INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE: THE CASE OF A
17TH-CENTURY ISTANBULITE DERVISH AND HIS DIARY

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is an attentive reading of the earliest known diary written in the Ottoman Turkish and referred as *Sohbetnâme* in the secondary literature. Authored by an Istanbulite Halveti-Sünbüli dervish, Seyyid Hasan, and kept between the years 1661-1665, the diary provides an unmatched insight into the daily life of the author and lives of his close-knit social milieu of family and companions. The framework of this thesis is inspired by the existing tensions that literature on ego-documents and discussions on individuality presents by locating the pairs of individual-community and public-private in contradistinction to each other. The primary attempt of this thesis is to locate *Sohbetnâme* within the context of historiography on ego-documents and individuality. The main aim of the thesis is to relate the author to his community, and to provide a reading of the diary's content on the axis of public and private life. The diary's lack of thematic unity and its primary occupation with recording the daily life events provides the reader with a wide array of fragmentary information on many spheres of life in 17th-century Ottoman Istanbul. By providing the content of the diary under six subheadings and by evaluating the tone and fashioning of the author in each; this thesis concludes with a discussion on the probable motivations of the author for producing a written representation of his daily life and the possible value of the diary for his descendants in family and lodge circles.

Keywords: Ego-documents, Individuality, Community, 17th-Century Ottoman Istanbul, Daily Life

ÖZ

BİREY VE TOPLULUK, KAMUSAL VE ÖZEL: 17. YÜZYIL İSTANBULLU DERVİŞ VE GÜNLÜĞÜ ÖRNEĞİ

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Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü

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Bu tez, literatürde Sohbetnâme ismiyle bilinen Osmanlı Türkçesi'nde yazılmış en erken günlük örneğinin özenli bir okuması üzerine kuruludur. Seyyid Hasan isminde İstanbullu bir Halveti-Sünbüli derviş tarafından 1661-1665 yılları arasında tutulan bu günlük, yazar ve onun aile ve arkadaşlarından oluşan sıkıca bağlı sosyal çevresinin hayatları hakkında eşsiz bilgiler sunmaktadır. Bu tezin kapsamı, birey-topluluk ve kamusal-özel çiftlerini bir karşıtlık içinde sunan ego-belgeler literatürü ve bireysellik üzerine tartışmalarda mevcut gerilimlerden ilham almıştır. Tezin birincil çabası, Sohbetnâme'yi ego-belgeler ve bireysellik bağlamında tarih yazımı içinde konumlandırmaktır. Tezin ana amacı, yazarı bağlı bulunduğu topluluğa ilişkilendirmek ve günlüğün içeriğini kamusal ve özel hayat ekseninde sunmaktır. Günlüğün tematik bütünlükten yoksun oluşu ve birincil olarak gündelik hayatı kaydediyor oluşu, okuyucuya 17. yüzyıl Osmanlı İstanbul'unda hayatın pek çok alanına dair geniş bir yelpazede bilgiler sunar. İçeriği altı alt başlık halinde sunarak, ve her birinde yazarın tonu ve metni biçimlendirmesini inceleyerek bu tez; yazarın günlük hayatının yazılı bir temsilini üretmekteki muhtemel motivasyonlarını ve, aile ve tekke çevresinden sonraki kuşaklar için günlüğün olası değerini tartışarak sonlanır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ego-döküman, Bireysellik, Topluluk, 17. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İstanbul'u, Gündelik Yaşam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> ESTRAGON: All the dead voices.
> …
> VLADIMIR: They all speak at once.
> ESTRAGON: Each one to itself.
> …
> VLADIMIR: What do they say?
> ESTRAGON: They talk about their lives.
> VLADIMIR: To have lived is not enough for them.
> ESTRAGON: They have to talk about it.
> VLADIMIR: To be dead is not enough for them.
> ESTRAGON: It is not sufficient.
> *Waiting for Godot, Samuel Beckett* [1]

History as an academic discipline had long been preoccupied with the dealings of political and administrative bodies and with those who represent the authority in one or another institution. Those who constituted the very institutions that historians sought to uncover were often treated as a passive and submissive mass of insignificant individuals, whose agency had long waited to be recognized. As a monarch's power to rule is dependent on his subject people, historical inquiry is equally dependent on an understanding of the mass, as it is on the authority. After all, even monarchs were not indifferent to the destructive capacity of the masses and individuals' agency that they actively employed carefully calculated strategies to rule over those.

For the last couple of decades, challenge was neither recognizing the significance of, nor growing an appetite for the study of those who were outside of the power circles

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[1] Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot: A Tragicomedy in Two Acts*, (New York: Grove Press, 1954), Act II, p. 40. A shorter version of the same lines cited in Qi Wang, *The Autobiographical Self in Time and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 42.

but, more of material insufficiency and credibility. Obvious enough, those who were in the position of power were, by and large, those who produced systematic records of their deeds, preserve, and transmit those to later ages for historians to work on. This, however, did not mean that scholars faced a dead end street when they turned their attention to those nameless agents of history. On the contrary, this shift in attention breed a broadening of the historical horizon as scholars begin to add new sources to their repertoire that were previously delegated to other branches of the humanities, and developed new strategies for using the known ones. Stepping outside of the state archives, borrowing and adopting new sources and new methods for the study of history led to a more comprehensive understanding of the events, by not being confined to how they were officially documented but by inquiring into how they were individually experienced.

Present thesis rests predominantly on an attentive reading of one primary source that falls in the category of ego-document.[2] Ego-documents broadly cover genres of documents and patterns of writing in which author presents privileged information about his/her intimate experiences, feelings and thoughts, and thus reveals and conceals his/her[3] *self*. Although their self-centeredness have always been a point of criticism against their accuracy and reliability as historical sources, the very

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[2] "Ego-document" is a term that originated in, and predominantly embraced by, Dutch and German academic circles. Before the invention of term in mid 1950s, scholars have been referring to those documents as self-narratives, first-person narratives and life representations; and some opponents of the term ego-document still do so. Main point of criticism against the use of the term is that, it implies an access into the ego who produced it, however, in fact only a portion of the texts referred as ego-documents actually allow for it. Since the term has almost exclusively replaced alternative terms in English literature, throughout this study the term ego-document will be used. For a more detailed account on the term, see in this thesis: "Ego- Documents and Historiography: A Literature Review".

[3] Several strategies have been developed to bypass the gendered pronouns of the third person singular in the academic discourse, which until quite recently remained predominantly masculine. A non-sexist alternative may require the author of this thesis to use the pairs of *he/she, his/her* together; or use the word *one*; or stick with the latest popular approach and use third person plural *they/their/them* when referring to a non-specific individual. Upon evaluating each with their advantages and the possible confusions they might lead, I have decided to apply a specific method for this thesis. Given that this thesis has two main person, one being the author of the manuscript diary which will be presented in the following pages, Seyyid Hasan (male); other being the author of this thesis (female), from this point on, i will be referring all unspecified historical character and author of ego-documents as *he*, and all unspecified researcher and historian as *she*. Alas, I am fully aware that I fail to circumvent the gender-based language of the academic writing, but at least I hope that I have proposed a functional and equitable method in the scope of this thesis.

subjectivity that ego-documents provide contributes greatly to historical studies by endowing ordinary people of the past with agency. The manuscript diary that constitute the case-study of this thesis, likewise, presents uniquely privileged information about the daily life practices of a historical persona in 17th -century Ottoman Istanbul. It must be admitted from the very beginning that, just like the word persona implies a mask or a constructed self through which one presents himself to the public, this study is confined to an understanding of the author and his world only to the extent that he presented it in his writing.

The term ego-document does not refer to a well formulated literary genre with clearly established boundaries, neither its sub-categories demonstrate a uniformity in their formatting. The fact that they are personal, private or intimate in nature allows for a great freedom on its authors' side, however, more than often pose a great challenge for historian to work with. The most crucial point to keep in mind is that when reading, and studying, one does not deal with the authors' lives; but rather an interpretation and fashioning, a written representation, a cultural product, a literary artefact that has a truth claim outside of the text. The actual lived experience is one thing, the selective telling of it in the medium of written language is another.

Scholarly attention on the ego–documents primarily started among European historians of ideas and mentalities, and paralleled an interest in the concept of individuality. Basically, ego-documents, especially diaries and autobiographies, believed to be products of a heightened self-awareness and sense of individualism.[4] Jacob Burckhardt claimed that it was Renaissance which breed the very notion of individuality and thus, European individual, too.[5] Contrary to the communalism of the Middle Ages, individualism of the Renaissance presented as the condition in

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[4] This long-standing assumption has been critically revised by the contemporary history and literary scholarly circles. As more archival research have been increasingly constructed in recent years, scholars came to conclude that the early modern ego-documents in fact do not satisfy the premise of being solid expressions of the self-awareness or revealing the ego of the author. Currently, they are rather being treated more in their capacity to reveal the socio-cultural context in which they were produced and the writing subject's self-positioning within the community/groups he belongs.

[5] Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, (New York: The New American Library, 1961).

which all sorts of expressions about the self was possible. It did not take long before historians begin to address the issue and inquire into the non-European sense of individuality, or one that predates the Renaissance. By that time, eminent Orientalists like Gustave von Grunebaum[6] and Franz Rosenthal[7] had already declared that there was no such thing as Oriental/Islamic individuality. Followers of this line of argument commented on the nature of Islam which excludes individuality with its emphasis on religious congregation of believers; Islam dismiss the possibility for formation of a self-awareness by prioritizing *cema'at* at smaller scale, and *ümmet* at larger. It is quite obvious that the concept of individuality should not be defined in its narrow European sense but, the problem with all this debate on individuality was that it was never clear what was meant by it. Rather than conceptualizing the term, primary effort was put into finding its products, ego-documents, as the bear witness of individuality.

In the last decades, research concerning non-Western first person narratives has received great attention of scholars. The reason for the growth of the field was partly the discovery of previously unknown manuscripts that brought into light one after another with continuous efforts of historians; and partly discovery of the ego-perspective and accordingly re-examination of the already known ones. An illustrative example for the second case was the discovery of ego-perspective in travelogues. Islamic societies have produced many travel diaries, most of which narrates the journey of pilgrimage; since it was an obligation for those who have appropriate financial means and led each year a great volume of voluntary mobility that was directed to the same destination. However, travelogues, until recently, were often treated as geographical sources. The most well-known example for the case is 17th -century Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatname*.[8]

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[6] Gustave von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A study in Cultural Orientation*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946).

[7] Franz Rosenthal, *Man versus Society in Medieval Islam*, ed. Dimitri Gutas, (Leiden: BRILL, 2014). Also see Franz Rosenthal, " Die arabische Autobiographie," *Analecta Orientalia*, 14 (1937): 1- 40.

[8] See Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*, (Leiden: BRILL, 2006).

17th-century Europe has a special position for the production of ego-documents, both in quantity and in the variety of the backgrounds of the authors. However, the tradition of self-narrative writing was neither an eccentricity of the 17th century, nor was confined to Europe. Although for the Ottoman Empire it would be an exaggeration to claim that numerous ego-documents from pre-19th century have reached to us, the located amount is much more than previously assumed to be possibly exist. Suraiya Faroqhi identifies two reasons for the long neglect of the Ottoman ego-documents: ideological and technical. On the ideological ground, European scholars until very recently have associated the possibility for existence of ego-documents with the 'individualism' that mainly assumed to be a specifically European phenomenon, unmatched in non-western context or in previous centuries. On the other hand, technical obstacles for locating ego-documents were that such documents were usually remained as a single copy or, even worse, they were not independent manuscripts but rather bound to a *mecmua*.[9]

Commenting on the chaotic climate of 17th century, Madeline Zilfi argued that the Ottoman society was discontented with the notion of individuality. For the traditionalist nature of the Ottoman society, extended families and blood bonds, professional organizations, religious sects and orders, neighbourhood communities were purposeful groupings. Muslim elites of Istanbul were in close relations with their families, circles and careers out of the need that living in the imperial capital created.[10] Although this conclusion might well apply to early modern European societies as well, 17th-century Ottoman capital was indeed alert in several respects, that would inevitably strengthen existing bonds, which were originated from the need of protection that uncertainties of early modern world necessitated. However, this could hardly be a peculiarity of the Ottoman society. Contemporary approach is one that does not take the ideal of the Renaissance individualism for granted. John-Jeffries Martin, in his *Myths of Renaissance Individualism*, presents an exploration of

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[9] Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History: An Introduction to the Sources*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 163-164.

[10] See Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Post-Classical Age (1600–1800)*, (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988).

how Renaissance men and women thought about themselves and presented themselves to others, and what abstract assumptions they held about their self.[11] Among many other points, the ideal Renaissance individual that was supposed to break free from all of the traditional groupings as Middle Ages and its communalism ended, was in fact not even remotely unattached from its community ties. As crucial as the sense of individualism, the context of written culture also should have been a determining factor for producing a narration of life.

The context in which the *Sohbetnâme* was produced seems to be the result of a dynamic process of experimenting with writing activity. In a comprehensive and elaborative work, Nelly Hanna observed that urban centres of Damascus, Aleppo, Cairo and Istanbul witnessed significantly increased production of books as a result of lower prices of paper imported from Europe, growth of literate population, and increased purchasing power of a newly forming urban class with literary taste. Inquiring on the increased number of books produced in 18th century, Hanna reaches a larger process of transforming social formations, economic conditions, trading relations, cultural transitions and intellectual attitudes that were rooted in as early as mid-16th century.[12] Indeed, it appears that between mid-16th and 18th centuries, Ottoman society was experiencing a cultural transformation that manifested itself in the changing attitudes towards written culture. Although religious scholars were still predominantly associated with and monopolistic over the written word, early modern Ottoman urbanites' relations with the written culture was becoming more intensive even though they had no connection with professions linked to book and to writing. As new areas of use emerged, written word eventually started to serve as a medium for expressing the self, which is the utmost level of the individual penetration into world of written culture. While writing books on literature, religion, history and other sciences seems to be tools for gaining patronage, perpetuating name or spreading the *'ilm*; writing about the self is an end in itself and signalizes development of an intensive personal contact with the written word.

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[11] John Jeffries Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism*, (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[12] Nelly Hanna*, In Praise of Books: A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

The diary of Seyyid Hasan, *Sohbetnâme*[13] is the earliest diary known to be produced in the Ottoman Turkish. The diary was kept between H. 1072- 1075 (1661- 1665) and consists of two volumes, first of which is 160 and the second is 260 folios long. The general structure of diaries applies to the *Sohbetnâme* as well. The entries are on daily bases, with the day of the month indicated. The diary is in *nesih* script written on white paper, with exception of several yellow ones. Black and red inks are used, latter preferred for recording the name of the days, and first days of months, beginning of religious festivals and holy days, the first word of marginal notes, the name of the host of the gathering of the day, the name of the host whom he spend the night at and the beginning of each part of the manuscript. Throughout the diary, author also uses Arabic and Persian words and phrases time to time.

Although Seyyid does not share any biographical information about himself in the diary, he did not even record his name, we are able to reach information about him through mostly Şeyhi Mehmed's *Vakâyiü'l- fudalâ*[14], a collection of short biographies, and also through Mehmed Süreyyâ's *Sicill- i Osmanî*[15] which presents a shorter account on Seyyid Hasan. Es-Seyyîd Hasan ibn eş-şeyh es-Seyyîd Muhammed Emîn ibn es-Seyyîd Abdü'l-Hâlık, from now on shortly Seyyid Hasan, was the son of *Sünbüli* sheik of Koca Mustafa Paşa lodge in Istanbul, the main lodge of the order. He was born in 1620 and died of plague in 1688. Like his father, he was a disciple of *Sünbüliye* branch of Khalwatiyya order of Islam. Although he could never succeeded his father's post as the sheik of the main lodge of *Sünbüliye* order in Istanbul, as he was too young to take over such a position when his father died, in April 1664 he was seated to the post as the sheik of Ferruh Kethüda lodge in Balat,

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[13] *Sohbetnâme,* manuscript in two volumes, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, TSMK, H. 1426 vol.1, H. 1418, vol.2.

[14] Şeyhî Mehmed, *Vekâyi'ü'l- Fudalâ*, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, II: 25a.

[15] Mehmed Süreyyâ, *Sicill- i Osmanî*, II: 142.

and became second in the order after the sheik of Koca Mustafa Paşa. As it was customary for sheiks, he also became preacher of the neighbouring mosque.[16]

The diary was not titled by its author; it was catalogued under the name *Sohbetnâme*[17] most probably with an inspiration from its content, in which dining gatherings, *sohbet*, constitute the greatest magnitude throughout the whole manuscript. Therefore, it should not be mistaken with Sun'ullah Gaybî's *Sohbetnâme* which was titled by its author.[18] In the secondary literature, it was studied with a central focus by prominent Ottoman historians. Orhan Şaik Gökyay published an article on the diary in 1985, where he introduced the content of the source in a detailed fashion[19]. Cemal Kafadar, on the other hand, elaborated the source in the frame of self-narratives in the Ottoman context. Kafadar suggested that the study on the formation and relations of branches of self-narratives is a key to understand the dividing line between self and society in the Ottoman culture.[20] Both of those works dates back in 1980s, and were in line with the scholarly current of the period which favoured the use of ego-perspective as the backbone of the new cultural history, as will be discussed in following pages. Other than those two elaborate studies, *Sohbetnâme* appeared in some works of socio-cultural history of the Ottoman

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[16] By the late 16th century, it became a common practice for *Sunna*-minded, learned Sufis to be appointed as preachers to the mosques in the quarters of the city where their lodges' located as in the case of Seyyid; or if they were particularly favoured, at the sultanic mosques that attracted large crowds. Derin Terzioğlu attributed the power and the influence that Sufi preachers began to enjoy to be motivated by the sultans' desire to counterbalance the power of the *'ulema* and to build new channels of communication with subject population. In a time of general breakdown in public order, preachers functioned as instruments of social disciplining. See, Derin Terzioğlu, "Sunna- minded Sufi Preachers in the Service of the Ottoman State: The Nasihatname of Hasan Addressed to Murad IV," *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 27 (2010): 241-312, 254-255. Seyyid Hasan, however, never mentions what he preached about, although he carefully records and counts whether on the Friday of the week he fulfilled his duty as a preacher or, skipped for unspecified reasons.

[17] In Turkish "The Book of Conversation", in Arabic "The Book of Companionship" in Dana Sajdi's translation. See Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 133.

[18] Sun'ullah Gaybî, *Sohbetnâme,* Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi.

[19] Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Sohbetnâme" *Tarih ve Toplum,* III, no. 2 (1985): 56-64.

[20] Cemal Kafadar, *Kim Var İmiş Biz Burada Yoğ İken, Dört Osmanlı: Yeniçeri, Tüccar, Derviş, Hatun*, (Istanbul: Metis, 2014); "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature" *Studia Islamica*, 69 (1989): 121-150.

Empire.[21] This interest is a result of the fact that the diary is unique in many sense among other contemporary accounts of life as it provides a great insight into the details of daily life practices of a 17th -century Istanbulite dervish.

First and foremost, the central focus of the diary is the author's daily life, neither politics nor spirituality as were the common themes for its contemporaries. He actively participated in urban life by frequenting the shops of his friends, joining in trips to rural districts, going to swimming, visiting clockmakers shop to fix his clock, touring market square, shopping for food, visiting his friends and spending the night there. Contrary to the expectation, sheik Seyyid Hasan did not record the details of the rituals, how they were performed, which conversation topics were preferred, or how was he experiencing inner processes related to his religiosity or spirituality. Apart from the heavy proportion that records mundane details of Seyyid's daily life, main themes of the diary consists of events that either directly affects the life of the author or those people around him. Turning points in life like deaths, marriages, divorces, births of children and grandchildren, and circumcision ceremonies are recorded by giving a detailed narrative account of the events when author was present in the scene. Most repeatedly appearing records are those related to gatherings of the author and his close circle; records of *sohbet*, *meclis* and '*işret* in each of which author gives the name of the host, a list of the attendants and meals, drinks and sweets that were served. More striking is the records of death; roughly the

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[21] See Suraiya Faroqhi, "Ein Istanbuler Derwisch des 17. Jahrhunderts, seine Familie und seine Freunde: Das Tagebuch des Seyyid Hasan" in *Selbstzeugnisse in der Frühen Neuzeit, Individualisierungsweisen in interdisziplinärer Perspektive,* ed. Kaspar von Greyerz (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2007); Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005); David Waines, Halil İnalcık, John Burton-Page, "Matbakh" *in Encyclopedia of Islam, Secon Edition*; Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Zeynep Yürekli, "A Building between the Public and Private Realms of the Ottoman Elite: The Sufi Convent of Sokullu Mehmed Pasha in Istanbul" *Muqarnas*, XX (2003): 159-185. Thus far, four master thesis have appeared which predominantly concentrates on *Sohbetnâme*. See Aykut Can. "Seyyid Hasan, Sohbetnâme, I. Cilt (1071-1072/1660-1661)" M.A. Thesis, (Marmara Üniversitesi, 2015); Fatma Deniz. "The Use of Space by Sufis in Seventeenth Century Istanbul in Light of Seyyid Hasan's Diary, The Sohbetnâme" M.A. Thesis, (Central European University, 2018); Tunahan Durmaz. "Family, Companions, and Death: Seyyid Hasan Nûrî Efendi's Microcosm (1661-1665)" M.A. Thesis, (Sabancı University, 2019); Ayşe Akkılık. "Seyyid Hasan'ın Günlüğü, II. Cilt (H.1073-1075/M.1662-1664), (İnceleme-Metin)" M.A. Thesis, (Marmara Üniversitesi, 2019).

first half of the first volume is full of entries related to epidemic, visits of ones in their deathbeds, burials and related rituals.

A founding principle of a diary is the belief in its own privacy, writer of the diary principally communicates with himself. However, this principle might not reflect the actual practice, for diaries usually allows for a number of implied addressees, from a fried to a relative to an unknown reader.[22] Indeed, to whom Seyyid was addressing when starting entries of his diary by saying *ma'lum ola ki*, "let this be known [that]"? Using Lynn Z. Blooms's terms, is *Sohbetnâme* demonstrates the features of a "truly private diaries" or those of "private diaries as public documents"?[23] What should be inferred from the fact that it was preserved thus far? Which properties of it were valuable to those who kept it for three centuries one after another? Was it intended as an attempt to write a community history of the author's close circle, his companions who frequented the same lodges, were disciples of the same sheikh, participated in the same rituals, attended the same gatherings and conversations; those who also spend their days and many nights by having meal, drinking coffee, visiting tombs and graves, cooking *helva*, harvesting fruits in orchards, visiting bathhouse, going swimming in the sea, shopping, travelling and taking walks together? Was this close ties among the circle a result of the extraordinary circumstances that originated from the traumatic experience of plague, or was it typical for the early modern Ottoman urbanites, and their European counterparts alike; how did those societies which were used to face plague waves, natural and human made disasters of several kind benefited from locating themselves in one sort of grouping? To what extent early modern individual was identified himself with the community he belongs? Is it possible to historicize the line separating individual from the community he belongs? How to conceptualize private and public beyond a mere spatial division?

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[22] Irina Paperno, "What can be done with diaries?" *The Russian Review*, 63 (2004): 561-573, 564.

[23] Lynn Z. Bloom, ""I Write for Myself and Strangers": Private Diaries as Public Documents" in *Composition Studies as a Creative Art: Teaching, Writing, Scholarship, Administration*, (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1998), 171-185.

Contrary to what researchers used to believe, egos talking about their life and lives of their close social milieu are not a rarity in the Ottoman literature. Some of them have their roots in Sufi circles, like *Sohbetnâme*, some others in scholarly community. Indeed, there are many ways of speaking about the self[24], although each of which posits their own peculiarities. The primary source which this study based on is a diary that lacks any thematic unity, but communicates a wide array of many things that took place in four years during which the diary was kept, and author found worthy of mention. Adorned with the details of day-to-day life of a this-worldly Sufi, *Sohbetnâme* not only presents a promising opportunity for the study of an unorthodox early modern Ottomans' daily life, but also allows for far more than occasional glimpses into the daily lives of those around him. Thus, in an attempt to deal with the primary source at hand in a more comprehensive fashion, this study is not confined to investigate one of the many themes that diary presents; but by taking daily life as the ground, builds on a more inclusive examination. By moving from daily life of Seyyid Hasan, present thesis is an attempt to read *Sohbetnâme* on two axes, one of which is individual and community, second private and public.

This thesis consists of three main chapters. First chapter outlines the ego-documents and how they are associated to the question of individuality in the historiography. Beginning by providing the invention and definition of the term ego-document, the first half of the first chapter presents the discussions on their use value in historiography. As it is the case with all kinds of historical sources, ego-documents have their peculiar pitfalls and necessitate certain reading strategies. First and foremost, ego-documents of early modern age are highly challenging to contextualize given the fact that our knowledge of the age and of the specific information that the document provides are limited. Moreover, because they are individually oriented, ego-documents could mislead one to overlook the fact that they are not crystal texts that exactly represents reality, but in fact a selection, re-examination and fashioning of it. The second part of the first chapter deals with the question of individuality and

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[24] Ralf Elger, Yavuz Köse, eds., *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian and Turkish (14th- 20th Century)*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 9.

the ways in which it is associated to the production of ego-documents in history. By following a chronological order, the second part of the first chapter begins by providing a discussion on the Renaissance and then goes on to discuss the Middle Ages in terms of the context, mentality, motivations and tradition of producing written account of self introspection. In the literature, individuality was a notion that previously attributed to the emerging modern mindset of Renaissance man. A revision of this long persisted thesis, however, claimed that instead individualistic tendencies were rooted in the medieval Europe and did not emerged immediately with the advent of the Renaissance.

Inspired by the exiting tension in ego-documents literature that puts forward an antagonism of community and individual, former often treated as the assimilator of the latter, the second chapter of the thesis is an attempt to present the roots of genres and tradition of self-centred mode of writing in the Arabo-Islamic literature. The second chapter opens up with a discussion on the concept of 'community' and the ways in which in was positioned against individuality, especially for the non-western context. The Orientalist scholarship that defied the possibility of 'Oriental' or 'Islamic' expressions of individuality prior to adopting the ideas and modes of writing that were peculiar inventions of Europe is outlined by presenting the reactions to it and providing some early expressions of self in the Arabo-Islamic literary tradition. The second part of the second chapter is devoted to the problems of locating and studying ego-documents in the early modern Ottoman literature, and presenting some examples that contemporary to the *Sohbetnâme* by emphasizing their peculiarities and, the similarities and differences between them.

The last chapter of the thesis is devoted to the Sohbetnâme, the context in which it was produced and the content of the diary. The chapter opens up with a brief overview of the historical context of the 17th century Ottoman Istanbul. A greater emphasis and length is saved to provide the context of written culture, which was apparently going under some transformation in the early modern era, in which the Sohbetnâme was produced. Prior to presenting the content of the diary, a brief discussion is made on the characteristics of Sohbetnâme as an example of early

modern diaristic mode of writing. A heavy proportion of the chapter deals with the content of the diary; an attempt to present the content not in contradistinction but in lines of public and private. The last section of the chapter presents a brief overall consideration of the tone and content of the Sohbetnâme in the dualities that literature on ego-documents and literature on individuality presented, that is between individual and community, and between public and private.[25]

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[25] In the scope of this thesis, concept of the individual and its derivatives will be used in a restrained manner; they will be dealt with as far as they seem to touch upon an attempt to historicize the cultural tendencies related to individual human beings and their communities. Therefore, this thesis will not be dealing with the individualism as in political sense, but rather will be concerned with the psychological experience that on personal level avail us to distinguish our own being from those of others. The pairs of individual-community and private-public not only defy clear definitions but also pose a challenge for distinguishing in a written representation of life. For this reason, this thesis will avoid to propose definitions, like it will avoid to draw boundaries demonstrating at which point e.g private ends and public begins for Seyyid Hasan.

CHAPTER 2

WRITING ABOUT THE SELF: EGO-DOCUMENTS AND THE QUESTION OF INDIVIDUALITY IN HISTORIOGRAPHY

2.1 Ego-Documents and Historiography: A Literature Review

2.1.1 Invention and Definition of the Term

For the traditional, politically oriented historiography in which great men received highest attention of scholars; diaries, biographies and corresponding of monarchs, military commanders and state elites have always been valued sources. In cases which those great men did not left a document that was penned by themselves, the accounts of those who enjoyed a position in his close circle were regarded as most reliable sources; as logic goes, closer the writer is to the great men, the more historically accurate the account must have been. However, personal literature, in general, is distinguished from other modes of writing by the fact that the author, the narrator and the protagonist of the writing is compulsorily identical.[26]

In the mid-1950s, Dutch historian Jacques Presser introduced the term 'ego-document' that was to serve himself as an umbrella term to cover the specific kind of documents that he was interested in studying: autobiographies, memoirs, diaries, personal letters and the like. He described ego-documents first as "those historical sources in which the researcher is faced with an " I" … as the writing and describing subject with a continuous presence in the text", and later on more briefly as "those documents in which an ego deliberately or accidentally discloses or hides itself". Whether defined as documents "concerning personal events and life experience" or as "a text in which an author writes about his or her own acts, thoughts and

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[26] Philippe Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact" in *On Autobiography*, ed. Paul John Eakin, trans. Katherine Leary, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 5.

feeling".[27] In an attempt to encourage German scholars into the field[28], the definition later expanded by Winfried Schulze to involve an individual's self-perception formed chiefly within his primary societal context of family and community which author presents in whether incomplete or disguised manner; but necessarily justifying a behaviour, revealing a fear, or experiences and expectations of life.[29] Regardless of the minor alterations in definition, what ego-documents have in common is that they offer an unsurpassed insight into writers' world by providing privileged information that is unmatched in any other kind of written source.

Indeed, those qualities are of great advantage to historian, especially if one considers the issue of value and credibility of state generated sources, that in its strictly formulated nature is a textual extension of the policies, discourses and mentality of the prevailing authority. Moreover, official records that for very long enjoyed a higher position in the hierarchy of historical sources without facing serious concerns and criticism against itself, lacks literary aspects in its structure that is based on formulations for recording specific matters in specifically prescribed ways. Those literary aspects of ego-documents, on the other hand, were one of the properties that catch the attention of literature historians, and perhaps changed the whole picture with the mid 1980s revival of narrative in historiography.

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[27] Rudolf Dekker, "Jacques Presser's Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History" *Memoria y civilización* 5 (2002): 13-37.

[28] In 1992, Winfried Schulze ran an international conference and proposed a German equivalent for the category of ego-document by adopting and widening Presser's version of the term. Consequently, however, the term self-narrative (Selbstzeugnis), rather than Schulze's category of *Egodokument*, prevailed in the German academic circles. More influential for the later Berlin research group was the ideas and works of Gabriele Jancke and Claudia Ulbrich. See Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, "Introduction" in *Mapping the 'I' Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, eds. Claudia Ulbrich et all. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 2-3.

[29] Henning Sievert, "Representations of the self in Ottoman Baghdad: Some Remarks on Abū'l-Barakāt Muḥammad al-Raḥbī's Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ʿulamāʾ al-ʿIrāq" in *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th century)*, eds. Ralf Elger, Yavuz Köse (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 117-131, 117. Also see Winfried Schulze, "Ego-Dokumente. Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte? Vorüberlegungen für die Tagung, Ego-Dokumente" in *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte,* (Berlin: Akad.-Verl, 1996), 11-30.

2.1.2 Doubt and Restraint: Early Reflections on the use of Ego-Documents in Historiography

All kinds of historical sources have their peculiar pitfalls and necessitate specific reading strategies, thus, just as state generated sources have their own strength, ego-documents are not free of their own weakness; more than often, ego-documents raised much doubt and many points of criticism about their use in historiography. It is not even hardly possible to encounter a fully recognizable self in such texts, specifically when the text predates 20th century and historians have only fragmented clusters of contextual knowledge.[30] Neither an approach of psychohistory would serve the end since such texts never truly reveal the inner workings of an ego. This is the main point of criticism of those scholars who prefer the term self-narratives for early modern ego-documents; which in fact refers to sources that do not actually offer a wide access to the ego of a historical person. Although every written account reveals something about its author, the opposite is the case when a speaking ego lacks a narrative. Thus, those deserve better to be called ego-document, even though they might not be an individual document but more a record which that does not present a narrative, and therefore do not fall in the category of self-narratives. To make the point clear, marginal notes on a popular manuscript story are not independent documents and do not necessarily provide a narrative, but they are still present a speaking ego when they record, for example, that they enjoyed or disliked the story.[31] Yet, it would be fair to conclude that, at the very least, whether called ego-documents or self-narratives, they allow us to historicize the very notions of the self and individual.

Scholarly attitude towards ego-documents have not always been a positive one that celebrated its fruitfulness, rather use of such documents as sources of historical study

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[30] Kaspar von Greyerz, "Ego-Documents: The Last Word?" *German History* 28, no.3 (September 1, 2010): 273-282, 280.

[31] On the reader notes of a popular manuscript story, see for example, Elif Sezer, *The Oral and the Written in Ottoman Literature: The Reader Notes on the Story of Firuzşah* (Istanbul: Libra, 2015). Also see Tülün Değirmenci, "Bir Kitabı Kaç Kişi Okur? Osmanlı'da Okurlar ve Okuma Biçimleri Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler" *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 13, (2011): 7-43.

initially raised scepticism on the bases of its heavily subjective nature. In the 19th century, when historiography was orienting towards a more scientific approach to past, Leopold von Ranke, the founder of modern history, emphasized the centrality of archival sources as the backbone of any historical inquiry and their essentially objective nature, which would not allow for more than one interpretation. Ranke warned historians against the unreliability of many memoirs since they represented a 'truth' that was distorted either by its writer or by the editors. Until the middle of 20th century, this condemnation endured and memoirs regarded as extremely unreliable by majority of historians.

At the end of 19th century, however, an emphasis on the use and centrality of ego-documents appeared among the members of a small circle of scholars working on the history of ideas which was represented by famous 19th century philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey who advocated the use of autobiographical sources. For Dilthey and his pupil Georg Misch, history "was especially a matter of on-going development of individual" and thus, could be traced most favourably in autobiographies. Misch's work, which was the first and most massive systematical treatment of autobiographical genre from the ancient times to writings of Rousseau, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*[32] ("The History of Autobiography") served as a great example for much research on the history of ideas, and opened the way for the formation of a canon consisting of limited number of authors like St. Augustine, Rousseau, Gibbon, Goethe and Sartre.[33] On the whole, this approach that concentrated on, again, Western-great men of either religious or intellectual sort, have been criticized for its Eurocentrism and for lacking any comprehensive discussion on the concept of individuality; a concept that neither its definition nor its products could ever be homogenous and stable, in neither culture nor in time.

