

**THE REAL AND THE IMAGINARY THRESHOLDS OF OTTOMAN SUBJECTIVITY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE REAL AND THE IMAGINARY THRESHOLDS OF OTTOMAN SUBJECTIVITY**

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This work examines the nature of frames that restrict our perspectives and thus give birth to such sociological entities like societies, communities and nations. How is the dualism of “inside-outside” created on sociological and psychic levels? More importantly, what instruments play what kind of roles in the creation of that dualism? Examining the formation of Ottoman subjectivity as a case, this study gives original answers to these questions. The psychoanalytic theory, which opened a new methodological domain for the social sciences in the past century, productively accommodated a good amount of works on these questions. Sigmund Freud’s pioneering works on the dynamics of human psyche and Jacques Lacan’s theories of human subjectivity played important roles in the improvement of this domain. Beginning from the second half of the past century, discussions on identity and belonging, as well as such furious social questions as nationalism, racism and xenophobia, have been held in the light of the new approaches of psychoanalytic theories in the field of social sciences. In this sense, this study can be seen as a part of those



approaches, because methodologically, it bases itself on the opportunities offered by a particular psychoanalytic theory, namely, that of a French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan. I pick up two of Lacan's productively scrutinized concepts, namely the "real" and the "imaginary", to develop a particular perspective towards this question: How is the dualism of inside-outside created in different contexts throughout the Ottoman history, so that this dualism could give birth to Ottoman subjectivity? Taking the two Lacanian concepts as a base, I analyze the instruments that play the role of "thresholds" in the formation of the dualism of "inside-outside", under two general headings: The "real thresholds" and the "imaginary thresholds". To put in a very brief manner, a "real threshold" is born out of any material obstacle that puts restrictions of any kind to the abilities of human body (natural obstacles like mountains, rivers and oceans, as well as designed obstacles like any object of war architecture, for instance, fall into this heading). Imaginary thresholds, on the other hand, are the "images of selves" that reflect back to us on the social ground, just in the same manner as our mirror-images come back to us and provide us with a subjective feeling of self (like the diplomatic texts and the mythologies). Although I borrow the two Lacanian terms (i.e. real and imaginary) to build up a theory of thresholds, I do not hesitate to bend and reshape those concepts whenever necessary, to build the conceptual tools into a rather ergonomic manner.

**Keywords:** Ottoman identity and self, Ottoman subjectivity, boundary, Jacques Lacan, psychoanalysis, theory of thresholds and subjectivity.

**ÖZ**  
**OSMANLI ÖZNELLİĞİNİN GERÇEK VE İMGESEL EŞİKLERİ**

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Bu çalışma, öznelliklerimizi ortaya çıkaran, yani bakış açılarımızı sınırlandırarak millet, cemaat ve cemiyet gibi sosyolojik varlıkları ortaya çıkaran çerçeveleri sorgulamaktadır. İnsanın tüm duyularına sınırlama koyabilen, dünyayı ve nesnelere öyle değil de böyle algılamamızı sağlayan sınırlandırmalar hangi mekanizmalarla ve ne gibi araçlarla işlemekte, psişik düzeyde sonuçları nasıl ortaya çıkmaktadır? Daha da önemlisi, “iç-dış” bölünmesi sonucunda öznelğin meydana çıkmasını sağlayan araçlar nelerdir? Elinizdeki çalışma, Osmanlı öznelliğinin oluşumunu incelerken bu sorulara özgün cevaplar vermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Geçtiğimiz yüzyılda sosyal bilimler alanında yeni yöntemsel mecralar açan psikanalitik kuram, bu konuda oldukça verimli çalışmaların yapılmasını sağladı. Sigmund Freud’un insan ruhunun dinamiklerine dair fikirleri

ve Jacques Lacan'ın özne kuramları, bu verimli mecrain niteliğini belirlemede önemli rol oynadı. Kimlik tartışmaları, aidiyet, mensubiyet ve cinsiyet konuları kadar milliyetçilik ve hatta ırkçılık ve zenofobi gibi hararetli sosyal fenomenleri ele alırken, psikanalizin açtığı yeni alanı zemin olarak kullanan oldukça geniş hacimli bir akademik külliyat meydana geldi. Metodolojik açıdan, elinizdeki çalışma, psikanalizin getirdiği imkânları kullanmayı denemektedir. Fransız psikanalist Jacques Lacan'ın iki kavramını, yani “gerçek” ve “imgesel” kavramlarını esas alarak, “iç-dış” düalizminin farklı tarihsel bağlamlarda ne tür sınır araçlarıyla ortaya çıkarak Osmanlı öznelliğini meydana getirdiğini araştırmaktadır. İç-dış düalizmini yaratan araçları, genel olarak iki başlık altında incelemektedir: “Gerçek eşikler” ve “imgesel eşikler”. Gerçek eşikler, insan bedenini sınırlayan her türlü maddi engelden meydana gelir (dağlar, denizler, nehirler gibi doğal engellerin yanısıra, savaş mimarisinin ürettiği her türlü tasarlanmış engel bu başlığa dahil edilebilir). İmgesel eşikler ise, tıpkı aynadaki imajlarımız gibi, sosyal yaşamdan akisler halinde bize dönen her türlü “benlik” imgesidir (diplomatik metinler ve mitolojiler gibi). Elinizdeki çalışma, Lacan'ın bu iki kavramını ödünç almakla birlikte, bu iki kavramı gerektiğinde eğip bükerek, çalışmanın sorularına yanıt ararken onları daha “ergonomik” hale getirmekte, böylece bu kavramlara kısmen özgün anlamlar da yüklemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Osmanlı kimliği ve benliği, Osmanlı öznelliği, sınır, Jacques Lacan, psikanaliz, eşikler kuramı ve öznellik.

To Vildan and Rona

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## ABBREVIATIONS

D.I.A.: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı (1988-) *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı)

M.M.: Turkey (1877) *Muahedat Mecmuası*. 5 volumes. (İstanbul: Hakikat Matbaası)

SII: Lacan, Jacques (1954) *The Seminars of Jacques Lacan Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (trans. Sylvana Tomaselli, notes by John Forrester) New York: Norton, 1991.

SE: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, volumes 1-24. London: Hogarth Press, 1953-1974.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Basic Questions

A very basic impetus of this study is to understand how the dualism of “inside-outside” is formed on psychic and sociological levels. This question is very important especially when we take into account the increasing impacts of nationalism, xenophobia and racism in the contemporary societies. Understanding how our perspectives are delimited in particular contexts by means of cultural and material instruments is very important to make sense of the basic dynamics of the social practices of “inclusion” and “exclusion”.

The dualism of inside-outside is strictly connected with our subjectivities. But we have to be interrogative of this interconnection: Are our perspectives delimited because we born *into* ready-made restrictive grounds such as nations, races or communities? Or do we, the human subjects, already have restricted perspectives by birth and this boundedness is what brings about an illusory sense of inside-outside? To avoid a possible vicious cycle between these questions, I pick up the term “subjectivity” as a starting point and try to understand how the feelings of inside-outside create a particular



subjectivity, namely the Ottoman subjectivity. The definition of the term “subjectivity” here depends on two concepts which are very much central to this study: “Real” and “imaginary”. These two concepts are taken from the work of a French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, although they do not necessarily stick firmly to his definition in this study. In other words, I give a central place to those two concepts, without yet holding back from some modifications.

The psychoanalytic traditions in Europe have generated a vast literature on the “inside” and the “outside” of human subjectivities. The whole Freudian and the Lacanian schools have been working very productively on the two dimensions of human subjectivity. Freud’s model of psyche is entirely related to the interaction between the psychic domain and the objective world on neurological and cultural grounds. The deep “inside” of human psyche is in an interaction with the outer world, the world of objects in Freud’s account. This basic notion helped him generate a really extensive work on the nature and the outcomes of this interaction. Lacan, too, devoted much of his time to investigating the “inside” of human subjectivity, but did not turn his back to what happens in the “outside”, namely the “big other” or the “symbolic order” (the domain of culture and language). His approach to the relationship between this “inside” and the “outside” of the subjective domain ended up with a literature which is not less productive than his predecessor, Freud.

However, it is interesting to note that these leading thinkers, as well as their followers, have failed to scrutinize the no-man's-land, the very demarcation lines that separate the subjectivities from the external world. So, an original dimension of this work lies in its primary focus on the buffer zones, the demarcation lines and any intermediary tools that bring about the sense of "inside-outside". By what means is the dualism of inside-outside generated on the historical, cultural and material grounds? I try to answer this question by focusing on a particular case, namely the case of what I call "Ottoman subjectivity".

### **1.2. On Methodology: History and Psychoanalysis**

A big source of anxiety for the author of this work is the possibility that the reader may be too hasty to see it as an eclectic collection of original historical documents. This work depends to a very important extent on historical documents which are treated very selectively and as much carefully as possible. However, in methodological sense, it is located somewhere very distant from the discipline of history. So, the historical documents are brought together for the purpose of answering particular questions which are not very much of historical character.

Just to express the role of the historical documents in this study, we can think of what we call "Ottoman subjectivity" as an old (in fact, very old)

individual who was born in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup> and passed away in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This very old man has generated a good amount of texts throughout his life, like visual materials, written documents, architectural and artistic works, official and folkloric documents. Some of those documents may be authentic while others are forged. It might be a non-scholarly job in the eyes of a historian to throw oneself into some bulks of those eclectic documents. However, this may not seem that objectionable for a psychoanalytic approach whose main capital are the texts produced by the analysand who lies down on the Freudian couch, leaving his mind totally to the “free associations”. The theoretical principle of this study takes its claim of originality at this point: The attitude of this study towards historical texts takes the relationship between the psychoanalyst and the analysand as a model, assuming a major difference between the analyst and the historian: For an analyst, every text generated by the analysand (whether it is forged, or a product of phantasy or even lie) is “authentic”. In fact parapraxes, slips of the tongue, symptoms, phantasies, dreams and all kind of “documents” that a historian might consider unimportant make up the most “genuine” documents for a psychoanalyst. For a historian, a “forged document” may worth working on, but eventually it is something that should be weeded out. An analyst, on

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<sup>1</sup> We take the birth of the Ottoman state as the starting point in this study. The most conventional approach to the Ottoman history says that the Ottoman state was founded in 1299.

the other hand, may situate whatever omitted by a historian to the center of his psychoanalytic narrative.

### **1.3. On the Concepts of “Real” and “Imaginary”:**

Definitions of these two concepts, namely the “real” and the “imaginary” in this study are based on Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytic account, and have very little in common with their literal meanings defined in dictionaries as follows:

Real:

Adjective 1. Being or occurring in fact or actuality; having verified existence; not illusory; "real objects"; "real people; not ghosts"; "a film based on real life"; "a real illness"; "real humility"...

Imaginary:

Adjective 1. Not based on fact; dubious; "the falsehood about some fanciful secret treaties"- F.D.Roosevelt; "a small child's imaginary friends"; "her imagined fame"; "to create a notional world for oneself".<sup>2</sup>

These two concepts, together with the third one which is strictly interconnected with them but not employed in this study, namely “the symbolic”, are very important in Lacan’s theory of subjectivity. So much so that, it would be impossible to talk about Lacan’s theory of human subjectivity even on superficial level without mentioning these concepts. These “three orders”, or

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org>

the “three registers” as they are sometimes named in English translations of Lacan’s work, operate together to make up the three essential dimensions of human subject. I will briefly introduce the terms “real” and “imaginary” here, and omit the third member of this triplet, the “symbolic”, which does not constitute a separate topic in this study. This omission is not because the term “symbolic” is of the least importance in this Lacanian conceptual triplet. On the contrary, its definition and theoretical role in Lacanian theory is so productive that a separate work which is complementary to this study would deserve a title like “The Symbolic Thresholds of Ottoman Subjectivity”. So, the very reason behind this omission is not about the power of the concepts, but about the starting point of this study. Since this formal point is closely related to a deeper methodological question, we need to make further clarifications on that.

When the question of application of original concepts of an author by a researcher to a particular study is at issue, one can speak of two possibilities regarding the starting point: The first possibility is that the researcher already has those concepts in his/her repertoire and he/she accordingly wants to apply them to a particular matter. Or, the researcher has some initial questions that lead his/her attention eventually to those concepts. The difference between these two attitudes is the same as the difference between two different usages of an astronomical instrument: One can come across a telescope accidentally first, for instance, and learn as much as possible about it. Then his/her research

may follow by using it to observe the skies. The other possibility is that one has many questions in mind about the skies and this curiosity takes him/her to the need for a telescope. Likewise, whether a researcher in the domain of social science falls into the first or the second way in his attitude not only affects the course and the nature of his/her research, but also the major findings and the results of the study may vary fundamentally. After all, concepts are important hand-tools for the researchers in social sciences.

So, the first caution I feel obliged to make here about the employment of psychoanalytic concepts is that, it is not intended in this study to put Lacan's concepts to the test or to make room for a full application of those concepts. It is just the other way around: The starting point for this study is not concepts, but questions: What narrows down our perspectives from a universal, panoramic outlook like that of God to a particular point of view? How is a perspective constructed? How is the dualism of "inside-outside" built on psychic and sociological levels? And more important than all of these questions, what kind of observations can we make about the nature of the frontiers of subjectivities, namely, about the boundary lines *per se* that almost infinitely compartmentalize human subjectivity?

Once questions, not the concepts, are placed at the very outset of a research, picking up the appropriate tools (concepts) becomes the next major

issue. As far as the question of “appropriateness” is on the table, the researcher has the right to make some alterations to his tools whenever necessary. Based on this methodological principle, I did not hesitate to make changes, of minor or major type, to Jacques Lacan’s two main concepts, namely “the real” and “the imaginary”, whenever necessary. I believe that trying to ergonomize one’s tools, making alterations to the concepts, is productive. Let us now take a closer look at these concepts in their original Lacanian definitions and then the ways in which I bended them this or that way at certain points.

The term “real” appeared in Lacan’s teachings far later, when he had passed the half of the way in his scholarly journey. But once it appeared, it took a fortified and central place in his thought. The first thing we should immediately draw attention at this point is that, in Lacanian account, the term “real” is carefully distinguished from, or sometimes directly contrasted to, the term “reality”. Reality is simply the ground on which the ordinary social relations are based. The “real”, on the other hand, is a hypothetical domain which is totally unknowable to human subject. Some scholars of Lacanian thought compare the “real” to Freudian “unconscious”. Although there are some good reasons to make this comparison, Lacan’s “real” is fundamentally different from Freud’s unconscious. Žižek, on the other hand, compares the Lacanian term “real” to Kant’s “thing-in-itself”. And he concludes that the Lacanian “real” does not

consist in the objective entities or the positive beings that exist beyond the symbolic domain.<sup>3</sup>

The most frequently appearing point about the concept of the real in the second-hand resources on Lacan's work is that, "the real resists symbolization". That is another way of saying that the real can never be grasped by human intellect. Its content can never be a subject to our knowledge. This is the very basic character of the real in Lacan's thought, and it is what he means when he repeatedly says in his seminars that "...the real has no fissure"<sup>4</sup>.

This obscure characteristic of "the real" is strictly connected to another original Lacanian idea that the human subject is fundamentally split, as opposed to the Cartesian notion that the human subject is a unity. The split of human subject in Lacanian notion comes out as a result of a radical divergence between the chain of signifiers and the signified, between the conscious and the unconscious. In the symbolic domain, namely, in the domain of language, the signifiers are separated from the signified elements fundamentally. In Lacan's account, human subjectivity should be sought somewhere in the side of the signifiers, which are connected to each other like the rings of a chain. It is an important point in Lacan's theory that the flows of signifiers make up the

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<sup>3</sup> Zizek, 1989:172.

<sup>4</sup> Lacan, SII, p. 98.



“reality” in the ordinary world as such in which human-subjects live. In this picture, “the real” is whatever rests somewhere off the site. It turns out that the split between “the reality” and “the real” is impassable and in Žižek’s words, the human subject can never “...reach the point at which “the circumstances themselves begin to speak”, the point at which language starts to function immediately as “language of the Real””.<sup>5</sup> However, again as Žižek points out, this does not mean that human subjects live in a world of dreams:

When Lacan says that the last support of what we call “reality” is a fantasy, this is definitely not to be understood in the sense of “life is just a dream”, “what we call reality is just a dream” and so forth! “...The Lacanian thesis is that there is always a hard kernel, a leftover which persists and cannot be reduced to a universal play of illusory mirroring.”<sup>6</sup>

The term imaginary is relatively older in Lacan’s teachings. It started to be used as a major concept before the 1950s.<sup>7</sup> Based on a general outlook of Lacanian account of the term, we can talk of two basic principles that regulate

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<sup>5</sup> Žižek, 1989, p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> Žižek, 1989, p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> Lacan, Jacques (1977) *Écrits*, trns. Alan Sheridan (London and New York: Routledge), see: Translator’s note, p. ix.

the imaginary dimension of the human subjectivity. First, the imaginary relations are based on the dialectical opposition of “you or me”. In other words, the imaginary ground is where the “parties” of a relationship appear. Second, the imaginary ground is where an important part of the self, namely the “ego”, comes into existence. In fact, in Lacan’s own words, “...the ego can in no way be anything other than an imaginary function...”<sup>8</sup> The best way to understand Lacan’s concept of imaginary is to think about this term in its relation to the metaphor of “mirror”. A mirror reflects the image of one’s body. What is activated in an individual’s relation with his mirror image is the ego. However, on the imaginary ground the ego is not something like “*an active agency*”. Rather, the ego, as a product of the mirror reflection, is an imaginary *object*.<sup>9</sup>

Everything in the domain of imaginary operates in relation to its opposite, coming out as a product of dialectical relations. In Žižek’s words, the opposites come together to “...build a harmonious totality; each gives the other what the other lacks—each fills out the lack in the other (the fantasy of the fully realized sexual relationship, for example, where man and woman form a harmonious whole)”.<sup>10</sup> In contrast to this dialectical character of the imaginary, in Lacan’s

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<sup>8</sup> Lacan, S II, p. 52.

<sup>9</sup> Fink, 1995, p. 84

<sup>10</sup> Žižek, 1989, p. 172

thought, “there is no absence in the real”.<sup>11</sup> Lacan’s expression of this point leads us to think that there is an ahistorical short circuit between the opposite poles in the domain of the real. So, one should not seek the Freudian libidinal dynamics in the real. This is quite the opposite of the imaginary, since Lacan states that

. . . every imaginary relation comes about via a kind of *you or me* between the subject and the object. That is to say *–if it’s you, I’m not. If it’s me, it’s you isn’t* [sic]...On the imaginary level, the objects only ever appear to man within relations which fade. He recognizes his unity in them, but uniquely from without. And in as much he recognizes his unity in an object, he feels himself to be in disarray in relation to the latter.<sup>12</sup>

Giving a general and very brief outlook of the two terms in Lacanian theory in this way, we should now demonstrate how these concepts are employed in this study, and in what ways their contextual usages here converge with and diverge from their origins. Let us start with the term “real”. In this study, generally speaking, the term “real” is inspired by, but not totally depends on, its Lacanian definitions that we introduced above. The ideal reading of the term in this study should bring to the mind of the reader the Lacanian notions

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<sup>11</sup> Lacan, SII, p. 313.

<sup>12</sup> Lacan, S II, p 169.

that we selectively cited above. This would make it easier to communicate with a reader who has not so far concerned him/herself with Lacanian concepts at all. However, a reader who is acquainted in some degree with Lacan may immediately say in most cases that “this is not very much Lacanian”. We have already stated above that the basic motive behind the employment of these concepts in this study is not to put Lacan on test or stick firmly to his concepts to build a theoretical approach. So, the reader should be tolerant with the modifications of the terms in some contexts in the main text.

The clearest difference between the Lacanian definition of the two terms and their usages in this work is about the “real”. Zizek claims that Lacan’s real is not something that has a positive existence.<sup>13</sup> This means that when we say “a real object” with Lacanian denotations, we should not think something like “an object that exists in this world but cannot be grasped by human mind”. This means that the real is not out there in the form of material beings. So, the term bears a contradiction to the very essential meaning we attach to it in this work at a certain point: First of all, we use the term “real” in this work to talk about very material things in a certain point of view. This is why we mention mountains, rivers, cliffs and the like material obstacles, for example, to talk about the “real thresholds of subjectivity”. So, here is the foremost divergence of the usage of

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<sup>13</sup> Zizek, 1989, p. 172.

the term real in this work from its Lacanian origin: A real threshold is based on the real obstacles, and a real obstacle is anything that restricts the physical movements of human body. Real obstacles may be a part of the nature, or they may be designed and built by human hands. The “designed obstacles” like intrenchments, fortifications, city walls, barbed wires, and other products of war architecture, for instance, are “real thresholds” because they bring restrictions to the movements of human body. Here, the critical point is that, the term “real obstacle” takes human body as a starting point.

In fact, at some point in Lacan’s seminars, a similar approach towards the term real can be observed. Lacan sometimes implies that the “real” has a lot to do with human body, as in the following lines from his seminars:

If psychosomatic reactions as such suggest something, it is that they are outside the register of neurotic constructs. It isn’t an object relation. It’s a relation to something which always lies on the edge of our conceptual elaborations, which we are always thinking about, which we sometimes speak of, and which, strictly speaking, we can’t grasp, and which is nonetheless there, don’t forget it –I talk about the symbolic, about the imaginary, but there is also the real. *Psychosomatic relations are at the level of the real*<sup>14</sup> (my italics).

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<sup>14</sup> Lacan, S II, p. 96.

As for the term “imaginary”, its usage in this work resembles very much to its Lacanian definitions. But again, we have made some modifications, additions and omissions to make it a more ergonomic tool for our research. A series of important and easily perceivable modifications to the Lacanian definition of the term “imaginary” in this work is about the usage of some auxiliary concepts, such as “ontology”, “diplomacy” and “representation”, to put forward some theses about the “imaginary thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity”. So, when we say “the ontological thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity”, for example, we mean the imaginary reflection of Ottoman self in a dialectical relationship of “you or me”. In other words, the imaginary thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity are built in any dialectical encounter that polarizes the sense of “self” vis-à-vis the “other”.

Now, to tidy up whatever we said about the diverging points between the Lacanian definitions of the concepts of “real” and “imaginary” and the way we interpret them here, let us briefly lay bare major additions that we have made to them.

#### **1.4. Real Thresholds of Subjectivity**

A real threshold has *material/bodily* aspects. Any material object that operates as an obstacle to the human body, by restricting its bodily, physical or organic functions, is a real obstacle. The psychic outcome of this restriction

makes up an important part of “real thresholds”. And this is the point where the usage of the term “real” in this study might seem at odds with Lacanian sense.

This notion depends on the dialectic of “ergonomy versus de-ergonomy”, by which we imply that the human body can be in touch with the material objects in two opposite directions in terms of functions. And this point does not very much clash with a very introductory (Freudian) psychoanalytic assertion in saying that, human infant is born premature and there is a fundamental discrepancy between human body and the objective world. Lacan unfailingly develops this Freudian idea to reject any “pre-established harmony” between any organism and the environment:

The notion of reflected relations of the living being with its environment, the hypothesis of a pre-established harmony, even if we give it the broadest sense, is a premise whose validity nothing goes to demonstrate. If other modes of research, such as atomism, associationism, etc., against which we can raise all kinds of criticisms, are more fruitful, it is because they move away from this hypothesis, because without knowing it they place symbolism in the foreground. They project it into the real, they imagine that it is the elements of the real which are of relevance. But it is simply symbolism which they bring into operation inside the real, not by virtue of projection, nor as a framework of thought, but by virtue of being an instrument of investigation. The real is without fissure.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lacan, SII, p.98.

We can read this Lacanian passage in this way: The difference between the living organism and the environment is placed on the ground of “real”. In other words, the functional discrepancies between the living organisms and the material world are “real”. However, the impacts of these discrepancies are located in either imaginary or the symbolic domains. This, actually, is a main gate to the whole Freud-Lacanian psychoanalysis.

A representative example of this relationship between the real and the imaginary in the case of Ottoman subjectivity is “Vienna”. Throughout the historical course of the Ottoman progress into the European lands, Vienna played the role of a “real obstacle”. Ottoman forces besieged Vienna two times in their history (in 1529 and in 1683), each ending in tragic failures. The destructions, demolitions and all the possible catastrophic pictures of the wars took place on the ground of the “real”. But throughout history, Vienna has become an imaginary threshold. Even today, there is a vast literature on the possible impacts of invasion of Vienna by Ottomans.

### **1.5. Imaginary Thresholds of Subjectivity**

As I have stated above briefly, I have added some dimensions to Lacan’s concept of “imaginary” to talk about the “imaginary thresholds of Ottoman



subjectivity” in this work. Major additions are threefold: The “ontological dimension” of the term imaginary; the “diplomatic character” of the imaginary relations and the relations of “representation” that requires an imaginary ground. Let us now briefly introduce these dimensions here.

An ontological threshold is whatever constructs the imaginary perceptions of “subject” in the dialectics of “self” and the “non-self” (not to say “other”). Here, the dialectic does not necessarily have to be of conflicting character, in contrast to what a standard Lacanian interpretation of Hegel (via Kojève) would imply. An imaginary relation between the supernatural beings and “Muslim-Ottoman”, for example, can fit perfectly to the Lacanian account of the imaginary register which is characterized by “you or me”. However, there are many other supernatural-irrational beings which are quite in peace with Muslim-Ottoman self (the abstract beings of good nature like “ferište” and “melek” (angel), for example). So, what we need is a more comprehensive account of the “imaginary thresholds” which depends on the ontological differences between the subject and the object: A part of imaginary thresholds of subjectivity are constructed on the ontological level in such a way that the feelings of “inside” and “outside” eventually bring about a sense of “self”. In this account, the “self” differs from the “non-self” not on the phenomenological, but ontological level. Not only the pre-modern mythologies of “gins”, “fairies” and “anthropophagi”, but also the modern descriptions of “other cultures” operate by means of this

ontological boundary lines between the “self” and the “non-self” in constructing the imaginary thresholds. Constructions of subjectivities vitally depend on the dehumanization of the objective world, which is an ontological operation. We can find abundant examples of this anti-psychotic character of the “absolute other”, the very ontological ground on which the self is assured of its existence, in the “pre-modern” as well as modern times. A typical example from the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman subjectivity would be the paradigm of “new world” (*hadis-i nev*). The way Piri Reis (an Ottoman sailor who is famous for his “World Map” of 1513) talks about the “new world” feels like it is a universe of “monsters” and “the curious and marvelous beings”. In that discourse, which is not peculiar to Piri Reis but represents a popular attitude towards the “external world” among his contemporaries, those “curious and marvelous” beings (*ve garâib*) differ from “us” not only in their *appearance*, but in their *essence*, too. Following Lévi-Strauss’ arguments about the clinical function of the mythologies, I argued in the subsequent parts of the study that this kind of “imaginary boundaries” are of “anti-psychotic” character, no matter how they seem to be a “mad man’s discourse” at first glance.

It is reported that when “World Map” of Piri Reis was presented to the Sultan Selim (I) four years after its accomplishment (in 1517), the Sultan looked at the map and said that “the world is too small for a monarch!” In the “age of geographical discoveries”, the Ottoman Empire was in its heydays of conquests.

So, the impacts of these two “expansions” (geographical discoveries and conquests) had very striking effects on the perception of “inside-outside” of Ottoman subjectivity. Here, the existence of an “outer world of curious and weird beings” is functional to re-establish the dualism of “inside-outside”. One can find infinite examples of this way of rebuilding-maintaining the imaginary boundaries in modern times, too.

By the expression of “diplomatic character of imaginary relations”, I mean another polarization that provides the “self” with a constructive ground. The implication of this definition is broad enough to cover any ground on which the “selves” are presented to one another. In other words, in the imaginary relations, one can design his/her mirror image. One can decide what characteristics of his/her self to pick up to reflect in an intersubjective context. In this way, the imaginary boundary lines of the selves are fixed. And this is how the sense of “inside-outside” comes out on the imaginary ground. Diplomatic contexts contain rich examples of how the imaginary thresholds of human subjectivities emerge. So, to see a the imaginary boundary lines of Ottoman subjectivity from a certain point of view in different contexts throughout history, I focus on the discourses of some international conventions.

### **1.6. Is There Such a Thing as “Ottoman Subjectivity?”**

Whatever plays the role of a boundary mark is there to separate the “object” from the “subject”. So, a boundary mark cannot be regarded as part of either side. That is to say, boundary marks are neither objective, nor subjective. This, perhaps, is where their uncanny characters come from.

At a certain practical level, it is not difficult to say whether an individual is American, Turk, Arab, or whatever nationality. After all, the whole modern and knotted bureaucracy of citizenship is all about this. And as for the theoretical level, psychoanalytic literature has much to say of this question of identities. At least Lacanian outlook of object and subject, for the most part, is productively used in the contemporary domain of social science to address this question. For example, when we say “an American subject” with Lacanian lexicon in mind, we will unavoidably have the mental image of its diagonally opposed partners like Arabs, Europeans, the world of overseas, Canadians, Mexicans, immigrants or whatever falls into the side of the notorious term “the other”. This Hegelian match is vital for our desires, hates, loves, or anything that comes out as a result of the interaction between object and subject. So far so good. However, it looks like everything related to this dichotomy in Lacanian theory is either about object or subject as such. That is, we find little or nothing at all about the nature and character of the “demarcation lines” in the vast volume of psychoanalytic literature. We have

to think about “the no man's land” where there is neither subject nor object. For the sake of simplicity, we will call in this work those no man's lands as “thresholds of subjectivity”.

Asking basic questions about subjectivities, in all their silly-but-great nature, was central to early modern philosophy. When Descartes was once lost in doubts, in his meditations, he was asking “how can I know that I am real?” The starting point to get out of this impasse was the certainty that he attributed to the existence of his body, a certainty which was nothing other than an outcome of his senses. Nevertheless senses too, according to Descartes, might have been deceiving him. So, the only concrete and evident thing he would be sure of about his personal existence was his body. He was asking himself in his meditations: “How can it be denied that these hands or this body is mine?” He was sure that only mad men would be in confusion about his own body: “...mad men, whose brains are disturbed by such a disorderly melancholick vapour [sic], that makes them continually proses [sic] themselves to be Kings, tho [sic] they are very poor...”<sup>16</sup>

Descartes raises a great point in his naïve questions: One can hardly mistake his body for anything else. So, our bodies can be a starting point to distinguish “ourselves”. But what about racism, which treats so many bodies as

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<sup>16</sup> Descartes, Rene (1680) Six Meditations (London: B.G.), p. 3.

one and the same? After all, however “irrational” or “insane” it may seem, racism is a fact and many racists believe in the totality of bodies, under the idea of “unity of selves”.

If the idea of “unity of selves” is successfully practiced by nationalism, it is because the “real” and the “imaginary” (and of course the symbolic) are interconnected like the rings of a chain. Despite his intellectual and the psychic capacity, human being has something that makes him a part of the nature: That is the “body”. Human body works in accordance with all of the “natural laws”. In other words, there is continuity between human body and the other objects of the nature in terms of “obeying the rules” which are modeled by the modern sciences. There are particular “natural laws” that regulate the flow of liquids and the movements of particles and masses, for instance, which prevail on human body verbatim.

So, where does this “dualism” between human body and the natural laws come from? The point where this dualism of “human versus nature” emerges is not the human capability of escaping from those rules. Human being differs from other organic entities in the capability of leading his bodily divergence from the nature. In other words, human being can design the extent and the forms of his separation from the nature. Thus, the primary step in the emergence of “inside-outside” in human mind has a lot to do with the

ability to design. This is a general and the major assumption of this study. And the most general question which can be seen as the origin of many investigations of this study takes shape in accordance with that assumption: How can human being take this dualism of “inside-outside”, which primarily emerges on the level of “real” (namely, on the psychosomatic level), to the imaginary and symbolic levels, to processes of creating nations, communities, ethnicities and races?

Basing our discussions on psychoanalysis, especially on the classical Freudian tradition and the Lacanian paradigm, we can argue that the dualism of “inside-outside” comes into being in the life of individuals first time as a result of birth. That is why “inside” comes before “outside” in ontological as well as in temporal sense. Also, that is why “inside” is where we ultimately desire to be. “Inside”, as opposed to the diasporic character of “outside”, is the authentic space where we have left once in the past and want to return to eventually. As a foremost source of our phantasies, it is the most secured spatial dimension of our existence, where our being is legitimate to the full extent. In short, the “inside” is the mother’s womb, while “outside” is where all of the excitations that force us into the middle of life emerge.

### **1.7. Of the “Real Subject”: Turk or Ottoman?**

A very difficult question this study was faced was about a naming process: Should we call the subjectivity that I examine in this study as “Turk” or “Ottoman”? Turkish nationalist ideology would not hesitate to position itself in the side of the former by such arguments: “Turkish identity is as old as the history; it is not contingent or causal. It is as authentic and legitimate as coming into being in one’s mother’s womb”. In the nationalist account of this discourse, being a member of one’s nation is spontaneous and universal. This study is very much at odds with these claims. So, it would be a contradiction to give a central place to the term “Turkish subjectivity” while maintaining a critical approach towards this kind of nationalist assumptions.

A brief look at the history of the usage of the term “Turk” along with its nationalist designations was helpful to overcome this deadlock. Such important authors and politicians who contributed a lot to the emergence of Turkish nationalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as Zeki Velidi Togan (Ahmet Zeki Validov), Gaspıralı İsmail (Ismail Gasprinski), Yusuf Akçura and Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Ahmet Agayef) were coming from Russia.<sup>17</sup> They came to Istanbul and gave shape to the nationalist movements there, while some other leading figures of Turkish

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<sup>17</sup> As Turkism became a more settled ideology, these leading figures were mentioned as “Northern Turks (north referring to Russia)” and “Eastern Turks (east referring to Azerbaijan and Central Asia).



nationalism, like Ahundzade Mirza Feth Ali (Ahundof) [1811-1878] were coming from Azerbaijan. When the works of these figures who contributed to the development of Turkish nationalism subsumed and absorbed the image of “Turk” which had been under construction in the works of European orientalists since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century on, the idea of “Turkish nation” was already arising.<sup>18</sup> The orientalist works which took the term “Turk” even beyond its ethnic implications and made it a metaphor for a modern-nation, originated and concentrated mainly in two irrelevant domains in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Studies on

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<sup>18</sup> The impacts of the “external gaze” (in the case of Turkish nationalism, it is mainly European gaze) on the transformation of the meaning of the term “Turk” as part of the development of nationalist point of view is not peculiar to Turkish nationalism. As a matter of fact, it is almost a universal phenomenon that nationalism takes its vital energy from the “outer world”. An author was observing this fact for almost any nationalism in 1919, in the context of the First World War, in which nationalist movements were polarized to the utmost level: “The most fanatical exponent of pan-Germanism is Houston Chamberlain, an Englishman. Treitschke was of Bohemian blood, Nietzsche of Polish, and Moltke of Danish. O’Higgins, the national hero of Chile, bears anything but a Spanish name. Napoleon was from the island of Corsica and the empress Joesphine from the island of Martinique. Kossuth, the leader of Hungarian nationaslim, was a pole. Bernadotte, the founder of the reigning Swedish dynasty, was a Frenchman. Alexander Hamilton, the exponent of American nationalism, was born in the island of Nevis. Columbus, who gave a new world to Íspain, was an Italian. Disraeli, who originated British imperialism, was a Jew. Venizelos, to whom the expansion of Greece is due, is a Cretan by birth. Parnell, the Irish home roler, was part Scotch and part American. Gladstone, the most typical of Englishmen, was Scotch. Wellington was Irish, so was Kitchener. Lloyd George is a Welshman if ever there was one” (Slosson, Edwin E. (1919) “Uniting the United States” in Robertson, D.A. (ed.) (1919) *The University Record*, Vol. 5. pp. 174-188 (p. 183).

“sinology”<sup>19</sup> and the scholarly interests on Muslim cultures. The early examples of the scholarly European works that preferred the term “Turk” over the term “Ottoman” date back at least to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Ottomans have always been well aware of those works. For example, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in a period when the term Turk was not so reputable among the Ottomans (it was even a derogatory word in those times), a book written by a European author, which was presented to the Sultan himself in Istanbul, was mentioning the Ottomans as “Turks” and “Muslims” (not as Ottomans).<sup>20</sup> It was only after the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the term Turk has accomplished its movement towards a rather “favorable” meaning among the Ottomans, as part of the reception of the European point of view in broader cultural ground. There was already a good deposit of scholarly-orientalist works on the origins of Turks without putting a stress on the religious dimension of the term. It would be useful here to take a brief look at that works.

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<sup>19</sup> Sinology: Studies of China and Chinese culture.

<sup>20</sup> Leunclavius, Johannes (1590) *Neuwer Musulmanischer histori Turkischer Nation von jhrem herkommen geschichten und thaten*. Another copy of the book is dated 1595, and titled *Neuwer musulmanischer histori Türckischer Nation von jhrem herkommen biss auff Suleiman den Andern dieses namens. Achtzehen bücher dermassen auss ihrenselbs eigenen historien*. Leunclavius was a painter. He went to Istanbul in the time of Murat III zamanında (1574-1595) to present his book to the Sultan (Metin And, 1974, p. 15).

French sinologist Joseph de Guignes was the first orientalist author to write a treatise on the Asiatic origins of Turks<sup>21</sup> with a stress upon their non-Muslim origins in his *Histoire Générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mongoles et Autres Tartares occidentaux* [General History of Huns, the Turks, the Mongols, and other western Tatars].<sup>22</sup> Another very important European author who sorted out Turks on ethnic and racial grounds and thus contributed to the birth of the ethnic claims of Turkish nationalism was a Hungarian orientalist Arminius (Hermann) Vambéry<sup>23</sup> (who is known as the father of pan-Turkism). The most important contribution of Vambéry to the birth of Turkish nationalism was that he paved the way to the separation of Turkish identity from its religious aspect, namely from Islamic dimension. In Europe, the Term Turk had been an interchangeable mate of the term Islam for centuries. In this respect, Vambéry's separation was an important step, which was soon accepted by some Ottoman intellectuals, too. So, it would be proper to seek the origins of the secular character of Turkish nationalism in Vambéry's attempts. His assistance in the

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<sup>21</sup> This assertion has been defended by Ağaoğulları first (see: Ağaoğulları, 1987:179).

<sup>22</sup> De Guignes, Joseph [1756] *Histoire générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mongoles et autres Tartares occidentaux* [General History of Huns, the Turks, the Mongols, and other western Tatars] (Paris: Desaint&Saillant).

<sup>23</sup> Turkists of later periods (Yusuf Akçura, for instance) obsessively claim that Vambéry was a spy. (Also see: Mim Kemal Öke (1983) *İngiliz Casusu Prof. Arminius Vambéry'nin Raporlarında Abdülhamid II ve Dönemi* (İstanbul: İçdal Neşriyat)).

development of Turanist<sup>24</sup> idea played a direct role in the development of the racist branches of Turkish nationalism later in the 1900s. Another important European figure who has contributed to the usage of the term “Turk” in modern-nationalist sense by divorcing it from the classical Islamic emphasis was Léon Cahun [1841-1900]. His *Introduction a l’histoire de l’Asie: Turcs et Mongols des origines a 1405*, published in 1896, has been an important source for the Turanist-Turkist movements. One of his works, which was rendered into Turkish in early 1900s, was celebrated by Ziya Gökalp who said that “it is as though this book has been written to encourage pan-Turkism!”<sup>25</sup> Cahun, just like the other Turcologists, did his best to propagate the idea of Turanism in the Ottoman Empire. He was claiming that the Turan race brought civilization to Europe and what caused the degeneration of Turks was nothing other than Islam.

Replacement of the term “Ottoman” with the term “Turk” as a part of the linguistic studies of orientalist scholars was quite consistent with the conditions that brought about the emergence of Turkish nationalism. In fact, there were

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<sup>24</sup> Turanist ideology appeared first in Hungaria as a reaction against pan-Slavism and pan-Germanism. Later on, the Hungarian intellectuals who took refuge in the Ottoman Empire after 1848 were able to influence some intellectuals and spread Turanism in that way (Ağaoğulları, 1987, p. 179).

<sup>25</sup> Ağaoğulları, 1987:179.

scholarly works in Europe that preferred the term “Turk” in *linguistic studies* instead of “Ottoman” in pre-modern times. One of the earliest European works that talked about the Ottoman language as “Turkish” was Hieronymus Megiser’s [ca. 1553-1618] *Institutionum Linguae Turcicae, Libri Quator* published in 1612.<sup>26</sup> There emerged other *linguistic studies* in Europe that favored the term “Turk” over the term “Ottoman” in the years to follow.<sup>27</sup> But the linguistic studies became a ground for nationalist ideas among the Ottoman intellectuals only after the junction of the impacts of the French revolution and the works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Turcologists. The most influential scholars in the domain of language were the German orientalist Heinrich Julius Klaproth and the French orientalist Jean Pierre Abel Rémusat. These two authors have made much of the idea that having a distinctive linguistic origin, Turks were a separate nation essentially differing from other Asiatic peoples. These authors gave a direction to the studies of Turcology. Another work that held Turkish language as a means of raising nationalist consciousness was Arthur Lumley Davids’ *A Grammar of the*

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<sup>26</sup> Hieronymus Megiser [ca. 1553-1618] (1612) *Institutionum Linguae Turcicae, Libri Quator* (Lipsiae: Sumptibus Athoris)

<sup>27</sup> Seaman, William [1606-1680] (1670) *Grammatica Linguae Turciae: In Quinque Partes Distributa* (Oxoniae: Excudebat Hen. Hall). Another work that is worth mentioning was published by a foreigner merchant of Smyrna in 1706 for practical use of Ottoman language, and which was not very much of scholarly feautre: Vaughan (1706) *A Grammar of the Turkish Language* (London).

*Turkish Language* (1836). Also, Silvestre de Sacy, Abel de Rémusat and Arthur Lumley Davids, who were rather concerned themselves with Arabic literature and the eastern languages, had very important impacts on the proto-nationalist Ottoman intellectuals. Celeleddin Paşa's book "Eski ve Yeni Türkler" (The Ancient and the Contemporary Turks), for example, was based on De Guignes' "Histoire des Huns". Beside these scholarly interactions, some of the European scholars were in close contact with the Ottomans. For instance, Şinasi, a 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneer of Turkist ideology, was a close friend of the French Sacy family. Also, sometimes the European authors were increasing their impacts by presenting their works on the linguistic and the ethnic origins of Turks directly to the Ottoman Sultan. For example, Arthur Lumley Davids' "Kitabü'l-İlmü'n-Nafi fi Tahsil-i Sarf ü Nahv-i Türkî" was presented to Sultan Mahmud II in 1833.<sup>28</sup>

Now, we clearly saw that from the earliest times of the Ottoman Empire on, Europeans preferred the term "Turk" and "Muslim" rather than the term "Ottoman". But what about the Ottomans How the Ottomans were calling themselves in the pre-nationalist era? Were they calling themselves Turks or Ottomans? We can clearly and directly say at this point that Ottomans did not

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<sup>28</sup> Akçura, 1978, p. 60. Akçura believes that the leading figures of Turkism in the late 19th century in the domain of language, like Şinasi and Vefik Paşa, could not be unaware of this book.

call themselves “Turks” in the pre-nationalist periods, except in very rare cases.<sup>29</sup>

The very clear examples of how Ottomans introduced themselves can be found in international conventions and diplomatic contexts. In the third chapter of this study, we will see more detailed examples of how the Ottoman self is represented in diplomatic texts. We can mention a couple of them here, just for the purpose of illustration:

In most cases, some territorial expressions were combined with the Ottoman dynasty and the personal title of the Sultan, to designate the Ottoman self. For instance: “I [...] am the greatest Sultan of many cities [...] Sultan Mahmud Khan the son of Sultan Abdülhamid Khan the son of Ahmet Khan...” It is not rare for a student of Ottoman history to come across this kind of titles of the Sultans, which are sometimes stretch over pages of documents. Another way of designating the “Ottoman self” in diplomatic texts in pre-nationalist era was such phrases as “Bab-ı Ali” (sublime porte), “südre-yi vâlâmız” (literally “our sublime threshold”) and “atabe-yi âlâmız” (again, meaning “our elevated threshold”), which refer to the “seraglio” rather than the state or the Sultan. Also, the phrase of “Devlet-i Aliyye” (the sublime state) appears no less frequently than any of these phrases to mean the “Ottoman self” in diplomatic

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<sup>29</sup> The question of how the Ottomans introduced themselves as a party of a particular international relation is held detailly in the relevant parts of the second chapter in this study.

texts. Why the Sultans did not simply introduce themselves as “the Sultan of Turks” is a meaningful question, which this study approaches from a variety of aspects in the subsequent chapters. We will content ourselves here to saying that usage of the term “Turk” as a representative of the self in the international contexts came only in the aftermath of the World War I.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE REAL THRESHOLDS OF OTTOMAN SUBJECTIVITY**

#### **2.1. The Meta-Linguistic Aspect**

Real thresholds of subjectivity are related to the functionality of human body. They are strictly connected to the relationship between the material world and the physical-organic capabilities of human body. So, when we say “the real thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity”, we should be engaged in the conditions that bounded the bodily functions (and thus gave birth to the subjective positions) of this or that number of particular people in the past. However, although the real thresholds are based on the restrictive functions of the objective world, the reflections of those conditions in the cultural sphere are also crucial in the formation of subjective positions. Thus, it would be very helpful to start with those reflections. As part of this task, we should think about what kind of meanings were associated by the term “boundary” in the Ottoman culture.

The mainstream part of Ottoman cultural world was under the impact of Islamic civilization. For that reason, in order to properly understand the Ottoman terminology about the concept of “boundary”, we should take a look at the pre-Ottoman Islamic culture in general to see what concepts and terms have been used in that culture to denote the idea of boundary.

