

From the Editor¹

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Münîb fell into the whirlpool of rebellion, is about to drown,
[He] cries out in despair, [God] let him be saved.

If I were to reprimand fate and say to it: you've put us under tyranny,
You let fortune burn us; endure, my heart, just endure.

...

It is fate, we have fallen apart; they've found an excuse for us,
[And] exiled us to various lands, but only me to Trabzon

[There is] neither someone friendly nor a loved one, we've come to this lonely place,
Tell me, what is the remedy for this? Endure, my heart, just endure.²

Thus laments Ahmed Münîb, in his *nâle* (plaint) that I came across at Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Berlin State Library), when he gets exiled from

1 The typesetting and publication expenses of this issue have been covered by Yurt Dışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı [The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities].

2 Ahmed Münîb's *nâle* (plaint): Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2617, fol. 30b.

Sarajevo to Trabzon in 1727.³ Since our Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) research project involves the research of manuscripts in Turkish libraries, our Alexander von Humboldt project titled “Ottoman Ego-Documents: Benefiting from German Libraries and Archives” is important for identifying relevant works in libraries abroad. In January-February 2024, I visited Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Bavarian State Library) in Munich; Herzogliche Forschungsbibliothek in Gotha (Gotha Research Library) - which, with its library rich in manuscript collections, is attached to Erfurt University - and finally, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Berlin is well known among those working on Oriental manuscripts. Going to Munich was my decision, and the one who told me that I must visit Gotha was Alexander Schunka, a former faculty member in the Department of History at Erfurt University and currently a faculty member in Freie Universität Berlin Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut (Berlin Free University Friedrich-Meinecke Institute). I was able to take up this suggestion - which Schunka made in 2017 - in 2024, thanks to the opportunities available for the alumni of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. And I am glad I did. My research trip to Gotha turned out quite fruitful - so did those to Munich and Berlin. For every manuscript library, certain names come to the fore in terms of the creation of their collections; the manuscript accumulation in Gotha is the result of Ulrich Jasper Seetzen’s assiduity.⁴ One sees his signature on the manuscripts. Before moving on to sharing news about us and to the contents of this issue, we will take a quick look at the results of my research trip to these three locations.

First of all, let me announce to interested parties in Türkiye that all the manuscripts in Germany are now available for browsing on a single web portal. It is called Qalamos,⁵ and its description is “the portal for manuscripts and block prints from Asian and African script traditions”. On this highly advanced portal, certain outstanding institutions have provided images of their manuscript collections in their entirety. From what I have learned from Boris Liebrecht, Leipzig, for instance, is one such institution that uploaded the entirety of their manuscripts to the portal. According to

3 The meaning of the term *nâle* is given in dictionaries as “moaning, moan, cry”; the entire text is filled with such elements.

4 For Seetzen, see Kemal Beydilli, “Seetzen, Ulrich Jasper,” <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/seetzen-ulrich-jasper>.

5 <https://www.qalamos.net/content/index.xed>.

Qalamos's publicly announced objective, their aim is to do for all manuscripts in Germany what has been done in Leipzig. Currently, the catalog records for 110.000 manuscripts in 81 scripts and 162 languages can be found on the portal.⁶ The DFG⁷ project titled Orient-Digital, which ran between 2020 and 2023 and out of which Qalamos was born, was implemented by the collaboration of Munich, Gotha, Berlin, and Leipzig libraries.

Ego-Documents in German Libraries: Munich, Gotha, and Berlin

The first stop in my research trip during the semester break was Munich. Here, I have worked on the Oriental manuscripts at Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Compared to centers such as Berlin, Paris and Vienna, Munich does not necessarily stand out in terms of Turkish manuscripts; nevertheless, I must stress that here, there are 750 Turkish manuscripts within the 5300-item Oriental manuscript collection. During my studies in Munich, the biggest surprise for me was the poet Nâbî (d. 1712). There must surely be a story behind the accumulation of copies of Nâbî's works in this library. Among these, his *Münşeât* (turc 230) is significant in terms of our areas of interest. Adnan Oktay, who edited the text for publication, expresses its importance for our subject in the following words: "The letters found in *Münşeât* are letters that span across approximately 50 years of Nâbî's life. Therefore, these texts are highly important in terms of reflecting his deeds throughout his lifetime, his audience, friends and enemies, and his emotions, dreams and thoughts."⁸

Another text that greeted me in Munich was Veysî's *Hâbnâme*.⁹ Placing Ahmed I in conversation with Alexander the Great, *Hâbnâme* takes as its subject matter the issue of corruption in state administration. While, as such, it has been assessed within the *nasihatnâme* literature (mirrors for princes), it also relates to dream narratives, which are a type of ego-document: Veysî places the conversation in a dream narrative and gives his messages to the reader from within that construct. While the content is heavily political, here, we are clearly dealing with a literary set-up that is eye-open-

6 I provide these numbers according to their official booklet dated June 2022.

7 Die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation).

8 Yusuf Nâbî, *Münşeât-ı Nâbî: Nâbî'nin mektupları (inceleme-tenkitli metin)*, ed. Adnan Oktay (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2017), 56.

9 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Cod.turc. 68, fols. 61b-82a.

ing in terms of analyzing the motivations of literary circles interested in getting their points across via dreams. Even in dream narratives that are of a much more individualistic nature than *Hâbnâme* and which are outright ego-documents, the concern for giving quotidian or political messages is common. I bring up *Hâbnâme* here because it relates as much to the Islamic dream narrative tradition as to the *nasihatnâme* genre, and that connection, too, needs to be acknowledged.¹⁰

Out of the findings of the Munich research trip, our Humboldt junior researcher Gülşen Yakar has added two new works to our ego-document inventory. The first of these is the pilgrimage account of Yusuf Nâbî titled *Tuhfetü'l-haremeyn*, recorded in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek under the catalogue number cod.turc. 307.¹¹ It is possible to find autobiographical material in this account of the poet's pilgrimage to Mecca. The text reflects the emotional states Yusuf Nâbî experienced when going on the pilgrimage became a real possibility for him. The second work added to the inventory is the *Risâle-i Devriye*¹² of Niyâzî-i Mısırî (d. 1694), recorded in the same library catalogue under the number cod.turc. 311. This work, in which, unsurprisingly, Mısırî talks of himself, must be considered an ego-document only partially. The Munich copy of the *Risale-i Terbiyenâme*¹³ of Mehmed Sâdık Erzincânî (d. 1794), which was already in our inventory, has also been added; it is recorded under the catalogue number cod.turc. 315. A short autobiography of Erzincânî can be found at the end of the manuscript. Yakar's studies are currently ongoing on the *Tahbîzü'l-Mathûn*¹⁴ of Tokadî Mustafa b. Ahmed b. Hüseyin (d. 1782), recorded in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek under the catalogue number cod.turc. 300, and on two works by Nuh b. Mustafa er-Rûmî el-Konevî (d. 1660) recorded under the catalogue number cod.turc. 350.

