

Konferans Raporu/*Conference Report*

Report on the Third Meeting of the “Ottoman Ego Documents: OLBA 2024, Skopje”

Üçüncü “Osmanlı Ben-Anlatıları Sempozyumu: OLBA 2024, Üsküp” Raporu

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Geliş Tarihi/Date of Arrival: 26.11.2024

Kabul Tarihi/Date of Acceptance: 16.12.2024

Yakar, Gülşen. “Report on the Third Meeting of “Ottoman Ego Documents”: OLBA 2024, Skopje” *Ceride* 2, no. 2 (Aralık/December 2024): sayfa/pp 159-173.
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15073477

The third meeting on “Ottoman Ego-Documents” was held on May 24–26 at Çifte Hammam in the historic site of the Turkish bazaar in Skopje, North Macedonia.¹ The meeting was organized in collaboration with the Istanbul Medeniyet University Faculty of Letters and their Center for the Study of Ego-Documents (BAMER), the Harvard University Center for Middle East

1 <https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/tamamlanmis-etkinlikler/uskup-2024/ana-sayfa-uskup-2024>. Accessed November 26, 2024.

tern Studies, and the Balkan Studies Foundation. It was further sponsored by TİKA (the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) and YTB (the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities). The meeting brought together scholars of various fields of expertise from Turkey and the Balkan region in order to introduce and consider Ottoman ego-documents which were mainly, but not exclusively, produced in the Balkans.

This was the third in a series of meetings organized by the Center for the Study of Ottoman Ego-Documents, the previous two of which were held at Istanbul Medeniyet University in 2020² and 2022.³ The meeting was opened with welcome speeches delivered by Selim Karahasanoğlu (Director of the Center for the Study of Ego-Documents, BAMER), Sevba Abdula (Director of the Balkan Studies Foundation, BSF), and Mehmet Bayrak (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency's Director of Skopje).

Selim Karahasanoğlu's opening speech, "Ego-Documents from Istanbul to Skopje: A Progress Report, 2020-2024" informed the audience of the completed and ongoing projects, publications, and future agendas of the TÜBİTAK Project "Ottoman Ego-Documents: Inventory and Analysis (1500-1800)", the Center for the Study of Ego-Documents (BAMER), Istanbul Research Group and *Ceride: Journal of Ego-Document Studies*.⁴ Karahasanoğlu clarified the research group's understanding of Ottoman ego-documents and their classification. In addition to providing an overview of the ongoing research projects, both in terms of their content and quantity, Karahasanoğlu announced that papers presented during the meeting will be published both in *Ceride* and the *Journal of Balkan Studies*.⁵

İhsan Fazlıoğlu delivered the opening lecture, "Self-Narratives Embedded into *Nazarriyât*: Do Works of Science in the Ottoman Country Have Any

2 Selim Karahasanoğlu, "Osmanlı Literatüründe Ben-Anlatıları Çalıştayı Üzerine Rapor," *Toplumsal Tarih*, 320 (2020): 8-11; Selim Karahasanoğlu, "Learning from Past Mistakes and living a Better Life: Report on the Workshop in İstanbul on "Ottoman Ego-Documents," *Review of Middle East Studies* 54, 2 (2021): 294-302. For further information on the workshop, see <https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/tr/tamamlanmis-etkinlikler/calistay/calistay-ana-sayfa>. Accessed November 26, 2024.

3 Özlem Özdemir Kumbar, "Osmanlı Literatüründe Ben-Anlatıları Sempozyumu Üzerine Rapor," *Toplumsal Tarih Akademi* 1 (2022): 130-6; "Report on the Symposium 'Ottoman Ego-Documents': Towards an Inventory of Ottoman Ego-Documents," *Ceride* 1, 1 (2023): 183-98. For further information on symposium, see <https://benanlatilari.medeniyet.edu.tr/tr/tamamlanmis-etkinlikler/sempozyum/ana-sayfa-sempozyum>. Accessed November 11, 2024.

4 Accessed November 26, 2024, <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ceride>.

5 See <https://www.balkanjournal.org/jbs>. Accessed November 13, 2024.

Function for Self-Narratives?” His lecture focused on texts produced in several scientific fields and their capacity to present the authors’ autobiographies, which he argued might be classified as fragmentary ego-documents. Although the texts in question do not deliberately aim to do so, they inevitably provide autobiographical information which serves as both complementary autobiographical data on the author and background information for the scientific, cultural, and political context in which they produced their scientific works. Fazlıođlu warned that researchers should not omit scientific texts and further asserted that even the prayers in *dîbâce* (foreword) sections, which is customary to include, incorporate valuable information about the scientific perspective of the author or the opposition they might have as educators in the sciences.