The Islamic culture of making, preserving and naming the boundaries would be remaining totally untouched in the domain of science unless a few number of works had come to exist. Ralph W. Brauer’s work is one of such studies.<sup>30</sup> His work examines the conception of “boundary” in Islamic paradigm from a multidimensional perspective and comes up with satisfactory results. However, his work is limited to the analyses of the works of 23 Muslim-Arabic geographers who wrote books between 850 A.D.-1350 A.D. For this reason the Ottoman culture of boundaries could not have fallen into his scope. However, we can still take a closer look at his work in order to have an introductory outlook of Muslim understanding of boundaries before we go into the details of the Ottoman context. The first and basic thing one can get from Brauer’s work is that the world maps drawn by the earliest Muslim geographers (i.e. *Ma’mun* and *Kharizmi’s* world maps) do not have any kind of cartographic signs

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<sup>30</sup> Brauer, Ralph W. (1995) “Boundaries and Frontiers in Medieval Muslim Geography”, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, vol. 85, no. 6, pp. 1-73.

demonstrating the boundaries with precision. Neither *Ibn-Hauqal*, the prominent representative of the *Balkhi School*,<sup>31</sup> nor *al-Idrisi* [1100-1165] and his followers used cartographic signs to mean clear-cut boundaries in their maps. More than half of the maps drawn by *Ibn-Hauqal* do not show the boundaries at all. Other maps show the boundaries by the term “*hadd*”, without showing any sensitivity of precision, in geographical or any other meaning of the term. In Brauer’s own words “in each case the detailed map sketches are encased in calligraphic and largely rectilinear frames designated as “*h.....add al-fârs* or “*h.....add al-khuzistan.*”<sup>32</sup> As we will provide more examples from the Ottoman context below, this way of designating the boundaries did not mean to cut-off the territories of states geographically from one another. In my view, those signs are only graphical representations of the cultural, political and social boundaries that separate people from one another. In other words, those signs should be seen as the imaginary limits of the state sovereignties. In the same way, Brauer reads those marks in terms of the power relations between the

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<sup>31</sup> The author talks about two major schools of geographers in Islamic culture: The *Balkhi School* (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries) that consisted in those cartographers who contributed to the different versions of *Atlas Islamicus*. The other school is *al-Idrisi* of Andalusia (1100-1165) and the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries Arabic geographers who followed him. The *Balkhi school*, which was centred in Bagdad, was founded by a persian geographer named Ahmed ibn Sahl al-Balkhi (850-934). This school originates from *al-Kindi* (801-873), who was the teacher of *Balkhi*.

<sup>32</sup> Brauer, 1995, p.3. The phrases respectively mean “the boundary of Persian [people]” and “the boundary of Khuzistan”.

“center” and “periphery”, in which those signifiers separate the limits of the central powers’ reach to tax collection:

...it is not unjust to conclude that geographers of the period of the Balkhi school (i.e., the ninth and tenth centuries AD) recognized the existence of political boundaries in the sense that as one progressed in a direction away from the center of a state, one would sooner or later pass from one sovereignty to another or that one’s taxes would flow to different places on either side of such a division. Yet, clearly in the minds of these cartographers such boundaries were constituted not as sharply defined boundary lines but rather transitory zones of uncertain sovereignty between two states.<sup>33</sup>

As for the verbal expressions of the idea of boundary in Islamic culture, Brauer points out that the idea of boundary came into existence and developed into a discourse in the territorial intersections where the Muslim political power and non-Muslim power (*dâr al-harb*) were geographically neighbors. He specifies out some main concepts, most of which being Arabic in origin, that express the idea of boundary in Islamic paradigm.<sup>34</sup> Among the set of concepts that Brauer

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<sup>33</sup> Brauer, 1995, p.3.

<sup>34</sup> The main concepts which reflect the Islamic culture of “boundary” detected by Brauer are as follow:

*Akhir* (أخير): The edge or extreme side of things.

marks out from the works of twenty three Muslim geographers, the most remarkable ones are perhaps “thugur” and “awasim”. In most cases appearing side by side in the classical Muslim texts, these two words have for a long time designated the *de facto* border zone between the Byzantine Empire and the Muslim states. During the reign of Caliphate Omar [590-644 A.D.], the Muslim powers advanced up to the Taurus Mountains.<sup>35</sup> The Byzantine state, as a part

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*Takhum* (تخوم): This word means “boundary” in general. We can come across its different forms denoting the ideas directly or indirectly related to the term “boundary”. The word “*mutâkhim*” (مُتَاخِم) for example, means “adjacent” or “neighboring”.

*Khaṣiye* (حاشية): Literally, marginal part of things, especially of books and papers.

*Ferc* (فرج): Originally meaning “breach” or something close to it. Brauer says that it is occasionally used to mean “boundary” in Muslim authors’ texts.

*Had* (حد): Its primary meaning is “the cutting edge of sword or knife”. This word is now widely used in contemporary Turkish too, keeping its original Arabic meaning reservoir, such as “edge, boundary, border, limit, terminus”.

*Thagr* (ثغر): Again originally Arabic, this word literally means “front teeth”. Its plural form “*thugur*” (ثغور) means “boundary” or “the sector of boundary”.

*Nib* (نيب) (plural: “*aniab*”): Literally means “canine tooth” or “fang”. In the times of Memluks, it was used instead of the concept of “thugur”.

*Asim* (عصم): The term “*asim*” is very close in its meaning to the term “thugur”. However, “*asim*” denotes the territories relatively less exposed to the raids of enemy. The plural form of this word, *awâsim* (عواصم), signifies the military powers standing behind the sector of *thugur*. The *Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi* defines “*awasim*” as “a specific term denoting the fortified boundary zones between the Islamic states and Byzantine Empire” (See D.İ.A. entry for “*awasim*”).

<sup>35</sup> Taurus Mountains: The chain of mountains in southern Turkey today.

of their defensive strategy, fell back and left an unpopulated zone between the two states. This buffer zone, which stretched out in Anatolia over the line of Adana-Maraş-Malatya-Firat River, was populated by Muslims in the course of time. With a clearly military character, these places as a whole were named *thugur*. There were two *thugurs*: *Thugur-u Şamiyye* (the center of which was *Damascus*) and *Thugur-u Cezeriyye* (whose center was *Maraş*). Caliphate Harun Rashid fortified the border cities in 786 A.D. Following this reconstruction, he named a particular military settlement in Damascus *Jund al-Awasim* and he made that place a separate principality. After the 10<sup>th</sup> century, this principality disappeared as a result of Byzantine attacks.<sup>36</sup>

All in all, we can say that the twin terms of *awasim* and *thugur* denoted a boundary zone between the Muslim and Byzantine powers whose limits were not defined sharply. In this structure, a boundary zone was a political basin vulnerable to any kind of intrusions, whose geographical limits might be changed as a result of unexpected attacks and counterattacks.

What was the situation in the Ottoman context? As we pointed out above, Brauer's work does not provide a comprehensive sketch of the Ottoman discourse of the idea of boundary (because he focuses on the historical period

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<sup>36</sup> For more detailed information, see: D.İ.A. entry for "*avâsim*".

which reaches only to the very early stage of the emergence of the Ottoman state). The geographical boundaries of European as well as Asian Ottoman lands have been changing continuously. So, we might expect a large terminology of boundaries as a result of this mobility. However, it is surprising to see that the Ottoman terminology of boundary is not as extensive and diverse as the Arabic terminology.

As a starting point, let us take a look at some dictionaries published in different historical eras. In a French-Ottoman dictionary of 1790 titled *Grammaire Turque avec Un Vocabulaire*<sup>37</sup> the French word “limites” is explained by such Ottoman words as “sinor”, “snor”, “merz” and “hadd”. We learn from the same dictionary that someone who guards or watches the boundaries (*inspecteur de limites*) is named “marzban”. The French word “limitrophe” is defined by the Ottoman words “serhadlu” and “hemsinor” in the same dictionary.

Another dictionary, the Redhouse Ottoman-English Dictionary dated 1880, defines the word “frontier” by such words as “sınır” and “serhad”. The dictionary matches the English word “border” with the Ottoman terms of “kenar”, “serhad” and “sinorbaşı”.

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<sup>37</sup> (1790) *Grammaire Turque d'une Toute Nouvelle Methode d'Apprendre Cette Langue en Peu de Semaines avec un Vocabulaire* (Berlin)

These two sources are from somehow later periods of the Ottoman Empire. What can we say about the earlier periods? Apart from dictionaries, a variety of sources can be searched to trace the words and concepts expressing the idea of boundary: Historical narratives and the works of chronicles, the classical geographical works and the official documents (by which I mean any kind of document related directly or indirectly to the border problems, that have come out as a part of Ottoman bureaucracy and diplomacy). In this respect, “*vakifnames*” (deed of trust) and “*hududtnames*” (certificate of boundary) as well as “*kanunnames*” (codes of law), “*tahrir records*” (population and cadastral surveys), “*title deeds*” and international treaties can serve as first hand materials. These kinds of documents are important because they reflect the gaze of Ottoman subjectivity. When I scanned some of these documents, I found out that the following terms and concepts have been used in different historical contexts to express the idea of boundary in Ottoman discourse:

*Had* (pl.: *hudud*): It is originally an Arabic word. It has been accepted and widely used by the Ottomans. First hand resources show that this word has been in use from the earliest times of the Ottoman Empire. *Celalzade Mustafa's* [1494-1567] *Selimname* uses this word to talk about the boundaries and the neighboring countries of Ottoman Empire: “The country of safety [i.e. the Ottoman land] is bounded by Georgia and the country of Tartars and the evil



Russians and the boundary [*hudud-ı*] of Ye-cûc Me-cûc to the north...”<sup>38</sup> In the same book, the following usage of the term “*hudud*” is typical: “His excellencies *Padişah* turned his face from the boundary of Arab [*hudud-ı Arab*] to the city of Malatiyye...”<sup>39</sup>

*Merz (marz)*: This word is originally Persian. We do not come across this word as often as the Arabic words like *had* and *sinor*. In *Şemseddin Sami's* [1850-1904] *Kamus-ı Türkî*, the entry “*marz*” is defined like this: “1. Flour, ground, earth. 2. Boundary.”<sup>40</sup> We learn from the same entry that there were two related words derived from “*marz*”, which have disappeared over the time and are not in usage any more today: “*Merzubum*” and “*merzubân*”. *Merzubum* means “*country, region*” in Ottoman language, while “*merzuban*” means “a warden of the marches”.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> The original text: “...memalik-i mahmiyenin [...] taraf-ı şimali Gürcistan ve vilayet-i Tatardan iklim-i Rûs-ı menhus ile *hudud-ı* Ye-cûc Me-cûc...” (Selimname, s. 128). In modern Turkish: Emniyet ve muhafaza içinde olan ülkelerin... kuzey yönü Gürcistan ve Tatar vilayetinden uğursuz Rus ülkesiyle, Ye’cüc [Me’cüc] sınırı...” (Selimname, s. 356).

<sup>39</sup> The original text: “Hazreti Padişah...hudud-ı Arabdan Malatiyye semtine teveccüh-i müvecceh itdiler” (Selimname, s. 185) [Padişah hazretleri...Arap sınırlarından Malatya semtine yöneldiler” (Selimname, s. 416)].

<sup>40</sup> “1. yer, zemin, arz; 2. sinur, had, hudud”

<sup>41</sup> Redhouse, 1880.

*Sinor* (also appears as “*sinur*” or “*sınır*”): This word should have evolved from the Arabic term “*thugur*”, which I introduced above by referring to Brauer’s work. The word “*sinor*” (also spelled as “*sınır*” and “*sinur*”) appears rather in “internaitonal” treaties. For example: “The Temeşvar principality which is subject to Temeşvar castle should be under the power of my Sublime State (*Devlet-i Aliye*) along with all of the demos and rivers around it and its boundary (*sinur*) on the side of Transylvania should...”<sup>42</sup>

*Serhad*: By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the word “*serhad*” had become an administrative title given to the settlements located in the geographical margins of the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, to the contrary of the abstract quality of the term “*sınır*”, the term “*serhad*” expresses a concrete meaning. It refers to the territories in which the representative of the central power is in concrete relations with the agrarian people of the peripheral lands. In the treaty of *Zsitvatorok* (signed between the Ottoman state and the Austrian state in 1606), the term “*serhad*” is used like this: “should the bandits who damage the *serhad provinces* on either side are arrested by our rulers, they will be put under house arrest after the higher authorities are briefed and they will be judged and

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<sup>42</sup> The original text: “Tamişvar kalesine tabi Tamişvar eyaleti cümle nevahi ve enharile Devlet-i Aliye’min zabtında olup Erdel tarafında olan sınuru Eflâk vilayetinin imtihasından Morş suyuna varınca...” (Muahedat Mecmuası, V 3, p. 92).

treated in proper ways...”<sup>43</sup> In its older usage, the word *serhad* denotes the margins of the sovereignty of Ottoman state. A typical example of this usage can be found in *Celazade's* [1494-1567] *Selimname*: “From the *serhad* of the Ottoman territories up to the Gazza...” or as in the following sentence: “The lands of Ajam will get cloudy under the hoofs of the agile horses of the fortunate ghazis who will be departing from the *serhad* of the Rûm...”<sup>44</sup>

*Uç*: Literally means “peak” or “terminal”. We can assume that the word “uç” in its geographical-administrative meaning dates as far back as to the times of the Sultanate of Rûm (Selçuks of Anatolia) [1077-1307]. Osman, the very founder of the Ottoman Empire, was a “vassal chieftain” (*uç beyi*). Zeki Velidi Togan states that in a budget chart from the time of *Çobanoğulları*,<sup>45</sup> the notables of western Anatolia who were paying taxes to *Çobanoğulları* were recorded under the general name of “Memalik-i Rûm al-Mahrusa” (the Lands of Rûm). As we learn from Togan, the same document shows that the middle

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<sup>43</sup> The original text: “iki canibden olan *serhad vilayetlere* zarar ider haramzadeyi bizim hakimlerimiz tutarsa ol serhadde anlara tabi kapudanlara bildirüp andan adem alıp o husus şer’le görülüp her ne lazım gelirse icra iderler” (MM, V 3, p. 70).

<sup>44</sup> The original text: “Serhadd-ı memalik-i Osmaniyyeden ta Gazzeye varıncaya kadar...”, (Selimname, s. 191); ve “Serhadd-ı Rûmdan çıkılıb, hâk-i eknâf-ı Acem, summ-ı semend-i gaziyan-ı sa’adet-mend ile ğubâr-âmiz olıcak” (Selimname, p. 134).

<sup>45</sup> *Çobanoğulları* was the last bit of the Sultanate of Rûm [1227-1309].

Anatolian provinces which are parts of the *Lands of Rûm* (Memalik-i Rum al-Mahrusa) are gathered under the general title of “al-Vustaniye” (“the middle places”). Orhan’s vassal (the kernel of the Ottoman Empire) was listed in the same document among the “*al-ujat*” (“the peak vassals”) together with *Karaman, Germiyan, Eğridür, Hamidoğlu, Sinob, Denizli, Gerede-Bolu, Umurbey* and *Kastamonu*.<sup>46</sup> “Uç” was perhaps in a close interaction with its Byzantine equivalent “*ăkpa*”, meaning “border” or “boundary”.<sup>47</sup> In Byzantine culture, the boundary zones were considered as wilderness. This should have a lot to do with the fact that the dominant economic activity in “*ăkpa*” zones was pastoral, rather than agricultural.<sup>48</sup> The situation was the same in the other side, too. Especially in the early Ottoman culture, the “uç” fields were populated by the nomadic people.

In sum, the terminology of “boundary” in Ottoman culture was under the impact of Arabic, Persian and Latin cultures. This is because the Ottoman subjectivity emerged in the intersection of these civilizations. Emerging as a “vassal chiefdom”, in other words, growing right on the intersection of

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<sup>46</sup> Togan, 1981, p. 338.

<sup>47</sup> The Byzantine term “*ăkpa*” and the Turkish term “uç” has a common English equivalent: “peak” (Hopwood, 1993, p. 129).

<sup>48</sup> Hopwood, 1993: p. 130.

boundaries, the Ottoman subjectivity adopted the terminology of boundary of the cultures that were fighting for stable boundaries. The term “marz” alone has a lot to say about this. Brauer says that “...this word comes “probably [from] the origin of the term ‘*marca*’ in Romance languages or *march* in English and *mark* in German and related languages”.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.2. Real Thresholds and the Imperial Imagination

Hopwood writes that in the times of Akkoyunlu state, in order to accomplish their raids, Turks had to pass through seven valleys which lay up to the Byzantine lands. Each of those valleys was called by the Byzantines as “*bandon*” (the zone organized for military defense). In the Turkish side, the “*uç*” zones were grasslands with average of 1000 meters of height. Generally those grasslands were captured by Turks in summer times and regained by Byzantine forces during the winter times. The Great Komneos had to devote most of his winter times to stop the conflicts arising as a result of close contacts between Turks and Byzantines on the buffer zones.<sup>50</sup> The Anatolian valleys and plateaus that made up the boundaries between the Selçuks and Byzantines were of the same qualities. Those regions were on the margins of the arable lands. As soon as the nomads grew in number, the balance turned in favor of the pastoral culture. The semi-nomads and nomads of both Byzantine and Turkish

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<sup>49</sup> Brauer, p.12, n. 18.

<sup>50</sup> Hopwood, 1993: 130.

populations lived very close to each other, and thus they had many commonalities in their cultures. The direct interferences of the central power with the “uç” or “*akpa*” regions were not welcomed in either side.<sup>51</sup>

As part of that intermediary position, Ottoman subjectivity emerged in a geographical and cultural peak zone (“uç”) framed by the real and imaginary obstacles. The very original space where Osman and his comrades were located when acting towards the emergence of the Ottoman state was “Bithynia, a protected space in the larger frontier, located near the eastern lands of the Marmara Sea, delimited in the south by Mount Olympus (Uludağ), in the east by the Sangaros River Valley (Sakarya), in the north by the Gulf of Nicomedia (Izmit), and the westernmost point of the small peninsula at Cyzicus”.<sup>52</sup> This geographical delimitedness should not be taken as a constraint to the actions of Osman and his followers. On the contrary, the geographical delimitations have always been an advantage for a secure life. What I want to draw attention here is the possible impacts of those geographical limitations on the formation of the sense of “inside” which is vital for the establishment of “self”. So, I will claim that some parts of the earliest real thresholds of the Ottoman subjectivity was based on Mount of Olympus, Sangaros River Valley, Gulf of Nicomedia and the tiny peninsula at Cyzicus. Needless to say, one can find infinite number of real

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<sup>51</sup> Hopwood, 1993: 131.

<sup>52</sup> Barkey, 2008, p. 43.

thresholds that might have brought the sense of “inside-outside” to the daily lives of the proto-Ottoman populations (like minor city walls that were widespread over the Anatolian cities to separate the religiously fragmented populations from one another, as described in Ibn Battutta’s book of travel), as well as to that of the Ottomans. But those secondary partitions and intrenchments were fulfilling a contrariwise sociological function: The main city walls and natural obstacles like mountains and river valleys were functioning as thresholds in favor of the formation of a feeling of “society” (*gesellschaft*) while the minor walls and intrenchments were to create/maintain communities (*gemeinschaft*). In other words, the formers were the source of a united self, while the latter were forming the fragmentary aspect of the self.

As the Ottoman state grew rapidly, territorial expansion became a part of its ideological goal. The vicissitudes of the territorial margins have always brought about changing portraits of the real thresholds. In particular times, particular real obstacles (like mountains, rivers and valleys) were specified as the boundary marks by international boundary conventions. Before citing many examples of these specifications from international conventions below, let us take a look at some examples of how the real thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity were reflected in the Ottoman narratives of territorial expansion (or “fetih” (conquest)).



**Figure1:** A minor wall combined with mountains, together serving as a real obstacle to a fragmenting, rather than uniting function (illustration by a 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman painter, Matrakçı Nasuh. Source: *Menazil*, folio 108a). The inscription: “[The road to] backside home via the gate of horror” (“Korku kapı aşub arka eve...”)



When we look at the Ottoman narratives of conquests, we see that some big castles have played the role of “real threshold”. Belgrade castle is one of them. The Belgrade castle had been besieged by Ottomans many times. The first siege was laid by *Murat II* in 1441. The defensive structure of the castle, which had evolved by the experiences of centuries of similar attacks by other nations, did not let the Ottomans get the control of it. The second siege, which again ended in failure, was laid in 1456. Ottoman forces were able to conquer the castle in 1521, under the power of *Suleiman I*. Tursun Beg’s narrative of the siege reflects the impacts of that “real threshold” on the Ottoman subjectivity:

Every house has a door. *Get into the houses through the proper doors* (Koran, Al-Baqara, 189). In accordance with this Koranic verse, the precaution of the Sultan –whose precautions have always been no less than the quality of good judgments- deduced the conclusion that the key to conquering the Hungarian lands is Belgrade castle–having been constructed at the point of juncture of Danube and Sava rivers, its hardness and obstructive fortification have become legendary. First he intended firmly to conquer this castle, and got the gigantic canons and big catapults ready. He ensured that the ships full of well armed and brave

fighters and other perfect instruments were ready near the Danube River.<sup>53</sup>

There is of course a spatial target in the offensive plans of the Ottomans as reflected in these lines. The “imaginary target” is reflected in Tursun Beg’s words as “the lands of *Hungary (Üngürüs memleketi)*”. Citing the Koranic verse “*Get into the houses through the proper doors*”, Tursun Beg expresses the common idea of his time that the Belgrade castle was a gate to the conquest of Hungarian lands. So the immediate thing to do was to open that gate. Cannons, weapons, soldiers and navy were all prepared, and the campaign was started. In all these processes of siege, the “real obstacles” that made up the thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity were consisted in whatever constrained the mobility of the bodies of the soldiers and the military supplies. The natural and designed obstacles they would come across during the campaign, like the Danube River

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<sup>53</sup> The original text: “Li-küllü dürün bâbün *fe’tü’l-büyûte min ebvabihâ*” vefkınca tedbîr-i padişah -ki hemîşe hem-inân-ı hüsn-i takdirdür- bunı müncer oldı ki, memleket-i Üngürüs fethine miftah çün kal’a-i Belgrad’dur –ki nehri Tuna ve Sava mültekasında bünyâd olmuş, ad ile meşhur ve sît-i menâ’at ü metâneti ma’lum u mezkûr kal’adur- evvel anun fethine kasd idüp, esbab-ı münasib –ki şahan-ı memalik-küşay şânına layıktur- kûh-peyker, mehîb toplar ve kazâ-kirdar mancanıklar, ve Tuna suyu tarafından yaraklu ve bahadur, namdar azebler, mellahlar ile meşhûn gemiler ve sayir mâyahtâcı bî-kusûr hazır ittürdi” (Tursun Beg (1977) *Tarih-i Ebu’l Feth*. Hz. Mertol Tulum (İstanbul: Baha Matbaası) s.79).

and the architecture of Belgrade castle, were the real obstacles between the Ottoman subjectivity and the Hungarian lands.

There are some other Ottoman manuscripts from the 16<sup>th</sup> century about the conquests and military campaigns of the Sultans, with eye-ful visual descriptions of the places of the passages of the armies. However, those works do not give an idea of where exactly the boundaries of countries were located. *Sinan Çavuş's* work titled *The History of Conquest of the Şikloş, Estergon and İstolni-Belgrade (Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş, Estergon ve İstolni-Belgrad)* is one of these kinds of works. The author personally joined the campaign of *Suleiman I* in 1542, and took detailed notes about the journey and the siege. This 16<sup>th</sup> century manuscript is supported with many miniatures depicting the geographical details such as bridges, roads, villages, cities as well as the camp sides that the Sultan and his army passed during the travel. Yet, one cannot find any idea of "boundary" in that book either in verbal or graphical sense of the word. The visual and verbal descriptions in the manuscript as a whole feel like as if the Sultan and his army were moving from one place to another on a map without boundaries. Possible questions of any curious reader about the boundaries of Ottoman state in the mid-sixteenth century will probably remain unanswered even after reading this detailed manuscript, although we know by some other texts (like treaties and diplomatic documents) that the questions of boundaries were a serious matter for the states in those times.



**Figure2:** A geographical description of the places where *Suleyman I* and his army passed during the 1542 Belgrade campaign (Source: *Sinan Çavuş's Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş, Estergon ve İstolni-Belgrad*. The illustration was made by *Matraççı Nasuh*, famous Ottoman painter of 16<sup>th</sup> century). This typical documentary miniature of the 16<sup>th</sup> century does not contain any cartographic element showing the boundaries.

When we look more closely at the manuscript of *Sinan Çavuş*, we see that what we might expect from the cartographical function of boundary lines are fulfilled by fortresses. Fortresses depicted the geographical coverages of the political powers of the states. When the possession of a particular fortress handed over, what the new sovereignty got hold of was not only the people and goods in that fortress, but also the arable lands around it. So, a conquest of a castle meant a new regime of taxes and regulations in the practice of power. As soon as a fortress was conquered by the Sultan, a diplomatic process began to make new arrangements about the tributes and taxes while the cannons and rifles of the war were still hot. Thus, such practices of political power like tax collection and conquest of fortresses were determining the boundaries.

### **2.3. Designing the Thresholds**

Boundaries emerge as a result of a duality: Steadiness versus mobility. We could not speak of boundaries if everything were in a fully steady condition. In the same manner, the idea of boundary could not mean anything if everything were on an endless move. Hence, the first *raison d'être* of the idea of boundary is the dialectical relation between the moving and stable objects. In this dualism, the second condition of existence for the idea of boundary is the presence of “obstacles”. I have already asserted above that the “real boundaries” are based

on material/corporeal obstacles. What is an “obstacle”, then? We can speak of two kinds of obstacles that make up “real boundaries”.

The first type of obstacle that makes up the real boundaries is that which prevents things from changing their essential characters. For example, our bodies are the real obstacles that prevent us from turning into other peoples and other things. For that reason, our bodies make up a part of the real thresholds of our subjectivities. Providing our feelings with a particular spatial ground, our bodies play the role of vital spaces for pain and pleasure. One cannot experience the pain of bodies other than one’s own. Likewise, one can not feel the pleasure generated in another body.

The second types of obstacles that constitute the real boundaries are the obstacles that keep things and bodies from changing geographical and spatial positions. In other words, the obstacles that prevent us from moving our bodies and the adjacent objects from one point to another are real obstacles. Roughly speaking, the obstacles that prevent us from moving from one point to another are of two groups. We can call the first type as “natural obstacles”. Gravitation, rocks, stones, mountains, hollows, rivers, seas and the like are of this type. The second type can be called as “designed obstacles”.

Freudian psychoanalysis says that the most adequate place for human body is mother’s womb. I think it would not be an exaggeration to say that this is

the very departing point of the whole Freudian paradigm. As soon as our bodies leave this perfectly accommodating place, we fall into a continuous lack. This never ending feeling of lack is responsible for the whole body of eroticism. Based on this point of view, we can repeat the Freudian notion that all of the excitations and libidinal dynamism come out as a result of the loss of the absolute harmony, on account of birth, between the human body and the external world. Together with birth, human infant moves from an almost perfect milieu to a defective environment. According to Lacan, who takes Freud's axioms further to build his own philosophy, the basic motive behind the unending search for objects is the fact that human infant is born as a premature being. That brings about an everlasting lack. On the other hand, in Lacan's account, this lack is constructive rather than destructive. Human subjectivity is constructed with vital impetuses like need, demand and desire, thanks to this fundamental lack.

According to Freud, the most authentic object to bring human beings to completion is mother's breast. Breast is perfectly ergonomic. It has the basic ergonomic qualities to be integrated into the body of infant. Not all objects that human being contacts in the external world are as ergonomic as mother's breast. This basic outlook is functional in my attempt to define the "real obstacles": When I talk about the real obstacles between human body and the



external world, I mean anything that excludes human body, stops its functions and is discordant in details with its design.

Now we can return to the question of how such objectivities as rivers, mountains and seas constitute the real thresholds of our subjectivities. First of all, these objectivities restrict the physical mobility of human body. The naked human body has a bio-physical structure which allows him move ideally on a plain, flat ground close to the earth. Human body can make certain movements on a particular limit of pace.<sup>54</sup> So we will call any designed or natural obstacle which limits the movements of human body and dysfunctionalize it, as a “real obstacle”. Accordingly, a “real threshold” is made of real obstacles. What is more, human being is capable of designing and constructing some obstacles of his own on those natural ones. The different ways of presentation of our bodies in daily life, fashion, choice of colors and styles, tattoos, piercing and any way of designing and expressing difference can all show the way we use the ground of “real” in designing the thresholds between subjectivities.

The most proper way to see the firm relation between the “real thresholds” and the nature is perhaps to look at the warfare. In the state of war, boundaries are created by combining the natural obstacles with the designed obstacles. That is why the most important sign of “victory” is the physical

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<sup>54</sup> Olympic games show the limits of activities of human body.



presence of the infantryman in a sector. For this reason, the wars in the past brought about a very serious literature on designing obstacles and crossing them. The American military theorist Dennis Hart Mahan [1802-1871], an important figure in the history of modern war architecture, set forth very influential principles in the construction of natural and artificial intrenchments and front-line construction in warfare. In the First World War, his doctrines were used very effectively. Although it is particularly about the state of war, Mahan's theories of architecture of intrenchments is worth further attention since it may help us think about how the "real obstacles" are determining the thresholds of our subjectivities even in the time of peace.

Dennis Hart Mahan talks about the use of mountains, rivers, marshes and forests in the construction of obstacles and setting the lines of intrenchments.<sup>55</sup> Mahan's such doctrines of obstacle architecture, covering both offensive and defensive warfare, is an expression of the importance of dysfunctionalization of human body to the modern state of war. The important part of his doctrine for our work is the "obstacle architecture", to which we might refer in order to exemplify how the "real thresholds" are related to our bodies. By specifying the means of obstacles which were commonly used in European nations, Mahan reveals the accumulation of the European war architecture about

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<sup>55</sup> Mohan, 1862: 76-82.

dysfunctionalization of human body and designing real obstacles. The artificial obstacles that Mahan describes are as follows:

*Trous-de-loup*: Deep and strait pits in which some sharp pointed stakes are located in the bottom. Lippitt, who followed Mahan's doctrines, asserted that in order for the pits dug for the purpose of fortification be effective means of obstruction, they should be at least 180 cm (6 feet) deep and 360 cm (12 feet) across on the top.<sup>56</sup>

*Abatis*: Intermingled branches of tree, whose sharp points are directed towards the enemy.

*Palisades*: The pales set out in rows like fencing. There is another type of obstacle whose design is very close to this: *Fraise*. Unlike *palisade*, *fraise* is constructed by plain woods instead of stakes.

*Chevaux-de-frise*: A piece of stake (or a metal stick) which is traversed with iron pointed stakes in different directions (Ottomans called this "çarkıfelek").<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Lippitt, 1866: 12.

<sup>57</sup> Netz, 2004: 91.

#### **2.4. De-ergonomy and the Other**

Mahan's doctrines of designing obstacles are very good examples of the relationship between the imaginary thresholds and the real thresholds. Just to remember what we said about "real obstacles" above: A real obstacle is whatever gets our bodies dysfunctional, whatever stops, delays or slows down the physical movements and spatial mobility, and consequently whatever makes the objects of our needs, demands and desires unreachable. In other words, the real obstacles are the things that cancel out the given compatibility between our bodies and the objects. Needless to say, the objective conditions that by default never contain such compatibility are also real obstacles.

Once we define real obstacles in this way, we can now divide them in two groups for the sake of simplicity. Let us call the first group "natural real obstacles" and the second group "the artificial real obstacles". Now, let us examine some examples of the "real obstacles" of Ottoman subjectivity under the lights of this terminological division.

## **2.4.1.The “Natural-Real Obstacles” That Framed the Ottoman subjectivity**

### **2.4.1.1. Mountains**

Lord Curzon, the well known British aristocrat who was deeply concerned himself with the boundaries and boundary making issues during the colonial times, claims that the oldest natural obstacles for the mobile human groups were mountains.<sup>58</sup> So, it should not be surprising to see that mountains have been used by Ottomans to mark out boundaries in many cases. In the Treaty of Karlowitz, which was signed between the Ottoman state and Austrian state in 1699, the boundary between the two states is partly marked out by mountains:

The principality of Eflâk will remain to be under the power of aforementioned Caesar... The mountains in the intermediary region will show the boundaries as they have been doing before this war. Likewise, from the edge of Eflâk up to the Morş River, the in-between mountains will be the boundary and the peoples of the two sides will respect the boundary by not trespassing from either side.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Curzon, 1908:17.

<sup>59</sup> The original Ottoman text is as follows: “Erdel vilayeti hala müşarünileyh Çasâr zaptında olmağla yine zapt ve tasarrufunda kalup Podolya tarafından Eflâk vilayetinin intihasına varınca sınuru Eflâk ve Buğdan vilayetlerle mabeynde vaki bu cenkten evvel olan kadimî hududu olan dağları ile ve Eflâk intihâsından Morş suyuna varınca kezalik yine kadimî hududu olan dağları ile

Mountains were usually not arable lands, but this did not keep them from having an important place in the inter-state property relations.<sup>60</sup> This was because the mountains were very convenient places for the nomadic and semi-nomadic populations who did not even pay taxes to the central power. The nomadic people living on the mountains were good warriors. This meant “a populated buffer zone” to the central governments. Also, because the mountains had the character of “natural obstacles”, they were preventing any immediate population movements across the boundaries.

#### **2.4.1.2. Rivers**

Rivers, especially the ones that are as large as the Danube River, have always played the role of “real obstacles” and separated subjectivities from one another. This kind of separation of subjectivities from one another by “real obstacles” brought about imaginary distances between subjectivities. Mythological narratives and stories emerge where these imaginary distances exist. The oldest mythologies in Roman culture about the “Barbarian races”

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mahdud olup terafeynden hududu kadimeye riayet olunup ne öte ne berü kat’a tecavüz olunmaya” (MM, v. 3, p 92).

<sup>60</sup> For example, the Belgrad treaty signed between the Austria-Russia on one side and the Ottoman state on the other side in 1739, contains an article about the handover of mountains among the states: “The Nemçe Eflâk shall be handed over to the Ottoman state by the Roman Emperor” (“Nemçe Eflakı dağlarile Devlet-i Aliye’me Roma İmperatoru tarafından teslim oluna” (1739, Blegrad Treaty, Ottoman-Austria and Russia, MM, V3, p. 121)).

across the Ren River, for example, are a product of this kind of distances.<sup>61</sup> The Roman people who could not get in direct and primary relations with the Gothic

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<sup>61</sup> The mythology of Drusus is a perfect example of emergence the unreachable “real enemy” in the imaginary domain. The forces of growing Roman Empire could not cross the Ren River to get to the western side despite many attempts. Actually, the Gothic people who lived across western side of the river were not as good warriors as their Roman counterparts. After a while, there emerges a brave commander who decisively wants to cross the river and proceed into the inner lands of the “barbarian races”. That is the commander Drusus. He crosses the river together with his soldiers. However, they would be faced with some unexpected difficulties in the other side. It did not seem to be as easy as they expected to defeat those people who were in an inferior state of development in weaponry and military aspects. Because unlike what was planned in the beginning, they could never get in direct contact with those people. The bushy forest which hid even the sun could easily hide the “barbarian enemy”. The Roman soldiers who proceeded without having any fight with the enemy and facing the danger of getting lost in the forest during the daytime were camping in the darkness of the forest which turned into an uncanny place in the nights. Despite all these difficulties Drusus and his army proceeded up to the inner regions of Germany, up to the *Elbe River*, where no Roman people had hitherto stepped over. Hence, they were feeling themselves closest ever to the secrets of the enemy and started to expect to introduce the Roman power to those lands. However, some strange things start to happen. A beautiful woman whose elegance was not less than her monumental size emerges unexpectedly on their way. That was perhaps the spirit of Germany. This creature, whose face was clearly expressing the danger of loss of the territory to the enemy, was talking in a foreign language from which the only thing Drusus and his soldiers were able to get was a warning. The words of this beautiful and uncanny woman skim over the faces of the Romans just like a cold wind blowing from the deepest sides of the wild forest: “Where this rush is taking you to, o greedy Drusus? Go back, I give an order to you! The destiny does not allow you to see these lands!” Drusus, having erected a monument representing their power on this farthest lands, and returns. However, he falls down from his horse and dies before he gets back to his homeland. After a while, another Roman commander, *Varus*, decides to go to those lands to establish a permanent Roman power there. However, he faces with a much worse fate. Unlike Drusus who was able to bring his soldiers back, *Varus* was terminated together with his legions. The whole Roman Empire gets in mourn for them. The Emperor was so heavily

(or rather “barbarian”) peoples were re-designing the "enemy" in their imaginations.



**Figure3:** Architecture (city walls) and nature (watercourse) combined for city fortification, as reflected in a 16<sup>th</sup> century documentary painting (Matrakçı Nasuh. Source: Menâzil, folio 67a).

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impacted by this loss that he talks in his sleep saying “give my legions back!” Consequently, the *Ren River* was accepted to be the boundary of Roman Empire (Lansing, Marion Florence (1911) *Barbarian and Noble* (Boston: Ginn and Company), pp. 3-9).

The role of rivers in international boundary conventions is not different than their places in mythologies. Ottomans used rivers to set forth boundaries, especially in their European borders. The Karlowitz treaty of 1699, for instance, uses Morş River and Tise River to mark out the local boundaries among the people.<sup>62</sup> While the Ottoman lands in Europe were defined and redefined in different times, the Danube and Sava rivers have always maintained their privileged places. For example, the Belgrad treaty signed between the Austrian-Russian alliance and Ottoman Empire in 1739, Danube and Sava rivers were enrolled as the demarcation lines that separated culturally, ethnically and religiously different elements from one another to construct two different subjectivities: “Serbia, along with the Belgrad castle which is located in that principality, shall be handed over to my Sublime Porte by the Roman Empire, and Danube and Sava rivers shall be boundaries between two states...”.<sup>63</sup> Likewise, the Edirne treaty signed by Russia and Ottoman states in 1829, was referring to the Purut river to set forth the boundary between the two states:

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<sup>62</sup> “Bounded by this side of the Morş and Tise Rivers, whatever things of this sort exists in the lands of Temeşvar...” (Morş ve Tise sularının beru kıyıları ile mahdud olan Tamışvar toprağında vaki bu misillu her ne var ise...) (MM, V3, p. 93).

<sup>63</sup> “Sırp eyaleti ve bu eyaletün içinde vaki Belgrad kalesi Devlet-i Aliye’me Roma İmparatoru tarafından teslim olunub nehr-i Tuna ve nehr-i Sava iki devlet eyaletleri beyninde hudud ola...” (MM, V. 3, p. 121).



“The Purut river, from the point where it reaches to the lands of Buğdan up to the point where it joins the Danube river shall be the boundary between the two states”.<sup>64</sup>

Rivers are unstable grounds, and they bring some limitations to human body as to the capability of moving. It is because of this feature of rivers that human populations could never develop a permanent property relationship with the rivers. Certainly, there have always been economic activities on rivers. However, compared to *terra firma*, the water-grounds are nearly impossible to establish a permanent authority represented by an unchangeable mark. For that reason, whenever there emerged a necessity to use a river as a boundary mark, the economic values associated with the river *per se* had to be divided.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> “Purut nehri kelevvel Buğdan toprağına muttasıl olduğı mahalden Tuna nehrine kavuştuğı mahalle kadar beyneddevleteyn hudut ola...” (1829, MM V. 4, pp. 71-72).

<sup>65</sup> Again, the Karlowitz treaty of 1699 was introducing a particular judgement of this kind: “Such economic activities as fishery and irrigation on Morş and Tise rivers which are located inbetween, should be equally open to the people of both sides...”(... mabeynde vaki Morş ve Tise sularından saki devab [sulama, ct] ve saydı mahi [balık avı, ct] ve sair elzem olan fevayidde tarafeynin reayası alesseviye intifa edeler...) (MM, V 3, p. 93).

### **2.4.1.3. Lowlands**

In some rare cases, when there was no conveniently positioned rivers or mountains available, “lowlands” were used as boundary marks between the Ottoman state and its neighbors. For example, the Belgrade treaty of 1739 used a lowland as a boundary zone: “Starting from the mountains situated across the İrşova island up to the aforementioned two rivers a straight line should be drawn and the lowland bounded in this way should belong to my Sublime State”.<sup>66</sup>

## **2.4.2. The Artificial Real Obstacles that Bounded Ottoman Subjectivity**

### **2.4.2.1. Fortifications, Walls and Fortresses**

We should say in the beginning that the city walls were not a common architectural subject in many Islamic cultures. The “fortified enceintes” we see in Bagdat and Cairo were not designed to protect the cities and large populations, but to secure the nobles and rulers only.<sup>67</sup> Most of the fortresses held by the

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<sup>66</sup> Original text: “İrşova adası karşusunda olan dağlardan şuru olunub bu mahalde olan fasıla ile her mahalde zikr olunan iki ırmağa gelince mesaha olunub bir hat çekile ve bu hat ile tefrik olunan ova Devlet-i Aliye’min tasarrufunda kala...” (MM, V. 3, p. 121).

<sup>67</sup> Prag, 2006: 295.

Ottoman state were from Byzantine or Sasanian times. Likewise, many fortresses constructed during the crusaders have been passed in this or that way to the hands of Ottomans. In Europe, especially in France and England, there have been important experiences of fortress construction. Those experiences have been moved to eastward with the First Crusade.<sup>68</sup> When the crusaders arrived, there were definitely important and powerful fortresses in the Levant. The walls and fortresses in Istanbul alone were spectacular. However, only few or none of the castles have been built by Turks. When the crusaders besieged Nicea (*İznik*) on 19 June 1097, Turks defended the city using the fortifications that had been constructed by the Byzantines.<sup>69</sup>

The fortresses were the most important metaphors of the subjectivities that assumed a bodily form in the personalities of the monarchs or emperors. The most clear expression of the sovereignty over a territory was the physical control over the fortress around that region. In this respect, a fortress was playing the role of both real and imaginary threshold for subjectivity. In this respect, fortresses provide an imagination of existence through such dichotomies as “inside-outside” and “here-there”. And certainly, their high walls,

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<sup>68</sup> Kennedy, 1994: 14.

<sup>69</sup> Kennedy, 1994: 14.

enduring and tough structures make up the “real thresholds” which are hardly passable to human body.



**Figure4:** Anadolu Hisarı, built by Yildirim Bayezid in 1394. He built the fortification to get the control over Bosphorous traffic and to hinder the sea-based assistance to Constantinople, where he was preparing to lay siege.



**Figure5:** Rumeli Hisari- Built by Fatih Sultan Mehmet in 1451-1452 as a part of his plan to conquer İstanbul, which ended in success in 1453.

Only in very rare cases the city walls have been constructed for offensive purposes.<sup>70</sup> Having mostly been constructed for defensive purposes, they were bringing about an imagination of “inside” with an advanced administrative structure, division of labor and a good control of in and outflow of populations. Just like defensive castle walls, city walls were also creating a sense of “inside-outside”.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> One of the rare fortifications that has been built for offensive purposes is the *Anatolian Castle*. It was built by Bayezid the Thunderbolt in 1394 to lay a siege on Istanbul. Fatih Sultan Mehmet built another castle of the same sort, the *Rumeli Castle*, in 1451-1452.

<sup>71</sup> As a contemporary example, it may suffice to think of the Berlin Walls. Located somewhere in the center of Europe, those walls were functioning as both real and imaginary thresholds,





**Figure6:** City walls and mountains combined for fortification in Ottoman architecture. From 16th century documentary painting by Matrakçı Nasuh (Menâzil, folio 38b).

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separating the Eastern Germany from Western Germany. Its fatal fortification structure and high walls were making it a perfectly functioning “real threshold”.

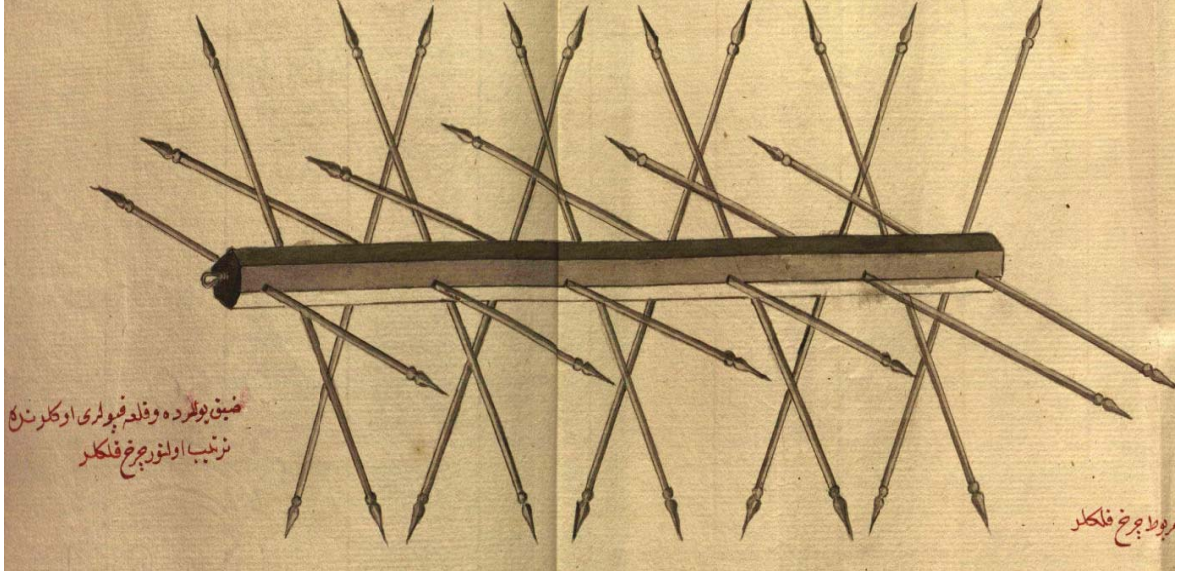
#### 2.4.2.2. Barbed Wire

Barbed wire, in terms of both its design and material structure, is a very de-ergonomic object that keeps away human body. Ottomans had already been using a “de-ergonomic object” similar to barbed wire in castle gates, fortification and control points since at least the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>72</sup> Inspired by a famous object in French war architecture called *chevaux-de-frise*, it was called by Ottomans as “*çarkifelek*”.

