

T.R.
ISTANBUL MEDENİYET UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

**A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO EARLY MODERN
SELF-NARRATIVES: REPRESENTATION OF THE SELF IN
OTTOMAN CONTEXT (1720s-1820s)**

Ph.D. DISSERTATION

SEMRA ÇÖREKÇİ

March, 2022

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SUPERVISOR
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March, 2022

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that all information in this dissertation has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conducts, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Semra  rek i

I hereby declare that this dissertation, for which I am the supervisor, is fully the work of my student, that he worked observing the academic rules and ethical conduct.

Prof. Dr. Selim Karahasano lu

İMZA SAYFASI

Semra ÇÖREKÇİ tarafından hazırlanan “A Methodological Approach to Early Modern Self-Narratives: Representation of the Self in Ottoman Context (1720s-1820s)” başlıklı bu doktora tezi, Tarih Anabilim Dalında hazırlanmış ve jürimiz tarafından kabul edilmiştir.

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Tez Savunma Tarihi: 21 Mart 2022

To my daughter,
Zeynep Ravza  rek i



PREFACE

Prof. Dr. Selim Karahasanoğlu's very illuminating course on Ottoman self-narratives have taken the attention of many Ph.D. students at Istanbul Medeniyet University. I am one of those students who are now preparing their dissertations on Ottoman self-narratives. During the course, we examined some known examples of Ottoman self-narratives and read the secondary literature on them. I planned to write my final paper on the memoirs of Aşçı Dede. However, Karahasanoğlu encouraged me to make a research in manuscript libraries and find an unknown text. Although I was not sure if I could find anything new, I went to ISAM (Center For Islamic Studies) to check the printed catalogues. I examined all the manuscript catalogues that I can find; catalogue of manuscripts found in Kandilli Rasathanesi, catalogue of manuscripts of Tercüman newspaper, catalogue of manuscripts found in Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü (Istanbul Research Institute), The Union Catalogue of Manuscripts in Turkey and Karatay's catalogue of manuscripts found in Topkapı Palace Museum Library. In Karatay's catalogue, I came across with a manuscript titled as *Düşnâme*. I immediately went to Topkapı Palace Museum Library to see the manuscript. It was a notebook in which an ottoman official recorded his dreams. I prepared my final paper on this self-narrative. The first chapter of this dissertation is also based on my research paper written for Karahasanoğlu's course.

After completing my course work, I went to Karahasanoğlu's office to talk about my ideas for possible dissertation topics. Knowing my interest on the subject, Karahasanoğlu prompted me to think about studying Ottoman self-narratives. My initial fear was that it could take years to discover unknown material in the manuscript libraries without having proper catalogues. Selim Karahasanoğlu was sure that there must be more Ottoman self-narratives waiting to be discovered and he encouraged me to do research in the manuscript libraries of Istanbul. Hence, I found myself digging in the libraries to find out if there might be more Ottoman self-narratives to explore. In the third week of the study, I discovered the diary of Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid

Efendi at Istanbul Millet Library. This finding cleared my doubts and encouraged me to spend more time in the manuscript libraries. After two months, I found Abdülkadir Hisârî's self-narrative in Istanbul University's collection of rare books. This prompted me to search for more. As a result of a long period of research, I discovered nine unknown Ottoman self-narratives of varying lengths. Of those nine self-narratives, three texts are examined in this dissertation.

From the moment I entered Karahasaoğlu's office to discuss my dissertation subject until now, he provided me with invaluable support and guidance. Without his encouragement, insightful advice and firm support, this dissertation could not have been written. I also want to express my deep gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee. Professor Bilgin Aydın was always ready to answer my questions about the nature of Ottoman documents. He contributed greatly to this dissertation with his deep knowledge on Ottoman manuscripts, insightful comments, and suggestions. Professor İsmail Hakkı Kadı always made very constructive criticisms guiding me to clarify my ideas and to improve the text.

A special thank goes to my aunt and her family who hosted me during my stay in Berlin. Without their help, I could not have completed secondary literature survey. I thank my parents, sisters, brother, nephews, and nieces for the invaluable support they gave. Their presence has always been a refuge to me.

I cannot express my gratitude enough to my family members. My daughter Zeynep was in the womb when I started to this Ph.D. program. She shared the difficulties of her mother's doctoral journey. I thank her for being such a great child and bringing joy into our lives. And a special thank goes to my husband Suphi Uğur for his inspiring guidance, care, and love.

ABSTRACT

A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO EARLY MODERN SELF-NARRATIVES: REPRESENTATION OF THE SELF IN OTTOMAN CONTEXT (1720s-1820s)

Çörekçi, Semra

Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of History, 30% English Ph.D. Program

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March, 2022, 250 pages.

In this dissertation, I have introduced three different Ottoman self-narratives, written by a provincial governor, a scholar, and a calligrapher in a hundred-year period from the first half of the eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. These manuscripts have been selected to scrutinize how different people from different walks of life talked about themselves, described their lives, and recorded their innermost feelings. Therefore, this study provides an insight into the Ottoman self-narratives and reveals how different layers of the self were represented with all its complexities in a variety of styles. It is also an attempt to develop a methodology on how to study Ottoman self-narratives as opposed to the claims that they are unreliable sources and must be used with caution. This study is designed to introduce various unknown Ottoman self-narratives, to scrutinize the authors' individual experiences like feelings, expectations, actions in face of events, and to uncover their social selves embedded in several networks of relations. By examining distinct texts written by persons with different backgrounds, this dissertation provides insight into the private lives of Ottoman individuals who obviously had a culture of writing about themselves.

Key Words: Self-Narrative, Ego-Document, First-Person Narrative, Ottoman Empire, Autobiography, Diary, Dream.

ÖZET

ERKEN MODERN BEN-ANLATILARINA METODOLOJİK BİR YAKLAŞIM: OSMANLI BAĞLAMINDA ‘BEN’İN TEMSİLİ (1720ler- 1820ler)

Çörekçi, Semra

Doktora Tezi, Tarih Anabilim Dalı, %30 İngilizce Doktora Programı

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Selim Karahasanoğlu

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Bu tez, on sekizinci yüzyılın başı ile on dokuzuncu yüzyılın başı arasında geçen yüz yıllık süreçte bir mutasarrıf, bir hattat ve bir müderris tarafından üretilmiş daha önce bilinmeyen üç farklı Osmanlı ben-anlatısını inceleyerek, Osmanlı ben-anlatıları literatürüne bir katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, böyle metinlerin güvenilir olmadığı ve bu sebeple de ihtiyatla kullanılması gereken kaynaklar olduğu görüşünün aksine, Osmanlı ben-anlatılarının kaynak değerini ortaya koyma ve bu metinlerin tarihsel çalışmalarda nasıl kullanılabileceğine ilişkin bir metodoloji geliştirme girişimidir. Bu tezde incelenen metinler Osmanlı bireyinin dünyasına adım atmak ve benliğin farklı katmanlarının çeşitli üslup ve şekillerde nasıl temsil edildiğini anlamak için önemli veriler sunmaktadır. Osmanlı ben-anlatıları, yazarlarının kariyerleri, çevreleri, yaşadıkları zorlukları, sevinç, korku ve acıları canlı bir şekilde resmetmekte ve okuyucuları bireyin dünyasına olabildiğince yaklaştırmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma farklı sosyal ve kültürel çevrelerden gelen ve kendileri hakkında yazma kültürüne sahip oldukları açık olan üç Osmanlı bireyinin sosyal ve duygusal dünyasına bir kapı aralamaktadır. Bu tez, yazarlar kendilerinden, kariyerlerinden, yaşadıkları çevreden ve etraflarında bulunan insanlardan nasıl bahsetmişlerdir, iç dünyalarını ne kadar yansıtmışlardır gibi sorulara ışık tutarak Osmanlı ben-anlatıları literatürüne önemli bir katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Ben-Anlatıları, Benlik-Belgeleri, Birinci Ağızdan Anlatılar, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Otobiyografi, Günlük, Rüya

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing awareness among scholars in Ottoman ego-document/self-narrative studies in the last few years.¹ A number of scientific meetings have been held in Turkey and publications started to appear. This dissertation is written with the intention of making a contribution to these efforts towards creating an awareness of Ottoman self-narratives. The aim of this dissertation is not to prove that Ottoman self-narratives do exist, an issue that has already been proven by a number of previous studies. However, this dissertation seeks to prove that there are far more Ottoman self-narratives than scholars previously believed.

This dissertation aims at providing an insight into Ottoman self-narratives and showing how different layers of the self were represented with all their complexities in a variety of styles. It will attempt to develop a methodology on how to study Ottoman self-narratives in opposition to the claims that they are unreliable sources and must be used with caution. I have introduced three different texts, written in a hundred-year period from the first half of the eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. By examining distinctive texts written by persons with different backgrounds, this study will show that we need to broaden our perspective to have a better insight into the self in an Ottoman context. We need to benefit from the experiences of scholars studying early modern and modern European material, but we should also have a local perspective to create a deeper insight into the variety of forms and methods through which the self was expressed in an Ottoman context.

The title of this dissertation was given in 2017 after I completed the primary source research. After a while, when I started reading secondary literature, I realized that the phrase “A methodological approach to early modern self-narratives” was used as a subtitle in a Ph.D. dissertation. Despite this, I decided to keep the title as it is, because it was the most appropriate title for the content of the dissertation. See Laia Hashem Abdel-Rahman El-Sayed, “Discourses on Emotions: Communities, Styles, and Selves in Early Modern Mediterranean Travel Books” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kent and Freie Universität Berlin, 2016), 38.

¹ I use the concepts of “self-narrative” and “ego-document” interchangeably throughout the dissertation.

Survey of the Literature on European Ego-documents

The Dutch historian, Jacques Presser, was the scholar who first invented the term “egodocumenten.” Presser used it as a blanket term for autobiographies, diaries, memoirs and personal letters in which the reader is confronted with an “I” figure.² He described the term as referring to “those documents in which an ego intentionally or unintentionally discloses or hides itself.”³ According to this description the term egodocumenten was used for “historical sources in which the user is confronted with an ‘I’, or occasionally with a ‘he’, continuously present in the text as a writing and describing subject.”⁴ The pioneering role for ego-document research was taken by Rudolf Dekker who, in the 1980s, initiated a research project to make an inventory of all ego-documents written/published in the Netherlands since the 1500s.⁵ Dekker revived Presser’s terminology and explained the term ego-document as “a text in which the author writes about his or her own acts, thoughts and feelings.”⁶ The project looked for autobiographies, diaries, memoirs and travel journals but excluded letters for practical reasons, although private notes which were described “as notes kept over a short period of time” were included and particular events like family disputes focused on. Family books were also included, provided they contained a considerable number of personal remarks and observations.⁷

The Netherlands group created a website called “The Center for the Study of Ego-documents and History” to present the results of the inventory project.⁸ This research project was accompanied by important publications. Brill Publishers launched a book series titled *Ego-Documents and History* under the editorship of Rudolf Dekker, Arianne Baggerman and Michael Mascuch. Peter Burke, James Amelang and Philippe

² Rudolf Dekker, “Jaques Presser’s Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History,” *Memoria y Civilización* 5 (2002), 14.

³ Dekker, “Jaques Presser’s Heritage,” 14.

⁴ Rudolf Dekker, “Introduction,” in *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in its Context since the Middle Ages*, ed. Rudolf Dekker (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 7.

⁵ Marijke Huisman, “Life Writing in the Netherlands,” *European Journal of Life Writing* 4 (2015), 20, accessed January 10, 2022, doi:[10.5463/ejlw.4.171](https://doi.org/10.5463/ejlw.4.171).

⁶ Dekker, “Jaques Presser’s Heritage,” 14.

⁷ Rudolf Dekker, “Egodocuments in the Netherlands from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century,” in *Envisioning Self and Status: Self Representation in the Low Countries*, ed. Erin Griffey (Hull: Association for Low Countries Studies in Great Britain and Ireland (ALCS) c/o University of Hull, Department of Dutch Studies, 2000), 257.

⁸ <http://www.egodocument.net/egodocument/index.html>.

Lejeune, distinguished names of the field, are also part of the board of editors.⁹ Verloren Publishers issued a series titled *Egodocumenten* to publish autobiographical texts written in the Dutch language. Thirty-three volumes have been produced in this series under the editorship of Rudolf Dekker and Gert-Jan Johannes.

Peter Burke was the first scholar who used the term “ego-document” in English.¹⁰ Apart from transferring the term into English, his article is very significant in that, in contrast to the Burckhardtian conception of the self/individual, which was believed to have arisen in Italy during the Renaissance, he proposed the idea of taking a broader perspective and thinking in terms of different styles of self-representation that might be found in different cultures. Burke was the first scholar to advocate for a transcultural perspective in the study of ego-documents. “It is better to think in terms of a variety of categories of the person or conceptions of the self (more or less unified, bounded and so on) in different cultures, categories and conceptions which underlie a variety of styles of self-presentation or self-fashioning.”¹¹ After many years of experience in examining ego-documents, Burke began to express this idea even more strongly. Reading the ground-breaking publications by Kafadar on Ottoman materials,¹²

⁹ A considerable amount of literature has been issued under this series, see Rudolf Dekker, *Family, Culture and Society in the Diary of Constantijn Huygens Jr, secretary to Stadholder-King William of Orange* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf Dekker and Michael Mascuch, eds., *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing since the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Arianne Baggerman and Rudolf Dekker, *Child of the Enlightenment: Revolutionary Europe Reflected in a Boyhood Diary* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Jeroen Blaak, *Literacy in Everyday Life: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Dutch Diaries* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). For other studies by Dutch scholars, see Rudolf Dekker, “Dutch Travel Journals from the Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries,” *Lias Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas* 22 (1995): 277-300. Rudolf Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland: From the Golden Age to Romanticism* (New York: St. Martin Press, 2000); Rudolf Dekker, “Sexuality, Elites, and Court Life in the Late Seventeenth Century: The Diaries of Constantijn Huygens, Jr.” *Eighteenth-century Life* 23 (1999): 94-109; Rudolf Dekker “Watches, Diary Writing, and the Search for Self-Knowledge in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Making Knowledge in Early-Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, Texts, 1400-1800*, ed. Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); Arianne Baggerman, “The Moral of the Story: Children's Reading and the Catechism of Nature Around 1800,” in *Making Knowledge in Early-Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, Texts, 1400-1800*, ed. Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); Arianne Baggerman, “Travelers in Time: Nineteenth-Century Autobiographers and Their Fight Against Forgetting,” in *Les écrits du for privé en Europe, du Moyen Âge à l'époque contemporaine*, ed. J. P. Bardet, E. Arnoul and F. J. Ruggiu (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2010).

¹⁰ Peter Burke, “Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes,” in *Rewriting the Self. Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1996), 21.

¹¹ Burke, “Representations of the Self,” 28.

¹² Cemal Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature,” *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-150.

Reynolds on Arabic autobiographies¹³ and Wu on autobiographical writings in traditional China,¹⁴ Peter Burke asserted that ego-documents were not confined to Western culture only and did not just begin in Italy around the year 1600. This way of writing certainly existed in Arabic culture, in the Ottoman Empire and in China.¹⁵

James Amelang, another significant name in the field, studied the autobiography of Miguel Parets, a Barcelona tanner.¹⁶ Amelang's contribution is not confined to a single autobiography. He found out that the case of Parets was not unique; there were other artisan autobiographies written in Spain and other parts of Europe. He compared the textual context of Paret's text and other artisan autobiographies and focused on the aspects of "writing in the first person at a specific historical time, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, and from a specific social position."¹⁷ He examined these autobiographies as a cultural and social practice in which a wide range of social groups participated.¹⁸ Amelang was very beneficial in providing a checklist of artisan autobiographies at the end of his work which opened the door to further studies. Amelang took an active part in ego-document/selbstzeugnis projects and contributed to publications by the Dutch, Basel and Berlin research groups.¹⁹ He criticized the easy association of autobiography with individualism. According to Amelang, early modern first-person writing was rarely autobiographical in the modern sense of autobiography as a developed retroactive narrative revealing the inner development of the author in

¹³ Dwight Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

¹⁴ Pei-Yi Wu, *The Confucian's Progress: Autobiographical Writings in Traditional China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

¹⁵ Peter Burke, "The Rhetoric of Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century," in *Touching the Past: Studies in the Historical Sociolinguistic of Ego-Documents*, ed. Marijke J. Van der Wal and Gijsbert Rutten (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013), 150.

¹⁶ James S. Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁹ Amelang contributed to volume *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing since the Sixteenth Century* with an article on the relation between Spanish inquisitorial interrogation and autobiography. James Amelang, "Tracing Lives: The Spanish Inquisition and the Act of Autobiography," in *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing since the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf Dekker and Michael Mascuch (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

chronological order.²⁰ He stated that very few authors wrote in isolation from the social milieu surrounding them.

We are often misled by the unfolding individualism with which autobiography is inevitably associated. Not only was no man, much less an early modern craftsman, an island into himself; very few writers even tried to write in isolation from the multiple worlds to which they belonged.²¹

In his contribution to *Selbstzeugnis und Person: Transkulturelle Perspektiven*, Amelang emphasized the significance and necessity of transcultural as well as interdisciplinary approaches to the investigation of autobiography.²² “If anything forces us to step off our home ground, it is a transcultural focus, if we understand this as requiring us to move beyond the original context of our texts to assess them in the light of their presence and interpretation in other cultural contexts.”²³ His ideas contributed to the incorporation of autobiographical texts produced in several African, Asian or Near Eastern literature into the discussion.²⁴

In Germany Winfried Schulze was first to borrow the term.²⁵ He wanted to emulate the Dutch example in the study of German ego-documents but proposed to use a more inclusive interpretation of the term. He argued that all kinds of official documents, such as judicial records, should be regarded as ego-document.²⁶ Schulze’s approach was not taken up by German researchers. Kaspar von Greyerz criticized Schulze’s approach and noted that “many historians in the field have continued to adhere to the notion of *Selbstzeugnisse*, knowing full well that in many of the personal documents studied one does not really encounter a fully recognizable self.”²⁷

²⁰ James S. Amelang, “The Dilemmas of Popular Autobiography,” in *Von der Dargestellten zum erinnerten Ich: Europäische Selbstzeugnisse als historische Quellen (1500-1800)*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz, Hans Medick and Patrice Veit (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), 435.

²¹ Amelang, “The Dilemmas of Popular Autobiography,” 434.

²² James S. Amelang, “Transcultural Autobiography or the Lives of Others,” in *Selbstzeugnis und Person: Transkulturelle Perspektiven*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich, Hans Medick and Angelika Schaser (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2012), 79.

²³ Amelang, “Transcultural Autobiography,” 79.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Dekker, “Introduction,” 9; Winfried Schulze, ed., *Egodocumente. Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996).

²⁶ Ibid., 9.

²⁷ Kaspar von Greyerz, “Ego-Documents: The Last Word?,” *German History* 28 (2010), 280.

In 1996 Greyerz initiated a project to create an inventory of self-narratives found in the libraries and archives of German-speaking Switzerland.²⁸ He found the concept of ego-document an “unfortunate term in dealing with autobiographical text from centuries earlier than twentieth century.”²⁹ He regarded the term ego-document as anachronistic and associated it with the Freudian conception of the ego which “constantly has to mediate between the sexual and bodily drives of the id and the conceptions of the world offered by the super-ego.”³⁰ According to Greyerz some of the sources provide the researcher with access to a historical personage’s ego, but the great majority do not give anything about the essence of a historical person.³¹ Hence, he opposed using the term ego-document and suggested employing the terms “self-narrative” and “personal-narrative” instead. He argued that these texts provide more information about social and personal networks and groups than they do about individuals; therefore, he proposed to look for “primarily persons in their specific cultural, linguistic, material and, last but not least, social embeddedness.”³² The Swiss group are working on an important project under the leadership of Kaspar von Greyerz and Danièle Tosato-Rigo and have opened a database on Swiss personal writings.³³

Greyerz also cooperated with the Berlin group of scholars who started a DFG project called “Selbstzeugnisse in transkultureller Perspektive” under the leadership of Claudia Ulbrich. The main aim of the Berlin group was “to develop an understanding of ego-documents as a social and cultural practice.”³⁴ More importantly, they were the first to have a transcultural perspective in the study of ego-documents. They wanted “to find out about a person’s own life as a topic of writing in different cultures, in different periods and in different geographical areas.”³⁵ Therefore, they included the

²⁸ Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, “Introduction,” in *Mapping the ‘I’ Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 2.

²⁹ Greyerz, “Ego-Documents: The Last Word?,” 275.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 281.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ <https://wp.unil.ch/egodocuments/en/>. For an important publication by Basel research group, see Kaspar von Greyerz, ed., *Selbstzeugnisse in der Frühen Neuzeit: Individualisierungsweisen in interdisziplinärer Perspektive* (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2007). Suraiya Faroghi also contributed to this volume with an article on Seyyid Hasan’s diary.

³⁴ Gabriele Jancke, “Selbstzeugnisse in Transkultureller Perspektive,” *Zeitenblicke* 1, no: 2 (2002), 6, accessed December 13, 2021, <https://www.zeitenblicke.de/2002/02/jancke/jancke.pdf>.

³⁵ Jancke, “Selbstzeugnisse in Transkultureller Perspektive,” 7.

studies of various scholars on texts written in Dutch, German, English, French, Latin, Arabic, Japanese, Ottoman, Turkish, Persian, and Tataric.³⁶ Like Greyerz, the Berlin group also decided not to use the term ego-document. Gabriele Jancke wrote that they “opted for using a broader term ‘Selbstzeugnisse,’ because to have a deep insight into the autobiographical writing in all its variety seemed to be more rewarding as it was being practiced in different geographies and historical times.”³⁷

They wanted to take the focus away from the concept of “individuality” which was one of the fundamental themes of the scholarship on autobiographical texts during the 1990s, even at an international level.³⁸ According to them, applying “individualism” as a general standard impedes considering other cultures in their own historical contexts. They found it problematic to focus only on individualism and ignore other concepts of the person.³⁹ They aimed at paying attention to the different concepts of the person rather than focusing on the individual, in other words, “to investigate the self-thematization of one’s life as a cultural and social practice across various cultures, periods, geographical sites and interactive contexts, and to place it in the realm of social relationships.”⁴⁰

Within this approach, they focused more on the authors’ relationships with the outer world. According to Jancke, such autobiographical writers were acting socially when writing their texts. She argued that they must be seen as “social beings belonging to certain social, professional, religious and gender groups, moving in certain social contexts and relationships.”⁴¹ She wrote that it was impossible “telling the story of the rise of Western individual, at least in combination with autobiographical writing.”⁴² The most important facet in regarding these texts as a “form of social practice” is the

³⁶ Jancke, “Selbstzeugnisse in Transkultureller Perspektive,” 6.

³⁷ Ibid., 5.

³⁸ Ulbrich, Von Greyerz and Heiligensetzer, “Introduction,” 4.

³⁹ Jancke, “Selbstzeugnisse in Transkultureller Perspektive,” 8; Also see Ulbrich, Von Greyerz and Heiligensetzer, “Introduction,” 4-5.

⁴⁰ Gabriele Jancke and Claudia Ulbrich, “From the Individual to the Person: Challenging Autobiography Theory,” 8, accessed January 1, 2022, https://www.academia.edu/31774251/From_the_Individual_to_the_Person_Challenging_Autobiography_Theory_by_Claudia_Ulbrich_and_Gabriele_Jancke.

⁴¹ Gabriele Jancke, “Autobiography as Social Practice in Early Modern German-Speaking Areas,” in *Autobiographical Themes in Turkish Literature: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Olcay Akyıldız, Halim Kara and Börte Sagaster, vol. 6 (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2007), 70.

⁴² Ibid., 71.

argument that the autobiographical authors displayed their embeddedness in the networks of relationships and “what shows up is no inner self but a person with many outward elements.”⁴³ The results of the project were published in 2012.⁴⁴ *Selbstzeugnis und Person: Transkulturelle Perspektiven* was the first book to emerge under the editorship of Claudia Ulbrich, Hans Medick and Angelika Schaser.⁴⁵ In accordance with the transcultural approach, they included studies on Japanese, Ottoman, Turkish and Colonial autobiographies. *Fashioning the Self in Transcultural Settings: The Uses and Significance of Dress in Self-Narrative*, published in 2015 under the editorship of Claudia Ulbrich and Richard Wittmann, is among the books published within the scope of the project.⁴⁶ *Mapping the I: The Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, published in 2014 under the editorship of Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, came out as the fruit of long collaboration between the Berlin and Basel project groups.⁴⁷

In 2003 French historians François-Joseph Ruggiu and Jean-Pierre Bardet started a research program called *Les écrits du for privé en France de la fin du Moyen Âge à 1914*. They aimed at creating an inventory of all types of text written in the first person to be found in French archives. They created a website to put their inventories online.⁴⁸ The French research group was attracted by the transcultural perspective offered by the Berlin research group. To combat the prominent theory put forward by Jacob Burckhardt, who identified Italy during the Renaissance as the key place where

⁴³ Jancke, “Autobiography as Social Practice in Early Modern German-Speaking Areas,” 74.

⁴⁴ For some other publications by German scholars, see Claudia Ulbrich, “L’usage historiographique de l’autobiographie,” in *Vies en récits: Formes littéraires et médiatiques de la biographie et de l’autobiographie*, ed. Robert Dion, Frances Fortier, Barbara Havercroft and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, (Québec: Collection Convergences, 2007); Claudia Ulbrich, Hans Medick and Angelika Schaser, “Ecrits autobiographiques et personne: perspectives transculturelles,” *Études de lettres* 1, no: 2 (2016): 217-42, accessed February 4, 2022, <http://journals.openedition.org/edl/882>; M. Fulbrook and U. Rublack, “In Relation: The ‘Social Self’ and Ego-Documents,” *German History* 28/3 (2010): 263-72; Gabriele Jancke, “Individuality, Relationships, Words About Oneself: Autobiographical Writing as a Resource (Fifteenth-Sixteenth Centuries): Konrad Pellikan’s Autobiography,” in *Forms of Individuality and Literacy in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Franz-Josef Arlinghaus (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015).

⁴⁵ Claudia Ulbrich, Hans Medick and Angelika Schaser, eds., *Selbstzeugnis und Person: transkulturelle Perspektive* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2012).

⁴⁶ Claudia Ulbrich and Richard Wittmann, eds., *Fashioning the Self in Transcultural Settings: The Uses and Significance of Dress in Self-Narratives* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2015).

⁴⁷ Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, eds., *Mapping the ‘I’ Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

⁴⁸ <http://ecritsduforprive.huma-num.fr>.

individuality had emerged in a way not experienced in other societies, the French research group adopted a global perspective.⁴⁹ They looked for the inscribed forms of private, intimate, autobiographical self within African, Asian and Near Eastern cultures for the *désoccidentalisation* of the concept.⁵⁰ The volume, *The Uses of First-Person Writings: Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, was one of the most important contributions of the French research group. The book was the reflection of this transcultural perspective in that they gathered together specialists on personal writings from the Near East, Africa, Colonial America, Far Asia and Europe.⁵¹

There seems to be two central debates concerning ego-document studies. Scholars argue about whether the scope of the term ego-document can be expanded to include all types of documents containing some personal information, for example, judicial records or traveler's accounts. The second debate centers around the question of individuality; that is, whether one can find subjective information such as feelings, emotions, and thoughts, or only objective information revealing a person's social connections and relationships. Dekker, in his introduction to the book, *Ego-Documents and History: Autobiographical Writings in Its Social Context since the Middle* published in 2002, pointed to debates about the meaning of the term and elaborated on the question of whether "it is sufficient to classify a text as an ego-document on the sole grounds that it was written in the first person and contains personal information."⁵² Dekker underlined the fact that it is a very subjective decision to call a text an ego-document and may vary from reader to reader, referring to Lejeune's description of autobiography as "pacte autobiographique," that is "the reader's assumption that the author, the narrator and the text are one and the same person."⁵³ Dekker also touched upon Schulze's broad definition of the term ego-document, but he apparently avoided harsh criticism of it. Dekker was content to quote Benigna von Krusenstjern's reaction to Schulze and noted that such a wide interpretation would make the concept unworkable.⁵⁴ According to Dekker, the terms ego-document and "Selbstzeugnis" can

⁴⁹ François-Joseph Ruggiu, "The Uses of First Person Writings on the Longue Durée," in *The Uses of First Person Writings: Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggiu (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2013), 14-15.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 15.

⁵¹ Ibid., 16.

⁵² Dekker, "Introduction," 9.

⁵³ Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte Autobiographique* (Paris: Édition du Seuil, 1975).

⁵⁴ Dekker, "Introduction," 9.

be used interchangeably but in a more limited way.⁵⁵ In 2016, the Dutch group of historians were more strict about the definition of the term and wrote that, “the expansion of the range of ego-documents was welcomed in the conference held by Winfried Schulze, but it consequently put the “ego” into question.”⁵⁶ Although most German scholars found *Selbstzeugnisse* to be the historically correct term, the Dutch group found that “the more capacious category of *Ego-Dokument* has also attained currency in German historiography, and is available, for instance, in academic research manuals like *Kompass der Geschichtswissenschaft*.”⁵⁷

Upon the question about what kind of individuality was to be found in these texts, Dekker underlined how these texts enabled the reader to enter into the world of their authors. Dekker’s answer is worth quoting at length in the sense of revealing that he did not have as much trouble with the concept of the individual as the Berlin, Basel and French scholars.

My ideas on the question of individuality, to begin with, depend on which text I am reading. After reading the diary of Samuel Pepys, I somehow really have the idea that I know this man a bit. Much more so in the case of my friend, I am tempted to say, Constantijn Huygens Jr. Maybe I know them better than living friends, none of whom has ever given me his diary to read. Even if Pepys and Huygens have only shown some aspects of their selves in their diaries, the same is true for persons still alive. I am never disappointed reading an egodocument, simply because I do not believe that selves flow from these sources like water from the tap. For the same reason, though, I can understand that literary critics do not care for the type of information I hope to find there.⁵⁸

Ottoman Self-Narratives

Debates concerning whether European individuality had an equivalent in eastern cultures based on the assumptions made by Burckhardt who argued that “in the middle ages, man was conscious of himself as member of a race, people, party, family or

⁵⁵ Dekker, “Introduction,” 9.

⁵⁶ Michael Mascuch, Rudolf Dekker and Arianne Baggerman, “Egodocuments and History: A Short Account of the Longue Durée,” *The Historian* 78, no:1 (2016),12.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ <http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2002/02/dekker/index.html>.

corporation.”⁵⁹ According to him, this consciousness, formed through membership, evolved first in Italy and man came to recognize himself as an individual thanks to the political conditions in the Renaissance.⁶⁰ Burckhardt posited individualism as the distinctive characteristic of Western culture in his path-finding study on the Italian Renaissance.

It was Georg Misch who linked autobiography with individualism.⁶¹ In his seven-volume book, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, Georg Misch devoted his efforts to tracing the history of autobiography from antiquity to Middle Ages and to the self-presentations of the nineteenth century.⁶² He mostly devoted his efforts to proving the truth of arguments brought forth by Burckhardt. He not only focused on Europe but also on other cultures. He pointed out the rich corpus of material from ancient Egypt and other oriental cultures such as the Babylonian and Assyrian, but labeled them as texts with no personal touch, written before the advent of a sense of individuality. He noted that “in all this abundance of material there is an infinite poverty of individual character ... They conform to one settled pattern. Their large measure of uniformity marks them as the product of established usages and of traditional forms of self-presentation.”⁶³ Misch provided a large corpus of Oriental material in order to say that the autobiography first came into existence in Hellenic culture. He wrote that none of the Oriental works he examined presented the full personal life of their subject. A true historical consideration of autobiography became possible only with the birth of Hellenic culture.⁶⁴

Burckhardt’s ideas about European individualism and Misch’s linking it with autobiography set the tone for autobiography studies, and scholars confidently argued that individuality and, therefore, true autobiography did not develop in cultures outside the West. One of those scholars was Rosenthal, who produced pioneering works

⁵⁹ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1990), 98. [Originally published in German in 1869].

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ James Amelang, “Transcultural Autobiography,” 80-81.

⁶² Willi Jung and Alber Wimmer “Georg Misch’s *Geschichte der Autobiographie*,” *Annali d’Italianistica* 4 (1986): 30-44, accessed December 14, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24004417>.

⁶³ Georg Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, trans. E. W. Dickes (London: Routledge, 2014), 42. Seven volumes of *Geschichte der Autobiographie* first published in German between 1900 to 1965. See Jung and Wimmer, “Georg Misch’s *Geschichte der Autobiographie*,” 30.

⁶⁴ Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 104.

dealing with Arabic autobiography. He advocated that “the autobiographical tradition in Islam is bound less to personality than to the subject matter. The experiences of the individual, as such, do not offer the incentive for their being communicated, but rather do so only through their generally applicable pedagogic content.”⁶⁵

Rosenthal and Misch’s ideas were accepted as authoritative and repeated in subsequent studies on Arabic autobiography.⁶⁶ Scholars repeatedly wrote that individualism is a European phenomenon and therefore his dictum that related literature, such as autobiographies, diaries, and memoirs can only be found in European cultures had a deep effect on debates concerning European vs Middle Eastern self-consciousness. Grunebaum, for instance, argued that Eastern people are depersonalized. He noted that Islam “induces the individual to cultivate as the highest aim of life the mystical experience of complete unity with the divine essence,” hence “consciousness of any separate personality is blotted out.”⁶⁷ Therefore, this experience of complete unity required “the stripping of the human being of all the accidents that defined him in this world as the particular man or the particular woman.”⁶⁸ In such a culture, there would be no autobiography in the European sense. He wrote that “much of Arabic autobiography is limited to the listing of significant dates: birth, study, public appointments. The personality behind the events remains shrouded.”⁶⁹ In “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” Georges Gusdorf stated that “autobiography is not to be found outside of our cultural area; one would say that it expresses a concern peculiar to Western Man.”⁷⁰ According to Gusdorf, autobiography is not universal; it is “limited in time and in space.”⁷¹ It is natural for his own culture only “to turn back on one’s own past, to recollect one’s life in order to narrate it.”⁷²

Until a few decades ago, scholars continued to repeat the idea that autobiography is rarely found in Eastern cultures. Marvin Zonis noted that “concepts of the individual

⁶⁵ Quoted in Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 23; Franz Rosenthal, “Die arabische Autobiographie,” *Studia Arabica* 1 (1937), 15–19.

⁶⁶ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 28.

⁶⁷ Gustave E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), 221.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁷⁰ Georges Gusdorf, “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 29.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 29.

and individualism assume different dimensions in Middle Eastern and in Western cultures ... The centrality of the value of community over individuality and individualism works against the production of both autobiography and biography.”⁷³ In those eastern cultures, according to him, communal well-being is valued over the well-being of the individual. This in turn became the determinant factor for the lack of autobiography because the importance of the community rather than the individuality overcomes the necessity for the evaluation of the individual’s life.⁷⁴

Reynolds showed the existence of an important autobiographical tradition in the Islamic world. He examined numerous Arabic autobiographical texts, disclosed historical links among texts and identified various authorial motives for penning autobiographies.⁷⁵ He argued that the materials he examined throughout the book represented a well-known category of Arabic literary production.⁷⁶ Reynolds proved that Arabic autobiographies are more abundant than had been believed, although they are in the minority compared to Arabic biographical writings. He more importantly displayed that Arabic autobiographers revealed extensively more about their inner personal lives in their narratives, but researchers must make a close reading of the texts by taking literary strategies and the author’s social milieu into consideration in order to reveal such intimate information. Lastly, Reynolds argued that an autobiographical consciousness was already firmly established in medieval Arabic literary tradition. The authors articulated their autobiographical consciousness by addressing various motivations for writing, referring to earlier autobiographers as examples as well as offering religion as a reason for producing autobiographical accounts.⁷⁷

Burckhardt’s ideas about individualism as a requisite for writing about oneself and successive scholars’ assumptions about autobiographical tradition in Islamic cultures also had deep effects on scholars of Ottoman history. It was long believed that diary, memoir, or autobiography in which a self-conscious ego speaks about himself/herself

⁷³ Marvin Zonis, “Autobiography and Biography in the Middle East: A Plea for Psychological Studies,” in *Middle Eastern Lives: The Practice of Biography and Self-Narrative*, ed. Martin Kramer (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 62-63.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 52.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 30-1.

was very unusual in Ottoman society in the pre-Tanzimat period.⁷⁸ The idea that Middle Eastern societies did not have a sense of individuality and did not produce autobiographical material caused such works to be disregarded. Although there were a number of texts already known in which authors talked about themselves, these texts were depicted as exceptions and very rarely studied.⁷⁹ In her intriguing book on Ottoman sources, Faroqhi pointed out the ideological reasons behind the long neglect of self-narratives. “European scholars until quite recently have tended to think that first-person narrative is linked to ‘individualism’. ‘Individualism’ and ‘enlightenment’, however, are regarded as specifically European values, which cannot be found in and should not be attributed to non-European cultures.”⁸⁰

Bernard Lewis rejected the idea that it was under Western impact that autobiographical writing flourished after the Young Turk revolution. He wrote that autobiographical writing in Arabic and Ottoman literature went back a very long way.⁸¹ To situate self-narratives in a historical perspective, he listed the known autobiographical material from Arabic and Ottoman literature as well as from ancient times to the present. However, he concluded his arguments by saying that little of the autobiographical material he had examined were discrete books or long enough to be separate books.⁸² “The great majority are brief, running from a few lines to a few pages, and obviously written for inclusion in some larger book, either one’s own or someone else’s.”⁸³ Although Lewis rejected the idea that Middle Easterners started to produce autobiographical material only under Western impact, he nevertheless contributed to the argument that these texts were rare and materials already known were not long or deep enough to be separate books such as European historians were accustomed to.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Tanzimat Edict of 1839 was accepted as the first official step towards the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a modern state.

⁷⁹ Suraiya Faroqhi, “Ein Istanbul Derwisch des 17. Jahrhunderts, seine Familie und seine Freunde: Das Tagebuch des Seyyid Hasan,” in *Selbstzeugnisse in der Frühen Neuzeit: Individualisierungsweisen in interdisziplinärer Perspektive*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016), 113. I would like to express my thanks to Tuğba İsmailoğlu Kacı for helping me in reading this article.

⁸⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History: An Introduction to the Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 164.

⁸¹ Bernard Lewis, “First-Person Narrative in the Middle East,” in *Middle Eastern Lives: The Practice of Biography and Self-Narrative*, ed. Martin Kramer (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 21.

⁸² Ibid., 34.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Christoph Herzog and Raoul Motika likewise claimed that few Ottoman or Middle Eastern self-narratives meet the criteria defined by Westerners for a true autobiography, that is, autobiography should reveal a full picture of the author's inner psychological self.⁸⁵ However, the question remains as to whether when studying Ottoman autobiographical texts, we must adhere to the criteria defined by westerners - that is the autobiography must disclose a personal, inner psychological self rather than a public self -. To quote at length from Reynolds,

The answer to this question hinges both on our modern expectations of autobiography as a genre – that it should reveal a private, psychological inner self beyond an exterior, public self – and on our expectations of autobiography as a portrayal of an individualized identity or personality. To what extent are these modern expectations generalizable across cultures and literatures.⁸⁶

Do Ottoman autobiographies have distinctive qualities? If they have, can't we then qualify them as autobiographies? In that case, what status would be given to many Ottoman texts in which the authors wrote about themselves and gave a complete picture of their lives? We need to produce more systematic studies to comprehend Ottoman self-narratives, their distinctive qualities, and also their similarities to the self-narratives produced in other cultures.

İbrahim Olgun's article in *Türk Dili* is one of the earlier studies paying attention to Ottoman autobiographical texts. He gave a short survey of existing texts and introduced some unknown examples of autobiographical material from *Sergüzeşt-i Esîr-i Malta* to Memoirs of Osman Agha of Timisoara, from Aşçı Dede's memoirs to İntizâmî's *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân*⁸⁷ in his article published in 1972.⁸⁸ At a very early date, Olgun wrote that it was impossible to agree with scholars who believed that there were not enough works in the genre of memoirs in the Turkish literature. He argued that it is not the paucity of such works but insufficient efforts to explore and evaluate sources and a lack of method that caused such beliefs.⁸⁹ This early awareness, however, did

⁸⁵ Christoph Herzog and Raoul Motika, "Orientalism 'alla turca': Late 19th/Early 20th Century Ottoman Voyages into the Muslim 'Outback'," *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no:2 (2000): 139-195.

⁸⁶ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 73-74.

⁸⁷ This sergüzeştname was studied by Cihan Okuyucu and Sadık Yazar, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân: XVI. Yüzyıldan Bir Katibin Sergüzeşti* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2021).

⁸⁸ İbrahim Olgun, "Anı Türü ve Türk Edebiyatında Anı," *Türk Dili* 25/246 (1972): 402-427.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 406-7.

not lead to a change in the perception that autobiographical material was rare in Ottoman literature. A study on a similar scale to Reynold's survey on Arabic autobiographies has not yet been done for Ottoman autobiographical works.

Some well-known autobiographies like the one written by Osman Agha of Timisoara, the autobiography of chief mufti Feyzullah Efendi (d.1703), Evliya Çelebi's writings revealing very intimate information on his life, as well as the works of historian Mustafa Ali (d. 1600), who "inject[ed] personal commentary and autobiography into even the most formal of contexts,"⁹⁰ were not enough to change this idea that there was an "actual shortage of personality" in Ottoman sources.⁹¹ Goffmann argued that "a paucity of diaries, memoirs, letters, and similar writings has served to dampen scholarship in this potentially tantalizing discipline."⁹²

Despite all these views about the paucity or lack of autobiographical writing, scholars at times identified as Ottoman self-narratives works found either in the state archive or manuscript libraries. However, an obstacle to studying these texts was that scholars mostly did not know what to do with this special kind of texts which were not valued as sources for historical studies. These texts were either only transcribed and introduced to the scholarly public without being put into a context or, at best, used to extract facts about some larger themes like cultural or social history. One of such studies was İsmet Parmaksızoğlu's article written in 1953.⁹³ Parmaksızoğlu analyzed a captivity narrative in which Macuncuzâde Mustafa Efendi related how he was captivated by pirates on his way to Baf (Paphos, Cyprus) and taken to Malta where he stayed for two years between 1597 and 1599. Parmaksızoğlu underlined that this work might be the earliest captivity narrative providing detailed information about the conditions of Muslim prisoners in Malta. Parmaksızoğlu examined the text to make a comparison between Muslim captives held in the prisons of Malta and Christian captives held in Istanbul. Another study made on the same work was Fahir İz's edition

⁹⁰ Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 8.

⁹¹ Daniel Goffmann, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), xiv. Also cited by Astrid Meier, "Ego-Documents in Early-Modern Ottoman Syria? Result of a Difficult Search," in *The Uses of First Person Writings: Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggiu (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2013), 124.

⁹² Goffmann, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, xiv.

⁹³ İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, "Bir Türk Kadısının Esaret Hatıraları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 8 (1953): 77-84.

of *Sergüzeşt-i Esîr-i Malta* published in 1970.⁹⁴ İz briefly introduced the text and the author without giving much detailed information.

Osman Agha's work is perhaps the most known example of Ottoman first-person accounts. Osman Agha was born at the end of the seventeenth century in Timisoara. He was captured in 1688 during the siege of Lipova and ended up being a servant in the household of an aristocrat in Vienna. He wrote about the misfortunes of being a captive in the hands of infidels. He provided a lively and amusing account of his time in Vienna and his escape in 1699. Richard Franz Kreutel and Otto Spies first published Osman Agha's memoirs in German in 1954.⁹⁵ Later, in 1980, a London autograph copy was edited by Kreutel in its original Ottoman script.⁹⁶ Recently, R. Aslıhan Aksoy Sheridan published an article reading Osman Agha's memoirs as self-narrative.⁹⁷ Examining the form, context, and reasons for writing and the intended functions of Osman Agha's narrative, Aksoy Sheridan stated that his narrative not only uncovers the emotional implications seen between the lines, but also reveals the political situations experienced on an individual level. Self-narratives can give a vivid picture of the actual conditions individuals lived through.⁹⁸

Another well-known autobiographical work was written by the chief mufti Feyzullah Efendi. F. Çetin Derin and Ahmet Türek translated the text from Arabic into modern Turkish.⁹⁹ His autobiography has been studied by Suraiya Faroqhi,¹⁰⁰ Barbara Kellner-

⁹⁴ Fahir İz, "Macuncuzâde Mustafa'nın Malta Anıları: Sergüzeşt-i Esîr-i Malta," *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı Belleten* 18 (1970): 69-122.

⁹⁵ Richard F. Kreutel and Otto Spies, *Leben und Abenteuer des Dolmetschers Osman Ağa – Eine türkische Autobiographie aus der Zeit der großen Kreige gegen Österreich* (Bonn: Selbstverlag des Orientalischen Seminars der Universität Bonn, 1954).

⁹⁶ Richard F. Kreutel, *Die Autobiographie des Dolmetschers 'Osmân Ağa aus Temeschwar. Der Text des Londoner Autographen in normalisierter Rechtschreibung* (Cambridge: E. J. W. Gibb Memorial, 1980).

⁹⁷ R. Aslıhan Aksoy Sheridan, "Nostalgia of a Frustrated Ottoman Subject: Reading Osman Agha of Timisoara's Memoirs as Self-Narrative," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53 (2021): 323-330.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 329-30.

⁹⁹ Ahmet Türek and F. Çetin Derin, "Feyzullah Efendi'nin Kendi Kaleminden Hal Tercümesi," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 24 (1970): 69-92.

¹⁰⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, "An Ulama Grandee and His Household," *Journal of Ottoman Studies (Osmanlı Araştırmaları)* 9 (1989): 199-208.

Heinkele¹⁰¹ and Michael Nizri¹⁰² in terms of ulama grandee households and family politics. Lastly, Michael Nizri published a monograph on Feyzullah Efendi's household. He examined the formation of a powerful ulama household and the politics arising around such an influential figure.¹⁰³

Agah Sırrı Levend was the first to bring together known examples of the *sergüzeştname* (book of memoir) genre. In his monumental work, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, Levend recorded fifteen manuscripts under the title of *sergüzeştname* and *hasbıhâl*.¹⁰⁴ After briefly describing the genre of *sergüzeştname*, he added a list of the manuscripts. Haluk Gökalp examined nineteen manuscripts in his book which was published in 2009.¹⁰⁵ He studied the style, form, and content of these manuscripts in great detail and provided a complete picture of the genre for the first time. Gökalp argued that the main motivation behind the production of *sergüzeştnames* was that the authors give value to their lives and the events they experienced as individuals.¹⁰⁶ Following are the some of the manuscripts examined by Gökalp: *Firkatnâme*, *Hecrnâme*, *Kitâb-ı Sergüzeşt-i Zaîfî*, *Makâlât-ı Varvarî Ali*, *Sergüzeştname-i Fakîr Be 'Azîmet-i Tokat*, *Sergüzeştname-i Kâtib Osman*, *Sernüviştname-i 'Âcizî*, *Sergüzeşt-i İstolçevî*.¹⁰⁷

Researchers have also discovered new manuscripts. Two *sergüzeştnames* produced by the same author have recently been identified by Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş and Mustafa Demir. Mustafa Demir prepared his M.A. thesis on *Sergüzset-i Âşık Yazıcı Murtaza* in 2020.¹⁰⁸ Demir transcribed the text, which was written in verse, into modern Turkish

¹⁰¹ Barbara Kellner-Heinkele, "Family Politics of Ottoman *Ulema*. The Case of Sheykhülislam Seyyid Feyzullah Efendi and His Descendents," in *Kinship in the Altaic World, Proceedings of the 48th Permanent International Altaistic Conference Moscow 2005*, ed. Elena V. Boikova and Rostislav B. Rybakov (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006).

¹⁰² Michael Nizri, "The Memoirs of *Şeyhülislam* Feyzullah Efendi (1638–1703): Self, Family and Household," in *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self*, ed. Yavuz Köse and Ralf Elger (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 27–36.

¹⁰³ Michael Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics and the Ulema Household* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ Agah Sırrı Levend, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1973), 141–42.

¹⁰⁵ Haluk Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeştname* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2009).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 604. Also cited by Karahasanoğlu, "Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53 (2021), 301.

¹⁰⁷ Since the literature about *sergüzeştname* genre is detailly examined in the second chapter, I am not citing complete literature here.

¹⁰⁸ Mustafa Demir, "Sergüzeşt-i Âşık Yazıcı Murtaza (İnceleme-Metin)," (MA thesis, Hitit University, 2020).

and analyzed its form and content. In the same year, Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş came up with a lively account of Aşık Yazıcı Murtaza who also left a record of his adventures in prose. Ertaş provided a vivid picture of the adventures of Yazıcı Murtaza' who left his family and homeland behind in the hope of making money. He spent years away from his homeland and knocked around in different regions of the empire from Albania to Basra, from Selanik to Yerevan. He was away from home and did not see his family for ten years. He wrote the account of his life in great disappointment and with great yearning for home.¹⁰⁹

Ottoman intellectuals also produced autobiographical works under the title of *terceme-i hâl* (autobiography). They wrote their autobiographies either as separate works or inserted their life stories into larger works like hagiographies, travelogues, biographical dictionaries, or historical works, as well as in the prefaces of various legal, scientific and religious works.¹¹⁰ One must be aware that diverse styles and forms might be used in composing a life narrative. For instance, Taşköprüzâde provided autobiographical details in his biographical work *eş-Şakâiku'n-Nu'mâniyye fî 'Ulemâi'd-Devleti'l-Osmâniyye*.¹¹¹ Katip Çelebi inserted autobiographical experiences into three different works of his: *Süllemü'l-Vusûl ilâ Tabakâti'l-Fuhûl, Mizânü'l-Hakk fî İhtiyâri'l-Ehakk* and *Cihânnümâ*.¹¹² Katip Çelebi defended his preference to write an autobiography by giving reference to earlier intellectuals who wrote their autobiographies, such as Taşköprülüzâde, Suyûtî, Şa'rânî, İbn Hacer and others, explaining that he wanted to express his gratitude to God in such an endeavor.¹¹³

Jan Schmidt is another well-known researcher publishing accounts of Ottoman autobiographical writing before the Tanzimat period. Contrary to the ideas of Georges

¹⁰⁹ Yazıcı Murtaza, *Arnavutluk'tan Basra'ya 18. Yüzyılda Kayserili Bir Katibin Seyahat Anıları*, ed. Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2020).

¹¹⁰ Derin Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments: Reading Ottoman Personal Miscellanies in the Early Modern Era," in *Autobiographical Themes in Turkish Literature: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Olcay Akyıldız, Halim Kara and BÖrte Sagaster (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2016), 85-86.

¹¹¹ 'İsamü'd-Din Ebu'l- Hayr Ahmed b. Mustafa Taşköprüzâde, *eş-Şakâiku'n-Nu'mâniyye fî Ulemâi'd-Devleti'l- Osmâniyye*, ed. Ahmet Suphi Furat (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1985), 552-560.

¹¹² Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, "Kâtib Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 37 (2002): 297-319.

¹¹³ Sarıcaoğlu, "Kâtib Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," 298-299.

Gusdorf, who thought that autobiography was peculiar to Western man, Schmidt came up with examples of manuscripts he discovered in the Oriental Collection of the Leiden University Library. These manuscripts were “incompletely and misleadingly, even disparagingly, catalogued and ... consequently unread and unstudied.”¹¹⁴ Jan Schmidt apparently experienced similar technical problems of misleading catalogues in finding autobiographical works. Schmidt showed the existence of autobiographical passages in diverse unexpected places and contexts.¹¹⁵ An obviously important discovery by Schmidt was the autobiography by a low-ranking Ottoman soldier who called himself Kabudlu el-Hac Mustafa Vasfi Efendi. This soldier participated in a number of military campaigns in Anatolia and Rumelia in the early nineteenth century during the reign of Mahmud II.¹¹⁶ Mustafa Vasfi Efendi served as an irregular horseman together with his father. He kept a record of the military campaigns he participated in, together with an account of his travels and a lively report of his adventures. He described his feelings with great vivacity, bringing the reader close to the reality of Ottoman military life.¹¹⁷ Jan Schmidt translated the text into English and pointed out its value as an ego-document: “a rare source for the life and emotions of a low-ranking Muslim inhabitant of the pre-Modern Ottoman Empire.”¹¹⁸ This text was published by Ömer Koçyiğit in 2016 together with a comprehensive analysis of the life and adventures of Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi Efendi.¹¹⁹

A late nineteenth century memoir was written by a Sufi called Aşçı İbrahim Dede (d. after 1906) under the title of *Risâle-i Terceme-i Ahvâl-i Aşçı Dede-i Nakşî Mevlevî*. Aşçı İbrahim Dede was an Ottoman bureaucrat who had Sufi affiliations as can be recognized from the title of his memoir as well as the from the title *aşçı dede* which was a rank in the *Mevlevî* Sufi order.¹²⁰ The backbone of his narrative is mostly about

¹¹⁴ Jan Schmidt, “Ottoman Autobiographical Texts by Lami’i and Others in the Collection of Turkish Manuscripts at the Leiden University Library,” *Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları: Barbara Flemming Armağanı* 26, no:2 (2002), 197.

¹¹⁵ Jan Schmidt, Ottoman Autobiographical Texts,” 197.

¹¹⁶ Jan Schmidt, “The Adventures of an Ottoman Horseman: The Autobiography of Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi Efendi, 1800-182,” in *The Joys of Philology: Studies in Ottoman Literature, History and Orientalism (1500-1923)*, vol I (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2002), 165.

¹¹⁷ Schmidt, “The Adventures of an Ottoman Horseman,” 179.

¹¹⁸ Schmidt, “The Adventures of an Ottoman Horseman,” 181.

¹¹⁹ Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi Efendi, *Tevarih* (Analysis-Text-Maps-Index-Facsimile), ed. Ömer Koçyiğit (Cambridge: Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 2016).

¹²⁰ Yusuf Turan Günaydın, “Tasavvufi Günlükler,” *Hece: Günlük Özel Sayısı* 30 (2015), 71.

his appointments to the different regions of the Empire. He not only worked as an officer in the different regions of the Ottoman Empire, but also joined several Sufi orders, which were active in the cities where he worked as a bureaucrat. He joined the Mawlawi order in Istanbul and Edirne,¹²¹ the Khalidi order in Erzincan, and the Qadiri order in Erzurum. He explained his reasons in the following remarks: “A true path should include four aspects; the affection of the Qadiris, the path of Naqshbandis, the morals of Mawlawis, and the obedience of the Bektashis.”¹²² For Aşçı Dede, it was very significant to have the guidance of a sheikh, because this would lead him to the eternal life that he was searching for.¹²³ Aşçı Dede provided a lively account of his life as a bureaucrat and also as a Sufi. His memoirs give valuable insight into nineteenth-century official duties and the Sufi way of life.

Some of the Ottoman diaries which have been studied recently in the context of self-narratives/ego-documents had also been discovered and introduced to the scholarly public long ago. For instance, Niyazi Mısri’s (d.1694) diary was first introduced by Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı in 1972.¹²⁴ In the article in which he aimed at uncovering Niyazi Mısri’s life, Sufi identity, and mentality, Gölpınarlı devoted a large space to the diary. Likewise, the diary of Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi was first discovered by Fazıl Işıkoğlu in 1973.¹²⁵ In 1977, Madeline Zilfi introduced the diary of Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi (d. 1790) covering the years between 1749-1756 and examined it as “a new source for Ottoman biography.”¹²⁶ Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi was a *müderris* (teacher) and, therefore, he reserved a lot of space in his diary for recording appointments. He also wrote about the injustices he suffered in his profession and complained about the grievances he experienced.¹²⁷ Around a decade later, Orhan Şaik Gökyay discovered

¹²¹ Aşçı İbrahim Dede, *Aşçı Dede’nin Hatıraları: Çok Yönlü Bir Sufi’nin Gözüyle Son Dönem Osmanlı Hayatı*, ed. Mustafa Koç and Eyyüp Tanrıverdi, 4 volumes (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2006). [hereafter, Aşçı Dede I, II, III, IV].

¹²² Aşçı Dede III, 1469.

¹²³ Aşçı Dede I, 333.

¹²⁴ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, “Niyâzî-i Mısri,” *Şarkiyat Mecmuası* 7 (1972):183-226.

¹²⁵ Fazıl Işıkoğlu, “Başbakanlık Arşivi’nde Yeni Bulunmuş Olan ve Sadreddinzâde Telhîsî Mustafa Efendi Tarafından Tutulduğu Anlaşılan H. 1123 (1711)-1148 (1735) Yıllarına Ait Bir Ceride (Jurnal) ve Eklentisi,” in *VII. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1973), 508-34.

¹²⁶ Madeline Zilfi, “The Diary of a Müderres: A New Source for Ottoman Biography,” *Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1977):157-172.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Sohbetnâme and, transcribing some parts of it, wrote an article to introduce this very interesting source.¹²⁸ Kemal Beydilli discovered another very interesting work, the diary of an imam, in 2001.¹²⁹ However, Beydilli used it to extract information about imams rather than giving a voice to the writer of the diary. Diaries produced in Arabic speaking Ottoman lands were also beginning to appear. The diary/history of Ahmed al-Budayr was translated into Turkish by Hasan Yüksel in 1995.¹³⁰ Ahmed al-Budayr organized his diary according to the years. He recorded his entries by giving the day, month, and year. His diary offers an extraordinary insight into the everyday life of a small business owner who lived in seventeenth- century Ottoman Damascus. Nabil Saleh studied the diary of an Ottoman judge living in Beirut in 1843. Abu Khalid provided an intriguing account of his life, his work as a judge, the troubled cases he had to deal with and his relations with others in an environment shaped by difficult political circumstances.¹³¹ Most of these studies were descriptive, aiming to introduce manuscripts to the scholarly public; some of them were used as sources of information for larger subjects. Some of these sources, have long been awaiting rediscovery and integration into ego-document/self-narrative studies in Europe.

Even though modern scholarship on the Ottoman Empire favored archival documents and official histories revealing “factual” information, and distrusted autobiographical narratives, still Ottoman self-narratives have attracted the attention of scholars over the last few decades and a number of very important analytical studies have appeared at an ever-increasing pace. Most importantly, one should mention Cemal Kafadar’s groundbreaking study of Seyyid Hasan’s diary in 1989. Kafadar was the first scholar to integrate an Ottoman diary into ego-document literature. *Sohbetnâme*, a diary covering the period between 1661 and 1665, was penned by a Sufi called Seyyid Hasan, head of the Sufi convent in Balat.¹³² In his diary, Seyyid Hasan mostly narrated

¹²⁸ Orhan Şaik Gökyay, “Sohbetname,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 14 (1985): 56-64.

¹²⁹ Kemal Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar ve Bir İmanın Günlüğü* (İstanbul: TATAV, 2001).

¹³⁰ Hasan Yüksel, *Berber Bediri’nin Günlüğü 1741-1762: Osmanlı Taşra Hayatına İlişkin Olaylar* (Ankara: Akçağ, 1995).

¹³¹ Nabil Saleh, *Qadi and the Fortune Teller: The Diary of a Judge in Ottoman Beirut (1843)* (London: Quartet Books, 1996).

¹³² *Sohbetnâme* is found in Topkapı Palace Museum Library in two volumes. Seyyid Hasan, *Sohbetnâme*, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, MS Hazine 1426; Seyyid Hasan, *Sohbetnâme*, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, MS Hazine 1418.

mundane occurrences in his daily life; people he encountered, places he went to or the food he ate. Kafadar suggested that literary activities common in Sufi circles, such as writing the words or visions of one's sheikh, provided Seyyid Hasan with the necessary vocabulary to write about his own deeds. "It is clear that recording the worldly and miraculous deeds, words and visions of one's sheikh was a respected activity in Sufi circles. Seyyid Hasan had in a way produced a work of that nature but inverted the process and recorded his own deeds."¹³³

Kafadar associated *Sohbetname* with social environment of Seyyid Hasan who mostly described his experiences as being in harmony with the group he belonged to. "If unique personal experiences of a mystical nature are not recorded, perhaps it is because our diarist felt the true path to the good life to lie not so much in individual experiences as in communal harmony—a sensibility that was rather common in Sufism."¹³⁴ Indeed, referring to Natalie Zemon Davis, Kafadar wrote that "the notion of individuality, totally dissociated from identification with any group according to Burckhardt's famous depiction, now seems to have more leaks than it once did." Like Davis, Kafadar argued that embeddedness in group was not an obstacle to self-definition and self-consciousness.¹³⁵ What is more important for this article is that Kafadar did not limit himself to *Sohbetnâme* but discussed almost all known works as well as some unknown works in the context of ego-documents. For example, Asiye Hatun, whose letters to her sheikh, were found and edited by Cemal Kafadar provided a curious example of the Ottoman dream landscape.¹³⁶ These dream letters give a valuable chance for the researcher to gain insight into a woman Sufi's life and her spiritual pathway.

Kafadar's students also made significant contributions to the field. Among them Derin Terzioğlu's study of Niyazi Mısri's diary must be mentioned.¹³⁷ Terzioğlu searched

¹³³ Kafadar, "Self and Others," 127-28.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 147.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 135. Also see Natalie Zemon Davis, "Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France," in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, ed. Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, David E. Wellbery with Arnold I. Davidson, Ann Swidler and Ian Watt (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 53-63.

¹³⁶ Cemal Kafadar, "Mütereddît bir Mutasavvîf: Üsküplü Asiye Hatun'un Rüya Defteri 1641-43," *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıllık* 5 (1992): 168-222; Cemal Kafadar, *Rüya Mektupları: Asiye Hatun* (Istanbul: Oğlak Yayınları, 1994).