The first panel of the meeting was devoted to ego-documents produced in the Balkan region. Nilgün Dalkesen acted as the chair for the panel which was entitled “Narrating the ‘Self’ in the Balkans”. Aleksandar Shopov delivered a presentation on fifteenth century poets who travelled to newly conquered Balkan lands. In his presentation, “There is Little Bread or Salt, and We Did Not See Melon or Watermelon: First-Person Narrative, Experience, and Knowledge in 15th-Century Ottoman Poetry About the Balkan Peninsula”, Shopov opened a discussion about the issue of historical geography and identity formation through Ottoman poets’ impressions of Balkan lands. Construction of their self in poetry, Shopov claimed, was significantly influenced by the land, having been shaped in relation and/or in contradiction to it. Marijana Mišević took a holistic approach to Hâcî Yūsuf of Livno. In her presentation entitled “Marginalia of the Frontier or Tokens of Power of an Imperial Literate Culture: The Oeuvre of Hâcî Yūsuf of Livno (d. after 1647) and Its Self-Documentary Elements”, Mišević, analyzed the author’s works produced in various textual genres that have been studied separately thus far. By doing so, Mišević problematized the existing literature’s approach to the Yūsuf which typically provides contradictory portraits of him. The studies conducted thus far have been derived from single, particular texts under analysis and failed to capture what is inherently multifaceted. Mikail Türker Bal’s presentation, “80 Years in a Diary: Mesnevihan Haji Hafız Khalid Efendi Hajimuliç”, focused on the well-known Sufi of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hacımuliç. What makes this modern figure noteworthy was the persistence of his habit of keeping a diary from 1931 to 2010, co-

vering almost his entire life. Hacimuğ’s voluminous diaries serve as a good illustration of the true value of ego-documents, providing what might have been unattainable in the absence of such subjective material, the “trivial” aspects that historians seek to uncover, such as his fondness for football, movies, Tolstoy, and cats. The last presentation of the panel was delivered by Orhan Ençakar and entitled “Self-Narrative of Bosnia-Akhisar Judge Hasan Kāfī al-Aqhisārī (d. 1024/1615) on the Axis of His Autobiographical Work Named *Nizām al-‘Ulamā’ ilā Khātām al-Anbiyā*”. This prominent scholar of Bosnia-Aqhisar provided his autobiography in *Nizām al-‘ulamā’ ilā khātām al-anbiyā* which was presented to Bosnian Damat İbrahim Pasha (d. 1601). The author provided information on scholarly aspects of himself—such as his own education and that of his pupils—as it would be expected, but he also included information on his family.

The panel “‘Self’ in Autobiographies” was chaired by Şükran Fazlıoğlu. The first presentation was delivered by Günay Kayarlar, entitled “Self-Narratives in the Works of Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi”. Kayarlar began with a short biography of Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi (1592-1658) followed by an introduction to *Zeyl-i Ravzatü’l-Ebrar* and *Gülşen-i Niyaz*. Both works prove to be rich in expressing the author’s emotions—most strikingly his ambition, envy, even his suicidal leanings, which Kayarlar argues to be one of the earliest known written explicit expressions of it in the Ottoman prose. In “Ego-Documents in the Ottoman Empire: How Mirzazâde Sâlim Efendi Introduced Himself” Ebru Onay argued that an ego-document should be examined alongside the author’s other works in order to shed light on different parts of their lives. Accordingly, Onay supplemented the autobiographical information in Mirzazâde Sâlim Efendi’s (1688-1743) *Tezkiretüş-Şu’arâ* with that found in his *Divan*. The next presentation was Metin Aydar’s “Narratives Leaving a Mark: A Converted Priest in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire and Thoughts on His Work”, which focused on the life of Dervish Mehmed, a former priest. The text dates to the middle of the seventeenth century and is the record of a conversation between a dervish-disciple and his sheik. The conversation retrospectively provides the dervish’s conversion narrative. Although the conversation is likely (or at least, partly) a symbolic-imaginary product of the newly converted dervish’s mystical zeal, it illuminates the psychology of this rite of passage. The final presentation of the panel was delivered by Mehmet Arıkan, “What Lies in the

Heart of a Mudarris: Self Narratives in the Works of Ömer İspirî". One of the many works of İspirî, *Ferhatu'l-fuâd* presents the life narrative of an eighteenth century *müderriş* in financial distress and despair, seeking favor and support with a firm belief in his own scholarly expertise.