10 On the relevance of the text to the Islamic dream tradition and the examination of *Hâbnâme* as a novel genre, see Ahmet Tunç Şen, "The Dream of a 17th Century Ottoman Intellectual: Veysi and his Habname," MA Thesis, Sabancı University, 2008.

11 Nâbî, *Tuhfetü'l-Haremeyn: Haremeyn Armağanı*, ed. Mahmut Karakaş (İstanbul: Mostar, 2013); Muhsin Kalkışım, "Nâbî'nin Tuhfetü'l-Haremeyn'i -Dil İncelemesi, Transkripsiyonlu Metin, İndeks," MA Thesis, Atatürk University, 1988; Menderes Coşkun, "The Most Literary Ottoman Pilgrimage Narrative: Nâbî's Tuhfetü'l-Haremeyn," *Turcica* 32 (2000), 363-88.

12 Abdurrahman Güzel, "Niyâzi-i Mısırî'nin Gözden Kaçan Bir Eseri (Risâle-i Devriye)," *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları XVII-XXI/1-2* (1979-1983), 121-39.

13 Muhammed Sadık, *Risâle-i Terbiyenâme*, ed. Aytekin Yıldız (İstanbul: Büyüyenay Yayınları, 2018).

14 *Tahbîzü'l-mathûn: el-Kânûn fi't-tıb tercümesi: Külliyyat, İbn Sina*, trans. Tokadî Mustafa Efendi; ed. Mustafa Koç, Eyyüp Tanrıverdi (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2018).

My second stop in Germany was Gotha, a city itself small, but its importance for Oriental manuscripts immense. Irrelevant of ego-documents, I first encountered in the Pertsch catalogue¹⁵ *Dürretu'l-ulûm*,¹⁶ a treatise (*risale*) about the classification of the sciences written by the prominent 15th century scholar Bistâmî (d. 1454). Bistâmî's classification of the sciences has been written about before, so I immediately consulted the relevant literature. There, his classification is stated to be based on *El-Fevayihü'l-Miskiyye*. None of the works I consulted analyzed this particular Gotha text.¹⁷ The reason this work, which was mentioned by Brockelmann, has not been studied so far must be the possible difficulty of obtaining it from Gotha. Now, it can be directly downloaded thanks to Qalamos.¹⁸

As for ego-documents, sometimes, secondary literature leads us to the primary sources, whereas other times, the opposite occurs. Upon encountering a text¹⁹ about İbn Arabşah (d. 1450)²⁰ in Gotha, I remembered that Büşra Sıdıka Kaya had presented a paper²¹ on it in the symposium we had held at Istanbul Medeniyet University. Kaya describes this text, titled *Ukûdü'n-nasîha*, as an autobiography in verse; no first-person narration has been detected in it except for a limited number of quotations in verse. So in this three-page long Gotha text, the first-person narration parts by İbn Arabşah are limited to these verses. Right at the beginning of the text, the

15 *Die orientalischen handschriften der Herzoglichen bibliothek zu Gotha*, dritter Theil: Die Arabischen Handschriften, Erster Band, ed. Wilhelm Pertsch (Gotha: Friedr. Andr. Perthes, 1878), 159.

16 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. A 90.

17 Veysel Kaya, "Abdurrahman Bistâmî'nin Bilimler Tasnifi," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 35 (2016), 187-216. However, Carl Brockelmann did list this work: *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Zweite den Supplementbänden angepaßte Auflage. Zweiter Band (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1949), 300. İbrahim Ağâh Çubukçu has contended with mentioning the work with reference to Brockelmann ("İslâm Müelliflerine Göre İlimlerin Taksimi ve Bunlar Arasında Gazzalî'nin Yeri," *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 7: 1-4 [1960], 129). Halis Demir, too, mentions, with reference to Çubukçu, that Bistâmî does have such a work: "İlimler Tasnifi Literatürü Denemesi," *Balikesir Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 5: 1 (2019), 58. In *Encyclopedia of Islam*, there is no mention of such a work by Bistâmî: Mustafa Çağrırcı, "Bistâmî, Abdurrahman b. Muhammed," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bistami-abdurrahman-b-muhammed>.

18 https://dhh.thulb.uni-jena.de/receive/ufb_cbu_00005178.

19 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. A 94, fols. 62b-64a. The text can be found verbatim here: Takıyyüddin b. Abdülkadir et-Temîmî el-Gazzî et-Temîmî, *Tabakâtü's-seniyye fî terâcimî'l-Hanefiyye*, ed. Abdülfettah Muhammed el-Hulv, vol. 2 (Riyad: Dârü'r-Rifai, 1983), 55-59.

20 See Abdülkadir Yuvalı, "İbn Arabşah, Şehâbeddin," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibn-arabsah-sehabeddin>.

21 Büşra Sıdıka Kaya, "Moğol-Osmanlı-Memlük Üçgeninde Bir Entelektüel: Şehâbeddin İbn Arabşah (ö. 854/1450) ve Ben Anlatısı/An Intellectual in the Mongolian-Ottoman-Mamluk Triangle: Muhammad İbn Arabshah (d. 854/1450) and his Egodocuments." Also see Büşra Sıdıka Kaya, "Ukûdü'n-Nasîha (İbn Arabşâh)," <https://tees.yesevi.edu.tr/madde-detay/ukudu-n-nasihat-ibn-arabsah>.

work titled *A'yâni'l-a'yân* by Süyûtî is cited; indeed, several sentences concerning İbn Arabşah's biography are found verbatim in Süyûtî's work.²² Here, we present the parts of the text in verse which can be viewed as ego-document, with a translation to Turkish by Elmin Aliyev. The verses reflect the poet's yearning for homeland and family, the hardships he endured on his quest for learning, and his times of wealth and poverty:

Hear me, oh, people of Damascus,
I hail from the line of Sa'd and Osman.

Damascus is where I was born, and there
Are most of my ancestors, my family and brothers.

But the divine will ordained unto me
Has made me change my country and made [me] move away.

Fate has roll me around with its curved-tipped staff,
To frequently turn and frequently wander.

I spent most of my life in search of greatness,
Far from my homeland and [most of] my kin.

Now you see [me] in China, in front of my camel,
Now in Anatolia, riding a camel.

You see me in riches sometimes,
And sometimes, complaining of wealth when I am poor, hiding my sorrow.