¹³⁷ Derin 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.

for the circumstances in which the diary was produced, the emotional state of the diarist when producing such a text and, above all, the modes of self-representation in a Sufi narrative. Terzioğlu noted that Ottoman practitioners of Sufism inherited a large corpus of life narratives from their masters and other previous Sufis in several forms and genres.¹³⁸ This, in a sense, gave them an advantage in writing about themselves. “As writers of self-narratives, Ottoman Sufis also had an advantage over the rest of the literate minority in that Sufism provided them with a set of highly sophisticated concepts and vocabulary with which to write about themselves as well as with a reason to do so.”¹³⁹ Like Kafadar, Terzioğlu did not confine herself only to the genre of diary, she examined all the known Sufi self-narratives and integrated them with ongoing debates in European historiography. These two articles written by Kafadar and Terzioğlu presented an amount of important material and have the potential to open the door to new studies.

At this time, Suraiya Faroqhi included a discussion about self-narratives in her book on Ottoman sources.¹⁴⁰ She discussed five texts belonging to the period before the nineteenth century, and three texts produced after the middle of the nineteenth century. She examined these materials under the title of “Writing for a Restricted Audience: The First Person-Narrative.” She argued that these texts were written to be read by a restricted circle. She based her argument on the fact that such texts conveying personal experiences were not generally copied.¹⁴¹ She touched upon the issue of European individualism and the ideological reasons behind the idea that memoirs and autobiographies in the Ottoman Empire began to appear only in the twentieth century. She also discussed technical and ideological reasons behind the ignoring of manuscripts written in the first person.¹⁴² Her brief discussion of this material is quite significant in that it is the first time that these particular types of text appear in a book on Ottoman sources revealing their value as sources for historical research. She also contributed to a publication by Kaspar von Greyerz, the leader of Basel ego-document group. Faroqhi offered a detailed analysis of the diary of Seyyid Hasan. The diary, as

¹³⁸ Terzioğlu, “Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times,” 143.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 142.

¹⁴⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History: An Introduction to the Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 163-67.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 164.

¹⁴² Ibid., 163-164.

noted before, covered the period between 1661 and 1665. Seyyid Hasan was the son of Halveti Sünbülü, a sheikh in Istanbul. Faroqhi noted that he was financially well off and did not have to think about working. Hence, work plays obviously a very minor role in his diary. There is also no evidence of a career in the author's diary. Excursions and visits were a popular theme. The author reports in detail who went where with whom. Eating and drinking were also important themes for Seyyid Hasan. For this reason, Faroqhi notes that the diary can be considered as a significant - and rare - source of nutrition for well-off city dwellers.¹⁴³ She found the text particularly interesting because the author makes so many statements about himself that one can well imagine him as a person.¹⁴⁴ Seyyid Hasan apparently loved socializing and contact with friends more than anything, but also enjoyed being in the open air. Eating and drinking coffee offered comfort and relaxation, even in the worst times of his life.¹⁴⁵ Faroqhi tends to believe that such a growing interest in "the culture of the intimate" in seventeenth-century Ottoman urban society served as a sign of wider, more complex processes. According to her, the change in mentality in the later nineteenth century was not brought into the Ottoman Empire from outside a result of an intensive contact with European thinking; rather it was about the local roots of Ottoman modernism.¹⁴⁶

Dana Sajdi must be counted among those who made important publications related to ego-document literature. She wrote about the barber of Damascus, Shihab al-Din Ahmad Ibn Budayr, who lived in the 18th century. Ibn Budayr was born into humble circumstances and somehow became apprentice to a fashionable city barber who served some of the most recognized intellectual characters of Damascus.¹⁴⁷ Hence, Ibn Budayr finally became a barber with a similar high-standing customer profile. More curious than his becoming a fashionable city barber was that Ibn Budayr penned a history book to record events occurring in his lifetime. Sajdi examined this book to look for "the life and work, the aspirations and fears, of this remarkable eighteenth-

¹⁴³ Faroqhi, "Ein Istanbuler Derwisch," 117.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 124.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 125.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 2.

century Damascene craftsman.”¹⁴⁸ To contextualize the emergence of a new kind of literacy – “nouveau literacy” as she described it- she compared Ibn Budayr’s work to other such commoner chronicles written “by a couple of soldiers, by a court clerk, by Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic priests, by a Samaritan scribe, and by a Merchant” in the eighteenth century Levant.¹⁴⁹ In this way, she unveiled the emergence of a new kind of genre, that is, history- writing by unusual people.¹⁵⁰ She related this phenomenon not to a rise in literacy, saying it was more specifically about a new social phenomenon, that is, “the rise of authority in the field of history among seemingly ‘random’ individuals, who come from different backgrounds and who do not have any connection to one another.”¹⁵¹ Sajdi’s work provided valuable insights into the life of Ibn Budayr in particular, and the culture of ordinary people in general in eighteenth-century Ottoman Syria.

Recently, scientific meetings to discuss Ottoman self-narratives have begun to be organized. A symposium was jointly organized in 2003 by Boğaziçi University and the Orient Institut der DMG under the title of “Autobiographical Themes in Turkish Literature: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives.” In 2016, a selection of the papers presented in the symposium was published as a book under the same name by Olcay Akyıldız, Halim Kara and Börte Sagaster.¹⁵²

An international workshop was organized in 2009 by the German Research Foundation’s Research Group 530 on “Self-narratives in Transcultural Perspective” (DFG-Forschergruppe 530 Selbstzeugnisse in transkultureller Perspektive) in collaboration with Orient Institut, Istanbul. An important volume developed out of this workshop with the title of *Fashioning the Self in Transcultural Perspective: The Uses and Significance of Dress in Self-Narratives*. This included the theme of material culture in the research on self-narratives by examining the function of dress in people’s

¹⁴⁸ Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus*, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Steve Tamari, “The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth- Century Ottoman Levant by Dana Sajdi,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no:4 (2014): 826-828.

¹⁵¹ Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus*, 9.

¹⁵² Olcay Akyıldız, Halim Kara and Börte Sagaster, eds., *Autobiographical Themes in Turkish Literature: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2016).

self-concept.¹⁵³ An international research project of the Orient Institute, Istanbul called “Istanbul Memories” was coordinated by Richard Wittmann in cooperation with Christoph Herzog.¹⁵⁴

Two publications focusing on the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman life narratives appeared under the Routledge series of “Life Narratives of the Ottoman Realm: Individual and Empire in the Near East.” Philipp Wirtz examined autobiographies of journalists, soldiers, novelists or officials like Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Halide Edip Adivar, and Ahmet Emin Yalman who were born into the Ottoman Empire but wrote in the post-Ottoman period.¹⁵⁵ Wirtz analyzed these autobiographical narratives to display different images of a past world and to “examine which attitudes authors take towards the past, whether the past is presented in a positive or negative light, or a combination of both.”¹⁵⁶ The second publication of the series was edited by Christoph Herzog and Richard Wittmann entitled *Istanbul-Kushta-Constantinople: Narratives of Identity in the Ottoman Capital 1830-1930*. This offered a glimpse into the diverse life experiences in the Ottoman capital by focusing on narratives produced by persons from various walks of life. The book’s title bears three different usages of the city’s name -by Muslims, Jews and Christians respectively- revealing the main aim of the editors who wanted to reconstruct the city’s multiple pasts “to understand better the defining role that ethnic diversity played in the shaping of the city.”¹⁵⁷ Accordingly with the stated aim of the editors, the book is composed four parts under the titles of “European and Ottoman Women in the Empire,” “Outside Observers of Istanbul,” “Jewish Communities,” and “Armenian and Bulgarian Christian Communities.”

Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse edited a book focusing on Middle Eastern ego-documents in 2010 under the title of *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*. They followed the

¹⁵³ Claudia Ulbrich and Richard Wittmann, “Introduction,” in *Fashioning the Self in Transcultural Perspective: The Uses and Significance of Dress in Self-Narratives*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich and Richard Wittmann (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2016), 12.

¹⁵⁴ <http://www.istanbulmemories.org>

¹⁵⁵ Philipp Wirtz, *Depicting the Late Ottoman Empire in Turkish Autobiographies: Images of a Past World* (London: Routledge, 2017), 2.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁵⁷ Christoph Herzog and Richard Wittmann, eds., *Istanbul-Kushta-Constantinople: Narratives of Identity in the Ottoman Capital 1830-1930* (London: Routledge, 2019), 1.

ideas of Winfried Schulze and expanded the scope of the term even more, thinking that “ego-documents could encompass all texts with an ego talking about himself.”¹⁵⁸ They even noted that “texts without an ego speaking can be interpreted as ego-document, since everything we write reveals something about ourselves.”¹⁵⁹ Hence, they included a broad spectrum of articles focusing on “all kinds of texts: stories of a whole life, short personal notices and everything in between.”¹⁶⁰ The book was divided into four sections under the titles of “The Remembering Ego”, “The Travelling Ego”, “The Fictional Ego” and “The Hidden Ego.” Some of the articles found in this volume are as follows: Hatice Aynur contributed to the volume with an article revealing autobiographical parts in Aşık Çelebi’s (d. 1572) dictionary of poets; Michail Nizri wrote about Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi (d. 1703)’s memoirs; Denise Klein examined *Sefâretnâme* genre as ego-documents by discussing three different 18th century examples; Jan Schmidt focused on Ottoman miscellaneous manuscripts; Aslı Niyazioğlu contributed with a study of dreams and Ottoman biography writing in 16th century and Yavuz Köse provided insight into Ottoman consumer behavior.

Mehmet Beşikçi has been producing important publications using ego-documents written by Ottoman soldiers at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁶¹ One of the most significant contribution of Mehmet Beşikçi is the article in which he provided a methodological analysis as to how to use autobiographical texts in historical research.¹⁶² Beşikçi asserted that ego-documents are distinctive types of historical sources and defined them as texts in which authors present a subjective experience in writing with their own particular ways of remembering. However, that subjective experience/truth was shaped both by the political, social, and cultural context within which it was lived and remembered.¹⁶³ There are two dimensions to evaluating ego-documents: when it was written and when it was remembered. Hence, it is necessary

¹⁵⁸ Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse, “Introduction,” in *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 8.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶¹ Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

¹⁶² Mehmet Beşikçi, “Tarih Yazımında Hatırat ve Günlükler Nasıl Kullanılmalı? Birinci Dünya Savaşı’na Katılan Askerlerin Benlik-Belgeleri Özelinde Metodolojik Bir Analiz,” *Toplum ve Bilim* 144 (2018): 253-282.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 278.

to fully understand the authors' characteristics and problems to bring this type of document into a more fruitful relationship with other types of documents.¹⁶⁴ By evaluating the model provided by Sidone Smith and Julia Watson for the study of autobiographies, Mehmet Beşikçi provided a roadmap for those who want to use ego-documents for historical studies.¹⁶⁵

These studies made a significant impact, and interest in Ottoman self-narratives gradually increased. We must talk also about Selim Karahasanoğlu who made significant contributions to ego-document studies in Turkey. In 2013, he published a book entitled *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711-1735) Üzerine Bir İnceleme*.¹⁶⁶ Although this diary of Mustafa Efendi was first discovered by Fazıl Işıközü in 1973, it is Karahasanoğlu who integrated the diary into Ego-document literature. In an article entitled "Ego-documents: Potentials and Limitations as a Source for Historical Research," Karahasanoğlu aimed at creating an awareness of the study of ego-documents in Turkey. He claimed that Ottoman manuscript collections include lots of works that can be evaluated within the category of ego-documents and these sources have the potential to add a human factor to Ottoman historical scholarship.¹⁶⁷ According to Karahasanoğlu, defining the term ego-document too broadly is not helpful because such broad definition causes the term to lose its precision.¹⁶⁸ He thinks that any source can give some clues about its author, even the genre of chronicle. Thus, he is "inclined to include only the material that can be defined directly as an ego-document in the sense that the motivation of the author is clearly to describe himself/herself."¹⁶⁹

In the same year, Karahasanoğlu wrote an article part under the title of *Ben-Anlatıları* in a historical methodology book edited by Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş. It was the second time, after Faroqhi's inclusion of texts narrated in first person in her book *Approaching Ottoman History*, that we saw Ottoman ego-documents analyzed as sources in a

¹⁶⁴ Beşikçi, "Tarih Yazımında Hatırat ve Günlükler Nasıl Kullanılmalı?," 278.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 278-80.

¹⁶⁶ Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711-1735) Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013).

¹⁶⁷ Selim Karahasanoğlu, "Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkanları, Sınırları (Ego-Documents: Potentials and Limitations as a Source for Historical Research)," *Turkish History Education Journal*, 8, no:1 (2019), 213.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 214.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 213-14.

historiography book on Turkey,¹⁷⁰ which is a very significant step in creating an awareness of Ottoman ego-document studies. Karahasanoğlu focused on the reasons for the neglect of these very special kind of sources. According to him, Ottoman historiography in Turkey is generally disconnected from the wider historiographical trends in the world. This lack of connection probably also had its effect on ego-document studies. Most of the scholars in Turkey think that there are more “important and serious” sources to be studied. Also, working conditions in manuscript libraries and lack of proper catalogues may also be other reasons for this neglect, since researchers mostly prefer to study in the very professionally- organized state archives. Finally, the tendency of Fuat Köprülü, who was the pioneer of modern historiography in Turkey, to use narrative sources for historical study has not been followed in Turkish historiography.¹⁷¹ Like Kafadar, Karahasanoğlu thought that diaries, autobiographies, memoirs, and private letters were common and established genres in the Ottoman world. What makes them different is the inefficiency of cataloguing in the manuscript libraries.¹⁷²

Karahasanoğlu’s effort to create an awareness for ego-document studies in Turkey culminated with a workshop on Ottoman Ego-documents which was held by Istanbul Medeniyet University’s Faculty of Letters and the Center for Ego-Document Studies. A report on the workshop was published in the *Review of Middle East Studies*.¹⁷³ Selim Karahasanoğlu noted that this workshop was the first event in Turkey to discuss a wide range of Ottoman ego-documents.¹⁷⁴ This workshop was very significant in creating an awareness in Ottoman historiography towards the study of self-narratives in that eminent historians came together and discussed central methodological issues related to studying Ottoman self-narratives. Also, a selection of papers presented in the

¹⁷⁰ Selim Karahasanoğlu, “Ben-Anlatıları,” in *Tarih Bilimi ve Metodolojisi*, ed. M. Yaşar Ertaş (İstanbul: İdeal Kültür Yayıncılık, 2019), 280-4.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 282-83.

¹⁷² Ibid., 284.

¹⁷³ Selim Karahasanoğlu, “Learning from Past Mistakes and Living a Better Life: Report on the Workshop in Istanbul on Ottoman Ego-Documents,” *Review of Middle East Studies* 54, no:2 (2020): 294-302.

¹⁷⁴ Karahasanoğlu, “Learning from Past Mistakes,” 294.

workshop was published in the roundtable for *International Journal of Middle East Studies* in 2021.¹⁷⁵

Looking at the several examples given above, we can say that Ottoman individuals obviously had a culture of writing about themselves. When discussing the relative rareness of Ottoman ego-documents from the early modern period, Karahasanoğlu pointed out the limited availability and the cost of paper in pre-industrial times. According to him, a lack of paper rather than a lack of self-awareness must have caused ego documents to be relatively rare.¹⁷⁶ Many examples provided in this dissertation show that Ottoman individuals found their life and experiences worth telling when they had the means and the tools to write with. Indeed, the famous French scholar Philippe Lejeune, who is known for his studies on diary and autobiography, made a similar observation about the rise of European diaries. He noted that “the rise of the diary in the late Middle Ages as a form of personal expression coincided with the rise of paper and the clock.”¹⁷⁷

The Methodological Approach Used in this Dissertation

As noted earlier in this chapter, one of the most central ongoing debates about ego-documents is whether these texts convey only objective information about the authors or reveal their individuality, intimate feelings, and inner self. As can be seen from the different perspectives adopted by Dutch, Swiss, German, and French researchers, there are two trends in the study of ego-documents or self-narratives. One group of scholars argue that those texts that reveal the author’s inner self, intimate feelings and emotions can be classified as ego-documents.¹⁷⁸ To describe a text as an ego-document, the

¹⁷⁵ Karahasanoğlu, “Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art.”; İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Autobiographies and Weak Ties: Sain al-Din Turka’s Self-Narrative,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53, no:2 (2021): 309-13; A. Tunç Şen, “The Emotional Universe of Insecure Scholars in the Early Modern Ottoman Hierarchy of Learning,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53, no:2 (2021): 315-21; Sheridan, “Nostalgia of a Frustrated Ottoman Subject.”; Semra Çörekçi, “The Dream Diary of an Ottoman Governor: Kulakzade Mahmud Pasha’s *Düşnama*,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53, no:2 (2021): 331-5; Suraiya Faroqhi, “Aziz Nesin about Himself and his Parents: Poor People in Istanbul during the Late Ottoman Period,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53, no:2 (2021): 337-43.

¹⁷⁶ Karahasanoğlu, “Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art,” 307.

¹⁷⁷ Philippe Lejeune, “The Continuous and the Discontinuous,” in *On Diary*, ed. Jeremy D. Popkin and Julie Rak (Manoa: University of Hawai Press, 2009), 185-86.

¹⁷⁸ Nelly Hanna, “Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500-1800,” in *The Uses of First Person Writings Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggiu (Bruxelles: P.I.E Peter Lang, 2013), 146.

ego/I must be present throughout the text. On the other side of the spectrum, scholars question the idea of the emergence of individualism in Italy during Renaissance and argue that what can be gleaned from these texts is not the inner self but many outward aspects of the authors' lives. They claim that "individuality is just one among several different concepts of person and that autobiographical texts also give evidence of a larger variety of concepts about the person."¹⁷⁹ Hence, they focus on the social self of the authors to place them in the realm of relationships. They adopt a global perspective to counteract the great narrative created by Jacob Burckhardt.

As a researcher writing in a non-European context, I believe that it is somewhat problematical to draw a strict boundary between these different approaches and focus only one aspect of the self. In her article on Arabic self-narratives, Nelly Hanna suggests that there are various texts that can be placed neither on one side or the other, but in the middle of that wide spectrum. She further states that there are many texts that look emotionless but actually hide profound emotions that are not verbalized.¹⁸⁰

This approach aims to consider these texts as showing multifaceted nature of the self, and of its complexities; as well as a person's social surroundings; or in a more general way, identifying the context within which the self was expressed. Self-narratives can thus be seen as being embedded in a collective context within which the self was expressed. These texts thus shed some light on the social relations of an individual so this can help us to place him in the larger social environment. These self-narratives can consequently be a source not only delve into the inner lives of the individuals but also perceive certain dimensions that are not available in other kinds of sources.¹⁸¹

Nelly Hanna's approach is quite effective in studying Ottoman self-narratives. I can say that the texts I have studied in this dissertation find a middle ground in the wide general spectrum. The criteria used in this dissertation to evaluate the situation are based on this approach. I focus both on the social context of self-narratives and on voice of the individual. I aim at studying both the relationships of individuals to construct their networks and social environment as well as their inner emotional selves

¹⁷⁹ Gabriele Jancke, "Individuality, Relationships, Words about Oneself: Autobiographical Writing as a Resource (Fifteenth-Sixteenth Centuries)-Konrad Pelikan's Autobiography," in *Forms of Individuality and Literacy in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Franz-Joseph Arlinghaus (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 160.

¹⁸⁰ Hanna, "Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500-1800," 146.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 153.

to map their way of thinking. I show that these different layers of the self are not mutually exclusive, rather that self-narratives can provide researchers with significant tools to reveal the multi-layered nature of the self with all its complexities.¹⁸²

I first focused on the authors' social environments and networks to place them in the wider context of political, social and kinship relationships. The self-narratives studied in this dissertation all reveal much about the network of the writers, from kinship ties to political and social relationships. These texts offer valuable information on how the success, wealth/financial security and prominence of the individual mostly depended upon the maintenance of social and political networks as well as on kinship ties and show how all these relationships were determinants in creating individual identity.¹⁸³

Secondly, I looked for information uncovering the external selves of the authors: daily routines, outings, the way they dressed, official duties, artistic productions or religious practices. In this way, I tried to uncover the daily rhythms of their lives and how they portrayed the physical dimensions of their selves. For these discussions on relational and external self, I used the methodological approach offered by German group, especially the ideas of Jancke and Ulbrich.

Thirdly, Ottoman self-narratives reveal much more information about the inner emotional worlds or private experiences of the authors than one might expect. The authors used diverse strategies to reveal their feelings and thoughts. Some texts possessed many features that can be identified as a direct portrayal of the inner self. The authors wrote in an explicit manner and vividly described their grief, happiness, or pride. Some authors allowed us to grasp their emotions through explaining their behavior in certain situations, including interactions with family members, servants, colleagues, and even with rivals. They recorded their dreams, referred to poems, hadiths, and commonplaces. Hence, a close analysis of Ottoman self-narratives could open the door to the emotional worlds of the authors. I used the method offered by Nelly Hanna as well as Dwight Reynold's methodology to uncover emotional worlds of the authors.

¹⁸² Hanna, "Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500-1800," 153.

¹⁸³ Davis, "Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France," 63.

Seeking out motifs and devices that ... indicate some form or representation of inner emotion or private experience—though they may not coincide precisely with modern western ideas of that realm of human experience—points to two recurring features as particularly deserving of further analysis: the narration of dreams and the use of poetry.¹⁸⁴

On the Concept and Its Scope

As researchers studying Ottoman texts, we are far from discussing the scope of the term as we do not yet have an inventory of self-narratives.¹⁸⁵ Turkish scholars studying Ottoman material do not have a consensus about which term to use, just as in the case of European scholars. Kafadar, in his seminal article “Self and Others”, used the term “first-person narrative.” Kafadar had reservations similar to those of Kaspar von Greyerz. In an interview, he said that he did not like using the term “ego-document” because of the connotations of the word “ego.” He stated that he found it too soon to collect all those first-person narratives under the title of ego-document.¹⁸⁶

In the volume edited by Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse the term ego-document was preferred. They expanded the scope of the term to include all texts with an ego writing about the self, such as travelogues and authorial notices in the margins of manuscripts. They even included articles studying texts without the voice of an ego, thinking that everything we write reveals something about ourselves.¹⁸⁷ Mehmet Beşikçi preferred to use the term *benlik-belgeleri*, the exact Turkish equivalent of the term ego-documents. Beşikçi studied the memoirs and diaries of Ottoman soldiers who served on the frontiers during the First World War.

Selim Karahasanoğlu used the Turkish term “ben-anlatısı” and argued that only the material in which the author had the clear motive of describing himself/herself can be described as an ego-document.¹⁸⁸ According to Karahasanoğlu, enlarging the scope of the term to include all materials having some autobiographical parts, like travelers’

¹⁸⁴ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 88.

¹⁸⁵ Quoted in Karahasanoğlu, “Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkanları, Sınırları,” 214.

¹⁸⁶ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 218.

¹⁸⁷ Elger and Köse, “Introduction,” 8-9.

¹⁸⁸ Karahasanoğlu, “Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkanları, Sınırları,” 213.

accounts or court decisions, renders the term unworkable.¹⁸⁹ He wanted to focus on distinct materials written with a clear motive of describing the author's self.¹⁹⁰

Following Selim Karahasanoğlu's approach, my aim is to study only the distinct texts in which the authors' motive was to talk about their lives. I use the terms "self-narrative" and "ego-document" interchangeably throughout the dissertation, because the purpose of this dissertation is not to argue in favor of one side or other. However, I used the term "self-narrative" in the title because the texts I examine in this dissertation present a narrative. Secondly, these texts not only disclose intimate details about the authors' ego, but also describe his/her social milieu and network of relationships identifying the various contexts within which the self was expressed. The authors told of their social interactions with relatives, neighbors, guests, or colleagues, as well as everyday experiences, ambitions, joys and sufferings. In this dissertation, I try to explore the different strategies and styles of self-representation in Ottoman self-narratives.

Time Frame

In this dissertation, three Ottoman self-narratives written between the first half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century are examined. Although I have discovered other manuscripts written as early as the sixteenth century, I chose to study these three texts in that they are highly representative of Ottoman self-narratives and can be read in relation to each other. The manuscripts examined in this dissertation were produced on the verge of modern times and they show that self-narratives were already being penned by Ottoman literati before the advent of modernism and the blossoming of many other literary genres. These early examples set an example and provided the vocabulary for a journey into the inner world of Ottoman individuals living in modern times.

Outline of the Dissertation

This study consists of three main chapters. In the first chapter, I introduce Kulakzâde Mahmud Pasha's (d. 1745) *Düşnâme* (Dreambook). This is an Ottoman governor's

¹⁸⁹ Karahasanoğlu, "Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkanları, Sınırları," 212-13.

¹⁹⁰ Karahasanoğlu, "Learning from Past Mistakes and Living a Better Life," 297.

private notebook. Mahmud Pasha lived and worked in Avlonya (Vlorë in Albania) in the first half of the eighteenth century. The manuscript provides insight into the daily, mundane concerns of an official who had access to pen and paper to record them. He recorded daily not only his travels, but also his dreams. This chapter aims at uncovering how an Ottoman bureaucrat pictured his environment, as well as how he interpreted his dreams, considering the social context and political atmosphere in which he lived. The first part will focus on his “relational dreams” to reveal his network. *Düşnâme* shows that people had dreams about each other in accordance with the relationship that connected them, and those dreams were narrated in social gatherings. Hence, people were interconnected not only by their material worlds but also by the web of their dreams. This dream narrative, therefore, gives valuable information about the different layers of relationships that a low-ranking Ottoman pasha created. Intermittent references in his dream diary to family, friends, acquaintances, and also enemies permit one to reconstruct Mahmud Pasha’s relational self. The second part will focus on dreams and provide us with scenes allowing us to visualize how Mahmud Pasha lived. The manuscript provides a wealth of detail about the life of a provincial governor, from appointment to dismissal, from battle scenes to banquets in elite mansions. Mahmud Pasha was not reticent about the world around him; this in turn enables us to understand how he spent his days. For this discussion, I will particularly concentrate on how his daily routines were shaped by his military identity. The third part will focus on his “professional dreams” to reveal how he was emotionally affected by the uncertainties of life, particularly in his political status. Linked to this, the relationship between dreams and anxiety will be examined, using the dream narratives in which his concerns for obtaining a position were the main subject. This chapter shows that, all things considered, dream narratives can be used as sources for historical studies. Such self-narratives can uncover the most intimate feelings, desires or worries of the dreamer; therefore, dreams can provide the necessary evidence to map the mentality of a historical person and to portray the many layers of the self.

The second chapter discusses another self-narrative written by Abdülkadir bin Hasan el-Hisârî (d. ca. 1787/88) who was a calligrapher living in the second half of the eighteenth century. Hisârî narrated his life, starting from his childhood until attaining

a position as a scribe at the age of thirty-six. I argue that this calligrapher /scribe not only portrayed his social self, but also revealed much intimate detail about his private/inner/emotional self as opposed to the claims that self-narratives do not reveal an inner, emotional self. The first part focuses on his life at the courts of pashas and the network of relationships he created to attain the scribal position he desired. The second part reveals insights about his external self. Abdülkadir Efendi kept his narrative at a professional level. He focused on three aspects of his external self: his creative self as an able calligrapher, his professional self as a scribe, and his religious self, that is, his submission to God as a *Halvetî*. He wrote about his talent and works of art. He wrote about the positions he held in the courts of pashas until he secured a place in scribal service. He also communicated the image of a person who was beholden to God's grace upon him, despite the sad events he lived through. The third part elaborates on how he described his thoughts, emotional reactions, and feelings among the many stories of appointments and the search for a benefactor.

The third chapter examines the diary of Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi (d. ca. 1850). This diary was kept in the first half of the nineteenth century before the *Tanzimat* period began. This chapter aims at uncovering Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi's emotional self, material circumstances and web of relations from what he writes in the diary. The first part focuses on the relational self of the diarist. Mustafa Hamid Efendi was the son of the chief mufti, Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi and therefore part of an important ulama family. The diary reveals various features of the household of a powerful ulama family in which a variety of activities were used to establish a powerful web of influence: recruitment of protégés to fill important governmental posts, the accumulation of wealth, the creation of networks to advance the political position of the household members. The second part focuses on regular features of Mustafa Hamid's daily life, outings, visits, dinner parties and the material dimension of his self as well as his concept of time. The diary is especially significant for its descriptions of the daily and private life of its author. The third part focuses on the question of to what extent the diaries provide us with the means to reveal the inner self and emotions of the author. I try to uncover his inner self through the diary entries by explaining his behavior in certain situations, including interactions with family members, his relationships with his wife, servants, colleagues and even with his rivals.

All in all, this chapter is designed to be an answer to the question of “What can be done with diaries?”¹⁹¹ It aims at developing a methodological framework and provide a model for how to use a diary for historical research.

Since the 1980s, ego-document/self-narrative studies have developed into an established field of research in Europe. In Ottoman historiography, we do not yet have enough systematic research to establish ego-documents/self-narratives as an academic field. This dissertation is a humble attempt to show that Ottoman literature has significant potential for studies in self-narrative. In contrast to the belief that existing materials are not sufficient and do not progress beyond a dull listing of positions held, this dissertation demonstrates that there are quite long self-narratives with a content that reveals the authors’ personality, networks and emotions.

Earlier scholars who discovered Ottoman autobiographical materials in libraries or archives did not know what could be done with these special texts, as modern scholarship categorized autobiographies, memoirs or diaries as unreliable documents and did not consider them to be a source of any value. These scholars were therefore content to simply transcribe these texts or use them to retrieve facts about larger issues, since they considered these materials difficult to work with.¹⁹² In this dissertation, self-narrative will be given a source value and used as a reflection of the self of a particular individual. The analysis aims at examining the way life narratives were conceptualized and composed by Ottoman individuals before the advent of modernism. We will try to reconstruct the individual lives of Ottomans within the context of family, friends, associates, career, physical environment, religious or political affiliations, as well as their emotions, hopes, aspirations, anxieties, likes or dislikes. In Fleischer’s words, “this study attempts to provide sorely needed flesh to the Ottoman skeleton, to delineate not only bones, but organs, veins, emotions, rhythms.”¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Irina Paperno, “What Can Be Done with Diaries?,” *The Russian Review* 63 (2004): 561-73.

¹⁹² Dekker, “Egodocuments in the Netherlands,” 276.

¹⁹³ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 4.

CHAPTER I: ON THE DREAMS OF AN OTTOMAN OFFICIAL: THE CURIOUS CASE OF KULAKZÂDE MAHMUD PASHA¹⁹⁴

Lamoreux wrote that Muslims were not the first creating a culture for divination, they were aware of the long history of dream interpretation.¹⁹⁵ Muslims were influenced by these earlier works and influenced other cultures.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, early Islamic cultures' great interest in dreams and their interpretation can be demonstrated by the enormous literature on the interpretation of dreams as well as dream narratives recorded in various historical documents.¹⁹⁷ The Ottoman Empire was not distinctive in the sense that it had a culture of narrating and recording dreams and produced a considerable literature on dream interpretation as well. Unlike former studies that disregarded the importance of dreams, studies have proliferated in the last decades thanks to the rising inclination to value dreams as source for cultural history. Hence, dreams began to be taken seriously. However, as Peter Burke noted, researchers must remember the fact that "they do not have access to the dream itself but at best to a written record, modified by the preconscious or conscious mind in the course of recollection and writing"¹⁹⁸ Dream narratives might be recorded by the dreamer in the way s/he desired to recollect them. The "reality" of the dream might have been altered and distorted in some sense. Nevertheless, dreams, distorted or not, can be used for historical inquiry as they can uncover the most cherished feelings, desires, or concerns. Such accounts can offer a productive site to understand the beliefs, attitudes, mental world of the person, because

¹⁹⁴ A short version of this chapter was published in 2021. See Semra Çörekçi, "The Dream Diary of an Ottoman Governor," 331-335.

¹⁹⁵ John C. Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 7.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁹⁷ Dwight Reynolds, "Symbolic Narratives of Self: Dreams in Medieval Arabic Autobiographies," in *On Fiction and Adab in Medieval Arabic Literature*, ed. Philip F. Kennedy (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005), 263; Kelly Bulkeley, "Reflections on the Dream Traditions of Islam," *Sleep and Hypnosis* 4, no:1 (2002), 1.

¹⁹⁸ Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 28.

“such ‘secondary elaboration’ probably reveals the character and problems of the dreamer as clearly as the dream itself does.”¹⁹⁹

This chapter aims at sampling the dreams that are related in *Düşnâme*²⁰⁰ by Mahmud Pasha, a governor general operating in Vlorë in the first half of the 18th century. By scrutinizing the methodology employed by an Ottoman official in narrating his own dreams, I will try to divulge how he made sense of those visions, how he disclosed his ambitions and his inner self, in other words, try to come to an understanding of dreams as clues to the self.

When we think of the limited studies made on the Ottoman perception of dreams, there are many questions to be examined. What did dream narratives mean for early modern Ottomans? Was there a difference between the perspective on dreams of women compared with that of men, between lay and elite, educated and uneducated? What was the attitude towards dreams of statesmen, members of the ulama or of different Sufi orders? Did they give dreams a divine authority or were they a part of their worldly lives? On what occasions did they talk about their visionary experiences? Did dreams create new ways of being sociable? What about the issue of interpretation? Who were the interpreters? What terminology did they use to talk about their dreams? Was there a difference between calling a dream a *vakıa*, a *düş* or a *rüya*? Although it is not possible to answer all of these questions in one study; some of them will be touched on here.

1. TOWARDS CONCEPTUALIZING OTTOMAN DREAMS

Although today we refer to the psychological aspects of dreams, “Medieval and modern Muslims have considered dreams to be windows into the hidden mysteries of both this world and the next.”²⁰¹ Dreams could talk about “the world outside the dreamer, things that could not otherwise be known ... (and) each good Muslim could expect guidance from God in dreams.”²⁰² In Islamic context, dreams are identified with

¹⁹⁹ Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History*, 28.

²⁰⁰ *Düşnâme*, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, MS Hazine 1766. [hereafter *Düşnâme*].

²⁰¹ Alexander D. Knysh, “Introduction,” in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 2.

²⁰² Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*, 4.

prophetic wisdom. Within the Qur'an itself there are actually various mentions of dreams and their obvious influence on people's lives. The prophet Joseph, for instance, was a true interpreter of dreams. The dreams of Prophet Muhammad also appear in the Qur'an. Prophet Muhammad saw a dream in which he enters the Masjid al-Haram at Mecca. After this dream, he decided to conquer Mecca: "Indeed Allah had shown His Messenger a true vision, according to the truth: You will surely enter the inviolable place of worship, if Allah wills, in full security; you will have your heads shaved, your hair shortened, and you will have nothing to fear. He knows what you do not know. Therefore, he granted you this near victory before."²⁰³

Likewise, there are many hadiths of Prophet Muhammad on the importance of dreams. For instance, "A good dream of a righteous man that comes true is one of forty-six parts of prophetism"²⁰⁴ is an often-cited hadith. Prophetic visions are known as *rüya-yı sadıka* which means 'dreams that are sent by God'. "If anyone of you sees a dream that he likes, then it is from Allah, and he should thank Allah for it and narrate it to others; but if he sees something else, a dream that he dislikes, then it is from Satan, and he should seek refuge with Allah from its evil, and he should not mention it to anybody, for it will not harm him."²⁰⁵ The true dream is worth considering and interpreting while the bad dream (sent by Satan) should not be mentioned to anyone. Obviously, dreams have been valued as a portent of future events and as divine guidance. "There is a God who exercises a providential control over the events of the world. This same God, at times, uses dreams to inform human beings about those events."²⁰⁶ Dream narratives have an important place in Islamic history. There are numerous studies on the religious, social and political implications of dream narratives in historical texts.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ *The Holy Qur'an with English Translation*, trans. Ali Özek, Nureddin Uzunoğlu, Tevfik R. Topuzoğlu, Mehmet Maksudoğlu (Istanbul: İlmi Neşriyat, 1994), 513. [hereafter, *The Holy Qur'an*].

²⁰⁴ Quoted in Lamoreaux, *Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*, 117.

²⁰⁵ Cited in Marcia Hermansen, "Dreams and Dreaming in Islam," in *Dreams: A Reader on the Religious, Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming*, ed. Kelly Bulkeley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2001), 75.

²⁰⁶ Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*, 81.

²⁰⁷ For some of the studies on Islamic understanding of dreams and their interpretation, see Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, "The Cultural Function of the Dream as Illustrated by Classical Islam," in *The Dream and Human Societies*, ed. G. E. Von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh, eds., *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012); Jonathan Katz, *Dreams, Sufism and Sainthood: The Visionary Career of*

1.1. A Particular Ottoman Way

We can talk more of the general Muslim attitude towards dreams; however, it is hard to talk in particular about the Ottoman perception of dreams. Available studies on the Ottoman attitude towards dreams in different periods are rather limited. Hence, it is necessary to study dreams in different periods and geographies of the empire as well as examine dreams recorded by people with different social and cultural backgrounds.

Some very influential studies were made on the Ottoman understanding of dreams. In his seminal article on Ottoman First Person Narratives, Cemal Kafadar introduced various manuscripts on dreams: the dreams of a seventeenth century Sufi woman, Asiye Hatun, the *Kitâb-ı Menâmat* of Murad III upon which a doctoral dissertation was prepared by Özgen Felek, as well as the *Düşnâme* which is the subject of this chapter.²⁰⁸ Kafadar published the dream letters of Asiye Hatun of Skopje who left a record of her dreams that she sent to her sheikh.²⁰⁹ Suraiya Faroqhi also briefly examined Asiye Hatun's letters in her book on Ottoman culture and daily life.²¹⁰ As the daughter of a scholar, Asiye Hatun was probably well-educated and a successful writer, discussing her spiritual world in compelling language.²¹¹ Asiye Hatun joined the *Halvetiyye* order in the late 1630s and followed Veli Dede as her master. However, her attachment to Veli Dede weakened after a while and she became attached to another sheikh called Muslihiddin of Uziçe (d. 1648) about whose fame she had heard from other Sufis. Asiye Hatun belonged to the *Halvetiyye* order in which dreams had

Muhammad al-Zawâwî (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Jonathan G. Katz, "Visionary Experience, Autobiography and Sainthood in North African Islam," *Princeton Papers* 1 (1992): 85-118; Jonathan G. Katz "Shaykh Ahmad's Dream: A 19th-Century Eschatological Vision," *Studia Islamica* 70 (1994): 157-180; Jonathan G. Katz, "An Egyptian Sufi Interprets his Dream: 'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Sha'raânî 1493-1565," *Religion* 27 (1997): 7-24; Louise Marlow, ed., *Dreaming Across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Leah Kinberg, "Literal Dreams and Prophetic Hadits in Classical Islam: A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation," *Der Islam* 70 (1993): 279-300; Ibn Abi al-Dunya, *Morality in the Guise of Dreams: A Critical Edition of Kitab al-Manam with Introduction by Leah Kinberg* (Leiden: Brill, 1994). Elizabeth Sirriyeh, "Dreams from Allah," *Way-London-Society of Jesus* 40, no:1 (2000): 51-59; Elizabeth Sirriyeh, "Arab Stars, Assyrian Dogs and Greek 'Angels': How Islamic is Muslim Dream Interpretation?," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22, no:2 (2011): 215-233.

²⁰⁸ Kafadar, "Self and Others," 129-30; Özgen Felek, "Re-Creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murad III's Self-Fashioning," (Phd. Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2010).

²⁰⁹ Kafadar, "Mütereddât bir Mutasavvîf." Also see Kafadar, *Rüya Mektupları*.

²¹⁰ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Kültürü ve Gündelik Yaşam: Ortaçağdan Yirminci Yüzyıla*, trans. Elif Kılıç (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2005), 144-5.

²¹¹ Kafadar, *Rüya Mektupları*, 41.

a significant place. She sent her dreams to her master to learn about her progress and to receive spiritual guidance. She kept copies of those letters and those copies were compiled into a book sixty years after being written.²¹² Her letters reveal her different feelings and thoughts. Asiye Hatun was an obedient disciple but also took an active role in discussing her own spiritual progress. She even opposed her sheikh who said that she had reached a stage where she could use another name of God. Asiye Hatun was indecisive about proceeding to do so. She had such self-confidence that she could oppose the suggestions of her sheikh, contrary to the traditions of the Sufi path.²¹³ These dream letters give researchers a valuable insight into a woman Sufi's life and her spiritual pathway. Kafadar's study on Asiye Hatun's dream letters is very significant in that his venture opened an unprecedented vista in the academic field of Ottoman dream studies.

Another study was published by Cornell Fleischer on the dreams of scribes of the Ottoman Imperial Council in the second half of the 16th century. According to Fleischer such dream accounts are helpful in that they give historians important information with which to map the "panoramic views of the social, cultural, and private psychic lives of individuals that can go forward telling us the ways and means whereby they interpreted their environment."²¹⁴ Fleischer's study showed that these dream records are highly indicative of the increasing number of literate people and their access to pen and paper. He also showed that it was not only Mustafa Ali or Evliya Çelebi who had the capacity and motivation to compose personal narratives. Less prominent Ottomans also had reasons and the means to write their own histories and intertwine their inner and public lives.²¹⁵ According to Fleischer, it was not only the ability to remember but also the ability to write and preserve those accounts made the historicization and contextualization of the self possible.²¹⁶

Robert Dankoff, in his book, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*, offered a brief discussion of the dreams in Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme*. He focused

²¹² Cemal Kafadar and Leslie Schick, trans., "Dream Letters of a Sufi Women in Skopje, 1640s," in *The Ottoman World: A Cultural History Reader 1450-1700*, ed. Hakan T. Karateke and Helga Anetshofer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021), 29-30.

²¹³ Kafadar, *Rüya Mektupları*, 21, 45; Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Kültürü ve Gündelik Yaşam*, 282.

²¹⁴ Fleischer, "Secretaries' Dreams," 84.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

on how dreams provided Evliya with comfort or counsel when he or his patron, Melek Ahmed Pasha were in a trouble.²¹⁷ Elizabeth Sirriyeh studied the perception of dreams and dream manuals using the example of Abd-al Ghani Nablusi who lived in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Syria.²¹⁸ Dror Ze'evi, in *Producing Desire*, wrote a chapter on the early modern dream manuals in circulation in Ottoman territory. Ze'evi tried to offer a glimpse into the Ottoman cultural and sexual unconscious through the symbols seen in dreams.²¹⁹ Ze'evi described Ottomans as a society having a “dream culture” because each experience in this world was supposed to have an equivalent in the dream world and to have a spiritual aspect. Dreams were used to contemplate or comprehend past experiences, to predict the future, and analyze future steps. According to her, dream tradition was a discourse, providing persons with common experiences and connecting them.²²⁰

Lately, very significant studies scrutinized the importance of dreams in early modern Ottoman society and culture. Aslı Niyazioğlu is a most important name in the study of Ottoman dream narratives. She published several very illuminating articles on dreams. Her article on Nihani's nightmare is one example. After experiencing a nightmare in which he was punished in the afterlife because of the decisions he made as a judge, Nihani relinquished his post and returned to the Sufi way of life. Niyazioğlu argues that his giving up the *ilmiye* career after a nightmare should be evaluated within the context of the social, political and financial crises that took place in the late sixteenth century. Nihani's example was not unique. There were other contemporary *ilmiye* members who were said to have given up their posts after similar nightmares. She thinks that those nightmare narratives reflected the troubles experienced by the judges. The expansion of the empire slowed down at the end of the sixteenth century and the appointment process turned into long anxious waits as no new judicial posts were opened. In order for judges to be appointed, the need for patronage and the giving of bribes when necessary emerged. Niyazioğlu's basic objective is that she wants to show the link between such nightmare narratives and the Ottoman way of life. She underlies

²¹⁷ Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Eliya Çelebi* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 209.

²¹⁸ Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: Abd al-Ghanî al-Nâbulusî, 1641-1731* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 57-84.

²¹⁹ Dror Ze'evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 99.

²²⁰ Ibid., 107

the significance of these narratives in the study of Ottoman history and aims at freeing them from generalization and reductionist approaches.²²¹ Another very intriguing article by Niyaziolu is about the nightmare of Figani (d. 1532), a poet living in 16th century. Aşık Çelebi (d. 1572) wrote the biography of Figani thirty years after his execution by the grand vizier İbrahim Pasha (d. 1536). The interesting side of his biography is that Aşık Çelebi devoted almost all of the entry about Figani to a dream foretelling his execution. According to the narrative, Figani was executed because of a poem criticizing the grand vizier, İbrahim Pasha, who had erected three statues in front of his palace at the Hippodrome after the Hungarian campaign in 1529. Before his execution, Figani saw a dream which he interpreted as foretelling terror and disgrace. Niyazioğlu argues that the dream story enabled Aşık Çelebi to debate the dangers and benefits of relations with powerful statesmen and to criticize such executions. She wants to show how dreams provided 16th-century biographers with a medium to discuss the fears and desires of the poets. According to Niyazioğlu, a poet's life should not be studied in isolation from others and reminds us of the significance of social ties in the lives of Ottoman poets.²²² Another article by Niyazioğlu is on the dreams of *Halveti Sümbüli* sheiks in 16th century. Niyazioğlu, this time, focused on the relation between the dreams of sheikhs and biography- writing through examining a biographical work presented to Sultan Murad III and his mother, Nurbanu Sultan, (d.1583) by Sinaneddin Efendi, a sheikh at the Kocamustafapaşa Lodge in Istanbul. She reveals how Sümbüli sheikhs were connected to each other through dreams as they were interconnected in real life. Therefore, it is impossible to examine Sümbüli dreams without taking their social life into consideration because dreams voiced the expectations and concerns of the whole community.²²³ Her experience and expertise in the field of dreams and biography writing culminated in the book, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective*. The book is about the dream narratives and their function in Atâ'i's biography writing. To this end, she focuses on dreams cited by biographer Atâ'î (d. 1637) and displays how a

²²¹ Aslı Niyazioğlu, "On Altıncı Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı'da Kadılık Kabusu ve Nihani'nin Rüyası," *Journal of Turkish Studies – Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 31, no: 2 (2007): 133-143.

²²² Aslı Niyazioğlu, "How to Read an Ottoman Poet's Dream? Friends, Patrons and the Execution of Fiğānī (d. 938/1532)," *Middle Eastern Literatures: Incorporating Edebiyat* (2013): 1-12.

²²³ Aslı Niyazioğlu, "On Altıncı Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Halveti Sümbüli Şeyhlerinin Rüyaları ve Osmanlı Biyografi Yazıcılığı," *Doğu Batı* 53 (2010): 21-35.

biographer used dream narratives to create a space in which to discuss the career routes of learned Ottomans of the Establishment. The book mainly focuses on how learned people narrated and used dream narratives to form networks and attain positions. It offers a glimpse into a rather complex range of relationships that define the careers paths of learned Ottomans in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Istanbul.²²⁴ Aslı Niyazioğlu also contributed to the volume edited by François-Joseph Ruggiu with her article on Ottoman Turkish biographies and dream narratives.²²⁵ Niyazioğlu's studies show that dream narratives can be very revealing in understanding the individual's complex web of relations, expectations and worries in Ottoman society.

Özgen Felek's study on Murad III's dream letters, *Kitabü'l-Menâmât*, also made a considerable contribution to the literature. Felek focused on the ways in which these dream narratives served the image of their authors. She examined the role of dreams in contributing positively to the sultan's image and identity.²²⁶ Tunç Şen's study on Veysî's *Hâbnâme* should also be considered among the literature on Ottoman dreams. He aimed at putting Veysî's dream setting in the context of Ottoman 'Mirror for Princes' literature, comparing it with similar mirrors in contemporary society. He considered the political, intellectual, and cultural context within which the manuscript was produced. More importantly for the scope of this study, Şen questioned "Why might Veysî have created such a dream setting?" and "In what ways did this dream apparatus enable him to express his views?"²²⁷

²²⁴ Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2017).

²²⁵ Aslı Niyazioğlu, "Secrets of the Ottoman Lives? Ottoman Turkish Biographical Dictionaries and Dream Narratives," in *The Uses of First Person Writings: Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggiu (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2013).

²²⁶ Özgen Felek, "Re-creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murad III's Self-Fashioning," in *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012).

²²⁷ A. Tunç Şen, "The Dream of an 17th Century Ottoman Intellectual: Veysî And His Habname," (M.A. thesis, Sabancı University, 2008).

1.2. On the Manuscript, Author, and Motivation for Writing

When I began my research on Ottoman ego documents, the first source I searched was the catalog of manuscripts found in Topkapı Palace written by Fehmi Ethem Karatay.²²⁸ I came across a manuscript called *Düşnâme* which was a notebook belonging to a provincial official who lived in the early eighteenth century. A brief investigation unsurprisingly revealed that Cemal Kafadar presented the text in his 1989-article, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature.” He briefly introduced the content of the daily records and dreams.²²⁹ I preferred calling this piece a “dream diary,” as it integrates the form of the diary with dream narratives. In fact, the manuscript presents some very important literary features of diary genre, such as day-by-day records and immediacy.²³⁰ Our writer recorded not only his daily activities but also visionary experiences.

The author indicated his name in folio 28a. His signature noted that he was the *mutasarrıf* (governor) of Vlorë in Albania, Mahmud Pasha.²³¹ He inscribed the official positions he was appointed throughout the years. He was appointed Brigadier of Vlorë on 2 February 1716 and the Governor Genral of Vlorë on 1 February 1717. One year later, revenues from Yanya (Janina) were allocated to Mahmud Pasha in the form of an allowance (*arpalık*).²³² This note was very helpful in disclosing the identity of the author. Considering the sources on provincial administration, Mahmud Pasha seems

²²⁸ Fehmi Ethem Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu: Din, Tarih, Bilimler, Filoloji, Edebiyat, Mecmualar* (İstanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1961), 335. Karatay described the manuscript as *muhtıra defteri* (a daybook, a notebook) in which the author recorded his dreams. He noted that the author’s name is not recorded but added the information that he was appointed to Vlorë as brigadier in 1726, and benefits of Janina were assigned to the author in 1718/19.

²²⁹ Kafadar, “Self and Others,” 129-130.

²³⁰ Steven Rendall, “On Diaries,” *Diacritics* 16 (1986): 57-65. Also used by Derin Terzioğlu in the same way, Derin 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), 152.

²³¹ *Düşnâme*, 28a. The signature read as “Mahmud Paşa mutasarrıf-ı Avlonya.” The confusion in the folio numbers suggests that the numbering was done later by different catalogers. For the sake of simplicity, I am using my own version. I numbered the first folio in which the first dreams were recorded 1b. The signature was the first record taken on 30 *Muharrem* 1130 (3 January 1718), but it takes place in the folio 28a. It is probably because the binding was made later. There are nineteen more blank folios after folio 28a where the author affixed his signature.

²³² *Düşnâme*, 28a. Also see Çörekçi “The Dream Diary,” 332.

to have been working in the Rumelia until his death in 1745.²³³ His family name was Kulakzâde, he was from Belgrade.²³⁴

Mahmud Pasha's estate inventory reveals that he passed away in Erzurum during a visit in the month of Cemaziyelevvel 1158 (June 1745).²³⁵ The register gives clues about his family members. The information given in the document disclose that his father was Hüseyin Pasha. In *Düşnâme*, there is no information revealing his father's identity but there are a number of documents in the state archives about Hüseyin Pasha who was the governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Vlorë before Mahmud Pasha took his turn.²³⁶ Therefore, we can think that Mahmud Pasha must have been belonged to an influential provincial household. His wife's name was Rabia Hanım, the daughter of certain İslam Agha. Meryem, Ayşe and Kadire were the names of Mahmud Pasha's daughters. We do not have additional information revealing his daughters' lives because *Düşnâme* does not include any record about them. The names of his three sons were specified in the document: Süleyman Beğ, Mehmed Beğ and İsmail Pasha. A record in *Düşnâme* shows that Mahmud Pasha experienced a dream in which his son Derviş appeared.²³⁷ An archival document reveals that this son actually had two forenames; he was called Derviş İsmail Pasha. The document discloses that Derviş İsmail Pasha was former governor of Vlorë and his brother's name was Süleyman Beğ, who was residing in Arnavud Belgradı (Albanian Belgrade).²³⁸ This document verifies the records in *Düşnâme* and in the estate inventory. The family appears to have been active in the Vlorë region for at least three generations.²³⁹ The revenues of Vlorë and Janina in 17th century lead one to conclude that Mahmud Pasha must have had considerable wealth and power.²⁴⁰ He probably had a place in a powerful network of pashas, from which

²³³ Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA), AE. SMHD. I. 185/14366, 29 Cemaziyelevvel 1158 (29 June 1745); Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, ed. Nuri Akbayan, 5 vols. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), vol. III, 927 [hereafter, *Sicill-i Osmani*, I-II-III-IV-V]; Fehmeddin Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı* (1717-1730) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1997), 38-43.

²³⁴ *Sicill-i Osmani*, III, 927.

²³⁵ BOA, AE. SMHD. I. 185/14366, 29 Cemaziyelevvel 1158 (29 June 1745).

²³⁶ BOA, AE. SAMD. III. 66/6671, 13 Şevval 1133 (7 August 1721).

²³⁷ *Düşnâme*, 12b.

²³⁸ BOA, AE. SMHD. I. 165/12515, 25 Şevval 1158 (20 November 1745).

²³⁹ See Çörekçi, "The Dream Diary," 332.

²⁴⁰ The revenues of Janina and Vlorë were 515.000 and 535.000 *akçes* respectively see Halil İnalcık, "Rumeli," *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol 35, 232-35. [hereafter, *DİA*]

he gained power and success in that region. However, things did not go so smoothly all the time as after 1728 he was given some minor positions.²⁴¹

He recorded his dreams in folios 1b to 26a, he titled this part *Düşnâme*. It is clear that Mahmud Pasha routinely recorded his dreams and daily activities. The manuscript offers unparalleled information about the mundane and everyday life of an Ottoman official who had the instruments to record them.²⁴² In folio 27a, Mahmud Pasha wrote details of his journeys took place in March 1143 (March/April 1731). He wrote down the places he passed through and stayed at. Intriguingly, he sometimes even recorded the time in minutes and hours. For instance, he specified the exact time they stopped on 1 March 1143 as being 11:35 p.m. He also recorded the *zakat* (almsgiving) he distributed in Receb 1144 (December/January 1731/1732), describing the identity of the people helped. He mostly dispensed his alms to the students of the Qur'an and Sufi dervishes.²⁴³

The manuscript contains some one -hundred- and- seventy separate dream reports in varying details. In the first part, dream records are quite brief, obscure and the time is not indicated. Later, the records become more detailed and more extensive, and the date is added whereas it is not in the first dream records. The longest of the dreams takes place in the last part of the notebook. He not only wrote down his dream accounts, but also occasionally described how they came true. Thus, his dreams essentially functioned as signals of forthcoming events. The first dream record is about Osman Pasha's being given the seal of the vizierate.²⁴⁴ As Topal Osman Pasha (d. 1733) was appointed to the vizierate on 8 Rebiülevvel 1144 (10 September 1731), we can firmly say that the first dream record was written in 1731.²⁴⁵ The last dream recorded belongs to the year February/March 1735.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ BOA, C. DH. 290/14484, 19 Zilkade 1143 (26 May 1731).

²⁴² Fleischer came up with similar interpretations about Ottoman secretaries' dreams and their access to means of writing, see Cornell H. Fleischer, "Secretaries' Dreams," 80, 85. I would like to thank Bilgin Aydın for informing me about Kağıt Eminliği (Paper Trustee), which provided Ottoman officials with paper. This shows that Mahmud Pasha had easy access to the tools of writing, facilitating the production of his self-narrative.

²⁴³ *Düşnâme*, 1a; Kafadar also provided a brief description of the records in *Düşnâme*, Kafadar, "Self and Others," 129-130.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1b.

²⁴⁵ Abdülkadir Özcan, "Topal Osman Paşa," *DİA*, vol. 41, 244-46. For the identity of Osman Pasha mentioned in the first dream record, see the page 58 of this chapter.

²⁴⁶ *Düşnâme*, 26a; Çörekçi, "The Dream Diary," 333.

The rather unstructured and obscure style of Mahmud Pasha's first dream records suggests that at the beginning Mahmud Pasha did not intend to create a diary of dreams. He seems to have recorded some of his dreams about other people's employments and it ended up being the dream diary that foreshadow his own appointment to Vlorë when he was going through a period of anxiety and hope concerning this appointment. We can understand from the records on his daily activities like travels that Mahmud Pasha had a practice of inscribing small details concerning his personal and official life. This habit conceivably resulted in creating a work like the *Düşnâme*.²⁴⁷

As the dreams started to get longer, Mahmut Pasha started to add the exact time of his dreams in the same way as his recording the exact time of his official and religious duties.²⁴⁸ This, in a sense, confuses the reader about distinguishing between the records of real-life experiences and dreams. The impression is of reading about actual events if Mahmud Pasha did not specify that he woke up at the end of some of his records. Also, he associates the experience of dreaming with "seeing" rather than indicating that he was talking about dreams, this situation makes it hard to draw a clear line between nocturnal visions and real wakeful experiences.²⁴⁹ Some quite brief factual accounts reinforce this idea. "We had a little bit of a fight with Ali Bey of Ergiri (Gjirokastër)."²⁵⁰ "Ahmed Solak wants to kill me. I said to my men, 'Kill this [man]'. "²⁵¹ "I saw Osman Pasha a couple of times. I also saw Mehmed Pasha."²⁵² These dreams were recounted as if real life experiences. There is no clue as to whether they were lived in the real life or experienced in the dreams.

Another significant point to emphasize is author's preference of putting the sign of "sah" (صح) at the end of many entries.²⁵³ This sign was an indicator of reliability and

²⁴⁷ We do not know for sure if the title of *Düşnâme* was given by Mahmud Pasha himself. The title might have been added later by another person.

²⁴⁸ Keeping records of dreams on a daily basis was not peculiar to Mahmud Pasha. An earlier example which was about the dreams of Seikh Hüdâî shows that there were such manuscripts produced before. In that manuscript, Shiekh Hüdâî's dreams were recorded, and the date was added on each entry. Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, MS. Kemankes 511.

²⁴⁹ Mahmud Pasha mostly uses the word *gördüm* (I saw) or *bir adam gördü ki* (a man saw) rather than *rüyamda gördüm* (I saw in my dream) or (a man saw in his dream).

²⁵⁰ *Düşnâme*, 7b.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 23a.

²⁵² Ibid., 22a.

²⁵³ For further information, see Mehmet İpşirli, "Sah," *DİA*, vol 35, 490-1.

precision which generally seen in official documents as well as in manuscripts. Redhouse's dictionary describes it as "the paraph or official mark written on a document when it has been examined."²⁵⁴ Authors or copyists generally used this sign to show that they had made some corrections or added some new information to the text so that the reader would know it is accurate/reliable. What was the purpose of Mahmud Pasha adding this mark at the end of dream records as if to verify the accuracy of them? Did he felt a need to underline the correctness of the dreams that he narrated or was using this sign just a habit? The captivating question is whether they were real dreams or not. Did Mahmud Pasha use dream plot as a literary maneuver to write his inner-most sentiments and desires?

The time between 1731 and 1735 was clearly a period of anxiety and hope, since all the dreams were seen and written between these years. Around the time he recorded his dreams he was not yet governor general of Vlorë.²⁵⁵ This point is important in that Mahmud Pasha had lots of dreams about his aspiration to be reappointed as the governor general of that *sancak*.

People dreamed about each other and shared their dreams in social gatherings. Mahmud Pasha recorded other people's dreams in which he took part. He also took care to indicate the time when inscribing dreams of others. The identity of the dreamers was occasionally specified, except for dreams seen by sheikhs and close associates. Rather than identifying the exact name of the sheikhs, he mentioned the city where they operated; the sheikh of Niş (Nis) and the sheikh of Leskovik (Leskoviku, Korçë County, Albania) are two examples. When it comes to his private life, we cannot extract any satisfying information about his family life from the accounts at hand. He did cite some dreams in which he saw his mother, his sister, his wife and his son. Mahmud Pasha related many dreams in which important figures of Ottoman history played a role. He cited many names including those of Paşmakçızâde, Damadzâde, Mahmud Pasha of Yakova, Vizier Osman Pasha, and Fatma Sultan. These dream records give clues about the professional and personal life of an Ottoman provincial

²⁵⁴ James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon* (Constantinople: A. H. Boyajian, 1890), 1168.

²⁵⁵ BOA, C. DH. 290/14484, 19 Zilkade 1143 (26 May 1731). According to the document, the governorship of İlbasan was given to Mahmud Pasha in May 1731 in return for his services under Osman Pasha.

governor. Persons who appeared in his dreams indicate that Mahmud Pasha had a network that included notable people.

Dream narratives can disclose much information about the writer's experiences, intentions, and emotions. Kahana-Smilansky noted that dreams convey a message to the public or the community, whether contemporary or in the future; therefore, the explanation of a dream-account could be meaningful in the context of the dreamer's life-history. Dreams can reflect in their context the personality of the writer, his/her perceptions, emotions, and beliefs.²⁵⁶ My aim here is not to stress whether Mahmud Pasha's dreams were real, but to explore how an Ottoman governor wrote the most intimate narrative of his life by a use of dream records. In this study, I will try to analyze the dream narratives from this point of view. I will try to see how he comprehend the world around him and reacted against problems. What was the role of dreams in his understanding of life? How did an 18th-century-official deploy dreams in his dream log/cum diary? What triggered him to write down his dreams? What did dreams represent? What function did they serve? The aim of this chapter is to uncover a provincial governor's different layers of self through his dream accounts.