A parallel session, "Self in Recollection", was chaired by Elmin Aliyev. The first presentation of this session was delivered by Ahmet Koçak and entitled "Refik Halit Karay's Memoirs in the Framework of Ego-Documents: *Minelbab İlelmihrab* and *Bir Ömür Boyunca*". The presentation focused on Refik Halit Karay (1889-1965) who played a prominent role in the modern Turkish literature and produced many works in various genres, including memoir. Karay's memoirs capture one of the most turbulent time periods in the history of Turkey, from the end of the Ottoman Empire and the occupation of Istanbul to its liberation and reformulation in the modern Turkish Republic. What Karay provides in his memoirs is not only the intellectual, ideological, and cultural landscape of the time but also the political and social struggle to survive and endure. Elif Sezer-Aydınlı's presentation, "18th Century Self-Narratives in the Miscellanies of Connoisseurship: Dâyezâde Mustafa, Süleyman Fâik ve Saraybosnalı Molla Mustafa" was delivered by Mine Karataş in her absence. The presentation focused on three eighteenth century miscellanies that transcend the traditional borders of historical record and personal scrapbook: Dâyezâde Mustafa's *Selimiye Risalesi*, Süleyman Fâik Efendi's *Mecmua*, and Saraybosnalı Molla Mustafa's *Mecmua*. What these three have in common, Sezer-Aydınlı argued, is that their authors characteristically turned these works into self-narratives while they were all allegedly composed for other, not ego-centered motivations. "An Evaluation About 19th Century Ottoman Ego-Documents From Writing Motivation Point of View, Based on *Risale-i Tercüme-i Ahvâl-i Aşçı Dede-i Nakşi Mevlevi* Case" was the final presentation of this panel, delivered by Esra Çon-Yılmaz. Aşçı Dede's (b. 1828) memoir is a well-known text in the field; thus, Çon-Yılmaz chose not to prioritize the content. Instead, her presentation focused on the genre, organization, and motivation of the text in order to consider its compatibility with the term "ego-document".

A third panel, "Methodological Approaches to 'Self'", was chaired by Hatice Aynur. The first presentation was delivered by Rukiye Aslıhan Aksoy-Sheridan and focused on one of the most famous and eccentric figures of Ottoman history, Evliya Çelebi, and his most utilized work, which has ope-

ned an on-going debate in the study of Ottoman ego-documents. In her presentation entitled, “Evliya Çelebi’s Book of Travels as a ‘Work-in-Progress’: Notes on an Unfinished ‘Self-Inscription’”, Aksoy-Sheridan evaluated the voluminous text as a self-inscription expressing the author’s vibrant life experiences and feelings. Aksoy-Sheridan observed that the text poses in itself a variety in naming and genre, organization, accounts of fiction and fact. Similarly, the motivations involved to pen it down was also multiple and complex, thus allowing the historian to read it as a self-narrative as well. The next speaker was Güneş Işıksel with a presentation entitled “Some More Remarks on BnF supplément turc 221: Baroque Orientalism, Early Modern Narrativities, Invention of Fiction and *Sergüzeşt*names”. Early eighteenth century *Risâle-i fevâ'idü'l-mülûk* was not a form of *nasihatname* (advice literature), as the title implies. Rather, it is a fictional *hasbihal* (causerie). Işıksel evaluated the text in its relation to contemporary European written culture and consequently questioned its authenticity as an Ottoman text. The next presentation was Barbaros Köksal’s “Composing ‘New Military History’ Utilizing the Perspective of Ego-Documents: Methodology, Sources, and Challenge”. Köksal’s presentation was not centered on a text or an author, but on ego-documents’ potential to influence and reshape military history. Köksal illustrated the benefits of this mode of writing in its capacity to reveal the elements behind what archival sources of military history customarily provide. These include the lived experiences, motivations, and the very psychology of battle as well as that of its aftermath in captivity and conversion. Kristina Nikolovska was the final speaker of the session. In “Marginal Inscriptions as Ego-Documents”, Nikolovska focused on marginal notes on religious text as self-inscriptions. More specifically, the presentation focused on a metropolitan bishop who had a habit of using margins to talk about his own rank and how he rose to it and, occasionally, even to curse at the patriarch.

