

THE IMAGE OF THE *OTHER*
IN THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY
CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM HAGIOGRAPHIES

A Master's Thesis

by
NERGİZ NAZLAR

Department of History
Bilkent University
Ankara
September 2008

To My Family: Birsen, Nurhayat, Tugay and Selin

THE IMAGE OF THE *OTHER*
IN THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY
CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM HAGIOGRAPHIES

The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of
Bilkent University

by

NERGİZ NAZLAR

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

September 2008

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

Dr. Eugenia Kermeli
Thesis Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

Assistant Prof. Evgeni Radushev
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

Associate Prof. Hakan Kırımlı
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Erdal Erel
Director

ABSTRACT

THE IMAGE OF THE *OTHER* IN THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM HAGIOGRAPHIES

Nazlar, Nergiz

M.A., Department of History

Supervisor: Dr. Eugenia Kermeli

September 2008

In the thesis we have aimed to examine the image of the *other* in fifteenth-century Ottoman history. With this aim in mind, we have carried out our research focusing on the analysis of the image of the *other* both within the population of Orthodox Christians under Ottoman rule, and also within Ottoman society. We have argued that hagiographies and *menakıbnames* can be utilized as reliable historical sources for cultural-historical research. With this view we have examined eight Orthodox Christian neo-martyr hagiographies and two Ottoman *menakıbnames* from the fifteenth century (more specifically those of Şeyh Bedreddin and Otman Baba), in addition to Byzantine and Ottoman chronicles of the period. Three fundamental tasks are established as the focus of the thesis: who the *other* is, how the *other* is

perceived, and what this process of *otherization* reveals about the prejudices, preoccupations, and concerns of the authors in relation to the broader world.

Our analysis of the image of the *other* in fifteenth century Ottoman history shows that although the hagiographical and *menakıbname* sources were written from a religious perspective, how the *other* was perceived in this period had much more to do with political than theological motivations. The socio-religious antagonisms witnessed in these texts should thus be seen a result of the underlying political antagonisms arising in the fifteenth century, both within the Orthodox Christian populations under Ottoman rule and among the Muslim Ottoman population, rather than being treated in isolation as a strictly religious affair.

Keywords: *other*, *otherization*, hagiography, neo-martyr, *menakıbname*, Orthodoxy, Islam, Şeyh Bedreddin, Otman Baba.

ÖZET

ONBEŞİNCİ YÜZYIL HİRİSTİYAN VE MÜSLÜMAN HAGİOGRAFİLERİNDE ÖTEKİ İMGESİ

Nazlar, Nergiz

Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Eugenia Kermeli

Eylül 2008

Bu tezde, onbeşinci yüzyıl Osmanlı tarihinde *öteki* imgesinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla beraber, araştırmamız, Osmanlı yönetimi altındaki Ortodoks Hristiyan nüfusunda ve de Osmanlı toplumunda *öteki* imgesinin analizine odaklanarak yürütülmüştür. Hagiografilerin ve menakıbnamelerin kültürel-tarihsel çalışmalar için kullanılabilir güvenilir tarihi belgeler olduğu savunularak onbeşinci yüzyıldan sekiz Ortodoks Hristiyan *neo-martyr* hagiografisi ve iki Osmanlı menakıbnamesi (Şeyh Bedreddin ve Otman Baba menakıbnameleri), ek olarak da dönemin Bizans ve Osmanlı kronikleri incelenmiştir. Bu tezde üç ana öge esas alınmıştır: *öteki* kimdir, nasıl algılanmıştır, ve dış dünya ile ilişkilerinde yazarların önyargıları, endişeleri ve ilgileri *ötekileşme* sürecinde ne şekilde açığa çıkmıştır.

Onbeşinci yüzyıl Osmanlı tarihinde *öteki* imgesinin analizi göstermiştir ki; hagiografi ve menakıbnameler dinsel bir bakış açısıyla yazıldıkları halde, yazıldıkları dönemde *öteki* imgesinin nasıl algılandığını dini kaygılardan ziyade politik motivasyonlar belirlemiştir. Böylelikle, metinlerde geçen sosyal-dinsel antagonizmalar katı bir şekilde işlenmiş dini meselelerden ziyade, onbeşinci yüzyılda hem Osmanlı yönetimi altındaki Ortodoks Hristiyan nüfusunda, hem de Müslüman Osmanlı toplumu arasında yükselen belli başlı politik antagonizmaların bir sonucu olarak görülmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *öteki*, *ötekileşme*, hagiografi, neo-martyr, menakıbname, Ortodoksluk, İslam, Şeyh Bedreddin, Otman Baba.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my supervisor Eugenia Kermeli who has always encouraged me during my journey in the history discipline and from whom I have learned a lot. I owe her much for her encouraging support and many hours she spent for the translation and interpretation of the texts.

I thank Evgeni Radushev and Hakan Kırımlı for their valuable comments and encouragement as the jury members. I would also like to thank Oktay Özel, Özer Ergenç and Paul Latimer for their encouraging help, support and inspiration they gave me during my three years in the history department.

I owe the most to my family who have always believed in me even more than myself and who have always supported my decisions.

I would also like to thank my friends from the history department, Aslıhan Gürbüz, Fulya Arpacı, Giselle Marien and Polat Safi for their invaluable friendship and support. I owe much to Yağmur Sarioğlu, A. Burak Erbor, and Filiz Tütüncü who have been always best friends to me.

Without the criticisms, comments, help, support and friendship I have received from Güneş Artam, Aslıhan Gürbüz and Hugh (Jeff) Turner, this thesis could not have been realized. Thus, I owe them much for sharing my enthusiasm, disappointments and experience with me. I am especially indebted to Güneş Artam who was able to bear with me even when I was in my most intolerable moods and who could always find a way to make me feel self-confident.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Image, Self, and Other	2
1.2. Sources.....	4
1.2.1. Hagiographies as Historical Sources	4
1.2.2. Menakıbnâme (Islamic hagiographies) as Historical Sources.....	8
CHAPTER II FROM THE BATTLE OF ANKARA TO THE FALL OF TRABZON: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	14
CHAPTER III THE IMAGE OF THE <i>OTHER</i> VIS-À-VIS US	34
3.1. Orthodox Christian Hagiographies of the Fifteenth Century.....	38
3.2. Discussion of the Hagiographies	46
3.3. Conclusion	66
CHAPTER IV THE <i>OTHER</i> AMONG US	68
4.1. Summary of the <i>Menakıbnâme</i> of Şeyh Bedreddin	69
4.2. Discussion of the <i>Menakıbnâme</i> of Şeyh Bedreddin	76
4.3. Summary of the <i>Menakıbnâme</i> of Otman Baba.....	88
4.4. Discussion of the <i>Menakıbnâme</i> of Otman Baba.....	95
4.5. Conclusion	101
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION.....	103
BIBLIOGRAPHY	112
APPENDIX: MAPS.....	119

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

[...] The central point in all this is, however, as Vico taught us, that human history is made by human beings. Since the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning.¹

Thus Edward Said asserts that human history is the product of human beings; and so their struggle for historical and social meaning is very much part of this history. Said also adds:

The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from another, but to connect them, despite the contrast between the overpowering materiality of the former and the apparent other-worldly refinements of the latter. [...] The construction of identity [...] is finally a construction – involves establishing opposites and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from “us.” Each age and society re-creates its “Others.” Far from a static thing then, identity of self or of “other” is much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.²

By this statement, Edward Said argues that the identity of a culture is a construct, made by that culture’s interpretation of the *other*, which represents what is attributed to another culture and how it differs from the *self*. In other words, the interpretation of the *other* is a way of defining the identity of a culture, the *self*. The historical, social, intellectual, and political process of a culture is the decisive factor

¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995), 331-332.

² Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 332.

in its interpretation of the *other* and the *self*. Thus, the construction of one's identity, together with its constituent elements, namely, the *other* and the *self*, is not a static but a dynamic, or continuously changing, notion. For this reason, it is important for a critical scholar to consider both the interpretation of one's *self* and that of the *other* in order to come closer to understand the historical, social, intellectual and political motivations of a period of a culture.

Similar to Edward Said's works, there are many significant works of other contemporary scholars, who have attempted analyzing various cultures' construction of their identity in relation to their conception of the *other*. Among these works are various analyses of how members of different faiths perceive one another; the *other* is to be found even among the members of the same culture.³

This thesis focuses on the image of the *other* in fifteenth-century Ottoman history. First, however, certain key terms need to be explained: *image*, *self* and *other*.

1.1. Image, Self, and Other

According to Joep Leerssen, image is basically a mental representation of a group or a person which has its roots in the relation between social facts and psychological features attributed to them. That is, as Leerssen explains, images are not the products of empirically testable facts but rather of the linking of social facts and attributed collective *psychologisms*. In this sense the elements that compose an

³ For example: Ahmad Gunny, *Images of Islam in the 18th century Writings*, (London: Grey Seal, 1996); Hugh Goddard, *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity*, (London: Grey Seal, 1996); another book of Goddard, *Christians and Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding*, (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995); Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of An Image*, (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 1966); Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Ottomans: Dissolving Images*, (London: Penguin Books, 1995); Şevket Yavuz, *The Construction of the "Other" in Late Byzantium and During the Construction Period of the Ottoman State*, (unpublished PhD diss., Temple University, 2002); and Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature" in *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-150.

image can be assumed as *imaginated*.⁴ Since our study is on the image of the *other*, we will primarily focus on these *imaginated* elements.

Another important argument of Leerssen's is that images are not constant but changeable. According to him, these changes can occur as a result of political circumstances; they can even transform into their counter-images. However, counter-images do not have to abolish their former forms but they are usually transformed into a mixture of images.⁵ The present study is in agreement with this statement.

Manfred Beller notes how historians and social psychologists suggest that people transmute their perceptions into images and they perceive the matters from their own distinctive perspectives. This is called selective perception and is caused by the suppressed tensions between the image of the *self*, and that of the *other*.⁶ Beller further argues that meeting with other cultures or societies is managed by this selective perception, which causes curiosity and arouses fascinating images in people's minds. The establishment of the *other* is made possible as a result of this point of view.⁷ Beller provides an example from the Middle Ages, which he argues was an era full of images of exotic alienation and the *satanization* of religious enemies at the time, drawing attention to the poems or apologetic texts describing the clashes between Christian and Muslim soldiers.⁸

As Margaret Meserve has noted in a recent work, the operative question in any study involving what she describes, following Edward Said, the "discourse of alterity," centers on three fundamental tasks: who the *other* is, how he was perceived

⁴ Joep Leerssen, "Image", in *Imagology: The Cultural construction and literary representation of national characters*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (New York: Rodopi, 2007), 342.

⁵ Joep Leerssen, "Image", 343.

⁶ Manfred Beller, "Perception, Image, Imagology" in *Imagology: The Cultural construction and literary representation of national characters*, ed. by Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (New York: Rodopi, 2007), 4-5.

⁷ Manfred Beller, "Perception, Image, Imagology", 6.

⁸ Manfred Beller, "Perception, Image, Imagology", 6.

as the *other*, and what this process of *otherization* reveals about the prejudices, preoccupations, and concerns of the author in relation to the broader world.⁹ The present study will be analyzing images as the representations of an essentially a negative *other*; that is to say, an image of the *other* which is the opposite of one's own values, a negated version of one's ideals, an anti-self. The first two questions, that is, who this *other* is, and how he is made to seem so, are addressed here with reference to hagiographies and the *menakıbnames*. The final part of the question on what this process of *otherization* tells us about the concerns of the authors and actors is addressed within such parametres.

1.2. Sources

1.2.1. Hagiographies as Historical Sources

Alexander Kazhdan defines hagiography as a category in Byzantine literature, the principle concerns of which are, adoration of the saints and the establishment of an ideal Christian behavior.¹⁰ He argues that although miracles are a typical element in hagiography, hagiographies are nevertheless important sources for historians. First, hagiographies often do indicate where a saint lived, sometimes even specifying a particular monastery or city. Second, many of these saints play important political roles. Thus, although the factual merits of such texts are variable, the wealth of information on political affairs that hagiographies include makes them important sources for scholars to examine.¹¹ Kazhdan also states that there are three major types of hagiographies. These are "martyrion," which narrates the trial and execution

⁹ Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 10.

¹⁰ Alexander Kazhdan, "Hagiography" in *The Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. 2, ed. A. Kazhdan (New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1991), 897.

¹¹ Alexander Kazhdan, "Hagiography", 897.

of a martyr; “vita” which is basically the biography of a saint; and “apophthegmata partum” which accounts the wise-sayings of the hermits.¹² The hagiographies examined in Chapter III are all *martyrion*-type texts. For this reason, it is now necessary to explain the terms “martyr” and “neo-martyr”. According to Alexander Kazhdan and Nancy Ševčenko, “martyr” was a title or honor attributed to a saint who gave his/her life for the Christian faith. The cult of this martyr was a response to his or her persecution. The aim was to establish the heroism of the victim who was not necessarily a real person.¹³ On other hand, Nomikos Michael Vaporis identifies neo-martyrs as Orthodox Christians who suffered and were tortured to death for their insistence on the Christian faith against the Muslim Ottoman authority that demanded their conversion.¹⁴ Vaporis also states that cases concerning Muslim apostates to the Orthodox Church, often subjected to torture or execution at the hands of Ottoman authority, were also a concern of neo-martyrdom.¹⁵

These neo-martyr hagiographies are of great value to our study, where the data presented by such sources form a basis for various arguments. The importance of these martyr-hagiographies rests on the fact, as noted by Elizabeth Zachariadou, that these hagiographies display the ideals and principles of the Orthodox Church and thus carry the message of the church. For this reason, examining this message is far more important than the historical authenticity of the events told in the hagiographies.¹⁶ The general framework of our study is in keeping with this

¹² Alexander Kazhdan, “Hagiography”, 897.

¹³ A. Kazhdan and Nancy Ševčenko, “Martyr” in *The Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. 2, ed. A. Kazhdan (New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1308.

¹⁴ N. M. Vaporis, *Witness for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period 1437-1860*, (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000), 1.

¹⁵ N. M. Vaporis, *Witness for Christ*, 2; also see Demetrios Constantelos, “Altruistic Suicide or Altruistic Martyrdom? Christian Greek Orthodox Neomartyrs: A Case Study,” *Archives of Suicide Research* 8/1 (2004): 57-71.

¹⁶ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Neomartyr’s Message”, *Bulletin of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies*, 8 (1990-1991): 55.

statement, as far as its examination of the eight Orthodox Christian neo-martyr hagiographies (see Chapter III): *Ephraim the Monastic Priest* (May 5, 1426), *George the Soldier from Sofia* (March 26, 1437), *Andreas Argentes* (May 29, 1465), *Nimat the Young from Bakhaa, Antioch* (1471), *John the Merchant from Trebizond* (June 2, 1492), *St John from Serez* (1480-1490's), *Michael Mavroeides from Adrianople* (late fifteenth century), *Metropolitan Arsenios of Verroia* (end of the fifteenth century).

We will examine these sources by comparing them with certain Byzantine chronicles. According to Vryonis the focus of these Byzantine chronicles were strongly affected by the conditions of the fifteenth century, a period when the Byzantine Empire lost its prominence due to the worsening conditions with which the empire had to struggle. Thus, some Byzantine scholars, like Chalcocondyles or Kritovoulos, chose the Ottoman Turks as the subject of their narratives, but not the Byzantine Empire.¹⁷ Vasiliev agrees with Vryonis' account and says that the social and political events of the fifteenth-century had a great impact on Byzantine historians of the period. These include, for instance, John Cananus, who wrote about the unsuccessful siege of Constantinople in 1422; or John Anagnostes wrote about the capture of Thessalonica by the Ottomans in 1430. George Phrantzes, Laonikos Chalcocondyles, Doukas, and Kritovoulos were also among historians of the period who wrote accounts on the fall of Constantinople in 1453.¹⁸ These last chroniclers have great significance for the examination of the events, including those following the fall of the Byzantine Empire, from the Byzantines' point of view. Phrantzes, for example, was a Byzantine chronicler captured by the Ottomans after the fall of Byzantium, finally escaping to Mistra and then to Corfu. His chronicle remained in

¹⁷ Speros Vryonis, *Byzantium and Europe*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 182.

¹⁸ Vasiliev, A. A. *History of the Byzantine Empire: 324-1453*, Vol. 2, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), 691.

two volumes. The first volume was a brief account of the events between 1413 and 1478, but the second and longer one dealt with the events from 1258 until 1478.¹⁹ Unlike Phrantzes, Chalcocondyles, who was an Athenian by origin, wrote his chronicle in ten books on the events of that had occurred prior to 1464. However, he wrote only about the Ottoman Empire not about the Byzantine.²⁰ In addition to these two chroniclers, should also be mentioned Doukas, who was from one of the distinguished families of Constantinople. His father, Michael Doukas, took part in the civil war between John V Palaiologos and John VI Cantacuzene on behalf of the latter. However, Palaiologos was victorious in the war, and Michael Doukas was imprisoned. In 1345, he took refuge in the Principality of Aydın in Anatolia, where he lived as a scribe and doctor. The son Doukas was most probably born in this principality. He then moved to Phocaea where he established relations with the Genoese, ultimately becoming scribe for the Genoese Adorno family. Later he served the ruler of Lesbos in diplomatic affairs, thus coming to deal with Ottomans frequently. However, after the capture of the island in 1462, the location to which he had fled, and where he ultimately died are not clear. He probably wrote his book, where he is explicit in his hatred for the Ottomans, between the years 1453 and 1462. His book mainly covers the events beginning from the reign of Bayezid I up to the fall of Lesbos.²¹

In contrast to Doukas' attitude towards the Ottomans, Kritovoulos was a well-known Byzantine historian with close relations with the Ottomans. Kritovoulos was born most probably in 1410 in Constantinople as a member of a distinguished family of the island of Imbros. As a result of his conciliatory attitude in political affairs, he

¹⁹ Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, 691.

²⁰ Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, 693.

²¹ Melek Delilbaşı, "Türk Tarihinin Bizans Kaynakları", *Cogito*, 17 (1999): 342-343.

was commissioned to become the governor of the island by the Ottomans.²² Following its capture by the Venetians in 1456, he left Imbros and moved to Constantinople in 1466. Kritovoulos devoted his book to the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II and praise of his victories. His book covers the events that occurred between 1451 and 1467.²³ Since Doukas' and Kritovoulos' attitudes towards the Ottomans were so different to each other, they give us different Byzantine perceptions of the Ottomans and so their chronicles²⁴ allow this thesis to use a comparative approach.

1.2.2. Menakıbname (Islamic hagiographies) as Historical Sources

Ahmet Yaşar Ocak's definition of a *menkabe* (pl. *menakıb* or *menakıbname*) is an act or behavior that deserves praise.²⁵ According to Ocak, in the history of Sufism *menakıbname* – as the small stories that narrate the wonderful doings of Sufis – were first compiled in the ninth century. Sometimes, the term *keramat* (sg. *keramet*), meaning miracles, was used instead of *menakıb*, since miracles constructed the basis of the *menakıbname*.²⁶ Ocak argues that with the establishment of the Sufi orders during the ninth century, miracles played an important role in ensuring the absolute authority of the leaders of these orders, as well as being employed to pacify their followers.²⁷ Since these sources are rich in supernatural elements, they show some similarities with myths, fables and epopees. However Ocak argues that

²² Melek Delilbaşı, "Türk Tarihinin Bizans Kaynakları", 347.

²³ Melek Delilbaşı, "Türk Tarihinin Bizans Kaynakları", 347.

²⁴ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, trans. VL. Mirmiroğlu, (İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1956), and Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Charles T. Riggs, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1954).

²⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), 27, 36.

²⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 27.

²⁷ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 29.

menakıbnames are not fables, myths, or epopees, but rather they are legends,²⁸ that is, narrations about real people. As a matter of fact, the time and places in which these people operate are also real and known, so in this respect these *menakıbnames* are fundamentally different from fables, myths, and epopees. Thus it is possible to use these texts as historical sources if analyzed carefully.²⁹ Cemal Kafadar also affirms his agreement with those historians who believe that such sources ought to be considered and used as historical documents.³⁰ We also share the same point of view with Ocak and Kafadar, and consider certain *menakıbnames* of the fifteenth century as historical sources beneficial for the purposes of this study. These are the *menakıbnames* of Şeyh Bedreddin and Otman Baba. We should also note the existence of many other scholarly works on the *menakıbnames*. The works of Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*,³¹ and Ahmet Yaşar Ocak's *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*³² and *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*³³ refer to the *menakıbnames* of Şeyh Bedreddin. Halil İnalcık's article, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed,"³⁴ is an example that refers to the *menakıbnames* of Otman Baba.

²⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 32.

²⁹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 33-34.

³⁰ The *menakıbnames* of Seyyid Battal Ghazi, Sarı Saltuk and Yahşi Fakih are some of the examples that Kafadar examines in his book. His main concern in his work is the question of Ottoman origins, its development from a principality to an empire. To explain this question, he uses these *menakıbnames* and epics of the early Ottoman conquests and looks at how these origins had been described in the sources. He also examines the descriptions of the origins in Ottoman court chronicles and also in the works of modern scholars. He follows a comparative outlook on these sources and believes that although these *menakıbnames* belonged to the mythical oral traditions, they can still be used to construct the historical developments of their period. For detailed information, see: Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (London: University of California Press, 1995).

³¹ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2005).

³² Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler (XIV-XVII. Yüzyıllar)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999).

³³ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler: (15.-17. yüzyıllar)*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998).

³⁴ Halil İnalcık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed" in *Doğu Batı: Makaleler I*, (Ankara: Doğubatu, 2005).

Ocak asserts that *menakıbnames* usually illustrate the social values of their societies.³⁵ This statement is important for us since the purpose of this study is to examine the image of *other* in certain *menakıbnames*. In addition to this, Ocak argues that one of the important reasons behind the writing of these texts was to propagandize the order and its leader. This need can be explained as a result of the negative attitudes of the *ulema* class – representing the official religious position of the state – against these orders and their leaders.³⁶ This suggestion is supported in our study of two Ottoman *menakıbnames*. That of Şeyh Bedreddin was written by his grandson, Hafız Halil bin İsmail, in late fifteenth century in order to defend Şeyh Bedreddin and his works.³⁷ As for the *menakıbname* of Otman Baba, this was written by a disciple of Otman Baba, Güççük Abdal, in 1483 to support Baba and his order.

It is necessary to note here that the *menakıbnames* of both Şeyh Bedreddin and Otman Baba will be examined here with a comparative outlook which also involves the examination of certain Ottoman chronicles of the fifteenth century. These chronicles will be *Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi*,³⁸ *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*,³⁹ *Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* of F. Giese,⁴⁰ and *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma* by Neşri.⁴¹ We will also use the chronicle of *Tarih-i Al-i Osman* of Yusuf bin Abdullah⁴² that was written by Yusuf bin Abdullah in 1516 to look at how the images of Bedreddin and his followers were depicted in an early sixteenth-century chronicles. The importance of these chronicles for the study necessitates giving some information about them.

³⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 34.

³⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 36

³⁷ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, 57.

³⁸ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, ed. A. Nihal Atsız, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985).

³⁹ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, ed. Atsız, (İstanbul: Tercüman).

⁴⁰ Friedrich Giese, *Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, ed. N. Azamat, (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1992).

⁴¹ Mehmed Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma: Neşri Tarihi*, Vol. 2, ed. F. R. Unat and M. A. Köymen, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1949).

⁴² Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*, ed. E. Sevinçli, (Dokuz Eylül Yayınları: İzmir, 1997).

Suraiya Faroqhi argues that the Ottoman tradition of writing chronicles most probably started in the second half of the fifteenth-century. She asserts that the chronicles of Oruç (after the second half of the fifteenth-century and the first half of the sixteenth-century), Aşıkpaşazade (after 1400-1484), and Neşri (his death before 1520) have a significant importance in the Ottoman history.⁴³ These sources in fact seem to be connected with each other. Faroqhi argues that even though these were written after the second half of the fifteenth-century, their narratives began with the events from the period of the founding of the Ottoman State. Since this means a hundred and fifty years of chronological gap, Faroqhi suggests that, the chroniclers used earlier narratives such as those of Yahşi Fakih, which have not survived until today, or oral stories of eyewitnesses from the early Ottoman history. Therefore, in some points they display a mythical character.⁴⁴ Faroqhi thus points to the importance and necessity of a cross-check survey on these sources.⁴⁵ This method of analysis based on cross-referencing will also be used in the examination of sources used by this. Thus, it is necessary to give brief information about the Ottoman chroniclers and their work that we will use.

We learn a great deal about Aşıkpaşazade from his chronicle. Born in 1392/93 in modern day Amasya, he calls himself “Derviş Ahmed Aşiki”. His chronicle starts with the beginning of the Ottoman history up to the reign of Bayezid II in late fifteenth century.⁴⁶ Similarly information about Oruç Bey is present in his chronicle, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, covering the period of time from the beginning of Ottoman history up until the beginning of the sixteenth century⁴⁷. According to this

⁴³ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Tarihi Nasıl İncelenir*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999), 211.

⁴⁴ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Tarihi Nasıl İncelenir*, 211.

⁴⁵ Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Tarihi Nasıl İncelenir*, 213.

⁴⁶ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 3-7.

⁴⁷ Faik R. Unat, “Oruç” in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 9 (Eskişehir: M.E.B. Devlet Kitapları, 2001), 418.

source, Oruç Bey was born in Edirne and his father was a silk tradesman. There is no other information on him apart from this.

Friedrich Giese was a Turcologist and historian who lived in 1870-1944. He was the first to publish the early *Ottoman Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* sources. This book starts with the beginning of Ottoman history and ends with the period of Süleyman the Magnificent.⁴⁸ Another chronicler of importance is Mehmed Neşri. Although Neşri's birthplace is still unknown, we know that he received his education in Bursa and he was from the *ulema* circle. Neşri wrote his chronicle in late fifteenth century and narrated the events from the beginning of the thirteenth century until the reign of Bayezid II.⁴⁹ As for Yusuf bin Abdullah, an Ottoman *devşirme* growing up in Edirne in the sixteenth century, he completed in 1516 a work covering the period from the thirteenth century to the time of Sultan Selim.⁵⁰

The above list of Ottoman chronicles will be discussed in Chapter IV. Here, it is argued that these sources are representative of the Ottoman central authority and that the depictions of both Şeyh Bedreddin and Otman Baba and their followers in these chronicles are reflecting the image of *other*.