2. RELATIONAL SELF: KULAKZÂDE MAHMUD PASHA'S HOUSEHOLD

Fulbrook and Rublack noted that self-narratives can provide insight into people's webs of relations and "social self."²⁵⁷ Dreams had an important place in Ottoman society bringing people together, constructing and strengthening social relations. People had dreams about each other in accordance with the relationship that connected them, and those dreams were narrated in social gatherings. Hence, people were interconnected not only by their material worlds but also by a web of dreams.²⁵⁸ The *Düşnâme* gives valuable information about the different layers of relationships created by a low-ranking Ottoman pasha. The references in his dream diary to family, friends, acquaintances, and also enemies, permit one to reconstruct Mahmud Pasha's relational

²⁵⁶ Hagar Kahana-Smilansky, "Self-Reflection and Conversion in Medieval Muslim Autobiographical Dreams," in *Dreaming Across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands*, ed. Louise Marlow (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 102.

²⁵⁷ Fulbrook and Rublack, "In relation," 268.

²⁵⁸ For Fleischer's interpretation of how people were connected to each other through dreams, see Fleischer, "Secretaries' Dreams," 87.

self. Having these in mind, we will deal with the dream records providing information about the relational self of Mahmud Pasha.

2.1. Mahmud Pasha's Network

The Kulakzâde family was powerful in Vlorë for at least three generations as we learnt from archival documents concerning Mahmud Pasha. The family network was, therefore, probably very important in maintaining and augmenting the position of its members. Patron-client relationships were also created to fortify his position in adverse times²⁵⁹ and *Düşnâme* gives valuable information about the different layers of relationships Mahmud Pasha created. He was a bureaucrat of average importance trying to gain an influence over regional politics. He had important statesmen in his network; he had his own household with many dependents and recruited soldiers to spread his influence; he also seems to have built some Sufi connections.

Düşnâme does not contain much information about the members of his household. He recorded only two dreams in which he saw his sons, Derviş and Bayram. The estate inventory of Mahmud Pasha suggests that he had three sons. Their names were İsmail Pasha, Süleyman Bey, and Mehmed Bey. A document found in the Ottoman archives shows that İsmail Pasha actually had two names: İsmail and Derviş. Like his father and grandfather, İsmail Derviş ended up becoming the governor of Vlorë.²⁶⁰ The fact that Bayram is not mentioned in the death registry brings to mind two possibilities. One possibility is that Mahmud Pasha originally had four sons and Bayram had already passed away before his father's death in June 1745. The other possibility is that Bayram had two names like his brother İsmail Derviş. If so, one of the two other sons mentioned in the estate inventory must have had Bayram as a second name. There is only one archival document about his son Bayram Pasha. According to the document, Bayram Pasha was the son of Mahmud Pasha, the current governor of Vlorë.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Antonis Anastopoulos, "Introduction," in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire*, Halcyon Days in Crete V. A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003, ed. Antonis Anastopoulos (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2005), xxi-xxii.

²⁶⁰ BOA, AE. SMHD. I. 165/12515 25 Şevval 1158 (20 November 1745).

²⁶¹ Çörekçi, "The Dream Diary," 332; BOA, AE. SMHD. I. 94/6466 5 Zilhicce 1151 (16 March 1745). The document is about bandits attacking districts and villages around Vlorë. The document also mentions his brother İsmail Pasha.

Mahmud Polat? saw that my son Derviş was grown up. He came with a horse and said, “Where are you? I went to Istanbul and settled your affairs. And now, two dervishes will come, they will bring a white horse from the sultan for my father...”²⁶²

... Those dervishes did not allow me to go, but they said that you can send your son, Bayram. I did that and sent Bayram to Nis ...²⁶³

Mahmud Pasha’s father also served as the governor of Vlorë, but Mahmud Pasha did not record any dreams in which he saw his father. Interestingly, however, he recorded dreams in which he saw his mother, his wife and his sister. However, these dream records cited below do not give satisfactory clues to the female side of his household. He did not provide their names or any further details.

On 23 Ramadan, I saw my mother, also there were one or two women sitting on a high place. I asked my mother, “Where do I sit?” She replied, “You will sit there, directly go and sit there. I came there and sat between those two women.”²⁶⁴

I arrived at Mehmed Bey’s harem [and] entered in, but I had reached a place where there were women. I sat there for a while though I wanted to go out. I was wearing simple white clothes. There was a turban on my head. I wanted to go out through the door. There was a woman who died. I went outside, my wife was also with me ... while we were sitting there, lots of women came and some people also gathered there ... I said, “Come here”, they did not come. That’s why they were seated in this way. I stood up to go. My wife was not covered, I was embarrassed. I said her, “Go and enter in through the door.” It was the harem’s door. She went and entered in ...²⁶⁵

... My sister was sitting in his house. As if she helped me to easily cross over. [She said,] “Enter in from here but I am afraid.” We entered. Then I said. “If they nailed a big piece of wood, no one would be afraid of [entering]...”²⁶⁶

The households of provincial pashas did not include only family members but also his entourage. The household included military, administrative and fiscal units so the household dependents might number hundreds of people.²⁶⁷ We do not have enough

²⁶² *Düşnâme*, 12b.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 12a.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5b.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 8a.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 12b.

²⁶⁷ For household structures of viziers and grand viziers, See İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti’nin Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1948), 168-173; Mehmet İpşirli, “Kapı Halkı,” *DİA*, vol. 24, 343-4.

information about the actual size of Mahmut Pasha's household, but *Düşnâme* gives valuable information revealing the names of some of its members. The households of pashas (*saray/konak*) included personnel such as a secretary (*mühürdâr*) and a chamberlain (*kethüda*). These persons worked as key figures in ruling over the district and in spreading the provincial governor's influence. Abdi Bey was one of those important figures. He was apparently working for Mahmud Pasha, possibly as his chamberlain. Abdi Bey and Mahmud Pasha used to share their dreams in two ways: they saw dreams about each other and appeared in each other's dreams. Abdi Bey seems to have been trusted not only on account of official duties but also for his propitious dreams.

On the 4th of Zilhicce, Abdi Bey saw in his dream that I became the *imam* and after performing the prayer, I rode a horse.²⁶⁸

May 7, Abdi Bey saw that I became the *imam*, and I was sitting in a high place, I was leading [the prayer] and I prayed. All people were crying and saying "Amen".²⁶⁹

12 May, Abdi Bey saw that we arrived somewhere. We entered a new harem above which there had previously been a mansion. He said to me, "Go and stay there." I said "How can I ride my horse if I go there?" I immediately took my horse and entered a room. We went along playing [cheerfully]; our horses were also well equipped.²⁷⁰

The secretary (*mühürdâr*), düfenkçi (gunsmith), delibaşı (leader of irregular cavalry), bayraktar (standard-bearer) are other people that figured in the dream records. These personnel members also shared their dreams with their benefactor.

Again, the standard-bearer saw that they appointed me as the *surre emini*.²⁷¹ We arrived at Trabzon.²⁷²

Again, the secretary saw that a foolish man came by and said to him that they had increased your pasha's status. They asked how much it had increased. He answered "Three horsetails and seven ... were conferred on your pasha. May Allah make it auspicious."²⁷³

²⁶⁸ *Düşnâme*, 11b.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.,

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Redhouse described the term as "The official into whose charge is confined the treasure sent to Mekka and Medina." Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 1175.

²⁷² *Düşnâme*, 12a.

²⁷³ Ibid.

I saw Ergirili (Gjirokastër) Ali Bey's mother. There were clocks in front of her and our *delibaşı*'s military assistant, Süleyman Kethüda, wanted to have a big clock and arrived at the tent of *delibaşı*.²⁷⁴

Archival documents show that Mahmud Pasha achieved local prominence in the district he ruled over. According to one document, he was dismissed from the governorship of Vlorë after complaints by the people made around 1725/1726. Vizier Abdullah Pasha made an inspection after which it was understood that Mahmud Pasha had fallen victim to slander. The same document notes that Ömer Pasha who had then become the current governor of Vlorë, was not effective in campaigning against brigands or in collecting tax-farming revenues. Mahmud Pasha benefited from Ömer Pasha's failure and was once again appointed to be governor of Vlorë. Mahmud Pasha was praised for his successful fights against bandits, his success in collecting revenues and his general reputation in Vlorë.²⁷⁵ In order to administrate effectively and to spread their influence, provincial governors recruited a great number of soldiers to serve them. Mahmud Pasha was no exception to this as one can understand from the number of dream records in which he talked about his men/soldiers and their battles.

There was a mortar, a piece of it was taken. While we were standing there, the infidel fired a big cannonball. It crossed over us and hit that fractured mortar and heaved it upwards more than the height of a man. An agha was sitting beside me. He said that the infidel hit the mortar ... I woke up.²⁷⁶

Mahmud Pasha's dreams relating to his official duties also included upper-class elites. The sultan or the chief mufti (*şeyhülislam*) or the viziers appeared in his dreams. But he mostly recorded dreams about colleagues operating in the same region as himself.

Again, a man saw that I arrived at Istanbul. I fought with the people of Istanbul and defeated them. I found the sultan and went to kiss his hand and greeted those who were standing beside him. The sultan had a table set, I sat the table and we started to eat.²⁷⁷

I saw that Osman Pasha was sitting in a big mansion. I entered and was going to sit next to him; however, I remained standing. There was a young newly-bearded boy

²⁷⁴ *Düşnâme*, 5a.

²⁷⁵ Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı*, 42-43.

²⁷⁶ *Düşnâme*, 22b.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 26a.

sitting just opposite.²⁷⁸ God knows who he was; they said he was either Paşmakçızâde or Damadzâde ... and he was the chief mufti. Osman Pasha was having a conversation with him and they said [to Osman Pasha] “You must be mad to be talking to him in such a way.” I was amazed by the way he was addressing the chief mufti. Then, the sultan bowed and said, “I do not go, he can come if he wants.” Accordingly, we refrained a little. The sultan came incognito. He entered and was seated beside him. They consulted each other. Then Osman Pasha called Mahmud Pasha of Yakova (Gjakovë) and [ordered that] “You will go to Yakova on business.” [Mahmud Pasha opposed] “I will not go; I will [rather] send one of my boys.” They quarreled. In that region, there were saddled horses ... [and] lots of men ... The 18th of February.²⁷⁹

This is the nineteenth of February and the fourth of Ramadan. I saw that I reached Istanbul and entered the mansion of an important man. It seems he was the chief mufti. After having a conversation and kissing each other, I complained about ruthless people. I woke up and slept again ... Again, I arrived at a palace, I entered in. It seems, the chief mufti was inside. Just then, we again kissed each other ...²⁸⁰

The dream records translated above mentioned, for example, the chief mufti and Osman Pasha. Mahmud Pasha might not have known the chief mufti in person but most probably knew those pashas who occupied space in his dreams. The person he called Osman Pasha was probably Topal Osman Pasha who was the governor of

²⁷⁸ For another dream account including the figure of a beardless boy, see *Düşnâme*, 16a; “Another person saw that a young (*taze*) boy put Mehmed Pasha into a flower garden, he fell of as soon as he smelt.” Although we cannot know exactly if this figure of a young barely bearded boy did have any sexual connotation, Alan Mikhail points out that “the beauty of boys is virtually the same as those for women, a fact underlined by the extraordinary prominence of the question of the beard in homoerotic poetry and anecdote.” See Alan Mikhail, “The Heart’s Desire: Gender, Urban Space and the Ottoman Coffee House,” in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and the Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 167. For a study on young boy being a focal point of desire, see Walter G. Andrews and Mehmed Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005). Quite the contrary, Dwight Reynolds states that in the medieval Arabic tradition dreams about sex were believed to be related to one’s public life, see Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 90; and Reynolds, *Symbolic Narratives of Self*, 267.

²⁷⁹ *Düşnâme*, 3a.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 4a. In this dream record, Mahmud Pasha wrote that it was seen on the nineteenth of February, the fourth of Ramazan. However, he did not indicate the year as in most of the dream records. That he indicated the month both in Islamic calendar and Gregorian calendar enable us to detect the year of writing. We know that *Düşnâme* was written between 1130 and 1147. Almost all the dream records included the month of writing, but the year was indicated only two times in the dream records and three times through all other records. Mahmud Pasha did not indicate the year until 1143 and this dream in concern was written after 1143. The fourth of Ramadan in 1145 corresponded to the eighteenth of February 1735. Mahmud Pasha must have indicated the day incorrectly as nineteenth of February. Therefore, we can firmly say that this dream was seen in 1145.

Bosnia for many long years, having become Grand Vizier on 8 Rebiülevvel 1144 (8 September 1731), around the same time that Mahmud Pasha wrote down his dreams.²⁸¹ Mahmud Pasha must have met him after he became the governor of Bosnia. Osman Pasha was, therefore, a figure frequently seen in the dreams recorded in *Düşnâme*.

It was the time of feasting. When we were performing the prayer in Murad Çelebi district, the *mehterhâne* (military band) started to play. We asked what happened. They said that Osman Pasha had performed the feast prayer before us. It was his *mehterhâne* playing.²⁸²

This dream record was later interpreted as being an event that "... occurred in ten days from when he took the seal."²⁸³ From then on, Osman Pasha was seen in many other dreams. In the dream cited above, the way Mahmud Pasha depicted Osman Pasha's treatment of the chief mufti and his amazement at the Pasha's behavior makes the reader think that Mahmud Pasha was a favorite of Osman Pasha, or, at least, he wanted to be in league with a powerful person like the Grand Vizier. Consequently, his dreams about Osman Pasha were mostly positive and he was depicted as a powerful and influential figure.

On the 10th of February, I saw Osman Pasha and they said to him, "Allow Mahmud Pasha." He said to some notable people that [he] would be late for one or two days. It seemed that we were in the district of Premedi (Përmet). I said that I do not have anything to do in other places. I will reside in the district of Përmet for a couple of days, because these [people] are disorderly. I said that I dreamed of Kolonya (Kolonja). I described it in such a way that I can make them orderly by sending one man. Why do you listen to the words that are against me? How much they slandered me. He said, "I do not listen to their words, but they come and talk" ... I was telling him that they speak ill of me and I was in tears. All the notable people present there felt sorry for me.²⁸⁴

27 Ramadan, I dreamed that Osman Pasha will come from the district of Višnice (Višnjica), but I am afraid.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Özcan, "Topal Osman Paşa," 244-46.

²⁸² *Düşnâme*, 1b.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 4a.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 5a.

On the other hand, he obviously had many rivals in a competitive relationship with him. A large number of provincial governors used to compete to obtain appointments to the same district. The time each remained in office, therefore, was not long.²⁸⁶ It was not an easy thing to keep the post in hand, considering the rivalry between provincial governors to obtain posts, influence and power.²⁸⁷ Such a competitive environment and consequential rapid loss of office was a psychological strain on those provincial governors. Mahmud Pasha showed this apprehension by having bad dreams about his rivals. Dream records revealing the dreamer's negative feelings enable the reader to learn about his rivals. One such figure was Mehmed Pasha who belonged to an influential family of the region, the *Kurd* family.²⁸⁸ From 1138 (1825/26) to 1145 (1732/33), the governorship of Vlorë was frequently interchanged between Mahmud Pasha and Mehmed Pasha. From 1733 on, it was Mehmed Pasha who obtained the district.²⁸⁹ The rivalry between these two pashas can be understood through the frequency of their appointments and dismissals between these dates.

... Mahmud Pasha's man came from Istanbul and I wish to die once I have finished this duty. If I were given [the governorship of] Vlorë, order would come to the region. I said that Mehmed Pasha must see [the impossibility of] sending his men; after four, five, six, or seven days, the people would fire them.”²⁹⁰

This dream record underlines Mehmed Pasha's actual lack of success in bringing order to the region. He might even have been fired by the people because of the delay in sending his men. In his dream Mahmud Pasha said that, if he was given the governorship of Vlorë, he could bring order. The critical tone directed towards

²⁸⁶ İ. Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government 1550-1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 70-72.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 89.

²⁸⁸ BOA, A. DVNS. NMH. d. 135/78 20 Şaban 1140 (1 April 1728); Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı*, 43.

²⁸⁹ Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı*, 43; See for the years Mehmed Pasha performed as the governor, BOA, A. DVNS. NMH. d. 135/78 20 Şaban 1140 (1 April 1728); BOA, A. DVNS. NMH. d. 139/462 10 Ramazan 1145 (24 February 1733). For Mahmud Pasha's term as the governor of Vlorë, see BOA, İE. AS. 77/6973, 4 Safer 1142 (29 August 1729); BOA, A. DVNS. NMH. d. 136/227 29 Cemaziyelahir 1143 (9 January 1731). Archival documents dated between 1145 and 1147 show that Mehmed Pasha gained the governorship against Mahmud Pasha. We do not see any mention of Mahmud Pasha as the governor of Vlorë around that time. See BOA, İE. DH. 12/1207, 29 Zilhicce 1145 (12 June 1733); BOA, A. DVNS. NMH. d. 139/1238, 29 Rebiulevvel 1146 (9 September 1733); BOA, AE. SMHD. I. 18/1059, 14 Safer 1147 (16 July 1734).

²⁹⁰ *Düşnâme*, 25a.

Mehmed Pasha actually shows the fierce competition between these two pashas and Mahmud Pasha's great desire to become the governor of Vlorë.

It was not only Mahmud Pasha who had bad dreams about Mehmed Pasha. Mahmud Pasha cited the dreams of others in which Mehmed Pasha was in a bad situation. "Another man saw that all the people of the city gathered. The governor of Vlorë, Mehmed Pasha, had disappeared (*zâyi' oldu*), no one dreamed of his name and reputation."²⁹¹ Interestingly this dream was cited just after a dream in which he saw himself in his house giving an extravagant banquet for some noble people. In that dream, the footman brought him an ivory comb and rose water. Mahmud Pasha explained that it was the custom among viziers to comb their beards with `ivory comb and sprinkle them with rose water.²⁹² Whereas Mahmud Pasha likened his own situation to that of the viziers, Mehmed Pasha was portrayed as a person who had lost his reputation.

On Zilhicce, Polat? Hasan saw that Mehmed Pasha was in his own house and lay face downwards. His chamberlain ... was also wearing old clothes and he was weak and it seemed that commissioners came. [He wanted to] fire [them] and I was sitting in a high mansion and the commissioner and Mehmed Pasha stood up . The commissioner went away and Mehmed Pasha was left behind lying down.²⁹³

On the 14th of Muharrem, Friday. Cafer saw the chamberlain of Mehmed Pasha. His face was as black as coal. His beard and mustache were gone. He was standing bowing his head ...²⁹⁴

These dream records indicate that people shared not only good dreams but also the bad dreams they dreamed about people they did not like. In a sense, dreams could bind people together on the basis of shared negative feelings towards another person. Scholars of Ottoman history usually pinpoint the fact that there was a culture of narrating and interpreting dreams in social gatherings.²⁹⁵ Additionally, there was probably some gain to be made from dream telling in Ottoman society as some of the records in *Düşname* that we will later deal with in this chapter reveal. On this basis,

²⁹¹ *Düşnâme*, 17a.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid., 13a.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality*, 206.

the inference might be that those people who saw or pretended to see the above-mentioned dreams knew about Mahmud Pasha's expectations of being reappointed to the district of Vlorë and his negative feelings towards Mehmed Pasha. They might have hoped to gain some benefit from Mahmud Pasha in return for their dreams.

The competitive relationship between Mehmed Pasha and Mahmud Pasha was also depicted in the dreams seen by sheiks.

On the 19th of Muharrem, the sheikh of Nis dreamed on Wednesday that Mehmed Pasha built a new mosque and I reached there. I became the imam, I led the prayer and then a man came with a paper. He (the sheikh) asked, "What is this?" He replied that they had given Mahmud Pasha the governorship of the district (*sancak*) of Vlorë.²⁹⁶

Mahmud Pasha obviously cited this dream for a purpose. It is noteworthy that the documents announcing the good news came to a mosque built by Mahmud Pasha's rival, Mehmed Pasha. The sheikh's dream is of benefit to Mahmud Pasha because it indicated his superiority over Mehmed Pasha.

2.2. Sufi Connections

Düşnâme contains dreams in which Mahmud Pasha saw sheikhs and a good number of dreams seen by sheikhs. In the light of such dream accounts, it seems that Mahmud Pasha might have had some Sufi affiliations. On addition to that he mostly distributed his alms to dervishes as recorded in the manuscript on hand.²⁹⁷ Also he named one of his sons Derviş. Mahmud Pasha sometimes gave the exact names of the sheikh he dreamed of. Sometimes, he only noted the region they belonged to such as the sheikh of Nis or the sheikh of Leskoviku. This means that he personally knew those sheikhs and was somehow connected to them.

Reşat Öngören notes that Vlorë, Berat and Delvinë had already become centers of the Halvetî order in the seventeenth century and from there they spread their influence further into Kosovo and Macedonia. The Halvetî order was also powerful in Leskoviku.²⁹⁸ This information suggests that Mahmud Pasha had a connection with

²⁹⁶ *Düşnâme*, 14b.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1a.

²⁹⁸ Reşat Öngören, "Arnavutluk'taki Tasavvuf Faaliyetlerinin Karakteri," in *Balkanlar'daki İslam Medeniyeti II. Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri Tiran-Arnavutluk*, ed. Ali Çaksu (İstanbul: IRCICA, 2006), 346-353.

the Halvetî order. Indeed, as Derin Terzioğlu notes, many of the Halvetîs like Seyyid Hasan and Niyâzî-i Mîsrî recorded in their diaries mundane occurrences such as how they spent the day.²⁹⁹ Mahmud Pasha's dream diary bears a resemblance to these earlier examples. Like Mîsrî's diary, Mahmud Pasha's self-account "represents an interesting amalgam of a secular diary and a visionary account."³⁰⁰ He recorded in the same manuscript some mundane occurrences such as his journeys or the religious duties he performed, as well as his dreams. Another Halvetî member, Hattat Abdülkadir Hisârî, followed a similar strategy in producing his self-narrative that will be discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation. His text was written in order to find a heavenly explanation for the hard circumstances he experienced in his life.

Reminding one of Sufi dream narratives, Mahmud Pasha's *Düşname* seems to use a literary device in which important figures and sheikhs guide the dreamer. He may have sent his dream reports to the sheikhs for interpretation like Asiye Hatun did. But, contrary to Asiye Hatun, he probably sought interpretation of his dreams not to learn about his spiritual advancement but to find out if they foretold a potential appointment. The figure of a sheikh, therefore, stands in *Düşnâme* as someone who gives guidance, not in spiritual terms, but for worldly affairs such as appointments.³⁰¹ He seems to have benefited from the narrative structure of Sufi dreams in order to integrate his material life with that of the spiritual. The spiritual figure spoke for Mahmud Pasha and expressed his desire for a reappointment.

The sheikh of Nis dreamed that Mehmed Pasha built a new mosque. I also went to [the mosque]. I became imam, we prayed with the congregation. One man came with a document . He asked, "What is this?" He said that [the governorship of] Vlorë had been given to Mahmud Pasha. The 19th of Muharrem.³⁰²

The sheikh of Nis once saw in a lucid dream that the Friday prayers were being performed. They brought two horses, he tied them up, and they practiced artillery

²⁹⁹ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times," 153.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Özgen Felek observes that "Ottoman dream interpretations fall mainly in two categories: those produced by and for Sufis, which tend to be more spiritual and use dreams as an educational means for their disciples, and those tend to be more secular. In studying dreams, these two philosophies approach dreams quite differently. The interpretations produced by and for Sufis were used to analyze at which stage the soul was in the journey, while non-Sufi interpretations basically serve to predict the future." See Felek, "Re-creating Image and Identity," 131, fn. 17.

³⁰² *Düşnâme*, 14b.

shooting three times. He once dreamed that he was told that three papers would come from Istanbul addressed Mahmud Pasha. He saw one of them in my hand; the other two papers would also come. The 13th of Muharrem.³⁰³

During the month of Ramadan, the sheikh of Leskoviku came and said to me, “Do not doubt, Vlorë will be given to you.”³⁰⁴

A dervish ... came and greeted me. It seemed that he was afraid of coming [towards me]. I stood up, I said “Come,” five or ten times. I heard a scream, and it was the prophet who came. May Allah make it auspicious.³⁰⁵

Some dreams also display that Mahmud Pasha was very familiar with the dream interpretation literature, considering his caution to note the color of his clothes, and describe objects, animals and human figures.³⁰⁶ These dream accounts do not seem to be recorded to share with the sheikhs whom he knew personally.

A man saw that I was wearing white clothes and riding a white horse. I climbed the minaret and recited the call to prayer. People prayed and I went down.³⁰⁷

I had a stone building with a yard. There was a little tree at one side of the yard. There was water under the tree. All the pigeons were going there and wading through the water before entering their nests. It was evening. I looked at the water and said “The water is so shallow. Why do they wade through the water?” I went to the pigeon’s nest. They were frightened and flew away. Those walls and houses were full of pigeons. All were of different colors; some were black, some white or another color. They had diamond, emerald, and ruby rings on their fingers, and he had not seen such expensive things in his life. The 13th of Zilhicce.³⁰⁸

Mufti Efendi dreamed that I and Bayram were riding a white horse. We were going somewhere. Another man also dreamed in this way.³⁰⁹

³⁰³ *Düşnâme*, 3a.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 11a.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 9b.

³⁰⁶ Fleischer makes a similar observation for the dreams of Ottoman scribes, see Fleischer, “Secretaries’ Dreams,” 87.

³⁰⁷ *Düşnâme*, 1b.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 7b.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 11b.

2.3. Dreams in Public

Robert Dankoff states that Ottoman elites had a culture of narrating dreams and interpreting.³¹⁰ *Düşname* exemplifies this case and reveals that dreams were essential parts of the public sphere as Mahmud Pasha included the dreams of others into his private dream diary. Mahmud Pasha was incorporated into the larger political, social, and economic, and also the spiritual network around him. People came together in various circles in which dreams were shared, discussed, and interpreted. Interestingly, people not only told each other about the dreams they saw, but also preferred to inscribe and preserve other people's dream narratives. Dreams probably provided an opportunity for social gatherings. *Düşnâme* is, in Katz's sentence, "illustrative of how an individual's [very intimate] experience enters the public domain and finds a resonance."³¹¹ The following dream report, in which Mahmud Pasha was praised for being given a true dream, gives a clue about the tradition of dream telling.

I saw that the mount Timur was higher than it actually was. While I was looking at it, a huge fire appeared in the threshing place. I said, "What is this sign, for Allah's sake?" One man said that they had probably set the haystack on fire. I thought that I saw this incident when I was awake, but I was wrong. There were some people around. I said them, "Muslims! I saw such a dream." They replied, "Who would bestow such a dream? Allah rewarded(?) you with such a dream." May Allah make it auspicious! The 17th of Muharrem.³¹²

The dream account cited below is another example of how dreams interconnected people who aspired to be gifted by messages coming from the unseen world. The dream was seen by a person other than Mahmud Pasha. He was probably so affected by the dream that he kept a record of it. The dream basically concerns the inclusion of an important person, the prophet's son-in-law, guiding the dreamer.

One man saw that his holiness Ali came and said, "Take Zülfikar, gird yourself with it!" [but] the man refused. A big fire came from the minaret, and this told him, "Of course, you should gird yourself with it." The man took Zülfikar. Then, [the fire] wanted him to get on Düldül. He said, "I cannot ride Düldül, I would abstain from

³¹⁰ Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality*, 206.

³¹¹ Katz, "Shaykh Ahmad's Dream," 180.

³¹² *Düşnâme*, 9a.

riding it.” He immediately got on a horse. The fire again commanded, “Get on your own horse!” The man said to his Holiness Ali, “I heard that you [lost?] Zülfikar, where did you find it?” He responded, “I went and took it.” This man was later appointed to a Dervish lodge on the Danube at Belgrade. The fire told him, “I will make your horse stronger and faster than Döldül, go immediately to Belgrade!” The man went to Belgrade and found the dervish lodge closed. He opened the door and entered the lodge. He saw that the buildings were burned. He went out. He called his thirty thousand men and again entered the lodge. A man from the castle came and said “Forgive us! I will give you the castle key.” He took the key and protected the castle. He sent the key to Sultan Mahmud. May Allah make it so easy.³¹³

Dreams served to create a social milieu proving that the dreamers shared similar interests and social backgrounds. Mahmud Pasha’s willingness to talk about other people’s dreams as well as dreams being seen as a conversation topic reveals that those people were actually connected to each other not only by their interests, social background, and political networks but also by their dreams. Mahmud Pasha not only cited other people’s dreams about himself; he also saw dreams about the appointments of other provincial governors in his network.

I saw Mahmud Pasha of İpek (Peć) in my dream; it seemed that they gave him [the governorship of] Elbasan.³¹⁴

This network of dreams, in a sense, interconnected people’s waking and visionary activities. To quote at length from Fleischer:

“The night experiences of ... the dreamer are linked to those of others in a logic dictated by association of objects, numbers, actors, and motifs in such a way as to demonstrate that the concentration of such shared elements in the dreams of those with he was closely associated possessed a larger prognosticative value; dreams were not purely subjective experiences, but intimations of a present and future shaped by, and through the dream medium available to, other human beings...”³¹⁵

³¹³ *Düşnâme*, 2b.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7a.

³¹⁵ Fleischer, “Secretaries’ Dreams,” 87.

3. EXTERNAL SELF: MAHMUD PASHA'S OFFICIAL LIFE

As Tunalı notes, dream narratives are a useful tool that enables us to understand the personal characteristics of Ottoman individuals. Moreover, dreams provide us with a visual impression of scenes and surroundings of life in the past which are important clues as to how those people lived.³¹⁶ Mahmud Pasha was not reticent about the world around him; this in turn enables us to understand how he spent his days. He reveals a wealth of detail about the life of a provincial governor, from appointment to dismissal, from battle scenes to banquets in elite mansions. In this part, I will concentrate on Mahmud Pasha's official life, and on how his daily routine was shaped by his military identity. I will also touch on the link between dreams and the self-image of the dreamer.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Mahmud Pasha affixed his signature defining himself as the governor of Vlorë to the last part of the manuscript.³¹⁷ He also wrote of official positions he had held in previous years. The majority of the dreams recorded in the *Düşnâme* were about his official life. It seems that his official life in general and his role as the governor of Vlorë in particular were the most defining features of his self. According to Fleischer, dream narratives are important in that they provide “panoramic views of the social, cultural and private psychic lives of individuals that can go far towards telling us the ways and means whereby they interpreted their environment.”³¹⁸ The fact that Mahmud Pasha's official life and aspirations interrelated with his spiritual life explains the abundance of “professional dreams” that he experienced.³¹⁹ He not only worked as an official but also built relations with important personages. He was very concerned about his official appointments, his relations with high-ranking people, and his duty as a governor. Hence, the basis to his dreams was mainly his view on appointments and official duties.

February and again, a man dreamed that he gave me large number of soldiers and I appointed him as headman to some villages, accompanied by ten thousand men. He

³¹⁶ Gülçin Tunalı, “Üç Rüya Bir Tereke: Ankaralı Müneccim Müderriszâde Sadullah el- Ankaravi'nin Hayatından Kesitler,” in *Ayşegül Keskin Çolak'a Armağan: Tarih ve Edebiyat Yazıları*, ed. Hasan Çolak, Zeynep Kocabıykoğlu Çeçen, N. Işık Demirakın (Ankara: Kebikeç Yayınları, 2016), 115.

³¹⁷ *Düşnâme*, 28a, The seal is read as “Mahmud Paşa Mutasarrıf-ı Avlonya.”

³¹⁸ Fleischer, “Secretaries' Dreams,” 77-88.

³¹⁹ This concept of “professional dream” is borrowed from Fleischer.

reached there with some of his men ... We landed on Galatopça (?) and he landed on the other side. We were going to Delvine (Delvinë) together with our soldiers.³²⁰

Arpa Emini dreamed that I was in the castle of Nis. Mehmed Pasha sent [one of his men] and wanted me to open the gate. I answered saying, "I cannot open it, because I sent one of my men to Istanbul in order to bring me [an edict]. Then, an attendant brought a sealed letter from Nemçe (Nemce). The letter said "You should be prepared for a campaign." I replied "I sent my man to the sultan in Istanbul, I will be ready on hearing the news. The 6th of Muharrem."³²¹

Again I dreamed that I was going somewhere accompanied by lots of cavalry men.³²²

On the 15th of Şevval, one of the scribes came and gave me an edict and a couple of documents in a small bag. It seemed that I had been appointed to go on a campaign. I opened the edict and read it. There was nothing in it about that. I said, "Nothing about that is written here." They appointed me to one place even though Gül Ahmed Ağa had appointed me to another place. Why didn't I go to İskenderiye? I said, "The edict comes from the sultan, and I must obey it. However, I was very anxious, and I woke up just as I was getting ready to go."³²³

Apparently, his official life and activities connected with the militia were the core of his dream narratives. His daily life and pleasures were also shaped by his military identity. The frequency of the dreams in which he saw himself hunting suggests that Mahmud Pasha enjoyed hunting trips. Hunting was not only a pleasure, but it was also related to sustaining and enhancing military skills in peacetime. In a sense, it served as a militia training exercise. Mahmud Pasha must frequently have gone hawking in the areas surrounding Vlorë and beyond. Seemingly he was accompanied by his militia. In the dream records translated below, Mahmud Pasha noted that he had a falcon. This record suggests that several types of hunting were practiced; hunting with trained birds of prey and hunting in the chase and the drive (*sürek avı*).

³²⁰ *Düşnâme*, 2b.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 13a.

³²² *Ibid.*, 5b.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 23a.

I dreamed that we hunted together with one [or] two hundred men. All of us chased the same prey. We each had a musket and we were on foot. We killed all the rabbits we chased.³²⁴

I dreamed that I was holding a falcon in my hand and a couple of hunters were chasing something in the distance. It looked like a duck, big [duck]. It passed me and fell down ...³²⁵

The seventh of Muharrem, Friday. I dreamed that we were walking somewhere. We had our horses and we wanted to hunt. It was close to Belgrade ...³²⁶

Zilhicce, we were in Bolaç. I dreamed that we arrived at a house. We hunted down ten rabbits. They say it brings good luck. It was our first hunt and I was riding my dapple-grey horse.³²⁷

In the middle of February, the Sunday night. I dreamed that ... I reached our farm. I wanted to go on a hunt. I ordered the farmers to come, [and] we would go coursing. We arrived at the [hunting] place; they had not come. I was riding a horse to take part in chase and drive. I saw that they were coming and unfurled a flag.³²⁸

Muharrem, I dreamed that we were going hunting. I got ready and went to take my horse. My horse was there. I arrived at that district and send a man to take my horse. I was together with Hasan Beğ of Karaşar and Ali Beğ.³²⁹

Governors were probably accompanied by horses on many of the hunting excursions. Mahmud Pasha must have given much importance to riding good/strong horses as such a horse was associated with the powerful, prestigious position of the owner. In his dreams, likewise, riding a strong, fast horse was generally interpreted as a portent of an appointment, which is why he habitually dreamed about horses.

The 1st of Şaban, Wednesday night. I dreamed that we were going to a place for the first time. Everyone's horse was ready. I said, "Bring the horses and let's mount and go." They brought everyone else's horses, but my horse did not come. I said, "Hurry up, bring my horse." Lately, one of my horses was ... They brought that horse when Vlorë was taken, [and the horse] was not equipped. After that, I took my sword out

³²⁴ *Düşnâme*, 8b.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 10a.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13b.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12b.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2b.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 10a.

because the servant was late, and I hit his head a few times, holding the horse by the bridle. I woke up. Again, we had good horses, and we made the horses gallop. May Allah make it auspicious.³³⁰

Again, I saw that we were on top of a mountain. We were on foot, but the horses were ready. We wanted to ride our horses. I said. “Bring the horses ...” “They first brought Bayram’s horse. The horse was lame. Then they brought my horse. They rode it fast, but it never got exhausted. The horse was the same horse which escaped from me in my dream when I was dismissed from Vlorë.³³¹

Other aspects of elite life that can be read through dream narratives were the wearing of fine, expensive clothes and feasting at banquets with important personages. Such pleasurable activities were also a usual theme of dream narratives and described in great detail.

Again, that night, I dreamed that I had a new ermine fur, and I put it. Sarı Ahmed Pasha became the vizier. I arrived and he made me wear a green tabard, a sable fur and I also kissed the hem of his garment ...³³²

On the 15th of February, Saturday, I dreamed that I was wearing a sable fur and riding a horse, I was going to [join] the army of soldiers.³³³

On Wednesday night, I saw that we were in a palace. It was Ramadan. We ate the *iftar* dinner, we stood up to perform the evening prayer. I entered a room, that was well furnished for the feast and Kara Osmanoğlu Ahmed Beğ also attended that *iftar* dinner. He stood up to recite the prayer, I reached that room, below which there was a big vineyard. They said that we saw ... in it. When I was going down to the courtyard, the district of Kumburgaz appeared to me. It was Istanbul and there were houses by the sea, I was looking at them ... Büyük Mehmed was also in his home. He said. “Do not let him see it, he does not know anything and all the horses in the courtyard were going out. They brought my horse near to the door. I wanted to get on it, but people were rushing to get out ... there were one or two horses left, and I go out. I woke up, but they were holding my horse and I could not find the way to reach and take [my horse]. May Allah make it auspicious.³³⁴

³³⁰ *Düşnâme*, 22b.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 26a.

³³² *Ibid.*, 2a.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 2b.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3a.

The dream scenes actually represent the real-life experiences in that hunting excursions, riding good horses, wearing fine, expensive clothes or taking part in banquets with the elites of the region must have been routine parts of Mahmud Pasha's daily life.

3.1. Dreams as a Means of Self-Fashioning

Reynolds notes that "dream accounts function as the displaced authority of the authorial 'I': what the author cannot say on his own authority, he can support with the testimony from an outside source through the narration of vision or dream."³³⁵ Dream narration is interrelated with the act of describing the aspects of one's life.³³⁶ Therefore, there seems to be a particularly close link between dreams and the self-image of the dreamer.³³⁷

They put a round shot into Ali Pasha's cannon. In ten days, his son was given the title of ...³³⁸

We were in Ergirili Ali's room. He said "He will not eat my bread." I escaped. He sought for Delvinë, they dismissed me, and gave it to Mehmed Bey.³³⁹

It was the religious feast. When we were praying in the district of Murad Çelebi, *mehter* music was being performed in the city. We said that "What is it?" They said t "Osman Pasha prayed earlier, the *mehter* music is being performed for him." It occurred that ten days later he took the seal.³⁴⁰

As Reynolds argues with a reference to a dream that leads to Hunayn ibn Ishaq's (d. 873 or 877) being cleared of accusations, "the dramatic moment comes not in the interpretation of the dream ... but ... in the public narration of the dream."³⁴¹ This dream report points to Mahmud Pasha's spiritual status as the receiver of true messages. The claim that these dreams had come true actually carried the message that all the dreams about his reappointment to Vlorë would also turn out as desired. Indeed,

³³⁵ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 93.

³³⁶ Reynolds, "Symbolic Narratives of Self," 283.

³³⁷ For a discussion on dreams' serving to public image of the dreamer see, Felek, "Re-creating Image and Identity," 249-72. The title of this part is given in reference to Felek's study.

³³⁸ *Düşnâme*, 1b.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 91.

those records about his being a very good governor imply that he deserved to be appointed to the position that he sought for.

I dreamed that I was in a place in the city. I went to a public bath where there were women. I proceeded, but I was walking slowly. The sheikh of Parakalama (Parakalosë) also came along behind me, but he could not catch me. I wanted to go to a public bath. I reached one public bath and entered it. There were lots of people in it. There was an agha standing on foot. He was very elegant; it seemed that he was the deputy of the public bath's owner. However, I was wearing very extravagant clothes that no other person could wear. My servants had also come along with me. One of them had my prayer rug. It was new and green ... and beautiful. I rolled up the prayer rug that was on the floor and I said "Roll out my own prayer rug!" That agha said "If you do that, you had better kill the owner of the public bath because life would be unbearable for him." I said, "Very well. Bring the prayer rug of the bath owner!" However, there was no heat in the bath. And that agha said to me, "You are Mahmud Pasha of Belgrade, I swear to God that there is no pasha like you." May Allah make it auspicious! 28th of Ramadan 1147.³⁴²

He cared a lot about being portrayed as a very good governor as he was actually having a hard time in receiving the appointment he wished for. Thus, he cited dreams to show the image he desired others to see and appreciate.³⁴³ Likewise in many of his dreams he saw that he became the *imam* (leader in worship), leading the people in prayers just like he governed in reality. He obviously was very sensitive about demonstrating his own worth and talents. Hence, he wanted them to be known by others as well, so that these dreams were circulated and recorded.

On the 4th of Zilhicce, Abdi Bey saw that I became the *imam* and after performing the prayer, I rode on a horse.³⁴⁴

May 7, Abdi Bey saw that I became the *imam*, and I was sitting in a high place, I was leading [the prayer] and I prayed. All the people were crying and saying "Amen".³⁴⁵

³⁴² *Düşnâme*, 25b-26a.

³⁴³ Felek, "Re-creating Image and Identity," 83-124.

³⁴⁴ *Düşnâme*, 11b.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

A man saw that all of my clothes were white, and I took a white horse and I climbed to the minaret and recited the call to prayer (*ezan*) and all the people were praying.³⁴⁶

On the 5th of May, Thursday, I saw that Osman Pasha and his entourage wore new clothes and the regiment would come to a mosque. We were going to meet them, but we could not catch up with them. The place where Osman Pasha was sitting was narrow, they were all seated side by side. I arrived at the mihrab, the place was large, and I started to recite the prayers.³⁴⁷

We also frequently observe him fighting in battle against infidels as explained in the dream record in which the infidels are symbolized by large pigs.

Mahmud Polat? saw that my son, Derviş had grown up. He came with a horse and said, “Where are you? I went to Istanbul and settled your affairs. And now, two dervishes will come bringing a white horse from the sultan for my father. After he said these words, two dervishes came holding spears. After that, other four dervishes came with horses. They brought the horses sent by the sultan and they brought one ... We discussed with the dervishes our outing to Nis. My son said, “Now, you cannot go to Nis. Circumstances require this.” I said that I could go. Those dervishes did not allow me to go, but they said, “You can send your son, Bayram. “I did that and sent Bayram to Nis. I was about to return, and I said to five or six men, “Do not stop, move forward.” They set off on the journey, [but] they immediately returned. I asked them, “Why did you not go?” They replied, “There are too many pigs over there, [those pigs] do not allow us to go.” The people are shocked by this situation. Those two dervishes who came before said, “What will this thing be?” ... They made me stand up. One dervish climbed on one side and the other dervish climbed on the other side and they made me ride the horse sent by the sultan. They also rode their horses. The people wanted us to sit down. I was in the middle and the three of us made an attack on the pigs. We lunged towards the pigs. The horses trampled the pigs in such a way that no pig could survive. All of the pigs died. When we moved to the other side, the two dervishes speared the pigs and raised the pigs up with their lances. The people were amazed at how the dervishes raised and carried such big pigs up with their lances. The dervishes told us what would happen to them and that we will go to the province.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁶ *Düşnâme*, 1b.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6b.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 12a-12b.

Someone dreamed that my men arrive at a cemetery and open up a grave; they resurrect the dead and then they depart to their own work. He said, “Then why do they not resurrect our children if they are capable of doing it?”³⁴⁹

The first dream shows Mahmud Pasha in the middle of a battle with pigs. The fight with those unpleasant animals says much about his superior military capabilities. This scene also establishes him as the protector of the people and restorer of order. Unsurprisingly, this dream started with a scene in which his son Derviş brought his father a white horse sent by the sultan. Mahmud Pasha rode that horse when attacking the pigs and displaying his extraordinary courage and strength. The second dream attributed to Mahmud Pasha and his men had the Prophet’s ability to resuscitate the dead.

Dreams had very strong connotations in the historical context within which he lived. The author of the dream diary, therefore, had some sort of consciousness of his readers/listeners. He used phrases like, “May Allah make it auspicious.” At the end of some records, he used expressions like “I do not remember what I dreamed.” “I do not know whether it was good or bad.” Such literary devices strengthen the idea that he was writing for an audience. He might be preserving those dreams to share with his associates as portents of the future. The use of dreams can therefore be seen as an effort to control the way the dreamer’s public image is presented, as the truthful dreams of righteous man were seen to be one of the forty-six parts of prophetising.³⁵⁰

4. INNER SELF: ANXIETY AND HOPE AS REVEALED IN THE DREAMS

If the interpretation of dreams is a common facet of ordinary life, why then should one dream rather than another be deemed worthy of entering the public domain? This question raises larger issues regarding the conceptions of the self and the individual ... What could induce the dreamer or the diarist to divulge his innermost subjective experiences? What was to be gained by crossing the line that separated private and public life?³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ *Düşnâme*, 10a.

³⁵⁰ Felek, “Re-creating Image and Identity,” 267; G. E. Von Grunebaum, “Introduction: The Cultural Function of the Dream as Illustrated by Classical Islam,” 13. Grunebaum noted that “the dream constitutes a private prophecy.”

³⁵¹ Katz, *Dreams, Sufism and Sainthood*, 30.

Researchers must consider the connection between dreams and anxiety. This connection is very useful in contextualizing and understanding dream accounts and putting them in the historical context in which they were created. Reynolds stated that dreams had a remarkably important place in Arabic autobiographies and dreams mostly appeared at critical points in the authors' life.³⁵² Studies made on Ottoman dreams show that instability in professional life seems to have led to the dissemination and circulation of dreams. Aslı Niyazoğlu's study of Nihani's nightmare is a good example of questioning the use of dreams in such insecure situations.³⁵³ Likewise, Evliya Çelebi used dreams at critical points to overcome his anxiety. According to Robert Dankoff, dreams "provide Evliya with comfort or counsel when he is troubled or in a quandary."³⁵⁴ Dream narratives were added to the *Seyahatnâme* in accordance with the role Evliya assigned to them. Dreams mainly functioned as a means of relief when he or his patron, Melek Ahmed Pasha, felt troubled.³⁵⁵ All these cases show that dreams eased troubled experiences that the dreamer had been through as well as his endeavor to overcome his anxiety. Mahmud Pasha was no an exception. He kept the record of his dreams when he was given some minor *sancaks* as opposed to his aspiration to regain the governor generalship of Vlorë. Probably, that situation came at a delicate time in his life and explains his concerns of securing a mundane post which influenced the construction of his dream narratives. Reading these accounts, one can recognize Mahmud Pasha's hopes of advancement.

As Reynolds noted, the deployment of dreams reflects moments of anxiety, not in the content of the dream itself as we modern readers may assume, but at the time of its inclusion in the text.³⁵⁶ "Dreams 'providing 'future portents, affirmation and legitimation' generally come in response to an anxiety the dreamer had experienced before, after, or during the dream."³⁵⁷ This is also evident in the dreams of Mahmud Pasha. His dreams were related to the uncertainties of his life, mainly connected with his political status.

³⁵² Reynolds, "Symbolic Narratives of Self: Dreams in Medieval Arabic Autobiographies," 262.

³⁵³ Aslı Niyazioğlu, "On Altıncı Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı'da Kadılık Kabusu ve Nihani'nin Rüyası," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 31, no. 2 (2007): 133–43.

³⁵⁴ Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality*, 209.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 90.

³⁵⁷ Kahana-Smilansky, "Self-Reflection and Conversion," 100.

Mahmud Pasha and obviously other provincial administrators, operated on slippery ground because dismissals and appointments frequently took place and duration in an office was not long. Officials could be dismissed at any time of the year.³⁵⁸ This ambiguous atmosphere combined rapid promotion and dismissal, personal opportunity, and failure in a perplexing mixture. Administrators who failed to attain a governorship in a province reacted with disappointment, anxiety, or anguish. Mahmud Pasha's diary of dreams is full of accounts revealing the emotional world of a provincial governor. Over-frequent dismissals and appointments affected Mahmud Pasha in such a way that many of his dreams revealed his desire for a reappointment to the province of Vlorë. Dreams reveal that his emotional situation fluctuated from certainty to fear, from anxiety to hope. He was in contact with the unseen world and dreams basically served him to make sense of his struggle in life. The following dream reports probably resulted from such an anxiety. He dreamed excessively about his appointment to Vlorë as well as the appointments of other officials, because he was fully preoccupied with dismissals and loss of jobs.

I saw that we were in some rooms found in Belgrade. About five or six hundred people were praying and they expressed their gratitude. I asked, "What are these people doing?" They replied, "These are the men to whom you distributed alms in Ramadan." "Why are they thankful? "They are thankful because you have been appointed to Vlorë. I said to Abdi Bey, "Vlorë has not been given to me, why do you lie?" [Abdi Bey] said "I do not know for sure." I said, "What about Gül Ahmed Agha?" He became the vizier's chamberlain. He suffered so much that he will not be appointed again. The 30th of Ramadan.³⁵⁹

During the month of Ramadan, the sheikh of Leskoviku came and said to me, "Do not doubt, Vlorë will be given to you."³⁶⁰

He usually saw documents sent from the capital, which were typically lengthy and scripted in beautiful calligraphy. These documents were clearly edicts, the signs of his upcoming promotion. It is worth pointing out that dreams were narrated like objective

³⁵⁸ Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 70-72; For governor appointments to Vlorë and duration of office, see Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı*, 42-43.

³⁵⁹ *Düşnâme*, 10b.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 11a.

realities and were attributed to have an explanatory value. In this case, the news of the anticipated appointment first came in the dream in the form of official papers.

The sheikh of Nis once saw in a lucid dream that they were performing the Friday prayers. They brought two horses; he tied them up , and they practiced artillery shooting three times. He once dreamed they said to him that three official papers will come from Istanbul addressed to Mahmud Pasha. He saw one of them in my hand; the other two papers will also come. The 13th of Muharrem.³⁶¹

[8] ... A man came. He brought two letters. One of them was sent by Osman Pasha, the other one by Selman Kethüda. Both were enveloped in the same way that Selman Kethüda had done previously. But the document was large. It seemed to come from Istanbul, it was not flat, it was long. This supposedly happened twice, and he brought two documents. I opened the one sent by Selman Kethüda ... The paper itself was unquestionably large, but the writing was small and beautiful. May Allah make it auspicious.³⁶²

I saw that it was evening; I was having a conversation with Mustafa Agha of Delvinë. And they brought me a sealed envelope [send] by Fatma Sultan. I took it. And one of my men came from the capital and said, “We have Vlorë, soon they will come with an edict.” The 15th of Ramadan.³⁶³

While I was sitting in the mansion, İsa rushed in. He gave me an edict. I thought that it was the edict about Vlorë. When I read it, I saw that it was the charter (berat) of Yanya. May Allah make it auspicious! The 18th of Zilka‘de.³⁶⁴

The sheikh of Nis dreamed that Mehmed Pasha built a new mosque. I also went to [the mosque]. I became imam, we prayed together with the congregation. One man came with an official paper. He asked, “What is this?” He said that [the governorship of] Vlorë had been given to Mahmud Pasha. The 19th of Muharrem.³⁶⁵

Some objects seen in past dreams at significant moments have allowed the dreamer to precisely interpret his current dreams. Horses were the animals that emerged most often in his dreams. Riding a good horse in a dream was a significant indicator of an upcoming appointment. Once again, he dreamed of the horse he saw when he was

³⁶¹ *Düşnâme*, 13a.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 7a.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10b.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 11a.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 14b.

dismissed from Vlorë. In that previous account, the horse ran away from Mahmud Pasha, and this resulted in his dismissal. In the current dream, however, the horse was coming fast towards Mahmud Pasha without any signs of exhaustion. The common element of these two visions probably assisted him to interpret the fast coming of the same horse as portent of his appointment back to Vlorë. Dreams elucidated the future, the present and also the past. They have always remained significant and relevant.³⁶⁶

Again, I saw that we were on top of a mountain. We were on foot but the horses were ready. We wanted to ride our horses. I said, "Bring the horses ... "They first brought Bayram's horse. The horse was lame. Then they brought my horse. They rode it quickly, but it never became exhausted. And this horse was the same horse which escaped from me in my dream when I was dismissed from Vlorë.³⁶⁷

This was not the only dream linking the vision of a horse with the governorship of Vlorë. On the first of Şaban, he again experienced a dream in which he dreamed of horses. Mahmud Pasha connected the current dream experience with an earlier one in which the same horse was brought to him when he was appointed to Vlorë. He did not interpret this openly, but it is obvious that he found a relationship between his possible appointment and riding that horse in his dream. The repetitive nature of these dreams seemed to clarify their meaning, so Mahmud Pasha emphasized that the earlier vision was related to his appointment and did not feel the need for further interpretation.

The 1st of Şaban, Wednesday night. I saw that we were going somewhere for the first time. Everyone's horses were ready. I said, "Bring the horses and let's go." They brought everyone else's horses, but my horse did not come. I said, "Hurry up, bring my horse." Lately, one of my horses was ... They brought that horse when Vlorë was taken away, [and the horse] was not equipped. Afterwards I took my sword out because he was late, and I hit him on the head a few times holding the horse by the bridle. I woke up. Again, we rode good horses, and we made the horses gallop. May Allah make it auspicious.³⁶⁸

Mahmud Pasha was actively seeking for divine answers to find a solution for his political status which was filled with uncertainties. The dream diary shows that he asked sheikhs to lie down to sleep in the hope that God would send some indication in

³⁶⁶ Çörekçi, "Dream Diary," 335.

³⁶⁷ *Düşnâme*, 26a.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 22b.

dreams to his fervent hopes of advancement. Although he was not satisfied with the experience that took place in the month of Receb, he included it in his dream diary.

The 13th of Muharrem. The sheikh of Nis once saw in a lucid dream that they were performing the Friday prayers. They brought two horses, he tied them up, and they practiced artillery shooting three times. He once dreamed that they told him that three papers were to come from Istanbul addressed to Mahmud Pasha. He saw one of them in my hand; the other two papers will also come.³⁶⁹

In [the month of] Receb, a tall dervish came. I gave him three hundred aspers. I also gave him two hundred aspers more because he was not pleased. I asked him to help me practice pious meditation. He said, "Close your eyes." I closed my eyes, but I did not see what I wanted.³⁷⁰

Some dreams reflect deeply felt emotions, such as grief. As a provincial governor Mahmud Pasha must have faced many complaints and much hostility. Archival documents show that governors could be investigated on account of accusations of collecting or extracting illegal taxes, of oppressing the people or because of slanders. Governors had a hard time clearing their names of such accusations. For instance, Mahmud Pasha was dismissed around 1725/1726 after such an inspection. He was cleared thanks to his reputation for fighting against brigands, his success in collecting taxes and his general reputation in Vlorë.³⁷¹ From recurrent themes of breaking down in tears or complaining of slanderers, one can understand his emotional reactions against accusations.

The 10th of February, I saw Osman Pasha in my dream. And they said to [Osman Pasha], "Make allowances for Mahmud Pasha." He said to a number of elevated men that he would stay one or two more days. We were supposedly in the district of Përmet. I said, "I do not have anything to do in any other place. I will stay in the district of Përmet for two or three days, because these [people] are not ordered properly. I dreamed of Kolonya (Kolonja). I suppressed it in such a way that [I could put them in their proper place by sending only one man]. Why do you listen to such improper remarks? They are slandering me. He said, "I do not listen to their words, but they come and talk. One may think what they say is true, but I do not listen to them for your

³⁶⁹ *Düşnâme*, 13a.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 10b.

³⁷¹ Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihati*, 42-43.

sake. I said, “They are talking about me behind my back,” and I broke down in tears. All the men of high office present there felt sorry for me.³⁷²

This is the nineteenth of February and the fourth day of Ramadan. I dreamed that I arrived in Istanbul and entered the mansion of an important man. He was, I suppose, the chief mufti. After having a conversation and kissing each other, I complained about these ruthless people.³⁷³

He recorded these two dreams which concentrated on the same theme within a nine-day interval. These narratives described the difficulties he experienced as a result of slanders and how he overcame them. In the same folio, in fact, among those tales of grief, he included another dream in which a few horses were sent from Istanbul for his use.³⁷⁴ The theme of a horse bestowed by a royal person (from Istanbul) received detailed treatment in the *Düşnâme*. Mahmud Pasha mostly interpreted such dreams as an affirmation of his political status. This dream in which he enjoyed a royal favor was probably cited as supporting testimony for the eminence of his situation.

Likewise, political alignments and personal hatreds greatly affected the career of provincial governors. The anxiety felt on account of a rival’s enmity can be understood from the dreams in which Mahmud Pasha sometimes saw people who prevented him from being promoted and sometimes saw animals representing the hostility of his enemies. He experienced such stressful dreams as part of something larger; they indicated the habitual stressful events in the careers of Ottoman officials who aspired to gain a better position. The significance of such dreams is obviously not in their depiction of the reality, but rather in their ability to unveil the emotional effect on the dreamer.³⁷⁵

A man was a chamberlain like Selman Agha [and] Sarı Ahmed Pasha’s chamberlain Abdurrahman Agha. He was living in a big mansion. But there were a lot of other men there also. I arrived. All of them stood up and the one who was the chamberlain reached out to me so that he could pull me up. The chamberlain was wearing a green garment. He gave me his hand, but it was a trick. He was [pretending] to pull me up,

³⁷² *Düşnâme*, 4a.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Kelly Bulkeley, *Dreaming in the World’s Religions: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 197.

but [actually] was pulling me down so that I could not climb up. He seemed to be joking, but I felt suffocated. I pulled my hand back from his and somehow entered the mansion. May Allah make it auspicious.³⁷⁶

In the middle of the winter ... I wanted to use a leech. There was a little eel there. They said, "This [eel] also draws [blood]." I allowed [them] to put it on me. It held on to my foot. But once it held fast it took as much as an enemy would.³⁷⁷

Among such many troublesome events, Mahmud Pasha recorded auspicious dreams that predicted the good things he hoped for. These dreams were recorded as a witness to the grace of God bestowed on the dreamer. His visions were also supported by the concurrent dreams of acquaintances.

Again, a man dreamed that I arrived at Istanbul. I fought with the people of Istanbul and defeated them. I found the sultan and went to kiss his hand and greeted those who were standing beside him. The sultan had a table set., I sat at the table and we started to eat.³⁷⁸

On the 11th of Zilhicce, I saw that we were standing on our feet. A cloud came. It snowed. After that another cloud came. It rained. At that moment, the sky and the clouds started to bubble away like boiling water. I said, "Allah will punish someone." We were going somewhere riding white horses. Another man also dreamed in this way.³⁷⁹

A man dreamed that there were three crescent moons in the month of Receb. While he was looking at the sky, those three crescents turned into white pigeons and they flew up in the sky. Another pigeon came in sight there. The one who saw [the dream] said that they took it from the pigeons of the sky. They played and played [and] all four pigeons landed on our house.³⁸⁰

The literary evidence displays that Mahmud Pasha included dream accounts as messages from the outside world and from the divine realm that acted as augury. Dreams are appreciated precisely because they enabled people to comprehend an outer reality beyond their knowledge, offering believers "a royal road that led not inward

³⁷⁶ *Düşnâme*, 4b.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 2a.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 26a.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 11b.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 22a.

but outward, providing insight ... into the hidden affairs of the world”³⁸¹ The regularity of dream records anticipating his much-craved appointment tells how, in a world so full of competition and anxiety, he never gave way to despair.

Conclusion

This chapter on the *Düşname* aimed at depicting the social, political spiritual, and mental life of an Ottoman administrator living in the eighteenth century. I tried to uncover the way in which he comprehended and construed his environment, and how he interpreted his dreams by taking into consideration his network as well as political and social context in which he lived. In the first part, I focused on Mahmud Pasha’s relational self. People who occupied his dream narratives actually provide an opportunity to reconstruct his relationships. An additional point was made by examining Mahmud Pasha’s Sufi networks. When considering the fact that Mahmud Pasha included the dreams of acquaintances in the *Düşnâme*, I questioned the practice of dream-telling in Ottoman society. I tried to disclose the interconnectedness of dreams and emphasized the power of dreams in giving good reasons for people to gather in social spaces. The second part focused on his external self in order to understand the personal characteristics of an Ottoman governor. For this discussion, I used the concept of “official dreams” to uncover how his professional life and aspirations accorded with his psychic life. I have tried to uncover details about the life of a provincial governor such as his daily activities and pleasures. In this part, I also attempted to demonstrate how true dreams served to enhance the public image of the dreamer. In the last part, I tried to display the inner-most subjective experiences of the dreamer and the connection between anxiety and dream narratives by examining the dreams that focused on his concerns about acquiring a good position.

³⁸¹ Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*, 4. Also cited by Amira Mittermaier, *Dreams That Matter: Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 14.