Taken from a 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman manuscript on war architecture entitled “*Fenn-i Harb*” (*Art of War*), the figure below shows the design of “*çarkifelek*”, which is not less “de-ergonomic” than barbed wire. In Turkey, barbed wire was started to be used after the First World War.

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<sup>72</sup> Netz (2004) finds out that the barbed wire, which he believes put an end to the symbolic character of spatial control, was used for the first time in 1874 in America.



**Figure7:** De-ergonomi: “Çarkıfelek” (*Chevaux-de-frise*) from Ottoman war architecture. “Zayıf yollarda ve kale kapular önlerinde tertib olunur çarkı felekler” (*çarkıfelek* which is installed on weak roads or in front of castle gates).<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Source: *Fenn-i Harb (The Art of War)*, folio 22. An anonymous, undated work in National Library Collections of Manuscripts, under the call number: 06 Mil Yz B 25/1. The work features the general characteristics of late 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman discourse on war, when the European sources on modern technologies and architecture of war were being translated into Turkish. In 1793, for example, the 17<sup>th</sup> century French siegecraft engineer Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban’s (1633-1707) work was rendered Turkish and published in Istanbul. This was the earliest indications of the French influence on modernization of the Ottoman military architecture. The well known Şevket Mustafa Paşa’s *Fenn-i Harb* (1843) was inspired by, if not totally based on, that discourse.



### 2.4.3. The Boundary Marks

According to a Greek mythology, in order to set off the boundaries between *Peloponnesia* and *Attica*<sup>74</sup> the King *Theseus* erected a pillar on the boundary zone and wrote “this is not the Peloponnesus, but Ionia” on one side of the pillar and “this is the Pelopennesus, and not Ionia” on the other side of it.<sup>75</sup> This mythological narrative is a perfect expression of the imaginary role of the boundary marks. The “constructed boundary marks” (as opposed to natural objects which are employed as boundary marks), either in the form of material signs intermittently installed one after the other, or in the form of continuous lines like walls or barbed wires, provide the feeling that our “selves” are continuously separated from objects and objective world. One cannot see the two sides of boundary marks at a time. This physical constraint comes with a psychic restriction. Thus, a sense of “inside-outside” comes out.

Once faced with a boundary mark, the self gets divided into two. Lacan has spent much of his energy to understand the split of subjectivity. In his

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<sup>74</sup> These are in the southern Greece today.

<sup>75</sup> Reeves, 1944: 534. Reeves quotes this mythology from *Pauasnias'* (200 BC) book *A Description of Greece*.

account, human being experiences this division first time in his individual history in what he calls “mirror stage”. The optical reflection of the image of infant gives an end to the misconception that the infant is an organic part integrated to his mother. Thus, the body of the infant becomes a space for the subjectivity enclosed mainly by his body. In other words, as soon as the infant perceives himself as a separated being on the mirror, he gets into a dualism. In this dualism, the human infant is now a party in a dual structure. We can find many similarities between the role of mirror in Lacanian theory and the boundary marks. Boundary marks are absolute evidences of the fact that one cannot look through the perspective of the self and the other simultaneously. What determines the frames of a particular subjectivity and makes it one of the two parties in subject-object relation is the restriction which delimits our perspectives on the imaginary ground. For this reason, the imaginary boundaries of the subjectivities are precise. That is why changing the geographical location of a boundary mark, moving it from a particular point to another does not change the precision of imaginary boundaries. Because, on the imaginary level, the “external world” is definitely separated from the “self”. Let us now see some examples of the Ottoman processes of building boundary marks.

#### 2.4.3.1. Fictitious lines

One of the earliest examples of assuming fictitious lines on the earth in modern times for the purpose of sharing territories is the *Tordesillas Treaty* signed between Spain and Portugal in 1494.<sup>76</sup> Together with improvements in the geographical sciences, the fictitious lines have turned into the idea of meridians. However, unlike meridians and latitudes, the fictitious lines were not drawn as a part of the geological shape of the world as a whole. They have always been independent, partial and local.

Ottomans used the fictitious lines to define the boundaries of their territories. Generally taking particular natural objects like mountains, body of rocks or intersection of rivers as starting point, the fictitious lines were passing through a series of triangulations to create a feeling of continuity before reaching to the ending point. For instance, in the treaty of Nissa signed between Ottomans and Russia in 1739, a fictitious line is used to delimit the boundaries: “[...] from the small river named *Konskiyodi* in Salvardosi language, up to the great river named Berda, a straight line shall be drawn starting from the sources

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<sup>76</sup> *American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 79, 1938, p. 402.

of the aforesaid rivers and all of the lands framed in this way between the rivers shall belong to my Sublime State”.<sup>77</sup>

#### 2.4.3.2. Indication marks (*nişan*)

The most typical way of *de facto* separation of the domain of sovereignties on the *terrafirma* was to build up “indication marks” on particular points of fictitious lines. The indication marks, as we will see below, were built by a variety of styles and with different materials. In Ottoman literature of treaties, a typical text regarding the differentiation of boundaries by means of “indication marks” is as follows: “About the boundaries determined in both sides for the aforesaid Khanate and the tribes subject to him: From the city of *Şemahri* up to the side of Hazer Sea, properly adjusted clocks being the means of measuring, an average walk along a straight line up to the Hazer Sea will be taken. The total time passed in the meantime will be multiplied by three. Then, starting from the

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<sup>77</sup> “Özi suyunun öte tarafından Salvardosi lisanında Konskiyodi tesmiye olunan ırmağ-ı sağirden kebir nehr-i Berda’ya varınca nehreyn-i merkumeynin menbalarından bir hat-tı müstakim çekilip işbu nehreyn beyninde olan bilcümle arazi Devlet-i Aiye-i Osmaniye’ye kala” (MM V. 3, p. 251).

sea, the two-thirds of the total time calculated above will be walked back and an indication mark will be erected to the destination”.<sup>78</sup>

### 2.4.3.3. Ditches and excavations

In Ottoman diplomatic culture, another common way of creating “continuous lines of boundaries” on fictitious straight lines by means of construction of objects of different types was to make ditches and excavations. Ditches and excavations were functioning as “real obstacles” because they were difficult if not impossible for people to cross. At the same time, they were taking the role of “imaginary obstacles” because they were designed for the purpose of dividing subjectivities. A typical diplomatic discourse of this kind was in the Treaty of Karlowitz signed in 1699 between Ottomans and the Austrian state:

A straight line will be assumed between the point where the Tise river joins the Tuna river right across the Titel [...] and this side of Busent river. From there until where the Sava river joins the old course of Bosut

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<sup>78</sup> The original Ottoman text is: “Yedine berat-ı alıŝanım ita olunmađla hanlık-ı mezbur ve ana tabi kabaile tarafeyinden tayin olunan hududun beyanında Őemahi Őehrinden Bahr-i Hazer tarafına sahih-i kamilülayar saatler ile meŐ'i mutavassıt üzere, istikamet ile yürünüp Bahr-i Hazerde derya kenarın vardıklarında Őemahi'den deryaya varınca her kaç saat gelmiş ise teslis olunup ve deryadan başlanıp sülüsani olan mahalle *niŝan* vaz kılınur...” (1724, Rusya ile Bölüşme Anlaşması, MM, v 3, pp. 238-239).

river, some excavations will be made, ditches will be constructed, masses of stones or some stakes shall be built so that this side should belong to my Sublime State alone and the other side to the Caesar.<sup>79</sup>

#### **2.4.3.4. *Khumka***

The word “khumka” means “hill” or “hummock” in Serbian language. It looks quite safe to assume that this word has been picked up from Serbian language and settled down in Ottoman diplomatic lexicon, as a result of Ottoman boundary diplomacy in the Balkans. As we demonstrated above, some little hills made of stones, soils and woods were used by Ottomans to make up boundary marks. We have evidence to believe that this way of designing boundary marks which has been used by Ottomans especially in the Balkans, can be seen as the ancestor of the boundary marks used in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In an anonymous Ottoman manuscript which dates to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>80</sup> the famous types of the boundary marks of those times are depicted

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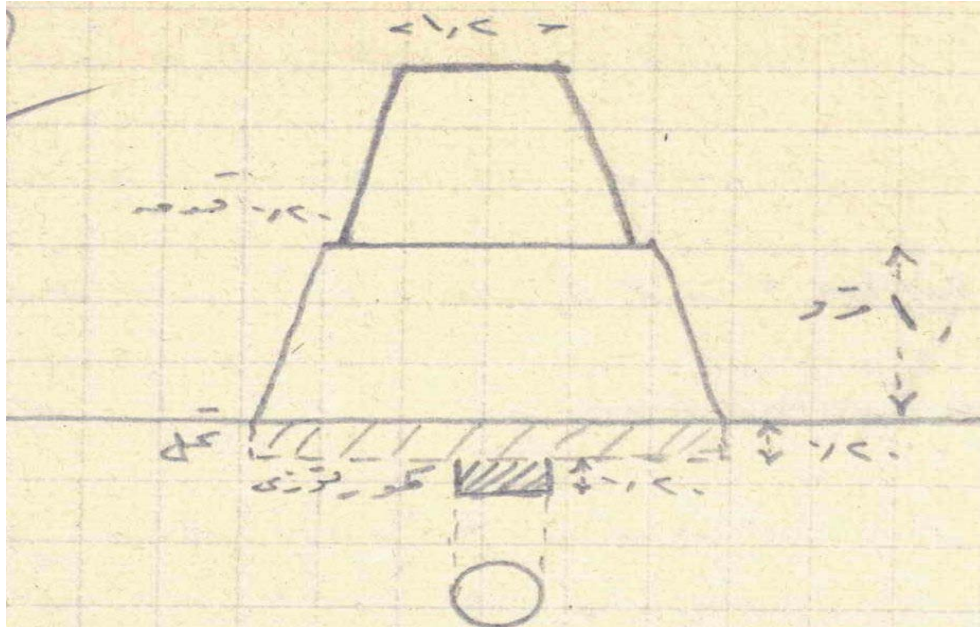
<sup>79</sup> The original text in Ottoman words: “Nehr-i Tise’nin Tuna’ya karıştığı mahalde Titel karşusunda Tise’nin beru yakasında olan ucundan karşı Sezem tarafına tamam mukabilinden Morvik’e doğru Busent suyunun beru yakasında bir hatt-ı müstakim farz olunup andan dahî Bosut suyunun mecra-yı kadîmesile nehr-i Sava’ya munsab olduğu mahalledek beru tarafı müstakillen Devlet-i Aliye’min ve öte tarafı müstakillen müşarünileyh çasar zabtında olmak üzere hendek hafrı ve taş ve kazık alâyimi vaz’ı ile kat-ı hudud oluna...” (MM, V. 3, p. 94).

and the materials and architectural features of them are described in details. According to that text, the boundary marks are divided into three groups regarding their functions and architectural features: “The boundary marks of first degree” are made of stones and mortar. It should be built in cone-like shape to save from material. It is erected on a 20-cm-deep base. A further hole of 20 cm should be dug down right in the center of the base and it should be filled with coal dust. The mark should be in 2 meters high. The bottom should be painted in white and the upper side should be painted in black. “The second degree of boundary marks” too, are built in cone-like shape for the same reason. These are built in 1,5-2 meters high. Their external faces are painted in black and white. As for “the third degree boundary marks”, these are purely made of stones. The external surfaces of these materials are painted in white. They are 1,5-1,2 meters height. Apart from these, the book talks about another type of boundary mark: The “platforms” (Ott. *Kürsi*, Fr. *piliars*). Again made of cement, these are rectangular in shape.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> “Taksim-i Arazi Noktalarına Yapılan İşaretler”. An anonymous work from the collection of manuscripts of National Library (06 Mil Yaz A 1247, folio 3a). The work is undated but its linguistic style depicts the general characteristics of the period between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>81</sup> These types of boundary pillars were widely used after the First World War to determine the changing boundaries Turkey. With changing sizes and shapes from country to country, these monuments have been used in different parts of the world. For example, in 1992, the boundaries



**Figure8:** A sketch of a boundary pillar in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Turkey.

between Iraq and Kuwait were concretized by means of these pillars. First, the commission appointed by the United Nations completed their surveys and office based works to determine the Iraq-Kuwait boundaries. Thus, to an important degree they gave an on-paper precision to the boundaries. The next step was to erect 106 pieces of monuments in a line of nearly 2 kilometers in the field to set forth the boundary. In Adler's description, "Each boundary monument site consists of a steel-reinforced, silica-mica aggregate concrete boundary pillar, painted yellow and black, 3 m in height and measuring 45 cm at the top and 90 cm at the base... At each location one witness mark on the Iraqi side and one witness mark on the Kuwaiti side are buried in the ground to facilitate repositioning of the pillar should it become necessary..." (Adler, 2001: 71). As the last step, the commission recorded the geographical coordinates of those pillars by clear references to their longitudes and latitudes. The Iraq-Kuwait boundaries have in that way been finalized.



## 2.5. Architecture of the Real

In the hot summer days of 1701, *Ibrahim Sâmi*, the Secretary of the Ottoman Council (*divan katibi*) and general *Konto Marsili* of the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806) were feverishly moving here and there over the forests and mountains of the Balkans, reading carefully and discussing soberly the official papers, ordering their subordinates now to cut some trees here and then dig some ditches there. These two envoys were delegated to concretize the boundaries stipulated in the treaty of peace signed between *Sultan Mustafa II* (1664-1703) and the Holy Roman Empire. In *Ibrahim Sami's* own words, they were instructed to “cut-out the boundaries” (“*kat’-i hudud*”) and “differentiate the lands” (“*tefrik-i arazi*”).

The two delegates, who were surveying the environment carefully, observing every single tree, every cluster of rocks, waterbeds and hills more meticulously than anyone else, were representing two rival subjectivities which had come out in consequence of bloody wars and peace negotiations of years. They were trying to differentiate peoples and territories of two states, drawing the real and imaginary boundaries. They were keeping the records of the geographical positions of every single boundary marks. The resulting text was

called by Ottomans as “*hududname*” (literally “certificate of boundary”), which is available in a collection of treaties called *Muahedat Mecmuası*, dated 1877.<sup>82</sup>

The *hududname* is worth a closer look because it can show a lot about the imaginary and real boundaries of Ottoman subjectivity in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the very introductory part of the *hududname*, it is stated that a treaty had been signed between the Ottoman Sultan and the head of Holy Roman Empire after a 16-year of wartime. One can learn many things from the text indirectly about the nature and course of boundary making diplomacy. The bureaucracy goes like this: First, some reciprocal documents of peace are prepared in the names of the Ottoman Sultan and the Holy Roman Emperor. Those documents were exchanged as a part of the diplomatic tendencies of the time. In those exchanged conventions, the boundaries are mentioned very roughly. In other words, those conventions do not set forth any clear-cut and well defined boundary lines. Then, the boundary commissioners are nominated from both sides, in order to make the boundaries concrete in the field in accordance with the conventions. The *hududname* explains this step very clearly:

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<sup>82</sup> This “*hududname*” (certificate of boundary) is published in *Muahedat Mecmuası*, volume II, pp. 217-240.

The conventions of treaty explicitly command that the boundaries of the countries must be differentiated. This humble servant, *Ibrahim Sami* (the secretary of Ottoman council) on the one side and *General Konto Marsili*, the great Christian executive on behalf of the Caesar on the other side, have been appointed for this task. This *hududname* is to explain the details about the *humkas* (boundary pillars) made of stones and soil as well as about the rivers and mountains playing the role of boundary marks in the regions of *Serm*, *Bosnia* and *Temeşvar*.<sup>83</sup>

The *hududname* does not refer to any geographical or mathematical reference system at any level to describe the exact geographical locations of the *humkas* and other boundary pillars like trees, rivers and stony places. Instead of this kind of reference systems, a symbolic system based on the cultural elements of the local peoples is used to describe the places of boundary pillars. At this point, we are face to face with the confusing relationship between the “real” and “imaginary”. The following expression from the *hududname* shows the nature of the symbolic system on which the boundary pillars are based: “A *humka* was built on a local hill named “*Zivane Poştak*”, which looks out on four directions. Based on the descriptions and determinations of the frontier people, the Serbian land is ended here”.<sup>84</sup> In these words, the ethnical boundaries and the real boundaries seem to be intermingled. In other words, it looks like the ethnical

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<sup>83</sup> MM, v. II, p. 217.

<sup>84</sup> MM, v. II, p. 230.

boundary is superimposed over the real boundary. From that moment on, the only possible way to change those boundaries is to commit violence. On the other hand, throughout the course of boundary making, the whole process of differentiating the “self” and the “other” is carried out on a diplomatic consciousness. In Lacanian psychoanalytic sense, this “diplomatic consciousness” is nothing other than the domain of imaginary which makes the perception of the self and other as the two parties of a common experience possible. For this reason, it is not surprising to see that the discourse of the *hududname* is based on the idea that actual subjects of everything happening between the two subjectivities (i.e. the Ottoman and the Holy-Roman subjectivities) are the Ottoman Sultan and the Holy-Roman Caesar: “The 16 years of war between *Mustafa Khan*, the son of the holy sultan *Muhammed Khan* and the greatest king of the Christian peoples, the Roman Emperor [the Emperor of Holy Roman Empire] his excellencies *Caesar Bedkar Leopoldus ...*”<sup>85</sup>

In Lacanian theory, the symbolic system is a closed system of signifiers, in which no symbols can frame the “real object”. In this respect, the discourse of the *hududname* is a good example of Lacanian symbolic order. The *humkas*, which are linked to each like the rings of a chain, function as a defile of signifiers. However, on the level of “real”, the *humkas* are nothing but independent hills

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<sup>85</sup> MM, v. II, p. 217.

and piles of rocks which exist in the nature indifferently. The imaginary function of these independent natural objects, namely the polarizing ground on which the “self” and the “other” are created, is somewhere between the real and symbolic structures. In this “closed system of signifiers”, each of the *humkas* play the role of *point de capitone*. This nullifies in advance the very modern question we impliedly posed above: Why mathematics or geometry are not used in the *hududname* as reference systems in order to make the boundaries definite?<sup>86</sup>

### 2.5.1. Of the “Precision” and the “Ambiguity” of Thresholds

Ottomans were practically concerned themselves with boundary questions mainly for two reasons. First, as a part of agricultural economy, Ottoman bureaucracy required detailed records of land ownership. Distribution of lands among the state, foundations and the tenants has been recorded in detail since the earliest times of the Empire. In the bureaucratic process of land

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<sup>86</sup> There is only one particular way of expression in the *hududname* that we might consider as relatively closer to a modern mathematical measurement: “From the Bosat river four hours of walk up until where there is Anbarçe island and from there twelve hours of walk up until Zuban island and from there six hours of walk up until the Rastoça island...” (MM, v. II, p. 220). It is clear that what is meant by “hour” in this context is the distance traveled by a moderate healthy person within one hour. Was this kind of measurement easier to apply on the uneven surfaces of the earth than using measuring devices like meters etc? It is hard to know this. However, the important implication of the question about measurement for this study is this: The ultimate limit for measuring the boundaries is human body.

surveys (*tahrirs*), a proper way of determining the boundaries of lands was decisive. For instance, when a piece of land was donated by someone, the boundaries of that land had to be clarified properly. In most cases, this sense of boundary fixing had a lot to do with agricultural economy. Thus, the decisive factor was about the economic value of the surface of lands. The property relations with the surface of the earth were not hypothetical. It was a vitally practical relation which determined the lives of people to an important extent. The point where an individual was placed in the whole picture of the agricultural economical system could determine his social roles entirely. Social status as well as the rights and duties of an individual (like going to the war, paying tributes and taxes) were based to an important extent on his relation with the land system.

The second ground of the boundary questions in Ottoman society was “international boundary affairs”. In this sense, up until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the “international boundary diplomacy”, too, was mainly about the surface of the lands. When the impacts of industrial revolution became apparent on Ottoman “relations of property” and “relations of production”, the idea of land ownership changed radically. Actually the mining industry and underground economy had been an important matter since the earliest times of the Ottoman

Empire.<sup>87</sup> However, we can assume that the property relations regarding the extractive industry and underground goods were deepened and got a modern character in the early times of the reign of *Sultan Abdulhamid II* (i.e. 1870s). Still, the practical relationship with the “underground resources” (as industrialization required) would get furthered in the aftermath of the First World War. This transition has brought about a change in the understanding of land ownership. As a result, the underground mining sites became as much important as (or even more important than) the arable surfaces of the lands.<sup>88</sup>

We have already asserted that the Ottomans have been engaged in this or that sense in boundary making questions since the earliest times of the Empire. We also know that the Ottoman diplomacy of boundaries has been taking place mainly with Austria, Russia and Iran. The fact that Ottomans have always found

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<sup>87</sup> *Halil İnalçık* states that the imperial desire for putting control over the mining and underground resources was alive even in the earliest times of the Ottoman Empire. He records that the Empire was in severe competition with Italy and Hungary over the gold and copper minings in Serbia and Bosnia in the reign of *Murat I* (İnalçık, 1994, p. 58). However, the economic indications provided by İnalçık in the same work show that the proportion of the revenues that the Empire was gaining from mining to the total revenues was only  $\frac{1}{4}$  in 1475. This proportion augmented over the course of modernization and industrialization.

<sup>88</sup> The most well-known example of this kind of modern understanding of land ownership in Ottoman were the two cities, namely Mosul and Kirkuk which are known for their good amount of oil reserves. Having been lost as a result of the First World War, these cities still remain as the main subjects of irredentist Turkish nationalism.

problems of boundaries on the table in their diplomatic relations with European states, concerning especially the Balkans, has always required an interaction between the Ottoman and European sides in the terminology of boundary as well as in the cadastral techniques and boundary constructing practices. Especially in the period of modernization, Ottomans started to take directly the methods of the science of geodesy and the techniques of cadastral surveying.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> A rough look at the stages of the evolution of cadastral techniques in Europe might help us observe clearly the evolution of the idea of “precision” in Ottoman culture. The history of cadastral surveys in Europe is dated back to the ancient times. The examples of technical applications of land surveying and concretizing the boundaries abound after the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Especially in Italy, cadastral surveys and record keeping became a common and very important practice in order to increase tax revenues. Rather than maps and visual materials, the recording documents called *cartes parlantes* were in use. *Cartes parlantes* were based on the verbal descriptions of the ownership relations around a particular land and the revenues of it. The records about land ownership based on maps and visual materials were used in Germany in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a style of record keeping based on a combination of verbal and graphical descriptions became widespread. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the role of local authorities who have been functioning as intermediary agents in tax collection was taken by the central states in Europe. From those times on, the central political powers were getting in direct touch with the tax payers. The French Revolution of 1789 brought about fundamental changes in the functions of institutions. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the science of geodesy, together with its surveying techniques and theoretical background, had become the most fundamental scientific discipline for cadastral surveys. With the new faces of the science of geodesy, a new way of calculations based on the principle of “precision” was introduced. In this modern understanding of precision the method of “geometric triangulation” was crucial. A more effective use of geodesy in the legal system was delayed nearly for one century after its emergence because of the reluctance of legists. Especially in German speaking countries, the cadastral practices were based on a surveying and recording technique that consisted in a collaboration of law and geodesy. After the introduction of computer technology in the second



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half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the question of cadastral surveys has completely become a part of the domain of law (Stubkjaer, 2008 pp. 65-67). Although the improvement of the science of geodesy and the innovations in the surveying techniques have promised some fundamental solutions for the problem of precision, this question cannot be considered to have been properly solved even today.

Today, despite all these developments in cadastral surveying methods and the satellite based measuring technology, the question of “precision of boundaries” still remains unsolved. As a topic that concerns *boundary engineers* rather than *boundary architects*, the question of precision is held today in an academic paradigm based on satellite technology, known as GPS (Global Positioning System). In 4 November 1957, when the first artificial satellite SPUTNIK -1 was sent to the space, the advance of satellite-based geodesy was getting into a new phase. Towards the 1990s, the imaginary straight lines called “geodesics” contributed much to the question of “precision”, especially in the concretization of maritime boundaries (Johnston, 1990:17). Today, even the satellite-based technology work with a tolerance of up to 20 meters (Estopinal, 2009: 124-125. Some observers state that the tolerance can be lowered down to +1 metres (see Sickle, 2001:226). All in all, especially when the international boundary conflicts are in question, the advancing technology cannot solve the problems totally. Today, international authorities like International Court of Justice are authorized to take the action about boundary conflicts. For example, in 1966, a boundary conflict between Argentina and Chile was resolved by International Court of Justice (Adler, 2001: 9). Also, in recent times, the boundaries between Iraq and Kuwait, as well as the boundaries between Israel and Jordan were determined by UN. The United Nations Security Council made a call for help to the UN Secretary General for the determination of the Iraq-Kuwait boundary in 1992. The UN Secretary General established a commission named *United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission*. In the first step, the boundaries were determined on table by verbal descriptions and maps. Then, boundary marks were designed and erected in the field (Adler, 2001: 2). It is very interesting to note that even the satellites (which we assume will take us to behind our visible system of references) fail at some point and stay under the shadow of a symbolic structure. We might expect that pictures taken by satellites would be much reliable for boundary engineers. However, this is not the case. Adler brings up the reputation of satellite pictures among the boundary engineers and diplomats in these words: “These images , taken or sensed from a great elevation above the earth, are of limited value to the treaty negotiators, since they

### 2.5.2. The Ottoman Understanding of Precision of Boundaries

In Ottoman Egypt, a man was found dead in far distant from a village. The judges were supposed to give their decision as to whether the corpse was within the boundaries of the village or not, a decision which was easier said than done. For that purpose, they decided to wait for the Muslim daily call for praying

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require interpretation, do not carry names of features and have no reference lines, such as meridians and parallels or plane rectangular grids" (Adler, 2001:4). In international treaties too, we often come across this idea in a phraseology like this: "if there is a conflict between the map and verbal description, the latter will be based on" (For example, the Treaty of Kars of 1921 (concluded between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Russia) imposes that: "in case of a conflict between the text of the treaty and the map, the text will be preferred to the map" ("Metn-i muahede ile harita arasında adem-i tevafuk halinde metn-i muahede haritaya tercih edilecektir"). The Lousanne Treaty of 1923 has an exactly the same clause). Why the materials without pictures, inscriptions and symbols are less reliable? There is no doubt that engineers and diplomats have their own answers for this question. However, for our study, there is but one answer: It is because the "real" can never be symbolized. That means, "a real boundary can never be put into the symbolic domain". A large and streamy river is a "real boundary" in the very actual experience of a man in a particular moment when wants to cross to the other side with his herd. As soon as we give a name to the river we are in the symbolic domain. As we will see more examples below, "boundary making" is partly depends on the imaginary domain. To give an example from a recent context, in the south-eastern part of Turkey, some people "cross the boundaries" for smuggling oil and electronic goods. Those smugglers pass through two main types thresholds: First type is the "real thresholds" which consist in mountains, forests and of course the land mines installed by national security units. As we defined above, whatever makes human body dysfunctional can be a real threshold. The other type of threshold that the smugglers have to pass over on their ways is the "imaginary threshold", which consists in anything that makes smugglers feel themselves a party in a dual system. The idea of "self" in any form like the feeling of being a part of a particular nation, makes up the imaginary boundary.

(*azan*). When the call was given, the last point where the voice of the *muezzin* (the caller) could reach would be taken as the boundary of the village.<sup>90</sup> Appearing in the Ottoman Court Records (*kadı sicili*), this practice alone can show how the pre-modern Ottoman way of identifying the boundaries could be different from today's boundary engineering which is based on mathematics and geographical coordinate system. We can find similar sorts of pre-modern boundary setting methods in other sources. For example, Ibrahim of Aleppo, in his well known *al-Multaqa al-Abhur*<sup>91</sup>, gives a sketch of "the lands of tithe" (*öşür*) and "the lands of tribute" (*haraç*).<sup>92</sup> He describes the Arabic lands which fall into

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<sup>90</sup> Al-Qattan, 2007: 201. "The extent where the voice reaches" as a way of measuring distances was used in Ottoman law (*fiqh*) often. For example, the famous Ottoman canonist Kemalpaşazade uses this measure in this manner: "Question: Zeyd hires his grinder to both Amr and the miller in such a way that the one-third of the total product go to Amr. While Amr is responsible for the grinder, a man is found dead in a distance where a shout from around the grinder can be heard. Given that the killer is known, should the punishment be given to Amr or to Zeyd? Answer: If Amr is residing in the miller, the punishment will go to him" (Kemalpaşazade [1468-1543], *Fetâva (Fetvalar)*. Amasya Beyazıt II Halk Kütüphanesi. In the National Library collection of Manuscripts, call number 05 BA 922. Folyo 56a). Ottomans usually were using this kind of measuring methods which were depended on or related somehow to human body.

<sup>91</sup> This work of İbrahim Halebi is fundamental to the Hanefî law (*fiqh*) in Ottoman religious paradigm.

<sup>92</sup> "Öşür" (tithe) is a tax collected from the Muslim subjects. "Haraç", on the other hand, is the tribute paid by non-muslim subjects to the Muslim state. Halebi states that because neither the Prophet of Islam nor the four Caliphs collected tributes from Arabic land, the Ottoman state

the category of “the lands of tithe” by referring to their boundaries in this way:  
“The Arab land is a land of tithe (öşriye). That land stretches horizontally from Uzaib (a village in Kufa) up to the *big stone* in Mahra in the Yemen”<sup>93</sup> (my italics).

We are not able to know whether the British Viceroy for India, Lord George Nathaniel Curzon (1859-1925) was basing his arguments on these particular Ottoman ways of boundary setting, when he was convinced in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to say that the oriental societies intrinsically lacked any sense of “precision” of boundaries. He was quite sure to claim that

...the idea of demarcated frontier is itself an essentially modern conception, and finds little or no place in the ancient world. In Asia, the oldest inhabited continent, there has always been a strong instinctive aversion to the acceptance of fixed boundaries, arising partly from the nomadic habits of the people, partly from the dislike of precise arrangements that is typical of the oriental mind...<sup>94</sup>

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should not collect either. His main idea is to determine the type and the rate of the tax which should be collected from those Muslim lands which have just been conquered by the Ottoman state. For that reason, he needs to identify the boundaries of those regions.

<sup>93</sup> İbrahim Halebi, el-Mülteqal Ebhûr, vol. 1, p. 216.

<sup>94</sup> Curzon, 1908, p. 49.

In fact, Lord Curzon was not alone in his hasty judgment. Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904), the founding father of modern geography and ethnography in Germany, who was frequently cited in the works of political geographers in 1940s along the Second World War paradigm, repeated the modern and conceited idea that the principle of “precise boundary lines” is a specific characteristic of “higher civilizations”, this being the reason why the “lower cultures” were lacking any understanding of precision in boundary questions.<sup>95</sup>

What we quoted above from Lord Curzon and Ritz would remain far from the truth even if we would ignore their “orientalist” point of view. After all, the “precision” that these writers are talking about is a “geometrical precision”. The methods and techniques of “making precise” the boundaries by means of mathematical calculations and coordinate systems have been introduced into the domain of international law only after the World War I. But we know that the idea of *meridians*, which is based on some geographical reference points, were used at least as early as in the 15<sup>th</sup> century for the purpose of sharing territories, in the *Treaty of Tordesillas*.<sup>96</sup> However, in the European countries

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<sup>95</sup> For a typical citation of this kind, see Reeves, Jesse S. (1944) “International Boundaries”, *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 38, No 4. pp 533-545. In that work, Reeves quotes Ratz’s dictum that “..the mathematical precision of boundaries is a special characteristic of higher civilization” (p. 533).

<sup>96</sup> The first modern case in which meridians were used to fix international boundaries was the *Tordesillas Treaty* which was signed between Spain and Portugal in 7 July 1494 (*American*

too, up until the world wars, the precision of boundaries were not based merely and strictly on “mathematical precision”, despite an individual might easily decide whether he was within the coverage of this or that sovereignty. So, we have to clarify the idea of “precision” further at this point.

Let us take a look at three documents from Ottoman land bureaucracy, to see not only the extent to which the idea of “precision” was different from its modern understanding, but also the way it could change from one Ottoman context to another, eventually being based on a peculiar understanding of precision. The first of these documents is from 1366, an endowment by Murat I. The other two documents consist in “hududnames” (certificates of boundary) from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Document 1: Among the oldest documents that may show indirectly about the techniques and terminologies of boundary setting in Ottoman culture, deeds of endowment (*waqfiye*) are of particular importance. An endowment deed is a document which shows the transfer of a property to the public. As part

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*Philosophical Society*, Vol. 79, 1938, p. 402). The technique used in that treaty to fix boundaries brought about a serious problem of “precision”. The treaty was designed for the purpose of sharing the “new world” right after Christopher Columbus’ discoveries. According to the treaty, a vertical line would be drawn along 370 leagues (circa 1800 kms) west of the Cape Verde islands. The eastern side of the line would belong to Portugal and the western side to Spain. Serious problems about “precision” emerged in the application of this treaty. Even a “small” change in calculations brought about a confusion about the possession of a very large territory in South America. The question was about whereabouts of the margins of the Cape Verde islands.

of their functions, the endowment deeds are supposed to include detailed descriptions of the boundaries of the endowed property. An endowment made by Murat I on 1 Rajab 767 (14 March 1366) depicts the terms and ideas of boundary in the very earliest times of Ottoman culture:

The boundary of that place starts from the house of Fuzil and continues up to where the hides are tanned, and from there up to the reedy place, and from there in the outbound direction up to the breach located across the Yeken village, from there backwards down to Kangli road reaching to Saru Yar, from there back to Gavur village, from there forward towards the dervish lodge of Furyaz the *akhi*, from there to the place where women wash the clothes, from there down back to watercourse [...] and through there upwards to Kılıç Hasan road, from Hasan vineyard back to Fuzil's house...<sup>97</sup>

Document 2: A passage from a "hududname" (certificate of boundary) dated 1740:

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<sup>97</sup> The original text: "...ol yirin haddi ve sinorları bir haddi Fuzil evinden tabbağlar işledüğü bikare ve bikar ayağından sazlığa yeken köyüne geçer köprüye geçdikden sonra gediş sıra yeken köyüne bakan gedüğe geri aşığa saru yâre inen Kangli yoluna andan gerü yola inen gavur köyüne gavur köyü yolundan ilerüsü sıra furyaz ahısı tekyesinden avratlar don yudukları yire değin andan gerü dere sıra dik yukaru kılıç hasan araluğundan gelen yola hasan bağından gelüb [...] sokağına inince hasan bağından gerü Fuzil evine gelince tasarruf eylesün..." For a facsimile of the text, see: Öz, Tahsin (1941), *Tarih Vesikaları I*, No 4. This text was picked up by Cemal Kafadar in Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies as a course material in the spring term of 2008.

The white stone in the side of *Manastır*, where the boundary begins, up to the black stone located in the upper side of aforementioned *Manastır*, and from that point up to the place named *Badiye Kalfos*, and from there along the ridge of the mountain until the place called *Alatadis*, bound by the boundaries of *Ozole* village, and bound again by the boundaries of *Berbaze* village which is one of the *Konice* village-groups, from the place known as *Erkeç Taş* through *Istanik* brook straight down to the big stream, from that point straight up towards the *Kalkaralu Taşı* also known as *Keşiş Taşı*, and again from the *Aktaş* which is bounded by *Vernemohta*, the village of *Yanya*, up to *Kutkâb*, and from that point up to the pear tree and again along the ridge of the mountain until the place known as *Pedekçula* and alongside the ridge of the mountain up to the place named *Çerevniye* and straight down to *Ofşe* next to *Cermaya* and again from that place down to the stream and then to *Kiryako Grave* and up to the place known as *İstinaya* on the border of *Kalamborle* village and from there along the ridge up to the graveyard and from there alongside the boundary of village named *Mejak* up to *Eşfoka Grave* and from there along the ridge known as *Mavredoti* up to *Eftani*, and along the ridge up to *Badlonka*, from the left side along the boundary of *Milla* village, which is subjected to *Macak*, straight up towards the place known as *Karniyo İstalo* [...] unanimously ending in the place bounded by the black stone located in *Manastır* which was mentioned in the beginning, explained so far how the aforementioned village is bounded and from now on its surrounding region should not extend in excess of the aforesaid boundaries...<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> From the archive of Directorate of Waqfs of Turkey (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü arşivi*). The document is recorded in the row number 124/3, page 270 of the defter numbered 735. Its original date is 20 Rajab 1153 h. (11 October 1740 m.). The original text goes as follows: “Mebde-i had olan *Manastır* kurbinde Beyaz taşdan *Manastır-ı merkumin üst yanında karataşa varınca ve ondan Badiye kalfos nam mahalle varınca ve yine mahall-i mezburdan dağ sırtla çıkup*



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Alatadis nam mahalle varınca ve Ozole karyesinin hududiyle mahdut ve yine Konice karyelerinde Berbaze nam karyenin hududiyle mahdut erkek taş demekle nam mahalden dik aşağı İstanık deresinden büyük dereye buluşınca ve oradan dik yukarı kalkaralı taşı nam-ı diğer keşiş taşına varınca ve yine Yanya karyelerinden Vernemohta nam karyenin hududiyle mahdut Aktaşdan dik yukarı Kutkâbe varınca ve oradan Armut ağacına varınca ve yine dik yukarı dağ sırtıyla Padekçula demekle nam mahalle varınca ve yine dağ sırtıyla Çerevniye nam yere varınca ve yine dik aşağı Ofşe maa Cermaya varınca ve yine mahall-i mezburdan dereye inen ve andan Kıryako Mezarına varınca ve yine Kalamborle karyesinin hududunda İstinaya nam mahalle varınca ve yine sırtla varup Mezarlığa ve Mezarlıktan Mecak nam karye hududiyle Eşfoka Mezarına varınca ve andan Mavredoti demekle sırtla Eftiyane varınca ve yine sırtla Badlonka nam mahalle varınca ve yine sol taraftan Macak karyesine tabi Milla nam karye hududiyle Şalatora demekle nam mahalden dik yukarı karniyo İstalo nam mahalle varınca ve anan Gereniye karyelerinden Akrata nam karye hududundan dik yukarı Dağ sırtıyla yalta çukurına varınca ve andan dik aşağı ve Lofkadenkâ nam mahalden diğer Şalatura diline varınca ve yine Kerakal nam karye hududundan dik yukarı lapoş çukurına ve andan Latanir karyesinin hududuna varınca Kotkâdan dik aşağı Paraçkoya varınca ve yine mahall-i mezburdan Yade verdine nam mahalle varınca ve mahall-i mezburdan iki dere mülâki olduğu yere varınca ve yine dere kenarıyla Konva deresine ve mahall-i mezburdan kanuvada beyaz taş dahil olmak üzere karye-i mezbure ahalilerinin bundan akdem harab olan Bilenkür nam karye toprağında Ana ve Dedelerinden ikiyüz seneden beru izn-i sahib-i arz ve hüccet-i şer'iyye ile zapt ve tasarruflarında olup a'şar ve rüsumatların Sipahi olanlara vergeldikleri tarla veya gan ve mezrealarının hududı karnuva nam karye mahalden dik yukarı sağ tarafından çera yolu ile iki çeşmelere varınca ve yine yol sıra karataşa varup Odele hududiyle muttasıl sol tarafından beyaz taş varınca balâda zikrolunan Manastırda olan karataşla mahdud müntehi olmak üzere ittifak olunmakla veçh-i meşruh üzere karye-i mezbur tahdid olunup min bad etrafı hudud-u mezkürden tecavüz etmemek üzere mevlâna-yi mezbur mahallinde ketb ve tahrir ve maan ba's olunan mutemedde aleyh adam ile meclis-i şer'a gelüp âlâ vukuihi inha etmeğin mavakaa bit-taleb ketb ve imlâ olundu. Fil-yevmil-işrine min Recebil-ferd li-sene selâse ve hamsine ve miete ve elf. Min hicretin men lehül-izzü veş-şeref"

Document 3: A document describing the boundaries of a *waqf* land, dated 1752. I quote a passage from the text which is directly related to the boundaries:

[...] the [village in question] and its arable lands are differentiated on one side by the Sirak stream and on the other side by Sofular field and on the third side by Çörek rocky place and on the other side by Aladağ stream. And Sinebüklü [should be known as] the lands bounded by Kızılcaasma on one side and Göçpelidin on the other side and Yukarıbağ and Aladağ stream on other sides<sup>99</sup>

These three documents show the nature of “boundary fixing” and precision of boundaries in different Ottoman contexts. In the first document, the boundary fixed by the “endowment certificate” takes a particular point in the social web, namely the house of Fudil (or Fuzil) as a point of origin. Such elements as “reedy place”, “road” and “river” are the “real thresholds” reproduced in the symbolic domain. The “white stone in the side of Manastır” and “the İstanik stream” in the second document, as well as “Çörek rock” and “Aladağ Lake” in the third document seem to have played the role of “real thresholds” for the people who lived in those regions.

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<sup>99</sup> From a “hudutname” held in the archive of General Directory of Waqfs (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü arşivi), defter no: 738, page 177; row: 99. The hududname was issued for “R. oğlu sipahiler ağası hacı M. ağa”. Dated 8 Ramazan 1165 (20 July 1752).

The idea of continuity is very crucial for a demarcation line. So, the use of such symbolic elements of daily life as “the place where women wash clothes” as a triangulation point accomplish this task. In such examples, some social elements of daily life are enrolled in the construction of demarcation lines. A feeling of continuity of demarcation lines is obtained through a combination of the symbolic elements and real obstacles. In the first document, the demarcation line ends at the starting point, namely the house of Fudil. What makes these three cases of division of property from dividing lands among states is only a matter of discourse. That is to say, in terms of the combination of “real” and “imaginary” elements, the idea of boundary fixing is the same in basic points in the case of civic division of properties and international boundary clarification. The international treaties use such real obstacles as mountains and rivers whenever available, while the real thresholds in endowment certificates are based on relatively small scale obstacles like reed beds and gaps. Likewise, both domestic boundary certificates and international boundary conventions carry out an imaginary function. As we will be talking about in much more detail in the next chapter, imaginary function of the boundary discourses is based on a very Hegelian principle: Recognition. In this sense, an international boundary convention is a kind of “recognition” in Hegelian sense. The sense of “self” and “other” is decisive in the discourse of international boundary conventions. Thus, such conventions, together with the real and imaginary elements, are very

crucial for the creation of subjectivities. The feeling of “self” in boundary conventions is at the same time a frame for the subjective perception of the parties. The subjects as well as the political power, owe their point of view to the dualism of “inside-outside” created by the real and imaginary boundaries. Each of the three documents I cited above creates a separate subjectivity, made of the signifiers that come together around a common political power. After all, to have a property is to look out the world through the particular window which is created by means of that property.

It is not a coincident that such “objective” means as geographical coordinate systems, meridians and latitudes in the process of boundary fixing started to be used widely in the colonization period. Colonization was a sign of the fact that the relationship with the soil was undergoing a radical change. Not surprisingly, the change in the role of soil in economic system would bring out some changes in the concepts of “boundary” and “precision”. In agricultural economic systems, property relations and practices of belonging (such as tax paying) were determining the precision of boundaries.