A parallel session, “On the Margins of Ego-Documents”, was chaired by Ahmet Koçak. The first presentation was delivered by Mustafa Beyazıt who researched on a truly challenging and indeed marginal medium of speaking about the self, tombstones. Beyazıt’s presentation was entitled “The Traces of Self-Narratives in Denizli Tombstones from the Ottoman Era” and focused only on those inscriptions that do not fit into patterned samples but were genuine expressions of those about to die—or at least, expressions of

what the living expected the deceased to say on their death bed. İbrahim Şirin's presentation was entitled "Esat Serezli's Memories of His Homeland: The Ego-Document as an Sample of a Place of Memory". Şirin evaluated Esat Serezli's (b. 1877/78) memoir with a central focus on the dimension of space, specifically Serezli's homeland as a place of memory which shaped the author and, in return, was celebrated by him as the main organizing principle of his memoir. What distinguishes Serezli's memoir is that while retrospective writing about the self typically embodies a certain degree of nostalgia in describing one's homeland as places where the author spent their childhood and youth, this memoir is principally devoted to a place and aims to make it remembered. The final speaker was Yasemin Beyazıt. Beyazıt's presentation focused on a text well known to Ottoman historians, Taşköprüzâde's (b. 1561) famous biographical compilation *Şakâ'iku'n-Nu'mâniyye*. In "Potentials and Limitations from Autobiography to Ego-Documents: The Case of *Şakâ'iku'n-Nu'mâniyye*", Beyazıt observed that Taşköprüzâde included his autobiography in the work and by doing so, he set an example for later translators of the work to follow. Beyazıt's presentation emphasized that the work itself, including its supplements and translations should not be overlooked by researchers of Ottoman ego-documents.

The first day of the meeting was concluded with the keynote address, "The Many Identities of Evliya Çelebi: How Many Can We Hope to Identify?" delivered by Suraiya Faroqhi. Referencing Robert Dankoff's masterful biography, Faroqhi opened her speech by identifying three identities that Evliya claims to have: a passionate world traveler, a devoted servant of the Ottoman dynasty, and a member of the local nobility of Western Anatolia. Faroqhi focused on the last identity of Evliya in her presentation. She observed that Evliya did not record much about his nameless slave mother but his silence on the topic defies the customary explanation of women's seclusion and privacy because he is otherwise quite attentive to in recording the complications in Kaya Sultan's pregnancy. During his life and in his writing, Evliya observed and presented much insightful information about the reigning sultans and influential figures of the time in his monumental travelogue, but not exclusively to praise them. After providing an overview of the historical approaches developed over the years to analyze *Seyahatname*, Faroqhi emphasized that Evliya was not--nor he was trying to convince his readers that he was--a geographer or a historian. The question that

should be posed then, Faroqhi claims, is where did Evliya find the inspiration to write what he did. Resembling a travel novel at times, *meddah* (public storyteller) stories might be the answer. In order to fully understand the work, Faroqhi urged that we first need to understand the mid-seventeenth century, as a period marked by normality and novelty, natural and supernatural, and the people who were Evliya's talked source of information and his audience.

The second and final day of the meeting was opened with the panel entitled "Spiritual and Scientific Journey in Ego-Documents" and chaired by Tuğba İsmailoğlu-Kacı. The first speaker was Şükran Fazlıoğlu whose presentation was entitled "An Ottoman Scholar's 'Intellectual-Self' Narration: The *Sebet* of Bandırmalı Küçük Hamid Efendi". Fazlıoğlu focused on those texts in which the authors document their tutors, as well as the lessons they received from them and the books they read to maintain their professional authority. Known as *fehrese*, *sebet*, *mu'cem*, and *meşîha*, these texts also provide fragmentary information about the author beyond their professional training and experience. Fazlıoğlu further focused on Bandırmalı Küçük Hamid Efendi and his *Câmi'ü rivâyâtî'l-fehâris* in order to trace the autobiographical elements and reveal this eighteenth century scholar's intellectual-self in his own words. The second speaker was Ümit Karaver whose presentation was entitled "Biographical Analysis Based on Autobiographical Records of Sheikh Ali Al-Bestami Musannifak, a Scholar from the 15th Century Timurid/Karamanid/Ottoman World". Musannifak provided fragmentary autobiographical notes on the margins of the works which were to be presented to courtly figures. As for all ego-documents, even for the most intimate and private, writing about the self is partly a process of self-fashioning and self-representation. Karaver claimed that, when combined, these marginal notes not only provide the full autobiography of the author but also clarify the author's motivation in self-representation. The next speaker was Nurdan Soylu-Şahin with a presentation entitled "Ismail Hakkı Bursevi in the Context of Sufi Self-Narratives (1653-1725) and His Relationship with Writing in Self-Construction". Soylu-Şahin's focus was on Ismail Hakkı Bursevi's *mecmua* which involved records of his journeys, letters, dreams, the divine inspirations he received, and the dialogues between him and his sheik. Sufis are known for reflecting on their own spiritual journeys and keeping records thereof. Furthermore, we know that the mystics' method of

