus may have punctuated provincial life through processes of revenue-extraction and defense, but often resembled more of a shadow than a spotlight of authority. These concerns in turn swayed scholars of the 'center' away from the decision-making processes of the Sultan or of his council, and toward the tenuous nature of imperial control. In the early to mid-1990s, Huricihan İslamoğlu, Linda Darling, and Karen Barkey each contributed powerful reconfigurations of the relationship between the Ottoman state and the regions it governed during the Empire's middle years.[29] They moved beyond solely materialist explanations of state power, and, to varying degrees, argued instead for an interdependent nexus between ideology, revenue extraction, and state stability. Each referenced the 'circle of equity' as the ideological ground of the Ottoman state, and linked sultanic power to the dynast's position as the arbiter of justice and protector of the tax-paying subjects. İslamoğlu and Barkey drew attention to the way in which the *state* capably crafted a hegemonic discourse of interdependency and redistribution of resources that agriculturalists and regional elite alike invoked as their medium for dissent. As a result, according to their presentation of Ottoman *state* dynamics, rebellious actions did not seek to disrupt the ideological claims or legitimacy of the *state*, but rather the means to influence its proportional dispersal of gifts, rewards, and resources. "The viability of the Ottoman state", as Tosun Arıcanlı and Mara Thomas suggested in the clearest articulation of this trend, "was due to the convergence of the interests of the participants of the distributive game at a locus demarcated by the state. There was a common interest in participating in the redistributive process as opposed to being excluded from it. Rebellions developed on arguments over shares and not principles."[30] A "shares not principles" approach, however, focuses analysis on the scrabble for resources and leaves unattended the principle that purportedly gives shape to the game as a whole. This tendency may be observed in the early work of Linda Darling, who traces in intricate detail transformations in financial accounting and revenue-raising practices of the Ottoman state, yet places these against an assumed ideological backdrop of justice, provisionalism, and protection of the weak.[31]

---

[23] L. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York 1993), 81-97.

[24] See also Hathaway, 'Problems of Periodization', 40.

[25] Ibid., 27.

[26] C. E. Farah, *Decision Making and Change in the Ottoman Empire* (Kirksville 1993).

[27] Significant edited collections include H. T. Karateke and M. Reinkowski, (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden 2005); B. Tezcan, K. K. Barbir, and N. Itzkowitz, (eds), *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz* (Madison 2007). For other key examples or significant chapters within these collections, see: S. Faroqhi, 'Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanic Legitimation (1570-1650)', *JESHO*, 35 (1992), 1-39; B. Tezcan, 'The Definition of Sultanic Legitimacy in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Empire: The *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î* of Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi (1510-1572)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Princeton University, 1996; G. Hagen, 'Legitimacy and World Order', in H. T. Karateke and M. Reinkowski (eds.), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power (Leiden 2005)*, 55-83; O. Todorova, 'The Ottoman State and Its Orthodox Christian Subjects: The Legitimistic Discourse in the Seventeenth-Century 'Chronicle of Serres' in a New Perspective', *THR*, 1 (2010), 86-110.

---

[28] Dina Khoury's analysis of Ottoman Mosul remains one of the strongest examples of this trend: D. Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834* (Cambridge 1997). For other representative studies, see A. Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem* (Cambridge 1994); D. Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany 1996); and C. L. Wilkins, *Forging Urban Solidarities Ottoman Aleppo 1640-1700* (Leiden 2010).

[29] H. İslamoğlu, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia During the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 1994); K. Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca 1994); L. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden 1996).

[30] T. Arıcanlı and M. Thomas 'Sidestepping Capitalism: On the Ottoman Road to Elsewhere', *The Journal of Historical Sociology*, 7 (1994), 39. See Boğac Ergene's rebuttal of this approach, also referenced below, for a more in-depth assessment of this historiographical trend in B. Ergene, 'On Ottoman Justice: Interpretations in Conflict (1600-1800)', *Islamic Law and Society*, 8 (2001), 70–71.

Even as regional and revisionist studies of the Ottoman state challenged easy divisions between *state* and society, or center and province, these binaries were still invoked, and remained the implicit scaffolding upon which the analyses depended. Moreover, ideology was itself deployed as a static indicator of state legitimacy rather than as a specific production with its own historical genealogy. Barkey, for example, proposed: "in the Ottoman Empire, legitimacy was based on the notion of a normative order that produces concrete and reproducible relations between the ruler and his subjects".[32] Legitimacy generated a sense of belonging, and "was imagined and maintained by the Ottomans" through a particular conceptual rubric of a well-ordered realm (*nizam-ı âlem*) and reproduced through a reciprocal vision of justice. She characterized this normative order as a "compact" and a "foundational component of rule" deployed by "the sultans who consolidated the empire" who also "fashioned an explicit content to the normative order".[33] This static vision of a normative order with the Sultan as the ultimate architect contrasts with Barkey's overarching goal of explaining Ottoman state longevity. She linked longevity to flexibility, defined in the introduction as "not getting locked into enduring forms, being able to change according to circumstances, and maintaining a certain degree of elasticity of structure".[34] However, she assumed the existence of an "ideological/cultural form of legitimation" and then assessed efforts to manage cultural diversity and appropriate resources against the backdrop of this normative order. As a result, Barkey subordinated processes to structures and thus re-inserted an analytic divide between *state* and society, and collapsed ideology and legitimacy into one thing.[35]

In the past two decades, the field has shifted away from reductive analyses of the Ottoman *state* as a 'thing in itself' and toward the textual projects that produced and reified its history. Rifaʻat Abou-El-Haj issued a clarion cry for revisionist narratives and castigated twentieth-century scholarship on the Ottoman Empire for treating the 'state' "as if, regardless of the passage of time, the state had remained essentially the same" before the heyday of publishing in Ottoman studies had even fully materialized.[36] Gabi Piterberg, in perhaps the most radical response to this cry, proposed that the 'state' itself "is a constructed reification".[37] In more subtle forms, scholars who turned once again to questions of legitimacy propelled the field further away from normative and static treatments of the 'state', and also proposed the most fruitful alternatives to oppositional frameworks of *state*/society and center/periphery. Hakan Karateke summarized the import of these studies in his contribution to a significant collection of essays on 'state' legitimacy: "Legitimacy is a mutual relation" between a governing body that asserts claims to rightful rule and a subject population that confers authority by virtue of their submission.[38] While he too relied on the presence of an Ottoman "normative legitimacy", Karateke's move from ideology to legitimacy also precipitated one from structure to practice. Legitimacy's 'reach' through literary productions, ceremonies, public works, monument building, and welfare projects took center stage in his analysis. These activities constituted a "factual legitimacy", according to Karateke, that reinforced a "normative legitimacy" constructed primarily by *state* elites. The two in tandem "habituated" both rulers and subjects to a particular structure of power.[39] Karateke thus provided a partial answer to his own question "was legitimacy in pre-modern society a kind of luxury good" by suggesting that perhaps the normative construct was, but the facts on the ground entailed a more diverse and differentiated project.[40] Gottfried Hagen's essay on the trope of world order (*nizam-ı âlem*) focused directly on the "luxury good". He too identified legitimacy as a "continuous negotiation between ruler and ruled", but suggested that this process of negotiation reaffirms a polarized construct of *state* and society and belies the emergence of "a discourse *within* the central power" concerning order and governance in the Ottoman world.[41] Hagen pivoted from legitimacy conceived as either structure or practice toward legitimacy as a discourse, produced through the meaningful participation of many actors in both the Ottoman chancery and scholarly debates of the period. "World order", in his telling, is neither "realistic" nor "idealistic", but rather a historically contingent project of the intellectual elite. This elite silenced the subject population and deprived them of agency even as they themselves challenged the authority of the ruler. While Hagen traced the historically contingent nature of a legitimating discourse, and emphasized the desperate need for attentive analyses of intellectual developments in the Ottoman context, he also foregrounded a new chasm: between intellectual and administrative venues. Hagen's analysis concluded where Karateke's began, in a presumed divide between elite conceptual discourse and administrative practice.

---

[31] Both Barkey and Darling dedicated future projects to re-working relationships between state projects and subject populations. Barkey placed the state management of difference at the heart of imperial projects, and Darling turned precisely toward the 'ideological backdrop' in a masterly historical genealogy of the circle of equity: K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge 2008); L. T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice From Mesopotamia to Globalization* (New York 2013).

[32] Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 100-101.

[33] Ibid., 101, *passim*.

[34] Ibid., 14.

[35] Ibid.

[36] R. A. Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Syracuse 2005), 11–18.

Boğaç Ergene's incisive critique of a static vision of "normative order" provides a possible bridge across this divide. A regional specialist himself, he combined insights born out of provincial research with a robust theoretical assessment of how the ideological principle of justice was neither unitary nor stable.[42] Like Hagen, he represented Ottoman 'state' order as a contentious ideological field. However, drawing simultaneously on the imperial divan-issued rescripts of justice (*adaletname*) and on treatises produced by statesmen and littérateurs, Ergene argued that administrative practice was *precisely* the domain of ideology creation. The "Ottoman 'official' ideology" in Ergene's alternative reading, was "specifically associated with the realm of revenue raising" and thus with the personal benevolence of the ruler.[43] Ergene depicted the protective relationship between the Sultan and the agriculturalists as one premised on a discursive "misrecognition" that transformed a material aim of revenue extraction into the symbolic capital of a just sovereign equitably redistributing resources. He thus drew from subaltern theorists attentive to 'cracks' in hegemonic constructs of authority and Pierre Bourdieu's conviction that economic capital is converted into symbolic capital by a deceptive artistry. In this guise, both the dominant agent (ruler) and the coerced subject "misrecognize" violence for munificence.[44] This misrecognition shapes both imperial edicts and subjects' petitions for redress, and evinces not false consciousness, but rather the generative process that produces (and reproduces) an imperial system.

---

[37] Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 161.

[38] H. T. Karateke, 'Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate' in H. T. Karateke and M. Reinkowski, *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power (Leiden 2005)*, 15.

[39] Ibid., 16, 18 and 34. Karateke also draws upon two works of Rodney Barker in order to build his theory of legitimacy as a mutual relationship: R. Barker, *Political Legitimacy and the State* (Oxford 1990); idem, *Legitimating Identities: The Self-Presentations of Rulers and Subjects* (Cambridge 2001).

[40] Karateke and Reinkowski, *Legitimizing the Order*, 4.

[41] Hagen, 'Legitimacy and World Order', 55-57.

However, Ergene insisted that an "uncritical appropriation of this "official" definition of justice", and thus of imperial order, predicated on revenue extraction, reproduces a *state*-generated hegemonic discourse in Ottomanist historiography. This statist approach then leads to the "loss of voices of those 'dissidents' who did not necessarily conform to the official definition of justice".[45] Ergene shifted attention instead toward armed rebels or scribal critics of absolutism who rebuked the sultanate for abandoning its obligations within a reciprocal administrative order of loyalty and reward. In this framework, justice served to mark "the proper order and stratification of society" and thus to perpetuate clear divisions between imperial servants, agriculturalists, and merchants.[46] Yet, it is important to note that these two forms of justice, and thus of ideology production, are not so easily distinguished from each other. Ergene's examples of "dissident voices" included regional power-brokers, courtiers, and bureaucrats such as Kalenderoğlu Mehmed, Evliya Çelebi, and Mustafa Ali, who each played a role in re-shaping both administrative strategies and ideological constructs.[47] While Kalenderoğlu Mehmed was a famous rebel commander who orchestrated many victorious campaigns between 1592 and 1610 against Ottoman forces during the so-called Celali rebellions, he had also been co-opted into positions of regional governorship and repeatedly crossed the threshold between loyal servant and armed dissident.[48] This threshold mobility re-affirmed the basic outlines of *state*-servant obligations and placed a battle over resources at the ‘center’ of imperial affairs. Likewise, both Evliya Çelebi and Mustafa Ali were directly connected to the imperial court, the former through lowly scribal positions and shifting patrons with whom he journeyed on military and diplomatic campaigns, and the latter as a significant bureaucrat within the imperial chancery. Evliya Çelebi’s voluminous compendium of travel narratives inscribed regional affairs into moral and social hierarchies generated from within an Istanbul-centric vision of imperial order.[49] As for Mustafa Ali, he served as an establishment bureaucrat, yet simultaneously censured the abuse of power by particular dynasts and wrote what is commonly believed to be the first *nasihatname* that adopted a newly critical mode.[50] Each of these men actively produced a threshold between *state*-centric principles of hierarchical order and potential challenges to its reproduction. This threshold moment should provoke an analytical response, as it potentially steers focus away from justice as an inherent or static principle and toward the tactics by which that principle was produced and affirmed as the natural order of the *state*.

---

[42] B. Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society, and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)* (Leiden 2003).

[43] Ergene, 'On Ottoman Justice', 64.

[44] Ibid., 69.

[45] Ibid., 70.

[46] Ibid., 75.

[47] For references and book-length studies on each of the men referenced by Ergene, consult: R. Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden 2006), and C. H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton 1986).

Debating Historical Praxis: Ottoman Dynastic Genealogies and Political Critique

“The natural order of the *state*” should now read as a potential *trompe l’oeil*, tricking the eye of both Ottoman and Ottomanist into perceiving a described detail as a ‘living’ object with attributes and agency. However, image production was a key component of early modern composite courts, which pivoted around the scripts and ceremonials that governed protocol both inside the palace walls and the formulae of administrative strategies beyond. While these composite courts relied on patronage networks – carefully delineated circuits of obligation and reward so as to sustain and disperse establishment power across large territorial domains – they were also dependent on the fashioning of its rulers as idealized embodiments of absolute power. Thus a nexus consisting of the intersection between palatine courts, image-production, and administered imperial domain became one of the singular features of courtly establishments reliant on co-opted intermediaries yet intent on broadcasting universalist sovereign claims. Within the Ottoman context, this nexus was partially realized in the emergence of 'scholar-bureaucrats', whose administrative duties and institutionalized status served as the crucible for their varied intellectual productions.[51] As some of these scholar-bureaucrats fashioned a historical narrative of the dynasty, they also inscribed a set of expectations for its proper rule. Two strikingly opposed Ottoman literary elites *cum* establishment figures illustrate the ways in which history, critique, and efforts to define the *state* coalesce. Seyyid Lokman's *Quintessence of Histories* and Mustafa Ali's *Essence of History* produced competing narratives of Ottoman ancestral paths and dynastic glory, yet both definitively positioned history as the locus of interpretive intervention into the nature of *state* power.[52]

---

[48] W. J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion* (Berlin 1983; Bristol 1992 [2nd ed.]), 357. Griswold’s work was long a standard for late sixteenth-century provincial upheaval, but interventions by Sam White and Oktay Özel have redefined the parameters of the period and set new guidelines for future research attentive to intersections between administrative, environmental, and demographic transformations. See, respectively, S. White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2011); and O. Özel, *The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Anatolia: Amasya 1576-1643* (Leiden 2016).

[49] An abridged version of the 10 volumes can be found in R. Dankoff and S. Kim (eds and trans.), *An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi* (London 2011). See also Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Beşir Ağa 448-452 (Vols 1-10 and Pertev Paşa 458-62 (Vols 1-10).

[50] A. Tietze, *Muṣṭafā ‘Ālī’s Counsel for Sultans of 1581* (Vienna 1979). The arguments in the pages which follow were originally formed from work on the manuscript copy of Mustafa Ali’s *Künhü’l-ahbar* accessed at the Süleymaniye Library (Nuruosmaniye 3409), in addition to Jan Schmidt’s edited copy, *Muṣṭafā ‘Ālī’s Künhü’l-Aḫbār and Its Preface According to the Leiden Manuscript* (Leiden 1987).

Both works were tied to broader institutional changes within the Ottoman court, to the appointment of court historians, *şehnameci*s (or historiographers, a truer label for their role as fashioners of an imperial genealogy), and to the emergence of a distinctly 'Ottoman' professional cadre and literary style. Of the five men who held the post of *şehnameci* from approximately 1555 to 1605, Seyyid Lokman's lengthy tenure in office, from 1569 to 1596/1597 virtually defined both the position and the stakes involved in definitions of history and historical legacies at the Ottoman court. And Mustafa Ali (d. 1600), acclaimed litterateur and member of a newly re-fashioned bureaucratic cadre, typifies an intellectual and political world that was in part shaped by the increased attentiveness within palace artisanal workshops to the language and depiction of dynastic history. The court historiographers produced a total of fifteen works, including campaign and court chronicles, general world histories, and specialized dynastic accounts. They originally followed the Persian epic tradition established by Ferdowsi (d. 1025), who conjoined early Persian and Islamicate histories into a new historical lineage for the Samanid and Ghaznavid courts, but gradually transitioned into stylized Ottoman verse and prose, and used historical narrative to shape a unique imperial courtly tradition.[53] Arguably then, just as scribal cohorts gradually transitioned from diverse regional and intellectual backgrounds into a self-generating professional Ottoman bureaucracy, so too did the language deployed as a marker of status.[54] The former prestige of Arabo-Persianate models was gradually eclipsed by the formalization of court and courtly aesthetics that culminated in the reign of Süleyman (1520-1566). The sixteenth century, with its newly configured Ottoman conquest of territories throughout Greater Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and the Mediterranean, can also be viewed as a linguistic conquest. The emphasis on Ottoman, as distinct from Turkic nomadic roots or rival imperial histories, marked a conscious effort to fashion a unique textual representation of the imperial establishment and of the elite culture it both depended on and consciously fostered.

---

[51] First foregrounded by Kafadar in *Between Two Worlds,* 'scholar-bureaucrat' has now become commonplace in the field. See A. Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2017).

[52] Baki Tezcan juxtaposed these two scholar-bureaucrats in his prescient reading of the two texts: B. Tezcan, 'The Politics of Early Modern Ottoman Historiography', in V. H. Aksan with D. Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge 2007), 167-98. His summary provides a useful departure for the arguments presented concerning history and political thought presented here.

[53] However, a simple transition from Persian to Ottoman Turkish is no longer a tenable argument concerning shifts in literary style during the early modern period. Instead, regional dialects, mixed genres and vocabularies, and shifts in register indicate a wide diversity of forms and patterns. For a summary of these trends see: C. Woodhead, 'Ottoman Languages', in C. Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London and New York 2012) 143-158.

The position of the *şehnameci* was directly tied to this history of territorial and linguistic displacement, as his role was to ensure the supplanting of past rivals with the Ottoman present, and to disseminate the dynasty's new claims to imperial universalism.[55] Cornell Fleischer argued that the *şehnameci* position, created around 1555, was an "attempt by the dynasty to assert direct control of the literary expression of historical ideology and imperial image".[56] But Baki Tezcan cautioned against this depiction, and suggested instead that the Sultans did not fully control the competitive visions of imperial ideology or the historical image-production shaped by those appointed in this role.[57] Further, as every court was remade anew upon the accession of the next Sultan, the establishment could not mask the variability inherent within the very structure of the sultanate itself.[58] Thus, even in an effort to exert control over image production, tendencies toward multiplicity and diversity abounded. This multiplicity is well represented in the *Quintessence* and *Essence*, as Lokman reinforced the triumphant narrative and palace-centric goals of his later patron, Murad III (r. 1574-1595), and Mustafa Ali continued his protracted critique of profligate power and the misalignment of order within the late sixteenth-century dynastic court. Tezcan, himself dedicated to a critique of the label 'absolutist' for the early modern Ottoman establishment, argues instead for a gradual depersonalization of rule and expansion of elite influence.[59] Ironically, in Tezcan's treatment, the Ottoman *state*, while failing to control sixteenth and seventeenth-century image productions, widely succeeded in doing so during the eighteenth, where a near monopoly of voices was achieved.[60] He therefore suggests that impersonal rule lends itself to hegemonic power, rather than undermining it, a point historians of the modern state might do well to contemplate.[61] The official position of the court historiographer was short-lived, phased out by the beginning of the seventeenth century. Yet the remaining sections of this essay suggest that the courtly status of history that the post initially enshrined, and the role that historical vision played as a dynamic forum for bids to power and grandeur in a competitive early modern political environment did indeed endure, as did the Empire its practitioners sought to see triumph even when later adopting a critical mode.

---

[54] Woodhead, 'Ottoman Languages'; T. Artan, 'Questions of Ottoman Identity and Architectural History', in D. Arnold, E. A. Ergut, and B. T. Özkaya (eds), *Rethinking Architectural Historiography* (London 2006), 86-109.

[55] For key texts that address the links between conquest, scribal cohorts, and courtly languages, see H. E. Çıpa, *The Making of Selim: Succession, Legitimacy, and Memory in the Early Modern Ottoman World* (Bloomington 2017); K. Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World* (New York 2013); and J. Shinder, 'Early Ottoman Administration in the Wilderness: Some Limits on Comparison', *IJMES*, 9 (1978), 497-517.

[56] C. H. Fleischer, 'The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman', in G. Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman Le Magnifique et Son Temps, Actes Du Colloque de Paris* (Paris 1992), 172.

[57] The classic treatments of the *şehnameci* can be found in C. Woodhead, 'An Experiment in Official Historiography: The Post of Şehnāmeci in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1555-1605', *WZKM*, 75 (1983), 157-182; E. Fetvacı, 'Office of the Ottoman Court Historian', in R. G. Ousterhout (ed.), *Studies on Istanbul and Beyond* (Philadelphia 2007), 7-21.

[58] Selim II (r. 1566-74) exemplifies this 'remaking' process in the breach, as the strained conditions of the treasury meant that he was barely capable of paying the necessary donatives to ensure loyalty amongst his own attendants, much less the military corps who were dependent on these 'gifts' to replenish their salaries or their stalled revenue extraction from land grants. However, for one of the best examples of scholarship devoted to the Ottoman dynast's immense efforts to first achieve the sultanate and then sustain his authority, consult E. Çipa, *The Making of Selim: Succession*.

Lokman's *Quintessence of Histories* (*Zübdetü't-tevarih*) is actually a 'copy' of sorts: three codices produced from a scroll, the *Tomar-ı hümayun* (the *Imperial Scroll*) completed during the reign of Süleyman.[62] The codices were probably not finalized until the 1580s, under the tutelage of the court historiographer Seyyid Lokman along with calligraphers and painters during Murad III's (1574-95) tenure. The most dramatic difference between scroll and codex inheres in the visual imagery: the Lokman workshop turned illustrated Qur'anic quotations into scenes from the lives of prophets and early Muslim companions, and included portraiture for the corpus of Ottoman Sultans.[63] The scroll and the codices position Osman's dynastic house within a genealogical history that begins with a cosmological chart of the world's origins, and then sketches parallel connections of prophets and kings in ancient Persian and pre-Islamic dynasties emanating out from the first humans, Adam and Eve. This remains a highly selective genealogy, however, as only Muhammad and the first four successors receive detailed enumeration, and even the early Ottoman rulers up until Mehmed II were merely listed, rather than fully described. Mehmed II alone punctuates this summary treatment with the title "emir of emirs, khan of khans, and *qaysar* of Rum", but not until Süleyman does any copious detail re-emerge. Although this genealogical map places the Ottomans within diverse lineages, and uniquely also traces the chains of transmission (*silsile*s) of religious scholars and Sufis, with the arrival of the Ottoman dynasty, all contemporary rivals disappear. The scroll introduces Süleyman's reign with an adapted Qur'anic quotation from 3:110: "Of all the communities raised among men you are the best, enjoining the good, forbidding the wrong".[64] Tezcan suggested that the scroll and the *Quintessence* created a monumental world in which Süleyman's exploits paralleled God's creation of the universe. As the preambles of both scroll and codices explain: "God's creation of the heavens and earth starts the text, and Süleyman's conquests were to end it".[65] The suggestion that the Ottoman dynasty possessed no parallels (imagistic or textual) reinforced Lokman's presentation of Osman's genealogy as a "final world order".[66] All hierarchy was now subsumed within the auspices of sultanic grandeur, and Süleyman's actions set the parameters of just and proper governance.

---

[59] Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*; idem, 'Lost in Historiography: An Essay on the Reasons for the Absence of a History of Limited Government in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45 (2009), 477-505.

[60] This is ironic, as historians of the Empire tend to equate the eighteenth century with the rise of provincial notables and with the escalating influence of 'Western' imperialist intervention, and hence with the collapse of centralized state authority. Classic examples of this approach can be found in: A. Hourani, 'Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables', in W. R. Polk and R. L. Chambers (eds), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century* (Chicago 1981), 36-66; E. R. Toledano, 'The Emergence of Ottoman-Local Elites (1700-1900): A Framework for Research', in I. Pappé and M. Maoz (eds), *Middle Eastern Politics and Ideas: A History from Within* (London 1997), 145-162. Only recently has this vision been revised, to reflect the 'partnerships' that all but defined Ottoman rule: A. Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford 2016).

[61] Tezcan, 'Ottoman Historiography', 169.

[62] E. Fetvacı, 'From Print to Trace: An Ottoman Imperial Portrait Book and its Western European Models', *The Art Bulletin*, 95 (2013), 243-268.

[63] W. G. Andrews, *Poetry's Voice, Society's Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Seattle 1985).

Mustafa Ali's the *Essence of History* (*Künhü'l-ahbar*), stands in stark contrast to Lokman's projection of the Ottoman *state.* Mustafa Ali fiercely criticized Lokman and disparaged his literary abilities, but the conflict between them was as much ideological as it was stylistic: Lokman confabulated the Ottomans as the end of history, while Ali forewarned of the Empire's end. Left incomplete when he died in 1600, it joins a corpus of his works (*Council for the Sultans* and *Seasons of Sovereignty*) that together embodied a rising discontent among elite scholars with sultanic rule. Mustafa Ali devotes the preface of the *Essence*, unlike the entire text of the *Quintessence*, to a more comprehensive account of previous Muslim dynastic courts and their legacies, including the Safavids of Persia, Mughals of India, and the Uzbeks of Central Asia. In fact, Ali's *Seasons* was almost entirely devoted to past dynasties that had once triumphantly ruled, but had now disappeared without a trace. Fleischer adroitly reads the significance of this choice: "the moral of this arrangement of material is clear: the Ottoman state, placed in a comparative historical context, was subject to the same historical cycles as other states, and could fall apart as quickly as it had risen".[67] Jan Schmidt, however, cautions against a strong reading of Mustafa Ali's comparativism and provides a reminder that the intersection between narrative devices and political agendas must be analyzed, not assumed.[68] Easy renderings of the relation between the two can, as Christine Woodhead has argued, lead scholars astray, particularly with regard to the rather mysteriously short-lived yet critical post of the *şehnameci*.[69] Hence, Woodhead's careful consideration of the import and potential impact of the *şehnameci* as an institution leads toward a broader assessment of the meaning of history as an Ottoman courtly practice. On the one hand she notes that *şehname* manuscripts functioned in part "to establish an acceptably 'correct' Ottoman historical record".[70] Yet Woodhead also suggests a rather limited, palace-centric audience for this stylized image and emphasizes that these commissioned histories acted more as *objets d'art* than propagandistic pamphlets. As "literary-historical texts which seem to be neither one thing nor the other and not to lead anywhere", these works confound simplistic interpretations.[71] They also, however, lead directly toward the discursive possibilities outlined above, wherein the textual and the political are of a piece, rather than distinct fields acting upon each other. In this case, the 'audience' is perhaps less important than the 'act' of production itself, along with the forms and structures adopted so as to showcase the Ottoman rulers in a period of pronounced military achievement and diplomatic success.

---

[64] B. Tezcan, 'Ottoman Historical Writing', in J. Rabasa, M. Sato, E. Tortarolo, and D. Woolf (eds), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, Vol. 3 (Oxford 2015), 192-211.

[65] Ibid., 208.

[66] Ibid., 174.

[67] Quote from C. H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton 1986), 178. Cited by Tezcan, 177.

[68] J. Schmidt, *Pure Water for Thirsty Muslims: A Study of Muṣṭafā 'Ālī of Gallipoli's Künhü l-Aḫbār* (Leiden 1991). Thanks go to the anonymous reviewer for bringing this point to my attention.

It is possible to clarify this observation by returning to the juxtaposition of Lokman and Mustafa Ali. These two texts embody overlapping interpretive conflicts for the Ottomanist: how to assess the relationship between elite literary productions and the sultanate as the ultimate patron, and how to understand what role 'history' played in these stylized itineraries of dynastic power. With regard to patronage, it is perhaps sufficient here to think briefly of commensurate courtly practices across Eurasia, wherein the position of a royal historiographer, the production and collection of embellished and illustrated manuscripts, and the link between stylized verse and dynastic myth had become part of a shared vocabulary of sovereignty by the seventeenth century.[72] As for the meaning of history *within* these literary productions, Lokman and the *şehname* genre more generally embodies a performative mode while Mustafa Ali writes from within an evaluative posture. Lokman thus adopts the panegyric and performs Ottoman exceptionalism, while Mustafa Ali invokes a form of imperial comparativism that ultimately lends itself to a more critical stance even if he too seeks to sustain a vision of Ottoman greatness. Thus, although Lokman's text drew on the comparative tactics of historians such as Ibn Khaldun, he remained wedded to an internal genealogy of power, and therefore to the reproduction of a distinctive Ottoman imperial glory.[73] Lokman's selective use of comparative indices sets him apart from Ibn Khaldun's critical historical agenda, one that gradually seeped into the conscious labors of Ottoman scholar-bureaucrats.[74] In his *Muqaddima*, or prolegomena to a new historical vision, Ibn Khaldun criticized the absence of evaluative labor in most practitioners of 'history' (*tarikh*): "Other historians, then, came with too brief a presentation (of history). They went to the extreme of being satisfied with the names of kings, without any genealogical or historical information, and with only a numerical indication of the length of their reigns."[75] Evinced here is the indictment of a narrow vision of the historical craft, framed within the Ottoman context as *tahrir ü tasnif*: *'tahrir'* indicating the simple act of recording, based on what one has witnessed, or based on reports (*akhbar*) either heard of or read, and *'tasnif'* designating the classifying and ordering of things both past and present.[76] Neither, however, draws on a particular philosophy or rationale through which names, dates, and reported speech or acts might be organized. True, *ṭarīkh* inherently called for an organizational practice, and thus for a textualized vision of order, but Ibn Khaldun aspired to something more than either chronological ordering or the mere classification of reported speech or events. He insisted that the true craft of history moved beyond "parroted" or obsequious speech, and toward a comparative analysis that weighed principles of human and cultural behavior along with reported action. Only through history as a methodical disciplinary practice, according to Ibn Khaldun, might we avoid "stumbling and slipping". He indicts those who "trust historical information in its plain transmitted form" and those who have "no clear knowledge of the principles resulting from custom, the fundamental facts of politics, the nature of civilization, or the conditions governing human social organization".[77] *History-writing*, in this mode, entails *historiographical thinking* – an intervention into the density of the past and the politics of the present. It was arguably this interpretive intervention via historical writing that Mustafa Ali and other reform-minded scholar-bureaucrats of the long sixteenth century adopted as a means to assess the nature of the Ottoman *state* in an era of perceived crisis, to then locate this crisis within a disordered conceptual and political realm, and finally to seek a restorative mechanism so as to affirm Ottoman longevity.[78]

---

[69] C. Woodhead, 'Reading Ottoman 'Şehnames': Official Historiography in the Late Sixteenth Century', *SI*, 104 (2007), 67-80.

[70] Ibid., 68.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Woodhead draws attention to comparative practices as well. See especially pages 76-78. For broader discussions of commensurate courtly practices attentive to language, see the introduction to P. F. Bang and D. Kołodziejczyk (eds), *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History* (Cambridge 2012); and J. S. A. Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture under the Ancien Régime, 1500-1750* (London 1999).

---

[73] Ibn Khaldun played an influential role in the formation of an Ottoman critical mode. Here I am attentive not to his vision of cyclical history, but rather to his emphasis on historical *praxis* itself.

[74] As previously referenced, Fleischer traced this influence in 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and 'Ibn Khaldûnism' in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters'.

[75] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah; An Introduction to History*, ed. F. Rosenthal (New York 1958), 7.

[76] See also S. Buzov's 'History' in J. J. Elias, *Key Themes for the Study of Islam* (London 2014), 182-199.

[77] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, 11.

[78] Gottfried Hagen and Ethan L. Menchinger propose that "a full-fledged philosophy of history as a distinct field of inquiry has never developed in Ottoman letters". Rather, they clarify, Ottomans worked within the "pragmatics of historiography" and despite a "highly variegated body of historical writing", produced "remarkably homogenous" works. See 'Ottoman Historical

Thus, within the works of those such as Mustafa Ali and later Kâtip Çelebi (d. 1657), this notion of interpretive and interventative ordering, as among the duties incumbent upon the writer of history, came increasingly to represent a critical assessment of Ottoman sovereignty set against a standard of proper order and justice. This model of order and justice, cumulatively defined by the varied branches of jurisprudence, philosophy, and theology, together shaped an ideology of just government deployed increasingly as a new historical criticism.[79] İdris-i Bitlisî, in an oft-cited formula, evoked this notion during a period when he himself was co-opted into an emergent Ottoman bureaucracy. In his *Qanûn-i shehinshâhî* he draws on an aphorism in Arabic: 'The justice is in placing everything in its proper place'.[80] Here it is worth noting that Bitlisî's explicit linking of justice and proper order arose from within a particularly volatile competitive terrain. As the Osman confederacy sought to eclipse disparate trans-regional Eurasian rivals and formalize its own nascent institutions, scribal personages and traditions became a kind of battleground on which new sovereign claims took distinct textual form. Bitlisî serves as a harbinger for a new politics of the text, in which mechanisms for ordering and organizing imperial affairs produced in the chancery contained within them both a conceptual mapping of power and a mechanism for administrative practice. Rescripts of justice (*adaletname*), legal protocols (*kanunname*), and registers of sultanic edicts (*mühimme defterleri*) dispersed this combined map and mechanism, a form of 'textual habitus', across Ottoman domains and beyond.[81] These textual forms are components of an active imperial archive, a textual repository that guided the dynastic establishment, Ottoman

---

Thought', in Pr. Duara, V. Murthy, and A. Sartori (eds), *A Companion to Global Historical Thought* (West Sussex 2014), 92-106. Quoted passages can be found on page 93. Here I aim to identify the 'uses' of history as a potential political mode and leave aside the question of history as a theoretical or philosophical quest.

[79] For general surveys of these varied intellectual strands and their lineages, see G. Cooper, 'Medicine and the Political Body: A Metaphor at the Crossroads of Four Civilizations', unpublished paper delivered at the Healing Arts across the Mediterranean: Communities, Knowledge and Practices Symposium, Rutgers University, 2014; D. Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early Abbasid Society (2nd-4th/8th-10th Centuries)* (London 1999); and M. Shefer-Mossensohn, *Science Among the Ottomans: The Cultural Creation and Exchange of Knowledge* (Austin 2015).

[80] O. Başaran, 'İdris-i Bitlisi hakkında bazı yeni bilgiler', *Journal of Academic Studies*, 4 (2002); H. Tavakkolî, *İdrîs-i Bitlisî'nin Kanun-ı Şehinşahî'sinin Tenkidli Neşri ve Türkçeye Tercümesi* (Istanbul 1974). Christopher Markiewicz composed a definitive statement of the conflicting loyalties and identities of the Timurid-Ottoman context of İdris-i Bitlisî's patronage: C. Markiewicz, 'The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam: A Study of Idrīs Bidlīsī (861-926/1457-1520) and Kingship at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2015.

[81] 'Textual habitus' adapts Pierre Bourdieu's notions of field and habitus as structured and 'enstructuring' sets of relationships between agents, individuals, and modes of knowledge-making with Brinkley Messick's identification of a legal textual terrain peculiar to Islamicate forms of jurisprudential authority. See P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge 1977) and B. Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley 1996).

scholar-bureaucrats, and Ottomanist researchers alike in their quest to define the *state*. They thus also serve as the embodiment of an 'Ottoman way', a point the conclusion of this essay will engage with below.

As one example of how Ottoman scholar-bureaucrats engaged with the textual repository of imperial action, Mustafa Ali transposed notions of justice, order, and the text into a new analytical position. This analytical mode, in which critics *cum* historians gradually moved from characterizing the *Sultan* as just to identifying *systems* of just governance, thereby also inspired a shift from defining the *state* via the personhood of the ruler to locating it within the mechanisms of administrative action.[82] Even if the Sultan remained as the nominal guarantor of a just system, Mustafa Ali epitomized the sense that it is the historian or critic who places the volatility of the past and present into a proper order, and even divines what that order entails. In so doing, history becomes a particular *praxis,* or rather, it becomes historiographical, interpretive, and thereby a mode of political action. Thus, Mustafa Ali looked precisely for the *essence* (*künh*) of chronological order (*ahbar*), sifting through materials compiled by other historians and yet arguing not, like ibn Khaldun, for a new philosophy or science of history, but rather for a reformed vision of political theory. Ali described the erosion of impartiality, meritocracy, morality, and loyalty within the Ottoman realm and interpreted them as the consequential loss of an inherent order of things. Within this rubric, Lokman's opposition to Mustafa Ali was not just in his affirmation of absolutism, but also in his *emplacement* of the Ottoman Sultans within a genealogy of order untouched by the interpretive intervention of the historians' craft. If, according to Lokman, the Sultans joined a chain of transmitted genealogies (*nasab*), and were thus lifted outside of time and into the sphere of tradition, accepted by faith and presumed sacred, then historical judgment would lack standing, and sovereignty itself be removed from critique. Alternatively, within Mustafa Ali's form of political theory and criticism, justice may form the primary criterion of order, but therein sovereignty itself should be defined, and potentially curtailed by, just order. The codices and scroll produced under Lokman's supervision suggested that *proper order* inhered within the dynasty itself. For Mustafa Ali, that order resided not only in just governance, but also in

---

[82] Careful consideration of the vocabulary of 'state'/*state* in Ottoman historical writing continues to yield invigorating discussions that address the relationship between textual and territorial claims to power. For examples of key works that also argue for the gradual disentanglement of the 'state' from the personhood of the Sultan over the course of the long sixteenth century see: H. Yılmaz, 'The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Süleyman the Lawgiver (1520-1566)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2004, and M. Sariyannis, 'Ruler and State, State and Society in Ottoman Political Thought', *THR*, 4 (2013), 83-117. Einar Wigen pushes these discussions further to suggest that while *state* may have played a key role in Ottoman intellectual and bureaucratic circles, it remains unclear as to whether or not we can assume any coincidence across terms for 'empire' in Ottoman v. Ottomanist usages: E. Wigen, 'Ottoman Concepts of Empire', *Contributions to the History of Concepts*, 8 (2013), 44-66. I also address notions of empire and the variable uses of the term *devlet* and the intersection between justice, state, and sovereignty in H. L. Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things: Language, Power and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* (Stanford 2018).

proper critique, which potentially served as a standard against which any Sultan should be judged. Critique was premised on juxtaposition with past forms and experiences, and thus on history. The critic *cum* historian thereby constructed an ideal 'state' so as to improve the Empire's current *state* of affairs.

These debates concerning the nature of historical praxis within an expanding Ottoman literary and conceptual sphere, serve to re-situate questions that attend to the nature of sovereignty, its limits and its heritage, in a broader intellectual terrain circumscribed by Ottoman statesmen and elite producers themselves. The historiographical arguments concerning early modern courtly politics and the state that opened this essay can thus be addressed from within this evolving practice of political analysis and critique itself. The categories deployed by Mustafa Ali and Lokman, and the strategies made available to them by a rich cultural tradition intent on demarcating the nature of just governance within dynasties ruled by self-professed Muslims, constitute their own basis for analysis and interpretation. These categories, and this cultural tradition, further provide an alternative rubric for assessing the Ottoman imperial narrative: the role that categories for order and classification played as simultaneously strategies of governance and frameworks for critique. This rubric reframes any discussion of the 'long sixteenth century' as one of a persistent struggle over the categories of sovereignty, the nature of just rule, and the principles of ordered administration. History and history-writing was one of the key domains in which these struggles transpired.

The Vulnerabilities of Ottoman Imperial Power: Vicissitudes of History and Historiography

Lokman and Mustafa Ali's disparate use of dynastic genealogies enabled an alternate assessment of conceptual paradigms for the Ottoman *state*, one that positioned institutionalized courtly politics and formulae as components of 'state'-making achieved through history-writing. Both authors, despite the dramatic oppositions outlined above, produced chronicles and treatises intent on capturing the broad sweep of chronological patterns and locating the Ottoman dynasty within this diachronic arc. This section turns instead to a *şehname* treatise composed within a particular moment, the opening years of the long war, or fifteen years' war, with the Habsburgs in Ottoman-occupied Hungary (1591/2-1606). The treatise demonstrates that the use of history-writing as a potential mode of political critique traversed genres and personages and may also have shaped later court-produced rescripts of Ottoman dynastic history. One of the more significant treatises of the opening events of this campaign, Talikizade's (d. 1599) *Şehname-i hümayun*, placed these military encounters within a broader commentary on the vicissitudes of Ottoman imperial power.[83]

---

[83] Christine Woodhead provided a critical commentary and edition of this text in *Taʻlīḳīzāde's Şehnāme-i Hümāyūn. A History of the Ottoman Campaign into Hungary 1593–94* (Berlin 1983). She further outlined the larger stakes involved in the position of court historian in Woodhead, 'An Experiment'. For a comprehensive study of manuscript production and image management at the Ottoman court during the period, see E. Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the*

His treatise, though stylized as a campaign history (*gazaname*), also exemplifies the development of *inşa* prose, with its hybrid linguistic and lyrical forms, in the second half of the sixteenth century. It thus showcases the glory of the Empire, both through the literary virtuosity of its statesmen, and in the narrative of its challenges and accomplishments. Talikizade was first a court scribe and then the fourth *şehnameci* (serving from 1591-1600). He had also served as a census registrar (*tahrir katibi*) and campaign clerk (*sefer katibi*) before becoming a fixture in the imperial *divan*, first simply as a copyist for daily transactions of the council, and then as a stylist for the court itself.[84] His interaction with the textual habitus of the Ottoman establishment thus traversed forms intended to record and document administrative practice, and those intended to transform those practices into a literary declamation of imperial might. Talikizade's *Şehname* tracks the opening years of the long war, and concentrates on the 1594 siege of Yanık (Györ). Christine Woodhead suggested that the campaign served only as the scaffolding for his literary display, as there was very little focus on the minutiae of the military venture itself.[85] However, at three critical points in the text—in the panegyric opening, in reports concerning the council of war with Sinan Pasha as the campaign commenced, and upon news of the accession of Mehmed III (r. 1595-1603)—Talikizade showcased the fundamental structure of the Ottoman *state* and the sultanate. At these moments the campaign treatise breaks to enumerate the organizational structures of the Empire, comment on its history, and thereby transform the larger imperial project into an object of representation and, subtly, of criticism.

In the opening, he references a previous work, the *Şemailname* (Book of Dispositions) in which he had outlined the features of sultanic rule deemed "admirable" and essential to the strength and vitality of the Ottoman dynasty.[86] Seemingly, Murad III criticized this text when he reviewed its pages and Talikizade left for the campaign in Hungary deeply disturbed that he had incurred sultanic disfavor.[87] The *Şemailname*'s

---

Ottoman Court (Bloomington and Indianapolis 2013); a shorter version of her arguments concerning the significance of patronage in the composition of official historical narratives can be found in eadem, 'Office of the Ottoman Court Historian', in R. G. Ousterhout (ed.), *Studies on Istanbul and Beyond: The Freely Papers*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia 2007), 7-21.

[84] Woodhead, 'Taliqizade Mehmed'.

[85] Woodhead, *Ta'līḳīzāde's Şehnāme-i Hümāyūn*, 3 and 68-70.

[86] The first *Şemailname -i Âl-i Osman* was produced during Seyyid Lokman's tenure as *şehnameci* and during the viziership of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha, who invested heavily in the textual iconization of Ottoman imperial history and power. The first copy was dated 1579, and gave rise to a number of manuscripts that followed its formal elements: illustrated portraits of the Sultans, carefully crafted genealogies of their claim to dynastic legitimacy, and descriptions of both the physical and moral attributes of a just and wise sovereign. Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court*, 139-141. On the emergence of a trans-regional focus on portraiture and display as part of a performance of imperial power see the essays by G. Necipoğlu, 'Word and Image: The Serial Portraits of Ottoman Sultans in Comparative Perspective', and J. Raby, 'From Europe to Istanbul', in S. Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman'* (Istanbul 2000), 22-61 and 136-163.

[87] Woodhead, 'Reading Ottoman *Şehname*s', 72. Woodhead argues that Talikizade himself indicated this purported disfavor by crafting a defense of the text within the re-organized compila-

purported emphasis on Murad III's renowned poetic and intellectual talents may have played one role in garnering the Sultan's scorn.[88] The post of the *şehnameci* during Murad III's reign was tasked with countering an outpouring of critical literature in the guise of advice manuals typified by Mustafa Ali. His accusations directed both implicitly and explicitly at Murad III suggested that the sultanate had departed from the ideal and become a profligate court, one that had abandoned just governance and campaigning for personal indulgence and lavish entertainment behind palace walls. Thus, poetic talent, no matter how great, may not have been the image best captured within the pages of the *Şemailname.* In fact, when Talikizade composes his *Şehname* and includes a rescript of the "admirable qualities" listed in the *Şemailname* he abandons poetry for the idealized image of dynastic legitimacy and grandeur. He thus repeats a full list of 20 qualities, including adherence to Sunni Islam and the Hanafi legal school, continuous dynastic succession, guardianship of the holy cities and dominion of both land and sea, the diversity and prosperity of the Empire's inhabitants, the extension of a system of just rule, adherence to the sharia, cultivated behavior of the Sultans themselves (*adab*), the enforcement of law, the maintenance of a solvent treasury, and respect for freehold property.[89] While presumably attached to the personhood of Murad III, they also come to identify a trope of sovereign authority which is thus also implicitly attached to the sultanate rather than to any individual Sultan.

The *Şehname* visibly deploys this sleight of hand, or slippage from Sultan to sultanate, within the ensuing pages. First, the 20 attributes become the framework from within which he shaped the episodic narrative of the campaign. Almost immediately, they form an implicit critique of conditions reported to the current Grand Vezir, Sinan Pasha, concerning Ottoman administrative tactics in the Hungarian occupied territories. Local complaints concerning the Ottoman establishment's neglect of fortress defenses, the increased numbers of soldiers too inexperienced to adequately police borders, lapsed attention to securing just rule over the population that had increased the likelihood of complaint and rebellion in combination meant that the loyalty of the region as a whole to the Ottoman sovereign was fragile and must be restored.[90] The narrative Talikizade constructed suggests that while the military campaign might secure the borders and reassert territorial control, the larger questions of allegiance could only be resolved with a full commitment to proper governing strategies.

Toward the end of the text, upon the accession of Mehmed III, Talikizade breaks from the vaguely chronological flow of the narrative to compose the traditional formal tribute

---

tion of sultanic attributes subsequently presented in his *Şehname.* See The Present '"Terrour of the World"? Contemporary Views of the Ottoman Empire C1600', *History*, 72 (1987), 20-37; and Woodhead, *Ta'līḳīzāde's Şehnāme-i Hümāyūn* 17-19, and 114-33.

[88] For an additional effort to trace these potential criticisms and their meaning for both the post of the *şehnamecı* and the role of sultanic patronage, see C. Woodhead 'Murad III and the Historians: Representations of Ottoman Imperial Authority in Late 16th Century Historiography', in Karateke and Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order*, 85-98.

[89] Woodhead, *Ta'līḳīzāde's Şehnāme-i Hümāyūn*, 17-19, and 114-133.

[90] Ibid., 15b-20a, and 143-154.

and advice-giving that marked the consecration of a new Sultan. He composed 382 verses that included praise, counsel, and a record of past glories so as to outline future hopes for the Empire. Contained within this praise, however, was a reckoning in which he enumerated the contemporary woes that plagued the dynasty.[91] These woes had become part of a new critical voice amongst statesmen and literati such as Mustafa Ali concerned by shifts in the fortunes of the Empire, and would reach a fevered pitch in the first decades of the seventeenth century.[92] Through the organization of the *Şehname,* Talikizade catapulted the woes of the street into the pages of a text shaped within the palace workshop. Talikizade first reasserts the importance of the proper ordering of society, and the role of the Sultan in bringing harmony to the disparate elements of the realm. He references all the typical concerns: lapsed boundaries between the military and the productive classes; the breakdown of the traditional backbone of the Ottoman forces, the *sipahi* cavalryman, who were deserting their duty to appear readily equipped for war; the rampant abuse of power amongst state agents and insistence on personal reward rather than replenishing the imperial treasury; the increased distance of the Sultan from administrative and military affairs, with the result that tyranny abounded and justice faltered, and dismay that officials whose job it was to administer justice across the realm (especially the *kadı,* in Talikizade's judgment) were not adequately appointed or were transferred too often to fully perform their duties.[93] Talikizade concludes this section with a customary posture of humility, indicating that the Sultan knew best, and yet simultaneously asserting that the sanctity and felicity of the realm depended on the sovereign's ability to take wise counsel.[94]

Talikizade's treatise therefore ends not in triumphant expectation of future sultanic glory, but rather in the chaos accompanying Sinan Pasha's dismissal from office, and the failures of his successor, Ferhad Pasha, to deal with a revolt in Wallachia and Moldavia or to prevent the loss of the key fortress of Esztergom. The re-appointment of Sinan Pasha, and plans for a new campaign season led by the Sultan himself in 1596, referenced in the final folios of the treatise, ultimately bore fruit in Mehmed III's conquest of Eger. However, the mixed success of Ottoman efforts to control invaded territories, and to assert continuous rule over a region with independent political forces and ideological narratives, ultimately led not to universalist power, but, in Talikizade's estimation, a weakened authority tempered by political infighting, inconsistent management, and improper adherence to the principles of governance. Talikizade's *şehname cum gazaname* thus embodied a bricolage of textual genres: chronicle (*tarih*), reportage and classification of events (*tahrir ü tasnif*), treatise on etiquette and proper comportment (*adab*), and advice manual (*nasihatname*). Consequently, it also blended varied authoritative voices typical of these genres to sustain his portrait of both campaign and Empire: Qur'anic citations, references to the hadith, poetic conventions quoted or invented, and traditions of kingly virtues and attributes actively propounded within Arabo-Persianate and Türkmenid contexts such as the circle of equity (*daire-i adalet*). This bricolage of styles and voices was brought to bear on one pivotal question posed within the folios of the *Şehname*: in the midst of war and potential imperial crisis, what are the foundational principles of the Ottoman *state* and how might they be enacted so as to secure present borders and future fortunes?

---

[91] Ibid., 62 and 105a-119a; 366-411.

[92] Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire*, 3-5.

[93] Woodhead, *Ta'līḳīzāde's Şehnāme-i Hümāyūn*, 109a-113b, and 380-397.

[94] Ibid., 113b, and 397.

The framework for this question, one that seeks principles in the past to safeguard the present and ensure the durability of the Empire, places the scholar-bureaucrats and *şehnameci*s briefly surveyed here within a larger corpus of actors engaged in reflective analysis. Seyyid Lokman, Mustafa Ali, and Talikizade may have differed in their agendas and positions within the Ottoman establishment, but in combination they embody an obsessive focus on the *state*, and thus generated part of a textual web that defined its power. This power, across these perhaps idiosyncratic representatives of a more generalized shift during the 'long sixteenth century', was more vulnerable and even fabricated than absolute. Lokman, who foregrounded the Sultan and staunchly defended his absolute discretionary power, in actuality oversaw the production of a scroll and codices that focused instead on the courtly establishment: viziers, scribes, dignitaries, and servants of the realm. In other words, the court itself replaced the Sultan, for whom the elaborate apparatus of text and image had been intended to sacralize and enshrine. Mustafa Ali projected an idealized past, an 'Ottoman way' or *kanun* against which the perceived present crisis was measured.[95] Even more pressing, he suggested that absolute power was in itself a corrupted goal. And Talikizade turned panegyric into critique, by inserting attributes of just rule into a *şehname/*campaign chronicle that narrated intrigue and disorder. Each of these actors was himself part of a 'way-making' or *kanun*-making establishment, and thus traversed boundaries between conceptual and administrative mappings of the dynasty and its imperial domains. While this 'Ottoman way' may have been retrospectively constituted, even as it drew from *kanun*-making activities of the imperial council, it suggests a clear sense that the Ottoman *state* was a thing that must be made, or rather, constantly re-made, through the combined activities of sword and pen. The vulnerability of the *state*, then, also highlights the vicissitudes of 'state'-making, or rather, of historiographical efforts to affix statehood within an analytical rubric. Ottomans and Ottomanists alike strained in their effort to achieve this goal. As present practitioners of the craft, we thus also strive to avoid parroted speech or a derivative re-transmission of past knowledge, and engage instead an analysis that weighs principles against practice so as to define structures of knowledge and methods of knowledge-making peculiar to the period of study.

---

[95] A phrase now key to the field since Fleischer's discussion in *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire* where he also linked it to an emerging "bureaucratic consciousness" that Mustafa Ali typified. See esp. pages 214-231 and Guy Burak's reference to the importance of a "Rumi way" that frames the legal activities of the Ottoman establishment as well in G. Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York 2015), 99-100.

« LE SULTAN DES DEUX TERRES ET DES DEUX MERS » :
REPRÉSENTATIONS DIPLOMATIQUES DE L'ESPACE POLITIQUE OTTOMAN AU XVI^{E} SIÉCLE

Güneş Işıksel*

À partir des années 1550, les dignitaires ottomans prennent davantage conscience des limites géographiques et culturelles du monde qui les entoure. La consolidation des frontières existantes de l'empire devient alors la priorité. Cependant, à une majeure exception près, il n'existe aucune tentative de redéfinition ou de représentation émique détaillée, écrite ou visuelle, de cet espace politique au seizième siècle, bien qu'il y existe un dénominateur commun : les « Pays bien-gardés » (*memalik-i mahruse*)[1]. Ce groupe nominal ne se prête pas à une interprétation immédiate et ces « pays » demeurent souvent indéfinis. Néanmoins, la titulature du sultan, insérée au protocole initial des actes les plus officiels offre un cadre de lecture.

Dans cet article, notre intention est non seulement d'analyser les façons de représenter les « Pays bien gardés » au xvi^{e} siècle dans les actes sultaniens, mais aussi d'interpréter les instruments tant diplomatiques que stylistiques qui permettent à la chancellerie ottomane de transmettre les messages politiques aux différents destinataires de ces documents[2]. Parmi ces actes, nous avons choisi les *ahdname* concédés aux Impériaux et

---

* Istanbul Medeniyet University.

[1] Le chef d'œuvre inachevé de Celalzade Mustafa, *Tabakâtü'l-memâlik ve derecâtü'l-mesâlik* devait comprendre une description détaillée du territoire ottoman : P. Kappert (éd.), *Geschichte Sultan Süleyman Kanunis von 1520 bis 1557* (Wiesbaden 1981). Sur cet auteur et son projet: İ. K. Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World* (Cambridge 2013).

[2] Pour des tentatives similaires, *cf.* H. İnalcık, « Power Relationship Between Russia, Ottoman Empire and Crimean Khanate as Reflected in Titulature », dans: Ch. Lemercier-Quelquejay, G. Veinstein, S. Enders Wimbush (éd.), *Turco-Tatar Past Soviet Present: Studies presented to Alexandre Bennigsen* (Paris 1986), pp. 175-211; D. Kołodziejczyk, « Khan, Caliph, Tsar and Imperator: the Multiple Identities of the Ottoman Sultan », dans P. Fibeger Bang et D. Kołodziejczyk (éd.), *Universal Empire. A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History* (Cambridge 2012), pp. 175-193. Dans son livre récent, Palmira Brummett évoque les données territoriales dans les actes sultaniens, sans pour autant les analyser : *Mapping the Ottomans: Sovereignty, Territory, and Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Cambridge 2015), p. 78.

au Royaume de Pologne qui constituent une série considérable –quatre documents originaux, pour chacun des cas – et qui comprennent une titulature plus élaborée par rapport à celle insérée dans les capitulations octroyées aux autres États européens[3]. Il serait intéressant d'analyser également la titulature du sultan telle qu'elle s'affiche dans les actes adressés aux souverains orientaux, mais dans ceux-ci, pour des raisons encore à élucider, les mentions territoriales font défaut.

La chancellerie et l'image sultanien

La chancellerie est le lieu destiné à l'élaboration, à la publication et à la conservation des actes issus du monarque ottoman. Le *nişancı,* son directeur, contrôle tant leur élaboration et leur rédaction que leur expédition[4]. Les scribes pratiquent une écriture à usage politique et administratif, capable de démontrer leur maîtrise de procédés littéraires et syntaxiques, tels que l'emploi de la prose rimée, la composition de préambules grandiloquents et l'usage averti de références et de citations[5]. Il leur faut donner l'image d'un pouvoir qui ordonne, gère et commande de façon efficace. Ce respect formel est un travail long, délicat et indispensable : le chancelier et le grand vizir n'hésitent pas à refuser un texte s'il ne correspond pas aux normes de précision et d'exactitude qu'ils réclament. Tous ont conscience que pour transmettre un message, le document doit être clair dans l'exposé ainsi que dans les dispositions et injonctions. Il faut que les documents soient formellement parfaits afin de refléter une image positive du sultan, mais ils doivent aussi être irréprochables sur le fond afin de garder toute leur efficacité. C'est dans cette double optique que le chancelier conçoit les actes. Le sultan se doit d'afficher l'image d'un pouvoir magnanime et magnifique pour rassurer ses sujets et pour impressionner les monarques, et les productions écrites doivent être à l'image de ces principes.

La titulature – la section sans doute la plus élaborée des actes sultaniens – fait partie du protocole initial. Elle est constituée par la suscription (*intitulatio*, *unvan*) dans laquelle on trouve une formule qui précise les titres et qualités de l'auteur de l'acte. Celle-ci est suivie par l'adresse (*inscriptio, elkab*), puis par la formule de salutation (*dua*) qui est modelée en fonction du titre, du rang et de la confession du destinataire. La titulature sultanienne et l'adresse ci-dessous est tirée de la traduction contemporaine en français d'un *ahdname* concédé par Selim II (1566-1574) aux Impériaux, en 1574.

---

[3] Dans les capitulations accordées aux rois de France au XVIe siècle, la titulature sultanienne est sommaire. Dans l'acte de 1569, le sultan est décrit uniquement en tant que le maître de la mer Blanche et de la mer Noire ainsi que de la Roumélie, de l'Anatolie et de l'Arabie. BNF, ms. tur. 130, fol. 3 r°. Dans les capitulations anglaises, la titulature sultanienne n'est pas introduite du fait que ces documents sont stylés comme des *nişan* auguste. Cf S. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578-1582* (Londres 1977), pp. 232-236.

[4] J. Matuz, *Das Kanzleiwesen Sultan Suleymans des Prachtigen* (Wiesbaden 1974); C. H. Fleischer, « Preliminaries to the Study of the Otoman Bureacracy», *JTS*, X (1986), pp. 135-141; *TDVİA*, «Nişancı» (E. Afyoncu).

[5] *TDVİA*, « Kâtip » (Erhan Afyoncu, Recep Ahıskalı); Ch. Woodhead, « From Scribe to Littérateur: The Career of a Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Katib», *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin*, 9/1 (1982), pp. 55-74: 58.

> Moi qui suis seigneur des seigneurs, et seigneur des royaumes des Romains, Arabie & Perse, Roy des Roys, et des royaumes de Tyr (*sic* !) et Halt et Lim (*sic* !), puissant subjugateur, victorieux dominateur et triomphant de tous exercices, occupant et possédant les royaumes du Monde, roy des seigneuries et royaumes qui naguère ont esté sous les Césars ; et de ce temps souverain monarque de la victorieuse couronne de ce siècle et empereur des régions et des provinces ... [leur liste extensive, *infra*] ... encores plus oultre des autres principaux royaumes qui sont occupez par nostre victorieux et heureux glaive, très resnommez royaumes et chasteaux qui sont possedez par notre Cesarée puissance. Suis Empereur Sélim Han, fils de Sultan Suleiman Han, fils de Sultan Sélim Han [...] lesquels avec l'aide de Dieu très bon, très grand et très puissant, ont estably l'ordre très heureux de la Monarchie sous ma puissante main et glaive triomphal. Il est concédé et confirmé à mon bras fort d'occuper et de dominer aux royaumes de ce Monde et par moy est possédée et assurée tout la largeur de la Terre [...] À présent toy qui es honoré et esleu du peuple romain & empereur des Royaumes des Germains et des royaumes des Bohème, Croatie et Sclavonie et Roy et dominateur d'autre principaux Royaumes […][6].

Les titres honorifiques soigneusement attribués que la chancellerie employait en s'adressant aux dignitaires, aux vassaux ainsi qu'aux souverains et ambassadeurs étrangers et qui correspondaient à l'*inscriptio* de la pratique diplomatique européenne, étaient un instrument tant pour rendre officielle la hiérarchie internationale dans laquelle le sultan sans se justifier se place au sommet que pour définir la relation entre les épistoliers, et le lieu où se met en place une hiérarchie entre les interlocuteurs. Le « dispensateur des couronnes » était, au demeurant, la source des honneurs, et la forme précise dans laquelle ils étaient décernés devait être rigoureusement respectée.[7] Ainsi, le nom du destinataire était suivi souvent par la salutation libellée en fonction de son rang (voir l'annexe II). L'*inscriptio* se termine souvent par la formule de bénédiction (*dua) hutimet ʻavakibuhu bi'l-hayr* (que sa vie ici-bas s'accomplisse dans le droit chemin). Les considérations sur la hiérarchie entre les interlocuteurs visent à définir la tonalité de l'ensemble de la lettre. Par ailleurs, les formules de bénédiction sont prises très au sérieux par la chancellerie. Dès l'époque de Mehmed II, il s'est établi tout un système de gradation. Les *münşi* (épistolier) semblent avoir constitué tôt des listes des bénédictions (*dua*) d'autant plus nécessaires que les différences de rang sont devenues de plus en plus subtiles où à chaque *lâkab* correspond une *dua* précise[8].

---

[6] La traduction contemporaine française: Paris, Bnf. ms. fr. 7093, fol. 28 v°- 35 r°. Ne serait-ce qu'inexacte dans quelques passages – à dessein ou simplement par l'incompréhension des traducteurs comme dans le cas de *Türk ve Deylem* (littoral méridional du Caspien)– cette traduction reflète la perception européenne de la titulature sultanienne. Pour la description de l'acte original: E. D. Petritsch, *Regesten der Osmanischen Dokumente im Österreichischen Staatsarchiv. Band 1: 1480-1574* (Vienne 1991), p. 253.

[7] Kołodziejczyk, « Khan, Caliph, Tsar and Imperator », pp. 178-180.

[8] Yahya b. Mehmed, *Menâhicü'l-inşâ*, Ş. Tekin (éd.) (Cambridge 1971) ; Tacizade Sa'di Çelebi, *Münşeât-ı Sa'di Çelebi*, N. Lugal et A. Erzi (éds) (Istanbul 1956). Voir aussi, B. Kütükoğlu, « Münşeat mecmualarının Osmanlı diplomatiği bakımından ehemmiyeti », *Tarih boyunca paleografya ve diplomatik semineri-Bildiriler* (Istanbul 1988), pp. 169-176.

L'évolution des mentions territoriales dans les actes sultaniens

Nous n'analyserons pas ici toutes les parties de la titulature, mais nous pencherons sur les notions territoriales qu'elle comprend. Néanmoins, il faut insister sur quelques points. La langue hyperbolique, typique des actes sultaniens du XVI^e^ siècle, évoque immédiatement un jeu d'idées et d'émotions dont la construction demande peu ou pas d'explication au destinataire. Ces images sont parlantes dans un contexte culturel commun aux protagonistes. Par exemple, la chancellerie associe souvent les sultans aux rois mythiques, à l'instar de Chosroes, qui représente la magnificence, ou les désigne en tant qu' « Alexandre de leur temps ». Ainsi, lorsque la chancellerie ottomane se réfère au « roi biscornu » – c'est-à-dire à Alexandre le Grand –, c'est en vue de promouvoir l'idée de la suprématie des Ottomans sur leurs pairs ; suprématie que l'on retrouve également à travers d'autres usages, comme l'énumération dissymétrique de l'espace politique dominé.

En effet, l'usage de titres et d'épithètes qui se réclament d'une domination extensive sur le « quart habité du monde », est fréquent dans la rhétorique des chancelleries orientales, et ce, depuis l'Antiquité[9]. Un moyen commode de le suggérer est d'affirmer l'autorité du souverain sur un monde perçu comme une unité indifférenciée, par exemple le titre de « roi de l'univers ». L'épithète *âlempenah* (refuge du monde) et ses formes adjectivales en sont un exemple particulièrement récurrent. Mais le plus souvent, la totalité gouvernée est considérée, *a fortiori*, comme administrativement structurée. D'où la liste ouverte où sont énumérées une kyrielle d'unités simples (souvent des régions administratives), afin de donner l'impression d'un immense ensemble dont est revendiqué un contrôle unique – ou, du moins, une ambition dans ce sens. La présentation de cette «liste ouverte» est certainement moins exhaustive pour décrire le contrôle sur le monde entier: elle laisse penser qu'une autre région pourrait toujours être ajoutée ou qu'un autre pays reste encore à soumettre. Bien que moins catégoriques, ces listes ouvertes peuvent s'avérer plus utiles à des fins de propagande. Une telle liste peut également être organisée selon un motif structurel (par exemple, en opposant les régions orientales et occidentales) afin de démontrer que les unités géographiques énumérées ne sont pas seulement nombreuses, mais se distribuent d'une manière équilibrée dans le monde entier. Dans certains cas, l'hyperbole prolonge l'idée de puissance suprême et, sans l'expliciter, suggère la suprématie du souverain sur les frontières du monde habité. Dans le cas ottoman, cet effet est créé par l'ajout final de la mention « *ve sair nice vilâyetin* (ainsi que beaucoup d'autres régions) »[10].

---

[9] T. Gnoli, *The Interplay of Roman and Iranian Titles in the Roman East* (Vienne 2007), pp. 33-40. Cet élément a aussi sa place dans les actes adressés par des potentats musulmans à des puissances étrangères. Par exemple le souverain mamelouk était entre autres sultan des Arabes, des Persans et des Turcs et roi des deux mers : M. Dekkiche, « Le Caire : carrefour des ambassades. Étude historique et diplomatique de la correspondance échangée entre les sultans mamlouks circassiens et les souverains timourides et turcomans (Qara Qoyunlu-Qaramanides) au XVe s. d'après le BnF ms.ar. 4440 », thèse de doctorat non publiée, Université de Liège, 2011, p. 37 et *seq*.

[10] L'énumération des régions soumises est une pratique également répandue dans les chancelleri-

La titulature sultanienne ainsi que les donnés géographiques qu'elle comprend apparaît, au XV^e^ siècle, sous une forme rudimentaire. Dans ses actes, Mehmed II se présente en tant que sultan des Deux Terres et des Deux Mers (*berreyn ve bahreyn).*[11] Sous le règne de Bayezid II, l'autoreprésentation du sultan à travers l'évocation des pays dominés se régularise et la liste des beylerbeylicats ottomans commence à devenir un élément stable de la titulature sultanienne[12]. Cependant, la chancellerie de l'époque de Soliman le Magnifique étoffe cette liste, tout en établissant des usages rhétoriques qui exposent la puissance infinie du padichah. Ainsi, dans le bulletin de victoire (*fetihname*) de Bagdad (1535), à l'intention du roi de France, le sultan se présente comme le maître « de la mer Blanche et de la mer Noire, de la Roumélie et de l'Anatolie, des pays de la Caramanie et du Roum, du Dulkadiriye, du Diyarbakır, du Kurdistan, de l'Azerbaïdjan, du pays des Tatars, de Damas, d'Alep et du Caire, de la Mecque la vénérée, de Médine la très illuminée, de Jérusalem, et de Djedda, des [pays] arabes en totalité, du pays perse (*Acem*), de Bagdad, séjour de la paix, de Basra, du pays de Muşa'şa, de Luristan, des territoires du Levant et des pays du Couchant »[13]. Selon la norme qui s'imposera au fil des actes

---

es médievales occidentales. Par exemple, dans sa lettre au sultan datant de 1533, Charles-Quint fait une longue liste comprenant, entre autres, l'épithète du « *roy de Hiérusalem* » et terminée par une mention d'*et cetera*: *Charles Ve de ce nom par la grâce de Dieu empereur des Romains tousiours auguste, roy de la Germanie, Hispaigne, Castille, Léon, Arragon, des deux Siciles, Hiérusalem, Hungrie, Dalmatie, Croatie, Granade, Tollède, Valence, Galice, Maillorque, Sicille, Sardigne, Cordua, Corsica, Murcia, Algarby* [Djerbe], *Gibraltar, Canaries, Indes, et terre ferme, mer océane, Archiducq d'Austhrice, ducq de Brabant, Stirie, Carinte, Carniole, Limbourg, Gheldre, Athines, Wittemberghes, comte de Flandre, Habsbourg, Tirol, Barchelone, Arthois et Bourgogne, palatin de Hesnault, Hollande, Zélande, Namur, Rossillon, Cerdagne et Zutphaine, lantgrave d'Elsace, marquis de Bourgogne, Oristain, Hotiain et du Saint-Empire de Rome, prince de Suèbe, Cathalane, et Biscaye, Seigneur de Frize, Marche, Slavonie, Wealines, Salines, Tripoli et Malines etc.* Cf. A. von Gevay, *Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte der Verhältniffe zwischen Oesterreich, Ungarn und der Pforte im 16. u.,* t. II, 1, (Vienne 1841), pp. 106-107. L'analogie entre les titulatures habsbourgeoise et ottomane est tentante : pourrait-on déduire pour autant un cas de mise en chère dans les longues listes ottomanes qui apparaît à partir des années 1530 au moment où l'antagonisme avec les Impériaux atteint son niveau le plus élevé ?

[11] M. Çelik (éd), *Fatih Sultan Mehmed Dönemi Ferman ve Arşiv Belgeleri* (Gebze 2015).

[12] D. Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations, 15th-18th Century: An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leyde 2000), p. 210. Dans le traité de 1489, le sultan Bayezid est uniquement : « Asie, Grecie Imperator » : *op.cit*., p. 200. Dans celui de 1494, « *Imperator ambarum terrarum*, *Asiae atque Europae et marium Magnus Sultanus* » : *op.cit*., p. 202. Sept ans plus tard, le même sultan est « *Imperator Grecie*, *Assie atque Europe et marium* »: *ibid*., p. 208. Quant à son successeur, Selim Ier, il est le « *Grande imperator di Constantinopoli*, *di Asia Europa Persia Soria et Egipto* », *ibid*., p. 218.

[13] Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. supplément turc, n° 835. Dans la lettre à Fréderic II de Mantoue, préparée en 1526, la titulature sultanienne est également sommaire et similaire. Ainsi, le sultan est le sultan et padişah des de la mer Blanche et de la mer Noire, de la Roumélie et de l'Anatolie, des pays de la Caramanie et du Roum, du Dulkadiriye, du Diyarbakır, du Kurdistan, de l'Azerbaïdjan, de la Perse (*Acem*), de Damas, d'Alep et du Caire, de la Mecque, de Médine, de Jérusalem, de tous les pays arabes, du Yémen ainsi que beacoup d'autres pays. Cf.

ultérieurs, la chancellerie égraine, à quelques exceptions près, le chapelet des beylerbeylicats en fonction de leur ancienneté. Ainsi, ceux de Roumélie et d'Anatolie, créés dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e^ siècle, sont cités en premier. Ils sont suivis des beylerbeylicats créés à l'époque de Mehmed II: la Caramanie et le Roum. Ensuite, comme nous allons le voir, la logique interne des listes se complique.

Force est de constater que ces énumérations d'éléments géographico-administratifs au XVI^e^ siècle comportent de nombreuses irrégularités. Cela s'explique d'abord par la nature des actes faisant partie de notre échantillon. Nous avons privilégié les *ahdname*, du fait qu'ils sont plus riches et éloquents en ce qui concerne la liste de régions. Ces listes changent non seulement en fonction du destinataire que des rapports de force entre ce dernier et le sultan au moment de la rédaction des actes, mais également en fonction du contexte politique[14] : la conquête de nouvelles régions va souvent de paire avec un nouvel agencement de l'énumération. En outre, ces textes ne sont pas issus du même *nişancı* : les styles de Celalzade (en poste entre 1534-1556 ; 1566-1567) et de Feridun Bey (1573-1577), peuvent différer dans le détail et les blocs territoriaux, bien qu'ils conservent une cohérence interne, comme on le verra, s'alternent.

Ainsi, dans les lettres adressées aux monarques occidentaux au XVI^e^ siècle, les sultans ne font pas appel à leur titre de « serviteur des deux saints sanctuaires »; mais se présentent comme les détenteurs des villes saintes, dotées de leurs épithètes respectifs. Ainsi, La Mecque est vénérée, Médine est illuminée et Jérusalem, noble. La position de ces villes saintes – toujours regroupées dans la même hiérarchie – n'est pas stable au sein de la liste globale. Elles sont citées tantôt en tête, avant les autres unités géographiques, et tantôt à la suite des trois éléments territoriaux et culturels constitutifs de l'identité ottomane, à savoir les pays de *Roum*, *Arab* et *Acem*, et des deux mers, que sont la Méditerranée et la mer Noire. Elles se voient parfois rétrogradées au niveau des provinces arabes. Quant aux trois capitales historiques (Istanbul, Edirne et Bursa), elles sont rarement évoquées dans l'*intitulatio* au XVIe siècle. La seule attestée parmi celles-ci est Istanbul, une fois dans le cadre d'une lettre au tsar Ivan IV, et deux fois dans ceux de deux traités avec le roi de Pologne en 1519 et en 1577. Dans la lettre au tsar, la ville capitale est qualifiée de « l'objet de la convoitise des monarques »[15].

Une dernière remarque s'impose ici. Ces énumérations ont aussi bien de similitudes que de différences par rapport aux registres de *tevcihat*. À quelques exceptions près, les noms des beylerbelicats se coïncident et correspondent dans ces deux types de documents. Cependant, dans les *tevcihat*, ni les principautés clientes ni même les régences barbaresques, sont évoquées (voir l'annexe II).

C. Römer, « A propos d'une lettre de Soliman le Magnifique à Federico Gonzaga II (1526) », dans : G. Veinstein (éd.) *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps* (Paris 1992), pp. 455-463.

[14] İnalcık, « Power Relationship », pp. 176-177.

[15] Feridun Bey, *Mecmua-i münşeatü's-selâtin* (Istanbul 1858), t. II, 465 ; Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations,* p. 272.

La liste des domaines ottomans dans les ahdname *Habsbourgeois, 1550-1575*

Dans les premiers traités signés avec les Impériaux, l'énumération des beylerbeylicats suit l'ordre chronologique de leur création.[16] La liste commence avec la Roumélie, suivie de l'Anatolie, du *Roum* et de la Caramanie. Ensuite, la chancellerie mentionne les régions situées sur la frontière safavide: Erzurum, Diyarbakır, le Kurdistan, le Luristan, l'Azerbaïdjan, la Perse. La Dulkadiriye assure la transition vers les provinces arabes, que sont l'Égypte, la Syrie, Alep ainsi que l'Arabie « en totalité » (*külliyen*), précédée des trois villes saintes. L'énumération se poursuit avec les provinces moyen-orientales créées à l'époque de Soliman le Magnifique: Bagdad, Basra, Aden et le Yémen. Sont ensuite dénombrées les entités politiques et les régions « vassales » : le Pays tatar et les steppes kiptchak. Néanmoins, la question de savoir si la chancellerie ottomane désigne par « Pays tatar » le khanat de Crimée ou les possessions ottomanes dans les péninsules de Taman et Kertch, ou bien les deux à la fois, reste en suspens. Le dernier toponyme, dans les actes de 1547 et 1554 est le « trône de Bude » (*Budin tahtı*).

Dans les dernières capitulations du règne de Soliman le Magnifique accordées aux Impériaux, il y a des continuités mais aussi de ruptures. Les quatre premiers localités – la Méditerranée, la Mer Noire, la Roumélie et l'Anatolie – citées dans l'*intitulatio* des derniers *ahdname* solimaniens – les actes de 1559, 1562 et 1565[17]– sont les mêmes que dans les lettres adressées aux États européens dans la première partie du XVI^e^ siècle. Après une référence aux « Deux Terres » (*berreyn*) et aux « Deux Mers » (*bahreyn*), la liste continue avec les régions conquises sur les Mamelouks par Selim I^er^, y compris les villes saintes de l'Islam. Après, l'Arabie – appelée cette fois uniquement en tant que « *Arabistan* » – arrivent les beylerbeylicats d'Asie Mineure (Caramanie, Roum et Dulkadiriye). Enfin, le sultan procède à une énumération de termes géographiques correspondant aux régions conquises sous son règne, à l'exception de Caffa (conquise par Mehmed II en 1475), qui s'étendent de Van à Temeşvar. Curieusement, pour 1559, on constate que la chancellerie omet de citer la « Tartarie » et les steppes kiptchak parmi les régions sous suzeraineté ottomane. On ne trouve en effet que Caffa, l'unité administrative la plus importante de cette zone.

Notons deux changements importants dans les actes de 1559, 1562 et 1565. Le premier est la revalorisation des unités administratives arabophones par rapport aux domaines ruméliotes et anatoliens. Le deuxième concerne la présentation des territoires trans-danubiens sous l'emprise ottomane : les principautés roumaines, à commencer par la Valachie, puis la Moldavie, sont ordonnées en fonction de l'ancienneté de leur statut de tributaire ; suit le « trône » de Bude. Force est de constater que le beylerbeylicat de Bude est mentionné souvent sous différentes formes. On le voit sous l'appellation du « trône de Bude » dans les premier documents, puis simplement « Bude » en 1559. Dans les actes de 1562 et 1565, il est attesté dans la forme « *Üngürüs* », appellation qui ne désigne toutefois pas exactement Bude. Il n'est pas exclu que la chancellerie désigne à la fois les beylerbeylicats de Bude et de Temeşvar – ce dernier n'est évoqué qu'en 1562–, afin de rappeler au destinataire les prétentions de la Porte sur la totalité de l'ancien royaume de la Hongrie, malgré le tracé des frontières.

---

[16] Feridun Bey, *Mecmua-i münşeatü's-selâtin*, t. II, 76-78. A. C. Schaendlinger, (éd.), *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen an Karl V., Ferdinand I. und Maximilian II. aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchive zu Wien* (Vienne 1983), pp. 59-65.

[17] Schaendlinger, (éd.), *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen*, pp. 67-74; pp. 87-94.

Dans les traités ratifiés par les successeurs immédiats de Soliman le Magnifique, la chancellerie développe davantage ses procédés stylistiques. Elle se sert de l'allitération, par les retours des sons et par l'emploi anaphorique des génitifs. Les groupements rimant ensemble ont très souvent entre eux un rapport de sens étroit. Un souffle poétique court dans ces phrases. Il est aisé de constater l'extension d'un énoncé qui se complaît dans le détail, la thématique d'une majesté. Force est de constater que si la répétition en écho de synonymes ou quasi synonymes crée l'effet de solennité, elle sacrifie souvent, l'idée à la figure et le sens à l'apparence. La prose est parfois rendue sciemment obscure par l'emploi de mots rares et par la profusion d'allusions érudites. Ainsi, dans l'acte de 1568, les épithètes se suivent en cascade, donnant lieu à une énumération à la Prévert :

> Moi qui est le sultan des sultans de *Rum*, de l'Arabie et de Perse et khakan des khakans de Chine, de Cathay, de Turkestan et de Daylam. Le chevalier par excellence des champs de bataille et le monarque des climats et pays. [Je suis] celui qui donne des ordres aux césars de l'âge et de l'époque; le maître de la heureuse constellation et la personne que les deux victoires se rassemblent. Je suis le maître des villes de grande renommée aux parages de la Méditerranée et des forteresses aux alentours de la mer Noire. Notre Seuil Sublime est le refuge des grands sultans du monde et notre Noble Excellence, est l'abri des khakans de l'époque[18].

La surenchère qui marque ce document est évidente[19] : dans les textes antérieurs, la nature de la souveraineté ottomane sur les deux mers était formulée assez vaguement. Or, dans celui-ci, la chancellerie la précise, sans pour autant remporter la conviction. Ensuite, la chancellerie énumère les domaines à l'aune des actes de 1562 et 1565. La liste des localités correspond généralement aux beylerbeylicats. Les gouvernorats orientaux et arabophones sont évoqués en priorité, suivis des beylerbeylicats anatoliens avant d'énumérer les unités administratives et les entités politiques vassales situées près de la frontière Habsbourg, qui forment la partie occidentale de l'Empire.[20]

---

[18] Pour la référence archivistique de l'acte : E. D. Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente im Österreichischen Staatsarchiv. Band 1: 1480-1574* (Vienne 1991), pp. 187-188.

[19] Nous ne pouvons interpréter cette formulation, qui est unique dans les correspondances sultaniennes du XVIe siècle, sans la comparer à une autre, beaucoup trop ambitieuse, que l'on trouve dans une lettre de Murad III à Maximilien II. Au lieu de proposer une liste des territoires sous l'emprise ottomane, la chancellerie y offre une description chimérique de la domination politique de la Porte : « la surface de la Terre, en long et en large, de la Chine jusqu'aux confins du monde…. la totalité du quart habité et les sept climats sont sous mon autorité. » Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, *Mühimme Defteri,* XXVII, p. 256. Ici, la réalité géopolitique s'éclipse au profit d'un *leitmotiv* idéologique.

[20] Voici la liste des domaines dans l'acte de 1568 : *Akdeniz etrafında olan bilâd-ı sipihr-irtifanın ve Karadeniz cevanibinde bulunan kılâ ü buk'anın ve nadire-i asr olan Mısır ve Sa'îd-i a'lânın*

La présentation de ces régions limitrophes subit encore de changements d'un document à l'autre dans les actes issus des chancelleries de Selim II (1566-1574) et Murad III (1574-1595). Les seuls éléments qu'on retrouve régulièrement dans notre échantillon sont les principautés-clientes de la Valachie et la Moldavie. Une irrégularité importante concerne le cas de la Transylvanie. Cette principauté est omise dans les *ahdname* de 1559, 1562, 1565 et de 1568, soit dans les années où cette principauté était aux mains du prince Jean II Sigismond Zapolya (1540-1570). Elle ne fait sa réapparition qu'après la mort du dernier, dans l'*ahdname* de 1574, et quand le pays est vassalisé, à l'instar des deux autres principautés danubiennes.[21] Quant au beylerbeylicat de Bude, il n'est même pas évoqué subrepticement ni dans l'acte de 1568 ni dans celui de 1574, tout comme celui de Temeşvar.

La titulature du sultan dans les ahdname *aux rois de Pologne, 1525-1577*

Nous avons sélectionné quatre *ahdname* à l'intention des rois de Pologne. Les deux premières datent de l'époque de Soliman le Magnifique ; le troisième, du règne de Selim II et le dernier, de celui de Murad III[22]. Les premières régions citées dans les trois premiers documents sont les mêmes : la Méditerranée, la mer Noire, la Roumélie et l'Anatolie. Ensuite, on retrouve le bloc des quatre unités administratives orientales conquises avant le règne de Süleyman, qui subit de légers changements dans la hiérarchie de l'énumération : la Caramanie, le Roum, la Dulkadiriye, le Diyarbakır, suivies du Kurdistan et de l'Azerbaïdjan. À partir de 1553, Damas et Alep sont citées respectivement en cinquième et sixième places. La place des trois villes saintes varie dans chaque ordre. Les nouveaux beylerbeylicats créés à l'époque de Süleyman (ceux de Yémen, de Van, de Buda, de Temesvar, de Bagdad et de Basra) figurent toujours à la fin de ces trois documents, avec des changements dans l'ordre de leur énumération. Les « pays roumains », c'est-à-dire les principautés-clientes de la Valachie, la Moldavie et la Transylvanie ainsi que la Tartarie et les steppes kiptchak, sont toujours absents dans la titulature sultanienne des lettres à l'intention de rois de Pologne. Et cela, pour cause : ces régions étaient l'objet d'une rivalité intense entre les deux États dès le XVe siècle, et la Porte s'abstient de les évoquer dans les lettres dont l'objet principal était de raffermir l'amitié.

---

ve Bağdad-ı darü's-selâm ve bilâd-ı Haleb ve Şam'ın ve Bender-i Cidde ve Beytü'llahi'l-Haram'ın ve Medine-i münevvere ve Kuds-i şerif-i lâzımü'l-ihtiramın ve vilâyet-i Yemen ve Aden ve San'a'nın ve memalik-i Habeş ve Basra ve Lahsa'nın ve Kürdistan'ın ve Gürcistan'ın ve Lûristan'ın ve Van'ın ve Deşt-i Kıpçak ve diyar-ı Tatar'ın ve külliyen vilâyet-i Anadolu ve Zü'l-kadriye ve Karaman'ın ve umumen memalık-i Rumeli ve Eflâk ve Boğdan'ın [*hakimi*].

[21] Sur cette procédure, notamment du point de vue diplomatique : S. Papp, *Die Verleihungs-, Bekräftigungs- und Vertragsurkunden der Osmanen für Ungarn und Siebenbürgen: Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (Vienne 2003). Pour l'*ahdname* de 1574, *cf* : Petritsch, *Regesten*, pp. 253-254.

[22] Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish*, pp. 222-224 (1525), pp. 234-238 (1553), pp. 265-268 (1568) et pp. 270-274 (1577). Cet auteur fait une première analyse de l'énumération territoriale entre les pages pp. 17-20.

Par rapport aux traits quasi-réguliers de ces trois actes, adressés aux rois Jagellon, celui de 1577 apporte un changement[23]. Désormais, la liste presque stable des actes de trois premiers quarts du XVI^e^ siècle, en moyen vingt unités d'administration, est considérablement révisée et augmentée. Dans ce document, la liste commence par la mention des trois villes saintes, suivies des beylerbeylicats dans la frontière avec les Safavides. Ensuite la chancellerie évoque les provinces anatoliennes. Après la mention isolée et unique de l'île de Rhodes, l'interprétation de l'énumération devient difficile. Dans cet amas jaspé, les localités aussi diverses que la capitale ottomane et la forteresse de La Goulette sont mentionnées les unes après les autres. Nous pouvons cependant repérer dans ce recensement désordonné les conquêtes récentes de l'époque de Selim II (Chypre, Tunis, La Goulette). La grande nouveauté de *l'ahdname* de 1577 est l'apparition, dans cette liste, des steppes kiptchak, de la Valachie, de la Moldavie, ainsi que de la Transylvanie à la fin de l'acte. En effet, leur apparition fait sans doute écho que le Roi de Pologne Étienne Bathory (1576-1586), destinataire de l'acte, est un ancien vassal de la Porte en qualité de Voïévode de Transylvanie (1571-1576).[24]

Fins politiques et subtilités diplomatiques

L'analyse de la titulature dans les actes à l'intention des Habsbourg et des Jagellon révèle que la composition des listes de pays varie en fonction aussi bien du destinataire que du contexte et ce, selon des règles bien établies. La comparaison montre que ces différences sont plus marquées dans la présentation des provinces et vassaux ottomans d'Europe. La chancellerie évite de mentionner dans les *ahdname* les localités susceptibles d'irriter le destinataire. Ainsi, le beylerbeylicat de Bude apparaît bien dans les actes à destination des rois de Pologne, mais ne figure pas dans le document adressé aux Habsbourg. De même, les steppes kiptchak, le pays de Tatars, la Valachie et la Moldavie font partie des « Territoires bien gardés » dans la correspondance avec l'empereur, mais disparaissent dans les *ahdname* concédés aux Jagellon. Dans les actes adressés aux souverains mitoyens en Europe, les représentations des « Pays bien-gardés » commencent par l'énumération des régions orientales – qui donne également à voir le caractère musulman de l'entité politique ottomane – et aboutissent à un point final avec la mention des frontières partagées avec le destinataire – ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'esprit de *gaza*– tout en omettant pour autant les régions conflictuelles.

En guise de conclusion, nous permettons d'insister à nouveau sur le protocole initial des actes. Le protocole initial ne consiste pas d'une formule stéréotypée à la phraséologie redondante qui ne contiendrait que des idées générales, voire des banalités sans rapport avec l'objet du dispositif. Les différentes parties de ce protocole initial expriment une certaine philosophie du pouvoir. L'ordre et le choix des mots ainsi que les emphases et jeux rhétoriques sont aussi bien de signifiants que des signifiés. Ainsi, nous pouvons proposer que la diplomatique est loin d'être une forme d'érudition stérile voire obsolète. Si ce n'est pas faux quand ces opérations intellectuelles restent purement descriptives, ce n'est plus vrai quand la description n'est qu'une première étape pour passer à l'interprétation. En effet, les formes diplomatiques expriment une vision politique.

---

[23] Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish*, pp. 270-274.

[24] Sur l'élection du dernier au trône de Pologne, on consultera K. Beydilli, *Die polonischen Königswahlen und Interregnen von 1572 und 1576 im Lichte osmanischer Archivalien* (Munich 1976).

En somme, la suscription des actes constituent un aspect important du système de représentations dont le document est le produit. Ces éléments protocolaires éclairent les circonstances de la préparation du document et les rapports de force entre le destinateur et le destinataire. Ces formules fournissent surtout des indices précieux pour l'interprétation des conceptions sultaniennes de l'espace administratif au seizième siècle. Autrement dit, ils laissent à voir comment les Ottomans inventoriaient, ordonnaient et cherchaient à présenter leur empire. Il faut enfin se rappeler que les lettres impériales ne sont pas écrites uniquement à l'intention d'un monarque étranger. Elles sont souvent recopiées et préservées dans les recueils épistolaires qui se diffusent dans les chancelleries provinciales et les cercles littéraires. Par ce biais, elles deviennent un instrument de propagande impérial et un vecteur majeur de l'autoreprésentation politique et territoriale des « Pays bien-gardés ».

Annexe I : L'inscription dans les actes pour l'empereur dans les *ahdname* du troisième quart du XVI^e^ siècle

L'année de l'*ahdname*	**La teneur de l'inscription**
1565	L'honneur des éminents émirs des fidèles de Jésus, l'élu parmi les notables de la nation du Messie, le roi Maximilien, tu es honneur et gloire du peuple romain et l'empereur des pays allemands et le roi et le prince des pays tchèques, slaves, croates ainsi que d'autres pays.
1568	Toi, qui es l'honneur des éminents émirs des fidèles de Jésus, l'élu parmi les grands de la nation du Messie, celui qui veille sur les affaires publiques et la paix de Nazaréens, celui qui déploie la traîne de la magnificence et de la pompe, légataire de la gloire superbe, le roi Maximilien, honneur et gloire du peuple romain et l'empereur des pays allemands et le roi et le prince des pays tchèques, slaves ainsi que d'autres pays.
1574	Toi, qui es l'honneur et la gloire du peuple romain et l'émir des pays allemands ainsi que du taifa des tchèques, slaves et croates, la fierté des éminents émirs des fidèles de Jésus, l'élu parmi les grands de la nation du Messie, celui qui veille sur les affaires publiques et la paix de Nazaréens, celui qui déploie la traîne de la magnificence et de la pompe, légataire de la gloire superbe, le roi Maximilien, que sa vie ici-bas s'accomplisse dans le droit chemin !

Nous constatons que la titulature du « roi de Vienne » développe dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e^ siècle, au fur et à la mesure que les relations entre les Habsbourg et les

Ottomans se stabilisent comme le montre l'inscriptio de Maximilien II. Par rapport à l'*inscriptio* du dernier *ahdnâme* octroyé à l'époque de Süleyman I^er^, celle des actes de 1568 et de 1574 est plus élaborée. Il est vrai que l'*elkab* de Maximilien II est le plus développé parmi les souverains chrétiens à l'époque de Selim II. Cependant, dans cette titulature très longue nous constatons l'omission systématique d'un titre, celui du roi de la Hongrie. En outre, la formule de bénédiction *hutimet ʻavakibuhu bi'l-hayr*, habituelle dans la correspondance avec les monarques chrétiens n'apparaît qu'en 1574. Dans ce dernier document, l'« octroi » de la formule de bénédiction est "compensé" par la dégradation du titre de *kral* et *hakim* des pays tchèques, slaves, croates à celui du simple émir. La titulature de rois de France est succincte par rapport à celle de l'empereur. Cependant, malgré l'économie dans les louanges, on constate l'attribution le titre du *padichah* au roi de France, une grande distinction car, hormis certains monarques asiatiques – comme le sultan de Aceh –, ce titre est généralement réservé par la chancellerie ottomane pour désigner le sultan.

Annexe II. Trois différentes représentations territoriales des années 1570

Les unités administratives et vassales	Le registre des *tevcihat* 1568-1574[25]	L'*ahdname* de l'empereur des Habsbourg en 1574	L'*ahdname* du roi de Pologne, en 1577
Rumeli	X	X	X
Anadolu	X	X	X
Rûm	X	X	X
Karaman	X	X	X
Diyarbekir	X	–[26]	X
Haleb	X	X	X
Şam	X	X	X
Mısr	X	X	X
Zulkadriye	X	X	X
Erzurum	X	–[27]	X
Bağdad	X	X	X
Yemen	X	X	X
Budin	X	–[28]	X
Basra	X	X	X

---

[25] D'après le *sancak tevcihat defteri* publié par Metin Kunt: *Sancaktan eyalete* (Istanbul 1978), pp. 133-149.

[26] Mentionnée dans les *ahdname* des Habsbourg jusqu'en 1565.

[27] Mentionnée uniquement dans l'*ʻahdname* de 1549.

[28] Cf. *supra*.

Van	X	X	X
Temeşvar	X	–[29]	X
Lahsa	X	X	X
Habeş	–	X	X
Trablus-ı garb	–	–[30]	X
Kıbrıs	X	–	X
Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid	X	–[31]	–
Luristan	–	X	X
Kürdistan	–	X	X
Cezayir-i Garb	–	X	X
Gürcistan	–	X	–[32]
Eflak	–	X	X
Boğdan	–	X	X
Erdel	–	X	X

S’il est facile d’expliquer l’absence d’entités clientes dans le registre des *tevcihat* qui n’ont pas de gouverneurs désignés par le centre comme les pays roumains, géorgiens ou kurdes. Il en est moins quant à interpréter l’omission de Régences barbaresques et l’Abyssinie qui avaient, au XVIe siècle leurs *beğlerbeğ*. Pour ce qui est l’absence des beylerbeylicats de Diyarbekir et d’Erzurum ainsi que du Chypre dans l’*ahdname* de Maximilien II de 1574, la réponse parait être que leur absence dans l’acte de 1568 à partir duquel le copiste a du préparer le nouveau –le Chypre a été conquis *de jure* en 1573. Nous pouvons en conclusion asserter que la représentation territoriale ottomane se constituait, au XVIe siècle, des beylerbeylicats (*merkezî* et *salyaneli*) en base et des principautés clientes. Cet amas était reconfiguré en fonction du destinataire et de la conjoncture politique.

---

[29] Cf. *supra*.

[30] Mentionnée dans l*‘ahdname* de 1559.

[31] Evoqué antérieurement dans l’épithète du maître des « deux Mers ».

[32] Absent également dans les actes antérieurs.

İSTİMALET:
WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY KNOW ABOUT IT?

Elias Kolovos*

Istimalet is a term used very frequently in Ottomanist historiography in order to describe the Ottoman policy toward their non-Muslim subjects during their early conquests, aiming at winning them over.[1] In this paper, I would like to revisit the term, through research into its exact use/s, and discuss its place and history in the Ottoman political vocabulary.

The policy of *istimalet* has been described by Halil İnalcık in 1991, in his paper on 'The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans' as follows:

> … It is now a commonplace that in the early period of their expansion, the Ottomans pursued, primarily in order to facilitate conquest, or to make the indigenous population favorably disposed, a policy called *istimalet*. It was intended to win over the population, peasants and townspeople, as well as military and clerics, by generous promises and concessions, sometimes going beyond the limits of the well-known, tolerant stipulations of Islamic Law concerning non-Muslims who had submitted without resistance. Within this policy of *istimalet*, the Ottomans especially during the first transition period, maintained intact the laws and customs, the status and privileges, that had existed in the pre-conquest times, and what is more unusual, they incorporated the existing military and clerical groups into their own administrative system without discrimination, so that in many cases former *pronoia*-holders and seigneurs in the Balkans were left on their fiefs as Ottoman timar-holders. But the most fundamental and perhaps the most effective component of the *istimalet* policy was, from the beginning, the recognition of the Orthodox church as part of the Ottoman state….[2]

For this paragraph, İnalcık makes a reference to his seminal paper on the 'Ottoman Methods of Conquest', published in 1954, where, interestingly, the same historical phe-

---

* Department of History and Archeology, University of Crete and Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, Institute for Mediterranean Studies.

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to Elizabeth Zachariadou, Marinos Sariyannis, and Ekin Tuşalp Atiyas for their invaluable help in the compilation of this paper.

[2] H. İnalcık, 'The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Under the Ottomans', *Turcica*, 21-22 (1991), 409. Emphasis is mine. Halil İnalcık had already written a page concerning the *istimalet* in his entry on *İA*, s.v. 'Türkler/Osmanlılar' (H. İnalcık)

nomena are described; however, there is no mention of the policy of *istimalet*. İnalcık used then only the term "assimilation", in order to describe the Christian *sipahi*s who had entered Ottoman service.

Heath Lowry, in his *Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (published 2003),[3] expanded the use of the term *istimalet* in his analysis of an early Ottoman *syncretic* reality:

> Clearly, fifteenth-century Ottoman peasant reality was a far more syncretic and dynamic one than that seen in the sixteenth century and thereafter. It was typified by an accommodationist stance vis-à-vis the majority of Christian population, one in which religion was only marginally a barrier to either military or administrative advancement. The present study has suggested that this policy of *istimalet* may well have stemmed from the speed of the Ottoman conquests placing serious strains on the supply of trained military and administrative power. It was a need which accounted for the large-scale utilization of both Christian peasants and their former rulers in the expanding Ottoman administration. Typified by a flexible tax system which preserved earlier practices, the ensuing new Ottoman order must have looked particularly attractive to a Christian peasantry long abused during the preceding centuries of Byzantine decline. It may well have been this accommodationist, indeed syncretic fifteenth-century Ottoman reality, rather than the abundance of an overgrowing influx of Turks, to which we must look for an explanation of Ottoman success in embracing the multitude of peoples divided by culture, language, religion, and history.[4]

Karen Barkey, in her *Empire of Difference* (2008), has also theorised the concept of *istimalet* as a "strategy for the stabilization of power".[5]

In an encyclopedia entry on *Istimalet*, written by Mücteba İlgürel for the *Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 23 (2001)[6], *istimalet* is defined as follows: "[the] name attributed to the accommodationist policy of conquest the Ottomans applied [Osmanlılar'ın uyguladığı meylettirici ve uzlaştırcıcı fetih siyaseti için kullanılan tabir]". İlgürel used the following terms, following, as he says, the Ottoman chronicles, in order to explain *istimalet*: "halkı ve özellikle gayri müslim tebaayı gözetme, onlara karşı hoşgörülü davranma, raiyyetperverlik" (love for the *reaya*). It is interesting to note that İlgürel attributes the origins of the Ottoman policy of *istimalet* in the Holy Qur'an, where the expression "bringing hearts together [for Islam]" (but expressed as *müellefe-i kulûb*) was used for the expenditures of alms to the new converts to the faith (9:60):[7]

---

[3] H. W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany 2003), 91-92.

[4] Ibid., 112. *Istimalet* is the central analytical tool of Heath Lowry in his *Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities: Christian Peasant Life on the Aegean Island of Limnos* (Istanbul 2002).

[5] K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York 2008), 87-88; she refers to the paper by H. İnalcık on 'The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans'.

[6] *TDVİA*, s.v. '*Istimalet*' (M. İlgürel) with extensive bibliography; however, İlgürel fails to make a reference to Halil İnalcık's description of *istimalet* in the *İA*. İlgürel had written a little earlier on 'Osmanlı Siyasetinde İstimalet Siyaseti', *XII. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Vol. 3 (Ankara 1999), 941.

[7] For this understanding of the Qur'anic term, see *Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*, 'q-l-b' (E. M. Badawi and M. A. Haleem), Brill Online, 2014.

> *Zakah* expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [*zakah*] and for *bringing hearts together [for Islam]* and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveller - an obligation [imposed] by Allah.[8]

Before moving to an examination of the actual sources concerning *istimalet*, let us look also at the meanings given to the word in the dictionaries. According to Redhouse, *istimale* means 1) leaning, inclining; 2) gaining goodwill, coaxing. (According to the New Redhouse: "a trying to persuade; a gaining goodwill, a coaxing"). According to Zenker, *istimalet* means (in French) "action de se pencher, de s'incliner vers q. ch.; de chercher à se concilier, à se rendre favorable q. qn.; caresse, flatterie, conciliation, consolation"; *istimalet etmek* or *vermek:* "se pencher, être porté vers q. ch. ou q. qn., chercher a se concilier, a se rendre favorable q. qn., caresser, flatter q. qn.". Meninski, in the seventeenth century, had explained *istimalet (vermek)* as following (in French): "caresser, consoler, foulager, donner des bonnes paroles, encourager".[9]

Moving now from the dictionaries and historiography to the actual sources, I can locate the earliest reference to *istimalet* in the Ottoman chronicles of the fifteenth century, which, however, describe the practice already in connection with the first Ottoman conquests of the fourteenth century. Actually, when describing the very first Ottoman conquest in Europe, the conquest of Tzymbe, Oruç Bey narrates that the Ottomans did not harm the infidels of the neighbouring areas in the peninsula of Gallipoli; on the contrary, they won them over as allies, promising that they and their families would be safe and sound (*ol yörenün kâfilerini incitmediler, istimaletler virdiler. Emn ü eman içinde oldılar. Hatunlarını ve dahı oğlanlarını ve kızlarını be-gayet hoş dutdılar. Cimnik kal'asınun kâfirleri bu gazilere müteffik oldılar*).[10] In the Tzymbe narrative of Aşıkpaşazade, there is no reference to *istimalet*, but to the possibility that the Ottomans provided them with benefits (*hısarı aldılar kâfirlerini incitmediler belki kâfirlerine dahı ihsanlar etdiler*). In their narratives of early Ottoman history, all the Ottoman chronicles of the fifteenth century include a lot of similar examples of political practices of 'carrot' as opposed to political practices of 'stick'; however, with the aforementioned exception of Oruç Bey and some other exceptional references,[11] they do not use the word *istimalet*. In the light of this observation, it should be discussed whether we are justified in using the term *istimalet* as a term of early Ottoman political thought.

---

[8] Halil İnalcık, in his paper 'Osmanlı döneminde Balkanlar Tarihi üzerinde yeni araştırmalar', read at the Conference of Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi in 1996, published much later in *GAMER* I, 1 (2012), 1-10, also makes a reference to the policy of *telif-i kulûb* in the Holy Qur'an as identical to the policy of *istimalet*.

[9] Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium* (Istanbul 2000), 202.

[10] *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul 2007), 20.

[11] In the case of another conquest episode in Thrace, Aşıkpaşazade narrates that after the demolition of a fortress (named afterwards *Tanrı Yıkduğı*), the Ottomans left the neighbouring people in their places again with promises (*halkını girü istimaletle yerinde kodular*). *Die altosmanische Chronik des 'Āşıkpaşazāde*, ed. F. Giese (Leipzig 1929), 55. Cf. also *Anonim Osmanlı Kroniği (1299-1512)*, ed. Necdet Öztürk (Istanbul 2000), 31: *Murad Han Gazi ol hisarun kâfirleriyle ahdleşüp, avratı ve oğlanlarıyla istimalet virdi. Girü yirlerine gönderdi. Şimdi ol hisara Tanrı Yıkduğı dirler.* Oruç explains in connection with the same episode that the people

On the other hand, and contrary to what one would expect as a reader of the historiography on *istimalet*, the word is actually very frequently used in the later Ottoman sources. Two hundred years after Tzymbe, during the war for the conquest of Cyprus, an order from the *Mühimme Defterleri* (the Imperial Registers of Important Affairs), dated 18 Zilkade 977/24 April 1570, refers in detail to the *istimalet hükmi* given to the *reaya* of the island by Sultan Selim II, promising them that, if they did not side with the Venetians, they would keep their properties (including their timars) under the Ottomans (*cezire-i mezburenün reayasına istimalet içün mukaddema gönderilen hükm-i şerifüm mukarrerdür. Buyurdum ki: Vardukda, bu babda tamam tedarük üzre olup sabıka gönderilen istimalet hükmi mucebince cezirenün reayasına girü kendü canibünden mektublar gönderüp her birine yeni istimalet virüp şöyle ki; "düşmen tarafına meyilleri ve muavenetleri olmayup Südde-i Sadetüm canibine toğrılık üzre teveccühleri mukarrer ola, inşaallah fethı müyesser oldukda her birisi mutasarrıf oldukları timarları ve evleri ve sayir emlâki ile muaf u müsellem olup bir nesneleri ellerinden alınmayup...*).[12] In this case, it is obvious that *istimalet* has developed to be clearly a political term, which described a carefully designed political practice, with legal expression also in a document of safety (*istimalet hükmi*).

It is perhaps no coincidence that the Ottoman bureaucrat Feridun Bey included in his *Münşeatü's-selâtin*, the treatise par excellence on Ottoman chancellery practice (presented to Sultan Murad III in 1575), a list of imperial documents categorised as *istimaletnames*.[13] These documents were addressed to semi-autonomous leaders such as the Sharif of Mecca, the Han of the Crimea, Kurdish leaders like Şeref Han, and other people in power in Azerbaijan, Dagestan, Georgia, and Transylvania, as well as to Ottoman pashas on campaign such as Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha, the Governor of Damascus Hasan Pasha,

---

were held as prisoners and then were liberated as allies (*varup ol hisarı görüp esirlerini alup ağlıyla, kızıyla, dahı mallarıyla cem idüp getürdiler. Amma hisarun halkını ahd ü peyman ile azad idüp, girü yerlü yerine gönderdiler*). *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 27.

[12] *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (978-979/1570-1572)*, Ankara 1996, No. 19. According to a report of the *beylerbey* of Egypt, quoted in an order of 1 Rebiyülevvel 967/1 December 1559, the *reaya* of Egypt were comforted with a promise of tax justice in the near future (*Hele bu sene üzerinüzde maktu olan malı eda idün; sene-i âtiyede aşağa virilmesi lâzım olan ziyadeler bervech-i adalet görile diyü istimalet virilmekle reaya müteselli-i hâtır oldılar*). *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966-968/1558-1560)*, Ankara 1993, No. 541. In another case, the *sancakbey* of Semendire comforts the *reaya* with the promise that the oppressive taxmen will be reported to the Sultan (*ba'zı haracîler ve koyun hakcılar reayadan ziyade alup zulm ü taaddi eyledükleri ecilden reaya perakende olup; "Taife-i mezbure arzolunsun." diyü istimalet virmekle karar itdürilüp*). *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (*975-976/1567-1569)*, Ankara 1999, No. 2019.

[13] These document samples from the *Münşeatüs'selâtîn* were republished separately by Veysel Öz, 'Ferîdûn Bey'in Münşeât Mecmuası'nda Bulunan İstimâletnâmeler ve Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Marmara Üniversitesi, Istanbul 2002. This thesis includes extensive quotations as to the uses of the word *istimalet* in Ottoman historiography. However, the author does not make any distrinction in his analysis between Ottoman history and historiography.

the Governor of Diyarbekir Derviş Pasha, the Grand Vizier Mehmet Pasha, or the Vizier Sinan Pasha.[14] The existence of documents named as such is corroborated by entries in the contemporary *Mühimme Defterleri*: Sultan Selim II, for example, was ordered by his father, Süleyman, to send *istimalet* letters (*istimalet-gûne ahkâm-ı şerife*) to the Governors of Van, Diyarbekir, and Baghdat, as well as to the *bey*s of Kurdistan, in order to safeguard the passes in their districts (*hâliyâ Van ve Diyârbekr ve Bagdâd beglerbegilerine ve anlara tabi olan cümle Kürdistân begleri kullaruma müekkid istimalet-gûne ahkâm-ı şerife yazılup her biri sancaklarında vakı olan derbendleri ve sair mürur u ubur olıncak, mevâzı'ı onat vechile hıfz idüp anun gibi isyan üzre olan ehl-i fesaddan bir canibe hareket olur ise her biri def ü refinde ve gereği gibi haklarından gelinmek babında enva-ı mesai-i cemile zuhûra getüreler*).[15]

It is interesting to note that *istimalet*, as a policy of 'carrot', was, of course, replaced by the 'stick' when the subjects did not fall for it: during the Cyprus War, in another example from the *Mühimme Defteri*, when revolts erupted in the Western Balkans, the *beylerbey* of Rumelia was ordered to try to quiet down the Albanians with promises and coaxing (*istimalet ü müdara ile*: 'the carrot');[16] but if they do not fall for it, he should eliminate five to ten villages in order to make all the others quieten down ('the stick') *(Ar-*

---

[14] For these 'marginal' provinces of the Ottoman Empire and their rulers in relation to the Ottoman administration, see the excellent study by Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (London and New York 2004), 75-84. The foreign policy of the Ottomans, and especially the foreign policy of Selim II, has recently been thoroughly examined by Güneş Işıksel in his doctoral dissertation: G. Işıksel, 'La politique étrangère ottomane dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle : le cas du règne de Selîm II (1566-1574)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, n.d. The issuing of *istimaletname*s might have been already a practice from the reign of Selim I. See esp. p. 125, fn. 6 concerning the issuing of 30 *istimaletname*s by the *reisülküttab* Haydar Çelebi addressed to the Kurdish *bey*s. However, the source of this information is again Feridun Bey's *Münşeat*.

[15] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (966-968/1558-1560)*, Ankara 1993, No. 329. Cf. a similar order granting *istimalet* to the *bey*s of Kurdistan, quoted by Güneş Işıksel, 'La politique étrangère ottomane', 67, fn. 10 (source: KK 888, fol. 157).

[16] Definitions of *müdara* in the dictionaries: J. Th. Zenker, *Türkisch-Arabisch-Persisches Handwörterbuch* (Hildesheim 1967), 830: "*Mudârât, mudârâ:* action de flatter, de cajoler; affection, soumission simulée, douceur feinte, manière doucereuse; dissimulation; *Mudârât etmek:* flatter, cajoler, dissimuler"; Meninski, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium*, 4504-4505: "*Müdara*: Humilitas, humanitas, civilitas, mollis ac blanda tractatio; dissimulatio; *müdara etmek:* dissimulare, blandiri; *ol vilayetün kâfiri ile müdara ile zindegânî eyler idi*: Cum infidelibus subditis illius regionis blande vitam ducebat, seu dissimulanda & leniter eos tractando vivebar; *Müdarat:* Concordia, blandi mores, lenitas, assabilitas, seu lenis & benigna tractatio; *Acht.* Dissimulatio; *müdarat etmek:* dissimulare; *au tut Gol.* Circumvenire, faller, & benigne, comiter, leniterque tractare, blandiri. (French:) *dissimuler, feindre, traiter doucement, à l'amiable*". Further research is necessary on the use of terms synonymous with *istimalet* in the Ottoman political vocabulary, like *müdara*. Keith Hopwood, in his paper on 'Mudara', in A. Singer and A. Cohen (eds), *Aspects of Ottoman History: Papers from CIEPO IX, Jerusalem* (Jerusalem 1994), 154-161, think that as a political term *mudara* must have been "the creation of the later chronicler, including Aşıkpaşazade and Neşri" (p. 160).

navud taifesi istimalet ü müdara ile ıslah olunmayup aralarında beş-on pare karyenün haklarından gelinürse sayirleri iskât olunurdı).[17] A similar practice was registered again in a case of another village in Albania: if they quiet down, handle them with *istimalet*; if not, suppress them (*karye-i mezbure ahalisi istimalet ile itaat ü inkıyad üzre olup isyan u tuğyan üzre olmadan feragat idüp ıslahı mümkün olursa onat vech ile istimalet virüp itaat ü inkıyad itdüresin. Şöyle ki; istimalet ile itaat ü inkıyadları mümkün olmaz ise, müşarünileyhün karye-i mezburede sakin olan akriba vü taallûkatın ihrac ittükden sonra emr-i sabıkum muktezasınca haklarından gelesin*.)[18]

So far, I have observed that *istimalet* as a word was used systematically not in early but rather in later Ottoman history; moreover, the sources examined below will show that *istimalet* as an Ottoman policy of 'carrot'' was not restricted, as we would expect, only to the non-Muslim subjects of the Sultans: the Ottomans had often to apply an accommodationist policy towards their Muslim subjects as well.

Mustafa Selanikî, for example, in his narrative of a Celali rebellion which had erupted in Anatolia in 1596, writes that the imperial government had sent orders in order to win over the local population, against the rebels, "with goodwill" (*hüsn-i rey ü tedbir ile memleket halkına istimalet ile ahkâm yazılup gönderildi*).[19] Kâtip Çelebi also describes how the famous Celali rebel Tavil had been appointed as *beylerbey*, in order to win him over (*reis-i eşkıya olan Tavil'e istimalet içün beylerbeyilik emri irsal olunmağın kabul eylediği haberi geldi*).[20] According to Naima, the bandit Katırcıoğlu was persuaded by promises (*istimaletiyle*) to stop attacking the caravans on their way for the Hajj and side with the Ottomans (*istimaletiyle yanımız alıp şerrin ümmet-i Muhammed'den def eyledik 'sen bir bahadır yiğitsin rehzenlik sana ayıptır, padişahımızdan senin için bir şey rica edelim'*).[21] Naima, again, describes how some troublemakers in Anatolia after the death of Fatih Mehmet were pardoned (*afv ü istimalet*) and assigned new posts in the military (*Günahlarımız afv olunur ise hizmet-i padişahîde damen dermiyan ederiz" deyü arzıhal ettikleri paye-i serir-i alâya arz zımnında "Meza ma meza afv u istimalet olunmak münasibdir" deyü kelimat-i şefaatamizi derc etmeğin, afv buyurulup müteayyin olanların*

---

[17] *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, No. 182 (17 Şevval 978/14 March 1571). For the revolts, see Phokion Kotzageorgis, 'Επαναστατικά κινήματα στην Ελληνική χερσόνησο τον 16ο αιώνα και Οθωμανικές πηγές: μια πρώτη προσέγγιση [Revolutionary movements in the Greek mainland in the 16th century and Ottoman sources]', *ΚΘ΄ Πανελλήνιο Ιστορικό Συνέδριο, 16-18 Μαΐου 2008 & ΚΗ΄ Πανελλήνιο Ιστορικό Συνέδριο (Μέρος Β΄), 25-27 Μαΐου 2007, Πρακτικά* [29th Panhellenic History Conference, 16 - 18 May 2008 & 28th Panhellenic History Conference (Part B), 25 - 27 May 2007, Proceedings], Thessaloniki 2009, 21-31. For other cases of association between *istimalet ü müdara* see *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, *972/1564-1565* (Ankara 1995), Nos. 1130 and 1132; *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, *975-976/1567-1569*, III (Ankara 1999), Nos. 2553, 2558, 2588, and No. 2763.

[18] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564-1565),* I:410.

[19] Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî*, ed. M. İpşirli (Istanbul 1989), 581.

[20] *Fezleke*, fol. 110b.

[21] Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* ed. M. İpşirli (Ankara 2007), III:1228. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 77.

ba'zına bölük ağalıkları tevcih olunup hil'atler ile istimaletten sonra....illetlerin izaleden sonra cümlesin iki kısım ettiler ba'zısın Kütahya'da Nasuh Paşa'ya gönderdiler).[22] In another example, according to a *Mühimme* order dated 28 Şevval 1040/30 May 1631, after a raid by pirates on the island of Midilli (Gk. Mytilene) and a revolt by the soldiers and the people of the island, the *kapudan paşa* and the *kadı* were ordered to give everybody promises (*istimalet*), in order to quieten down the revolt (*her birisine istimalet virüp def-ı ihtilâl eyleyesiz*).[23]

In some cases, we can see that the policy of *istimalet* was applied through the distribution of robes of honour (*hil'at*): Ibn Kemal, for example, narrates that Prince Mustafa, the son of Mehmed the Conqueror, during an expedition to Karaman, distributed to the tribal leaders of the area very precious robes of honour (*hil'at*) and promised a lot to the leaders of his army in order to persuade them to fight (*boybeylerini ... doylayub her birine fahir hil'atler verdi; ceri çeribaşlarına lutf ile söyleyüb savaşa kandurdı vafir istimaletler verdi*).[24] On 5 Rebiyüelevel 967/5 December 1559, in another example, from the *Mühimme Defterleri*, the Imperial Council ordered Turgud Pasha, the *beylerbey* of Trablus in Libya, to persuade the Arab tribes in his province to form an alliance. More specifically, robes of honour were sent with imperial orders to every Arab Shaikh "as a sign of goodwill (*istimalet)*" (*meşayih-i Urbana her birine mufassal istimalet için ahkâm-i şerife ile hil'at-i hümayunum gönderilmiştir*).[25] Mustafa Selanikî, again, mentions in his Chronicle that the Ottomans sent to the Han of the Crimea Gazi Giray an *istimaletname* together with a robe of honour and a decorated sword (*Tatar Han-ı Gazi Giray Han ve serdar-ı âli hazretlerine şemşir-i zerrin ve hil'at-ı fahire ve istimaletname ile gidüp...*).[26] And Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi explains in his Memoir (*Telhisü'l-beyan*) that "presents" (*istimaletler*) were necessary especially for the governors of the frontiers; the Sultans should sent every year to them robes of honour, swords, and horses, in order to reinforce the allegiance of the Muslim armies (*serhadlerde olan beğlerbeğlere riayet ve istimalet lâzımdır. Faraza sene be sene taraf-ı padişahîden hil'at ve kılıç gönderilüp, birkaç at gönderilse asker-i islâma kuvvet olup ve âdaya zaaf-ı kalb hâsıl olurdu*).[27]

Moreover, the sources show that *istimalet* was also – and maybe more than anything else – a policy of gentle persuasion of the Ottoman soldiers. The history of Oruç Bey describes how, for example, during the Hungarian invasion of 1443, the volunteers of Rumelia did not show up at the critical battle because their leader Tur(a)han Bey had tried to persuade them gently (*istimalet*) to participate in the campaign, giving them the false impression that they would encounter only a small bunch of infidels; this, however, resulted in their not showing up for the battle at all (*Turhan Beg yoldaşlık itmeyüp akıncılara istimalet virüp cevablaşup didi kim: Bunlar bir avuç kâfirdür, bunları tagıdup sonra varup her birinüz çiftünüz süregidüp varun diyüp, akıncılara bu istimaleti virüp akıncılar ve tovcalar bu haberi işidüp varamayup Kasım Paşa yalunuz kalup*).[28] The same history of Oruç Bey narrates, in another example, that during the siege of Moton (Gk. Methoni) in 1500, the *beylerbey* Sinan Bey proclaimed to his soldiers that the Sultan promised them a permission (*istimalet*) to plunder in the name of God and the Prophet. "On hearing this promise, the Muslim soldiers marched to the battle" (*beglebegi Sinân Beg münadi idüp çagırdı kim, padişah başı içün Allah yolına ve Hazret-i Risalet sallâllahu aleyhi ve sellem aşkına yagma diyüp, münadiler her tarafdan çagırdılar. Ehl-i İslâm leşkeri dahı bu istimaleti işidüp yürüdiler*).[29] According to Neşrî, Sultan Murad I, during his campaign against Karaman, made "good promises" (*va'de-i hasene*) of *istimalet* to every one of his soldiers, in order to persuade them to fight for him (*hünkâr dahı leşkerine istimalet idüp, her birine va'de-i hasene idüp, cümle gaziler dahı ikdam-ı beliğ gösterüp, hünkâra i'tikad virdiler*).[30] Promises of *istimalet* were also given by the Ottomans to the soldiers of their enemies, as in the case of the conquest of the fortress of Vişegrad, when Ibrahim Pasha by this method persuaded the soldiers of the enemy to fight with the Ottoman side (*Sabıka İbrahim Paşa istimaleti ile asker-i İslâma mülhak olup ağır ulûfeler ile mer'i olan Frenkleri görüp bunlar dahi benî nev'ine ittibaen gelip padişaha bende oldular*).[31] Counter-promises of *istimalet* were also given by the opponents of the Ottomans. It is interesting to note that in the same passage concerning the siege of Moton we examined above, Oruç mentions that the Christian priests had spread the following words of encouragement (*istimalet*) to the defenders of Moton: "Do not fear. Nobody can conquer this fortress" (*keşişleri, batrikleri, kasisleri, ruhbanları istimalet virüp korman diyü bu kal'ayı kimesne alımaz diyü söylerlerdi*).[32]

---

[22] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* ed. İpşirli, II:715. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 78.

[23] *85 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri, 1040-1041 (1042)/1630-1631 (1632)*, Ankara 2002, No. 493.

[24] İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman, VII. Defter (tenkidli transkripsyon)*, ed. Şerafettin Turan, (Ankara 1957), 327.

[25] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, *966-968/1558-1560* (Ankara 1993), No. 579. Cf. also *Fezleke*, 51a, where robes of honour are sent together with an *istimaletname*. Robes of honour to the Ottoman conquerors of Chania in ibid, 260a.

[26] *Tarih-i Selânikî*, ed. İpşirli, 769. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 45.

[27] Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Telhîsü'l-Beyân Fî Kavânîn-i Âl-i* Osmân, ed. S. İlgürel (Ankara 1998), 113. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 45.

In some cases, *istimalet* meant that the soldiers were promised salary increases. For example, when Sinan Pasha was enlisting in 1568 soldiers in Egypt in preparation for his Yemen campaign, he gave them, according to his report to the Sultan, promises of salary increases (*terakki vü istimalet*) in order to persuade them to enrol (*atlu vü piyade bin*

---

[28] *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 63-64. Cf. also ibid., 74 and 116, with the same meaning of 'permission'.

[29] *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 201. Cf. an order dated 16 Şaban 972/17 February 1565 to an *akıncı bey* in Rumelia to prepare his enlisted soldiers for the campaign, encouraging them to raid the territory of the infidels and look for booty (*hıdmetde ve yoldaşlıkda bulunalar ve zikrolunan akıncı kullaruma gereği gibi istimalet viresin ki, kefere vilâyetine akın salınup toyumluklar olunmağa niyet olunmışdur*), *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564-1565)* (Ankara 1995), No. 816.

[30] Mevlânâ Mehmet Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ (6. Kısım: Osmanlı Tarihi (687-890\1288-1485*), ed. N. Öztürk (Istanbul 2008), 104. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 70.

[31] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* I:293, quoted in Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 74.

[32] *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 201. Cf. *Tarih-i Selânikî*, ed. İpşirli, 121 (promises given to the Ottoman soldiers of Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa by his opponents in the Caucasus [*asker-i İslâma istimaletler ile nüvazişler idüp*]). Also, cf. *Fezleke*, 259a, referring to Venetian *istimaletname*s given to the besieged Ottomans in Chania.

nefer mikdarı ancak yazılup terakki vü istimalet virmekle gitmeğe razı olup).[33] Naima, in his History, describes this practice as "promise of money" (*bezl-i mal ile istimalet*): this is how the Vizier Mere Hüseyin Pasha had tried to quieten down his officers who were preparing for mutiny (*ve kul taifesinden istiş'ar ettikçe anlardan ba'zı bî-edeb hane hareket his eyledikçe iç-hazineden bezl-i mal ile istimalet gösterirdi. Bu suretle Yeniçeri oda-başılarından ba'zı müteayyin zorbaları kendine tabi edip…*) .[34] Naima, again, narrates that it was through the spending of money that Abaza Pasha of Erzurum tried to enrol soldiers in his cause after the execution of Sultan Osman II (*Abaza dahi Kalavun'un leşkerini istimalet ve bezl-i mal ile kendiye tabi ve leşkerine zam eyledi*).[35]

In the same vein, Kâtip Çelebi, describing an argument between the Istanbul and the provincial *sipahi*s concerning who was going to have the right of collection of the *gulamiye* (the collecting fee for the *cizye*) in 1603/4, gives a definition of *istimalet* as an "important thing during a campaign, in order to keep the soldiers in hope for victory" (*Çün öbür tarafda kesret olup ve seferler esnasında istimalet mühim idi, iktiza eyledi ki, ekser içün hükm-i küll vardır diyü galib tarafın memulüne müsaade oluna.*).[36] Further down in his book, Kâtip Çelebi mentions an *istimaletname* as a document promising help to the defenders of the fortress of Istolni Belgrad in Hungary (*Serdar müşavereden sonra İstolni-Belgrad'da tabur üzerine gitmeği mukarrer idüp, "dönüşde imdada yetişirüz" diyü istimaletname virdi*).[37]

In the light of the above references, I would argue that the word *istimalet* was used primarily to describe more generally 'encouragement' of the soldiers by promises and concessions, in order to persuade them to fight. In the summer of 1565, for example, during the Malta campaign, the Imperial Council in Istanbul issued an order asking Vizier Mustafa Pasha to send information about the siege. In the final clauses of the *dispositio*, the Vizier was ordered the following: "to encourage the Islamic zeal of the army and drive the Muslim *gazi*s to victory against the infidels" (*dîn gayretine ve İslâm hamiyetine gereği gibi istimalet virüp guzat-ı müslimini kefere-i fecereye tegalüb itdürüp*).[38] A few days later, Mustafa Pasha informed the Imperial Council about his success in capturing the fort of St Elmo, Turgut Reis dying as a martyr in the battle. According to the *ferman*, Mustafa Pasha was ordered "to encourage with promises" his generals, the janissaries, and the other soldiers (*ümerayla yeniçeri kullaruma ve sayir asakir-i fevz-me'serüme gereği gibi istimalet viresin*).[39]

---

[33] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (*975-976/1567-1569)* (Ankara 1999), No. 2248 (19 Rebiyülahır 976/11 September 1568).

[34] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* II:509. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 51.

[35] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* II:548. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 51.

[36] *Fezleke*, fol. 92b; copied in *Târîh-i Naima*, I:377-379.

[37] *Fezleke*, fol. 61b.

[38] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564-1565)* (Ankara 1995), No. 1423 (17 Zilhicce 972/16 July 1565). Cf. *Fezleke*, vr. 33b: *Mukabele-i padişahîde duran vüzera ilerü varup safları tertib ve askere istimalet ü gayret virmekle cenge tahriz ü takrib itdikden sonra girü gelüp padişah-ı İslâm'a ahvali i'lâm iderlerdi.*

[39] *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564-1565)*, Vol. II (Ankara 1995), No. 1479 (issued on 29

According to Naima, before the battle of Mezőkeresztes (1596), the viziers in the entourage of the Sultan were sent around the camp to encourage the soldiers with *istimalet* (*Giderek ceng kızışıp mukabele-i padişahîde olan vüzera ileriye varıp safları tertip ve askere istimalet ve gayret vermekle cenge tahriz u tergib ettikten sonra gelip Padişah-ı İslâm'a ahvali i'lâm ederlerdi*).[40] Similarly, during the siege of Baghdat, Hafız Pasha went around the trenches to encourage the soldiers with *istimalet* (*Hafiz Paşa metrisde [siper] yatıp kalkıp askere in'am u ihsan ederdi. Ve zâbitlere ve nefere hadden efzun istimaletler ve riayetler eylerdi*).[41] Murad IV himself also encouraged his soldiers during the siege of Erevan, at the same time opening his purse for those who fought bravely or had lost their horses during the battle (*Revan Muhasarası cenginde padişah hazretleri bizzat ayak üzere damen dermiyan durup altın ve guruş keselerin ağzı açılıp meydana dökülüp baş getirenlere kırkar guruş, atı helâk olanlara ellişer filori bahşiş verip 'Koman kurdlarım gayret vaktidir şehbazlarım' deyi istimaletler verip in'am u ihsanı ebr-i nisan gibi mebzul-i firavân etmişler idi*).[42]

Neşrî uses *istimalet* with the meaning of 'encouragement' when referring to the speeches of Mehmed I before his battle against Kara Yahya (*sultan yanındaki serverlerine istimalet idüp, eyitti ki: Ey benüm yiğitlerüm! Vaktidür ki bunları, kara karga misal tagıdup, askerin helâk idelüm*: "My braves! The time has come to disperse their soldiers like black crows and kill them"), and before the battle against his brother Isa (*Sultan,… Rum serverlerine istimalet idüp, 'ha merdanelerüm! Göreyim sizi ne vecihle hareketler, şecaatler gösterürsüz' diyüp, istimaletler virdi*: "My braves: Let me see now how you are going to fight and show your valour").[43] According to Oruç, Sultan Murad I encouraged the volunteering raiders who did not want to fight the infidels in Thrace with the following words of *istimalet*: *akıncılara istimalet virüp cevablaşub didi kim: Bunlar bir avuç kafirdür, bunları dagıdup sonra varup her biriniz çiftünüz süregidün diyüp*: "These are only a bunch of infidels, let's disperse them and afterwards you can go to your lands and continue to cultivate them".[44]

Kâtip Çelebi cites the exact content of an *istimalet* speech of Hasan Pasha, delivered in order to encourage his soldiers before a battle of the Long War with the Habsburgs:

> He encouraged everybody with a speech: "Hey, *Gazi*s! Do not be afraid of the numbers of the infidels. God's favour is on our side. Whenever the infidels tried to light the flame of dis-

---

Zilhicce/28 July). In the same vein, *istimalet* was also used again during the Cyprus War, when the Sultan ordered the Vizier Mustafa Pasha to do his best "for the conquest of the island, for the defeat of the enemies, and for the order of the army of Islam, his zeal for *istimalet*, *gaza* and *cihad* (*cezirenün feth u teshiri ve âdanun kahr u tedmiri ve asakir-i İslâm ahvalinün nizam u intizamı ve hüsn-i istimalet ve gaza vü cihada terğibi babında enva-ı mesai-i cemilenüz vücûda getürile*). *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, no. 34 (22 Ramazan 978/17 February 1571).

[40] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* I:114. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 70.

[41] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* II:581. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 70.

[42] *Târih-i Na'îmâ,* II:815. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 71.

[43] Neşrî, *Cihânnümâ*, 169 and 196. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 71.

[44] *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 201. Quoted by Öz, 'Osmanlı'da İstimâlet Siyaseti', 72.

> order amongst the Muslims, Almighty God put out that flame himself. Let me see you: let's fight bravely for the pride of Religion. Our casualties will be happy martyrs. All of you! Get ready and prepared, with your rifles, guns, and all your instruments of war. When the miserable infidels start marching against us, fight them bravely. I hope that our plans will prevail!" (*ve her birine istimâlet virüp, "ey gaziler! Küffarın çokluğundan üşenmen. İnşaallah fursat bizimdir. Her bar ki küffar ehl-i İslâm üzerine nar-ı fitne ikad itse Hak te'alâ kendi lûtfundan ol âteşi söyündürür. Göreyim sizi. Din uğruna dilirane duruşup ceng idelim. Ölenlerimiz şehid ve gaziler saiddir. Her biriniz kollu kolunuzda hâzır-baş olup top ve tüfeng ve edevat-ı cengle müheyya durum. Küffar-ı hâksar yürüdükde merdane deprenin. Ümiddir ki, bu tedbirleri dahi rast gelmeye" diyü söyledi*).[45]

A final example, again from Kâtip Çelebi, shows how *istimalet* was actually addressed both to the soldiers and the prospective subjects of the Ottomans during the Cretan War. Deli Hüseyin Pasha, the general of the Cretan campaign, had gently persuaded his soldiers to follow him into the conquered fortress of Merambello, where he granted privileges to the conquered *reaya*:

> When Hüseyin Pasha learnt the news of the conquest [of the fortress of Merambello], he moved very fast from Rethymno to Candia, in three days. After making promises [and/or presents] to his soldiers, he marched to the aforementioned fortress [of Merambello] in four days. There, he made promises [and/or gave protection] to the *reaya*s. The infidels had a fortress on an island called Spinalonga, located in the sea between the aforementioned fortress [of Merambello] and Candia; they used to move their animals for pasture on to the land opposite with boats. The Pasha sent some mounted soldiers to kick the animals out. And the *reaya*s of that district asked for forgiveness. There was also a salt pan dependent of that fortress [of Merambello] near the sea [mod. Elounda]. The soldiers conquered the salt pan and 60 villages. On the request of the *reaya*s, the Pasha appointed officers and 150 janissaries under Aşcı Ali Ağa to guard the fortress [of Merabello]. (*Haber-i fetih Hüseyin Paşa'nın mesmû'ı oldukda sebükbar Resmo'dan üç günde Kandiye'ye varup askere istimalet virdikden sonra dört menzilde mezbur hisara varup içine asker kodı. Ve reayaya istimalet virdi. Zikr olunan kal'a ile Kandiye arasında derya içinde küffarın Rişpalanka nam ada içinde bir kal'ası olup davar ve koyunların kayıklar ile karaya çıkarup otlatmağla paşa-yı zî-kerem birkaç atlu gönderüp davarların sürdürdi. Ve ol etraf reayası dahi emana gelüp hisar-ı mezbura tabi leb-i deryada bir azîm tuzla olup altmış pare köy ile mezbur tuzla dahi zabt olundı. Ve reaya talebi ile yasakçılar ve yüz elli nefer yeniçeri ile Aşçı Ali Ağa zabtına ta'yin olundı.*)

In conclusion, I would like to argue that *istimalet* seems to have been a much more widely used term in the Ottoman political vocabulary, and it was not only a policy towards the *zimmi*s/*reaya*s (*raiyetperverlik*), as historiography has described it so far. I think that the few uses of the term *istimalet* in the narratives of early Ottoman history do not fully justify its use as a term (not as a practice) of early Ottoman political thought. In any case, I believe that we might want to be very careful before we apply such sweeping generalisations.

When we actually look for *istimalet* in the sources, it strikes us with its *polysemy*. In this vein, as a term of the political vocabulary of the Ottomans, it seems, I think, that

---

[45] *Fezleke*, vr. 63b.

istimalet was much more than a ‘method of conquest’: it was also a policy for encouraging the army, and, last but not least, an accommodationist policy for handling dissent (*def-i ihtilal*). After all, the army and dissent were the major problems of the Ottoman imperial government, at least during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: to follow a pragmatic policy of sweet talk (*uzubet-i lisan, dil-hoşlık*) and ‘carrot’ was especially important, if not essential. It is a subject for further research to align this practice with other ideas in the Ottoman political vocabulary.

BEYOND THE *MILLET* DEBATE:
COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN PRE-TANZIMAT-ERA CYPRUS

Antonis HADJIKYRIACOU[*]

THE *MILLET* DEBATE IS CURRENTLY RECEIVING RENEWED ATTENTION. After several years of sporadic contributions,[1] there is a sustained interest by, and critical mass of recent studies that revisit one of the most fundamental debates in Ottomanist historiography.[2] *Millet* de-notes religious community, and the semantic controversies arise when the word is associated with the system that allegedly regulated the organisation of and interaction between different confessional groups, as well as their relations with the Ottoman state. My usage of the term is confined to this context, i.e., with reference to a system explicitly or implicitly suggesting an institutionalised and/or hierarchical structure that followed or reflected religious organisation. In the case of the Christian Orthodox, this was the Orthodox Church.

---

[*] Boğaziçi University. I would like to express my gratitude to Marinos Sariyannis and the anonymous reviewer for their perceptive comments and helpful suggestions. This essay has benefited greatly from exchanges during the various workshops of the *Re-imagining Democracy* project directed by Joanna Innes and Mark Philp. Research was financially supported by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme Marie Curie Actions, as part of the *Mediterranean Insularities* project (reference ID: 630030) hosted at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas between 2014 and 2016. Elizabeth Zachariadou had listened to a very early version of this essay at the Skilliter Centre for Ottoman Studies in Cambridge, back in 2007, and her comments and feedback were instrumental. As this volume was about to go to the press, I received the news of her death. I would like to dedicate this essay to her memory.

[1] The debate was initiated by B. Braude's 1982 essay 'Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System', in idem and B. Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, Vol. 1: *The Central Lands* (New York 1982), 69-88. Braude challenged the conventional wisdom of an unchanging ancient *millet* system that regulated relations between religious communities and the Ottoman state, and he was soon followed by several scholars to become what constituted a major paradigm shift in Ottomanist historiography. For two thorough historiographical overviews see M. van den Boogert, 'Millets: Past and Present', in A. S. Roald and A. N. Longva (eds), *Religious Minorities in the Middle East* (Leiden-Boston 2011), 27-45; 27-30 and E. Gara, 'Conceptualizing Interreligious Relations in the Ottoman Empire: The Early Modern Centuries', *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 116 (2017), 57-91, at 66-72.

[2] K. Barkey and G. Gavrilis, 'The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and its Contemporary Legacy', *Ethnopolitics*, 15 (2016), 24-42; K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge 2008), 115-116, 132-153; Van den Boogert, 'Millets', 27-45; A. Lyberatos, 'The Application of the Tanzimat and its Political Effects: Glances from Plovdiv and its Rum *Millet*', in I. Părvev, P. Mitev, M. Baramova and V. Racheva (eds), *Power and Influence in Southeastern Europe, 16th-19th Centuries* (Münster 2013), 109-118; V. Kursar, 'Non-Muslim Communal Divisions and Identities in the Early Modern Ottoman Balkans and the *Millet* System Theory', in ibid., 97-108; E. Kermeli, 'The Right to Choice: Ottoman, Ecclesiastical and Communal Justice in Ottoman Greece', in C. Woodhead

Scholars differ over the historical origins of this system, the degree of its institutional nature, as well as how consistently and uniformly it was applied. The traditional view highlights its ancient roots, emphasising how at key moments of conquest the Ottoman Empire integrated non-Muslim populations by bestowing their spiritual leaders with fiscal and administrative jurisdiction, while at the same time facilitating the exercise of religious functions.[3] This view was challenged from the 1980s onwards, when more focused studies demonstrated how the term *millet* came to acquire any institutional character pertinent to communal organisation in the context of the nineteenth-century Tanzimat reforms.[4] The argument here, somewhat provocatively articulated by Braude,

---

(ed.), *The Ottoman World* (New York 2011), 347-359; a longer version of this essay under the same title is available in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 52 (2007), 165-211; B. Masters, 'Christians in a Changing World', in S. N. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (Cambridge 2006), 272-279; M. Rozen, 'The Ottoman Jews', in ibid., 256-271; M. Aymes, *A Provincial History of the Ottoman Empire: Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean in the Nineteenth Century* (London 2014), 21-32; T. Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries* (Oxford 2015); M. Ueno, 'For the Fatherland and the State': Armenians Negotiate the Tanzimat Reforms', *IJMES*, 45 (2013), 93-109; dem, 'Religious in Form, Political in Content? Privileges of Ottoman Non-Muslims in the Nineteenth Century', *JESHO*, 59 (2016), 408-441; A. Koçunyan, 'The *Millet* System and the Challenge of other Confessional Models, 1856–1865', *Ab Imperio*, 1 (2017), 59–85; D. Stamatopoulos, 'Rum Millet between Vakıfs and Property Rights: Endowments' Trials of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Mixed Council in the Late Ottoman Empire (19th–20th c.)', *Endowment Studies*, 2 (2018), 58-81; H. Çolak and E. Bayraktar-Tellan (eds), *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution: A Study of Early Modern Patriarchal* Berats (Istanbul 2019)..

[3] H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, Vol. 1, pt 2 (London 1950), 211-212; S. Runciman, '"Rum Milleti": The Orthodox Communities Under the Ottoman Sultans', in J. J. Yiannias (ed.), *The Byzantine Tradition After the Fall of Constantinople* (Charlottesville and London 1991), 1-15; idem, *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (London 1968), 167-168; H. İnalcık, 'Ottoman Archival Materials on *Millet*s', in idem (ed.), *From Empire to Republic. Essays on Ottoman and Turkish Social History* (Istanbul 1995), 91-103; idem, 'The Status of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarch Under the Ottomans', *Turcica*, 21-23 (1991), 407-436; T. Papadopoullos, 'Orthodox Church and Civil Authority', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2 (1967), 201-209; idem, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the History of the Greek Church and People Under Turkish Domination*. (Aldershot 1990 [2nd ed.]); E. Ceylan, 'The Millet System in the Ottoman Empire', in J. Upton-Ward (ed.), *New Millennium Perspectives in the Humanities* (Istanbul and Provo 2002), 245-266.

[4] D. Goffman, 'Ottoman *Millet*s in the Early Seventeenth Century', *New Perspectives on Tur-*

is that there "were neither *millet*s nor a system" for most of the Empire's existence, although he conceded that 'a considerable, but by no means absolute, degree of communal autonomy existed'.[5] According to this view, pre-nineteenth century arrangements between the Ottoman state and non-Muslim religious communities were largely *ad hoc*, and Istanbul-based religious leaders may have *claimed* Empire-wide authority, but this was very limited and fluctuated over time.

Michael Ursinus shifted the debate by pointing out the sporadic use of the word *millet* in the pre-Tanzimat period. The term denoted religious community, with its earliest reference going back to 1697.[6] Implying a more institutional character and cohesive nature of the *millet* as religious community from the mid eighteenth century onwards, Ursinus acknowledges, however, that the term's usage was limited to the *mühimme defterleri*, reflecting an imperial rather than local vision of collective organisation.[7] Thus, the term did not appear in local administrative or legal sources such as the sharia court records, where one would expect to find it in cases pertinent to different confessional communities. He thus accepts that local communal organisation may have taken different forms, but insists that "in the perspective of the central government [local communities] were seen as parts of religious and juridical communities which, under the leadership of their (ecclesiastical) heads, ideally had an empire-wide dimension".[8]

In a recent contribution, Vjeran Kursar identifies 1626 as the earliest date of an Ottoman document employing the term *millet* for non-Muslims, although not in a fashion

---

key, 11 (1994), 135-158; R. Clogg, 'The Greek *Millet* in the Ottoman Empire', in Braude and Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews*, Vol. 1, 185-207; Braude, 'Foundation Myths', 69-88; idem, 'The Strange History of the Millet System', in K. Çiçek (ed.), *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, Vol. 2 (Ankara, 2000), 409-418; idem, 'Introduction', in idem (ed.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Abridged Edition with a New Introduction* (Boulder 2014), 1-49; A. Cohen, 'On the Realities of the *Millet* System: Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century', in Braude and Lewis, *Christians and Jews*, Vol. 2, 7; Ueno, 'For the Fatherland and the State', 95; P. Konortas, *Οθωμανικές θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο. Βεράτια για τους προκαθήμενους της Μεγάλης Εκκλησίας (17ος-αρχές 20ού αιώνα)* [Ottoman perspectives on the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Berat*s* concerning the Leaders of the Great Church (seventeenth-early twentieth century)] (Athens 1998); idem, 'From Tâ'ife to Millet: Ottoman Terms for the Ottoman Greek Orthodox Community', in D. Gondicas and C. Issawi (eds), *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton 1999), 169-179; E. Balta, 'The Exploitation of Otherness in the Economic Advancement of the Rum *Millet*', *Ο Ερανιστής*, 24 (2003), 139-160; D. Stamatopoulos, 'From Millets to Minorities in the 19th-Century Ottoman Empire: an Ambiguous Modernization', in S. G. Ellis, G. Hálfdanarson and A. K. Isaacs (eds), *Citizenship in Historical Perspective* (Pisa 2006), 253-273; M. Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı Millet Sistemi: Mit ve Gerçek* (Istanbul 2004).

[5] Braude, 'Strange History', 410.

[6] See the transcribed document in A. Refik, *Onikinci Asr-ı Hicrinde İstanbul Hayatı (1689-1785)* (Istanbul 1988), 21 (document 34).

[7] *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Millet' (M. Ursinus), 61-64; for an expanded version of the text in German see M. Ursinus, 'Zur Diskussion um "millet" im Osmanischen Reich', *SF*, 48 (1989), 195-207.

[8] Ursinus, 'Millet', 63.

that suggests a system.[9] Hidemitsu Kuroki supported Ursinus's position by demonstrating that since 1813 there had been local usage of the word *millet* indicating a consciousness of sorts in Aleppo.[10] Conversely, Paraskevas Konortas has pointed out the significance of the use of the term *taife* (group, community, class, tribe) as a precursor to *millet* during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century.[11] This term, however, is also used in Ottoman bureaucratic nomenclature to denote professional, military, or ethnic groups regardless of religion. Overall, and issues of dating notwithstanding, less clear in all these formulations, and perhaps the source of disagreement between Braude and Ursinus, is the degree of institutionalisation which would in turn determine whether the term 'system' is applicable.[12]

This debate is important because, regardless of the position one assumes, there seems to be an inherent agreement that *millet* was the catalyst that transformed pre-modern religious communities into modern, national ones. It is for this reason that the *millet* system is a particularly popular, if erroneously used, analytical category among historians, political scientists, sociologists, or anthropologists studying nation-state-building processes in the post-Ottoman lands.[13]

While scepticism about the temporal omnipresence of the *millet* system has now become the consensus among most Ottomanists, certain contributions have pumped new blood into the debate. Marc Aymes questioned the genealogical connection between *millet* and nation, asserting that nothing predisposed the former to evolve into the latter. In this sense, Aymes shifts the stakes away from the modernist-developmentalist paradigms of nation-state formation, questioning the inherent teleology behind the transformation of religious into national identity.[14] From the other end of the debate, Karen Barkey has recently re-articulated the primordial argument for the *millet* system, which she sees as the cornerstone of Ottoman tolerance and the multiculturalism that characterised Ottoman rule.[15] Defining it as "a loose administrative set of central-local arrangements",[16] she emphasises that it was a system nevertheless, and one that had ancient origins. Reflecting her broader theory of the Ottoman state, Barkey sees a *millet* system characterised by institutional flexibility. Yet, her analysis and more detailed accounts indicate that the Ottoman state Barkey perceives is more institutional than flexible.[17]

---

[9] Kursar, 'Non-Muslim Communal Divisions', 104.

[10] H. Kuroki, 'The Orthodox-Catholic Clash in Aleppo in 1818', *Orient: Report of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan*, 29 (1993), 1-18.

[11] Konortas, 'From Tâ'ife to Millet', 169-179. This is corroborated by cases from the present study: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), C.ADL. 3535; C.ADL. 879; all archival references are from BOA unless otherwise noted.

[12] Braude, 'Strange History', 418, note 3.

[13] For one such typical example see R. Hirschon, 'Dismantling the *Millet*: Religion and National Identity in Contemporary Greece', A. Aktar, N. Kızılyürek and U. Özkırımlı (eds), *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle: Cyprus, Greece and Turkey* (London and New York 2010), 61-75 at 61-62, 67-69.

[14] Aymes, *A Provincial History*, 21-32

[15] See a critique in Gara, 'Conceptualizing Interreligious Relations', 68-69.

[16] Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 125.

[17] Ibid., 70-71, 109-123, 132-153.

In discussing the Greek Orthodox communities, Barkey relies heavily on Theodore Papadopoullos, whose work was published in the 1950s.[18] Predominantly based on documentation from ecclesiastical sources, Papadopoullos reproduces the image clerical institutions were projecting for themselves as the exclusive intermediary between state and society – reifying the notion of a *millet* system inaugurated in 1453 upon the conquest of Constantinople. Importantly, Papadopoullos' handling of primary sources had already been criticised in Anglophone bibliography since 2001.[19]

These are issues that go beyond historiography: they affect current understandings of politics and inform popular discussions on inter-communal relations throughout the post-Ottoman world. Indicative is the case of Cyprus. One of the (several) points of convergence between the two competing nationalist imaginations of the historical past of the island is the effective equation of the non-Muslim communal organisation with the Orthodox Church. Following either the above-mentioned Ottomanist paradigm of an unchanging *millet* system under the 'natural leadership' of the higher clergy, or the Greek Cypriot narrative of a Church monopolising the political, economic, and cultural realm in Ottoman Cyprus, both models reproduce the idea of an almighty Church. The same is true of scholars to the left of the political spectrum, who reify the image of the Church as an omnipotent institution at the centre of all aspects of life, if by adopting a critical stance.[20] The overall narrative remains unchanged as far as the main historical actor is concerned.

The operative term here is institution, and at stake is conceptualising the logic of representation, devolution of power, endowment of authority, and the administrative arrangements that emerged through the negotiation between centre and province. In this context, the religious community appears to have had a unified and homogeneous structure, devoid of social hierarchies and competitions both within and across the religious divide. This precise feature of the economy, society, and politics of the communities which composed the *millet*, real or imagined, has escaped the discussion at either end of the historiographical spectrum. In the words of Yaron Ayalon, "the social world of many people comprised more circles than just the religious community".[21]

This is how I propose to go beyond the *millet* debate: by focusing on the nuts and bolts of communal organisation. Local differentiations and social complexity of religious groups were the collateral damage of almost four decades of discussing whether a *millet* system imposed upon confessional communities from above existed. In addressing this issue, I explore the extent to which communities were rigidly delineated, whether they were organised as a cohesive and undifferentiated social group,[22] and show some snippets of inter-confessional co-existence (which included both co-operation and competition, as well as many other forms of interactions).[23] The following episode eloquently addresses these issues.

---

[18] Papadopoullos, *Studies and Documents*. The book was originally published in Brussels in 1952.

[19] A. G. Papademetriou, 'Ottoman Tax Farming and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate: An Examination of State and Church in Ottoman Society (15-16th Century)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2001, 21-23. See also Papademetriou, *Render Unto the Sultan*, 37-38.

[20] M. N. Michael, 'An Orthodox Institution of Political Authority: the Church of Cyprus', in idem, M. Kappler and E. Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus: A Collection of Studies on History and Culture* (Wiesbaden 2009), 209-230.

[21] Y. Ayalon, *Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire: Plague, Famine and Other Misfortunes* (Cambridge 2015), 168.

Communities in the Ottoman world

In 1707, the archbishop and the janissary commander of Cyprus, some monks, priests, and "certain other individuals" were exiled to Rhodes. They were found guilty of oppression and exploitative taxation. By claiming to have been "representatives of the *reaya*s" (*reaya vekiliyüz deyü*), they managed to collect more than 100,000 *kuruş* over a period of four to five years by manipulating the *maktu* system of collective tax assessment and collection.[24] Their activities were so detrimental to the local economy and society that they resulted in a tide of peasant emigration. In turn, this forced the Ottoman state to take urgent measures for the restoration of stability which included tax breaks and discounts for those willing to return to their "old homelands" (*evtan-ı kadime*), as well as a range of administrative and fiscal reconfigurations with regard to the distribution of political power in the province.[25]

Such descriptions of corruption no longer raise the eyebrows of Ottomanist historians. Yet, one facet deserves further consideration and is relevant to the present discussion of communal representation: the title "representative" (*vekil*) is frequently encountered in Ottoman bureaucratic parlance on Cyprus from the 1770s onwards. While *reaya* usually refers to the tax-paying subjects of the Sultan irrespective of religion, in this instance it is confined to the non-Muslims of the island.[26] Historians take this title to exemplify the extensive degree of independence granted to the leadership of a communal organisation. It is therefore rather odd that the title appears as early as the 1700s. To appreciate the importance of this detail, it is necessary to delve into the evolution of the fiscal and administrative functions associated with communal organisation throughout the Ottoman world. This will allow us to scrutinise the assumption that the office of representative of the non-Muslims had a corporate character as the head of a hierarchical and bureaucratised communal structure, which was in turn instrumental in subsequent nation-building processes, as the *millet* narrative has it.

---

[22] For a similar approach see Ivanova, 'Armenians in Urban Order and Disorder', 260.

[23] Gara, 'Conceptualizing Interreligious Relations', 79-80.

[24] This system was based on the assessment of the community as a whole rather than of individual taxpayers. This gave communal leaders a considerable degree of independence through the distribution of the burden according to the needs of the community. The dark side of this system, however, was that inherent were opportunities for handsome profit for those responsible for the distribution. See below.

[25] C.ADL. 833; H. F. Alasya, *Kıbrıs Tarihi (M.E. 1450-M.S. 1878) ve Belli Başlı Antikleri* (Nicosia 1939), 66-67; I. P. Theocharidis, *Κατάλογος Οθωμανικών Εγγράφων της Εθνικής Βιβλιοθήκης της Σόφιας* [Catalogue of Ottoman Documents in the National Library of Sofia] (Nicosia 1984), 37 (document 9).

[26] The term *reaya* has multiple usages in Ottoman texts. In earlier periods it was used to denote subjects or peasants irrespective of religion. In the documentation I have examined primarily concerning eighteenth-century Cyprus, the term is used as a juxtaposition in order to separate non-Muslim from Muslim taxpayers. The latter are usually defined as *ahali*. For example: *ahali ve reaya* (C.BH. 8864); *müslim ve reaya* (HAT. 25303); *ehl-i İslâm ve reaya* (C.ML. 3801); *ehl-i İslâm* and *ehl-i zimmet reayalar* (C.ML. 6251). However, this also is not an exclusive term, and can also mean 'people', irrespective of religion. On the polysemous nature of

Communal representation neither had an unchanging *ab antiquo* structure, nor did it follow a straight and consistent evolutionary path leading to nationhood. Reflexive assumptions about the nature of communal representation of the empire's Orthodox communities often lead to opposite conclusions, and are frequently based on the image such informal institutions were projecting for themselves. As Eleni Gara reminds us,

> [i]t would be a mistake to expect that communal institutions developed in a linear way from a rudimentary to an elaborated form. It would be equally erroneous to assume that they did not evolve over time, but had always been the same as they were when they attracted the attention of outside observers in the nineteenth century.[27]

An important new corpus of studies on communities throughout the Ottoman Empire has shed considerable light on the mechanics of collective representation and communal organisation.[28] At the centre of these discussions is the well-known legal principle of the

---

the term, as well as the temporal changes in its content, see A. Fotić, 'Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term *Re'āyā* in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans', *Balcanica*, 48 (2017), 55-66.

[27] E. Gara, 'In Search of Communities in Seventeenth Century Ottoman Sources: The Case of the Kara Ferye District', *Turcica*, 30 (1998), 135-162, at 140.

[28] Ö. Ergenç, 'Toplumsal Düşünce Açıklama Kanalı Olarak "Cemm-i Gafîr ve Cem'-i Kesîr"', in *XVI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 20-24 Eylül 2010, Ankara. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 4, part 2: *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara 2015), 1063-1071; A. Anastasopoulos, 'Imperial Institutions and Local Communities: Ottoman Karaferye, 1758-1774', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1999, 53-93; idem, 'Centre-Periphery Relations: Crete in the Eighteenth Century', in B. Forsén and G. Salmeri (eds), *The Province Strikes Back: Imperial Dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Helsinki 2008), 123-136, at 37-47; idem, 'Political Participation, Public Order and Monetary Pledges (*Nezir*) in Ottoman Crete', in E. Gara, M. E. Kabadayı and C. Neumann (eds), *Political Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011), 127-142. For a comparative examination of the rich Greek and Bulgarian historiography on communities, usually linguistically inaccessible to most Ottomanists, see Gara, 'In search of communities', 135-161 and Lyberatos, 'The Application of the Tanzimat', 109-118. See also A. Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford 2016), 117-156; M. Pylia, 'Λειτουργίες και Αυτονομία των Κοινοτήτων της Πελοποννήσου κατά τη Δεύτερη Τουρκοκρατία (1715-1821) [Functions and autonomies of the communities of the Peloponnese during the second period of Turkish rule (1715 - 1821)]', *Μνήμων*, 23 (2001), 67-98; S. D. Petmezas, 'Christian Communities in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Greece: Their Fiscal Functions'

Hanefî school of Islamic jurisprudence whereby corporate entities are not recognised. In this context, legal arrangements had to take place between individuals, i.e., private

---

in M. Greene (ed.), *Parallels Meet: New Vistas of Religious Community and Empire in Ottoman Historiography*, special issue of *Princeton Papers*, 12 (2005), 71-127, also published as eadem (ed.), *Minorities in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton 2005); S. D. Petmezas, 'Διαχείριση των Κοινοτικών Οικονομικών και Κοινοτική Κυριαρχία. Η Στρατηγική των Προυχόντων: Ζαγορά 1784-1822 [Management of communal finances and communal sovereignty. The strategy of the notables: Zagora 1784-1822]', *Μνήμων*, 13 (1991), 77-102; B. A. Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)* (Leiden and Boston 2003); H. Canbakal, *Society and Politics in an Ottoman Town. 'Ayntab in the 17th Century* (Leiden and Boston 2007), 125-177; eadem, 'Vows as Contract in Ottoman Public Life (17th-18th centuries)', *Islamic Law and Society*, 18 (2011), 85-115; D. Papastamatiou, 'Tax Farming (*İltizam*) and Collective Fiscal Responsibility (*Maktu*) in the Ottoman Southern Peloponnese in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century', in E. Kolovos, P. Kotzagiorgis, S. Laiou and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History. Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 289-305, 298-305; idem, 'Οικονομικοκοινωνικοί Μηχανισμοί και το Προυχοντικό Φαινόμενο στην Οθωμανική Πελοπόννησο: Η Περίπτωση του Παναγιώτη Μπενάκη [Socio-economic mechanisms and the phenomenon of the notables in the Ottoman Peloponnese: the case of Panaghiotis Benakis]', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2009, 129-159, 186-197; idem, 'Κομματικές Φατρίες στην Προεπαναστατική Πελοπόννησο (1807-1816). Ο Ρόλος των «Τουρκαλβανών» του Λαλά ως Παράγοντας Πολιτικής Διαφοροποίησης [Party factions in the pre-Revolution Peloponnese (1807-1816). The role of the Turco-Albanians of Lala as a factor in political differentiation]', *Ίστωρ*, 10 (1997), 185-233; E. Balta, 'Από το Φορολογικό Τεκμήριο στην Αγροτική Οικονομία: Οι Καλλιέργειες στη Σαντορίνη τον 18ο Αιώνα [From the taxation presumption to the agricultural economy: the farms on Santorini in the 18th century]', *Τα Ιστορικά/Historica*, 5 (1988), 283-314; J. A. Reilly, *A Small Town in Syria: Ottoman Hama in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Oxford and New York 2002), 55-68; M. Çizakça, 'Cash *Waqf*s of Bursa, 1555-1823', *JESHO*, 38 (1995), 313-354; G. Veinstein, 'İnalcık's Views on the Ottoman Eighteenth Century and the Fiscal Problem', in K. Fleet (ed.) *The Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, special issue of *Oriente Moderno*, 17 (79) (1999), 4-9; B. Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1995), 143-149, 172-180; C. Wilkins, *Forging Urban Solidarities: Ottoman Aleppo 1640-1700* (Leiden 2009), 19-112; K. Sakul, 'An Ottoman Global Moment: War of Second Coalition in the Levant', unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 2009, 310-331; S. Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι.-1919: Οι Ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες. Από το μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο Ελληνικό έθνος* [Asia Minor, 19th century - 1919: The Greek Orthodox communities. From the millet of the Romii to the Greek nation] (Athens 1998), 318-373; J. C. Alexander, 'Some Aspects of the Strife Among the Moreot Christian Notables, 1789-1816', *Επετηρίς Εταιρίας Στερεοελλαδικών Μελετών*, 5 (1974-75), 473-504; S. I. Asdrachas, 'Φορολογικές και περιοριστικές λειτουργίες των κοινοτήτων στην Τουρκοκρατία' [Taxation and restrictive functions of the communities under Turkish rule], 45-62; idem, 'Νησιωτικές κοινότητες: οι φορολογικές λειτουργίες (Ι)' [Island communities: the taxation functions (I)], *Τα Ιστορικά/Historica*, 5 (1988), 3-36; idem, 'Νησιωτικές κοινότητες: οι φορολογικές λειτουργίες (ΙΙ)' [Island communities: the taxation functions (II)], *Τα Ιστορικά/Historica*, 5 (1988), 229-258; A. Ozil, *Orthodox Christians in the Late Ottoman Empire: A Study of Communal Relations in Anatolia* (London and New York 2013); S. Joseph, 'Communicating Justice: Shari'a Courts and the legal entities. Traditional scholarship which tended to restrict itself to social interactions as they were reflected in legal texts took the absence of institutional arrangements for granted.[29] In short, this legal framework was taken at face value, and it was assumed that institutions were unable to formally develop. Taken a step further, this line of interpretation concluded that the lack of corporate legal status accounted for the Ottoman Empire's inability to match the development of institutions encountered in Europe during the early modern period. This assumption is baseless, however, and similar conditions from the point of view of legal theory existed widely in Europe at the time.[30]

Moreover, legal practice as evidenced in the sharia court proceedings points to the opposite conclusion. Cases involving collective representation in one form or another abound in court records, indicating that there was ample legal space for the recognition of this corporate status. The legal assumption rationalising this was that every member of the collectivity verbally authorised its representative.[31] In other words, Ottoman bureaucrats and legal scholars proved flexible enough to work round the conundrum of corporate identity – as with so many other cases of reconciling legal theory and practice.[32] Moreover, Özer Ergenç has identified the existence of a lexicon referring to collective entities at various levels as early as the end of the fifteenth century.[33] In this context, the evolution of structures of representation largely took place along the grey zone that lies between formally recognised and actually functioning modes of communal organisation that may transgress legal principle either in letter or spirit.

Communal organisation was closely connected to fiscal administration. This was particularly the case from the seventeenth century onwards, when the system of lump-sum (*maktu*) tax-collection proliferated. Part of the Ottoman state's push towards monetisation, this system was based on collective, rather than individual (household), taxation. In its more institutionalised and standardised form, the individual household distribution of taxes was based on the *tevzi* (apportionment) system.[34] Of interest is also the empire-

---

Christian Community in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Greece', *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 20 (2009), 333–350.

[29] J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford 1964), 155. For a critique of traditional views see A. Cohen, 'Communal Legal Entities in a Muslim Setting, Theory and Practice: The Jewish Community in Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem', *Islamic Law and Society*, 3 (1996), 75–90; H. Gerber, *Islamic Law and Culture, 1600-1840* (Leiden, Boston and Köln 1999), 1-22.

[30] F. W. Maitland, *State, Trust, and Corporation*, D. Runciman and M. Ryan (eds) (Cambridge 2003); G. Post, '*Plena Potestas* and Consent in Medieval Assemblies: A Study in Romano-Canonical Procedure and the Rise of Representation, 1150-1325', in *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State 1100-1322* (Princeton 2015), 31-162.

[31] Gara, 'In Search of Communities', 136-140; H. Canbakal, *Society and politics in an Ottoman town. 'Ayntab in the 17th century* (Leiden and Boston 2007), 125-177.

[32] L. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkley, Los Angeles and London 2003), 1-2, *passim.*

[33] Ergenç, '"Cemm-i Gafîr ve Cem'-i Kesîr"', 1063-1071.

[34] H. İnalcık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt,* 6 (1980), 335-337; for an extensive analysis of the multiple functions of the *tevzi* system see generally Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire*.

wide 1691 reform concerning the non-Muslim *cizye* tax, which was until then collected on the basis of flat-rate assessment. This practice was deemed contrary to Islamic law, and the new system followed the sharia-sanctioned tax brackets of high (*âlâ*), middle (*evsat*), and low (*edna*) on the basis of wealth.[35]

Ostensibly, this shift was ideologically driven. Nevertheless, Marinos Sariyannis has illustrated how contemporary sources also point to a process of bureaucratisation and rationalisation of fiscal administration.[36] Moreover, the actual application of this reform was not uniform, and an analysis of its implications reveals a more complex picture. By discarding flat-rate, and therefore individual, household tax assessment and collection, this reform essentially allowed local communities to internally distribute taxation according their own specific requirements. This is the same fiscal logic behind the *maktu* system that was widely employed during this period. It is difficult, if not impossible, to document a link between the two developments; but the similarities at the level of collective taxation are striking. Intentional or not, the 1691 *cizye* reform effectively legitimised and further embedded local communal autonomy in fiscal administration. Such was the degree of autonomy communities had that they could blatantly ignore the canonical three classes, distributing taxation along seven tax brackets.[37] This was the case of Patmos, even on the morrow of the application of the reform itself,[38] thus annulling the jurisprudential premise upon which the reform was based on before it was even applied. At the same time, communal self-governance did not necessitate the equitable distribution of taxes: the largest of the seven groups paid the highest amount.[39] This not only suggests a pre-existing *de facto* practice, but more importantly that it was the internal balance based on social hierarchies rather than any ideas of justice that determined the distribution of the tax burden.

Ali Yaycıoğlu has recently shown how during the eighteenth century the monetisation of governance and the shifting of balance in favour of local contractors meant that "[t]he empire was reintegrated through these fiscal ties, and provincial administration became a business". A concomitant localisation of governance constituted "one of the structural trends that changed the dynamics of the Ottoman provinces".[40] In this scheme, the communalisation of authority was central. The latter process is of particular relevance here, since it forged mutual bonds of dependency between Ottoman subjects at the local level through the collective liability for taxes. Summarising this process, Fikret Adanir has observed that

---

[35] S. Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590-1699', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds) *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 1994), 411-636, at 546.

[36] M. Sariyannis, 'Notes on the Ottoman Poll-Tax Reforms of the Late Seventeenth Century: The Case of Crete', *JESHO*, 54 (2011), 39-61, see 40-42 for the extensive bibliography on the issue.

[37] Asdrachas, 'Φορολογικές και περιοριστικές λειτουργίες', 54.

[38] The reform was originally applied in Crete and the Aegean islands in 1670-71 before it was universally applied throughout the Empire. Sariyannis, 'Notes on the Ottoman Poll-Tax', 39-61.

[39] Asdrachas, 'Φορολογικές και περιοριστικές λειτουργίες', 54.

[40] Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire*, 79-80, 117-156; idem, 'Provincial Power-holders and the Empire in the later Ottoman World: Conflict or Partnership?' in Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World*, 436-452, at 447-448.

> [b]y means of mutual warrants and guarantees the individual was compelled to act in solidarity with others of his [*sic*] group, and by belonging to a corporate community, the members of which were collectively liable to fulfil common duties, he [*sic*] acquired civil status. [The outcome of these processes was that] the relationship between the state and the taxpayer became more fluid.[41]

Taxation occupied an important role in the Ottoman discourse of legitimacy and conception of politics. One fundamental component was the well-known notion of the 'Circle of Justice'. Put simply, it was through justice that a sovereign legitimised the extraction of taxes. Justice (*adalet*), alongside order (*nizam*), were not just empty words in a state-legitimising nomenclature: these were the key concepts Ottoman subjects repeatedly used and challenged the Sultan to uphold in their petitions and complaints.[42] This language concerned not only centre-province relations. Justice and order were central to the internal organisation of communal authorities, for they were regularly employed when the legitimacy of communal leadership was challenged.[43] As a result, communal authorities were (at least theoretically) expected to uphold these legitimising concepts both from above and below.

Communal administration in Ottoman Cyprus: problems and perspectives of interpretation

It was within this context that the institutional development of communities took place. Despite the lack of a legal framework defining corporate status, some sort of institutional continuity was necessary for various state functions – taxation, fiscal functions, collective responsibility, or the administration of justice. Yet, communal organisation did not follow a consistent and coherent model according to which a single institution, whether the Church or other lay officials, was endowed with authority by the Ottoman state as of old. While such agents were confident in projecting an image of corporate identity, and to a large extent *functioned* in such a way,[44] the reality vis-à-vis the Ottoman state was different. Neither justified nor entirely arbitrary, the institutional reality of these processes was that they were situated somewhere between the *de facto* and the *de jure*.

---

[41] F. Adanir, 'Semi-autonomous provincial forces in the Balkans and Anatolia', in S. N. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge 2006), 162, 167.

[42] B. A. Ergene, 'On Ottoman Justice: Interpretations in Conflict (1600–1800)', *Islamic Law and Society*, 8 (2001), 52-87.

[43] See the ample evidence for the extant documentation of various Greek Orthodox communities in Giorgos D. Kontogiorgis, *Κοινωνική δυναμική και πολιτική αυτοδιοίκηση: οι ελληνικές κοινότητες της τουρκοκρατίας* [Social dynamic and political self-governance: the Greek communities under Turkish rule] (Athens 1982).

[44] The institutional identity of the office of *reaya vekili* was becoming increasingly more substantial at the turn of the nineteenth century, primarily because of the activities of dragoman Hadji-

Conventional wisdom has it that the formation of communal representation in Cyprus took place sometime in the 1660s. The source for this is Kyprianos, a contemporary historian and cleric. Acknowledging the obscure nature of this affair, he speculates that during that period the prelates were "recognised as the main custodians and representatives of the *reaya*s on fiscal matters",[45] emphasising the fiscal over the political in this early engagement with public affairs. Kyprianos then marks a qualitative shift and a decisive turning point in 1754, when the taxes of Cyprus would be collected by lump sum (*maktu*, in fact this would be a return to this system). According to Kyprianos, a sultanic command was issued officially recognising the prelates as "*kocabaşı*s or custodians and representatives of the *reaya*s", authorised to communicate freely with Istanbul on the problems of the island.[46] This implies broader, political and administrative jurisdiction alongside the fiscal one. Based on this, clichés as to the 'natural' essence of the leadership of the Church abound not only in Greek, but also Turkish historiography.[47]

However, as far as the institutional nature of the Church as head of the communal organisation is concerned, the earliest arrangement which was akin to such a legal status occurred in 1830.[48] Even the late-eighteenth-century office of "representative of the non-

---

yorgakis Kornesios and archbishop Kyprianos. Ironically, this increasing 'institutionalisation' was on a personal basis.

[45] *Η Πόρτα να εγνωρίζει αυτούς κυρίως επιστάτας και επιτρόπους του ραγιά εις τα βασιλικά τέλη*, Archmandrites Kyprianos, *Ιστορία χρονολογική της νήσου Κύπρου. Έκδοσις παλλιγεννησίας* [Chronological history of the island of Cyprus] (Nicosia 1971 [Reprint of 1788 ed.]), 313.

[46] *Έλαβον και οι τέσσαρες Αρχιερείς της Κύπρου υπό τω Βεζύρι να είναι και να γνωρίζονται του Ραγιά της Νήσου Κοτζαμπάσιδες είτε Επιστάται και Επίτροποι, και διά των αυτών φόρων να τποβάλλουσιν αμέσως εις την υψηλήν Πόρταν τα ζητήματα και τας προσκλαύσεις του αυτού Ραγιά εις κάθε καιρόν άφοβα*, Ibid., 315-316.

[47] To quote just one example: "the Orthodox Church that was the natural representative of the *Rum*s". In this case, *Rum* can be translated as either Christian Orthodox or Greek-Cypriot. A. E. Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi, 1726-1750* (Istanbul 2005), 32-93. For some examples of the use of the *millet* paradigm as a traditional, unchanging feature of the Ottoman Empire, without any attempt at a definition or elaboration, see Çevikel, *Kıbrıs Eyaleti*, 30; idem, 'An Aspect', 129, 132; see also Papadopoullos, 'Orthodox Church', 201-209; idem, *Studies and Documents*, 8.

[48] M. Aymes, 'Reform Talks: Applying the Tanzimat to Cyprus', in M. N. Michael, M. Kappler and E. Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus: A Collection of Studies on History and Culture* (Wiesbaden 2009), 107-116, at 110; for an analysis of these changes see K. D. Louis, 'Η Διαχείριση των Φορολογικών Λογαριασμών του Κοινού της Κύπρου από την Κεντρική Δημογεροντεία (1830-1839/40)' [The management of the tax accounts of the Koinon of Cyprus by the central council of the elders (1830-1839/40], *Επετηρίδα*, 28 (2002), 175-211; idem, 'Τυπολογία και Δομή Οικονομικών Καταστίχων Αρχιεπισκοπής Κύπρου (1800-1839/40)' [Typology and structure of the financial registers of the Archbishopric of Cyprus (1800-1839/40), in G. V. Mendilaras (ed.), *Διεθνές συνέδριο αρχειακών. Αρχεία και προοπτικές στη νέα χιλιετία. Κύπρος, 4-6 Μαΐου 2000* [International Archivists' Conference. Archives and prospects in the new mil-

Muslims” (*reaya vekili*) was not exclusive to clerics, contrary to what most historians assume.

Ottoman documentation does not entirely back up Kyprianos’s assertion that this title was inaugurated in 1754.[49] While several Ottoman documents further elaborate on the nature of the socio-political background of these administrative reconfigurations, there is absolutely no mention of the title “representative of the non-Muslims” in the documentation.[50] What the Ottomans described in 1751 as a “new order’ (*nizam-ı cedid*), a series of changes designed to remedy many of the administrative and fiscal problems of the island matching what Kyprianos described, surely would have mentioned the inauguration of such a title if this was part of it (*nizam-ı cedid* here is not to be confused with Selim III’s reform programme). At stake here is not dating this event, but the absence of any appointment process. The term appears only in a taxation register from that year, with no further elaboration.[51] While I was unable to locate any reference to when the title was officially inaugurated, if it ever was, the next time it appears is in 1760.[52] The term is used again in 1768 in a petition in Greek by the prelates stating that

> a Christian named Francescos from the town of Larnaca became the *yazıcı* [secretary, lit.: scribe] of the *mîrî* [taxes] of the town of Larnaca with the power of the *muhassıl*s [tax-farming governors] and *zâbit*s [local officers], *without our consent, who are the representatives of the reaya* [my emphasis].[53]

The passage insinuates, *but does not assert*, that a certain kind of authority attached to the ‘representatives of the *reaya*’ was questioned and challenged. Most importantly, this was done with the support of powerful Muslim officials – a common practice as we previously saw. Only after the 1770s is the consistent use of the title observable.[54]

---

lennium. Cyprus, 4-6 May 2000] (Athens 2001), 255-279; T. Stavrides, ‘Cyprus 1750-1830. Administration and Society’, in M. N. Michael, M. Kappler and E. Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus*, 89-106, at 102; Çiçek, ‘Zimmis’, 59.