CHAPTER II: INTO THE LIFE OF AN OTTOMAN CALIGRAPHER: ABDÜLKADİR HİSÂRÎ'S *SERGÜZEŞTNÂME*

In this chapter, I will introduce an eighteenth-century Ottoman self-narrative in which a calligrapher narrated his life, starting from his childhood and proceeding until he attained a position in the scribal service at the age of thirty-six.³⁸² My aim is not to define a proper starting point for Ottoman autobiographies and not to raise an argument about, in Terzioğlu's words, "the creation of an 'autobiographical mentality' in the early modern Ottoman Empire"³⁸³ or determine all their differences or similarities to those of western counterparts. I will argue that this calligrapher/scribe not only portrayed his public/external/relational self but also revealed many intimate details about his private/inner/psychological self as opposed to the claims that self-narratives do not reveal anything about the inner/emotional self.³⁸⁴ I will search for the circumstances in which this narrative was created and try to understand how the author categorized his text. I will try to analyze what this self-narrative meant for its writer and potential readers.³⁸⁵

1. OTTOMAN *SERGÜZEŞTNÂMES*

Sergüzeştnâme is a literary genre in which the authors narrated their lives mostly in verse and sometimes in prose.³⁸⁶ These texts mostly caught the attention of scholars in the field of literature. They studied them mainly in terms of style, content, and form, and aimed at defining the literary characteristics of the genre. However, these texts need the attention of historians in that they reflect the world-view of Ottoman individuals and offer information that cannot be found elsewhere. They reveal the way

³⁸² Abdülkadir bin Hasan el-Hisârî, *Sergüzeştnâme*, İstanbul Üniversitesi nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, MS Türkçe 544. [hereafter, *Sergüzeştnâme*]

³⁸³ Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments," 85.

³⁸⁴ Greyerz, "Ego-Documents: The Last Word?," 281.

³⁸⁵ Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments," 83.

³⁸⁶ Orhan Kemal Tavukçu, "Sergüzeştnâme," *DİA*, vol. 36, 559-60.

a particular individual lived, felt, and reacted to certain situations. These texts, which reveal invaluable information about the authors' lives, families, networks, social status, professions, career processes, anxieties, fears, and hopes, can, therefore, enable historians to come closer to the lives of Ottoman individuals.

Agah Sırrı Levend was the first to gather together the known examples of the genre of *sergüzeştname* and bring them to the attention of scholars. In his monumental work, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, Agah Sırrı Levend recorded fifteen manuscripts under the title of *Sergüzeştâmeler ve Hasbîhâller*.³⁸⁷ Levend did not make a division between *sergüzeşt* and *hasb-i hâl*. He evaluated them as a subbranch of fiction. The brief list given by Levend is significant in that he opened a vista for future studies on the genre. After briefly describing *sergüzeştname*, he added a list of the manuscripts.

From then on, new studies in this genre began to appear, mostly by scholars studying in the field of Turkish literature. Günay Kut's article on Halîlî's *Fürkatnâme* (Book of Separation) is an example of these. *Fürkatnâme*, written in 1471/72, was one of the earlier examples of the genre.³⁸⁸ Kut stated that the whole story is told from Halîlî's point of view using the first-person singular. He narrates the story of a love he had experienced in his youth. According to the narrative, Halîlî is persuaded to go to *Rum* (land of Romans) by a friend's insistence. They arrive at Iznik (Nicaea) and spend their time travelling and working. While walking in the market one day, Halîlî sees a beautiful girl and falls in love. He suffers pain because of the love he feels for her. He sends a letter to his love but is rejected. Upon hearing the sad news, he becomes very upset and decides to leave for Istanbul. However, in time his pain grows deeper. He sends a messenger to tell his love about his suffering. Upon receiving a letter from his love, he returns to Nicaea, but he is not well received by his beloved. Halîlî complains about his fate and says that he will never become happy as long as he lives. Referring to the mystical elements used in the work, Kut noted that the actual theme of the work is divine love and categorized it as a mystical *hasb-i hâl*.³⁸⁹ Such narratives can reveal how people in the past experienced strong emotions like love.

³⁸⁷ Agah Sırrı Levend, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1973), 141-42.

³⁸⁸ Günay Kut, "Fürkat-nâme," *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı Belleten* 25 (1977), 336.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 353.

Betül Demirayak wrote her master thesis on *Sergüzeşt-nâme-i Zihnî* in 1997.³⁹⁰ This work is a narrative of Zihnî's (d. 1860) official life.³⁹¹ In this he vividly describes his life, his appointments, dismissals, and resignations. He harshly criticizes those who behave unfairly and abuse their power. Demirayak informed us briefly about the author and had transcribed Zihnî's work into modern Turkish. She did not delve into the text or give much information about the content. Zihnî's work needs the attention of historians who work on Ottoman self-narratives.

Zehra Toska's article is very illuminating in that she not only examined a nineteenth-century *sergüzeşt-nâme* but also tried to uncover the literary features of the genre for the first time.³⁹² She divided *sergüzeşt-nâmes* into those covering the story of love and those disclosing the adventures experienced by the authors. Toska noted that the first group cannot be placed under the category of autobiography. Although the authors set the story of their love within real events and narrate it in the first person singular, these love stories were fictional. According to her, such *sergüzeşt-nâmes* can be seen as the result of a search for novelty by the authors who were obliged to repeat the same stories that had been told for hundreds of years. In their search the authors benefited from the *sergüzeşt-nâme* genre by finding a new way to narrate these stories. By claiming to tell a true love story, they manage to arouse more interest in such well-known love stories. In the second group of *sergüzeşt-nâmes*, on the other hand, the authors aimed at narrating the real events they had been through. They tell of hardships on a voyage or unjust treatment they had faced. They want to reveal the reasons for their suffering. The second group can therefore be put under the category of autobiographical works. After introducing her preliminary findings of the genre, Toska examined Mehmet Rıfat's *Efsâne-i İbret* written in 1887/88. It is an autobiographical work in which Mehmet Rıfat (the son of Şefik Ali Pasha who worked as a high-level bureaucrat during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecit and was dismissed forty days after the enthronement of Sultan Abdülaziz in 1861³⁹³) relates the events of his life from his

³⁹⁰ Betül Demirayak Özsoy, "Sergüzeşt-nâme-i Zihnî (Bayburtlu Zihnî)," (M.A. thesis, Pamukkale University, 1997).

³⁹¹ Yunus Özger, "Bayburtlu Şair Zihnî'nin Ölümü ve Tereke Defteri," *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 26 (2004): 211-225.

³⁹² Zehra Toska, "19. Yüzyılda Yaşamış Bir Paşazadenin Sergüzeşti: Mehmet Rıfat ve Efsâne-i İbret," *Edebiyat ve Dil Yazıları, Mustafa İsen'e Armağan*, ed. Ayşenur Külahlıoğlu İslam ve Süer Eker (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2007).

³⁹³ Ibid., 533.

birth to the age of forty-five.³⁹⁴ Although Mehmed Rifat states that he wants his work to be an heirloom for his children, his real motivation for writing was to relate the difficulties he experienced after the dismissal of his father and to tell about the injustices they suffered. He aims at presenting his work to Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) in order to explain his situation, to seek refuge in the sultan's justice and ask for his patronage.³⁹⁵ Toska argued that Mehmed Rifat's work is the first modern autobiography written in Turkish literature because no impersonal memory is included in the narrative. Mehmed Rifat does not mention any political or historical event; he only relates his happy childhood in the distant past and the financial problems he is in as well as the emotions he feels concerning this. If we take Toska's explanations into account, Abdülkadir Efendi's work can also be considered an autobiography in the modern sense. His main aim is to narrate the progress of his life until he finds a proper position as a scribe in the palace bureaucracy. He reports political events only if they are related to his life. He describes the difficulties he experiences and reveals his emotional attitude toward these.

Ali Emre Özyıldırım analyzed the genres of *hasb-i hâl* and *sergüzeşt-nâme* to show the differences or similarities between them. Özyıldırım underlined the difficulty of making genre classifications by considering the words used by the authors to define their works. According to him, the words *hasb-i hâl* and *sergüzeşt* were not always used to indicate the genre of the works. Ottoman authors sometimes used those words for the sake of explaining the content of their work. For instance, the word *sergüzeşt* was used to emphasize that the content of the work was about real-life events, while the word *hasb-i hâl* was used to underline the connection between those events and the author's psychological situation.³⁹⁶ Özyıldırım distinguished *sergüzeşt-nâmes* from *hasb-i hâls* in terms of their subjects. According to his division, the authors of *sergüzeşt-names* relate real-life events, the authors of *hasb-i hâls* describe events that affect their psychological situation such as love, separation, being away from the

³⁹⁴ Toska, "19. Yüzyılda Yaşamış Bir Paşazadenin Sergüzeşti," 517.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 540.

³⁹⁶ Ali Emre Özyıldırım, "Sergüzeşt-nâmeler Üzerine Hasbihâl veya Hasbihâlin Sergüzeşti," in *Nazımdan Nesire Edebî Türler: 25 Nisan 2008 Bildiriler*, ed. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim S. Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım (İstanbul: Turkuaz Yayınları, 2009), 138.

homeland.³⁹⁷ After these explanations of the genre, he analyzed fourteen different works to disclose their literary features.

Haluk Gökalp is an important name in studying the *Sergüzeşt-nâme* genre. In 2004 he wrote an article on Mir Ali Rıza el-İstolçevî's *sergüzeşt-nâme*.³⁹⁸ Gökalp scrutinized the content of the work and transcribed it into modern Turkish. Mir Ali Rıza wrote this work in 1855/56. Apart from the introduction, the text is written in verse. In the introduction Mir Ali Rıza reveals information about his past. According to this information, he worked as a scribe for several statesmen. He relates his compulsory exile in Bursa and how he returns to Istanbul after being forgiven by the sultan. He narrates that he was affected by an eye disease and describes his time in Yenişehir hospital. He expresses his thoughts about the medical personnel. He describes the financial and emotional difficulties he has been through.

Gökalp published his illuminating work on *Sergüzeşt-nâmes* under the title of *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeşt-nâmeler* in 2009.³⁹⁹ This work is very important in that he not only reveals the nineteen examples of the genre but also makes a detailed survey of the subjects, forms, and literary styles. He provides for the first time a complete picture of the genre. Gökalp divided *sergüzeşt-nâmes* into two on the basis of their subjects; fictional *sergüzeşt-nâmes* and memoirs. He also divided the latter category into two: narratives about the lives of the authors and those focusing only on one issue in the authors' lives such as exile, love, illness, travel. After introducing the known examples of *sergüzeşt-nâme* genre, he made a detailed analysis of *Firkatnâme*, *Hecrnâme*, *Kitâb-ı Sergüzeşt-i Zaîfî*, *Makâlât-ı Varvarî Ali*, *Sergüzeşt-nâme-i Fakîr Be- 'Azîmet-i Tokat*, *Sergüzeşt-nâme-i Kâtib Osman*, *Sernüvişt-nâme-i 'Âcizî*, *Sergüzeşt-i İstolçevî*.

Gökalp also examined other genres in which authors talk about themselves to reveal their relationship with *sergüzeşt-nâmes*. *Hasb-i hâls* has a close relationship with that genre in that the authors narrate their physical and mental conditions and also reveal

³⁹⁷ Özyıldırım, "Sergüzeşt-nâmeler Üzerine Hasbihâl," 138.

³⁹⁸ Haluk Gökalp, "Bir Osmanlı Memurunun Hâl-i Pür-Melâli: Sergüzeşt-i İstolçevî," *Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 13, no:1 (2004): 151-166.

³⁹⁹ Haluk Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeşt-nâmeler* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2009); Also see Haluk Gökalp, "Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeşt-nâmeler," (Ph.D. dissertation, Çukurova University, 2006).

their feelings through the fictional characters they create.⁴⁰⁰ Another genre in which the authors talk about themselves is *arz-ı hâls*. These authors mostly produced such texts to ask for benevolence from the sultan or other high officials after narrating their social and financial situation. For instance, Vahid-i Mahtumî, in his work *Arz-ı Hâl-i Mahtumî Berây-ı Sultân Mahmûd Hân*, narrates his years in exile and asked the sultan for permission to return to Istanbul. Gökalp noted that *arz-ı hâls* were similar to *sergüzeştnâmes* in that the authors talk about their feelings.⁴⁰¹ Another widely treated theme in *sergüzeştnâmes* is separation. Gökalp wrote that the genre had a connection with *fırkatnâme/ firâknâme* in which the authors write about being separated from the homeland, a lover, their friends, their office, or God. He noted that it is convenient to examine *firâknâme* as a sub-genre of *sergüzeştnâme*.⁴⁰² According to Gökalp, *Sergüzeştnâme* and *seyahatnâme* (Book of Travel) are slightly related to each other. In some *sergüzeştnâmes*, the authors talk about the places to which they traveled. However, they do not give as much detail as there is in *seyahatnâmes*, because they do not aim at introducing those places to the reader. The theme of travel has only been touched on in relation to the main subject.⁴⁰³ Likewise, some authors write sections of their work under the title of *nasihatnâme* (Book of Advice). They relate their private experiences to give advice to others. They benefit from the *nasihatnâme* genre in giving a moral message to the reader.⁴⁰⁴

Gazavatnâme (Book of War) and *Zafernâme* (Book of Victory) are also connected to this genre. The authors sometimes narrate the political events of their times when talking about their lives. They dwell on subjects similar to those of *gazavatnâme* and *zafernâme*. The main difference between these genres is that while the subject of *sergüzeştnâme* is the authors' lives, the sultan is at the center of the other two genres.⁴⁰⁵ Gökalp states that these authors used the literary features of other genres to enrich their narrative and those genres were always used in relation to the main subject.⁴⁰⁶ Gökalp's explanations show that all autobiographical narratives are intertwined and

⁴⁰⁰ Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeştnâmeler*, 5-6.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 8.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 10.

share many similar literary characteristics. Hence, it is really difficult to define clear-cut boundaries and divide them into well-defined categories. Gökalp's seminal study has been followed by studies concentrating on single texts.

Mehmet Ali Üzümcü wrote his master thesis on *Kitâb-i Sergüzeşt-i Zaîfî* in 2008. Like many other master theses written by students of Turkish Literature, Üzümcü analyzed the work in terms of content, style and form and transcribed it into modern Turkish script.⁴⁰⁷ In 2013 Vildan Serdaroğlu Coşkun who studied the text in more detail published a critical edition of the manuscript together with a detailed analysis of the *sergüzeştname* genre.⁴⁰⁸ She wrote about Zaîfî's life and works. She analyzed his works in terms of form, content, and style. Coşkun also analyzed the *sergüzeştname* genre in terms of self-narratives. She compared Ottoman *sergüzeştnames* with western autobiographies and focused on the differences between the two. She brought three issues to the fore:

1. While the individual was in the center of the autobiography, the public/social sphere became prominent in *sergüzeştname*.
2. In *sergüzeştnames*, the subject's attachment to society is at the forefront while the authors of western autobiographies turn to their inner selves.
3. While the autobiography is a narration about the self, *sergüzeştname* aims at emphasizing a social issue through examples from one's own life.⁴⁰⁹

At the end of all these explanations, she concluded that it is impossible to find an authentic individual in Ottoman literature.⁴¹⁰ She portrayed an impersonal narrative tradition through her comparison of western autobiographies with *sergüzeştnames*. Although Coşkun might seem correct in that at first glance these texts look less intimate compared to western examples, I think she ignores the fact that they abound in more personal private details about an individual's life than are expected. Reynold's observation of Arabic autobiographies is quite relevant for this discussion.

While these texts at first glance look less "personal" than modern autobiographies (Arabic or western), they are not therefore less "individuating." They are, in fact, each replete precisely with the specific details of an individual life. In many cases, they

⁴⁰⁷ Mehmet Ali Üzümcü, "Kitâb-ı Sergüzeşt-i Zaîfî," (M.A. thesis, Kocaeli University, 2008).

⁴⁰⁸ Vildan Serdaroğlu Coşkun, *Zaîfî'nin Sergüzeştnamesi* (Istanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2013).

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 19-20. [Translations are mine.]

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 18.

clearly communicate a strong sense of the author's personality. There may be many ways in which the medieval and premodern texts in this corpus differ from modern examples, but to attribute this difference to a less developed sense of “individual identity” would certainly be neither accurate nor intellectually useful.⁴¹¹

Gülşah Taşkın’s article on poet Mahfî’s *Arz-ı Hâl ü Sergüzeşt-i Gilanî* is another important example. Mahfî was a Persian poet who came to Istanbul after the death of his patron and entered the service of the sultan. He provided an account of his life before moving to Istanbul. Mahfî thought that he was not supported by his patron Sultan Süleyman in contrast to other poets. Consequently, he wrote a letter to submit to Sultan Süleyman. In this he narrated his physical and psychological state and revealed how affected he was by the events he had lived through. He expressed his feelings of desperation and loneliness. Taşkın placed Mahfî’s work among autobiographical *sergüzeşt-nâmes* because the subject of the work was the poet’s life. She noted that it is also possible to describe it as a *hasb-i hâl*, referring the reader to Ali Emre Özyıldırım who distinguished *sergüzeşt-nâmes* from *hasb-i hâls* in terms of their subjects. According to his division, texts covering the events lived through by the authors belong to *sergüzeşt-nâme* genre; texts covering the events that affected the psychological situation of the authors belong to *hasb-i hâl* genre.⁴¹² Mahfî’s work can also be put under the latter category as he wrote about the events that deeply affected him and revealed his feelings and mental condition in the face of those difficult experiences. Also, as Mahfî wrote this work to submit his requests to the sultan, it can be put under the category of *arz-ı hâl*.⁴¹³ Taşkın’s main aim was to show that it is quite difficult to differentiate between the above-mentioned genres as they have many similar features. She questioned whether it is proper to situate such narratives under the higher category of “autobiographical narratives.”⁴¹⁴

Ahmet Karataş was the finder of Hindî Mahmud’s *sergüzeşt-nâme* which was thought to have been lost. In 2011 he introduced Hindî Mahmud’s work to the scholarly public

⁴¹¹ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 243.

⁴¹² Özyıldırım, “Sergüzeşt-nâmeler Üzerine Hasbihâl,” 138.

⁴¹³ Gülşah Taşkın, “On Altıncı Yüzyıla Ait Otobiyografik Bir Eser: Arz u Hâl ü Sergüzeşt-i Gilanî,” *Turkish Studies International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 8, no:4 (2013), 1348.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

through a very detailed article.⁴¹⁵ Hindî Mahmud was enslaved during the battle of Lepanto and taken to Italy in 1571. He narrated his experiences in the prisons of Messina, Napoli, and Rome. He vividly described the conditions of prisoners and expressed the grief he felt. The facsimile edition of Hindi Mahmud's work was published by Karataş in 2013.⁴¹⁶ Karataş analyzed its content in detail and wrote a biography of Hindî Mahmud based on the information given in his work. Karataş also revealed Hindi Mahmud's scholarly and religious self through information given by the author.

Mertol Tulum published a sixteenth century *sergüzeştname* written in prose by a certain Hacı Ahmed Efendi. It was published in 2014 together with another work of the author, *Ravzatu't-Tevhîd*. Hacı Ahmed Efendi wrote a lively account of his life and his spiritual journey through the dreams he saw. He related details of his travels to Egypt and on his pilgrimage to Mecca. Ahmed Efendi also gave information about his work, *Ravzatu't-Tevhîd*, in terms of its organization and layers of symbolic meaning. Mertol Tulum finds this account very important in that Ahmed Efendi gives information about the Zeyniyye order and the sheikhs whom he had met. Ahmed Efendi's self-narrative deserves a more detailed study in order to reveal the author's self. It is important enough to be published as a separate study.⁴¹⁷

Özkan Uz wrote his dissertation on Mehmed Dâî's *Nevhatü'l-Uşşâk*, a seventeenth century *sergüzeştname* written in verse.⁴¹⁸ Uz aimed at making a critical edition of the work. He mostly repeated Gökalp's analysis of the genre and did not add anything to the findings in previous studies. Uz analyzed the form, language structure, and content of the work. He listed the people, places and family members that were mentioned in the text. Referring to Gökalp's division of the genres, Uz described this work as a *sergüzeştname* narrating a period of the author's life. Although Mehmed Dâî Efendi narrated the love he felt for one of his male students while working as a teacher, Uz

⁴¹⁵ Ahmet Karataş, "Bir İnebahtı Gâzisinin Esâret Hâtıraları: Sergüzeştname-i Hindî Mahmûd," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları / The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 37 (2011): 17-48.

⁴¹⁶ Ahmet Karataş, *Sergüzeştname-i Hindî Mahmûd: İnebahtı Gazisi Hindî Mahmûd ve Esaret Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2013).

⁴¹⁷ Mertol Tulum, *Sergüzeşt: 16. Yüzyılda Bir Otobiyografi ve Ravzatü't-Tevhîd: Zeynilik Tarihine Işık Tutan Sembolik Bir Eser (İnceleme-Metin- Tıpkıbasım)* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2014).

⁴¹⁸ Özkan Uz, "Nevhatü'l-Uşşâk: İnceleme-Metin," (Ph.D. dissertation, Van Yüzüncüyıl University, 2015).

noted that the main message of the work was to attain true spiritual love; worldly love was only a means to that end.⁴¹⁹

Cihan Okuyucu and Sadık Yazar published Bosnalı İntizâmî's *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân* in 2021.⁴²⁰ They wrote a long introduction in which they examined autobiographical genres in Ottoman literature as well as the *sergüzeştname*, genre mostly with a reference to studies made by Gökalp, Özyıldırım, and others. They disclosed their findings about the *sergüzeştname* genre and made a comparison between *sergüzeştname* and *seyahatname*, *sefâretname*, *hasb-i hâl*, captivity memoirs and diaries. One of the most instructive things about their study is that they analyzed the words used by İntizâmî to describe his work; *sergüzeşt*, *hasb-ı hâl*, *vasf-ı hâl*, *menâkıb*, *hisse*, and *kıssa*.⁴²¹ They analyzed the context in which these terms were used and looked for the nuances that expressed the author's intention to pen his own life. They concluded that İntizâmî intended to produce a self-narrative as he used many terms pointing to autobiographical accounts in classical Turkish literature.⁴²² İntizâmî's work is invaluable in that his self is at the center of the narrative and he relates his life experiences, travels, and historical events of his time.⁴²³ İntizâmî narrates the story of his life in chronological order. He starts his account from his childhood years. He relates the injustice he suffered in primary school, writes about starting to trade, how he ended up in prison as the result of a slander, how his fabric shop burnt down, his long years of service as a scribe, how he fell off a cliff during a trip, how he survived the danger of drowning in the Danube River, how he wrote his famous book *Surnâme* and presented it to the sultan, and his adventures during the Egri campaign of 1596. He wrote a lively account of his youthful excitements, disappointments, bad habits, success, failures, and also regrets.⁴²⁴ İntizâmî's narrative provides necessary tools for researchers to discover him as a person and understand the mental world of an Ottoman individual.

⁴¹⁹ Uz, "Nevhatü'l-Uşşak: İnceleme-Metin," 11.

⁴²⁰ Cihan Okuyucu and Sadık Yazar, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân: XVI. Yüzyıldan Bir Katibin Sergüzeşti* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2021).

⁴²¹ Ibid., 79-83.

⁴²² Ibid., 307-308.

⁴²³ Ibid., 19.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 309-310.

All of these studies on the *sergüzeştnâme* genre indicate that these texts were mostly studied by scholars in the field of Turkish literature. Their main aim was to publish critical editions and analyze them in terms of form and structure. A few studies touched upon their importance as examples of Ottoman self-narratives. These autobiographical accounts fit well into the category of self-narratives. A systematic study is still to be done in order to understand Ottoman individuals and “to bring a human factor to our narrative, a dimension that is solely needed in Ottoman historical scholarship.”⁴²⁵

1.1. About the Genre

The word *sergüzeşt* is a Persian compound word that means adventure, history, the experiences one lives through.⁴²⁶ Haluk Gökalp described *Sergüzeştnâme* as a genre in which authors narrated their life experiences mainly in verse form. According to his description, the authors sometimes related their life experiences and feelings directly and sometimes enriched their narratives by adding fictional elements. Consequently, Gökalp divided *Sergüzeştnâme* into two categories; fictional *sergüzeştnâme* and memoirs. Then he made a further distinction and divided the latter category into two parts; those narrating the authors’ life stories and those focusing on only one incident or period in the authors’ lives such as love, exile, illness, or a journey.⁴²⁷ Abdülkadir Efendi’s text can be put under the second category in that he related his own life beginning from his childhood.

Abdülkadir Efendi did not give his work a title. The manuscript’s title, *Sergüzeştnâme-i Abdülkadir Hisârî*, was given by someone else. The title must have been given in response to the words used by Abdülkadir Hisari to describe his work in the *sebeb-i telîf* (the reason for writing) section. When explaining his reasons for writing, Abdülkadir Efendi refers to many different words, which may lead the reader to put the manuscript under several different genres. However, when I read the work, I realized that the two most commonly used words were *sergüzeşt* and *güzeşt* which are usually translated as adventure. He uses these words seven times: *sergüzeşte-i*

⁴²⁵ Selim Karahasanoğlu, “Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkanları, Sınırları (Ego-Documents: Potentials and Limitations as a Source for Historical Research),” *Turkish History Education Journal* 8, no:1 (2019): 213.

⁴²⁶ Tavukçu, “Sergüzeştname,” 559.

⁴²⁷ Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeştnâmeler*, i-ii.

mâdde,⁴²⁸ *sergüzeştemiz*,⁴²⁹ *vekâyi‘-i güzeşte*,⁴³⁰ *sergüzeşte-i vekâyi*,⁴³¹ *ahvâl-i güzeşte*,⁴³² *âlem-i güzeşte*.⁴³³ Such frequent use of the word by the author must have had an effect on its being given the title of *Sergüzeştnâme-i Abdülkadir Hisârî* and of being put under the *Sergüzeştnâme* genre.

Abdülkadir Efendi made compound words using words *vekâyi‘* and *ahvâl* together with the term *sergüzeşt*. *Vekâyi‘*⁴³⁴ is the plural of *vakı‘a* which means an event that took place.⁴³⁵ Ottoman histories written in chronological order were called *vekâyi‘nâme*. Abdülkadir Efendi’s use of the words *vekâyi‘* and *sergüzeşt* together displays his intention of writing his life events in chronological order. *Ahvâl*⁴³⁶ is the plural of the word *hâl* which means a condition, a state of affairs, a mode, a manner.⁴³⁷ *Ahvâl-i sergüzeşt*, therefore, represents the portrayal of the author’s condition, his attitude towards events, and his state as an individual. Taking into consideration the author’s use of these words, we can say that he wanted to display his intention of narrating not only his life in chronological order but also, in the *sebeb-i telif* (reasons for writing) section, his feelings and behaviors at certain instances.

Abdülkadir Efendi also categorized his work under names such as *nasihatnâme* (the Book of Advice),⁴³⁸ *mecmû‘a-i resâ‘il* (miscellany of treatises),⁴³⁹ *evrâk-ı müstetâb* (exalted/pleasant documents),⁴⁴⁰ *evrâk-ı perîşân* (random papers),⁴⁴¹ *cerîde-i seyyiât* (journal of the sins), *ferec ba‘d eş-şidde* (relief after hardship), *tuhfe-i hakirâne* (the gift of the humble one). However, except for *ferec ba‘d eş-şidde*, all other words are only used once when explaining his motivation for writing.

Vildan Serdaroğlu Coşkun noted that to keep the readers’ attention the authors of *Sergüzeştnâmes* frequently make use of the elements of a variety of other genres such

⁴²⁸ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 7b.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 8a.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 8b, 9a.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 9a.

⁴³² Ibid., 30a.

⁴³³ Ibid., 47b.

⁴³⁴ Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 2144.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 2146.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 40.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 755

⁴³⁸ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 5a.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 7a.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 8a.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 9b.

as *nasihatnâme*, *methiye* (eulogy), *hicviyye* (satirical poem) and so on.⁴⁴² Abdülkadir Efendi's reference to *nasihatnâme* is compatible with Coşkun's explanation. Abdülkadir Efendi wished to tell of his life and to provide an example. He seems to have tried to establish a moral ground for writing his life experience and benefited from other genres to embellish it. He notes that he composed his book using jewel-like words and sayings and wanted to put it within the category of *nasihatnâme*. He writes that he is including complaints about the evils of this world and the deceptions of the commanding self. He gives good moral precepts to tell the reader to beware of doing improper things.⁴⁴³ The term, *evrâk-ı müstetâb* (exalted/pleasant documents), also refers to his intention of giving counsel. Indeed, just after using this expression, he notes that his book is a treasury of wisdom. It is full of exalted examples of counsel and exemplary stories providing its readers with a feeling of contentment.⁴⁴⁴

The term, *tuhfe-i hakirâne*, also deserves to be mentioned in this connection. We know that a good deal of Ottoman manuscripts were titled *Tuhfe*, because the authors meant them to be gifts for either future generation or acquaintances.⁴⁴⁵ Therefore, as Yazar and Okuyucu noted, the title *tuhfe* does not tell as much about the genre and the content, as about the reasons for writing.⁴⁴⁶ All in all, we can say that Abdülkadir Efendi's use of the word, *tuhfe*, is compatible with the intention of writing a gift for wise people who seek salvation.⁴⁴⁷ Indeed, he uses the term *tuhfe* just after explaining that his *sergüzeşte-i vekâyi* has been written to guide clever people and for those who observe the rules of good manners.⁴⁴⁸

Evrâk-ı perîşân is the most interesting title given by an author. As far as I know, this term acquired a common usage about a hundred years later when Namık Kemal published the biographies of great figures of Islamic history under the title of *Evrâk-ı Perîşân*.⁴⁴⁹ Hikmet Dizdaroğlu wrote that Namık Kemal found this title suitable to denote his scattered writings and works written in different genres.⁴⁵⁰ This explanation

⁴⁴² Coşkun, *Zaîfî'nin Sergüzeştname'si*, 21. Also see Yazar and Okuyucu, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân*, 33.

⁴⁴³ *Sergüzeştname*, 5a.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8a.

⁴⁴⁵ Yazar and Okuyucu, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvân*, 80.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁷ *Sergüzeştname*, 9b-10a.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁹ Namık Kemal, *Evrâk-ı Perîşân* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniyye, 1301).

⁴⁵⁰ Hikmet Dizdaroğlu, *Namık Kemal: Hayatı, Sanatı ve Eserleri* (Istanbul: Varlık Yayınları, 1995), 45.

is compatible with the literal meaning of the term, that is ‘random papers’. Still, the question arises as to whether this term has any connotation with writing a biography or autobiography. Its usage by Abdülkadir Efendi in the context of autobiography and later usage by Namık Kemal in the context of biography suggest that it might have acquired such a meaning. In Abdülkadir Efendi’s case, *evrâk-ı perîşân* was used in the same folio and just before the term *sergüzeşte-i vekâyî*.⁴⁵¹ Hence, he seems to have used this term to explain the contents of his book which was written to assemble in order the events of his life. Just after describing his book as *kitab-ı evrâk-ı perîşân*, he hopes his readers will read it without seeing its flaws and not ignore it by relying on unimportant excuses.⁴⁵² By calling the narrative of his life a book of random papers perhaps he also points to a certain level of “autobiographical anxiety,” an issue that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Ferec ba’d eṣ-ṣidde is another expression used throughout the manuscript. This term must come from the anonymous fifteenth-century compilation *Ferec Ba’d eṣ-Ṣidde* which consisted of a collection of tales translated originally from Persian. Ulrich Marzolph wrote that most of the tales narrated in *Ferec Ba’d eṣ-Ṣidde* belong to the category of ‘marvelous and strange’.⁴⁵³ According to Marzolph, these tales were used to show exemplary cases to teach the reader an important lesson. “They demonstrate and teach that nothing at all is unimaginable or impossible since Almighty God potentially allows all kinds of phenomena to exist.”⁴⁵⁴

To quote at length;

It is interesting to note that, in the same manner as the Ottoman Turkish *Ferec ba’d eṣ-ṣidde* contains (not only but predominantly) tales of the marvelous (‘*ajīb*) and strange (*gharīb*), the vaguely contemporary Arabic collection *Kitāb al-ḥikāyāt al-‘ajība wa-’l-akhbār al-gharība*, whose title explicitly refers to tales of the marvelous and strange, contains to a certain extent tales of the genre *faraj ba’d al-shidda*, or “relief after hardship.” The latter genre, whose best-known representative in classical Arabic literature is the *Kitāb al-Faraj ba’d al-shidda* compiled by al-Muḥassin b. ‘Alī

⁴⁵¹ *Sergüzeṣtnâme*, 9b.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Ulrich Marzolph, *The Relief After Hardship: The Ottoman Turkish Model for the Thousand and One Days* (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2017), 35.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 36-17.

al-Tanūkhī (d. 994), covers tales in which the protagonist—often, though not necessarily, starting from a somewhat precarious situation—initially suffers a deterioration of his situation but in the end experiences a happy resolution of his difficulties.⁴⁵⁵

Abdülkadir Efendi, indeed, considered many of the episodes in his life to be strange (*acâyib*). He generally observed the strange things that happened after spending a period in prayer and found there a resolution for the difficulties he experienced. He narrated his difficult times and how he obtained relief after enduring various hardships. Hence, the context within which Abdülkadir Efendi used the term *ferec ba'd eş-şidde* was exactly compatible with Ottoman and Arabic examples of the genre.

The term *ferec ba'd eş-şidde* was also used to designate some of the tales narrated in *Afife Hanım Sergüzeşti* (Adventures of Lady Afife), a work from the end of the eighteenth century.⁴⁵⁶ Although *Afife Hanım Sergüzeşti* can be put under the category of fictional *Sergüzeştname*, it illustrates our point. Indeed, the term was used to compare a strange and marvelous tale about a herdsman to that of *Vâmık ile Azrâ* (Vâmık and Azra), a tale narrated in *Ferec Ba'd eş-Şidde*.⁴⁵⁷ Afife Hanım depicted her situation as strange and marvelous like the tales narrated in *Ferec Ba'd eş-Şidde*.⁴⁵⁸ This example shows that to compare *Sergüzeştname* and *Ferec Ba'd eş-Şidde* was not an exceptional occurrence.

Two other Ottoman terms used by Abdülkadir Efendi were *cerîde-i seyyi'ât* and *mecmû'a-i resâ'il*. *Cerîde* (journal) and *mecmû'a* (miscellany) are perhaps two of the terms most taken note of by researchers working in the field. As Terzioğlu notes, *cerîde* and *mecmû'a* were two of the descriptive titles given to Ottoman diaries.⁴⁵⁹ Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi called his piece a *mecmû'a*. Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi called his work a *cerîde*.⁴⁶⁰ Indeed, Sadık, who somehow owned Telhisî Mustafa Efendi's diary and recorded his own accounts in the manuscript,

⁴⁵⁵ Marzolph, *The Relief After Hardship*, 40.

⁴⁵⁶ Nagihan Gür, *Hikayenin Hikayesi: Osmanlıda Bir Kadın Anlatısı Afife Hanım Sergüzeşti* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2020), 24.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 23-24.

⁴⁵⁹ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times," 48.

⁴⁶⁰ Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 34.

referred to Mustafa Efendi's diary as a *cerîde*.⁴⁶¹ Mehmed Efendi, who worked as the imam of Soğanağa Mosque, also called his piece a *cerîde*.⁴⁶² He ended most of his entries saying *işbu cerîdeye kayd olundu* (registered in this *cerîde*). However, Abdülkadir Efendi's use of the term *cerîde* is interesting in that his piece is far from being a diary.

In his book Selim Karahasanoğlu investigated the use of the word *cerîde* (journal) in the context of self-narrative when discussing the diary of Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi and secondary literature about this diary. He wrote that this term was considered equal to the word 'memoir' by İsmail Erünsal. Erünsal used *cerîde*, diary, and memoir interchangeably.⁴⁶³ Karahasanoğlu referred to the difference between a memoir and a diary. While a diary communicates the immediate experiences, the memoir includes records based on the authors' recollections. While the diary offers a place for "short sight," the memoir offers a site for "long vision" and gives a lifetime pattern.⁴⁶⁴ Karahasanoğlu, therefore, wrote that he prefers the term diary as an equivalent for *cerîde*.⁴⁶⁵ In Abdülkadir Efendi's case, however, this term seems to have been used as being equal to memoir as he wrote about his past experiences. I think the author used the term *cerîde-ı seyyiât* to emphasize that his work will be the narrative of his own life and the difficulties experienced in it. As Karahasanoğlu noted, these numerous references to the term by the authors of self-narratives suggest a connotation of writing about one's own life.⁴⁶⁶

When thinking of the word *mecmua* (miscellany), there is a consensus among researchers that Ottoman miscellanies provided a unique perspective in studying Ottoman self-narratives. Terzioğlu noted that "miscellanies offer a unique vantage point from which to approach the question of personal narratives in the Ottoman Empire."⁴⁶⁷ According to her, early modern Ottomans classified many

⁴⁶¹ Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 34, fn. 15.

⁴⁶² Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar*, 99, 119, 124, 202.

⁴⁶³ İsmail E. Erünsal, "Bir Osmanlı Efendisi'nin Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi ve Ceridesi," *Kaynaklar* 2 (1984): 77-81.

⁴⁶⁴ William Matthews, *British Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of British Diaries Written between 1442 and 1942* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), x. Cited in Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 34.

⁴⁶⁵ Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 34.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments," 86.

autobiographical texts under the category of miscellany.⁴⁶⁸ Schmidt's work also shows that Ottoman autobiographical texts can be found under diverse categories such as miscellanies.⁴⁶⁹ Abdülkadir Efendi supports these explanations in putting his work under the title of *mecmua*. Information given by Abdülkadir Efendi in *Sergüzeştname* also hints that he possibly had a *mecmua* in which he recorded some personal notes. He said that he took a record of the dream he saw on 18 Recep 1189 (14 September 1775) in his *mecmua*. He recorded the dream with its date, day, and hour.⁴⁷⁰ This information suggests that Abdülkadir Efendi may have used the notes taken in his *mecmua* when writing his autobiographical account. Personal notes recorded in miscellanies may have been used by the authors of self-narratives as the source for their personal histories.

Ali Emre Özyıldırım argued that it is really difficult to classify Ottoman texts and determine their genres by considering the words used by the authors. He noted that the authors used various expressions like *hasbihâl*, *fîrâknâme*, or *sergüzeşt* to define their works, but they did not always use those words to classify their works under well-defined genres in the sense we think of today. They sometimes used them just for their literal meanings.⁴⁷¹ Keeping this in mind, I think Abdülkadir Efendi's work can be put under the *Sergüzeştname* genre in which real-life events are narrated- a category defined by Haluk Gökalp. All other expressions like *nasihatnâme*, *tuhfe-i hakirâne*, *ferec ba'd eş-şidde* were used in their literal meaning to reveal the content of the book. Abdülkadir Efendi probably did not regard these expressions as literary terms designating the genre of his work.

1.2. About Abdülkadir bin Hasan El-Hisârî

The author of the manuscript reveals his identity in folio 8a. He gives his full name as Abdülkadir bin Hasan el-Hisari. On folio 11a, he writes that he was born at three o'clock. on the twenty-seventh night of the sacred month of Ramadan. He was named after the sacred night of Qadr on which he was born. This family moved to Anadolu Hisari after his birth and lived there for many years. We do not know anything about

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Schmidt: "The Adventures of an Ottoman Horseman," 284.

⁴⁷⁰ *Sergüzeştname*, 86a-87a.

⁴⁷¹ Özyıldırım, "Sergüzeştname Üzerine Hasbihal," 139.

his family apart from his father being a shopkeeper in Anadolu Hisârî. He mentions his mother's death but does not give her name nor does he write anything about his siblings if there were any. We know that his father wanted him to marry after the death of his mother, but he did not provide us with any further information about his wife or his children.

Few things are known about Abdülkadir b. Hasan el-Hisârî aside from what he wrote about himself in his *Sergüzeştname*. Müstakimzâde Süleyman Sadeddin Efendi wrote an entry about Abdülkadir Hisârî in his *Tuhfe-i Hattâtîn* (Gift of Calligraphers), Abdülkadir Hisârî was the son of a herbalist (*attar*) from Anadolu Hisârî. He obtained his master's certificate (*icazet*) from a famous calligrapher of the period, Ebu Bekir Raşid Efendi. According to the information provided by Müstakimzâde, Abdülkadir Efendi died while he was working as a scribe at the time that *Tuhfe* was completed.⁴⁷² Müstakimzâde started to write his work in 1173 (1759-60) and completed it in ten years. After 1770, he made some additions to the text and recorded the years of the death of certain calligraphers until his own death on 23 Şevval 1202 (July 23 1788).⁴⁷³ Using this information, Rıdvan Enes Akçatepe determined Abdülkadir Efendi's year of death as being 1202 (1787/88).⁴⁷⁴ Abdülkadir Hisârî's two works are currently to be found in Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; they consist of a calligraphic galleon, which was mentioned in *sergüzeştname*,⁴⁷⁵ and a book of prayers.⁴⁷⁶

1.3. On the Manuscript

The Manuscript is composed of ninety-two folios. It is written in prose. On the first folio, which was not numbered, the identity of the author is wrongly specified as Yakup Haseki. However, someone struck out this information and the author correctly identified as Abdülkadir Hisârî. On the reverse side of this unnumbered folio, there is

⁴⁷² Müstakimzâde Süleyman Sadeddin Efendi, *Tuhfe-i Hattâtîn* (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1928), 260.

⁴⁷³ M. Uğur Derman, "Tuhfe-i Hattâtîn," *DİA*, vol. 41, 351-3.

⁴⁷⁴ Rıdvan Enes Akçatepe, "Osmanlı'da Hattatlık ve Hattatlar (XVI.-XVIII. Yıllar)," (M.A. thesis, Hacettepe University, 2012), 110.

⁴⁷⁵ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/454611?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=%27Abd+al-Qadir+Hisari&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1>

⁴⁷⁶ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/629452?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=%27Abd+al-Qadir+Hisari&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=2>

a note in the margin which calls it a “writing of Abdülkadir bin Hasan el-Hisârî, the third assistant to the chief black eunuch’s secretary.”

The manuscript covers the period between the birth of the author on 27 Ramazan 1157 (3 November 1744) and his appointment as the third assistant to the chief secretary of the chief black eunuch in Şaban 1193 (August/September 1779). Abdülkadir Efendi may have started to write his self-narrative around this date. Another possibility is that he may have started to write it when he was appointed to be the fourth assistant on 18 Recep 1191 (22 August 1777) as this was the appointment he described as “relief after hardship.” This appointment may have triggered him to write his life story and to give counsel to people struggling to achieve a proper place in their career. If this was the case, he seems to have continued to take record of his appointments in the course of writing his narrative. After writing about his last appointment, the manuscript ends with a prayer. The author does not specify the date of completion. After the completion of the work he continues to give information in the margins about appointments. The last marginal note was written on 13 Muharrem 1194 (20 January 1780). Therefore, we can presume that *Sergüzeştname* might have been completed before January 1780.

Abdülkadir Efendi divided his autobiography into forty chapters. There is an index of the chapters at the beginning of the manuscript. However, some of the chapter titles are not written on the folios indicated in the index. The author used red ink when writing the titles, verses, poems, and some words to stress their importance. On every folio, he wrote fifteen lines. However, he sometimes added capacious marginal notes. The author probably did not have the chance to go over the manuscript to make any necessary additions as he did not specify the dates of some events although he put spaces in the sentences to insert the date.

Abdülkadir Efendi narrates his life story in chronological order. There is “directionality among events; that is, to structure events in such a way that they move over time in an orderly way toward a given end.”⁴⁷⁷ He starts with his birth. He writes briefly about his childhood and education. Then, he continues writing about his professional life. He gives a vivid description of his life in the service of pashas and

⁴⁷⁷ Kenneth J. Gergen, Mary M. Gergen, “Narratives of the Self,” in *Memory, Identity and Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, ed. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 164.

finally in scribal service. He addresses an audience rather than talking intimately to himself. He wants to provide a moral exemplum for future generations.

Abdülkadir Efendi sometimes referred to himself as “this poor one” or “this humble one.” However, he also used possessive suffix of first-person singular -m (pederim/my father) and the first-person plural (we). His use of the possessive suffix of first-person singular “communicates to the reader a clear sense of the author as a person beyond the text.”⁴⁷⁸ *Sergüzeştname* gives us a chance to get as close as possible to the inner world of an Ottoman individual. He gives reference to verses, sayings of the prophet, to support his arguments whenever necessary. He also includes poems and narratives concerning wisdom to signal his feelings and emotional state. Sometimes he incorporates his dreams into the narrative. These dreams were mostly seen as portents of the future.

1.4. The Motivation for Writing

Reynold remarks that autobiographical writers show their autobiographical anxieties by providing a lengthy defense to prove that they are not writing for motives of deceit or pride.⁴⁷⁹ Our author was no different in that he engaged in justifications for producing his autobiography and showed a certain level of “autobiographical anxiety.”⁴⁸⁰ He explained why he engaged in the act of writing about himself by saying that he wrote with good expectations of being forgiven in the afterlife.⁴⁸¹ He also felt a need to defend himself from potential charges of vanity⁴⁸² and called the story of his life a treasury of wisdom.⁴⁸³ His autobiography was written to serve as a refuge in times of anguish⁴⁸⁴ because it provided future generations with useful information and guidance. He wanted it to be a reassuring exemplar to future struggling people, particularly to those who were facing hardship in their careers. He apparently believed that “he had good reason to assume that his life was exceptional and that this required

⁴⁷⁸ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 180.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., 66-68.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁸¹ *Sergüzeştname*, 7a.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 8a.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 9a.

a particularly stylized mode of self-representation.”⁴⁸⁵ This is also supported by his explanation for preferring to write in the Turkish language, saying it was because he wanted the account of his life to be truly interpreted and understood.⁴⁸⁶ His aim was to circumvent all possible misconceptions arising from incorrect interpretations of his work.⁴⁸⁷

Abdülkadir Efendi’s intention of providing an example for his readers is a common theme found in the reasons for writing sections (*sebeb-i telif*) of many other genres of writing produced by Ottoman intellectuals. Abdülkadir Efendi writes that he formulated this work as a book of advice to introduce his readers to moral values and to provide examples from his life story portraying *ferac ba’d eṣ-ṣidde* (relief after hardship). He refers to Chapter 94:5-6 of the Qur’an to strengthen what he wishes to communicate throughout his autobiographical work: “surely every hardship is followed by ease.”⁴⁸⁸ Whenever he had difficulty in finding a position or was subjected to injustice, he turned to invocations (*zikr*) to find a solution. Each time he explained which verse and which name of the God was invoked in order to overcome the hardship. Thus, his life story was written to provide the key to divine help. He aimed at guiding those who had difficulty in finding a proper position. The elements of *nasihatnâme* (book of advice) genre seem to have been used as a guide for those who were seeking relief. In other words, the author believed that reading of his own past experiences would help future generations to “learn from past mistakes and live a better life.”⁴⁸⁹ His autobiography, therefore, demonstrates not only the hardships but also the blessings he received from God as well as the chronological list of the positions he attained thanks to his patience and intellectual achievements.

The “autobiographer tends to claim individual significance by virtue of some specific quality or accomplishment, or because he has been a witness to the affairs of the great;

⁴⁸⁵ Jürgen Schläger, “Self-Exploration in Early Modern English Diaries,” in *Marginal Voices, Marginal Forms: Diaries in European Literature and History*, ed. Rachael Langford and Russell West (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 27.

⁴⁸⁶ We do not know for sure if he spoke another language but intensive references to persian poems throughout the manuscript suggest that he must have been proficient at least in Persian.

⁴⁸⁷ *Sergüzeṣtnâme*, 9a.

⁴⁸⁸ *The Holy Qur’an*, 595.

⁴⁸⁹ Karahasanoğlu, “Learning from Past Mistakes and Living a Better Life,” 295.

hence the variety of motivation and subject matter in his works.”⁴⁹⁰ Abdülkadir Hisâri’s autobiography might be resulted from his awareness of divine aid regarding his achievement. All these above-stated motives cited as providing useful information for future generations might be only half-truths in that he may have attempted to make his writing look respectable or to fit the accepted traditions.⁴⁹¹ He openly wrote that having a career in palace service was not something granted to everyone.⁴⁹² From the narrative that he constructed, one may suspect that the real incentive for his enterprise was his excitement and pride in finding a place in the scribal service and his desire to narrate the agonies he was exposed to in order to obtain such a position. His feeling that he was distinguished from others by his achievement in being given this office may have aroused “the autobiographical impulse.”⁴⁹³

1.5. The Issue of Accuracy

Abdülkadir Efendi did not provide much information about the historical events of his time. He wrote about the appointments and dismissals of people, of the deaths, and births, of notables, and some historical events related to the context of the narrative. Such records allow us to check the accuracy of the information against other sources.

To illustrate, throughout the text he recorded his patron Yenişehirli Osman Efendi’s appointments and dismissals because it affected the author’s own career. When his patron gained prominent positions, his chance of gaining the sultan’s notice increased. Through Osman Efendi as intermediary, he produced some calligraphic works for the sultan and tried his luck in attaining the position he desired. Osman Efendi’s career, therefore, had an important place in his narrative. He accurately recorded Osman Efendi’s appointment as head of the treasury (*baş defterdar*) in 1773 and receiving the rank of vizier with three horsetails in Muharrem 1188 (March/April 1774).⁴⁹⁴

He also recorded the birth of Prince Mehmed on 6 Receb 1190 (21 August 1776) and the accession of Sultan Abüdlhamid I. He accurately recorded the death of Muhsinzâde

⁴⁹⁰ Paul Delany, *British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), 108.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁹² *Sergüzeştname*, 88b.

⁴⁹³ Michael Angold, “The Autobiographical Impulse in Byzantium,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998): 225-57.

⁴⁹⁴ *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1.

Mehmed Pasha. During a campaign against Russia Mehmed Pasha's illness had worsened when the army was in Şumnu (Shumen in Bulgaria). He died in the district of Karinabad from where he was taken back to Edirne. He was first buried in Edirne, but ten days later his body was moved to Istanbul.⁴⁹⁵ However, none of these records took up much space in the narrative.

The most noticeable record that can be tested through reference to chronicles was the dismissal of his master, Ahmed Efendi, who was the chief secretary of the chief black eunuch. According to the narrative, he was dismissed because he engaged in an act of bribery. The information given in *Sergüzeştname* is compatible with the chronicles of the period. In his chronicle Ahmed Vasıf Efendi gave detailed information of the dismissal of Ahmed Efendi. According to his account, Secretary Ahmed Efendi gained favor with the sultan by offering him both confidential and regular services. He accumulated enormous wealth in a short time in this way. However, he was not content with the wealth he had accumulated and engaged in some bizarre acts to earn more. He accused some statesmen of unfounded misconduct. He also ensured that edicts were issued to the people he accused. For instance, he sent a letter to Abdürrezzak Efendi, who was Reisülküttab, "the head of the chancery and record offices of the imperial divan,"⁴⁹⁶ accusing him of accumulating wealth and inheriting a number of unusual assets from his mother. He implied that Abdürrezzak Efendi's mother accumulated those properties thanks to Abdürrezzak Efendi's position. He accused Defterdar Derviş Mehmed Efendi, Tahir Ağa and Selim Sırrı Efendi in the same way. Ahmed Efendi accumulated more than one thousand purses in nine months. Eventually he was dismissed and was replaced by Bağçevanzâde Mustafa Efendi who managed to stay away from scandal.⁴⁹⁷

As aforementioned, Abdülkadir Efendi's aim was not to record all the historical events he witnessed but to narrate his own experiences in life. He therefore recorded the events that had important impacts on his life. His facts were correct in describing what

⁴⁹⁵ Nevzat Sağlam, *Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi ve Mehasinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakâikü'l-Ahbâr'ı 1166-1188/1752-1774 (inceleme ve metin)* (Ankara: TTK, 2014), 618-21.

⁴⁹⁶ Ali Akyıldız, "Reisülküttab," in *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Alan Masters (New York: Facts on File, 2008), 486-7.

⁴⁹⁷ Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, *Mevasinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakâikü'l-Ahbâr 1774-1779 (H. 1188-1193)*, ed. Mücteba İlgürel (Ankara: TTK, 2014), 16-18.

happened and when, and his work came closer to the genre of chronicle when describing such historical events.

2. RELATIONAL SELF: INCORPORATING INTO HOUSEHOLDS AND CREATING A NETWORK

Compared to most modern autobiographies, these texts differ fundamentally with respect to the basis on which they operate, and the general aims and purposes their authors have in mind. Instead of putting a distance between the protagonist of the autobiographical texts and society, they elaborate on a position in society that they feel comfortable with. Instead of working on a unique *result* of their reflections (individuality), they are more interested in telling a unique story about the *way* in which the person achieves a certain ‘inclusion individuality.’⁴⁹⁸

Arlinghaus’ description of early-modern self-narratives is in some ways compatible with Abdülkadir Efendi’s text. His self-narrative provides fascinating insights into the career processes and network of a scribe. In Abdülkadir Efendi’s work, the individual becomes visible with all his professional affiliations. He not only narrates with whom he was affiliated but also displays the conflicts he lived through. He portrays his relationships very vividly and tells of how placing oneself in a network worked for him.⁴⁹⁹ Establishing a network and being affiliated to prominent people provided him with many opportunities of bringing him to the sultan’s notice and achieving a favorable position. However, Abdülkadir Efendi’s narrative was not told to relate how he achieved that “inclusion individuality.” It was a way of narrating the more important aspects of his life. He relates the story of his affiliations in order to show how he succeeded in attaining a position as a scribe. Consequently, he seems to have created a positive sense of self through his success in attaining a respectable position.

As I noted before Abdülkadir Efendi was born on 27 Ramazan 1157 (3 November 1744 and named after the night of Qadr on which he was born. Abdülkadir Efendi does not give a full description of his childhood and years of education. He notes briefly that he was not dissolute and did not misbehave like other children. He focuses rather

⁴⁹⁸ Franz-Josef Arlinghaus, “In and Out, Then and Now: The Conscious Self and Its Relation to Society in Pre-Modern and Modern Times,” *The Medieval History Journal* 18, no:2 (2015): 399.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 382.

on his education. He cites a saying of the prophet that learning is a duty for all Muslims.⁵⁰⁰ His father must have had enough wealth to afford to have his son educated. Abdülkadir Efendi studied Arabic grammar with Dağıstânî es-Seyyid el-Hac Muhammed Efendi. He also read various Persian books like *Şahîdî* and *Pend-i Attar* with this master. He studied calligraphy with the famous Ebu Bekir Raşid Efendi. The account of his childhood reveals the regular educational practices of the time. He devoted his time to studying works with reputable teachers. He also made an effort to improve his skill in calligraphic writing.

Before he became twenty-one, he had managed to become incorporated into the household of the chief gatekeeper (*kapıcıbaşı*).⁵⁰¹ Abdülkadir Efendi must have known that building connections was essential to make his advancement possible. In the household of the chief gatekeeper, he was assigned the position of private secretary. However, in a short while, he fell into disfavor and left the household. He does not give any details but simply writes that “Our daily bread ran out and separation occurred.”⁵⁰² One possibility is that he might have left the household on finding a more advantageous position in another prominent household.

Immediately after informing the reader that he had left, he writes that he has entered into service with Bostancıbaşı Ağa⁵⁰³ who was the head of the gardeners. He was entrusted with the preservation of order in the shorelines the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, and the Marmara Sea. He was also inspector of forests in the vicinity of the capital. A chief gardener could rise to even the rank of grand vizierate.⁵⁰⁴ Service to a prominent person like this could eventually lead attendants gaining important careers in public service and even rise to the highest levels of Ottoman administration.⁵⁰⁵

“Attaching oneself to the household of an Ottoman official even in the ambiguous status of a ‘slave,’ must have been an acceptable way of social advancement.”⁵⁰⁶ Abdülkadir Efendi, indeed, took advantage of being a servant of such a prominent

⁵⁰⁰ *Sergüzeştname*, 11b.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 30b-31a.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 31a.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 30b.

⁵⁰⁴ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Bostancı,” *DİA*, vol. 6, 308-9.

⁵⁰⁵ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 42.

⁵⁰⁶ Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 44-47. See also İ. Metin Kunt, “Sultanın Kulları,” *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Dergisi: Beşeri Bilimler* 3 (1975): 27-42.

figure. He wrote that strange things occurred when he was in the service of that agha.⁵⁰⁷ In 1178 (1764/65), a woman claimed that she owned the estate of Beylerbeyi Palace in Çengelköyü. She wrote a petition hoping that she would be given a payment by the sultan.⁵⁰⁸ Abdülkadir Efendi called her *hâtûn-u mübârek* (blessed woman) because her petition seems to have triggered events that were of service to Abdülkadir Efendi. According to the story told in *Sergüzeştname*, Sultan Mustafa was angered by her petition and ordered the chief gardener to pull the palace down.⁵⁰⁹ On receiving the order, the chief gardener wanted Abdülkadir Efendi to write a *takrîr* (declaration) to ask the sultan for details of the demolition work. Abdülkadir Efendi prepared the *takrîr* in his beautiful calligraphy and the chief gardener sent it to the sultan. When Sultan Mustafa III read the *takrîr*, his attention was caught by its calligraphy and remarked that the chief gardener could not write so beautifully. He wanted to know to whom the chief gardener had dictated the document. Upon learning that the document was written by a servant of the chief gardener, he ordered the calligrapher to be appointed as a junior scribe (*küçük yazıcı*).

The chief gardener was informed of the sultan's order but the current junior scribe, whose name was later verified as Yakup Haseki, heard about it. Fearful of losing his position, he asked for some prominent people's influence to hinder Abdülkadir Efendi's appointment. By putting forward the facts of Abdülkadir Efendi's youth and lack of experience, he managed to scupper the appointment.⁵¹⁰ Yakup Haseki must have had a better network than Abdülkadir Efendi as he had probably been around for longer. Although his appointment was prevented and progress was threatened by keen competition, Abdülkadir Efendi experienced the practical benefit of becoming incorporated into a household and creating a network. This situation must have cherished his dreams of attaining a career in bureaucracy because he was now aware that his abilities would be rewarded in the future.

Abdülkadir Efendi, though disappointed, continued to look for a new position in different households. He did not specify why he left the household of the chief

⁵⁰⁷ *Sergüzeştname*, 31a.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., 31b; Metin Sözen, "Beylerbeyi Sarayı," *DİA*, vol. 6, 77-8.

⁵¹⁰ *Sergüzeştname*, 32b-33b.

gardener, but the disappointment he experienced must have been instrumental in his leaving the household. Immediately after giving this information, he was then employed by Abdullah Paşazâde Hüsnü Hüseyin Bey. In a short while his patron became Commander-in- Chief of the navy. Abdülkadir Efendi sailed for two years with his patron and served him with his pen. When Hüsnü Hüseyin Pasha was dismissed and appointed to a new position, he did not take Abdülkadir Efendi with him to his new post.⁵¹¹ Dependent on a patron for income, Abdülkadir Efendi was now alone. On top of that, he got news of Yakup Haseki's rapid advancement. Yakup Haseki had reaped the fruits of his endeavors. In 1179 (1765/66), he was appointed first as the confidential messenger (*karakulak*)⁵¹² and then, a couple of months later, he became Head of the Chamber of the Imperial Gardeners (*bostancılar odabaşılığı*),⁵¹³ finally becoming the chief gardener for Istanbul.⁵¹⁴

Abdülkadir Efendi knew that an influential patron could open up his way to a bureaucratic career. After a period of seclusion in his house, he became attached to the household of Reisülküttap Yenişehirli Osman Efendi who was a person of distinguished renown.⁵¹⁵ Since Osman Efendi was appointed as reisülküttap (the head of the scribes) on 5 November 1767 and dismissed from this post on 25 September 1768, Abdülkadir Efendi must have been affiliated to him as private secretary. between 1767 and 1768.⁵¹⁶

According to the narrative, Osman Efendi lived in seclusion in his mansion for three years after he was dismissed from that office. Around this time, Abdülkadir Efendi once again turned to his prayers. His devotions did not go unrewarded, it seems, as he

⁵¹¹ *Sergüzeştname*, 35b.

⁵¹² Ibid., 39a; Abdülkadir Özcan, "Karakulak," *DİA*, vol. EK-2, 23. Also see Sahaflarşeyhizâde Seyyid Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi*, ed. Ziya Yılmaz (İstanbul: OSAV, 2000), 620. [hereafter, Esad Efendi]. According to the hierarchical line, one of the *hasekîs* would have been promoted as the confidential messengers (*karakulak*) and the previous *karakulak* promoted to the head of the chamber of the imperial gardeners (*bostancıbaşı*).

⁵¹³ Bostancılar Odabaşılığı was an office in charge of the imperial gardens. Odabaşı was one of the chief officers of the corps of gardeners. See İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Saray Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1945), 465-87; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Bostandji-Bashi," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam New Edition*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb, J. H. Kramers, E. Lévi-Provençal and J. Schacht, vol.1 (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 1278-9; Abdülkadir Özcan, "Bostancı," *DİA*, vol. 6, 308-9.

⁵¹⁴ *Sergüzeştname*, 39a.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., 41b.

⁵¹⁶ *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1; Recep Ahışhalı, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Reisülküttaplık (XVIII. Yüzyıl)* (İstanbul: Tarih ve Edebiyat Vakfı, 2001), 42.

observed that strange things occurred. His patron, Osman Efendi, had close contact with Melek Mehmed Pasha who was the deputy grand vizier, and he was reportedly in great proximity to the sultan.⁵¹⁷ The sultan frequently visited the household of the deputy grand vizier and they often discussed important issues until late into the evening. One day during such a visit, the sultan talked about his intention to build an armed galleon. This conversation triggered the events Abdülkadir Efendi called strange. Melek Mehmed Pasha sent preliminary sketches to Osman Efendi and entrusted him with the task of drawing an accurate blueprint of the warship. Osman Efendi ordered his scribe, Abdülkadir Efendi, to verify the accuracy of the sketches by obtaining information from sailors who had participated in the war with the Venetians and to draw a fuller design for the warship. Abdülkadir Efendi completed the task and his calligraphic drawing of the ship was presented to the sultan. Charmed by the beauty of the artwork, Sultan Mustafa wanted to learn about the artist.⁵¹⁸ Encouraged by the approval of the sultan, Abdülkadir Efendi believed that he would be rewarded for his work. He had good reasons to expect this because his patron, Osman Efendi, had once again become a prominence bureaucrat.⁵¹⁹ Following this incident, the sultan asked Abdülkadir Efendi to show his artistic skills several other times. Abdülkadir Efendi prepared another drawing of a galleon and copied several books on the orders of the sultan. However, the calligrapher was always disappointed in his attempts to enter on a career as an apprentice scribe.