introspection regularly turned into a habit of writing and talking about the self, recording not only prophetic dreams and conversations between the disciple and his sheik but also the ordinary course of their daily life. The final presentation of the session was Münzir Şeyhhasan's "The Ego-Documents within the work titled *Al-Kavlü's-sadîd fî ittisâli'l- asânîd*, authored by the Hadith scholar and esteemed teacher Ahmad al-Manîni". Şeyhhasan claimed that the autobiographical information that eighteenth century scholar Ahmad al-Manîni provided went beyond the customary borders of *sebet* literature. He evaluated the work in the frameworks of family and life, his intellectual personality and network, travels and scholarly relations, scholarly lineage and his certificates.

The parallel session was chaired by Turgay Şafak and entitled "Ego-Documents Penned by Poets". Its first speaker was Hatice Aynur. In her presentation entitled "Reading the Poems of Tatavlı Mahremî (d. 1535) as Ego-Documents" Aynur analyzed Mahremî's recently discovered poems which inform the reader about the poet's daily life, the material environment in which he lived, as well as his intimate feelings and thoughts. The second speaker of the session was Türkan Alvan with the presentation entitled "The Contribution of *Dolâb-nâma* Genre to Ottoman Self-Narratives: The Sample of Faqîrî's The *Dolâb-nâma*". Alvan focused on the *dolâb-nâma* literature together with its sub-categories which she argued has been neglected as a source of ego-documents. The next speaker was Betül Akdemir-Süleyman. Her presentation, "Delving into Self-Reflection in Poetry: Self-Documents from the Perspectives of Umami Sinan of Elmalı and Niyazi-i Misri", compared the divans of two prominent Sufis from the seventeenth century from diverse educational backgrounds. Akdemir-Süleyman's purpose was to identify the repeating patterns between the two. The final presentation of the panel was delivered by Christiane Czygan and entitled "The Puzzling Relationship Between the Poet and the Poetic Persona in Early Modern Ottoman Literature". Czygan's presentation focused on an often overlooked aspect of ego-documents and proposed an inspiring perspective to focus on the interplay between the poet and the poetic persona, inconstant distancing and uniting of the two in early modern literature.

The next panel "Ego-Documents in Records and Letters" was chaired by Yasemin Beyazıt. Sena Hatip-Dinçyürek's "Approaching Late Ottoman Petitions in Rumelia as Self-Narratives, Discussing Their Potential and Limits"

was the first presentation. Hatip-Dinçyürek analyzed the petitions submitted to the General Inspectorate of Rumelia (Rumeli Vilâyâtı Umûm Müfettişliği- Teftişat-ı Rumeli Evrakı) in the early twentieth century and claimed that some of these documents provide almost partial autobiographies of people from all segments of the society. Certainly, in their formulated style, calculated content, and intermediary scribe's uncertain role in composing it, not all *arzuhâls* (petitions) display ego-document characteristics; but they nonetheless convey the first-person narratives of ordinary people and thus deserve a closer look. The next presentation was Şule İyigönül-Atasağın's "An Analysis of Poet Nabi's *Münşeât* (1642-1712): Searching for 'ego' in *Münşeât*". Nâbî's *Münşeât* (collection of letters) contains the letters that the famous seventeenth century Ottoman poet wrote across almost fifty years and has thus far been used as a supplementary source for social and political history, or analyzed with their literary qualities. İyigönül-Atasağın, on the other hand, argued that approaching these letters as ego-documents will contribute to our understanding of this famous figure's inner world, which otherwise escaped official and private documentation. The next speaker was Beyzanur Eraslan whose presentation was entitled "Letters to Lala from Enderunlu Hacı Mustafa". Eraslan too focused on letters, but rather than being compiled in a *münşeât* these letters belonged to a certain Enderunlu Hacı Mustafa whose name would have been remained unknown to us without them. Hacı Mustafa's letters to his *lala* (tutor) are informative about life in Enderun, but more significantly these provide insight into the pupil-tutor relationship in the second half of the eighteenth century, although it remains largely unknown whether the intimacy they seem to have was typical or not. The final speaker of the session was İlkey Kirişçioğlu with a presentation entitled "The Self in the Interrogation of a Revolutionary Hungarian Convert". Kirişçioğlu's presentation was on a nineteenth century *istintaknâme* (an interrogation report) of a certain Hungarian revolutionary named Charles Justinian. Bringing up the type of document that has been subject of substantial discussion in the ego-document studies in world, Kirişçioğlu reminded that the Ottoman material awaits to be examined with its self-narrative qualities, which would inevitably bear sophisticated theoretical and methodological discussions in the field.