In pre-modern times too, when geodesy had not yet become a means of boundary fixing, there were conflicts over boundaries both on domestic and international levels. However, in very rare cases the basic reason for the international boundary conflicts was the ambiguity of borders. The social

structures of the frontier zones were very influential in the emergence of conflicts.<sup>100</sup> So, the problems were not arising because the demarcation lines were fixed ambiguously. On the contrary, the local frontier people knew the boundary lines very well, and problems arose whenever they did not comply with the boundaries. Loyalty to the central political power was generally weaker in frontier zones than interior regions. This problem was practically solved in

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<sup>100</sup> For example, a convention of boundary was concluded between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in 1847. The convention was reached after the accomplishment of a fieldwork by a commission, who were delegated by Russia and England. The British delegate Robert Curzon (should not be mistaken for Lord George Nathaniel Curzon) published his journal of those days. His journal reveals many thing about the course and the nature of the bussiness of boundary fixing and the actual social problems (beyond the diplomatic problems) that surround the boundary questions. The first thing we learn about the nature of the boundary disputes is that, the boundary problems do not emerge first on diplomatic level between the states and then spread into popular level. In reality, the flow of the problem is just in opposite direction: Local people have some disputes and conflicts first. When these problems get severe enough (like bloody fights and mass destructions), states become a part of the problem. Curzon's personal observations give us an account of the nature of the particular case of boundary dispute between the Ottoman and Persian local peoples before the convention of 1847: "The invading party, always on horseback, and with a number of trained led horses, which could travel one hundred miles without flagging, managed to arrive in the neighbourhood of the devoted village one hour before the sunrise. The barking of the village curs was the first notice to the sleeping inhabitants that the enemy was literally at the door. The houses were fired in every direction; the people awoke from sleep, and, trying in confusion to escape, were spread on their thresholds by their invaders; the place was plundered of every thing worth taking; and one hour after sunrise the invading bands were in full retreat, driving before them the flocks and herds of their victims, and the children and girls of the village bound on the led horses..." (Curzon, 1854: V-VI).

most cases by widening the power of influence and authorization of the local governors. In international laws, most of the provisions were related to regulations about the “banditry”. So, the “boundaries” were always clear-cut at least on the imaginary level.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE IMAGINARY THRESHOLDS OF THE OTTOMAN

#### SUBJECTIVITY

##### 3.1. The Breach in the Ottoman Self

Separation between the Sultan and the Ottoman subjects has gone through big changes over time. Taking a standard historical narrative of the emergence of the Ottomans as our starting point, we can have an account of the origins of the breach in the Ottoman subjectivity.<sup>101</sup> As most of the “standard” modern works on Ottoman history are based on (or at least inspired by) Joseph

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<sup>101</sup> There are different and conflicting accounts of the origins of the Ottoman Empire. The very essence of the conflict between the different accounts is about this question: Has the Ottoman Empire been shaped around an ethnically pure core group or it has been as much heterogenous in its earliest days as it was in, let us say, the 19<sup>th</sup> century? Cemal Kafadar gives a detailed account of this discussion (see, Kafadar, 1995, especially pp. 10-12). However, in terms of our particular interest in this context, which one of those arguments reflects the truth is not an essential concern. The important thing for the particular interest of this study at this point is the fact that a social group has turned at a specific historical moment into an organized political power and established a relation of representation with large amount of populations.

von Hammer-Purgstall's [1774-1856] work, we can take his narrative about the origins of the Ottoman Empire as our starting point. In his account, the very origins of Ottoman Empire should be sought in the history of a particular group of people of Central Asian origin who were compelled to leave their lands due to Mongolian pressures. They were an unobtrusive large group whose main purpose was to get rid of the Mongolian pressures, moving westward without any desire for conquest. Headed by Suleiman, the son of Kaya Alp, this large group of families (of around fifty thousand members) moved along until they passed Armenia and they decided to settle where they considered convenient for their dwelling somewhere around Erzincan.<sup>102</sup> After Suleiman's death, his successor Ertugrul and the families surrounding him moved towards western Anatolia. Later on, this group would gradually turn into an emirate, then into a state and lastly into an Empire. Now, departing from this narrative (which we introduced here very roughly for our particular purpose) we can ask the following question: How could a dualism of "representative self-represented self" grow out from this group of people?

We do not have any first hand documents which might show us the milestone of the process of transition of the Ottoman subjectivity from a local power (whose origins are usually sought in a kinship group) into an organized

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<sup>102</sup> Hammer, 1913 : 89-90. Erzincan is an eastern province in modern Turkey.



political being.<sup>103</sup> So, lacking any first-hand document about the emergence of the Ottoman state as a political power, we have to seek an answer to our question on another ground: When and how the dualism of “represented-representative” emerged within this particular population in which people were tied together by kinship in the first step and then by ideological ties in the later stages?

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<sup>103</sup> Why we lack any documents that would directly talk about the emergence of the Ottoman subjectivity despite the fact that civilization was to an important extent based on writing in those times? From the point of view of the discipline of history, this question may seem invalid because there can hardly be an “exact moment” in which a state is founded. But let us imagine “an ideal document” to answer this question anyway. The document should be able to answer excellently any fundamental questions about the emergence of the Ottoman state. Perhaps, the best document would be something like this: “I, Osman, the son of Ertugrul, hereby declare in this warm day of the summer of 1299, together with my fellows who have been fighting in my side for a long time, that the Ottoman state is factually established today. From now on, our objective is to make conquests continuously and make our state more and more powerful. The most important goal that I would direct my offspring is to establish an Empire extending from Iran up to the shores of the Adriatic sea”. This would be very clear first-hand document, which is ideal for our questions. However, we never have such a clear documents about the moment of the foundation of the Ottoman state. Back to our question (why do we have very few (or none at all) first-hand documents about the moment of emergence of the Ottoman state?) we should remember the Lacanian concept of “real”. The “real” in Lacanian theory is properly a “text-free” moment. In other words, the “real moments” are those in which we are not able to generate any kind of text. That is to say, the real cannot be made a subject of language. Thus, it is impossible (at least from Lacanian point of view) for any subjectivity to keep a first-hand record of its emergence.

Osman (the founder of the Ottoman state) was a warrior and his fellows also were consisted in combatants who actively participated in fights and wars. Those warriors were kept together around a common principle (*gaza*, an understanding of holy war). According to Halil İnalçık, the “units of holy warriors” (“*gaziyan birlikleri*”) were consisted almost totally in those combatant fellows (*nökers*) who gathered around Osman on a common ideological ground.<sup>104</sup> In this way, we can assume that a group of ideologically (but not ethnically) homogenous people were in the center of the process of creating this particular subjectivity.

Naturally, some members of those groups were not able to participate actively in the wars and fights. After all, the women and the children could not fight and these noncombatant members were not so few in number. When we consider the relations and attachment of different kinds between the warriors and the civil population, we can assume that there should have been a relation of representation on psychic level between these two sections of the proto-Ottoman society. Along with the growing conquests, two things have changed fundamentally. First, the amount of the settled populations (who politically got into the domination of the constantly moving warriors) increased dramatically. The non-Muslim subjects who have been added to the Ottoman population as a result of the conquests brought about a heterogeneous society. The second

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<sup>104</sup> İnalçık, *Devlet-i Aliye*, p. 28.

development was the handover of an important number of fortresses as a result of “gaza” wars (holy wars). Since it was practically impossible to erect military forces in every piece of the conquered lands, the only clear indication of the political control over a particular territorial piece was the conquest of the fortresses around that region. The *de facto* existence of the soldiers of a particular group was the real sign of the sovereignty around that region. In the earliest times of the Ottoman history, there were fortresses and fortifications all over the Anatolian lands. Most of those fortresses had been constructed (and later left) by the Byzantine forces. Frequently, the local powers were living in those fortresses separately from the political subjects. The well known 14<sup>th</sup> century traveler, *Ibn Battuta* [1304-1369] records in his travel book that from the point where he passed into Anatolia (Alanya) along the line of his travel, there were fortresses everywhere. He implies that in some places, the local rulers (of whom he talks as “sultan” or “bey”) were living in those castles.<sup>105</sup> At some point in his travel, *Ibn Battuta* meets Orhan Bey, the son of Osman. *Ibn Battuta* records that Orhan was holding sway in more than one hundred fortresses, and “...he was spending most of his time visiting and regularly examining those fortresses”. He also notes that Orhan was continuously putting sieges on the

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<sup>105</sup>For example, the sultan of Smyrna, *Ömer Beg* (*Ibn Battuta*, p. 221); and the sultan of Antalya, whose name is not mentioned in the travel book (*Ibn Battuta*, p. 203).

fortresses of “infidels of the territories of Rûm”.<sup>106</sup> Battuta does not tell anything about whether Orhan settled his family in a particular fortress or he was living together with his family in a city place outside the fortresses. But as we have noticed above, he clearly notes that Orhan was on a constant movement from one fortress to another, to examine the ones he already possessed and to make plans to conquest new ones. In this case, we can assume that there was already an administrative structure (and accordingly an administrative class) in the fortresses. That means, we can assume that the metaphorical dualism in the Ottoman self was established as early as in the time of Orhan Beg (1281-1359). The demographic facts about the Ottoman populations clearly demonstrate that the population growth did not follow a natural course. Along with conquests, some new populations (alien populations) were being added to the proto-Ottoman society. There were already “imaginary demarcation lines” between those newly added foreign populations who did not participate in the wars and the original populations who have always been in close contact with the political power and have been actively attending the fights. In this way, the dualism in the Ottoman subjectivity was deepening.

Since we do not have any historical documents which might directly express this schism in the Ottoman self in the earliest times, the account I briefly

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<sup>106</sup> Ibn Battuta, p. 225

introduced above will remain as an assumption. The historical documents that express this rupture clearly and directly came only after the settlement of the Ottoman state as a powerful political agency. A popular administrative-bureaucratic phrase that clearly expresses the dualism is “Bab-ı Âli” (Sublime Porte). Apart from its bureaucratic connotations, on the semiological base, this phrase implies the sharp division between the two main parts of the Ottoman subjectivity: The Sultan and the bureaucrats on one side, and the political subjects, on the other side. It is not difficult at this point to conclude that the term “Bab-ı Ali” (Sublime Porte) includes the very physical separation of the Sultan (together with the bureaucrats) from the political subjects, by means of fortified settlements and city walls.<sup>107</sup>

### **3.2. Signification of the Ottoman Self**

The nomadic groups around whom the Ottoman society has taken shape should already have an understanding of “inside-outside” in the very early times of their formation. We can safely assume that the relations of these core groups

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<sup>107</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when this concept was still in use, a European author was looking for the origins of the term “Bab-ı Ali” in Babel: “When the first dwellers on the plains of Chaldea, after the Deluge, gathered themselves for the building of a common structure Bab-el, or Bab-ilu, or Babi-ilu, the Door of God, ...as to-day the Sultan, who is spiritual father of the faithful Muhammadans, and autocrat of his realm, is widely known as the “Sublime Door” (Bâb-ı Ali)” (Trumbull, 1896: 103)

with the “outer world” required a representative power, which is vital for the imaginary dimension of subjectivity. In the very early times of the Ottoman history, when the proto-Ottomans were still a marcher principality, those nomadic groups were paying their taxes to *Çobanoğulları*, the last piece of the *Sultanate of Rûm*.<sup>108</sup> The earliest form of the “imaginary” existence of the proto-Ottomans in Anatolia was reflected in that political involvement. In the historical accounts about the earliest times of Ottoman history, Osman is the imaginary figure<sup>109</sup> who represents the Ottoman subjectivity. The foundation of Ottoman self as a political agency of “international relations” came with their first diplomatic contacts with the late Byzantine state. In 1325, an agreement was made between Orhan I, son of Osman, and Andronikos II, on the handover of Bursa to Ottomans. Three years after that, another peace and friendship agreement was concluded between Orhan I and Andronikos III, to end Orhan’s siege of Nicomedia.<sup>110</sup> These were the earliest forms of the diplomatic grounds on which the Ottomans were represented by an imaginary existence. Needless to say, we cannot define these “imaginary bodies” as a “nation” in the modern

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<sup>108</sup> İnalçık (2009) *Devlet-i Aliyye* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları), p. 10.

<sup>109</sup> Here, the term “imaginary” is used in Lacanian sense. So by the term “imaginary figure” , we do not mean that Osman is a fantastic figure, that is, such a personality did not exist at all. What we mean by “imaginary figure” is a representative existence which is referred to in order to make a sense of “self” as opposed to “other” in diplomatic relations.

<sup>110</sup> Ekrem (1934: 7).

sense of the term. So, what kind of an imaginary existence was representing the Ottoman self in those intersubjective relations?

“International conventions” are based on an imaginary sense of “self” and “other”, which arise out of the identification of members with a supra-individual entity. In order to find out how this identification is based on a dualism of “inside-outside”, in other words, the way it constructs a particular subjectivity on “social ground”, we need to find an answer to this question: Were each of the Ottoman individuals engaged in, or at least informed of, those conventions? Beginning from the establishment of the Ottoman state, the Ottoman society has always been an ethnically, religiously and economically heterogeneous society. So, we have to accept that in order for those conventions concern every section of the society, they should have been based on very fundamental problems. Otherwise, very few of conventions would be of interest to every individual of the Empire. Also, conventions that might be of interest to the whole populations would require a political representation fulfilled by an “international agency”. However, as we will see below, there has never been a representational relation in political sense between the Ottoman Sultans and their subjects until modern times. In pre-modern times, the Sultan was involved in “international relations” not as a diplomatic actor who represented his people, but as the representative of the sultanic dynasty. The international conventions, treaties and agreements would not attract the attention of the

imperial subjects except particular economic or religious sectors of the society who were directly influenced by the conclusions of the conventions.

In Ottoman Empire (especially from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on), the question of identification of individuals with the central power is different than the case of monarchies. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century on, the Sultan was at the same time the Caliph and he had the ability to exercise an endless power on people's behalf in any issue. He was even above the legislative power.<sup>111</sup> This structural difference was putting an ontological distance between the Sultan and the subjects, between the seraglio and the periphery. In addition, the international conventions were mostly related to commercial matters. So, only a few small sections of Ottoman population were *directly* influenced by, and thus immediately concerned themselves with, particular international conventions until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We can assume that some agreements like war-ending conventions might have attracted the attention of large sectors of society (that of Anatolian peasants, for example) because the warfare was an alarm for

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<sup>111</sup> There was not such a thing as separation of powers in modern western sense in the Ottoman society. In the Ottoman legislative system, the *kadis* (muslim judges) were not authorized to make new derivations or establish new religious legislations. This power (of introducing new legislations) was set aside for the "fuqaha" (those who held mastery over religious sciences and were authorized to make legislative derivations). The Ottoman legislative system was based on the Hanefi doctrine, and according to this doctrine, as long as there was a sultanic judgement about a particular question, the *qadis* could not render alternative judgements (provided that the sultanic judgement was not clearly unlawful).



everyone. On the other hand, when we look at the *Muahedat Mecmuasi*,<sup>112</sup> we see that even the “treaties of peace” include an important amount of commercial regulations, which were subject to the knowledge and the interest of a very limited number of the imperial population.<sup>113</sup>

Now, by looking at some conventions concluded between the Ottoman state and a variety of foreign powers in different centuries, let us try to examine a particular dimension of the formation of the imaginary thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity. What kind of a conception of self did the Ottoman subjectivity have on the imaginary ground of “international relations” in different contexts? What was the situation of the imperial subjects (*reaya* and *beraya*) on that imaginary ground? In other words, to what extent the imperial subjects were included in the imaginary presentation of the Ottoman self in the active policies of the “international relations”? Pursuing answers for these questions, we will be able

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<sup>112</sup> The official collection of treaties of Ottoman Empire, published in 1877 (Turkey (1877) *Muahedat Memuasi* (İstanbul:Hakikat Matbaası)).

<sup>113</sup> The most striking example of international commercial treaties that establish intergenerational identifications is perhaps “capitulations”. The commercial privileges (capitulations) which have been granted by Ottoman sultans to the western states centuries ago have been in force until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. First, the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki) decidedly declared unilateral cancellation of the capitulations in 1910s. However, in spite of this kind of attempts, abolition of capitulations could not be achieved by Turks until the Lausanne treaty of 1923.

to have an idea of the imaginary margins of the Ottoman subjectivity on diplomatic ground.

### 3.2.1. The Sultan and the Dynasty as the Self

On the ground of international law, the Ottoman subjectivity has been expressed in a discourse of representation with direct references to the personality of the Sultan. This has remained so until the emergence of modern-nation state. The following phrases and ways of expression are used in the texts of international conventions to represent the Ottoman subjectivity as the actual party of conventions:

One of the widely used expressions to refer to the Ottoman side in international conventions is “*asitane-i saadet aşıyanemiz*” (“the threshold of our happy house”). Here, the Ottoman word “*asitane*” literally means “threshold”.<sup>114</sup> In Sultanic correspondences, a variety of Ottoman terms meaning “threshold” or “door” (like *asitane* (threshold), *atabe* (threshold), *südde* (door or threshold) and *bâb* (door)) are used frequently to mean the Ottoman party of the convention. One of the cases of the usage of the term “*asitane-i saadet aşıyanem*” appears in the Peace of Zsitvatorok of 1606 in this manner: “On the condition that [they

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<sup>114</sup> *Şemseddin Sami's famous Kamus-ı Türki* defines the word “*asitane*” in this way: “*Asitane*: 1. Threshold 2. Capital; the center of Sultanate”. He adds that, by this last meaning, the word refers to Istanbul, the capital of Ottoman Empire (see: Ş. Sami, “*asitane*”, 1901).

will] send two hundred thousand pennies to the threshold of my happy house...”<sup>115</sup> In the same text of treaty, another Ottoman phrase which means “threshold” is used to express the Ottoman side of the convention: “Südde-i vâlâ”.<sup>116</sup> Here, the expression of “südde-i vâlâ” in the original text of the treaty literally means “my sublime threshold”. Another term which is related to the concept of “threshold” used in international texts to refer to the Ottoman side is “Bâb-ı Âlî” (Sublime Porte). Again in the Peace of Zsitvatorok, the expression of “bab-ı aliyetül’atabemiz” appears repeatedly. Here, “bâb” is an Arabic word for “door”. *Atabe* is also an Arabic word, meaning “threshold”. Thus, the whole expression can be rendered like “the threshold of our Sublime Porte”. A direct example of this expression is again available in the text of the Peace of Zsitvatorok: “...the threshold of our Sublime Porte...”<sup>117</sup>

Other than such words as “door” and “threshold”, in some cases the Ottoman side of the international conventions is pointed to by referring to the Sultan’s personality and the Ottoman dynasty. One of the expressions referring

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<sup>115</sup> “*Asitane-i Saadet aşiyane* nakit ve yadigar iki yüz bin guruş göndermek şartıyla...” Peace of Zsitvatorok, 1606; *Muahadat Mecmuası* (MM), v. 3, p. 69.

<sup>116</sup> “...ve südde-i valâmıza gönderilen pişkeşlerden sonra...” The Peace of Zsitvatorok, 1606; MM, v. 3, p. 70.

<sup>117</sup> “...bab-ı aliyetül’atabımız ve vüfuri sadakat ve ihlas ve fartı istikamet ve ihtisas üzre olanlara riayet ve ihtiramımız...” Peace of Zsitvatorok, 1606; MM, v. 3, p. 69.

to the dynasty is “hanedan-ı adalet unvanımız” (“our dynasty known for justice”).<sup>118</sup> In some cases, the sultan was personally indicated as the diplomatic agent of the treaty, typically in the following wordings: “Şevketlu Padişah-ı Al-i Osman Hazretleri...”<sup>119</sup> (his majesties the supreme Ottoman Padishah). In some treaties, the Sultan speaks of himself in the mood of the first person pronoun.<sup>120</sup>

### 3.2.2. The State as the Self

A widely used expression to refer to the Ottoman subjectivity in international conventions is “the Sublime Porte” (“Devlet-i Aliyye”). This form of the expression has been used in international treaties from the earliest times of Ottoman history until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this classical expression, the Ottoman state *per se* is presented as the agency of the treaty. This expression appears in three forms. In the first type of usage, it shows up in a plain form, without taking any prefix or suffix. For example, in the peace treaty concluded

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<sup>118</sup> As in “...*asitane-i devlet aşyanemize ve hanedanı adalet unvanımıza* irsal idüp sulh ve salah alamâkân mukarrer olup müceddeden ahidnamemmi humayun inayet ve ihsan olunması...” MM, v. 3, p. 69.

<sup>119</sup> Peace treaty with England, 1799. MM v.1, p. 262.

<sup>120</sup> As in “...meşruh üzre sulh ve salahı *ben* dahi kabul idüp...” (.../I, too, agree to be in peace and tranquility in accordance with what is explained above..). Peace of Zsitvatorok, MM, v. 3, v. 69.

with France in 1802,<sup>121</sup> as well as the treaty of Dardanelles signed with England in 1809,<sup>122</sup> the Ottoman agency is pointed to as “the Sublime Porte” (Devlet-i Aliyye). The second form in which this expression shows up is “our Sublime Porte” (“Devlet-i Aliyyemiz”). This usage appears, for instance, in the convention concluded between Ottoman and Russian powers in 1774.<sup>123</sup> Third usage of the expression is: “my Sublime Porte” (“Devlet-i Aliye’m”). The Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, for example, refers to the Ottoman side in this way.<sup>124</sup> We come across

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<sup>121</sup> “Peace and tranquility are perfectly prevalent between the sublime porte and the people of France” (“Devleti Aliye ve França Cumhuru beyninde daimi sulh ve salah kamilen cari olup...”). Treaty of Peace with France, 1802. For the full text of the treaty, see Erim, 1953: 215.

<sup>122</sup> The Çanakkale Treaty concluded between Ottoman Empire and England in 1809, MM, v. I, p. 266. For other examples of the usage of the expression “sublime porte” see: The Treaty of Alliance with Prussia, in 1790, MM, v. 1, p. 90; Zıştov Treaty between Ottoman Empire and Austrian Empire in 1791, MM, v. 3, p. 156; Treaty of Alliance between Ottoman Empire and England in 1799, MM v. 1, p. 262.

<sup>123</sup> “Devlet-i Aliyemiz taahhüd ider ki...” (“our sublime porte promises that...”) Article 16 of Küçük Kaynarca Treaty, concluded between Ottoman and Russia in 1774. v.3, p. 264.

<sup>124</sup> “The Temişvar principality, along with all of the rivers, is under the power of my sublime porte...” (“Temişvar kelesine tabi Tamışvar eyaleti cümle nevahi ve enharile Devlet-i Aliye’min zabtında olup...”) Treaty of Karlowitz, 1699. MM, v. 3, p. 95.

this form no less frequently than the other two forms in different treaties and conventions.<sup>125</sup>

In some international conventions, “state” as the agency of the treaty is pointed as “devleteyn” or “işbu iki devlet” (both meaning “the two states”). In the diplomatic discourse of the heydays of the Ottoman Empire, language and wordings of the treaties were implying asymmetric power relations in favor of Ottoman side. The way Ottomans named the act of making agreements expresses this asymmetry clearly. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there have been two classical Ottoman terms meaning “treaty”: “Ahidnâme” and “emân”. “Ahidnâme” means “covenant” and implies a unilateral distribution of power in a diplomatic relation. The other term “emân” also implies practice of a unilateral force literally meaning “safety, security; safe-conduct, protection and mercy”.<sup>126</sup> Originally, it comes from the classical Islamic law of peace. When Muslim powers conquered a territory, they granted an “emân” to the non-Muslim populations of

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<sup>125</sup> “From the lands of Acem to the side of sublime porte...” (“Memalik-i Acemden Devlet-i Aliye’ m tarafına...”) The convention of division between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, MM, v. 3, p. 239; “The Bögürdlen Castle should be handed over to my sublime porte” (“Bögürdlen kalesi Devlet-i Aliye’ me teslim oluna...”) Belgrad Treaty between Ottoman Empire and Avustria in 1739. MM, v. 3, p. 12. In some contexts, the wording goes like “the Ottoman sublime porte” (“Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye”), as in the convention of Niş between Ottoman and Russia in 1739 (see MM v. 3, p. 251).

<sup>126</sup> Redhouse, 1880.

that territory to promise that those people would stay under the protection of the new Muslim authority as long as they did not start a war. This earliest form of Islamic diplomacy became a tradition in Ottoman Empire in the days of conquests. Some authors group the Ottoman diplomatic texts under three periods, by looking at the terminology. The first one is the classical period in which Ottomans called the diplomatic texts and international conventions as “ahidnâme”. This covers the period between the earliest days of Ottoman Empire and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the second period, the term “muahede” is the name of diplomatic texts in Ottoman foreign affairs. This period starts in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and ends in “Tanzimat period” (the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). In the third period, the diplomatic name for international conventions became “tasdikname” (from Tanzimat period up to the collapse of the Empire in 1918).<sup>127</sup> This classification is very useful in understanding the terminological evolution along the change in power relations. However, there seems to exist a mistake in the chronology of this periodization. The problem is about the chronology of passage from the asymmetric power implied in “ahidname” to the symmetric diplomacy of “muahede”. In the aforementioned periodization, it is claimed that Ottomans used the term “ahidname” until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and accordingly the Ottoman side perceived themselves as the powerful side of

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<sup>127</sup> To read more about this periodization see: Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı (2000) *Osmanlı Arşivinde Bulunan Muahedelerden Örnekler* (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü), p.1.

diplomacy. However, a careful gaze at the texts of conventions shows that this asymmetry lost its absolute character as early as in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For example, the boundary convention concluded in 1701 between Ottomans and the Holy Roman-Germen Empire, the sides of the treaty are described in the following sentence: “...between Mustafa Han the son of Sultan Muhammed Han and his majesties Caesar [of the Holy Roman Empire] Leopoldus...”<sup>128</sup> In that convention, whose primary function is to put an end to an 16-year-war between Ottoman Empire and Holy Roman Empire, the two sides of the convention are presented as equal parties who exchange their “ahdnâmes” (written covenants, or literally “promises for peaceful attitudes”).<sup>129</sup> The very reason behind this change in the signification of the “Ottoman self” in diplomatic discourses was a previous diplomatic experience Ottoman state had in 1699. In that year, Ottomans attended an international meeting which depicted the character of an “international” congress. That meeting brought about a radical change in the diplomatic history of the Ottoman Empire. The

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<sup>128</sup> “Mustafa Han ibnissultan Muhammed han hazretleri ve eslâfi selâtin-i cihad âyîn ile mülûk-i millet-i nasrâninin a’zamı olan Roma İmparatoru ([Kutsal Roma Cermen İmparatoru] devletlü kutlu çâsar Leopoldus (Leopoldos) mabeynlerinde...”

<sup>129</sup> “...hostility and contention [between the two states] will be replaced by love and friendship and peace and tranquility [will be maintained] in accordance with the “ahidnames” exchanged between two parties...” (“...uduvvat ve şikak muhabbet ve dostluğa mübeddel olub sulh-u salâhı mutazammın tarafeynden alınub virilen ahidnameler mucibince...”) MM, v. 2, p.217.



meeting was designed like a peace conference after the unsuccessful attempt of Ottoman powers to take over Vienna. That was the second siege of Ottomans, which started in 1683 and lasted for 16 years.<sup>130</sup> When the siege ended in failure in 1699, a congress was decided to gather to negotiate the peace. The congress was an unusual experience for the Ottoman diplomacy, because it was for the first time that there were a bunch of states on the one side of the table<sup>131</sup> while the Ottoman state sat alone on the other side. This was an indication of the fact that the Ottoman diplomatic language could no longer maintain its asymmetrically powerful character. This experience was the first step in the course of change in the paradigm of diplomatic signification of the Ottoman subjectivity. However, more fundamental changes came after the French Revolution.

The downturn in the asymmetric power of Ottoman state in the diplomatic discourses expanded beyond such secondary documents as “*hududnames*” (boundary conventions) into the primary documents after the

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<sup>130</sup> The first siege was put in 1529 during the reign of Kanuni.

<sup>131</sup> Among these states, four (Austria, the Kingdom of Poland, Russia and Venice) were allied forces while England and France were enrolled as mediators. Hammer writes that it was for the first time that Ottoman Empire accepted the mediation of European states in a diplomatic course. The changes brought about by this experience of “intermediary states” in the diplomatic domain of Ottoman Empire is worth an independent study.

French Revolution. When one takes a quick view of the discourses of the conventions from this point of view in a chronological order, this observation becomes undoubtedly clear. The Ottoman state is one of the “equal parties” in most of the conventions from 1790s on, as expressed in the following discourse: “...from now on in terrestrial as well as in marine regions and in river sides, a firm and a general peace and tranquility should get in effect between the two states as well as between their subjects and peoples”.<sup>132</sup> This new diplomatic presentation of the Ottoman self in a diplomatic course of “exchange of commitments between two equal states” appears in the following phrase in the Zıştov treaty of 1791 (between Ottoman and Austrian states): “...these two sublime states that have mutually entered into treaty...” (“...muahid olan iki ulu devletler...”).<sup>133</sup> This emphasis on the mutuality is much more apparent in the treaty of alliance between Ottoman Empire and England, signed in 1799: “...likewise, his nibs Padishah of the Sublime Ottoman *equivalently* participates in

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<sup>132</sup> “fi mabaad iki devlet beyninde ve tebaa ve reayaları meyanında berren ve bahren ve nehren müeyyed ve umumî bir sulh ve salah musahafat-ı kâmile mer’i ve muteber ola” (Zıştov treaty between Ottoman and Austrian powers in 1791. see MM v. 3, p. 156. For another exapmle of this kind, refer to “The Treaty of Alliance between Ottoman Empire and Prussia” in 1790, MM v. 1, p. 90).

<sup>133</sup> See MM, v. 3, p. 156.

this exchange of covenants with his majesties the King of England” (my italics).<sup>134</sup>

The same conception of “imaginary Ottoman self” appears in the following form in the Treaty of Edirne concluded in 1829 with Russia:

The first article- All kind of the hostilities and conflicts that have been taking place between the two states so far should be abandoned from today on in terra-firma and in marine regions, and an eternal peace and tranquility as well as a unity should be established between his nibs Ottoman Padishah and his majesties Russian Emperor and the allies. And the two sublime states shall be exercising great care from today on to avoid any conflict between their subjects.<sup>135</sup>

### 3.2.3. Religion as the Imaginary Margin of the Ottoman Self

There is an implicit agreement that an important dimension of the Ottoman self consisted in religion (mainly Islam). Taking this implicit agreement

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<sup>134</sup> “...mukabeleten Şevketlü Padişah-ı Al-i Osman Hazretleri dahi işbu ittifakname ile haşmetlu İngiltere Kraliile *bilmisil* muahede eder...” Treaty of alliance with England, 1799. For the full text of the treaty, see MM v. 1, p. 262.

<sup>135</sup> “Evvelki madde- şimdiye kadar beyneddevleteyn tekevvün eden her türlü husumet ve münazeat bugünden gerek berren ve gerek bahren terkolunup ve şevketlü Padişah-ı Al-i Osman Hazretleri Haşmetlü Rusya İmparatoru ve Padişah-ı Cenapları ve ahlâf ve devletleri beyinlerinde ilelebed sulh ve müsalemet ve ittihat cereyan ede ve devleteyn-i fahimeteyn-i müteahideteyn fimabaad tebaaları beyinde mübayeneti mucip olacak her gûna hilafetin define say ve dikkat-ı mahsusa edeler...” Edirne Treaty, between Ottoman Empire and Russia, 1829 (MM, v. 4, p. 70).

as an assumption, one might expect that the imaginary presentation of Ottoman self in diplomatic relations should be based on religion to an important extent. However, on discursive level, the international conventions of Ottoman Empire do not support this expectation. It is true that Islam made up an important dimension of the “symbolic facet” of the Ottoman subjectivity. In other words, most of the political subjects of the Empire were fulfilling their identification under Islam to make up their “big Other”. However, surprisingly, on the “imaginary ground” (i.e. in diplomatic discourses) Islam was hardly put forward to make up a diplomatic representation. One of the rare phrases in which the Ottoman self is symbolized by Islam is “darüsselâm” (literally “the house of peace”). Politically, this phrase is derived from a well known Arabic term, namely “dâr al-Islam” (the phrase denoting the Muslim countries as a whole). Another diplomatic phrase in which the Ottoman subjectivity is pointed to by this religious reference is “the member of Islamic community” (“ehl-i İslam”). This phrase usually appears in the sentences about tax paying matters, to make a distinction of status among the subjects. One of the cases in which the phrase of “ehl-i Islam” represents the Ottoman side in a diplomatic context is “...they should obey and pay their taxes to the *Islamic community*; and those who have been paying their taxes to the members of the *Islamic community* should keep doing so...”<sup>136</sup> (my italics).

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<sup>136</sup> “...itaat idüp virgülerin ehli islama vireler; ehli islama virgü viren karyeler arasında olanlar girü

### 3.2.4. The Territorial Self

One of the most common ways of referring to the Ottoman self in diplomatic texts is “memalik-i mahrûse”. “Memalik”, the plural form of “memleket”, means “the territories”. “Mahruse” means “defended, protected”. So, combined together, they literally mean “the defended dominions”, which eventually turns out to mean “the Ottoman territories.”<sup>137</sup> A typical example of this territorial reference to make up the imaginary self is: “...as Eflak and Buğdan are a part of *our defended dominions*, they should not be subjected to aggression from now on...” (my italics).<sup>138</sup>

In the pre-nationalist era, the diplomatic discourses which used territories as imaginary ground of subjectivity were not based on the idea of a monolithic and totally uniformed land, unlike the nationalist idea of “motherland”. Rather, the territories were imagined as segmentary units which were brought together under the symbolic umbrella of the Sultan. That is why we come across some extremely long titles whose basic function was to put forward the Sultan as the imaginary agent of particular diplomatic contexts. The following passage is a

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virgülerin ehli islama vireler” MM, v. 3, pp. 71-72.

<sup>137</sup> Redhouse, 1880.

<sup>138</sup> “...Erdel ve Eflak ve Buğdan memleketi *memaliki mahrusamızdan* olmağla min badin dahl ve taarruz olunmaya”. MM, v. 3, p. 70.

typical example of what we might call as “the imaginary self made of fragmented territories”, in which the Ottoman dominions are mentioned one by one:

Ibrahim the son of the most famous, and most renowned of the Emperours, [...] the emperor of the Turks, of Greece, Macedonia, and Moldavia; King in Samaria, Anglian, and of the Great and little Egypt, King of all the inhabitants of the Earth, and of the earthly Paradise a Consecrated Prince, preserver of the Cities of Hungaria, Provost of the earthly Paradise, Keeper of the Sepulcher of thy God, Lord of all the Emperours in this World, who are from the East to the West, King of all Kings, Lord of the Tree of life, conquerour of Melonia, Anglian, of the city of Porchewiz. Great Persecuter of Christians, and of all the wicked, the joy of the flourishing Tree, Provost and keeper of thy Crucified God; the Lord and hopes of the Pagans...<sup>139</sup>

This long and territorial designation of “self” shows up in many diplomatic texts until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the Tanzimat period (in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century) and especially in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the most of those territories were lost one after another, this territorial self appeared less frequently and in a shorter form, before disappearing completely in the republican period.

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<sup>139</sup> (1645) *“The Great Turkes Letter Sent Unto the Prince of Transilvania”* (Translated out of the French copy Printed in Paris) (London: printed by T.Forcet)

### 3.2.5. The Political Subjects and the Self

The “political subjects” (*reaya* and *beraya*) of Ottoman Empire have been mentioned in different forms, for varying particular reasons in diplomatic texts. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (concluded with Russia in 1774), for example, is one of the earliest examples of diplomatic context in which “reaya” are mentioned: “... in accordance with the mutually expressed friendship and amity, whatever sin and criminal offense the subjects (*reaya*) of the two sides have committed so far shall be forgotten totally...”<sup>140</sup> In another part of the same convention, the “reaya” (subjects) are mentioned in the following manner: “...and as the bounding regulations require, the subjects of the two sides (“*tarafeyn reayası*”) are not expected to be in a disputing position or in a major conflict...”<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> “...tecdi olunan muvalât ve musafât muktezasınca bilâ istisna iki tarafa ve her ne güne töhmet iden *cümle reayaların* tarafeynden nesyenmensiyya cerayimleri külliyyen af olunub...” Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, concluded in 1774 between Ottoman Empire and Russia. MM, v.3, p. 255.

<sup>141</sup> “...ve tahdid olundukları nizam muktezasınca *tarafeyn reayalarına* mucib-i mubahasa ve bais-i niza-ı cesim olacak bir madde olmadığı...” Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, concluded in 1774 between Ottoman Empire and Russia. MM, v.3, pp. 261-262.

These were the earliest examples of the coming into view of the political subjects (*reaya*) in diplomatic texts. However, as we clearly see, the political subjects are mentioned neither as the “represented part” nor as “representative agent” of the Ottoman self. The first examples of the diplomatic contexts in which the “political subjects” were mentioned as the “party” of an imaginary relation became visible only after the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Treaty of Sistova<sup>142</sup> is the first case in which the Ottoman subjects (*reaya*) were mentioned as the “party” of a convention. The introductory part of the treaty says that a convention is achieved “...between the two states and their subjects...”<sup>143</sup>

In the Treaty of Sistova, there are some regulations about the political subjects whose lands are divided between the two parties of the convention. The Treaty imposes that the political subjects of this kind should make a choice between the two states to express their loyalties to.<sup>144</sup> However, in any case, this kind of incorporation of the “reaya” (the political subjects) into the text of the treaty is still far from depicting them as the imaginary party of diplomatic

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<sup>142</sup> Concluded between Ottoman Empire and Holy Roman Empire in 1791.

<sup>143</sup> “İki devlet beyninde ve gerek taraf-ı aharn tarafgiri olmuş canibeyn reaya ve tebaası tarafından...” Treaty of Sistova, Ottoman Empire and Holy Roman Empire (Austria), 1791. M.M. v. 3, p. 156.

<sup>144</sup> See the Treaty of Sistova between Ottoman Empire and Austria, 1791, article. 8. MM v. 3, p. 160.



relations. A very clear junction of the two parts of the Ottoman self (i.e. the Sultan and his subjects) to impersonate together the “imaginary” Ottoman self appeared in a treaty of alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia concluded in 1798:

The first article- Peace and tranquility, friendship and amity should be established forever in terra-firma and in marine regions between his nibs the Ottoman Sultan and the Empire of all of the Russian lands as well as between *their subjects*. The tie being established between the two states by this convention should be of strength and intensity...<sup>145</sup> (my italics)

### 3.3. The Spatial Thresholds of the Ottoman Subjectivity

Space (“mekân” in Turkish) is an important element of the imaginary dimension of a subjectivity. Before putting forward some assertions about the spatial dimensions of the Ottoman subjectivity, it would be very helpful to say a couple of things about the meaning of the term “mekân” (*space*).

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<sup>145</sup> “Evvelki madde- Padişah-ı Al-i Osman Hazretleri ve cemi Rusyaların İmparatoru ve Padişahı ve *devletleri ve reayaları arasında* gerek berde ve gerek bahirde ilelebet sulh ve salah ve hub ve tevad ve hüsn-i vifak baki ve berkarar olup bu defa beyneddevleteyn akdolunan işbu tedafûî ittifak hasebile beyinlerinde hasil olacak rabita şol mertebede kavi ve müstahkem ola ki...” The Treaty of Alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, 1798. MM, v. 4, p. 14 (my italics).

“Mekân” is originally an Arabic word and comes from the root of “k-v-n”. Let us take a quick look at some of the words which are derived from this root:

*Kûn* (كُون) : To be; to exist; to take place or come out. The word is also used as the imperative mood of “to be”.

*Kevvene* (كَوَّن): To create, to make up, to generate.

*Kevn* (كَوْن) : To be; to exist; to be present. With the Arabic definite article “al” (ال) it means “the entire universe”.

*El-yekûn* (الْيَكُون): Sum, total amount.

The word “mekân” (“مَكَان”: *space*), which is a close relative of the terms we introduced above, conveys such meanings in Turkish: “A place where someone or something is found; or a location where something takes place”. The forms of the word in some middle eastern languages which are in close contact with Turkish are also based on the semantic reservoir of the Arabic word “mekân”. So, the word passed into a number of languages keeping its original Arabic meaning along with its philosophical connotations. In Persian language, the word “kevn” (or “kovn”) means the same things as in Arabic (universe). We can also add a Kurdish form of the word, “kevn” (“كُون”, meaning “old”, “of yore”). Thus, adding these Kurdish connotations (“old”, “of yore”) into the Arabic

semantic reservoir, we see that the word “mekân” (space) has a multiaxial catch basin of denotations. Juxtaposing the words we listed above, a web of denotations based on a kind of free association will appear in our minds regarding the concept of “mekân” (space) in Turkish: Being, presence, existence, of yore, ancient, creation, generation, sum total, universe, possibility, possible. Thus, we see that the word “mekân” (space) should be taken into account along with all these connotations and denotations, when we think about the “spatial” dimension of a subjectivity in general, and of Ottoman subjectivity in particular context of this work below.

Like all subjectivities, the Ottoman subjectivity has a spatial dimension. And because the Ottoman Empire had a continuously changing spatial dimension from the beginning of its history until its end, the spatial dimension in the narratives of Ottoman history show a great variance. Roughly speaking, there are four “mekâns” that the narratives of Ottoman history are based on: Central Asia, Anatolia, Northern Africa and Europe. The term “central Asia” was adapted by *Alexander de Humboldt* in 1843.<sup>146</sup> Today, “central Asia” is one of the most important spatial dimensions of the nationalist narratives of Ottoman (read “Turkish”) history. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, “central Asia” has

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<sup>146</sup> Humboldt, Alexandre de (1843) *Asie Centrale* (Paris : Gide, Libraire-Editeur).

got its focal place in the narratives of Turkish nationalism about the “origins of Turkish nation”.

Most of the modern narratives of Ottoman history are based on a spatial dualism of “east-west”, a dualism that has been remaining as the constructive paradox of the modern Turkish subjectivity. The politicians and the intellectuals of the late imperial context who were fighting to save the Empire from collapse were deeply concerned with this spatial paradox: Was the Ottoman society (in later times Turkey) western or eastern? Those who were thinking that it was eastern were divided into two poles among themselves. Some sought the eastern origins in the central Asia while others took the Islamic lands instead. Those who claimed that the origins of “eastern” aspect of Turkey should be sought in central Asia, as part of the idea of a history of “pure Turks”, opened the nationalist and sometimes racist doors. On the other hand, the ideas of those who believed that the “eastern” aspect of Turkey lies in “Islamic geographies” were developed into the “Islamist” core idea that the survival of the Ottoman Empire depended on a kind of “Islamic unification”. As opposed to these two notions, some intellectuals believed that the future of the Empire was in the “west”. Some took the term “west” directly as “Europe” and argued that westernization could save the future of the Empire. Others took the “west” as the second original space of Turks, accepting the narratives of central Asia, but without attributing any nostalgia to it. In this last account, the oldest history of

Turks would take us to the origins of all world languages<sup>147</sup> and world cultures.<sup>148</sup>

The spatial dualism of east-west was one of the fundamental dynamics of the “ideological big bang” that took place in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Turkey, and it is still the impetus of ideological conflicts in modern Turkey.

### **3.3.1. Space as Mother’s Womb**

Here, it would be helpful to examine some terms that play central role in the spatial dimension of Ottoman identity: *Anatolia*, *Minor Asia* (Asie Mineur) and *Central Asia*. The term “Anatolia” dates fairly back in history, extending far beyond the appearance of Turko-Ottoman existence there. Its connotations in Turkish historical narratives appeared along with nationalist discourses. Cemal Kafadar aptly highlights that the terms “Seljuk Anatolia” and “Ottoman Anatolia” have been fabricated by the Turkish nationalist scholars as part of the construction of a nationalist past.<sup>149</sup> According to some sources, the very earliest usage of the term “Anatolia” dates back to the times of ancient Greeks. In

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<sup>147</sup> “The Sun Language theory”, according to which all world languages originated at some point in the history from Turkish.

<sup>148</sup> The Turkish Historical Thesis, which argues that in the center of all world cultures, there lies a very core culture: The culture of Turks who came and settled down in mesopotamia in prehistoric times.

<sup>149</sup> Kafadar, 2007: pp 7-9.

Hellenic language, the term “Anatolia” meant “where the sun rises”. The mental associations between the spatial dimension of “Turkish existence” and the term “Anatolia” came up around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, in the European minds. Works of some 16<sup>th</sup> century European authors about Ottomans provide us with the first hand view of the passage from the term “lesser Asia” to “Anatolia” in relation to Turkish existence.<sup>150</sup>

In Ottoman resources, we see that the term “Anatolia” was accepted as early as in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Although it is impossible to know the exact geographical boundaries covered by the term Anatolia in particular discourses of the pre-modern Ottoman usage, we can confidently believe that it has always implied “east”, maintaining the Hellenic essence of the word. In Tursun Beg’s [1453-1499] discourse, the term Anatolia takes its definition from a spatial contrast between the eastern and the western sides of the Marmara Sea, where the western side is named “Rumelia” and the eastern side “Anatolia”:

And the eastern side of this flowing sea [the Marmara sea] is the Anatolian territories while the western side of it is the Rumelian lands, which have been conquered by the sharp swords of the sublime Ottomans and whose temples have been converted

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<sup>150</sup> “They [the Turks] five hundred yeres sence, entering into the *lesser Asia*, which now hath name *Natholia...*” Bartolomej Georgijevic (1569) *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomano* (London: Thomas Marshe), folio 9b (my italics).

into Muslim masjids. And the Ottoman territories, which are worth the euology of “as large as the earth and the skies” (“*arzuhâ ke-arzı’s-semâ-i ve’lraz*” the Koran, Suretul Hadid, verse 21), consist in these two lands. Anatolia and Rumelia are so high in their values that each of them contain varieties of pleasant places and very large cities and different peoples.

Verse

Anatolia is where musks dwell  
Mind cannot grasp the estimation of its harvests  
Rumelia is that whose dust is golden  
Beautiful enough to compete with the heavens<sup>151</sup>

The term “Anatolia” survived into modern days with all of its connotations related to the idea of “east”. In the contexts of antagonist juxtaposition of the terms “east” and “west”, the former indicates Asia (Anatolia) wherever the latter

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<sup>151</sup> “Ve bu didüğümüz akar deryâçenün [Marmara denizi] taraf-ı şarkîsi Anatolî memleketidür, ve taraf-ı garbîsi Rûm-ili diyârıdır ki, darb-ı darb-ı şemşîr-i bürrân-ı Âl-i Osmân ile fetholunmuştur, me’âbidi asnâmı mesâcid-i ehl-i İslâm olupdur. Ve memleket-i Osmâniyye bu ikiden ibârettür ki “*arzuhâ ke-arzı’s-semâ-i ve’lraz*” (Kuran Suretül Hadid, âyet 21) anun na’ti olmak lâyıktur. Ve Anatolî ve Rûm-ili, her birisi bir cins menzilesindedür ki, envâ’ı emkine-i latîfeyi ve medâyın ü emsâr-ı azîmeyi ve esnâf-ı tavâyif-i muhtelifeyi müştemildür...