The purpose of this study being to examine the image of the *other* in fifteenth-century Ottoman society, we began this chapter by addressing questions of methodology of evaluating relevant sources that will form the basis of this work. The second chapter of this paper begins with a brief survey of the general historical background for Ottoman society in the fifteenth century, with specific attention paid

⁴⁸ Friedrich Giese, *Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*. We learn this information by Nihat Azamat in the introduction of the book on pages v-vi.

⁴⁹ Şehabeddin Tekindağ, "Neşri" in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 9 (Eskişehir: M.E.B. Devlet Kitapları, 2001), 214-216.

⁵⁰ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*. Sevinçli gives us the related information on pages: 9-16.

to the significant political circumstances of the period as a context for the elaboration and examination of the image of the *other*. Discussion in Chapter III will focus on the image of the *other* in the Orthodox Christian population under Ottoman rule during the same period, based on selected Orthodox Christian neo-martyr hagiographies and Byzantine chronicles. Chapter IV evaluates a selection of Ottoman *menakıbnames*, or Islamic hagiographies and Ottoman chronicles, then goes on to examine the image of the *other* within Ottoman society with special focus on mechanisms of alienation. Finally in Chapter V the significance of the *other* as represented in Christian and Islamic sources of the fifteenth century will be examined. The conclusion reached by this study is that in spite of the religious rivalry between Christians and Muslims in Ottoman society and its environs during the fifteenth century, and the fact that religious imagery features frequently in the sources of the period, the concept of *otherness* was primarily utilized in a religiously-neutral capacity for the purposes of addressing concrete political concerns that surpass the Christian-Islamic divide, as well as the internal divisions between Christians and Muslims themselves.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE BATTLE OF ANKARA TO THE FALL OF TRABZON: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since we will analyze the Orthodox Christian hagiographies and Byzantine chronicles alongside Ottoman menakibnames and chronicles of the fifteenth century and these sources generally cover the events beginning from the Battle of Ankara to the fall of Trabzon -the last outpost of the Byzantine culture and civilization- it is necessary to examine the historical-political background of this period before we begin our examination of the sources.

The fifteenth century began with a storm of radical changes, uncertainties, fluctuating political balances and unavoidable crises in Anatolia and the Balkans. Especially in the first half of the century, events in the region became a matter of life and death for powers both great and small in these regions. The Byzantine Empire and the Ottomans are significant examples of this trend. For many historians, this century was characterized as a transition from an emirate to a powerful empire for the Ottomans, while it brought about the end of the old and great empire of Byzantium.⁵¹

⁵¹ See, Paul Wittek, “Ankara Bozgunu’ndan İstanbul’un Zaptına (1402-1455)”, trans. Halil İnalcık, *Bellekten*, 7/27 (1943): 557.

One of the important events of the beginning of the fifteenth century was the Battle of Ankara, fought between the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I and Timur of the Mongols, and concluded with the defeat of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid. After the Bayezid's defeat and capture, a civil war began between his sons. The former principalities of Anatolia regained their territories and re-established their independence from the Ottoman State with the permission of Timur.⁵² The rule of the remaining Ottoman lands was divided between the sons of Bayezid, all of whom apart from one were able to escape from the army of Timur. The eldest son, Süleyman, crossed the Dardanelles in company of Ali Çandarlı, the vizier of his father.⁵³ Bayezid's other two sons Mehmed and İsa established their power in the regions of Amasya and Bursa, respectively. His remaining son, Musa, was captured alongside his father remained a prisoner at this point. Knowing that without the unification of the Ottoman lands in Rumelia and Anatolia the Ottomans could not survive for long, both Süleyman and Mehmed sought to extend their power in these regions.⁵⁴ During the Ottoman civil war Byzantium, the Balkan lords, the Venetians, and the Genoese, favoring a divided Ottoman power to a united one, all followed a policy of supporting the weaker party against the stronger.⁵⁵

Following the battle of Ankara, many people escaping the army of Timur crossed the Straits from Anatolia to Rumelia. The profile of these people was diverse. There were peasants, soldiers, Muslim, Christian, magnates, and princes, and

⁵² Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire : the classical age, 1300-1600*, (London: Phoenix, 1994), 17; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), 16; Halil İnalcık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire" in *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730: chapters from the Cambridge history of Islam and the New Cambridge modern history*, by V. J. Parry, H. İnalcık, A. N. Kurat, and J. S. Bromley, ed. M. A. Cook, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 27.

⁵³ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 572.

⁵⁴ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 17; Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 572-576.

⁵⁵ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 17; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 56-57.

the Ottoman prince Süleyman was one of them. After he crossed the Straits, his first act was to attempt to start peace negotiations with the Christian powers in Rumelia and the Balkans in order to consolidate his position in Rumelia.⁵⁶ It seems his policy was a result of three major threats: Timur was still powerful and posed a great danger, his brothers were in Anatolia and a war with them seemed unavoidable, and the Venetians had their eyes on Gallipoli. To preserve himself in this dangerous atmosphere Süleyman quickly started negotiations. The parties involved in these negotiations were the Venetians, the Genoese, the Knights of Rhodes, Stephan Lazarevich and the representative of the Byzantine emperor Manuel.⁵⁷ In the aftermath of the Battle of Ankara, news of Bayezid's defeat reached Manuel in Paris. He did not hurry back to his capital, instead leaving the negotiations to his nephew John VII.⁵⁸ After three and a half months of negotiations, John signed a peace treaty in Manuel's absence in late January or early February of 1403. After Manuel returned to Constantinople, he signed another copy of the same treaty. As a result of this treaty, the Byzantines stopped paying tribute to the Ottomans. They regained control of Thessalonica, Mount Athos, the Aegean islands of Skyros, Skopelos and Skiathos, and the Black Sea coast up to Mesembria.⁵⁹ Süleyman also promised the return of certain former Byzantine cities in Anatolia. The Genoese were relieved from paying tribute to the Ottomans. The Venetians took back their territories in

⁵⁶ His message to the king Manuel is quite interesting because he refers to Manuel with the Byzantine terms and he displays his desire to the emperor Manuel II to be accepted as a son to him and then he guaranteeing to him the control over the lands and places of Süleyman as his own. That meant that he wanted to be a vassal of Byzantium.

⁵⁷ G. T. Dennis, "The Byzantine-Turkish Treaty of 1403" *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 33 (1967): 72; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 56-57; D. J. Kastritsis, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413" *Medieval Encounters*, 13 (2007): 226; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1969), 557; E. Zachariadou, "Süleyman Çelebi in Rumili and the Ottoman Chronicles", *Islam*, 60 (1983): 270-271; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 319.

⁵⁸ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 318.

⁵⁹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 319.

central Greece that were previously captured by the Ottomans. In addition to these items, Genoese and Venetian prisoners that had been captured by the Ottomans were to be released. And Stephan Lazarevic was to remain as the despot of Serbia and he was returned possessions he held in the time of Bayezid. The important thing is that this treaty indicated that Byzantium was clearly involved in the Ottoman civil war and was taking sides.⁶⁰

The territories of Süleyman in Rumelia, which had been controlled by the *ghazi* beys during the chaos following the Battle of Ankara, were both large and rich. They were to grow even more as Süleyman consolidated his position in the region. However, the situation in Anatolia was drastically different. The former principalities of Saruhan, Aydın, Menteşe, Germiyan, Karaman and İsfendiyaroğlu all established their independence from the Ottomans after Bayezid's defeat. As we mentioned above prince Mehmed was able to escape from the defeat and established his dominion in the region of Tokat-Amasya, while his brother İsa was ruling his own territory from Bursa. Mehmed offered İsa to divide their lands but the offer was rejected. Thus, Mehmed attacked and defeated his brother. As a result İsa fled to and was given sanctuary by the Aydın principality. This escalated the plans of the emir of Aydın to form a coalition with the principalities of Saruhan and Menteşe against prince Mehmed. However this coalition was eliminated by Mehmed who took these principalities under his control.⁶¹

The success of his brother in Anatolia was alarming for Süleyman. He crossed the straights with his army and marched towards his brother. As a result

⁶⁰ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 318-319, Nicol also states that the Ottomans became the vassal of Byzantine emperor with this treaty; also see D. J. Kastritsis, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413", 226-227; E. Zachariadou, "Süleyman Çelebi in Rumili and the Ottoman Chronicles", 277-280; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 58-59; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 557.

⁶¹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 64-65.

Mehmed had to withdraw first to Ankara and then to Amasya.⁶² In 1405, Mehmed prepared for a counter attack but was defeated in the mountains near the region of contemporary Yenişehir. Following this battle Süleyman returned to Rumelia, most probably in 1408. Mehmed decided to release the other brother Musa and to use him against Süleyman. Musa, who had been previously captured alongside his father by Timur, had remained in the custody of the principality of Germiyan since 1403.⁶³ In 1409, as a part of Mehmed's plan, the Germiyan handed him over to Mehmed. As mentioned above Mehmed released him and encouraged him to cross the Dardanelles and to seek the help of Mircea, the voyvoda of Wallachia. He accepted this advice and went to Wallachia.⁶⁴ He then married the daughter of the voyvoda and became an ally of Mircea. Immediately after this he began to prepare for war against Süleyman.

Musa gathered the support of the local lords and some *ghazi* beys who were displeased with the regime of Süleyman.⁶⁵ With no attacks on the Christian lands the income of these *ghazi* beys was reduced, but they were still being forced to pay their taxes.⁶⁶ In this context Musa gained many supporters in very little time. As a result Musa was able to outwit Süleyman in Rumelia and eventually occupied Gallipoli. Süleyman fled, but on June 15th of 1410 with the help of the Byzantium he fought against his brother and defeated him.⁶⁷ Musa tried a second attack but failed again. In February of 1411, Musa attacked for a third time and was able to enter Edirne.

⁶² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 65.

⁶³ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 575; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 65-67; D. J. Kastritsis, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413", 231.

⁶⁴ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 575; D. J. Kastritsis, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413", 231.

⁶⁵ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 575-576; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 67.

⁶⁶ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 574.

⁶⁷ The emperor Manuel helped him to cross to Rumelia; see D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 326.

Süleyman escaped and Musa established his dominion in the region which lasted until 1413. Unlike his brother, Musa followed an aggressive regime in the Balkans. He refused to conform to the treaty of 1403 and prepared a campaign to regain the territories that had previously been ceded to the Byzantines by Süleyman,⁶⁸ thus causing discontent and hatred among many wealthy lords in Rumelia and in the Balkans. He sent his troops to Thessalonica and Constantinople to besiege these cities. He also demanded an enormous tribute from the Byzantine emperor.⁶⁹ The emperor Manuel was neither willing to pay the tribute nor happy with Musa's regime. Thus, he made contact with Mehmed and offered to aid him in his struggle against Musa. With the help of the emperor, Mehmed crossed the straits and attacked Musa. The first and the second attempts were unsuccessful but the third attempt, with the support of Manuel and Stephen Lazarevic, concluded with his victory in 1413 and the death of Musa.⁷⁰ Following this event, the civil war ended and Mehmed I became the sole ruler of the Ottoman lands.

The eventful years between 1402 and 1413 left the people of Anatolia exhausted due to Timur's invasion and the struggles between the Ottoman princes and the reestablished former principalities. The situation in Rumelia was no different, with a combination of civil war and unstable government weakening the people there too. Mehmed I thus tried to effect an internal consolidation.⁷¹ For this reason he also pursued good relations with Manuel and the Balkan princes. He started peace

⁶⁸ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına", 574-578; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 66-73; D. J. Kastritsis, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413", 231-241; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 326-327.

⁶⁹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 326.

⁷⁰ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 326-327.

⁷¹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 75-76.

negations with them. And finally, in 1413, they signed a treaty confirming the previous treaty of 1403.⁷²

After the treaty was signed Manuel left Constantinople to his son John VIII in 1414 and made a tour of his dominions which lasted until 1416. He first visited Thessalonica, followed by the Peloponnese, and then moved on to Mistra. In Morea he rebuilt the Hexamilion wall across the Isthmus of Corinth.⁷³ It is safe to speculate that Manuel did not believe in the viability of this treaty. He sent his envoys to Venice to ask for money to be used against the Ottomans. However, his proposal was refused by Venice in 1414.⁷⁴ Then in 1416, he returned to his capital and released Orhan, the son of Süleyman, who had been kept as a prisoner in Constantinople. According to Manuel's plan, following his release Orhan went to Wallachia, got the support of Mircea and pressed his claim to the Ottoman throne. When Mehmed was informed, he marched on Orhan and defeated him in battle. Following this victory, Orhan was blinded and sent to Bursa.⁷⁵

However, the uprisings continued in several parts of the State. For instance, in 1415, Cüneyd Bey of Aydın rebelled against the state and was successful in conquering some of the Ottoman lands.⁷⁶ Mehmed besieged İzmir for ten days and was able to suppress this rebellion. As a result, Cüneyd was exiled and transferred to the governorship of Nikopol.⁷⁷ The same year Mustafa, the long lost brother of Mehmed, appeared in Trabzon. He was invited by Mircea to Wallachia. The aim of Mircea was to encourage Mustafa against Mehmed. At that time their common struggle against Mehmed made allies of Mustafa and Cüneyd. Mustafa also had the

⁷² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 75-76.

⁷³ George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 558; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 328.

⁷⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 76.

⁷⁵ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 76-77.

⁷⁶ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 79; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 329.

⁷⁷ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 79.

support of Manuel and of the Southern Greece and Aegean lords. This resulted in negotiations for an anti-Ottoman league in the Aegean in 1416.⁷⁸ However, these negotiations only made the Ottoman attacks more aggressive. By May 1416, while Mehmed's hands were full with a rebellion led by Mustafa, his newly-built fleet was sunk at Gallipoli by the Venetians.⁷⁹ Mehmed marched towards the combined forces of Mustafa and Cüneyd which forced them to take refuge in Thessalonica. During the same time the despot of Thessalonica was Andronikos, with John VII having died in 1408. Andronikos refused to hand over Mustafa and Cüneyd to the Ottoman troops, thus provoking Mehmed to attack the city. But the news of another revolt in Anatolia stopped him and forced Mehmed to accept Manuel's demand for an annual pension for the custody of these two for the rest of their lives.⁸⁰

Another untimely revolt was led by Börklüce Mustafa in Karaburun near İzmir. Börklüce was a follower of Şeyh Bedreddin, who soon lead another revolt in Dobrudja in the region of northeast Bulgaria.⁸¹ Mehmed eventually managed to suppress these revolts but suffered heavy casualties. Şeyh Bedreddin was hanged on 18 December 1416. Following the end of this bloody era, Mehmed again shifted to conciliation policies.⁸²

In 1421 Manuel left his throne to his son John VIII and on May 21st of the same year, Sultan Mehmed I died in Edirne. Manuel recognized Murad as the

⁷⁸ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 80-81.

⁷⁹ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 18; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 329.

⁸⁰ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 329; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 82.

⁸¹ The regions of the rebellions were interesting enough to be examined. They had been the places for many struggles, wars, chaos and trouble for many years. Firstly, Timur plundered the area then the civil war. The inhabitants of the regions had been harassed for many years. Therefore, it is not surprising to see these people in the revolts. For a detailed information about the rebellions of Börklüce and Şeyh Bedreddin look at the works: A. Gölpınarlı, *Simavna Kadısıoğlu Şeyh Bedreddin*, (İstanbul: Eti, 1966); Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyân*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2000); Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler: (15.-17. yüzyıllar)*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998).

⁸² Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 18; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 82-84.

successor of Mehmed to the throne. However, his son John VIII preferred to release Mustafa who was still under the custody of the Byzantines in Constantinople against Murad.⁸³ This was the beginning of a new crisis for the Ottomans. Mustafa promised the Byzantine emperor to hand over Gallipoli, Thessaly, Mount Athos and the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria. Following his release Mustafa entered and occupied Gallipoli.⁸⁴ As soon as Murad heard about this situation he sent his troops under the leadership of Bayezid Paşa. After the ensuing battle near Edirne, Bayezid Paşa was defeated. Mustafa marched towards Edirne and occupied the city while his ally Cüneyd marched towards Gallipoli. After Mustafa established his dominion in Rumelia, he did not keep his promise to hand the captured cities under his control to the Byzantine Emperor. Following this successful campaign he began his march towards Bursa. However, things did not go according to his plan: he suffered defeat and was forced to flee from Murad.⁸⁵ Eventually, he was captured later and hung in Edirne on 15 January 1422.⁸⁶ To take his revenge Murad began preparations to besiege Constantinople. At the same time he sent his troops to blockade Thessalonica. To break the siege John VIII sent his envoys to Mustafa, who was a younger brother of Murad, in hope of encouraging him to press his claim to the throne. The former principalities of Anatolia also tried to persuade Mustafa. Afterwards Mustafa eventually revolted against Murad with the help of these former

⁸³ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 331-332; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 559.

⁸⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 91; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 19.

⁸⁵ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 92-93; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 19.

⁸⁶ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 93; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 332; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 559.

principalities. Murad had to lift the siege of Constantinople. He marched against his brother and defeated him.⁸⁷

After Murad restored the order in Anatolia, he led his troops into the Balkans. However, his invasion of Albania was seen by the Venetians as a threat to their security in the Adriatic. Meanwhile, the siege of Thessalonica continued. Since 1422 conditions in the city had worsened and the inhabitants were suffering from famine. Also the ruler of the city, Andronikos Palaiologos, was suffering from elephantiasis.⁸⁸ As a result of the dramatic conditions he offered to hand the city over to the rule of the Venetians in 1423. The Venetians accepted the offer while the city was still under the Ottoman siege. They sent their ambassadors to Murad for a peace treaty, which was promptly refused. In the spring of 1423, the Ottomans marched towards southern Greece and destroyed the Hexamilion wall and devastated the region of the Morea.⁸⁹ The same year, the Byzantine emperor John VIII left Constantinople to find assistance in Europe against the Ottomans. He arrived at Venice in December 1423 and did not return to Constantinople until October of 1424. While he was far away the regent of John VIII, Constantine, made a treaty with Murad on February 22 of 1424 and accepted the payment of an annual tribute to the Ottomans. Thus, Byzantium became a vassal of the Ottomans again, and despite of all their efforts the Venetians lost Thessalonica in 1430.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Halil İnalcık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Doğuşu" in *Osmanlı*, Vol. 1, ed. Güler Eren, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 1999), 69; Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 19; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 94-95; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 333; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 559.

⁸⁸ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 333-335.

⁸⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 96; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 334; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 559-560.

⁹⁰ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 19; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 97-110; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 334-348; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 559-560.

While away the emperor John VIII was seeking assistance against the Ottomans. He assumed that, if he could establish a union between the Latin and Greek churches, the Pope would help him by declaring a crusade against the Ottomans. As a matter of fact the Pope promised to help against the Ottomans, if the Greek Church recognized the supremacy of the Latin Church. In 1430, John VIII proposed to the Pope Martin V to begin negotiations for the union of the churches.⁹¹ However, in 1431 Martin V, who summoned the council at Basel, died and his successor Eugenius IV opposed the council at Basel. This resulted in controversies between the Pope and the council.⁹² Then Eugenius decided to invite the Byzantine Emperor and the patriarch to Ferrara and in 1437 the Byzantine delegation arrived to Ferrara.⁹³ There were also controversies between the Pope and the Byzantine patriarch. Eugenius was insisting that the Patriarch should bow down in front of him and kiss his foot as a sign of submission, but the Patriarch was vehemently against it. At the end of 1438, following an outbreak of plague, the Pope and his delegates agreed to continue the council in Florence. Finally, on July 6th of 1439, the union of the churches was declared. However, the union of the churches divided the Byzantines. There were many people in Constantinople, both from lay circles and clerics, who opposed the authority of the Latin Church. For instance Demetrios, the brother of the emperor, was a well known anti-unionist. He also attempted to take the throne with the help of the supporters of the anti-unionists and was accepted as the protector of Orthodoxy. He attacked Constantinople with the help of the Ottomans, but he failed and was imprisoned for his actions in 1442.⁹⁴

⁹¹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 351; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 561-564.

⁹² D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 351-352.

⁹³ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 352-353.

⁹⁴ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 356-360; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 561-564.

As for Murad, after his capture of Thessalonica he followed an aggressive policy in the Balkans. In 1438, the Ottoman troops marched across the Danube as far as Transylvania. In 1439 the Despotate of Serbia was conquered and in 1440 the armies unsuccessfully sought to remove the Hungarians from Belgrade.⁹⁵ In 1441, a commander of Murad, Mezid Bey, during his campaign into Transylvania was defeated and killed by the voyvoda of Transylvania, John Hunyadi. The next year saw the defeat of another commander of Murad, Şihabeddin, at the hands of John Hunyadi.⁹⁶ Following these victories, in 1443, Hunyadi marched across the Danube as far as the Balkan Mountains. As a result of this campaign Murad had to sign a treaty with him on 12th of June 1444 at Edirne. According to the treaty, the king Vladislav of Poland and Murad agreed on a ten year armistice, the Despotate of Serbia was to be reestablished and the despot was to regain the lands of Smederovo and Golubats.⁹⁷

The emir of Karaman in Anatolia was probably an important factor that forced Murad to sign the above-mentioned treaty. In the summer of 1443, İbrahim of Karaman attacked the lands of the Ottomans.⁹⁸ Before his attack, the Byzantine emperor John VIII promised him to blockade the Dardanelles and to prevent Murad's troops from crossing over into Rumelia. However, he failed to realize this promise. And when İbrahim heard that Murad entered Anatolia he escaped and proposed a peace treaty. With the treaty of Yenişehir the region of Hamidili was given to İbrahim. Following these treaties, assuming that the eastern borders and regions in

⁹⁵ Halil İncik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20.

⁹⁶ Halil İncik, *Gazavat-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehmed Han: İzladive Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavatname*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1978), 87; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 120.

⁹⁷ Halil İncik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 126-127.

⁹⁸ Halil İncik, *Gazavat-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehmed Han*, 84-85; Halil İncik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 122.

the Balkans were safe, Murad decided to abdicate from the throne and let his young son Mehmed II succeed him as Sultan in 1444.⁹⁹

When the emperor John VIII learned that there was a young and inexperienced sultan on the Ottoman throne he encouraged the Balkan powers to crusade against the Ottomans. On 22 September 1444, Hunyadi, Vladislav, Cardinal Cesarini and George Kastriota (also known as İskender Bey), who was trying to re-establish his father's dominion in northern Albania, united their powers against the young sultan. At the same time, the Byzantine emperor released Orhan, the grandson of Bayezid, who attempted a revolt in Dobrudja.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, a Venetian fleet closed the Dardanelles. While the troops of Wallachia and Hungary were crossing the Danube through Bulgaria, Constantine, the despot of Morea, led his army towards the southern Greece and rebuilt the Hexamilion wall. Using Mehmed's youth as an excuse the former sultan, Murad II, returned to the throne to fight foes. He crossed the straits and successfully marched towards the crusaders. The troops met at Varna on 10 November 1444. In the ensuing battle the king Vladislav died and Hunyadi and most of the Hungarian army fled. The war thus, concluded with an important victory for Murad.¹⁰¹

As a matter of fact the return of Murad II to the throne was a result of the efforts of the vizier Çandarlı Halil and his provocation of the Janissary army. In 1446, Janissaries revolted in Edirne. There were two reasons behind this revolt. The first reason was Çandarlı Halil's efforts to provoke the Janissaries in order to bring

⁹⁹ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 129; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 564-565.

¹⁰⁰ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20-21; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 129-130; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 362-363.

¹⁰¹ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 20-21; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 129-134; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 565-566. D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 362-363. For detailed information on the events between the years 1443-1444 see Halil İnalcık, *Gazavat-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehmed Han: İzladive Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavatname*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1978).

Murad back to the throne.¹⁰² The other reason was probably that the Janissaries had not been paid for two quarters.¹⁰³ As a result of this revolt prince Mehmed was removed from the throne and Murad was brought back.

As soon as Murad came to throne he led his army towards Constantine, the despot of Morea. In 1447 Isthmus, Patras, and Morea were captured but Constantine was not dethroned. He continued to rule Mistra but he had to pay an annual tribute to the Ottomans.¹⁰⁴ Similarly in 1447, Hunyadi encouraged the lords at the Balkans for a new crusade but the Venetians did not join them this time. Eventually, in 1448, Hunyadi crossed the Danube with his allies and fought with the Ottoman troops in the Kosovo plain (October 23rd 1448). However, this attempt of the crusaders against the Ottomans failed.¹⁰⁵

As a result of the defeats of the Balkan powers at the battles of Varna and Kosovo Constantinople became isolated from the European powers. In the April of 1448, John VIII signed a treaty with the Venetians and on October 31, 1448, he died.¹⁰⁶ After the death of John, his brothers Thomas and Demetrios (who was known for his anti-unionist views), both pressed their claims to the throne. Their mother Helena, however, declared the elder son Constantine as the new Byzantine emperor in Mistra.¹⁰⁷ The new emperor went back to Constantinople in March 1449. The brothers of Constantine, Demetrios and Thomas, were appointed as the governors of the Despotate of Morea and the province was demarcated between

¹⁰² Halil İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 21; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 137.

¹⁰³ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 137.

¹⁰⁴ Halil İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 21; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 137-138; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 364-365.

¹⁰⁵ Halil İnalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 21; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 139-141; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 566-567; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 365-366.

¹⁰⁶ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 368.

¹⁰⁷ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 369-370.

them. According to this accord, Thomas took the northwestern part of the land including the towns of Patras, Clarentza and Achaia while the rest of the land from Mistra was left for Demetrios.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, by the time the emperor Constantine arrived in the city, Constantinople was already divided between the unionists and the anti-unionists and the new pope, Nicholas V, was insisting that the emperor had to suppress these anti-unionists and hurry for the proclamation and the celebration of the union in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia.¹⁰⁹

On 3 February 1451, Murad II died and Mehmed II returned to the throne on the 18th of February. The first act of Mehmed II was to execute his own brother in order to prevent his claim for the throne.¹¹⁰ In addition to this, Mehmed II saw the capture of Constantinople as a necessity, just like his viziers, Zaganos and Şihabeddin Pashas.¹¹¹ Therefore, before attacking the city he followed a peace regime on his western borders. He signed peace treaties with Hunyadi of Hungary and Brankovic of Serbia.¹¹² His aim was to prevent a possible Byzantine alliance with Hungary and Serbia. In 1451, Mehmed was forced to march against Karaman because the emir of Karaman, İbrahim, had attacked Ottoman lands. He was also supporting the claims of the emirs of Aydın, Menteşe and Germiyan against the Ottomans. Thus, by concluding a treaty with İbrahim Mehmed was also eliminating the claimant emirs.¹¹³

In the spring of 1451, while Mehmed was busy with İbrahim of Karaman, the emperor Constantine decided to increase the payment of Mehmed II for the custody

¹⁰⁸ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 370.