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[32] See Georg Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907). Also see Willi Jung, Albert Wimmer, "Georg Misch's "Geschichte der Autobiographie" *Annali d'Italianistica* 4 (1986): 30-44.

[33] Rudolf Dekker, "Jacques Presser's Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History", 21-22.

2.1.3 Reinvention of Ego-Documents: Social Turn and Revival of Narrative in Historiography

Later *Annales* historians, who aimed to establish history as a social science by adopting the methods and technique of sociology, had no interest in the study of life stories or consulting on such subjective (read as *deficient*) sources, especially when the biographical approach became controversial and marginal even in the sociology.[34]

In mid 1980s, a reaction to *Annales* approach begins to appear which manifested itself most clearly in the revival of narrative historiography.[35] Consequently this reaction led to a reassessment of the value and uses of ego-documents in the framework of this new historiography. As usual, this new popularity of ego-documents came along with new problems and new points of criticism. This time, main argument was that one ego-document could not possibly be representative and thus, for historical accuracy, scholars begin to study on, compare and present many such texts simultaneously. Studies that analyse a large group of ego-documents however, preferred 'historical accuracy' by means of the sociological methods instead of a closer involvement with the literary qualities and peculiarities of each text.

1980s witnessed another very significant change of focus in historiography, this time inspired not by sociology but by anthropology. Within the history of mentalities, Carlo Ginzburg and other prominent Italian historians developed an approach that later named as 'micro history', which valued the analysis of individual text with a greater awareness of their aspects. The micro history, also referred as historical anthropology, initially based on the study of judicial documents and interrogations. Perhaps the great novelty was the way that representatives of micro history treated such sources. In his well-known *Cheese and Worms*, Ginzburg used Inquisition

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[34] Rudolf Dekker, "Jacques Presser's Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History", 19-20.

[35] Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History" *Past and Present* 85, (1979): 3- 24.

interrogation reports of a 16th century heterodox miller Menocchio, and draws a portrait of the miller's mental and intellectual horizon by basing his study on the autobiographical aspects of the records.[36] Another great example is *The Return of Martin Guerre*[37] by Natalie Zemon Davis, in which reader finds a splendid narrative. As Zemon Davis makes the reader to ask, was it indeed possible to establish a person's identity beyond all doubt in the 16th century, especially when mere recognition was becoming dubious and unreliable at one point?

Beginning in 1980s, this shift from a traditional kind of social history towards the cultural history, led to an acceleration of researches on diaries, autobiographies, travel accounts, letters and so on. The impacts of the discourse analysis and the gender theory were significant, as well as the influence of Foucauldians and linguists which reminded that expressions of the individual consciousness are in essence collective. In their extreme variations, those theoretical approaches declared that it was not possible to get closer to a historical subject, whether attempted through the medium of literature or history, because simply the historical narrative was qualitatively not any different from the literary fiction. At the heyday of the discourse analysis in the historical scholarship, Philipp Sarasin, for example, claimed that the only thing that one can gain from such texts was the insight into the occasional references to personal pain and suffering; the only instances when autobiographical writing might actually transcend discourse and consequently might allow for a glimpse at the personal experience. Gudrun Piller, on the other hand, suggested that in fact each autobiography creates its own discourse rather than positing *the* discourse that is only occasionally might be transcended so that the personal experience is revealed to reader. Obvious enough, this creation could not be of individual kind since discourses are essentially collective, thus ego-documents both in their creation and in the way they reproduce discourse are deeply embedded in collective context.[38] On the other hand, historical-sociolinguistic attraction to ego-

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[36] Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

[37] Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Rreturn of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

[38] Kaspar von Greyerz, "Ego-Documents: The Last Word?", 275-76.

documents is grounded primarily on their proximity to *speech* and, on the fact that they alone provide the sound base for a study of 'language history from below' among all the other kinds of nonfictional formal historical texts. Although neither is a perfect conveyer of the speech, historical sociolinguists have mainly focused on speech-like texts such as private letters and speech-based texts like trial proceedings.[39]

Although the scholarly attention to ego-documents appeared after almost three decades following the invention of the term and its first systematic study; texts in which the writer communicates his life with all of its misfortunes, bitterness, sorrows, miseries, joys and delights in, supposedly, absolute intimacy have always received popular attention. Times of crisis rather than of comfort, on either individual level or more extensive sort, such as wars, are both one of the most powerful motivations for producing an expression of experiences and at the same time, most intriguing for reading an account of. However, while reading the self-narratives produced in times of crisis, historian and the common reader alike finds itself between the appeal of reading an intimate document of someone from far past and an awareness of its literary orientation, even sometimes its fictional nature, in which the author contorted the real experience either consciously or unconsciously.[40]

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[39] Marijke van der Wal, Gijsbert Rutten, "Ego-Documents in a Historical-Sociolinguistic Perspective" in *Touching the Past: Studies in the Historical Sociolinguistics of Ego-documents* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013), 1-19.

[40] After all, it is only natural for tragic experiences of the humanity to arose a great curiosity well beyond the academic circles, and might well reach population at large when the right cannels for its spread are established. Perhaps, the best example to illustrate an ego-document's popularity on the one hand, and a lack of scholarly attention on the other, is the diary of Anne Frank, a Jewish girl in hiding during the Holocaust. The best-known diary in Dutch, and read all over the world, diary of Anne Frank posits what Rudolf Dekker calls 'the paradox of Anne Frank', which is "a telling example of the paradox the ego-documents presents, as a text that easily takes its reader back to past, but is notoriously intransigent for professional historian". See Rudolf Dekker, "Jacques Presser's Heritage: Egodocuments in the Study of History", 36.

2.1.4 Challenge of Contextualization, Illusion of Intimacy and Problem of Unreliable Author: Ego-Documents between Selfhood and Events

Historians often warned against the dangers that ego-documents posits by presenting its reader an illusion of getting closer to past as it was individually experienced. However, this challenge is of little concern when one recognizes the fact that ego-documents, like all other sources of history, are not crystal clear texts that historians can extract facts from. Recent scholarly trend is to view ego-documents not only as sources to study of one or another historical phenomenon, but to regard and study those as study objects themselves; in a more comprehensive fashion that involves examination of its content, the context in which it was produced and its literary aspects, altogether. In other words, current approach to ego-documents is not to make them serve to answer the historical question at hand, but to enable them to produce their own peculiar historical questions.

Perhaps the most intimate kind of ego-documents are diaries with the expectation that they convey glimpses into the mentality and daily life practices of the writer. However, reading and contextualizing manuscript diaries is a complicated "detective work" which allows historian much latitude for interpretation, yet gives only few clues. Given the scarcity of textual clues, one can only gain an imperfect understanding of the diarist's world.[41]

Many scholars have commented on the uncertainties of diaries as historical sources since diary is a genre that, among all kinds of ego-documents, most clearly stands in between selfhood and events, between subjectivity and objectivity, and between private and public.[42] The ever present tension between private and public character of the ego-documents is a result of their dual nature in which, on the one hand it presents an "I" oriented account; but on the other hand, both that "I" and its ego-document are products of, essentially belong to and operate within the realm of

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[41] Cynthia A. Huff, "Reading as Re-vision: Approaches to Reading Manuscript Diaries" *Biography* 23, (2000): 504-523, 506.

[42] Irina Paperno, "What Can Be Done with Diaries?" *The Russian Review* 63, (2004): 561-573, 564.

public objectivity of their specific context. The personal testimony presented in seemingly sincere tone in diaries, therefore, inevitably is a reflection of all the conventions of public realm that are inseparably embedded in the author. At this point, historians admit the imperfectness of the conclusions that drawn from the ego-documents of early modern age since a comprehensive contextualization of pre modern ego-documents is simply not possible for we lack additional sources that are comprehensive enough to allow such an endeavour. Roughly put, earlier the account dates, imperfect the contextualization could be and thus, greater the gaps would be for the historian to fill. The way that writers of the manuscript diaries construct themselves and their text can only be comprehended by applying variety of reading strategies simultaneously.

Seemingly irreconcilable polarities between selfhood and events, between subjectivity and objectivity, between private and public are interwoven in diaries to a such degree that inevitably leads one to question those very categories which are simply defined by being antagonist of each other. In addition to ones related to its content and nature, diary as a genre is most challenging to locate in between literature and historical writing, between fictional and documentary, spontaneous and reflected narrative.[43]

As we shall see in the following pages, autobiography in particular has a peculiar position in the traditional scholarly attempts to relate ego-documents to the emergence of an outright sense of selfness and manifestations of individuality. The traditional memoirs are oriented towards the aim of giving an account on public matters, and building upon those provides only a restrained ego perspective on how they were experienced. Letters are simply irreplaceable mediums of communication and although personal exchanges are exclusively self-centered, they can not be inferred as signalling anything beyond their communicative function in themselves. In other words, even though the personal exchanges of letters constitute great sources for many of the historical questions, in the scope of an attempt to historisize the

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[43] Jochen Hellbeck, "The Diary between Literature and History: A Historian's Critical Response" *The Russian Review* 63, (October 2004): 621-629, 621.

sense of selfness or individuality, their very existence is of little use to be elaborated upon. Diaries, on the other hand, are too loose of a literature genre to be appreciated for its authors' intellectual and literary merits, let alone to be appreciated for the privacy of information it provides. However, autobiography is characterized by its inwardness, introspection and self-reflection whose elegant expression counted as the measure of its author's literary intellect. This is not to mean that the authors' subjectivity is best revealed in autobiography, but the literary tradition has placed the autobiography as the milestone with which both the extent of individuality could be inferred and a certain high standard in the art of writing can be displayed.

2.2 Ego-Documents and the Question of Individuality: European Myths of Origin

Beginning in the antiquity, the 'perfection of the self' has always been one of the central concerns of the philosophical life, but the conceptualization of the individual as the self-conscious being who is reflecting and expressing his selfhood is a rather recent phenomenon, and the concept of 'individualism' has often argued to be the base of the modern ideology.[44] With the advent of Romantic Era, the revival of the Neo-Platonic ideals of the soul allowed for a wide-spread emphases and awareness for the capacity of the individual as the fully active and conscious agent of the cultural domain he operates within, highly valued both in his aesthetic potentialities and uniqueness in artistic practice.[45] Although the formulation of the concepts of individual and individuality that we are most accustomed are quite recent, and have no such elaborated equivalents in the Antiquity or the Middle Ages, it does not mean that it would be anachronistic to apply the terms to pre 18th century context. After all, both the individual human and a dominant approach to his being was always present

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[44] See Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[45] Haijo Westra, "Individuality, Originality and the Literary Criticism of Medieval Latin Texts" in *Poetry and Philosophy in the Middle Ages: A Festschrift for Peter Dronke,* ed. John Marenbon, (Leiden: BRILL, 2001), 281-292, 281-282.

in each culture and in each historical period; whether defined through his relation to Greek City States, or his path for the salvation and unification with God, or as located in his immediate circle of others.

Even though accepted as an exclusively Western phenomenon until very recently, the weakness of the sense of individuality is not always attributed those societies which usually described as primitive. Ancient Greek and Hellenistic civilizations had a rich repertoire of concepts related to community but they had no equivalent assigned to concept "person".[46] However, it is often argued that the Eastern cultures had left less space for the individual and the Western individualism was not a common experience, but rather almost an eccentricity among cultures. At times, it was interpreted to have emerged in relation to religious motivations and at others to the exact opposite, a separation from those. As the sense of being individual is reserved for the Western culture, so did the literary products that are of personal character, and are expressions of self-exploration and experience such as biography, autobiography, diary, memoir and portrait were accepted as unknown or undeveloped in non-Western context.

2.2.1 Renaissance Man: First-Born Sons of Modern Europe?

In the scholarly and popular minds alike, the concept of individual with all of its derivatives has always been most readily linked to the Renaissance culture. Although it is a matter of debate in today's scholarly circle that whether there was a Renaissance at all, Jacob Burckhardt who produced one of the most genuinely seminal works of history on the Renaissance culture and established an orthodoxy in the field that for long remained unchallenged, was the main propagandist to claim that it was actually the starting point of the modern times. First published in 1860, in is highly reputed and heavily criticized work *The Civilization of the Renaissance in*

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[46] Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050- 1200* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 2.

Italy,[47] Burckhardt claimed that Renaissance Italy was the unique political and cultural stage from which modern man born. The political circumstances of Italy was, according to Burckhardt, what allowed for the early development of Italian man into modern individuals, the first born sons and the core of modern Europe. Prior to their transformation, or rather their *becoming*, to individuals and recognizing their selves as such, "man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family, or corporation –only through some general category" and only with the advent of the Renaissance "man became a spiritual individual, and recognized himself as such".[48] It was first and foremost the Renaissance Italian who striped off from the illusions that dominated the way they grasped the world and their very own existence in the previous centuries, and who accomplished the process of distinguishing himself from the group he belonged. Despotism, wealth, leisure, arts, learning, cosmopolitanism of the 14th century all played a role in the formation of the markedly worldly individualism in the following two centuries that is unmatched.[49]

A similar observation to Burckhardt's was made by Stephen Greenblatt that the 16th century Europe was the stage for the formation of the individual as self-conscious about his capacity to fashion his identity; a consciousness that previously existed among the elites of the classical world but later inhibited by the Christianity's understanding of men to shape their identity, as inherently incompetent and flawed beings. Moving from the Geertzian preposition that the humans themselves are cultural artifacts, Greenblatt claimed that the concept and act of self-fashioning defies any sharp boundaries between literature and social life.[50] Indeed, literature is an central component and conveyor of a given culture; and whether fictional or

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[47] Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (New York: The New American Library, 1960).

[48] Jacob Burckhardt, "Part Two: The Development of the Individual" in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 86.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 1-11.

intimate, intimate as in our case, in each work of literature self-fashioning is embedded.

The major points of opposition to Burckhardt, obviously, were that the Renaissance did not constituted the beginning of the modern era but the conclusion of the medieval period; and the qualities that Burckhardt regarded as exclusively belonging to the Renaissance Italy were already present in the previous centuries and outside of Italy.[51] Other than this broad line of argument, Natalie Zemon Davis, for example, argued that contrary to Jacob Burckhardt's claim, the exploration of the self in 16th century France was not a product of man's dissociation from the community he belongs, but rather exploration of the self was made "in conscious relation to the groups to which people belonged" and "the greatest obstacle to self definition was not embeddedness but powerlessness and poverty".[52] For 16th century France with a broadened focus beyond the individual, Davis asserted that embeddedness in patriarchal family structure did not prevented the individual's self-discovery but rather prompted it especially for women and young males.[53]

2.2.2 Renaissance Revised: Revolt of the Medievalists

It was, however, with "the revolt of the medievalists" [54] that the characteristics which Burckhardt argued to have belonged 14th and 15th centuries claimed to have sprang actually in 12th century. The concepts of 'Humanism', 'Renaissance', 'the discovery

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[51] Irene Gordon, "Introduction" in Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*.

[52] Natalie Zemon Davis, "Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France" in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, eds.Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, David E. Wellbery, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 53-63, 53.

[53] Ibid., p.63. For an elaborate and gripping work on the three early modern self-narratives authored by women -one Jewish merchant with 12 offspring, one Catholic mystic and one Protestant painter- see Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[54] The "revolt of the medievalists" as Wallace K. Ferguson called it in *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation*, cited in Caroline Walker Bynum in "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?".

of nature and man' both in their narrow and in philosophical definitions all claimed for the 12th century along with, and most importantly, individual. Beginning around 1970s, the increasing claims for the importance of the 12th century concentrated around the discovery of the individual as the author and protagonist, as the subject of self-discovery and self-examination, and as increasingly sensitive to boundary separating self and other, and as the agent of individual achievement.[55] The most significant implication of this shift in attention from the Renaissance to the Middle Ages was that the first line of argument was based on the European societies' exploration of themselves and the consequent esteem they placed on the human capacity and worth. Those processes have often been claimed to parallel with their retreat from the religious ideals related to human beings and their heavy reliance on the divinity. To the exact opposite of the first, the latter line of argument that prioritized the socio-cultural context of the Middle Ages for the emergence of individual relies primarily on the role of religion and the individual effort for unity with the divine.

2.2.2.1 Confessional Mode of Writing

The tradition of confessional writing which has a central position for Western literary tradition of personal writings, begin to emerge around 4th century with Saint Anthony, "the patron saint of the personal diary" in Philippe Lejeune's terms. What Saint Anthony proposed and advocated for the believers was simply a method to keeping track and ultimately eliminate sins and wrongdoings; observing one's own soul, and writing down of the deeds and happenings as if they were being told to others. However, the step that will evolve to the diary form was offered by Saint Basil, who recommended to concentrate on a single specific fault on daily basis, thus opened up the path to observe and write down the self over time. Throughout the Middle Ages this technique persisted within a relatively small segment of the society

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[55] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?" *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31, no.1 (1980): 1-17.

and mainly among the religious communities, but later inspired the Christian tradition of Confession.[56] However, the encouragement of self-examination in the Christian asceticism of the Middle Ages was mostly influenced by Saint Augustine, who proposed a new spiritual task through which the believers could reach the meaning of his own existence.

St. Augustine of Hippo was an early Christian theologian of 4th century whose confessional autobiography, *Confessions*[57], is often claimed to mark the beginning of a spirituality that is concerned primarily with the examination of the individual believer's soul by himself. With Augustine's *Confessions*, there emerged a model for a new spirituality that prioritized introspection and reflection of the evaluation of one's own faith; a model which for long had served as the canon of the Christian self-examination. The peculiarity of the Augustine's *Confessions* in the Western literary tradition lies perhaps not so much in the fact that it is the first written account in which the author systematically concerned about and reflects his self, but rather that is the first example that we "encounter a recognizable concept of the self as a project of 'self-improvement'".[58] St. Augustine and his *Confessions* still remain important in the study of the Western literature, as well as in the study of the Western Christendom. A concern with the intimacy of the private individual has not yet been located prior to Augustine who is argued to be the very first *subject* in the known literary history. Thus the *Confessions* remains as the first literary self-creation of an individual both as object and subject.[59]

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[56] Philippe Lejeune, *On Diary*, eds. Jeremy D. Popkin, Julie Rak, trans. Katherine Durnin, (University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 55.

[57] See Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. Edward Bouverie Pusey, (Auckland: Floating Press, 1921).

[58] Haijo Westra, "Individuality, Originality and the Literary Criticism of Medieval Latin Texts" in *Poetry and Philosophy in the Middle Ages: A Festschrift for Peter Dronke*, ed. John Marenbon, (Leiden: BRILL, 2001), 281-292, 283.

[59] John Freccero, "Autobiography and Narrative" in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, eds.Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, David E. Wellbery, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 16-29, 16.

Autobiographical texts, written retrospectively, usually narrate a process of progress, development or transformation to the better self one now is, how one came to be what he is now. The idea of development itself is an essentially retrospective one. The transformation that Augustine, like many other autobiography writers, has gone through towards the faith is worthy of telling only with reference to worth of its ending. The ending of the development is what gives meaning and significance to all what has been recounted prior to it, to the whole account itself. Indeed, had he not reached the state of faith, there wouldn't have been a story to tell, thus the autobiography itself.[60]

The Christian confessional narrative tradition has its roots in the Doctrine of Salvation which occupies the central theme in the Christian theology. Beginning in the early phases of formation of the Christian theology, the perfection of the soul emerged as the main Christianity project. Theoretically, the project of perfection ends when the individual's unification with god is accomplished, which means purification of the sinful. The salvation, then, is achieved when the individual mystic is dissolved in the divinity; in fact, when the *self is vanished*. In order to exemplify the point with the *Confessions*, for Augustine his sins result from illicit selfhood and autonomy and he is destined to sin unless he accomplishes to integrate his self to the divine. Thus, Augustine's *Confessions* can be interpreted as "the creation of a modern self who establishes his coherent life story and, paradoxically, as a premodern denial of the validity of such a creation. What survives for us is the literary genre, transvalued and secularized."[61] Indeed, the theological paradoxes are of little concern for the scope of this thesis as long as the process breeds a self-narrative.

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[60] Mark Freeman, *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 44.

[61] Thomas C. Heller, David E. Wellbery, "Introduction" in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, eds. Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, David E. Wellbery, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 1-15, 3.

2.2.2.2 Monastic Life: Individual Monk and Community of Order

Monasteries undoubtedly were one of the most genuine institutions of the medieval Western world and they were, as it appears, closely linked to social attitudes related to individual and community. Those who chose the monastic life retreated from their immediate community -of kin, neighbours and like- only to replace it with a community which they joined with full initiative. In this new and purposeful grouping and isolation, they were able to find a spiritual and intellectual companionship in contrast to more coincidental and unavoidable traditional community. However, voluntary their new community may be, the monasteries were heavily crowded and monastic life was busily ordered thus, again, seem to have left little room for the individual in his capacity for initiative and expression.

Richard William Southern in *The Making of the Middle Ages*, takes western Europe of the period between the late 10th century to the early 13th century as a period of changing attitudes and shifts of emphasis which altered every sphere of life. Southern claims that, beginning in the 10th century, the increasing reputation and popularity of the Benedictine monasticism in the Western European society was followed by a decline in the emphasis on community. The monastic ideal of the 10th and 11th centuries, created the urge for devoted believers to follow a pursuit of life in the asceticism and spirituality of the monastic life. However, The Rule of St. Benedict prescribes a static monastery life; individual had to live in accordance with laborious and busily ordered daily routine of services with his fellows, and was not allowed to leave the monastery before his death. It was a life devoted to absolute discipline, frozen in time and highly repetitive. Moreover, it was a communal life which did not allowed for privacy, thus in short time the individual was stripped from his personality in the communality of monastery. For Southern, by the end of the 12th century, the individual emerged from his communal background through a mentality change that emphasized individual expression which accompanied by broader opportunities for privacy. The change in mentality was one related to religious self-inspection and expression. Men begin to perceive themselves less as stationary objects and more as pilgrims; their lives less as exercise of endurance and more as

seeking.[62] Thus, the change arrived at the point which individual begin to take a step back from the crowded and pre-ordered life of monastery which was believed to be the gateway to paradise a century earlier. This new way of thought and feeling, as Southern suggests, was not confined to religious life and found expression in secular society, since monastic life was always communicated to those who were not necessarily aspired by a high degree of religiosity. Similarly, Colin Morris argued that the 'discovery of the individual' was a Western invention of the period between 1050 and 1200, during which the value attributed to individual was inherited from the classical Christianity. Accompanied by broader changing social conditions and revolution in learning, the twelfth century Renaissance owed a great deal to the virtue of self- knowledge that Fathers of the Church and monastic communities initiated. The pre-conditions for the major discovery of the individual were established by the Christian ideal of self-examination, self-knowledge and self-expression.[63] With the Reformation, holistic and hierarchical Christian community was increasingly begin to be recognized as being formed by individuals. Traditional community was being devalued in favour of triumph of the individual.[64]

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[62] R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 221-223.

[63] Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050- 1200* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

[64] Against both of the claims, Caroline Walker Bynum argued that, the religion-inspired newly emerging concerns for the inner self and the urge to produce a written expression of it, which characterize the 12th century Western culture and institutions, was in fact a tendency initiated by the new forms of communities but not their dispensation at the expense of individual. Newly emerging ways of thinking about group affiliation, influence of spiritual models and other-identification were reflections of the increasing concern for 'outer man' which inspired for the exploration of the self, 'inner man'. See Caroline Walker Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?" *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31, no.1 (1980):1-17. For an elaborative investigation of the relationship between person and community, and the ways in which medieval people relate to their communities, and the extent to which self in the Middle Ages can be claimed to be *individual* free of group, institution and community pressures, see Rachel Fulton, Bruce W. Holsinger, eds., *History in the Comic Mode: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), for an range of influential introductory questions, see "Introduction: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person".

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL: FROM THE ORIENTALIST SCHOLARSHIP TO THE DISCOVERY OF EGO-DOCUMENTS IN THE ISLAMIC LITERATURE

Humanism and individualism, although they are not the same, share the belief in the value of human beings. Alain Renaut argued that a distinction between subject and individual must be attempted in their corresponding theoretical grounds of humanism and individualism. Basically put, humanism is the valorization of humanity for the autonomy in act. The humanistic man alone is the source of both all his actions and representations, and norms and laws which he established in the guidance of his own reason and will. Individualism, however, places the emphasis on independence, rather than the autonomy. Individual's independence in his private affairs is the conventional measure of modern individualism. The philosophical predicament here is that, theoretically, the notion of autonomy is perfectly compatible with the individuals subjugating themselves to, for example, the authority, norms and laws of the community. The ideal of independence that individualism advocates, on the contrary, is irreconcilable with any limitation of the self; it aims at the absolute affirmation of *self* as the value which subordinates the social whole.[65] In other words, individual is the supreme value that can be subjected neither to the laws of God or the authority of church and monarch, nor he is destined to conform the societal norms that he himself did not part-take in forming. Then, modern individualism rests on the foundation of humanism, upon which it arrived and established the greater sovereignty of man, by destroying the possibilities for even the previous forms of voluntary submission. Although, the autonomy of subject is a much debated, and even an altogether denied notion by some, the central value placed on the individual freedom still remains. For the modern political philosophy, the pair of individual and

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[65] Alain Renaut, *The Era of the Individual: A Contribution to a History of Subjectivity*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise, Franklin Philip (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 17- 19.

society is a popular theme as one restricting or consuming the autonomy or freedom of the other.

First and foremost, the most common assumption is that individual emerges from his communal backgrounds, individual existence at the expense of community. Often retrospectively and very vaguely interpreted, the main arguments that circumscribe the term individualism can be combined into the definition, in the scope of this thesis, that "Individualism is a belief system that privileges the individual over the group, private life over public life, and personal expression over social experience."[66] It coincides the historical moment at which men initiated the attempt to free themselves from their immediate milieu of family and clan, questioned the heavy burden of customs, demand more room for privacy, seek the company of only those whom they choose. In other words, individualism is the men's cataclysm against, and breaking of the traditional restrictions imposed by the communality.

Although a taken-for-granted for Western world, the Orientalist scholarship had repeatedly declared the supposed limitations on the emergence of the sense of self, individuality, in the Islamic culture. General opinion was that Islamic emphasis on religious congregation of believers, *cema'at*, prevented Muslims from developing the notion of individuality in the form that emerged in the Renaissance Europe. Consequently, regarding themselves solely as the members of the *cema'at*, Muslim societies could not have developed the related literature genres that are speaking about one's self. In other words, existences of written accounts of life are taken as the natural outcome and thus, a symbol of individuality; lack of which was symptomized by lack of diaries, autobiographies and the like.[67] Clearly, searching to

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[66] Peter L. Callero, *The Myth of Individualism: How Social Forces Shape Our Lives* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2013), 17. Callero's full definition is that "Individualism is a belief system that privileges the individual over the group, private life over public life, and personal expression over social experience; it is a worldview where autonomy, independence, and self-reliance are highly valued and thought to be natural; and it is an ideology based on self-determination, where free actors are assumed to make choices that have direct consequences for their own unique destiny."

[67] "The questions about individuality, self-consciousness and the constitution of the self (with traditions stretching back to Jacob Burckhardt and forward to the present) smuggle in, largely invisibly, normative constructions about the period, place and persons. Such questions ask whether a particular stage of consciousness or personality has or has not yet been reached, whether an author has

find the notion of individual and related production in literature exactly as it is found in the Western culture could not provide meaningful inferences for the Muslim societies.

3.1 Community: Defining the Term, Positioning Against the Individual

'Community' is one of the words that is used in daily speech very frequently but pose great challenge to social scientists when it comes to define what exactly it is. Although it is highly problematic to reach a consensus on its definition, the term cannot be avoided by historian and sociologists alike. As it is also the case with the term 'culture', what community means is a question of commonsense knowledge on the one hand, yet on the other hand, the term is loaded with ambiguities about its nature and scope. Perhaps the first characteristic that comes to mind of contemporary user is that it is a somewhat nostalgic term referring to a social structure that is no longer as vital as it was in the past. The most strikingly apparent feature of the community for ordinary user is its supposed irreconcilability with urbanized, specialized and diversified societies of today. Although it can be debated whether or not it would be anachronistic to apply the term 'community' to refer any sort of contemporary groupings,[68] the scope of this thesis allows remaining in the safe waters for it will be dealing with communities of pre-industrialized world.

The basic implication of the community is twofold; it refers to a group of people who have something in common with each other and, that sameness on one ground

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become independent of traditions as well as of religious and social relations, what significance is accorded to a person's "inner life," and the degree to which a self-representation reveals self-reflective intellectualization." See Gabriele Jancke and Claudia Ulbrich "From the Individual to the Person Challenging Autobiography Theory" in *Mapping the 'I': Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, eds. Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 13-33, 23.

[68] See Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft: Abhandlung des Communismus und des Socialismus als empirischer Culturformen* (Leipzig: Fues, 1887), or see a later edition of the work *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft : Grundbegriffe der reinen Soziologie* (Berlin: Karl Curtius, 1922). For the English translation of the work, see Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society,* ed. Jose Harris, trans. Jose Harris, Margaret Hollis, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

distinguishes them from the members of other groups. At the very base, a community is a product of the interplay of similarity and difference, it brings together those who are like each other and demarcate them from those others who are not like them. Thus, first and foremost, community is a *relational* concept. This brings us to community's second characteristic, that is *boundary*. Each community draws borders that serve to include its members and exclude them from the members of the other communities, in other words, boundary sets the limits of the beginning and end of a community within the larger society. British social anthropologist Anthony Cohen claims that this very boundary encapsulates the identity of the community and, thus, the identity of the individual who is a member of it. It functions for the members to distinguish themselves from the others in their social interactions; boundaries are drawn because communities are, or wish to be, distinguished when they interact with other social entities.[69] Boundaries of communities are, thus, constructed by the interaction of the people and the communities with each other.

Thus far the concern was that how a community is formed and enclosed externally; by explicitly embracing its members and decisively excluding outsiders with its sharp boundaries. The primary concern of this thesis, however, is related more to its internal traits. A community is a grouping within which a high degree of likeness of the members and their characterization with the collective identity is the expectation. Likewise, the term prioritize the sense of belonging of the members, and thus implies cohesion, harmony and solidarity among them as the norm. The obvious conclusion that can be drawn is that community is a social grouping with a high degree of homogenizing potential. When conceptualized in this way, then, community leaves little space for the individual in this idealized collectivity.

Inquiring into the relation between languages and communities in early modern Europe, Peter Burke claims that the danger of the term originates from its implication for homogeneity, boundary and consensus that in reality are absent.[70] Theoretically,

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[69] Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 2001), 12.

[70] Peter Burke, *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5-6.

it makes great sense to dispense the assumption that a group of people joined together on the basis of their sameness, and separated themselves from the outsiders with clearly established boundaries. This might be the case of an ideal community in an ideal world, but hardly it seems to resemble the real life experience. People neither belong to a single community nor they identify themselves solely with their being a part of it; neither they are overtly same with the other members of the community nor their individual being is ceased to exist at the moment they become a member. Commonality which is inherently present in all sorts of community to some extent, does not necessarily means uniformity or homogeneity. Members of a community could never be duplicates of one another; they pose a degree of commonality on the ways of behaving (forms) but the meanings they give (content) vary considerably among them.[71] What is for sure is, man has always seek to increase his chances for survival and protection, influence, favour and support he could potentially receive by making alliances outside of his immediate milieu of family and clan, and by identifying himself with other individuals through his involvement in voluntary groupings. However, those have always been various; increased in number and narrowed down in purpose and scope through the history. Thus, historian has been left with a challenge when she attempts to reconstruct the multiple belongings and identities between which her study subject had, seemingly, negotiated on daily bases.

Perhaps, a more fertile approach to community and its importance in people's experience would be one concerned more with the symbolic aspects of it, as Cohen suggests community itself is essentially symbolic in nature.[72] Obviously, communities have no intrinsic meanings in themselves; but their existence depends on the meaning and the value that their members attribute to them. Still, a definition of the community has not been provided yet. What is a community in the first place? What is its social function in the everyday lives of people? More importantly, what is its significance for those who are a member of it? What does it mean to be part of a

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[71] Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, 20.

[72] Ibid.,14.

community for its members? How far do they attach and commit themselves to the community in their everyday life? What was the members' experience of community?

In all, community is a social entity which is on the one hand more inclusive than kinship and not confined to bloodline and on the other, more immediate and concrete than the abstraction that we call 'society'. It is the ground on which people acquire their most fundamental and primary experience of social life. By learning how to establish, maintain and express friendship, community is where one learns and practice to be social; or more precisely community is where one acquires the symbols that would equip and enable them to be social.[73]

The evolutionary approach to social transformation is a familiar one presupposing that basically, societies moves from simple or 'primitive' to complex or 'advanced' forms of social organization in a linear fashion, and this transformation is a historical process of development. In the same vein, the social transformation that Ferdinand Tönnies advocated was a historical change of social context from *Gemeinschaft* (community), to *Gesellschaft* (society).[74] This transformation of the social context, as theory proposes, changed peoples' daily life practices fundamentally as the process moved them out from the confines of an immediate milieu of family, kin, neighbours and close associates which constituted their entire repertoire for sociability. The social life of *Gemeinschaft* was characterized by the close-knit community in which every member personally knows each other and interacts on regular basis; in other words, individuals' social world was under the occupation of his *similar*. On the contrary, *Gesellschaft* is characterized by almost perfect anonymity of the individuals who simultaneously interact with distinct groups and people through their various identities, without necessarily being overtly attached to one. Thus, community in

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[73] Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, 15-16.

[74] For the translation of the words in Turkish, see for example, Mehmet Fikret Gezgin, "Cemaat-Cemiyet Ayırımı ve Ferdinand Tönnies." *Sosyoloji Konferansları* 22 (1988): 183- 201. *Gemeinschaft* (community) is translated to Turkish as *cemaat* and *Gesellschaft* (society) as *cemiyet*. In Turkish and English literature alike, *cemaat* is also the word which is used to refer the Muslim religious congregation of believers when referring to a population that is more confined and immediate than the *ümmet,* which is usually used to refer the whole Muslim population.