[49] Kyprianos, *Ιστορία*, 315-316.

[50] C.ML. 18969, c. 8 Zi’l-hicce 1164/28 October 1751; C.ML. 6251, c. 23 Rebiü’l-ahir 1204/10 January 1790; C.ML. 6949, c. Zi’l-hicce 1176/June-July 1763.

[51] D.BŞM.KBE.1/20557, c. Zi’l-kade 1165/September-October 1752.

[52] C.ADL. 4934, 4 Rebiü’l-evvel 1174/14 October 1760. The document concerns the accusations against archbishop Paisios, of which he was later acquitted. The accusers were the Peloponnesian resident of Istanbul Konstantinos Korodaras (?), a certain Petrakis, Andrikos, Nikolas, and another Petrakis. See also Kyprianos, *Ιστορία*, 316-317. Elif Bayraktar Tellan also sheds light on this incident from a relevant document using the same terminology. Elif Bayraktar Tellan, ‘The Archbishopric of Cyprus in the Context of the Eighteenth Century Ottoman Orthodox Institutions: The Evidence From the Archbishop *Berat*s (1732-1767)’, *ArchOtt*, 32 (2015), 83-100, at 90-91.

[53] *Ένας χριστιανός ονόματι φραντζέσκος από τον κασαπάν του λαρνάκου, ο οποίος με την δύναμιν των μουχασιλάδων και των ζαπητάδων γίνεται γραμματικός απάνω εις το μηρίν του κασαπά του λαρνάκου, χωρίς το θέλημα ημών των βεκκηλίδων του ραγιά*. KBM 1/14, f. 2, undated, c. 14 Şevval 1768/4 March 1768.

[54] The usual formula encountered in the usage of the title *reaya vekili* is always used in conjunc-

Given the lack of documentation confirming such a radical change, i.e. an official recognition of wide-ranging administrative and representative authority, available evidence points to a rather gradual process which did not entail a *de jure* recognition at one specific point in time, but rather the normalisation of a *de facto* situation. On a different level, tax-farming, in a strict sense, does not appear to be part of the appointment to the office in available documentation. Finally, as far as the discrepancy with Kyprianos' statement is concerned, in all probability he projected the title and content of 'representative' as it was used in the 1780s when he wrote his book, assuming that the meaning and significance were the same in the 1750s. Indeed, projecting the meaning of terms backwards is extremely common phenomenon in any discussion of communal organisation.

*Projecting an institutional identity: from guarantor (*kefil*) to representative (*vekil*)*

By the final third of the seventeenth century certain *informal* structures of communal responsibility were already established. I stress informal, for regardless of the degree of sophistication, hierarchical structure, or effective nature communal organisation may have had, it developed within a specific framework circumscribed by the sharia, customary law, and day-to-day administrative considerations. These boundaries were not inflexible, and the meanings of words and titles were stretched or shrunk according to specific circumstances.

Communal representation is most notably visible in tax-collection.[55] Certain sharia court register entries from 1677 illustrate this point. Twice, delegations of non-Muslims

---

tion with the other title of the person or persons it is attached to, e.g., "dragoman of Cyprus and representative of the *reaya*s" (*Kıbrıs tercümanı ve reaya vekili*), "the archbishop and representative of the *reaya*s" (*başpiskopos ve reaya vekili*), or "the four bishops who are the representatives of the *reaya*s" (*reaya vekilleri olan dört nefer piskoposlar*). This illustrates that the meanings of such titles were not consolidated yet, and their use should not be taken as a clear-cut recognition of an institutional position. Papastamatiou reaches the same conclusion, arguing for a 'semi-officialisation' of titles and functions during the second half of the eighteenth century in the Morea. Papastamatiou, 'Οικονομικοκοινωνικοί Μηχανισμοί και το Προυχοντικό Φαινόμενο στην Οθωμανική Πελοπόννησο: Η Περίπτωση του Παναγιώτη Μπενάκη' [Socio-economic mechanisms and the notables in Ottoman Peloponnese: the case of Panayiotis Benakis], unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2009, 195-196. For the formulaic constructions used when referring to bishops and the lack of any titles akin to institutional positions, see C.ADL. 1321, undated; C.ADL. 2218, c. Rebiü'l-evvel 1144/September-October 1731; C.ADL. 2729, 2 Safer 1121/13 April 1709; C.ADL. 4396, middle days of Cemaziü'l-ahir 1200/11-20 April 1786; C.ADL. 4538, c. Cemaziü'l-ahir 1144/November-December 1731; C.ADL. 4934, 4 Rebiü'l-evvel 1174/14 October 1760; C.ADL. 5067, 17 Rebiü'l-evvel 1214/19 August 1799; C.ADL. 5137, c. Muharrem 1214/June-July 1799; C.ADL. 5895, c. 1759.

[55] This is not the sole function of communities, as the vast literature suggests. For an example of how communal organisation contributed to the administration of justice, see the case when the representatives of the inhabitants of Famagusta testified in court with reference to an accident

presented themselves to the court offering to undertake tax-collection and deliver the amounts to the appointed collectors. Claiming to represent the community, the delegations offered their know-how to the collectors.[56] Importantly, these were *private* arrangements between the delegations and the collectors, for which the court merely gave its approval. In other words, this was neither an institutionally-sanctioned arrangement, at least as far as the law was concerned, nor was it legitimised on the grounds of consuetude or ancient local practice.

One specific phrase is particularly revealing of the nature of this arrangement: "archbishop Kigalas […] guarantor (*kefil*) of the communal affairs of the non-Muslims of the island of Cyprus".[57] He was appointed to this role by 31 named individuals and an unspecified number of unnamed persons from all over the island. The first point that stands out concerns those who appointed Kigalas to the position of guarantor: a list of names of those who were inhabitants of the various districts (*kaza*s) of the island, presumably representing their local communities, and then a vague reference to "others". Such a formulation corresponds to the logic behind the legal fiction of corporation, whereby the verbal consent of each and every member of the community is presumed – in this case, the verbal consent is supposed to have been given to the delegates who presented themselves to the court.

Secondly, the archbishop was not considered by the Ottoman state as the natural leader of the non-Muslims by virtue of any primordial *millet* system, but as what this excerpt explicitly states: the guarantor of communal affairs, appointed by the people on that specific occasion. While the specific reference to communal affairs (*cem'î-i umur*) clearly implies that a *de facto* communal administration of sorts was in place, the passage makes no reference to any legal status that the Ottoman state recognised. This should be no surprise, for in this case the court was not interested in the internal organisation of the non-Muslims.[58] What the court *was* interested in was the assumption of responsibility by someone who would guarantee the payment of taxes for the whole of the community. Any authority that Kigalas had was not granted by Istanbul, but by the individuals who appointed him (*nasb*) as their guarantor (*kefil*), and the court merely accepted the legality of this arrangement.

---

for which the *alaybeyi*s of Nicosia and Famagusta were accused of being responsible. Theocharides, *Κατάλογος*, 91 (doc. 217). Here we can differentiate the more 'mundane' and day-to-day aspects of communal organisation expected in any kind of organised society, and the more official or semi-official character that the leadership of communities took on in becoming political entities much later.

[56] Hadjianastasis, 'Bishops, Ağas and Dragomans', 121-125; 276-279.

[57] *Cezire-i Kıbrıs reayası cem'î umurlarına kefil nasb eyledikleri baş piskopos Cigala*, ibid., 277. 'Cigalas' is the phonetic transcription of the name from Cypriot Greek into Ottoman. There is no documented relationship with Cigalazade Sinan Paşa.

[58] In this case, and throughout the period, there is no distinction between bishops and priests, and all are described as 'papa'. (Marios Hadjianastasis, personal communication, 18 June 2010). This is in sharp contrast with the eighteenth century.

The connotations of the term guarantor (*kefil*) are in some ways in contrast with those of representative (*vekil*), which is prevalent in post-1770s documentation. The former is a legal function, the latter is (also) a title. The usage and context of representative suggests an official recognition and a certain degree of authority. Moreover, it is taken to denote leadership over the community more clearly and explicitly: representative of the non-Muslims. However, the meanings of the terms guarantor and representative are neither fixed nor absolute. Indeed, from other examples in the Empire it may even be possible to argue that the terms have overlapping meanings, depending on the context.[59]

It is, however, possible to broadly delineate certain 'official' semantic boundaries. The term guarantor, used in earlier periods, concerned fiscal functions with lending connotations.[60] The usage of this term is limited to the function of someone guaranteeing the collection of taxation – in other words, undertaking the responsibility of paying in case of default. On the other hand, while 'representative' may include the function of guaranteeing the tax amount, as we will see later, it also implies broader administrative and representative jurisdictions. The subsequent usage of *vekil* indicates how the term gradually developed fiscal qualities, and was eventually projected (with a certain degree of arbitrariness) as a political-administrative title.

It is important to highlight that both terms originated from the legal nomenclature of the court.[61] In the case of *vekil*,[62] the legal concept of representation (one's deputy, plenipotentiary, or representative in court) was redeployed and reconceptualised in such a way as to acquire a new content alluding to or connoting fiscal, administrative, and/or political representation. This may or may not have had any official Ottoman sanctioning, despite and tacit approval in practice.

This polysemy notwithstanding, my observations concern this specific context and the meanings the terms convey as revealed by the patterns of political praxis: 'guarantor' is used in an era when communal representation is unofficial, and representative when it is on its way towards institutionalisation, but still has a malleable nature. Neither term entails an officially recognised hierarchy, particularly so before the 1770s.

The gradual development of practices and notions of representation were observable elsewhere in the Empire. Other communities used a variety of titles but essentially performed similar functions.[63] Regardless of the title used, it covered a broad range of levels of representation: the collectivities involved may be a small village outside Karaferye, a neighbourhood in Antep, the four non-Muslim religious communities in Aleppo,[64] or an entire province, as with the office of *Mora vekili*.[65] What is more, the political employment of the term *vekil* has a much longer history: Mehmet II delegated authority to his Grand Viziers as 'absolute deputies in all affairs (*vekil-i mutlak*)'.[66]

---

[59] Anastasopoulos, 'Imperial Institutions', 86.

[60] In a strictly legal context, the term refers to the guarantor of debtors. C.ML. 24254, c. Muharrem 1170/September-October 1756; C.ADL. 5293, 3 Şaban 1172/1 April 1759.

[61] See the concepts of *wakīl* and *wakāla* in W.B. Hallaq, *Sharī'a: Theory, Practice, Transformations* (Cambridge 2009).

[62] For the term *vekil* in particular, see R. C. Jennings, 'The Office of Vekil (Wakil) in 17th Century Ottoman Sharia Courts', *SI*, 42 (1975), 147-169.

[63] Kontogiorgis, *Κοινωνική δυναμική*, 427, 469-481, 519-520; N. Stavrinidis, 'Ο θεσμός των Γραμματικών της Πόρτας στην Κρήτη' [The institution of Secretaries of the Porte in Crete], in *Πεπραγμένα του Δ' διεθνούς κρητολογικού συνεδρίου* [Acta of the 4th International Cretan Studies Conference , 4 vols (Athens 1980-81), III:397-401; M. Sotiropoulos and A. Hadjikyriacou, '*Patris*, *Ethnos* and *Demos*: Representation and Political Participation in the Greek World', in

In this context, the introduction of the idea of representation as part of political and administrative parlance was part of larger trends observable throughout the Empire. Evocative of these developments are the concomitant shifts in the meaning and patterns of usage of the term *wakīl* (from the Arabic original of the Turkish *vekil*) which are also to be found in Iran during exactly the same period. Christoph Werner highlights the

> polysemic character of the term *vakīl* in its usage during the 18th and early 19th century in Iran. The sources do not only use this term to denote quite different offices, but also as an honorary title. A vakil can therefore assume the identity of a highranking provincial official (similar to or replacing a provincial vizier or mustawfi), of a financial administrator of lower rank or an appointed arbitrator in urban society. But nevertheless the basic meaning of vakil as 'representative' or 'attorney' is always present in these definitions, creating a situation where meaning is continuously oscillating between its basic level and its concrete shapings.[67]

It was during this period that Karim Khan Zand in Iran refused to assume the title of *şahinşah* (king of kings), opting for that of *wakīl-e ra'āyā*, whereby popular representation was a central tenet of his legitimacy.[68] This is of course not to compare the content of this title with the ones examined in the Ottoman context. But it would indeed be worthwhile to speculate whether this constituted a Eurasian shift in political thought and ideas

---

J. Innes and M. Philp (eds), *Re-imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean* (Oxford 2018), 99-124 at 102-106.

[64] B. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge 2001), 64-65.

[65] Antonis Anastasopoulos highlights a very similar case from the eighteenth century in a village outside Karaferye, when a priest is appointed (*nasb*) as their representative (*vekil*) with regard to tax-collection. Anastasopoulos, 'Imperial Institutions', 75. Canbakal, *Society and Politics*, 175; M. V. Sakellarios, *Η Πελοπόννησος κατά την δευτέραν τουρκοκρατίαν (1715-1821)* [The Peloponnese during the second period of Turkish rule (1715-1821)](Athens 1939), 94-96; A. T. Photopoulos, *Οι κοτζαμπάσηδες της Πελοποννήσου κατά τη δεύτερη τουρκοκρατία (1715-1821)* [The *kocabaşı*s of the Peloponnese during the second period of Turkish rule (1715-1821)] (Athens 2005), 59-75.

[66] T. Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453-1471)* (Leiden 2001), 70; H. Yılmaz 'Containing Sultanic Authority: Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire before Modernity', *OA*, 45 (2015), 231-264 at 236.

[67] C. Werner, 'Ambiguity in Meaning: The *Vakīl* in 18th and early 19th-Century Iran', in C. Melville (ed.), *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies Held in Cambridge, 11th to 15th September 1995*, part 2: *Medieval and Modern Persian Studies* (Wiesbaden 1999), 317-325, at 317.

[68] J. R. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand* (Oxford 2006), 118-119.

of government during this conjuncture,[69] even if the agency of the appointment did not rest with those represented. Be that as it may, such an inquiry requires an examination beyond the present scope, and may be part of another research agenda.

As far as Cyprus is concerned, available evidence is more lucid on the *projections of leadership and authority* over the community, rather than the specific substance and content of the term. If this was the case, then what is the meaning of the episode from 1707, where the archbishop, the janissary commander, and other locals claimed to have been "representatives of the non-Muslims" when such an office did not exist? Clearly, the claim was arbitrary, and the individuals concerned, incidentally both Muslims and non-Muslims, projected a specific institutional identity that they did not possess in order to justify the collection of taxes at more than twice the prescribed rate. While the claim may be revealing of a certain consciousness by those using the title, the fact of the matter was that it was used as a means for exploitative taxation under a veneer of officialdom.[70]

The politics of communal authority in early eighteenth-century Cyprus

Contrary to what is often explicitly and implicitly assumed, the relationship between non-Muslim lay and clerical office-holders was not always an easy one. This was particularly the case during the closing decades of the eighteenth century, when boundaries of jurisdiction were being redrawn, and different officials (dragoman, archbishop, or tax-farming governor) were striving for increasing their share of sultanic authority and local power.[71]

Conventional wisdom has it that lay non-Muslim office-holders were hand-in-glove with, if not under the thumb of, the clerical hierarchy. While there is indeed evidence of close co-operation between bishops and secular officials, this was not always the case. There are many indications of the independent and separated role they had, as well the tensions and antagonisms between lay and clerical officials who occupied different functions in the constantly-changing organisational chart of communal administration. Depending on circumstances, their relationship fluctuated between co-operation, conflict, toleration, or co-optation.[72] Despite this wide spectrum of interactions, I will focus here on instances of conflicting agendas to illustrate the need to conceptualise these actors as distinct, rather than unified, poles of authority. This way, one can fully appreciate the complex and multi-layered nature of quasi-institutional structures of communal organisation.

Particularly in earlier parts of the eighteenth century, the offices of *sarraf* (financier) and *yazıcı* (scribe, secretary) entailed fiscal functions, in co-operation with that of the dragoman.[73] Moreover, such functions were performed together with Muslim officials. In 1709, a petition informed Istanbul that the dragomans and *sarraf*s assisting the pashas of the island were oppressive, and the hitherto unknown dragoman Yerolemos was consequently dismissed.[74]

---

[69] For European developments, H. F. Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967).

[70] C.ADL. 833, last days of Ramazan 1118/2-12 July 1706.

[71] N. Çevikel, *Kıbrıs Eyaleti: Yönetim, Kilise, Ayan ve Halk (1750-1800). Bir Değişim Döneminin Anatomisi* (Famagusta 2000), 134, 140-141, 198-200.

[72] Stavrides, 'Administration and Society', 91-98; Bayraktar Tellan, 'The Archbishopric of Cyprus', 83-100.

There is currently very little information on the precise separation of jurisdiction (or the extent thereof) between these three secular offices and their role within the community. What is certain is that the lines between them were somewhat blurred; yet that all three were involved in fiscal matters. In one incident from 1743 a certain Yannis who was performing the duties of *sarraf* and *yazıcı* had fled the island after having embezzled an amount of 5,522 *kuruş*. To remedy the situation, dragoman Christofakis had guaranteed (*tekeffül*) the payment of taxes to the concerned tax-farmers, and Yannis was consequently removed from these two offices, the duties of which were transferred to Christofakis.[75]

In 1745, Christofakis was found guilty of oppressive and unjust behaviour after several petitions were sent against him. He was removed from the position of *sarraf* and *yazıcı* and a certain Anastasis was appointed in his place.[76] A year later, in 1746, a document states that "due to the abuses of those performing the services of dragoman, *sarraf*, and *yazıcı*, and because of the annulment of these offices, nobody is granted a *berat*".[77] While the office of *yazıcı* does not appear in subsequent documentation, and the office of *sarraf* resurfaces in the early nineteenth century, the position of the dragoman seems to have continued nevertheless, since Christofakis had been dragoman upon his death in 1750.

More important than the events these documents are describing is the ambiguity about the offices involved. The first two of these documents are entries in the sharia court registers, and are respectively entitled "Dragoman Christofakis' *berat* (appointment deed) for the dragomanship" and "The new dragoman's *berat*".[78] Despite these misleading titles, a description of the functions of the dragoman are nowhere to be found, as it is the case with *berat*s. The only description of functions or offices are those of the *sarraf* and *yazıcı*, who were atatched to "the court of the *muhassıl*". This is interesting because such a qualification is not to be found in subsequent documentation from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards.

---

[73] C.ADL. 5293, 3 Şaban 1172/1 April 1759; C.ML. 29407, 12 Cemaziü'l-evvel 1215/1 October 1800; C.ML. 21122, 11 Muharrem 1266/27 November 1849; G. Mariti, *Travels in the Island of Cyprus. With Contemporary Accounts of the Sieges of Nicosia and Famagusta*; C. D. Cobham, ed. and trans. (Cambridge 1909 [2nd ed.), 7; Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 74-78, 282; T. Papadopoullos, 'Το Άσμα των Διερμηνέων' [The song of the interpreters], *Κυπριακαί Σπουδαί*, 45 (1981), 55-141, at 79-80.

[74] C.ADL. 2729, 2 Safer 1121/13 April 1709.

[75] Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 418-420.

[76] Ibid., 77. For the document see II. Mahmud Kütüphanesi, Nicosia, Kıbrıs Şeriyye Sicilleri, 17/16-1, 24 Safer 1158/28 March 1745. I would like to thank Ali Efdal Özkul for sharing the document with me.

[77] C. DH. 6328, 16 Muharrem 1159/8 February 1746. This eight-page document is unfortunately unavailable for consultation because of its fragile condition. The information comes from the summary in the Cevdet Dahiliye catalogue.

[78] *Tercümân Hristofaci'nin tercümanlık beratıdır* and *Tercüman-ı cedidin beratıdır* respectively. II. Mahmud Kütüphanesi, Nicosia, Kıbrıs Şeriyye Sicilleri, 15/215-3 29 Zi'l-kade 1155 and 17/16-1, 24 Safer 1158/28 March 1745.

The *kadı*'s slip of the pen in entitling the entries as "the dragoman's *berat*" despite the fact that the appointments concerned different positions was no simple mistake: it reveals how intertwined the positions of dragoman, *sarraf* and *yazıcı* were at the time. Thus, these documents testify to the fluid nature of the functions and duties of these three offices and the changing nature of the distribution of authority in the mid eighteenth century.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, these non-clerical functionaries were part of the (informal) local bureaucratic apparatus, involved in fiscal and political matters as much as anyone else. Some of the laymen who occupied these positions were closely connected to the clerical authorities.[79] Nonetheless, it should neither be automatically assumed that all of them were part and parcel of the same structure, nor that they always acted in harmony by virtue of their common religion. Conflict between lay and clerical high-ranking officials is observable as often as co-operation, while these were not mutually exclusive characteristics of relations between the two groups.[80] For example, the close links that Christofakis had with the bishops indicate that both the dragoman that he deposed, and the one who briefly interrupted his own dragomanship in 1745, opposed the interests that united Christofakis and archbishop Philotheos.[81] The constant power struggles manifested through the many accusations against various prelates and attempts to replace them indicate the existence of competing groups, and neither alliances nor conflicts were characterised by consistency as far as confessional identities were concerned.[82]

---

[79] The most notable case is Christofakis, who also bore the ecclesiastical title of *rhetor*. P. M. Kitromelides, *Κοινωνικές σχέσεις και νοοτροπίες στην Κύπρο του δέκατου όγδοου αιώνα* [Social relations and mentalities in eighteenth-century Cyprus] (Nicosia 1992), 21. He is often to be found in the relevant documentation acting in concord with the bishops, usually as a guarantor of an outstanding loan, or an accomplice in over-taxation. See A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 34, *hükm* (order) to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, middle of Rebiü'l-evvel 1160/13-22 March 1747; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 65, *hükm* to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, first days of Şevval 1160/6-15 October 1747; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 189, *hükm* to the *naib* of Nicosia and *muhassıl* of Cyprus, last days of Ramazan 1163/23 August-2 September 1749; Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 77.

[80] For example see A.DVN.KBM. 1/14, f. 2, c. 14 Şevval 1181/4 March 1768, when the bishops complained against Francesco, the *yazıcı* of the town of Larnaca. For the tensions between the bishops and Hadjiyorgakis see E. Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, 'Ιστορική Μαρτυρία Ιωάννου Κορνάρου του Κρητός' [Historical testimony of Ioannis Cornaros the Cretan], in eadem and C. Hatzichristodoulou (eds), *Νέα εικόνα και ιστορική μαρτυρία Ιωάνου Κορνάρου του Κρητός* [New picture and historical testimony of Ioannis Cornaros the Cretan] (Nicosia 2000), 19-46, at 32-33. For the seventeenth-century case of dragoman Markoullis see M. Hadjianastasis, 'Cyprus in the Ottoman Period: Consolidation of the Cypro-Ottoman Elite, 1650–1750', in Michael, Kappler and Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus*, 63-88; idem, 'Crossing the Line in the Sand: Regional Officials, monopolisation of state power and 'rebellion'. The case of Mehmed Ağa Boyacıoğlu in Cyprus, 1685-1690', *Turkish Historical Review*, 2 (2001), 155-176, 163-64.

[81] Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 73-74.

[82] There are several known examples that need not be repeated here. See, indicatively, T.

Kyprianos, the previously-mentioned author of a 1788 history of Cyprus, was particularly close to archbishop Chrysanthos and was unequivocal about his political opinions. While the information he provides is generally accurate, his opinions on historical and contemporary developments are heavily loaded, projecting a very specific worldview and essentially setting the boundaries to acceptable knowledge.[83] Kyprianos liberally uses negative adjectives against anyone who deviates from what he considers as the official church line, and never misses an opportunity to condemn as malevolent (*κακεντρεχείς*) those who complained against the prelates.[84] Such adjectives are in fact the

---

Stavrides, *Οικουμενικό πατριαρχείο και Κύπρος: τα πατριαρχικά έγγραφα των ετών 1600-1878* [Ecumenical Patriarchate and Cyprus: the patriarchal documents of the years 1600-1878] (Nicosia 2001), 31-73. For documentation from the Ottoman archives see C.ADL. 2218, c. Rebiü'l-evvel 1144/September-October 1731; C.ADL. 2554, 8 Rebiü'l-ahir 1225/11 July 1810; C.ML. 3568, 2 Rebiü'l-ahir 1172/3 December 1758; C.ML. 4538, c. Cemaziü'l-ahir 1144/November-December 1731; C.ML. 5067, 17 Rebiü'l-evvel 1214/19 August 1799; C.ML. 5137, c. Muharrem 1214/June-July 1799; C.ADL. 5895, c. 1759; C.ML. 5293, 3 Şaban 1172/1 April 1759; HAT. 17754, undated; MAD. 9726, p. 288, 19 Receb 1226/9 August 1811; A.DVNS.AHK. CZRK. 1, 19-20, *hükm* to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, middle days of Muharrem 1159/2-12 February 1746. Stavrides, 'Administration and Society,' 96. For some of the many cases of co-operation between Muslim and non-Muslim officials as one facet of this issue, see A.DVN.KBŞ. 1/15, 4 Cemaziü'l-evvel 1191/10 June 1777; C.ADL. 833, last days of Ramazan 1118/2-12 July 1706; 3568; C.ML. 3132, 25 Cemaziü'l-ahir 1204/12 March 1790; HAT. 24651, c. 17 Şaban 1224/27 September 1809; Theocharides, *Κατάλογος*, 92 (doc. 220); idem, 'Ανέκδοτα Οθωμανικά Έγγραφα για το Δραγομάνο της Κύπρου Χατζηγεωργάκη Κορνέσιο [Unpublished Ottoman documents on the dragoman of Cyprus Hadzigeorgakis Kornesios]', in *Σύμμεικτα Δραγομανικά της Κύπρου* [Miscellaneous dragoman documents of Cyprus] (Ioannina 1986), 34-38, 45-47, 55; P. Hidiroglou (ed.), *Οθωμανικά έγγραφα της εν Κύπρω μονής Κύκκου* [Ottoman documents of the Kykkos Monastery in Cyprus] (Nicosia 1973), 31-32, 97-99, plate II (doc. 2); 34-35, 102-104, plate IV (doc. 4); 41-44, 109-113, plates VII-IX (docs. 8-9); 67-72, 137-142, plates XXI-XXII (docs. 11-12); N. G. Kyriazes, 'Προξενικά Έγγραφα. Δάνεια των Θρόνων Κύπρου [Consular documents. Loans of the thrones of Cyprus]', *Κυπριακά Χρονικά*, 12 (1936), 104-123; N. Çevikel, 'An Aspect of History of Muslims and Non-Muslims in the Late 18th Century-Ottoman Province of Cyprus', *Belleten,* 72:263 (2008), 123-140, at 132; F. Zannetos, *Ιστορία της νήσου Κύπρου από της αγγλικής κατοχής μέχρι σήμερον μετά εισαγωγής περιλαμβανούσης βραχείαν περιγραφήν της όλης ιστορίας αυτής* [History of the island of Cyprus from the British conquest up to the present with an introduction including a brief history of this whole history], 2 vols (Nicosia 1997 [2nd ed.]), I:1112; A. Drummond, 'Drummond' in C. D. Cobham (ed.), *Excerpta Cypria: Materials for a History of Cyprus* (Cambridge 1908), 271-305, at 280; K. I. Myrianthopoulos, *Χατζηγεωργάκις Κορνέσιος. Ο διερμηνεύς της Κύπρου, 1779-1809 ήτοι συμβολαί εις την ιστορίαν της Κύπρου επί τουρκοκρατίας (1570-1878)* [Hatzigeorgakis Kornesios. The Interpreter of Cyprus 1779-1809 or contributions to the history of Cyprus under Turkish rule] (Nicosia 1934), 50K. Çiçek, 'Zimmis (non-Muslims) of Cyprus in the Sharia court: 1110/39 A.H./1698-1726 A.D.', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1992, 165; Mariti, *Travels*, 8; Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 74-76, 85, 282.

[83] For an assessment see George Hill, *A History of Cyprus*. Vol. 4; H. Luke (ed.), *The Ottoman Province, The British Colony* (Cambridge 1952), 99.

[84] Kyprianos, *Ιστορία*, 329

Greek equivalents to terms to be found in contemporary Ottoman documents describing internal tensions.

Such tensions are evident in the issue of financing episcopal sees. The appointment of bishops and archbishops was confirmed with the payment of an amount of money (*mîrî pişkeş*) for the issuing of a *berat*. Just as with the Patriarchate of Istanbul, where this procedure occurred on a much larger scale, competition between candidates raised the stakes considerably, and correlatively the amounts that had to be paid. Financing these appointments was contingent upon laymen who lent money to candidates. It is reasonable to assume that the expectation was that these debts would be serviced through taxation or other extra-ordinary contributions from the community subsequent to the appointment. There are several instances of complaints against bishops for outstanding debts in the historical record. While these grievances were recorded as financial, in at least some cases there were also political dimensions. Moreover, either because the capital could not be found in Cyprus, or to avoid local political implications, lenders were sought in Istanbul.[85] For example, archbishop Chrysanthos had such high-profile lenders as the *sarraf* of the Grand Vizier.[86]

Finally, cases of Muslim and non-Muslim officials collaborating while discharging fiscal duties abound. Apart from the seven episodes mentioned above, one can add a case in 1732 when archbishop Sylvestros, the bishop of Larnaca Ioannikios, and the *muhassıl* were summoned to Istanbul to be investigated following certain complaints against their conduct.[87] In another episode of cross-confessional collaboration, dragoman Christofakis, archbishop Philotheos and the *alaybeyi* of Cyprus Abdülgafur were accused of excessive taxation in 1745.[88]

The bigger picture of communal politics of representation indicates that during the earlier parts of the eighteenth century, fiscal and administrative functions were performed by several lay office-holders, namely the dragoman (interpreter), the *yazıcı* (secretary), and the *sarraf* (financier). The participation of other individuals should not be excluded, while we also notice the engagement of Muslim officials in affairs that should be considered as exclusive to the non-Muslim community – or at least they become so in other instances.

---

[85] C.ADL. 1321, undated; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 19-20, *hükm* to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, middle days of Muharrem 1159/2-12 February 1746; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 34, *hükm* to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, middle of Rebiü'l-evvel 1160/13-22 March 1747; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 65, *hükm* to the *muhassıl* of Cyprus and *naib* of Nicosia, first days of Şevval 1160/6-15 October 1747; A.DVNS.AHK.CZRK. 1, 189, *hükm* to the *naib* of Nicosia and *muhassıl* of Cyprus, last days of Ramazan 1163/23 August-2 September 1749; F. M. Emecen, 'Some Notes on the *Defter*s of the *Kaptan Pasha Eyaleti*', in E. Zachariadou (ed.), *The Kapudan Pasha: His Office and Domain* (Rethymno 2002), 253-261, at 259-261; J. M. Kinnier, 'Kinnier' in Cobham (ed.), *Excerpta Cypria*, 414-418, at 416.

[86] C.ADL. 4396, middle days of Cemaziü'l-ahir 1200/11-20 April 1786.

[87] Bayraktar Tellan, 'The Archbishops of Cyprus', 86.

[88] G. Dinç, 'Kıbrıs Saray Tercümanlığı Kurumu (1779-1816)', in *XVI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 20-24 Eylül 2010, Ankara. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 4, part 1 (Ankara 2015), 423-437, at 424; Özkul, *Kıbrıs'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, 77.

These functions were performed in collaboration with the higher clergy. Such a configuration of both Muslim and non-Muslim, as well as lay and religious officials, required a certain balance of interests and a degree of consensus. Often, this was not achievable. More important, this consensus, or the lack thereof, was the result of the convergence or divergence of different interests represented by non-Muslim agents, as well as Muslim ones. During the second half of the century, and its final quarter in particular, we see the rise of more consolidated forms of authority, concentrated in the hands of particular individuals. The final part of the essay addresses this issue, with reference to the means of projecting institutional identity as the sole source of imperial authority in communal affairs.

Projecting an institutional identity: the dragoman as reaya vekili

It should not be assumed that towards the end of the eighteenth century an institutional identity had been consolidated and officially recognised by the Ottoman state to create an office with clearly defined jurisdiction. Even though the title "representative of the non-Muslims" (*reaya vekili*) was consistently used, the concept was still ill-defined. Any corporate nature that its use in Ottoman documentation may convey was not part of a teleological process, but the result of a case-to-case basis evaluation – indeed a personalised affair. An incident from 1788/89 is particularly enlightening in that respect.

Upon the death of a *muhassıl*, a dispute had arisen regarding the collection of non-Muslim taxes. Hadjiyorgakis Kornesios, the dragoman of Cyprus (*Kıbrıs tercümanı*) sent a petition asserting that

> in accordance to the ancient tradition of the country since the imperial conquest, [the collection of the taxes of the non-Muslims] has been entrusted to […] the dragoman and representative of the non-Muslims.[89]

He then described this process, whereby a bond was issued in the name of the dragoman, who made the payment on behalf of the taxpayers and thus undertook the right of collection. The community then requested that the payment be made in interest-incurring instalments; basically a debt to the dragoman. Interestingly, the community was described in a non-institutional manner as "the people, the rich traders, and the merchants".[90] In the meantime, *emin efendi*, the deceased *muhassıl*'s deputy, had an imperial command issued authorising him to collect the taxes. Since, according to the dragoman's petition, this was in contravention of ancient practice, the dragoman requested the cancellation of this order and the (re-)affirmation of his right of collection.[91]

---

[89] *Ehl-i zimmet reayalarının üzerlerine edası lazım gelen cizye-i şer'iye ve emval-i mîrîyeleri feth-i hakanîden berü kaide-i belde tercüman ve reaya vekili marifetiyle tevdi ve taksim*. C.ML. 629, undated, c. 1203/1788-89. See a similar description in C.ML. 6251, c.23 Rebiü'l-ahir 1204/10 January 1790.

[90] *Gah reayadan ve gah ağniya-ı tüccar ve barırgân* [sic: *bazirgân*] *taraflarından*. C.ML. 629, undated, c. 1203/1788-89.

[91] For further documentation on this affair see C.ML. 20157, 15 Cemaziü'l-evvel 1203/11 February 1789 and HAT. 57178, undated, c. 1206/1791-92.

According to the petition, the right of collection of non-Muslim taxes had always been delegated to the dragoman since the conquest. This is clearly an exaggeration, as appeals to *ab antiquo* rights in such documentation usually are. While we know that since the seventeenth century dragomans had had the right to tax-collection, this was certainly neither an exclusive right, nor an institutionalised practice. Archbishops or lay functionaries were also awarded this function.[92]

There are multiple layers of complexity in this incident. First of all, the echoes of guarantor (*kefil*) are abundantly clear. Secondly, the position of Hadjigeorgakis as the tax-collector by virtue of his position as 'representative of the non-Muslims' was not uncontested. Thus, there was no legal guarantee of the right of collection, which seems to have been awarded more on a case-to-case basis rather than in a fully consistent fashion.

Custom, to which Hadjigeorgakis is appealing, could be sufficient legal grounds to argue for at least a quasi-institutional position.[93] Yet, this is more about the projection of an institutional identity than its reality. Just as the Church was accustomed to making such projections, so was Hadjigeorgakis. For despite his argument that the right of collection belonged to the dragoman since the conquest, this was a false claim.[94]

Equally revealing is the way this affair was treated by the Ottoman bureaucracy. While Hadjigeorgakis's request was granted, the choice of words shows how acutely aware the Ottomans were of such subtle issues of institutional identity. Istanbul's response neither refuted nor confirmed the dragoman's claim of having the right of collection since the conquest: "according to custom, the dragoman and representative of the non-Muslims Hadjiyorgakis" undertook the debt for the taxes, and has the right of collection.[95] A strict interpretation is that the lack of reference to the conquest regarding the dating of the custom means that the claim was not confirmed. In other words, this was a practice specifically associated with Hadjigeorgakis. Thus, customary law is entirely in line with the principles of Islamic law in not recognising corporate entities in the form of an office-holder, but only individuals. On the other hand, the ambiguous usage of the term "custom" is loose enough to allow for another interpretation confirming Hadjigeorgakis's claim: "custom" is temporally vague, and may or may not stretch back to the conquest. The circle was thus squared, and all sides could project the image they would like on the basis of what we could define as constructive ambiguity.

---

[92] The inconsistency of the system of delegation of tax-collection is also evident in a case from 1800. This time, Hadjigeorgakis and Hadjidavid, the financier of the province (*vilayet sarrafı*), were delegated the right of tax-collection. This is one of the rare cases when the involvement of a *sarraf* is recorded in the second half of the eighteenth century. C.ML. 29407, 12 Cemaziü'l-evvel 1215/1 October 1800. Conversely the involvement of *sarraf*s is much more frequently documented during the first half of the eighteenth century.

[93] On customary law (*örf*), see Gerber, *Islamic Law and Culture*, 105-115; for the use of precedent as an argument see S. Faroqhi, 'Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanic Legitimation (1570-1650)', *JESHO* 35 (1992), 1-39, at 5-6.

[94] On appealing to ancient custom to legitimise a claim, see Faroqhi, 'Political Activity', 5-6.

[95] *Ber-mûtad tercüman ve reaya vekili Aci Yorgakiden aldığı deyn temessükü*. HAT. 57178, undated, c. 1206/1791-92.

Conclusion

Whatever the *millet* system may have been, it is overrated. At most, if it functioned as anything resembling a centralised and institutionalised system, it did so from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards – a few decades that were a mere fraction of the six centuries of Ottoman existence.[96] Projecting the mid-nineteenth century experience, in the case of *millet*, or the eighteenth-century functions of the 'representative of the *reaya*s', back to an immemorial past was a legitimation tool that *claimed* historical depth, institutional status, and the legal weight of custom and tradition. The historical record, however, does not back these claims.

What did exist in lieu of system? Structures of communal organisation had great regional variation in their development and evolution over time and space. Local custom, difficult as it is to legally codify, played a much more important role in the political and administrative practices than is immediately apparent. Equally underestimated is the role of Islamic law and legal traditions in the development of communal structures. This is not because it had no room for corporate legal entities, but because it allowed an in-between condition: the carving of a quasi-institutional space that in effect permitted the existence of legal entities without violating the letter of the law. These complexities are lost in the *millet* system model and national(ist) historiographical trajectories.

Focusing on the institutional development of structures of representation in pre-Tanzimat-era Cyprus, this essay questioned the social cohesion of, and inquired into conflicting interests within the community. It shows that there was nothing predetermined about the leadership of the communal organisation. Religion was neither the sole marker of identity nor did it guarantee communal homogeneity and cohesion. The path to the formation of communal institutions was not straight; it was one full of twists and turns, with no consistent and uniform evolutionary character of its own. The formation of quasi-institutional structures of communal leadership entailed a great deal of experimentation, the stretching of the meanings of titles, and arbitrary declarations. The examination of these issues reveals a great deal about what it meant to imagine oneself as the head of a collectivity, but also the complex ways in which such collectivities were constructed.

Examining the development of quasi-institutional forms of communal representation and leadership reveals the non-linear forms that jurisdiction and delegation of authority from above and from below took. By the eighteenth century, the representative of the non-Muslims in Cyprus (and regardless of the form such a title took elsewhere in the empire, the content was essentially the same) was someone who:

- was appointed and recognised by the sovereign in that position because
- that person was in possession of enough political, social, and economic capital to perform fiscal and administrative functions in the name of the community, which, in turn

---

[96] Dimitris Stamatopoulos is correct in his hypothesis that "[m]aybe one could even speak of a fundamental reinvention of religious communities in the 19th century, especially during the second phase of Tanzimat reforms". See his 'Rum Millet', 58-81 at 60n.

- directly or indirectly consented to the maintenance of order and the payment of taxes, something that
- implied anything between ensuring the economic prosperity of the community to its bare sustainability, and the latter case would jeopardise the political-economic system.

This schematic representation of delegation and representation at the communal level is strongly reminiscent of the circle of justice.

The creation and manipulation of semantic ambiguities with reference to the content of titles were, perhaps unsurprisingly, fairly common strategies in projecting an institutional identity that claimed an undisputed and historically rooted leadership and authority over the community. The development of structures of representation did not follow a consistent and coherent model according to which a single institution, whether the Church or the dragoman, was endowed with authority by the Ottoman state as of old. While such agents were confident in projecting an image of corporate identity, and to a large extent *functioned* in such a way,[97] the reality vis-à-vis the Ottoman state was different. Local representative structures kept either foot within the realms of the *de facto* and the *de jure*, manipulated this ambiguity, adapted themselves to changing conditions, and strove for further imperial authority. At stake is understanding the way institutional identity was constructed, projected, and contested within the context of the struggle for legitimacy characterised by asymmetrical relations of power. Most importantly, target audiences were not only the tax-paying population of the time or the imperial capital, but also future students of those events and processes.

---

[97] The institutional identity of the office of *reaya vekili* was becoming increasingly more substantial at the turn of the nineteenth century, primarily because of the activities of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios and archbishop Kyprianos. Ironically, this increasing 'institutionalisation' was on a personal basis.

WHAT'S IN A FAKE?
UTTERANCES OF LATE OTTOMAN POLITICALNESS

Marc AYMES*

THINKING ABOUT POLITICS, AS MUCH AS THE PRACTICE THEREOF, is determined by the search for an ordering of worldly affairs – hence, in the Ottomans' phraseology of ruling, the omnipresence of *nizam*s of all sorts. Just as 'politics' may be defined as "the sphere where collectively binding decisions are taken for the whole of a given social group",[1] it also involves an institutionalised framework that pre-ordains the appearance of things considered political, by authorising certain utterances and forbidding others from going public.

Meanwhile, politics is shaped at least as much by the inability to corral the 'body politic' and exert control over the 'room for debate'. As distinguished from political policing, other forms of 'politicalness' may be characterised as indeterminate, ambiguous, and open-ended ways of engaging in public debate. Thoughts and practices may therefore be considered political not only when complying with the imprimatur of the powers that be but also when overriding it.

To this extent, fakes and forgeries appear very much to be (both thoughtfully and practically) political. As Alessandro Stanziani puts it, "fraudsters and forgers know the norm and stick to it, even though they do not respect it".[2] Those who utter counterfeit or forged currencies indeed do so out of an eager desire to be embodied and embedded in the order of institutional rule – while at the same time managing to preserve their outsider status vis-à-vis the latter. Many a forger would readily admit to the legitimacy of official currencies, only to pose a challenge to the ruler's legal credibility when it comes to controlling their utterance.

In sum, the linkage of the forger's act to 'politics' has to do with both state-building and bottom-up social initiatives. On the one hand, forgeries permeate the realms of insti-

---

* Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris), Centre d'Études Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques.

[1] In J. Büssow's terms, *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem 1872-1908* (Leiden and Boston 2011), 9.

[2] A. Stanziani, *Histoire de la qualité alimentaire (XIXe-XXe siècle)* (Paris 2005), 9: « Le fraudeur ou le falsificateur connaît et applique la norme, même s'il ne la respecte pas » (all translations are mine unless otherwise noted).

tutional politics, wherein they induce a dynamics of normativity and lawfulness associated with their repression. On the other hand, forgeries prompt a sense of 'politicalness' insofar as their parasitical presence implies a fierce, if muffled, criticism of the very institutions that host them.[3] Using nineteenth and early twentieth-century Ottoman sources, the present essay aims to follow each of these two paths. Yet before setting off, let us for a while stay put where the road forks: to begin with, how do we know what the Ottomans meant when they referred to 'politics'?

I. Talking (about) polîtika

Judging by present-day conceptions of politics, things or events deemed 'political' are those that prompt public debate. Focusing on utterances (be they linguistic or otherwise) is a way to ascribe some extent of analytical relevance to this premise: politics is about in which terms as well as under which terms matters for debate may (or may not) gain currency. The same *in* / *under* distinction is also to be found in the grammatical nuance that separates 'talking about politics' from 'talking politics'. If a predicate being talked about, politics refers to the content of discourse; turned into an adverb, it encompasses both content and form. Uttering is therefore not only about producing abstract ideas but also about linking ideas to statements. At this point political thought and practice merge into the actual performance of talking (about) politics.

Using a few revealing utterances as a sample, let us then first see how the Ottoman authorities, when talking about politics, also took care to talk politics. One such utterance occurs in the law that came into force in 1865 concerning "the printing and circulating of administrative and political news by all sorts of newspapers and brochures printed and circulated at the Abode of Felicity or within the royal domains".[4] These regulations have been considered to be "inspired by the French press law" in force at the time.[5] A comparison of its initial clause with that of the 'Organic Decree on the Press' issued in France on 17 February 1852 bears sufficient testimony to this family resemblance.

---

[3] On criticism as a key to the study of Ottoman political thought see M. Sariyannis, 'Ottoman Critics of Society and State, Fifteenth to Early Eighteenth Centuries: Toward a Corpus for the Study of Ottoman Political Thought', *ArchOtt*, 25 (2008), 127-150.

[4] BOA, Y.EE. 112/26, "dersaadetde ve memalik-i şahanede tab ü neşr olunan her nev'i gazete ve evrak havadis-i mülkiyye ve polîtikiyye tab ü neşri hakkında bu kere tanzim olunan nizamnamedir", printed text with handwritten annotations, dated 2 Şab'an 1281 / 19 Kânun-ı Evvel 1280 [31 December 1864]. Article 36 specifies that "the present law shall come into force as of January 1st, 1865". Cf. *Düstūr*, I, 2 (Istanbul 1289 [1872-1873]), 220-226. On Ottoman legislation affecting the press prior to the 1865 law see A. Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History* (New York and Oxford 1995), 111-112; F. Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid döneminde sansür* (Istanbul 2007), 30-31.

[5] *Encyclopaedia of the Ottoman Empire*, s.v. 'Newspapers' (O. Koloğlu), 433. As is the case with several other laws issued by the Ottoman government in that period, the text was simultaneously promulgated in a French version, which will on occasions also be quoted below: BOA, Y.EE. 112/26, 'Loi sur la presse', printed text.

1852 French 'Organic Decree on the Press':	1865 Ottoman Press Law:
Art. 1. — No newspaper or periodical dealing with political matters or social economy, be it issued regularly on a fixed day or by irregular deliveries, may be established and published without the government's prior permission.[6]	Art. 1. — No newspaper or periodical dealing with political or administrative matters, be it issued regularly on a fixed day or by irregular deliveries, and whatever its language, may be established and published without permission.[7]

Resemblance is no similitude though: as one crucial difference shows, the Ottoman did not merely make a tracing of the French text, but adapted its terminology to their own standard operating procedure. Hence their replacement of the reference to "*économie sociale*" with a mention of run-of-the-mill "administrative matters". When conflating "political matters" and "social economy", the 1852 decree paid tribute to the vigour of socialist thought (and practice) in post-1848 French politics. The Ottoman re-wording switches over to a quite different logic, whereby "administrative" (*mülkiyye*) and "political" (*polîtikiyye*) topics are dealt with as parts of one and the same set.

Ottoman legalese thus merges 'politics' and 'administration' into one sole and exclusive realm of government, to the point of making the two terms sound quasi-synonymous. This again occurs in the revised 'Press Law' drafted by the Istanbul authorities in June 1874, although a careful reading also reveals slight differences in phrasing:

1865 Ottoman Press Law:	1874 Ottoman Press Law (draft):
Art. 9. — It is prohibited to introduce and circulate in the royal domains newspapers or other periodicals printed in foreign lands with a view to meddling in and antagonising the Sublime State with regard to political and administrative matters.[8]	Art. 9. — It is prohibited to introduce into the royal domains newspapers or other periodicals printed in foreign lands with the express purpose of breeding resentment and antagonism towards the Sublime State, on account of politics or administrative matters.[9]

---

[6] Quoted in J.-J. F. Rolland de Villargues, *Code des lois de la presse interprétées par la jurisprudence et la doctrine* (Paris 1863), 260: « Aucun journal ou écrit périodique traitant de matières politiques ou d'économie sociale, et paraissant soit régulièrement et à jour fixe, soit par livraisons et irrégulièrement, ne pourra être créé ou publié sans l'autorisation préalable du gouvernement ».

[7] BOA, Y.EE. 112/26, *loc. cit.*: *her kangı lisanda olur ise olsun mevadd-ı polîtikiyye ve mülkiyyeyi şamil olmak üzere gerek suret-i muntazama ve evkat-ı muayyenede ve gerek cüz cüz ve evkat-ı gayr-ı muayyenede gazete ve sair evrak-ı mürettebe istihsal-i ruhsat olunmaksızın ihdas ü neşr olunamayacakdır*. The French text reads: « Aucun journal ou écrit périodique traitant de matières politiques ou administratives, en quelque langue que ce soit, et paraissant soit régulièrement et à jour fixe, soit par livraisons et irrégulièrement, ne pourra être créé ou publié sans l'autorisation du Gouvernement impérial ».

[8] BOA, Y.EE. 112/26, *loc. cit.*: *mevadd-ı polîtikiyye ve mülkiyyeyi şamil olmak üzere devlet-i aliyyeye taaruz ve husumet efkârıyla memalik-i ecnebiyyede tab etdirilen gazete ve evrak-ı mürettebe-i sairenin memalik-i şahaneye idhal ü neşri memnudur*. The French text reads: "L'introduction et la circulation de tout journal ou écrit périodique traitant de matières poli-

Ten years on, what sounded like conflation in 1865 here becomes more clearly (if slightly) dissociated. Yet Ottoman lawmakers still lump together 'politics' and 'administrative matters' in one class. Implicit in this phrasing is a definition of 'politics' as nothing more than a circumscription upon which administrative power may exert its authority.

This in turn, rather than pointing to a supposedly Ottoman-specific 'mentality' or 'culture', may be paralleled in how, starting in the years before the 1852 decree, French courts arbitrating press disputes came to define 'political matters'.[10] More often than not, these definitions merged "everything related to government or the administration of cities and states", and thus encompassed both 'general politics' and 'issues of general administration'.[11] In a way, then, the Ottoman conflation of *mevadd-ı polîtikiyye ve mülkiyye* remains in line with this reasoning, which it only makes more explicit. Accordingly, conceiving of 'politics' implies relating it to the regulatory purview of administrative bodies. Political thought thus ends up being little more than a praxeology of public order.

Besides what may surface in officially encoded legal regulations, thoughts about politics are also to be found permeating more immediately practical documents.[12] Such is, for instance, the case in the report sent to the Grand Vizier in May 1868 by the Governor-General of the Mediterranean Islands, Ahmed Pasha. In it, he disparagingly recommends that Tayyib Pasha, currently posted to Cyprus as a governor, be dismissed right away: "He certainly says and writes nice and fine words, yet his discourse does not tally with his deeds, and he spends his time as if on vacation: for more than four years since he took up office, he has done absolutely nothing that could have provided the state or people with benefits and favours".[13] As a replacement, Ahmed Pasha continues,

---

tiques ou administratives et qui serait publié à l'étranger dans un but d'hostilité et d'agression contre le Gouvernement Impérial, sont interdites dans les États de S.M. le Sultan".

[9] BOA, Y.EE. 112/9, amended draft version of the 'Press Law' (*matbuat nizamnamesi*), 17 Rebiü'l-ahir 1291 / 21 Mayıs 1290 [2 June 1874]: *devlet-i aliyye aleyhinde gerek polîtika ve gerek mevadd-ı mülkiyyeden dolayı icra-yı garaz ü husumet kasdıyla memalik-i ecnebiyyede tab etdirilmiş olan gazete ve evrak-ı mevkute-i sairenin memalik-i şahaneye idhali memnudur*.

[10] Cf. A. Rubin, *Ottoman* Nizamiye *Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York 2011), 7 (emphasis in the original): "in the late nineteenth century, everyday judicial manifestations of modernity took various forms in France as much as they were uneven in the Ottoman Empire. […] New ideas and practices that came to be associated with modernity emerged roughly *at the same time* in many parts of the world in the course of the nineteenth century".

[11] Jurisprudential gloss provided by Rolland de Villargues, *Codes des lois*, 261-265: « Les expressions : *matières politiques* doivent s'entendre par leur généralité de tout ce qui a trait au gouvernement ou à l'administration des villes et des États » (§2, 6). « Elles embrassent non-seulement la politique générale, mais encore tout ce qui se rattache à la science du gouvernement et de l'administration de la cité » (§2, 7). « À tout ce qui est relatif soit à des faits, soit à des questions d'administration générale ou à des actes de l'autorité locale ou municipale » (§2, 9).

[12] Here drawing on M. Reinkowski, *Die Dinge der Ordnung: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung über die osmanische Reformpolitik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich 2005), 32.

[13] BOA, İ.ŞD. 5/284, report (*tahrirât*) from the Governor-General of the Mediterranean Islands Es-seyyid Ahmed Pasha, 17 Muharrem 1285 / 28 Nisan 1284 [10 May 1868]: *güzel güzel lâkırdılar söyler ve yazar ise de kavlî fiilîne gayr-ı muvafik olarak ve vaktini eyyam-ı ta'til*

> circumstances make it necessary [...] that the felicitous Said Pasha, currently serving as Governor of Mytilene, be appointed. For evident is his ability to multiply the prosperity and improve the administration of the aforesaid island [Cyprus] as per the requirements of its capacity; and, evident as well is his cognisance of the rules of politics, so that he will prevent the government’s claims from falling into the oppressive hands of foreigners.[14]

In commenting on this short quotation, two remarkable implications may be emphasised. First, politics is tightly knit to a phraseology that makes it part and parcel of a judicial normativity and legality framed by Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The ‘rules of politics’ (*usûl-i polîtika*) here come as a substitute for *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and ‘the government’s claims’ (*hukuk-ı hükûmet*) as a supplement to ‘claims of God’ (*ḥuqūq Allāh*) and ‘claims of men’ (*ḥuqūq al-ʿibād*), which constitute the distinctive nomenclature of this very *fiqh*. Politics thus gets confined to the realms of government, that is, an institutionalised business of state. Meanwhile, its tacit definition draws on an analogy between how sovereigns make decisions at state level and how judges return verdicts or give rulings in court.

Second, knowledge of ‘politics’ means, as Ahmed Pasha makes clear, being able to deal with the claims and encroachments of ‘foreigners’. Here, as above, the Ottoman Turkish word for ‘politics’ is *polîtika*. Starting with its Romance etymology, it straightforwardly relates to the ‘oppressive’ presence of non-Ottoman subjects within the Sultan’s domains. Thus in the early and mid 1860s, the Damascus and Aleppo Governors-General were flanked by a ‘political officer’ (*polîtika memurı*), also known under the title of ‘Director of Foreign Affairs’ (*umur-ı ecnebiyye müdiri*), whose alleged duty was “to deal with the foreign consuls in the country”.[15] We lack an elaborate description of this official’s job so far, and Ahmed Pasha’s report shows that governors themselves also were expected to know what *polîtika* was about. Tayyib Pasha did not: under his tenure “some foreigners got spoiled by over-indulgence and thus even found themselves in a position to call the tune on all matters”.[16] At least this confirms that Ottoman officials tended to equate ‘politics’ with the dealings of ‘foreign affairs’—or should we say, as was common usage at the Sublime Porte, ‘external affairs’ (*hariciye*)?

Debates held in the Council of State in Istanbul during the preparations for yet another Press Law in 1874 shed some further light on the underpinnings of this notion of

---

gibi geçirerek dört seneyi mütecaviz olan müddet-i memuriyetinde devlet ü milletce fevaid ü muhassenâta mucib hiç bir şey yapmamış.

[14] Ibid.: *cezire-i mezkurenin kabiliyeti icabınca tezyid-i maʿmuriyeti ile ıslah-ı idaresine kudreti ve hem de hukuk-ı hükûmeti ecnebilerin eyadi-i tagallübüne virmeyecek suretde usûl-i polîtikaca ma’lûmatı derkâr olan Midillü mutasarrıfı saadetlü Said Paşa’nın taʿyini [...] mevkii icabından olub.*

[15] M. Ma’oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840-1861: The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (Oxford 1968), 220. Cf. M. Ade, *Picknick mit den Paschas: Aleppo und die levantinische Handelsfirma Fratelli Poche (1853-1880)* (Beyrouth and Würzburg 2013), 180-186.

[16] BOA, İ.ŞD. 5/284, *loc. cit.*: *bazı ecnebiler dahi şımarub her işde sözlerini etdirmekde bulundukları.*

politics. After a first draft had been submitted by an *ad hoc* committee, deliberations ensued in plenary session. At some point

> the question of where to attach the Press Administration came up: all concurred that, with regard to the right course of affairs, it was most necessary to have its premises located within the Sublime Porte. Some nevertheless put forward the view that since permissions issued for the publication of newspapers as well as proceedings taken because of their contents appertain to internal affairs, there could be no suitability in affiliating the aforesaid Administration to the illustrious Ministry of External Affairs. Under the Sublime Sultanate, however, the Ministry of External Affairs has not been confined to foreign affairs only: since time immemorial some of the chancery business has been referred thereto. Besides, what newspapers publish about politics is eminently related to the aforementioned Ministry. Hence it was judged fit and proper to maintain the Press Administration's current affiliation.[17]

This debate, although condensed into a few lines in the minutes, provides us with revealing insights into how the identification of 'politics' with 'external affairs' played out in practice. Eventually, the Council of State resolved that 'external affairs' ought not to be confused with 'foreign affairs only' (*sırf umur-ı ecnebiyye*). All kinds of issues, be they related to foreign countries or not, were indeed subsumed under this heading, which thus also encompassed some degree of 'chancery business' (*mesalih-i divaniyye*). On reflection, it seems that handling 'external affairs' meant making decisions at the state's top levels, whereas, by contrast, 'internal affairs' hinged upon routine procedures of administrative control, such as issuing permissions for and taking proceedings against publishers. This differentiation between the 'interior' of administration and the 'exterior' of politics already framed Ahmed Pasha's argument above: "cognisance of the rules of politics" was only one of the duties to be fulfilled by Cyprus governors, the other being the "ability to multiply the prosperity and improve the administration [*idare*] of the aforesaid island".

Talking (about) politics thus involved, on the part of Ottoman officials, endorsing an all-pervasive topology of rule. On the inside, undisturbed toil and smooth tax collection were in order. On the outside were unpredictable utterances, fickle claims made by spoiled foreigners or op-eds circulated by Ottoman subjects. This symbolic dichotomy contrasts with the usual 'domestic' *v.* 'foreign policy' allotment. Politics is not always where one would expect it to be.

---

[17] BOA, Y.EE. 112/9, report of deliberations held in 'plenary session' (*heyet-i umumiyye*) of the Council of State (*şura-yı devlet*) following recommendations submitted by the latter's Board of Re-organisations (*daire-i tanzimat*), 17 Rebiü'l-ahir 1291 / 21 Mayıs 1290 [2 June 1874]: *matbuat idaresinin ne tarafa merbut olması iktiza edecegi meselesi der-miyan kılınarak işbu idarenin bab-ı âli dahilinde bulunmasının maslahaten elzem oldığından reyler ittifak etmekle beraber gazete neşri içün ruhsat i'tası ve gazetelerin mündericatından dolayı lâzım gelen muamelâtın ifası umur-ı dahiliyyeden olmak hasebiyle idare-i mezburenin hariciye nezaret-i celilesine merbutiyeti münasib olamayacağı bazı âra tarafından irad edilmiş ise de saltanat-ı seniyyede hariciye nezareti sırf umur-ı ecnebiyyeye münhasır olmayub mesalih-i divaniyyeden bazıları mine'l-kadim oraya muhavvel edügüne ve gazetelerin polîtikaya müteallik neşriyatı haysiyetiyle nezaret-i müşarünileyhaya cihet-i münasebeti bulundığına nazaren idare-i matbuatın merbutiyet-i hâzıresinde ibkası [...] bi't-tensib*. For more on how the Press Administration's affiliation fluctuated in this period see Demirel, *Sansür*, 44.

Such preliminary remarks are meant to light up a warning signal: in Ottoman history as elsewhere, the business of relating words to concepts and concepts to contexts remains a tricky one. This caveat becomes even more relevant when one sets out to unravel what curious links could exist between 'political' practice and the forger's act.

II. Fakes at the stake, for siyaset*'s sake*

By studying in and under which terms politics could be conceived of, one is led to trace the lineaments of a complex connection between the utterance of counterfeit currencies and the logic of Ottoman 'politics'. For fakes and forgeries intriguingly straddle the in/out topology outlined above. As an appropriation of the fiduciary currencies of the legal order, they circumvent the routine operations of administrative control and certification. Meanwhile, their utterance also questions the authenticity of the sovereign's very decrees, thereby infringing the chief symbols of government authority – which is why the repression of forgeries often goes hand in hand with upgrades in *lèse-majesté* jurisprudence. Counterfeits are thus simultaneously, as Ottoman officials would put it, "political and administrative matters" (*mevadd-ı polîtikiyye ve mülkiyye*). Coping with their utterance is as much an 'external' affair as it is an 'internal' one.

Starting in the mid nineteenth century, the Ottoman authorities engaged in a large-scale fabrication and circulation of printed documents. Forms of all kinds proliferated. Bills and bonds multiplied. This mechanical reproducibility of the governmental written toolkit allowed rulers keen on a 'reformed' notion of state control to multiply and disembody their technologies of administration. Yet it also trivialised the experience of forging the state's currencies. Once in circulation, look-alikes implied the wholesale cancellation of originals and costly replacement procedures. Such was the case in particular with paper money. Thus in late 1855

> twenty-five hundred thousand and fifteen bills of exchange [lit. 'cash documents'] without interest, amounting to eighty-four thousand, two hundred purses, were newly printed at the Privy Purse, so as to be substituted for the ancient ones. Right after two batches of eighteen hundred and fifty-eight thousand pieces had been exchanged, some counterfeiters imitated them. It was then required by sublime order that the rest of the aforementioned circulated documents, consisting in two hundred thousand and fifty-seven thousand pieces, be cancelled, and that sheets of a new kind be printed instead. The High Council [of Judicial Ordinances] therefore deliberated whether or not to have the Ministry of Finance send the aforementioned cancelled documents, as well as the exchanged eighteen hundred and fifty-eight thousand pieces of the ancient kind, to the Sublime Porte, along with officials in charge of them. There these documents would be burnt before the High Council, as is being done in similar cases.[18]

---

[18] BOA, İ.MVL. 345/14946, minutes from the High Council of Judicial Ordinances (*meclis-i vâlâ-yı ahkam-ı adliyye*), late Rebiü'l-evvel 1272 [early December 1855]: *[…] atîkiyle tebdil olunmak üzere hazine-i hassa'da müceddeden tab olunan seksen dört bin iki yüz kiselik yigirmi beş yük on beş bin aded faizsiz evrak-ı nakdîyyeden iki kalem on sekiz yük elli sekiz bin adedi-*

While their euphemistic phrasing here allows the High Council secretaries to meet the requirements of standard rhetorical humility, it should not be taken at face value: under the guise of ‘deliberations’, the report clearly states a resolute recommendation to the Sultan. The plan put forward is that cancelled fakes meet the same fate as obsolete originals. All ‘cash documents’ deemed improper have to be destroyed, whatever the reasons that make them unfit for circulation. It makes little difference whether annulment results from forgery or from antiquity. What counts is that irregular documents do not impair the state’s regulatory control over money matters. Here, then, the repression of forgery appears motivated by the administrative necessity to keep the country’s legal tender under control. In this respect it may be described, using the officials’ terminology highlighted above, as an ‘internal’ operation.

Meanwhile, these measures dovetail with yet another Ottoman conception of politics. Instead of *polîtika* above, ‘politics’ is now being conceived of in terms of *siyaset*—namely, punishment for reasons of expendiency.[19] A supplement to sharia penalties in matters canon law did not cover, *siyaset* generally meant, according to Uriel Heyd’s *Studies in Old Ottoman Criminal Law*, “severe corporal punishment in various forms”.[20] One of these was the amputation of a hand, which, apart from being featured in the legal doctrine of the *kadı*’s ‘discretionary punishment’ (*ta‘zir*), was also put to good use by jurisconsults who codified sultanic law (*kanun*). Most noticeably, it became a retribution “for habitually forging decrees or legal certificates. As an administrative punishment (*siyaseten*), it was inflicted also for counterfeiting as well as for clipping (*kırmak*) coins”.[21] *Siyaset*-wise, forgeries of all kinds thus appear to have been of great concern to those who defined the contours of ‘political’ lawfulness.

At its harshest, *siyaset* could also refer to capital punishment, again inflicted for reasons of expediency – what Ottoman officials themselves used to call ‘execution for political motives’ (*siyaseten katl*).[22] Uttering false coins or forging state documents could at times

---

nin atîkiyle tebdil olundığını müteakıb bazı sahtekârdan buna taklid etmeleriyle evrak-ı merkumeden salifü’z-zikr neşr olunandan maadası olan iki yük elli yedi bin adedinin battal edilerek ve yerine eczalı olarak bir nev’i evrak tabı mukteza-yı irade-i seniyyeden bulunmağla zikr olunan battal evrak ile tebdil olunan on sekiz yük elli sekiz bin aded evrak-ı atîkenin emsali vechile meclis-i vâlâ pişgâhında hark olunmak üzere memurlarıyla evrak-ı merkumenin bab-ı âli’ye gönderilmesi hususunun nezaret-i müşarünileyhaya [= maliye nezaretine] havalesi meclis-i vâlâ’da tezekkür kılınmış.

[19] R. Peters, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge and New York 2005), 196. This translation itself, however, remains a matter of expediency, which does not militate against a more inclusive perspective on the historical semantics of *siyaset*: cf. B. Lewis, ‘*Siyāsa*’, in A. H. Green (ed.), *In Quest of an Islamic Humanism: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Mohamed al-Nowaihi* (Cairo 1984), 3-14.

[20] U. Heyd, *Studies in Old Ottoman Criminal Law*, ed. V. L. Ménage (Oxford 1973), 264.

[21] Ibid., 265.

[22] A. Mumcu, *Osmanlı devletinde siyaseten katl* (Ankara 1963). Cf. *EI*^{3}, s.v. ‘Capital punishment’ (C. Lange), URL : http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/capital-punishment-COM_25344 (accessed 26 November 2015).

count as part of such 'political motives'.[23] In the 1855 document quoted above, nothing was said of the sentence pronounced on the counterfeiters themselves. Strikingly, though, the treatment inflicted upon unreliable bills matched a similarly 'political' framework of suppression. Beyond its practical efficiency, their destruction by fire was meant to be a symbol-laden measure, all the more so since it was to take place "before the High Council", an institution where top dignitaries discussed virtually all issues regarding government policy at the time.[24] Bills were thus intended to be quite officially (if not publicly) executed. Withdrawing and cancelling them did not suffice: they had to be burnt at the stake.

Documents, not only people, could thus be executed for political motives. Arguably, such executions may be better understood against the backdrop of the increasing circulation of printed documents that took place throughout the Sultan's domains at that time. Printed matter was an effective tool of legal consistency, yet a menace to the symbolic tenets of sultanic legitimacy, inasmuch as it substituted the lacklustre artificiality of bureaucratic wheelwork to the charismatic aura of the 'calligraphic state'.[25] While enhancing the 'internal' reliability of administration, they upended public trust in the 'external' transcendence of the government's aegis. On this account, the need smoothly to administer the circuits of monetary exchange only marginally accounts for the recommendation that counterfeit or obsolete currency be "burnt before the High Council". More crucially, the staging of this 'execution' reveals how very much 'political' an annihilation it was: all that usurped the symbols of sultanic power, or even bore witness to the possibility of such an usurpation, deserved punishment for reasons of state.

Forgery politics therefore aims at a symbolic significance that exceeds the daily exigencies of administration. Similarly to *polîtika* above, the realms of *siyaset* reach beyond the confines of 'internal' matters. What is political about money (and its counterfeiting) is that, issues of legal tender status notwithstanding, it replicates the key emblems of the sovereign's authority. Forgery not only upsets the due course of administrative proceedings, it furthermore threatens the ruler's rights to govern—something close to what Ahmed Pasha called "the government's claims" (*hukuk-ı hükûmet*) in the 1868 report quoted above. The same holds true of other types of offence subject to *siyaset* punishment. As stressed by Uriel Heyd,

> punishable with death are many offences against public order and security, the possession of fire-arms by civilians (in Egypt), serious violations of market regulations, counterfeiting, acts of disobedience against the Sultan and the spreading of calumnies about him, the illegal sale of grain and export of arms to foreign (Christian) countries, etc.[26]

---

[23] Mumcu, *Siyaseten katl*, 53: "Kalpazanlık, devlet evrakında sahtekârlık cürmünü işleyenler, siyaseten katledilebilirler".

[24] M. Seyitdanlıoğlu, *Tanzimat devrinde Meclis-i Vâlâ, 1838-1868* (Ankara 1994).

[25] B. Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford 1993). Cf. S. Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909* (London and New York 1998).

[26] Heyd, *Studies*, 261. Also see *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Djazā' – ii. Ottoman Penal Law' (U. Heyd).

However eclectic this listing might seem, on the whole it clearly appears that Ottoman sultanic law recommended the death penalty for all those who unduly appropriated the sovereign's claim to rule. Political punishment, in sum, applied not so much to legality breaches as to infringements of the Sultan's legitimacy.[27]

Here the linkage between acts of forgery and 'politics' latches on to a definition of 'politics' as state monopoly. Forgeries are political inasmuch as they partake in the contentious process through which sovereign states come to assert their prerogatives. This in particular holds true of monetary policies. As stressed by studies of early modern state formation, the struggle against forgers offered "a means to establish the rule of law, which itself implied political lawfulness".[28] Enduring parasites upon the realms of law and order, counterfeits in their turn obliged the authorities to carry out constant maintenance checks, even when (even more so since) coinage monopolisation obtained. In sum, "the forger's experience steered a path for the state's experience".[29]

This does not imply that fakes and forgeries prompted a political treatment that was designed specifically for them. As shown by the 1855 report, all 'cancelled' documents were *indiscriminately* executed. Yet such an equality of punishment ought not to dissuade us from looking for meaningful differences. The reasons why obsolete bills had become irrelevant were obviously not similar to the rationale behind the suppression of counterfeit money. The former was legitimate currency only recently turned into a thing of the past, whereas the latter was illegitimate through and through. Out-of-date money had to disappear as per the Sultan's instructions, while counterfeits resulted from an unauthorised usurpation, an intentional violation of the sovereign's rights. In sum, there were different motives behind their similar punishment. These questions of meaning and intention remain to be addressed here. They point to yet another way in which the utterance of forgeries may be deemed political, a way that shifts our attention from politics as state monopoly, and looks rather for it in relation to social initiatives.

---

[27] C. Römer and N. Vatin draw similar conclusions in their 'Faux, usage de faux, faux témoignage, accusation mensongère et usurpation d'identité à la fin du règne de Soliman le Magnifique', in J. Zimmermann with C. Herzog and R. Motika (eds), *Osmanische Welten: Quellen und Fallstudien. Festschrift für Michael Ursinus* (Bamberg 2016), 509-561.

[28] O. Caporossi and C. Lastécouères, 'Pour une histoire sociale et européenne du faux monnayage', *Revue de Pau et du Béarn*, 34 (2007), 211: « la répression du faux monnayage s'impose d'emblée aux yeux du pouvoir souverain comme un moyen de construire la norme judiciaire et, à travers elle, la légalité politique ».

[29] O. Caporossi, 'Traces, sources, savoirs : la monarchie hispanique et le faux monnayage (1530-1921)', *Revue de Pau et du Béarn*, 34 (2007), 230: « l'expérience du faux conduit l'expérience de l'État ». While dealing with commercial issues rather than with currency policy, Peter Andreas's argument that "smuggling […] has been as much about building up the American state as about subverting it", so that "illicit trade and related activities therefore not only challenged but also empowered the new American state", bears certain similarities to this approach: P. Andreas, *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America* (Oxford and New York 2013), xi and 7.

III. 'Political business' in the forging

Coping with counterfeit official currencies was undoubtedly, as highlighted above, "at the core of the state-building process" that delineated the history of early modern and modern politics.[30] Yet one should avoid assimilating political thought and practice to a by-product of state-building endeavours. 'Politics' also – and more crucially perhaps – involves groups or activities not directly related to statecraft issues.[31] To be sure, 'political initiatives from the bottom up' usually find themselves compelled to manoeuvre vis-à-vis the claims staked by government officials. Yet in so doing they establish a critical interference with state-centred normative topologies, thereby contributing to resetting the political agenda for their own purposes.[32]

The sources adopted for the present study, drawing on archives compiled as per official instructions, allow but a sparse description of such unruliness. Clearly forgery and its punishment are being approached here from the perspective of law- and decision-makers. Further studies would be in order so as to gain insight into whether and how forgery issues pervaded wider social spheres. Still, some documents show, even if in a partial manner, how disturbingly political the activities of forgers could become to the powers that be.

Although related to a political, military, and judicial context whose discussion would go beyond the scope of this piece, a document dated late February 1922 deserves quotation here. In it a man described as a "first lieutenant serving as second-class reservist", Ahmed Zühdî Efendi, is said to stand trial "on suspicion of various offences: he has been busy with politics, he made up and used forged bonds".[33] These few well-chosen words show that Zühdi Efendi's judges considered his 'political business' (*siyasetle iştigal*) an offence in itself, thus acknowledging it to be political in the first place. This recognition would have been unlikely had they yet again referred to *siyaset* as the realm of state affairs where the hoi polloi may not intrude (whatever 'state' may have meant in that year 1922). Here, then, one has to suppose that a rival understanding of *siyaset* was brought into play: one that meant 'politics' in the broadest sense of the term, as something which occurs wherever and whenever people manage to voice opinions and publicly debate them.[34] This disturbing sense of politicalness lingered within and beyond officially cordoned politics. As much as he contravened the rules of the latter, Zühdî Efendi showed he could readily practise the former. His 'business' could do without official sanction, therefore remaining an unlegitimised (if not illegitimate) one. Formally accredited political authorities took offence, but recognised this disturbance as something political all the same.

---

[30] Caporossi, 'Traces', 229: « Entre 1530 et 1921, les déséquilibres et la discontinuité de la répression de la criminalité monétaire sont véritablement au cœur de la construction de l'État ».

[31] Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine*, 10, thus suggests adopting Pierre Bourdieu's conception of 'politics as a "field" of social activity', so as to stress that it "includes both the *explicit* rules of the political game, such as those laid down in state laws, and the *implicit* rules political actors may follow, such as those prescribed by kinship or patronage" (emphasis in the original).

[32] See A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives 'from the Bottom Up' in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete VII: A Symposium Held in Rethymno 9-11 January 2009* (Rethymno 2012). P. Clastres's work remains a defining read in this respect: *La Société contre l'État. Recherches d'anthropologie politique* (Paris 1974), trans. R. Hurley and A. Stein, *Society against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology* (Cambridge MA 1987).

[33] BOA, İ.DUİT 178/84, sultanic order dated 1 receb 1340 (28 February 1922): *ceraim-i muhtelife ile tazannun olarak siyasetle iştigal ve sahte vesika tasni ve istimal eylemesi*. Elsewhere in the same document the suspect is described as *ikinci sınıf ihtiyat mülâzim-i evvelî*.

Lacking further explanation or background, Zühdî Efendi's incrimination makes it difficult to flesh out what exactly he was taken to court for. But more than the pursuit of a tentative contextualisation what I find interesting here is to take note of the kind of 'collocation' that could be established between 'politics' and forgery in that case. As a matter of fact, it does not take a stretch of the imagination to hypothesise why the fabrication and circulation of 'bonds' (*vesika*) should be related to 'political business' at large. Insofar as they impacted on trust in currency, they were bound to cause concern to the general public (*siyaset* #2) if not to the state authorities themselves (*siyaset* #1). Already in the early 1840s, the Ottoman Minister of Finance Saib Pasha stressed that "while such spurious bonds may cause no harm at all to the Treasury, they do injure God's servants and subject them to loss and baseness".[35] Chronologically distant as they may appear, these two utterances of fake bonds confirm that forging had to do with politics in more than one respect.

Mutatis mutandis, the appearance and circulation of false news in the press may also appear a way of 'doing politics' in this unofficial (and therefore somehow offensive) manner. It therefore might be useful (though again partial) to read further what the Ottoman lawmakers had to say in this regard. They too, after all, were practitioners: abstract as they may sound, their writings aimed at organising the realms of practice. Or to be more precise: they provided the outline of a theory of practice. Let us get back, for instance, to the 1865 Press Law:

> Art. 26 – Newspaper publishers who intentionally and for some wicked purposes print false news, run off fabricated documents and certificates, or insert news and documents of this kind

---

[34] *EI*², s.v. "Siyasa – 1. In the sense of statecraft, the management of affairs of state and, eventually, that of politics and political policy" (C. E. Bosworth), 694: "in Ottoman Turkish, whereas *siyāset* had been almost exclusively used in regard to physical punishment for offences against the state (as, e.g. in the *kanunname* of Mehemmed II), during the course of the 19th century it began to acquire the meaning of "politics", with Ottoman reformers of the mid-19th century now demanding *hukuk-i siyasiyye*, so that the old sense of "punishment" rapidly disappeared." *Contra* the latter assertion see Ş. Mardin, 'Center-Periphery Relations, a Key to Turkish Politics?', *Daedalus*, 102 (1973), 173: "Today, *siyaset* means *politics* in Turkish, and *siyaseten katl* means *condemnation to death for reasons of state*, but in earlier official parlance *siyaset* (politics) was also a synonym for a death sentence imposed for reasons of state. This grim connotation is the one which *siyaset* still retained for peasants in a study carried out in 1968 and 1969."

[35] BOA, İ.DH. 30/1412, #1, memorandum from the Minister of Finance Saib Pasha, n.d. [~ 1256 / 1840-41]: *egerçe işbu kalb kaimelerden hazine-i maliyyeye bir gûne zarar terettüb etmez ise de bu maddede ibadullah mutazarrır ve mübtelâ-yı hasar olmaları*.

> from other papers, shall be punished with six-month to one-year imprisonment, or with a ten- to fifty-gold fine.[36]

Be they untruthful ideas, documentary fabrications, or unverified sources, all kinds of misleading utterances could thus easily be lumped together as variations on a single theme. Content and form were thus jointly liable to the same treatment of forgery as political disturbance.

Key to this notion of politicalness is the issue of intentions. The utterance of forgeries deserves punishment only if done "intentionally and for some wicked purposes" (*taammüden ve bir sû-i niyete mebni kasden*). The law's emphasis on this aspect provides a marked contrast with the document quoted above, where punishment for political motives was meted out indiscriminately to all improper 'cash documents', be they obsolete or counterfeit, regardless of intentionality issues. As shown above, such treatment rested on the idea that 'politics' was at the ruler's sole discretion. It was therefore virtually inconceivable to engage in 'political business' on one's own initiative: only by virtue of the sovereign's ruling would one's business be hallmarked as 'political'. As per this conception of politics, the utterance of counterfeit money implied no more political premeditation than the circulation of obsolete currency. The politicalness of forgeries could only (if ever) be pronounced after the fact, without its perpetrators' will. It occurred more by accident than design.

The 1865 Press Law, by contrast, turns *siyaset* into something else. Politics is what matters to the general public. It is by definition something ordinary people may intentionally engage in. Hence the possibility that the forging of documents may be part of one's 'political business'. This politicalness has its roots not in the sovereign's will to foil *lèse-majesté* but in the forger's premeditated endeavour to gnaw away at publicly trusted currencies. On this account, the utterance of counterfeit money has much in common with the publication of false news or fabricated documents by newspapers editors. All are political by design, not by coincidence.

Here as above, reference to the 1852 French 'Organic Decree on the Press' is in order when attempting to further unpack this politics of 'wicked purposes' with regard to its theoretical and practical contexts:

> Art. 15. – The publication or reproduction of false news, fabricated, forged or misleadingly attributed documents, shall be punished with a 50- to 1,000-franc fine. If publication or reproduction are carried out in bad faith or in a manner likely to disturb the public peace, the penalty shall be a one-month to one-year imprisonment, and a 500- to 1,000-franc fine. The maximum

---

[36] BOA, Y.EE. 112/26, *loc. cit.*: *bir gazeteci taammüden ve bir sû-i niyete mebni kasden havadis-i kâzibe ve yahud evrak ü senedat-ı musanna tab ider veya bu makule havadis ü evrakı diger bir gazeteden naklen derc eyler ise bir aydan bir seneye kadar habs ve yahud on altundan elli altuna kadar ceza-yı nakdî ahzıyla mücazat idilür*. The French text reads: « La publication ou la reproduction, faites avec intention et de mauvaise foi, de nouvelles fausses, de pièces fabriquées ou falsifiées, sera punie d'un emprisonnement d'un mois à un an, ou d'une amende de dix à cinquante livres. »

> penalty shall be applied whenever publication or reproduction is both likely to disturb the public peace and carried out in bad faith.[37]

As will again be apparent here, Ottoman lawmakers closely followed the French decree's wording when drafting the 1865 legislation. But significantly enough, they chose to skirt around the issue of what was 'likely to disturb the public peace', preferring to lay emphasis (in typically redundant style) on notions akin to '*mauvaise foi*'. On first reading, this would seem to imply that they ruled out the sense of politicalness that explicitly permeated the French text. I would rather contend to the contrary: Ottoman lawmakers actually generalised and systematised the political implications of press forgeries. In their view, any intentional falsity, if reported in the press, was *intrinsically* disturbing public peace. To them it therefore went without saying that when it came to the forging of public opinion, 'wicked purposes' inevitably involved 'political business'. This also explains why they felt no need to institute a sliding scale of crime and punishment the way the French did. All in all, one may conclude that to those who drafted the 1865 Ottoman Press Law, politics sprang from the insincerity of statements rather than from their general tenor. What was being said counted only in relation to the (un)trustworthiness of the utterance. Content was not to be dissociated from intent.

Still, inferring intent from content was no easy task. Formal compliance, 'nice and fine words', made it arduous to pronounce on trustworthiness.[38] Conversely, it could end up more practical to label certain utterances 'treacherous' or 'treasonous', a convenient topos when it comes to excluding members from the body politic. More often than not, the practice of politics therefore came down to dealing with the ambiguity of expressions.[39] In this regard, it had much to do with close-reading.

This could be more acutely experienced a few decades later when, following the 1908 constitutional revolution, freedom of the press became openly debated within the Ottoman realms.[40] In early 1909, lawmakers started working on an updated set of press regulations, which took its final shape in the aftermath of the counter-revolutionary *coup* attempt of 13–27 April 1909.[41] Admittedly, the bill that the Unionist-dominated Chamber of Deputies passed on 29 July 1909 did not explicitly deal with matters of ambiguity.[42] Neither did earlier drafts (*lâyiha*) or deliberation reports (*mazbata*) made available by later publications.[43] And yet the 'Yıldız Papers' kept at the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul reveal that an alternative (much longer) version was formulated at some point during the drafting process. Significantly enough, one of its final clauses states the necessity to criminalise forms of equivocal language for public order's sake:

---

[37] Quoted in Rolland de Villargues, *Code des lois*, 276-277: « La publication ou la reproduction de nouvelles fausses, de pièces fabriquées, falsifiées ou mensongèrement attribuées à des tiers, sera punie d'une amende de 50 fr. à 1,000 fr. Si la publication ou reproduction est faite de mauvaise foi, ou si elle est de nature à troubler la paix publique, la peine sera d'un mois à un an d'emprisonnement, et d'une amende de 500 fr. à 1,000 fr. Le maximum de la peine sera appliqué si la publication ou reproduction est tout à la lois de nature à troubler la paix publique et faite de mauvaise foi. »

[38] Again here borrowing from BOA, İ.ŞD. 5/284, *loc. cit.*: *güzel güzel lakırdılar*.

[39] On the 'productivity of ambiguity' in revolutionary constitutionalist context(s) see N. Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (Cambridge 2011), 26-27.

[40] See İ. K. Yosmaoğlu, 'Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913', *TSAJ*, 27 (2003), 31 *sqq.*; O. Koloğlu, *1908 Basın Patlaması* (Istanbul 2005); A. Tamer Torun, '"Matbuat hürriyetimiz var mı yok mu?" 1908 sonrası basın özgürlüğü ve Matbuat Kanunu tartışmaları', *Kebikeç*, 40 (2015), 93-118.

[41] On the '31 March incident' (as the event was dubbed according to the Julian calendar) and its

> Art. 49. – Where it can be firmly inferred that written words replete with enigmatical and ambiguous expressions have been used by means of the press against a personality or a constituted body, or in contravention of public civility, legal action shall be taken against the manager in charge [of the press] on account of the situation as ascertained. The court will pronounce sentence on him as per the penalties carried by the present law.[44]

What was lacking in the 1865 law above is being explicitly articulated: aspersions cast on personalities (*zat*), constituted bodies (*heyet*) or public civility (*âdab-ı umumiyye*) at large indeed come as an elaborate equivalent for what in the 1852 French antecedent was said to be "disturbing the public peace".[45] Hence the passage quoted here provides

---

repercussions see Sohrabi, *Revolution*, 224-267. Cf. A. Kansu, *Politics in Post-Revolutionary Turkey, 1908-1913* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne 2000), 77ff. Both renderings of the events place great emphasis on the press both as a historical source and as a protagonist.

[42] Original text available in *Düstūr*, II, Vol. 1 (Istanbul 1911), 395-403. Strong emphasis has again been laid on the text's strong resemblance to the French Law on the Freedom of the Press of 29 July 1881: for a detailed comparison see Ö. Türesay, 'Être intellectuel à la fin de l'Empire ottoman. Ebüzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, 2008, 418-422.

[43] Several such documents are provided (in the Latin alphabet) in the *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, first term, 69th session (28 April 1325, according to the Ottoman financial calendar), as an appendix to the meeting's proceedings. See also S. R. İskit, *Türkiyede Matbuat Rejimleri* (Istanbul 1939), 'archive section' (*arşiv kısmı*), 17-67. For an insightful analysis of parliamentary proceedings see A. -I. Moroni, 'Une nation impériale. Construire une communauté politique ottomane moderne au lendemain de la révolution de 1908', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2013, 408-418.

[44] BOA, Y.EE. 31/9, printed draft version (*lâyiha*) of the new Press Law (*matbuat kanunı*), annotated in pen, n.d. [dated 6 Rebiü'l-ahir 1327 / 27 April 1909 in the archives catalogue]: *Kırk toquzuncı madde matbuat vasıtasıyla bir zat veya bir heyet aleyhinde ve âdab-ı umumiyye hilâfında rümuz ü ihamat ile yazılan sözler karine-i kat'îyye ile anlaşıldığı takdirde mahkemece tebeyyün edecek hale göre müdir-i mes'uli hakkında işbu kanunun ta'yin etdigi ceza hükmü icra olunur*.

[45] Arguably, the wording chosen by Ottoman lawmakers is not void of ambiguity here, since 'person' would be as fit a translation of '*zat*' as 'personality'. Still, whenever other such *zevat* (to use the plural form of *zat*) make an appearance elsewhere in the 1909 law, they always come up as people endowed with official capacities and prerogatives. Articles 35 and 38 of the same draft version thus respectively deal with "defamation" (*zem*) and "invective" (*kadh*) against "ministers, viziers, ulema, sheikhs of high rank, spiritual leaders, officials of the Sublime State, and person(alitie)s acting in their capacity as public servants (*vükelâ ve vüzera ve ulema ve kibar-ı meşayih ve rüesa-yı ruhaniyye ve me'murin-i devlet-i âliyye ve me'murin sıfatıyla hareket etmiş*

us with a condensed generalisation of the precepts analysed above. It does so in three respects at least:

1. First, it bespeaks the maintenance of a conceptual continuum between institutional and public politics: deference towards 'personalities' and 'constituted bodies' refers to the former, while respect for 'public civility' hints at the latter.
2. Second, norms of civility come up as a touchstone of licit circulation of 'written words' in print: the law implies that even when politics got out of the sovereign's hand, as became a general rule after the 1908 revolution and even more so in the aftermath of the '31 March incident', public tranquillity could and should still obtain, provided that contention and disagreement abided by the art of fair disputation.[46] As the law's final draft rephrased it (Art. 25): "criticism, if within the limits of civil debate, may never constitute a crime".[47]
3. Finally, trustworthy debate by definition requires forbearance from using veiled terms and two-edged insinuations: only if couched in all genuineness are arguments to be considered licit. Forty years on, the 1909 lawmakers' worry about "enigmatical and ambiguous expressions" thus reiterated the 1865 Press Law's intentionalist rationale. Fleeting as it may seem, this anxiety to rid politics of ambiguity shows that not only deliberate forgeries but many other sorts of hidden transcripts could appear politically disturbing.

* * *

Approaching 'thought' in conjunction with 'practice', as this volume's main title suggests, implies combining the universalist potential of concepts with the historical specificity of *in situ* practical endeavours. To the extent that politics is both thought of and practised, our understanding of it needs to rely on a double-edged contextualisation. On the one hand, one may posit that context is what historically determines the conditions of possibility of a given action; on the other, it may also be approached as what imparts conceptual relevance to interpretations of this action. The search for meaning may concur with the girdle of facts, yet it remains exposed to the meddling of other realisations.

---

olan zevat hakkında)". In the law's final draft, Articles 18 and 25 more clearly spell out the distinction between 'persons' (*kimse*) and 'personalities': *Düstūr*, II, Vol. 1, 399-400.

[46] In this respect, the present mention of *âdab* may be taken as an indirect reference to theories of scholarly argumentation earlier subsumed under the label '*ādāb al-baḥs̱*'. On how this and related notions permeated literary debates in late nineteenth-century Istanbul see M.K. Karabela, 'The Development of Dialectic and Argumentation Theory in Post-Classical Islamic Intellectual History', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 2010, 245-253. For an outline of Ottoman conceptions of *âdab* at the time—in relation to 'morality' (*ahlâk*) and 'bourgeois sociability' – see E. Wigen, 'The Education of Ottoman Man and the Practice of Orderliness', in M. Pernau, H. Jordheim *et al.*, *Civilizing Emotions: Concepts in Nineteenth-Century Asia and Europe* (Oxford 2015), 115-125.

[47] *Düstūr*, II, Vol. 1, 401: *âdab-ı münazara dairesinde tenkid hiç bir vakit cürm teşkil edemez.*

The present essay has been an attempt to spark off one such realisation. To put it in a nutshell, one has come to the conclusion that the occurrence of forgery provided Ottoman officials with a blueprint for delineating the realms of legitimate politics at a time when sultanic authority ceased to exercise a monopoly.[48] This came as a result of multiple tensions in their conception of the link between politics and forgery itself. Insofar as the Ottoman topology of rule reigned supreme, the forger's act could remain confined within the 'internal' realms of 'administrative matters', only collaterally verging on politics whenever *lèse-majesté* was at stake. Yet just as 'political matters' were all but uncoupled from social initiatives, so did the transcendent aura of the 'government's claims' only partially relate to the morals of public civility in society at large. The less politics relied on the ruler's decree, the more acumen it demanded in discriminating between sincere subjects and deceptive postures. The way Ottoman lawmakers strove to codify it, the intentional spreading of deceptive currencies provided them with a generic framework for conceiving of threats to public peace. In sum, they placed a forger's scheme of things at the core of their notion of politicalness.

This conclusion carries implications that exceed by far the localised case study of the present essay. In times and spaces distant from nineteenth-century Ottoman history, conceptions of politics in theory and practice have called forth assumptions that may come as analogous to (if dissimilar from) those highlighted above. Not only do such conceptions balance the 'police' of institutional order against the unsanctioned 'politics' of public dissent, they also put forth a notion of politicalness as something that breaks the code of an established 'distribution of the sensible', hence disturbing the pre-ordained allotment of public time and space frames.[49] To some, this amounts to defining politics as an 'art of not being governed'.[50] *Mutatis mutandis*, late nineteenth-century Ottomans made a significant contribution to this debate. Their linkage of political concerns to counterfeit matters makes it clear that to them doing politics necessarily combined policing the Sultan's subjects with a commitment to the sincerity of publicly voiced opinions. Hence the monitoring of so-called 'state conversations' (*devlet sohbetleri*) in Istanbul coffeehouses both fulfilled the needs of police control and made for a legitimisation of 'popular lies', thus prompting the authorities, as Cengiz Kırlı argues, to 'discover "public opinion"'.[51]

---

[48] Cf. I. Moroni, 'Continuity and Change in the 1909 Constitutional Revision: An Ottoman Imperial Nation Claims its Sovereignty', in N. Lévy-Aksu with F. Georgeon (eds), *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Empire: The Aftermath of the 1908 Revolution* (London and New York 2016), 273-279.

[49] J. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. G. Rockhill (London and New York 2004).

[50] J. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven and London 2009). Cf. M. Aymes, 'Defective Agency', in M. Aymes with B. Gourisse and É. Massicard (eds), *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century* (Leiden and Boston 2015), 42-43.

[51] C. Kırlı, *Sultan ve kamuoyu: Osmanlı modernleşme sürecinde "Havadis Jurnalleri" (1840-1844)* (Istanbul 2009), 25. Cf. M. Şiviloğlu, *The Emergence of Public Opinion: State and So-*

While adopting the circumscription of a certain historical setting (that of the Ottoman nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), this essay has been an attempt at showing how thoughts or practices that occurred within the presumed limits of this ‘context’ may also end up exceeding them. The question, in other words, cannot just be that of how ‘Ottoman political thought and practice’ relate to a given time and place frame, but also whether they could contribute to shaping our general understanding of politics, and vice versa. Impractical as they may seem, Ottoman ‘political’ documents indeed splice two layers that many a theorist has tended to keep separate. Their take on politicalness makes reasons of state and public opinion parts of one and the same art of dealing with elusive utterances, one that demands philological training together with dialectical thinking.

---

ciety in the Late Ottoman Empire (Cambridge and New York 2018), 4 fn. 5, warning against possible amalgamations of 'public opinion' with 'popular opinion' here.

PART THREE

AUTHORS AND IDEAS

OTTOMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND THE CRITIQUE OF THE JANISSARIES

Linda T. Darling[*]

Ottoman political thought is often considered to be well represented by the literature of advice (*nasihatname*s) written between 1580 and 1653 by a series of authors from governmental, scribal, or judicial positions. This literature identified problems in the functioning of the Ottoman Empire and its various groups and classes and gave advice to the rulers about how to rectify them. For a long time these works were admired in the West as candid assessments of the Empire's weaknesses; they were among the earliest works published and translated into European languages.[1] A closer examination of some of their complaints regarding the timar system, however, indicated that their claims about the granting of timars to outsiders in preference to the sons of timar-holders were not upheld by the information in the Ottoman timar documentation.[2] The proper operation of the timar system, however, was at the heart of Ottoman imperial integrity for most of the *askeri* elite, and the idea that outsiders holding timars were proliferating threatened that integrity.[3] The present paper deals with another of the chronic issues in the advice literature, the 'corruption of the Janissaries' by the admission of outsiders (*ecnebi*) into the corps. In this case, we know that the government gradually replaced the boys recruited through the *devşirme* with men from Muslim families, so that at some time in the seventeenth century the *devşirme* was more or less abandoned. But the changes in Ottoman political thought on this problem have yet to be traced.

This study presents an overview of the advice literature's pronouncements on the issue of outsiders in the Janissary corps and a comparison of the advice writers' views on this subject with those found in governmental sources. It is part of a larger project on the role of the advice literature and cannot be considered the final word on the question. Ottoman political thought on the Janissaries has two branches: the ideas of writers of the advice literature, and the ideas of the government as expressed in its edicts and actions. The advice writers disparage outsiders in the Janissary corps and see them as the cause of military failure and governmental chaos; the government finds it not only useful but quite legitimate to staff the corps with outsiders. The state did not produce treatises on its decisions, but its understanding of the Janissaries and the status of outsiders in their midst is represented in regulatory works on the Janissaries.

---

[*] University of Arizona.

[1] B. Lewis, 'Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline', *Islamic Studies*, 1 (1962), 71-87.

[2] L. T. Darling, '*Nasîhatnâmeler, İcmal Defterleri,* and the Ottoman *Timar*-Holding Elite in the Late Sixteenth Century', *OA,* 43 (2014): 193-226; eadem, '*Nasîhatnâmeler, İcmal Defterleri*, and the Ottoman *Timar*-Holding Elite in the Late Sixteenth Century: Part II, Including the Seventeenth Century', *OA*, 45 (2015), 13-35.

[3] D. A. Howard, 'The "Ruling Institution", Genre, and the Story of the Decline of the Ottoman Empire', Grand Rapids, unpublished paper, 1992.

The Janissaries in Ottoman Regulatory Works

The near absence of complaints about the Janissaries in the early advice works suggests that in the late sixteenth century the changes in the Janissary corps were not widely viewed as problematic. A chronological review of Ottoman political literature reveals that the political works of that period, such as *Hırzü'l-mülûk*, Mustafa Ali's *Counsel for Sultans*, or Akhisarî's *Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizami'l-âlem*, barely mentioned the Janissaries, despite the changes the Janissary institution was already experiencing.[4] Not until Veysî's *Hâbnâme* of 1608 do we get a brief complaint about Janissary rebellion; Veysî saw it as the cause of a decline in sultanic authority, but other complaints took up more space in his book.[5] Consideration of outsiders in the Janissary corps was more visible in works on the regulatory side, such as the anonymous *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* of 1606 and edicts in several of the *mühimme* registers. The *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* was completely devoted to the Janissaries' history, organisation, and conditions, and the *mühimme* registers referred frequently to the Janissaries and recorded orders about their activities, as they were essentially part of the Sultan's household. These works enable us to historicise the complaints about outsiders and to investigate the relationships of the advice works both among themselves and with writings in the genre of *kanun*.[6]

The genre of *kanun* had a regulatory rather than an advisory function. Pál Fodor proposed that the *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* should be viewed as an advice work, and indeed, the complaints made in it sound very similar to those of Koçi Bey.[7] The composition and purpose of the *kanunname*, however, differ from those of the *nasihatname*. Advice works were addressed to the ruler, whereas regulatory works were addressed to those being regulated. Unlike the *nasihatname*s, penned mainly by scribes, the *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* was compiled from sultanic edicts and chronicles by a long-time Janissary who had been on many campaigns and was now in what might be called the 'Geezers' *Ocak*' (*pir-i dana ocağı*).[8] He states that his grandfathers had been in the service of the Janissary Corps since the time of the conquest of Constantinople; we must take this reference to grandfathers as metaphorical, as establishing his expertise.[9] On the other hand, he mentions 'one grandfather', Saka Mahmud, as having served under Sultan Süleyman as *İstanbul Ağası* for 14 years; taking this reference literally would make him one of the beneficiaries of the regulation allowing Janissaries' sons to enter the corps.[10] Like Ayn-ı Ali's *Kavanin-i Al-i Osman* of 1609, the anonymous *kanunname* of the Janissaries was compiled for Ahmed I (1603-1617), who came to the throne quite young and without having spent any time as a provincial governor to learn how to rule.[11] He attained power at a time when the Empire faced enormous military and economic challenges; old certainties were rapidly vanishing, and Ottoman society and institutions were undergoing transformation. The *kanunname*s functioned both to codify and selectively legitimise certain changes that were occurring in the military corps and to assert the continuity and essential unchangingness of the Empire despite these modifications. In contrast to Mustafa Ali, who decried change as corruption and pleaded for a return to the past, the *kanunname*s treated limited change as adaptation, as incorporation of the past into the present.

---

[4] Anonymous, *Hirzü'l-mülûk*, in Y. Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair kaynaklar* (Ankara 1988), 145-207 + text; Mustafa 'Ali, *Muṣṭafā 'Ālī's Counsel for Sultans of 1581: Edition, Translation, Notes*, 2 vols, ed. and trans. A. Tietze (Vienna 1979-1982); Hasan Kâfî al-Āqhisārī, *Usūl al-hikam fī nizām al-'ālam*, ed. N. R. al-Hmoud (Amman 1986); Turkish trans., M. İpşirli, 'Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî ve devlet düzenine ait eseri *Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizâmi'l-âlem*', *TED,* 10-11 (1979-80), 239-278; French trans., M. Garcin de Tassy, 'Principes de sagesse, touchant l'art de gouverner', *Journal Asiatique*, 4 (1824), 213-226, 283-290.

[5] P. Fodor, 'State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th-17th Century Ottoman Mirror for Princes', *ActOrHung,* 40.2-3 (1986), 228; see Veysî, *Khab-Name (Kniga Snovideniia)*, ed. F. A. Salimzianovoi (Moscow 1976).

[6] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân,* A. Akgündüz (ed.), *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve hukukî tahlilleri*, Vol. 9 (Istanbul 1996), 127-367 (cited by page and paragraph number); I. A. Petrosian (ed.), *Mebde-i kanun-ı yeniçeri ocağı tarihi* (Moscow 1987). For the *mühimme* registers see later footnotes.

The *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* in particular aimed to establish the legitimacy of Janissary practices existing at the beginning of the seventeenth century and to delegitimate some of the changes that had been recently introduced. It is organised as a series of definitions, grouped into categories, each with a heading posed as a group of questions: what is this aspect of the institution and how does it operate? For the most part, the text codifies the organisation and promotion patterns of the different types of Janissaries and their officers. Occasionally it gives the history of some custom or regulation. It legitimises these regulations with the words *'kanun budur',* this is the law.[12] Sometimes, as in the case of the number of Janissaries and Janissary marriages, it explains that the regulation has changed; in days of old it was one way, but that regulation was abrogated in the time of such-and-such a Sultan, and now the *kanun* is this.[13]

---

[7] P. Fodor, 'Bir nasihat-name olarak Kavānīn-i yeniçeriyan', *Beşinci Milletler Arası Türkoloji Kongresi, Tebliğler III. Türk Tarihi*, Vol. 1 (Istanbul 1986), 217-224.

[8] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 131 #2.

[9] Ibid., 130 #2.

[10] Ibid., 149 #100.

[11] On the *Kavânîn-i Âl-i Osman* see Akgündüz (ed.), *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, 9:24-126; D. A. Howard, 'Genre and Myth in the Ottoman Advice for Kings Literature', in V. H. Aksan and D. Goffman (eds), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge 2007), 137-166; idem, 'From Manual to Literature: Two Texts on the Ottoman Timar System', *ActOrHung*, 61 (2008), 87-99. See also Y. Beyazit, 'Efforts to Reform Entry into the Ottoman *İlmiyye* Career towards the End of the 16th Century: The 1598 Ottoman *İlmiyye Kanunnamesi*', *Turcica*, 44 (2012-2013), 201-218.

[12] See, for example, *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 143 #70; 145 #83; 146 #86.

The main problem the author is trying to correct is outsiders entering the Janissary corps, particularly in exchange for bribes. The two traditional routes to Janissary status were the *pençik*, the one-fifth of prisoners of war allocated to the Sultan, and the *devşirme*, the levy of non-Muslim boys within the Empire. By the time of the *Kavanin*, however, the definition of Janissary insiders had narrowed to a single category; the author mentions a *pençik kulu*, but he does not even discuss prisoners of war; he calls the *devşirme* boys *pençik oğlanları* and implies that the *devşirme*, for a long time the main source of Janissary recruits, was the only valid means of entry.[14] The *kanunname*'s attitude towards outsiders, however, is divided, regarding some as legitimate and others not. By the time of the *kanunname*, the Janissary corps had enacted several exceptions, legitimising the status of different sets of outsiders who did not become Janissaries via the traditional route. One exception was the recruitment of inhabitants of newly conquered areas who were supposed to be exempt from the *devşirme*, such as Bosnian Muslims, who were recruited during the reign of Mehmed II despite the prohibition on enlisting Muslims (*kanun olduğundan maada*) and who had to be carefully inspected so that Turks did not sneak in through this route; or the inhabitants of Trabzon, which had been exempted from the *devşirme* since its conquest but were recruited in the time of Selim I, for which the Sultan had to issue a new *kanun*.[15] Another was the sons of Janissaries, the *kuloğlu*s, who were supposedly barred from entry because as Muslims they could not be enslaved. Since, according to the *kanunname*, the Sultan's serving *kul*s could not marry, theoretically only former Janissaries (some retired and some transferred to different positions) would have had sons who could even consider joining the corps.[16] The *mühimme* registers for the mid-sixteenth century, however, mention a number of married Janissaries living with their families in villages across the Empire; indeed, scholars have found Janissaries in active service in the provinces who were marrying and having sons from the mid-fifteenth century onwards.[17] According to the *kanunname*, the sons of Janissaries were entitled to part of their fathers' salaries. When they grew old enough, such boys could be registered for salaries of their own and serve on the horse boats that brought soldiers across the Bosporus or supplies and wood to the palace. They were then treated the same as *devşirme* boys, despite their Muslim origins; they were no longer considered outsiders and could become regular Janissaries after nine to ten years of service. They entered a special unit that was established just for them, the *Kul Oğulları*, and they served under the *sekbanbaşı*.[18]

---

[13] Ibid., 135 #19-20; 151-52 #104.

[14] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 137 #35, 139#49, 151-52 #104. This may be an attempt to justify the *devşirme* on the basis that the subject populations had been defeated in war and their sons were therefore part of the *pençik*, an idea that is already present in Aşıkpaşazade; G. Yılmaz, 'The Economic and Social Roles of the Janissaries in a 17th Century Ottoman City: The Case of Istanbul', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 26. For more on the *devşirme*, including its legality, see eadem, 'Becoming a *Devşirme*: The Training of Conscripted Children in the Ottoman Empire', in G. Campbell, S. Miers, and J. C. Miller (eds), *Children in Slavery through the Ages* (Athens, OH 2009), 119-134.

[15] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân,* ed. Akgündüz, 141-43 #57-#65.

[16] Ibid., 157 #121, 173 #217; İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devleti teşkilatından Kapukulu ocakları*, Vol. 1 (Ankara 1942), 31-33.

[17] Cv. Georgieva, 'Organisation et fonctions du corps des janissaires dans les terres bulgares du XVIe jusqu'au milieu du XVIIIe siècles', *Études Historiques*, 5 (1970), 319-336 (from *kadı si-*

By the time of the *kanunname*, in the early seventeenth century, these sons of Janissaries were seen as having been in the corps from time immemorial, *kadimü'l-eyyamdan beri,* and *kanun budur,* this is the *kanun*.[19] But how and when did it become the *kanun*? According to the indices in the published registers, the first order in *Mühimme*s 5, 6, or 7 (covering the period 1564-1569) to mention *kuloğlu*s is in *Mühimme* register number 7, an order (#789) issued by Selim II (1566-1574) on 3 Şaban 975/2 February 1568:

> "An order to Vezir Mustafa Pasha: since it is made known that the Janissaries of Damascus number fewer than one thousand, whether those going with you [to Egypt and then Yemen] or whether those serving in Damascus or in Aleppo in service to the Treasury, in order to increase their number to 1,000 men, I order that when this arrives, you enrol Janissaries from among suitable brothers of *kul*s and sons of *kul*s and bring their number up to 1,000 men. But among those enrolled let there not be Persians [*Tat,* probably Kurds] or Arabs; let them be brothers of *kul*s and sons of *kul*s."[20]

For some time the *kuloğlu*s had been trickling into the regular regiments as individuals without authorisation; this was their first enlistment as a group, and with a sultanic edict. It was not a general edict legitimising *kuloğlu*s in the Janissary corps; it only commanded the enlistment into the regular Janissaries of a particular group of non-*devşirme* recruits in the province of Syria. Apparently, however, it was taken as a precedent elsewhere for the acceptance of numbers of *kuloğlu*s and *kul kardeşleri*, including possibly the author's family. Forty years later, these outsiders were discussed in the *kanunname* as if they had always been legitimate.[21]

---

cilleri); L. T. Darling, 'Crime Among the Janissaries in the Ottoman Golden Age', in *A Historian of Ottoman War, Peace, and Empire: A Festschrift in Honor of Virginia Aksan*, ed. F. Castiglione and V. Şimşek (Leiden forthcoming), from *mühimme defterleri*.

[18] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 146 #87, 151 #104, 153 #106.

[19] Ibid., 146 #86-87, 199 #369.

[20] *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.975-976/1567-1569), Özet – Transkripsiyon - İndeks* (Ankara 1998), 381 #789. Cf. Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, 1:20-21, an order of Süleyman not to enrol "Russians, Persians, Gypsies, and Turks". In 1572, another order came to eliminate Arabs and Persians from the local recruits: *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.978-979/1570-1572), Özet – Transkripsiyon ve İndeks* (Ankara 1998), 161 #1008. This insistence on purity would change with the change in the Janissaries' roles. Not mentioned here are the Circassians and Georgians, whose availability as slaves must have reduced the need for Balkan *devşirme*s.

[21] Their legitimacy is called into question, however, by the idea that in 1620 it supposedly still took a bribe for a Janissary to enrol his son in the corps; G. Yılmaz, 'Economic and Social Roles of the Janissaries', 80.

Later in the *kanunname*, the author states that Janissaries could not be other than *devşirme* or *kuloğlu* (although of course there had once been prisoners of war), but it then goes on to say that when a prince becomes Sultan, he can add his provincial military troops to the Janissary corps. Ordinarily this would involve a few hundred men, probably from his father the Sultan's palace troops. When Selim II became Sultan in 1566, however, he made the people of the *sancak* he had ruled as a prince into Janissaries, and although it was irregular and exceptional, because the Sultan had ordered it, it was *kanun* and therefore legitimate.[22] This must be a reference to the assimilation into sultanic service of the large army Selim recruited while still a prince to defeat his brother Bayezid. This army amounted to some 8,000 provincial men, most of whom were of Anatolian peasant background, and they were housed in the Janissary barracks vacated by the regular army's departure for the siege of Szigetvar. Their entry caused a massive personnel shift; the trainees in the palace school and gardener (*bostancı*) corps graduated to make room for them in Istanbul's training regiments, and many older Janissaries were retired in order to create vacancies for those being promoted. Their invasion of the palace precincts was vehemently resented by the well-educated, largely Balkan, Janissaries and palace troops, and the bad feeling they aroused and the epithets (such as uncouth, dogs, common criminals, and murderers) used against them by the insulted *devşirme* men were later transferred to other outsiders entering the corps.[23]

Ironically, the backgrounds of these Anatolian peasant soldiers were probably not very different from those of the Janissaries recruited through the *devşirme* except for their religion and language. Since the *devşirme* boys from non-Muslim backgrounds were now Muslims, they could not denigrate the Anatolians on the ground of religion, so to distance themselves from the Anatolian troops they exaggerated and maligned their unpolished and improper behaviour. The author of the *kanunname* is in a difficult position: on the one hand, he wants to condemn the entry of people from non-*devşirme* origins who had come in through the new channels that were opening up, but, on the other, he needs for the sake of his own legitimacy to approve the admissions policies of Selim

---

[22] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 199 #369.

[23] İ. M. Kunt, 'Turks in the Ottoman Imperial Palace', in T. Artan, J. Duindam, and M. Kunt (eds), *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective* (Leiden 2011), 302-306. Kunt raises the question whether Selanikî's designation of these men as *sekban*s in the sense of mercenaries was anachronistic. Examination of the *mühimme* registers reveals that while Selim II was still a prince, an order regarding the murder of one of his *müteferrika*s stated that the first to be questioned were his *sekban*s Kara Mustafa and Derviş: *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.972/1564-1565), Özet – Transkripsiyon ve İndeks* (Ankara 1995), 6 #7. Another order begins with the testimony of *Dergah-ı Muallâm yeniçerilerinden Gani*, who states, *"Kütahiyye'de sekbanlarumdan iken . . . .", 7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, 39 #76. Other orders in the same register mention *sekban*s who received timars (41 #79, 46 #91, 265 #541), and there is one about *reaya* with firearms pretending to be *sekban*s (225 #453), which suggests that Selim's *sekban*s carried firearms (cf. Kunt, 'Turks', 306). The introduction of Selim II's provincial troops, then, may actually have caused the shift of meaning whereby the name for a specific type of soldier came to designate mercenaries in general. It also suddenly increased the number of retired Janissaries.

II, which included not only the marriage of Janissaries and the entry of their sons into the corps but the admission of other outsiders as well.[24] He implies but does not say that what makes those others, who are not *devşirme* or *kuloğlu*, true outsiders is that no *kanun* was issued legitimising their entry.[25]

The entry into the Janissary corps of men other than *kuloğlu*s who had non-*devşirme* backgrounds may not have been authorised by *kanun*, but it had been occurring for some time, and by the time of the *kanunname* it was institutionally organised. The companies of *ağa çırağı,* the agha's apprentices, and *ferzend-i sipahi*, the sons of *sipahi*s, had been formed to house such recruits.[26] The *kanunname* also speaks about a unit of *ferzend-i çavuş*, sons of *çavuş*es, which apparently began under Selim II as well,[27] in addition to units of *ferzend-i çaşnigir*, sons of tasters, and *ferzend-i bevvab*, sons of *kapıcı*s (were they not all eunuchs?), that were abolished before it was produced.[28] In the mid-sixteenth century, in other words, the Janissary corps, with the partial authorisation of the Sultan, made institutional provision for the recruitment of new members from a number of different sources, not all from the *devşirme*. Half a century later, the author of the *kanunname* seeks to delegitimise their entry, saying that through these companies '*Türk mürk*' had become *acemi oğlan*s and Janissaries.[29] Other *Türk mürk*, he claims, adopted non-Muslim names and were made Janissaries in return for bribes, 25 gold pieces being the specified amount, and urban Muslim artisans were smuggled in with the claim that they were relatives of members of the corps.[30] Sons of *sipahi*s, the author says, should become *sipahi*s, sons of *çavuş*es *çavuş*es, sons of *kapıcı*s *kapıcı*s; in other words, this practice does not ruin the corps so much as it offends his social sensibilities! He calls that, with some exaggeration, "disrupting the order of the world".[31]

The author of the *kanunname* represents the problem as the desire of all sorts of people to become Janissaries, obtain salaries, and wear turbans.[32] But this problem of growth was not limited to the Janissaries; in the same period, other categories of government service also expanded, such as the scribal service, the *çavuş* or messenger service, and the ulema. It was a period of population growth both in the countryside, where farmed land did not expand as fast as the farming population, and in the cities, where migration from the countryside added to the increase of artisans and the unemployed.[33] Life as a Janissary, despite its drawbacks, was probably more secure and certainly more profitable than eking out a living as an independent craftsman. But in addition, the state needed more Janissaries at this juncture: garrison forces were expanding, and on the battlefield Janissaries were becoming not just the Sultan's bodyguard but the core Ottoman troops, especially as siege warfare became more important. Janissaries were also being given greater responsibilities in tax collection and administration. So there was a pull as well as a push driving more men into the Janissary corps. If so many men were anxious to get in, there was less need to alienate the non-Muslim population by taking away their sons.[34] Since many of the new entrants were Turks or had grown up in Istanbul, the long period when the recruits learned Turkish and became Muslims would be unnecessary; the years of training could be shortened and the recruits could become more immediately useful. The reasons why non-Muslims' children had originally been preferred over Turks (to subordinate and incorporate the conquered people, to prevent the substitution of a new ruling family) were no longer urgent, and the system changed. The disapproval of the *devşirme* class was unhelpful, even obstructive, and their advice was carefully scrutinised and usually discarded.

---

[24] This partial delegitimation of outsiders was paralleled by the exclusion from the *tımar kanunnamesi* of anyone but the sons of timar-holders, even though many other groups regularly gained timars, such as men at arms, retainers of officials, provincial military forces, and men from auxiliary military groups; their omission reinforced the sense that timars should be awarded only to sons of previous timar-holders, although that was never practised; *Kavânîn-i Âl-i Osman*, 64-66; Darling, '*Nasîhatnâmeler,* 193-226; eadem, '*Nasîhatnâmeler II*, 3-35.

[25] *Kavânîn-i yeniçeriyân*, ed. Akgündüz, 145 #84.

[26] Ibid., 211 #437.

[27] Ibid., 145 #84-85, 151-52 #104, 157 #121,173 #217.

[28] Ibid., 152 #105.

[29] Ibid., 240 #590, 253 #649.

[30] Ibid., 145 #84, 252 #643, 156 #114.

[31] Ibid., 152 #104; 155 #111.

[32] Ibid., 157 #123.

In official registers such as salary registers, the origins of Janissaries are indicated by descriptive terms or by place-names and patronymics. The *mühimme* registers for the period between 1558 and 1570 contain numerous orders regarding Janissary assignments, salaries, promotions, crimes, and punishments, but they show little interest in the Janissaries' origins, usually not even indicating whether a Janissary is from the *devşirme* or the son of a Muslim. The word *ecnebi* is used only in connection with timar-holders, castle garrisons, or villages.[35] *Mühimme* register 82 (1616-1617), covering the last year of Ahmed I's reign, may be seen as a measuring stick for the condition of the Janissary corps in the decade after the composition of the *kanunname*. The orders concerning Janissaries in this volume, which similarly ignore their origins, cover only two topics. One is people pretending to be Janissaries or *acemi oğlan*s (Janissary apprentices), which would allow them to carry guns, pay no taxes, and be immune to local punishment for crimes. The other is the estates of deceased Janissaries, indicating both the existence of Janissaries' families and their prosperous economic condition. In this volume the word *ecnebi* does not appear at all, and outsiders do not appear as a problem. Since the subsequent advice works still complain about them, they have clearly not disappeared; therefore, the absence of orders against them can be interpreted as indicating that their presence was not an 'important affair', which amounted to an unofficial acceptance of their enlistment in the corps.[36] The absence of discussion about the Janissaries' roles cannot mean they had no roles to play; rather, it probably indicates that their tasks were not considered remarkable enough to be worthy of notice in the "registers of important affairs"; they had become routinised.

---

[33] L. T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden 1996).

[34] It may also be that the *devşirme* simply could not supply enough men: H. İnalcık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 288.

[35] *3 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.966-968/1558-1560)*, *Özet ve Transkripsiyon* (Ankara 1993), no entries; *5 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.973/1565-1566)*, *Özet ve İndeks* (Ankara1994), #202, #223, #256, #1229; *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, #18, #1185, #1458; *7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, #40, #91, #323, #341, #541, #974, #1066, #1937;*12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri,* #439, #601.

Two Disagreeable Books of Advice: Kitâb-ı müstetâb *and Koçi Bey's* Risale

The failure of the Polish campaign of 1621, attributed to the lacklustre performance of the Janissaries, called the *kanunname*'s validity into question only 15 years after its compilation. The *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, written for Osman II (1618-1622), expressed harsh opposition to measures that the *kanunname* took in its stride or condemned more mildly.[37] The anonymous author was probably a *devşirme* recruit, educated in the palace school.[38] His *nasihatname* exhibits a much stronger attachment to the old, proper ways of doing things than does the *kanunname*, which is only to be expected from an author defending himself and his group and looking for scapegoats towards whom criticism might be deflected. The book harks back to the mythical days of Osman Gazi (1299-1326?), when Sultans governed with justice and in accordance with sharia and *kanun*, the Sultan's orders were in force throughout the Seven Climes, and what they conquered they held. This idealistic portrait of the past took no account of defeats, setbacks, or the fragmentation of the Empire by Timur, nor did it envisage the *kanun* as something the Sultans enacted over time and that had for centuries existed in somewhat uneasy relation to the sharia. Like so many other Ottoman literary works, the book creates an ideal image of the Empire's past against which to set the inadequate present.[39] The description of the current time must be regarded as equally unrealistic: everything is wrong, nothing is right; all officials are unjust and corrupt, all peasants oppressed, all the military rebellious, and as a result, the order of the world is overturned and the foundations of the dynasty are crumbling. The actual facts, that the world continued on and the dynasty remained in power, are irrelevant to this lament, which stresses the seriousness of the situation and the blamelessness of the *devşirme* element. "The first distortion to appear was outsiders mixing in the *kul taifesi*."[40]

The common understanding is that this work was written in the aftermath of the Polish campaign of 1621 to critique the Janissaries' failures. The book does not mention the Polish campaign, but if it was written for that purpose, it was not a critique of the Janissaries but a defence of the 'real' Janissaries against the failures of the interlopers and a critique of the high officials who accepted bribes and allowed imposters and ignoramuses to infest the military corps. It did not provide useful suggestions for reform but played on the reader's emotions, twisting the heartstrings on behalf of the *devşirme* recruits and against the newcomers. As we know, Osman II was not taken in by this ploy, and decided to eliminate the Empire's dependence on the Janissaries, *devşirme* or not, a plan which did not succeed. Nevertheless, recruitment through the *devşirme* was all but abandoned, becoming less frequent throughout the seventeenth century in favour of the recruitment of Muslims with, apparently, little or no attention to ethnicity. *Mühimme* register 83, covering the years 1626-1628, contains few sultanic orders, reflecting the relative incapacity of the neurotic Mustafa I (1622-1623) and the child Murad IV (1623-1640), and those few are concerned only with assigning and paying the Janissaries garrisoning the forts on the Danube.[41] The quarrel over their origins was not treated as an important affair of the Empire, and the concerns of the writers of advice literature were marginalised.

---

[36] *82 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1026-1027/1617-1618) <Özet – Transkripsiyon – İndeks ve Tıpkıbasım>* (Ankara 2000).

[37] Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, 24.

[38] Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair kaynaklar*, xx.

[39] See the literature on the Ottoman trope of decline: D. A. Howard, 'Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of "Decline" of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of Asian History,* 22 (1988), 52-77; H. Ferguson, 'Genres of Power: Constructing a Discourse of Decline in Ottoman *Nasihatname*', *OA*, 35 (2010), 81-116.

[40] *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, in Y. Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair kaynaklar*, 2.

The *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* begins with two chapters dealing with the award of timars and *dirlik*s to outsiders and the granting of offices and salary increases in return for bribes, in which the Janissaries are included only by implication. In the third chapter, it directly addresses the problems of the Janissary corps. The author gives a recipe for producing what the author calls a healthy *kul taifesi* by describing in detail the career of a *devşirme* boy, including the process of collecting boys through the *devşirme*, their assignment to different career paths according to appearance and ability, and their promotion through a series of offices up to the level of vizier, which was supposed to allow deserving candidates to become viziers knowledgeable about the whole Empire and all the ranks of service.[42] Rather than the definitions of the *kanunname*, the *nasihatname* focuses on the life cycle of the candidates. The detailed descriptions of the sufferings of those learning to be Janissaries sound like personal experience, and so it should not be surprising that the author resents the award of salaries and promotions to those who had not spent "many years cold and enduring a master, their hearts bleeding" and encountering "beatings in the palaces, distress, fatigue, and imprisonment".[43] According to him, the less successful had career paths of their own which purportedly could also lead to the top offices.[44] In reality, men from the bottom ranks did not gain the highest offices, but it was comforting to think that they could.

But now, complains the author, outsiders have entered the *ocak*s, doubling and tripling the number of soldiers; salaries have increased, and the former pay scales are not being adhered to.[45] The reason for the salary increase was, of course, monetary inflation, but it is represented as a great transgression. If this is what the author meant by his phrase "destruction of the old customs", then perhaps their destruction was worthwhile. Scholars rejecting the declensionist narrative acknowledge that the expansion of the Janissary corps was affected by a number of factors, including the military revolution, the stabilisation and garrisoning of the Empire's borders, unrest in the provinces and the garrisoning of cities, and the monetarisation of the economy; additional contributing factors must have been the greater unification of this vast empire, better integration of the provinces, the expansion of the government's reach, and the increased bureaucratisation of its operations, all of which generated more paperwork, a need for more managers and messengers, and for enhanced security provisions. The *mühimme* registers of the time pay more attention to inspecting, paying, and addressing the needs of Janissaries than to regulating entry into the corps (although a significant number of orders still deal with the problem of people pretending to be Janissaries).

---

[41] *83 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (H.1036-1037/1626-1628) <Özet – Transkripsiyon – İndeks ve Tıpkıbasım>* (Ankara 2001).

[42] *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, ed. Yücel, 6.

[43] Ibid., 7, 8.

[44] Ibid., 7.

[45] For discussions of the effect of growing commercialisation and monetisation on Ottoman organization and political thought see Ferguson, 'Genres of Power', and Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*.

The author also complains that since places in the corps could be purchased with money, people with no prior service could become fully-fledged Janissaries and from there be promoted to other offices.[46] This author does not seem to be bothered by the corps of *ağa çırağı*, *ferzend-i sipahi*, or *ferzend-i çavuş*, but by the entry and promotion of men with no background at all in the Janissary corps. This phenomenon was not even in evidence when the *kanunname* was written, but by 1621 it had become the foremost problem in the advice writer's eyes. The difficulties he adduces are the ignorance of the purchasers of office, who do not understand the Empire's problems or know what orders to give, and the drain on the treasury (which he persists in calling "the *beytü'l-mal* of the Muslims", for an obvious propaganda effect) from the growth in salaries. The granting of positions without supervision from the centre, which used to occur only on the actual battlefield in the presence of the men's commanding officers, now takes place over the whole time from the departure from Istanbul to the army's return to the city, allowing the award of offices without any demonstration of military prowess, and by this means (he says) all sorts of unqualified people enter the corps.[47] The *mühimme* registers of this period, in contrast, make no distinction between different types of Janissary recruits, which could easily have been done had the state had a reason to do so. This suggests that the anxiety about outsiders was not pervasive but was confined to men of *devşirme* origin, several of whom wrote advice works in a futile effort to hold back the tide of change.

The *nasihatname* defines *kanun* in a different way from the *kanunname*, pairing *kanun* and sharia in a way that makes adherence to the *kanun* the political equivalent of submission to God.[48] This idea appears earlier, in Mustafa Ali: "to obey [the Sultan's] orders should be equal to worship and to performing a religious duty."[49] Rather than something made by living Sultans, in these texts *kanun*, like sharia, is eternal in the heavens. According to the ancient law, income covers expenses; this is not a law that a Sultan can decree.[50] *Kanun* in this view is no longer a regulation to be obeyed or disobeyed, retained or altered; instead, it embodies the ideal order of the world, to be loyally conformed to or rebelled against, with consequences for the cosmic order.[51] Several times the author states: "Thus, in this way the ancient law was enforced and by this means the world was ordered and regularised."[52] But now, "The *kul taifesi* has left its old ways . . . The *ocak* of Hacı Bektaş has left the ancient law."[53] According to this author, "It is because the *kanun* of the House of Osman has been broken and the innovation of *sipahi* and *silahdar* and then Janissary agha going on campaign with the viziers has existed. It is because of this that we have had two wars with Iran and Europe, and that in Anatolia the Celalis have arisen and villages are ruined and income does not meet expenses and money had to be drawn from the Inner Treasury, and still salaries remained unpaid, and there are not enough soldiers fit for campaign."[54] *Kanun* in the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* is the magic mirror; when it is broken all the ills of the world pour forth. The *kanunname*, in contrast, even though it idealises a particular moment in the history of Janissary development, and, like the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, embodies a competition between the men of the *devşirme* and Janissaries of other origins, presents a view of *kanun* that belongs to the real world.

---

[46] *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, ed. Yücel, 8-10, 13-14.

[47] Ibid., 3-4.

[48] For the corollary, the aversion to innovation, see Ferguson, 'Genres of Power', 99. On the relationship between *kanun* and sharia in the Ottoman Empire, see G. Burak, 'The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Post-Mongol Context of the Ottoman Adoption of a School of Law', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 55.3 (2013), 579-602; idem, 'Between the *Kānūn* of Qāytbāy and Ottoman *Yasaq*: A Note on the Ottomans' Dynastic Law', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 26.1 (2015), 1-23; idem, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2012)

In the advice writings of Koçi Bey, the view of the *kanun* and the *kul taifesi* as guaranteeing the order of the world already sounds like a hackneyed trope, even though he wrote his first *Risale* for Murad IV only nine years after the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*. Koçi Bey was a *devşirme* recruit employed in the palace all his life, and he may have been surrounded by people in government repeating that idea over and over as they promoted their own interests. He had much the same complaints as the author of the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, including the expansion of the corps, the growth in salary payments, and the entry of outsiders, "upstarts, those who said 'there is profit here'", city boys, and peasants.[55] In order to be convincing, he provides from the *müşaherehorân* registers the numbers of personnel in all the salaried corps of the palace: military, scribal, and craft, omitting only the harem. According to these figures, between 1574 and 1630, the salaried staff tripled in size from 36,153 to 92,206, with the biggest growth in the *müteferrika*, *çavuş*, *kapıcı*, Six Bölüks (palace cavalry), and Janissary corps.[56] In an era of rapid inflation and monetary instability this was certainly cause for concern for financial reasons, but it was not the overturning of the world order that he proclaimed it to be. Like the author of the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, he also complains about those who entered the corps without training. Some office-holders, he says, sell their offices to outsiders, saying they are their relatives; *veledeş* ('his son') thus became the term for an outsider holding a sinecure. Moreover, he states, 5,000-6,000 of these men have titles and receive pay but do not work and do not go on campaign.[57] He attributes this development to Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha allowing outsiders into the *bölük*s and Koca Sinan Pasha allowing them into the garrisons in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Others cite different dates and events, and it becomes clear that the process of attribution is not a historical one that seeks a real culprit, but a myth-making one defining the good guys and the bad guys in Ottoman factional contestation.[58] The *devşirme*, like the timar system, has become an element in the ideal *kanun*-regulated state, compared with which the real state can only appear as a sordid disaster calling for immediate and drastic remedial action.

---

[49] Mustafa Ali, *Counsel for Sultans*, 20.

[50] *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, ed. Yücel, 14.

[51] On the political/cosmic order see H. T. Karateke and M. Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden 2005); Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*.

[52] E.g., *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, ed. Yücel, 3, 7.

[53] Ibid., 4, 10.

[54] Ibid., 17.

[55] Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey risalesi*, ed. Y. Kurt (Ankara 1994), 12.

[56] Ibid., 41-42.

On the following page, Koçi Bey tells a story of origins that differs from this and also from the tale in the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*. Here he claims that the first outsiders to enter the Janissary corps were the firefighters, who in 1582 under Ferhad Ağa were all granted the status of Janissaries.[59] After that, courtiers and boon companions (*nedim*s and *mukarreb*s) entered under his auspices as well and were placed in a separate troop, later named the agha's apprentices, *ağa çırağı*.[60] Subsequently, the *ferzend-i sipahi* were created, and then the innovation of *becayiş*, place-switching, arose, until finally city boys, Turks, gypsies, Persians, Kurds, foreigners, Laz, Yürüks, muleteers, cameleers, porters, syrup-sellers, brigands, pickpockets, and other sorts of people could hold office or become Janissaries. As a result, he thinks, they dominate the state, and rebel, and they no longer fear the Sultan.[61] To reform the Janissary corps, he offers recommendations as unrealistic as his plan to restore the timar army. He wants to cancel the innovations to the Six Bölüks and promote Janissaries to the vacancies once every seven years. The new troops should be eliminated, officers should be kept in the same positions for seven-eight years, and only men from the *devşirme* (and the *kuloğlu*s!) should be recruited.[62] Along with the creation of permanent governorships and a hereditary timar-holding class, this is a recipe for stagnation, not for reform. The advice was not followed; in fact, the practices decried by the advice-writers were, or resulted from, the decisions of the state.[63] Government policy moved in the direction of discontinuing the *devşirme*, which was performed only infrequently after the early seventeenth century. Although Osman II was not successful in eliminating the Janissaries, subsequent Sultans completely altered their character, creating a corps somewhat like the one Osman had planned, drawn from the Anatolian Turkish population and other groups rather than the *devşirme*.

---

[57] Ibid., 42-43.

[58] Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha and Koca Sinan Pasha were enemies and rivals. Özdemiroğlu in 1584 became the first Circassian Grand Vizier, thus breaking a hundred-year string of Balkan Grand Viziers, plus a few Turks. Circassians became more frequent under Mehmed IV (1648-1687); E. Fetvaci, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington 2013), 242; E. Radušev, 'The Ottoman Ruling Nomenclature in the 16th-17th Centuries (Monopoly of the "Devşirmes" – First and Second Stages)', *Bulgarian Historical Review* 3-4 (1988), 68-71.

[59] *Koçi Bey risalesi*, 44. The usual story tells it the other way around, that the Janissaries were employed to fight fires; see, e.g., *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, 105 #125.

[60] Ibid., 45. The *ağa çırağı*, according to Uzunçarşılı, was established by Bayezid II in the late fifteenth century: İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, 2 vols (Ankara 1943; repr. 1984), 162-171.

[61] Ibid., 31-32, 40. *Becayiş* already appears as a term for transfers in a register of 1580, BOA MAD 7168.

[62] Ibid., 71.

Some Authors with One Foot on the Ground

The disapproval of the authors above had virtually no effect on the shape of Janissary recruitment. The units which were the subject of contention remained in place, and by the reign of Murad IV, Aziz Efendi in his *Kanunname-i sultanî* describes the *ağa çırağı* and *ferzend-i sipahi* as having become acceptable, although he does not mention a *kanun*.[64] He blames their creation for the increase in Janissary numbers and what he calls the destruction of their ancient customs and the invasion of the Sultan's palace by "low, undesirable types and city boys".[65] Nevertheless, he says, the entry of these people into the system in the era of Murad III was "capable of being borne" (that is, it did not in actual fact destroy the corps, although it changed some of its practices) because these new recruits were required to work as *acemi oğlan*s for a number of years and were only accepted into the regular regiments after receiving sufficient training and, presumably, becoming socialised in the Janissary outlook. According to Aziz Efendi, the entry of real outsiders into the corps without prior service or training began only in 1623, after the execution of Osman II.[66] Aziz is wrong about that, however, since the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* had already complained about them in 1621.[67] Why would he contradict the earlier work in this way, unless he was trying to exonerate the older outsiders for the defeat in Poland, for which the author of the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* had blamed them so harshly?[68] We perhaps see here an echo of the conflicting factions in the Ottoman administration, contending over where to draw the line of acceptability for the non-*devşirme* recruits.[69]

---

[63] R. A. Abou-El-Haj, 'The Nature of the Ottoman State in the Latter Part of the XVIIth Century', in A. Tietze (ed.), *Habsburgisch-osmanische Beziehungen*, (Vienna 1985), 181.

[64] Aziz Efendi, *Kanûn-nâme-i sultânî li `Azîz Efendi, Aziz Efendi's Book of Sultanic Laws and Regulations: An Agenda for Reform by a Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Statesman*, ed. R. Murphey, Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures 9 (Cambridge, MA 1985), 6. Nevertheless, he wanted them abolished, from which it can be deduced that they had never been legitimated by *kanun*; ibid., 10.

[65] Ibid., 6.

[66] Ibid., 7.

[67] *Kitâb-ı müstetâb*, ed. Yücel, 8-10, 13-14.

[68] Did these authors not read each other's work? Perhaps they did not, and the phrases that sound as if they were copied from one another represent instead a common oral culture of abuse of outsiders that was current among the *devşirme* recruits and palace society.

[69] The intimate court factions of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries have begun

Aziz Efendi, writing in 1632-1633, was not of *devşirme* origin but a scribe, probably in the *divan*, with access to imperial orders and registers.[70] Like the *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* and the *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân*, his work was written in the aftermath of a military failure for a young Sultan in need of advice. And like his predecessors, Murad IV appears to have disregarded this particular bit of unsolicited advice.[71] We hear much about his reform of the timar system but little or nothing of a reform of the Janissaries. Godfrey Goodwin describes two *devşirme*s carried out in 1637 and 1638, which in his eyes amounted to a reform.[72] The second of these is attested by Naima, but he does not imply that it was part of a reform; rather, its purpose was to replace 5,000 *acemi oğlan*s who had graduated from the palace school and gardens to go on the Baghdad campaign of 1637.[73] Other historians do not mention a Janissary reform in this period, and for that there may have been a political reason. The Janissaries were the main prop for the power of Kösem, the *Valide Sultan* who exercised power intermittently from her husband's death in 1617 until her own death in 1651. She would not have favoured any reduction of Janissary numbers, salaries, or privileges that risked the loss of their support. Murad IV, as her son, may well have been guided in his Janissary policy by his mother's interests, and indeed, they may have been his own as well.

Koçi Bey (?) composed a second treatise in very simple language for the newly enthroned Sultan İbrahim (1640-1648), but at the same time an anonymous author, perhaps aspiring to rival him, wrote another treatise on how the good order of the Ottoman army and society had been broken.[74] This work, *Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve Menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn*, was written for the reforming Grand Vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha (1639-1644), apparently by someone close to him, hypothetically a bureaucrat with a non-Turkish background (judging by the mistakes in his Turkish).[75] His book is supposed

---

to be studied: Fetvaci, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court*; G. Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-17) and His Immediate Predecessors', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2010. Patronage and factionalism, however, spread widely throughout the ruling class, in the provinces as well as at the capital: D. Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany 1996); J. Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis* (Cambridge 1997); M. Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics and the Ulema Household* (Basingstoke 2014). Grasping its effects, and understanding what happened with the appointment of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, demands detailed investigation of the social networks among both the greater and the lesser elites, including social network analysis of the chronicles, the tax records, and literary and ulema circles, as well as attention to the circulation and activities of provincial elites and the appointment and salary registers.

[70] Aziz Efendi, *Kanûn-nâme-i sultânî*, vii.

[71] "The author has again made bold to importune your majesty with his effrontery", ibid., 4.

[72] G. Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (London 1994), 35. There are no references for these descriptions.

[73] Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, ed. M. İpşirli (Ankara 2007), 2:859, 881.

[74] Anonymous, *Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn*, in Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair kaynaklar*, 91-141 + text.

[75] Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair kaynaklar*, 62.

to have provided advice for the Vizier's reforms, but the part on the Janissaries seems somewhat frivolous. For example, after a forthright disquisition about what Janissaries ought to wear, its main complaint is that young and bribable *yayabaşı*s, at the behest of some great men (whose factions they probably belonged to, although the book does not say so) were being sent in place of old and upright *yayabaşı*s to head the *devşirme*. Seeing this, peasants would sell their fields in order to raise the money to bribe these officials not to take their sons. The peasants then had no homes and emigrated from their registered locations, to the detriment of the tax revenue.[76] In actuality, such an event must have been exceedingly rare, especially in an era when the frequency of the *devşirme* was rapidly decreasing. If this is the worst the author can find to say about the Janissaries, things had apparently improved considerably since Koçi Bey's treatise was written. While the book's world view and concept of social structure are largely the same as those of the other *nasihatname*s, it apparently did not share their pessimism, since it has been analysed as demanding change in the laws and it specifically separated *kanun* from religious obligation.[77] The bureaucrat author seems here to be distancing himself from the *devşirme* point of view represented by Koçi Bey.

By this time the Janissaries had many functions in addition to fighting, and their number had increased accordingly, along with that of other salaried staff, such as scribes and ulema. In order to balance the budget, Kemankeş Kara Mustafa did cut the number of Janissaries back to its 1574 level, but this policy was reversed after his death, suggesting that these men may not have been as useless as the advice works make them sound. In *mühimme* register 90 (1646/47), which contains orders sent primarily to the provinces soon after Kara Mustafa's death, Janissaries are most often found in an administrative capacity, petitioning the Porte on behalf of officials or residents in various parts of the Empire and reporting crimes. A number of entries show Janissaries solving crimes, enforcing laws, and escorting ambassadors, and one Janissary in this register acts as a moneylender.[78] In Istanbul, where they have been studied most intensively, the Janissaries' roles in supplying the palace and the corps itself had led them into occupations that also supplied the city with food, fuel, and raw materials.[79] They were increasingly active in tax collection, credit, and moneylending.[80] As their economic activities multiplied, they developed associations with more and more guilds; by the mid-seventeenth century about half the guilds that had cases in the Istanbul court registers had military associations; examples are the *kebab*-sellers, *boza*-makers, tanners, metalworkers, candle-makers, butchers, coffee-house owners, and barbers.[81] Janissaries took up similar occupations throughout the Empire where they were stationed as fortress garrisons in the cities or on the frontiers. As they adopted civilian pursuits, civilians (many in the same occupations) acquired Janissary status, which gave them protection and freed them from taxation. Janissaries obtained economic monopolies, especially in the provinces, which provided most of their wealth and gave them a certain autonomy from the state and its representatives.[82]

---

[76] *Kitâbu mesâlih*, ed. Yücel, 98-100.

[77] K. İnan, 'Remembering the Good Old Days: The Ottoman *Nasihatname* [Advice Letters] Literature of the 17th Century', in A. Gémes, F. Peyrou, and I. Xydopoulos (eds), *Institutional Change and Stability: Conflicts, Transitions and Values* (Pisa 2009), 120.

[78] *Mühimme 90* (7 out of 22 entries); see entries 64, 74, 75, 96, 128, 141, 157, 219, 264, 268, 271, 330, 334, 366, 370, 389, 421, 423, 433, 439, 492. There is one complaint of Janissaries being taxed, one of a Janissary oppressing the peasants, and one of a Janissary being arrested. Two Janissaries are robbed, one is almost killed by bandits, and one has a merchant father who is killed and robbed. One entry concerns people pretending to be Janissaries. One Janissary is married with a son, and two die leaving estates. In the first half of the seventeenth century, about half the Janissaries of Istanbul were married; G. Yılmaz Diko, 'Blurred Boundaries between Soldiers and Civilians: Artisan Janissaries in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', in S. Faroqhi (ed.), *Bread from the Lion's Mouth: Artisans Struggling for a Livelihood in Ottoman Cities* (New York 2015), 175-193.

In terms of imperial policy, the main problem with the Janissaries at this point was not their identity or fitness for battle but the financial difficulty of paying their salaries. This is in fact the only complaint that Kâtip Çelebi makes about the Janissaries in his 1653 treatise, *Düstûrü'l-amel li-ıslahi'l-halel*.[83] Like phlegm in the body, he says, the military is necessary for the health of the state, but too much of it indicates some sickness or imbalance of the humours. He gives the following list of figures for the salaried military forces (mainly the Janissaries and palace cavalry); these differ somewhat from Koçi Bey's figures but sound equally horrifying.

DATE	NUMBER OF TROOPS	TOTAL OF SALARIES
970/1562	41,479	1223 *yük* of *akçe*s
974/1566	48,316	1264 ”
997/1588-89	64,425	1782 ”
1004/1595	81,870	2512 ”
1018/1609	91,202	3800 ”
Osman & Mustafa	100,000	?
Murad IV	59,257 (Janissaries 30,000+)	2631 ”
	(under Mehmed, Bayram, and Kara Mustafa Pashas)	

---

[79] Yılmaz, 'The Economic and Social Roles of the Janissaries', 197-200.

[80] Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, 169; Yılmaz, 'The Economic and Social Roles of the Janissaries', 208-243.

[81] E. Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden 2004), 139.

[82] E. Kostopoulou, 'Cretan Janissaries in the Ottoman Army, 1750-1826', a review of *The Social, Administrative, Economic, and Political Dimensions of the Ottoman Army: Cretan Janissaries, 1750-1826* (in Greek), by Y. Spyropoulos, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Crete, 2014, http://www.dissertationreviews.org/archives/12097, accessed 25 October 2015. See also Spyropoulos' contribution in the present volume.

[83] Kâtip Çelebi, *Bozuklukların düzeltilmesinde tutulacak yollar (düstûru'l-amel li-ıslahi'l-halel)*, trans. A. Can (Ankara 1982), 26-27.

The treasury, the empty stomach of the body politic, was unable to meet so large an expenditure, said Kâtip Çelebi, and the Empire needed a "man of the sword" who could reduce the toll of salaries and corruption by force. Köprülü Mehmed Pasha (1656-1661) took this literally; when he came to power, he is supposed to have dismissed or executed 10,000 of the elite, replacing them with his own followers. In this way he seems to have gained control of the ballooning expenditures and created an entirely new set of conditions among the military elite, to which the political literature of the second half of the seventeenth century responded.

Conclusion

On the issue of the Janissaries, the *nasihatname*s written by men of the *devşirme* take the most extreme position, vociferously demanding the elimination of all Janissaries who were not, like themselves, *devşirme* recruits or sons of *devşirme* recruits. The *kanunname* takes the same position, and its author belongs to the same group, but by virtue of its genre and its early date it is more moderate in tone. The *nasihatname*s authored by men of other origins take intermediate positions: Aziz Efendi, a bureaucrat, recommends elimination of the outsiders but recognises that they are both more acceptable and less pernicious than other writers have said, while the scribal author and Kâtip Çelebi have few complaints beyond the expense of their salaries. For the *mühimme* registers, however, the question of Janissary origins is a complete non-issue; governmental edicts on the Janissaries are concerned with their assignments, their salaries, their discipline, and their well-being. When discussing individuals, these edicts never mention how they became Janissaries or who their fathers were.

The issue of outsiders in the Janissary corps, to which the advice writers devoted so much anguished rhetoric, was never treated as problematic in actual state policy. As Kafadar put it, "the administrations of Selim II (r.1566-74) and Murad III (r.1574-95) chose to be more flexible on the incorporation of new elements into the standing army".[84] The Sultans themselves ordered the enlistment of men outside the *devşirme*, and their officials created the additional units to which outsiders belonged. Reforms of the Janissary corps had to do with reducing the cost of their salaries for the treasury rather than discharging Janissaries on the basis of their origins or eliminating the new recruitment methods. Indeed, it was the old recruitment method, the *devşirme*, that was eliminated, and as Yılmaz argues, this must have been a conscious policy adopted to control the elite as much as to deal with conditions of the early seventeenth century.[85]

---

[84] C. Kafadar, 'Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman Istanbul: Rebels without a Cause?' *IJTS,* 13.1-2 (2007), 116.

[85] Yılmaz, 'Becoming a *Devşirme*', 130; she discusses a mistrust of the *devşirme* that arose owing to their rebellions, which may have contributed to their defensiveness. Radušev notes that the curtailment of the *devşirme* coincides with an escalation of conversions to Islam and wonders if the cause of the conversions is partly Balkan men not wanting to lose their opportunity for upward mobility; Radušev, 'The Ottoman Ruling Nomenclature', 66.

It struck hardest at those who complained the loudest. The rhetoric of the few *devşirme* recruits who remained grew more shrill as they saw their numbers diminish and their advice ignored. We can hardly consider their complaints as representing the mainstream of Ottoman political thought. It was the actions of the government, about which no advice works or even *kanunname*s were written, that truly represent Ottoman political thought at this juncture. This cannot be discovered by reading only what is commonly considered political literature; the *nasihatname*s are no shortcut to the political thought of this period.

Treated as representing a minority view, however, these works, in conjunction with other sources, do provide insight into issues of contention among the elites and the terms on which their battles were fought out. If they were not manuals of political thought, the *nasihatname*s nonetheless represent a political position. The question then arises, did their authors speak for a consistent minority faction, or did they re-combine in different groupings over different issues? Comparing the writers' positions on different questions may allow us to see the extent to which their alliances shifted or remained stable. Bringing their works into dialogue with other forms of literature—chronicles, laws, registers, poetry—will assist in the identification of genre-specific and period-specific features, as well as further alliances among the elite, or the conditions with which changes in state institutions can be associated. If the *nasihatname*s represent minority views, we need to identify ways to discern the dominant political views, since literary arguments for them seem to be absent. Moreover, the writing of a *nasihatname* was itself a political act, and that act must be situated in the political context of the moment when it occurred, and surrounding acts by others must be identified.

Armed with this knowledge, we can return to the chronicles and *mühimme* registers and reassess the decisions and actions recorded there to uncover the concepts behind the actual political directions taken by the Empire. The majority view in Ottoman political thought was apparently that the *devşirme* was unnecessary, that the Janissaries were useful for many purposes other than fighting, and that the benefits of intensifying patronage outweighed the disadvantages. The state in which these positions made sense was not the declining state depicted in the *nasihatname*s but a state that was becoming less of a military machine and was experiencing economic and social change and even growth.

As several scholars have pointed out, the anxiety of the *devşirme* men arose from a shift towards a commercialised and monetarised society, with its consequences for men's relations to each other and to the state. The analysis in the advice literature attributes these changes to the personal ethics of the individuals involved or to specific conditions in Ottoman institutions, but they were part of a global transformation that had similar effects in Europe and China. The study of Ottoman political economy in a comparative context will greatly illuminate the cultural manifestations of this shift; by the same token, greater attention to the actual political culture and not just the complaints of a few will further illuminate the economic and social consequences of the commercialisation of society. And what were the effects of each country's experts thinking that the problem lay within their own country alone? The study of the Ottoman *nasihatname*s as symptomatic of social changes undesired by some can thus contribute to the understanding of the intellectual responses to the ‘seventeenth-century crisis’ on a larger scale. At the same time, uncovering the ideas that actually guided the state will radically change our assessment of Ottoman politics in this period.

“AND THE QUESTION OF LANDS IS VERY CONFUSING”:
BİRGİVÎ MEHMED EFENDI (D. 981/1573)
ON LAND TENURE AND TAXATION

Katharina Ivanyi*

The legal status of land ownership and taxation was a topic of heated debate among Ottoman ulema of the early modern period. This paper will focus on Birgivî Mehmed Efendi’s discussion of the question of lands in *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya*, a popular manual of exhortation (*wa‘ẓ*) and advice (*naṣīḥa*).[1] One of the most vociferous conservative dissidents in the negotiation of Islamic orthodoxy of the sixteenth century, Birgivî was involved in a number of debates concerning questions of great political, ethical and socio-economic import. These included the debate over the so-called cash *waqf*, the question of whether or not Muslims should receive payment for the performance of communal duties, the relative status of imperial law vis-à-vis the sharia, and so on.[2]

The fact that the question of land ownership and taxation would feature in a manual of popular ethics, devoted to the cultivation of personal piety in everyday life, is significant. Indeed, as this paper will argue, for Birgivî the cultivation of a pious self, which included the eradication of vices such as anger, envy, and arrogance, was intimately connected to issues of larger economic and political concern. Since the believer was not isolated from the world at large, he had to understand the implications of his economic relations—in the widest sense of the word—for salvation or damnation after death, respectively. In fact, it was not only individual virtue, but societal virtue that mattered. The question of state revenues, including the legal status of land ownership, was one of the most fundamental issues when it came to the establishment of societal virtue to begin with. Indeed, it could not be ignored. Just as in the case of the cultivation of individual virtues, such as forbearance, temperance, or generosity, the point of departure in Birgivî's discussion in economic matters was personal obligation. Thus, it was not so much the case of a move from 'private' to 'public' that we witness in Birgivî's discussion, but rather a question of the adherence to the laws of God, as understood by man, through the process of *fiqh*. The five *aḥkām* of Islamic Law and the proper interpretation and understanding of the situation at hand (*ʿilm al-ḥāl*) were thus central to the establishment of societal virtue.

---

* Independent scholar.

[1] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya wa‘l-sīra al-aḥmadiyya*, ed. A. S. ʿAlī (Cairo 1937). For a detailed discussion of the work and secondary literature, see K. Ivanyi, ‘Virtue, Piety and the Law: a study of Birgivī Meḥmed Efendī’s *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya*’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2012.

[2] For the cash *waqf*, see J. E. Mandaville, ‘Usurious Piety: The Cash Waqf Controversy in the Ottoman Empire’, *IJMES*, 10 (1979), 289-308. For an excellent recent appraisal of the debates relating to the question of imperial *kanun* vs. the sharia and the development of Hanafi legal discourse in the early modern Ottoman Empire more generally, see G. Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law* (Cambridge 2015). For some of the other debates, see Ivanyi, ‘Virtue, Piety and the Law’, 31-32 and 48-63.

As Colin Imber and others have argued, Ebussuud's tenure as *şeyhülislam* saw the radical re-interpretation (in legal terms) and practical systematization of what was a patchy and complex field of administration.[3] Indeed, Snježana Buzov has convincingly shown that it was following Grand Vizier İbrahim Pasha's (d. 942/1536) failed attempt to 'purify' the *kanun* of its un-Islamic characteristics that Ebussuud embarked upon his project of providing a harmonizing legal framework for the status and administration of lands under Ottoman dominion.[4] What Ebussuud did was to, in effect, justify many of the pre-existing, customary practices of the lands that had come under Ottoman rule in terms of Hanafi doctrine. According to Imber, "it was above all this redefinition which gained [Ebussuud] the reputation of having reconciled the *kanun* with the sharia."[5] Indeed, "his statements on Ottoman [land] tenure and taxation came to occupy a central position in the Ottoman legal canon."[6]

This was a thorn in Birgivî's side, since he considered Ebussuud's re-interpretation of the law on land tenure and taxation not only misguided, but actually contrary to the original intent of the sharia, as expressed by the earliest authorities. Indeed, Birgivî would proceed to contest Ebussuud's pronouncements regarding the status of land as passionately as he fought the cash *waqf*. In the last part of the *Ṭarīqa* we thus find a section on the question of land tenure and taxation that is worth investigating in some detail.[7]

---

[3] For a good introduction to Ebussuud's legal doctrines regarding Ottoman land, see C. Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud: The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Edinburgh 1997), 115-138; for post-classical Hanafi theories of the legal status of land, with particular reference to Mamluk and Ottoman Egypt, see B. Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent: The Peasants' Loss of Property Rights as Interpreted in the Hanafi Legal Literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (London 1988).

[4] For Pargalı İbrahim Pasha, also known in the sources as both *makbul* ("the favorite") and *maktul* ("the one who was executed"), see *İA*, s.v. 'İbrahim Paşa' (T. Gökbilgin), 908-915. For his H.936/1530 CE *kanunname* of the Bosnian *sancak*, as well as that of the Vlachs of Hersek, and the ultimate failure of his 'purge', see S. Buzov, 'The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers: The Role of Legal Discourse in the Change of Ottoman Imperial Culture', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2005, 46-75. For Ebussuud's preamble to the *kanunname* of Buda as well his fatwas on land questions (later compiled under the title *Kanun-ı Erazi*), see ibid., 82-100.

[5] Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud*, 51, and, in similar terms, p. 136.

[6] Ibid., 51.

[7] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 213-215. See also M. Mundy and R. Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London

Birgivî begins by stating that “the question of land (*amr al-arāḍī*) is very confusing (*mushawwash jiddan*) in our age.” This is, he says,

> “Because those who hold [land] (*aṣḥābahā*) act as if they were the actual owners (*mullāk*), in terms of selling, renting, cultivating, and so on; and they pay the [different forms of] *kharāj* to the military (*muqātila*) or other persons appointed by the Sultan (*mimman ‘ayyanahu al-sulṭān*). But if they sell [it], then the person appointed by the Sultan to collect the taxes takes part of the price. And if they die, and if they leave sons, only they inherit the land, to the exclusion of the rest of the heirs; and his debts are not demanded, nor are the bequests [of the one who had held the land] executed. Otherwise [if there are no sons], the person appointed by the Sultan sells the land.”[8]

According to classical Hanafi jurisprudence, ownership of land was originally vested in the individual, arising from a recognition by the *imām* of those who possessed lands at the time of the conquest.[9] The religious status of the owners at the time of conquest defined the nature of the tax that had to be paid: (i) *‘ushr* in the case of Muslims, (ii) *kharāj* in the case on non-Muslims. The status of *kharāj* lands remained fixed, however, even when the owners later converted to Islam or when the lands were sold to Muslims. Thus, from a relatively early stage, the initial connection between the legal status of the owner and land was severed.[10] Also, while Hanafi doctrine provided for the possibility of the ruler designating conquered land as *waqf* property or as property of the treasury, this was treated as an exception, rather than as the rule, as both Mundy and Johansen have pointed out.[11] The basic understanding was thus one of individual ownership, not ownership by the state.

Under the Mamluks, however (and possibly also in Central Asia, in a parallel development), a new principle was formulated in post-classical Hanafi legal theory which understood land ownership to be lodged in the treasury (*bayt al-māl*). The argument was that, while ownership had indeed originally been vested in the individual, over time, as the original owners and their descendants had died, the land gradually passed into the hands of the treasury.[12] Thus, a new strand of Hanafi jurisprudence, as represented in the works of Ibn al-Humam (d. 861/1457) and Ibn Qutlubugha (d. 879/1474), for example, came to see state ownership of land as the norm, rather than individual ownership.[13] In

---

2007), 17-18. Mundy and Saumarez Smith have translated and analyzed large parts of this section and I am greatly indebted to their efforts. The translation offered here is my own.

[8] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 213.

[9] See Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property,* 11, and Ö. L. Barkan, ‘Mülk topraklar ve sultanların temlik hakkı’, in the posthumously published collection of his essays, *Türkiye’de toprak meselesi* (Istanbul 1980), 231-247.

[10] Cf. Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 12.

[11] Ibid. and B. Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent*, 18.

[12] See B. Johansen on the ‘death’ of the *kharāj*-payer, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent*, 82-85.

[13] Opening up another potentially important avenue in the study of the development of Hanafi doctrine, Mundy and Saumarez Smith argue (on the basis of *al-Fatāwā al-tātārkhāniyya*) that

this scheme, the right to cultivate lands was delegated by the ruler to the cultivators, in various kinds of arrangements, with middle-men administrators, usually military tax-farmers, assigned the duty of collecting taxes.

Ottoman administrative practice seems to have followed this basic understanding of treasury ownership from the beginning. Thus, upon conquest, the Ottomans would usually designate new lands as *mîrî* (i.e., 'of the ruler'), and confirm, by way of a *kanunname*, the tax arrangements that had previously governed the province in question. Thus, the feudal structure of much of the old system of land tenure in the Balkans, for example, remained unchanged, with taxes paid by the cultivators (i.e., the lessees) as before, while the land itself came to be designated as property of the treasury (*mîrî*).[14]

Indeed, as Halil İnalcık has argued, "[…] in the Balkan countries the peasantry in general had never been proprietors of the soil which they worked, and this state of things facilitated the Ottoman policy of establishing there a régime of state property. It simply replaced the old native aristocracy and the small Balkan states in the proprietorship of lands. Now a universal state succeeded to the feudal lords and the old practices persisted, it must be pointed out that in this way many instances of *bid'a*, that is innovation, slipped into the Ottoman legislation."[15] Birgivî could not have agreed more.

In fact, it was the changes brought about by the Balkan conquests, in particular, and later that of Hungary (with the *kanunname* of Buda, issued in 948/1541), which guided much of the legal debate. For while Ottoman administrative practice did recognize the category of *mülk* land (i.e., personal property that could be sold and bequeathed, as classical Hanafi doctrine envisioned), the great majority of Ottoman lands were understood to be *mîrî*, i.e., state lands (*arazi-i memleket*), belonging to the treasury.[16]

In Birgivî's view, this was the first fundamental aberration in the land tenure system as it pertained, although it is not one that he addresses in the above excerpt directly. Rather, he deals with the complicated and often contradictory legal consequences the doctrine of treasury ownership entailed for those who cultivated the lands. Since those

---

"there may have been a second Central Asian genealogy for this doctrine." See *Governing Property*, 240, fn. 8.

[14] For a very useful discussion (including an overview of some of the extensive literature) on the use of the term 'feudal'—much debated even in its European context—with regard to Ottoman history, see J. Matuz, 'The Nature and Stages of Ottoman Feudalism', *Asian and African Studies*, 16 (1982), 281-292.

[15] H. Inalcik, 'Land Problems in Turkish History', *The Muslim World*, 45, 3 (1955), 221.

[16] Different Ottoman jurists of the sixteenth century tried to justify or explain this new doctrine of state ownership in different ways. Kemalpaşazade, for instance, adopted a historical argument similar to the 'death-of-the-*kharāj*-payer' argument of Ibn al-Humam in Egypt, saying that the original presumption of individual ownership was superseded by historical events. Ebussuud, on the other hand, gives two main explanations for treasury ownership: (i) the 'Sawād argument', (ii) an argument on the basis of practicability and public interest. For both, see Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 15 and 242f., fn. 30. For the *malikâne divanî* as personal property in the sixteenth century (not to be confused with the *malikâne* of later centuries), see N. Beldiceanu, *Le timar dans l'État ottoman (début XIV^e-début XVI^e siècle)* (Wiesbaden 1980), 33.

who cultivated the land were not its owners, the *kharāj* could not actually be demanded of them. Furthermore, if they were not the actual owners, common legal transactions pertaining to property, such as 'sale', 'inheritance', or 'the right to pre-emption' could not apply either. Nonetheless, Birgivî complains, the lessees "act as if they were the actual owners", not only "in terms of selling, renting and cultivating", but also in that "they pay the *kharāj* […] to the military or other persons appointed by the Sultan".

According to the earlier Mamluk interpretations, what cultivators owed when land was owned by the treasury was not a tax, but rent (*ijāra*). This idea was taken up in modified form in the Ottoman context, too, as when Ebussuud first described the relationship between cultivators and the treasury as one of "defective rental" (*ijāra fāsida*).[17] However, the problem was that in order for a contract of rental to be valid according to the law, the duration of the lease had to be specified, which was not the case here.[18] Indeed, as opposed to Mamluk jurists, Ebussuud in his later years prefers to avoid the term *ijāra* altogether, as Mundy has shown, instead arguing that the relationship between the treasury and cultivators was one of "delegation" (Tr. *tefviz*, Ar. *tafwīḍ*) of the use-right or 'object utility' (*manfaʿa*) of the land, while the ownership (*raqaba*) remained with the treasury, much as in a rental agreement, but without the actual rental. At other points he also speaks of the relationship as a "loan" (Tr. *ariyet*, Ar. *ʿāriya*), or he explains the land to be "an object held in trust" (Tr. *vedia*, Ar. *wadīʿa*).[19]

In whichever way the relationship between cultivators and the treasury was conceived, there were two aspects of the Ottoman land system that would complicate any strictly Islamic appropriation (i.e., any straightforward justification in terms of Hanafi *fiqh*). First, there was the so-called *tapu* fee (*resm-i tapu*), which was a fee collected by administrators, generally *sipahi*s, whenever a new cultivator took over *mîrî* land (i.e., when land was passed on from an old cultivator to a new one).[20] Often interpreted as an 'entry-fee', it is what Birgivî refers to when he says that "if [those who hold the land] sell it, then the person appointed by the Sultan […] takes part of the price". No such arrangement could exist if the proper Hanafi terms of a rental contract (*ijāra*) were adhered to, nor indeed in the case of either a 'delegation' (*tafwīḍ*), a 'loan' (*ʿāriya*), or a 'deposition as a trust' (*wadʿ*). Indeed, Ottoman jurists before Birgivî, such as Kemalpaşazade, for instance, had already argued that the *tapu* fee could not be justified in terms of the sharia, but derived from imperial *kanun* alone. Ebussuud, however, argued that the fee was valid in Hanafi terms, representing an "advance on rent" (Tr. *ücret-i muaccele*, Ar. *ujra muʿajjala*).[21] Like the idea of a 'defective rent', this was an interpretation Birgivî was to vehemently reject.

---

[17] Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 16.

[18] Birgivî speaks of it in terms of *tawqīt*.

[19] Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 16.

[20] See *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Tapu' (S. Faroqhi), 209-210.

[21] See H. Inalcik, 'Islamization of Ottoman Laws on Land and Land Tax', in C. Fragner and K. Schwarz (ed.), *Festgabe an Josef Matuz: Osmanistik—Turkologie—Diplomatik* (Berlin 1992), 102.

The second aspect of the *tapu* system that was difficult to defend in terms of the sharia was the practice by which land conferred by *tapu* deed could only be inherited by sons (in some cases, brothers) of the deceased cultivator. This, of course, ran blatantly counter to sharia provisions of inheritance for both male and female heirs, including wives and daughters. Hence Birgivî's comment that "if they die, and if they leave male children, only they [i.e., the sons] inherit the land, to the exclusion of the rest of the heirs".

This was not the only thing unlawful according to the sharia, however. Indeed, Birgivî continues to lament that "his debts [i.e., the debts accrued by the deceased cultivator] are not demanded", either. For according to Hanafi *fiqh*, all of a deceased person's debts had to be paid before any property or possessions could be passed on to the heirs. This was not the case with *tapu* land, however, which—since it was understood as belonging to the treasury—was 'sold' on to new cultivators for usufruct if there were no male descendants of the previous cultivator to take over.

Birgivî embarks upon a detailed analysis and critique of the consequences of the *tapu* system in a discussion that, as Martha Mundy has argued, would "prove utterly damning for the legality of the Ottoman land regime".[22] Birgivî offers two possible approaches to the problem, as he saw it. First, he says, the issue could be tackled from the 'classical' point of view, which considered ownership of land to be vested in the individuals in whose 'hand' it actually was (i.e., those who cultivate it): "If we consider the question of actual possession (*fa-idhā iʿtabarnā bi-l-yad*)", he says, "we would say that the land is owned by the individual who has possession of it (*anna al-arḍ mulk li-dhī al-yad*), which means that it must be inherited by all of the heirs, after deduction of debts and bequests (*baʿd an tuqḍā minhā duyūnuhu wa-tunfadh waṣāyāhu*). To deprive [rightful heirs] other than sons, and to fail to honor [payment of debts and the execution of special bequests of the deceased] constitutes injustice (*ẓulm*). But if [only the male heirs] dispose of it, or those appointed by the Sultan, if no male children exist, this represents disposal of property by a third party [who has no right to dispose of it], the result of which is reprehensible (*khabīth*)."[23] Furthermore, "if the person appointed by the Sultan takes all or part of the price of sale of the land, it is unlawful (*ḥarām*)". That is to say, Birgivî explicitly says that the *tapu* fee, which was collected by the administrator when land deeds were transferred, was illegal.

After laying out the fundamental problems of the issue at hand in such a clear way, Birgivî next addresses the argument according to which individual ownership of land came to be replaced by state ownership. For even when the assumption of state ownership was conceded, many of the details of the system were still unlawful. "If we assume", Birgivî says, "that the lands are not owned by those who hold them (*anna al-arāḍī laysat bi-mamlūkat^{in} li-aṣḥābihā*), but that their ownership (*raqaba*) belongs to the treasury, as is the understanding in our age (*al-maʿhūd fī zamāninā*), and as our fathers and grandfathers knew it, that the Sultan, when he conquered a place, did not divide its lands among those entitled to take booty—this is permissible, because the *imām* can choose between dividing [the land among those entitled to booty] and keeping it for the Muslims until the Day of Resurrection, by stipulating a tax (*bi-waḍʿ kharāj*). Then those who are on it have the right to cultivate it (*wa-yakūn taṣarruf dhī al-yad fīhā*)."[24] Birgivî thus reiterates the classical doctrine that the ruler had the right to choose to either divide conquered lands among his army, or "keep it for the Muslims until the Day of Resurrection".

---

[22] Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 17.

[23] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 213.

"This", he says, "can happen in one of two ways […]: They are either considered as in the position of owners (*iqāmatuhum maqām al-mullāk*), in terms of cultivating and paying the *kharāj*; or [they pay] rent (*ijāra*) equal to the value of the *kharāj*, in which case what is taken from them is *kharāj* for the ruler, but rent for them. In either case, neither sale, gift, the right of pre-emption, the foundation of a *waqf*, inheritance, or the like are possible."[25] That is to say, the cultivators who 'hold' the land (i.e., in whose 'hands' it is) cannot sell it, bequeath it as a gift, endow it as *waqf*, or inherit it. This is because they are not the rightful owners; they just stand in the place of owners. They are like owners for cultivation and tax-paying purposes, but nothing more, since the state (or rather the treasury, to be more precise) is the true owner.

As for the second possible interpretation of the status of cultivators, namely as tenants who pay rent, Birgivî believes that "it is less in contradiction with the law and less harmful to people" than arguing that they are stand-in owners. While it should thus be preferred to the first option, he also stresses that it is "clear that the sale [of such land by them] is invalid (*bāṭil*), and the price paid a bribe (*rishwa*)".[26] That is to say, the 'sale' or transfer of state land from one cultivator to another (under the legal term 'sale') was not legally valid for Birgivî, nor was the *tapu* fee, which he argued constituted an illegal 'bribe'.

What was happening, on a practical level, was that cultivators would exchange lots of *mîrî* land between themselves according to sharia prescriptions of 'sale'. Indeed, as Mundy and Smith have argued, "there was a kind of market wherein cultivators exchanged their rights to lots and drew up contracts governing factors of production, such as ploughing, weeding and harvesting. Yet this was a market heavily conditioned by administrative control over permanent exchanges of lots, subject to a *tapu* fee extracted by the *tımarî*."[27] Thus, in order to transfer a given lot, for example, the incumbent cultivator, the *tımarî* administrator, and the person who was aspiring to secure the lot for himself composed a contract stipulating the 'sale' of the deed from the incumbent to the aspiring cultivator, with the *tapu* fee being paid to the *tımarî* for official recognition.

According to Suraiya Faroqhi, "conditions of holding a piece of land by *tapu* showed certain common features throughout the Ottoman Empire […] *Tapu*-held land consisted of fields, and was in principle leased to the cultivator in perpetuity, as long as the latter cultivated the land. Land left fallow for three years […] could be taken from the holder and turned over to another. According to the *kanunname* of Vize, it did not matter if the original holder of the land had been the one who had first brought it under cultivation; once the land was reassigned, he had lost all rights to it."[28]

---

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 19.

Even though Birgivî disgruntledly accepted the idea of state ownership and the assumption that cultivators could be interpreted as 'renters', he reiterates at several points in his discussion that he accepted this assumption only out of necessity and that there was "great corruption" in this. For while those who cultivated the lands were supposed to be considered 'renters' (i.e., as paying 'rent'—rather than 'tax'—in exchange for the right to cultivate), the *tapu* deeds that were drawn up in the exchange of lots were drafted in a language of 'sale'. "Rental", however, Birgivî argues, "cannot be contracted with the words denoting a sale (*al-ijāra lā tunʿaqid bi-lafẓ al-bayʿ*)".[29]

Meticulously seeking out the many inconsistencies and contradictions (from the point of view of Hanafi *fiqh*) in the arguments of those who supported the *tapu* system, Birgivî's discussion is long and detailed, and sometimes not devoid of inconsistent reasoning itself. For example, although he initially agreed (albeit disgruntledly) to interpret the money cultivators paid to the state as 'rent', he later focusses on the fact that it is "rent only from their point of view", not from "the point of view of the owner", i.e., the state, for which it is 'tax'. Thus, at some later point he reverts to saying that what they pay "is in fact a tax [...] not a true rent".[30] This lets him include a number of direct attacks on Ebussuud, whose classification of the relationship as one of "defective rent", he explicitly rejects as "very corrupt" (*fāsid jiddan*). The same verdict is meted out on Ebussuud's interpretation of the *tapu* fee as "an advance on rent".[31] Indeed, time and again, Birgivî will return to what he regarded as the clear illegitimacy of the *tapu* fee, in one instance even arguing that it would be more logical for the 'seller' to have to pay a fee rather than the 'buyer'.[32]

Finally, what preoccupied him most, apart from the *tapu* fee, was the fact that only direct male descendants could 'inherit' a *tapu* deed—a practice that ran directly counter to Islamic provisions on inheritance. With regard to this problem, in particular, however, Suraiya Faroqhi has pointed out that "in the course of time, the impact of *şer'î* rules of inheritance was felt to an increasing degree".[33] Indeed, from the late sixteenth century on

---

[28] Faroqhi, 'Tapu', 209.

[29] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 215. In fact, Mundy and Saumarez Smith have noted, with great perception, that "the legal vocabulary in which the rights of the cultivator were expressed was composed of the terms governing rights to office", not those governing personal property. Thus, "the devolution of the cultivator's plot from father to son followed the model of devolution of office". And while Ottoman *fiqh* treated the cultivator like a quasi-office-holder, social and ideological requirements necessitated the restriction of the category of 'office' to the elite, leading to confusion—as Birgivî rightly laments—when it came to the peasantry. See Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 19.

[30] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 215.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid: "Thus, if what is paid is considered as part of the tax, then the seller [i.e., the incumbent] should pay, not the buyer, what he received as part of the tax due."

[33] Faroqhi, 'Tapu', 210.

(and certainly so from the seventeenth), wives, daughters, and even mothers came to be included among those entitled to 'inherit' *tapu* deeds from a deceased cultivator. Despite significant regional variation in actual practice (in some provinces women were excluded up until the nineteenth century), there can be no doubt that it was pious legal criticism such as Birgivî's that must have contributed to this change.

With regard to the question of the designation of lands, too, criticisms like that of Birgivî gradually made themselves felt over the course of the next century. The Cretan *kanunname* of 1080/1670, for instance, has long been argued to represent a deliberate departure from Ebussuud's interpretation of the status of lands. More consciously in line with classical Hanafi legal theory, the Cretan *kanunname* rejected Ebussuud's interpretation of land as *mîrî* ('of the ruler'), instead adopting a concept of lands as private property on which tax was due in the form of *kharāj*. Considering the "possible connection between the land regime imposed on Crete and the Kadızadeli movement", as Molly Greene has argued, a century after Birgivî formulated his critique of the Ottoman land regime, his influence was clearly being felt.[34] Gilles Veinstein, too, believes that Kadızadeli influence must have played a significant role in the promulgation of the Cretan *kanunname*.[35]

The fact that Birgivî served as a direct inspiration for a number of active members of the Kadızadeli movement is undisputed. However, by the seventeenth century, he and his work had taken on somewhat of a life of their own, becoming the focus of contention between those of Kadızadeli leanings and their opponents. Irrespective of that, what is certain is that even in his own time, Birgivî was not the only one criticizing the Ottoman land regime for being "confusing" or not in agreement with the percepts of classical Hanafi *fiqh*. Mundy and Saumarez Smith, for instance, have found an anonymous fatwa, possibly dating from the era of Süleyman I, that is surprisingly similar to Birgivî's in its critique.[36] Indeed, four decades before Birgivî formulated his criticism of contemporary land practices in the *Ṭarīqa*, Pargalı İbrahim Pasha had already attempted to 'purify' the *kanun* by imposing, among other things, the *jizya* on Vlachs and Martoloses in the preamble to the Bosnian *kanunname*.[37] Thus, the ideas Birgivî expounded regarding the status of lands, the illegality of the *tapu* fee, and the restriction of 'inheritance' to male descendants only were clearly in the air at the time.