¹⁰⁹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 371-372.

¹¹⁰ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 145.

¹¹¹ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 23-26; Halil İnalcık, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Doğuşu", 70.

¹¹² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 145-146; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 374.

¹¹³ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 145-146; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 374-375.

of Orhan, the grandson of late Sultan Süleyman. Orhan was in the custody of Byzantines in Constantinople.¹¹⁴ Constantine sent his envoys to the Grand Vizier of Mehmed II, Çandarlı Halil, to demand double the amount. Çandarlı had warned them about the invalidity of this demand but nevertheless forwarded the message to the Sultan. The answer of Mehmed was just as Halil expected. Mehmed commenced preparations for the siege of Constantinople.¹¹⁵ First of all, in April 1452, he gave start to the construction of a fortress on the European shore of the Bosphorus, on the opposite side of the one that was already built by his grandfather Bayezid.¹¹⁶ The function of this fortress would be to cut supplies to the city from the sea.

The emperor Constantine also sought help from the western powers. He asked the Venetians and Genoese for help. However, both remained a loof to this request, preferring not to risk antagonizing the Sultan in his plans in the Bosphorus.¹¹⁷ Constantine also asked help from the Pope. The Pope accepted to help him on one condition: that the Greek Church accepted the authority of the Roman church.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, the emperor also tried to calm down Mehmed by sending gifts with his envoys, but Mehmed simply beheaded the envoys.¹¹⁹ Mehmed surrounded the city with his fleet and army. His construction of the castle on the Bosphorus was completed in September. To prevent any aid arriving from the brothers of Constantine from Peloponnesos, Mehmed sent Turhan Bey against them with an army.¹²⁰ At Gallipoli he built a fleet and gathered all his troops from Rumelia and Anatolia. He also summoned volunteers and asked for the tributary states to provide

¹¹⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 147; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 374; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 567-571.

¹¹⁵ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 375.

¹¹⁶ This older fortress was called as Anadolu-Hisar and it was built in 1396; see D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 306.

¹¹⁷ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 376.

¹¹⁸ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 376-377.

¹¹⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 148.

¹²⁰ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 148.

troops. George Brankovich sent an army of fifteen hundred.¹²¹ Eventually, the Ottoman army was numerous and the forces of Constantinople were insignificant in comparison.

On 26 October 1452, a Genoese vessel brought reinforcement of two hundred men to Constantinople, composed of crossbowmen and gunners. Cardinal Isidore and Archbishop Leonard of Chios, who were sent by the Pope for the union of the two churches, also came to Constantinople on this vessel.¹²² On December 13th of 1452, the union was celebrated in Hagia Sophia. However, this act of celebration created hostility among the Greeks both lay and clerical. Even Loukas Notaras, the Grand Duke, declared that he preferred *the turban of the Turks to Latin mitre*.¹²³ However, the emperor was in need of the two hundred archers that the Latin clerics brought with them.

On the 20th of April 1453, three Genoese ships authorized by the Pope approached Constantinople. These ships were carrying new supplies of food and weapons for the besieged city. They were further joined by a Greek ship that had been sent to Alfonso of Aragon in Sicily by Byzantium to get wheat for Constantinople.¹²⁴ However, the Ottoman fleet under the command of Baltaoğlu confronted these ships and a two-hour sea battle began. Neither side was victorious but many Ottoman soldiers died.¹²⁵ As a result these four ships were able to enter the city. The defeat of Baltaoğlu made the Grand Vizier Halil Çandarlı, who already did not support the siege of the city, even more suspicious about the siege. On the other

¹²¹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 148.

¹²² D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 376; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 149.

¹²³ Nicol states that the Byzantine historian Doukas made Notaras say these words in his narrative, and in this way he might have wanted to provoke the insensitivity of some unionists; see D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 378.

¹²⁴ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 383; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 568.

¹²⁵ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 152.

hand, the Second Vizier Zaganos Pasha was insisting on the continuation of the siege.

The Sultan preferred not to lift the siege, and on April 21st, a tower at the St. Romanos Gate and some yards were destroyed by the fire of the great cannon. The last Ottoman attack on the city began on 29 May 1453. As a result of this final assault the Ottomans entered the city at St. Romanos Gate and then the troops began to plunder the city.¹²⁶ The next day, Mehmed entered the city. He ordered the execution of some important prisoners and took some into his own service.¹²⁷ The pretender Orhan and the emperor Constantine XI were already dead.¹²⁸ Galata, the city of Genoese, also fell with the city of Constantinople and lost its independence. The Genoese sent their representatives to the Sultan. They were granted freedom of trade, worship and travel but they had to pay their taxes to the Sultan.¹²⁹ When Mehmed II returned to Edirne in June 1453 he executed Halil Çandarlı, who had opposed the siege of the city. As a result of this order of Mehmed II, the power of the family of Çandarlı was greatly reduced.¹³⁰

The fall of Constantinople was interpreted by some contemporary Byzantines as a punishment for betraying Orthodoxy. Some people also interpreted the fall meaning that God was supporting the Ottomans, so the right thing would be to convert into Islam.¹³¹ On the other hand, the patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory, was abroad at the time of the fall of the city. Since he was a unionist Mehmed II

¹²⁶ Halil İncik, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar: I*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1987), pp. 124-131; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 569-571; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 152-157.

¹²⁷ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 158.

¹²⁸ Halil İncik, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, 132. For the mythical stories on the siege and fall of Constantinople look at Stefanos Yerasimos, *Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*, trans. Şirin Tekeli, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1993).

¹²⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 158.

¹³⁰ Halil İncik, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, 132-133.

¹³¹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 390.

searched for another person to fill up the patriarchal seat.¹³² George Scholarios was a man that was known for his anti-unionist views and he seemed to be suitable for patriarchate. When he was offered the Patriarchate, he accepted. In January of 1454, George was enthroned in the church of the Holy Apostles as the Patriarch Gennadios II. This symbolized the approach of Mehmed II to the faith of the Greeks. Mehmed was also pleased to see himself as Basileus and Caesar.¹³³

After the fall of the Constantinople, the only remaining Byzantine territory was Morea which was under the control of the brothers of the last Byzantine emperor, Demetrios and Thomas. There was chaos in Morea at that time. The Greek landowners and Albanian immigrants revolted and they declared Manuel Cantacuzene their despot.¹³⁴ The Venetians were planning to purchase Patras and Corinth so they started negotiations with him. This alarmed Mehmed II. In December 1453, the son of Turahan, Ömer Bey was sent to the region to calm the situation. However, in October 1454, as an answer to the request of Demetrios and Thomas, Turahan Bey had to return to the Morea.¹³⁵ Turahan and Ömer beys suppressed the revolt and Manuel Cantacuzene had to escape from Morea. In the meantime, Demetrios and Thomas were still fighting against each other. Although Mehmed II kept them in power as his vassals they separately began to negotiate with the western powers for a crusade against Mehmed.¹³⁶ When the sultan heard this, he led his troops against Morea. As a result of the ensuing Ottoman assaults only about one-third of the territory of Morea was left to the power of these two despots. With the permission of the sultan, the remaining district was divided between them but the

¹³² D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 392; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 160.

¹³³ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire : the classical age, 1300-1600*, 26; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 392; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 160.

¹³⁴ George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 571; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 396; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 162.

¹³⁵ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 396; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 162.

¹³⁶ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 396.

region became an Ottoman vassal state and these two despots had to pay annual tribute.¹³⁷ However, fighting among the brothers did not cease. Thomas continued his negotiations with the Pope. But unlike him, Demetrios asked the Ottomans for help against his brother and as a result Mehmed returned to Morea in 1460. He took Mistra away from Demetrios without any resistance. However, the dominions of Thomas were terrorized by the Ottoman army and at the end Thomas had to escaped to Corfu and then to Rome in the same year.¹³⁸

After the fall of the Morea the only remaining outpost of Byzantine culture and civilization was Trabzon. In 1460, the emperor in Trabzon was David Komnenos who was seeking an anti-Ottoman coalition with the Pope Pius II and the Duke of Burgundy.¹³⁹ Mehmed planned to capture the city. Thus, he would have gained an important commercial center and he would also reduce the power of the emperor's allies in eastern Anatolia. In the winter of 1460, Mehmed prepared his navy and army for a campaign against Trabzon. The year of 1461 saw the actualization of this campaign. While the fleet left Constantinople, Mehmed and his grand vizier marched on the land. The siege of the city was concluded with its fall in the August of 1461.¹⁴⁰ The captured emperor David and his family were sent to Constantinople. In 1463, David, his nephew and his children were executed in Constantinople.¹⁴¹ After this, Mehmed appointed Kasım Bey as the governor of Trabzon.¹⁴²

¹³⁷ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 396-397.

¹³⁸ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 397-399; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 170-173; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 571.

¹³⁹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 407.

¹⁴⁰ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 406-408; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 176-179; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 571

¹⁴¹ D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 408-409.

¹⁴² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 179.

CHAPTER III

THE IMAGE OF THE *OTHER* VIS-À-VIS US

Gregory Palamas was the archbishop of Thessalonica (1347-1360) and also the leader of the hesychasts, who, during the reign of Sultan Orhan, had fallen captive to the Ottomans following the earthquake of Gallipoli in 1355.¹⁴³ Georgiades Arnakis gives us a brief story of Palamas' memoirs of this period of captivity when Palamas came to Nicaea where he observed the proceedings of a Muslim funeral headed by the Imam. Palamas joins a crowd gathered at the gate where a group of Christians was also present, and a conversation on religion ensues:¹⁴⁴

"The archbishop [...] asked what was said in the prayers before the marble catafalque. The imam answered [...] 'We have prayed to God for the sake of the dead to forgive the sins of his soul.' Gregory thereupon spoke of Christ's second coming, of the Last Judgment for all, and of the need of all to worship Christ as the World Incarnate, indivisible from the Father. The *tasimanis* answered, 'Christ, too, is a servant of God.' Gregory reminded him of the prophecies in the Old Testament. [...] the Turk said, 'We accept all the prophets and Christ with them and the four books descended from Heaven. Why do you not accept our prophet? Why do you not believe in his book, which has come down from Heaven?' Gregory said that, in the case of Mohammed, there were no heavenly signs, like those of Moses and Jesus, and no testimony of the prophets regarding him. The imam (...) said, 'Mohammed was spoken of in the Gospel but you cut it out. Moreover, setting out from the remote east, he came as far as the west, victorious, as you yourself see.' For the Moslem theologian the spread of Islam undoubtedly

¹⁴³ G. G. Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of His Captivity as Historical Sources," *Speculum* 26/1 (1951), 104.

¹⁴⁴ Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks," 109-110.

was a miracle matching those of Moses and Christ, and an indication of God's approval and help."¹⁴⁵

Palamas answers:

'But Christ's teaching, though offering none of the pleasures of this world, has spread to the ends of the earth, and it stays even among its enemies, without the use of force –nay, overcoming force. This is the victory that has encompassed the world.'¹⁴⁶

Arnakis tells us that Palamas' answer angered the crowd, whereupon Palamas says:

"The Christians who were present made a sign to me to finish my speech. Then, changing my tone to a mild one, I smiled gently at them and said, "Had we been able to agree in debate, we might as well have been of one faith."¹⁴⁷

This conversation between a Christian and a Muslim is indicative of the controversy between the members of different faiths on theological matters. As the above anecdote illustrates, even when an agreement is reached over some issues, a fundamental controversy nevertheless remains. This controversy, at times giving way to animosity, is reflected in the polemical literature of Christians and Muslims, especially in the Middle Ages. John Tolan argues that in the face of the growing power of Islam, reflected by the victories of Muslims and increasing conversions to Islam, Christian churchmen began to struggle with the changing conditions. They began to write about Islam and portrayed it as spiritually inferior to Christianity. Tolan argues that they have presented Islam as a heresy devoted to the worldly delights like power and wealth unlike Christianity that voluntarily rejected the worldly pleasures.¹⁴⁸ We have observed the same assessment in Palamas words arguing that Christ's teachings did not offer the worldly pleasures but could spread in

¹⁴⁵ Palamas, cited in G. G. Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of His Captivity as Historical Sources," *Speculum* 26/1 (1951), 110.

¹⁴⁶ Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks," 110.

¹⁴⁷ Arnakis, "Gregory Palamas among the Turks," 110.

¹⁴⁸ John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), introduction: XX.

the world even without the use of force. Although the controversy was depicted on religious terms as in Palamas' memoirs, there was also a politic component behind the antagonism between the Christians and the Muslims, also reflected in their literature. In this chapter, we will examine the Orthodox Christian perceptions of the image of Muslim Ottomans, the *other*, and the political factors that laid behind the construction of this image as the *other*.

Since the beginning of the fourteenth century the Ottomans were growing and expanding their borders in Anatolia. Following the conquest of Gallipoli in 1354 their expansion gradually accelerated both in Anatolia and Rumelia.¹⁴⁹ In the newly conquered territories, non-Muslim inhabitants became their subjects, and the Orthodox Christian population constituted a significant part of the population.¹⁵⁰ The capital city of the Byzantine Empire and center of the Orthodox Church, was captured by the Ottomans in 1453. Becoming the subjects of the Ottoman Sultans, the local Christian population was to continue their customs and traditions under the sovereignty of the Ottomans whose religion, policy, customs and traditions were alien to them. In other words the Orthodox Christians, former Byzantine subjects, were the followers of another faith and naturally of a different cultural identity from the Ottomans. This can be seen as the basis of the emergence of an antagonism between the two peoples. Then again it is important to note that the Orthodox population's views toward the Ottomans were not in fact homogeneous.

Apart from the obvious religious antagonism, the Orthodox views may be classed into two major groups: those who supported the Ottoman authority and those who opposed it. It would be safe to suggest that this division was essentially reflected in the people's perception of the *other*. Since the aim of this study is to examine the

¹⁴⁹ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunundan İstanbulun Zaptına", 557-558.

¹⁵⁰ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunundan İstanbulun Zaptına", 561.

image of the *other* among the different groups under the Ottoman rule we will now examine the fifteenth-century hagiographies of the Orthodox Christian Church and the Byzantine chronicles of the period.

First, some information on the neo-martyr hagiographies, which constitute an important part of our study, is necessary. Elizabeth Zachariadou points out that a person being killed by an “infidel” was not enough for the Greek Orthodox Church to recognize this person as a martyr. In order to achieve this status one had to be tortured and killed for his persistence in his faith.¹⁵¹ Zachariadou also adds that the *vitae* of these martyrs were written by clergymen or monks who propagandized the ecclesiastical theology. Therefore we could assume that a martyr or saint’s acts and attitudes, as codified in their hagiography, did represent the ideals and principles of the Orthodox Church.¹⁵² Thus, although these sources may not be very reliable historically, they serve as the ideal sources for examining the ideology of the Church. Additionally, as Zachariadou noted, these texts also reveal the attitude of the Church towards the Ottomans during this period.¹⁵³

The *vitae* of the neo-martyrs were collected by St. Nicodemos and published for the first time in 1799. The book was entitled *Neon Martyrologion*.¹⁵⁴ *Neon Martyrologion* does not include all the *vitae* of Neo-martyrs prior to 1796. A number of these are still awaiting scholarly attention in the monastic archives of Mt. Athos.¹⁵⁵ The need to create models of behavior for Christians who were converting to Islam *en masse* is stressed by St. Nicodemos in the introductory chapter of his

¹⁵¹ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Neomartyr’s Message”, 55. There was also another category to be announced as a saint or martyr according to which one had to be a model for the other Christians with his/her pious way of life.

¹⁵² Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Neomartyr’s Message”, 55.

¹⁵³ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Neomartyr’s Message”, 55-56.

¹⁵⁴ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, Athens, 1996, 12-13. Its second edition came out in Athens. It has editions including of neo-martyrs after 1796 up to 1838; see Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 2 (footnote: 2).

¹⁵⁵ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 14.

work. Some of the vitae used in this thesis most probably represent an earlier layer. The use of the term “barbarian” to refer to the Ottomans is a continuation of the Byzantine historiographic tradition.

As sources reflecting the attitudes and conception of the Church concerning the Ottomans, these hagiographical texts will be the basis of our analysis in this chapter. The analyses of hagiographies will in turn be supplemented by the chronicles of two Byzantine historians. One of these is the chronicle written by the Byzantine historian Doukas, a passionate opponent of the Ottomans, of their way of expansion, and of their culture. The other chronicle was written by Kritovoulos who was known for his affinity towards the Ottomans. It is our hope that the use of these two chronicles, written from radically different perspectives, will lend a fuller picture of Byzantine thought in the fifteenth century and it will provide a framework within which the hagiographies will be rendered more meaningful. In this study we will first look at what the hagiographies tell us and then we will attempt to criticize them *vis-à-vis* the facts that the chronicles present.

3.1. Orthodox Christian Hagiographies of the Fifteenth Century

We will consider the hagiographies in chronological order, as this will clarify changes that occurred in the image of *other* over time.

Ephraim – 5th of May 1426

He was born on September 14th, 1384.¹⁵⁶ He was orphaned from his father, and he was one of six children. He became a monk at the age of fourteen in Attica and remained in this region, in the monastery of Annunciation of the Theotokos on

¹⁵⁶ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 510.

mount Amomoi¹⁵⁷ for twenty-seven years. On 14th of September following his return from his ascetic trip he found his monastery destroyed by *barbarian Turks*. While all the other monks were killed he was captured. Following his capture Ephraim was hanged on a tree upside down and was tortured to death. He was 42 years old when he died on 5th of May in 1426.¹⁵⁸

Georgios from Bulgaria – March of 1437

He was born in Sophia in 1408 and died when he was 30 years old. He was a *soldier* in the Ottoman army at the frontier of Edirne which a once glorious city suffered under the deception of *barbarians*.¹⁵⁹ In his hagiography it was stated that the city was full of Christians but these were not “real Christians.” One day, while Georgios was in the marketplace of the city, he heard a Muslim bow-maker cursing Jesus Christ. He could not tolerate this man’s words and he began to shout at him. He even said “your prophet is a dog.” His words caused anger among the crowd in the marketplace. The crowd reacted immediately and started beating him, although he did not stop shouting. They even put a tight rope around his neck and despite of his strength he was able to continue shouting. He said, “there is only one God, Jesus” and also “kill me or send me to your lord.” Then his hands were tied behind him and he was taken to a government official where he was asked whether he actually did utter the words he was reported for. Georgios confirmed that what was told was true and he also added more. Then he was sent to another government official where witnesses also accompanied him to confirm his words. The governor said “look! The crowd wants your body to burn” but Georgios just smiled and resigned to his faith.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 31.

¹⁵⁸ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 510-512; Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 31-32.

¹⁵⁹ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 409; Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 33.

¹⁶⁰ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 409.

The next day a group of religious people, some of whom came from the lineage of the Prophet, came to the Sultan but he was absent,¹⁶¹ so they spoke to the lord (*hygemon*) who was his representative. Seeing this crowd the lord was shocked and asked why the crowd was there and shouting. They were all against this man, Georgios. One of them said “how he can curse our religion; even if we were in Constantinople, the glorious city of the Christians, or even in the old city of Rome, in the lands of Christians, we would have killed him immediately when he uttered these blaspheming words against our religion, but in our land and between us how dare he speak like that! While we strive for the advancement of our nation (*ethnos*) and our rule we see that the Christians nation (*ethnos*) has been attacking us.” Then the lord wanted to see him and he was brought into the lord’s presence, who was an *excellent commander*. Georgios continued to repeat the same words.¹⁶² After the lord listened to him he said “I know the laws and I judge him to be whipped and not burned.” But he could not resist the crowd’s wishes and finally said to them, “take him and judge him according to your law.” As a result he was placed in a basket and put on fire. He died before the holy week, Easter, on the Good Tuesday. John Paleologos was king at the time.¹⁶³

Andreas Argentis – 29th of May 1465 in Galata

He was twenty-five years old. He came from Chios to Galata. Some Egyptian merchants reported to the authorities that Argentis was originally a Muslim but changed his religion and became an Orthodox Christian. Although he had not

¹⁶¹ In 1437, the Ottoman sultan was Murad II and we learn from Colin Imber that in the spring time of this year Murad II marched against İbrahim Bey of Karaman principality; see Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 116. Most probably the Sultan was absent in Edirne at the time of Georgios’ trial for this reason.

¹⁶² *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 410. This is the earliest version of this story.

¹⁶³ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 403-413; Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 32-36.

become Muslim, he had never been to Egypt, and even he was not circumcised he could not find any witnesses to support his argument. As a result of this accusation Andreas Argentis was arrested. He was then tortured, and decapitated in 1465.¹⁶⁴

Nimat the Young from Bakhaa, Antioch - 1471

Nimat was born in Bakhaa near Antioch. He was brought up as a pious Orthodox Christian. One day, he had to go to Damascus but there was a problem: he was afraid of fanatic Muslims. He thought that if he wore Muslim clothes for his trip he would be safe. When he arrived at the city gate, he was asked by some Muslims whether he was a Muslim or not. He responded them that he was a Muslim. This answer satisfied them and he could enter the city. However, a few days later he was seen in the city in Orthodox Christian clothes by these Muslims again. They asked him if he was a Muslim or not. This time he did not lie and said that “I am an Orthodox Christian and Jesus Christ is my Lord and God.” This response made the Muslims very angry and they began to beat him. Later on, they brought Nimat before the lord of the city. The lord asked him if he were really an Orthodox Christian and Nimat said it again fearlessly: “Yes, I am an Orthodox Christian and Jesus Christ is my Lord and God.” His fearless attitude to say the truth astonished the people who were present in his court. Then again, his confession concluded with his imprisonment and torture.¹⁶⁵ This period of imprisonment and torture lasted for two years. He suffered from great pains and died in Damascus in 1471 as a result of torture.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 563. His martyrdom was written by Georgios Trapezuntios who was born in Cantacas, Crete in 1396 and he was from Trabzon family. Also see, Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 37-38.

¹⁶⁵ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 38.

¹⁶⁶ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 39.

John the Merchant –22 June 1492

John was a distinguished merchant from Trebizond. One day while he was onboard a trade ship, the captain of the ship saw him fasting and giving alms to the poor on the ship and the captain got jealous. Then, he began disturbing John and a discussion about religious matters erupted between the two men. Throughout the journey the captain and John argued about faith and the Orthodox creed. John defeated the captain in each discussion, but this only served to anger the captain. When they arrived in Asprokestron¹⁶⁷ (Akkerman, a city in modern Ukraine) the captain went to the lord of the city and said “look, there is a Christian man from Trebizond who decided to come to your faith and took an oath that will do so,” and added that “this man [John] is an intellectual and among the most important men of Trebizond. If you convert him this may be very beneficial for you and your religion.” Subsequently, the lord ordered John to be brought before him. When John came before him the lord greeted him with great honor and said: “I heard that you decided to come to our faith. You should believe in our faith, which is glorious, and you should become a *Turk* in order to receive great honors, positions, and wealth and become our dear brother.”¹⁶⁸ When John heard this he raised his hands and eyes to the sky and said that he will never betray Jesus and that he was born and he will remain Christian. He added that he neither wishes to gain riches nor to become a *Turk*. This response made the lord very angry and he threatened him with torture but John did not change his mind. As a result John was put in jail and he was beaten with sticks full of thorns until the ground became red from his blood. Next day, he was brought before the lord of the city but he refused to deny his religion and again

¹⁶⁷ The city of Akkerman was sieged by Bayezid II, the heir of Mehmed II, in 1484; see Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 30.

¹⁶⁸ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 620.

rejected conversion. The judge ordered to be beaten up again until the soldiers got tired. The standbys were scolding the lord for his cruelty. But the lord instead of getting softer he ordered a wild horse to be brought over. They tied the Saint to the horse tail and dragged him around the castle. When the Saint was passing in front of the houses of the Jews, they came out making fun of him. They were beating him until a Jew took a sword and cut off the head of the Martyr. None of the Christians dared to take the body to bury it. When it became dark a miracle happened. Three men in white sparkling clothes came by. A Jew thought that priests of the Christians came to remove the body for burial and he took up his bow to hit them. However, his hands froze, and he remained tied up to the bow and string until dawn. When he learned about the miracle the Lord got afraid and gave permission for burial. The captain seeing all this, regretted his acts and tried to steal the body. The Saint woke up the priest of the church he was buried in, to have his body rescued.¹⁶⁹

St John from Serez – 1480-1490's

He was born in Serez. He was from an aristocratic family and wealthy. However, his wealth and aristocratic descent created an animosity among Muslim inhabitants in Serez whom wrongly accused him that he was blasphemous to their faith. They dragged him in front of the Church, accusing him that although he accepted Islam he did not hold his promise. In the questions of the *kadi*, he answered that he is firm in his Christian faith and he accused his accusers of lying. The judge ordered his imprisonment. He was taken out of jail after a while and was promised gifts and positions to change his religion, but even threats were to no avail. Then they tortured him repeatedly and they dragged him into the streets of the city. While he

¹⁶⁹ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 619-622; Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 41.

was in jail, they sent a letter to the sultan who replied without delay. He ordered that, if the youth did not change his religion then they should kill him and burn his body. The Saint accepted fondly the decision and without hesitation moved to his martyrdom. The accusers decided to make his death more tyrannizing. They tied him up in the middle of a great fire that started to burn his feet. The saint remained calm until one of the accusers put an end to his martyrdom by tucking a piece of wood in his mouth that caused his death.¹⁷⁰

Michael Mavroeides from Adrianople - late fifteenth century

Michael Mavroeides was from a distinguished Orthodox Christian family of Edirne. He was a pious, handsome, and a successful businessman. His success on the business activities brought him a great wealth and numerous properties. Mavroeides was very popular both among Orthodox and Muslim populations; he was even popular among the distinguished Orthodox and Muslim leaders of Anatolia and the Balkans. However, his richness and popularity created jealousy among some of the Muslims.¹⁷¹ Those *barbarian Turks* went to the judge, the lord, and accused him as having professed the Islamic faith. Michael denied this accusation before the judge, who in fact knew Michael personally. The judge believed him and did not take any action against him. However, this situation did not satisfy the accusers, who then threatened the lord for ignoring the law and swore to bring this case before the Sultan

¹⁷⁰ The text is written by Manuel Corintios one of the most celebrated ecclesiastical men of the third century after the capture of Constantinople, see Tasos Karanastasis "Enas Neomartyras Stis Serres tou 2nd misou tou 15ou aiona" (A neomartyr from Serres of the Second half of the 15th century), *Byzantine*, 16 (1991): 197-262. This vita is published from a codex stored in the monastery of Iveron in Mount Athos sometime after 1517 to 18. However, the original text must have been written around 1480 to 1490, see Karanastasis "Enas Neomartyras," 215. According to Karanastasis, the Muslim element in Serez increased in numbers in the second half of the fifteenth-century and acquired a more active role in the productive life of the city, see Karanastasis "Enas Neomartyras," 238.