Gesellschaft is either of very small significance and influence, or it is totally lacking and anachronistic.[75] This theory of historical social development was based on Durkheimian model of transformation from the social characteristics of the mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity, and later adopted largely by the American sociology tradition established by the Chicago School. However, sociological theory, it appears, is of little help in an attempt to historicize the individual and his self-reflections since, from the very beginning, it bases on an assumption of individualism as a historically increasing process. The related classical theories, predominantly based on Durkheimian model, build around the conviction that linearly intensifying social differentiation led men and women of the past to become increasingly individual.[76]

3.1.1 Scholarship on the Obstacles: Discussion on the (Im)probability of Individuality in the Early Modern Islamic Culture

Islam has often interpreted as a religion of community. The religion itself leaves little room for the initiative of individual in his daily affairs which are prescribed by the Qur'an and by the hadith that regulates almost every sphere of human life. The worship is mainly a communal act that preferably performed with the *cema'at* at the mosque that constitutes the core around which a Muslim settlement is located.

The prominent Orientalist scholars' arguments about cultural aspects of Muslim view of the community and individual must be outlined at this point. For Bernard Lewis, from the time of *Hijra* onwards Islamic religion demanded not only submission to the new faith, but also submission of believer to the single community which he claims to be formed by those who spoke Arabic and believed in Islam under the

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[75] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society*, ed. Jose Harris, trans. Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[76] Niklas Luhmann, "The Individuality of the Individual: Historical Meanings and Contemporary Problems" in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, eds. Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, David E. Wellbery (Stanford: Stanford University Press,1986), 313-325, 313.

caliph as the head of the community.[77] The idea that the community played the primary role in the Islamic culture, and was the central determinant for the individual Muslims' lives and self-perceptions was most eminently emphasized by Gustave von Grunebaum. Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, one of the most prominent Orientalist scholars of the Islamic culture, defines Islam as the community of *Allah*, whose legislative and supervisory power rules over not only the workings of the community but the private lives of the individual members.[78]

In *Medieval Islam: A study in Cultural Orientation*, Gustave von Grunebaum draws the sketch of the Muslim Middle Ages, with a special attention paid to the Muslims' view of themselves and their universe, their intellectual and emotional attitudes, and the mood in which they lived their life.[79] According to Grunebaum, the depersonalization of the individual constitutes one of the most primary characteristics of the Muslim human ideal. On the one hand, when people constitute the subject of an intellectual effort, the Muslim tradition of thought tends to reduce people to types and show little enthusiasm for their distinctiveness. Whether one is a beggar or a prophet or a ruler, they are known and appreciated with the types of man which they correspond and represent; in other words, the value of the man is based on the divine order of being and according to the categorical function they fulfil for the community of Islam, but certainly not on their individual traits. On the other hand, it equalizes people on the bases of their shared divine essence and potentiality for the unity with the divine. Thus, individual is dissolved in the traditional Muslim theology, philosophy and literature since the limits, characteristics and experiences are, at best liable to taxonomy, or at worst, identical.[80] Muslim moral education, in his words "does not purpose either the unfolding of the self and its fullest possible realization…it purposes nothing but assimilation to established type of the individual

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[77] Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 144.

[78] Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation*, 142.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid. 221- 223.

self".[81] He also bases Muslim self-conception of weakness and ineffectiveness as resulting from the Qur'anic description of creation of man from clay and the continuous reminder of lowliness of his physical origin which subjects him to hunger and thirst, disease and pain, ignorance and forget; thus, ultimately dependent to the grace and will of God. Moreover, this 'deindividualizing tendency' inherent in the Islamic outlook on life is deeply embedded in all forms of traditional writing, and further intensified with the increasing literarization of the Muslim reflections on life.[82]

Franz Rosenthal, representative of the Classical Orientalism and one of the most eminent scholars of the historical sociology of the pre-modern Islamic civilization, presented the Islamic individual and the society of the Islamic Middle Ages in a polarity; one being the antagonist of the other and, vice versa.[83] Rosenthal observes that Islamic emphasis on the belief that the qualities and character of a man can be best judged by evaluating the company he keeps, other-identification played a central role in regulating the social life of the Muslim individuals. The primary determining factor in the lives of the Muslim individuals was the *cema'at*, the totality of with whom an individual should best identify, and the social entity which all the actions of the individuals were targeted; as Rosenthal claims, the community "was the intended beneficiary of whatever an individual was supposed to do or not do" in the Islamic culture.[84] The most circulated view in medieval Islam was that the individual by himself was subject to a natural weakness; the source of all his power was in his capacity for integration and service to the community, if not to the more abstract notion of the society.[85]

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[81] Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation,* 221.

[82] Ibid., 226.

[83] Franz Rosenthal, *Man versus Society in Medieval Islam*, ed. Dimitri Gutas, (Leiden& Boston: BRILL, 2014).

[84] Franz Rosenthal, "I am You: Individual Piety and Society in Islam", in *Man versus Society in Medieval Islam*, 54.

[85] Ibid., 57.

This view has the implication that medieval Muslim individual lacked any concern related to himself; the dominant self comprehension was that his being was meaningful only to the extent that he was one of the insignificant and submissive parts of the greater whole. Unrealistic as it seems, the question has repeatedly appeared in scholarly circles and still being debated, to what extent individual and community are reconcilable? The answer lies in the ways in which ordinary individuals perform different acts of identity with the each community they are a part of. Although each community has their specific repertoire of shared symbols and performances, that does not necessarily mean that each member gives the same meaning and attribute the same value to those. Thus, being part of a community does not mean being subordinated by an absolute orthodoxy since each member construct his unique relationship to the community he belongs, people he belongs with and the mediums they share. By being part of a community, then, one does not necessarily compromise his individuality which, as we shall see, finds itself various channels and instances for expression.

3.2 Communicating the Self in *Cema'at*

Alain Renaut in his *The Era of the Individual* inquires into the philosophical history of modernity. One of the main cultural characteristic of modernity that crucially differentiates it from previous Middle Ages is de-divinization or, as more widely circulated in Nietzsche's phrase, the "death of God". For Nietzsche, god was long dead, for he was an atheist. But figuratively, he was pointing to the great momentum that the Enlightenment created, which erased the possibility of belief in God from then on.[86] Elaborating on the de-divinization of modernity, Heidegger links the phenomenon with humanism, and reaches the widely accepted interpretation on the emergence of man as *subject*. Contrary to the Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the "place of God" (read as the ever present and absolute influence of God), is

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[86] See Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, or see *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* Both works contain the same idea.

reserved as the "place of man" in modern era. Consequently, the values of modernity were being defined by the man who placed himself at the centre of all being by acquiring two attributes of God; omniscience and omnipotence.[87]

Religions and belief systems in general has tendency to prioritize the role of community in believers' life; majority pursuits a corporate religious ideal and emphasize the centrality of community of believers whose inner harmony is the necessary condition in the order of the world. What is more is that, within each religion and belief system one notices that the primal attempt is to regulate the activities of the community of believers. The promotion of true believer's well-organized life serves the aim to regulate and control the lives of believers on yearly and even daily bases. In Christianity, as it is almost the same in Islam or Judaism,[88] believers' lives are to be organized weekly by communal acts and yearly by Saints' days and other holidays. This does not mean that daily life of the believer is left unregulated, in each religion there is a model of the true believer, a prophet or saint whose daily life conduct constitutes the great example to be followed and mimicked. The Christian religion, just like Islam, provides its believers an ideal of life whose moral codes as well as daily conduct is established although, not exclusively in the sacred text itself but in the model of Saints, their lives and deeds. The exemplary journey of St. Augustine to faith and the self-narratives of monks produced throughout the Middle Ages were the constituted such models whose life should be mimicked by the individual believers. In a similar vein, but not necessarily in the Muslim saints' autobiographical accounts, Islam provided an even longer persisting model of true believer and his venerable deeds to follow in the hadith literature in

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[87] Alain Renaut, *The Era of the Individual: A Contribution to a History of Subjectivity*, 4.

[88] Judaism posits an exception in terms of ego-centred accounts and self-representations. Contrary to its central position in the Christian and Islamic mystical traditions, it seems that for the Jewish culture autobiographies remained of marginal significance prior to its emergence in 16th century Safed. Cabbalists were in favour of using the objectified third person and predominantly preferred to compose their writing in an impersonal manner up until the appearance of three mystical diaries by R. Joseph Karo, R. Elazar Azikri, and R. Hayyim Vital in mid-16th century. Treated as a part of the confessional writing tradition, their emergence have been valued as the indicator of a subjective turn in the Kabbalah in which individual cabbalist begin to place more emphasis on their own soul and the changes it goes through than ever before. Jeffrey Howard Chajes, "Accounting for the Self: Preliminary Generic-Historical Reflections on Early Modern Jewish Egodocuments" *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 95, no.1 (2005): 1-15.

which the prophet himself served as the utmost model of true Muslim. Often referred as the backbone of the Islam, and the second most referred written source after Qur'an, hadith is as biographical as it is a historical source.

3.2.1 Roots in the Traditional Islamic Literature Genres: Interplay of Historical Account and Biography

Unlike other individual centred literature genres, and clearly as opposed to all forms of fiction, biography and autobiography in particular are referential texts which have a claim for truth, or historical accuracy.[89] Indeed, they can be likened to historical writing in the sense that they claim to provide information about a reality outside of the text against which it can be verified. A total oath, indicating the full responsibility and assurance of the author to tell the whole truth as it is, rarely takes place but, it is not necessarily needed and when exists, only serves as a supplementary proof for the claim of reality.[90] In other words, the claim for providing an image of the reality is not laid in a formulized oath, but rather it is embedded in the biography and autobiography itself.

While the accuracy of a biography can be checked against other sources, autobiography tells the reader what it can alone tell about the authors' life; the information and insight of protagonists' life is exclusively reserved in the autobiographical writing which is self-referential. Thus, autobiography poses both a great advantage for gaining intimate information about the authors' life and, a great challenge for estimating the degree of its reliability as a historical source.

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[89] See Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography,* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1960). This work was first published in 1960 and Pascal was one of the earliest critics of the autobiographical genre in relation to its fictional character. Pascal draw attention to the autobiography's truth claim as in fact not presenting the objective truth but subjective interpretations of it.

[90] Philippe Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact" in *On Autobiography*, ed. Paul John Eakin, trans. Katherine Leary, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 22.

Gustave von Grunebaum locates history and biography together in between the two basic types of self-expression, one might be best represented with autobiography and the other with epic. Within historical writing and its 'specialized twin' biography, characteristics of both first and third person narratives of self-expression are embedded.[91] The hadith narrative, the 'biography' of the prophet Muhammad, for example, employs a mixed strategy of writing that combines the elements of biographical account with those of historical. Firstly, it presents a holy personage both as a combatant of the inner doubts and humanly delusions; and as a warrior of the God fighting against the oppression of infidels, at the same time. This writing strategy was used in Christian vitas presenting personages as the soldier of God, fighting wars not only against the individual enemy but also against the infidelity. Secondly, hadith presents an earthly ruler, overseeing the daily conduct and solving the conflicts of the community under his lead; this strategy seems to have been influenced from the Persian *Siyar al-mulûk* tradition (or as used in Ottoman Turkish, *Siyaset-nâme*), a genre which is devoted to record the lives and deeds of kings in order to constitute a model and advise true conduct of administration. Third identifiable inspiration of the hadith derives from the native pre-Islamic Arabic *ayyâm* tales which is characteristically provides the snapshot-like sketches of the scenes and looks of the protagonists.[92]

3.2.1.1 The Life of Muhammad, Hadith Literature and Tradition of *Isnad*

One of the long persisting conclusions drawn by the Orientalist scholarship was that Islamic literary tradition's reliance on the categories of specialization, rather than concentrating on the single individual, was symptomizing a culture in which individuals were defining themselves and being defined by being part of a specific community, or individual as member of a group. Indeed, Arabic biographical accounts build upon categories of people whose professional specialization serve as

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[91] Gustave E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation*, 258-259.

[92] Ibid., 276-277.

the index for biographical compendiums, perhaps with the sole exception of the Prophet whose life narration presented in its fullest in the *sira* tradition.

Hagiography, the genre devoted to telling life narratives of holy people, is a form of biography and a component of religious history. Although there was a very strong oral transmission tradition in pre-Islamic Arabic Peninsula, the written culture begin to emerge with the advent of Islam. Historiography, in the sense that existed in the oral culture of pre-Islamic Arabia, was devoted to the genealogies, listing of tribal ancestors. The Arabic historiography proper, claimed to begin with the biography of Muhammad.

Sira[93], life narrative of the Prophet Muhammed is the earliest form of biographical writing and dates back as early as second Islamic century. Although devoted primarily to telling of the Prophets life and conduct, it eventually evolved to be employed to provide the exemplary lives of famous figures like Selahaddin Eyyubi, or prophets son-in-law Ali. The term *sira* later grew to involve autobiographies as well, and two types of *sira*, biographical and autobiographical were not clearly distinguished from one another as they both were a subgenre of history writing providing a literary representation of individual lives. However, most of the *siyar* were not independent works, or individual *sira*, but rather composed within biographical collections and anthologies.[94]

Bernard Lewis claimed that the impersonality or even collectivism that dominated Arabic literature has been reflected in the passive and even anonymous attitude of the authors, avoiding to present their work as their individual creation. The *isnad* tradition, as Lewis goes on, was a result of authors' attempt to conceal themselves

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[93] *Sira* is the genre in early Islamic literature and the term that usually used to refer to the biography of Muhammad. Literal meaning of term is "conduct", "way of life" and in these meanings it is almost synonymous with *sunna*. The plural, *siyar*, is used for referring to the lives of saints recorded in the biographical compendiums and dictionaries. In the hadith literature and Islamic law, the plural *siyar* is also used to refer "rules of war and dealings with non-Muslims". See, W.Raven, 'Sīra', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, accessed 2 April 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1089

[94] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 38-40.

behind the prestige of authority and previous transmitters in the chain. The collectivist, rather than humanist, emphasis deeply embedded in Islamic thought is a result of the Muslim ideal of the Perfect Man which all must attempt to conform by imitating the model of the prophet in contrast to attempting to develop individual potentialities.[95] However, the tradition of *isnad*, presenting a chain of transmitters, can also be interpreted as a tendency for establishing the credibility and assuring the reliability of the given information. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the ideal of the Perfect Man was not a peculiarity of Islam since Christianity was also had religious role models like saints.

When taken together, the traditions of hadith and *isnad* signal a serious concern for creating reliable historical accounts. The credibility of biographical account was based on the authenticity and authority of the transmitter. The effort put for gathering eye witnessed pieces of information together, track down their authenticity, and composing them into more extensive works implies that the standards for accuracy and source criticism was in no sense short.

Depending on the applied reading strategies, even the literature genres like poems, which builds on an established tradition of verse and a great backdrop of cultural norms regulating the sphere of emotions as they are experienced and expressed; and novels, which is mistakenly believed to be a product of pure fiction, may reveal more than imaginable insight of about the context in which they were produced. Similarly, the text in which reader is faced with the authors' ego, speaking as he did about his life and himself, can be read as a piece of literature as it can as a historical source. The historical use-value of a text is not inherently apparent nor necessarily intended in itself, but awaits to be extracted. An ego-document that seemingly only concerned with recording of the inner struggles, miseries and desires, thus, is valuable for history, as it is for literature and psychology[96] , in the sense that at the very least it

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[95] Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 154.

[96] For an early discussion on the use of personal documents for psychology studies which includes the evaluation of autobiographies, personal letters and diaries according to their benefits and drawback, see Gordon W. Allport, *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science* (New York: Social Social Science Research Council, 1942).

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constitutes a manifestation of the pure will or intellectual trend or religious superiority-claim for the authors' part which, becomes historically meaningful when attempted to contextualize.

3.2.2 Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition and Early Interpretations of Self in the Islamic Culture

As it was the case in western literary tradition, and supposedly was a peculiarity of the Christianity, spiritual and particularly Sufi writing motivations played a crucial role in the rise of Arabic autobiographical writing. The central focus of those texts is providing portrayal of the inner self of the author whose path to spiritual development is narrated. The primary motif in such texts is the protagonist's conversion to a greater spiritual or mystical state, thus providing the reader with an inward journey of transformation to a higher rank in the path to unity in god, or simply put, development in religiosity, as was the case with St. Augustine's *Confessions*.

As it has been previously discussed for the genres and sub-genres of ego-documents that predate the establishment of the Eurocentric canon, or those that were produced outside of the West and show cultural variations; the question remains as to whether it would be expedient to use the term 'autobiography' for this corpus of Arabic writings which clearly communicates autobiographical elements to its readers, or whether it would be more appropriate to employ rather neutral terms which are not burdened with such literary expectations of the autobiography proper -and instead refer them as self-narratives or life-representations-. On the one hand, employing the term autobiography may misleadingly allow for a comparison of these medieval and pre-modern autobiographical texts with those Western autobiographies that approximately begin to take its shape after the Renaissance, so may lead an anachronistic approach.[97] However, as will appear repeatedly throughout this thesis,

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[97] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, 9.

refraining to use the terms like diary, biography, memoir, autobiography and the like would lead to a greater historical fallacy because it would perpetuate the complete dissociation of two cultural and geographical spheres; those having breed a sense of self and consciousness of personality and produced the written representations of life, and those earlier or other cultures who possibly could not have done. Even though may not appear legitimate to use the established genres of literature for the sake of accuracy in comparison at the first glance, as long as the primary concern is the written expressions of self and life of the individual; this thesis aims to associate culturally and geographically separate attempts by employing a content-centred approach and by using the conventional naming of the genres.

3.2.2.1 Autobiography: Definition and Historical Significance

In the following two centuries, late 18th century interest in the study of autobiographical writings begin to evolve around the conviction that the genre was an unique cultural product of modern Western civilization, treated almost as an eccentricity unmatched in non-Western context or in previous ages. The members of mid 20th century scholarly circle build the autobiography's 'myth of origins'[98] that remained unchallenged until very recently. It was Georges Gusdorf who claimed in 1956 that the consciousness and appreciation for the singularity of each individual life emerged only in the Western civilization and thus, "The concern, which seems so natural to us, to turn back on one's own past, to recollect one's life in order to narrate it, is not all universal. It asserts itself only in recent centuries and only on a small part of the map of the world".[99] Later, Roy Pascal who followed Gusdorf's assertions

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[98] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, p.18. Reynolds uses the phrase 'myth of origins' to refer the studies of Gusdorf, May, Pascal and Grunebaum as having established the long valid and continuously repeated assumption of autobiography as an exclusively Western invention that could not have emerge in non-Western or previous cultural contexts.

[99] Georges Gusdorf, "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography" in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical,* ed. James Olney, trans. James Olney, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 28-48, 29.

argued that although members of the Eastern civilizations have also produced autobiographies in modern times, like Gandhi did, it was because they adopted the European forms of writing and "There remains no doubt that autobiography is essentially European".[100] Georges May approached the issue from a different approach and attributed the unique cultural influences that allowed for the emergence of autobiography to the Christianity.[101] Taking the Western form of autobiography as the autobiography proper and seeking to employ it to measure the level of self-consciousness in time and among cultures, conclusion was one that teleologically imputed the changing forms of literary expressions of the self in time, and negated the possibility of sense of individuality in non-Western context. As the culturally defined self peculiar to the West could not been found in the prosaic examples of non-Western origin, which interpreted as underdeveloped forms, autobiography in mid 20th century scholarly circle treated and privileged as the marker of what it is to be Western per se.[102] The early authoritative judgments of Misch, Rosenthal, Grunebaum, Gusdorf, Pascal and May on the alleged lack of inwardness and description of personality of the author in Arabic autobiographies persisted and obstructed a re-examination of the genre for almost until the turn of the 21st century.

The most profound and widely accepted definition of autobiography in the literature was made by one of the most preeminent critical theorist of autobiography and diary, Philippe Lejeune. Autobiography is a "Retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality."[103] In his ground breaking essay "The Autobiographical Pact", Lejeune applied some of the most effective approaches for the study of life writings and claimed that autobiographies are essentially build upon a pact between author and reader; an agreement in which author assures that he is

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[100] Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography*, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 21.

[101] See Georges May, *L'autobiographie*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979).

[102] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, 17-20.

[103] Philippe Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact" in *On Autobiography*, ed. Paul John Eakin, trans. Katherine Leary, 4.

identical with the protagonist whose life being narrated in the autobiography.[104] Although, autobiographies are predominantly written in the first person signalling that the narrator and principal character of the narration is identical, there are some rare marginal cases in which author uses the third person, or intervenes as a fictive narrator to present the author's view. Paradoxical it may seem, in exceptional cases, authors of autobiographies prefer to speak about themselves as someone else might, while writing their own life stories.[105]

The centrality of autobiography among all kinds of ego-documents has been stressed repeatedly by many scholars. Peter Burke proposed a model of concentric circles of ego-documents; with autobiography at the centre and the other genres of diary, letter, journal etc. all located around the centre in accordance with their proximity to autobiographical writing.[106] Autobiographies, among all kinds of ego-documents or self-narratives, occupy a special position firstly due to their historically attributed quality as the marking point of the emergence and expression of the sense of individuality. More than any other genre speaking about one's self, autobiographies taken as an eminent symptom of a sense of selfness on the authors' part and thus, treated as an dignified inborn product of a mentality change towards individualistic tendencies. In addition, they have been associated with the emergence of history as a distinct discipline with its modern characteristics. Modern historiography claimed to have given rise to an autobiographical sensibility; an autobiography is basically an

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[104] See Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*. Lejeune claims that the autobiographical pact between the author and reader of the autobiography originates and starts from the cover, or the title page of the text. By indicating their name, authors assure the identicalness of the name as the author, the narrator and the protagonist of that autobiographical text. The autobiographical pact is the affirmation of this identity in the text which the reader relies on. As the name appears on the cover, author does not need to declare his identicalness in the text, and by the fact that he is the author, he assumes that he is known to the reader. This identicalness has central importance for an autobiographical text since it stands as an agreement that the name on the cover of the book is the first person pronoun of the whole text which has a truth claim, thus responsible for not making up fictional content.

[105] See Philippe Lejeune, Annette Tomarken, Edward Tomarken, "Autobiography in the Third Person" *New Literary History* 9, no.1 (1977): 27-50, 27.

[106] Peter Burke, "The Rhetoric of Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century" in *Touching the Past: Studies in the Historical Sociolinguistics of Ego-Documents*, eds. Marijke van der Wal, Gijsbert Rutten, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013), 149-165.

attempt in which one narrates his life story or history, and does so retrospectively, and by treating himself as the subject of this history.

The second feature that distinguishes the role of autobiography relates to the textual construction characteristic peculiar to the genre rather than how it is evaluated and credited by scholars. They diverge from other self-narratives by the fact that autobiographies have a peculiar temporality; author of the autobiography presents his life story in time *retrospectively*. The dimension of temporality in autobiography comes to fore in two respects.

Firstly, autobiographies are formed by recollection of past memories, and although memory is an universal human faculty it is also slippery, and begin to fade out with the coming of old ages in which people are most often tend to write their life stories. Therefore, the first issue on the time dimension of autobiographical writing is the reliability related to its potential for unintentional inaccuracies. Second problem with the time dimension of autobiographical writing is that retrospective writing allows the author to select and re-evaluate, or to manipulate, specific memories while writing. Obviously, all kinds of ego-documents are selective but autobiography in particular enable the author to present the events in causal chains, or presenting all the prior events as if they were leading to one ultimate end which the autobiography aims to tell the story of. The ambiguous conclusion of its signaling the sense of individuality may be debated; however, autobiographies almost always function as the mediators communicating to wider public the story of how things became what they are.

3.2.2.2 Arabic Autobiographical Writings

Ever since Augustine's *Confessions*, Western autobiography is distinguished by the presence of self as the central element. Autobiography as a genre is established in the West on the principle of a manifest self-interest, if not egocentrism. This is the case whether an author pursuits the model of ideal man, either religious or intellectual

sort, or glorify his unique individuality.[107] More than being a matter of invention and peculiarity of the Western culture and a total absence in the Islamic civilization, perhaps the appealing point in the autobiographical traditions of the two lies in the traditionally characteristic purposes of their composition. There is an established and recognized literary tradition of autobiographical writing in Arabic. Arabic autobiographical genre emerged in the context of the Arabic biographical tradition which developed as a branch of historical writing; thus, biography and autobiography together constitutes the bases of Arabic literary-historical tradition. The earliest autobiographical account of Islamic civilization dates back to 9th century, around four hundred years after the *Confessions* of St. Augustine and three hundred from the advent of Islam.

The pre-Islamic Northern Arabia was chiefly inhabited by Bedouins who had a little formal culture and hardly any written tradition prior to Islam, but had developed a poetic language and oral tradition of noteworthy richness. This vibrant oral poetic tradition noticeably was influenced primarily from the Bedouins' real experiences of hard desert life and cannot be characterized as a literature of abstraction. The Arabic civilization, however, begin to develop during the period of Arab and Islamic Empires' strength in the Near and Middle East and was not purely Muslim but an amalgam of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian influences. Its primary medium of expression was Arabic language which according to Bernard Lewis is the richest of all Semitic languages, and its primary source of influence was the Islamic religion and the life it prescribed.[108] Arabic language continued to be enriched long after the fall of the Arab kingdom, and it persisted as the central instrument of culture by being inherited by later Muslim Empires. But, according to Bernard Lewis it was not only the Arabic language that persisted but it carried on with itself the Arabic classical poetry and the world view embedded in which he characterized as rhetorical and declamatory as opposed to being intimate and personal. Even the individual expression of poetry which supposed to be personal and intimate, serves public and

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[107] Qi Wang, *The Autobiographical Self in Time and Culture*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 43.

[108] Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, 142- 143.

social ends. The individualism of the early Arabs only survived among the Bedouins of desert while the urban centres of civilization increasingly embraced an anonymous attitude.[109] This traditional structure of thought in Islamic society widely claimed by scholars to have persisted until the impact of the West begin to appear in Muslim parts of the world beginning in the 19th century.

One possible reason for narrating one's own life could be based on a concern for the authority over the life story, especially when the author is aware of his position as likely to be the subject of an future biography. In other words, the prominent religious, intellectual or political figures who produced autobiographies could be attempting to prevent possible errors and distortions of a possible biography, and/or preferred to use their authoritative position over their life story to create an illusion about themselves as they wish. After all, a first hand writing would be more credible than a biography which gathers clusters of fragmented information about the protagonist and composed after the passing of him. Whether composed by the protagonist aiming for a distortion in the story or, composed by a pupil and lack the reliability of an autobiography, both genres can be easily associated with the tendency related to historiography.

In the preface of his autobiography titled *al-Tahadduth bı-ni'mat Allah* ("Speaking of God's Bounty") penned around the end of 15th century, Egyptian scholar Celâleddîn Süyûtî[110] expresses his motivation for writing an account of his life story as primarily originating from his faith. Moving from the Qur'anic injunction that one should speak of the blessings one has received and following the tradition of the Prophet (*hadith*), he claims that it is the duty of every Muslim to speak of God's blessings as a way to demonstrate the gratitude for them. He identifies praiseworthy intentions of writing an autobiography as; to speak of God's bounty in gratitude, and make known the authors' life so that others might emulate them and those who were indifferent of

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[109] Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, 143- 154.

[110] Jalāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī or as shortly known in Turkish Celâleddîn Süyûtî. For further information, see Halit Özkan, "SÜYÛTÎ" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/suyuti#1

their circumstances in life could learn of them. He then presents a list of those well reputed authors of autobiographies before him whom he emulated and write down an account of his life. Although Süyûtî is a somewhat exceptional example, for he produced various autobiographical works and at least three versions of written account of his life, he for certain was well aware of the Arabic literary tradition of autobiographical writing upon which he produced his work and cited many previous examples. Introductions similar to his were given by other autobiographers leads to conclusion that the genre of autobiography was already well established in the Arabic literary tradition as early as 12ᵗʰ century, although the earliest example dates back to 9ᵗʰ century.[111]

Accounts expressing the inner self or emotional stance which assumed to be lacking, thus led their dispensation as true autobiographies, can be exposed with closer reading of texts and acquaintance with the Arabic literary tradition in general, and with the author's artistic style in particular. By evaluating the author's style of narration, Dwight Reynolds maintains that al- Süyûtî employs a rhetoric of action rather than providing a description of the innermost emotions in his autobiography. Rather than telling how he felt, he gives an account of what he did; rather than describing how nervous he was when delivering his first public lecture, he reports that he prayed for God's aid in this undertaking.[112] Although a modern reader might expect more manifest declaration of the emotions when confronted with an self-narrative, actions do contain motivational emotions. The self or the ego that scholar attempts to unveil is rarely outright in early modern Islamic-Arabic writing convention, but neither absent nor unattainable.

Clearly, regardless of the literary tradition, an author enjoys the full initiative over the text he composes; and an autobiography that bypasses certain features of the autobiographical writing conventions is a possibility. Ahmad al-Damanhuri,

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[111] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, 1-2.

[112] Ibid., 87.

prominent Islamic scholar of 18th century Egypt[113], penned down an extensive autobiography of a somewhat peculiar sort. As is customary for Islamic scholars to give a detailed account on, Damanhuri recorded his educational background, his teachers, the books he read and the ones he wrote, his students and his career. What is intriguing is that, he did so in an entirely impersonal manner as if he was presenting himself in a biography compilation of Islamic scholars of the age; with exception of using "I" rather than a "he". As Nelly Hanna concludes, the text is one of the most obvious sources for the study of self by genre; however, it provides very little to advance our knowledge of it, if any.[114] The exact opposite is also the case, sometimes authors prefer to speak about their own life in texts where you would expect to encounter least. One such example is an dictionary of the colloquial dialect of Cairo composed by a famous 17th century Arabic lexicographer Yusuf al-Magribi, *Daf al-Isar fi Kalam Ahl Mısr*.[115] Other than being a valuable source of information about the Egyptian dialect of the 17th century and the one of the very first attempts for the study of colloquial Arabic, the dictionary provides information about the author whom otherwise we know little about. In several sections, al-Magribi sees no inconvenience to narrate his life, youth and career as well as providing a history of his family; thus linguistic scholar turns to the "I" and author of a self-narrative.[116]

Dwight F. Reynolds sums up the conclusions he reaches through the elaboration of the corpus of Arabic autobiographies as follows: first, although the genre remains minor when compared to Arabic biographical and prosopographical writings, defined as the texts presenting the part of author's life retrospectively, Arabic autobiographies are more numerous than assumed; second, pre-modern Arabic

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[113] Khaled El-Rouayheb, "al-Damanhūrī, Aḥmad" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *3rd Edition*, eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, accessed on 2 May 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_25838

[114] Nelly Hanna, "Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500–1800" in *The Uses of First Person Writings Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggio, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2013), 139-154, 141.

[115] For an edition of the dictionary, and an elaboration on the linguistics of the dialect and colloquial poetry, see Liesbeth Zack, *Egyptian Arabic in the Seventeenth Century: A Study and Edition of Yûsuf al-Maghribî's Dafʿ al-isr ʿan kalâm ahl Misr*, (Utrecht: LOT, 2008).

[116] Nelly Hanna, "Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500–1800", 142-143.

autobiographies reveal more than assumed about the inner life of their authors yet this inward reflections of the author necessitate a closer reading of the texts and the full fledged contextual knowledge related to current social milieus and literary strategies; third, an 'autobiographical consciousness' that claimed to be condition of the western autobiography became established in medieval Arabic literary tradition.[117]

A serious concern for the autobiographical genre is its conception as a part of high literary culture. Remained unchallenged until early 1980s, autobiography was treated as if it was the reserved sport, or a sophisticated art, of great men of various sorts: Saint Augustine [118], Rousseau [119], Goethe [120], Benjamin Franklin [121] and so on. Only the names that can be associated with the self-consciousness and individualism of the Western culture were included in the canon. However, it was not only the art of the work that determined the inclusion and exclusion from the canon but rather it seems that, the social status and the gender of its author were the central prejudices regulating it.[122] Autobiographies belonging to those ordinary men of the past or to working class, and to women and ethnic minorities have long waited to be included in the canon but currently appeal to many scholars.[123]

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[117] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, p.30.

[118] See Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. Edward Bouverie Pusey, (Auckland: Floating Press, 1921).

[119] See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les confessions*, first published in 1782. See for the English translation of the work, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. Edmund Wilson, (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1924).

[120] See Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Autobiography of Goethe : Truth and Poetry Relating to My Life*, trans. John Oxenford, (Auckland: Floating Press, 1848).

[121] See Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin: 1706-1757* (Auckland: Floating Press, 1793.).

[122] Mary Chamberlain, Paul Thompson, "Introduction: Genre and Narrative in Life Stories" in *Narrative and Genre*, vol. 1, (London: Routledge, 2003), 1-22, 4.

[123] Autobiographies have always been criticized for not representing a random sample of the population. Indeed, they lack representative qualities because producing an account of one's own life usually requires a set of privileged life conditions like being literate, having adequate material means and time to engage in such an effort and most importantly, having considering the story of life to be

By building upon memories, "the remembered self" of autobiographical writing is "the self in time". However, there is no such thing as personal history that can be separated from the history of family and community one belongs. The influence of the community in one's life comes fore once again since the memories of the personally experienced events are not the only source of the autobiographical writing. Autobiographies also include the memories of those who are significant in the author's life, as well as memories of events that author shares with the group he belongs. What is more is that communities not only provide the context of one's history, i.e. story of his life, but also they provide the lenses through which one remembers and evaluates the past events and deeds. After all, one's self is always connected to other selves and only able to form a sense of who he is through his relation to the family, community and culture he belongs.[124]

3.3 Ego-Documents in the Early Modern Ottoman World

The dominant view, as thus far being discussed, was that the consciousness of the self has emerged in Europe at the beginning of modern period and adopted by other cultures as the European influence begin to spread other parts of the world. Having attributing value to individual experience and composing a written account of it was not essentially a part of the modern worldview. The expressions of early modern and non-European self have appeared in many different forms and in different genres that defy any uniformity in use, scope, form and content with those produced in Europe or in modern times. Paying attention to the cultural peculiarities, literary conventions

interesting and worth telling, or having been expected to tell the story. Thus, autobiographies, among all other kinds of ego-documents, are less a democratic genre that represents a cross section of the population at large. One early attempt to overcome the problem of representation was undertaken by Diane Bjorklund who upon analysing over hundred American autobiographies published after 1800, chose a sample that involved different social classes and ethnic groups. At the cross-section of all the cases analysed, Bjorklund identified three tensions that particularly shared in American autobiographies: modesty, honesty and the importance of being interesting. See Diane Bjorklund, *Interpreting the Self: Two Hundred Years of American Autobiography*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[124] Qi Wang, *The Autobiographical Self in Time and Culture*, p.xi- xiii.

and historical conditions would reveal that those people who lived and died did talk about their lives.