---

[34] M. Greene, 'An Islamic Experiment? Ottoman Land Policy on Crete', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 11 (1996), 61.

[35] G. Veinstein, 'Le législateur ottoman face à l'insularité: L'enseignement des Kânûnnâme', in N. Vatin and G. Veinstein (eds.), *Insularités ottomanes* (Paris 2004), 104. Veinstein explains this influence in terms of the connection between Vanî Efendi, the famous Kadızadeli preacher of the third (and last) wave of the movement, and Grand Vezier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. For a detailed discussion of the debate, see E. Kermeli, 'Caught in Between Faith and Cash: The Ottoman Land System of Crete, 1645-1670', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule, Crete, 1645-1840: Halcyon Days in Crete VI: a symposium held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 17-48.

[36] See Mundy and Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property*, 16 and 244, fn. 42.

[37] See Buzov, 'The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers', 50, and above, fn. 111.

In fact, pious conservative opposition to Ottoman legal and administrative practices was nothing new. Over half a century prior to Birgivî, for instance, we find Şehzade Korkud voicing severe criticism of what he regarded as the illicit nature of funds accumulated by the Ottoman *beytü'l-mal*.[38] Indeed, pious opposition to Ottoman fiscal and administrative policies often found itself at the very helm of the Ottoman religious hierarchy, as in the case of *şeyhülislam* Çivizade.[39] As in the case of the cash *waqf* (which was the main bone of contention between Çivizade and Ebussuud), Ebussuud's interpretations regarding the status of land did not go unchallenged either, and Birgivî was certainly not the only one to confront him.

Birgivî's call for a narrow interpretation of the law when it came to the question of land tenure shows the great gap he conceived between ideal and reality—a gap that needed to be overcome, or at least narrowed, for virtue to be established. As in the case of the cash *waqf*, or the problem of how to remunerate individuals for the performance of religious services on behalf of the community, Birgivî understood the land system of his day to be falling seriously short of the standards articulated in the classical texts of Hanafi *fiqh*.[40] Dissecting the inconsistencies and internal contradictions of everyday land practices (such as the exchange of lots between cultivators, payment of 'entrance' fees and so on), in mostly dispassionate legal language, Birgivî's discussion is successful in conveying the difficulties the Ottoman land system would have posed to the pious man in practical terms. Societal virtue, just like individual virtue, could only be established through correct practice, which in the case of land included the implementation of canonically valid taxes and the avoidance of innovation (*bid'a*) such as 'entrance fees'.

Indeed, the individual believer had to be on his guard not to implicate himself in unlawful practices and in general to "abstain from doubtful financial schemes (*al-shubuhāt al-māliyya*)", as Birgivî warns.[41] The connection between individual virtue and wider economic and social questions was clear. For the "uprightness of the body" (*qawām al-badan*) and "the orderliness of one's livelihood" (*intiẓām al-ma'āsh*) were both achieved, he reiterates, "by way of coins, grain and other things like it produced by the earth" (*bi-l-nuqūd wa-l-ḥubūb wa-naḥwihimā mimmā yakhruj min al-arḍ*).[42] The body, as the "pack animal" that carried man's virtue (*maṭīyat al-faḍā'il*) was thus intimately linked to the earth, the things produced by it, and the way these were put to use. Moreover, as with ritual practice, the rules governing the acquisition and expenditure of worldly wealth were clearly laid down by God's law. To make these rules as widely accessible as possible, as Birgivî saw it, to propagate right practice in the economic arena just as in the area of ritual practice, was thus an integral part of his overall project of *naṣīḥat al-muslimīn*. For "the *waqf* and the treasury", as Birgivî says, "when the conditions of the law are respected regarding the two, there is nothing better in terms of goodness. But when they are not respected, there is nothing worse in terms of evil."[43]

---

[38] See. C. Fleischer, 'From Şeyhzade [*sic.*] Korkud to Mustafa Âli: Cultural Origins of the Ottoman Nasihatname', in H. W. Lowry and R. S. Hattox (eds.), *IIIrd Congress on the Social and Economic History of Turkey* (Istanbul 1990), 67-77. The most detailed survey of the contents of Şehzade Korkud's *nasihatname* has been made by N. al-Tikriti, 'Şehzade Korkud (ca. 1468-1513) and the Articulation of Early 16th Century Ottoman Religious Identity', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2004, Chapter 5 ("Every soul tastes death"), 193-233.

[39] See Mandaville, 'Usurious Piety', 297-304.

[40] For the question of remuneration for the performance of religious services, see Ivanyi, 'Virtue, Piety and the Law', 31-32 and 258-262.

[41] Birgivī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 216.

[42] Ibid., 213.

---

[43] Ibid., 210.

POWER, PATRONAGE, AND CONFESSIONALISM:
OTTOMAN POLITICS THROUGH THE EYES OF A CRIMEAN SUFI, 1580-1593[†]

Derin TERZİOĞLU[*]

THERE IS A PARADOX INHERENT IN LATE MEDIEVAL and early modern Sufism:[1] even though its practitioners believed this world to be nothing but an apparition, and aspired to eschew it in their pursuit of divine reality, Sufi masters who had fully detached themselves from this world were also thought to be in possession of tremendous power in the here and now. Even if the rise of more powerful territorial empires – most notably, those of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals – reined in the political ambitions of the Sufis in the early modern era, charismatic Sufi leaders continued to use their spiritual authority and worldly connections to weigh in on a variety of political matters in the new imperial contexts also. Because of a narrow conceptualisation of early modern Ottoman politics as the affairs of an increasingly bureaucratised state, however, Ottomanists have paid only scant attention to the political roles of Sufis after the fifteenth century.[2]

[†] I dedicate this article to the memory of my dear friend Vangelis Kechriotis. He was a brilliant historian, a kind-hearted person, and a true embodiment of the Aristotelian idea of "man as a political animal".

[*] Boğaziçi University.

[1] The results of the present article are based on research funded by the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2015-2020)/ERC Grant Agreement 648498, 'The Fashioning of a Sunni Orthodoxy and the Entangled Histories of Confession-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th-17th centuries'. I wrote the final version of the article as a visiting researcher at the Institut für Islamwissenschaft at the Freie Universität in Fall 2016. I would like to thank Gudrun Krämer for having made this affiliation possible. I would also like to thank Denise Klein, Gülru Necipoğlu, Günhan Börekçi, Helen Pfeifer, Peter Campbell, and Tijana Krstić for reading over and offering comments on this article. Needless to say, I remain responsible for all remaining errors and deficiencies.

[2] On the Sufi input in Ottoman political thought in the sixteenth century, see H. Yılmaz, 'The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Reign of Süleymān the Lawgiver (1520-1566)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2005; B. Flemming, 'Ṣāḥib-ḳirān und Mahdī: Türkische Endzeiterwartungen im ersten Jahrzehnt der Regierung Süleymāns', in G. Kara (ed.), *Between the Danube and the Caucasus: Oriental Sources on the History of the Peoples of Central and Southeastern Europe* (Budapest 1987); eadem, 'Der *Ǧāmi' ül-Meknūnāt*: Eine Quelle 'Ālīs aus der Zeit Sultan Süleymāns', in H. R. Roemer and A. Noth

The present article aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of both the politics of Sufism and the practice of politics in the Ottoman Empire in the late sixteenth century through a contextual study of the collection of letters written by the Halveti sheikh İbrahim-i Kırımî (d. 1593) to Murad III (r. 1574-1595). This was a period when Sufis became especially prominent in Ottoman courtly politics thanks, in no small part, to the strong interest Murad III took in Sufism. In the earlier scholarship, Murad's infatuation with Sufism was linked with his purported lack of interest in politics and was mentioned among the factors that contributed to the onset of Ottoman 'decline' in his reign. Today, however, this approach no longer finds favour, as the decline paradigm has been rejected as a useful framework for understanding Ottoman history after the sixteenth century, and as religion and politics are no longer seen as having represented separate and competing spheres of activity in the early modern Ottoman world. Instead, the most recent study on the topic has argued that Murad turned to Sufism not to withdraw from politics, but to fashion himself as a ruler who combined in his person the highest spiritual *and* temporal authority as part of his efforts to transition to a more 'absolutist' mode of government.[3]

Curiously, however, even as Ottomanists have reconsidered the political dimensions of Murad's Sufi entanglements, they have paid little attention so far to the politics of the Sufis who attached themselves to his court.[4] This omission stems from a rather one-sided understanding of the relationship between the Ottoman Sultan and the Sufis in his court,

---

(eds), *Studien Zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients: Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag* (Leiden 1981), 79-92; C. Fleischer, 'The Lawgiver as Messiah: the Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleymân', in G. Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps, Actes du colloque de Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, 7-10 mars 1990* (Paris 1992), 159-179; idem, 'Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences: Prophecies at the Ottoman Court in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries', in M. Farhad and S. Bağcı (eds), *Falnama: the Book of Omens* (London 2009), 232-243; N. Clayer, 'Quand l'hagiographie se fait l'écho des dérèglements socio-politiques: le *Menâkıbnâme* de Münîrî Belgrâdî', in G. Veinstein (ed.), *Syncrétismes et hérésies dans l'Orient seldjoukide et ottoman (XIVe-XVIIIe siècle): Actes du Colloque du Collège de France octobre 2001* (Paris 2005), 363-381; for explorations of Sufi political thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see D. Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī (1618-1694)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999, 277-354; eadem, 'Sunna-Minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State: the *Naṣīḥatnāme* of Hasan Addressed to Murad IV', *ArchOtt*, 27 (2010), 241-342; M. Tabur, 'İsmail Hakkı Bursevi and the Politics of Balance', unpublished M.A. thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2011; and B. Tezcan's contribution in this volume.

[3] Ö. Felek, '(Re)creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murād III's Self-Fashioning', in Ö. Felek and A. D. Knysh (eds), *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* (Albany 2012), 249-272; eadem (ed.), *Kitābü'l-menāmāt: Sultan III. Murad'ın rüya mektupları* (Istanbul 2014).

[4] For a rare exception, see J. J. Curry "The Meeting of the Two Sultans": Three Sufi Mystics Negotiate with the Court of Murād III', in J. J. Curry and E. S. Ohlander (eds), *Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200-1800* (London and New York 2014), 223-242. See also A. Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective* (Abingdon 2017), Chap. 3, for a discussion of Sufi and scholarly perspectives on the Ottoman bureaucracy in this period.

not to mention the dynamics of court relations more generally. As the voluminous scholarship by early modern Europeanists has shown, the growing importance of royal courts as centres of power and patronage after the late sixteenth century did not necessarily bring about the eclipse of other power groups; rather, the royal courts became the new settings in which a variety of powerful individuals and groups strove to exert 'influence' over royal policy.[5] While Ottomanists have only recently begun to explore the politics of patronage, faction, and court, a number of pioneering studies have also demonstrated the significance of court factions in the making of Ottoman domestic, and even more so, foreign, policy in the second half of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.[6]

Even though the Sufis are yet to be integrated into the aforementioned scholarship, we know of at least one area of policy-making that was of direct relevance to them, and in which some Sufis began to have a greater say in the second half of the sixteenth century: namely, religious and, especially confessional, politics. Here I have in mind primarily the Ottoman promotion of Sunnism as the only acceptable form of Islam and the policies of Sunnitisation which were implemented by the state authorities, and secondarily, various steps undertaken to demarcate the confessional boundaries between Muslims, Jews, and Christians of various denominations living under Ottoman rule.[7] In this article, I use the term ‘confessionalism’ to highlight the new centrality of doctrinal and ritual conformity to social and political forms of belonging in the early modern era – a phenomenon that cut across boundaries of confession and state in a vast geography extending from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.[8]

---

[5] For key studies on court, faction, and patronage in early modern Europe, see S. Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York and Oxford 1986); R. Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford 1988); R. G. Asch and A. M. Birke (eds), *Politics, Patronage and the Nobility* (Oxford 1991); P. Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Regime France, 1720-1745* (London and New York 1996); M. Fantoni, *The Court in Europe* (Rome 2012); for a comparative perspective on royal courts, see J. Duindam, T. Artan and M. Kunt (eds), *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective* (Leiden and Boston 2011).

[6] For studies that explore the sixteenth-century Ottoman royal court from diverse perspectives, see İ. M. Kunt, 'Sultan, Dynasty and the State in the Ottoman Empire', *The Medieval History Journal*, 6 (2003), 217-230; idem, 'Turks in the Ottoman Imperial Palace', in J. Duindam, T. Artan and M. Kunt (eds), *Royal Courts*, 289-312; B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge 2010); G. Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Courts of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-17) and his Immediate Predecessors', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 2010; E. Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington and Indianapolis 2013). For studies on the importance of court factions for policy-making, see G. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford 2010), Chap. 4; E.S. Gürkan, 'Espionage in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 2012; idem, 'Fooling the Sultan: Information, Decision-Making and the Mediterranean Faction (1585-1587)', *OA*, 45 (2015), 57-96.

[7] On Ottoman Sunnism and Ottoman policies of Sunnitisation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see H. Sohrweide, 'Der Sieg der Safaviden in Persien und seine Rückwirkungen auf die Schiiten Anatoliens im 16. Jahrhundert', *Der Islam*, 41 (1965), 95-223; M. Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy: Competing Claims for Authority and Legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid Conflict', in H. T. Karateke, M. Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: the Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden 2005), 151-173; Nabil al-Tikriti, 'Kalam in the Service of State: Apostasy and the Defining of Ottoman Islamic Identity', in ibid., 131-149; D. Terzioğ-

Because Sufis were a rather heterogeneous group in their religious, social, as well as political orientations and affiliations, their experiences in the Ottoman age of confessionalism also varied substantially. In the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, it was mostly the antinomian Sufis with Alid tendencies and questionable political loyalties who tended to find themselves at the receiving end of a variety of punitive and disciplinary measures. Sufis who were, or who were perceived to be, sharia-abiding, on the other hand, largely preserved their place within the religious mainstream, and some of the Sufis in the second

---

lu, ‘How to Conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization: A Historiographical Discussion’, *Turcica* (2012-2013): 301-338. On the demarcation and reinforcement of boundaries between Muslims, Jews, and Christians in the early modern Ottoman Empire, see N. Al-Qattan, ‘Dhimmis in the Muslim Court: Legal Autonomy and Religious Discrimination’, *IJMES*, 31 (1999), 429-444; B. Tezcan, ‘Ethnicity, Race, Religion and Social Class: Ottoman Markers of Difference’, in C.Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London and New York 2012), 159-170; K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: the Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge 2008), 109-153.

[8] I prefer the term ‘confessionalism’ to ‘confessionalisation’, because it allows us to recognise the importance of confessional identities for early modern forms of social and political belonging without positing a strong causal link between confessional differentiation, state-building, and social disciplining. It seems to me that while the first phenomenon is broadly attested in different parts of the Eurasian world, the evidence for the second is rather patchy especially outside the German-speaking areas. While the literature on this debate is huge, for a sampling of some of the more important studies, see T. A. Brady, ‘Confessionalization – The Career of a Concept’, in J. M. Headly, H. J. Hillerbrand and A. J. Papalas (eds), *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700: Essays in Honor of Bodo Nischan* (Aldershot 2004), 1-20; U. Lotz-Heumann, ‘The Concept of ‘Confessionalization’: A Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute’, *Memoria y Civilización*, 4 (2001), 93-114; A. Pettegree, ‘Confessionalization in North Western Europe’, in J. Bahlcke and A. Strohmeyer (eds), *Konfessionalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa: Wirkungen des religiösen Wandels im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert in Staat, Gesellschaft und Kultur* (Stuttgart 1999), 105-120; R. C. Head, ‘Catholics and Protestants in Graubunden: Confessional Discipline and Confessional Identities without an Early Modern State?’ *German History*, 17 (1999), 321-345; P. Benedict, ‘Confessionalization in France? Critical Reflections and New Evidence’, in *The Fate and Fortunes of France's Huguenots, 1600-85* (Aldershot 2001), 309-325; T. M. Safley (ed.), *A Companion to Multiconfessionalism in the Early Modern World* (Leiden and Boston 2011). For discussions on the applicability of the paradigm of ‘confessionalization’ to the Ottoman context, see T. Krstić, ‘Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, 1 (2009), 35-63; eadem, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2011); Terzioğlu, ‘Where ‘*İlm-i Ḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization’, *Past and Present* 220 (2013), 79-114; eadem, ‘How to Conceptualize’; G. Burak, ‘Faith, Law and Empire in the Ottoman ‘Age of Confessionalization’ (Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries): the Case of ‘Renewal of Faith’’, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 28 (2013), 1-23.

category even began to lend their support to the campaigns of religious and moral indoctrination in the middle decades of the sixteenth century.[9] It was also these politically loyal and religiously conformist Sufis who benefited most from elite and royal patronage and who found new opportunities to shape public opinion, and even royal policy as mosque preachers, army sheikhs, and royal companions, during the reign of Murad III.

The Sufi writer whose letters to Murad III are examined in this article, İbrahim-i Kırımî, was also one of these politically-connected and confessionally-minded Sufis. Specifically, he belonged to the *Muslihuddin Nureddinzade* branch of the Halveti order, which was perhaps the most active of the 'Sunnitising' Sufi groups and which was especially well-represented in Istanbul and the European provinces of the Empire. While Kırımî himself hailed from Crimea and retained his ties to his land of origin in later years, he also spent most of his adult life in eastern Rumelia and Istanbul, where he built up for himself a wide social and political network while serving as Sufi sheikh, preacher, and, ultimately, royal companion.

Kırımî's letters to Murad III span the years 1580 to 1593, and provide fascinating insights into the religious and political issues that preoccupied a Sufi in court circles. These issues covered a wide range from the affairs of the ulema to the affairs of the Imperial Harem, and from state policies towards nonconformist Muslims living under Ottoman rule to military and diplomatic relations with Safavid Iran, Muscovy, and Poland-Lithuania. On most of these issues Kırımî articulated views that were strongly informed by the rampant Sunni confessionalism of the time, but which were nevertheless also quite distinctive, owing to his Sufi beliefs, personal ties, and group loyalties.

Despite their rich contents, however, Kırımî's letters have not yet received the critical attention that they deserve. In fact, Kırımî's name barely surfaces in Ottomanist scholarship, while his letters to Murad III have been widely (but erroneously) attributed to a more famous Sufi: the Celveti master Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî (d. 1628). Remarkably, this misattribution has not been corrected either by the numerous Hüdayî scholars, who have used the letters to add fanciful elements to this master's biography, or by Mustafa

---

[9] For a general treatment of the issue, see D. Terzioğlu, 'Sufis in the Age of State-Building and Confessionalization', in C. Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (Abingdon and New York 2012), 86-99; cf. R. Öngören, *Osmanlılar'da tasavvuf: Anadolu'da sûfîler, devlet ve ulemâ (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (Istanbul 2000); on Ottoman policies directed at Sufi groups deemed 'heretical', see A. Tietze, 'A Document on the Persecution of Sectarians in Early Seventeenth-century Istanbul', *Revue des études islamiques*, 60 (1992), 161-166; S. Faroqhi, *Der Bektaschi-Orden in Anatolien: vom späten fünzehnten Jahrhundert bis 1826* (Vienna 1981); A. Y. Ocak, *Osmanlı toplumunda zındıklar ve mülhidler (15.-17. yüzyıllar)* (Istanbul 1998), Z. Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman Empire: The Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age* (Birmingham 2012); A. Karakaya-Stump, *Vefailik, Bektaşilik, Kızılbaşlık: Alevi kaynaklarını, tarihini ve tarihyazımını yeniden düşünmek* (Istanbul 2016); on 'Sunnitizing' Sufis, see N. Clayer, *Mystiques, état et société: les Halvetis dans l'aire balkanique de la fin du XVe siècle à nos jours* (Leiden 1994); J. J. Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire: the Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1650* (Edinburgh 2010); and Terzioğlu, 'Sunna-Minded Sufi Preachers'.

Salim Güven, who prepared a modern Turkish transcription of the letters in his unpublished M.A. thesis.[10] Even the Ukrainian scholar Mykhaylo Yakubovych, who has recently published an informative article on another work by Kırımî, does not seem to be aware of his letters to Murad III.[11]

This article, then, represents essentially the first attempt to situate the letters of Kırımî in their proper historical context. In the first section of this article, I shall present the evidence for Kırımî's authorship of the letters, and provide a brief biographical sketch of the author. Readers who are willing to take me at my word can skip this section and proceed directly to the next two parts, in which I examine the letters (in dialogue with other sources from the period) to gain insight into Kırımî's politics. In the second section, my aim will be primarily to analyse Kırımî as a participant in Ottoman court politics. Close attention will be paid in this regard to his relations with the Ottoman Sultan as well as a number of other Ottoman and Crimean political players. The social, political, and cultural codes that informed these relations and the ways they are represented in the letters will also be analysed. Then, in the third part, I will examine the interplay between religion and politics, and between ideology and personal and group interests, in Kırımî's advice about which policies to follow towards 'heretics' and 'infidels'. The uses and limits of Sunni confessionalism will be a major focus of this discussion. Finally, I will conclude by considering some of the broader implications of the letters regarding Ottoman court and confessional politics and the place of Sufis in it at the turn of the sixteenth century.

The authorship of the letters: a correction

There is a simple reason why modern scholars have, until now, unanimously identified Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî as the author of the *Tezakir*, as the letters of Kırımî are known. While the author does not mention his name in the individual letters, in all of the 14 extant manuscript copies of the epistolary compilation, he is identified either by the copyist or by a later reader as Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî.[12] Before we review the textual evidence that suggests otherwise, it might be worth pointing out that the earliest extant manuscript copy of the *Tezakir* was made at least a century and a half after the original letters were written. We learn from a reader's note that prefaces one of the later copies that the original letters remained in the form of loose sheets in a chest in the Imperial Treasury until the reign of Mahmud I (1730-1753), and came to light only after this Sultan ordered all loose tracts (*resail*) and letters (*tezakir*) in the palace collections to be collected, rearranged, bound, and deposited in the library that was to be constructed adjacent to the recently rebuilt Fatih Mosque in 1749.[13]

---

[10] For the principal biographical studies which use the letters to reconstruct Hüdayî's life, see Z. Tezeren, *Seyyid Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî*, 2 vols (Istanbul 1984-1985), and K. Yılmaz, *Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî: Hayatı - Eserleri – Tarîkatı* (Istanbul 1990); for a modern Turkish transcription of the letters, see M. S. Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî'nin mektupları', unpublished M.A. thesis, Marmara University, 1992.

[11] M. Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise from 16th century: *Mawāhib al-Raḥman fī bayān Marātib al-Akwān* by İbrāhīm el-Qirīmī', *OA*, 45 (2015), 137-160.

[12] Thirteen of these manuscript copies are located in diverse public libraries in Turkey: Hacı Selim Ağa Ktp. (hereafter HSAK), Hüdayi 251 (copied in H.1225/1810); HSAK, Hüdayi 260 (copied in H.1271/1854); HSAK, Hüdayi 277; Süleymaniye Ktp. (hereafter SK), Fatih 2572 (copied before 1748-1749); SK, Hacı Mahmud Efendi 2508; SK, Kasidecizade 323 (copied in H.1288/1871); SK, Yazma Bağışlar 213/1; Arkeoloji Müzesi 141/1, 1b-84b (copied in H.1273/1856); Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Ktp. (hereafter TSMK), Hazine 269 (copied in H.1265/1849); Bayezid Ktp. 3497 (copied in H.1252/1837); İstanbul Üniversitesi Ktp. (hereafter İÜK), T.Y. 447 (copied in H.1241/1825); İÜK, T.Y. 6444 (copied in H.1285/1868); İÜK, T.Y. 9927. The fourteenth manuscript copy, which belongs to a private collection, forms the ba-

While the whereabouts of the original letters remain unknown, it is almost certain that MS. Fatih 2572 is the earliest extant manuscript copy of the original letters. The manuscript in question was previously part of the manuscript collection of Mahmud I at the aforementioned library, and appears under the title *Kitab-ı Tezakire-i Hüdayî Mahmud Efendi* in the library's first catalogue, prepared in H.1162 (1748/9).[14] Despite this entry, neither the individual letters compiled in MS. Fatih 2572 nor the manuscript as a whole bears a title that identifies the text as the work of Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî. The latter's name is mentioned only in the final notes appended to folio 303b by a later reader. This suggests that the original letters also bore no trace of their author's name, and that the letters were attributed to Hüdayî only after this compilation was made, though no later than the mid eighteenth century.

As we shall presently see, the attribution to Hüdayî is actually not supported by textual evidence, and can only be explained by the fact that when the letters were rediscovered in the mid eighteenth century, memory of their actual author had faded, while Hüdayî was remembered as the most famous of the Sufis to have hobnobbed with the Ottoman Sultans a century and a half earlier. Once the letters were connected with Hüdayî, moreover, this, in effect, created a ready readership for the letters, as Hüdayî enthusiasts, many of them Celvetis, rushed to make their own copies of the letters as a relic from this beloved Sufi.[15] This dynamic seems to have been especially evident in the nineteenth century, when most of the dated manuscript copies were made.

---

sis of the modern Turkish transcription made by Güven. Even though this manuscript copy was copied at the relatively late date of H.1258/1842, it actually closely follows the earliest extant manuscript copy, which is SK, Fatih 2572 (Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 33-36). I have myself checked all thirteen of the publicly available manuscript copies, but will make references here to Güven's transcription, as it is more readily accessible to modern readers than the manuscript versions. References will be given to the manuscript copies only when they contain an additional remark not found in Güven's transcription.

[13] [Kırımî], *Tezakir,* İÜK, T.Y. 447, ib-iva.

[14] *Defter-i Atîk-i Sultan Mahmud-ı Evvel*, SK, Yazma Bağışlar 242, 36b. The same manuscript is mentioned with the same attribution in a later catalogue, dated H.1284/1867: *Fatih Cami'i Kütüphanesinin Kadim Defteri*, SK, YB 252, 29b.

[15] For instance, Seyyid Salih Mehmed, who made the abovementioned note about how the letters were originally discovered in the reign of Mahmud I, also relates how he learned of the letters' existence from the Celveti sheikh Ali Efendi in his hometown of Ilbasan in Albania and how he remained restless until he obtained a copy for himself ([Kırımî], *Tezakir,* İÜK, T.Y. 447, iiia-iva.). Quite possibly, the three manuscript copies of the letters preserved in the library of the

Because Hüdayî was known to have been particularly close to Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617), in several of the manuscript copies, the addressee of the letters is identified as Ahmed I.[16] In other manuscripts, however, no such identification can be found, while at least one Ottoman reader was careful enough to note the references to the Hijri year of 1001 (1592/93) and to conclude on this basis that the letter(s) must have been written in the reign of Murad III.[17] Interestingly, even though modern scholars have found further evidence linking the letters to Murad III, they have not entirely given up on the idea that at least some of the letters could have been addressed to Ahmed I.[18]

In fact, however, there is overwhelming textual evidence that the *Tezakir* brings together letters addressed to one Sultan, and that is Murad III. Apart from the references to the new millennium, Murad is mentioned by name in at least three other letters.[19] In numerous other letters, we find references to well-known officials who served under the same Sultan, including the royal tutor Hoca Sadeddin (d. 1599), the *şeyhülislam*s Bostanzade Mehmed (d. 1598) and Bayramzade Zekeriyya (d. 1593), Düğmecizade, the Chief Justice of Rumelia, Hızır Pasha, the Beglerbegi of Rumelia, and Hâfız Ahmed Pasha, the Governor-General of Cyprus, and later, Egypt.[20] The letters also contain references to various events that took place during the reign of Murad III, including Ferhad Pasha's

---

Hüdayî lodge in Üsküdar were also reproduced by such Celveti devotees. In fact, it is explicitly stated in the colophon of one of these manuscripts that a certain Hâfız Halil İbrahim of Üsküdar made this copy and then gave it as a gift to the Hüdayî lodge in the same neighbourhood ([Kırımî], *Tezakir,* HSAK, Hüdayî 251, ib).

[16] [Kırımî], *Tezakir,* HSAK, Hüdayî 251, ib; SK, Hacı Mahmud Efendi 2508, 1a; TSMK, H.K. 269.

[17] [Kırımî], *Tezakir,* Bayezid Ktp. 3497, ia.

[18] See Bayezid Ktp. 3497, ia for a reader's note which reads: "The ninth folio contains congratulations on account of the arrival of the year H.1001/1592, which shows that the text should date not from the time of Sultan Ahmed but from the time of Murad III". Among the more recent scholars to address the topic, Güven has argued that while many letters can indeed be shown to have been addressed to Murad III, the possibility cannot be discarded that others were addressed to Ahmed I, and even Mehmed III, Osman II, and Murad IV, the latter also being rulers who ruled when Hüdayî was alive. The only piece of evidence that Güven presents in support of his argument about Ahmed I being the addressee is a letter in which the author interprets a dream of the Sultan about a meeting with the Prophet, and mentions the mystical properties of the letters in the name 'Ahmed'. However, since Ahmed was also one of the names of the Prophet Muhammad and since the said passage discusses the esoteric meaning of the name Ahmed to draw a link between the sighting of the Prophet (Ahmad) and the sighting of God, literally the One (*Ahad*), I am inclined to read the name here as a reference to the Prophet, and not to the Sultan. ('Çeşitli yönleriyle', 37-39; for the letter referred, see 139-140.) In any case, whether one finds Güven's reading or mine to be more convincing, the fact remains that the letters contain no other reference to Ahmed I or to events in his reign.

[19] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 56, 177, 186.

[20] For Kırımî's remarks on Hızır Pasha, who served served as *Beglerbegi* of Rumelia between Şaban H.997/June-July 1589 and Rebiü'l-ahir H.999/January-February 1591, see ibid., 57-59; for the beginning and end of the tenure of Hızır Pasha as *Beglerbegi* of Rumelia, see Selanikî, *Tarih,* 222-223, 231. References to the specific passages discussing the other names and events will be given when discussing them in greater detail below.

entry into Tabriz (1586), Âdil Giray's capture and execution by the Safavids (1579), and the banishment of the royal astronomer Takiyüddin (1580). These references, together with the thematic continuities and cross-references between the different letters, indicate that the vast majority of the letters were written during the reign of Murad III.

There is nevertheless one clear exception to this rule, and it is a letter addressed to Selim II (r. 1566-1574). The main subject of this letter (or at least the part that is extant) is the *Şeyhülislam* Ebussuud (d. 1574), who is referred to as "deceased" and who is praised as a high-ranking official who served "Islam, Muslims and the padishah of Islam", a scholar who authored a highly commendable Qur'an commentary during "the serene days of your reign" (*eyyam-ı saltanat-i selimelerinizde*) [note the pun on the name of Selim, meaning 'serene'] and a Sufi-like figure who is "possessed of God-fearingness (*takva*) and gnosis and who is the son of a Sufi sheikh (*şeyhzade*), who brings together in his person the sharia, the Sufi path (*tarikat*) and divine truth (*hakikat*) and who has reached the state of sainthood [literally, the state of one who can be asked for succour (*istimdad makamındadur*)]".[21] The letter must have been written sometime in the second half of the year 1574, after the death of Ebussuud in August and before the death of Selim in December. Interestingly, the letter lacks a proper ending, and a marginal note made by the copyist in the earliest extant manuscript copy, MS. Fatih 1572, and which reads "I have copied this letter until this point", suggests that it was left incomplete on purpose.[22]

Even though it is theoretically possible that the *Tezakir* brings together the letters of more than one Sufi, there is compelling evidence that all the letters addressed to Murad III were penned by the same writer. The letters begin and end in the same stylised manner, make use of the same turns of speech, evoke the same concepts, evince interest in the same types of issues, and contain many autobiographical passages which were clearly the product of the same pen. Below are the facts that we can ascertain about the author in the light of these autobiographical passages:

1) The author completed his education during the reigns of Süleyman I and Selim II**.**[23]
2) He became a disciple of Muslihuddin Nureddinzade (d. 1573), a Halveti sheikh at the dervish lodge of Küçük Ayasofya in Istanbul, and lived in the same lodge two years before the Szigetvar campaign (1565-1566).[24]
3) At an unspecified point, the author moved to Babaeski (called Baba in the text), where he lived until shortly after the "martyrdom" of his beloved patron, the Crimean *kalga*, Âdil Giray, in Safavid captivity (1579). While in Babaeski, the author also clashed with some of the local Muslims, whom he characterises as Shiites (*rafizî*), *Kızılbaş*, and *Simavnî*s (i.e., followers of the teachings of Sheikh Bedreddin).[25]
4) Apart from Babaeski, the author was also familiar with and had contacts in a number of other places around the Black Sea and the region of Thrace, including Bender

---

[21] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 35-36.

[22] [Kırımî], *Tezakir,* SK, Fatih 2572, 53a.

[23] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 80.

[24] Ibid., 80, 167-168.

[25] Ibid., 58-59, 61.

(Bendery) in present-day Moldova, Akkirman (Bilhorod-Dnistrovskyi), and Kili (Kiliya) in present-day Ukraine, Dobruja in present-day Romania, Zağra (Stara Zagora) in present day Bulgaria and Yanya (Ioannina) in present-day Greece.

5) The author visited Istanbul twice during the reign of Murad III. It was already during his first visit (which he dates in one passage to H.985/1577-1578 and in another to circa 1579) that he established a close relationship with the royal tutor Hoca Sadeddin (d. 1599), who tried unsuccessfully to persuade him to stay in Istanbul.[26] He then came to Istanbul for a second time, "seven years ago", and this time he ended up staying there, when Sadeddin and several other high dignitaries once again insisted that he stay. Since the author wrote this note shortly after the establishment of peace with the Safavids (1590), his second arrival at Istanbul must have taken place around 1583.[27]
6) Five months into his second stay in Istanbul, the royal tutor, the Agha of the Porte (*kapu ağası*), and Hafız Ahmed Ağa/Pasha, who was "previously chief storekeeper (*kilercibaşı*) and currently governor of Cyprus", helped secure the author the position of sheikh at the lodge of Küçük Ayasofya, which had fallen vacant upon the death of the previous sheikh.[28]
7) The author accompanied the Ottoman army led by Ferhad Pasha when it entered Tabriz (H.994/1586).[29]
8) The author was still sheikh in the Küçük Ayasofya lodge at the time of his writing. He also writes of having been appointed preacher in the Sultan Mehmed Mosque "this year".[30]
9) One of the author's works was about the twelve modes of spirituality that are exhibited by the spiritually "perfect" in twelve regions of the world, which are identified as follows: 1) the Black Sea, Crimea and what is around them; 2) Istanbul; 3) Antioch; 4) Cairo; 5) the tomb of Moses and its environs; 6) Jerusalem and its environs; 7) the tomb of Abraham and Mecca; 8) Medina; 9) Damascus; 10) Basra and Baghdad; 11) Qazvin and its environs, and 12) Bukhara and its environs. The author wrote this work in instalments. He had already completed the part on the five manners when he came to Istanbul seven years previously, but he finished the rest of the work around the time peace was concluded between the Ottomans and the Safavids following the long-drawn-out wars in Transcaucasia (i.e., circa 1590).[31]
10) Sometime during his residence in Istanbul the author also completed the commentary that his master Nureddinzade had begun to write on the *Nusus* of Sadreddin-i Konevî and presented it to Murad III.[32]

---

[26] Ibid., 16-19.

[27] Ibid., 80.

[28] Ibid., 150-151.

[29] Ibid., 59-61.

[30] Ibid., 119-120, 132, 167-168.

[31] Ibid., 80-81; see also 105-106 for a letter that was composed prior to the completion of the work, and which mentions that three chapters still remained to be written.

[32] Ibid., 80.

11) The author also mentions various other tracts that he had recently completed and submitted or was about to submit to the Sultan for his approval. These consist of a) a tract titled *Merâtib-i kulûb ve menâzil-i ʻizzeti'l-guyub*;[33] b) a tract on the staff of Moses;[34] c) a tract about the esoteric meaning of the the Qur'anic verse al-Qalam 68/1;[35] d) a tract on the night of *Kadir*;[36] e) a tract which was a reworking of one of his sermons about the esoteric meaning of the stories of Zachariah, John (Yahya), Mary, and Jesus,[37] and f) a tract titled *Feth-i medain ve keşf-i menazil u meyadin*, which was inspired by one of his dreams.[38]

When we compare these snippets of biographical information with the facts that we can ascertain about Hüdayî based on his certified writings and the entries about him in the earliest biographical sources, a number of incongruities become apparent. To begin with, items 3, 4, and 9 above indicate that the author of the *Tezakir* was a man with strong connections to both Crimea and Rumelia, whereas no such strong connections can be documented for Hüdayî.[39] Secondly, neither Hüdayî nor any of his contemporary and near-contemporary biographers mentions his having attached himself to Nureddinzade in any period of his life.[40] Even if we presumed, as have several modern scholars, that Nureddinzade had been one of several sheikhs with whom Hüdayî had associated prior to his attachment to the Celveti sheikh Üftade, we could hardly explain how he could omit mention of his final and beloved master and instead identify himself as the disciple of Nureddinzade as late as 1592-1593. Likewise, there is no indication in any of Hüdayî's own writings or in those of his contemporary and near contemporary biographers that he lived for any period in Babaeski, or that he was sheikh in the Küçük Ayasofya lodge in Istanbul. Nor do we find among his numerous works any tracts that bear a resemblance to the texts the author of the *Tezakir* mentions as his own.

---

[33] Ibid., 167-168.

[34] Ibid., 10.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid., 130-131.

[37] Ibid., 135.

[38] Ibid., 62, 88, 100.

[39] Hüdayî had spent the early years of his life in Koçhisar and Sivrihisar in Central Anatolia; then as an aspiring scholar and junior member of the judiciary he had lived briefly in Edirne (H.978/1570-1571), Damascus, and Cairo, before moving to Bursa in H.981/1573, where he attached himself to the Celveti master Üftade and devoted himself entirely to Sufism; and finally, as a Sufi sheikh in his own right, he had first spent a few years back in the region of his birthplace as well as Bursa and then settled and spent the rest of his life in Üsküdar on the Asian side of Istanbul.

[40] Tezeren, *Seyyid Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî*, I:19-21; and Yılmaz, *Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî,* 49-52. The most reliable source of information about Hüdayî is, of course, his own writings, particularly the diary that he kept in Arabic during the period of his spiritual training, *Kalimāt ʻan tibr al-masbūk al-mushtamilu ʻalā mā jarā bayna hādhā al-faḳīr wa ḥaḍrat al-shaykh fī athnā al-sulūk* (Words of gold which were exchanged between this poor one and the venerable master during initiation), also known as *Wāḳıʻāt* (Occurrences), and another autobiographical piece, in Turkish, which brings together the dream visions that he had after the completion of his training and which is known by the title *Tecelliyât* (Manifestations). Important complementary information on his life can be found in the biographical dictionaries of Atayî and Muhibbî as well as in the commentary written by Abdulgani Nablusî on the *Tecelliyât* and in the *Silsilename-i Celvetî* by İsmail Hakkı Bursevî. For a brief but nonetheless reliable piece that reconstructs Hüdayî's life on the basis of these sources and not the *Tezakir,* see I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Hüdā'ī', EI^2.

By contrast, the autobiographical information provided in the letters matches remarkably well the information which we can gather about İbrahim-i Kırımî from his own writings as well as from several Ottoman and Tatar biographical and historical sources.[41] The full name of this Sufi was Sheikh İbrahim b. Hak Muhammed el-Kırımî, but he was also popularly known as the 'Tatar Sheikh'. As his epithets indicate, Kırımî was a Tatar by descent, and a Crimean by birth, though his father, Hak Muhammed Efendi, had originally come to Crimea from Desht-i Qipchak, namely the steppes north of the Black Sea.[42] Kırımî is presumed to have received his early education in Bahçesaray, where, according to the Tatar historian Gulnara Abdullaeva, he also made the acquaintance of the Crimean Khan Devlet I Giray (r. 1555-1577).[43]

Eventually, however, Kırımî left Crimea for the lands of Rum, where his path seems to have crossed that of the 'Sunnitising' Sufis of Rumelia. Both the Ottoman and Tatar sources report that once in Istanbul, Kırımî attached himself to the Halveti master Muslihuddin Nureddinzade at the lodge of Küçük Ayasofya, who, it will be remembered, is none other than the master mentioned in the letters. In his *Mawāhib al-raḥmān fī bayān marātib al-akwān* (The Gifts of the Merciful in the Exposition of the Cosmic Hierarchy), Kırımî further relates that he also spent some time in Sofia, where he stayed in the lodge of his master's master, Sofyalı Bâlî (d. 1552).[44]

The eighteenth-century Tatar historian Seyyid Mehmed Rıza reports that after a while Kırımî returned to Crimea, where he stayed until certain unjust and unlawful incidents that he witnessed led him to return to the lands of Rum.[45] Yakubovych dates Kırımî's second sojourn in Crimea to between the death of his master Nureddinzade in 1573 and the death of his patron Devlet Giray in 1577.[46] If Yakubovych's reconstruction of this period of Kırımî's life is correct, it might have been in this period that the Sufi sheikh developed an attachment to Âdil Giray, who was one of the eight sons of Devlet Giray and who became *kalga* (the second highest rank after the khan) after the latter's death. While neither the Ottoman nor the Tatar sources mention Kırımî's link with Âdil Giray specifically, a particularly important Ottoman writer, Münirî-i Belgradî, who was a disciple of Nureddinzade and a contemporary of Kırımî's, confirms that the Crimean Sufi spent some time in Babaeski, where, it will be remembered, the author of the *Tezakir* mentions having been when he learned of the news of Âdil Giray's death. Since Babaeski was a region with a significant Crimean Tatar presence since at least the late fifteenth century, it is quite likely that it was once again his Crimean connections that had led Kırımî there.[47] Interestingly, the Tatar historian Seyyid Mehmed Rıza also mentions Kırımî's sojourn in "the mountain of Baba", which he attributes to the latter's divine mission to fight against heresy and rebellion.[48]

---

[41] The earliest Ottoman biographical sources are Atayî, *Ḥadāi'ḳu'l-Ḥaḳāi'ḳ fī Tekmīletü'ş-Şaḳā'iḳ* in A. Özcan (ed.), *Şakaik-ı Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri*, 5 vols. (Istanbul 1980), III:370, and Belgradî, *Silsiletü'l-muḳarrebīn ve menāḳıbu'l-muttekīn,* SK., MS. Esad Ef. 105a-105b; for the modern Turkish transcription, see T. Bitiçi, 'Münîri-i Belgrâdi ve *Silsiletü'l-mukarrebîn* adlı eseri', unpublished M.A. thesis, Marmara University, 2001, 188. Some information on Kırımî can also be found in Bursalı Mehmet Tahir, *Osmanlı müellifleri*, 3 vols. (Istanbul 1975), I:118. The earliest Tatar history to mention Kırımî, Seyyid Mehmed Rıza's (d. 1755/56) *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar fî ahbar-i mülûk-i Tatar)* (Kazan 1832), was actually written considerably later, in the early eighteenth century; nevertheless, this text makes use of some earlier written and oral sources, and is generally considered the most important Tatar source on the history of the Khanate.

[42] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, 152.

[43] Gulnara Abdullaeva, *Zolotaya epoha Krymskogo hanstva* (Simferopol 2012), 143-148, cited in Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise', 140-141.

[44] Kırımî, *Mawāhib al-raḥmān fī bayān marātib al-akwān*, cited in Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise', 142.

[45] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, 153

However long he stayed in Babaeski, Kırımî also seems to have had a foot in Istanbul between the years 1577 and 1580. In an autobiographical passage of the *Mawāhib*, he writes that he was already in Istanbul at the beginning of H.985/1577, the same year that is identified in the *Tezakir* as the date of his first visit to the capital during the reign of Murad III. From the same text we learn that while in Istanbul, the Sufi sheikh stayed in the lodge of Koca Mustafa Pasha, where he may have briefly attached himself to the *postnişin* and Halveti sheikh Yusuf Sinaneddin (d. 1581), to whom he refers as "my master" (*şeyhinâ*). Since Sheikh Yusuf actually left Istanbul as *Şeyhü'l-harem* in the same year, however, Kırımî's discipleship to the latter must have been of short duration; in any case, he does not refer to it in his other writings.[49]

As we have seen above, the author of the *Tezakir* dated his second and final trip to Istanbul to 1583, adding that it was five months after his second arrival in the city that his highly-placed patrons arranged for him to be appointed sheikh at the lodge of Küçük Ayasofya. That Kırımî eventually settled in Istanbul and served as sheikh at the lodge of Küçük Ayasofya is also corroborated by both the Ottoman and Tatar sources. This was, of course, the lodge where Kırımî's one-time master Nureddinzade had once been sheikh. Upon Nureddinzade's death, the office had fallen to his eldest son, Sheikh Mahmud, who had in turn died in 1583, clearing the way for Kırımî.[50] The biographical sources confirm that in addition to serving as *postnişin* at the Küçük Ayasofya lodge, Kırımî also began to double as a mosque preacher. He seems to have served first in more minor mosques like the Cerrah Mosque, but eventually made his way to the prestigious Fatih Mosque, where the author of *Tezakir* also mentions having preached.[51]

---

[46] Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise', 142.

[47] On the settlement of Crimean Tatars in general and some members of the Giray family in particular in Babaeski, see H. Kırımlı, *Türkiye'deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay köy yerleşimleri* (Istanbul 2012), 8-9.

[48] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, 153.

[49] For a discussion of the passage, see Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise', 155. It seems that a slightly different version of the same passage circulated as a free-standing text, and it is from this version that the reference to Yusuf Sinaneddin is taken. See Kırımî, [Kızılbaşlık hakkında risale], SK, H. Hüsnü Paşa 132a-133b.

[50] For information on Sheikh Mahmud, see Bitiçi, 'Münîri-i Belgrâdi', 188, and BOA, Mühimme

At least one early Ottoman source, Belgradî, mentions that the Crimean Sufi became sheikh and advisor to Murad III at this period.[52] Corroborating evidence comes from another piece by Kırımî, a short text that he seems to have composed to preface the letters that he had received from Sultan Murad, but which are missing from the only known manuscript copy. In this text, Kırımî writes that he became Murad's sheikh only after the latter's first master Sheikh Şüca died in H.996/1587-1588. He also claims to have been completely taken by surprise when the Sultan invited him to become his "companion".[53] However, we need not take him at his word on this matter. In all likelihood, he wanted to represent the beginning of his attachment to Murad III in a manner that would fit the time-honoured ethos of the ideal man of religion, who would be courted by, rather than court the company of, Sultans. In fact, judging by the datable letters in the *Tezakir,* he was already addressing letters to Murad III a decade earlier, during his first stay in Istanbul.[54] However, these letters are relatively few in number, and there is a long hiatus between them and the next and much larger corpus of letters, dating from circa 1590 and 1593. This suggests that even if Kırımî started to seek the audience of Murad III from the time of his first visit to Istanbul in the late 1570s, it was only after the death of Şüca that the Sultan returned the attention that Kırımî had been lavishing on him, and chose the Crimean Sufi as his master.

It is clear that Kırımî had become a political player of considerable significance during the early 1590s. This was a particularly turbulent period, characterised by monetary instability and military rebellions, and it was also a military revolt that tested Kırımî's skills as a power-broker. The military revolt in question broke out on 23 Rebiü'l-ahir 1001/27 January 1593, when members of the imperial cavalry, in protest at being paid in defective coins, demanded the heads of the Grand Vizier Siyavuş Pasha, the Treasurer Emir Efendi, and the Imperial Stewardess (*Kethüda Kadın*). Kırımî and another Halveti sheikh and preacher, Emir Efendi, rushed to the scene with Qur'ans in their hands and pleaded with the rebellious soldiers to give up their demands. The angry soldiers, however, were clearly not at all impressed with these appeals to the Qur'an and Islam, and mocked the sheikhs, saying that they (the soldiers) had become infidels and were

---

Defteri 25, entry no. 2024, dated 3 Ramazan H.982/1574. This seems to have been the year that Sheikh Mahmud replaced his father as sheikh at Küçük Ayasofya.

[51] For references to his appointments as preacher, see Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, 154 and Bursalı, *Osmanlı müellifleri*, I:118; for the relevant passage in the *Tezakir*, see fn. 29.

[52] Bitiçi, 'Münîri-i Belgrâdi', 188. Note that the Tatar historian Seyyid Mehmed Rıza also stresses Murad III's strong love for and faith in Kırımî when describing the appointment of his son Afifüddin as *müderris* to a Dahil *medrese* (Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, 154-155).

[53] Kırımî, [Sultan Murad'a dair bir risale], SK, H. Hüsnü Paşa 763/19, 103b-111b. The specific reference is from folios 103b-104a.

[54] See, for instance, Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 92, 162; and Kırımî, [Kızılbaşlık hakkında risale], SK, H. Hüsnü Paşa 763/23, 132a-133b.

not even beyond slaying Hasan and Hüseyin, if it came to that. In the end, it was only a bloody counter-attack by the imperial gatekeepers which prevented the cavalrymen from entering the Imperial Harem and from taking the lives of the targeted officials with their own hands.[55]

Even though Kırımî was not able to prevail upon the rebellious cavalry on this occasion, his efforts in this direction did not damage his standing at the Ottoman court, and possibly even enhanced his reputation as a loyal servant of the Ottoman house, for when he died a few months later, on 13 Cumadelûlâ 1001/15 February 1593 according to Selanikî, or in the month of Şevval/July according to Atayî, his funeral was held at the Fatih Mosque and was attended by "all men of the state, viziers and ulema dignitaries". Selanikî, in his obituary, memorialised the sheikh as "the elect of the ulema and the sheikhs" (*muhtarü'l-ulema ve'l-meşayih*) as well as "the ascetic of the age, a singular worshipper, a teller of truths and preacher to the people" (*zâhid-i zemane, âbid-i yegâne, natık-ı hakaik, vaiz-i halaik*).[56]

This, then, sums up the story of Kırımî's life, which as we have seen, matches remarkably well with the biographical information provided in the *Tezakir*. There is also a significant degree of matching between the certified works of Kırımî and the texts that the author of the *Tezakir* mentions as his own. At least four texts mentioned in the *Tezakir* can be identified as Kırımî's. They are: 1) *Risāla fī bayān asrār aṣā Mūsā wa yadd al-bayḍā* [Treatise explicating the secrets of the staff of Moses and the white hand];[57] 2) *Kitāb fatḥ marātib al-ḳulūb wa kashf manāzil 'izzat al-ġuyūb* [Book on the conquest of the degrees of the heart and the discovery of the way-stations of the glory of the unknown], which appears in the *Tezakir* under the slightly abbreviated title *Merâtib-i kulûb ve menâzil-i izzetü'l-guyûb*;[58] 3) *Madārij al-malik al-mannān fī bayān ma'ārij al-insān* [The paths of the beneficent ruler in explication of the stages of ascent of the human], which was originally written as a work that associates the seven stages or circles of the soul (*el-devā'ir el-seb'a*, or *el-eṭvār el-seb'a*) with the seven climes, and 4) *Mawāhib al-raḥmān fī bayān marātib al-akwān*, which was originally written as a work that discusses the five stages of descent (*nüzūl*) as part of the 12 stages of the cycle of existence. Later, however, Kırımî combined these last two pieces in a single work which discusses the 12 stages of the cycle of existence in connection with the 12 regions of the world. The longer work, dealing with all 12 stages, can be found listed under either title in various manuscript collections of Turkey. Both works are described in the *Tezakir,* albeit without mention of the title, as a work on the 12 modes of spirituality that are prevalent in the 12 regions of the world. The dates of composition given in the letters are also identical with those mentioned in the preface of the actual work: accordingly, Kırımî started writing this text in H.991/1583-4 and completed it in Şaban H.998/June-July 1590.[59] In addition to these, Kırımî also authored many short treatises on the esoteric meaning of various verses of the Qur'an, and further examination of these texts, which are often untitled, might enable us to match them with the untitled exegetical pieces referenced in the *Tezakir*.

---

[55] Selanikî, *Tarih-i Selânikî (H.971-1003/1563-1595)*, ed. M. İpşirli, 2 vols., Vol. 1 (Ankara 1999 [2nd ed.]), 302.

[56] Ibid., 306-7 and Atayî, *Ḥadāi'ḳ*, 370. In contrast to Selanikî and Atayî, Belgradî erroneously gives H.999/1590 as the date of Kırımî's death. See Bitiçi, 'Münîri-i Belgrâdi', 188.

[57] Kırımî, *Risāla fi bayān asrār 'aṣā Mūsā wa yadd al-bayḍā*, SK, Laleli 1512/5, 46b-51a.

[58] Kırımî, *Kitāb fatḥ marātib al-ḳulūb wa kashf manāzil 'izzat al-ġuyūb*, SK, H. Hüsnü Paşa 763/5, 43b-49a; Carullah 2079/11, 68-82.

In the light of all the evidence presented above, we can now safely conclude that the letters wrongly attributed to Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî were, possibly with a single exception (the letter addressed to Selim II), authored by İbrahim-i Kırımî. This discussion has also revealed several facets of Kırımî's background, which will be of central importance to us when we examine his political entanglements. These include his life-long links to Crimea and its political elites, his membership of a circle of Rumelian Sufis known for their strong advocacy of Sunni Islam, and the close relationship he cultivated with the Ottoman Sultan Murad III, as well as various other figures in his court. In the next two sections, we shall see how Kırımî negotiated these three dimensions and reconciled the contradictory demands they made upon him when he sought to comment on and steer the direction of Ottoman politics.

Sufi as courtier: negotiating power and patronage at the Ottoman court

As is well known, politics, even high politics, in the late sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire was not restricted only to the Ottoman Sultan and members of the Imperial Council. Some of the ulema dignitaries, Sufi sheikhs and preachers, royal women, and even some wealthy Jewish and Christian merchants and bankers with court connections could also have a say in it. At the same time, of course, there were unwritten rules of protocol that governed who could say what, when, and in what ways. We primarily learn of these unwritten rules of protocol when they became the subject of debate. In the late sixteenth century, members of the scribal service and military administration frequently expressed exasperation at mosque preachers, because they thought that the latter were exceeding their formal duties by discoursing on state matters. Critics like the bureaucrat and man of letters Mustafa Âli (d. 1600) argued that the duty of preachers was simply to recite and expound the Qur'an and hadiths, and not to opine about matters about which they had little experience and knowledge. To Âli, preachers who "interfere[d] in the business of state and (…) compete[d] at arrows with vezirs and sancak beyis" represented "the height of impertinence".[60] It was considered less objectionable if a preacher informed a grandee of his views on politics in private, but even in this case, a considerable degree of delicacy was expected. In a *telhis* to Murad III, the Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Pasha complained extensively about the above-mentioned Halveti master and preacher, Emir Efendi, because the latter was constantly commenting on state affairs and statesmen in his sermons, writing letter upon letter to Murad III and giving him political advice, and as if all this was not enough, he was adding insult to injury by reading the Sultan's letters to others to show off.[61]

---

[59] For copies of manuscripts, listed under the title *Madārij al-malik al-mannān fī bayān maʻārij al-insān*, see SK, Bağdatlı Vehbi 699/1, 1b-195a; *Reisülküttab* 1135 (copied in H.1088/1677); Musalla Medrese 120; for works listed under the title *Mawāhib al-raḥmān fī bayān marātib al-akwān*, see Kastamonu İl Halk Ktp. MS. 3649. For a recent study of the longer work, based on Kastamonu İl Halk Ktp. MS. 3649, see Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise', 137-160. More research is needed to reconstruct the short and early versions of the text and to establish the relationship between the extant manuscripts. For the passage in the *Tezakir*, see fn. 32.

[60] Mustafa Âli, *The Ottoman Gentleman of the Sixteenth Century: Mustafa Âli's Mevā'idü'n-*

This raises the question of how Kırımî himself managed to write so many letters of advice to Murad III, and to guide and steer him on not just religious but also political matters. It is easiest to account for the letter-writing. Writing was the primary medium of communication between Murad and the outside world, because he had taken the Ottoman custom of royal seclusion to a new high, and was spending nearly all his time in the inner sanctuary of his palace, refusing to go on campaigns, and towards the end of his reign, even failing to present himself to the public for the Friday prayers, as custom dictated.[62] Clearly, however, Murad still wished to be in touch with the outside world, and being fond of reading and writing, he had very much taken to corresponding on a regular basis with his Grand Vizier, as well as with his favorite Sufis.[63] It is clear that the correspondence between Kırımî and the Sultan was not one-sided; the Sultan was also writing to Kırımî.[64]

It probably helped, too, that Kırımî wrote to Murad not just as any ordinary Sufi or preacher, but as his personal sheikh. However, it was no light matter to act as spiritual guide to a monarch who was said to be the shadow of God on earth, and who very much aspired to be Sultan of both this world and the next. This must be why in the preface he wrote to the (now missing) letters of Murad, Kırımî cleverly chose to represent the Sultan as an active seeker of his own gnosis rather than an ordinary disciple who is required to submit his will to that of his master. As Kırımî put it, Murad had recognised "out of the perfection of his sagacity and intelligence" the meaninglessness of this lowly world and re-orientated himself towards the higher realms. In his great wisdom, he had also unders-

---

nefā'is fī ḳavā'idi'l-mecālis, 'Tables of Delicacies Concerning the Rules of Social Gatherings', annotated English translation by D. S. Brookes (Cambridge MA 2003), 172-173.

[61] H. Sahillioğlu (ed.), *Koca Sinan Paşa'nın telhisleri* (Istanbul 2004), 69-71.

[62] On the formulation of the Ottoman custom of royal seclusion, see G. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge MA and London 1991), 15-30, see esp. 25-26 for remarks on developments in the reign of Murad; for a different appraisal of Ottoman royal ceremonial, which emphasises royal presence over royal seclusion, even while noting the reclusive habits of Murad III, see E. Boyar and K. Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (Cambridge 2010), 28-41; esp. 31-32, 37-38.

[63] On the institutionalisation of *telhis*-writing, see P. Fodor, 'The Grand Vizierial *Telhis*', *ArchOtt*, 15 (1997), 137-188; S. Faroqhi, 'Das Grosswesir-*telhis*: eine aktenkundliche Studie', *Der Islam*, 45 (1969), 96-110; C. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı tarihine âid belgeler: telhîsler (1597-1607)* (Istanbul 1970).

[64] In one letter, Kırımî wrote that he sometimes had misgivings about sending the Sultan so many letters, only to add immediately afterwards that he also feared that neglecting to write back to the Sultan would also be insolent. Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 114-115.

tood that spiritual perfection can be attained only through attachment to a "master of training" (*mürşid-i irşad*), and he had consequently entered into an intimate companionship (*musahabet ve mukarenet*) first with Sheikh Şüca, and later with Kırımî.[65]

The concept of 'companionship' evoked by Kırımî had both religious and political connotations. On the one hand, *musahabet* was a close cognate of *sohbet*, which in the technical sense of companionship and conversation with an authorised master was seen by many Sufis as a valuable tool in attaining spiritual insight.[66] On the other hand, *musahib,* derived from the same triliteral Arabic root *s-h-b*, denoted a 'royal companion' or 'favourite'. Even though Ottomanists have until now discussed under this rubric mainly *musahib*-viziers or *musahib*-aghas, it could be argued that in the reign of Murad III, a number of Sufis who became sheikhs to the Sultan, most notably Şüca and Kırımî, also fit the bill as "'creatures' of the Sultan, empowered to act as his power-brokers".[67]

The ambiguity of Kırımî's position as sheikh and 'creature' of the Sultan is in full evidence in his letters. On the one hand, the Sufi sheikh assumed the voice of a humble subject when he referred to the Sultan as the "shadow of God on earth", "Caliph of God", and "Caliph of the Messenger of God", as well as "renewer of faith" (*müceddid-i iman*) of both the new century and the new millennium.[68] He also described meeting the Sultan, when he (Kırımî) was with the Grand Vizier in the palace, as a rare incident that threw him off base and transported him to a different state almost like experiencing an intimation of the divine.[69] On the other hand, Kırımî also guided the Sultan, as a master would guide an initiate on the Sufi path. When, for instance, Murad chided Kırımî for not showing him the essence of divine reality and for making him suffer as a result, the Sufi sheikh politely explained that God hides himself from the ignorant but reveals himself in signs and allusions to the gnostic. Hence the Sultan should know that it is on account of his gnosis that God has been shown to him in this manner.[70] On another such occasion, the Sufi master uncharacteristically allowed himself to address the Sultan in the second person singular, saying "Your passion (*iştiyak*) for the divine exceeds all bounds; it is too much. I have seen so many seekers, adepts, and visionaries in my life but have found none to surpass my Padishah in his yearning (*hırs*) and passion for divine gnosis".[71]

Perhaps because Murad considered himself an already 'arrived' Sufi by the 1590s, he no longer reported his dreams and asked for their interpretation, as he had done earlier with Sheikh Şüca. Rather, it was Kırımî himself who related his dreams to the Sultan and who then provided his own interpretations of them. In most cases, the reported dreams were about the Sultan. Considering how rarely Kırımî and Murad met in real life, it is tempting to think that the Sufi sheikh relied on these dreams to compensate for the absence of physical contact with the Sultan. At the same time, however, the Sufi sheikh often used his dreams as a pretext to advise Murad about political matters.[72] In several instances, Kırımî also justified his advice-giving as an integral part of his duties as a man of religion, citing the hadith 'Religion is counsel' (*El-dīn el-naṣīḥa*).[73] Interestingly, the word *meşveret,* or 'consultation', never surfaces in the letters, even though it was also part of the juridical language of Islamic rulership and would have been well known to Kırımî as a learned sheikh with the equivalent of a madrasa education.[74] Perhaps the Sufi master avoided the latter concept because it implied an obligation on the Sultan's part, and by extension, a limitation of the latter's power.

---

[65] Kırımî, [Sultan Murad'a dair bir risale], SK, H. Hüsnü Paşa 62, 103b-111b. The specific reference is from folios 103b-104a.

[66] *TDVIA*, s.v. 'Sohbet' (Süleyman Uludağ).

[67] Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 17, 151-152; also see E. Turan, 'The Sultan's Favorite: Ibrahim Pasha and the Making of the Universal Sovereignty in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman (1516-1526)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2007.

[68] See, for instance, Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 7, 15-16.

[69] Ibid., 98.

[70] Ibid., 134

[71] Ibid., 133.

Yet it would be wrong to read Kırımî's letters as if they were presenting a programmatic case for Ottoman 'absolutism', not only because there was no one else in sight making a contrary argument, but also because Kırımî's primary reader was the Sultan, who did not need to be convinced of his great power. It seems that in many cases Kırımî evoked the Sultan's power and used sacralising language to do so also because he wished him to realise that this great power brought responsibilities. In one letter, the Sufi writer assured his royal reader that he (Murad) possesses greater political power (*devlet ve kuvvet*) than all the Sultans before him, but he should, for this reason, be all the more vigilant to maintain it.[75] In other letters, Kırımî evoked the quasi-sacral nature of the royal office to get Murad to forgive the trespasses of various high-ranking officials, arguing that forgiveness and mercy are divine qualities.[76]

In one letter, Kırımî also reminded Murad that his power ultimately depends on the "soldiers of Islam and the *reaya*", and that he should show "mercy and affection" (*merhamet ve şefkat*) to the *reaya*, and "respect and service" (*riayet ve hizmet*) to the soldiers of Islam.[77] That royal power depended on the prosperity of the *reaya* and the strength of the army was a point that was often made in the political literature of the time, and often a connection was made between all three through the metaphor of the circle of justice, which, in the most common version, went something like this: "No power without troops – No troops without money – No money without prosperity – No prosperity without justice and good administration".[78] Interestingly, however, Kırımî chose not to mention the treasury in this connection, and in fact hardly ever alludes to fiscal and monetary matters in his letters. This omission is striking, because fiscally-motivated monetary debasements were the primary cause of grievance of the discontented *kul* soldiers in this period, including in the incident in which Kırımî himself had played the role of mediator between the palace and the imperial cavalry on 27 January 1593.[79]

---

[72] See, for instance, ibid., 6, 28-30, 56, 83-84, 84-85, 88-89, 92, 125-126, 132.

[73] Ibid., 7, 145; Buhari, İman, 42; Müslim, İman, 95.

[74] On *meşveret* in sixteenth-century Ottoman political thought, see H. Yılmaz, 'Osmanlı devleti'nde batılılaşma öncesi meşrutiyetçi gelişmeler', *Dîvân: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi* 13, 24 (2008), 1-30; M. Sariyannis, 'Ottoman Ideas on Monarchy Before the Tanzimat Reforms: Toward a Conceptual History of Ottoman Political Notions', *Turcica*, 47 (2016), 33-72.

[75] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 53.

[76] Ibid., 15, 16.

[77] Ibid., 127.

[78] L. T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (Abingdon 2013), 2, 127-148.

Unfortunately, we do not know in which context Kırımî made the above-mentioned remark about the need to respect and serve the soldiers, but the overall analysis of his letters indicates that he was much more likely to speak on behalf of specific high-ranking officials than for larger entities like "the *reaya*" or even the "soldiers". He was, in this regard, very much a man of the Ottoman court, concerned first and foremost with the power games in this ultimately rather constricted, privileged environment.

The late sixteenth century was a time when factional struggles were particularly intense at the Ottoman court. The personal and factional rivalries that divided it are, however, barely visible in Kırımî's letters. Perhaps the Sufi sheikh thought it best for a man of religion to position himself above the worldly squabbles for power. Perhaps, too, he was extra cautious because his letters could have been read by any one of the officials who conveyed them to the Sultan, or because the Sultan himself could have the letters read in the presence of others. Either way, in most cases, the Sufi sheikh prudently limited his criticisms to unnamed "scoundrels" (*erazil*), and when he named specific officials to the Sultan, it was almost always to praise them, and not to criticise. A rare exception to this rule would be his remarks about the "accursed Takiyüddin", but in this case, too, Kırımî was actually playing it safe, since the controversial astronomer had already been banished at the time of writing. Kırımî was also obviously jealous when he learnt that Davud Efendi from the *zaviye* of Ali Pasha had been invited to the palace. However, rather than malign his rival, he simply made it clear to Murad that there was nothing special about this man, who was just one of the Sultan's many well-wishers.[80]

At the same time, however, as the Sultan's sheikh and companion, Kırımî also did what any self-respecting courtier would do: namely, he used his proximity to Murad to procure benefits for himself and others. It was presumably for his own benefit that he asked Murad to convert the Arslanhane (literally, Lion's Den) into a Sufi lodge, or that failing, to allow the *kapu ağası* to do the same instead.[81] The said building had originally been a Byzantine church, before its basement was converted by Mehmed II into a royal menagerie in the late fifteeenth century, and in the sixteenth century, its upper floor served as the workshop of court artisans (*Nakkaşhane*). Presumably, Kırımî wished to move to the Arslanhane, because it was in very close proximity to the Topkapı Palace, and would have facilitated his access to the court even further.[82]

---

[79] C. Kafadar, 'Les troubles monétaires de la fin du XVIe siècle et la prise de la conscience ottomane du déclin', *Annales. Économies, Sociétés et Civilisations*, 46 (1991), 381-400; Ş. Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2000), 131-148.

[80] Güven, 'Çeşitli Yönleriyle', 120-121, 136.

[81] Ibid., 87-88, 167-168.

[82] On the royal menagerie, see Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, 46, 48, and Ç. Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park 2009), 204, 263.

When Kırımî intervened on behalf of others, he typically stressed his indebtedness to them. Significantly, the people on whose behalf Kırımî interceded came from several different branches and ranks of the imperial administration. Among the men of religion, he put in a good word not only for fellow Sufis like Medeni Sheikh Ahmed, Sheikh Mehmed Efendi of the *Şabani* branch of the Halveti order, and a certain "holy fool" (*meczub*) from Kastamonu, but also for top-ranking ulema like the royal tutor Hoca Sadeddin, the *şeyhülislam*s Bostanzade Mehmed, and Bayramzade Zekeriyya, and the *kadıasker* of Rumelia, Düğmecizade.[83] Kırımî also hastened to the defence of the kadis who had angered Murad III and the Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Pasha, when a large group of them had convened at the Fatih Mosque to protest against the dismissal of the kadi of Samakov. Since Kırımî himself was a preacher at the same mosque, he might also have been involved in the incident, but writing one month after the event, he clearly found it in his power to plead with the Sultan to forgive the errant kadis. He argued that the latter had already apologised for their "disobedience" (*tuğyan*) and that "they, being members of the ulema should not be treated like other people" (*ulema zümresindendir; saire kıyas olunmaya*).[84]

In addition to men of religion like himself, Kırımî also lent his support to various members of the palace corps and military administrators of *kul* background. In connection with the ulema protest over the dismissal of the kadi of Samakov, for instance, he asked Murad to forgive "the fault, if there is any" of a certain Hüseyin Ağa, who "was formerly master of the stables (*mirahur*) and who now serves as *kapıcıbaşı*".[85] He also closely followed the career tracks of his patrons and clients among the palace-reared *kul* administrators. He congratulated Murad for appointing a certain Hüseyin Beg as the Governor of Jerusalem, while he recommended his benefactor Hâfız [Hadım] Ahmed Pasha for the lucrative governor-generalship of Egypt. Kırımî's wish was granted, and Ahmed Pasha was appointed Governor-General of Egypt in H.999/1590-1591.[86]

Perhaps the most interesting person the Crimean Sufi recommended to Murad from within the palace was, however, the *Haseki Sultan* Safiye. In a long and elaborate letter, interwoven with mystical themes, Kırımî praised Safiye Sultan as Murad's "loyal servitor of many years" (*kadim emekdarınız*), and he urged the Sultan to reward her services by manumitting and then marrying her. He argued that such an act would also be good for the Sultan's own spiritual progress.[87] It might be worth pointing out that Kırımî could give this kind of advice not only because he was the Sultan's sheikh, but also because sex and marriage in the royal household were very much regarded as "state affairs" and thus open to some degree of public scrutiny and comment. As for the content of Kırımî's advice, it went against the royal tradition that maintained that Ottoman Sultans were not supposed to marry, but to enjoy sexual relations with and reproduce through their female slaves; however, it was not entirely unprecedented either. Murad's grandfather Süleyman had broken with the existing norms by manumitting and marrying his favorite consort, Hürrem, circa 1534. There is some evidence that this unprecedented action created scope for similar action, even if it did not completely overturn the existing norms. The Venetian ambassador Jacobo Ragazzoni claimed that Süleyman's son and successor, Selim, had also manumitted and married his royal consort, Nurbanu; however, this marriage is not reported in any of the Ottoman sources. In Murad's case, only one Ottoman writer, Mustafa Ali, and no European contemporary, reported his having manumitted and married Safiye. Ultimately, we do not know whether Murad heeded Kırımî's advice and followed the example of his father and grandfather, but if he did so, he, too, seems to have been discreet about it like his father.[88]

---

[83] Ibid., 16-19, 102-103, 120, 165.

[84] Ibid., 15-16. It is worth noting that in the letter that immediately precedes the one written on behalf of the kadis (Ibid., 14-15), Kırımî himself submits his apologies for an unspecified misdemeanour. On the protest by the ulema and the responses to it by the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, see *TDVİA*, s.v. 'Zekeriyya Efendi, Bayramzade' (M. İpşirli); Sahillioğlu (ed.), *Koca Sinan Paşa'nın telhisleri*, 27-28.

[85] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 55.

[86] Ibid., 150-151; Selanikî, *Tarih*, 242, 335.

[87] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 125-126.

In addition, Kırımî mentioned in his letters a variety of high-ranking officials in a highly complimentary manner, though without necessarily asking for a favour for them. One of the officials he praised in this manner was the Venetian-born Gazanfer Ağa (d. 1603), who was one of the most powerful officials at the time as the holder of two major offices within the palace, that of Agha of the Porte (*Kapu ağası*, *Babüssaade ağası*) and Head of the Privy Chamber (*Hasodabaşı*).[89] Another official of whom Kırımî spoke with praise was the Grand Admiral Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha (d. 1606), who had been a member of the aristocratic Genoese family of Cicala, before being taken captive by Ottoman corsairs, and entering Ottoman imperial service.[90] Significantly, both of these men were part of the same court faction as Safiye Sultan and Hoca Sadeddin, which was in fact the most powerful court faction at the time.

That Kırımî, too, participated in Ottoman court politics thanks in part to his links with this powerful faction seems clear. In fact, the Sufi sheikh seems to have shown a remarkable propensity to work with whoever was in a position of ascendancy in this period. A case in point would be his relations with Koca Sinan Pasha, a powerful official who was appointed to and dismissed from the office of Grand Vizier a total of five times in the late sixteenth century (three of them in Kırımî's lifetime). It seems that particularly during Sinan Pasha's second term as grand vizier, Kırımî went out of his way to express support for the Grand Vizier. He specifically praised Sinan Pasha's aborted plan to connect the

---

[88] For a discussion of the actual and/or imputed marriages between Süleyman and Hürrem, Selim and Nurbanu, and Murad and Safiye on the basis of Ottoman and Venetian sources, see L. P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford 1993), 58-63, 92-95.

[89] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 87-88, 150-151. On Gazanfer Ağa, see E. R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore 2006), 119-123; Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 49-50; A. E. Dikici, 'The Making of Ottoman Court Eunuchs: Origins, Recruitment Paths, Family Ties and 'Domestic Production'', *ArchOtt*, 30 (2013), 105-136.

[90] Güven, 'Çeşitli Yönleriyle', 96. On Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha, see *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Cigālā-zāde Yūsuf Sinān Pasha' (V. J. Parry); Dursteler, 122-123.

Black Sea with the Gulf of İzmit via the Sakarya river in order to bring wood to Istanbul, and he compared this project to the restoration of Istanbul's water supply system during the reign of Süleyman I. He even related having had a dream in which the Grand Vizier was building "a grand bridge" over the Bosporus.[91] Despite these words of praise, however, the Crimean sheikh did not always see eye-to-eye with the Grand Vizier. As we shall see in the next section, Sinan Pasha favoured peaceful relations with Poland-Lithuania, while Kırımî preferred all-out war, or at least an extension of the diplomatic bickering. Sinan Pasha wanted to punish the top ranks of the ulema for their role in the protests at the sacking of the kadi of Samakov, while Kırımî wished them to be forgiven. Sinan Pasha was engaged in a bitter feud with Ferhad Pasha, whereas the latter was a long-time associate of Kırımî. Significantly, however, even as Kırımî let his views be known on some of these matters, he was careful not to directly target the Grand Vizier.[92]

Political prudence was probably also the reason why Kırımî made so few references to the Crimean ruling elites in his letters to Murad III. Even though the Crimean Khanate was a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire, it nevertheless enjoyed a great deal of autonomy, and Kırımî might have found it impolitic as a Crimean at the Ottoman court to profess his attachment to members of another, albeit vassal, dynasty.[93] Quite appropriately, the only Crimean royal whom Kırımî mentioned by name to Murad was one who was safely dead: namely, the *kalga* Âdil Giray, who had been killed by the Safavids while in captivity in Iran.[94] From the way Kırımî describes his grief upon learning of Âdil Giray's death, it would seem that he was quite close to the *kalga*.

It is not clear how Kırımî comported himself when relations between the Ottomans and the Crimean Khan Mehmed Giray soured shortly after the *kalga*'s death, and when Mehmed Giray was forcibly replaced with İslam II Giray in 1584. However, considering that the Crimean Sufi did not suffer any setback in his Istanbul career in subsequent years, we may presume that he had successfully adapted to the new political situation. In fact, there is considerable parallelism between the political positions of the Crimean Sufi and the new Crimean Khan: just as Kırımî would position himself as a loyal subject of the Ottoman house in his letters to Murad III, İslam II Giray, too, would prove himself an ardent Ottoman loyalist and initiate the custom of having the Ottoman Sultan's name read before his own in the Friday sermons delivered in Crimean mosques.[95]

---

[91] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 84-85, 162. Judging by the references in them, the first of these letters was written during the second grand vizierate of Sinan Pasha (1589-1591), while the second was written at the beginning of his first tenure as Grand Vizier (1580-1582). See *TDVİA*, s.v. 'Koca Sinan Paşa' (M. İpşirli).

[92] Sinan Pasha's animosity towards the royal tutor and the *kadıasker* of Rumelia as well as Ferhad Pasha comes through quite clearly in the *telhis*es he sent to Murad III, even if the grand vizier was forced to be a bit more circumspect and indirect in his attacks against Hoca Sadeddin on account of the latter's special status as a top-ranking member of the ulema as well as royal tutor. See Sahillioğlu (ed.), *Koca Sinan Paşa'nın Telhisleri,* 51-53, 65-66, 69-71, 90-91, 133-134, 153, 182-183, 195-197; 199-200, 228-229, 260. See also İpşirli, 'Koca Sinan Paşa'.

[93] On the special relationship between the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Empire, see N. Królikowska, 'Sovereignty and Subordination in Crimean-Ottoman Relations (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)' in G. Kármán and L. Kunčević (eds), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden and Boston 2013), 43-65.

[94] Reportedly, Âdil Giray had been killed because of his involvement in an adulterous love affair with a Safavid royal woman, but there are also counterclaims that the murder of both Âdil Giray and his alleged romantic liason were all part of a power struggle between different factions in the Safavid palace. On this affair, see L. Uluç, 'The Representation of the Execution of the Safavid Princess Begum from the Ottoman Historian Mustafa Ali's *Nusretname*', in F. Hitzel (ed.), *14th International Congress of Turkish Art: Proceedings* (Paris 2013), 799-806.

The next person to be appointed Khan, Gazi Giray (r. 1588-1597), was also a son of Devlet Giray like Âdil and Mehmed Giray. He too participated in the Transcaucasian campaign under Âdil Giray's command, was taken captive by the Safavids, but managed to return safely to the Ottoman lands before being appointed Khan. Given Kırımî's reputed acquaintance with Devlet Giray during his youth in Crimea, and his attachment to Âdil Giray during his Rumelian years, and given the fact that his patron Hoca Sadeddin himself had warm relations with Gazi Giray, it would be surprising indeed if the Crimean Sufi did not know the new Khan personally. It seems, however, that in his correspondence with Murad III, Kırımî also refrained from making references to this Khan for the reasons stated above.

To recapitulate, the discussion so far has revealed Kırımî to have been a skilled political player who was able successfully to juggle his roles as Sufi sheikh and royal favourite, to maintain an impressive web of connections that extended from Crimea to Istanbul, and even to weather the intense infighting and factional struggles at the Ottoman court. Yet it would be wrong to say that Kırımî's concern as a court player was simply to preserve his privileged position as the Sultan's sheikh and favourite. As a 'Sunnitising' Sufi, with loyalty to both the Ottoman and Crimean dynasties, Kırımî also had a distinctive perspective on Ottoman politics, and he used his influence over the Ottoman Sultan to promote policies in line with this distinctive vision. It is only when we examine these policy recommendations of his and place them in their proper historical context that we can truly appreciate how an early modern Sufi with multiple affiliations navigated his way through the complex demands of religious and political ideology as well as *realpolitik* at the turn of the sixteenth century.

Religion in the service of the state?
The uses and limits of Sunni confessionalism

Even though in his letters to Murad III Kırımî dwelt more on practical politics than on political theory, his basic approach to Ottoman politics can be said to have followed the line of the 'Sunnitising' Halvetis of Rumelia such as his master, Muslihuddin Nureddinzade, and his master's master, Sofyalı Balî. On the one hand, he drew on the Sufi, and particularly Akbarian, idea of the body politic as a mirror image of the cosmic order to describe the Sultan as the soul (*ruh*) and sometimes the heart (*kalb*) of the body politic and the guarantor of order in this world. On the other hand, he also drew on the juridical discourse of Islamic rulership to emphasise the duties of the Sultan to dispense justice, to enforce the sharia and the Sunna of the Prophet, and to wage war in the name of religion (*gaza* and jihad being words he used interchangeably and often jointly in this connection).

---

[95] *TDVİA*, s.v 'Giray' (H. İnalcık).

For Kırımî, as for other confessionally-minded Halvetis, the only admissible form of Islam was Sunnism, albeit a Sunnism that was tempered by Sufism, and which accommodated the historical experiences and political needs of the Ottoman state. In fact, the Sufi writer equated political loyalty to the Ottoman house and religious conformity to such an extent that he even claimed that someone who refuses to pray for the well-being of the Ottoman Sultan can no longer be be considered "a believer and a Muslim".[96] Kırımî also highlighted the Islamic credentials of the Ottoman Sultan as well as the Ottoman harmonisation of Sufism with the sharia when he contrasted Ottoman religio-political history with that of Safavid Iran. He argued that it was because the ulema, the sheikhs, and military rulers *(ümera)* of Iran had tried to pursue the path of gnosis (*mearif-i ilâhiyye*) without showing respect for the sharia and the Sunna that the "*Kızılbaş* tribes" (*kabail-i Kızılbaş*) had managed to extend their rule over that geography. The lands of Rum, by contrast, had been spared the same calamity, as the Ottoman rulers from the beginning had shown great respect for the sharia and the Sunna, and as they had built countless "*imaret*s, mosques, dervish lodges (*tekye*), *medrese*s and other charitable foundations, which extend in an unbroken line from Istanbul to Yanya".[97]

Even though Kırımî mentioned the dervish lodges and *imaret*s (a term which had originally denoted a multi-functional hospice but which by the late sixteenth century had come to mean a soup kitchen) along with mosques and *medrese*s among the institutions that had helped implant religious orthodoxy in the lands of Rum, he clearly excluded from this category the *ışık zaviyeleri*, namely the dervish lodges frequented by the Shiitising antinomian dervishes in the Ottoman lands. In fact, Kırımî called on the Ottoman Sultan actively to survey and punish the antinomian dervishes, whom he regarded as "heretics" (*zındık*, *mülhid*), and "not Muslim". He also specifically targeted the *Bedreddinî*s – or as he called them, the *Simavnî*s – a heterodox Muslim community which had its origins in the messianic movement associated with the famous Sufi and scholar Bedreddin of Simavna (d. 1420), but which by the sixteenth century had come under Shiitising influences and "turned *Kızılbaş*". According to Kırımî, the *Bedreddinî*s lived mainly "on the other side of the Balkans", in Dobruja and in the villages known by the name of Taviçeler (or Toyçalar)[98] in the same region, but they were also to be found in Babaeski, where the Crimean sheikh himself had come into contact and clashed with them. On the basis of his own experiences, and, presumably, also of information that he would have picked up from his numerous associates in the region, Kırımî labelled the *Bedreddinî*s as *Rafizî*s (a derogatory term for Shiites), and claimed that they supported or were even indistinguishable from the *Kızılbaş* (*Kızılbaşla birdür*). He directed at them the standard forms of accusation that were directed at the *Kızılbaş*, such as having no respect for the sharia and the Sunna, and habitually cursing the first four (!) Caliphs openly in public. He also highlighted the threat that these groups presented to the Ottoman political order by referring to the incidents of banditry and Celali disturbances that habitually erupted in places where this community lived. He also blamed the widespread incidents of military desertion among the timar-holding cavalrymen in the region on their being *Bedreddinî*s, claiming that these men regularly abandoned their timars in order not to fight against the *Kızılbaş* (i.e., the Safavids).[99]

---

[96] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 133.

[97] Ibid., 29.

[98] Even though Güven has transcribed the word as 'Duçeler', I have learnt from Nevena Grammatikova, courtesy of Rossitsa Gradeva, that the correct reading should be Taviçeler or Toyçalar, a word that is thought to be of either Slavic or Mongol origin, and which denoted officers of the light cavalry stationed along the Danube. I thank both scholars for their assistance in this matter. For a reference to the Taviçes in the Ottoman archival records as well as a discussion of the word's etymology, see A. Kayapınar and E. Erdoğan Özünlü (eds), *Mihaloğullarına ait 1586 tarihli akıncı defteri* (Ankara 2015), 6, 260.

When Kırımî wrote to Murad about the *Bedreddinî*s, the Ottomans had just signed a peace treaty with the Safavids (1590), but the Sufi writer urged the Ottoman Sultan now to channel his campaign inwards and to perfect his *gaza* and jihad by going after the *Bedreddinî* heretics. He advised the Sultan first to target the military personnel in the fortresses and to subject them to inspections (*yoklama*) to weed out the heretics. He also called for inspections to be undertaken at the lodges of the *ışık*: "if the dervishes agree to give up their reprehensible practices such as cursing the Companions of the Prophet and the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs and to abide by the Sunna and the Sharia, fine; if not, then they should also be eliminated (*ref'*)". The Sufi sheikh was a little more optimistic about the possibility of reforming the *reaya*. He argued that they would largely follow suit, if they saw their religious and military elites brought into line. However, he also advised in more proactive fashion that "a Sunni imam should be sent to every village, and he should be in charge of educating the children, women, and men".[100]

Kırımî's advice about the *Bedreddinî*s may seem a good deal harsher than the policies that the Ottoman state officials were implementing on the ground. Scholarship based on the Ottoman *mühimme* records has pointed out that at this period the political authorities were mainly going after those *Kızılbaş* who had recently 'converted', or who were actively helping the Safavids by sending them taxes, by missionising on their behalf, or by trying to migrate to the Safavid lands. Moreover, the *Kızılbaş* and Shiite communities which bore the brunt of the state surveillance and punishment were located in the frontier provinces of the Empire, most notably in the provinces of Rum, Dulkadir, Şehrizor, and Baghdad, while the *Kızılbaş* communities which inhabited the Empire's western provinces as well as Mt Lebanon were largely spared.[101] Still, it would be wrong to dismiss Kırımî's harsh discourse on the *Bedreddinî*s as ideological ranting which had no chance of application. Even if in the late sixteenth century the extreme persecuting measures advocated by Kırımî were not put into action in a domestic context, it should be borne in mind that shortly after Tabriz had come into Ottoman lands, the Ottoman soldiers stationed there had reportedly killed "thousands" of civilians (mostly merchants and shopkeepers) in retribution for the killing of some Ottoman soldiers in a public bath.[102] Since Kırımî himself had arrived in the same city a year later, he would almost certainly have heard of this massacre and possibly had this kind of purge in mind when he advised Murad to eliminate the *Bedreddinî*s living in Ottoman Rumelia.

---

[99] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 57-59.

[100] Ibid., 58-59.

[101] H. Sohrweide, 'Der Sieg der Safaviden in Persien und seine Rückwirkungen auf die Schiiten Anatoliens im 16. Jahrhundert', *Der Islam*, 41 (1965), 95-223; C. Imber, 'The Persecution of the Ottoman Shi'ites according to the Mühimme Defterleri, 1565-1585', *Der Islam* 56 (1979), 245-273; M. Salati, 'Toleration, Persecution and Local Realities: Observations on the Shiism

In addition, it is important to remember that Kırımî was not alone in targeting the *Bedreddinî*s as he did; rather, several other Rumelian sheikhs in his branch of the Halveti order, including his master, Nureddinzade, and his master's master, Sofyalı Bâlî, had done the same, and would continue to do so in the decades to come.[103] This suggests that the non-conformist Muslims in Rumelia were not exactly left alone, as some recent studies would seem to suggest, but, rather, that they were pressured by a number of local groups, including, no doubt, the Sunnitising Halveti sheikhs as well as their followers and sympathisers among the military administrators and the civilian population.

At present, we do not know through what channels a network of Sufis in Ottoman Rumelia could internalise imperial discourse that paired heresy with political treason. What is clear, nevertheless, is that these Sufis still viewed confessional matters through a highly localised perspective. In fact, as intimately as Kırımî knew the distribution of *Bedreddinî*s in the eastern Balkan countryside, he had only the vaguest idea about the presence of *Kızılbaş*-Alevi, Shiite, or other non-conformist Muslim communities in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. He had nothing to say about the *Kızılbaş*-Alevi communities living in different parts of Anatolia, for instance, presumably because he was not

---

in the Holy Places and the Bilad al-Sham (Sixteenth- Seventeenth Centuries)', in *Convegno sul tema La Shi'a nell'Impero Ottomano, Roma, 15 Apr. 1991* (Rome 1993), 121-148; S. Savaş, *XVI. Asırda Anadolu'da Alevîlik* (Ankara 2002); S. Winter, *The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1788* (Cambridge 2010); A. Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, 'The Formation of Kızılbaş Communities in Anatolia, and Responses, 1450s-1630s', *IJTS*, 20 (2014), 21-48.

[102] It should be noted, however, that most of the Ottoman accounts relate the massacre with a degree of disapproval and try to absolve the Ottoman commander Özdemiroğlu of direct responsibility for them. See Mustafa Ali, *Künhü'l-ahbar. Dördüncü rükn: Osmanlı tarihi*, (Ankara 2009), 530b-531a; Âsafî Dal Mehmed Çelebi, *Şecâ'atnâme: Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa'nın şark seferleri (1578-1585)*, ed. A. Özcan (Istanbul 2006), 540-542; B. Özkuzugüdenli, 'Tâ'lîkî-zâde Mehmed Subhî Tebrîziyye', unpublished M.A. thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2005, 68-70; Y. Zeyrek (ed.), *Târîh-i Osman Paşa: Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşanın Kafkasya fetihleri (H. 986-988/M. 1578-1580) ve Tebriz'in fethi (H. 993/M. 1585)* (Ankara 2001), 71-72; M. Karanfil, 'Harîmî'nin *Zafernâme* ve *Gonca*'sına göre Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa', unpublished M.A. thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1998, 101-102; Selanikî, *Tarih,* 162-163; Peçevî İbrahim, *Tarîh-i Peçevî* (Istanbul 1980), with an index and introduction by F. Ç. Derin and V. Çabuk, 98-99.

[103] For a discussion of the views of Bâlî and Nureddinzade, see Clayer, *Mystiques, état et société*, 78-79, 85-86.

familiar with this region. Likewise, regarding the province of Baghdad, his sole comment was that "the people of Baghdad have been mired in heresy (*ilhad*) and libertinism (*ibahat*) since the time of Hallac-ı Mansur", suggesting only a vague, and rather bookish, familiarity with the confessional make-up and history of this province.[104]

In comparison, Kırımî must have been more familiar with the confessional map of Iran, since he had accompanied Ferhad Pasha into Tabriz in 1586, and since he had followed the development of the rest of the Ottoman-Safavid wars of 1578-1590 quite closely. As we have already seen, Kırımî's discussion of Safavid Iran, both during and after the end of the Ottoman-Safavid campaigns, was extremely negative. In fact, he denied the Safavids even the minimal respect that was granted by Ottoman officials in diplomatic correspondence, and even in some of the Ottoman histories. Rather than acknowledge the Safavid Shah as a rival dynasty, Kırımî described Iran simply as a land overrun by "*Kızılbaş* tribes" and "*Kızılbaş* gypsies" (*Kızılbaş kıptîsi*) and in a permanent state of chaos. It is worth noting that even though tribalism was also a potent force in the Tatar polity as well as in parts of the Ottoman Empire, Kırımî, with close links to the Crimean and Ottoman dynasties, associated tribes with lawlessness and chaos. Simultaneously, he coupled the *Kızılbaş* with the gypsies because he associated both with a lack of respect for Islamic social and religious norms.[105]

In many letters as well as in his *Mawāhib al-raḥmān*, Kırımî gave strong support to the Ottoman campaign against the Safavids, and in one letter, written in 1579, a year after the start of that campaign, he even expressed hope for a total conquest of the Safavid realms.[106] Moreover, even after a peace treaty was signed between the two empires in 1590, he reminded Murad that peace with heretics could not be permanent and he urged the Sultan to come to the aid of the people of Gilan, as they were "Sunni" but were now facing political subjugation by the Safavids.[107] Still, the Crimean sheikh was not an indiscriminate advocate of continual warfare against the Safavids. Quite the contrary: in several letters he composed after the conclusion of the Ottoman-Safavid peace treaty, he stressed the futility of waging war against the Safavids. Interestingly, it was less on an ideological basis and more on pragmatic grounds that Kırımî urged the Sultan to wage war against the "infidels" in the West instead. "If only one-tenth of the effort invested in the Safavid campaigns had been invested in campaigns against the Franks, many lands would have been conquered", he wrote. He also urged the Sultan to take advantage of the peace with the *Kızılbaş* and turn to the much neglected western frontier. Possibly with the Qur'anic verse 2:115 (*Unto Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn, there is Allah's Countenance. Lo! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing*) in mind, he reminded Murad that perfect justice is bounded neither by the West nor by the East.

---

[104] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 40-41.

[105] On the place of and attitudes towards gypsies in the Ottoman Balkans, see E. Marushiakova and V. Popov, *Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire: A Contribution to the History of the Balkans* (Hatfield 2001).

[106] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 92; Yakubovych, 'A Neglected Ottoman Sufi Treatise'.

[107] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 59-61.

Hence if Murad was to perfect his rule, he was not to occupy himself with the conquest of the East alone, but also turn his attention to the West, where the infidels had been harassing Muslims for some time.[108]

It might be presumed that Kırımî's greater enthusiasm about war against the "infidels" in the West reflected, in part, the general mood at the Ottoman court, where many saw the conclusion of the Safavid campaign as an opportunity to attend to more profitable military engagements on other fronts. Circa 1590-1591, different factions had different ideas about which of these fronts they wanted to prioritise. Some favoured going after Venetian-held Crete, while others favoured targeting Malta as part of a broader effort to weaken Spain. To all appearances, Kırımî himself did not have a strong opinion about whether the Ottomans were to take on Venice or Spain. Instead, he advised Murad simply to attend to the "*gaza* on the seas" and try to take Crete *and* Malta.[109] In another letter, possibly written sometime in 1592, he related a dream about the capture of Vienna, seemingly in a gesture of support for those who favoured a war against the Habsburgs instead.[110]

If, however, Kırımî played it safe by making rather generic remarks in support of war against the "Franks", he was far more specific and informed when he advised Murad about how to deal with Poland-Lithuania and Muscovy. It is reasonable to think that the author's Crimean background had much to do with the strong interest he took in these two major powers of eastern Europe. Both the Grand Duchy of Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania were immediate neighbours of the Crimean Khanate, and intricate ties of military conflict and rivalry as well as diplomacy connected the three states closely. Of course, relations with both countries also mattered to the Ottomans, but not as much as did relations with their more immediate rivals, the Safavids and the Habsburgs.

This basic difference between Ottoman and Crimean priorities came to the fore especially during the Ottoman-Safavid wars of 1578-1590. As Ottoman vassals, the Crimeans had to contribute actively to the war efforts, and this took a heavy toll on the security of the Khanate itself, tipping the power balance in favour of Muscovy and Poland-Lithuania and exposing the Khanate to numerous raids by the Muscovites as well as by the irregular Cossack units which inhabited the Ukrainian steppes and were controlled only very loosely by Poland-Lithuania. All these developments caused a good deal of resentment among the Crimean ruling elites,[111] and it is more than likely that Kırımî was also voicing some of this resentment, when he complained about the neglect of the defences of the Empire's western territories during the Ottoman-Safavid wars.[112]

---

[108] Ibid., 96, 116, 186.

[109] Ibid., 7.

[110] Ibid., 88-89.

[111] The mounting tensions had led the Crimean Khan Mehmed II Giray to clash with the Ottoman authorities, and eventually to lose first his post and then his life. The next Khan, İslam Giray, in turn, had had to contend with the threat posed by two sons of Mehmed Giray who had sought refuge in Muscovy, and who periodically attacked the Khanate with the Tatar forces they summoned. On these developments, see D. Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th-18th Century): A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden and Boston 2011), 105-106.

In the late 1580s, however, Ottoman and Crimean interests had begun once more to converge, as both parties blamed Poland-Lithuania for her failure to stop the Cossacks of Dnieper from raiding Ottoman, Crimean, and Moldavian settlements around the Black Sea. In 1587, the Ottomans authorised the Crimeans to organise a punitive raid on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and even sent a contingent of Janissaries to support them in this effort. However, Islam Giray died unexpectedly before the raid was undertaken, and in 1588, the new Khan, Gazi Giray, extended offers of peace to Cracow in return for overdue "gifts". The tensions were once again stirred up when the expected gifts failed to arrive, and there was talk, for a while, of an Ottoman invasion of Poland-Lithuania. It seems that at this point in time, opinion was also divided at the Ottoman court between those who favoured peaceful relations with the Poles (largely because they prioritised military confrontation elsewhere) and those who wanted, rather, an all-out war against them. A powerful official favouring the former position was Koca Sinan Pasha, while the opposing faction included the new *Beglerbegi* of Rumelia, Saatçi Hasan Pasha, and the influential Jewish dignitary David Passi, who had been playing the role of go-between between the Ottoman and Polish courts. Ultimately, it was Sinan Pasha's clique that had its way, mainly by convincing the Sultan that members of the other faction were in the pay of the Spanish or the Venetians, and were purposefully sabotaging Ottoman-Polish relations behind Murad's back. The disgrace of Passi and the arrival of a diplomatic mission from Cracow with the promised gifts finally sealed the Ottoman peace with Poland in 1591.[113]

It seems that Kırımî himself sympathised with the losing faction in this affair. In a letter that he must have written shortly after the arrival of the Polish envoy, the Crimean Sufi expressed relief that the "Polish treasury" (*Leh'in hazinesi*) was finally delivered, and he reported with a touch of disbelief that he had heard rumours that the Poles had promised to send the agreed amounts on a yearly basis thereafter. Even though Kırımî was prudent enough not to go against the prevailing trend at the Ottoman court, he still urged the Sultan not to tolerate similar insolence from these "infidels" in the future. If the Poles are remiss in paying their tribute again, he advised, then the Ottomans should go and simply conquer their lands. To whet Murad's appetite for such a venture, Kırımî portrayed Poland-Lithuania as a weak power, and downplayed the distance that separated this country from the Ottoman capital, claiming that "it would take no more than ten days to go from here to Poland, if only the Black Sea were land".[114]

---

[112] In fact, Kırımî was already addressing these issues in a letter written in 1580. Specifically, he informed the Sultan about the Cossack raids in the vicinity of Akkirman, Bender, and Özü, and reported that people in Kili and Babaeski were said to be 'in great fear and consternation". Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 162.

[113] On the military and diplomatic negotiations between Istanbul, Bahçesaray, and Cracow, see Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate*, 104-109; for a discussion of the complex relations between Cracow, the Polish-Lithuanian nobility, and the Cossacks, see S. Plokhy, *Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford 2001); on the divisions within the Ottoman court on the same issue and the Passi affair, see S. Faroqhi, 'Ein Günstling des osmanischen Sultans Murād III: David Passi', *Der Islam*, 47 (1971), 290-297; E. Özgen, 'The Connected World of Intrigues: the Disgrace of Murad III's Favourite David Passi in 1591', *Leidschrift*, 27 (2012), 75-100; E. S. Gürkan, 'Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-Betweens and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560-1600', *Journal of Early Modern History* 19 (2015), 107-128; Sahillioğlu (ed.), *Koca Sinan Paşa'nın telhisleri*, 12-15, 17-18, 64, 82-83, 90-91, 182-183, 205, 258-260.

Kırımî likewise followed the Ottoman negotiations with Muscovy very closely. In a letter he wrote in Muharrem 1001/October-November 1592, he told the Sultan that he had heard of the arrival of the Muscovite ambassador in Istanbul. He added that if the Muscovites should ask for the renewal of peaceful relations with the Ottomans, a deal could be struck with them so that the Muscovites could get to keep the fortress they had built over the Terek river, but give Astrakhan (Han in the text) and Kazan in return. Muscovy should also promise not to build a fortress over the Kuban river. However, even in the event of such a truce, the Sultan would do well to watch the Muscovites carefully, Kırımî cautioned, as the latter were known for their deceit and as they had close to 10,000 soldiers with rifles in the fortress on the Terek river alone.[115]

It could be argued that Kırımî advised Murad to offer to the Muscovite ambassador terms of peace that served Crimean more than Ottoman interests. The Terek fortress, which the Sufi sheikh was willing to leave in Muscovite hands, was in the North Caucasus and thus much closer to the Ottoman sphere of operation than both Kazan and Astrakhan, which he wanted "back". In fact, it had been the Muscovite construction of the Terek fortress that had first alarmed the Ottomans about Muscovy's expansion to the south, but clearly, by 1592, Muscovite control of this fortress was firmly established, and the issue was now simply to prevent the Muscovites from building further fortresses in the region.

Kazan and Astrakhan, which Murad was supposed to demand from Muscovy, were important former centres of the Golden Horde, whose capture by Moscow in the mid sixteenth century had been a major blow to the Girays, undermining their claims of succession to the Golden Horde, while bestowing on the Grand Duchy of Muscovy a new imperial prestige and aura. Even though Kazan and Astrakhan lay far beyond the Ottomans' conventional areas of operation, between 1567 and 1569 the latter had also briefly toyed with the idea of evicting the Muscovites from Astrakhan by digging a channel between the Don and the Volga and using it to transfer the Ottoman ships and heavy guns up north. Yet the plan had come to nothing, in part because of logistical difficulties and in part because the Crimeans had failed to render the Ottomans their full support, probably because they had not wanted their powerful Ottoman overlords to extend their rule and influence over lands that they regarded as their own patrimony.[116] In any case, after the failure of this project, the Ottomans had lost pretty much all interest in the issue, and it is unlikely that their interest would have been revived at a time when they were turning their attention from their eastern frontiers to the west, and preparing for a new campaign against the Habsburgs. On the other hand, around the time that Kırımî wrote his letter, Gazi II Giray was threatening Muscovy with an Ottoman invasion of Astrakhan to strengthen his hand in negotiations. In this context, it is quite possible that Kırımî gave Murad the advice that he did not because he actually expected the Ottomans to go to war over Kazan and Astrakhan, but because he thought that the renewal of Ottoman demands as to these two important lands would help the Crimean Khan's negotiations with Moscow.

---

[114] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 62-63; also see ibid., 186.

[115] Ibid., 11.

[116] H. İnalcık, 'The Origins of the Ottoman-Russian Rivalry and the Don-Volga Canal (1569)', *Annales de l'Université d'Ankara*, 1 (1946-1947), 47-110; A. N. Kurat, 'The Turkish Expedition to Astrakhan in 1569 and the Problem of the Don-Volga Canal', *Slavonic and East European Review,* 40 (1961), 7-23; A. A. Novoselskiy, *XVII. yüzyılın birinci yarısında Moskova*

Having discussed at some length Kırımî's views on Ottoman policies towards the Empire's non-Sunni Muslim subjects as well as towards non-Sunni and non-Muslim neighbouring states, it might be appropriate to round off this discussion by considering what the Crimean Sufi had to say on Ottoman policies towards the non-Muslim, specifically Jewish and Christian, communities which lived under Ottoman rule. This is a question of considerable significance, since the second half of the sixteenth century also witnessed the beginning of a long process within the Empire whereby the confessional boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims would become progressively hardened. Until now, scholars have tried to account for this process in a number of different ways. Some have stressed the toll that the growing social, political and economic tensions and intensified inter-elite conflicts took on intercommunal relations, while others have put the emphasis instead on the growing weight of shar'i norms among the Ottoman ruling elites as well as ordinary Muslim subjects, leading them to reject the earlier accommodationist policies in favour of policies that would institutionalise the subordinate position of Jews and Christians under the legal category of *dhimmī*hood. Of course, the two explanatory frameworks do not actually exclude each other. In fact, several scholars have pointed out that both religious and pragmatic considerations impacted the policies of the Ottoman state, and that the state authorities actually engaged in a complex process in the intercommunal conflicts that flared up, going along with the Islamising demands when and where it suited them, but restraining them at other times to safeguard intercommunal peace and public order.[117] Interestingly, nevertheless, scholarship has tended to present a more monochrome picture as far as the so-called 'non-state' actors and especially religious figures are concerned. In some of the recent studies, the latter have been portrayed almost exclusively as agents of Islamisation rather than as complex actors with complex material as well as ideological considerations.[118]

---

devletinin Tatarlarla mücadelesi, translated into Turkish by K. Ortaylı, ed. E. Afyonlu and İ. Kamalov (Ankara 2011), 1-42; M. Khodarkovsky, 'The Non-Christian Peoples on the Muscovite Frontiers' in M. Perrie (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Russia*, Vol.1: *From Early Rus' to 1689,* (Cambridge 2002), esp. 317-327; Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate*, 90-111.

[117] For nuanced discussions of the roles played by Ottoman state officials in cases of intercommunal conflict, see R. Gradeva, 'Apostasy in Rumeli in the Middle of the Sixteenth Century', *Arabic Historical Review for Ottoman Studies*, 22 (2000), 29-73; Krstić, *Contested Conversions,* esp. 143-164.

[118] This is especially evident in the growing literature on the Kadızadeli movement of the seven-

Kırımî's letters indicate the need to introduce greater nuance and complexity into our analyses of even the most confessionally-minded religious actors. Remarkably, even though the letters are suffused with a rhetoric of religious antagonism towards "heretics" and "infidels", this rhetoric is not deployed against the Christians and Jews living under Ottoman rule. The only statement in Kırımî's letters that could be construed as showing Islamic zeal against the Empire's Christian subjects would be his celebration of the conversion of the Pammakaristos Church into a mosque circa 1590.[119] This was actually one of several instances in which churches were converted into mosques in this period, but it carried particular significance as the Pammakaristos Church had served as the seat of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate for about a century and a half prior to its conversion. It has been argued that the conversion of Pammakaristos was "driven by two factors: the search for imperial prestige in an age of diminished opportunities and the increasing difficulty of building in Istanbul".[120] Indeed, it was the rather modest Ottoman gains in Georgia against the Safavids that had provided the Ottomans with the pretext to seize the Pammakaristos and rename it the Fethiye (Conquest) Mosque in commemoration. In his comments on the incident, Kırımî himself emphasised the prestige that the conversion of the church conferred on Murad personally, arguing that it had been an act of divine grace (*inayet-i ilâhiyye*) that the Church of Pammakaristos had come intact down to Murad's time, allowing the latter to enjoy the unique honour of conquering this building for Islam. Unlike other sharia-minded commentators who showed an interest in the issue, Kırımî did not, however, urge Murad to convert other churches into mosques. It is true that the royal menagerie he wanted converted into a dervish lodge had once been a Byzantine church, but at the time he was writing, the building had lost its religious significance, or at least function.

If Kırımî diplayed a relatively low dose of religious zeal against the local Christians in his letters to Murad, he did not display even that low dose towards the Jews. In fact, even though the Sufi sheikh barely commented on flesh-and-blood Jews in his letters, he often reminded the Sultan of the importance of the Old Testament prophets revered by both Jews and Muslims, and he urged Murad to take good care of the tomb of Abraham in Jerusalem.[121] This neutral, and even positive, treatment of Judaic themes in Kırımî's letters is quite interesting, and demands further analysis. It is possible that as an Akbarian

---

teenth century. For a particularly monochrome characterisation of the Kadızadelis (and their Ottoman patrons) as diehard agents of Islamisation, see M. D. Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (Oxford 2008); for a more recent study which has emphasised the social and economic dynamics behind the movement, see M. Sariyannis, 'The Kadızadeli Movement as a Social and Political Phenomenon: the Rise of a "Mercantile Ethic"?' in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives from the Bottom-Up in the Ottoman Empire (Halcyon Days in Crete VII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009)* (Rethymno 2012), 263-289.

[119] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 167-168.

[120] M. Greene, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1453 to 1768: the Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh 2015), 65-66.

[121] Güven, 'Çeşitli yönleriyle', 7-10, 16-19, 22-25, 26-28, 32, 52, 92-93,146, 170.

Sufi, Kırımî was simply enacting Ibn Arabi's teaching that each and every Muslim saint would inherit the spiritual legacy of one or more of the earlier prophets; in his case, that of Abraham, with whom he shared his first name.[122] It is also possible, though difficult to prove, that with this kind of statements the Crimean Sufi was subtly taking a more pro-Jewish position at the Ottoman court. This was, after all, a time when the Jewish dignitaries at the Ottoman court were coming under attacks from both disgruntled *kul* soldiers and some high-level officers. While opponents of Jewish court influence often expressed their objection in religio-legal terms, arguing that it went against the sharia and the Sunna to employ "infidels, and especially Jews" in state service, in reality, a variety of social, political, and economic as well as religious factors fuelled the conflicts. The *kul* soldiers, in particular, targeted the Jewish bankers and female courtiers known as *kira*s because they held the latter to be responsible for the monetary instability of the 1580s and 90s, and particularly, for the 1589 debasement of Ottoman coinage, which had reduced their purchasing power by nearly half. Other attacks on individual Jewish dignitaries were rooted in the incipient factionalism of the period, as was the case with the conflict that pitted Koca Sinan Pasha against David Passi. Considering that several of Kırımî's own patrons, including Safiye Sultan and Ferhad Pasha were aligned with the Jewish dignitaries under attack, it is tempting to think that the Crimean Sufi's sympathies, too, lay with the latter rather than with their Muslim critics.[123]

Conclusion

Having discussed various facets of the political advice offered by Kırımî to Murad III between the years 1580 and 1593, we can now conclude by considering some of the broader implications of the letters for our understanding of Ottoman court and confessional politics at the turn of the sixteenth century. To begin with, Kırımî's letters have shown us that a Sufi sheikh and preacher who held no administrative office and who is not known to have done so at any point of his life could nevertheless be deeply involved in Ottoman imperial politics. I have argued that what enabled Kırımî to become a prominent political player was, on the one hand, his proximity to the Sultan as his sheikh and companion, and on the other, his reputation and track record as a sharia-abiding, Sunnitising Sufi. Both of these facets of his identity appear to have served him well in a time when court and confessional politics together constituted much of what we might regard as Ottoman high politics.

---

[122] On Ibn Arabi's prophetology, see M. Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn Arabi* (Cambridge 1993); for an exploration of the use of Akbarian prophetology by another politically-minded Ottoman Sufi, see D. Terzioğlu, 'Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī (1618-94)' *SI*, 94 (2002), 139-165.

[123] On the Jewish bankers, merchants, physicians, and *kira*s connected with the Ottoman court, and the challenges they faced during the reign of Murad III, see J. H. Mordtmann, 'Die jüdischen Kira im Serai der Sultane', *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen*, 32 (1929), 1-38; C. Roth, *The House of Nasi: The Duke of Naxos* (Philadelphia 1948), esp. 187-221; S. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews: Late Middle Ages and Era of European Expansion* (New York and Philadelphia 1983 [2nd ed.]), XVIII:122-181; M. Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul: the Formative Years, 1453-1566* (Leiden and Boston 2010), 197-214; S. A. Skilliter, 'Three Letters from the Ottoman 'Sultana' Sāfiye Sultan to Queen Elizabeth I', in S. M. Stern (ed.), *Documents from Islamic Chanceries* (Cambridge 1965), 119-157.

While proximity to the Sultan had always been an important asset for those who wanted to participate in the making of Ottoman royal policy, recent scholarship has argued that it became even more crucial in the late sixteenth century. A number of different factors are thought to have contributed to this process, from “the sedentarisation of the Sultanate” to the “destabilisation of the Grand Vizierate” and from the empowerment of the palace aghas and royal favourites to the cessation of the practice of princely governorships (which started slightly later, during the reign of Murad’s son and successor Mehmed III). At the same time, however, it has been argued that this development towards ‘absolutism’ was countered by a powerful ‘constitutionalist’ coalition of religious and military elites, who invoked the *kanun* and the sharia to limit royal authority.[124] Finally, a number of pioneering studies in Ottoman conceptual history have traced the emergence of a more depersonalised and more institutionalised understanding of the Ottoman state in the writings of Ottoman literati between the late sixteenth and late seventeenth centuries.[125]

While this study has concerned itself with a more micro-level, synchronic analysis of Ottoman imperial politics in the late sixteenth century, some of its findings might also have a bearing on what has been said so far about the transformation of Ottoman political culture during the early modern period. For instance, the letters reveal no evidence that there was anything resembling an ‘absolutist’ versus ‘constitutionalist’ divide in the Ottoman court in this period. In fact, just about every major player in the sixteenth-century Ottoman court can be said to have paid lipservice to the ‘absolute’ power of the Ottoman Sultan, regardless of his or her social and political affiliations and opinions. What is perhaps more crucial to note is that such lip service did not translate into ‘absolute’ power for the Ottoman Sultan. In fact, one could easily say of the Ottoman Sultans in the late sixteenth century what has already been said about the paradigmatically ‘absolutist’ French monarchs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, namely that, in actual practice, the power of these rulers was far from absolute, and depended on the successful management and co-option of diverse power groups within their realms. Along the same lines, the Ottoman royal court, too, was not just a site for the performance of the Ottoman rites of sovereignty and the production of cultural forms representing the power and magnificence of the Ottoman Sultans, but also a political platform where members of the ruling elites vied with one another to ‘influence’ the Ottoman ruler and royal policy. Kırımî himself was no exception. Even as this Sufi courtier eulogised Murad as the “shadow of God on earth” and the “renewer of faith”, he also felt free to inform, advise, and sometimes gently rebuke the Sultan on a wide variety of religious and political matters, no doubt conveying in the process not just his own thoughts and concerns but also those of his diverse patrons and clients.

---

[124] Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*.

[125] M. Sariyannis, ‘Ruler and State, State and Society in Ottoman Political Thought’, *THR*, 4 (2013), 83-117.

While the early modern Ottoman state has been described as a polity with both ‘bureaucratic’ and ‘patrimonial’ features, Kırımî’s letters point to a political system in which relations of patronage and clientage weighed far more than seemingly impersonal rules and regulations. In letter upon letter, the Sufi sheikh put in a good word for various officials in the military administration, the palace, and the religio-legal establishment with the aim of procuring for them better positions, or more often, to help them preserve their current positions, which was a difficult task given the rapid turnover of officials in this period. It is striking that when Kırımî recommended an official, he often stressed how he was personally indebted to the said official. Clearly, the reciprocity of patron-client relations and the exchange of favours and benefits were such taken-for-granted features of Ottoman court politics that Kırımî did not feel the need to hide his personal interests in recommending this or that official to the Sultan. Of course, in several instances, he also stressed the recommended officials’ loyalty to the Sultan and their previous good service, but in general, ‘experience’ and ‘expertise’ were not central features of his political discourse, as they arguably were of the political discourse of a number of military administrators and civil bureaucrats in this period.[126] Neither do we see any references to *kanun* or Ottoman state law and tradition in Kırımî’s letters, as we see in the political tracts and histories written by some other members of the Ottoman imperial administration.

It could be argued that Kırımî as the Sultan’s sheikh with no administrative position represented the more ‘patrimonial’ features of the Ottoman political system, while its ‘bureaucratic’ face was represented by writers who held offices in one of the three principal branches of the state. This is a defensible position, provided that we remember that there were also serious limits to the sixteenth-century Ottoman bureaucratic mentality. As the letters of Kırımî remind us, members of the imperial administration, too, owed their offices in no small part to patron-client relations. Moreover, it remains an open question how much the Ottoman holders of administrative offices internalised principles that we associate with the bureaucratic mindset such as the separation of functions. For instance, Koca Sinan Pasha, who, like Mustafa Âli, argued that the job of preachers was strictly to recite Qur’anic verses and hadiths and not to meddle in ‘state affairs’, was not averse, when he saw it fit, to advising the Sultan about “his afterlife”, or to quoting verses from the Qur’an to get him on his side.[127]

This brings me to the third and last general issue, on which Kırımî’s letters shed light: namely, the uses of religion and specifically, Sunni confessionalism, in sixteenth-century Ottoman politics. Until recently, the rise of Sunni confessionalism in the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire was discussed in a largely state-centric framework, as the result of state action, taken in response to the Shiitising policies of the rival Safavid dynasty, on the one hand, and to the multiple challenges of ruling a multi-ethnic, multi-religious empire, on the other. As scholars have begun to pay closer attention to the political developments and to the intellectual output of this period, however, a more nuanced picture has begun to emerge of sixteenth-century Ottoman confessionalism.[128] In a similar vein, this study, too, has been an attempt to bring to the fore both the multiplicity of agents involved in the making of Ottoman Sunnism and the complexity of considerations that informed their positions.

---

[126] On the importance of ‘expertise’ in early modern European state-building, see E. H. Ash, ‘Expertise and the Early Modern State’, *Osiris*, 25 (2010), 1-24.

[127] Sahillioğlu (ed.), *Koca Sinan Paşa’nın telhisleri*, 12-16.

In a sense, Kırımî's letters might seem a peculiar choice for a scholar who wishes to introduce greater complexity to our understanding of sixteenth-century Ottoman confessional politics, since the Crimean writer belonged to a line of Sufis who had lent their active support to the Ottoman Sunnitisation efforts for about three generations, and since he, too, continued this position in his own lifetime. Add to this the fact that as a preacher in one of the most prestigious royal mosques in Istanbul as well as the Sultan's sheikh, Kırımî would almost certainly have considered himself to be a member of the imperial establishment. For all these reasons, it is not surprising to find a high degree of matching between Kırımî's religious discourse and what is sometimes labelled 'official' religious discourse at this period. In particular, Kırımî's emphasis on the performance of the canonical religious rituals, and especially, the five daily prayers as an indicator of orthodoxy, his synthesis of sharia-abiding Sufism with Sunnism, and his equation of *Kızılbaş* Islam with political treason were in perfect alignment with the dominant religio-political outlook among the Ottoman ruling elites in the last decades of the sixteenth century.

At the same time, however, this study has also revealed that as important as Sunni Islam was for Kırımî as a source of religious *and* political identity, it did not provide him with a ready-made political agenda. In fact, like other political players in this period, Kırımî was quite discriminating, when it came to advising the Ottoman Sultan about specific policies. Certain matters that we associate with the sharia-minded politics of this period – such as calls for banishing Jews and Christians from state service, converting churches into mosques, or imposing sartorial restrictions on non-Muslims – are discussed only marginally, or do not figure at all in Kırımî's letters. While we can only speculate about the social and political connections that might have made the Sufi sheikh less than vigilant on these matters, it is easier to account for the specificities of his foreign policy recommendations. It is quite clear, for instance, that in the early 1590s, Kırımî was much more enthusiastic about a possible Ottoman war against the Poles or the Muscovites than about the possibility of war against the Spanish, the Venetians, or for that matter, even the Safavids. It is quite clear, too, that his preferences had more to do with his desire to protect Crimean territorial interests than a concern for religious glory.

---

[128] For recent notable studies that highlight the complexity of Ottoman religious and political alignments in the early sixteenth century, see Z. Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman Empire: The Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age* (Abingdon 2012) and E. Çıpa, *The Making of Selim: Succession, Legitimacy, and Memory in the Early Modern Ottoman World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis 2017).

In fact, Kırımî was not unlike other Ottoman court players with his multiple loyalties and affiliations. Recent research has shown that once in positions of power, Ottoman administrators of *devşirme* background often reactivated their ties to their original families and homelands, and tried to safeguard the interests of their family members and even their original countries without necessarily compromising their service to the Ottoman house. Even though as a freeborn Muslim and a member of the Crimean ruling elite, Kırımî's standing at the Ottoman court must have been different from that of *kul* administrators, his ability to serve *both* Ottoman *and* Crimean political interests is still strongly reminiscent of the endeavours of, say, Gazanfer Ağa or Cigalazade Sinan Pasha to safeguard Venetian interests even while serving the Ottoman house as a loyal Sunni Muslim administrator.

This article has argued that we also have to take into consideration all these personal ties and group loyalties when we examine how confessionalism worked as a political force in the early modern Ottoman Empire. In this regard, one of the important conclusions of this study has been that confessionalism in the sixteenth-century Ottoman context was less the straightforward implementation of religious 'ideology' from the top down, and more the working out of a loose set of religio-political orientations whose formulation (not to mention implementation) was mediated in practice by power relations as well as by personal and group loyalties.

THE PORTRAIT OF THE PREACHER AS A YOUNG MAN: TWO AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LETTERS BY KADIZADE MEHMED FROM THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

for Michael Cook

Baki TEZCAN[*]

KADIZADE MEHMED (D. 1635) IS A WELL-KNOWN NAME for those who are interested in the quotidian politics of the mid to late seventeenth-century Ottoman capital, not to mention the provinces. The Kadızadelis and their revivalist interpretation of Islam, as well as their social ties and political alliances, have been the subject of various studies.[1] What we know about Kadızade Mehmed himself, however, has been limited to, mostly, what Kâtip Çelebi (d. 1657) wrote about him.[2] In this study I introduce two letters that Kadızade wrote himself, in which he provides some further details about his early education and career in Istanbul. While these autobiographical letters do not contradict what his one-time student Kâtip Çelebi wrote about him, they do provide some important details, complicating what one perceives from Kâtip Çelebi's account and also supplying evidence which supports the important nuances Dina Le Gall and Derin Terzioğlu's studies brought to the earlier portrayal of the Kadızadeli – Sivasi conflict as one between 'orthodoxy' and Sufism. The first and shorter part of the chapter presents the context of the letters, the second section focuses on the new biographical details which the letters provide, the third part concentrates on the authorship of some political works which, thanks to these letters, can now be safely attributed to Kadızade Mehmed, and the last section articulates some of the political implications of these new details for a more nuanced understanding of Kadızade and his contemporary and posthumous followers, the Kadızadelis.

---

[*] UC Davis. I would like to thank the organisers of the Halcyon Days in Crete IX Symposium, Antonis Anastasopoulos, Elias Kolovos, and Marinos Sariyannis for giving me an opportunity to share my work. I am also indebted to the participants, especially Derin Terzioğlu, for their feedback, which shaped the first draft of the present chapter. I must acknowledge a UC Davis Academic Senate Small Grant which helped me finance part of the research for this study which involved a trip to Cairo. I am grateful to Amira Ayman, who kindly helped me in Cairo in securing a digital copy of the manuscript that most of this article is based on, and to the UC Davis Humanities Institute for providing me with a fellowship which allowed me to complete the first draft of this study in the spring of 2016. I owe special thanks to Derin Terzioğlu, who read that draft and offered invaluable feedback, which led me to reconsider and revise the framework of the conclusion. I am also indebted to Şükrü Hanioğlu for checking my reading of a handwritten note, to Hossein Modarressi for his generous help in identifying one of the Persian texts in the manuscript of central importance for this study, to Lucia Raggetti, who examined one of the treatises in the same manuscript, to Mehmet Kalaycı, who mailed me a copy of his book that was not available in American research libraries, and to the anonymous reviewer who provided comments and suggestions which shaped the final version of the article. I would like to dedicate this piece to Michael Cook, Class of 1943 University Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, where I was lucky enough to attend several of his seminars, including the one on primary sources of Islamic Studies which offered the kind of graduate training which I recalled with a great deal of appreciation while working on this piece. He has continued to read my work and provide invaluable advice whenever I sought his help since I left Princeton, including with this piece, which he was kind enough to read, to correct my reading or translation of some of the Arabic material, and to ask several important questions about it. I was not able to address all his questions adequately in the final version; and I am, of course, responsible for all the remaining shortcomings.

[1] A representative –but by no means exhaustive– list would include A.Y. Ocak, ‘XVII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda dinde tasfiye (püritanizm) teşebbüslerine bir bakış: ‘Kadızâdeliler Hareketi’’, *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları,* 17-21 (1983), 208-225; N. Öztürk, ‘Islamic Orthodoxy

The context of the letters

The letters are not autographs. They are copies included in a *mecmua* of the early eighteenth century which contains, among other works most of which are in Arabic, Kadızade Mehmed's Turkish treatise on horses: *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*.[3] The *mecmua*, and

---

Among the Ottomans in the Seventeenth Century – with special reference to the Qādi-Zāde movement', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1981; M. Zilfi, 'The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies,* 45 (1986): 251-269; eadem, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis 1988), 97-181; S. Çavuşoğlu, 'The Ḳāḍīzādeli Movement: an Attempt of Şerīʿat-Minded Reform in the Ottoman Empire', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1990; C. Gündoğdu, 'XVII. yüzyılda tekke-medrese münâsebetleri açısından Sivâsîler – Kadı-zâdeliler Mücâdelesi', *İLAM Araştırma Dergisi,* 3 (1998), 37-75; D. Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyāzī-i Mıṣrī (1618-1694)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999, 190-276; D. Le Gall, 'Kadizadelis, Nakşbendis, and Intra-Sufi Diatribe in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *TSAJ,* 28 (2004), 1-28; idem, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandīs in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700* (Albany 2005), 150-156; M. Sariyannis, 'The Kadızadeli Movement as a Social and Political Phenomenon: The Rise of a "Mercantile Ethic"?' in *Political Initiatives "From the bottom up" in the Ottoman Empire: Halcyon Days in Crete VII – A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009*, ed. A. Anastasopoulos (Rethymno 2012), 263-289.

[2] Kātib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, trans. G. L. Lewis (London 1957), 132-133; idem, *Fezleke*, 2 vols (Istanbul H.1286-1287/1869-1870), II:182-183; see also Ibrahim bin Abd al-Baki Uşakizade, *'Ušaqizade's Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Gelehrter und Gottesmänner des Osmanischen Reiches im 17. Jahrhundert (Zeyl-i Šaqâ'iq)'*, ed. H. J. Kissling (Wiesbaden 1965), 43-45.

[3] The copy of the treatise is described in *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-turkiyya al-ʿuthmāniyya allatī iqtanathā Dār al-Kutub al-Qawmiyya mundhu ʿām 1870 ḥattá nihāyat 1980 M*, 5 vols (Cairo 1987-1997), III:296-297 (for a reference to one of the letters, see at 296, n. 1); the *mecmua* is categorised under Turkish *mecmua*s with the call number 97 Majāmiʿ Turkī Ṭalʿat (97

perhaps its master copy too, must have belonged to Damadzade Ahmed (d. 1741), as a note on the flyleaf indicates that he had the copy made in 1714, when he was the senior justice of the European provinces.[4] Damadzade Ahmed came from a scholar-jurist family. His father Mustafa (d. 1684), originally from Çankırı in northern Anatolia, affiliated himself in Istanbul with Şamizade Mehmed, who served as the chief of the chancery (*reisülküttab*) during the 1650s and the early 1660s.[5] Mustafa eventually became the senior justice of the Asian provinces in 1670-72.[6] Ahmed's maternal grandfather was Minkarizade Yahya (d. 1678), who was Grand Mufti in 1662-74.[7] Ahmed himself and his son Feyzullah were to become Grand Muftis in 1732-33 and 1755-56, respectively.[8] In short, the manuscript belonged to someone well-entrenched in the scholar-jurist aristocracy.

The contents of Damadzade's manuscript, which is described on its flyleaf as a collection pertaining to Prophetic traditions,[9] have not much to do with Prophetic traditions. The first piece is Omar Khayyam's Arabic treatise on existence and responsibility (*kawn wa'l-taklīf*), which was written in 473/1080-81.[10] The second one is a Persian work, Abdullah-ı İlâhî (d. c. 1491)'s *Manāzil al-qulūb*, which is a commentary on the fifth part of the *Risāla-i Quds* by Ruzbihan al-Baqli (d. 1209).[11] After two short extracts on two

---

MTT hereafter) in the Dar al-Kutub al-Qawmiyya, the National Library of Egypt. For a modern Turkish adaptation of this treatise, see Kadızade Mehmed, *Kitab-ı Makbul: atalarımızın gözüyle at*, ed. T. Galip Ser'atlı (Istanbul 1986); for the question of authorship, see below, n. 177. For a short summary of the treatise and a list of several of its manuscripts, see M. Şen, 'Baytarnameler', in *Türk kültüründe at ve çağdaş atçılık*, ed. E. Gürsoy-Naskali (Istanbul 1995), 177-263, at 188-189.

[4] "*Istaktabahu al-faqīr Aḥmad qāḍī bi-ʿasākir Rūm Īlī, kāfaʾa Allāh la-hu wa-li-aslāfihi wa-akhlāfihi, sanat 1126*", 97 MTT, f. IIa – I would like to thank Şükrü Hanioğlu for taking the time to confirm my reading of this grammatically somewhat problematic note. The pagination of the manuscript, which I could only examine through a digital copy of its microfilm, is not perfect. By "flyleaf", I am referring to the first couple of folios, which I am numbering as I and II, starting to count the left-hand side of the third manuscript image on the microfilm as f. 1a so that my pagination is consistent with the pagination of the manuscript in the later folios. The copy date of H.1126/1714 is also noted in *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-turkiyya*, III:297.

[5] Ahmed Resmî Efendi, *Halifetü'r-rüesa*, reprint indexed by R. Ahıskalı (Istanbul 1992), 39-40.

[6] Uşakizade, *'Ušaqizade's Lebensbeschreibungen*, 515-517.

[7] *TDVİA,* s.v. 'Minkārîzâde Yahyâ Efendi' (M. İpşirli),

[8] *TDVİA,* s.v. 'Damadzâde Ahmed Efendi' (M. İpşirli); *TDVİA,* s.v. 'Feyzullah Efendi, Damadzâde' (M. İpşirli); for other members of the family, see H. Duran, 'Çankırılı bir ulemâ ailesi: "Damad-zâdeler"', *Çankırı Araştırmaları Dergisi,* 4 (2009), 85-90.

[9] "*Majmūʿa fī ʿilm al-ḥadīth wa-ghayrihi*," f. 1a.

[10] 97 MTT, ff. 1b-6a; for an edition and English translation of this treatise, see S. G. Tirtha, *The Nectar of Grace: 'Omar Khayyām's Life and Works*, trans. A. Quddus (Allahabad 1941), lxxxiii-lxxxix, xlv-xlvi, xc-xcix; for a brief assessment of it, see S. H. Nasr, 'The Poet-Scientist Khayyām as Philosopher', in *Mélanges Luce López-Baralt*, ed. A. Temimi, 2 vols (Zaghouan 2001), II:535-553, at 542-543.

[11] 97 MTT, ff. 7b-23a; described by N.A.M. al-Tirazi, *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-fārisiyya allatī taqtanīhā Dār al-Kutub ḥattā ʿām 1963*, 2 vols (Cairo 1966-67), II: 182, # 2302; this version of the work has some variations, including the date of composition, which is noted as "*awākhir Ra-*

Prophetic traditions which pertain to the relationship between jurisprudence, principles of religion, and mysticism (the "hadith of Gabriel"), and to invoking blessings on the Prophet, respectively, the fifth work is Ibn Arabi (d. 1240)'s own list of his writings.[12] Then comes an Arabic treatise on the plague consisting of selections from Yusuf Ibn Abd al-Hadi's (a.k.a. Ibn al-Mibrad, d. 1503) *Funūn al-munūn fī'l-wabāʾ wa'l-ṭāʿūn*, which is a collection of Prophetic traditions on the plague.[13] The next two short pieces on medicine, also in Arabic, are those of the great polymath al-Razi (d. 925): *Burʾ al-sāʿa* and *Risāla fī'l-nazla*.[14] The ninth work in the manuscript is a treatise on the properties of animals, trees, plants, jewels, minerals, and stones entitled the *ʿAyn al-khawāṣṣ*.[15] Finally,

---

jab, sanat 888 (August-September 1483)" [f. 21b] from the published version, which carries the date of H.889/1484; compare M. Taqi Danish-pazhuh, ed., *Rūzbihān-nāma* (Tehran 1347), 64-66, 387-421, at 420-421 – note the added *alif* to the chronogram in the published version. While al-Tirazi attributes the title to al-Baqli and notes that the commentary is that of Abdullah-ı İlâhî, the title is the title of the commentary. The manuscript which the published version is based on is described by Muhammad Taqi Danish-pazhuh, *Fihrist-i mīkrūfīlmhā-yi Kitābkhāna-i Markazī-i Dānishgāh-i Tihrān* (Tehran 1348), 778-779, #2998. I am grateful to Hossein Modarressi for his help in properly identifying this work by locating a copy of it in the *Rūzbihān-nāma* which I did not have access to. For Abdullah-ı İlâhî, a sheikh from Anatolia who is regarded as the first representative of the Nakşibendi order in Ottoman lands, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Abdullah-ı İlâhî' (M. Kara and H. Algar), I:110-112; for Ruzbihan al-Baqli, see C. W. Ernst, *Rūzbihān Baqlī: Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism* (Richmond 1996).

[12] See 97 MTT, f. 24 for the two extracts (ff. 23b and 25 are blank), and ff. 25b-31a for Ibn Arabi's list of his own works. The source of the extracts, which are anonymous in the manuscript, could be Abd al-Wahhab al-Subki (d. 1370)'s *Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿiyya al-kubrā*, eds. Mahmud Muhammad al-Tanahi and Abd al-Fattah Muhammad al-Hilw, 10 vols (Cairo 1964-1976), I:117-118, 180-181. Ibn Arabi's list is probably another copy of the one which Ibn Arabi composed for Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi (d. 1273); see J. Clark and S. Hirtenstein, 'Establishing Ibn ʿArabī's Heritage: First findings from the MIAS Archiving Project', *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*, 52 (2012), 1-32, at 1, n. 2.

[13] 97 MTT, ff. 31b-35a; a complete copy of this treatise is to be found at the Topkapı Palace Library; see F. E. Karatay and O. Reşer, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 4 vols (Istanbul 1962-1969), II:254, # 3026; see also Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, eds Ş. Yaltkaya and K. R. Bilge, 2 vols (Istanbul 1941-1943), II:1292; on the author, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'İbnü'l-Mibred' (F. Koca).

[14] 97 MTT, ff. 36b-39a, and 39b-41b, respectively. For the former, see al-Razi, 'Kitab burʾ al-sāʿa', ed. Duktur Gig [Paul Guigues] *al-Mashriq*, 6 (1903), 395-402. I could not identify an edition of the latter, which seems to be a copy of a letter al-Razi wrote in response to a question he received from Shahid bin al-Husayn al-Balkhi about a malady of Abu Zayd Ahmad bin Sahl al-Balkhi (d. 934), another great physician; see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Râzî, Ebû Bekir' (M. Kaya); *TDVİA* s.v. 'Belhî, Ebû Zeyd' (İ. Kutluer).

[15] 97 MTT, ff. 42b-49a (f. 42a is blank). While the author is mentioned in the manuscript as Naw Asghar bin Rustam, I could not identify this person. Kâtip Çelebi attributes this title, which he does not seem to have seen as he does not provide any information on it, to a certain al-Daylami, see *Keşf-el-zunun*, II:1182. M. al-Damiri (d. 1405) refers to al-Daylami's *ʿAyn al-khawāṣṣ* in his *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān (A Zoological Lexicon)*, trans. A. S. G. Jayakar, Vol. 2, part I (London 1908), 171, 209. Lucia Raggetti, a scholar of medieval science in Arabic, kindly examined the first section of the treatise devoted to animals and also identified additional references by

the last piece before Kadızade's writings is an anonymous page-long report in Turkish on good and inauspicious marks on horses.[16]

In short, Damadzade Ahmed (and the owner of the master copy of this manuscript or the receiver of the copy which Damadzade had made) seems to have been interested in such things as philosophy, mysticism, medicine, the natural world, and horses. It is clearly these wide-ranging interests which must have attracted the owner(s) to Kadızade's Turkish treatise on horses, which is the last piece in the manuscript.[17] It is preceded by the endorsement (*takriz*) of the Grand Mufti Esad and a title page recording the name of the work, its presentation to Osman II (r. 1618-22), who was known to have been fond of horses, and the name and the occupation of the author.[18] The two autobiographical letters of Kadızade are copied immediately before the preface.[19] What is at first sight rather surprising is to find Kadızade in the company of philosophers and Sufis, especially Ibn Arabi, whom Kadızadelis are well known to have regarded as an infidel.[20] As will be shown in this study, however, Kadızade himself seems to have had mixed feelings about him in his twenties.

Kadızade's letters are addressed to Hocazade Mehmed, who served as Grand Mufti in 1601-03, and then again from June 1608 until his death in July 1615. One of the biographical details provided by Kadızade himself suggests that he could not have written these letters before 1609 and another one makes it more likely that he wrote them after 1611;[21] so we can date them roughly to the first half of 1610s. While the letters themselves are in Arabic, they are introduced by statements in Turkish which were originally written by Kadızade Mehmed himself – perhaps as titles in his letter collection or private papers.[22] The introduction of the first letter reads:

---

al-Damiri to the work of al-Daylami. According to her analysis, the treatise in this manuscript is not identical to the *ʿAyn al-khawāṣṣ* referred to in the *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān*, although there are some resemblances. Thus she suggests that the treatise in the manuscript may be an abridgement of al-Daylami's work, or an adaptation. Her conclusion is that the available evidence does not lend itself to a definitive conclusion about the question of whether Naw Asghar bin Rustam may be the same person as al-Daylami. I am deeply grateful to Dr Raggetti for examining the treatise with such care.

[16] 97 MTT, f. 49b (f. 50a is blank); another copy of this short notice seems to be found in Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi 3695, ff. 123b-124a, where it precedes a copy of Kadızade's treatise on horses; see Şen, 208, #44.

[17] 97 MTT, ff. 57b-76a.

[18] 97 MTT, ff. 56b-57a, the latter page is also to be found in another copy of the *Kitab-ı makbul*; see Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Kadızade Mehmed 420 (possibly an autograph), f. 1a. For Osman II's interest in horses, see B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York 2010), 118-19.

[19] 97 MTT, ff. 50b-55b (f. 56a is left blank).

[20] Öztürk, 'Islamic orthodoxy', 401-404.

[21] See p. 204 below.

[22] Kadızade must have had some private papers which had some limited circulation as attested by the copy of his record of a dream he had on 2 December 1629; see Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. T 17, 1b-2b.

> This letter was written and sent when we heard that mischievous enviers were talking nonsense with invention of lies to the late and praiseworthy Mufti Mehmed Efendi in order to make him hate this well-wisher of his.[23]

Right after this statement in Turkish, Kadızade's first letter starts with an invocation of God and four citations from the Qur'an:[24]

> O you who believe, if a dissolute person brings some news, verify it first lest you attack a people ignorantly and later regret what you had done [Qur'an, 49:6].
>
> … and (when) you said what you did not know, and took it lightly – though in the sight of God it was serious – Why did you not say when you heard it: "It is not for us to speak of it; God preserve us, it is a great slander"? God counsels you not to do a thing like this… [Qur'an, from 24:15-17]
>
> Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge… [Qur'an, from 17:36]
>
> Do not heed a contemptible swearer, or backbiter, calumniator, slanderer [Qur'an, 68:10-11].

Kadızade then paraphrases al-Ghazali's (d. 1111) discussion of slander from the third volume of the *Revival of Religious Sciences* by stating that scholars had laid down six concerns which someone to whom slanderous remarks about someone else is communicated is obliged to have. First, he should not believe the slanderer as the latter is a sinner. Second, he should forbid him to slander people and denounce his action in accordance with God's words: "bid what is known to be right and forbid what is wrong (Qur'an, from 31:17)". Third, he should hate him for God's sake because he is defying God. Fourth, he should not suspect the absent and slandered man of evil as God demands one to "avoid most suspicions (Qur'an, from 49:12)". Fifth, he should not try to gain information about the facts of the matter as God states: "do not pry into others' secrets (Qur'an, from 49:12)". And, finally, he should not relate his slander to others as he would then become a slanderer himself.[25]

After relating two anecdotes from al-Ghazali's chapter on slander in an abbreviated fashion,[26] Kadızade amends a third anecdote to better suit his needs. Al-Ghazali relates a story about the Umayyad Caliph Sulayman (r. 715-17) in which Sulayman asserts to someone who came to him that he had heard that the latter spoke negatively about him.

---

[23] "Merhûm ve mebrur Müfti Mehmed Efendi'ye bu dailerini tebgiz içün hussad-ı fesad ihtira-ı müfteriyat idüb türrehat söyledikleri mesmumuz oldukda bu varaka ketb olunub irsal olunmuşdı", 97 MTT, f. 50b.

[24] Ibid., The English translations of the Qur'anic verses quoted by Kadızade Mehmed are based on *Al-Qur'ān*, rev. trans. A. Ali (Princeton 2001) throughout this chapter.

[25] See al-Ghazali, *Revival of Religious Sciences*, trans. M. M. al-Sharif, 4 vols (Beirut 2011), III:257-58; my paraphrase in this paragraph is based on Kadızade's Arabic text, reproduced in the appendix to this chapter with references to the Arabic text of al-Ghazali.

[26] These are the ones on a sage visited by one of his brethren who gave him news about one of his friends and the response of Ali (the fourth Caliph, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet) to someone who carried slanderous news about someone else; see al-Ghazali, *Revival of Religious Sciences*, III:258-259, and the appendix of this chapter.

The man rejects the Caliph's allegation. Then the Caliph states that the man he heard it from is a truthful person. Al-Zuhri (d. 742), a well-known scholar who happened to be in the presence of the Caliph, states that a slanderer would not be truthful. The Caliph agrees with al-Zuhri and tells the man to leave in peace.[27] Kadızade substitutes al-Zuhri for the well-known early Hanafi jurist Abu Yusuf (d. 798), thus moving the story to Abbasid times, does not name the Caliph, and edits the unnamed man who comes into the presence of the Caliph out of the story.[28] The revised version starts with an anonymous man slandering Abu Yusuf to the Caliph, who could be imagined as Harun al-Rashid (r. 786-809). The Caliph tells Abu Yusuf: "you said such and such". Abu Yusuf responds: "I did not say that". The Caliph asserts that a trustworthy man reported it to him. When Abu Yusuf reminds the Caliph that a slanderer would not be trustworthy, the Caliph agrees and resents the slanderer.[29] Clearly, Kadızade would like to be compared to Abu Yusuf and hopes that the Grand Mufti will act like the Abbasid Caliph in his story, which he attributes to al-Ghazali.[30]

Then Kadızade inserts two couplets of Arabic and 14 couplets of Persian verse, which he adapts –without acknowledgment– from one of the poems of al-Nabigha (d. c. 604), and the first and seventh chapters of Sadi (d. 1291)'s *Bostān*:[31]

I swore—and I left no doubt in your mind
and a man has no pursuit beyond God.
Surely, if you had been informed of crime on my part,
then your embroidering informant was indeed false and lying.[32]

Beware that you hear not the speech of the designing man;
Because, if you set to work (on his speech), you will repent.
An enemy, whom my position disgraced,
It is necessary to fly from his deceit to the distance of a league

---

[27] Ibid., III:258-259.

[28] On al-Zuhri and Abu Yusuf, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Zührî' (H. Özkan); and *TDVİA* s.v. 'Ebû Yûsuf' (S. Öğüt); respectively.

[29] 97 MTT, f. 50b.

[30] While there is the remote possibility that the copy of the *Revival* manuscript Kadızade used included this version of the story, I find it rather unlikely. Kadızade seems to have decided to skip the original version of this story at first as the anecdote about Ali, which he relates before this story, actually comes after it in al-Ghazali's chapter on slander; compare *Revival of Religious Sciences*, III:258-259. It is also quite likely that Kadızade was not using an actual manuscript of the *Revival* but instead writing from memory.

[31] All of the following poetry is skipped in the other copy of the letter (A 2688, 62b), which I introduce below; see n. 41 and the appendix.

[32] Keeping in mind the variants in Kadızade's version of the distichs (see the appendix of this study), I have adapted this translation from A. J. Arberry, *Arabic Poetry: A Primer for Students* (London 1965), 34, lines 3-4; note that his Arabic edition (35) has a variant in the first line of the second distich when compared with a more recent critical edition (see the appendix).

> But, I fear not the king’s wrath;
> For an innocent one is bold in his speech.
> If the inspector of measures seizes, there is sorrow to that one
> whose weight of the standard balance-weight is deficient.
> When words flow correctly from my pen,
> What fear have I of the word-seizers?
> Oh, the lucky one! That is not my form,
> but the pencil is in the hand of the enemy.
> Since the skirt (of my garment) is free from (the stain of) crime,
> I fear not the malignity of the evil-intent one.
> The faithful one is a basin, and the evil-intent one an ant;
> The ant cannot make a breach in the basin by force.
> In like manner I have a good name; but,
> For his own interests, the evil-intent one speaks not good (of me).[33]
>
> Whosoever tells to you “so and so is a bad man”;
> Know this much, that he is slandering himself.
> For (while) it is necessary to prove that one’s bad deed,
> (This one’s) evil is made manifest by this act.
> In the act of breathing (speaking) ill of mankind,
> Even if you speak truth, you are bad.
> A person let loose his tongue in slander;
> A sagacious and eminent one spoke to him:
> “In speaking of people, malign them not before me;
> Make me not suspicious of yourself”.[34]

The Qur’anic citations, the story of Abu Yusuf and the Abbasid caliph, and the Arabic and Persian couplets all lead the reader to anticipate that Kadızade is going to defend himself against some allegations in this letter. We finally read about these allegations after a page and a half:

> I hear from my friends that people say about me that “he reviles the Greatest Sheikh [i.e., Ibn Arabi] and denies the saints”. I am free from both (of these charges) because reviling someone is among the acts of fools and the denial of truth among the distinguishing marks of the ignorant. God the Sublime already blessed me –praise be to God!– with that which is necessary from the Arabic (linguistic) and rational sciences and religious and legal knowledge for me to distinguish between healthy and sick, strong and weak, and the erroneous and the correct.

---

[33] 97 MMT, 50b-51a; *Kolliyāt-e Sa‘dī*, ed. M. Ali Faroghi, (Tehran 1379 [7th printing]), 196, 195, 194, 192, 195; keeping in mind Kadızade’s version of the verses (see the appendix), I have adapted this translation from H. Wilberforce Clarke, *The Bústán by Shaikh Muslihuddín Sa‘dí Shírází* (London 1879), 52 (verse 247), 49-50 (verses 222-225), 49 (verse 219), 48 (verse 202), 44 (verse 160), 49 (verse 221); and Ziauddin Gulam Moheddin Munshi, *The Bostan of Shaikh Sadi*, rev. R. Davies (Bombay 1889), 34 (verse 33), 32 (verses 7-8, 11, 9, 4), 31 (verse 76), 28 (verse 34), 32 (verse 6).

[34] 97 MTT, 51a; *Kolliyāt-e Sa‘dī*, 319-320; the translation is adapted from Clarke, *The Bústán*, 314 (verses 136-40), and Munshi, *The Bostan*, 210 (verses 3-5), 211 (verses 3-4), keeping in mind Kadızade’s version of the verses (see the appendix).

In the next part of the first letter Kadızade lists some of the books he had studied in order to impress upon the Grand Mufti that he is neither a fool nor an ignorant man, but a well-read scholar.[35] He ends this brief bibliography by stating that earlier he had also read Ibn Arabi's *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* and wrote down parts of it in a *mecmua* of his own. However, in 1014/1605-6, he came across four books which created a great ambivalence in his heart about Ibn Arabi because they included hundreds of fatwas against him.[36] Thus he related what he had read to some contemporary scholars, who instructed him to suspend judgement about Ibn Arabi. Kadızade states that he followed their instructions and stopped mentioning him after that time. And yet what he related about the things he had read about Ibn Arabi became known among the people. So his enemies traced these back to him and rushed to grandees to take revenge on him with their complaints.

Kadızade concludes by declaring that on the Day of Judgment it will become clear who is truthful and who is a liar. He does not state anything but the truth. Yet the truth is bitter, whereas falsehood is sweet. All that the slanderers could do to him are three things, which happen to correspond to the same three that Bahaeddinzade Muhyiddin Mehmed (d. 952/1545-6), who happens to be the paternal cousin of Birgivî's (d. 1573) father Pir Ali, listed as things that could happen to him when he was warned by his friends to stop his criticism of Ibrahim Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Süleyman the Magnificent: an unjust execution, which would make him a martyr; imprisonment would mean seclusion and solitude, which are his way (*ṭarīqa*); and exile, which would be emigration (*hijra*), the sunna of the prophets.[37] Either way, he would be rewarded, as he is firm on the upright truth and the straight path, observing the book of God, the Sunna of the Prophet, and the sayings of the *mujtahid* jurists. He finishes his letter with two citations, the first from the Qur'an and the second from al-Ghazali's *Revival*:

> And the oppressors will come to know through what reversals they will be overthrown![38]
> Imam al-Shafii (may God the Most High have mercy on him) said: "Among the people of reason, knowledge [builds] an unceasing kinship". Therefore I do not understand how a community, among whom knowledge has become [the source of] a sharp enmity, claims to emulate the predecessors![39]

We do not know whether or not Kadızade had really stopped talking about Ibn Arabi. The complaints about him definitely did not. In the Turkish introduction to his second letter, Kadızade states that he wrote it when the Grand Mufti heard false rumours about him again.[40] In short, one could regard these two letters as Kadızade Mehmed's defence against allegations of reviling Ibn Arabi which were brought to the attention of the Grand Mufti Mehmed, probably in the early 1610s. Not surprisingly, the only other copy of the letters I was able to identify was named the 'Defence of Kadızade' by the cataloguers of the National Library of Turkey.[41] This second copy of Kadızade's letters are in the company of an extract from Şeyhzade (d. 1543)'s *haşiye* on Baydawi's exegesis (Qur'an, 5:1-25),[42] Nabî (d. 1712)'s *mesnevi* entitled *Hayrâbad*,[43] Kemalpaşazade (d. 1534)'s treatise on the faith of the Pharaoh,[44] Mustafa bin Ebu Bekir (d. 1240/1824-5)'s Persian grammar in Arabic, *al-Mafātiḥ al-durriya*,[45] Ali Ferdi bin Mustafa (d. 1127/1715)'s Arabic commentary on *Tuhfe-i Şahidî*, which is a Persian-Turkish dictionary in verse by İbrahim Şahidî (d. 1550),[46] an Arabic treatise by one of Birgivî (d. 1573)'s students on supererogatory prayers,[47] Abu al-Jaysh al-Ansari al-Andalusi (d. 549/1154-5)'s short and very popular treatise on prosody in Arabic,[48] and Hüdayî (d. 1628)'s Arabic treatise on the love of God, the Prophet, and his family, *Ḥabbat al-maḥabba*,[49] not to mention other shorter extracts and notes. The only nineteenth-century work in the collection, *al-Mafātiḥ al-durriya*, is copied by a different hand in a fascicle which could have been bound with the rest of the manuscript at a later time.[50] More important, the copy date of Ali Ferdi's commentary on *Tuhfe-i Şahidî* is 3 April 1731 (25 Ramadan 1143).[51] Therefore, this copy of Kadızade's letters may also be dated to the first half of the eighteenth century, although a more detailed examination of the manuscript and the different hands involved in copying it is necessary to ascertain this.

---

[35] 97 MTT, f. 51.

[36] I will introduce these books in the next section of the chapter; see n. 139ff.

[37] Taşköprüzade, *al-Shaqā'iq al-nu'māniyya fī 'ulamā' al-dawla al-'uthmāniyya* (Beirut 1975), 260. On the well-known scholar Birgivî, who had a major impact on Kadızade and his followers, see H. Martı, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi: hayatı, eserleri ve fikir dünyası* (Ankara 2008).

[38] From the Qur'an, 26:227.

[39] My translation is a modified version of the one in *Revival*, I:91. Kadızade changed al-Ghazali's original "to emulate his way (*madhhabihi*)", which would refer to the Shafii school, to "to emulate the predecessors (*al-salaf*)", also al-Ghazali has it as "the people of virtue and reason" rather than "the people of reason"; compare *Ihyāʾ*, I:41.

---

[40] For the first letter, see 97 MTT, 50b-52a; compare A 2688, 62b-63a; for the second letter, see 97 MTT 52a-55b; compare A 2688, 63a-64a, which does not include the end of the second letter, as will be discussed below; see n. 41 and the appendix.

[41] See 'Risale-i Müdafaa-yı Kadızade', Milli Kütüphane, A 2688 [A 2688 hereafter], 62b-64a. The actual title in the manuscript reads "*Risāla mansūba li-Ibn al-Qāḍī, raḥimahu Allāh*", f. 62b.

[42] A 2688, 3b-28b; compare Şeyhzade, *Ḥāshīyat Shaykhzāda 'alá tafsīr al-qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī*, 4 vols (Istanbul 1988-1991 [reprint of the 1306 Istanbul ed.]), II:187-207; on the author, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Şeyhzâde' (E. Baş).

[43] A 2688, 34b-56a; this copy of the *mesnevi* does not include the invocation and dedication sections and thus starts with the reason of the composition; compare S. Ülger, 'Nabi – Hayrabad: İnceleme – Metin', unpublished M.A. thesis, Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, 1996, 82-145 (the part that is skipped in the manuscript), 145-337.

[44] A 2688, 67a-b; on the author and his works, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Kemalpaşazâde' (Ş. Turan, Ş. Özen, İ. Çelebi, M. A. Y. Saraç).

[45] A 2688, 68b-77b; compare Mustafa Ibn Abu Bakr al-Sivasi, *Mafātiḥ al-Durriya fī ithbāt al-qawānīn al-dariyya* (Bulaq, 1242); on the author, see Bağdatlı İsmail Paşa, *Hadiyyat al-'Ārifīn, Asmā' al-Mu'allifīn va Āṯār al-Muṣannifīn*, eds K. R. Bilge and İ. M. K. İnal, 2 vols (Istanbul 1951-1955), II:455.

[46] A 2688, 80b-85b; on the author, see Bağdatlı İsmail Paşa, *Hadiyyat al-'Ārifīn*, 767; on the work commented upon, see Muğlalı Şâhidî İbrahim Dede, *Tuhfe-i Şâhidî: Farsça-Türkçe manzum sözlük*, ed. A. H. İmamoğlu (Muğla 2005); see also Y. Öz, *Tuhfe-i Şâhidî Şerhleri* (Konya 1999), 102-104. Öz used this very copy of the work to date its composition, but I believe he is mistaken in assuming the date of the copy to be the date of the composition.

[47] A 2688, 85b-87a; one could probably call it "waẓāʾif nawāfil al-ʿibādāt" after the introductory sentence; see [N.] Atsız, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerine göre Birgili Mehmet Efendi (929-981 = 1523-1573) Bibliyografyası* (Istanbul 1966), 39, # 15; compare A. Kaylı, 'A Critical Study of Birgivi Mehmed Efendi's (d. 981/1573) Works and their Dissemination in Manuscript Form', unpublished M.A. thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2010, 108.

[48] A 2688, 90b-94a; Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, II:1135.

[49] A 2688, 96a-103a; this treatise was translated into Turkish by A. Remzi ([Akyürek], d. 1944) and published by R. Deniz as *Mahbûbu'l-ehibbe: Sevenlerin sevgilisi* (Kayseri 1982); see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Aziz Mahmud Hüdâyî' (H. K. Yılmaz).

Regardless of its copy date, this second manuscript represents a different reading community from the first one. Instead of philosophy and the sciences, mysticism is coupled with a treatise of Kemalpaşazade which could be cited to support the Kadızadelis in one of their debating points with the followers of Sivasî,[52] and another one by a student of Birgivî, who is justifiably regarded as the intellectual founding father of the Kadızadelis. Not surprisingly, therefore, one notices some variants in the copies of Kadızade's letters which are to be found in these two manuscripts some of which relate to skipped pieces of poetry while others are more significant, as will be pointed out below.[53]

The first three decades of Kadızade's life

At the beginning of his second letter, Kadızade states his full name as "Şeyh Mehmed bin Mustafa bin İlyas" and adds that his father was a judge resident in Balıkesir and known as Doğanzade. And, apparently, it was his father who named him "Şeyh Mehmed", thus the designation 'sheikh' in his case appears to be part of his name rather than his title. He also provides his date of birth as the first Friday night of the month of Rajab in 990, the year of which was apparently recorded by his father with a chronogram, *mahdum-ı mükerrem*, or "revered son" – this date corresponds to a day in late July 1582.[54] His first teacher was one of the students of Birgivî, a certain Sheikh Alaeddin, who taught him the Qur'an, the Muslim articles of faith (or *akaid*), and grammar.

Kâtip Çelebi's account of Kadızade's biography jumps from this point to Kadızade's arrival in Istanbul to become a student of Dursunzade, which does not help us much with a chronology. It also creates the impression that Kadızade's early life was dominated by the students of Birgivî, a master with quite a revivalist reputation. Kadızade has a few more details that help us both establish his approximate time of arrival in Istanbul and also bring some nuances to his early education.

---

[50] In A 2688, ff. 68a-78b seem to constitute a fascicle, but my impression is based on the digital images of the manuscript and should be confirmed by an examination of the actual copy.

[51] A 2688, 85b.

[52] On this point of the debate, see Kātib Chelebi, 75-79; on Kemalpaşazade's view, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Firavun' (Ö. F. Harman and M. Uzun).

[53] A detailed comparison of the two manuscripts in their representation of the first letter is to be found in the appendix of this study. As for the variants in the second letter, see below n. 138.

[54] 97 MTT, 52a; the numerical values of the Arabic letters in which one writes the expression *maẖdûm-ı mükerrem* with add up to 990 (40+600+4+6+40+40+20+200+40). The exact date could be either the night of July 19-20 or 26-27.

Kadızade states that he continued to study grammar under a certain Kadı Halil and a certain Müderris İbrahim. Then he notes that he studied the *Kitāb al-ḍawʾ* under a certain Kadı Abdurrahman, which must refer to al-Isfarayini (d. 1285)'s commentary on *al-Miṣbāḥ fī al-naḥw* of Nasir al-Mutarrizi (d. 1213),[55] a book on Arabic grammar. Next comes the "Book of Sadr al-Sharia", which must refer to the commentary by Sadr al-Sharia the Second (d. 1346) on the work of his grandfather, the *Wiqāyat al-riwāya fī masāʾil al-Hidāya* by Burhan al-Sharia, which is, in turn, a work that relates to al-Marghinani (d. 1197)'s *al-Hidāya*, a teaching manual on Hanafi jurisprudence that was part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum.[56] This happens to be one of the titles that Kâtip Çelebi notes that Kadızade taught at the mosque of Murad Pasha in Istanbul.[57] Apparently Kadızade had studied it in Balıkesir under a certain Kadı Muslihuddin. The first of the last couple of books he studied in his home town was the *Mukhtaṣar Īsāghūjī*, that is the "Summary of Isagoge", a text on logic the origins of which go back to the third-century Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry from Italy, who wrote the *Isagoge* as an introduction to Aristotle's *Categories*. Kadızade must have read its thirteenth-century reworking by al-Abhari, which was read in many *medreses*.[58] He also read Husam al-Din Hasan al-Kati (d. c. 1359)'s commentary on al-Abhari's study of logic.[59] He studied these two texts under Mufti Lutfullah, who is the last person he names among his teachers in Balıkesir and the first one I was able to identify with any certainty in his biography. Atayî has a short entry for Lutfullah, who was appointed to teach at the madrasa of Balıkesir and to act as the mufti of the city around 1591-92 and died there in September or October of 1600.[60] Thus Kadızade must have left Balıkesir at the latest by 1600. The names of those he studied with in Istanbul and their appointment dates, which will be touched upon below, suggest that he actually arrived there a little earlier in the middle of the last decade of the sixteenth century while he was still a teenager.

---

[55] Muhammad ibn Muhammad Isfarayini, *Al-Sharḥ al-nāfiʿ al-miṣrāḥ al-musammá bi-Ḍawʾ al-miṣbāḥ* ([India:] al-Matbaah al-Ahmadiyah 1262); on al-Mutarrizi, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Mutarrizî' (M. S. Çöğenli).

[56] On the author, his family, and his work, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Sadrüşşeria' (Ş. Özen). For the place of al-Marghinani (d. 1197)'s *al-Hidāya* in the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum, see S. A. and N. Filipovic, 'The Sultan's Syllabus: A Curriculum for the Ottoman Imperial medreses prescribed in a fermān of Qānūnī I Süleymān, Dated 973 (1565)', *Studia Islamica,* 98-99 (2004), 183-218, 202; for the use of *Wiqāya* in Ottoman *medreses*, see İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin ilmiye teşkilatı* (Ankara 1965), 29-30.

[57] Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, 2 vols (Istanbul 1286-1287), II:182.

[58] On the *Isagoge* and the many texts and commentaries on logic inspired by it in the Islamic world, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Îsâgûcî' (A. Bingöl); on al-Abhari, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Ebherî, Esîrüddîn' (A. Bingöl). For the use of Abhari's work in Ottoman *medreses*, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin*, 21, 30-31.

[59] Husam al-Din Hasan al-Kati, *Sharh kitab Īsāghujī fī ʿilm al-manṭiq lil-Imām Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī al-mutawaffā sanat 663 H* (Amman 2013); Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin,* 31.

[60] Nevîzade Atayî (d. 1635), *Ḥadāiʾḳuʾl-Ḥaḳāiʾḳ fī Tekmīletüʾş-Şaḳāʾiḳ*, 2 vols in one (İstanbul H.1268/1852), reprinted with indices in A. Özcan, ed., *Şakaik-ı Nuʾmaniye ve Zeyilleri*, 5 vols (İstanbul 1989), Vol. 2 [hereafter Atayî], 442.

It is important to note that Kadızade's early education seems to have been quite in the mainstream of an Ottoman Hanafi education, both in terms of the texts he studied and the people he studied them under. These texts are related to the Ottoman madrasa curriculum, and most of his teachers are judges or professors, with the exception of the first one, the student of Birgivî, who is depicted as a sheikh. This self-portrayal is quite different from the portrait drawn by Kâtip Çelebi, who depicted Kadızade's education in Balıkesir in these words:

> Having acquired the rudiments of knowledge in his native town, from the disciples of Birgili Mehmed Efendi, he came to Istanbul and became a student-instructor under the teacher Tursunzade.[61]

Kadızade also provides additional details about his early life in Istanbul. He states that he moved there after the death of his father in order to seek a career in the judiciary. He adds that even though his father had set him up as a *çavuş*, an administrative-military rank, he terminated that and entered on the course of a scholarly career.[62] This interesting detail, coupled with the family name of his father, Doğanzade (falcon-son), might suggest that Kadızade's paternal ancestors might have included a falconer with a palace connection which his father must have had recourse to in order to secure a *çavuş* career for his son. So it is quite possible for Kadızade's grandfather to have been a *devşirme*.[63]

In Istanbul Kadızade first worked with a certain Müderris Muslihuddin, who might be the same person he mentioned earlier in Balıkesir as Kadı Muslihuddin, as some small-town judges went back to teaching for advancement in their later judicial careers. After teaching him some *al-Hidāya*, the above-mentioned text of Hanafi jurisprudence which was an essential part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum, Muslihuddin sent him to another müderris, a certain Yusuf. Then Dursunzade Abdülbaki took Kadızade under his wing for the sake of the friendship he had with his father. This identification corrects a mistake that seems to have entered the scholarship through some Kâtip Çelebi manuscripts in which the Dursunzade in Kadızade's biography is identified with Abdülbaki's brother Abdullah.[64] While Dursunzade Abdülbaki's career is well documented by Atayî, it is difficult to date when Kadızade started studying under him. Dursunzade was teaching in Istanbul until August 1593, after which he moved to different cities, probably coming back to Istanbul in between his appointments and during his judgeship in Üsküdar in 1597-98.[65] Kadızade lists three titles which he studied with him: *Mukhtaṣar al-talkhīṣ*, which is probably Sad al-Din al-Taftazani (d. 1390)'s summary of his own commentary on Khatib al-Qazwini (d. 1338)'s summary of the third part of the *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* by Abu Yaqub al-Sakkaki (d. 1229) on rhetoric – also part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum;[66] Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492)'s well-known work on Arabic grammar, *al-Fawā'id al-ḍiya'iyya*, which was also in the reading lists of the Ottoman madrasas;[67] and a large part of the *Tafsīr al-Qāḍī*, which must refer to Baydawi (d. 1286)'s commentary on the Qur'an, another standard work in the Ottoman madrasa curriculum.[68]

---

[61] Kātib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, 132.

[62] 97 MTT, 52b.

[63] Incidentally, Ahmed Rumî, another revivalist like Kadızade, was a recent convert to Islam; see Y. Michot, *L'opium et le café: edition et traduction d'un texte arabe anonyme, précedées d'une premiere exploration de l'opiophagie Ottomane et accompagnées d'une anthologie* (Beyrouth 2008), 54.

[64] See, for instance, Kâtip Çelebi, *Mîzanü'l-hakk fi ihtiyari'l-ahakk (En doğruyu seçmek için hak terazisi)*, ed. O. Ş. Gökyay (Istanbul 1980), 111; compare, Lewis, 132.

[65] Atayî, 513-514.

Another professor Kadızade studied with was Yusuf, better known as Arab Sinan. With him he read *al-Muṭawwal*, which must be al-Taftazani's above-mentioned commentary the summary of which he had read with Dursunzade – a must read in the Ottoman madrasa curriculum,[69] and the *Sharḥ al-'aqā'id*, most probably Dawwani (d. 1502)'s commentary on 'Adud al-Din al-Iji (d. 1355)'s work on theology, also to be found in the reading lists of Ottoman madrasas.[70] Kadızade must have studied under Arab Sinan in 1600 while the latter was teaching at the Sahn-ı Seman in Istanbul as he had appointments in different cities both before and after this date.[71]

Kadızade also lists *al-Tawḍīḥ*, which must refer to *al-Tawḍīḥ fī ḥall ghawāmiḍ al-Tanqīḥ* by the above-mentioned Sadr al-Sharia the Second (d. 1346), "a commentary on the author's own work on Hanafi jurisprudence entitled *al-Tanqīḥ fī al-uṣūl*".[72] He studied this book, which was also part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum, under a certain Mullah Abdullah.[73] He read the *Sharḥ al-Manār*, a commentary on al-Nasafi (d. 1310)'s *Manār al-anwār*, a work on legal theory that was also part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum,[74] under Kadı Abdülcabbar. Kadızade also notes that he attended the study assembly (*majlis dars*) of Mullah İbrahim, whom he identifies as the "*mudarris* of the

---

[66] On al-Taftazani and his work, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Teftâzânî' (Ş. Özen), 299-308; for the significant place of his work and the *Miftāh al-'ulūm* in Ottoman *medrese*s, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin*, 21, 27; on al-Sakkaki, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Sekkâkî, Ebû Ya'kūb' (İ. Durmuş); and on al-Qazwini, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Kazvînî, Hatîb' (İ. Durmuş).

[67] On Jami, see E. Ökten, 'Jāmī (H.817-898/1414-1492): his Biography and Intellectual Influence in Herat', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2007; for the use of his work on grammar in Ottoman *medrese*s, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin,* 30.

[68] Ahmed and Filipovic, 'The Sultan's Syllabus', 197-198.

[69] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin,*13, 21, 26, 30, 39.

[70] On Dawwani, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Devvânî' (H. Anay); on al-Iji's theological work and its importance in the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'el-Akaidü'l-Adudiyye' (Y. Ş.Yavuz), II:216; see also Uzunçarşılı, 23.

[71] Atayî, 536.

[72] Ahmed and Filipovic, 'The Sultan's Syllabus', 205.

[73] There are several Abdullahs who could be this person, see the index of Atayî, 1. I have refrained from attempts at identification of the names mentioned by Kadızade unless I could safely narrow down the possibilities to one person.

[74] For the author, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Nesefî, Ebü'l-Berekât' (M. Bedir); for the many commentaries on his work in Ottoman *medrese*s, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Menârü'l-envâr' (F. Koca); see also Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin,* 22.

medrese of Sinan Pasha for a long time”.[75] This must be İbrahim bin Mustafa, who taught at the Darü’l-hadis of Sinan Pasha from May 1596 until his death in April 1606.[76]

To reiterate: Kadızade appears to have arrived in Istanbul sometime in the 1590s, probably during the last years of the reign of Murad III (1574-1595), or first years of the reign of Mehmed III (1595-1603), while he was still a teenager. As he himself states, his initial aim seems to have been a judicial-scholarly career in *medrese*s and judgeships. After noting his attendance at the lectures of Mullah İbrahim, he ends this part of his autobiography by stating that he started teaching at the Mosque of Murad Pasha in late March – early April 1602 (*awāʾil shahr Shawwāl min shuhūr sanat ʿashar wa-alf*), a few months before he turned 20 years old, in our reckoning.

It is at this point in his life that he seems to have moved to a preaching career under the patronage of Sheikh Ömer, the Halveti sheikh of the Tercüman (or Dragoman) lodge and a preacher at the imperial mosques of Istanbul.[77] He states that he attended his sermons and then his lectures. He also entered the “forty days of solitude”, *al-khalwa al-arbaʿiniyya*, with Sheikh Ömer three times. When Sheikh Ömer went on a military campaign with Ali Pasha, he apparently left Kadızade as his successor for purposes of his sermons. Thus Kadızade preached at the Mosque of Sultan Selim for nine months and also commented upon the second half of the second chapter of the Qur’an during this period, which must be during the military campaign of the Grand Vizier Ali Pasha in 1604 against the Habsburgs, as Topçular Katibi Abdülkadir confirms Sheikh Ömer’s participation in this campaign.[78] Kadızade also notes that he got married during these months in his neighbourhood of Çavuş, which might be near Silivrikapı.[79] When Sheikh Ömer came back from the military campaign, he invited Kadızade to his own neighbourhood, settled him in a house endowed to be occupied by scholars, and appointed him as his successor at the Tercüman Mosque, where Kadızade preached and commented upon the Qur’an for a year, after which Sheikh Ömer and Kadızade fell into a disagreement on some issues which he does not specify. Then Kadızade notes that he separated himself from Sheikh Ömer, returned to his former neighbourhood and to his teaching at the Murad Pasha Mosque. I will return to Kadızade's separation from his sheikh in the last section of this study.

---

[75] 97 MTT, 52b.

[76] Atayî, 508; Baltacı, 888; cf. 426-427.

[77] Kātib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, 132. On this sheikh, see F. İdiz, *Ömer Fânî Efendî ve tasavvufa dair üç eseri: âdab, cehrî zikir, semâ’ ve tasavvufa dair bazı meseleler* (Istanbul 2011).

[78] Abdülkadir, *Topçular Kâtibi ʿAbdülkādir (Kadrî) Efendi Tarihi*, ed. Z. Yılmazer, 2 vols (Ankara 2003), I:403, 412, 416.

[79] Evliya Çelebi mentions two neighbourhoods the names of which include “Çavuş”, but they are in Kasımpaşa and Tophane, whereas the Murad Pasha Mosque is located near Aksaray in the old city. That is why I believe that the neighbourhood around “Çavuş mescidi”, which Evliya Çelebi locates in the vicinity of Silivrikapı, might be a more appropriate choice for Kadızade to live in; see Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu – Dizini*, Vol. 1: *İstanbul*, ed. O. Ş. Gökyay (Istanbul 1996), I:129; see also the index, 353. There is another “Çavuş mescidi” in Balat, which the anonymous reviewer of this piece drew my attention to; see H. Ayvansarâyî, Alî Satı‘, and Süleymân Besîm, *Hadikatü’l-cevâmi‘: İstanbul camileri ve diğer din – sivil mi’marî yapılar*, ed. A. N. Galitekin (Istanbul 2001), 117. Ayvansarayi refers to two other mosques with the same name; see 117, 119.

Kâtip Çelebi's summary of this part of Kadızade's life reads:

> He then chose the career of a Sufi sheikh, entering the service of Umar Efendi, Sheykh of the Terjuman lodge (tekke), and occupying himself with spiritual purification. Finding, however, that the Sufi path did not suit his temperament, he adopted the way of speculation.[80]

Kadızade, however, does not seem to have given up on Sufism. Right after noting his return to the Murad Pasha Mosque, he states that he became a companion of a certain Nakşibendi Sheikh Mehmed, who resided in Yalova and whom he describes with the loftiest of adjectives as an eminent sheikh and the perfect spiritual guide, and adds that he pledged allegiance to him. He further asserts that he later associated with some other Nakşibendi sheikhs as well, and found them consistent with and adhering to the sublime law and the exalted religion in the articles of faith, in words, actions, and attitudes.[81] In short, Kadızade is telling the Grand Mufti that he became a Nakşibendi.

Following this sharp turn in his Sufi allegiance from the Halveti to the Nakşibendi order, Kadızade lists another series of teachers and the books he read with them, starting with a certain Behram, whom he identifies as one of the students of a certain Sheikh Ahmad al-Muqri, and under whom he studied the Qur'an. Then he read the Qur'an, memorising it, with Evliya Mehmed Çelebi, who was to become the Imam of the Sultan around December 1616. Evliya Mehmed had specialised in Qur'an recitation and studied it with a certain Ahmad Misri, who is described as the best of the sheikhs of recitation,[82] and who is perhaps the same person as Ahmad al-Muqri mentioned by Kadızade. The attention Kadızade started paying to his Qur'an recitation after studying law for at least a decade must be related to his shift to a career in mosques.

After perfecting his Qur'an recitation, Kadızade turned to hadith and studied *al-Maṣābīḥ*, which must refer to al-Baghawi (d. 1122)'s *Maṣābīḥ al-sunna*, another well-known work in the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum,[83] under Abu al-Suud al-Qudsi, who granted him an oral as well as a written licence to relate all that which was licensed for him to relate.