¹⁷¹ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 41.

(Bayezid II).¹⁷² Although the lord tried to compromise by hiding the judgment, the case was heard even by the Sultan. The accusers then went before the Sultan to accuse Michael falsely and demanded capital punishment for him by fire. The Sultan declared his death penalty but only if he refused to convert to Islam. Michael once again stood before the lord, but this time he was asked for his conversion to save his life. Even though, he was offered additional honors and riches, Michael rejected all riches and honors and stood tall in his faith. He said that he would not change his faith even at the expense of his life. He preferred his death by the sword but did not insist on that matter.¹⁷³ Then, he was beheaded and his body was thrown into the fire and turned to ashes. He sacrificed his life for the love of Jesus Christ in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁷⁴

Metropolitan Arsenios of Verroia – end of the fifteenth century

Arsenios was the metropolitan of Verroia, Macedonia in Greece. He saw that his people's faith was suffering and weakening in the face of the continuing progress of the Ottomans and their hostile actions. As a result of this situation, he thought that he needed to take some actions against the Ottomans so he started to preach for the faith of Jesus Christ. Due to his preaching, he was considered as a threat by the Muslim military forces, and he was arrested. He was brought before the religious authorities and then tortured. He was asked to convert to Islam. However, he refused. His case was concluded with his death; he was beheaded. Even, his body was exposed in the open for three days. Then, after receiving the permission to take the

¹⁷² Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 42.

¹⁷³ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 42.

¹⁷⁴ Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 43.

body, Orthodox Christians buried him with honor as an Orthodox Christian metropolitan.¹⁷⁵

3.2. Discussion of the Hagiographies

There are interesting points to draw from the vitae mentioned above. It seems that coercion was one way to supplement the advancement of the Ottomans in the newly conquered lands. Looking into the number of neo-martyrs quoted in *Neo-Martyrlogion* it is apparent that early occurrences of martyrdom are fairly random, with 30 cases of martyrdom until the end of the 16th century and 38 cases only in the 17th century. If we look into the profile of the neo-martyrs only two come from ecclesiastical circles; these are Ephraim and Arsenios, the metropolitan of Verroia. The laymen include five merchants and a soldier. One of these merchants was Nimat who tried to take advantage of the privileges pertaining to Muslims, disguising himself as one. Three of the merchants come from the upper strata of post-Byzantine society. Michael Mavroeides, as a member of the old Byzantine aristocratic families of Adrianople, shares the same profile with John the Merchant, a member of a distinguished family from Trebizond, and John, from an aristocratic family from Serez. Similarly, although not mentioned in the texts, as in the case of three previous martyrs, Andreas Argentis must have been a member of the well-known Argenti family of Chios. Another common theme in all four cases of distinguished merchants is that they get along well with the Muslims. It is surprising to see this detail mentioned in the otherwise highly polemical work of martyrdom vitae.

The societal pressure and perhaps even strife is apparent in the vitae. All merchant saints have been accused that they had at one point accepted Islam. In the

¹⁷⁵ *Synaxarastes Neomartyron*, 748-749; Nomikos Michael Vaporis, *Witnesses for Christ*, 43.

case of John the Merchant it becomes obvious that prominent members of the Christian community converted that would add to the prestige of the administration locally. However, the cases of John the Merchant and Michael Mavroeides also reflect the reluctance of the local administrators to provoke the local Christian communities or create uneasiness and animosity, by basing their decision on local ear saying. However, the pressure of certain Muslim circles, identified as the religious members of the Muslim community, is a determining factor in decisions made by the local Ottoman administration. Notwithstanding, the prestige of these local Christian elites is emphasized in the vitae. A case in points is that of Michael Mavroeides, for whom the sultan ordered capital punishment by burning; local Ottoman administrators being familiar with the position of the Mavroeides family, however allowed Michael to choose his death by sword— a death more becoming for a member of the old Byzantine aristocracy.¹⁷⁶

The only case of a soldier, Georgios of Bulgaria, is particularly of interest, as here the dichotomy between the reconciliatory policies of the local Ottoman lord and the attitude of the Muslim community is more obvious. The vita does not find it improper to mention that Georgios was a soldier, who must have been serving in the Ottoman army. When a simple case of swearing in the marketplace is taken out of proportion, the local governor repeatedly tries to exercise his entire leniency. The vita implies a link between his intentions and the governor military position. The text praises him as a great general, pointing out the necessity for good soldiers, as Georgios would have been. The same “public” pressure is put upon him. According

¹⁷⁶ On the issue of punishment see, Rudolph Peters, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-first Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 64-65. Unlike other schools, the Hanafites and Shiites do not regard apostasy as a *hadd* offence. Further, they hold that only male apostates are to be executed, whereas female apostates must be imprisoned until they repent or to be beaten at the hours of ritual prayer (according to the Shiites) or every third day (according to the Hanafites), Rudolph Peters, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law*, 65.

to the narration the second day of Georgios' arrest, the *ulema* and descendants of the Prophet scold the governor for his leniency, arguing that should a similar incident happen in the market place in Constantinople or Rome, Muslims would avenge the culprit. From this detail we can assume the martyrdom occurred before the conquest of Constantinople. They continuing arguing that as Ottomans try to increase their influence and religion, the Christians are "attacking" them, undermining these efforts. Since the vita of the Georgios is among the oldest preserved,¹⁷⁷ it echoes the anxiety of a newly established Ottoman presence in the Balkans. The governor's response is very interesting: Pointing out that he is familiar with the law, he describes that most appropriate punishment for Georgios the Soldier would be chastisement. However, as the crowd demanded Islamic punishment, the governor is narrated to have allowed Georgios punishment according to the crowd's laws. The dichotomy between the governor's and the *ulema*'s law, might indicate the uneasiness between *kanun* and *shari'a*.¹⁷⁸

It would be appropriate to begin our review of hagiographies with Ephraim's, his work being the earliest. There are two important aspects of this source that need to be noted. One is that the writer describes the Ottomans as the *barbarian Turks*, a similar description also found in the hagiography of Michael Mavroeides. Here we turn to Paul Koudounaris' assertion that the representation of the *other* gives an important interpretation on the *self*.¹⁷⁹

According Koudounaris, these two function together like a photograph and its negative. A negative of a photograph, he says, serves to construct the photograph

¹⁷⁷ See the use of the archaic form "barbarians" instead of Muslims or Turks in the text.

¹⁷⁸ For the punishment of those abusing Muslim symbols see, M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı*, (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1983), 112-113.

¹⁷⁹ Paul Koudounaris, *Barbarians Within and Without: The Visual Construction of Alterity in Early Modern Europe*, (unpublished PhD diss., University of California, 2004), p. 5.

itself by projecting its opposition. Thus, if one displays the *other* as lacking morality and values this may indicate that he characterizes himself as a civilized.¹⁸⁰ From this point of view, we can assume that these sources show the Orthodox Christians as a civilized people, very much unlike the *barbarian Turks* who deserve the humiliation. In fact, we come across similar representations in Doukas' work too. For instance, in a section of his book, Doukas wrote that Cantacuzene had asked for help from the Ottoman ruler Orhan against the Byzantine king,¹⁸¹ offering him great riches in return. It is in this section of his book that Doukas described the Ottomans as a people who were very *lustful* and inclined to have sex with young girls, boys and even with animals. Doukas also added that these people preferred Byzantine or Italian women to their own women for whom they hated as if they were *bears* or *hyenas*.¹⁸²

The other example is that when he wrote about the defeat of Thessalonica by the Ottomans, he said that the ornaments of the churches and holy cups were taken by the *dirty hands* of the Turks and the virgins were taken by these Turks who were in fact *slaves to lust*.¹⁸³ Doukas also described the Ottomans as *godless* or *impious*.¹⁸⁴ According to him they loved money very much; even if they seized the killer of their fathers they would set them free in return of some money. Thus they could do more to ones that did not do anything bad to them or were in need of help.¹⁸⁵ Following Koudounaris' assumption, it may be suggested that all these humiliating descriptions of Ottomans in Doukas' work do not only show his opposition against the Ottomans,

¹⁸⁰ Paul Koudounaris, *Barbarians Within and Without*, 1-5.

¹⁸¹ John V Palaiologos was the emperor at that time.

¹⁸² Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 19.

¹⁸³ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 121.

¹⁸⁴ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 74.

¹⁸⁵ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 177.

the *other*, but also represent how he interpreted his own culture, the *self*, which was *moral, pious and civilized*.

As stated above there is one other important point in relation to the hagiography of Ephraim that needs to be examined. The hagiography indicates that Ephraim's monastery was not under the control of the Ottomans before his journey and he returned to the monastery only to find it attacked by the Ottomans whom the hagiography referred to as the *barbarian Turks*. In this sense the Ottoman attack was represented as a cruel action. Since the cruelty of such actions is emphasized in both Doukas's and Kritovoulos' chronicles, it may prove to be useful to examine and clarify this issue in relation to the Ottoman policies on conquest. Halil İnalcık states that according to Islamic Law if an area inhabited by non-Muslims had to be taken by force, the conquerors were allowed to take the inhabitants as slaves and confiscate their buildings.¹⁸⁶ Also Kemal Karpat adds that according to this law the soldiers were allowed to loot the captured city for three days.¹⁸⁷ As a matter of fact the events of three days following the capture of Constantinople are good examples of this situation. Since the reflections of the results of this law in Byzantines' mind are quite interesting, we should also examine what they say on this account.

In his account on the fall of Constantinople, Doukas wrote that the houses and estates of the inhabitants, which had been inherited from their fathers, were taken by the *others*; their mothers became widows; they faced persecution and they suffered greatly; their own fathers committed sin and now they had to pay for this; nobody could escape.¹⁸⁸ Also he referred to Mehmed II as a *wolf in sheep's clothing*. Doukas

¹⁸⁶ Halil İnalcık, "Istanbul: An Islamic City" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, (İstanbul: Eren, 1998), 255.

¹⁸⁷ Kemal Karpat, "Ottoman Views and Policies Towards the Orthodox Christian Church", *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 31 (1986): 134.

¹⁸⁸ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 191.

said that when the opportunity arose he did not hesitate to do injustice.¹⁸⁹ He also wrote that Mehmed II was an *antichrist*, the enemy of each person that devoted himself to the cross and what was attributed to it; he was a *devil that wore snakeskin* but showed his face as if he was a friend.¹⁹⁰

Doukas also devoted a long passage in his book to the description of the acts of the Ottomans and the reasons behind their victories and their advantages against the Christians. According to him, Turks came from Iran passing through Armenia and arrived in the northern Cappadocia and began to plunder the region. The Turks also called for the people to rise up and engage in raids against the impious people (the Christians). He wrote that *these Turks loved booty, pillage and injustice more than any people*. They did not hesitate to do these things even to their own people and they found no reason not to do the same things to the Christians. He added that as a response to the call for the raids against the Christians they were coming together; thousands of them, some of them on foot, and most of them without any weapons, were attacking the Christians and enslaving them like flocks of sheep.¹⁹¹ From these passages we may assume that the policy of plunder that the Ottomans followed when they captured lands by force was an important element of their image as the *other* in the Byzantines' mind. We should also note that according to Karpas, the conquest of Constantinople was an unexpected shock and a big trauma for the Christian inhabitants. Thus, Doukas was representing his sorrow in his work by describing Mehmed II as a wolf in sheep's clothing or a disciple of Satan.¹⁹²

Even in the work of Kritovoulos who was a well known for his affinity with the Ottomans, we witness a similar reflection. Although Kritovoulos did not oppose

¹⁸⁹ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 141.

¹⁹⁰ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 141.

¹⁹¹ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 82.

¹⁹² Kemal Karpas, "Ottoman Views and Policies Towards the Orthodox Christian Church", 134.

Mehmed II and his actions and instead praised the Sultan, calling him *the supreme emperor, Mehmed the fortunate, kings of kings*,¹⁹³ there is still a part in his book that Kritovoulos could not completely hide his emotions about the Ottoman soldiers. In this part which was devoted to the narration of the plunder of Constantinople by the soldiers, he said that the inhabitants of the city of every age and class, were dragged out of their homes, collected together and some of them were killed, and that these actions were carried out *pitilessly, dishonorably, mercilessly, disgracefully and shamefully*.¹⁹⁴ In addition to this, he mentioned that the priests who devoted themselves to God were dragged out of the churches with *insults* and *dishonor*.¹⁹⁵ The holy objects, such as reliquaries and icons, were also thrown to the ground in *dishonor* and holy books too were trampled upon *dishonorably*.¹⁹⁶ He did not say that the soldiers were merciless or pitiless but he preferred to express the situation with the use of certain adverbs. These words can be assumed to be the indicators of Kritovoulos' feelings about the Ottoman soldiers. Since he was writing Mehmed II's history on behalf of the Sultan¹⁹⁷ it can be supposed that he could not write his feelings honestly and openly so these adverbs may be accepted as the indicators of his real feelings about these new victors of the history. On the other hand, there is also another part that Kritovoulos compared the capture of the city with other famous and important cities in the history that were conquered by some others. These were the conquests of Troy by the Greeks, Babylon by Cyrus, Carthage by Scipio, Rome for the first time by the Celts and Gauls and later by the Goths, Jerusalem three times by the Assyrians, Antiochus and then by the Romans, even the city of Constantinople itself by the Latins but he explicitly said that the sufferings of all of these cities were

¹⁹³ Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 3.

¹⁹⁴ Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 72-74.

¹⁹⁵ Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 73.

¹⁹⁶ Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 73-74.

¹⁹⁷ He wrote his work, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, as the personal historian of the Sultan.

not comparable with the defeat of Constantinople in 1453.¹⁹⁸ His need to compare the defeats of these cities with Constantinople's suffering can also be seen as an indicator that he opposed these acts of the new victors (the Ottomans).

On the other hand we must also note that the attitude of the Ottomans was not always harsh towards the inhabitants of the newly conquered lands. Halil İnalcık mentions that according to the Islamic Law, the non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic State were called *dhimmi* and they were kept under the State's protection. Their properties and economic activities were also protected by the State.¹⁹⁹ He argues that the Ottomans followed a policy that was called *istimalet* since the early period of their expansions to make the native populations of the regions more amenable to their rule. In this sense the aim of this policy was to persuade the populations of the regions, including townspeople, peasants, soldiers, and clerics, to accept their rule. As a matter of fact the policy was actualized by generous promises.²⁰⁰ Especially in the early period they were protecting and not changing the pre-conquest conditions of regions, such as certain privileges, status, customs and laws. They even integrated the clerical and military groups of the territories into their own administrative system.²⁰¹ İnalcık also argues that the Ottomans left the fiefs of seigneurs and former *pronoia* holders to them as *timar*.²⁰² He says that it was a well known Ottoman practice to integrate the pre-Ottoman taxes into their own tax-system under the condition that they would not disagree with the Ottoman principles of taxation.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 77-79.

¹⁹⁹ Halil İnalcık, "Greeks in Ottoman Economy and Finances, 1453-1500" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, (İstanbul: Eren, 1998), 380.

²⁰⁰ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, (İstanbul: Eren, 1998), 196.

²⁰¹ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 197; also see Halil İnalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, 181-182.

²⁰² Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 197.

²⁰³ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 209.

The explanations above also conform to our second hagiography at some points. We see in the hagiography of Georgios that he was a Christian soldier in the service of the Ottoman army. As a matter of fact this point in the source seems to be very important. According to Zachariadou the message in the hagiography of Georgios the Soldier was obvious. She underlines the fact that there is nothing in the hagiography that is negative about Georgios being an Ottoman soldier even though he was a Christian.²⁰⁴ We can assume that this information in the source is quite interesting to note since hagiographies are polemical and religious texts. In addition to this we can also observe in the text that the members of the Orthodox Christian community – the writers of the source – were in fact quite familiar with the system of judicial process. Another interesting point to which Zachariadou directs our attention is that the Ottoman vizier as the representative of the Ottoman secular administration was depicted in the source as a calm and reasonable man who tried to protect Georgios, talked to him, and wanted to give him the lesser punishment of whipping rather than the death sentence. However, she says that according to the hagiography the devil was the dervishes and *ulema* that were the member of *another, an alien religion* and demanded a punishment by burning him. In the hagiography it was indicated that George did not waver from his faith and did not take his words back and he was killed and became a martyr as a result of this.

Zachariadou suggests that the aim of the church in writing this text was to propagandize that living under the Ottoman rule did not prevent one from being a good Christian; thus those living under Ottoman rule were not less faithful in comparison to the people that lived under the Latin or Byzantine rule. And this message, Zachariadou argues, was a reference to the controversy between the Latin

²⁰⁴ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Neomartyr’s Message”, 62.

and Greek Churches.²⁰⁵ Zachariadou mentions that although the official separation of the Western and Eastern Churches happened in 1054, its significance was not recognized until 1204, when Constantinople captured by the Latins.²⁰⁶ She says that the plunder and massacre continued in the city for three days by referring to the accounts of the eyewitness of the events; the highly educated Byzantine writer Niketas Choniates criticized the Latin army and compared them to the Muslims by writing that the Saracens (the Muslims) were kind and merciful unlike *those creatures that carried the cross on their shoulders*.²⁰⁷ As Zachariadou summarizes as a result of the capture of the city, Thomas Morosini who was a Venetian became the first Latin patriarch of the city; the Byzantine territories were granted to the crusaders as fiefs; the Western feudal political system was established which obliged higher taxation and frequent corvées.²⁰⁸ She says that when the Byzantine emperor came back to throne in 1261 he was weak and had to give huge commercial privileges to various states, especially the Venetians and Genoese.²⁰⁹ The Latin beneficiaries of these privileges thus soon began to dominate Byzantine trade, much to the chagrin of the Byzantine merchants. Another source of Byzantine displeasure was that the Latins were engaged in the slave trade and even took their coreligionist Orthodox Christians as slaves.²¹⁰ Zachariadou underlines the importance of the fact that when the Latins appointed their own patriarch in the Greek Church they did not allow the Greek metropolitans and bishops to dwell in the regions that were occupied by the Latins. They also confiscated the properties of the monasteries. All these measures

²⁰⁵ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 62.

²⁰⁶ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 51.

²⁰⁷ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 51.

²⁰⁸ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 51.

²⁰⁹ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 51.

²¹⁰ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 52.

taken by the Latins created a strong anti-Latin sentiment among the members of the Orthodox community.²¹¹

Doukas also devoted a section in his book to this anti-Latin sentiment. Doukas wrote that the Byzantine emperor (Constantine XI) sent a group of bishops to the Pope to ask for their help against the Ottomans. They also demanded the union of the churches.²¹² He wrote that when these bishops returned to Constantinople the curious people asked about how things had concluded in Florence. The bishops responded by declaring that the empire had lost its religion and had fallen into impiety. Doukas, who was a supporter of the union, wrote that their sin was in fact great for saying things like these.²¹³ He continues that the people then asked the bishops why they signed the decisions, and the bishops answered that they did so out of fear of the Latins. However, Doukas wrote that there were no reasons for such fear since they were not threatened, put into jail or beaten by the Latins. Thus, according to him, these were all inappropriate responses, going on to add that these bishops took money from the Latins in great amounts and although they said that they regretted what they did, they never paid the money back.²¹⁴

Doukas continued by writing that as a response to the emperor's demand, the Pope sent Isidore who was the Cardinal of Poland to Constantinople to effect the union of the Churches.²¹⁵ As a matter of fact Isidore arrived in the city in 1452 when it was under the Ottoman siege. However, when he came, Isidore realized that the majority of the Byzantine inhabitants and priests were in fact against the union. Doukas described these inhabitants and priest as *ignorant* and *dastardly*.²¹⁶ He went

²¹¹ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 52.

²¹² Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 154.

²¹³ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 131.

²¹⁴ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 131.

²¹⁵ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 154.

²¹⁶ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 156.

on to explain the events of day from his point of view and wrote that the union was established with a big ceremony in Hagia Sophia on the 12th of December.²¹⁷ After the establishment of the union, however, people kept away from the big church (Hagia Sophia), viewing it in the aftermath of the ceremony as if it were a pagan temple.²¹⁸ Doukas wrote that these people denied the union and assumed the Latin Church to be impious, but that after the conquest of Constantinople these people began praying to the foreigners' prophet (Muhammad) and accepted impiety shamefully.²¹⁹ He also mentioned that Gennadios (George Scholarios) was one of the objectors to the union and acted against its supporters. Even the head admiral from the senate was saying that he preferred the Turk's turban to the Latin helmet.²²⁰ Doukas added that if an angel would come from the sky and ask these people that if they accept the union and the peace in the church and that this angel would save them from the Turks, they would still refuse this offer.

Doukas blamed them for the suffering of the city after it was defeated by the Turks.²²¹ Therefore, he said, Jesus Christ turned his face away from these Orthodox Christians to punish them.²²² From the passages of Doukas we can actually witness that there was a huge clash of ideas among the Byzantines. From Doukas' point of view we observe how a supporter of the union described its opponents. From these passages it may be argued that the Byzantines themselves began to see and to depict each other as *other*.

Vryonis also supports this assumption and says that the historical conditions of the Byzantine Empire in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries determined the

²¹⁷ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 157.

²¹⁸ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 161.

²¹⁹ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 157.

²²⁰ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 161.

²²¹ Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 179.

²²² Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 161.

cultural self-consciousness and evolution of the Byzantines. He explains four of these conditions: According to him, the disintegration of the Byzantine territories from the state and the Byzantine population becoming the subjects of an alien region and a foreign state was one of the reasons that affected their self-consciousness. The second reason was their political weakness in contrast to the Ottoman state. The third reason was the collapse of the political centralization in the Byzantine state and the rise of the native feudal tax system (*pronoia*). The fourth reason was the increasing inequality between the traditional imperial theory of the Byzantium and the harsh realities of the day.²²³ He argues that these conditions created a deep crisis in Byzantine society. Losing their lands to the Muslim Turks and the attempts of the Catholic Italians to convert them to their religion made their relations with these peoples and their cultures sharper than ever. Thus, according to Vryonis, they saw these peoples as a political and economical danger and a threat to their own culture.²²⁴ He also adds that the Byzantines were harassed by both Latin Christianity and Turkish Islam.²²⁵ These were the external threats for the Byzantine state and society but, he says, there was also a threat within the society, a division in the society between those who preferred the Latins and those who preferred the Ottomans.²²⁶

Although we have mentioned the roots of this clash of ideas among the Byzantines this case still needs more explanation. With this aim in mind we will first attempt to delve more deeply into the rationale underpinning the anti-unionist movement, before moving on to examine the facts behind the unionist movement.

²²³ Speros Vryonis, Jr., "Byzantine Cultural Self-Consciousness in the Fifteenth Century" in *The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire*, ed. S. Curcic and D. Mouriki, (paper from the colloquium held at Princeton University, May 8-9, 1989), (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 5-6.

²²⁴ Speros Vryonis Jr., "Byzantine Cultural Self-Consciousness in the Fifteenth Century", 6.

²²⁵ Speros Vryonis Jr., "Byzantine Cultural Self-Consciousness in the Fifteenth Century", 11.

²²⁶ Speros Vryonis Jr., "Byzantine Cultural Self-Consciousness in the Fifteenth Century", 11-12.

We have mentioned above the roots of the anti-unionist stand with the help of Zachariadou's ideas on that matter. In addition to aforementioned arguments, Zachariadou also stresses that after the battle of Manzikert in 1071 the survival of the Greek Orthodox Church in Anatolia depended on the protection of the Islamic Law which recognized the peoples of the Book. She also gives a reference to a letter that was sent by the patriarch of Constantinople to the Pope in 1384, which declared that although they suffered from the Turks they were in better conditions than the Latins gave to them; they had their freedom and right to administrate their church.²²⁷ In fact, she states, the Ottoman sultans' prestige among the Orthodox people was increasing since the sultans recognized their religion and granted tax exemptions to their monastic properties.²²⁸ In addition to this, İnalcık suggests that the distinguished measure of the *istimalet* policy of the Ottomans was the recognition of the Orthodox Church as a unit of the state and the administrative system. İnalcık adds that metropolitans were also granted *timar* in the frontier regions and became a part of the ruling class. He argues that even before the fall of Constantinople the Ottoman rulers established close ties with the Orthodox patriarchate.²²⁹ He also stresses the interesting fact that the monasteries of Mount Athos recognized Ottoman power even before the conquest of their region.²³⁰ He argues that the earliest known appointment of a metropolitan was made during the reign of Bayezid I in Antalya.²³¹ He mentions that the Greek metropolitans under the Ottoman rule did in fact create opportunities for the Ottomans to establish relations with the monasteries that were beyond the Ottoman boundaries.²³²

²²⁷ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 53.

²²⁸ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 54.

²²⁹ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 197.

²³⁰ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 197.

²³¹ Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 202.

²³² Halil İnalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", 198.

İnalcık also writes that in the Balkans, the hostility harbored by the Catholic powers of Hungary and the Venetians for their Orthodox brethren again led to a situation where the Orthodox Christians tended to favor the Ottomans over and against the Catholic Church. As a result of the Catholic Church's tendency to treat the Orthodox Christianity as a schismatic sect, the Ottomans found it easy to expand in the Balkans. The mild Ottoman policy over the Orthodox Church was an important reason for their quick and firm expansions in the Balkans. İnalcık stresses the fact that it is well known that the local Orthodox clerics cooperated with the Ottomans for several times.²³³ According to him, the Latin Church always acted against the Ottomans by encouraging the Crusades against them and refusing peace settlements from the fourteenth century onward. For this reason the Ottomans forbade the Latin Church from their provinces and formally supported the Greek Orthodox Church.²³⁴

On the other hand, Vryonis states that for some Byzantines the only help that they could receive against the Ottomans would have had to come from the west and this could only be actualized in ecclesiastical terms, which meant the union of the Churches. For other people however, such as Scholarios – who was also known as Gennadios – the union would have to have been done in conformity with the Greek terms. Vryonis argues that this idea was not possible since the Greek party did not possess enough power to force the Catholics to pay heed to its demands. In fact, in both attempts of union in 1439 and 1452, the Greeks had to concede to the Catholic terms. Thus members of the anti-unionist party, like Gennadios, were afraid of losing both their city and souls by forsaking their true faith. They also believed that the help

²³³ Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 50-51.