In the Ottoman literature written representations of self, life-narratives or speaking egos are not a rarity and in fact, are more numerous than scholars used to believe. The main handicap for scholar to recognize a text that she came across in the archive as ego-document is the expectations she holds about related genres. The canon of forms of self-writing as established in the West, and adopted vastly beyond it now, does not exactly applies to modes of writing that provides a representation of oneself which were produced in the Asia and in the Middle East. Although, the West and the Middle East are too broad terms to refer the historical-mental geographies whose boundaries can in no way be specified here, still it would be safe to claim that the accounts they produced are in no ways identical prior to 19th century; when one began to adopt as it did in many other areas of culture and one began to dominate. Other than the thematically oriented ego-documents, like dream-narratives and conversion accounts, egos talking about their life and lives of their close social milieu are not absent prior to the 19th century.

The period beginning around the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 coincided with an impetuous increase in the production of self-narratives as the ideologies formed around the formation of nation states gained momentum and vibrant political environment breed its independence struggles and heroes in the Middle East. As is usual for the times of political movements and wars, political actors in particular took the initiative to participate in the process of history writing by keeping diaries, memoirs and autobiographies and thus, making a contribution that they themselves exclusively could.[125] Although even for the political actors and war heroes a doubt can always be raised for each instance of diary writing, as to whether the author indeed aimed to leave a personal history record for the use of others or to seize and

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[125] Juliette Honvault, "Speaking about Oneself When External Life is Ethically Primordial: The Diary of the Syro-Lebanese Arab Nationalist 'Adil Arslân (1887-1954)" in *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*, eds. Ralf Elger, and Yavuz Köse, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 47-58, 47.

fix the great memories of a glories war for his own use in time, the question for motivation is less puzzling for autobiographies and memoirs.

3.3.1 The Problem of Locating Ottoman Expressions of Self: Where to Look and How to Interpret

It is more than sensible to think that ordinary people, or more precisely those who were not really among the elite circle, write their life story, or parts of it. The problem is that only few of them have reached to us, and even fewer were ever recognized as authors. The obvious reason is that, less renowned a person is, the less likely his work would survive through the early modern ages to finally reach our days. Even in the cases it did, and if it is an independent text, the researcher needs to decide between which genre's boundaries it fits in; she is expected to follow the taxonomy that makes little sense to apply to a range of writings that have parallel neither in time nor in culture. Is it indeed the case that "the less original a work the more likely it was to fit comfortably into a genre category"?[126] Only a small portion of Ottoman self-narratives are composed as independent texts of predictable genres, rather a substantial portion of talks about the self and life is incorporated in a various texts of different genres. A closer inspection reveals Ottoman self-narrative of various qualities that is embedded even in the most unlikely manuscripts and official documents.

To give an example, Ibn al-Tawq, Damascene court clerk, known for his authorship of a three-volume work of the history, or rather a chronicle, of the history of Damascus at the end of the 15th century. The works is mainly devoted to record the events of the city on daily bases from 885/1480 to 908/1502.[127] The journal itself is

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[126] Mary Chamberlain, Paul Thompson, "Introduction: Genre and Narrative in Life Stories" in *Narrative and Genre*, vol. 1, eds. Mary Chamberlain, Paul Thompson, (London: Routledge, 2003), 1-22, 3.

[127] See Shihab al-Din Ahmad Ibn al-Tawq, *Al-Ta'liq*, *Yawmiyat Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn al-Tawq*, ed. Shaykh Jaafar al-Muhajir, 3 vols., (Damascus: IFEAD, 2000-2004).

highly rich with the wide scope of information it provides about the lives of all segments of the society. Moreover, Al-Tawq was enthusiastic to talk about his home and family in an impersonal way, too. He records the visits paid to friends, that he spend the night at their house, his wife's and children's visits to public bath and its cost, and daily life details of similar sort.[128]

16th century poet Aşık Çelebi is one of the best reputed names in the history of Ottoman literature and author of the one of the most widely referred works both back in Ottoman Empire and now. *Meşâ'irü'ş-şu'arâ* is a tezkire, biographical dictionary or compendium, containing biographical accounts of 427 poets and composed to be presented Sultan Selim II in 1568. Although Aşık Çelebi did not included an autobiography in his tezkire, he provided his paternal genealogy going back to prophet Muhammad and stressed the relatively early date of his ancestor's arrival in the Ottoman lands clearly. Obviously, in both of these attempts he aimed to stress and dignify his social position, as it is always the case when one gives an account of his lineage. In a similar effort, accounts of his family ties, personal associations and relationships with the renowned tutors and bureaucrats of the time was provided to invest the author with advantage in public life. What is significant for the framework of this thesis is that, when giving anecdotes and commenting on his subject material or attaching his poems when he saw fit to the subject in some way, Aşık's ego finds itself a room for expression even in the traditional genre of tezkire that supposed to concentrate on others. For example, while giving an account on life of Fikri he intervenes when it comes to his subject's divorce and he declares his own intention to get divorce himself and decision to never again commit himself to another woman.
[129] It might be interpreted that throughout the text, author finds a way to reveal his self, speak about the community he is associated with, for establishing the legitimacy of his belonging to it, and to promote his position within it.

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[128] Nelly Hanna, "Self Narratives in Arabic Texts 1500–1800" in *The Uses of First Person Writings Africa, America, Asia, Europe*, ed. François-Joseph Ruggio, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2013), 146.

[129] Hatice Aynur, "Autobiographical Elements in Aşık Çelebi's Dictionary of Poets" in *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*, eds. Ralf Elger, Yavuz Köse, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 17-26.

The literary tradition of the Arabic travelogue was well established and further intensified with the expansion of Islam since the religion command every Muslim of sufficient means to involve in the greatest voluntary and systematic mobility of the age, hajj to Mecca. Although hajj played a central role in the formation of genre in Arabic literature, genre was not restrained by this single motivation since travelling long distances to seek education and mysticism were also common practices. Previously, these travelogues were treated generally as geographical sources of little use which did not share the features of the genre, and had little parallel with its European counterparts. Earlier Arabic travel reports were generally narrating the story of the journey in a chronological form, almost as a diary form. However, until recently they escaped the attention of historians that they convey the story of a journey as it is individually experienced and expressed, and thus providing an ego-perspective. The turning point in Arabic travel literature was arrived with Rifa'a at-Tahtawi's famous book *Takhlis al-ibriz fi talkhis Bariz*, generally accepted as the first modern example, and even claimed to be first example of modern Arabic literature in general. Rifa'a at-Tahtawi was a young Islamic scholar who was among the men who sent to Paris to study and report the European culture by the Egyptian ruler Muhammad 'Ali in 1826. In addition to providing information on the everyday life of the people and the scientific activities of the universities, in *Takhlis al-ibriz* he described the journey but he did so by employing the previously unknown European geographical writing style and a systematic description of the France in general, and the city of Paris in particular. This, however, is how he recorded what he was sent to observe; while narrating leaving for Paris and return back to Cairo he applied the familiar writing strategies of the traditional travel literature, resembling the diary form.[130] Perhaps, the reason why the travelogue is often argued to constitute the breaking point in the tradition of Arabic travel reports is that, he applied the proper observation and writing methods on the appropriate time and issues; although, he felt free to avoid it at the beginning and the end of the text while it was uncalled for.

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[130] Ralf Elger, "Arabic Travelogues from the Mashrek 1700-1834. A Preliminary Survey of the Genre's Development" in *Crossing and Passages in Genre and Culture,* eds. Christian Szyska, Friederike Pannewick, (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2003): 27-40.

3.3.2 Some Ego-Documents Contemporary to *Sohbetnâme*

Among the ego-documents contemporary to Seyyid's diary, autobiography of Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi is worth mentioning.[131] Although it was customary to dismiss or at worst exile a high member of *ulema,* Feyzullah Efendi[132] was one of the three şeyhülislams that were ever executed in the entire Ottoman history upon dismissal and all took place within less than a century.[133] Moreover, after being subjected to torture in prison and on his way to beheading, the şeyhülislam's body was dragged in the streets accompanied by Christian priests chanting to make the public humiliation worse, and his dead body eventually was thrown into the Danube. The autobiography was penned a year before he was deposed and executed, and records the life story of Feyzullah Efendi in the first person singular. Containing information about his training, career, relations with Sultan, a period of exile in Erzurum, career of his sons and the like, the autobiography provides insight on how Feyzullah portrayed himself in the face growing criticism against himself while he

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[131] For a translation of the original work from Arabic, see Ahmet Türek, F. Çetin Derin, trans., "Feyzullah Efendi'nin Kendi Kaleminden Hal Tercümesi", in 2 parts in *Tarih Dergisi/Turkish Journal of History* 23 (1969): 204-218 and *Tarih Dergisi/Turkish Journal of History* 24 (1970): 69-92.

[132] Feyzullah Efendi (1638-1703) served as şeyhülislam first during the reign of Süleyman II for seventeenth days, and later during the reign of Mustafa II beginning in 1695 until his exacution in 1703. His life, career and execution was indeed a curious case, and among the three şeyhülislams that were executed in Ottoman history he was the only one who tortured, publicly ashamed and beaten by a raged crowd. Selim Karahasanoğlu in his introductory paper on Sabra Meservey's unpublished doctoral thesis submitted to Princeton University in 1965, *Feyzullah Efendi: An Ottoman Şeyhülislam*, states that Meservey specifically emphasized Feyzullah's unusually privileged career that consequently won him hostilities of many influential men of differing ranks and professions. For several and mostly warrantable reasons, Feyzullah made influential enemies among all branches of the Ottoman ruling elite of the age, like Grand Vizier Rami Mehmed Paşa and Karakaş Mustafa in addition to famous historian Naima and the leading tradesman of the capital. The riot that ended in Feyzullah's execution and the dethronement of Mustafa II, known as *Edirne Vakası*, was named as *Feyzullah Efendi Vakası* by historian Naima. However, according to Meservey, Naima's naming of the incident was unjustly since Feyzullah in no capacity could single-handedly compensate the severity of Karlowitz, and Meservey argued that it would be more suitably named as *Karlofça Vakası*. See Selim Karahasanoğlu,"Yanlış Zamanda Yanlış Adam: Feyzullah Efendi" *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 5 (2005): 843-848.

[133] Other two were Ahizade Hüseyin Efendi (d.1634) who was the first şeyhülislam executed in the Ottoman history, and Hocazade Mesud Efendi (d.1656). See Mehmet İpşirli, "Ahîzâde Hüseyin Efendi" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 1 July 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ahizade-huseyin-efendi. See Mehmet İpşirli, "Mesud Efendi, Hocazâde" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 1 July 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/mesud-efendi-hocazade

was abusing his official position and influence with the Sultan, trying to adopt a 'vizier-like pose'.[134] What is noteworthy is that, he was certain about his intention and effort to serve the population and state in his best capacity; the autobiography communicates no self-criticism and Feyzullah had no confessions or apologies to make.[135] Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi, thus, constitutes a fair example to how high ranking ruling elite compose and use their autobiographies to provide a self-image which would legitimize the deeds done; even a turbulent career full of favouritism, unlawfulness and conflict is presented in an absolute professional proud.

Niyâzî-i Mısrî (1618-1694)[136] was the founder father of a sub-branch of the *Ahmediyye* which is one of the four main branches of the Khalwatiyya order of Sunni Islam, *Mısriyye* or also referred as *Niyâziyye*. Mısrî was one of the most renown Sufi poets and the most rigorous antagonists of the ruling elite of the age and won the hostility of some of the influential members of ulema and court officials, like Feyzullah did. In his lifetime, he produced over thirty works devoted mainly to religious commentaries and sufi writings, in addition to his sufi poetry collection. What is most valuable here is that he left two *mecmûa* [137], one of which, *Mecmûa-i Kelimât-ı Kudsiyye-i Hazret-i Mısrî* is basically a memoir of his distressing life in

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[134] Michael Nizri, "The Memoirs of Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi (1638-1703): Self, Family and Household" in *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*, eds. Ralf Elger, Yavuz Köse, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 27-36.

[135] Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature" *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-150, 137.

[136] See Mustafa Aşkar, "Niyâzî-i Misrî", in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 3 July 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/niyazi-i-misri#1

[137] *Mecmûa,* also called *cönk* or *sefine,* is basically a scrapbook and a common writing practice among the early modern Ottoman literati. The term refers to notebook that posits no content or format based uniformity whatsoever. Content may include parts of poetry and prose, recipes of ointments and meals, fatwa and parts of code of law, dream augury, funny anecdotes, important events of public and private sort, and so on. One general interpretation is that they are intended as reference books for the personal use of its composer. In a manuscript culture where circulation of written material was limited, they seem to have functioned as personal libraries of immediate use. See, Selim S. Kuru, "Mecmûaların İçine, Edebiyatın Dışına Doğru…" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, eds. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım, (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 17-29. For a comprehensive discussion on the source with all its peculiarities, problems and advantages see, Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim S. Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım, eds., *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012).

exile in Limnos.[138] Other than providing a valuable source revealing his intellectual and religious points of view[139], the mecmua, kept in the form that resembling a diary, is unique for openly and sometimes obsessively communicating the most intimate fears and agonies of a restless man in exile; so much so that, he was constantly expecting being poisoned and murdered treasonously.[140] Perhaps, *Mecmûa-i Kelimât-ı Kudsiyye* is the most intriguing text which best exemplifies the principle of essentially intimate character of ego-documents in Ottoman literature, at least to the knowledge of the present author.

Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa was a member of family which produced many high officials of the Ottoman State. Telhisi's diary, *Ceride*, begins in 1711 while he was 44 years of age and ends in 1735 when he died. Distinguishing feature of Telhisi's diary is the long period of time it covers and its peculiar character as a diary. Telhisi preferred to record the postings and dismissals of the state officials rather than narrating the details of his daily life or his career. *Ceride*'s categorization as a diary, then, was not exactly based on the content of it but rather on its diary-like formatting. Contrary to the *Mecmûa-i Kelimât-ı Kudsiyye*, the intimate reflections on the author's life are only occasional and highly narrow in *Ceride*. Selim Karahasanoğlu asserted that, moving from the abundant number of entries about the matters of state, the diary is intended to be a historical record.[141] Whether intended to be one or not, every ego-document is a historical record and eventually a historical source.

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[138] For the earliest introduction of Niyâzî-i Mısrî's other *mecmûa, Mecmû'a-i Şeyh Mısrî,* see, Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "Niyâzî-i Mısrî" *Şarkiyat Mecmûası* 7 (1972):183-226. For a study on the *Mecmû'a-i Şeyh Mısrî* and an assessment on the literary practices of Mısrî's in particular, and 17th century Ottoman Sufis' in general, see, Derin Terzioğlu, "Mecmûa-yı Şeyh Mısrî: On Yedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Anadolu'da Bir Derviş Sülûkunu Tamamlarken Neler Okuyup Yazdı?" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, eds. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım, (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 291-321.

[139] On an evaluation of the *Mecmûa-i Kelimât-ı Kudsiyye* in terms of Niyâzî-i Mısrî's mystical views, see Abdülkadir Karahan "Kendi El Yazısı Hatıratına Göre Niyazi-i Mısri'nin Bazı Mistik Görüşleri" *Journal of Turkology* 19 (1977): 93-98.

[140] Derin Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyazi-i Misri (1618-94)" *Studia Islamica* 94 (2002): 139-165.

[141] Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711-1735) Üstüne Bir İnceleme* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013).

The diary of Sıdki Mustafa stands rather in between the last two examples of *Mecmûa-i Kelimât-ı Kudsiyye* and *Ceride* since it combines the former's intimacy in expressing the feelings with the latter's attention for the public events. It begins in 1748 during his *mülazemet,* waiting period of *'ilmiye* members for appointment in posts, and ends in 1756. During his 7 years of *mülazemet* , Mustafa expressed in his diary the frustration and anger of waiting. Although the diary contains entries on postings and dismissals of the state officials, it seems to be a result of the tendency of Sıdki' awaiting for being posted, since the rest of the diary recorded both personal experiences and important events of the day. There are many entries recording information about *'ulema* of the age, making the diary a promising source for the study of this group in the course of mid-18th century.[142]

At the bottom of all what is said thus far, one universal human faculty is what makes any act of giving an account which primarily concerned with its protagonist-author's life possible; an ego-document relies on the memory. However, memory in this sense is not solely referred its capacity to remember and thus, allowing for a simple act of recounting on what has happened in the author's life. As any ego-document is an account given from above, narrated retrospectively either at the very later phases of life or simply at the end of one day, memory here is referred as an interpretive act, which in the act of writing enables the author to establishes a plot, to construct chains of cause and effect, to sequence one happening in its relation to particular another; and thus gives shape to the story to be told. Memory, then, is an interpretive act which consequently aims, or simply ends up in it involuntarily, to reach an understanding of the self.[143] It is the condition for making sense of one's self firstly with its capacity to contain and consequently, to interpret as a coherent flow of happenings and situations. Remember how this irreplaceable medium of one's own history, stands at the very core of history, per se; history as it actually happened and history as organized into a meaningful story. Now we will turn our attention to the

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[142] Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Diary of a Muderris: A New Source for Ottoman Biography" *Journal of Turkish Studies*, I (1977): 157-174. Ali Aslan, "18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İlim Hayatından Bir Kesit: Sıdki Mustafa Efendi'nin Günlüğü ve Mülazemet Yılları", (M.A. Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2015).

[143] Mark Freeman, *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative* (London: Routledge, 1995), 29.

story, or history, of Seyyid Hasan and will be carefully listening what a dead voice had to say, about his life, to himself.

CHAPTER 4

THE CASE OF A DERVISH AND HIS DIARY IN 17TH CENTURY OTTOMAN ISTANBUL: SEYYID HASAN AND *SOHBETNÂME*

Having drawn an outline of the discussions around the use of ego-documents as historical sources and the ways in which the genre came to be associated with an intensified sense of selfness or individuality in the modern European thought in the first chapter; and having provided a preliminary into the Orientalist scholarship which overlooked or denied the possibility of expressions of individuality in the early modern non-Western societies of primarily communal conception of self and world in the second chapter; and presented some selves and self-narratives that were contemporary to Seyyid Hasan and his Sohbetnâme[144], the case of this thesis should be presented at last. This chapter begins by attempting to provide the context of the life in the17th century Ottoman Istanbul in which Seyyid Hasan lived and the context of the early modern written culture in which he produced his diary. The main body of the chapter deals with the content of the *Sohbetnâme* and the conclusion of the chapter will discuss the author between his selfhood and events, and the diary between private and public kind of document.

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[144] Throughout this chapter, transliteration of the excerpts from original text in Ottoman Turkish belongs to me. However, two separate master thesis that appeared earlier, that of Aykut Can's and Ayşe Akkılık's are the transcriptions of the full text of first and second volumes of the *Sohbetnâme*. Thus, throughout the chapter, I will be giving reference to the page numbers of those two thesis that also contain the record I cite in the footnotes. Although more often than rarely my transliterations and those of Can's and Akkılık's differs in varying degrees, not all of them will be indicated unless the meaning of the record significantly alters, and I will be providing my own transliteration.

4.1 Introduction on the Diary: Context of Daily Life and the Written Culture

4.1.1 Historical Background

By the contemporary observers and modern scholars alike, post 16th century Ottoman Empire was approached in its supposedly deteriorating military, economic and administrative capacities in the face rising power of West. The scholarship of decline have been largely discredited for quite a while and the thesis of general crisis of 17th century economic hardships and political instability placed the Ottoman experience in the macro level. Rather than approaching it as a period of decline, scholars find it more appropriate to consider the period as a dynamic process of series of transformations in which the central administration did not passively reacted but in fact, took an active role in negotiating and adapting into the current conditions of age.

Celali İsyanları was the term used to refer almost regular outbreaks of rebellion of subject in the Anatolian countryside. Those rebellious subject did not constituted a group with the precise boundaries and a unifying ideological ground that positioned itself against the central government to destroy it, but rather was intended to impair it to achieve its occasional and changing aims. Brigandage activities and violence they carried in the rural district of Anatolia was both a demonstration of power and a threat for the palace to oblige it to negotiate their demands. More than often they were switching sides between their Celali companions and central government depending on the extent to which either side seemed advantageous to achieve their individual demands, like an officially granted post. Celali was an voluntary, temporary and occasional identity which even the government officials embraced at times when the central government seemed not be receptive to his demands.[145] After all, by and large, they "were not peasants acting in behalf of a definite revolutionary

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[145] Mustafa Akdağ, *Celâlî İsyanları (1550-1603)* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1963), 1-2.

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program, but rather cultivators left without land or employment as a result of tremendous inflation".[146]

Apart from the janissary revolts, demographic movement initiated by the Celali Revolts and natural diseasters, unrest in the imperial capital have been assumed to redoubled with the religious movement known as the *Kadızadeli* in the 17th century. The religious conflict was led by Kadizade Mehmed b. Mustafa and his follower fundamentalists who targeted the novelties, read as deviations from the religious ideals that represented by life and deeds of the prophet Muhammad, and the doctrinal and ritualistic heterodoxies of Sufi orders in the capital. Organized during the Friday sermons in the city, messages delivered in the mosques by Kadızadeli preachers resulted in several instances of bloody confrontations in not only in mosques and Sufi lodges but also in streets. In essence, the debate was originated from the Sharia guided orthodoxy and heterodoxy of Sufism, Islamic mysticism, represented most influentially in the capital by Halveti orders, but seems to have echoed in the various parts of the empire even generations after the initial antagonists.[147] Curious is, the diary neither records the supposedly on-going religious tension in the capital nor implies a self-restraint and concealment in the activities and rituals that Kadızadelis most eagerly opposed, like consumption of coffee, and musical rhythms, dhikr and devran. Thus, the chaos-in-theory does not seem to have found a reflection in the *Sohbetnâme*.[148]

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[146] On the 16th and 17th century monetary problems and their effects in demography see, Ömer Lutfi Barkan, "The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the near East" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 1 (1975): 3-28, 4.

[147] Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45, no. 4 (1986): 251-269.

[148] Cemal Kafadar proposed that the very existence of the diary, and perhaps the author's preoccupation with his circle in his life and in his diary, could be result of the Kadızadeli unrest. As the groups turned against each other, members within the groups should have been intensely solidified and our Seyyid Hasan and his circle, as Kafadar suggests, were not exceptions. See Cemal Kafadar, "Self and others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman literature" *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-150, 148.

4.1.1.1 17th Century Ottoman Istanbul: Life in the Capital

As the capital of the Ottoman Empire in its heydays, Istanbul became a magnet of migration for those who seek job and livelihood or better opportunities in life. Although at times central government seek to populate the city to strengthen its claim to be the centre of the world empire or to recover from depopulation that resulted from waves of epidemics and fire breakouts, by the 17th century such attempts turned into the policies to control and prevent the flow of rural migrants that begin to overburden the city's resources and its provision. The city was being filled with the peasants fleeing countryside to take refugee in cities where they would be protected from the Celali violence in Anatolia.

Beginning with the reign of Murad IV, at times, those who were not able to evidence that they earn their livelihood and lead a legitimate life in the capital were expelled from the city[149] and even roads leading to Istanbul were blocked now and then to allow only those travellers to pass who could provide that they had a legitimate business in the capital.[150] Those who have migrated to Istanbul, of course, not uniformly absorbed into the life in the capital, but they seem to have chosen the hardship in livelihood and their marginal status within the urban population of the city over the hardships that they struggled in their rural districts of origin. A great portion of those who were migrating into Istanbul were young single males of rural origin who were seeking their chances for livelihood in the capital but apparently ended up in a deepening marginality of being migrant and untrusted that consequently lead unemployment and criminality.[151]

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[149] Işıl Çokuğraş, *Bekâr Odaları ve Meyhaneler: Osmanlı Istanbulu'nda Marjinalite ve Mekân, 1789-1839* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2016), 19-26. The most immediately suspected and inspected places were *bekar odaları*, inns, that provided a low-quality accommodation to those young single poor migrant males of irregular, or even illicit, occupation and marginal life style. They constituted the usual suspects and uncanny crowd of the urbanizing capital, vulnerable to the policies of migration control and most readily expelled.

[150] Suraiya Faroqhi, "Migration into Eighteenth-Century 'Greater Istanbul' as Reflected in the Kadi Registers of Eyüp" *Turcica* 30 (1998): 163-183, 163-164.

[151] Fariba Zarinebaf, "Epilogue: The Evolution of Crime and Punishment in a Mediterranean Metropolis" in *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul: 1700-1800* (Berkeley: University of California

Perhaps the most peculiar and lively place of urban sociality of the early modern Ottoman Istanbul was the coffeehouse. Begin to appear first in the capital of empire in the second half of the 16th century, coffeehouses in time came to serve multiple functions for the urbanites; at times served as domestic space, as places where business carried, venues of varying entertainments, locals of leisure and the ground through which the urban crowd meet, exchanged words and, to a certain extent, mingled that defies the oversimplification of the spatial dichotomy of public and private.[152] As fairly put, "the places in which it was consumed and the social rituals constructed around this consumption became more significant than the actual drink".[153] Interestingly, our author never mentions to have been in a coffeehouse, or even the word itself never appears in the diary. A fact that perhaps should be related to the coffee houses' association with idleness.

The capital city of the Ottoman Empire, a seaport and trade centre, magnet of attraction, main stage for festivities and imperial pageantry, Istanbul was also a city of natural disasters, fire breaks, epidemic waves, rebellion and janissary revolts. Life in the capital, thus, was as uncertain and worrisome as it was as comfortable and desirable.[154] Eremya Çelebi Kömürciyan (1637-1695) was the well-known 17th century Armenian poet and chronicler who produced, among many others, two

Press, 2010), 175-183. In terms of population growth, migration and increased urbanization in the 18th century, Istanbul seems to had much in common with its European contemporaries like London and Paris. All of them staged the consequently transforming measures of social control, policing and surveillance in the face of crime as the increasingly pressing problem of major cities.

[152] Alan Mikhail, "The Heart's Desire: Gender, Urban Space And The Ottoman Coffee House" in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure And Lifestyle In The Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi, (New York: IB Tauris, 2007), 133-170, 134-136. Alan Mikhail argued that one of the most multi functional and multi layered urban places of early modern Ottoman Empire, coffeehouses should not be subjected to the traditional Habermasian influence of distinction between public-male and private-female. He rather adopts an approach of Foucauldian heterotopia for the Ottoman coffee house. On the social dimension of the public coffee houses, its relation to the other urban public localities and to domestic space, and on the communality it produced, see Ahmet Yaşar ed., *Osmanlı Kahvehaneleri: Mekan, Sosyalleşme, İktidar* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2018).

[153] Alan Mikhail, "The Hearts's Desire: Gender, Urban Space and the Ottoman Coffee House" in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure And Lifestyle In The Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi, (New York: IB Tauris, 2007), 133-170, 138.

[154] Ebru Boyar, Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 72-128.

independent works devoted to the fires that took place in the capital. While first of them is more generally deals with the fires, topography and the social and economic conditions of the people living in the capital, the other one is more particularly focuses on the Great Fire of 1660.[155] In his work of history of fires in the capital, Kömürciyan gives some of the most common causes of the often fire breakouts in the capital, among them he lists the carelessness of the household members when melting oil, inexperienced or arsonist servants, incendiary thieves and looters, laxness of pipe and tobacco smokers, and occasionally works of flying celestial objects, wonder what the last one might be.[156] However, the main reason for the frequent and severe fire outbreaks in the capital, as Kömürciyan observed and reportedly advised people otherwise, was the construction material used in the buildings and a general tone of indifference on the issue.[157] In his other works, Eremya Çelebi records two great fires that breakout in the capital in 1660, a year before the beginning of the Sohbetnâme, second of which is known as the *İhrâk-ı Ekber* or Büyük Yangın (Great Fire) of July 14, that reportedly lasted for sixty three hours and destroyed the Yenikapı, Kumkapı and Yedikule districts of the city.[158]

An interesting coincidence is that, we find a reference to the *İhrâk-ı Ekber* in the Sohbetnâme in an entry where Seyyid narrates another fire break in his close surrounding, although in much more insignificant scale. He narrates that one night while he was accompanied by his younger sister and brother-in-law, fire appeared in their sight, and the brother-in-law rushed to the scene of fire and came back reporting a house and a bakery which were rebuild after being destroyed in the *ihrâk-ı ekber* were on fire, due to an accident occurred while oil melting. He then goes on to narrate that after spending the night and having coffee in the morning, he arrived at

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[155] On the life and works of Eremya Çelebi see, Ziya Yilmazer, "Eremya Çelebi" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed August 13, 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/eremya-celebi.

[156] Hrand Der-Andreasyan "Eremya Çelebi'nin Yangınlar Tarihi" *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 27 (1973): 59-84, 60.

[157] Hrand Der-Andreasyan "Eremya Çelebi'nin Yangınlar Tarihi", 59.

[158] P. Ğ. İnciciyan, *XVIII. Asırda Istanbul*, trans. Hrand Der-Andreasyan (İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1956), 147.

the scene of fire to see for himself.[159] In another, but less detailed record, he mentions a fire that broke out of the furnace and upon its extinguishing his brother-in-law reported the event to the officials.[160] In another case, he suffice by simply mentioning that he heard a scream of fire.[161]

4.1.2 Experimentations and Novelty: Changes in the Use of Written Medium and the Role of Sufi Circles

The context in which Şeyhülislam Feyzullah Efendi, Niyâzî-i Mısrî, Sadreddinzade Telhisi, Sıdki Mustafa, Seyyid Hasan and many others[162] produced individual works of self-narratives was one that initiated by the late 16th century transformation process in the Ottoman written culture. It was still a predominantly manuscript culture in which production, circulation and ownership of written material was relatively limited, and by and large remained as the monopoly of state elites and 'ulema, and the literacy itself was still reserved for a privileged strata of the society. However, beginning to manifest itself in the 17th century, people from different layers of the society who has no traditionally organic relation with the written culture begin to widen the scope of writing activity beyond the customary lines of spreading

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[159] "Kassab Çeşmesi kurbünde küçük enişte ve küçük hemşirenin mihmanı olub musahabat üzre iken nısfü'l-lelyde bir ihrak zahir oldı enişte at ile varup geldi meğer deniz hammamına akreb bir ev ve bir etmekci dükkanı imiş ve sahibi bir mütemevvil odabaşılıkdan çıkma kimse imiş ihrak-ı ekberden sonra henüz bina idüp içinde sakin olmuşlar yağ eridirken ale'l-gaflet parlamağıyla emval ve eşya tahlis idememişler ba'dehu nevm ve istirahat idüp ale's-sabah [46b] küçük hemşirenin kahvesini içüp gice vaki' olan ihrakı görmeğe gitdim ve bizüm İsmail Çelebiyi anda bulup ve ma'an seyr idüp refakat ile semte geldik", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 46a-46b; Aykut Can, 34.

[160] "nagah ciranından Kaimakam Mahzari İbrahim Ağa nam kimsenin ocağı tutuşup akab-i itfada enişte zabitlere varub ilam eylemiş", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 134a; Aykut Can, 93.

[161] "bir ihrak avazesi olmağla", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 53b; Ayşe Akkılık, 74.

[162] Although a selection of four have been briefly provided in previous chapter, more self-narratives that pre-dates the Tanzimat Period can be listed. For example, on the *mecmuâ* of the Molla Mustafa of Sarajevo who was also attentive in recording the events of the day, see Kerima Filan, *XVIII. Yüzyıl Günlük Hayatına Dair Saraybosnalı Molla Mustafa'nın Mecmuası* (Saraybosna: Connectum, 2011). For a memoir of an Ottoman military bureaucrat, Osman Ağa of Temeşvar, in which the memories of the years in captivity recounted, see Esat Nermi Erendor, *Temeşvarlı Osman Ağa'nın Anıları*, (İstanbul: Aksoy Yayıncılık, 1998).

'ilm, seeking patronage, manifesting professional authority or advocating social and political order.

Obvious enough, this process of altering relations with the writing had its roots in a larger process of changing economic conditions and trading relations, transforming social formations, cultural and intellectual novelties that begin as early as mid-16th century. Increasing purchasing power, expanding import of European ink and paper that consequently lowered the prices of written and writing material allowed for the intensified book production and trade that eventually manifested itself in the 18th century growth of literate population and a newly establishing urban class with literary tastes in the economic, administrative and cultural centres of Damascus, Aleppo, Cairo and Istanbul.[163] The process best exemplified by the humble authors from ordinary backgrounds whose work interpreted as signalling the birth of a "nouveau literacy" in the 18th century Ottoman Levant, and even associated with the so- called "Arabic Renaissance" or al-Nahda Movement.[164]

This change in attitude towards the writing activity can be most clearly traced in the act of writing to express and communicate personal experiences; it demonstrates the fact that individuals begin to establish a new relationship with the writing act that bypasses the customary, institutionalized, and therefore public character of written medium for a rather personal, intimate and therefore private one. Although in some cases purposes and motivations of writing about the self could resemble those of writing about e.g state, law, religion, etc., in general it would not be an overt exaggeration to claim that writing also begin to be comprehended and aimed as an aim-in-itself rather than serving merely as a gateway to achieve status, authority,

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[163] Nelly Hanna, *In Praise of Books: A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

[164] al-Nahda Movement is often referred as "Arabic literary Renaissance" and as a "cultural awakening". Beginning with the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt, 19th century Arabic literature begin to be growingly influenced from the Western forms of writing in particular, and the environment of free thinking and expression, in general. Sajdi interprets that 19th century contact with West gave way to such welcome results due to the inner transformations of the previous century. The similar author-centricity between the chronicles of those nouveau literates and those Ottoman first-person narratives of 17th and 18th century, in her conclusion, is indicative of the larger trend in the Ottoman literature. See, Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

sponsor and legitimacy. Thus, writing was increasingly becoming a personal activity breeding the products of intensely private relationship with the written medium.[165] Consequently, the content of the writing begin to involve the mundane details of daily lives of ordinary author-protagonists. Individuals from different layers of the society, but significantly and innovatively from outside of power and high culture circles, begin to explore and experiment with the writing to express their selves and to tell the story of their lives which they increasingly conceive as worth telling.[166]

That fact that the majority of the early modern Ottoman self-narratives were produced by individuals from Sufi circles, but not necessarily by sheiks who represent the utmost level of mastery in a mystical order, is telling in many respects. Apparently, Sufism played a crucial role in this process by influencing the individual to introspect himself as he progress through the various stages of the path, and consequently record, and thus annotate, and communicate what he observed within.[167] Once settled, the practice of producing an account of self and life, initiated by mystical motivations, opens up a range of whole new possibilities for the act of writing, tempting individuals to experiment with.