22 Ebü'l-Fazl Celaleddin Abdurrahman b. Ebî Bekr Suyuti, *Nazmü'l-ikyân fî a'yâni'l-a'yân*, ed. Philip Khuri Hitti (Beyrut: el-Mektebetü'l-İlmiyye, 1927), 63. The rest of the text in Gotha is found in Sehavî's *et-Tibru'l-mesbûk*, though not in verbatim: Ebü'l-Hayr Şemsüddîn Muhammed b. Abdirrahmân b. Muhammed Sehavî, *et-Tibrü'l-mesbûk fî zeyli's-Sülûk* (Kahire: Mektebetü'l-Külliyati'l-Ezheriyye, [n.d.]), 325-27. I owe the references in Arabic and the comparison of the Gotha text with these works to Elmin Aliyev. We find İbn Arabşah's autobiography in more detail in his student İbn Tağrıberdî's work titled *el-Menhelü's-sâfi*: İbn Tağrıberdî, *el-Menhelü's-sâfi ve'l-mustevfi ba'de'l-vâfi*, vol. 2, ed. Muhammed Emin (Kahire: el-Hey'etü'l-Misriyyeti'l-Âmme li'l-Kitâb, 1984), 131-146. I owe this last reference to İbrahim Halil Ayten.

Either way, you see me holding on
To the hem of meanings, without complaint.

I expend my strength and effort for learning,
And always serve virtuous people.²³

As can be seen, while İbn Arabşah's separation from his homeland in pursuit of learning has enabled us to recognize him today as an intellectual known across a wide geography, this wandering lifestyle does not seem to have been easy for him.

Another document I have found in Gotha related to our subject is the Grand Mufti Ebussuud Efendi's (d. 1574) *tezkiye*²⁴ (correspondence) in which he complains to his son: "I have run out of patience, I can endure no more." According to the related literature, the manuscript copy of *Peçevi Tarihi* in Gotha starts with this *tezkiye*.²⁵ Nihal Atsız writes about the contents of this letter: "The letter [Ebussuud Efendi] wrote to his third son Şemseddin Ahmed Çelebi on account of his keeping unscrupulous company."²⁶ Abdülkadir Dağlar, in his thesis on Ebussuud's letters in Turkish, includes this letter found in *Peçevi*²⁷ and has the following to say on its contents: "In this letter he wrote to his son, Ebussuud, after explaining his own standing in society, asks his son to be worthy of him and to avoid any deed that might bring shame on him."²⁸ In following publications about the letter, Dağlar also describes the contents as:

Later in the letter, Ebussuud Efendi expresses with great sorrow that his son, to whom he addresses, has wasted the opportunities granted him and failed to keep his rank; has fallen in with and befriended perverse, unruly

23 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. A 94, fols. 63a-63b.

24 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. T 151, fols. 30a-31a.

25 İbrahim Pazan, "Peçevi Tarihi'nin Yazma Nüshaları ve Zeyilleri," *Kadim* 6 (2023), 63.

26 Atsız, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerine Göre Ebussuud Bibliyografyası* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1967), 52. Dağlar also cites a copy of this letter in the Süleymaniye Library: Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Esad Efendi, 3713/1, fols. 191b-192b. See Abdülkadir Dağlar, "Türkçe Mektupları Işığında Ebussuud Efendi'nin Beşerî Münâsebetleri," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies* XLI (2013), 315.

27 The transcription in Dağlar's thesis is based on the text on page 63 of the 1282 İstanbul print of *Peçevi Tarihi*. See Dağlar, "Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi'nin Türkçe Mektupları," p. 102-03.

28 Abdülkadir Dağlar, "Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi'nin Türkçe Mektupları," MA Thesis, Ege University, 2001, 15.

and lowly persons, and acted in certain disagreeable ways without consideration for his own rank or his father's status. Ebussuud emphasizes that in this way, he [his son] can do right by him [Ebussuud] as his father; or else, at a time when he has many enemies and competitors, Ebussuud would be embarrassed in society, and that he has also run out of patience.²⁹

I have also encountered in Gotha a dream record by Kadızâde (d. 1635).³⁰ In his dream beginning with "It was Monday night, the 17th night of the month of Rebiü'l-âhir [Rabi II] of the year 1039 [November 4, 1629]. I dreamed that I was travelling towards the Luminous City [i.e. Medina]", Kadızâde talks about seeing the Prophet Muhammad lying abed; of falling to his feet, the Prophet opening his eyes to look at him and saying "Well done, may you be prosperous and happy. You love me very much and you love the Quran more than [you love] me. You are on the right path and are pleased with. Be firm and steady, said he to this poor one," and kissing his hands. This record by Kadızâde Mehmed Efendi - after whom the Kadızâdeli movement would be named - is important within the context of discussions around the Quran/sunnah/*bid'ah* (invention), insofar as it represents an expression of his relationship with the sunnah and the Prophet Muhammad as worded by the Prophet himself. Even though Kadızâde Mehmed held a negative view in the issue of "whether it is legitimate to utter to the Prophet Muhammad and his companions '*sallallâhu aleyhi ve sellem*' [peace and blessings be upon him] (*tasliye*) and '*radiyallâhu anh*' [peace be upon him] (*tarziye*) upon mention of their names"³¹ and was of the opinion that "Resûl-i Ekrem's [The most noble of God's Messengers', i.e. Prophet Muhammad] parents... were unbelievers"³², according to the dream record, Kadızâde invoked upon the Prophet, to his face, "the *salawat* a few times, saying *essalâtü vesselâmü aleyke yâ Rasulallah* [peace and blessings unto you, oh messenger of Allah], *Essalâtü vesselâmü aleyke yâ Habiballah* [peace and blessings unto you, oh beloved of Allah], *Essalâtü vesselâmü yâ seyyide'l-evvelîn ve'l-ahirîn* [peace and blessings unto you, oh master of all who came before and who will come hereafter]", and thus, perhaps, as opposed to his convictions that might be interpreted as against the Prophet, attempted to prove his love for him through this dream.

29 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. T 151, fols. 30a-31a.

30 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. T 17, fols. 1b-2b.

31 Semiramis Çavuşoğlu, "Kadızâdeliler," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kadizadeliler>.

32 *ibid.*

Boris Liebreuz and Kristina Richardson had discovered Dokumacı Ke-maleddin's notebook in Gotha under the catalogue number A 114.³³ When I was there, I studied all the notebooks before and after this entry with the expectation that there might be other similar notebooks. Indeed, the Pertsch catalogue offers enough data to make one suspect "another notebook by a Syrian Christian". Pertsch had made such a note on A 116: "Another notebook by a Syrian Christian, *with extremely unremarkable content*. As Seetzen noted on the endpaper, what may be worth mentioning in the contents is the eulogies the author made to saints."³⁴ This 52-page notebook containing personal notes by an ordinary person might have been 'extremely unremarkable' during Pertsch's lifetime, but within the context of our subjects of interest today, they are indeed extremely significant. What we are looking for is precisely such records kept by people who were not part of the ruling elite, but who nevertheless valued talking about themselves and recording their everyday lives and deeds, in one way or another.