His next teacher is Ibrahim al-Laqani (d. 1632), a Maliki Sufi scholar from Egypt who is best known for his didactic poem of 144 couplets on Muslim theology, the *Jawharat al-tawḥīd***.** Kadızade states that he studied with him this poem and a part of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the most revered compilation of hadith among Sunni Muslims. Kadızade notes that he received an oral as well as a written licence from al-Laqani as well. Since neither Atayî nor other sources refer to any trip that al-Laqani might have taken to Istanbul,[84]

---

[80] Kātib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, 132.

[81] 97 MTT, 53a.

[82] Şeyhî Mehmed (d. 1145/1732-33), *Vekayiü'l-fudalâ*, 2 vols., Beyazıt Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin Efendi 2361–2362; facsimile edition with indices in Özcan (ed.), *Şakaik-ı Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri*, Vols 3–4 [hereafter Şeyhî, all references are to Vol. 3 unless otherwise stated], 60.

[83] Ahmed and Filipovic, 'The Sultan's Syllabus', 200.

[84] Atayî, 763; *TDVİA* s.v. 'Lekanî, İbrâhim b. İbrâhim' (M. Yurdagür).

Kadızade must have visited Egypt at some point. And he indeed notes in another of his writings that he was in Egypt in 1020/1611-12. Perhaps it was part of a pilgrimage trip, as he also notes in one of his better known works that he conversed with the scholars of Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, Morocco, Central Asia, and India. Since one of his teachers and the close friend of his father Dursunzade Abdülbaki served as the chief judge of Egypt from May 1606 until his death in January 1607, he might even have visited Egypt twice, or stayed there for a few years after the death of his teacher. This visit could also explain how he would have worked with Abu al-Suud al-Qudsi, who seems to be a scholar from Jerusalem and does not appear in the Turkish biographical dictionaries.[85]

After mentioning al-Laqani, Kadızade stops listing books he read and teachers he studied them under and starts listing what he taught. Perhaps his visit to Egypt, or his extended pilgrimage trip, was an escape from Istanbul, where he had first fallen into a major disagreement with his Halveti sheikh, and then, after the death of Dursunzade, he had lost his most reliable supporter. He might have decided that it would be very difficult to secure a *mülazemet* without a powerful patron, or, even if he secured a licence to teach, it would be difficult to obtain desirable professorial or judicial appointments.[86] Back in Istanbul, he probably embraced his position at the Murad Pasha Mosque and taught books on grammar, logic, exegesis, principles of jurisprudence, and related subjects. He notes specifically that he taught the “Sadr al-Sharia”,[87] the book he had first studied in Balıkesir, probably when he was around 12 years old, and the *Durar*, which must be Mullah Khusrav (d. 1480)’s famous commentary on his own *Ghurar al-aḥkām* – also an essential part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum,[88] and completed them both, while writing down his own thoughts on some of the issues raised in them. Clearly, he was not just a preacher but also used the mosque as a classroom in the longstanding Muslim tradition of public instruction, which had a longer history in the Islamic world than the *medrese*s.[89]

---

[85] Atayî, 514; Kadızade, “Mas’alat ṣāḥib al-ʿudhr,” Dār al-Kutub al-Qawmiyya, Majāmi‘ Ṭal‘at 809, ff. 90b-95a, at f. 94b; as noted by *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-turkiyya*, IV:98, this piece is in Kadızade’s own handwriting which is attested by the colophon; while the catalog does not attribute the authorship to Kadızade, the self-reference to the starting date of his position at the Mosque of Murad Pasha as Şevval 1010 (March-April 1602) confirms him as the author, f. 94a. For the reference to the geographical origins of the scholars he conversed with, see Mehmet Özkan, ‘Osmanlı’da ilmihal geleneği: Kadızâde Mehmed Efendi (1045/1635) ve ‘Risâle-i Kadızâde’ adlı çalışması’, *İslam Hukuku Araştırmaları Dergisi* 27 (2016): 553-74, at p. 571. Abu al-Suud was the *kunya* of the famous Najm al-Din al-Ghazzi (1570-1651), whose family was originally from Palestine but living in Damascus. He also visited Istanbul; see *TDVİA* s.v. ‘Necmeddin el-Gazzî’ (C. İzgi). Kadızade may have referred to him as al-Qudsi, but it is difficult to be sure.

[86] He could have secured a licence to teach as a former student of a deceased mullah, which was one of the ways to receive a *mülazemet*; see Y. Beyazıt, *Osmanlı İlmiyye Mesleğinde İstihdam (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (Ankara 2014), 75-86. But in the absence of a patron, his future would not be very secure. İsmail Hakkı [Uzunçarşılı] claims that Kadızade received a licence to teach from Dursunzade and served the latter as his teaching assistant. Yet this claim seems to be based on İsmail Hakkı’s own assumption as his source, which he does not cite, seems to be Kâtip Çelebi for this part of Kadızade’s life; see his *Karesi Meşâhîri*, Vol. 1: *‘Ulemâ ve Meşâyîh Faslı* (Karesi 1339/1342), 34.

[87] Kâtip Çelebi confirms that he taught this book at the Murad Pasha Mosque; *Fezleke*, II:182.

[88] On Mullah Khusrav, see *TDVİA* s.v. ‘Molla Hüsrev’ (F. Koca); on the use of his works in Ottoman *medrese*s, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin*, 22.

Kadızade also taught Baydawi's exegesis of the Qur'an, supplementing it with readings from Zamakhshari (d. 1144)'s *al-Kashshāf* and the *Irshād*, which must refer to Ebussuud (d. 1574)'s exegesis. He states that he finished it all in seven years and then started again, reaching as far as the 31st verse of the second chapter. Even if one were to assume that he started teaching Baydawi as soon as he arrived at the Mosque of Murad Pasha in 1602 and included the years he spent at the Mosque of Selim I when he was substituting for his Halveti sheikh, and his visit to Egypt within these seven years, this period of his life would be over by 1609, thus helping us to date Kadızade's second letter safely to 1609-1615, when Kadızade was in his late twenties and early thirties, and Hocazade Mehmed, the addressee of the letters, occupied the position of Grand Mufti. Unless he made several trips to Egypt, Kadızade's presence in Egypt in 1020 and his reference to al-Laqani in his second letter, which means that it was written after the trip that included a stay in Egypt, might suggest that he must have written it after 1020/1611-12, thus in 1612-15.[90]

After summarising his teaching activities, Kadızade goes back to the books he studied, but this time with no names of teachers attached to them.[91] According to my own identification of the books he describes, he lists the following titles, starting with major works on Sufism: al-Kalabadhi (d. 990)'s *al-Taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-tasawwuf*, as well as Ala al-Din al-Qunawi (d. 1329)'s commentary on it;[92] al-Qushayri (d. 1072)'s treatise on Sufism;[93] Shihab al-Din Umar Suhrawardi (d. 1234)'s *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif*, another work related to Sufism,[94] and al-Ghazali (d. 1111)'s *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*,[95] which he was apparently teaching at the time of his writing the second letter.

---

[89] On the continuation of this old practice during the Ottoman era, see M. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Dersiâmları* (Istanbul 2010).

[90] See note 85 above.

[91] Kh. El-Rouayheb discusses the rise of "deep reading" in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire; this emphasises individual encounters with texts rather than learning a text through the guidance of a teacher; see his *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (New York 2015), 97-128.

[92] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Kelâbâzî, Muhammed b. İbrâhim' (S. Uludağ); trans. A. J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Ṣūfīs (Kitāb al-taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-taṣawwuf)* (Cambridge 1935); *TDVİA* s.v. 'Konevî, Alâeddin' (T. Özcan); ʿAlī al-Qūnawī, *Husn al-taṣarruf li-sharḥ al-taʿarruf*, ed. Taha al-Dasuqi Hubayshi, 4 vols (Cairo 2016).

[93] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Kuşeyrî, Abdülkerîm b. Hevâzin' (S. Uludağ); trans. A. D. Knysh, *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism: Al-Risala al-qushayriyya fi 'ilm al-tasawwuf* (Reading 2007).

[94] For an English translation, see al-Suhrawardi, *A Dervish Textbook* [based on al-Kashani's Persian translation], trans. H. Wilberforce Clarke (London 1980 [reprint of the Calcutta edition of 1891]).

[95] On this book, see K. Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abu Hamid al-Ghazalī and his Revival of the Religious Sciences* (Oxford 2014).

He also taught Birgivî (d. 1573)'s *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya wa'l-sīra al-aḥmadiyya*,[96] which he notes he had taught several times, as well as his other works and treatises, such as *Jilā' al-qulūb* (a book of ethical and spiritual advice), *Īqāẓ al-nāʾimīn*, *Inqādh al-hāliqīn* (both on the illegality of performing religious services in return for monetary compensation),[97] *al-Sayf al-ṣārim* (on the illegality of cash *waqf*), *Dhukhr al-mutaʾahhilīn* (on menstruation), and *Iẓḥār al-asrār* (on syntax).[98] This categorisation of books is important to note as Kadızade lists the works of Birgivî right after several works on Sufism. Clearly, he did not see these groups of works as mutually exclusive. Birgivî himself wrote on Sufism and his *magnum opus*, *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, has come to be embraced by many Sufis.[99] This list of works by Birgivî also underlines the impact their author must have had on Kadızade, who does not list more than one or two works for most other authors in his letter.[100] However, this impact, which has been noted in modern scholarship,[101] should not be overemphasised, as most of Kadızade's foundational bibliography actually consists of Ottoman *medrese* textbooks and Sufi classics.

After listing the books he studied and taught, Kadızade moves on to his own works and lists several books he translated: Ibn al-Hajib (d. 1249)'s work on Arabic grammar, *al-Kāfiya*, which was part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum,[102] and the gist of its commentaries; *al-Talkhīṣ*, which must be Khatib al-Qazwini (d. 1338)'s summary of the third part of the *Miftāḥ al-ʿulūm* by Abu Yaqub al-Sakkaki (d. 1229) on rhetoric mentioned above;[103] the above-mentioned 'Summary of Isagoge' on logic,[104] and a work on theology by Abu al-Muin al-Nasafi (d. 1115).[105]

---

[96] On this work, see K. A. Ivanyi, 'Virtue, Piety and the Law: A Study of Birgivi Mehmed Efendi's *al-Tarika al-Muhammadiyya*', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2012.

[97] Kadızade might also have translated the latter treatise into Turkish; see *Terceme-i İnkâzü'l-Hâlikîn*, which is attributed to "Kadızade Efendi" in Milli Kütüphane, A 3994, 135b-143b – I did not have a chance to examine this manuscript, which I identified in the online catalogue of the Turkish National Library.

[98] Ivanyi, 'Virtue, Piety and the Law, 24-45; *TDVİA* s.v. 'Birgivî' (E. Yüksel), at 193. Some of these treatises have been published; see, for instance, *Dhukhr al-mutaʿahhilīn wa-al-nisā' fī taʿrīf al-aṭhār wa-al-dimā'* (Damascus 2005).

[99] See Birgivi, *The Path of Muhammad: A Book on Islamic Morals and Ethics & the Last Will and Testament*, trans. T. Bayrak (Bloomington 2005). The translator Bayrak is a *Cerrahi*-Halveti sheikh in the US. On Birgivî's ideas on Sufism, see Martı, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi*, 153-166. Another Sufi reader of Birgivî was al-Nabulusi (d. 1731), see Samer Akkach, *'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi: Islam and the Enlightenment* (Oxford 2007), 106.

[100] I will dwell upon another implication of some of these works below, see n. 257ff.

[101] Both Öztürk and Çavuşoğlu start their discussions of the historical background of the movement inspired by Kadızade with Birgivî, see Öztürk, 'Islamic Orthodoxy', 135-143; Çavuşoğlu, 'The Kādīzādeli Movement' 48-59.

[102] Uzunçarşılı, 30, 40, 68.

[103] See *TDVİA* s.v. 'Kazvînî, Hatîb' (İ. Durmuş); *TDVİA* s.v. 'Sekkâkî, Ebû Yaʿkūb' (İ. Durmuş); see also n. 66 above.

[104] Probably Kadızade is referring to al-Abhari's work mentioned above, nn. 58-59.

[105] It is most probably his *al-Tamhīd*; see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Nesefî, Ebü'l-Muîn' (Y. Ş. Yavuz).

Then Kadızade lists the works he authored himself: *Irshād al-ʿuqūl al-mustaqīma ilā al-tarīqa al-qawīma bi-ibṭāl al-bidaʿ al-saqīma*, which was briefly summarised by Necati Öztürk in his Ph.D. dissertation;[106] a treatise on the deeds of the companions of the Prophet;[107] the *mathālib al-rawāfiḍ*, or the "shortcomings of the renegades",[108] which is probably a critique of Shiism; a treatise on the refusal of the congregational recital of the prayers for *Raghāʾib*, *Barāʾat*, and *Qadr*, holy nights which are popularly associated with the conception of the Prophet, the descent of the Qur'an to earthly heavens, and the beginning of its revelation to Muhammad, respectively, which has been identified by Öztürk with its original title;[109] a title that reads *amthila mufaṣṣala*, which is probably about the Arabic language;[110] a commentary on *al-Maqsūd*, an anonymous work on Arabic grammar which was part of the Ottoman madrasa curriculum;[111] a commentary on Ibn Malak (d. after 1418)'s Arabic-Turkish dictionary,[112] and other treatises on some of the books he taught or studied, such as the exegesis of Baydawi, the *Durar* of Mullah Khusrav, the "[Book of] Sadr al-Sharia", and *al-Islāḥ*, which must refer to Ibn al-Sikkit (d. 858)'s *Iṣlāḥ al-mantiq***.**[113]

Kadızade's letter continues with other books he studied, such as Ibn Malak's commentary on Radiyy al-Din al-Saghani (d. 1252)'s *Mashārik al-anwār al-nabawiyya*, which was also part of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum and on some subjects of which Kadızade wrote interpretative notes (*ḥāshiya*).[114] He also studied the chapters on ritual purity, ritual prayer, and some subjects in the chapter on dealings (*muʿāmalāt*) in Ibn al-Humam (d. 1457)'s *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* and Akmal al-Din al-Babarti's (d. 1384) *al-ʿInāya*, both of which are among the well-known commentaries of the above-mentioned *al-Hidāya*, a foundational work of Hanafi jurisprudence and the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum.[115] The last title he notes in this group is North African scholar al-Sanusi (d. 1490)'s *ʿAqāʾid***.**[116]

Then Kadızade lists several other works which he studied, the common denominator of which seems to be advice on keeping on the straight path. He is now moving out of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum and taking us to a wide-ranging reading list in the early modern Islamic world. The first book in this group is a title that may no longer be extant, or its authorship is misattributed: the *Tanbīh al-ghāfilīn* by Sheikh Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi (d. 1389), which is attested by Kâtip Çelebi in his bibliographical dictionary but not described in any detail; it is also not listed among the works of the founder of the Nakşibendi order, who is not known to have authored any works.[117] The next book Kadızade lists carries the same title as the first: the *Tanbīh al-ghāfilīn* by Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi (d. 983), the contents of which reminds one of written sermons on various subjects.[118] After the two *Tanbīh*s come two titles by al-Ghazali: the *Minhāj al-ʿābidīn*, which discusses the seven obstacles on the way to heaven and how one may overcome them, and *al-Arbaʿīn fī uṣūl al-dīn*, which was originally conceived by its author as the third part of his *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān*.[119]

---

[106] Öztürk, 'Islamic Orthodoxy' 152-153; this work is recorded with a slightly different title but the same content as described by Öztürk by Kâtip Çelebi as well; see *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, I:66.

[107] '*Risāla fī manāqib al-ṣaḥāba*', 97 MTT, 53a; this title is also mentioned by Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *ʿOsmânlı Müʾellifleri*, 3 vols (Istanbul 1333-1342), I:402.

[108] 97 MTT, 53b.

[109] Öztürk, 'Islamic Orthodoxy', 154. As Derin Terzioğlu kindly reminded me, Kadızade is not against individual performance of superogatory prayers during these special nights but is opposed to their congregational performance.

[110] Birgivî has a work on the Arabic language which bears a somewhat similar title; see Yüksel, 193.

[111] *TDVİA* s.v. 'el-Maksûd' (K. Demirayak); Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin*, 30, 40.

[112] *TDVİA* s.v. 'İbn Melek' (M. Baktır).

[113] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Islâhu'l-mantık' (N. Ü. Karaarslan).

[114] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Meşâriku'l-envâri'n-nebeviyye' (İ. Hatiboğlu); Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin*, 19.

[115] *TDVİA* s.v. 'İbnü'l-Hümâm' (F. Koca); *TDVİA* s.v. 'Bâbertî' (A. Aytekin).

[116] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Akaidü's-Senusî' (Y. Ş. Yavuz).

Next, Kadızade lists four titles which he attributes to the well-known Hanbali author from Baghdad, Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1201): the *Minhāj al-qaṣidīn ilā al-janna*, the *Ighāthat al-lahfān min makā'id al-shaytān*, the *Taʿrīf al-talbīs wa-tabʿīd al-iblīs*, and the *Taḥdhīr al-īqāẓ min akādhīb al-wuʿʿāẓ*. While the first has been translated into English from the summary produced by one of Ibn al-Jawzi's students,[120] the second must be the *Ighāthat al-lahfān min maṣā'id al-shaytān* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350),[121] another Hanbali author and a student of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328). The latter work has been described as a summary of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's social reform project, which was to inspire Salafi Muslims.[122] The third could be Ibn al-Jawzi's *Talbīs Iblīs*, or the *Delusion of the Devil*, a very large part of which is a critique of various Sufi practices.[123] But there is also a title identical with the third title which Kadızade provides and yet is that of a certain Muhammad bin Idris al-Nakhjiwani, who might be the son of Idris Bitlisî (d. 1520), the well-known Kurdish-Ottoman bureaucrat.[124] As for the fourth, the *Taḥdhīr al-īqāẓ*, this is not mentioned among the known works of Ibn al-Jawzi and is attributed to al-Suyuti (d. 1505).[125] Kadızade, however, notes that he studied a similar title, the

---

[117] Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, I:488; *TDVİA* s.v. 'Bahâeddin Nakşibend' (H. Algar).

[118] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Semerkandî, Ebü'l-Leys' (İ. Yazıcı)

[119] Al-Ghazali's authorship of the first of these titles was questioned by Ibn Arabi; see *TDVİA* s.v. 'Gazzâlî – Eserleri, Tesirleri' (H. B. Karlığa).

[120] Ibn Qudama al-Maqdisi, *Towards the Hereafter: Mukhtaṣar Minhāj al-qāṣidīn*, trans. W. A. Shihab, rev. S. Faris (El-Mansoura H.1422/2002); also see *TDVİA* s.v. 'İbnü'l-Cevzî, Ebü'l-Ferec' (Y. Ş. Yavuz and C. Avcı).

[121] This work is attested with two slightly different titles; the one that Kadızade cites is less common; see Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Ighāthat al-lahfān fi maṣāʾid al-Shayṭān* (Cairo H.1320/1902); idem, *Mukhtaṣar Ighāthat al-lahfān min makā'id al-Shayṭān*, summ. Abd Allah ibn Abd al-Rahman Aba Butayn (Al-Yamama 1972).

[122] See *TDVİA* s.v 'İbn Kayyim el-Cevziyye' (H. Y. Apaydın and Y. Ş. Yavuz).

[123] Ibn al-Jawzi, *Talbīs Iblīs: Delusion of the Devil*, trans. D. S. Margoliouth, ed. N. Kr Singh, 2 vols (New Delhi 2003).

[124] For a summary of the work, see Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, I:421; for the author's identification as Idris Bitlisî's son, see Bağdatlı İsmail Paşa, *Hadiyyat al-ʻĀrifīn*, II:253.

[125] Muhammad bin Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Ghazzi (d. 1753-4), *Dīwān al-Islām wa-bi-ḥāshiyatihi*

Taḥdhīr al-khawāṣṣ min akādhīb al-quṣṣāṣ, which he identifies as al-Suyuti's summary of Ibn al-Jawzi's *Taḥdhīr al-īqāẓ*.[126]

Kadızade continues his list of the books he read with four more titles by the well-known Egyptian scholar al-Suyuti. The *Kitāb al-itqān* must be *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, which is an introduction to the sciences of the Qur'an. And the *Khaṣāyiṣ al-ḥabīb* must be *Unmūzaj al-labīb fī khaṣāʾiṣ al-ḥabīb*, which is al-Suyuti's summary of his own *al-Khaṣāʾis al-kubrā*, a book on the attributes and qualities of the Prophet.[127] The third, the *Mukhtaṣar badhl al-māʿūn* must be *Mā rawāhu al-wāʿūn fī akhbār al-ṭāʿūn*, which is a summary of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1449)'s *Badhl al-māʿūn fī faḍl al-ṭāʿūn*, a collection of Prophetic traditions on the plague.[128] The last title, the *Sharḥ al-nuqāya*, refers to *Itmām al-dirāya*, al-Suyuti's commentary on his own *al-Nuqāya*, which deals with 14 objects of knowledge, such as grammar, calligraphy, jurisprudence, and medicine.[129] Kadızade adds that he also read other treatises by al-Suyuti, suggesting that this Egyptian scholar was one of his favourite authors alongside Ibn al-Jawzi and Birgivî.

The next couple of titles Kadızade mentions are North African scholar Qadi Iyad (d. 1149)'s *al-Shifāʾ*, which is a work on the Prophet,[130] and al-Kalabadhi's (d. 990) *Maʿānī al-akhbār*, a mystically inclined commentary on a selection of hadith.[131] Then he cites three great classics of Persian poetry: Rumî (d. 1273)'s *Mathnavī* and the collected works (*kulliyyāt*) of Sadi (d. 1291) and Attar (d. 1221) – he actually cited verses from Sadi in his first letter (without acknowledgment). It is very important to note that both Rumî's *Mathnavī* and Attar's *Conference of the Birds*,[132] which would be included in his collected works, are among the most inspiring works of Sufism.

Then Kadızade states that he studied a "precious treatise on the prohibition of the vocal *dhikr* (*risāla nafīsa fī manʿ al-dhikr al-jahrī*)" by al-Sayyid al-Sharif, who must be Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Jurjani (d. 1413). While I could not identify such a treatise among the known works of al-Jurjani, Kâtip Çelebi attributes to him a treatise on the glorious

---

asmā' kutub al-aʿlām, ed. S. K. Hasan, 4 vols (Beirut 1990), III:57, n.; for a manuscript that carries the same title and is also attributed to al-Suyuti; see Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin Efendi 1885, which I did not have a chance to examine.

[126] 97 MTT, 53b; see al-Suyuti, *Taḥdhīr al-khawāṣṣ min akādhīb al-quṣṣāṣ*, ed. Abd Allah ibn Muhammad ibn al-Siddiq al-Maghribi (Cairo 1403).

[127] For al-Suyuti and his works, see *TDVİA* s.v 'Süyûtî' (H. Özkan, M. S. Mertoğlu, S. Şensoy, and S. S. Yavuz).

[128] Al-Suyuti, *Mā rawāhu al-wāʿūn fī akhbār al-ṭāʿūn*, ed. Muhammad Ali al-Barr (Damascus 1997); Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Badhl al-māʿūn fī faḍl al-ṭāʿūn*, ed. Ahmad Isam Abd al-Qadir al-Katib (Riyad 1411); Ibn Hajar's work was also summarised by al-Munawi (d. 1467); see *TDVİA* s.v 'Münâvî, Yahyâ b. Muhammed' (M. Koçak).

[129] E. d. W. Root, 'A Translation of Kitab al-nuqāya containing the Essence of the Fourteen Sciences by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī', unpublished M.A. thesis, Hartford Seminary, 1940.

[130] *TDVİA* s.v 'Kādî İyâz' (M. Y. Kandemir).

[131] On al-Kalabadhi and his work, see n. 92 above.

[132] *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*, trans. R. A. Nicholson, 6 vols (London 1925-1940); Farīd al-Dīn ʿAttār, *The Conference of the Birds*, trans. D. Davis and A. Darbandi (Harmondsworth 1984).

deeds of the founder of the Nakşibendi order, Sheikh Baha al-Din al-Naqshbandi.[133] If al-Jurjani had Nakşibendi sympathies, he could have been critical of vocal *dhikr*, as al-Naqshbandi reputedly "abandoned the vocal *dhikr*".[134] The Nakşibendi practice of silent *dhikr* might have been one of the reasons why Kadızade chose to pay allegiance to a Nakşibendi sheikh.

The next title in Kadızade's reading list is the North African Maliki scholar Ibn al-Hajj (d. 1336)'s *al-Madkhal*, a book which draws attention to those customs and traditions which are deemed to be opposed to the fundamentals of religion, and criticises innovations (*bidʿa*).[135] Kadızade then notes that he studied Ibrahim al-Halabi (d. 1549)'s commentary on al-Kashghari (d. 1305)'s *Munyat al-muṣallī*, which is about ritual purity and prayer, adding that he also taught al-Halabi's own summary of his commentary.[136] Another treatise Kadızade read was on the above-mentioned *Raghāʾib* prayers by one of the Ibn Nujaym brothers, Hanafi scholars from Ottoman Cairo (d. 1563, 1596).[137] The last treatise he notes is by a certain Sheikh Ali al-Qudsi, who was apparently knowns as a commentator of al-Nasafi (d. 1310)'s *Kanz al-daqāʾiq*. The tension in the last sections of Kadızade's letter between well-known Sufi texts such as the *Mathnavī* of Rumî, whose followers adopted whirling as a fundamental component of their rituals, and other works, such as the treatise on the prohibition of vocal *dhikr*, should prepare us for what comes next, which was edited out of the other copy of the second letter, a point to which I will return.[138]

What comes next is Kadızade's long anticipated discussion of Ibn Arabi. First, he repeats his statement in the first letter, reminding the Grand Mufti that he used to have a notebook in which he wrote things that Ibn Arabi stated in his *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, and then citing four books which caused a great deal of ambivalence about Ibn Arabi in his heart when he read them in 1014/1605-6. He identifies the first one as *Kashf al-Ghiṭāʾ* [*fī radd al-fuṣūṣ*] by the highly respected Shafii jurist and hadith scholar Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1449),[139] which he describes as a big book comparable in size to Mullah

---

[133] *TDVİA* s.v 'Cürcânî, Seyyid Şerîf' (S. Gümüş).

[134] Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism*, 117; while Le Gall also notes on the same page that some Nakşibendis practised vocal *dhikr*, she cites three seventeenth-century Ottoman authors "who all used the yardstick of silent versus vocal *dhikr* to distinguish between two categories of Ottoman tariqas, with the Naqshbandiyya and its silent *dhikr* on one side and the Khalwatiyya and its vocal one on the other": ibid., 113. And, of course, al-Jurjani may have been critical of vocal *dhikr* for reasons other than being a Nakşibendi sympathiser as well.

[135] *TDVİA* s.v 'İbnü'l-Hâc el-Abderî' (S. Köse).

[136] For these two works, see *TDVİA* s.v 'Halebî, İbrahim b. Muhammed' (Ş. S. Has).

[137] *TDVİA* s.v 'İbn Nüceym, Zeynüddin' (A. Özel); *TDVİA* s.v 'İbn Nüceym, Siraceddin' (A. N. Serinsu). A copy of the treatise in question is quite possibly held at the Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi, MS 1275.

[138] The copy of the second letter at Milli Kütüphane, A 2688, ff. 63a-64a, ends here with a short notice by the copyist acknowledging the existence of the verses at the end of the letter that s/he left out and thus suggesting that there was nothing else between the reference to the treatise by Sheikh Ali al-Qudsi and the verses.

[139] 97 MTT, 54a; the second half of the title is from the first letter; 97 MTT, 51b; see also Milli Kütüphane, A 2688, 63a.

Khusrav's above-mentioned *Durar*. Although I have not been able to identify such a book written by Ibn Hajar, there are some references which do suggest that Ibn Hajar might indeed have been very critical of Ibn Arabi.[140] Alexander Knysh's overall opinion on this question is that Ibn Hajar was elusive about Ibn Arabi. But this might have been his way of protecting himself against the Mamluk court, which seems to have been frequented by scholars who were admirers of Ibn Arabi.[141] However, the presence of contradictory pieces of evidence makes it difficult to make a call on Ibn Hajar's stance regarding Ibn Arabi at this point.[142]

The last book Kadızade cites is "another book on the refutation of the *Fuṣūṣ* [*al-ḥikam*]" by the above-mentioned al-Taftazani. This very well respected medieval scholar who produced major works on exegesis, theology, jurisprudence, logic, and Arabic language, was indeed known to have been critical of Ibn Arabi.[143] However, the book which Kadızade had in mind, which must be the *Fāḍīḥat al-mulḥidīn wa-naṣīḥat al-muwaḥḥidīn*, is actually that of Muhammad al-Bukhari (d. 1437), a student of al-Taftazani.[144] Yet Kadızade should not be blamed for this misattribution, as there are several manuscript copies of the work, as well as a print edition, which have been attributed to al-Taftazani. To make things more complicated, in some manuscript copies, the work starts with a poetic epigraph attributed to al-Taftazani and is quite critical of the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.[145] Modern scholars continued this misidentification all the way to the late twentieth century, even though late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Ottoman scholars pointed out the problems with it and also identified the correct author.[146] As noted by Bakri Ala al-Din, the origin of this confusion might well be related to al-Bukhari's doctrinal loyalty to his master, al-Taftazani. Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (d. 1731), for instance, devoted a very long section to a critique of al-Taftazani in his defence of Ibn Arabi and the theory of the unity of being, frequently citing al-Taftazani's major work on theology, the *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid*, which was part of the Ottoman madrasa curriculum, and making very vague allusions to the *Fāḍīḥat al-mulḥidīn* without ever mentioning the name of al-Bukhari.[147] Thus while Kadızade's identification of the author he read was mistaken, most of the ideas represented by this author were traceable to his teacher, a major authority whose works were read in Ottoman madrasas.

---

[140] On Ibn Hajar, see *TDVİA* s.v 'İbn Hacer el-Askalânî' (M. Y. Kandemir). Ibn Hajar notes that when he asked his teacher al-Bulqini (d. 1403) about Ibn Arabi, he asserted that Ibn Arabi was an unbeliever (*kāfir*); see Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Lisān al-mīzān* (Multan 1330-1331), IV:318, cited by his student Burhān al-Din al-Biqai (d. 1480-1), *Maṣra' al-taṣawwuf, aw, Tanbīh al-ghabī ilā takfīr Ibn 'Arabī wa-taḥdīr al-'ibād min ahl al-'inād*, ed. Abd al-Rahman Wakil (Bilbis 1989), 176. See also the story which his contemporary Taqi al-Din al-Fasi (d. 1429) relates directly from Ibn Hajar, *Juzʾ fīhi ʿaqīdat Ibn ʿArabī wa-ḥayātuhu wa-mā qālahu al-muʾarrikhūn wa'l-ʿulamāʾ fīhi*, ed. Ali Hasan Ali Abd al-Hamid (Hofuf 1988), 75-76 [this short book is an extract from al-Fasi's *Al-'Iqd al-thamīn fī ta'rīkh al-balad al-amīn*, ed. Muhammad Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Ata, 7 vols (Beirut 1998), II:277-300, the story is at 299-300]. Ibn Hajar and al-Fasi seem to have had a close relationship; see *TDVİA* s.v 'Fâsî, Takıyyüddin' (C. İzgi). Al-Biqai cites the same story with some more detail; see *Maṣra' al-taṣawwuf*, 149-150. For a summary in English, see A. D. Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany 1999), 132, 332, n.102. Evidence of Ibn Hajar's negative opinions on Ibn Arabi may be found in other works of his as well; see Ş. Özen, 'Ottoman *'Ulamā'* Debating Sufism: Settling the Conflict on the [*sic*] Ibn al-Arabi's Legacy by *Fatwā*s', in *El sufismo y las normas del Islam – Trabajos del IV Congreso Internacional de Estudios Jurídicos Islámicos: Derecho y Sufismo, (Murcia, 7-10 mayo 2003)*, ed. A. Carmona (Murcia 2006), 309-341, at 313, n. 16.

[141] Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 128, compare 135.

[142] While the council of chief judges Ibn Hajar presided over seems to have taken a negative attitude toward Ibn Arabi's teachings in the late 1420s, Ibn Hajar is also credited with a fatwa which is supportive of Ibn Arabi; compare Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 207-208; A. Tek, 'İbnü'l-Arabî'yi müdâfaa amacıyla kaleme alınan fetvâlar', *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi*, 23 (2009), 281-301, at 284-285. Also, Bursalı Mehmed Tahir lists Ibn Hajar among the authors who wrote positively about Ibn Arabi and attributes to him a book on this subject, *al-Intiṣār li-aʾimmat al-amṣār*, which I could not identify, see *Tercüme-i hal ve fezail-i Şeyhü'l-ekber Muḥyiddin-i Arabî* (Istanbul 1316), 15.

[143] Özen, 'Teftâzânî', 303.

[144] Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Bukhari, 'Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn wa-naṣīḥat al-muwaḥḥidīn', ed. Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Awdi, unpublished M.A. thesis, 2 vols, Jamiat Umm al-Qura, H.1414.

The other two titles Kadızade mentions are identifiable: the *Niʿmat al-dharīʿa fī nuṣrat al-sharīʿa* and *Tasfīh al-ghabī fī [tanzīh] Ibn ʿArabī*, both of them by the well-known Arab-Ottoman scholar of the early sixteenth century Ibrahim al-Halabi, who was very critical of Ibn Arabi, whom he accused of changing the meaning of the Qur'an and being an enemy of God, and of his ideas, which he described as "satanic views".[148] Al-Halabi had also taken the time to copy al-Bukhari's *Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn*, and he was the actual author of the short poetic epigraph that is to be found in the copies of the work attributed to al-Taftazani.[149] Thus he was very familiar with the critical tradition directed against Ibn Arabi, to which he contributed with the two works Kadızade cites.

---

[145] See al-Bukhari, 'Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn', I:394-398 (for a discussion of authorship, including references to the manuscripts), and II:4, n. 4 (for the poem); for an English translation of the poem, see Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 147-148. The print edition is the first treatise in the *Majmū'at rasā'il fī waḥdat al-wujūd* ([Istanbul] 1294), 2-47.

[146] Bursalı Mehmed Tahir identified the correct author as al-Bukhari, also citing Çerkeş-Şeyhizade Mehmed Tevfik, who stated that the author of this text could not be al-Taftazani (*Levâyiḥü'l-ḳudsiye* [H.1303/1886], 5), see his *Tercüme-i hal*, 14, n.; see also İ. Fenni [Ertuğrul], *Vahdet-i vücud ve Muhyiddin Arabî* (Istanbul 1928), 101-102. Yet the misattribution persisted; see Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, 147-148 (338 n. 50), esp. 206 (362 n.30). In the French introduction to his edition of Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi's *Al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq wa-al-khiṭāb al-ṣidq* (Damascus 1995), Bakri Ala al-Din devotes a chapter to this question and notes how he himself had erred by attributing the *Fāḍīḥat al-mulḥidīn* to al-Taftazani in 1985, see 15-30, esp. 16.

[147] Al-Nabulusi, *Al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq*, 117-148; 'Alā' al-Din's French introduction, 16. As mentioned above, the *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid* was al-Taftazani's commentary on his own *al-Maqāṣid*; see *TDVİA* s.v 'el-Makāsıd' (M. Sinanoğlu); see also Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin*, 55. While Elizabeth Sirriyeh believes that al-Nabulusi himself might have been "unaware of the true authorship" of the *Fāḍiḥa*, according to Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, al-Nabulusi was aware of the misattribution of this treatise to al-Taftazani; *Tercüme-i ḥâl*, 14, n.; see also İ. Fenni [Ertuğrul], *Vahdet-i vücûd*, 101; compare Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, 1641-1731* (London and New York 2005), 95.

[148] *TDVİA* s.v 'Halebî, İbrahim b. Muhammed' (Ş. S. Has).

Kadızade asserts that Ibn Hajar, al-Taftazani, and al-Halabi utter vicious words about Ibn Arabi; they quote legal opinions from 280 muftis and cite 700 works by eminent scholars, accusing him of infidelity and rejecting his work *al-Fusūs*.[150] He notes that all of this created a great deal of ambivalence in his heart and then repeats his statements from the first letter about how he related what he read to some of the contemporary scholars who instructed him to suspend judgment (or stop talking, *tawaqquf*) about Ibn Arabi. Kadızade adds, as he did in his first letter, that he followed their instructions.

But then Kadızade adds a new twist to this discussion in the second letter by stating that some books he later read resolved his ambivalence about Ibn Arabi. All of these books were authored by Abd al-Wahhab al-Sharani (d. 1565), an Egyptian Sufi who defended Ibn Arabi.[151] He lists the titles as *Mashāriq al-anwār fi ṭabaqāt al-akhyār*, which must be the *Lawāqiḥ al-anwār fi ṭabaqāt al-akhyār*, a biography of scholars and Sufis;[152] *Lawāqiḥ al-anwār wa-manāqib al-Shaykh al-Akbar quddisa sirruh al-anwar*, which is probably *Lawāqiḥ al-anwār al-qudsiyya*, a summary of Ibn Arabi's *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*; *al-Yawāqīt*, a theological work that aims to explain the views of Ibn Arabi and other Sufis and theologians on articles of faith; *Talkhīs al- Futūḥāt*, which is likely to be *al-Kibrīt al-aḥmar fī bayān ʿulūm al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, a summary of the *Lawāqiḥ al-anwār al-qudsiyya*; and *al-Baḥr al-mawrūd fī al-mawāthīq wa-al-ʿuhūd*, a work on the right moral principles for Sufis which are shaped by the conversations the author had with sheikhs he met.[153]

---

[149] See Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Fāḍīḥat al-mulḥidīn wa-naṣīḥat al-muwaḥḥidīn*, Balıkesir İl Halk Kütüphanesi, MS 1135, 23b-55a, at f. 55a, where the copyist identifies himself as "Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Halabi" and notes that he was in Damascus at the *madrasat al-Qijmāsiyya*, which must be the college of law endowed by the Mamluk governor of Damascus Qijmas al-Ishaqi (d. 1487). When he completed the copy on 24 Shawwal 894 (20 September 1489), al-Halabi must have been in his thirties; compare *TDVİA*, loc.cit. In the same copy of the treatise, the poetic epigraph is preceded by a biography of al-Bukhari and introduced by the phrase "*min naẓm al-faqīr Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī*" (f. 23b), a very clear attribution of the poem to al-Halabi by himself. Interestingly, in the same manuscript one finds yet another copy of the same treatise, which was copied much later, in October-November 1666, this time with an attribution to al-Taftazani, see ff. 59b-87b. It thus seems that the circulation of al-Bukhari's work under the name of al-Taftazani must have started after 1489, most probably in Ottoman lands during the sixteenth century, and perhaps in Balıkesir, where Kadızade was born and received his early education, and this manuscript is to be found today.

[150] 97 MTT, 51b, 54a.

[151] R. J. A. McGregor, 'Notes on the Transmission of Mystical Philosophy: Ibn ʿArabī According to ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī', in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought*, ed. T. Lawson (London 2005), 380-392; A. Sabra, 'Illiterate Sufis and Learned Artisans: the Circle of 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani', in *Le développement du soufisme en Égypte à l'époque mamlouke*, eds R. J. McGregor and A. Sabra (Cairo 2006), 153-168; M. Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of Abd al-Wahhab Sharani* (New Brunswick 1982).

[152] Al-Sharani also wrote a book entitled *Mashāriq al-anwār al-qudsiyya fī beyān al-ʿuhūd al-Muḥammadiyya*, see *TDVİA* s.v 'Şa'rânî' (H. Kaplan).

Kadızade does not forget to thank God for guiding him to waive the ambivalence about Ibn Arabi from his heart by aptly quoting from the Qur'anic verse 7:43: "We are grateful to God for guiding us here. Never would we have been guided if God had not shown us the way". In conclusion, Kadızade claims that he was envied by people – that is why they were slandering him with many lies and defaming him with false accusations. And then he starts citing fitting verses of poetry, mostly in Arabic, taken from various unidentified authors, some of whom might be Abu al-Aswad al-Duali (d. 688-9), al-Buhturi (d. 897), al-Mutanabbi (d. 965), and al-Farazdaq (d. c. 729).[154] To convey a sense of the length of this concluding section of poetry, I should state that while the first letter, an edition of which is appended to this study, is a little less than three and a half pages in the manuscript, and the part of the second letter I gave an account of above a little longer than four pages, the poetry cited occupies more than two and a half pages.[155] Kadızade ends his second letter with these two lines, which are attributed to Abu al-Fath al-Busti (d. 1010):[156]

> *Cultivate tolerance, enjoin justice*, as you were ordered, *and avoid the fools*.
> Speak gently to all of humankind as gentleness is deemed good for those who possess high rank.

Before moving to the next section, I should address the possibility of a forgery, which my colleague Nicolas Vatin rightly raised when I presented an earlier version of this study in Rethymno in 2015. The *mecmua* within which I located these letters add some urgency to this question because Damadzade Ahmed, the Ottoman jurist who had it copied in 1714, could probably not be farther from the Kadızadelis, as he is definitely interested in Ibn Arabi and in what we may call the rational sciences, or *al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqliyya*, as evidenced by the contents of the manuscript discussed in the first section. These were far from popular subjects among the people who were inspired by Kadızade. In Cairo, where the manuscript ended up or perhaps its original was copied,[157] Kadızade's name meant something around 1714, when it was copied. The 1711 incident, in which Sufis and their critics took their differences to the streets,[158] was quite fresh in everyone's memory. So someone could have had a vested interest in producing a piece which would demonstrate that even Kadızade himself respected Ibn Arabi.

---

[153] Kaplan, 'Şa'rânî'.

[154] After some more research into the identification of this poetry, I am hoping to publish an edition of the second letter as well.

[155] 97 MTT, 50b-52a, 52a-54a, 54a-55b, respectively.

[156] 97 MTT, 55b; A. Qabbish, *Majmaʿ al-ḥikam wa'l-amthāl fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī* (Damascus 1979), 334. The words in italics in the first line are from the Qur'an, 7:199.

[157] In addition to its current location, the quotation from al-Subki (see n. 12 above), a Mamluk era Shafii scholar, could be cited in support of the possibility of a Cairene origin for the manuscript.

[158] B. Flemming, 'Die vorwahhabitische Fitna im osmanischen Kairo 1711', in *İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan* (Ankara 1976), 55-65; R. Peters, 'The Battered Dervishes of Bab Zuwayla: a religious riot in eighteenth-century Cairo', in *Eighteenth Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, eds N. Levtzion and J. O. Voll (Syracuse 1987), 93-115.

But for such a demonstration, one would not need two letters, I believe. Furthermore, identifying all the people who could possibly have been around Kadızade in the first three decades of his life would be quite difficult, especially if the letters were produced so long after he died. Also, the long section of poetry would definitely not come naturally to a forger, while that section makes a lot of sense, given Kadızade's appreciation of the poetic medium for his message, which I touch upon in the next section of this study. Most importantly, however, there are two clues in the letters which tie them to Kadızade very closely. The first is his attribution of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *Ighāthat al-lahfān min maṣā'id al-shaytān* to Ibn al-Jawzi. He repeats this misattribution, including the use of the word *makāʾid* instead of *maṣā'id*, in an advice work of his which he presented to Murad IV.[159] And the second is one of the very few pieces of Turkish poetry he cites in the long concluding section of his second letter:[160]

> Ben ne toprağım ki kendüm gösterem
> [Satduğum kâh ola gendüm gösterem]
>
> Hâcenündür cümle çün mal u menal
> Kise-i dellâl olur ber-geşte

Kadızade must have been quite fond of this quatrain, which he cites (without acknowledging its author) from the well-known Ottoman Nakşibendi author and poet Lamiî (d. 1532)'s preface to his own compilation of his poems, as he also inserts it also into the introduction of his *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*.[161]

A final question may be raised about the part of the second letter in which Kadızade takes a step back from his stance in the first and declares his peace with Ibn Arabi by invoking the works of al-Sharani. That part of the letter is missing in the second copy of the letters, together with the section about Ibn Arabi immediately before it and the long poetic section after it.[162] Could that be a later addition to vindicate Ibn Arabi? I would not think so because Kadızade had to persuade the Grand Mufti Hocazade Mehmed that he would not revile Ibn Arabi. This was the second time complaints had been raised about him. And more importantly, the Grand Mufti would certainly censor him for reviling Ibn Arabi. There is indeed a legal opinion of Hocazade Mehmed in which he is consulted about an imam-preacher who curses Ibn Arabi and criticises his *Fuṣūṣ*. Hocazade's response is quite clear: if this man does not repent, he would lose his job and be severely reprimanded.[163] Whether or not this particular legal opinion concerned the young Kadızade (and it very well might have), Kadızade must have known about Hocazade's stance on this issue and written his second letter accordingly once he heard about a second round of complaints about him. It is possible to imagine that an older Kadızade who would have had the support of the large masses he was going to appeal to at the imperial mosques of the capital in the 1620s and 1630s could have written a different kind of response. But at this point in time, he was just trying to hold on to his post at the Murad Pasha Mosque and took a more conciliatory approach toward Ibn Arabi in his second letter. Another possibility is that he indeed had changed his opinion about Ibn Arabi.[164] Either way, I will treat these letters as authentic. In the last section of this study, I will articulate some of the implications of the new pieces of information that they provide. Before doing so, however, I would like to correct my own misattribution of some of Kadızade's works in the light of these letters. This correction will also provide a few additional biographical as well as bibliographical details about Kadızade.

---

[159] See Kadızade Mehmed, *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih mecmuatü'n-nasayih*, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hüsrev Paşa 629, f. 110a; compare n. 121 above. I will discuss the authorship of *Mesmuat* in the next section, see below, n. 165ff.

[160] 97 MTT, 55a; the second line, which the copyist mistakenly skipped in the text of the manuscript, has been inserted by a reader on the margin of the page.

[161] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, KM 420, 6b; Ser'atlı, ed., 11; compare H. Tolasa, 'Klasik edebiyatımızda dîvân önsöz (dibâce)leri: Lami'î Divânı önsözü ve (buna göre) divan şiiri sanat görüşü', *JTS*, 3 (1979), 385-402, at 398, where it reads "aşüfte" instead of "ber-geşte"; but the "ber-geşte" variant is not unique, see *Bursalı Lami'î Çelebi Divanı'ndan seçmeler*, ed. H. B. Burmaoğlu (Ankara 1989), 190.

[162] See n. 138 above.

Kadızade's works of royal advice

There are three books of royal advice that carry Kadızade's name and were presented to Murad IV. Yet 'Kadızade Mehmed' is a relatively common name; there are at least three men who were called Kadızade Mehmed, lived in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and found a place in biographical dictionaries as preachers. Thus, perhaps it is not surprising that the identification of the authorship of works which bear the name of Kadızade Mehmed has proved to be prone to mistakes.

Tayyib Gökbilgin introduced two of the three works discussed in this section in 1957: *Nushü'l-hükkâm ve sebebü'n-nizam* and *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih mecmuatü'n-nasayih*.[165] Gökbilgin ascribed these two works to Kadızade İlmî Mehmed from Amasya.[166] In 1962, Agâh Sırrı Levend introduced a translation of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328)'s *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿiyya* entitled *Tacü'r-resail ve Minhacü'l-vesail*, also attributing it to Kadızade İlmî

---

[163] Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi Kütüphanesi, 1841, f. 2a [actually, the third folio of the manuscript].

[164] There is a treatise attributed to Kadızade on Ibn Arabi which starts with the statements he made in these two letters and continues with a reference to al-Sharani's *al-Baḥr al-mawrūd*; see Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 2937, 120b-129b [45 Hk 2937/12], ff 120b-121a. Since I came across to this treatise in the copyediting stage of the present work, I defer a detailed examination of its contents to another study; see n. 286 below.

[165] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Aşir Efendi [AE hereafter] 327 and Hüsrev Paşa [HP hereafter] 629, respectively. I have followed the spelling of the titles as they appear in the manuscripts, see AE 327, f. 36b; and HP 629, f. 1a.

[166] M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, 'XVII. asırda, Osmanlı devletinde ıslahat ihtiyaç ve temayülleri ve Kâtip Çelebi', in *Kâtip Çelebi: hayatı ve eserleri hakkında incelemeler* (Ankara 1957), 197-218, at 211.

Mehmed from Amasya.[167] 'İlmî' is indeed the pen name of the author of these works. In the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* the author introduces himself as "Şeyẖ Muḥammed [Mehmed] el-ʿİlmî aṣ-Ṣagîr, el-maʿrûf bi-Ḳāḍīzâde".[168] In the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*, this pen name can be found in some of the parts in verse.[169] This pen name is also used on the flyleaf of *Tacü'r-resail* in identifying the author,[170] as the author uses the pen name 'İlmî' in some of the poetry dispersed throughout the work.[171] While Gökbilgin and Levend's attribution of these works to Kadızade Mehmed from Amasya was not followed by many others, it is still worthwhile to explore this particular Kadızade, if for nothing else, in order to rule out his authorship firmly.

What is known about Kadızade Mehmed from Amasya is very sketchy. Necdet Yılmaz mentions him among the followers of the Halveti sheikh Abdülmecid Sivasî and his nephew Abdülahad Nuri, who is regarded as the founder of the *Sivasiyye* branch of the Halveti order.[172] Yet while most of the followers of Sivasî are attested by a late seventeenth-century Halveti author Mehmed Nazmî (d. 1701), this Kadızade Mehmed first appears as a follower of Sivasî in the works of Mehmed Tahir (d. 1925) and Hüseyin Vassaf (d. 1929).[173] The latter two are two late Ottoman/early republican authors who produced invaluable biographical dictionaries but had little time to check the names and nicknames of the people whose biographies they provided, or the authorship of the books they listed in their biographical entries. Mehmed Tahir states that this Kadızade from Amasya died in 1045/1635-6, the same year that the well-known Kadızade died in Istanbul.[174] It was most probably Mehmed Tahir whom Gökbilgin followed when he attributed the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* and the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* to Kadızade from Amasya as he lists these titles under his works.[175] While the pen name 'İlmî' is not mentioned by either of these two authors, Hüseyin Vassaf notes that he was a Halveti sheikh and identifies him as "Kadızade Şeyh Küçük Muhammed Efendi", perhaps on the basis of the self-identification of the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih*'s author as "Şeyẖ Muḥammed [Mehmed] el-ʿİlmî aṣ-Ṣagîr, el-maʿrûf bi-Ḳāḍīzâde". Mehmed Tahir and Hüseyin Vassaf both state that he was a student of Zileli Abdurrahman, became one of the *halife*s of Abdülmecid Sivasî, preached at the Bayezid Mosque in Amasya, and was burried next to Pir İlyas Halveti. While Amasyalı Abdizade mentions him as well and confirms his preaching at the Bayezid Mosque in Amasya (noting his death date as 1044/1634-5 and his pen name as İlmî), Mehmed Tahir probably had recourse to another source, as some of the information he provides is either not found or different (such as the date of Kadızade's death) in Abdizade's work.[176]

---

[167] A. S. Levend, 'Siyaset-nameler', *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı-Belleten* (1962): 167-194, at 179, n. 23. Levend's remarks about a second copy of the work with a different title actually refer to *Nushü'l-hükkâm*. Wilhem Pertsch had introduced the *Tacü'r-resail*, correctly identified its author, and also noted Aşık Çelebi's earlier Turkish translation of *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿiyya* in his *Verzeichniss der Türkischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin 1889), 278-279, #255.

[168] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, HP 629, f. 1a.

[169] See, for instance, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, AE 327, f. 14b.

[170] Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Hazine 371, f. 1a, where one also reads the designation "Seyyid".

[171] See, for instance, TSK, H 371, f. 4b.

[172] N. Yılmaz, *Osmanlı toplumunda tasavvuf: sufiler, devlet ve ulema (XVII. Yüzyıl)* (Istanbul 2001), 201.

[173] See Cengiz Gündoğdu, 'Abdulmecîd-i Sîvâsî: hayatı, eserleri ve tasavvufî görüşleri', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Atatürk Üniversitesi, 1997, 157-166; Gündoğdu reads his name as "Kadızade Şeyh Köpük Mehmed Efendi", 164; compare Osmanzade Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, eds M. Akkuş and A. Yılmaz, 5 vols (Istanbul 2006), III:483; Mehmed Nazmî Efendi, *Hediyyetü'l-İhvan*, ed. Osman Türer in *Osmanlılarda Tasavvufî Hayat: Halvetîlik Örneği* (Istanbul 2005), 470-480; Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, 3 vols (Istanbul 1333-1342), I:153.

[174] Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, I:153; Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya* III:483, compare Yılmaz, *Osmanlı toplumunda*, 202, n. 1.

Four (or five) of the seven works attributed to this Kadızade from Amasya by Hüseyin Vassaf and Mehmed Tahir are not his. The authorship of the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* and the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* will be discussed below in some detail. The *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*, which Hüseyin Vassaf attributes to this Kadızade from Amasya, belongs to the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir. Perhaps the self-identification of Kadızade in the preface of his book on horses as the preacher of the Mosque of Bayezid led Hüseyin Vassaf and Mehmed Tahir to attribute this work to Kadızade of Amasya, who was also known to have preached at the Mosque of Bayezid – but the one in Amasya.[177] The confusion of Mehmed Tahir is apparent as he also lists the same title under the works of the well-known Kadızade from Balıkesir.[178] The *Niddü'l-ahbâb kahrü'l-bab* in Hüseyin Vassaf's list of the works of Kadızade from Amasya, which Mehmed Tahir identified as *Nehrü'l-ashab ve kahrü's-sibâb*, must be *Naṣr al-aṣḥāb wa'l-aḥbāb wa qahr al-kilāb al-sibāb fī radd al-Rāfiḍa*, a title which Kâtip Çelebi, and, following him, Bağdatlı İsmail Pasha, identify as one of the works of the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir.[179] Also, the

---

[175] Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, I:153; Vassaf lists them, too, III:483; however, Vassaf's work was not widely accessible until recently.

[176] Abdizade Hüseyin Hüsameddin [Yaşar], *Amasya Tarihi*, 5 vols (1328/1330 [1912]-35), I:222, IV:70; for Pir İlyas Halveti and his tomb, see ibid., I:188, 225; for the previous preacher at the same mosque, see IV:51; for Zileli Abdurrahman, see IV:19; for the probable father and brothers of this Kadızade, see IV:16.

[177] There are several reasons why Kadızade Mehmed from Amasya may not have been the author of the *Kitab-ı makbul*. If the author had been the preacher of the Mosque of Bayezid in Amasya, one would expect the identification of the city on the title page of the manuscript as the first Mosque of Bayezid to come to mind in Istanbul would be the one in the same city. Also, most of the manuscripts of the work are in Istanbul libraries. And the few Anatolian libraries which hold a copy do not seem to include any in Amasya; see the online catalogue of manuscripts in Turkey at http://yazmalar.gov.tr. For a discussion of the well-known Kadızade Mehmed's appointment to the Mosque of Bayezid, see n. 196 below.

[178] Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, I:402.

[179] Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, III:483; Tahir, I:153; Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, II, 1955. Afyon Gedik Ahmed Paşa Kütüphanesi, manuscript No. 17180, which Yılmaz, *Osmanlı toplumunda*, 202, n. 8, identifies as the work in question which is attributed to Kadızade from Amasya is a copy of the *Naṣr al-aṣḥāb* by the well-known Kadızade Mehmed as it starts (f. 2b) with the

Risale-i Regaibiyye which is to be found in the list of the works of Kadızade Mehmed of Amasya might well refer to the treatise which Kadızade mentions as his own in his autobiographical letter.[180] In short, the attribution of any work to this Kadızade of Amasya has to be treated very carefully.

Having read Mehmed Şimşek's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (1977), which discusses Kadızade's works, Ocak attributed the *Tacü'r-resail* to the well-known Kadızade in 1983.[181] Öztürk in 1981 and Çavuşoğlu in 1990 did so as well.[182] And they had good reason: the author identified himself as "Şeyẖ Muḥammed [Mehmed] bin Muṣṭafā el-maʿrûf bi-Ḳāḍīzâde".[183] While one does not know the paternal name of Kadızade Mehmed from Amasya, the name of the well-known Kadızade's father was certainly Mustafa. Moreover, the fact that the *Tacü'r-resail* was a translation of Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿiyya* was probably seen as a good reason for being sure about this attribution. A medieval Muslim scholar who is very well-respected by twentieth-century Salafis was seen as a reasonable model for Kadızade, who spent a lot of his energy on opposing *bidʿat* (innovation).

In 2001, I indicated that all of the three works discussed in this section most probably are those of yet another Kadızade Mehmed who was a contemporary of the well-known Kadızade.[184] This Kadızade Mehmed was, like the Kadızade Mehmed from Amasya, a Halveti sheikh and had preceded the well-known Kadızade as the preacher of the Aya Sofya (Hagia Sophia), to which post he was appointed in 1033/1624.[185] My reasoning behind this supposition was based on the introduction of *Nushü'l-hükkâm*, in which the author relates a conversation he had had with the late Grand Mufti Esad after he had given a sermon in Aya Sofya. Thus the author's preaching career at Aya Sofya seemed to have started before Esad died in 1625, which would rule out the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir, who was appointed to the Aya Sofya in 1041/1631-2. Moreover, the author

---

first words that Kâtip Çelebi notes in his bibliographical entry. Even though Kâtip Çelebi does not refer to Balıkesir in his references to Kadızade Mehmed, the fact that he does not need to specify the particular Kadızade he has in mind suggests that he is referring to the one from Balıkesir because that is the one he knows most closely as attested by his autobiographical writings; see his *Balance of Truth*, 135-136. Bağdatlı İsmail Paşa, who uses Kâtip Çelebi's bibliographical work to create a biographical dictionary of authors, identifies three works as belonging to Kadızade Mehmed from Balıkesir; see *Hadiyyat al-ʻĀrifīn*, II:277; compare Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, I:66; II:1461, 1955; Kâtip Çelebi mentions three more works in connection with the name Kadızade Mehmed, the last couple of which most probably are those of the well-known Kadızade from Balıkesir; see *Keşf-el-zunun*, I:105, 868, 894.

[180] See n. 109 above.

[181] Ocak, 'XVII. Yüzyılda', 216, n. 27; for the full reference to M. Şimşek's work, see 211, n. 6.

[182] Öztürk, 'Islamic orthodoxy', 154-155; Çavuşoğlu, 'The Ḳāḍīzādelı movement', 93.

[183] This self-reference with paternal name is to be found in two copies of the *Tacü'r-resail*, see Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmud Efendi 1926, f. 12a, and Pertsch, 278.

[184] B. Tezcan, 'Searching for Osman: A Reassessment of the Deposition of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618-1622)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2001, 252, 376, n. 91; see also B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*, 125, n. 43.

[185] Atayî, 765.

of the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* states that he had presented a previous version of the same work to the Grand Vizier Murad Pasha, who passed it on to Ahmed I (r. 1603-17). Murad Pasha was Grand Vizier from 1606 to 1611, a period during which the presence of the well-known Kadızade in Istanbul was not reported in any source. So I assumed that even if Kadızade had arrived from Balıkesir in Istanbul, as a young immigrant from a small north-west Anatolian town, he would not have the necessary patronage connections to present his work to a Grand Vizier. The elder Kadızade Mehmed was also an immigrant to Istanbul. Yet he was attested to have become the sheikh of the Halveti convent endowed by Sokollu Mehmed Pasha upon the death of his master, Vaiz Emir, in 1015/1606-7.[186] Therefore he could have had the kind of connections that would enable him to present his work to the Grand Vizier. I did not provide these details back in 2001 as the question of the authorship of these works was not central to the argument I was making, which was the rising significance of preachers in Ottoman politics. Since then, Derin Terzioğlu has published a very thorough comparison between Aşık Çelebi (d. 1572)'s *Miʿracü'l-eyâle ve minhacü'l-adâle* and the *Tacü'r-resail*, clearly demonstrating that the latter was very much a wholesale 'borrowing' from Aşık Çelebi's earlier translation of Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿiyya*. She also made a case for the elder and lesser-known Kadızade having been the scholar who made this 'borrowing' without a single reference to the actual translator and having authored both the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* and the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih*.[187]

The biographical details about the well-known Kadızade provided by his letters to the Grand Mufti Mehmed, however, remove some of the reasons which led Terzioğlu and myself to attribute the three advice works mentioned above to the elder Kadızade. Not only did Kadızade arrive in Istanbul, but also started a preaching career before he turned twenty. He stood in for his Halveti sheikh Ömer at an imperial mosque while the latter attended a military campaign a few years before Murad Pasha was appointed to the grand vizierate, and his name became sufficiently well known soon after - so much so that his adversaries filed complaints with the Grand Mufti, most probably during the tenure of Murad Pasha as Grand Vizier. It is not difficult to imagine how an earlier version of his stern tone of his later years, which was going to bring him close to Murad IV, could have appealed to Murad Pasha, who was also well known to have been a political leader with an iron fist. While Kadızade does not refer to any treatise of advice which he presented to a Grand Vizier in his autobiographical letters, he might well have written the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* in the immediate aftermath of the second letter with a view to securing strong political allies against his adversaries.

---

[186] Atayî, 597, 765.

[187] D. Terzioğlu, 'Bir tercüme ve bir intihal vakası: Ya da İbn Teymiyye'nin *Siyasetü'ş-şer'iyye*'sini Osmanlıcaya kim(ler) nasıl aktardı?', *JTS*, 31 (2007), 247-275; for another article which compares Aşık Çelebi's translation with Kadızade's 'borrowing' of it (identifying the 'borrower' as the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir without a reference to Terzioğlu's work), see A. H. Furat, 'Selefîliğin Osmanlıya etkisi bağlamında kullanılan bir argüman: İbn Teymiye'nin Es-Siyâsetü'ş-Şer'iyye isimli eserinin Osmanlı dünyasında XVI. ve XVII. asırdaki tercümeleri', *Marife: Bilimsel Birikim*, 9 (2009): 215-226.

Another piece of evidence indicating Kadızade’s proximity to the upper echelons of the imperial capital is provided by Kâtip Çelebi, who notes that Kadızade wrote a treatise on the *mizan*, or the (divine) scale, on the suggestion of the Grand Mufti Sunullah (d. 1612), who held the office of Grand Mufti four times (1599-1601, 1603, 1604-06, 1606-08). If Kadızade had managed to accumulate enough intellectual and political capital in the early years of the seventeenth century for a Grand Mufti to suggest to him writing a treatise on a subject which had been treated by the towering figure of Kemalpaşazade earlier,[188] he might very well have been able to present a treatise to the Grand Vizier too. Thus it might be worthwhile to have another look at the passage in the the *Nushü’l-hükkâm* where the author and Esad both refer to the author’s sermon in Aya Sofya:

> Ve dahi bu kitab-ı şerifin tahririne sebeb bu olmuşdur ki bu fakir Ayasofya-ı kebirde bir gün va‘z itmeğe canib-i saltanatdan memur olub ve emre imtisal etdüğümüzden üc gün sonra merhûm ve mebrur Esad Efendi hazretlerine ziyarete vardum. Buyurdılar ki “Ayasofya’da gayet eyü ve nafi ve câmi vaʿz itmişsiz. Cemi huzzar-ı meclis vaʿzınızı istihsan ve istısvab itmişler. Hattâ âdanız bile gayet eyülüğüne şehadet etdiler. *Al-faḍl mā shahidat bi-hi al-aʿdā* mânası sizde zahir oldı. Rica olunur ki anda tefsir olınan ayatı ve nakl olınan hikâyatı şimdi bize tekrar tefsir ve nakl buyurasız.”[189]

While I had understood the underlined part as a reference to the beginning of the elder Kadızade’s appointment to Aya Sofya, it could also lend itself to be understood in a way to suggest that the author was instructed by the young Sultan, or one of his or his mother Kösem Sultan’s agents, to give a sermon in Aya Sofya for one day, which was not unusual.[190] Thus one could interpret this passage as a reference to a special sermon rather than the beginning of a regular appointment, which, in any event, would not really be made by the sultanate but the senior leadership of the lords of the law, most probably by one of the senior justices (Anadolu or Rumeli kadıaskeri) or, in the case of imperial mosques like Aya Sofya, the Grand Mufti.[191]

---

[188] Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, II:894; *TDVİA* s.v. ‘Sun‘ullah Efendi’ (M. İpşirli); *TDVİA* s.v. ‘Mîzan’ (S. Toprak); s.v. ‘Kemalpaşazâde’, 244. While the fact that Kadızade does not list this treatise among his works in the letters studied here might cast some doubt on his authorship of such a treatise, Kâtip Çelebi should be regarded as a reliable source on Kadızade as he was one of his students in the late 1620s; *Balance*, 135-136. It is possible that he wrote the treatise after the letters, since Sunullah was alive until 1612. Moreover, Kadızade’s treatise on the *mizan* is also noted in the short biographical entry devoted to him by Mustafa bin Fath Allah al-Hamawi (d. H.1123/1711), *Fawā’id al-irtiḥāl wa-natā’ij al-safar fī akhbār al-qarn al-ḥādī ‘ashar*, ed. Abd Allah Muhammad al-Kandari, 6 vols (Beirut 2011), II:18. Unfortunately, I could not identify a copy of this treatise the first sentence of which is copied by Kâtip Çelebi in his bibliographical entry.

[189] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, AE 327, f. 36a.

[190] See, for instance, Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, III:157.

[191] For an anecdote about the appointment of a caller to prayer which involves the judge of Istanbul and the senior justice of the Asian provinces, see B. Tezcan, ‘*Dispelling the Darkness*: The Politics of ‘Race’ in the Early Seventeenth Century Ottoman Empire in the Light of the Life and Work of Mullah Ali’, in *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume*

Clearly, the new biographical details do not necessarily prove the well-known Kadızade's authorship of the three works under discussion. Yet they do open some room to consider this possibility one more time. In order to do so, however, one also needs to address the question of Kadızade's pen name. On the title page of the *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*, the author refers to himself as "Şeyẖ Muḥammed el-Millî el-Vâʿiẓ fî câmiʿ-i Sulṭân Bāyezîd el-velî...", and in the work itself as "Şeyẖ Muḥammed el-maʿrûf bi-Ḳāḍīzâde".[192] Thus if the well-known Kadızade had a pen name, it must have been Millî, although he does not use this pen name in the main text of the *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*, a book that Kadızade must have completed by 1622, when Osman II, to whom the work was dedicated, was deposed and executed. Yet the author of the three works discussed in this section uses the pen name İlmî. While it is not unheard of for someone to change his (or her) pen name, as exemplified by the well-known story of the great seventeenth-century master of both panegyric and satire Nef î, who was a contemporary of all the Kadızades mentioned so far and had started his career as a poet with the pen name Zarrî and later adopted Nefî upon Ali's advice,[193] in order to entertain this possibility in the case of the well-known Kadızade, one has to establish that he did have some pieces in verse with the pen name İlmî. Evliya Çelebi attributes this pen name to him, but he is as confused about the two Kadızades within a few decades of their deaths, as I was in 2001. In his short biography of the well-known Kadızade, he mentions, instead of Balıkesir, Sofia as his birthplace, which is actually the birthplace of the elder Kadızade according to Atayî.[194] Since the well-known Kadızade's authorship of the three works discussed in this section is still in question, the evidence for his use of the pen name İlmî has to come from other works which can be attributed to him beyond any doubt. Thanks to the more recent studies on Kadızade, this attribution can now be made in two separate works of his.

Sebahat Deniz published in 2008 a short piece by the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir in which he clearly uses the pen name İlmî. This piece, entitled *Duanâme*, or the "book of prayer", consists of 107 couplets and is dedicated to Murad IV, probably soon after his enthronement in 1623. The author introduces himself as "Sultan Bayezid-i Veli … Cami-i şerifinde hâlâ vaiz ü nâsıh olan Şeyh Muhammed İlmî daileri".[195] Accord-

---

of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz, eds. B. Tezcan and K. K. Barbir (Madison 2007), 73-95, at 81. For the role of the Grand Mufti in preaching appointments to the imperial mosques in the late eighteenth century, see M. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı döneminde vâizlik* (Istanbul 2016), 25-26.

[192] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Kadızade Mehmed 420, f. 1a, 5b; 97 MTT, f. 57a, 58b.

[193] *TDVİA* s.v. 'Nef'î' (M. Akkuş).

[194] Evliya Çelebi, 164-165; compare Atayî, 765.

[195] Deniz identified two copies of this work in two *mecmua*s: Bayezid Devlet Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin 1801, and TSK, Emanet Hazinesi 739. This quotation is from the latter, f. 114b; the former, f. 84a, also identifies "Şeyh Muhammed İlmî" as the contemporary preacher at the Mosque of Sultan Bayezid; see S. Deniz, 'Kadızâde Mehmed İlmî'nin Sultan IV. Murad için yazdığı manzum Duânâme'si', *Divan Edebiyatı Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1 (2008), 9-40, at 28, and 28, n. **.

ing to Uşşakizade (d. 1724), the well-known Kadızade was appointed to preach at the Mosque of Sultan Bayezid in 1032/1622-23; contemporary sources suggest that he held this position earlier, at the latest in 1031/1622.[196] Moreover, the elder and lesser known Kadızade is not attested to have preached at any major mosque before his appointment to Aya Sofya in 1033/1624. Thus the *Duanâme*, in which the name Kadızade and the pen name İlmî are both mentioned together, must be that of the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir.

More recently, in a well-researched master's thesis, Songül Karaca studied Kadızade's book of *akaid* (tenets of faith), which is more than 1,500 verses long and was completed in 1037/1627-8. There are several verses in which the author uses the pen name İlmî.[197] And in several manuscripts the author is identified by this pen name.[198] This work must be the one which the author of the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* refers to as his *akaid* work in verse.[199] While these references could also be understood as indicating the authorship of the elder Kadızade, who might have used the same pen name, Karaca states that the 107 verses of the *Duanâme*, the authorship of which is certainly to be identified with that of the well-known Kadızade because of the self-identification of the author as the preacher at the Mosque of Bayezid, are taken from this work.[200]

---

[196] Uşşakizade, *'Ušâqîzâde's Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Gelehrter und Gottesmänner des osmanischen Reiches im 17. Jahrhundert (Zeyl-i Šaqâ'iq)*, facs. ed. H. J. Kissling (Wiesbaden 1965), 44; Uşşakizade most probably based this date on the assumed death date of Kadızade's predecessor at this mosque, Birgilizade Fazlullah. Atayî does not give a precise date for Fazlullah's death, noting that he passed away towards the end of the second reign of Mustafa I (1622-1623). Since Kadızade represents himself in this position in his preface to *Kitab-ı makbul* while Osman II (1618-1622) was still alive, this death date might be at least a year off; or perhaps Fazlullah retired from the pulpit before he died and passed his position to Kadızade, who had succeeded him in his previous appointment at the Mosque of Selim I as well; Atayî, 675, compare p. 221 above. Bostanzade confirms Kadızade's position at the Mosque of Bayezid in 1622 when he refers to him as the preacher of that mosque while he narrates the rebellion that led to the deposition of Osman II, see O. Ş. Gökyay, 'II. Sultan Osman'ın Şehadeti', in *Atsız Armağanı*, eds E. Güngör, et al. (Istanbul 1976), 187-256, at 206; Bostazade Yahya, *Vaḳ'a-ı Sulṭân ʿOs̱mân Ḫân*, TSK, Revan 1305, f. 18a.

[197] S. Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed Efendi, Manzûme-i Akâid (İnceleme-Tenkitli Metin-Sözlük-Dizin)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi, 2012, 191, 197, 201 (in a subtitle), 203, 215, 223, 225, 226, 246, 268, 274, 302, 326. For another thesis on this work which includes a modern Turkish translation of it, see B. Büyükkeçeci, 'Kadızâde İlmî Efendi'nin 'İtmâmü'l-merâm min nazmi'l-kelam' adlı eserinin tahlil, çeviri ve değerlendirilmesi', unpublished M.A. thesis, Erciyes Üniversitesi, 2005. Büyükkeçeci's study is based on a single manuscript, and she does not dwell upon the question of identifying the author. Karaca looked at 16 manuscripts of the work and decided to use five of them for her critical edition; see Karaca, 176-185.

[198] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 20, n. 72, 177, 178, 181, 185.

[199] "Bir Turkî manzum * cami-i akaid ü ulûm", Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, HP 629, f. 113a.

[200] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 26. It is indeed possible to identify every verse of the *Duaname* in the *Akaid* in verse. Chronologically speaking, however, the relationship between the two works might be slightly different. Most probably, Kadızade composed this *Akaid* in verse over

Moreover, Karaca identifies some parts of the *Akaid* in verse which have been quoted by others in reference to the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir. One of these quotations is a couplet Kâtip Çelebi heard from Kadızade while he was following his lectures in 1041/1631-2:

Kelâm-ı felsefe fülse değer mi?
Aña sarrâf-ı keyyis baş eğer mi?[201]

Last, but not least, the contents of the *Akaid* in verse point to the authorship of the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir rather than a Halveti sheikh such as the elder and lesser known Kadızade. As Karaca notes in some detail,[202] the work does not employ a hostile tone towards Sufism in general. On the contrary, as demonstrated by Karaca, Kadızade adapts many verses written by Sufis, including some by Mahmud Hüdayi (d. 1628), a well-known sheikh who was still alive when Kadızade completed the *Akaid* in verse, and makes them his own by editing them for his own purposes without mentioning the source of the verses.[203] The *Miskinnâme* by Dede Ömer Ruşenî, a fifteenth-century Halveti who came to be seen as the founder of the *Ruşeni* branch of the Halveti order, is the object of his most radical revisions, such as the ones in this couplet:

Tasavvuf terk-i evtandur dimişler
Tasavvuf hecr-i ihvandur dimişler

Tasavvuf terk-i isyandur dimişler
Tasavvuf fıkh-ı Kurʾandur dimişler.[204]

While for *Ruşeni* Sufism is about leaving one's hometown and separating oneself from one's brothers and friends in the couplet on the left, Kadızade declares it to be a

---

a period of time, incorporating into it pieces he wrote over the years. Thus he probably recycled the verses he composed for Murad IV in different parts of the *Akaid* in verse; hence, the dispersed nature of the *Duanâme* verses in this work. The 107 verses of Kadızade's prayer for Murad IV are either identical with or very close to the following 107 verses in the *Akaid* in verse (in the order of the *Duanâme* as edited by Deniz, with verse numbers referring to Karaca's edition of the *Akaid* in verse): 62-81, 547-555, 559-574, 514-533, 624-625 (note the change in 625), 534-545, 1519-1520, 1244, 546, 558, 103-104, 106-114, 411, 115, 134-136, 138, 142, 1516-1517 (note the change in 1517), 556, 116, 418. Another work by Kadızade the relationship of which with this *Akaid* in verse is identified by Karaca is a 137 verse long piece known as 'Kaside-i Kadızade', which was described by its editor as an *akaid* work in verse; see Karaca, 26; M. Arslan, 'Klasik türk edebiyatı manzum dini eserlerinden bir örnek, manzum akaid risalesi: Kasîde-i Kadızâde', in idem, *Osmanlı edebiyat-tarih-kültür makaleleri* (Istanbul 2000), 115-128. This latter piece might be a selection from the complete work or an early version of it before Kadızade completed it. Arslan had not identified the author of the piece he published as he did not have sufficient evidence to attribute it to one of the many Kadızades who could have authored it, see 117-118.

[201] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 24, 207; Kâtip Çelebi, *Mîzanü'l-hakk*, ed. Gökyay, 114.

[202] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 111-115.

[203] Karaca compares these verses with their original forms in Hüdayî's work, indicating Kadızade's alterations in bold, see 78-84.

[204] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 62; for Kadızade's other revisions on Ruşenî's work, see 61-64.

categorical rejection of rebellion and the adoption of the jurisprudence of the Qur'an. After adapting 43 verses from Ruşenî without acknowledging him, Kadızade continues by raising his voice against some Sufi practices, such as whirling. According to him, no other body part than one's tongue should move during the dhikr ceremony:

Şular kim zikr iderken raks iderler
Tasavvuf ismin anlar naks iderler

Olur raksun sonı her vech-ile naks
Ki zira Samirî ihdasıdur raks

Dilünden gayrı depretme vücudun
Meğer ola rükû ile sücudun

Salâtda hem gerekdür toğrı turmak
Haram oldı bil anda da salınmak.[205]

These four couplets align well with what we know about Kadızadeli arguments on the subjects of "singing, dancing, and whirling", and further strengthen the identification of the author, who uses the penname İlmî, with the well-known Kadızade of Balıkesir.[206] The other Kadızade, who was a Halveti sheikh at the convent of Mehmed Pasha in the Kadırga neighbourhood of Istanbul,[207] would probably have had different opinions on these issues even if he might not have been as vocal about them as one of his contemporary Halvetis, Sivasî, who entered into debates with the well-known Kadızade.

These new pieces of evidence indicating the use of the penname İlmî by the well-known Kadızade, coupled with the evidence of his autobiographical letters which establish his presence in Istanbul at the very beginning of the seventeenth century as an already talked-about preacher, suggest that Kadızade of Balıkesir might well have been the author of the three works discussed in this section.

Another piece of evidence which supports the attribution of these three works to the well-known Kadızade is the above-mentioned self-identification of the author of the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih*: "Şeyẖ Muḥammed [Mehmed] el-ʿİlmî aṣ-Ṣagîr, el-maʿrûf bi-Ḳāḍīzâde". "Aṣ-Ṣagîr" could be understood as small or young, just like the Turkish adjective *küçük*, which was used with reference to the well-known Kadızade in order to distinguish him from the other Kadızade who preceded him at Aya Sofya. Since the lesser-known Kadızade was identified with the adjective 'kebir' or 'büyük' by his contemporaries, including some members of his own Halveti order, he would definitely not identify himself as "as-Sagir", and this work must belong to the well-known Kadızade.[208]

---

[205] Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 313.

[206] Kâtib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, 38-46.

[207] D. Kuban, 'An Ottoman Building Complex of the Sixteenth Century: The Sokollu Mosque and its Dependencies in Istanbul', *Ars Orientalis*, 7 (1968), 19-39; for an earlier depiction, including a note about this Kadızade's burial there, see Ayvansarâyî, *Hadikatü'l-cevâmi'*, 259; and for the identification of the extant tombstones, see J.-L. Bacque-Grammont, H.-P. Laqueur, and N. Vatin, *Stelae Turcicae II: cimetières de la mosquée de Ṣoḳollu Meḥmed Paşa à Kadırga Limanı, de Bostancı Ali et du turbe de Ṣoḳollu Meḥmed Pasa à Eyüb* (Tübingen 1990); the lesser-known Kadızade's tombstone is not extant, but his predecessor's is, see ibid., 105-106.

[208] For the use of *Büyük* and *Küçük* with respect to the two Kadızades, see Yılmaz, *Osmanlı toplumunda*, 125-126; for contemporary usage, see Topçular Katibi (*Abdülkadir Efendi tarihi*,

The close relationship between the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* and the *Tacü'r-resail* was already pointed out by Terzioğlu, who identified the source of one of the few additions made by Kadızade to the original translation of Aşık Çelebi in the text of the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih*. Coincidentally, the very source of this addition, which repeats a mistaken attribution of the authorship of a medieval work by Kadızade in his autobiographical letters, points more to Kadızade of Balıkesir than the lesser-known Büyük Kadızade.[209] Since there is a similarly close relationship between the texts of the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* and the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*,[210] all of these three texts might be assumed to have been authored by him. Furthermore, just as it is possible to identify some of the verses the well-known Kadızade wrote for Murad IV in the *Duanâme* in his slightly later *Akaid* in verse, it is also possible to recognise some verses from both of them in the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*, including one with his pen name İlmî, strengthening the case for Kadızade of Balıkesir's authorship of the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*.[211]

There are two further clues connecting these texts with the well-known Kadızade. One of them is the story about Abu Yusuf and the caliph who is mentioned by Kadızade in his autobiographical letter. This story is related, this time in Turkish, in the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* as well.[212] The other is a longer section about the four classes of mankind, that is the men of the sword, the men of the pen, the men of trades, and the men of agriculture.

II:1177): "Meşayih-i izamlardan ... Kadızade-i Kebir Efendi, Kadızade Efendi...", where the "Kebir" (corresponding to 'büyük') must refer to the lesser-known Kadızade, as Topçular Katibi refers to the other one simply as "Kadızade" during the Revan campaign of Murad IV and the time of his death (ibid., II:1009, 1041). The lesser-known Kadızade is described as "Büyük Kadızade Şeyh Mehmed Sofyavî"; see Ayvansarayî, *Hadikatü'l-cevami*, 259. Most importantly, Mehmed Nazmî, who was born the year before the lesser-known Kadızade's appointment to the Aya Sofya and was a committed Halveti, refers to him as "Büyük" Kadızade (Nazmî, 507, 510), and he mostly refers to the well-known Kadızade simply as Kadızade, or in one instance, as "Küçük" Kadızade (Nazmî, 432, 510, 512, n. 69). In 2001, I interpreted this adjective as one that differentiated the author from other poets who used the pen name İlmî, such as Remzizade Mehmed, Edirneli Ahmed Çelebi, or Manisalı Gınayizade; see Atayî, 414; es-Seyyid Rıza (d. 1672), *Tezkire-i Rıza*, ed. A. Cevdet, (Istanbul 1316), 74-75. But it makes more sense to read it in parallel with the contemporary references to the two Kadızades in Istanbul.

[209] Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident', 268, n. 92. This addition, which is not found in the Topkapı manuscript of the *Tacü'r-resail* (see H. 371, f. 3b), is a summary from the *Ighathat al-lahfan 'an/min maka'id al-shaytan*, which Kadızade mistakenly attributes to Ibn al-Jawzi both in his autobiographical letter (see above n. 121) and the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* (see Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, HP 629, f. 110a) while the actual author is Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.

[210] Compare Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, AE 327, 23a (the end of the last line) - 26a, with HP 629, 36a-42b (except the part in verse, 36b-38b).

[211] Compare Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, AE 327, f. 7b, lines 1-9, with Deniz, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 31-32, verses 30-33, 35, 34, 36-38; AE 327, f.10b, lines 6-12, with Deniz, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 32, verses 39-45; f. 7b, the last two lines, with Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 305, verses 1279-80; f. 10b, lines 3-4, with Karaca, 'Kadızâde Mehmed', 246-7, verses 622-623; İlmî is on line 3, verse 622.

[212] Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, HP 629, f. 53.

The wording of this section is quite similar in Kadızade's *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul* and the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*.[213] While a discussion of this theme is commonly found in all kinds of literary sources and Kadızade borrowed it from Akhisarî Hasan Kafi (d. 1616)'s *Usulü'l-hikem fi nizami'l-âlem*,[214] the 15- couplet-long piece of poetry in it is Kadızade's own addition to the text of Akhisarî (whom he does not mention at all) and is identical in the *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul* and the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*.[215] Since the former work was attributed reliably to the well-known Kadızade by Kâtip Çelebi,[216] one of his students who later became critical of him, the presence of this section in the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* might be considered as yet another piece of supporting evidence for identifying the well-known Kadızade as the author of the corpus of the three texts discussed in this section.

Finally, attributing these three texts, in two of which the use of narration in verse is quite frequent,[217] to the well-known Kadızade is more in line with their reputations. Şeyhî Mehmed notes in his biographical entry for Kadızade Mehmed of Balıkesir both his extensive scholarly output ("müteaddid risaleleri") and his poetry which he describes as "mixed with good advice (nasihat-amiz)".[218] Atayî, a contemporary of both Kadızades, does not mention any scholarly works or poetry for the elder Kadızade, whose agreeable appearance he notes extensively.[219] While Tevfik, the author of a nineteenth-century biographical dictionary, states that Büyük Kadızade wrote some poetry, he notes his pen name as Şeyhî rather than İlmî.[220] Last but not least, contemporary historical sources have various anecdotes about the closeness of the well-known Kadızade to Murad IV while Büyük Kadızade is not mentioned in any context with Murad IV.[221]

---

[213] Compare Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Kadızade Mehmed 420, 8b-12b; AE 327, 55b-57b.

[214] M. İpşirli, 'Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî ve devlet düzenine ait eseri *Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizâmi'l-âlem*', *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 10-11 (1979-1980): 239-278 [Hasan Kafi hereafter], at 251-253. I should add that Kadızade borrows much more from Hasan Kafi in the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*; compare, for instance, AE 327, 55a-55b, 57b-63a, 67a, 67b-69a, with Hasan Kafi, 249-251, 253-262, 263, 272-276.

[215] Compare Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Kadızade Mehmed 420, f. 11; AE 327, 56b-57a. I must add, however, that Kadızade may be citing someone else's poetry without mentioning the name of the poet as he does earlier in the *Kitab-ı makbul* when he cites Lamiî without acknowledging him; see n. 161 above.

[216] Kâtip Çelebi identifies the author of this work as Kadızade Mehmed bin Mustafa and states the death date of the author as 1044. Although the well-known Kadızade died in 1045, this seems to be a simple mistake that Kâtip Çelebi repeats in his bibliographical entries for other works of Kadızade (as well as his incomplete biographical entry about him) and might not refer to the other Kadızade who died in 1041 and whose patronym is not known; see Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, II, c. 1461, compare I:66 (where he has Kadızade's patronym as Mehmed rather than Mustafa); I:868; II:1955; and I:894 (where he gives his date of death as 1043); and *Sullam al-wuṣūl ilā ṭabaqāt al-fuḥūl*, ed. E. İhsanoğlu, 6 vols (Istanbul 2010), III:201; V:270. Kâtip Çelebi was not in Istanbul in the last years of Kadızade Mehmed's life (1043-1045); see *The Balance of Truth*, 137. While Kadızade joined Murad IV's military expedition against the Safavids, he returned from Konya in 1044, as he fell sick and died in 1045, which Kâtip Çelebi notes in his *Fezleke*, II:183. Perhaps when he wrote the relevant parts of the *Sullam al-wuṣūl* and *Kashf al-ẓunūn* he took the date of Kadızade's return from Konya as his death date and corrected this mistake while he was working on the *Fezleke*, which he completed later; see *The Balance of Truth*, 143-144. While Ayvansarayi notes the burial place of the lesser-known Kadızade, his tombstone, on which his paternal name could have been found, is no longer there; see n. 207 above.

[217] Both the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* and the *Mesmuatü'n-nekayih* include long pieces in verse.

[218] Şeyhî Mehmed, *Vekayiü 'l-fudalâ*, 60.

Even though the authorship of the three works in this section can now firmly be attributed to the well-known Kadızade, there are still some unanswered questions, such as yet another pen name associated with the name of Kadızade Mehmed. In some of the manuscripts of the *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul*, the author is identified as Kadızade Füyûzî Mehmed in manuscript catalogues.[222] This identification may well refer to Enderûnî Füyûzî, who presented a treatise on horses, which he claims to have compiled from Arabic sources, to Mustafa II upon his accession to the throne in 1695.[223] A cursory look at this work suggests that it is a minimally redacted version of Kadızade's *Kitab-ı makbul*.[224] Finally, as noted by Terzioğlu, the manuscripts of the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* include a variety of references and many variants, which, if taken together, do not rule out the possibility of an appropriation of an earlier work by Kadızade.[225]

---

[219] Atayî, 765. Since Atayî died before the well-known Kadızade Mehmed, he could not have included an entry for him in his biographical dictionary.

[220] Tevfik, *Mecmuatü't-Teracim*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, Türkçe Yazmalar 192, f. 35.

[221] See, for instance, Nazmî, 417, 459-461.

[222] See, for instance, the records for the manuscripts Nuruosmaniye Kütüphanesi 3699 and 4990 on http://www.yazmalar.gov.tr.

[223] F. E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu*, 2 vols. (Istanbul 1961), II:383-84, # 3063.

[224] Tülay İrfanoğlu studied two copies of this work (Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmud Efendi 2055, and İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, TY2181) in her M.A. thesis. While she does not compare the work with Kadızade's, the two are very similar from beginning to end; see her 'Füyuzi'nin Makbul Der Hal-i Huyul adlı baytarnamesi: Giriş-tenkitli metin-dizin', unpublished M.A. thesis, Marmara University, 2013, 20-50; compare Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Kadızade Mehmed 420. In the nineteenth century, this work seems to have been reworked once again, this time by a certain Ali Hadi, to be presented to Abdülmecid (r. 1839-1861); see Karatay, I: 591-592, # 1824-1825. I must add, however, that I have not examined Ali Hadi's manuscripts myself, thus the extent of the 'borrowing' may be limited. Furthermore, yet another pen name which is used in the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* is Feyzî (f. 71b), which may refer to Dursunzade Abdullah Efendi (d. 1610); see Rıza, *Tezkire-i Rıza*, 78 – Kadızade may just have inserted a poem by Dursunzade, like the poems of Kemalpaşazade and Latifî he inserted in the *Mesmuat*, ff. 7a-8b, 26b.

[225] I would like to thank Derin Terzioğlu for sharing with me the details of her findings in the *Nushü'l-hükkâm*, Istanbul University, Turkish manuscripts, 6966 [İÜ TY 6966 hereafter], f. 70a, which led her to think that the author must be the elder Kadızade who may have been from Mostar rather than Sofia; see Terzioğlu, 'Bir tercüme ve bir intihal vakası', 266. While according to Atayî, the elder Kadızade is supposed to have been from Sofia, Yılmaz states, on the basis of later sources, that he was from Bosnia; Yılmaz, *Osmanlı toplumunda*, 125-126. Yet the expression on İÜ TY 6966, f. 70a, which ascribes the authorship of a piece in verse

There are several other works which bear the name of Kadızade, some of which have been discussed by Refik Ergin in a recent M.A. thesis.[226] Ergin is mistaken in ruling out the two works which are attributed to him by Mehmed Tahir, the *Kitab-ı makbul der hal-i huyul* and the *Manāqib al-ṣaḥāba*, as Kadızade himself lists the latter among his works in his second autobiographical letter, and Kadızade's authorship of the first is confirmed by Kâtip Çelebi.[227] But he seems to be right in identifying the *Risale-i Kadızade* in the Turkish National Library as a work which belongs to him, as the work's contents correspond to Kadızade's own description of his work on the special prayers, an Arabic version of which was identified by Öztürk.[228] There are at least four other treatises in Turkish which bear the same title but include different material listed by Öztürk.[229] Ergin is also correct in claiming Kadızade's authorship for a treatise in Turkish known under varying titles such as *İlm-i hal*, *İman ve İslâm*, or *Namaz*, which I will refer to as the treatise on ritual prayer.[230] Although Ergin attributes four other works to Kadızade,[231] as should be clear by now, attributing a work to Kadızade requires a lot of caution, and some of the treatises which Ergin identifies as belonging to Kadızade belong to Nushî, whose work in Turkish was recently studied in an excellent article by Terzioğlu, and whose identity may now be ascertained as Muslihuddin Mustafa bin Hamza bin İbrahim bin Veliyüddin, a Nakşibendi who was originally from Bolu but lived, probably for many years, in Cairo.[232] But one of the remaining four deserves mention here as it is one of the more overtly political works which this section is devoted to.

---

that follows the end of the text, which is marked with the Arabic expression *tamma*, to a certain Fazlî from Mostar, reads *li-nāmiqihi al-ḥaqīr Fażlī al-Mūstārī*, suggesting that Fazlî was more likely to be the calligrapher of the manuscript than its author and simply added a piece of his own in verse after he finished copying the main text that ended with *tamma*; compare A. Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition: A Glossary of Technical Terms and Bibliography* (Leiden 2001), 145.

[226] R. Ergin, 'İslam düsüncesinde zahir-batın ayrımı açısından Kadızadeliler örnegi', unpublished M.A. thesis, Selçuk Üniversitesi 2007, 61-68.

[227] Ibid., 62; compare n. 216 above.

[228] Ibid., 62-63; the manuscript in question is A 5237 in Milli Kütüphane, Ankara; the treatise is on ff. 56b-91b; see also Öztürk, 'Islamic Orthodoxy', 154.

[229] Öztürk, 'Islamic Orthodoxy', 158-159.

[230] Ergin, 64-65; there are numerous copies of this treatise in libraries world-wide. They are mostly identified as "*risale-i Kadızade*"; some of them include poems bearing his pen name İlmî. Since the first sentence after the invocation of God includes the phrase "*iman ve İslâm,*" that phrase was noted as the title of the work in some manuscripts and catalogues. I have chosen to refer to it as the treatise on ritual prayer as its contents are more focused on this subject; see, for instance, EH 1739, 94b-101a. Many copies of this treatise are to be found bound together with two other popular works, Birgivî's testament and Akhisarî's treatise on it; see n. 261 below.

[231] Ergin, 64-67.

[232] Compare Ergin, 64, 65-66, with D. Terzioğlu, 'Where *'İlm-i ḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization', *Past and Present*, 220 (2013), 79-114, at 88 n. 20. For the identification of Nushî, see Karatay, I:82, #239; *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-turkiyya*, IV:19, #4192; and M. İ. Dönmez, 'Kuşadalı Mus-

A socio-political critique of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the seventeenth century written in verse during the reign of Murad IV has been attributed to Kadızade since the early twentieth century. This piece was first published by Ali Emirî, who identified the author as "«İlmî» muhallas Kadızade Şeyh Mehmed Efendi", and noted the author's closeness to Murad IV.[233] Ali Canib published selections from it and noted that in the *mecmua* where he found the piece in the Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha Library, the author was identified as "Sultan Bayezid Şeyhi Kadızade".[234] More recently, Bayram Ürekli published another version he found in Konya.[235] A fourth copy of the work is to be found in a *mecmua*, most of which seems to be dedicated to the works of Kadızade Mehmed, the first of which was copied in 1049/1639-40.[236] Yet another copy is in another *mecmua* in the Köprülü Library.[237] Finally, two more copies were identified by Pertsch in Berlin.[238] The facts that in one copy of the piece the author is identified with reference to the mosque where Kadızade Mehmed was preaching at the beginning of the reign of Murad IV, in another his most commonly used pen name is mentioned, and the third is included in a collection of Kadızade Mehmed's works the first piece of which was copied only a few years after his death are, I believe, sufficient to attribute this socio-political critique in verse to Kadızade Mehmed of Balıkesir. But there are enough differences between the three copies published that it might be worthwhile to produce a critical edition.

Conclusion: Kadızade and the Kadızadelis in context

The young Kadızade we are left with at the end of this biographical and bibliographical survey occasioned by his autobiographical letters is somewhat different from the one we know. He could apparently already draw the attention of Grand Muftis and Grand Viziers in his twenties, so he had become a public figure before the reign of Murad IV. His education was much more nuanced and closer to the Ottoman madrasa education than in Kâtip

---

tafa bin Hamza ve 'Netâicu'l-efkâr fî şerhi'l-izhâr' adlı eseri (inceleme ve tahkik)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2013, 27-30.

[233] [A. Emiri], ed., 'Sultan Murad-ı Rabi hazretlerinin gayet mutekid oldukları fuzalâ-yı meşayihden «İlmî» muhallas Kadızade Şeyh Mehmed Efendi merhûm tarafından 1040 hududunda ahval-i âlem hakkında takdim edilen ve hakan-ı müşarün-ileyh hazretleri canibinden telâkki-i bi-kabul buyurılan tarihi, kaside-i hamiyyet-piradır', *Osmanlı Tarih ve Edebiyat Mecmuası* 2 (1335), 278-282, at 278.

[234] A. Canib, 'Tarihe vesika olacak eserlerden: Dördüncü Murad devrine dair Kadızade'nin bir manzumesi', *Hayat* 2 (1927), 3-5, at 3.

[235] B. Ürekli, 'Dördüncü Murad devrine dâir Kadı-zâde'nin bir manzûmesi', *Selçuk Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 11 (1997), 277-300.

[236] Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, EH 1739 [EH 1739 hereafter], 140b-144b; the other pieces by Kadızade contained in this manuscript include his *Duanâme*. Karatay dates the *mecmua* to H.1049/1639-1640, only a few years after the death of Kadızade and, most probably, while Murad IV was still alive, but this date is the copy date of the first piece in it, which is Kadızade's *Akaid* in verse; see Karatay, II:326-327, # 2902; compare, EH 1739, 67a.

[237] Köprülü Kütüphanesi, Ahmed Paşa 345, 77a-79a.

[238] Pertsch, *Verzeichniss*, 72, 89.

Çelebi's representation. And when he was pressured by consistent complaints by powerful people, he knew how to be flexible and alter his position vis-à-vis Ibn Arabi – at least when he was in his late twenties or early thirties. Perhaps most surprisingly, we also learn that after he left the Halveti order, he remained on the Sufi path, but in the Nakşibendi order. The self-portrait drawn by Kadızade makes him more comparable to Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624), the South Asian Nakşibendi who is regarded as the founder of the Mujaddidi (*Müceddidi*) branch of the order that later spread very widely in the Islamic world. Interestingly, Sirhindi is also known for his efforts to reconcile Ibn Arabi's thought with the legal boundaries of Islam, which Kadızade seems to have tried to do as well.[239]

Kadızade's Nakşibendi affiliation may not be as surprising as it sounds.[240] Dina Le Gall had already shown us how some Nakşibendis were not shy of allying themselves with the Kadızadelis in the seventeenth century against other Sufi groups.[241] More recently, Mustapha Sheikh pointed out the close relationship between the "Naqshbandi paradigm" and the writings of Akhisarî Ahmed, a major name of the early seventeenth century Muslim revivalism which evolved into the Kadızadeli movement.[242] Mehmet Kalaycı emphasized the close affinity between the Kadızadelis and the Nakşibendis.[243] With their silent practices of remembrance, or dhikr, the Nakşibendis would not necessarily be offended by Kadızade's verbal assaults upon Halveti and Mevlevi rituals. As for Kadızade, his *Akaid* in verse makes it clear that he was not against Sufism as such, so it is not startling to learn that he was a Nakşibendi. In Ottoman as well as Islamic studies we have been accustomed to complain about the use of the terms of orthodoxy and Sufism in opposition to each other, always placing orthodoxy in quotation marks. What we see here is clearly a tension between different forms of Sufism as exemplified by Kadızade's *Akaid* in verse and in some of Birgivî's writings, which actually embrace many Sufi practices while remaining critical of whirling and preferring silent dhikr. Similarly, Kalaycı has recently drawn attention to the long history of the tension between ascetic Sufis who are legal minded and other Sufis who are reproached by the former.[244] Perhaps it is time to discard the counterposing of orthodoxy and Sufism completely, and take Sufism as a term which is as expansive as Islam, incorporating a wide spectrum of ideas and practices, some of which do not necessarily agree with others. Then one could construe the tension in question as one which arises around the question of the definition of orthodoxy between different groups organised in accordance with their particular practices and understandings of Islam which have varying levels of socio-economic support, political capital, and dedicated followers.

---

[239] Kadızade points to his Nakşibendi allegiance elsewhere as well; see his treatise on ritual prayer in EH 1739, f. 100a, where he appropriates a verse by Lamiî: "hem dahi ki asitan-ı Nakşibend'e intisabum var benüm"; Derin Terzioğlu kindly noted that she saw the same verse in another manuscript, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Yazma Bağışlar 5563, f. 47a; compare Lamiî as cited by Sehî Bey, *Tezkire: Hest Behişt* [*sic*] (Istanbul 1980), 104. On Sirhindi, see A. F. Buehler, *Revealed grace: The juristic Sufism of Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624)* (Louisville 2011); for Sirhindi's views on Ibn Arabi, see, among others, A. Ventura, 'A letter of Šayh Ahmad Sirhindī in defense of the *wahdatal-wuğūd*', *Oriente Moderno* 92 (2012): 509-17. For Kadızade's exposition of his views on Ibn Arabi, see n. 164 above.

[240] What is suprising is Kadızade's choice of a sheikh in Yalova rather than in the Ottoman imperial capital; see n. 81 above.

[241] Le Gall, 'Kadizadelis, Nakşbendis'.

[242] M. Sheikh, *Ottoman Puritanism and its Discontents: Aḥmad al-Rūmī al-Āqḥiṣārī and the Qāḍīzādelis* (Oxford 2016), 56-66.

[243] See, for instance, M. Kalaycı, *Osmanlı Sünniliği: Tarihsel-Sosyolojik bir tahlil denemesi* (Ankara 2015), 256-67. I would like to thank the author for sending me a copy of this book, which was not available in American research libraries.

The most generously funded organised faith in Ottoman realms was, without any doubt, imperial Hanafi Islam, an umbrella structure which channelled resources to different groups of Hanafi Muslims including Sufis, especially in the form of sheikh (leadership) appointments to convents and preaching appointments to mosques. Kadızade's letters provide ample evidence that he and his posthumous followers remained within the boundaries of Hanafi Islam even when they proclaimed ideas that have been deemed extreme by some observers. For instance, we can see in these letters how Kadızade *could* defend a critical position regarding Ibn Arabi very easily from within the Hanafi school. One did not need to go to Ibn Taymiyya, whom Kadızade does not seem to have read at all in his early life; the Hanafi heritage which Ottomans respected so highly includes some very well respected scholars who were utterly critical of Ibn Arabi. Thanks to these letters, we learn that Ibrahim al-Halabi was probably as strong an influence on Kadızade as was Birgivî, a point which, I think, takes us further in the direction of Terzioğlu's work, which reminds us that one did not need to be a Salafi to translate Ibn Taymiyya, as exemplified by Aşık Çelebi and the fact that the Kadızadelis utilised, among other things, the works of earlier Ottoman Hanafi scholars to pursue their arguments.[245]

Al-Halabi was no marginal figure. He was an Arab scholar who studied in Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo, and then moved to Istanbul where he served as an imam and, eventually, a professor of law. He is the author of one of the most important works on Ottoman law, the *Multaqā al-abḥur*, which became a textbook in Ottoman madrasas and was used by Ottoman judges and muftis alike.[246] It was treated almost like an unofficial codification of Ottoman law in many areas.[247] His commentary on Sadid al-Din Kashghari (d. 1305)'s *Munyat al-muṣallī*, entitled *Ghunyat al-mutamallī fī sharḥ munyat al-muṣallī*, which treats of the subjects of ritual prayer and ritual purity, has been another major textbook in Ottoman madrasas for centuries. His influence would even reach South Africa. When in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman scholar Abu Bakr (d. 1880), who was sent there for South African Muslims, published his *Bayān al-dīn* in vernacular Afrikaans written in Arabic letters, he relied mainly on the work of al-Halabi.[248] Even if we rule out the references Kadızade makes to Ibn Hajar, who was the commentator on the most revered collection of Prophetic hadith, the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and to al-Taftazani, who was one of the most prolific authors of the medieval Islamic world, as they do not seem to have produced works which are as critical of Ibn Arabi as the ones Kadızade attributes to them, his reference to al-Halabi is solid and sufficient to legitimise any critique of Ibn Arabi. More importantly, when we look at the works of al-Halabi, we see how he wrote on other subjects which the Kadızadelis were going to take to the streets of Istanbul in the later seventeenth century, such as whirling (as did many other Ottoman scholars before and after him), and the parents of the Prophet. On another of their favourite topics, the faith of the Pharaoh, they could cite Kemalpaşazade, a former Ottoman Grand Mufti.[249] Thus it is difficult to call the Kadızadelis extremists in terms of their ideas. They were simply following the conclusions which some legitimate interpretations of Islamic law and practice could reach and actually *did* reach within the Hanafi school in Ottoman territories a century before them.

---

[244] See n. 243 above; Martı, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi*, 153-166; and M. Kalaycı, 'Zühd ve melâmet farklılaşması bağlamında Hanefî geleneğin Kuşeyrî'ye ilgisi', in H. Alper (ed.), *İmam Mâtürîdî ve Mâtürîdiyye Geleneği: Tarih, Yöntem, Doktrin – Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloğlu Anısına* (Istanbul 2018), 305-37.

[245] Terzioğlu, 'Bir tercüme ve bir intihal vakası', 270-271.

[246] Uzunçarşılı, 22, 173; see also Ş. S. Has, 'A Study of Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī with Special Reference to the Multaqā', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1981; idem, 'The Use of Multaqa'l-Abhur in the Ottoman Madrasas and in Legal Scholarship', *OA* 7-8 (1988), 393-418.

[247] G. Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York 2015), especially, 181, n. 32.

The novelty which the Kadızadelis represent is their taking of these debates, which more often remained within the covers of books or within the confines of learned scholars' salons and royal courts, to large congregations and, eventually, the streets. Thus, while the ideas the Kadızadelis propagated may best be analysed within the framework of Islamic intellectual history, their transformation of intellectual debates to socio-political conflict would be better approached through the lens of social history. In this regard, Kadızade's letters provide support for Sariyannis's quest in looking for a new mercantile ethic within the rise of the Kadızadelis. While the Kadızadelis revisited countless debates which had taken place within Islamic intellectual history, as Sariyannis has pointed out, they did not re-open the cash *vakıf* controversy, in which their retrospective intellectual founding father Birgivî had played a central role.[250] Kadızade lists Birgivî's work on cash

---

[248] For an English translation of this work, see *The Religious Duties of Islam as Taught and Explained by Abu Bakr Effendi*, ed. M. Brandel-Syrier (Leiden 1971).

[249] See the sources cited in n. 148 and 44 above for al-Halabi's and Kemalpaşazade's relevant works, respectively; the faith of the Pharaoh is actually an offshoot of the discussions related to Ibn Arabi. For a general overview of this debate in English, see C. W. Ernst, 'Controversies over Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ*: The Faith of Pharaoh', *Islamic Culture*, 109 (1985), 259-266; E. Ormsby, 'The Faith of Pharaoh: A Disputed Question in Islamic Theology', *Studia Islamica*, 98/99 (2004), 5-28.

[250] Sariyannis, 'The Kadızadeli Movement', 284. Derin Terzioğlu kindly warned me that there are a few treatises written against interest, such as the one quoted by Sariyannis through the work of J. Schmidt, 'Hamza Efendi's Treatise on Buying and Selling of 1678', *Oriente Moderno*, 25 [86] (2006) [special issue: *The Ottomans and Trade*, eds E. Boyar and K. Fleet], 181-186, and another one which she came across, rendering the conclusion that the Kadızadelis were not necessarily against the endowments in cash somewhat premature at this point. What

vakıf in his long reading list. But the Kadızadelis clearly did not find that issue worth fighting for as they included many merchants among their ranks who most probably relied on the financial mechanism of borrowing the cash *vakıf*s provided for in Ottoman society.

There might be another (and perhaps closely related) reason for Kadızadelis to ignore the cash *vakıf* controversy which has to do with Kadızade's Nakşibendi affiliation. Thanks to the work of Le Gall, we know how central the cash *vakıf*s were for Nakşibendi institutions:

> As it turns out, the *waqf*s supporting a number of Naqshbandī institutions … were actually packages, each consisting of small *waqf*s that were established over several decades by the founding shaykh and his followers. Their assets were typically cash or modest pieces of rentable urban real estate. … [W]hile the phenomenon of "cumulative *waqf*s" certainly had its analogues in *tekke*s of other tariqas, the register [of Istanbul endowments] of 953/1546 mentions it exclusively in a Naqshbandī connection; of several thousand *waqf*s appearing in the register, it is only those assigned to Emīr-i Bukhārī Tekkes in Fātiḥ and Edirne Ḳapı that are lumped together under the specific designation *evḳāf ül-mürīdīn ve'l-muḥibbīn* (roughly "disciples' *waqf*s"), which is meant to indicate this kind of cumulative mode.[251]

It would not be far-fetched to assume that the cash *waqf*s established to support Nakşibendi institutions would have financed craftsmen and small businessmen who had to compete with their peers who enjoyed a connection with the Janissary corps and were thus able to borrow from their 'Common Bank'.[252] It is also not difficult to imagine that those who would borrow from the Nakşibendi cash *waqf*s could grow sympathetic towards the Nakşibendi order and eventually contribute to the social base of the Kadızadelis, one of whose targets in the seventeenth century were the Janissaries, who not only enjoyed the financial resources of their bank but also privileged positions in trade and guilds, and thus made it difficult for others in the world of small business to make a place for themselves.[253]

Another distinguishing feature of the Nakşibendis was their ability to operate independently of convents – if not their ambivalence towards them. Since they could also conduct their devotional rites without paraphernalia, "we might expect more of them to have been based in public mosques, especially those in which they might officiate as preachers or prayer leaders".[254] While Le Gall found this practice to be more prominently

---

is of greater interest to me, however, is the silence of Kadızadeli leaders on this issue and the fact that it has not found a place in the long list of debated questions in Naima's work; *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, ed. M. İpşirli, 4 vols (Ankara 2007), IV:1705.

[251] Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism*, 48, 50.

[252] Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*, 205-206.

[253] Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and dissident', 244-245; on the guild connections of Janissaries, see E. Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century İstanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden 2004), and G. Yılmaz, 'The Economic and Social Roles of Janissaries in a Seventeenth-Century Ottoman City: The Case of Istanbul', unpublished Ph.D. disserstation, McGill University, 2011.

[254] Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism*, 47.

present in Bursa than Istanbul,[255] the identification of Kadızade as a Nakşibendi at a mosque in Istanbul may alter this picture.

As for the role the unorganised masses played in the production of the tension between different forms of organised faith, this has not yet been adequately theorised in the context of early modern Ottoman Empire.[256] One could definitely note, however, that their increasing interest in questions of faith is quite obvious when one looks at the circulation of some of the key texts referenced by Kadızade. In his very well researched M.A. thesis, Ahmet Kaylı identified 296 copies of Birgivî's *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* and 164 copies of his *Vasiyyetnâme* in the manuscript libraries of Istanbul.[257] While the copies of the former would have been read by madrasa students or graduates, as it is in Arabic, the wide circulation of the latter, which Birgivî specifically penned for a larger audience, is evidence of great interest among the commoners. Kaylı also mapped the circulation of these works over time by analysing those manuscripts which bear a copy date. It is rather striking to note that the popularity of these works starts rising in the 1620s, some 50 years after the death of Birgivî and coinciding with the shift of Kadızade's career from a neighbourhood mosque to the royal mosques of the imperial capital, at which he started reaching larger audiences, and continues until 1785, long after the end of the Kadızadeli movement, which is usually dated to 1685.[258]

The fact that Kadızade played a key role in the wider dissemination of Birgivî's works is not only suggested by the dating of the rising popularity of his works, but also the way in which one of the earliest mentions of "Birgivî followers" appears in the historical record. As Terzioğlu has noted, several legal opinions in the *fetva* collection of the Grand Mufti Esad "are concerned with the objections of 'Birgivî followers' to the communal performance of supererogatory prayers on the nights of Regaib and Kadir".[259] This happens to be the topic of one of the treatises by Kadızade mentioned above.[260] Kadızade not only took Birgivî's works to larger audiences but also added his name to Birgivî's, thanks to the wide dissemination of his treatise on ritual prayer in manuscripts, which also include Birgivî's *Vasiyyetnâme*, starting from the late seventeenth century.[261] Thus

---

[255] *Ibid*., 48.

[256] The works of Tijana Krstic and Derin Terzioğlu that I will touch upon below certainly opened an avenue of research in this area; see, for instance, A. Gürbüzel, 'Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan: Preachers and the Rise of a Political Public Sphere in Early Modern Istanbul (1600-1670)', Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2016.

[257] Kaylı, 'A critical study', 163; compare Atsız, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerine*, 5-11, 15-32.

[258] Kaylı, 'A critical study', 176-77, 190, and Table VI.

[259] Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and dissident', 200.

[260] See n. 109 above; Kaylı notes what is very likely a copy of this treatise in a manuscript which also includes seven works by Birgivî, as well as two fatwas of Ebussuud, the latter of which was copied most probably by Kadızade himself; see Kaylı, 'A critical study', 191.

[261] For some examples, see Bibliothèque Nationale, supplément turc [st hereafter] 476 and st 479; and Beyazıt Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin Efendi [VE hereafter] 3638. These copies do not include the last part of the treatise which contains Kadızade's pen name; compare st 476, 38a-42b; st 479, 56b-62b; and VE 3638, 60b-64a, with EH 1739, 94b-101a, at 99a-101a. VE 3638 has been transcribed in its entirety by S. Tanboğa in 'Birgivi'nin 'Vasiyetname' adlı eseri üzerine bir gra-

Kadızade not only preached for the masses, but also wrote for them in the long term. Yet, he had multiple audiences. His works in Arabic, including the letters studied here, clearly suggest that he cared about impressing his peers among the '*ulema*'. Another audience he tried to impress was political authority.

The significance of the identification of Kadızade Mehmed of Balıkesir as the author of the three treatises discussed in the third section of the present study lies in the reminder that they provide regarding the importance of political authority in the realisation of the Kadızadeli agenda. Kadızade had already tried to enter royal circles during the reigns of Ahmed I and Osman II, as evidenced by his presentation of the first version of the *Nushü'l-hükkâm* to the Grand Vizier Murad Pasha and his dedication of the *Kitab-ı makbul* to Osman II. Perhaps partially with the help of the Grand Mufti Esad, who endorsed the latter work, he actually succeeded in gaining the attention of Osman II, who took him on the Khotin campaign in 1621.[262] He was so well respected among the circles of power that in 1622, during the early hours of the rebellion which ended with the deposition and murder of Osman II, he and his former Halveti sheikh Ömer were chosen by the Grand Vizier to calm down the soldiers.[263]

Kadızade and his posthumous followers continued to build strong relations with the Ottoman political authority in the seventeenth century, for, as Kadızade reminded Murad IV, whom he called "the renewer of religion in the eleventh century [AH]", "people follow the religion of their kings (*al-nās ʿalā dīn mulūkihim*)".[264] Thus Kadızade and his followers aimed to shape the particular form of Islam that Ottoman Muslims were to be exposed to in the Ottoman public domain by reaching the Sultan or his Grand Vizier directly, which distinguishes them sharply from their intellectual inspiration, Birgivî, who chose and advised to stay away from the representatives of political authority.[265]

---

mer, metin ve indeks çalışması', M.A. thesis, Niğde Üniversitesi, 2006, which also includes a copy of the manuscript. For an analysis of such manuscripts which also include the treatise of Ahmed-i Rumî (aka Akhisarî; d. 1632), see my 'A Canon of Disenchantment: Birgivi, Rumi, and Kadızade', forthcoming in B. Tezcan, *A* Gift for the Turks: *Studies on Islam and its Early Modern Transformation in the Ottoman Empire* (forthcoming). Ahmed-i Rumî and Kadızade must have met each other during the former's temporary stay in Istanbul in the early seventeenth century; see Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, II, 1590n2.

[262] Topçular Katibi, *Abdülkadir Efendi tarihi*, II, 720, 740.

[263] Gökyay, 'II. Sultan Osman'ın Şehadeti', 206.

[264] HP 629, 4a, 3a; it is impossible not to note the closeness of this expression to the Latin phrase *cuius regio, eius religio*, or 'whosever realm, his religion', the well-known principle adopted at the Peace of Augsburg in 1555.

[265] While Kadızade wrote to Murad IV that one should memorise the *Testament* (*Vasiyyetnâme*) of Birgivî, the latter advised his readers in that very work not to approach Sultans, senior justices, or state administrators unless they had to – he even asked his sons not to become students at a madrasa or seek a judicial appointment. He seems to have been categorically suspicious about the possibility of justice under a ruler (or perhaps the ruler of his own time, Süleyman the Magnificent), even though he advised his readers to pray for the justice of the ruler and never to rebel even if the ruler is an oppressor; see HP 629, 112a; Birgili Muhammed

While the voices of Kadızade and his posthumous followers were not the only representative voices of Islam which Murad IV or the later Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (d. 1676) lent their ears to, I believe that theirs was the one that proved to have considerable impact on the Ottoman public space in the long term. As Terzioğlu has argued, they did this in alliance with the highest representatives of Hanafi Islam, the Grand Muftis who came to issue much more conservative legal opinions in matters pertaining to 'innovations' than their predecessors in the sixteenth century. While the initial impetus might have come from such people as Kadızade and his followers, the conservative stance of the Grand Muftis continued at least into the early eighteenth century.[266] A similar long-term impact might be observed in the mosques.

The Kadızadelis' close relationship with political authority coupled with the pressure their followers on the streets exerted on the Ottoman leadership seems to have shaped the public voice of Islam which the mosque-goers of the imperial capital listened to at the royal mosques of Istanbul, such as Aya Sofya, which was regarded as the most prestigious pulpit in the capital. Gradually, the preachers associated with the Sufi orders which the Kadızadelis targeted were replaced with others who shunned the vocal dhikr at Aya Sofya. While Kadızade Mehmed of Balıkesir was most probably one of the first non-Halvetis to be appointed to preach there in the seventeenth century, in the almost hundred years that followed the appointment of his student Âmâ Mehmed (d. 1672) to the same post, there seems to have been only one appointee who engaged in vocal dhikr there.[267] This long-term development may not simply be explained by the Kadızadelis,

---

Efendi, *Vasiyyet-name: Dil incelemesi, metin, sözlük, ekler indeksi ve tıpkıbasım*, ed. M. Duman (Istanbul 2000), 106, 117, 119, 120, 126.

[266] Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and dissident', 231-233.

[267] Müstakimzade (d. 1788), *Tercüme-i ahval-i şuyuh-ı Aya Sofya* [descriptive online catalogue title], Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi 1716, 10b-16a. This short treatise is a bibliographical dictionary of 11 preachers who were appointed to Aya Sofya between 1000/1591 and the time of the treatise's composition, and were regarded as "*erbab-ı zikr-i cehr ve tevhid*". Since neither Kadızade nor his student Âmâ Mehmed would have engaged in vocal *dhikr*, their biographies are not included; for the latter, see Şeyhî, I:568. Kadızade's predecessors mentioned by Müstakimzade are four Halvetis: Hamidî Yoluk Mehmed (d. H.1009/1600-1), Kemali Alî (d. H.1012/1603), Tercüman Şeyhî Ömer Fanî (d. H.1033/1623-4), and Büyük Kadızade Mehmed (d. H.1041/1631-2). Osman II's tutor Ömer had been a preacher there before he became the tutor of Ahmed I's sons, as well; see Atayî, 728. Müstakimzade's omission of him may be interpreted as an indication of his not being a Halveti. Between H.1080/1669-70, when Erdebilizade Ahmed, the ninth preacher included in the treatise and also a Halveti, died, and H.1180/1766-7, when Abdüşşekûr, the last preacher mentioned in the treatise, was appointed, the only preacher listed by Müstakimzade is Bülbülcüzade Abdülkerim (d. 1694), a Halveti who had a madrasa education as well as some teaching experience. It is worth noting that Müstakimzade's Aya Sofya preachers who practised vocal *dhikr* include a Nakşibendi from Bosnia, Osman (d. 1664) – clearly, not all Nakşibendis, even in the seventeenth century, had given up on vocal *dhikr*. At first, this portrait seems to contradict Zilfi's data about the impact of the Kadızadelis on the preaching positions at the imperial mosques. Looking at the period between 1621 and 1685, she found that out of the 48 appointments (representing 28 individual appointees) made to "the five most prestigious mosques in the city", 19 were Halvetis and

as their last influential leader, Vanî Mehmed (d. 1685), was banished from Istanbul in the aftermath of the failed siege of Vienna in 1683. Yet their agenda, which could be regarded as a socio-political engineering project of sorts aiming at limiting public expressions of religious diversity, seems to have sustained its appeal, as is also evidenced by the continuing popularity of Birgivî's works and the conservative legal opinions of some early eighteenth-century Grand Muftis in matters relating to 'innovations'.

One should also add that the Kadızadelis were definitely not the first Ottomans to aspire to limit Muslim religious diversity. As pointed out in several studies, many, if not most of, early Ottoman mosques were ritual spaces where both Sunni ritual prayer and Sufi rituals took place and where itinerant dervishes and other travellers stayed and were fed. They were mostly identified as *imaret* (or *zaviye*) on their original building inscriptions – incidentally, the Mosque of Murad Pasha, where Kadızade launched his career and preached for more than a decade, was originally built in this style and had been endowed by Murad Pasha, the nephew of the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI Palaiologos.[268] In the early sixteenth century, while this architectural type, which was born in a social environment that was inclusive of diversity, started disappearing, and mosques came to be exclusively devoted to Sunni ritual prayer, one could still witness a Sufi ritual in mosques at times, for instance, as narrated in an anecdote about the Halveti sheikh Sünbül Sinan (d. 1529), who would give Friday sermons at the Mosque of Mehmed II or Aya Sofya and then continue with a dhikr ritual, including whirling,[269] which produced a wave of debates on the permissibility of whirling. While Ottoman dervishes continued to whirl in the sixteenth century in their convents, one could not see them in the imperial mosques any more after these debates.

In short, the limitation of public expressions of Muslim religious diversity has a long history in the Ottoman Empire which predates the Kadızadelis. Terzioğlu calls this

---

four Celvetis (or 12 and three individuals, respectively), which account for almost half of the appointments (or slightly more than half of the individual appointees); *The Politics of Piety*, 165, 180-81nn130-31; see also 255-56. If one were to look at the appointments to Aya Sofya during the same period, one finds an even heavier representation of preachers who practised vocal *dhikr* – seven of the 11 preachers included in Müstakimzade's list served in this period, and the other three appointees in this period were Kadızade Mehmed of Balıkesir, his student Âmâ Mehmed, and İspirî Ali (d. 1692); for the latter, see Uşşakizade, 687-88. Thus the seeming purge of the practitioners of vocal *dhikr* from Aya Sofya appears to have followed the end of the Kadızadeli movement rather than having accompanied it; hence, the discrepancy between Zilfi's data and the portrait created by Müstakimzade's list.

[268] T. Acar, 'Anadolu Türk mimarisinde tabhaneli camiler', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ege Üniversitesi, 2011, 463-467; H. W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany 2003), 115-116; D. Terzioğlu, 'Sufis in the Age of State-Building and Confessionalization', in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (Oxon 2012), 86-99, at 89. The first couple of imperial mosques where he later preached, that of Bayezid II and Selim I, the latter of which was built by Süleyman the Magnificent for his father, were the last examples of this type of mosque to be endowed by Ottoman Sultans; G. Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London 2005), 92-95.

[269] Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, III:369, 372.

process “Sunnitization”, and Krstić refers to it as “confessionalization”.[270] There is no doubt that both concepts are very helpful in understanding several socio-religious developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, while both Krstić and Terzioğlu account for multiple factors at play, I believe the terms ‘Sunnitization’ and ‘confessionalization’ end up underlining the increasing emphasis the Ottoman political leadership placed on its identification with Sunni Islam in response to the identification of the Safavids with Shiite Islam. The significance of this Sunni emphasis is beyond doubt, especially when it comes to the treatment of the *kızılbaş* communities by the political authority. Moreover, as suggested by the work of Muhammed Şen, the emphasis placed on the Sunni identity of the Empire’s Muslims by the Ottoman authorities seems to have found its counterpart in the production of foundational texts that sought to define the beliefs and practices of *kızılbaş* communities.[271] Yet there is nothing in Sunni Islam that is *inherently* opposed to diversity. A tradition which produced at least four legal schools the followers of which regarded every other one as equally orthodox did not *have to be* interpreted as a licence to limit religious diversity. More importantly, the seventeenth-century socio-religious conflict between the Kadızadelis and Sivasis took place between two groups the members of both of which would never question their allegiance to the Hanafi interpretation of Sunni Islam or see themselves as belonging to a different confession from Sunni Islam. They were, rather, engaged in a struggle to define what Sunni Islam was. Similarly, the early texts produced by the communities which came to be called *kızılbaş* suggest that they did not see themselves as anything other than Sunni.[272] That is why, I believe, we need a slightly different conceptual approach which would help us interpret this conflict without having to make an inadvertently normative call on the definition of Sunni Islam by confirming the Ottoman authorities’ claim to it.

I propose to look at the Kadızadelis as agents of a populist reformation in Sunni Islam that ultimately disenchanted it by denying the possibility of reaching the realm of the divine in this world and argue that they should be contextualised within the socio-political transformation which produced what I have called the Second Ottoman Empire. My proposal is very much inspired by the late Shahab Ahmed's work,[273] although I treat some of his concepts differently. Ahmed builds his analysis of Islam, among other things, on the concept of a social hierarchy of truth which operated in the geographical region between the Balkans and Bengal in 1350-1850 and allowed the educated elite to explore the mystical and philosophical dimensions of Islam in the private sphere, while a more legalistic understanding of Islam, which was often at odds with mystical and philosophical interpretations, operated in the public sphere for the masses. Ahmed sees European modernity, with its foundational myth of human equality and the accompanying social egalitarianism of a simple truth for all, as the phenomenon which rendered possible a hierarchical epistemology which offered alternative paths to truth to different social groups, untenable.

---

[270] T. Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford 2011); see also Krstić’s ‘From Shahāda to ‘Aqīda: Conversion to Islam, Catechization, and Sunnitization in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Rumeli’, in *Islamisation: Comparative Perspectives from History*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock (Edinburgh 2017), 296-314; D. Terzioğlu, ‘How to Conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization: A Historiographical Discussion’, *Turcica*, 44 (2012-13), 301-338; Terzioğlu, ‘Sufis in the Age of State-Building and Confessionalization’.

[271] M. S. Şen, ‘From Confessional Ambiguity to Confessional Crystallization: Identity Formations in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire 1550-1700’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Davis, 2018.

[272] R. Yıldırım, ‘In the Name of Hosayn’s Blood: The Memory of Karbala as Ideological Stimulus to the Safavid Revolution’, *Journal of Persianate Studies*, 8 (2015), 127-154, at 135; see also Yıldırım’s ‘Sunni Orthodoxy vs Shi‘ite Heterodoxy?: A Reappraisal of Islamic Piety in Medieval Anatolia’, in *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, eds A. C. S. Peacock, B. De Nicola, and S. N. Yıldız (Burlington 2015), 287-307.

While I am very much inspired by Ahmed's concept of a social hierarchy of truth and his identification of modernity as the cause of the destruction of this hierarchy, which led to the hegemony of a legal understanding of Islam, I argue that modernity was not thrust upon Muslims by the sheer force of European colonialism but rather produced by them—more or less simultaneously with European Christians—as a result of upward social mobility and the political transformation this mobility brought about by expanding the ruling class in the early modern era. The copyright on the social egalitarianism of a simple truth for all does not belong to a particularly European modernity, but is shared by diverse socio-political projects world-wide in different periods of history. The Kadızadelis represent a particular iteration of such a project which came to attract relatively large masses, who found that the social egalitarianism of a simple truth for all resonated with them in the increasingly socio-economically stratified urban communities they were living in.

I also propose historicising Ahmed's concept of a social hierarchy of truth by demonstrating how it had been built in parallel with the production of a social differentiation between the ruling class and the masses in the medieval period. The phrase 'populist reformation' refers to the purported destruction of this social hierarchy of truth by Muslim reformers in the early modern period. Using the term 'reformation' allows one to take cognisance of certain parallels with the Christian Reformation, such as a selective purge of certain medieval practices from the public experience of Islam in the name of a professed restoration of Islam as described in some of its early sources deemed to represent its original form. As for the adjective 'populist', it connects the way in which Kadızadelis would have liked to define Sunni Islam, which emphasised its more egalitarian-looking legalistic epistemology, with the political uses that their project lent itself to, that is, utilising a seemingly egalitarian Sunni Islam as a collective identity which could transcend political class boundaries, which were no longer as blatantly unsurmountable as they used to be in medieval times, when membership of the ruling class was exclusively granted to conquerors, their offspring, and/or their slaves.

---

[273] Sh. Ahmed, *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton 2016). I must acknowledge once again my debt to my colleague Derin Terzioğlu, who encouraged me to read Ahmed's work, which had been sitting on my desk –untouched– for months while I worked on the first draft of this study.

As I argued elsewhere, the Second Ottoman Empire witnessed a great deal of upward mobility and the translation of socio-economic capital into political status for certain segments of the Muslim population in the Ottoman Empire, thus breaking the monopoly of the *devshirme* in the administrative ruling class. This was a novel picture which contrasts with the medieval history of central Islamic lands that was often marked by either an ethnic (or tribe-based) differentiation between the rulers and the ruled, which was sometimes also supplemented by the slave origin of the ruling class, as was the case in the First Ottoman Empire.[274]

However, this Ottoman early modernity, which was marked by upward mobility and the expansion of the political nation, also produced social tensions, as not every Muslim could be as fortunate as his financially astute fellow-believer. Sunni Islam was to serve a new function in this new dispensation: with its re-calibrated egalitarian message, it became the perfect glue for a collective identity which could mediate social tensions on a massive scale. It was in this environment that Kadızade Mehmed carried the voice of Birgivî from the manuscripts of his works to the imperial mosques of Istanbul, where it reached thousands of Muslims who found solace in a seemingly egalitarian faith in which everyone had the same chance to achieve salvation, and the attainment of the real Islamic truth was not the privilege of a select few as was the case in many a Sufi order. What one needed to achieve salvation was to live according to the example of the Prophet – and not to seek the intermediacy of this or that saint, which was nothing but superstition compared to the rationality of the Kadızadelis' version of Sunni Islam, which brought a virtual equality to an increasingly more stratified urban society.

It is not that the Sivasis were not Sunni. Not unlike many Sufi orders, however, as members of the Halveti order, they were hierarchical, not only in their organisational structure, which was based on a sheikh picking some of his disciples over others in appointing his successors, but, more importantly, in their epistemological commitment to the idea of privileged access to divine intermediacy, as in miracles of saints. The very idea of a saint, especially one like Ibn Arabi, who describes his works as products of divine inspiration,[275] could pose a serious threat to any assumption of egalitarianism in accessing divine truth. The realm of the divine which was accessible to medieval saints who enchanted the world with their miracles had to be rendered inaccessible in this world for this world to become a fair testing-ground for the rewards of the hereafter; hence, the gradual early modern disenchantment of Sunni Islam.[276]

---

[274] For my definitions of the First and Second Empires, see Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*, 89-100, 191-198.

[275] Ibn ʿArabī, *Sufis of Andalusia: the ʿRūḥ al-qudsʾ and ʿal-Durrah al-fākhirahʾ of Ibn ʿArabī*, trans. R. W. J. Austin (Berkeley 1972), 48.

[276] It was Marinos Sariyannis who first suggested discussing the "disenchantment of the world" in the early modern Ottoman context through the writings of non-Sufi authors and brought up the Kadızadelis in this context; see his 'Of Ottoman Ghosts, Vampires and Sorcerers: An Old Discussion Disinterred', *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 30 (2013), 191–217, at 215-16. The Nakşibendi identity of Kadızade suggests that the line that divides the disenchanters from those who persisted living in an enchanted world, like Niyâzî-i Mısrî (d. 1694), was not necessarily Su-

As pointed out earlier, Kadızade was not against Sufism as such. As long as they facilitated the discipline of the self and one's devotion to the divine, Sufi practices were helpful. But the idea that there could be a different level of truth accessible only to some select few who were not at liberty to share their secrets with the commoners was not something he was willing to concede. Thus he advocated an interpretation of Sunni Islam that was based on epistemological egalitarianism in a disenchanted world. I believe his message was well received because it struck a strong cord in a society which was experiencing a great deal of social mobility with some significant political repercussions. In short, I argue that the Kadızadeli – Sivasi conflict became so widespread and prolonged because Kadızade and his followers voiced the message of an egalitarian epistemology in accessing divine truth at a time when class divisions were sharpening among Ottoman Muslims, a select few of whom were entering the administrative-military ruling class which used to be reserved for the *devşirme* in the past. Unsurprisingly, the Halveti brotherhood not only represented an elitist epistemology according to which some were selected over others in coming closer to the divine, but, especially in Istanbul, its centres were symbols of the *devşirme* political power of the past, such as the Halveti lodge in Kadırga, which had been endowed by the Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha (d. 1579).

Of course, this is not to say that the Halvetis were all members of the elite. On the contrary, as an urban brotherhood, they had a diverse membership. That is why it would be wrong to assume that the Kadızadeli – Sivasi conflict reflects a socio-economic class conflict with clearly defined parties belonging to mutually exclusive hierarchical classes. Rather, it reflects a social struggle between two alternative ways of transcending socio-economic class divisions in urban settings. While the Halvetis represent the vertical social alliances created in medieval and more compartmentalised and guild-based urban settings, one could think of the Kadızadelis as their early modern competitors who aimed to build a larger collective, transcending the medieval corporate urban structures under the leadership of a new mercantile elite who were competing with the established merchants, as suggested by Sariyannis's work.

* * *

I would like to close with an anecdote which illustrates Kadızade's stance and perhaps explains why he transformed himself from a Halveti who was on his way to succeed to his sheikh to a fierce critic of the Halvetis, as well as of other groups and practices which were still deemed permissible within the Ottoman public space.

Kadızade dates his encounter with the four books which were heavily critical of Ibn Arabi to 1014/1605-6, that is, to the time of his break from Ömer, his Halveti sheikh, who, after his return from the Habsburg campaign in 1604, had invited Kadızade to his own neighbourhood, settled him in a house endowed for scholars, and made him his successor for the preaching post at the Mosque of the Tercüman Halveti convent, which,

---

fism as such but perhaps the different meanings assigned to it. On Niyazî-i Mısrî and his enchanted world, see D. Terzioğlu, 'Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyâzî-i Mısrî (1618-94)', *Studia Islamica*, 94 (2002), 139-165.

incidentally, had also been founded by a Christian-born Muslim. Kadızade states in his letter that he preached and commented upon the Qur'an there for a year, after which a disagreement arose between him and his sheikh that led to his break from Ömer and his return to his former neighbourhood. Therefore, his break with his sheikh must have taken place in late 1605, around the time of his encounter with the Hanafi critique of Ibn Arabi by al-Bukhari and al-Halabi. Thus it is safe to assume that Kadızade's disagreement with Ömer was somehow related to Ibn Arabi. The question is what might have happened to lead to this disagreement. Thanks to an anecdote narrated by Atayî involving Ömer, it is possible to add one more important detail to the larger context of this disagreement about Ibn Arabi in Ömer's neighbourhood around 1605.

One of the key personalities representing the diversity of Islamic practices in the early seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire happened to live in Ömer's neighbourhood: Hacı Ali Bey (d. 1615), who was better known to his followers as İdris-i Muhtefi (the hidden İdris), the contemporary leader of the Melâmi-Bayramis. Since it is impossible to treat this enigmatic leader and his followers in the way they deserve in this study, let me just state that the Melâmi branch of the Bayramis was one of those religious groups which the Ottoman state and its jurists had very little tolerance for in the sixteenth-century Ottoman public space: many of their leaders were either interrogated, imprisoned, or executed.[277] Thus it is no wonder that Hacı Ali Bey chose to be known simply as an upright merchant to his non-Melâmi acquaintances, including his neighbor Ömer. While İdris was living right in his neighbourhood, Ömer and his fellow-Halveti Sivasî were denouncing him from their pulpits as a heretic, asking the monarch to issue an order for his arrest and punishment. Even though such an order was issued, Atayî tells us, no one could find any clues as to his whereabouts.

According to Atayî, Ömer invited Ali to his home one day and asked for his advice about the great disorder brought about by İdris, who was leading thousands of Muslims astray. Ali asked Ömer whether he had ever met this man or had any evidence (*ilm-i şer'î*) proving his suspicions about him. Upon hearing his negative answer, Ali asked him why he was slandering a Muslim without any evidence. When Ömer regretted his words and hastened to ask for God's forgiveness, Ali introduced himself to him with his nickname, asserting that he was the man they called İdris, and asked him what he thought of him. Ömer stated that he held him to be in the rank of his teacher (*pîrim, azîzim*), a man who is "a firm pillar and a high mountain in righteousness and piety". "Now, know me thus!" said Ali İdris and ended the conversation.[278]

---

[277] Abdülbâki [Gölpınarlı], *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler* (Istanbul 1931); P. Ballanfat, *Unité et spiritualité: le courant Melâmî-Hamzevî dans l'Empire ottoman* (Paris 2013); N. Clayer, A. Popovic, and T. Zarcone eds, *Melâmis-Bayrâmis: études sur trois mouvements mystiques musulmans* (Istanbul 1998); V. Rowe Holbrook, 'Ibn 'Arabi and Ottoman Dervish Traditions: The *Melâmî* Supra-Order' [in two parts], *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*, 9 (1991), 18-35, 12 (1992), 15-33; İ. E. Erünsal, ed., *XV-XVI. asır Bayrâmî-Melâmîliği'nin kaynaklarından Abdurrahman Elaskerî'nin Mir'âtü'l-ışk'ı* (Ankara 2003); A. Tek, ed., *Melâmet risâleleri: Bayrâmî Melâmiliği'ne dâir* (Bursa 2007).

[278] Atayî, 602-03.

Since Atayî reputedly had Melâmi sympathies and definitely had access to reliable sources on Melâmis, whom he represents in his biographical dictionary in multiple entries, at times by going beyond his chronological coverage,[279] this anectode must have reached him by way of a follower of Ali İdris. Thus it might include some embellishments to represent the Melâmi leader in the best possible light, but there is no reason to discredit its basics, that is, the neighbourly relations between Ali İdris and Ömer, as well as Ömer's change of heart with respect to his thoughts on the leader of the Melâmis. Atayî's narration includes a reference to others present during this conversation.[280] So, if the encounter that produced this anecdote had taken place in 1605-06, Kadızade might well have witnessed it. Even if he were not present, Ömer would definitely have shared what he learnt about his neighbour with Kadızade, whom he was already considering as his successor – unless the encounter took place after 1605.

While we may never know the exact date of Ömer's encounter with Ali İdris and thus not be certain about whether he told Kadızade that the wanted leader of the Melâmi-Bayramis was living right in his neighbourhood, this anecdote is nevertheless an important reminder of the context within which the possible significance of Ibn Arabi for Kadızade's intellectual world could be understood. Around 1605, when Kadızade read the Hanafi critique of Ibn Arabi and broke away from his sheikh, the existence of Melâmi sympathisers in other Halveti circles of the capital, such as Abdülkerim of Stip (d. 1015/1606-07), the sheikh of the Halveti convent endowed by the late Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha in Kadırga, was well known.[281] As a prospective Halveti sheikh, Kadızade would definitely have known about the Melâmis and their sympathisers among other Sufi circles, as the Melâmis seem to have entered a process of expansion among the Ottoman elite exactly around the early seventeenth century.[282] Ibn Arabi was certainly a major source of inspiration for many Sufis; but his writings had a special place among the Melâmis. As Gölpınarlı noted, while Ibn Arabi's concept of the unity of existence was a 'secret' which was opened up only gradually and cautiously to dervishes in other Sufi orders, Melâmis were not shy of declaring and manifesting their loyalty to Ibn Arabi and the unity of existence, which constituted the beginning of the Melâmi path rather than its end.[283]

I believe it was in this context that Kadızade started reading the critiques of Ibn Arabi, and eventually broke with his sheikh. He probably chose not to target the Melâmis directly in his sermons as they had discreetly managed to add politically very powerful followers to their ranks from the circles of the ulema, high ranking imperial administrators, as well as courtiers, including the Grand Mufti Ebulmeyâmin Mustafa (d. 1606), the

---

[279] See, for instance, the biography of Oğlan Şeyh, who died many years before Taşköprüzade Ahmed, the first entry in Atayî's biographical dictionary; ibid., 8-11, 89.

[280] For the reference to the presence of others, see "*cümlesi hayırla cevab virüb*", Atayî, 603.

[281] Atayî, 597; Cemaleddin Mahmut Hulvî, *Lemezât-ı Hulviyye ez lemezât-ı ulviyye: yüce velilerin tatlı halleri* (Istanbul 1993), 601, 602.

[282] *TDVIA* s.v. 'Melâmiyye' (DİA).

[283] Abülbakî [Gölpınarlı], *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler* (Istanbul 1931), 170.

Grand Vizier Halil Pasha (d. 1629), and Murad IV's boon companion Tıflî (d. 1660).[284] Perhaps it was one of these powerful allies of the Melâmis who complained to the Grand Mufti about Kadızade's attitude towards Ibn Arabi and secured a legal opinion reprimanding preachers who cursed Ibn Arabi. It is possible that Kadızade did not learn his lesson the first time and continued his criticism. But after the second letter, in which Kadızade claims to have made his peace with Ibn Arabi, he probably stopped talking about him publicly, at least for a while.

Instead of targeting a group that had very powerful political allies directly, Kadızade, perhaps under the guidance of the late Birgivî's favourite son, Fazlullah, who arrived in Istanbul in 1020/1611-2 and preached at the mosques of Selim I and Bayezid II, to be succeeded by Kadızade in both appointments,[285] chose to focus his attention on disciplining the faith of the masses so that they would not be drawn to the likes of the Melâmis. In an age when there were so many different Islamic paths to take and orders to follow, Kadızade preached on the existence of only one that led to salvation, the path (or order in the sense of a Sufi order) of Muhammad, Birgivî's *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. Since the particular version of Islam Kadızade and his followers were preaching came with a strong sense of social discipline as well as obedience to the political authority, and did not touch upon the status quo on socio-economically substantive issues, such as that of the cash *vakıf*, Kadızade's agenda proved to dovetail with the interests of the political authority as well; hence, the considerable support and patronage he and his followers received from Murad IV and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.

But most importantly, Kadızade's version of Sunni Islam represented nothing else beyond the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet, the scriptural sources of the law, which one needed to master in order to come closer to the divine. One did not have to be chosen to partake of divine truth. One did not need to have otherworldly inspirational experiences. The truth was out there for everyone to discover. All one needed was to seek knowledge by learning from the scriptural sources. Perhaps this is what inspired Kadızade to adopt *İlmî* as his pen name – *ilm* means, primarily, knowledge and learning.

While the Kadızadelis seemed to disappear from the public space after the Ottoman defeat at Vienna (1683), I think that a significant part of their heritage survived in the Müceddidi branch of the Nakşibendi order which reached Istanbul from India through a Bukharan sheikh in 1681.[286] If we were to adopt Ahmed's terminology, the Müceddidis had struck the perfect balance between the Text, representing the scripture, and the Pre-Text, which signifies all the mystical and philosophical literature in the Islamic tradition, by asserting that what the Pre-Text did was simply to confirm the Text. Sufi orders that practised whirling and vocal dhikr, which had been targeted by the Kadızadelis, were gradually marginalised, while the Müceddidi branch of the Nakşibendi order, which shunned both of these practices and emphasised Islamic law as the path that leads to truth, expanded its influence all over the Empire. The Müceddidi-Nakşibendis and their nineteenth-century successors, the Khalidis (*Halidi*), were distinguished by their political activism and their loyalty to the Sultan, for which they were rewarded with the convents of the Bektaşis after the latter order was banned in the aftermath of the abolition of the Janissary corps in 1826 because of their close ties to them.

---

[284] While the identity of these powerful Melâmi sympathisers may not have been manifest publicly, the fact that they had powerful allies in different circles would have been known. The number of Melâmis or their sympathisers among the elite was to grow in the first half of the seventeenth century, especially if one were to interpret Paul Rycaut (d. 1700)'s reference to *müsirrîn* (those who keep a secret) as a keyword for Melâmis; P. Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, (London 1670 [3rd ed.]), 129. While Rycaut interprets this group as atheists, Lady Montagu, who was in the Ottoman Empire about half a century later, states that they were deists; M. Wortley Montagu, *Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague* (Paris 1800), 84.

[285] Atayî, 675.

[286] Two years before Vanî Mehmed, the last Kadızadeli leader, was exiled from the Ottoman capital, Murad Buhari (d. 1720) arrived in Istanbul as the first major representative of this branch,

In summary, I suggest that the early modern expansion of the political nation to include Muslim-born subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the imperial administrative hierarchy was pregnant with social tensions which came to be mediated by the epistemologically egalitarian discourse of the Kadızadelis, who advocated a populist reformation in Islam. While they were not able to realise all of their goals, they did prepare the ground for the gradual marginalisation of most Sufi orders at the expense of, first, Müceddidi, and later, Halidi Nakşibendis, who expanded their networks in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively. Thus modernity in the Ottoman world came to be marked by Nakşibendi branches which distinguished themselves by a sober attitude towards social experiences of religion, upheld the law as the ultimate truth, and thus managed to project a much more egalitarian discourse than other orders in terms of their epistemology. From within this perspective, the Kadızadelis may be regarded as the harbingers of political modernity in the Islamic world, a modernity that was brought about by the socio-economic developments which carried the Ottoman *ecnebi*s into the administrative-military ruling class, eventually replacing the *devşirme*s altogether, and thus creating a majority Muslim society the rulers of which were much less distinguished from the ruled and, therefore, all the more in need of justifying why they were the ones in charge.[287]

Appendix

In providing this edition of Kadızade Mehmed's first letter to the Grand Mufti Mehmed (c. 1610), I have kept my interventions in the text to a minimum, only using quotation marks to indicate Qur'anic references and reported conversations, introducing parag-

---

which had started in India with Ahmad Sirhindi, who came to be regarded by his followers as the renewer of the second millenium in Islam. Buhari was hosted by Damadzade Ahmed, the man thanks to whom Kadızade Mehmed's autobiographical letters reached us; *TDVIA* s.v. 'Murad Buhârî' (H. İ. Şimşek). I will dwell upon the intellectual connection between Kadızade, his likely intellectual reconciliation with Ibn Arabi, Müceddidi Nakşibendis, and the diverse contents of Damadzade's manuscript that were discussed above in a forthcoming study, tentatively entitled *The Disenchantment of Sunni Islam: A populist Muslim reformation in the early modern Ottoman Empire*.

[287] I am going to elaborate on this particular perspective in *The Disenchantment of Sunni Islam*.

raphs to prose, line breaks to poetry, and parentheses for Muslim expressions of gratitude to God, Ali, Ibn Arabi, and scholars, and spelling ‘g’ with گ rather than ك in Persian in order make the text easier to read. “\” indicates the end or beginning of lines in the text of 97 MMT; and “/” does the same for A 2688. In the rare instances when I read a word differently, such as in some poetic quotations, I have noted the spelling found in the manuscript in the footnotes. Most differences between the manuscripts are indicated in the footnotes, but such things as a missing *shadda* in one of the manuscripts has not been noted (A 2688 uses the *shadda* much more than 97 MTT).

[50b] مرحوم و مبرور مفتي محمد افندى يه بو داعيلرينى تبغيض ايچون \ حساد فساد اختراع مفتريات ايدوب ترهات سويلدكلري \ مسموعمز اولدقده بو ورقه كتب اولنوب ارسال اولنمشدى[1]

[*62b*] اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم و من شر حاسد لئيم   بسم الله الرحمن \ الرحيم   وبه نستعين /

قال الله تعالى "يا ايّها الذين آمنوا ان جاءكم فاسق \ بنبإٍ[2] فتبيّنوا ان تصيبوا قوما[3] بجهالة فتصبحوا على ما / فعلتم نادمين"[4]

و \ قال |الله|[5] تعالى "وتقولون بافواهكم ما ليس لكم به علم وتحسبونه هيّنا وهو \ عند الله عظيم لولا / اذ سمعتموه قلتم ما يكون لنا ان نتكلم بهذا سبحانك \ هذا بهتان عظيم يعظكم الله ان تعودوا لمثله / ابدا"[6]

وقال تعالى "ولا تقف \ ما ليس لك به علم"[7]

وقال تعالى "ولا تطع كل حلّاف مهين همّاز مشاء بنميم" \[8]

---

[1] This introduction is not included in the Milli Kütüphane copy of the letter. That copy carries this title instead: *Risāla mansūba li-Ibn al-Qāḍī – raḥimahu Allāh*; A 2688, 62b.

[2] I followed the spelling of the Qur’anic verse (49:6) that Kadızade Mehmed is quoting here. Both copies include a typo and read: بنباء.

[3] There is a spelling mistake in A 2688, 62b: قولا.

[4] The text in between the quotation marks is Qur’an, 49:6. Kadızade Mehmed or the copyist must have written this from memory as the text actually does not follow the Qur’anic spelling, which uses diacritical marks rather than an *alif*, for instance, to indicate some long vowels. I kept the additional *alif*s of the letter (see the first and last words of the verse).

[5] *Allāh* is missing in A 2688, 62b.

[6] The Qur’anic text in between the quotation marks is from 24:15-17. I kept the small variants in the letter: the *wa* at the beginning of 24:16 is skipped, and an *alif* is added to the spelling of *subḥānaka*.

[7] The quotation is from the Qur’an, 17:36.

[8] The text in between the quotation marks is Qur’an, 68:10-11; 97 MTT, 50b, adds *al-āya* to the end of the quotation, which usually refers to the rest of the verse but in this case both verses are quoted in full.

/ قال العلماء[9] يجب على المنقول اليه ستة امور ان لا يصدق النمام \ لانه فاسق بالنميمة وينهاه[10] / ويقبح فعله لقوله تعالى "وامر بالمعروف وانه \ عن المنكر"[11] ويبغضه في الله تعالى لانه عاص بها ولا يظن / باخيه الغائب السوء \ لقوله تعالى "اجتنبوا كثيرا من الظن"[12] ولا تجسس لقوله تعالى "ولا تجسّسوا"[13] / ولا يحكي \ نميمته[14] فيكون نماما ومغتابا[15]

سعي رجل الى حكيم فقال له "اتيتني بثلاث \ خيانات / بغضتني[16] الى آخر واشتغلت[17] قلبي الفارغ واتهمت نفسك الامينة" \[18]

وسعي رجل الى عليّ (رضي الله عنه)[19] فقال "ان / كنت صادقا مقتناك وان كنت \ كاذبا عاقبناك"[20]

ونمّ رجل ابا يوسف الى الخليفة فقال له / "انت قلت كذا \ وكذا" قال ابو يوسف |"ما قلت هذا" قال الخليفة "اخبرني رجل ثقة \ معتمد" فقال ابو يوسف|[21] "يا امير المؤمنين ان النمام لا يكون معتمدا و \ ثقة" فاستحسن / الخليفة |كلامه|[22] وسخط على النمام[23] كذا في الاحياء

|حلفت \ فلم اترك لنفسك ريبة   وليس وراء اللّٰه للمرء مطلب
لئن كنت قد \ بلغت عني جناية   لَمبلغك الواشي اغش واكذب[24]

ز صاحب غرض تا [51a] سخن نشنوی   که گر کاربندی پشیمان شوی[25]
حریفی که حال من \ آبش بریخت   بفرسنگ باید ز مکرش گریخت
ولیکن نیندیشم \ از خشم شاه   دلاور بود در سخن بی‌گناه
اگر محتسب گردد آن را غمست \   که سنگ ترازوی بارش کمست

---

[9] The following is paraphrased and sometimes directly quoted from al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, 4 vols ([Cairo] [1916]), III:135-136; see notes 15, 18, 20, 23 below.

[10] A 2688, 62b, reads وينهى.

[11] The quotation is from the Qur'an, 31:17.

[12] The Qur'anic text in between the quotation marks is from 49:12.

[13] This Qur'anic quotation is also from 49:12.

[14] A 2688, 62b, reads بنميمته.

[15] Compare al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn,* III:135.

[16] A 2688, 62b, reads بغضي.

[17] A 2688, 62b, reads واشغلت.

[18] Compare al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, III:136.

[19] Abbreviated in both copies as رضه.

[20] Compare al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, III:136.

[21] The copyist skipped the part between the "|" signs; A 2688, 62b.

[22] A 2688, 62b, does not include كلامه.

[23] Compare al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, III:136, where the plot and characters of the story are actually different; see pp. 192-93 above.

[24] These two distichs are from Ziyad ibn Muawiya (d. c. 604), better known as al-Nabighah al-Dhubyani, one of the last pre-Islamic Arab poets. The last word of the first distich should have been مذهب; and the last word of the first line in the second distich خيانة or رسالة; compare Arberry, *Arabic Poetry*, 35; Nabighah al-Dhubyani, *Dīwān al-Nābighah al-Dhubyānī bi-tamāmih, ṣanʿat Ibn al-Sikkīt wa-huwa al-Imām Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb ibn Isḥāq (186-244 AH)*, ed. Sh. Faysal (Beirut 1990 [2nd printing]), 77.

[25] I have preferred Sadi's original کاربندی to کاردی in the manuscript; compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e*

چو حرفم برآید درست از قلم   مرا \ از همه حرف گیران چه غم[26]
که ای نیک آن نه شکل منست   ولیکن \ قلم در کف دشمنست[27]
مرا چون بود دامن از جرم پاک   نیاید ز خبث \ بداندیش باک[28]
امین و بداندیش طشتند و مور   نشاید درو رخنه \ کردن بزور[29]
مرا همچنین نام نیکست لیك   ز علت نه گوید بداندیش \ نیك[30]

ترا هر که گوید فلان کس بدست   چنین دانکه در پوستین \ خود است
که فعل فلانرا بباید بیان   وزین فعل بد می‌بکردد عیان \
ببد گفتن خلق چون دم زدی   اگر راست گویی سخن هم بدی \
زبان کرد شخصی بغیبت دراز   بدو گفت داننده سر فراز
که یاد کسان \ پیش من بد مکن   مرا بدگمان در حق خود مکن|[31]

اعلموا ايها المؤمنون \ اني ابتليت في هذا الزمان / ببهتان عظيم كما ابتلى الاوّلون

اسمع \ من الاحباب ان الناس يقولون في حقي انه يسبّ / الشيخ الاكبر \ وينكر الاولياء واني برئ منهما لان السبّ لاحد من افعال السفهاء \ وانكار / الحق من شعار الجهلاء وقد رزقني الله تعالى (والحمد لله) من العلوم \ العربية والعقلية والمعارف / الدينية والشرعية ما اميّز به بين \ الصحيح والسقيم والقوي والضعيف والخطأ والصواب

وعرفت \/ طبقات العلماء الكاملين (رضوان الله تعالى عليهم اجمعين)[32] واقرأت \ تفسير القاضي البيضاوي مع رؤية / كثير من التفاسير من اوّله فوصلت \ الى سورة الفتح على طريق التدقيق ورأيت كتاب احياء علوم الدين \/[33] بالتمام مرّتين والآن ادرّسه وطالعت كتاب التعرّف في علم التصوّف [51b] ورسالة القشيري وعوارف / المعارف واتممت كتاب صدر الشريعة \ مرّتين والدرر والغرر مرّة على طريق التدريس وكذا التوضيح \/ والتلويح وشرح العقائد[34] وشرح المواقف من الالهيات \ الى آخره

Sa'dī, ed. Mohammed Ali Faroghi, 7th printing (Tehran 1379), 196, line 6.

[26] Compare, Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 195, lines 3-6, where one reads وزیری instead of حریفی, جاه instead of حال; there are also some insignificant spelling variants, such as به فرسنگ instead of بفرسنگ, غم است instead of غمست, کم است instead of کمست. I have followed Sadi's original آبش rather than ایش in the text of the manuscript, which must be a copyist's mistake; I have also preferred Sadi's درست to دردست in the manuscript.

[27] Compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 195, line 1, where it reads نیکبخت rather than نیک, and این instead of ان; and منست and دشمنست are spelled as من است and دشمن است.

[28] Compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 194, line 11, where one reads نباشد instead of نیاید.

[29] Compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 192, line 19, where one reads تشتند instead of طشتند, which is based on the Arabicised form (طشت) of the Persian تشت; and درو is spelt as در او.

[30] Compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 195, line 2, where نیکست is spelt as نیك است, and نه گوید as نگوید.

[31] Compare Sadi, *Kolliyāt-e Sa'dī*, 319, line 18 – 320, line 1; where one reads چنان instead of چنین, می‌برأید instead of می‌بکردد, and داننده ای instead of داننده. There are also some insignificant spelling variants, such as بد است instead of بدست, دان که instead of دانکه, فلان را instead of فلانرا, وز این instead of وزین, به بد instead of ببد, به غیبت instead of بغیبت. I have preferred Sadi's بباید over بیاید in the text of the manuscript. Also, please note that the 16 lines of Arabic and Persian poetry between the "|" signs are skipped in A 2688, 62b.

[32] A 2688 has the abbreviation تعی instead of تعالی.

[33] A 2688 abbreviates احیاء علوم الدین as احیاء العلوم.

[34] Both manuscripts have this word spelled as العقاید.

وقرأت[35] اوّلا من الصرف والنحو والمعاني / والمنطق وآداب \ البحث ما يكفيني ولم اضيع[36] وقتي في غير العلم ولم يصدر منّي من زمني[37] \ الصبي الى الآن / سبّ احد فكيف اسبّ[38] الشيخ الاكبر بعد ما كنت \ عالما ووصلت (الحمد لله) الى توحيد الذات والصفات / والافعال \ ولا اقول ذلك كبرا وفخرا بل امتثالا لقوله تعالى "وامّا بنعمة ربّك \ فحدّث"[39]

وسبب [*63a*] هذا البهتان عليّ انّي كنت في اوائل حالي جمعت \ مجموعة كبيرة من الفتوحات المكيّة اكتب |فيها|[40] قال / الشيخ الاكبر \ والكبريت الاحمر (قدّس سرّه الانور) ثمّ رأيت |في سنة اربع عشر \ والف|[41] كتاب كشف الغطاء[42] في ردّ الفصوص / لابن حجر العسقلاني \ شارح البخاري وهو كتاب كبير في جرم الدرر والغرر[43] ونعمة[44] الذريعة \ في نصرة / الشريعة وتسفيه الغبي في نصرة ابن عربي للشيخ ابرهيم \[45] الحلبي شارح المنية وكتابا[46] أخر للسعد / التفتازاني ذكروا في حقّ \ الشيخ الاكبر الفاظا غليظة ونقلوا الفتاوى عن[47] مأتين وثمانين \ مفتيا / والردّ عن[48] سبعمائة مصنّف من كبار العلماء فحصل في قلبي \ اشكال عظيم على مفهوم من يسمع يخل / فحكيت اقوالهم في حقّه لبعض \ علماء زماننا ليزيلوا الاشكال عن قلبي فامروني بتوقّف في حقّه /\ فامتثلت امرهم ولم اذكره من ذلك الزمان الى الآن ولكن \ شاع ما حكيته عنهم اولاً بين الناس فاسنده / الاعداء اليّ وسعوا به \ الى الاكابر لينتقموا منّي

فحسب حالي هذا فقط لا غير يظهر بين يدي \ الرحمن / في يوم الميزان الصادق والكاذب وانّي لا اقول غير الحق [52a] لكن الحقّ مرّ والباطل حلو والحقّ ابلج / والباطل لجلج وانّي لا اخاف \ ولا ارجو[49] احدا غير الله تعلى وغاية ما يقدر عليّ المفترون باذن الله / تعلى \ ثلثة امّا القتل ظلما وانه شهادة وامّا الحبس وهو عزلة وخلوة وكلاهما \ طريقتنا[50] وامّا / النفي عن البلد وهو هجرة وسنة الانبياء عليهم السلام و \ احتسب عليها ثوابا لاني[51] ثابت / على الحقّ القويم والصراط المستقيم \ باتباع كتاب ربّ العالمين وسنّة سيّد المرسلين واقوال الفقهاء /\ المجتهدين

"وسيعلم الذين ظلموا ايّ منقلب ينقلبون"[52]

قال الامام الشافعي \ (رحمه الله تعلى) "العلم بين أهل / العقل رحم متّصل" فلا ادري كيف يدعي \ الاقتداء بالسلف جماعة صار العلم بينهم عداوة قاطعة كذا في الاحياء[53]

---

[35] 97 MTT has misspelt this word as قرت.

[36] A 2688 has it as اضيّع.

[37] A 2688 has it as زمن.

[38] A 2688 has it as السبّ.

[39] The Qur'an, 93:11.

[40] فيها is missing in A 2688.

[41] في سنة اربع عشر والف is missing in A 2688.

[42] ء is missing in both manuscripts.

[43] الغر in A 2688.

[44] نعمت in both manuscripts.

[45] ابراهيم in A 2688.

[46] كتاب in 97 MTT.

[47] على in A 2688.

[48] على in A 2688.

[49] ارجوا in A 2688.

[50] طريقان in A 2688; compare Taşköprüzade, 260; see p. 195 above.

[51] لا في in A 2688.

[52] The quotation is from the Qur'an, 26:227.

[53] Compare al-Ghazzali, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, I:41.

OTTOMAN IBN KHALDUNISM REVISITED:
THE PRE-TANZIMAT RECEPTION OF THE *MUQADDIMA*, FROM KINALIZADE TO ŞANİZADE

Marinos Sariyannis[*]

The introduction of Ibn Khaldun's views into Ottoman literature has been the object of a minor debate in the historiography of Ottoman ideas.[1] Ziyaeddin Fahri Fındıkoğlu in the early 1950s and Bernard Lewis in the mid-1980s maintained that Ottoman authors had developed an early interest for the famous Arab historian and philosopher.[2] As Bernard Lewis was stating in 1986:[3]

---

[*] Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, Institute for Mediterranean Studies.

[1] The literature on Ibn Khaldun and his work is huge. General surveys and introductions are always useful: F. Rosenthal, 'Translator's Introduction' in idem (tr.), *Ibn Khaldun, The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 3 vols (New York 1967 [2nd ed., 1st ed. 1958]), xxix-lxxxvii; B. B. Lawrence, 'Introduction to the 2005 Edition', in F. Rosenthal (tr.), N. J. Dawood (ed.), *Ibn Khaldun, The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History. The Classic Islamic History of the World* (Princeton 1969, repr. 2015), vii-xxv; E. I. J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam. An Introductory Outline* (Cambridge 1958), 84-109; A. Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought. From the Prophet to the Present* (Edinburgh 2011 [2nd ed.]), 169-185. From among the most recent publications, see, e.g., B. B. Lawrence (ed.), *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology* (Leiden 1984); M. J. Viguera Molins (ed.), *Ibn Khaldun, the Mediterranean in the 14th Century: Rise and Fall of Empires* (Seville, 2006); A. J. Fromherz, *Ibn Khaldun: Life and Times* (Edinburgh 2010). Cf. the bibliography in A. al-Azhmeh, *Ibn Khaldun in Modern Scholarship: A Study in Orientalism* (London 1981), 231-318. The editions of Ibn Khaldun's work I use here are Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, and its abridged edition: Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*.

[2] On Ibn Khaldun's influence in Ottoman historical and political thought see: H. Ziya (Ülken) and Z. Fahri (Fındıkoğlu), *İbni Haldun* (Istanbul 1940), 39; Z. F. Fındıkoğlu, 'Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm', in *60. doğum yılı münasebetiyle Fuad Köprülü Armağanı* (Istanbul 1953), 153-164; idem, 'L'École Ibn Khaldounienne en Turquie', in Z. V. Togan (ed.), *Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Congress of Orientalists.* Vol. 2: *Communications* (Leiden 1957), 269-273; B. Lewis, 'Ibn Khaldūn in Turkey', in M. Sharon (ed.), *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization* (Jerusalem 1986), 527-530 [reprinted in B. Lewis, *Islam in History. Ideas, People, and Events in the Middle East* (Chicago and La Salle 1993), 233-236, and, more recently, in Viguera Molins (ed.), *Ibn Khaldun, the Mediterranean in the 14th Century*, 1:376-380]; C. Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism and 'Ibn Khaldunism' in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 18 (1983), 198-220 [reprinted in Lawrence (ed.),

> What is much less known is the earlier interest and appreciation of his work among the Ottomans. It has often been said that Ibn Khaldun was neglected and forgotten by his own people, until he was again brought to their notice by Western scholarship. It is doubtful if this is true for North Africa; it is certainly not true for the Ottoman East, where Ibn Khaldun was known and read, exercising considerable influence.

Three years earlier, in 1983, Cornell Fleischer had taken the other side, arguing that Ibn Khaldun's ideas had not appealed to Ottoman thinkers till the midseventeenth century, when their sense of 'decline' resonated with his stage theory, while earlier forms of 'cyclist' theories, such as Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali's, were of a more 'autonomous' nature:[4]

> It has long been taken as axiomatic that Ottoman men of letters… were well acquainted with the celebrated *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun… Received scholarly opinion suggests either that Ibn Khaldun had a definite but undefined influence on Ottoman historiography or that his ideas nearly revolutionized Ottoman historical thinking. Such judgments mislead by their very generality…

In this paper, I will seek to give an answer to the question of the first appearance of Ibn Khaldun's thought in Ottoman texts, to reconsider seventeenth-century reception and, finally, to study Ibn Khaldunist influences on eighteenth-century Ottoman political thinkers. I will not discuss the reception of Ibn Khaldunist ideas in the Tanzimat period and in the late Ottoman Empire, especially through Cevdet Pasha's (d. 1895) translation and historical work, as it is beyond my expertise and as such an account would lengthen further an already long essay.[5]

I. Kinalizade: The Invisible Introduction

All major accounts of Ibn Khaldun's influence in Ottoman letters begin with Kâtip Çelebi (d. 1657). Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Fahri Fındıkoğlu, Zeki Velidi Togan and others mention Ahmed Taşköprüzade (d. 1561), one of the most celebrated Ottoman scholars of his time,

---

Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology, 46-68]; E. Okumuş, 'İbn Haldun ve Osmanlı'da çöküş tartışmaları', *Dîvân – Disipliner Arası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 6 (1999/1), 183-209; S. Buzov, 'History', in J. J. Elias (ed.), *Key Themes for the Study of Islam* (Oxford 2010), 182-199; C. Doğan, '16. ve 17. yüzyıl Osmanlı siyasetnâme ve ahlâknâmelerinde İbn Haldûnizm: Kınalızâde Ali Efendi, Kâtip Çelebi ve Na'îmâ örnekleri', *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 6 (2013), 197-214.

[3] Lewis, 'Ibn Khaldūn in Turkey'.

[4] Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism', 198. Notions of cyclical time (of a much greater scale) were also present in some trends of early Islam; see E. Krinis, 'Cyclical Time in the Ismâ'îlî Circle of Ikhwân al-safâ' (Tenth Century) and in Early Jewish Kabbalists Circles (Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries)', *SI,* 111 (2016), 20-108.

[5] See Fındıkoğlu, 'Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm'; Okumuş, 'İbn Haldun ve Osmanlı'da çöküş tartışmaları', 183-184 and 204-206; Y. Yıldırım, '*Mukaddime*'nin Osmanlı dönemi Türkçe tercümesi', *Dîvân – Disipliner Arası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 21 (2006), 17-33. On Cevdet Pasha see Ch. Neumann, *Araç tarih amaç Tanzimat: Tarih-i Cevdet'in siyasi anlamı* (Istanbul 2000).

as being familiar with Ibn Khaldun's work.[6] However, Taşköprüzade does not mention his name and, moreover, the taxonomy of sciences in his encyclopaedic *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda wa miṣbāḥ al-siyāda fī mawżūʿāt al-ʿulūm* ('The key to happiness and the guide to nobility in the objects of science', completed in 1557) has no relation whatsoever to Ibn Khaldun's categorisation of human knowledge;[7] a similar suggestion by Petra Kappert, who saw Ibn Khaldunist influences in Bostan's *Süleymannâme* (1542) also seems mistaken.[8] On the other hand, according to Abdülhak Adnan Adıvar, *Madīna al-ʿilm* ('The city of knowledge') by the scholar Muhammed b. Ahmed Hâfiz al-Dîn Acamî (d. 1550) mentions Ibn Khaldun and his work;[9] as this work was not accessible to me I could not confirm this reference.

The historian Naima, to whom we will revert later, claims that Kınalızade Ali Çelebi (d. 1572) took from Ibn Khaldun his formulation of the famous 'circle of justice' in his monumental work on ethics and government, *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* ('Sublime Ethics'; composed in 1563-1565);[10] however, Fleischer rightly suggests that there were more direct ways for Kınalızade to find references to the circle.[11] And indeed, the Circle of Justice was long known in Ottoman letters, ever since Nasireddin Tusi's school of thought, and especially

---

[6] Ziya (Ülken) – Fahri (Fındıkoğlu), *İbni Haldun*, 39; A. Z. V. Togan, *Tarihde usul* (Istanbul 1950), 170. Fındıkoğlu does not repeat this assertion in his 1953 article ('Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm').

[7] Ahmad b. Mustafa (Tashkupri-zadah), *Miftâh as-Sa'âdah wa misbâh as-siyâdah fî mawdu'ât al-ulûm*, eds K. K. Bakry and A. Abu'l-Nur (Cairo 1968); M. T. Gökbilgin, 'Taşköprü-zâde ve ilmî görüşleri', I: *İslam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 6 (1975), 127-138; II: *İslâm Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 6 (1976), 169-182; F. Unan, 'Taşköprülü-zâde'nin kaleminden XVI. yüzyılın "ilim" ve "âlim" anlayışı', *OA*, 17 (1997), 149-264; and cf. Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 2:436ff.; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 343ff.

[8] P. Kappert, 'Zur Charakteristik osmanischer historiographisch-narrativer Quellen des 16. Jahrhunderts', in W. Voigt (ed.), *XIX. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 28. September bis 5 Oktober 1975 in Freiburg im Breisgau* (Wiesbaden 1977), 1204-1209 at 1205. The "arabischen Termini" she gives as examples of Ibn Khaldunist influence (*as-sulṭān ẓillu'llāhi fi'l-ʿard*, *al-insān al-madanī bi't-ṭabʿ*, *ictimaî hayatın zaruri olması*) belong in fact to the Persian *falasifa* tradition and can be found in authors such as Amasî or Kınalızade, copying in their turn Tusi or Dawwani.

[9] A. A. Adivar, 'İbn Haldûn', *İA*, 740; Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:lxvii. On this author see C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, 2+3 vols (Leiden 1937-1942), 2:453. Brockelmann notes one copy of Acami's work (Istanbul, Köpr. 1387).

[10] More precisely, he says that Ibn Khaldun "mentions a circle of justice" which "was taken up by Kınalızade Ali Efendi": Mustafa Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 6 vols (Konstantiniye H. 1281/1864-66), 1:40; M. İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ (Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn fî Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-Hâfikayn)*, 4 vols (Ankara 2007), 1:30.

[11] Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism', 201. The notion of the 'circle of justice' comes from a very old Iranian and Middle Eastern tradition, while it is also to be found in the Central Asian *Kutadgu Bilig*. See L. T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (New York 2013); H. İnalcık, 'Kutadgu Bilig'de Türk ve İran siyaset nazariye ve gelenekleri', in *Reşit Rahmeti Arat İçin* (Ankara 1967), 259-271 at 263.

Jalal al-Din Dawwani (d. 1502), had been translated, adapted, and modified.[12] Before Kınalızade, this very well-known term of Middle Eastern political thought had been used in plenty of treatises, including *Kitab-ı mir'atü'l-mülûk* ('Book of a mirror for kings') by one of the first political authors (mostly translating Tusi), Ahmed bin Hüsameddin Amasî, composed in 1406.[13] To be sure, Kınalızade's description of the 'circle' is identical with that found in the *Muqaddima*;[14] on the other hand, Ibn Khaldun copied it (and states it explicitly) from Pseudo-Aristotle's *Sirr al-asrār* ('Secret of secrets', also known under its Latin designation of *Secretum secretorum*), the famous medieval compilation of advice which had exerted a major influence in Islamicate (as well as in Medieval European) thought.[15] As a matter of fact, Kınalızade did nothing more than copy his model, Dawwani's *Akhlāq-e Jalālī*, which also ends with the same appendix from Pseudo-Aristotle culminating in the circular formulation of the 'circle of justice'.[16] Thus, on this point Fleischer seems to be absolutely right in concluding that "there is no evidence to support Naima's supposition that Kınalızade read Ibn Khaldun".

---

[12] On these two authors see Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, 210-223; D. M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London 1963), 169-184; M. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden 1994 [2nd ed.]), 131-141 and 143ff.; Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought*, 149-157 and 188-189.

[13] M. Ş. Yılmaz, 'Political Thought in the Beginning of the Ottoman Empire as Expressed in Ahmed bin Husameddin Amasi's *Kitab-ı miratü'l-mülûk* (1406)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Bilkent University, 1998, 142. Other authors who mention the circle before Kınalızade are İdris-i Bitlisî (d. 1520) and Nişancı Celalzade Mustafa (d. 1566/7): see A. Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve hukukî tahlilleri*, 9 vols (Istanbul 1990-1996), 3:32; M. Balcı, 'Celalzade'nin *Mevahibü'l-hallak fi meratibi'l-ahlak* isimli eseri', unpublished M.A. thesis, Harran University, 1996, 69 and 81.

[14] Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi, *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î*, ed. M. Koç (Istanbul 2007), 539 (another instance of the 'circle of justice' occurs in ibid., 483); Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:81-82; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 41.

[15] On the 'circle of justice' in the *Sirr al-asrār* see Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power*, 74-76; see also M. Manzalaoui, 'The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Kitāb sirr al-asrār*: Facts and Problems', *Oriens*, 23-24 (1974), 147-257; M. Grignaschi, 'L'origine et les metamorphoses du 'Sirr al-asrar'', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 43 (1976), 7-112; R. Forster, *Das Geheimnis der Geheimnisse: Die arabischen und deutschen Fassungen des pseudo-aristotelischen Sirr al-asrar / Secretum Secretorum* (Wiesbaden 2006). *Sirr al-asrar* was translated into Ottoman Turkish in 1571 for the Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha: H. Yılmaz, 'The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Süleymân the Lawgiver (1520-1566)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2005, 59-62.

[16] Of the two English translations of Dawwani's work, this part is translated in full only by S. H. Deen (ed.), *The English Translation of "The Akhlak-i-Jalali", a Code of Morality in Persian Composed by Jalal-ud-din Mohammad alias Allama Dawwani* (Lahore 1939), 249. The other translator, William Francis Thompson, stops just before this point: W. F. Thompson (ed.), *Practical Philosophy of the Muhammadan People, Exhibited in its Professed Connexion with the European... being a Translation of the Ahklâk-i-Jalâly, the Most Esteemed Ethical Work of Middle Asia* (London 1839), 457.