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[165] Derin Terzioğlu, "Mecmûa-yı Şeyh Mısrî: On Yedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Anadolu'da Bir Derviş Sülûkunu Tamamlarken Neler Okuyup Yazdı?" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, eds. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım, (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 291-321, 319.

[166] Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 202-203. The same transformation process that Derin Terzioğlu described was observed by Suraiya Faroqhi only with the exception that Faroqhi located the beginning of the process at around second half of the 17th century.

[167] On the relation of Sufism and self-narratives see, Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 194-203. Given pages also covers an account on the diary of Seyyid Hasan and self-narratives of some other Ottoman Sufis whose names and works appears throughout this thesis. Also see, Derin Terzioğlu, "Mecmûa-yı Şeyh Mısrî: On Yedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Anadolu'da Bir Derviş Sülûkunu Tamamlarken Neler Okuyup Yazdı?" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, eds. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 291-321, 319. Terzioğlu claimed the role of sufi circles was not confined to lodges' function as locales for urban crowd to learn how to read and write, and to get acquainted with the written culture, along with medrese and cami. Rather, she emphasized the role of sufi circles as wide webs of influence through which the newly establishing uses of writing could outspread to urbanites who was not necessarily closely attached to circle.

Another this worldly and Seyyid's contemporary diarist was famous Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), an English statesmen. His well-known and widely circulated diary, or as he calls it *journal,* was kept between 1 January 1660 and 31 May 1669 in six volumes, and although it was primarily a personal journal it was interpreted as also being "in some sense a history of his London neighbourhood"[168] or a "chronicle of public affairs" in which "the history of the man and the history of his country become fused to a certain extent".[169] When he begin his diary in 1660 he was serving as household official of his Cromwellian politician and naval commander cousin Edward Mountagu. As a young man 26 of age, he was full of appetite for all the pleasures, arts and enjoyment the 17th century London had to offer. Eager for the pursuit of happiness, Pepys observed that the act of recording had the effect of remembering and thus, invigorating the enjoyment of his day.[170] Could this be also the motivation of writing a diary for Seyyid Hasan who did not seem to be predominantly concerned with expressing introspection, recording his spirituality or elaborate on the rituals of the lodge, but rather provides, unavoidably, glimpses to those?

4.1.2.1 Intimate Dreams and Public Representations: Dream Narration among the Sufi Circles

Traced back as early as medieval Arabo-Islamic tradition, dreams and their interpretations constituted a significant and rich proportion of the written culture that Ottoman Empire inherited.[171] Approached mainly in their symbolic and allegorical capacities and as divine revelations; producing manuals on dream interpretation,

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[168] Robert Latham, "Introduction I: The Diarist" in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds. Robert Latham, William Matthews (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), xvii-xl, xvii.

[169] Robert Latham, "Introduction V: The Diary as History" in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds. Robert Latham, William Matthews (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), cxiv-cxxxvii, cxiv.

[170] Robert Latham, "Introduction I: The Diarist" in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, xvii-xl.

[171] Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition*, 88-93.

diaries that narrate dreams, letters that communicate them with whom the interpretation was expected has always been a part of the writing activities that early modern Ottomans traditionally engaged. Halvetis, in particular, attributed a great significance to dream interpretation.

Written account of dreams were not necessarily composed as individual texts of dream logs, letter corresponding with dream readers (*muabbir*) or with spiritual mentors and sheiks[172], but more than occasionally found in mecmua, autobiographies and diaries. One extremity is that, narrating and communicating one's own dreams is so deeply rooted socio-culturally that, one can encounter them even in the literature genres which is not primarily concerned with author's life. Such is the case with Nev'îzâde Atâî, a prominent 16th century Ottoman poet, who narrated his two dreams as the major motivation for his poetry. As is usual for poets to present their motivations for undertaking the project of writing in *sebeb-i telif* passages of the work, Atâî narrated dreams to emphasize the support and guidance he has received from a deceased local sheikh of *Gülşeni* order, a sub-branch of Halwatiyya. This, in part, seems to have been influenced from the emergence of a new interest in narrating dreams as a part of career related issues of the ulema in the late 16th century Ottoman biographical dictionaries.[173]

One of the members of the Seyyid's circle of companions is a dream interpreter Mu'abbir Hüseyin Dede, to whom Seyyid has regards, perhaps due to his old age or perhaps due to his valued position in the lodge. Nowhere in the diary, Seyyid mentions another mu'abbir (dream interpreter) he is acquainted with. He neither recorded consulting his dreams to the *mu'abbir dede*, or to someone else; nor he mentioned anyone else did. Curious as may seem, given that Seyyid was a Halveti-

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[172] See for example, the section "Mütereddit Bir Mutasavvıf: Üsküplü Asiye Hatun'un Rüya Defteri" in Cemal Kafadar, *Kim Var İmiş Biz Burada Yoğ İken* (Istanbul: Metis, 2014), 123-191.

[173] Aslı Niyazioğlu, "The Very Special Dead and a Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Poet: Nev'îzâde Atâî's Reasons for Composing His Mesnevîs" *Archivum Ottomanicum* 25 (2008): 221-232. Niyazioğlu argued that Atâî's narration of his dreams was motivated by this-worldly as well as the other-worldly reasons, and the passages of sebeb-i telif which usually treated with the factual information it provides can actually reveal a great deal about the author's literary milieu and ways in which he sought to legitimize his authorship and position among the elite. These conclusions, again, were reached through an elaboration based on a dream narrative.

Sünbüli sheik known for their excessive interest in dreams and their interpretations, he never talked about his dreams with only one exception. What is to be inferred from the fact that he did not record his dreams: that he had none? What is to be understood from the fact that he never recorded himself or his companions consulting dreams to the interpreter who obviously was always in their presence? If he did not produce an independent dream log which we unfortunately could not have laid hands on, what is a more suitable medium to communicate dreams than a diary? Could it be that the diary itself was not intended to be personal or ego-centred enough for Seyyid to record his dreams which would traditionally serve, or could be manipulated to serve, to manifest and transmit his authority, legitimacy and distinction in the Sufi path? Why did he made an exception to record that specific dream which was foretelling the death of a respected member of the lodge and an intimate companion?

The only dream that Seyyid has ever narrated, or mentioned having, is a prognostic dream. The record begins with the indication of the word *rüya* (dream) in red ink. Seyyid narrates that in the world of dreams (*âlem-i menâm*) he was informed that Pişkadem Seyyid Hasan Çelebi was lying dead in his home. He rushes to the cell of Mu'abbir Hüseyin Dede and finds him preparing the morning coffee in the company of another dervish. However, while the three was about to leave the cell to attend the funeral of Pişkadem, his son Pişkademzade Mustafa Çelebi enters the cell and was seated holding papers and coffee in his hands. Seyyid records that he woke up at around eight o'clock and Pişkadem Seyyid Hasan Çelebi passed away at ten o'clock.[174] Unfortunately, the author of this thesis is in no capacity eligible to provide a psychoanalytical interpretation of this dream. However, note that Pişkadem

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[174] *Sohbetnâme II*, fols. 46a-46b; Ayşe Akkılık, 67-68 " rü'ya 'alem-i menamda cami'-i şerifin orta kapusı haricinde ve kurbunda esmana nazar iderim aya hammam açıldı mı ne dirim ve bu esnada Pişkadem Çelebi fevt olub içerüde ya'ni evinde yatması ma'lumumuz imiş ani tefekkür iderim [46b] ve Mu'abbir Hüseyin Dede'nin hücresine giderim hücresi ziyade vasi' ve kendü ile bir derviş dahi var imiş ve bu esnada fukara cami'-i şerifde güya sabah virdinde imişler Hüseyin Dede kahve kayırmada tekasül idüb ba'zı evza' ve hareket ider ve cenazeye hazır olmalarımıza müte'allik rey gösterir üçümiz hücreden çıkmak kasdında iken Pişkademzade Mustafa Çelebi taşradan bir iki kerre avaz ider Hüseyin Dede hareketden kaz' olub deruninden kahve 'ameline meyli teferrüs olunur ve Pişkademzade dahil-i hücre olub oturur ve ellerinde güya kağıdlar ile kahve var idi bidar oldıkda sa'ati sekize karib buldum ma'lum ola ki Hazret-i Aziz'in damadı ve birader ve selefi Seyyid Kerimeddin Efendi'nin mahdum-ı mükerremi Pişkadem Seyyid Hasan Çelebi onıncı sa'atde cam-ı eceli nuş eylemiş".

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was known to be ill and his death was expected; thus, this oracular dream was reality-bound both in the narrated content of familiar places and activities, and in the real life experiences and expectations. After all, it is indeed more than natural for friends to dream about each other in troubled times[175] especially if they happen to be of Sufi affiliation who accustomed to communicate his dreams and leave a written record of it to affirm and maintain their spiritual legitimacy. Still, this is the only instance where reader can sense the mysticism of the author, although provides a highly constrained glimpse.[176]

4.1.3 The Problem of Genre: Diary or What?

The assumption is that one's ability to reflect and express his life depends on a certain consciousness about his own self, an inner sense and awareness of his self. Through this consciousness he became aware of himself as an individual person, recognizes himself as himself, as different form another person.[177] This awareness argued to be manifesting itself most intimately in the diary form which supposedly is a writing act as an end itself. In other words, while the motivations for ego-documents like letters, autobiography, memoir and travelogue are fairly more easily recognizable, a private diary usually seems to have lacking an apparent purpose and motivation, and hardly has an aim outside of itself.

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[175] Aslı Niyazioğlu, "How to Read an Ottoman Poet's Dream? Friends, Patrons and the Execution of Fiġānī (d. 938/1532) *Middle Eastern Literatures* 16, no.1 (2013): 48-59, 54.

[176] At one instance, one of the companions consulted his dreams to Seyyid, however neither the content of the dreams nor its interpretation was recorded in the diary. Although it might seem uncertain that who consulted dreams to whom, throughout the diary Seyyid refers only to himself as *fakîr* which literally means poor but usually stands for humble, as well as dervish. " imruz ba'de'z-zuhr Mahmud Dede'nin hücresine girüb kendüye sipariş-i hidmet ve zeyl-i sevkde Mihterzade ve Hacı Evhad Odaları kapusı kurbunda Hariri ve Haherzade'ye iltika ve Cinci Emir Çelebi Baġçesi ortasında fakîre rüyalar 'arz itmek". *Sohbetnâme II,* fol. 170b; Ayşe Akkılık, 187. The complete transcription of the folio aslo appears in Deniz Fatma, "Uses of Space by Sufis", 38-39, footnote 120, but with a minor slip, Fatma recorded folio as 171a.

[177] For the early modern Western philosophical discussions on the issues of self-consciousness and personal identity, see Udo Thiel, *The Early Modern Subject: Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

What is a diary anyway and what characterizes diary as a literary genre other than the most obvious organization of it?[178] First of all, it is dubious whether the diarists even considers themselves as authors[179] especially because almost all of the manuscript diaries remained as single copy; a point that should be explained perhaps not so much by the lack or uncommonality of printing press but of their low use value if the author is not a renowned person. Basically, a diary is the daily written account of the selected parts of its author's life, a personal and selective chronicle. We might assume that in the act of writing, author is by his own, he does not need assistance of others in his reach to confirm or correct the content which solely based on the memory of its author. He might speak about anything he wishes, could stop at one point and continue to write when he saw fit.

The diary form, like the writing itself, was born out of the functions it fulfils in commerce and administration, in both of which making systematic records and dating is of crucial importance. They seem to have contained some marginal records of the states of mind, too; although not outright expression of the intimate experiences but those that related to business, in as much an account book could possibly contain. A similar use that can be traced as back to the Rome was a kind of civil register journals of communities which included both the regulations and

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[178] The earliest diary produced in the Western world, dates back to 15th century, is the anonymous French Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris de 1405 à 1449. Islamic world, on the other hand, developed the diary form very early in its history. George Makdisi identified the earliest example of diary produced in Islamic world as dating back to 8th century. Makdisi suggested that the composition of diaries was simultaneous with composition of annalistic and biographical works both of which rooted in early Islamic tradition as genres of historiographical literature. See George Makdisi, "The Diary in Islamic Historiography: Some Notes" *History and Theory* 25 (1986): 173-185.

[179] One of the most crucial points in the study of the subjects relating to the Ottoman written culture prior to printing press, and up until to its widespread use, is to conceptualize the terms 'author', 'reader', 'editor' and even, the 'book' itself. These concepts which defined and highly embedded in the context of institutionalized print culture of the modern age, tend to pose a challenge when attempted to locate in the manuscript culture of early modern era. Indeed, the subjects of this thesis whose life narratives are being presented were simultaneously authors, editors and readers of their own manuscripts and were most probably, by and large, *müstensih* (copyist) and consequently editors of many other works which they deemed suitable for their own use. Even though we will not be opening up a discussion on this issue, the problem well applies to our Seyyid Hasan and his *Sohbetnâme*. See, Derin Terzioğlu, "Mecmûa-yı Şeyh Mısrî: On Yedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Anadolu'da Bir Derviş Sülûkunu Tamamlarken Neler Okuyup Yazdı?" in *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, eds. Hatice Aynur, Müjgan Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim Kuru, Ali Emre Özyıldırım, (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 291-321, 293.

important events of the community and, births, marriages, deaths of individual members of it. Such journals, however, seem to have disappeared during the Middle Ages until it made its reappearance in 16th century, and it was essentially "a *community* affair". Although there were journals of more private nature, like those kept by heads of households which at best recorded the household events, they too have dealt with a community and were in no ways private as we use the term now.[180]

The author of the diary, Seyyid Hasan, actually in nowhere refers to the manuscript as *Sohbetnâme*. It appears that the manuscript named and catalogued after the dining gatherings that Seyyid at times recorded as *Sohbet*. The manuscript that we have thus far referred categorically as a diary was in fact organized and called as *Sâlnâme* (yearbook) by the author. [181]Indeed, the manuscript was kept with a strict indication for the change of years and the main headings on the first page of each volume refers to years that manuscript covers. Thus, *Sâlnâme* is a term for the external organizing principle of time span of the written material. At this point, then, a justification for the use of the term needs to be given, and grounded by referring to the distinguishing characteristic of the diary as a literature genre, if we are to pursue referring it as such. For one thing, the manuscript's inner organizing principle is that records were kept on daily bases in the evening of each day with an explicit and clear indication of name of the days −and months- provided at the beginning of the entry. Secondly, the fashioning of the manuscript is one that the records on one side of each leaf are divided with the words indicating the evening of the day written larger in size. If the given side of the leaf does not contain a record of a day that the author almost always hierarchically enlarge and emphasize in size and in colour to indicate that the day is e.g a religious holiday, beginning of a new month or so, texts is always divided with an exaggerate extension of the last letter of the word *şeb* (evening) and with the name of the day, both written always in red ink. Thus, the text on one side of each page is

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[180] Philippe Lejeune, *On Diary*, eds. Jeremy D. Popkin, Julie Rak, trans. Katherine Durnin, (University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 51-53.

[181] For the facsimiles of the opening folios of the first and second volumes of the diary, see Appendix A.1 and A.2. While the first volume that covers the records of one year opens up as "bu defter bin yetmiş iki tarihinindir" (this notebook belongs to year one thousand and seventy two); the second volume which contains the records of four years opens up as "sâlnâme-i sene 1073" (yearbook of the year 1073).

divided by daily records; horizontally with a whole line providing the word *şeb* (evening –of-) in greater size in black ink, and the name of the day attached to end of that line relatively smaller and in red ink.[182] In short, thus far, it conforms to the principle of daily record keeping; both by the act of writing each day and by its visible fashioning that emphasize the daily based organization of the manuscript. Still, a fair criticism can be raised as to why insist on referring to it as a diary rather than remaining allegiant to the author and his categorization of his own manuscript.

As it was customary for learned of the Ottoman society, through Şeyhi Mehmed's biographical account in his compendium, we know that Seyyid had composed several poems of humble sort. For the Arabic biography tradition, it is a standard practice to include either the most artful or best representative poems in the account to demonstrate the literary achievements of the biographical subject. In his diary, Seyyid neither recorded his poems or someone else'[183], nor did he even mention the process of composing while he was telling his day.[184]

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[182] See appendix A.3 for a typical folio.

[183] Although there is little ground to confuse Sohbetnâme with a mecmûa, the lack of parts of poetry or prose of the author or some other author's is the most obvious distinguishing trait, other than lacking the circumstantiality and occasionality of a mecmûa.

[184] Inclusion, or exclusion, of poetry in the diary is a point that should not be overlooked. As it will be more clearly demonstrated, the content of the diary is this-worldly oriented and provides an account on the author's everyday. However, never did the author record any introspections or expressed his mystical orientation, except for the indirect implications of his Sufism through the undetailed records of happenings and rituals of the lodge. This fact, however, perhaps should be think of more in terms of tradition of writing and medium of genre, and less in the author's personal preferences. Introspection and inward examination of the soul was, by and large, communicated through the medium of mystical poetry but not in the form of autobiographical writing. See Jan Schmidt, "First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Miscellaneous Manuscripts" in *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th century)*, eds. Ralf Elger, Yavuz Köse (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 159-171, 167.Unfortunately, the present author of this thesis is not in any capacity qualified for examining and commenting on the spirituality or religiosity of Seyyid Hasan as reflected in his poetry.

4.2 *Sohbetnâme*: Content Between Public and Private

4.2.1. General Tone and Main Themes of the Diary

What is for sure is that all those other persona that appear so repeatedly throughout the diary, were never mentioned in their character, capacity of specialization or mysticism; even Seyyid never presented himself in his background, trait, personality, occupation or Sufism. A great rhetoric of action and interaction dominates the text, if not almost an impersonality. All were simply *there* to be visited and accompanied, to supper and drink coffee, to converse and spend time with. They were recorded in the very moment of their company or with the reaching news about them; none treated in an abstraction of the moment and activity. Never did the author recorded someone as to be think of[185] or longed for, and as an individual person or as a friend. Each was a part of the circle just like Seyyid positioned himself to be; gathered in the company of those, in that specific moment and place, doing this and that.

Other than recording the events and happenings, at times, diary also describe the natural conditions of the given day. To begin with, the author briefly indicates the weather conditions of rain, storm and snow[186], however, nowhere in the diary implies high temperature even in the days that he records to have swim, and ablution in the sea. Obviously, the lack of record can not be possibly indicative of the lack of event and the fact that the records of swimming are more than rare clearly illustrates the suitable weather conditions for it, but Seyyid seems to have always recorded unusual, or better unexpected, weather events of the day with the exception of high temperature. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis and knowledge of the present author, the fact perhaps is related to the climatic conditions of the Little Ice Age.[187] However, perhaps the most curious entry of the whole diary is one that

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[185] One exception to this rule is his son.

[186] Occasionally, the author records the wheather condition by providing it with a descriptive attributive. Some examples are "matar-ı şedid" (driving rain), "be-gayet lodos esmesi" (strong southwester wind), "hayal mertebesi kar" (dream-like snowfall), "azıcık kar" (slight snowfall).

[187] The Little Ice Age is the name given by the environmental historians to refer the extreme weather conditions of the period broadly between 1300 and 1850. The worldwide environmental phenomenon

clearly indicative of an extreme weather condition. While narrating the shopping he made for the kitchen supplies, Seyyid records that, among other things, he bought some sour oranges and an a watermelon by indicating the amount he paid for the items. He then goes on to narrate his gathering with some members of the *ihvân*[188] whom he run across, sit and enjoyed accompany in the shop of another member. On their way back to neighbourhood, Seyyid record that snow begin to fall; almost dreamy at first but got more heavy as they walk and snow slightly covered the roofs of the houses over the night.[189] Watermelon and snow is a pair that seasonally can hardly coincide under the normal climatic conditions.

Seyyid was also very attentive to record the dates of the traditional indicator of the changing of season and beginning of spring, known as cemre. He records cemre either right after recording the date in the beginning of the day's entry or in the margin notes, but always as writing both the word cemre and its enumerated order from 1 to 3 in red ink, as he does when recording the religious holidays or the name of the day.[190] More curious is one particular record in which Seyyid remarkably breaks his writing strategy for an obvious motivation to *inform* on a certain weather condition in a margin note. Beginning by writing *ma'lum ola ki* ("let this be known") in red ink as is usual for the diary when recording an event or date of significance, he

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of droughts and consequent famines, and extraordinarily cold winters were also severely experienced in the Ottoman Empire. See Sam White, "The Little Ice Age Crisis of the Ottoman Empire: A Conjuncture in Midlle East Environmental History" in *Water on Sand: Environmental Histories of the Middle East and North Africa,* ed. Alan Mikhail, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 71-90.

[188] Although a clear distinction is not available between the groups which words *ihvân* (brothers –of the path-) and *yâran* (friends, companions) separately refer, both of which appears frequently in the diary, these seem to have been interchangeably used by the author. For the cases where the lodge-affiliation is clearly implied, I will employ the term *ihvân*; and for the rest, I will be using the English equivalent for *yâren* (friend, companion), instead.

[189] "çiçekciden on yedi akçaya bir küçürek karpuz aldım…[52b] …semte avdet itdikde Cerrah Yolundaki Soğuk Çeşme kurblarında hayal mertebesi kar yağdı ve Hobyarda bulgur gibi yağdı… evden oğlumla Ahmed Ağaya giderken bayağı yağdı ve gice tamlar biraz ağardı", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 52a-52b; Aykut Can, 38.

[190] The author also records the Days of Hızır, "rûz-ı hızır". See, for example *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 114a. Traditionally known as *Hıdrellez*, the day originally refers to the Turkic holiday at which the summer is celebrated, although in time it was slightly loaded with Islamic motifs. In the Ottoman society, *Hıdrellez* was the day at which the season of winter ended and summer begin according to the traditional two-parted seasonal calendar. See, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, "HIDRELLEZ" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed on 16 July 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hidrellez

describes in a detailed fashion, of course detailed relatively in the *Sohbetnâme*'s term, a peculiarity of the night sky of *Nevruz*.[191] He informs that at the night or day of *Nevruz* there is a moment at which not a single cloud can be seen in the sky. He then goes on to declare that there are three phases or cues of Nevruz; *kavl-i müneccimin* at the eleventh day, *kavl-i sahib-i ruzname* at the twelfth day, and *kavl-i sahib-i mülheme* at the thirteenth day of March.[192] The author even further moves beyond his own tone that dominates the diary and concludes this margin note by recording *el 'uhdetü ale'r-ravi,* a phrase that is known to be used by chroniclers who narrates an event which he himself did not witnessed, to indicate that the responsibility belongs to who spreads rumour. Although Seyyid does not record from whom he has heard and transmitted this information, he clearly passes down and communicates an information; an attempt one is not likely to engage when he hopes to be the sole overseer of the document at hand. However, this could be the case only if the rumour is not newly heard and the act of recording it does not aim to process and absorb the new information.

Other than the weather conditions of the day, Seyyid occasionally records the phases of the moon. For example, in one record he briefly narrates that he viewed the new moon in his older sister's garden[193] or in another he saw the new moon while being accompanied by a certain Osman Ağa[194]. In some others, however, he indicates as

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[191] The name of the day and festivities coinciding March 21 vernal equinox. It constitutes the beginning of the new year and marked the spring in traditional Turkish-Persian calendars. See Şinasi Gündüz, "NEVRUZ" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed on 2 August 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/nevruz. As the date was associated with blossom and regeneration of spring, it also constituted the beginning of the seasonal sociocultural practices and outdoor gathering of gardens, orchards and courtyards in night-time. See, Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 19-20

[192] "ma'lum ola ki nevruzun gicesinde yahud gündüzinde bir dakika vardır ki anda hava yüzinde mikdar-ı zerre sehab olmaz ve nevruzda üç kavl vardır kavl-i müneccimin martın on birinci günidir ve kavl-i sahib-i ruzname on ikinci ve kavl-i sahib-i mülheme on üçünci günleridir el 'uhdetü 'ale'r-ravi", *Sohbetnâme II*,fol. 63b; Ayşe Akkılık, 83.

[193] *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.63a; Aykut Can, 46, "haher-i mihterin bağçesinde rü'yet-i hilal".

[194] *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.51b; Ayşe Akkılık, 72, "Osman Ağa ile küçük odasında oturırken ma'a hilali gördik".

recording "şeb-i husuf"[195] (night of lunar eclipse), or records in the margin of the folio as "husuf tam"[196] (full lunar eclipse) without providing a narration of viewing it.[197]

4.2.1.1 Plague and Death: "We Need a Coffin Again, I Replied"

The most strikingly apparent theme which covers the whole two volumes of the manuscript but specifically dominates the first half of the first volume is ta'un[198] and death.[199] For the first volume, in each day Seyyid records more than one death and funeral of his close and distant relatives, neighbours, acquaintances, companions and

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[195] *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.121b.

[196] *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.202b.

[197] Same is the case for the only record of earthquake in the diary which the author suffice by recording "zelzele der-sa'at 4" (earthquake at 4 o'clock) in the margin of a folio. See *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.127a; Ayşe Akkılık, 136. Akkılık's translation of the record "zelzele dersa'adet" seems more than unlikely to be accurate.

[198] *Ta'un* is the exact word Seyyid uses to refer the on-going epidemic, and *mat'un/ mat'une* to refer those who are ill. The word *ta'un* have almost always taken as referring to bubonic plague in the literature, unlike the other mostly circulated word *veba* which might refer epidemic diseases other than plague. Nowhere in his diary, Seyyid uses the term veba and this always led to interpretation that the epidemic he was referring was specifically bubonic plague. However, Sam White draw attention to the fact that most cases of "plague" in the Ottoman history might be resulted from an misinterpretation of a linguistic simplification. It appears that in the majority of Ottoman writings words *veba* and *ta'un* were not used in their precise medical meanings, and both were used interchangeably to refer various diseases. See Sam White, "Rethinking Disease in Ottoman History" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42, no.4 (2010): 549-567, 556. The fact that Seyyid used the term *ta'un* over *veba* do not easily allow to conclude that the epidemic which the diary records was indeed plague, and we have little ground to assume he made his choice of word with an awareness of the clinical implications. However, it is beyond the knowledge of the present author to further discuss and identify the exact epidemic disease, so will be referring it as plague in English, also.

[199] The diary does not necessarily indicate each and every death to be related to the ta'un and, given the fact that it covers about four years of time span, it can be assumed that some records of death which lacks reference to it might actually be due to natural reasons like old age or other unspecified illnesses. Among those deaths whose reason was specified, or can be inferred, as not associated to *ta'un*, one such death was clearly caused by an unfortunate accident where a wooden pillar fell on to head of the late Mütevelli Ağa who passed away shortly after the incident. "ve anda bir gürüh-i enbuhi rüyet ve Hariri Çelebi ne olmış buna didikde bizim Mütevelli Ağayı bir dükkan kenarında laya'kıl müşahede ve der-'akab 'Abdülbaki Çelebinin büyük oğlı Valide Cami'inde başına mertek düşmiş deyu ihbar" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.151b; Ayşe Akkılık, 167.

their families and relatives.[200] However, Seyyid exclusively focuses on narrating the visits paid to those who are ill and description of their conditions, the location of their bed, the arriving news of their passing, preparations for the funeral, the burial and the attendants, the following visits of condolence, meals served to those who are gathered, and the like. Except for the two cases of death, one being his wife and the other his son, Seyyid never records his own emotional state of devastation or sorrow on deaths. In line with the general mode of the diary, death, like any other event, is recorded without providing an extended description of the emotional, spiritual or in any sense personal and intimate state of the author, but a focus on the exceptions would suffice to reveal disproportionally more insight on how death individually experienced and communally shared than can be extracted from any other kind of documents.[201]

A heavy proportion of the diary, but especially the first volume, records the illness and death related activities and rituals which were essentially carried out and participated by the members of the community formed of family members, close and distant relatives, lodge circle companions, neighbours and their families and relatives.[202] Records of activities range from the arriving news of illness, visits paid to diseased, the location of the diseased bed in the house and in the room, rarely his

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[200] As will be demonstrated in detail in the following pages, a considerable attention was paid to the fashioning of the diary to increase the distinguishability of the entries that records rites of passages in the author's and members of his circle's life. In the same fashion, the diary records some deaths in the first thirty folios of the first volume as *Târîh-i Fevt–i* x (the date of the passing of x), and occasionally followed by *ibn-bin/bint* y (son/ daughter of y), written in red ink and formatted like a sub-heading. It might be the case that Seyyid seek for a further emphasis and visibility of certain records of deaths at first, but later goes on to record every death in the same manner as he records all the rites of passages and the major public events. Written always in red ink, beginning the entry as *ma'lûm ola ki* (let this be known) is the cursor that was used throughout the diary.

[201] The theme of illness, especially the experience of plague, has a particularly significant position in the literature on self-narratives. In their capacity to express the subjective experience, self-narratives have been especially valued as the primary contributors to the history of the body. See Gudrun Piller, "Private Body – What Do Self-Narratives Bring to the History of the Body?" in *Mapping the 'I' Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, eds. Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 76-94.

[202] For an elaborative and meticulous prosopographical study on the *Sohbetnâme* and for a special focus on the themes of death, ritual and careerism, see Tunahan Durmaz, "Family, Companions, and Death: Seyyid Hasan Nûrî Efendi's Microcosm (1661-1665)" M.A. Thesis, (Sabancı University, 2019).

condition; arriving news of death and its time, preparing the body for burial, determining the place of the grave, orders for coffin and stone, names of those who attended the funeral, who led the namaz, who gave the speech; names of those who were present in the deceased house, who made the service for attendants, meals served; visits paid to deceased's grave, third, seventh and fortieth days upon the death, the anniversaries of death and again those who attended, those who served and meals served. For all the processes and rituals related to illness and death, Seyyid recorded the names of those who were present in each step, attending, sharing the sorrow and paying condolence to those members of the community they belong. As the protagonist of the text, it is more than expectable that Seyyid devoted the records of majority of the emotionally motivated actions in the face of death to his own lost of his wife and sons, although he also seems to have made exceptions in some cases. What one realizes is the dual character of the death; on the one hand being the most personal and emotion-loaded, and indeed traumatic, misfortune of the individual lives' and on the other, a set of traditionally preordained processes of activities and rituals that essentially operates in the public realm, or at least in the extension of domestic and private. *Sohbetnâme* in that sense, reminds how the death is located at the very crossroad of the private and public, and how it is essentially personal and simultaneously a shared experience of the community one belongs.

Not the very first record but the very first major event of the diary is the arriving news of illness and the eventual death of Seyyid's wife, Gülbevi Hatun within the first five folios of the first volume of the diary.[203] While he was away from his home,

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[203] Throughout the whole diary entries are recorded on daily bases, written on the evening without retrospection beyond the given day and without any reflections on the past, not even on the day before. However, a closer inspection reveals that the beginning of the first volume constitutes a noteworthy exception, one that perhaps should be related to the question of motivation to begin writing a diary. In the first entry of the diary Seyyid begins by recording that he got shaved by a certain Nîm Berber and goes on to narrate his journey to Ali Beğ Köy. He records his arriving to destination in folio 2b as " guruba karib Ali Beğ Köyü'ne dahil olduk amma fakir arabadan bir miktar mukaddemce dahil oldum ve anda yedi gece beytutet eyledim" (on sunset we arrived at Ali Beğ Köy but I arrived earlier than (those in) the car and spend seven nights there), and then goes on to briefly narrate those seven days. After this seven days, he begins recording the day in which the news of his wife being seriously ill in death bed have reached to him by "ve'l-hasıl yedi gece beytuteden sonra" (in short after seven nights of staying) in *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 4a; Aykut Can, 13-14. Although it is difficult to speak for certain, it seems that from that day on, there is no other gap in the daily based structure of the diary. The implication of all that is, perhaps Seyyid had no project of keeping a diary in his head, but the serious news or following loss of his wife, after losing one of his sons Hüseyin

in the rural district of Alibeyköy for an unspecified reason, Seyyid was deeply alarmed by the sight of the arriving messenger on horseback and asked whether it was good news that he carried with himself. When he opened the letter, he recognized the handwriting of his son and relieved for a moment but the message read that "Gülbevi Hatun is at death's door, try reaching while she is still alive or to her death".[204] He then narrates leaving in hurry and his journey to back home where he reached his wife while she was still alive but in great suffering. He records that she died two hours after his arrival and goes on to narrate the arrangements made for the funeral. Some of the most emotional entries of the diary, in the sense that emotions were actually described rather than the emotional reactions, were recorded after the arrangements for funeral completed and Seyyid " in great difficulty and sorrow I tried to rest but sleep escaped me, then I went to the side of deceased and waited until the morning call to prayer by thinking and crying"[205] and while the deceased's body was being carried out of the home for the funeral "when her head was appeared in those hands the most deepest sadness and cry overtook me which can not be described".[206]

Great misfortune for him, it was not only his wife that Seyyid had lost in the family but two of his three sons, too. We know his oldest son Hüseyin died before the beginning of the diary, yet it is not indicated whether he died of epidemic or by any

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prior to the beginning of the diary, was perhaps the initial motivation of the diary. In other words, the diary might have a prevalent personal motivation in its beginning, the traumatic experience of losses in the family. This, however, would not be surprising since such intense experiences tend to breed a record as a part of coping mechanism of the protagonists. More intriguing is, then, why he kept recording for more than four years and what was the motivation for the diary's persistence.

[204] "çiftlik kapusundan biri Na'lbend Ahmet Beğ'in al atını yederek nümayan oladüşti derunum pür-helecan oldu hayır mı didikde hayırdır kağıdı okudukda ma'lum olur didi fakir dahi nerduban başında kağıdı açup oğlumun hattını gördükde bir mikdar helecanım hıffet buldı amma mazmunı bu ki Gülbevi Hatun halet-i nezdedir bolaykı [5a] hastalığına yahud mevtine yetişmeğe sa'y idesiz". *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 4b-5a; Aykut Can, 14.

[205] "fakir küçük odada gayet meşakk-rah ile istirahate kasd itdim lakin hab müyesser olmadı ba'dehu merhumenin yanına çıkup gah tefekkür gah büka iderek sabah ezanına dek bekledim" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 6a; Aykut Can, 15.