According to the findings of İbrahim Halil Ayten, one of our researchers, we see records by three different individuals in this notebook: Yuhanna Fînân, Hannâ Fînân³⁵ and Mikail Sâlim Fînân. The notebook includes notes across a long period of time, which can be roughly dated as 1718-1786. This very special personal notebook includes birth records of family members, some short letters, accounts of debts owed, poems in the form of ego-documents, and some poems that stand as eulogies to key personages in the Christian tradition (Jesus, Mary, etc.) in which, at times, the authors talk also of themselves. Particularly in these poems and eulogies, the poet's emotions and feelings of helplessness stand out:

My name is Yuhanna Fînân, your slave, my sins are many,
 Illness has wrecked my body, it has no cure.
 I have nothing but eulogizing you, my tears are aplenty,
 From your heavens, send me your aid against the impossible.³⁶

33 For the related publication, see Boris Liebreuz and Kristina L. Richardson, eds., *The Notebook of Kamâl al-Dîn the Weaver: Aleppine Notes from the End of the 16th Century* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2023).

34 *Die orientalischen handschriften der Herzoglichen bibliothek zu Gotha*, ed. Pertsch, 198. The italics are mine.

35 Although it is not exactly clear, this may possibly be the same person as Yuhanna Fînân.

36 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. Orient. A 116, fol. 6a. Translation from the original in Arabic by İbrahim Halil Ayten. For instances of talking of the self throughout the notebook, see 4a, 6a, 11a-b, 12a, 13a, 19b.

The notebook also contains small, private notes written by those who were interested in and read these records, and as such, is significant for showing its circulation among various hands.³⁷

Among Oriental manuscripts in libraries abroad, one source type that we encounter the most frequently is letters. Numerous letters were exchanged, found either within compilations (*mecmua*) or as individual papers, concerning intellectual exchange of ideas, as correspondence among family members, or as a means of connecting with relatives who were under captivity. We have found an extremely personal letter in Gotha.³⁸ Sent by the son Tomo in 1798 to his father Maksi Yosib, who, unable to deal with a debt situation, failed to rise to the occasion and fled his hometown in fear to take residence in a mansion in Kütahya,³⁹ it brims with a sense of familial protection. Since his father has left, Tomo has withdrawn from work. Both the older and younger generations in the family express their longing for him:

My father, I no longer curry. I have been lying around ever since you left. My sister Seydi sends her greetings, kisses your hand. Şemmas Yakob sends his greeting. Your uncle's daughter Meren and your uncle Kadashan send their greetings; Kör Haşmi sends his greetings, your mother Meryem sends her greetings. They pray, ask of news of you, and all who ask after you, young and old, send their greetings and ask how you are. As things are this way, send us a paper [i.e. letter].

Tomo advises his father that he has nothing left to fear about the debt situation and that he could now come home in peace: "Of the creditors here,

37 Among these, the French interpreter Mansur veled-i Anton left a note saying that he saw Hannâ Fînân's records. See 53b.

38 This letter in Dresden, dated 1743, drew the attention of Melike Beyza Abdukarimov of our Humboldt auxiliary staff: Sächsische Landesbibliothek - Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, Mscr. Dresd.Eb.439 - 3. A father, Maksi Yosib, came to Istanbul and had audience with the vizier hoping to free his son Tomo, who had fallen captive in Moscow probably during the siege of Özi (Ochakov) in 1737 and was then a captive of the king of Brandenburg. In the letter, the father informs the son of these endeavors in tones of longing on the one hand, and tries to motivate him on the other, writing "No one has ever remained captive forever. God willing, neither will you."

Perhaps the most well-known example of the letter genre is Fuzûlî's (d. 1556) *Şikâyetnâme*, famous for its line "I gave a greeting, they did not receive it since it was not a bribe." (Abdülkadir Karahan, *Fuzûlî'nin Mektupları* [Istanbul: İbrahim Horoz Basımevi, 1948]). It is the copy in Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig recorded under the catalogue number [DE-UBL] B. or. 77 - 11. This record was brought to attention by Gülşen Yakar.

39 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. orient. T 275, letter no: 109.

they are not of one mind; they say 'let him come, he may pay in weeks or months'. Come as you please. There is no reason left to fear the judge. Do not be negligent and remain there; come. Thus let it be known."

Another important group of documents I found in Gotha is, once again, a folder full of letters.⁴⁰ Here are approximately 100 letters dated between 1216 (1801/1802)-1219 (1804/1805). One character we meet in them, Yusuf veled-i Anton, is the brother of İlyas Havvâ veled-i Anton Butrus/Petrus el-Mârûnî, who was previously discovered by İbrahim Halil Ayten of our TÜBİTAK project team in the manuscript collection of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Kütüphanesi (Presidency of Religious Affairs Library).⁴¹ İlyas Havvâ was a tradesman from Aleppo born on March 31, 1766, who relocated to Istanbul for business in November 1793. He later went to Lebanon and served as a steward in a church before passing away on January 24, 1848.

According to Ayten's preliminary studies, İlyas Havvâ mentions his brother Yusuf frequently in the family history he had personally penned. Yusuf claims a prominent place in the family's special days. He is present in nearly all the family members' births and marriages, their baptism and wedding ceremonies in church. In these narratives by İlyas Havvâ, all important events experienced by the family, such as births, deaths and weddings, are mentioned in chronological order – such that there is even a reference to the years his brother Yusuf died (before May 2, 1847).

Since Ayten has also studied Ottoman archival documents, he has also uncovered important correspondence of the family as well as certain official documents concerning joint commercial activities of the family members (Yusuf veled-i Anton and his children, İlyas Havvâ and his children) and documents showing that Yusuf Havvâ had become a priest in a church in Lebanon. Using İlyas Havvâ's autobiographic family history on the one hand and the archival documents on the other, Ayten manages to bring to light almost the entire family tree of the Anton Butrus family (father of İlyas and Yusuf) and their relationships. The letters I found in Gotha, on the other hand, constitute important data on the entire family, particularly on the

40 Universität Erfurt, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Ms. Orient. A 2837.

41 İbrahim Halil Ayten, "Osmanlı'da Bir Gayr-ı Müslim Ben-Anlatısı: İlyas (Elias) Havvâ b. Anton Butrus el-Marunî'nin Otobiyografik Aile Anlatısı/A Non-Muslim Ego Document in the Ottoman Literature: The Autobiographical Family Narrative of Elias (Elias) Hawwa b. Anton Butrus al-Mârûnî," Ottoman Ego-Documents Symposium, Skopje, May 24-26, 2024. Abstract booklet, p. 70: <https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/documents/benanlatilari/21-mayis-ozet-kitapciqi.pdf>.