Beyt

Anatolî ki odur ma’din-i mis  
Hisâb-ı hâsılın derk eylemez his  
Ur’um-ili ki toprağı zehebdür  
Güzellikte cinâna oldı mücânîs" (Tursun Beg [1453-1499] 1977 :41).

refers to Europe. Interestingly enough, in other particular contexts where the term “west” points to the regions around the Aegean Sea and the Marmara Sea, its opponent “Anatolia” refers to the territories closer to the Iranian frontiers. The language of the diplomatic texts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (where the Ottoman boundaries were negotiated in modern sense) expresses this conceptual dualism. For instance, in the discourse of the boundary commission of 1878, who came together in Batum to negotiate the eastern boundaries of Ottoman Empire and Russia, the term “Anatolia” in the Ottoman text is rendered “Asie” in the French version of the convention.<sup>152</sup>

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on, the term “Anatolia” experienced a transformation throughout the modernization process. In this new context, besides its classical connotations, the term Anatolia has turned to be the spatial symbol of “peripheral”, “peasantry” and “oppositional” identities. Gaining its modern meaning as a spatial opponent of the centers of modernization projects like Istanbul and Salonica, the term “Anatolia” has become the key reference of peripheral Turkish nationalism as opposed to the

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<sup>152</sup> Russia and Turkey (1882) *Protocoles Régles par la Commission de Délimitation des Frontières RussoTurques de l’Asie : Réunion a Batoum le 31 Octobre 12 Novembre 1878 =1878 Sene-i Miladiyesi Teşrin-i Evvelinin Otuzbirinci ve Frengi Teşrin-i Saninin On İkinci Günü Batum’da İçtima’ EdenRusya ve Devlet-i Aliye Anadolu Hudud-ı Cedidinin Tahdidine Memur Muhtalit Birinci Komisyonun Tanzim Eyledikleri Zabtnameler* (İstanbul : Ministère de la Guerre).



nationalism of the urban-based culture. It has reached its current meaning throughout the conflicts between the two rival nationalisms, namely, between the nationalism of urban culture and the nationalism of peripheral-peasantry culture. In the first step of this conflict, the urban based nationalism of the intellectuals of *Tanzimat period*<sup>153</sup> was opposed by the populist nationalism of the members of the movement of Union and Progress. Ironically, the winner of this collision, namely the movement of Union and Progress lost its peripheral character and turned into an urban nationalist movement. In turn, another nationalist movement which was identifying itself with the interests of peripheral people started a fight against the urban elitist movement of Union and Progress.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> The period known as “Tanzimat period” in Ottoman history is a part of the course of modernization, stretching between 1830s and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>154</sup> The most influential theorist of Turkish nationalism in the early republican period (in 1920s) named Ziya Gökalp, who was an ex-member of Unionist movement, was advocating the idea that the true source of the “national culture” should be the peripheral people who were living in the villages and rural areas of Anatolia. On the other side, in the domain of literature, the term “Anatolia” has been attached such positive meanings as “pure, honest, naïve and incorrupt”. For example, *Mehmet Emin Yurdakul’s* [1869-1944] “Anadolu’dan Bir Ses” (“A Voice from Anatolia”, also known as “Cenge Giderken” (“On the Way to War”), was an important work in the nationalist literature, and it has received a great reception among nationalists. His works were very important for the development of “rural nationalism”. For some nationalists, *Mehmet Emin Yurdakul* was the second nationalist writer who contributed much to the development of “Anatolian-populist” nationalism after *Ahmet Mithat* [1844-1912] (see. Akçura, Yusuf (1978) *Türkçülük* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları), p. 77 and 143). By 1940s, the

The other spatial reference in the narratives of the emergence of Ottoman Empire is “Asia Minor” (sometimes appears also as “lesser Asia”). The term “Asia Minor” appears as early as in the 15<sup>th</sup> century in the works of European writers, to denote the region known also as “Anatolia”.<sup>155</sup> The term has been used extensively especially by the orientalist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, W.M. Ramsay’s work titled *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*<sup>156</sup> attracted the attention of some Ottoman authors. That was the beginning of the usage of the term “Asia Minor” (*Asya-yı Suğra* in Ottoman

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urban-elite character of Republican nationalism became evident. This time, the “peripheral-Anatolian nationalism” started to be defended by such intellectuals as Remzi Oğuz Arık and Nurettin Topçu. The nationalist intellectual-political movements of these leaders were quite desirous of calling their movements like “Anatolian movement” or “Anatolian nationalism” (Bora and Can, 1991, p. 254). By 1950s, with transition to the multi-party political system, the electorates of rural-peripheral origin were constituting an important portion of the total voters in Turkey. So, the “Anatolian nationalism” became a major subject for most of the political movements, the term having reached to its current spatial meaning for nationalist narratives. For instance, a contemporary political party in Turkey, *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party) known for its “ultra-nationalism”, emanated from “Republican Peasant-Nation Party” (Cumhuriyet Köylü Milet Partisi).

<sup>155</sup> One of the earliest appearances of the term Asia Minor is Pope Pius II’s [1405-1464] *Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum: Cum Locorum Descriptione non finita Asia Minor Incipit*.

<sup>156</sup> W.M. Ramsay (1890) *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London: John Murray).

language) interchangeably with “Anatolia”.<sup>157</sup> The term “Asia Minor” lost its reputation without reaching to a popular usage. So, the term “Türkiye” (Turkey) was the strongest candidate to denote the territories of nationalist Turkey. The first decisive usage of the term “Turkey” in domestic discourses was by the Union and Progress circles.<sup>158</sup> On an official level, the term “Turkey” was used for the first time in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920, right after the World War I. Then, the term was used in the Treaty of Alexandropol (Gümrü) (in 1920) and in the Treaty of Moskow (in 1921). Then, it has received acceptance on the highest level in the Constitution of 1921. The previous constitution (the Ottoman constitution of 1876) did not have anything about the spatial dimension of the Ottoman identity. The Ottoman Sultan, his dynasty and the Ottoman State were in the very core of the discourse of the constitution of 1876.

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<sup>157</sup> Insomuch as the intellectual circle of *Yeni Fikir Mecmuası* was declaring in 1929 that they were going to publish a new periodical, whose title would be “Asie Mineure”. See: *Yeni Fikir*, issue 50, 15 Teşrin Evvel 1929, p. 15; also issue 46, 10 Mayıs 1929, p. 8.

<sup>158</sup> Cemal Kafadar reports that the term “Turkey” (“Turchia” in Latin) appears as early as in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in some Latin maps. However he adds that the term has not been accepted by Turks until the World War I (Kafadar, 2007: 9). So indeed when we look at the international conventions signed by Turkey in the end of the World War I, we see that the term “Turkey” signifies the Turkish party of the conventions only after 1920. The Ottoman parliament of Istanbul prepared a public declaration on 20 January 1920 (known as “National Pact”, (*misak-ı millî*)) and delivered it to its people and world parliaments. The term “Turkey” was not used in that document, to point out the territories of “Turkish nation”. The term “Turkey” appears as the agency of a treaty in international context first time in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920.

The term “Central Asia” began to circulate in the late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century, first in the works of orientalists and then in the works of Ottoman writers. Especially the writers who were concerned themselves closely with the history of Mongols and Tartars were using the term “Central Asia” to refer to the geographical origins of those peoples. Those writers who were studying the history of Turks<sup>159</sup> together with the history of Mongols and Tartars pioneered the mentioning of the term Central Asia with “Turkish history”.<sup>160</sup> A work which has received a considerable amount of citation is Humboldt’s *Asie Centrale*.<sup>161</sup> Due to the spatial references of Turkish history in some works that approach the “Ottoman history” as the “history of Turks”, the term “Central Asia” has become the fundamental spatial origin of Turks in nationalist historical narratives. There emerged some Ottoman writers who took the definition of the phrase of “Central Asia” verbatim from the works of orientalists, and traveled into the “Central Asia” as early as in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. So, the first examples of the nostalgia of “Central Asia” in the construction of a nationalist

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<sup>159</sup> Scholars of oriental researches were preferring the term Turk over the term Ottoman.

<sup>160</sup> The immediate example of this kind of works is Leon Cahun’s [1841-1900] 1896 work *Introduction a l’histoire de l’Asie; Turcs et Mongols, des Origines a 1405* (Paris: A. Collin et cie).

<sup>161</sup> Humboldt, Alexander von [1769-1859] (1843) *Asie Centrale. Recherches sur les Chaines des Montagnes et la Climatologie Comparée* (Paris : Gide)

Turkish past and the earliest contributions to the nationalist literature of spatial origins of Turks emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>162</sup>

A general view of the historical narratives of the emergence of the Ottoman Empire shows that there are some place names which are common in the most of those works, while a variety of different place names are accepted by different authors. Bursa, a western province in modern Turkey where the tombs of Osman and most of his family member are located, and which is said to be conquered by Orhan Bey in 1326, is almost without exception mentioned in the historical works that concern themselves with the origins of the Ottoman state. Other place names which are mentioned not less frequently than Bursa are Söğüt, İzmit and İznik. Apart from these widely used names, a variety of place names are mentioned in different works to make up a spatial narrative of the origins of Ottomans.

İdris-i Bitlisî's *Heşt Behişt* [1512], which was a basic source for the Ottoman historians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gives considerable importance to the

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<sup>162</sup> See, for instance, Mehmed Emin Efendi [d. 1907] (1879) *Istanbul'dan Asya-yi Vusta'ya Seyahat [A Journey from Istanbul to Central Asia]* (Istanbul: Kirkanbar Matbaası). This travel book is an example of the fact that a sort of "nostalgia of Central Asia" was ready in 1870s. Although this travel book hardly gives the clues of a modern feeling of "Turkishness", the traveler-author is full of admiration for the characteristics of the Central Asian people, which, doubtlessly, can be read as the implication of the earliest versions of nationalist nostalgia of "spatial origins of Turks".

conquest of some particular places in the history of the emergence of Ottoman state: Karacahisar, Göynük, Mudurnu, Yeni-Targın, Bilecik, İnegöl, Köprühisar and Marmara, Leblebici, Mekece and Geyve, Akhisar, Bursa, Kocaeli, Sakarya and İznik.<sup>163</sup> Idris-i Bitlisi's work was a special source for Hammer, a 19<sup>th</sup> century authority in the domain of Ottoman history. In Hammer's account, the Ottoman history cannot be thought apart from the history of Oguzs, Turkomans and the Seljuks of Iran and Seljuks of Rûm.<sup>164</sup> The spatial dimension of his narrative about the foundation of Ottoman Empire is based on an uneven line extending from Central Asia into Anatolia, following the line of travel of a migratory group: The town named *Mahan* in Greater Khorasan (a Central Asian region where the *Kayı* tribe left due to Mongol pressures); the region around *Erzincan* (in eastern Anatolia), where Kaya Alp's son Süleyman arrived together with a group of fifty thousand people;<sup>165</sup> then the inner and westward Anatolian locations named *Aksa*, *Domanıç* and *Söğüt*; *Karacadağ* around *Ankara*; *Karacahisar* in the north of *Kütahya*<sup>166</sup> and particularly *Eskişehir (Sultan Önü)*.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> M. Şükrü 1934, p. 20-24.

<sup>164</sup> Hammer, 1913, v. 1, p. 49.

<sup>165</sup> Hammer, 1913: v. 1, pp. 89-90.

<sup>166</sup> Ertuğrul and the large group of people around him, on their way to western Anatolia, came across a war between two armies. Hammer records that Ertugrul and his men get involved in

Another authority of Ottoman history, *İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı*, builds his own narrative of the emergence of Ottoman Empire, basing his frame on a series of conquests made by Ottomans. Those conquests were a series of handover of Byzantine territories to the Ottomans. The following place names make up the

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the fight, taking the side of the weak party. The side of the war they helped was the Seljukian Sultan Alaeddin, and the opponent was the Tartars. When Ertugrul's side won the war, the Seljukian Sultan Alaeddin granted some territories to Ertuğrul, namely, Aksa and Domaniç as summer place, and the plain district around Söğüt as winter place. According to Hammer, Ertuğrul asked for a quiet and peaceful place from Alaeddin. The Sultan offered Karacadağ around Ankara. There were some non-muslim groups (pieces of Byzantine populations) who were obeying Sultan Alaeddin, located in the north of Kütahya, in Karacahisar region. There emerged some disputes between Ertugrul's group and those non-muslim populations. Alaeddin thus decided to take up those regions and he did so by the permission of the Sultan Alaeddin.

<sup>167</sup> As a commander of Alaeddin, Ertugrul had a fight with Byzantine and Tartar groups in a location between Bursa and Yenişehir. Ertugrul and his men won the fight which lasted for three days (Hammer, 1913 : 91). After that war, Alaeddin decided to change the name of "Eskişehir" into "Sultan Önü", and he granted Sultan Önü to Ertugrul. And Hammer gives a considerable importance to Sultanönü in the emergence of Ottoman Empire:

"The town Sultanönü was the cradle of the emerging Ottoman sovereignty. Sultan Önü, also spelled as Sultanögü, is based on the exact boundaries of the old district known as *Ferijya iptakos*. The names of centrums and the major cities are the most valuable guides for the earliest times of the Ottoman Empire. Eskişehir, which was called as "dorilom" [Dorylaeum] in the times of Christians and which was famous for its caravanserais, thermal springs and vineyards, was the residential of Osman's father in law, Seikh Edebalı (also he is buried there) (Hammer, 1913, p. 92). The fortified regions of Karacahisar and Bilecik are located in Sultanönü province [...]. İtburnu, where Osman's beloved woman Mâl Hatun spent her early life together with her father, as well as Boz Yüğü (or Bozögü) where Heraikis took place, also İn-önü, were all dependencies of Sultan-önü (Hammer, 1913: 93).

spatial discourse of *Uzunçarşılı's* narrative: *Bursa*,<sup>168</sup> *İznik*,<sup>169</sup> and *İzmit*.<sup>170</sup> *Uzunçarşılı* pays special attention to *Ankara*, as he thinks its conquest by *Orhan Bey* in 1354 paved the way for the eastwards extension of Ottoman Empire.<sup>171</sup> Also, *Balıkesir*, *Bergama*, *Çanakkale* and *Edremit* are the other city names on which the spatial dimension of *Uzunçarşılı's* narrative is based.

These place names started to circulate, with differing degrees of importance, in the generally accepted narratives of history from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century on, making up the backbone of nationalist point of view of Turkish history. *Fuat Köprülü's* spatial reference regarding the emergence of Ottoman state represents the common discourse: "[The Ottoman state is]...a new political formation which emerged in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in the northwestern Anatolia, on the Seljukian-Byzantine frontier..." The next step in the spatial advancement of Ottoman state in *Köprülü's* discourse is its expansion towards west: "[Ottoman

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<sup>168</sup> Was conquered by Orhan Bey in 1326. *Orhan* moved *Osman Bey's* (his father) grave to *Bursa* upon his father's last will (*Uzunçarşılı*, 1947, p. 34)

<sup>169</sup> Conquered by Ottomans in 1330.

<sup>170</sup> Captured by Ottomans in 1337 (*Uzunçarşılı*, 1947, p. 35.)

<sup>171</sup> *Uzunçarşılı*, 1947, p. 36.



existence] turned in less than a hundred years into a powerful state which held the sway over the Balkans and the most part of the Seljuk Anatolia".<sup>172</sup>

*Ahmet Rasim* [1864-1932], another prominent Ottoman historian whose narratives of the origins of Ottoman state have become a basic frame for the modern-popular historical accounts, attaches special importance to *Söğüt*, where Osman Gazi was born in 1258. In *Ahmet Rasim's* account, the boundary zone between the Seljuk power and the Byzantine state is a very special place because it is the very location where the Ottoman state came into the picture. He records that the security of that region was entrusted by the Seljuk state to *Osman Gazi*.<sup>173</sup> In his account too, the emergence of Ottoman state depends on a series of handover of particular places (Ottoman conquests): Osman Bey captured *Karahisar* in 1288;<sup>174</sup> *Göynük* and *Taraklı Yenice* in 1290. In 1326, following the invasion of *Bursa* and *İzmit* in 1326, *İznik* came into the possession of Ottomans in 1330.<sup>175</sup> *Ahmet Rasim's* narrative gives the impression that the conquests that took place in the early post-Osman Bey era were as much

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<sup>172</sup> Köprülü, 1959:1.

<sup>173</sup> Rasim, 1966: 13.

<sup>174</sup> Rasim, 1966:13.

<sup>175</sup> Rasim, 1966:15.

important as (or sometimes more important than) the conquests of his time in terms of the development of the establishment of the Ottoman Empire. The conquest of “Rumelia” seems to have an extraordinary spatial significance in his account. He records that the first Rumelian place taken over by Ottomans was Samandira Fortress, a place at a distance of four-hour from Üsküdar. Rasim’s narrative goes on to recount a very important spatial development in the history of the improvement of Ottoman Empire: That is, the narrative of “passage to Roumelia”. We can consider the narrative of “Ottoman passage to Roumelia” as not only an important step in the spatial expansion of Ottoman existence, but also as a cultural and social expansion of Ottoman subjectivity. *Ahmet Rasim* states that the actual milestone of the course of “Ottoman passage to Roumelia” can be considered as the annexation of *Karesi Beyliği* in 1356. So he believes that “...if we were to search a starting point in the history of Ottoman invasions, the passage to Roumelia is the best choice to think about.”<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *Rasim*, 1966, p. 18. On the other hand, another Ottoman historian, *Cemal Kafadar* pays special attention to the conquest of *Kallipolis* by Ottomans in 1354 in terms of passing to *Thrace* (*Roumelia*). He asserts that together with a control over Kallipolis, a hope for the control over Thrace emerged in the horizons of the ghazis (Kafadar, 1995 , p. 17). In *Kafadar’s* narrative, the role of *Kallipolis* was a kind of bridge between *Thrace* and Asia Minor, and thus it played a central role in the unification of east and west, which was a key development in the emergence of the Ottoman Empire. As a matter of fact, Kafadar records, in the reign of *Murad I* (1362-1389) Kallipolis was lost to the enemy and this brought about the danger of breakdown of the unity among the Beyliks of Thrace. When Kallipolis was taken back in 1377, the unity was

“Ottoman passage to Roumelia” has become a very important spatial expression in the official as well as popular historical narratives.<sup>177</sup> One possible reason for this could be that Ottomans were developing into a new phase of political view after a long period of defense-attack strategies that they had to follow merely because of living on the eastern frontiers of Byzantine state. As a matter of fact, *Fuat Köprülü*, besides many historians of western origin, obsessively underlines that the very purpose of the Ottoman passage to Roumelia was not to raid and loot, but a very well planned long-term policies of conquering and settling down.<sup>178</sup> Thus, “passage to Roumelia” can be seen as an important spatial development in the history of Ottoman Empire as it means a passage from “nomadic culture” into a “settled life”.

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ensured one more time. After that, Ottomans started to proceed towards the inner Europe via *Thrace* (Kafadar, 1995, p. 17).

<sup>177</sup> The narrative of “Ottoman passage to Roumelia” gets much more interesting character when we notice the spatial connotations of the term “Roumelia”. Cemal Kafadar shows the unsteady and confusing semantic reservoir of the term “Rome” (Rûm) very well (Kafadar, 2007). His perfectly documented work shows us that the term “Rome” with a spatial connotation has passed to Ottoman culture from Arabic and Persian cultures in a couple of steps. The term “Rûm” was first used by Arabs and Persians to point to the Eastern Rome. It has eventually evolved into another semantic level, to point almost merely to the “whole west” or “Christian territories”. Taking this into consideration, we can say that the narrative of “Ottoman passage to Roumeli” implies not only a “spatial”, but also a “cultural” expansion of Ottoman subjectivity.

<sup>178</sup> This assertion is advocated by Zeki Velidi Togan, too (Togan, 1981, pp. 344-345).

On the other hand, some historians believe that “passage to Roumelia” was more disadvantageous than profitable to the actual Ottoman history. *Zeki Velidi Togan* was among the first historians to defend this thesis. Togan believes that it was a great loss (if not an offhandedness) for the Ottomans to make plans always to proceed westwards in the early times of the establishment of the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly he adds that it was a very fortunate development that Bayezid decided to pause the Ottoman conquests in the west and turn the face of the Empire towards the east. Togan goes further to speculate that if the Ottomans were able to expand their hands into Italy and Australia before the Hundred Years’ War ended, the destiny of Turks would not be different than that of the Western Hunnic Empire. After all, Turks would be dispersed if they would expand that much before passing fully into a settled life.<sup>179</sup>

*Zeki Velidi Togan’s* narrative of the emergence of the Ottoman state contains the spatial references we mentioned above, with different degrees of accent: *Osman Gazi* took hold of *Bursa* in 1326 and his son *Orhan Gazi* captured

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<sup>179</sup> “If Turks did not cross over at all the Balkan regions in the succeeding years, it would not be a loss of any kind to the Turkish history. In fact, they might get the chance of settling down more powerfully in the north and east sides of the Black Sea. Although some “convert” (*devşirme*) Christians accepted to be Turk [sic], the Rums who have been living around the regions of *Apolyon* and *Manas Lake* (conquered by *Orhan Gazi* as early as in 1330) managed to maintain their religions and held their ground against converting into Turkishness until when they were subjected to population exchange in 1923; and I would hardly believe that the people of Vienna or Rome would accept to be Turkicized” (Togan, 1981, p. 350).

*İznik* in 1330. *Orhan* annexed most of the *Karasi Beylik* in 1336 and thus got hold of the *Marmara* basin.<sup>180</sup> While *Orhan* was still alive, his son *Süleyman Paşa* managed to pass to Roumelia in 1357. *Kallipolis* was made a military station and *İpsala* and *Tekirdağ* were taken by Ottomans in less than a year. *Osman's* successor *Murat I* conquered *Edirne* in 1362, which became the capital of Ottoman Empire in 1362. In 1385-86, *Sophia* and *Niš* were captured by Ottomans, and *Tirnov* (then-capital of Bulgaria) was surrendered to Ottoman forces in 1393.<sup>181</sup>

The proper names of places in *Togan's* narrative are the same as the spatial discourses we introduced above. The only different aspect we may find in *Togan's* discourse is about a spatial reference he cites from a document dated 1349-1350. In that document, a budget table which was prepared in the times of *Çobanoğulları* for the period of 1349-1350, the western territories which were paying their tributes to *Hoca Necmeddin Cüveyni*, are called by the general name of "*Memalik-i Rum Al mahrusa*" (The Great Cities of Lands of Rome). As *Togan* records, in the same document, the middle Anatolian provinces, which seem to have been considered as a part of "*Memalik-i Rum al-Mahrusa*" are called as "*al-Vustâniye*" (the middle places). The territories under the power of *Orhan Bey*

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<sup>180</sup> Togan, 1981, p. 337.

<sup>181</sup> Togan, 1981, pp. 342-344.

(which would turn into the Ottoman lands in the near future) were named in the same document as “*al-ucât*” (“the frontier zones”), among other places like *Karaman, Germiyan, Eğridür, Hamidoğlu, Sinob, Denizli, Gere-de-Bolu, Umurbey,* and *Kastamonu*. *Togan* takes this document as a base to argue that *Orhan Gazi* “...was being mentioned among the *Beys* who were paying taxes to the *Çobanoğulları* who were the last extension of the *Ilkhanit* sovereignty...”<sup>182</sup> Significance of this assertion for our interest in this particular point of the study is this: While the *Beylik of Karasi* was already annexed to an important extent in 1336, and thus the *Marmara* basin was under the control of Ottoman forces in those times, in the spatial imagination of the late 1340s, an eastern city, namely *Tabriz*, was the central point of the spatial imagination of the early Ottoman power. In that spatial imagination, Orhan’s domain of power somewhere in the westwards of “*al-vustaniye*” (“the middle places”) and eastwards of the Byzantine frontiers. In a short while, when *Kallipolis* was captured first in 1357 and for the second time in 1377, the Ottoman state was not an “*uç*” (frontier) any more, at least in the *spatial* meaning of the term.

### 3.3.2. The Imperial Spatial Imagination

It is reportedly said that when the famous world map of *Piri Reis* [1464-1555] was presented to the *Sultan Selim I* [1470-1520] in 1517, he thoughtfully

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<sup>182</sup> *Togan*, 1981, p. 338.

examined it for a while, and disappointedly said “the world is too small for a monarch”.<sup>183</sup> This narrative can be seen as an expression of the impacts of the “second big expansion”<sup>184</sup> on the spatial dualism of “inside-outside” in the Ottoman subjectivity. During the reign of *Selim I*, the Ottoman Empire proceeded towards east and south. Most of those campaigns towards the eastern and northern neighboring territories ended in success. The disappointment expressed in the words attributed to *Selim I* can be understood only by thinking about the nature of the ideology of conquest: How far could an ideology of conquest take an empire further on a limited space? The disappointment comes out right at this point in relation to an impasse. The dualism of “inside-outside” would immediately end as soon as the last margins of the “outer world” would be annexed. And we know very well that the imperial imagination (of at least Ottoman subjectivity) was based on nothing less than “giving an order to the universe” (*nizâm-ı âlem*).

*Celalzade Mustafa's* [1494-1567] narratives of the details of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman campaigns are helpful to understand the discursive mechanism in which the ideology of conquest is designed and maintained in

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<sup>183</sup> Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi (anonymous manuscript), p. 15.

<sup>184</sup> By the expression of “the second spatial expansion of the Ottoman subjectivity”, we mean the Ottoman expansion into the north Africa in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, based on the idea that the “passage to Roumelia” in the 14<sup>th</sup> century was the first spatial expansion for that subjectivity.

Ottoman subjectivity. More importantly, his narratives clearly set forth the imperial imagination of space. In his account, “this nice and warm home” (i.e. Ottoman lands), which was absolutely secured, was surrounded by extensive territories which were awaiting for Ottoman conquest due to the grand ideology of “giving order to the universe” (“*nizam-ı alem*”):

His nibs the deceased Padişah (may God illuminate his testimony) was settled in the place of the Sultanate, the center of the Caliphate, the place of good fortune and happiness, that is, in the city of Edirne. Whenever he came together with wise and virtuous minds who were able to enhance goodness and purity, he carefully and kindly held a consultation with them. He was asking in his shiny mind to what direction he had better direct his victorious reins? The well protected and safe territories [i.e. the Ottoman lands] were bounded by Egypt and Arabia to the south, by Ajemistan province to the east, by Georgia, Tartaria, the daemonic Russian country and the boundaries of Gog and Magog (Ye’cüc-Me’cüc) to the north; by the European countries which are full of infidel Christians and by some oceans which are full of amazing impacts and islands everywhere...<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Celalzade [1494-1567] 1990: 356. The original text is as follows: “Hazret-i padişah behişt-aşiyân –enâra’llâhu burhâneh- sa’adet-ikbal ile daru’s-saltanatı’l-aliyye mustakarri’il-hilafeti’l-behiyye, mahruse-i Edirne-i mahmiyede karar itmîşlerdi. Her çend zikrolunan fuzala-i isabet-ârâ ve ukala-i saffet-efza ile esna-i muhâlata ve ihtilatda hüsni iltifat-u-inbisât ile meşveret itdiler, ve kendü zamîr-i münîr-i âfitâb-te’sîrlerinde mûlahaza ve fikrettiler ki, âyâ ‘inan-ı azimet-ikbal-i zafer-me’alleri ne canibe munsarîf ve mün’atîf kılîna? Memalik-i mahmiye ve ekâlim-i mevkiyenin canib-i cenub-ı, Mısır-u-Arabistan; taraf-ı şarkı, vilayet-i Acemistan; taraf-ı şimali Gürcistan ve vilayet-i Tatardan ıklîm-i Rûs-ı menhus ile hudud-ı Ye-cüc Me-cüc; canib-i garb



In 1516, the Ottoman armies were set off for a campaign towards east. *Sultan Selim I* and his armies defeated the Safevids on their way and proceeded up to *Tabriz*. The eastern and south-eastern parts of Anatolia, north-east of Syria and the north of Iraq were conquered by Ottomans in that campaign. Also, the Ottoman forces fought with the *Abbasids*, who were then enjoying the *Chalipship*. The *Caliphate Mutevekkil III* was captivated and the institution of *Chalipship* was taken over by the Ottoman Empire. In this way, with the conquest of Egypt, the Arabic ideology of state of the Sunni orthodox Islam intermingled with the imperial ideology of Ottoman Empire. All these eastern and southern advancements of the Ottoman Empire brought about an ideological and spatial expansion of the Empire. The ideological expansion was due to the acquisition of the traditional means of Islamic political power (i.e. Caliphate) by the Ottoman authority. In spatial sense, the Ottoman Empire was expanded up to the region called today as “Middle East”. There is no doubt that these expansions brought about great qualitative changes to the Ottoman subjectivity.

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cümle kâfiristan ve vilayet-i enva-ı Nasara-yı küfr-âra ile memalik-i Frengistan; nice bihar-ı garaib-âsâr içinde cezayir-i dehşet-serayirde husûn ve kıla-ı müşeyyede ki, fil hakika cism-i ibret-makrun-ı rub'-ı meskundur”.

Geographical knowledge in the Ottoman culture was limited to cultural and historical geography before the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a new generation of Ottoman intellectuals emerged who were not indifferent to the maritime discoveries of European sailors. Chiefly such Ottoman sailors as Piri Reis and his disciples were deeply interested in the developments of the maritime culture of European societies. However, the spatial imaginations of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman sailors (as opposed to their European counterparts) were based not on a geodesic system of benchmarks on the earth. Instead, the maps were created on the base of reference systems which were built by referring to wars, historical happenings or legends. For instance, an atlas prepared by *Macar Ali Reis* in 1567 (nearly half-century after *Piri Reis*) is based on this kind of legends, rather than any geodesic reference system. *Soucek*, who worked on *Macar Ali Reis'* atlas, reports that the atlas uses such legends to build a spatial sense: "*Selmanlar=Ponza*: The place where the late Sinan Pasa took [infidel] ships."<sup>186</sup> Also, *Macar Ali Reis* put the following legend on the north-east of the Island of *Djerba (Cerba)*: "The place where the infidel blockaded *Turgut Bey*" and on the west of the same island "The place where *Turgut Bey* broke through and sailed out."<sup>187</sup> The fact that these kinds of legends are preferred to the

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<sup>186</sup> "Selmanlar=Ponza: Sinan Paşa merhum gemiler aldığı yerdir". Soucek, 1971, p. 24.

<sup>187</sup> Soucek, 1971, p. 25.

coordinate systems shows that the spatial imagination of Ottoman subjectivity was characterized by a qualitative tendency rather than quantitative.

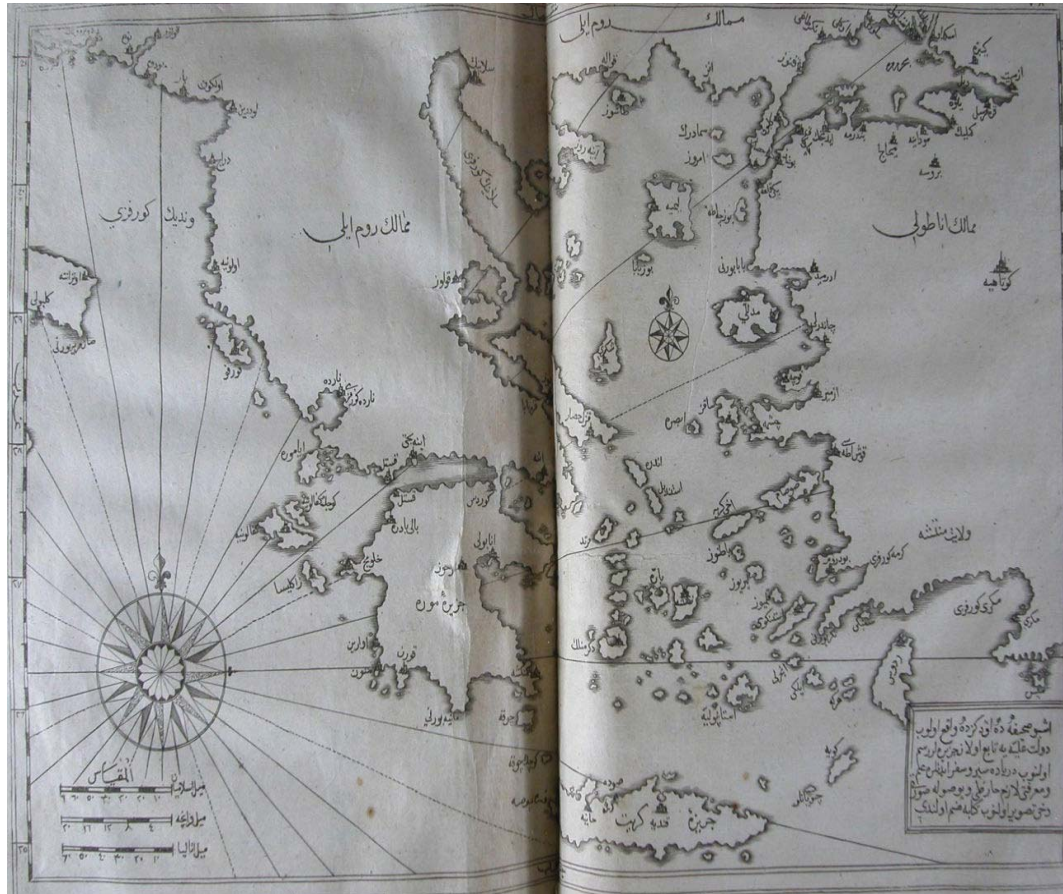
Modernity changed to a significant extent the symbolic system that Ottoman spatial imagination had been based on. Especially starting from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century on, the impact of European culture on Ottoman geography was gradually increasing. As a result of European impacts and in parallel to the continuous change in the Ottoman borders, the imagination of space in Ottoman subjectivity changed from time to time. Of course, the Ottoman state has always been sensitive of keeping detailed inventory of its territories. However, when we look at those inventories (the *tahrir records*), what we see is less a “spatial imagination” (spatial in the sense of the term “space” (*mekân*) as we introduced above) and more rational-administrative paperwork. The spatial imaginations of the sultans and the bureaucrats (or we should say the imperial cognition of the territories) were bounded by those rational documents (*tahrirs*, or land-population surveys).

Despite the degree of rationality that gives shape to the *tahrir records*, they are really far from a modern spatial imagination of “country” or “motherland”. As a matter of fact, the modern understanding of “monolithic-integrated territories”, which has been playing a key role in the emergence of nation-state in Europe, came to the Ottoman Empire as late as the second half of

the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In official documents, the spatial dimension of the Ottoman existence is expressed by such phrases as “*memalik-i Osmaniye*” (The Ottoman Lands) or “*memalik-i mahrusa*” (The Great Lands) (In some maps, very rarely though, we may come across the term “*Memalik-i Anadolu*”<sup>188</sup> (“The Anatolian Lands”)). Here, what is worth particular notice is the fact that the plural form of “lands” (“*memalik*”) is preferred to its singular form (*memleket*). There were two basic reasons which made it impossible (or at least less preferable) to build a “monolithic” understanding of space in tahrir records. First, the tahrirs had to be as much detailed as possible, which made the fragmentally constructed official documents more preferable. More details meant more conveniently calculated taxes. Secondly, the impossibility of developing a main inventory book which might cover the entire fragmentary bodies of records was an obstacle to the creation of an official imagination of block-like, monolithic image of territories. Cartographic representations, on the other hand, was not used as an official means of creating maps for the particular purposes of land and population surveys (*tahrirs*). For that reason, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cartography in the Ottoman Empire did not serve any practical purposes other than planning conquests and determining the pilgrim ways.

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<sup>188</sup> For the use of the term “*Memalik-i Anadolu*” in a map, see: Katib Çelebi [1609-1657] (1733) *Cihannüma*, Selimiye Yazma Eserler Koleksiyonu, 22 Sel 4706, folio 78.

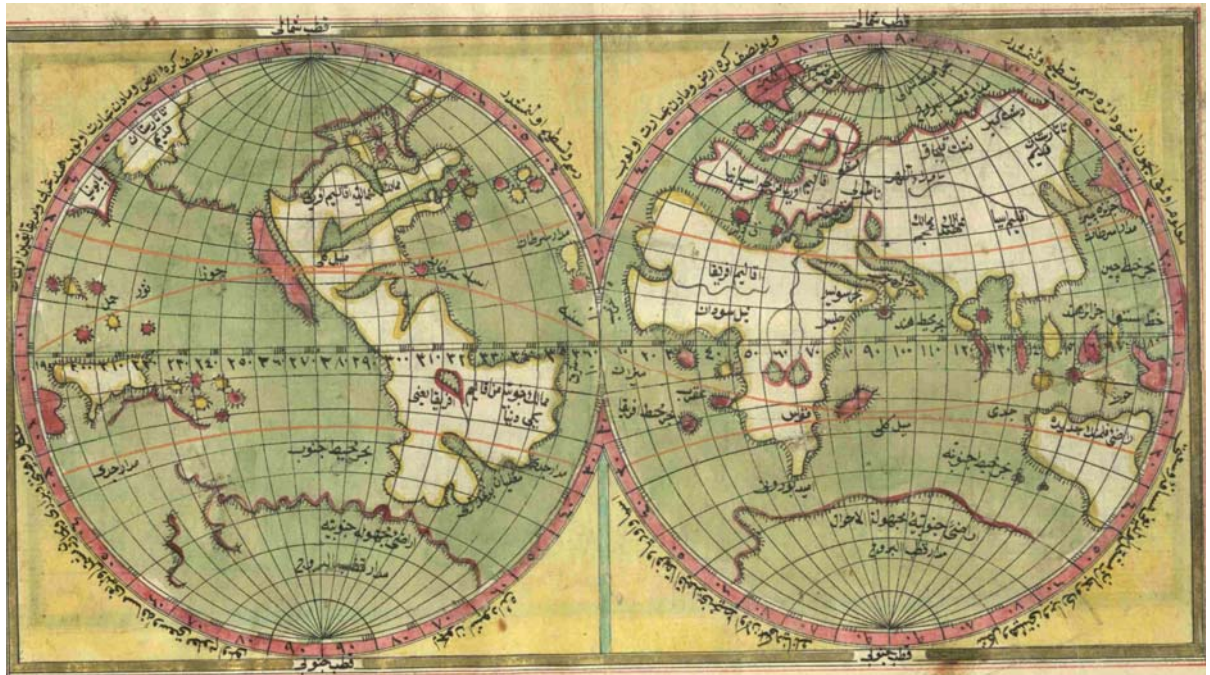


**Figure9:** The partial cartographic representation of Ottoman lands. The right folio shows the western part of Anatolia under the title “Memalik-i Anadolu”. The left folio depicts the Ottoman lands in Europe, under the title “memâlik-i Rum-ili” (Katib Çelebi (1733) *Cihannüma*, Edirne Selimiye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, 22 Sel 4706, folio 78).

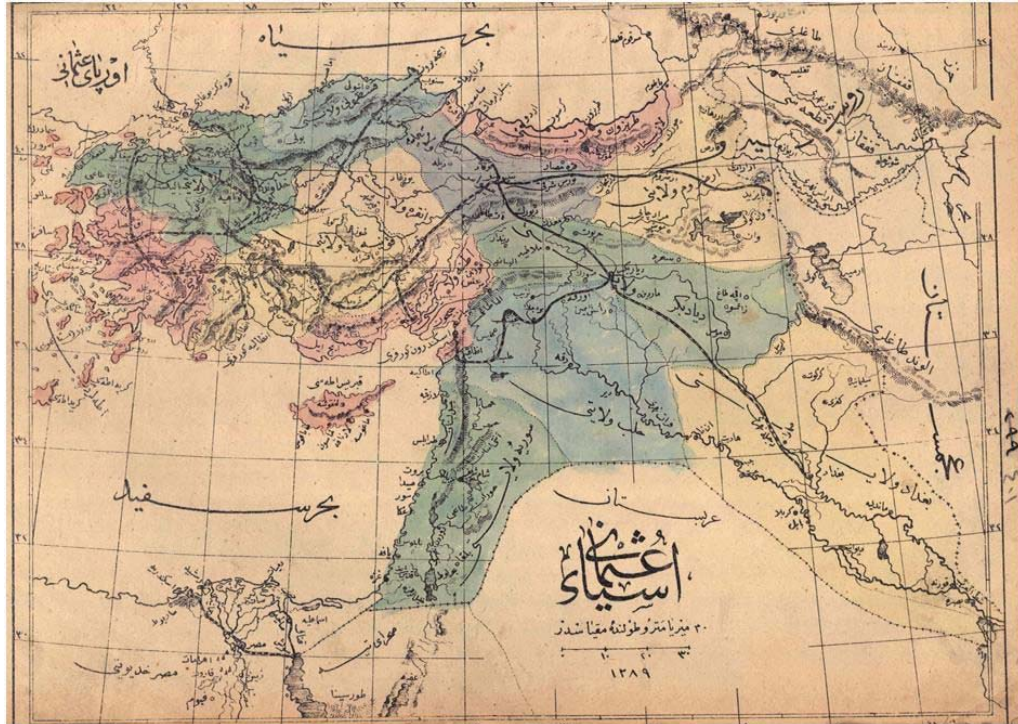


**Figure10:** Relatively comprehensive cartographic representation of Ottoman lands. The inscription is still “*Memalik-i Anadolu*” (Katib Çelebi (1733) *Cihannüma*, Edirne Selimiye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, 22 Sel 4706, folio 78). These two successive maps, which are taken from the most important geographical work in the early modern Ottoman history (*Cihannüma*), show that there were not clear-cut boundary lines to depict the territorial margins of the Ottoman Empire. This cannot be because of the lack of knowledge about the exact boundaries of the Empire, since, as we have seen in the first chapter, the boundaries were fixed in details by conventions. So, the actual reason why we do not see boundary lines on these maps is because there was not such thing as “monolithic” or “one-piece” image of territories in the spatial imagination of the Empire.





**Figure11:** A “world map” in Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkî’s (1703-1772) *Marifetname* (Manuscript Collection of National Library, 06 Hk 4454, folio77b). In this map, the territorial boundaries of the Ottoman Empire are not shown clearly. The right-hand-side hemisphere uses the term “Anatolia” (*Anadolu*) to point to the Ottoman territories partially (a part which constitutes the territories of modern Turkey today). There is not any clear signification of the spatial coverage of Ottoman subjectivity.



**Figure12:** “Ottoman Asia” (“Asya-yi Osmani”), (Source: Hüseyin Sabri b. Hafız Osmançıkî (1873) *Nevadir-ul Hukemâ*, the Manuscript Collection of National Library, 06 Mil Yz B 26, 172a). This map, which was drawn towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, (when the proto-nationalist discourses were being made up; the concept of “motherland” (vatan) began to circulate and the seed of the idea of “unification” was sown) is a sign that the conception of “monolithic space” was emerging. The map distinguishes the territories of the Ottoman Empire by colors. Since it is already bounded by Black Sea on the north, only the southern and the eastern boundaries are depicted by boundary lines. However, even those relatively clear-cut lines do not suffice to mark out the entire boundaries of the Empire at once. The Ottoman territories are divided into two main parts on this cartographic representation, namely “The Ottoman Asia” (“Asya-yi Osmani”) and “The Ottoman Europe” (“Avrupa-yi Osmani”). The second part (*Avrupa-yi Osmani*) is below.

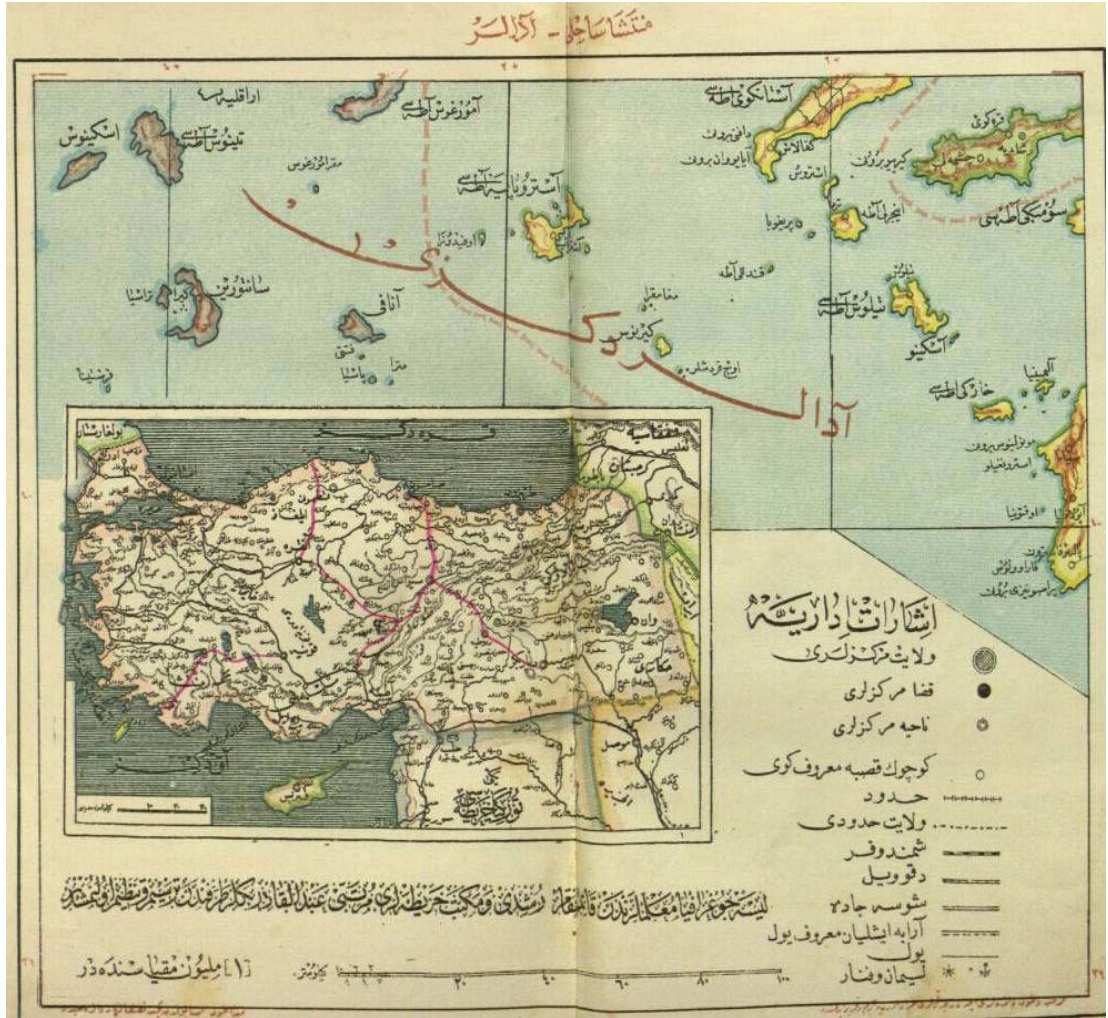
As the Ottoman Empire enlarged its territories, geographical works dealing with the populations, settlement places, the distances between different



cities and towns in different regions, and the distances between the major cities and sacred spaces (such as *Makka*, *Madina* and *Jerusalem*) grew obviously in number. Majority of those works were taking Istanbul as a center and were making calculations accordingly to make up a spatial discourse about the Ottoman territories. This kind of geographical works, which we may call as “the paradigm of *masâlik and memâlik*”, emerged from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on, when Ottoman maritime knowledge was in an upward tendency.