[206] "yukarı nerdubanın birkaç kademesine vazı kadem idüp ellerinde merhumenin başı canibi nümayan oldukda bir mertebe enderuni hüzn ve büka galebe itdi ki beyane gelmek kabil değil" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 7b; Aykut Can, 16.

other reason, since the general rule of the diary applies here as well and there is not retrospective records related to him and to his death. Rather, again in line with the style of the diary, we know that Seyyid had a son named Hüseyin who was deceased prior to beginning of the diary thanks to the records of action relating to the deceased. Within around the first fifteenth folios of the first volume, the name Hüseyin, or more sincerely "Hüseyinim" as in my (beloved) Hüseyin, appears in three records with reference to first visiting his grave[207] and then in relation to funeral and grave of Gülbevi hatun[208] who probably was the mother of late Hüseyin. Another reference to Hüseyin was again related to an action of gathering, praying for the deceased and serving food to those who attend in the anniversary of death of Hüseyin.[209]

It must be noted that deaths of children and offsprings were recorded in an slightly diffrent tone; one that reveals the parents' despair relatively more openly when compared with the records of adult deaths and the general tone of the diary. Moreover, this discrepancy of the tone is not an exception for the protogonist-author of the diary, but in some cases applies to deaths of the offsprings of his circle, too. In one entry, for example, Seyyid records that upon the death of his oldest son, how Bakkal (grocer) Emir Ahmet Çelebi "wondered up and down on the streets screaming and moaning".[210] Other than providing a deeper description of emotional reactions in the face of a young death, or the death of an offspring, those entries seems to have been formatted with more mindfull emphasis in the sense that, unlike

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[207] "Hüseyinimin kabrine vardık" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 1b; Aykut Can, 13.

[208] "Hüseyinimin kabri kurbüne varup sol canibinde bir mezar sipariş eyledik" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 5b; Aykut Can, 15. "Hüseyinimin sol canibinde bizüm merhumeyi defn idüp" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 9b; Aykut Can, 17.

[209] "ba'de'z-zuhr haher-i gühterin evinde merhum oğlum Hüseyinin yılı içün akd-i cem'iyyet ve suffeteyn beynindeki sütun dibinde Muhammediyye kürsisi vaz' olunub Aziz Hazretleri va'az ve nasihat ve iki def'a tevhid-i şerif ve İmam Efendi ve Yolgeçen İmamı birer hatm-i şerif du'ası tilavet itmek ve siyakında pilav ve zerde tenavül olunmak vaki' olmuşdur matlab sal-i Hüseyin" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 91a; Aykut Can, 64.

[210] "Bakkal Emir Ahmed Çelebi'nin büyük oğulcuğu Seyyid Mehmed fevt oldığını istima' itdik Emir-i mezbur feryad ü zar ile bir iki kerre bezme geldi gitdi ve sokaklarda gezdi yürüdü" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.11b; Aykut Can, 18.

the adult deaths, they might contain the age of the decesaed as well.[211] One such exceptional entry is the deatailed record of death of a baby. After providing the names of the both parents, with the occupational title of the father and paternity line indicated, Seyyid goes on to record the exact date and place which Seyyid İbrahim died mat'un at the midday while he was four months and thirteenth and a half days old, and then the exact date, time and place where he was buried without a coffin.[212]

The diary does not merely records those who died but, as was also the case with Gülbevi Hatun, sometimes records conditions of those who are ill in their deathbed. In one such entry, Seyyid narrates that a certain Şahbaz fell ill, *mat'une olub*, and they waited and slept by her side but the poor Şahbaz moaned and wandered for whole night, and died the day after. Upon taking measurements of the deceased and on his way to order coffin, Seyyid replied to a certain Sun'izade who call out to him asking what have happened that they "need a coffin again".[213]

The common view was that the Islamic influence by and large shaped the Ottoman Muslims' mental attitudes towards diseases and epidemics, encouraging them to

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[211] One example is the death of his pupil Mehmed at six o'clock of the given day and at the age ten. "ma'lum ola ki altıncı sa'atte Ramhi Ahmed Ağanın oğulcığı tilmizim Mehmed Ağa on yaşında cam-ı eceli nuş eylemiş" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.16b; Ayşe Akkılık, 34. It is beyond the purpose of this thesis, and Sohbetnâme contains only a few cases of death where Seyyid recorded the age of the deceased, but self-narratives in general could provide a truly authentic glimpse for the study of culturally constructed age categories. In the case of death of his pupil, it appears that an exception made to indicate his age because it was considered to be too soon, and therefore further dramatic. These are kind of glimpses that contemporary Ottoman social historians are so desperately seeking after and facing serious challenge to locate outside of the legal texts. Although individual self-narratives could possibly provide only bits and pieces of information on the age categories and their approximate dividing limits from one another, they certainly provide the actual life experiences and the mentality that regulates the socio-culturally specific categories of children, adult and elder, rather than people's mere identification in kadı court as such.

[212] "tarih-i fevt-i Seyyid İbrahim ibn-i Seyyide Zahide ma'lum ola ki haher-i kihterim Seyyide Zahide kadının ebe güveygüsü ve Orta Defterdar [26b] İbrahim Efendinin ortanca oğlı Ahmed Ağadan olan oğlı Seyyid İbrahim dört aylık ve on üç buçuk günlük oldığı halde ve mat'un oldığı halde [Sahh: Ali Beğ Köyünde] saferin tokuzuncı gününde ve isneyn gününde ve öyle vaktinde fevt olup irtesi onuncı güni yevm-i sülesa vakt-i duhada Yeldeğirmeni kurbünde tabutsuz defn olunmuş", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 26a-26b; Aykut Can, 25.

[213] "küçük suffede evvelki pencire dibinde minder üzre came-i hab düzilüb beytute yeledik amma Şahbazcık bütün gice inleyüb söyledi…[20b] ba'dehu mezar ölçisi alub giderken Sun'izadenin dükkanından nedir aslı deyu hitab geldi yine bir mezar lazım oldı deyu cevab virdim" *Sohbetnâme I*, fols.20a-20b; Aykut Can, 23. In his transliteration, Can seems have made a minor mistake and read the word as "hücre" that is clearly "pencire".

accept it as the divine will and take a fatalistic and passive stand, one that even prevented them from fleeing the outbreaks. This indifference towards diseases believed to be persisted until the Tanzimat Era when the first systematic proactive measures and implementation of quarantine begin to appear with the 1838 quarantine reforms. At the turn of the 21st century, Heath Lowry observed that a change in the attitudes towards plague occurred in 16th century Ottoman society in relation to the Empire's expansion into the Arab world and its political rivalry with Safavids. By expanding its territories into the early centers of Islamic civilization and by positioning itself increasingly against the belief and value system of rival heterodox Safavid state, 16th century Ottoman Empire begin to be increasingly fashioned in line with its position as the head of orthodox Islam in the world. The process of increasingly embracing and representing the orthodoxy in Islam, as Lowry argued, resulted in an deepening acceptance of plague divinely preordained.[214] Contrary to this dogma based explanations, in the last decade of Ottoman historiography opponents have increasingly argued that in fact not all the Muslim Ottomans were indifferent or unwilling to fight the infectious diseases in their capacity. It seems that Ottoman Muslims rather show a mixture of reactions to epidemics: at the one end, there were religious scholars preaching the plague to be the will of god and at the other, there were muftis fleeing the capital in times of epidemics.[215] Although the majority of the Ottoman religious writers did not uniformly prohibited a proactive stand to fight and flee the plague, and some even encouraged it, it seems that the essentialist and fatalistic tendencies in the face of plague epidemics was in fact not a peculiarity of Islam and contemporary religious dogmatists of enlightened and reform oriented European countries were preaching God's omnipotence and trust in his divine order, also.[216]

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[214] Heath W. Lowry, "Pushing the Stone Uphill: The Impact of Bubonic Plague on Ottoman Urban Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 23 (2003): 93-132, 129-130.

[215] Sam White, "Rethinking Disease in Ottoman History" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42, no.4 (2010): 549-567.

[216] Birsen Bulmuş, *Plague, Quarantines and Geopolitics in the Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 15-38.

Unfortunately, *Sohbetnâme* does not contain sufficient information to speculate on the degree of proactive or fatalistic stand in the face of the epidemic that was so dramatically shaking the life of the protagonist as well as those of his community. In one record, Seyyid mentions that a certain Atazade, a well respected member of the lodge and a close companion, paid a visit to take the pulse of the diseased as well as his youngest sister, neither of whom he refers as *mat'un* or *mat'une* which he usually do.[217] Since Seyyid did not specified whether they were ta'un and since the procedure is very basic to apply for a wide range of unwellness, it can be also assumed that neither was actually infected with the epidemic. Moreover, for this example, Atazade is not related with a speciality in the field, neither he was implied to be for the rest of the diary. The more precise and informative examples involves a certain Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi, referred in his capacity for medical operation.[218] In two entries, Seyyid records that Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi applied ointment to the diseased' *ta'un* (read as an open wound) but he does not mention whether it relieved the diseased, or whether he paid for the service.[219] The most detailed and informative glimpse to treat, or relieve, the effect of the epidemic that can be found in the whole diary is the brief narration of Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi incising the wound of mat'une

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[217] "ba'de't-tevhid Atazade bizüm eve geldi hem hastamızın ve hem haher-i kihterin nabızlarını tutdı" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.56a; Aykut Can, 41. The assumption that Atazade visited in order to take the pulse of those two person rests on the fact that the day's record stops after this brief information and Atazade's visit was not recorded beyond it. If, lets say, they had conversation or a drink together, it would be highly unusuall for Seyyid to skip mentioning it.

[218] The early modern Ottoman barbers were known to be performing circumcisions, pulling tooth, cupping and leech therapy, healing minor wounds and bruises, prepare ointments for various skin diseases in addition to their primary task of shaving hair and beard. See Reşad Ekrem Koçu, "Berber" in *Istanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Istanbul Ansiklopedisi ve Neşriyat Kollektif Şirketi, 1961): 2513-2520, 2515. Given the minor medical tasks that this Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi recorded to have performed, he might be assumed to be a barber, too. However, the fact that this certain Yusuf Çelebi have always been recorded as *Cerrah* as opposed those other figures referred as *Berber* (barber), like Nîm Berber or Berber Ömer Bey, allows to conclude that this certain Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi was in greater surgical capacity than a barber could have. The range of operations Yusuf Çelebi, or any other cerrah in 17th century, was capable of is beyond the knowledge of the present author and the scope of this thesis, as long as it was not narrated in the diary.

[219] "imruz büyük saffada hastamızın ta'unına mezbur cerrah merhem örmek" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 130a. "Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi büyük saffada hastamızın ta'unına merreten saniye merhem komak" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 130b.

with a scalpel and applying a yellow coloured ointment.[220] Not the records themselves, or the information they contain and lack, but their rarity pose a challenge for interpretation here. Given the proportion of entries recording the illness and death, the diary provides so little glimpse on the proactive measures or the fatalistic mentality in the face of epidemics.

Even more restrained and speculative than the proactive measures would be a discussion on the fleeing the epidemic in the diary, since it involves no implication of such purpose whatsoever. However, the diary do records a high mobility of the author's circle in and out of the city. Seyyid tends to record those who are departing, whether or not he had the chance to wish well and say goodbye, and the purpose or the destination of the travel. Of course there are exceptions to this rule which he sufficed by noting that they left, probably because it was too obvious to him to consider worth mentioning. As it would be expected, the most detailed entries of those who left are either destined to hajj[221] and at one instance to military campaign. Other than those records of departure whose purpose were indicated, the diary also records many minor travels to countryside of the city. Spring and summer were obviously climatically more suitable for travel in the early modern world, but it was also the season of summer which epidemic diseases spread more quickly and thus, deaths peaked. Although the diary does not record such an agenda of the travels to countryside, given the severity of the illness and the lack of evidence to assume that they were opponents of such strategies for avoiding it, it might be claimed that at least part of the travels to countryside in hot weathers was in part motivated by the epidemic.

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[220] "cerrah mezbur bizim büyük saffada ve oğlum nazarında mat'unemizin ta'unına nişter darb idüb deşmek ve bir sarı merhem koyub gitmek" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 131b: Ayşe Akkılık, 141.

[221] Seyyid seems to have carefully recorded those members of his community who left for the religious duty of pilgrimage to holy lands of Mecca and Medina, and those who returned from there. For example, "ma'lum ola ki Şah Sultan Şeyhi ve Hazret-i Eyyub Va'izi Ahmed Efendi iki oğlı ile ma'an bu esnada Hacc -ı Şerife azimet buyurmışlar", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 67a; Aykut Can, 48.

4.2.1.2 *Meclis*, *İşret* and *Sohbet*: Gathering of *İhvan*

The most regularly reappearing events throughout the whole diary, but especially for the second volume, are *'işret*, *sohbet* and *meclis*. Although it is not perfectly clear how Seyyid used the words, and whether those were meant to refer distinguishably different settings and activities or rather used almost interchangeably, these words or the events they correspond are perhaps the most significant components of the diary. For one thing, *meclis* refers to often dining gatherings of the circle while *'işret* and *sohbet* to the parts of it in which the circle converse on unspecified topics, most probably including daily events as well as religious and spiritual discussions. The magnitude of the *'işret*, *sohbet* and *meclis* in Seyyid's life, and its represented importance in the *Sohbetnâme* can be illustrated by exploring them into the lines of content and formatting.

Those records of *'işret*[222], *mücaleset*[223], *sohbet*[224] covers generally the gathering of the circle, dining and drinking beverages, conversing on unspecified topic,

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[222] The word *'işret* in particular is most readily associated with, or in the practice of daily speech it was actually related to, a certain kind of gathering that involve enjoyments of peculiar and opulent sort, also referred as *'işret meclisi*. *İşret* in the Ottoman culture as mainly hosted by the privileged strata of courtly elites implies the exclusive pleasure in the opulent decoration and banquet in which young and beautiful *sakis* served wine, attended by the elites and the learned, in addition to the most famous and gifted poems, musicians, singers and dancers. These exclusive pleasures of the *'işret* was in fact inherited by the Ottomans from the customary festivities of courtly rejoicing of the Umayyad, Abbasid and Tamerlane Dynasties, and paralleled the *regalia* of the contemporary European palaces'. See Halil İnalcık, *Has-bağçede 'Ayş u Tarab: Nedîmler, Şâîrler, Mutrîbler,* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011). In the scope of our case, it must have been an *'işret meclisi* of a more humble and most probably religious-mystical sort but the degree to which the rest of the given components were provided remains uncertain. For one thing, the event was closed and certain people attended the gathering on invitation, and there was a banquet for sure which Seyyid attentively recorded each item. We also know that musicians performed in these *meclis* occasionally, and it is more than a probability that some attendees were reciting poetry, although could be more of religious verses. To illustrate the point, see *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.51a; Aykut Can, 37, "ba'de'l meclis merhum Kambur İbrahim Efendinin yaylı cem'iyetine hazır olduk Hazret-i Aziz anda va'az ve nasihat eylediler Muhammediyyeci taksim ve ilahi okumuşdur". However, we have no clue whatsoever to assume that dancers performed, but certainly religious ritual of dhikr was being performed. And for the wine, the word şarab only appears five times in the whole two volumes, all of which is within the first 30 folios of the second volume, and not necessarily in the records narrating the *meclis*. It could be the case that Seyyid avoided recording it, or the five exceptions could be a minor typing error in which he aimed to write the word for "to drink" (ş-r-b, *şürb*) which he oftenly uses, and mistakenly write down "wine" (ş-r-a-b, *şarab*), although the latter seems more unlikely.

[223] *Mücalese(t)* is the Arabic word for sitting together, derived from the word *cülus* (literally means sitting) and shares the same word-root with *meclis* that is used to refer either the place of gathering or

instrumental music (kudüm ve çalgı), occasionally chanting and rhythm (zemzeme and demdeme)[225], devran[226], reciting of certain sura and religious-mystical verse[227], and usually spending the night at the host's house (tesehhür and beytutet) and leaving there after the morning coffee.

While recording those gatherings of ihvan, circle of lodge companions, Seyyid carefully records where they were gathered and goes on to list those who attended by opening the entry "huzzârı beyan idelüm" (let us give the attendee) and lists each and every name by writing the word "ve" (and) between them in red ink.[228] The use of red ink, along with its use in some other certain words, was obviously indicative of

the event of being gathered and sitting. In the diary, the word *meclis* is used generally for the gatherings of the tekke-circle or more broadly carries the implication of involving a religious-ritualistic motivation of gathering. In order to illustrate the use of word, see for example *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.38b-39a; Aykut Can, 30, "ba'de't-ta'am ba'zılar gidüp ba'dehu mücaleset itdiğimiz ihvanı zikredelüm Pişkadem ve zakirin ve Cerrah Yusuf Çelebi ve Bedestani Mustafa Çelebi bu esnada zakirler okudılar ve İmam efendizade Nurullah Çelebi bir hatim [39a] du'ası okudı.", or see *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.45a; Aykut Can, 33, "ba'dehu Ahmed Kethüda ve Çakır Çavuş ve Saçlızade Mustafa Çelebi hazır-ı bi'l-meclis oldılar dahi esvat ve ilahi okundı ve müzahebe altıncı sa'atde vaki' oldı".

[224] *Sohbet* literally means conversation. In the *Sohbetnâme* usually implies being gathered with a differing number of the members of the circle and conversing on never-specified topics in comfort.

[225] For *demdeme* and *zemzeme* in the diary, see for example *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 39b; Aykut Can, 31, "ma' Pişkadem ve zakirin ve Amm Efendi ba'dehu demdemeler ve zemzemeler vaki' oldı ba'dehu Sâdık gelüp gah ma'an gah münferiden okudı ve meclis ahirinde…". Unlike *kudüm* and *çalgı*, *zemzeme* and *demdeme* here seems to be directly related with religious ritual of dhikr in which dervishes chant aloud a hymn, move their body and keep rhythm accordingly.

[226] *Devran* refers to dhikr of Sufi dervishes aligned side by side on a circle and lead by the rhythm provided by a pulsatile musical instrument. See Süleyman Uludağ, "DEVRAN" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 7 August 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/devran#1

[227] The diary occasionally records the reading, or reciting, of Yasin, Tevhid and Muhammediyye during those meclis. Yasin is a Qur'anic surah of pivotal significance, emphasizing the oneness of Allah, narrating the virtues of Muhammad as the prophet and, portrayal of heaven, and warns for the divine judgement hereafter. See Bekir Topaloğlu, "YÂSÎN SÛRESİ" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 28 April 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/yasin-suresi. Tevhid here might be used to refer not the Islamic principle of accepting God's oneness and resigning to it, but seems to have been used to refer those religious texts of commentaries on these principle. Muhammediyye is one of the most influential texts that played a crucial role in the formation of the Ottoman religious-mystical culture. It is a verse written by Yazıcıoğlu Mehmed (d. 1451) and was usually cited by Sufi circles in their rituals. See, Mustafa Uzun, "MUHAMMEDİYYE" in TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, accessed 26 April 2019, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/muhammediyye--yazicioglu. Also see Zehra Öztürk, "Osmanlı Döneminde Kıraat Meclislerinde Okunan Halk Kitapları" *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 9 (2007): 401-446, 411-412.

[228] See for example, *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 142a and *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 6a.

the significance he attributed both to the event and to the record of it. [229] Even more interesting is the carefully enumerated listing of the meals served in each dining gathering.[230] It is dubious whether or not he took notes of those names and meals while he was in the meclis or consulted the assistance of another member while he was recording the day at the end of it. It could be the case that he consulted the assistance of his older son, given the fact that he had access and attended the gatherings of the *ihvan* and also, had access to Seyyid in his intimacy of writing. Even more uncertain is that whether or not he was indeed careful and perfectionist as we assumed him to be while recording those list of attendees or the menu of the dining gatherings. However, the accuracy of these mundane details is of little significance, and the assumption holds still for he applied those methods of using different colour or enumerating that could not possibly aimed nothing but to emphasize the event and make it more easily detectable in the text.

The more crucial is the question that why he did what he did. It can be assumed that listing of the meals was his personal consideration for worth emphasizing, as will be demonstrated in more detail he almost always considered meals as worth recording, or those menus were somehow functional in the sense that they were indicative of how diligent and rich the gathering and the host was.[231] Moreover, he had a general

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[229] At a certain point within roughly the second quarter of the second volume, this practice of writing the "and" between the names of attendees of the event in red ink ends, but careful recording of those persists.

[230] See for example, "ta'şiye ba kebap 1 ve yahni 2 ve mumbar 3 ve lahna dolması 4 ve turunciyye 5 ve ıspanak 6 ve süzme 7 ve tavuk 8 ve ekşili tavuk 9 ve kefal şorbası 10 ve uskumru dolması 11 ve tekir tabesi 12 ve börek 13 ve baklava 14 ve kabuni 15 ve zerde 16 ve ekşili aş 17 ve şikenbe 18 ve şorva 19 ve palude 20 ve üzüm 21 ve pestil 22 ve bağrı basdı hoşabı 23 ve hezarpare 24 der-enişte", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.36b; Ayşe Akkılık, 58. Akkılık's and mine translation of some dishes and dessert differs. For the facsimile of a typical folio recording list of attendees and list of food served in a gathering, see appendix A.4.

[231] The author almost never explicitly comments on the taste of the meal and only rarely implies so by beginning his list recording "mutaa'm-ı nefîseyi beyan idelüm", rather than "it'ameyi beyan idelüm" or simply "muta'am". See for example, "muta'am-ı nefiseyi beyan idelüm kaz 1 salata 2 yahni 3 şalgam boranisi 4 lahana dolması 5 kabak böreği 6 katmer samsa 7 ıspanak 8 pilav 9 ekşi aş 10" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 53b; Aykut Can, 39. This banquet, "ziyâfet", was hosted by Hazret-i Aziz in his cell and was attended by twenty person, each of which the author recorded and enumerated. Hazret-i Aziz was the sheik of the lodge and apparently the most prestigious person in the author's immediate reach, whose company Seyyid clearly attached great importance to. Although the author have attended banquets that more than twice the items he listed in Aziz's banquet was served, either the taste and the

tendency to narrate each event and activity in the text by recording it in the company of whom it took place, ranging from a simple walk taken with someone to more significant events of funerals, wedding and the like. However, those gatherings of the lodge circle were more than simple visits paid to neighbours but a practice of the tekke circle that customarily had a symbolic significance for the given community of dervishes beyond being the mere occasions of feasting and conversing. Seyyid Hasan is the only one, at least to our knowledge, who was engaging in producing an account that included those dinning gatherings, thus, was the only one to record the meals served and those who attended. Althoguh we do not know whether or not anyone else other than the author was aware of the existence of the diary, he himself who recorded it was probably aware of the fact that he was the only one doing so by the time being. It could be the case that this awareness was what encouraged the author to record the events and gatherings at which the members of the circle, ihvan, dervishes of the lodege attended in a more detailed and elaborative fashion.

Indeed, who was aware of the existence of this diary? Was it solely his household members who might have witnessed him in the act of writing, or was it known by the lodge circle as well? If the latter was the case, then the use of red ink and enumeratings in recording the *meclis* could be in fact aimed to make it noticeable for the reader other than Seyyid himself. But to what extent this particular manuscript can be argued to be appreciated as worthy by the circle whose lives and company in the protagonist's life constitutes a heavy proportion of it? Or, was it valuable merely for it recorded the tekke related events and rituals? More questions can be raised, but the challenge of locating the motivations of an pre-modern ego-document, even when it was openly declared by the author himself, applies to the *Sohbetnâme* as well. On the one hand the author obviously made use of some methods that would emphasize certain entries that predominantly relates to community affairs and on the other, it would be an overinterpretation to attribute a function to a diary and claim that it was essentially aims a reader other than the author. After all, Seyyid could have been employing certain writing strategies solely for himself, by emphasizing

quality of the food was noticeably higher or the felicity of being in his company made Seyyid imply an enjoyment of the dining.

certain records for his own use so that he can find them easily whenever he wished to fresh up his memory in his own writing.

4.2.1.3 Eating and Drinking: "Mutâa'm-ı nefîseyi beyân idelüm"

Although Seyyid has a general tendency to record everything he eat and drink during the day, he seems to have been particularly attentive when food and beverage was offered to him as a guest or when eating and drinking was shared with members of the circle. Even though he might have record that he had meal while he was not accompanied by someone outside of his household, or in solitude, he usually tend to record it by simply saying that he ate, not necessarily specifying the meal.

The diary seems to have never skipped to record the meals and drink that was offered to author in his visits paid to houses and shops of his circle and to lodge cells of the ihvan, in 'işret and meclis gatherings, in circumcision and wedding ceremonies, and after those who died. Although attentive to record each meal when especially when offered in a gathering, Seyyid rarely comments on the taste of them but rather simply lists them by recording as *"muta'âm"* (dishes) or by saying *"it'ameyi beyan idelüm"* (let us give the dishes) or rarely by indicating *"mutâa'm-ı nefîseyi beyân idelüm"* (let us give the luscious dishes). Perhaps the most interesting record of those rare remarks on the taste is his comment on the lusciousness of his late wife Gülbevi's *helvâ*, a traditional dessert usually prepared and served upon the death of someone by the family.[232] Shortly after recording the suffering and eventual death of his wife

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[232] Other than being consumed on deaths and offered to guests and neighbours, *Sohbetnâme* involves many records of cooking and eating of helva, almost all of which is carried on in the lodge and by the members of lodge circle. At times, it is mentioned as a certain kind of gathering purpose which seems to have directly related to cooking and sharing of *helva* by the tekke circle. See *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 86a; Aykut Can, 62, *"ba'de'l- ezan hücrede kettan helvası bezmi akd olundı"* or see *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 55a; Aykut Can, 40,"ba'de'l-ihya Mu'abbir Hüseyin Dedenin hücresinde işret ve tahta bendinde tabh-ı helva ve içerüde tenavül vaki' oldı". For example, see *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.48a; Aykut Can, 36 "mücaleset-i medide vaki' olmuşdur amma def'a-i saniyede gaziler helvası dahi var idi", *Gaziler Helvası* here refers to a specific type of *helva*. Given their position as the dervishes of the one of the most popular Sufi orders of Istanbul, members of the lodge were not only preparing helva upon deaths of their own relatives or for their own consumption and gathering as lodge members, but at times were doing so for more public purposes.

Gülbevi, and right before recording his sorrow and misery upon her passing, Seyyid narrates the arrangements for the funeral and the order of coffin for the deceased burial, and goes to record those who were present by his side in his home and they were served meal and late Gülbevi's helva, prepared by Selîm Kadın, excellently delicious that no taste can match.[233] Given the fact that he rarely does so, perhaps this somewhat unexpected comment on the taste of his beloved deceased wife, this record on describing the deliciousness of the helva perhaps should be interpreted by keeping in mind that it was meant to be served and offered to those who are attending to support and pay their condolences in the troubled day of our protagonist. In other words, the deceased's helva in this case should have been beyond the mere enjoyment of a delicious dessert; but might actually be a more symbolic indicator of the care paid to a traditional service performed to be attended by the community's members and commitment to meet the customary expectations in the best capacity upon the death of a family member. After all, he never comments on the taste of a deceased' helva when he himself was not liable to serve to his community as the head of the household.

Perhaps it is off little surprise that coffee is the most repeatedly appearing consumption item throughout the whole diary. Prepared and served not only in the comfort of houses but also in the shops and lodge, coffee seems to have been both an everyday and ordinary consumption, and a convenient beverage to offer, most readily welcomed and enjoyed. However, it would be somewhat debatable to uniformly generalize the consumption of coffee as a part of the daily life enjoyments of all segments of the 17th century Ottoman society, especially if the conclusion relies on what has been recorded by a this-worldly Sufi sheik. It could be indeed an almost peculiarity, given the fact that Seyyid belonged to a more well-off and a privileged segment than ordinary in general; and in particular, he was a member of an heterodox mystical order which was famous for idiosyncrasy in doctrine and in ritual, as well as the affinity with the consumption of intoxicating substances, if not ill-reputed for it.

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[233] "ba'de'l-işa' vera'-i mıthanda Kayın Çelebi ile mücaleset itdik ve helvasını yidik Selim Kadın pişürmiş lezzet-ü nefaseti [6a] hadden birun ve kıyasdan efzun idi", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols.5b-6a; Aykut Can, 15.

Being an ordinary as well as a worth recording event of several times in each day, the entries necessarily involve an indication of where and with whom the coffee was drink. What is more than the mere recording of it, drinking of coffee seems to have served as a reference point for our Seyyid Hasan to keep track of time within the day as he usually records the events as taking place after coffee drinking. It was not only in the houses that coffee was enjoyed but often in lodge, too.[234] As pointed out repeatedly in literature, there seems to have been an organic relationship between the consumption of coffee and Sufi orders, and even it is often claimed that it was the mid 15th century Sufis of Yemen who first managed to roast the beans, prepare and consume coffee. The fact that Sufi circles were most probably the first consumers, and undoubtedly the most willing advocates of it in times of heated discussions and condemnation of the religious authorities, can be explained beyond the mere taste and enjoyment of its drinking. It might have been the case that coffee's most obvious effect as a strong stimulant was what made it desirable for Sufis who held communal worships of dhikr usually late at night and known for their appreciation of various herbs, hashish, opium, tobacco and the like to enhance the mental excitement of the worship.[235] However, the extent to which such religious motivations persisted in the second half of the 17th century in which coffee seems to have become an conventional and convenient social beverage, can be debated. Seyyid and his circle, as far as we can glimpse, consume coffee predominantly in the day time,[236] leaving

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[234] Throughout the diary there is only one mention of an certain "amberli kahve" (amber coffee) offered by Hazret-i 'Aziz, the sheik of the lodge, in his cell. See *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 54a; Aykut Can, 40, "Aziz'in orta kapısı önine vardık…ve fakir yed-i mübarekelerin takbil itdik ve hücre-i şerifesinde amberli kahve içdik". Although it is curious what exactly that might be, it is the only amber coffee that Seyyid had recorded to drink and the fact that it was offered by one of the most prominent and prestigious figures in Seyyid' immediate circle could be indicative of it as a rare and exclusive consumption.

[235] Ralph S. Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 23-25.

[236] More specific is the recurring records of "sabah kahvesi" (morning coffee), the rest have been recorded without being attributed an exact time within the day. Still, its consumption is so regular and common, and the majority takes places during the day time, that there is no ground to assume that it was even closely associated with its stimulant-physiological and religious-beneficial effects. Even though this factual effect begin to circulate in the public knowledge as soon as coffee arrived to the Ottoman capital, and even though the actors of the diary are predominantly dervishes and people of Sufi affiliation, they seem to have drink coffee when conversing and sharing the moment with others.

little ground to assume it was drink for beyond the habit and for such practical aims of staying awake at night to have better engage in worship and religious rituals.[237]

4.2.1.4 Time, Daily Life and 'Leisure'?

The fact that document at hand is a diary, which is a manuscript with a diurnal temporality and subjective fashioning, makes it somewhat unavoidable, as well as intriguing, to look at the ways in which the author experienced time and expressed it in the organization of his text. Alf Lüdtke proved both the time dimension and the management of writing space to be an uniquely pioneering framework for studying a diary, or perhaps rather a personal notebook, that lacks any narration whatsoever.[238] However, *Sohbetnâme* is generous in narrating the events it records and posits little peculiarity for an concentration on the formatting of the text. It is fashioned exclusively as a plain text with the exceptions of margin notes, occasional enumerated lists embedded in the usual lines and spacing of the text, particular uses of red ink, and occasional sub-divisions of the text with headings and bigger font. More promising, then, would be a closer look at the time dimension; how Seyyid reckoned, experienced and indicated the time of his day, and how he reconstruct temporality in his diary.[239]

Obviously, the most culturally dominant and practical medium for time recogning and indication within the day must have been the five times of call for prayer for an early modern Ottoman urbanite; especially when he happens to be and Istanbulite

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[237] One such ritual that took place at evening and appears in a single entry of the whole diary is the unfamiliar, unfamiliar of course to the knowledge of the present author, but obviously religious event of watching lampions with *ihvan*. "umumen köşkde müşahede-i kanadil eyledik", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 114b; Aykut Can, 79.

[238] Alf Lüdtke, "Writing Time-Using Space: The Notebook of a Worker at Krupp's Steel Mill and Manufacturing- an Example from the 1920s" *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung* 38, no.3 (2013): 216-228.

[239] Perhaps the most crucial is the point that the author tends to never break the flow of time and presents thing that have happened with the order that they happened within the day; without using even the slightest retrospection, Seyyid rather adds what he thought he have skipped recording in the margin notes.

dervish, sheik and preacher. Not only the rhythms of lives of believers, but also all sorts of institutions were governed in accordance with this prayer cycle which "functioned as a kind of a public clock".[240] As it would be expected, the main points of time indication and sequence references of the diary are *ezan*[241] and *namaz*[242]. As certain and predictable as adhan and prayer in Seyyid's days was the coffee, which he more than often used to establish the sequence in the diary, particularly with reference to the morning coffee.[243]

Other than one traditional-religious and one novel-consumption, Seyyid also used a technical medium to keep time and provided a less vague, even almost certain and objective, track of his day. Although rather infrequently, the author recorded certain events by indicating the exact hour that it took place. Although their technical accuracy and functionality is a subject of uncertainty, watches are known to be in use as early as 16th century in the Ottoman Empire, and Seyyid Hasan clearly owned one.[244] What is for certain is that time measurement and diaristic form of writing has an organic relation in the sense that the latter essentially necessitates a certain form of the former, not only to express diurnal temporality but also to comprehend it and reconstruct day in the act of writing. Furthermore, the invention and use of the precision clock and the acceleration of diary writing in the eve of modern era are seems to be both intermingled and simultaneous processes of increasing time

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[240] Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 24.

[241] ezan-ı zuhr (noon adhan), ezanü'l-'asr (midafternoon adhan), ezan-ı i'şa (evening adhan); ba'de'l-ezan (after adhan).

[242] namaz-ı zuhr (noon prayer), namaz-ı 'asr (midafternoon prayer), namaz-ı i'şa (evening prayer); one specific namaz which is prescribed to be performed in the mosque with congregation, namaz-ı Cum'a (Friday prayer).

[243] "ba'de'l-kahve" (after coffee) appears almost in each day's entry, at times more than once within a day. Also used is "'akab-ı kahve" in the same meaning as after coffee. The only time specific coffee reference *is kahve-i sabah* or *sabah kahvesi* (morning coffee).