When his patron Osman Efendi was sent to Russia on an official duty in 1186 (1772/73), Abdülkadir Efendi wanted to stay in Istanbul. Although he tried to explain his stay for health reasons, his actual intention was to attain a scribal position in the Imperial Arsenal.⁵²⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi sent a plea to the sultan asking for that position. However, the sultan refused his request.⁵²¹

When Osman Efendi returned to the capital, he was appointed to superintend the building of Tophane in June 1772.⁵²² According to the information given in

⁵¹⁷ Fatih Yeşil, "Melek Mehmed Paşa," *DİA*, vol. EK-2, 244-5.

⁵¹⁸ *Sergüzeştname*, 42b.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43a-44a.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 55b.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 56a-57a.

⁵²² *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1301.

Sergüzeştnâme, Osman Efendi seems to have worked hard and nurtured his relations with important personages to gain higher appointments. His efforts finally bore fruit when he was appointed Head of the Treasury (*baş defterdar*) in 1773.⁵²³ Abdülkadir Efendi reestablished his client relationship with Osman Efendi who once again had gained a prominent position. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that he continued to serve in the household of Osman Efendi in the hope of attaining a scribal apprenticeship.

A short while after the enthronement of Abdülhamid I (r. 1774-1789) in 8 Zilkade 1187 (21 January 1774), Osman Efendi was appointed to high military office in Muharrem 1188 (March/April 1774).⁵²⁴ and given the title of Vizier with Three Tugs- or Horsetail- these being the symbol of high office. When he was invited to join the household of the Deputy Grand Vizier Silahdar Abdullah Pasha, Osman Efendi asked for pardon in wishing to decline the appointment, saying he was too old for such a position. He claimed that the newly- enthroned sultan did not know how diseased the body of his servant was. According to Abdülkadir Efendi's narrative, Silahdar Abdullah Pasha warned Osman Efendi that he might get into trouble if he opposed the decision made by the sultan.⁵²⁵ Apparently, he did not want to leave the capital. He secluded himself for three days in his mansion. He refused to allow the military band to perform as he was disappointed by being appointed to this unworthy post.⁵²⁶ Abdülkadir Efendi implied that his patron could not keep his position in the capital because of factional struggles and enmities. He wrote that proximity to the sultan brought about jealousy of both enemy and friend and that such dangerous people had caused Osman Efendi to have been separated from the sultan.⁵²⁷

A scribal post had long been Abdülkadir Efendi's desire and yet again he decided to use his calligraphic skills to attract the attention of the newly enthroned sultan, Abdülhamid I. He wrote the sultan a plea asking for a position. On top of this, he drew the sultan's tughra (monogram) and prepared a calligraphic panel in which he wrote the *surah al-Fath*. On 7 May 1774, he found an opportunity to submit the petition to

⁵²³ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 58b-59a.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 61b-62a; *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1.

⁵²⁵ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 61b-62b.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 62b.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, 64a-64b.

the sultan during a visit to Sadabad in Kağıthane.⁵²⁸ After reading the plea, the sultan ordered Rikabdar Abdülkerim Agha to ensure Abdülkadir Efendi's entrance into the palace service as a *baltacı* (halberdier) and to be trained by the chief black eunuch's secretary, Ahmed Efendi.⁵²⁹ This position was not a dead-end post. A halberdier could become *Haseki agha*- the lieutenant of the chief black eunuch. Moreover, the chief black eunuch's chief secretary (*darüssaade ağası başyazıcısı*) and his four assistants were chosen from among the learned halberdiers.⁵³⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi had finally managed to secure a scribal apprenticeship for himself, a position which could lead him towards the career he had craved for years.

Rikabdar Abdülkerim Agha informed the secretary of the chief black eunuch, Ahmed Efendi, of the sultan's order. Although Ahmed Efendi opposed Abdülkadir Efendi's appointment saying that he was not suitable to become a halberdier, he could not hinder it. Abdülkadir Efendi eventually gained his longed-for apprenticeship. As Aksan notes, "a young person [like Abdülkadir Efendi] could enter the lower-level scribal service as an apprentice to be educated by an experienced scribe. Promotion to higher levels of clerical office was dependent on the furthering of writing skills."⁵³¹

Around November/December 1774, Abdülkadir Efendi's master, Ahmed Efendi, was dismissed from office. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote in detail about his dismissal. According to the narrative, every evening the sultan summoned notables to the *iftar* dinner. These gatherings sparked rumors. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that dismissals took place after these iftars. Those who were dismissed grieved while the appointees were pleased. Ahmed Efendi started to be concerned about his situation. Although Abdülkadir Efendi openly praised Ahmed Efendi, saying that he was ahead of his

⁵²⁸ *Sergüzeştname*, 66b; Banu Bilgicioğlu, "Sadabad," *DİA*, vol. 35, 379-81. Bilgicioğlu noted that Abdülhamid I took a close interest in Sadabad and a restoration work held upon the order of the sultan.

⁵²⁹ *Sergüzeştname*, 67b.

⁵³⁰ H. Bowen, "Baltadji," *The Encyclopedia of Islam New Edition*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb, J. H. Kramers, E. Lévi-Provençal and J. Schacht, vol.1 (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 1002-4. 1003-4. Also see Carter V. Findley, *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d'Ohsson and His Masterpiece* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 282. Findley wrote that "the term *baltacı* led to mistaken assumptions that they were woodcutters. At the funerals of a sultan or other members of the imperial family or harem, they bore the coffin. Their supervisors included a number of officials with duties pertaining more to the chief black eunuch; these included his secretary (*yazıcı efendi*) who kept the accounts on the foundations supporting the two holy cities, and the receiver (*haseki başı*) who collected those funds for him."

⁵³¹ Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 700-1783* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 3.

counterparts in all respects, information added in the margins contradicted what he said. Ahmed Efendi seems to have engaged in bribery. He could not see that his undertakings would harm his reputation. He continued to receive bribes without thinking this might harm him. However, he was dismissed. In the margins, Abdülkadir Efendi further elaborated on the issue of bribery. He noted that some dignitaries become wealthy through the abuse of office. They bribed those who sought appointment; some gave horses, some gave jewelry, and other people gave coins. Abdülkadir Efendi continued his criticisms of Ahmet Efendi after giving information about his dismissal. He criticized those who were keen on accumulating wealth for not being wise. It seems that Ahmed Efendi could not escape the scandal that attended the dismissals of some greedy notables.⁵³² As Fleischer notes, “outright gifts of money between individuals with no other personal or professional ties were considered abnormal.”⁵³³ Hence, Ahmed Efendi could not protect his position. He was exiled to Smyrna because of negative reactions concerning his acts⁵³⁴

The question is that why Abdülkadir Efendi gave so much importance to narrating the dismissal of Ahmed Efendi. Ahmed Efendi’s resistance to the appointment of Abdülkadir Efendi as halberdier in the first place suggests that they could not have built a good relationship. Abdülkadir Efendi’s individual advancement may have been impeded by Ahmed Efendi. Although Abdülkadir Efendi did not want to portray himself as an ambitious person, he seems to have sought rapid advancement. He might have hoped for rapid progress after Ahmed Efendi’s dismissal.

When Bağçevanzâde was appointed as the chief secretary to the chief black eunuch, Abdülkadir Efendi continued to serve in the same office as before.⁵³⁵ After a couple of months, Bağçevanzâde was dismissed and someone called Mehmed Efendi was appointed as secretary.⁵³⁶ Abdülkadir Efendi must have built a good relationship with Mehmed Efendi in that he emphasized that his master’s opinion of him was positive. While he was hoping to be promoted to an assistantship (*yazıcı halifeliği*), Abdülkadir Efendi was dismissed from the office. However, this did not affect him much. During

⁵³² *Sergüzeştname*, 80a-82a.

⁵³³ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 62.

⁵³⁴ Ahmed Vasıf Efendi, *Mehasinü'l-Âsâr*, 31.

⁵³⁵ For Bağçevanzâde Mustafa Efendi, see *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1160.

⁵³⁶ *Sergüzeştname*, 84a.

his service as halberdier, he must have built connections and had access to a network of patronage in order to become scribe to Hazînedâr Nevres Kadın, the fourth consort of Abdülhamid I and the head treasurer.⁵³⁷ Abdülkadir Efendi diligently worked for about three years in her service until Receb 1191 (August 1777).

During his long years of service as halberdier under the chief black eunuch's scribe, Abdülkadir Efendi seems to have established a patronage tie that was to shape his life. He managed to ingratiate himself with powerful personages which eventually gave him an advantage in obtaining a post within the scribal service. When the above-mentioned Secretary Mehmed Efendi was dismissed from the office, the third assistant Mehmed Efendi became the secretary. The fourth assistant moved to the third position, and the fourth assistantship became vacant. One of the eunuchs of the harem, who was said to be a favorite of the sultan, mediated on behalf of Abdülkadir Efendi. He told the Chief Black Eunuch, Beşir Agha, that Abdülkadir Efendi was worthy of this position and requested his appointment.⁵³⁸ Abdülkadir Efendi ultimately attained this long-desired position on 18 Receb 1191 (22 August 1777). After two years of service as fourth assistant, he ended up becoming third assistant to the chief black eunuch's chief secretary in 1191 (1779/1780).⁵³⁹ The story of Abdülkadir Efendi's career process illustrates the practical utility of becoming incorporated into the household of important personages.⁵⁴⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi was initially attached to the household of the chief gatekeeper, then to that of the chief gardener, of Abdullah Paşazâde Hüsnü Hüseyin Pasha, and of Yenişehirli Osman Efendi, later making the jump from Osman Efendi's household to the scribal service appointment he had long craved for.

3. EXTERNAL SELF OF AN OTTOMAN CALLIGRAPHER/SCRIBE

Abdülkadir Efendi kept his narrative at a professional level. He related occurrences that demonstrate how successful he was in his art which he expected to lead him

⁵³⁷ *Sergüzeştname*, 85a; Betül İpşirli Argıt, *Life After the Harem: Female Palace Slaves, Patronage, and the Imperial Ottoman Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 49-50. Betül İpşirli Argıt noted that Nevres Kadın was the third consort of Abdülhamid I. The head treasurer was defined as the assistant to the chief administrative officer and she was responsible for the clothes of the sultan and the finance of the harem, as well as she accompanied the women of the palace when they went outside.

⁵³⁸ *Sergüzeştname*, 88b.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, 92b.

⁵⁴⁰ An observation made for Mustafa Ali's career, Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 209.

towards a rewarding career in the bureaucracy. He wrote about his relation to God when he failed to achieve the desired position. The autobiography does not say much about his private personal habits like what he ate, where he went, or what he bought. He focused on three aspects of his life; his creative self as an able calligrapher, his professional self as a scribe, and his religious self that is his submission to God as a *Halvetî*. Abdülkadir Efendi knew that his art would be the key to open the door for an appointment and so he writes mostly about his talent and artwork. He lists the positions he held in the pashas' households up until he secures a place in the scribal service. He also depicted the image of a person beholden to God's grace despite the sad and hard events he lived through. In this way he knitted the events of his life into a "coherent sequence" and evaluated a variety of significant and exciting issues about his professional life.⁵⁴¹ Since all these aspects of his external self have already been covered in two other sections, here I will touch upon them only briefly.

Obviously, Abdülkadir Efendi did not portray his life in full. Indeed, he had no such intention. He briefly talked about his family and childhood, but these were not particularly significant in regard to his work. The whole text was dedicated to narrating his professional life and his struggle in that life. To quote from Jancke, the summary of what he narrated and what he did not disclose how the author wanted to present his "I".⁵⁴²

The calligrapher began narrating his life by presenting his education and his scholarly connections. He did not say much about his early youth except to note the books he recited, the calligraphy courses he undertook, and details of his teachers. He wanted to portray a childhood in which he never misbehaved. He devoted himself to learning and practicing calligraphy. The qualifications earned in his youth ultimately enabled him to gain positions in the scribal service. The creation of such an organized narrative enabled him to present his life as one of meaning and direction.⁵⁴³ He wanted to portray

⁵⁴¹ Gergen and Gergen, "Narratives of the Self," 163.

⁵⁴² Gabriele Jancke, "Autobiographical Texts: Acting Within a Network: Observations on Genre and Power Relations in the German-Speaking Regions from 1400 to 1620," in *Mapping the 'I' Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 130.

⁵⁴³ Gergen and Gergen, "Narratives of the Self," 162.

himself as a skilled and hardworking person in order to show himself worthy to be included in the scribal service.

After narrating his education, he wrote of how he entered the *Halveti* order after the death of his mother. We have seen that religious practices and recitations had a significant place in *Sergüzeştnâme*. His devotion to religion and prayers gave him the strength to bear the hardness of this world and would lead him to the way of salvation. Although he related his relief after eventually finding a suitable position as a scribe, he did not want to portray himself as greedy or cunning. He represented himself as someone worthy of receiving the blessings of the other world by creating an image of a very pious person who was bent on seeking spiritual salvation. He sometimes cited dreams in which he saw the Prophet or other wise people. Those dreams helped to underline his devotion and spiritual status.

His becoming an able calligrapher was one of the most important aspects of his external self. He refers to many of the works of art he had created. He highlighted his skills in calligraphy and praised the quality of his artistic productions. In this way, he showed his status and worth among his peers. Abdülkadir Efendi knew that it was his talent in the art of calligraphy that enabled him to create a network and find a proper position for himself. One striking example underlining his superior skills was the conflict he had with Yakup Haseki, with which we will deal later in this chapter. According to the narrative, Yakup Haseki was easily able to be appointed as the chief gardener of Istanbul by taking on Abdülkadir Efendi's identity and pretending to be the talented calligrapher. Abdülkadir Efendi took all the credit for the easy rise of Yakup Haseki and implied that Yakup Haseki could only have risen so easily by pretending to be so talented. Amidst all these distresses, there was the urge to present his skills and his worth. His *Sergüzeştnâme* is full of examples underlining his talents in calligraphy.

His professional career culminating in the position he attained in the scribal service was the central subjects of the self-narrative. The story was constructed around that and the events relevant to it. All other issues are related to showing how he attained the position he desired. Even though he wrote that he wanted to give advice and

provide an example for future generations, it seems that he was very proud of his success and what he really wanted to convey was his ability in scribal matters.

4. INNER SELF: DIFFICULTIES AND PAINS IN THE PATH TO A CAREER IN SCRIBAL SERVICE

One aspect of Abdülkadir Efendi's autobiography is particularly noteworthy in this discussion and that is the outburst of his feelings. Abdülkadir Efendi's autobiography possesses many features that can be identified as the portrayal of the inner self. He described his thoughts, emotional reactions, and feelings in the many stories of his search for an appointment and a benefactor.⁵⁴⁴ He expressed the difficulties and tribulations he faced in his career and mentioned them at a very personal level. He gave vivid descriptions of dramatic moments in his life and of how these affected him. Rizvi's observation of Babur's self-narrative is also relevant for that of Abdülkadir Efendi; he did not constrain his feelings and recorded his emotions in a way that made them visible to the reader. Externalizing his emotions allowed the reader to perceive the inner world of Abdülkadir Efendi that he alone had access to.⁵⁴⁵ In this way, one may form an opinion about the experiences and deepest feelings of the author. In this part of the dissertation, we will look for elements that can be identified as the representations of his inner self: his emotional reactions and behaviors in certain instances.

At the age of sixteen in 1173 (1759/60), Abdülkadir Efendi lost his mother. Although Abdülkadir Efendi only recorded the time of his mother's death and did not express any emotion about it, the fact that he recorded the date as a reminder shows how much he was affected by her death. He records that time as the beginning of a new period in his life. After his mother's death, his father wanted him to marry to avoid behaving in an unsuitable manner in following his sexual desires.⁵⁴⁶ Abdülkadir Efendi did not provide further information about his marriage or the identity of his wife. He described at length his entrance into the *Halvetî* order to which he became attracted in the same

⁵⁴⁴ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 74.

⁵⁴⁵ Kishwar Rizvi, "Introduction: Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in the Early Modern Period," in *Affect, Emotion, and Subjectivity in Early Modern Muslim Empires*, ed. Kishwar Rizvi (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 9.

⁵⁴⁶ *Sergüzeştname*, 12b.

year his mother died.⁵⁴⁷ The interesting thing here is that he added information about his attraction to the Sufi order just after explaining the reasons for his father's worries and desire for him to marry. The autobiographer probably wanted to defend himself from the charge of committing a sin. The reader should not be deluded into thinking that sexual desire was his motive. He emphasized how devoted and pious his feelings were. He declares his good faith and willingness to restrain from dishonorable acts.

After this, he reported how he became involved with recitations of prayers and praises of the Prophet, saying he continued doing this for a couple of years. He wrote that, morning and night, that he repeated the prayers from three to five hundred times.⁵⁴⁸ He wanted his prayers to protect him from the calamities of this world to be accepted. He experienced some astonishing things at night as a result of those sincere prayers. However, he wanted to experience more both in this world and in the dream world. He lamented, "Oh God, why could not I observe effect although I am so constant in my prayers?"⁵⁴⁹ He hoped to be rewarded and expected good things to happen in his life. He referred to the Qur'an 49:17 to explain his being favored by good faith. "They regard it as a favor to you that they embraced Islam. Say: 'Count not your Islam as a favor to me. It was Allah who bestowed a favor on you, in guiding you to faith, if you are sincere.'"⁵⁵⁰ His desire came to fruition in that he saw the Prophet in his dream after a long period filled with expectation. The Prophet patted him on the back saying, "Abdülkadir, my son, my beloved, do not worry. On the day of judgment, I will intercede for you."⁵⁵¹ This dream must have given him the solace and the strength to bear with the grief he felt after the death of his mother. After, possibly, a period of recitations and preparations his formal entrance into the Halvetî order took place in 1175.⁵⁵²

Up until folio 30a, he continued to write about the Sufi order and his experiences in that mystical way of life. From then on, the narrative veered off in a new direction. First he constructed a background to what he was to relate in the remaining part. This

⁵⁴⁷ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 12b.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 12b-13a.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 13b.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 14b; *The Holy Qur'an*, 516.

⁵⁵¹ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 16a;

⁵⁵² *Sergüzeştnâme*, 24a.

part was devoted to his endeavors to obtain a career in bureaucracy and his story tells of his knocking on many doors, as well as the griefs and disappointments he felt until he succeeded in finding his desired position. His mystical life and recitations became a security blanket in those hardest of times. He related the amount of suffering he had undergone and took pride in his submission to God in times of grief. He narrated all the periods of hardship he went through until he succeeded in finding a reliable position for himself, that is, his appointment as the fourth assistant to the chief eunuch's chief secretary on 22 August 1777.

Abdülkadir Efendi was very eager to point out God's mercies upon him. He endeavored to see and narrate his life as a whole to give a moral example. However, the autobiography discloses a character in which the deep excitement of delightful events in his career and the angst of aggrievement sometimes dominated over his effort to narrate his life as a whole moral exemplum.⁵⁵³ One can sense, as in the case of Delany's study of British autobiography, that the autobiographer was caught between the effort to relate everything as a moral example and the sentimental attitude that reflects the emotions in its immediacy.⁵⁵⁴

Disillusionment is the most apparent emotional status visible throughout Abdülkadir Efendi's self-narrative. Abdülkadir Efendi built his narrative upon the realities of his professional life. His narrative, in a sense, gave a vivid account of the emotional outcomes of a minor scribe's career full of ups and downs. He not only noted with whom he had been affiliated and what positions he had acquired but also noted his desires, expectations, and disappointments. His autobiography, therefore, offers a compiling look into the world of an individual who exhibits his feelings in written form.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, after becoming affiliated to the chief gardener, Abdülkadir Efendi rapidly gained the attention of the sultan thanks to his skills in calligraphy. When the sultan read the *takrîr* (declaration) sent by the Chief Gardner, he had paid attention to its writing. The sultan was aware that the Chief Gardner was not skilled in calligraphy and was curious as to who had written the document. When

⁵⁵³ Delany, *British Autobiography*, 125.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

the sultan learned that the private secretary of the chief gardener had prepared the document, he ordered the secretary's inclusion in the Corps of Gardeners and his appointment as the junior scribe (*küçük yazıcı*). However, the sultan had not learned that the private secretary's name was Abdülkadir. This situation would have led to a misunderstanding that resulted in a great disappointment for Abdülkadir Efendi.

Hearing about the sultan's admiration for his art must have puffed up Abdülkadir Efendi ego. He wrote in detail about how he had written the document in beautiful calligraphy and used the correct expressions.⁵⁵⁵ However, his appointment was hindered by the current junior scribe, Yakup Haseki.⁵⁵⁶ This was not the result Abdülkadir Efendi had hoped for. Though disappointed, he endured this assault. He referred to a saying of the prophet to foster his patience; "Patience is the key to salvation." He resigned himself to his fate and found solace in the advice given by the Prophet. He decided to stay away from such people as Yakup Haseki. He reminded himself that it is necessary to go through such difficult stages in order to reach the level of human perfection (*insan-i kâmil*)⁵⁵⁷ He was now aware that his calligraphy skills would bring him greater attention and rewards and, therefore, seems to have easily shown tolerance. Around this time, the calligrapher entered into the service of Abdullah Paşazâde Hüsnü Hüseyin Bey who became the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy.⁵⁵⁸ The calligrapher probably changed his allegiance upon losing his chance for a post at court.

Abdülkadir Efendi in the first place seems to have dealt with feelings of disappointment. However, when he learned about the rapid rise of Yakup Haseki, he devoted a section to narrate how Yakup Efendi gained those appointments under false pretenses. That section was titled *Nistem Hestem* (I am not, I am).⁵⁵⁹ The title of this section is really striking in that he not only questioned Yakup Haseki's rapid rise but also questioned he himself had been ignored.

Having protected his position as a junior scribe, Yakup Haseki wanted to attract the sultan's attention. When Yakup Haseki was working on the restoration of the walls of

⁵⁵⁵ *Sergüzeştname*, 32a.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32b-33a.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 34b.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 35a-35b.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 35b.

a seaside palace damaged by an earthquake in 1179 (1765/66), a fire started in a mansion in Rumeli Hisarı and spread to other houses. The Chief Gardener dealt with the fire and ordered his junior scribe to inform the sultan about the situation. Yakup Haseki was aware that this could give him a chance to attract the attention of the sultan. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that Yakup Haseki memorized the most eloquent expressions to use in the presence of the sultan. Yakup Haseki wanted to make the sultan believe that he had rhetorical skills and he used articulate language to inform the sultan that the fire had been put out. Impressed by his skills, the sultan wanted to know the name of the messenger who brought the news about the fire. He was informed that the messenger was the Chief Gardener's junior scribe. Upon learning that the messenger was the junior scribe, the sultan said that "I remember him, he is skilled in writing, he is a skilled calligrapher." Silahdar Agha and others replied that "He is exactly such a servant of yours." According to the narrative, the sultan had confused Yakup Ağa with Abdülkadir Efendi. When the sultan wanted to learn his name, Silahdar Agha and others present there informed the sultan that his name was Yakup Haseki.⁵⁶⁰ According to the information given in *Sergüzeştname*, the sultan did not know that Yakup Haseki had hindered Abdülkadir Efendi's appointment. The sultan actually supposed that the private secretary to the Chief Gardener was Abdülkadir Efendi and had become the junior scribe.⁵⁶¹

The sultan was misled in thinking was the talented calligrapher he appointed as the junior scribe.⁵⁶² Yakup Haseki had reaped the fruits of his undertaking and was appointed first as a confidential messenger (*karakulak*).⁵⁶³ A couple of months later he became the Head of the Chamber of Imperial Gardeners (*bostancılar odabaşılığı*),⁵⁶⁴ and was finally appointed as the Chief Gardener of Istanbul.⁵⁶⁵ Yakup Haseki gained those positions under false pretenses and would rapidly rise by stealing Abdülkadir Efendi's identity. This must have been one of the biggest losses Abdülkadir Efendi suffered throughout his career.

⁵⁶⁰ *Sergüzeştname*, 35b-38a.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 38b-39a.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 38a.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 39a.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Abdülkadir Efendi had seized a chance for rapid advancement at an early age, thanks to his talents, but he lost this chance just as quickly. He showed strong emotions in the face of Yakup Haseki's rapid rise. He implied that the person to be appointed should actually have been himself. He revealed how disturbed he was by this confusion citing a Persian poem; *derîn-i âyine aks-ı rû-yi yârem nîstem hestem*. The poem can be translated as "Is there a reflection of my love's face in this mirror or not?" The title of the section, *Nistem Hestem (I am, I am not)*, was also derived from this poem. The poem mirrored the feelings of the writer. Abdülkadir Efendi implied that Yakup Haseki could only have obtained the sultan's attention by stealing first Abdülkadir Efendi's position and then his identity. The autobiographer seems to have been doomed to disappointment; he wrote a part titled 'Solitude.' He devoted himself to prayer to endure this unpleasant situation.⁵⁶⁶

On top of that, Abdülkadir Efendi actually wanted to underline his talent and qualifications by taking all the credit for the advancement of Yakup Haseki. He seems to have coveted Yakup Haseki's appointment because he thought he deserved what Yakup Haseki had gained. We cannot know for sure if Yakup Haseki managed to rise in such a rapid way by taking over Abdülkadir Efendi's identity and making the sultan believe that he was a skilled calligrapher, or by creating a network and exerting the power of some prominent people. Abdülkadir Efendi narrated Yakup Haseki's appointments in such a way as to underline his own abilities and worth. His choice of wording, organization, and use of poems to strengthen his narrative shows that he took great pride in his skills in calligraphy. This might have been the biggest disillusionment Abdülkadir Efendi experienced, but not the last one.

His affiliation to Yenişehirli Osman Efendi brought him, as mentioned before, many chances to show his skills in calligraphy and attract the attention of the sultan. Abdülkadir Efendi's first assignment was to draw a picture of the armed warship that the sultan wanted to build.⁵⁶⁷ He showed his mastery over pen and brush and completed the task. The sultan wanted to learn about the artist as he admired his abilities. Abdülkadir Efendi stressed the fact that his name was pronounced in the

⁵⁶⁶ *Sergüzeştname*, 40b-41a.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 42a-42b.

presence of the sultan.⁵⁶⁸ For the calligrapher, it was very important that the sultan knew him by his name so that he would not be disappointed once again, as he had been in the case of Yakup Haseki. After this incident, he wrote a section narrating that his patron Osman Efendi had gained prominence and become close to the sultan.⁵⁶⁹ This section is very remarkable in that he communicated his feelings of pride. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote this section to show the link between his successful drawing and his patron's advancement. He wrote, "He (Osman Efendi) became close to the sultan thanks to this humble being."⁵⁷⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi implied that his patron had become close to the sultan by virtue of his servant's artistic skills. We cannot know for sure if Osman Efendi's rise to prominence resulted from Abdülkadir Efendi's artistic abilities as written in *Sergüzeştnâme* or from his close contact with so influential a figure as the Deputy Grand Vizier Melek Mehmed Pasha.⁵⁷¹ Osman Efendi started to join in the meetings held in the household of the Deputy Grand Vizier and had a chance to meet the sultan in person. In time, he got closer to the sultan and acquired fame among the statesmen for privately discussing affairs of state with the sultan.⁵⁷² The narration of this event and his use of words proclaims the obvious pride he experienced. Abdülkadir Efendi had an inclination to present his abilities as the reason for others' advancement. Encouraged by the approval of the sultan, he was now hoping for an appointment. In a short while, glad news arrived giving Abdülkadir Efendi new hope. The sultan sent several books to Osman Efendi and asked his secretary, Abdülkadir Efendi, to copy them.⁵⁷³ Abdülkadir Efendi started to work on the task hoping to be rewarded by entering into the scribal service as an apprentice.⁵⁷⁴ To that end, Abdülkadir Efendi gave up his comfort and worked diligently to prepare the books.⁵⁷⁵ Awaiting the rewards, he turned to prayer.⁵⁷⁶ However, his hopes faded. He could not even get paid for the paper used for the books, let alone gain an appointment.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁶⁸ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 42b.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 43a-44a.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 44a;

⁵⁷¹ For more information on this issue, see "Relational Self" section of this chapter.

⁵⁷² *Sergüzeştnâme*, 44b.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 46a-46b.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 46b-47a.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 46b.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 46b-47a.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 47a.



The galleon drawn by Abdülkadir b. Hasan el-Hisârî is currently found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

He resented this situation and secluded himself for a couple of days in his home. Seclusion was a way to deal with frustration. After a while, Osman Efendi sent one of his men summoning Abdülkadir Efendi to his presence. Abdülkadir Efendi did not want to go, saying he was sick. Osman Efendi insisted and ordered Abdülkadir Efendi to come even if he was sick. Reluctantly, he went to his patron's mansion. Osman Efendi informed him that the sultan wanted to build another galleon. Knowing his earlier works, the sultan wanted Abdülkadir Efendi to draw a picture of the galleon.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁸ *Sergüzeştname*, 48a-48b.

Osman Efendi encouraged his scribe to employ his art to the full and use this chance to show his abilities.⁵⁷⁹

The calligrapher worked for eighteen days to prepare the drawing of the galleon.⁵⁸⁰ After completing the task, he went with his patron to present the drawing to Melek Mehmed Pasha. Impressed by his ability, Mehmed Pasha assured Abdülkadir Efendi that the sultan would definitely appoint him this time.⁵⁸¹ As he had been disappointed several times, Abdülkadir Efendi did not seem excited by the Deputy Grand Vizier's compliments. He noted that the Deputy Grand Vizier complimented him on the drawing but showed no generosity to this humble loyal servant of his.⁵⁸² Abdülkadir Efendi was fully aware that his patron Osman Efendi was unable to provide much intercessory assistance for him.

Melek Mehmed Pasha and Osman Efendi then took the drawing to the sultan saying that the sultan would show his beneficence. Although Abdülkadir Efendi wrote about his expectations in return for his services, he did not want to be seen as greedy. He wrote, therefore, that he intended to serve the sultan, but he would like to be rewarded for enduring the difficulties of preparing such a work.⁵⁸³ Abdülkadir Efendi started to pray for a reward knowing that the only benevolence would come from God. He wrote that it was the harder than the fires of hell to wait expectantly. He found solace in a saying of the Prophet; "Awaiting relief with patience is a form of worship." However, in the end, no benevolence was revealed to the artist.⁵⁸⁴ He again took refuge in another saying of the prophet, "Patience is the key to relief."⁵⁸⁵ He wrote that he had begun to deliberate and abandon his hopes. He showed how he felt through the medium of a Persian poem, "Justice should be given to the sultan; justice should be done to make the world blissful."⁵⁸⁶ This poem must have been added to express his strong feelings based on a state of anguish.

⁵⁷⁹ *Sergüzeştname*, 48b.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 49a. One of the calligraphic galleons prepared by Abdülkadir Efendi is currently found in Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/454611>

⁵⁸¹ *Sergüzeştname*, 49a.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 49a.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, 49b-50a.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 51a.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 51a.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 51a.

The desperate calligrapher had no alternative but to use his artistic abilities, once again, to attract the attention of the sultan. He wrote a petition praising the Prophet (*arzuhâl-i peygamber 'aleyhisselâm*).⁵⁸⁷ He decorated it by adding at the top a *hilye* - a calligraphy panel in which the personal appearance of the Prophet is described. Abdülkadir Efendi wanted to present this piece to the sultan. He stressed that he did not put his signature to it.⁵⁸⁸ When his patron, Osman Efendi, found an opportunity to present that calligraphic piece to Sultan Mustafa, the sultan was charmed by its beauty. He penned his signature as the slave of the sultan'. Abdülkadir Efendi noted that his calligraphic work was put into a chest together with the holy flag – the symbol of the Ottoman sultan as caliph when the army embarked on a campaign. Just after that the sultan ordered Abdülkadir Efendi to prepare a new piece for his personal use. Abdülkadir Efendi completed the task and ornamented it with an outstanding illumination (*tezhib*). The sultan hung the calligraphy on the wall of his chamber and promised Abdülkadir Efendi he would be accepted as an apprentice in the scribal service. However, the sultan broke his promise. The calligrapher was once again frustrated in his attempts for an appointment.⁵⁸⁹

After all those disappointments he had been through, he probably despaired of gaining anything from his patron and decided to try his own luck. When his patron Osman Efendi went to Russia on an official mission in 1186, Abdülkadir Efendi stayed in the capital on the excuse that he was sick. He noted that a Muslim could engage in jihad in five different ways; to fight with the infidel on the battlefield, to deal with secret infidels, to deal with hypocrites, to fight with the cravings of the flesh, and to deal with the desires of the heart. Although he wrote that his bodily health did not allow him to go on such a mission, he added information revealing his actual intention. He had received news of a vacant scribal post in the Imperial Arsenal. The calligrapher obviously wanted to obtain that position. He seems to have had a desire for gaining the favor of the sultan. To that end, he wrote a plea to ask for that position and handed it to the sultan when he was going in disguise to the household of the Deputy Grand Vizier.⁵⁹⁰ The sultan remembered Abdülkadir Efendi and praised his skills. Then, he

⁵⁸⁷ *Sergüzeştname*, 51b.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 52b.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 54a-54b.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 56a-56b.

said “I know you, but this clerkship is not suitable. You have done us great service, though. You are a man of skill and deserve to be appointed.”⁵⁹¹ The sultan advised him to keep on with his prayers. Abdülkadir Efendi seems to have had a somewhat inflated sense of his own importance. He was obviously a talented man, but he had little experience. He expected to rise more rapidly than such a person as he was could expect. Fleischer’s observation on Mustafa Âli seems to be also relevant for Abdülkadir Efendi: “able though he was, he had an exaggerated conception of his own worth, or at least of the rewards and respect that a talented and learned young man with few contacts and little experience within the Ottoman system could realistically expect to receive.”⁵⁹²

After this incident, Abdülkadir Efendi wrote two long pages to explain why he should not grieve. He took refuge in the Qur’an, in ancient counsels and sayings. He noted that if one wishes for something and acts vigorously to achieve it, he should not continually ask for it. He must rely on God and should not deviate from the path of submission to the will of God. He referred to the Qur’an 65:1 to assure himself that God would give him new possibilities: “... after that Allâh may bring to pass some new situation.”⁵⁹³ He reminded himself again that he should not be upset that his desire had not been fulfilled and his efforts fruitless. He consoled himself by saying: ‘If God wants to bestow something, it occurs. If God does not bestow something, it is unwise to grieve in vain.’ He strengthened his ideas even further by the inclusion of a poem;⁵⁹⁴

There is no delay in the sustenance provided by God
There is no lagging behind in the division made by Allah
Do not think fancy words are elegance
There is no conduct like silence in this universe

That he wrote such long passages to convince himself not to feel sad reveals his actual feelings. He must have felt so disappointed that he wanted to assure himself that new possibilities would arise if he endured the pain.

⁵⁹¹ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 56b-57a.

⁵⁹² Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 40.

⁵⁹³ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 57a; *The Holy Qur’an*, 557.

⁵⁹⁴ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 57b.

After this futile attempt, Abdülkadir Efendi must have realized that his chance of obtaining a scribal apprenticeship at court was minimal without the help of a benefactor. Once again, he renewed his loyalty to his patron Osman Efendi who had returned to the capital and become first the superintendent of the opportunity building of Tophane in June 1772⁵⁹⁵ and later, in 1773, the Head of the Treasury.⁵⁹⁶ Abdülkadir Efendi considered this could be an opportunity for him. He could gain entry into a scribal career in the capital. However, it seems that his patron Osman Efendi did not support him in obtaining such an appointment. This might have resulted from Abdülkadir Efendi's decision to stay in the capital while his patron went on a mission to Russia. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that he wished to be remembered by his patron as heretofore; however, he was grieved by his patron's lack of benevolence and of upbringing, and his heart was locked because of this intense sorrow (*endûh-u enbûh*).⁵⁹⁷ He wrote, as always, long passages of counsel to himself. Being aware of the possibility of this being his own fault, he referred to verses on the sinfulness of Satan. He prayed to be protected from behaving like Satan who denied that prostrating oneself before Adam increased sinfulness.⁵⁹⁸ Disappointed once again, Abdülkadir Efendi continued to serve Osman Efendi until his patron was sent away from the capital as a high-ranking military officer in March/April 1774.⁵⁹⁹ Abdülkadir Efendi was once again left alone. His patron was sent away from the capital through the hostile acts of envious people.⁶⁰⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi had worked hard to integrate himself into the households of powerful personages, but once again he was alone and secluded himself in his house, devoting himself to prayers and devotional practices.⁶⁰¹ He wrote that those who were not satisfied with the sustenance given by God and asked for more because of their greediness would suffer trouble. How greedy you are is not important; your share would suffice. Your share is fixed, and it will not change. The hardships you experience to gain more would be useless.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁵ *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1.

⁵⁹⁶ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 59a.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 60a.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 60b-61a.

⁵⁹⁹ *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1300-1.

⁶⁰⁰ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 64a-64b.

⁶⁰¹ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 65b.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, 66a.

After this incident, however, Abdülkadir Efendi's luck turned. The calligrapher began to articulate more the feelings of gratitude, pride, and happiness and less of the feelings of disappointment and sorrow. The structure of *Sergüzeştname* was indeed designed to narrate how one could reach relief after experiencing hardship. The first half of his narrative, therefore, devoted to the hardships and disappointments he had been through and the second part was devoted to narrating how his persistence and patience bore fruit.

After his patron left the capital, he resolved to try his chance and wrote a plea to submit to the newly enthroned sultan, Abdülhamid I. To show his skills in calligraphy, he added the tughra of the sultan and a calligraphic panel in which he wrote the surah *al-Fath*. Abdülkadir Efendi emphasized that he had used his most beautiful calligraphy and illuminated it with gold. When the sultan read the plea, he praised Abdülkadir Efendi's art and said that such a talented person should not be ruined in the city.⁶⁰³ This sentence he reported from the sultan reminds us that he actually expressed his thoughts about his worth. The calligrapher probably thought that his skills had been ruined as he could not find a suitable position for years.

Abdülkadir Efendi eventually became a halberdier and secured a scribal apprenticeship. He would be trained by the chief black eunuch's secretary, Ahmed Efendi. According to the narrative, Ahmed Efendi at first opposed the order of the sultan saying that Abdülkadir Efendi was not suitable to serve as a halberdier. When the sultan was informed of this, he warned Ahmed Efendi declaring that Abdülkadir Efendi deserved to be appointed as secretary even.⁶⁰⁴ By underlining the sultan's advice to Ahmed Efendi and that the sultan actually deemed him worthy of the position of secretary, Abdülkadir Efendi emphasized that he considered himself worthy of being appointed to this position. Afterward, the sultan ordered Ahmed Efendi to summon his new apprentice. Abdülkadir Efendi came into his master's presence and offered his respects. Ahmed Efendi complimented Abdülkadir Efendi on his skills.⁶⁰⁵ We cannot know for sure if this actually happened, but his feeling of pride at being rewarded with long-deserved promotion is seen in his writing so prominently of this

⁶⁰³ *Sergüzeştname*, 66b-67a.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 67b.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 68a.

incident. His sense of self-confidence is revealed in his narrative speaking openly about his worthiness to receive a higher position.

He narrated how pleased he was and his happiness on hearing those compliments. He was now sure that he would be rewarded with oodles of blessings and benevolence. He wrote that words were not enough to describe the joy he felt. He then felt guilty of the feeling of delight- and, obviously, the pride- he had in his heart upon hearing all those compliments. He wondered if these feelings arose from the *nafs al-ammara* (the inciting self) or the *hakikat-i rûhaniye* (the essence of the soul). He seems to have regarded the pride and the joy he felt in his heart at that moment as unpleasant emotions and tried to regulate his feelings. He wrote that if a wide array of venal thoughts come into the mind and give pleasure to the heart, it means that those thoughts come from the inciting self. If those thoughts relate to the body and one cannot repulse them, it means they come from the heart (*makam-ı kalp*). If such thoughts come to mind over and over again only the ulama or saints manage to reject them. After this brief analysis, he wrote that he was unaware of thinking about such subjects. He had supposed his feelings/thoughts were not awakened by the inciting self.⁶⁰⁶ This was the only time Abdülkadir Efendi questioned his thoughts and expressed feelings of guilt.

From then on, Abdülkadir Efendi lived in expectation of good things to come. However, he wanted to climb the professional ladder quickly. It was to some extent his hastiness that was causing him to be disappointed. Sometime after Abdülkadir Efendi started a scribal apprenticeship, the sultan ordered a *Şifa-i Şerif* (a book of prayers for good health) to be prepared. Abdülkadir Efendi was assigned to write the book through the agency of Ahmed Efendi. Abdülkadir Efendi stressed the fact that the whole work was the product of his efforts. The sultan was very pleased with the result and granted him a hundred gold coins. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that sixty gold coins were cut (possibly by Ahmed Efendi) on the grounds that forty of them were already *zer-i mahbûb* (beloved gold).⁶⁰⁷ Although Abdülkadir Efendi expected to receive at least forty gold coins, he ended up receiving nothing. The remaining gold

⁶⁰⁶ *Sergüzeştname*, 69a-69b.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 72a; J. Allan, "Zer Mahbûb," in *E. J. Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. M. T. Hautsma, A. J. Wensinck, H. A. R. Gibb, W. Heffening and E. Lévi-Provençal, vol. 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 1226; İbrahim Artuk, "Zer-i Mahbub," *DİA*, vol. 44, 281-2.

coins were given to people he did not know.⁶⁰⁸ To please the frustrated calligrapher, Scribe Ahmed Efendi declared that he well deserved to be included in the scribal service because he was well educated. He ordered his second assistant, İbrahim Hanif Efendi, to register Abdülkadir Efendi as the fourth assistant, a position Abdülkadir Efendi desired to be appointed to. However, Ahmed Efendi broke his word in just a couple of hours, leaving Abdülkadir Efendi empty-handed.⁶⁰⁹

Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that he was grieved by what happened. He comforted himself by thinking that a person progressing slowly would achieve his goals in the end while a fast-progressing person in the fast track could become involved in difficulties. He turned to prayers to seek solace for his disappointment because his worth had not been recognized. He openly expressed his feelings about Ahmed Efendi's action and his chagrin that Ahmed Efendi had not acted as expected of such an honest person.⁶¹⁰ We do not know if Abdülkadir Efendi criticized his master to his face, but it seems that his tempered criticisms reached Ahmed Efendi's ears. While Abdülkadir was hoping that his master would keep his word, Ahmed Efendi even thought of dismissing him from the rank of apprenticeship. Abdülkadir Efendi thought that was too severe a punishment and decided to wait patiently to see what would happen.⁶¹¹

He must have been very anxious in to have written at such length about this incident. He explained what he thought and felt over and over again. Abdülkadir Efendi's insistence produced no positive results; quite the contrary. Ahmed Efendi seems to have become violently angry with him. Abdülkadir Efendi expressed his feelings of sorrow and fear that his master had ceased to remember him. According to the calligrapher, one must show patience when angry, and keeping promises brings salvation. These are the requirements of virtuous people. Wise men do not go back on their word.⁶¹² However, his master forgot about the promise he had given and did not remember having done so, thus bringing grief to Abdülkadir Efendi. Because of his master's negligence, he also felt embarrassed among his peers.⁶¹³

⁶⁰⁸ *Sergüzeştname*, 72b-72b.

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 72b.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 73a.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 73b-74a.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 74b-75a.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 75b.



An image from a prayer book written by Abdülkadir b. Hasan el-Hisârî. This prayer book is currently in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

He turned to the prayers to ease this troubled situation. However, being aware of the seriousness of the situation this time he did not confine himself only to prayers. He took concrete steps to seek forgiveness and wrote a plea to Ahmet Efendi to explain his situation. He wrote that he his face was bowed like a broom to the dust of his noble feet. However, his master paid no attention.⁶¹⁴ He had no other choice but to endure the situation. The calligrapher was so sad, but still continued to criticize his master for not remaining true to his word. His master got angrier with him, let alone forgiving.⁶¹⁵ We do not know if Ahmed Efendi eventually pardoned Abdülkadir Efendi or not, as the story of this conflict ended without informing the reader about the result.

⁶¹⁴ *Sergüzeştname*, 76a.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 76b.

Shortly after this incident, as mentioned before in this chapter, Ahmed Efendi was dismissed from office in 1774.⁶¹⁶ First Bağçevanzâde Mustafa Efendi and then, a couple of months later, Mehmed Efendi was appointed secretary of the Chief Black Eunuch. Although Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that he had good relations with the newly appointed secretary, he was unexpectedly dismissed from office. He wrote that Mehmed Efendi's positive attitude was of no avail. He entered again on a period of resigned acquiescence. However, his grief apparently did not last long this time. He managed to become the scribe of Hazînedâr Nevres Kadın and worked for her for about three years between 1188 and Receb 1191 (1774/75 and August 1777).⁶¹⁷ For Abdülkadir Efendi, this scribal position must have been a blessing and the fulfilment of his ambitions. He made reference to poems and narratives of wisdom to express his feelings. He wanted to portray the image of a modest person, stressing that it was his patience that had brought him success. According to him, one must be truthful, grateful for sustenance and the rank given by God, and be patient under hardship. His success was due to his careful observance of these requirements. He referred to a poem by Imam Şafi to explain that he was not after worldly goods. "It is nothing but a corpse, the desire of the dogs swarming it around is to pull it to pieces."⁶¹⁸ By referring to this poem he wanted to underline that he no desire to chase around after the positions and wealth of this world. He wanted to serve the state and reach salvation.

This was not his last enjoyable experience. Unsurprisingly, the news of the long-desired appointment came through the dream world. On the 18th night of Receb 1190 (2 September 1776), when he was already in the service of Nevres Kadın, he saw a dream in which he was trying to get a foot inside a big white door on which there were gold- and silver-plated ornaments, but he could not even manage to stand upright. A wise old man told him not to hurry, but to come close to the door very slowly so that he could enter. Abdülkadir Efendi made clear that he recorded this dream with the date, day, and hour in the margin of his miscellany.⁶¹⁹ The importance that he attached to the precise recording of the dream displays that his excitement in interpreting this

⁶¹⁶ *Sergüzeştname*, 80a-82a.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 85a;

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 85a; Hasan Uçar, "İmam Şâfi'nin Şâirliği ve Şiirlerinin Belâgat Açısından Tahlili," *Ekev Akademi Dergisi* 19, no:63 (2015), 147.

⁶¹⁹ *Sergüzeştname*, 86a-87a.

dream as a portent of an appointment. The message of the dream was concordant with the form in the *Sergüzeştnâme* where he always highlighted the importance of patience and progressing slowly. We do not know what was happening at the time he saw this dream, but everything was probably going well for him. He had a good position as a scribe. He had good relations with some harem aghas and possibly with other palace grandees.⁶²⁰ He had managed to build a network during those long years in the scribal service and, conceivably, he had real expectations of gaining the position he wanted to have. Indeed, exactly one year after he had the dream, he became fourth assistant to the Chief Black Eunuch's secretary on 18 Recep 1191 (22 August 1777). Two years later, he gained the position of third assistant in Şaban 1193 (August/September 1779).⁶²¹

This assistantship was the position Abdülkadir Efendi had desired to obtain. Abdülkadir Efendi wrote that the dream came true in the same way as he had seen it.⁶²² He reiterated that the story of his life was an example of relief after hardship. All those sufferings and hardships he had been through were to earn his living and to educate his soul. However, the calligrapher was now sure that he left all hardships behind. According to him, being included in the palace service and among those who are close to the palace circles is not something granted to everyone.⁶²³ Abdülkadir Efendi had those blessings after many hardships and endurance; therefore, he was very proud of being granted such a position.

Abdülkadir Efendi used diverse strategies to express his feelings. He sometimes wrote in an explicit manner. He revealed his grief, sometimes wrote down his harsh criticisms, and at other times expressed his feelings of pride and happiness. He wrote so vividly that he provided the reader with the tools to access to his inner world as directly as possible. *Sergüzeştnâme*, therefore, provides a good example of how emotions can be expressed unambiguously.

He sometimes referred to poems to uncover his powerful feelings. To quote at length from Reynolds:

⁶²⁰ *Sergüzeştnâme*, 87b.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, 90b.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 87a.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, 88a-88b.

It could also be used to express deeply felt emotions: love, grief, loneliness, anger, yearning. All these were themes more often expressed in poetry than in prose ... poetry functioned as an acceptable code for expressing things that, if expressed in plain language or in actions, might be culturally unacceptable. Though it might be unseemly to lose control of one's emotions, to express those same raging feelings in verse offered a socially satisfactory alternative.⁶²⁴

He frequently referred to verses, hadiths, prayers, and commonplaces to disclose how he felt. To the modern reader, such references might seem lacking in emotion, but “for contemporaries these were familiar and meaningful and just as evocative as the commonplaces we use nowadays in more individualized descriptions of what we feel.”⁶²⁵ He turned to prayer and recitations to seek spiritual solace. Religious practices gave him the strength to bear the difficulties.

Sometimes he described his actions rather than explicitly saying that he felt sorry. The need for isolation and his remaining at home for days at a time was a way of expressing feelings of anger, sorrow, and desolation. For instance, he did not want to see his patron when his calligraphic work went unrewarded and stayed at home for days in isolation. Dreams were also cited whenever necessary. He included dreams in his narrative because dreams were obviously believed to convey truthful and comforting messages of the future. Hence, dreams occupied an important place in his self-narrative.

Conclusion

As Ruggiu suggests, “separate traditions of personal narratives exist in cultural context very far away from those initially described by Jacob Burckhardt and his followers.”⁶²⁶ Ottoman *sergüzeştâmes*, of which there are examples from as early as fifteenth century, indicate the existence of a well-established self-narrative tradition in the Ottoman Empire.

Coşkun’s observation – western autobiographies revealed details about inner self while *sergüzeştâmes* revealed attachment to the society - is actually based on our “modern expectations of autobiography as a genre, that it should reveal a private,

⁶²⁴ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 95.

⁶²⁵ Erika Kuijpers, “Histories, Chronicles and Memoirs,” in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (New York: Routledge, 2017), 104.

⁶²⁶ Ruggiu, “Uses of First Person Narratives,” 17.

psychological inner self beyond an exterior, public self.”⁶²⁷ However, such a generalization seems problematic as, together with their public selves, the authors of *sergüzeştnâmes* revealed some most intimate details about their lives and feelings in the face of events. As Amelang puts it, “autobiography was an individualized expression of the experience of a broad range of overlapping circles, circles that began with the past and present of the author’s family, and which quickly expanded to embrace a wider social universe. Its purview was thus neither fully private nor fully public.”⁶²⁸ Hence, we cannot say that the authors of *sergüzeştnâmes* did not turn their thoughts inward or reveal nothing about their psychological inner self. The entire genre of *Sergüzeştnâmes* cannot be judged as a mere reflection of social environment by evaluating only one text. Abdülkadir Efendi’s narrative is one of the examples of a self-conscious ego speaking about himself in the Ottoman literature of the genre. We can say that the individual was at the center of his self-narrative. He narrated all his social relations and network in order to give a complete picture of his struggle in life. The social sphere was a supportive element in his narrative.

Abdülkadir Efendi might not disclose all the events in his life, all his doings and all his feelings; however, he revealed more than one might expect to find. For instance, he wrote about his negative feelings towards Yakup Haseki who hindered his appointment. When his patron Osman Efendi was sent to Russia on an official duty, Abdülkadir Efendi stayed in the capital in expectation of receiving an appointment. He explained that there are various ways of doing jihad and his decision to stay in Istanbul should not be interpreted wrongly. He wanted to highlight how pious and sincere he was and at the same time how honorable his readers should perceive him to be. When he could not get anything in return for the books he copied, he expressed his disappointment by saying that he could not recoup even the money he spent on paper.

Serdaroğlu Coşkun also claimed that the aim of *sergüzeştnâme* is to emphasize a social issue through examples from one’s own life, while the aim of the autobiography is to narrate one’s own self.⁶²⁹ Her observation was based on statements made by the authors in the sections on reasons for writing (*sebeb-i telîf*). Most of the Ottoman

⁶²⁷ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 74.

⁶²⁸ Amelang, “The Dilemmas of Studying Popular Autobiography,” 434.

⁶²⁹ Coşkun, *Zaîfî’nin Sergüzeştnâmesi*, 19-20.

literati used a common introductory theme when explaining their reasons for writing—that of writing to provide a moral example for those who read it. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this could be a half-truth in that they might have used such themes to justify their act of writing about themselves. There might be an aim of narrating one’s self, one’s accomplishment or feelings behind the idea of emphasizing a social issue through examples from one’s own life. *Sergüzeştnâme* writers used various techniques and strategies “to circumvent the conventions and restrictions surrounding such themes.”⁶³⁰ Abdülkadir Efendi certainly did not want to be invisible. In portraying his life as an example for others, he wanted to show himself as a person who is talented, honest, and guided by God. Being a scribe did not come easily. He strived hard to gain that position. He worked in the environment of pashas and produced many works of art to attract royal attention, but most of the time he returned empty-handed. In his autobiography he communicated his experiences, cravings, disappointments and fears. He also emphasized his qualifications and showed how his qualifications were recognized and appreciated by the sultan and by his patrons. His autobiography served as a way for him to depict himself in the image he wanted to reveal.

⁶³⁰ Meier, “Ego-Documents in Early-Modern Ottoman Syria,” 129.

CHAPTER III: THE SELF BEHIND THE TEDIOUSNESS OF DAILY LIFE: THE DIARY OF SIDKIZÂDE MUSTAFA HAMİD EFENDİ

An uncertain genre uneasily balanced between literary and historical writing, between spontaneity of reportage and the reflectiveness of the crafted text, between selfhood and events, between subjectivity and objectivity, between the private and the public ... [it] constantly disturbs attempts to summarize its characteristics within formalized boundaries. The diary is a misfit form of writing, inhabiting the frontiers between many neighboring domains, often belonging simultaneously to several "genres" or "species" and thus being condemned to exclusion from both at once.⁶³¹

Scholars (literary specialists and historians) can be judged on their ability to deal with diaries, which calls for attention to the form (or genre), context, and individual subject simultaneously.⁶³²

The Diary is “a difficult-to-define genre.”⁶³³ Scholars mostly point out the ambiguous situation of the diary and argue in terms of “What can be done with diaries?”⁶³⁴ The diary can be described as a kind of private writing full of a “chronologically ordered sequence of dated entries addressed to an unspecified audience.”⁶³⁵ Entries of the diary are typically private/personal, unstructured, and prompt. Their defining characteristics are sincerity and immediacy.⁶³⁶

The complex nature of the diary makes it hard for historians to define it. Formerly diaries did not command the attention of scholars as sources; rather they were mostly

⁶³¹ Rachael Langford and Russell West, “Introduction: Diaries and Margins” in *Marginal Voices, Marginal Forms: Diaries in European Literature and History*, ed. Rachael Langford and Russell West (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 8-9. The same passage was cited by David L. Ransel, “The Diary of a Merchant: Insights into Eighteenth-Century Plebeian Life,” *The Russian Review* 63, no:4 (2004), 595.

⁶³² Paperno, “What Can Be Done With Diaries?” 573.

⁶³³ K. Eckhard Kuhn-Osius, “Making Loose Ends Meet: Private Journals in the Public Realm,” *The German Quarterly* 54, no:2 (1981), 166.

⁶³⁴ Paperno, “What Can Be Done with Diaries?.”

⁶³⁵ Ibid., 562, fn. 9

⁶³⁶ Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles: A study of English Diaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 40.

used to retrieve information about some larger issues under discussion.⁶³⁷ This chapter aims at introducing an Ottoman self-narrative, the diary of Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi,⁶³⁸ as the main subject of study and show the way the author's self is reflected in it. Archival sources and chronicles will be used to back up the narrative whenever necessary.

1. TOWARDS CONCEPTUALIZING OTTOMAN DIARY

The idea that the Ottomans did not produce diaries has already been confuted by some important discoveries and the resulting studies. The existence of diaries in Ottoman literature was already known as various researchers discovered Ottoman diaries independently of each other. As mentioned in the introductory chapter to this dissertation, Zilfi studied the diary of a scholar, Sıdkı Mustafa, who wrote about his struggles to obtain a career in *ilmiye*. He wrote at length about the appointments and dismissal of scholars.⁶³⁹

Kemal Beydilli published another diary produced in the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁶⁴⁰ The diary of Mehmed Efendi, who worked as the imam of Soğanağa Mosque, covers a four-year-period between 1810 and 1814. In it Mehmed Efendi refers to himself as *biz(im)/kendimiz* (we, our, ourselves), but when he talks about his son, for instance, he uses the word *oğlum* (my son) using the first person singular possessive suffix *-m*.⁶⁴¹ Mehmed Efendi kept records of political events, dismissals, appointments, weather condition and fires, as well as what happened in his neighborhood and in his own family. Births and deaths in the neighborhood, the appointment of an acquaintance would be recorded in the diary. He even recorded the concubines bought by his neighbors Hüseyin Bey and Emin Efendi. He did not forget to add details about the skin-color and prices of those concubines.⁶⁴² He recorded

⁶³⁷ David L. Ransel, "The Diary of a Merchant," 599.

⁶³⁸ Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi, Millet Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, MS Ali Emiri Efendi Tarih 570. [hereafter, Sıdkızâde]. An edition of the diary will be published by the author of this dissertation.

⁶³⁹ Zilfi, "The Diary of a Müderris."

⁶⁴⁰ Kemal Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar ve Bir İmamın Günlüğü* (İstanbul: TATAV, 2001).

⁶⁴¹ Ibid., 202.

⁶⁴² Ibid., 235.

family events: births, deaths,⁶⁴³ the education of his own children.⁶⁴⁴ He even noted the day his chickens hatched.⁶⁴⁵

Scholars mostly treated Ottoman diaries as “secondary”⁶⁴⁶ sources to extract information about some broader subject. Self-narratives were mostly used to support information gained from “noteworthy/serious” sources. Except for a couple of studies on Ottoman diaries, diary genre would be specified as unimportant by conventional scholars. As Kafadar puts it, narrative sources were treated as a subsidiary by Ottomanists who were looking for statistical data in relation to specific events. Therefore, compared to sources retrieved from the state archives, the value of narrative sources as expressions of mental attitudes was largely ignored.⁶⁴⁷ Kafadar nevertheless studied a seventeenth-century diary in his influential article published in 1989. He opened a way to formulate “new approaches to the history of mentalities and perception of the self.”⁶⁴⁸ He introduced the reader to a diary that offers a very lively account of “social networks, the web of spaces and forms of sociability spun by a dervish in seventeenth-century Istanbul and his day-to-day attitude to life.”⁶⁴⁹ The important thing is that Kafadar situated Ottoman self-narratives in general and diaries in particular among the studies on ego-documents/ self-narratives made in Europe and elsewhere. His seminal study, therefore, opened the way for further research.

Following Kafadar, his student Derin Terzioğlu studied the diary of Niyazi Mısrî in great detail. Like Kafadar, Terzioğlu did not confine herself to discussing the diary of Niyazi Mısrî; she contextualized Ottoman Sufi self-narratives and presented a detailed discussion of that literature. According to Terzioğlu, Ottoman Sufis had an advantage over the other literate minority in that Sufism used a good deal of erudite vocabulary to talk about themselves as well as giving a reason for writing about themselves, saying a person could only know God if he knows himself.⁶⁵⁰ Terzioğlu stated that Ottoman

⁶⁴³ Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar*, 221.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 99.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., 235.

⁶⁴⁶ Kafadar discussed how narrative/literary sources (mostly found in manuscript libraries) assumed a secondary role compared to archival sources providing concrete data on economic and social life, see Kafadar, “Self and Others,” 122-123.

⁶⁴⁷ Kafadar, “Self and Others,” 122.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid., 125.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁰ Terzioğlu, “Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times,” 142.

Sufi writers were different from their medieval counterparts in that they included information about their daily lives and family issues and wrote about their friends and acquaintances., The signs of worldly time were very noticeable in their narratives which in turn signaled the emergence of a literary form used by Sufis, that is the diary.⁶⁵¹

Niyazi Mısrî was in his early sixties when he began to compose his diary on the island of Lemnos. He was banished first to Rhodes and then to Lemnos as he got into trouble with the government because of the Kadızadeli controversy. He was not officially in prison, being released from the fortress of Lemnos in 1678. However, he did not go back to Bursa because of security concerns; instead, he lived in the Harbor Mosque in Lemnos without leaving the courtyard even once.⁶⁵² Terzioğlu wrote that unusual features of the diary had very much to do with the unusual circumstances in which Mısrî lived and wrote. His practice of keeping a diary was intimately connected with his experiences in exile. He dated each entry by giving the number of days passed since his first detention.⁶⁵³ Mısrî recorded in each entry how he spent his day. More importantly he gave important insights into his emotional world. In accordance with the central theme of the diary, that is exile/persecution, he mostly expressed his feelings of fear, suspicion, frustration or anger. He expressed his greatest worries in a rather striking way. He was afraid that his enemies would poison the water. If he saw a new grave in the cemetery, he used to wonder whether that it was for him or a disciple of his.⁶⁵⁴ Apart from his fears and suspicions, he also commented on Ottoman politics and compared the current state of the dynasty to its past, similar to Ottoman bureaucrats who wrote treatises on advice.⁶⁵⁵ While Mısrî's diary can be taken as an example of how the political, economic, and social structures of this world were integrated into Sufi narratives, his diary is not completely oriented towards this world. His diary negotiates between this world and the other world as the text was written

⁶⁵¹ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times," 148.