**Figure13:** “Ottoman Europe” (“Avrupa-yi Osmani”), (Source: Hüseyin Sabri b. Hafız Osmançî (1873) Nevadir-ul Hukemâ, Manuscript Collection of National Library, 06 Mil Yz B 26, 173a).



**Figure14:** A modern map of Turkey. The cartographic representations showing the territories as a monolithic, one-piece entity with clear cut boundaries came after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (source: Abdülkadir, Mehmed ve Rüştü, Mehmed (1928) *Mükemmel ve Mufassal Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Atlası* (İstanbul: Tefeyyüz Kütüphanesi) p. 69).

The monolithic maps that show the Ottoman territories as an integrated entity with well-defined boundary lines began to emerge around the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the maps that were drawn prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of “Ottoman motherland as a whole” was not a thematic motive. The idea of precise boundary lines shown as continuum on maps is closely related with the idea of a mono-block and accurately calculated territorial ranges. These two thematic principles of cartography became determinant in parallel with the development of the idea of “motherland” (*vatan*) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In other words, the fragmentary character of the space in the imperial imagination was replaced by the nationalist spatial imagination of “motherland as a one-piece territory” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Namık Kemal* (1840-1888) was a pioneering figure in the historical evolution of this spatial imagination in Ottoman subjectivity. *Namık Kemal* was in a continuous dispute with the Sultanic government in the *Tanzimat* era for a variety of reasons. As a result of those disputes, he had to spend much of his life in another country, sometimes by his own will, sometimes being deported by the Sultanic will. Being in absence from home in this or that way, the idea of “motherland” has taken a central place in his thought. When he was back from France in 1870 after a three years of absence as a refugee, the impacts of French nationalism were deeply permeated into his beliefs. He began to publish a periodical named “*İbret*” in Istanbul, and that soon became the major means of dissemination of his ideas. Some representative fragments from



his ideas of “motherland” that came out as part of his thought system that was at odds with the classical Ottoman understanding of fragmented territories are as follows:

### An Elegy for the Motherland

Alas! We have set the whole motherland on fire  
Sprinkled up to the horizons its fume and flame  
The worthies shut their eyes that deserve curving out  
Enemy’s dagger is now against her breast  
But no one to save this unlucky mother<sup>189</sup>

*Namık Kemal’s* imagination of “space as the mother” as reflected in these verses depict the very nucleus of the feeling of loss which was going to get deepened in the “second constitutional period (1908-1918)” and in the context of World War I:

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<sup>189</sup> “Vatan Mersiyesi

Ah yaktık şu mübarek vatanın her yerini  
Saçtık eflâke kadar dūdunu âteşlerini  
Kapadı gözde olanlar çıkacak gözlerini  
Vatanın bağına düşman dayadı hançerini  
Yoğimiş kurtaracak bahtı kara maderini”

The motherland is spreading over the ground of insult  
Crying out "help! This is my dying breath"  
Oh our dear mother, the fate is getting lost out  
Enemy's dagger is now against her breast  
But no one to save this unlucky mother

Just remember the glorious times of her birth  
Now that the martyrs fill out this mortal world  
Is not even one of her children ready to mourn?  
Enemy's dagger is now against her breast  
But no one to save this unlucky mother

Once we were the sultan of prosperity  
And the leader of the world but now wretched  
Alas, we have become the victim of a blood sucker  
Enemy's dagger is now against her breast  
But no one to save this unlucky mother<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> "Serilip hâk-i hakarete vatan can veriyor  
Yetişin son nefesimdir gelin imdade diyor  
Sevgili validemiz âkibet elden gidiyor  
Vatanın bağına düşman dayadı hançeri  
Yoğmuş kurtaracak bahtı kara maderini

*Namık Kemal's* poems were receiving popular acknowledgement as soon as they were published. However, the popular excitements of those poems were not due to their artistic styles and literal techniques. The sensational aspect of *Namık Kemal's* poems was thematic rather than artistic. The very core thematic topic of his works was what we might call “the proto-nationalist spatial imagination”. The rational relationship between the Sultan, his people and the territories in the classical Ottoman paradigm was being replaced in this way gradually by a psychological motive of “love for motherland”. And the Sultan was not happy with this transformation. In 1873, *Namık Kemal* was exiled again. Whatever the reason was shown on official level, the actual thing disturbing the Sultan was essentially *Kemal's* contributions to the transformation of the definition of the territories from “memalik” (lands) into “vatan” (motherland).

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Düşünün devr-i zühurundaki şanlı demini  
Doldururken şühedası bu fena alemi  
Tutacak bir çocuğu kalmadımı matemini  
Vatanın bağına düşman dayadı haçerini  
Yoğimiş kurtaracak bahtı kara maderini

Bir zaman âlem-i ikbalde sultan olduk  
Cami-i âlem idik şimdi perişan olduk  
Ah bir kan içinin keyfine kurban olduk  
Vatanın bağına düşman dayadı haçerini  
Yoğimiş kurtaracak bahtı kara maderini” (Quoted in Köksal, 1957: 7)

The impacts of this transformation could not be less than tremendous for an Empire whose political, economic and social systems have been firmly based on “land” for centuries. The rational roles of the “lands” in the whole classical Ottoman system was under the threat of a new understanding of lands according to which lands were more valuable as “social spaces” than economically valuable possessions. The following words written by *Namık Kemal* in 1873 show the direction of this transformation:

Man loves his motherland. Because the motherland is not merely some lines drawn by the swords of victorious fighters or by the pen of a clerk. Motherland consists in a sum of such sublime things as nation, independence, interest, sovereignty, respect to ancestors, love for family and care for courage. For that reason, loving one’s motherland is the greatest virtue in every religion, in every nation, in every culture and civilization.<sup>191</sup>

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century paradigm of space in which the Ottoman state was represented as “the Ottoman lands” (*memâlik-i Osmaniye*) was gradually replaced by the idea of “unification” (*ittihad*) and “motherland as an integrated unity”. The idea of “unification” was a conservative response to the schismatic nationalisms, and it became a nationalist ideal soon. Later, in Balkan Wars and in the aftermath of the World War I, the nationalist ideal of “unification” gave birth

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<sup>191</sup> Quoted in Köksal, 1957: 15.

to another nationalist view: Ethnic purity. In other words, the transformation of the spatial aspect of Ottoman subjectivity from fragmented territories into a monolithic, one-piece land gave birth to the nationalist ideal of “ethnic purity”.

### 3.4. The Ontological Thresholds of Ottoman Subjectivity

Before beginning to talk about the “ontological thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity”, we have to make one point clear via a question: Should we consider the people as psychotics (mad men) when they believe in supernatural things like *angels*, *ferişteler* and *genies*? I will base my argument on Lévi-Strauss’ approach, to say that those supernatural “others” were a kind of “anti-psychotic”, rather than psychotic elements for Ottoman subjectivity.<sup>192</sup> In other

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<sup>192</sup> In one of the chapters of his *The View From Afar* (1985), entitled “Cosmopolitanism and Schizophrenia”, Lévi-Strauss questions a common tendency of his time, that is, of seeing a parallel between madness and myth. Strauss cites a myth from Chinook Indians, a North American tribe, to support his thesis that “myth is not on the side of madness, but on the side of psychiatry”. The myth is about the adventures of a hero, whose parents have divorced shortly after his birth. He is stolen from his cradle by an ogress, when his mother leaves him to the care of five slaves in a wedding party. And the whole extraordinary adventures of the hero begins right there. The narrative of the myth includes many supernatural things and experiences that one might hardly believe in the flow of the logic of daily life. Narrating the whole myth, Lévi-Strauss then asks: “Can we ascribe a schizoid constitution to these Indians...?” Strauss’s question makes sense because “*the Chinook had a reputation as shrewd businessmen with their feet planted solidly on the ground*” (my italics, Strauss, 1985: p. 182). And, more importantly: “...just who *is* schizophrenic here? Not the narrator of the myth, who is not its author, and who relates it not because it arouses a morbid state in him, but because he heard it



words, supernatural beings in Ottoman mythology have been fulfilling a very important function in the construction of Ottoman subjectivity: They have been giving a sense of “threshold” for the Ottoman self, to keep the crucial evidence for “the outer world”, lack of which is the basic character of psychoses. In other words, mythologies are fundamentally functional in creating and maintaining the dualism of “inside-outside” in subjectivities. Thus, my basic assumption here about the “ontological thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity” is based on the idea that myths, with all their unacceptable formal characters to the modern mind, are anti-psychotic, not psychotic.

### **3.4.1. A Historical Background for the Ontological Paradigms of Ottoman Subjectivity**

The Ottoman imagination of the “outer world” should be examined in parallel with the common Ottoman feelings, beliefs and dispositions towards the

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from other storytellers, who themselves drew upon a similarly anonymous tradition. By no means ...can the hero...be likened to be a schizophrenic”. (Strauss, 1985: 182). He eventually comes to the conclusion that:

“Myth is not the same category as delirium, nor does it presuppose a manifest or a latent delirium in those who narrate or listen to the myth. Even with all the reservations that we have formulated, the Chinook myth does not illustrate a case of schizophrenia or some morbid state resembling it. It does not translate in its own fashion any mental disorder; it produces, in its own fashion, a theory, and thus places itself on the side of clinician, not the patient.” (Lévi-Strauss, 1985: 184).

ethnic, religious and ideological characteristics of the new populations that were added to the Ottoman society throughout the continuous conquests. So, it might be useful to have a general view of the continuously changing territorial extents of the Ottoman Empire, to settle our account of the ontological thresholds on. Ottomans have been continuously extending their territories since the earliest times of their emergence until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Beginning as a small vassal chieftom in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Ottomans have come to hold sway over a very large territory in the glory days of their imperial existence, by the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Empire was at its largest territorial margins just before loosing some of its lands in Europe in 1699. Its territories were stretching up towards Russia to the north, down to *Sahra-yı Kebir*<sup>193</sup> to the south, to Vienna to the west, and to Iran and Caucasia to the east. Because the Empire was surrounded by seas, it had a considerable marine forces and it held sway over Black Sea, Aegean Sea and Mediterranean as well as the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The Treaty of Karlowitz (signed in 1699) became the beginning of a long historical course of territorial loss for the Empire. First, Ottoman Empire lost Hungary and Transylvania in that treaty. The territorial losses of the Ottoman Empire were quite in parallel to the Russian advancement towards the Black Sea regions. In 1774, the *Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca* was concluded between Russia and Ottoman Empire. Following that, the Treaty of Yaş was signed in 1792. These

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<sup>193</sup> *Sahara* of the North Africa.

two treaties helped the Russian expansion down to the Black Sea area. These were main territorial losses for Ottoman Empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The next century was net less catastrophic for the Ottoman Empire in terms of territorial losses: Nationalist movements brought about new losses in the European lands of the Empire. Greece got its independence from the Empire in 1820, and Crimea's independence followed in 1856. When the Ottoman-Russian war ended in 1877, Ottomans had lost a good amount of lands in Europe and Anatolia. Serbia, Romania, Montenegro and Bulgaria were no longer under the Ottoman control. The losses continued after the Balkan Wars and the World War I. Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed by Austria-Hungary in 1908, while the eastern Thrace was conquered by Bulgaria. In the meantime, Ottoman supremacy in the seas was shrinking. Greek invasion of Crete took place just before Ottomans lost the province of *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid*.<sup>194</sup> In 1911, Italy entered into the picture invading *Western Tripoli* and *Benghazi*. But these losses were not the end of the story. Ottoman Empire lost its supremacy in most of its Caucasican and Middle Eastern regions: Azerbaijan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were all lost by the Empire one after the other in the aftermath of the World War I. In the same period of time, the Ottoman sovereignty in the Mediterranean ended by the loss of Cyprus.

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<sup>194</sup> *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid*: The Aegean area containing 12 islands, where the Ottoman Empire has been holding the sway since the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The aggressive and the recessive activities in the territorial and political domains of the Empire should have inevitable influences on Ottoman subjectivity. Here, in order to understand the immediate and the gradual impacts of the territorial vicissitudes on the Ottoman subjectivity, we should have an idea of a particular aspect of the nature of the Ottoman self: There were not the immediate means of “homogenizing media” in the Ottoman society, comparable to the modern apparatuses like television, telephone and the internet. Thus, we cannot assume a monolithic, single-piece “Ottoman world of objects”. That is to say, it is really hard to rely on general assumptions about the nature of “Ottoman society”. Various people had radically differing mental images of “outer world”. So, we can only talk of some “imagined Ottoman communities” which had been shaped and scatteredly located around particular focal points of the central power. In other words, we cannot consider the whole Ottoman history as something structured by a hidden and solitary hand.

Having these important remarks about the Ottoman history in mind, we can now try to analyze the “ontological thresholds” of the Ottoman subjectivity. Since the schism between the “self” and “the outer world” strictly depends on the broader sociological picture, we have to keep these vicissitudes in mind when trying to understand the nature of the thresholds that separate the Ottoman subjectivity and the world of objects on an ontological ground.

### 3.4.2. The Ontological Thresholds

Apart from the “travel books”, the most important first hand sources showing the conception of “outer world” are perhaps the geographical and cosmological works. The geographical and cosmological narratives in Ottoman society were operating on two main grounds: On the one hand, those works were providing the policies of conquest with practical information. On the other hand, they were shaping the Ottoman understanding of “outer world”.

*Cevdet Türkay*, a prominent scholar of Ottoman history of geography, divides the Ottoman geographical works into three main groups: 1. The practical works (geography of marine is an example of this domain) 2. Scientific geography (by which he points to the mathematical aspects of geography as well as to those geographical works pertaining to astronomy and cosmography) 3. Travel books.<sup>195</sup> Since this classification is very helpful in terms of its comprehensiveness, we can base our investigation on it. Based on this perspective, when *Cevdet Türkay* takes a general look at the Ottoman geographical works, what he sees immediately is that the Ottoman works on “physical geography” are relatively few in number. Most of the works are related to regional geography and topography.<sup>196</sup> Because the science of geography

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<sup>195</sup> Türkay, 1959, p. 2.

<sup>196</sup> Türkay, 1959, p. 1.

came to the Ottoman society through the influences of the *Samarkand School*,<sup>197</sup> they were concerned themselves with celestial questions rather than the terrestrial issues. The geographical works were based less on observations and measurements than on the transmission of the old narratives.

Besides the impacts of the *Samarkand School*, Ottoman geography stayed under the impacts of the Ptolemaic<sup>198</sup> paradigm until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. When Istanbul was captured by *Fatih Sultan Mehmet* in 1453, the Greco-Roman geographical works in the libraries of Istanbul came into the possession of Ottomans.<sup>199</sup> Ptolemy's *Geographia* was among those works. *Fatih Sultan Mehmet* appreciated the *Geographia* and immediately had it translated into Arabic.<sup>200</sup> The work was soon synthesized with other Arabic geographical literatures and the Ottoman books on navigation. What came out was a powerful Ottoman cartography from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on. *Piri Reis'* "World Map" of 1513 is the most well-known outcome of this historical juncture. Other well-

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<sup>197</sup> Samarkand School: A school of astronomy developed around an observatory in today's Uzbekistan, in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>198</sup> Ptolemy: Roman astronomer lived between AD 90-AD 168.

<sup>199</sup> Barber, 2005, p.84.

<sup>200</sup> Türkay, 1959, p.2.

known Ottoman sailors (like *Sidi Ali Reis*), whose works have been translated into many European languages, also grew in this important historical and cultural amalgamation. The 17<sup>th</sup> century became a turning point for the Ottoman geography. *Katip Çelebi's* and *Evliya Çelebi's* original works were clearly demonstrating that the Ottoman horizons in the domain of geography were getting expanded. Besides these original works, many important European works were also translated and made available to the Ottoman readers.<sup>201</sup>

Taeschner states that although *Katip Çelebi's Cihannüma* and *Evliya Çelebi's Seyahatname* are the most famous Ottoman works among European scholars, there are some earlier books that were not less influential than these two.<sup>202</sup> Taeschner's researches led him to the conclusion that the earliest

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<sup>201</sup> Like *Nusrat al-Islam ves-surur fi Tercüme-i Atlas Mayor*, a 9-volume Latin work translated by *Ebubekir bin Behram Dimişki*, for instance.

<sup>202</sup> Taeschner, Franz Gustav (1925) "Osmanlılarda Coğrafya", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, v 2, p. 271-304, see p. 275. Taeschner's article was translated into Turkish in 1925. The translator added an endnote to Taeschner's article to claim that there is another work which is much older than Yazıcıoğlu's *Acaib*: It is a book with a similar title to Yazıcıoğlu's work: *Acaibul Mahlukat*, dated circa 1365-1370. The book is written by Ali bin Abdurrahman, and held in *Darülfunun Kütüphanesi*, no. 2307. Taeschner too, has examined that work in his later visits. Today, we know that the original of "Acaib ül-Mahlukat ve Garaib-ül Mevcudat" is a part of Arabic literature and was written by *Zekariya ibn Muhammed Qazvini* [1208-1283] in Arabic language, and has been translated into Ottoman language by different authors in different contexts. Yazıcıoğlu's version is just one of those translations.

Ottoman geographical work was *Yaziciođlu Ahmed Bican's "Acaib ül-Mahlukat ve Garaib-ül Mevcudat"*, dated 1453.<sup>203</sup>

By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the printing press started to be used in Ottoman Empire, the number of the "modern" geographical works grew observably. The founder of the first printing press workshop in the Ottoman Empire, *İbrahim Müteferrika*, was interested in the modern geographical works. As a matter of fact, the very first materials he printed were geographical works. *Katip Çelebi's Cihannüma* was among the first (if not the very first) books printed by *Müteferrika*. He made some revisions in *Cühannüma* (added, for instance, the Kopernican principles which have been ignored totally by Katip Çelebi). *Cihannüma* was distributed very fast over the intellectual circles, which consequently brought about the replacement of the traditional-Ptolemaic paradigm by the modern, western paradigm of geography.

#### **3.4.2.1. Ajaib al-Mahlûqât:<sup>204</sup> Supernatural Beings as Ontological Thresholds**

The conception of "outer world" of Ottoman subjectivity can be examined on a general ground by means of the geographical and cosmological works. For the sake of simplicity, we can divide those works which can be of help in our attempt to understand the Ottoman conception of "outer world" into two main

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<sup>203</sup> Introduction in Yaziciođlu Ahmed Bican [d. 1466] (1999) *Dürr-i Meknun* (Saklı İnciler) ed. Necdet Sakaođlu (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları) (p. 2)

<sup>204</sup> Literally: The Marvelous Creatures



groups: We may call the first group as “the proto-encyclopaedics”. The second group of works might accordingly be called as “encyclopaedics”. Now, let us introduce some representative works from each of these groups and as a part of the main interest of this section, try to observe the reflections of the Ottoman conceptions of “external world” in them. In this way, we will try to see some of the types and species of beings in different times and contexts, which functioned as “ontological thresholds” for Ottoman subjectivity.

What we call as “proto-encyclopaedic works” are those semi-encyclopaedic works which are blended with classical-religious narratives. In the works that fall into this category, such cosmographic-religious types of beings as angels, fairies, satans and other supernatural things and beings are mixed with the earthly geographical elements, to make up a discourse about the origins and the present state of the universe. The earliest Ottoman sample of this type of works is *Muradname of Bedr-i Dilşad*, written in 1427.<sup>205</sup> Although *Muradname* does not express in direct words the author’s conception of the “outer world” and of the species of beings, it is clearly based on a dualism of “inside-outside”. Besides such “earthly” themes as the good fashions of drinking wine, falling in love and making love, listening to music, the author of *Muradname* also deals with such religious-cosmological questions as the creation of the *Prophet*

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<sup>205</sup> The original copy of *Muradname* dated 1427 is held in the manuscript collection of National Library, under the call number: 06 Mil Yz FB 470.

*Muhammad*, as well as basic ethical questions of goodness and badness. These kind of normative elements are treated in the book in such a way that the targeted reader, chiefly the Sultan in whose honor the book is written and to whom it is dedicated, is offered a total account of a “model of self”. As opposed to the model of self (i.e. the “inside” of the constructive dualism), there is the conception of the “outer world”. What makes *Muradname* interesting is that it comes up with a dualism of “inside-outside” in such a way that there is not a conception of “outer world” based on supernatural things, *acaibs and garaibs* (curious and marvelous things), in it. *Muradname* is mainly about “this world”. In this sense, it is based on a kind of “realism”. The “outer world” supposed and contributed by the work is rational; it is not a utopic space in which some uncanny beings and anthropophagi pour out. In other words, the external world implied in *Muradname* is an earthly place where the Ottoman subjects could reach and touch by means of earthly actions such as wars, conquests or commerce.

Interestingly, those proto-encyclopedic paradigms that saw the “outer world” as the space of uncanny, grotesque and weird things and beings outflowed after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453. If we are allowed to run the risk of an error, we can make a generalization out of the major proto-encyclopedic works at this point: As the territorial boundaries of the Ottoman Empire expanded by conquests, the number of proto-encyclopedic works that

saw the “outer world” as a space of uncanny and grotesque beings increased. This has a lot to do with the nature of the idea of “conquest”. The actual impact of the continuous conquest is traumatic. It is traumatic not only for the “conquered”, but also for the “conqueror”. Conquests turn upside down the psychic economy of the subject regarding the psychic investments of objects. In other words, they bring about changes in the form as well as the content of the dualism of “inside-outside” in a particular subjectivity. The immediate psychic consequence of a conquest in this sense is the partial inclusion of the objective world. The objects in the outer world which have been separated from “us” in the dualism of “inside-outside” by means of real and imaginary demarcation lines become a part of “us” after the conquest. The ontological distance between the subject (the conqueror) and the object (the conquered) disappears. The object which has hitherto been an imaginary existence turns out to be tangible. As an example, let us take Istanbul, which had been a subject of conquest fantasies for centuries in the Muslim world. The city walls of Istanbul had been playing the role of “real thresholds” that created the sense of “inside-outside” not only for those people who had been living within those walls, but also for those who had been struggling to conquer the city for a long time. Together with Ottoman conquest of the city in 1453, this dualism disappeared on formal level. The two parties of the hostility got together after the conquest. In this case, what comes out is comparable to the situation of the dualism of inside-outside in

psychotic's world, in which the Cartesian relationship between the subject and the object is under threat. So, in psychoanalytic terms, conquest is an unending process of reconstruction: The conqueror needs to reconstruct a conception of outer world in order to avoid a psychotic situation, a main characteristic of which is the lack of the demarcation line between the subjective and the objective world (or simply, the non-existence of the outer world). In this sense, the very psychoanalytic dynamic of the Ottoman ideology of conquest was based on an impasse. The ideology of conquest eventually and inevitably turned into the principle of "giving an order to the universe" ("nizam-ı alem"). We have talked about the disappointment of the Sultan when he saw Piri Reis's "world map" in 1517. His words express more disappointment than anything else: "The world is too small for a monarch!" We cannot see these words only as an expression of the disappointment about the real sizes of the earth. They voice an ontological concern, an *angst*. In this anxious account, the imperial subjectivity will eventually be faced with the danger of falling into an "objectless" situation. When the last conquest would have been performed (of which the Sultan was quite sure in the heydays of the imperial expansion of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century), there would remain no "outer world" at all, which is a threat to the libidinal sources of the imperial subjectivity.

The whole literature of grotesque beings (i.e. the paradigm of "*acaib ve garaib*") is functional at this point. Boundaries are reconstructed on two levels

after a conquest. On one level, the boundary marks are drawn on the earth and concrete demarcation lines are fixed. On the other level, the imaginary boundaries are reconstructed to regain the binary opposition of “inside-outside”. Thus, in this account, it is understandable to see that the conception of the outer beings which are totally different from “us” functions much more in the times of conquests when the dualism of “inside-outside” is under threat.

We have already asserted that the grotesque and supernatural beings began to outflow in number in the Ottoman subjectivity especially following the conquest of Istanbul. One of the works which can be demonstrated as an example of this kind is “Acâ'ibü'l-Mahlûkât ve Garâ'ibü'l-Mevcûdât” (hereafter “Acaib”),<sup>206</sup> which is radically different from the “rational” and “earthly” conception of the outer world of the proto-encyclopaedics of previous centuries (like that of *Muradname*, for instance). When one looks through the windows of

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<sup>206</sup> Kazvini's *Acaib* has been translated into Ottoman language by different authors. One of those translations was made by Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bî-Cân b. Sâlih Gelîbôlulu [d. 1455] in 1453. Titled as “Acâ'ibü'l-Mahlûkât ve Garâ'ibü'l-Mevcûdât”, a manuscript copy (*istinsah*) of this work dated 1618 and accomplished by Şeyhzade Mehmed Harpurdî is available to the reader of Ottoman language in Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, no: 06 Mil Yz A 3028/1. Other manuscript versions of the book are as follows: The *Sururî* version: Muslih ed-dîn Mustafâ b. Şabân Sürûrî (897-969/1492-1562) “Terceme-i Acâibul-Mahlûkât”. This translation has been copied by İsmail bin Ali in 1699, and contains miniatures (see: Manisa İl halk Kütüphanesi, no: 45 Hk 5355). The *Ayaslogi* version: Rodosî-zâde Mehmed b. Mehmed Ayaslogî (d. 1113/1701) “Terceme-i Acâibül-Mahlûkât ve Garâibül-Mevcudât” (Egypt National Library, Tarih-i Türkî 124). The *Bursavî* version: Hüsâm ed-dîn Bursavî (d. 1046/1636) “Acâibül-Mahlûkât ve Garâibül-Mevcûdât” (National Library Collection of Manuscripts, no: 06 Mil Yz A 3916).

the *Acâib*, one will see an outer world which is full of grotesque and weird beings, some examples of which are seen in the miniatures below:



**Figure15:** “A weird being whose lower part of body is one while the upper part consists in two heads and four hands” (“Belinden aşağısı bir beden, belinden yukarısı dört el iki baş olan acâib”)<sup>207</sup>

<sup>207</sup> Muslih ed-dîn Mustafâ b. Şabân Sürûî [1492-1562] (1699) *Terceme-i Acâibul-Mahlûkât* (Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi Arşiv no: 45 Hk 5355).





**Figure16:** “I have seen a dragon... It was as tall as two leagues...it had two large wings like the wings of fish...and it had two ears like the ears of men” (“Ejderha gördüm... uzunluğu iki fersah mikdarı... ve iki büyük kanadı var balık kanadı gibi... ve iki kulağı var adem kulağı gibi”)<sup>208</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Source: Muslih ed-dîn Mustafâ b. Şabân Sürûrî [1492-1562] (1699) *Terceme-i Acâibul-Mahlûkât* (Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi. Arşiv no: 45 Hk 5355) (folyo 146 a)).



**Figure17:** A rational-realist description of the curious things of the “outer world” in Ottoman subjectivity, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. “An image of a crocodile with a bird in its mouth” (“Suret-i timsah ve ağzında olan kuş suretidir”)<sup>209</sup>

<sup>209</sup> Source: Muslih ed-dîn Mustafâ b. Şabân Sürûrî [1492-1562] (1699) *Terceme-i Acâibul-Mahlûkât* (Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi. Arşiv no: 45 Hk 5355) (folyo 146 b)).



The books of “acâib ul-mahlukat” (“the weird of creatures”) in Ottoman paradigm, which are full of the types of never-heard-beings, the dragons and human-like monsters, originate from the 13<sup>th</sup> century imagination of Muslim-Arabic world.<sup>210</sup> There is an important point which differentiates this kind of Ottoman imagination of “weird beings” from mythological beings: The myths are either based on the idea that there is another world beyond this existing world, or a hidden consciousness about the “irrationality” of the myths is at work (which, as we have talked about in the beginning, keeps the myths in the side of psychiatrist in Lévi-Strauss’ account). However, the paradigm of “acâib ve garâib” is based on the narratives of the explorers and they talk about the beings and creatures which are the part of “this world”. When one looks closely at the narratives of “acâib ve garâib”, one may immediately notice that such creatures as “man with two heads, four arms and two legs” are reported from a real man who has witnessed those creatures in person. These kinds of beings are presented as creatures which live in the same world with human beings, possessing the characteristics of real existences. For example, in the famous world map of Piri Reis, the *anthropophagi* (weird creatures) are described with images and the narratives about those beings are presented with references to

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<sup>210</sup> This kind of beings were as much overflowing in the works of European writers of the middle ages as they were in the Muslim world.

the original narrators (usually the original narrator in Piri Reis' narratives are Portuguese, Genoese or Spanish explorers). The paradigm of "acâib ve garâib" survived to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and disappeared gradually. The disappearance of this paradigm was facilitated by the Ottoman modernization in geographical domain. So this paradigm got a "realist" character first and then that realism took the paradigm to the end. The impacts of the modern anthropology on Ottoman thought also accelerated the disappearance of the paradigm of "acâib ve garâib". The European desire of "discovering the outer world", which has always run as a part of colonization, gave birth to the discipline of anthropology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This discipline had some important impacts on the Ottoman intellectuals, who had already opened their doors for modernization for a long time. Ahmed Rasim's (1888) *Garaib-i Âdât-ı Akvâm* (The Curious Customs of the Peoples)<sup>211</sup> can be seen as a typical understanding of the Ottoman conception of the "outer world" which is based on the "realism" of the "era of collapse", as opposed to the "irrationalism" of the ages of conquest. This work, in which Ahmed Rasim tries to construct a view of "outer world" through the eyes of orientalist-European scholars, is an example of the Ottoman realism which was under the heavy impacts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European intellectual winds.

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<sup>211</sup> Ahmed Rasim (1304) [1888] *Garâib-i Âdât-ı Akvam* (İstanbul: A. Maviyan Matbaası)

Another example of proto-encyclopedic works is *Dürr-i Meknûn* (“The Hidden Pearls”), which was written by Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican in 1466. *Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican’s* works [d. 1466], as he is considered to be one of the earliest Ottoman authors in the field of geography,<sup>212</sup> give us the opportunity to get an idea of the psychic boundaries of an average Ottoman subjectivity, as well as of the “objects” that lied beyond that boundaries. Besides his *Acaib-ül Mahlukat* (“*The Marvels of Creatures*” [1453]), his *Dürr-i Meknun* (“*The Concealed Pearl*” [1466]) is also important in this respect. These works were proto-encyclopedic sources about beings and universe for the Ottoman people and they are still important to the modern scholars.

*Necdet Sakaoğlu*, who transliterated *Dürr-i Meknun* into modern Turkish, reports that there are at least two thousand different types of beings somehow mentioned in the book.<sup>213</sup> In fact, *Yazıcıoğlu* himself mentions some numbers in the beginning of *Dürr-i Meknun*: He says that God has created “one thousand”

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<sup>212</sup> Taeschner Taeschner, Franz Gustav (1925) "Osmanlılarda Coğrafya", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, C 2, s. 271-304, p. 275.

<sup>213</sup> Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican [d. 1466] (1999) *Dürr-i Meknun* (Saklı İnciler) ed. Necdet Sakaoğlu (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları), p. 2.

species<sup>214</sup> upon the completion of the creation of celestial bodies. In one way or another, we understand that this 15<sup>th</sup> century author is somehow supposing the existence of diversity among ontologically differing beings. In this narrative, which is heavily influenced by Arabic and Persian mythologies, there are the species whose adjectives, sizes and essences are exposed to our knowledge, as well as those whose qualifications are incomprehensible to human beings. For instance, “there is a very large sea under the highest heaven (*arş*), which is named “Sea in Heat” (*Bahr-i Mescûr*) and God, may his name be glorified, is represented by an angel (*ferişte*) there, whose name is *Kamkâil*. Nobody other than God knows its adjectives.”<sup>215</sup> On the other hand, another angel, *Azrail*, is known to the details of its adjectives: “And *Azrail* is a great and majestic angel. He is on the first layer of the heaven. Some people say that there is a place between earth and heaven and he inhabits there.”<sup>216</sup> In his cosmology, there are varieties of beings with whom we are already familiar from our “ordinary world”, as well as the unique and weird ones which come into existence through a combination of the ordinary adjectives: “The prophet has once been asked: From

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<sup>214</sup> One must keep in the mind that the number “one thousand” (*hezar*) should not be taken literally, as it attributes a quality, rather than quantity, to the things in question in Ottoman texts.

<sup>215</sup> *Dürr-i Mekkûn*, p. 26.

<sup>216</sup> *Dürr-i Mekkûn*, p. 27.

what material *Hûr-ül Aynî* is created out? He replied: From its foot to its knee it is made of musk. From its stomach to its head, camphor. Its hairs, eyelashes, eyebrows, and lock of hairs are made of black glory”<sup>217</sup>

We can trace the influence of the *Ptolemaic* paradigm on the formation of Ottoman account of “objective world” (*âlem-i âfâkî*), in *Durr-i Mekkun*. In *Yazicioğlu’s* account, the “extraterrestrial bodies” (*kevâkîb*) hold a very special place. Those entities are physically located in distant positions from the Earth, enjoying their specific orbits (*felek*). Yet, they always keep interacting spiritually with human beings.

Another important work that we might consider as one of the most influential proto-encyclopedic works is a book in Ottoman language from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, titled *Metali’al Sa’âdah wa Manâbi’ al-Siyadah* (hereafter *Metali’*). In the historical context of fights and schisms some Muslim authors from the early 9<sup>th</sup> century on were talking about a general classification of beings.<sup>218</sup> *Birûnî* [973-1048], for example, separated the being into three main groups: The abstract beings of the highest level,<sup>219</sup> the mid-level creatures (i.e. human being) and the

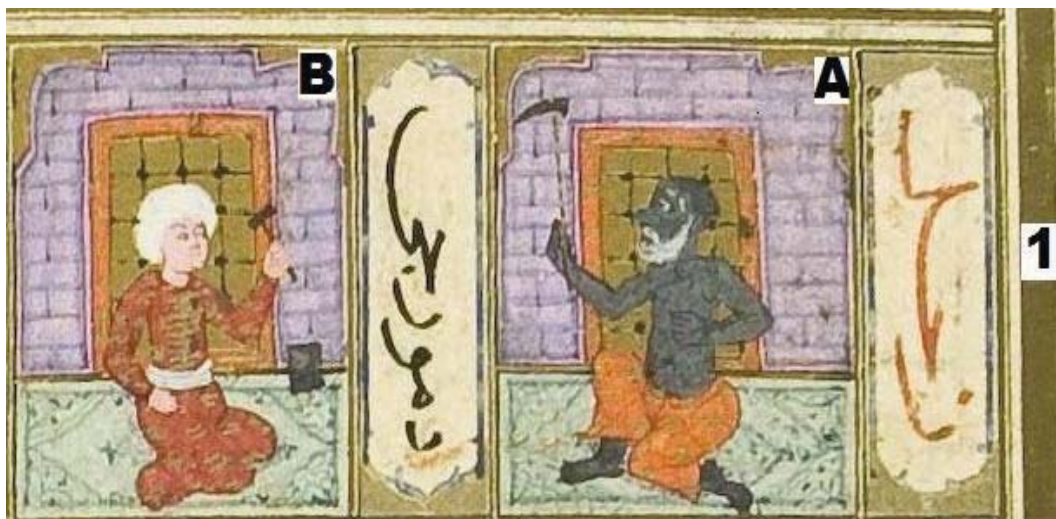
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<sup>217</sup> *Durr-i Mekkûn*, p. 29.

<sup>218</sup> Works on cultural and religious differences started earlier, in 9th century, which we will be focusing upon in subsequent chapters.

<sup>219</sup> “Al-rûhaniyyun” (“الروحانيون”), literally “spirituals”.

creatures of the lowest level, namely the animals.<sup>220</sup> We can assume that this classification, differing in terminology though, somehow survived to the Ottoman context. The indirect impact of *Ptolemaic* “geocentric” description of the universe on the Ottoman imagination was blended with the classical Islamic classification. We can say that the beings other than God are located in the following cosmological scheme: There is the human mind (or human being as such) in the core. As we move from the center to the periphery, varieties of beings show up. This *Ptolemaic* account of universe would easily be turned into a cultural scheme, in which one could grant the central place to his own culture.



**Figure18:** Stars and diversity

1-B: Zuhā: Demurci (blacksmith) (Source: *Muhammad ibn Amīr Hasan al-Su’ūdī* ‘s [d. 1591] *Matāli’ al-Sa’ādah wa Manābi’ al-Siyādah* [Book of Felicity], folio 33a. Miniatures are by *Üstat Osman*, the famous Ottoman painter of 16<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>220</sup> Biruni, Muhammad ibn Ahmad [973-1048] (1887) *Tarikh al-Hind* (London) p. 43.



**Figure19:** 3-B: Merih: Cellad (executioner). This paradigm of diversity is meaningful in two respects. First, it is a non-religious narrative based on the idea that we are in relations with the “external world”. Second, the objective world can bring about a set of social and personal differences that ultimately create mutually exclusive social groups. In this way, sociological differences are seen as ontological disparities. Each occupational group is a distinct subjectivity. A *blacksmith* of *Zuhal*, for example, differs from the *executioner* of *Merih* not only in social (occupational) manner, but also in ontological level.

The narratives of interaction between the celestial bodies and human being are part of a paradigm of cosmology, which explains the social and physiological differences between human beings. *Kiyâfetnâmes* (*physiognomica*) and *falnâmes* (*books of divination*) are typical genres of this narrative. Among all, perhaps the *Metali'* is a perfect illustration of this account of the impact of the celestial beings on human diversity. *Metali'* was translated out of Arabic language into Ottoman language in 1582 by *Muhammed ibn Amir Hasan al-Suudi* [d. 1591]. The book is a typical Muslim version of *Ptolemy's* geocentric account which remained unveiled in the



Western world until 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is based on the Ottoman narrative that the celestial bodies are not “indifferent” entities, but they are actively enrolled in the formation of the different characteristics of human beings.



**Figure20:** Weird things of the “New World”: “It is reported that in ancient times a monk named Sanvolrandan (Santo Brandan) traveled over seven oceans. The monk and his friends came across this fish and they thought it was a dry place and they made a fire on it; when its back got hot enough the fish plunged into the sea. They rushed on the boat and escaped to the ship (This event was not narrated by the infidel of Portugal but by the old Pappa Moudas)” (Quoted from Piri Reis’ 1513 World Map).



When the European explorers discovered the “New World” in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the impacts of those discoveries became evident gradually on the Ottoman subjectivity. Just like conquests, “discoveries” can influence boundaries of subjectivities. The first obvious outcome of the impacts of the discoveries of the “New World” on the Ottoman conception of the “outer world” was Piri Reis’ “World Map” in 1513.<sup>221</sup> The World Map was a product of a kind of incorporation of the European and Ottoman views of the “external world”.<sup>222</sup> The figures and illustrations drawn on Piri Reis’ map to represent the “curiosities” of the external world give us a clue of the direction and the nature of the impacts of the expansion of the “external world” on “ontological boundaries” of the Ottoman subjectivity.

We may find more examples of this kind in Piri Reis’ other works like *Kitab-ı Bahriye* (The Book of Navigation) which was written between 1511 and 1525. It gives practical information about the Mediterranean, Aegean Sea and the shores of European countries. In this sense, it is a kind of ideal hand book for navigators of the time, combining the documentary information, “portolan charts” and narratives of fantastic beings. On the other hand, it is to an important extent based on the paradigm of “acâib ve garâib” on the conceptual and discursive levels.

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<sup>221</sup> The original copy of the World Map of Piri Reis is available in the Museum of Topkapı Palace.

<sup>222</sup> It was based on a map drawn by Christopher Columbus in 1498, the original being lost today.



**Figure21:** Weird things of the “New World”. “This monster is seven-hand-span tall. The distance between its eyes measures one hand span. Yet it is of a benign character” (Quoted from Piri Reis’ 1513 World Map). Of course, we cannot say that the conception of “external world” in Piri Reis’ mind consists merely in this type of “anthropophagi”. There are other beings that are of quite rational and earthly nature in his conception of “external world”. So, we should say that the external world that existed beyond the imaginary boundary lines of the Ottoman subjectivity as reflected in Piri Reis’ works consisted in a combination of the irrational, supernatural beings and rational, earthly existences.



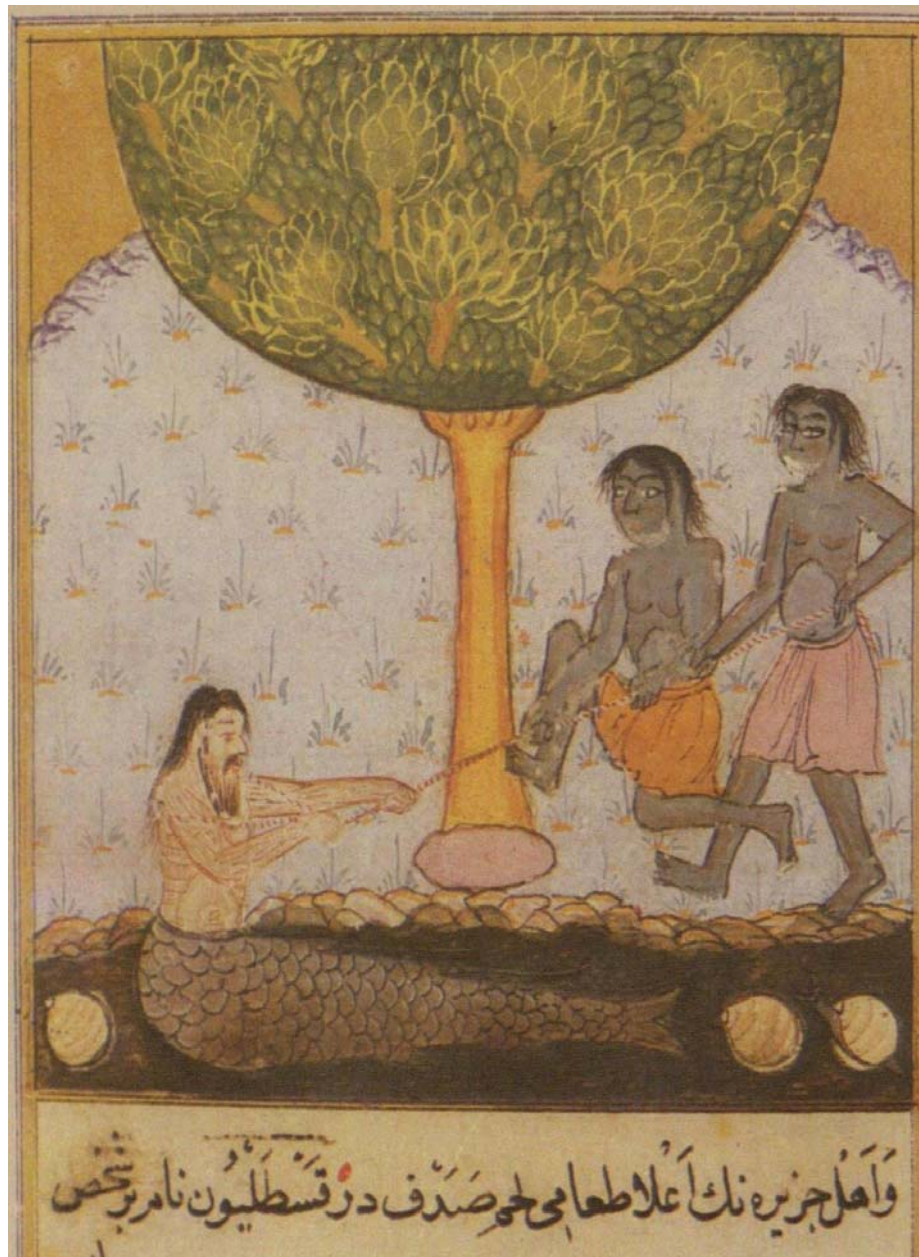
Another noteworthy work from the 16<sup>th</sup> century reflecting the Ottoman conception of “external world” is “Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî” (The History of Western India). This proto-encyclopedic work, which was translated from an unknown western source and presented to Sultan Murad III in 1583, was one of the pioneering works that contributed to the dissemination of the paradigm of “New World” all over the Ottoman Empire. The manuscript reflects the general western outlook of the 16<sup>th</sup> century along with the classical Ptolemaic conceptions, as well as some classical Muslim geographical works.<sup>223</sup> *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî*’s contributions to the expansion of the paradigm of “New World” all over the Empire triggered a set of similar works with different names (like “*Ahvâl-i Âlem-i Cedîd*” (“Situations in the New World”); “*Tarih-i Yeni Dünya*” (“The History of the New World”); “*Kutr-ı nev*” (“The New Hemisphere”) and “*İklim-i Cedîd*” (“The New Climate”)).<sup>224</sup> *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî*, which also reflects the narratives of “Acâib ve Garâib”, contains a rich amount of visual contents that might help us understand the “ontological thresholds” of the Ottoman subjectivity of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>223</sup> Like Mes’udi, İbn-ul Verdî and Nasreddin Tûsî.