²³⁴ Halil İnalcık, "Ottoman Galata, 1453-1553" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, (İstanbul: Eren, 1998), 286.

that would come from the Latins would not be enough to defend against the Ottoman attack.²³⁵ Vryonis also directs our attention to a letter that was written by Gennadios to the duke Lucas Notaras in 1451. In this letter Gennadios wrote that the aid of the Pope would be little and in return for this help he would take their souls. In other words, he wrote in his letter that the Pope was not a reliable ally for the Greeks.²³⁶ As a result of all these statements we may assume that the foundation of the anti-unionist movement was formed after the Latin invasion of Constantinople: the economic, religious and politic acts of the Latins resulted in the hatred of the Byzantine population. In addition to this, it may also be supposed that the mild policy of the Ottomans towards these Byzantines, the Orthodox Christian community, made them willing to accept the Ottoman rule against the Latins.

Now we will examine the unionist movement. Angeliki Laiou suggests that the capture of Constantinople by the Latins was the beginning of a new era of relations between the Byzantines and the Western world. He says that from then on, a great number of Westerners began to settle in both areas like the islands, parts of Greece and the Morea that were held by the Latins, and on Byzantine soil. As a result of this the relation between Byzantium and these westerners became an important issue in the Byzantine foreign policy agenda.²³⁷ Laiou asserts that these relations between Byzantium and the West reflected itself at the dynastic level, as six out of ten emperors of the last Byzantine dynasty were married to Western noblewomen.

²³⁵ Speros Vryonis, "Crises and Anxieties in Fifteenth Century Byzantium: And the Reassertion of Old, And the Emergence of New, Cultural Forms" in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Societies: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Wadie Jwaideh*, ed. Robert Olson, (Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1987), 104.

²³⁶ Speros Vryonis, "Crises and Anxieties in Fifteenth Century Byzantium", 104.

²³⁷ Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 34 (1980 - 1981): 178.

And these brides carried their retinues, customs and ideas with themselves.²³⁸ At this point it is necessary to mention the arguments of both Michael Angold and İnalcık. Angold states that the supporters of the union were the influential members of the Byzantine elite. According to him, this group's approval for the Latin culture was growing as a result of their concerns about the deteriorating condition of Byzantium. They also believed that they could only get their salvation in the west.²³⁹ In addition to this, İnalcık argues that the local lords or princes of the Balkans were cooperating with the west against the Ottomans. As a matter of fact they did not even oppose to accept the superiority of the Latin Church over their own. Consequently, they earned the hatred of their own people.²⁴⁰ It would thus not inappropriate to assume, without disregarding the implications of the Ottoman threat against Byzantine sovereignty, that the influence of western culture and customs on the Byzantine dynasty played a role in the eventual Byzantium support of the union. According to Laiou, in some territories the Byzantine economic life mostly relied on the West.²⁴¹ While Byzantium entered the international market of the Eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century and the Byzantines got their part in the economy of exchange, they actually depended on the westerners.²⁴² As Angeliki suggests, this situation became more obvious in the fourteenth century.²⁴³ Thus the Byzantine merchant population did to a degree rely upon these westerners, who had the control of the Mediterranean trade market, and this too may be counted as a reason for their support of the union.

²³⁸ Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System," 178.

²³⁹ Michael Angold, "Byzantium and the West 1204-1453" in *Eastern Christianity*, ed. by Michael Angold, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 53.

²⁴⁰ Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 51.

²⁴¹ Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System", 179.

²⁴² Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System", 216.

²⁴³ Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System", 179.

The Ottoman land system may also be counted as one of the factors that drove people to seek help from the west. İnalçık suggests that in the fifteenth century, among the *timar* holders, a distinguished percentage showed that they were the direct descendants of the pre-Ottoman local military classes or nobility and in some areas half of them were actually Christians.²⁴⁴ He says that in the conquered lands the native population was also used as the auxiliary forces whose loyalty was encouraged by special privileges like exemption from taxation. However these privileges were not permanent and if the Sultan felt it to be necessary they could be taken away.²⁴⁵ In addition to this, Cemal Kafadar states that there were significant similarities between the Ottoman *timar* system and the Western style feudalism since the Ottomans demanded the military service from its subjects that were *timar*-holders.²⁴⁶ However, he also says that, there are still significant differences between these two systems. For instance, the rights over *timar* were not heritable and the *timar* holder did not have any judicial powers; the state was the dominant landowner and the peasantry was also freer than in the western feudal system.²⁴⁷

At this point, İnalçık directs our attention to the fact that the social conditions in the Balkans during the fourteen century were important and should be analyzed. According to him, since the central authority of Byzantium had lost its strength over the Balkans, the military or ecclesiastical landowners were able to increase their riches. Then again the small feudal lords had to oppress their subjects, peasants, to

²⁴⁴ Halil İnalçık "Ottoman Methods of Conquest", 113-114.

²⁴⁵ Halil İnalçık "Ottoman Methods of Conquest", 107-108.

²⁴⁶ Cemal Kafadar, "The Ottomans and Europe" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, Vol.1, ed. T. A. Brady, Jr., H. A. Oberman and J. D. Tracy, (Leiden: BRILL, 1994), 601. In fact, there is a huge discussion between the modern scholars about the "Ottoman Feudal System"; the following sources are recommended for whom interests in this discussion: Ömer Lütfü Barkan, "Feodal Düzen ve Osmanlı Timarı" in *Türkiye'de Toprak Meseleleri*, (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980), 873-895; Halil Berktaş, "The Feudalism Debate: The Turkish End –Is Tax-vs.- Rent Necessarily the Product and Sign of a Modal Difference?", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 14/3 (1987): pp. 291-333; Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumu*, (İstanbul: Sermet, 1971).

²⁴⁷ Cemal Kafadar, "The Ottomans and Europe", 601.

collect heavy taxes which they needed in order to survive. However, in the fifteenth century, these conditions were turned upside down by the Ottomans; the properties of the former lords or princes of the Balkans were seized by the Ottomans. Some of them regained some parts of their lands but only as *timar* holders attached to the Ottoman State. He suggests that in contrast to the previous Balkan or Byzantine taxation systems the Ottoman *timar* system was not so severe and with this system the peasantry of the Balkans was relieved of his heavy burden to his feudal lord. Now he was working on the land that was owned by the Sultan but his rights as a peasant were under the protection of the State.²⁴⁸ İnalçık states that according to the Ottoman land system, it was a crime to force from the peasant anything beyond the tax he was required to pay by law. This tax system became more preferable for the peasants and it increased the power of the central government over peasants and lands.²⁴⁹ He also adds that while many of the former fief holder lords of the Balkans continued to hold some of their privileges, as *timar* holders their responsibilities to the government were determined. That is to say they became a part of the Ottoman ruling class that was under the control of the government.²⁵⁰ However, some of the powerful former lords did not want to give up their privileges and acted against the Ottoman government and sought help from the western Catholic world.²⁵¹ Thus, we can assume that although the land system received sympathy from the Byzantine peasantry, the former land-lords did not like this situation and turned their face towards the west against the Ottoman rule.

Now that we have addressed some of the reasons behind the unionist and anti-unionist groups in Byzantium, we may now return to our last hagiographies.

²⁴⁸ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 51-52.

²⁴⁹ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 35.

²⁵⁰ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 35.

²⁵¹ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 35.

Zachariadou suggests that since the second half of the thirteenth century the Christian population in Anatolia and the Balkans was decreasing and the Muslim population was increasing. The reasons Zachariadou provides include wars, massacres, and slavery, but most importantly the conversions of Christians to Islam. The important thing is that the conversions did not generally occur through the use of coercive force. This may suggest that some of the Christian population were in fact willing to convert, possibly as a result of the various benefits accorded to converts, such as exemption from the tax levied against non-Muslims, being released from the humiliation of *dhimmi* status, and the chance to gain access to the higher social ranks.²⁵² To prevent the conversions, the Orthodox clergy could only propagandize that the guarantee of the salvation would only come from the old faith.²⁵³ We witness this message clearly in the hagiographies of John the Merchant and Metropolitan Arsenios. For instance, according to text of John the Merchant, the lord of Akkerman tried to persuade John to convert, offering him riches and saying that if he became a Muslim he would get honor, but John remained resolute in his faith and rejected the lord's petitions. He was then killed, achieving the status of martyr according to the hagiography writer.

In addition to this, Zachariadou states that as a response to the loss of its members through conversion the Church began to use a theme in its hagiographies that warned the Orthodox community about the penalty of apostasy from Islam if they felt guilt and attempted to return to their old faith. The Church was advising them to remain in their own faith, Orthodoxy.²⁵⁴ Since apostasy from Islam earned

²⁵² Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 61; Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Great Church in Captivity 1453-1586" in *Eastern Christianity*, ed. Michael Angold, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 181. Also see Speros Vryonis, "Crises and Anxieties in Fifteenth Century Byzantium", 111, 114; and Halil İnalcık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," 115.

²⁵³ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Great Church in Captivity 1453-1586", 181.

²⁵⁴ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Neomartyr's Message", 61.

one the death penalty, they propagandized that he who repented from his action and returned to his old faith, Orthodoxy, would suffer martyrdom in the Muslims' hands. Zachariadou suggests that the Orthodox clergy was employing this theme in their hagiographies since the early centuries of the Arab conquests. They were propagandizing this theme to warn their people about the risks of conversion to Islam. According to their propaganda this conversion would bring them a feeling of guilt and they could only salvage their soul by martyrdom.²⁵⁵ And this theme is obvious in the hagiography of Andreas Alkendis who was tortured and then killed due to a claim that he was Muslim who changed his faith to Orthodox Christian, as similar to the stories of Nimat the Young, St John from Serez, and Michael Mavroeides. To sum up, as Ottoman political power was came to prevail over the ongoing political hegemony of the Orthodox clergy the social conditions of the Orthodox population began to change even in the absence of coercive force, and triggering the displeasure of the Orthodox clergy.

3.3. Conclusion

We have seen that the hagiographies of Ephraim, and Michael Mavroeides and the passages from both Doukas and Kritovoulos described the Ottomans, the *other*, as *impious*, *immoral* and *barbarian* but described their own culture, the *self*, as *pious*, *moral* and *civilized*. We have argued that the Ottoman expansion policy that pursued the Islamic Law, prescription allowing the plunder the cities that were taken by force. This in fact was a significant reason behind this point of view. From our second hagiography, Georgios the Soldier, we have witnessed the indications that the Orthodox Christian community had already been integrated into the Ottoman judicial

²⁵⁵ Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "The Great Church in Captivity 1453-1586", 182.

and administrative system and they did not present any complaints about the system. The source rather stressed that being a Christian under Ottoman rule did not make a person less Christian than the one living under the Byzantines or Latins. Thus we were led to examine the controversy between the Latin and Greek Church, which was the concern of the two opposing groups of the unionists and anti-unionists in Byzantium. As a result of our inquiries on this issue we identified that the different policies of Latins and Ottomans towards the Orthodox Christians created a division within the Orthodox community itself, some of whom preferred the Latins to the Ottomans and vice versa. That this division was also reflected in these people's perceptions, and that the two groups used the imagery of the *other* to describe one another, is borne out in Doukas' chronicle. Our last hagiographies of Andreas Argentis, Nimat the Young, John the Merchant, St John from Serez, Michael Mavroeides, and Metropolitan Arsenios, show the Byzantines beginning to view the Ottoman conversion policy as a threat to the Orthodox Christian faith. The Orthodox Church and clergy find it necessary to take measures against the Ottomans to prevent the conversion of their people. This Ottoman policy once again concluded with their image as *other* in the mind of this Orthodox circle.

Hence, although the hagiography sources were written by a perspective of a religious circle, our analyses display that the *other* was shaped dominantly by political concerns of the Orthodox Christian people rather than theological criteria.

CHAPTER IV

THE *OTHER* AMONG US

Fifteenth century Ottoman history begins with the defeat of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I at the hands of Timur in 1402. A civil war between the Ottoman princes and the re-establishment of the former Anatolian principalities are the foremost results of this defeat. Then again, when we come to the second half of the century the strength of the Ottoman Empire was already reconsolidated. As a matter of fact, the destruction of the Empire in 1402 and its reconsolidation within half a century both occurred under the effects of the centralization policy of the government and its control mechanisms. This centralization policy can be seen as the main reason for the antagonism between the subjects of the Sultan which divided them into two groups: the supporters and the opponents of the central authority. This division is also reflected in the people's perception of the *other*. Since the aim of this study is to examine the image of the *other* among these opposing groups, we will examine two important sources from the fifteenth century: one is the *menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin that was written by his grandson Hafız Halil and the other is the *menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba, written by his disciple Güççük Abdal. Both of these sources are important for this study since they give clues on the characters of the opposing groups of the time. The *menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin will help us to look at the opposing groups at the time of civil war and the *menakıbnâme* of Otman

Baba will help us to examine the opposing groups during the reign of Mehmed II when the strength of the Ottoman Empire seemed almost reconsolidated again. It is, then, important for us to carefully examine what both *menakıbnames* tell us about. Therefore in this study we will first summarize the *menakıbnames*, especially the parts we consider important for the aim of this study, and then we will attempt to examine and critically reflect upon the data they present to us.

4.1. Summary of the *Menakıbname* of Şeyh Bedreddin

Şeyh Bedreddin was from a distinguished *ghazi* family of Anatolia. His grandfather, Abdülaziz, was a *ghazi* Bey. According to the *menakıbname*, Abdülaziz was a nephew and a vizier of the Seljukid Sultan, Alaeddin Keykubad.²⁵⁶ Although he was a Sheikh ul-Islam, his service to Mevlana and Hüsam Çelebi indicates that he was also a Sufi.²⁵⁷

Bedreddin's father was *Ghazi* İsrail who was one of the seven *ghazis* that accompanied Süleyman Bey, the son of Orhan, during their raids in Rumelia.²⁵⁸ When the *tekfur* of Dimetoka surrendered the castle to the Ottoman commander Hacı İlbey, *Ghazi* İsrail was also there.²⁵⁹ After the capture of Dimetoka he was married to the daughter of the Bey of Simavna, who was a Christian woman who became Muslim and was named *Melek*.²⁶⁰ Bedreddin was born in the town of Simavna²⁶¹ in

²⁵⁶ Oruç Bey describes him as a “wise and smart” man in his chronicle *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 24.

²⁵⁷ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı and İsmet Sungurbey, *Halil bin İsmail bin Şeyh Bedrüddin Mahmud: Simavna Kadıoğlu Şeyh Bedreddin Menakıbı*, (İstanbul: Eti Yayınevi, 1967), 5-7. We will refer to this book as “Hafız Halil menkb” from now on.

²⁵⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 9.

²⁵⁹ Hafız Halil menkb, 11-12

²⁶⁰ Hafız Halil menkb, 12-13.

²⁶¹ Simavna was a town at the southwest of Edirne in the districts of modern Greece.

1358/59 in a church that had been converted into a house,²⁶² before moving to Edirne after it was conquered by the Ottomans in 1361.²⁶³

Bedreddin received his first education in Edirne. His father taught him how to read the Qur'an. Later he started to learn *fıkıh* (Islamic canon law) from his master Hoca Molla. When Hoca Molla died he had to continue his education in Bursa in the Kaplıca Medrese.²⁶⁴ Later, in order to study logic and astronomy, he went to Konya under the guidance of Feyzullah.²⁶⁵ He then moved to Cairo to continue his education.²⁶⁶ Soon after his arrival in Cairo, the young scholar Şeyh Bedreddin became famous for his intellect. He was invited to the palace by Berkuk, who was the Sultan of the Mamluk Burji dynasty, as teacher to his son Ferec.²⁶⁷ In the palace he met Hüseyin Ahlati who influenced Bedreddin very much. Berkuk offered two Habeş sister slaves to Ahlati and Bedreddin. The names of these sisters were Cazibe and Mariye. Cazibe later became the mother of Bedreddin's son, İsmail.²⁶⁸

Şeyh Bedreddin was affected very much by the ideas of Ahlati and became his disciple. As a symbolic gesture of his new path, leaving *fıkıh* for the science of theology, he allegedly threw his books into the Nile River. Then he started his mystic suffering period.²⁶⁹

The Rum friends²⁷⁰ of Bedreddin in Cairo sent word to his father that Bedreddin had become a Sufi. According to the story, his mother and father prayed to God after receiving the news thus gaining the approval of his family.

²⁶² Hafız Halil menkb, 13.

²⁶³ Hafız Halil menkb, 13.

²⁶⁴ Hafız Halil menkb, 13-16.

²⁶⁵ Hafız Halil menkb, 19-22.

²⁶⁶ During this period Cairo was a famous academic centre; people came here from virtually everywhere to take education on various subjects. See Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 41-42.

²⁶⁷ Hafız Halil menkb, 38-39.

²⁶⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 41-43.

²⁶⁹ Hafız Halil menkb, 45-46; Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 44-45.

²⁷⁰ We understand that in the menakıbnâme the people of Anatolia or Rumelia were referred as "Rum"; see Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 41-43.

Consequently, his father sent his servant Şahne Musa to Cairo to bring Bedreddin back to Rumelia.²⁷¹

Şahne Musa arrived in Damascus at a time when Timur was marching against the city. He also fought against Timur's soldiers. The *menakıbnâme* romanticizes about his bravery, mentioning that even Timur noticed it. Thus, he ordered his soldiers to rescue Musa who was wounded. He esteemed Musa's bravery and helped him to make his journey back to Egypt in safety.²⁷² However, when Musa asked Bedreddin to go back, the Şeyh refused his offer.²⁷³

According to the story, Bedreddin, as a committed Sufi, fell in a deep *cezbe* (ecstasy). It was so intense that his şeyh Ahlati began to worry about him. He recommended that Bedreddin take a trip and sent him to the east.²⁷⁴ Bedreddin went to Tebriz where he met Timur, right after the Battle of Ankara, as they were transporting the corpse of Timur's grandson from Tabriz to the city of Sultaniyye. There were some Iranians that recognized Bedreddin and told Şemseddin Cezeri, an important *fıkıh* scholar of the time, about him.²⁷⁵ When Bedreddin walked around the city he saw Tatar soldiers, who had abandoned Bayezid I and changed sides in the battle and were thus mentioned as *traitors* in the *menakıbnâme*.²⁷⁶ Bedreddin began to chat with them and asked them why they betrayed Bayezid I. They responded that Bayezid had neither paid them nor showed them respect. Thus, they abandoned him just as the other *emirs* had done. However, they included that Timur had also

²⁷¹ Hafız Halil menkb, 47-49. According to Balivet, there was a need for well educated ulema in Rumelia so the father wanted Bedreddin to return back to the region; see Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 45.

²⁷² Hafız Halil menkb, 49-55.

²⁷³ Hafız Halil menkb, 55-56.

²⁷⁴ Hafız Halil menkb, 56-57.

²⁷⁵ Hafız Halil menkb, 57-58.

²⁷⁶ Hafız Halil menkb, 58.

humiliated them while they were expecting to be honored.²⁷⁷ In the course of the conversation a servant approached and told him that Cezeri was waiting for him. Cezeri invited Bedreddin into a discussion where Timur was also present. Again the *menakıbnâme* praised Bedreddin's intellect by mentioning how Timur was impressed by the Şeyh. This resulted in common meetings and finally as a token of appreciation Timur offered the great 'alim his daughter, a province in his realm, and the position of Sheikh ul-Islam.²⁷⁸ However, Bedreddin was aware that Ahlati looked on him favorably as the successor to the capitol of his order, or *hanikah*. One night, after seeing Ahlati in a dream, Bedreddin decided to travel to visit Ahlati. Bedreddin used this dream as an excuse to return.²⁷⁹ Following Ahlati's death he became the şeyh of the *hanikah* but the other caliphs opposed his leadership and struggles emerged among them. Bedreddin stayed in the *hanikah* for six more months but then he decided to leave the city and returned back to his homeland.²⁸⁰

During his journey back, he first went to Damascus and then to Halep. The *menakıbnâme* mentions that upon hearing of his coming, thousands of Turcomans greeted Bedreddin in Halep.²⁸¹ However, Bedreddin wished to continue his journey and went to Konya, the place he received his early education. He stayed in the city for a while. Once more, Bedreddin's fame is stressed. The Bey of Karaman wanted to see him and invited him to his place. The *menakıbnâme* mentions that although the Bey was a faithless man, he was impressed by the Şeyh and became his *mürîd*, or follower.²⁸² During his stay in Konya he also got in contact with Şeyh Hamid-i Veli,

²⁷⁷ Hafız Halil menkb, 58-59.

²⁷⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 59-62.

²⁷⁹ Hafız Halil menkb, 62-65.

²⁸⁰ Hafız Halil menkb, 83-84.

²⁸¹ Hafız Halil menkb, 85.

²⁸² Hafız Halil menkb, 85-87.

the member of the Bayramiyye order and a follower of Hacı Bayram.²⁸³ He then passed to the territory of the Germiyan. In this region he was greeted by the Germiyan Bey and his mother with kindness.²⁸⁴ He continued his journey to the territory of the Aydın principality. He went to Tire where he was again invited by the Bey of İzmir.²⁸⁵ According to the *menakıbnâme*, the people of the İzmir castle, who numbered around four or five hundred, saw Bedreddin in their dreams even before they met him. When Bedreddin came to this castle, all of them became his *mürîd*.²⁸⁶ The reputation of his miracles spread around and influenced the priests of the Chios Island, who came to İzmir with the son of the Bey of the Island. They gave many gifts to Bedreddin and invited him to their island as their guest. They wanted him to accept their invitation *for the sake of Muhammad, Jesus and Moses* as the text mentions.²⁸⁷ They even offered to leave the son of the Bey of Chios as a hostage in order to assure his safe return from the island. Trusting these priests, however, he refused this offer. He sailed with them to the island where he stayed for ten days. During this stay five of the priests became Muslims. Two of them were from Enez (Ainos) and were invited by Bedreddin to Edirne.²⁸⁸

After his visit to the Chios Island, Bedreddin decided to continue his journey to Edirne. However, he had to extend this journey because the Beys of Rum²⁸⁹ were at war, so he passed to Kütahya and Domaniç through Bursa²⁹⁰. In the village of Sürme²⁹¹ he came across a group of *Torlaks*.²⁹² They were very impressed by him

²⁸³ Hafız Halil menkb, 87. Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyân*, 54-55.

²⁸⁴ Hafız Halil menkb, 88.

²⁸⁵ The Bey of İzmir was Cüneyd who later became a big trouble for the Ottoman State.

²⁸⁶ Hafız Halil menkb, 88-89.

²⁸⁷ Hafız Halil menkb, 89-90.

²⁸⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 90-93.

²⁸⁹ The *menakıbnâme* most probably refers to the war between Mehmed I and his brother İsa who was allied with the beys of Aydın, İzmir, Menteşe and Saruhan; see Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyân*, 65.

²⁹⁰ Hafız Halil menkb, 93.

²⁹¹ Balivet mentions that this village was at the skirts of the mountain Keşişdağ.

and became his followers too. They accompanied him to Bursa, but they did not enter the city.²⁹³ Following Bursa he passed to Thrace and arrived in Edirne from Gallipoli. Soon after his arrival to the city, the *menakıbnâme* suggests that he got an invitation from Bursa and returned to this city and then continued to Aydın. When he returned to Edirne, he stayed in solitude for seven years.²⁹⁴

While Bedreddin was in Edirne one of the priests from Enez, who was invited to follow him from the Island of Chios, appeared before his door with his family. The power of Bedreddin to convert is once more manifested in this story. He and his family – except his sister²⁹⁵ who was married to an Armenian – all became Muslims and lived with him from then on.²⁹⁶

This was a time of the struggle between two princes, Musa and Süleyman. After Musa defeated his brother he became the ruler of Rumelia. The *menakıbnâme* mentions that among many candidates it was to Bedreddin that Musa offered the position of *kazasker*, and the Şeyh accepted this offer.²⁹⁷ However, Mehmed I defeated his brother Musa and became the new ruler of the Ottomans. As a result, Bedreddin was exiled to İznik. During his exile in İznik he completed his book *et-Teshil*.²⁹⁸ Then he escaped from the city. According to Hafız Halil, Bedreddin asked the Sultan to leave İznik to go to Cairo for pilgrimage and for a visit of his followers. When the Sultan refused his demand he had to leave the city without permission.²⁹⁹

²⁹² Torlaks were a branch of the Kalenderi (a heterodox Sufi) movement; see page 16.

²⁹³ Hafız Halil menkb, 93-94.

²⁹⁴ Hafız Halil menkb, 94-95.

²⁹⁵ This woman's daughter later became the mother of the writer of this *menakıbnâme*.

²⁹⁶ Hafız Halil menkb, 95-96.

²⁹⁷ Hafız Halil menkb, 97-100.

²⁹⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 101-102.

²⁹⁹ Hafız Halil menkb, 102.