extensive family and social sphere, works and correspondences of Anton Butrus's other son, İlyas Havvâ's brother, Yusuf veled-i Anton. I must express how pleased I am of this neat overlap between our TÜBİTAK and Humboldt projects; as members of the project team, we all are extremely pleased about being able to trace the same family all the way from Ankara to Gotha. İbrahim Halil Ayten examined the letters I sent him from Gotha and offered the following preliminary observations:

In the letters, Yusuf veled-i Anton is depicted not only as a "teacher/professor" (saint?) but also as the interpreter for Spain and of Fransis Berna. The most important aspect of these letters is that they are written personally by the members of the family or of their social circle. They are written by several different people. Even so, directly or indirectly, nearly all of them concern Yusuf veled-i Anton. Some of them are written by Yusuf to his father, his children or close friends, while others are penned by his children, nieces and nephews. Still others, while not written by or addressed to Yusuf, include anecdotes or brief information about him. Some of the letters were written in and sent to Yusuf Havvâ from various cities such as Jerusalem, Aleppo, Damietta and Jafa. While the letters mention private/personal feelings, they also include business correspondence and, on account of his being a family of tradesmen, some records related to accounting/payments. The language of the letters is quite informal. They also include records of payment and expenses within the family itself. Another contribution these letters make is the existence of narratives penned by the notables in Yusuf veled-i Anton's social circle, alongside ego-documents concerning members of the Anton Butrus family.⁴²

I passed to Berlin from Gotha. I am well-acquainted with Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. My visit this time was fruitful in terms of making solid contributions to the inventory and has yielded certain productive results, one of which was in the form of a will. Wills hold a very special place in our ego-document inventory. I do not mean the wills in the sense of a person simply dividing his legacy among his children; some wills that have reached us are so personal that they were written with the intention of organizing

42 Private correspondence with İbrahim Halil Ayten. Ayten is currently working towards publishing the manuscript found in the Presidency of Religious Affairs Library and the letters in Gotha together as an article.

the funeral ceremony, including the way the remains were to be handled, down to the very last detail. Without doubt, this kind of effort to design one's days after death is extremely personal and touching. An interesting example is: "[This is] the copy of the will of the revered Şeyh Hüseyin Efendi (may Allah's mercy be upon him), who was the imam and preacher of the Ferhadiyye Mosque in the city of Sarajevo around the year 1070 [1659/1660], which was written in his own hand and found after his passing."⁴³ In this instance, we see that Şeyh Hüseyin had experienced a certain state of ecstasy (*kerâmet*) in the mosque, and not wishing it to fade away, wanted it captured in writing. The metaphysical state he describes is as follows: on the left side of the *mihrab*, a common soldier stares at him, holding a bloodied sword in his right hand, with two freshly severed infidel heads on his left. The soldier vanishes when Hüseyin Efendi approaches him. Hüseyin Efendi thinks that the soldier, whom he saw in the realm of meanings, must be the harbinger of the conquest of the Varad castle (1660) by Seydi Ahmed Paşa (d. 1661).⁴⁴ Clearly, the state of war during this time left its imprint in the physical and metaphysical worlds of people across all levels of society. Hüseyin Efendi also makes a request of those who would visit the Ferhadiyye Mosque: "For every wish, [let them] conduct a prayer of need on the left side of the said mosque's *mihrab* and ask for their heart's desire. For the sake of the saints, may their wish be granted." This will, then, stands out with the individuality it contains and its interesting content.

A second finding in Berlin has been the plaint that I have shared a part of in the epigraph.⁴⁵ Ahmed Münîb sorrowfully describes his exile from Sarajevo to Trabzon as "You have expelled many men from their lands, and kept them away for a long time from their children."⁴⁶ As soon as I saw the term *nâle* (plaint), I recalled the title of Cemal Kafadar's keynote speech in 2022, "Secret and Plaint: On the Adventures of First-Person Narratives in Ottoman and World History."⁴⁷ In Münîb's writing, the yearning for his homeland and family is intense. When he writes:

43 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2617, fol. 7b.

44 For Varad, see Mihai Maxim, "Varad," *DİA*: <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/varad>. For the conquest process of the Varad castle and Seydi Ahmed Paşa's efforts and role in it, see Mehmet Ali Ünal, "Evlîya Çelebi'ye Göre Bir Osmanlı Veziri: Seydi Ahmed Paşa," *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10 (2011), 13-14.

45 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2617, fols. 28b-31b.

46 *ibid.*, fol. 29a.

47 https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/documents/benanlatilari/olbasempozyumprogrami_compressed.pdf

To all the poor men, it is like cruelty,
May He allow reuniting with their homelands

I became a poor man now when I was a repentor
Which is God's will, though, there is no helping it.⁴⁸

we understand that he is desperately longing for his homeland, feeling weak and helpless, yet still resigned to God's will. And when he writes:

Oh dawn breeze, gracious wind, come, relieve my soul,
Inform my people, my children, of my longing.

Why do you constantly hesitate? Deliver news of me
To my beloved and my home, tell them of my desperate cries.⁴⁹

Oh, waft of dawn breeze, tell me of the one who holds my heart,
Don't let my yearning go to waste, give me news of my beloved.⁵⁰

he desires that his sorrow be somehow known to his wife and children. He suffers deeply from being unable to receive news of them, and how clearly do these feelings come through! In the lines:

Do you waft through every land, do you go to Bosnia?
Do you see Sarajevo? Give me news of my home.

What state is our houses in, do our children cry?
It is them we long for; give me news of everything.

Are our gardens planted, our roses blossomed?
Do our nightingales sing? Give me news of the parrots.

Do the gillyflowers smell? The layered hyacinths bloom?
What of the lilies, do they grow? Give me news of the daffodils.⁵¹

48 Ahmed Münib's plaint: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2617, fol. 28b.

49 *ibid.*, fol. 29b.

50 *ibid.*, fol. 30b.

51 *ibid.*, fols. 30b-31a.

we understand that he wonders about the state of his home and children, and that from its flowers to its birds, he deeply misses everything about his homeland.