Is this exact? It is true that Kınalızade's *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* is an almost complete translation of the *Akhlāq-e Jalālī*, itself an adaptation of Tusi's *Akhlāq-e Nāṣirī*;[17] on the other hand, this enables us to follow in detail and with exactness whatever changes, additions or omissions he made in relation to his source. These differences are relatively few in number, and some of them are manifestly intended to criticise specific Ottoman policies; more particularly, Kınalızade seems to have belonged to the opposition against Süleyman's and Ebussuud's policy of supplementing or even replacing Sharia with customary law and Sultanic edicts.[18]

From among the few other changes Kınalızade made to his rendering of Dawwani's advice, there are some that may imply his knowledge of Ibn Khaldun's work. In his fourth chapter, Kınalızade deals with the subject of economy. He explains that the sources of revenues may be categorised in several ways; for instance, revenue can be divided into two categories, i.e., revenue that comes through gain and by choice (e.g., trade or craft) vs. revenue that comes incidentally, such as gifts or inheritance. All this comes from Tusi and Dawwani (and can also be found in previous *falasifa*-influenced Ottomans like Amasî); but then Kınalızade adds other views, for instance, that revenue can come from commerce, craftsmanship, or agriculture. A third view sees four means of revenue, adding leadership (*emaret*), i.e., pensions and salaries (*vezaif ü ulûfât*) coming from the ruler:[19]

> Some have divided the ways to acquire property into three categories: commerce, craftsmanship, agriculture. And some have increased these ways of revenue to four, adding leadership. Because pensions and salaries come from the ruler's rank (*mertebe-i emaret kısmından add olunmakla*), this is a true categorisation.

This addition, which is quite fit for an empire such as the Ottoman, might be Kınalızade's own.[20] However, it can also be found in Ibn Khaldun's work; the Tunisian scholar reads:[21]

> Certain thorough men of letters and philosophers, such as al-Hariri and others… said: 'A living is made by (exercising) political power (*imārah*), through commerce, agriculture, or the crafts'. (The exercise of) political power is not a natural way of making a living. We do not have to mention it here. Something was said before… about governmental tax collection and the people in charge of it. Agriculture, the crafts, and commerce, on the other hand, are natural ways of making a living.

---

[17] See the detailed comparison of the three works in B. Tezcan, 'The Definition of Sultanic Legitimacy in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Empire: The *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î* of Kınalızâde Ali Çelebi (1510-1572)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Princeton University, 1996, 65ff.

[18] See M. Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought Up to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Leiden 2018), 122-123.

[19] Kınalızâde, *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î*, ed. Koç, 335-336.

[20] See Tezcan, 'The Definition of Sultanic Legitimacy', 83-84 and cf. Dawwani's text in Thompson (ed.), *Practical Philosophy of the Muhammadan People*, 252; Deen (ed.), *The English Translation of "The Akhlak-i-Jalali"*, 129.

[21] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 2:316; omitted in Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*.

I am not the first to propose this connection, as it was also noticed by Metin Kunt in the context of a later (and substantially revised) use of this formulation, namely in Naima's work.[22] There is also a significant difference in how Kınalızade and Ibn Khaldun understand leadership: as we may deduce from his reference to tax collection, Ibn Khaldun has in mind the ruler's income as a source of revenue different from other, 'productive', sources. As for Kınalızade, his reference to "pensions and salaries" leads us to the conclusion that he meant the administrative elite's revenue from the state treasury.[23] In a way, the difference between the two thinkers is deeper: Ibn Khaldun speaks of wealth in a 'public' sense, while Kınalızade uses a more 'private' notion, probably from his experience as a member of the Ottoman governmental-judicial apparatus. One is tempted to see a sense of 'state' closer to its modern notion, i.e., as a self-reproductive mechanism distinct from the person of the ruler: for Ibn Khaldun, the revenue from taxes may be considered as belonging to the ruler, whereas Kınalızade prefers to see the wealth of the state as something producing private revenue for its employees.[24]

Ibn Khaldun's own source is obscure (Rosenthal notes that no such quotation is to be found in the works by the famous al-Hariri), and thus we cannot exclude the possibility that Kınalızade used another source, common to both thinkers. But there is a second instance of Ibn Khaldunist influence, which uses an idea clearly attributed to Ibn Khaldun's original thought: after the final part of the book on house economics, Kınalızade moves on to the book on government (*tedbir-i medine*), the smallest one of his work and probably added in a second phase of composition.[25] This is how he begins:[26]

> Let it be known that civilised societies (*temeddün*) are a general composition and arrangement of various classes and communities. Every class has its appropriate degree [of power] and place, and professes its special activities… The constitution of the world is based on the equilibrium among these components… For it is known that in the beginning of a state [or dynasty] (*her devletin ibtidası*) a ruling class (*her taife ki bir devletin ashabıdır*) gets a unanimous agreement and its members support and help each other, like the members of a single body; because every person has power up to a definite extent, but the power of many gathered together in a place is greater than the power of each individual. A small class, when is united, prevails over a larger but fragmented one. Is it not clear that any ruling class is not even the one-tenth [in numbers] of its subjects (*reayasına*)? But they are unanimous; and they prevail over the subjects because the latter are not… Experience has shown that whenever such a ruling class has unity and mutual assistance, it is safe from difficulties and deficiencies; but when later fragmentation and disagreement appear among this class, it starts to weaken and finally ends in ruins.

---

[22] İ. M. Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vezir and Entrepreneur: A Study in Ottoman Political-Economic Theory and Practice', *Turcica*, 9 (1977), 197-214 at 208.

[23] When Naima uses the same quotation, he clearly has in mind Ibn Khaldun's meaning; but as we will see, Naima read Ibn Khaldun in the original and copied him abundantly.

[24] Cf. M. Sariyannis, 'Ruler and State, State and Society in Ottoman Political Thought', *THR*, 4 (2013), 83-117.

[25] This was suggested by Tezcan, 'The Definition of Sultanic Legitimacy', 28-30, to explain the fact that another version of Kınalızade's theory on politics is also incorporated in the final part of his book on house economics.

[26] Kınalızâde, *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î*, ed. Koç, 479-480.

This passage comes, as does most of the work, from Dawwani's *Akhlāq-e Jalālī*, but Kınalızade has introduced a crucial point: where he stresses the unity of the ruling class, noting specifically that their numbers are very small in comparison to its subjects, Dawwani's text had nothing more than the traditional eulogy of unity and harmony among the various classes (enforced by the ruler's justice). For the sake of comparison, here is Dawwani's relevant passage:[27]

> Now society being a term for complete coalition between its various classes, as long as every single class retains its proper place… assuredly, the temperament of the state is on the course of equipoise, and its affairs bear the stamp of regularity. But no sooner do they depart from this rule than disturbances result, tending to dissolve the bond of union, and introduce corruption and ruin. For it is admitted that the initiative of every state is correspondence in the opinions of the aggregate. These, in point of co-operation, should stand in place of members to the individual; and then the case would be, as if a person were brought into the world, possessing the powers of all who are in it… Since, then, the management of multitudes cannot be carried on without a consorting unity, which is the unity of equity… as long as the prince walks by the rule of equity… assuredly his kingdom will be well regulated. But if otherwise, every class will be engrossed in the allurements of self-interest… till… the bond of union is entirely dissolved.

Apart from Kınalızade's apparent allusion to the Ottoman example (the reference to the dynasty being one-tenth of its subjects is as clear as it can get), it is tempting to see here an echo of Ibn Khaldun's *'aṣabiyya* or 'esprit de corps', the solidarity allowing small nomadic tribes to prevail over large settled populations, only to fall in their turn when their members become too accustomed to luxury; all the more so since Kınalızade stresses that this solidarity characterises "the beginning of a dynasty". Even if we accept that in the case of 'leadership' as a source of revenue both writers had a common source, here there can be no doubt that Kınalızade's source was Ibn Khaldun.[28]

---

[27] Thompson (ed.), *Practical Philosophy of the Muhammadan People*, 384-386. I also quote Deen's translation of the relevant passage [Deen (ed.), *The English Translation of "The Akhlak-i-Jalali"*, 199-200]: "Since the term "society" is applicable to a general congregation of different classes as long as every one of these classes keeps itself within the limits of its own respective position… so long shall the society necessarily maintain its equipoise in temperament, and its affairs shall be throughout marked with harmonious adjustment. When, however, it deviates from this principle, disagreement inevitably follows, which ultimately leads to dissolution of bonds of harmony, and brings about disruption and anarchy. For it is an established principle that every state is engendered by a general consensus of opinion among a class of people, who in mutual cooperation must resemble the members of an individual person. Such a cooperation has the effect of producing, as it were, in the world, a single individual possessed of the powers of all the people residing in that state… Since, therefore, no multitude can be organised without a harmonious unity, which is equity… as long as the king observes the rule of equity… so long shall his kingdom be regularly adjusted. Should it, however, be otherwise, every class will be ruled by motives of self-interest… and in consequence… bonds of union will break asunder."

[28] The similarity was also recently noticed by Doğan, '16. ve 17. yüzyıl Osmanlı siyasetnâme ve ahlâknâmelerinde İbn Haldûnizm', 205.

True, Kınalızade never mentions Ibn Khaldun's name and we can only make suppositions as to how he became acquainted with his work. In Ottoman letters, there is no reference to Ibn Khaldun whatsoever before Kâtip Çelebi's mid-seventeenth century encyclopaedic works; manuscripts of the work in Ottoman libraries are numerous (not to count the Ottoman translation of Pirizade after 1730), but none of them seems to date from the Ottoman era earlier from the mid-seventeenth century.[29] The fact that Kınalızade wrote most of his voluminous treatise in Damascus (where Ibn Khaldun, then a judge in Cairo, had his famous meeting with Timur in 1402) may explain an enhanced access to Arabic manuscripts. At any rate, there can be no doubt that the earliest date of Ibn Khaldunist theories appearing in Ottoman texts must now include Kınalızade's work, even though he does not mention Ibn Khaldun among his sources.[30]

One has to note that the first provable acquaintance of an Ottoman with Ibn Khaldun dates from 1598, when Veysî Efendi acquired a manuscript of the *Muqaddima* in Cairo (as deduced from his notes on it).[31] There is no safe indication that this Veysî Efendi is to be identified with the famous poet and scholar (d. 1628); however, it is quite probable, since we know that Veysî had served as judge and governor secretary in Egypt during these years.[32] Apart from his other works, Veysî is famous for his *Hâbname* ('Vision' or 'Dream book', mentioned also as *Vakıaname*), composed in the early 1610s. In this work, Veysî has a vision, where he sees Ahmed I meeting Alexander the Great and complaining to him about his era; Alexander points out that all these problems (such as factionalism and bloodshed) never ceased to be present in the history of humanity and that the world was never prosperous and thriving, at least not more than it is now.[33] Perhaps it would not be too far-fetched if we saw a distant echo of Veysî's readings from Ibn Khaldun in this kind of cyclism (presumably Veysî's aim was to refute the main political discourse of his era, which was focusing on decline as a result of departure from the old law).[34]

---

[29] Estimation according to Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:xc-xcix and the Turkish metasearch interfaces of catalogues of manuscript libraries, www.yazmalar.gov.tr and http://ktp.isam.org.tr/ktpgenel/findrecords.php. A copy dated 1642 is in Konya İl Halk Kütüphanesi, Konya Bölge Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, 42 Kon 198/21; copied by Ahmed b. İbrahim Dürrî, it bears the title *Risaletü'l-tenbihât* ('Treatise of warnings') and seems to be only a smart part of the *Muqaddima*, as it consists only of 23 folios according to the catalogue entry. See http://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay_goster.php?k=198969 (accessed October 2015).

[30] He mentions Tusi, Dawwani, and Vaiz-i Kâşifî (Kınalızâde, *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î*, ed. Koç, 38-39), and occasionally other medieval authors.

[31] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:xciii-xciv; Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism', 199. The manuscript is MS. Atif Efendi 1936.

[32] See *TDVİA*, s.v. 'Veysî' (B. A. Kaya).

[33] E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry,* 6 vols (London 1900-1909), 3:208-210; Veysî, *Вейси. Хаб-Наме. Книга сновидения. Критический текст, перевод с турецкого, введение и примечания* [Veysî. Hâb-nâme. Dream Book. Critical text, translation from Turkish, introduction and notes], ed. F. A. Salimzjanova (Moscow 1976); *Hâb-nâme-i Veysî*, ed. M. Altun (Istanbul 2011). On this work see also P. Fodor, 'State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th-17th Century Ottoman Mirror for Princes', *ActOrHung*, 40 (1986), 217-240 at 227-228; V. Günay, 'Osmanlı nasihat ve ıslahatname geleneğinde Veysi ve Habname'sinin yeri', in E. Čaušević, N. Moačanin and V. Kursar (eds), *Perspectives on Ottoman Studies: Papers from the 18th Symposium of the International Committee of Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies (CIEPO)* (Berlin 2010), 303-313; A. T. Şen, 'A Mirror for Princes, a Fiction for Readers: the *Hab-*

II. From Kâtip Çelebi to Naima: The Emphasis on Stage Theory

Most scholars, from Fındıkoğlu to Lewis and Fleischer, consider Kâtip Çelebi's *Düstûrü'l-amel li-ıslahi'l-halel* ('Course of measures to redress the situation') as the first introduction of Ibn Khaldun's ideas into Ottoman literature. Indeed, in this work, composed in 1652/53, apart from a novel medical simile of human society and a pioneering definition of state, one finds the first systematic introduction of the Ibn Khaldunian notion of the 'state stages' into Ottoman philosophy of history. Kâtip Çelebi argues that the social condition of man (*insanın ictimaî hali*) resembles the individual. An individual's life is naturally divided into three stages, namely growth, standstill, and physical decline (*nümüv, vukuf, inhitat*); the coming of each age, in its turn, depends on the disposition of the individual, so that a strong man comes to his old age later than a weak one. In a similar way, the social state of man (previously defined as society or *devlet*, and here Kâtip Çelebi departs significantly from his model, who clearly spoke of dynasties) is also divided into three ages, depending on its strength: this is why some societies (*cem'iyet*) reached decline soon, whereas others ("like this exalted state") were late in entering the age of standstill, because they had solid foundations and construction. Furthermore, specific signs show each age in both the individual and the social state of humanity. Those who want to take measures for redressing the conditions of the commonwealth (*umur-ı cumhur*) have to act according to these signs: every period requires other measures, just as in medicine a mature person cannot be treated with a cure for children:

> Let it be known that the state (*devlet*), which means realm and kingdom, consists, according to another view, of the human society. Those who discern the secrets of the nature of beings can see that its theoretical and practical state, if examined carefully, is clearly similar to the individual state of man; these two states are equal to each other… First of all, the natural life of man is measured in three stages: these are the age of growth, that of standstill, and that of ageing and decline. The timing of these three stages is appointed according to each individual's realities… Now, the social state of man, which consists of the state (*devlet*), is also divided into three stages: growth, standstill, and decline. In the same vein, societies differ from one another as far as concerns these three stages; this is why some societies of the past passed into decline before long, while others pass into standstill because of the disastrous lack of measures, just as a young man may have an accident. Others, like this great state [of the Ottomans], have a strong disposition and healthy foundations and consequently continue their life with standstill

---

nâme of Veysî and Dream Narratives in Ottoman Turkish Literature', *Journal of Turkish Literature*, 8 (2011), 41-65.

[34] On this 'anti-declinist' interpretation of Veysî's *Habname* see B. Tezcan, 'From Veysî (d. 1628) to Üveysî (fl. ca. 1630): Ottoman Advice Literature and its Discontents', in S. Rauschenbach and Ch. Windler (eds), *The Castilian "Arbitristas" and the Cultural and Intellectual History of Early Modern Europe* (Wiesbaden, forthcoming).

> coming quite late. These stages have specific signs, either in their individual or social form; those who want to take measures to readjust public affairs act according to these signs… Because, the cure applied to an old man cannot be suitable for a child, and vice versa…

Although, as Cornell Fleischer again showed, 'dynastic cyclism' had already its history in Ottoman letters, this is the first introduction of Ibn Khaldun's famous theory of the laws of states; we have to note that, whereas Ibn Khaldun used the word *dawla* in the established meaning of 'dynasty', Kâtip Çelebi uses it in a quite different meaning, defining it as 'human society' (*ictima-i beşerîyeden ibaretdir*).[35] Kâtip Çelebi definitely knew Ibn Khaldun's work, as he had written an entry on the *Muqaddima* in his bibliographical encyclopaedia, *Kashf al-zunûn 'an asâmî al-kutub wa al-funûn* ('The discovery of opinions from the names of books and sciences').[36] And indeed, he had already included a slightly more faithful adaptation of Ibn Khaldun's stage theory in his concluding remarks to *Takvimü't-tevarih*, a world history compiled in 1648.[37] There, too, Kâtip Çelebi remarks that the changes and phases seen in human civilisations and societies (*nev-i beşerden her sınıfın temeddün ve ictimaî halinde*) correspond to those seen in individuals according to their age, and that there are three stages in every state and society (*devlet ve cem'iyet*), corresponding to the three ages of man (growth, standstill, and decline). As the 'natural' life of man extends to 120 years, so does the usual time span of a society (*her taifenin müddet-i ictimaî*), although it can vary according to its strength or weakness. This comes again from Ibn Khaldun, who declares that[38]

> in the opinion of physicians and astrologers, the natural life (span) of individuals is one hundred and twenty years, that is, the period astrologers call the great lunar year. Within the same generation, the duration of life differs according to the conjunctions… The same is the case with the life (span) of dynasties. Their durations may differ according to the conjunctions. However, as a rule no dynasty lasts beyond the life (span) of three generations. A generation is identical with the average duration of the life of a single individual, namely, forty years, (the time) required for growth to be completed and maturity reached.

---

[35] Ayn-ı Ali Efendi, *Kavânîn-i Âl-i Osman der hülâsa-i mezâmin-i defter-i divan* (repr. İstanbul 1978), 119-140; modern Turkish translation in Orhan Şaik Gökyay (ed. and tr.), *Kâtib Çelebi'den seçmeler* (Istanbul 1968), 154-161. Cf., later on, "the present community of men, which consists of the state", *insanın devletden ibaret olan ictimaî hali*. Bernard Lewis ignores these definitions, I think, when he states that by "human states" Kâtip Çelebi "clearly means dynasties" [B. Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago and London 1988), 24]; cf. Sariyannis, 'Ruler and State', 92-93. On Ibn Khaldun's formulation, see Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, 87-90 and 229.

[36] Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, eds Ş. Yaltkaya and K. R. Bilge, 2 vols (n.l. [Istanbul] 1943), 1:278, 2:1124, and 1795; cf. Fındıkoğlu, 'Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm', 157; Lewis, 'Ibn Khaldun in Turkey', 234.

[37] Kâtip Çelebi, *Takvimü't-tevarih* (Kostantiniye H.1146/1733), 233-237; Turkish translation in Gökyay (ed. and tr.), *Kâtib Çelebi'den seçmeler*, 114-117; cf. B. Yurtoğlu, *Kâtip Çelebi* (Ankara 2009), 22-24.

[38] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:343-346; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 136-138.

The three ages described by Kâtip Çelebi correspond to Ibn Khaldun's description of these three generations of a dynasty.

Moreover, it is in *Takvimü't-tevarih* that Kâtip Çelebi introduces Ibn Khaldun's theory on the famous *'aṣabiyya*, which has been variously rendered as 'tribal solidarity' or 'esprit de corps'. In Kâtip Çelebi's version, this interpretation is coupled with the likening of society to the human body: just like one needs one's parents' care while still a child, a state or a dynasty (*devlet*) is characterised in its early stages by its members' "zeal and mutual assistance" (*taassub ve taavün-ı rical*). The simile continues in the other two stages: just as self-governance comes to a growing person, so a king lays down just laws and uses his treasury to govern his state. The finances, the army, the might, and the population of a state grow continually in its early period, the way a man's limbs grow till his maturity. In the same vein, a mature society comes upon its most just rulers and more generally its heyday in every respect. Finally, in the age of decline, just as an old body gradually loses its temperature and humidity (*hararet ve rutubet*), and consequently its powers and senses, so do statesmen (*vükelâ-yı devlet*, a state's temperature and humidity) lose their ability to think rightly and to take the proper measures; consequently, the people and the army (the powers and senses) start to go astray. Furthermore, officials trying to mend such problems of decline in the same way they would do it in the standstill or middle period are bound to fail, since each period requires its own measures. More specifically, now, the signs of decline are: a tendency of the magnates to imitate their rulers in wealth and pageantry, and more generally a tendency to continually expand luxury and pomp. The middle class wants to live like the king, and the military prefer ease and peace rather than fighting. Kâtip Çelebi's description is much less elaborate than that of Ibn Khaldun here, being rather a summary of the latter's subsequent description of the five stages of a dynasty; however, one may discern a clear reflection of Ibn Khaldun's *'aṣabiyya* in the emphasis on "mutual assistance" as dominating the early period of a dynasty.

One might also discern Ibn Khaldunist influence in the rest of this introduction, where Kâtip Çelebi tries to establish some 'laws of history': for instance, that a patricide has never survived in power more than a year; that viziers or chieftains who opened a king's way to the throne have very often met their death at the latter's hands; or, that the sixth king in every dynasty has lost his throne (which in the Ottoman case would give Murad II's abdication in favour of his son, Mehmed II). This is perhaps a unique instance of an Ottoman author conceiving a notion of historical laws, and perhaps it would not be too far-fetched to suppose that Kâtip Çelebi's thought was influenced by his great predecessor in his way of thinking, as well as in his ideas proper.[39]

---

[39] There are certain similarities between Ibn Khaldun's and Kâtip Çelebi's discussion of magic and the occult, but to establish them would require a more detailed study. See Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 3:156ff., 258ff.; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 391f., 405ff.; Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşf-el-zunun*, 2:980-982 and 1930; Gökyay, *Kâtip Çelebi'den seçmeler*, 233-234. Cf. M. Asatrian, 'Ibn Khaldûn on Magic and the Occult', *Iran and the Caucasus*, 7

Kâtip Çelebi's immediate continuators

It seems that Kâtip Çelebi played a major role in the popularisation of such ideas, as we can discern traces of them in many works that may belong to either his contemporary circle or to his late seventeenth-century continuators. An almost simultaneous text by an obscure author, the *Nasihatname* ('book of advice') composed probably by one Hemdemî in 1652, shows some similarities.[40] Hammer-Purgstall identified the author as Solakzade Mehmed (d. 1657/8), a historian who also wrote poems under the pen-name of Hemdemî, on the grounds that some poems following the Vienna ms. (of similar content and obviously by the same hand) are signed by Hemdemî.[41] Little is known of Solakzade: he was an early recruit to the palace and was a "constant companion" to Murad IV, together with Evliya Çelebi; it seems that he remained in the palace under the next two Sultans as well. He was a musician and composer of note, but his main work is the history of the Ottoman dynasty up to 1643, mainly a compilation of older chronicles. Both Flügel and Sohrweide are cautious and question this attribution; Rhoads Murphey, author of the sole study so far of the text, thinks it plausible (the completion of the work corresponds to the final compilation of Solakzade's historical work and it could be a "spin-off product of a period of intensely concentrated work"), but "far from being definitely established". Neither Christine Woodhead nor Abdülkadir Özcan refer to the *Nasihatname* in their biographical entries on Solakzade.[42] Overall, the work seems to lack the concrete historical references one would expect from a historian (apart from the usual locating of the beginning of decline in the year H.1000, and some moralistic rather than historical anecdotes on Mehmed II, Selim I and Suleyman I).

There is no great originality in Hemdemî's (if we are to accept at least this attribution) treatise, which in many ways seems like a compendium of late sixteenth and early-seventeenth century political advice. Nevertheless, a recurring theme of the work, the likening of the development of dynasties/states to the decline of the human body, might imply

---

(2003), 73-123; M. Dols, *Majnûn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, ed. D. E. Immisch (Oxford 1992), 264-273.

[40] This work remains unpublished. There are two manuscripts, Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz MS, Or. Oct. 1598, ff. 125b-172b (copied together with Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Pasha's treatise), and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Ms, N.F. 283, ff. 1b-38b (see Murphey 2009b, 46-47, for some differences; Vienna MS is probably a copy, see, e.g., the lines mistakenly repeated in f. 9a.3-6 and various copying mistakes, such as the frequent substitution of *izafe* with *ve*; on the other hand, a marginal note inserted in f. 24a seems to be an autograph). On the manuscripts see G. Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der K.-K. Hofbibliothek zu Wien* (Vienna 1865-1867), 3:309-310; H. Sohrweide, *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*, Vol. XIII/3 (Wiesbaden 1974), 102. So far the text has been studied only by R. Murphey, 'Solakzade's Treatise of 1652: A Glimpse at Operational Principles Guiding the Ottoman State During Times of Crisis', in *Beşinci Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğleri*, Vol. 1 (Ankara 1990), 27-32; repr. in idem, *Essays on Ottoman Historians and Historiography* (Istanbul 2009), 43-48.

[41] Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Ms, N.F. 283, f. 39a.

[42] *EI*^{2} and *TDVİA*, respectively.

distant influences from Kâtip Çelebi (the same goes for the numerous references to “the people constituting the realm”, *devlet ve saltanat müştemil olduğu kavmi*, which may be paralleled with Kâtip Çelebi’s definition of *devlet* as “society”). The author uses the same simile of societies and the human body, and argues that a state is like a patient: the young ones have need of different treatment from the older. A man is young (*taze*) till the age of seventeen (eighteen in the Berlin MS), a strong youngster (*yiğit*) till forty, and old till his death; similarly, a state/dynasty is fresh when it appears, and its strength increases gradually until it reaches the point where it can defend itself both against the surrounding enemies and the tensions between its members. Then begins the young stage, till the pomp and luxury of the ruler and his subordinates increases, as do expenses and salaries; this is the beginning of old age, ending with the collapse of the state. However, in contrast with human death, the author claims that the collapse of a state can be prevented, as God has granted his protection to men, high and low. If a Sultan loves God, follows His orders and practises justice, the same will happen in the hearts of “the tribe that make the state”, and eventually even rain will make all business flourish, and vice versa.[43]

Furthermore, Hemdemî’s text contains another original statement which may imply an Ibn Khaldunist echo: at the beginning of the treatise, we read that the worldly occupations were organised into four groups, namely the farmers (*ehl-i hiraset*), the craftsmen (*ehl-i zanaat*), the merchants (*ehl-i ticaret*), and the statesmen (*ehl-i siyaset*):[44]

> Depending upon the state of [men’s] worldly order and arrangement (*dünyevî nizam ve intizam halleri*), they constitute four groups (*bölük*). One is the people of agriculture, that is to say those who sow and harvest; another is the people of crafts, that is to say spinners, weavers, cobblers, and builders; another group is the people of commerce, that is to say those who carry, bring, and sell goods which are needed from one country to another; and another group is the people of politics, that is to say the rulers and administrators who, with the practice of good government, prevent the people from attacking one another’s family, honour, and property and from killing each other according to their natural faculties of passion and lust. Thus they avoid the chaos which would bring the end of their rule (*hilâfet ve emaretlerine*) and prevent war and slaughter.

This is an amalgamation of the usual quadruple taxonomy of society (the ‘four pillars’ or *rükn-i erbaa*, i.e., men of the pen, of the sword, of commerce, and of agriculture)[45] with the categorisation of “ways to acquire property”, as we met with it in Kınalızade’s work (commerce, craftsmanship, agriculture, and leadership), and Kınalızade, as we saw, might well have taken it from Ibn Khaldun. Hemdemî, in his turn, could well be copying Kınalızade here rather than having used Ibn Khaldun; at any rate, the coincidence is striking.

According to Hammer-Purgstall (followed by Babinger), the universal history of Halilpaşazade Ebu Bekir, known as Tab’î Beg, composed in c. 1665, was modelled on Ibn Khaldun’s *Muqaddima*. However, this might be only a general impression; at any rate,

---

[43] Vienna MS, fols 10a-11b; Berlin MS, fols 131b-133b.

[44] Vienna MS, f. 2a; Berlin MS, fols 126b-127b.

[45] See Sariyannis, ‘Ruler and State’, 100-102 and 107-109 on various forms of this categorisation.

Tab'i Beg makes no mention of Ibn Khaldun or his ideas in his introduction.[46] Nevertheless, 20 or 25 years after Hemdemî's work we may pause over Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi b. Cafer's (1600-1678/79) work.[47] Hezarfen was a polymath following in the footsteps of Kâtip Çelebi (whom he probably had met: the two men were almost of the same age, although Hezarfen outlived Kâtip Çelebi by almost 40 years), and, like him, used Greek and Latin sources for his historical work with two dragomans as intermediaries. It is through Kâtip Çelebi, whom he copied abundantly, that Ibn Khaldunist ideas can occasionally be seen in his work as well. His well-known treatise, *Telhisü'l-beyan fî kavanin-i Âl-i Osman* ('Memorandum on the rules of the House of Osman'), completed in all probability around 1675, shows surprisingly little knowledge of Kâtip Çelebi's innovative ideas, as it is mostly written in the vein of early seventeenth-century 'administrative manuals'. Only at one point can one discern a free adaptation of Kâtip Çelebi's analysis, and all the more so, of the Ibn Khaldunist theory of stages: Hezarfen notes that in this world everybody has to follow a certain way of making one's living, and thus both polities and houses are well-governed. But this, i.e., that each person stays in his proper place, is not achievable in every period: the stages of a state (*bir devletin asırlarına göre*) all have different arrangements (*daima nesk-ı vahid üzere ola gelmemişdir*), for "this is the necessity of the natural stages of civilisation and society" (*mukteza-ı etvar-ı tabiat-ı temeddün ve ictima*).[48] Hezarfen also copied Kâtip Çelebi's conclusion of *Takvimü't-tevarih* in his own universal history (*Tenkih-i tevarih-i mülûk*): we will find there a verbatim rendering of the simile of the time-span of a society and a man's natural life, as well as of the discussion of the three ages of states and their characteristics.[49]

---

[46] Halilpaşazâde Tab'î Ebu Bekir Beğ Efendi, *Tarih-i cem'*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. H. O. 7 Han, fols 5b-6b. I wish to thank Professor Claudia Römer and Dr. Andreas Fingernagel, Director of the Manuscripts Collection of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, for their help. On the alleged 'philosophical' and 'Ibn Khaldunist' structure of the work, see J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, ed. H. Duda (1830; 2nd ed. Graz 1963), 9:183-184 ("Der Verfasser wollte nach dem Muster Ibn Chaldun's minder Geschichte als Betrachtungen über die Resultate derselben liefern, doch hat er sein Musterbild keineswegs erreicht, indem es ihm durchaus an Klarheit, Ordnung und Tiefe des Urtheiles gebricht"); F. Babinger, *Die Geschichtschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke* (Leipzig 1927), 212 (No. 183) ("dieses… geschichts-philosophische Werk hatte Ibn Chaldun's berühmte *muqaddime* zum Vorbild, ohne dieses Muster irgendwie zu erreichen"); Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften*, 2:102 (nr. 871) ("Der Verfasser gedachte nicht sowohl eine Geschichte als vielmehr eine Philosophie derselben, wenn man so sagen darf, oder überhaupt ein pragmatisches Geschichtswerk zu liefern, allein dazu fehlte es ihm nicht nur an umfassender Kenntniss, sondern auch an Geschick").

[47] On Hezarfen see R. Anhegger, 'Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi'nin Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair mülâhazaları', *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 10 (1951-1953), 365-393; H. Wurm, *Der osmanische Historiker Hüseyn b. Ğa'fer, genannt Hezârfenn, und die Istanbuler Gesellschaft in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1971); introduction to Hüseyin Hezarfen Efendi, *Telhîsü'l-beyân fî kavânîn-i Âl-i Osmân*, ed. S. İlgürel (Ankara 1998).

[48] Hezarfen Efendi, *Telhîsü'l-beyân*, ed. İlgürel, 142.

[49] Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Tenkihü't-tevarih*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hekimoğlu 732, fols 277b-279b.

Naima and the full exposition of stage theory

It is now a commonplace that the fullest exposition of Ibn Khaldun's ideas is to be found in Naima's historic work – not only the biohistorical theory of stages (in its full form now), but also a fully-fledged exposition of the nomads v. settled conflict was translated almost verbatim in the introduction to his *Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn fî hulâsati ahbâri'l-hâfikayn* ('Huseyin's garden, with a summary of news for East and West', commonly known as *Tarih-i Naima*), not to count occasional references to Ibn Khaldun's views on economy or education at other points. Son of the Janissary commander of Aleppo, Naima, we should note, spoke Arabic fluently, and thus had direct access to Ibn Khaldun's original work. His noting of it is enthusiastic:[50]

> In Arabic, among the best of these later histories… [and] above all there is Ibn Khaldun the Maghribi's Arabic history *'Unwān al-'Ibr fī Dīwān al-Mutada' wa'l-Khabar*, a book whose preface alone is one entire volume. It is an incomparable treasure-trove, full of gems of learning and pearls of judgment. Its author – a marvellous man – has surpassed all historians. His book is concerned with what took place in the Maghrib, but into his preface he introduced the whole of his learning.

Indeed, the second part of the first section in his preface (composed in the last one or two years of the seventeenth century) is based on Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*.[51] Since in his classic analysis of Naima's prefaces Lewis Thomas somehow neglected these Ibn Khaldunist parts, I will attempt here a more detailed exposition of their content. Naima first describes the three ages of state (according to Kâtip Çelebi's medical elaboration of Ibn Khaldun's anthropomorphic simile) and then sets about describing in detail the five stages, following the Tunisian scholar closely.[52] It is God's will, he explains, that every "state and community" (*devlet ü cem'iyet*; and here again we may notice Kâtip Çelebi's innovative idea of focusing on the whole society, rather than the dynastic family or tribe) passes through defined stages, to each of which correspond different features of society:

> Let it be known that the divine custom and God's will have ordained that the situation of every state and community is always settled in a uniform manner; it does not stay perpetually on one path, but instead moves through several periods [from one situation] to a renewed one. The features of one period are different from another, and the necessities of one stage are contrary to those of the preceding one. As for the children of the time [contemporary people], they are in accord with the characteristics of the period they live in; men of each era are defined according to the circumstances necessary for their era. For it is an innate feature, based on concealed [di-

---

[50] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:5-6; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:4; L. V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, ed. N. Itzkowitz (New York 1972), 112.

[51] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:33-40; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:26-30; cf. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, 77-78. The preface was composed after c. 1698, when Naima was commissioned to write his work, clearly with a view to justifying the negotiations for peace at Karlowitz, which ended in 1699.

[52] Naima's source is Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:353-355; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 141-142.

> vine] ordinance, that one conforms and complies with the necessities of the time, that the disposition of the state follows the period, and that it respects the nature of the creatures. Thus, the different periods of a state cannot usually excede the number of five stages.

During the first stage, that of "victory" (*zafer vakti*), the state struggles "to free itself from the hands of others and to obtain dominion" (*eyadi-i gayrdan intiza ve mülke istilâ için*). People are content with a simple way of life, as the predominant feature of this stage is *asabiyyet*, solidarity and zealous cohesion; united, people and army (*kavm ve asker*) share all booty and nobody wishes to stand higher than the others. In the second stage, that of "independence" (*istiklâl*), the victorious state consolidates itself; gradually the ruler deals with his affairs independently of his people (*kavm*) and grants his family wealth and power. Moreover, he collects slaves and uses them in administration; now, tribal power (*kuvvet-i aşiret*) and zeal, which used to make the members of the tribe unanimous in the first stage, is only an "imaginary event" (*emr-i vehmî*); on the other hand, slaves and purchased or voluntary servants of the ruler are "metaphorically within the notion of solidarity" (*mecazâ asabiyyet hükmünde dahil*) and join in the benefits of the tribal structure. Thus, while this common zeal is necessary in the appearance of a state, it cedes its place to a "private tribe of the ruler" (*kavm-i hass*) as the dynasty leaves nomadism behind and becomes settled. Consequently, the early companions of the ruler gradually lose their power and also their confidence in the dynasty. Here Naima inserts a suggestion of his own concerning the Ottoman case: the companions and servants of the Sultan were of various origins and thus differed from one another in their customs, habits, clothing, and etiquette. This is why the Ottoman state did not perish in the second stage because of internal strife, as most dynasties do.

The third stage is that of peace, prosperity, confidence, and security. Promising youths find their way into the state apparatus, while soldiers and servants get paid in time and are always ready and willing to defend the country. The rulers (*ashab-ı devlet*) have no internal opponents, do not share their power, and make laws for the community. Now the state is strong enough to dispense completely with tribal solidarity (*aşiret ü asabiyyet*), which was necessary in its early stages. Solidarity becomes unnecessary, since officials begin to form dynasties for their offspring and thus the subjection and obedience of the latter is beyond doubt. During the fourth stage, however, that of saturation and tranquillity (*kanaat ü müsalemet*), people are content with imitating their ancestors' deeds. Ministers, magnates, and officers have established their position and compete with each other; furthermore, they start to covet wealth and prefer it to truth, thus gradually swerving away from the concepts of just government. Moreover, the army begins to be rebellious and undisciplined; consequently, the state has to send them on campaigns to keep them calm, thus paying a heavy burden both in men and in wealth. Naima claims that the Ottoman Empire entered this stage in 1683, with the second siege of Vienna, and suggests an interval of peace in order to give time to the state to reorganise itself.[53] Finally, the fifth stage is that of prodigality, excessive expenditure, and eventual destruction. During this stage, people only care for luxury and ease; "strange customs" are introduced, rulers spend their wealth in pomp and pageantry, neglecting the protection of the people and care for the army. Expenses are such that cannot be met even with extra-ordinary taxes; the state imposes obligatory loans on wealthy people, practising, in fact, confiscation (*müsadere*); wealthy people think of going to Mecca or to Egypt to acquire properties again, but even there they are not safe from their rulers' greed. This is the final stage, and the state is ripe for being overpowered by a new dynasty (although Naima claims that even in this stage the process can be reversed, provided campaigns come to a halt first).

---

[53] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:59; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:44.

After an excursus on the "circle of justice" (again attributed to Ibn Khaldun, as we saw), Naima moves on to more specific observations on human societies, and here again he summarises or copies Ibn Khaldun's theory on nomadism. In this part, nomadism, as opposed to settled civilization (*buduv ü hazar*), is examined as a factor which influences the route of history. Because savage peoples (*ümem-i vahşiyye*) do not know the hindrances of ease and comfort, he says, they are stronger than other peoples and subdue them easily. However, if they settle down and familiarise themselves with the pleasures of town life, they gradually lose both their savagery and their courage, just as wild beasts are turned to domesticated animals. Every new generation gets used to more and more luxury and seeks more and more comfort and ease; men tend to neglect war and to entrust their protection and safety to kings, leaving war to salaried soldiers. Thus they gradually lose their courageous nature, as they are immersed in the comforts of settled life (*refh-i hazâret*).[54]

Then Naima sets out to show how tyrannical and harsh ministers (*ümera*) weaken conquering power and the ability of a state to wage war.[55] For the needs of their reproduction, men have the natural tendency to dominate others (*reis bi't-tab olup*); whereas, whenever they are overwhelmed by the power and dominion of others and obliged to submit and obey, their sensual ardour wanes and they become sluggish. Naima illustrates this point with a story featuring Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, one of the companions of the Prophet, confiscating the booty a valiant soldier had gathered without his consent; Caliph Umar gave it back, saying that this would harm his ardour and zeal. All this (including the anecdote) comes from an Ibn Khaldunian chapter on the destruction of sedentary peoples by their reliance on laws;[56] but to further illustrate this suggestion, Naima again copies Ibn Khaldun on education: this is why, he says, the zeal of servants and children is weakened when they are intimidated with heavy punishment, or why excessive harshness in education makes fragile characters.[57] Thus, the use of intimidating and violent methods in politics has not been deemed right, especially during the fourth and fifth stages of a state, toward the end of the standstill period; when kings and judges investigate too thoroughly people's lives and impose severe punishments for minor misdemeanours, people feel humiliated, become avaricious, start to lie and deceive, and so forth. Instead, ministers (*vülât*) should persuade rather than impose, so as to enhance solidarity and union among the people. It has to be noted, observes Naima, that this capability of gentleness and suavity is met mostly among silly and stupid people, while only rarely is it seen among men of a strong intellect, but acute intellect does not necessarily characterise virtuous men, and therefore an excess of smartness and reasoning can be a cause of shame for statesmen (*hükkâm-ı sahib-i siyaset*), as people call shrewd politicians 'Satans' and demonic. Some think that as far as the faculty of thought (*kuvvet-i fikriyye*) is concerned, its moderation must be desirable, and excess (or lack) of it criticised, just as with the other virtues. Naima argues that the excessive presence of this faculty, i.e., shrewdness, is not considered blameworthy; but in public affairs and in social intercourse it is not proper to exhaust and weaken people by investigating their slightest movements: as Plato has said (in Arabic), "those who search the sins people hide lose the love of their hearts".[58]

---

[54] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:44-46; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:33-34. Cf. Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:249-250, 257-258; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 91, 94-95.

[55] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:46-49; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:34-37.

[56] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:258-259; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 95-7.

[57] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 3:305 (=Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 424-25): "Severe punishment in the course of instruction does harm to the student, especially to little children, because it belongs among (the things that make for a) bad habit. Students,

Next, Naima expands his thoughts on some of the ruling classes in the light of the stage theory: a short chapter on "men of the sword and of the pen"[59] stresses that at the beginning of a dynasty or state, the need for the sword is greater, while the pen only serves the execution of the king's orders. Similarly, in the last stages of a state, there is again a great need for the sword, overpowering that for the pen. However, in the middle stages, the dynasty, now at the zenith of its power, has to rely on the men of the pen rather than the army in order to control its income and expenses and to execute its decisions:

> The sword and the pen are most important for rulership and necessary instruments for the foundation of a state. In the beginnings of a dynasty there is more need for the sword, in order to secure the fulfilling of its purposes and the application of its orders. In this period, the pen serves the execution of the ruler's orders. As for the sword, it is appointed to assist the attainment of his aims and the acquisition of his demands. Moreover, during the aforementioned period of weakness and decline of power, which happen in the late days of a dynasty, imploring assistan-

---

slaves, and servants who are brought up with injustice and (tyrannical) force are overcome by it. It makes them feel oppressed and causes them to lose their energy. It makes them lazy and induces them to lie and be insincere".

[58] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:383-385 (=Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 153-154): "Good rulership is equivalent to mildness. If the ruler uses force and is ready to mete out punishment and eager to expose the faults of people and to count their sins, (his subjects) become fearful and depressed… It should be known that an alert and very shrewd person rarely has the habit of mildness. Mildness is usually found in careless and unconcerned persons… Cleverness and shrewdness imply that a person thinks too much, just as stupidity implies that he is too rigid. In the case of all human qualities, the extremes are reprehensible, and the middle road is praiseworthy… For this reason, the very clever person is said to have the qualities of devils. He is called a 'Satan' or 'a would-be Satan' and the like."

[59] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:49-52; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:37-39; cf. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, 79-80.

> ce from the men of the sword and being in need of them is certain; in these two stages the superiority of the sword over the pen is manifest... But in the middle of a dynasty and during the period of its full power, the stabilisation of affairs makes it able, up to a point, to do without the sword. On the contrary, it is established that there is need for the use of the pen, for tasks such as the collection of benefits and revenues, the gathering of taxes, the control of the budget, or the execution of orders. Thus, in this period the power of the pen is elevated and the men of the pen are more esteemed than the men of the sword.

Up to this point, Naima is again copying Ibn Khaldun;[60] then he adds some thoughts of his own. In this period, kings and viziers respect and care for both the ulema and the scribes; they, in their turn, protect the kingly order and the honour of the state, taking part in every important council and meeting. Even excess of respect for this class cannot be detrimental for the state; only rarely do men of the pen transgress their limits. They usually are moderate in their manners, build houses appropriate to their ranks, and in general only benefit the state. Men of the sword, on the other hand, while offering their lives and souls for the war against the enemies of the state, tend to be dependent on the monies and gifts given to them by the dynasty; especially when these remunerations become excessive, soldiers get used to a comfortable life. Their expenses grow more and more and they wish to imitate their superiors in luxury, with the result that they often end up in debt and poverty. On the other hand, if the state increases their salaries in order to match their expenses, its budget becomes heavily burdened, and, consequently, the peasants, as a source of the state income, are impoverished. Thus, the men of the pen and those of the sword should be kept in equilibrium, with a careful dispensing of gifts and remunerations to those worthy.

Later on in the preface, Naima observes again that in the fourth and second stages of a state's life, luxury and respect for the king has replaced the solidarity and nomadism of the previous stages. He warns that administrators (*mülûk ü hükkâm*) should act independently of people's sayings and opinions; an excess of friendliness is against the rules of good manners (*kanun-ı edeb*) and harms majesty and modesty. Thus, they have to act "behind the curtain of importance and of power", so that people will await their decisions with awe. To this effect, Naima quotes Ibn Khaldun again (this time precisely specifying him by name): by nature, man seeks perfection, and so people tend to imitate great men whose intellectual perfectness they acknowledge, not only in their behaviour and views, but also in their attire and headgear (actually, this is Ibn Khaldun's chapter on the vanquished seeking to imitate the victor!).[61] Consequently (from here on Naima sets out his own thoughts), a wise administrator will first seek to inspire law-abidingness and respect among the people, so that afterwards they will follow him wholeheartedly in his decisions. So, the reduction of luxury and pomp must be gradual and careful, and should be carried out according to rank and with moderation. Pomp can be tolerated in state officials (*erkân-ı devlet*), but not in those who only wish to satisfy their carnal whims with their private wealth, because luxury should mark the distinction between the soldiers and the servants of the state, on the one hand, and the simple commoners, on the other. For the same reason, high offices such as that of a vizier should be given sparingly, lest they lose their value.[62]

---

[60] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 2:46-47; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 213.

[61] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:299-300; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 116.

The ease with which Naima uses ideas and sections from all over Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* can be seen if we put all these parts together: in Franz Rosenthal's monumental three-volume translation, he copies in turn parts from pages 353-355, 249 and 257-259 of the first volume, then jumps to page 304 of the third volume, then back to pages 383-384 of the first, 46-47 of the second, and back again to page 299 of the first; that is to say, he moves freely to and fro in a way that shows his deep knowledge of Ibn Khaldun's work. Naima's self-confidence is evident in another piece of economical-*cum*-political thought in his work: after the description of Derviş Mehmed Pasha's death (1655) and of the huge wealth he had amassed by various entrepreneurial activities,[63] Naima quotes the Pasha as saying that the natural ways of making a living are three (agriculture, commerce, or leadership, i.e., income coming from the ruler), while others have also added craftsmanship.[64]

> The following remarks are derived from ancient philosophers; some wise men are reported to have attributed them to Derviş Paşa. There are three means of gaining wealth: agriculture, commerce, and political authority. Crafts have also been considered by some as a fourth means; nevertheless, it would be proper to limit the means of wealth to the three mentioned above since most artisans are unable to provide for their living, since they keep of the produce of their crafts barely enough to subsist on, while most of the fruit of the labour falls to the rich merchants of that particular commodity. It has traditionally been the case that agriculture and trade have been the more profitable [to an individual] in direct proportion to [his] power and position in society. This is so because people serve a person of power and high position, work for his gain both with their labour and with their funds, without asking for immediate remuneration, hoping to become closer to him and expecting future benefits. Some others fear his power and oppression and therefore give up an expected share of their profits, or they too may work for him. Thus, in either of these two ways, the payment for the people's services and one-fourth of their labour being due to the person of position, he should amass a huge fortune in a short time.

This formulation (we may decide to attribute it to the Pasha or to Naima himself) departs from Ibn Khaldun's similar expression of his view, repeated by Kınalızade, as we saw above:[65] Naima (or the Pasha) accepts leadership as a natural source of revenue, but maintains that in fact craftsmanship can be reduced to commerce, as the income of most craftsmen barely suffices for their living and therefore they have no consequent revenue. Naima seems reluctant to adopt this perspective and hastens to note that some moralist treatises consider commerce and agriculture totally prohibited for administrators. At any rate, what interests us here is the way he uses and alters Ibn Khaldun's formulation in a quite free and self-confident way.

---

[62] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:54-56; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:40-41.

[63] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 6:26-28; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 4:1571-1572. Cf. Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vezir and Entrepreneur'; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Part II: Crisis and change, 1590-1699', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 411-636 at 547-549. On Ibn Khaldun's formulation see Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 2:315ff.; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 299-300.

[64] Here I use the translation by Metin Kunt (Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vezir and Entrepreneur', 205-206).

Finally, it is interesting to note that, whereas Naima begins his preface with a short essay on history, where he lays out his rules for the historian, he totally ignores Ibn Khaldun's similar essay in the beginning of the *Muqaddima*.[66] Thus, the Tunisian scholar warns against prejudice and partisanship, (imprudent) reliance upon transmitters (of an event), unawareness of the purpose of an event, unfounded assumptions, ignorance of the real dimensions of an event, embellishment of high-ranking persons, and, finally, ignorance of the laws of civilisation; he urges the historian to study these laws so that he may distinguish possible from impossible events. Naima, however, follows his predecessor's example in giving his own, different, rules: as summarised by Lewis Thomas, these rules urge the historian to "(1) tell the truth and substantiate it; (2) disregard the false tales current among the common folk; (3) not content himself with 'simple annals' but enable the reader to draw the moral for himself; (4) not be a partisan, regardless of his own views; (5) use plain language and not sacrifice clarity to literary affectation; (6) limit himself strictly to appropriate embellishments (verses, quotations, etc.); (7) discuss astrology only when he can prove that astrological causes had certain established results".[67] The third point is of particular interest, as it conveys a sense of Ibn Khaldunism although it belongs to Naima's original thoughts (here in Thomas's translation):

> Whatever the sphere of human life to which the question of which an historian is treating belongs, he should not be content simply to tell the story but should also incorporate useful information directly into his narrative. It is of no great consequence merely to recount campaigns and seasons of repose from campaigning, arrivals and departures, appointments to office and removals from office, and peace and war. Rather, historians ought first to inform themselves, from those who have proper information concerning the question in hand, of what was the divinely ordained condition of any age in history; of how, in a given century, the affairs of men were going forward, and in what direction; of what ideas and counsels were predominating in problems of administration and finance – in short, historians must first ascertain what it was that men thought and what it was over which they disagreed, what it was they believed to be the best course in the conduct of war and in making terms with the foe, what were the causes and the weaknesses which were then bringing triumph or entailing destruction. Then, after an

---

[65] See the detailed analysis in Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vezir and Entrepreneur', 206-211, and cf. F. Ermiş, *A History of Ottoman Economic Thought. Developments Before the Nineteenth Century* (London and New York 2014), 97-102.

[66] Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, 1:4-8; İpşirli (ed.), *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 1:3-5; Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:15ff. and esp. 71ff.; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 11ff., 35ff. Naima's piece is translated by Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, 110-115.

[67] Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, 116.

> historian has ascertained all these things, he should present his findings on the basis of their reliability. When this has been accomplished, later readers will be able to avail themselves of the different benefits of experience's teachings. But simple annals, devoid of these useful features, are in no way different from so many *Hamza-name*s.

III. The Eighteenth Century: From Stage Theory to the Glorification of Nomadism

Thus, Naima not only set out Ibn Khaldun's full theory of stages, he also introduced his distinction between the nomadic and the settled way of life, together with the emphasis on tribal solidarity and its role in the rise of empires. And as far as we know, it would take another 50 years for these ideas to fully permeate Ottoman political literature. Fındıkoğlu and Lewis note that almost simultaneously the introduction on history and historiography in the universal history composed by Müneccimbaşı Ahmed b. Lutfullah (d. 1702), Naima's contemporary, follows almost verbatim Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*.[68] However, Müneccimbaşı's introduction does not seem to have any relation with Ibn Khaldun: his exposition on the profession of historian has some points in common with Ibn Khaldun's, such as the need to avoid flattering high-ranking persons or relying to unreliable witnesses, but he cites Taj al-Din ibn Taqi al-Din al-Subki (d. 1370) and his famous biographical work *Tabaqāt-i Kubrā* (*Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʻiyya al-kubrā*). Overall, Müneccimbaşı's introduction has more in common with Naima's similar section and certainly no relation with Ibn Khaldun's.[69] At any rate, it would take some decades till these theories found a constant place in Ottoman political thought. In İbrahim Müteferrika's work, for instance, which is innovative in many other ways, including a famous, yet isolated, introduction of the Aristotelian distinction between governments (actually copying a work by Kâtip Çelebi),[70] there is no trace of such ideas.

Nevertheless, knowledge of Ibn Khaldun's work became more and more common in the circles of the Ottoman literati. First of all, the *Muqaddima* began to be copied in Istanbul (there were earlier copies in the Arab lands, as, for instance, in Jidda). The first dated Ottoman copy of the *Muqaddima* (excluding those copied in the Arab lands) bears the date 1706/7 and its commissioner was a certain Abulhayr Ahmed;[71] another was copied in 1715 by Mehmed Müezzinzade for Damad Ali Pasha (d. 1716).[72] Finally, between 1725 and 1730, the *şeyhülislam* Pirizade Mehmed Sahib Efendi (d. 1749) made the first translation of Ibn Khaldun's introduction (actually, of a large part of it, as he left untranslated the large part on human knowledge) into Ottoman Turkish.[73] Pirizade's translation must be seen in the context of the organised translation efforts initiated by Nevşehirli İbrahim Pasha, the Grand Vizier of the 'Age of the Tulips', even if his initiative was strictly personal (at any rate it was not printed till 1858, unlike other translations which found their way to İbrahim Müteferrika's printing-house).[74] It is interesting to study Pirizade's additions and marginal notes to Ibn Khaldun's text: for instance, he disagrees with Ibn Khaldun that the Muslim world may have two leaders (caliphs) because of geographical distances; he also has a few corrections to make on geographical issues, something that has to do with the remarkable development of geography following Kâtip Çelebi's efforts (although the printed version of the latter's *Cihânnümâ*, with additions from Ebu Bekr al-Dimişkî's work and supplementary maps by İbrahim Müteferrika, was to be published in 1732, two years after the completion of Pirizade's translation). Pirizade also comments on Ibn Khaldun's considering the time-span of 120 years as obligatory for all dynasties, stressing the exceptionality of the Ottoman dynasty:[75]

---

[68] Ziya (Ülken) – Fahri (Fındıkoğlu), *İbni Haldun*, 38-39; Fındıkoğlu, 'Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm', 158-159; Lewis, 'Ibn Khaldun in Turkey', 235. Müneccimbaşı's history was written in Arabic, but it was translated into Ottoman Turkish by the poet Nedîm; on his use of Western sources cf. B. Lewis, 'The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources', in B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds), *Historians of the Middle East* (London 1962), 180-191.

[69] Müneccimbaşı Ahmed, *Sahaifü'l-ahbar*, 3 vols (Istanbul H.1285/1868), 1:32-34. On Subki see *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Subkî.9' (J. Schacht-[C. E. Bosworth]).

[70] A. Şen (ed.), *İbrahim Müteferrika ve Usûlü'l-Hikem fî Nizâmi'l-Ümem* (Ankara 1995). On the use of Kâtip Çelebi's works by Müteferrika see the detailed analysis in Yurtoğlu, *Kâtip Çelebi*, 37ff. and esp. 72-78 on copying *İrşâdü'l-hayârâ*, with the distinction of government into monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy [B. Yurtoğlu (ed.), *Katip Çelebi'nin Yunan, Roma ve Hristiyan tarihi hakkındaki risalesi* (Ankara 2012)] .

[71] MS Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 805. Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:xcviii.

> With God's assistance and with the helpful bountifulness of God the omnipotent, the eternal Exalted State of the Ottomans – praised be its pillars (*erkân*)! – lasts for almost five hundred years, thanks to the divine favours, and rules in its spacious territories and its roads of distant regions, which are situated in the four cardinal directions of the inhabited world, enforcing the Holy Law and the principles of the monotheistic religion.

However, it seems that Naima's formulation continued to be used as the main source of Ibn Khaldun's theories, rather than Pirizade's translation. Having studied a number of probate inventories of the mid eighteenth century, Henning Sievert notes that while more than 60 copies of Ibn Khaldun's history (almost half of them in Pirizade's translation) are preserved in Istanbul alone, it is almost non-existent in probate inventories of the Ottoman elite, in contrast with Naima's history.[76] Indeed, those who repeated the stage theory during the eighteenth century did not neglect to stress the similitude of states to the human body and its decay; this simile, as we saw, is not to be found in Ibn Khaldun's original work, as it was introduced by Kâtip Çelebi and then incorporated by Naima into his own formulation of the theory.

---

[72] MS. Nuruosmaniye 3424. Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:xcvii. Rosenthal also dates to the same period MS. Nuruosmaniye 3423: ibid., 1:xcviii.

[73] Pîrîzâde Mehmed Sâhib, *İbn Haldun: Mukaddime osmanlı tercümesi*, eds Y. Yıldırım, S. Erdem, H. Özkan and M. C. Kaya, 3 vols (Istanbul 2008).

[74] See Yıldırım, '*Mukaddime*'nin Türkçe tercümesi'.

[75] Yıldırım, '*Mukaddime*'nin Türkçe tercümesi', 24-25, 27-30; Pîrîzâde, *Mukaddime osmanlı tercümesi*, XXX-XXXV and 1:93 (on geography), 1:334 (on the life span of the Ottoman state), or 2:66 (on the caliphate).

[76] H. Sievert, 'Eavesdropping on the Pasha's Salon: Usual and Unusual Readings of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Bureaucrat', *OA*, 41 (2013), 159-195 at 179-180.

Thus, in the relatively unknown treatise *Nuhbetü'l-emel fî tenkihi'l-fesadi ve'l-halel* ('Selected wishes for the emendation of mischief and disorder'), composed in early 1774 by Dürrî Mehmed Efendi (d. 1794),[77] we find a peculiar combination of the 'three ages' theory with the more elaborate 'five stages'. Dürrî states that it is a necessity of the divine wisdom that, just as the human individual (*efrad-ı nev'-i beşer*) has three ages, that of growth, of standstill, and of physical decline (*nümüv, vukuf, inhitat*), so do states (*devletler*) as well. The Ottoman state has reached the age of standstill, which in the individual corresponds to the age from 33 to 45 and which is the age of splendour. The Ottoman state began in H.700 (1300/1) and passed through the "three ages" (*kurun-ı selâse*) in H.950 (1543/44), 980 (1572/3) and 1000 (1591/2); these ages constitute the "times of the soldiers" (284b: *ricalinin evkatı*), and, being the "age of growth" (*sene-i nümüv*), were full of wars and victories. Afterwards, however, comes the "age of standstill" (*sene-i vukuf*), when people wish for peace and welfare (*asayiş ve refah*) rather than war and glory. This explains why from then on, Ottoman wars ended both in victories and defeats.

A decade later, Süleyman Penah Efendi (1740-1785) wrote an account of the 1769-1770 revolt in the Peloponnese and included a long, detailed, and highly original discussion of the state of the Empire and of the measures to be taken. In various chapters one can discern his Ibn Khaldunist influences: in the beginnings of a state or dynasty, he says, the soldiers obey to it and display solidarity and unanimity in their plundering of the enemy and dividing the shares of the conquered land; officials and statesmen tend to ignore their failures. This is a feature of the said period, however; when the state proceeds to the stage of consolidation (*kemal ve kudret peyda itdikde*) the soldiers begin to pursue their ease, comfort, and luxury; moreover, the inhabitants of the various towns and villages develop their own various manners and character (*her biri bir tavır ve meşreb peyda ider*), with the result that their control becomes difficult. When sagacious counsellors perceive that thus the state is going to be dissolved, they divide the population under their dominion (*zir-i hükmünde olan nüfus*) into some classes or groups (*sınıf*) that have to obey certain rules. Penah Efendi's source is probably not directly Ibn Khaldun but rather Naima, and Penah Efendi quotes the latter on the three ages of the state and the similarities to the human body (ultimately taken from Kâtip Çelebi). He notes, however, that unlike human beings, states that obey their laws and adjust themselves to the changes that occur in the world (*dünya tarz-ı ahar oldukça esbabiyle hâkimane hareket olunsa*) may avoid decline and fall.[78]

A rare example of probable direct use of Ibn Khaldun, presumably from Pirizade's translation, was noticed by Bernard Lewis in Ahmed Resmî Efendi's (1700-1783) discussion of the rise of Prussia (where he had been sent as the first Ottoman ambassador in 1763):[79]

---

[77] Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, E.H. 1438, fols 281b-296a; the relevant part is in f. 283b-284b. K. Atik, 'Kayserili devlet adamı Dürri Mehmed Efendi ve layihası', in A. Aktan and A. Öztürk (eds), *II. Kayseri ve yöresi tarih sempozyumu bildirileri (16-17 Nisan 1998)* (Kayseri 1998), 69-74, gives a detailed synopsis of the text. I wish to thank Ethan L. Menchinger who made this text known and available to me.

[78] A. Berker, 'Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi veya Penah Efendi mecmuası, 1769', *Tarih Vesikaları*, 2 (1942-1943), 63-80, 153-160, 228-240, 309-320, 385-400, 473-480, at 157-159.

> In the words of Ibn Khaldun, the complete victory of a newly created state over an old established state depends on the length of time and the recurring sequence of events.

As far as I can tell, there is no such quotation in Naima; on the other hand, it may have originated from many parts of Ibn Khaldun's work.[80]

Nomadism and war

However, in the story of eighteenth-century Ottoman Ibn Khaldunism, the case of Dürrî or of Penah Efendi is more of a deviation: most eighteenth or early nineteenth-century authors emphasise the value of nomadic life rather than the stage theory. Even Dürrî, who otherwise restricts himself to sketching a somewhat peculiar theory of stages, uses the distinctively Ibn Khaldunist term *hazar* ('settled life') to describe the period of peace which he advocates.

The influence is clearer and perhaps more important in an anonymous short essay on the European balance of powers, *Avrupa'ya mensub olan mizan-ı umur-ı hariciyye beyanındadır* ('On the balance of foreign affairs relating to Europe'), which must almost certainly be attributed to Ahmed Resmî Efendi (whom we saw above naming and using Ibn Khaldun). The author of this essay, which was completed in 1774, just after the Russian-Ottoman war, treats the Ottoman Empire as just another state in an international community, and, in order to argue for the necessity of peace, uses Ibn Khaldun's authority on nomadism and its decline:[81]

> According to Ibn Khaldun's *Mukaddima*, we must obey the necessities of time and situation: because of the long and uninterrupted continuation of settled life (*temadi-i hazar*), we forgot the arts of war and consequently we have not had any single victory for five years now.

Here we have the notion of nomadism, whereas Ibn Khaldun's stage theory is absent. In the same vein, Azmî Efendi, the Ottoman ambassador in Berlin, described in 1790 what he saw as the love of comfort prevailing among Europeans (as Resmî Efendi had also done) and attributes it to "the loss of virility" associated with decline, quoting explicitly Ibn Khaldun.[82] The stage theory is still present, but the emphasis has shifted to the ‘settled’ features of decline. Similarly, only few years later we encounter the same distinction between nomadism and settled life in some of the memoranda (*lâyiha*) submitted to Selim III in 1792. The then *defterdar* Şerif Efendi writes that what is needed is continuous training and exercise, and the basis of this precept is the distinction between nomadism and settled life: if soldiers are left to settle down, their military skill will fade away:[83]

---

[79] Lewis, 'Ibn Khaldūn in Turkey', 235, quoting Resmî, *Viyana sefaretnâmesi* (Istanbul H.1304/1886), 33. A classic study of Ahmed Resmî is V. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700-1783* (Leiden 1995).

[80] Rosenthal (tr.), *The Muqaddimah*, 1:299-300, 2:130ff.; Rosenthal (tr.) – Dawood (ed.), *The Muqaddimah*, 116, 253-255.

[81] F. Yeşil (ed.), *Bir Osmanlı gözüyle Avrupa siyasetinde güç oyunu: Avrupa'ya mensûb olan mîzân-ı umûr-ı hâriciyye beyânındadır* (Istanbul 2012), 11. On the authorship of the treatise see ibid., 1 fn. 4; cf. V. Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing, 1768-1808', *IJMES*, 25 (1993), 53-69, 59-60.

> Since frugality and temperance are harmful in time of campaign, I understood that once a campaign begins it is difficult to stop it before it attains its aims; like the Cretan campaign, it cannot be abandoned without reaching victory. Because when the army gets used to nomadism (*bedeviyyete alıştıkça*), it begins to be useful and efficient… The secret of all this is the issue of nomadism and settled life.

In his memorandum, Mustafa Reşid Efendi (*kethüda* of the Grand Vizier) expounds the *asabiyyet* theory in the same way as Kınalızade (who, the reader may remember, had stressed that because of its unanimity, a ruling class may dominate a population ten times bigger). Using historical examples, Reşid Efendi shows how unanimity and solidarity (*ittifakü’l-kelim, asabiyyet*) secure the rule of the ruling class (administrators and soldiers) over the ten-fold population of their subjects. Sultan Orhan tried to recruit salaried soldiers from Anatolia, but could not impose discipline over them, and thus created the Janissaries, which enabled him to fulfil these precepts.[84] Rasih Efendi (ex-*rikâb kethüdası*), in his turn, suggests the continuous training of the army (“restoring the nomadic conditions in the time of settled life”, *vakt-ı hazarda askerimize bedeviyyet hâlâtını kesb*).[85] Around the same time, in 1791, Abdullah Halim Efendi, a scholar who served as secretary of several close collaborators of Selim III, including the aforementioned Şerif Efendi and Mustafa Reşid Efendi, composed his *Seyfü’l-izzet ila hazreti sahibi’d-devlet* (‘The sword of glory [or: Izzet’s sword] for his excellency the lord of the state’) at the request of his then patron, İzzet Mehmed Pasha (who became Selim’s Grand Vizier in 1794). In a strange contradiction of his reformist associations, his tract has a strong traditional taste, as it launches all the traditional accusations against corruption, ignorance, and moral decay. In the epilogue, which is structured as a playful dialogue between fictional representatives of the population of Istanbul, Halim Efendi claims that the people of old also avoided luxury and pomp, esteemed knowledge, and were not pleased whenever peace was concluded with the infidel. If these things change, “the Exalted State will become fresh and young again" (*tazelenür*) in two years' time, "as is written in the conclusion of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*".[86] As a matter of fact, this is undoubtedly another instance of emphasis on nomadic virility, which can restore a declining state.

---

[82] Lewis, ‘Ibn Khaldūn in Turkey’, 235-236, quoting ‘Azmî, *Sefaretname. 1205 senesinde Prusya kırali ikinci Frederik Guillaum’ın nezdıne memur olan Ahmed Azmi Efendinindir* (Istanbul H.1303/1885), 52.

[83] E. Z. Karal, ‘Nizâm-ı Cedîd’e dâir lâyihalar’, *Tarih Vesikaları*, 1 (1941), 414-425 at 422-423; E. Çağman, ‘III. Selim’e sunulan bir ıslahat raporu: Mehmet Şerif Efendi layihası’, *Divan*, 7 (1999), 217-233 at 230-231.

[84] Karal, ‘Nizâm-ı Cedîd’e dâir lâyihalar’, *Tarih Vesikaları*, 2 (1942), 104-111 at 104.

[85] Ibid., 107.

As we approach Tanzimat, this emphasis on the nomadism/settled life conflict is quite evident. A fine example is Şanizade Mehmed Ataullah Efendi (c. 1770-1826), who wrote various medical and mathematical treatises (some of them translations from German or French), served as official historian, and wrote a chronicle for the period from Mahmud I's accession (1808) up to August 1821.[87] When discussing the human inclination towards evil and its degrees (a discussion that he actually takes from Kınalızade and ultimately Dawwani), Şanizade quotes "books of natural philosophy (*kütüb-ı tabiiyye*) such as Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*".[88] This is a sort of false citation, but in other parts of his work he seems quite familiar with the Ibn Khaldunist theory of *'aṣabiyya*. For instance, he states that when the arrangements of great groups called states by the philosophers (*devlet tabir olunan nizam-ı cemaat-i kübra*) fall into decline (*inhitat*), the strongest groups prevail and start to act independently. The class of the Janissaries, being more united (*müttefik u müctemi*) than the other classes (because of their previous order), dominated over them. In this way, however, whatever affluence and comfort had been seized by other nations because of the power of social solidarity (*kuvvet-i ictimaiyye*) is now lost, as a result of the conflict among the other classes.[89] Elsewhere, in a report about a Kurdish revolt, Şanizade observes that the local governor, having the benefit of tribal solidarity (*sahib-i asabiyyet*) because of his local followers and relatives, managed to mobilise immediately the Kurdish tribes "thanks to nomadism" (*fazilet-i bedeviyyetle*).[90]

---

[86] A. Şahin, 'Abdullah Halim Efendi'nin *Seyfü'l-izzet ila hazreti sahibi'd-devlet* adlı kitabının çevirim yazısı ve değerlendirilmesi', unpublished MA thesis, Marmara University, 2009, 192-193 (*ve bu benim sana söylediğim mevaddın küllîsi hulâsa-i tedabir-i devlet ile makrundur. Ve netice-i* Mukaddime-i İbn-i Haldûn'*dur*). I wish to thank Günhan Börekçi who brought this valuable text to my attention.

[87] In the pieces of political advice he inserted, Şanizade used a wide variety of sources, from Dawwani and Kınalızade to Koçi Bey and Naima, not to mention European sources. Edhem Eldem discovered recently that Şanizade may have plagiarised Voltaire's article on history in the famous *Encyclopédie*: E. Eldem, 'Début des lumières ou simple plagiat? La très voltairienne préface de l'histoire de Şanizade Mehmed Ataullah Efendi', *Turcica*, 45 (2014), 269-318.

[88] Şâni-zâde Mehmed 'Atâ'ullah Efendi, *Şânî-zâde târîhi [Osmanlı tarihi (1223-1237 / 1808-1821)]* ed. Z. Yılmazer (Istanbul 2008), 1028. For these degrees of the inclination towards evil see Kınalızâde, *Ahlâk-ı Alâ'î*, ed. Koç, 486ff. These are (a) those who are naturally inclined towards good and also act for the benefit of the others; a just ruler must choose his companions and advisors from among these people; (b) those who are inclined towards good, but do not exert their good influence in the benefit of others; the king must look after their needs; (c) those who are neither good nor bad by nature; the ruler must protect them and try to guide them to the right path; (d) those who are bad by nature, but do not oppress others; the ruler must treat them with contempt and then encourage them to improve themselves; (e) those bad by nature who oppress others.

[89] Şâni-zâde, *Şânî-zâde târîhi*, ed.Yılmazer, 405-406.

[90] Ibid., 953.

The most interesting reference, however, belongs not to Şanizade but to an imperial order he quotes, issued on the 1821 revolt and stating that although Muslims have turned to the settled way of life (which is "a second nature to man's disposition"), they have now to revert to their ancestors' nomadic (and hence war-like) customs and fight back. A few months later, another decree also urges Muslims to take arms and abstain from luxury and pomp, "adopting the shape of nomadism and campaign" (*bedeviyyet ve seferiyyet*). In practice, this meant a kind of general military levy or *seferiyyet*, without such effective results; this measure was extended even to the number of meals prepared in each house. Reflecting on these developments, Şanizade repeats that with imperial order Muslims had to unite and "substitute settled and peaceful life for campaign status" and describes vividly how the Muslim inhabitants of Istanbul roamed about in full war-like apparel. Soon, however, people started to "transform nomadism into foolish squandering" (*bedaveti yine sefahete tahvil*) and to attach more importance to adorning their weapons and exhibiting luxury.[91] These developments (leading to violence against non-Muslims in Istanbul, Izmir, and Salonica, until the central government changed its policy and resumed exclusive control over the use of violence) have been described in detail by Şükrü Ilıcak;[92] I will only add that there might have been an antecedent: the Greek Phanariot Yakovakis Rizos Neroulos writes in 1827 that after Mustafa IV's deposition and during the rule of Bayraktar Mustafa, in 1808, "[l]a Porte prétendit établir un gouvernement à la tatare: elle proclama le *Bédéviyet* ou regime nomade".[93] However, I could not find any reference to such measures taken in 1808.

We have to note that the glorification of nomadism remained mostly at an ideological level and did not exactly coincide with the actual practice of the Ottoman state: although efforts to settle nomadic tribes had begun at least from the late sixteenth century on, they intensified after 1690 (a special bureau, the 'Office of Settlement' or *İskân Dairesi* was founded in 1693). At the same time, however, there also were systematic efforts towards registration and incorporation of tribal groups into the Ottoman army, and it may be more than a mere coincidence that, from 1691 on, the Balkan Muslim nomads, the Yürüks, were registered as Evlâd-ı Fatihan, "children of the conquerors".[94] One is tempted to see an echo of early Ibn Khaldunism in this denomination, although (as we saw above) what had permeated Ottoman ideology by that time was the stage theory, rather than the idealisation of nomadism. At any rate, it is evident that late eighteenth, and, even more, early nineteenth-century, Ottoman scholars and statesmen preferred to quote Ibn Khaldun's theory on the military superiority of the nomads, rather than his pessimistic view on the inevitable stages of a dynasty. Although this is beyond the scope of the present paper, which confines itself to the pre-Tanzimat period, one has to note that by the Hamidian era, the contrast between settled and nomadic life had changed sides. Instead of being associated with virility and strength, nomadism came to be used as the negative 'other', and, more particularly, as a state of ignorance from which it had to be forced into civilisation.[95] In his very interesting analysis of the late Ottoman Empire as a version of "borrowed colonialism", Selim Deringil connected this attitude with an adoption of the French colonial 'mission civilisatrice', this time aimed against Kurdish and Bedouin nomadic populations of the Empire.[96] One might see a precursor of this 'colonising' trend in the plea of Penah Efendi (seen above as an Ibn Khaldunist) for the civilising of the unruly Albanians by using the methods presumably used by the Spanish upon the wild inhabitants of America.[97]

---

[91] Ibid., 1084, 1169, 1238-1241. Some of these expressions originate directly from Mahmud II's decrees; see Ş. Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society During the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1826', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011, 113.

[92] Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire', 100ff. and esp. 121-167. Hakan Erdem notes the measures taken but fails to grasp their Ibn Khaldunist underpinnings; Christoph Neumann, on the other hand, makes this connection: see H. Erdem, ''Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers': Ottoman responses to the Greek War of Independence', in F. Birtek and Th. Dragonas (eds), *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London 2005), 67-84 at 76; Neumann, *Araç tarih amaç Tanzimat*, 179-180.

[93] Jacovaky Rizo Néroulos, *Analyse raisonnée de l'ouvrage intitulé Charte Turque*, eds B. Bouvier and A. D. Lazaridou (Athens 2013), 194.

[94] See R. Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants and Refugees* (Seattle and London 2009), 66-71 and 72-74. On the Evlad-ı Fatihan organisation see M. T. Gökbilgin,

---

Rumeli'de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-ı Fâtihân (Istanbul 1957), esp. 255ff. A relevant regulation stated that "the group of the Evlad-ı Fatihan, being from before an obedient, distinguished and warlike (*güzide ve cengâver*) army of the Exalted State, proved very efficient and honourable; thus, this group was named and called Evlad-ı Fatihan" (ibid., 255).

[95] See T. Baykara, 'Nizam, Tanzimat ve medeniyet kavramları üzerine', in I. Duruöz and G. Büyüklimanlı (eds), *Tanzimat'ın 150. yıldönümü uluslararası sempozyumu: Bildiriler, 25-27 Aralık 1989, Millî Kütüphane, Ankara* (Ankara 1994), 61-65; E. Wigen, 'Interlingual and International Relations: A History of Conceptual Entanglements between Europe and Turkey', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oslo, 2014, 105ff. and esp. 119-123.

[96] See S. Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains. Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London and New York 1999), 19, 41-42; idem, '"They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery": The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 45 (2003), 311-342, esp. 317-318. Cf. Ş. Mardin, 'Center-Periphery Relations. A Key to Turkish Politics?', *Daedalus*, 102 (1973), 169-190 at 170-171 ("the clash between nomads and urban dwellers generated the Ottoman cultivated man's stereotype that civilization was a contest between urbanization and nomadism, and that all things nomadic were only deserving of contempt"). On the practical side of the matter, namely, the more organised state efforts to settle the nomads from the late 1820s onwards, see Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, 84ff.

[97] Penah Efendi describes the Albanians as unruly and undisciplined plunderers, who know nothing of trade or arts. Among the measures he proposes, one is teaching them the Turkish language, since "the good manners of a tribe depend on its learning the language of its dynasty" (*bir kavm terbiyesi bir devletin tekellüm itdiği lisanı tekellüme muhtacdır*); another is educating Albanian youths in Istanbul just as the Spanish brought Indian women to their country and had them married to Spanish men (allegedly their children, who spoke both languages, were sent back to America and served as interpreters, with the result that soon the natives forgot their own language and now spoke only Spanish). See Berker, 'Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi veya Penah Efendi mecmuası', 239-240 and 309-312 and cf. A. Anastasopoulos, 'Albanians in the Eighte-

IV. CONCLUSION

It must have been evident from the analysis above that the reception of Ibn Khaldun's work by Ottoman historical and political thought challenges the commonly received idea that the Tunisian scholar's ideas had practically no influence on Islamicate historiography till his rediscovery by the nineteenth-century West.[98] However, the introduction of Ibn Khaldunism into Ottoman literature cannot be explained solely by textual interdependence and other tools of the history of ideas (or, as it is now fashionable to call it, intellectual history). Whereas Ibn Khaldun's work seems to have been known in some intellectual circles already by the 1560s, it did not exercise any serious influence until Kâtip Çelebi's work, which, as we saw, was successful in transmitting these ideas throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. True, Kâtip Çelebi's and later Naima's elevated status of authority must have played some role, and we have already seen that the great success of Naima's printed edition contributed to the reception of Ibn Khaldun's ideas through his adaptation. However, the continuous presence of these ideas during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries cries out for some explanation beyond mere textual transmission.

Kâtip Çelebi and the affirmation of historical change

In order to understand why Kâtip Çelebi became such a fervent follower of his Tunisian predecessor, we have to look at his intellectual environment and the ideological trends he was trying to refute. Before Kâtip Çelebi's time, the dominant idea in Ottoman political thought (and, in fact, in the circles which influenced the palace policies during Murad IV's time) was what we could call a 'theory of decline': thinkers such as the anonymous author of *Kitâb-ı müstetâb* (c. 1620), Koçi Bey (c. 1630), or Aziz Efendi (1633) shared the same view of the present situation as a dangerous deviation from the rules of Süleyman's Golden Era. In a way elaborating previous views (e.g., that of Mustafa Ali at the end of the sixteenth century), they suggested that the solution would be a return to the glorious past: institutions of the early or mid sixteenth century were idealised and strict adherence to the "old law" was advocated. Most of these authors seem to have been associated with Murad IV and his efforts to impose discipline and order on the Janissary army after the upheavals of the 1620s, and one can even argue that the main motive behind all this discourse was to give an ideological background to an effort of the palace to curb the growing power of the Janissaries.[99] A set of texts describing *kanun* or 'regulations' for the military and the government to follow, such as Koçi Bey's second treatise (1640), the anonymous *Kavanin-i yeniçeriyân* (1606), Ayn Ali's (c. 1610) and Avni Ömer's (1642)

---

enth-Century Ottoman Balkans', in E. Kolovos, Ph. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou, and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History. Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 37-47.

[98] Cf. Buzov, 'History', 189-197.

[99] Cf. B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge and New York 2010).

descriptions of the Janissary and timar system, may be seen as belonging to the same trend. Furthermore, alongside these advocates of a strict return to the old order, another trend became more and more visible from the 1620s and 1630s throughout the century, namely, what Derin Terzioğlu named the 'Sunna-minded' authors and preachers, comprising not only the 'fundamentalist' Kadızadelis but also a wider range of ulema and dervishes, favouring a more or less uncompromising return to the early Islamic values.[100] Towards the end of the century, this trend gained an unprecedented influence on the imperial policy-makers and left its mark on the financial reforms of the late seventeenth century, such as the reform of the poll tax and various experiments undertaken in landholding, taxation, and regulation of prices.[101] But in Kâtip Çelebi's time, the 'Sunna-minded' trend was clearly perceived as a demand for a strict legalism, which would bring about a huge turmoil in people's everyday life.

Kâtip Çelebi, himself a disciple of Kadızadeli Mehmed Efendi, took a clear stance against both these traditions. His ideas were nearer the reformist viziers of the 1650s, like Tarhuncu Ahmed Pasha and Köprülü Mehmed Pasha.[102] In his last work, *Mizanü'l-hak fi ihtiyari'l-ahak* ('The balance of truth for the selection of the truest [way]', 1656), he tried to refute once and for all the 'Sunna-minded' legalism, arguing that violent interference in people's lives and customs brings only dissent and strife.[103] It seems that, by endorsing Ibn Khaldun's view of history as a series of rises and falls of dynasties, he was trying to refute the other dominant ideology of his era, that of the 'old law' advocates.[104] To this end, he began by seeing society as analogous to the human body (enhancing the older similes by substituting the four elements for the four bodily humours as corresponding to the four social groups), having first defined *devlet* in terms of society rather than dynasty.[105] Then he introduced the Ibn Khaldunist theory of stages, insisting again on the similitude between man and society; then he was ready to proceed to his main argument, i.e., that, just as a doctor should give different medicines to a patient according to the latter's age, so should a reformer use different measures according to the stage a society has reached. The implication was that change and innovation were a positive rather than a negative value, and thus the potential reformer should adopt a problem-orientated policy rather than revert to some idealised constitutions of the past. Of all the Ibn Khaldunist ideas in Kâtip Çelebi's work, it was exactly this last implication that survived or that was used with more intensity by his seventeenth-century followers (i.e., Hemdemî and Hezarfen), but also by Naima, Dürrî, or Penah Efendi in the eighteenth century. This may indicate the real reasons why these ideas became so popular: Ibn Khaldunism offered a sophisticated theoretical ground for arguments in favour of socio-political change and reform.

---

[100] D. Terzioğlu, 'Sunna-minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State: the *Nasîhatnâme* of Hasan Addressed to Murad IV', *ArchOtt*, 27 (2010), 241-312. On the Kadızadelis in particular see M. Zilfi, 'The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 45 (1986), 251-269; eadem, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis 1988), 129-181; D. Le Gall, 'Kadızadelis, Nakşbendis and Intra-Sufi Diatribe in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *TSAJ*, 28 (2004), 1-28; M. Sariyannis, 'The Kadızadeli Movement as a Social and Political Phenomenon: The Rise of a 'Mercantile Ethic'?', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives from the Bottom-Up in the Ottoman Empire (Halcyon Days in Crete VII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009)* (Rethymno 2012), 263-289.

[101] See G. Veinstein, 'Les règlements fiscaux ottomans de Crète', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840 (Halcyon Days in Crete VI. A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006)* (Rethymno 2008), 3-16; M. Greene, 'An Islamic Experiment? Ottoman Land Policy on Crete', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 11 (1996), 60-78; E. Tuşalp Atiyas, Chapter VI in Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought*.

[102] G. Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit. Entstehung und Gedankenwelt von Katib Celebis Ğihannüma* (Berlin 2003), 62-64.

[103] Kâtip Çelebi, *Mizanü'l-Hak fi İhtiyari'l-Ahak* (Istanbul H. 1306/1888); English translation by G. L. Lewis, *The Balance of Truth, by Kâtib Chelebi* (London 1957); cf. M. T. Gökbilgin, 'Kâtip Çelebi, interprète et rénovateur des traditions religieuses au XVIIe siècle', *Turcica*, 3 (1971), 71-79.

[104] The reader may remember that a similar case can perhaps be made for Veysî Efendi's work, in connection to his probably being the first known owner of a *Muqaddima* manuscript.

Nomadism as patriotism

Whereas in the seventeenth century Kâtip Çelebi popularised a three-stage version of Ibn Khaldun's laws of imperial growth, connected with his own similitude to the human body, Naima's more faithful rendering of the five-stage theory did not leave so many traces, even if (as we saw above) it was his printed edition by İbrahim Müteferrika that contributed to the continuous presence of Ibn Khaldunism in eighteenth-century political tracts. What is certain is that towards the end of the eighteenth century the notion of nomadic life as a sign of valour and solidarity, connected with the rise of empires, gains weight as the dominant element of Ibn Khaldunist ideas circulating in these circles.

One could also argue that a certain emphasis on 'unity' and 'solidarity' has some affinities with Ibn Khaldun's nomadic *'aṣabiyya*. Mustafa Reşid Efendi's emphasis on *asabiyyet*, explained as unanimity (*ittifakü'l-kelim*), may not be very far removed from the 'Deed of Alliance' (*sened-i ittifak*), the famous document signed in 1808 by the Sultan, the representatives of the government and the group of provincial notables who had been assembled in Istanbul under Bayraktar (or Alemdar) Mustafa Pasha.[106] Furthermore, the observable shift towards a more individualistic interpretation of history, where responsibility for the welfare of the community belongs to all its members, rather than being left to Divine Providence, could also be related to this attitude. Abdullah Halim Efendi stresses that all social groups must be held responsible and strive to show zeal and religious fervour, while Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi (c. 1730-1806) employed around 1784 a subtle philosophical distinction between "particular" versus "universal events" to argue that the Ottomans should secure the former (i.e., muster the means of warfare) to call forth God's help.[107] By 1806, Dihkanizade Kuşmanî, another defender of Selim III's reform, in order to establish his own right to speak, admits that he is only an itinerant dervish, but, on the other hand, even an itinerant dervish is still a Muslim, and all Muslims are similarly responsible for "commanding right and forbidding wrong" (*emr-i ma'ruf ve nehy-i münker*).[108] As put by Virginia Aksan,[109]

---

[105] Cf. Sariyannis, 'Ruler and State', 92-94.

[106] See the full text and literature in A. Akyıldız, 'Sened-i ittifâk'ın tam metni', *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi/Turkish Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2 (1998), 209-222 [and in English translation in A. Akyıldız and M. Ş. Hanioğlu, 'Negotiating the Power of the Sultan: the Ottoman *Sened-i İttifak* (Deed of Agreement), 1808', in C. M. Amin, B. C. Fortna and E. Frierson (eds), *The Modern Middle East: A Sourcebook for History* (Oxford 2006), 22-30], and cf. N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (London 1964), 90-92; M. Ş. Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton and Oxford 2008), 57-58; A. Yaycıoğlu, 'Sened-i ittifak (1808): Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda bir ortaklık ve entegrasyon denemesi', in S. Kenan (ed.), *Nizâm-ı Kâdîm'den Nizâm-ı Cedîd'e: III. Selim ve dönemi* (Istanbul 2010), 667-709 at 700-707; idem, 'Provincial Power-Holders and the Empire in the Late Ottoman World: Conf-

> By pointing to the efficacy of rationalizing warfare, [Ottoman bureaucrats] were suggesting that the outcome of war could be influenced by man, though divine intervention remained the deciding factor. The ideology of the "ever-victorious-frontier" and "the circle of equity" was slowly being replaced with that of service to *din-ü-devlet* on the part of each individual.

If all individuals are responsible, then their unanimity is required. This is how the same principle is expressed in the text of the 'Deed of Alliance':[110]

> …it is manifest that the re-invigoration of religion, the Sublime State, and the whole Muslim community depends upon the sincere unity of and concord among the high officials and ministers… Praise be to God, who strengthened Islam by means of men who acted with one accord and in harmony… It is a self-evident fact that the conquests, victories, glory, and might that [the Sublime State] enjoyed from its early foundation to this very day have been accomplished through union, unity, and the removal of selfishness and strife (*ittihad ü ittifak ve ref'-i nefsaniyet ve şikak ile*)… Hence… we exerted efforts for the re-invigoration of religion and the state, as a single body and in union and concord.

---

lict or Partnership?', in Ch. Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London and New York 2012), 436-452 at 449-450.

[107] Şahin, 'Abdullah Halim Efendi'nin *Seyfü'l-izzet ila hazreti sahibi'd-devlet*'; E. L. Menchinger, 'A Reformist Philosophy of History: the Case of Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi', *OA*, 44 (2014), 141-168.

[108] Ö. İşbilir (ed.), *Nizâm-ı Cedîde dâir bir risâle: Zebîre-i Kuşmânî fî ta'rîf-i nizâm-ı ilhâmî* (Ankara 2006), 14-18. On this traditional Islamic obligation, see M. Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge and New York 2000).

[109] Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing', 63-64; cf. K. Şakul, 'Nizâm-ı Cedid düşüncesinde batılılaşma ve İslami modernleşme', *Dîvân – İlmî Araştırmalar,* 19 (2005), 117-150 at 120. The same emphasis on service to *din-ü-devlet* was repeated in the preambles of the first laws of Selim III, inaugurating the *Nizam-ı Cedid* reforms: see, e.g., Y. Koç and F. Yeşil (eds), *Nizâm-ı Cedîd kanunları* (Ankara 2012), 3.

[110] The translation is from Akyıldız and Hanioğlu, 'Negotiating the Power of the Sultan', 24-25; cf. Akyıldız, 'Sened-i ittifâk'ın tam metni'. On the expression "alliance of the hearts" (*ittifak-ı kulûb*), used in the 'Deed of Alliance' as an alternative of *asabiyyet* see also Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire', 124-125.

Although the word *asabiyyet* does not appear, the Ibn Khaldunist spirit is evident.

This shift of emphasis calls for an interpretation. Given the undoubted rise of nationalisms in the Balkans during the same period, one may wonder whether this late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century emphasis on the superiority of nomadism constitutes a kind of 'Ottoman patriotism'. Scholars and political theorists aside, it seems that a certain emphasis on the glorious nomadic past of the Ottomans came to be dominant towards the late eighteenth century. For instance, let us consider the ceremonial girding of each new Sultan with a sword. Whereas in the seventeenth century the sword had no other specification, with Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703) it began to be designed as the Prophet Muhammad's sword (not surprisingly, given Mustafa's tendency to favour the Sharia rather than the 'secular' *kanun* of the past). By Mustafa IV's accession, in 1807, the sword had become Osman's, i.e., a symbol of nomadic military superiority.[111] On the other hand, one should not think that Ottoman statesmen were taking these allusions to nomadism literally: nobody really ever advocated a dissolution of settled cities or an army constantly on the move. 'Nomadism' mostly had for them the meaning of a general mobilisation (in the form of the age-old *nefir-i âm*)[112] and of an army continuously drilling and training, as opposed to living a luxurious life and to the soldiers mainly being occupied with trade and business or with coffee-house discussions.

Furthermore, it is tempting to see the various stages of Ibn Khaldun's reception in parallel with Ottoman ideas on historical time.[113] As Reinhart Koselleck has suggested, the turmoil of the revolutionary years in Europe (roughly 1750-1850, seen by Koselleck as a *Sattelzeit* or "saddle period") brought the ancient notion of history as *magistra vitae*, 'a teacher of life', to an end. A new temporality began to emerge, one where present choice could not be dictated by the past and where the future was open.[114] Using this analytical tool, Gottfried Hagen and Ethan L. Menchinger recently argued that Ottoman historiography, being a proponent of revelation history, had no place for real historical time and continued to stress the instructive and didactic function of history even well into the nineteenth century.[115] On the other hand, Kâtip Çelebi and Naima's endorsement of Ibn Khaldunist stages (as well as Veysî's anti-declinist discourse) is a continuation of an earlier emphasis on cyclical dynamics (or "dynastic cyclism", as Cornell Fleischer calls it) as a universal pattern, from which the Ottoman state could only escape through a typical exceptionalism.[116] One might remark, however, that Kâtip Çelebi's body metaphor leads him to imply that the death of the Ottoman dynasty would be as sure as the fate of mortals. Indeed, Kâtip Çelebi claimed that the regular time span of a state could only be prolonged (just like the doctor can prolong a patient's life). Naima recognised the last stage of dynasties in his own times, but hoped that the process of decline could be reversed with the help of an interval of peace; Pirizade in his translation stressed the exceptional character of the Ottoman state (which permitted its escaping the 120-year rule), while Dürrî solves the problem by placing the Ottomans still at the middle age of states.

---

[111] N. Vatin and G. Veinstein, *Le Sérail ébranlé. Essai sur les morts, dépositions et avènements des sultans ottomans, XIVe-XIXe siècle* (Paris 2003), 314 (on Mustafa II), 319 (on Mustafa IV). I wish to thank Gottfried Hagen for bringing this point to my attention. From 1730 onwards, new Sultans began to visit the *türbe* of Mehmed II: ibid., 317-319.

[112] It is striking how little we know about this institution of a 'popular militia', raised from among inhabitants of villages and towns under the leadership of local officials in times of emergency in the borderland or against Celali rebels. The procedure is described, e.g., in Silâhdâr Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Silâhdâr Tarihi,* ed. A. Refik, 2 vols (Istanbul 1928), 2:356 [=N. Karaçay Türkal, 'Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, Zeyl-i Fezleke (1065-22 Ca 1106/1654-7 Şubat 1695)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Marmara University, 2012, 1151-1152]. This kind of general call to arms was used as late as in 1828 against Russia: V. Aksan, 'Military Reform and Its Limits in a Shrinking Ottoman World, 1800-1840', in eadem and D. Goffman, *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge 2007), 117-134 at 130. On its beginnings, see M. Tuğluca, 'Osmanlı'da nefîr-i âmm uygulamasının erken dönem örnekleri ve toplumsal dinamizme yansıması', *Belleten,* 80 (2016), 773-796.

[113] I owe this whole paragraph to a comment by Gottfried Hagen.

[114] R. Koselleck, 'Historia magistra vitae: über die Auflösung des Topos im Horizont neuzeitlich bewegter Geschichte' in idem, *Vergangene Zukunft: zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main 1979), 38-66 [tr. by K. Tribe as 'Historia Magistra Vitae: the Dissolution

With the glorification of nomadism by the end of the eighteenth century, however, a return to the origins begins to be considered a potential new start: in Abdullah Halim Efendi's words, the Ottoman Empire could "become fresh and young again" (*tazelenür*), whereas the 'Deed of Alliance' speaks of a "re-invigoration" of society (*ihya-yı din ü devlet*). (A cautionary or, perhaps, corollary, remark: the same sense of re-invigoration through a return to the values of the past is also present in the seventeenth century in both 'declinist' theorists and Kadızadeli Salafists, whom Kâtip Çelebi sought to refute through Ibn Khaldunism). Thus, eventual decline and fall can be avoided and history becomes open-ended. However, if we are to follow Koselleck's model, it still is seen as *magistra vitae*, since it is through repetition of the glorious beginnings that a glorious continuation can be achieved. To use another famous concept of Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte*, Ottoman Ibn Khaldunism was used by Kâtip Çelebi and Naima to widen the 'space of experience', in order to contain their 'horizon of expectation', whereas late eighteenth-century authors and statesmen used the same ideas to widen their 'horizon of expectation', keeping a constant 'space of experience'.[117] In other words, Ibn Khaldunism was used in the first case as a means of interpreting the conceivable future of the Empire by reducing it to

---

of the Topos into the Perspective of a Modernized Historical Process', *Futures Past: on the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York 2004), 26-42].

[115] G. Hagen and E. L. Menchinger, 'Ottoman Historical Thought', in P. Duara, V. Murthy and A. Sartori (eds), *A Companion to Global Historical Thought* (Oxford 2014), 92-106 and esp. 102-104.

[116] Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism'; Hagen and Menchinger, 'Ottoman Historical Thought', 100-101; E. Menchinger, 'Free Will, Predestination, and the Fate of the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 77 (2016), 445-466 and esp. 455-457.

[117] See R. Koselleck, 'Erfahrungsraum und Erwartungshorizont – zwei historische Kategorien', in idem, *Vergangene Zukunft*, 349-375 (tr. by K. Tribe as ''Space of Experience' and 'Horizon of Expectation': Two Historical Categories' in *Futures Past*, 255-275); on the application of these concepts in the Ottoman case, cf. Hagen and Menchinger, 'Ottoman Historical Thought', 95-96.

a universal phenomenon, whereas the social engineering efforts of the second case tried to bring about a new future, by referring to this same and known past. The concept of 'change' may have been well introduced by the end of the seventeenth century, but that of 'progress' did not appear till well into the nineteenth.[118]

---

[118] On the other hand, one could argue that the way political thinkers of the eighteenth century tried to advocate Westernising reforms by referring to steps of reciprocity and mutual imitation (the concept known as *mukabele bi'l-misl*) implies a sense of 'progress'. See U. Heyd, 'The Ottoman 'Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II', in idem, *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization. Scripta Hierosolymitana*, 9 (1961), 63-96 at 74-77; A. Özel, 'İslam hukuku ve modern devletler hukukunda mukabele bilmisl / misilleme / karşılıklılık', *İslam Hukuku Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5 (2005), 49-66; Şakul, 'Nizâm-ı Cedid düşüncesinde batılılaşma', 118-121; E. L. Menchinger, 'An Ottoman Historian in an Age of Reform: Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi (ca. 1730-1806)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2014, 225-233 and 242-260; Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought*, Chapter IX. On the genesis and development of the concept of progress in the Tanzimat and post-Tanzimat periods, see Wigen, 'Interlingual and International Relations', 123-126.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS MODEL LEADER - OTTOMAN READINGS OF THE TREATY OF AL-HUDAYBIYYA

Gottfried HAGEN[*]

Framework: The Prophet as model in government

THAT EMULATION OF THE ACTIONS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD is a central tenet of Muslim piety is a truism, yet it is worthwhile to remember that it emerged not through an inherent logic of the revelation, nor naturally from an innate sense of sacred memory, but as the result of specific political decisions in specific socio-political circumstances. Far from being limited to acts of worship proper, seeking guidance from the model of the Prophet came to include all acts of life, without a boundary that would separate the realm of the sacred from a 'secular' area. Islamic scholars devised an elaborate hermeneutical procedure to determine which actions of the Prophet were to be taken as model, and how to follow them.[1] This procedure assumes that the Prophet's saintly rank implies that in any question of life, his way of acting is the one that is most likely to please God, and as such will lead to salvation.

However, while almost any aspect of regular life came to be guided by the Prophet as a saintly model for emulation, his role as political and military leader received comparatively little attention. The first narratives of his life in Islamic literature (*sīra*) naturally include his accomplishments as founder and leader of the community of believers, but this aspect is subsequently eclipsed in the primarily 'devotional' *sīra* literature of the pre-modern period.[2] Once the Abbasids were firmly established, and their rivalry with the Umayyads over the legitimate succession to the Prophet faded into the past, interest

---

[*] University of Michigan.

[1] A very useful overview is R. Gleave, 'Personal piety', in *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad*, ed. J. Brockopp (Cambridge 2010), 108-117.

[2] The foundational narratives of *sīra* are those by Ibn Ishaq (d. 767) as transmitted by Ibn Hisham (d. 833), al-Waqidi (d. 822), al-Tabari (d. 923), Ibn Saʿd (d. 845), and al-Baladhuri (d. c. 892), on all of whom see T. Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad: Narratives of the Prophet in Islam across the Centuries* (New York 2009), 57-103. The term 'devotional *sīra*' is from Ch. F. Robinson, *Islamic historiography* (Cambridge and New York 2003), 65. On the later developments crucial for our argument see T. Nagel, *Allahs Liebling. Ursprung und Erscheinungsformen des Mohammedglaubens* (Munich 2008), 199-229 and *passim*.

in the military exploits of the Prophet typically flourished mostly near the frontiers.[3] At the same time, the emerging sunna-hadith literature with its pronounced ahistorical agenda foregrounded very different themes, such as the establishing of legal and moral norms from the actions of the Prophet, and his elevation to a cosmic principle from which creation and salvation equally flowed. Thus, in the later *sīra* literature, the account of the Prophet's military career was often relegated to a catalog of raids, or broken down further into episodes that primarily served as arguments in legal disputes.[4]

Leadership of the community became a matter of revelation or inspired acts of model character which inculcated piety, but not political thinking. The 'umma document' of 622, which under the label of 'Constitution of Medina' is often touted in modern discourse as a cornerstone of Muhammad's statesmanship, is hardly mentioned after Ibn Ishaq.[5] Historians in turn had different reasons for focusing on the salvific aspect of Muhammad's career as the culmination of revelation history, but they also ended up reporting his military exploits more as a matter of record than as exemplary leadership. Historiography as a resource for the guidance of the political and administrative elite flourished in the Islamic Empire and its successor states, but, in the words of Chase Robinson, "even the most deeply pious might concede that Muhammad's sunna - his model way of doing things, enshrined in the hadith - had little specific to teach men in power about creating or maintaining a polity and social order".[6] The theological reasons for why the political leadership of the Prophet was not suitable as a historical object lesson in the same way as that of other kings were put forward by medieval historian-philosopher Ibn Miskawayh (d. 1030):

> We had made it a condition at the very beginning of this work that we would only include such narratives as may hold a valuable stratagem for the future or a cunning trick that took place in wartime or elsewhere, so that it may be something to ponder and learn from for one who undertakes anything similar in the future. (…) For this reason, we have omitted to mention most of the Prophet's *Maghazi* since they all took place through divine success and support combined with abasement of his enemies. But no experience can be usefully deduced from this, nor any cunning trick or any human stratagem.[7]

Ibn Miskawayh's history is titled *Tajārub al-umam*, The Experiences of Nations, indicating that for him history is a repertoire of exemplary tales. What he has articulated here is implicitly true for many other writers in his genre: that the person of the Prophet is essentially a manifestation of the extra-temporal, albeit within the chronology of history, but without an inherent relation to it.[8] There is a yet little understood process which leads from the treatment of Muhammad's life as extraneous to history, and as tangentially relevant at best to the ultimately didactic and political goals of historiography, to his depiction as first and foremost a political agent in a specific historical context, as he is seen in modern Muslim and non-Muslim historiography. This is, to a large degree, because the production from the Ottoman period is often neglected by scholars focused on Arabic texts.[9]

---

[3] Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 122.

[4] Nagel, *Allahs Liebling* specifically cites Ibn al-Jawzi and al-Maqrizi in this regard (loc. cit.).

[5] On it see M. Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina': Muhammad's First Legal Document* (Princeton 2004).

[6] Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 115. It is no surprise, then, that the historical reference point for the wars of memory in the Abbasid period, the harnessing of historical arguments for political disputes, was primarily the Rightly Guided Caliphs, rather than the Prophet himself; see T. el-Hibri, *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History. The Rashidun Caliphs* (New York 2010).

[7] From *Tajārub al-umam*, translated in Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad*, 300.

It is with this background in mind that I am approaching references to the Prophet Muhammad as a political figure and model in Ottoman letters, asking where and how Ottoman writers would feel compelled to draw on his political and military actions in order to explain or justify decisions by their own political leadership, and how they would navigate the concomitant moral and legal claims and the theological pitfalls of pious emulation. The Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century consciously identified as a Sunni polity, based both on a set of imperial institutions of Islamic learning and on a mature historical consciousness that placed the Ottoman polity squarely in a long tradition of Sunni statehood. It is well known that Ottoman scholars developed a theory of the Caliphate being passed on to the House of Osman. The chancellor Feridun Ahmed Beg (d. 1583) opened his model collection of Ottoman state correspondence with the letters sent by the Prophet Muhammad to leaders of foreign states, as a token of continuity from his days to the Ottomans.[10] While the dynasty engaged in the establishment of a state-sponsored legal school, the persecution of Shiites under Ottoman rule was a hallmark of the sixteenth century.[11] All these observations have given rise to the concept of Sunnitization, suggesting that the orientation towards the model set by the Prophet was essential to the Ottoman self-image.[12]

---

[8] The contrast between the extra-temporal and the historical is a main theme in Nagel*, Allahs Liebling*.

[9] Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad*, 241-297 highlights the contrast but offers very little explanation. Similarly, Thomas Bauer's valuable study of Islamic cultural and intellectual history: *Die Kultur der Ambiguität. Eine andere Geschichte des Islams* (Berlin 2011), contrasts a pre-modern culture with a modern one produced by the encounter with Western colonialism, but unfortunately skips the history between 1500 and colonialism, in which indigenous transformations also occurred alongside exogenous change.

[10] Ahmed Feridun Beg, *Münşeat-ı selâtin* (Bulaq 1274), I:30-35; see also D. J. Kastritsis, 'Ferīdūn Beg's Münşeʾātü 's-Selāṭīn ('Correspondence of Sultans') and Late Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Views of the Political World', in *Imperial Geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman Space*, ed. S. Bazzaz, Y. Batsaki, and D. Angelov (Cambridge MA and London 2013).

[11] M. Dressler, 'Inventing orthodoxy: Competing claims for authority and legitimacy in the Ottoman-Safavid conflict', in *Legitimizing the Order: Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. H. Karateke and M. Reinkowski (Leiden 2005); N. Al-Tikriti, 'Kalam in the service of the state: Apostasy and the defining of Ottoman Islamic identity', in *Legitimizing the Order: Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. H. Karateke and M. Reinkowski (Leiden 2005); G. Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2015).

[12] D. Terzioğlu, 'How to conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization: a historiographical discussion', *Turcica*, 44 (2013) with further references concerning the state of the debate.

It is often assumed that the model set by the Prophet has, in one way or another, a determining influence on the decisions Muslims make regarding their lives, but strikingly, the rich genre of Ottoman advice literature, as far as I can see, does not typically reference conduct of the Prophet as leader of the community as a model for Ottoman rulers and administrators. Does that mean, however, that Ibn Miskawayh's reasoning has been adopted consistently (if implicitly), and that Ottoman thinkers have insulated the Prophet from historical contingency? If that is the case, what is the significance of the prominent instances where Ottoman writers explicitly constructed historical-political arguments on episodes from the Prophet Muhammad's political and military leadership of the community of Believers? Are there indications that Ottoman writers – as might easily be assumed – also in other ways inserted their 'presentist' concerns into their representations of the Prophet's life? In either instance and either genre, such references are bound to raise a host of philosophical questions for the pious. If authors agree with Ibn Miskawayh that the Prophet stands outside the regularities of historical experience, what is the effect of emulating his actions? Is this emulation beneficial because his actions were rational, or because the follower will receive a divine reward for his piety? Is there a method by means of which such lessons can be deduced?

The questions pursued here, then, seek to contribute to the nascent study of Ottoman political theology, a term by which I mean the way in which theological thinking applies to political matters, or in which political matters are expressed in theological, or more generally, religious terms. Ottoman political theology manifests itself in discussions as to whether and how the Divine intervenes in historical matters, and in which way the historical – always understood as the political – acquires its meaning through theological interpretation.[13] Ottoman dynastic history, for instance, was clearly written with an idea of 'manifest destiny' in mind, encapsulated in Osman's providential dream, and more than one Sultan imagined himself as surrounded by an aura of sanctity.[14] In short, the concept of political theology, in addition to the legal and pious aspects of Ottoman Islam, has much potential to provide new insights into and connections between hitherto separate historiographical problems.[15]

At the core of my investigation are two famous references to the same episode of the Prophet's political and military career - the expedition to Mecca which resulted in the

---

[13] See G. Hagen, 'Salvation and Suffering in Ottoman Stories of the Prophets', *Mizan*, 2 (2017): http://www.mizanproject.org/journal-post/salvation-and-suffering-in-ottoman-stories-of-the-Prophets/.

[14] G. Hagen, 'Dreaming Osmans: Of History and Meaning', in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. A. Knysh and Ö. Felek (Albany 2012); C. Fleischer, 'The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleymân', in *Soliman le magnifique et son temps*, ed. G. Veinstein (Paris 1992). There are many more examples.

[15] My exploration owes much to my numerous conversations with Ethan Menchinger, whose study of Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi (d. 1806) could not be consulted in time for this study, but will add much to this discussion: E. L. Menchinger, *The First of the Modern Ottomans* (Cambridge 2017).

Treaty of al-Hudaybiyya[16] in the year 6 after the Hijra: the first is Peçevî's (d. c. 1649/50) account of a fatwa obtained by Selim II in anticipation of the conquest of Cyprus in 1570, the second is Naima's (d. 1716) famous introduction to his chronicle, in which he uses the Hudaybiyya episode to justify the peace treaty of Karlovitz in 1699.[17] These two instances stand out as truly exceptional among the canonical Ottoman historical literature. I am not aware of others, although a systematic parsing of texts remains to be conducted. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this paper, these two instances are also sufficiently different to make a larger point, especially when contextualized not only in their respective socio-political settings, but also in regard to the wider literature about the life of the Prophet, which implicitly or explicitly served as the source of information.

The Case: al-Hudaybiyya

In the sixth year after his emigration to Yathrib, the Prophet Muhammad spontaneously decided to make a "lesser pilgrimage (*ʿumra*)" to the Kaʿba in Mecca, setting in motion a chain of events which included dramatic setbacks, but ultimately led to the surrender of Mecca to the triumphant Believers.[18] The pivotal moment in this chain of events was the peace agreement concluded between Believers and Meccans at a locality not far from Mecca, known as al-Hudaybiyya. Since the story is complicated, a detailed summary based on the classical sources is in order.[19]

Approaching Mecca with a large group of followers and sacrificial animals, but only lightly armed, the Believers soon found their path blocked by superior forces from the Quraysh, until they were shown secret passages to al-Hudaybiyya, where they camped. That the Prophet's camel here stopped in its tracks and refused to move further was understood as a sign from God; another miracle expanded the available water so that every Believer could quench his thirst.[20] Several envoys from Mecca arrived at the camp, to learn that the Believers were only seeking to perform the pilgrimage, but were not intending to fight. Upon their return to Mecca the envoys also conveyed to the Quraysh the degree of dedication to the Prophet that they had observed among the Believers. At one point, Uthman b. Affan, Muhammad's father-in-law, was sent to the city to negotiate with the Quraysh; when he was held back rumors spread among the Believers that he had been killed. In the midst of this drama, afraid of an attack by the superior Quraysh, the Believers gathered under a tree to swear an oath of allegiance (*bayʿat al-riḍwān*) to the faith and the Prophet. Ultimately, however, the Quraysh chose to negotiate, and agreed to a ten-year truce stipulating that the Believers would retreat this time, but would be allowed to perform the pilgrimage the following year. For the Believers, this was half a victory at best; additional stipulations about alliances with the other tribes, and about the return of converts to their communities blatantly disadvantaged them. Moreover, the Quraysh humiliated them in the process of drafting the written agreement by rejecting the *basmala* formula in the opening along with the identification of Muhammad as 'messenger of Allah as contrary to their belief and hence inappropriate in a treaty between equals. For Umar, the humiliation was so deep that it led him doubt the justness of Muhammad's cause. That Muhammad, complying with the agreement he had just signed, promptly handed a convert who had escaped from Mecca back over to his pagan father, although the latter had tortured the young man, shook the community's confidence in his wisdom to the core. The emerging crisis of legitimacy came to a head when after all this the Believers ignored the Prophet's command to shave their heads and perform the sacrifice, a moment close to a silent mutiny which was only overcome when Muhammad's wife Umm Salama advised him to go ahead with the sacrifice, rightly predicting that the community would follow his example. After the sacrifice, the Believers returned to Medina.

---

[16] In the interests of consistency, I continue to render the names of the Arab protagonists in their Arabic, rather than Ottoman, form.

[17] I am indebted to Baki Tezcan, who drew my attention to the first instance, while my presentation during the Halcyon Days was focused on the second.

[18] The term is taken from F. McGraw Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers* (Cambridge MA 2010).

[19] Needless to say, this does not imply any statement about the factuality or veracity of this narrative, which is besides the point for our purposes.

[20] The behavior of the camel is compared by the sources to that of the elephant of Abraha, the subject of Sura 105 al-Fīl.

Ultimately, however, the truce allowed the Believers to refocus their military efforts on the fortress of Khaybar, which they took in the following year. In the year 8, a long-standing feud between the tribes of Khuzaʿa and Banu Bakr, allied with Believers and Quraysh respectively, flared up again, and the fact that a few Quraysh joined the fray on the side of Bakr, leaving several men of Khuzaʿa dead, was enough of a pretext for the Believers to declare the truce broken. However, in the two years since al-Hudaybiyya, the balance of power had shifted decisively, so that the Quraysh found no way to either restore the truce or mount a defense, and ultimately had to surrender Mecca to Muhammad and his followers.

All early Islamic sources struggle with the hermeneutical challenge of integrating this episode into Islamic salvation history.[21] Other military events had a clear message: the victory at Badr (year 2) appears as a miraculous escape from what looked like certain defeat, and legends of angels fighting with the Believers abound. By contrast, the catastrophe at Uḥud the following year is typically framed as a cautionary tale against greed for booty, and a call for unity. Al-Hudaybiyya was more difficult. Miracle stories integrated into the narrative indicate that everything occurred with divine blessing: Sura 48 Al-Fatḥ (The Victory) is typically associated with this event. One interpretive strategy is to present the events at al-Hudaybiyya as a moral victory that distinguishes true believers from infidels, culminating in the oath under the tree; the other sees the retreat simply as a strategic detour to imminent victory in the form of the conquests of Khaybar and Mecca. Such efforts, however, do not easily resolve the profound inherent tensions in the story, dealing with reversals of fortune, doubt, suffering, and redemption. Thus it lends itself to radically different narrations, depending on whether the focus is on divine pre-ordainment, prophetic foreknowledge, or Muhammad's diplomatic farsightedness, not to mention aspects of individual or communal piety.

---

[21] Ibn Ishaq provided most of the material for al-Tabari, while the most detailed account is to be found in al-Waqidi. These are accessible in English translation: A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad. A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (Oxford 1955), 499-508; *The History of al-Ṭabarī. Vol. VIII: The Victory of Islam*, trans. M. Fischbein (Albany 1997), 67-91; R. Faizer, *The Life of Muhammad. Al-Waqidi's Kitab al-Maghazi* (London 2010), 280-311.

In the sections which follow, I will discuss crucial motifs of the story that lend themselves to moral and political interpretations, and I will highlight the various exegetical strategies apparent in Ottoman versions of the text, in order to provide the backdrop against which the political interpretations are deployed. It is important to point out, however, that Ottoman authors of *sīra* texts tend to preserve much more of the multilayered character of the narrative in the classical sources.[22]

Lessons for the Subjects: Obedience, Trust, and Piety

The contrast between the infidel Quraysh and the piety of Muhammad's followers supplies an initial object lesson. Mustafa Darir, writing late in the fourteenth century, excoriates the stubbornness and blindness of the Quraysh that led them to reject Muhammad's message.[23] By contrast, the dedication of the Believers is expressed in their eagerness to hold on to body parts of the Prophet, such as hair from his head or beard, or to imbibe water he had used for ablution, etc. Many Ottoman authors pick up on the theme, which illustrates the importance they attribute to unconditional obedience and reverence for the Prophet. The classical sources have a member of the Quraysh report these acts to his fellow-tribesmen, stating that this level of dedication exceeds anything he had seen at the imperial courts of Byzantium, Iran, and Ethiopia.[24] None of the Ottomans, however, seems to be particularly interested in the fact that these comparisons put the Prophet on the same level as the emperors of the time. Instead, they see a sign of spiritual commitment to a prophet as a model saint. This saint demonstrates his power by a series of miracles, primarily those that remedy suffering or the needs of his followers. As will be recalled, the miracles in question have no bearing on the political-military dimension of the story, but they leave no doubt that here as everywhere else the Prophet was acting with divine approval.[25]

---

[22] Even they, however, tend to filter out details which serve, for instance, either genealogical agendas or as precedents for legal or ritual rules.

[23] On him and the other texts discussed in this chapter see my overview of Ottoman *sīra* literature: G. Hagen, 'Sira, Ottoman Turkish', in *Muhammad in History, Thought, and Culture. An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God*, ed. C. Fitzpatrick and A. H. Walker (Santa Barbara 2014). In the absence of a critical edition, I am here relying on the modern Turkish version by Gürtunca, which however preserves fairly well the critical interpretive poems, Darir's most original contribution to what is otherwise often a translation of an older Arabic text: Mustafa Darir, *Kitab-i Siyer-i Nebi*, ed. M. F. Gürtunca (Istanbul 1995). The poems are edited on the basis of manuscripts by E. Egüz, 'Erzurumlu Mustafa Darîr'in Sîretü'n-Nebî'sindeki Türkçe Manzumeler (İnceleme-Metin)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, T.C. İstanbul Ūniversitesi, 2013.

[24] E.g., Waqidi 294, repeated in the world history of Müneccimbaşı (Ahmed b. Lütfullah Müneccimbaşı, *Sahaifü'l-ahbar* (Istanbul H.1285/1868), I:183-184), a context strongly focused on the military aspect of the episode, but in the absence of any exegetical intervention by the author, it is hard to claim that this specific motive should be read as exclusively political.

For Darir, devotion to the Prophet is paramount, meaning not only recognizing him with the 'inner eye' of gnosis, but trusting in the superior wisdom of his actions, in contrast with the blindness of the Quraysh (III:431). Blindness befalls not only infidels, but also believers, including some with the strongest hearts. This is true despite the 'oath of allegiance' that the Believers have sworn to Muhammad under the tree (*bayʿat al-riḍwān*). Taking a cue from ʿUmar's doubting of Muhammad's wisdom and authority, Darir expounds how the true benefit of a situation (in this case, the actions of God through his messenger) is hidden, so that man is bound to mistake good for evil, and evil for good. Confidence in God and abstention from scrutiny is the only path open to the inadequate intellect, which resembles the blindness of the author (Darir, in Turkish rendered as *gözsüz*, meaning blind; III:452-453). That every action of the Prophet in this episode, as everywhere else, was divinely inspired and thus beyond question and reproach, ultimately renders the 'political' dimension of the story moot. Darir *de facto* insulates this episode against attempts to learn from Muhammad by showing that scrutinizing the Prophet's actions is not helpful for the enlightenment of the believer, but an act of impiety. As a whole, however, the paucity of commenting poetry in this section, which closely follows the account of Ibn Isḥāq, indicates that the episode was not of major interest for Darir.

Yusuf Nabî's (1642-1712) continuation of Veysî's (d. 1628) fragmentary biography of the Prophet, *Dürretüʾt-tac*, The Crown-Jewel, takes the same motif in a different direction. Both Veysî's and Nabî's works breath the same mystical spirit, written in the most elaborate *inşā* prose, cloaking every event in an aura of a mythical *tempus illud*.[26] Absent interpretive poems in the style of Darir, it is almost impossible to pinpoint specific elements of particular interest to Nabî in the Hudaybiyya narrative, but clearly he too is drawn to the dramatic features of the story, the tension in the confrontation of Believers and the Quraysh, and the struggle of the Believers with the apparent humiliation in the negotiations over the treaty text and the subsequent return of a Believer to his Meccan tormentors. The emotional turmoil which culminated in Umar's outcry "Aren't you the true Prophet, aren't we right, and aren't our enemies wrong?" (*a-lasta nabiya llāhi ḥaqqan wa-lasnā ʿalā l-ḥaqq wa-aduwwunā ʿalā l-bāṭil*) resonates with Nabî's anxieties about spiritual fulfillment and his individualistic quest for truth in personal life.[27] At the same time, by narrating the divine signs along the way, Nabî leaves no doubt that

---

[25] E.g., Lamiî Çelebi, *Şevahid-i nübüvve* (Istanbul H.1293/1876), III:41-43. As the title of his work indicates, Lamiî (d. 1532) selects only miracles as proof of prophethood from the material.

[26] Yusuf Nabî, *Zeyi-i siyer-i nebevî [Zeyl-i siyer-i Veysî]* (Bulaq 1240). Nabî's work is the first original Ottoman work of the genre to include this episode, all other works in Ottoman Turkish being translations from Arabic or Persian.

[27] On Nabî's worldview see M. Mengi, *Divan şiirinde hikemî tarzın büyük temsilcisi Nâbî* (Ankara 1991), especially 113-129.

God was guiding the Prophet and the community in this endeavor.[28] Given his skepticism vis-à-vis political power and state offices, as expressed in his poem of advice to his young son (*Hayriye*), it is not surprising that he, like his predecessors, makes no perceivable attempt to explore the potential political implications of a story of blind surrender to the authority a charismatic political-military leader. While Nabî, in an Ode to Peace (*Sulhiye*), celebrated the peace treaty of Karlowitz, which is the focus of Naima's use of al-Hudaybiyya, he does not mention the Prophet in it.[29]

Darir, Nabî, and many other Ottoman authors asked their audiences to adopt the perspective of the Believers: their situation is comparable to Umar and the others who struggled to accept the concessions made to the pagans and the appearance of weakness of the Believers. Like followers of a Sufi sheikh, but also of any pre-modern ruler, they should not think of themselves as having either the permission or the capability to challenge an inspired authority. We see that the pious can derive lessons from the *sīra* which go beyond questions of emulating the Prophet, as we had assumed before. While the identification with the perspective of the companions is present in many accounts, it is increasingly eclipsed in later accounts, especially by a direct identification with the key decision-maker and his political calculations.

Imagining Diplomacy

That parsing this episode (or any other in the *sīra* in general) in search of a model in the pursuit of military or political success was even a desirable way of reading *sīra* in the early modern period is far from clear. In the sixteenth century, Lamiî offered a poignant message: when Ali objects to the Meccan envoy's demands to remove Muhammad's name from the treaty document, Muhammad enjoins him to comply by pointing out that he, Ali, will be in the same situation after the battle of Siffin (657 CE), when Caliph Muʿawiya refused to recognize Ali as Commander of the Believers (*amīr al-muʾminīn*). Rightful claims to power, Ali has to learn, may have to cede to force, as political power is transient and treacherous.[30]

The historian Müneccimbaşı (d. 1702) adopted a different strategy in taking the political edge off the events of the Prophet's life. Rather than replicating a coherent narrative of the period within his world history, he chose to break it down according to a number of categories, among which raids and war constitute only one. The bare-bones outline of essential facts containing no trace of the drama and no moral lesson may have functioned primarily as a mnemonic device to help an educated reader to recall a more detailed narrative from a more detailed *sīra* source. It is in fact as if Müneccimbaşı was doing only the minimum because he was aware of Ibn Miskawayh's argument above - or had come to a similar conclusion, which however he does not articulate explicitly.[31]

---

[28] Nabî, *Zeyl*, 133; the Prophet's camel is compared to the elephant of Abraha.

[29] Nabî's politics are discussed by H. Yorulmaz, *Dîvân edebiyatında Nâbî ekolü. Eski şiirde hikemiyat* (Istanbul 1996), 295-344. On his *Hayriye* see M. Kaplan, *Hayriyye-i Nâbî* (Ankara 2008), on his Ode to Peace see M. Kaplan, 'Bir Şairin Barışa Teşekkürü. Nâbî'nin Sulhiyye Kasidesi' http://mahmutkaplan1.tripod.com/sulhiyye_kasidesi.htm and Bayram Rahimguliyev, 'Osmanlı Edebiyatında Dönüşümün Şiiri: Sulhiyyeler', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Bilkent Universitesi, 2007.

[30] Lamiî Çelebi, *Şevahid*, III:42; the same story also in Nabî, *Zeyl*, 144, and others.

One of the key motifs of the narratives is the issue of negotiation, making concessions in order to obtain a larger good which is not accessible otherwise, possibly creating dilemmas for the negotiator. What then was the greater good Ottoman authors saw the Prophet obtaining? In the war-torn and war-weary seventeenth century, peace might have been such a good, and we saw that Nabî wrote in praise of peace after 1699, but his *sīra* was written much earlier, even before the disastrous Ottoman campaign of 1683. Nabî devotes a great deal of language to the conclusion of a peace treaty, but the fact that he elsewhere also celebrates the Prophet's victories on the battlefield should warn the selective reader against declaring Nabî a pacifist. Rather, the notion of peace has a strong interior dimension, as a personal and individual experience, and the fact that this peace was the result of a military endeavor (*gazve-i sulhengiz-i Hudeybiye*) was not lost on him. Still, in assuming primarily the perspective of the believer, and resisting presentist referents in its wealth of metaphorical language, this version, too, eschews the potential political dimension.

The reluctance to read the *sīra* through contemporary experiences and explain it in presentist terms fades in the course of the eighteenth century, changing the interest in the negotiation process at al-Hudaybiyya, and shifting the identification of the reader from the community of Believers to the Prophet himself. One example is the narrative commentary on a mnemonic poem about the Prophet's life which was presented to Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807) by the philologist and translator Âsım Efendi, known as Mütercim Âsım (d. 1819). Every line of the original poem (by Ibrahim b. Mustafa al-Halabī) corresponds to one year in the life of the Prophet, enumerating the important events, which are then elaborated on in Âsım's commentary. Taking many cues from Nabî, Âsım maintains the moralistic contrast between the depravity of the Quraysh and the devotion of the Believers, and the miraculous events (although without comment), but, in comparison with his predecessors, downplays the humiliating aspects of the negotiations with the Quraysh. More importantly, Âsım expands his poetic vocabulary by introducing the language of diplomacy into his description of the negotiations. While still couched in high poetic style, these terms may be a reflection of his own experience in this realm, as well as in his other profession as official historian.[32] This nascent realism points to an increasing tendency to normalize the person of the Prophet in a larger history, by describing him and his context in concepts familiar to the readership from their own experiences.

This trend towards historicization is on full display in the last Ottoman classic of the genre, Cevdet Pasha's (1823-1895) *Kısasü'l-enbiya*.[33] On the one hand, Cevdet abandons the refinements of Ottoman artistic prose for a distinctly popular tone; on the other hand, he clearly wants his readers to understand the rise of Islam through contemporary concepts, in other words, he brings the narrative into the present, and in the most blatant way by referring to the Believers as an “imperial army” (*ordu-yi hümayun*, 345). As part of the new realism, Cevdet regularly intersperses the original narrative, believed to largely derive from Ibn Kathir, with explanations of the local conditions the Prophet as the crucial decision-maker was facing, illustrating the constraints and exigencies of the moment which made the truce a necessity. For Cevdet, even the most problematic concessions resulted from necessity, as Muhammad lacked the power to force a different outcome (*çaresiz*). The truce thus appears as appropriate (*mukteza-yı akl u hikmet*, 355).

---

[31] Müneccimbaşı, *Sahaifü'l-ahbar*, I:183-185.

[32] Ahmed (Mütercim) Âsım, *Tercüme-i Siyer-i Halebi* (Cairo H.1249/1833), 183-194.

[33] Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Kısas-ı enbiya ve tevarih-i hulefa* (Istanbul H.1291/1874).

At this point, we can state that Ottoman *sīra* literature furnishes multiple lessons from the al-Hudaybiyya episode, but these lessons are initially more concerned with morality and personal piety than with imagining the political quandary of the expedition. While later accounts clearly take more interest in a historical contextualization of the story, casting the Prophet as a political and military leader, none of them appears to draw any direct connections between current or recent history and the events of the *sīra*. That they make this connection explicitly and directly, while drawing on the large pool of *sīra* tradition, including texts discussed above, is what makes the two instances to which we turn now so remarkable.

Pushing for War

According to the chronicler İbrahim Peçevî (d. 1649?), in H.978/1570, the peace treaty with Venice was frequently disrupted by pirates based in Cyprus who harassed travelers and merchants between Constantinople and Cairo, until the Sultan felt it behooved him and his honor to launch a campaign against them (*gayret ve namus-ı padişahî muktezasınca*). In presenting the problem in this way, Peçevî seems to make a case that the Venetians in Cyprus were the ones in violation of the treaty, which technically would have been a *casus belli* in itself. The Sultan did, however, also request a fatwa from the *şeyhülislam*, Ebussuud, which Peçevî quotes in full, out of reverence (*teberrüken ve teyemmünen*), pointing to the unusual process. The fatwa sets up a legal case for war by pointing to previous Muslim sovereignty over the island:[34]

> The matter is as follows: A land has previously been a part of the Abode of Islam (*darü'l-islâm*), but was occupied by the abject infidels, who destroyed its colleges and mosques (*medaris ve mesacid*) and left them vacant, and filled its pulpits and galleries with infidelity and error, and intended to insult the religion of Islam with all kinds of vile deeds, and display their ugly attitudes to the entire world. If [then] the Sultan, Refuge of Religion, in accordance with his zeal for Islam, sets out and makes an effort to take the aforementioned lands from the infidels

---

[34] Ibrahim Peçevî, *Tarih-i Peçevî* ([İstanbul] H.1283/1866), I:486-487; the fatwa is also included in the collections of Ebussuud's fatwas: M. E. Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislâm Ebussu'ûd Efendi'nin fetvalarına göre Kanunî devrinde Osmanlı hayatı: fetâvâ-yı Ebussu'ûd Efendi* (Istanbul 1998), #478. My translation follows the text more closely than Imber's (C. Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud: the Islamic Legal Tradition* (Edinburgh 1997), 84-85); partial translation also in V. L. Ménage, ‘The English capitulation of 1580: A review article’, *IJMES* 12, (1980), 378.

> to include it in the Abode of Islam, and if, when a peace treaty was concluded regarding other lands in the hand of these infidels, and the aforementioned land was included in the treaty (*ahdname*) given to them, is there an impediment according to the Pure Sheriat against intending to break that treaty?
>
> Answer: There is no possibility that there would ever be an impediment. That the Sultan of Islam - may God exalt his victories - would conclude a peace with the infidels is legal if there is a benefit for all Muslims, and if there is no benefit the peace is never legal. Once a benefit has been observed and peace[35] has been concluded for a limited time or indefinitely, if in a propitious moment breaking it appears more beneficial, then breaking it is definitely mandatory and necessary. The Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and give him peace) in the sixth year of the Hijra concluded a treaty with the infidels of Mecca for ten years, and Ali (may God ennoble his face) wrote a treaty document that was corroborated, but after the peace treaty was confirmed, a year later it appeared to be more beneficial to break it. So in the eighth year of the Hijra [the Prophet] attacked them, and conquered the Mighty City of Mecca. His Excellency the Caliph of the Lord of All Mankind (may God make his shadow over all the [groups of] Muslims everlasting, and may he aid him with blessed assistance and clear victory) has in his imperial determination taken guidance from the noble Sunna of the His Highness the Refuge of Prophethood (may God bless him and give him peace),[36] which will result in clear victory, with the support of God the King and Helper.

As Ménage and Imber have pointed out, Ebussuud in his response did not engage the argument of hostile acts perpetrated by forces based on the island, or the notion of actions against Islam, two lines of reasoning presented by the questioner, and clearly sufficient as a *casus belli*. Instead he went much further and asserted not only a general right but an obligation for the Sultan to break any peace treaty if the moment was considered opportune. As Imber states, this does no more than affirm the general Hanafi legal position.[37] It is noteworthy that Ebussuud so strongly highlights the validity of the original document, written by Ali, and confirmed again, because in his reasoning the matter is not that the treaty might not have been formally correct; instead, highlighting the correct procedure (in the language of diplomacy), he makes the argument of the Prophet's prerogative to break it even stronger. By extension, the Ottoman Sultan as Caliph would enjoy the same prerogative to break treaties even when they were correctly enacted and valid.

Up to this point, we are dealing with a strictly legal argument: the legitimacy of a specific practice can be ascertained by pointing to a precedent in the practice of the Prophet. The fundamental principle of deriving law from the practice of the Prophet is of course that this Prophetic practice is exemplary, even binding, because it is based on divine inspiration and guidance - in other words, the model is authoritative exactly because it is outside the realm of human insight and capability. But Ebussuud does more: in a concluding phrase he makes it clear that following the Prophet is not only righteous but efficacious: it will lead to "obvious victory with the support of God the King and

---

[35] Peçevî om.

[36] Peçevî's rendering ends here with the formula 'written by the poor Ebussuud' (*ketebehü'l-fakir Ebussuud*, 487).

[37] Imber, *Ebu's-su'ud: the Islamic Legal Tradition*, 84-85.

Helper” (*müstetbi-i feth-i mübindur bi-inayetillâhi’l-meliki’l-muin*).[38] What is this promise of a successful outcome based on? Is Ebussuud suggesting a historical analogy, just as the Prophet’s breaking of the peace treaty led to the conquest of Mecca (by giving him leeway to deal with the Arabian tribes and the Jews of Khaybar), so the breaking of this treaty will also result in a victory for Islam, now in this situation for the Ottomans?[39] This would be a more or less secular understanding of historical causality, but we have reason to believe that the causality attributed to the acts of the Prophet and the Caliphs would be different from the kind of cause and effect that kings were looking for in historiography, which, as argued previously, at one level functions as a repertoire of just this kind of tale, so that kings could calibrate their decisions accordingly. Instead, Ebussuud predicts that the Caliph would be rewarded with victory because God would come to his succor, just as he had, in his wisdom, steered the Prophet through the seeming defeat to the triumphal conquests of Khaybar and Mecca. This is evident from the pointed way in which Ebussuud highlights that the Sultan is in fact the Caliph, and is emulating the Prophet. Moreover, he promises not simply victory, but “clear victory” (*fetḥün mubīn*), using a Qur’anic phrase from Sura 48 The Victory, a sura directly related in the *sīra* tradition to the raid on al-Hudaybiyya. While the classical tradition and Qur’anic exegesis, including Ebussuud’s own *tafsīr*, have kept this idea of victory wide open to multiple interpretations, the context of the fatwa clearly speaks of military victory.[40]

There is a risk of over-interpreting this brief section, and making theological distinctions where for an Ottoman reader the meaning is unified and self-evident. At the very least, however, these last words of the fatwa blur the difference between an ahistorical legal precedent and political advice based on historical, and hence contingent, experience.[41] The Sultan is not simply a human being seeking to follow the law, or deriving lessons from historical events, but as Caliph he is included in the sacred circle of leaders who are directly supported by God where they take the actions of the Prophet as model and inspiration. In other words, Ottoman history is sacralized through this connection. As we shall see below, our second example implies just the opposite, as Naima integrates aspects of the Hudaybiyya episode into secular history.

Another aspect of Ebussuud’s interpretation at this point at least merits mention. We do not know through which tradition Ebussuud had studied the original *sīra* narrative – *sīra* was not a separate part of the *medrese* curriculum, so it is possible that his main information came from the canonical hadith collections rather than a specific *sīra* text.

---

[38] Why this phrase is absent from Peçevî’s rendering of the fatwa, otherwise authenticated by the concluding formula, is not clear.

[39] M. Lecker, ‘The Ḥudaybiyya-Treaty and the expedition against Khaybar’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 5 (1984).

[40] Abu’s-su’ud, *Tafsīr Abī s-suʿūd aw irshād al-ʿaql al-salīm ilā mazāyā l-kitāb al-karīm* (n. l.: Dār al-fikr, n.d.) V 595 ff., see also Wāqidī, 304-307.

[41] It is possible, in the absence of systematic manuscript research, that these last words are a commentary by the *fetva emini* in charge of compiling the collection in question, or even by a later copyist. Such a situation would not, however, invalidate my argument, because it would only mean that it was another official, not Ebussuud, who harbored these same ideas.

Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the classical historical texts, Ibn Ishaq as transmitted by Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari (also relying on Ibn Ishaq extensively), and al-Wāqidī, go to considerable lengths to put the blame for the failure of the truce on the Quraysh or their allies, the Banu Bakr, while insisting that Muhammad meticulously fulfilled his obligations. How the Meccans feared that the violation of the stipulations of the truce would allow Muhammad to cancel the agreement, and how the Meccan leader Abu Sufyan came to Medina to salvage it are integral elements of the narrative. Ebussuud, however, seems to have none of this as he sweepingly asserts that the Prophet broke the treaty not because it had been violated, but because the prospect was advantageous. Again, Muhammad could have known this simply as a talented statesman, but in Ebussuud's thought, I suggest, this foreknowledge was part of his prophetic inspiration. Thus, it is again prophetic charisma that allows him (and by extension his successor, the Ottoman Sultan qua Caliph) to act decisively and achieve a benefit for the Believers.

Seeking Peace

In comparison to Ebussuud's one-page fatwa, Naima's elaboration on the al-Hudaybiyya episode is much longer, and takes a prominent place in the introduction to his chronicle.[42] This introduction has been famously studied by L. V. Thomas, who recognized its unique character as a philosophical engagement with history, and as a political argument in its time.[43] Yet, focusing on Naima as an Ottoman rather than an Islamic intellectual, Thomas did not delve deeper into the textual details of Naima's representation of the events at al-Hudaybiyya, misleadingly stating that Naima "reproduces in full a recent, highly esteemed version - that given by Nabî".[44] In fact, Naima treats Nabî's text rather selectively, which enables him to distill from it a pointed argument which we did not find in the original in this form. Our explorations above have now put us in a position to add nuance and scope to the context and meaning of this fascinating text.

As is well known, Naima's work is formally a history of the Ottoman Empire from the millennium forward. The passage that is relevant for us appears in an extensive introduction designed to make an elaborate argument for the study of history as the source of wisdom and leadership, and specifically in defense of Naima's patron Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha, the Grand Vizier from the Köprülü family who negotiated the peace treaty of Karlovitz in 1699, in which the Ottomans had to make major, in fact unprecedented, concessions to the Habsburgs. This introduction, more than sixty pages in print, addresses the nature and benefits of history, historiography, and leadership, borrowing from Kâtip Çelebi, Ibn Khaldun, and Kınalızade Ali. It opens, however, right after a dedication and an explanation of the historian's craft, with a narration of the episode of al-Hudaybiyya, as an instructive analogy of Karlowitz.[45]

---

[42] Mustafa Naima, *Tarih-i Naima: Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn fî Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-Hâfikayn* (Istanbul H.1281/1864), I:13-26.

[43] L. V. Thomas, *A Study of Na'ima*, ed. N. Itzkowitz (New York 1972), 65-124.

[44] Thomas, *A Study of Na'ima*, 71; the beginning of the chapter in Nabî's work indicates [Ahmad b. Muhammad] al-Qastallani (d. 1517) as the main source; however, the corresponding passage in al-Qastallani, both in the Arabic original and in the Turkish translation by Bakî, has nothing in common with what Nabî is presenting. The significance of this misidentification remains a mystery to me [Ahmad b. Muhammad (al-) Qastallani, *al-Mawāhib al-ladunīya bi-al-minaḥ al-Muḥammadīya* (Beirut 1991); [Mahmud Abdülbakî] Bakî, *Mevahib-i ledünîye tercümesi mealimü'l-yakin* (Istanbul H.1261)].

This section is entitled: 'About truce with the kings of the infidels and peace with the factions of the Christians on all sides, for the sake of order in the lands and the prosperity of the servants [of God]'.[46] Thus, it is clear from the outset that where Ebussuud pushed for war, Naima is doing the exact opposite, that is, utilizing the same historical event as an argument for peace. Of course, political circumstances were different: no longer buoyed by military success, the Ottomans had been on the retreat since the catastrophic failure of the siege of Vienna in 1683. While it may be obvious in hindsight that the peace treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 was the only political and military option for the Ottomans to regain their footing, there appears to have been a strong pro-war faction at the court and in the elite. The urgency of Naima's argument clearly speaks to a need to push back against strong opposition to the treaty and the larger policy pursued by the viziers of the Köprülü family at the time. On the other hand, Ottoman poets, Nabî among them, had celebrated the treaty in poems known as *Sulhiye*, Ode to Peace.[47]

What Naima is presenting, however, is not a legal argument claiming that peace with the infidels is permissible, a point that had already been affirmed implicitly in Ebussuud's fatwa. A rich literature of fatwas throughout the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries reflects constant legal engagement between Ottomans and their Christian adversaries.[48] If the term for peace, *sulh*, strictly speaking, refers to a stable political situation in which a non-Muslim state submits to a Muslim power and agrees to pay tribute, this is not the case for Naima, who uses *sulh* interchangeably with *muhadene* or *muvadaa*, which suggest temporarily halted hostilities.[49] In one instance, Naima even cautions against taking al-Hudaybiyya as a legal precedent when it comes to returning recent converts to their non-Muslim state of origin (I:20). Ultimately, however, his point was not that the treaty of al-Hudaybiyya was legally 'correct' or 'permissible', but that it was necessary, advisable, and advantageous.

This is not to say that Naima's support for the peace was the result of a pacifist inclination, as he clearly was not imagining an ideal state of global peace along the lines of Immanuel Kant's *Zum ewigen Frieden* (Perpetual Peace) written later in the same century. Naima's rhetoric, inspired by (or copied from) Nabî, idealized the peace treaty as something pure and sacred, when he speaks of the 'newly-wed bride of peace, whose ring and jewelry should not be cut by the file of treason'; the pitcher of peace has washed off the dirt of war.[50] Taking advantage of the shared Arabic root, Naima like many earlier authors describes peace (*sulh*) as benefit (*maslaha*). However, Naima finds that the illness of hostility of the Quraysh could only be cured by the sword, and quotes the Prophet explaining to Umar that the final purpose of the treaty is to "provide medicine which will cure every aspect of the temperament of the world from the gross substance of unbelief and idolatry" (I:24). In a different metaphor, he states that the sapling (*nihal*) of the peace bore fruit in the conquest of Mecca three years later (I:26), as announced in Sura 48 (al-Fatḥ) of the Qurʾan. Thus, Naima makes no attempt to claim that the treaty will be anything but temporary, if the analogy is taken seriously.

---

[45] Thomas, *A Study of Na'ima*, 68-69.

[46] Naima, *Tarih*, I 12, cf. Thomas, *A Study of Na'ima*.

[47] In addition to Rahimguliyev, 'Sulhiyyeler', see Ali Fuat Bilkan, 'İki Sulhiyye Işığında Osmanlı Toplumunda Barış Özlemi'. https://www.tarihtarih.com/?Syf=26&Syz=384647.

[48] H. Krüger, *Fetwa und Siyar: Zur internationalrechtlichen Gutachtenpraxis der osmanischen Şeyh ül-Islâm vom 17. bis 19 Jahrhundert unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des "Behcet ül-Fetâvâ"* (Wiesbaden 1978); see also the forthcoming book by J. M. White, *Piracy and Law in the Ottoman Mediterranean* (Stanford 2017).

[49] V. Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace: The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers* (Boulder 2000), 233-263.

The example of al-Hudaybiyya sets Naima's readers up for an extended analogy between the early Believers and the Ottomans, and, by the same token, the Quraysh and the Austrians. The same stark moral difference between the two parties applies in either case. From this point of view, Ottoman readers could also take consolation in the fact that the Quraysh refusing to recognize the Prophet's mission in the protocol of the treaty did not have any significance, but was purely about words (*niza-i lâfzî müntic-i mâna olmamağın*).[51] While Naima does not highlight the oath of allegiance under the tree, he emphasizes another instance where the dedication of Muhammad's followers is key, compelling the Quraysh to seek peace (I:18-19). Transferred to the Ottoman situation, this would imply a moral obligation for the Ottoman elite to stand behind the Sultan. But Muhammad's reminder to Ali of the humiliation at Siffin is quoted by Naima, too, showing that despite the victory for the righteous cause, the story should not serve to glorify worldly power.

Learning from (Secular) History

All along, Naima presents the entire episode as an event embedded in the same history as all the other kings and caliphs from whom Ottoman advice literature drew its object lessons. His rhetoric can again help to make this point: like Mütercim Âsım and Ahmed Cevdet after him, Naima borrows from the terminology of diplomacy and international relations to describe the negotiations between the Meccans and the Quraysh, making them appear like a process familiar to his readership. He does not dispute that Muhammad had better insight (*ḥikmet*) into the political situation of his time, and was therefore able to make decisions which even his most dedicated followers – like Umar – were unable to arrive at by themselves (I:13, 15).[52] But despite his preternatural qualities, these insights were accessible to reason, and could be communicated and adopted by others; in other words, they were valid models for ordinary humans as well. In his dedication to

---

[50] Naima, *Tarih*, I:24, see Nabî, *Zeyl*, 145.

[51] Nabî, *Zeyl*, 144, Naima, *Tarih*, I:22.

[52] *Hikmet* in such contexts typically connotes a meaning which is not self-evident.

Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha, Naima had explicitly praised his knowledge and understanding of history (I:3), which, as we know, is an Ottoman author's way of expressing the expectation that the patron will adopt the lessons from the history book being presented to him.

But how could Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha actually follow Naima's advice and learn from the case of al-Hudaybiyya? Was Naima being oblivious of Ibn Miskawayh's caveat that an inspired leader like the Prophet would be unsuitable as an example in history? Naima concludes the section with a passage which departs from Nabî, and any other *sīra* author known to me. In fact, the passage constitutes one of those rare crystallizing points of intellectual innovation in Ottoman letters:

> This event full of admonition is described in detail in the books of the Prophet's biography (*kütüb-i siyer*). To the intelligent and enlightened it is no secret that the Knower of the Secrets of the Universe (most noble greetings unto him) did not accede to the wishes of the enemies because of weakness and coercion – God forbid! Rather, this Sultan of the Throne of Right Guidance (peace by upon him) intended to teach his blessed community, by way of instruction, to comply with the appearances of the possible causes and furthering affairs gradually. The light of the exalted *sunna* of this Sun of the Orient of Prophethood and the works of his laudable *sīra* are exhaustive hints at the firm road and sufficient guidance to the straight path. Those thirsty of heart lost in the desert of confusion find the fountainhead of knowledge with the help of the narrations of his deeds.[53]

As we have seen in the summary of the classical sources, the narrative of al-Hudaybiyya was so compelling partly because it showed the Prophet as limited by human constraints, like the lack of military power, the negotiating skills of the Quraysh, or the feeble-spiritedness of some of his followers. Similarly, some of the early legal literature had taken this episode as an example to argue that the Believers were justified in negotiating with the infidels if they lacked the power to impose their domination.[54] Later Islamic prophetology, however, has elevated the Prophet to a saintly figure in whom divine omnipotence becomes manifest through his miracles. On this assumption, the idea that the Prophet lacked the power to impose his inspired will would be tantamount to blasphemy. Naima is, as far as I can see, the only author to acknowledge this theological dilemma of squaring the account of the event with the dogma. This in and of itself is remarkable as an attempt to overcome the compartmentalized discourses of law, history, and theology, and to bring all of them to bear on the same single empirical reality. Such unification was not always to be had without conflict: in the mid seventeenth century Sufis vehemently rejected ideas that, based on simple chronology, the parents of the Prophet must have been pagans. In this case, the dogma of the Prophet's saintliness required saintly descent, and could not be reconciled with what the historians might have considered self-evident.[55] In a thought-provoking study, Thomas Bauer has argued that pre-modern

---

[53] Naima, *Tarih*, I:26.

[54] M. Khadduri*, War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore 1955), 134.

[55] J. Dreher, 'Une polémique à Istanbul au XVIIe siècle. Les parents du prophète étaient-ils mu-

Islamic culture was characterized by a high tolerance of ambiguity, which subsequently was lost under colonialism and modernization.[56] What Naima (and the debate about the Prophet's parents) is showing us may be an indication that the tolerance of ambiguity was already decreasing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which explains why he felt compelled to resolve it explicitly with a dialectical trick, as he declared the absence of a miraculous solution for the crisis intentional.[57]

As a result, Naima successfully reversed Ibn Miskawayh's objection to an exemplary character of the Prophet's political and military exploits. It had been based on the fact that prophetological dogma placed the Prophet outside of the regular experience of cause and effect in political matters. As was mentioned in the introduction to this article, Ottoman advice literature operated in largely secular terms: advice can only function where there is predictability, and prediction is contingent on regular relations of cause and effect.[58] Treating subjects unjustly will cause them to rebel, but acts of unbelief do not have a comparable, predictable effect. The oft-quoted saying that "the world does not come to an end because of unbelief but because of injustice" expresses the quintessence of this secular approach to history and government.[59] In contrast with Ebussuud, Naima needed to minimize the relevance of Muhammad's sainthood. He achieved it by declaring that the Prophet intentionally refrained from calling down a miracle to win an easy victory, and thus inserted the political events of the *sīra*, and al-Hudaybiyya in particular, into the repertoire of historical object lessons.

The lessons adduced apply, for Naima, at two different levels. Strictly pragmatically, the entire episode makes a case for accepting the peace treaty of Karlowitz of 1699. By analogy to al-Hudaybiyya, it might advisable to conclude a peace treaty with the infidels as a tactical move, and such a treaty would not be an obstacle, but rather a means to future victory. But there is a larger argument which dovetails with the 'secularizing' tendencies of classical advice literature by explicitly directing his audience to rely on 'the means at hand' as the only plausible way to deal with a political crisis.[60] The argument that political action needed to be based on regular observations of cause and effect had been made half a century earlier by Kâtip Çelebi, whose political thinking is reflected in multiple ways in Naima's work. Kâtip Çelebi's history of the naval wars of the Ottomans is evidently a call for reform, written under the immediate impression of the weakness of the navy in the war against Venice and the threat of a Venetian attack on Constantinople in

---

sulmans?', in *Le soufisme à l'époque ottomane, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle*, ed. R. Chih and C. Mayeur-Jaouen (Cairo 2010).

[56] Bauer, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität. Eine andere Geschichte des Islams*. For Bauer those processes are not the main focus, but they appear to be conceived mainly as extraneous forces.

[57] The weak spot of his argument is that the Prophet's intention is nowhere stated explicitly.

[58] The argument is similarly made by Bauer; in identifying such 'secular' ideas already in the Islamic middle period, Bauer pre-empts another problematic search for an Islamic secular modernity *avant la lettre*.

[59] G. Hagen, 'World Order and Legitimacy', in *Legitimizing the Order: Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. M. Reinkowski and H. Karateke (Leiden 2005).

[60] Thomas, *A Study of Na'ima*, 69-71.

1656. Like Naima, Kâtip Çelebi had to engage a dogma that undercut notions of causality, in his case, occasionalism. Occasionalism as espoused by Ashari theology claimed that sufficient causes could not determine an effect, which would be an infringement on God's omnipotence. Instead, God creates the effect at any given moment directly. In this case, however, those politically active will never know if their efforts will produce any results. What can they do?

> And, His majesty be exalted, He made this world the world of causes and revealed all events of providence in the world of generation and corruption by way of a cause. Therefore, all events that occur are in essence traces of the power of God, free agent and almighty […]. Out of His pure goodness and benevolence, He granted His servants particular volition. He enabled everyone to use their particular volition in some respect and realized his custom to create the effects (of this volition). In order to teach that one who has a wish should concern himself with the (secondary) causes (leading to its realization), and make an effort at the means, and care about them, God gave orders in several instances in the noble scripture. […] Thus, the servant (of God) who wants to obey his noble command shall concern himself with the (secondary) causes, and should not allow for any neglect or shortcoming. By concerning himself with the causes the servant has fulfilled his duty; to let the effect happen remains up to Him who makes causes take effect. If He wills he creates (the effect) and makes it happen; if he wills it not, he does not. To obtain (the effect) is not the duty of the servant. Since neglect or shortcoming in terms of the preparing of the secondary causes is tantamount to disobedience of God's command, the servant becomes a sinner. As he deserves castigation and punishment, he is being punished by things like being defeated by the enemy, or suffering from poverty. If the warning is not heeded, and no effort is made to understand the (divine) judgments of the past, the castigation and punishment are increased, and gradually a new form emerges.[61]

Thus, just as according to Naima, the Prophet was acting 'as if' there was no supernatural power that he could invoke in the present crisis, Kâtip Çelebi enjoins his audience to act 'as if' he could expect that God would in fact create the effects of the causes brought forth by political effort. In other words, both authors call on their audiences – or their advisees – to conceive of their political agendas in strictly secular terms, and not get caught up in hopes for divine intervention. Both Naima's and Kâtip Çelebi's arguments can very plausibly be read as interventions in an on-going discourse of political theology in which we are currently missing the opposing voice. If both of them so strongly emphasize the worldly contingency of political action, then it might be inferred that their opponents were suggesting that the solution to the crisis was one of pious purity, that the Ottomans should rely on God's support for the pious (*tevekkül*), and forge ahead with new military action regardless of the military disadvantage. Such an opposition could easily dismiss the 'secular' activism supported by the historians as a violation of tenets of piety.[62] Seen from this angle, it becomes important that Kâtip Çelebi and Naima bracket and isolate ideas of divine intervention in history, but they don't deny it. Just as Kâtip Çelebi argues that action is God's command, Naima makes following the Prophet's example a dual obligation: not only are his actions at al-Hudaybiyya as such a model to emulate, but since the Prophet explicitly (according to Naima) willed this event to be a lesson to the Believers, obeying his command and taking heed becomes an additional, broader, obligation, with the paradoxical result that the endorsement of 'secular' thinking is based on a model of piety.

---

[61] This passage is quoted in G. Hagen and E. L. Menchinger, 'Ottoman Historical Thought', in *A Companion to Global Historical Thought*, ed. P. Duara, V. Murthy, and A. Sartori (Oxford 2014), 101-102; it is not included in Mitchell's partial translation of *Tuhfetü'l-kibar* recently re-edited by Svat Soucek.

[62] I use 'secular' in quotation marks because the discussion of a broader development of secular-

Conclusion

We have come a long way in the many implications and interpretations of the story of al-Hudaybiyya as Ottoman writers attempted to make sense of this complex and contradictory narrative. The classical Islamic tradition, based on the narrations in early *sīra* literature, reflects the shift from a Prophet who is essentially human, with all his conflicts and weaknesses, to a charismatic or saintly figure of almost unlimited power. Ottoman narratives, taking up the latter imagination from their respective sources, increasingly struggled to square the notions of quasi-omnipotent sainthood with the external facts. That they would seek a political dimension in the deeds of the Prophet is, as we saw, not to be taken for granted. Their primary concern being not a coherent system of theology or prophetology, Ottoman *sīra* authors took advantage of the multiplicity of motives, and highlighted one or the other or many in order to inculcate lessons of piety, trust in leadership, and divine providence. Their priorities are clearly shifting over time, from Darir's lesson of submission to Nabî's search to alleviate doubts and find fulfillment, to the modernists' interest in the Prophet's political leadership. This trajectory could certainly be fleshed out more by including more texts in the sample.[63] The important point, however, can be made based on the current selection, that is, that none of these Ottoman *sīra* authors appears to draw direct connections between the archetypical events of the *sīra* and his own experiences. Given that Ottoman poetry also excels in erasing the individual experience by sublimating it into universal truths, this should not come as a surprise, nor does it preclude that Ottoman readers made those connections, possibly in multiple ways, in their reading. It is even likely that such reading of *sīra* in the light of individual experiences happened on a regular basis, but was not recorded. Nevertheless, the two instances examined in great detail above in which this link was made explicit show that readings were historically contingent in more than one way. We saw that Ebussuud and Naima derived diametrically opposed political directions from the consultation of the al-Hudaybiyya episode. More importantly, however, is that the way in which they proceeded differed so starkly. Where Ebussuud suggested that an Ottoman Sultan qua Caliph

---

ism in Ottoman contexts is beyond the confines of this article. The term 'activism' is from E. L. Menchinger, 'An Ottoman Historian in an Age of Reform: Ahmed Vasif Efendi (Ca. 1730-1806)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2014.

[63] In addition to those quoted above, I have consulted Altıparmak and Karaçelebizade, but they did not ultimately add anything of significance, especially since they are based on translations.

could emulate the Prophet and thus participate in his charisma, which would guarantee him divine succor and success, Naima took pains to preclude such arguments. Instead of extolling the Prophet as model above the historical normalcy of kingship, Naima inserted him into this normalcy by arguing that the Prophet had purposefully, for didactic reasons, given up everything that separated him from other decision-makers. To eliminate (with due respect and caution) the saintly or charismatic aspects of the Prophet's leadership made it possible to engage with his model. Modern political discourse apparently no longer sees a need to respect the theological concerns, but treats the Prophet simply as a talented military leader.[64] In this context, the example of al-Hudaybiyya also retains its ambiguity, as can be seen when it is used to characterize peace between Muslim states or entities and Israel, serving as an argument for a treaty with the unbelievers for some, or as a caution against imminent betrayal for others.[65]

---

[64] A Western example is R. A. Gabriel, *Muhammad: Islam's First Great General* (Norman 2007), a Muslim example (out of many, but apropos today) is M. F. Gülen, *The Messenger of God: Muhammad. An Analysis of the Prophet's Life* (New Jersey 2005), 267-272.

[65] E.g. Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad*, 87, fn 43.

PART FOUR

OBLIQUE VIEWS

OTTOMAN GREEK VIEWS OF OTTOMAN RULE (15TH-16TH CENTURIES)

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PATRIARCHATE ASSOCIATES

Konstantinos MOUSTAKAS*

THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1453 WAS WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED as the definite end of the Byzantine world, a process that was completed with the Ottoman conquest of the last Byzantine outposts, the *Despotate* of the Morea and the Empire of Trebizond, in 1460 and 1461, respectively. In any case, most of the people who were once subjects of the Byzantine state, or who identified themselves with it, already lived under Ottoman rule long before these dates. The majority among the conquered Christian peoples tried to accommodate themselves as best they could to the condition of second-class subjects, *zimmi*, of the Islamic Ottoman state; some left for the Latin dominions or Italy, while others occasionally revolted in areas close to the fronts of fighting between the Ottomans and Western powers. The task of theorising about the new state of affairs was naturally left to the intellectuals. In this respect, Greek learning and intellectual life seriously diminished in the Ottoman territories during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as most intellectuals had departed to Italy, and local conditions were not favourable to intellectual life until as late as the seventeenth century.

The dominant view about Ottoman rule, as expressed by the emigrant scholars, and those who lived in the Latin dominions, was that of a tyranny that was violently imposed by a barbaric and infidel power, which the Christian people had to resist in collaboration with Western powers. The most characteristic exponents of this approach in the fifteenth century include Cardinal Bessarion, Isidore of Kiev, Michael Apostolis, and the historian Ducas. Different approaches were expressed by scholars who remained in the Ottoman Empire, and can be distinguished into two groups, one consisting of clerics associated with the reinstated Patriarchate of Constantinople, which became the major nucleus of Greek intellectual life in the Ottoman Empire during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the other being a short-lived nucleus of secular learning consisting of laymen associated with the Ottoman ruling establishment.[1]

---

* University of Crete.

[1] This second group includes scholars such as George Amiroutzes, Kritoboulos, and, probably, Laonikos Chalkokondyles.

The first Patriarch of Ottoman Constantinople, Gennadios, had already distinguished himself as one of the leading scholars in fifteenth-century Byzantium. Then, he was the one who undertook the task of establishing a theoretical framework in which the position of Christians under Ottoman rule could be accommodated. His ideas belong to the area of political theology, with the theological being the major factor for interpreting political and historical developments. In this respect, the Ottoman conquest and rule is considered to be a disaster and misfortune, but one that was ordained by God, as punishment for serious sins the Byzantines had committed.[2] Thus, they had to abide in that condition.

Gennadios personified Ottoman rule in the person of the Sultan, more precisely, Mehmed II, the only Sultan whose reign he survived, setting in this way a model for the future insofar as the views of the patriarchal associates are concerned. He is always courteous in his writings about the Sultan; in one case he even describes him as philanthropic and friendly to the Church,[3] but always avoids calling him *basileus*, preferring other terms, such as *ο κρατών*, i.e., 'he who holds power'.[4] This point is especially crucial regarding the issue of whether Byzantines who came under Ottoman rule, and Ottoman Greeks later on, could regard this rule as a legitimate one. The term *basileus* had special connotations in Byzantine political thought, and that is why the use of the Greek term is preferred from this point on, instead of a translation into 'king' or 'emperor'. Even though it seemed bizarre in the late Byzantine period, the Byzantines mostly avoided the use of the term *basileus* for rulers other than their own, whom they continued to regard as the 'Roman Emperor', an ecumenical Emperor, and the only lawful holder of this title, whose dignity was considered to be higher than that of other rulers. The term *basileus* also meant the legitimate Emperor, as opposed to terms like 'tyrant', 'dynast', etc. In this respect, by not allocating the title of *basileus* to Sultan Mehmed II, Gennadios did not concede recognition to the legitimacy of his rule; however, he recommended to his flock, then an Ottoman *millet*, to accept that rule and to operate under the conditions it set.

What Gennadios considered as primary for his flock was not to lose their Orthodox faith, as they had almost done, in his opinion, when Church Union was accepted at the Council of Ferrara – Florence and with the Uniate ceremony of December 1452 in Hagia Sophia. What mostly concerned the Church in general was to cement its authority over the Christian people by propagating what could be described as moral integrity.[5] A more specific challenge the Church had to face was to help its people resist the temptations of Islamisation,[6] as is shown by, among others things, the canonisation of those converts to Islam who reverted to Christianity and were consequently punished by death, the so-called *neo-martyr*s.[7] In any case, Gennadios's policies and ideas were shaped in a short-term perspective, since he believed that the end of the world was coming soon, and expected it to happen in the year 7000 from the creation of the world, according to Byzantine chronology, which corresponded to the A.D. year 1492.[8]

---

[2] M. -H. Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400 - vers 1472). Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'empire byzantin* (Paris 2008),124-135.

[3] George Gennadios Scholarios, *Apologia de silentio ad Theodorum Branam*, in M. Jugie, L. Petit and X. A. Siderides (eds.), *Ouvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, v. IV (Paris 1935), 265-266.

[4] Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 107.

[5] In this respect, the *General Address* of c. 1477 by Patriarch Maximos III recommends a fencing of Christians around their church authorities: M. Paizi-Apostolopoulou and D. G. Apostolopoulos (eds), *Μετά την κατάκτηση. Στοχαστικές προσαρμογές του Πατριαρχείου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως σε ανέκδοτη εγκύκλιο του 1477* [After the conquest. Adaptations of thought of the Patriachate of Constantinople in an unpublished circular of 1477] (Athens 2006).

Gennadios can be credited with introducing and establishing the ideology of the Patriarchate. Other scholars of the second half of the fifteenth century associated with the Patriarchate, such as Theodore Agalianos, Matthew Kamariotes, the intellectual Patriarchs Maximos III (formerly Manuel Christonymos) and Mark Xylokarabes, the Grand Rhetor Manuel Korinthios and others, are not known to have contributed anything more to the ideology of the Patriarchate with their writings.[9] Insofar as their writings concern the Ottoman conquest and rule, they are limited to lament, and to a persistent re-assertion of the divine punishment schema.[10]

First established by Gennadios, the opinions of the Church and Patriarchal associates were somewhat modified in the course of the sixteenth century, being in any case in line with the basic model proposed by him. The text that principally allows us to deduce the sixteenth-century view from this perspective is a historical one, the *Ekthesis Chronica*, an anonymous chronicle composed around the middle of the century which reflects the world-view and ideology of the associates of the Patriarchate.[11] In this historical composition, the turning- point in history is the conquest of Constantinople. The narration actually starts in the 1390s, with the long siege of the city by Bayezid I (1389-1402), describing some deeds of the last Byzantine Emperors and the contemporary Ottoman Sultans, but this introductory narrative of the pre-conquest period should not be seen as reflecting any sense of continuity between the Byzantine and Ottoman realms; it rather serves as a prelude to the Ottoman take-over of Byzantium. After the conquest of Constantinople, the narrative has a two-fold focus: on the deeds of the Sultans, and on the history of the Patriarchate.

---

[6] Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 136-138.

[7] E. A. Zachariadou, 'Βίοι νεοτέρων αγίων: Η επαγρύπνηση για το ποίμνιο [Lives of latter-day saints: watchtfulness for the flock]', in E. Kountoura-Galaki (ed.), *The Heroes of the Orthodox Church. The New Saints, 8th – 16th c.* (Athens 2004), 215-225.

[8] C. Mango, *Byzantium. The Empire of New Rome* (London 1980), 213; Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 128-133.

[9] S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity. A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (Cambridge 1968), 208-210; Ch. Patrinelis, *Ο Θεόδωρος Αγαλλιανός ταυτιζόμενος προς τον Θεοφάνην Μήδειας και οι ανέκδοτοι λόγοι του. Μια νέα ιστορική πηγή περί του πατριαρχείου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατά τους πρώτους μετά την άλωσιν χρόνους* [Theodoros Agallianos identified with Theophanes of Medeia and his unpublished discourses. A new historical source concerning the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the first years after the Fall] (Athens 1966); K. Th. Papadakis, *Ματθαίος Καμαριώτης. Το θεολογικό έργο του. Μετά εκδόσεως ανέκδοτων έργων του* [Matthew Kamariotes. His theological work], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2000; D. K. Chatzimichael, *Ματθαίος Καμαριώτης. Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου, του έργου και της εποχής του* [Matthew Kamariotes. A contribution to the study of his life, work, and age], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2002.

[10] Cf. e.g. the lament on the fall of the city by Matthew Kamariotes: *De Constantinopoli Capta Narratio Lamentabilis*, in J. -P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. CLX, cols. 1060-1070; additionally, the *General Address* by Patriarch Maximos III (c. 1477) see in Paizi-Apostolopoulou and Apostolopoulos, *Μετά την κατάκτηση.*, 55-57.

[11] S. P. Lambros (ed.), *Ecthesis Chronica and Chronicon Athenarum*, London 1902; M. Philippides (ed.), *Emperors, Patriarchs and Sultans of Constantinople, 1373-1513. An Anonymous Greek Chronicle of the Sixteenth Century* (Brookline 1990).

In its basic conception, the *Ekthesis Chronica* cannot be regarded as an Ottoman history proper, which is in contrast with other Greek texts of the later sixteenth century, such as the unpublished chronicle of Ms. 161 of the Library of Chios, by Manuel Malaxos, which starts with Ishmael, and continues with the emergence of the Turks, followed by Osman; or the verse chronicle of Hierax, starting with Osman;[12] or the Barberinus Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans published by Zoras.[13] Instead, the *Ekthesis Chronica* is the particular history of the Greeks under Ottoman rule, focusing on the two major authorities which exercised power over them, the Sultans in the political field, and the Patriarchs in the religious and communal fields. The *Ekthesis Chronica* is followed up by two chronicles, which focus on each of these two authorities respectively, composed in 1578 by known Patriarchal associates, Theodosios Zygomalas and Manuel Malaxos, under the same circumstances, on the orders of Martinus Crusius. These are the *Historia Politica Constantinopoleos* and the *Historia Patriarchica Constantinopoleos*.[14]

In their representation of the Ottoman ruling system, the *Ekthesis Chronica* and its two follow-ups sustain its identification with the Sultan's person, in accordance to Gennadios's model. The Muslims of the Ottoman Empire appear only once as a distinct actor, in the *Historia Patriarchica*, in the narration of an incident, taking place in the 1520s or 30s, in which the ulema of Constantinople asked for the closing of all churches in the city, on the grounds of its conquest by force, a request that was not satisfied by Sultan Suleyman II (1522-1566).[15] In this respect, a sharp distinction in the stance and attitude towards Ottoman Christians is apparent between the Sultan, who appears as just and impartial, and Ottoman Muslims in general, who appear as hostile.

More generally, insofar as the Sultans are concerned, the *Ekthesis Chronica* persists in not attributing to them the title of *basileus*, a title strongly invested with political symbolisms. The Sultans are usually described as *αυθέντης* – master, or *μέγας αυθέντης* – grand master, in accordance with their own self-styling in their Greek nomenclature.[16] A deviation from this tradition is first observed in the *Historia Politica* and the *Historia Patriarchica*, in which the title of *basileus* appears to be occasionally attributed to the Sultans, together with the other titles they were described by in Greek texts (*σουλτάν*, *αυθέντης, μέγας αυθέντης*).[17] That was a sharp break with the tradition that had been established since the days of Gennadios, and could strengthen the impression that Ottoman rule was seen as legitimate to some extent, upon the presupposition that those scholars of the later sixteenth century properly knew and understood the symbolic meanings and implications the term had in Byzantine times, something that cannot be taken for granted.

---

[12] K. N Sathas (ed.), *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη* [Medieval Library], Vol. I (Venice 1872), 245-268.

[13] G. Th. Zoras (ed.), *Χρονικόν περί των Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (κατά Βαρβερινόν ελληνικόν κώδικα 111)* [Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans (according to Barberinus Greek Codex 111] (Athens 1958); E. A. Zachariadou, *Το Χρονικό των Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (του Βαρβερινού Ελλην. Κώδικα 111) και το ιταλικό του πρότυπο* [The chronicle of the Turkish Sultans (of Barberinus Greek Codex 111) and its Italian original] (Thessaloniki 1960).

[14] M. Crusius, *Turcograeciae Libri Octo* (Basel 1584), 1-43, 106-184. The edition that is used here is the later one by I. Bekker in the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*: I. Bekker (ed.), *Historia Politica et Patriarchica Constantinopoleos, Epirotica*, (Bonn 1849) (hereafter: *Historia Politica* and *Historia Patriarchica*, respectively).

[15] *Historia Patriarchica*, 158-169.

It is of particular importance that the Sultans are described in these texts as *basileis* – now it can be translated as 'Emperors' – of Constantinople. This designation of the Sultans as Emperors of Constantinople further emphasised the view of Constantinople as the central subject of history, which is apparent in the *Ekthesis Chronica* already, as can be deduced from the thematic arrangement of the narrative.[18] Nevertheless, albeit acknowledged as Emperors of Constantinople, they were seen to belong to a new era for the imperial city that was properly discontinuous with the Byzantine past. As is indicated by the successive numbering of the Sultans from the Conqueror onwards, as first, second, etc. Emperor of Constantinople,[19] the discontinuity with the older Byzantine imperial establishment is properly stressed. By adhering to this pattern in the *Historia Patriarchica*, Manuel Malaxos is inconsistent with his approach in other texts he also composed, under different circumstances. In the unpublished chronicle of Ms. Chiensis 161, which he also appears to have composed, he has a different view of the 'Emperors of Constantinople', according to which the succession of all previous Emperors, Byzantine, Franks, again Byzantine, and finally Ottomans, is given in an unbroken successive line, with Mehmed

---

[16] F. Miklosich and I. Müller (eds.), *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana* (Vienna 1865) Vol. III:286, 287, 290, 293, 295, 298, 299, 301, 302, 306; S. P. Lampros, Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ ὡς ἐπίσημος γλῶσσα τῶν σουλτάνων [Greek as the official language of the Sultans]', *Neos Hellenomnemon*, 5 (1908), 66, 67.

[17] For the Sultan's designation as *basileus*: *Historia Politica*, 31, 40, 51, 52, 66, 67. *Historia Patriarchica*, 150, 151, 190, 199. It is important to stress again here that relevant comments in this study only concern the texts written by associates of the Patriarchate which reflect its ideology. Other scholars, such as Amiroutzes and Kritoboulos, who wrote from different perspectives, had already viewed and described *the Sultan* as their *basileus* long ago. See K. Moustakas, 'Byzantine "visions" of the Ottoman Empire: Theories of Ottoman legitimacy by Byzantine scholars after the fall of Constantinople', in A. Lymberopoulou (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings. Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker* (Aldershot 2011), 220-221.

[18] K. Moustakas, 'The Logic of Historical Thematology in the *Historia Politica Constantinopoleos* and the *Historia Patriarchica Constantinopoleos*', in E. Balta, G. Salakidis, Th. Stavridis (eds), *Festschrift in Honor of Ioannis P. Theocharides*, II, *Studies on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey* (Istanbul 2014), 365-369.

[19] *Historia Politica*, 77, *Historia Patriarchica*, 150, 151, 190, 199.

II being described as 7th Emperor of the Turks and 94th of Constantinople, Bayezid II as 8th Emperor of the Turks and 95th of Constantinople, etc.[20]

With regard to the image of the Sultans in these texts, the *Ekthesis Chronica* and the *Historia Politica* evolve to a great extent from a totally negative view of pre-conquest Sultans and Mehmed II to a discreet, impartial, and occasionally positive, view of later Sultans. About Mehmed II, both texts reserve an ambivalent view, often describing him in pejorative terms and presenting him in dark colours, and in two cases he is described as a "reprobate and destroyer of Christians" in the *Ekthesis Chronica*.[21] However, in the final assessment of his reign the approach is more balanced and he is recognised as a capable leader and a friend of learning.[22] In an idealised account of Gennadios' discussions with him, the former is shown to have appeased him and to have changed his attitude toward Christians from hostile to friendly.[23] This particular story is pivotal to the subsequent self-presentation of the Patriarchate as the protector of Ottoman Christians. What can be deduced from it is that, in the ideology of the Patriarchate, it was the Church, and not the prerequisites of Islamic law or the political considerations of the Ottomans, that had achieved whatever tolerance existed for Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The role of the particular Sultans in the conquest is not irrelevant to the way in which they are depicted. Mehmed II was the one who was thought to have accomplished it, while the later Sultans operated within the context of a *fait-accompli* which had already determined the situation Ottoman Christians had to accept and accommodate themselves in.

As mentioned before, these texts hold to a discreet position on the Sultans after Mehmed II with no negative comments about them. Occasionally they make positive comments, in which they describe them as either just or philanthropic.[24] Both, justice and philanthropy, were among the highest values that the Emperor had to endorse among his ideal features in Byzantine political tradition. Piety was the third one, but it could not be applicable to the Sultans since they were of a different religion. Nevertheless, we cannot be certain as to whether the sixteenth-century authors applied these values to the Sultans following Byzantine traditions, for justice and philanthropy are ideal qualities of the ruler in Islamic and other oriental political traditions too.[25]

---

[20] Koraes Library of Chios, Ms. 161, 103v, 224r.-224v.

[21] *Ecthesis Chronica*, Philippides ed., 54, 82.

[22] *Ecthesis Chronica*, Lambros ed., 38-39; Philippides ed., 88, 90; *Historia Politica*, 50-51.

[23] *Ecthesis Chronica*, Lambros ed., 20; *Historia Politica*, 30, 31.