He first went to İsfendiyaroğlu.³⁰⁰ The night that Bedreddin arrived in the region the local Bey had just had a son, who was then given his name, İsmail, by the Şeyh.³⁰¹ Then they began to talk about Bedreddin's situation. Bedreddin was considering fleeing to the son of Timur, Şahruh. The Bey, who did not wish to act against Mehmed I, was alarmed. Thus, he tried to discourage the Şeyh from going to Şahruh. In this part of the *menakıbnâme* Şahruh was described by the Bey as a murderer, the enemy of the Ottoman state and a liar. He added that if Bedreddin trusted Şahruh he would live to regret it.³⁰² He advised the Şeyh instead to go to the Crimean Tatars as his delegate.³⁰³ He even arranged a ship for Şeyh.³⁰⁴ However, Bedreddin's ship changed its direction and went to Wallachia where Şeyh had to abandon the ship.³⁰⁵ More mysticism is added when the *menakıbnâme* mentions that this action brought bad luck to captain and he was eventually captured there. His survival was the result of another miracle. At night, the priests saw Şeyh in their dreams with Jesus and thus the captain was released. He became a follower of Bedreddin and travelled around Chios, İzmir and Serez.³⁰⁶ On the other hand, in Wallachia the *infidels* recognized Bedreddin and brought him to their city showing their respect. There Bedreddin met an old supporter of Musa who, after the defeat of his patron, had escaped. This man was helpful to Bedreddin.³⁰⁷

Bedreddin then traveled to Deliorman where he was greeted with presents by a crowd. The locals there had benefited from Bedreddin when he was the *kazasker* of

³⁰⁰ It was the principality that was given to İsfendiyar Bey, who was the heir of the Candaroğlu Principality, by Timur following the battle of Ankara. This region, including the city of Kastamonu, covered the lands of the Candaroğlu principality; see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 1 (Türk Tarih Kurumu), 83-85

³⁰¹ Hafız Halil menkb, 102-103.

³⁰² Hafız Halil menkb, 104.

³⁰³ Hafız Halil menkb, 103.

³⁰⁴ The need to remove Bedreddin was obvious, for otherwise Mehmed I would be provoked against İsfendiyaroğlu.

³⁰⁵ Hafız Halil menkb, 105-106.

³⁰⁶ Hafız Halil menkb, 107-109.

³⁰⁷ Hafız Halil menkb, 109-110.

Musa.³⁰⁸ Mehmed I was informed of his arrival. However, the *menakıbnâme* says that no one around the sultan protected or supported Bedreddin but rather that there were only malicious people who wished to hurt Bedreddin. As such, they began to mislead the Sultan against the Şeyh.³⁰⁹ The servants of Mehmed I brought the Şeyh to Serez and jailed him.³¹⁰ According to Hafız Halil, some *ulema* hated Bedreddin because they were jealous of his religious knowledge and the number of his followers. Therefore, they worked against Bedreddin.³¹¹ On the other hand, the Sultan was afraid of the number of his supporters and the possibility of their opposition against the state.³¹² Following his capture the Sultan and later Molla Haydar Herevi from Iran engaged him in conversation. After two days of talking, Molla announced the innocence of Bedreddin. However, according to *menakıbnâme*, the grand vizier Bayezid Pasha and Fahreddin Acemi were responsible for the execution of Şeyh.³¹³ His execution was authorized by a fatwa mentioning that the blood of Bedreddin was *helal* (permissible) but his property was *haram* (forbidden). However, *menakıbnâme* suggests, the decision to execute him was a result of slander.³¹⁴ As a result Bedreddin was hanged in Serez in 1416.

4.2. Discussion of the *Menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin

The *menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin is an important source for our purpose, which is to analyze the character of opposing groups of the Ottoman central authority in the early fifteenth century. Therefore, in line with our methodology, we will first try to identify the political ‘otherness’ of Bedreddin and his supporters both in the

³⁰⁸ Hafız Halil menkb, 111.

³⁰⁹ Hafız Halil menkb, 111-112.

³¹⁰ Hafız Halil menkb, 112-116.

³¹¹ Hafız Halil menkb, 119.

³¹² Hafız Halil menkb, 118.

³¹³ Hafız Halil menkb, 121-123.

³¹⁴ Hafız Halil menkb, 130.

menakıbnâme and various chronicles of the century, and then we will proceed to examine their *otherness*.

Both in the chronicles of the fifteenth century and in his *menakıbnâme*, the political *otherness* of Bedreddin was clearly depicted. The details provided pertaining to the works of Bedreddin is identical in all of the chronicles. When Bedreddin arrived in Deliorman, he pronounced himself as the new *sultan* and he claimed to be the *owner of the throne*. He even provoked the people on his behalf and offered them *sancak*, *timar* and *subaşılık* in return for their support.³¹⁵ This statement, showing Bedreddin's claim to be the *sultan* instead of Mehmed I, clearly represents the political *otherness* of Bedreddin. In addition to this, although it seems that Hafız Halil wrote the *menakıbnâme* to acquit his grandfather in the public memory, the *menakıbnâme* itself gives us significant clues that may be employed to argue that Bedreddin was indeed a political *other* to the Ottoman government. For instance, the *menakıbnâme* mentions that escaping from İznik, Bedreddin came directly to İsfendiyaroğlu and shared his plan about fleeing to Timur's son Şahruh.³¹⁶ Bedreddin's choice to go to İsfendiyaroğlu as his first stop after his escape from İznik, as well as his future plan to seek the protection of Şahruh, is telling. According to Michel Balivet, the bey of İsfendiyaroğlu was systematically making alliances with the enemies of the Ottoman State during this period.³¹⁷ Hayrunnisa Alan also suggests that the strength of Şahruh and other Timurids was an important threat against the Ottomans even until the end of the Murad II's reign.³¹⁸ Although we cannot be absolutely sure with whom it was that Bedreddin really allied, it is obvious

³¹⁵ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 89- 90; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 76; Giese, *Anonim Tevârih-i Al-i Osman*, 58; Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma: Neşri Tarihi*, 545-547.

³¹⁶ Hafız Halil menkb, 104.

³¹⁷ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 85.

³¹⁸ Hayrunnisa Alan, *Bozkırdan Cennet Bahçesine Timurlular (1360-1506)*, (İstanbul : Ötüken, 2007), p. 260.

that there is a language of political *otherness* constructed by relating Bedreddin to such places and people so closely associated with political opposition to Ottoman rule.

Other than this, the *menakıbnâme* of Bedreddin depicts the milieu in which the personality of Bedreddin was molded. It is obvious that Bedreddin was from a distinguished *ghazi* family: his grandfather Abdülaziz was a *ghazi* bey and his father İsrail was also a *ghazi* bey, the latter of whom accompanied Süleyman Bey (the son of Orhan) and the Ottoman commander Hacı İlbey, alongside five other *ghazi* beys, on their raids of Rumelia. His father was married to the daughter of the tekfur of Dimetoka and he was born in this newly conquered town before the capture of Edirne. He is a product of a mixed marriage, who grew up in an Ottoman frontier region. On top of this, not only his mother but his wife and daughter-in-law were Christians too. He was even born in an old church that had been converted into a house. This is important because as Michel Balivet describes the Ottomans generally converted churches in newly conquered lands to mosques, but in this example it did not happen like that and the church was used as residence.³¹⁹ On the other hand, according to Balivet, this situation indicates that Bedreddin was born in a milieu that had not yet developed strong links with the Muslim world. In other words, it was an environment that had not yet been completely Islamized after its conquest by the Ottomans.³²⁰ Thus, we may infer that Bedreddin would have been familiar with Christian circles. On the other hand, the *menakıbnâme* emphasizes the fact that Bedreddin was a well educated *fıkıh* scholar, which means he had distinguished

³¹⁹ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 39.

³²⁰ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, 39.

knowledge of classic Islamic traditions,³²¹ and he was good enough to be the teacher of the son of Berkuk, the Sultan of the Mamluk Burji dynasty. He was also a famous Sufi şeyh. As we learn from the *menakıbnâme* he was influenced very much by Ahlati. After experiencing a deep mystic suffering period, he became a Sufi with many followers from varied regions as the *menakıbnâme* mentions. These were the factors we know about that shaped Bedreddin's personality.

As Şeyh Bedreddin was the leader of some serious revolts of the fifteenth century it is important to analyze these factors in the making of Bedreddin's personality. Looking into the transformation of these elements in time will serve to highlight the process of *otherization* in Bedreddin and his supporters and the meaning of their *otherness* vis-à-vis the central authority.

Firstly, the connection of Bedreddin to the *ghazi* environment is stressed in Cemal Kafadar's book *Between Two Worlds*. Kafadar establishes a link between the oppositional character of Bedreddin and the *ghazi* milieu of the time to central power.³²² He does not claim that all *ghazi* milieus had an adversarial character but he suggests that some of them did. He argues that at the time of Bedreddin, most *ghazis* acted differently than the *ghazi* father of Bedreddin or Hacı İlbey. Unlike these latter, who resembled the early *ghazis* in that they were more or less independent, the majority of the *ghazis* of Bedreddin's time were in the service of the Ottoman State. Kafadar also stresses, however, that these *ghazis* did not miss the opportunity to oppose to the Ottoman State when the conditions were appropriate.³²³

It seems crucial to note here that since Bedreddin grew up in a frontier region it is also necessary to examine the environment of the Ottoman frontier forces or

³²¹ It is important to note here that his grandfather was also the Sheikh ul-Islam of the Seljukid Sultan, Alaeddin Keykubad.

³²² Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 143.

³²³ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 144.

beys of the time. Based on the “enemy” front, in the Ottoman chronicles of the fifteenth century the supporters of Bedreddin were depicted as the ones who demanded offices and land grants or who had benefited from Bedreddin when he was in office.³²⁴ For this reason it is necessary to examine the reasons that drove these people to become opponents of the central authority to get *timar* or *sancak* from Bedreddin.

According to Halil İnalçık the economic facilities and military functions of the Ottoman State were primarily based on the *timar* system.³²⁵ After a conquest the first job of the State was to search and examine the potential sources of income from the conquered area. At that time this information was recorded in detail in official documents. Then the lands were divided among the members of the military class, especially among the *sipahis*. These lands granted to members of the military class were called *timar*.³²⁶ He also suggests that in the early period of the Ottoman history the right to hold *timar* could pass from father to son.³²⁷ However, in time the state began to grant the *timar* especially to the members of the *Kapıkulu* (the slaves of the Sultan’s Porte) army.³²⁸ The *Kapıkulu* army consisted of the Sultan’s prisoners of war or youths who were levied from the Christian subjects of the Sultan. These soldiers were trained at the Sultan’s court.³²⁹ İnalçık proposes that Bayezid I was the one who strengthened this army’s power and significance in the State.³³⁰

According to İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, during the reign of Murad I as a result of the new conquests in Europe, the Ottoman frontiers became more distant and the

³²⁴ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 90; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 76; Giese, *Anonim Tevârih-i Al-i Osman*, 58; Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma: Neşri Tarihi*, 547.

³²⁵ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 111.

³²⁶ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, ed. Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert, trans. Halil Berktaş, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004), p.175.

³²⁷ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 158.

³²⁸ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 176.

³²⁹ Halil İnalçık, “The Rise of the Ottoman Empire”, 28.

³³⁰ Halil İnalçık “Ottoman Methods of Conquest”, *Studia Islamica*, 2 (1954): 105.

conquests began to take longer to conclude. This situation created a need for more soldiers for the crashing raids in Rumelia and in the Balkans.³³¹ According to the fifteenth century chronicler Aşıkpaşazade, the ‘alim Molla Rüstem from Konya argued to Çandarlı Halil, the vizier, that under God’s law the ruler had a right to one out of five prisoners taken in war, known as *pençik*. When Halil told this to Murad I he decided to regulate this system.³³² As stated by Abdülkadir Özcan, the war-prisoners were collected as the slaves (*kul*) of the Sultan and trained according to the Ottoman-Islamic traditions for some years. Then they came to the Porte of the Sultan as his own force. These were called as *Kapıkulu* (the slave of the Porte)³³³. These *kapıkulu* soldiers were organized in two main groups; as infantry and cavalry. The infantry, Janissary (*Yeniçeri*), troop became the first established force unit of the *kapıkulu* system.³³⁴ The *kapıkulu* soldiers took their commands directly from the Sultan. They did not serve only in battle but also served in the palace or in official positions of the State. When a boy became a *kapıkulu*, depending on his talent, he could climb all the hierarchical steps and even become the grand vizier.³³⁵

During the reign of Bayezid I the number of the *kapıkulu* soldiers increased. To actualize his centralization policy Bayezid began to appoint the important military or governmental officers among these *kapıkulus*.³³⁶ Özcan also suggests that these *kapıkulu* soldiers became an important tool of the state against the frontier beys who were acting as semi-feudal forces at the time.³³⁷ In addition to this, İnalçık suggests

³³¹ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, Vol. 1, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1984), 2.

³³² Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 58; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapıkulu Ocakları*, 6.

³³³ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Kapıkulu” in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 24, (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988), 347-348.

³³⁴ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Kapıkulu”, 347.

³³⁵ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Kapıkulu”, 348.

³³⁶ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Kapıkulu”, 348.

³³⁷ Abdülkadir Özcan, “Kapıkulu”, 348.

that since the State emphasized their significance, the *Kapıkulu* forces became one of the main supporters and protectors of the central authority; the central authority was the guarantee of their status and privileges.³³⁸ On the other hand, as we mentioned before, İnalçık suggests that in the early period of the Ottoman history, the right to hold a *timar* could pass from a father to son automatically. According to him, it was necessary to incorporate the local families into the *timar* system. However, with the growing power of the central authority, the Ottoman government preferred to abandon the principle of hereditary rights pertaining to the *timar* system.³³⁹

Unsympathetic to these centralizing reforms, the distinguished and the powerful families of both Anatolia and the Balkans acted against the central authority to keep their privileges intact.³⁴⁰ İnalçık says that especially the regions of Dobrudja and Deliorman became a center for these people who were against the centralization policy.³⁴¹ İnalçık also adds that in the *timar* distribution the priority was given to the members of the *kapıkulu* army, especially the ones that showed success in combat.³⁴² However, there was a need for more *timars* and this was creating tension between the frontier raiders who were hoping to get *timar* and the ones who already had it.³⁴³ The situation was not different in Anatolia. The *sipahis* of the former Anatolian emirates were not happy with the Ottoman regime since their holdings were taken away. Especially in the fifteenth century, there was a huge discontent between these old *timar* holders and the central authority and its centralizing regime.³⁴⁴ Thus, we may assume that this discontentment played a role

³³⁸ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 28.

³³⁹ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 158.

³⁴⁰ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 18.

³⁴¹ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 18.

³⁴² Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, 176.

³⁴³ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 116.

³⁴⁴ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 116.

in the uprisings of the fifteenth century, such as the revolt of Şeyh Bedreddin in 1416.³⁴⁵

In addition to this, Paul Wittek states that during the civil war, Süleyman followed a mild policy in the Balkans³⁴⁶ and this peace regime increased the hatred of the frontier forces that were in need of new *timars*. Due to the cessation of raids the State could not get income from booty. Therefore it began demanding heavier taxes from its subjects. Since the majority of the population in the region depended on the raids for their livelihood, the ill-will harbored by the frontier forces for the Süleyman's regime increased.³⁴⁷ İnalçık states that the brother of Süleyman, Musa, got the support of these forces against his brother and became the victor in the region. At that time *ghazi* Mikhaloğlu became the *beylerbeyi*, or general governor, of Rumelia. Musa also appointed Şeyh Bedreddin as his *kazasker*, or military judge. Mikhaloğlu and Şeyh Bedreddin had distributed *timars* among the frontier officers and soldiers³⁴⁸ and presumably he got their support. As we mention before, İnalçık also adds that frontier soldiers and officers hated the fact that the inland forces held rich *timars* and especially that in the *timar* distribution preference was given to the *kapıkulu* soldiers.³⁴⁹

The *menakıbnâme* also supports this assumption with a story that explained what happened between Bedreddin and Tatar soldiers in Tabriz. According to this story, Bedreddin asked these soldiers the reason of their betrayal of Bayezid on behalf of Timur. They responded that Bayezid neither paid them the salaries nor the

³⁴⁵ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600*, 18.

³⁴⁶ Heath Lowry also mentions about Süleyman's mild policy in a passage where he examines the Ahmedî's İskendernâme and stresses the fact that the only war that Süleyman dealt with was against his own brothers; see Heath Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 30.

³⁴⁷ Paul Wittek, "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbulun Zaptına", 574.

³⁴⁸ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 33-34.

³⁴⁹ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire", 33-34.

respect they were due. In addition to this, the chronicles of the fifteenth century tell us that Bayezid remained all alone only with his *kapıkulu* and *yeniçeri* army while the remainder of his forces turned their backs to him.³⁵⁰ We may thus infer that these other forces were at least in part influenced by their hatred of the centralization policy of Bayezid. According to Aşıkpaşazade even a *kul* of Bayezid criticized his policy. This *kul* blamed the Sultan for creating a central treasury and collecting the money there, and in doing so dissatisfying his forces who then were to defect to the side of Timur.³⁵¹ Thus the revolts associated with Bedreddin may be seen as a case of the old *timar* holders, especially the frontier forces, growing in their opposition to the central authority and eventually banding together in open resistance.

The other important point that needs to be examined is the Sufi character of Bedreddin and his followers. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak suggests that heterodox groups, namely the *Kalenderis*, constituted the majority of those involved in the uprisings of Börklüce Mustafa in the region of Aydın, the uprisings of Torlak Kemal in Manisa, and those of Bedreddin in Dobrudja.³⁵² As evidence for this assertion, he notes that the followers of Börklüce were described by the Byzantine chronicler Ducas as of “naked feet and bald head,”³⁵³ and because of this description Ocak identifies them as *Kalenderis*.³⁵⁴ The other revolt in Manisa was directed by Torlak Kemal and his *Torlak* followers.³⁵⁵ Ocak also argues that *Torlaks* were a branch of the *Kalenderi* movement. They too were known to wander near-naked, barefoot, shaving their heads, beards, moustaches and eyebrows, and used hashish, just as did the other *Kalenderi* groups. On the other hand, the members of this group were generally

³⁵⁰ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 61; Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 78.

³⁵¹ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 78.

³⁵² Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 127.

³⁵³ Ducas, *Bizans Tarihi*, 68.

³⁵⁴ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 127.

³⁵⁵ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 90; Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 76; Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma: Neşri Tarihi*, 545.

described as uneducated, unkind, and burglars by the primary sources, especially by European writers.³⁵⁶ These *Torlaks* were also associated with Bedreddin and we know that in his *menakıbnâme* the writer devotes a section to the first meeting between the group and Bedreddin. In addition, Ocak states that the majority of those in the region of Dobrudja, in which the Bedreddin revolt took place, were members of another heterodox group known as *Işık*. He adds that the term *Işık* was used for *Abdalan-i Rum* or in other word for the *Babais*. In Dobrudja there was a *zaviye*, or shrine, of Sarı Saltuk which was the center of these *Işıks*. According to Ocak, after his escape from İznik Bedreddin came here and gathered strong support from these people.³⁵⁷

Ahmet Yaşar Ocak and Michel Balivet argue that Bedreddin was also associated with another heterodox group. According to Ocak, Şeyh Bedreddin was influenced by the ascetic Sufi movement of the *Halvetiyye*. This movement was established by Fazlullah-i Esterabadi in Iran in 1394 and influenced a number of heterodox people in the region. Later his movement was forbidden and he was hanged during the time of the Timurid Empire. His followers escaped. Ocak suggests that they escaped to the regions of Sivas, Eskişehir, Tire, Akçahisar and to middle and western Anatolia in great numbers. They also fled to Rumelia and Balkans.³⁵⁸ The *Halvetiyye* faith consisted of some elements from ancient Iranian religions, Christianity, and Cabbalism. These elements were mixed and interpreted by Sufi Islamic thoughts.³⁵⁹ Especially incarnation and the *Mahdi* faith were distinguishing

³⁵⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 115-116.

³⁵⁷ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 128.

³⁵⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 131-133. Even during the reign of Mehmed II they could entered the palace; but as a result of the provocations of the grand vizier Mahmud Paşa and Müftü Molla Fahreddin- i Acemi on their belief of incarnation, they were kicked out the palace.

³⁵⁹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 132.

features of the movement.³⁶⁰ It is important because some chronicles of the fifteenth century suggest that Bedreddin or Börklüce Mustafa were claiming themselves as the *Mahdi*.³⁶¹

All these factors support the idea that heterodox Sufi groups also played their part in the revolts associated with Bedreddin against the central authority. More research, however, would be needed before such a conclusion could be definitively affirmed. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak suggests that during the foundation period of the Ottoman State the Ottoman rulers were in close contact with ascetic dervishes, especially the *Babai* dervishes (*Abdalan-i Rum*) who were fighting at the frontiers with their hundreds of followers and were very useful in the raids.³⁶² Ocak also argues that the Ottoman rulers took advantage of these dervishes' spiritual authority to legitimize their own, over the population that was faithful to these dervishes.³⁶³ Since these Ottoman rulers benefited from the dervishes' authority they gave them some privileges in return for their help.³⁶⁴ In this way the dervishes established their *zaviyes* (dervish lodges) in the conquered lands and they even strengthened these *zaviyes* with rich *vakfs*.³⁶⁵ This mutually beneficial relationship between them and the Ottoman rulers developed in time and gradually a policy based on this relationship was established.³⁶⁶ Ocak also asserts that the growing relations as parallel to the growing power of the State caused the gradual replacement of the popular mystic character of Islam, which was dominant at the early period of the State, by *fıkıh* (Islamic law) until the fifteenth century. This was also a period of

³⁶⁰ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 140.

³⁶¹ Oruç wrote that Börklüce claimed himself as prophet in the Aydın region in his chronicle, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 75. In addition to this, *The Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* (F. Giese) wrote that Bedreddin was claiming himself as Sultan Mahdi, 57.

³⁶² Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 126-127.

³⁶³ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 118-119.

³⁶⁴ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 126-127.

³⁶⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 118.

³⁶⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 126-127.

politization of Islam within the Ottoman State.³⁶⁷ In the foundation period the *medreses* were functioning as the legitimizing tool of the Ottoman government. *Ulema* became an important part of this legitimizing period, since these *medreses* were being organized by them. In this way the *ulema*, the representatives of Islam, also became a representative unit of the central government.³⁶⁸ Ocak advances his argument suggesting that in the early fifteenth century, with the help of the Medrese organization Sunni Islam with all its theoretical and practical traditions began to take its place in the central bureaucratic institutions.³⁶⁹ In addition to this, as a result of the conquests of the principalities of Anatolia, bureaucrats and *ulema* came to the Ottoman State for service. These newcomers helped to establish political, social and juristic organizations of the state and society by using classical *fıkıh* (Islamic law). This argument of Ocak supports the idea that the early heterodox dervishes and the population that they represented began to lose their respectful place in the State as the *ulema* began to replace them. This process seems eventually to lead to the treatment of heterodox groups as opponents of the central authority and to their *otherization* vis-à-vis the State. The process of *otherness* is reflected in the Ottoman chronicles. Aşıkpaşazade calls the Sufis that helped Bedreddin in Serez *bad devotees*.³⁷⁰ Oruç blames Börklüce Mustafa and Torlak Kemal as spreading *malicious ideas* in the region.³⁷¹ He also states that Torlak Kemal and his followers were acting *ungodly* and *hypocritically*.³⁷² The early sixteenth-century Ottoman historian Yusuf bin Abdullah also suggests that Bedreddin was *persuaded by the*

³⁶⁷ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 93.

³⁶⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 93.

³⁶⁹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 94.

³⁷⁰ Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 90.

³⁷¹ Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 74, 76.

³⁷² Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, 76.

devil.³⁷³ He also describes Torlak Kemal and his followers as *ungodly*³⁷⁴ but more interestingly he determines the Sufis around Börklüce Mustafa to have a *devil face* (*div-suret*) and calls them being *Lut-worshippers* (*Lut-perest*).³⁷⁵

To summarize, from the *menakıbnâme* of the rioter Bedreddin the opponent groups of the Ottoman central authority during the early fifteenth century, including the frontier beys, frontier soldiers who were in need of *timar*, and heterodox groups, are all described as *other* to the central authority.

4.3. Summary of the *Menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba

Otman Baba came to Anatolia from the east at the time of Timur's invasion in 1402.³⁷⁶ However, it is not certain where he was originally from. It is only known that he spoke with an Oğuz accent.³⁷⁷ He traveled in the regions of Germiyan, Saruhan, Bursa, and İznik, but spent most of his life in Rumelia and the Balkans.³⁷⁸ In the regions he travelled people seemed to think of him as crazy,³⁷⁹ epileptic,³⁸⁰ or as an escapee.³⁸¹ When travelling alone, he generally ate wild plants or tree barks.³⁸² Sometimes he would stay in a village and work there for a while, helping the poor and those in need,³⁸³ helping the peasants in their harvest, working as a shepherd,³⁸⁴ or as a worker in the mills.³⁸⁵

³⁷³ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*, 97.

³⁷⁴ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*, 101.

³⁷⁵ Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*, 99.

³⁷⁶ Filiz Kılıç, Mustafa Arslan and Tuncay Bülbül, *Otman Baba Velayetnamesi*, (Ankara, 2007), 17. We will refer to this book as "Otman Baba menkb" from now on.

³⁷⁷ Otman Baba mnkb, 16.

³⁷⁸ Otman Baba mnkb, 18.

³⁷⁹ Otman Baba mnkb, 18, 25, 36, 41, 50, 54.

³⁸⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 36, 50, 54.

³⁸¹ Otman Baba mnkb, 18, 22, 25, 29, 34, 48.

³⁸² Otman Baba mnkb, 25, 30.

³⁸³ Otman Baba mnkb, 30.

³⁸⁴ Otman Baba mnkb, 49.

³⁸⁵ Otman Baba mnkb, 50.

We learn his real name from one of the stories in the *menakıbnâme*. According to this story, one day Otman appeared in the Balkan Mountain. There was a group of men, all brothers, who were cutting wood. They saw Otman and asked him what he was doing there and what he was eating on the mountain. He answered that his name was Hüsam Şah and he ate tree leaves and plants. They assumed that he was a crazy person. Thus, they brought him into their village. However, according to *menakıbnâme*, their father realized that he was not crazy or an escapee but a holy person who possessed the secret of both worlds.³⁸⁶

In another story, he explains the meaning of *abdâl*. According to the story, he was again in the Balkan Mountain where a group of people were hunting. They saw Otman and then brought him to Tırnova, to the *kadı* of the city. The *kadı* asked him his identity and the meaning of *abdâl*. He responded to the *kadı* that he, himself, was the representative of God and *abdâl* was a person that arrives in the unity of God by passing through all worldly stages.³⁸⁷

The power of Otman Baba to predict the future and his attitude towards worldly titles and goods is depicted in the *menakıbnâme*. One day Mehmed II and his vizier Mahmud Paşa were coming back from hunting. Otman Baba was sitting in front of the Silivri Gate of İstanbul. The Sultan was planning to make a raid on Belgrade and he was talking about this with Mahmud Paşa. Then, Otman Baba suddenly and loudly spoke to the Sultan that he should not make this raid because he would not be successful. Hearing this Mehmed II drew his sword. Then Mahmud Paşa warned him about Otman Baba. He told the Sultan that Otman Baba was not a regular or ordinary person but a saint and then Mehmed II calmed down.