Another work found in Berlin that is of importance for our subject is *Mücerrebât-ı Zeki*.⁵² Some manuscripts in our country have important copies in libraries abroad. One such manuscript is the *Mücerrebât-ı Zeki* of Müneccimbaşı Mustafa Zeki (d. 1735). The Berlin copy of this manuscript is well-preserved. As Özlem Kumbar points out, the parts of it that concern us are primarily Mustafa Zeki's dreams that are recorded at the end, and the parts about his life and his emotional expressions that can be found in them.⁵³

Another example where the main source led us to modern research is the memoir of Binbaşızâde el-Hac Mehmed Ağa-zâde El-Hac İbrahim Edhem. One day, our Humboldt junior researcher Talha Murat told me about having found in the Staatsbibliothek the memoir of a soldier dated around the years of Napoleon's occupation of Egypt (1798-1802)⁵⁴. I was pleased to hear about it. Later, while researching the literature to see if the text was referred to in it, Murat noticed that it had been studied as a thesis in Türkiye.⁵⁵ Reading the text along with the thesis, I realized that the latter focused heavily on the first 40-page part of the manuscript. Yet, in his memoir, İbrahim Edhem also writes about the experience of fulfilling his duty of pilgrimage - indeed, according to his own account, the main reason behind his joining the military campaign was the possibility that it might allow him to undertake the pilgrimage.⁵⁶ As such, the text contains individuality, and it appears that the reason behind its creation was also a personal one.

52 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2277.

53 Özlem Özdemir-Kumbar, "Müneccim Mustafa Zeki'nin (ö. 1735) Rüyaları: Arzular Korkular ve Vizyonlar/The Dreams of Mustafa Zeki, the munajjim (d. 1735): Desires, Fears, and Visions" Ottoman Ego-Documents Symposium, Skopje, May 24-26, 2024. Abstract booklet, p. 75: <https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/documents/benanlatilari/21-mayis-ozet-kitapcigi.pdf>. I thank Şaban Bıyıklı for alerting me to the ego-document nature of *Mücerrebât-ı Zeki*.

54 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Hs. or. oct. 851. The catalogue record reads: Erinnerung an die Feldzüge gegen Napoleon und Kleber in Syrien [Memoirs of the military campaign in Syria against Napoleon and Kleber].

The original text is available in full on the library's web page: https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN863460925&PHYSID=PHYS_0227&DMDID=DMDLOG_0003

55 Adem Ayvalı, "18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarihine Bir Kaynak Olarak el-Hâc İbrahim Edhem'in Tarihçesi (1799-1803)," MA Thesis, Gaziosmanpaşa University, 2019. The thesis advisor was Songül Çolak, who introduced *Tarih-i Göynüklü* to the public and who works on Ottoman manuscripts in the Staatsbibliothek.

56 Ayvalı, "18. yüzyıl Osmanlı tarihine bir kaynak olarak el-Hâc İbrahim Edhem'in tarihçesi (1799-1803)," 8-9.

News about us

An important administrative development took place between our second and third issues. In 2015, we had founded the Division for the Study of Ego-Documents under the Center for Civilization Studies (İSMAM) of Istanbul Medeniyet University. While suggesting the establishment of such a division under İSMAM, I had at the back of my mind the *Center for the Study of Egodocuments and History* in Amsterdam headed by Rudolf Dekker and Arianne Baggerman as a comparable example. While this was underway, I was on the verge of meeting and collaborating with the members of the project headed by Claudia Ulbrich in Germany,⁵⁷ where I would be going thanks to a TÜBİTAK scholarship. I had felt the need for such a formation so that it may answer the need for an institutional framework whilst we sought to collaborate with academicians from across the globe who worked on ego-documents. As things stand today, we have transformed into a formation that produces output far beyond that of a division under a research center, and became a sizeable research group operating within that structure. Here, I mean a formation that is leading one national and one international research project with over twenty researchers; which has organized three major academic meetings including two in Türkiye (OLBA 2020, 2022) and one abroad (OLBA 2024-Skopje) - and is currently preparing a fourth interim meeting (OLBA 2024-Medeniyet) - and which publishes an academic journal. For these activities, our division has formed academic collaborations with more than a few national and international organizations and institutions. It has organized the 2020 meeting with Türk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish Historical Society) and İSTEV (The Foundation for Science, Art, History and Literature); the 2022 meeting with TÜBİTAK and İSTEV; the May 2024 meeting with Balkan Çalışmaları Vakfı (Balkan Studies Foundation), Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, The Presidency of the Turkish Collaboration and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), and is working with Freie Universität Berlin and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for the December 2024 meeting. The realization of these undertakings has proven that ours was a formation that deserved to become its

57 DFG-Forschergruppe 530. Selbstzeugnisse in transkultureller Perspektive: <https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/fg530/index.html>.

own research center - even its own institute. With that in mind, we applied to the Council of Higher Education to change from a division to a center, and on February 21, 2024, the establishment of our research center was approved, with the rules and regulations published in the Official Gazette on June 30, 2024.⁵⁸ The full name of the center is Center for the Study of Ego-Documents/*Ben-Anlatıları Araştırmaları Merkezi* and we have decided on the abbreviation BAMER. As a brand new collaboration, we have already started working towards a joint project with *The Center for Microhistorical Research* in Iceland founded by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon. From now on, *Ceride* can be viewed as a periodical of BAMER. In terms of non-periodicals, we are considering creating a series called “BAMER Library” under the Istanbul Medeniyet University Press, and there, publishing books related to our subject.

Yet another important development in this period was the completion of the third OLBA meeting in a two-day activity in Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia, in the 15th century Ottoman Çifte Hamam [“double bath”] on May 24-26, 2024. The choice of location was on point as Çifte Hamam stands at the heart of the Turkish market. The sessions were held simultaneously in two separate halls. In the presentations, we paid attention to pairing early-career researchers with well-established names in the field. There was particular interest in the meeting from the Balkans. Although there had been no requirement for the papers to focus on the Balkan region, some papers did aim to shed light on the body of ego-documents produced in these Ottoman lands. With the presentation of a total of fifty papers, the activity concluded successfully. By the end of this third meeting, it became apparent that we did not feel the need to discuss the concept itself as much. Even in terms of the inventory, the individual findings and the introduction of the works to the public, with this meeting, we have reached a point of satisfaction. Even though our inventory is not published yet, it is clear that these three meetings alone have produced an inventory by themselves. The time for analytical studies on Ottoman ego-documents has now come. The road is clear.

58 <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2024/06/20240630-12.htm>.