[24] A notable case is provided by the comment on Selim I (1512-1520) in the *Ekthesis Chronica* and the *Historia Politica Constantinopoleos*, who is claimed to have allowed the re-opening of several churches that were closed by his predecessors: *Ecthesis Chronica*, Lambros ed., 59. Philippides ed., 122. *Historia Politica*, 72. In the *Historia Patriarchica*, Manuel Malaxos reserves much praise for Murad III, the contemporary Sultan: *Historia Patriarchica*, 199-200.

[25] For a general view of the Byzantine and the Islamic case respectively: K. D. S. Paidas, *Τα βυζαντινά «κάτοπτρα ηγεμόνος» της ύστερης περιόδου (1254-1403). Εκφράσεις του βυζαντινού βασιλικού ιδεώδους* [The Byzantine "mirrors of a prince" of the later period (1254-1403). Expressions of the Byzantine ideal of kingship] (Athens 2006), esp. 75-143; A. Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought. From the Prophet to the Present (Edinburgh 2001), passim*.

As the major communal institution of the Christian people in the Ottoman Empire, the Church had to implement a policy of accommodation which would find a place for its followers in an Islamic state. Consequently, the ideology of the Patriarchate and its associates was one of accommodation and compromise. Following, in general, the models of Gennadios, but lacking his scholarly qualities, latter-day associates of the Patriarchate, either known ones, such as Zygomalas and Malaxos, or unknown ones, such as the anonymous authors of the early versions of the *Ekthesis Chronica*, produced texts that reflect this ideology, even though in a less sophisticated way as compared with their prototype. In a dynastic empire like the Ottoman, which had no official name other than 'the state of the house of Osman', the person of the Sultan occupied a central place in state ideology. The intellectual associates of the Patriarchate adhered to that conception of Ottoman rule with special emphasis, as it allowed them to overlook the presence of the superior Muslim *millet* within the Ottoman ruling establishment. Moreover, these intellectuals alluded to the idea about the inherent subjugation of their compatriots and co-religionists to an 'empire of Constantinople', which had been allocated then to the Ottoman Sultans by God's will.

NEGOTIATING POWER IN THE CRIMEAN KHANATE:
NOTES ON TATAR POLITICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE (16TH–18TH C.)

Denise Klein[*]

Because of its distinct tradition and political constitution, the Crimean Khanate constitutes a particularly interesting yet intricate case for the study of political thought and practice in the Ottoman world. Succeeding the Great Horde in the early fifteenth century, the Khans of the Giray dynasty inherited the western steppe model of shared power between a Genghisid Khan and the four ruling Tatar clans who controlled most of the productive lands, population, and military, and who elected the Khan. Following the Ottoman conquest of Crimea's southern coastline in 1475, the Sultans in Istanbul gradually established suzerainty over the Khanate, whose lands extended across the peninsula to the steppes north of the Black Sea. At first, the Ottomans merely sanctioned the clans' vote for the Crimean throne, but they later came to appoint the Khans directly. As a result of this peculiar system, political equilibrium in the Khanate was exceptionally fragile, and power relations had to be frequently renegotiated. Fierce rivalries and shifting alliances between diverse political players in both Crimea and in Istanbul, which resulted in the recurrent removal of Khans deemed too powerful, dominated the Khanate's politics from its beginnings in the fifteenth century until its annexation by Russia in 1783.[1]

This paper discusses basic notions of political authority and their use in the process of negotiating power in the Crimean Khanate between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, on the basis of the historiographical literature. Scholarship on Crimean Tatar political thought and practice is scarce and has focused primarily on the Khans' political ideology *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman Sultan and foreign powers particularly as expressed in peace treaties, imperial decrees, diplomatic letters, and titulature. As such, this scholar-

---

[*] Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz.

I want to thank the anonymous reviewer and the colleagues at our venue in Rethymno as well as at two other venues where I have presented earlier versions of this paper, the Netherlands Institute in Istanbul and the University of Bonn, for their valuable feedback.

[1] For an introduction to the history and political constitution of the Crimean Khanate see A. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford 1978); A. Bennigsen, P. N. Boratav, D. Desaive, and C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, *Le Khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapı* (Paris 1978).

ship has largely overlooked the political ideas and discourses that dominated the scene in Crimea itself, for which there is abundant material, especially in the Khanate's historiographical literature.[2] The Khanate truly belonged to the Ottoman world both on account of its growing political dependence on the Sultan and Istanbul's great cultural influence. Yet research into Ottoman political thought and practice has mostly concentrated on the Empire's capital, neglecting the provinces and, especially, its semi-autonomous regions. Scholars have primarily embarked upon re-readings of the prominent advice literature for rulers. They have shown little interest in texts by less well-known authors in other genres that dealt with political notions, or gave voice to the ideas and experiences of the common people.[3] This paper addresses some of these flaws in the scholarship in an attempt to make a contribution to the history of the political thought and practice of both the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman world at large.

The Khanate's historiographical literature constitutes a major source for the study of Crimean Tatar political thought and practice. This is because, first, histories functioned simultaneously as advice literature and political treatises in the Tatar state, as these genres did not exist on their own. Second, historiography played a prominent role in the process of negotiating power. It was not only men hoping for the Khan's favour who composed histories to promote the ruler's ideology and legitimise his politics; other political actors used historiography as well, pushing their own agenda and, at times, challenging the ruler's political choices and claims to power. Either way, their ideas and opinions most likely entered the political discourse of the wider Crimean public inasmuch as, in the Khanate, histories were commonly read aloud in gatherings in front for audiences made up of members of the ruling elite as well as commoners.[4] In concrete terms, I will be looking at the seven histories that were written for audiences within the Tatar state between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the eighteenth century. Though not necessarily penned by locals, these works were read and discussed in the Khanate:

---

[2] Two studies, both dealing with Ottoman-Tatar relations, use some of the Khanate's histories alongside contemporary Ottoman histories and works from the post-Khanate era in order to discuss certain Crimean Tatar notions of political authority. The second study also gives an overview of the relevant literature: A. W. Fisher, 'Crimean Separatism in the Ottoman Empire', in W. W. Haddad and W. Ochsenwald (eds), *Nationalism in a Non-National State: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire* (Columbus 1977), 57-76; N. Królikowska, 'Sovereignty and Subordination in Crimean-Ottoman Relations (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)', in G. Kármán and L. Kunčević (eds), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden 2013), 43-65.

[3] For a recent overview of the existing scholarship and its biases, see M. Sariyannis, *Ottoman Political Thought up to the Tanzimat: A Concise History*, with a chapter by E. Tuşalp Atiyas (Rethymno 2015), 7-13.

[4] On Crimean Tatar historiography and its role in society, see D. Klein, 'Historiography and Historical Culture in the Crimean Khanate (16th-18th Century)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Universität Konstanz, 2014, 92-214. See also I. V. Zajcev [Zaytsev], *Krymskaja istoriografičeskaja tradicija XV-XIX vv.: puti razvitija, rukopisi, teksty i istočniki* [Crimean Historiographical Tradition of XV-XIX Centuries: Currents, Manuscripts, Texts and Sources] (Moscow 2009); N. S. Sejtjag'jaev, *Krymskotatarskaia istoricheskaia proza XV-XVIII vv.* [Crimean-Tatar Historical Prose of XV-XVIII centuries] (Simferopol 2009). I wish to thank my Russian-speaking friends, in particular Kateryna Kovalchuk and Roman Voyts, for translating these publications for me.

1) Remmal Hoca’s *History of Khan Sahib Giray* (*Tarih-i Sahib Giray Han*) is the earliest history from the Khanate, chronicling the reign of Khan Sahib Giray (r. 1532-1551). Remmal Hoca (d. after 1568), an Ottoman scholar and long-term resident at the Khan’s palace, composed this panegyric work as a commission from the late Khan’s daughter.[5]
2) Senai’s *History of Khan Islam Giray* (*Tarih-i Islam Giray Han*) is a panegyric history focusing on Khan Islam III Giray’s (r. 1644-1654) victories between the years 1644 and 1651. Hacı Mehmed Senai (d. after 1651) of Bahçesaray, a former secretary of the Khan’s *divan*, composed the work at the request and under the close supervision of the Khan’s powerful vizier.[6]
3) Sabit’s *Book of Victory* (*Zafername*) is the only Tatar history in verse. Alaeddin Ali Sabit (d. 1714), a poet and ambitious scholar from Bosnia, presented the work, which celebrates the victory of Khan Selim Giray (r. 1671-1678, 1684-1691, 1692-1699, 1702-1704) over Russia in 1689, to the Tatar ruler in the hope that he would advance his career as a judge in the Ottoman Empire.[7]
4) Mehmed Giray’s *History of Mehmed Giray* (*Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*) is one of two works penned by members of Crimea’s ruling house. The exiled Prince Mehmed Giray (d. after 1703) critically reviews Ottoman and Tatar history from the failed siege of Vienna in 1683 through the 1703 ‘Edirne Event’.[8]
5) Seyyid Mehmed Rıza’s *Seven Planets in the Narratives of the Tatar Kings* (*Es-seb’ü’s-seyyar fî ahbar-i mülûk-i Tatar*) is an elaborate universal history focusing on Tatar history up through the year 1737. Seyyid Mehmed Rıza (d. 1756), an Ottoman scholar of Tatar origin, closely connected to the Khanate's elite, composed the work in collaboration with Khan Mengli II Giray (r. 1724-1730, 1737-1740).[9]

---

[5] [Remmal Hoca], *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān. Histoire de Sahip Giray, Khan de Crimée de 1532 à 1551*, ed. and trans. Ö. Gökbilgin (Ankara 1973).

[6] Hadży Mehmed Senai z Krymu, *Historia Chana Islam Gereja III: Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Z. Abrahamowicz (Warsaw 1971).

[7] Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. T. Karacan (Sivas 1991).

[8] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, H.O. 86. For a transliteration (without the marginal text), see U. Demir, ‘Târîh-i Mehmed Giray (Değerlendirme – Çeviri Metin)’, unpublished M.A. dissertation, Marmara University, 2006. For an edition and German and Polish translations of the first few folios, dealing with the Siege of Vienna, see M. Köhbach, ‘Der *Tārīḫ-i Meḥemmed Giray* – Eine osmanische Quelle zur Belagerung Wiens durch die Türken im Jahre 1683’, *Studia Austro-Polonica*, 3 (1983), 137-164; Z. Abrahamowicz, *Kara Mustafa pod Wiedniem*: *Źródła muzułmańskie do dziejów wyprawy wiedeńskiej 1683 roku* [Kara Mustafa under Vienna: Muslim Sources up until the Viennese Expedition of 1683] (Cracow 1973), 25-27, 307-322.

[9] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb’ü’s-seyyar fî ahbar-i mülûk-i Tatar: Asseb o-ssejjar ili Sem’plan-*

6) Abdulgaffar Kırımî's *Pillar of the Narratives* (*Umdetü'l-ahbar*) is a monumental but rather simple universal history chronicling events from creation until the year 1743. Abdulgaffar Kırımî (d. after 1755-1758), a member of the Khanate's most powerful clan and a high-ranking state official in exile, apparently intended the work for the ruling Khan.[10]
7) Said Giray's *History of Said Giray* (*Tarih-i Said Giray*) is the personal report of the second Tatar prince to turn historian, Said Giray (d. after 1758), concerning the years between 1755 and 1758, when he served as commander of the nomadic Nogay Tatars in Yedisan, the steppe region north of the Black Sea between the Dniester and the Dnieper rivers.[11]

Drawing on these seven surviving histories from the Khanate, the first part of the paper establishes key ideas regarding the Khan's rule and Ottoman suzerainty. The second part attempts to highlight the dynamic nature of Crimean Tatar political ideology. Focusing on three of the histories that express the views of major political players at critical moments of the Khanate's history (Nos 1, 4, and 5 in the list above), it explores how certain political actors in the Khanate used these ideas for their own particular ends.

As this study is a preliminary survey, it should be noted at the outset that it cannot do justice to the evolution of ideas over time or to the complexity of political discourses, nor can it always distinguish between earlier traditions of political thought and later Ottoman influences, in particular in the paper's first part. What is more, the study's focus on the Tatar histories runs the risk of overstressing the Ottoman impact on Crimea. Indeed, my emphasis on this literature, which is largely inspired by the Ottoman tradition, obscures other literary traditions of Crimea concerning the past, such as epics and genealogies, which were rooted in the Tatars' steppe origins and oral culture.[12] At the same time, this literature does not reflect the other cultural traditions that informed Tatar political ideas and practices, for instance that of the Khans' European clerks, which can be seen in the

---

et soderžaščij istoriju Krymskih Hanov, ed. M. Kazembek (Kazan 1832). I wish to thank Barbara Kellner-Heinkele, who allowed me to take a copy from her exemplar of this rare book.

[10] Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi 2331. The pages which, according to the table of contents, chronicle the years 1743-1755 are missing. For an old (and flawed) edition and a transliteration of the work's core part, dealing with the Tatars, see N. Asım, 'Umdetü't-tevarih', *Türk Tarih Encümeni Mecmuası*, 11, supplement (Istanbul H.1343/1924); D. Derin, 'Abdülgaffar Kırımî'nin Umdetü'l-Ahbar'ına (Umdetü't-Tevarih) göre Kırım Tarihi', unpublised M.A. thesis, Ankara University, 2003.

[11] Said Giray, *Tarih-i Said Giray*, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orient Hs. or. oct. 923 (http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN778818373&LOGID=LOG_0001, accessed June 1, 2016). For a partial edition, see B. Kellner-Heinkele, *Aus den Aufzeichnungen des Saʿīd Giray Sulṭān. Eine zeitgenössische Quelle zur Geschichte des Chanats der Krim um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg 1975). I am greatly indebted to the author for allowing me to use her handwritten transliteration of the work, which significantly facilitated the reading of this poorly penned manuscript.

[12] On these traditions, see Klein, Historiography, 34-51; Sejtjag'jaev, *Krymskotatarskaia istoricheskaia proza*, 57-86.

chancery documents.[13] Finally, most of the histories date from the Khanate's last century, when Ottomanisation was well advanced. The sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries are under-represented compared to later periods, while no works at all exist from the Khanate's early years, when Istanbul's role was negligible.

I. Political Ideology

Crimean Tatar historiography conveys various notions regarding the rule of the Khans of the Giray dynasty and the role of the Ottoman Sultans in the Khanate. The works critically review the performance of Khans and Sultans alike, and also include words of advice for the rulers. The following overview outlines the most significant ideas circulating in the Khanate between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the eighteenth century, as reflected in the seven Tatar histories that have come down to the present. It should be noted that each author used these ideas in an eclectic way. As such, they seem to have never formed a complete and coherent political ideology.

The Khan's rule and the ideal Tatar ruler

The historiography suggests that the major sources of legitimacy for the Crimean Khans were their pedigree and a divine mandate to power, in combination with certain qualities required for the ruler seated on the Crimean throne. The matter of lineage is brought up in various ways. First, according to the texts, the mere fact that Giray dynasty had already been in power for many generations justified the khans' right to the throne. The justification of rule based on dynastic longevity, signifying nobility as well as continuity and stability, was an argument used around the world, but it acquired particular significance in the steppe empires, where it was considered the most important asset of a ruler.[14] This idea apparently endured into the time of the Crimean Khanate, where a historian's list of "requirements for rulership" mentions first and foremost that a ruler "must be of noble descent; from forefather to forefather, he should be shah, son of shah."[15] The Tatar histories stress the Girays' inherited claim to power by introducing every new Khan as the son, the grandson, or the great-grandson of a member of the dynasty who had previously occupied the throne. Some texts add, by way of explanation, that because the Khans belonged to a dynasty that had held the insignia of sovereigns for generations, they could not be deposed: "Unless he abdicates his own power, one cannot depose the Khan of Crimea; for generations he has been the master of power, named in the public prayers and possessing the right to mint coins".[16]

---

[13] On the Khan's chancery, see D. Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th-18th Century); A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden 2011), 229-240; Zajcev, *Krymskaja istoriografičeskaja tradicija*, 18-22.

[14] D. Sinor, 'The Making of a Great Khan', in B. Kellner-Heinkele (ed.), *Altaica Berolinensia: The Concept of Sovereignty in the Altaic World; Permanent International Altaistic Conference, 34th Meeting, Berlin 21-26 July, 1991* (Wiesbaden 1993), 241-258, here 249.

[15] Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 35.

With certain features added, lineage is used to legitimise the Khans' claims to power in Islamic terms as well. Most of the histories include statements claiming that the Khans of the Giray dynasty inherited their privilege from their forefathers, who had been great rulers since the time of Noah and his third son, Japheth. In fact, two of the seven works are actually arranged according to this logic, being universal histories that relate the reigns of every ancestor of the Crimean Khans as far back as Noah. In this way, these works inscribe the Khanate's ruling house and the Tatar state into the already well-established narratives of Islamic universal history.[17]

The most important lineage-related asset of Crimea's ruling house was their Genghisid ancestry. The Khans' pedigree was not only the key to the political constitution and unchallenged within the Khanate – where even rebels trying to depose the ruling Khan could only consider a Giray as worthy of taking his position – but it also provided the Crimean rulers with an unrivalled political legitimacy outside the world of the steppe.[18] With the inclusion of Mongol heritage in the political ideology of most Islamic states, the Genghisid lineage had already acquired a prestige rivalled only by descent from the tribe of the prophet Muhammad. In the Ottoman Empire, for instance, the "Genghisid kings" of Crimea were repeatedly discussed as possible alternatives for the throne should the Ottoman dynasty ever die out.[19] It thus comes as no surprise that the Crimean Tatar historiography emphasises the Khans' widely recognised Genghisid claims, speaking of them as "the Genghisids" occupying the "throne of Genghis Khan" in "Bahçesaray, the capital of the rulers of the house of Genghis".[20] The texts also include genealogies highlighting how the Girays' line of succession reached all the way back, via the Khans of the Golden Horde, to Genghis Khan.[21] The two aforementioned universal histories underline this continuity in their general narrative, providing a more or less concise overview of the beginnings of humankind and the dynasties that had ruled the world, including the Ottomans, ultimately culminating in Tatar history, from Genghis Khan up through his successors in Crimea.[22]

---

[16] Ibid., 20, translation based on Fisher, 'Crimean Separatism', 68.

[17] See, for instance ibid., 23; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٣٤. For the two universal histories, see Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar,* ed. Kazembek. The latter work repeats the Khans' line of succession in the introduction, see ibid., 3-4.

[18] On Tatar rebels discussing whom to bring to power after deposing the ruling Khan, see, for instance, Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 92r-v.

[19] For an example from late seventeenth-century Istanbul and the bewildered reaction to this idea in Crimea, see Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2 vols (Istanbul 1928), 2:340; M. de Peyssonel, *Traité sur le Commerce de la Mer Noire*, 2 vols (Paris 1787), 2:230-234. For a more general discussion, see F. M. Emecen, 'Osmanlı Hanedanına Alternatif Arayışlar Üzerine Bazı Örnekler ve Mülahazalar', *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6 (2001), 63-76.

[20] There are numerous references of this kind; see, for example, Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 82; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٥; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 79; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 79v; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 72; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 290r.

[21] In the case of one history, such a genealogy makes up a separate chapter: Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٥٨.

Other than the dynasty's pedigree, the legitimacy of the Khan's rule also rested on the idea that God endowed the Tatar ruler with the throne. The notion of a divine mission to rule is common to many cultures, and the Tatar histories suggest that the people of the Khanate were familiar with at least two such traditions: that of the steppe, and that of Islam. According to the former, the ruler owed his elevated position in society and his conquests to heavenly support; he was the son of heaven and the lord of the world. This idea had been integrated early on into the legitimising repertoire of the Islamised Turco-Mongol states, becoming fossilised in such titles as "lord of the (auspicious) conjunction" (*sahib-kıran*) and "world conqueror", titles which laid claim to universal sovereignty and were utilised by rulers from Moghul India to the Ottoman Empire, including the Crimean Khanate. Epithets bearing such steppe notions of sovereignty regularly appear in the histories, though much of this usage seems merely formulaic.[23] Instead, it was the Islamic concept of divine rulership that seems to have played the crucial role in legitimising the Khans' claims to power. According to this idea, God chose the ruler on the throne, bestowed on him good fortune and special knowledge, and guided him in his actions. The texts refer to this notion primarily by calling the ruler the "shadow of God (on Earth)" (*zıllullah fî âlem*) and the "ruler of the Earth" (*padişah-ı ru-yi zemin*). Such epithets, however, are only occasionally elaborated upon, through such comments as the following: "God the exalted gave power to you [the Khan] and made you padishah among the people".[24]

The Islamic notion of divine rulership is closely connected to the concept of a divine 'world order' (*nizam-ı âlem*), a notion which figured prominently in Crimean Tatar historiography over the centuries. The idea that God not only created all beings, but also arranged for them to live together in peace is prevalent in Islamic political literature in general and in the pre-eighteenth-century Ottoman advice literature for rulers in particular.[25] According to this concept, God ordained a particular place in society for each of its members and assigned to the ruler the duty of preserving this divine order of things, placing him at the top of the hierarchy and bestowing on him the authority to issue commands. In the words of a Crimean historian:

---

[22] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*.

[23] See, for instance, Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 119; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٤٩; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 83. For an introduction to the steppe concept of divine rulership, see A. Sárközi, 'Mandate of Heaven: Heavenly Support of the Mongol Ruler', in B. Kellner-Heinkele (ed.), *Altaica Berolinensia: The Concept of Sovereignty in the Altaic World; Permanent International Altaistic Conference, 34th Meeting, Berlin 21-26 July*, *1991* (Wiesbaden 1993), 215-221. On the Ottoman reception, see for instance R. Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800* (London 2008), 78.

[24] Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 87. For examples of these epithets, see ibid., 19; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٩; Sabit, *Zafername,* ed. Karacan, 84; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 110r.

[25] On this concept in Ottoman letters, see in particular G. Hagen, 'Legitimacy and World Order',

> God the Exalted saw humans as worthy of being the crown of the wonder [of Creation] and said [Quran 17:70]: 'We have honoured the Children of Adam'. But some of them became saints, some of them prophets, some of them rulers, and some of them subjects.
>
> He has assigned a task to everyone,
>
> He has made us satisfied with this.[26]

In addition to these basic principles relating to the Khan's rule, the histories also mention a series of attributes that a ruler on the Crimean throne must possess. First and foremost, they stress the importance of justice, which they commonly define as the absence of all forms of oppression (*zulm*), concluding that a ruler must exercise his power so as to be "a wolf to the oppressor (*zalim*) and a sheep to the oppressed (*mazlûm*)".[27] Following a view common in Islamic and Ottoman political thought, the texts connect the idea of justice with obedience to sharia law and the ruler's ability to maintain the social order ordained by God. They praise Khans for following the right path of the sharia and warn them from going astray and bringing in illicit innovation (*bid'at*).[28] Furthermore, they suggest that justice is the main criterion for deciding whether or not a ruler's authority was legitimate: the only Khan who could be legitimately removed from power was one who oppressed his subjects or neglected state affairs in such a way that the people living under his rule were placed at risk of oppression.[29] However, the works underscore that a Khan was also to be judged according to his ability to protect his subjects from enemy attack and to provide for the people in such a way as to enable them to live in peace and prosperity. Moreover, in the view of the Khanate's historians, a good ruler needed to be prudent in his conduct of state affairs, to have foresight, and to listen to the right advisors; he should be merciful, generous, and charitable; and, ideally, he should also possess such moral virtues as piety, erudition, and kindness, in order to be able to serve as an example to everyone.

In addition to reflecting such commonplaces of Islamic and earlier political thought, the Crimean Tatar historiography also conveys notions of legitimate authority and good

---

in H. T. Karateke with M. Reinkowski (eds), *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power* (Leiden 2005), 55-83.

[26] Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 19. The translation from the Quran is based on A. J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London 1955).

[27] Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 35. See also Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٧-٨; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 17v-18r; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 87; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 317r.

[28] See, for instance, Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 50v-51r; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 289r-v.

[29] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 69r; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 288r.

rulership that are quite specific to the Khanate inasmuch as they originate in the Khanate's steppe past. First and foremost, the historians leave no doubt that the Khans' Genghisid claims committed them to an adherence to Genghisid custom, emphasising how, in the Khanate, justice and the rule of law meant not only applying the sharia and preserving the divine world order, but also adhering to the old 'law' or 'tradition' (*kanun, töre*, *âdet*) of Genghis Khan. The texts highlight three such laws or traditions in particular: the system of joint rulership, certain rules of succession, and a particular way of deploying troops on campaign.

First, the texts claim that Genghisid tradition required a Genghisid Khan and the four ruling Tatar clans to share authority over Crimea's people and resources:

> Since the old days, the leaders of the four ruling clans or *karaçi* are the commanders of their domains. This is what Genghisid tradition says. The first commander is the *bey* of the Şirin, the second is the *bey* of the Mangıt, the third is the *bey* of the Secevit, and the fourth is the *bey* of the Argın. The domains belong to their respective families. The *bey*s are the heads of each house and they are not subject to appointment or dismissal but hold their position for life.[30]

While the histories reflect the changes in the clan hierarchy over the centuries, they also underline that the relation between Khan and clans ought not be disputed. However, as the discussion below will show, the authors had quite different ideas about how this joint rule should play out in practice. Depending on their particular vision, they stressed different qualities that a Khan ought to possess: he should either rule with a strong hand and punish any extreme behaviour from the clans, or he should allow the *bey*s great latitude and be lenient and generous towards them above all. But whatever policy a Khan chose, he had to find a balance with the clan leaders and convince them of his commitment to Crimea's traditional political constitution.

Second, according to the histories, Genghisid custom had it that the throne of Genghis Khan was reserved for the oldest male member of the ruling house, irrespective of whether or not he was actually the Khan's son. The same rule applied to the Giray princes appointed to the positions of *kalga* and – since its introduction in the later sixteenth century – *nureddin*; that is, the second and third-in-command in the Khanate, respectively:

> The ancient custom of the Genghisids stipulates that if a prince is one day or perhaps only one hour older than another prince, the younger prince must show respect to and honour the older prince. Whenever they meet, he must bow to the [older prince]. This is the old and approved custom that existed among [the Genghisids]; this is how they secured order and discipline. If a position is given to the younger brother, the older brother must leave Crimea.[31]

---

[30] Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٧. On this 'Genghisid law', see also the short comment in H. İnalcık, 'The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy: The Crimean Khanate under Sahib Giray I', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 3-4 (1979-1980), 445-466, here 447.

[31] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 107v. See also Remmal Hoca, *Tārīḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 20; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 280r. For this principle and competing ideas about succession, see A. Bennigsen with C. Demercier-Quelquejay, 'La Moscovie,

The histories provide several examples to show that only a Khan who respected these rules of succession was considered legitimate by the Tatar clans and the population. Khans who rose to power in violation of the principle of seniority were believed to be doomed because their lack of authority allowed Crimea's powerful factions to fight for influence, plunge the country into chaos, and eventually oust the ruler from the throne.

Finally, the Crimean historians place a great deal of emphasis on the traditional arrangement of the Tatar troops in three units with the clans forming the army's two wings, which they claim was stipulated by Genghisid law as well: "[The Khan] deployed the troops according to the old law of Genghis Khan: on the right wing, there was the commander of the Şirin, and on the left wing, there was the commander of the Mangıt."[32]

The Crimean Tatar historiography puts forward many more ideas originating in the steppe tradition and relating to the duties of the Khan as a military commander. Above all, the Tatar ruler was expected to personally participate and successfully lead his troops on campaign, as well as to conduct profitable raids into neighbouring territories. He had to take into consideration that the Tatars were not equipped for long sieges, as they each had several horses they needed to feed, and that their main incentive in joining a campaign was the prospect of booty. Moreover, the Khan was expected to give preference to the needs of the Tatars over his obligations to the Ottoman Sultan. More concretely, some authors suggest that, if necessary, the Khan would do better to arrive late to or withdraw early from any joint Ottoman-Tatar operation, rather than let his people starve or alienate the Tatar clans and risk being left alone on the battlefield.[33] As a matter of course, a Khan was expected to obtain booty that was to be partitioned among the soldiers according to ancient custom. The notion of prosperity in the Tatar histories is typically closely connected to captured people, livestock, and valuables.[34] Finally, the works also propagate ideals of manliness and heroic behaviour. Most notably, they underline how, as successors to the greatest steppe emperor, the Crimean Khans were expected to be exceptionally brave, have Genghisid and *gazi* zeal, and possess a warrior's qualities and skills, such as proficiency with bow and arrow.

---

l'Empire ottoman et la crise successorale de 1577-1588 dans le Khanat de Crimée. La tradition nomade contre le modèle des monarchies sédentaires', *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 14 (1973), 453-487.

[32] Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٢١. See also Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 100; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 84–85; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 309v. On Tatar warfare, see L. J. D. Collins, 'The Military Organization and Tactics of the Crimean Tatars, 16th-17th Centuries', in V. J. Parry with M. E. Yapp (eds), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London 1975), 257-276.

[33] See, for instance, Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 26; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 36r-37v. On Ottoman-Tatar military co-operation, see M. Ivanics, 'The Military Co-operation of the Crimean Khanate with the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in G. Kármán with L. Kunčević (eds), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden 2013), 275-299.

[34] See, for instance, Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 128-129; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٣٠–٣١; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 281r.

The Sultan and Ottoman suzerainty

The Tatar histories give voice to a number of ideas regarding the position and duties of the Ottoman Sultan. Especially in the later period of the Khanate, as the Sultan's suzerainty over the Khan became real, the Ottoman ruler was a tangible feature of the Khanate's political constitution. Overall, the texts represent the Sultan less as a political overlord than as a mighty protector and religious leader.[35] While they downplay the Sultan's political role and deny him any legitimate political claim on the Tatar state, the texts do invoke some of the Sultan's religious functions as a way of legitimising Ottoman suzerainty. The attributes deemed important for the Ottoman Sultan are therefore quite different from those put forward with regard to the Crimean Khans.

One common strategy used in the histories to downplay the Sultan's political role in the Khanate is silence: while the Khan is mentioned constantly, the Sultan is strikingly absent in these texts. Every new Tatar ruler is introduced and characterised, but the advent of a new Sultan goes largely unmentioned. Changes on the Crimean throne are reported using formulaic language, which allows for little fuss to be made about the Ottoman factor in Crimean succession. Those Khans who pursued a policy particularly independent from Istanbul figure much more prominently in the histories than those who loyally executed the Sultan's commands; in fact, one work, the *Seven Planets in the Narratives of the Tatar Kings*, is dedicated to seven Khans singled out for being the most independent.[36] Another technique used to make the Sultan appear insignificant is to openly contest his political authority. The histories include various reports demonstrating that the Ottoman ruler was often not in a position to issue binding commands. They show Khans who ignored imperial orders without facing any consequences, Khans who openly challenged the validity of a Sultan's verdict by sending his envoy back empty-handed, and Khans who tricked the Ottomans by pretending that certain tribes who had disobeyed an imperial decree were beyond the reach of the Tatar ruler's command, when in fact they were actually acting on his secret orders.[37]

Moreover, the Crimean Tatar historiography blurs the Ottoman-Tatar power hierarchy to create the impression that the Sultan and the Khan were rulers of equal rank and prestige. Some of the works insinuate that the two rulers established their relationship by means of an agreement made when the Ottomans first arrived in the peninsula in 1475.[38] In descriptions of joint campaigns and gift exchange – where the Sultan typically makes an actual appearance in the texts – the Khan and the Sultan are represented as peers: they meet to chat and discuss military strategy and then march forward with their respective troops against the common enemy. On the occasion of the accession of a Khan to the throne, the Sultan is depicted as presenting the Tatar ruler with treasures, while the Khan, after a successful raid, sends selected human booty to the imperial palace in Istanbul. Some depictions of the Sultan and the Khan as equals are particularly blunt, such as the following staging of Sultan Süleyman II (r. 1687-1691) and Khan Selim Giray (here r. 1684-1691) employing metaphors from nature, Ferdowsi's *Book of the Kings*, and the Quran:

---

[35] This confirms an observation Alan Fisher made 40 years ago: "Crimean historians from the very beginning never accepted the idea of Crimean Giray subjection to the Ottomans in the political field, but only in the religious"; see Fisher, 'Crimean Separatism', 67-68.

[36] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek.

[37] See for instance, Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed Abrahamowicz ٣١-٣٢; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 300r-v.

[38] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 103r-104r; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 279r. Scholars have questioned whether such a written agreement ever actually existed; see, in particular, H. İnalcık, 'Yeni vesikalara göre Kırım Hanlığının Osmanlı tâbiliğine girmesi ve ahidname meselesi', *Belleten*, 8 (1944), 185-229.

> There came together two great rulers.
> One called Süleyman, one called Selim. […]
> One was the moon, one was the sun.
> One was Khosrow, one was Jamshid.
> This was Afrasiyab, and that was Hakan.
> This was Alexander the Great, and that was King Salomon.[39]

Despite all this, the Khan and the Sultan are also represented as rulers of a different sort. In contrast to the former, the latter possessed no legitimate political authority in the Khanate. The histories acknowledge that the house of Osman had established its right to the throne in Istanbul over the course of generations, but they also insist that, as non-Genghisids, the Ottomans could not lay political claim to the inheritance of Genghis Khan's empire in Crimea.[40] Unlike the Khan, however, the Sultan possessed legitimacy as a supreme religious leader. The texts explain the Sultan's role for the Tatars and legitimise Ottoman suzerainty over the Khanate by asserting that he is the refuge for the world's Muslims, the leader of the umma, and the guardian of the holy cities of Islam.[41]

According to the texts, the Sultan was the world's most powerful emperor, the one who guarded and extended the abode of Islam and acted as mighty protector to all Muslims. He was the "refuge of the world" (*âlempenah*) and the "refuge of all rulers of the time" (*merci-i havakinu'z-zaman*), titles that are used only for him and never appear in reference to the Khan.[42] The texts accentuate how the Ottoman world dominion is to be interpreted in religious terms, thereby leaving the Crimean Khans' right to the heritage of the Golden Horde untouched. The epithets used to highlight the Sultan's power are "the Sultan of the Arabs, the Persians, and Rome", "the Sultan of Rome", and "lord of the two continents and two seas", thus allowing him no political authority over the former territories of the Golden Horde.[43] The eighteenth-century historian Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, who elaborates on the issue, first presents an extensive list of all the lands and seas that the Ottomans had conquered and thereby included within the abode of Islam, and then proceeds to list the domains of the Golden Horde Khans extending north of these territories, from Khwarezm in the east to the Danube in the west. The Crimean Khans are represented as the heirs to the Golden Horde Khans and their domains. While they have entered the Sultan's service in return for special favours, they remained the rulers of Kazan and Astrakhan, functioning as the Sultans' intermediaries in controlling these areas.[44] Put differently, the Sultan was the supreme lord of the Islamic world, which included the Crimean Khanate and explained the fact of Ottoman suzerainty, but the Khan was nonetheless the unchallenged lord of the steppe.

---

[39] Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 70-71.

[40] Only one history labels the Sultans' recent genealogy as "debated" and their descent since Noah unknown: Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 168r, 243r. The other texts describe the house of Osman, without reservation, as a well-established dynasty; see for instance Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٣٢; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 66; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 1v; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 3.

[41] This is in line with the observations of the eighteenth-century French consul in Crimea and with the titles the Khans generally used when addressing the Sultan: Peyssonel, *Traité*, 2:233-234; H. İnalcık, 'Power relationships between Russia, the Crimea and the Ottoman Empire as reflected in titulature', in C. Lemercier-Quelquejay with G. Veinstein, S. E. Wimbush (eds), *Passé turco-tatar, présent soviétique: études offertes à Alexandre Bennigsen* (Paris 1986), 175-211, here 195-202. Titles such as "shadow of God" or "ruler on Earth," which appear in the histories and allude to a divine mission of the Sultan, seem explicitly connected to these religious notions and not, as in the case of the Khans, to the exercise of political power; see, for instance, Remmal Hoca, *Tārīḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 119; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 63; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 13r.

The histories further emphasise the Sultan's role as leader and protector of the Islamic community by invoking the caliphate and the Ottoman Sultans' guardianship over Islam's holy sites in Mecca and Medina. Most works, both earlier and later, call the Sultan "caliph", "Commander of the Believers", or the like.[45] With the exception of Senai's panegyric history, which praises the seventeenth-century Khan Islam III Giray using every possible attribute and title, the texts reserve such epithets for the Sultan and do not use them to refer to the Khans.[46] On the contrary, the Ottomans' religious leadership was used as a way of emphasising the difference between the two rulers, as the following quotation from a discussion among Tatar rebels indicates: "We have not only been rebellious against the ruler of the house of Osman, who is the Padishah of Islam, but we have also rebelled against our own Padishah [the Khan]".[47] In addition, several histories mention that "the House of Osman [were] the lords over Mecca and Medina" or bestow on the

---

[42] See for instance Remmal Hoca, *Tāriẖ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 96; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 1v; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 291r.

[43] See for instance Remmal Hoca, *Tāriẖ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 31; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٩–١٠; Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 66; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 1v; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 3.

[44] Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 63-69.

[45] See for instance Remmal Hoca, *Tāriẖ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 119; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٩; Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 16v-17r; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 3.

[46] On this exception, see Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz,٦.

[47] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 97v.

Sultan the title “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques” in order to underline his religious function for the Tatars.[48]

The attributes that the Crimean historians ascribe to the ruler in Istanbul reflect this view of the Sultan as being a religious leader rather than a political overlord for the Tatars, and a powerful world emperor providing protection. First and foremost, the texts emphasise the virtues of care, mercy, generosity, benevolence, and piety, while also pointing out the Sultans’ power and glory. Apart from noting the importance of choosing the right advisors in general and not being deceived by people pursuing sinister plans within Crimea in particular, the histories make no mention of the qualities that are commonly required in a ruler who exercises power, such as those put forward with regard to the Crimean Khan.[49]

II. Negotiating Power in the Crimean Khanate

Although the above outline introduces the key notions regarding the Khan’s rule and Ottoman suzerainty, it must be said that the image it presents of Crimean Tatar ideology is not only static, but often inaccurate inasmuch as it brings together ideas expressed by different authors in different periods for different ends. The following discussion attempts to put these ideas back into their respective contexts in order to show that Crimean Tatar political ideology was actually dynamic, accommodating the needs of different political actors at different times. Focusing on three of the seven Tatar histories in particular, it analyses how people in Crimea used the existing ideological repertoire and enriched it by introducing new notions applicable to their particular causes. The selected texts represent the views of three major political players at the most critical moments in the Khanate’s history: Remmal Hoca’s *History of Khan Sahib Giray* reflects the stance of the Khan’s favourite during the largest power struggle of the Khanate’s ‘golden age’ in the sixteenth century; Mehmed Giray’s *History of Mehmed Giray* expresses the opinion of an exiled Tatar prince on Crimea’s first severe crisis following defeat in the war against the Holy League at the end of the seventeenth century, and Abdulgaffar Kırımî’s *Pillar of the Narratives* provides the viewpoint of a member of the Tatar clans on the Khanate in the 1740s, when it had fully lost its independence and was threatened by Russia’s southern expansion.

---

[48] See, for instance, Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 1v; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb’ü’s-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 65; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü’l-ahbar*, 296v.

[49] See, for instance, Sabit, *Zafername*, ed. Karacan, 64-65; Hadży Mehmed Senai, *Üçüncü Islam Giray Han Tarihi*, ed. Abrahamowicz, ٣١; Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü’l-ahbar*, 317r. On the attributes that Istanbulite authors commonly ascribe to the Sultan, see M. Kurz, ‘Gracious Sultan, Grateful Subjects: Spreading Ottoman Imperial “Ideology” throughout the Empire’, *SI*, new series 3 (2012), 119-148. This paper also mentions the most important studies on the subject.

Remmal Hoca's apology for Khan Sahib Giray's centralising policies

Remmal Hoca's *History of Khan Sahib Giray*, the only historiographical text from sixteenth-century Crimea, chronicles a decisive episode in the relations between the Crimean Khan, the Tatar clans, and the Ottoman Sultan relating to Khan Sahib Giray's (r. 1532-1551) attempts to centralise power. Remmal Hoca, an Ottoman polymath in the intimate service of Khan Sahib Giray, composed the work at the request of the Khan's daughter after the death of her father. It provides an enthusiastic account of the Khan's entire reign, focusing on his military expeditions and his struggle against the different coalitions trying to chase him off the throne.[50]

Khan Sahib Giray was an ambitious ruler who, having spent many years in Istanbul studying the sultanic mode of rulership, attempted to concentrate power in his own hands by introducing Ottoman-style military units, unifying the administration, and crushing his political rivals. The Tatar clans deemed his innovations and authoritarian tendencies a threat to their position, but competition amongst them hindered their struggle to preserve the traditional system of joint rulership and led to shifting alliances. While every party in the struggle was attempting to obtain the support of the Sultan in Istanbul, the Ottomans, for their part, were playing the different groups off against each other in order to, on the one hand, ensure the Tatars' loyalty and participation for imperial campaigns and, on the other, to curtail the Khan's ambitions to expand his sphere of influence beyond the Khanate. During his twenty-year reign, Khan Sahib Giray's authority was challenged three times. The first was an attempted coup by his *kalga* Islam Giray and the most powerful Tatar clan, the Şirin. In this struggle, the Khan had the support of the rival Mangıt clan and the Nogay tribal confederation, as well as the backing of the Sublime Porte, which ignored letters requesting that the "refuge of the world" replace Khan Sahib Giray, based on the claim that he was unable to maintain order (*nizam u intizam*), acted against Genghisid tradition (*töre*), brought in illicit innovation (*bid'at*), and no longer conducted raids, all of which was said to be causing injustice (*zulm*), internal unrest (*fitne u fesad*), and poverty.[51] A second violent conflict broke out when the Khan's Mangıt-Nogay confederates turned into his most dangerous adversaries. The Tatar ruler overcame this threat only because his former opponents from the Şirin clan now became his loyal allies, not to mention the fact that he still had sufficient support in Istanbul. In the end, however, the Khan fell victim to his centralising, repressive, and independent policy, which alienated his supporters in Crimea and Istanbul alike. He was dethroned and murdered in 1551.[52]

---

[50] For the text's publication and French translation, see above. On the author, Kaysunizade Mehmed Nidaî or Remmal Hoca in Crimea, and his oeuvre, see Klein, 'Historiography', 96-103; *TDVİA* s.v. 'Nidâî' (S. Özçelik).

[51] These letters have been published several times: Ö. Gökbilgin, *1532-1577 yılları arasında Kırım Hanlığı'nın siyasî durumu* (Ankara 1973), 55-58; idem, 'Quelques sources manuscrites sur l'époque de Sahib Giray Ier, Khan de Crimée (1532-1551), à Istanbul, Paris et Leningrad', *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 11 (1970), 462-469; Bennigsen *et al.*, *Le Khanat de Crimée*, 121-129.

[52] For an analysis of Khan Sahib Giray's reign in general and these power struggles in particu-

The *History of Khan Sahib Giray* is an apology for the fallen Khan's contested policy and leadership, an attempt to restore his memory and provide guidance for future rulers of Crimea. Though he plainly states his work's objectives, Remmal Hoca also leaves his motives for writing open. It is most probable that he was not merely seeking money, but also felt loyalty, gratitude, and affection for his long-term master and benefactor and, as an Ottoman who was accustomed to centralised rule, was truly convinced of the rightness or necessity of Khan Sahib Giray's policy.[53] The Khan serves as the lone protagonist of the work; notwithstanding the author's origin, the Ottoman Sultan makes an appearance only twice, first when he confirms the clans' choice for the Crimean throne, bestowing on Khan Sahib Giray the traditional insignia of power, and, second, when he, according to the text, wrongly deposes the Khan, believing in the truth of an intrigue between his greedy advisors and their Giray and clan allies.[54] The portrayal of the Tatar's overlord in Istanbul is also perfectly in line with Crimean Tatar political ideology. The history emphasises that the Ottoman Sultan was the Muslims' supreme leader and safe haven, and that he and the Khan were peers, introducing Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520-1566) as "Sultan of the House of Osman" and Khan Sahib Giray as "Khan of the House of Genghis", two sovereigns who enjoyed each other's company and fought side by side against infidels.[55]

The work begins by proving wrong the different factions that had challenged Khan Sahib Giray's position, attesting that his rule was indeed legitimate in both steppe and Islamic terms. As to the former, the text emphasises that the Khan was chosen by the leaders of the ruling clans and ascended the throne only after his older predecessor had voluntarily abdicated and left the country.[56] As to the latter, the text explicitly invokes the ruler's divine mission in a preordained world. The Ottoman author, well versed in the

---

lar, see İnalcık, 'The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy'. See also Gökbilgin, *1532-1577 yılları arasında Kırım*. Both authors make intensive use of Remmal Hoca's history. On the role of neighbouring powers in these internal conflicts, see Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate*, 71-89.

[53] On the work's objectives, see, in particular, Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 19. Remmal Hoca's presentation is remarkable considering that he spent the last years of the Khan's reign in prison, which he hints at in a phrase that may very well represent his true feelings: "Thank God that in spite of the troubles and suffering I have gone through, my affection for the deceased [Khan] has never vanished from my heart"; see ibid., 149. He speaks about his imprisonment only in a later work, see Özçelik, Nidâî, 77. However, many in Crimea must have known about it; see, for instance, the mention of his imprisonment in an eighteenth-century history: Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar*, ed. Kazembek, 92-93.

[54] On the Khan's inauguration, see Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 20. On his deposal, see ibid., 113-121. Sultan Süleyman's advisors reportedly concocted a claim that the Khan ignored imperial orders, failed to appear on campaign, and attempted to expand his control so as to include Ottoman territories. The author brings up his intimate knowledge of the Khan to refute all these accusations, on the contrary stressing how the Khan has always remained loyal and behaved in an upright manner towards the Sultan.

[55] On the Sultan's religious function, see, for instance, ibid., 29, 119, 139. On the representation of the Khan and Sultan as peers, including the above quotations, see in particular ibid., 19-20.

[56] Ibid., 20.

political literature of contemporary Istanbul, seems to have played a crucial role in introducing these Islamic notions in their Ottoman form into Crimean Tatar political thought. He first presents the new Khan using the epithet "padishah of mankind and the shadow of God on Earth", and then explains the concept of world order, admonishing the work's readers and listeners to accept the place God has allotted to each member of society.[57] Throughout the text, it is repeatedly pointed out that God arranged for the Tatar ruler to be in a position of superiority and strength, in particular *vis-à-vis* the Tatar clans, and that challenging the Khan's rule meant challenging God's rule:

> As the rulers are the shadows of God on Earth,
> The one who looks askance at them goes astray. […]
> God gave them knowledge and power,
> They always are of the highest rank.
> […] Be attentive, learn from every word you hear.[58]

In direct response to the charges against Khan Sahib Giray, the history argues that the deposed Khan's fight for control and his strict exercise of power had been both God's will and a necessity for rulership in the Khanate. The text highlights the key notion of justice and insists that, in order to uphold God's regime and the rule of law, a monarch must be firmly seated on his throne and his commands must be followed.[59] It was therefore "in the interest of the world order" that Khan Sahib Giray imprisoned certain Tatar princes who posed a direct threat to his position and killed rebels like the unruly *kalga* Islam Giray, and it was essential that he punish offences relentlessly, applying both sharia and Genghisid law.[60] According to the history, it was the Khan's "firm control" (*zabt*) and the fact that "his orders were strictly executed" that accounted for the rule of law and the absence of injustice (*zulm*) during his reign.[61] What is more, it was also because of his rigorous and brutal exercise of power that the Tatar *bey*s, out of fear of the Khan, abstained from oppressing the people living in their domains and from committing injustice during raids and imperial campaigns.[62]

Stressing a Khan's obligation to protect and provide for his people, the history claims that Khan Sahib Giray stood out among the Tatar rulers in terms of securing peace and prosperity owing to his authority over the Khanate's military force and his tough stance against Crimea's external enemies. According to the text, the Khan's operations and severe punishments struck neighbouring countries with such awe that they sent gifts to appease the Tatar ruler instead of launching attacks against the Khanate. This allowed the people living in the Khan's realm to attend to their business, and enabled the Khanate's economy to thrive as never before. In addition, the text asserts, the Khan's raids and campaigns brought the Tatars immense amounts of booty, and the ruler added to the country's wealth through his legendary generosity and charity.[63]

---

[57] Ibid., 19.

[58] Ibid., 70. See also 68, 87.

[59] See for instance ibid., 45, 97, 105.

[60] On these measures meant to maintain world order, see ibid., 22-23, 134. On justice in general, see, for instance, ibid., 34, 106, 119. On sharia law, see, for instance, ibid., 26-27, 31, 103. On Genghisid custom, see, for instance, ibid., 27-28, 49, 71. On the Khan's determined actions against oppression, see, for instance, ibid., 27, 93-94, 98.

[61] Ibid., 131. See also ibid., 32, 35.

[62] See, for instance, ibid., 32-34, 70-71, 101-102.

In this context, the history's detailed description of warfare and army tactics reads like an answer to the allegation that Khan Sahib Giray's new military units constituted an illicit innovation violating Genghisid tradition. The text emphasises how, on the occasion of every expedition, the Khan deployed the soldiers according to the old custom, while adding his own new troops. It argues that the record that this combination of traditional Tatar warfare and new technology brought significant military advantages, which at times proved crucial for the success of an expedition.[64] Highlighting the Khan's merits as a military commander and great steppe warrior "who drew the bow like no one else, no Circassian, no Turk, and no Nogay", the history pardons his failed expeditions and hides his strategic mistakes well between the lines.[65] At the same time, the text's failure to mention certain attributes of the Khan, most notably kindness and mercy, can be read as covert criticism. However, these virtues appear to be of only minor relevance, given the exceptional challenges of rulership in the Khanate in general and during Khan Sahib Giray's reign in particular.

Overall, the history creates the image of an ideal Islamic steppe ruler who should serve as an example to future Khans, but who was unfortunately misjudged by his contemporaries.[66] The text goes far beyond simply establishing the legitimacy of Khan Sahib Giray's rule, narrating his accomplishments, and mourning his deposition and murder: it demonstrates that he was precisely the kind of ruler that the Khanate needed at the time, and it reasons that his end may well have marked the end of a golden age. Expressing concern about the Tatars' future if no similarly strong Khan arises to protect the Khanate from injustice and enemies, the history closes with a report of the recent developments, suggesting that Crimea was indeed moving towards gloomier times. According to the text, the powerful Khan Sahib Giray was ousted so that greedy people in Istanbul and Crimea could abuse their position for their own personal enrichment. The new ruler on the Crimean throne immediately seized the rich treasury in order to buy off the Tatar

---

[63] On the relation between the Khan's military actions and the Tatars' safety and prosperity, see, in particular, ibid., 81, 95, 113. On booty, see, for instance, ibid., 31, 80, 128-129. On the Khan's personal generosity and charity, see, for instance, ibid., 25, 74, 82.

[64] See, for instance, ibid. 61-63, 72-75, 112-113. On the Khan's military expeditions and tactics based on Remmal Hoca's history, see V. Ostapchuk, 'Crimean Tatar Long-Range Campaigns: The View from Remmal Khoja's *History of Sahib Gerey Khan*', in B. J. Davies (ed.), *Warfare in Eastern Europe, 1500-1800* (Leiden 2012), 147-171.

[65] Remmal Hoca, *Tāriḫ-i Ṣāḥip Giray Ḫān*, ed. Gökbilgin, 131. See also ibid., 20, 101. For concealed criticism of the Khan's military decisions, see, for instance, the account of the ruler's first campaign to Circassia: ibid., 41-42. See also the account of his third Caucasus campaign. According to one manuscript, the Khan was unaware that the expedition was bound to fail, while according to another manuscript he ignored a sheikh's warning to that effect: ibid. 86.

[66] For a summary of this idea at the end of the history, see ibid., 130-131.

*bey*s and the local population. The fallen Khan, together with all his male offspring, was murdered in cold blood. Seven *bey*s of the leading Şirin clan were slain in revenge.[67]

Mehmed Giray's attempt to restore confidence after Karlowitz

When Mehmed Giray penned his *History of Mehmed Giray* one and half centuries after Remmal Hoca's *History of Khan Sahib Giray*, the Khanate was in the midst of a severe crisis brought about by defeat in the war with the Holy League (1683-1700), a crisis that would usher in the Khanate's last century of slow decline. Mehmed Giray, a Tatar prince who spent much of his life in exile but maintained close contact with his powerful relatives in Crimea, wrote the history in 1703 on his own initiative, for his peers and a primarily Tatar audience. This is the only work from the Khanate that discusses Tatar and Ottoman history together, chronicling the years from the failed second Siege of Vienna in 1683 through the 1703 'Edirne Event' that deposed Sultan Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703).[68]

The Ottoman-Tatar war against the Holy League – an Austrian-Polish-Venetian coalition formed after the Siege of Vienna in 1683, which Russia joined in 1686 – shook Crimea and Crimean Tatar political ideology to their very foundations. The Tsardom launched its initial attacks on the peninsula, seizing the Black Sea stronghold of Azov. The subsequent peace treaties of Karlowitz and Istanbul (1699/1700) prohibited the Tatars from raiding neighbouring territories, thus putting an end to the lucrative slave trade and ransom business and threatening the livelihoods of many, while also prompting some clan leaders to advocate independence from Istanbul. External pressures and economic distress led to internal conflicts. The Khans were caught between the interests of the Tatar clans and those of the Ottoman Sultan, resulting in seven changes on the Crimean throne between 1683 and 1703, more than ever before. All this was difficult to reconcile with fundamental ideas regarding the Khan's rule and Ottoman suzerainty. The devastating defeat at the hands of an alliance of Christian powers challenged the Sultan's role as the mighty protector of Muslims against the enemies of the faith. Moreover, the Khans' claim to the heritage of the Golden Horde was hardly convincing any longer after the peace treaties confirmed the territorial integrity of neighbouring countries, ended the tribute payments of Russia and Poland to the Crimean Khans, and eliminated the Khanate's position as intermediary between the Tsar and the Sultan. The oft referenced autonomy of the Tatar state was not a reflection of reality during these years of crisis, when there were few opportunities to pursue an independent policy. What is more, the fact that the Khans were at the mercy of the clans and the Sultan, and that the Khan was constantly changing, did not accord with the idea of a divine mandate to power. Last but not least, how could the Khans credibly claim to be good rulers in light of these unprecedented military defeats, political turmoil, and economic hardship?[69]

---

[67] Ibid., 114-116, 134-145.

[68] For the autograph and (partial) editions of the text, see above. On the author and his history, see Klein, 'Historiography', 114-123.

[69] For a historical overview of this era, see H. İnalcık, 'Struggle for East-European Empire, 1400-

The *History of Mehmed Giray* seeks to provide answers to these questions. It is an attempt to restore confidence not only in the Giray dynasty, securing the family's hold on power, but also in the bond between Tatars and Ottomans, speaking out against calls for Tatar independence. It offers an explanatory model based on the idea of world order so as to make sense of the recent crisis and to frame the author's own political agenda. The work proposes that, up until the Siege of Vienna, God's regime had been basically in place: the Ottoman Sultan was the leader and the safe haven of the Islamic community, the protector of Mecca and Medina who expanded the abode of Islam through new conquests. The Crimean Khan, meanwhile, was the lord of the steppe and a champion of Islam, receiving tribute from Moscow and other neighbours that allowed the Tatars to enjoy peace and prosperity.[70] Discussing the different aspects of the "disaster [that] befell the umma" in 1683, the text acknowledges people's anxieties and disillusionment, but cautions that one must not question the Khan's rule or the nature of Tatar-Ottoman relations.[71] Instead, one must read the phenomenon of crisis as a sign indicating that the world was in chaos, and must look to the reasons why the rulers of the time had fallen short in terms of maintaining God's order. Mehmed Giray identifies three such causes, discussing them each in a separate chapter, while also presenting the events as part of a historical account in order to support his conclusions.[72]

Emphasising the key notion of justice, the author first argues that injustice and oppression (*zulm u taaddi*) caused the withdrawal of God's support in battle.[73] The work underscores the notion that rule of law is crucial for maintaining the preordained order and receiving God's favour.[74] The recent disrespect for sharia law is blamed on a lack of moral values, especially greed for power and money. For instance, according to the text, the Ottomans' decision to wage war on the Habsburgs in 1683 was made in violation of sharia law, out of greed and arrogance, and the Sultan's army was deprived of God's support in combat because the soldiers were remunerated with money obtained through the oppressive extraction of taxes by greedy tax farmers.[75] Though Mehmed Giray fo-

---

1700: The Crimean Khanate, Ottomans and the Rise of the Russian Empire', *Milletler Arası Münasebetler Türk Yıllığı*, 21 (1982-1991), 1-16; R. A. Abou-El-Haj, 'The Formal Closure of the Ottoman Frontier in Europe: 1699-1703', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 89 (1969), 467-475; Bennigsen *et al*., *Le Khanat de Crimée*, 12-13, 342-347; A. W. Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea 1772-1783* (Cambridge 1970), 17-18.

[70] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 1v-2r, 7v.

[71] Ibid., 3r.

[72] I have examined this separate chapter – which is entitled 'The Three Reasons for the Weakness of the Ottoman State' and which begins with a summary of the different phenomena of crisis, from military defeats to inflation to divine signs like earthquakes and eclipses – in another article: D. Klein, '"Das Chaos der Welt." Ein krimtatarischer Blick auf die Zeit um 1700', in Y. Köse (ed.), *Şehrâyîn: Die Welt der Osmanen, die Osmanen in der Welt. Wahrnehmungen, Begegnungen und Abgrenzungen; Festschrift Prof. Hans Georg Majer* (Wiesbaden 2012), 157-172.

[73] Mehmed Giray, *Tarih-i Mehmed Giray*, 67r-v.

[74] See, for instance, ibid., 17v-18r, 47v.

[75] Ibid., 2r-5v, 67r-v. For examples of particularly excessive taxation and oppression, see ibid.,

cuses on injustice and moral decay in the Sultan's realm and praises several Khans for their moral virtues and strict adherence to sharia law and Genghisid tradition, he also acknowledges that problems of a similar kind existed in Crimea as well, and that some of his relatives in power must not be absolved of their own role in contributing to the Muslims' loss of divine support.[76]

The discussion of the actual politics in Istanbul that led to the military defeats, presented as the second cause of the crisis, emphasises the Sultan's role as a religious, rather than a political and military, leader. According to the text, the constant changes in the Ottoman grand vizierate, in conjunction with negligence and incompetence in military matters on the part of Ottoman statesmen, led to disastrous campaign planning and poor performance on the battlefield, and, in the end, to the loss of Islamic lands to the infidels and the humiliation of the umma. While the Sultans are not charged with lacking the qualities of military leadership, they are blamed for choosing the wrong men to govern the Empire, and, out of negligence, giving them full discretionary power. Consistent with Crimean Tatar political ideology, the history assigns little involvement in decision-making to the Ottoman ruler, instead highlighting his function as the refuge of the world, Caliph, and guardian of the holy sites of Islam, as well as attributes such as generosity, mercy, and piety.[77]

The text establishes the Khan as the military arm and natural counterpart of the Muslims' supreme leader and protector in Istanbul. It recommends that the rulers of Crimea should serve as advisors in military matters, complaining that much trouble could have been avoided if their counsel had not fallen on deaf ears.[78] Individual Khans are also presented as great commanders and warriors possessing the traditional virtues of a steppe ruler, being placed in the service of God in general and of the Ottoman "religion and state" (*din ü devlet*) in particular.[79] Failures on the battlefield are attributed not to a lack

---

15v-18v, 24r. Istanbul's political elite is, overall, labelled haughty and corrupt. Moreover, some officials are accused of illicit innovations and decadence, such as, for instance, certain Ottoman pashas depicted as wallowing in pleasure rather than fighting the enemy; see ibid., 50v, 63v-64r.

[76] On the particularly virtuous and law-abiding rulers Khan Murad Giray, Khan Selim Giray, and Khan Devlet Giray, see, in particular, ibid., 6v, 7v; 23r; 79v-80r, 107r-v. On the "bad Khan" par excellence, Khan Safa Giray, who only came to power because he had bribed the Ottoman Grand Vizier, see, in particular, ibid., 38v-39r, 40v-43v, 100r-100v. He is depicted as a greedy, stingy, envious, and crooked drunkard who violated sharia law, oppressed the people, mistreated his soldiers, neglected state affairs, and failed to fulfil his duties towards the Sultan and the Islamic community.

[77] On the second cause of the crisis, see ibid., 67v-68v. On the Sultan's religious function, see also ibid., 1v, 17r, 40v. For praise and criticism of the Sultans, see, for example, Sultan Süleyman II, who is described as "a dervish type who said 'yes' to whatever he was told", and despite being acclaimed for his piety and kindness, is accused of leaving state affairs to his eunuchs and servants, with the result that "the world was all in a tumble": ibid., 18r, 38v, 40v.

[78] For example, Khan Murad Giray cautioned, to no avail, the Ottoman Grand Vizier, who was typically given carte blanche by the Sultan, against making certain strategic mistakes during the Siege of Vienna: ibid., 2v, 4r-v.

[79] See, for instance, ibid., 49r, 55r, 72v.

of skill, but rather to certain Khans' moral weaknesses and to Ottoman interference.[80] In spite of occasional setbacks, the text claims that it was the Khan and his soldiers, not the Sultan with his immense army and abundant monetary resources, who accounted for the protection of the abode of Islam and the honour of the umma, both in the past and during the recent years of crisis, when nothing less than Rumelia and Istanbul as well as the banner of the Prophet Muhammad would have fallen into the hands of the infidels had it not been for the Tatars.[81]

The third and most important reason why the world was in chaos concerns the weakening of the Khan's authority. The text argues that the recent depositions of Tatar rulers constituted an infringement of the divine law and order. It maintains that the Khans were the legitimate rulers of Crimea because they belonged to an old ruling house descended from Genghis Khan, chosen by God to act on His behalf. According to sharia law, as the text explains, an Islamic ruler could not be deposed: it was God alone who could judge a ruler for his faults. Men could only remove an illegitimate ruler, particularly, one who had gone astray and attempted to alter the order by illicit innovations, and refused to return to the right path.[82] According to Mehmed Giray, none of this was the case with the Khans, who had been replaced because greed, ignorance, and negligence – rather than law – governed much of the political elite in Crimea and Istanbul.[83]

The history puts special emphasis on demonstrating how this disrespect for God's regime prevented the Khans from fulfilling the role ascribed to them. They could neither prevent injustice nor lead a strong Tatar army to fight for the Sultan and the faith, because as soon as they tried to exercise their authority, they risked losing the throne. All the Khans' efforts were consequently directed towards striking a balance between the Sultan, who constantly demanded troops, and the Tatar clans, who shirked campaigns to conduct independent actions instead. The history highlights that, once order is restored and the Khan back in his position, justice, prosperity, and God's support would return to the Khanate.[84] Because of the Khan's central role for the Islamic world, glorious days awaited:

---

[80] For example, the devastating defeat at Slankamen in 1691 and the death of numerous Tatar soldiers from starvation and disease are ascribed to Khan Saadet Giray's short temper, bossiness, and venality, as well as to the Ottoman pashas' arrogance and ignorance: ibid., 32r-38r.

[81] Ibid., 22v, 23v, 5r-v. The decisive defeat at Zenta in 1697 reportedly only occurred because the Habsburgs – fearing the Khan and his soldiers but not the "cowardly" Sultan – attacked after the Tatars had left the battlefield to raid: ibid., 74v-77v. Also, during Sultan Süleyman's reign (r. 1520-1566), for instance, "the Khan […] was the reason why the German kingdoms were destroyed and prostrated before the late Sultan": ibid., 70v.

[82] See, in particular, ibid., 12r, 69r.

[83] See, for instance, the account of Khan Hacı Giray, which combines criticism of the prince and later Khan, the Tatar clans, the Ottoman Grand Vizier, and Sultan Mehmed IV: ibid., 6r-7v, 9v-12v.

[84] See, for instance, the case of Khan Devlet Giray: ibid., 70v-71r, 79v-80r, 94r-95r, 107r-v. The Ottoman Grand Vizier who rejected a Tatar request to remove this Khan is praised for restoring the world order, and accordingly given his own separate chapter; see ibid., 113r-v.

> If things were different than described here, if the Crimean Khans were not deposed upon [the Tatar clans'] request, if they were independent Khans, if their orders were executed, and if the *bey*s and *mirza*s were kept under control, then […] not only the Germans, but even the cursed Pope would be frightened and the motherland would shine bright again; that's for sure![85]

By rationalising the late seventeenth-century crisis as a departure from the divine order, caused by injustice and general moral decay, governmental failure in Istanbul, and offences against the Khan's authority, the history turns any criticism of the existing political constitution into criticism of the political elite. This way of framing events allows the author to restore confidence in the Khan's rule and the Ottoman-Tatar alliance and to present his own political programme as the only way out of the crisis. By establishing the Sultan as the guardian and the Khan as the military spearhead of Islam, the text ties together the destinies of Tatars, Ottomans, and all Muslims, and suggests that their future depends on the fate of the Crimean Khans. Consequently, the work calls upon the different political actors in Crimea and Istanbul to return to the preordained order and to let the Sultan and the Khan resume their respective roles. First and foremost, they must reinstate the rule of law, be prudent in political decision-making, and stop weakening the position of the Giray Khans.

Abdulgaffar Kırımî's quest for joint rulership between Khan and clans

Ultimately, the situation in Crimea and the Islamic world did not change in the way that Mehmed Giray had envisioned and hoped. On the contrary, Ottoman suzerainty became more thorough and the Tatar state found itself under increased external threat when, in 1748, Abdulgaffar Kırımî wrote his *Pillar of the Narratives*, the only history to represent the perspective of the Tatar clans. A member of the leading Şirin clan and a former high official of the Şirin *bey* and of several Khans, Abdulgaffar Kırımî had been sent into exile and apparently hoped to change his fate by offering his work to the ruler. Dealing with the world's dynasties from the time of creation, his universal history focuses on the Genghisid Khans up through Khan Selamet Giray (r. 1740-1743), as well as on the Şirin clan. Appended to it is an annotated clan genealogy and an *ilm-i hal*.[86]

At the time Abdulgaffar Kırımî penned his history, the Khanate was in serious trouble. The changing balance of power in Europe, peace treaties sanctioning Tatar raids, and Ottoman intervention all threatened the Khanate's integrity, stability, and peace. Russia had invaded the peninsula in 1736 and 1737, sacking most of Crimea's towns, including Bahçesaray and the Khan's palace, and leaving behind great destruction, political turmoil, and a population on high alert. By then, if not even earlier, it was evident that the Tsardom's southern expansion posed a constant danger to the Tatars and that the Ottoman Empire could not protect them. At this point, the Khans had fully submitted to the Sultans in Istanbul, and they would be immediately replaced whenever they failed to comply with imperial orders or abstained from participating in campaigns. Given nearly two decades of constant warfare – against Persia from 1730 to 1735 and again from 1743 to 1746, and against Russia and Austria from 1735 to 1739 – this proved to be an excessive burden and resulted in regular changes on the Crimean throne, in particular because the Khans' authority *vis-à-vis* the landholding clans and the Khanate's main military force had been dwindling rapidly throughout the eighteenth century, when there was less booty to distribute. The clans, in turn, feared that they would be marginalised by the closer Ottoman-Giray alliance, and apparently also saw their position as being challenged by the service-based nobility, which had developed out of several Khans' centralising policies, beginning with Khan Sahib Giray in the sixteenth century. The *bey*s regularly turned to independent action and unauthorised raids, and sometimes even advocated Tatar independence.[87]

---

[85] Ibid., 70r-v.

[86] For the autograph and partial editions, see above. On the author and his work, see Klein, 'Historiography', 132-139; B. Kellner-Heinkele, 'Who was ʿAbdulghaffār el-Qırımī? Some Notes on an 18th Century Crimean Tatar Historian', *Journal of Asian History*, 32 (1998), 145-156. For the genre of *ilm-i hal*, manuals of religious and moral instruction for the wider public, see Derin Terzioğlu, 'Where *ʿİlm-i Ḥāl* Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization', *Past and Present*, 220 (2013), 79-114.

The *Pillar of the Narratives* reflects these new dynamics in the Khanate, reassuring the author's tribal peers of their importance while warning the Khan and court circles against simply writing off the Tatar clans. The work describes the Khanate's system of joint rulership, drawing on the notion of world order, and calls upon the Khan and the *bey*s to maintain God's regime and to abide by his law. Allegedly, "God set the order (*nizam*)" that a Genghisid Khan and the four ruling *bey*s would govern the Khanate together, and that without the *bey*s' consent no order could be executed. The text also claims that God specified the hierarchy among the *karaçi bey*s – first the Şirin, second the Mangıt, third the Barın, and fourth the Secevit – and assigned clear roles to the other powerful groups in Crimean society; that is, to the leading ulema and sheikhs, the *mirza*s of various clans, and the wise elders at the Khan's court.[88] The Sultan in Istanbul, in the author's view, always remained an outsider to the Tatars' world and Crimean politics.[89] His role is defined as that of the "refuge of the world" and "crown of all Islamic kings", who bears the Prophet Muhammad's banner and protects the holy sites of Islam. However, the text bemoans the fact that, in recent years, the Ottoman rulers had often failed to fulfil their role and, rather than protecting the Islamic lands, interfered in Crimean affairs.[90]

---

[87] For a historical overview, see Fisher, *The Russian Annexation*, 17-25; Bennigsen *et al*., *Le Khanat de Crimée*, 12-13, 348-352; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 4, (Ankara 1983 [2nd ed.]), 10-22. On the rise of a "new nobility", see D. Kołodziejczyk, 'Ottoman vs. Crimean Tatar Elites in the 17th Century: A Comparative Approach', in M. Sariyannis (ed.), *New Trends in Ottoman Studies: Papers Presented at the 20th CIÉPO Symposium, Rethymno, 27 June-1 July 2012* (Rethymno 2014), 609-616. The history of Said Giray suggests that certain families dominated at the Khan's court in the eighteenth century as well. It is, moreover, noticeable that the 'who's who' section of the work lists first the Khan's officials and only second, and much more briefly, the members of the Tatar clans: Kellner-Heinkele, *Aus den Aufzeichnungen*, 96-112.

[88] Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 318r. On the role of the *karaçi bey*s in Genghisid states, see U. Schamiloglu, 'The *Qaraçi* Beys of the Later Golden Horde: Notes on the Organization of the Mongol World Empire', *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevii*, 4 (1984), 283-298; D. Kołodziejczyk, 'Divided Sovereignty in the Genghisid States as Exemplified by the Crimean Khanate: '"Oriental Despotism" *à rebours*?', *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, 32 (2012), 1-21. The former paper also relies on Abdulgaffar Kırımî's history.

Abdulgaffar Kırımî judges a Khan's reign primarily according to his relations with the clan leaders, emphasising in this context certain qualities of a Crimean ruler that were considered of particular importance. First and foremost, the text claims that a Khan must acknowledge the *bey*s' authority and treat them with due respect. Rulers who "restored order by winning the hearts of Crimea's *bey*s" or took pains to govern the country "all together" in "the Khanate way" are praised and said to be blessed with success, whereas rulers who had positive qualities but who nevertheless tried to alter the traditional order by introducing illicit innovations "intolerable" to the "the actual owners of Crimea", or who violated the *karaçi bey*s' traditional rights by seizing clan property, are excoriated and presented as eventually failing and being ousted from the throne.[91] At the same time, the text also insists a Khan must be tough and assertive in his dealing with the clans. If he, for instance, turned to the Sultan for assistance, he was doomed.[92] The history emphasises that a Khan must also win the *bey*s over, most notably by buying their loyalty. He had to be generous and "besiege" them with gifts on the occasion of his accession and then, throughout his reign, he must secure a constant influx of booty for the clan leaders and their soldiers.[93] As such, the attributes of a great warrior, army commander, and raider play a key role in Abdulgaffar Kırımî's descriptions of good rulers.[94] The text points out that a lack of booty constituted a serious challenge not only to the position of the ruler, but also to the Khanate's inner stability and peace.[95] Finally, the work also highlights the virtue of mercy, as this is presented as a means of overcoming Crimea's regular rivalries and hostilities in order to jointly rule the country and protect it from enemies.[96] Leniency towards remorseful rebels is shown as a tactic that often pays off in the long run, as it turns a ruler's rivals into his ardent supporters.[97]

---

[89] The text does not conceal the Ottoman presence in Crimea, nor the fact that Istanbul deposed and installed the Khan and summoned the Tatars to appear on campaign, but it does keep discussion of the Sultan's role to a minimum and treats Ottoman history in a different section of the work, see Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 168r-242v.

[90] On the Sultan's role, see, for instance, ibid., 291r, 296v, 303v. On Ottoman interference, see, for instance, ibid., 285r, 294r, 305r. First and foremost, Istanbul is held responsible for the devastation of 1736 and 1737 because it overstrained the Tatars on campaign, lacked trust in the Khan, and did not provide the necessary military assistance: ibid., 308v-311r, 313v-315r.

[91] For the two positive examples quoted, Khan Selim Giray and Khan Mengli II Giray, see ibid., 289v-290r, 289v margins; 305r-v. For the two negative examples quoted, Khan Adil Giray and Khan Hacı Giray, see ibid., 288v-289v; 290r. Other examples of failed Khans include Khan Saadet Giray and Khan Safa Giray: ibid., 290v.

[92] See, for instance, the case of Khan Saadet IV Giray: ibid., 304r-305r.

[93] Examples of generous Khans include Khan Kaplan Giray, Khan Saadet IV Giray, and Khan Mengli II Giray: ibid., 294v margins, 308r; 303v, 304v; 305r, 316v.

[94] These attributes are mentioned for almost all Crimean Khans. For examples from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, see ibid., 282r, 284v; 286r, 291r; 291v margins, 307v, 311r.

[95] For example, the old and sick Khan Selim Giray "did not have the strength to conduct raids so as to establish order in Crimea": ibid., 290v.

Besides establishing the clans' position *vis-à-vis* the Khans, the history also focuses on legitimising Şirin leadership among the four ruling clans. The author claims, as mentioned above, that God arranged for the Şirin *bey* to assume the role of the head of the *karaçi bey*s. He stresses his clan's independent heritage and traditional rights, appending to his history an annotated genealogy of the Şirin going all the way back to the Golden Horde and asserting that the Şirin *bey*s' position goes back to their and the Giray Khans' ancestors, who pledged each other loyalty forever.[98] The text also attests that, ever since these beginnings, the clan leaders had acquired legitimacy by marrying Genghisid wives.[99] Moreover, the history highlights the Şirin *bey*s' significance and achievements in terms of securing the Tatars' safety and comfort. It demonstrates that under their leadership, the clans acted in the interest of God's law and order, counterbalancing the power of the Giray Khans while also serving them loyally.[100] It shows that, contrary to the common idea that the clans were unreliable, the *bey*s and *mirza*s were in fact generally courageous and trustworthy and played a major role in protecting the country and fighting the enemy.[101] The text speaks highly of most of the leading figures from the Şirin and, drawing on the same legitimising vocabulary used for the Khans, stresses the virtues of justice and bravery, as well as the importance of the qualities of a raider. At the same time, the author whitewashes the reputation of certain controversial figures and argues that, as far as the few bad apples are concerned, the clan leaders took matters into their own hands, for example by exiling a *mirza* who had "committed injustice, besmearing the honour of the Şirin".[102] The history underscores how, assuming the clans were to continue to play the positive role they had played for centuries, there was no alternative to Şirin leadership. While the text makes little mention of the Barın and Secevit clans and marginalises Crimea's service-based nobility, it pays a good deal of attention to the Mangıt, the second-ranking ruling clan and the only one to ever challenge the Şirin's position. This clan's independent heritage and their service to the Crimean Khans are presented both as distinctly inferior to the heritage and service of the Şirin, and as problematic in and of themselves. Subtly hinting that the clan's ancestor was a contested figure, the text suggests that the Mangıts "inherited" from him "the desire for world domination" and were therefore especially volatile and a potential threat to order. As proof of this, the history cites the short period in the seventeenth century when the Mangıt obtained supremacy among the four ruling clans, emphasising how this experiment ended badly and resulted in the Şirin being reinstalled as *karaçi bey*s. "And to this day," the universal history ends, "the Şirin, owing to their traditional and continuing loyalty and service, possess high titles and are *bey*s of great reputation!"[103]

---

[96] For example, Khan Islam III Giray's reign is labeled "a very good era" not only because the ruler was exceptionally generous and led legendary raids into Russia, but also because he was kind and merciful towards the troublemakers of 1645, when a major conflict broke out between the *karaçi bey*s and the Khan's vizier on one side and the Khan's personal troops and *kalga* on the other: ibid., 288r-288v, 288v margins. On this conflict, see *TDVİA* s.v. 'İslâm Giray III' (H. İnalcık).

[97] See, for example, Cavim Mirza, who was pardoned by Khan Devlet Giray: Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 292v-293r, 292r margins-293v margins, 296v.

[98] For the appendix, see ibid., 318r-322v. On the ancestors Rüktemir and the Golden Horde Khan Toktamısh, see ibid., 266v-269v, 318r-v. On their legendary story and the history of the Şirin in general, see M. Ivanics, 'Die Şirin. Abstammung und Aufstieg einer Sippe in der Steppe', in D. Klein (ed.), *The Crimean Khanate between East and West (15th-18th Century)* (Wiesbaden 2012), 27-44.

[99] On the first such marriage, that of the Şirins' ancestor Rüktemir, see Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 269r-v.

[100] For example, they vehemently opposed a Caucasus expedition by Khan Kaplan Giray because it was unlawfully targeting *reaya*, but participated and perished when their advice fell on deaf ears: ibid., 294v-296r.

[101] For instance, against the Russians in 1710/1711: ibid., 296v. According to the text, even the Nogays, the most notorious troublemakers among the Tatars, would never defect to the unbelievers because "they knew that they belonged to the umma of Muhammad": ibid., 292v, 297r (quote). For a rare example of Şirin disloyalty, see ibid., 293r-v.

In conclusion, the different notions introduced to describe the Khanate's main political players and their role in history culminate in the author's demand that the political system of Crimea be left untouched, with the steppe model of joint rulership between a Genghisid Khan and the four ruling Tatar clans under the leadership of the Sirin bey, and religious guidance from the Ottoman Sultan. In order to present this traditional political make-up as legitimate, well established, and beneficial, the author draws on the Islamic notion of world order, the Khanate's steppe heritage, the intrinsic historical and personal ties between the Giray Khans and the four ruling clans, as well as on practical considerations. The text emphasises how no Crimean Khan could do without the support or, at the very least, the sufferance of the *karaçi bey*s in general and the Şirin *bey* in particular, thereby promoting a set of virtues for the Crimean Khan that was primarily informed by steppe notions of good rulership.

---

[102] For examples of virtuous Şirins, including a couple of promising young *mirza*s whom the author personally promotes, see, in particular, the genealogy: ibid., 319r-322v. The most prominent case of whitewashing concerns the Şirin *bey* Cantimur, whom the author had served as cadi. The text praises the *bey* and claims that his rebellion, which deposed Khan Saadet Giray, was not about power or booty, but rather a fight over a girl that escalated: ibid., 320r-322r, 304r-305r. On this rebellion, see B. Kellner-Heinkele, 'Coping with the Rules of Rulership: Saʿādet Gerey Khān III in Crimean Tatar and Ottoman Historiography', *Finnisch-Ugrische Mitteilungen*, 32-33 (2010), 279-290; G. Veinstein, 'La révolte des *mirza* tatars contre le Khan 1724-1725', *Cahier du Monde russe et soviétique*, 12 (1971), 327-338. For the case of the exiled *mirza*, see Abdulgaffar Kırımî, *Umdetü'l-ahbar*, 321v.

[103] The genealogical appendix presents the Mangıts after the Şirin and much more briefly: ibid., 322v-324r. On their ancestor, the Golden Horde emir Edige, as well as their failed leadership, see ibid., 286v, 287r margins-288r margins, 324r (quotes). For another example of trouble with the Mangıts, see ibid., 289v-290r.

III. CONCLUSION

Presenting historiography as a key genre in the study of political thought and practice, these notes on Crimean Tatar notions of political authority and their use in the process of negotiating power highlight the unique heritage of the Crimean Khanate and point towards the diverse cultures that co-existed in the Sultan's realm. The Crimean case presents us with a more nuanced view of the Ottoman world at large. It demonstrates that the Empire's provincial and semi-autonomous regions can provide especially fascinating cases, since it was typically outside the imperial capital that different traditions met and power relations (between local, regional, and imperial actors) were at their most complex. The seven surviving histories from the Khanate indicate that Crimean Tatar notions of political authority were shaped by three traditions: the Tatars' steppe past, their Islamic legacy, and their exposure to a particular Ottoman interpretation of Islamic concepts. These sources also show that Crimean Tatar political thought maintained this hybrid character in spite of the Khanate's increasing Ottomanisation from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century.

The fact that Khans from the Giray dynasty ruled the Khanate throughout its history is remarkable considering that their authority was severely limited by the Tatar clans and the Ottoman Sultans, both of which fuelled opposition and subversive activities. It owed much to the Giray Khans' possession of a strong ideology. The historiography suggests that the legitimacy of the Khan's rule rested on two principles, alongside a particular set of attributes defining good government. First, the works promote the idea that the Giray dynasty was a well-established ruling house whose lineage could be traced back to Genghis Khan and the prophet Noah, thus providing the rulers with legitimacy in both steppe and Islamic terms. Secondly, the texts justify the Khan's elevated position in society by drawing on the Ottomanised version of the Islamic concept of a ruler's divine mission to maintain the preordained world order. Finally, conveying what might be expected from the person occupying the Crimean throne, the histories reflect the Islamic tradition and ideas originating in the Khanate's steppe past. Special emphasis is put on the notion of justice, which is associated with adherence to both sharia law and Genghisid custom, as well as on the virtues expected to be possessed by an ideal steppe warrior who fights for the faith and conducts raids for his people's prosperity.

Having thus established the Khans as legitimate rulers in their own right, the historiography also accentuates the notion that the rulers of Crimea were different in kind, but equal in rank, to the Sultans in Istanbul. The Ottoman-Tatar hierarchy of power is blurred, the Sultans' role in the Khanate's politics is downplayed, and the non-Genghisid house of Osman is denied any political claim to the Crimean successor state of the Golden Horde. According to the texts, the Ottoman Sultan and the Crimean Khan ruled over different worlds – namely, the world of Islam and the world of the steppe, respectively – and the Khan's submission to the Sultan was religious in nature, not political. The ideological vocabulary used to legitimise the Ottomans' position in Crimea is entirely different from that used with regard to the Giray Khans, invoking the overarching religious functions of the Sultan while leaving the Khan's political leadership and prestige untouched. Although the works portray the Ottoman Sultan as the refuge of all Muslims, the Caliph, and the protector of Islam's holy sites and emphasise that he must act as a virtuous religious leader and mighty protector, they also stress the idea that he should keep out of internal Crimean affairs.

The historiography also demonstrates that different political actors in Crimea used this rich repertoire of political ideas in a dynamic way, adapting the ideas to endorse their own specific needs according to the political discourse of their time. For example, in order to defend the controversial centralisation policy and harsh rulership of his benefactor Khan Sahib Giray, and to lay the ideological basis for similarly ambitious policies of future rulers, Remmal Hoca introduced the concept of divine rulership and world order and argued that a strict exercise of power on the part of the Khan was indispensable for the maintenance of justice, security, and prosperity. The outspoken prince Mehmed Giray, on the other hand, used the concept of world order as part of a more complex discursive strategy explaining the late seventeenth-century crisis as a departure from God's regime and aiming to restore confidence in the Tatar ruling house and in the alliance between the Muslims' religious leader in Istanbul and their military forerunner in Crimea. Finally, speaking for the leading Tatar clan of the Şirin, Abdulgaffar Kırımî related the Islamic idea of a God-given order to the Khanate's Genghisid tradition, advocating fealty to the steppe model of shared power between the Khan and the clans, headed by the Şirin *bey*, if the Tatar state was to survive the severe threats that it was facing in the middle of the eighteenth century.

BETWEEN SAINT-DOMINGUE AND THE SUBLIME PORTE:

REVOLUTION, OTTOMAN REALPOLITIK, AND THE INTER-HEMISPHERIC CONTINGENCIES OF MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Ariel SALZMANN*

GLOSSING THE CONVENTIONAL *HITAB* (*devletlü inayetlü merhametlü veliyyü'n-nimetim kasir al-lûtuf vel kiram efendi sultanım hazretleri*) an archivist typed a short description of the contents of a document that had been sent to the Sublime Porte from the Ottoman Embassy in London in late 1801. The entry would become part of the bound volumes of the catalog for the series of the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* (sultanic rescripts and memoranda) that are to be found on the reference shelves of the Prime Minister's Archive in Istanbul. More than half a century later, another archivist updated the entry for the online catalog:

> Fon Kodu: HAT
> Dosya No:249 Gömlek No:14127
> Tarih: 25/Ş /1216 (Hicrî) [31 December 1801]
>
> *Fransa Devleti'nin Amerika'da son Dominik* [sic] *adasında Tosi Lövernor* [sic] *ismindeki âsiyi tedip için Brest Limanı'ndan donanma sevkedeceği.* [The French Government will dispatch a fleet from the Port of Brest to the island "son Dominik" in America to put down a revolt in the name of "Tosi Lövernor"].

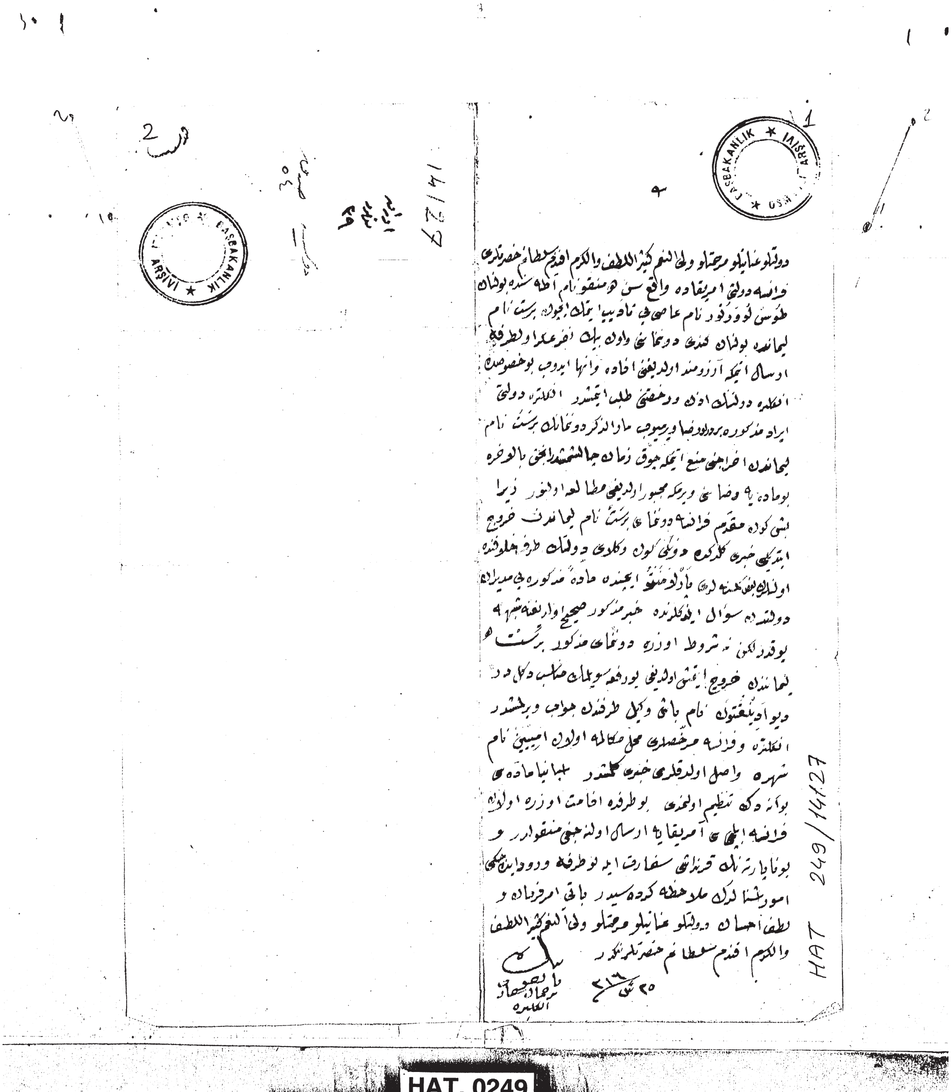
The short, single-sided document [hereafter referred to as HAT 14127], reproduced in facsimile on the following page, does in fact open with the words:

> France made an official request to Great Britain for permission to dispatch a fleet carrying 10,000 soldiers to an island in the Americas known as "Sân Düminkü" [Saint-Domingue or Hispaniola] in order to repress a rebellion in the name of "Tüsâ Lüvârtür" [Toussaint Louverture].

A list of loosely related news items follows the headline. These notices concern: debates in the British Parliament about the French request to grant safe passage to its heavily armed fleet through British waters; negotiations between the British government and the French envoy underway in London; and that, at the conclusion of these preliminaries, a British plenipotentiary set out to join his counterpart in Amiens. Dated December

---

[*] Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.



دولتلو عنایتلو مرحمتلو ولی النعم کثیر اللطف والکرم افندم سلطانم حضرتلری
فرانسه دولتی امریقاده واقع سن دومنقو نام اطه سنده بولنان
طوسن لوودور نام عاصی یی تادیب ایچون برست نام
لیماننده بولنان کندی دوننماسی واون بیك نفر عسکر اول طرفه
ارسال ایتمکه آرزومند اولدیغنی افاده وانها ایدوب بو خصوصده
انکلتره دولتنك اذن ورخصتنی طلب ایتمشدر انکلتره دولتی
ایراد مذکوره بر درلو رضا ویرمیوب ما الذکر دوننمانك برست نام
لیماندن اخراجنی منع ایتمکه چوق زماندن برو چالشمشدر الحق بالاخره
بو ماده یه رضاسنی ویرمکه مجبور اولدیغی مطالعه اولنور زیرا
ایشبو کون مقدم فرانسه دوننماسی برست نام لیماندن خروج
ایتدیکی خبری کلدکده دولتلی کون وکلای دولتدن طرف عالیلرنده
اولنان بعض کمسنه لر یارلومنتو ایچنده ماده مذکوره یی مدیرانه
دولتلریه سؤال ایلدکلرنده خبر مذکور صحیح اولدیغنه شبهه
یوقدر لکن نه شروط اوزره دوننمای مذکور برست
لیماندن خروج ایتمش اولدیغی بو دفعه سویلمك مناسب دکلدر
دیو ادینغتون نام باش وکیل طرفندن جواب ویرلمشدر
انکلتره و فرانسه مرخصلری محل مکالمه اولان امیین نام
شهره واصل اولدقلری خبری کلمشدر اسپانیا ماده سی
بو آنه دکین تنظیم اولنمدی بو طرفده اقامت اوزره اولان
فرانسه ایلچیسی آمریقایه ارسال اولنه جغی منقولدر و
بوناپارته نك قرنداشی سفارت ایله بو طرفه ورود ایده جکی
امورشناسلرك ملاحظه کرده سیدر باقی امر فرمان و
لطف احسان دولتلو عنایتلو مرحمتلو ولی النعم کثیر اللطف
والکرم افندم سلطانم حضرتلرینکدر

۲۵ ش ۱۲۱۶

انکلتره

HAT 249/14127

14127

HAT. 0249

31, 1801, the communiqué was composed at the end of active fighting in the War of the Second Coalition (1798-1801) and after the evacuation of French troops from Egypt, while Ottoman diplomats were themselves engaged in talks with the Consulate's representatives. It arrived in Istanbul on the eve of the signing of the Treaty of Amiens (March 25, 1802), which would officially end the war and formally restore Egypt to Ottoman sovereignty. Although the peace between Great Britain and Republican France (and her allies) would last only 14 months, it would be the longest respite in the more than two-decades-long conflicts comprising the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815).

I came across this intriguing document many years ago. Although HAT 14127 has figured in talks and presentations concerning Ottoman interest in the Americas,[1] I have been unable to put into writing the reasons why its contents have remained so elusive and unsettling. Was my perplexity due to the fact that – notwithstanding President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's recent interest in tracing the Muslim history of the Caribbean[2] – many researchers who reviewed this entry before and after me did so, apparently, without remarking on the unusual appearance of the name of [François-Dominque] Toussaint Louverture [Bréda] (1739-43?-1803), a freedman, commander, and colonial governor, who, along with an army of former slaves, had compelled the French National Assembly to emancipate the more than half million enslaved persons toiling on the plantations that enriched the Caribbean's wealthiest colony, the 'Pearl of the Antilles'?[3] Or was my perplexity due to the fact that this document provided unimpeachable testimony that, at the turn of the nineteenth-century, even as Ottoman soldiers and their allies sought to dislodge French armies from the Adriatic and Egypt, the gaze of Ottoman officials extended far into the Atlantic?

Indeed, it is what the document leaves out, the larger spheres of ideas and political analyses that exist beyond the ink and paper of HAT 14127, that tease the modern historical imagination. What relationship, if any, existed between the French colony of Saint-Domingue and the Eurasian and African imperial state that ruled from Istanbul? How might knowledge of the social conditions and mass enslavement of Africans in

---

[1] Over a decade of conversations concerning Caribbean-Ottoman relations require an expression of gratitude to my interlocutors: María del Carmen Baerga and Lanny Thompson of the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras; the organizers of the 'Consortium on the Revolutionary Age' held in 2009 in Savannah, Georgia; Carolle Charles of Baruch College and my colleagues at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and most recently, Elizabeth F. Thompson of American University's School for International Service in Washington, D.C. I am indebted to the co-participants in the 2015 Halcyon Days Symposium on 'Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire'; to the staff, students, and faculty of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies in Rethymno, Crete, and especially to Marinos Sariyannis, the editor of this volume.

[2] President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan famously claimed that Muslim explorers had reached the Americas before Christopher Columbus. Associated Press, "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Muslims discovered America, says Turkish president", *The Guardian* 16 November 2014 https://www.netflix.com/watch/80129819?trackId=155573560 (accessed November 9, 2018). Although the Turkish Republic does not have an embassy in Haiti, a Turkish non-governmental organization subsidized the building of a new mosque there, named for "Boukman". Boukman was the name of the leader of the original slave uprising. http://diyanetvakfi.org.tr/en-US/site/haberler/haiti-nin-ilk-minareli-camisi-ibadete-acildi-1820 (accessed November 9, 2018). On this subject see M. A. Gomez *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas* (Cambridge 2012), 88-90.

[3] Of the enormous literature on the Haitian Revolution, see C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York 1989); M.-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston 1995); C. E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville 1990); D. P. Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington 2002), and L. Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge MA 2005).

European empires have informed Ottoman intellectuals' reception of the ideas of the French Revolution? Did the news of a major revolt of the enslaved workers in a region that was central to Europe's colonial economy of sugar, coffee, and indigo influence the Ottoman statesmen's decision-making with respect to its renewed alliance with Paris or their comprehension of the global dimensions of negotiations at Amiens?

Merely by the juxtaposition of the words Saint-Domingue and the Sublime Porte, HAT 14127 challenges many of the underlying assumptions concerning the protagonists and stakes in the War of the Second Coalition.[4] Although European historians have begun to approach the French Revolution from less provincial vantage points and adopt more 'global' frameworks of analysis for their accounts of the turn of the nineteenth century conflicts bracketed under the "Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars" which unfolded concurrently on the Continent, in Africa, the Americas, and Asia, rarely, if ever, do the eastern and western hemispheres form part of a single integrated approach to understanding the political strategy of European and non-European actors.[5] The approaches of area studies are, by definition, equally unbalanced in terms of their geographical frameworks. That few Middle Eastern historians have considered the relevance of the Atlantic to the Mediterranean or Napoleon Bonaparte's Caribbean calculus with respect to the invasion of and withdrawal from Egypt;[6] or, for that matter, that scholars of the Caribbean do not routinely reference the Ottoman Empire or South Asia as factors contributing to the success of the slave revolt that led to establishment of the Republic of Haiti in 1804,[7] betray the absence of a truly multilateral approach to the 'global' among non-Western specialists as well.

---

[4] Although the Ottoman Empire is mentioned in passing, Schroeder supplies no commentary whatsoever on the Caribbean in his classic study of the changing world system before, during, and after the Napoleonic Wars. P. W. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe* (London 2004). Similarly, idem, 'The Collapse of the Second Coalition', *The Journal of Modern History*, 59 (1987), 244-290, and A. B. Rodger, *The War of the Second Coalition, 1798 to 1801: A Strategic Commentary* (Oxford 1963). By contrast, E. Ingram 'A Preview of the Great Game in Asia – IV: British Agents in the Near East in the War of the Second Coalition, 1798-1801', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 10 (1974), 15-35; idem, 'The Geopolitics of the First British Expedition to Egypt – IV: Occupation and Withdrawal, 1801-3', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 31 (1995), 317-346) emphasizes the global stakes in the conflict and the preponderance of colonial concerns in the final Amiens treaty.

[5] Examples of this trend include D. Armitage and S. Subrahmanyam (eds), *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840* (London 2009) and Alan Forrest and Matthias Middell (eds), *The Routledge Companion to the French Revolution in World History* (London 2015). Compare David A. Bell, 'Questioning the Global Turn: The Case of the French Revolution', *French Historical Studies*, 37 (2014), 1-24.

[6] Ingram, 'The Geopolitics of the First British Expedition'; Manuel Covo, 'Race, Slavery and Colonies in the French Revolution', in D. Andress (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution* (Oxford 2015), Chap. 17; K. Şakul, 'An Ottoman Global Moment: War of the Second Coalition in the Levant', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 2009; J. Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (London 2008), 20.

[7] Chris Bongie, whose scholarship on Haiti includes a translation and critical edition of Baron de Vastey's *Le système colonial dévoilé* (Liverpool 2014), is currently examining the intellectual links between Saint-Domingue and Southern India during the late eighteenth century.

The unanticipated nature of a document drafted by an Ottoman diplomat residing in London concerning an anti-French revolt in the Caribbean that led to the formation of the second republic in the Americas (and the first modern state founded on the basis of the universal emancipation of its inhabitants) is in itself an indication of the degree to which the colonial and nationalist segregation of research into discrete continental, hemispheric, and oceanic silos bounds the historical imagination. And thus, by its very existence, HAT 14127 raises a host of formidable conceptual questions about the inter-hemispheric patterns and contingencies that informed the intellectual context from which modern political thought emerged.[8] Given the extent of recent theoretical reflection in the field, from the practitioners of subaltern studies, transnational history, and *Begriffsgeschichte* to the advocates of *histoire croisée* and the proponents of a global Enlightenment, an exploration of the full range of the relevant historiographical issues certainly exceeds the brief of a single essay.[9] Nevertheless, a shorter format may serve to explore some key methodological issues that must be considered preliminary to conceptual reflection. That is, before engaging in discussions concerning the theories and models of the past, several key questions must be answered concerning the means of interpretation and the modes of establishing a historical context for the writing and reading of this document. These methodological concerns fall under two broad headings: the first relates to the problem of contextualization of thought in political and social space (how to recover the larger semantic ecosystem in which this document was drafted, in the absence of a substantial body of contemporary, written artefacts that might corroborate or explain its writer's perspective, policy choices, and/or political convictions); the second concerns the role of timeline and chronology – whether the standard periodization, namely the 'War of the Second Coalition', adequately represents the underlying geographical and temporal co-ordinates and allows for proper evaluation of the significance of the ideas expressed.

Of course, the methodological questions themselves turn on a judgement call about classification: is this text worthy of treatment as an artefact of turn of the nineteenth century political thought? Yet such reservations may be less a function of its form, style of writing, or authorship than a reflexive, a priori distinction routinely made by historians who sift through the contents of an archive, setting aside texts deemed to be of intrinsic intellectual value, as opposed to those they relegate to the category of generic cultural-political, administrative, or economic evidence. Such a classificatory grid informs the methods of investigation of social movements, conceptions of power, and responses to economic conditions; it has shaped the historiographical division separating the study of popular culture or *mentalités*, that is, research devoted to reconstructing the thoughts and motivations of subaltern actors, often in the absence of self-authored documentation, from intellectual history proper, defined by scholarly inquiry in terms of the ideas and works of a relatively few well-positioned authors and their associates (whose literary, scientific, artistic, and philosophical effects survive in sufficient quantity or by reputation). Increasingly, however, as the research of Ottoman historians working on concepts of justice and political history 'from below' indicates,[10] a more sociologically integrated approach to the history of political thought necessarily blurs the line between popular and elite perspectives, collective acts, and solitary literary production. Understanding changing patterns of political thought and the legitimacy of political authority requires a more complex, dialogical approach to ideas and the multiple realms of cognition concerning rights and wrongs.

---

[8] For a recent attempt to re-orient such studies, B. A. Hendrix and D. Baumgold (eds), *Colonial Exchanges: Political Theory and the Agency of the Colonized* (Manchester 2017). See also, M. Middell (ed.), *Cultural Transfers, Encounters and Connections in the Global 18th Century* (Leipzig 2014).

[9] S. Conrad, 'Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique', *The American Historical Review*, 117 (2012) 999-1027; S. Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton 2016); A. Dirlik, 'Performing the World: Reality and Representation in the Making of World Histor(ies)', *Journal of World History*, 16 (2005) 391-410; A. Iriye, *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (London 2013); M. Werner and B. Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity', *History and Theory*, 45 (2006), 30-50. Compare Ch. Mukerji, 'Cultural Genealogy: Method for a Cultural Sociology of History or Historical Sociology of Culture', *Cultural Sociology*, 1 (2007), 49-71.

Multi-disciplinary perspectives may be useful in breaking down this dichotomy as it affects the methodologies of intellectual history. In addition to the anthropologists who have objected to the distinction between 'high' and 'low' cultural production,[11] philosophers have come to embrace a more socially integrated approach to epistemology as they recognize the plurality of knowing subjects who have not been considered by traditionally defined philosophical inquiry.[12] As the feminist philosopher Miranda Fricker argues,[13] traditional epistemology suffers from "dysfunctions" with respect to epistemic practices that result in exclusions of entire classes of subjects. Such systematic exclusion constitutes forms of "epistemic injustice". Despite the singularity of their reflections and experiences and their profound roles in shaping currents of thought with respect to political, cultural, and social questions, entire groups who are marginalized on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religion, social status, geographical provenance, or intersectional difference have long been ignored by philosophers. Such exclusion takes different forms. It is the product of biases that effectively discount or devalue the testimony (oral or written) of subjects as knowers and thinkers. Additional barriers occur when structural and social constraints create hermeneutical systems, closed realms of meaning and interpretation. Such structural inequities not only favor one group's 'truth' over another's but also limit, as José Medina asserts, the dominant group's own capacity to communicate with, understand, and learn from others.[14]

---

[10] See especially A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives from the Bottom Up in the Ottoman Empire – Halcyon Days in Crete (VII 9-11 January 2009)* (Rethymno 2012), and L. T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (London 2013). For a remarkable study of political thought and insurrectionary action, B. Onaran, *Détrôner le sultan. Deux conjurations à l'époque des réformes ottomanes: Kuleli (1859) et Meslek (1867*) (Leuven 2013).

[11] G. E. R. Lloyd, *Demystifying Mentalities*, (Cambridge 1990); Linda T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (London 2012).

[12] Special issue on 'Epistemic Injustice', *Social Epistemology*, 26 (2012); A. M. Isasi-Díaz and E. Mendieta (eds), *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy* (New York 2011); Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (London 2015); M. Brady and M. Fricker (eds.), *The Epistemic Life of Groups: Essays in the Epistemology of Collectives* (Oxford 2012).

[13] M. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford 2007).

Historians face these philosophical problems in their ordinary methodological choices with respect to the selection, classification, and interpretation of their data. Michel Foucault's metaphor of the archeological site is useful to the extent it provides a vivid metaphor for conceptualizing the problems involved in attempting to develop methods for a more inclusive, transcultural history of political thought. Historical knowing subjects are submerged in an evidentiary record that is from the beginning subject to imperfect recording and registration and, as concerns contemporary researchers, remains recessed in time with the attendant problems of preservation, cataloging, and recovery.[15] In addition to global structural inequities, enforced by modern, imperial hegemons, which have subordinated languages, places, and peoples to strict hierarchies of power, both imperial and local elites have also used their control over the archive to overwrite cognition while, not infrequently, appropriating forms of indigenous knowledge without attribution.[16] In addition to the privilege of the pen and maintenance of the archive, layers of secondary documentation bury actors and knowing agents under weighty sediments of institutions, discourses, and narratives. The empirical losses involved are enormous and overwhelmingly irrecoverable: for example, the Ottoman secretary who committed some of his thoughts to paper but consigned others to silence or forwarded them via oral transmission; the leaders of the 1791 slave uprising on Saint-Domingue who communicated across long distances through drumming; or, for that matter, the ideas of Toussaint Louverture himself, expressed in eloquent speeches in Creole or Fon to his soldiers and followers, have been lost multiple times, in the absence of transcription on the spot and by virtue of the hermeneutical nature of traditional intellectual historiography.[17] Without an initial challenge to the methodology of writing the 'intellectual' histories of political thought, historians remain trapped in a particular form of textual positivism, a textual positivism that from the modern period onward favors the Western archive and the Western canon of ideas.

---

[14] J. Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and the Social Imagination* (Oxford 2012).

[15] For a concrete, empirical example of these methodological issues as they affect historiography, see Sh. Amin's *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992* (Delhi 1995).

[16] See B. S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton 1996) and D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton 2000).

[17] D. Geggus, 'Print Culture and the Haitian Revolution: The Written and the Spoken Word', *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 116 (2006), 299-314; A. F. Saint-Aubin, 'Toussaint Louverture's Memoir: Representing Racial Difference', *The French Review*, 85 (2012), 658-669; Ph. R. Girard, 'Un-Silencing the Past: The Writings of Toussaint Louverture', *Slavery & Abolition*, 34 (2013), 663-672.

To instantiate this document as an example of a set of excluded knowers and actors involved in practices of an inherently political and intellectual nature requires, perforce, adopting a methodology that is not solely dependent on textual evidence and allows indirect methods of reconstruction and recovery. The many unspoken or coded "transcripts" that James C. Scott suggests informed and preserved political strategies he labels "weapons of the weak",[18] may only be elucidated indirectly. Their content demands an understanding of the larger sociological and material co-ordinates of power which enveloped these otherwise 'silent' individuals. Primary sources and secondary literature concerning the economics and environmental history of the modern world must be tapped to yield the macro-co-ordinates that will enable scholars of political thought to locate societies and classes in terms of local and long-distance sociological and material relations. Analyses of trade, war, and migration furnish concrete and often quantitative indicators about cultural differences and inequalities as well as the extensiveness and intensiveness of networks of exchange, the very conditions that produced or suppressed authors, actors, and conversations within and across cultural boundaries. These circuits of goods and peoples map the routes taken by material signs, oral communications, beliefs, and technologies. Such a materialist approach to the history of ideas points to another desideratum: a redefinition of what is meant by modernity in terms of political thought and practice. Rather than a type of internal dialogue or lonely contemplation, much less as the reworking of or break from of a finite set of ideas, tenets, or concepts, what Arjun Appadurai calls "modernity at large",[19] might be better measured on the basis of the volume and velocity of ideas, as distant cognitive realms collided and responded to the cacophony of voices of the millions of individuals on the move and the proliferation of visual and tactile signs resulting from the mass circulation of material signifiers.[20]

Naturally, these broad co-ordinates for locating ideas in macro-social contexts and under changing material conditions do not suffice for understanding a particular text or transcript. A narrower, more nuanced lens must be adapted to capture the semantic specificity of place and to distinguish between sites on the basis of their relative connectivity within regional or trans-hemispheric currents of exchange.[21] Certain imperial metropolises, port-cities, and internal transit points – for example a Caribbean colony like Saint-Domingue whose majority population had, in the course of their lifetimes, traveled between the shores of Africa, Europe, and the Americas or resided in cities that rivaled in size those of the newly independent United States – resulted in a quotidian melding of ideas and languages as well as an inescapable receptivity to inter-regional cultural trends.

---

[18] J. C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven 1987).

[19] A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis 1996).

[20] In terms of the Haitian revolution, David Geggus writes in 'Print Culture and the Haitian Revolution', 308: "the voice of the black revolt is as irrecoverable as the talking drum messages that accompanied the outbreak of the slave uprising".

[21] S. Aslanian in *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley 2014) retraces the material and social connections articulated by a compact group of Armenian merchant families radiating across the globe from a suburb of seventeenth-eighteenth century Isfahan.

Quantifiable sources on the composition, flows, and the provenance of human and non-human migratory flows into and through such sites provide important indices for intellectual historians, prima facie evidence for the writing of histories of knowledge.[22] To the extent possible, identification of the specificity of locales of exchange within these larger urban or rural settings adds further nuance and detail: certainly the cane fields of the Caribbean, which forcibly brought together peoples of different religions, classes, and continents or a barber's shop in Damascus which facilitated both everyday banter and political reflection between what Dana Sajdi has labeled the "nouveau literati" was as rich, indeed perhaps richer, in terms of political ideas, than cross-cultural exchange and social strategies as the Paris salons sponsored by wealthy French women for the philosophes.[23]

Singular, identifiable authors and actors, to the extent that they may be situated within organizations or social systems provide other indicators that are indispensable for understanding the form and content of political knowledge. To the extent that biographical notices are coupled with actual understanding of the individual's location within a society and with respect to the larger institutional framework, that is, positionality within family or dynasty, organizations, and social orders, they furnish a particular form of expertise. The intellectual capacity that Michael Polanyi called "tacit knowledge"[24] owes to position in society, in communicative systems, productive or political apparatuses. Location itself furnished highly specialized interpretative skills and powers of extrapolation based on direct, hands-on experience in terms of specialized social arrangements and organizational forms. Accordingly, the particular discernment of certain individuals must be granted without need for textual evidence: they were able to extract meaning from seemingly unfamiliar circumstances, texts, and symbols with a fluency that would escape the majority of their contemporaries and modern comprehension. Thus, no matter how abbreviated, a seasoned Ottoman official like the polyglot 'English' Mahmud Raif Efendi (1760-1807), presumably one of the readers of HAT 14127,[25] whose service took him to

---

[22] For a classic example of 'reading' material culture as political philosophy and imperial aspiration, Ch. Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles* (Cambridge 1997).

[23] On re-reading intellectual history in Ottoman lands, see R. Schulze, 'Das islamische achtzehnte Jahrhundert: Versuch einer historiographischen Kritik', *Die Welt des Islams*, 30 (1990), 140-159, and D. Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford 2013). M. Sariyannis in 'Ottoman Ideas on Monarchy before the Tanzimat Reforms: Toward a Conceptual History of Ottoman Political Notions', *Turcica*, 47 (2016), 49-51 notes the role of conversational exchanges across confessional boundaries.

[24] M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City 1966), 9-10; idem, *The Study of Man* (Chicago 1959), 12. Such tacit knowledge should be distinguished from the 'implicit' compare S. B. Schwartz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge 1994). The breadth of tacit knowledge is a function of both organization and time: unlike contemporary society where the pace at which technological change rapidly compounds the forms of technical 'illiteracy' over a generation, but, given the common languages – such as computer codes – vastly exceeds the national and linguistic, the areas of common reference and experience over the centuries vary considerably.

[25] K. Beydilli and İ. Şahin, *Mahmud Râif Efendi ve Nizâm-ı Cedîd'e Dâir Eseri* (Ankara 2001).

Western Europe, the Adriatic, Egypt, and Istanbul, or a colonial governor like Louverture who managed men and supplies while keeping abreast of political events from Washington to Paris and beyond would have been able to draw astute inferences from communications concerning military, economic, or diplomatic affairs, no matter how abbreviated the form of these written or oral communications.

These material, social, and institutional co-ordinates help to relocate the individual reader and writer, speaker and listener, actor and witness in meaningful sites and semantic contexts. Nevertheless, methods of evaluating the intellectual significance of a specific utterance, thought, or text are acutely dependent on situating it in time, particularly with respect to the bracketing of increments and their staging in particular spaces. Although most contemporary historians might dismiss *histoire événementielle* as either a moribund genre or an academic relic left for popular narratives, the temporality of narrative conventions continues to shadow much history-writing in a variety of ways, including through the default sequencing of time or the spatial subordination of certain events to others. Without a critical approach to the diachronic aspects of relationships bearing on modern knowledge and event, the significance and relevance of words, texts, and acts are either consigned to liminality or subordinated to the pre-established – that is, European – timeline. This tendency to defer to accepted periodization also has consequences for valorizing and attributing political thought, establishing or severing relationships across hemispheres, and recognition of historical agency. To the extent that such periodization owes to an unacknowledged hindsight and ideologies, it superimposes a specific teleology, occluding the many poorly explored connections and contingencies that influenced both on-the-ground strategies and emerging political philosophies.

The textbook rendering of the Ottoman eighteenth century provides a notable example of how such Euro-centered timelines have tended to delimit the range of narratives available to historians, and how, in turn, distort how one evaluates local intellectual trends.[26] It is true that Ottoman observers also portrayed this century as one of administrative decline, although recurrent strains of Khaldunism in Ottoman literature were not unique to the eighteenth century. However, to the extent that the modern period has been and continues to be framed by the French Revolution (rather than the American or Haitian revolutions), the historical reflex has been to read the Ottoman old regime as a deviation from the normative track toward political change rather than understanding France's overthrow of its Bourbon monarchy as a peculiar variant of the Ottoman political trajectory. The *Nizam-ı Cedid* (1792-1807),[27] a series of military, administrative, fiscal, intellectual, and political programs initiated by the regime of Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807) becomes a 'belated' or 'defensive' response to a unique problem: its entry into European relationships over the eighteenth century, an exotic detour from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Whether through the exploration of the roots of the 'Eastern Question' or the theoretical emphasis on orientalism, European-centered narratives of later Ottoman history favor research into relations with European states rather than with Muslim powers, from Morocco to Mysore, or with respect to ideologies of republicanism or nationalism rather than with respect to Sufism or Wahhabism. To the extent that Ottoman histories of the period of the War of the Second Coalition fail to recognize the degree to which global economic and political interests gravitated to a large degree around the production of commodities in the Caribbean and control over sea routes linking the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean makes Middle Eastern scholars no less complicit in the "silencing the past", as Michel-Rolph Trouillot entitled his eloquent indictment of a historiography that has long relegated the political actors on Saint-Domingue to bit players in the French Revolution.[28]

---

[26] For examples of the 'decline paradigm', see B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford 2001); N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (London 1999). See also O. Bouquet, 'Is it Time to Stop Speaking about Ottoman Modernization?' in M. Aymes, B. Gourisse and É. Massicard (eds.) *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century* (Leiden 2015), 45-67.

[27] See S. J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807* (Cambridge 1971); A. Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire: The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolutions* (London 2017), and A. Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford 2016).

In this regard, HAT 14127 serves as a jarring corrective to methodologies of exploring the recorded and largely unrecorded elements of political thought and global perspectives at the turn of the nineteenth century. Foregrounding Toussaint Louverture as an actor whose policies and actions reverberated across hemispheres at this juncture must transform the way historians plot the so-called War of the Second Coalition. More than a mere curiosity, a rare, early example of Ottoman Americana, the document affords an opportunity to reconsider the historian's methods of reading political thought of the past while considering the myriad suppressed or marginalized epistemic components and contexts that shaped an emerging modernity at large, one of liberal promises and imperial domination. The following three sections seek to apply these methodological adaptations in an effort to recover the semantically complex, but only indirectly accessible, intellectual spheres of global actors who wrote and read this text before evaluating its relevance to understanding the multi-regional dynamics of conflict, alliance, and diplomacy of the Revolutionary Age. The conclusion suggests how this re-reading points to the need for a dynamic model for writing about the transformation of political thought in light of global contingencies and local social-political realities. It also emphasizes the need to factor not only the 'progressive' message of the French Revolution into the intellectual history of the period, but also the more pervasive and enduring intellectual legacy of Bonapartism throughout the world.

---

[28] M.-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston 1995). Saint-Domingue does not even merit mention in P. W. Schroeder's account of the War of the Second Coalition (see *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe* [London 2004]). By way of contrast, S. Englund, in *Napoleon: A Political Life* (Cambridge MA 2003), 178, recognizes an important shift in Bonaparte's strategy after 1801 toward the Caribbean.

Writing "Toussaint Louverture" in Ottoman Turkish

We can be fairly sure that it was one of the two Phanariot translator-secretaries assigned to the Empire's London Embassy who authored HAT 14127.[29] Drawn from the cadres of the polyglot Christian elites who had long served the Ottoman court and bureaucracy as linguists, diplomats, advisors, and administrators,[30] these translators worked closely with the embassy's First Secretary, or perhaps, in this instance, the Ambassador himself. Together they determined the importance and relevance of information relayed to Istanbul. The text is spare; its wording is succinct. If the author's primary concern was to digest the most up-to-date information concerning the state of Franco-British diplomacy, the writer's decision to open the communiqué by referring to a rebel in a distant Atlantic colony would seem to be an unnecessary detail at best. Even so, assuming that the translator-secretary relied on the sensational accounts of the situation on Saint-Domingue that were widely reported in European newspapers, a certain license is noted: rather than referring to Louverture by his first name alone, with the kind of disrespect toward a black subordinate common to slave-holders, the writer not only wrote out his first name and surname but also added phonetic markers above the letters [طُوسَن لُووَرتُور] to make sure that readers at the court could pronounce it correctly.

Historians of the Atlantic world might find the terseness of the Ottoman communiqué concerning Saint-Domingue unusual for other reasons. When compared with the voluminous documentation to be found in the archives of Europe and the Caribbean itself concerning colonial administration, the trafficking in human beings from Africa, and the shiploads of commodities directed toward European ports and beyond, the absence of any explicit mention of slavery within the Ottoman document is in itself striking. Its writer did not comment on the fact that the slave revolt played out against the background of the ideas and politics of the French Revolution. Rightly so: each social context produced anew relevance and a semantic grid. In the Caribbean, if documents such as the 'Rights of Man' inspired the white colons to draft their own constitutions and moved the *gens de couleur libres* (free people of mixed heritage) to demand equal rights in Paris, it took the uprisings by the enslaved in French colonies – in Martinique (1789), Saint Domingue (1791) and Guadeloupe (1793) – to force the National Assembly to make universal rights a reality in certain French colonies.[31]

In his classic account of the Haitian Revolution published in 1938, the Trinidadian scholar C. L. R. James viewed the epic struggle of the enslaved for their freedom as an example of the fulfillment of the promise of the Enlightenment, albeit interpreted by newly liberated former-slaves in Saint-Domingue "in their own image".[32] When it comes to what these authors thought about the Revolution, David Geggus underlines that the majority understood the term ‘freedom’ in its most elemental meaning: the end of bondage and not as the cluster of rights associated with citizenship.[33] In contrast to many of the foot soldiers of the black revolt, Toussaint Louverture’s voice has been recorded in collections of documents; yet these materials and his policies also reflect an individualist interpretation of Revolutionary principles. An opponent of the republicanism espoused by Benoît Joseph André Rigaud (1761-1811) during the civil war of 1800, his 1801 constitution for the island of Hispaniola espoused a fierce defense of equality without regard to color even as he rejected tolerance of faiths other than Catholicism, including the indigenous Afro-Caribbean religion of Voudon.[34] Wary of the Directory government (1795-1799), he welcomed its overthrow and Bonaparte’s assumption of power.[35]

---

[29] M. Talbot, *British-Ottoman Relations, 1661-1807: Commerce and Diplomatic Practice in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Woodbridge 2017), 94.

[30] On the Phanariot cadres, see C. M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley 2011).

[31] For the unfolding of events, see Fick, *The Making of Haiti*.

[32] James, *The Black Jacobins*, 81.

Conditions for the majority in the French Caribbean were obviously very different than the urbane milieu in West Asia in which Ottoman intellectuals and policy-makers found themselves. Nevertheless, James’s interpretation of how Afro-Caribbean Jacobins responded to the combination of ideas and policies that crossed the seas might also be instructive for students of Ottoman intellectual history. Much of the oral and uncensored communications between key figures and decision-makers has been lost to historians. As more sophisticated and comprehensive analyses of Ottoman political texts suggest, we are only beginning to fully understand and qualify the multiplicity of views of Muslims and non-Muslims on questions of rights, republicanism, and constitutions, or considering the many situations in which unrecorded discussions between, say, Muslim officials, foreign-born advisers and Greek-speaking intellectuals may have shaped opinion before and after the period of administrative, educational, and military reforms associated with the *Nizam-ı Cedid* and the Tanzimat (1839-1878).[36] Added to this is the fact that local contexts often furnished lively arenas of social and cultural exchange, such as coffee shops, the graves of noted religious figures, and taverns much of which content has been lost to posterity.[37] All in all, scholars must assume that Ottoman elites and ordinary Ottoman subjects in the Empire’s large cities were likely more conversant with ideas circulating beyond imperial borders than is revealed in the carefully curated memoirs and commentary left by Ottoman officialdom.

Framed by wider intellectual horizons, the London secretary’s careful transcription of Louverture’s name suggests a range of possible interpretations. Particularly after 1798 and the French occupation of Egypt (and Bonaparte's slaughter of Ottoman soldiers in Jaffa in 1799), it is tempting to read into the translator's attention to the name of a rebel in the French Caribbean a type of rebuke to the Revolution's call for "liberty, equality, and fraternity". Nevertheless, even if Ottoman officials considered this challenge to French rule a well-deserved punishment for the Jacobin "bandits" who had overthrown the Bourbon monarchy and continued to sow discontent across the Adriatic and Balkans by disseminating the writings of radicals like Voltaire, their own experience with provincial upstarts, the *ayan* and *derebey,* would have precluded a blanket endorsement for Louverture's actions against a state which they nonetheless continued to recognize as the legitimate political authority.[38]

---

[33] Geggus, ‘Print Culture and the Haitian Revolution’, 299; C. E. Fick, ‘The Haitian Revolution and the Limits of Freedom: Defining Citizenship in the Revolutionary Era’, *Social History*, 32 (2007), 394-414.

[34] ‘Constitution of 1801 of the French Colony of Saint-Domingue’, https://thelouvertureproject.org/index.php?title=Haitian_Constitution_of_1801_(English). (accessed November 9, 2018).

[35] C. Fick, ‘Revolutionary Saint Domingue and the Emerging Atlantic Paradigm of Sovereignty’ in E. M. Dillon and M. Drexler (eds), *The Haitian Revolution and the Early United States* (Philadelphia 2016), 23-41.

[36] See M. Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought up to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Leiden 2018).

[37] C. Kırlı, ‘Kahvehaneler: Ondokuzuncu Yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Kamuoyu’, in A. Yaşar (ed.), *Osmanlı Kahvehaneleri: Mekân Sosyallik ve İktidar* (Istanbul 2009), 95-118.

Before returning to the question of what ideas Ottoman writers may have invested in or associated with the name Toussaint Louverture, it is necessary to ascertain to the extent possible what the drafters of the communiqué might have known about the Caribbean itself. By the late eighteenth century, the expanding number of formal and informal channels of information could only have enhanced Ottoman knowledge of the main geopolitical trends around the globe and their understanding of the politics and commerce of European colonialism. These channels included top-down efforts to secure intelligence about their neighbors by Sultan Abdulhamid I (r. 1773-1789), who ordered the translation of the foreign press for the edification of the court and central bureaucracy.[39] As for oral channels, they were legions: for the Sublime Porte, the two delegations sent by Sultan Muhammad (1757-1790) of Morocco, which included the dispatch of substantial material support in the form of ships, armaments, and treasure for the Ottoman navy in its conflict with Tsarist Russia, must also have served as a conduit of reliable information concerning developments along the African, European, and American shores of the Atlantic.[40] It should be remembered that Morocco, the North African *dey*s, and the Ottoman vassal, the Republic of Ragusa, were among the first states to recognize the independence of the Thirteen Colonies from British rule and to establish diplomatic relations with Washington. With the conclusion of the Ottoman-Spanish Treaty of Peace and Trade (and Neutrality) in 1782, sea captains and sailors hailing from the farthest corners of the Iberian Empire in the Atlantic and Pacific arrived in Istanbul as well. As one of the leading producers of global commodities such as sugar and coffee, the conflict within Saint-Domingue and its ripple effect on supply and prices of exports could not have gone unnoticed by Ottoman merchants and consumers from Salonika to Istanbul and Izmir.[41]

With the opening of the first permanent missions in such European capitals as Vienna, Paris, and London in the 1790s, Ottoman officials were able to gather intelligence about

---

[38] Republicanism among other forms of government was discussed in İbrahim Müteferrika's *Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizam'ül-ümem* (1732).

[39] V. H. Aksan, 'Ottoman sources of information on Europe in the Eighteenth Century', *ArchOtt*, 11 (1988), 11-12.

[40] T. Zorlu, *Innovation and Empire in Turkey: Sultan Selim III and the Modernization of the Ottoman Navy* (London 2008), 156.

[41] E. Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden 1999), 76. Although Caribbean sugar 'captured' the Ottoman market, not so Caribbean coffee.

Europe and the European colonies in situ, evaluating information on the basis of the interests and needs of the Empire even as individual diplomats explored scientific and political subjects to satisfy their own intellectual curiosity. Although it was impossible for Ottoman observers to ignore the ideological impact of the French Revolution, other aspects of the pre- and post-Revolutionary situation attracted their attention. In an Ottoman memoranda devoted to explaining the causes and impact of the French Revolution, Ebubekir Ratib Efendi (1750-1799), a diplomat based in Vienna, paid particular attention to economic matters.[42] He described the role of fiscal crises and over taxation that contributed to the unpopularity and ultimately the downfall of the Bourbon dynasty. He also noted the fact that the protracted political and social upheaval within the country continued to weaken the French economy. The unrest precipitated the flight of merchants and capital to the benefit of France's enemies. Although similarly detailed accounts concerning the French economy in Ottoman Turkish have not yet been found for the period of this study, one must assume that as disruptions to inter-state trade caused by continental conflicts and the British blockade compounded the revenue losses to the Ottoman state as well, official knowledge in the global economic repercussions of these wars could only have become more nuanced and fine-grained. As for the Caribbean, a major source of French imports and re-exports, particularly from Saint-Domingue's 8,000 plantations, could not have gone unnoticed. Nor could staff in the Ottoman embassies in Paris and London, ignore the discontent after 1794 in French ports, such as Nantes, Bordeaux, Le Havre, and La Rochelle that once profited from the trade in human beings or the fear among slave traders and Caribbean merchants in Liverpool after the Jamaican slave insurrection of 1795.[43]

In fact, appreciation of the role of the economy and revenue streams for political stability at home and particularly as a necessary ingredient to ensure the success of the reforms undertaken by Sultan Selim III might also explain the appointment of a generation of Ottoman diplomats originating from merchant families, including the second Ottoman Ambassador to Great Britain, İsmail Ferruh Efendi (c.1747-1840), whose extended tenure in London seems to have overlapped with the drafting of this communiqué.[44] For such individuals, intelligence gathering was rarely limited to the paper trail, handbooks for princes, or intrigues of the court. They understood the value of the tips and notices coming from a variety of other sources gleaned from the shoptalk of local brokers, long-distance merchants, sailors, and galley slaves. In Ottoman lands, information about the massive slave trade from West Africa toward the Greater Caribbean was likely carried on via a number of conduits, including European merchants visiting Balkan and Syrian ports, the French occupying forces in Egypt, African pilgrims to the Hijaz, or American captives in Algiers or Tripoli.[45] The combination of official communications and written sources complemented the worldly information that transited the seas toward Istanbul itself via the quotidian movement of individuals – diplomats, merchants, sailors, and prisoners of war – who communicated combinations of news and rumor on the docks, in shops, warehouses, and coffee-houses.

---

[42] F. Yeşil, 'Looking at the French Revolution through Ottoman Eyes: Ebubekir Ratib Efendi's Observations', *BSOAS*, 70 (2007), 283-304 (esp. 290).

[43] M. Covo, 'Race, Slavery and Colonies in the French Revolution', in D. Andress (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolutio*n (Oxford 2015), Chap. 17.

[44] Talbot, *British-Ottoman Relations*, 59.

[45] Recalling a conversation with Ahmad al-Jazzar Pasha (1722-1804) in Syria, Horace Sébastiani

Though not abundant, textual evidence does support the notion that Ottoman elites generally, especially the then Secretary of State, Mahmud Raif Efendi, were very aware of the strategic importance of the colonial Caribbean for the most powerful European states. Beginning with an expanded version of Kâtip Çelebi's *Cihannüma* by İbrahim Müteferrika in 1732, which contained a description of the Americas, geographical interest in European imperial expansion must have only increased. As the First Secretary to the first Ottoman ambassador to London, Yusuf Ağa Efendi (1744-1824) (an official whose father, Süleyman Penah Efendi, had drafted a treatise referencing Spanish colonization in the Americas),[46] Raif Efendi pursued the study of language, comparative government, and world geography. After composing his *Tableau des Nouveaux Règlements de L'Empire Ottoman* (Constantinople: Imprimerie la Génie, 1798), which sought to dispel the ignorance he found among his Western counterparts concerning the "real state of the Ottoman Empire",[47] he drafted an 80-page treatise in French on the world's political and economic geography. The Istanbul publication of Raif Efendi's treatise in 1804 followed the translation and redrawing of the maps to be found in William Faden's very popular *Atlas Minimus Universalis* (1798) under the title *Cedid atlas tercümesi* in 1803.[48]

Translated by the Ottoman Chargé d'Affaires in Vienna, the Phanariot Yakovaki Efendi (Iakovos Argyropoulos) (1776-1850)[49] under the title *Ucaletü'l-coğrafiyye*, Raif Efendi's treatise featured several sections on the Atlantic world. The section on the North

---

recounted the fact that the pasha told him the story of a "black slave [...] [who] after a long journey, in which he had suffered the greatest privations, arrived at a little field of sugar canes [...]", suggesting that the African slave trade to the Americas was widely known ('Report made to the French Consul by Colonel Sébastiani, extracted from the *Moniteur* of the 30th of Jan. 1803'. *The Official Correspondence between Great Britain and France on the subject of the Late Negotiation; with His Majesty's declaration to which is prefixed, the preliminary and definitive treaties of Peace; with an appendix containing Colonel Sébastiani's Report to the First Consul, &c.&c.* Appendix No. 1 (London 1803), viii-ix.

[46] V. H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700-1870. An Empire Besieged* (London 2007), 189-191.

[47] Mahmoud Rayf Efendi, *Tableau des Nouveau Reglemens de L'Empire Ottoman* (Constantinople 1798), 4; M. A. Yalçınkaya, 'Mahmud Raif Efendi as the Chief Secretary of Yusuf Agah Efendi, The First Permanent Ottoman-Turkish Ambassador to London (1793-1797)', *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma Merkezi*, 5 (1994), 422-434. See Beydilli and Şahin, *Mahmud Râif Efendi*, 42.

[48] William Faden, *Atlas Minimus Universalis or a Geographical Abridgement Ancient and Modern of the Several Parts of the Earth in Fifty Five Maps composed principally for the Use of Schools* (London 1798). Fifty copies of the atlas were printed; the maps were re-engraved under the direction of Müderris Abdurrahman Efendi. For a digital copy of the *Ucaletü'l-coğrafiyye* and *Cedid atlas tercümesi* `https://www.loc.gov/item/2004626120/` (access December 10, 2018).

[49] J. Strauss, 'The Millets and the Ottoman Language: The Contribution of Ottoman Greeks to Ottoman Letters (19th - 20th Centuries)', *Die Welt des Islams*, 35 (1995), 189-249.

American continent, which includes mention of British Canada and a description of the government of the breakaway ex-settler colony, the United States (rendered as the "English Republic" in the Ottoman translation of the Faber map of North America), has been examined.[50] However, another lengthy section entitled "Concerning the islands that surround [continental North] America" is entirely devoted to the Caribbean. The text emphasizes the economic contributions and complex imperial geography of the region.[51] It furnishes statistics concerning the approximate land mass of each island, including those composing the Greater Antilles, as well as an estimate of the distance of important islands from the Spanish-controlled Gulf of Mexico. In addition to identification of each island's colonial status, Raif Efendi emphasized the fact that many of them possessed a peculiarly favorable climate (*âb ve hava lâtif*),[52] presumably for the cultivation of tropical crops. He underscored the massive trade in commodity exports (*azîm ticaret*) these islands provided Europe, undoubtedly referring to well-known transfers of such Old World commercial crops as sugar, indigo and coffee to the Americas.[53]

This geographical information tells us little about how the Ottoman elite regarded the legitimacy of Europe's colonial regimes in the Caribbean or whether such information may have influenced Ottoman opinions about the politics and ideologies associated with the French Revolution. If it is unreasonable to expect that Ottoman officials to have betrayed their actual opinions about the relative merits of foreign governmental forms, much less individual rights, in such texts, it is also unsurprising that most Ottoman bureaucrats shared the convictions of their Prussian and Habsburg counterparts when it came to dynastic rule and established state religion. Nevertheless, they had different expectations of inter-state relations. Like the French, as evidenced by Robespierre's veto of a proposal to establish a Jacobin Club in Istanbul brought forward by a zealous revolutionary merchant,[54] they were pragmatists. The Sublime Porte chose not to sacrifice a longstanding geopolitical alliance on the altar of ideological purity. While denouncing Jacobinism and democracy as political systems, unlike Christian Europe, Ottoman statesmen did not consider such ideological departures (or even regicide) to be a sufficient *casus belli*. Not only did they resist entreaties by other monarchies to join the First Coalition (1792-1997), but the Empire also fed the Revolution's hungry cities and strove to promote peace among the belligerents.[55] After the French expulsion from the Ionian islands, neither the Sultan, nor, for that matter, his Second Coalition partner, Tsar Paul I

---

[50] J. Strauss, 'Nineteenth Century Ottoman Americana', in M. Hadjianastasis (ed.) *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honor of Rhoads Murphey* (Leiden 2015), 259-281.

[51] Mahmud Raif Efendi, *Ucaletü'l-coğrafiyye*, 71-74.

[52] Ibid., 72.

[53] Moralı Süleyman Penah Efendi's 1769 history of the uprisings in the Morea (*Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi*) ends with suggestions that Ottoman officials emulate European colonial policies in the Americas. F. Ermiş, *A History of Ottoman Economic Thought. Developments Before the Nineteenth Century* (London 2014), 141-142.

[54] P. Firges, *French Revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire: Diplomacy, Political Culture and the Limiting of Universal Revolution, 1792-1798* (Oxford 2017), 114-115.

[55] Ibid., 249-250.

(r. 1796-1801), rejected republicanism out of hand: the constitution for the Septinsular Republic by which independence was guaranteed by a Russo-Ottoman condominium was printed in Istanbul on 21 March 1800.[56]

However, if the concept of 'freedom' – democratic rule, freedom of speech and assembly, and equality before the law – became, in the words of one intellectual historian, acutely "politicized" for many, ordinary Ottoman subjects at the turn of the nineteenth century,[57] it should be attributed to experience as much as ideology. There could be few more glaring refutations of Enlightenment ideals than French rule in Egypt itself. Every step of the Republic's campaign in the southern Mediterranean from 1798 onward was justified by French officials and generals by cynically invoking revolutionary virtues.[58] Thus, the Malta campaign was characterized as an effort to carry the 1794 emancipation laws to the last Crusader citadel by shutting down the Order of the Knights of St. John's industry of kidnapping, enslavement, and ransom. The redirection of the French armada toward Egypt became a humanitarian mission to repatriate newly freed Muslim captives. After making land at Alexandria and marching on Cairo, Bonaparte presented himself as an emissary of the Sultan, whose intervention aimed only at the removal of an oppressive, rebel neo-Mamluk regime and the restoration of Istanbul's rule. Even Niqula bin Yusuf al-Turk (1763-1828), an Ottoman Christian from Syria who joined Bonaparte's campaign, could not fail to record the reaction of the captive Cairene audience who witnessed the Republican army's performance of a revolutionary fête. Instead of a "tree of liberty", the Egyptian spectators viewed the erection of a column adorned with the tricolor and portraits of the executed Bourbon monarchs and defeated neo-Mamluk lords to be a more apt representation of their own torment, or in his words, a "pike upon which they and their occupied country had been impaled".[59]

This first-hand experience of transparently imperial practices glossed by republican ideals to one side, Ottoman elite criticisms of the Revolutionary rhetoric of rights, freedom, and equality themselves merit further consideration. Beyond the question of whether they as a group or individually explicitly rejected such principles in their totality, it is also possible to understand why they might tend to be more skeptical as to whether a declaration of the "Rights of Man" alone might actually deliver a universal franchise. Ottoman political knowledge was informed by social hierarchies that were compounded by both inherited privilege and wealth as well as differences based on ethnicity, religion, life-style, and servile/free status. Unlike Europe's middle classes, who enjoyed the products of an enslaved workforce without witnessing the quotidian abasement of human beings condemned to life-long servitude, the inhabitants of Ottoman lands knew slavery for what it was: a license for sexual exploitation, re-sale, pawnship, and the gifting of other human beings.[60] It was this social reality that prompted the Ottoman envoy in Vienna, Ebubekir Ratib Efendi, whose report on the economics of the French Revolution was referenced above, to mock Jacobin slogans, especially the facile comparison of the status of freeborn Europeans with those who were enslaved. Such Enlightenment similes could only have appeared to Ottoman elites and commoners alike as risible hyperbole.[61]

---

[56] See S. Gekas, *Xenocracy: State, Class, and Colonialism in the Ionian Islands, 1815-1864* (Oxford 2016).

[57] W. Abu-'Uksa, *Freedom in the Arab World. Concepts and Ideologies in Arabic Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (New York 2016), Chap. 1.

[58] Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *Napoleon in Egypt*, trans. Sh. Moreh (Princeton 2005), 24-25, 50-51.

[59] N. El-Turk, *Histoire de l'expedition des Francais en Egypte* (Paris 1839), 52. Compare Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (Cambridge MA 1991), 133.

Although the scale of servile labor in agriculture in a Caribbean setting like Saint-Domingue, where the population of the enslaved vastly outnumbered its free inhabitants of either European or African heritage, had no equivalent in Ottoman lands, greater appreciation of the many forms of servile status within the Empire may also complicate understandings of enslavement in other settings. It may offer insights into the sociological logic underlying Toussaint Louverture's politics of emancipation as he attempted to re-organize the colony of Saint-Domingue between 1793, when the local French officials were forced to recognize the end of legal slavery on the island, and 1801, when Louverture directed his army to annex Spanish Hispaniola. Throughout the 1790s, conflicts and rivalries within the colony had been fraught and many-sided: the contests between settler-colonial Europeans, black, and mixed-race populations had been exceptionally violent. Neither whites nor free blacks, both of whom held slaves, initially supported the emancipation of the majority of the colony's black inhabitants. After the abolition of slavery, the legacy of quotidian cruelty and humiliation persisted, as did the extremes of wealth. At the same time, the history of selective manumission and the recognition of mixed race offspring meant that certain affinities endured between former slaves and masters, as did patterns of acculturation to French ways. Added to the many ideological, racial, and economic fault lines within the island's society, was the overwhelming reality that Saint-Domingue's emancipation remained a unique outpost in a sea of colonial slavery. In this setting, too, freedom meant freedom from legal slavery, as opposed to individual and political rights: these basic realities justified Louverture's determination to keep the plantation economy running and his reluctance to export the revolution beyond the island of Hispaniola.[62]

In returning to our initial question as to why the translator-secretary chose to foreground the name of Toussaint Louverture and ascribe to him primary responsibility for the rebellion on Saint Domingue, we must assume that he, like other Ottoman officials, was well aware of the prevalence of agricultural slavery in the French Caribbean. Although Ottoman elites shared prejudices concerning skin color, birth, and ethno-geographic origin with European statesmen, they possessed a degree of discernment about slave societies that eluded most of their Western counterparts. For officials ruled by a dynasty perpetuated by concubine-consorts and defended by an army that originated in the form of servile child recruits, no philosophical epiphany was required to appreciate the capabilities, intellect, and determination of men and women whatever the circumstances of their birth. Thus, regardless of the terms of the European press's portrayal of Louverture's character and motivations or its assumptions concerning the inherent (or innate) superiority of the European generals that were sent to defeat him, Ottoman writers could no more underestimate the seriousness of his challenge to the Republic than they could discount the erudition of the Sudanese eunuchs who administered the Sultan's household, deny the expertise of the Jewish banker who organized Cezzar Pasha's defense of Acre in 1799, question the legal acumen of a Christian *voyvoda* who governed a Black Sea principality under Ottoman suzerainty, or wonder about the longevity of a dynasty of Georgian slaves that had ruled the province of Baghdad for the better part of a century.

---

[60] On conditions of the enslaved in Ottoman lands, see E. R. Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven 2007), and M. C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (Cambridge 2010).

[61] Yeşil, 'Looking at the French Revolution through Ottoman Eyes'.

[62] P. Cheney, 'Haiti's Commericial Treaties: Between Abolition and the Persistence of the Old Regime' in A. Alimento and K. Stapelbroek (eds.) *The Politics of Commercial Treaties in the Eighteenth Century: Balance of Power, Balance of Trade* (London 2017), 401-420.

Reading the New Imperialism's Old Regime

This communiqué concerning Toussaint Louverture's 'rebellion' arrived in Istanbul at a moment when, although the France had finally withdrawn their troops from Egypt, Ottoman officials were still entangled in protracted negotiations with French diplomats. Paris was pressing the Ottomans to sign a new treaty of alliance with absent concessions, or reparations for the enormous damage to property caused by their assault on Egypt, and much less compensation for the loss of life in Syria. Given their lack of forthrightness over the terms of the parallel negotiations underway with the British, there was ample reason for the Sublime Porte's officials to suspect that Ottoman interests in the postbellum status of Egypt were far from secure.

Readers of HAT 14127 in Istanbul, including the then Secretary of State Mahumd Raif Efendi and, perhaps, Sultan Selim III himself, who not infrequently left his comments on communications and intelligence about European states, had become wise to the ways of Bonaparte and Talleyrand. They had no need to comment on the contents of this communiqué in a *der kenar* or marginal notation. Instead, despite the terseness of the message, critically telling, if not fully accurate, details would have commanded their attention. In addition to mentioning the number of the ships and the 10,000 men deployed in the Brest armada, the secretary added a line noting that the size of the expedition was great enough to provoke alarm among members of the British Parliament (who had reason to distrust French motives in routing a hostile fleet's passage so close to their shores, particularly after the support given by Paris to the Irish rebellions of 1796 and 1798). Similarly, the document's reference to the fact that the commander of the fleet was a Bonaparte family member, though not, as the London secretary wrote, his brother (*karındaş*), but rather, his brother-in-law, General Charles Victor Emmanuel Le Clerc (1772-1802) (that is, Josephine's Martinique-born brother), signaled the fact that the First Consul himself set considerable stock by the mission's success. Interestingly enough, in contrast with the meticulousness shown in the writing of "Toussaint Louverture", the secretary did not feel that the general was worthy of mention by name.

By late 1801, news of France's Caribbean dilemma, coupled with recent combat experience with the French army and navy in the Adriatic, Italy, Egypt, and Syria during the War of the Second Coalition, must have prompted an Ottoman re-assessment of the Republic's military preparedness overall. Previous generations of Ottoman observers and advice-givers had praise for the French military's discipline and technique. There was no denying that Revolutionary armies in their defensive and later offensive campaigns on the Continent itself remained formidable. Ottoman observers credited France's victories on land to both leadership and the patriotic fervor that mobilized its soldiers. In contrast to the resistance from the traditional infantry toward Sultan Selim III's military reforms and against the conscription troops for the New Order army from the general population – or for that matter, the hostility toward Britain's continuing practice of dragooning American citizens into the Royal Navy – Bonaparte's armies relied on infantry recruits from Poland, Malta, and Italy, as well as from Christian communities in the Middle East. With the enfranchisement of the majority in Guadeloupe and Saint-Domingue, experienced black officers who had defended the colony against the Spanish and British incursions manned colonial garrisons.

Celebrated victories on the Continent notwithstanding, the French navy never measured up to Great Britain's state-owned armada and merchant fleets by sea. Despite incorporating the port facilities, ships, sailors, and other maritime resources of the Italian cities under their control, Bonaparte's imperial schemes, which spanned from the Adriatic to the Atlantic and from the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean, far outstripped France's maritime capacity. British parliamentarians who weighed Paris' request for permission to pass through English waters toward the Caribbean, lambasted Bonaparte's back-to-back ventures in the Mediterranean and Atlantic as hubristic folly. Officials in Istanbul learned that the one of the principle reasons for Bonaparte's withdrawal from Egypt was France's inability to conduct naval operations simultaneously in two oceanic theaters.[63]

Such a sober assessment of one of Europe's most powerful state's ability to project power should also caution historians against exaggerating the difference between the logistics of rule under the new imperialism and the more 'traditional' organization of the land-based agrarian empires of Asia at the turn of the nineteenth century. Before the age of industrialization and the introduction of the steam engine transformed production and transport, both European and Asian empires were hobbled by constraints of scale, technologies of war, supply lines, and infrastructure. On land, even well-provisioned and well-disciplined infantries marched on foot and carried their supplies on their backs or by means of quadrupeds. Success in battle depended not only on leadership, organization, armaments, and size of infantries, but also on weather conditions, disease, and the availability of passable roads for wheeled carriages and horses. As such, although the Revolution's overhaul of state institutions vastly outstripped the more limited fiscal and military programs of the *Nizam-ı Cedid*, both empires continued to face daunting challenges when it came to managing far-flung lands and peoples.

---

[63] BOA *HAT* 5968 (12/M /1217 [15 May 1802]). The French had pulled its troops from Egypt to send an armada to the Americas.

These logistical parallels as well as the problems of manpower and morale were more pronounced once the Republic's armies left European shores and embarked on purely imperial ventures. In Egypt, Bonaparte's armies' initial successes proved deceptive.[64] An undisciplined and poorly outfitted neo-Mamluk cavalry offered no match for a well-trained and well-armed Western European infantry. Yet once Ottoman troops joined their allies on land and sea, the French advantage was lost. In the Adriatic and Italy, the Tsar's navy and Ottoman soldiers defeated the French garrisons stationed in the Ionian Islands and helped to defend Naples; the Empire's New Order soldiers would prove up to the task of defending Syria. In Egypt, French reversals came hard on the heels of victories, as the British navy soundly defeated the French armada in the Nile and joint Ottoman-British forces confronted Republican troops on land. Although the French army's retreat to Upper Egypt extended their occupation, it came at considerable cost in men and treasure. Short on manpower, the same French officers who pretended to be liberating the Egyptians resorted to the purchase of enslaved persons to supplement their forces.

It was not only in terms of their imperial aggression in Ottoman lands that the French generals gave short shrift to Republican ideals. Throughout the French Empire, the Republic had yet to retire the signature administrative practices of the old regime. Like the Ottomans, the French could not afford to universalize the new regime. Whether land-based or oceanic, given the large scale of territories and overseas colonies, as well as the extreme diversity of social contexts, imperial rule meant that the very reforms that were implanted in the core areas of the state proved very difficult and, at times, impossible to replicate in peripheral provinces or distant colonies. Thus, despite degrees of revolutionary centralization and standardization, many features of the old regime endured while others were re-introduced as the exigencies of war and imperial strategies required. This duality was not new: Alexis de Tocqueville described absolutism under the Bourbons as a "rigid type of rule with a soft practice".[65]By "soft practice" Tocqueville referred to the great latitude accorded local authorities, especially those entrusted with governance at the periphery of empires and large states.

In a mid-nineteenth century treatise dedicated to understanding the social, intellectual, and institutional roots of the French Revolution, Tocqueville underscored the lines of political continuity in practices between the old and new regimes. With unmistakable irony, he traced the etymology of Revolutionary "liberty" in the monarchy's own former practices, remarking that even the old regime offered its subjects a form of "liberty", however irregular or erratic in application ("une espèce de liberté irrégulière"). This took the form of special privileges accorded the aristocracy and provincial administrators.[66] Little wonder that Ottoman politicians also re-purposed old regime terms to describe what they regarded as both an ideological departure and a permutation on an existing phenomenon. *Serbestiyet*, a Persian-Arabic neologism, derived from the administration concept of *serbest*, an Ottoman administrative practice indicating a cluster of immunities enjoyed by functionaries and tax farmers who were free from central state oversight, was also used as a means of describing the privileges enjoyed by foreign aristocrats. It too contained seeds of a more modern notion of 'liberty'. The translation of the clause pertaining to the *serbest* status accorded the Crimean khans under the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) was rendered in Italian as "*libertá loro politica e civile*" (their political and civic freedoms).[67]

---

[64] Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt,* 66.

[65] Alexis de Tocqueville*, L'ancien regime et la Revolution* (Paris 1866), 121.

[66] Ibid., 199.

It was precisely the old regime practice of 'liberty/*serbestiyet*' – what British colonial administrators would later term "indirect rule" – that continued to provide both French and Ottoman authorities an operational format for governing imperial peripheries before, during, and after the Revolution. Ottoman observers who followed the administration of European colonialism in the Americas, including how that the French and British applied such policies in their interactions with indigenous peoples in the Americas and in order to enlist their military support in proxy wars over control of the Great Lakes region,[68] were well aware of the parallels. The revolt of the American Thirteen Colonies against Great Britain was but one example of the often contentious relationship between European states and their overseas subjects who insisted on degrees of liberty in the conduct of local affairs and fiscal questions. During the Revolutionary Wars, there are many examples in which European powers found it impossible to impose the laws of the center on settler colonial populations: for example in the French Mascarene Islands (in the Western Indian Ocean) the governor and provincial assembly of the Ile de France (Mauritius) rejected the 1794 emancipation law passed by the National Assembly, defying Paris for a decade; similarly, the local officers of the British East Indian Company all too often took matters into their own hands in defiance of London's prerogatives.[69] Exploiting fears among royalists concerning the potential contagion of revolutionary ideas and the possibility of collaboration with the French, the Marquis of Wellesley produced documents, likely falsified, that claimed Sultan Fath Ali Sahab Tipu (Tipu Sultan) (1750-1799) had supported a Jacobin Club in his capital as retroactive justification of his pre-emptive strike on Mysore in May 1799.[70]

Wartime marked a revival of old regime policies of 'liberty/*serbestiyet*' in both the French and Ottoman empires. While the center concentrated its forces in order to conduct military campaigns in other regions, these policies served to maintain the loyalty of local elites and power-brokers as well as to stabilize governance in more distant realms. In this regard, there is more than a passing resemblance between the relationship of Paris with the Caribbean and Istanbul's tenuous ties with the Balkans at the turn of the century.[71] Both regions supplied critical resources to the central state whether in the form of raw materials, tax revenues, or commercial products. Moreover, during the conflicts on the Continent, in the Adriatic and Egypt, both the French Caribbean and the Ottoman Balkans presented major security challenges for their respective imperial centers. Given their proximity to rival states, frontier provinces afforded the local lords who dominated them with considerable autonomy as they leveraged their loyalty to and support for central authority on the basis of a changing political map.

---

[67] B. Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago 1988), 109-111, 174; for a more nuanced discussion: H. Yılmaz, 'From Serbestiyet to Hürriyet: Ottoman Statesmen and the Question of Freedom during the Late Enlightenment', *SI*, 111(2016), 202-230.

[68] BOA *Cevdet Hariciye* 9160 (14/S /1192 [14 March 1778]).

[69] There was no universal abolition in the French colonies.

[70] J. Boutier, 'Les "lettres de créances" du corsaire Ripaud. Un club jacobin" à Srirangapatnam (Inde), mai-juin 1797', *Les Indes Savantes* (2005). <halshs-00007971> https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00007971/document (accessed November 9, 2018).

The Wars of the Second Coalition witnessed important shifts in the degree and nature of central state intervention to maintain control over peoples, lands, and resources in these regions. Relations between local authorities and the center seesawed between *de facto* autonomy and nominal obeisance. Comparable, too, were the careers of regional power-brokers, whom state officials might regard as loyal subjects one day and rebels the next. Among the many Ottoman examples, Vidinli Osman Pazvantoğlu (1758-1805) of Bulgaria amassed territory from the Danube to the Balkan Mountains and from Belgrade to Varna.[72] As the Sublime Porte vacillated between condemnation and political rehabilitation, Pazvantoğlu minted his own coins and conducted diplomacy with European powers independent of Istanbul. In the Caribbean, his counterpart took a similar path. Louverture who emerged as the commander of an army of former slaves challenged French policies by leveraging an alliance with the British to liberate Saint-Domingue's slaves. With the National Assembly's abolition of slavery and suspension of the African slave trade, he switched sides in 1794.

On the eve of the outbreak of the War of the Second Coalition, competition between neighbouring territorial states furnished local power-brokers with the possibility of bargaining for greater autonomy from central authorities in Istanbul and Paris. As Paris made overtures to Pazvantoğlu, whom *Le Moniteur* hailed as the leader of a potential "Mohammedan Republic", the Sultan elevated him to the rank of pasha.[73] In the Caribbean, as Bonaparte concentrated a substantial portion of the Republic's ground and sea forces toward a campaign in the Mediterranean, Paris rewarded Louverture with a title and eventually recognition as the military commander of the colony. Although Louverture expelled the French Commissioner of Saint-Domingue, Léger-Félicité Sonthonax, from the colony in 1797, he nevertheless continued to enjoy the support of Paris. With Napoleon's armies engaged in the Adriatic, Malta, Egypt, and Syria, Louverture conducted his own foreign policy, concluding commercial treaties with Great Britain (1798) and the United States (1799). So obvious were the analogies between the French and Ottoman empires to observers like Albert Gallatin, a Swiss-born representative from

---

[71] A. Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire*, 104; more generally, F. Adanır, 'Semi-autonomous forces in the Balkans and Anatolia', in S. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge 2006), 157-185.

[72] F. S. Turhan, *Janissaries, Modernisation and Rebellion in the Nineteenth Century* (London 2014), 196-197.

[73] R. T. Sellaouti, 'The Republic and the Muslim World' in A. I. Forrest and M. Middell (eds), *French Revolution in World History*, 97-116 (esp. 109-110).

Pennsylvania in the United States Congress and an opponent of the 1799 treaty between the United States and Saint-Domingue, that he warned congressmen that the semi-autonomous French colony might become the Algeria of the Atlantic.[74]

Surely, such geopolitical parallels were not lost on the Istanbul readers of HAT 14127. Ottoman officials summoned their tacit knowledge gained from the first-hand experience of managing the moving parts of a multi-continental territorial empire to interpret the subtexts of this communiqué. In the face of the machinations of French diplomats and the bluster and bellicose talk about dismantling the Ottoman Empire that remained a theme in the French press, Ottoman officials would have had no problem in extracting the larger meaning and potential consequence of the document's brief though highly resonant lines; indeed, they knew that between Egypt, India, and now the upheaval in the 'Pearl of Antilles', the French Empire was facing an enormous crisis with myriad consequences for its economic stability and military capability. Le Clerc's charge was to capture the "rebel" Louverture and regain military control over the entire island of Hispaniola. In addition, Paris ordered the preparation of fleets and reinforcement from other ports, most of which were also directed at Saint-Domingue. Other fleets were directed toward the occupation of Guadeloupe and the Gulf of Mexico. In the scramble to man these operations and find able-bodied soldiers, the Republic drafted Germans, Swiss, Basques, Maltese, and Poles. Rather than a national army of French patriots, the imperial troops whom Bonaparte sent across the seas anticipated a version of the *Légion étrangère*.[75]

Colonial Convergence and Ottoman Realpolitik (1798-1804)

The previous sections have considered the telegraphic wording of the first part of the H.H. 14127 concerning France's responses to Louverture's challenge in the Caribbean. Although shorn of detail, a reconstruction of the cosmopolitan intellectual milieu in which the Ottoman staff in London and Istanbul operated supports a more nuanced interpretation of how its writers and readers may have interpreted the information and suggests important geopolitical implications. This reconstruction of the epistemic context has also relied upon an appreciation of the social and institutional knowledge that Ottoman officials brought to bear on turn-of-the-century imperial rule. Indeed, there was no need to explain to the bureaucrats in Istanbul the strategic danger posed by an astute, able, and powerful *ayan* like Louverture who could leverage his position in a pivotal area of the French Empire to either dictate terms to the center or break free of imperial control.

Yet this interpretation does not fully resolve all the puzzling components of the communiqué, particularly the seeming disjuncture between the content of its opening statements and those referring to British responses to this situation. It is precisely because the information about the Caribbean speaks so emphatically about the geopolitical vulnerability of the French that the balance of text, which concerns the resumption of diplomacy with their nemesis, Great Britain, appears disconnected, even counterintuitive: France had lost battle after battle, from the Adriatic to the Nile. In 1798, after Admiral Horatio Nelson's stunning victory over François-Paul Brueys D'Aigalliers which destroyed France's main fleet in the Mediterranean, discerning observers knew that the war was, to all intents and purposes, practically over. The following year, the East India Company's assault on Mysore foreclosed any future French designs to control the entrance to the Indian Ocean via the Red Sea. By the time of the writing of this communiqué from London, British and Ottoman forces had also routed the French army from Lower Egypt; the last Republican troops had departed Egypt the previous September. And yet, at the very moment when France was most vulnerable, the Sublime Porte learned that the British government – fully apprised of the Republic's conundrum in the Caribbean – chose not to follow up on its military advantage. Stranger still, notwithstanding British suspicions concerning Bonaparte's real motives, the new Prime Minister permitted the French expedition to cross the English Channel en route to the Americas. Diplomacy to end the war proceeded apace with negotiations in London in October, yielding a British promise to meet in Amiens to conclude a final agreement.

---

[74] G. S. Brown, *Toussaint's Clause: The Founding Fathers and the Haitian Revolution* (Tuscaloosa 2005), 141.

[75] D. P. Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington 2002), 25-27.

What did Ottoman officials make of this turn in Franco-British relations? Given their position of overwhelming dominance, why hadn't the British followed up on their victories in the Atlantic and Mediterranean as they had in the Indian Ocean? Was this shift in policy from war to diplomacy to be attributed to the replacement of the implacably Francophobic ex-Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806) in 1801? Stranger still, rather than encouraging the British negotiators to press for greater concessions from France, the situation in Saint-Domingue seemed to accelerate co-operation between the two powers. Considering the fact that French diplomats actually attempted to barter their position in Egypt against a restoration of their ports in India, the Ottoman court and diplomats had good reason to fear that the British turn from war to negotiations might indicate that erstwhile friend and foe had arrived at a compromise at the expense of the Sublime Porte.

By bringing together inter-hemispheric concerns and the paradoxes of war and peace on a single page, the Ottoman document's written and unwritten components not only underscore the grey zones in Ottoman diplomacy with their European counterparts due to the multi-lateral nature of negotiations taking place in France, Istanbul, Egypt, and London. Situating Ottoman responses in an intellectual milieu with inter-hemispheric co-ordinates also furnishes an historical counterpoint to what otherwise have been rather narrow expectations about what the Sublime Porte knew and when, as well as the extent of information (or ignorance) involved in both military strategies and political decision-making. It presents an alternative perspective on the changing stakes in global conflicts during this phase of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. It points to potentially flawed assumptions about geography and agency that have influenced narratives that have foregrounded the Great Powers and their struggles for dominance within continental Europe, and to a lesser degree within the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean.[76] Such biased narratives, even with respect to the greater Mediterranean, as recent scholarship reveals,[77] ignore the multiplicity of geopolitical variables in these contexts and the consequential nature of the participation of powers often regarded as outliers to the European continental order, such as Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire. So too, without enlarging the geopolitical lens to capture less prominent inter-hemispheric actors, such as the Sultanate of Mysore and the newly formed United States of America as well as a host of of semi-autonomous, sub-imperial brokers in the Caribbean, North Africa, and the Balkans these narratives fail to capture the central dynamic of these multi-lateral, inter-hemispheric wars. As the final text of the Treaty of Amiens would articulate, the War of the Second Coalition itself took place within a zone stretching from the Great Lakes in North America to the Red Sea and from the Indian Ocean to South America.

---

[76] P. W. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Mod-*

Such a revisionist, inter-hemispheric perspective on the War of the Second Coalition is particularly important for two reasons. First, because throughout the war, these extra-European theaters of competition remained critical to appreciating the timing of European military engagement on the Continent and the Mediterranean as well as the larger economic and strategic calculus of the British, French, Dutch (Batavian), and Spanish empires. Second, because the oscillations between and the gravitational pull of colonial and continental interests influenced the terms of the peace between these powers. In effect, by 1801, shared European colonial interests in the Atlantic to a large degree took precedence over competition within zones of the eastern hemisphere, from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. Whether it was the continuance of the trans-Atlantic trafficking in enslaved African peoples, shoring up the plantation economy threatened by the emancipation of the population of the Caribbean's wealthiest colony, or supporting the expansion of sugar production to other tropical island colonies, the turn to diplomacy represented a convergence of colonial concerns that forced an inter-imperial truce. A cessation of the conflict would allow the Consulate to redirect its forces toward Saint-Domingue. Staunching struggles for freedom by the enslaved within the Caribbean was in the interests of every European colonial power.

From this perspective, the translators at the Ottoman embassy in London who prioritized the elements in the story within the communiqué got it right: what they transmitted to Istanbul underscored the hierarchy of European interests at this moment, their shared investments in the Caribbean generally, and the absolutely central importance of the unfolding events in Saint-Domingue to the relatively rapid conclusion of negotiations between 1801 and 1802. Indeed, it points to a single overarching narrative thread that connects the larger geopolitical contests across both hemispheres: the Second Coalition War would be better described as a short interruption in the decade of the Haitian Revolution that began with the self-emancipation of its enslaved population in 1793 and ended with the rout of the French in late 1803. Between 1794 and 1800, Louverture's government became the geopolitical and economic anchor in France's imperial strategy not only in the Atlantic but also in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. The colony which

---

ern Europe (New York 2004).

[77] Şakul, 'An Ottoman Global Moment'.

counted more than a half million former slaves formed a defensive bastion for the Republic with respect to other European empires. Coupled with the importance of the island's agricultural production for the French domestic economy was the fact that its citizenry formed, by virtue of their emancipation, a sword of Damocles hanging over the slave regimes in the colonial Carribean. Given the British precedent of offering freedom to enslaved persons in exchange for their military support during the American Independence War, London had good reason to fear that Bonaparte might deploy an army of freedmen under the banner of the 'Rights of Man' to extend French rule across the Caribbean.

So long as Saint-Domingue's thousands of plantations remained secure, Bonaparte could afford to gamble in the eastern hemisphere. His campaigns against Malta and Egypt were directed at frustrating British communications with the Indian Ocean by controlling the key overland access point connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea. Despite its pomp and spectacle, France's Egyptian campaign proved to be a dismal failure. Bonaparte may have hoped to develop an active alliance with Mysore and the Marathas, despite the fact that the French no longer enjoyed a substantial territorial presence on the subcontinent or naval support from the Ile de France, given the settler colonists' revolt against the Paris governments of the Directorate and later, the Consulate.[78] None of these plans succeeded. The returns from Egypt, in comparison with France's well-established investments in and revenues from the Caribbean were minimal. Beyond the looting of antiquities and neo-Mamluk treasure, Bonaparte's foray into the Ottoman Empire proved to be enormously costly in terms of men, armaments, and ships. French merchants and the Directory's coffers incurred additional losses as the Sultan impounded French goods and prohibited French commerce in Ottoman ports for the duration of the conflict. One must assume that Bonaparte's bold attempt to reroute world trade and annex one of the key provinces of the classical and Islamic world appealed to an imperial irredentism among the French public, a dream of turning back the clock before the massive forfeiture of colonies following the Seven Years' War (1747-1756) in the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. In the end, moreover, the Republic's dreams of unrequited empire took additional victims. Without the backing of neighboring independent Indian states on land or the French navy at sea, Mysore's ruler Tipu Sultan died defending his capital Srirangapatnam in 1799 against an unprovoked assault by the East India Company that resulted in the British annexation of his kingdom.[79]

In the Mediterranean, too, Bonaparte miscalculated the strength of his allies and the abilities of his foes. In his detailed study of Ottoman participation in the Second Coalition

---

[78] B. Smith, 'Diplomacy and its Forms of Knowledge: Anquetil-Duperron, the Balance of Power and India in the French Global Imaginary, 1778-1803', in M. Fourcade and I. Županov (eds), *L'Inde des Lumières: entre l'orientalisme et les sciences sociales (XVI-XIXe s.)/Indian Enlightenment, between Orientalism and Social Sciences (16th-19th c.)* (Purusartha 2013), 209-228; esp. 219- 220.

[79] A. Ray, 'France and Mysore: A History of Diverse French Strategies', 120-139 in *State and Diplomacy under Tipu Sultan: Documents and Essays*, ed. Irfah Habib (New Delhi 2001), 134-135; Y. Bayur, 'Maysor Sultanı Tipu ile Osmanlı Padişahlarından I. Abdülhamid ve III. Selim Arasındaki Mektuplaşma', *Belleten*, 12 (1948), 643-650.

War, Kahraman Şakul convincingly argues that the Sublime Porte was not caught unawares by France's imperial intentions, particularly after the annexation of the Republic of Venice and the Treaty of Campo Formio (1797).[80] Although the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris might have been deliberately misled by French prevarications concerning the direction of the French fleet, before Bonaparte's disembarkation in Alexandria in the summer of 1798, the Ottoman bureaucracy was already in motion. They recruited troops and sought new alliances. Sultan Selim III's officials by-passed potential objections by the ulema to Muslim participation in a European military coalition by soliciting a *fetva* from the *şeyhülislam* that recognized the urgency of the situation and the existential threat it posed to the Empire.

Ottoman intellectuals articulated their own version of Realpolitk. This overarching strategy is to be found in Secretary of State Ahmed Atif Efendi's 1798 memorandum of the 'Balance of Politics'. In it, he justifies a two-tier strategy of alliances and military defense that distinguished between the long-term and short-term interests of the Empire.[81] In the long term, it was necessary to continue to be vigilant concerning the most proximate and immediate geopolitical threats to the Empire, presented by Tsarist Russia to the east and Habsburg Austria to the west. Such long-term considerations, however, did not preclude temporary coalitions to respond to rogue regimes (of which he considered Revolutionary France to be a prime example) or to military exigencies. The French invasion of the Adriatic and Egypt triggered such a shift in policies. During the winter of 1798-1799, the Empire concluded three new alliances in succession: with Russia on 23 December 1798, with Great Britain on 5 January 1799, and with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies on 21 January 1799. The Ottoman military co-ordinated with the Russian navy in the Adriatic; Ottoman officers and soldiers fought alongside their Christian European counterparts without incident.

This coordinated defense of Egypt and a deteriorating situation within Europe forced an abrupt change in French strategy. Austria's declaration of war on 9 October, along with mounting turmoil within the Directory government precipitated Bonaparte's abandonment of the army in Syria and Egypt. Considering the magnitude of the Republic's losses for his own career, his early departure was fortunate. Before the ignominious evacuation of the last French troops from Alexandria, Bonaparte capitalized on France's unrequited dreams of a new empire. With his allies, he engineered the November coup d'état and the plebiscite that dissolved the Directory and made himself First Consul for life. At one blow, the 18th Brumaire putsch put an end to the period of democratic ferment and curtailed the extension of the new franchise to the non-European populations of the Empire. Recognizing the mounting discontent among citizens in France who had profited from the slave trade and colonialism, the First Consul soon promised Frenchmen a new order based on a dual legal code, one privileging continental citizens and another designed for the subordination of colonial populations.[82]

---

[80] Şakul, 'An Ottoman Global Moment'.

[81] "Memorandum of the Reis ul-Kuttab Atif Efendi Pertaining to the Balance of Political Affairs ... For every state must have two kinds of policy. One is the permanent policy which is taken as the foundation of all its actions and activities; the other is a temporary policy, followed for a period, in accordance with the requirements of the time and circumstance." T. Naff, 'Ottoman Diplomacy and the Great European Powers 1789-1802', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1961, 234-235.

In the immediate aftermath of the coup d'état, Bonaparte dined with many of Saint-Domingue's wealthiest plantation owners, signaling both his sympathy with their economic concerns and his intention to return to the *status quo ante* in the Caribbean.[83] As the regime consolidated their power at home and in Italy, Saint-Domingue appeared to veer toward independence. By 1801, Louverture assumed *de facto* control over much of the military and civil administration of the island. As Bonaparte embarked on an Egyptian adventure, Louverture operated unilaterally. He concluded treaties with the British and Americans that assured a steady flow of staples and industrial supplies to feed the colony and keep the sugar mills running. These treaties guaranteed the protection of foreign merchants in Saint-Domingue's ports while securing shipping lanes across the Atlantic in wartime. Without the permission of Paris, on 26 January 1801, Governor General and Delegate of the French Government Louverture sent his army of 20,000 battle-hardened soldiers into the eastern half of Hispaniola to enforce the terms of the France-Spanish Treaty of Basle of 1795 that had assigned Santo Domingo to France. After liberating Santo Domingo's enslaved population, Louverture charged an assembly with the task of drafting a constitution for the island. Its initial articles abolished slavery and all distinctions based on race throughout the island. It carefully defined the territorial integrity of the island and conferred the office of Governor-General for Life on Louverture.[84]

Judging from the debates in the United States Congress over whether to conclude the treaty with Saint-Domingue, neighboring states did not regard this colony of emancipated slaves as France's dilemma alone. Before the revolt and the ending of the French slave trade, Saint-Domingue produced more sugar than the rest of the Caribbean islands combined. From Virginia to the Windward Islands and Brazil, the new citizens of Hispaniola posed, by their very existence as free men and women, a threat to the very basis of the colonial economic order. The French ambassador who congratulated Thomas Jefferson upon his election in 1800, was greeted by the new president with a declaration of his readiness to aid the French overthrow Louverture. Jefferson offered to put Hispaniola's ports under an American naval blockade that would 'starve' its population into submission.[85] Despite such willing allies, Bonaparte appears not to have made a final decision on what course to pursue in the Caribbean before 1801.[86] Both action and inaction posed risks for the Empire. On the one hand, imposing slavery by military means would condemn thousands of resisting workers to death and likely involve the destruction of crops, housing, equipment, and sugar mills. On the other hand, without the restoration of slavery, the French plantation owners and settler-colonists would likely leave or throw their loyalty behind another European power.

---

[82] L. Dubois, 'The Haitian Revolution and the Sale of Louisiana, or Thomas Jefferson's (Unpaid) Debt to Jean-Jacques Dessalines', in P. J. Kastor and F. Weil (eds) *Empires of the Imagination: Transatlantic Histories of the Louisiana Purchase* (Charlottesville 2009), 98.

[83] Ibid., 98.

[84] E. Matibag, *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint: Nation, State, and Race on Hispaniola* (London 2003), 72-73.

[85] Brown, *Toussaint's Clause*, 200, 214.

[86] L. Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in The French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (London 2004). 42; see also P. Branda and Th. Lentz, *Napoléon, l'esclavage et les colonies* (Paris 2006).

As the French withdrew from Egypt over the summer of 1801, the focus of Europe's political and merchant elite turned toward the Caribbean. Between 1801 and 1803, Saint-Domingue dominated reports, newspapers, and parliamentary debates. Scottish, English, and Irish newsletters mention the most important sugar colonies, British Jamaica and French Saint-Domingue frequently. By 1802, articles on the two most important Caribbean colonies eclipsed those on Egypt.[87] At a time when Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was developing his theory of the dialectic between bondsman and master which would appear in 1807 in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Phänomenologie des Geistes*), the German press also covered events on the island extensively, particularly the brave resistance of former slaves to the French military.[88] Against this background, neither the opening of diplomacy between France and Britain in the fall of 1801 nor the speed with which British diplomats agreed to allow a French armada to sail into English waters should be considered a coincidence. That British and French colonial interests converged in the Caribbean was openly discussed in the British Parliament: one member of the British House of Lords admitted that France's success in the capture of Louverture was essential for the "security of our own colonies"; another averred that the freedom enjoyed by the island's majority black population itself presented a "moral danger" for the colonial economy overall.[89]

In October, as the principal parties reached a preliminary agreement to end hostilities in London, France, with British blessings, sent General Le Clerc and the first naval expedition to Saint-Domingue to arrest Toussaint Louverture.[90] For the Consulate's leaders, this action was only the first, albeit utterly essential, step in launching a larger imperial venture in the Atlantic. Leading up to the signing of the Treaty of Amiens, Bonaparte's regime prepared the necessary arrangements for this new imperial offensive. His diplomats peeled off members of the anti-French coalition by concluding a series of bilateral treaties. Over the course of 1801 and 1802, France appeased Austria and Spain with title to regions on the Italian peninsula while engaging in negotiations with the Ottoman envoys in Alexandria, Istanbul, and Paris. Arguably the single most important component of

---

[87] In 1801, newspapers cited Egypt 5510 times, Jamaica 2541 times, and Saint-Domingue 777 times; by 1802 references to Egypt fell to 3086, lower than Jamaica (3479) and only about 10% higher than Saint-Domingue (2772). *The British Newspaper Archive* https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk (accessed November 9, 2018).