³⁸⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 25. In this story the writer also mentioned that these people were semi-nomads that were preparing to move to a plateau.

³⁸⁷ Otman Baba mnkb, 26.

Subsequently, the Sultan marched to Belgrade but he was not successful as predicted by Otman.³⁸⁸ Following his return to İstanbul Mehmed II met him again. Otman Baba stopped the Sultan and asked “who was the Sultan you or me?” The Sultan remembered him and answered as “you are!” and kissed his hand. The respect of the powerful Sultan towards the hermit is shown when he said “you are the owner of the secret and I am inferior to you.”³⁸⁹ To show respect the Sultan then ordered his servant to give money to Baba. That was perceived as an insult by the Baba who angrily yelled at him “don’t give me this shit, take it back now.”³⁹⁰

According to the story, his fearless attitude impressed people and increased his popularity. For instance, one day he was in Yanbolu. Once more the inhabitants could not be sure about his identity: “was he an epileptic, or just a crazy person, or what?” Then one person among them mentioned that he was the one who made Mehmed II consternated and silent. Upon hearing this, the inhabitants of Yanbolu showed him great respect.³⁹¹

In his frequent travels he would occasionally stay in *tekkes*, such as the one in Vardar known as the Bayezid Baba *tekke*. A dervish of Bayezid Baba whose name was Mümin Dervish chose Otman as his *evliya* (saint) and they travelled around together and collected offerings from the people. Otman Baba, being above worldly affairs, despised the dervish’s lust for cash.³⁹² Due to this attitude, the number of his followers increased. For instance, the shepherds of Dobrudja came to him and became his dervishes. In the Çölmek village a worshipper came from Dobrudja and

³⁸⁸ Otman Baba mnkb, 38.

³⁸⁹ Otman Baba mnkb, 39.

³⁹⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 40.

³⁹¹ Otman Baba mnkb, 54.

³⁹² Otman Baba mnkb, 71, 87.

became a dervish of Otman and brought four or five thousands akçe (coin) and innumerable sheep.³⁹³

A Turcoman *subaşı* from Yanbolu,³⁹⁴ a *sancakbey* from Varna whose name was İsa Bey,³⁹⁵ and a *ghazi* bey called Mihaloğlu Ali who was preparing raids at the frontiers³⁹⁶ were the governors that protected Otman Baba according to the *menakıbnâme*. For example, one day Otman came to a garden near the city of Varna and commanded his *abdals* to cut some trees of this garden and burn them. When the trees were burnt and the owners of the garden saw this they cried out. They went to the *kadı* of the city to complain about the situation. They said that “Baba and a group of his thieves cut down our trees and destroyed our garden.” The *kadı* told the situation to the *sancakbey*, İsa Bey, but İsa responded to the *kadı* that he had no power over Otman.³⁹⁷

The volatile character of Otman Baba and his followers is apparent in the following story. According to the *menakıbnâme*, Otman Baba and his barefooted *abdals*, numbering around three hundred, went to Edirne to the Balaban *tekke*. The sight of them shocked the inhabitants of Edirne as they were so unconventional. When they came to see Otman and the *abdals* Otman Baba hit them with his club.³⁹⁸ The inhabitants’ opinion about him was divided. Some supposed that Otman was an infidel that was claiming himself as God. Some others wanted to burn him. Others accepted him as a saint. Some even resorted to the *kadı* saying Otman Baba came to the city to spread malicious ideas with a group of men that wore sacks. They also added that the group did not even announce God’s name and pray for God. The *kadı*

³⁹³ Otman Baba mnkb, 173. It is quite interesting for someone who had little regard for money to mention this.

³⁹⁴ Otman Baba mnkb, 94-97.

³⁹⁵ Otman Baba mnkb, 127-128.

³⁹⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 168-171.

³⁹⁷ Otman Baba mnkb, 130.

³⁹⁸ Otman Baba mnkb, 155.

sent his investigators. He eventually ruled that if Otman was a crazy person, according to Holy Law, they could not punish him.³⁹⁹ The fact that he might not be sane is depicted in his actions afterwards. He went to a shop in Edirne and seized it. After burning all the furnishings in the shop he stayed there for three days. On the fourth day with his club in his hand, he went to a butcher's shop and threw the meat hanging to the mud. He also destroyed the bazaar.⁴⁰⁰ Then he returned to the Balaban Baba *tekke*. As a reaction to this, the inhabitants of Edirne went to the *kadı* to complain about all the destruction in the butcher's shop and bazaar. The *kadı* had to reprimand some of his *abdals*. The *kadı* told them to leave the city and take Otman with them, and warned them that if they did not comply he would put them in jail.⁴⁰¹

The acts of Otman Baba and his followers continued to create trouble in Edirne. Some of Otman's *abdals* went to a *tekke* in the city where *şeyhs* and people from the *ulema* class were gathered. These *şeyhs* and *ulema* asked these *abdals*, "your father, Otman, does not look like any people so what is his origin?"⁴⁰² The *abdals* answered that "he is the head of the universe." Upon receiving this answer, they who asked this question petitioned Mehmed II and complained of Otman and the *abdals*. They wrote that Otman Baba was a man that claimed himself to be the secret of God and also *Muhammad, Jesus, Moses and Adam*. They also added that Otman had troops of thieves, highwaymen, and murderers. According to the accusation, they were also involved in highway robbery.⁴⁰³ When Mehmed II received the letter he ordered his execution immediately. But *menakıbnâme* says that

³⁹⁹ Otman Baba mnkb, 156-157.

⁴⁰⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 162.

⁴⁰¹ Otman Baba mnkb, 164-165.

⁴⁰² Otman Baba mnkb, 189.

⁴⁰³ Otman Baba mnkb, 190. The accusations are interesting because both could bring the death sentence either because of heresy or because of the *hadd* punishment of highway robbery.

Mehmed II later saw Otman Baba in his dream and recalled this order.⁴⁰⁴ He gave another order instead to the *kadı* and *subaşı* of Edirne to send Otman Baba to the Porte.⁴⁰⁵

A *kul* (slave) of the Sultan tried to bring Otman and his dervishes to İstanbul. At first Otman caused trouble but in the end he acquiesced and complied.⁴⁰⁶ They first travelled to Edirne.⁴⁰⁷ According to the story, when Otman asked his *abdals* “where are you going?” and they responded “we are slaves and are being brought to İstanbul,” he responded that “you are liars, we are not slaves they are.”⁴⁰⁸ Finally, they entered İstanbul from the Silivri Gate. Some inhabitants of İstanbul greeted them with respect but some were shocked at their sight.⁴⁰⁹ The vizier of the Sultan was informed of their arrival. The grand vizier commanded to take them to Atmeydanı. The plan was to kill them, but when the vizier informed the Sultan of their arrival he instead commanded that they be taken to the Kılıç Monastery.⁴¹⁰

The Sultan’s viziers, *kazaskers*, *defterdars*, *subaşı*s, and *sipahis*, around a hundred men according to the *menakıbnâme*, went to the monastery to see Otman. To show respect, the grand vizier Sinan Paşa is depicted as kissing the hand of Otman, who was accompanied by more than a hundred seventy-three *abdals*. Then they all got involved in a discussion. During this conversation Otman never bent down. Once

⁴⁰⁴ Otman Baba mnkb, 190.

⁴⁰⁵ Otman Baba mnkb, 191.

⁴⁰⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 194-198.

⁴⁰⁷ Otman Baba mnkb, 198-200.

⁴⁰⁸ Otman Baba mnkb, 201.

⁴⁰⁹ Otman Baba mnkb, 205.

⁴¹⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 206. This was the monastery of Akataleptos and it had supposedly been converted into a *zaviye* that was dedicated to the *Kalenderis* by the Sultan, just after the conquest of Constantinople; see Şevki Koca, *Odman Baba Vilayetnamesi Vilayetname-i Şahi Gö’çek Abdal*, (Bektaşî Kültür Derneği, 2002), 229; Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 119. Also see, *Kalenderhane in Istanbul: the buildings, their history, architecture, and decoration: final reports on the archaeological exploration and restoration at Kalenderhane Camii*, 1966-1978, ed. Cecil L. Striker and Y. Doğan Kuban (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1997); Nejat Göyünç, “Kalenderhane Camii”, *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, 34 (1983-84): 485-494.

more the story stresses Otman Baba's disregard for money: when the *defterdar* wanted to give him a hundred akçe, Otman got angry and said him "to take this shit back."⁴¹¹

According to *menakıbnâme*, the source of Otman's fearless attitude and hatred of the possessions of this world was his belief.⁴¹² He believed that if someone does not see anything but God, he arrives at the reality of God. Nothing besides the vision of God covers his heart. He who tries to destroy him would not be successful because he would be one with God at that moment.⁴¹³ Otman Baba also strongly believed that he himself was the secret of God and the incarnation of the prophets Muhammad, Jesus and Moses.⁴¹⁴ On the other hand, the believers of orthodox Islam that were allied with *ulema* circles became the main opponents of Otman and his *abdals*. For instance, one time Mahmud Paşa sent his servant to give five thousand akçe to Otman. He wanted to give money to Otman, that Otman would pray for his long life. However, his aides from the *ulema* circles opposed this scheme threatening that if Mahmud gave the money to Otman Baba, they would throw their books into a river. Mahmud eventually gave money to them.⁴¹⁵ In more instances the tension between Otman Baba and the *ulema* is obvious. In İstanbul the *ulema* and their aids came together and said that Otman was claiming himself to be the God, and thus spreading malicious ideas. They said that their own credibility with the people had decreased and tried to display any fallacy on the part of Otman and his *abdals* that would warrant a suit being brought against them.⁴¹⁶ They even came to Mehmed II

⁴¹¹ Otman Baba mnkb, 212-214.

⁴¹² Otman Baba hated the goods of this world such as money what he calls as "shit"; see Otman Baba mnkb, 40, 124, 214.

⁴¹³ Otman Baba mnkb, 20.

⁴¹⁴ Otman Baba mnkb, 20.

⁴¹⁵ Otman Baba mnkb, 166-167.

⁴¹⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 217.

and complained about them.⁴¹⁷ They all demanded his execution. They said that at least some of these *abdals* should be killed since their existence was confusing the minds of the inhabitants.⁴¹⁸ However, Mehmed II took no action against Otman and his Rum *abdals*. He even offered a *tekke* and *vakfs* to him but Otman Baba refused them.⁴¹⁹

Eventually, the *menakıbnâme* mentions that in the end all Otman and his *abdals* left İstanbul.⁴²⁰ Otman Baba warned his *abdals* that they should not be like the mendicant *şeyhs*, who chase after money and privileges⁴²¹ and he died in 1478.⁴²²

4.4. Discussion of the *Menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba

The *menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba is important for us to examine because of the light it sheds on groups opposing the central authority around a half century after Bedreddin's revolts. We witness, in his *menakıbnâme*, that Otman was almost always in trouble with the institutions of the central government like the *ulema* and *kadıs*. The *menakıbnâme* also mentions that the inhabitants of the inland regions like Edirne or İstanbul greeted Otman and his followers as outcasts. Many times the people complained to the *kadıs* or to the Sultan about them. Even the *ulema* demanded that Mehmed II kill them. Following in the footsteps of Bedreddin fifty years earlier, Otman Baba and his followers function as the *other* vis-à-vis the Ottoman society. In the *menakıbnâme* Otman Baba is clearly described as the religious leader of the Rum *abdals* or *Abdalan-ı Rum* of the time, as the *menakıbnâme* calls Otman's followers

⁴¹⁷ Otman Baba mnkb, 218.

⁴¹⁸ Otman Baba mnkb, 215.

⁴¹⁹ Otman Baba mnkb, 223.

⁴²⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 256.

⁴²¹ Otman Baba mnkb, 262.

⁴²² Otman Baba mnkb, 268.

“Rum *abdals*.”⁴²³ In order to appreciate the characterization of the light shed on the period’s oppositional groups, then, it is necessary for us to more closely examine the Rum *abdals* specifically.

They were first mentioned in Aşıkpaşazade as *Abdalan-ı Rum* and were described as one of the four major groups that had populated Anatolia.⁴²⁴ Halil İnalçık gives vital information about these *abdals*. He describes them as very similar to the nomadic Turcoman tribes in life-style and culture. During the foundation period of the Ottoman State they were accepted with honor as holy characters. However, over time this respectful recognition lost its prestige in the minds of the people. They turned into a peripheral group excluded from the bulk of social life. They were alienated by the government, the people of the *medrese*, and by city-dwellers. Thus, they became the opponents of the central authority and its supporters: *medrese*, city people, and the government.⁴²⁵ We clearly notice this alienation in the *menakıbnâme*, as Otman is viewed to be crazy or an epileptic. The attitude of the inhabitants of Edirne is instructive: the inhabitants of the city were shocked at the curious sight of Otman.⁴²⁶ İnalçık also argues that the Turcoman life style and *abdals*’ heterodox Islamic belief system found refuge in Rumelia and in the Balkans as orthodox Sunni Islam took its place as the official religion of the State in the central government in the regions of Edirne and İstanbul. The frontier *ghazi* beys became their protectors. Otman Bey, for instance, became a religious character who had the respect and the protection of the frontier beys.⁴²⁷ This assumption of İnalçık fits with the data that the *menakıbnâme* gives us. For example that the *sancakbey*

⁴²³ Otman Baba mñkb, 167.

⁴²⁴ These four groups were Gaziyan-i Rum, Ahiyan-i Rum, Adbalan-i Rum and Baciyan-i Rum, see Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, 195.

⁴²⁵ Halil İnalçık, “Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed”, 145.

⁴²⁶ Otman Baba mñkb, 155.

⁴²⁷ Halil İnalçık, “Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed”, 146.

from Varna whose name was İsa Bey, and *ghazi* Mihaloğlu Ali Bey are clearly shown as the protectors of Otman in the source.⁴²⁸ İnalçık explains this by saying that the strong frontier beys were taking their *sancak* by inheritance and they were acting more or less independent from the central government. However, the centralization policy of the state was aiming at trying to reduce the power of these beys at the frontiers. Especially during the reign of Mehmed II their strength was mostly limited. Due to the centralization policy of the government they were ready to support the acts that were opposing central authority.⁴²⁹ Thus, he says, it is not surprising to see the cooperation between Otman Baba and the frontier beys.⁴³⁰

Ahmet Yaşar Ocak argues that *Abdalan-ı Rum* were members of the *Kalenderi* movement. They were also called *Babai* or *Abdal*. It is a well known fact that they were in close contact with the revolt under the leadership of Şeyh Baba İlyas and his disciple Baba İshak against the Seljukid Empire in 1240.⁴³¹ When the Seljuks suppressed this revolt the *abdals* had to escape to the mountainous areas or frontier regions like those of the Ottomans.⁴³² Ocak suggests that the *Kalenderi* movement came to Anatolia in two bodies. One group consisted of the people from the lower level strata and the other represented high level Sufi society. In Anatolia the popular *Kalenderi* movement gradually became the majority. In the fourteenth century the popular *Kalenderi* movement began to appear all over Anatolia, especially in the frontier regions.⁴³³

This religious movement that was followed by the *abdals* is quite interesting for the aim of this study. Ahmet Karamustafa asserts that the essence of *Kalenderi*

⁴²⁸ Otman Baba mñkb, 94-97, 127-128, 168-171.

⁴²⁹ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 150.

⁴³⁰ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 150-151.

⁴³¹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 79-81.

⁴³² Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Türk Dervişleri ve Zaviyeler", *Vakıflar Dergisi*, 2 (1942): 288-289.

⁴³³ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 79.

thought was that a person had to release himself from both of the worlds (this world and that of the after-life) and in this fashion a person could remove the obstacles separating him from the light of God, in other words “*one must die before he dies.*”⁴³⁴ Since this outlook was a symbol of the social identity of a person and social identity was a requirement of this world these dervishes also rejected dressing and acting like normal people. Thus they wore ugly clothes as a protest against society and would walk around almost naked, shaving off all the hair on their bodies, and eating wild weeds.⁴³⁵ That Otman Baba embodies this philosophy is also clearly evidenced in the *menakıbnâme*. For this reason he was generally considered by people as a crazy, epileptic or as an escapee person. The appearance of his followers is similarly characterized in the *menakıbnâme*.⁴³⁶

We learn from the *menakıbnâme* that Otman hated money and any kind of privilege, and this attitude on the part of Otman towards money and privileges can be assumed to be a result of his religious faith that requires rejection of the goods of this world. In precious article titled “Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed,” Halil İnalcık argues that Otman Baba was fighting against the ones that were oppressing the people to get privileges in *this world*. He was trying to bring *justice* back.⁴³⁷ This attitude, according to İnalcık, explains his closeness to other groups that were excluded from the Ottoman social life, such as frontier *ghazis* and Turcomans.⁴³⁸ İnalcık also adds that the majority of these *ghazis* were Turcomans who came from Anatolia to the frontiers for *gaza*, or holy war, and that their only income was the

⁴³⁴ Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Tanrının Kuraltanımaz Kulları: İslam Dünyasında Derviş Toplulukları, 1200-1550* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2007), 52-53.

⁴³⁵ Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Tanrının Kuraltanımaz Kulları: İslam Dünyasında Derviş Toplulukları, 52-53.*

⁴³⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 155-157. For instance, the source mentions that Otman Baba came to Edirne with his almost three hundreds naked foot abdals who wore sacks.

⁴³⁷ Halil İnalcık, “Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed”, 146.

⁴³⁸ Halil İnalcık, “Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed”, 147.

booty that they were getting from the raids. He claims that the central government used the Turcomans just like captives in heavy manual labor. However, these duties were not appropriate to their life style. Thus they became opponents of the central government.⁴³⁹ Rudi Paul Lindner also agrees with this assumption of Halil İnalçık in his book *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*.⁴⁴⁰

The significance of the oppositional stance of these groups shows through in the *menakıbnâme*. In the story of Yanbolu, for example, when the inhabitants wondered about Otman's identity one person among them mentioned that he was the one who made Mehmed II consternated and silent, and thus Otman gained great respect.⁴⁴¹ According to İnalçık too, due to the oppositional character of the region Otman Baba was supported in the frontier. He says that the regions of Deliorman, Dobrudja and Varna especially became the center of the acts against centralization⁴⁴² and underlines the importance of the fact that the *abdals* of Otman Baba were generally poor shepherds of these eastern Balkans and Turcomans of Dobrudja.⁴⁴³ We also notice the examples in the *menakıbnâme* that support this argument of İnalçık.⁴⁴⁴

In addition to all these, we witness in his *menakıbnâme* that Otman and his *abdals* were almost always in trouble with the *ulema* or the *kadı* circles. This is reflected in the encounter with Mahmud Paşa.⁴⁴⁵ The complaint that Otman's activities diminish the status of the *ulema* in the eyes of the population is another

⁴³⁹ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 147.

⁴⁴⁰ Rudi Paul Lindner, *Ortaçağ Anadolu'sunda Göçebeler ve Osmanlılar*, (Ankara : İmge, 2000), 118.

⁴⁴¹ Otman Baba mskb, 54. Therefore it is supposable that for them the criteria of respect was the opponent attitude to the central authority.

⁴⁴² Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 147.

⁴⁴³ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 149.

⁴⁴⁴ For example, the *menakıbnâme* wrote that the shepherds of Dobrudja came to Otman and became his dervishes; see Otman Baba mskb, 173.

⁴⁴⁵ Otman Baba mskb, 166-167.

example.⁴⁴⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak suggests that the opposition of the belief system of Otman and the *abdals* to the components of Holy Law, such as their belief in incarnation,⁴⁴⁷ was the main reason behind their being dragged to the courts.⁴⁴⁸ İnalçık also supports this assumption. He implies that the *ulema* wanted their execution because of their adherence to a heterodox, deviant faith and did not even care about the political outcomes of this demand.⁴⁴⁹ All these show us that Otman and his supporters were perceived as the *other* by such central government circles as the *ulema*. On the other hand, it is interesting to mention here that when this circle demanded from the government to take harsh precautions against Otman Baba and his *abdals*⁴⁵⁰ the Sultan chose to be calm and did not do anything against Otman Baba and his dervishes. İnalçık argues that the reason behind this approach of Mehmed II to Otman and his *abdals* was political,⁴⁵¹ because Otman Baba was representing many opponents of the government and thus his execution would create a crisis in the empire. According to him, dervishes like Otman Baba did not hesitate to show their opposition to the central authority since they carried on the voice of the community. They also had immense influence upon the public opinion. Therefore, he asserts, the Sultan chose to act carefully.⁴⁵² However, we can also presume that Mehmed II did not take any serious precaution against Otman and his followers because there was no serious political power behind Otman unlike the case of Şeyh

⁴⁴⁶ Otman Baba mnkb, 215-218.

⁴⁴⁷ According to Ahmet Yasar Ocak, Otman was one of the religious leaders that was influenced by the doctrines of *Hurufi* order. This order, according to him, was widespread and very influential in the Balkans. The incarnation belief of *Hurufi* order was its most significant character. In addition to this, since Otman's faith of incarnation was very strong he was affected by this order; see Ocak, *Zındıklar ve Mülhidler*, 134.

⁴⁴⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler*, 98.

⁴⁴⁹ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 159.

⁴⁵⁰ Otman Baba mnkb, 215, 217.

⁴⁵¹ Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 160.

⁴⁵² Halil İnalçık, "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed", 153.

Bedreddin. The silence of the fifteenth-century chronicles on Otman Baba further substantiates this argument.

4.5. Conclusion

The *menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin has showed us that the frontier beys - the frontier soldiers who were in need of *timar*- and heterodox Sufi groups can be counted as the *other* to the central authority in the early fifteenth century. The State's attempt to implement a series of centralizing reforms in the fifteenth century challenged the old traditions that had prevailed largely unmolested at the frontiers challenged the adherents of the old system and contributed to their alienation. If the *otherness* of Bedreddin is primarily constructed against the central authority of the State, the *menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba presents us with a picture of the *other* operating against Ottoman society. He and his followers gained the supports of the frontier beys who were also seen as the supporters of Bedreddin. Moreover, as fellow representatives of the nomadic life-style they gained the supports of Turcomans. Although they were accepted with honor as holy characters during the foundational period of the Ottoman State, this respectful recognition faded from the people's minds over time and they turned into a peripheral group excluded from bulk of societal life. They were alienated from and became the opponents of the central authority and its supporters: the government, the people of the *medrese*, and city-dwellers. Then again unlike Şeyh Bedreddin and his supporters Otman and his followers were not punished by the government in the end. This is probably due to the fact that they did not have serious political power behind and thus did not constitute a threat; this, unlike Bedreddin whose considerable power and subversive

acts made him an eminent threat to the government in the eyes of the central authority.

Although the terminology is couched in such religious terms as heretic, ungodly, etc., an analysis reveals that the concept of the *other* in both the *menakıbname* of Bedreddin and that of Otman Baba is used with primarily a political, rather than a moral, aim.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have aimed to examine the image of the *other* in fifteenth-century Ottoman history. With this aim in mind, we have carried out our research focusing on the analysis of the image of *other* both within the population of Orthodox Christians under Ottoman rule, and also Ottoman society. We have argued that hagiographies and *menakıbnames* can be utilized as reliable historical sources for cultural-historical research. With this view we have examined eight Orthodox Christian neo-martyr hagiographies and two Ottoman *menakıbnames* from the fifteenth century, in addition to Byzantine and Ottoman chronicles of the period. In Chapter I, we set out to identify the *other* in the sources, and identify the processes that led to their perception as such against the historical background presented in Chapter II. Chapter III has focused on the ideas of *other* within the Orthodox Church and Byzantines, while Chapter IV has concentrated on two Muslim figures in the Ottoman world. It now remains for us to more explicitly identify what this *otherization* reveals about the prejudices, preoccupations, and concerns of the authors discussed in the preceding chapters, as they relating to their broader contexts.

Looking at the image of the *other* in Orthodox Christian neo-martyr hagiographies and examining the elements that supposedly lead them to be *alienated*,

we see that the use of *otherness* did not fall strictly along denominational lines. As we are dealing with neo-martyr hagiographies in a mixed Christian-Muslim environment, we would expect to see a focus on portraying the Muslim as *other*, and this in critical terms, by the Christian authors. In the hagiographies of Ephraim, and Michael Mavroeides and the passages both from the Byzantine historians Doukas and Kritovoulos, this is precisely what we see. The Ottomans, as the *other*, are described as *impious*, *immoral* and *barbarian*, but the authors' own culture, that of the *self*, is described as *pious*, *moral* and *civilized*. We have argued that the Ottoman expansion policy that followed Islamic Law giving them the right to plunder cities taken by force, became a significant factor in the creation of this point of view.

The hagiography of Georgios the Soldier, however, differs greatly from what we might expect. It presents a case of Orthodox Christians living under Ottoman rule, having already been integrated into the Ottoman judicial and administrative system. The dichotomy between the law of the Ottoman governors and that of the law of the *ulema* is also stressed. In this story, rather than to focus on the *otherness* of the Ottomans, the emphasis of the text lies on showing that being a Christian under the Ottomans did not make a person less pious than if this person was living under Byzantine or Latin rule. This second story highlights an important rift within the Byzantine community, between supporters of Ottoman rule and its opponents, and the supporters and opponents of the Latin Church. This message has led us to examine the Ottoman policy towards the non-Muslim population, which made most of them willing subjects under the Ottoman rule; and then to examine the controversy between the Latin and Greek churches. There was a division among the Byzantines themselves: those who preferred the Latins to the Ottomans or *vice versa*. This

division was also reflected in these people's perceptions and we see that in time they began to view each other as *others* in these terms.

The reasons behind the people's varying attitudes against the Latins or the Ottomans were the different policies of Latins and Ottomans towards the Orthodox Christian circle. On the one hand, the Ottoman *istimalet* policy, which guaranteed State protection of non-Muslim property and economic activity, was an important reason behind the willing acceptance on the part of Byzantines of Ottoman rule. Since their invasion of Constantinople, the economical policies of the Latins and their attitudes towards the Greek Church and its clergy created a strong anti-unionist sentiment among some Byzantines. Thus, they accepted that the Ottomans' relatively mild and protective economic policies towards the Byzantine population and the Orthodox Christian Church were more preferable than those of the Latins. While this perspective moved them closer to the Ottomans, it also *alienated* them from the Latins. Eventually, since Byzantine central authority was essentially weak and could not control the conditions in the fifteenth century, the different economic and religious policies of both the Ottomans and Latins towards the Orthodox Byzantines created a growing *alienation* among the Byzantine population and they began to perceive each other as the *other*.