In this issue

In this issue, we have once again brought together several intriguing research articles. Ümit Karaver has been working on Şeyh Âli el-Bestâmî Musannifek (d. 1470) for a long time. He joined our previous meetings and delivered papers that focused on various facets of Musannifek.⁵⁹ In his article here, he attempts to construct the biography of this prolific writer by compiling the autobiographic elements in his works, including *Tuhfe-i Mahmûdî*, *Şerhu'l-Mutavvel*, *Şerhu'l-Misbâh*, *Kitâbü's-Şifâ*, *er-Reşâd fî Şerhi'l-İrşâd*, *Şerhu'l-Akâidi'n-Nesefiyye*, *Hâşiye ala Şerhi'l-Akâidi'l-Nesefiyye*, *Şerhu'l-Lübâb*, *Hâşiye ale'l-Mutavvel*, *Şerhu's-Şemsiyye*, *Şerhu'l-Vikâye*, *Tuhfetü's-Selâtîn*, *Şerhu Kasideti'l-Bürde*, *Şerhu Kasideti'l-Ruhiyye*, *Hallu'r-Rumûz*, *Şerhu'l-Hidâye*, *Hakâiku'l-Îmân li Ehli Yakîn ve'l-İrfân*, *Şerhi Mesnevî*, *Hâşiye alâ Hâşiyeti'l-Miftâh*, *Hâşiye el-Mutavvel*, *Tefsir-i Musannifek*, *Mülteka'l-Bahreyn/Kitâbu's-Şifâ*, *Muhtasaru'l-Muntazam*, and *Kitâbu'l-Hudûd ve'l-Ahkâm*. Karaver masterfully compiles not just the autobiographic data about Musannifek in his extensive body of work, but also remarks about him in works written by his contemporaries, as well as bringing together Musannifek's colophons, ex libris and foundation records.

Türkan Alvan had featured in our previous issue in a review of her book *Sultan Murad-ı Sâlis'in Dünyası*.⁶⁰ She now contributes to the journal with an article on the *dolabnâme* genre - a genre in which only a handful of works are known. *Dolabnâme* is not a well-known variety; Alvan focuses her attention on the work of Kalkandelenli Fakîrî, one of the few that are known, written at the end of the 15th century, pointing out that among the known *dolabnâme* examples, this one, completed in 1498 in Ermenek, is the most complete and well-organized one. Clearly, works in this genre - which derives its name from the heart-wrenching sound the water wheel makes as it turns - are invaluable sources in which intense emotional states can be traced, and which can enrich the content of ego-documents. Possibly, future historians of literature may uncover other *dolabnâmes* such as Fakîrî's.

59 2020: Ümit Karaver, "Şeyh Ali el-Bistâmî Musannifek'te 'Ben' Anlatıları"; 2022: Ümit Karaver (with Muhammed Takî Hüseyinî), "Musannifek'in "*Tuhfe-i Mahmûdî/Tuhfetü'l-Vüzerâ*" Adlı Eserinde Bulunan Otobiyografik Kısmın Değerlendirilmesi: XV. Yüzyıla Ait Bir Önceki (CV) Örneği/Review and Translation of the Autobiographical Section of Shaykh Âli Al-Bistâmî Musannifek's Work "*Tuhfa-i Mahmûdî/Tuhfa al-Vuzara*": A Classical Resume Sample."

60 Türkan Alvan, *Sultan Murad-ı Sâlis'in Dünyası: Mektupları ve Rüyaları Işığında Bir Derviş Padişah* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2021).

One contribution from the 17th century comes courtesy of Günay Kayarlar, which centers around the *Gülşen-i Niyâz* of the historian/grand mufti Karaçelebizâde Abdülaziz Efendi (d. 1658) in which he writes about his inner world, his spiritual journey and his life in exile, focusing on his days in Cyprus during his first exile in 1634-1636 (his second exile would be to the Island of Chios about fifteen years later).⁶¹ Kayarlar also makes use of his poems and his *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrar* and makes comparisons with Seyyid Hasan's *Sohbetnâme*.

İsmâil Hakkı Bursevî (d. 1725) is a name that I had encountered frequently since his was one of the faces of the time period I had written my dissertation on. In this issue, I am pleased that we are publishing a paper that focuses on his ego-documents. Taking his notebooks that contain some of his personal notes, such as *Tamâmü'l-Feyz*, as the departure point, Nurdan Şahin attempts to identify him and his personality.

The *Mecmua* of the imam and scribe Molla Mustafa Başeski (d. 1223/1808-09) was previously studied as a dissertation, with the title "Ruznâme" [court diary], by Kerima Filan in Ankara University.⁶² This is not a text written by a confidential secretary detailing the everyday activities of the sultan; on the contrary, the sense of immediacy in the entries is enough to describe it as a diary. Filan later published her dissertation in Sarajevo⁶³ and made further publications in English and Turkish based on this text.⁶⁴ While she tends to treat the text as a source to derive information from, in terms of the genre it belongs to, its value as an ego-document, its style and its drive, it is a fertile piece on which more can be said. Unlike her previous publications, in this article, Filan makes a character analysis of Mustafa using the *Mecmua*. Accordingly, the author comes across as a moderate figure who values justice and humility – or at least, that is the portrait he wishes to paint of himself in the text. Having lived a long life by the standards of

61 On his life, see Nevzat Kaya, "Karaçelebizâde Abdülaziz Efendi." <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/kara-celebizade-abdulaziz-efendi>

62 Kerima Filan, "Başeski Şevki Molla Mustafa, Rüz-nâme: Metin-Sözlük-İnceleme," PhD Diss., Ankara University, 1999.

63 *XVIII. Yüzyıl Günlük Hayatına Dair Saraybosnalı Molla Mustafa'nın Mecmuası*, ed. Kerima Filan (Sarajevo: Connectum, 2011).

64 Kerima Filan, "Life in Sarajevo in the 18th Century (According to Mulla Mustafa's Mecmua)," *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, ed. Markus Koller, Vera Costantini (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 317-45; idem, "Saraybosnalı Mollâ Mustafâ'nın Mecmûası İşığında Bir Osmanlının Topluma Bakışı," *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Çalışmaları VII: Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur (İstanbul: Turkuaz, 2012), 271-90.

his time, he made entries in his notebook across a time span that covers nearly the entire second half of the 18th century. We learn from Filan that Molla Mustafa kept obituary records in some pages of his book, and events on others. The recording of deaths and daily occurrences is a format we find in Sadreddinzâde.⁶⁵ He, too, recorded only obituaries in the first few pages of his diary and then began recording events taking place around him. Even though Molla Mustafa, who was born in 1730, died in 1223 (1808-09), and we find various records in the text until 1804-05, because he lived most of his life in the 18th century, we must consider this an 18th century text. No certain date of death was given for Molla Mustafa in Filan's previous publications. She has found the writer's gravestone in her later work and thus clarified his death date. The gravestone is being published here for the first time.