[88] S. Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh 2009), 48-49.

[89] For an overview of the debates in Parliament about France's campaign 1801, see 'Mr. Canning's Motion Respecting the Cultivation of the Island of Trinidad (May 27, 1801)', *The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year to the Year 1803. Hansard's Parliamentary Debates 27 October 1801 to 12 August 1803*, Vol. 36 (London 1820), 854-876. "… was it possible to look at the present state of the colonial world without feeling considerable awe and apprehension?"

[90] For Louverture's resistance and capture see James, pp. 332-339.

France's diplomacy took place in secret. Under the terms of the unannounced Treaty of Ildefonso, signed on 21 March 1801, Spain agreed to retrocede the portion of the North American continent that France lost during the Seven Years' War: what would become of the 'Louisiana Purchase' when it was sold to the United States in 1803, consisting of lands that stretched from today's Canadian prairie provinces and the Great Lakes southward along the length of the Mississippi River up to and including the Port of New Orleans.

With the notable exception of the Treaty of Ildefonso, these diplomatic agreements were reconfirmed in the final treaty signed on 25 March 1802 at Amiens.[91] The principal imperial parties negotiated for themselves and their less powerful allies: Great Britain and Ireland acted on behalf of Portugal and the Ottoman Empire, while France negotiated on behalf of the Dutch (the Batavian Republic) and Spain. France made considerable concessions: it recognized the autonomy of the Adriatic Republic of the Seven Islands, affirmed Ottoman sovereignty over Egypt, and promised to withdraw its troops from Naples and the Vatican States. A strategic node in the Mediterranean, Malta was accorded special attention. Given its important place in the Tsar's occidental policy, the treaty's text laid out its post-war status in great detail, spelling out the terms of its independence and the measures taken to safeguard it. The British and French governments pledged to withhold their candidates from the rotation for the Grand Master and to join Russia, Austria, Spain, and Prussia in supporting the garrisoning of Sicilian troops on the island.

The treaty's verbosity with regard to the autonomy of the smallest points in the Mediterranean, however, was in inverse proportion to the succinct terms devoted to describing the fate of enormous territories in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans under European colonial control. As such, the articles of the Treaty of Amiens, a peace that marked the end of military conflicts on the Continent and in the Mediterranean, provide vivid examples of the far greater areas of collaboration and the spirit of co-operation that defined inter-imperial relations across the globe at this critical juncture. In fact, the treaty departed from the Franco-British commitment to adhere to the "status antebellum" of imperial domains in the eastern and western hemispheres, a principle established during the early discussions held in London in 1801. The treaty provided guidelines for settling the boundaries in South America separating the French and Portuguese colonies in Guyana. Articles were devoted to resolving disputes over shipping and tariffs with respect to the Cape of Good Hope and to apportioning rights to the fisheries off the shores of Newfoundland and within the St. Lawrence River. Entire regions of the non-European world were 'swapped' between European states: in the Caribbean, Trinidad (along with Martinique) was ceded to Great Britain, while France retained Tobago. France and its ally the Batavian Republic officially ceded control over Ceylon to Great Britain, while France was promised the port of Pondicherry on the subcontinent.[92] The agreement concluded with a staggered timeframe for the parties to comply with these Continental, Mediterranean, and colonial re-assignments in Asia and the Americas.

---

[91] For the complete text, see Treaty of Amiens (March 25, 1802) http://www.napoleon-empire.com/official-texts/treaty-of-amiens.php. (accessed December 19, 2018).

[92] B. Smith, 'Diplomacy and its Forms of Knowledge', 220. For Napoleon's efforts to return to the Indian Ocean, A. Das, *Defending British India against Napoleon: The Foreign Policy of Governor-General Lord Minto, 1807-13* (Woodbridge 2016), 31-33.

In effect, the Treaty of Amiens represented a pause in Franco-British competition in order to secure common imperial interests. Foremost among them was maintaining slavery and the plantation system of production in the Americas. Throughout the deliberations in Amiens, the French delegation received updates on military operations in Saint-Domingue.[93] Several months after the conclusion of the negotiations, the Consulate re-authorized the trade in human beings between West Africa and the Caribbean.[94] The 14-month truce provided an important window of military forbearance that allowed the Republic to dedicate its forces to a campaign of repression in Saint-Domingue and Guadeloupe. For the French, imposing slavery in these islands, particularly Saint-Domingue, was also an essential step toward realizing a new imperial project involving Spanish retrocession of much of the North American continent. Annexing 'Louisiana' would provide land for the establishment of new settler-colonies; it would furnish a temperate hinterland to grow cereals and other staple food crops; its forests provided timber for shipbuilding, housing, and industrial supplies. With Saint-Domingue as its industrial engine, the combination of these new territories would restore France's imperial power, becoming in the words of a member of the British Parliament who viewed the expedition toward the Antilles with great trepidation, a "Colossus [with], one foot in the mouth of the Mississippi and the other in the mouth of the Amazon."[95]

Months before the signing of the Amiens Treaty, Ottoman Grand Vizier Yusuf Ziya Pasha and Secretary of State Mahmud Raif Efendi learned that 'Louisiana' was another factor contributing to Paris's eagerness to put the Egypt affair behind them.[96] Despite the lack of forthrightness by French diplomats in their negotiations with the Sublime Porte, the Ottoman court and its diplomats pursued a course based on their own version of Realpolitik and an understanding of the inter-hemispheric co-ordinates of power.[97] Their willingness to entertain a new alliance with France was owing not only to the uncertainties of their relationship with Russia after Tsar Paul I's death in 1801.[98] It reflected growing concerns about Great Britain's merits as an ally in the Mediterranean and beyond. Britain's overwhelming naval superiority and their imperious treatment of their allies during joint campaigns gave reason to fear London's unchecked ascendance. The East India Company had wasted no time in using the conflagration in the West to annex the Muslim kingdom of Mysore, whose ruler Tipu Sultan had been, if nominally, a Sunni ally of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. Indeed, Tipu Sultan had warned them that Great Britain was poised to dominate India.[99] After eliminating the French from Egypt, the British navy had begun reconnaissance in the Gulf and Red Sea.[100] Most importantly for Istanbul was the reality that not only did the British navy remain in Malta but London seemed in no rush to withdraw its 3,500 troops from Egypt. Their diplomats argued for a permanent presence in Egypt and for the rehabilitation of the surviving Neo-Mamluk lords.[101]

---

[93] Nineteenth-century historians do not neglect the Caribbean, including Marie Joseph L. Adolphe Thiers, *The History of the Consulate and Empire of Napoleon*, Vol. 1 (London 1850), 334. By contrast, J. D. Grainger, *The Amiens Truce: Britain and Bonaparte, 1801-1803* (Woodbridge 2004), 55-56) pays almost no attention to Saint-Domingue.

[94] Y. Benoit and M. Dorigny (eds), *Rétablissement de l'esclavage dans les colonies françaises: 1802* (Paris 2003).

[95] *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 343.

[96] BOA *HAT* 1491 (15/M /1216 [28 May 1801]). The Ottomans were informed that France had exchanged Tuscany for Louisiana.

[97] Sariyannis, *Ottoman Political Thought,* 407, esp. n. 52. One might trace this position to Ahmed Resmi Efendi; see also V. H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi*, 1700-1783 (Leiden 1995).

[98] Naff, 'Ottoman Diplomacy', 411.

Judged from the larger, inter-hemispheric 'balance of power', Ottoman statesmen understood, despite their misgivings about France, that Bonaparte's over-extended military forces posed no immediate threat to the Empire's territories in the Middle East or Balkans.[102] Whatever the outcome of its engagements in the Atlantic, France remained a counterweight to Austria and Russia on the Continent and a commercial check to British naval ascendency in the Mediterranean. If the negotiations with France dragged on and yielded no reparations for their aggression, the new Franco-Ottoman alliance signed on 25 June 1802 by Foreign Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, and the special Ottoman plenipotentiary, Seyyid Mehmet Said Galip Efendi, must not be considered a pure capitulation on the part of Sultan Selim III.[103] Many of the clauses that might, at first glance, appear to be over-generous concessions to French demands served a dual purpose: as geopolitical and economic insurance against the encroachment of other European states that remained French rivals. Thus, allowing France access to the Empire's Black Sea offset the expanding networks of erstwhile allies like Tsarist Russia; equalizing tariffs for French merchants in Ottoman lands put them on an equal footing with British companies. With war clouds gathering on the horizon, French assurances to respect Ottoman territorial integrity and, by means of a secret article, to exempt the Sublime Porte from participating in the wars that would certainly follow, protected the most vital of the Ottoman Empire's geopolitical interests. This analysis was borne out: the last British battalion did not leave Alexandria until 11 March 1803, practically on the eve of the resumption of hostilities with France.

Epilogue as conclusion: the global intellectual legacies of a failed revolution

In the spring of 1803, as Toussaint Louverture lay dying in Fort de Joux prison, the new Ottoman Ambassador and his entourage traveled toward France. They entered French territories in mid-summer after three months of travel. As he later wrote in his memoirs, Ambassador Mehmet Said Halet Efendi (1761-1822) found many aspects of his sojourn in France distressing.[104] The Ambassador's arrival coincided with considerable political upheaval, plots, and intrigue in Paris. He faced situations that proved profoundly embarrassing for a man of his station. For example, the beautiful Arabian stallions that he had planned to offer as gifts to the First Consul and other dignitaries arrived late and in terrible condition, emaciated to the point of being mere skin and bones. As for the upkeep of his own household, contrary to long-standing Ottoman practice, foreign embassies to France were expected to pay their own way. With his stipend from Istanbul delayed, the Ambassador was forced to borrow money from the Papal Nuncio to maintain himself and his household.

---

[99] K. H. Karpat, The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State (Oxford 2001), 50-51.

[100] Ingram, 'First British Expedition'.

[101] S. Güner, 'Londra'da Bir Memlûk Beyi: Muhammed Bey Elfî (Ekim-Aralık 1803)', *Akademik Bakış*, 9 (2015), 41-69.

[102] BOA *HAT* 5968 (12/M /1217 [15 May 1802]). Intelligence confirmed France's military conundrum: Bonaparte could not conduct concurrent operations in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean.

[103] For the relevant articles in the treaty, see Naff, 'Ottoman Diplomacy', 430-439.

Infuriating, too, were the double standards of the French press: while the Consulate's censors prevented mention of French reversals in Saint-Domingue, the pages of newspapers like the *Le Moniteur Universel* were filled with sensational tales about the political anarchy in Ottoman lands which were based on reports by travelers and emissaries, including Horace François Bastien Sébastiani de La Porta. At times, the coverage of events in the Balkans in the pages of *Le Publiciste* and *Le Débat* was so openly hostile to the Empire that Halet Efendi felt obliged to lodge an official protest with Talleyrand.[105] Modern readers may dismiss the litany of complaints in his memoir as the railings of a man who simply found an alien culture opaque and often vulgar. But a more balanced reading of his text must take into account what is not written: that he, like many Ottoman officials, was aware of the larger scope of imperial ambitions throughout the world, the propagandistic nature of the public spectacles that were part of the regime's appeal for popular support, and the routine double-dealing that had become the hallmark of the Bonapartist regime.

One anecdote in Halet Efendi's memoir is particularly revealing about the French political elite's condescension toward their Muslim ally and their patronising attitude toward the intellectual formation of Ottoman officials.[106] That incident took place during a rare face-to-face meeting between the Ambassador and the First Consul. Entering the salon where the audience was to take place, Bonaparte immediately demanded that Alexander and Petraki Efendi, the Ottoman translators, leave the room. In justifying his dismissal of the Phanariot officials, the First Consul professed a distrust of "Greeks", whom, he insisted, "were all in the pay of Russia".[107] Instead of conducting the interview in the customary Greek or French, he chose Arabic. In his harangue, Bonaparte argued that the Ambassador must impress upon his superiors that only France could protect Ottoman lands from Tsarist Russia's growing power on land and in the Black Sea and

---

[104] E. Z. Karal, *Halet Efendinin Pari's büyük elçilgi: 1802-1806* (Istanbul 1940). Also on the conditions for Ottoman ambassadors, see S. Yerasimos, *Deux ottomans à Paris sous le directoire et l'empire: Relations d'ambassade Morali Seyyid Alî Efendi et Seyyid Abdürrahim Muhibb Efendi* (Paris 1998).

[105] Karal, *Halet Efendi*, 38-39.

[106] Ibid., 46-47.

[107] Ibid., 59. Bonaparte refers to the Ottoman translator Pangiotis Codrika. However, he colluded with France, not Russia. Aksan, *An Empire Besieged*, 228.

Mediterranean. When Halet Efendi failed to respond, he took the Ambassador's silence to be evidence of ignorance rather than an expression of polite restraint. In exasperation, Bonaparte snapped: "Don't your men ever look at maps?"[108]

Like most Frenchmen of the day, Bonaparte's remarks reveal how little his regime knew about Ottoman political thought and policy, and still less of the fact that the Sublime Porte kept track of Europe's global ambitions. Whether through their own envoys and staff in Europe or via communications with allies, diplomats and vassal states from Ragusa to Mysore, the Sublime Porte was well informed about French negotiations and military adventures within the Continent, in the Indian Ocean, and across the Atlantic. Like many of his colleagues, Halet Efendi would have had the opportunity to study the two dozen world maps to be found in the *Cedid atlas tercümesi* in preparation for publication.[109] The strategic position of Saint-Domingue within the Caribbean Sea (*Karib denizi*) was clearly visible on the map of North America, as were the proximity of the islands of the Greater Antilles to lands on the continent designated as French (*Fransa-i cedid*) and an area labeled with the name "Louisiana" (*Luwizina*). It was on the large Antillean island, captioned in Ottoman Turkish, "Santo Domingo" (*Sondominku*), where Commander Le Clerc, after capturing and deporting Louverture, succumbed to disease in November 1802. His successor, General Jean-Baptiste Dontier de Vimeur (Count de Rochaubeau), unleashed a brutal campaign against the black population. The army's indiscriminate violence, coupled with the restarting of the trafficking in human beings, fueled a general insurrection against French rule. Mixed race, Creole, and African-born troops defected *en masse* from colonial garrisons, joining the "Armée indigène", led by Louverture's former lieutenant, General Jean Jacque Dessalines (1758-1806).[110]

In fact Bonaparte's pique, expressed in his bullying of the Ottoman Ambassador to France and threats to retaliate militarily if the Sultan failed to recognize his new title as "Emperor of the French" after his coronation in 1804 might well be attributed to the humiliation suffered as an army of barefoot former slaves defeated his well-armed European troops.[111] Tens of thousands – some 70,000 European forces dispatched to the island over the eighteenth century in one estimate – of the French reinforcements sent to the Caribbean never left.[112] They died of battlefield wounds and of tropical diseases. In May 1803, a few months before Halet Efendi's arrival in Paris, the last European soldiers were evacuated from island. This defeat spelled the loss of the "pearl of the Antilles", France's single most valuable colony. And it dashed the plan of annexing the vast lands on the North American continent. On the eve of a new war with Britain, the French claim to 'Louisiana' became a liability.[113] To assuage the United States, which threaten to take military action if France occupied the port of New Orleans, Paris publicly affirmed the 1801 Franco-Spanish Treaty of Idelfonso. Within a month, on 20 December 1803, it ceded title to these lands to the United States President. With a stroke of the pen, this transfer doubled the territorial size of the new American republic.

---

[108] Karal, *Halet Efendi,* 61.

[109] K. Beydilli, *Mühendishane ve Üsküdar Matbaalarında Basılan Kitapların Listesi ve Bir Katolog* (İstanbul 1997).

[110] D. Geggus, 'The Haitian Revolution in Atlantic Perspective', in N. Canny and Ph. Morgan (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World: 1450-1850* (Oxford 2011), 535.

[111] Karal, *Halet Efendi*, 71-72; Ph. R. Girard, *The Slaves Who Defeated Napoleon: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian War of Independence, 1801-1804* (Tuscaloosa 2011), 210-212.

[112] Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*, 27.

As for the resumption of war, it has been generally attributed to clear violations of the terms of the Treat of Amiens on the Continent and in the Mediterranean. France's military incursion in Switzerland, and Great Britain's refusal to evacuate Malta have been presumed to be the *casus belli* that re-opened the war between these states. However, a more plausible explanation is France's failure to re-impose slavery in Saint-Domingue by force of arms. The defeat of the French in Hispaniola by a rebel army voided the primary reason for an inter-imperial intermission, the so-called "Treaty of Amiens."

In Hispaniola, at the outset of 1804, a liberated population declared Haiti's independence. The devastation and death caused by the France's scorched earth campaign left entire cities in ashes and reduced the colony's population by half. But this was no Pyrrhic victory: the defeat of the French army narrowly averted the generals' plan to carry out a genocide of the island's adult population of African descent.[114] Among the defenders, many of whom had embraced the Revolution and risked their lives to defend Saint-Domingue against other European empires, the sense of anger and bitterness was palpable. The declaration of independence, drafted by Louis Félix Boix-Tonnerre (1776-1806) on behalf of General Dessalines, denounced the Revolution itself as a grand deception. The text indicted themselves for being "[...] victims for 14 years of our credulity and indulgence; vanquished, not by French armies, but by the misleading eloquence of their agents' proclamations [...]".[115]

In Istanbul itself, few if any of the Ottoman imperial elite would have mourned the Revolution's demise, much less expressed such profound disillusionment with the miscarriage of professed principles of democratic governance and individual rights.[116] Nevertheless, reformers might have concurred that the Revolution's detours had also cost the Ottoman Empire dearly. France's pivot from the defense of the Republic to imperial aggression in the Adriatic, Egypt, and Syria significantly undermined the Nizam-ı Cedid's program to transform the Empire's institutions. Mounting a defense of Ottoman territories strained state finances and tested the as yet unready new military force. The overthrow of the Sultan Selim III in 1807 by a rebellion led by Kabakçı Mustafa and the old guard (the Janissaries along with their sympathizers in the state and religious cadres, as well as others affected by the fiscal reforms) put an end to many of the projects that the reformers had initiated. Before the powerful provincial *ayan* from Rumelia and Anatolia intervened in the capital and secured the throne for Sultan Mahmud II in 1808, the rebellion had already taken the lives of many of the most dedicated advocates of change, the polymath Mahmud Raif Efendi among them.[117]

---

[113] R. L. Bush, *Louisiana Purchase: A Global Perspective* (London 2013), 10; Dubois, 'Thomas Jefferson's (Unpaid) Debt'.

[114] Ph. R. Girard, 'Caribbean Genocide: Racial War in Haiti, 1802-4', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 39 (2005), 138-161.

[115] See Julia Gaffield, 'Haiti and the Atlantic World: "1804 Declaration of Independence"', https://haitidoi.com/doi/ (accessed November 9, 2018)

[116] Compare Ş. Mardin, 'The Influence of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire', *International Social Science Journal*, 44 (1989), 17-32; R. Koselleck in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History Spacing Concepts* (Stanford 2002), 128, recognizes the peculiarly prescriptive nature of Enlightenment discourse.

Other officials, whose support for the reforms had been only tepid or who were simply fortunate enough to be far from Istanbul at the time of the coup d'état were sent into exile or re-assigned to distant posts. One of the survivors was the former Ambassador to France, Halet Efendi. Rehabilitated in 1809, he would become one of the new Sultan's closest advisors. Under his guidance, the Ottoman Empire ended their diplomatic engagement on European soil, shuttering their embassies in Vienna, London, and Paris. Instead, the regime set its sights on consolidating power within the Empire by repressing the *serbest* provincial lords who threatened central state authority. This alternative 'new order' began with the repression of the semi-autonomous Ottoman cities along the Iranian border and continued with campaigns against the great *ayan* in areas of northern Syria and the Balkans.

It required another generation for the Sublime Porte to re-appoint a cadre of resident diplomats to European capitals. In the aftermath of the first successful Ottoman revolution in the Greek Morea (1821-1830), a new Ottoman diplomatic corps was formed and by the second half of the nineteenth century, Istanbul established diplomatic and commercial ties with states in North and South America, as well as opening its first consulates in South Asia, in Bombay and Calcutta.[118] Although the Republic of Haiti was not included among these later diplomatic contacts, the intersecting paths between what might otherwise appear to be two very distinct polities located at extreme points on the world map at the outset of the modern age was neither serendipitous nor episodic. Events in the Caribbean and the Eastern Mediterranean during the so-called War of the Second Coalition exemplify an inter-hemispheric convergence born of four centuries of global economic integration. The eighteenth century witnessed an escalation in the Atlantic trafficking in human beings toward the Americas and flows of agricultural commodities toward Europe and beyond. In general, under the New Imperialism, European empires competed with one another for new outlets for their products and raw materials, to control oceanic and continental waterways and overland communications, as well as to dominate trading ports and territories in Asia and the Americas. But there were specific conjunctures, such as the turn of the nineteenth century, when threats to the perpetuation of a system of exploitation of non-European peoples and lands resulted in the temporary cessation of inter-imperial contests and collaboration between otherwise rival states.

---

[117] On the causes of the overthrown of Selim III, see Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion,* esp. Chap. 3.

[118] See M. N. Kutlu, Ş. Atakan, E. Yurtaydın, Ö. Kaygusuz, N. Çicek, G. Erdem (eds), *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu - Latin Amerika (Başlangıç Dönemi*) (Ankara 2012). For Ottoman diplomatic sources for both Western and non-Western states, see E. Yurdusev, 'Studying Ottoman Diplomacy: A Review of the Sources' in A. N. Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy Conventional or Unconventional?* (London 2004), 167-193.

In revealing a hitherto unappreciated dimension in this critical juncture, HAT 14127 ascribes both practical and intellectual agency to those whose transformative struggles and engagements affected the outcomes of war and peace in both hemispheres. In addition to the many well-documented geopolitical consequences of the success of the Haitian Revolution – from France's hasty sale of the 'Louisiana Purchase' to the United States and the launching of what Dale Tomich has named the "secondary slavery",[119] the rapid extension of the plantation system of commodity production throughout the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean – historians must also contemplate its ramifications for Africa and Asia. Indeed, if Toussaint Louverture's government initially provided France with a solid platform to launch its eastern hemispheric imperial adventure, it was also the resistance of Saint-Domingue's population to the resumption of the slave trade and withdrawal of their most basic human rights that all but assured France's expeditious departure from Egypt and desire to enter into a new alliance with the Ottoman Empire.

So, too, re-centering this period of the so-called War of the Second Coalition in the Caribbean rather than in Western Europe (or the Mediterranean) should also help us better understand the contervailing intellectual currents that anticipated and followed the French Revolution. On the one hand, the legacy of liberation and struggles for freedom that would be refracted in the dialect of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* had already been articulated forcefully and consistently, in a century of hopes, ideas, and resistance of the millions of men and women who languished in the fetters of colonialism, grueling toil, and enslavement.[120] On the other hand, the revolutionary moment, when the rhetoric of human rights was matched, to some degree, by policy and practice inside and outside France or in French-controlled areas of Europe and in certain colonial settings, proved short-lived. A decade of emancipatory and republican zeal only briefly interrupted France's colonial trajectory that would resume with the expedition toward Saint-Domingue in 1801-1803, and again in North Africa with the invasion of Ottoman Algeria in 1830.[121]

The intellectual refrains born of this global conjuncture of political thought and praxis would be articulated by the few non-Western governments that managed to escape the juggernaut of later nineteenth-century European "high imperialism." Although Haitian citizens survived the planned annihilation by Bonaparte's armies, they continued to face military threats and economic isolation. Two decades after the declaration of independence, French gunboats extorted crippling concessions from Haiti's government. King Charles X (1757-1836)'s Royal Ordinance (1826) imposed a 'free trade' regime and a 150 million francs indemnity on the Haitians,[122] which anticipated, by a half century, the financial imperialism experienced by the peoples of the Ottoman Empire. Not surprisingly, in both countries, the political principle that state sovereignty trumped individual, citizenship rights became a logical response to the post-revolutionary, imperial order.[123] In Haiti after 1805 and in the Ottoman Empire after 1807, from the short-lived rule of Emperor Jacques I (1804-1806) to Papa Doc Duvalier in Haiti, and from Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808-1838) and the regime of Abdulhamid II (r.1878) in the Ottoman Empire to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's One Party State and the present Justice and Development/ Erdoğan regime in Turkey, leaders have recurrently resurrected an equally venerable political philosophy of the Revolutionary period: Bonapartism.[124]

---

[119] On this phenomenon, D. W. Tomich (ed.), *The Politics of the Second Slavery* (Albany 2016).

[120] D. Geggus, 'The Sounds and Echoes of Freedom: The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in Latin America' in D. Davis (ed.), *Beyond Slavery: The Multifaceted Legacy of Africans in Latin America*. (Lanham 2006), 19-36; J. Gaffield, *Haitian Connections in the Atlantic World: Recognition after Revolution* (Chapel Hill 2015).

[121] D. Todd, 'French Imperial Meridian, 1814-1870', *Past & Present*, 210 (2011), 155-186.

[122] On Haiti's debt, F. Beauvois, 'L'indemnité de Saint-Domingue: '"Dette d'indépendance" ou "rançon de l'esclavage"?', *French Colonial History*, 10 (2009), 109-124; compare, Turan

In summary, HAT 14127 a document too anomalous to fit into the accepted historical narratives and too complex in its text, sub-texts, and extra-textual dimensions to locate in traditional intellectual historiography offers an opportunity to widen the horizons of interpretation used to understand the history of political thought. This preliminary examination of methodology has been dedicated to reconstructing contexts in space and time. It supports the contentions of an increasing number of historians that past approaches to knowledge and knowing have yet to fully appreciate the *Weltanschauung* of the Ottoman statesmen or the cosmopolitan and complex calculus informing the policies and practices of the Black Jacobins of the Caribbean.[125] It suggests, moreover, that despite the limited survival of written artefacts of explicitly philosophical content in many contexts, historians of political thought must adopt alternative methodologies to recover the larger and often inter-connected epistemic landscapes that produced actors and thinkers to supplement a more finite body of written texts. A more dynamic and interactive model of intellectual history must depart from the assumption that many global actors were never confined to parochial cultural niches, trapped by immediate needs or limited by class-bound mentalities. Indeed, any attempt to reconstruct a truly global intellectual historiography must start out from the premise that to date researchers have only glimpsed the tip of an iceberg of the unrecorded cognition of the world's knowing subjects whose ideas and actions constituted the modernity of political knowledge at large.

Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China* (Cambridge 2010).

[123] As for the primacy of sovereignty as a legacy of this encounter, see M. S. Palabiyik, 'The Emergence of the Idea of "International Law" in the Ottoman Empire before the Treaty of Paris (1856)', *Middle Eastern Studies*, (2014), 233-251, and Ph. R. Girard, 'Jean-Jacques Dessalines and the Atlantic System: A Reappraisal', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 69 (2012), 549-582, and Fick, 'Atlantic Paradigm of Sovereignty'.

[124] Papa Doc Duvalier professed admiration for Atatürk: D. Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* (New Brunswich 1996), 210.

[125] For Ottoman history: Sariyannis, *Ottoman Political Thought*, 369. Aylin Koçunyan writes of the "the rich variety of foreign channels through which new currents of political ideas flowed" in 'The Transcultural Dimension of the Ottoman Constitution' in P. W. Firges, T. P. Graf, Ch. Roth, and G. Tulasoğlu (eds), *The Well-Connected Domains* (Leiden 2014), 236. See also I. Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914* (Berkeley 2010).

PART FIVE

IDEAS IN PRACTICE

LE POUVOIR DES BARBEROUSSE À ALGER D'APRÈS LES *GAZAVAT-I HAYREDDİN PAŞA*

Nicolas Vatin[*]

Ma contribution au débat sur la théorie et la pratique du pouvoir chez les Ottomans sera modeste. Il ne s'agit pas pour moi de traiter de la philosophie politique des grands penseurs et hommes d'État stambouliotes, mais, partant d'un ouvrage de propagande politique à l'usage d'un vaste public, d'aborder la question du pouvoir d'un point de vue très concret et avec des concepts simples.

Commandé par Soliman le Magnifique pour contribuer à la gloire de son règne en célébrant un de ses acteurs les plus remarquables[1], le texte des *Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Paşa* raconte à des gens simples, dans une langue simple, la geste d'un corsaire qui devint roi et offrit son royaume au sultan ottoman[2]. Assurément, il faut tenir compte des caractéristiques propres à un récit épique et de propagande. Pourtant, l'analyse précise de nombreux épisodes a montré qu'il s'agissait d'une source historique de qualité[3]. Moyennant la prudence qui s'impose, on peut donc y chercher des éléments solides pour s'interroger sur la nature du pouvoir des Barberousse à Alger, principalement jusqu'au moment, en 1533, où Hayreddin rejoignit Soliman. Il s'agira donc, dans les pages qui suivent, non pas de l'Algérie ottomane, mais de l'Algérois des Barberousse, sur lequel on est assez mal renseigné[4]. Pour des raisons de chronologie, Oruç étant mort assez tôt, c'est principalement de son cadet Hayreddin qu'il sera question.

---

[*] CETOBAC (CNRS, EHESS, Collège de France), EPHE, PSL, Paris.

[1] Cf. N. Vatin, « “Comment êtes-vous apparus, toi et ton frère ?” Note sur les origines des frères Barberousse », *SI* Nouvelle série, I (2011), pp. 103-131 (www.studiaislamica.com) ; version turque : « “Sen ve kardeşin nasıl ortaya çıktınız?” Barbaros kardeşlerinin kökenlerine ilişkin notlar », dans E. Eldem, E. Pekin et A. Tibet (éds), *Bir allame-i cihan : Stefanos Yerasimos (1942-2005)* (Istanbul 2012), pp. 691-716.

[2] J'ai utilisé l'édition critique d'A. Gallotta, « Il Gazavat-ı H̱ayreddîn Paşa di Seyyîd Murâd », *Studi Magrebini*, XIII (1981), fondée sur le fac-similé du manuscrit de l'Escorial. C'est à la foliotation de celui-ci que je renvoie.

[3] Cf. N. Vatin, « “Comment êtes-vous apparus, toi et ton frère ?” » ; idem, « Note sur l'entrée d'Alger sous la souveraineté ottomane (1519-1521) », *Turcica*, 44 (2012-2013), pp. 131-166.

[4] Les descriptions dont on dispose sont antérieures, comme celle de Léon l'Africain, ou postérieures comme celles de Marmol ou Haëdo, en sorte que les *Gazavat* demeurent notre meilleure source.

Les références sociales et politiques du public visé par le texte étant ottomanes, je vais donc essayer de comparer, à un idéal ottoman sous-entendu, les réalités concrètes que la chronique donne également à voir, en m'interrogeant sur la légitimité du pouvoir des Barberousse avant d'aborder l'action politique[5].

* * *

Les frères Barberousse sont rois d'Alger. Le fait n'est jamais clairement exposé dans les *Gazavat*, composées sur l'ordre du sultan d'Istanbul à la gloire de son *beylerbeyi* des îles, mais il apparaît à l'usage des titres usuels qui leur sont attribués, lesquels changent selon la situation et l'époque. Ainsi, dans l'introduction qui se situe au moment de la rédaction, dans les années 1540, Hayreddin porte le titre de pacha (3 v°). Mais dès que le récit proprement dit commence (4 v°), il est question d'Oruç Reis et de Hızır er-reis. Peut-être l'emploi de l'article arabe pour le cadet signifie-t-il qu'il faut voir là une sorte d'épithète homérique – Hızır Hayreddin étant appelé à devenir le Marin par excellence – car ce n'est qu'une fois arrivé à Tunis, quand il cesse d'être un obscur capitaine de marine marchande pour entamer sans ambiguïté une noble carrière de corsaire de la foi, que notre héros porte désormais le titre de *reis* et est désigné par son *lâkab* de Hayreddin (25 v°). Oruç de son côté porte le titre de *bey* après l'échec du second siège de Bougie, au moment où il s'installe à demeure dans le port de Djidjelli (47 r°) dont il s'était pour son compte emparé par les armes (44 r°) : il est clair que le titre ici fait de lui non pas l'officier du sultan de Tunis – et moins encore de celui d'Istanbul –, mais un potentat indépendant. Ce n'est qu'un peu plus tard, quand Oruç désormais maître d'Alger – sa capitale[6] – lui confie une moitié du pays avec Dellys comme chef-lieu, que Hayreddin à son tour devient *bey* (61 r°)[7]. Il est à dire vrai encore subordonné à son frère, qui peut lui demander des renforts et le convoquer pour exercer un intérim à Alger (62 r°). Mais c'est sous la forme courtoise d'une « lettre » (*name*) et non d'un ordre : le vice-roi est un roi potentiel. Il le devient à la mort d'Oruç et nous verrons ses compagnons turcs l'appeler *hüsrevümüz* (110 r°). C'est en souverain que, reprenant possession d'Alger quelques années plus tard, il reçoit sous forme de baisemain l'acte d'obédience des notables de toutes conditions[8]. Au moment où nous nous situons, les conquêtes maghrébines des Barberousse sont déjà entrées dans l'orbite ottomane et Hayreddin – dans la chronique en tout cas – affiche sa qualité de *kul* de Soliman. Néanmoins, à s'en tenir aux simples faits, l'influence de la dynastie ottomane se borne alors à faire dire la *hutbe* et battre la monnaie au nom de Soliman : vassal du sultan, Hayreddin peut donc demeurer un roi[9]. Dans une vision bien ottomane des choses, l'auteur des *Gazavat* présente comme une promotion l'accession au rang de *beylerbeyi* des îles – après tout du reste, si l'on joue sur les mots, un bey des beys est plus qu'un bey – et à partir de l'expédition de Corfou, le manuscrit de l'Escurial n'appelle plus son héros que Hayreddin Pacha. Cela n'allait pourtant pas de soi, puisque d'autres manuscrits lui conservent le titre de *bey* que, dans le contexte, il faut donc sans doute considérer comme plus prestigieux. Au demeurant, le texte des *Gazavat* précise clairement que, en partant pour Istanbul à l'appel de Soliman en 1533, Hayreddin « renonça à la couronne et au trône »[10]. La situation pourtant n'était pas sans ambiguïté, puisque le Sultan ne désignait pas un nouveau *bey* d'Alger, mais laissait le soin de trouver un lieutenant capable à Hayreddin, qui choisit un de ses esclaves[11]. Ajoutons enfin qu'à la mort de ce dernier, la possibilité d'une succession héréditaire ne fut pas absolument rejetée[12].

---

[5] En somme, il s'agit de revenir, en entrant plus avant dans le détail, sur les trois « points faibles » diagnostiqués par S. Boubaker, « Il Maghreb in età moderna », dans Roberto Bizzocchi (éd.) *Storia d'Europa e del Mediterraneo V. L'eta moderna (secoli XVI-XVIII)*, t. XII, *Popoli, stati, equilibri del potere* (Rome 2013), p. 649-698 (p. 659) : « Questi corsari avevano tre punte deboli : l'assenza di legittimità, la fragilità delle loro alleanze e la paura che ispiravano ai poteri locali. Hayreddin se ne rese conto osservando quanto accalde ad Arrouj nel 1518 : dovette abbandonare Algeri. » On trouvera des questions similaires dans deux articles qui traitent des rapports entre « Turcs » ou « Turco-ottomans » et autochtones sur la longue durée. Pour S. Hizmetli, « Türklerin yönetimi döneminde Cezayir'in idaresi ve kurumları », *Belleten*, LVIII/221 (1994), pp. 71-117, ce fut au Maghreb médian un « âge d'or », grâce à l'adoption d'institutions inspirées de l'exemple ottoman et aux bonnes relations entre la population et des administrateurs turcs bienveillants et respectueux des coutumes des tribus. Le point de vue de B. Lahouel, « Rapports entre les gouvernants et les gouvernés autochtones dans l'État algérien à l'époque ottomane », *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine*, XIX/65-66 (1992), pp. 41-49, est plus nuancé : les « Turco-ottomans » surent jouer à la fois de la coopération et de la répression, et diviser pour régner.

[6] *Taht* (53 v°).

[7] Dans le manuscrit de Vienne étudié par R. Murphey, « Seyyid Muradî's prose biography of Hızır Ibn Yakub, alias Hayreddin Barbarossa », *ActOrHung*, 54 (2001), pp. 519-532, n. 11, ce

Si Hayreddin, donc, était roi d'Alger, quelle légitimité fondait cette position ?

Il n'est pas étonnant, vu le contexte de la rédaction des *Gazavat*, que la première source de légitimité évoquée soit le rattachement à la dynastie ottomane. Dès le début de la chronique, il nous est rappelé que tout procède de l'aura de celle-ci :

> Quiconque a reçu la bénédiction de la dynastie d'Osman, tout ce qu'il entreprend lui est aisé assurément, car c'est une grande lignée. Quiconque reçoit d'eux une bonne bénédiction, tous ses travaux sont faciles. Quiconque lui jette un regard de traîtrise sera rabaissé. Voilà pourquoi Hayreddin Bey vint des pays arabes pour recevoir la bénédiction de Son Excellence le padi-

---

n'est pas avant le conflit avec İbn el-Kazi, bien plus tard donc, que Hayreddin reçoit le titre de *bey*.

[8] 133 v°, 137 v°.

[9] Lors d'une conversation avec les ambassadeurs de Ferdinand de Habsbourg en mai 1533, Alvise Gritti, le fidèle collaborateur d'İbrahim Pacha, soulignait que Hayreddin s'était à lui seul rendu maître d'Alger et qu'il en était le propriétaire, même s'il était le serviteur du Sultan : cf. K. N. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, t. III (Philadelphie 1984), pp. 376-377.

[10] *An samimi'l-kalbi tac ü tahtın terk edüb* (214 v°).

[11] 212 r° ; Hasan est le *kul* de Hayreddin (311 r°), qui l'a fait *bey* et l'a laissé à sa place (211 v°).

[12] Sur ce point particulier et sur la question de la nature royale de Hayreddin, cf. N. Vatin et G. Veinstein, « Roi, pirate ou esclave ? L'image de Hayrü-d-dîn Barberousse dans le manuscrit Supplément 1186 de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France », dans N. Clayer et E. Kaynar (éds), *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman et en Turquie. Études réunies pour François Georgeon* (Paris-Louvain 2012), pp. 233-259.

> chah refuge du monde. Il vint, reçut sa bénédiction, et vois comment peu de temps après il fut gratifié de la charge de *beylerbeyi*[13].

Aussi les conquêtes accomplies par les Barberousse alors qu'ils étaient en rupture de ban n'en sont-elles pas moins rétroactivement associées à la Porte : « Ils sont venus et ont pris à ferme le *haraç* pour le fortuné padichah », s'écrient les mécréants en les voyant à Alger[14]. Hayreddin lui-même, au moment où il envisage de faire acte de soumission et donc avant de l'avoir fait, dit aux Algérois : « J'ai un maître dont je suis l'humble *kul* et qui a des centaines de milliers de *kul* comme moi. Mon souhait, tant que je suis dans ce pays, est de faire faire le prône et la monnaie au nom sacré du padichah refuge du monde qui est ce mien maître[15]. » Il ne s'agit pas seulement de décider, par un choix politique, de devenir le vassal de la Porte : Hayreddin a toujours été le *kul* du sultan d'Istanbul et, en conséquence, ses conquêtes étaient par nature ottomanes. Assertion évidemment contestable puisque, jusqu'ici, il n'a pas éprouvé le besoin de faire valoir ce lien (d'ailleurs rompu) avec Selim I^er^. C'est du reste confirmé par les propos qu'il tient juste après, quand ses deux lieutenants ont accepté sa proposition : « Quant à moi, je m'en vais présenter ma propre situation à la porte de mon maître : peut-être acceptera-t-il son esclave que je suis parmi ses *kul* et voudra-t-il bien [qu'on fasse en son nom] le prône et la monnaie[16] ? » La question n'est nullement rhétorique et, de fait, Selim se montrera très hésitant[17], ce que ne nous dit pas la chronique. En revanche, la réponse qu'elle prête à Selim montre bien que c'est de manière rétroactive que celui-ci endosse l'action passée de Hayreddin (et donc d'Oruç), proclamant ainsi, légalement et symboliquement, que les Barberousse ont agi pour son compte : « Puisque cette personne était auparavant mon *kul* fils de mon *kul*, j'avalise tout ce qu'il a fait. Qu'il fasse faire en mon nom immaculé le prône et la monnaie de ce pays[18]. »

On nous montre donc régulièrement les populations conquises, heureuses de la paix et de la prospérité retrouvées, prier pour le sultan d'Istanbul[19]. Vis-à-vis de ses propres vassaux, Hayreddin n'hésite pas à forcer le trait, comme dans sa lettre à Abdallah de

---

[13] *Her kim al-i Osmandan dua ala lâ-büd anın tutduğı kolay gelir zira kim bunlar ulu ocakdur her kim bunlardan … bir hayır dua ala her kârı asan olur her kim bunlara kec nazar ede anın başı aşağı olur ve Hayreddin Beg dahi diyar-ı Arabdan ol sebebden geldi kim padişah-ı âlempenah hazretlerinden bir hayır dua ala gelüb aldı yine az zaman geçmedin gör kim beylerbeyilik verildi* (21 r°-v°).

[14] *Varub devletlü padişaha harac iltizam edüb* (53 r°).

[15] *Benim bir efendim vardur kim ben anın bir edna kulıyım anın benim bigi bir nice kere yüz bin kulı vardir imdi benim muradım oldur kim bu vilâyetde olduğum takdirce hutbe'i ve sikke'i ol efendim olan padişah-ı âlempenah hazretlerinin nam-ı şeriflerine döndürem* (85 r°).

[16] *Ben dahi kendi ahvalimi efendim kapısına i'lâm edeyin ola kim yine bu bendesin kulluğuna kabul kılub hutbe'i ve sikke'i isteyeler* (85 v°).

[17] Cf. Vatin, « Note sur l'entrée d'Alger ».

[18] *Çün kim ol kimesne benim evvelden kulum oğlı kulumdur imdi ben anın her kârını kabul eyledim ol vilâyetün hutbesin ve sikkesin benim nam-ı pakime döndürsün* (86 r°).

[19] 73 r°, 88 v°, 100 v°-101 r°, 141 r°, 146 r°, 188 v°, 237 r°…

Tlemcen :

> Si je peux me montrer patient pour d'autres choses, pour ce qui est du changement de la *hutbe* et de la monnaie, je n'ai ni patience ni repos (…) Eh bien fais-moi donc la grâce d'abandonner ta rébellion : ne nous force pas à aller jusqu'à toi en nous faisant du tort. Désormais, tu sais ce qui en est avant que je n'arrive sur place par la grâce de Dieu : la suite des événements est claire. À présent, si tu modifies la *hutbe* et la monnaie au nom de Son Excellence le padichah, est-ce qu'Elle te laissera – que crois-tu ? – ainsi ? Allons, ouvre les yeux : change d'avis pour sauver ta tête[20] !

Il s'agit d'une exigence morale, inséparable de la loyauté et du refus de la compromission avec les mécréants espagnols. Mais en récompense, tout succès est à mettre au compte du *kut* impérial, comme Hayreddin l'indique à des prisonniers espagnols : « Seigneurs, nous avions formé l'intention de rejoindre la famille d'Osman. Or voyez combien, sans même bouger le moins du monde de notre siège, nous avons fait de butin. Déduisez-en combien Son Excellence le padichah refuge du monde est un padichah fortuné, par la grâce de Dieu[21]. » On comprend dès lors l'inquiétude du sultan hafside de Tunis :

> À présent, Hayreddin a fait faire le prône et la monnaie au nom du fortuné padichah par toute la population du pays d'Alger. Désormais il gagne progressivement en puissance et provoque de graves nuisances. Il ne cesse de nuire de toutes les manières, à vous comme à nous. Auparavant, alors qu'il n'avait aucun pouvoir, nous avons marché contre lui, sans résultat. Maintenant qu'il dispose d'un soutien comme le padichah de Roum, nous n'obtiendrons plus rien contre lui[22].

En somme, considérant la situation par le petit bout égoïste de sa lorgnette, le Hafside apporte son eau au moulin d'Andrew Hess selon qui les Ottomans purent s'implanter au Maghreb grâce à leur légitimité impériale[23].

Pourtant, une fois la part faite au discours obligé d'un texte de propagande politique, la force du rattachement à la dynastie, même à la lecture des *Gazavat*, paraît moins déterminante. Ce n'est que par convention qu'il est possible de considérer *a posteriori* comme ottomanes les conquêtes des frères Barberousse antérieures au printemps 1521, quand arriva à Alger l'acceptation par Soliman de la soumission de Hayreddin. Dans les années précédentes, ils avaient d'abord été soumis au sultan de Tunis, puis avaient conquis une indépendance assez chère à Hayreddin pour qu'il ait hésité un an, après la mort de son frère, avant de se tourner vers la Porte[24]. Bien plus, les passages évoqués précédemment qui montrent complaisamment les populations locales élever des prières pour Soliman, même s'ils se multiplient après la reprise d'Alger en 1527, sont au total assez peu nombreux. Ils interviennent surtout à l'issue de campagnes militaires heureuses, comme un rappel de principe. Pour le reste, la Porte et le Sultan ne sont guère évoqués et sont complètement absents, par exemple, des considérations qui poussent Hayreddin à entreprendre la reconquête d'Alger. Ainsi la légitimité impériale ottomane du pouvoir royal d'Oruç puis de Hayreddin Barberousse, dans la période concernée tout au moins, paraît une pétition de principe bien plus qu'un élément concrètement déterminant du contrôle des territoires et des populations.

---

[20] *Benim gayre sabrim olduğu takdirce hutba ve sikke istibdaline sabrim ve kararim yokdur (...) imdi lütf eyle yine ol isyanı terk eyle ve bizi dahi rencide edüb anda iletme imdi bi-avni'llahi biz anda varıncak hod ahval ma'lûmdur ve nice olacağı bellidir haliyen kim padişah Hazretlerinin hutbesin ve sikkesin tebdil edesin hiç seni ne anlarsın eyle koyalar mı imdi gözün aç aklını başına degşir* (141 v°-142 v°).

[21] *Begler Âl-i Osmana gitmek niyet eyledik henü[z] dahi yerimizden kımıldamadan görün kim nice ganimet eyledik andan bilin kim padişah-ı âlempenah Hazretleri nice oğurlu padişahdır elhamdülillah* (223 r°).

[22] *Haliyen Hayreddin cümle Cezair halkına hutbe'i ve sikke'i devletlü padişah adına döndürtdi imdi gitdikce ulalub hayli fesad koparmakdadur ve sizi bizi bi'l-cümle rencide etmekden hâli değildir pes bundan evvel hiç nesneye kadir degilken üzerine vardık nesne hâsıl etmedik hâliyâ [sic] Rum padişahı bigi arkası ola min-ba'd biz andan nesne hâsıl etmeziz* (89 r°).

[23] « More than the conquest of new territories, what drew the Ottomans into North Africa was their imperial legitimacy » : A. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier. A History of the Sixteenth Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago-Londres 2010 [2e éd.]), p. 69.

C'est donc ailleurs, me semble-t-il, qu'il faut chercher les fondements de la légitimité de nos héros. Une image inversée en est déjà donnée par les nombreux mauvais souverains dont les turpitudes mettent en valeur par contraste les qualités des deux aventuriers turcs. Ils sont souvent lâches et, plus souvent qu'à leur tour, fuient devant l'ennemi en abandonnant leurs villes et leurs peuples[25]. Qu'importe, au reste, si cette conduite s'explique par les pratiques habituelles et les rapports de force dans le pays ! Oruç, au contraire, tient sept mois assiégés à Tlemcen puis meurt en *şehid* lors d'une sortie[26] – en fait en cherchant à fuir. Quant à Hayreddin assiégé dans Alger, ne s'écrie-t-il pas : « Même si je savais que le fort d'Alger allait souffrir mille fois plus que Tlemcen, je ne vous le donnerais pas, et pas même une pierre dans les dents[27] ! » ? Ces mauvais chefs sont encore dissimulés, comme ces cheikhs n'osant pas signer les lettres par lesquelles ils poussent Hayreddin à revenir à Alger[28]. Ils ne participent pas au *cihad* et empêchent les *gazi* de remplir leurs devoirs – c'est le cas du sultan de Tunis qui refuse la poudre nécessaire à la prise de Bougie[29] ou du roi de Tlemcen qui « fait obstacle à nombre de nos projets »[30] – et même ils se compromettent avec les mécréants espagnols et leur versent tribut[31]. Enfin ce sont des tyrans injustes – reproche indissociable de celui de collusion avec les mécréants[32] – quand ils ne sont pas vicieux et immoraux comme le sultan de

---

[24] Sur cette date de 1521, cf. Vatin, « Note sur l'entrée d'Alger ».

[25] Cf. les potentats de Ténès (58 v°-59 r°), de Tlemcen (63 r°, 91 v°, 100 v°, 106 r°), de Bizerte (234 r°), sans parler de celui de Tunis.

[26] 67 v°.

[27] *Ana olan atebeden bin dahi ziyade olacağın bilsem sizlere Cezair kalesin değil dişinize bir taş dahi vermezem* (69 r°).

[28] 127 r°-v°.

[29] 45 v°.

[30] *Çok nesnemize mani olur* (62 r°).

[31] 55 v°, 57 v°-58 r°, 61 v°, 62 v°, 63 v°-64 r°, 72 v°, 101 v°, 201 r°-v°…

[32] 62 v°-63 r°, 101 v°.

Tunis, à en croire ses sujets[33] : « Voilà un individu qui, bien qu'on l'appelle croyant et qu'il soit en apparence considéré comme un croyant, a commis des actes que même un mécréant ne commettrait pas[34]. »

On l'aura compris : ce sont les qualités inverses qui fondent la légitimité des Barberousse. En premier lieu, ils sont victorieux, ce qui est source de prospérité pour tous. Les retours de campagne (en mer principalement, mais aussi par exemple à Ténès) sont l'occasion d'exposer un magnifique butin[35] équitablement distribué, pour la joie des populations[36]. Le succès attire les volontaires autour du chef charismatique, comme ces corsaires qui disent à Hayreddin, après une affaire délicate à Minorque : « Tu es notre chef ; c'est de toi seul que dépend notre prospérité[37]. »

Mais l'intérêt bien compris n'est pas seul à assurer la popularité du *gazi*, à en juger par ce retour triomphal de Hayreddin à Tunis : « Quand son frère, les autres *gazi*, les marabouts et les saints de l'endroit, ses grands et petits personnages virent et apprirent le butin de Hayreddin et ses hauts faits, ils en furent ébahis et surpris et s'écrièrent : "Cet homme n'est pas le premier venu ! Si Dieu très grand le veut, il deviendra un grand personnage, car où qu'il aille, Dieu (qu'Il soit exalté) lui accorde ce qu'il désire[38]." » Le doute n'effleure donc pas Ibn el-Kazı et Muhammad bin Ali quand, dans un premier temps, ils refusent de céder aux pressions des sultans de Tunis et Tlemcen. En effet, par sa *gaza*, ses victoires et sa piété, Hayreddin a acquis une légitimité que les princes locaux ont perdue par leur incompétence :

---

[33] La légende noire de Hasan doit d'ailleurs être remise en question à la lumière du contexte, d'après S. Boubaker, « L'empereur Charles Quint et le sultan hafside Mawlāy al-Ḥasan (1525-1550) », dans idem et C. Ilham Álvarez Dopico (éds), *Empreintes espagnoles dans l'histoire tunisienne* (Gijón 2011), pp. 13-82. Quant à son prédécesseur Muhammad V, honni par les Barberousse à qui il n'avait pas envoyé l'aide escomptée pour leur permettre de s'emparer de Bougie, sa réputation n'était plus à faire : cf. Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı bahriyye*, éd. F. Kurdoğlu et H. Alpagol (Istanbul 1935), pp. 663-664 ; Léon l'Africain, *Description de l'Afrique*, éd. Épaulard (Paris 1956), p. 388 ; M. Sanudo, *Diarii*, t. XXVII (Venise 1890), col. 82.

[34] *Ol kişi ki gerçi mü'min derler ve sureten mü'min denilir amma işler işler kim anın etdiği işleri kâfir dahi eylemez idi* (234 v°).

[35] Cf. notamment le cortège décrit en 28 v° : « On habilla alors à leur mode les 60 compagnons de ce seigneur mécréant, on leur mit une aigrette sur la tête, on leur fit revêtir leur cuirasse et on leur mit à chacun un chien à la main ; et on fit revêtir une cuirasse à leur 60 compagnons, on les mit à cheval et on confia un faucon à chacun. Il sortit encore de cette *barça* quatre femmes ravissantes, dont aucune n'avait alors sa pareille dans aucun pays. Elles furent elles aussi apprêtées. Les deux capitaines [les deux seigneurs] avaient deux bons mulets trotteurs : on les sortit et l'on plaça deux de ces femmes sur ces mulets et les deux autres sur de bons chevaux, et on les envoya avec tous ces présents, faisant marcher à pied les mécréants devant leurs compagnons à cheval : c'est dans cet ordre que [Hayreddin] envoya ses dons au sultan [de Tunis], sous la conduite d'un de ses hommes de confiance. » (*ol kâfir beginin altmış yoldaşın kendi âdetlerinin muktezasınca yine geydirüb başların sorkuçlayub ve yine cebelerin geydirüb ve ellerine birer birer zağarlar verüb ve kendinin dahi altmış yoldaşına cebeler geydirüb atlandırub ellerine birer togan verüb ve dahi ol barçadan dört cemile avretler çıkdı kim ol zamanda her biri bir vilâyetde bulunmazdı anları dahi tonadub ve ol iki kapudanın iki yarar ve yorga katırları çıkdı ikisin ol katırlara bindirüb ve ikisin iki yarar atlara bindirüb dahi bunca hedaya ile bunları göndürüb kâfirleri bu atlu yoldaşların önlerince piyade sürüb bu ünvan üzre sultana bir yarar âdeminden bişkeş için gönderdi*)

[36] 25 v°-26 r°, 28 r°, 40 r°, 60 v°, 73 r¨, 123 v°-124 r°, 155 v°-156 r°, 188 v°, 206 r°.

[37] *Sen bizim serverimizsin bizim varımızın devleti heb senin başınızdadır* (35 v°). Cf. aussi 39 r°, 47 v°.

> Voilà un certain temps que les mécréants venaient dans ces pays et faisaient souffrir des nuisances sans nombre aux musulmans. Ils ont pris plus d'un fort aux musulmans et y ont transformé les mosquées et madrasas en églises. Aucun de vous n'a rien pu faire pour nous aider de quelque manière et nous renforcer. À présent, voilà qu'est venu un combattant de la foi dans la voie de Dieu, qui a conquis ce pays sur les mécréants. Avant d'en arriver là, ce *gazi* a longtemps travaillé et subi force difficultés et souffrances. Il a mainte et mainte fois consacré sa bravoure au profit des musulmans qui résident en ces pays et a plus d'une fois mis en déroute les soldats mécréants. Non seulement nous avons profité de son incomparable bonté, de ses grâces et de ses faveurs ; non seulement nous avons vu de nombreux exemples de sa mâle valeur et de sa bravoure ; mais encore nous avons vu sa grande foi et piété. Eh bien, celui qui se rebellerait et se révolterait [contre] un pareil homme ne connaîtrait le bonheur ni dans ce monde ni dans l'autre. Serait-ce se montrer musulman que de lui être rebelle[39] ?

Ainsi que le rappelle ce passage, la victoire n'est que la sanction de la piété qui fait de Hayreddin un *sultanu-l-mucahid*[40], un champion de la *gaza* et du *cihad* et un défenseur des musulmans. C'est cet argument qui est développé dans les appels à l'aide que, à en croire la chronique, les gens de Bougie adressent à Oruç :

> Vous patrouillez en mer en menant la *gaza*. Mais nous, quelle tyrannie, quelle oppression, quelles souffrances nous subissons ici de la part des mécréants ! Ce n'est pas une situation normale pour les croyants, que vous jouissiez du bien-être alors que nous sommes ici dans

---

[38] *Bu ganimeti ve bu etdiği işleri karındaşı ve sair gaziler ve ol yerin mürabıtları ve azizleri ve sair ekâbiri ve eşagiri görüb ve işidüb hayran olub ve taaccüb edüb ayıtdılar kim bu kişi tehi değildir inşaallah el-azim bu kişi bir ulu kimesne olur zira kim her kanda varsa Hak te'alâ muradın verir dediler* (40 r°).

[39] *Bu nice zamandur kim bu vilâyete kâfirler gelüb ehl-i islâma haddan ziyade rencide eylediler ve bir nice ehl-i islâm kalelerin dahi alub mescidlerin ve medreselerin heb kelisa eylediler hiç birinizin elinden gelmedi kim nev'en bize yardım edüb takviyyet edesiz hâliyâ bir mücahid fî sebili'llah kimesne gelüb bu memleketi kâfir elinden alub bu hale koyunca ol gazi bunca zaman geçirüb hayli belâ ve meşakkat çekdi ve bu diyarlarda olan ehl-i islâma def'at ile kerrat ile nice yoldaşlıklar eyledi ve kâfir askerin dahi bir nice kerre münhezim eyledi ve biz dahi anlardan bîkıyas eylükler ve in'amlar ve ihsanlar gördügümüzden gayri çok erlikler ve bahadırlıklar gördügümüzden gayri izdiyad [sic] ile dindarlık ve mü'minlik gördük imdi anun bigi kimesne[ye] isyan ve tuğyan eden hiç iki cihanda iflâh olurdı ve dahi alâmet-i islâ[m] mıdır kim biz ana âsi olavuz* (89 v°-90 r°).

[40] C'est le titre que lui donne l'inscription de la plaque de fondation de sa mosquée à Alger, datée d'avril 1520 : cf. G. Colin, *Corpus des inscriptions arabes et turques d'Algérie. I Département d'Alger* (Paris 1901), pp. 13-15 ou plus récemment M. Tütüncü, *Cezair'de Osmanlı İzleri* (Istanbul 2013), p. 67 sq.

> la misère. Si vous souhaitez que les *gaza* que vous avez faites soient agréées par Allah et son prophète, venez et tirez-nous des griffes de ces chiens fils de chiens[41].

C'est à peu près dans le même ton que les Algérois le font un peu plus tard entrer dans leur ville[42]. En somme, pour Hayreddin qui, envisageant en 1519 de quitter Alger, se flatte de l'avoir équipée militairement et d'en avoir assez formé les habitants pour qu'ils puissent désormais se défendre seuls[43], la *gaza* et le *cihad* sont essentiels à la nature du souverain musulman légitime, comme il le rappelle sentencieusement à Abdallah de Tlemcen :

> Encore une fois, dégage-toi des mécréants, coupe tout lien avec eux et agis en ennemi de quiconque est l'ennemi de Son Excellence Dieu (qu'Il soit béni et exalté). Quel pouvoir ont donc les mécréants pour parvenir en ce monde à se faire remettre le *harac* par un musulman ? À mener guerre et bataille contre eux, il y a deux avantages qui ne manquent pas, l'un en ce bas monde et l'autre dans l'au-delà : si tu meurs, tu es sûr d'être un *şehid* ; et si tu ne meurs pas, tu es un être fortuné assurément[44].

Ce rôle de protecteur des croyants, Hayreddin l'assume tout particulièrement dans l'aide qu'il apporte aux musulmans d'Espagne :

> Aucun souverain – rappelle le chroniqueur – ne leur a apporté d'aide ou de soutien pour les libérer de cette oppression et de l'obscurité de la mécréance. (…) Élevons ici une prière pour que Dieu (je Le loue, qu'Il soit exalté) les sauve de cette calamité et qu'il en accorde le mérite à Son Excellence le chah de céleste pouvoir Sultan Soliman, souverain maître des conjonctions. Amen, ô Auxiliateur. Et qu'Il fasse de Son Excellence Hayreddin Pacha (que Dieu – qu'Il soit

---

[41] *Deryada gazalar edüb gezersiz biz bunda kâfirlerden ne zulümler ve ne taaddi ve ne ezalar görürüz bu mü'minlik değildir kim sizler refahiyyetde olasız ve biz bunda mihnetde olavuz imdi eger kkıldığınız gazalar Allah ve resûlullah katında makbul olsun derseniz gelüb bizi bu kelb bin kelblerin elinden halâs edesiz* (44 r°).

[42] 48 v°.

[43] Cf. 83 r°-v° : « Votre fort a maintenant été bien équipé en canons, arquebuses et autres matériels de guerre. [Sa garnison] est parfaitement entraînée à la guerre et au combat et a appris les moyens de se battre. En particulier ces musulmans ramenés d'Andalousie sont tous habiles à l'arquebuse ou à l'arbalète. Outre ceux-ci, les enfants et parentèles de chacun d'entre vous ont été équipés d'armes et d'arquebuses. Quant au fort, qui n'avait pas jusque là un seul canon, on y a installé à présent plus de quatre cents bouches à feu. » (*Şimdiki halde hisarınız topdan ve tüfenkden ve sair âlet-i harbdan ma'mur olmışdır ve bi'l-cümle harba ve zarba alışmışdır ve heb cenk kolayın dahi ögrenmişler hususen kim bu denlü müslimanlar kim Ûndûlûs vilâyetinden getürilmiş her biri tüfenkçi ve zenberekci kimesnelerdir ve anlardan gayri her birinizin dahi evladı ve ensabı heb yaraklandılar ve tüfenklendiler ve kalenin dahi şimdiye dek bir topı yok idi şimdiki halde dört yüzden ziyade toplar dahi kondı*).

[44] *Ve yine kâfirlerden dahi elin çek ve kat'-ı alâka edüb Allah tebareke ve te'alâ Hazretlerine aduv olan kimesnelere adavet eyle imdi kâfirin ne kudreti vardır kim vara dünyada mü'min olan kimesne haraç vere ve anlarınla cenk ve kıtal etmek iki faideden hâlî değil biri dünyevî ve biri uhrevî yani eger ölürsen şehid sahih ve eger ölmezsen said sarih olasın* (142 r°).

> exalté – lui accorde ses désirs) l'instrument de leur salut et l'associe à ce mérite. Car c'est lui qui le premier a été cause que certains d'entre eux sont revenus dans le peuple de l'islam[45].

Ne nous laissons pas leurrer par la référence obligée à Soliman : à l'évidence, c'est Hayreddin qui est glorifié ici et les *Gazavat* reviennent à plusieurs reprises, au cours du récit, sur ses efforts pour sauver les mudéjares et les ramener en terre d'islam[46]. Bien plus, c'est le refus par les hommes d'İbn el-Kazi de recevoir ces réfugiés à Alger qui amène le bon apôtre à décider de partir à la reconquête de la ville[47] !

Guerrier de la foi à l'extérieur, le bon souverain doit bien sûr être juste à l'intérieur. C'est ainsi que le premier souci au retour d'une campagne en mer est de répartir équitablement le butin entre les marins, mais aussi toute la population, comme au lendemain de telle action victorieuse contre la flotte d'Andrea Doria : « Quant à lui, comme il le faisait auparavant, il réserva leur part et portion de ce riche butin à chacun des saints et des marabouts et donna leur part à tout ce que la ville comptait de pauvres, grands et petits, et distribua dons et cadeaux aux notables et au reste du peuple, bref à tous ceux qui le méritaient, selon leurs rangs[48]. » Cette politique de justice est la marque d'un souci bien compris du bien-être des musulmans. Réfugié à Djidjelli après avoir dû quitter Alger, le premier souci de Hayreddin est de récolter en mer le blé qui manque à une population souffrant d'une grave disette :

> Il en distribua une partie à ces soldats, aux pauvres et à la population de Djidjelli, ainsi qu'à des Arabes venus de territoires dépendant de Djidjelli. À certains il en cédait pour de l'argent. C'est ainsi que par la grâce de Dieu (qu'Il soit exalté) et grâce aux grains de ces *barça*, le pays fut débarrassé de la famine et par la suppression de celle-ci retrouva la prospérité. Ce que voyant, la population du pays éleva toutes sortes de prières et d'actions de grâce en l'honneur de Hayreddin Bey, disant : "C'est pour donner les moyens de subsister à notre pays que Dieu (nous Le louons, qu'Il soit exalté) a fait quitter Alger à ce combattant de la foi et l'a envoyé en ce pays. Il n'y a pas le moindre doute sur ce point. Il sait ce qui convient à quoi, assurément : de tout effet il fournit la cause et du présent effet, c'est lui qu'il a fourni pour cause[49]."

---

[45] *Hiç bir padişah muin ve zahir olmadı kim anları bu zulümden ve küfür karanlığından halâs eyleye (...) bu mahallde dua kılalım kim Hak subhanehu ve te'alâ anları ol belâdan kurtara fe-amma kurtarmak sevabını ol şah-ı gerdun-iktidar Sultan Süleyman sahibkıran-ı şehriyar hazretlerine müyesser ede âmin yâ muin ve Hayreddin Paşa yessere Allahu te'alâ mâ-yeşâ hazretlerini dahi anlara sebeb ediverüb ol sevabda bile eyleye kim ibtida anların bazısın ehl-i islâma çıkarmağa sebeb ol olmışdır* (32 v°).

[46] 97 r°, 126 v°, 158 r° sqq., 204 r°, 208 r°-211 r°.

[47] 127 v°-130 v°.

[48] *Ve anlar dahi her bir azizlere ve mürabıtlara yine evvelden edegeldikleri bigi ol malî ganimetden hisseler ve paylar çıkarub ve şehrin fukarasına dahi sıgar ü kibar ne kadar varsa heb hisse verüb ve ayanına ve sair halkına ve dahi her bir mahal olan yerlere haddınca hediye ve armağan verüb* (188 v°).

[49] *Ve bazısın dahi ol askere ve fukaraya ve Cicel halkına ve Cicele tabi olmış bazı yerler var idi ol elin dahi Arabları geldi anlara dahi bezl eylediler ve kimine dahi akçe ile verüb Hak te'alânun inayeti ile ol barcalarun terekesi sebeb olub ol memleketden kahtlık götürildi ve def olub ganilik oldı ve hem ol memleket halkı dahi bu ahvali görüb Hayreddin Bege enva-ı dualar ve sena-*

Aussi n’a-t-il aucune difficulté à imposer son pouvoir à Tunis, par une attitude de justice qui contraste avec les turpitudes antérieures du Hafside, comme avec le pillage auquel se livreront les Espagnols[50] qui, bientôt, le remettront sur son trône en en chassant le bey/pacha ottoman :

> Auparavant, Son Excellence Hayreddin Bey avait conseillé à ses compagnons de ne pas faire souffrir de tort et de dommage aux gens de la ville. De fait, à personne parmi les gens de la ville, à personne absolument il ne permit qu’on infligeât mal et souffrance : rien de tel ne se produisit. Quant à lui, il prit la place du sultan et administra. Il suffit qu’il eût fait grâce au peuple et l’eût caressé pour qu’aussitôt le peuple comme avant rouvrît les boutiques et recommençât à pratiquer le commerce et autres occupations : chacun se consacra à son art, ses affaires et son gagne-pain et tous, dans la plus grande sûreté, s’occupèrent de leurs affaires[51].

Enfin, on est frappé par le légalisme affiché par les Barberousse. Oruç consulte les oulémas d’Alger et obtient d’eux une *fetva* justifiant sa campagne contre Tlemcen[52]. Hayreddin leur demande aussi leur avis sur la question des prisonniers espagnols : est-il conforme à la *şeriat* de rendre contre rançon des soldats de valeur qui, libérés, reprendront les armes contre les musulmans ? Leur réponse, négative, justifie l’exécution des captifs par un souverain non pas cruel, mais responsable et soucieux de la Loi[53]. Plusieurs années après, sans faire appel cette fois aux oulémas, Hayreddin refuse pour le même motif à ses compagnons le droit de vendre des prisonniers, leur disant : « Ce que vous me proposez n’est pas une marque d’islam[54]. » Au lendemain d’une révolte armée des

---

lar edüb aydurlar idi kim Hak subhanehu ve te’alâ ol mücahidi bu vilâyete sebeb kılmak içün Cezairden ihrac edüb bu vilâyete salmışdır hiç şaibe-i şübhe yokdur nesi neye gerek idigin ol bilir elbetde her hususa bir nesne-i sebeb eder anı dahi bu hususa sebeb etmişdir (123 v°-124 r°).

[50] Cf. Marmol, *L’Afrique de Marmol*, trad. N. Perrot (Paris 1567), p. 347, qui note que la population de Tlemcen refuse un roi qui a permis la mise à sac du pays par les Espagnols.

[51] *Ve bundan evvel dahi Hayreddin Beg Hazretleri yoldaşlarına ısmarlamış idi kim şehirli taifesine zarar ve güzend etmeyeler vakıa şehirli taifesinden bir kimesneye kat’a ve aslâ bir kimesneye husr ü ziyan etdirmeyüb ve olmayub ve kendi dahi geçüb sultan yerine oturub beglik edüb halka aman verüb ve nevaht edicek halk dahi kemakân dükkânların açub ticaretlerine ve gayri tuşlarına mübaşeret edüb ve her biri yine kendi san’atlarına ve kâr ü kesblerine meşgûl [o]lub tamam emn ü aman üzre olub her biri kendi ahvallerine meşgûl oldılar* (237 r°-v°).

[52] 62 v°.

[53] 81 r°-v°. La question se pose aussi concernant le corps, réclamé par les parents : « les oulémas furent à nouveau réunis et ils émirent une *fetva* selon laquelle c’était un cadavre, dont la vente était interdite et contraire à la *şeriat*. Dès qu’ils se furent ainsi exprimés, Son Excellence Hayreddin Bey fit sortir de la prison le corps de ce mécréant et sans le remettre [à ses parents], il le fit abandonner dans une crique qu’il y avait, afin que son parent ne pût pas le voler d’une manière ou d’une autre. » (82 v° : *yine ulemayı cem edüb fetva etdikde anlar dahi bu meytedir bunun bey‘i haramdur ve şer‘î değildir deyicek tiz Hayreddin Beg Hazretleri dahi ol kâfirin meyyitin zindandan çıkardub bir göz koy var idi vermeyüb ana bırakdırdı kim şayed akrabası bir tarik ile oğurlaya deyü*).

[54] *İmdi bu siz dediğiniz alâmet[-i] islâm değildir* (216 v°).

Algérois, il rappelle aux rebelles qu'« il lui serait permis (*helal*) de les exécuter tous[55]. »

Au total, à cette date en tout cas, l'aura de la Porte paraît bien lointaine : c'est Hayreddin qui est sur place. Certes c'est un parvenu, comme le rappelle Abdallah, ce prince qu'il a remis sur le trône de Tlemcen, mais qui refuse le statut de vassal et ne lui reconnaît aucune légitimité :

> S'il m'a donné cette terre et confié ce pays, il m'a seulement confié [le pouvoir] d'ordonner et gouverner. Je n'ai pris l'engagement de verser quoi que ce soit à quiconque. Du reste ce pays est la terre de mon père. De toutes les manières, sa garde et sa protection ne viennent que de moi. S'il a le pouvoir de venir me le prendre des mains, eh bien le pays est là ; il ne s'est pas envolé. Qu'il vienne donc et s'en empare. Mais sinon, cette terre est à moi. Elle était le bien de mon père et m'a été transmise de lui par voie d'héritage. Je suis capable de la tenir. Je ne donnerai à personne ni mon bien ni un seul grain[56].

À y regarder de plus près, cependant, Abdallah semble admettre que son droit héréditaire pèserait peu devant la force. On est donc renvoyé à la conception des malékites locaux sur la légitimité du pouvoir telle que l'analyse Houari Touati : le *mülk* est un fait de violence, dont la loi ne condamne que les abus : tyrannie, injustice ou sensualité ; le statut légal du *mülk* implique de pratiquer le *cihad* pour défendre et conserver le royaume, de garantir la justice, d'assurer la sécurité et de préserver l'ordre. Ce code « fait de l'État un appareil défensif au service de la communauté politique » et suffit à légitimer un souverain juste : tout pouvoir est légal pourvu qu'il respecte à la lettre la *şeriat*[57].

Comme on le voit, l'analyse du récit des *Gazavat* semble une illustration parfaite de cette conception du pouvoir. Encore convient-il de se demander, ne fût-ce qu'à la lecture seulement de la chronique, dans quelle mesure ce programme était appliqué. L'assassinat de Selim el-Toumi, qui permit à Oruç de s'emparer du pouvoir à Alger, devait être difficilement justifiable en justice et en droit, puisque les *Gazavat* préfèrent n'en pas parler. Oruç se montra d'ailleurs incapable d'honorer son contrat de défenseur des musulmans, son artillerie se révélant impuissante contre le fort des Espagnols sur le Peñon d'Alger. Quant à son attitude à Tlemcen, plus d'une source rapporte qu'il montra tant de violence et de tyrannie que les citadins en vinrent bientôt à souhaiter son départ[58].

---

[55] 116 r°.

[56] *Ol bana bu yeri alıverüb ve bu memleketi ısmarladı ise ancak bana hükm ve hükûmetin ısmarladı artık benim kimesneye nesne vermek borcum değildir ve hem işbu memleket dahi benim atam yeridir ve her vech ile bu yerin hıfzı ve hiraseti benim elimden gelir imdi eğer ol dahi yine gelüb benim elimden almağa kadir ise uşda memleketdir yerinden göçüb gitmedi gelsin alsın ve illâ bu yerler benimdir ve benim atam milkîdir ve cihet-i irsî ile bana atamdan müntakıl olmuşdur imdi pes [yin]e anın ben zabtına kadirim kimesneye ne milkim veririm ve ne bir habbe veririm* (142 v°-143 r°).

[57] H. Touati, *Entre Dieu et les hommes. Lettrés, saints et sorciers au Maghreb (17^e^ siècle)* (Paris 1994), pp. 112-119.

[58] Cf. M. Sanudo, *Diarii*, t. XIX (Venise 1887), col. 148-153 ; t. XXIII (Venise 1888), col. 23 ; H. de La Primaudaie, « Documents inédits sur l'histoire de l'occupation espagnole en Afrique », *Revue Africaine*, XIX (1875), pp. 148-153 (p. 152) ; Marmol, *L'Afrique*, p. 339 ; Ch. de La Véronne, *Oran et Tlemcen dans la première moitié du XVIe siècle* (Paris 1983), p. 25.

Hayreddin semble avoir été plus politique et plus adroit avec la population. Néanmoins il lui fallut à lui aussi attendre 1529, à un moment où sa position était apparemment plus solide, pour s'attaquer au fort du Peñon. Les choses n'avaient pas été si simples auparavant. C'est précisément alors qu'il avait obtenu la reconnaissance du sultan ottoman qu'İbn el-Kazi, dont on a vu le soutien qu'il affichait à l'égard de ce noble *gazi* défenseur des musulmans, décida de se retourner contre lui et il n'eut pas de mal à convaincre les habitants de la campagne algéroise d'arrêter ou tuer les Turcs dont ils pourraient se saisir[59]. Dans la ville soumise à de longs mois de blocus, la situation devenait intenable pour les habitants, qui n'avaient donc plus guère de raisons de soutenir un souverain qui n'était pas des leurs et dont la présence ne leur apportait que la misère. Tels sont en tout cas les arguments avancés par l'ennemi qui cherche à les séduire :

> Comment demeurez-vous dans une forteresse qui est comme une prison ? Si vous venez vous entendre avec nous et trouvez la tranquillité, eh bien quoi ? Nous, en tout cas, nous n'abandonnerons pas cette place. Vous aurez vergogne alors. Si cela se fait dès maintenant grâce à vous, eh bien quoi ? Si vous vous débarrassez de ce Turc et vivez avec les vôtres, où sera votre honte et où votre zèle[60] ?

De fait, un soulèvement se prépare bientôt, qu'il faut réprimer brutalement. Certes le calme revient, mais l'atmosphère est lourde : « Bref, deux ans passèrent ainsi, tantôt dans l'amitié, tantôt dans l'hostilité, chacun se comportant vis-à-vis de l'autre avec une certaine dissimulation. Mais enfin, comme ils ne pouvaient pas faire confiance aux citadins ni se fier à eux, ils ne pouvaient aller nulle part et étaient comme prisonniers dans le fort[61]. » Deux décennies plus tard, l'atmosphère semble comparable dans Tunis assiégée par les Espagnols[62], dont la population, également travaillée par le sultan hafside dépossédé[63], est partiellement hostile à Hayreddin, ce qui provoque sa défaite.

Dans les deux cas, Hayreddin est contraint de se retirer. Certes, le récit des *Gazavat* donne le change : il nous montre le héros remettant les clefs d'Alger avec hauteur à ses ennemis gratifiés d'un discours moralisateur, puis quittant la ville en majesté, entouré des prières du peuple qui souhaite qu'il reste. Mais quoi qu'il en soit de la réalité invérifiable du déroulement de la journée, Hayreddin n'avait pas le choix : non seulement la situation militaire était inquiétante, mais plus encore, incapable d'assurer la sécurité face aux ennemis et, à l'intérieur, le bon ordre et la justice, il avait perdu sa légitimité : une légitimité fondée sur la force est naturellement ébranlée par une perte de force.

---

[59] 104 r°.

[60] *Nice bir habs bigi bir kalede durursuz gelseniz bizimle sulh edüb huzur etseniz ne ve biz hod âhirü'l-emr ol kale'i koyacak değiliz ol vaktin utanacağınız(ı) şimdiden sizlerin minneti bile olsa ne ol Türki aradan ihrac edüb kendi cinsiniz ile olsanız kanı arınız ve kanı gayretiniz* (109 v°).

[61] *Velhasıl iki yıl bu üslûb üzre gâh dost ve gâh düşman suretinde birbiri ile münafikâne zindegâne eylediler âhır şehirlü taifesine i'tikad ve i'timad olınmamağın bir yere varmağa da mecalleri olmayub ancak habs bigi kalede kalıcak* (119 r°).

[62] Sur le siège de Tunis, cf. 244 r° sqq.

[63] « Il diffusa aussi des papiers à l'intérieur du fort et rédigea et diffusa des sauf-conduits pour des Arabes, multipliant serments et conditions : dans ces papiers, il recherchait la confiance du peuple » (*ve hisar içinde dahi ba'zı kâğıdlar bırakub Arab taifesine aman kâğıdların yazub bırakub andlar ve şartlar edüb ol kâğıdlar içinde halkı inandırdılar* : 248 r°). Si les *Gazavat* ne reproduisent pas le contenu de ces tracts, Marmol, *L'Afrique*, p. 480, en donne une idée qui paraît vraisemblable : « Chassez les Turcs, qui sont vos tyrans, et recevez votre roi, qui vous aime et qui vous veut du bien. » On est frappé par la parenté de ton entre ce message et ceux envoyés aux Algérois assiégés.

* * *

Indépendamment de ces questions de légitimité, on peut se demander dans quelle mesure les Barberousse ont imprimé leur marque dans l'organisation et la pratique du pouvoir et, en particulier, s'ils ont ottomanisé leur domaine[64].

Incontestablement, on décèle un modèle ottoman sous-jacent, sans du reste qu'on puisse toujours déterminer s'il dicte la conduite des deux frères, ou s'il permet seulement à l'auteur de donner à son public une idée à peu près concrète de ces contrées lointaines et exotiques. C'est particulièrement clair dans un passage qui nous montre les premières mesures prises pour organiser le territoire, peu après la mainmise d'Oruç sur Alger :

> Il y avait dix forts qui étaient des dépendances des pays de cette région, c'est-à-dire des dépendances d'Alger et de Bougie. C'étaient de bons forts, cinq situés à l'est, cinq à l'ouest. Séparant ces dix forts par une frontière, Oruç Bey donna à Hayreddin Reis ceux qui étaient du côté oriental. Hayreddin Reis s'y rendit et devint *bey* en ce pays. Il fit de Dellys sa capitale, s'y installa et commença à gouverner ce pays et royaume qui lui avait été accordé. Puis quittant ce lieu, il sortit pour [visiter] le pays et royaume. Il fit le registre des foyers de ce pays, avec son produit et son revenu, afin de le dépenser — à hauteur de ce qu'il rapportait — en soldats. Il désigna endroit par endroit et dépêcha des secrétaires et des *emin*. Il implanta et envoya des caïds pays par pays : c'est à dire qu'il envoya un *bey* dans chaque lieu pour assurer le contrôle, la garde et la protection de ce pays. Ceux-ci partirent et assurant chacun la gestion des lieux qui leur étaient affectés, y assurèrent la paix et la tranquillité[65].

---

[64] Qu'on me permette de redire que ce qui suit concerne uniquement la courte période du règne effectif de Hayreddin, jusqu'en 1533 (ou 1535 dans la mesure où j'évoque à l'occasion l'éphémère conquête de Tunis). C'est sur une situation administrative postérieure (même si certains éléments peuvent avoir déjà existé) que sont fondées les considérations des historiens sur la province ottomane d'Alger, comme par exemple les pp. 658 sqq. de la synthèse de Boubaker, « Il Maghreb », ou comme l'article de Hizmetli, « Türklerin yönetimi döneminde ». Or il est clair, à lire le récit des *Gazavat*, qu'il n'y avait pas de présence notable de janissaires à Alger à l'époque qui nous concerne (sur le mythe de l'envoi de janissaires par Selim Ier, cf. Vatin, « Note sur l'entrée d'Alger »), de même que Hayreddin contrôlait personnellement le monde des corsaires. Sur la formation d'un territoire tunisien par le moyen d'un contrôle administratif manifesté par le registre, cf. F. Ben Sliman, « De l'espace au territoire de l'identité. Registres fiscaux et représentations de l'espace dans la Tunisie ottomane (fin 17^{e}-début 19^{e} siècles) », dans L. Aïssa (éd.), *Perceptions de l'espace au Maghreb et ailleurs. Rencontre internationale, vendredi 10 avril et samedi 11 avril 2009* (s.l.n.d., Université de Tunis, Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales), pp. 83-100.

[65] *Ol tarafda olan memleketler tevabihi yani Cezair ve Bicâya tabileri on pare kale idi heb yarar kaleler idi beşi arkî ve beşi garbî vakı olmış idi ve ol on pare kıt'anun ortasına sinür koyub şol ark tarafında vakı olan kaleleri Oruç Beg merhûm Hayreddin Reise verdi ve Hayreddin Reis*

La même politique est appliquée peu après dans Tlemcen occupée : « Feu Oruç Bey quant à lui désigna des gouverneurs pour chaque endroit du pays et royaume et en prit l'entier contrôle. Dans cette position il lui apportait paix et sûreté sous sa justice et y faisait régner l'ordre[66]. » Une dernière citation paraît éclairante. Affirmant vouloir quitter Alger en 1519, Hayreddin explique à ceux qui veulent le retenir qu'il a accompli sa mission : la place est désormais bien équipée et capable de se défendre mais, plus encore, le pays a acquis des institutions qui le renforcent : « À présent votre pays a trouvé la paix et la sécurité. Maintenant que je m'en vais, vous pouvez le contrôler, car toute la population du royaume s'est soumise à un seul lieu. Que ce soit les imams, les *hatib*, les marabouts ou les autres notables, ils se sont tous mis d'accord[67]. »

Pour un auditoire ottoman, tout ceci renvoie à des réalités simples et claires : le pays a été divisé en *sancak* ayant chacun un *bey* à sa tête ; des fonctionnaires compétents ont été chargés de dresser systématiquement des registres fiscaux de manière à déterminer le revenu disponible. Ainsi, un impôt juste et équitablement réparti permettra de financer l'armée et l'appareil de l'État pour le plus grand bonheur de la population réunie avec ses élites autour de la capitale – comprenons, quoique Hayreddin prétende quitter la place, de son souverain. Ainsi, dans ces contrées marquées par le perpétuel désordre institutionnel et politique dû aux rivalités entre princes[68] et à la présence dans l'arrière-pays de tribus à peu près incontrôlables[69], les Barberousse ont importé le modèle qui a fait le succès des Ottomans…

Sur les modalités concrètes de la gestion de leurs provinces par les Barberousse, on ne sait à dire vrai rien, nos sources les plus anciennes – Marmol ou Haëdo – étant postérieures et décrivant la situation telle qu'elle fut par la suite. Il n'en demeure pas moins que le tableau que je viens de citer doit être observé avec prudence. On aura noté que le terme employé est *caïd*, traduit par *bey* à l'intention du public turcophone. Il s'agit

---

dahi varub ol diyarda beg olub ve Delîs taht edinüb anda karar edüb ol ta'yin olınan eline ve memleketine hükm ve hükûmet etmeğe başladı ve andan yine turub el ve memleket üstine çıkdı ol vilâyetün hanesin yazub hâsıl ve mahsulin bile tâkim hâsılı nedir ana göre asker kullanub harc ede ve cabeca kâtibler ve eminler ta'yin eyleyüb gönderdi ve kaidler dahi diküb vatan bevatan irsal eyledi yani yer yer begler dahi gönderdi ol vilâyetün zabtı ve hıfz ü hiraseti için ve anlar dahi varub her birisi ta'yin olunan yerlerine hükm ve hükûmet edüb tamam emn ü aman üzre eylediler (60 v°-61 r°).

[66] *Oruç Beg merhûm dahi ol ele ve ol memlekete yer yer zâbıtlar ta'yin eyledi tamam zabt etdirdi uşta memleketi zabt eyleyüb adl ile emn ü aman ile kılub nizam intizam vermekde* (63 v°).

[67] *Şimdiki halde memleketiniz dahi emn ü aman üzre olmuşdur çün kim ben giderim yine siz memleketi[n]izi zabt edebilirsiz zira kim şimdiki halde cümle memleket halkı dahi heb bir yere tabi olmuşlardur eğer imamları ve eğer hatibleri ve eğer murabıtları ve sair ayanı heb ittifak üzredir* (83 v°-84 r°).

[68] Bien connu historiquement, le phénomène est abondamment souligné dans les *Gazavat* qui consacrent de nombreux passages aux luttes dynastiques qui ébranlent régulièrement Tlemcen.

[69] Sur les Hafsides et les tribus, cf. R. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides, des origines à la fin du XVe siècle*, t. II (Paris 1940-1947), p. 98-103. Pour ce qui est du sultanat de Fès, cf. M. Kably, *Société, pouvoir et religion au Maroc à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris 1986), pp. 223 sqq.

donc, somme toute, d'une institution locale dont les compétences, dans le cas du sultanat hafside, ne recouvraient que partiellement celles d'un *sancakbeyi* ottoman[70]. De même, la mention au passage d'un geôlier du bagne d'Alger obtenant une permission pour se rendre sur son « *timar* »[71] ne permet évidemment pas de supposer l'organisation dans le pays d'une hiérarchie de cavaliers timariotes, mais doit traduire une réalité locale rapidement assimilée à un *timar* pour la clarté du récit[72]. On n'a pas d'information sur la plupart de ces caïds. Certains sont présentés comme des *kul* d'Oruç ou de Hayreddin, donc des proches[73], ce qui indique de la part du centre une volonté de contrôle fondé sur la fidélité. Mais outre qu'une tendance similaire s'était peu à peu imposée chez les Hafsides[74], ce pouvait être un espoir illusoire, comme le montre le cas de Kara Hasan qui, suborné par les ennemis de Hayreddin, se constitua pour quelques années un petit royaume à Cherchell.

Bien plus, on est frappé par la façon dont Oruç divise son domaine en deux, en confiant la moitié à Hayreddin. Certes, on a vu que celui-ci demeurait son subordonné et tout, dans le récit des *Gazavat*, donne l'image d'une entente parfaite entre les frères. On peut néanmoins se demander si confier au cadet un pareil apanage n'était pas une nécessité politique visant à éviter tout risque de conflit : c'était, pour reprendre une formule de M. Kably, la « solution du partage et du compromis » adoptée par les Mérinides au Maroc pour résoudre la question de la rivalité des princes[75]. C'était aussi prendre le risque d'une tendance sécessionniste, ainsi que le remarquait S. İlter[76], dont la désapprobation souligne inconsciemment combien ce choix probablement inévitable était aux antipodes d'une pratique centralisatrice ottomane idéale.

La mort d'Oruç résolut le problème, mais n'assura pas pour autant à Hayreddin un règne paisible sur un royaume uni, centralisé et prospère, puisqu'il dut lutter pour sa survie à Alger, face à des tribus tantôt alliées, tantôt ennemies, mais aussi face à une population urbaine qui, au moins jusqu'à son retour en 1527, fut loin, on le sait, de faire corps autour de lui. Quant au contrôle économique et fiscal du territoire, nous ne sommes guère renseignés, mais on est frappé par les considérations qui amènent Hayreddin à abandonner Alger assiégée :

---

[70] Cf. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, pp. 112-113 : faire respecter l'autorité sultanienne, assurer l'ordre parmi les habitants, servir d'intermédiaire naturel entre le pouvoir central et la population, recouvrer l'impôt, commander les troupes de la province. Pour une description des caïds de l'Algérie ottomane au XVIe siècle, cf. D. de Haëdo, *Topographie et histoire générale d'Alger*, trad. Monnereau et Berbrugger, *Revue Africaine* (1870 et 1871), pp. 51-53.

[71] 221 v°-222 r°.

[72] On peut supposer qu'ici, *timar* traduit *ikta*. Sur la forme locale de cette concession de revenu, cf. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, pp. 184-190.

[73] Celui de Miliana, lors de la première période algéroise, est un cheikh arabe (71 v°-72 r°). En revanche celui qui est en poste à la frontière de Tlemcen, dans la seconde période algéroise, Velid Bey, est un ancien esclave d'Oruç (202 r°) ; c'est également un de ses *kul*, Cafer, que Hayreddin nomme caïd de Kairouan au lendemain de l'éphémère conquête de Tunis (246 v°). Haëdo, *Topographie*, p. 53, évoque une centaine de maisons de caïds et, parmi les 23 plus importantes, dénombre 6 Turcs, 11 renégats, 2 *Türkoğlu*, 2 Maures et 1 juif.

[74] Cf. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, p. 111.

[75] Cf. Kably, *Société, pouvoir et religion au Maroc*, p. 173.

[76] Aziz Samih [İlter], *Şimali Afrika'da Türkler* (Istanbul 1936), p. 77.

> Hayreddin constata d'une part que la position de la population du pays était ce qui a été dit, que faute de lui faire confiance on ne pouvait sortir et qu'il avait perdu le contrôle du territoire. D'autre part il savait n'avoir pas un revenu suffisant pour entretenir lui-même et ses troupes et qu'il ne lui restait rien du Trésor : tout avait filé. Il en vint pour finir à songer à abandonner Alger et à repartir un temps faire la course en mer[77].

On comprend bien, à lire ce texte, l'importance de l'or pour régner, mais aussi que loin de compter sur l'impôt pour remplir les caisses, l'homme qui voulait être roi ne pouvait faire fortune que sur mer. Il n'était toujours qu'un corsaire dont le véritable élément était liquide : si Oruç avait trouvé la mort à Tlemcen, dans l'intérieur des terres, Hayreddin, à Alger comme à Tunis, avait pris soin de préserver à portée de main une flotte dont il savait pouvoir attendre le salut.

Avant d'en arriver à la solution du retrait – pour ne pas dire de la fuite –, Hayreddin n'avait guère d'autre choix que de composer avec les forces locales : cheikhs de tribus, notables urbains, oulémas et marabouts, compagnons (*yoldaş*) turcs enfin.

Vis-à-vis des tribus et de leurs chefs, on pouvait à l'occasion faire acte de violence, comme à l'égard de tel cheikh qui collectait le tribut destiné aux Espagnols et qu'Oruç voulait mettre au pas. Sur la demande de son frère, Hayreddin « fondit la nuit [sur ce cheikh] pris au dépourvu alors qu'il campait : il le trouva lui-même, s'empara de sa personne et le ramena à Djidjelli avec sa maisonnée, sa famille, ses biens, ses fils, ses filles, ses moutons et ses dromadaires. » Mais c'était pour trouver aussitôt un arrangement : « Ils conclurent le traité suivant : tout ce qu'il remettait précédemment forfaitairement aux mécréants, il le maintiendrait et le leur remettrait intégralement à eux [les Barberousse][78]. »

Maître d'Alger à la mort d'Oruç, Hayreddin semble avoir à son tour procédé à une sorte de partage des responsabilités militaires au sein de son royaume, mais ce fut au profit de chefs tribaux, Muhammad ibn Ali et İbn el-Kazi de Kouko[79]. On sait que ce dernier ne tarda pas à changer de camp. Finalement victorieux de son rival, Hayreddin fit un retour triomphal dans sa ville d'Alger, recevant sur son chemin l'allégeance des chefs de tribus venant lui baiser la main[80]. Mais c'était pour composer aussitôt : « Quand ils virent que Hayreddin Bey venait sur place, ils rencontrèrent leur *bey* : ils vinrent et ceux qui étaient de qualité parmi eux lui baisèrent la main ; joyeux et heureux, ils firent toutes sortes de manifestations de fête et de bonheur. Hayreddin Bey leur confirma et assura la possession des pays qu'ils tenaient[81]. » Et un peu plus tard :

---

[77] *Ve Hayreddin Beg dahi gördi kim hem memleket halkının ise hali bu bunlara inanılub taşra çıkılmaz ve memleketin ise taşrası elden gitdi kendilere ve askerine kifayet edecek mikdarı nesne hâsıl olmaz oldı ve elinde ise hazine kısmından nesne kalmadı heb gitdi âkıbet eyle fikr eylediler kim Cezairi bırakub gidüb varub bir zaman yine bahra çıkub şikârın ede* (120 r°).

[78] *Gafil bir yerde yatırken gece ile basub kendiyi bulub ele getürdi evi ve barkı ve esbabı ve oğlı ve kızı ve koyunı ve devesi ile sürüb Cicele getürdiler ve eyle sulh eylediler kim sabıka maktuları ne ise kim küffara verirler idi yine anı berkarar edüb bî-kusur anı vereler* (55 v°).

[79] La présentation des *Gazavat*, dont l'auteur cherche encore une fois à trouver un équivalent ottoman à une réalité qu'on cerne mal, assimile Hayreddin à un *sancakbeyi* et ses collaborateurs à des *zaim* : « Il y avait deux personnes nommées Ahmed bin Kazi et Muhammad ibn Ali, qui étaient de grands marabouts, de grands savants et de grands ascètes et à qui précédemment Hayreddin Bey avait confié les cavaliers arabes, c'est à dire qu'il les avait mis à leur tête comme des sortes de *çeribaşı* ou d'*alaybeyi*, l'un chargé de l'est et l'autre de l'ouest. » (*Ahmed bin Kazi ve Muhammed ibn Ali nam kimesneler kim anlar gayetle murabıtlar ve âlimler*

> Des lettres furent envoyées dans toutes les directions, à tous les villages et toutes les tribus, par lesquelles [les indigènes] étaient invités avec promesse d'*aman*. À la vue de ces lettres, sans tarder, en l'espace de dix jours vinrent de tous côtés les cheikhs, les descendants du Prophète, les marabouts, les saints hommes, les grands, les savants, bref tous les hommes de valeur des tribus, tous tant qu'ils étaient, qui faisant à nouveau acte d'obédience, baisèrent la main de Hayreddin Bey. Chacun d'eux reçut une lettre d'*aman*, la possession des terres qu'ils dominaient leur fut fermement confirmée et ils repartirent chacun chez soi. Ils vécurent chacun chez soi comme auparavant, dans la tranquillité ancienne et dans la paix[82].

La question tribale est ainsi à jamais résolue, nous assure le chroniqueur avec optimisme :

> Le reste de la population vint également, présenta des excuses sans fin et l'on repartit chacun chez soi dans une sûreté et une tranquillité parfaites. La population du pays toute entière connut une sûreté et une tranquillité entières et respecta partout le bon ordre. Les yeux des *reaya* s'ouvrirent pour certains : non seulement nul ne se lancerait désormais dans la rébellion pour suivre son clan, mais même si les beys du pays partaient, ils se détourneraient d'eux sans leur prêter attention[83].

---

ve zâhid kimesneler idi ve hem Arab sipahilerinin üzerlerine Hayreddin Beg anları mu'temed eylemiş idi a'nî çeribaşı bigi veyahud alay begi bigi hele anları baş eylemiş idi birini şark tarafına ve birini garb tarafına : 83 v°).

[80] Le baisemain marquant l'obédience était bien connu du pays (cf. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, p. 18-20), mais pouvait aussi, bien entendu, être assimilé au cérémonial ottoman.

[81] *Çun kim anlar Hayreddin Begün anda geldiğin gördiler gelüb anlar dahi beglerine buluşub yine gelüb yararları el öpüb ve şad ü hurrem olub ve enva dürlü şenlikler edüb ve şadılıklar eylediler ve Hayreddin Beg Hazretleri dahi yine anların ellerinde olan yerlerin ibka ve mukarrer eyledi* (133 v°-134 r°).

[82] *Her canibe ve her köye ve her boya mektublar gönderüb gelesiz deyüb aman verdi ve anlar dahi ol mektubı görüb eglenmeyüb on günün içinde her tarafdan boy şeyhleri ve şerîfleri ve murabıtları ve azizleri ve ululları ve âlimleri ve bi'l-cümle yararları bi-esrihim ve ecmi'im gelüb yine tekrar bey'at edüb ve Hayreddin Begün elin öpüb ve her birisi yine aman mektubların alub ve üzerlerinde olan yerlerin yine mukarrer ve ibka edüb andan varub yine yerlü yerine gitdiler ve varub yine yerlü yerinde kemakân geçinüb ve ber-karar-ı sabık mukarrer olub huzur eylediler* (137 v°-138 r°).

[83] *Ve sair halk dahi gelüb her biri bî-had özürhahlık eyleyüb yine emn ile ve aman ile yerlü yerine gitdiler ve ol memleket halkı dahi heb tamam emn ü aman üzerine olub ve her taraf nizam ve intizam tutdı ve reaya taifesinin dahi bir pare gözleri açıldı artuk kimesne paresine uyub isyan etmek değil gerçekden anlara ol vilâyetin begi gider olsa dönüb bakmayalar* (138 r°).

Pourtant, le frère du défunt İbn el-Kazi ne devait pas tarder à se révolter à son tour et il fallut deux ans d'infructueuses campagnes dans les montagnes pour mettre la main sur sa famille :

> Alors, des intermédiaires s'interposèrent à nouveau et l'on s'entendit sur 30 charges d'argent : les nôtres reçurent celles-ci intégralement et eux vinrent faire acte de repentance et demander pardon : ils ne sortiraient plus désormais du droit chemin. [Hayreddin] fit cent remontrances à leurs *lala*, les avertissant de conseiller à leurs patrons de ne plus agir de la sorte et de se tenir convenablement. Puis il repartit pour Alger où il s'installa dans la joie et le bonheur[84].

Vision irénique qui laisse dubitatif quand on sait que les tribus continuèrent par la suite à poser au maîtres du Maghreb ottoman les mêmes problèmes auxquels avaient été confrontés leurs prédécesseurs[85]. Caractéristique de la contradiction entre une attitude impériale « ottomane » et la réalité de la situation est le dialogue opposant Hayreddin qui vient de s'emparer de Tunis à des chefs tribaux :

> Afin de mettre la main sur ce maudit qui est de mèche avec les mécréants[86], envoyez dans une direction différente chacun des gens qui sont sous votre contrôle, enquêtez, recherchez et pourvoyez-y. Car s'il se trouve en un lieu à portée de votre main et si vous-mêmes vous trouvez en un lieu où vous puissiez porter la main sur eux mais que vous demeurez inactifs et vous mettez dans le cas d'avoir été négligents et insouciants, sachez que vous subirez vous aussi la peine et le châtiment qui lui reviendront. Après cela, à celui d'entre vous qui se saisira de lui, je donnerai 30 000 pièces d'or et je laisserai ses pays purs, autrement dit je les exempterai des *tekâlif-i örfiyye* et des *avarız-i divaniyye* et ferai d'eux des *müsellem*[87].

Mais ses interlocuteurs répondent en exigeant le tribut traditionnellement versé par le sultan hafside : « depuis les temps les plus anciens, c'est notre *kanun* que le sultan régnant ici nous envoie tous les ans une certaine somme d'or. Ce même sultan qui vient de fuir en abandonnant Tunis nous la livrait. Versez-la nous vous aussi et nous ferons tout ce que vous voudrez : vous n'avez qu'à parler[88]. » Hayreddin est bien contraint d'accepter, tout en faisant preuve de fermeté : ils ont déjà reçu le tribut de l'année en cours : « Actuellement, vous pesez sur les *reaya* et leur faites souffrir tyrannie et oppression. Cessez de vivre sur eux et allez vous installer dans le désert. Après quoi apportez vos *berat* et nous verrons : nous vous verserons l'annuité prévue par vos *berat*[89]. » On voit que pour finir, en dépit d'une phraséologie ottomane, ce sont bien les cheikhs qui obtiennent gain de cause et que, loin de devenir des auxiliaires exemptés de certaines taxes, ils continuent à toucher le tribut que leur versait le sultan de Tunis.

---

[84] *Yine muslih ortaya düşüb otuz yük gümüşe kesüb ve otuz yük gümüşi bî-kusur alub anlar dahi gelüb tevbeler ve istiğfarlar edüb artık azmayacak oldılar ve ol dahi anların lalalarına yüz nasihat eyledi kim siz yine dahi bunlara nasihat eylen ki artık eyle etmeyüb edebleri ile otursunlar deyüb andan göçüb yine Cezaire gelüb şad ü hurrem oturdılar* (145 v°-146 r°).

[85] Il suffit de lire Marmol pour s'en convaincre. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, pp. 156-186, considère qu'au total, le pouvoir ottoman réussit à contrôler assez bien le monde tribal. Cf. aussi la brève synthèse de Lahouel, « Rapports entre les gouvernants et les gouvernés », qui conclut (p. 49) que les « Turco-ottomans » surent à la fois former des alliances (changeantes) avec les dignitaires politiques ou religieux des tribus et avoir recours à la violence face à de nombreux soulèvements et ajoute surtout : « Mais à aucun moment les autochtones ne présentèrent un front unique. Leurs actions parcellaires ne compromirent guère la stabilité relative du régime. »

[86] Le sultan hafside en fuite.

[87] *Ol kâfirler ile ortak olan mel'unı ele getürmek içün zabtınızda vakı olan halkın her birin bir yana gönderüb tecessüs edüb yokladub gördüresiz şöyle kim sizlerin eli erer yerlerde olub ve sizler ele getürecek yerlerde olub ve sizler tınmayub ve ihmal ve müsahele etmiş olacak olursanız eyle bilesiz kim ana olacak azab ve i'kab sizlere olur ve ba'dehu eger kangınız kim ele getürürse otuz bin nakd kızıl altın verüb ve dahi anın memleketlerin sarah edelim yani kim tekâlif-i örfiyyeden ve avarız-i divanîden muaf ve müsellem edelim* (237 v°-238 r°).

Tout aussi ambigus sont les rapports avec les populations urbaines. J'ai rappelé précédemment des gestes de justice et de générosité destinés à les lier au nouveau pouvoir. Un *leitmotiv* des *Gazavat* est le retour à la paix et à la prospérité entraîné par l'arrivée des Barberousse, arrivée parfois sollicitée par une partie des habitants. Marmol signale au passage, dans sa description, que certaines villes avaient de tradition de bons rapports avec les Turcs, alors que d'autres subissaient leur tyrannie. À Alger même, on verra les habitants contribuer à la défense de la ville contre Charles Quint et, au début de sa première installation, Hayreddin tenait compte de son avis – qui fut à l'origine de la création du premier bagne – et n'hésitait pas à l'armer[90]. Mais cette bonne volonté ne suffit pas, on l'a dit, à empêcher la révolte d'une population épuisée par plusieurs mois de blocus. Il n'était plus question désormais de se borner à l'*istimalet* : les compagnons de Hayreddin souhaitaient massacrer toute la population[91]. Lui-même cependant opta pour une politique plus nuancée : il convoqua « dans leur totalité les grands et les petits de la ville et les fit tous venir sans exception à la mosquée sacrée », puis « s'y rendit en personne avec un certain nombre de serviteurs[92] » : autant dire que toute la population de la ville était prise au piège. Là,

> il se mêla à l'assemblée, s'assit au milieu d'eux, après quoi il releva la tête, ouvrit la bouche et commença à parler en ces termes : "Ô mes compagnons ! Qu'est-ce donc que vous avez fait là ? Quelle action est-ce que la vôtre ? Quelle affaire, celle que vous avez entreprise ? Que vous avons-nous donc fait, quel mauvais traitement, quelle méchanceté, pour que vous vous conduisiez si mal ? Car enfin, nous avons montré tant d'esprit de camaraderie à votre égard ; non seulement nous vous avons défendus et protégés contre l'ennemi, mais nous avons multiplié

---

[88] *Kadimü'z-zamandan bu yere padişah olan kimesnelerden her senede bu kadar altın kanunumuz vardur ve ol sultan kim Tunusı komış kaçmışdır el'ân ol verirdi ve sizler dahi verin andan ne buyurursanız eyle olsun den* (238 r°-v°).

[89] *El'ân sizler heb reaya üzerinde oturub anlara zulüm ve taaddi edersiz anların üzerinden kalkın ve varın sahralarda oturun andan sonra beratlarınız getürün görelim biz dahi ol beratlar mucibince heb yıllıklarınızı verelim* (238 v°).

[90] 76 v°-77 v°.

[91] 114 v°.

[92] *Nida etdürüb âmmeten şehrın büyügün ve küçügün cami-i şerife davet edüb ve kıgırdub eksiksiz getürdüb cami-i şerife toldurub andan kendi dahi bir mikdar hizmetkârlar bile sürüb varub* (115 v°).

> les bons procédés envers nombre d'entre vous. Est-ce ainsi que vous nous payez de retour en vous livrant à des actes si inconvenants ? N'eût-il pas convenu, dans les temps que nous vivons, que vous agissiez un peu en camarades à notre égard ? Vous voulez détruire tant de nos compagnons, nous expulser de la ville et nous condamner à errer sans toit. Qu'est-ce à dire ? Cette action inconvenante est-elle convenable ? À présent il m'est permis (*helal*) de vous exécuter tous. Ô [mes amis], que vais-je faire de vous[93] ?"

Les notables s'interposèrent, on ne retint que cent soixante meneurs dont seulement vingt furent exécutés. Ceux qui en réchappèrent, conclut le chroniqueur, furent éblouis par la générosité du maître. En vérité ils avaient dû trembler, car au milieu des discours complaisants, les Algérois lors de cette rafle avaient sans doute surtout entendu ces mots inquiétants : « À présent il m'est permis de vous exécuter tous. » Sous le masque inquiétant de Raminagrobis, c'est une politique de terreur que menait Hayreddin, plus politique et efficace qu'un massacre. Tout en jouant de la menace, il se posait en défenseur des citadins contre la violence aveugle de ses compagnons turcs. Pour autant, comme le rappellent les *Gazavat*, c'est désormais la méfiance qui régna. Pour qu'il pût revenir le bienvenu, il fallut apparemment que les Algérois subissent la tyrannie d'un autre maître pendant quelques années.

Une catégorie sociale particulièrement importante est celle des hommes de religion, oulémas et marabouts, que le chroniqueur a tendance à mélanger ou pour le moins à juxtaposer. Je ne reviendrai pas sur ce que j'ai déjà dit, en me fondant sur H. Touati, sur l'attitude naturellement conciliante avec le pouvoir des oulémas malékites de la région, ni sur leur collaboration avec les frères Barberousse qui les consultaient et leur demandaient des *fetva*. Un autre élément essentiel est le rôle d'intermédiaire des hommes de religion, phénomène bien connu et quasi institutionnel dans la région[94]. Ainsi, quand le marabout Afaf bin Abdallah intervint en faveur d'Abdallah de Tlemcen, Hayreddin ne pouvait pas refuser de lui prêter une oreille attentive[95]. En effet, c'était « un très saint homme et un homme de science. Ce marabout jouissait de beaucoup d'estime, de sympathie et de respect de la part de Son Excellence Hayreddin Bey, qui l'appréciait beaucoup en raison de sa pieuse droiture. S'il sollicitait quelque chose de Hayreddin Bey, un mot suffisait : il n'était pas nécessaire de le répéter[96]. » À plusieurs reprises, on voit ainsi les potentats indigènes passer par des marabouts pour proposer un arrangement ou un retour à la paix[97]. Et tout naturellement ce sont les hommes de religion qui viennent au devant de Hayreddin alors qu'il s'approche pour s'emparer de Tunis : « les *hatib*, les imams, les savants, les saints personnages et les marabouts se rassemblèrent tous, au nombre de 5 à 10 000, vinrent au devant de lui et à sa rencontre, lui manifestèrent des marques d'honneur et de respect et, multipliant les signes de soumission envers Son Excellence le fortuné padichah, ils se placèrent devant lui et le menèrent dans la ville[98]. »

---

[93] *Ol cemaatın içine karışub ortalarında oturub andan sonra baş kaldırub ve dehan küşade kılub söze ağaz edüb ayıtdı kim ya ashabuna bu etdiğiniz iş ne asıl işdir ve bu kıldığınız fi'l ne fi'ldür ve bu gördüğünüz maslahat dahi ne maslahatdır kim biz sizlere ne eyledık ve ne yaramaz kâr etdik ve ne kemlik eyledik kim sizler bu asıl bedkârlık edersiz kim biz sizlere bu kadar yoldaşlıklar edüb sizi heb bir nice âdadan kurıyub ve kurtardık ve bir niçenize dahi enva üzre nice nice eyülükler dahi eyledik anların ivazı bu mudur kim sizler bu asıl nâ-ma'kul vaz edersiz ve sizlere lâyık bu değil mi idi kim bu asıl vaktimizde bize bir nice yoldaşlıklar eyleye idiniz sizler bizim olanca yoldaşlarımızı kırub bizi şehirden çıkarub avare etmek dilersiz bunun aslı nedir ve bu kâr-ı nâ-seza lâyık mıdir uşda şimdiki halde sizlerin heb katli dahi bana helâl olmuşdur ya ben sizleri nice edeyin* (115 v°-116 r°).

[94] Cf. Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, t. II, pp. 338-339 ; Touati, *Entre Dieu et les hommes*, pp. 107 sq., 129 ; T. Shuval, *La ville d'Alger vers la fin du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris 1988), pp. 120-121.

[95] 93 v°-95 v°.

De son côté, Hayreddin lui aussi se sert des oulémas. Averti du complot qui se trame contre lui à Alger, il convoque « le mufti, le cadi, le *hatib*, les imams, les témoins, bref tous les principaux oulémas de la ville[99] » et il leur demande de se rendre auprès des comploteurs pour les ramener à la raison :

> Allez donc auprès d'eux. Les compagnons que voici vous accompagneront et vous montreront la maison. Mais ils ne doivent pas se faire voir en entrant avec vous, car cela provoquerait aussitôt des troubles. Vous irez vous ; vous leur direz qu'ils sont découverts et vous leur conseillerez de renoncer désormais à cette mauvaise action. Pour moi, je leur pardonne leur faute et les tiens quittes de leur crime. Sermonnez-les et dites-leur bien que c'est de la traîtrise et que ce genre d'entreprise est voué à l'échec, que tout ceci est du vent et ce qui vole au vent finit par disparaître ; demandez-leur quel est le fondement de cette révolte et qui en est à l'origine, et ramenez-les à de meilleurs sentiments[100].

On aura noté le fait que les soldats turcs ne devaient pas se montrer : les oulémas seuls pouvaient s'interposer, dans un moment aussi délicat, du fait même de leur position d'intermédiaires et de défenseurs du peuple. Ce rôle tout particulier de protecteur et de dispensateur d'asile apparaît un peu plus tard, après l'échec du soulèvement qui eut lieu malgré leur intervention : certains des insurgés, en effet « s'engouffrèrent dans les oratoires et cherchèrent la protection des marabouts, des oulémas, des saints personnages et des notables[101]. »

---

[96] *Gayetle aziz ve ehl-i ilm kimesne idi mezkûr murabıt Hayreddin Beg yanında hayli hürmeti ve rağbeti var idi salihligi cihetinden mezkûr murabıtı Hayreddin Beg Hazretleri gayetle severdi her ne kim Hayreddin Begden dilese bir sözi iki olmaz idi* (93 v°).

[97] 105 r°, 145 r°-v°, 203 r°.

[98] *Şehre giderken şehrin hatibleri ve imamları ve âlimleri ve azizleri ve murabıtları cümle cem olub beş on bin mikdarı kimesneler olub karşı gelüb ve istikbal edüb izzet ve ikr[am] eyleyüb devletlü padişah hazretlerine dahi enva-ı mütâbi'atlar (sic) gösterüb önüne düşüb alub şehre getürdiler* (235 r°).

[99] *Şehrin müftisin ve kadisin ve hatibin ve imamların ve şühudların ve bi'l-cümle ayan-ı ulemasın kığırdub cem edüb* (112 r°).

[100] *İmdi varın sizlere bu yoldaşlar hem yoldaş olsunlar ve hem ol evi gösteriversinler anlar amma içeri bile varub anlara görünmesinler kim el'ân fitneye bais olur ve hem sizler varub anlara eyle den kim uşda tuyuldunuz gelin şimden geri bu bed amelden feragat edin* (112 v°).

[101] *Kimileri dahi mescidlere düşüb ve murabıtlara ve âlimlere ve azizlere ve ekâbirlere düşüb* (114 r°).

Enfin les hommes de religion jouissent d'un droit d'adresse, d'admonestation du prince[102]. C'est ainsi que, s'entremettant en faveur d'Abdallah de Tlemcen, Afaf bin Abdallah déjà évoqué n'hésite pas à dire à Hayreddin très réticent : « Si tu as le pouvoir de le faire sortir d'entre les mécréants et que tu ne le fais pas, avec cette conséquence qu'il sera pour toujours mécréant, alors il est certain que tu en subiras les tristes suites et que tu en porteras aussi le péché[103]. » De même, dans les graves circonstances que je viens d'évoquer, quand le souverain les interroge sur une conspiration en cours, ils se permettent d'abord un rappel à l'équité (sinon même à la loi) et lui font savoir que la *siyaset* a ses limites : « Nous n'étions pas au courant de pareilles actions et vilenies. Des gens de science et des croyants ne se livrent pas à ce genre d'affaires inconvenantes. [Mais] qu'en est-il d'eux ? L'information fournie par une seule source peut être vraie comme fausse. Il faut d'abord enquêter à leur sujet[104]. »

Force est donc de constater que Hayreddin a besoin des oulémas et marabouts pour assurer son pouvoir local et que, de ce fait, loin de les contrôler, il leur reconnaît un rôle social et politique essentiel typique de la région. Ajoutons que cette collaboration n'est pas dépourvue d'ambiguïté, ni toujours assurée. À Constantine, une partie des oulémas semble être restée fidèle aux Hafsides[105]. À Alger, la manière dont Hayreddin utilise leurs services pour tenter d'étouffer la révolte dans l'œuf montre pour le moins une certaine méfiance : les principaux oulémas sont convoqués en pleine nuit dans sa résidence, ce qui ressemble à une arrestation à peine déguisée, et accueillis par des propos assez menaçants :

> Nobles personnes, il paraît que les cheikhs – c'est à dire les *kethüda* – des quartiers de la ville se sont réunis et veulent se lancer dans des actions déraisonnables et inconvenantes. Êtes-vous au courant ? Êtes-vous complices ? Ou bien est-ce qu'ils ont pris sur eux de se rebeller contre leurs chefs[106] ?

C'est donc par la terreur qu'il s'assure leur collaboration forcée, ce qui amène à voir sous un autre jour la question des soldats qui doivent, sans se faire voir, les mener jusqu'à la maison des conjurés. Nul doute que les oulémas auraient su la trouver seuls. C'est donc qu'on les surveille. Du reste, lors de la rafle de la grande mosquée qui suivit l'échec de la révolte, ils faisaient partie de la population rassemblée et menacée.

Quelles que soient les qualités politiques de Hayreddin, son pouvoir au sein de la population locale, aussi bien dans l'arrière-pays qu'en ville, peut donc paraître fragile. Pour le conforter, il avait besoin d'une force sûre et fidèle, autrement dit extérieure au pays. Ici encore, il n'était pas dans une situation différente des potentats locaux. La différence est que, étranger lui-même, c'est sur les siens qu'il comptait, sur ses camarades turcs, ses *yoldaş*. Encore fallait-il qu'ils fussent fidèles et en nombre suffisant. Cela impliquait le succès. Aussi les corsaires turcs de Djerba ne se pressèrent-ils pas pour répondre à ses appels à l'aide alors qu'il était assiégé à Alger : « c'était sans effet : ils ne venaient pas et ne voulaient pas venir[107]. » Par la suite, retiré à Djidjelli, il réussit à en attirer auprès de lui, mais on découvre au détour d'une phrase que ce ne fut pas sans mal : « Quand il les eut bien caressés et eut fait se dissiper leurs réticences, ils se rassemblèrent à nouveau tous autour de lui et le rejoignirent[108]. »

---

[102] Cf. Touati, *Entre Dieu et les hommes*, p. 108.

[103] *Ve eğer kim siz anın küffar içinden ihracına kadir olasın dahi ihrac etmeyesiz ol kadar nefs-i ebedî kâfir ola mukarrerdir kim siz vebale girürsiz ve günahkâr dahi olursuz* (95 r°).

[104] *Hâşa ve kellâ ki bizim bu asl-ı ef'al ü kabihadan haberimiz ola deyü bu asl-ı kâr-ı nâ-sezayı ehl-i ilimler ve mü'minler etmezler görün anların dahi hâlleri nedir ve haber-i vahidin sıdka ve kizbe ihtimali vardır hele anlar dahi evvel bir görilsin* (112 r°-v°).

[105] Cf. Touati, *Entre Dieu et les hommes*, p. 74.

[106] *Azizler bu şehrin mahallesinin şeyhleri yani kethüdaları cem'iyet edüb ba'zı nâ-ma'kul ve nâ-seza iş etmek dilerler imiş imdi sizlerin dahi bu işden haberi var mıdır ve ittifakı bile midır yohsa anlar başka başlarına baş mı çekerler* (112 r°).

Même avec ses plus proches camarades, il fallait composer. On a vu qu'ils souhaitaient répondre à la révolte des Algérois par une répression violente. Adepte d'une réponse plus subtile, Hayreddin n'obtint d'eux qu'un accord réticent : « Par Dieu, cette affaire est de votre ressort et n'est confiée qu'à vous. Mais vous être une personne noble et miséricordieuse. Si vous leur accordez l'*aman*, ce sont, eux, des malfaisants : à la fin ils pourraient bien attaquer nos maisons et provoquer un malheur[109]. » Mais quand il tenta ensuite de les convaincre d'épargner les 160 meneurs finalement arrêtés, ils éclatèrent :

> "Voilà ce que nous avions prévu : vous leur accordez miséricorde et pardon. Mais nous n'en sommes pas d'accord, car si maintenant, sans tenir compte de cette malfaisance qu'ils ont montrée ni montrer une constante prudence, vous relâchez ces gens-là, ils feront pire une autre fois. Quel sera notre sort alors ?" Ils insistaient fortement, tenant de tels propos, chacun poussant des clameurs et criant : "Nous ne consentons pas à pareille paix avec eux ! Nos cœurs n'en sont pas contents[110] !"

Cette fois les propos sont violents et le respect pour le chef est mis à mal. On en est venu à l'épreuve de force et Hayreddin ne peut plus se contenter de discours conciliateurs et rassurants, ni de faire appel à leur bon cœur en pleurant[111]. Il doit maintenant lâcher du lest : il désigne vingt meneurs, qu'il abandonne au bras vengeur de ses compagnons, tandis qu'il relâche les 140 autres individus retenus. Pour ses *yoldaş*, c'est un pis-aller dont ils se contentent, mais en grognant : « ils passèrent un peu leur colère en exécutant comme ils l'entendaient ces vingt rebelles qui leur avaient été remis, qui étaient apparus passibles de mort et dont il s'imposait selon la *şeriat* et le *kanun* de s'en débarrasser[112]. »

---

[107] *Çare olmazdı ve gelmezler idi ve gelmek dahi istemezler idi* (119 v°).

[108] *Ve anları nevaht edicek anların dahi hicabı ref' olub yine heb ana dirkenüb [sic pour dirlenüb?] yanına geldiler* (126 r°).

[109] *Bi'l-hak bu emir sizlerindir ve ancak sizlere müveffazdır amma siz bir kerim ve rahim kimesnesiz anlara yine aman veresiz anlar hod müfsidlerdir ve âkıbet bizim evimiz basdurub bir hasaret etdireler* (115 r°).

[110] *İmdi bizim size evvelden dediğimiz budur kim siz anlara rahm edüb aman verirsiz biz razı olmazız zira kim şimdi anlar işbu asıl müfsidlik eğer sen tınmayub ve ebedî mukayyed olmayub koyuverirsen anlar bir de dahi ziyade ederler ol vaktin bizim halimiz nice olur deyüb ziyade ikdam edüb ve her biri feryad edicek ve biz bunun bigi sulha bunlarınla kail değiliz ve kalbımız dahi hoş olmaz* (118 r°-v°).

[111] 118 r°.

Légalement, la mise à mort des rebelles était donc justifiée. Le débat entre Hayreddin et ses compagnons était donc politique : les choix du chef, qui paraissaient dangereux pour la survie du groupe, étaient contestés. Il n'avait d'autre choix que de composer. En l'occurrence, un compromis acceptable fut en effet trouvé, mais ce débat montre que la fidélité des compagnons avait elle aussi ses limites. Il y avait bien entendu le risque pour que certains tentassent leur chance et se lançassent dans une aventure individuelle, tel Kara Hasan qui avait entraîné avec lui les troupes qui lui avaient été confiées. La leçon ne fut pas oubliée puisque partant rejoindre Soliman en 1533 en laissant pour lieutenant à Alger son esclave Hasan, Hayreddin jugea prudent d'assurer un certain équilibre des pouvoirs, disant aux cheikhs et marabouts : « je vous confie la personne que je laisse à ma place. Ne manquez pas d'avoir l'œil sur lui[113] jusqu'à mon retour[114]. » Mais sans même qu'il soit question de trahison, les objectifs, donc la conduite de Hayreddin qui voulait être roi ne coïncidaient pas nécessairement avec ceux de ses compagnons d'aventure. Alors cette force même pouvait se déliter. Tel était précisément le cas quand il se résigna à livrer Alger à İbn el-Kazi :

> Quant à ses propres compagnons sur place, ils se partageaient en trois groupes. Les premiers lui étaient dévoués corps et âmes et prêts à mourir en suivant sa voie. Les deuxièmes, au vu des mauvais traitements et des difficultés qu'ils rencontraient [à Alger] et des séditions et désordres qui s'y produisaient tous les jours, avaient pris le pays en dégoût et en horreur et s'en étaient totalement détachés : s'il avait été en leur pouvoir d'en partir, ils l'auraient quitté sur l'heure et s'en seraient allés, mais ils y demeuraient par force. Enfin les troisièmes étaient devenus pères de famille, s'étaient mêlés à la population du pays et ne pouvaient pas quitter les leurs : par nécessité, ils n'avaient d'autre choix que de rester et de faire allégeance à quiconque viendrait s'imposer comme souverain de l'endroit ; ils n'avaient pas d'échappatoire[115].

---

[112] *Ve yoldaşlar dahi varub ol ellerine verilen yiğirmi nefer vacibü'l-katl olub ve münfek olmaları 'bi-hasbi'ş-şer ve'l-kanun lâzım olan tagileri diledikleri bigi heb katl edüb bir az öykelerin aldılar* (119 r°).

[113] *Gözlen* : faut-il comprendre qu'ils doivent le surveiller, ou le protéger ? Sans doute les deux à la fois…

[114] *İmdi bu yerime koduğum kimesnenin emanetin sizlere ısmarladım imdi gafil olman bu kimesneyi onat gözlen ben yine gelince* (213 r°).

[115] *Ve anda olan yoldaşlar dahi üç bölük olub taraf taraf oldılar bir bölügü kendiye bin can ü dilden mütabaat edüb yolunda ölmeğe mailler idiler ve bir bölügü dahi anda olan hakareti ve musibeti görüb ve her gün olan fitneyi ve aşubı görüb ol memleketden yigrenüb ve uşanub ve bi'l-cümle el çekmişler idiler ve eğer kim ellerinden gele idi ol saat bırakub giderler idiler amma zaruretden tururlar idi ve bir bölügü dahi ehl-i ıyal olub ve ol vilâyet halkı ile muhtelit olub anları koyub gitmeğe kadir olmayub bi'z-zaruri oturub her kim gelüb ol yerde hâkim olurlarsa anlara mütabaat etmekden gayri çareleri kalmayub mecalleri yok idi* (119 v°-120 r°). Murphey, « Seyyid Murad's prose biography », pp. 525-526, qui cite notamment ce même passage, a évoqué avant moi les difficultés rencontrées par Hayreddin dans ses relations avec les Turcs, que ce soient les corsaires ou ses propres compagnons.

* * *

Au total, dans la quinzaine d'années que couvre principalement l'étude qui précède, le pouvoir des Barberousse à Alger paraît bien fragile. La légitimité ottomane de Hayreddin, sur laquelle insiste naturellement l'auteur des *Gazavat*, tient surtout du discours de propagande à l'intention d'un public ottoman et ne semble guère avoir de prise sur les réalités locales. La justice et la bienveillance du souverain sont assurément essentielles, mais ne suffiraient pas par elles-mêmes : c'est le succès, le fait même de tenir le pouvoir qui légitimait le pouvoir du corsaire devenu roi.

Légitimité fragile, qu'un renversement de situation pouvait à tout moment mettre à mal.

Dans ces conditions, ce fut sans doute un choix judicieux que de se raccrocher à la puissance ottomane, quitte à perdre son indépendance si le sultan d'Istanbul décidait de s'approprier la conquête qu'on lui offrait. Mais, sur place, tout en s'imposant par la force, il fallait composer avec la réalité sociale du terrain, jouer les uns contre les autres, accepter des compromis, renoncer à être un autocrate tout puissant et même renoncer à imposer un modèle – à supposer du reste qu'il se soit agi là d'une volonté des Barberousse et non d'une présentation tendancieuse des faits par leur biographe. Assurément, l'arrivée des Barberousse au Maghreb fut à l'origine de changements politiques et sociaux importants. Mais pour autant, ce qui frappe à la lecture des *Gazavat*, c'est surtout la façon dont Hayreddin sut se couler dans les modèles locaux et, plus que son frère ou ses compagnons, chercha à s'acclimater. Il fallait aussi éviter de se diluer, de fonder une dynastie de petits potentats locaux pareils à ceux contre qui il s'était imposé. Pour cela, conserver une identité turque et ottomane était sans doute essentiel.

Plus essentiel encore, bien entendu, était le soutien divin, qui donne la victoire au héros auquel il a accordé un destin d'exception. Les *Gazavat* reviennent à maintes reprises sur ce thème, soit par l'affirmation de cette destinée manifeste, soit en montrant Hayreddin, qui était un grand rêveur, demander et obtenir des conseils de Dieu et du Prophète. Rien d'étonnant assurément dans un *Gazavatnâme*. Mais c'est l'occasion de rappeler à quel point l'établissement des Turcs ottomans au Maghreb fut d'abord une aventure individuelle, dont la réussite est due à la personnalité des frères Barberousse, à l'audace d'Oruç et à l'intelligence politique de Hayreddin.

ATPAZARÎ SEYYİD OSMAN FAZLI AS PORTRAYED IN *TEMĀMÜ'L-FEYZ*:

SUFI TEXT'S RELEVANCE TO POLITICS IN LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ISTANBUL

Eunjeong Yı[*]

Sufi texts comprise a genre of literature which is probably one of the least utilised sources in research on Ottoman political history. Certainly, their value is equivocal. On the one hand, we often underestimate the political influence of the Sufis who belonged to urban Sunni orders;[1]on the other, however, Sufi literature is so venerating of their *şeyh*s that it may easily exaggerate or distort historical facts, and its incorporation of mysteries and miracles makes it hard to take seriously. In addition, it may be saturated with Sufi concepts which are often deployed ironically or opaquely, and sometimes written in Arabic, making them difficult to decipher for researchers who are primarily accustomed to Ottoman Turkish (including the present author). It is no wonder, then, that such literature has largely remained the turf of Sufism experts who focus primarily on religious ideas, the development of orders, and their followings in wider society.

Temāmü'l-Feyz ('Perfect Overflow', hereafter *TF*), by İsmail Hakkı Bursevî (d. 1725), may be just the kind of valuable Sufi work that is commonly overlooked by the Ottoman historian interested in the politics of the seventeenth and eighteenth century.[2] This is a weighty Sufi treatise (consisting of more than 300 folios), written in Arabic and graced with ample Sufi philosophising and anecdotes of miracles; it covers such topics as the meaning of Sufi orders, Sufi training and manners, and the genealogy of the Celveti order to which its author belonged. Among other things, however, the details it provides of the life and deeds of Atpazarî Seyyid Osman Fazlı, İsmail Hakkı's *şeyh*, afford a rare insight into the intersection between Istanbul politics and Sufi religious authorities. Given the arguably huge religious clout some Sufis commanded through their 'miracles',[3] Sufis did have political leverage, and the account given in *TF* is uniquely valuable in helping us understand how such spiritual power could operate in the arena of politics. *TF* inadvertently sheds light on what common people – the 'people of the marketplace' – said and did, and gives a clue regarding the composition of the urban followers of the *zorba*s (rebellious soldiers). The account reveals many unexpected sides to Atpazarî Seyyid Osman Fazlı that belie our expectations of a Celveti Sufi whose *tarikat* was reputed to be a moderate and pliant urban order centred on Istanbul.

---

[*] Department of Asian History (and Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations), Seoul National University.

[1] Cf. A. Yaşar Ocak, 'Sufi Milieux and Political Authority in Turkish History: A General Overview (Thirteenth-Seventeenth centuries)', in P. L. Heck (ed.), *Sufism and Politics: The Power of Spirituality* (Princeton 2007), 168.

[2] For a critical edition and general overview of this book, two MA theses from Marmara University are very helpful. The dissertations divide the text of *Temāmü'l- Feyz* into two parts: R. Muslu, 'İsmail Hakkı Bursevi ve *Temāmü'l- Feyz* Adlı Eseri (Birinci Kısım)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Istanbul Marmara University, 1994 covers from the beginning to Chapter 13, and A. Namlı, 'İsmail Hakkı Bursevi ve *Temāmü'l-Feyz* Adlı Eseri (İkinci Kısım), unpublished M.A. thesis, Istanbul Marmara University, 1994, covers from Chapter 14 to Chapter 17.

İsmail Hakkı, the author of *TF*, was one of the most prolific authors of Ottoman Sufi literature, and some of his works circulated very widely.[4] Given that *TF* was composed by a disciple of Seyyid Osman, there is an issue of how impartially the *şeyh* is represented therein; addressing this, however, is beyond the scope of the present paper. What is clear, however, is that this account of the life and deeds of the *şeyh* was considered to be rather important, at least in some circles. İsmail Hakkı devotes many chapters (Chapters 8 to 14 out of 17 chapters in all)[5] to the details of Seyyid Osman's life. In his much shorter and simpler account of Seyyid Osman's life in *Silsilename-yi Celveti*, he indicates that there is a fuller account in *TF*,[6] nudging the interested reader in that direction. Given that there are at least ten manuscripts scattered across various libraries and that it was still being copied and read well into the second decade of the nineteenth century, it clearly enjoyed a high reputation for quite a long period.[7] Had it been written in Ottoman Turkish, it would have drawn more attention in the central Ottoman lands. Derin Terzioğlu's recent article on *ilm-i hal* literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mentions the emergence of a second-tier reading public whose knowledge of Arabic was negligible.[8] There were probably good reasons why İsmail Hakkı wrote about his revered but controversial *şeyh* in Arabic. As will be clear in the sections which follow, he contrasts Seyyid Osman's virtues with Köprülüzade Fazıl Mustafa's greed, which may well have been a minority opinion as the latter was hugely popular among men of the marketplace. Of the known manuscripts, I used the one kept at the Süleymaniye Library (Halet Efendi 244) for citation. Although not the oldest extant manuscript,[9] it is neatly handwritten and easy to read, and moreover states that it was copied from İsmail Hakkı's original, now lost, in H.1234/1819.[10]

---

[3] The most prominent example is the Celveti Sufi saint Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî (d. 1628), who had a reputation for numerous miracles. He was extremely successful in building connections with the cream of the elite and was often consulted by the Sultans. His lodge in Üsküdar was used by endangered statesmen as a safe haven. For details, see H. K. Yılmaz, *Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî ve Celvetiyye Tarikatı* (Istanbul, c. 1980).

[4] For general information about İsmail Hakkı, see *TDVİA*, s.v. 'İsmâil Hakkı Bursevî' (M. M. Yurtsever, Y. Ş. Yavuz and C. Karadaş); and M. A. Ayni, *Türk Azizleri*, Vol. I: *İsmail Hakkı: Bursalı ve Ruhü'l-Beyan Müellifi* (Istanbul 1944). For the reception of his books, see M. Kara, *Metinlerle Osmanlılarda Tasavvuf ve Tarikatlar* (Istanbul 2004), 231-232.

[5] The last chapter of *TF* is also devoted to the description of Hakkı's seven visits to his şeyh.

[6] *Silsilename-yi Celveti*, Süleymaniye Library, Şazeli Tekkesi Nos 63, fols 49a and 50a.

[7] Muslu, 'İsmail Hakkı (Birinci Kısım)', 32-34.

[8] D. Terzioğlu, 'Where İlm-i Hal Meets Catechism: Islamic Manuals of Religious Instruction in the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Confessionalization', *Past and Present*, 220 (2013) 84, 90, 96-97.

Seyyid Osman:[11] *his character and influence*

'Atpazarî' Seyyid Osman Fazlı (d. 1102/1691) is not an easily definable Sufi. He was born in Şumnu in today's Bulgaria to a *seyyid* family. He joined the Celveti order in Edirne at the age of 17, and later moved to Istanbul, finding a satisfactory *şeyh* in the person of Zakirzade Abdullah Efendi, and finally settling down to be his disciple. As Zakirzade did not teach 'exoteric knowledge' (*al-'ulūm al-ẓāhir*), he learnt it from a separate teacher on his own.[12] From early on, it was very clear that he did not just follow the trends of his order, but lived according to his own judgement. Towards the end of his life, multiple crises beset the Empire, and there he stood out as a preacher and communicator.[13]

Perhaps Seyyid Osman was a relative outsider and freewheeler within the moderate and quiet Celveti orbit.[14] Although he generally conformed to the Celveti principles of recognising the importance of sharia[15] and admiring the works and deeds of Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî,[16] one can observe from the text of *TF* that Seyyid Osman had a forceful personality and did not shy away from confrontation. He would suggest ideas, often unsolicited, and voice criticism of government policies when he deemed it necessary. According to *TF*, he was the first man of religion who agreed to the dethronement of Mehmed IV when secret plans for this began to be laid,[17] and according to Şeyhî he meddled in some unidentified important affairs at the enthronement of Sultan Süleyman II.[18] In sum, he was an interesting character who combined the legitimacy of a moderate and established Sufi order with a strong inclination towards public action. With his often confrontational behaviour, it was not uncommon for him to earn the hostility of certain ulema and statesmen.[19]

---

[9] The oldest is İstanbul Atatürk Kitaplığı, Osman Ergin No. 530, which was copied in 1703. Although Muslu says the oldest is No. 523, this seems to be a mistake.

[10] *TF* 324b, see the colophon at the bottom. Ramazan Muslu and Ali Namlı in their theses used a manuscript copied in 1703 and currently kept at Atatürk Kitaplığı as their base text.

[11] There is no good biography of him to date except for the encyclopedia entry in *TDVIA*, s.v. 'Atpazari Osman Fazlı' (S. Yıldız). Ayni, *Türk Azizleri*, 15-59 does give a rather detailed account of Seyyid Osman's life, but it is not very accurate or analytical.

[12] *TF* 90a-b, 105b.

[13] Madeline Zilfi, 'The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 45 (1986), 265, mentions him as one of the prominent preachers who vilified secular officials after the sudden decline of the Kadızadelis' influence after 1683.

[14] For the moderate and sober style of Celveti ceremonies, see Ö. T. İnançer, 'Osmanlı Tarihinde Sufilik Āyīn ve Erkânları', in A. Y. Ocak (ed.), *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf ve Sufiler* (Ankara 2005), 119, 125. The Celveti order's reputation for being moderate seems to have been borne out by the fact that most of its şeyhs stayed away from controversies and politics during the ascendancy of Vani Efendi. See D. Terzioğlu, 'Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyazi-i Misri', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1999, 254. *TF* almost never mentions Seyyid Osman's relations to Celveti Sufis other than his own şeyhs. Hakkı once complained to him about some Bursan Celvetis' practices such as whirling and dancing, to which the şeyh answered, "Men of eloquence and men of monotheism [*tawhid*] have become few" (*TF* 275b), which may indicate that he was dissatisfied with most other Celvetis.

[15] "As the skin of a fruit protects the seed, […] the exoteric clothes the esoteric. […] One who does not abide by Sharia cannot attain the true religion" (*TF* 117a).

[16] *TF* 129a, 244b, 274a, among others.

His actions seem to have stemmed from a self-confidence rooted in his mystical visions and 'miracles' (*keramet*). *TF* is sprinkled with stories of miracles worked by Seyyid Osman, as well as by Sufis of earlier times. The miracle stories are often of his visions, dreams, and prognostications of the future. One such anecdote, however, demonstrates his rather passionate character: once, in a mosque of a *hanekah* at the time of morning prayer, he was suddenly seized by ecstasy and took off his clothes to manifest the "freedom" (*tajarrud*)[20] of Abraham, which he had lately come to understand. The people around him locked him up with his hands and feet bound, thinking he was mad, but miraculously the chains were loosened, the locked door was opened, and he rejoined the prayer.[21] As shown in this anecdote, he seems to have been a man of action, eager to help people high and low with what he 'knew', and to get across his ideas. So outspoken was he that his unsolicited or blunt advice often fell on deaf ears. Kara Mustafa Pasha ignored his letter to the effect that the Ottomans should not start a war with the Habsburgs,[22] although Seyyid Osman's reputation was elevated for this presaging of a disaster which was to be remembered later as the failed siege of Vienna in 1683. His newly earned reputation got him invited to the Edirne residence of Mehmed IV, where the Sultan did not mend his pleasure-seeking lifestyle despite the şeyh's repeated harangues. His dangerous statements once had him banished to his home town in Bulgaria.[23]

At any rate, he established enough of a reputation as a Sufi *şeyh* with spiritual knowledge that he came to be consulted by some of the statesmen of the day. *TF* surely exaggerates the scale of his influence, as he is cast in a very reverent light by his disciple, but we may reasonably believe the claim that he had impressed the high-ranking ulema and

---

[17] *TF* 133b.

[18] Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, 'Vekayiü'l-Fudalâ', in A. Özcan (ed.), *Şakaik-ı Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri*, Vol. 4 (Istanbul 1989), 90.

[19] While he was still an unknown figure in Filibe and in Istanbul (*TF* 98a-100b), he was often criticised and scorned by ulema who did not like his manners and his passion for Ibn al-Arabi's works. One of the accusations was that he had too many wives and concubines, in defence of which *TF* 106b says that this was in the tradition of the ancient prophets.

[20] In *TDVİA*, s.v. 'Mücerred' (S. Uludağ), Uludağ explains that this is a state of being rid of any outer covering and having reached the essence, which is one of the cherished virtues within Sufi circles.

[21] *TF* 128b-129b.

[22] *TF* 148a.

[23] *TF* 149a.

Köprülü viziers, beginning with Fazıl Ahmed, and was able to mobilise their support to silence his enemies. It is unclear to what extent Mehmed Köprülü's son-in-law Siyavuş Pasha (d. 1688) or Köprülüzade Fazıl Mustafa Pasha (d. 1691) sought his advice.[24] Although he was not successful in getting his advice accepted, he at least maintained a certain standing which enabled him to raise his voice and address the ruling circle. Şeyhî's aforementioned comment that he meddled in important affairs at the enthronement of Sultan Süleyman II would seem to indicate that he was invited to the state ceremony. While the chronicle of Sarı Mehmed Pasha depicts him in an extremely venerating tone, other chronicles – such as Silahdar's – relate anecdotes about him more matter-of-factly.[25] The part of Mehmed Raşid's *Tarih-i Raşid* covering the late seventeenth century follows Sarı Mehmed's *Zübde-i Vekayiât* almost word for word, but its perception of the *şeyh* is much more reserved and conscious of conflicting views about him.[26] It is likely that views on the *şeyh* differed from person to person among the elite.

Aside from his reputation among the Istanbul elite, which was at best fluctuating, among his followers he apparently commanded the heartfelt veneration that is expressed in *TF*, and this was especially true after his superb role as a go-between with demonstrators and the palace during the turmoil of 1688. İsmail Hakkı's view is expressed in the following words in the course of the description of the event: "God has made him the centre of the order of the world" (*ja'alahu madār niẓām amr al-'ālam*).[27] He was also referred to as the *qutb* (the foremost Sufi saint), and was likened to the prophets and saints of olden times.[28]

The upheaval in Istanbul and Seyyid Osman's double-edged role

As I have discussed the 1688 uprising of Istanbul civilians elsewhere, with a focus on the artisans of Istanbul,[29] I here only give the briefest of sketches regarding the events, before turning to focus on the differences between the accounts given in other sources and that in *TF*. In the earlier article, which aimed to reconstruct the progression of the events, I did not differentiate between the sources that describe the role of the *şeyh* in different but complementary ways.

---

[24] Köprülüzade Fazıl Mustafa Pasha is supposed to have requested a dream interpretation from Seyyid Osman in which the latter foretold that he would become a Grand Vizier, although it would take some time. See *TF* 152b.

[25] See Sarı Mehmet Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, ed. A. Özcan (Ankara 1995), 308-310, 365, 386, where Sarı Mehmet Paşa calls him '*kutbü'l-ârifîn*'. In contrast, Silahdar Mehmed Ağa does not show much interest in his person, although he gives many details of what the *şeyh* did during the uprising of Istanbul artisans (*Silahdar Tarihi*, Vol. 2 [Istanbul 1928], 337 ff.).

[26] See Mehmed Raşid, *Tarih-i Raşid*, Vol. 2 (Istanbul 1865) 64, 123, 147.

[27] *TF* 133a.

[28] *TF* 106b.

[29] E. Yi, 'Artisans' Networks and Revolt in Late Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: An Examination of the Istanbul Artisans' Rebellion of 1688', in E. Gara *et al*. (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2011), 105-126.

The years following the failed siege of Vienna brought about a series of disasters. The Viziers who replaced the Köprülüs were inept and corrupt, and the series of military defeats continued while the financial squeeze intensified. As the battles wore on, the unpaid and angry soldiers on the northern front rose up in the autumn of 1687, driving the frightened Grand Vizier Süleyman Pasha in flight from the battlefield to Istanbul. Although Sultan Mehmed IV desperately tried to appease them with the execution of Süleyman Pasha, the rebels marched on Istanbul. They practically seized the city and established a '*zorba* regime', replacing the Sultan with his brother Prince Süleyman and having Siyavuş Pasha, who had returned from the front, appointed as Grand Vizier. The new Sultan and Viziers were unable to put an end to the unruly behaviour of the underpaid soldiers, who repeatedly pillaged the marketplace. As disorder in Istanbul continued over the course of about four months, there were attempts, masterminded by Köprülüzade Mustafa Pasha and half-heartedly supported by Siyavuş Pasha, to get rid of the *zorba* leaders.[30] The counter-attacks by the *zorba*s, however, were vicious: they murdered the newly appointed Janissary commander Harputlu Ali and completely destroyed the household of the rather conflicted Siyavuş Pasha, hacking the Vizier to pieces.

When it seemed that all hopes of crushing the *zorba*s were completely dashed and they resumed their pillaging, the people of various markets rose up against them. An *emir* (i.e., a *seyyid*, descendant of the Prophet Muhammad) who was a napkin-maker, held up a makeshift banner and cried, "those who are Muslims, come under the banner!" With a snowball effect, this led to a massed crowd demonstrating in the first court of Topkapı Palace. *TF* describes the scene vividly: "They were as if gathering in a blacksmith's house at the time of jokers and stories".[31] There had been no Grand Vizier since the brutal killing of Siyavuş, and many state dignitaries went into hiding in horror. In other words, the usual administrative chain of command between the palace and the 'city-people' (*şehirlü*) was not functioning. According to Silahdar, on encountering this multitude, which was demanding the Holy Banner of the Prophet Muhammad, the palace officials refused to deal directly with the crowd, telling them to bring forth a leader from among the *seyyid*s and ulema who could receive the banner. The crowd then managed to bring forward some influential people (*sahib-i kelâm*); Silahdar does not make it clear whether Seyyid Osman was one of those who were called forth by the crowd, and Sarı Mehmed Pasha just mentions that Seyyid Osman also came to the palace and was later allowed to go inside.[32] In the end, it was Seyyid Osman who received the banner and played the crucial role of go-between – which took great courage, as the crowd was in a murderous mood and had killed an official who was suspected of being on the side of the *zorba*s.[33] Seyyid Osman was successful in winning the trust of both the crowd and the palace, helping both sides reach a satisfactory agreement.

---

[30] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:318. Siyavuş Pasha was in a position where he could not exert himself in any direction, as he was caught between Köprülüzade Mustafa Pasha, who was the son of his patron Mehmed Köprülü, and the *zorba*s who had made him the Grand Vizier. Silahdar portrays the scion of the Köprülü family as an arrogant, proud, and pushy person who regarded Siyavuş merely as his father's freed slave.

[31] *TF* 136b.

[32] *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 227-280, nn. 61-62. Cairo manuscript 123b. "*Şehir halkı güruh güruh yürüyüp […] Saray-i Sultanî'ye doğru yürüdüler. […] Sultan Selim Camii vaizi Atbazarî Eşşeyh Osman Efendi ve ulemadan ba'zıları dahi Saray-i Sultanîye dahil olup Şeyh-i mezkûrun içerü duhulüne ruhsat virdiler*."

To this general storyline the *TF* adds a few revealing details, particularly from the unique viewpoint of the Sufi, which add depth to our understanding of the process. First of all, *TF* seems to locate Seyyid Osman's role in the civilian uprising within the context of his constant advice to the state dignitaries and the Sultan. In this light, his bold advice to Siyavuş Pasha before the civilian uprising is noteworthy. He had been trying to help Siyavuş ever since the latter first began secretly scheming to dethrone Mehmed IV.[34] It is interesting that Seyyid Osman relates that Siyavuş had played an important role in overthrowing Mehmed IV's government and portrays him in a sympathetic light. This is in contrast to other chronicles, where the leading role in the deposition of Mehmed IV is assigned to Köprülüzade Mustafa Pasha.[35] In *TF*, when Seyyid Osman suggested to the Grand Vizier that he should bring the military corps back to order, saying that the janissary, *sipahi*, *topçu*, and *cebeci* units were the four pillars of the sultanate, Siyavuş confided to Seyyid Osman that he did not have any real power with which to rein in the rebellious soldiers. Then the *şeyh* suggested that Siyavuş should go so far as to discipline Köprülüzade Mustafa, the son of his patron, as it was he who held the Grand Vizier's seal. When Siyavuş baulked at this suggestion, Seyyid Osman intuited that his end would not be a good one.[36]

We may also note that there were many other people along with the *zorba*s proper who participated in the raid on Siyavuş's residence. Interestingly enough, Sarı Mehmed Pasha mentions that there were probably Jews and Christians involved,[37] while *TF* clearly states that among the raiders there were both Muslims and non-Muslims,[38] reminding us of the complexity of the relations between those groups. While it is difficult to determine whether non-Muslims participated in the ensuing revolt of Istanbul civilians, which was so obviously framed by Islamic religious concepts and symbols such as the umma, *seyyid*s, and the Holy Banner, it seems significant that the participation of non-Muslims is mentioned in the raiding of the Grand Vizier's house. One may dismiss this as vague or simply as slander of non-Muslims; however, a Greek official of the Patriarchate later expressed sympathy for those who tried to return plundered goods in the belief that they would be forgiven (as had been announced), only to be executed.[39] Given that the Greek official knew the fears and expectations of the raiders, perhaps he was not all that distant from some of them, and thus it does not seem impossible that there were in fact non-Muslims among those who pillaged Siyavuş's residence.

---

[33] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:336.

[34] *TF* 133b.

[35] *TF* 133b-134b. *TF* probably discounts the importance of Köprülüzade's role out of personal hostility. See also *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:295-296, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 254.

[36] *TF* 135a.

[37] See *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 276. *Silahdar Tarihi* (2:332-334) does not mention any non-Muslims among the plunderers.

[38] *TF* 135b-136a.

[39] P. I. Zerlentes, 'Ioannou tou Karyofyllou Ephemerides [Ioannes Karyofylles' Journals]', *Deltion Istorikes kai Ethnologikes Etaireias tes Hellados*, 3 (1889), 312-313. The author was hos-

Regarding the *şeyh*'s participation in the civilian uprising, *TF* cites the *şeyh* as saying that "a strong motive for going to the Sultan's palace occurred to me", as if this was a divine inspiration.[40] It goes on to state that when he arrived at the palace gate, 'they' (the crowd) gave way in order to let him pass into the palace,[41] which makes it clear that he became involved in the uprising on the side of the demonstrators. If we permit ourselves to make guesses based on the wording of the sentence, it would seem possible that the *şeyh* voluntarily participated even before he was called, although it is likely that he was invited. At that time, the palace was trying to summon all those state dignitaries who were not in hiding, but it does not seem very likely that the palace would have called upon such a troublemaker as Seyyid Osman, who had meddled in important affairs upon the enthronement of the reigning Sultan just four months previously.[42] In any event, by stating that the *şeyh* went to the palace on his own initiative, urged by an inner motive, *TF* places him upon a rather neutral, elevated platform, rather than simply associating him with one side or the other.

While it seems clear from the general situation that he started out on the side of the crowd, the emphasis in *TF* is that he advocated for the position of the Sultan and the palace, and so succeeded in appeasing the angry and frustrated masses, thus defusing a great danger to the sultanate. This was also in stark contrast with the high-ranking ulema, who were either being held at the headquarters of the *zorba*s or participating in the meeting inside the palace, and none of whom had the courage to take the Holy Banner and appear in front of the huge crowd. If *TF* was indeed attempting to dilute the *şeyh*'s connection with the crowd, this seems to be consonant with Seyyid Osman's general orientation toward giving advice to Sultans and Viziers – that is to say, for him it may have been more important to guide the statesmen correctly, and indeed his views on the men of the marketplace as scattered throughout *TF* are not particularly positive. To him the civilian uprising in and of itself was not greatly meaningful, other than that it was an emergency he had to take care of personally, and probably a chance to get rid of the *zorba* regime.[43]

What he did during the uprising was apparently to provide the sole window of communication between the crowd and its demands (i.e., the raising of the Holy Banner, punishment of the *zorba*s, and appointment of just and pious persons to major positions of government) and the answers and decrees from inside the palace – on which point all the

---

tile to Siyavuş for personal reasons as well. I thank Marinos Sariyannis for informing me about two Greek sources that are sympathetic to the Janissaries and translating the relevant passages into English for me.

[40] *TF* 137a. *"Waqa'at lī dā'iah qawīyyah ..."* .

[41] *TF* 137a.

[42] See footnote 17.

[43] *TF* does not leave one with a sense that the *zorba* regime was much worse than the rule of Mehmed IV or the excessive taxes under Tekfurdağlı Mustafa Pasha.

sources agree.[44] He had the absolute trust of the crowd, which wanted to hear information regarding what was going on through him alone. They are supposed to have shouted: "O Seyyid, we bear witness that you are a truthful and trustworthy person and pious and perfect *şeyh*".[45] The fact that the crowd selected him as their mediator is remarkable in that they must have known about his reputation as a politically outspoken Sufi, and they stuck to his mediation throughout the course of the uprising.

He was also able to persuade the palace, albeit with some difficulty, to take out the Holy Banner.[46] Standing on top of the second gate of the Topkapı palace (Babü's-selâm or Orta Kapı), where the Holy Banner was raised, he reassured the crowds below that their wishes would be granted. His voice was very loud, and "there was nobody among the crowd who could not hear him".[47] He emphasised the importance of patience, just as "while God had the ability to create heaven and earth in just a blink of the eye, He took seven days".[48] These turns of phrase, also found in Silahdar's chronicle, make it sound as if he wanted the demonstrators to wait patiently and adopt a rather passive stance until solutions were handed down from above.[49] *TF*, however, perhaps allows us to discern what he really meant by these words. He gently persuaded the crowd not to disperse before the whole situation had ended. This would have been at his own initiative rather than the palace's, since although a general call-to-arms was put into force under the Holy Banner, the palace would have been reluctant to consider civilians without titles as legitimate political agents, and would likely have felt uncomfortable about there being so many of them right outside the palace gates. *TF* mentions that the crowd, for the most part, did not leave the palace for a day and half, despite the hardship of spending the night in the open and having to stand the extremely foul smell.[50] In Silahdar, this aspect of his leadership in making them keep their position is completely missing, leaving only his telling them that those who had things to take care of at home could go once the imminent danger was past.[51] In contrast, although *TF* tries to portray him as a neutral mediator and a wise advisor both to the Sultan and the crowd, it also – inadvertently – reveals that he was in fact steering the demonstration. Seen in this context, the *şeyh*'s statement to the palace recorded only in İsazade's chronicle that the uprising would not calm down without [the appointment of] a Grand Vizier, *şeyhülislam* and *kadi*s and Janissary agha sounds more forceful.[52] Therefore it is not at all surprising that Seyyid Osman figured prominently in the closing stages of the events (i.e., after the purge of many major *zorba* figures and appointment of 'reasonable people' to major government positions), standing out even more than the newly (re) appointed *şeyhülislam* Debbağzade Mehmed Efendi, and leading a prayer that moved the participants to tears.[53]

---

[44] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:337-345; *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 277-281; *TF* 137a-140a.

[45] *TF* 137b. "*Ayyuha as-sayyid al-jalil, nashhadu annaka rajul ḥaqq wa ṣidq wa shaykh ṣāliḥ kāmil*".

[46] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:338. As there was a threat from the *zorba*s, the banner was hoisted after some hesitation and only with the support from old *şeyh*s and ulema in the palace meeting.

[47] *TF* 137a.

[48] *TF* 137a-b.

[49] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:343. There Seyyid Osman is cited as having said this in response to Orta Imamı, who wanted to remove the *zorba* ringleaders quickly.

[50] *TF* 138b.

[51] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:344.

[52] Z. Yılmazer (ed.), *'Îsâ-zâde Târîhi* (Istanbul 1996) 209. The account of the uprising given here is extremely succinct and it is peculiar that we get this interesting statement from this chronicle.

The dialogue between Seyyid Osman and the demonstrators is even more interesting still. When he came out on the ramparts of the gate with a list of new appointees, he read the names aloud and asked the people assembled whether they were satisfied.[54] If we are to trust Silahdar – who records the crowd's answer simply as "Very reasonable. We accept it" (*Pek ma'kul. Kabul ittik.*) – we may well regard the question as a merely rhetorical one to which the crowd was supposed to assent. However, in *TF* the *şeyh* tells the crowd that the new appointments are just as they wanted, but as he enumerates the names of the appointees they declare they want someone else as Grand Vizier.

Ayni's biography of İsmail Hakkı says that the crowd wanted Seyyid Osman himself as the new Grand Vizier, but that he refused to be considered.[55] This argument is surprising as it would seem rather unlikely for the crowd to want a controversial Sufi *şeyh* as the Grand Vizier, however high his reputation may have become in the process of the revolt. This is very different from asking for redress of their grievances with the *zorba*s. In fact, it is easy to see that Ayni's claim is mistaken. Ayni probably misread the passage in Silahdar's chronicle where the crowd said they "wanted Seyyid Osman" while the palace was discussing whom to appoint as the Grand Vizier.[56] This just seems to be a coincidence of timing, and the crowd seems simply to have "wanted" to see Seyyid Osman, who had gone inside the palace, to come out and talk, but not as the new Grand Vizier.

The crowd did not actually want Seyyid Osman as their Grand Vizier; if Ayni were right, *TF* would have been at pains to emphasise it. Nevertheless, Ayni's view has an interesting resonance given that we come to learn that the crowd actually wanted Köprülüzade Mustafa Pasha instead of İsmail Pasha, upon whom the palace meeting had agreed.[57] *TF* relates that Mustafa Pasha was deemed to be pious, knowledgeable, just, and moderate among the people of Istanbul, even to the extent of being expected to be the second 'renewer' (*mujaddid*: the hero who supposedly renews religion and politics at the turn of a century) after the year 1000 of the Islamic calendar.[58] Given the timing of the uprising, coinciding with early spring of the year 1099 in the hijri calendar, there may well have been an atmosphere of expecting the *mujaddid*. Although he had enemies,[59] his reputation must nevertheless have been quite high among the elites, partly because of his father's and elder brother's effectiveness, and also his experience and education. It seems to have been especially high among the ulema, who later promoted him by consensus to become Grand Vizier.[60] That the demonstrators wanted him as the new Grand Vizier may be evidence of the circulation of opinions between the elites and the common people at this period.

---

[53] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:346; TF 140a.

[54] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:343, "*Razı olup kabul ider misiz*?"

[55] Ayni, *Türk Azizleri*, 45-46. He does not give any reference for this. Probably he did not read *TF* closely.

[56] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:340.

[57] *TF* 139b. The crowd's desire to have Köprülüzade Mustafa as the Grand Vizier is also corroborated in a Greek account. See 'Chronographos' [Chronicler], in K. N. Sathas (ed.), *Mesaionike Vivliotheke* [Medieval Library], Vol. 3 (Venice 1872), 38-39. I thank Marinos Sariyannis for bringing this source to my attention and translating the relevant passages into English.

[58] *TF* 152b-153a. See *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Mudjaddid' (E. van Donzel).

Upon this unexpected turn of events, Seyyid Osman worked wonders in saving face for the Sultan. Stating that he had promised not to go against the will of the Sultan, he reminded the crowd that they had agreed to this as well.[61] Reassuring them that their favourite's turn to serve as the Grand Vizier would come soon, he managed to gain their acquiescence. The dynamics of the situation, unexpectedly making the Istanbul artisans legitimate political actors engaged in meting out punishment to *zorba*s, must have left them sufficiently self-confident that they even dared make a counter-suggestion to the Sultan's decision. For the official chroniclers, this was probably too unpleasant or too 'unimportant' a detail to record.

At any rate, it was an undeniably great feat of compromise that served the interests both of the Sultan and the people of Istanbul. To İsmail Hakkı, it was literally one of the miracles worked by his *şeyh*.[62] He even thought that his *şeyh*, and not Mustafa Pasha, could be the *mujaddid*, saying, "He was father of destiny in both form and meaning, and was the means for life both to his Sultan and his people. What would the mystery of renewal at the beginning of a century mean other than this?"[63]

Aftermath: Exile and death as a troublemaker

Seyyid Osman's life after the riot was no less dramatic. Since his performance had undoubtedly and dramatically increased his clout, the government attempted to mobilise him in support of wartime policies of extremely heavy commandeering and conscription during the viziership of Tekfurdağlı Mustafa Pasha.[64] This was a time when key Balkan cities such as Belgrade had fallen to the Habsburgs and a major war had to be waged with a ruined state budget. This, however, provoked him to take a contrary direction.

---

[59] See Silahdar's unfavourable account in fn. 30 above. He was occasionally held in check by rival statesmen of the time. See *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Köprülü' (M. T. Gökbilgin and R. C. Repp).

[60] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:358. For a favourable account of Köprülüzade Mustafa Paşa's life and deeds, see A. Özcan (ed.), *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi (1099-1116/1688-1704)* (Ankara 2000), 28.

[61] *TF* 139b.

[62] *TF* 126a and 141a.

[63] *TF* 140b. "*Fa-kāna abā'l-qismah fi'ṣ-ṣūrah wa'l-ma'nā wa sababan li-ḥayah ahl al-'ālam min sulṭānihi wa ra'iyetihi. Fa-mā ma'nā sirri'l-tajdīd fi ra's'i'l-mi'ah gayr hādha?*"

[64] *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 308-310. See also *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:275-276 for the uproar caused by the heavy demands from the government. A good overview of the financial difficulties and desperate fiscal reforms of the period between 1683 and 1699 is given in C. Finkel, *Osman's Dream* (London 2005) 325-328.

It is unclear whether Seyyid Osman was unco-operative from the beginning. Sarı Mehmed Pasha relates that in addition to the many statesmen in charge of mobilisation, Seyyid Osman was charged with preaching that performing *gaza* (war against infidels) with all one's means (including one's life) was the duty of all, and he was later exiled for a short period to Boğaz Hisarı, at the same time as some high bureaucrats were also exiled, as a warning against under-achievement in the mobilisation of resources.[65] *TF*, on the other hand, gives us a rather different version of this story. Seyyid Osman apparently delivered a fiery sermon (*va'ẓ*) against these policies from the pulpit of the Sultan Selim Mosque (although he had previously retired from his role as preacher there). In principle, he agreed that jihad against the invasion on the northern front was needed and asked the congregation to join it if they could, promising that he himself would do so as well. However, he decried the imposition of excessive taxes, saying the "current confiscation of properties is an abominable novelty [*bid'ah qabīḥah*]".[66] He advised the congregation to give as much money as they pleased to the worthy men among the poor soldiers, rather than paying the exorbitant taxes.[67] In the same sermon he even revealed to the people that the Grand Vizier had secretly asked him to support the tax-collection drive – which was exactly the opposite of what the administrators, with Tekfurdağlı Mustafa at their head, had wanted from him. When he actually set out for war with his followers and arrived in Sofya, the Grand Vizier naturally blocked him from joining the army marching to Belgrade.[68]

With such non-conformist behaviour and high popularity, it would have been natural that statesmen in central government should consider him a dangerous figure. During the grand viziership of Köprülüzade Mustafa, who replaced Tekfurdağlı Mustafa, there is no indication that Seyyid Osman again raised his voice in criticism of government policies. *TF*'s view of the Grand Vizier's reform policies seems rather ambiguous. Köprülüzade Mustafa's repealing of the unpopular taxes was considered praiseworthy, but the abolition of the fixed prices (*narh*) which had long been regulating the market was seen in quite a negative light.[69] While undertaking such large-scale reform measures and having to organise a major military campaign against the Habsburgs,[70] it is understandable that the Grand Vizier decided to remove political enemies and potential troublemakers, among whom was numbered Seyyid Osman (probably not a very important one, but a nuisance all the same) from Istanbul to such remote places as the Famagusta fortress on Cyprus – where the *şeyh* ended up, dying about a year later.

---

[65] *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, 309.

[66] *TF* 150b. In his conversation with his disciples he also disapproved of the new taxes (*al-takālif al-sultaniyya*), as they were collected in "abominable ways and were given to unworthy people" (*TF* 279b).

[67] *TF* 150b.

[68] *TF* 151a-152a. He was furious about this and said he had severed relations of his heart with the Sultan and his helpers.

[69] *TF* 153a: "prices changed according to the opinion of sellers who overstepped the bounds".

[70] For details of his reforms and campaign efforts, see F. Yılmaz, 'The Life of Köprülüzade Fazıl Mustafa Pasha and His Reforms', *OA*, 20 (2000), 181-219.

TF gives many clues as to why Köprülüzade Mustafa banished the *şeyh*.[71] (1) It suggests that Köprülüzade Mustafa was envious of the *şeyh* because the latter was destined for "enjoining the good and forbidding the evil" regarding Sultans, viziers, and others; (2) The *şeyh* had suggested to Siyavuş Pasha that he discipline Köprülüzade if need be, which would have offended the latter; (3) Köprülüzade was very probably not happy that Seyyid Osman had diverted the people's demand to have him appointed as the Grand Vizier (*TF* views the pasha as a greedy character who held a personal grudge against the *şeyh*, although the *şeyh* had foretold more than once that Köprülüzade Mustafa would be the Grand Vizier in the end); (4) However, the most important reason must have been to stop him from meddling in state affairs, as he was too independent and fearless, and thus more troublesome than useful.[72] Although Hakkı says it is absurd that the edict of banishment should have stated that the *şeyh* was exiled because he was helping criminals (*li-kaunihi mu'inan ashqiya*),[73] this would have made sense for the government in that what he had been doing could be seen as instigating disobedience to state authority. Seyyid Osman "gladly" accepted his exile, giving a religious meaning to it, and repeatedly prayed for the Sultan, the Vizier, and the army of Islam as he left for Famagusta;[74] the lengthy passage describing how God punished the viziers who had sent him into exile, however, alludes to what his real feelings may have been.[75]

Seyyid Osman's connections with and perceptions of social groups

As we have seen, Seyyid Osman is not a figure who is easily classified. He was a politically active Sufi who belonged to the mostly quiet and moderate Celveti order; he studied the exoteric sciences while training as a Sufi; and having his *tekke* at Kul Camii in Atpazarı in the Fatih district,[76] he must have had daily contacts with artisans and soldiers, but at the same time his spiritual knowledge held a certain appeal for state dignitaries. Given this complexity, we should not presume anything about the characteristics of his connections with social groups in advance of an exhaustive study of what evidence there is.

Having begun my work on Seyyid Osman from the perspective of the artisans' uprising, I had imagined that he had well-established connections and networks among the artisans due to the location of his *tekke* and/or his being a famous preacher. This may very well have been so, although *TF* does not speak about such things. At least from the *şeyh*'s point of view (and also from İsmail Hakkı’s), the artisans and merchants, and the city-people (*şehirlü*) by extension, were neither important nor wise. They were of a rather inferior nature, usually uninterested in understanding the mystical dimensions of life and religion, and mostly in need of guidance as regards having their grievances redressed.[77] Thus they were the object of his guidance and help. *TF*’s low regard for the men of the marketplace is apparent when Hakkı describes the application of Köprülüzade Mustafa Pasha’s policy of repealing fixed prices.[78] He also says that “people of nature and desire” (i.e., those who find it difficult to understand the esoteric) are usually to be found among artisans, merchants, teachers, judges, etc.[79]

---

[71] *TF* 154a-155a.

[72] *TF* 155a. Köprülüzade says, "I know the *şeyh* is never afraid of anybody, not of the Sultan, not of the Vizier, nor anybody else. […] He may not be present, may not pray for them [i.e., oppressive/sinful viziers], or may not accompany them on campaigns".

[73] *TF* 166a.

[74] *TF* 164b

[75] Ibid.

[76] The mosque had a military connection as it was a place where 12 Janissary *çorbacı*s performed evening prayer before they set out for nightly duties. *TDVIA*, s.v. 'Atpazari Tekkesi' (M. B. Tanman).

It is also clear that the ulema comprised another outstanding social group not regarded highly in *TF*. İsmail Hakkı repeatedly emphasises the uselessness of the ulema in a time of crisis, saying that they could not provide the support that the weak Sultan needed, he having lived in confinement for 40 years.[80] İsmail Hakkı also claims that most ulema, upon becoming close to the Sultan and other dignitaries, boasted about this and thus “got farther away from God”.[81] They were considered to be ignorant of what to do in a crisis and engaged in a perpetual search for power and benefits. The author proudly states that his *şeyh* was incorruptible by worldly means,[82] while other men of religion often bragged about the gifts they had received. On the other hand, however, *TF* does not seem to manifest personal hostility toward any individual ulema, despite its tirades against them as a group.[83]

As for the military, *TF* cites a very interesting statement which Seyyid Osman made while advising the Grand Vizier Siyavuş Pasha. He posited (as we have seen) that the sultanate was like a tall structure built on four pillars, respectively the Janissaries, *sipahi*s, *topçu*s, and *cebeci*s, each of which had been established “by a Sufi saint”.[84] Now they were corrupt and order had to be restored to them, a task which he expected Siyavuş to take on. With the purge of unjust oppressors (i.e., *zorba*s) from among the four pillars, Siyavuş’s situation as well as that of the government would improve in a remarkable fashion.[85] Given that he considered these military corps as the most basic structures which sustained the state, it seems that Seyyid Osman did not inherently regard the military with low esteem. Silahdar's chronicle, which provides an excellent description of the internal affairs of the military, shows that the *şeyh* was actually very adept at dealing with the military officers who obeyed the general call to arms in the course of the civilian uprising. It was the *şeyh* who selected and recommended the new Janissary agha, Bosnavî Hasan Ağa, from among the palace personnel, and he also called the major Janissary officers from the crowd, asking them to come forward and meet their new ağa at one of the palace gates with the proper ceremony.[86] He does seem skilful and authoritative in commanding the officers, and this probably suggests some connection with the military. It is interesting that *TF* does not mention this important detail, but the oversight is not entirely inexplicable, as Hakkı himself was not present in Istanbul during the uprising.

---

[77] *TF* 265a.

[78] *TF* 153a.

[79] *TF* 94b. “*Fa al-ṭabīʻah wa’l-nafs maqām al-tafriqah al-kulliyyah….Erbābu’l- ṭabīʻah wa’l-nafs min at-tujjār wa’l-sannāʻ wa ahli’l-tadrīs wa’l-qaḍā’ wa gayrihim*.”

[80] *TF* 140b ff.

[81] *TF* 262a.

[82] Mehmed IV wanted to build him a *hanekah*, but he refused. *TF* 262a.

[83] Even Feyzullah Efendi, who had stayed with the *zorba*s, was described in a matter-of-fact way. Some of the highest ulema of the time, such as Esirî Mehmed who had been a Şeyhülislam, were shown in a favourable light, as they had recognised and helped Seyyid Osman. See *TF* 100b.

[84] *TF* 135a. “*Fa-qultu inna as-salṭanah ka-binā’in ʻaliyyin yuqīmuha arbaʻah arkān wa hiya ma yuqāl fi lisān al-āmma yeniçeri, sipahi, topçu, cebeci. Waḍaʻa hadhihi’l-arkān baʻżul’l-awliyā Allah bi ishārah min Allah*.”

[85] *TF* 135a.

The full gamut of Seyyid Osman's relations with state dignitaries is a matter for speculation. Although he himself preferred not to get any material gains from his patrons, he had a following among the officials and people of distinction (*havass*), who secured water sources for his house.[87] As time went on, the poor Sufi – who had to make his living by handwriting the Qur'an in the early days following his arrival in Istanbul[88] – came to have a piece of land in Atpazarı granted by the *nakibüleşraf* (head of the *seyyid*s), where he had a house built,[89] as well as a multi-storey (*fevkani*) house on the shores of the Bosporus.[90] It is unclear to what extent he was taken seriously by the powerful statesmen of the time, as he sometimes demanded difficult changes to the habits of the Sultan or harshly criticised government policies. It is not surprising he was exiled three times.

While the statesmen would have treated his advice or dream interpretations with some reservations, Seyyid Osman, of course, took his role very seriously. As his suggestions were mostly ignored, the *şeyh* expressed his frustration in remarks such as "I would migrate to India if I only had the means",[91] and "the time of the Mahdi [Messiah] is near and the Ottoman Sultans are dying out".[92] (He probably did not seriously mean what he said, since he still prayed for the Sultan, Vizier, and the army as he left for Famagusta. He remained a gadfly inside the Ottoman system in the end.[93]) Given their subversive potential, even if usually expressed in short sentences and only in passing, such ideas and statements could nonetheless be dangerous, and this may well have necessitated the composition of *TF* in Arabic and the limited circulation of its copies, at least initially. The very full description of the life and deeds of Seyyid Osman in *TF* is in stark contrast with the succinct biographical entry on him in the same author's *Silsilename-yi Celveti*, composed in Ottoman. The latter consists in only a few folios, wherein İsmail Hakkı rarely mentions any colorful detail. In the *Silsilename*, Hakkı only says that 'some viziers' harbouring rancor and envy toward him sent him into exile,[94] whereas in *TF* he talks freely about Köprülüzade Mustafa's reasons for hating Seyyid Osman and relates that although common people looked up to Köprülüzade as the *mujaddid*, it was Seyyid Osman who was closer to fulfilling that role. Hakkı may well have wanted to keep this manuscript from the central government, the Köprülü household, and others who might have welcomed a chance to report on what he set out in this book.

---

[86] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:343-344.

[87] *TF* 273b. In addition, the fact that he had many wives and concubines would seem to indicate that he was fairly well-off before he was finally exiled to Famagusta, Cyprus.

[88] *TF* 98a.

[89] *TF* 101b.

[90] *TF* 273b.

[91] *TF* 149a.

[92] *TF* 261a. "*Injarra al-kalām ila dhikr as-sultān wa ikhtilāl az-zamān bi'ẓ-ẓulūm wa'l-'udwān wa'l-fasād wa'l- ṭughyan wa qurb zamān al-mahdi wa inqirāḍ al-salāṭīn al-'uthmāniyyah*".

[93] In terms of political stance, it would be very interesting to compare him with the 'dissident Sufi' Niyazi Misrî after collecting more information from his works and not just Hakkı's, which is, of course, way beyond the scope of this article. For the details of Misrî's political thoughts and the contexts they were in, see Terzioğlu, 'Niyazi Misri' Chapter 4, 277-354.