<sup>224</sup> “Introduction” in “Tarih-i Hindi Garbi” ([1583] (1987), (İstanbul, Alaş Basımevi), pp 14-16.





**Figure23:** Weird things of the New World: “And in that ocean there is an occasionally appearing fish. The upper part of its body is like human being. And it has beard and hair. And its arms are like those of human beings” (source: *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî*, folio 63b).

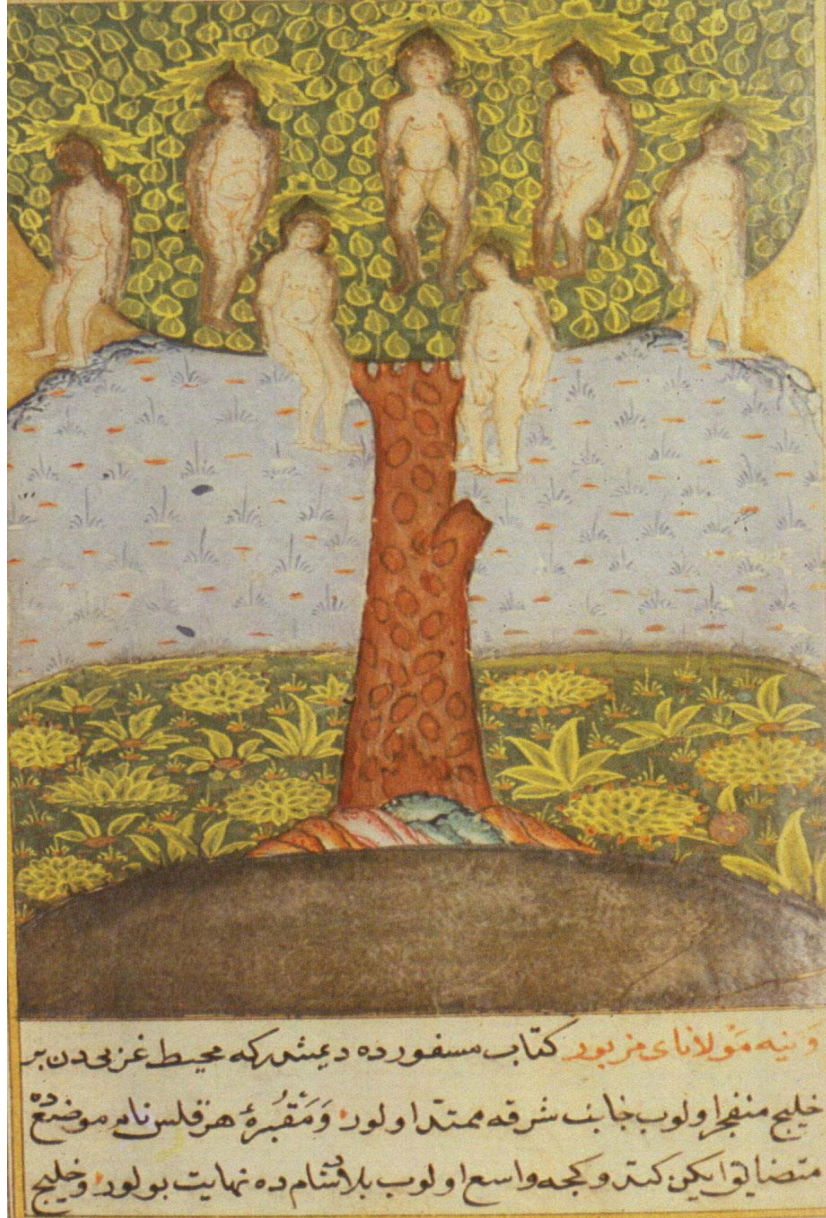
One of the “acâibs” (the curious things) in the New World, as it is narrated in *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî*, is the “tree of quack quack” (“vak vak ağacı”). The *Three of Quack Quack* (also known as “The Island of Quack Quack” in some other sources) provides us with a perfect example of the erotic relationship a subject establishes with the external world which is situated beyond the imaginary thresholds. The narrative appears in different paradigms from the Chinese sources to Arabic and Ottoman cultural reservoir.<sup>225</sup> Different sources locate this tree (or the island) in different places: Some sources locate it in the Indian Ocean, while other narratives say that it is somewhere in Africa or in eastern China.<sup>226</sup> So, the spatial base of the narrative changes from sources to sources. However, there is a ubiquitous content in all of the versions: The “tree of quack quack” bears a very unusual fruit which is shaped like woman body. In other words, the woman organs like breasts and vagina are present on those fruits. These fruits appear in the spring time. When they are picked up by human hands or drop down from the tree in natural course, they stay alive for only two days and then die to merge into the soil. The explorers who visit the tree (or the island) can have an intercourse with those women-fruit. Both parties of the intercourse (i.e. the fruit and the man) take much of pleasure from the

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<sup>225</sup> Metin And states that the oldest version of the legend of “Vak Vak Ağacı” (Tree of Quack Quack) is located in the 8<sup>th</sup> century Chinese sources (Metin And, 1998, p. 291).

<sup>226</sup> Metin And, 1998:291.

intercourse. Those women-fruit go “quack quack” when they fall apart from the tree, and this is where the name of the narrative comes from.



**Figure24:** “Vak vak ağacı” (The Tree of Quack Quack) (Mehmed bin Emir el-Hasan el-Su’ûdî [1583] (1987) *Tarih-i Hindi Garbi el Müsemma bi Hadis-i Nev* (facsimile) (Istanbul: Turkish Historical Foundation) (Folio 18b)

In *Tarih-i Hind-i Garbî*, the island of quack quack is mentioned in the following manner:

There is no human population dwelling in the Island of Quack Quack. Now and then, the voice of “quack quack” is heard all around... And if one of them [the woman-like fruits] is picked from its original place it will survive around two days and then it will deteriorate and perish. It is also reported that some men have intercourse with them and they take a great pleasure...<sup>227</sup>

The proto-encyclopedic works which were consisted in a blend of the mythological and “empirical” narratives appeared less and less in number and then were replaced by the rationality of what I call “encyclopedic works”. One of the representative works of the transitory era was *Marifetname* of Erzurumlu Ibrahim Hakkı (1703-1780).<sup>228</sup> Written in 1757, *Marifetname* attempts at describing the whole universe, starting with the very beginning of the cosmos up to the coming into existence and the present states of abstract beings (like angels and genies) as well as the concrete things like the sun, moon, earth and

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<sup>227</sup> Mehmed bin Emir el-Hasan el-Su’ûdî [1583] (1987) *Tarih-i Hindi Garbi el Müsemma bi Hadis-i Nev* (facsimile) (Istanbul: Turkish Historical Foundation), folio 18a.

<sup>228</sup> When *Marifetname* was written in 1757, it received a wide acceptance in the Ottoman society and has been copied many times especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today, there are different copies and versions available to the readers. I based my examinations here on the version held by the manuscripts collection of National Library, call no 06 Mil Yz B 687.



the space. In this sense, *Marifetname* is a good example of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman transitory works that reflect the view of the “outer world” in the proto-modern Ottoman subjectivity. *Marifetname* provides its reader with detailed knowledge of the location of the earth in the universe, the formations of nights and days, the roundedness of the earth (“isbat-ı kürriyet-i heyet-i alem”) and the origins and creation of spiritual and material beings in a sufistic discourse. The sufistic tendency of the writer leads him to a particular state of thought in which as if there is no such thing as the dualism of “inside-outside” which we were able to detect easily in the proto-encyclopaedic works of previous centuries. The total and integrated image of the universe described by *Marifetname* leads the reader to think that the abstract and material things, the celestial and the terrestrial beings are merged into one another in the whole picture. So, Ibrahim Hakki’s perspective does not imply any “inside” which is radically separated from “outside”. The only constructive dualism that dominates the universe of *Marifetname* is not any ontological dualism but the ethical dualism among the whole world of beings (namely, the conflicting sides of good and evil). We have to think about this conception of *Marifetname* in the particular historical context in which the Ottoman state had been exposed to a series of military and diplomatic defeats and territorial losses, and other particular experiences that led the Ottoman Empire open its doors fully to the western culture for the sake of saving the Empire from its unfortunate fate. In that historical context of the

18<sup>th</sup> century, the boundary lines (both the imaginary and the real boundary lines) of the Ottoman Empire were transparent rather than impervious and isolated.

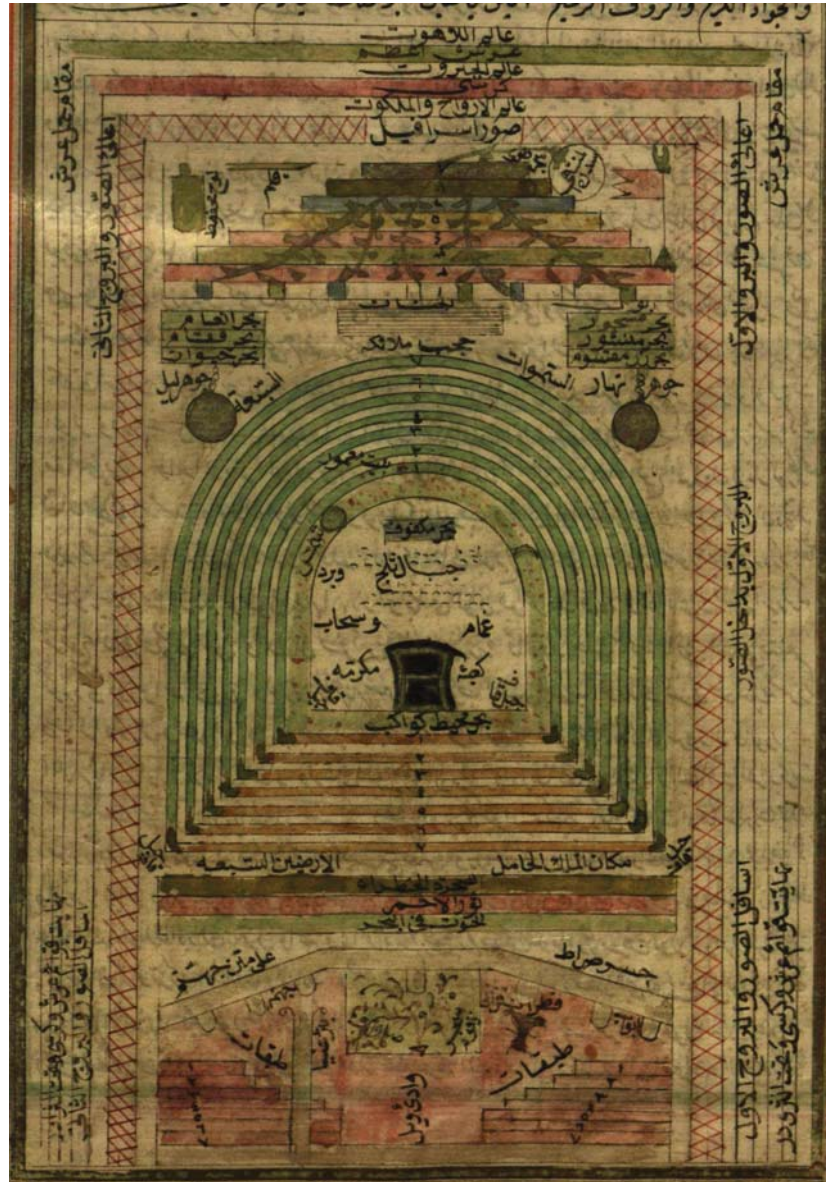
A closer look at the following figure from *Marifetname* depicts this character of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman subjectivity in which the “external world” is mingled with the “internal world” as reflected in İbrahim Hakkı’s perspective. The black and rectangular shape in the middle is “Kabe-i Mükerrreme” (“The Holy Kaaba”). The outermost sidelines show the “universes” which are located one within the other. The names of those universes are (beginning from the outmost towards inside): “The universe of Hût; The Highest Heaven; The Imperious Universe; the Center; the Universe of Souls and Angels; and the The Sûr of Raphael”.<sup>229</sup> Each of these is related to the horoscopes. The stairs located in the upper middle of the figure depict the hierarchical distance between the world we live in and the heavens. If we follow the tree (which hangs down over the stairs) down to its roots, we see a circle in which there is an inscription saying: “sidretül münteha”.<sup>230</sup> Right on the left side of the stairs, there are “Kalem” and

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<sup>229</sup> “Alem-i hût; Arş-ı a’zâm; Alem-il ceberrut; Kürsî; Alem-i ervâh ve melekût; Sûr-i İsrâfil”.

<sup>230</sup> *Dürr-i Mekkun* (“Hidden Pearl”), a proto-encyclopaedia of the 15<sup>th</sup> century written by Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, talks about “Sidretül Münteha” in this manner: “It has some leaves. The names of every individual person who has ever come and will ever come to this world is written on one of those leaves. Whenever the appointed hour of one’s death arrives, the leaf that his name is inscribed turns pale and deform. It falls into right before Azrael (the angel of death) (Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, s. 27).

“Levh-i Mahfuz”. Those two are the abstract planes, in Islamic cosmology, on which God writes down and keeps everything about the destinies of human beings.



**Figure 25:** The intermingled “external universe” and “internal universe” as depicted in the conception of “inside-outside” of *Marifetname* (*Marifetname*, folio 14a).

The two black spheres that are located on the upper-left and the upper-right sides of the figure are correspondingly “cevher-i leyl” (the substance of night) and “cevher-i nehar” (the substance of day). The arched green lines in the middle (which are numbered consecutively from 1 to 7) represent the seven-layered heavens. The innermost of those lines contains the sun. In the bottom of the figure, *al-Sirat* (the Bridge of Hell) and the Hell are described. The “Tree of Quack Quack” (*Şecer-i Vak Vak*), which we talked about above, is interestingly located here (the green box located between the two stairs in the bottom).

Another example of the proto-encyclopaedic works is an anonymous manuscript dated to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, named *Cevhername*.<sup>231</sup> In *Cevhername*, we do not find the supernatural beings of the early Ottoman cosmography, for example, that we come across in *Dürr-i Mekkun*. The objects in the “external world” of *Cevhername* are located in “this world”. In other words, the conception of “outer world” in *Cevhername* is based on those objects which are found in the world as we know it and live in it. In this sense, *Cevhername* can be seen as a transitory work and can be placed accordingly somewhere between proto-encyclopaedic and documentary types. The paradigm of “acâib ve garâib”

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<sup>231</sup> Anonymous, (1805) *Cevhername* (manuscript collection of the National Library) (archive call no: 06 Mil Yz A 8606/1).

is given an important space in the conception of “outer world” in *Cevhername*. However, the eccentricities of those objects come from the sphere of culture. In other words, the cultural differences are presented as ontological differences in *Cevhername*:

The old philosophers have declared that [...] God has created the world. He created first a matter which was shaped like very small point which was out of water. Most of the places are located in water and only those places that are located outside the water are countries, some of which are properous and some others are ruinous. Everywhere except the inhabited places are overwhelmed with water, parts of them remaining in the surface and making up islands. There are twelve thousand islands in the Arabian Sea. In each island, there are varieties of peoples. There are marvelous and weird things (“acaib ve garaib”) on those islands. God’s message has not reached to those islands which are close to these human beings. As they have not received God’s message, they keep living like animals, without ever being aware of nations and religions.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> The original Ottoman text: “Hükema-i mukaddimîn şöyle beyan itmişlerdir kim [...] hak teala dünyayı yaratdı nokta-i kör şeklinde bir madde yaratub anun bir mikdarı sudan taşra kalmışdır bu yirlerin çoğu su içre müstağrakdır ve lakin taşrada kalan memalikdir anun dahî bazısı ma’mûr ve bazısı harabedur. Meskundan gayri suya gark olmuşdur ve dahî gark olandan gayrısı niçe yerler sudan taşra kalmışdır cezireler olmuşdur dirler ki bahr-i ummanda on iki bin cezire muhitde dahi her cezirede tavayif-i muhtelifi vardır. Acayibler ve garaibler vardır. Anların şol ademlere yakın olan cezirelere allahın risaleti irişmedi. Anlar kim risalet irmedi hayvan gibi millet ve mezheb bilmezler” (*Cevhername*, p. 26).

And there are some islands whose peoples eat each other; while some others eat nothing other than snakes and the snakes never bite them or God forbid even if snakes bite them they are not harmed at all. And there are some islands whose people are in spherical shape, with forty legs and twenty heads. They are called forty-leggeds, and when they walk, they move rolling over like oxcart wheels; God's power is over everything! There are some islands whose people have never heard about wheat. There are islands where there is only one woman per ten thousand men, and whoever reaches that woman he catches her [...] And there are some islands that never see the sun, while some others never see the sundown. There are islands whose man sleep with whoever they reach like animals, God forbid, no matter if she is the daughter, sister or aunt. There are some islands whose people worship to the strangers for one year and when one year of worship is accomplished they walk him around with music and then slaughter him and share his flesh. There are some islands whose people are hairy [...] And there are islands whose soil is made of musk and stones made of pearls and rocks are golden and silvern [...] *Skender* saw all these and the whole narrative comes from him...<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> The original Ottoman text: "Ve dahî cezire vardır kim halkı birbirin yirler cezire var kim halkı yılandan gayri nesne yimezler ve yılan onları sokmaz soksa dahi kar itmez maazallahu teala ve dahi cezire vardır kim halkı degirmidir kırk ayağı ve yigirmi başı var anlara çıl pâ dirler yürüyicek kaknı tekerleği gibi döne döne yürürler ve hüve alâ külli şey'in kadîr cezire var kim buğday nedir bilmezler cezire var kim on bin er içinde bir avrat bulunur irişdüği avratı dutarlar kâben bilmezler [...] cezire var kim güneş hiç dutmaz cezire var kim güneş hiç batmaz cezire var kim hayvan gibi kızın ve kız karındaş hâlesin (halasın) ve diyezsin (teyzesin) dutarlar maazallah teala cezire var kim anda bir garib gelse ol garibe bir yıl taparlar bir yıldan sonra çalgu ile gezdürürler andan boğazlarlar etinden kefarete deyişirler ve cezire var kim halkınun tüyleri var cezire var kim anda deccal eşki olur deyişirler şeyatin (cevhername, s. 57) ol deccal eşkine kulluk iderler [...]"

### 3.4.2.2. The Earthly Beings of the “Outer World” as Ontological Thresholds

There emerged a serious number of geographical works especially following the conquest of the regions of Egypt and Hedjaz in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century by the Ottomans. Most of those works were concerned themselves with the pilgrim routes in general and the routes of other normal travels between cities in particular. Referring to a mostly repeated phrase in those works, we can name this genre of literature, which was based on verbal (rather than a possible cartographical) descriptions of the routes and distances among cities, as “*the literature of al-masâlik wa al-mamâlik*” (literally: “The Routes and Countries”). As this phrase already implies, this paradigm provides detailed documentary information about the geographies of particular cities with information about the ideological and cultural features of the peoples of those regions.<sup>234</sup> It is worth noting here that the paradigm of “al-masâlik wa al-mamâlik” usually takes

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cezire var kim toprağı misk taşı yakut incidür mercandur kayaları altun gümüşdür erenlerinin sakalı olmaz dahi avratların oğulları gayet de hubdur [...] zehî hikmet ve âlihi iskender dahi bu acayıbları gördü rivayet andandır ....” (*Cevhername*, p. 59).

<sup>234</sup> In Ottoman language, these two words are used to mean “our motherland” as, for example, in “*memaliki mahrusetül mesaliki*”. Mostly, this usage is seen in the discourses of the Sultan and in official documents. In this case, these words refer to Istanbul.

Istanbul as the center and calculates the distances accordingly. In this sense, the conception of “outer world” in this paradigm is based on a twofold center: The ideological outlook centers around the Sunni-Islamic point of view, while the spatial outlook takes Istanbul as its center. Although the most famous work of this paradigm is Seydi Ali Reis’ “*Mir’at ül-Memalik*” (The Mirrof of Countries),<sup>235</sup> there are works written in earlier times. Mustafa bin Ali, the *muwaqqit*<sup>236</sup> of the Sultan Selim Mosque, wrote a book of this genre in earliest ages. His work is known as “*Ekalim-i Seb’a*” (The Seven Climates). In that work, he gives some information about the distances between Istanbul and some important cities.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Seydi Ali Reis (1590) *Mirat ül Memalik*, Kütahya Vahidpaşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 43 Va 2242.

<sup>236</sup> Muwaqqit: The person who was enrolled in a particular mosque to deal with the questions about time, like the time for the daily prayers.

<sup>237</sup> Mustafa bin Ali the muwaqqit expresses the basic intention why he wrote that book in this way: “It is not a secret to the class of the learned people that it has almost been a usual behavior among people to talk about the distance of how many days and hours are there between the surrounding cities and Istanbul. Some of them tell the truth, but mostly what is said is far from the accuracy. As a matter of fact, some people make additions and what comes out is exaggerations. To the superior knowledge of his nibs [the Sultan] , this humble servant wants to give this gift, which includes explanations about a hundred cities chosen from the seven climates, some of whom being well known among people and some of them not that much. The well known cities are explained by indicating their places in the seven climates and the distances between each of them and Istanbul, the center of the cities, is shown in miles by means of straight lines...” (The original text: “Erbâb-ı maârif ve ashâb-ı letâife hafî olmiya ki halk mabeyninde etrâf-ı âlemde vâki’ olan şehirlerin İstnabul şehrinde ba’di ve âna kurbi kaç aylık ve kaç günlük olduğu ahyanen bazı mecâlisde söylemek adeta vâki olagelmiştir. Söyleyen



His work was a typical of its genre, giving some important geographical information about the cities and regions.<sup>238</sup> The paradigm of “al-masâlik wa al-mamâlik”, which takes the Ottoman territories as a base and Istanbul as the center, is based on an understanding of “inside-outside” in both ideological and spatial sense.

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ahâbirin dahî bazı sahih olursa ekseri sahih olmadığı malumdur. Zira ana bazı kimesne mübalağa kasdidüp vaki olan adedden ziyade nakl olunur... [Sultan] hazretlerinin hazâin-i amirelerine hakirane tuhfe ve hediye olmağičün ekâlim-i sab’ada vaki olan biladdan yüz şehri ihtiyar idüb ki bazı bu diyarın halk yanında meşhurdur ve bazı dahi gayri meşhurdur meşhuru dahi ekalim-i seb’anın kaçınıcı ikliminden olduğu ve şehir-i Kostantiniyye ki merkez-i büldan budur denilmiştir hatt-ı müstakim takdiriyle bazı nisbeti ne mikdar mil olduğun beyan idelim...” (Muvakkit Mustafa b. Ali Rûmî (1655) *Ekâlim-i Seb’a*, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu (National Library Collection of Manuscripts), 06 Mil Yz A 2053/4. Folio 54 a-b).

<sup>238</sup> Works of this genre emerged in different contexts and in different times throughout the history of Ottoman Empire. Some of the works of this genre which are available to the readers of Ottoman manuscripts are as follows: Mehmed b. Ahmed Emîr (1600), *Mesâlikü-l Memalik*, (Manisa İlk Halk Kütüphanesi, 45 Hk 1385); an anymous work titled “Evezahül-Mesalik ilâ Ma’rifeti’l-Büldan ve’l-Memâlik” (Sipahizade Mumammed b. Ali (1683) *Avzahül Mesalik ila Marifetil Büldan ve Memalik*, İstanbul Millet Kütüphanesi, 34 Fe 1350); Hacı Mehmed’s (1701) “Risale-i Ahval-i Vilayet ve Padişahan” (Hacı Mehmed (1701) *Risale-i Ahval-i Vilayet ve Padişahan*, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu (National Library Collection of Manuscripts), 06 Mil Yz B 489/5); Ebu Bekr Feyzî bin Abdir-Rahman’s “Hülâsa-i Ahval-i Büldan fî Memâlik-i Devlet-i Ali-i Osman” (Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu (National Library Collection of Manuscripts), 06 Hk 782).

Besides these geographical works about the lands of the Empire and the neighboring lands, the technique of map drawing was improving continuously. So, the maps of the Ottoman lands were being drawn by different hands from different perspectives. The most comprehensive and modern encyclopedic works on the Ottoman lands emerged up in the works of some very careful and skilful travelers like Evliya Çelebi and Katip Çelebi, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century on. The 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed rapid dissemination of the geographical knowledge about the Ottoman lands, expanding beyond the small-sized, closed intellectual circles and being gradually available to the peripheral populations.

The very first signs of the possible changes in the Ottoman conception of the “outer world” as a result of a synthesis between the eastern and western geographical-cosmological paradigms was evident in Katip Çelebi’s *Cihannüma*.<sup>239</sup> *Cihannüma* was a geographical-encyclopedic work which was mainly based on Gerard Mercator’s [1512-1594] techniques of map drawing. If we consider Katip Çelebi’s *Cihannüma* in his whole work, it might be easier to understand the conception of “inside-outside” in the modernizing Ottoman subjectivity, which was a product of the dual impacts of the utmost territorial margins of Ottoman Empire and the well established orthodox Islamic culture.

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<sup>239</sup> A manuscript copy of *Cihannüma* dated 1145 h. (1733 m.) is held by Edirne Selimiye Manuscript Library under the call no: 22 Sel 4706. The examinations in thi particular context are based on that copy.

Katip Çelebi's *Tuhfat al-Kibar fî Esfâri-l Bihar*<sup>240</sup> gives important information about the seas and the cities and countries that were located on the shores of those seas, which made up the thresholds of Ottoman subjectivity in those ages. Actually, there was a good accumulation of knowledge in the domain of seamanship and navigation since the time of Piri Reis (16<sup>th</sup> century). Katib Çelebi's work was in a way bringing together and updating that information.

Katip Çelebi's work does not take account of such thing as "anthropophagi" and "acaib ve garaib" ("weird things") which occupied an important space in Piri Reis' *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. In Katip Çelebi's works, the imaginary boundary line between the "external world" and "us" is not designed as an ontological demarcation line that radically separates the two sides from one another on ontological ground. The "external world" is described in his work in a quite rational and earthly manner. There is not any attempt to explain the whole universe in a single narrative (which was the main character of the proto-encyclopedic and early cosmographical works) in Katip Çelebi's work. The dualism of "inside-outside" in his work is constructed by means of the rational and empirical handles of the world as we know it. His *Tuhfat al-Kibar fî Esfâri-l Bihar* opens up with a general explanation about the world, and then proceeds

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<sup>240</sup> A part of this book was translated into English in 1831: Katip Çelebi (1831) *The History of the Maritime Wars of the Turks, Chapters I to IV*. Ttrans. James Mitchell (London: A.J. Valpy, Red lion Court, Fleet Street).

to give very practical information about the neighboring geographical regions starting from the shores of Venice up to the Mora Island, then to the shores of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Italy, France and Spain. After providing practical information about those shores, the book talks about the “victories” and “defeats” of the Ottoman marines, along with the narratives of the Ottoman sailors. So, in his narrative, the “external world”, which is as tangible as the “internal world”, is presented as a space of earthly people who can be touched, and who live on the same ground with “us”.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **4.1 The Blind Spot: What Sets The Subject and The Object Apart?**

There is a main ground on which the concluding arguments of this study are established: Theses on the nature and the formations of “the thresholds of human subjectivity”. In this sense, this is a contribution to the interdisciplinary researches on the nature of human subjectivity, with a theoretical position based in the intersection of sociology and psychoanalysis. Contextual analyses on the “Ottoman subjectivity” serve to the purpose of application of “the theory of thresholds” to a particular instance. The theoretical starting point is that, on formal level, subjectivities (i.e. subject positions based on nation, race, gender and class) depend on “real” and “imaginary” thresholds. I will briefly sort out these grounds of conclusive arguments below.

It is a fruitful approach to examine the questions of identity and belonging on the base of the relationship between human subject and the objective world. Psychoanalytic approaches have been utilizing this dualism very productively. Especially the mainstream psychoanalytic literature has devoted much of

volumes to elaborate on the relationship between objects and the psychic dynamics of human subject from variety of perspectives. The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, spent almost his entire life to understand the dynamic nature of human subjectivity. In fact, Freud believed that “subject” (the ego) versus “object” (the external world) was one of the three fundamental polarities that made performance of mental life possible.<sup>241</sup> His main concern in the relationship between the human subjectivity and the objects lied in investigating the impacts of the latter on the former, rather than understanding any reciprocal waves.<sup>242</sup> But anyway, in one way or another, Freud was concerned himself with the relation between the human psyche and the world of objects. A glance over his *Standard Edition* (which contains his entire work) will show, however, that he has never paid a clear attention to the intermediary tools that played the role of demarcation lines between the subject and the objective world. The point at which Freud gets closest to this question emerges in his investigations on the abilities of “drives” and “stimuli” to set the human

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<sup>241</sup> Freud, 1915a, p. 133. The other two fundamental dichotomies were “pleasure” versus “unpleasure” and “active” versus “passive”.

<sup>242</sup> From the earliest times of his career on, he has been giving particular importance to the term “object”, too. At least from 1905 on, when he published his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, in which he gave an important role to the term “object”.

mind in action in his "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes."<sup>243</sup> However, even in that context Freud does not seem to have concerned himself merely with the exact frontier lines between the subject and the object. As a result, the fundamental questions I raise in this study remain intact in Freud's work: What can we say about the "thresholds" between the subjects and the objective world? What are those thresholds made of? In what manner they function to push the subject into the orientations of "inside" and "outside"?

It is worthy of note that this silence is obvious in the works of another influential psychoanalyst, who devoted volumes of works to the questions of "subject and object", namely, Jacques Lacan, too. His theoretical elaborations on the nature of the human subjectivity, as well as that of objects, have increasingly been providing the social sciences with powerful concepts and theoretical

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<sup>243</sup> Freud, Sigmund (1915a) *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, SE, 14: 117-140. In that work, Freud imagines the human subject as a living organism which is "entirely helpless" and "unorientated", whose nervous system gets some stimuli. The fundamental impetuses ("drives" and "stimuli") will lead that living organism into an orientation: The living organism will feel the pressure of the stimuli from which it may get away by means of a muscular action. In this situation, the pressure for flight will bring about the sense of "outside". On the other hand, Freud states that the organism may continue to feel that pressure even after moving away from that external source. This second type of feeling is the ground for the feeling of "inside". The "...efficacy of the muscular activity", Freud argues, acts as "...a basis for distinguishing between an 'outside' and an 'inside'" (Freud, 1915a, p. 119). This very short instance which is based on Freud's very quick view of the basic ground on which the polarity of "inside" versus "outside" is founded can be extended to only a few other cases in his *Standard Edition*.

positions in examining the everlasting modern questions of “identity”. Although Freudian psychoanalysis constitutes Lacan’s point of departure and final destination<sup>244</sup> at once, his theoretical approach towards the polarity of subject-object differs seriously from that of Freud. Lacan’s account of this polarity is quite original and in most aspects non-Freudian.<sup>245</sup>

A well known Lacanian analogy to explain the nature of the dualism of inside-outside is “moebius strip”. A “moebius strip” is a piece of band whose one

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<sup>244</sup> As reflected in the Lacan’s motto of “return to Freud”.

<sup>245</sup> First of all, Freud’s usage of the term “subject” is not very much unambiguous and in some cases he clearly refers to the “ego” when he talks about the subject (for a case in which Freud uses “subject” and “ego” interchangeably, see Freud, 1915a, p. 133). However, Lacan asserts that ‘[t]he core of our being does not coincide with the ego. . . There is no doubt that the real ‘I’ is not the ego. . . [The ego] is something else –a particular object within the experience of the subject’ (Lacan, S II, p. 44). Another important difference is that, Freud believed that the human subject does not consist in a totality. In other words, besides the polarity of subject-object, the human subjectivity is further split in itself in many respects, the foremost known one being the division between the conscious and the unconscious. Simply speaking, in this Freudian picture, the task of psychoanalysis is to bring the unconscious contents to the consciousness. Lacan’s originality lies in his assertion that the split in human subjectivity is an impassable one. Lacan used the linguistic concepts of “signifier” and “signified” to refer to the fundamental split in human subjectivity. He located human subject in the side of the “signifier” and claimed that just like there cannot be an ultimate integration between the signified and signifier in linguistic terms, the constructive polarities in human subjectivity cannot be adhered to one another. That is another way of saying that it is impossible to pass the barricade between the conscious and the unconscious parts of human subjectivity.



end is turned round once before its two ends are stuck together. In that way, if one walks along the surface of a moebius band, one will continuously oscillate between “inside” and “outside”. In other words, the inside and the outside on the moebius strip are not mutually exclusive and accordingly, it is impossible for one to know at what exact point he/she has passed from inside to the outside.<sup>246</sup>

Lacan’s theory of subject-object (as a part of the philosophical line extending along Kant to Hegel and Kojève) has exceeded beyond the limits of clinics and had important impacts on social sciences in relation to the questions of identity and belonging. A very fundamental implication of his theory for sociology is that, there is continuity between the subjective and the objective worlds in the construction of identities, and the two are intermingled like a DNA spiral. According to this view, national identity, for example, would be nothing other than an empty form if the idea of “enemy” did not exist. The concept of “the other”, which is easily attributed to the formations of any identity, is the well known and a widely used application of this psychoanalytic point of view. We might expect that despite the continuity between the subjective and the objective worlds, there should still be demarcation lines to establish the two poles as different entities. However, Lacan does not talk anywhere in isolation about the buffer zones, or the frontier lines.

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<sup>246</sup> Evans, 1996, p. 119.

Taking this gap as a starting point, this dissertation was an attempt at focusing merely and as much separately as possible on the intermediary apparatuses that demarcate the subjective and the objective spheres, which have been a blind spot to the studies inspired by psychoanalytic theories of identity, self and the other. Although what I call here as “the theory of thresholds” will remain open for further contributions, I propose that there are two categories of thresholds, namely “real thresholds” and “imaginary thresholds” that are crucial to the foundation of subjective positions.

Real thresholds are strictly connected to human body and depend on “obstacles”. By the term “obstacle”, I mean any objective entity or conditions that bring restrictions to the functions of human body. I suggest that there are two sorts of obstacles: Natural obstacles and artificial obstacles. By the term natural obstacle I refer to mountains, rivers, lowlands and seas and other similar natural bodies whose physical shapes are in opposition to the human physical abilities. The artificial obstacles, on the other hand, are also defined in relation to human body, but their physical shapes are a product of human mind. In other words, an artificial obstacle is a designed blockage to the abilities of human body. The best examples of artificial obstacles are from warfare: Barbed wires, intrenchments, city walls and other similar “designed objects”, which include a hostile idea of “external world”, are examples of artificial obstacles. Here, I coin another auxiliary phrase to understand the character of artificial obstacles: “De-

ergonomy". This term is the opposite of "ergonomy", the latter being based on the idea of designing objects in accordance with the shape and functions of human body. In other words, an ergonomic design aims at a smooth integration of human body to the objective world.<sup>247</sup> Human subjects feel continuity between the inside and the outside in the case of ergonomic designs, while a de-ergonomic design brings about a polarization between the subject and the object. Barbed wire, for instance, is a perfect example of this polarization. The discomfort and dysfunctionalizing effects of a barbed wire divide the mind of confronter into two and pushes him/her into a subjective position. Thus, de-ergonomic design fulfills some fundamental functions in the creation of the subjective orientations of inside and outside. This is how the "obstacles" play a vital role in the establishment of the "real thresholds" for a subjective position.

As for the "imaginary thresholds", they consist in whatever polarizes "the self" in the face of "non-self". A material object, a symbol, a discursive structure, a visual image can play the role of imaginary thresholds, as long as they bring about a schism between the subject and the objective world, raising the polarization of "you *or* me". Again, I use some auxiliary assertions to shed further light on this notion. There are mainly four auxiliary conceptualizations I utilize in order to make further clarifications on the "imaginary thresholds of

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<sup>247</sup> In this respect, an ideally ergonomic object would reveal a Lacanian description of inside-outside, as I briefly mentioned above by referring to his analogy of "moebius band".

subjectivity”: Breach in the self; signification of the self (or the diplomatic presentation of the self); the spatial thresholds of the self and lastly the ontological thresholds of the self. Let us briefly point out what I mean by each of these conceptualizations.

By the expression of “breach in the self”, I try to utilize the very Freud-Lacanian idea that the human subjectivity is not built of one piece but is fragmentary. This idea is very much of help in understanding an important dimension of the imaginary thresholds of subjectivity. On sociological level, the covering structures which the individuals identify themselves with or feel themselves a part of (i.e. societies and communities) require a relation of representation.<sup>248</sup> The poles of this representation come to existence in the very early phase of the formation of that identity and perform important tasks in the construction of the “imaginary thresholds”. The representation takes place on the margins of an identity, where the “outer world” or the world of objects comes into sight. The active part of this polarization, namely the “representative” agent of identity, makes a selection to pick up certain specifications of the self to put forward at the edges of the identity, where the

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<sup>248</sup> Needless to say, the representation I describe here is not the political representation in the modern sense of the word. By the term “representation”, I refer to a schism in the self, rather than any political division of labor.

interaction with the “external world” takes place. This is how the most diplomatic aspect of our identities, which consists in what I call “the signification of self”, operates.

The representative part of Ottoman subjectivity appears in different forms. In some cases it is the state as such, while in some other cases it is the sultan or the Ottoman dynasty. A particular form in which the signification of Ottoman self is accomplished in international relations is “the territorial self”. In some international correspondences, the Ottoman side is introduced by a very long title which consists in mentioning one by one the dominions of the Empire. This is what I mean by the phrase of “the territorial self” and is a perfect example of what I call “the spatial thresholds of subjectivity”. Basing my arguments on the definitions of the term “space” (“mekân” in Ottoman language), I argue that the imaginary thresholds have a spatial dimension. In the Ottoman language, which was a combination of Arabic, Persian and Turkish linguistic elements, the term “mekân” (space) is an abstraction which has been born out of a wide semantic reservoir, including such implications as “existence”, “being”, “creation”, “generation” and “possibility” (beside its literal meaning of “space”). So, an important facet of the imaginary thresholds for human subjectivity is “mekân”. Needless to say, the term “mekân” should be distinguished from the territorial conditions. The latter are related to the “real ground” and are functional in the construction of subjective positions and feelings of inside-

outside on that ground, while the former is related to the “imaginary register”. In other words, “mekân” functions as a threshold in separating the subject from the objective world on imaginary ground. In this sense, it closely relates to “ontological thresholds”, that is, the existential margins of the self.

In sum, the study was an effort to understand the formations of human subjectivity by concentrating merely on the demarcating elements that play important roles in the foundation of subjective positions. In other words, the area that encloses the subjective positions and gives birth to the points of references of “inside-outside” and ultimately to the dualism of “subject-object”, is the major concern to this study. Contextual examinations on the Ottoman identity answer most of the basic questions of this study, but any further questions on the nature and functions of “thresholds” can be asked and this makes this study open for further contributions.

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## APPENDIX A

### TURKISH SUMMARY

#### OSMANLI ÖZNELİĞİNİN GERÇEK VE İMGESEL EŞİKLERİ

##### ÖZET

###### I. Kuramsal yaklaşım

En genel düzeyde ifade edecek olursak bu çalışma, mensubiyetleri meydana getiren sosyolojik düzlemleri “öznellik” (*subjectivity*) olarak tanımlamakta ve buradan hareketle öznellikleri ortaya çıkaran, yani bakış açılarımızı sınırlandıran çerçeveleri sorgulamaktadır. Çalışmanın akışını sağlamak amacıyla bu genel sorunsalın altına yerleştirilen çok sayıdaki özel soruya, “Osmanlı öznelliği” adını verdiğimiz örnek üzerinde ayrıntılı araştırmalar yaparak çeşitli yönlerden cevap vermeye çalışmaktadır. Çalışmanın kuramsal yaklaşımı, Fransız psikanaliz paradigmasının önemli isimlerinden olan Jacques Lacan’ın iki kavramına dayanmaktadır: Gerçek (*real*) ve muhayyel (*imaginary*). Bu iki kavram, bakış açılarımızı sınırlayarak bizi bir öznelliğin içerisine kilitleyen sınır çizgilerini anlamak bakımında oldukça elzem rolleri ifa eder. Kısaca ve en genel kabul görmüş haliyle söylersek Lacan kuramında “gerçek”, dilsel ve simgesel alana



dahil edilemeyendir. Hiçbir konuşma, hiçbir simgeleştirme, objelerle tam ve bütüncül bir temas kurmamızı sağlayamaz. Bu nedenle “gerçek”, dile getirilemeyen, ne yaparsak yapalım dilin dışında kalandır. Lacan kuramının diğer önemli kavramlarından biri olan “muhayyel” kavramı ise, yine özetle söyleyecek olursak, öznel arasında bir tür “karşılıklık” (*intersubjectivity*) hissi meydana getiren ve böylece bireyi herhangi bir ilişkinin “tarafı” olarak ortaya koyan psikik deneyimleri ifade eder. Lacan’ın “imgesel” kavramını ifade etmek için kullandığı önemli bir metafor var: “Ayna” metaforu. Ayna, kişinin kendisini ayrı ve bütüncül bir varlık olarak algılamasını sağlayan araçtır. İnsan yavrusu gelişiminin belirli bir aşamasında kendi görüntüsünü yansıtan bir düzlemle karşılaştığında, “kendilik” (self) algılamasında köklü bir değişim meydana gelir. İnsan yavrusu, böylece kendisini bir obje olarak algılar ve zihninde taşıdığı, annesinin bedeninden farklı bir bedenle varlığını sürdüren bir kendilik tasavvuru geliştirir. Lacan’ın bu metaforik açıklamasını şöyle anlayabiliriz: Yaşamın herhangi bir yerinde bize ayrı bir benlik olduğumuzu hatırlatan veya bizi bu düşüncenin içine iten her şey, ayna görevi görür. Burada dikkat edilmesi gereken şudur: “Benliklerimiz muhayyeldir”, dediğimizde, “hayal ürünü, gerçekte var olmayan varlıkları” kastetmiyoruz. Lacan kuramında “muhayyel” kavramıyla kastedilen şey, ilişkiler içerisinde polarize olarak ortaya çıkan biçimsel benliklerdir.

Lacan’ın bu iki kavramını, bu çalışmanın sorularına cevap ararken küçük modifikasyonlara maruz bırakmakta bir sakınca görmedik. Özellikle “gerçek”

kavramını, Lacan tanımlamasının biraz dışına kaçarak, bu çalışmada kimi zaman neredeyse tamamen “maddî-bedensel olan” anlamında kullandık. Lacan da 1950’lerde kimi seminerlerinde “gerçek” kavramıyla öznelğin bedensel boyutuna işaret etmiştir. Buna rağmen Lacan’ın bu kavramı tam anlamıyla ve sadece öznelğin maddî-bedensel yönlerine atıfta bulunmak amacıyla kullandığını söyleyemeyiz. Ama belirttiğimiz gibi, biz bu kavramı bu haliyle yeniden tanımlamakta bir sakınca görmedik: Gerçek, maddi-bedensel olan, simgesel alana eklememeyen biçim ya da özlerdir.

Bu iki kavramdan yararlanarak, çalışmanın kendine özgü bir kavramını geliştirdik: “Öznelğin eşikleri”. Bir öznelği sınırlandıran her türlü araç, o öznelğin eşiklerini meydana getirir. Öznelğin “gerçek” ve “muhayyel” eşikleri vardır. İnsan bedenini işlevsizleştiren, bedensel hareketleri kısıtlayan tüm nesnel gerçek eşikleri meydana getirir. Mesela Avrupa içlerine doğru ilerleyen Osmanlı askerlerini durduran “Viyana”, Osmanlı öznelğinde hem gerçek, hem de muhayyel eşik görevi görür. 1683’teki 2. Viyana kuşatmasında Osmanlı askerlerinin fiilen, bedensel olarak geçmeye çalıştıkları ama bir türlü geçemedikleri engeller, belirli bir zamanda (1683 yılı) ve belirli bir mekanda (Avrupa) Osmanlı öznelğinin fiziksel eşiklerinden bir kısmını meydana getirir. Diğer yandan bu gerçek eşik, bugün bile Türkler için bir muhayyel sınır olmaya devam ediyor. Türklerin Avrupa içlerine doğru yayılması ile ilgili milliyetçi anlatılar içerisinde Viyana, imgesel bir eşik olarak yerini alır. Viyana kuşatması,

gerçek düzeyde 1683'te birbiriyle kıyasıya savaşan, 16 yıl boyunca kanlı kavgalar eden insan gruplarının deneyimleri olmaktan çıkarak, kimi zaman iki "milletin" (birleşik Avrupa güçleri ve Osmanlılar) kimi zaman da iki dinin (Hıristiyanlık ve Müslümanlık) mensupları arasındaki her türlü husumetin ebedi metaforu olarak yerini alır.

## II. Varsayımlar ve sorular

Temel varsayımımız şudur: Cemiyet ve cemaat gibi sosyolojik varlıklar, her şeyden önce öznel bir algılamayla ortaya çıkar. Bu öznel algılama, bir dizi "gerçek" ve "muhayyel" çerçeveye sınırlandırılan bakış açılarımızın ürünüdür. Bakış açılarımızı tıpkı bir pencere gibi belirli çerçevelere oturtarak olayları ve şeyleri birbiriyle ilişki içerisinde görmemizi sağlayıp bize bir tür gerçeklik hissi veren her şeyi "öznelliğimizin eşikleri" olarak tanımlıyoruz. Bu tanımlamadan sonra, bu eşiklerin nasıl var edildiğini sorgulamak, bu çalışmanın özgün yanını oluşturuyor. Şüphesiz, tek tek bireysel bakış açılarını aşarak kolektif bir pencere yaratmak, modern zamanlara özgü değildir. Her tarihsel dönemde, her toplumsallık düzeyinde (kabile, aile, cemaat...) bir tür kolektif pencere bulunabileceğine dair bir sav, bu çalışmanın esaslarına aykırı değildir. Sosyolojinin en iptidai anlatımına başvurarak bu iddiayı şu cümleyle yeniden ifade edebiliriz: Bireylerin gerçeklik algısını ve hakikat duygusunu şekillendiren

(dil, simgeler ve benzeri) kolektif algılama kanalları, toplumsallığın her düzeyinde bir öznellik var etmektedir.