[244] Although the time-related ideas and practices showed a great variety between social classes and religious and ethnic groups, by the 18th century, clocks were already constituting an integral part of the Ottoman temporal culture. It was, however, with the 19th-century reform and modern-state building project that they begin to assume different roles in their capacity for establishing bureaucratic regularity, efficiency and surveillance opportunities. See Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

awareness. This is not to say that the customary and imprecise forms of time measurement were not capable of expressing their own self-referenced diurnal temporality. However, the ever increasing awareness of time through the pre-modern age intensified the mechanical improvements in measurement of time and accelerated the production of the written accounts of one's precise time within the day, and vice versa.[245] While our author made use of different other indicators of time of the day as well, he seems to have used the precision time of watch only to record certain kinds of significant events like some births[246], deaths[247], and in the single record of earthquake.[248] Other than using it to provide the exact time of some events, visiting the clockmaker's shop to get his clock fixed and setting his clock on time by comparing it with someone else's were seems to be the regularly emerging necessitates that Seyyid needed to attend.[249]

Having seen how he keep track of time and how he recorded it in the diary, now comes the activities he recorded in his days. One of the most common and regular entries of the diary are visits to public bathhouses. It appears that there are two different contexts in which bathhouses appear in the diary. First one is the immediate

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[245] Rudolf Dekker, "Watches, Diary Writing, and the Search for Self-Knowledge in the Seventeenth Century" in *Making Knowledge in Early-Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, Texts, 1400-1800* , eds. Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt, (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007), 127-142. Dekker argued that the improvements in the mechanical timekeeping devices that initiated by the Scientific Revolution was linked with the emergence of modern and time-precise cultural products of diaries in Dutch history. The improvements in the time measurement were part of individuals' changing understanding of themselves and the outside world; thus, the emergence of literary tools that aims to research the self, one's inner world, coincided with the inventions that aims to research the objective outer world.

[246] For example, "ma'lum ola ki bu gice sa'at sekiz buçuğa geldikde imam efendinin bir seyyide-i vahidesi dahi doğmış" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 94a; Aykut Can, 66. But also see, for example, the next folio in which Seyyid uses a more traditional reference of sunrise for recording the time of birth, "güneş doğarken Abdülfettah Dedenin Mustafa nam oğlı doğmış", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.94b; Aykut Can, 66.

[247] For example, "ma'lum ola ki altıncı sa'atde Ramhi Ahmed Ağanın oğulcığı tilmizim Mehmed ağa on yaşında cam-ı eceli nuş eylemiş", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.16b; Ayşe Akkılık, 34.

[248] "zelzele der-sa'at 4", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.127a.

[249] For example, "ve sa'atci sa'ati tebdil itdi", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 111b; Aykut Can, 76. On the repairing of clock see, "fakir sa'atcinin odasına vardım sa'atimin kirişini bağladı ve bıçağımı biledi ve sapına dört dane çivi kakdı", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 115b; Aykut Can, 80. On the fixing of clock on time see, "Solak Kadri ağaya iltika idüb sa'atimi sa'atine tatbik eyledim…dahi içerüde sa'atlerimize bakışdık", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.117a; Aykut Can, 82.

and functional use of a bathhouse; visits for the purpose of bathing which the author does not provide any further detail of the process but simply records he has been in and out of a particular hammam.[250] Given the fact that our protagonist was a free Muslim adult male, the norm identity in the early modern Ottoman Empire both in the administrative as well as social terms, he was not in any sense spatially confined and could enjoy all the socializing sites that his prestigious position as sheik would morally allow.[251] Unlike the free adult females of the 17th century Ottoman society, *hammam* did not in any sense constituted the primal socially appropriate occasion of rare outings for our author.[252] However, it appears that bathhouses, or certain sections of it, also functioned as a gathering locality for Seyyid and his circle like lodge, houses, shops and gardens did. Perhaps, due to its advantage to gather and spend time in cold weather, the diary more than often records bathhouse almost as an extension of the places of intimacy for the circle to frequent, encounter with each other, rest and converse.[253] Like the records of visiting bathhouse for bathing, the

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[250] For example, "imruz İbrahim Paşa Hamamına girildi" *Sohbetnâme II,* fol.221b; Ayşe Akkılık, 242. More common is the brief record of "hammama girmek vaki' oldı", appearing in many folios throughot the document.

[251] For a detailed study on the use of space of Seyyid Hasan and his circle, see Fatma Deniz, "The Use of Space by Sufis in Seventeenth Century Istanbul in Light of Seyyid Hasan's Diary, The Sohbetnâme" M.A. Thesis, (Central European University, 2018).

[252] Bathhouses played an disproportionately greater role in the lives of early modern Ottoman females than males. The religious ideals of prevention of women from the non-family male gaze believed to have confined women to their home, as traditionally attributed spatial segregation of sexes assigned women to private sphere, read as domestic, while it privileged men with the public sphere. Although the extent of uniformity of female seclusion seems to have been an a question of material sufficiency and affordability, religious emphasis and obligation on the bodily cleanness seems to have uniformly allowed women to at least enjoy a weekly outing to the hammam. Accompanied by their female household, housemaids and slaves, neighbours and friends, this only unquestioned socially appropriate regular outing seems to have also constituted an occasion of sociability and recreation. On an elaboration of the visual depictions of female sociability and entertainment in bathhouse, see, "Ressam Gözüyle Osmanlı Hamamı" in *Anadolu Medeniyetlerinde Hamam Kültürü: Mimari, Tarih ve İmgelem*, ed. Nina Ergin, (Istanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2012): 369-403. On some observations, or rather perhaps must be better called hearsays, on the female bathhouse procedures, see Luigi Bassano, *Kanuni Dönemi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Gündelik Hayat*, trans. Selma Cangi, (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2015), 19-21.

[253] Of course, it is more than expectable for the members of the circle to run across each other in the neighbourhood bathhouse. However, the extent to which these encounters were coincidental and circumstantial is uncertain or rather, allows for assuming the otherwise. Even though the encounters could have been random, *hammam* also seems to have served as one of those places where members of the circle used to spend time sitting and conversing in the company of each other to a lesser extent. For example, "ve hammamda abdest alurken Şeyh Hasan Efendi ve Şeyh Mehmed Efendi hammama

author also seems to have recorded each shave and haircut he got by providing its various locations and the name of his barber, as ordinary and regular but still worth mentioning event of the day.

At this point, a challange must be attended which is undertaken unavoidably by employing the term "leisure"; one which modern historical sociology has developed into the sub-branch known as "leisure studies" in the last two decades. The concept of "leisure" or "free time" broadly connotes to the time outside of work, or time free of working. If the concept is to be defined in this contradiction, then, what is work? Even more crucial, how to define and contextualize it when the notion of regular and official employment was absent? Peter Burke, who initiated an illuminated debate on the concept and its historicity, begin by maintaining that the distinction and contradiction of work and leisure, and the very concepts themselves, emerged in the context of modern industrial capitalism. In contrast to the "festival culture" of the pre-industrial European societies, the "leisure culture" is genuinely a part of the modernization process and consequently, if we are to adopt this approach of total rupture between the two historical phases, then, employing the term to refer the non-work of pre-industrial societies would be anachronistic. The challenge arise for historian both if she adopts the thesis of continuity and anachronistically fits in the activities to the package of leisure when such a notion was absent; and when she holds the discontinuity approach to avoid anachronism but essentially falls into the pitfall of reproducing the ruptures in history that supposedly cuts in into the dichotomous phases.[254] The solution that Burke proposes is an "invention of leisure" process in early modern European culture during which recreation increasingly became a concern and attraction of the upper classes between the earlier phase of

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girüb görüşmeler ve camekanda Yoğurtcızadeye buluşmak", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 179a; Ayşe Akkılık, 193. Or see, "bizüm öbir hamamın külhanında aram ve camekanında hammamcısı Zülfikar Çelebiyle muanaka", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.27a; Ayşe Akkılık, 46. See also "Ali ağa ikimizi it'am ve işrab ve hammama götürüb camekanda meks ve aram ve oğlum münferiden istihmam ve anda cema'at ile salat-ı zuhrı eda", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 9b; Ayşe Akkılık, 25-26.

[254] Peter Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe" *Past & Present* 146 (1995): 136-150, 137-139.

festival culture and industrial leisure culture.[255] However, both his theoretical approach and his empirical sampling was criticised by Joan-Lluís Marfany who claimed that leisure was not needed to be invented in the early modern period simply because it existed ever before and as long as defined as the time spend as one pleases, the concept was not alien to the people of Middle Ages.[256]

Although the concept in hand as such was absent, alien to our historical persona, readily dispensing it and use rather more neutral terms like pastime or free-time would only serve to go around the term leisure to avoid anachronism, yet the question remains in place; the time free of what? Thus, rather than concentrating on the terms, and at the expense of engaging in a likely anachronism of minor significance,[257] we should maintain that in an age where formal employment and modern sense of work were lacking, there were still activities and enjoyments people attend to avoid boredom or to take pleasure. The concept of leisure, the use of time and activities dividing work and pleasure, and an extensive discussion on its implications for early modern Ottoman history is yet lacking, partly because the ambiguities that govern the concept that making it highly challenging to identify with safety in the Ottoman sources. The most familiar sources for the study of Ottoman history, unsurprisingly, predominantly deals with the time of sultans and high state officials, male elites of the society.[258] However, case in hand is related to the life and time of an dervish, whose responsibilities for society, service to state, righteousness and idleness were not topics that contemporary learned was concerned about and

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[255] With this hypothesis Burke initiated an lively debate on the early modern European leisure on basically whether the term should be avoided or not; or whether leisure is indeed essentially anything that is not work. See Peter Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe", *Past and Present* 146 (1995): 136-150; Joan-Lluis Marfany, "Debate: The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe" *Past & Present* 156 (1997): 174-191, and Peter Burke, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe: Reply to J.-L. Marfany" *Past and Present* 156 (1997):192-197 respectively.

[256] Joan-Lluis Marfany, "Debate: The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe" *Past & Present* 156 (1997):174-191.

[257] Of course, minor significance in the scope of this thesis and for the aim of the present author to provide an exercise on the document in hand.

[258] Marinos Sariyannis, "Time, Work and Pleasure: A Preliminary Approach to Leisure in Ottoman Mentality" *New Trends in Ottoman Studies: Papers Presented at 20th CIÉPO Symposium Rethymno*, 27 (2012):797-811.

produced advisory manuscripts on, unlike the ruling elite. Thus, what we have left with is not a description of an ideal, e.g an ideal dervish, but again the actual lived experiences of Seyyid Hasan as communicated in his diary.

The problem is to identify the leisure in the record of the days. What is most closely resembles "work" in a dervish's life? What were the simple daily life activities and what were the leisure of his days? For one thing, until his appointment as the sheik of Ferruh Kethüda Lodge in Balat that also initiated his preaching in the neighbourhood mosque, Seyyid have not been putting any regular effort to earn his livelihood that we know of, or that he recorded. In any event, an attempt must be made to identify those activities that neither falls in the category of repetitive and mundane daily actions nor to ones with an apparent function beyond the purpose of spending time in recreation. To begin with, for example, in one record he refers to time spend at a garden in the countryside by enjoying the view, banquet and coffee drinking as *zevk ü safâ* (pleasure).[259] In another, he records how he rejoiced by borrowing a book.[260] In another instance, he expressed his appreciation for the spiritual endeavour that he attended with some members of the ihvan, most probably a satisfying conversation and deliberation on a religious matter.[261] Although the author predominantly mentions the event without indicating the content of the conversations, in one entry he records that fables have been told while sitting on the sea pier with companions, but does not clarify the kind of it.[262]

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[259] "Süleyman sahrasında merhum Hüseyin Efendi bağçesinde seyr ü teferrüc ve zevk u safa ve ba'de'z-zuhr fakat cızbız kebabı ve kahve ve ba'de'l-asr kezalik cızbız (1) ve etli pilav (2) ve palude (3) ve aveng üzümi (4) ve kahve tenavül olunmak vaki' olmuşdır", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 57a; Aykut Can, 42.

[260] "Piri Halifezade Süleyman Ağa bir meniyyetü'l musalla getürdi satırlarının altında Türki ma'nası yazılmış deyü bir kitab arz eyledi gördükde telezzüz idüp istiare tariki ile eve getürdüm", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.31a; Aykut Can, 27.

[261] "Kandilci Dedenin hücresinde kendü ve Abdülfettah Dede ve Müezzin Ahmed Çelebi ve Ömer Beşli ve Süvari ile 'azm-i ruhani safalar oldı", *Sohbetnâme II*,fol. 128b; Ayşe Akkılık, 137. Akkılık reads the same entry as "Azim Ruhanî sefalar oldu", by capitalizing those words referred perhaps the name of a book or a person that I am unaware.

[262] "büyük odada kendü ve Mütevelli ve Bayram Dede ve Kalemkar Mehmed Çelebi dahi hazır idi ve fesane söylendi bu siyakda iskele burnunda oturduk" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 109b; Aykut Can, 75.

The only view that our Istanbulite dervish enjoyed were not the gardens, orchards and countryside, but more than often he enjoyed the seascape with his companions and those pleasurable time was again an occasion of dining together.[263] As it was a common entertainment for urbanites of the early modern Istanbul[264], the author often recorded he has swim with members of his companions in various shores of the city.[265]

Even though swimming or spending time in the shores seems to be occasionally functional, as in the case of ablution, it can be still more readily included in the activities that fall in the category of leisure, or pastime. The author records in several entries that he spend time watching the construction and restoration of buildings or parts of it with his fellow neighbours and companions.[266] Although he never implies to have spent the time delighted, this should also be at least an opportunity of pastime in an age where visual performances and entertainment were the rare and privileged occasions.

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[263] For example, "ba'dehu üçümüz be-gayet lodos [58a] esmesine bina'en Samatiyyenin hem iskelesinde hem mescidinde deryayı seyr eyledik ve anda ekl-i ta'am eyledik ba'dehu Kerasteci İsa Çelebinin evine müzahebe eyledik ve tabaka-i ulyasında hemçünan müşahede-i derya ve ekl-i meta'im eyledik", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 57b-58a; Aykut Can, 42. Or see, "Davudpaşa İskelesinde seyr ü derya vaki' olmışdır", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 173b; Ayşe Akkılık, 189. Many entries contain "deryayı müşahede" or "müşahede-i derya" (watching the sea).

[264] See Luigi Bassano, *Kanuni Dönemi Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Gündelik Hayat*, trans. Selma Cangi, (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2015), 136.

[265] Among various entries, see for example "Narlu Kapuda deryaya girdik", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 14a; Aykut Can, 19. "ba'de'z-zaman ibn-i kebirim das ve Bolevi ile Zeytunluk Burnunda deryaya girmeğe gitdiler", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 95a; Aykut Can, 67. Or see for a record of swimming that followed by a gathering in a garden and dining with *ihvan*, "ba'de'l-asr ma'a deryaya girüb koyun emini bağçesinde mücaleset ve Yıldız evinde ta'şiye vaki' oldı", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 207b; Ayşe Akkılık, 223. For an example of the ablution in the sea, see "ma'an deryaya gitdik anlar deryaya girdi fakir abdest aldım" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 129a; Aykut Can, 91.

[266] For two of various records see, "amelde olan mu'temed ve ırgad ve benna'ları seyr itdik" *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 41a; Aykut Can, 31, or see "Belkıs Hoca yaptırdığı kuyuyu seyr edüp ziyafet olun mak", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 57b; Ayşe Akkılık, 78.

4.2.1.5 Book: Reading, Lending and *İstinsah*

The process of producing a copy of a manuscript was both pricey and took long time even when it was not delegated to a professional copyist and one produced his copy on his own. In a manuscript culture where the ownership was costly and circulation was limited, it is more than natural that the confined population of literates were borrowing and lending books within the sub groups they belonged according to intellectual level and literary taste.[267] For one thing, given the value and scarcity of the book that changed hands, such relations of lending and borrowing were necessarily build upon a relationship of mutual confidence and trust. Thus, manuscript circulation between individuals was necessarily taking place within the communities as they contained the like-minded individuals who personally know each other and, of course to a more limited extent, have trust in each other. It might be claimed that such transaction of books between individuals was functioning, among many other activities, to further intensify the bonds between individuals, and perhaps strengthen the solidarity on community level. However, for the 17th century Ottoman society it would be unfounded to claim that communities were initially being established in line with the literary motives, because a wide reading public was yet been lacking.

The fact that Seyyid Hasan had a somewhat privileged and peculiar relationship with the written medium, for he was both among the learned minority of the early modern Ottoman society and further embedded in the world of writing to the extent that he produced a narrative account of his daily life for five years, might result in certain expectations about the magnitude of entries related to book and writing; however, the author of the diary only recorded a handful of those and rarely provided any

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[267] Prevalence of the activities of borrowing and lending manuscripts also seems to have allowed for the emergence of a non-text medium for sharing thoughts, emotions and suggestions about the reading. The ego-centred comments on the most widely circulated popular readings served as a channel of communication on the margin of the folios of manuscript between those who might have enjoy the book in isolation or as attendees of a reading gathering. The readers of the popular stories were as willing and expressive to such a degree that, those marginal notes are being elaborated on their capacities as self-narrations and more significantly, in their capacities as an act of forming communities among early modern Ottoman literates. See Elif Sezer, *The Oral and the Written in Ottoman Literature: The Reader Notes on the Story of Firuzşah*, (İstanbul: Libra, 2015).

significant information. In couple of entries the author records that he borrowed books[268], and in one particular he expressed how he was pleased ("telezzüz idüp") by borrowing a book.[269] In a single entry, the author records a book given as pledge of a debt. Although the author did not record the name of the book, he recorded the amount of debt that the book pledged for.[270]

Although the author of the diary occasionally records that he have been engaging in writing (*kitabet*)[271], he never indicates whether it was the very entries of his diary that he was busy writing with or he was producing copies of other texts for his own use or to be presented to others who might have commissioned. The fact that Seyyid himself was a calligraphist who we know thought lessons to at least one pupil[272] strengthens the last possibility however, the diary neither specifies the work being reproduced nor records a transaction in which Seyyid presents a manuscript and receive something in return.[273]

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[268] See for example, "Keşşafdan üçünci kıt'a isti'are olunub semte 'avdet", *Sohbetnâme II*,fol. 56b; Ayşe Akkılık, 77. Or see, "Osman Efendinin kapusına varmak ve bacanağı evinde Balat vakfının kitablarından fakire sekiz tane kitab teslim idüb Kaimzade eve götürmek", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 256a; Ayşe Akkılık, 278. In the last example, it is not clear whether he borrowed books for his own use or to be delivered to lodge.

[269] "Piri Halifezade Süleyman Ağa bir meniyyetü'l musalla getürdi satırlarının altında Türki ma'nası yazılmış deyü bir kitab arz eyledi gördükde telezzüz idüp istiare tariki ile eve getürdüm ba'dehu büyük hemşireye gitdim bila götürdüm", *Sohbetnâme I*, fol.31a; Aykut Can, 27.

[270] "ma'lum ola ki meclis-i mezburede ve şuhudati'l-esma mahzarlarında Bezirganzade Moralı Sinan Ağaya üç yüz esedi ve yüz esedi guruşa tuta bir kitap karz vermişdir ama mebllağ-ı mezburun ba'zı esedi ve ba'zı zolata ve ba'zı semen ve yedi altun idi", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.21b; Ayşe Akkılık, 39.

[271] Usually as "kitabet vaki' oldı" in several entries of the diary as in, for example, "ve kahve ve kitabet ve ba'de'z-zuhr iltikam kitabet ve menam ve kitabet ve ezan-ı 'asrı istima' eyledikde hareket" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 254a; Ayşe Akkılık, 276. This entry presents an exceptionally intense engagement with writing activity for our author and leads to the assumption that in this case it was beyond voluntary but he was writing in a somewhat hurry.

[272] See Mustafa Aslan, "Kastamonulu Hattatlar" *Turkish Studies International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 2 Volume IV(2007): 144-160, 149. The calligrapher Lâ'lî Mehmed Efendi was one of the names that we know to have been pupil of Seyyid Hasan.

[273] Likewise, we know that the author was sewing traditional headgears of others, or for others, but there is no record that he indicated transaction, he simply mentions the activity of *hıyatat*. Among many examples see, "Yıldız Köşkünde Çadırlızadenin yeşil çuka tacını hıyatat", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 85a; Ayşe Akkılık, 99.

For the early modern societies, there seems to have been a generalizable relationship between the manuscript culture and oral culture. For the Renaissance society, for example, oral performance and reading aloud of a text played an essential and irreplaceable role in the social circulation of literature product. In a culture dominated by the written word, the reasons why the vocal diffusion of texts perpetuated, even though the text was not necessarily produced to be performed, seems to have been utterly practical. First of all, having discussed the inherent material insufficiencies of the manuscript culture, reading aloud a text to a gathered audience was the most convenient way to communicate a text to a group of people at once. Rather than circulating the manuscript among the group so that each would individually read; reading aloud both saved time and relieved the owner because he might not want to lend it to all or departed from it for a long time. Another reason for preferring to read aloud seems to be that the text could be communicated to the audience even though they were illiterate or simply, had poor eyesight. It might also be case that the book was in foreign language which the performer was translating as he read. If, however, the book was a religious text or one that necessitated advance literary skills, the performer most probably was explaining and interpreting the text, also.[274] Well beyond being merely functional, reading gatherings should have served as socializing event and the oral performance of a text as early modern form of entertainment, although probably not an exact occasion of mingling but more a group-inclusive sociality, as it appears to have been for our author and *ihvan*.

In various instances and for various people the author mentions the existence of kitâbhâne, book room or a library. Apparently it was an separate room or a corner within the house which probably called as such since it contained the book collection and writing materials of the property owner who performed his reading and writing there. Although its location within the house and its physical conditions and furniture

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[274] Brian Richardson, *Manuscript Culture in Renaissance Italy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 226-228.

were never described, *kitâbhâne* seems to have also served occasionally as the room where the host accepted the guests and gathered with them.[275]

Of course, the diary was not the only text through which our author expressed his subjectivity and communicated his life. Given the fact that it was the sole medium of the non-verbal communication, the author must have been receiving and producing letters and scrip notes on regular bases. However, to our misfortune he neither attached the original copies he received, or perhaps those did not survived as the diary did, nor he reproduced the ones he send in his diary. Although it would be an unmatched opportunity to compare and contrast his writing style, language and formatting with the Sohbetnâme, the author sufficed by either recording that he send or received a letter or a scrip note, or occasionally by briefly recording the message of the ones he received. One such example is the arriving news of his wife Gülbevi being in her deathbed while the author was away from home. Seyyid records how he felt alarmed at first and slightly relieved upon recognizing the hand writing of his son in the letter he was handed, then goes on to briefly record the content of it.[276] In one another example, he records that he handed *muhabbetnâme* that penned by himself and addressed to Dülbendci Hüseyin Çelebi to a certain Bezirganzade who was about to leave for Selanik.[277]

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[275] For example, "Hasan Efendinin da'vetine icabet ve kitabhanesinde mu'aşeret" *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 57b; Ayşe Akkılık, 78. Or see "ba'de'z-zuhr oğlumın kitabhanesinde kendü ve Balatlı Ali Dede ile mücaleset", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 207a; Ayşe Akkılık, 222. More examples can be given, however neither of the entries that mention *kitabhane* allow for assuming that they were in fact located in lodge, rather than houses.

[276] "derunum pür-halecan oldı hayır mı didikde hayırdır kağızı okudukda ma'lum olur didi fakir dahi nerduban başında kağızı açub oğlumun hattını gördükde bir mikdar halecanım hıffet buldı amma mazmunı bu ki Gülbevi Hatun halet-i nez'dedir bolaykı [5a] hastalığına yahud mevtine yetişmeğe sa'y idesiz dimiş ve bir varaka dahi büyük hemşireden küçüğe gelmiş", *Sohbetnâme I*,fol. 4b-5a; Aykut Can, 14.

[277] *Muhabbetname* here could have refer to a handwritten copy of the 14th century work of verse authored by Harezmi, and reproduced by our author to be delivered to Dülbendci Hüseyin Çelebi, however this seems to be unlikely. *Muhabbetnâme* was also the word most commonly used to refer the letters exchanged between intimate friends and loved ones, and Seyyid clearly indictaes that he had written and adressed the document in hand for Dülbendci. "Bezirganzadeye Dülbendci Hüseyin Çelebiye hitaben kitabet ittiğim muhabbetnameyi tebliğ siyakında Selaniğe gitmek niyeti üzre fakiri veda' itdi" *Sohbetnâme II*,fol. 26b; Ayşe Akkılık, 45.

4.2.1.6 Records of Major Public Events

The fact that the diary is primarily concerned with the daily life of the author and recording of significant events in lives of those around him does not mean that he was indifferent to news of posting and dismissals of state officials and the ʿulema. In fact, throughout the whole diary he recorded many such news in an apparently objective tone and without providing any personal comments that he might have had. However, it must be kept in mind that he recorded such public events in addition to the proportionally much greater body of text that protagonist and companions centred. Thus, *Sohbetnâme* is better not compared to those other personal documents like Sadreddinzade Telhisi's whose content and tone significantly differs from *Sohbetnâme*.

The information is at times recorded by narrating how it was received. In one such record, a certain Piri Ağa reaches Seyyid and informs that a certain Elmas Ağa was dismissed by the sultan and pensioned a tımar of three thousand gurus, and goes on to ask whether Seyyid knew the event and the author records that he replied "şimdi sizden istima' itdim" (heard just now from you).[278] In several other entries, however, he provides the information but not the source or narration of learning it.[279]

The diary also records the marriages and wedding of state elite, the return of the sultan to Istanbul from his residence in Edirne Palace, death and funeral of grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Paşa and positing of Ahmet Paşa as the new grand vizier, and his visits to Melek Ahmet Paşa, and to Vişnezade and many such other records of news and contact with the state elite and ʿulema of the city. Last but not least, the

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[278] "ve meclis ahirinde merhum Derzibaşının küçük oğlı Piri Ağa geldi ve esna-yı mücalesetde hünkar, Davud Paşa Bağçesinden Edreneye azimet itdikde Salih Ağa ya'ni Elmas Ağayı üç bin guruşluk ze'amet ile yanından ihrac itmişdir hala Çatladıda Yoğurthane kurbünde olur buluşdınız mı didi fakir dahi şimdi sizden istima' [40a] itdim didim", *Sohbetnâme I*, fols. 39b-40a; Aykut Can, 31. For a more brief narration, see "Odabaşızadeyi ziyaret ve bezminde İsa Efendi Istanbul kadısı olmasını istima' olmışdır", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 153b; Ayşe Akkılık, 169, see also the margin note of the folio "maʿlum ola ki Istanbul kazası Behayi Efendi kardaşından Bosnevi İsa Efendiye nakl olunmuş", provided in a more impersonal tone in the margin.

[279] Among many others see for example, "ma'lum ola ki Istanbul kazısı kec- dehan damadı Abdullah Efendiden alınub Vişnezadeye virilmiş" in margin of *Sohbetnâme II*, fol.7b; Ayşe Akkılık, 24.

author also provides series of brief records of information on military campaign of Uyvar.[280]

Among the records of postings and dismissals of state officials and ʻulema, margin note recording his own posting as the sheik of Balat lodge should also be mentioned here. The author does not seemed surprised, as this posting should have been expected, or implies that he was glad but rather records in a humble tone.[281] The author also recorded the anniversary of his posting in the following year's entry.

The last record that will be cited here was penned not by the author of the diary, but by his descendant el-Şeyh es-Seyyid el-Hac Mehmed Haşim in 1761-62 in Koca Mustafa Paşa Lodge.[282] This note on the last folio of the second volume of the manuscript clearly illustrates that the diary was preserved after almost hundred years within the family before anyone recorded his awareness, or perhaps interest, of it. Although it does seem possible to claim for solely either one of them, the diary seems to have been preserved in the intersection of family and the lodge. More curious is that whether or not and the degree to which it was circulated and read among the family members or lodge frequenters alike.

What was the peculiarity of Seyyid Hasan that allowed his personal account to be preserved and reach to us more than three hundred years after its composition, prior to its ending up in Topkapı Palace Archive? Moreover, it was preserved by his family line who were also affiliated with the Sünbüliye order, leading one to assume that the manuscript diary was somehow deemed important and held valuable, or perhaps in some sense useful, by the members of the lodge, if not by the Sünbüliyye order of Istanbul in general. Speculations can be made and criticism can be raised,

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[280] See *Sohbetnâme II*, fols. 56a; 60a; 63a; 65a; 68a; 131b; 134b; 136a; 144a; 145a; 190a.

[281] "matlab-ı mutavvel maʿlum ola ki beyne's-selatinde Edirne'de Abdülfettah Dede Aziz fakire Balat zaviyesi tevcih olunmasını iradelüğine binaen tahrir ve irsal eylediği arzı Müfettiş Efendi'ye Şeyhülislam Minkarizade Yahya Efendi'nin evinde tebliğ ve Müfettiş Efendi mezbur Şeyhülislama tebliğ eyledikde fakire tevcih buyurmuşlar", *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 183a; Ayşe Akkılık, 196-197.

[282] "Bu salname cedd-i ʻalem el-Şeyh es-Seyyid Hasan Nuri Efendi hazretlerinin kendi tahrirleri olub bu abd-ı hakire vasıl oldığı tarihi beyan ider fi 1175 bir Şabaniye gicesi el-fakirü'l-maʻlum el-Şeyh es-Seyyid el-Hac Mehmed Haşim…fi hangah-ı Mustafa Paşa", *Sohbetnâme II*, inner backpage.

none could, however, reveal the exact motivation but hopefully would narrow down the possible answers to only propose a combination of them.

4.3 Seyyid Hasan between Individual and Community, *Sohbetnâme* between Public and Private

After all being said, meandering between individual-community and public-private, on what the author has recorded and how, let us turn back at the very beginning to ask why? What was the possible intention of the author to produce such a document in which he narrated his days? Obvious enough, it is more than unlikely to find an introduction to diaries in which author expresses his motivation of keeping record of his days simply because, supposedly, they were not written to be read and the motivations would be already known by the author. The lack of an unlikely introduction to the diary, however, can not be possibly indicative of lack of motive, either of more intrinsic sort or one that targets reader beyond the author.

Even after recognizing the fact that fashioning of the diary is based on a rhetoric of action, describing what the author did rather than how he felt and thought, we still have left with a restraint glimpse beyond the mere proceeding of the day. The diary provided neither an in depth description of major events and their effects on the author, nor it provides the intimacy or the ego that modern reader expects to be captivated in a diary. However, likewise it did not provided an outrightly public account in which author did not communicated his self here and there. It is, then, neither uniformly personal nor public but a rich interplay of both; the very characteristic that constitutes its peculiarity in the early modern Ottoman literature.

Prior to making any other claims it must be noted that the indications like "ama biz sadede gelelüm" (let us turn back to the point) and "ma'lum ola ki" (let this be known) could be used to assist the author himself when he wished to leaf through the manuscript. In other words, treated as an ordinary diary, it is possible that *Sohbetnâme* has no purpose outside of itself, and was addressed to no one but the

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author himself. It could be the case that the author aimed to relieve himself in the act of writing which would be highly expectable given the traumatic losses he has been experiencing. If the purpose was to open his heart and relieve himself, he seemed to have recovered from his sorrows in short notice, since he never communicated the grief of losing a loved one in the next record following the burial. Of course, relieve comes in keeping one's self busy and ordained, and the purpose might not have been emotional reflections but pursuing a habit of writing. Perhaps, motive was simply to protect his memories from decaying remembrance with old age. Although highly probable, none of these possible motives are rooted in what is in the diary, but grounded on a set of universal human agonies. Then, let us turn to rather what the tone and content of the diary implies as to be possible motivations.

The author's conception of his days as being worth recording almost to the extent that it involved a contact with the others constitutes a solid ground to speculate that in fact he might have attempted to compose a sort of *community history*. The author was, after all, highly attentive to record the major life changing events and rites of passages in the lives of his community; births, deaths, marriages, divorces, joining the guild and the like. But he was also recording the sorrow he felt upon death of his wife, his worries for the life of his son, or the details like his youngest son's first teeth and his first haircut. Of course in an attempt to record the days of a group of people, the author-protagonist would have his privileged part in narration. However, it seems unlikely that the record of the date in which his youngest son was cut off from breast feeding would have any significance for someone outside of the family and, the author could not possibly be expecting otherwise.

However, as have been illustrated thus far, the diary predominantly records the daily life of the protagonist-author that almost exclusively concentrates on the time spend in the company of others. In each day's entry the author records his visits and gatherings with the members of his family, *ihvan* and neighbours in their houses, lodge cells, shops, bathhouses and gardens. In each instance he records the name of those in his company and food and beverage that offered by the host, or enjoyed together in non-domestic localities that seems to have constituted an extension of

their private sphere. He frequently naps in the shops of his companions, have dinner in the members of his circle's houses and spend the night there, and takes the walks between one place to another, visits shrines and graveyards almost always accompanied by others. It almost appears as if he has been never alone, except for the times he was sleeping. This, however, seems to be the case if one only considers what he have recorded and overlooks what he have occasionally implied. More probable is that he did not consider much what he has done in isolation to be worth recording. Multiple entries of "hiç taşra çıkılmadı" (never been out) that followed by the records of slightest contact with a companion should be read as he neither get visitors nor himself contacted with someone, and the time he spend in the isolation of his home, or probably in the company of his household, considered rarely as worth recording. The fact that he tends to record that he ate without specifying the meal while he was not being accompanied by someone outside of his household; and on the contrary, providing a list of the dishes, beverages and treats when they were offered him as a guest or when shared with others, should also be seen in the light of the author's appreciation for his community or for his own sociality.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have attempted to present an outline and contextualize the earliest known manuscript diary in the Ottoman Turkish, written by the 17th century Istanbulite dervish Seyyid Hasan Nûri Efendi. The diary is in many ways a unique source, not only for the factual information it provides but more importantly for presenting a *self* in daily life. In the light of the life representation Seyyid Hasan authored in which he narrated his daily life, I have tried to relate this historical persona to his community. Knowing that the text is a selected, re-fashioned, and distorted representation of life, I have attended to the author's own selectivity and fashioning of his own text. My aim was twofold; on the one hand I tried to understand Seyyid Hasan's daily life between his self and his close-knit social milieu, and on the other, tried to locate his diary between his privacy and his circle's communality. The main framework for this study was inspired by the existing tensions in ego-document literature and by the scholarship on individuality, both of which collaboratively produced and progressed in the lines of contradistinction between individual-community and public-private. The purpose of this thesis was not to argue in favour of one end of each pair, and certainly the case study did not easily lend itself to these polarities, but to produce a preliminary presentation of the interplay in both pairs.