Conclusion

When the palace was still hesitating over whether to give the Holy Banner to the civilian crowd in early spring 1688, the old *şeyh*s and ulema attending the palace meeting suggested that it should be granted, saying it "is a miracle [*keramet*] of the Prophet Muhammad, and would lead to their [i.e., the *zorba*s'] destruction".[95] In like manner, the idea of the miracles and mysteries of religion was widely shared by both the elite and the populace. In the context of such widespread faith in the supernatural, Sufis would naturally have had relevance to all kinds of worldly matters such as politics, in addition to the otherworldly. Ottoman urban Sufis' interests and involvement in politics has begun to draw scholarly attention only recently,[96] but it is bound to be a productive venue for research.

Temamü'l-Feyz, a Sufi treatise probably not intended to be shown to the Sultans and their Viziers, is therefore a rich trove of insight into the political and social history of Ottoman Istanbul. Here, the contemporary situation, and the words and deeds of Seyyid Osman, are described in a revealing and uninhibited manner – if only one can turn a blind eye to the aggrandising elements. Details of the personal grudge (and the sense of rivalry?) existing mutually between the *şeyh* and Köprülüzade Mustafa are perhaps not to be found in any other source. It is likely that facts about Köprülüzade were exaggerated and distorted by personal feelings, but we cannot dismiss the element of envy (*hased*) on the part of the pasha completely, given that the *şeyh* was respected to the utmost degree by Sarı Mehmed Pasha, the author of *Zübde-i Vekayiât*, and a leading statesman of the next generation.

TF is all the more valuable in that it reveals important facts about the common folk of early modern Ottoman Istanbul. Authors of chronicles composed in the tradition of official Ottoman history-writing may not have been interested in faithfully conveying what the Istanbul civilians wanted, and may have felt uncomfortable about reporting the details of the dialogue between the *şeyh* and the crowd where the latter was demanding something that was beyond its customary prerogative. The elite chroniclers' perspective could be sometimes more distant from the common city-people than that of a Greek chronicler.[97] Even if *TF* is not particularly positive about the artisans and merchants, and does have a certain elite-centred orientation, Seyyid Osman, and for that matter Hakkı as well, was familiar with the city-people and understood their opinions, as in the case of their promoting Köprülüzade and regarding him as the 'renewer'.The vivid description of the crowd gathering at the time of the uprising – 'as if gathering in a blacksmith's house at the time of jokers and stories' – could not have emerged without a good knowledge of the behaviour of the common city folk. Despite its gaps, biases, and predilections, *TF* provides us with a rare opportunity to observe with vivid clarity the intersections between Sufis, elites, and the common people of Ottoman Istanbul, just as its colourful protagonist connected the many parts of that society.

---

[94] *Silsilename-yi Celveti*, 48b.

[95] *Silahdar Tarihi*, 2:338. "*Keramet-i resulullâhdır, makhur olmalarına delâlet ider.*"

[96] See, for example, D. Terzioğlu, 'Sunna-Minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State: The Nasihatname of Hasan Addressed to Murad IV', *ArchOtt*, 27 (2010), 241-312, in addition to her above-mentioned Ph.D. dissertation.

---

[97] See footnote 57.

THE OTTOMANS, MILITARY MANPOWER AND POLITICAL BARGAINS 1750-1850

Virginia H. Aksan*

The focus of this paper will be a comparative look at the options open to the Ottoman dynasty concerning mobilising the battlefields in the transitional period 1750-1850. It asks what military manpower was available to the Sultans and what compromises they were forced to make in order to defend shrinking frontiers against their Austrian and Russian foes. Honing in on the question of labour supply, the paper reviews a range of approaches available to historians of empire concerning the evolution of military forces, and raises certain fundamental questions about the importance of ecology, mobility, and political will in an era convulsed by both external and internal pressures on the Ottoman system.

Of particular concern in the discussion that follows is the role of warrior societies and mobile horsemen in the Ottoman context. An icon of Turco-Mongol civilisations, the horse and the crossbow are generally acknowledged to have permanently altered the nature of global warfare. Light cavalrymen (e.g., *akıncı, sipahi, levent, deli, başıbozuk*), fundamental to the early success of the Ottomans, have been approached using many lenses, but not sufficiently as the major force not just in early provincial conquest settlement, but as constant participants in the evolution and perpetuation of the Ottoman dynasty.

The underlying assumption here is that all imperial politics require bargaining for fighting men.[1] In the reflections that follow, the focus is on the era of dissolution just prior to the age of mechanised warfare, between the Seven Years War (1756-1763) and the Crimean War (1853-1856), when cavalry regiments world-wide generally evolved from irregulars to hussar-style ethnic formations in post-Napoleonic armies. The primary question is why Mahmud II (1808-1839) and his successors made different choices from

---

* Professor Emeritus, McMaster University.

[1] V. H. Aksan, 'Mobilization of Warrior Populations in the Ottoman Context, 1750-1850', in E. J. Zürcher (ed.) *Fighting for a Living,* International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam 2013), 323-343; V. Aksan, 'The Ottoman Absence from the Battlefields of the Seven Years War', in P. J. Speelman and M. J. Danley (eds), *Seven Years War as a Global Conflict* (Leiden 2013), 165-190.

their imperial foes concerning cavalrymen in the post-Janissary age. A related question is how the ecology and resources of the Ottoman Empire in particular drove the processes of assembling and distributing provisions for warfare and security. And, finally, in what sense were the Ottomans and their subjects drawn into the global revolutions around liberation and constitutionalism that began in the 1780s as a result of the political bargains required to get men to the battlefield.

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper consider the Ottomans central to their arguments about political conversations, "as an empire that managed to blend Turkic, Byzantine, Arab, Mongol, and Persian traditions into durable, flexible and transforming power". Empires, rulers and their subjects are envisioned as negotiating and contesting power, with particular repertoires of politics and cultures, which always include degrees of incorporation and differentiation of peoples across highly disparate territories. As Karen Barkey asserts, imperial power assumes the "exercise of political control through hierarchical and quasi-monopolistic relations over groups ethnically different from itself. These relations are, however, regularly subject to negotiations over the degree of autonomy of intermediaries in return for military and fiscal compliance".[2] In this context, the Ottoman political economy can be envisioned as an organic process resulting from a particular set of conditions requiring a re-allocation of resources. In other words, the dynasty engaged in redistributing wealth among the *arrivistes*, observable in the struggle to establish hegemonic power over Anatolia and the Balkans in the early as well as in the crises of the later eras. Although armaments, artillery, and handguns are means of negotiating political fortunes, or investing in state enterprises, stipendiary privileges, accession gifts, uniforms, devalued coinage, and competition over tax revenues and tax relief, and mobilising men and supplies for the battlefront are all prominent features of the Ottoman context around the business of war. Rebellions and other forms of violence that emerged in response to the on-going process can be viewed as 'political conversations', whether such outbursts of violence against monarchs and/or despots alike result from exhaustion because of religious or dynastic wars, over-extension of pre-modern agrarian empires in response to impossible demands on manpower and peasant production, or, more recognisably, as challenges about the nature and obligations of absolutism, good government, and moral authority. Alfred Rieber locates these conversations in the Eurasian shatterzones, contending that "by the early twentieth century, the borderlands had evolved into geocultural sites where proponents of incompatible ideologies and political movements – ethnic nationalism, agrarian populism, and industrial socialism – interacted, producing an explosive combination and threatening imperial rule with paralysis, rebellion, and foreign war".[3]

---

[2] J. Burbank and F. Cooper, *Empires in World History* (Princeton 2010), 18. K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge 2008), 9.

[3] A. Rieber, *The Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands from the Rise of Early Modern Empires to the End of the First World War* (Cambridge 2014), 530-531. His discussion embraces the Baltic powers of Sweden, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as well as the Mongol, Habsburg, Ottoman, Iranian (Safavid and Qajar), and Chinese (Qing) Empires in his Eurasia.

There are three phases of Ottoman *military* change that can be seen to involve conversations. 1) The foundational phase, which encompasses the era and domination of the *sipahi* cavalry (*timarlı,* timariot) and the creation of the Sultan's Janissaries (1400-1650). 2) The middle phase, when the *sipahi*s and the tax-farming systems were in increasing disarray, and the Janissary organisation, grown to an insupportable and dysfunctional size, was supplemented by volunteer militias, mercenaries, or irregulars (1650-1800); 3) the era of radical transition, 1800 onwards, when both *sipahi* and Janissary systems were replaced by conscription (introduced in 1820s). Military change was latterly most often prompted by the increasingly urgent need to mobilise men to defend the northern frontiers with Russia, boundaries characterised by treacherous rivers, disease-ridden marches, difficult mountain ranges, and vast steppes and plains. These territories were inhabited by pastoralists and mountain warrior societies, some of the most mobile peoples of Europe, if not Eurasia.

For the sake of argument, each of the three periods can be discussed under the following rubrics: 'networking and political households' for the 1440-1650 period; 'manpower and mobilisation' for the middle period of the Empire, and 'mobility, warrior societies and violence' for the final century, recognising their applicability at any historical moment in any given locale.

Networking and political households 1400-1650

The Ottomans were part of and heirs to possession of one of the most mobile parts of the world.[4] Their organisational genius, studied or not, was a particular ability to create a series of what look like spider-web organisations comprised of an organic family, slaves, cousins, clients, merchants, and intermediaries when necessary (translators, factors, representatives in Istanbul, etc.) which characterised their original thrust into Anatolia, present-day Turkey. Success was by no means certain and hard won, so the charisma of the first ten Sultans is widely acknowledged, and their proximity to collapsing Byzantine territories paramount. Religious authority was quickly attached to the household of Osman, with Muslim and Turkic cultures dominant, but the young dynasty embraced all comers. An extraordinary array of ethnicities and religious persuasions joined the enterprise. The question of their ferocity as Muslim jihadists – *gazi*s – has become a bit shopworn among historians as the road the success, but to settled peasants, Christian or otherwise, they would have been terrifying and mesmerising.[5] The challenge of the Ottomans at the edges of an emerging European consciousness must be acknowledged as having had a large influence on the development of European absolutism itself.

Ottoman patrimony was based on the notion of a political household, which was built on a widespread slave system, the largest household being that of the Sultan himself, whose beneficence began with his 'loyal sons', the Janissaries, and extended to the lowliest peasant.[6] To be styled a *kul* (slave) was to be a member of the Ottoman elite, obviously a striking distinction between the aristocratic households of Europe and those of the Turkish dynasty. All wealth and power derived from the Sultan himself. Naturally, proximity to the Ottoman dynasty in the House (or Gate) of Felicity, *Darü's-saadet*, as Istanbul was known, raised the odds for old and new participants in the rivalry for the Sultan's favour, so a system of representation of powerful individuals and their households in the capital emerged over time. So too, the consolidation of interest groups is evident, such as of the Sultan's private household, headed up by the Black Eunuch, who had privileged access to the harem; the bureaucracy, which broke completely free of the *kul* system only in the nineteenth century, beginning as a chancery and evolving into a separate administration, sometimes – often – in conflict with the Sultan, and instrumental in the reforms of the nineteenth century. Finally, there was the religious class, under the Chief Religious Officer, which regulated the Ottoman adoption and perpetuation of Hanafi sharia law.

---

[4] R. Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants and Refugees* (Seattle 2009).

[5] J. Grehan has recently returned to the question of religious syncretism as one way in which locals may also have adapted to their new overlords, in *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Oxford 2014).

The Ottomans demanded loyalty and submission, but also understood state service as contractual; sharia law in this context is largely about contracts. Sharia law would have been at first supplemented and then perhaps superseded in some regards by customary and sultanic law codes, although the evidence for that is still lacking.[7] The success of the first Sultans was based on a patrimonial style, nominally for all subjects, which extended to two military systems: the *sipahi*s, as noted, cavalrymen, and their retinues, who were free men assigned a fief (*timar*) as a reward for service on imperial campaigns, and the Janissaries, who were gathered from newly conquered, largely non-Muslim, territories through a slave system known as *devşirme*. The young men were forcibly converted to Islam and highly trained. Most ended up in the Sultan's infantry, but the best of them became the Sultan's administrators and advisors.[8] Slavery in this context has layers of nuance. Status was based on an acceptance of a contract between the Sultan, his court, and his subjects, the *reaya*, or his 'flock'. By the Süleymanic Age (1520-1566), the benefits for those who styled themselves Ottomans, and found themselves in the sultanic circles, were enormous.

Tribal and warrior peoples, if not drawn into the charmed military circle in either of these ways, that is, as fief-based cavalry, or palace-based infantry, were given special roles, such as caravan or mountain pass protection They were left as self-governing clients in a system known as *ocaklık sancak,* which may be a uniquely Ottoman way of dealing with remote, naturally insubordinate, marginal or deeply rooted confederative warrior cultures.[9] The inability or failure to impose sedentarisation on these tribal structures posed significant problems during the great transformation to a modern military system after 1800.[10]

---

[6] 'Political household' has come into use through the work of J. Hathaway and P. Brummett, among others, and suggests that the very construction of an extended nuclear family was influenced by the constant need to engage/negotiate with the Sultan in Istanbul. The best summary of the concept is to be found in P. Brummett, 'Placing the Ottomans in the Mediterranean World: The Question of Notables and Households', in D. Quataert and B. Tezcan (eds), *Beyond Dominant Paradigms in Ottoman and Middle Eastern/North African Studies: a Tribute to Rifa'at Abou El Haj* (Istanbul 2010), 77-96.

[7] The chief argument of the somewhat controversial work by B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge 2010), is his assertion that the crisis of the dynasty in the seventeenth century is precisely in the codification of sharia law as a limitation to potential sultanic abuse.

[8] See V. H. Aksan, 'War and Peace' in S. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey. Vol. III: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839* (Cambridge 2006), 81-117.

The real networking strengths of the Ottoman system lay in conversations about provisioning the military. At least until 1700, very large armies moved fairly effectively over vast distances, a system which engaged the entire population in the business/enterprise of war. Imagine an army that marched, at its best, some 13 kilometres a day and was followed by an enormous supply train that stretched a day's march into the distance. In premodern terms, it was a huge and lucrative enterprise, and a means of demonstrating and distributing the Sultan's patrimony, until it became an intolerable burden to the countryside. The question historians are still asking is when the system became an intolerable burden on society, and why? In revisiting that question, it is possible to see many political conversations between Sultan and subject in play by 1650.

Manpower and Mobilisation 1650-1800

By 1700, tax-farming was the primary Ottoman instrument for raising revenue, first benefiting the imperial elites in the capital, but evolving to empower local families, Janissary or otherwise, and their Istanbul proxies, as the system expanded across the Empire in life-time (*malikane*) contracts. One of the consequences of this competition for state resources was the evolution of a Janissary force which became better known for rebellion and thuggery than military valour. Members of the corps, no longer just in Istanbul, but distributed in large numbers across Ottoman territories in major fortress towns, invested their insufficient wages in tax-farming, protection, and money-lending enterprises, creating their own military networks. Simultaneously, the timar system, deeply eroded, could no longer support the *sipahi*s. *Sipahi* holdings themselves were swept up in the conversions to the *malikane* system, just as likely by Janissaries, or state elites. Some characterise this as the privatisation of public property, although clearly the struggle over state versus individual ownership was an old one in the Ottoman context. Perhaps another way to think about it is to see the emergence of a transformed political economy of the Empire, pitting global market forces, the Sultan and his entourage, and largely agricultural producers in a battle over shrinking resources.

---

[9] 'Warrior' societies embrace both the 'mercenary' aspect of soldiering, as in the professional soldier hired occasionally by armies, as well as the 'martial,' a term applied by the British to the 'natural' propensity of particular colonial peoples in the nineteenth century. As with the term 'tribal', it conveys a communal organization based on consanguinity, clientage and self-defence.

[10] In Erzurum from 1682-1702, for example, nine of the 17 provinces were *ocaklık,* granting hereditary status to multiple generations of local families. M. Nizri, 'Defining Village Boundaries at the Time of the Introduction of the *Malikane* System: The Struggle of the Ottoman State for Reaffirming Ownership of the Land' in K. F. Schull, M. S. Saraçoğlu and R. Zens (eds), *Law and Legality in the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey* (Bloomington 2016), 58, explores the difficulties surrounding property and taxation, highlighting the variability of property arrangements which might include *ocaklık*s, *miri,* or *vakf* (waqf) arrangements. In true Ottoman fashion, no system seems ever to have lapsed, or to have been unilaterally replaced.

Maintaining a household army, large or small, was typical of pre-modern rural organisations in order to protect one's holdings and family. Such Ottoman networks that had historically emerged were strengthened themselves by the redistributive system of this period, and the beneficiaries were reluctant to surrender whatever support (tax farms, extraordinary campaign taxes, rights to provisioning) that came with military 'contracts'. Provincial families and their households, who already understood and participated in this style of life to a degree, experienced its dramatic increase with shifting populations, such as the Janissary retreat from Hungary after 1700. It is noteworthy that all Habsburg-Ottoman treaties after 1699 include a clause about the necessity to control frontier-transgressing soldiers. But, by contrast with both Austrians and Russians, the Ottomans made no effort to settle or re-deploy their demobilised soldiers. Worsening economic conditions of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Ottoman realms, coupled with contracting borders, increased the creation of localised sources of power, which utilised both indigenous warrior populations and newly minted demobilised mercenaries for protection and when called upon to contribute to major campaigns.[11]

Commonly referred to as *ayans*, a term generally translated as notables, magnates, or warlords, these power brokers, called 'partners of the Empire' by Ali Yaycıoğlu, can be described as "entrepreneurial contractors with large portfolios in the business of governance who did deals through bids, negotiations, bargains, and offers in a volatile environment".[12] As part of their expanding portfolios, they created or enlarged their own armies, enlisting volunteers from among the Empire's most difficult populations to control. Such militias are ubiquitous after 1750 and have been hard to characterise, because they were guns-for-hire, sometimes by the Sultan himself (*levent*s, *sekban*s), sometimes by enemies of the royal household, such as Ali Pasha of Ioannina, and frequently by Ottoman enemies such as Russia and Austria. They include Albanians, Kurds, Circassians, Abkhazians, Georgians, Bosnians, Bedouin/tribal Arabs, and Tatars, all ethnic groups with simultaneous unruly, autonomous warrior traditions and with a history of service to the dynasty. The manpower pool available to the dynasty in this period had evolved from a centrally controlled to a confederative military system just as Europe itself moved to centralised, conscription-based armies. This was most evident on the Russo-Ottoman battlefields of 1768-1774, when both the assembled forces and the provisioning organisations collapsed.[13] In sum, Ottoman need for manpower not only facilitated the emergence of powerful provincial notables but also sanctioned the flourishing of a style of life for the individual warrior/soldier that persisted into the twentieth century. As anthropologist Michael Meeker has described it, "State officials no longer enjoyed a monopoly of military force as they once had during the classical Ottoman period. They were everywhere confronted with local elites in the coastal districts who were able to mobilize armed followings. [T]he two 'pieces' of sovereign power in the imperial system [were] the mechanism of bureaucratic centralism and the tactic of disciplinary association".[14] Meeker's informants in the region of Trabzon in the 1960s could recall without difficulty 22 aghas and agha families of the nineteenth century, the locally entwined elites, or 'little despots' of foreign observers. These were not just the major notables of the era, but an entire system of military entrepreneurs deeply entrenched by the end of the eighteenth century.[15]

---

[11] V. Aksan, 'Mobilization of Warrior Populations in the Ottoman Context 1750-1850', in E. J. Zürcher (ed.), *Fighting for a Living* (Amsterdam 2013), 323-343.

[12] A. Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford 2016), 99.

[13] Ahmed Resmî, *A Summary of Admonitions: a Chronicle of the 1768-1774 Russian-Ottoman*

Mobility, Warrior Societies, and Violence 1800-1850

If one accepts that mobility in the Eurasian/Mediterranean context was endemic, a particular style unique to its marginal and inaccessible territories, then what is it that is different about Ottoman governance concerning warrior populations in the first half of the nineteenth century? One answer is that the lack of systemic control over the surviving Ottoman territories, combined with the reverse migrations from Eurasian lands, which accelerated after the Crimean War, reproduced and perpetuated a particularly strong independent paramilitary culture based on that very mobility, where the strong man of arms (on horseback) continued to serve as the provincial model of security. This is the *başıbozuk* (master-less, or headless, as in 'out of one's head') phenomenon, which presents itself in kinship networks, or clientage warrior bands, or the ubiquitous 'gun-for-hire'.

The Ottoman understanding and treatment of such indigenous confederations distinguishes it from Russian and/or British imperial/colonial practices in the mid-nineteenth century. Rather than incorporating ethnic formations into an existing regimental system,

---

War, trans. E. Menchinger (Istanbul 2011); V. H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700-1870: An Empire Besieged* (Harlow 2007), Chapter 4.

[14] M. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire* (Berkeley 2002), 185. For a very partial list of recent work on the notables, see V. H. Aksan, 'Canikli Ali Paşa (d. 1785): A Provincial Portrait in Loyalty and Disloyalty', in E. Gara, M. E. Kabadayı and C. Neumann (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011), 211-224. For other portraits, see *Living Empire: Ottoman Identities in Transition 1700-1850*, V. H. Aksan and V. Şimşek (eds), *OA*, 44 (2014), with articles on the *ayan*s by T. Esmer, C. Wilkins, and F. Sel Turhan; R. Zens, 'Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807', *IJTS*, 8 (2002), 89-105. See also M. S. Saraçoğlu, 'Resilient Notables: Looking at the Transformation of the Ottoman Empire from the Local Level' in C. Lipp and M. Romaniello (eds), *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham 2011), 257-277, for an example from the nineteenth century. Yaycıoğlu's *Partners of the Empire*, Chapter 2, includes "geographies of notables" Ali Pasha of Iannina, the Çapanoğlus, Tirsinikli Ismail of Ruse, etc.

[15] Meeker, *A Nation*, 203; K. Şakul, 'The Evolution of Ottoman Military Logistical Systems in the Later Eighteenth Century: The Rise of a New Class of Military Entrepreneur', in J. Fynn-Paul (ed), *War, Entrepreneurs and the State in the Mediterranean 1300-1800* (Leiden 2014), 307-327.

as was the case in Russia with the Cossacks by the end of the eighteenth century, or promoting a romantic view of the martial races as pivotal to the maintenance of empire, more typically British in the case of mid-nineteenth century India, with Scots, Rajputs, Sikhs, and Ghirkas being the examples, Sultans Selim III (1789-1807) and Mahmud II (1808-1839), especially the latter, adopted wholesale a French revolutionary army model, 'the nation under arms', based on mass conscription, that left little space for the collaborative forms of defence (and the colourful ethnic diversity they embodied) which persisted in the Ottoman hinterlands.[16] Instead, a new voice emerged from the conversations about the end of the Janissaries, the power of the notables, and emerging Muslim views on the legitimacy of the Ottomans: the voice of the imagined ethno-religious nation, which adopted the warriors as their national heroes.[17] The conversations around conscription, citizenship, and constitutionality that unfolded in Istanbul in this period are uniquely Ottoman, but must have been deeply infiltrated with the extraordinary excitement of liberation, national sovereignty, individual rights, and Romanticism that filled the air.

When Sultan Selim III inaugurated his ambitious reform project in the 1790s, Europeans were already aware of the inability of the dynasty to secure its borders and protect its peoples. The long evolution of the redistribution of the state revenues to the margins, and the resilience and resistance of autonomous warrior communities had left the Ottoman centre short of cash, administrators, and military manpower. The two decades preceding Napoleon's attack on Egypt were characterised by extended Ottoman warfare with Russia and Austria, disturbing the countryside and filling the city of Istanbul with strange bedfellows and disturbing currents of resistance. Between 1760 and 1800, prices tripled, deficit budgets became the norm, and the state occasionally resorted to forced loans from its officers and country-wide gentry, or confiscation of their estates, in order to continue to finance war.

What is noteworthy here is that in all the engagements between the 1790s and the 1830s, both Sultans had to rely on the countryside irregulars and the general population as well to survive, as the Janissaries had virtually collapsed. As Selim III was addressing the intractable problem of manpower and military leadership, which simultaneously attacked the entire spidery contractual system and its beneficiaries, the new Franco-British rivalry, brought first Napoleon Bonaparte, and then the navies of Britain and Russia into the eastern Mediterranean. Bonaparte's invasion in 1799 inaugurated the age of international intervention in the Middle East, derailed the nascent Ottoman reform project, and propelled a propaganda war in an increasingly literate world. As they prepared to confront Bonaparte on the Nile, Selim III and his advisors were made acutely aware of the dire state of the imperial defences on land and at sea. Selim III's Francophilia and sense of isolation forced him to engage for the first time in international politics in the cities of Europe rather than just Istanbul.[18]

---

[16] The literature is increasingly vast on pre-modern global imperial behaviour, but less evident in the Ottoman context, where the Tanzimat historiography has had a particularly long life. H. Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester 2014), uses the Indian Mutiny as her starting-point. One can shift her focus to the Black Sea and the Crimean War as the place where Cossacks, Zouaves, Scots, Hussars, and *Başıbozuk*s converged, 'ethnic nations' of a military sort

[17] Yaycıoğlu, *Partners,* 244.

Moreover, Selim III ordered experimentation with the tools of the 'modern state': population control through registration of migrant and vagrant populations and the use of guarantors (*kefil*) (revival of an old practice in a new guise); the use of anti-Bonaparte propaganda on the streets of Cairo, and the creation of a cabinet familiar with European languages and institutions. Selim III was keen to restore order to both Istanbul and the provinces, and had considerable success in raising new troops, building new barracks in Istanbul, re-organising the grain trade to feed both troops and the ever-hungry population of Istanbul, and modernising the navy to partner with the British and Russians in removing Bonaparte from the eastern Mediterranean. In spite of the many advances, he lost the confidence of and was ultimately repudiated by his population.[19]

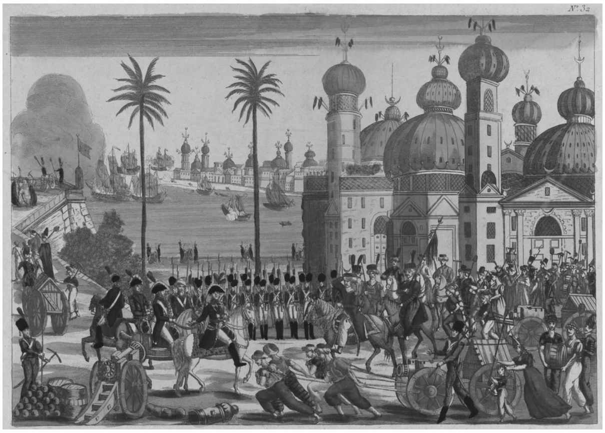
By October 1800, Bonaparte had slipped from Egypt to France to greater glory, but French troops remained in occupation of Cairo. In a joint military effort, beginning March 1801, the British and Ottomans landed their troops in Aboukir and were joined by the unruly cobbled- together Ottoman imperial army which marched overland from Palestine to Alexandria. The combined forces routed the French, and the last French troops embarked from Alexandria in September 1801 on British ships. Franco-Ottoman hostilities officially ceased with the Treaty of Paris in June 1802, which renewed all French commercial treaties, and re-established their diplomatic predominance in Istanbul – much to the chagrin of the British. The last British troops left Egypt in March 1803.

But the British were not finished with Egypt or Istanbul. As Europe took up its battle with Bonaparte once more, in the War of the Third Coalition, Selim III was emboldened by news of the massive French victory at Austerlitz (December 1805) to recognise Bonaparte as Emperor (February1806), and close the Dardanelles to Russian warships. The Russians declared war on the Ottomans immediately and occupied Moldavia by December 1806, more worried by French proximity to and influence on Selim III then potential Ottoman belligerence. *Ayan* of Rusçuk Alemdar Mustafa Pasha mobilised the countryside along the Danube and successfully prevented the Russians from crossing the Danube in that first thrust.

---

[18] Ahmed Cevdet records Selim III's supposed outrage at discovering that two of his barbers claimed membership of the artillery corps, Aksan, *Ottoman Wars,* 202; see also V. H. Aksan, 'Locating the Ottomans in Napoleons' World', in U. Planert (ed.), *Napoleon's Empire: European Politics in Global Perspective* (London 2015), 277-290.

[19] Şakul, 'The Evolution', 312-319; B. Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order* (Leiden 2014); Z. Abdul-Magd, *Imagined Empires: A History of Revolt in Egypt* (Berkeley 2013), 57ff; T. Zorlu, *Innovation and Empire in Turkey: Sultan Selim III and Modernisation of the Ottoman Navy* (London 2008); A. Yıldız, 'Vaka-yi Selimiyye or The Selimiyye Incident: a Study of the May 1807 Rebellion', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Sabancı University, 2008.



Vue de Constantinople. 1807 hand-painted engraving,
Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library.

So things stood, when, in February 1807, the British broke the Dardanelles blockade and sailed into Istanbul with warships in support of Russia, but found the French fortifying and enabling the resistance of the population to the British. French Ambassador Sébastiani had rounded up some 200 French officers and aides to man the batteries alongside the Ottoman artillerymen. Every available weapon was mobilised, and within a few days, the shores of the city were bristling with cannon. Crowds of the city's young men volunteered for service against British and Russians alike. It was perhaps the last moment that Selim III enjoyed the approbation of the streets of Istanbul, as the population waved goodbye to the British fleet on 3 March, and celebrated as the warships sailed through the Dardanelles. Still worried about possible French control of Egypt, the British made one more attempt to land at Alexandria, but were repulsed by Mehmed Ali, soon to become the new Ottoman Governor, an avowed reformer himself, and head of his own warriors, Albanian *levent*s.

The massive rebellion of May 1807 followed on the deployment of the 'new order' soldiers *in place* of the Janissaries in Rumelia, and just three months after the British naval expedition was successfully turned away from Istanbul's harbour.[20] Though it began as a factional palace coup against the imposition of new-style military uniforms, the revolt outgrew its initiators, stimulated by socio-economic conditions, migrant populations and foreigners on the streets of Istanbul, especially soldiers, sporting revolutionary cockades and singing the *Marseillaise.* The rebellion can be imagined as the 'Ottoman revolution' which aimed to restore the traditional relationship between Sultan and subject, at least as understood by commoners, Janissaries and military contractors who saw their privileges disappearing.[21]

---

[20] F. Yeşil, 'İstanbul Önlerinde Bir İngiliz Filosu: Uluslararası Bir Krizin Siyasî ve Askerî Anatomisi', in S. Kenan (ed.), *Nizâm-ı Kadîm'den Nizâm-ı Cedîd'e III. Selim ve Dönemi* (Istanbul 2011), 391-493.

[21] Yıldız, 'Vaka-yi Selimiyye', 770. Also, A. Yıldız, 'The "Louis XVI of the Turks": The Charac-

Meanwhile, in Rusçuk, Selim III loyalists assembled a new generation of reformers and provincial *ayan*s under Alemdar Mustafa Pasha. In mid-July 1808, Alemdar Mustafa and the Grand Vizier's imperial army marched on Istanbul, with 15,000 troops. That in itself was a novelty. By the end of July, order had returned to the city. Alemdar imposed strict discipline among his soldiers to restore confidence in the population. Unable to save Selim III, who had been hastily executed by his successor Sultan Mustafa IV before his own death, Alemdar rescued the young prince Mahmud, and installed him as Sultan Mahmud II. The assembled provincial notables then negotiated a contract with the new Sultan which was a complete novelty of Ottoman governance of any period. If the *Sened-i İttifak* (Deed of Agreement, or Charter of Alliance), then reluctantly signed by the young Sultan, is closely examined, it will be seen that the rights of local notables to inheritable estates are legitimated with the promise of the support of the Sultan, his military and taxation rights. It stands as a signal moment in the transition to the constitutionalism conversations that characterise the last hundred years of the Empire. In the context here, it is equally important to understand the significance of the presence of the warrior societies in the assembled armies.

But the agreement proved very fragile, as Sultan Mahmud II, who hated it, undertook a ruthless transformative programme to eliminate his regional rivals. His was also the task of manoeuvering Great Power diplomacy to prevent the complete dissolution of the Empire; of facing the shocking disloyalty of his Serbian and Greek subjects as the age of nationalism unfolded; and, finally, of responding to the supra-rebellion of his Egyptian rival Mehmed Ali, not settled until after Mahmud II's death in 1839. It is tempting to view the entire Mahmud II period as an Ottoman Reign of Terror, which resulted in the introduction of the Napoleonic regimental system and conscription to an outmoded military and highly reluctant population. All of these developments involved intra-cultural conversations which we are beginning to understand in ways different from the old Eastern Question tropes.

The first significant move Mahmud II made against his subjects was to remove the Janissaries. In 1826, after significant planning, and with the accord of the Istanbul street, the Sultan eliminated both the Janissaries and the Ottoman contractual and multi-confessional system they represented. That this occurred simultaneously with the on-going Greek Rebellion helps to explain at least partially what followed. In 1821, Mahmud II had already ordered an unprecedented census of the population in a very deliberate effort to identify the ethno-religious percentages of the city, and isolate 'disloyal' subjects. The Janissary dissolution itself was followed by an inquisition of individual Janissaries, and a public performance to discredit the corps for having been infiltrated with 'infidel' traitors. A smear campaign followed to discredit the corps entirely. Censuses followed in Anatolia and Rumelia as a prerequisite for creating a brand new army, known as the Trained Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad (*Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye*), distinctly Muslim and increasingly, though less obviously, Turkish.[22]

---

ter of an Ottoman Sultan', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 50 (2014), 272-290.

[22] V. Şimşek, 'The Grand Strategy of the Ottoman Empire, 1826-1824', unpublished Ph.D. dis-

A prime obstacle to the expansion of his rebuilt forces continued to be financial. Mahmud II debased coinage more than ten times, and confiscated the estates of two of his wealthy Jewish families – who each had more money than the annual revenues of the Ottoman centre – violating a centuries-old understanding on the distribution and sharing of revenues, however ill-applied by 1800. Remarkably, there was no consistent effort by the Sultan to reconstruct his cavalry, except of course, in the palace guard around him. Scarcity of both funds and horses and mules is among the more recent explanations found for this, but a deep distrust of the Greek and Serbian peripheries and his governor of Egypt, as well as anger at the interventionism of the Great Powers was also at work.[23]

While there is some disagreement among historians about the extent of 'intention' in the acts of the new Sultan, there is little doubt a new 'nation under arms', Muslim and Turkish, emerged from Mahmud II's ruthless crushing of the cross-imperial spider networks described above.[24] There is also little doubt that the military reforms engineered by both Mehmed Ali of Egypt and Mahmud II had a devastating impact on fragile agrarian populations, and in both cases resulted in further disruptions of traditional networks, massive rebellions, and waves of ecological disasters such as plague/cholera and famines.[25]

Most striking in this era of transformation is the apparent willingness of Mahmud II to turn his back on the foundational source of Ottoman power: the mobile warrior tradition in all its colourful ethnic and religious diversity, the generic *başıbozuk*. By the time of the Crimean War, *başıbozuk*s were officially included as irregulars in the military ranks, but remained largely outside the control of the official military. To man the battlefields, Mahmud not only homogenised the idea of an Ottoman soldier, he tore up the self-governing agreements with Albanians, Kurds, and Bedouins in his desperate fight with Mehmed Ali of Egypt. The Ottoman administration, which, for a variety of reasons, resisted the conscription of non-Muslims until the very last moment of empire, exhausted

---

sertation, McMaster University, 2016, 81-93; 142-144.

[23] Aksan, *Ottoman Wars,* 330-334. W. Clarence-Smith, 'Horses, Mules and Other Animals as a Factor in Ottoman military performance, 1683-1918', *War Horses Conference @SOAS 2014,* https://www.soas.ac.uk/history/conferences/war-horses-conference-2014/ [abstract title: Animal Power as a Factor in Ottoman Military Decline 1683-1918'] (accessed November 2018).

[24] H. Ş. Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society During the Greek war of Independence (1821-1826)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011, Chapter 2, argues that in the struggle against the Greeks, Mahmud and his advisors relied on Ibn Khaldunian tropes of a decayed civilisation as the reason for Ottoman decline, and called on all Muslims to return to the state of tribal robustness (*bedeviyyet*) and readiness represented in the Khaldunian cycle of dynasties, a curious use of the warrior ethos. See also Marinos Sariyannis' contribution to the present volume.

[25] Egypt is said to have lost one-sixth of its population to plague and famine 1783-1785. A. Mikhail, 'Ottoman Iceland: A Climate History', *Environmental History*, 20 (2015), 274. Abdul-Magd, *Imagined Empires*, spares no quarter with her litany of imperial disasters inflicted on the long autonomous Hawwara tribal confederations of Upper Egypt; G. Yıldız, *Neferin Adı Yok: Zorunlu Askerliğe Geçiş Sürecinda Osmanlı Devleti'nde Siyaset, Ordu ve Toplum (1826-1839)* (Istanbul 2009); T. Heinzelmann, *Cihaddan Vatan Savunmasina: Osmanlı İmparatoluğu'nda Genel Askerlik Yükümlülüğü 1826-1856* (Istanbul 2009).

a limited population of peasants and the urban poor, with predictable results.

The struggle to conscript Kurds, Bedouins, and Albanians, especially in the effort to confront the Egyptian upstart, ignited an Empire-wide resistance to conscription that exploded in large-scale rebellions across Ottoman territories, some challenging the right of the dynasty to bear the title of Caliph. Many were a response to the stripping of the privileges of private, contract armies – and to the end of centuries of contractual agreements with the Ottoman centre. This challenge by the Muslim populations of the Empire has recently received some long overdue attention and complicates the more simplistic Tanzimat/modernism teleology by arguing that the Mahmud II period and later represents a turn to internal colonialism on the part of a desperate government.[26]

Mehmed Ali's challenge eventually forced Mahmud II to sign the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of 1838 as a means of survival. The treaty awarded the British first-nation status, allowed for deep penetration into the countryside by merchants and foreign consuls alike, and drew the Ottomans further into the global economy. Striking at the heart of the redistributive system, the new global trading system stripped the (Muslim) economy further of its provisioning networks. The imperial rivalry for horses and mules, acute during the Crimean War, is certainly one example, where a lively trade in horses from Basra to India had already served to remove a ready supply of horses from the Sultan's reach.[27] The long arm of British protection had the effect of shifting economic power into the hands of Christian elites who had more consistent reach into the colonial projects of the European powers than their fellow Muslim citizens. This too is a raucous conversation underlying the Tanzimat reforms.

Over time, multiple imperial overlords and extra-territoriality led to a partial division of Ottoman citizens into military elites and merchant classes, the former Turkish and Muslim, the latter primarily Christian minorities, notably in large numbers in port cities, who were imbued with the excitement of the revolutionary age, the call for liberation, and the end of the global slave trade, which stirred up resistance in the entire Mediterranean world.[28] A cacophony of voices emerged, a more typical European post-1848 conversation about citizenship and constitutionality. The ‘imagined communities’ that arose each had multiple constitutional visions to contribute to the century-long debate about Ottoman citizenship and loyalty, eroding the last few vestiges of the sultan-slave patrimonial relationships and the spider networks that were foundational to the Empire and essential to its perpetuation.

---

[26] H. Erdem, '"Perfidious Albanians" and "Zealous Governors": Ottomans, Albanians and Turks in the Greek War of Independence', in A. Anastasopoulos and E. Kolovos (eds), *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760-1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation* (Rethymno 2007), 213-240: a series of communiqués on the Albanian forces by Ottoman commanders in the Morea in 1822 illustrates precisely the negotiations between contractual forces suspicious of Ottoman intentions and the new Ottoman leadership preference for conscripted and loyal Muslim troops. F. Anscombe, *State, Faith and Nation in Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Lands* (Cambridge 2014) sees much of the nineteenth-century Albanian resistance as a distinct rejection of Ottoman Islam; see also his 'Islam and Ottoman Reform', *Past and Present,* 208 (2010), 159-189; I. Blumi's, *Reinstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities 1800-1912* (New York 2011), T. Kuhn, *Empire, Islam and Politics of Difference* (Leiden 2011), and M. Minawi, *The Ottoman Scramble for Africa* (Stanford 2016) all address the problem of security and ongoing conversations about Ottoman/Muslim modernity.

[27] W. Clarence-Smith, 'Horses, Mules and Other Animals', 8, but also A. Mikhail's *The Animals in Ottoman Egypt* (New York 2014).

[28] See A. Koçunyan, 'The Transcultural Dimension of the Ottoman Constitution', in P. W. Firges,

These communities (‘nations’) co-opted not just the political conversation but also the iconographic images of the warrior tradition. Janissary-style costumes, ubiquitous in the *başıbozuk* paintings of Jean-Léon Gérôme, became the national costumes of Albanian and Greeks, and inspired the French Zouaves, Europeans in mufti, while Mahmud II and his successors exerted a constant, though unsuccessful, effort to incorporate them as irregulars into the new homogenised forces. Occasionally, *başıbozuk*s functioned as countryside gendarmes, but more often they persisted as the enforcers of local strongmen. The word *başıbozuk* in Ottoman realms became synonymous with barbarism and brutality, especially after the so-called ‘Bulgarian Atrocities’ incident of 1876, which became a cause célèbre in Europe, contributing to the dismantling of the Balkan territories of the Ottomans at the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

Ottoman Muslim elites were having a parallel, if different, conversation about a transformed state. Obviously, like the non-Muslim populations, they were similarly convulsed in the transitional period 1750-1850, but had become essential to the security of the Empire as the prime cannon fodder. Among Muslim ‘imagined communities’, the Ottoman suitability as the Caliph of the Muslim *umma* was in question as part of a debate about piety, reform, causality, and imperial success, exacerbated by the Napoleonic moment, but on-going since the mid eighteenth century.

In conclusion, the argument laid out here reflects in part the author’s participation in a three-year research project about military manpower, ‘Fighting for a Living’, hosted by the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam, under the direction of Erik Jan Zürcher.[29] It is not intended to reify the age-old tropes about Ottoman ferocity or paranoia, but rather to suggest that Eurasia, viewed diachronically, has a particular contribution to make to our understanding of how multi-confessional, multi-cultural empires were sustained. One consequence of moving to the macro-regional level is to restore linearity to pre- and post-World War I histories of the Middle East, especially as relates to Republican Turkey, but no less true of the Balkan Communists and the Arab Mandate military democracies. Equally, the story has been about the political nature and ecology of the frontiers of empires, where subjugated peasants and warrior peoples envisioned and negotiated multiple agendas of liberation.

T. P. Graf, C. Roth, and Güley Tulasoğlu (eds), *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (Leiden, 2014), 235-258. See on slavery and emancipation C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford 2004).

[29] E. J. Zürcher (ed.), *Fighting for a Living: a Comparative Study of Military Labour 1500-1200* (Amsterdam 2013), open source http://en.aup.nl/books/9789089644527-fighting-for-a-living.html

JANISSARY POLITICS ON THE OTTOMAN PERIPHERY (18TH-EARLY 19TH C.)

Yannis SPYROPOULOS*

THIS ARTICLE'S MAIN THESIS IS THAT, towards the end of its lifespan, the Janissary corps became an increasingly decentralised institution, a fact that redefined its political stance *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman government, its own central administration, and its involvement in provincial politics.[1] In the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, its political power passed mainly into the hands of low-ranking officers who, following a series of reforms, took the opportunity to create strong bonds with local societies. Such bonds were defined by 'bottom up' networking processes which allowed the regiments in the provinces to follow a trajectory of increased administrative and financial emancipation from Istanbul. The result was the creation of various different organisational structures inside the corps, which developed their own distinct characteristics, but remained, at the same time, organically connected to one another through a common institutional and legitimising frame of reference. By taking a close look at the case of the Janissaries of Crete, I thus argue that in order for us to understand the political role of the Janissaries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, we have to start looking away from Istanbul and examine their history mainly from a provincial perspective.

I. THE JANISSARY CORPS AS A DECENTRALISED INSTITUTION

The Janissary establishment was never static. It evolved immensely through time and the Ottoman central government played a major role in this process, since for centuries Istanbul developed new sets of rules and methods in order to ensure the corps' alignment with its political mindset. The significance of Janissaries as safe-keepers of sultanic authority in the Empire increased as the territory of the Ottoman state expanded. Janissary

---

* Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, Institute for Mediterranean Studies.

[1] Research for this paper was carried out in the framework of the project "Janissary networks in early modern Mediterranean, 18th-early 19th centuries", funded by the Greek State Scholarships Foundation (IKY) within the action "Funding of postdoctoral research" with funds from the Operational Program Education and Lifelong Learning, NSRF 2014-2020, priority axes 6, 8 and 9, co-funded by Greece and the European Social Fund.

garrisons were stationed in all strategically important fortresses, and the corps was given the status of one of the four 'pillars' of provincial administration alongside the *sancakbeği*s, the *kadı*s, and the *defterdar*s. The four institutions were independent of one another and reported straight to Istanbul, thus maintaining a system of checks and balances and giving prominence to the Sultan as the ultimate arbitrator in the Empire's provincial affairs. Unfortunately for the central government, though, as Janissary garrisons were being established in an ever-growing number of imperial fortresses away from the capital, maintaining control over them became an increasingly complicated task.

One way of keeping the Janissaries on the state's periphery under central control was through financial means. The imperial treasury was responsible for the yearly distribution of revenues destined for the corps' salaries and, in order to prevent the latter's entanglement in the interests of provincial financial/political networks, it did its best to keep the resources used for the payments of different Janissary garrisons detached from the localities to which they were appointed.[2] Another method used for restraining the power of the Janissaries in the provinces was the periodical rotation of their regiments from one fortress to another every three years.[3] This measure aimed at limiting the corps' interaction with the Ottoman provincial economies and societies, while keeping most of its combatant soldiers from remaining idle in Istanbul for long periods, a recipe for the creation of political effervescence in the capital.

Although at its core the idea that the imperial Janissary corps was an agent of sultanic authority remained intact through the years, the augmentation of its size in the post-Süleymanic era fundamentally remoulded its financial-*cum*-political status *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman centre. Combined with the deteriorating condition of the Empire's economy in the second half of the sixteenth century, measures originally used for controlling the corps turned into liabilities. In this vein, the overcomplicated centrally-regulated system of reallocation of financial resources used for the corps' salary distributions led to constant delays in the payment of the numerous provincial Janissary garrisons.[4] As a result, in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, payment-related uprisings in the capital and various fortresses on the Empire's periphery became a regular phenomenon, while an ever-increasing amount of tax resources started being permanently allocated for the payment of specific provincial garrisons in the form of *ocaklık*s.[5]

---

[2] In Crete, for instance, the sources of payment of the imperial Janissary garrisons were constantly changing. Thus, the soldiers were being paid one year from revenues coming from the Peloponnese, another year from Lebanon, from Aydın, and so on; Turkish Archive of Herakleio (TAH) 18:68; TAH.15:358; TAH.23:12; BOA, C.AS.841/35909; BOA, C.AS.1106/48950; BOA, C.AS.1078/47511; BOA, C.AS.460/19185; BOA, C.BH.213/9933; Archives Nationales de France (ANF), Affaires Etrangères (AE), B1, La Canée, Vol. 9 (5 January 1749).

[3] İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapukulu Ocakları*, Vol. 1 (Ankara 1988), 325.

[4] M. L. Stein, *Guarding the Frontier: Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe* (London and New York 2007), 126-128.

[5] For the use of *ocaklık*s as a method of payment of the Ottoman garrisons in Bosnia and Crete, see M. R. Hickok, *Ottoman Military Administration in Eighteenth-Century Bosnia* (Leiden, New York and Cologne 1997), 42-53 and TAH.33:69-70; BOA, C.AS.1145/50890.

In view of the difficulties that the state faced in financing the corps of a policy of frozen salaries which inevitably followed the scaling up of the Ottoman army's size, and of the inflationary tendencies in the Empire's economy following the first half of the sixteenth century, it comes as no surprise that a twofold process of financial emancipation of the Janissaries from centrally controlled institutions started to unfold. At an individual level, an ever increasing number of soldiers began to be involved in non-military financial activities, while, at an institutional one, the regiments' common funds (*sandık*) started looking for alternative ways to increase their income, mainly through large-scale investments in real estate and interest loans. This tendency, which was already gaining momentum in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Istanbul,[6] reached its peak in many places where Janissary garrisons were stationed throughout the eighteenth century.

Similar decentralisation processes were also taking place at an administrative level. Privileges granted to the Janissary corps in order to minimise its dependence on authorities with potentially centrifugal tendencies, like provincial governors, turned into one of the Janissaries' main instruments for avoiding central control. Their right to extradition only by their own officers, combined with their access to the means of violence, made them virtually unanswerable to other imperial agents and gave them an overpowering position *vis-à-vis* authorities such as *sancakbeği*s and *kadı*s, whose main defence mechanism against the Janissaries was to appeal to Istanbul for intervention, a procedure that often resulted in even more tensions and large-scale uprisings.

The eighteenth century can be seen as the pinnacle of this trajectory of decentralisation. Ironically, it was three measures that the Ottoman government itself put into effect that contributed most to its culmination. Two of them were part of a financial reform which overturned the corps' old system of payments. It was the same need for cash which had led Istanbul to the adoption of the *malikâne* reform in 1695, which brought about, some time before 1736,[7] the outsourcing of the office of the paymaster of the Janissary organisation to wealthy individuals from outside the corps, the *ocak bazirgân*s. This measure was followed by the legalisation of the buying and selling of Janissary titles of payment in 1740.[8] Selling Janissary pay-certificates was already an established practice in the black markets of the imperial capital. Its official authorisation by Mahmud I was a measure which prompted the titles' unofficial holders to register such transactions, thus rendering them more controllable and profitable for the *ocak bazirgân*s. In this way, the latter acquired a better idea of what the true size of the Janissary establishment was, while the financial leverage of the central fisc on them increased. The third measure was part of a general eighteenth-century policy of reducing the operational costs of the Janissary organisation, while weakening its political strength at the Empire's capital.[9] This reform, which took place approximately at the same time as the two above-mentioned measures, aimed at the decrease and the ultimate cessation of the periodical rotations of Janissary regiments in provincial fortresses. As a result, by the mid eighteenth century, all regiments deployed on the Ottoman periphery were tied to specific locations.[10]

---

[6] G. Yılmaz, 'The Economic and Social Role of Janissaries in a 17th Century Ottoman City: The Case of Istanbul', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Institute of Islamic Studies (Montreal 2011), 2, 175-243.

[7] Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, 1:408.

[8] H. A. Reed, 'Ottoman Reform and the Janissaries: The Eşkenci Lâhiyası of 1826', in O. Okyar and H. İnalcık (eds), *Türkiye'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi (1071-1920)* (Ankara 1980), 194; *EI*², s.v. 'Yeñi Čeri' (R. Murphey), 328; B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge 2010), 205, 209, 225.

If we look at such measures from the viewpoint of the Ottoman capital, it is difficult to understand the great impact which they had on the economic and political life of the Ottoman Empire. Istanbul, which hosted the corps' headquarters and training camps, was home to the largest Janissary garrison in the Empire and one of the few places where, for centuries, non-combatant and trainee Janissaries resided *en masse* alongside their active comrades-in-arms. All Janissary regiments had a considerable number of soldiers with a permanent presence in the city,[11] a fact that helped them preserve their local networks even when sent out to war or appointed to provincial garrisons for a number of years. This stable Janissary presence was one of the main reasons why Istanbul became one of the first places in the Empire where the corps started to intermingle with the local population and to be involved in the local economy. Consequently, by the time the above reforms were implemented, the Ottoman capital was already a place where extended Janissary networks were dominating the city's economic and political life.[12] Yet, this was not the case with the rest of the Empire.

It is true that, by the end of the sixteenth century, groups of Janissaries who had the right to permanently reside in fortresses outside Istanbul had increased in size and that the gradual decline of the *devşirme* system gave the Muslim population in many provinces access to the corps.[13] It is also true that, even since the seventeenth century, in many provinces with Janissary garrisons, members of the corps had been involved in the local financial and political life.[14] Yet, it would be misleading to assert that, before the eighteenth century, the ties of the Janissaries' with the Empire's provincial population were developing at the same pace and had the same stability as those established in the case of Istanbul. This becomes clear if we consider the difficulties created in this direction by the constant mobility of Janissary regiments from one fortress to another. The periodical rotation of regiment officers limited their connection with provincial societies. To a large part of the Empire's Muslim population, joining the corps seemed a non-viable 'investment', since entering one of its regiments meant that, if not granted a status of permanence in provincial garrisons,[15] they could eventually be sent to another fortress away from their homeland, families, and businesses. It thus comes as no surprise that, in the seventeenth century, one of the most popular channels used by Ottoman Muslims to enter the Empire's military apparatus was through the various local (*yerlü*) military forces that existed on the Empire's periphery. Such local corps, among which local Janissary units (*yerlü yeniçeriyân*), which are not to be confused with their imperial counterparts (*dergâh-ı âli yeniçerileri*),[16] gave a considerable number of people in the provinces the opportunity to participate in the Ottoman system of administration, offering them a steady salary and tax-exemptions.[17] Yet, they did not offer the same amount of privileges and protection provided by the imperial Janissary corps to its members. Enjoying no jurisdictional autonomy from local authorities and being dependent on local *defterdar*s for their payments, the soldiers of local corps were usually much easier to control by the provincial administration.[18] Moreover, the authorities at the *sancak* level had direct access to their payrolls, a fact that left little space for the creation of networks beyond their regiments, since it was easier for outsiders to discern who was a member of their organisation and who was not.

---

[9] I. Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman*, Vol. 7 (Paris 1824), 7:331.

[10] In Crete, the measure's implementation started in the 1730s and was completed before the end of the 1750s. According to Uzunçarşılı, sources like Koçi Bey, Silahdar, and Naima mention that the three-year rotation period of Janissary regiments in provincial fortresses was still in effect during the seventeenth century; Uzunçarşılı, *Kapukulu Ocakları*, 1:325. In the late 1780s, Mouradgea d'Ohsson wrote: "*Les* Ortas *restent en permanence dans les places fortes qui leur ont été assignées; on ne les déplace en temps de paix que lorsqu'il éclate entre deux compagnies une animosité dangereuse*"; Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, 7:321. For the measure's implementation in Vidin, see R. Gradeva, 'Between Hinterland and Frontier: Ottoman Vidin, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries', in A. C. S. Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (New York 2009), 340-341.

[11] For a detailed description of the distribution of Janissaries in various fortresses and Istanbul in the years 1663-1664, see Yılmaz, 'Economic and Social Role of Janissaries', 251-267.

[12] Ibid., 112, 175-243.

[13] *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan: Yeniçeri Kanunları*, ed. T. Toroser (Istanbul 2008), 77-78, 81, 100, 102-105, 138-139.

[14] See, for instance, A. Raymond, *Le Caire des janissaires: L'apogée de la ville ottomane sous ʻAbd al-Rahmân Kathudâ* (Paris 1995), 13-14, 21.

---

[15] Usually this status was granted to soldiers through the title of '*yamak*'. The *yamak*s were Janissaries who had the right to remain in the garrisons of specific fortresses even if their regiments were stationed elsewhere.

[16] It is a common mistake of modern historiography to confuse the recruits of such local forces with the members of the imperial Janissary corps. The confusion often stems from the fact that these different categories of soldiers bore the same titles, such as '*beşe*', a word used sometimes abusively as an indicator of imperial Janissary presence in various areas. In fact, this title could refer to low-ranking soldiers of all sorts of different local and imperial corps, such as *cebeci*s, *topçı*s, etc. It should be noted, though, that, depending on the political circumstances, a vague institutional connection between local and imperial Janissaries could be claimed or denied by local people or the Ottoman government in different regions of the Empire. For example, in the case of Bosnia, where the abolition of the Janissary corps proved to be a very difficult task, the central government, in order to prevent a coalition between the two military groups, maintained that the local Janissaries did not have to be abolished because they were not institutionally connected to the imperial corps. In Crete, on the other hand, where the 1821 Greek Revolution neutralised any popular reactions to the abolition of the corps, the government claimed that the local Janissaries originated from the imperial ones, and, thus, had to be abolished. For the case of Bosnia, see F. Sel-Turhan, 'Rebelling for the Old Order: Ottoman Bosnia 1826-1836', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2009, 104-106. For Crete, see BOA, HAT.289/17345 where we read the following: "*Memalik-i mahrusede ba'zı mahallerde yerlü kulı ta'biriyle bulınan yerlü neferâtı yeniçeri takımından haric ise de cezire-i mezkûrede yerlü yeniçeri denilen yerlü kulı olmayub bunlar mukaddema hîn-i fetihde bırağılmış ve orta ta'biriyle bulınanlar dahi sonradan buradan gönderilmiş olarak iki takımı dahi yeniçeri olub yevmiyeleri dahi bu tarafdakiler gibi beynlerinde beyi ve şira ile kendülerine me'kel olmış*".

[17] Even before the second half of the sixteenth century, maintaining salaried local corps was used extensively by Istanbul in *serhad* areas like Hungary, in order to have soldiers constantly in position for expeditions and to reduce the expenses of long-distance transportation of large imperial forces; K. Hegyi, 'The Ottoman Military Force in Hungary', in G. Dávid and P. Fodor (eds), *Hungarian-Ottoman Military and Diplomatic Relations in the Age of Süleyman the Magnificent* (Budapest 1994), 132-133, 139-140.

Basically, what the reforms of the first half of the eighteenth century did was that they gave the opportunity to a large number of imperial Janissary regiments to settle permanently in specific provinces, as was the case with the local corps, while preserving the privileges stemming from their status as agents of Istanbul. Furthermore, they allowed their financial and administrative independence from the centre to increase as not only did the palace give its right to control the corps' payments away to private individuals, but also the central Janissary administration distanced itself from the officers at a regiment level. This, of course, meant the acceleration of a decentralisation process inside the corps itself.

The cessation of the regiments' periodical rotations provided low and mid-ranking officers, such as *çorbacı*s, *odabaşı*s, and *aşçı*s, with the opportunity to create much stronger affiliations with provincial societies and to become influential power-brokers at a *sancak* level. In theory, an officer could not accept an unlimited number of soldiers into his regiment, as it was up to the central Janissary administration and the *ocak bazirgân*s to define the number of Janissary pay certificates available for each regiment and provincial garrison. In practice, though, since most people were mainly interested in the privileges and protection offered by the corps and not in its meagre salaries, this problem was easily dealt with at a local level via their unofficial enrolment in the regiments. The names of such Janissary-pretenders, generally referred to in the sources as "*taslakçı*s", were not listed in the payroll registers which were sent to the central Janissary administration. As a result, they were not entitled to any salary, but enjoyed the same privileges as real Janissaries under the auspices of their patron officers.

We should note at this point that, until the eighteenth century, pseudo-Janissaries were not often mentioned in official Ottoman sources pertaining to the provinces. It is only after the permanent establishment of Janissary regiments in particular fortresses and the subsequent minimisation of control over the latter by the government and the Janissary officers in Istanbul that the phenomenon of *taslakçı*s seems to have flourished on the Ottoman periphery.[19] In other words, the growing 'claim of being a Janissary'

---

[18] For an Ottoman document from Hanya, in Crete, showcasing the difference in protection from local authorities offered by the imperial Janissaries and the local corps to their members, see Y. Spyropoulos, *Οθωμανική διοίκηση και κοινωνία στην προεπαναστατική δυτική Κρήτη: Αρχειακές Μαρτυρίες (1817-1819)* [Ottoman Administration and Society in Prerevolutionary Western Crete (1817-1819): Archival Testimonies], ed. A. Papadaki, (Rethymno 2015), 273; BOA, KK.d.827:52.

[19] The earliest reference to *taslakçı*s in areas outside Istanbul that I was able to locate at the BOA pertains to the province of Bilecik and is dated 24 Şevval 1111 (4/14/1700); BOA, C.

(*yeniçerilik iddiası*) among the Empire's provincial population should be treated mainly as an eighteenth and early nineteenth-century phenomenon which expressed a 'bottom-up' networking process, defined by off-the-record arrangements between outsiders who wanted to enjoy the privileges offered by the corps and officers at a regiment level.

Yet, neither did the formation of Janissary networks have the same intensity nor did it follow the same trajectory and time-line in every Ottoman region. A number of factors influenced the dynamics created between Janissaries and the Empire's various local populations. One factor was, for instance, the geopolitical importance of each area and if it was considered to be frontier territory (*serhad*) or not by the Ottoman administration. In such areas the Janissary corps had stronger representation and was, thus, more likely to develop broader connections with the local people.[20] This does not mean, though, that the inhabitants of areas with no *serhad* status, but of great financial importance for the Ottoman market, such as Izmir, could not develop strong liaisons with the corps, especially as the latter was increasingly becoming involved in the Empire's economic life.[21]

Other factors were the historical relation of an area with the corps, its proximity to Istanbul, and its administrative status. Owing to their location and the conditions prevalent at the time of their conquest, places like Edirne, Bosnia, and Vidin had, for instance, es-

---

ZB.12/595. After the above-mentioned reforms, the references to Janissary-pretenders in Ottoman provinces become more dense. In particular, out of the 26 cases which refer to the period before 1826 and contain explicit mentions to *taslakçı*s, 21 pertain to the years from 1737 to 1823 and 19 to the period after 1756; BOA, İE.ŞKRT.6/557; BOA, İE.ŞKRT.5/382; BOA, İE.EV.41/4666; BOA, İE.ŞKRT.7/598; BOA, C.ML.185/7747; BOA, C.MF.113/5605; BOA, C.ML.147/6247; BOA, C.ADL.7/469; BOA, C.ML.212/8709; BOA, C.EV.457/23112; BOA, C.ADL.46/2800; BOA, C.AS.1110/49123; BOA, C.ZB.90/4490; BOA, C.ML.285/11708; BOA, C.AS.42/1949; BOA, C.ZB.39/1921; BOA, HAT.1388/55236; BOA, C.ZB.49/2438; BOA, C.DH.64/3155; BOA, C.DH.120/5978; BOA, C.ZB.2/78; BOA, HAT.651/31797 (25 Cemaziü'l-ahir 1229); BOA, HAT.651/31797 (11 Receb 1229); BOA, HAT.341/18505; BOA, C.AS.769/32503. That is not to say that *taslakçı*s were not existent outside Istanbul before the eighteenth century. For a relevant reference, see *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan*, 82.

[20] According to Mouradgea d'Ohsson, in the late eighteenth century 32 *serhad ağaları* were in charge of Janissary garrisons appointed to the most important fortresses of the Empire; Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, 7:316. Yet, this number seems to have been subject to changes through time, since it varies from one payroll register of the Janissary corps to another.

[21] The French traveller Tancoigne, who visited Izmir at the beginning of the nineteenth century, writes: "*Ce* mutésellim *a sous ses ordres une soldatesque nombreuse et turbulente de Janissaires, qui ne demandent que pillage et désordre, et auxquels les incendies qui ravagent si souvent cet entrepôt du commerce de l'Anatolie, procurent de fréquentes occasions de s'abandonner à leur penchant pour la rapine*"; J. M. Tancoigne, *Voyage à Smyrne, dans l'archipel et l'île de Candie* (Paris 1817), 29-30. For the infamous Janissary rebellion of 1797 in Izmir and its results, see Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (MAE), Correspondance Consulaire et Commerciale (CCC), Smyrne, Vol. 31:98 ff; S. Laiou, 'Το ρεμπελιό της Σμύρνης (1797)' [The Rebellion of Izmir], in *Η ιστορία της Μικράς Ασίας: Οθωμανική κυριαρχία* [The History of Asia Minor: Ottoman Rule], Vol. 4 (Athens 2011), 105-120; N. Ülker, '1797 Olayı ve İzmir'in Yakılması', *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 2 (1984), 117-159.

tablished from a very early point firm bonds with the Janissaries, who played a prominent role in their economic and political life until – or in some cases even after –[22] the abolition of the corps. It is interesting to note, at this point, that one of the first detachments of parts of the Janissary provincial administration from the corps' central organisation took place in Sultan Süleyman's time, following the conquest of the areas that came to be known as the *ocak-ı mümtaze*, i.e., the regencies of Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania. It should not come as a surprise that, although thousands of imperial Janissaries were deployed in these three areas, their military forces are nowhere to be found in the payroll registers (*mevacib defterleri*) preserved in the Ottoman archives of Istanbul. That is because these self-administered areas were given the right to recruit and finance their soldiers on their own.[23] Janissary forces resided permanently in the three regencies ever since their conquest and developed a very different type of organisation and a distinct political trajectory from their counterparts in other provinces.[24] This was not only because of the regencies' distance from Istanbul and the autonomous status of their administration, but also because of the religious and ethnic conditions prevalent in them, another important factor affecting the relation of Janissaries with the Empire's provincial populations.

The corps seems to have had the tendency to gain stronger popular support in areas with a history of extended conversions to Islam after their Ottoman conquest, like the Balkans, Anatolia, and Crete. On the other hand, in areas with large Arabic-speaking communities, its members often distanced themselves from the latter, manned their units mainly with non-local soldiers, and, in some cases, maintained an elite status which generally alienated them from the indigenous populations. In Damascus, for instance, the imperial regiments recruited people mainly from Anatolia, the Balkans, and from Kurdish regions, while they were often in conflict with the Damascenes, who took political refuge in the city's local Janissary corps (*yerliyya*).[25] Also, in Aleppo, the imperial Janissaries "seemed to have been immune to large-scale penetration by the local people", a large part of whom expressed their opposition to the corps' political domination by becoming *eşraf* and creating alternative groups of political power.[26] Moreover, in the Maghreb regencies, where the imperial Janissaries formed the main axis of the administration, the corps' intermingling with the local populace remained limited, while its soldiers were usually recruited from Anatolia, the Balkans, and from regions around the Aegean.[27] Yet, this did not mean that in the above-mentioned areas Arabs were completely excluded from the corps. In many cases the socio-political, and economic conditions led the Janissary authorities to accept locals in their ranks. According to André Raymond, for instance, in Cairo, "the recruitment of 'Arabs' annoyed the authorities, but they did not have the means to oppose it, since they were in need of troops for the large sultanic expeditions".[28] In Aleppo, peasants and other strata of the local people reportedly managed to enter the corps,[29] while in Algiers the development of the institution of *kuloğlı*s[30] had become an entrance-gate into the corps for various indigenous ethnic groups.[31] Generally, though, we can maintain that in Arab regions the penetration of Janissary ranks by local people never reached the levels seen in the Balkans, Anatolia, and Crete. In these last areas, the imperial regiments often absorbed large parts of the local Muslim communities into their networks, to the extent that in the eyes of outside observers the corps was often identified with local Islam.

---

[22] Sel-Turhan, 'Rebelling for the Old Order', 300-315 and *passim*.

[23] Unfortunately, apart from the fact that it had a military organisation similar to that of the other two regencies, very little is known about the Janissary forces of Ottoman Tripolitania. For an overview of the role of Janissaries in the regencies of Tunisia and Algeria, and relative bibliography, see A. Moalla, *The Regency of Tunis and the Ottoman Porte, 1777-1814: Army and Government of a North-African Ottoman Eyālet at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (London and New York 2004), 87-107; T. Shuval, *La ville d'Alger vers la fin du XVIIIe siècle : Population et cadre urbain* (Paris 2002), 57-117 and *passim.*

[24] For an analytical examination of the structure of the Janissary organisation in Algiers, see J. Dény, 'Les registres de solde des Janissaires conservés à la bibliothèque d'Alger', *Revue Africaine*, 61 (1920), 19-46, 212-260. Also, for two unpublished payroll registers of the same unit, see Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer d'Aix-en-Provence (ANOM), 15 MIOM, Vol. 118 and the unclassified register entitled 'Régistre des Janissaires, Bibliothèque d'Alger' preserved at the Archives privées de Jean Deny (CETOBaC).

[25] A. Rafeq, 'The Local Forces in Syria in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (eds), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London 1975), 277-280.

The above phenomena ineluctably give rise to a series of questions: can the preference of the Janissaries to integrate into their networks populations with a recent past of conversion be linked back to the old practice of the *devşirme*? Was it related to the fact that an *en masse* recruitment of Islamic populations in predominantly Muslim areas could fundamentally disrupt the administrative and financial order imposed by the '*askerî-reaya*' nexus? To what extent did the inequalities created by the '*reaya*ization' of non-Muslims in certain areas on account of the rapid expansion of Janissary networks contribute to the rise of national and religious conflicts? For the time being, the existing research does not suffice to answer comprehensively any of the above questions. As long as we insist on keeping our main focus on Istanbul when examining the Janissary institution, it will continue to be very difficult to understand the implications brought about by its decentralisation. We are, thus, in need of more case studies which will reveal how the corps functioned in different regions. In this vein, the pages which follow will examine in detail the political effects of these processes as witnessed in the *eyalet* of Crete.

---

[26] Ibid., 280-281. According to Bruce Masters, "although the Janissaries were well integrated into Aleppo's society by the eighteenth century, with native-born sons and grandsons succeeding the original migrants into the Janissary ranks, those in the city whose ancestral pedigrees were much older could still disdain them collectively as 'ousiders'"; B. Masters, 'Aleppo's Janissaries: Crime Syndicate or *Vox Populi*?', in E. Gara, M. E. Kabadayı, and Ch. K. Neumann (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011), 161.

[27] For the recruitment of soldiers into the Tunisian and Algerian Janissary garrisons, see T. Bachrouch, 'Les élites tunisiennes du pouvoir et de la dévotion : Contribution à l'étude des groupes sociaux dominants (1782-1881)', unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1981, 509-511; M. Colombe, 'Contribution à l'étude du recruitment de l'Odjak d'Alger dans les dernières années de l'histoire de la régence', *Revue Africaine*, 87 (1943), 166-183. Also, see, MAE, CCC, Alger, Vol. 43 (31 March 1817; 30 June 1817; 30 September 1817).

[28] Raymond, *Le Caire des Janissaires*, 13. For the enrolment in the Egyptian Janissary corps of members of the Havâre tribe, see S. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517-1798* (Princeton 1962), 190-191.

[29] H. L. Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760-1826* (Chapel Hill 1963), 63.

[30] According to the *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân*, in the sixteenth century, the *kuloğlı*s were the sons of Janissaries, who had the right to be admitted to the corps, alongside the *devşirme* recruits; *Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyan*, 24, 26, 33-35 and *passim*. Yet, in later periods, both the criteria for their admittance and their institutional role seem to have varied in different regions; E. Radushev, '"Peasant" Janissaries?', *Journal of Social History*, 42 (2008), 459; TAH.3:417; TAH.19:173, 178-179, 327.

[31] Shuval, *La ville d'Alger*, 107-117.

II. The Janissaries of Crete as Political Actors

The history of the Janissaries of Crete starts with the island's Ottoman invasion in 1645. The siege of its biggest fortress, the city of Kandiye, lasted for 24 years and cost the lives of tens of thousands of soldiers, while the fortified islets of Souda and Spinalonga, the last Venetian strongholds in the area, passed to Ottoman hands only in 1715. The many military difficulties that the Ottomans encountered during the War for Crete made them realise that the local population's support was crucial for defeating the Venetian army. This realisation resulted in an extended campaign for the recruitment of Cretan soldiers into the army, which began in the earliest phase of the war. They organised 13 different types of local corps which were installed in all of the island's fortresses, drawing their manpower mainly from local people. It was during that time that the first massive conversions of Cretans started taking place and soon a sizeable local Muslim community was created.

Although the imperial Janissaries, the main driving force behind the conquest of Crete, enjoyed an elevated status compared to the soldiers of these local corps, during that first phase the island's population was still quite reluctant to join their forces. Despite the much discussed process of the corps' infiltration by 'aliens' and guild members which was taking place in Istanbul, the Janissaries who invaded Crete consisted mainly of professional soldiers who travelled from far away in order to fight, only to depart for other posts a few years later.[32] This constant military migration, of course, meant that it was very difficult for them to get involved in the island's financial and political life.[33]

The conquest of the city of Kandiye signalled the beginning of a new era for the island. Despite the on-going war with Venice, this great victory consolidated the Ottoman presence in the area and gave rise to a gradual shift from a war-driven administration towards a more sustainable financial and political system of governance for the province.

---

[32] For the composition of the forces sent to Crete during the war, see E. Gülsoy, *Girit'in Fethi ve Osmanlı İdaresinin Kurulması (1645-1670)* (Istanbul 2004), 187-198.

[33] The fact that after the conquest of Kandiye only 28 imperial soldiers were registered as house-owners in the city, although in 1663-1664 4,636 imperial Janissaries were deployed in its siege, is indicative of this reality; Ibid., 252; Yılmaz, 'Economic and Social Role of Janissaries', 251-267.

This shift would only be completed after the signing of the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, which officially put an end to the Ottoman-Venetian struggle. One of the most important consequences of the end of the War for Crete was the progressive withdrawal of most of the Empire's imperial troops from the region, which would eventually leave, by the late 1750s, only a limited, but not insignificant, number of Janissaries in the province's three cities, Kandiye, Hanya, and Resmo (mod. Herakleio, Chania, and Rethymno). Another important development brought about by the new conditions was the belated implementation of the *malikâne* system in 1720. Both the departure of thousands of soldiers of non-Cretan origin and the newly imposed method of tax-farming played a pivotal role in the passing of the biggest part of the province's administration into the hands of the local population. Additionally, as was the case in all Ottoman provinces, the regular periodical rotation of Janissary regiments gradually stopped. The result was that, starting in the 1730s and before the end of the 1750s, a specific group of imperial regiments had their presence in the area consolidated. This process set off a rapid localisation of the Janissaries' manpower and financial resources and brought about profound changes in the local political scene.

1730-1770: Localisation and popularisation

Before their localisation, the imperial Janissary regiments' involvement in the actual political life of Crete was very limited. That is not to say that their soldiers did not carry with them on the island their long tradition of violent revolts and mobilisations, one of which erupted even in the earliest phase of the War for Crete, in 1649, owing to a leave-refusal to some of the soldiers who had been fighting in the trenches of Kandiye for two years.[34] In 1688, another mutiny of imperial Janissaries, which cost the life of the island's governor and of various military officers, broke out in the same city. Although the exact details of this incident are unknown, according to Silahdar, the reason was "grain provisions".[35] Despite these violent mobilisations, in early Ottoman Crete, revolts of the local corps seem to have been more frequent than those instigated by imperial troops,[36] who remained largely detached from local political developments.

It is only in the 1730s that the sources testify to a more active involvement of the imperial Janissaries in the political life of Crete. In 1731, a Janissary revolt broke out in Kandiye because of an accusation of theft made by a local Muslim notable against a Janissary. In a display of arrogance, the local governor not only decided to ignore the accused Janissary's special jurisdictional status and to incarcerate him, but he also sent away the agha of the imperial Janissaries when he tried to intervene. As soon as the rest of the Janissaries were informed of this insolence committed against their fellow-soldier and their leading officer by the pasha, they marched to the latter's residence and, after threatening him, seized the Muslim notable by force and cut him to pieces in the middle of the street.[37] In September 1733, another revolt took place, this time against the pasha of Hanya,[38] due to a long delay in the payment of Janissaries.[39] Around that time, a group of soldiers attacked the French Vice-Consul of Kandiye and some French sailors, who had been previously mistreated by a group of local Christians as well. The tension created between the French community and the Janissaries in Kandiye was quickly transposed to Hanya, where the recent uprising against the pasha converged with the agitation of the local population against the French and turned into a large-scale sedition. In the months which followed, multiple violent incidents contributed to the prolongation of social unrest in the city and led to a climax in the summer of 1734. In August, Christians and Muslims, joined by a group of Janissaries and led by Christian captains, attacked the house of the French consul in Hanya. As the pasha remained inert and incapable of intervening for fear of a new revolt against him, the only response to the crisis came from the agha of the corps, who sent a regiment of Janissaries in order to save the French from the hands of the mob.[40]

---

[34] R. Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700* (London 1999), 28; Gülsoy, *Girit'in Fethi*, 189-190.

[35] M. Sariyannis, 'Rebellious Janissaries: Two Military Mutinies in Candia (1688, 1762) and their Aftermaths', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840. Halcyon Days in Crete VI: A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 268-272.

[36] The local soldiers of Kandiye had caused three uprisings from 1692 to 1746, all of which because of their corps' internal administrative and financial issues TAH.7:19; TAH.15:300; TAH.16:44, 167; BOA, C.AS.1218/54668.

These incidents are very revealing with regard to the gradual transformation that the Janissary corps underwent in Crete. The 1731 revolt points to the fact that the Janissaries continued to behave primarily as a professional corporate group whose focus was on issues pertaining to their military status, such as their salaries and privileges. Yet, as demonstrated by the incidents of 1733-1734, some of their mobilisations had now started also to project non-military claims made by parts of Cretan society, such as those related to the financial rivalry of local Christians and Muslims with French merchants, whose commercial activity on the island was expanding dramatically in the 1720s and 1730s. The French consuls of Crete observe with concern this gradual amalgamation of the interests of Janissary groups with those of local society,[41] and note that there was a radical increase in the number of "dangerous" people on the island in recent years.[42] Yet, most of the thousands of Janissaries deployed on the island[43] seem to have stayed separate from this alignment of interests when no purely military claims were involved. Thus it should not come as a surprise that it was the Janissaries again who were called upon to intervene and protect those threatened by their own comrades-in-arms.

---

[37] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (the document has two different dates: 20 February 1731 and 3 August 1731).

[38] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (15 October 1733).

[39] This problem would still remain unresolved by the end of 1735; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (27 December 1735).

[40] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (25 November 1733; 1 December 1733; 18 December 1733; 31 December 1733; 2 January 1734; 2 January 1734; 9 January 1734; 15 January 1734; 28 January 1734; 1 March 1734; 4 April 1734 1734; 11 August 1734; 13 August 1734; 22 September 1734; 25 December 1734); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (1 January 1735; 31 January 1735).

[41] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (29 November 1735); "*les gens du pays qui sont fort mal intentionnés venant à se joindre à quelques Janissaires, dont il ya icy un très grand nombre aussy mal disciplinés*".

[42] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (27 December 1735).

Another very interesting issue is the transmission of tensions from one city to another and its relation with the political developments in the Ottoman capital. In December 1733, the French Consul of Hanya noted that "the bad example of the incident that took place in Kandiye against Mr Baume[44] has embroiled the Janissaries of this place [Hanya] in a movement that we could call a sedition".[45] He also writes in one of his reports that "security and tranquillity are nowhere to be found in this city, after the soldiers have lost the respect due for their commanders, who are terrified of chastising the wrongdoers in fear of a general uprising",[46] specifying, in another letter, that it is "since the revolution of Istanbul and the revolt that took place in Kandiye, that the soldiers and their supporters have lost their respect and obedience, to the extent that they are afraid of neither their commanders nor their peers".[47]

It is worth underlining the connection that the Consul sees not only between the regional revolts of Kandiye and Hanya, but also between the mobilisations of the Janissaries of Crete and the 1730 Patrona Halil incident in Istanbul. Despite its decentralisation, the Janissary corps always remained an institution empowered by its status as an agent of Istanbul. Its centrally-based organisation was a constant frame of reference for its soldiers, even if they had never set foot in the Empire's capital. Crete is a great example of the umbilical-cord-like liaisons which joined the corps' peripheral organisation to its headquarters. Yet, this connection should not be interpreted as proof of a strict control exercised by the latter over the former. It rather points to the existence of a common source of legitimacy and of a sense of camaraderie and networking that ran through the entire Janissary establishment, even when plain soldiers refused to obey their Janissary officers in Istanbul or elsewhere. It is, after all, no coincidence that the Patrona Halil rebellion was not the result of a top-to-bottom instigation within the corps, and nor were the 1733-1734 revolts in Crete. In other words, a strong ideological connection with Istanbul could exist side by side with the soldiers' unwillingness to obey their high-ranking officers in the capital.

In the years which followed, the Janissaries started increasingly to get involved collectively and in large numbers in local politics. Their mobilisations in the early 1730s on the side of Cretan Christians and Muslims seem to have quickly made them appear, in the eyes of the local people, as their protectors from the encroachments of other local authorities. In August 1737, 500-600 Christian subjects (*grecs raÿas*) from various villages of the countryside of Hanya gathered outside the gates of the city and demanded to see the pasha, declaring that they would stop paying the excessive amounts of irregular taxes imposed on them by the latter. While doing so, they asked for the protection of the Janissaries. The corps immediately sided with them and chose to disregard the direct orders of the pasha not to let the Christians inside the city walls and to treat them as rebels. Instead, the agha of the Janissaries called for a plenary session of the corps' members with the participation of Janissary elders, the *kadı*, the *müfti*, and the city notables. The body collectively decided to send a petition (*arz*) to the Porte exposing the misconducts of the pasha, and sent, for this purpose, several delegations to Istanbul consisting of Janissary officers and representatives of the Christian *reaya*s.[48] This is the first instance in which the sources explicitly represent the Janissaries as a body which utilised collective procedures in order to decide unanimously on political issues with direct reference to local society. Such initiatives would only increase in subsequent decades.

---

[43] In 1741, the number of imperial Janissaries in Kandiye was 3,166: 1.182 in Resmo, and 1,801 in Hanya; BOA, MAD.d.6568:363-384, 389-403, 663-695.

[44] Baume was the Vice-Consul of France in Crete. In 1733 he was beaten mercilessly by a group of Janissaries in the middle of the market of Kandiye; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (25 November 1733).

[45] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (18 December 1733). For another similar comment on the easiness with which Janissary uprisings were transmitted from one city to the other, see ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 6 (23 January 1739).

[46] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (1 December 1733).

[47] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (9 January 1734).

According to the Ottoman registers, in the 1740s and 1750s, the number of Janissaries in Crete decreased by 40%, bringing the gradual retirement of imperial forces from the island to an end. The number of regiments in the cities was reduced to five in Kandiye, one in Resmo, and two in Hanya (in later years this would rise to five), diminishing their manpower from a total of 6,149 soldiers in 1741 to 3,682 men in 1758.[49] Apart from temporary punitive transfers and minor changes, the regiments on the island in the late 1750s remained in place until 1826. Despite the overall reduction in the number of imperial Janissaries in the province, in the subsequent decades the regiments would manage to become the dominant power in local politics. The explanation of this seemingly paradoxical phenomenon lies beyond the Janissaries' diminishing official numbers, in the emergence of a group of 'soldiers' who cannot be traced in the corps' payrolls, the *taslakçı*s.

The existence of this group of Janissary-pretenders is easier to observe in non-official sources. In his 1818 description of the military organisation of Crete, Zacharias Praktikidis provides a quite accurate report on the manpower of the various local military corps of Kandiye, but, when he tries to calculate the number of imperial Janissaries deployed in the same city, the discrepancy between the numbers given in his account and those in the Janissary payrolls is striking: although the officially registered imperial Janissaries numbered 1,692,[50] Praktikidis' estimation rises to 25,000 men.[51] Similar inflated numbers are to be found in most traveller accounts from the mid eighteenth century onwards, but not in earlier periods.[52] It is, after all, around that time that the corps starts to become increasingly identified by outsiders with local Islam. In the mid 1740s, Pococke writes that "all the Turks" in Kandiye "belong to some military body".[53] In a similar fashion, Savary notes in 1779 that "all the male children of the Turks become members of the corps of Janissaries at their birth".[54] De Bonneval and Dumas write in 1783 that "the despotic and military administration brings no harm to the Turks, who can bear arms, as they all belong to a military corps".[55] In 1794, Olivier claims that the Muslims of Crete are "almost all enrolled among the Janissaries".[56] Tancoigne writes in 1812, that "almost all the Turks of the island of Crete are Janissaries",[57] while, Sieber mentions in 1817 that "every young Turk, upon his birth or after his circumcision, which he undergoes in a festive manner when he becomes ten or twelve years old, is enrolled in one of the Janissary regiments".[58]

---

[48] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (27 August 1737); (12 December 1737).

[49] Cf. BOA, MAD.d.6568:363-384, 389-403, 663-695 with BOA, MAD.d.6950:635-652, 657-668, 967-989; BOA, MAD.d.7015:529-546, 549-560, 583-603 and BOA, MAD.d.5866:1055-1084, 1087-1104, 1107-1120; BOA, MAD.d.5552:581-598, 601-614, 841-870.

[50] BOA, MAD.d.17575:71.

[51] Z. Praktikidis, *Χωρογραφία της Κρήτης, συνταχθείσα τω 1818 υπό Ζαχαρίου Πρακτικίδου, παραστάτου πληρεξουσίου και γενικού φροντιστού της δικαιοσύνης τω 1822-1829 εν Κρήτη* [To-

In the official Ottoman sources, the first reference to Janissary-pretenders that we come across is from an imperial edict of 1762 which was sent after a Janissary rebellion in Kandiye. In his edict the Sultan forbids "the acceptance in the various regiments of *taslakçı*s, people without pay-certificates",[59] as a measure to restrain the seditious tendencies of the local population. The extremely violent uprising of 1762, which cost the lives of the Janissaries' *başçavuş* and *kâtib*, and resulted to the deposition of their agha, seems to have acted as a wake-up call for Istanbul concerning the issue of popular support for Janissary mobilisations.[60] Yet, the problem that the above-mentioned *ferman*

---

pography of Crete, compiled in 1818 by Zacharias Praktikidis, Deputy Attendant and General Commissary of Justice in Crete, during the Years 1822-1829] (Herakleio 1983), 43.

52 Cf., for instance, the numbers given for the city of Kandiye by De Bonneval and Dumas in 1783 with those mentioned by Tournefort in 1700; De Bonneval-Dumas, *Αναγνώριση*, 190; J. P. de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant, fait par ordre du roi...*, Vol. 1 (Amsterdam 1718), 16.

53 R. Pococke, 'A Description of the East', in J. Pinkerton (ed.), *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World*, Vol. 10 (London 1811), 611-612.

54 C. É. Savary, *Letters on Greece: Being a Sequel to Letters on Egypt…* (Dublin 1788), 374.

55 P. De Bonneval and M. Dumas, *Αναγνώριση της νήσου Κρήτης: μια μυστική έκθεση του 1783* [Survey of the island of Crete: a secret report of 1783], trans. G. B. Nikolaou and M. G. Peponakis (Rethymno 2000), 213.

56 G. A. Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Persia, Undertaken by Order of the Government of France, during the First Six Years of the Republic*, Vol. 2 (London 1801), 243-244.

57 Tancoigne, *Voyage à Smyrne*, 1:102.

58 F. W. Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta im griechischen Archipelagus im Jahre 1817*, Vol. 2 (Leipzig 1823), 186.

59 "*bilâ esami olan taslakçı makulesini gayrî ortalara bir vechle kabul etmemek*"; TAH.3:361-363.

60 On this incident, see TAH.3:345-350, 361-363, 365-366; TAH.9:365-366; BOA, C.ML.165/6920; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 11 (27 June 1762; 15 September 1762); Sariyannis, 'Rebellious Janissaries', 255-274; E. Karantzikou and P. Photeinou, *Ιεροδικείο Ηρακλείου. Τρίτος κώδικας (1669/1673-1750/1767)* [Kadı court of Heraklion. Third codex

tried to address was nothing new. It was, in fact, the product of a tendency that had made its appearance as early as three decades before the incident. In the period from 1730 to 1760, Ottoman and French sources make reference to 16 revolts in the island's three cities, and in 12 of these cases, the involvement of imperial Janissaries is explicitly mentioned.[61] Of these revolts, three took place because of delays in the corps' payments,[62] while the rest were pertinent to non-military financial and political issues, touching on greater problems of the local population, who actively participated in the mobilisations.

One significant development of the decades following 1731 was the growing intolerance of the Janissaries towards the political authority of centrally appointed governors. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, a few exceptions notwithstanding, from 1731 to 1812 the political leverage of the pashas/governors in Crete becomes largely neutralised by the growing power of the Janissary regiments, which became gradually, in the words of an Austrian observer, "absolute masters, recognising only formally the authority of the pasha who is sent by Istanbul".[63] More specifically, in the above-mentioned period, the sources testify to the eruption of 18 revolts against governors, ten of which resulted in their deposition and one even in the murder of one of them.[64] In view of these events

---

(1669/1673-1750/1767)], ed. E. A. Zachariadou (Heraklion 2003), 416-417, 426-427, 429; N. S. Stavrinidis, *Μεταφράσεις τουρκικών ιστορικών εγγράφων αφορώντων εις την ιστορίαν της Κρήτης* [Translations of Turkish historical documents relating to the history of Crete] (Heraklion 1985), Vol. 5, 193-194, 196-200, 207-210.

[61] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (20 February 1731; 28 July 1731; 29 August 1731; 15 October 1733; 13 August 1734); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (27 August 1737; 12 December 1737); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 6 (23 January 1739; 6 February 1739); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 9 (20 January 1749; 8 March 1749; 30 December 1749; 4 September 1751; 29 January 1753); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 10 (4 March 1755; 8 April 1755; 12 September 1755; 6 November 1756); Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes (ADN), Constantinople, Correspondance avec les Echelles (Série D), Candie, Vol. 1 (15 March 1756; 22 October 1756); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol 11 (3 December 1760); BOA, C.AS.1218/54668; TAH.18:264-265; M. Sariyannis, 'Ένας ετερόδοξος μουσουλμάνος στην Κρήτη του 18ου αιώνα [A heterodox Muslim in 18th century Crete]', in K. Lappas, A. Anastasopoulos, and E. Kolovos (eds), *Μνήμη Πηνελόπης Στάθη. Μελέτες ιστορίας και φιλολογίας* [In memory of Penelope Stathi. Studies in history and philology] (Herakleion 2010), 371-385.

[62] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (20 February 1731); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 6 (23 January 1739; 6 February 1739); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 9 (4 September 1751).

[63] "*Die neun Regimenter sind unumschränkte Herren und nehmen den Bascha, der von Konstantinopel gesendet wird, nur der Form wegen auf*"; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 2:183. Sieber refers to nine out of the 11 regiments based on the island in 1817, owing to a temporary exile of two of them when he was travelling in Crete.

[64] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 4 (15 October 1733); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 5 (27 August 1737); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 6 (6 February 1739); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 9 (4 September 1751); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 9 (29 January 1753); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 10 (4 March 1755; 8 April 1755; 12 September 1755); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13 (3 November 1772; 22 May 1773); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 14 (16 May 1775; 3 June 1775; 8 December 1776); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 15 (22 January 1777; 20 April 1777); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 16 (31 December 1779; 6 February 1780; 23 April 1780); ANF, AE,

it comes as no surprise that De Bonneval and Dumas reported in 1783 that the Janissary officers "compete with the authority of the pashas owing to their popularity […] they are always ready to foster a revolt and evoke terror in the pasha, who is afraid that he is going to become their first victim […] the authority of the pashas of two horsetails is even more limited", while the local Muslims "believe they are free when they can massacre without consequences those who govern them".[65] According to the French consular reports, the "republican and rebel"[66] Muslims of Crete had created such a bad reputation for themselves[67] that certain pashas were even bribing the Sublime Porte in order to avoid an unfavourable transfer to the island.[68]

Istanbul often responded to the Janissary-inflicted violence against its chosen governors by the appointment of military officials, such as Janissary aghas and other high-ranking Janissary officers from the capital or other places outside Crete, with orders to punish those responsible for the rebellions. Yet, although such agents often succeeded in chastising groups of rebellious Janissaries and even managed to exile some of the regiments for a few years, insurrections against them were also becoming commonplace.[69] This persistent reaction against centrally selected corps officers led, from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, to the very frequent appointment of Janissary aghas from among the members of the regiments of Crete.[70] It is during that period that the Janissary administration of the island takes on its most decentralised form, allowing a series of local families to acquire an almost hereditary monopoly over its highest echelons.

The examples of Cretan families who came to power through this decentralisation process are plentiful. Their power was mainly grounded in a combination of financial and political activities which brought people from the Cretan countryside and urban centres together under the auspices of Janissary networks. The Karakaş household, for instance,

---

B1, La Canée, Vol. 17 (14 July 1783; 30 September 1783); MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:81-83; V. Raulin, *Description physique de l'île de Crète*, Vol. 1 (Paris 1867), 292; V. Psilakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης από της απωτάτης αρχαιότητος μέχρι των καθ' ημάς χρόνων* [The history of Crete from the remotest antiquity to our time], Vol. 3 (Chania 1909), 86.

[65] De Bonneval and Dumas, *Αναγνώριση*, 213-214, 217. On this issue, see also J. Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Candia. Addressed to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Palmerston, her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, &c. &c. &c.* (London 1840), 154.

[66] "*On dit hautement icy que le consul de France a si souvent dépeint les candiottes comme des républiquains et des rebelles qu'il est enfin parvenu à attirer sur eux la colère du souverain. Je n'ay garde de les désabuser de cette opinion, je souhaitte au contraire qu'ils y persistent, elle ne peut que contenir ces insulaires dans le devoir et à assurer notre repos*", ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 11 (15 September 1762).

[67] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13 (12 April 1771).

[68] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 14 (8 December 1776).

[69] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 6 (23 January 1739); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 1 (5 February 1769); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 12 (2 March 1770); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13 (18 September 1771; 28 September 1771); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 14 (5 February 1776); Sariyannis, 'Rebellious Janissaries', 255-274.

[70] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 17 (12 September 1784).

four members of which had risen to the rank of the Janissary agha of Kandiye, was made up of administrators of various *vakıf*s and *malikâne* aghas of the oil-producing areas of Neapoli and Merambelo in Eastern Crete. Being primarily based in Kandiye, its members opened a soap industry and invested a great amount of capital in shipping, thus creating a vertical line of production and trade in oil and soap which extended from the Cretan countryside to places such as Istanbul, Izmir, Alexandria, and Marseilles.[71] The Janissary networks' support was more than crucial for this development. On the one hand, they ensured the issuing by regiment *vakıf*s of loans for such businesses and contributed to wiping out financial competitors either through tariffs and other measures imposed by the council of the *ağa kapusı* or through Janissary-instigated violent mobilisations.[72] On the other hand, they provided protection from the encroachments of centrally appointed officials through the use of their status of administrative and judicial autonomy and/or by means of intimidation.[73]

A lot of the financial competition that the Janissary networks were trying to eliminate was coming from local Christian merchants. The Janissary networks' opening to local society had led to an increase in number of Cretan converts who joined Islam with an eye to entering the corps. At the same time, though, as one's Muslim identity was increasingly becoming identified with his participation in a group bearing administrative-*cum*-military authority, the *de facto* exclusion of local Christians from this privileged status put the latter in an inferior position. It thus contributed to the creation of a striking divergence in the interests of the two religious groups. Although this separation of interests was also connected with other reasons, such as the one-sided application of the *malikâne* system by Istanbul on the island, which excluded Christians from getting involved in tax collection,[74] the expansion of the Janissary networks was beyond a doubt one of the most important factors that led to it. As a result, although in the 1730s the Christians repeatedly counted on the Janissaries for the projection of their claims to the Ottoman administration, this practice is nowhere to be found from the 1740s onwards. The terms 'non-Muslim' and '*reaya'* become one and the same in both Ottoman and Western sources, the same way that all Cretan Muslims become identified as Janissaries in traveller accounts. Yet, despite the increasing political alienation created between the island's two major religious groups, this separation of interests did not lead to a direct clash between them until the 1770s.

---

[71] For references to various members of the Karakaş family and their activities, see TAH.3:282; TAH.9:283-285; TAH.17:125; TAH.25:43-45, 208; TAH.31:104; TAH.33:27-28; TAH.39:56-58, 187-188; TAH.40:26-27, 91, 145; TAH.41:17, 68-69, 76-77, 134-135, 137-140; TAH.42:7-8, 10-19, 23-25, 30-31, 50, 55-57, 157-158; BOA, C.ADL.92/5520; BOA, MAD.d.17505:51; BOA, HAT.339/19376; BOA, HAT.339/19401; BOA, HAT.720/34322; BOA, HAT.500/24476; BOA, HAT.340/19444; BOA, HAT.340/19444 C; Psilakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης*, 3:242, 627-629; N. S. Stavrinidis, *Ο καπετάν Μιχάλης Κόρακας και οι συμπολεμιστές του* [Kapetan Michalis Korakas and his comrades-in-arms], Vol. 1 (Heraklion 1971), 64-66; K. Kritovoulidis, *Απομνημονεύματα του περί αυτονομίας της Ελλάδος πολέμου των Κρητών* [Memoirs of the war of the Cretans for the autonomy of Greece] (Athens 1859), 377-382; E. Aggelakis, «Ο γενιτσαρισμός εν Σητεία» [The Janissaries in Siteia], *Κρητικαί Μελέται*, 1 (1933), 188; M. Dialynas, 'Ο Δονταραλής' [Dontaralis], *Δρήρος*, 3 (1940), 874.

[72] Such revolts were responsible for the abandonment, on several occasions, of Kandiye by French commercial houses; Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire*, 2:248-249. For the annulment of the plan for the creation of sustainable French soap industries on the island because of the competition with the local networks, see ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 11 (2 May 1761). For a characteristic example of a Janissary mobilisation used to wipe out non-Janissary financial competition, see BOA, HAT.511/25076; TAH.42:153-154; TAH.43:156; Th. Detorakis, 'Γεώργιου Νικολετάκη, χρονικά σημειώματα' [Georgios Nikoletakis, notes about various events], *Κρητολογία*, 5 (1977), 136-137; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 1:492-494; Stavrinidis, *Ο καπετάν Μιχάλης Κόρακας*, 1:17-19.

[73] MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:81-83; Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Candia*, 154.

1770-1812: Masters of the island

The years between 1770 and 1812 represent the apex of the political-*cum*-financial domination of the Janissary networks on Crete, a phenomenon created by the convergence of the above on-going processes with a series of incidents and developments at an imperial and a local level. Maybe the most important of these developments was the 1770 uprising, which came to be known in Greek historiography as the 'Daskalogiannis' Revolution' (Επανάσταση του Δασκαλογιάννη), a by-product of the Russian-instigated Orlov Revolt in the Peloponnese, which took place within the framework of the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768-1774.

When the exclusively Christian population of the mountainous *nahiye* of Sphakia in south-western Crete revolted against the Ottoman regime, the Janissaries, along with other local military forces and reinforcements from outside Crete, were called upon to suppress the rebellion through an expedition that cost thousands of lives in both camps. Although the revolt was mostly confined to the Sphakia area and the vast majority of local Christians did not side with the rebels, its consequences for the relations between the two major religious groups were grave. As the Muslims of the Cretan countryside started fleeing to the urban centres and the number of casualties grew, tension built up and a series of revolts and violent mobilisations against the Christian inhabitants of the three cities broke out.[75] From that point on, the sources testify to an increased polarisation in the relations between the two religious groups,[76] which would culminate with the 1821 Greek War of Independence.

---

[74] For the implementation of the *malikâne* system on Crete, see TAH.15:308-311; A. N. Adıyeke, 'Farming Out of *Mukataa*s as *Malikâne* in Crete in the Eighteenth Century: The Rethymno Case', in Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule*, 233-242.

[75] TAH.31:47, 49, 50, 56, 57, 69-70, 72-73, 74, 78-79, 93, 114; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 12 (29 March 1770 and ff.); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13:*passim*; ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 1 (8 January 1771); Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire*, 2:211-213; V. Laourdas, 'Η επανάστασις των Σφακιανών και ο Δασκαλογιάννης κατά τα έγγραφα του Τουρκικού Αρχείου Ηρακλείου' [The revolution of the Sphakiots and Daskalogiannis according to the documents of the Turkish Archive of Herakleion] *Κρητικά Χρονικά*, 1 (1947), 275-290; G. Papadopetrakis, *Ιστορία των Σφακίων* [History of Sphakia] (Athens 1888), 123-176; Psilakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης*, 3:123.

During the insurrection of the Sphakiots, Janissary rebellions acquired, for the first time, a strong religious justification and symbolism,[77] which was nowhere to be found in the sources before 1770. This religious tension made, without a doubt, the everyday life of the local Christians, who did not have the right to bear arms, more difficult. Yet, the violence of this period was a very complex phenomenon that cannot be examined only through a religion-based approach.[78] In fact, the period between 1770 and 1812 marks a general increase of violent incidents of both an inter and intra-communal nature. The combination of conversion to Islam with the expansion of Janissary networks, gave rise to large waves of migration from the Cretan countryside to the cities. These waves consisted mostly of people of modest means of subsistence who had, on many occasions, severed their bonds with their old social milieu in search of a better life. Treated by the authorities and by the local urban society as outsiders and pariahs,[79] many of them found refuge in the Janissary regiments, creating relations of social and financial dependence. In that light, it comes as no surprise that such converts were often recruited as personal guards of Janissary officers who used them to protect their interests in ways reminiscent of mafia-like practices.[80]

---

[76] The tension built between the two religious groups was demonstrated on various occasions. Upon the appointment of the Russian consul Spalchaber, for example, the Christian inhabitants of Hanya were warned by their Muslim compatriots that "the first among them to visit the consul of Russia was going to be slaughtered" (*Les grecs en revanche, sont dans la joye de leur coeur. Ils auroient certainement démontré cette joye, s'ils ne craignoient d'être assomés [sic] par les turcs qui leur ont signifié que le premier d'entr'eux, qui irroit [sic] chez le consul russe seroit mis en pièces*); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 18 (6 October 1785). For another incident, characteristic of this religious tension, see ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 2 (1 September 1780).

[77] See, for instance, the uprising against the pasha of Kandiye that took place in November 1770 owing to the escape of some Sphakiot prisoners. The attack on the part of the rebels started when their leader, Numan Ağa, "*donna le signal de la rebellion, avec l'étendard sacré du Prophète Mahomet qu'il portoit à la main*"; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 12 (24 November 1770; 4 December 1770).

[78] This approach is typical of the traditional Greek historiography. On this issue, see Spyropoulos, *Προεπαναστατική δυτική Κρήτη*, 97-142.

[79] "*şakavete tasaddi ve sekran oldıkları halde mahallat aralarında müsellah geşt ü güzar ve ibadullahın ehl ve ayal ve evlad ve a'râzlarına taarruz*"; TAH.3:345-346.

[80] "*ferman-i âli yahud ağa mektubı olmadıkça lüzumı yoğiken orta zâbıtanı tama-ı hamlarından naşi şürut-ı islâmı ve erkânı bilmeyüb raiyet hükminde olan bilâ-dirlik burma ta'bir olınur eşhası ortalara idhal ile müceddeden yoldaş yazmamak ve suffe ta'bir olınur mahalle hidmeti sebkat etmedikçe idhal etmemek*"; TAH.3:361-363. "*bir müddetden berü belde-i mezkûrede ikametleri mümted olmakdan naşi derun-ı şehirde ve taşra kuralarda sakin ehl-i şakavete tesahub ve miyanelerine yoldaş yazılmaların tergib ile yol ve erkân bilmez yaramaz eşkiyayı zümrelerine idhal*"; BOA, C.AS.524/21898; TAH.34:163. "*Ceux qui ont commis le plus d'assassinats sont recherchés par les régiments, et jouissent de la protection entière de leurs Chefs, et des Agas, qui s'en servent au besoin, soit pour assommer à coups de bâton, ou faire assassi-*

The period was also marked by an uncontrolled possession of weapons, which, combined with the declining authority of the pashas and the *kadı*s and on account of the protection given by Janissary officers to their clients and guards, granted a status of impunity to a considerable part of the local population and provided many of them with the opportunity to take the law into their own hands.[81] The importance of this last development can be evaluated in its true dimensions only if we take into consideration the insular character of Cretan society, which held – and still holds in certain areas – in great esteem the local tradition of blood-feuds and self-redress.[82] As a result of all of the above, the period after 1770 was dominated by a steep rise of criminality.[83] This phenomenon afflicted both the Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the island, and overwhelmed the Ottoman authorities, who tried in vain to convince the military officers to put an end to it.[84]

Criminality constituted only one aspect of Janissary violence. Another one of its dimensions was the collective mobilisations initiated by the corps on account of political and financial claims. From 1770 to 1812, without counting the numerous uprisings against Christians in the island's three cities which took place during the Sphakiot revolt,

---

ner ceux qui leur déplaisent, soit pout susciter des révoltes contre les officiers superieurs de la Porte, tels que Pachas, Janissaire-Agas, Mufti et Cadi, qu'ils suspendent de leurs fonctions, ou embarquent ignominieusement"; R. Pashley, *Travels in Crete*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge and London 1837), 183.

[81] During this period dozens of complaints on the part of local people and the administration concerning murders committed by Janissaries who were protected by their officers "owing to their solidarity relations" (*zâbitleri dahi kendü cinslerinden olmak mülâbesesiyle*) are to be found in the sources. See, for instance, TAH.32:24; TAH.34:158, 163; TAH.37:8, 29, 31, 40, 42, 109, 137; TAH.40:5-6, 10, 96-97, 104, 105-106, 107, 124, 136-137; BOA, C.ZB.22/1075; Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire*, 2:186.

[82] On the tradition of blood-feuds in Ottoman and Venetian Crete, see Pashley, *Travels in Crete*, 2:245-251. On the modern dimensions of the phenomenon, see A. Tsantiropoulos, *Η βεντέτα* στη *σύγχρονη ορεινή Κεντρική Κρήτη* [Blood-feud in modern mountainous Central Crete] (Athens 2004); idem, 'Collective Memory and Blood Feud; the Case of Mountainous Crete', *Crimes and Misdemeanours* 2 (2008), 60-80; Spyropoulos, *Προεπαναστατική δυτική Κρήτη*, 107-125.

[83] This increase in violent incidents is often referred to in French sources as a "violent crisis" (*crise violente*); MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 20:334-337.

[84] See, for instance, the 1800 negotiations between the Governor of Kandiye, Hakkı Mehmed Pasha, and the local military elite pertaining to this issue; TAH.37:42, 43, 49-50. The Governor wrote in one of his orders "Since my arrival to Kandiye I feel great pain seeing the tragic condition to which the poor subjects of the *nahiye* have been reduced" (*Kandiye'ye geleli dermande nahiye sakin reayaların haline vâkıf oldıkça ciğerim kebab olmada olub*); TAH.37:49-50. Also, see the following reports sent to the Porte in 1810 by another governor in search of a solution to the problem; BOA, HAT.650/31789 N; BOA, HAT.650/31789 E; BOA, HAT.650/31789 i; BOA, HAT.650/31789 C; BOA, HAT.650/31789 L; BOA, HAT.650/31789 M; BOA, HAT.650/31789 G; BOA, HAT.650/31789 B; BOA, HAT.650/31789 J. In 1808, the French Consul of Hanya comments on the incapability of a certain pasha of stopping criminality, and writes that during his one-year administration more than 200 assassinations had been committed; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:69-70.

the sources make reference to a staggering 37 Janissary revolts and collective violent mobilisations.[85] It is during this period that the long process of popularisation and 'demilitarisation' of the Janissaries of Crete reaches its completion. Despite the continuing delays in Janissary payments,[86] in 1779 the last Janissary revolts on account of salary-related issues took place.[87] From that point on, it becomes clear that the Janissary mobilisations did not reflect the concerns of a professional army any more, but only those of certain local interest groups and, sometimes, of larger parts of the Cretan Muslim population. This can be easily explained: the *taslakçı*s' numbers had been increasing to such an extent that the province's salaried soldiers ended up constituting only a small fraction of the total Janissary population of Crete. Besides, even the real Janissaries were progressively becoming uninterested in their military wages, which they saw as mere supplements to their income from their other financial activities in the local market. That was owing to the fact that their salaries had been frozen since at least 1740,[88] despite the decreasing silver content of the *akçe*.[89]

---

[85] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 12 (25 October 1770, 24 November 1770, 4 December 1770); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13 (10 July 1771; 14 October 1771; 10 December 1771; 3 November 1772; 23 January 1773; 26 April 1773; 27 October 1773); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 1 (16 October 1771); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, vol. 14 (10 March 1774; 5 February 1776; 21 September 1776; 10 October 1776; 8 December 1776; 14 June 1775; 24 August 1775; December 1775); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 15 (22 January 1777; 20 April 1777); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 16 (14 May 1779; 16 May 1779; 10 July 1779; 31 December 1779; 23 April 1780); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 11:79-81; BOA, MAD.d.17942:83-84; BOA, C.AS.1141/50724; TAH.7:274-275; TAH.31:61-62; TAH.32:51-68, 81-92, 102, 132-134; A. Anastasopoulos, 'Political Participation, Public Order and Monetary Pledges (*Nezir*) in Ottoman Crete', in Eleni Gara, M. Erdem Kabadayı, and Christoph K. Neumann (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011), 127-142; De Bonneval-Dumas, *Αναγνώριση*, 217-218; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 17 (14 July 1783; 30 September 1783); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 12:100-103; ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 2 (17 June 1784); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 13:32, 36-37, 39-40; ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 14:15-20; ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 18 (10 April 1785; 10 May 1785; 30 July 1785); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 19 (28 April 1786; 30 August 1791); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 15:13-14, 19-20; ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 2 (14 May 1786; 21 May 1786;1 June 1786; 17 June 1786; 14 October 1786; 14 August 1787; 26 February 1810); TAH.34:158, 163; BOA, C.AS.524/21898; BOA, C.AS.332/13769; BOA, C.AS.534/22328; BOA, C.AS.1093/48239; BOA, C.ADL.10/689; General State Archives of Greece (GSAG), Archives of Rethymno Prefecture (ARP), R.-F.210A/92; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 20:245-267, 294-295, 334-337; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:23-43, 49-54, 69-70; 81-83 and *passim*; S. Xanthoudidis, 'Ανέκδοτον επεισόδιον εν Κρήτη επί Τουρκοκρατίας' [Unpublished incident in Crete during Turkish rule], in N. Panagiotakis and Th. Detorakis (eds), *Στεφάνου Ξανθουδίδου Μελετήματα* [Studies of Stephanos Xanthoudidis] (Herakleio 1980), 74-75; Raulin, *Description physique*, 296; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 1:108.

[86] BOA, C.AS.1031/45233.

[87] ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 16 (14 May 1779; 16 May 1779; 10 July 1779; 31 December 1779; 23 April 1780); ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 11:3.

The demilitarisation of the Cretan Janissaries also becomes evident through their increasing refusal to send soldiers outside Crete in order to fight in imperial wars. In the years from 1777 to 1792, impressments of Cretan soldiers took place without much resistance.[90] Yet, from that point onwards, local society would start to react to any attempts on the part of Istanbul to recruit Cretan Muslims for the Ottoman navy. This led the central government, following a series of incidents directed against its delegates, eventually to acquiesce in accepting money instead of recruits from the island.[91]

This reaction reflects the pressure that the Cretan population was putting on the local notables who were put in charge of the recruitment process by Istanbul. These aghas, most of whom were high-ranking Janissaries, were not willing to clash with their clients, who, in turn, did not want to see their children go to war. In other words, the sources testify to a bottom-up process of negotiation inside the corps, which directly influenced its overall stance towards imperial politics. Such internal negotiations and conflicts are often visible in this period and reveal a multi-layered and multi-centred structure of the Janissary networks. Thus, when referring to the latter's politics in Crete, we should bear in mind that we are not talking about a homogeneous or strictly hierarchical system of decision-making, but rather about the interaction of a series of groups of interests which could, depending on the circumstances, converge or diverge.[92]

The corps' financial was analogous to and interdependent with its political influence. The Christian uprising of 1770 gave the opportunity to some of the Janissary entrepreneurs of Crete to take hold of the island's flourishing soap industry. In 1750, 70% of Kandiye's soap production belonged to local Christians.[93] Yet, following the above uprising, a series of Janissary revolts led to the destruction of Kandiye's soap factories and facilitated their gradual, but complete, acquisition by Muslims.[94] As a result, by 1811, only four persons, three of whom were high-ranking military officers, were in control of all local soap factories.[95] Similar developments can be seen in the cases of interest loans and maritime commerce, in which Muslim entrepreneurs with Janissary affiliations rose as the main rivals of the French. Already in the 1790s local Muslim maritime activity had been developing rapidly,[96] yet it was Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 and the subsequent imprisonments of French diplomats and merchants that gave the opportunity to the Cretan Janissary networks to take over a large part of the latter's lucrative commerce.[97] The same happened with the control of interest loans, another privileged domain of the French. The loans given by Janissary *vakıf*s to local businessmen, many of whom were old clients of French creditors,[98] sky-rocketed in the beginning of the nineteenth century, as can be deduced both by Kandiye's probate inventories (*tereke defterleri*) and by the confiscation registers of regiment properties in 1826.[99]

---

[88] Cf. BOA, MAD.d.6568:363-384, 389-403, 663-695 with BOA, MAD.d.6280:567-584, 691-704, 915-940 and BOA, MAD.d.6351:419-432, 603-620.

[89] Pamuk, *A Monetary History*, 162-164, 188-195.

[90] TAH.19:283-288; TAH.29:128-129, 161; TAH.34:51-53, 110-111, 114-115.

[91] TAH.39:187-188, 191; TAH.40:37-38, 46-47, 55, 109; BOA, KK.d.827:7, 31; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:253-254; Spyropoulos, *Προεπαναστατική δυτική Κρήτη*, 170, 213.

[92] See, for instance, the following occasions on which different interest groups inside the corps clash with each other: BOA, C.AS.1141/50724; TAH.7:274-275; TAH.31:61-62· TAH.32:51-68, 81-92, 102, 132-134; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:23-43, 49-54, 81-83 and *passim*. Also, see the relevant comment of Kritovoulidis, *Απομνημονεύματα*, ιδ΄-ις΄.

[93] TAH.3:286; T.A.H.37:132; V. Kremmydas, *Οι σαπουνοποιίες της Κρήτης στο 18ο αιώνα* [The soap factories of Crete in the eighteenth century] (Athens 1974), 39.

[94] ADN, Constantinople, Série D, Candie, Vol. 1 (16 October 1771); ANF, AE, B1, La Canée, Vol. 13 (14 October 1771; 10 December 1771).

[95] TAH.40: 110.

Another very important development which gave momentum to the political and financial activities of the Janissaries of Crete after the 1770s was the rise in Ottoman politics of the Cretan *valide kethüdası* Yusuf Ağa. Yusuf, who in the course of his career managed to become one of the richest and most influential individuals in the Empire, had established a solid network of relations with Crete, where he and his relatives owned vast properties and very profitable tax-collection contracts. He was one of the most important investors in the oil and soap industry of the island and a close collaborator of the local Janissary elite.[100] Being virtually part of the imperial household and very close to Selim III, he often used his position in order to depose and punish those officials who acted against the interests of his affiliates.[101] His presence in the central government thus acted as a guarantee of the smooth continuation of the financial-*cum*-political activities of the

---

[96] MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 20:231-233.

[97] TAH.37:14; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 20:245-267; V. Kremmydas, 'Χαρακτηριστικές όψεις του εξωτερικού εμπορίου της Κρήτης (τέλος 18ου και αρχές 19ου αιώνα)' [Characteristic aspects of the external trade of Crete (end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries)], *Ο Ερανιστής*, 16 (1980), 194-195; Tancoigne, *Voyage à Smyrne*, 2:21-22.

[98] Cf., for instance, TAH.45:98-117 with ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 3:65-66 and Y. Triantafyllidou-Baladié, 'Οι πιστώσεις στις εμπορικές συναλλαγές στην Κρήτη τον 18ο αιώνα' [Credit in the commercial transactions in Crete in the 18th century], in *Πεπραγμένα Ε΄ Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, Vol. 3 (Herakleio 1985), 227.

[99] TAH.3:269; TAH.19:358-359, 381-383; TAH.32:78-79; TAH.33:46-47; TAH.34:102, 168-170; TAH.37:11, 40, 43-44, 47, 73, 94, 134-135; TAH.38:27-29, 86-87; TAH.40:155; T.A.H.41:14, 17, 27, 35, 37, 59-60, 63-64, 124, 137-140; TAH.42:12-19, 70-72, 165-166; TAH.43:59, 67, 68, 79, 86, 93-94, 98, 112-113, 128, 180; TAH.45:98-117.

[100] For the life of Yusuf Ağa and his property in Crete, see TAH.19:333-334; TAH.33:65; TAH.39:138-139; TAH.39:138-139, 179-180; TAH.43:125-126; İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, 'Nizam-ı Cedid Ricalinden Valide Sultan Kethüdası Meşhur Yusuf Ağa ve Kethüdazade Arif Efendi', *Belleten*, 20 (1956), 485-525; S. J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807* (Cambridge 1971), 88-89 and *passim*; Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo*, 39-40; Stavrinidis, *Ο καπετάν Μιχάλης Κόρακας*, 1:40-42, 45; Olivier, *Travels in the Ottoman Empire*, 1:209-210; M. Sariyannis, 'Μια πηγή για την πνευματική ζωή της οθωμανικής Κρήτης του 18ου αιώνα' [A source about spiritual life of the eighteenth century Ottoman Crete], *Αριάδνη*, 13 (2007), 87-88.

[101] Kritovoulidis, *Απομνημονεύματα*, ιε΄.

Cretan Janissary networks and for the impunity of their clients.[102] Yet, all of the above was about to change.

1812-1821: Fighting for the established order

In 1807, Selim III was dethroned and his favoured Yusuf Ağa was executed, while Mahmud II's ascent to the throne in 1808 gave a new dynamic to Ottoman politics. Mahmud, who was a supporter of the creation of a centralising, authoritarian Ottoman polity that left little space for centrifugal powers to evolve, quickly realised that the various provincial power-brokers, be they *ayan*s or Janissaries, were standing in his way. In his effort to rid himself of the political opposition in the provinces, he decided to use as a weapon a number of devoted imperial agents who were to be sent to various *sancak*s with orders to intervene violently in local politics. According to Şükrü Ilıcak, this 'de-*ayan*ization' project was launched at the beginning of the second decade of the nineteenth century, resulting throughout the next years in dozens of violent clashes between these centrally appointed governors and various provincial magnates.[103]

In Crete, the governor who was called upon to initiate this process in 1812 was Hacı Osman Pasha or, as the Cretans called him, the 'Strangler' (Πνιγάρης). Osman was also followed by other disciplinarian governors, most of whom acted in an extremely violent fashion, always under the direct supervision and support of the Sultan. Mahmud II, in his dozens of *hatt-ı hümayun*s, openly prompted his pashas to show no mercy to anyone who resisted their policy, no matter what his social class or military rank was, and no matter if he was protected by the Janissary status of impunity or not. The *pasha*s, on the other hand, went to Crete ready for war, bringing with them huge entourages which consisted of several hundred soldiers.[104]

Tancoigne, who was in Hanya when Hacı Osman Pasha arrived to Crete, describes the first months of his rule as follows:

> Upon his arrival, Osman sought all the assassins who had been infesting the city [Hanya] and its countryside for years. More than 60 were killed by his exterminating sword. An even greater number managed to escape his inexorable justice by fleeing. In a period of three months he

---

[102] In 1805, the French consul commented on the neutralising effect that the actions of Yusuf and his family had on any attempts of the governors of Crete to contain the Janissaries of the island. He writes about the "*prépondérence à Constantinople*" that certain aghas of Crete had, and mentions that, following a revolt and a murder committed by Janissaries in Hanya, "*deux fermans sont vénus pour la punition des coupables, et l'on a vu en même temps l'un des assasins arriver de Constantinople muni de lettres de recommandation du frere du validé kiahia, plus puissantes que tous les fermans*"; MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 20:334-337. On Yusuf's pro-Janissary intervention in Cretan politics, also see ADN, Constantinople, Série D, La Canée, Vol. 15:19-20.

[103] H. S. Ilicak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence (1821-1826)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011, 27-99.

[104] BOA, HAT.500/24476; BOA, HAT.868/38598.

> finally restored peace and the law in an area which seemed not to recognise other authorities than that of the leaders who had torn it apart… The terror and the horror were widespread. Even the oldest crimes, those considered to be forgotten, were investigated and punished immediately with the same severity as the most recent ones.[105]

Indeed, the Mahmudian governors' draconian rule succeeded in reducing criminality on the island.[106] As far as the collective mobilisations of the Janissary networks, on the other hand, are concerned, their tactic had the exact opposite results.

Although the Mahmudian policies were a terrible blow for the Cretan Janissaries, soon after the first shock, they started regrouping and flexing their muscles once again. The period from 1812 to 1821 became a time of unprecedented clashes between them and the Ottoman governors. The pashas, in order to break the bonds between the officers of Crete and the local population, tried to weaken the whole set of privileges that jelled the Janissary networks together. They systematically violated the jurisdictional autonomy of the corps, they ordered the death of hundreds of simple soldiers, and they even caused the execution and confiscation of the properties of some of their most prominent leaders.[107] Through the co-operation of the central Janissary administration, the governors succeeded in prompting the appointment of persons of non-local origins to the highest ranks of the Cretan Janissary hierarchy.[108] Moreover, they attempted, and sometimes succeeded in this, to transfer temporarily the island's most rebellious regiments to other Ottoman provinces.[109] They even went as far as to ask Istanbul for the execution and replacement of plain *orta* officers by centrally appointed ones,[110] an extraordinary measure which aimed at attacking the networks at their core, the regimental level, threatening their local character and *ipso facto* their very existence.

---

[105] Tancoigne, *Voyage à Smyrne*, 2:29-30. Also, see the French consular report on the issue, MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:288-290.

[106] Sieber writes in 1817: "Since then [1812] the roads in the whole of Crete are very safe and, during my one-year stay, I was not warned once of bandits, which always stands as a proof for the greatest of safety. The son of a Turk, from whom I was renting a house and who was meeting with me regularly, complained to my escort that this year's Bayram was awful. 'Can you imagine', he asked, 'that not even one Greek was shot this year; In the old days it was fun to see the Greeks rolling on the ground'"; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 1:502. Also, see MAE, CCC, La Canée, Vol. 21:297-298.

[107] During this period, the judicial records of Kandiye are full of probate registers of Janissaries. Many of them contain the phrase "died by hanging" (*masluben fevt olan*). For the cases of various Janissaries and aghas who were executed and/or their properties confiscated, see TAH.42:7-8, 10-25, 28-30, 50, 55-59, 63, 92-95, 157-158, 175-188, 199-201, 202-203; BOA, C.DH.239/11906; BOA, HAT.339/19376; BOA, HAT.339/19401; BOA, HAT.720/34322; BOA, HAT.500/24476; BOA, C.AS.598/25213; BOA, HAT.340/19444; BOA, HAT.340/19444 C; BOA, HAT.341/19513; BOA, HAT.519/25364; Detorakis, 'Χρονικά σημειώματα', 133-135; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 1:316, 420; Tancoigne, *Voyage à Smyrne*, 2:29-30.

[108] BOA, HAT.500/24476; BOA, HAT.340/19444; BOA, HAT.340/19444 C; BOA, HAT.341/19513; BOA, HAT.1339/52333; BOA, HAT.1338/52214; BOA, HAT.720/34346; BOA, HAT.753/35540; Psilakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης*, 3:190; Kritovoulidis, *Απομνημονεύματα*, ιε΄; Detorakis, 'Χρονικά σημειώματα', 135.

[109] BOA, HAT.1339/52333; BOA, HAT.339/19376; BOA, HAT.339/19401; BOA, HAT.500/24476; BOA, C.AS.598/25213; BOA, HAT.511/25076; TAH.42:153-154; TAH.43:156; Th. Detora-

It is important to underline that, although several Janissary revolts against Ottoman governors have been taking place even before 1812, after that year there is an obvious change in their intensity, their scope, and the type of mobilisation that fuelled them. The lightning-fast purges that Mahmud II orchestrated in Crete spurred the Janissary networks into collective action and channelled the much more haphazard and fragmented violence of the period before 1812 into a consistent fight for a common political purpose. Throughout this process, the Janissaries undoubtedly lost part of their previous power, but they also became much more united and self-aware than before, claiming, for the first time, the right to be recognised as the official representatives of the local Muslim population.

The changing wording used in Ottoman documents stands as proof of this reality. When, for instance, a governor of Kandiye tried in 1814 to exile two regiments which had revolted against his predecessor, the above-mentioned Hacı Osman Pasha, the Janissaries called for meetings in their barracks, where everyone (*sıgar ü kibar*) signed an agreement. The population gathered outside the *paşa kapusı*, where the representatives of the five regiments of the city presented themselves in front of the governor and declared that

> the punishment of one of us equals the punishment of all of us. According to our agreement, either all of our comrades who belong to the five regiments of the garrison of Kandiye will be exiled together with the area's entire Muslim population or our governor, under the command of whom we are, will give pardon and exonerate our regiments which are being banished.[111]

As mentioned above, extended popular participation in Janissary mobilisations was not something new. Yet, both the official admission of governors that by confronting the Janissaries they were, in fact, dealing with the area's entire Muslim population,[112] and the official claim of the Janissaries that they were one and the same with the latter are nowhere to be found in Ottoman documents of earlier periods. Before 1812, all official sources were vaguely treating the Muslim population as something separate from the Janissaries. Thus, the *taslakçı*s were always represented as marginal groups of bandits, usually converts, detached from the rest of society.[113] At the same time, the Janissaries never officially admitted their popular support, as they were well aware that it was the result of the illegal admittance on their part of thousands of pseudo-Janissaries to their

---

kis, 'Χρονικά σημειώματα', 136-137; Sieber, *Reise nach der Insel Kreta*, 1:492-494; Stavrinidis, *Ο καπετάν Μιχάλης Κόρακας*, 1:17-19.

[110] BOA, HAT.720/34322.

[111] "*birimizin hakkında zuhûr eden te'dib cümlemiz hakklarında olmış gibidir mukteza-yı ittifakımız üzere Kandiye kalesi muhafazasında mevcud olan beş orta kâffeten yoldaşlarımız ve ahali-i memleket ile beraber kalkub gideriz ve yahud maiyetine memur oldığımız muhafiz paşa nefy ve iclâl olınan ortalarımızı afüv ve ıtlak etdirir*"; BOA, HAT.500/24476.

[112] BOA, HAT.720/34322; BOA, HAT.1338/52214; BOA, HAT.511/25076.

[113] See, for instance, TAH.3:345-346; BOA, C.AS.524/21898.

ranks. It was the frontal collision created by the new political stance of Istanbul which led to the overt recognition by both sides of the inextricable relation of the local Muslim society with the Janissaries, a recognition which would continue until the suppression of the corps. When in 1826 the *Vak'a-i Hayriye* was announced in Crete, for instance, Mehmed Ali of Egypt consulted with the governors of the three cities and expressed his doubts to the Sultan concerning the application of the measure in Crete, which was then being ravaged by the Greek War of Independence. His comment was that "their [the island's three cities'] Muslim population is the strength of the Janissaries and, according to them [the governors], the zeal of the Janissaries is the zeal of Islam, it is acceptable and appropriate under the circumstances".[114]

Besides the official acknowledgment of this entanglement that the various references to the popular support of the Janissaries demonstrate, such references are also reflections of an intensifying political clustering of the Muslim society around the corps. As explained above, until 1812, the Janissary networks behaved mainly as the sum of a number of separate patronage sub-networks which could either co-operate with or diverge from one another. Such groups of interests had been attacked several times – mostly unsuccessfully – by representatives of the central Ottoman administration. Yet, Mahmud II's policy did not target only specific parties inside the Cretan Janissary organisation. Instead, it violently contested the very fundamental privileges and rules which formed the bedrock of the political and financial strength of the corps itself. In other words, it threatened to bring about, in a very abrupt way, major changes to the lives of thousands of Cretans who were dependent upon the Janissaries for the preservation or amelioration of their social status, for the protection and funding of their financial activities. The gravity of this external threat surpassed by far that of any local grudges and, consequently, brought the various Janissary sub-networks closer to each other in defence. As a result, when the Greek War of Independence broke out in 1821, the Muslim population of Crete was, at a political level, more united than ever before.

1821-1826: The fall

It is very hard to calculate the extent to which the political banding together of the Cretan Muslims affected the way they reacted to the military conflict that erupted between them and their Christian compatriots. One thing is for sure, though: the 1821 revolution found the Janissaries completely unprepared for war and in a very vulnerable position. As the military conflict quickly spread from the Sphakia area to the rest of the Cretan *nahiye*s, Muslims started flocking from the countryside to the island's urban centres. In the next three years, the news of massacres of Muslims by Christian fighters led to a series of violent Janissary mobilisations inside the cities which would increase the polarisation between the two religious groups even further.[115]

---

[114] "*bunların ahalisi kavi-yi yeniçeri olub indlerinde yeniçerilik gayreti gayret-i islâmiyet müreccah ve hasbe'l-mevaki*"; BOA, HAT.290/17385.

[115] BOA, HAT.747/35284; BOA, HAT.843/37888 G; BOA, HAT.843/37888 J; BOA,

On the battlefield, it quickly became obvious that the Janissaries' gradual demilitarisation had taken its toll on their military performance. In September 1821, three months after the eruption of the revolution on the island, the governor of Hanya, Lütfüllah Pasha, sent an angry letter to the Sultan, in which he explained in detail the military inefficacy of the Cretan soldiers, asked for reinforcements, and expressed the fear that "God forbid, should help come by foreign powers to the traitors of the *millet* of the *Rum*s, they [the soldiers] will not be able to last for more than three days against the enemy".[116] In 1822, thousands of Egyptian and non-Cretan Ottoman troops landed on the island in order to support the besieged Cretan military forces. In the presence of this tremendous power and being under constant attack by the advancing Christians, the Janissary networks realised that they could not continue to pursue their goal of political domination over the centrally appointed Ottoman officials any longer.[117] Their fight quickly turned into one of survival and their only hope of winning the war became the Mahmudian and Egyptian forces. When, in 1826, the suppression of the corps was officially promulgated, no one dared to react.[118]

Although in the edict announcing the abolition of the corps the Janissaries were denounced as rebels, spies, crypto-Christians, etc.,[119] the main justification used by the cen-

---

HAT.904/39704; N. Stavrinidis, 'Τουρκοκρατία' [Period of Turkish Rule], in S. Spanakis (ed.), *Το Ηράκλειον και ο νομός του* [Heraklion and its prefecture] (Heraklion and Athens 1971), 197; S. Motakis (ed.), *Συλλογή εγγράφων Ζαχαρία Πρακτικίδη (ή Τσιριγιώτη). Έγγραφα ετών 1810-1834* [Collection of documents of Zacharias Praktikidis (or Tsirigotis). Documents of the years 1810-1834] (Chania 1953), 12-14; Pashley, *Travels in Crete*, 2:185-187; Ch. R. Scott, *Rambles in Egypt and Candia, with Details of the Military Power and Resources of Those Countries and Observations on the Government Policy, and Commercial System of Mohammed Ali*, Vol. 2 (London 1837), 335.

[116] "*maazallahü te'alâ, sair düvel tarafindan Rum milleti hainlerine bir iane ederi olsa üç gün mukabele-i âdada paydar olamayacakları*"; BOA, HAT.868/38598. For the letters sent to the Sultan by the Janissaries and the rest of the local authorities in response to Lütfüllah's accusations, see BOA, HAT.936/40498 B; BOA, HAT.865/38559 E.

[117] For analytical descriptions of the campaigns as witnessed by the Christian side, see Psilakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης*, 3:333 and ff.; Kritovoulidis, *Απομνημονεύματα*, 1-370; N. V. Tomadakis and A. A. Papadaki (eds), *Κρητικά ιστορικά έγγραφα, 1821-1830* [Cretan historical documents, 1821-1830] 2 vols (Athens 1974), *passim*. For accounts of the damage caused by the war and its consequences for the Cretan Muslim population, see Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Candia*, 155; C. A. Vakalopoulos, 'Quelques informations statistiques sur la Crète avant et après la révolution de 1821', in *Πεπραγμένα του Δ΄ Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, Vol. 3 (Athens 1981), 30. For Ottoman sources referring to military campaigns until 1826, see TAH.43:167-170; BOA, HAT.868/38598; BOA, C.AS.847/36182; BOA, HAT.936/40498 B; BOA, HAT.865/38559 E; BOA, HAT.747/35284; BOA, HAT.865/38559 A; BOA, HAT.915/39931 B; BOA, C.AS.16/674; BOA, HAT.843/37888 I; BOA, HAT.858/38284; BOA, HAT.904/39704.

[118] For the absence of reaction on the part of the Janissaries of Crete following the announcement of the *Vak'a-i Hayriye*, see MAE, CCC, Turquie, Vol. 2:38-42.

[119] "*bu defa tutılub siyaset olanların içlerinde kefereden kolında hem yetmiş beş nişanı ve hem gâvur haçı bulınarak işte içlerine ecnas-ı muhtelif karışmış ve iman içlerinde bu makule kefereden ehl-i İslâm kiyafetinde casuslar bulınduğı*"; TAH.45:82-85.

tral government was a military one. The document made explicit reference to the corps' 100-year-old military decline and stressed its inefficiency during the 1787-1792 war. Yet, if we take a closer look at the measures promulgated by it, we understand that, at least in the way they were imposed in the case of Crete, their goals were much more political and financial than military.

The edict announced the creation of the army which would replace the Janissary corps, the *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye* (Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad). It also specified that the new corps would be manned with ex-Janissaries, who were to keep their old salaries, use their old barracks, and serve at the same posts as before, while no measures whatsoever were taken concerning the soldiers' training. In military terms, such measures were barely changing anything but the name of the corps, thus fully justifying the expression "from now on the *name* of the Janissaries is being removed and replaced by the *title* 'Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad'" used in the document.[120] The superficial nature of the 1826 military reform in Crete was underlined by the governors of the province as well; in a joint petition to the Porte they complained that "since, of course, the soldiers enrolled in the *Asakir-i Mansure* will have to come from the suppressed corps, it is obvious that they will be useless".[121] Yet, although no significant military changes were brought about by the *Vak'a-i Hayriye* in Crete, the same cannot be said with regard to the local army's non-military functions.

Unlike what happened with the military-orientated aspects of the reform, to which the Ottoman sources devote no more than a few lines, dozens of documents refer to the confiscation of the Janissary corps' *vakıf* properties. Only the confiscation record of the imperial regiments of Kandiye are extant today. Yet, even from this document alone it is easy to understand the tremendous economic power that the Janissary regiments had acquired in Crete. In the barracks of only five of them, without taking into account their real estate property and with the money in cash of one of the regiments having mysteriously disappeared, the source lists a property of approximately 1,000,000 *guruş*. Two thirds of this sum were recorded as debts of hundreds of individuals to the Janissary *vakıf*s in the form of loans.[122]

The most direct consequence of this confiscation was the disconnection of the financial interests of thousands of Cretans from resources controlled until then by the island's military elite. Moreover, the declaration of 1826 noted that the old 'Law of the Janissaries' would be replaced by a new one.[123] According to the 'Law of the Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad' (*Kanunname-i Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye*), any offences of the *Asakir-i Mansure* troops in the provinces would, from that point on, be reported to the local governors, who would now be responsible for their punishment.[124] This measure negated in practice the administrative and jurisdictional autonomy which the Cretan soldiers enjoyed until 1826, as well as the protection that any remaining ex-Janissary officers could offer to their old clients.

---

[120] "*Fimabad yeniçerinin namı külliyen ortadan kalkub anın yerine ma'lûm Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye unvanıyla din ü devlete yaracak ve gaza ve cihada düşmana cevab verecek*"; ibid.

[121] "*Kandiye ve Resmo Asakir-i Mansure namıyla yazdıkları neferat elbette ocak-ı merfu takımından olmak lâzım geleceğine binaen işe yaramayacağı tebeyyün etmiş*"; BOA, HAT.289/17345.

[122] TAH.45:98-117.

[123] "*Ocağın isim ve resim terkini ve kâffeten kanun-ı kadimi âhir heyetiyle tecdid olınarak...*"; TAH.45:82-85.

The Ottoman government also declared that in order for ex-Janissaries to continue receiving their wages they had to first present their old titles of payment to the central administration, a measure intended to discourage any Janissary-pretenders from joining the new corps.[125] Finally, the new army was given almost none of the provincial administrative duties of the Janissaries. The abolished councils of the *ağa kapusı*s were not replaced by any equivalent military institution, while the new councils of the provincial governors included no military officers whatsoever.[126] In fact, of all the non-military functions of the Janissaries, the only one that was preserved and transferred to the *Asakir-i Mansure* of Crete was policing, and even that eventually passed into the hands of the soldiers of the Egyptian administration. In other words, although the abolition of the Janissary corps in Crete was officially presented as a purely military reform, its real emphasis was on the suppression of any official and unofficial non-military activities which had enabled the development of the financial and political power of the Janissary networks in the province.

III. CONCLUSION

The year 1826 did not mark just the abolition of an old corps and the creation of a new one. Rather, it represented a radical change in the Ottoman government's perception of what the role of an imperial army ought to be in a changing world. In the early modern era, the military included the vast majority of the Ottoman state's employees and had institutional functions and duties which were indispensable for the Empire's administration and economy. The term '*asker*', used for the members of the entire Ottoman governing class, is, after all, a reflection of this inextricable relationship.

Although war was only one of the many challenges it had to face, most of the Ottoman army's non-military functions are not evaluated by historians in their own right as fundamental features of an early modern institution. Instead they are treated as deviations from the army's 'true' purpose, i.e., conducting war, and as products either of an exogenous institutional decline or of private initiatives and interests. Yet, it was some of the oldest non-military functions and institutions of the Janissaries, such as their administrative role in the provinces, their policing and judicial duties, and their common funds, which played the most important role in the development of their Empire-wide networks and helped them become major political players in both the Empire's centre and periphery. It should, thus, come as no surprise that the Mahmudian reforms gave great emphasis to the transformation of the imperial army from a multifunctional establishment into an institution with strictly military functions under the absolute control of the central government.

---

[124] *Kanunname-i Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye* (Istanbul 1829), 136-137.

[125] H. A. Reed, 'The Destruction of the Janissaries by Mahmud II in June, 1826', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures, 1951, 336.

[126] For various references to the composition of the new administrative councils of the three cities, see *İA*, s.v. 'Girit' (C. Tukin); A. Anastasopoulos, 'Η Κρήτη στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο' [Crete in the Ottoman context], *Κρητολογικά Γράμματα*, 17 (2001), 105-106; Bowring, *Report on Egypt and Candia*, 155-156; Peponakis, *Εξισλαμισμοί και επανεκχριστιανισμοί*, 152-153; Scott, *Rambles in Egypt and Candia*, 294, 344-345; L. Cass, *An Historical, Geographical and Statistical Account of the Island of Candia, or Ancient Crete* (Richmond 1839), 12; M. Chourmouzis, *Κρητικά. Συνταχθέντα και εκδοθέντα υπό Μ. Χουρμούζη Βυζάντιου* [Subjects pertaining to Crete. Compiled and published by M. Chourmouzis Vyzantios] (Athens 1842), 20-21.

Another goal of the Mahmudian regime was to tame the Empire's provincial forces. In this light, when examining the *Vak'a-i Hayriye*, it is crucial to understand that, albeit formally Istanbul-based, the imperial Janissary corps was, by 1826, essentially a provincial institution. According to Mouradgea d'Ohsson, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the number of Janissary *orta*s installed in the capital was only 43,[127] out of the corps' 195 regiments.[128] As explained in this article, the remaining 152 *orta*s had been appointed permanently to specific locations, gradually developing their own regional networks and interests. At the same time, though, they remained entangled with one another and with their central organisation by means of a common institutional and legitimising frame of reference.

When studying the history of Janissary units and networks in different Ottoman provinces, one can spot both similarities and differences in their development. This, after all, is the quintessence of the decentralisation processes explained above. One should not set out to look for absolute uniformity, when the main element which defined the evolution of the Janissary corps in its later phase was the adjustment of various regiments to the cultural, financial, and political milieu of dozens of different areas.

The case of Crete demonstrates the ways in which provincial Janissary networks could be formed in areas with a frontier status and a military-orientated administration, in places at a great distance from Istanbul, large Muslim and Christian communities, and a strong contact with the West. It gives us valuable information on the processes which led to these networks' popularisation and political evolution, on the circumstances under which their interests could converge or diverge, on the benefits they offered to their members and to local economies, but also on the problems and conflicts they created at a local and imperial level. It showcases, at the same time, that the decentralisation of Janissary politics did not bring about a rupture with imperial politics. Instead, Janissary political initiatives on the periphery could be influenced by developments in Istanbul and transmitted from one provincial city to another. It thus underlines the need to examine the Janissary establishment as an organic whole in its diversity. Yet, it also acts as a reminder of the fact that we have to be very careful with generalisations when examining the history of the corps. The latter was a very complex institution and its trajectory of decentralisation described here only made it even more colourful and difficult to analyse. It is only through a case-by-case study that we will be able to put more pieces of this puzzle together.

---

[127] Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, 7:312; The number rises to 77 if we add the 34 regiments of the *acemi oğlan*.

[128] According to d'Ohsson, although the total number of Janissary regiments was officially 196, the 65th cemaat had been accused of the murder of Sultan Osman II and abolished by Sultan Murad IV in 1623; Mouradgea d'Ohsson, Tableau général, 7:312. In its place, the Janissary payrolls register the soldiers of the 34 sekban regiments.

The examination of the Janissaries on the Ottoman periphery holds the key to our better understanding of a series of crucial political processes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Being a centrally-based institution with branches in most of the Empire's provinces and the ability to incorporate all sorts of different social elements in its ranks, the Janissary corps was one of the best conductors for the transmission of people and ideas in the Ottoman state. As such, not only did it give an imperial dimension to provincial politics, it also played an important role in the creation of networks which transcended localities and social strata, and greatly contributed to the popularisation of political participation in the Empire. At the same time, though, Janissary networks were formed on the basis of religious, or sometimes even ethnic, criteria which could create tensions and act as incubators of political conflicts.

Historians of the Ottoman Empire often tend to see the evolution of the Janissary corps' political identity as a, more or less, homogeneous and linear process, largely defined by developments in Istanbul. It is true that the Janissaries' chain of command led to the imperial capital and that their organisation cannot be fully understood without references to their central administration. It is also true that Istanbul remained until 1826 one of the most important stages of their political activity and that the Ottoman sources give emphasis on the corps' stance towards big players in imperial politics, like Sultans, Grand Viziers, and other powerful officials who were close to the palace. Yet, what this paper proposes is that, in order to understand the true nature of Janissary politics and their implications for the Ottoman state and society, one has to pay attention to their provincial aspects as well. Throughout the years, the Janissary administration became increasingly decentralised. As a result, the more one approaches the last centuries of the corps' existence, the more indispensable the examination of its history from a provincial perspective becomes for the proper understanding of its political role.

THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE DEMISE OF THE JANISSARY COMPLEX:

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE 'AUSPICIOUS INCIDENT'

H. Şükrü Ilicak[*]

There has been a tendency among many Ottomanists to detach the abolition of the Janissary complex (in other words, the commencement of Ottoman/Turkish modernity) from the Greek War of Independence,[1] namely, the uprising of a subject people against whom, exactly a century later, the 'Turks' would happen to conduct their own war of independence and create their own national narrative, myths, and stereotypes. I argue that it was the Greek Revolution's unsettling effects that paved the way for momentous changes in the dynamics between the Ottoman state and society, and created a specific moral universe which enabled the central state elite to stifle social dissent and create, as well as impose, a conformism within Muslim society regarding the abolition of the Janissary corps. Although it is by now a commonplace that the corps had gradually incorporated large urban strata, through both expanding their activities in the market and representing the interests of the Muslim lower urbanites at the political level,[2] all sources agree that there was no noteworthy popular support for the defiant Janissaries during the so-called 'Auspicious Incident', probably for the first time in centuries. The dismantling of an almost five-century-old body so deeply seeded in society became possible only through the silence of the masses, which indicated apathy more than anything, in an atmosphere of discontent and frustration of apocalyptic proportions.

---

[*] Independent scholar. I am very grateful to Marinos Sariyannis and Yannis Spyropoulos for painstakingly preparing my article for publication.
Abbreviations:
FO: Foreign Office
HAT: Hatt-ı Hümayun (Imperial Scripts)
TNA: The National Archives (London)

[1] Mehmet Mert Sunar and Christine Philliou have both pointed to the role that the Greek War of Independence played in the creation of a new balance of power in Istanbul which, in turn, paved the way for the events of 1826; M. M. Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent: A Study of the Janissary Corps, 1807-1826', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Binghamton University 2006, 181-199; Ch. Philiou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley 2011), 74-81. For similar remarks concerning the provincial Janissaries, see Y. Spyropoulos, 'Κοινωνική, διοικητική, οικονομική και πολιτική διάσταση του οθωμανικού στρατού: οι γενίτσαροι της Κρήτης, 1750-1826' [Social, Administrative, Financial, and Political Dimensions of the Ottoman Army: The Janissaries of Crete, 1750-1826], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Crete 2014, 342-381; see also his article in the present volume. For some recent research on the Greek War of Independence, see H. Şükrü Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1826', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011 and the studies collected in A. Anastasopoulos and E. Kolovos (eds), *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760-1850. Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation. Proceedings of an international conference held in Rethymno, Greece, 13-14 December 2003* (Rethymno 2007) and P. Pizanias (ed.), *The Greek Revolution of 1821. A European Event* (Istanbul 2011). Finally, on the destruction of the Janissaries see H. A. Reed, 'The Destruction of the *Janissaries* by Mahmud II in June 1826', unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1951 and *Dictionnaire de l'Empire Ottoman*, s.v. 'Janissaries, Suppression (1826)' (A. Levy).

Before beginning to analyse this process, I should state that this paper is mostly based on the British Ambassador Lord Strangford's detailed and well-informed reports to London, as its main source of information for the period. Ottoman historiographers have omitted many issues which injure the grandiose image of the saviour-Sultan Mahmud II. Also, we can make sense of many of the undated Ottoman documents and occasionally recover the voice of the common folk and the Janissaries only through Strangford's correspondence with London.

* * *

It appears that by the time of the Greek Revolution, a certain stratum of the Janissaries, the *usta*s, had already established its domination over the corps and become the representative of the common Janissary before the state. Strangford defined the *usta*s as "junior officers", who were "the most turbulent and dangerous characters among the chiefs of the janissaries". According to Robert Walsh, the Chaplain of the British Embassy, who resided in Istanbul during the Greek Revolution, the Janissaries considered the *usta*s their protectors. If we put together the titbits of information in official documents and chronicles, we can deduce that the *usta*s were officers at the regimental level and had organic relations with the common folk.[3] Being among the ranks of the *esnaf*, the *usta*s were able to mobilise the lower classes of the Janissaries. Ottoman documents suggest that it was a body of around 30 *usta*s, rather than the Janissary Agha or other senior Janissary officers, who conducted negotiations with the central state on behalf of the Janissary corps.[4]

---

[2] During the last decades, a growing literature deals with the political role of Janissaries as virtual representatives of large parts of the Ottoman Muslim society and a force imposing limitations on sultanic authority. For some of these works, see Ibid; A. Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire: The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolutions*, (London and New York 2017); A. Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford 2016); idem, 'Révolutions de Constantinople: The French and the Ottoman Worlds in the Age of Revolutions', in P. M. E. Lorcin and Todd Shepard (eds), *French Mediterraneans: Transnational and Imperial Histories*, (Lincoln and London 2016), 21-51; B. Masters, 'Aleppo's Janissaries: Crime Syndicate or *Vox Populi*?', in E. Gara, M. E. Kabadayı, and Ch. K. Neumann (eds), *Popular Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire: Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul 2011), 159-176; B. Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York 2010); C. Kafadar, 'Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul: Rebels Without a Cause?', *IJTS*, 13 (2007), 113-134; D. Quataert, 'Janissaries, Artisans and the Question of Ottoman Decline, 1730-1826', in E. B. Ruano-M. Espadas Burgos (eds), *17th International Congress of Historical Sciences. I: Chronological Section, Madrid-1990* (Madrid 1992), 197-203.

If we are to believe Strangford's account, in the wake of the Greek Revolution, the Sultan and his favourite, Halet Efendi, lived in "continual terror"[5] of the Janissaries and the Sublime Porte "was obliged to temporize and to do many things contrary to its judgment and intentions for the sake of keeping them in good humour".[6] The Sublime Porte preferred to content itself with limited and imperfect authority over the Janissaries rather than to drive them to open insurrection by opposing their wishes.[7]

The *usta*s*'* direct intervention in Sublime Porte politics began as soon as the Greek Revolution erupted. The Sublime Porte entertained and generated growing apprehensions of an imminent Russian war following the Ipsilantis revolt in Moldowallachia.[8] In the face of the extreme Russophobe atmosphere, the Janissary party demanded to participate in the central state's policy-making process in order to keep Halet Efendi's pro-war tendencies in check. The Janissaries' anti-Halet Efendi disposition became evident as soon as they were requested to dispatch troops to Moldowallachia and their opposition to the government turned into uncontrollable demonstrations following the Grand Vizier Benderli Ali Pasha's deposition. The Janissaries, particularly the 25th, 31st, 56th, and 64th *Orta*s, which, reportedly, had long nourished an implacable hatred towards Halet Efendi, were exasperated by Benderli's banishment and attributed the situation to the intrigues of Halet Efendi and his party.[9] They held meetings to restore Benderli to office, causing "the utmost uneasiness to the government as well as to all classes of the inhabitants" of Istanbul.[10] Despite the fact that the city was already the scene of anarchy and anti-Greek crowd action headed by the Janissaries, the Janissaries' demand for the heads of Halet Efendi and the *Berberbaşı* Yakub Ağa on 4 May 1821 met with the Sultan's outright refusal. In the months which followed, the Sultan kept thousands of Anatolian *sekban* troops at the outskirts of Istanbul to hold the Janissaries in check, but at this point the Ottoman dynasty's perceived traditional tenure of legitimacy was the Sultan's only leverage against the Janissaries.[11] Hence, at least if we are to believe Strangford, Mahmud II threatened the Janissaries with putting an end to his life and to that of his only son if they persisted in their petition, and demanded the full and unconditional submission of the corps.[12] One day after the demonstrations, on 5 May, the Janissary Agha assembled the heads of the different Janissary corps and bought their allegiance to the Sultan for 600 thousand piastres. The Janissary commanders put out a statement apologising for their misconduct and declaring their resolution to submit unconditionally to the Sultan's will.[13]

---

[3] Strangford to G. Canning, 28 February 1823, TNA/FO 78-114/19; R. Walsh, *A Residence at Constantinople; During a Period Including the Commencement, Progress, and Termination of the Greek and Turkish Revolutions*, Vol. 2 (London 1836), 509. See also Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent', 109 and *passim*.

[4] See for example BOA/HAT 17328.

[5] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 April 1822, TNA/FO 78-107/22. Sunar, on the other hand, sees the participation of junior Janissary officers as a result of Halet Efendi's policy, underlining the latter's close relation with the corps; Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent', 181-185.

[6] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 September 1821, TNA/FO 78-101/18.

[7] Ibid.

[8] See Ş. Ilıcak, 'The Revolt of Alexandros Ipsilantis and the Fate of the Fanariots in Ottoman Documents', in Pizanias (ed.), *The Greek Revolution*, 225-239.

[9] Christine Philliou points to the role of Halet Efendi as a "Janissary patron" who acted as an intermediary between the corps and the Phanariots. The Greek War of Independence, according to Philliou, disrupted this nexus of relations and turned the Janissaries against him; Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*, 74-77.

[10] Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 May 1821, TNA/FO 78-98/32.

At the conclusion of that very same meeting, an event took place which Strangford described as "époque making". A senior Janissary officer, Yusuf Ağa, addressed a speech to the *şeyhülislam*, conveying the *usta*s' demand to participate in the administration of state affairs. The *usta*s argued that the disturbances had hitherto arisen from the fact that the Janissaries did not have any representatives on the Imperial Council (*meclis-i şura*). According to the *ustas*, these councils had always been composed of the ministers and the chiefs of the ulema; however, the military, forming a great and most important part of society, were totally excluded from partaking in deliberations on matters that frequently affected them and their interests. This had naturally resulted in the Janissaries' discontent and suspicion toward the administration. The *usta*s claimed that no sooner had the lower orders of the Janissaries heard of a meeting at the Sublime Porte than they immediately concluded that the existence of their corps was under threat, and tumult and insubordination were the inevitable consequences. The Janissaries' petition was hastily approved by the Sultan, but in all likelihood with intense resentment.[14] As a result, for the very first time in Ottoman history, the Janissary Agha and two *usta*s were permitted to be present at the Imperial Councils, launching a two-year period of direct *usta* intervention in Sublime Porte politics.

What was revolutionary about the *usta*s' participation in the Imperial Council was the fact that for the first time the lower strata of the Janissaries had a legal and legitimate venue to negotiate their way through 'big politics'. The Imperial Council had hitherto been a council of the central state elite and its decisions were imposed on the subjects. The *usta*s' participation, however, was a case of a 'meaningful discourse' between the ruler and the subjects, preventing the political crisis of the state from turning into a crisis of legitimacy.[15] In the next two years, the overwhelming human and material cost of the

---

[11] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 May 1821, TNA/FO 78-98/39; Strangford to Castlereagh, 2 July 1821, TNA/FO 78-99/19; Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 July 1821, TNA/FO 78-99/24.

[12] Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 May 1821, TNA/FO 78-98/32.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 May 1821, TNA/FO 78-98/41.

[15] Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent', 185-187.

Greek Revolution was legitimised through the inclusion of the most contentious section of society in the state's decision-making process. The confrontations between the Janissaries and the state did not reach the point of open revolt and both parties managed to survive this period through minor demonstrations and heated negotiations.

An unexpected consequence of the new regulation for the *usta*s was the Sultan's success in using the Imperial Council to impose his own agenda on the Janissaries. Thanks to the legitimising effect of the Greek insurgency, the Sultan put forward the reform of the Janissary corps for the first time since his enthronement. At the Imperial Council meeting on 19 May 1821, the Sultan proposed to introduce European tactics among all Ottoman troops. The *usta*s gave their consent on the condition that they should not be compelled to wear uniforms and the "obnoxious term of *Nizam-ı Cedid*" should not be revived.[16] Soon after this, however, for unknown reasons, the Janissaries formally retracted their consent and declared their intention of resisting the proposed innovation. One month later, on 23 June, the reform project was once again suggested to the Janissaries, but the proposal was withdrawn in the face of fierce opposition.[17] At the same meeting, the Sublime Porte proposed sending a large body of Janissaries to the Morea, but this idea was also rejected by the corps. The reform proposal was put forward for the last time on 31 July at the Imperial Council which convened to discuss the question of peace or war with Russia.[18] Once the threat of a Russian war disappeared and the commotion in Moldowallachia died down by late August, the Janissary party vehemently opposed the reform project.

What probably aroused the resentment of the Ottoman administrators more than the Janissaries' reluctance to fight or their resistance to reform was the increasingly interventionist role played by the *usta*s in state affairs. Even issues such as the appointment of new *voyvoda*s to Moldowallachia,[19] the content of diplomatic notes to be given to European ambassadors,[20] and the appointment of provincial and central state administrators[21] became subject to the approval of the *usta*s, who sought to put their own associates in these positions. It is possible to see in the Sultan's *hatt-ı hümayun*s how indignant he was at the protracted negotiations between the Sublime Porte and the *usta*s and how he was compelled to come to an understanding with them out of despair. For a Sultan who was convinced that he had a holy mission to save religion and the state, every intervention on the part of Muslims against re-inventing himself as an omnipotent ruler in the image of his glorious ancestors was also a matter for astonishment. How was it possible that the Janissaries did not consider themselves in the same boat with the Sultan in the face of the uprising of a subject people which threatened the existence of the state? Instead of reinforcing his efforts, "these fellows (*işte bu herifler*)" claimed the Sultan in a *hatt-ı hümayun*,

---

[16] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 May 1821, TNA/FO 78-98/41.

[17] Strangford to Castlereagh, 26 June 1821, TNA/FO 78-99/11.

[18] Strangford to Castlereagh, 6 August 1821, TNA/FO 78-100/6.

[19] Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 May 1822, TNA/FO 78-108/8.

[20] Strangford to Castlereagh, 5 March 1822, TNA/FO 78-107/1.

[21] According to Esad Efendi, the *usta*s imposed their own candidates to be appointed *voyvoda*s in the provinces, see Sahhaflar Şeyhi-zade Seyyid Mehmed Esʿad Efendi, *Vakʿanüvis Esʿad Efendi Tarihi (1821-1826)*, ed. Z. Yılmazer (Istanbul 2000), 174.

> never kept their word and occasionally paralysed the system of the entire Empire by intervening in affairs that were none of their business […] And they caused most of the current troubles. In every method considered to bring order [to the corps], an inconvenience was found, and it seemed as if there were no remedies. However, it was obvious that as long as their petitions were tolerated so as to prevent opposition, they would intervene in more issues [...]. Their corrupt practices disturbed the order of the Empire and caused complete disarray in administrative matters at such a critical time.[22]

A major turning-point leading to the abolition of the Janissary complex took place in June 1822 and was triggered by a Janissary conspiracy to instigate a general massacre of the Greeks in Istanbul. Allegedly, "some of the more desperate of the *yamak*s[23] in conjunction with the lower order of Janissaries" hatched a plot which would secure them the permission of the Sublime Porte to massacre the Greeks in Istanbul and plunder their property. The conspirators had provided a number of Greek costumes and planned to attack randomly against Muslims in disguise on the last evening of Ramazan so that the Sublime Porte would believe there had been a general Greek uprising and would order the Janissaries to put it down. The plan was disclosed and the Sultan issued a furious *hatt-ı hümayun* directed against the 25th, 27th, 31st, and 64th *Orta*s and threatened the Janissaries with "changing the seat of empire and [retiring] with his sons to some place where he should no longer behold his authority contemned" unless the officers of the corps put a stop to these disgraceful excesses and punished the culprits.[24] As a result, the chief officers of the Janissaries together with those *usta*s, not wishing to be associated with the riffraff (*erazil*) and fearing they might otherwise receive the "slap of the state", launched a massive hunt.[25] "I do not exaggerate", reported Strangford, "when I state the number of those who have been executed, imprisoned and banished at nearly five thousand".[26]

Following the conspiracy, the *usta*s most likely wanted to restore the credit of the Janissaries in the eyes of the people by punishing the recalcitrant elements within the corps. To this end, they even consented to restrain a notorious source of income of several *orta*s. Traditionally the Janissaries affixed the distinguishing badges of their regiments (*nişan tahtası*) to the vessels arriving in the harbours and seized a certain portion of the cargoes or allowed only the affiliates of their regiments to transport the cargoes. Latterly, these badges had been affixed even to tobacco stores and groceries. During the hunt, the *usta*s went round Istanbul, removed these badges and sent them to the office of the Janissary Agha in sacks.[27]

---

[22] Mahmud II's *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, undated, BOA/HAT 25729.

[23] On the *yamak*s and their role in the early nineteenth-century Istanbul, see A. Yıldız, 'The Anatomy of a Rebellious Social Group: The *Yamak*s of the Bosporus at the Margins of Ottoman Society' in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Halcyon Days in Crete VII: Political Initiatives 'From the Bottom Up' in the Ottoman Empire* (Rethymno 2012), 291-324.

[24] Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 June 1822, TNA/FO 78-108/33.

[25] Hacı Salih Pasha (Grand Vizier) to Mahmud II, undated, BOA/HAT 19371.

[26] Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 July 1822, TNA/FO 78-109/1.

[27] Hacı Salih Pasha (Grand Vizier) to Mahmud II, undated, BOA/HAT 19371; Hacı Salih Pasha (Grand Vizier) to Mahmud II, undated, BOA/HAT 19499.

With the conspiracy, the higher echelons of the corps began to separate their interests from those of the lower strata of the Janissaries, including the *usta*s. The elderly and the commanders of the corps stood in support of the central state and employed the forces under their direct control to enforce the state's measures. This was a major breaking-point within the complex, yet, despite their magnitude and importance, none of these events were mentioned by the official historiographers of the period, Şanizade and Esad Efendi (and thus, neither by Cevdet nor by any other historian).[28]

In November 1822, Halet Efendi's miscalculated and bold act in exiling and eventually executing Haydar Baba, a popular Bektashi dervish and a resident of the 99th Orta, in whom the Janissaries apparently found consolation, gave rise to extreme commotion among them.[29] The strife caused Halet Efendi to lose his head and also the withdrawal of the *usta*s from the Imperial Council.[30]

There are more myths than facts about Halet Efendi, but he was certainly a much hated figure. Since 1811, he had been the most dominant person in imperial politics and alienated a lot of people. Hence, the view that he was the cause of all the Empire's problems, including the Greek Revolution, was not a mere discourse of court historians but a widespread perception among the people of Istanbul. And with his execution, Ottoman religious, military, and bureaucratic elites coalesced around the Sultan, and together they grew into some form of paternalistic autocracy. The Sultan was no more the prince-in-seclusion. He was determined to exercise his sovereign authority by his own personal supervision. As soon as Halet Efendi departed from Istanbul, it was only for the second time since his enthronement that Mahmud II attended a cabinet meeting at the Sublime Porte, where he urged his ministers to hasten the preparations for the Imperial Fleet to be dispatched to the Morea in the spring expedition.[31]

The absolution of the dignitaries who had been banished by Halet Efendi responded to both administrative and ideological concerns and fostered the new role the Sultan assumed for himself. The benevolent act of the forgiving paternal Sultan and the re-employment of dignitaries marked another break with Halet Efendi's regime. By February 1823, dozens of exiled state dignitaries were back in Istanbul.[32] In the years which followed, no important state business could be settled without the approval of the Sultan and "no one beyond the limits of the seraglio was observed to take any lead in the management of affairs".[33] The ministers refused to act and even hesitated to give an opinion.

---

[28] See Şâni-zâde Mehmed ʻAtâ'ullah Efendi, *Şânî-zâde târîhi [Osmanlı tarihi (1223-1237 / 1808-1821)]*, ed. Z. Yılmazer (Istanbul 2008); Esʿad, *Tarih*; Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet: tertib-i cedid* (Konstantiniye H.1309/1893) and now *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, M. Güçlükol and B. Bozkurt (eds), 2 vols (Istanbul 2011).

[29] On Haydar Baba's exile and his role in the Janissary revolts of 1807-1808, see Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent', 189-190; Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion*, 190-191.

[30] For the events surrounding the execution of Halet Efendi, see Ilıcak, 'A Radical Rethinking of Empire', 236-246.

[31] Strangford to G. Canning, 25 November 1822, TNA/FO 78-111/21.

[32] Esʿad, *Tarih*, 141-142; Strangford to G. Canning, 10 February 1823, TNA/FO 78-114/7.

[33] Strangford to G. Canning, 10 December 1822, TNA/FO 78-111/27.

Nevertheless, the elite's attitude seems more voluntary than enforced. The longer the most detrimental problem of the central state, namely, the Greek Revolution, remained in a deadlock, the more the need for a saviour-leader figure was reaffirmed. The Sultan's and the state elite's legitimacy increasingly depended on the performance of the state in suppressing the Greek Revolution as the cost of the war to the common folk incessantly escalated.

Public despair had so much increased since the beginning of the Greek Revolution that the common Muslim folk, even the Janissaries, also came to tolerate the impositions of a saviour-leader, rather than rebel against him. Daily life became ever more difficult because of the protracted instability all around the Empire. Commercial life and the provisioning of major cities suffered years of stagnation because of the devastation of Moldowallachia, sluggish Russian Black Sea trade, and Greek piracy in the entire Eastern Mediterranean. Consequently, there were often food shortages in Istanbul and apprehensions of famine, which compelled the Sublime Porte to purchase corn from European merchants for exorbitant sums in order to prevent riots.[34] Also, inflation was galloping. Between 1821 and 1826, the Sublime Porte resorted to debasement at least four times.[35] The main concern was to pay the salaries of the mercenaries and the Janissaries' *ulûfe* with the debased money and reduce the burden of the state.

In addition to the flagging state of the economy, daily life became intolerable because of occasional fires, epidemics, and various natural disasters, and the prolonged drought of 1822, which affected the entire northern hemisphere from China to California. An earthquake in August 1822 devastated the entire province of Aleppo and took 20,000 lives. There was at least one serious plague and one smallpox outbreak in Istanbul in December 1824 and the spring of 1825, respectively.[36] One of the most disastrous fires in the history of Istanbul broke out on 1 March 1823, and destroyed 15,000 houses in an area encircled by the Firuz Ağa, Fındıklı, Ayas Paşa, and the Bozahane districts. If we are to believe Strangford, the fact that not a single Christian house had been damaged in the fire produced such a strong impression upon the Turks that the populace was loud in declaring this calamity "a visitation of providence in vengeance for the atrocities committed at Chios, and even the ministers of the Porte avowed that they considered it as a mark of divine displeasure".[37]

In short, all these dismal events and ever-increasing popular discontent translated into an apocalyptic mindset and growing expectations of a saviour among the Ottoman Turks which was perfectly captured in the following verses:[38]

---

[34] Mahmud II's *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, undated, BOA/HAT 45423.

[35] Şânî-zâde*, Şânî-zâde târîhi*, 2:1144-1145; Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 August 1821, TNA/FO 78-100/10; Strangford to G. Canning, 25 September 1822, TNA/FO 78-111/5.

[36] Strangford to G. Canning, 11 December 1824, TNA/FO 78-125/33; Reed, 'The Destruction of the *Janissaries*', 88.

[37] Strangford to G. Canning, 10 March 1823, TNA/FO 78-114/23.

[38] N. S. Banarlı, *Devlet ve Devlet Terbiyesi* (Istanbul 2007), 166-168. The poetry is from a manuscript in Banarlı's collection. My translation, edited by Sevda Çalışkan.

Ipsala Çamlıca Havza adası	Psara, Hydra, Spetses islands
Yaktı cigerümüz Mora yakası	That Morea caused us great pain
Dilerim hakdan yerebatası	May the Almighty bring it down
Hakk'a tevekkül ol Padişahım	Trust in God, my Sultan
Çeşmeler kurudu abdest alınmaz	Fountains are dry, ablution is out
Mescidler kapandı namaz kılınmaz	Mosques are shut down, you cannot perform *salat*
Kadir mevlam hikmetinden sorulmaz	God must surely have a plan
Mehdi'ye mi kaldı yol Padişahım?	But should we wait for the Messiah, my Sultan?
Bu Âşık Mihrî'ni dahl etme sakın	Do not blame Mihri, the minstrel
Kaç yıldır dünyanın hâline bakın	Just look at the state of the world
Korkarım ki Deccal'ın çıkması yakın	I fear the Antichrist will soon appear
Kıyamet yakındır bil Padişahım	Know that doomsday is near, my Sultan

Thus, there is little wonder why the Prophet Muhammad should have sent a letter to Mahmud II in February 1823, bearing his seal and the Sultan's address on the envelope, warning him that true Muslim piety was decaying, and informing him that in the last two years, out of 70,000 Muslims who perished in battle, only 47 had been allowed to enter the gates of heaven. According to the story, on the night of 20 December 1822, one of the guardians of the Prophet's grave in Medina found a letter addressed to the Sultan which he delivered to the Conductor of the Pilgrims (*sürre emini*) who took it with him on his return to Istanbul. Strangford reported that the letter was presented to the Sultan, who was "less flattered with the honour of a letter from the Prophet, than scandalized at the freedom with which his Highness' conduct has been canvassed in Paradise."[39] The letter was published in several European journals, probably to mock Turkish ignorance and fanaticism. But it appears that various versions of this letter became widely known in Istanbul and influenced public opinion.

It was only under such circumstances that the elimination of the *usta*s from the political scene did not provoke a Janissary rebellion. As became apparent, the Greek Revolution was testing the janissary corps' legitimacy as much as that of the state. The central state's efforts to curb the influence of the *usta*s culminated with the appointment of Rusçuklu Hüseyin as Janissary Agha. On 28 February 1823, on his second day in office, Hüseyin Ağa launched a vigorous *usta*/Janissary-hunt, which was triggered by the *seğirdim usta*s' mafia-like intervention in the appointment of a Greek bishop.[40] In the subsequent few months, a great number of the *usta*s were either banished from Istanbul or put to death, and the remaining ones apparently submitted to the Sublime Porte's authority.

---

[39] Strangford to G. Canning, 28 February 1823, TNA/FO 78-114/20.

[40] Strangford to G. Canning, 28 February 1823, TNA/FO 78-114/19.

In the three years which followed, there were no negotiations between the state and the Janissaries, nor were there any attempts on the part of the state to seek approval from the Janissaries for its decisions and actions. By August 1823, the corps was so humbled that the state was able to publicly execute *usta*s, a hitherto “unprecedented occasion” according to Strangford.[41] Demolition of Janissary coffee-houses and hostels (*oda*) around Asmaaltı in late July 1823 did not arouse any opposition.[42] In January 1824, Hüseyin Ağa began carrying out bi-weekly European-style military drills with supposedly the most refractory class of the Janissaries, the *yamak*s, who quietly gave their consent to this “infidel” innovation.[43] The centuries-old practice of affixing the badges of *orta*s to vessels and stores was suppressed altogether on 2 March 1824.[44] Depoliticisation of the corps also brought about some military mobilisation. In the 1824 expedition, a Janissary force of 50 *bayrak*s (6,000 men) was dispatched to Eğriboz (Euboea) and the Attica region from Istanbul.[45] However, they proved useless, and lack of co-ordination and mistrust between the Janissaries and the mercenaries caused disorder in the army. During the siege of Athens in the summer of 1824, most of the Janissaries fell sick, “furled their banners”, lifted the siege, and left for Istanbul without asking the permission to do so.[46]

The Sublime Porte had contracted out the suppression of the Greek uprising to Albanian warlords. However, in December 1823, when Buşatlı Mustafa Pasha, the *mutasarrıf* of İşkodra (Shkodër) and the patriarch of the predominant dynasty of the *Geg* Albanians lifted the siege of Mesolongi, in other words, the epicentre of Greek resistance, Ottoman administrators became convinced that the Greek revolt could not be suppressed by relying on an ethnic group which was not external to the issue. The need for a standing army operating under the direct command of the Sublime Porte manifested itself once again with the Buşatlı crisis and propelled the question of Janissary reform to the fore. By 1826, the imminent threat of a Russian war, coupled with the news of the capture of Mesolongi by Ibrahim Pasha’s bayonet-using and disciplined Egyptian forces not only expedited the military reforms but also turned a possible milder solution of the Janissary issue into a radical one.

However, to this end, the Sublime Porte had to win the ulema to its cause. One of the most important consequences of the Greek Revolution for the Ottoman state was the disengagement of the ulema from the Janissary complex and their re-alignment with the central state. From the very beginning of the insurrection, the ulema became the promoters of what might be called Islamic/religious patriotism. Only 18 years previously, in the midst of a Russian war, the ulema-Janissary coalition had cost the reforming Sultan Selim III his head.[47] This time, in the midst of a war against a *reaya* people and on the brink of another Russian war, it was the central state that won the competition over the control of Sharia. The success of the central state lay in gaining the upper hand in determining the index of being a Muslim.[48]

---

[41] Strangford to G. Canning, 11 August 1823, TNA/FO 78-116/7.

[42] Esʿad, *Tarih*, 247.

[43] Strangford to G. Canning, 10 January 1824, TNA/FO 78-121/5.

[44] Strangford to G. Canning, 10 March 1824, TNA/FO 78-121/32.

[45] Strangford to G. Canning, 30 December 1823, TNA/FO 78-118/21.

[46] Ömer Pasha (*Muhafiz* of Eğriboz/Euboea) to Sublime Porte, 30 August 1824, BOA/HAT 40093; Ömer Pasha (*Muhafiz* of Eğriboz/Euboea) to Sublime Porte, 1 September 1824, BOA/HAT 25048-B.

This was achieved by rallying the ulema to the state's cause and creating a moral position according to which deeds spoiling the unity of Muslims against the "infidels who were trying to trample upon the Muslims and annihilate the state of Islam" came to mean "giving an opportunity to the enemy".[49] This had been one of the mantras invoked by the Sublime Porte throughout the Greek Revolution to allay opposition. Any act of defiance against the authority of the state had become not only illegitimate but also immoral. All legitimacy was given to the state by the "exigency of the time", which allowed for such extraordinary measures.

Those who have been critical of Mahmud II's absolutist regime following the abolition of the Janissary corps, with the benefit of hindsight as to what was not achieved by the corps' abolition, namely a self-motivated and victorious army, obscure the fact that the question had become a highly moral issue by the time of the 'Auspicious Incident'. The Ottoman central state elite took a leap of faith and abolished the Janissary corps not necessarily because it was the *best* thing to do, but because they began to believe it was the *right* thing to do.

The Sublime Porte's encounter with the 'national idea' and years of unsuccessful mobilisation efforts against unyielding Greek insurgents translated into the need to create a new kind of Muslim man who would mobilise and sacrifice all his resources, including his life, for religion and state. With this goal in mind, the Janissary came to be viewed as the antithesis of this imagined proto-citizen, and the existence of the Janissary complex doomed the prospects for the imposition of a sense of Muslim patriotism and military mobilisation to failure. Hence, the demise of the Janissaries ought to be viewed as the Ottoman central state's attempt at top-down social engineering, aimed at creating a homogenised Muslim society, a proto-nation, with fewer sources of dissent, and also a disciplined standing army composed of ethnic-Turkish soldiers.

To summarise, my research shows that the Janissaries' attempt at institutionalised political participation, which began in the turbulence of the Greek Revolution, terminated in November 1822. By August 1823, the network of the *usta*s, who formed the backbone of the Janissary complex, had been silently broken. The lower strata of the Janissaries were thus left without leadership, and by the time of the abolition of the complex, the Janissaries had already been humbled to the utmost. From this perspective, the Janissary revolt in June 1826 was the corps' last struggle for survival, rather than the reaction of the monstrous bastion of the Ottoman *ancien régime* against the forces of modernity.

---

[47] For the role of ulema in the Janissary revolt of 1807, see Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion*, 31-38.

[48] Sunar, 'Cauldron of Dissent', 196-197.

[49] See, for example, Mahmud II's *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, undated, BOA/HAT 25590.