⁶⁵² Ibid., 150-151.

⁶⁵³ Ibid., 151.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., 153.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., 155.

under hard conditions in this world in order to find a divine explanation for and recover from those bad circumstances.⁶⁵⁶

Selim Karahasanoğlu studied the diary of a judge who left a record of twenty-four years of his life between 1711 and 1735. His book on Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi's diary is noteworthy in that he placed the diary in a wider context using the literature on self-narratives and took up the conceptualization of Ottoman diaries where Kafadar and Terzioğlu left off. He used the diary as "the primary" source to uncover the self and life of an Ottoman judge, providing a model on how to use an Ottoman diary for historical research.⁶⁵⁷ Sadreddinzâde's diary covers a period of twenty-four years. Karahasanoğlu interpreted this diligence of Sadreddinzâde as being a passion. More than that, Sadreddinzâde must have been inspired by his environment to keep a diary and his effort must have been part of an established tradition.⁶⁵⁸ Karahasanoğlu noted that his diary must have been connected to the emergence and spread of genres such as autobiography and memoir.⁶⁵⁹ Sadreddinzâde's entries give an insight into the professional, social, and private life of an Ottoman judge. He revealed information about appointments, weather conditions, earthquakes, fires, and travel conditions. He recorded his impressions of cities like Manisa, Diyarbakır, Plovdiv.⁶⁶⁰ While his records during his tenure as judge provided insight into how his life was shaped around his profession,⁶⁶¹ his entries as a dismissed judge revealed how he spent his days in Istanbul.⁶⁶² What is striking about Sadreddinzâde's diary is that its blank sheets were used by someone called Sadık who not only used the diary to record his own records but also commented on some of Sadreddinzâde's entries. He somehow interacted with the previous author of the diary and even quarreled with him.⁶⁶³ Sadık's using Sadreddinzâde's diary is very significant in showing the

⁶⁵⁶ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times," 165.

⁶⁵⁷ Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü*. Also see Fazıl Işıközlü, "Başbakanlık Arşivi'nde Yeni Bulunmuş Olan ve Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Tarafından Tutulduğu Anlaşılan H. 1123 (1711)-1148 (1735) Yıllarına Ait Bir Ceride (Jurnal) ve Eklentisi.," İsmail Erünsal, "Bir Osmanlı Efendisi'nin Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi ve Ceridesi," *Kaynaklar* 2 (1984): 77-81.

⁶⁵⁸ Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 33.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 69-77.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., 80-82

⁶⁶² Ibid., 83-119.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 183-189.

continuity of the practice of diary keeping in Ottoman literature as well as in displaying that keeping a diary was not an unusual practice when a person had the means and the tools to write with.⁶⁶⁴

Having discussed the researches done on Ottoman diaries up till now, how can we define an Ottoman diary? It is worth underlining in the beginning that the remarkable divergence in the form and content of personal diaries clearly shows that the Ottoman diary was not a corpus with precise features known by all Ottoman diarists. The structure of the Ottoman diary seems to derive from some forms of record-keeping prevalent in Ottoman literary and professional circles; the structure of the diary is linked to *mecmua*, *ruzname*, *takvim*, and account book. The Ottoman diary seems to have originated from and stood in-between these different genres and combined many aspects of each. Thus, the boundary between them is blurred because of the hazy areas of interaction and their obscurity.⁶⁶⁵ We need to see the Ottoman diary “as just one of a whole matrix of possible genre classifications.”⁶⁶⁶ Amelang’s ideas on artisan autobiography is also valid for the diary. He notes that “there was no such thing as a ‘typical,’ much less ‘model’ ... and that it would be a mistake to try to reduce such a complex series of cultural exercises to a handful of broad rules or observations.”⁶⁶⁷

Given such a context of flexibility and the difficulty of defining the characteristics of the Ottoman diary, we can say that the diarist infused/filled different forms with a sense of self and consequently provided insight into the lives of Ottomans (Istanbulite, male, and Sunni for this discussion). Accordingly, the value of using such pieces for historical studies involves understanding the importance of how the diarists adopted and adapted the established/conventional forms prevalent at the time and predominant in their professional and literary circles.⁶⁶⁸ Hence, it was up to the diarist to shape the content and form according to his background, education, and profession. The scribe, for example, wrote his dreams into official papers,⁶⁶⁹ the governor wrote his dreams

⁶⁶⁴ For an analysis of Sadık’s diary, see Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 190-201.

⁶⁶⁵ Andrew Hassam, *Writing and Reality: A Study of Modern British Diary Fiction* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1993), 20-21.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁶⁷ Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus*, 3.

⁶⁶⁸ Steven Stowe, “Making Sense of Letters and Diaries,” *History Matters: The U.S. Survey on the Web* (2002), iii, accessed November 1, 2021, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/letters/letters.pdf>.

⁶⁶⁹ Fleischer, “Secretaries’ Dreams,” 80.

into a private notebook made from official papers,⁶⁷⁰ the teacher wrote his daily records among many entries of appointments and dismissals.⁶⁷¹ As Millim notes, the diary is a cultural product of the society within which it was produced, and it “always reflects the material circumstances of its creation.”⁶⁷²

Given that it is difficult to make a clear-cut definition for Ottoman diaries, it is still important to answer the question of what it meant for an Ottoman individual to keep a diary? What can one find in an Ottoman diary? What were the main features? The dullness of daily life is the most noticeable characteristic of Ottoman diaries, as one might expect. The diarists mostly gave daily accounts of getting dressed, personal hygiene, visiting, hosting, weather report, financial reckonings, and medical formulas. Still, such an account of monotonous daily doings may constitute the main value of these sources, showing how people usually spent their time.⁶⁷³ The diary was also a tool for the diarist to write his own version of history as the diarists sometimes gave lively accounts of political, social, and financial events they witnessed. The enthronement of a sultan, the assassination of a grand vizier, or high prices at the market could be the day’s leitmotif. Sometimes diary entries were primarily shaped by the diarist’s occupation. Expectation of being appointed to a good situation, for instance, can be understood from numerous entries on the appointments and dismissals of colleagues.

1.6. Comparing An Ottoman Diary with Examples Outside the Ottoman Empire

In what ways is an Ottoman diary similar to or different from the diaries produced in Europe and elsewhere? Here, I will provide information about a series of diaries written between seventeenth and nineteenth centuries by people from different countries and backgrounds in order to compare these with Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s diary.

⁶⁷⁰ For a discussion on the dreams of Kulakzâde Mahmud Paşa, see the first chapter of this dissertation.

⁶⁷¹ Zilfi, “The Diary of a Müderris.”

⁶⁷² Anne-Marie Millim, *The Victorian Diary: Authorship and Emotional Labour* (London: Routledge, 2016), 5.

⁶⁷³ Ransel, “The Diary of a Merchant,” 600; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 9.

A seventeenth-century diary written by Constantijn Huygens Jr., secretary to the Stadholder-King William of Orange covers a long period between 1649 and 1696 and offers a special insight into the social and political life in England and Holland in the seventeenth century.⁶⁷⁴ An important aspect of his diary is its immediacy. He kept record of events immediately after their occurrence.⁶⁷⁵ He also had a keen interest on watches in that he recorded several entries on the purchase or repair of clocks and watches. Huygens kept records of every event in his professional and private life in great detail and revealed his personal observations, thoughts and feelings in an honest way.⁶⁷⁶ Huygens enjoyed recording gossip. He kept mainly records of gossip about secret love affairs and sexual encounters learned from his wife and elsewhere.⁶⁷⁷ When he was away from home, his wife Susanna sent him letters informing him about the events in the household in Holland such as hiring a servant,⁶⁷⁸ natural events like earthquakes,⁶⁷⁹ and sometimes warned her husband to be more careful or not to trust one of his friends.⁶⁸⁰ Huygens had a troublesome relationship with his son, Tien. Huygens wanted his son to have a good education and put pressure on him. However, he could not control his son's bad behaviors. In his diary, he described many confrontations between father and the son.⁶⁸¹ Servants were a significant part of the Huygens household. The size of the household and the number of servants were an important indication of wealth and influence. He recorded numerous details about everyday experiences with his servants; their relationship to them, their wages, hiring and dismissals.⁶⁸² Huygens also recorded a great deal about his professional life in the service of King William. Like every courtier, Huygens observed the king's every action, mood and gesture. He recorded the king's treatment of other officials and courtiers.⁶⁸³ The diarist also noted the king's interest in him. Whenever the king asked

⁶⁷⁴ Rudolf Dekker, *Family, Culture and Society in the Diary of Constantijn Huygens Jr, Secretary to Stadholder-King William of Orange* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 3.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁷⁶ Helmer Helmers, "Review of *Family, Culture and Society in the Diary of Constantijn Huygens Jr, Secretary to Stadholder-King William of Orange*," accessed November 10, 2021, <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/1508>.

⁶⁷⁷ Dekker, *Family, Culture and Society*, 120-1.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., 143.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid., 51.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 164.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid., 151-56.

⁶⁸² Ibid., 141-50.

⁶⁸³ Ibid., 60.

about his wife, son and brothers he writes it down.⁶⁸⁴ He also observed the moods of the queen. He might record a short conversation with the queen or write a note like “She greeted me first, laughing.”⁶⁸⁵

One of the most famous European diaries was the one written by Samuel Pepys who lived in London and worked as the secretary to Edward Montagu, a Councilor of State and a relative of Pepys. Pepys was well educated, but it was his affiliation with Montagu that had served to find him a position in government. He wrote in his diary for nine years between 1660 and 1669. His reports were very informative. He took great care to be clear and thorough. He explained obscure references and corrected errors, identified people and places in parenthetical notes. He did not neglect to note his personal reflections on what he narrated; e.g. “which pleases me very well,” or “of which I am glad.”⁶⁸⁶ He recorded all kind of public and private events. He incorporated in his diary an outline of each day and reported the news. Developments in the office, pleasurable activities or annoyances, his ideas, angers, or sexual attempts-anything could find its way into his records in the diary.⁶⁸⁷ Pepys usually wrote lengthy entries displaying his personal observations, feelings and character enabling the reader to enter into his world.

Martha Ballard was born in the small town of Oxford in Massachusetts in 1735 and moved to Hallowell (Maine) in 1777 with her husband Ephraim. Martha Ballard was a midwife and helped the birthing processes of hundreds of women. She kept a diary covering twenty-seven years from 1785 to 1812. She was a faithful diarist. Most of her entries were short and to the point. She dated each entry in the margins she ruled on the left of each page.⁶⁸⁸ She recorded the births she helped with, carefully registering each medical case. Apart from her entries on medical help, she gave information on her daily household activities such as weaving,⁶⁸⁹ producing yarns and textiles.⁶⁹⁰ She consistently recorded the weather.⁶⁹¹ The other consistent category in the diary of

⁶⁸⁴ Dekker, *Family, Culture and Society*, 66.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁸⁶ Fothergill, *Private Chronicles*, 98. As in the case of Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi who sometimes reflected his ideas and feelings as “I became so happy” or “I was so glad.”

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 99.

⁶⁸⁸ Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 21.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid., 80.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 87.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., 91. Ottoman diarists also liked recording weather reports.

Ballard was recording the identity of visitors or persons visited.⁶⁹² Dull daily tasks and exhausting repetition was the strength of her diary, representing the life of a midwife in all its fullness.⁶⁹³

Russian merchant Ivan Tolchënov's diary was another curious example produced in the 18th century. Tolchënov kept his three-volume diary for forty-three years between 1769 and 1812. At the beginning, the diary was a record of the author's travels, the daily activities of visiting and entertaining visitors, family events and remarkable sights.⁶⁹⁴ As time passed, politics found its way into the entries of the diary, as Tolchenov wanted to establish himself as a powerful personage. In 1773, he married the daughter of a merchant family from Moscow.⁶⁹⁵ Tolchenov left a dull record of his marriage only describing major events such as signing the marriage contract and the time of the wedding banquet.⁶⁹⁶ From then on, he became the head of his own household.⁶⁹⁷ Ivan reported exclusively on his business activities. He described his visits and his visitors, and also the banquets took place in his garden. He recorded his travels and even noted the exact time of arrivals and departures.⁶⁹⁸ He noted the periods he was away from home. He also reported on the births and the deaths in the household. When giving such information he recorded the exact time.⁶⁹⁹ He showed not a glimpse of emotion when recording the deaths of his children who died in a few months after birth. However, he showed tense emotion when his eight-year-old son and the nearly one-year-old daughter got sick. He described fully the period of sickness and finally the death of their lovely daughter. He wrote how emotionally affected he was by the demise of that lovely child.⁷⁰⁰ Tolchenov left a lively account of his life, from recording daily events to life in the family, from financial activities to religious practices, from successes to failures.

⁶⁹² Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 91.

⁶⁹³ Ibid., 9.

⁶⁹⁴ David Ransel, *A Russian Merchant's Tale: The Life and Adventures of Ivan Alekseevich Tolchënov, Based on His Diary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 29.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., 19-20.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., 21.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., 78. Kulakzâde Mahmud Pasha also recorded his travels and sometimes wrote exact time of arrivals.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., 78.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., 126-7.

This little survey of diaries written outside the Ottoman Empire reveal that their similarities with Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary in terms of content and form. As in the examples cited above, Mustafa Hamid Efendi's entries were all dated. He indicated the time at the end of the entries. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's style resembles Ballard's style in that his entries were short and to the point. His longest entry was about his marriage and his father's appointment as the chief mufti. Like Ballard, Mustafa Hamid Efendi was very attentive to weather conditions and also natural events.

Like Tolchenov and Huygens, he had an interest in watches. He recorded several times that he was given valuable watches as gifts. He also showed his interest on watches and time by giving the exact time of some important events. All these three diarists possibly carried their pocket watches with them and recorded events immediately. As in the case of all the diaries examined above, Mustafa Hamid Efendi revealed lots of detail about household issues; he wrote about servants, how he hired them, for what reasons he dismissed them, and the troubles he had with those servants. He recorded births and deaths. As in the case of Tolchenov, he did not show any sign of emotions after the death of a little child. He also gave lots of details about his daily life, his excursions in the vicinity of Istanbul, the banquets he attended, his visits and his visitors. He wrote about his official duties and appointments. He recorded some political events if they were related to Sıdkızâde household. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary is different from these diaries cited above in that some of them were more talkative on private issues like illicit love affairs or sexual relationships. Diarists like Pepys and Huygens were more open about their personal observations and thoughts. It is easier for the researchers to reach into the private world and feelings of those diarists.

1.1. On the Diary and Its Author

Diaries can yield a wealth of information about the experiences and values of its author and the community in which he lived. By finding shifts over time in patterns seen in the repetitious daily accounts of visiting, hosting and observing, historians may gain insight into the life of a community and into the social and personal identity of the diarist and those near to him.⁷⁰¹

⁷⁰¹ Ransel, "The Diary of a Merchant," 608.

Ulrich's study on Martha Ballard's diary and Ransel's study on a merchant's diary opened up a view of their lives and provided a model for working with early modern diaries. These two researchers wanted to recreate their diarists as individuals in the social environment and the historical context in which they lived. Mustafa Hamid Efendi, like the midwife of Ulrich's book and the merchant of Ransel's study, kept his diary in the early nineteenth century and wrote about his daily experiences, activities, emotions, and reflections that he as an individual experienced throughout a day. The diarist wrote down his experiences because he considered them to be noteworthy and significant. Outings, dinner parties, purchases, appointments, accepting gifts, showing anger, or the joy of a birth- the sum of all of such experiences and the way they were recorded in the diary gives us a chance to uncover the personal traits and character of the diarist.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary is composed of forty-four folios covering approximately six years between 1822 and 1828 with a long break of three years between 1824 and 1827. After this break, he wrote very little, but those entries are very important in that one can learn much about the diarist's self through detailed records of his marriage. We can say that the diary has two endings; one took place in 1824 when he wrote his last entry for that year on distributing alms (*zekat*). He suddenly gave up taking notes and did not write another word until 1827 when he was on the eve of marriage. During this long break important political events took place, such as the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826. More importantly however, in the same year he lost his daughter, Saliha Sabite, who died at the age of four on 9 Şevval 1241 (17 May 1826).⁷⁰² He did not record this unfortunate event. As will be mentioned later in this chapter, we can understand the love Mustafa Hamid Efendi felt for his little daughter from the importance he attached to recording her birth and the rituals that followed. The fact that there is no record of her death in the diary must be closely related to Mustafa Hamid Efendi's motivations for writing. He liked to record happy events rather than depressing ones. After a while, very exciting events which happened in his life -like the time his father was appointed as the chief mufti- must have pushed

⁷⁰² Hüseyin Kutlu, *Kayıbolan Medeniyetimiz: Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa Hazinesi'ndeki Tarihi Mezar Taşları* (İstanbul: Damla Yayınevi, 2005), 161. Saliha Sabite was four years old when she died according to the date found on her grave stone.

him to start to write in his diary again. We can say that the ending that took place in 1824 was not a formal one. It was like “to be continued in the next episode.”⁷⁰³ The next episode continued with his marriage with Ziyne Ziba Hatun. He had found a motivation for writing again. After narrating the whole engagement and marriage procedures they had been through, he once again stopped writing in 1827. After that, he returned to his diary by fits and starts, but he only recorded some financial issues. The blank sheets of the diary served him as a place for financial accounts.

In his diary there are some three hundred and forty entries of varying lengths. The diary was probably numbered later. He divided his diary into months and indicated each month on the upper part of the page beginning “this month.” He was not a faithful diarist as he did not write every day. He turned to his diary when important events happened; the birth of a baby, an earthquake or fire, a gift sent by an acquaintance, or a visit from a member of the upper echelons of the palace. After giving a three-year break, he ended up dividing his diary into monthly sequences. He started his entries by indicating “this day” and they became very scattered. As Marilyn Himmesoëte commented about French teenagers’ diaries, the diary had its own rhythm created by the author. The diary writer was to decide whether to record every day or once in a week or to keep silent for three years.⁷⁰⁴ Every month, Mustafa Hamid Efendi recorded an average of nineteen entries. In the first month, he recorded fifty-one entries, but the number of entries diminished every month. There is no interaction between entries. The entries made on any day were like unplanned pictures, as Ponsonby noted, snapshot, rough and spontaneous but such pictures catch the atmosphere that a carefully organized photograph cannot provide.⁷⁰⁵

The name of diarist is not given in the first folios of the diary. But it was not hard to decipher his identity as he gave the name of his brother on the very first folio, which is not numbered.⁷⁰⁶ On the following page, he wrote a lengthy paragraph about his

⁷⁰³ Philippe Lejeune, “How Do Diaries End?,” in *On Diary*, ed. Jeremy D. Popkin and Julie Rak (Honolulu: University of Hawai Press, 2009), 188.

⁷⁰⁴ Marilyn Himmesoëte, “Writing and Measuring Time: Nineteenth-Century French Teenagers’ Diaries,” in *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing Since the Sixteenth Century*, ed. J. Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf M. Dekker, and Michael James Mascuch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 151.

⁷⁰⁵ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century with an Introduction on Diary Writing* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1923), 33.

⁷⁰⁶ I will refer to this folio as “first (unnumbered) folio.”

father's being invited to the palace by Sultan Mahmud II and his appointment as *şeyhülislam* on 11 November 1823.⁷⁰⁷ According to the information given, the diarist was the son of a *şeyhülislam* and brother of Mehmed Rıfat Efendi (d.1875). After brief research in the secondary literature, the diarist's name was deciphered. He was Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi, son of Şeyhülislam Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi (d. 1834).⁷⁰⁸ Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote his name very late in folio 22a when recording his appointment as *müderris* with the rank of *ibtida-i altmışlı* (a medrese rank with a daily payment of sixty akçe) ⁷⁰⁹

Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary may not give information about his whole life, but it discloses a very detailed account of the years that it covered. We know that he started to keep a record in his diary just before his appointment as a teacher at İskenderpaşa Medrese on 13 Şevval 1238 (23 June 1823) when he was climbing up the career ladder and rising to the hierarchy with ease and comfort.⁷¹⁰ Hence, diary depicts a burgeoning career from its early stages. In the diary, there is no mention of his early career and education. Being the son of a powerful member of the ulama was an important factor for personal success. Those who were born into an ulama family usually received their first education privately from their father and then entered the ranks of *ilmiye*. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's education was probably no exception to this. According to the information given in the diary, he was continuing to receive education from his father even after he was appointed as a teacher. For instance, he wrote on 7 Rebiülahir 1239 (11 December 1823) that he had begun to read the book of Halebî with his father.⁷¹¹ Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi must have continued his close observation of the education and career of his sons. As a young *müderris*, therefore, Mustafa Hamid Efendi probably benefited from his parent's unlimited support; Ahmed Reşid Efendi must have used his influential position in the *ilmiye* and his power to ensure a

⁷⁰⁷ Sıdkızâde, 1a.

⁷⁰⁸ *Sicill-i Osmani*, II, 600; Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, ed. A. Fikri Yavuz and İsmail Özen, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1972), 178. [hereafter *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, I-II-III]

⁷⁰⁹ Sıdkızâde, 22a. For *medrese* ranks, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1965), 271-281; Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1976), 157.

⁷¹⁰ Sıdkızâde, 15a.

⁷¹¹ Ibid., 29b. The book of Halebî mentioned in the diary was probably İbrahim b. Muhammed Halebî's *Mülteka'l-Ebhur*. Halebî's work was one of the main sources of Hanefi fiqh in the Ottoman Empire, used as a reference guide by judges and professors. Şükrü Selim Has, "Halebî İbrahim b. Muhammed," *DİA*, vol. 15, 231-2; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı*, 22.

successful career for his sons.⁷¹² As we see, his sons rapidly progressed in their careers. After working in a number of important medreses with the respected rank of teacher, Mustafa Hamid Efendi was appointed judge of Eyüp in 1249 (1833/34) and in 1261 (1845) as chief qadi (judge) in Egypt, residing in Cairo. Finally he became the judge of Mecca in 1263 (1846/47).⁷¹³ His brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi was appointed to be judge in Damascus in 1250 (1834/35) and he was given the honorary rank of Mecca in 1262 (1845/46). Having acted as the judge of Istanbul, he moved to become the chief military judge of Anatolia in 1272 (1855/56) and finally became the chief military judge of Rumelia in 1278 (1861/62).

1.2. On the Concepts

Another significant question to be asked is, “What did the author think he was writing?” Why did he write in diary form? Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s diary is to be found in Istanbul Millet Library. It is titled “*Târîhe Dair Vekâyî*” in the digital catalog of the library. This title parallels the title given by Bursalı Mehmed Tahir in *Osmanlı Müellifleri* where Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s piece was titled “*Târîhe Mûte‘allik Mecmua-i Ma‘ârif*.”⁷¹⁴ These later titles deserve attention because Bursalı Mehmed Tahir was a person belonging to the Ottoman intellectual world. As Makdisi indicates (and also Tiringly touches on this issue in her article), the medieval Arabic diaries were named *Târîh*. They were basically scrapbooks in which information was recorded to fix dates later to be used for biographical histories.⁷¹⁵ According to Terzioğlu, the Ottoman diary is not precisely following the medieval Arabic examples, but it still employs the forms of various literary genres such as autobiography or annalistic histories.⁷¹⁶ That later titles included the word “*Târîh*” was compatible with its medieval predecessors. Makdisi notes that the term had the implication of “fixing the month,” “fixing the period of an event,” and it had to do with “fixing the beginning of the month.”⁷¹⁷ Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s diary supported this idea in that he was very

⁷¹² For the privileged position of the children of high-ranking ulama, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı*, 71-75.

⁷¹³ *Sicill-i Osmani*, II, 600.

⁷¹⁴ *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, III, 178.

⁷¹⁵ George Makdisi, “The Diary in Islamic Historiography: Some notes,” *History and Theory* 25, no:2 (1986), 175; Terzioğlu, “Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times,” 148.

⁷¹⁶ Terzioğlu, “Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times,” 148.

⁷¹⁷ Makdisi, “The Diary in Islamic Historiography,” 176.

careful to fix the beginning of each month. He divided his piece into monthly sequences and wrote the entries accordingly. He always appended the exact date after each entry.

The title that was given to the diary by Bursalı Mehmed Tahir also includes the word *mecmua*. On the very first page, Mustafa Hamid Efendi himself also called his work *mecmua*. Terzioğlu writes that the mixed character of Ottoman diaries can be understood from the different titles given to them. Some called their works *cerîde*, *mecmua*, *yevmiye*, *vâkı'ât* while others used rather different titles such as *sohbet-nâme*.⁷¹⁸ András J. Riedlmayer described *mecmua* as impromptu compiles, resembling to commonplace books or scrapbooks, formed through drawing material from various sources like letters, religious texts, astrological works or poems.⁷¹⁹ Indeed, an Ottoman *mecmua* can be described as a personal notebook with diverse contents. *Mecmua* writers mostly compiled poems, prayers, hadiths, or letters according to their interests. Some compilers also included personal notes on daily affairs or recorded important events like the birth of a child, death of a loved one, or natural events like earthquakes or storms.⁷²⁰ *Mecmua* had very rich and diverse content designed individually by its compiler and Mustafa Hamid Efendi's piece had certain points in common with that genre. However, the work at hand diverges from other *mecmuas* as it is not a compilation of the works of others. It was meant to be a personal notebook for writing down important information; it turned out to be a daily record of events. According to Terzioğlu, "segments of the Ottoman literati indulged in certain practices of reading and writing that were conducive to autobiography in the broader sense of writing about oneself."⁷²¹ She showed that Ottoman *mecmuas* provided their owner with a place for recording personal notes and writing their autobiography.⁷²²

Steven Stowe states that personal motives and backgrounds suggest a great deal about how the diarist made use of the knowledge and materials at hand to preserve his

⁷¹⁸ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times," 148-149.

⁷¹⁹ András J. Riedlmayer, "Ottoman Copybooks of Correspondence and Miscellanies as a Source for Political and Cultural History," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 61 (2008), 201-2.

⁷²⁰ For an example, see Kerima Filan, "Saraybosnalı Molla Mustafa'nın Mecmuası Işığında Bir Osmanlının Topluma Bakışı," in *Mecmua: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim S. Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım (Istanbul: Turkuaz Yayınları, 2012), 271-90.

⁷²¹ Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments," 85.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, 86.

innermost experiences in writing.⁷²³ Mustafa Hamid Efendi belonged to an important ulama household. His father, Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi, had been working in the *ilmiye* cadres for many years. The diarist himself also worked as *müderris* and in his later years as *qadi*.⁷²⁴ Official duties probably obliged his father, being at the very top of the hierarchy, to keep records of daily official activities. For example, *qadis* noted court decisions in *kadı sicili*; the chief military judges kept records of appointments and dismissals.⁷²⁵ His choice of diary form may have resulted from his familiarity with such a daily record-keeping business which required continuity and a certain discipline. As a member of the *ilmiye* he must have been aware of the official record-keeping methods in that the style of the diary bears a resemblance to the style of the appointment records of *müderris* and *qadis* (*mülazemet kayıtları*) as well as *qadi* registers. The diarist added such appointment records among the many entries of daily concerns. Like the *mülazemet* registers, some of his appointment entries are very brief without any comment or personal opinion.

The diarist was more than an ordinary literate person. As said before, he was a part of the centuries-old *ilmiye* tradition and familiar with the literary works, forms, and styles that shaped that tradition. In the diary, for instance, he gives the name of some books he read as part of his education. One of the books he read, for instance, was İbrahim b. Muhammed Halebî's *Mülteka'l-Ebhur*. This work was one of the main sources of the Hanefi *fiqh* used as a reference guide by judges and professors. The other book in his reading list was by the famous *ulama* Molla Fenârî.⁷²⁶ He did not give the exact title, but it must be *el-Fevâ'idü'l-Fenâriyye*, a book of logic widely taught in the Ottoman *medreses* until the last periods.⁷²⁷ In the diary, he uses uncomplicated language. His use of language does not illustrate his level of education. At the time of writing his diary, Mustafa Hamid Efendi was at the very beginning of his career and apparently still continuing his education. Therefore, he had a long time ahead in which

⁷²³ Stowe, "Making Sense of Letters and Diaries," iii.

⁷²⁴ *Sicill-i Osmani*, II, 600.

⁷²⁵ Yunus Uğur, "Şer'iyye Sicilleri," *DİA*, vol. 39, 8-11.

⁷²⁶ Sıdkızâde, 34a.

⁷²⁷ For a survey of the books read in the medreses of Istanbul, see Bilgin Aydın and Ekrem Tak, "XVII. Yüzyılda İstanbul Medreselerinde Okutulan Kitaplar (Tereke Kayıtları Üzerine Bir Deneme)," *Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları* 19 (2019): 183-236; İbrahim Hakkı Aydın, "Molla Fenârî," *DİA*, vol. 30, 245-7.

to achieve language of a high level of sophistication. On top of that, the cursory nature of the diary genre might not be suitable for showing his intellectual abilities.

So far, few Ottoman diaries that were written before the Tanzimat period have been discovered. Two of these diaries were produced by members of the same family.⁷²⁸ Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi's grandfather, Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi, also composed a diary when he was a young *müderres*.⁷²⁹ Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi's diary covered a seven-year period between 1749-1756. He mostly recorded appointments and dismissals of colleagues and left a narrative of his early efforts to obtain a career in the *ilmiye*.⁷³⁰ There is no clue in the diary about this earlier record-keeping activity of his forefather; we do not know for sure, therefore, whether Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi had a chance to read it or not. However, the similarity in their content and form suggests that he might have been familiar with the diary produced by his late grandfather around seventy years before.⁷³¹ Even if he did not know about earlier examples, he lived in an environment enabling him to share his experiences and knowledge with earlier scholars. He chose to speak through creating an autobiographical text.⁷³² In brief, he was no stranger to diary form nor to other record-keeping practices.

⁷²⁸ Mustafa Hamid Efendi's father Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi was the son of Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi. See Orhan Okay, "Hatrat," *DİA*, vol. 16, 445-9; 2015. *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1506; Mehmet İpşirli, "Ahmed Reşid Efendi," *DİA*, vol. 2, 122-3; Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 829.

⁷²⁹ There is a confusion in the literature about the father of Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi. In *Sicill-i Osmani*, Mehmed Süreyya noted that Ahmed Reşid Efendi was the son of Sıdkı Efendi who was the judge of the army. Yılmaz Öztuna, in *his Devletler and Hanedanlar*, gave similar information and identified the father of Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi as Mustafa Sıdkı Efendi who served as the judge of the imperial army. The information given by Mehmet İpşirli creates a confusion. He wrote that Ahmed Reşid Efendi's father was Mehmed Sıdkı Efendi. İpşirli gave no further information on the identity of the father. Hence, this information leads one to suspect that Mehmed Sıdkı and Mustafa Sıdkı were different persons. However, Orhan Okay's article clarifies the issue. Okay noted that Ahmed Reşid Efendi's father was known as Mehmed (Mustafa) Sıdkı who wrote a diary. It seems that the judge of the imperial army Sıdkı Efendi had two names. All things considered; we can say that Ahmed Reşid Efendi's father was Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi who kept a diary.

⁷³⁰ Kafadar, "Self and Others," 129; Zilfi, "The Diary of a Müderres," 161-2.

⁷³¹ Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi, İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi, MS Türkçe 10985; Also see Ali Aslan, "18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İlim Hayatından Bir Kesit: Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi'nin Günlüğü," (M.A. thesis, Istanbul University, 2015).

⁷³² Jancke, "Autobiography as Social Practice," 68.

1.3. Motivation for Writing

What was his motivation for writing? Why did he decide to leave a record of significant incidents in his life and his family? Was it a practical need to keep records of his daily activities that motivated Mustafa Hamid Efendi to keep a diary? Perhaps a need for order motivated him for preserving his daily experiences in written form.⁷³³ When it comes to the diary- barely studied by historians of the Ottoman Empire- questions are easier to ask than to find answers. The reason for writing seems to be manifold. It was related to social, political, and financial ties as well as to the character of the author.

Jancke asserts that “the sources reveal which relationships provided the decisive impetus for each author to undertake writing her/his autobiographical text.”⁷³⁴ Accordingly, the diarist’s position as a member of an important ulama family might have impelled him to produce this work. The diarist simply wrote that he initiated to write this piece to keep a record of some necessary information. However, the diary not only served for taking notes but also to keep in order the financial affairs of the household. The centrality of the Sıdkızâde household in *ilmiye* cadres and consequential financial benefits dominated the entries of Mustafa Hamid Efendi. It was a period of ease, comfort, and prosperity for the family. Thirteen days after writing his first entry on 12 Safer 1238 (29 October 1822), Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi was appointed *şeyhülislam*.⁷³⁵ He wrote one of the lengthiest entries of the diary to record his father’s being honored with the seal of *fetva*. His father’s prominent position in the *ilmiye* hierarchy and the wealth accompanied by it perhaps aroused a need for family accounting, as it created substantial gifts and flow of money to the family. Mustafa Hamid Efendi used his diary to record financial matters. There are eight entries on *bohça bahası*, which was an amount of money paid in return for an appointment. There are lots of entries concerning gifts given by acquaintances. It seems that the appointments made by Şeyhülislam Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi turned out to be an important source of income for the family as the amount of money paid for appointments was as high as five hundred *kuruş*. His administrative duties in

⁷³³ Similar questions were asked by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich to understand Martha Ballard’s motivation for keeping a diary, Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale*, 20.

⁷³⁴ Jancke, “Autobiographical Texts: Acting Within a Network,” 161.

⁷³⁵ Sıdkızâde, 2a.

several waqfs might also have prompted him to keep financial records. Inclusion of information on appointments, *bohça bahası*, and gifts as well as administration of waqfs reveals the practicality and readiness of the diary as a useful tool for Mustafa Hamid Efendi to keep his financial affairs in order.⁷³⁶

Among many tedious entries on financial issues and appointments, one can find a very lively account of an individual's happy times. The diarist used his entries like a camera to snapshot some joyful instants so that he could revisit and remember them.⁷³⁷ On 14 Safer, his brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's concubine Üçnaz (Evcinaz) Kadın gave birth to a son named Osman Nureddin (d. 1854).⁷³⁸ Likewise, two days after his father's appointment as *şeyhülislam*, his own daughter Saliha Sabite was born in 27 Safer 1238 (13 November 1822) at a quarter to nine.⁷³⁹ In this way the diary was used as a family album. By recording many beautiful moments, he was able to revive and enjoy the experience over and over again.

Certain things in the empire at that time were troubling everyone, regardless of financial or social status and whether they were members of a distinguished family or not. The diary does not provide information on those troubling political events.⁷⁴⁰ At a time when life in Istanbul was often difficult, the diary provided a record of considerable stability. The diarist preferred to remain silent on unfortunate events, however. The regularity of summer excursions, the joy of visiting and welcoming guests, delightful moments with children, recurring activities of cleansing the body, and getting dressed provided order and calm to the life that was probably disturbed by struggles between the elites, the violence of the janissaries, and the troubles caused by fires or earthquakes. Adhering to a routine probably created a feeling of relief and

⁷³⁶ For relevant information on the connection between the diary and financial accounting, see Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form, 1660-1785* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 58-67; Paperno, "What Can Be Done with Diaries," 562.

⁷³⁷ For studies on the photographic nature of diaries, see Anne-Marie Millim, *The Victorian Diary: Authorship and Emotional Labour* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013); Kathryn Carter, "Accounting for Time in Nineteenth-Century Manuscript Diaries and Photographs," *Life-Writing* 12, no:4 (2015): 417-30.

⁷³⁸ Sıdkızâde, first (unnumbered) folio.

⁷³⁹ Sıdkızâde, 1b; According to Orhan Çolak, Mustafa Hamid Efendi had two sons: Abdurrahman Münir Efendi and another son whose name cannot be read in the inscription of his grave. See Orhan M. Çolak, "Arşiv Belgelerinin Işığında Sadrazam Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa'nın Hayatı, İcraatı ve Hayratı," (M.A. thesis, Istanbul University, 1997), 187.

⁷⁴⁰ For instance, although the empire faced many deaths and troubling events, the diarist did not give any piece of information on *Vak'a-i Hayriyye*, the abolition of janissary corps in 1826. Kemal Beydilli, "Vak'a-i Hayriyye," *DİA*, vol. 42, 454-7.

comfort for the diarist. In brief, the diary was written to give an order to financial issues and to eternalize happy moments by recording them.

1.4. Major Themes Covered in the Diary

The most remarkable feature of the diary is the amalgam of different topics, from which one can observe a highly complex portrait of Mustafa Hamid Efendi and his environment. This is mainly because the diarist combined many roles as professor in a medrese, administrator of several waqfs, as father, husband, and a member of an important ulama family.

The diary opens on 12 Safer 1238 (29 October 1822) with a short entry explaining the reason for writing it. The diarist simply states that he began to write his *mecmua* - as he named this piece of writing- to keep records of necessary information.⁷⁴¹ The first entry was written the following day- 13 Safer 1238 (30 October 1822)- about the use of a medicinal ointment (*macun*) bought from the Jew Hayim.⁷⁴² It seems that the author was having difficulties with his urinary system; there was bleeding on urination.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi seems to have been very interested in his bodily health and his appearance as we will see later in his entries on disguise and personal hygiene. Indeed, he was very attentive in recording such trivial details of his daily life. Throughout his diary he recorded details about bathing, changing his turban, having new clothes, cutting his nails, and shaving. He must have had a high degree of awareness of self, being very active in the social occasions held in the elite mansions of Istanbul.

When it comes to family, he mostly recorded scenes of past pleasure. He wrote about the births of his daughter and his brother's son. He took note of the first activities of his daughter; her first clothes, her first hammam, and her first encounter with her grandfather. He showed the happiness felt on the birth of his daughter. Other family members also became a source of pride for the diarist. He reflected with great pleasure the pride he felt when his father became the head of the *ilmiye*, noting his appointment

⁷⁴¹ Sıdkızâde, first (unnumbered) folio.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

and rapid rise in the hierarchy. He diligently wrote about his marriage and recorded every tiny detail as if he wanted to be constantly reminded of it.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi was a member of *ilmiye* and this, above all, gives the diary its shape. The majority of the entries report the rise and fall of acquaintances in the *ilmiye* cadres, payments and gifts in return for appointments. Also, he was very keen on writing about the social events he attended. Among such events, invitations to dinner with other *ilmiye* members and notables constituted the pinnacles of his social life. As in the case of Ransel's merchant, the language of Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary is very simple, and the diary is mainly a record of such daily events as paying visits visiting and hosting others described as: "I paid a visit to so-and-so. So-and-so visited us." Their conversation is never mentioned nor sometimes even the reason for the visit. The significant thing was to simply take note of the close interaction.⁷⁴³ Yet this registry of visiting and hosting visitors discloses something of interest about the elite *ulama* society at this time. From such gatherings, we learn about the complex web of relations established among *ulama* families and with political figures. Important religious and political personages made up the essential part of his social life. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's marriage to the daughter of Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa (d. 1828/29)⁷⁴⁴ reveals the importance of such social occasions in building powerful intra-elite networks.⁷⁴⁵

The flow of gifts was another dimension of being part of a powerful *ulema* family. The identity of the gift senders discloses much about their networks. The chief military judge of Anatolia, Mustafa Rakım Efendi, former *şeyhülislam* (chief mufti) Zeynelabidin Efendi, Grand Vizier Ali Paşa were among the powerful elites who had a place in the Sıdkızâde network. They also had many acquaintances in different regions of the Empire ranging from Mecca to Salonica, from Cairo to Bursa; Mustafa Hamid Efendi therefore recorded many valuable gifts from their acquaintances in these cities. Likewise, the diary reveals a great deal about the materials used by Mustafa Hamid Efendi and, to some extent, by other family members. His entries concerning the material dimension of his daily life (clothes, textiles, horses) uncovers the

⁷⁴³ Ransel, "The Diary of a Merchant," 602.

⁷⁴⁴ *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1141.

⁷⁴⁵ Sıdkızâde, 38b. We will deal with Sıdkızâde household and their network later in this chapter.

economic standards necessary to operate successfully within the elite circles of Istanbul. Entries on financial matters also constituted an integral part of the diary: entries on *boğça bahası*, his administrative duties in various waqfs and his relationship with the *sarraḥ* (money lender) Tıngiroğlu Kirkor reveal his activities in making and investing money. Also, like many other Ottoman diarists, he provided detailed information about the weather conditions and natural events like earthquakes. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary did not depart from the rules in that he was very interested in keeping records of the very minute hailstorms, earthquakes, or fires began.⁷⁴⁶

1.5. The Issue of Accuracy

The diarist occasionally noted down his observations on political issues. Such entries allow us to check the accuracy of this information against that in other sources. When recording political events, appointments, dismissals, or executions, the diary comes closer to the genre of chronicle. The diarist was always accurate in determining what happened and when. He used verbs indicating certainty when reporting an event that he knew to be true. When he recorded something debatable, he used words to denote his uncertainty.

The most noticeable record of an event that can be tested through chronicles and archival documents was the dismissal and execution of Halet Efendi which was recorded with great accuracy. The diarist gave a full picture of Halet Efendi's downfall. He diligently recorded the dismissal of his favorites and the promotion of his enemies. The diary, therefore, can be used to reveal different factions and to understand the nature of court politics.

The diarist recorded that Halet Efendi was dismissed on 25 Safer 1238 (11 November 1822) and exiled first to Bursa. Because he had an influential network in Bursa, he was later sent to Konya where he was executed on 19 Rebiülevvel 1238 (4 December 1822).⁷⁴⁷ The sequence of events regarding Halet Efendi's exile and execution is verified by the information given by Vakanüvis Esad Efendi who wrote in his

⁷⁴⁶ Sıdkızâde, 14a, 24a.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., 3a; For archival information on the same event, see BOA, HAT 496/24325, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823); BOA, HAT. 496/24335, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823); BOA, HAT. 496/24324, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823); BOA, HAT. 496/24326, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823).

chronicle that Halet Efendi had acted in such an immoral way to maintain his position and power that he had gained the hatred of the public. His banishment and execution were linked to his wicked behavior.⁷⁴⁸ The diarist, on the other hand, did not record anything about the wicked behavior of Halet Efendi although one gets the impression that they belonged to different factions and each side disliked the other. He just recorded how surprised he was by the execution of such a wealthy and powerful figure. He interpreted this situation as a just punishment from God for the evils committed.

During tenure of his office, Halet Efendi had installed his favorites in influential positions. After his downfall, his favorites were banished from their positions.⁷⁴⁹ Among a series of dismissals, Ahmed Ağa's exile is worth considering. According to the records in the diary, Abdullah Paşa, who was appointed as Grand Vizier after Halet Efendi's demise, banished Halet Efendi's favorite Gümrükçü Ahmed Ağa to Amasya and confiscated his property. The record of events is again compatible with chronicles and archival documents.⁷⁵⁰ However, when the diarist further commented on the issue, he indicated that actually he was not certain of the truth of what he was writing as it was only hearsay (*mesmu'umuz olmuştur*). According to what the diarist had heard Ahmed Ağa was on the verge of being killed like Halet Efendi. However, he was saved from death and only exiled thanks to the intervention of the custodian of the Bosphorus, İbrahim Paşa.⁷⁵¹ This additional information is not present either in the chronicles or in the archival documents. The chronicler Esad Efendi wrote that Ahmed Ağa's intimacy with Halet Efendi was known by the public. Therefore, he was exiled to Amasya two days after the banishment of his patron Halet Efendi to put an end to rumors and to defuse tension.⁷⁵² Esad Efendi did not note anything about the possible execution of Ahmed Ağa or the intervention of İbrahim Pasha. Just as Halet's favorites

⁷⁴⁸ Esad Efendi, 136-137; For another account of Halet Efendi's exile and death, see Hekimbaşı Hafız Hızır İlyas Ağa, *Osmanlı Sarayında Gündelik Hayat: Letâif-i Vekâyi'-i Enderûniyye*, ed. Ali Şükrü Çoruk (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2011), 274.

⁷⁴⁹ Christine M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 56, 96; Esad Efendi, 139; BOA, HAT. 496/24332, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823).

⁷⁵⁰ Sıdkızâde, 3b; Esad Efendi, 140-141; BOA, HAT. 279/16514, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823). This document notes that he was dismissed because of his adherence on Halet Efendi; BOA, HAT. 518/25328, 29 Zilhicce 1238 (6 September 823). The document notes that Halet Efendi's favorite, Ahmed Ağa, was banished to Amasya and his property was confiscated.

⁷⁵¹ Sıdkızâde, 3b.

⁷⁵² Esad Efendi, 140-141.

were banished, so his rivals were promoted to new positions. The diarist recorded his father Ahmed Reşid Efendi's appointment as the Chief Mufti, Hüsrev Pasha's (d. 1855) appointment as the Admiral-in-Chief, and Abdullah Pasha's appointment as the Grand Vizier.⁷⁵³

Appointment records may also be correlated with the chronicles and archival documents. An interesting appointment was the promotion of the Janissary Agha to the Grand Vizierate on 19 Zilkade 1238 (28 July 1823). The diarist noted that the agha was qualified, prudent, and successful against troublemakers. He simply summarized this event with the sentence "Hüseyin Agha became pasha." The accuracy of this record can also be tested through archival documents and chronicles.⁷⁵⁴ According to Sahaflar Şeyhizâde Mehmed Esad Efendi, Hüseyin Agha (d. 1849) was skillful and deemed worthy of the post. He was appointed Grand Vizier at the auspicious time of 12:40 on 19 Zilkade.⁷⁵⁵

In short, the diary is very precise in giving the exact dates of events. The information on political events is compatible with the chronicles of the period and archival documents. The diarist used unambiguous language in recording events that he knew for certain. When he was not sure about what exactly happened, he noted that he was recording rumors. The accuracy of the diary in recording political events invalidates the idea that that self-narratives/ego-documents are inferior to archival sources and must be used with caution.

2. RELATIONAL SELF: MUSTAFA HAMİD EFENDİ AS A MEMBER OF SİDKİZÂDE HOUSEHOLD

In the past, as now, people experience themselves in relation to a variety of groups and norms, from family to friends, and in relation to their age, body and sexual identity, their abilities, ethnicity, religious beliefs, and status. They are more likely to display particular kinds of behavior in order to decide who to connect with rather than who to detach themselves from. Yet this does not mean that people in the past were

⁷⁵³ Sıdkızâde, 3a-3b; Esad Efendi, 133-135.

⁷⁵⁴ Sıdkızâde, 24b. Also see BOA, C. DH. 134-6676, 29 Zilkade 1238 (7 August 1823).

⁷⁵⁵ Esad Efendi, 226; Hekimbaşı Hafız Hızır İlyas Ağa, *Osmanlı Sarayında Gündelik Hayat*, 302. Also see BOA, HAT. 1562-34, 19 Zilkade 1238 (28 July 1823).

submerged in a collective culture. Subjectivity can in theory generally be seen as proceeding from connection, rather than detachment.⁷⁵⁶

A diary can reveal many layers of the self. One of those layers is the social self of the diarist, surrounded by various private and public domains such as household, family, professional circles, and financial relationships. Rather than focusing on the self as an autonomous individual, therefore, scholars have tended to see self-narratives as being “embedded in a collective context.”⁷⁵⁷ As Natalie Zeamon Davis puts it, “all the occasions for talking or writing about the self involved a relationship.”⁷⁵⁸ She stressed the importance of treating the self of an early modern person as part of a network of relations; relationship with God, with a patron, with a sheikh (thinking in an Ottoman context), and, in particular, with family/household and lineage.⁷⁵⁹ I think a modern person should be considered in the same way. The success, wealth/financial security, and prominence of the individual mostly depends on the maintenance of social and political networks as well as kinship ties. All these relationships are determinants in creating one’s identity.⁷⁶⁰ In this sense, our diarist was no different. Throughout the diary, Mustafa Hamid Efendi referred to the people he was in contact with and allowed us to see how his identity was linked to them.⁷⁶¹ One can see that his identity and sense of self were defined by the webs of relationships he built.⁷⁶² “Opening a diary for the first time is like walking into a room full of strangers.”⁷⁶³ In this section, we will try to get to know the people who occupied a place in the entries of the diary.

Operating within a strong ulama household was a very significant factor in creating a successful person like Mustafa Hamid Efendi. The diary reveals various features of the household of a strong ulema family in which a variety of activities led to the establishment of a powerful web of influence: the accumulation of wealth, the creation of networks to advance the political position of the household members. Hence, the

⁷⁵⁶ Fulbrook and Rublack, “In Relation,” 269

⁷⁵⁷ Greyerz, “Ego-Documents: The Last Word?,” 276-277.

⁷⁵⁸ Davis, “Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France,” 53.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid., 63.

⁷⁶¹ Ruggiu, “The Uses of First Person Writings,” 13.

⁷⁶² Jeanne Braham, “A Lens of Empathy,” in *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women’s Diaries*, ed. Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996). Jeanne Braham argued that women’s identity and self are defined by connection to others.

⁷⁶³ Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale*, 35.

diary discloses important aspects of an ulama household operating in nineteenth-century Istanbul. Mustafa Hamid Efendi was part of such an influential ulema family and this would have allowed him to create his own network and wealth. In this part, therefore, we will focus on the self of the diarist as embedded in his relations with various other individuals.

The diary entries reveal that family owned a mansion (*konak*) in town⁷⁶⁴ and a seaside mansion (*sahilhane*) in Rumelihisarı.⁷⁶⁵ The diarist probably did not have a separate household at least during the early years of his career, but it seems that he and his brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi did establish their own small households within the Sıdkızâde household. They were still dependent on their father's power, reputation, and wealth in order to advance. Some shreds of evidence found in the diary support this idea. Throughout the entries, the evolution of his private family sphere within the parental household can be observed. At the opening of the diary, he recorded the birth of his daughter Saliha Sabite.⁷⁶⁶ He placed particular emphasis on his daughter, the subject of many entries. The animal slaughtered on the occasion of her birth, the first visit by the grandparent Ahmed Reşid Efendi, the first purchase of clothes; all these happy instances and rituals he recorded with pleasure either when he was at the seaside mansion or in town. After a long break between 1239-1243, he once again started to keep records before his marriage to Ziyet Ziba Hatun. The marriage ceremony seemingly took place in the mansion of the Sıdkızâde family, and the young couple then resided with the parents.

"The home and family were traditionally associated with privacy and references to them implied that the writer was sharing some privacy with the reader."⁷⁶⁷ References to family members allow us to access the intimacy of the family and the private sphere of the household. The diary allows us to draw a vivid picture of other members of the household and its dependents. Mustafa Hamid Efendi referred to his father, the head of the household, as *veli'n-ni'me* (benefactor), *pederim efendimiz* or *şeyhülislam efendimiz*. He never gave the name of his father, but such references to the father

⁷⁶⁴ Sıdkızâde, 22b, 27a, 31b, 35b, 36b.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid., 16b, 20b. Also see M. Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Boğaziçi," *DİA*, vol. 6, 251-62.

⁷⁶⁶ Saliha Sabite's mother was probably one of his concubines (*câriye*), as the diarist was not married to a free born Muslim woman at the time of her birth.

⁷⁶⁷ Hanna, "Self-Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500–1800," 123-39.

confirm his key position in the household hierarchy. Ahmed Reşid Efendi was the benefactor of all household personnel who were dependent on his generosity and support. Mustafa Hamid Efendi did not give the name of his mother, either.⁷⁶⁸ He talked about his mother on the occasion of his marriage with Ziyet Ziba Hatun and when he purchased one of his mother's slaves. There is no other record revealing the activities of the female head of the household; the female part of the household is therefore quite obscure. We do not know much about their daily lives or their role in the household. The brother, Mehmed Rıfat Efendi, was frequently mentioned in the diary; details of his family, the positions he occupied in the *ilmiye*, and his presence on important occasions were habitually recorded in the diary. Mehmed Rıfat Efendi evidently had an important place both in the household and in his brother's life. Like his brother, Mehmed Rıfat Efendi, was most probably living in the parental residence with his wife, children, and concubines. He had his own servants and dependents. We know from the diary that Mehmed Rıfat Efendi had a concubine named Üçnaz Kadın and she gave birth to a son named Osman Nureddin.⁷⁶⁹ Zeliha Hanım and İffet Hanım, whose identities remained obscure for the time being, also had their place in the diary. The diarist recorded their first day at school.⁷⁷⁰ He also frequently mentioned a certain Damad Efendi who must be Meşrepzâde Mehmed Arif Efendi (d. 1858),⁷⁷¹ the husband of his sister Naile Hanım (d. 1855/56). Mustafa Hamid Efendi frequently visited Damad Efendi and they attended banquets (*davet-i ekl*) together.⁷⁷²

Servants and female slaves were also recorded in the diary, often by name. Among them, Üçnaz Kadın, Sabahat, and Feriha personify the female slaves of the household who served as housekeepers as well as satisfying their masters' sexual needs. Abdülbaki, Ahmed, and Raşid represented the male labor force in the household.

⁷⁶⁸ His mother Adilşah Hanım was the daughter of Hekimzâde Abdullah Bey see, *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1378.

⁷⁶⁹ Sıdkızâde, 1b; Öztuna wrote that Osman Nureddin was born into the marriage of Mehmed Rıfat Efendi and Fatma Hanım. However, the diary reveals that his mother was Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's slave, Üçnaz (Evcinaz) Kadın. See Yılmaz Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar: Türkiye (1074-1990)* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1969), 850.

⁷⁷⁰ Sıdkızâde, 8a.

⁷⁷¹ His sister's grave is found in Toklu Dede burial area. The grave stone reveals that his sister's name was Naile Hanım. She was married to Meşrepzâde Mehmed Arif Efendi.

⁷⁷² Sıdkızâde, 21a, 30a, 30b, 31b.

These servants were mostly recruited to the household at the request of a relative or an acquaintance who had relations with the household members.



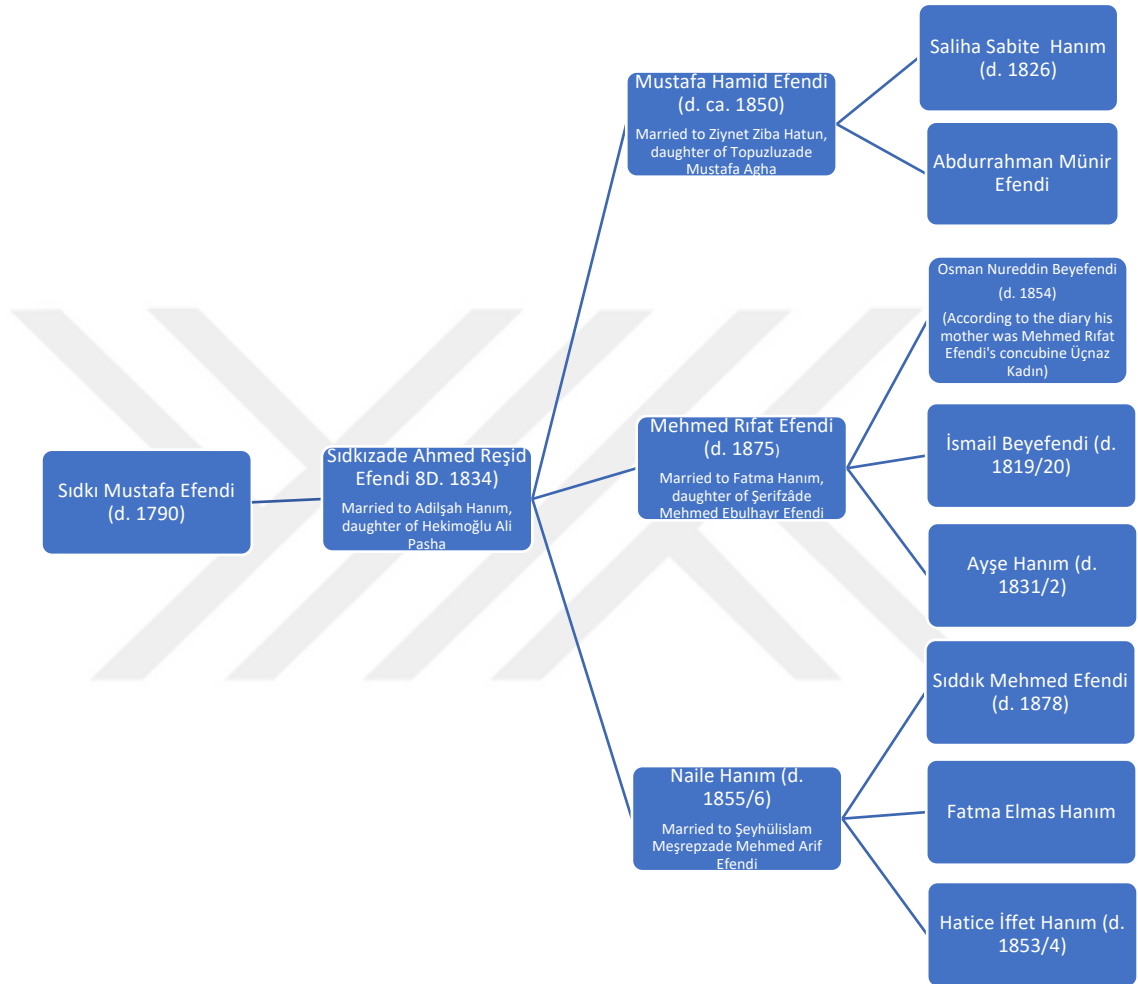
Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi's grave found in Toklu Dede burial area.



Sıdkızâde Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's grave found in Toklu Dede burial area.



Naile Hanım's grave. She was married to Meşrepzâde Mehmed Arif Efendi.



Members of Sıdkızade family.

2.1. Creating a Network

Gabriele Jancke argues that “autobiographical writers were not isolated individuals but social beings, belonging to certain social, professional, religious, and gender groups, moving in certain social contexts and relationships.”⁷⁷³ Self-narratives can be useful for uncovering “persons whose identities are shaped in relation to changing networks

⁷⁷³ Jancke, “Autobiography as Social Practice,” 70.

of interpersonal relations, with the self at the intersection of different sets of roles and expectations.”⁷⁷⁴ Thus, to contextualize a self-narrative it is necessary to look carefully at interpersonal networks. One must contextualize the source not only in its historical context but also consider the cultural and social context within which the author wrote his/her text.⁷⁷⁵ Uncovering the network of the diarist; therefore, serves to uncover his personality and conception of the world. The diary under scrutiny allows us to reveal the people with whom Mustafa Hamid Efendi had close contact.

Kinship formed only one aspect of a social network, but links with other bureaucratic elites were of great significance. Thus, the household within which an individual operated enabled him to build a web of relations with powerful personages. Among them, there would be influential members of the ulama, viziers, various pashas, and aghas. Our diarist also had a network of people who were attached to the Sıdkızâde household to fill *ilmiye* posts. Entries on appointments, visits and dinner parties, and exchange of gifts revealed people with whom the diarist was affiliated.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s diary can reveal complex webs of patronage prevalent mainly among men of learning. But the diary also divulges that the influence of the household went beyond the members of the ulama. Various bureaucratic elites also took part in the Sıdkızâde network. For a powerful scholar like Şeyhülislam Ahmed Reşid Efendi, it would be easy to use his powerful position for his sons and his protégés, “because the ulama, more than any other group in the ruling elite, had succeeded in institutionalizing patronage over a long and gradual process that originated in the 15th century.”⁷⁷⁶ Mustafa Hamid Efendi vigilantly recorded the examinations made during his father’s tenure as *şeyhülislam* to appoint scholars (*müderres*) as well as recording appointments at higher levels. Among those appointments, one can observe Mustafa Hamid Efendi and his brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi’s easy advancement in the *ilmiye* hierarchy. In the entry written on 13 Şaban 1238 (25 April 1823), he wrote that “My brother is appointed to Yahya Efendi Medrese at the level of *mûsıla-i sahn*”⁷⁷⁷ although

⁷⁷⁴ Fulbrook and Rublack, “In Relation,” 268.

⁷⁷⁵ Jancke, “Autobiography as Social Practice,” 72.

⁷⁷⁶ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 56.

⁷⁷⁷ *Mûsıla-i Sahn* was the level before *sahn-ı seman*. It was originally a dahil rank, but named as *mûsıla-i sahn* (preparatory level to the *sahn*) because after completing this level, scholars progressed to *sahn* level. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı*, 12; İpşirli, “Medrese,” *DİA*, vol. 28, 327-33;

there were thirty-eight people before him. We are appointed to İskender Paşa Medrese at the level of *mûsıla-i sahn* although sixty-five people were waiting before us.”⁷⁷⁸ This entry discloses that, being the sons of the Chief Mufti, they easily had the opportunity to progress to the upper levels without waiting long as the other scholars did.⁷⁷⁹ Zilfi noted that the process of centralization and “unionizing” of the *ilmiye* career was completed in the 17th century. By the 18th century, the *ilmiye* had increasingly begun to reflect the interests of the elite ulama families with patrimonial privileges. More and more teaching posts were concomitant with having family/blood ties.⁷⁸⁰ In short, the invaluable patronage of their father gave them an important advantage over their colleagues in the competition for advancement.