In our "Translation" section, we continue to bring papers that discuss the subject of ego-document as a concept and its scope to their Turkish readers. Kaspar von Greyerz's article, in which he suggests that the term *ego-document* is an unfortunate one, is an important one within the context of discussions about the concept, and the author himself, in ego-document studies. He conducted his studies, which shed light on Switzerland's collection of ego-documents in the German language for many years, in Basel. He has worked in close contact with the Berlin group and is one of the editors of Brill's "Egodocuments and History" series. I used to assign his article in this issue, "Ego-Documents: The Last Word?", in my doctoral classes. In a week that included this reading, Esra Çon Yılmaz, who was taking my class, had said that she could not understand why von Greyerz was so hard on the term *ego-document*. Many years have passed and we have deepened our studies on ego-documents; when I felt the need for translated works alongside our monographs, research articles, and editorial pieces, I thought that Çon Yılmaz would be the right person to translate von Greyerz. As a graduate of Boğaziçi University, she had no problem on the point of English competency, and I remembered her interest in the article from our class. I thank her for agreeing to make this translation. I agree with Çon Yılmaz; I, too, do not find the degree of von Greyerz's criticism of the term meaningful. On the contrary, I am in favor of using whichever term most efficiently rep-

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

resents the pre-modern people's selves. I frequently encounter phrases such as "autobiography in the modern sense" or "diary in the modern sense" and they mean nothing to me. We tend to believe that it is the modern person who does everything in the most ideal manner - and it only takes us further away from the people in history.

We also once again offer a rich book review section. You will find five reviews in this issue: **1)** When Sylvie Moret Petrini had come to *Medeniyet* in 2020 to present a paper, I was very interested to hear what she had to say on children's ego-documents. So when dear Richard Wittmann sent me the Istanbul diary of the Swedish girl recently published in *Orient-Institut Istanbul's "Memoria"* series, I thought that we must review it in *Ceride*, and that Petrini would be the most capable person to do it. **2)** Even though it has been some time since the publication of *Risâle-i Kürd Hatîb*, it has not drawn much attention as an ego-document. So we wanted to include it here at the risk of compromising on the principle of reviewing recent publications in the book reviews sections in journals. Elmin Aliyev is the one who alerted me that it is an ego-document. I decided that Cumhuriyet Bekar, who wrote his dissertation on the same time period, would be the best person to review it. **3)** For a book on the history of emotions published in German in 2017 and its English translation fresh off the press, I thought the best person to review it would be Nil Tekgöl. **4)** Türkan Alvan, who contributed to this issue with a research article, has recently published a book titled *Dolabnâme* along with Nihat Öztoprak. I wanted it reviewed in this issue, and you will read it as penned by Gülşah Taşkın. **5)** Upon my arrival in Gotha, the first thing that I had done had been to read Boris Liebrecht and Kristina Richardson's book. I examined the original copy of Dokumacı Kemaleddin's notebook alongside Liebrecht's work, and I also had the opportunity to meet Liebrecht and discuss the book with him when I went to Berlin. Safiye Türker İşıksel was the most qualified person in my social milieu to write about this book. I thank all five of our book reviewers for acceding to my requests.

In this issue, we have three contributions in our "An Ego-document from the Archives" section. As in every issue, Kemal Gurulkan contributes with interesting documents from the archives, and Burak Muhsin Akın, who is now a research assistant at Karabük University, with decrees of Sultan İbrahim. Both come from the Topkapı Palace Museum Archives. Mine Karataş

redraws your attention to an extremely interesting document concerning Levnî (d. 1732), a towering figure in Ottoman miniature painting. In the first contribution, you will be surprised by the letters Alemdar Mustafa Paşa (d. 1808) addressed to his predecessor in the grand vizierate Çelebi Mustafa Paşa (d. 1811), written in terrifying style, full of rage at being misunderstood, concerned with explaining himself correctly. As with Sultan İbrahim's other letters, with the one we present in this issue, you will once again be charmed by his vulnerable tones. Thanks to these imperial decrees written in the sultans' own hands - the most affective examples of which we find by the sultans İbrahim (d. 1648), Ahmed III (d. 1736) and Abdülhamid I (d. 1789) - we can see in plain sight these most genuine and human sides of the Ottoman sultans. The third contribution is a petition (*arzuhal*) dated 1706 written by Levnî, the head artist/painter of the palace workshop and thus whose occupation was an inherently visual one, in which he complains about an ailment of the eyes that he has been suffering from for three years ("afflicted with eye pain/infection"). It is quite an interesting document in terms of providing insight into this master's life, the one he lived at the background of his miniature paintings that have survived to this day. Ahmed III would respond favorably to his petition, in which Levnî requests "sufficient" financial help, and decide to grant him 20 aspers a day from the income of the Edirne customs.⁶⁶

As in the previous two issues, this issue's cover image is also very special to me. Since we had images of manuscript pages on the previous issues, I wanted this issue's cover to feature a miniature painting. For a long while now, we have been discussing among ourselves the self-portraits Cemal Kafadar had shown in his keynote speech at Istanbul Medeniyet University in 2022. I chose one of these possible self-portraits as the cover image. While showing this image in his Power Point presentation and explaining it, Kafadar had made the following remarks:

1. This miniature found in the *Süleyman-nâme* - a text prepared for Süleyman the Magnificent - includes an informative scene about the concept of *devşirme* (levy).

⁶⁶ Karataş noticed after submitting this document to our journal that it had been previously published by Gül İrepoğlu in her *Levnî: Nakış, Şiir, Renk* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1999, 40-41), but since we value drawing attention to this important master's petition also as an ego-document, we have decided not to withdraw it.

2. It appears to depict a certain geographic area (It calls to mind lands like Bosnia and Herzegovina.)
3. *There are certain indications that it might be a self-portrait.* The figures in the painting might represent certain people levied in the palace workshops and later rose to prominence among the *kapıkulu* (slaves of the Porte) or the palace artists.
4. *One of the figures here might have depicted his own experience in the painting.* Could he be the figure looking over his shoulder?
5. It depicts a highly emotionally charged scene - something that is unusual in a miniature painting.⁶⁷

This issue is the first product of our Skopje meeting. In our next issue, you will read contributions from that meeting as well. Until we meet in our fourth issue, take good care of your selves!

Ahmed Münib's plaint that I found in Berlin was very well-enjoyed when we read it line by line in class with our research group.⁶⁸ Our team has reassured me that it is indeed an affecting and highly emotive ego-document. While, as someone hailing from Trabzon, Münib's torment of living in this beautiful city of the Black Sea region wounded me deeply (!), I still conclude my words with his supplication to be free of Trabzon:

I have suffered and wept much in Trabzon
I have put into words the history of hardships

I have finished my plaint and said its prayers
Oh God, let Münib's liberation be swift.⁶⁹

67 The italics are by me. To listen to Cemal Kafadar's speech (starting at 3:22 for the part in which he talks about our cover image): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfTYoXecU6s&t=13342s>.

68 It is not only the plaint; we read each and every text in our inventory almost from front to back with our research group. Whilst reading the plaint, we have pondered on every single word collectively. Turgay Şafak made sure that we read Ahmed Münib's Persian-heavy text correctly. Mine Karataş made a clean copy of the text and even transcribed the rest of it by herself in preparation for the next class, thus speeding up our reading immensely.

69 Ahmed Münib's plaint: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2617, fol. 31b.