Elinizdeki bu çalışma, yıkarıda ima edilen kuramsal yaklaşımları “Osmanlı öznelliği” adını verebileceğimiz örneklem üzerinde inceleme yapmak üzere kullanmaktadır. Bu amaç açısından bakıldığında bu çalışmanın en özgün yanı, kendine has bir “öznellik” (*subjectivity*) tanımı getiriyor olmasıdır. Öznellik, birbirine karşı kayıtsız, kesintili ve ilintisiz bir durumda bulunan eşya ve olaylar arasında ilişkiler tasarlamamıza yardımcı olan her türlü ruhsal aracın bir araya gelmesiyle oluşan, insana özgü bütünlük hissidir.

Bu noktada, basit ama hayati bir soru ortaya çıkıyor: Yeryüzünde insan toplulukları nasıl oluyor da farklı öznellikler meydana getiriyor? Söz gelimi bir Alman’ın belirli bir olaya bakışını bir Türk’ün bakışından farklı kılan etken nedir ve bu etkenler nasıl ortaya çıkar? Bu noktada, öznellik kavramından ne anladığımızı bir analogi ile biraz daha netleştirelim. Öznelliğimiz, evimizdir. Kapıları, duvarları, pencereleri vardır. Kapılarından objeler girer, çıkar. Duvarları, istemediğimiz nesnelliklerden uzak durmamızı sağlar. Bizi, “diğerlerinden”, “nesnelere”, “ötekilerden” ayırır. Başka bir deyişle, benlikleri birbirinden ayıklar. İç-dış hissi yaratır. Öznelliğimizin pencerelerinden “dış dünyayı” seyrederek. Böylece bu çalışmanın bir başka odak noktasını oluşturan şu soru ortaya çıkıyor: Hem

bireysel düzeyde, hem de sosyal düzeyde “iç-dış” düalizmi nasıl meydana gelmektedir?

Psikanaliz, öznelliklerin içi ve dışı hakkında oldukça geniş bir literatür meydana getirmiş bulunuyor. Başta Freud ve Lacan psikanalizi olmak üzere bazı ekoller, öznelğin “iç” tarafını detaylarıyla ortaya koymayı hedefliyor. Freud’un psişe modeli, id, ego ve süperego gibi artık neredeyse herkesçe bilinen modellemelerle, insan ruhunun “iç” taraflarını, adeta bir coğrafi alan gibi haritalarını çıkararak, tasvir etmeyi amaçlar (tabii burada Freud, insan ruhunun mutlak ve verili bir biçimsel yapısının var olduğunu ima etmez. Sadece kültürel alandan hareketle, insan ruhunun yapısına dair kendi modellemisini yapar). Lacan’ın psikanalizi, “özne”nin kapalı bir alan içerisinde nasıl parçalı bir benlik halinde inşa olduğunu anlatır. Psikanalizin bu iki ustasının dikkatleri bir yandan da öznelğin dış dünya ile (Freud’un “nesneler dünyası” veya Lacan’ın “simgesel alan” veya “büyük öteki” dediği alan ile) ilişkilerini de kılı kırk yarararak araştırmaktan geri durmamaktadır. Ama garip bir biçimde ne bu iki usta, ne de onların çalışmalarından ilham alarak psikanalizi daha derinleştiren diğer takipçileri, “öznellik” ile “dış dünya” arasındaki tampon bölgeden, başka bir terminoloji ile söylersek, “iç” ile “dış” arasında kalan, bu ikisini birbirinden ayıran “sınır” bölgelerinden hiç söz etmemektedirler. İşte elinizdeki çalışmanın esas hedefi, kendine has bir öznellik tanımlaması getirirken, “iç-dış” ikiliğini yaratan tampon alanlar veya sınır çizgileri üzerine odaklanmaktır. Öznelği

mümkün kılan iç-dış düalizmi tarihsel, kültürel ve maddi düzeyde nasıl meydana gelmektedir? Bu düalizmi meydana getiren sınır çizgileri, ne tür malzemelerden, hangi tasarımlar aracılığıyla inşa edilir? Bu soruları, “Osmanlı öznelliği” adını verdiğimiz, dünyaya belli bir mekansal, coğrafi ve bedensel/maddi pencereden bakmayı sağlayan bir çerçeveye odaklanarak cevaplamaya çalışıyoruz. Öznelliğin nasıl kapalı bir alan içerisinde, belirli bir söylemsel ve ruhsal pencereden dünyayı izlememizi sağlayan bir çerçeveye dönüştüğünü anlamak önemlidir.

### III. Biçimsel formasyon ve içerik

Çalışmanın gövdesi iki ana bölümden meydana gelmektedir. “Osmanlı öznelliğinin gerçek sınırları” başlığını taşıyan *birinci bölümde*, “coğrafi oluşumlar”, “yeryüzü şekilleri” ve özellikle savaş zamanlarında etkili olan “engelleme araçları”nın Osmanlı öznelliğini sınırlandırmada ne tür işlevler ifa ettiğini inceliyoruz. Öznellik hissimizi oluşturan, bizi bir başkasına dönüşmekten alıkoyan ilk engel, bedenimizdir. Dolayısıyla beden, “gerçek eşikler”den biridir. Bununla birlikte bedeni işlevsiz kılan, hareketi engelleyen her şey, yine “gerçek eşik”lerin parçasıdır. Örneğin dikenli tel, mayın, *chevaux-de-frise* gibi savaş mimarisinde kullanılan kimi objeler ve anti-ergonomik tasarımlar kadar, dağlar, nehirler, uçurumlar da çıplak insan bedenini işlevsizleştirir. Bunlar, bedensel kabiliyetlerimizi sınırlandıran, dolayısıyla öznelliklerimizi çerçevlendiren

“gerçek eşikler”dir. Gerçek eşikler, savaş mimarisinin etkileriyle her dönemde farklı nitelikler gösteren tasarımlarla iç-dış düalizmi yaratır. Uluslar arası sınır konvansiyonlarına baktığımızda, hem doğal engellerin, hem de tasarlanmış engellerin kullanılarak sınırların belirlendiğini görürüz.

Sınır, hareketlilik-sabitlik ikiliği ile ortaya çıkar. Her şeyin hareket ettiği veya her şeyin sabit durduğu bir yerde sınırlardan söz edemeyiz. Sabit duran bir taraf ve hareket halinde olan bir taraf varsa, sınır vardır. Ve bu düalizm içerisinde sınırı meydana çıkaran şey, engellerdir. Gerçek sınırlar, maddi/bedensel engellerden meydana gelir. Peki engel nedir? Gerçek sınırları oluşturan iki tür engelden söz edebiliriz:

Gerçek sınırları oluşturan birinci engel türü, bir şeyin mahiyet değiştirmesinin önündeki engellerdir. Örneğin, bedenlerimiz, bir başka insan veya başka bir şey olmamızın önündeki gerçek engeldir. Bu nedenle bedenimiz, öznelliklerimizin gerçek eşliğini meydana getirir. Tıpkı kapalı bir elektrik devresi gibi hisleri kendi içerisinde tutan bedenlerimiz, acı ve hazzın vazgeçilmez mekânıdır. Bir başka bedenin acısını duyumsayamayız. Bir başka bedenin hazzını da duyumsayamayız. Kadın ve erkeği düşünelim. Kadın ile erkek arasındaki eşik gerçek bir eşiktir. Bu eşik, simgesel alanda birbirini arayan, ama hiçbir zaman mutlak ve nihaî birleşmeyi gerçekleştiremeyecek iki öznellik yaratır. Bu “nihaî birleşme”nin imkansızlığı, arzuyu ortaya çıkarır.

Gerçek sınırları meydana getiren ikinci engel türü, bir şeyin mekân ve coğrafi konum değiştirmesinin önündeki engellerdir. Bedenimizi veya onun uzantısı olan objeleri bir yerden başka bir yere taşımamın önündeki engeller, gerçek engellerdir. Bu şekilde konum değiştirmenin önündeki engeller de kabaca iki türdür. Birincisi verili, doğal engeller. Yerçekimi, taşlar, kayalar, dağlar, nehirler, çukurlar, denizler... gibi. Diğeri, ise tasarlanmış engeller.

Freud, insan bedeni için mükemmelen uyumlu olan yerin anne rahmi olduğunu söyler. Freud'un tüm kuramının altında bu aksiyom gizlidir desek abartmış olmayız. Bedenlerimiz için mükemmel olan bu alanı terkettiğimiz andan itibaren içine düştüğümüz eksiklik ise, erotizmin temel kaynağıdır. Diyebiliriz ki tüm heyecanlar, libidinal hareketlilikler, insan bedeni ile dış dünya arasındaki uyumun doğumla birlikte kaybolmasından ortaya çıkar. İnsan yavrusu, doğumla birlikte neredeyse kusursuz bir ortamdan, bedenini bütünleme bakımından kusurlarla dolu bir ortama gelir. Freud'un bu aksiyomunu kendi felsefesi içinde yeniden yorumlayan Lacan'a göre insanın nesnelere olan yönelimlerinin arkasında, dış dünya ile arasında kapanması imkansız olan bu fark gelir. İnsan eksikliklerle maluldür. Bütünlenmesi imkansız bir eksiklik bu. Ama bu eksiklik, özneliğimizi var eden, onu ihtiyaçla, taleple ve arzuyla dolduran, inşa edici bir eksiklik.



Freud'a göre insanı bütünlemeye yönelik en kadim obje, anne memesidir. Gerçekten de anne memesi, kâmilten ergonomiktir. İşlev ve ergonomi bakımından insan yavrusunu bütünleyecek niteliklere sahiptir. Fakat insanın temas kurduğu her nesne bu denli ergonomik değildir. İşte insan bedeni ile dış dünya arasındaki "gerçek engeller" dediğimiz zaman, insanın bedensel yapısını dışlayan, onunla detaylarda uyuşmayan her şeyi aklımıza getirmeliyiz.

Şu ya da bu coğrafyada olmak, öznelliğimizin biçimlenmesi bakımından önemlidir. Bu savı temel aldığımızda, Osmanlı döneminde coğrafi sınırların nasıl inşa edildiğini incelemenin önemi ortaya çıkar. Coğrafi sınırların farklı dönemlerde nasıl algılandığını ve nasıl inşa edildiğini görmenin bir yolu, devletler arası hukukun bir parçası olan sınır anlaşmalarına bakmaktır. Bu nedenle çalışmanın belirli bir bölümünü, anlaşma metinlerinin sınırlarla ilgili kısımlarını incelemeye ayırdık. Osmanlı devletinin ve onun ardından kurulan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin yaptığı uluslar arası anlaşma metinlerinden, sınır tespit etme ile ilgili kısımları inceleyerek, "gerçek eşiklerin" mimari ve mühendislikle nasıl inşa edildiğine, ne ölçüde verili ve doğal olarak var olduğuna baktık.

Sınır tespit etme işlerinde en önemli konulardan biri "kesinlik"tir. Sınırların kesinliği, her dönemde önemli bir mesele olarak ağırlığını korumuştur. Osmanlı yönetiminde olduğu günlerde Mısır'da bir köyün epey uzağında bir adam cesedi bulunur. Cesedin bulunduğu yerin köyün sınırları içerisinde mi

yoksa dışında mı kaldığını tespit etmek için, şöyle bir yöntem izlenir: Köyün müezzini ezan okuduğunda ezanın ulaşabildiği en son yer, köyün sınırı olarak kabul edilecektir. Kadı sicillerinde yer alan bu uygulama, o günlerde Osmanlılarda sınır tespit etme işinin, matematik ve coğrafi koordinat sistemlerine dayalı bugünkü sınır mühendisliğinden kimi zaman ne kadar farklı olduğunun bir örneği olarak görülebilir. Bunun benzeri olan sınır belirleme yöntemlerine, hemen hemen her alanda rastlıyoruz. Örneğin *El-Multeqal Ebhur* adlı eserinde İbrahim Halebî, öşür ve haraç vergilerinin hangi topraklara mahsus olduğunu anlatırken, öşür vergisine tabi olan Arapların topraklarını şöyle tasvir ediyor: “Arapların arazisi öşriyyedir. Burası (uzunluğuna) Uzeyb'den (Kufe'nin bir köyü) Yemen'de Mehre'deki büyük taş kadardır”.

Modern öncesi dönem ile modern dönem arasında kesinlik kavramı açısından önemli bir fark var: Modern öncesi dönemde sınırların kesinliği, sosyal ilişkileri ve toplumsal gerçekliği zemin olarak kabul ederdi. İktidarın ulaşabildiği en son birey, devletin sınırlarını gösterirdi. Örneğin bir sınır bölgesindeki insan nüfusunun kime vergi verdiği, sınırın kesinliğini gösterirdi. Oysa modern dönemde sınırların kesinliği, iktidarın insanlar üzerindeki nüfuz alanından ziyade, coğrafi ve fiziksel alanda belirlenir. Modern ölçüm teknikleri, jeodezi bilimi ve uydu teknolojisi, modern sınırların kesinleştirilmesinde kullanılan araçlardır. Bu yöntemlerle belirlenen modern sınırlar, ulus devletlerin coğrafi egemenlik alanlarını kaleler gibi şekillendirir. Böylece modern paradigma

içerisinde ülkelerin sınırları, kale duvarı gibi, kesintisizlik hissi uyandırır. Buna paralel olarak da ulusların varlığı, yekpare ve blok halinde bir mekân tasavvurunu gerektirir. 19. Yüzyılın ikinci yarısında Namık Kemal gibi entelektüellerin düşüncelerinde açıkça izleri görülen bu büyük değişim, 20. Yüzyıl başında politik alanın en belirgin özelliği haline geldi. Başka bir ifadeyle, modern öncesi dönemin parçalı ve kesintili sınır anlayışı ile şekillenen adem-i merkezî ve çoklu mekân tasavvuru, modern dönemin tek parçalı mekân tasavvuruna (*vatan*) yerini bıraktı. Yekpâre mekân olarak vatan kavramının sosyolojik düzlemdeki en önemli yansıması, toplumsal farklılıkların yerini homojen ulus tasavvurunun almış olmasıdır. Böylece “gerçek eşiklerin” modernleşerek yekpare ve kesintisiz bir sınır (ulusal sınır) anlayışını oluşturmasıyla birlikte, Osmanlı öznelliğini meydana getiren “iç-dış” düalizmi de kökten değişti.

Coğrafi koordinat sistemleri, meridyen ve paralel gibi “nesnel” araçların “sınır kesinleştirme” işlerinde kullanılmaya başlanmasının koloni kurma ile eş zamanlı gelişmesi, bir tesadüf değil. Kolonizasyon, insanların toprakla ilişkisinin kökten değiştiğinin göstergesidir. Toprağın ekonomi içerisindeki rolünün değişmesi ise, “sınır” ve “kesinlik” kavramlarında bazı değişiklikleri zorunlu kılıyordu. Toprağa bağlı ekonomik sistemlerde vergi, tabiiyet ve mülkiyet ilişkileri, en az koordinatlar kadar kesin sınırlar belirlemekteydi. Mülkiyet

hukuku, özellikle taşınmazların mülkiyeti, sosyal yaşamdaki pozisyonları koordinat olarak kabul ediyordu.

Modern öncesi dönemlerde, yani jeodezinin sınır belirleme aracı olarak kullanılmadığı zamanlarda, elbette sınır anlaşmazlıkları yaşanıyordu. Ancak, ülkeler arasındaki sınır anlaşmazlıklarının nedeni belirsizlikler değildi. Sınır bölgelerinin sosyal yapısı, anlaşmazlıkların yaşanmasında çok etkiliydi. Dolayısıyla sorunlar, coğrafi sınırların bilinmemesinden değil, bu sınırlara riayet edilmemesinden kaynaklanıyordu.

Türkler Anadolu'ya geldikleri zamanlardan itibaren, sosyal grupların fiziksel hareketliliğini kısıtlayan, böylece bir öznellik ve hakikat duygusu veren "doğal engeller" ile yüzyüze kalmış olmalı. Bazı araştırmacılar, Akkoyunlular zamanında Türkler'in, Bizans içlerine doğru uzayan yedi vadiden geçerek akınlar yaptığını yazıyor. Her bir vadi, Bizans tarafından "*bandon*" (askeri savunma için örgütlenmiş alan) olarak adlandırılırdı. Türkler tarafında ise "uç" denen alan, 1000 metre yüksekliğindeki yazlık otlama alanlarıydı. Yazları Türklerin otlak alanı olarak ele geçirdiği bölgeler kışları Bizanslıların eline geçiyordu. Hatta bu yakın temastan doğan çatışmaları engellemek için Büyük Komnenos pek çok kışını, bu alana dair düzenlemeler getirmeye ayırdı. Selçuklularla Bizanslılar arasındaki sınırları meydana getiren Anadolu plato ve vadileri de, bunlardan geri kalmazdı. Bu alanlar, ekilebilir toprakların "uçları" durumunda idiler. Konar-göçerlerin

çoğalmasıyla, denge pastoral yaşam biçimi lehine dönerdi. Bölgede, yarı-göçebe Bizanslılarla göçebe veya yarı-göçebe Türkler yakın yaşardı ve kültürel ortaklığa sahipti. Merkezi devletin askerlerinin “uç” bölgelerine girmesi iyi karşılanmazdı. Bu “gerçek engeller” ile iç içe geçmiş bir “muhayyel engeller dizisinin”, uçlarda yaşayan ve sınırın her iki tarafından etkilenmiş bir ara kültür meydana getirdiğini rahatlıkla düşünebiliriz. İşte Osmanlılar, devamlı olarak bu “gerçek engeller” ile sınırlandırılmış bir alanda, bir uç bölgesinde, tüm bu birikimlerden payını almış bir öznellikte birlikte ortaya çıktılar. Osmanlılar bir devlet haline geldikten sonra da, devamlı olarak değişen sınırlarını belirleyen anlaşmalar yaparken, “gerçek engeller” ile ilgili birikimlerini her zaman kullandılar.

Osmanlıların toprak üzerinde sınır belirleme deneyimleri, kabaca söylersek, iki alanda ortaya çıkıyordu. Birincisi, ziraat ekonomisinin gereği olarak, toprak mülkiyetine dair kayıtları belirlerken ihtiyaç duyulan sınır belirleme işleri. Vakıf arazileri, mîrî araziler, mülk arazileri, kısacası hemen her türlü toprak mülkiyeti, İmparatorluğun erken dönemlerinden beri kayıt altına alınıyordu. Bu kayıtlar sırasında, ister istemez sınır belirleme önemli bir ihtiyaç olarak ortaya çıkıyordu. Örneğin bir kişi elindeki bir toprak parçasını vakfettiği zaman, bu toprağın sınırlarının belirlenmesi gerekliydi. Bu sınır belirleme deneyiminde esas olan, ziraat ekonomisinin gereği olarak, *toprağın yüzeyi* ile kurulan mülkiyet ilişkisidir. Bu ilişki, nazarî düzeyde kalmıyordu. Pratik olarak insanların yaşamını belirleyen mülkiyet ilişkisiydi bu. Bir bireyin toprak yüzeyine

bağlı ekonomik sistemin neresinde bulunduğu, onun tüm hayatını hemen her yönden etkileyen önemli bir şeydi. Toplumsal statü, hak ve ödevler (savaşa gitme, vergi verme gibi) iktidarla kurulan dolaysız ilişkiler kadar tüketim biçimi, tüketim alışkanlıkları ve diğer toplumsal gruplar karşısındaki pozisyon da, çok önemli ölçüde toprak sistemi içerisinde kişinin bulunduğu yerden etkileniyordu. Osmanlıların ikinci tür toprak sınırı belirleme pratiği ise, devletler arası ilişkilerde ortaya çıkıyordu. 20. Yüzyılın başına kadar Osmanlıların diğer devletlerle yaptığı sınır anlaşmaları, söylemsel yapıları bir kenara bırakılırsa, yine *toprağın yüzeyi* ile kurulan mülkiyet saikine bağlıydı. Avrupa'daki sanayi devriminin zamanla Osmanlı üzerinde belirginleşen etkilerinin mülkiyet ve üretim ilişkilerine getirdiği köklü değişiklikle birlikte, toprak mülkiyeti anlayışı da büyük bir değişime uğradı. Esasen madencilik ve yer altı ekonomisi, Osmanlı devletinin en erken dönemlerinde bile belirli bir öneme sahipti. Fakat *toprağın altı* ile ilgili mülkiyet bilincinin derinleşmeye başladığı zamanlar, modernleşme ile paraleldir. Bu nedenle toprak mülkiyeti anlayışındaki bu değişikliğin 19. Yüzyılın başlarında ortaya çıktığını varsayabiliriz. Ama madenlerle ve “yer altı zenginlikleriyle” kitlesel üretim yapan sanayinin gerektirdiği pratik ilişkinin hayata geçmesi, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra asıl zeminine oturdu. Bu dönüşüm, toprak mülkiyeti anlayışını da değiştirdi. Bunun sonucu olarak artık sınır bölgelerindeki toprakların zirai ekonomi içerisindeki konumu kadar, hatta ondan çok daha fazla, yerin altında bulunan madenlerin varlığı belirleyici olmaya

başladı. Bu yeni toprak mülkiyeti anlayışının en bilinen örneği, içerdği zengin petrol yataklarıyla Musul ve Kerkük'tür. Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonunda kaybedilen bu iki kent, Türk milliyetçileri için bugün hâlâ "Türkiye'ye iade edilmesi gereken topraklar" olarak yerlerini koruyor.

30 Ekim 1918 tarihinde imzalanan Mondros Ateşkes Anlaşması, Osmanlı Devleti'nin fiilen yıkılmasının belgesi olarak kabul edilebilir. Osmanlı devletinin ortadan kalkmasının ardından, kurulan yeni devletin sınırlarının belirlenmesi, Avrupa kadar Orta Doğu bölgesindeki pek çok ülkeyi yakından ilgilendiren bir konu idi. Bugünkü Türk milliyetçiliğinin de çekirdeğinde bulunan temel söylemlerin çoğu, Birinci Dünya Savaşı şartlarında yaşanan travmalardan beslenir. Bu travmatik deneyimlerin merkezinde "toprak kaybı" fikri var. Osmanlılar sadece 1912-1913 arasındaki Balkan savaşlarında 6 milyon nüfuslu, 173.400 kilometrekarelik bir alanı yitirmişti. İlerleyen zamanlarda Ortadoğu'da yitirdiği nüfus ve toprakları da bun kayıplar listesine eklemek gerek.

Çalışmanın *ikinci bölümü* "Osmanlı öznelliğinin imgesel eşikleri" başlığını taşıyor. Bu bölümde başlangıç savımız şu oldu: İmgesel alan, benliğimizin en diplomatik yanıdır. Kendimizi ayrı bir varlık olarak algılarken ve başkalarına da öyle tanıtırken, bu "diplomatik ben" devreye girer. Böylece, tıpkı yukarıda anlatmaya çalıştığımız "gerçek eşikler" gibi, imgesel eşiklerin de bir hakikat duygusu yaratarak Osmanlı öznelliğini çerçeveselendirdiğini öne sürdük. Bu

özneliğin “imgesel eşiklerini” anlamının en iyi yollarından biri, yine uluslar arası anlaşma metinlerini incelemektir. Bu nedenle, Osmanlı devletinin eski devirlerden beri taptığı anlaşmalardaki temsiliyet ilişkilerine yakından bakmak, çalışmanın ikinci bölümünün pek sorusuna yanıt bulmamızı kolaylaştırmaktadır. Diplomatik masaya oturan, anlaşmaya imza atan bürokratların yaptığı işler, bireysel ilişkilerden çok farklıdır. Anlaşma masası, “imgesel benliğin” olabildiğince polarize olduğu yerdir. Örneğin masanın bir yanında Rus temsilci, diğer yanında Osmanlı diplomatı. Anlaşma masalarında konuşulan her şey bir yana, satır aralarında bir imgesel operasyon meydana gelir: Karşı taraftan onanma bekleyen “benlik tasavvurları”.

Uluslar arası anlaşmalar, kuşaklar ötesi bağlayıcılığı olduğundan, aynı zamanda ulusların dikey boyutunu da oluşturuyor. Ulusların “dikey boyutu” dediğimiz zaman, birbirini görme ihtimali olmayan kuşaklar arasında kurulan özdeşlik ilişkilerini anlamalıyız. Mesela Fatih döneminde Venediklilerle yapılan antlaşmalar, 1910’larda bile gümrük vergileri konusunda Osmanlı hükümetini bağlayan bir ilişkiler zinciri yaratabiliyordu. Böylece (bunun gibi pek çok antlaşma) insanların temel kaygılarını, arzularını etkileyerek, kuşaklar arası özdeşleşmeleri sağlar.

Bu özdeşleşmelerin nasıl “iç-dış” düalizmi yarattığını, başka bir deyişle “toplumsal zemin” üzerinde nasıl öznellik inşa ettiğini anlamak için, şu soruya yanıt



bulmalıyız: Osmanlı toplumunun tüm bireyleri, acaba bu anlaşmalardan haberdar oluyor muydu? Osmanlı toplumunun çok farklı etnik ve dinsel alt gruplardan meydana geldiğini düşündüğümüzde, bu anlaşmaların herkesi ilgilendirmesi için anlaşma imzalayan öznenin (Sultan) tebaa ile bir tür temsiliyet ilişkisi içerisinde olması gerekir. Oysa modernleşmeye kadar Sultan ile tebaası arasında herhangi bir temsiliyet ilişkisi yoktur. Modern öncesi dönemlerde Sultan “uluslar arası” ilişkilere halkını temsil eden diplomatik bir aktör olarak değil, hanedanlığın son temsilcisi olarak katılırdı. Başka devletlerle yapılan anlaşmalar, bu anlaşmalardan doğrudan etkilenen dini gruplar ve ticari zümrelerden başka, taşrada yaşayan tebaanın ilgisini çekmezdi. Bunun nedeni neydi? Her şeyden önce, “iletişim araçları gelişmediği için taşra bu gibi konularda bilgisiz kalıyordu” demek yetersiz bir açıklama. Gerçekten herkesi ilgilendiren bir konu olduğunda, belli tahrifatlarla da olsa, haber oldukça hızlı yayılabilirdi, bu bir yana. Diğer yandan, sorun merkezle çevrenin iletişiminden ziyade, merkezle çevre arasındaki özdeşlik-bütünlük ilişkisinde gizli. Sultan, aynı zamanda halife olduğundan, müslümanlar adına neredeyse sınırsız bir yetkiye sahiptir. Yasama gücünün bile üstündedir. Bu yapısal fark, sultan ile tebaa, saray ile çevre arasına ontolojik bir mesafe koyuyordu. Anlaşmaların büyük bir kısmı ticaretle ilgili olduğundan, 18. yüzyıl, hatta 19. yüzyıla kadar, Osmanlı nüfusunun çok sınırlı bir kesimi anlaşmalarla doğrudan ilgileniyordu. Savaşları sona erdiren antlaşmalar sadece savaş durumunu bitirmeleri cihetiyle, belki de Anadolu’daki bir köylüyü ilgilendirebilirdi. Ama, Osmanlı devletinin yaptığı uluslar arası anlaşmaların

büyük bir kısmını bir arada tutan Muahedat Mecmuası'na baktığımızda, "barış anlaşmalarının" bile, bir yığın ticari düzenleme içerdiğini görüyoruz. Bu nedenle uluslar arası anlaşmaların tebaa arasında gördüğü ilgi ticaretle uğraşanların dikkatleri ile sınırlıydı.

Kuşaklar arasında özdeşlik kurulmasında büyük etkisi olan uluslar arası ticari anlaşmaların en çarpıcı örneği, kapitülasyonlardır. Yüzyıllar önce Osmanlı Sultanları tarafından Batılı devletlere verilen ticari ahidnamelerin çoğu (kapitülasyonlar) 20. Yüzyılın başına kadar geçerli kaldı. Önce İttihat ve Terakki, 1910'larda kesin bir dille kapitülasyonları kaldırdığını ilan etti. Ama Lozan'a kadar (1923) kapitülasyonların tamamen iptal edilmesi, tüm denemelere rağmen mümkün olmadı.

Osmanlılar uluslar arası "özne" pozisyonu bakımından, nasıl bir "temsil eden"e sahipti? Temsil edilenlerin (reaya) uluslar arası anlaşmalardaki konumu neydi? Başka bir deyişle, uluslararası ilişkilerde aktif öznelliğin içerisinde tebaa ne ölçüde yer alırdı? Modern ulus-devletin ortaya çıkışına kadar uluslar arası hukukta Osmanlı öznelliği, hemen her zaman doğrudan Sultan'ın kişiliğine atıf yaparak kurulan bir temsiliyet söyleminde ifade edilir.

Osmanlı öznelliğini temsil etmek için uluslar arası anlaşma metinlerinde kullanılan tabirlerden biri "asitane-i Saadet aşyanemiz"dir. Burada "âsitâne" sözcüğü, "eşik" anlamına gelir. Sultan yazışmalarda ve anlaşma metinlerinde bir taraf olarak Osmanlı benliğini ifade etmek için "eşik" ve "kapı" anlamlarına gelen

(südde (eşik); bâb (kapı) gibi) kavramlara sıklıkla başvurur. “Asitane-i saadet aşyanemiz” tabiri, “mutluluk yuvamızın kapısı” anlamına gelir. “Südde-i valâ” tabiri de Osmanlı benliğine atıf yapmak için anlaşma metinlerinde kullanılan ifadelerdendir. “Südde-i vâlâ”, “yüksek eşik” anlamına gelir. Eşik kavramı ile ilişkili olan ve uluslar arası anlaşma metinlerinden Osmanlı tarafına işaret etmek için kullanılan bir diğer tabir “bab-ı ali” tabiridir. Burada “bab” sözcüğü kapı anlamına gelir. Yine “eşik” anlamına gelen ve bu haliyle anlaşma metinlerinde Osmanlı tarafına atıf yapmak için kullanılan bir tabir, “atabe” kelimesidir. “...bab-ı aliyetül’atabımız ve vüfuri sadakat ve ihlas ve furtı istikamet ve ihtisas üzre olanlara riayet ve ihtiramımız...” gibi. “Eşik” anlamına gelen “atabe” sözcüğü ile oluşturulan bir başka ibare “atabe-i aliyemiz” ifadesidir. Bu ifade de “yüksek eşigimiz” olarak sadeleştirilebilir.

Eşik ve kapı metaforlarıyla sınırlandırılan Osmanlı benliği, bazı durumlarda da Sultan’ın şahsı ve ailesine (hanedanlığa) atıf yapılarak temsil edilir. Hanedanlığa atıf yapan ibarelerden biri “hanedan-ı adalet unvanımız” tabiridir. Bu tabiri “adaletiyle tanınmış hanedanımız” olarak sadeleştirilebilir. Hanedanlığın yanısıra, padişahın şahsı da özne olarak atıf alabiliyordu: “Şevketlu Padişah-ı Al-i Osman Hazretleri...” ibaresinde olduğu gibi. Bazen de Sultan’ın birinci tekil şahıs zamiri ile (“ben”) özne konumuna getirildiğini de görüyoruz: “...meşruh üzre sulh ve salahı ben dahi kabul idüp...” örneğinde olduğu gibi.

Osmanlı öznelliğini “devlet”e atıf yaparak uluslar arası düzlemde temsil etmek için kullanılan bir tabir “devlet-i aliye”dir. Bu ifade, Osmanlı öznelliğini devletler arası düzlemde özne olarak zikretmek için en fazla kullanılan, klasik bir tabirdir. Burada vurgu, doğrudan sultanın şahsına veya ailesine değil, devLETEDİR. Uluslar arası ilişkilerin öznesi olarak devlete atıf yaparken bazı anlaşma metinlerine “devleteyn” (“iki devlet” anlamına gelir) veya “işbu iki devlet” tabirlerinin kullanıldığını görürüz. Güçlü olduğu dönemlerde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun devletler arası ilişkilerde kullandığı dil ve üslup, kendi lehine bir asimetrik güç ilişkisi içerisinde olduğu izlenimini verir hep. Özellikle fetih zamanlarında yaygın olarak kullanılan “ahidname” ve “eman” terimleri, bu asimetriyi açıkça ortaya koyar. Anlaşma metinlerine baktığımızda bu asimetrinin daha 18. Yüzyıl başında bozulmuş olduğunu kolayca görüyoruz. Osmanlı benliğinin diplomatik düzeydeki temsiliyet söylemindeki bu değişikliğin sebebi, büyük bir olasılıkla, 1699 yılında ilk defa bir kaç devletin aynı anda katıldığı “kongre” niteliği taşıyan bir toplantıya katılmış olmasıdır. 1683’te Osmanlı kuvvetleri Viyana’yı ikinci defa kuşatmıştı. 16 yıl süren bu kuşatma başarısızlıkla sonuçlanınca, barış için toplanacak kongrede, Osmanlı’nın alışık olmadığı bir zemin vardı. Bir yanda 6 Avrupa devleti (Avusturya, Lehistan, Rusya, Venedik, İngiltere ve Fransa) diğer yanda ise Osmanlı tarafı, müzakere için bir araya geliyordu. Bu diplomatik zemin, Osmanlı öznelliğinin temsiliyet paradigmasında belli ölçüde değişiklikler meydana getirdi. Ama esas köklü değişiklikler, Fransız ihtilalinden sonra geldi. Osmanlı’nın lehine görünen

asimetrik temsiliyet ilişkisinin, “hududtname” gibi tali metinlerin ötesine geçerek doğrudan anlaşma metinlerine girdiğini, özellikle Fransız ihtilalini izleyen yıllarda yapılan anlaşmalara baktığımızda açıkça görürüz. Osmanlı devleti, 1790’lı yıllardan itibaren anlaşmalarda “eşit devletlerden biri” konumundadır.

Özelliklerimizin imgesel eşiklerinin bir de “mekân” boyutu vardır. Mekân kavramı, salt coğrafi zeminden farklıdır. Mekân sözcüğünün ima ettiği semantik rezervuara baktığımızda, bu kavramın salt coğrafi göndermelerden ibaret olmadığını hemen görürüz: Esasen “bulunulan yer” anlamına gelen mekân kavramı, “var olmak”, “bulunmak”, “yekûn”, “kainat” gibi kavramlarla da amlamsal akrabalığa sahiptir.

İkinci bölümün bir kısmı, Osmanlı kimliğinin mekânsal zemini ile ilgili olan bir kaç kavramı kısaca analiz etmektedir. Bu kavramların başlıcaları: “Anadolu”, “Küçük Asya” (Asie Mineur), ve Orta Asya. “Anadolu”, aslında çok eski devirlere kadar giden bir kavram. Ama Cemal Kafadar, “Selçuk Anadolu” ve “Osmanlı Anadolu” tabirlerinin, Türk birliği ideali çerçevesinde modern akademisyenler tarafından uydurulduğunu tespit eder. Bazı kaynaklara göre, Anadolu isminin ilk kullanımını eski Yunan döneminde bulmak mümkün. Eski Yunanca’da “Güneşin doğduğu yer” anlamlarına gelen “Anadolu” sözcüğü, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun yükselme döneminde yeni bir anlam kazanarak Türklerin var olduğu mekân çağrışımı yapmaya başladı. Osmanlıca kaynaklara

baktığımızda, “Anadolu” tabirinin en azından 15. Yüzyıldan itibaren Osmanlılar tarafından sahiplenildiğini görüyoruz. Her ne kadar bu tabirle kastedilen yerlerin kesin olarak hangi coğrafi sınırları kapsadığı belirsiz olsa da, eski Yunanlılardaki anlamına yakın olarak, “doğu” anlamı taşıdığından emin olabiliriz. Anadolu tabiri, anlam yelpazesinde küçük farklılıklar göstermekle birlikte, "doğu" çağrışımını koruyarak günümüze kadar geldi. Doğu-batı karşıtlığında eğer batı ile kastedilen Avrupa ise onun karşıtı olan "doğu" (yani Anadolu), Asya ile eş anlamlı olarak kullanılır. Batı'dan kastedilen mekânların Ege denizine ve Marmara Gölü'ne yakın yerler olması durumunda ise Anadolu, İran tarafalarına doğru olan kesimlerdir. Osmanlı sınırlarının modern ölçülere yaklaşan tarzda müzakere konusu edilmeye başlandığı 19. Yüzyılda, uluslar arası metinlerin dili bu karşıtlığa dayanır. 20. yüzyılın başlarından itibaren "Anadolu" tabiri, modernleşme süreci içerisinde dönüşerek, muhalif ve taşralı kimliğin mekânsal simgesi diyebileceğimiz bir yan anlama sahip oldu. Modernleşme projelerinin beşiği olan Selanik ve İstanbul gibi şehirlerin mekânsal rakibi olarak Anadolu, kentli elit Türk milliyetçiliğinin zıddı olan taşra Türk milliyetçiliğinin anahtar kelimelerinden biri olarak bugün hâlâ kullanımdadır.

Osmanlı özneliğinin ortaya çıkışına dair anlatılardaki diğer bir mekânsal atıf "Asia Minor"dur (“küçük asya”). Bugün bile Osmanlı tarihçileri, Osmanlı devletinin ortaya çıkışına dair anlatılarını, doğuda (Selçuk) ve batıda (Bizans) yer alan iki

iktidar alanı arasından neş-ü nema bulan bir öznellik olarak kurgularken, “Asia Minor” kavramını kullanmaktadırlar. Bu kavram, Avrupalı yazarlar arasında en azından 15. Yüzyıl başından itibaren kabul gördü. 19. Yüzyılda yaşayan Avrupalı oryantalistler sayesinde bu tabir Osmanlılar tarafından da kullanılmaya başladıysa da pek rağbet görmedi ve İttihat ve Terakki çevresi, "Türkiye" adını tercih etti.

“Central Asia” adı ise, 18. Yüzyılın sonu, 19. Yüzyılın başında, yine müsteşriklerin çalışmalarında kullanılarak, bugünkü anlamıyla literatüre giren bir kavram. Özellikle Moğol ve Tatarların tarihine ilgi duyan yazarlar, bu insanların coğrafi kökenlerine atıf yaparken "Orta Asya" kavramını kullanıyorlardı. Türklerin tarihini Moğol ve Tatar tarihiyle birlikte çalışan bazı müsteşrikler, Orta Asya tabirinin Türklerle birlikte anılmasına öncülük etmiş oldular. Batı'nın “Orta Asya” kavramsallaştırmasını aynen alarak entelektüel bir merakı dönüştüren ve bölgeye seyahat ederek “Orta Asya nostaljisi” ile ilgili edebî anlatıya katkıda bulunan Osmanlı yazarlarına daha 19. Yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren rastlıyoruz.

İngesal eşiklerin bir başka boyutunu, “ontolojik sınırlar” oluşturur. Dış dünya tasavvurumuz, bazen “cinler, periler, feriştelere, şeytanlar” gibi soyut varlık türleriyle doludur. Bu tür varlıklara her inananı psikotik saymayız. Hatta Levi-Strauss, görünüş itibarıyla mitolojilerin psikotik bir yapıya sahip olduğunu, ama bir mitolojiye inanan insanı kolay kolay deli (psikotik) saymayacağımız söyler. “Dış dünya” (nesnelere dünyası) denen yapının sağlıklı biçimde işlenmesi

için bu tür varlıklar işlevseldir. Bu iddiayı inşa ederken salt kuramsal çıkarımlarla yetinmemeye çalıştık. Osmanlı döneminden itibaren yarı-ansiklopedik ve ansiklopedik eserlerdeki “dış dünya” tasavvurunu analiz etmek, bu bakımdan önemlidir. Müslüman Arap literatüründen Osmanlı dünyasına geçen “acaib ve garaibler” paradigmasının başta gelen eserleri, çalışmanın bu bölümü için önemli bir kaynak teşkil etmektedir. Örneğin Arap yazar *Kazvini* nin “Acaüb-ul Mahlukat ve Garaib-ul Mevcudat” adlı eseri, farklı zamanlarda Osmanlı diline tercüme edilmiştir. Bu tercümelerdeki “dış dünya” tasavvuru, fetihlerle topraklarını genişleten Osmanlı devletinin etrafında şekillenen öznelliğin “ontolojik eşiklerinin” zamana göre nasıl değiştiğini görmek bakımından önemlidir. Arap ve Fars kültüründeki “dış dünya” tasavvurlarının Osmanlı’daki etkisine, Avrupa toplumlarının yaptığı coğrafi keşiflerle birlikte ortaya çıkan “yeni dünya” paradigmasını da eklediğimizde, 15. Yüzyıldaki rasyonel, dünyevî ve belgesel dış dünya tasavvurlarının yerini neden 16. Yüzyılla birlikte irrasyonel ve doğaüstü dış dünya tasavvurlarının aldığını anlamak kolaylaşır. “Yeni Dünya”, sırlarla dolu, varlık düzeyi “bizlerden” oldukça farklı olan “yaratıkların”, “canavarların” (Piri Reis meşhur dünya haritasında pek çok canavar tasvir eder) yaşadığı mekan olarak yerini alır Osmanlı öznelliğinde. Bu durum, Avrupalı gezginlerin dış dünya tasavvurlarının Osmanlı üzerindeki yansımaları olarak da görülebilir. Ama dış dünyayı belgesel bir anlatımla tasvir eden (Bedr-i Dilşad’ın *Muradname*’si gibi) 15.



Yüzyıl eserlerinin değil de “Acaib-ul Mahlukat” benzeri eserlerin 16. Yüzyılda, keşiflerin ardından daha çok artmasının ardındaki ruhsal süreci anlamak için, “fetih” ideolojisinin İmparatorluk muhayyilesinin “dış dünya” tasavvurunu nasıl şekillendirdiğini anlamak gerek.

1517'de Piri Reis'in dünya haritası kendisine sunulduğunda Sultan Selim I, “dünya bir krallık için ne kadar da küçük!” diyor. Dünyanın küçük olduğuna dair bu hayal kırıklığı, “fetih” ideolojisinin “dış dünya” tasavvuruna ne kadar ihtiyaç duyduğunu gösteren bir işaret. Tüm dünyayı fetheden bir sultan için, artık “iç-dış” düalizmi sona erecektir. Bu düalizmin ortadan kalkması, psikozun temel karakteristiği olduğuna göre, psikoza karşı bir mekanizmanın devreye girmesi gerek. Tam da Osmanlı'nın fetihlerinin arttığı dönemlerde doğa üstü varlık türlerinin yer aldığı anlatılarda hep artış olduğunu gözlemliyoruz. Fetihler gibi, “keşiflerin” de iç-dış düalizmini ortadan kaldırma tehlikesi olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Her yeni keşif, insanın “dış dünya” ile sınırlarını ortadan kaldırma yönünde bir adım olarak görülebilir. Dış dünya ile sınırların tamamen ortadan kalktığı durumda öznellik psikotik bir “iç”ten ibaret olacaktır. Bu nedenle keşif dönemlerinde de “imgesel eşiklerin” yeniden inşa edildiğini görüyoruz. Böyle anlarda “Osmanlı olmak”, bir dünyevi mesele olmaktan çıkıp, “ontolojik bir mesele” olmaya başlıyor. Piri Reis'in dünya haritasındaki “yeni dünya”da bir yığın “acayib ve garayib” bu nedenle yer almaktadır. Boyu yedi karış olan, insan yiyen canavarlar; denizcilerin kara parçası zannedip üzerinde yemek pişirdiği

devasa balıklar... Piri Reis'in bu tür varlık biçimlerine inandığı için "deli" olduğunu mu düşünmemiz gerek? Bu tür varlıkların, öznelğin imgesel eşiklerini meydana getirdiğini ortaya koymaya çalıştık. Gerçeküstü varlıklar, fetihlerle veya keşiflerle ilhak edilen "dış dünya"nın yeniden inşasıdır. Bu nedenle bu tür nesnelere anti-psikotiktir.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **CURRICULUM VITAE**

#### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Name : Coskun  
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#### **EDUCATION**

##### **GRADUATE**

- Middle East Technical University (METU), Turkey. Institute of Social Sciences. PhD. In Sociology (March 2010)
- METU, Institute of Social Sciences. Ms. in sociology (2000-2003)  
( The title of MS thesis: The Uncanny Object: A Lacanian Analysis of Xenophobia. The PDF version of the thesis is available online:  
<<http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/1044858/index.pdf>>

##### **VISITING RESEARCHER**

- Harvard University, (USA), Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Visiting researcher (September 2007-September 2009).

## **UNDERGRAD**

- Minor: METU, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, History and Philosophy of Science (1997-2000)
- Major: METU, Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Department of Sociology, (1996-2000)
- METU, School of Foreign Languages, Department of Basic English (1995)

## **FIELD OF ACADEMIC INTERESTS**

- Major: Xenophobia, intolerance, theories of nationalism, Turkish nationalism, late Ottoman cultural and social context (1900-1918).
- Minor: Psychoanalysis; philosophy of science.

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Currently: Research assistant at the Department of Sociology, METU (since 2002)
- Freelance abstractor for the project of "Muslim Civilization Abstract" at Aga Khan University, London (June 2009 -)
- Research assistant in the Department of Architecture, METU (2000-2002)

## **GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

- Ibrahim Çeçen Foundation, Support for Research Abroad (September 2007-June 2008)
- European Sociological Association, Summer School on "Immigration in Europe". (3 -9 July 2006).

## WORKS AND PUBLICATIONS

### Forthcoming Books:

- Taştan, C. (ed) (2010) *Türkiye’de Freudizm Cilt I. 1921-1928* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları) (forthcoming)
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