After a short period, we see again these two brothers’ advancement in their careers. The entry written on 10 July 1824 reveals that Mehmed Rıfat Efendi was appointed to the degree of *bilâd-ı hamse*⁷⁸¹ and Mustafa Hamid Efendi upgraded to the level of *ibtida-i altmışlı*.⁷⁸² Both brothers were moving up the hierarchy very fast. The following entry was filled with records of a series of visits to present Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s thanks to various people including his father, the chief military judges of Anatolia and Rumelia, as well as the members of some important ulama families like the Dürrişâdes, the Arabzâdes, the Mekkişâdes, and the Çelebişâdes.⁷⁸³ Those people he visited after his appointment reveal the extent of Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s network. One can easily see that Mustafa Hamid Efendi and his brother benefited much from their father’s reputation and power and built strong relationships with powerful elites.

Ercan Alan, “Kadıasker Ruznamçelerine Göre XVII. Yüzyılda Rumeli’de Kadılık Müessesesi,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2015), 58.

⁷⁷⁸ Sıdkızâde, 15a.

⁷⁷⁹ For career patterns and appointment processes in the *ilmiye* system, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı*, 45-173; Yasemin Beyazıt, *Osmanlı İlmiye Mesleğinde İstihdam (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2014).

⁷⁸⁰ Madeline C. Zilfi, “Elite Circulation in the Ottoman Empire: Great Mollas of the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient/Journal de l’histoire économique et sociale de l’Orient* 26 (1983): 318-19.

⁷⁸¹ *Bilâd-ı hamse* was one of the dignitary ranks (*mevleviyet*) in the scholarly hierarchy. This rank consisted of five equal judgeships: Edirne, Bursa, Damascus, Egypt and Plovdiv. Those who were appointed to this rank would eventually be granted the judgeships of Mecca and Medina. Fahri Unan, “Mevleviyet,” *DİA*, vol. 29, 467-8; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilatı*, 100.

⁷⁸² Sıdkızâde, 22a.

⁷⁸³ Sıdkızâde, 22b-23a.

The patronage of Ahmed Reşid Efendi, who consolidated his power by occupying the highest position in the *ilmiye* hierarchy, was not limited to his sons. The Sıdkızâde household must have enjoyed remarkable influence among the ulama and gained many followers by allocating positions and assisting people in securing posts. In the entries on the appointments of people in their network, the emphasis was mostly placed on recording people who were granted important positions during his father's tenure as *şeyhülislam*. For instance, Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote that the former judge of İzmir, Calligrapher Mustafa Rakım Efendi (d. 1826), was granted the chief military judgeship of Anatolia (*Anadolu Kadiaskeri*) replacing Abdullah Efendizâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi who was dismissed from office on 5 Rebiülahir 1238 (20 December 1822).⁷⁸⁴ Although Mustafa Hamid Efendi talked about Mustafa Rakım Efendi as the former judge of İzmir, his career encompassed more than that. He was appointed to the judgeship of İzmir in 1809, he became the judge of Edirne and Mecca in 1814, and finally, he presided as the judge of Istanbul in 1818. From there, he moved to the chief military judgeship of Anatolia in 1823.⁷⁸⁵ The diarist's emphasis on Mustafa Rakım Efendi's judgeship of İzmir might have been related to the fact that his father Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi had also served as the judge of İzmir around 1805/1806.⁷⁸⁶ They might have known each other since then.

Mustafa Rakım Efendi had connections with the palace, being employed as the calligraphy teacher of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839). The sultan's respect and admiration for his teacher was an important factor in Mustafa Rakım Efendi's advancement.⁷⁸⁷ Hence, both sides, that is, the Sıdkızâde family and the *kadiasker*, must have benefited from building good relations with one another. As Abdurrahman Atçıl suggests, "the chief jurist (*şeyhülislam*) and chief judges (*kadiaskers*) had a significant role in the general administration of the empire as well as the administration of the hierarchy, strengthening scholar-bureaucrats – especially top representatives – within the Ottoman system."⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁴ Sıdkızâde, 5b.

⁷⁸⁵ Süleyman Berk, "Mustafa Rakım Efendi," *DİA*, vol. 34, 428-9.

⁷⁸⁶ İpşirli, "Ahmed Reşid Efendi," 122-3.

⁷⁸⁷ Berk, "Mustafa Rakım Efendi," 428.

⁷⁸⁸ Abdurrahman Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 133.

Assigning jobs and continuous gift exchanges were significant in reinforcing relations with key officials.⁷⁸⁹ One can observe from the diary that their relationships were continued and reinforced by recurrent visits and gifts. The entry written on 14 Rebiülahir indicates that the newly appointed chief military judge sent five hundred *kuruş* as a gift.⁷⁹⁰ Five months after being appointed, we again see Mustafa Rakım Efendi sending gifts for the oncoming month of Ramazan on 22 Şaban 1238 (10 May 1822).⁷⁹¹ Also, During the month of Ramazan also, Mustafa Hamid Efendi and most probably other Sıdkızâdes got together with the chief military judge of Anatolia for an *iftar* meal.⁷⁹² It seems that Mustafa Rakım Efendi's sustained relationship with the Sıdkızâdes enabled his protégés to obtain positions for themselves. Mustafa Rakım Efendi's *kethüda* is recorded as having passed the final examination and appointed as a *müderris*. Mustafa Hamid Efendi stressed that the above-mentioned *kethüda* became successful during his father's tenure although he had been unsuccessful in previous examinations given by Zeynelabidin Efendi.⁷⁹³ After Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi's dismissal, we see Mustafa Hamid Efendi this time asking Mustafa Rakım Efendi to prolong his *mühürdar*'s (stamp holder) term of office in the Kangrı district for two months more.⁷⁹⁴ A couple of days later, we see Mustafa Hamid Efendi paying a visit to the chief military judge of Anatolia to express his gratitude.⁷⁹⁵

Likewise, in the entry written on 26 Cemâziyelevvel 1238 (8 February 1823), we see that Debbagzâde Mehmed Şerif Efendi (d. ca. 1260)⁷⁹⁶ showed gratitude for his father-in-law Meşrebzâde Abdurrahman Efendi's appointment to the judgeship of Mecca. He prepared a bowl (*zevrak*) upon which Mustafa Hamid Efendi's name was engraved. It was put next to the door of *Zamzam* in *Kaaba* for pilgrims to drink *Zamzam* water⁷⁹⁷ The diarist had possibly mediated for this appointment, and for this reason, his name was carved upon this special gift. This entry reveals that Mustafa Hamid Efendi had a

⁷⁸⁹ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 150.

⁷⁹⁰ Sıdkızâde, 6a.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid., 16b.

⁷⁹² Ibid., 18b.

⁷⁹³ Ibid., 5b. For further information, see Tahsin Özcan, "Zeynelabidin Efendi," *DİA*, vol. 44, 366-7.

⁷⁹⁴ Sıdkızâde, 26b.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., 27b.

⁷⁹⁶ *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1587.

⁷⁹⁷ Sıdkızâde, 8a-8b.

say in *ilmiye* appointments. He most probably acted as an intermediary between those who hoped to be appointed and his father who was at the top of the *ilmiye* hierarchy.

This web of influence was not restricted to the *ilmiye*. Intersecting patron-client networks were created among different groups. Patronage ties between ulama and other bureaucratic elites were very frequent so that both parties could equally benefit.⁷⁹⁸ The Sıdkızâde household seems to have been frequently visited by some influential palace grandees, revealing their links with powerful palace elites. For instance, Grand Vizier Ali Paşa (d. 1829) paid recurrent visits to the Sıdkızâdes. Mustafa Hamid Efendi first recorded that the grand vizier honored the apartment (*daire*) of the *şeyhülislam* in the month of Receb.⁷⁹⁹ It seems that it was a private meeting with the *şeyhülislam*, probably for discussing state affairs. The grand vizier's second appearance was for iftar in the household of the *şeyhülislam*. Ali Paşa graced the Sıdkızâde household with his presence on the twenty-seventh night of Ramazan, the sacred night of Qadr (*Kadir gecesi*). Mustafa Hamid Efendi and his brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi met him at the door and escorted him to the audience hall where they had the *iftar* meal.⁸⁰⁰

In the entry written on 24 Rebiülevvel 1238 (9 December 1822), the diarist wrote that Hüsrev Pasha had been reappointed as Commander -in-Chief of the Navy. Three days later, on 27 Rebiülevvel 1238 (12 December 1822), he visited the Sıdkızâde household to express his gratitude for his appointment.⁸⁰¹ The entry reveals the connection between Hüsrev Pasha and the Sıdkızâde household. Hüsrev Pasha's dismissal in 1821 actually resulted from the influence of Halet Efendi (d. 1822) who seems to have been an enemy of the Sıdkızâdes.⁸⁰² After his dismissal, the pasha had been sent to Trabzon, and there he was appointed governor. Halet Efendi's demise created an opportunity for his rivals to occupy top positions. This entry discloses that the chief mufti Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi might have had an influence on the reappointment of

⁷⁹⁸ Sıdkızâde household resembles to the household of Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi in this sense, Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 213.

⁷⁹⁹ Sıdkızâde, 11a.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid., 19a.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid., 4a-4b.

⁸⁰² Halil İnalcık. "Hüsrev Paşa," *DİA*, vol. 19, 41-5.

some bureaucratic elites who had suffered from the rivalry of Halet Efendi, in just the same way as he had reappointed the banished ulama.⁸⁰³

Silahdar Ali Pasha and Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi were appointed and dismissed around the same time. Ahmed Reşid Efendi was appointed chief mufti on 4 December 1822, while Silahdar Ali Pasha became grand vizier on 9 March 1823. About three months after the dismissal of the chief mufti, Grand Vizier Ali Pasha was also dismissed from office.⁸⁰⁴ This information supports the idea that they belonged to the same power network.

Likewise, the Sıdkızâdes arranged patronage networks in the provinces to extend their influence and power.⁸⁰⁵ For instance, Şakir Efendi, the uncle of Damad Efendi, presented a horse to the diarist when he again became voivode of Uşak in 9 Safer 1239 (15 October 1823).⁸⁰⁶ His association with the Sıdkızâde household might have had an effect on his securing this position. Şakir Efendi, therefore, took care to cement his relations with Mustafa Hamid Efendi by presenting him with gifts on various occasions.⁸⁰⁷ It seems that the Sıdkızâdes were concerned to gain as many followers as possible by having protégés belonging to other elite groups in addition to their own followers from the ulama. This would enable them to reinforce their political and social standing among the powerful elite.

2.1.2. Marriage Ties

Nizri noted that elite households used marriage ties to extend their political and social networks. Thus, the head of the household had his daughters and sons marry members of other important households to create new ties and strengthen existing relations. In this way they could further extend their political and financial power. Consequently,

⁸⁰³ İpşirli, “Ahmed Reşid Efendi,” 122.

⁸⁰⁴ For Ali Pasha, see *Sicill-i Osmani*, I, 277; For Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi, see *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1378.

⁸⁰⁵ For Ottoman local elites, see Ehud R. Toledano, “The Emergence of Ottoman Local Elites (1700–1900): A Framework for Research,” in *Middle Eastern Politics and Ideas*, ed. Ilan Pappé and Moshe Ma’oz (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1997).

⁸⁰⁶ Sıdkızâde, 27b.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 24a, 27b.

they had easy access to important positions, and enjoyed the political support of other household members if necessary.⁸⁰⁸

The diarist's father, Şeyhülislam Ahmed Reşid Efendi, was married to Adilşah Hanım (d. 1831/32), the daughter of Hekimzâde Abdullah Bey.⁸⁰⁹ Abdullah Bey was the grandson of Hekimzâde Ali Paşa (d. 1758) who officiated as grand vizier during the reign of Mahmud I (r. 1730-1754).⁸¹⁰ Hekimzâde Abdullah Bey took a different path from his grandfather and entered the *ilmiye*. He became the military judge of Anatolia in June 1813.⁸¹¹ Ahmed Reşid Efendi's marriage to Adilşah Hanım was probably a significant point in his setting up a powerful household as this marriage linked him to a vizier cum ulama household.

Mehmed Rıfat Efendi, married Fatma Hanım, the daughter of Şerifzâde Mehmed Ebulhayr Efendi (d. 1823),⁸¹² who was the son of Şeyhülislam Şerif Mollazâde Mehmed Efendi.⁸¹³ There is no information in the diary about the marriage of Mehmed Rıfat Efendi. He probably married Fatma Hanım long before the diary was written. Although Yılmaz Öztuna stated that Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's son, Osman Nureddin was born of this marriage, Mustafa Hamid Efendi's entry on his birth shows that Osman Nureddin's mother was Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's concubine, Üçnaz Kadın.⁸¹⁴

Mustafa Hamid Efendi's sister Naile, whose name was unspecified in the diary, was married to Meşrepzâde Mehmed Arif Efendi.⁸¹⁵ Mehmed Arif Efendi's father was Müderris Şatırzâde Emin Efendi and his grandfather was Kadiasker Meşrepzâde Ali Efendi.⁸¹⁶ The Meşrepzâdes were one of the powerful ulama families of the period. Mehmed Arif Efendi became *şeyhülislam* on 21 March 1854.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote a detailed entry about his marriage to Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa's daughter, Ziyet Ziba Hanım. This marriage linked Mustafa Hamid

⁸⁰⁸ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 61-62.

⁸⁰⁹ *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1378.

⁸¹⁰ M. Münir Aktepe, "Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa," *DİA*, vol. 17, 166-8.

⁸¹¹ *Sicill-i Osmani*, I, 59; Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 679.

⁸¹² For Şerifzâde Mehmed Ebulhayr Efendi, see *Sicill-i Osmani*, II, 438.

⁸¹³ Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 829; *Sicill-i Osmani*, V, 1395.

⁸¹⁴ Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 829.

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸¹⁶ Mehmet İpşirli, "Arif Efendi, Meşrepzâde," *DİA*, vol. 3, 365; *Sicill-i Osmani*, I, 312. The person the diarist called as Damad Efendi in various entries must have been his sister's husband Meşrepzâde Arif Efendi.

Efendi and other members of the Sıdkızâde family to an important elite household. Mustafa Ağa was the *ayan* of İskeçe from where the family originated. In 1825, he was appointed *mîralem*,⁸¹⁷ “the custodian of the sultan’s symbol of sovereignty... who ceremonially presented newly appointed governors with the standard and horsetails, symbolic of the sultan’s authority.”⁸¹⁸

According to Nizri, the usual practice in forming alliances from the 16th to 19th centuries was by building marriage ties between the leading ulama families. Reputable ulama families preferred to marry among themselves to preserve the special nature of their group and to ensure the persistence of their family lineages and powerful position. They rarely created marriage ties with other elite families.⁸¹⁹ The Sıdkızâdes, in this sense, deviated from the established standards of the well-based *ulama* families, as they built marriage alliances with households that did not belong to *ilmiye* aristocracy; for example, their alliance with the Topuzluzâde line, also known as Mîralemzâdes, whose members used to serve as *mîralem*. Moreover, their descendants had been appointed to various governmental positions throughout the years. For instance, Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa’s son, Rıfat Halil İbrahim Bey, served as a *müderriş* and became the judge of Eyüp in 1250. His other son, Vakıf Bey, was working in the *mektubi sadaret kalemi* (Secretariat of the Minister for the Interior).⁸²⁰ The marriage of Mustafa Hamid Efendi to Ziyet Ziba Hatun must have connected the Sıdkızâdes to important personages in Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa’s network, thus further strengthening their influence.

2.2. Ways of Making Money

Accumulated wealth was an important instrument to preserve the family’s prominence and power. The diary discloses how the family accumulated the wealth that was necessary for building and preserving political power. Mustafa Hamid Efendi seems to have been actively involved in financial matters. He recorded in extensive detail the money received in return for appointments, that earned from waqfs and expensive gifts

⁸¹⁷ Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 868.

⁸¹⁸ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix, 2013), xvii.

⁸¹⁹ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 62.

⁸²⁰ Öztuna, *Devletler ve Hanedanlar*, 868.

sent by people in their network. The diary, in this sense, served to keep their financial issues in order.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi was appointed administrator of several waqfs just after the appointment of his father as *şeyhülislam* on 25 Safer 1238 (11 November 1822). His appointment as *mütevelli* (administrator) to the waqfs recorded in the next entry probably resulted from his father's influential position. The administration of religious endowments provided the administrator with a salary in the amount specified in the endowment deed.⁸²¹ Mustafa Hamid Efendi earned more than seventy-five aspers daily which was equal to a daily income of a *müderris* who had reached the level of *mevleviyet* (dignitary rank).⁸²²

This devotee was trusted with the supervision of four waqfs; the waqf of ex-Grand Admiral Kılıç Ali Paşa at Tophane for forty-five aspers daily, and the waqf of the mosque and *imaret* (public soup-kitchen) in Kaçanık of the late ex-Grand Vizier [and] the conqueror of Yemen, Gazi Sinan Paşa, for fifteen aspers daily, and the waqf of the late Polad Mustafa Paşa's mosque and *imaret* in Siroz and İstanbul for fifteen aspers daily, as well as the waqf of the late Beyhan Sultan, may she rest in peace ,l in Üsküp. 23 Rebiülevvel 1238,"⁸²³

As soon as Mustafa Hamid was appointed, he began work to increase the revenues of the Kılıç Ali Paşa waqf. Two days after his appointment on 25 Rebiülevvel (10 December 1822), he borrowed a sum of three thousand *kuruş* from the waqf of Kaftani İbrahim Ağa to pay the personnel salaries that had not been paid because the waqf properties were vacant due to the ongoing Greek rebellion.⁸²⁴ Around one month later on 24 Rebiülahir (8 January 1823), Yonda? Island, which was the waqf's *mukataa* (revenue source), was given to the voivode of Ayazmend El-Hac Süleyman Ağa as *iltizam* (tax farming) in return for twenty thousand *kuruş*. According to the agreement, Süleyman Ağa would pay six thousand *kuruş* in March, six thousand *kuruş* in September, and eight thousand in the February of the following year .⁸²⁵ The *mukataa* of the Gazi Sinan Paşa mosque was also handed over for tax-farming for the sum of

⁸²¹ Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, "Vakıf: Tarih," *DİA*, vol. 42, 479-86; Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 178.

⁸²² For the salaries in ilmiye hierarchy, see Beyazıt, *Osmanlı İlmîyye Mesleğinde İstihdam*.

⁸²³ Sıdkızâde, 4a.

⁸²⁴ Ibid., 4b.

⁸²⁵ Ibid., 7b.

one thousand two hundred and fifty *kuruş*.⁸²⁶ It appears that he managed to increase the waqfs' revenues and turn these into a money-making business.

Likewise, the author noted on 17 Şaban 1238 (29 October 1823) that he had been appointed to the clerkship (*kitabî*) of the Hekimzâde Ali Paşa waqf.⁸²⁷ It was worth four thousand five hundred *kuruş*, a fabulous sum compared to his services at the above-mentioned waqfs. When it came to Ramazan, he recorded that a sum of four thousand five hundred *kuruş* had been sent to him. He was exempted from paying the fee required in return for obtaining the decree proving one's duty in the waqf (*berat*). He ended the entry with a prayer revealing his desire to earn more gold.⁸²⁸

His administrative duties gave him the possibility to intervene in employments related to the waqfs under his supervision. For instance, the office of *duagû* (beadsman) in the waqf of Kılıç Ali Paşa was given to a certain Yusuf Halife for a wage of two and a half *akçe* daily.⁸²⁹ Also, an office of beadsman which generated twenty-five *akçe* daily salary was filled by the *kethüda* (chamberlain) of Zeynelabidin Efendi. Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote that fifteen *akçe* were given to the newly appointed beadsman and ten *akçe* to the above-mentioned chamberlain for his services.⁸³⁰ These administrative duties would have enabled him to accumulate wealth, build new patronage networks, and create a strong political and economic base for himself as well as for the household within which he operated.

Another source of money was the payments made in return for appointments. Judges and teachers had to pay a sum of money to *şeyhülislam* as a gift for every position they were promoted to. This payment was called *boğça baha*.⁸³¹ These payments must have turned into a significant source of wealth for the eminent ulama who made such appointments because the Şeyhülislam, as well as the chief military judges of Rumelia and Anatolia, were responsible for hundreds of appointments in the *ilmiye* hierarchy.⁸³²

⁸²⁶ Sıdkızâde, 6a.

⁸²⁷ Ibid., 15b.

⁸²⁸ Ibid., 18a.

⁸²⁹ Ibid., 10a.

⁸³⁰ Ibid., 14b.

⁸³¹ Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Tarih Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985), 20.

⁸³² Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 143.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi frequently recorded substantial sums of money paid as *boğça baha*. For instance, Fahreddin Efendi, who was the former judge of Filibe (Plovdiv), paid two hundred and fifty *kuruş* in return for his reappointment to the district of Plovdiv. In this first entry concerning *boğça baha*, the diarist stated that it was customary and paid thanks for an appointment made by his father. He also noted that he recorded that amount in the diary after being given permission by Fahreddin Efendi.⁸³³ Likewise, the judge of Bosnia paid three hundred *kuruş*,⁸³⁴ the judge of Üsküdar paid two hundred *kuruş*,⁸³⁵ the judge of Cairo paid two hundred and fifty *kuruş*,⁸³⁶ the judge of Maraş paid a hundred *kuruş*,⁸³⁷ the regent judge of Yenişehir paid three hundred *kuruş*,⁸³⁸ and the judge of Erzurum paid five hundred *kuruş*⁸³⁹ for their promotions. Similarly, Seyyid Mehmed Esad Efendi paid five hundred *kuruş* as *boğça baha* for being promoted to the honorary rank of Mecca.⁸⁴⁰ Mustafa Hamid Efendi also recorded money paid to him under different categories on 5 Şaban 1239 (5 April 1824). He was rewarded with a payment of two hundred and fifty *kuruş* as salary for his duty of clerkship, fifty *kuruş* as *boğça baha*, sixteen *kuruş* for stationery and another sixteen *kuruş* for an undefined purpose. He wrote that a sum of three hundred and thirty-three *kuruş* was paid to him on one day. At the end of this last entry, he wrote prayers for gaining more.⁸⁴¹

According to the records, the highest amount paid as *boğça baha* was five hundred *kuruş* while the lowest amount was fifty *kuruş*. Evidently, it was not a fixed amount as there was a significant difference of as much as four hundred and fifty *kuruş* between the lowest and the highest amount. The question is how the amount paid as *boğça baha* was determined. Nizri says that “the higher a government official’s position, the more was expected of him in terms of honoring his status and securing his office by frequent gift-giving,”⁸⁴² One might expect that the level of the *medrese*

⁸³³ Sıdkızâde, 10b.

⁸³⁴ Ibid., 12b.

⁸³⁵ Ibid., 12b.

⁸³⁶ Ibid., 12b.

⁸³⁷ Ibid., 14a.

⁸³⁸ Ibid., 19a.

⁸³⁹ Ibid., 23b.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid., 23b.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid., 33a.

⁸⁴² Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 149.

or judgeship was a determinant, but the records of Mustafa Hamid Efendi disprove this idea because judges who were promoted to the same levels paid different amounts. The judge of Erzurum paid five hundred *kuruş* while the judge of Üsküdar paid two hundred *kuruş* although both judgeships were at the *mevleviyet* level (dignitary rank). Judges or teachers may have paid *bohça baha* in accordance with their financial situation as well as their level of intimacy with the *şeyhülislam*. Those who wanted to sustain and strengthen their relations might force themselves to pay more. If the personal relationship and the financial situation of the appointee affected the amount paid, it means that *bohça baha* was negotiable.

According to the diary, fashionable, luxurious, technological devices like watches, binoculars, and muskets as well as such things as horses and textiles, and food items would have been the subjects of gift exchange which created and strengthened patronage networks sustaining the financial and social well-being of both the client and the patron. As explained before, gifts were usually sent as a result of an appointment. Yet, many other occasions necessitated gift exchange like religious festivals, the holy month of Ramazan, banquets, circumcision and marriage ceremonies, as well as dismissals, were also times to present gifts to the benefactor in order to secure a new post. Gifts were as important as money in strengthening the financial power of the addressee because most of the gifts recorded in the diary were highly- expensive items; such luxury objects were probably often resold and changed into cash. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's income was therefore supplemented by the various gifts he received on several occasions.

Numerous people in the Sıdkızâde network secured a constant flow of gifts; this, in turn, explains the number of entries recording the gifts accepted by Mustafa Hamid Efendi. As in the case of the money he earned, Mustafa Hamid Efendi was also very careful in taking note of the gifts. For instance, the diarist recorded that the chief military judge of Anatolia, Mustafa Rakım Efendi sent him a watch as it was customary (*ber mu'tâd*) to send gifts in the month of Ramazan (*ramazâniyye*).⁸⁴³ Halil Efendi, an officer in the army, also sent a watch as gift for celebrating the month of Ramazan. Likewise, a pair of gold binoculars was sent by the former judge of İzmir

⁸⁴³ Sıdkızâde, 16b.

on the second night of Ramazan, and Army Chamberlain Ali Efendi sent him a gold snuffbox on the third night of Ramazan.⁸⁴⁴ It seems to have been a very prosperous period as some people in his network showed their generosity and commitment by sending highly- expensive gifts to congratulate him during this very special period of the Islamic calendar. Some gold items were added to his fortune during this period of prosperity.

New appointments and promotions were usually followed by gifts. The voivode of Uşak, who was the uncle of his brother-in-law, presented a horse on his reappointment.⁸⁴⁵ Mustafa Hamid Efendi recorded his feelings of happiness on receiving such a special gift; we know from the diary that he was very fond of horses. Seyyid Cafer Fevzi Efendi presented a watch on the occasion of his appointment to the judgeship of *Darülhilfe*.⁸⁴⁶ The head of the *ayans* (notables) in Izmir sent a British watch.⁸⁴⁷ Dismissals were also times to strengthen ties with the benefactor. The former judge of Mecca sent him several luxurious fabrics and clothes when he returned to the capital.⁸⁴⁸ Several watches, expensive fabrics, a ram (*Mihaliç koç*)- these were some of the gifts recorded in the diary. The household kitchen was also supported by gifts. A certain el-Hac Mustafa Efendi dispatched a letter to Mustafa Hamid Efendi and sent halvah, musk, and a six-pack of cheddar cheese.⁸⁴⁹ Likewise, the judge of Eyüp, Emin Beğzâde Abdülkadir Efendi, sent ten bowls of yoghurt and one plate of cream.⁸⁵⁰ It was not only luxurious items, foods or fabrics that were sent as gift. Some unusual objects would also have been presented. Someone whom the diarist called ‘our İsmail Agah Efendi’ gave him a horn, known as a ‘serpent’, placed in a mother of pearl box⁸⁵¹ when he was dismissed and returned to the capital. Likewise, certain Mısrân Agha sent four red fish that were placed in a mason jar.⁸⁵²

The Sıdkızâdes did not only receive gifts. It was a reciprocal process; they also had to give gifts to preserve and strengthen existing ties as well as to create new webs of

⁸⁴⁴ Sıdkızâde, 17b.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid., 27b.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid., 23b.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid., 12a.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., 7a.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., 9a.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid., 14a.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid., 32b.

⁸⁵² Ibid., 4b.

relationships. After being appointed as the chief mufti, Sıdkızâde Ahmed I Efendi, for instance, presented expensive gifts and paid considerable sums to the sultan and other palace grandees. The diarist wrote that it was the custom for the *şeyhülislam* to present gifts to the sultan to show his appreciation. His father, for example, sent a Saxonian bowl and a plate to the sultan, while he paid a sum of four thousand five hundred *kuruş* to the sons of the sultan, the chief eunuch of the harem, the chief armorer and the treasurer. He also paid one thousand *kuruş* to the chamberlain.⁸⁵³

3.EXTERNAL SELF: DAILY LIFE OF THE DIARIST

The unremitting references to family, friends and acquaintances in his personal chronicle permit one to reconstruct Mustafa Hamid Efendi's social activities. He was not reticent about the world around him which enables us to understand how and with whom he passed his days. The diary is significant for describing the images of daily activities and revealing much about the author's way of life. The diary gives a wealth of information about the ordinary experiences in daily life; from the time passed as a member of an ulama family to the daily rituals of an individual. It also reveals a lot about the realities of human life, from the delights of births, marriages, or appointments to the sorrow of dismissals or fear of sickness. In my discussion of this, I will concentrate on an Ottoman individual and his authentic experiences, focusing on the regular features of Mustafa Hamid's life, the outings, visits, dinner parties and the material dimension of his self as well as his conception of time.

3.1. Sociability: Visits and Banquets

The house and the family were typically given to privacy; but the visits and banquets that took place in the mansions of the elite allowed the diarist to socialize, build up new relations and strengthen the existing ones. Like many other wealthy families of Istanbul, the Sıdkızâdes had two houses: a seaside mansion in the Rumelihisarı district and one house in the city, probably both embodying the wealth of the best elite mansions of that time. They would spend the summer in the seaside mansion which

⁸⁵³ Sıdkızâde, 3b.

was more suitable for the warm days of summer and move to the house in the city when the season turned cold.

The house was obviously very important as the center of everyday life. These two mansions of the Sıdkızâdes hosted numerous guests at iftars and dinner parties, witnessed wedding ceremonies, many births as well as the coming and going of servants and slaves who joined or left the household. Mustafa Hamid Efendi's daughter, Saliha Sabite, was born in the house in the city and ceremonies regarding her birth, like her first hammam experience or celebrations for the fortieth day after her birth, took place there as well. His own marriage ceremony with Ziyet Ziba Hatun was also organized in that house. This special event gathered together many important personages in their mansion.

Visits and dinner parties were important components of elite life and the diarist called the latter *ziyâfet* (banquet) rather than *ta'am* (meal). Mustafa Hamid Efendi was a popular figure at banquets organized by members of the ulama and other elites. He recorded the meals that he attended and identified people with whom he feasted. Such records enable us to access his network as well as to learn about his social life.

Damad Efendi was one of those frequently mentioned by the diarist. Mustafa Hamid Efendi used to visit Damad Efendi in his seaside mansion and they often had dinner together. These frequent records suggest that the diarist got along well with him. Usually they were accompanied by some other elite people. On the 25th of Cemâziyelevvel 1239 (27 January 1824), for instance, Mustafa Hamid Efendi and Damad Efendi were accompanied by two persons, one called Cezmizâde and the other Ahmedzâde, as well as a certain Şeyh Efendi at the dinner hosted by Damad Efendi.⁸⁵⁴ It seems that Mustafa Hamid Efendi spent the night in Damad Efendi's mansion. The next day, he first went to a certain Bahaeddin Efendi's⁸⁵⁵ house from where he moved to the mansion (*konak*) around eleven o'clock while Damad Efendi went to the seaside

⁸⁵⁴ Sıdkızâde, 31b.

⁸⁵⁵ Since he is carrying the title of Efendi, Bahaeddin Efendi must have been an *ilmiye* member in his network. In *Sicill-i Osmani*, there are four persons carrying the name Bahaeddin who lived around the same time with Mustafa Hamid Efendi. All of these four people named as Bahaeddin were belonged to established families carrying the suffix “zâde.” Melek Paşazâde Bahaeddin Mehmed Bey, Tatarcıkzâde Bahaeddin Mehmed Efendi, Uşşakizâde Bahaeddin Mehmed Efendi and Reiszâde Bahaeddin Mehmed Ferid Efendi. See *Sicill-i Osmani*, II, 350-51. All of them served as teacher or judge in the period under consideration.

mansion. Another day after eating breakfast in the city, he went to visit Zeynelabidin Efendi (d. 1824) in Üsküdar. From there he moved to the pier at ten o'clock to take a boat and go to the seaside mansion.⁸⁵⁶ The people mentioned in this entry by family names using the suffix “*zâde*” implies that they belonged to some prominent ulama families. On top of that, Zeynelabidin Efendi was the former *şeyhülislam* who was forgiven and allowed to return to Istanbul in November 1818, ten months after his dismissal and banishment to Bursa.⁸⁵⁷

Many other dinner parties were recorded throughout the diary. On 19 Cemâziyelevvel 1238 (1 February 1823), he attended a dinner party at the house of Cezmizâde Hasan Efendi who served as a teacher and finally became the judge of Eyüp.⁸⁵⁸ Another feast was hosted by Arzuhali Efendi on 29 Şaban 1238 (11 May 1823).⁸⁵⁹ The judge of the flour market (*kapan-ı dakik/un kapanı*), Ali Efendi, hosted a breakfast party at his seaside mansion on 18 Şevval 1238 (28 June 1823). After breakfast, the guests sailed to a beautiful boatyard and from there they rode horses to the vineyard of Ali Efendi where they had dinner. After spending the whole day together, Ali Efendi presented Mustafa Hamid Efendi with some valuable pieces of fabric as a gift. Having completed a busy day filled with excursions and banquets, Mustafa Hamid Efendi sailed to the seaside mansion by moonlight.⁸⁶⁰

Such meals did not only occur in the households of elites. Mustafa Hamid Edendi went all the way to the shrine of the prophet Joshua together with Damad Efendi and Meşrebzâde Ali Molla Efendi for a picnic/meal held on 26 Şevval 1238 (6 July 1823). They visited the tomb and prayed there after the meal. Prayers and petitions for forgiveness were followed by performing the prayer. Then they drove to the pier from where they sailed to the seaside mansion together.⁸⁶¹ Mustafa Hamid Efendi also attended meals in picnic areas like Kağıthane. Sometimes he spent all day visiting and attending feasts. In the entry for 17 Şevval 1243 (2 May 1828) for instance, he recorded

⁸⁵⁶ Sıdkızâde, 31b.

⁸⁵⁷ Özcan, “Zeynelabidin Efendi,” 366-7. Zeynelabidin Efendi was dismissed by the events, known as *softalar vak'ası* and *mum kavgası*, between students. Zeynelabidin Efendi decided to imprisonment and banishment of those involved. Because of these events and resulting reactions, Zeynelabidin Efendi was dismissed on 27 January 1818.

⁸⁵⁸ Sıdkızâde, 8a.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid., 17a.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid., 20b.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid., 21a.

his day thus: “Thanks to God, today we went to the picnic area of Kağıthane riding in a horse-drawn vehicle. After having breakfast (*sabah ta’ami*), we got into the vehicles at quarter past eight and ate dinner in the mansion of the head of the Stables (*mirahur köşkü*).”⁸⁶²

Mustafa Hamid Efendi was also in close contact with people from various occupational groups. For instance, once he attended a dinner invitation in the lodge of Emir Buhari.⁸⁶³ Another dinner invitation was hosted by Mehmed Efendi whom he wrote about as ‘our old stamp- holder’ (*bizim mühürdâr-ı sâbık*).⁸⁶⁴ It seems that Mustafa Hamid Efendi was such a favorite person at banquets that householders sometimes begged him to attend. He recorded one such occasion in which he attended a banquet against his inclination because of the host’s insistence. He attended the feast held by the apprentice scribe Aziz upon his request (*kemâl-ı ricâ ve niyâz istemesi*). Damad Efendi was also present at the dinner party. Although Mustafa Hamid Efendi was very fond of such gatherings, his record about this invitation suggest he did not want to attend. The reason for his unwillingness might result from the fact that the dinner party was held just after Damad Efendi lost his little daughter.⁸⁶⁵

The diarist also had the opportunity to meet the sultan in person thanks to his position as the administrator of the waqf of Kılıç Ali Paşa Mosque where the sultan occasionally attended Friday sermons. He recorded one such occasion with pleasure and prayers of gratitude as he had the chance to meet the sultan personally in the mosque. In this entry, he revealed his feelings of pride and his desire to reap the benefits of being in the presence of the sultan.

When the news has arrived that the sultan will honor Kılıç Ali Paşa Mosque in Tophane district where I am the administrator, ... after we sat with the janissary agha in the chief of artillery’s room, after ... the sultan arrived to the port side and we greeted [him] holding an incensory-burner in hand ... after [it was] brightened up by the presence of the light- giving moon (*rikâb-ı kamertâb*), again we stood on the stairs facing the right way, again we went out doors holding an incense burner. After we had taken approximately twenty steps, the imperial consent was given, saying “Let the

⁸⁶² Sıdkızâde, 35a.

⁸⁶³ Ibid., 8a.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid., 30a.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., 30b.

gentleman (*effendi*) stay here.” May God give happiness, auspiciousness and allow us to reap the benefits (*semere*) of this. 14 Şaban 1238, the night of Bara‘at, Friday.⁸⁶⁶

3.2. The Material Self: His Use of Servants, Horses and Luxurious Items

Consumption was a way of expressing social status and possessions to the rest of the group. As Yavuz Köse notes, goods were functional because of the constant needs of the body to be fed, kept warm and sheltered, as well as being functional because they gave the impression of being part of a group. The patterns of the consumption and use of certain goods allowed the consumer to stir up emotions, create relationships and observe rituals, and this, in turn, shaped their identity.⁸⁶⁷ Faroqhi and Akçetin saw consumption as being a “language one can understand, and which one had to master to maintain membership in the Ottoman elite club.”⁸⁶⁸

The diary gives valuable information on Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s material circumstances, especially on his consumption of goods. His expenditures were diverse and varied: salaries paid in return for certain services, gifts for acquaintances/elites who were in his network. It seems he spent considerable amounts on luxury items. His expenditures were largely allocated to buying expensive clothes, horses, and slaves.

Zilfi notes that wealthy families had both female and male slaves, as well as free servants for doing household work.⁸⁶⁹ According to the diary, Mustafa Hamid Efendi had many servants and female slaves in his service. He constantly recruited new retainers for the household. There are three entries about his servants in the year 1239, three entries in 1243 and one entry in 1244. These servants (*hâdim*) were mostly recommended to him by acquaintances. For instance, a boy named Ahmed was recommended by someone called ‘our devotee’ (*bizim sofı*). He added that the boy was to come from Kütahya. Zilfi notes that “household servants were often relatives

⁸⁶⁶ Sıdkızâde, 15a-15b.

⁸⁶⁷ Yavuz Köse, “Consume Together: Some Glimpses into Ottoman Consumer Behaviour,” in *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*, ed. Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 201.

⁸⁶⁸ Elif Akçetin and Suraiya Faroqhi, “Introduction,” in *Living the Good Life: Consumption in the Qing and Ottoman Empires of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Elif Akçetin and Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 16.

⁸⁶⁹ Madeline C. Zilfi, “Servants, Slaves, and the Domestic Order in the Ottoman Middle East,” *Hawwa* 2, no:1 (2004), 12.

or immigrant compatriots of the effective householder.⁸⁷⁰ In the case of the servant Ahmed, this particular devotee, who apparently had a close relationship with the Sıdkızâde household, was probably the young boy's relative and/or compatriot. As Zilfi further points out, "urban migrants had a better chance of surviving in the city if compatriots or relatives could show the way."⁸⁷¹ In this case, the young boy Ahmed had the good fortune of having a relative/compatriot who had close relations with a grandee household.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi, nonetheless, seems to be unlucky in finding hard-working and reliable servants needed to run the household. On 27 Rebiülevvel 1239 (1 December 1823), he wrote down his complaints regarding his servant Abdülbaki who was reckless and negligent in managing his duties. Mustafa Hamid Efendi said he was a malingerer (*habis*).⁸⁷² Although this particular Abdülbaki was forgiven a number of times for his misconduct, he did not receive a lesson and was finally dismissed.⁸⁷³ The statement of Mustafa Hamid Efendi at the end of the entry indicates his need of a loyal assistant. He hoped to find a trusted protégé to appoint as *kethüda* (chamberlain). This very important task necessitated managing all the business of the household, both the private and the public aspects, such as providing supplies for the household or assisting to oversee religious endowments and presenting gifts in the name of his patron.⁸⁷⁴ Mustafa Hamid Efendi wished to fill this important position by appointing a trustworthy and competent person, that is, he wanted to appoint his *kethüda* after training him in the household.

Abdülbaki was mentioned in a number of entries about running the household, revealing Mustafa Hamid Efendi's desire to train him. For instance, he was entrusted to convey one thousand, two hundred and fifty piastres to the moneylender, Tıngiroğlu Kirkor, in the early days of the month of Recep.⁸⁷⁵ At the beginning, Abdülbaki had evidently been trusted to fulfill important duties like transferring large amounts of

⁸⁷⁰ Zilfi, "Servants, Slaves, and the Domestic Order," 15.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid.

⁸⁷² Sıdkızâde, 28b.

⁸⁷³ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁴ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 76-77; Michael Nizri, "The Position of Steward to the Ottoman Provincial Governor as a Stepping-Stone to Regional Influence," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 22, no:1/2 (2016): 17-30; Mehmet Canatar, "Kethüda," *DİA*, vol. 25, 332-4.

⁸⁷⁵ Sıdkızâde, 11a.

money. His services were rewarded by Mustafa Hamid Efendi, who bestowed on Abdülbaki one of the gifts sent by the regent judge of Bursa, Nazif Efendi.⁸⁷⁶ However, he fell into disgrace in a short time because of disobedience and violating the norm of behavior expected from servants. Actually, “live-in servants were often treated as family members, intimates of the household, nonetheless. Intimacy was precarious, however, because unrelated servants were not, in fact, family and even relatives could be sent away if problems arose.”⁸⁷⁷

In addition to good service, loyalty was another major requirement in recruiting servants and other trusted persons. Loyalty did not last forever, nonetheless, as it was “determined by the ability of the patron to provide opportunities and better prospects for advancement.”⁸⁷⁸ Otherwise, servants could easily shift their loyalties from one patron to another and from one household to another. Complaints regarding household dependents were not restricted to the above-mentioned Abdülbaki. The diarist wrote about a certain Raşid who obtained a new patronage tie with another person as soon as Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s father was dismissed. The power and prestige of the diarist were derived from the prominent position of his father as şeyhülislam; members of the Sıdkızâde family could allocate some key positions to their protégés thanks to the power of Şeyhülislam Sıdkızâde Ahmed I Efendi. Raşid was well aware of the importance of such power networks in securing a position when he joined the Sıdkızâde household. However, it was certainly the dismissal of the most powerful figure of the household that prompted him to search for another patron. Eight months after Raşid left the Sıdkızâde household, Mustafa Hamid Efendi reported that Raşid had petitioned and begged to be taken back into the household, suggesting that he most probably could not find what he was looking for.⁸⁷⁹

Mustafa Hamid Efendi was also concerned with buying new female slaves for his household and selling those who were not needed anymore. According to Bernard Lewis, young and pretty white slaves were seen as status symbols as only the richest

⁸⁷⁶ Sıdkızâde, 12a.

⁸⁷⁷ Zilfi, “Servants, Slaves, and the Domestic Order,” 15-6.

⁸⁷⁸ Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics*, 70.

⁸⁷⁹ Sıdkızâde, 30a.

elites could afford them.⁸⁸⁰ We know that being a member of an influential ulama family, Mustafa Hamid Efendi had enough wealth to buy several slaves to serve him. In three entries, Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote the names of his female slaves, giving them a certain degree of visibility in the diary. These entries were written during the course of buying and selling. For instance, he bought a slave girl named Sabahat from his mother and paid the sum of 1651 *kuruş* on 1 Rebiülahir 1238 (19 December 1822). He renamed her Çeşm-i Felek (the eye of the sky), most probably because her eyes were blue. The transaction was held privately within the household between mother and son.⁸⁸¹ The considerable amount paid for Çeşm-i Felek signals the satisfaction of the former owner. However, she was sent to the slave market eight months after the transaction on 25 Zilkade 1238. Mustafa Hamid Efendi did not give any detail about the reason why he sold her in such a short time; we do not know if Çeşm-i Felek created trouble in her new household. The diarist just recorded that he sent her to the slave market; perhaps it was the usual practice to sell slaves who were not useful for household work. On 4 Şevval 1243 (19 April 1828), he sent another slave, Ruşenkâver, to Seyyid Feyzullah Efendi for sale in the slave market.⁸⁸² He also added his prayers for good customers. Although slaves were seen as a part of the household and mostly treated as family members, they also had a nominal value in the market and were part of the household investment. Therefore, if necessary, they were sent to the slave bazaar.⁸⁸³

These female slaves were mostly used for domestic work. Indeed, in the entry describing the wedding day of Mustafa Hamid Efendi, we see female slaves preparing the room for the groom and his bride, serving the food and contributing to the organization of the wedding. Female slaves were obviously charged with cooking, laundering, removing slops and scrubbing. However, domestic work did not exclude sexual activity; the heads of the household also had sexual relations with their female slaves. Mustafa Hamid Efendi, in fact, called female slaves concubines (*cariye*). The

⁸⁸⁰ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 75, 91.

⁸⁸¹ Zilfi, "Servants, Slaves, and the Domestic Order," 7. Zilfi noted that white female slaves were increasingly traded in private residences while the main places where African females were sold were the central slave market.

⁸⁸² Sıdkızâde, 35a.

⁸⁸³ Zilfi, "Servants, Slaves, and the Domestic Order," 15-6.

term probably had sexual connotations rather than just designating a female slave, responsible for the running of the household work in the domestic sphere. At the end of entries concerning employing new slaves, Mustafa Hamid Efendi added his prayers for happiness and God's blessings. Such prayers for happiness signal the responsibilities of female slaves as domestic workers and their duties to please the sexual needs of their owners. Indeed Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote an entry about the birth of his nephew at the very beginning of the diary. His brother, Mehmed Rıfat Efendi, had a son named Osman Nureddin on 13 Safer 1238 (30 October 1822). The mother of the baby was Mehmed Rıfat Efendi's concubine, Üçnaz (Evcinaz) Kadın (d. 1856).⁸⁸⁴ We do not know if he had a private harem, but it seems that Mustafa Hamid Efendi himself was a polygamist, probably having several concubines.⁸⁸⁵ He evidently had a child from one of his slaves as he was not married to a free-born Muslim women when his daughter Saliha Sabite was born on 27 Safer 1238 (13 November 1822). Nevertheless, there is no explanation about the legal status of the childbearing slave. We do not have any further information about Saliha's mother. The picture is quite blurred, and one cannot understand from the entries if she gained her freedom after giving birth to her owner's child.⁸⁸⁶

Mustafa Hamid Efendi had also black female slaves in the household. In the entry for 25 Zilhicce 1243 (8 July 1828), he wrote that a black slave (*zenciye câriye*) named Feriha was bought for the sum of 1200 kuruş. One can infer that all other slaves recorded in the diary were white as he did not indicate their color as he did for Feriha. Ehud Toledano notes that Ottoman slaves were distinguished according to their race. Essentially there were two classes of domestic slaves: white and African. Almost all African slaves were used for household works and they could not have a chance for

⁸⁸⁴ Sıdkızâde, 1b. Üçnaz (Evcinaz) Kadın's grave is found in Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha Mosque's burial area. Kutlu, *Kaybolan Medeniyetimiz*, 150. According to Orhan Çolak's study, Mehmed Rıfat Efendi was married to Fatma Hanım (d. 1855/56), the daughter of Şeyhülislam Ebulhayr Efendi. He also had three concubines called Meleknaz Kadın (d. 1832), Emine Üçnaz (Evcinaz) Kadın (d. 1856) and Cemal Kadınefendi (d. 1873/74). See Orhan M. Çolak, "Arşiv Belgelerinin Işığı Altında Sadrazam Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa'nın Hayatı, İcraatı ve Hayratı," 186.

⁸⁸⁵ Sıdkızâde, 2b. For example, the grave of one of his concubines, Nefise Nevciyan Kadın (d. 1828), is found in Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha Mosque's burial area, see Kutlu, *Kaybolan Medeniyetimiz*, 118.

⁸⁸⁶ Zilfi noted that the path for freedom was opened for those who bore the owner's child (*ümm-i veled*), see Madeline C. Zilfi, "Ottoman Slavery and Female Slaves in the Early Modern Era," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation: Economy and Society*, *Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation: Economy and Society*, ed. Halil İnalcık, et al, vol. 5 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000), 716.

upward mobility while white slaves functioned in a broader variety of occupations and had considerable opportunities for upward mobility, mostly through marriage to members of the upper echelons of Ottoman society.⁸⁸⁷ We do not know exactly whether the masters had sexual relationship with those black slaves. Toledano notes that the attitude of the predominantly white elite was psychologically directed towards white slaves by a feeling of “sameness.” Therefore, marriage across races was rare.⁸⁸⁸

There was a substantial difference between the market value of white and black slaves acquired for the household; 1,651 kuruş paid for Sabahat and 1,200 kuruş for Feriha. Mustafa Hamid Efendi paid 461 kuruş more to acquire his mother’s slave, but still this difference might not be derived from her race but from the fact that Sabahat was formerly his mother’s slave and satisfaction for her work was guaranteed. The transaction for Sabahat was held within the family, while Feriha was bought from the slave market.

Those female slaves were not the only luxury items listed in the diary. His entries revealed that he was pleased to include other very expensive items for his use. Mustafa Hamid Efendi had a keen interest on horses. If he went anywhere on horseback, he did not simply write “I went somewhere” but he emphasized the fact by saying “I ride a horse,” or “I ride in a horse-drawn vehicle.” There are lots of entries about Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s riding a horse, sending the horses to the grassland, accepting a horse as a gift or buying a new horse. For instance, he was very pleased by the gift of a horse from Şakir Efendi on the occasion of becoming the voivode of Uşak on 9 Safer 1239 (15 October 1823).⁸⁸⁹ Mustafa Hamid Efendi occasionally expressed his feelings of pleasure when recording gifts send by people in his network. He displayed his enthusiasm for horses by registering his pleasure (*gâyetü’l-gâye memnûn oldum*). He spent considerable amounts on buying new horses. He paid 325 kuruş to his brother, Mehmed Rıfat Efendi, to buy the horse sent by the governor (beylerbeyi) to him as a

⁸⁸⁷ Ehud R. Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 281.

⁸⁸⁸ Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade*, 281. Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Esir Ticareti,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, ed. Nuri Akbayan, Ekrem Işın, Necdet Sakaoğlu, Oya Baydar, M. Baha Tanman, M. Sabri Koz, Bülent Aksoy, Afife Batur, Yalçın Yusufoğlu, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1994), 200-2. Sakaoğlu noted that female white slaves were more desirable as concubines.

⁸⁸⁹ Sıdkızâde, 27b.

gift on 25 Şevval 1243 (10 May 1828). Immediately after procuring the horse, he rode it to visit Behçet Efendi by adding a prayer to ride it with ease and pleasure.⁸⁹⁰

Buying expensive clothes consisted of a huge part of Mustafa Hamid Efendi's expenditures as he was very attentive to his appearance. People mostly chose their clothes in accordance with the standards of the social environment in which they wanted to position themselves⁸⁹¹. Clothing itself "can be understood in terms of communication, for it is the necessary receipt of a message by other social players."⁸⁹² In this sense, garments- like "readable texts" with their own "system of symbols"- spoke for the wearer, indicating his wealth, status and even in certain cases revealing the wearer's profession.⁸⁹³

Tanyeli noted that Ottoman urban society in the seventeenth century mostly evaluated luxurious consumption in terms of clothing rather than in domestic goods. The estate inventories prove that large amounts were spent on clothing. Therefore, social status was displayed via one's outfit rather than by the materials used in the household.⁸⁹⁴ In Mustafa Hamid Efendi's case, the house was also a very important place for meeting people and entertaining guests; high social position was thus displayed through luxurious domestic equipment. But still, clothing seems to have been a more defining show of wealth and high social position. Mustafa Hamid Efendi acted in accordance with the standards of the social network in which he took part. In his personal account, he frequently took note of the clothes he bought from the market. Indeed, many of the diary's entries were about buying new clothes, changing clothes, accepting a piece of material as a gift or explaining how he dressed on various occasions. He appeared at events attended by the sultan and members of the elite society in Istanbul. He certainly

⁸⁹⁰ Sıdkızâde, 35a; Behçet Efendi must have been the person who was removed from his duty as chief physician and appointed as the chief military judge. See Hekimbaşı Hafız Hızır İlyas Ağa, *Osmanlı Sarayında Gündelik Hayat*, 301.

⁸⁹¹ David Gary Shaw, "Expressing Yourself in Later Medieval England: Individuality and Social Differentiation," in *Forms of Individuality and Literacy in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Franz-Joseph Arlinghaus (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 133.

⁸⁹² Ibid.

⁸⁹³ Cornelia Bohn, "Clothing as Medium of Communication," 7, accessed December 3, 2020, https://www.unilu.ch/fileadmin/fakultaeten/ksf/institute/sozsem/dok/Mitarbeitende/Bohn/Bohn_2004_clothing-as_medium.pdf.

⁸⁹⁴ Uğur Tanyeli, "Norms of Domestic Comfort and Luxury in Ottoman Metropolises: Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Illuminated Table, The Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2003), 315-6.

wanted to dress appropriately for every circumstance, revealing how much attention he paid to his appearance.

Ulinka Rublack noted that clothing played an imperative role in “constituting identities” of people.⁸⁹⁵ In the case of Mustafa Hamid Efendi, dressing appropriately served to signify attachment to and participation in the group. It was a way of expressing his identity and status as a member of a strong ulama household. He articulates “his consciousness of being on show”⁸⁹⁶ when he wrote that “I put on my shawl on hearing that *Şeyhülislam* Yasincizâde Abdülvehhab Efendi had appeared in the reception room (*selamlık*) with a shawl upon his fez and wearing a shirt.”⁸⁹⁷ This statement of the diarist reveals how individuals express their visual identities through specific forms of dress. The entries referring to clothes disclose his emphasis on his attire, making us understand “the individual’s personal attitudes and feelings about his public appearance.”⁸⁹⁸ The desire to dress properly possibly created some level of anxiety over the need to assert his (and other Sıdkızâde’s) particular rank and place within the *ilmiye* cadres as “garments as well as fabrics have a relation to the occasion and the identity of the person who wears them.”⁸⁹⁹ Indeed, he recorded the way others, in the higher echelons of Ottoman elite society dressed on certain occasions, and somehow drew a comparison between his way of dressing and that of other elites.

Thanks to God, on the night of twenty-seventh Friday in this month of Ramazan, Sadrazam, ex-Armorer (*silahdar-ı esbak*), Ali Paşa arrived wearing a quilted turban (*kallavi destar*) and a sof tabard (*ferace*) at twenty-five minutes to prayer time. And our master (*efendimiz*) arrived wearing his turban (*destar*) and a white *sof*. My brother and I took his arm and guided him to the audience hall and kissed his garment and [they] ate iftar meal and he came [again] after changing his clothes. 27 Ramazan, the year 1238, the night of Friday.⁹⁰⁰

⁸⁹⁵ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2010), 3.

⁸⁹⁶ Rhoads Murphey, “Forms of Differentiation and Expression of Individuality in Ottoman Society,” *Turcica* 34 (2002), 140.

⁸⁹⁷ Sıdkızâde, 36b.

⁸⁹⁸ Murphey, “Forms of Differentiation,” 140.

⁸⁹⁹ Bohn, “Clothing as Medium of Communication,” 6.

⁹⁰⁰ Sıdkızâde, 19a.

By describing the scene fully, the clothes worn, the welcoming ceremony, the iftar table and the behavior of the diners, he recreated the events in the mind of the reader, turning the reader into a spectator.⁹⁰¹

The material of the clothes was important as the type of fabric used for garments had a communicative value. Such information enables us to interpret his material world. “Objects impart their qualities (say color, or texture) to us and we relate them emotionally and think that they represent our tastes, values, wishes, and spirituality, our connection with others and with the past.”⁹⁰² For instance, garments made from expensive furs were accepted as status symbols as it was mostly the elite who could afford to buy them.⁹⁰³ “The basis of the universal communicative use of clothing ... are the virtually infinite possibilities of diversification in its materials. It begins with the fabric ... the part of the clothing and its system of significant.”⁹⁰⁴ The most frequent category of goods mentioned in the diary consists of textiles and garments. Among the fabrics, mention is made of woolens (*çuka*), *altıparmak* (striped silky fabric) and *çitari* (bombazine). Some kinds of fabric are recurrently registered throughout the text. He sometimes recorded the exact place of origins of those fabrics, for example, *Hind-kârî*. The most noteworthy fabric appearing in the diary was fur-lynx, sable, or ermine- which indicated Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s expensive tastes. He owned several valuable furs and seems to have preferred lynx especially. Often, tailors were trusted with these expensive fabrics to make clothes with. On 28 Rebiülevvel 1238 (13 December 1822), Mustafa Hamdi Efendi bought a lynx fur from a Jewish furrier for 400 *kuruş*. Three days later, he received the clothes from the tailor. On the same day, he wrote that he was wearing this newly obtained fur.⁹⁰⁵ For the upper classes of Istanbul, ermine, white fox, sable, marten, and black squirrel had special value; ermine was a great status symbol.⁹⁰⁶ Mustafa Hamid Efendi had some of these expensive furs in his wardrobe; particularly ermine and sable.

⁹⁰¹ René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 153.

⁹⁰² Rublack, *Dressing Up*, 3.

⁹⁰³ Filiz Karaca, “Kürk,” *DİA*, vol. 26, 568-70.

⁹⁰⁴ Bohn, “Clothing as Medium of Communication,” 5.

⁹⁰⁵ Sıdkızâde, 5a.

⁹⁰⁶ Markus Koller, “The Istanbul Fur Market in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 127.

In the winter, furs were generally lined to give protection from the cold. Furs were mostly lined with lambskin and sheepskin.⁹⁰⁷ Mustafa Hamid Efendi habitually had such clothes prepared for protection from the cold in the winter months, that is from November to March. He did not specify the material used to line his furs, simply wrote that he had them lined. Every time that he had one of his furs lined and put it on it, he prayed for God's blessing.⁹⁰⁸ "People did assert status through the goods they consumed,"⁹⁰⁹ including especially furs and expensive fabrics. These items were probably of extraordinary significance to Mustafa Hamid Efendi as supreme markers of nobility and were thus described by him so repetitively.

For women's clothing, the list of fabrics and clothes is rather short. Items of female clothing were represented in the diary by purchases for his daughter Saliha. Mustafa Hamid Efendi recorded that he bought fabrics for Saliha for the first time on 5 Cemâziyelevvel 1238 (18 January 1823).⁹¹⁰ His enthusiasm for attire can be read from this entry in which he described his first buying experience of buying material for his little daughter. He purchased (*çitari*) fabric for a dress, a pair of *shalwar* (baggy trousers) and a jacket (*hırka*) He gave the fabrics to the tailor to make up and received the embroidered clothes six days later. Saliha wore those clothes for the first time on 11 Cemâziyelevvel 1238 (24 January 1823).⁹¹¹ This entry was written on the twenty-fourth of January, precisely the day when they may have experienced the lowest temperature of the winter. The little girl's wardrobe had been prepared in readiness for the winter season. At different times, Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote down everything he purchased for Saliha, mostly dresses and *shalwar*.⁹¹² The only different item of female clothing mentioned in the diary was socks. He recorded that three pairs of socks for himself and two pairs of socks for his *harem* were sent as gifts by a certain Mehmed Efendi, the regent judge of Eskişehir.⁹¹³ No other mention of women's clothing appeared in the diary until he married Ziyet Ziba Hatun. The only female clothing item appearing in entries on the wedding ceremony is the aigrette (*sorguç*) worn by

⁹⁰⁷ Koller, "The Istanbul Fur Market," 127.

⁹⁰⁸ Sıdkızâde, 28a, 34a.

⁹⁰⁹ Akçetin and Faroqi, "Introduction," 32.

⁹¹⁰ Sıdkızâde, 7a.

⁹¹¹ Ibid.

⁹¹² Ibid., 12b.

⁹¹³ Ibid., 34b.

the bride.⁹¹⁴ Unfortunately, these female clothing items do not give a clear picture of women's clothing preferences in their daily activities. We do not have enough information in the diary about what Ottoman ladies wore at home or when they went out.

Apart from clothes and horses, various expensive materials used by Mustafa Hamid Efendi were also recorded in the diary. Fatma Müge Göçek noted that “gift exchange emerges as the most recurrent medium within which Western goods occur.”⁹¹⁵ Mustafa Hamid Efendi was no an exception to this, he attained many luxurious Western products through gift exchanges. Many luxurious European gifts were sent him by people in his network. He listed many fashionable technological devices in the diary. In seven entries, Mustafa Hamid Efendi mentioned clocks which were mostly sent as gifts. Among these luxury objects a British watch which was decorated with marcasite (*İngiliz-kârî markazit sâ'at*) and a lantern watch which cost for 150 *kuruş* must be mentioned.⁹¹⁶ The British watch was sent by Ahmed Reşid Efendi who was head of the notables in Izmir. The lantern watch was sent by moneylender Kirkor in return for money invested by Mustafa Hamid Efendi. Tanyeli notes that clocks and watches defined the upper boundaries of achievable luxury mostly found in the households of high-ranking bureaucrats. He further argues that clocks were just appealing to the eye and functioned only as status symbols. They played practically no role in the daily routines of the people who had them.⁹¹⁷ Expensive clocks, such as the lantern clock, registered in the diary definitely served to display the wealth of the Sıdkızâde household. Nonetheless, in addition to Tanyeli's interpretation, pocket watches must have had a significant function in the daily activities of Mustafa Hamid Efendi even if those luxurious clocks on display in the house did not. It is difficult to see how clocks were used in practice; however, the fact that Mustafa Hamid Efendi attached importance to registering the time of events indicates that clocks were not simply ornamental.

⁹¹⁴ Sıdkızâde, 38b.

⁹¹⁵ Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 99.

⁹¹⁶ Sıdkızâde, 12a, 34b.

⁹¹⁷ Tanyeli, “Norms of Domestic Comfort and Luxury in Ottoman Metropolises,” 315.