On the other hand, when looking at the controversy between the Churches, we see that the Byzantine central authority was too weak and was in need of help from the Latins against the threat from the Ottomans, and so demanded the union of the Churches. The strong influence of the Latins over the Byzantine dynasty and its elite circle made them seek help from the west in order to secure their future. Apart from these elite circles, some of the Byzantine population was engaged with trade and they depended on the Latins who had a powerful domination over Mediterranean

trade. We have counted the economic dependency of these Byzantines on the Latins as one of the reasons behind their unionist stand. In addition to this, although the Ottoman land system, *timar*, was preferred by the Orthodox peasantry – since it promised the protection of the State and relative freedom – the former landlords did not want to lose their privileges and sought help from the west, thus creating a strong incentive for them to sympathize with the unionist cause.

If in the first hagiography we see the Muslim Ottomans clearly and in vivid negative terms characterized as the *other*, in the second hagiography we see a blurring of the lines, as the Orthodox Christian community itself struggles with the questions of whether to support the Latin Church and the old privileges or the Ottomans and their relatively egalitarian policies. In the hagiographies of Andreas Argentis, John the Merchant, St John from Serez, and Michael Mavroeides, however, we see a return of the stark Ottoman *other*, but one utilized in a very different manner than before. As both a direct result of Ottoman policies and an indirect result of the Ottoman political structure, the subject Orthodox population was encouraged to convert to Islam in order to eliminate their *dhimmi* status, receive exemption from the tax that non-Muslims were forced to pay, and to earn the opportunity to gain a higher status in social ranks. The fact that many neo-martyrs are merchants, also reflect vigorous antagonism between different fractions in the early Ottoman society. The profile of these members of former aristocratic families preoccupied with trade and recognized as prominent members of their communities by both Muslims and Christians alike is common to all ages of neo-martyr tradesmen. In the hagiographies of Andreas Argentis, Nimat the Young, St John from Serez, and Michael Mavroeides we see the Orthodox clergy attempting to respond to this state of affairs by utilizing a negative Ottoman *other* to stress the dangers awaiting any apostate, and entreating

their congregations to reject the potential material benefits afforded by conversion and reaffirming the truth of their faith prevent the conversion of their people. For the apostate death awaits, the story of Andreas Argentis tells us, whereas in the story of the John the Merchant the truth and power of the martyr's religion is evidenced by the miracle that occurs after his death.

Our research for the image of the *other* among the Ottoman society itself has strongly suggested that the Ottoman policy of centralization was the main reason behind the antagonism within Ottoman society which had emerged as a division between two groups: the supporters and the opponents of the central authority in the fifteenth century. We have also claimed that this division was reflected in the people's perception of the *other*. With an aim to examine the image of *other* among these opponent groups, we have looked at the *menakıbnames* of Şeyh Bedreddin and Otman Baba since these sources give clues on the characters of the opponent groups of their time. The information presented by the *menakıbnames* was then examined within a comparative outlook involving the related events of the period and facts gathered from the chronicles of the period. Then we evaluated the elements that supposedly put the opponent groups in a process of *alienation*.

As we see from these "Orthodox" sources, *otherization* need not take place between two cultures largely alien to one another. The Muslim sources we examine exemplify this point, as Christians and Christianity, of any sort, play little or no role in the *menakıbname*. Rather than utilizing the category of the *other* to criticize a rival faith, the *menakıbname* of the period address a Muslim audience about issues pertaining to Muslims within the context of a broader Muslim community.

The *menakıbname* of Şeyh Bedreddin and the chronicles have given us a chance to analyze the character of the groups that opposed the central authority in the

early fifteenth century. From these sources we have clearly witnessed the roots of the political *otherness* of Bedreddin as they depicted his claim for the Ottoman throne and his calling people to get *timar*, *sancak* and *subaşılik* in return for their support. In addition to this, although it seems that the *menakıbname* was written by Hafiz Halil to acquit Bedreddin in public memory, from the *menakıbname* itself we have witnessed a language of political *otherness* that was constructed by relating the *other* figures to political opponents of the Ottoman central authority in one way or another. We have also considered that since Şeyh Bedreddin was the leader of one of the important revolts of Ottoman history in fifteenth century, the factors that shaped Bedreddin's personality deserved analysis. This analysis of the transformation of these factors in time has shown us the development of the *otherization* and the meaning of *other vis-à-vis* Ottoman central authority. Based on this analysis we have argued that there was a link between Bedreddin and the *ghazi* milieu of the time, since Bedreddin was from a distinguished *ghazi* family. When we have looked at the conditions of the *ghazi* circle during this period, we have seen that some of these *ghazi* beys were not happy with the Ottoman centralization policy simply because, their status in the service of the Ottoman State was far different from that of the early *ghazi* beys who were more or less independent. On the other hand, the frontier region, where Bedreddin grew up and which later became the setting for his rebellion, has also been discussed here as an important element for moulding Bedreddin's personality.

Based on our examination of this frontier region, we have argued that the Ottoman land-system, *timar*, and the *timar* distribution policy of the central government created opposition in this region. In the early period of the Ottoman history the right to hold *timar* could pass from father to son since the state felt it

necessary to incorporate the local families into the *timar* system. However, with the growing power of the central authority the Ottoman government made the abandonment of hereditary rights to *timar* one of its principles. Although this policy was introduced gradually, it still caused hatred among the distinguished families of both Anatolia and the Balkans who did not want to lose their privileges against the central authority. The regions of Dobrudja and Deliorman especially, where Bedreddin led his revolt, became a center for these people who were opposing the centralization policy. Unlike the earlier periods of Ottoman history there was a greater need for *timars* in the fifteenth century. However, the central authority was showing a tendency to give priority to the *Kapıkulu* soldiers in the *timar* distribution. This situation concluded with more hatred among the frontier raiders who were hoping to get *timar*, towards those who already had it. This is why we have argued that changing the *timar* distribution policy of the state was the main reason behind the acts of opposing groups in the frontier region that were against the central authority.

The other important factor that had shaped the personality of Bedreddin was his Sufi character, which he shared with most of his followers. The heterodox Sufi groups, especially the followers of *Kalenderiyye* movement, constituted the majority in the regions of Aydın, Manisa and Dobrudja where the revolts of Bedreddin and his disciples Börklüce Mustafa and Torlak Kemal took place. The reason behind the oppositional character of these groups against the central authority was hidden behind the history of their relations with the state. These Sufi groups were in close contact with the Ottoman rulers during the foundation period of the Ottoman State. There was even a mutual beneficial relationship established between these groups and the rulers, since they were legitimizing the authority of the ruler among the population and receiving privileges in return for their help. In time, however, *fikh*

(Islamic law) gradually replaced the popular mystic character of Islam in the Ottoman State. As a result, *ulema* began replacing the early heterodox dervishes and became an important element of the legitimization process representing the central government. At the same time, these heterodox dervishes and their followers began to lose their respectful place in the state. We have argued that this process led to the treatment of heterodox groups as opponents of the central authority, becoming the *other vis-à-vis* the State.

While the *menakıbnâme* of Şeyh Bedreddin presents us with certain groups that opposed Ottoman central authority in the early fifteenth century, the *menakıbnâme* of Otman Baba presents others opposing central authority around a half century after Bedreddin's revolts. As attested in the sources, Otman Baba and his followers functioned as the *other* in opposition to Ottoman society. Similar to Bedreddin's case, they gained the support of the frontier beys whose strength was greatly limited during the reign of Mehmed II. In addition, they also had the support of the Turcomans, since they represented more or less the nomadic culture and life-style. These Turcomans were not happy with the central government because the state employed them in heavy manual labor not suitable for their life-style. Thus, they were among the opposition. On the other hand, from the *menakıbnâme* we have also seen that Otman Baba and his disciples were always in trouble with central government institutions, especially with the *ulema* circle. This was because Otman Baba was an *abdâl*, a follower of the *Kalenderiyye* movement. During the foundation period of the Ottoman State these *abdals* were accepted by the State as holy characters and were honored accordingly. However, with the growing power of the central authority they lost their prestige in people's perceptions and since they were the adherents of a heterodox religious movement they were accepted as the followers

of a deviant faith. They turned out to be a peripheral group that was excluded from the society and they were alienated by the city dwellers, *ulema*, and the government. All of these have shown us that Otman Baba and his supporters were the *other* for the central government circles and vice versa.

To sum it up, our analyses of the image of the *other* in the fifteenth century Ottoman history shows that, although the hagiographical and *menakibname* sources were written from a religious perspective, how the *other* was perceived in this period had much more to do with political motivations than theological criteria. In this sense, these sources indicate that the socio-religious antagonisms can be seen as a result of the underlying political antagonisms that arose in the fifteenth century both among the Orthodox Christian populations under Ottoman rule as well as the Muslim populations of Ottoman society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Orthodox Christian Neo-martyr Hagiographies of the Fifteenth-century

“Ephraim the Monastic Priest, May 5, 1426” in *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, 510-512. Athens, 1996.

“Georgios from Bulgaria, March, 1437” in *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, 403-413. Athens, 1996.

“Andreas Argentis, May 29, 1465 in Galata” in *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, 563. Athens, 1996.

“Nimat the Young from Bakhaa, Antioch, 1471” in N. M. Vaporis, *Witness for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period 1437-1860*, 38-39. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000.

“John the Merchant, June 22, 1492” in *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, 619-622. Athens, 1996.

“St John from Serez, 1480-1490’s” in Tasos Karanastasis, “Enas Neomartyras Stis Serres tou 2nd misou tou 15ou aiona” (A neomartyr from Serres of the Second half of the 15th century,” *Byzantine*, 16 (1991): 197-262.

“Michael Mavroeides from Adrianople, late fifteenth century” in M. Vaporis, *Witness for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period 1437-1860*, 41-43. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000.

“Metropolitan Arsenios of Verroia, end of the fifteenth century” in *Synaxarastes Neomartyron* (Neomartyrs’ Vitae), ed. Ath. Margaritis, 748-749. Athens, 1996.

Post-Byzantine Chronicles

Dukas, *Bizans Tarihi*, trans. VL. Mirmiroğlu. İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1956.

Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Charles T. Riggs. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1954.

Ottoman Menakbınames of the Fifteenth-century

Gölpınarlı, A. and İsmet Sungurbey. *Halil bin İsmail bin Şeyh Bedrüddin Mahmud: Sımavna Kadısıoğlu Şeyh Bedreddin Menakıbı*. İstanbul: Eti Yayınevi, 1967.

Kılıç, Filiz, M. Arslan and T. Bülbül. *Otman Baba Velayetnamesi*. Ankara, 2007.

Koca, Şevki. *Odman Baba Vilayetnamesi Vilayetname-i Şahi Gö'çek Abdal*. Bektaşî Kültür Derneği, 2002.

Ottoman Chronicles

Aşıkpaşazade, *Aşıkpaşaoğlu Tarihi*, (haz.) A. Nihal Atsız. Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1985.

Giese, Friedrich. *Anonim Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*. Edited by N. Azamat. İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1992.

İnalcık, Halil. *Gazavat-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehmed Han: İzladive Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavatname*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1978.

Neşri, Mehmed. *Kitab-ı Cihan-nüma: Neşri Tarihi*, Vol. 2. Edited by F. R. Unat and M. A. Köymen. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1949.

Oruç Beğ, *Oruç Beğ Tarihi*, (haz.) N. Atsız. İstanbul: Tercüman.

Yusuf bin Abdullah, *Bizans söylenceleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi: Tarih-i Ali Osman*, ed. E. Sevinçli. İzmir: Dokuz Eylül Yayınları, 1997.

Secondary Sources

Alan, Hayrunnisa. *Bozkırdan Cennet Bahçesine Timurlular (1360-1506)*. İstanbul: Ötüken, 2007.

Angold, Michael. "Byzantium and the West 1204-1453." In *Eastern Christianity*. Edited by Michael Angold, 53-78. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Arnakis, G. G. "Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of His Captivity as Historical Sources," *Speculum* 26/1 (1951): 104-118.

Balivet, Michel. *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*. İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2005.

- Barkan, Ömer Lütfü. "Feodal Düzen ve Osmanlı Timarı" in *Türkiye'de Toprak Meseleleri*, 873-895. İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980.
- _____. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Türk Dervişleri ve Zaviyeler." *Vakıflar Dergisi* 2 (1942): 279-386.
- Beller, Manfred. "Perception, Image, Imagology." In *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters*, edited by Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, 3-16. New York: Rodopi, 2007.
- Berktaş, Halil. "The Feudalism Debate: The Turkish End –Is Tax-vs.- Rent Necessarily the Product and Sign of a Modal Difference?" *Journal of Peasant Studies* 14/3 (1987): 291-333.
- Constantelos, Demetrios. "Altruistic Suicide or Altruistic Martyrdom? Christian Greek Orthodox Neomartyrs: A Case Study." *Archives of Suicide Research* 8/1 (2004): 57-71.
- Daniel, Norman. *Islam and the West: The Making of An Image*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966.
- Delilbaşı, Melek. "Türk Tarihinin Bizans Kaynakları." *Cogito* 17 (1999): 339-351.
- Dennis, G. T. "The Byzantine-Turkish Treaty of 1403." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 33 (1967): 72-88.
- Divitçioğlu, Sencer. *Asya Üretim Tarzı ve Osmanlı Toplumu*. İstanbul: Sermet, 1971.
- Faroqhi, Suraiya. *Osmanlı Tarihi Nasıl İncelenir*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999.
- Goddard, Hugh. *Christians and Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding*. Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995.
- _____. *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity*. London: Grey Seal, 1996.
- Göyünç, Nejat. "Kalenderhane Camii." *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 34 (1983-84): 485-494.
- Gunny, Ahmad. *Images of Islam in the 18th century Writings*. London: Grey Seal, 1996.
- Imber, Colin. *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*. İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990.
- İnalcık, Halil. "Ottoman Methods of Conquest." *Studia Islamica* 2 (1954): 103-129.
- _____. "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire." In *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730: chapters from the Cambridge history of Islam and the New Cambridge modern history*, edited by M. A. Cook, 10-53. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

- _____. *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar: I.* Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1987.
- _____. *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600.* London: Phoenix, 1994.
- _____. "Greeks in Ottoman Economy and Finances, 1453-1500" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, 379-389. İstanbul: Eren, 1998.
- _____. "İstanbul: An Islamic City." In *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, 249-271. İstanbul: Eren, 1998.
- _____. "Ottoman Galata, 1453-1553" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, 275-327. İstanbul: Eren, 1998.
- _____. "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans" in *Essays in Ottoman History*, by H. İnalcık, 195-214. İstanbul: Eren, 1998.
- _____. "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Doğuşu." In *Osmanlı*, Vol. 1, edited by Güler Eren, 37-131. Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 1999.
- _____. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi.* Edited by Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, trans. Halil Berktaş. İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004.
- _____. "Otman Baba ve Fatih Sultan Mehmed." In *Doğu Batı: Makaleler I*, 139-163. Ankara: Doğubatı, 2005.
- Kafadar, Cemal. "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature" in *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-150.
- _____. "The Ottomans and Europe" in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation.* Vol.1, ed. T. A. Brady, Jr., H. A. Oberman and J. D. Tracy, 589-635. Leiden: BRILL, 1994.
- _____. *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State.* London: University of California Press, 1995.
- Karamustafa, Ahmet T. *Tanrının Kuraltanımaz Kulları: İslam Dünyasında Derviş Toplulukları, 1200-1550.* İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2007.
- Karpat, Kemal. "Ottoman Views and Policies Towards the Orthodox Christian Church." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 31 (1986): 131-155.
- Kastritsis, D. J. "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413." *Medieval Encounters*, 13 (2007): 222-242.
- Kazhdan, Alexander, and Nancy Ševčenko, "Martyr," in *The Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. 2, ed. A. Kazhdan, 1308. New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1991.

- _____. "Hagiography," in *The Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. 2, ed. A. Kazhdan, 897-899. New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Koudounaris, Paul. *Barbarians Within and Without: The Visual Construction of Alterity in Early Modern Europe*. Unpublished PhD diss., University of California, 2004.
- Laiou-Thomadakis, Angeliki E. "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34 (1980 - 1981): 177-222.
- Leerssen, Joep. "Image." In *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters*, edited by Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, 342-344. New York: Rodopi, 2007.
- Lindner, Rudi Paul. *Ortaçağ Anadolu'sunda Göçebeler ve Osmanlılar*. Ankara: İmge, 2000.
- Lowry, Heath *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.
- Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Nicol, D. M. *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261-1453*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Marjinal Sufilik: Kalenderiler (XIV-XVII. Yüzyıllar)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999.
- _____. *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler: (15.-17. yüzyıllar)*. İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998.
- _____. *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992.
- Ostrogorsky, George. *History of the Byzantine State*. New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1969.
- Özcan, Abdülkadir. "Kapıkulu," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 24, 347-349. İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988.
- Peters, Rudolph. *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1995.
- Striker, Cecil L. and Doğan Kuban *Kalenderhane in Istanbul: the buildings, their history, architecture, and decoration: final reports on the archaeological exploration and restoration at Kalenderhane Camii, 1966-1978*. Edited by Cecil L. Striker and Y. Doğan Kuban. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1997.

- Tekindağ, Şehabeddin. "Neşri," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 9, 214-216. Eskişehir: M.E.B. Devlet Kitapları, 2001.
- Tolan, John V. *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.
- Unat, Faik R. "Oruç," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 9, 418-419. Eskişehir: M.E.B. Devlet Kitapları, 2001.
- Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı. *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilatından Kapukulu Ocakları*. Vol. 1. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1984.
- _____. *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*. Vol. 1. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu.
- Vaporis, N. M. *Witness for Christ: Orthodox Christian Neomartyrs of the Ottoman Period 1437-1860*. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000.
- Vasiliev, A. A. *History of the Byzantine Empire: 324-1453*. Vol. 2. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952.
- Vryonis, Speros Jr. *Byzantium and Europe*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.
- _____. "Byzantine Cultural Self-Consciousness in the Fifteenth Century." In *The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire*. Edited by S. Curcic and D. Mouriki, 5-14. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- _____. "Crises and Anxieties in Fifteenth Century Byzantium: And the Reassertion of Old, And the Emergence of New, Cultural Forms." In *Islamic and Middle Eastern Societies: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Wadie Jwaideh*. Edited by Robert Olson, 100-125. Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1987.
- Wheatcroft, Andrew. *The Ottomans: Dissolving Images*. London: Penguin Books, 1995.
- Witteck, Paul. "Ankara Bozgunu'ndan İstanbul'un Zaptına (1402-1455)," trans. Halil İncelik. *Belleken*, 7/27 (1943): 557-589.
- Yavuz, Şevket. "The Construction of the "Other" in Late Byzantium and During the Construction Period of the Ottoman State." Unpublished PhD diss., Temple University, 2002.
- Yerasimos, Stefanos. *Konstantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*. Trans. Şirin Tekeli. İstanbul: İletişim, 1993.
- Zachariadou, Elizabeth A. "Süleyman Çelebi in Rumili and the Ottoman Chronicles." *Islam*, 60 (1983): 268-296.

_____. "The Neomartyr's Message." *Bulletin of the Centre for Asia Minor Studies* 8 (1990-1991): 51-63.

_____. "The Great Church in Captivity 1453-1586." In *Eastern Christianity*. Edited by Michael Angold, 169-186. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

APPENDIX: MAPS

Map I



Ottoman Empire, 1300-1512⁴⁵³

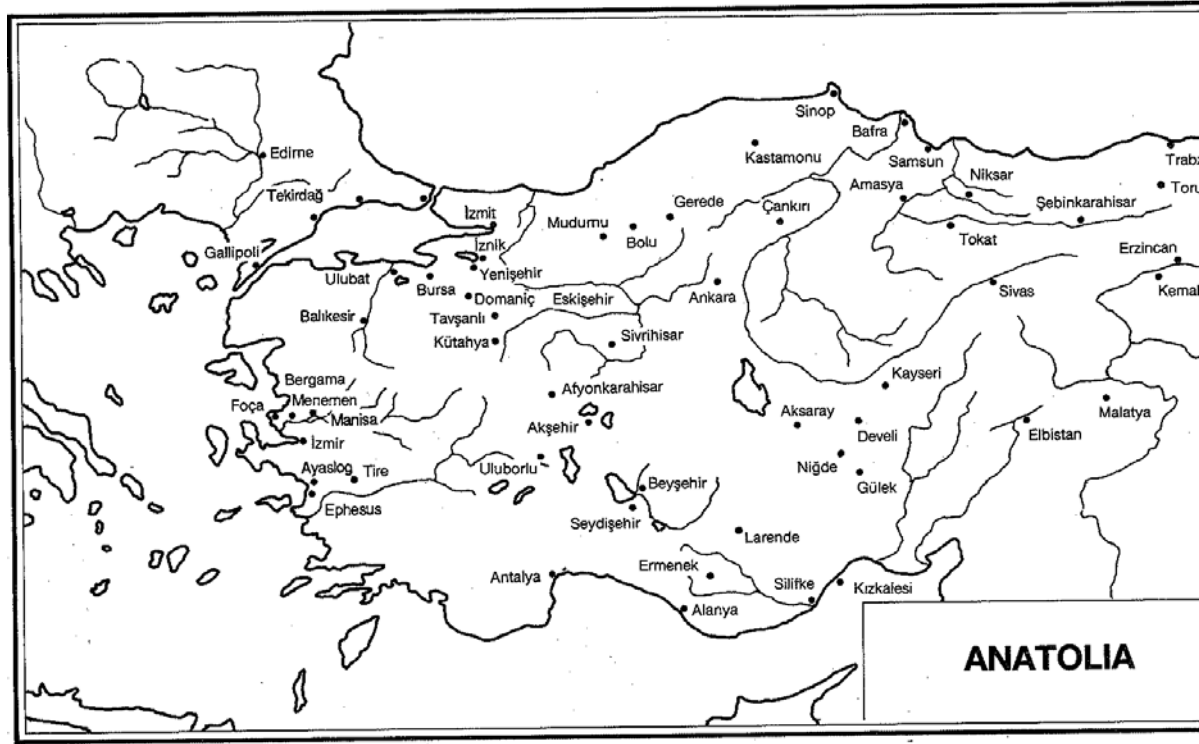
⁴⁵³ Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, ed. by Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert, trans. Halil Berktaş. (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004), 31.

Map II

The Aegean⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), 286.

Map III



Anatolia⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁵ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), 287.

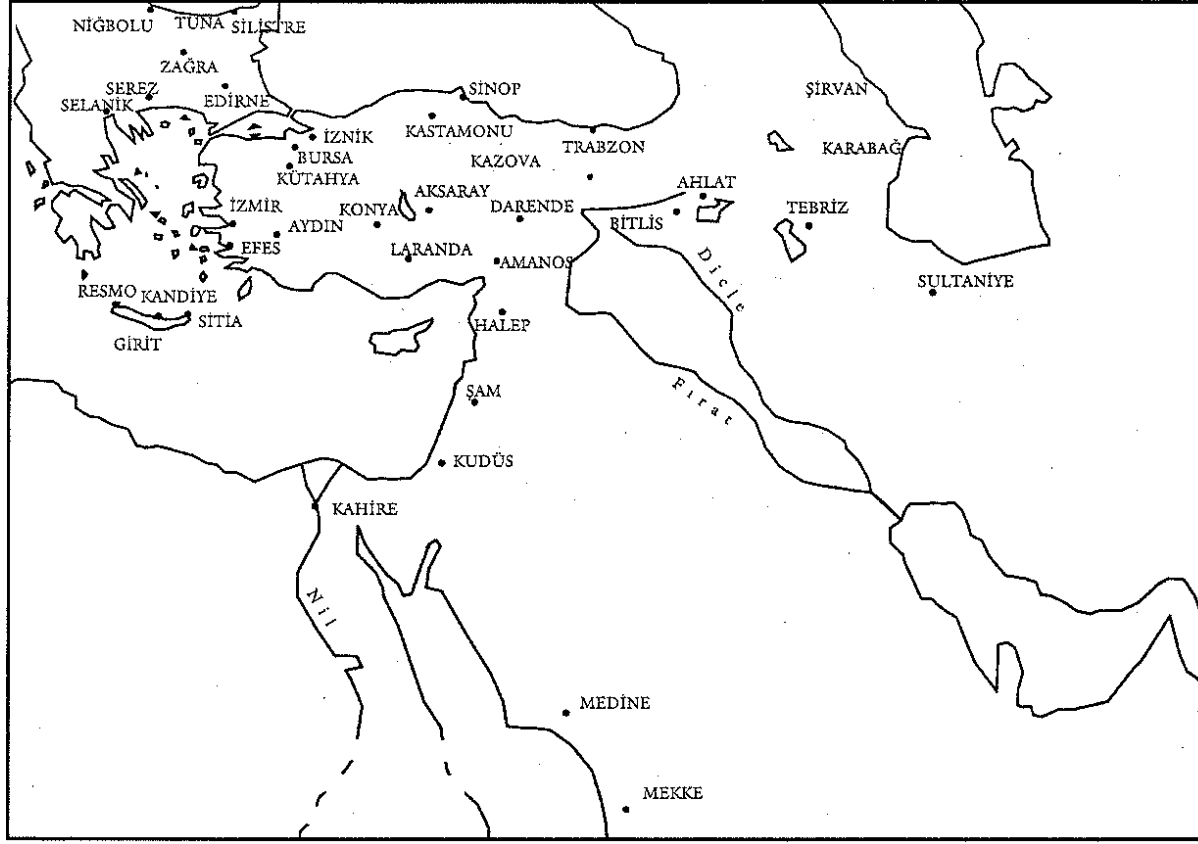
Map IV



The Balkans⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁶ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), 288.

Map V



The places of Şeyh Bedreddin's journeys and his supporters⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁷ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyân*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2005), 126.

Map VI



Şeyh Bedreddin and Bithynia⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁸ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyân*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2005), 128.

Map VII



Rumelia at the beginning of the fifteenth-century⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁹ Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin: Tasavvuf ve İsyan*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2005), 129.