I have begin by providing the literature on the ego-documents, their use-value as historical sources, peculiarities and pitfalls they possessed, and the ways in which they were claimed to be the indicators of increased self-awareness and products of individuality. To do so, I have provided a summary of the historiographical attitude that reserved self-awareness and its consequent cultural-artistic products to be peculiarities of the European Civilization; first, claimed to have emerged with the advent of the Italian Renaissance and later, claimed back to medieval Europe.

Although the approaches in historiography changed, underlying tension that regulate the discussions around individuality and ego-documents remained in place; academic discourse sought to locate individual in its capacity to contradict and disassociate with community. To have accomplished so was symptomatized by the production of a written account that is primarily concerned with the self who produce it.

Having approached in this light, both the pre-modern and the non-Western forms of self expression were denied at times, and more predominantly, denied for the Islamic civilization. The Qur'anic-Islamic emphasis on the community of believers that supposedly reduced Muslims to the members of the *'ümmet,* have been argued to constitute a mentality in which man and woman could not possibly comprehend and react upon their individual existence. Its members being stripped off from their individual traits and qualities, the early modern Islamic Civilization have been argued to be incapable of producing the written accounts on *self*. However, in the last two decades, historians increasingly proved these assumptions to be misleading and emphasized the need to evaluate early modern Arabo-Islamic life representations in their own terms of writing tradition, rather than subjecting them to the modern and European standards.

After briefly presenting the roots and some examples of account on self, I have moved on to the Ottoman written culture that by and large inherited from the Arabo-Islamic literary tradition. Upon providing some examples contemporary to the *Sohbetnâme*, I have finally contextualized the diary in the 17th century written culture. Having provided a discussion on the genre, I have summarized the content in six main themes and sub-headings. While doing so, I have brought forward the pairs of individual-community and public-private to lead the evaluation of the content and the tone of the author.

It has been previously mentioned that *Sohbetnâme* predominantly records the events and actions, it narrates the processes and proceedings rather than providing a description of mental, emotional or spiritual states of the author. In that sense, it does not fulfil the expectations that modern reader have about a diary. Furthermore, it might be claimed to pose a paradox with its dual character as on the one hand being a

product of supposedly heightened sense of self awareness and ego-centeredness, an on the other with its preoccupation with lives and company of the others. Seyyid Hasan was not even remotely detached from his community of kin, neighbours, fellow dervishes, friends and companions.

Having presented the note appended to the diary by the author's descendant, I was able to speculate on the possible uses and value of the diary for family and lodge circles; and having presented the tone and content of the diary, I have also discussed what the author's intention and motivations could be in this writing activity. Although none can be claimed to be the exact motivation with confidence, it appears that he was, in a sense, recording or chronicling his circle. While doing so, he did not compromise his central position as the narrator whose part in the story was privileged, since at times he expressed his feelings and thoughts.

The once-valid assumption about the incapability of the Muslim societies to produce the literary product that are exclusively an expression of the individual experiences prior to adopting the values of the Renaissance Europe, and importing Westernized forms of writing, have long lost its credibility. For the Ottoman history, meticulous efforts of historians who discovered and thoroughly studied early modern written accounts of life, revealed rich and lively ego-perspectives that were expressed as early as 17th century. The argument of Orientalist scholarship, we might conclude, was already very problematic at the beginning for taking the supremacy of role of religion in every sphere of life for granted and presenting Europe-originated phenomenon of the Renaissance as a condition to achieve, or to adopt.

Whether it is more private or public in character, each ego-document provides a unique contribution by endowing history with an individual dimension. Since the individual can not be detached from his social context, ego-documents also provide a reflection of the context within which it was produced and the self was expressed. However, none would actually allow for a complete reconstruction of life because they are not full representations of it but more a fragmented, occasional and opaque reevaluation of parts of it.

Still, a study on the *Sohbetnâme* that would focus on the records of major public events and the information it provides on the ruling elite, *'ulema* and Sufi circles will prove very fruitful, given the personal tone of narration through which Seyyid recorded the events. Likewise, a focus on the uncommonly rich information it presents on the cuisine and food consumption would bring lively results, since the eating habits of people from outside of the palace and courtly circles remains as a topic that is largely unexplored. More puzzles of the Ottoman History can be illuminated by a 17th century dervish's account on his days as long as the document at hand is allowed to breed its on riches and peculiarities, rather than forced into categories and polarities.

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APPENDICES

A. FACSIMILES OF SOME *SOHBETNÂME* FOLIOS
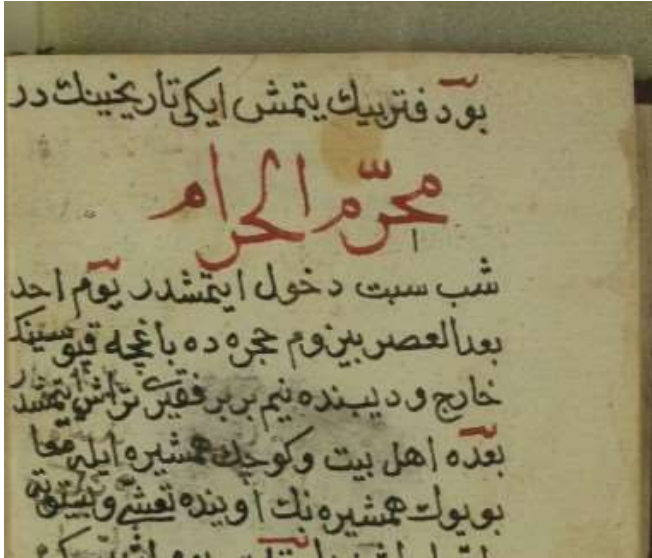
Appendix A.1: The facsimile of the first record of the first volume

TSMK Hazine 1426, *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 1b.

Appendix A.2: The facsimile of the first record of the second volume

TSMK Hazine 1418, *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 1a.

Appendix A.3: The facsimile of a typical folio

TSMK Hazine 1418, *Sohbetnâme II*, fol. 39b.

Appendix A.4: The facsimile of a folio recording list of attendees and list of food
served in a gathering

TSMK Hazine 1426, *Sohbetnâme I*, fol. 53b.

B. TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Tarih yazımı, akademik disiplinin kuruluşundan bu yana ağırlıklı olarak muktedirlerin, politik ve idari iktidar çevrelerinin, çeşitli kurumlarda otoriteyi temsil eden yetkililerin tarihi ile ilgilenmiştir. Yönetilenler ise çoğunlukla bu ilk grubun aksine pasif, itaatkar ve sessiz insan kitleleri olarak ele alınmış, tarihsel aktörlük kapasiteleri göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu durumun pratik bir sebebi, elbette, iktidar ve güç çevrelerinin tarih boyunca arkalarında kendi hayatları ve yönetimlerine dair yazılı kaynaklar bırakma pratiğidir. Günümüz tarihçilerinin geçmiş bir devri çalışmak istediklerinde ilk karşılaştıkları kaynaklar, yönetilenlerin değil yönetenlerin kaleme aldığı veya dikte ettiği, yönetimlerini ve kararlarını meşrulaştırmak maksadı ile yazılmış türden belgelerdir.

Bu tez literatürde Sohbetnâme ismiyle bilinen, Osmanlı Türkçesinde yazılmış en erken günlük örneğinin detaylı bir okuması ve bağlamsallaştırılması üzerine kuruludur. Günlükler; hatıratlar, otobiyografiler, mektuplar ve seyahat yazıları ile birlikte, ego-doküman olarak anılan yazım türü kategorisinde bulunur. Bu tür belgeler yazarın kendisi, hayatı, duygu ve düşünceleri, bireysel tecrübeleri hakkında ayrıcalıklı bilgi sunuyor oluşlarıyla diğer yazım türlerinden ayrılır. Ego-dokümanlar ben-merkezli oluşlarıyla, iktidar çevrelerinin dışında kalan geniş halk kitlelerinin tarihsel aktörler olarak değerlendirilmesini mümkün kılan yegane kaynaklardır. Öznel doğaları itibariyle sundukları bilgilerin tarihsel kaynak olarak güvenilirliği her ne kadar akademik tartışmalara yol açmış olsa da, şüphesiz ki ego-doküman yalnızca otoritenin belgeleri ve söylemi üzerine kurulu klasik tarihçilik anlayışını alternatif, çok katmanlı ve cihetli, ben-merkezli anlatılarla zenginleştirmekte ve pek çok bakımdan geliştirmektedir.

Terimin tanımı, sınırları ve karakteristikleri üzerinde bir uzlaşma bulunmamaktadır, ancak ego-doküman yakın zamana kadar literatürde benlik bilincinin tezahürü yazılı ürünler olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bir başka deyişle, bu türden yazılı belgeleri üretmek için yüksek bir benlik bilinci yani bireysellik duygusu ön koşul olarak öne

sürülmüştür. Bu varsayımdan hareketle, Gustave von Grunebaum ve Franz Rosenthal gibi zamanın öndegelen Şarkiyatçıları uzunca zaman revize edilmeden geniş kabul gören İslam medeniyetinde bireyselliğin gelişmesinin mümkün olmadığı tezini savunmuştur. Bu teze göre, İslam tabiatı itibariyle topluluğu bireyden daha fazla önemsemekte ve böylelikle din, Rönesans Avrupa'sındakine benzer bir bireyselliğin gelişmesine imkan vermemektedir. İslam'ın bireydense cemaate vurgusu, bu tezin savunucularına göre, en açık şekilde benlik bilinci, bireyselliğin ürünleri kabul edilen yazım türlerinin 19. yy. öncesi Müslüman toplulukları tarafından üretilmemiş olması ile kanıtlanabilir. Batılı yazım pratikleri ve türlerine adapte olmadan önce 'ben' tecrübelerini anlatan edebi ürünlerin yokluğu, bireysellik duygusunun gelişmediği ve buna engelin dinin yapısı olduğu sonuçlarına sebep olmuştur. Ego-dokümanların bireyselliğin alameti olarak kabul edilmesine ilaveten, bu kabuller de son yirmi yılda tarihçiler tarafından kritik ölçüde eleştirilmiş ve revize edilmiş bulunmaktadır.

Ego-doküman kategorisinde bulunan ve bu tezin de ana kaynağının yazım türü olarak dahil olduğu günlükler, geniş kitleleri etkileyen kamusal olayların bireysel düzlemde nasıl tecrübe edildiğini anlatan özel türden belgeler olarak kabul edilirler. Günlük yazarı, genel kanıya göre, yazma etkinliğinde kendisi dışında bir okuyucuya hitap etmez; kendi tecrübelerini, kendisini yazma eylemiyle rahatlatmak veya daha sonra hatırlayabilmek için samimi ve içten bir şekilde hikaye eder. Güncel edebiyat teorisinde bu varsayım revize edilmiş ve günlüklerin örtük ya da açık muhakkak bir okuyucuya hitaben ve muhakkak okunmak üzere yazıldığı iddia edilmiştir. Hedeflenen okuyucu yazarın kendisi yahut başkaları olsa da, günlükler kamusal olayların bireysel tecrübelerini hikaye eder ve bu sebeple tür itibariyle özel türden belge ile tarihsel, edebi, sosyolojik vb. alanlar için kaynak teşkil etmek arasında konumlanır.

Bu tez ilhamını genel itibariyle ego-dokümanlar, özelde günlükler üzerine literatürde mevcut tansiyonlardan alır ve tezin ana kaynağı olan yazma eseri birey-topluluk ve özel-kamusal eksenlerinde bağlamsallaştırmayı hedefler. Sohbetnâme edebi tür olarak günlük olarak sınıflandırılmasıyla, birey-topluluk ekseninde yazarın ürettiği hayat temsilinden yola çıkarak kendisini topluluğuna ilişkilendirmek ve bireyselliği-

toplumsallığı üzerine tartışma yürütmek için verimli bir kaynaktır. Öte yandan içeriğin incelenmesi, eldeki belgenin özel veya topluluğa dönük, bireysel ve tarihsel belge olarak, yani özel ve kamusal ekseninde konumlandırılmasını mümkün kılar. Sohbetnâme'nin tezde incelenen bütün cihetleri, Avrupa literatüründe var olan ego-dokümanlar ve bireyselliğe dair bağıntılarında öne sürülen soru ve sorunlardan esinlenilmiştir.

Seyyid Hasan'ın günlüğü, Sohbetnâme, Osmanlı Türkçesinde yazılmış bilinen en erken günlük örneğidir. Günlük, tamamı Hicri 1072-1075 (1661-1665) yıllarında tutulmuş iki ciltten oluşmaktadır. Birinci cilt 160 folyodur ve bir yılın kayıtlarını içerir; ikinci cilt 260 folyodur ve üç yıllık kayıtları içerir. Yazı okunaklı nesihdir, birkaç istisnai sarı yaprak dışında beyaz kağıt üzerine siyah ve kırmızı mürekkep ile yazılmıştır. Günlüklerin genel yapısı Sohbetnâme için de geçerlidir. Kayıtlar her günün akşamında ve gün gün tutulmuş, her günün kaydının başında ayın kaçıncı günü olduğu ve günün ismi kaydedilmiştir. Kırmızı mürekkep yalnızca günlerin isimlerini, ayın ilk gününü, dini bayramların başlangıcını, derkenarların ilk kelimesini, konuk olunan evin sahibinin ismini ve yazmanın her bölümünün başlangıcını kaydederken kullanılmıştır. Yazar günlüğünde kendisine dair biyografik bilgi paylaşmaz, öyle ki ismini bile kaydetmez. Seyyid Hasan hakkında biyografik bilgi Şeyhi Mehmed'in *Vakâyiü'l- fudalâ*'sı ve Mehmed Süreyyâ'nın *Sicill- i Osmanî*'sinde kısaca bulunmaktadır. Yazarın kimliğini ikinci cildin sonuna yüz yıl sonra düşülmüş bir nottan tespit edebilmekteyiz.

Es-Seyyîd Hasan ibn eş-şeyh es-Seyyîd Muhammed Emîn ibn es-Seyyîd Abdü'l-Hâlık, kısaca Seyyid Hasan, İstanbul merkez Halveti-Sünbüli tekkesi olan Koca Mustafa Paşa'nın şeyhinin oğludur, kendisi de Sünbüliye'ye erken yaşta intisab etmiş ancak babası kendisi henüz küçük bir yaştayken öldüğünden merkez tekkenin şeyhlik postuna geçememiştir. Ömrü boyunca da ancak tarikatın İstanbuldaki ikinci büyük tekkesi olan Balat Ferruh Kethüda'nın şeyhliğinde bulunmuştur.

Günlük, müellifi tarafından Sohbetnâme ismiyle adlandırılmamış, ancak salnâme olarak bahsedilmiştir. Sohbetnâme isminin verilmesi kuvvetle muhtemelen Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphane'sinde kataloglandırıldığı sırada içeriğinde sıkça

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kaydedilmiş sohbet alt-başlıklarından ilhamla yapılmıştır. Günlük yazarın gündelik hayatının akışını kaydeder. Günlük türünden beklentinin aksine duygusal, içten, samimi bir ton ancak birkaç durumda gözlemlenir. Yazar daha çok kendi gündelik hayatını ve etrafındaki insanların hayatındaki doğum, ölüm, evlilik, boşanma, sünnet gibi önemli dönüm noktalarını duygu ve düşüncelerini detaylandırmadan aktarır. 17. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unun çalkantılı toplumsal ve politik gelişmelerine, yahut derviş oluşundan beklenecek şekilde kendi içselliğine, dini-ruhani yönüne dair fazlaca bilgi paylaşmaz. Yazarın ürettiği yaşam temsilinde bu gündelik yaşam odaklı seçiciliği, bu yazmayı erken modern Osmanlı gündelik yaşamını ve sosyal-kültürel tarihini çalışmak için eşsiz bir kaynak haline getirmektedir.

Bu tez üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm literatürde ego-dokümanlar ve bunların ne şekillerde birey- bireysellik meselelerine ilişkilendirildiklerine dair bir özet sunar. Ego-doküman teriminin tanımı ve kapsamına dair bilgilerden sonra, bu türden belgelerin tarih yazımına kaynak olarak nasıl kullanılageldiklerini ve kullanımlarının hangi bakımlardan eleştirildiğini bu bölüm inceler. Tarih yazımında kullanılan her türlü kaynağın olduğu gibi, ego-dokümanların da kendilerine has avantaj ve dezavantajları, kullanımına dair dikkat gerektiren özellikleri ve doğru okuma stratejileri uygulandığında sunacakları zenginlikler vardır. Öncelikli olarak erken modern döneme ait ego-dokümanları, bu devirlere dair bilgilerimiz kısıtlı olduğundan bağlamsallaştırmak hayli zordur. Dahası, bu belgeler ben-merkezli olduklarından okuyucuyu yazarın hayatının tam bir temsilini okumakta oldukları izlenimiyle yanıltabilir. Halbuki ego-dokümanlar gerçekliği değil, onun seçilmiş bir kısmının öznel bir şekilde yeniden inşasını sunar. Birinci bölümün ikinci kısmı ise bireysellik olgusunun Avrupa literatüründe ego-doümanlarla ne şekillerde ilişkilendirildiğinin bir özetini sunar. Bireysellik öncelikli olarak Rönesans Avrupasının özgürlükçü, bireyi önceleyen değerleri ile ilişkilendirilmiş ve gelişmesi için gerekli koşulların öncelikli olarak yalnızca batı dünyasında gelişmiş olduğu ileri sürülmüştür. Bu argümana göre bireysellik, neredeyse batı dünyasına has bir olgudur ve dünyanın geri kalanı batı kültürü ve değerleri ile tanışmadan ve kendi kültürlerini batı kültürüne adapte etmeden önce bireye dair her türlü kaygıdan ve bireysellik olgusundan uzak, bihaberlerdi. Bu argüman da, elbette, çokça eleştirilmiş ve revize

edilmiş bulunmaktadır. En temelde, kişinin kendisine, varoluşuna ve biricikliğine dair kaygıları, ve kendi biricikliğini yazılı kültürde ifade arayışı tarihteki belli bir eşik-dönem ve belli bir coğrafyaya atfedilemeyecek kadar evrensel olgulardır.

Ego-doküman terimi literatüre Jacques Presser tarafından kazandırılmıştır. Presser'in maksadı, otobiyografi, hatrat, günlük ve mektup gibi kendi ilgilendiği türden belgeleri kapsayacak terim bulmaktı. Ego-dokümanları önce; araştırmacının sürekli olarak yazan ve tarif eden özne olarak bir 'ben' varlığı ile karşı karşıya bulunduğu tarihi belgeler olarak tanımladı, sonra tanımı sürekli olarak bir egonun kendini gizlediği veya açık ettiği belgeler olarak revize etti. Tanım daha sonra başka tarihçiler tarafından da geliştirildi ancak bu tür belgelerin ayırıcı özelliği her zaman için yazarın dünyasına, düşünce ve duygularına, tecrübeleri dair başka türden yazılı kaynaklarla kıyas kabul etmez bir açıklıkta bilgi sunmasıdır. Bilhassa devlet eliyle üretilmiş belgelerin hakim görüş, politika ve anlatının uzantısı olan, kati kurallarla formulize edilmiş ve edebi özellikleri kısıtlı belgeleri düşünüldüğünde ego-dokümanların tarih çalışmalarını büyük ölçüde zenginleştirdiği daha iyi takdir edilecektir. Ancak bütün belgeler gibi, ego-dokümanlarında tarih çalışmalarında kaynak olarak kullanımında dikkat edilmesi gereken noktalar vardır, bunlar arasında en temel olanlar bağlamsallaştırma zorluğu, samimiyet yanılsaması ve güvenilirliği şüpheli yazar sorunudur. Özellikle 19.yy öncesi gibi kaynak ve bağlamsal bilginin kısıtlı bulunduğu devirlerde ego-dokümanların sunduğu bilgi parçalarını devre dair geniş bağlama oturtmak hayli zordur. Bunun dışında ego-dokümanlar, okuyucuda yazarın özel hayatının, düşünce ve duygularının, tecrübelerinin olduğu gibi gözleri önünde serili bulunduğu yanılsamasına sebep olabilir ve bu durum öznel ve samimi bir tonla aktarılıyor olmasından kaynaklanır. Ego-dokümanların kaynak olarak kullanılmasında öne çıkan belki de en önemli mesele yazarın güvenilirliğinin bilinemiyor oluşudur. Bu belgelerin öznel anlatılarının dış-dünya gerçekliğiyle uyumlu olduğu iddiası çoğunlukla başka belgeler ile karşılaştırılamadığından, hayatını veya onun bir kesitini anlatmakta olan yazarın sunduğu versiyonun güvenilirliği kesin olarak asla bilinemez. Yazarlar her zaman için gerçekliği bilinçli olarak çarpıtmak veya bilmeden yanlış ve eksik aktarmakla şüpheli öznel kaynaklardır.

Ego-dokümanların üretilmesini bireysellik olgusuna bağlayan Avrupa literatürü, bireyselliğin oluşumunu da tarih yazımında önce Rönesans Avrupa'sına atfetmiştir. Jacob Burckhardt'ın Rönesans İtalya'sı üzerine yürüttüğü kapsamlı araştırmanın neticelerinden biri de, kendinin biricikliğinin bilincinde ve bunu artistik-kültürel ürünlerde yansıtmaya hevesli 'modern insan' ın yani bireyin ve onun öz-farkındalığı olan bireysellik olgusunun ilk olarak Rönesans Avrupa'sında ortaya çıktığı savıdır. Burckhardt'a göre, Rönesans öncesinde insanlar kendilerini ancak daha büyük gruplara aidiyetleri ile algılamak ve tanıtmak eğilimindeydi. Bu tez uzunca zaman literatürde sistemli eleştiriye maruz kalmadan yeniden üretilerek geçerliliğini korumuştur. Akademik çevrenin dışında da, bugün hala, bireysellik akıllarda en çok ve en kolay Rönesans Avrupa'sının değerleriyle ilişkilendirilmektedir. Ancak, Ortaçağ Avrupa tarihçileri Burckhardt'ın Rönesans İtalya'sına atfettiği karakteristiklerin aslında 12.yüzyılda kendisini göstermeye başladığını iddia etti. Bu teze göre itiraf temelli yazma eylemi ve manastırların sunduğu inziva yaşamı bireysellik duygusunun Ortaçağda gelişmesinde önemli rol oynamıştır

Bu tezin ikinci bölümü, ego-doküman literatüründe sıkça karşılaşılan birey-topluluk, bireysellik-toplumsallık hatları üzerine kuruludur. Topluluk, çoğunlukla bireyin bireyselliğini ufalayan ve kendi daha geniş varlığına asimile eden bir yapı olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu bağlamda Şarkiyatçılık uzunca zaman İslam medeniyetinin, ve Osmanlı toplumunun da, bireyselliğe yer bırakmaz kültür yapısını vurgulamıştır. Bu bölüm 'topluluk' kavramının tanımı ve bireyler için topluluğun neler ifade ettiği üzerine teorik tartışmalar ile başlar ve literatürde topluluğun nasıl bireyin antagonisti olarak konumlandırıldığını inceler. Bu bölümde, Arap-İslam edebi geleneklerinde benlik ifadesi yazılı türlerin kökenleri ve ilintili yazım pratikleri de sunulmuştur. İlaveten, bu bölümün sonunda Erken Modern Osmanlı ben- anlatılarını tespit etmek ve çalışmakta karşılaşılan sorunlar üzerine bir girizgahı takiben, Sohbetnâme'nin çağdaşı birkaç ben-anlatısı örneği de kısaca sunulmuştur.

Bireyselliğe ilişkin en temel varsayımlardan biri, bireyin topluluktan koparak ortaya çıktığıdır; yani bireysellik ancak toplumsallık son bulduğunda mümkündür. Kişi ancak birincil olarak bağlı bulunduğu aile ve akraba çevresinden uzaklaşmakla,

gelenkleri sorgulamakla, daha fazla mahremiyet aramakla ve yalnızca kendi seçtiği kimselerin eşliğini tercih etmekle birey olur. Bireysellik batı dünyasında doğmuş kabul edildiği gibi, İslam dininin bireydense topluluk ve cemaati vurgulayan yapısı Şarkiyatçı tarihçilerin İslam medeniyetlerinde bireysellik algısının gelişmiş olabileceği ihtimalini reddetmesine sebep olmuştur. Bireysellik duygusu gelişmeyen toplumlar, onun yazılı ifadeleri olan ben merkezli edebi anlatım türlerini üretmeye de kabil bulunmamıştır. Özetle, kendilerini ancak bağlı bulundukları cemaatin bir üyesi olarak tanıyan Müslümanlar, Batılı kültür ve yazım pratiklerini benimsemeye başladıkları 19.yy evvelinde benliğin ifadesi olan edebi üretimlerde de bulunmamıştır. Bu varsayımla ilgili en temel sorun benliğin ifadesi olan edebi üretimleri Avrupa literatüründeki örnekleri koşul olarak kabul edip, İslam toplumlarında da bunların aynılarını kültürel ve edebi gelenek farklılıklarını tamamen gözardı ederek aramasıdır. Tarihsel, kültürel, sosyal, edebi gelenek farklılıklarını gözardı ederek yapılan böyle bir arayış elbette anlamlı sonuçlar doğurmamış ve ne bireyselliğin ne de onun yazılı ürünlerinin bulunmadığı sonucuna yol açmıştır.

Topluluk kabaca, bir ortaklık temelini paylaşan bir grup insanı ifade eder. Bu benzerlikleri topluluk üyelerini diğer topluluk üyelerinden ayırır. En temelde topluluk, benzerlik ve farklılık ekseninde şekillenen bir oluşumdur, yani ilişkiseldir. Ancak topluluk üyelerinin benzerliklerine yapılan fazla vurgu, topluluğu kaçınılmaz olarak tek-tipleştirme potansiyeli güçlü ve bireyselliğe alan bırakmayan bir yapı olarak yorumlamaya yol açar. Ancak bir topluluğun üyesi olmak, ya da kültürel olarak topluluğun önemini vurgulayan bir dinin mensubu olmak bireysellikten taviz vermek anlamına gelmez. Varsayılanın aksine, Arap-İslami yazım geleneğinde de erken dönemlerden itibaren ben-anlatılarının üretilmesine engel olmamıştır. Arap-İslami yazım geleneğinde ben anlatılarının oluşturulmasında en büyük edebi etki tarihsel kaynak ve biyografi yazım gelenekleri olmuştur.

Tezin üçüncü ve son ana bölümü Sohbetnâme odaklıdır; günlüğün üretildiği bağlamı ve içeriğini detaylı bir şekilde inceler. Bu bölüm, tarihsel olarak 17.yy Osmanlı İstanbul'una ve başkentte yaşama dair bir sosyal-kültürel girişten sonra, ve daha

geniş bir biçimde, Erken Modern Osmanlı yazılı kültürüne dair bir özet sunar. Seyyid Hasan'ın günlüğünü yazdığı bu devirde, yazılı kültürde ve insanların yazıyla ilişkilenmelerinde önemli değişiklikler görülmeye başlandığı Osmanlı tarihçileri tarafından ileri sürülmüştür. Müellifimizin yaygın pratiğin aksine görünürde bir araç olmayan yazma pratiği bu dönüşüm geçirmekte olan yazılı kültür bağlamında mümkün olmuştur. Sohbetnâme bir günlüktür ve yazma pratiğinin Osmanlı kültürü için ana motivasyonlarından olan ilim yayma, himaye arama yahut geçmiş eylemleri meşrulaştırma gibi amaçlar taşımaz; yazar, basitçe kendi gününün kendi seçtiği kısımlarını hikaye ederek sunar. Bu bakımdan, yazının kullanım alanlarının genişlediği ve mevcut yazılı türlerde değişikliklerin gözlendiği 17.-18.yy yazılı kültür bağlamı, Seyyid Hasan'ı konumundan bekleneceği üzere dini, ruhani bir yönü bulunmayan ve o zamana kadar üretilmiş günlük-vari yazmalar arasında organizasyon ve içerik olarak modern günlüğe bu kadar yakınsayan başka bir benzeri bulunmayan Sohbetnâmeyi üretmesinde muhakkak etkili olmuş olmalı. Bu bölümün büyük kısmı günlüğün içeriğinin altı alt başlık halinde ve özel-kamusal ikiliği çerçevesinde incelemeye adanmıştır. Bölüm, Sohbetnâme'ye ilişkin birey-topluluk, özel-kamusal eksenlerinde ara-sonuç ve tartışmaların sunulduğu bir kısım ile sonlanır.

Tezin son bölümünde, belgenin genel tonunun anlatılmasını takiben, altı alt başlık halinde belgenin içeriği sunulmuştur. Bunlardan birincisi veba ve ölümdür. Günlüğün birinci cildinin ağırlıklı olarak ilk yarısı hasta düşenlerin ve ölenlerin haberleri, ve cenazeleri kaydeder. Veba salgınında Seyyid ailesinden, yakın ve uzak akrabalarından, komşularından ve tekkedeki yarenden pek çoğunu kaybeder. Ölümlerin hepsinin kaydedilmesine özen göstermiştir, ancak sadece karısı ve oğlunun ölümüne ilişkin olarak günlüklerden beklenen duygusal ve samimi-içten tonda yorumda bulunmuştur. İşlenen ikinci tema meclis, işret ve sohbetdir. Tekke dervişleri sıklıkla yemekli toplantılarda bir araya gelir, ve yemeği takiben zaman zaman konuk olunan evde sabahlar. Burada ilginç olan, Seyyid Hasan'ın bu yemekli toplantıların menülerini ve katılanların isim isim listelerini kaydetmeye gösterdiği özendir. Üçüncü tema yeme-içme ile ilgilidir. Yazar gün içinde yiyip içtiklerini düzenli olarak kaydetmiştir, ancak başkalarının eşliğinde yediği öğünlerdeki

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yemekleri tek tek sayarken tek başına yediği öğünlerde yalnızca yemek yediğini kaydetmiş gibi görünmektedir. Yazar ayrıca gün içinde birden fazla kez kahve içmekte ve sabah kahvesini günün akışı içinde zamanı belirtmek için de kullanmaktadır. Dördüncü başlık yazarın gündelik hayatında zamanı nasıl tayin edip günlüğünde aktardığını, gündelik hayat etkinliklerini ve 'leisure' olarak kabul edilebilecek etkinlikleri sunar. Beşinci başlık günlükteki kitaba, ödünç alma ve verme pratiklerine ve istinsah faaliyetlerine ilişkindir. İçeriğe dair son alt-başlıkta günlükte kaydedilen ulema ve saray çevresinden kimselerin azil, atama ve ölüm haberleri sunulmuştur. Yazar bu haberleri her zaman derkenarda ve üzerine yorum yapmadan kaydeder. Ayrıca yazar, Uyvar Seferi'ne ilişkin aşamaları da kısaca kaydetmiştir. Günlüğün ikinci cildinin son kaydı yazar tarafından değil, soyundan gelen bir başka Sünbüli şeyhi tarafından yaklaşık yüz yıl sonra kaydedilmiştir. Yani günlük aile ile tekke çevresinin kesişiminde muhafaza edilmiştir denilebilir.

Son bölümün son başlığı birey-topluluk, özel-kamusal eksenlerinde Sohbetnâmenin bir nihai değerlendirilmesidir. Yazar aile üyelerinin ölümlerini içeren kayıtlar dışında, modern günlüklerden beklenen türden içten ve duygu yansıtan bir üslup benimsememiştir. Olayları ve gelişmeleri çoğunlukla üzerine duygu ve düşüncelerini detaylandırmadan sadece kaydeder. Genel itibariyle kayıtların birey-merkezli olduğu da söylenemez, zira yazar topluluğunun üyelerinin hayatlarındaki önemli gelişmeleri kaydetmek konusunda çok özenlidir. Günlük ne tam manasıyla özel ne tam manasıyla topluluk odaklıdır denemez. İlgi çekici bir nokta, yazarın neredeyse hiç kimse kendisine eşlik etmediğinde, yalnızken neler yapıp ettiğini kaydetmemesidir. Yazarın hiç yalnız zaman geçirmediğini varsaymak mümkün olmadığından denebilir ki, yalnız geçirdiği vakti kaydetmeye değer bulmamaktadır ya da ancak topluluğunun üyeleriyle birlikte geçirdiği zamanı kıymetli görmektedir.

Yazar günlük içinde kırmızı mürekkep kullanımı ve önemli olayları kaydetmeden önce yazdığı 'ma'lum ola ki' uyarısıyla ya daha sonra kendisi günlüğüne göz gezdirdiğinde aradığı kayıtları bulmayı kolaylaştırmayı hedeflemektedir yahut kendisi dışında bir okuyucu hedeflediği de varsayılabilir. Esasen topluluğun ve topluluk üyelerinin günlüğün kayıtlarındaki önemi, yazarın yalnız geçirdiği zamanı

pek kaydetmemesi gibi durumlar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda bu günlüğün aslında topluluğun hayatını kaydetmeyi hedeflediği düşünülebilir. Nihai olarak aile ve tekke çevresinin bir kesişimi içinde muhafaza edildiğine dair not, belki bu düşünceyi desteklemektedir. Bu günlüğün aslında bir topluluk günlüğü ya da topluluk tarihi girişimi olduğu iddia edilebilir. Kendisi hiçbir yerde açıklamadığı için kesin motivasyonu bilmemiz imkansız olsa da bu günlüğün modern günlüklerden farklı olarak yazan özne kadar, hatta belki daha fazla, üyesi bulunduğu topluluğun hayatını merkeze aldığı söylenebilir.

Bu belge elbette çok farklı temalar ve çerçeveler dahilinde çalışılmaya uygundur. Tek bir tezin, bu belgenin zengin içeriğini tam manasıyla kapsaması mümkün değildir. Daha öznel ya da daha topluluğa dönük olsun, her ego-doküman üretildikleri sosyal, kültürel ve tarihsel bağlama ilişkin eşsiz bilgiler sunar. Sohbetnâme'yi çağdaşı olan diğer ben anlatılarından ayıran en önemli özelliği gündelik hayat odaklı oluşu ve geniş bir yelpazede pek çok konu hakkında bilgi veriyor oluşudur. Bu bakımdan birincil kaynak olarak kullanılabileceği daha pek çok verimli çalışma mümkündür.

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