Two other eye-catching items registered in the diary were a pair of gold binoculars and a beautifully made British musket. The gold binoculars were sent by a certain İsmail Efendi, a former mufti of İzmir.⁹¹⁸ He obtained the musket from his brother in return for the saddle blanket (*gaşıye*) sent by the deputy judge of Salonica.⁹¹⁹ Binoculars were rarely found in Ottoman estate inventories, being symbols of luxury and wealth.⁹²⁰ We cannot know for sure if Mustafa Hamid Efendi ever used these gold binoculars and the musket. These two items were mostly used for hunting purposes. However, the diary gives no clue as to whether Mustafa Hamid Efendi had any interest in hunting. He registered his excursions to the gardens of Kağıthane as well as other places were recorded but no hunting trips were. He might have used the binoculars to enjoy the beautiful view of Bosphorus from their waterside mansion in Rumelihisarı district. As Eldem notes, such expensive materials were often resold or exchanged to allow for new purchases.⁹²¹ Therefore, another possibility is that he exchanged such luxury items for other purchases because a gold binocular would be worth a considerable amount.⁹²²

3.3. Daily Routines of Getting Dressed and Hygiene

Similar to the importance he attached to his attire, the diarist was very attentive to his personal hygiene so the routines of bathing, changing clothes, shaving and cutting his nails became a regular subject of his diary. Such frequent mentions show that he had a concern for the physical/external image of his body. He was a person who regularly took part in social events, and he probably wanted his high standards to be noticed by others.

⁹¹⁸ Sıdkızâde, 17b.

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., 13b.

⁹²⁰ Tülay Artan, "Terekeler Işığında 18. Yüzyıl Ortalarında Eyüp'te Yaşam Tarzı Standartlarına Bir Bakış: Orta Halliliğin Aynası," in *18. Yüzyıl Kadı Sicilleri Işığında Eyüp'te Sosyal Yaşam*, ed. Tülay Artan (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998), 57.

⁹²¹ Edhem Eldem, "An Exercise in Ottoman Sartorial Micro-History: The Many Breeches, Shoes, and Fezzes of Mehmed Cemal Bey, 1855-1864," in *Fashioning the Self in Transcultural Settings: The Uses and Significance of Dress in Self-Narratives*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich and Richard Wittmann (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2015), 97.

⁹²² Sıdkızâde, 13b. The entry about his brother's musket strengthens this idea. His brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi exchanged his musket with a more practical item as saddle blankets (*gaşıye*) which were customarily used by the members of the *ilmiye*. For further information on *gaşıye* see, Erdoğan Merçil, "Gaşıye," *DİA*, vol. 13, 398-9.

Going to the hammam and performing all the rituals required to cleanse the body seems to be of significance to the diarist. When he went to the hammam, he described it as “the entrance into the hammam and the cleansing of the body (*duhul-ü hamam şod, tathir-i beden*).” The process of washing of the body was usually accompanied by cutting the nails and shaving. He also received gifts to be used in the hammam. Someone called Hafız Ahmed Efendi, for instance, presented him with a hammam shirt and two towels when he came back to the capital after his dismissal from the regentship of Yenişehir.⁹²³ Indeed, the hammam had great importance in Ottoman society. As Miri Shefer notes, it was a place where people met and socialized while fulfilling their need of personal hygiene. Public baths provided a set of services including removal of bodily hair, massaging etc., but more importantly the hammam was associated with health. Ottomans thought that going to the hammam and bathing were beneficial to their health.⁹²⁴

The diarist, likewise, was attentive to his health. Indeed, the opening entry of the diary was about his state of health. He had a problem with his urinary system about which he saw a Jewish doctor called Hayim. He recorded when and how to use the ointment (*mâcun*) prepared by the doctor.⁹²⁵ The other entry on his health was about leeching (*sülük*). This operation was made by a Greek woman named Katerina. Seven leeches were used to draw blood from his body. Mustafa Hamid Efendi seems displeased by this situation in that he prayed for healing in order not to need such an operation again.⁹²⁶

3.4. Time Consciousness: Relationship with Time

Time had many aspects in Ottoman society; therefore, different ways of telling time were described in the leaves of the diary. The diarist used the rising and the setting of the sun as a reference point to denote the precise time of some activities. Also, the cycle of the seasons governed his activities. Time was a natural phenomenon and also

⁹²³ Sıdkızâde, 11b.

⁹²⁴ Miri Shefer-Mossensohn, *Ottoman Medicine: Healing and Medical Institutions, 1500-1700* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2010), 83.

⁹²⁵ Sıdkızâde, first (unnumbered) folio.

⁹²⁶ Ibid., 15b.

had it religious aspect. He probably organized his daily life according to the call to prayer (*ezan*) recited five times a day.

In the first two years of his record-keeping activity, the diarist divided his diary into monthly sequences. At the top of the page, he provided a title indicating the beginning of the new month (*Bu Ay Şehr-i Recebü'l-Mücerreb Sene 38*). The diarist described his experiences of “this month” in tandem with the time they occurred. He used the blank pages to account for what he accumulated throughout the month.⁹²⁷ He recorded when an important event occurred but did not write anything for a day in which nothing happened. Therefore, his narrative consists of discontinuous incidents and instances.

The monthly division of the diary probably had something to do with accounting and measuring the financial profits of that month, because almost every month ended with a record of the revenues gained from the waqfs. He carefully described how he distributed salaries to the officials working in the waqfs under his administration. The diary enabled him to give order to his financial affairs. Beginning again after a two-year break, he stopped writing his entries under monthly sequences. His later entries started with “this day.” He did not break the rule but indicated the year and the month at the end of every entry. However, his entries became scattered and rare. He wrote no more than three entries for each month and gave up writing with his last entry for on 23 Şaban 1244 (28 February 1829). He continued using the diary’s blank pages for accounting purposes until 1253 (1837/38). He used a monthly measure of time means in organizing the household’s income and accumulation of wealth.⁹²⁸ In most European examples also, one can see that the diary was used for keeping a record of expenditures and receipts. Actually, the system used for accounting is believed to form the basis for what is known as a diary today. In her study on a midwife’s diary, for instance, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich notes that there was a tradition of using printed almanacs to keep record of “running accounts of receipts and expenditures” and the midwife’s diary derived from such forms of record-keeping.⁹²⁹ Many other scholars

⁹²⁷ For Sherman’s similar observations on the diary of Pepys, see Sherman, *Telling Time*, 58.

⁹²⁸ Sherman, *Telling Time*, 68.

⁹²⁹ Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 8.

studying diaries also associate financial accounting with accounting time as mostly almanacs were used as personal diaries.⁹³⁰

Alongside financial matters, a monthly division of the diary served to keep track of sacred times like the holy months of Receb, Şaban and Ramadan. The diarist spent such holy periods busily, attending many iftar banquets, visiting people, gift exchanging and, finally, taking part in religious festivals and bairam greetings. The entries written during these months were filled with vigor and liveliness.

The passing months brought seasonal changes. The diarist kept track of these changes in his entries, as they used to switch between their two mansions according to the season. The family spent the warm days of summer at the seaside mansion and moved to the city when the season turned cold. According to the diary they moved to the house in the city between September and November according to the seasonal change. Mustafa Hamid Efendi recorded that it was snowing on 26 November 1827, the very day they moved to the city.⁹³¹ In the following year, the snow was reported as coming on 3 December 1828⁹³², about two months later than their move that year. Outings and excursions seemed to define the days of spring and summer when the diarist enjoyed many banquets and much visiting. In the winter season, banquet were held in mansions while in the summer season people went on excursions to Kağıthane or to the shrine of the prophet Joshua in Beykoz.

While reports of excursion took place during spring and summer. Weather reports were from the cold winter season when newsworthy weather events could happen. On 5 Cemaziyelevvel 1238 (18 January 1823), he reported;

In this sacred year, in the above-mentioned month, to God belongs all praise, a severe winter occurred with heavy snow, three or four handspans and (the water) was frozen at the fruit pier in Kağıthane. The Chief Admiral Hüsrev Paşa had a way opened where one boat could be rowed between Kasım Paşa and Söğüt. This severe weather lasted for about one week or ten days. 5

⁹³⁰ Carter, "Accounting for Time," 421.

⁹³¹ Sıdkızâde, 33b.

⁹³² Ibid., 36b.

Cemaziyelevvel, year 38, the day of Friday: this is the date the snow melted, and the winter ended.⁹³³

In this entry, he referred to the month as a unit of time to specify and recapture such an extreme winter season. The week also was used as a time span not to indicate a unit of time within a month but to emphasize the length of the heavy snowfall. In the same month of the following year, he could then refer to his diary to recall how cold winter season had been the previous last year, how much snow the city had got and how long the severe winter lasted. Such time records in the diary enabled the diarist to see continuity or discrepancies throughout the years.

Time calculated by a clock or pocket watch, on the other hand, told the exact mechanical, time.⁹³⁴ However, his references to exact clock-time did not mean that he departed from traditional methods of timing. As Avner Wishnitzer notes, by the eighteenth century, clocks began to occupy a regular and essential part in Ottoman time-culture, nevertheless time-telling was not detached from the nature or the religious and astrophysical concepts that influenced it.⁹³⁵ The diarist owned many watches as mentioned before; some of them were for luxury purposes to be used at home, but he certainly had several pocket watches for daily use. The diarist was faithful in his recording of time as he gave the exact hours and minutes of noteworthy events. The purpose and the context of indicating time actually shows why it was important for the diarist. He mostly used time-indications to note if a certain activity took place at an auspicious time. He might have carried his pocket watch all the time or at least had his watch with him when witnessing important events. For instance, when registering the launching of the imperial boat (*sandal*), he wrote the exact time to the moment as being “Friday, at one o’clock, thirty-five minutes. It is the desired time.”⁹³⁶ His usage of the present continuous tense (*indiriyorlar*) reflects the immediacy of the recording; revealing the concurrence between the event and the

⁹³³ Sıdkızâde, 6b.

⁹³⁴ Molly McCarthy, “The Diary and the Pocket Watch: Rethinking Time In Nineteenth-Century America,” in *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing Since the Sixteenth Century*, ed. J. Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf M. Dekker, and Michael James Mascuch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 129.

⁹³⁵ Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 38.

⁹³⁶ Sıdkızâde, 13a.

report. He was there with his pocket-watch in his pocket to consult and perhaps his diary in hand to note if that important activity was taking place at an auspicious time. Another imperial boat was launched but not at the auspicious time calculated by the astrologist. The diarist then wrote “it is delayed by mistake.”⁹³⁷

In many other entries, he revealed how observant he was on this issue in his personal life too. The diarist seems to have asked the astrologer to calculate the auspicious time for performing several significant activities such as his marriage ceremony. He repeated various times that the ceremony took place exactly at that auspicious moment; “it was the blessed time of Friday at two o’clock, forty-eight minutes.”⁹³⁸

These are not the only examples indicating Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s relation with time. He wanted to specify the precise time by the clock of some noteworthy events. For instance, he usually kept records of the time of birth so the baby’s course in life could be foretold by looking at the celestial configurations at the moment of the birth.⁹³⁹ He registered, for instance, the birth of his daughter as “My daughter, Saliha Sabite, was born on Tuesday night at forty-five minutes past eight.”⁹⁴⁰

In brief, recording the exact time of events was not about timing and programming minutes for the coordination of everyday life. The diarist certainly had a time-discipline, but that was for the spiritual organization of his life. As Stuart Sherman puts it, the astrological paradigm encouraged textual precision about the clock time of events.⁹⁴¹ The diarist’s interest in prognostic tradition and astrological practices can be understood from the entries on the calendars sent by the chief astrologer,⁹⁴² his records indicating the exact time of significant events, and his concern for choosing the auspicious moment to do a specific activity. The inventory of activities ranged from private issues, like marriage and taking a bath, to imperial events like launching an imperial boat or starting a military campaign. The auspicious moment judged by the

⁹³⁷ Sıdkızâde, 13b.

⁹³⁸ Ibid., 37b.

⁹³⁹ Ahmet Tunç Şen, “Astrology in the Service of the Empire: Knowledge, Prognostication, and Politics at the Ottoman Court 1450s-1550s,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2016), 45-47.

⁹⁴⁰ Sıdkızâde, 2b.

⁹⁴¹ Sherman, *Telling Time*, 55.

⁹⁴² Sıdkızâde, 11a.

astrologist had to be observed when embarking on such activities so that it would bring good fortune.

4. INNER SELF: REFLECTION OF EMOTIONS IN WRITTEN FORM

An important question to articulate is how far we can trace the emotions of the author. Do self-narratives provide only objective data about the writer or do they provide us with the means to see his inner self and his emotions? As Nelly Hanna accurately notes, some texts that seem to be without feeling can in fact reflect deep emotions between the lines. An objective piece of information might hide emotions that are not directly articulated.⁹⁴³ The records in the diary of Mustafa Hamid Efendi are terse and seems not to show deep feelings but a detailed reading shows that actually the reverse is true.

The diary allows us to get as close as possible to the self of an Ottoman living in the period before 1839. He wrote about outward aspects of his life such as his career and those of his father and brother; he wrote about appointments as well as dismissals. Behind these records of official life, one can trace the innermost feelings of the diarist such as the pride, happiness, or disappointment he felt regarding such appointments and dismissals. He wrote about births, his own marriage and sometimes about deaths. He also recorded his daily business like taking a bath, purchasing new clothes, dismissing a disobedient servant, and recruiting others, accepting gifts and the pleasure he gained in sending gifts, or paying a visit to an acquaintance. Although he was willing to express times of happiness more and wrote less of mishaps, he showed his feelings of anger and of agony at some points. His entries thus enable us to explore the reactions to what he felt, heard, or tasted as well as the ways in which he interpreted such experiences. Although only sporadically, the diarist used emotional phrases like “I became happy” or “I am glad.” Or sometimes, he cursed those who bothered him. Still, diary entries do not always say candidly what the emotions of the individual are; Mustafa Hamid Efendi mostly preferred to describe his actions in detail rather than describe his inner feelings.⁹⁴⁴ Therefore, records describing how he behaved in certain situations, such as his entries regarding his relationship with family members, his wife,

⁹⁴³ Hanna, “Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500-1800,” 146.

⁹⁴⁴ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 88.

servants, colleagues and even rivals, allow us to observe his emotions and inner world beyond his social/external self. Broomhall described the household as “a social and socializing unit” that shaped the emotional identities of the people. Hence, interactions within the household can be a suitable unit of analysis for studying feelings providing us with ways to understand anger, happiness, jealousy or pride within a domestic social environment.⁹⁴⁵ In this part, I will focus on his interaction within the household as well as his relations with other people to reveal his emotional states.

Gratitude and appreciation are two emotional status remarked on throughout the text. The diarist often uttered prayers asking God to give him favors; he apparently had many blessings for which to be his thankful. One of such blessings was that the Sıdkızâde family had a very influential position, and the family members were able to advance easily up the *ilmiye* hierarchy. The entries show that the diarist was proud of the appointments of family members to important positions and the family’s influential network.

The diarist also recorded happily that his family was expanding by marriage. The most striking entries allowing the reader to get close to the life and self of the diarist are those regarding his marriage. He not only wrote about the marriage ceremony but started to take records beginning from his first attempt at asking a family to give him their daughter as bride. He even wrote about one of his failures. He had sent a message asking for the hand of the daughter of İrfanzâde Arif Efendi through Balçıklı Ali Efendi on 6 Receb 1244 (12 January 1829). Happy news arrived three days later on 9 Receb (15 January). He recorded this saying, “The receiving of İrfanzâde Arif Efendi’s message of ‘I agree to give my daughter to the gentleman if God pleases.’”⁹⁴⁶ He revealed his contentment by ending the entry with prayers for a happy and blessed marriage. However, just after this, he recorded another entry without indicating its date. “The above-mentioned subject ended because of her father’s execrable act. It would not be auspicious for either side. Praise be to God. O God, open the door, open to us the door of good fortune .”⁹⁴⁷ He seemed contented with this annulment, but his

⁹⁴⁵ Susan Broomhall, “Emotions in the Household,” in *Emotions in the Household (1200-1900)*, ed. Susan Broomhall (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 2.

⁹⁴⁶ Sıdkızâde, 37a.

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

prayers and his words about İrfanzâde Arif Efendi revealed his feelings of disillusionment and anger. That he did not even write the date of the entry supports this idea, considering Mustafa Hamid Efendi's preoccupation with recording the time of such important events, be it desirable or undesirable. The remarkable thing is that the diarist was a real a participator rather than remaining distant and objective, allowing his father to choose a bride for him.

Shortly after this failed attempt, he asked Miralem Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa for permission to marry his daughter on 18 Receb 1244 (24 January 1829). Six days later, the engagement cum civil marriage ceremony was held exactly as calculated by the head astrologer at forty-eight minutes past two. It was apparently very important for the diarist that the ceremony be held exactly at the desired time. He repeated three times in the same entry that it was a sacred and auspicious time in which they got married, obviously thinking that the time of event would have a positive effect on their entire marriage life.

The marriage ceremony [*nikah*] with the daughter of Miralem Topuzluzâde Mustafa Ağa was performed with greatness, happiness, and auspiciousness on the twenty-fourth day of this grateful month of Receb at forty-eight minutes past two in the dawn/twilight which is the auspicious time calculated by the head astrologer, İbrahim Efendi. The diamond engagement ring and other requirements of the ceremony were presented except for the *ağırılık*.⁹⁴⁸ My brother [*birader efendi*], Damad Efendi and Bahaddin Efendi acted as witnesses and the bride-price was two thousand, five hundred *kuruş*. Praise be to God, [the ceremony] took place on the sacred day at the sacred time ... May God grant us his favor, may God Almighty bless us and give us favorable offspring and affection, bestow on us peace and harmony, and grant us a long life with dutiful children ... the year 1244, 24 Receb. It is the fortunate time of twilight, Friday at forty-eight minutes past two.⁹⁴⁹

After the ceremony, the bride seems to have stayed in her father's house for a while until the actual wedding. Gift exchanges occurred between the households of the bride and groom during this time. Sending gifts served to strengthen the bond between

⁹⁴⁸ *Ağırılık* was the money paid to the bride before signing the marriage contract. The couple would be engaged when *ağırılık* was paid. See Fanny Davis, *The Ottoman Lady: A Social History from 1718 to 1918* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1986), 65.

⁹⁴⁹ Sıdkızâde, 37a-37b.

families as well as between the newly engaged couple. On 26 Receb 1244 (1 February 1829) for example, Mustafa Hamid Efendi sent his bride sweets and various fruits and flower, and, in return, his fiancée sent him garments on the last day of Receb. He wrote that those gifts were sent to ask after his fiancée's state of mind and health as well as that of her family.⁹⁵⁰ The next month, they were busy with activities related to the wedding celebration. The entry on 19 Şaban 1244 (24 February 1829) announced the end of arranging the bride's trousseau in the groom's house (*cihâz serme*).⁹⁵¹ This ceremony heralded the movement of the bride to a new life in her new home.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi noted every minute detail regarding his marriage ceremony; people attended, the name of the women who served during the ceremony, details about the bridal procession, their first meal together and even their first sexual intercourse. Most importantly, he wrote the name of the bride, Ziyet Ziba. On looking at the length and details of the entries recorded throughout the diary, one realizes that he expressed his feelings of excitement and happiness about an event mainly by writing a very detailed summary of the event and by adding his heartfelt prayers at the end; such entries were therefore longer than those that did not arouse any feeling. Entries regarding his marriage, in this sense, are the lengthiest of all and lasted through two folios. There are no other passages of similar length in the diary not even the entries in which he recorded his father's appointment as *şeyhülislam* or the birth of his daughter. Mustafa Hamid Efendi there abandoned the diary form and adopted a narrative style to give some very private details. He described the bridal procession and the wedding night thus;

With honor, fortune and happiness, on the twenty-second day of this respected month of Şaban, Nuri Efendi rode a horse and İsmail Efendi got in the carriage and my tutor (*lala*) Hüseyin Ağa and the steward of harem and Osman Efendi and tutor Mehmed Ağa walked alongside the carriage and yet ... Hanım and ... Kadın and our lady approached the harem at twenty-five past six, and we came close by the carriage and took our lady's arm and guided her up the stairs and into the main room. After welcoming her and having a short conversation we entered the banqueting hall (*divanhane*) ... later we entered the reception room where we talked with the

⁹⁵⁰ Sıdkızâde, 37b.

⁹⁵¹ Ibid., 38a.

companions invited [for the feast]. After the *isha* prayer, my father, who is our benefactor, Rahmi Bey and Meşrebzâde Efendi and other companions formed a circle in front of the *mabeyn* door [and] Şeyh Osman Efendi prayed. After the invocation, [I] kissed the graceful feet of my benefactor and kissed the hem of the garments of Ahmed Bey and Meşrebzâde and kissed the hand of above-mentioned *şeyh* and the sacred hand of my brother. And I entered by the above-mentioned door to meet with good fortune and happiness, there ... Hanım greeted us with candleholder and incense burner and [we] entered the harem where ... Hanım and elder sister (*hemşir hanım*) were standing. [38b] After kissing their hands, I asked about my mother who is my benefactor. I had the sad answer that it was not appropriate to kiss the hands of the mother (*valide hanım*) among the women on the wedding night (*zifaf gecesi*). When I learnt that the mother would not appear, I graciously agreed [the situation] to this custom among women. Then the curtains of our lady were opened, and we entered into the room reciting *bismillah* and saying, “O God, open the doors, open to us the gate of good fortune.” After greeting [her], I prayed the sacred *nafile namaz* and opened my hands to pray for my all wishes and aspirations. May God who is the most munificent accept my prayers, amen! When our lady and the sister-in-law (*yenge kadın*) were ready, we went to them. *Yenge kadın* took the auspicious hand of [our] lady as well as my auspicious hand, then she put our hands together and let us sit in the corner [of the room]. She removed jewelry from the box and put it on her head. After congratulating her, she asked her name three times, and she replied “Ziynet Ziba.” Then, she brought us chicken, make me eat one bite and another bite for the lady. Then, we had coffee, conversed, and drank syrup (*şerbet*). Afterwards, *yenge kadın* closed the door and left the room. After continuing our conversation for a while, *yenge kadın* came in and said, “We may take out her aigrette if you allow us.” After getting our permission, we recited our daily portion of scripture (*vird*) that we could not recite earlier [Our] lady and the elder sister came in. After having a little conversation, she left [the room] saying “Let God give comfort.” Then, our lady came in removing her aigrette. Concubines came in to prepare the bed and then they left [the room]. Then, we put on our nightclothes at around six o’clock, and performed our ablutions. Then, we invited our lady to the bed with appeals and pleadings that we would sleep with delight. May God make it an auspicious event and grant us happiness and bestow on us a good married life and sincere attachment. Amen! Amen a thousand

times! ... May God give us happiness with numerous righteous descendants. Amen!⁹⁵²

He possibly recorded such a detailed entry in order to remember and live those blissful minutes over and over again. His meticulous description of his marriage discloses the importance he attached to this very special event. His portrayal of his lady did not go beyond her bodily presence; he did not say anything about her physical appearance, her face or her clothes, but one can sense that the diarist treated his lady with great respect. He explained all other details about her, such as guiding her to her new house, his conversation with her, eating their first meal together, having coffee and syrup which was accompanied by a pleasant conversation, even her appearance in the room after removing her aigrette. He did not openly say that they had sexual intercourse, but he explained how they prepared themselves before going to bed by putting on their nightclothes and performing their ablutions. He expressed his sensibilities and gentleness towards his lady, inviting her to bed in a charming way. He did not give any further detail about their first night together, simply wrote that they felt asleep. However, the word *münevvem* that he chose to describe how they fell sleep implied they had sexual intercourse. That word means to fall into a state of oblivion, to become unaware, to fall into a soporific asleep, suggesting the very state of having had sex. He portrays his inmost private feelings as being experienced in silence and unspoken.

Appointments of family members was another source of happiness and pride. The Ottoman biographies that provide the dates of appointments and dismissals do not say much about the emotional outcome of a career full of ups and downs. Mustafa Hamid Efendi devoted a sizeable part of his diary to career progressions in *ilmiye* cadres and to the realities of professional life. Unlike biographies, he not only noted appointments and dismissals of family members, acquaintances, and rivals, but also commented on some of them.

His entry on the appointment of his father as the chief mufti reveals the obvious pride and pleasure he experienced. It is easy to see that the diarist praised his father more than the sultan. The words used to illustrate his father's eminence, were chosen, most

⁹⁵² Sıdkızâde, 38a-38b.

probably, to show his gratitude towards his benefactor as well as the pride and happiness he felt upon his father's appointment to the very top of the *ilmiye*.

By good fortune ... on the twenty-fifth day of this month of Safer in the year 1238, his majesty Sultan Mahmud Han sent the head muezzin to summon my honorable father, our lord, to the tiled pavilion located in Beşiktaş. In the afore-mentioned assembly, he [the sultan] granted our fortunate lord the rank of fetwa and eroded him in the white [gown] of those who were obeyed and advanced in religion. May God help him with divine guidance and assistance.⁹⁵³

Entries on the appointments of the diarist and his brother reveal the emotional outcome of a rapid and easy rise in the hierarchy. The entry written on 13 Şaban 1238 (25 April 1823) notes that his brother Mehmed Rıfat Efendi was appointed to Yahya Efendi Medrese at the level of *musıla-i sahn* without a long wait. The diarist wrote that there were thirty-eight people waiting to be appointed. The diarist himself was appointed to İskender Paşa Medrese at the level of *mûsıla-i sahn*. Like his brother, he did not have to wait long either even though sixty-five people were already waiting in line before him.⁹⁵⁴ After a short period, we see again these two brothers' appointments to higher ranks. Both brothers were moving very fast up the hierarchy. Mustafa Hamid Efendi ended this entry with a prayer expressing his feelings of gratitude to God and his wishes for many more promotions by his father.⁹⁵⁵ The diarist seemingly had a high opinion of himself. In these entries, he overtly disclosed their advantageous situation in being members of a powerful household and underlined the superiority of the Sıdkızâdes over the other members of the *ilmiye*. Feelings of contentment for their appointments and pride for the powerful position of the father can be read from the expressions used in the entries and the prayers made at the end.

Appointments and advancements were a routine part of life for Mustafa Hamid Efendi. However, things did not run smoothly all the time. Nine months after the appointment of his father as the chief mufti he wrote an entry informing the reader of the dismissal of his father on 25 September 1823. This record reveals no human emotion; there is no feeling of hatred or any attempt at vindication. But the obvious agony he felt can

⁹⁵³ Sıdkızâde, 2a.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid., 15a.

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid., 22a.

be read in the prayers for his father's reappointment and for his arrival at the sea-side mansion carrying the seal of fatwa once again.

On the nineteenth day of the month of Muharrem, our lord, my father, (pederim efendimiz) was dismissed from the office of fetwa and Mekkizâde Mustafa Asım Efendi became *şeyhülislam*. ... Efendi sent his *kethüda* and asked [my father] to go to the seaside mansion and take a rest. Our lord arrived at the seaside mansion at eleven o'clock. May the supreme God destine him to occupy the office of fetwa again and to reach the seaside mansion [again as the *şeyhülislam*]. Amen! Amen! a thousand times! 19 Muharrem, the year 39 (25 September 1823).⁹⁵⁶

Obviously, Mustafa Hamid Efendi did not give up hope for his father's reappointment. He repeated this prayer over again when he recorded important appointments. It was nearly three months after the dismissal of his father on the 10th of Muharrem 1239 (14 December 1823), when he took record of Galip Paşa's appointment as Grand Vizier. The news of this appointment immediately reminded him of the removal of his father, and he wrote "Please God, let my father, our lord, became the chief mufti for the second time. I hope that his services for the affairs of state, and order (*nizam*) are ensured."⁹⁵⁷ This entry set forth the desires, hopes and expectations of the diarist. The obvious sadness felt upon his father's sudden and probably unexpected dismissal can be understood from the tone and wording of this prayer. The word 'order; (*nizam*) implies that he wanted *nizam* to be ensured both for the affairs of state and for the affairs of their household.

Although sporadic, Mustafa Hamid Efendi's records were not reticent about his feelings of hatred and hostility. He wrote a page-long entry on the dismissal and execution of that famous Halet Efendi whose absence, as Philliou notes, created a space in court politics for his rivals. Sıdkızâde Ahmed Reşid Efendi's rise to prominence would have been possible after the downfall of a powerful enemy like Halet Efendi.⁹⁵⁸ According to Mustafa Hamid Efendi, Halet Efendi's execution was a testament to God's justice. His preference to date the dismissal and death of Halet

⁹⁵⁶ Sıdkızâde, 27a.

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid., 29a.

⁹⁵⁸ Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*, 96.

Efendi with reference to the time of his father's rise to the top implies his understanding and internalizing of the events as happening according to God's will.

God overcomes evil.

Halet Efendi who is famous among statesmen, vigilant, a man of influence, cautious in conducting the business of people, was mobbed by a few hundred people when he reached Üsküdar after leaving his waterside mansion on 25 Safer 1238, on the same day when my precious, respected father was robed in the bright garment of those who were obeyed and advanced in religion. When Abdullah Pasha was given the privy seal [Halet Efendi] was banished to Bursa where he had influence and power, and then sent to Konya where he was executed at a time when even minor officials were rarely dispatched. His severed head was brought back to Istanbul and put on the rock in front of the imperial door as a warning and deterrent to others on 19 Rebiülevvel of the same year. It is a divine mystery that he has been executed despite such power and wealth. Wait and see how just God is.⁹⁵⁹

The entry translated above was written on 19 Rebiülevvel 1238 (4 December 1822), twenty-three days after the banishment of Halet Efendi on 25 Safer 1238 (11 November 1822). In the entry written on 11 November, the diarist was silent about Halet Efendi's dismissal and banishment; he preferred to write at length about his father's appointment which was a very important event for the Sıdkızâde family. After a while (most probably on 4 December when Halet Efendi's head was brought to the capital), he added a piece of information about the dismissals of Salih Pasha and Şeyhülislam Yasincizâde Abdülvehhab Efendi, in very small letters on the margin of the entry for 11 November.⁹⁶⁰ Salih Pasha and Yasincizâde had their share in the rivalry of Halet Efendi. The question is why the diarist did not write on the very day that Halet Efendi was exiled, but he wrote when his severed head was brought to Istanbul? Why did he turn back twenty-three days in his diary to note the dismissal of Halet's favorites? Perhaps he did not predict that such powerful and wealthy person like Halet Efendi would be executed at the end. He noted down what, at that moment,

⁹⁵⁹ Sıdkızâde, 3a.

⁹⁶⁰ The entry was written later on the margin with very small letters and the date was not added. Salih Pasha and Yasincizâde Abdülvehhab Efendi were dismissed on 24 Safer 1238 (10 November 1822). While Philliou noted that Salih Pasha and Yasincizâde were favorites of Halet Efendi, Beydilli argued that they were supporting the faction against him. See Mehmet İpşirli, "Abdülvehhab Efendi, Yasincizâde," *DİA*, vol. 1, 285-6; Kemal Beydilli, "Salih Paşa, Hacı," *DİA*, vol. EK-2, 463-4; Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*, 56.

seemed of importance to him. When he assessed the ultimate, long-range significance of the event, he went back in time to put everything into place in accordance with God's will.⁹⁶¹ The diary offered safe ground to reevaluate and make sense of events beyond his control. He was reorganizing his diary and therefore remembering his feelings of resentment after observing God's justice for those who suffered from Halet Efendi's enmity. Thus, he was creating harmony between incidents and his spiritual digesting of them.

The other dismissal that he seemed to be very pleased to record was the banishment of Halet's favorite Gümrükçü (revenue officer) Ahmed Ağa and the confiscation of his property. Mustafa Hamid Efendi called him a swine and a traitor. Those words used to depict Ahmed Ağa indicate that he was evidently an enemy of the Sıdkızâdes. Mustafa Hamid Efendi likened his situation to that of Halet Efendi. According to the diary, Ahmed Ağa was on the verge of being killed but paid a lower price than Halet Efendi. He was banished to Amasya thanks to the intervention of the custodian of Bosphorus İbrahim Paşa.⁹⁶²

Mustafa Hamid Efendi actually recorded only three entries including offensive words. The first one was about İrfanzâde Arif Efendi who caused the cancelation of marriage which was recorded as the result of his accursed act (*mel'anet eylediğinden*).⁹⁶³ The second was about revenue officer Ahmed Ağa and his dismissal. Mustafa Hamid Efendi used the words "swine" (*hınzır herif*) and "betrayers" to depict his acts. The third one was about his servant Abdülbaki who was called malignant (*habis*). Therefore, feelings of anger sometimes emerged as a result of household members' untoward actions.

As mentioned before in this chapter, Mustafa Hamid Efendi suffered from his servants' misbehaviors. He wrote about his complaints regarding his servant Abdülbaki who was reckless and negligent. Although he was forgiven a number of times, he was finally dismissed. Mustafa Hamid Efendi expressed his sadness because he actually wanted to find someone to train as chamberlain. The household was the primary site

⁹⁶¹ Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 1960), 3. Pascal states that the diarists keeps note of things seems significant to him and they are not concerned with the long-range significance of the events. However, it seems quite the contrary in the case of Mustafa Hamid Efendi.

⁹⁶² Sıdkızâde, 3b.

⁹⁶³ Ibid., 37a.

of daily disputes and negotiations. Unruly servants were sometimes criticized, sometimes tolerated, and forgiven. Household members were treated as part of the family, and it seems that they had a say in household matters. However, their right to oppose and resist could not go beyond a certain point. Abdülbaki seems to have gone over the limits and was dismissed upon his patron's displeasure and anger.

The evil/malignant named Abdülbaki is the person I employed for my service. Sometimes I tolerated his many irritating actions and sometimes he begged for forgiveness, and he has been in my employ until this time. One day, when my guest, Çabi Abdullah Çelebi, was in my presence, he went out fishing without asking my permission. Then, [we also said that] when you go fishing other times when we do not have guests, do we say anything to you? You do not consider whether it is suitable to go fishing when we have a guest. When I said that I did not approve he complained. "You said you would not enroll me as servant (*ben seni mansıb etmem dedin*). You said you would give me a salary (*akçe ile mansıb olacağım*). I will bring you the contract later, and then I will leave." Then I decided that he would not be of any benefit to me. I paid him in the presence of [witnesses], then asked him, "Do you owe anybody anything?" He answered "No." Then I said, "We allow you [to go]. They say, "Whatever you do, you do it for yourself." Our desire was to employ someone [to train] and make him our chamberlain..."⁹⁶⁴

Abdülbaki was not the only servant to annoy Mustafa Hamid Efendi. As mentioned before in this chapter, he recorded that another servant, Raşid, left the Sıdkızâde household and attached himself to another patron after Ahmed Reşid Efendi's dismissal. After a while, however, he wanted to return to the Sıdkızâde household and pleaded to be re-employed. Mustafa Hamid Efendi wrote that he begged a hundred thousand times to be taken back and they finally agreed to employ him again. In fact, he revealed his anger at this disloyalty, saying, "Thank goodness, he became in need of us again!"⁹⁶⁵ The diarist was obviously pleased to see this disloyal servant begging for re-employment.

The diarist did not reveal his feeling about death. The only record regarding a death is about Damad Efendi's daughter. The little girl passed away during Mustafa Hamid

⁹⁶⁴ Sıdkızâde, 28b.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid., 30a.

Efendi's visit to Damad Efendi's house. Although he witnessed the death and most possibly the sorrow which accompanied it, the diarist showed no feeling of grief.⁹⁶⁶ He simply recorded the death and burial of the little girl. His entry on this event could not be more unemotional. On top of that, the following entry was about an invitation to a dinner which took place two days after the death of the little girl. Including Damad Efendi, they were invited to a dinner party at apprentice scribe Aziz's house and feasted together giving the impression that they did not mourn or were not affected by the death of the little child. That no feelings about the death of the little girl are expressed or the dinner party were registered in detail should not be seen as cold-heartedness. Rather, it might be related to the general tone of his diary in which he wanted to highlight mainly the more enjoyable events rather than the sad ones. Furthermore, life expectancy for small children was not high in the period under consideration.⁹⁶⁷ In the same entry, he noted that the little girl was buried in the same grave as the diarist's late brother, Abdullah Bey. The diarist did not note any further information about his brother who most probably died at an early age. It is difficult to assume that Mustafa Hamid Efendi formed an emotional bond with him. The emotional impact of the death of a small child might be little. The sorrow possibly would have been deeper if affection had developed with the growth of the child.⁹⁶⁸

As discussed before, emotions were mostly communicated through social interactions, but objects were also significant bearers of emotional value.⁹⁶⁹ Objects obviously displayed the financial situation of the owner, but sometimes they were more than that. According to Katie Barclay, emotional bonds and dynamics of the family were shaped by how the places and objects in the house were used. Also, sharing gifts and resources were influential in forming family bonds.⁹⁷⁰ The diary supports this idea in that some objects registered in the entries had an emotional meaning for the diarist, and they made him happy. This was exemplified in Mustafa Hamid Efendi's case by the

⁹⁶⁶ Sıdkızâde, 30b.

⁹⁶⁷ Carter V. Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism and Modernity, A History 1789-2007* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 63.

⁹⁶⁸ Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*, 8.

⁹⁶⁹ Päivi Räisänen-Schröder, "Books, Dress, and Emotions in the Memoirs of the Clergyman Johan Frosterus (1720-1829)," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 41, no:3 (2016): 429, accessed December 10, 2021, doi:10.1080/03468755.2016.1179834.

⁹⁷⁰ Katie Barclay, "Family and Household," in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London: Routledge, 2017), 246.

importance he ascribed to gifts he received from his father, from his wife-to-be as well as from some of his companions.

Mustafa Hamid Efendi gave emphasis to recording events and objects representing his relationship with his father who was described as the benefactor of the household (*veli'n-ni'am*). He was very pleased, for example, with a shawl given by his father. He typically used the verb *irsâl eyledi* (sent) to designate the act of gift exchange. But this time, he used the word *ihsân eyledi* (granted/favored/gave in kindness) to describe his father's act of giving.⁹⁷¹ Mustafa Hamid Efendi displayed his feelings of contentment when luxurious gifts like horses or furs were sent to him. A shawl was probably a small gift compared to other luxurious items listed in the diary, but it was not about the monetary value of the object, its significance was related to the giver.

Throughout the diary, the diarist described items related to his little daughter, Saliha Sabite with whom he obviously formed an emotional bond. For instance, the grandfather, Ahmed Reşid Efendi, visited the little baby and pinned an amulet (*maşallâh*) on her clothing a short while after her birth. Her first encounter with the beneficence (*veli'n-ni'me*) of the household and the object (the amulet) that represented it were given emphasis in the diary.⁹⁷² In fact, he registered many other entries regarding his daughter's first experiences; the first hammam experience,⁹⁷³ the placing of the baby into the baby bed,⁹⁷⁴ the buying of materials for the little girl, having clothes made for her and the first-time she wore them.⁹⁷⁵ All these records of rituals and first-time experiences indicate that the birth of the little girl had been a source of happiness for the diarist. Objects such as jewelry, clothes, the cradle noted in the diary obviously triggering feelings of happiness and affection. The diarist would remember certain events through those objects to which he was emotionally attached.

⁹⁷¹ Sıdkızâde, 6b.

⁹⁷² Ibid., 6a.

⁹⁷³ Ibid., 2b.

⁹⁷⁴ This event probably was related to the traditional celebration party known as "*beşik çıkma*". This ritual marked the end of puerpera's isolation which was celebrated with songs, dancing of gypsies and feastings that would last well into the midnight. *Beşik Çıkma* generally took place on the sixth day after the birth. According to the diary, Saliha Sabite's *beşik çıkma* celebration was held ten days after the birth. Sevgül Türkmenoğlu, "İbrahim Efendi Konağı'nda Eski İstanbul'un Gündelik Hayatı," *Zeitschrift für die Welt der Türken/Journal of World of Turks* 7, no:1 (2015): 237-252.

⁹⁷⁵ Sıdkızâde, 7a.

“Objects served to strengthen family relations, express fondness or goodwill between family members, and to keep memories of family members alive.”⁹⁷⁶

His marriage to Ziynet Ziba Hatun also formed an important turning point in his life, ushering in a new stage. He described in detail the gifts exchanged in the period between the engagement and the wedding ceremony. He noted that he presented a diamond engagement ring (*elmâs-ı hatem*) to the bride. Flowers, sweets and fruits were exchanged between the young couple. And finally, the bride’s trousseau was moved to her new home. All these items signaled that he had embarked on a happy married life. Indeed, the diary of Mustafa Hamid Efendi ends exactly at the point when he got married. All these events and objects registered in the diary marked the beginning of different time of life as head of an expanding family. His diary can be read as a memoir of how he developed from a man at the beginning of his career to a man of substance with a promising career, a family, and children.

Some objects, on the other side, had a spiritual value. The diarist did not record much about his religious activities. He occasionally recorded performing his prayer (*namaz*), reading the Qur’an or fasting. However, an entry about a bowl revealed the importance he attached to his connection with the *Ka’aba* and the sacred city of Mecca. In the entry written on 26 Cemâziyelevvel 1238 (8 February 1823), he described how pleased he was by a special gift presented by Debbağzâde Mehmed Şerif Efendi. He put the bowl, upon which Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s name was engraved, next to the door of the *zamzam* spring in the *Ka’aba*, so that pilgrims could use it to drink the sacred *zamzam* water. Moreover, two servants were entrusted by Mustafa Hamid Efendi himself to help pilgrims use the bowl.⁹⁷⁷ This was a visible act of honoring the diarist, creating bonds, and strengthening relationships. Mustafa Hamid Efendi recorded the happiness he felt upon hearing this wonderful news (*pek memnûn ve mesrûr oldum*). He added his prayers for the person who had prepared this special gift. That his name was engraved on the object connected him with the prayers of pilgrims, enabling him to create an actual physical bond with the sacred city of Mecca and the *Ka’aba*. Although he did not use that object in person, he shows how he became emotionally

⁹⁷⁶ Räsänen-Schröder, “Books, Dress, and Emotions,” 429.

⁹⁷⁷ Sıdkızâde, 8a-8b.

attached to it. This discloses that “objects also played a prominent role as carriers of emotional meaning and social bonds.”⁹⁷⁸

Likewise, the diarist kept the seed of a date (*hurma*) which was eaten by the sultan at the *mawlid* recited in the Sultan Ahmed Mosque.⁹⁷⁹ The date has a sacred place in Islamic societies; cited both in the Prophet’s sayings and the Qur’an. This special fruit was believed to be a source of healing, even relieving the pain of Jesus’s mother when giving birth.⁹⁸⁰ In the same entry, the diarist noted that the *mawlid* occasion took place during his father’s tenure and there were three people before him to be appointed to an upper echelon of *medrese*. It seems that he wanted to link his expected appointment to the sacred atmosphere of the occasion. He therefore kept the seed which was eaten in a spiritual environment by a spiritual person like the sultan. That object to which he attributed a sacred value would probably relieve him when waiting for his next appointment.

In conclusion, the emotions portrayed by Mustafa Hamid Efendi did not express his feelings to any great extent. This is not surprising considering the unemotional tone of early modern life writings. Yet it is remarkable that throughout his diary, he repeatedly points out some emotions, though he did not elaborate on these. Evidently, he also highlighted some feelings over others. Feelings resulting from, for example, pleasant events were described more often than those aroused from conflicts or hostilities. The diarist also showed his anger or relief at the downfall of an enemy, but this was rather sporadic compared to his descriptions of positive feelings.

Conclusion

“With its punctuated, irregular, and messy appearance, the diary may not be as noble and accomplished a form of self-presentation as the memoir, but for an understanding of autobiographical practice it is a rich, most complex, and infinitely rewarding source.”⁹⁸¹ Mustafa Hamid Efendi’s work discloses that the diary is a very giving

⁹⁷⁸ Räisänen-Schröder, “Books, Dress, and Emotions,” 429.

⁹⁷⁹ Sıdkızâde, 2b.

⁹⁸⁰ Nebi Bozkurt, “Hurma,” *DİA*, vol. 18, 391-3.

⁹⁸¹ Jochen Hellbeck, “The Diary between Literature and History: A Historian’s Critical Response,” *The Russian Review* 63, no: 4 (2004): 621-629.

source in terms of understanding a historical self with its all complexities. Among its scattered entries, the diary revealed much about Mustafa Hamid Efendi's emotional self, daily life and routines, network, familial relations, as well as the financial base of Sıdkızâde household. He revealed how he was emotionally affected and pleased by the births in the household, his marriage, appointments of his father as well as his and his brother's easy advancement in the *ilmiye* hierarchy. Diary entries disclosed his bonds with family members and with his connection to the elite society of the early nineteenth century according to which he shaped his identity. The diary entries unveiled his tastes as being member of a particular elite environment and lifestyle: his love for new clothes, his fascination with the technologic devices such as binoculars and watches, his interest in horses, his enthusiasm for banquets and excursions as well as his interest in expensive gifts. The diary offers the kind of information about a historical self that one cannot find anywhere else. This aspect of the diary essentially makes it an "infinitely rewarding source" for studies on the historical selves.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has sought problematization of a long-neglected subject of study, namely, Ottoman self-narratives, texts in which authors presented their life (or an important part of their life) retrospectively or taking immediate records. Although specialists knew of autobiographical works like the one written by Osman Agha of Timisoara and identified a number of new texts that fit into the category of self-narratives/ego-documents defined by European scholars, Ottoman autobiographical texts in which individuals speaking about themselves were believed to be exceptions until recently. Scholars of Ottoman Empire argued that there was no tradition of autobiography especially before Tanzimat period. Therefore, there was almost no academic discussion on self-narratives/ego-documents in Turkey until recent years. The present study was designed to introduce various unknown Ottoman self-narratives, to scrutinize the authors' individual experiences like feelings, expectations, actions in face of events, and to uncover their social selves embedded in several networks of relations. Three different manuscripts have been selected to scrutinize how different people from different walks of life talked about themselves, described their lives and recorded their innermost feelings. Although each text may be read in itself as an individual exercises, it should be taken into account that they are part of a long tradition of record keeping/dream telling/autobiographical writing.

For the first time in this dissertation, I introduced several unknown Ottoman self-narratives written before the Tanzimat in 1839, revealed the identity of the authors and examined them in relation to the wider literature on ego-documents. Hence, one of the most important contributions of this dissertation was that I showed the existence of distinct autobiographical texts touching on very intimate matters and revealing the personality of the author. Equally important, I showed the historical continuity of the Ottoman self-narratives by presenting examples from the first half of the eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. Particularly, I have showed the

historical continuity of Ottoman diaries as Sıdkızâde Hamid Efendi's grandfather Sıdkı Mustafa Efendi (d. 1790/1791) also kept a diary. We had two diaries produced by the members of the same family. The fact that these two diaries are very similar in form and content reminds that Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi must have known his grandfather's diary.⁹⁸² This very exciting discovery displays that these texts cannot be individual examples occasionally produced by Ottoman literati. They were not occurring sporadically, but rather must have been part of a historical pattern. Ottoman diaries produced before and after Tanzimat period shows that the example examined in this dissertation is most probably representative of a genre. The Ottoman diary literature hopefully will be taken more seriously than ever, treated as a discrete genre and will be the subject of more detailed studies after these imperative findings. Examples examined in this dissertation and possible further studies will also show that historical continuity of self-narratives offers an advantage for scrutinizing the issue of change and continuity in the ways of self-representation in Ottoman literature from early modern to modern times.

A significant contribution of this dissertation is that it reveals much about the characteristics of Ottoman self-narratives. It also provides an example for how to interpret them. Ottoman self-narratives are mostly found in autograph copies. Authors represented their selves in multiple ways and used diverse strategies to express their worlds. The texts were generally not edited or revised at all. Authors appear in person in the narratives. They used both plural and singular first-person pronouns (we, us, our, I, me, my). The authors mostly belonged to educated classes with an easy access to pen and paper. However, Ottoman self-narratives were not only written by Ottoman literati who also produced some other literary works. Those who did not belong to intellectual circles, like Kulakzâde mahmud Pasha, Seyyid Hasan or Asiye Hatun, also penned self-narratives.

Ottoman self-narratives had diverse contents. The content of diaries was shaped according to the curiosity of their authors. Some gave every detail from where he visited, what he ate and at whose house he stayed as a guest. Some even recorded more intimate events like the details of his wedding ceremony and the wedding night. Some

⁹⁸² Karahasanoğlu, "Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art," 307.

take mostly record of dull details of appointments or family events like births, deaths, and details of everyday life as well as natural events like earthquakes and weather reports. Whatever the content, individuals made a step-in writing because they felt that their life events and personal histories somehow worth recording. Thus, “the individuality of the writer becomes evident by the very fact of writing.”⁹⁸³ The historian can learn much about the author’s emotional reactions, thoughts, and personality. Focusing on what the author records about his daily routine life – visits, excursions, illnesses, marriages, deaths, births, appointments, household affairs, financial issues - the researcher can follow how an individual’s personal, social, emotional situation transformed over time.⁹⁸⁴ Routine tasks of daily life represented in the entries of the Ottoman diaries offers the historian a productive site to recreate the diarist’s life in his social and historical context.⁹⁸⁵ The content of dream narratives was formed in accordance with the worries or expectations of the dreamers. Sometimes dreams could foretell about an anticipated appointment or warn the dreamer about a possible catastrophe. There was a strong link between insecure circumstances, unwanted situations and dream recording. Dreams were mostly seen as future portents; thus, the authors recorded their dreams down to the smallest detail. Nocturnal visions enabled people to clarify their present and future. Ottoman tradition of dream telling, and recording provided historians with significant materials to interpret social cultural and private lives of individuals. The content of autobiographies/memoirs mostly concerned the difficult situations experienced by the authors. Some authors wrote after being captivated in the hands of infidels and talked about unbearable situations in the prisons and asked for help. It was sometimes about a painful love story and the author revealed how he reached to the true love of God. Some authors related an injustice suffered. As in the case of Abdülkadir Efendi, the content sometimes was about how the author appointed to the desired position and reached relief after many years of struggling and going through times of hope and anxiety.

⁹⁸³ Oscar Jané, “Self-Writing and Ego-Documents: Personal Memoirs in Catalonia (16th-19th Centuries),” in *Inscribed Identities: Life Writing as Self-Realization*, ed. Joan Ramon Resina (London: Routledge, 2019), 193.

⁹⁸⁴ Paperno, “What Can Be Done with Diaries?,” 570.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid.

Although the Ottoman selves that we encounter in these sources did not do in-depth psychological analysis of themselves, their emotions, ideas and social or physical situations as in the modern examples of the genre of autobiography, they provided many autobiographical elements and revealed much about their inner worlds by describing sufferings in the face of unwanted events, joys, beliefs, piety and how they acted in their social environment and interpersonal relationships. From the examples shown in this dissertation, we can firmly say that Ottoman self-narratives divulged significant details about the authors' individuality, emotional worlds, and social worlds. Early modern Ottoman individual was not much different from their early modern European counterparts or modern individuals. They had feelings like any other human beings and expressed/inscribed them when they had means and desire to do so. In order to reveal such intimate information, researchers must read these texts through a close scrutiny of social, cultural and historical contexts and must be aware of the literary strategies by which they express their most inner feelings. Showing that one can get very close to Ottomans who lived before the first half of the nineteenth century and they became visible as individuals is an important discovery.

This leads us to another aspect, the question of motivation. We can say that Ottoman writers of self-narratives had some kind of "autobiographical consciousness." They mostly pronounced the incentives for producing their works. Authors who wrote retrospective accounts mostly stated their motivations in detail while diarists or those who kept contemporaneous records either did not indicate any reasons for writing or simply say that they wrote to keep record of important things. In such cases, the content of the texts can be a guide in understanding the motivation for writing. The issue of motivation is very significant in revealing and making sense of the meaning between the lines of the texts, the personality of the authors, their emotions, concerns, and expectations embedded in the narrative. In Ottoman literature, there were self-narratives concerned recording an individual's spiritual progress like the one written by Asiye Hatun who wanted to learn about her development through the letters she sent to her Sufi master or *Vâkı'ât* (events) by Sheikh Hüdai who took note of his spiritual training process, dialogues with his master Üftâde Mehmed Efendi and

visionary experiences between 1577 and 1579.⁹⁸⁶ As can be seen from the examples examined in this dissertation, there were also texts dealing with the authors' worldly concerns, expectations or achievements. None of the texts scrutinized in this dissertation dealt with spiritual progress of the authors. They wrote to record financial issues, mundane occurrences in daily lives, or what processes they had been through to have an official position. Motivation behind recording was purely about how the authors perceived themselves, their lives and environment. Mustafa Hamid Efendi kept his diary because Sıdkızâde household rose to prominence and there was an enormous flow of money and gifts. He kept records of financial gains as well as his daily life in detail. We know from the two examples examined in this dissertation that worries and expectations for an appointment or having a proper career was very influential in creating such self-narratives. Kulakzâde Mahmud Pasha's motivation for writing was to rein in his anxiety because he was going through a time of uncertainty about his career. Abdülkadir Hisârî felt he was distinguished from others by his achievement to hold a position as a scribe in palace services. Hence, he wanted his life story be exemplar and provide useful information for future generations. All the authors examined in this dissertation had a habit of recording and they had the instruments and knowledge to record them in writing.

This brings us to another significant theme explored in this dissertation, the question of form and style. This dissertation focused on manuscripts that would have been categorized by contemporary Ottoman literati under the titles like *terceme-i hâl*, *cerîde*, *sergüzeşt* or *düş/vakıat*, irrespective of how modern scholarship would classify them.⁹⁸⁷ These different headings used by Ottoman literati to delineate such texts discloses that Ottoman individuals had a culture of writing about their lives and selves and a wide variety of ways/forms to do this. The forms of the texts have also been shaped by the motivations of the authors, as distinctive kinds of self-narratives emerged from different drives to write. A need for giving order to financial issues and the desire to record daily events to remember seems to be resulted in recording on a daily basis in the diary form. A need to clarify the future and suppress the worries have prompted the author to record the dreams and creating a dream diary. The intention to

⁹⁸⁶ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God," 145.

⁹⁸⁷ Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, 10.

leave the record of life events in the form of an organized narrative led the author to pen an autobiography. It goes without saying that one's social position and gender also played a role in which form the author wrote. The only known self-narrative by an Ottoman woman was written in letter form. Asiye Hatun sent her dream accounts to her sheikh as letter because she probably did not have the opportunity to see him in person. She did not live in the same city as her sheikh, but even so, she would not be allowed to visit him in person. Thus, she used letter form to communicate with him.

Another factor affecting the texts' form was the literary tradition to which the authors belonged. Their writing experiences in their professional life and habits were manifested in the forms of the texts in which they described their lives. For example, Mahmud Pasha's work bears the features of the form used in bureaucratic correspondence while Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary resembles to qadi registers. They applied the professional writing methods to the self-narratives.⁹⁸⁸

These various motivations for writing recall the question of audience. This dissertation has also sought answer to following questions: did Ottoman writers of self-narratives have an audience in mind when composing their self-narratives? If they had any, did writing for an audience have an effect on the content? How much did the authors reveal or hide their selves? Various dream accounts produced by Ottoman individuals disclose that dreams were recorded, shared, and interpreted. Thus, dreams were recorded to remember as well as to share. Mahmud Pasha, for instance, often recorded dreams in which he was seen as a skilled governor as well as dreams foretelling his appointment. He presented an image of a respectable governor who acted in justice. Sıdkızâde Mustafa Hamid Efendi's diary was probably read by others (possibly by family members) as he stated that he wrote some of the entries with the permission of the relevant people named in the records. Mustafa Hamid Efendi was a member of a prominent ulama family. Therefore, he preferred to reveal his familial relations and concentrated on his relationship with his father who was the benefactor of the household. He also disclosed some very intimate information about his relationship with his kids and wife as head of his own family. The authors of autobiographical

⁹⁸⁸ Torsten Wollina, "Ibn Tawq's Ta'liq. An Ego-Document for Mamluk Studies," in *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus. Mamluk Studies- State of the Art*, ed. Stephan Conermann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2013), 341.

narratives mostly stated that they wrote to set an example for those who read. Abdülkadir Hisârî, for example, wanted to inspire those who had difficulty in their career paths. Thus, he preferred to reveal his efforts for a decent career, how he served in various prominent households as secretary, and how he entered in the palace service. He presented an image of a pious, skilled, hardworking, and humble person. Niyazî Mîsrî for instance explicitly noted that he lent his diary to one of his disciples or a fellow Sufî master. Besides, Mîsrî did not want his diary to circulate widely because he was afraid of his enemies to expose his mistakes and embarrass him.⁹⁸⁹ An intended audience or the idea that someone would read them would have influenced the content. It may have caused the authors to hide some of their behaviors or emotions while highlighting engaging manners. Thus, it is important to consider silences and gaps about certain situations.⁹⁹⁰ Trying to make sense of those silences and gaps can help us reach fascinating information about their personality.

At this point, I want to talk about the problems of studying Ottoman self-narratives. Studying self-narratives has its advantages and limitations. One and foremost is the difficulty of making research at manuscript libraries and of identifying self-narratives. Although we have Bursalı Mehmed Tahir's seminal work on Ottoman authors and manuscripts⁹⁹¹ and also there are, as mentioned earlier, some very valuable catalogues prepared by renowned scholars like Fehmi Ethem Karatay, İsmet Parmaksızoğlu⁹⁹² and cataloging projects lead by Günay Kut,⁹⁹³ the researchers have been still discouraged by "the difficulty of finding with reasonable ease and speed what precisely reserved in the Süleymaniye Library."⁹⁹⁴ The situation in Istanbul University's

⁹⁸⁹ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of Times," 152-153.

⁹⁹⁰ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); 171.

⁹⁹¹ Although Bursalı Mehmed Tahir's work is so old, it has still retained its value.

⁹⁹² For example, see İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, *İstanbul Kütüphaneleri Tarih Coğrafya Yazmaları Kataloqları: I. Türkçe Tarih Yazmaları, Umumi Tarihler* (Ankara: Maarif Vekaleti, 1943).

⁹⁹³ For example, see Günay Kut, Hatice Aynur, Cumhure Üçer and Fatma B. Yılmaz, eds. *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Kandilli Rasathanesi ve Deprem Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Astronomi, Astroloji, Matematik Yazmaları Kataloğu: Kandilli Rasathanesi El Yazmaları: Türkçe Yazmalar* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2007); Günay Kut, Zehra Toska, Fatma B. Yılmaz, Tülay G. Demircioğlu, Arzu Atik, eds. *İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Yazma Eserler Kataloğu* (İstanbul: İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Yayınları, 2014); Günay Kut, *Tercüman Gazetesi Kütüphanesi Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu I* (İstanbul: Tercüman Gazetesi Yayınları, 1989).

⁹⁹⁴ Eleazar Birnbaum, "Turkish Manuscripts: Cataloguing Since 1960 and Manuscripts Still Uncatalogued, Part 5: Turkey and Cyprus," *Journal of American Oriental Society* 104, no: 3 (1984): 478.

collection of rare books is not different. Most of the library's holdings are in excel documents and card catalogues. These "catalogues" contain information about the authors, the titles, and brief physical descriptions. Manuscripts are not defined by their contents. Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı (The Presidency of Turkish Manuscript Institution) started a project for the preparation of catalogues of Islamic manuscripts, but it is not yet available to researchers. The fact that cataloging projects are not completed; researchers generally face with inaccurate titles and descriptions rather than detailed information on the texts. Hence, the identifying of the self-narratives requires experience, knowledge, and a little bit of chance. It is very difficult for the researchers to create a roadmap to discover the Ottoman self-narratives. The researchers may use some keywords to identify the texts. For instance, one can search for the words *cerîde*, *jurnal* or *tarih* and *mecmua* to identify diaries, *sergüzeşt* and *terceme-i hâl* to find autobiographies, *düş*, *rüya* and *vâkı'a* to find dream narratives. These keywords are useful to a certain extent. Ottoman self-narratives do not belong to a certain genre; therefore, the researchers will find themselves in the middle of an ocean of manuscripts. Apart from the difficulties result from the insufficiency of catalogues, there are also some problems arise from the nature of Ottoman manuscripts. It is very challenging to understand if a text can be put under the category of self-narratives, as the titles are mostly misleading. A work with a title that reminds very different subjects may contain content that can be classified as a self-narrative. Hence, the researchers must make detailed reading through every text to understand their content. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, I think my individual effort shows that many more Ottoman self-narratives will be unearthed as a result of a systematic research project.

Second problem is that scholarly community in Turkey has approached and is still approaching such materials with caution and skepticism. When I started to study on Ottoman self-narratives, my initial fear was whether I will be taken seriously by the scholarly community in Turkey even if I discovered some unknown Ottoman self-narratives. My fear was actually resulted from a reaction I got from a professor who knew my interest on self-narratives. He asked me why I am interested in such insignificant sources while there are a lot of "important" archival documents waiting to be examined. His reaction actually was the answer to the question of why these

sources had been ignored so far by the scholarly community in Turkey. These materials were attributed a lesser value, not to be preferred over “serious” archival documents. The main problem was that individual feelings, beliefs, and actions were not considered worthy of paying attention for historical studies. Nevertheless, recently this perception has begun to change, and these sources have been attributed a value for historical studies.

The third problem is the difficulty of working with these materials. We as historians are accustomed to studying with sources revealing objective information. Going outside the mainstreams of historical studies and giving priority to sources of very subjective nature brings some difficulties alongside. It is hard to examine and contextualize texts that touch upon diverse topics from political issues to social and personal conditions, from daily life to financial issues, from personal relationships and networks to eating habits, from professional life to emotional world. The researcher must learn to deal with such different information and be flexible enough to move elegantly between objectivity and subjectivity, between public and private to reconstruct the lived experiences of the authors with its all vivacity. This dissertation is intended to serve as an example for how self-narratives can be studied and to provide guidance on how close one can get to the self of historical personages.

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