The parallel session was entitled "Self on the Road" and chaired by İbrahim Şirin. The first speaker of this session was Safiye Türker-Işıksel. Her

presentation was entitled “The Safrat Al-Batruk Makâriyûs: Travel-Journal of Bûlus Ibn Al-Za’îm Al-Halabî”. The presentation focused on Paul of Aleppo’s *Safrat*, which according to its author was a historical work, specifically a chronologically organized narrative of his journey from Aleppo to Russia in the middle of the seventeenth century. Paul employed multiple mediums to construct temporality within his work, perhaps giving away his inclination to compose a historical work. Yet Türker-Işıksel observed that he could not restrain himself from depicting the ordinary course of daily life and material culture also. The next speaker was Tuğba İsmailoğlu-Kacı, who delivered a presentation on European travel literature. In “The ‘I’s on the Road: Self-Identity in 19th Century European Travel Diaries”, İsmailoğlu-Kacı argued that those accounts in which the traveler-author made room to express themselves were not favorably received in nineteenth century Europe where travel literature was in high demand and composing a travel account was highly commercialized. İsmailoğlu Kacı also observed that the names of the subgenres of travel literature seldom designated a well-defined uniform genre, but rather they were differentiated on the basis of their content. The final presentation of the session was delivered by Mine Karataş and was entitled “An Example of an Exile Narrative: Vahîd-i Mahtûmî’s *Lâlezâr*”. *Lâlezâr* is an eighteenth century *şehrengiz*, penned when the poet was in exile in Larissa (Yenişehir-i Fenar). But Karataş observed that it is also an *arzuhal*, or a petition thorough which the author strives to prove his innocence, recounting his ordeal and asking for forgiveness.

The session “Findings of the Project’s Team I” was chaired by Semra Çörekçi. This panel was the first in a series of team’s presentations on the ongoing TÜBİTAK research project. The first presentation was Kemal Gurulkan’s “Ego-Documents in the Correspondence Between Ayşe Sineperver Sultan and Her *Kethüda* in the Records of Topkapı Palace Museum Archives”. This presentation focused on the wealth of correspondence between Ayşe Sineperver Sultan (1761-1828) and Esmâ Sultan’s (1778-1848) *kethüda* (lieutenant). Produced in a harem, these letters do not resemble customary state documents in language and in style but are significantly expressive of emotions and reflect the Valide Sultan’s maternal concerns. The next speaker was Emre Eken. His presentation was entitled “Unofficial Faces of Ottoman Sultans: The Cases of Sultan İbrahim and Ahmed III”. Eken argu-

ed that the *hatt-ı hümâyûns* (imperial edicts) of Sultans İbrahim and Ahmed III are particularly expressive of the sultans’ inner lives and emotions. As such, these can also be considered ego-documents. In the presentation entitled “The Hidden Self in Testaments: An Evaluation on the Axis of Gülnüş Emetullah Sultan’s (d. 1127/1715) Testaments”, Elmin Aliyev identified two different categories of testaments and differentiated between those produced as advice on ethics, politics, morals, etc. and self-narratives. Aliyev focused on *vasiyetnâme* (last will and testament) literature and compared Gülnüş Emetullah Sultan’s (d. 1715) two wills with those produced by people from different social classes and backgrounds. The final speaker of the session was Turgay Şafak. Following presentations on letters, *hatt-ı hümâyûns*, and *vasiyetnâmes* of the royal household, the author-protagonist of Şafak’s presentation, “A Persian Poet’s First-Person Narrative in the Ottoman Palace: The Hasbihal-nâme of Hâmidî-yi Isfahânî”, was a once-courtly poet who crossed the sultan. Şafak provided an evaluation of *Hasbihal-name*, the story of a grief-stricken poet’s journey from his homeland to İstanbul, and finally to exile in Bursa.

The parallel session, “Women in Ego-Documents”, was chaired by Cihan Osmanağaoğlu-Karahasanoğlu. Although devoting sessions to the presence of women in history is itself a dissociating organizational practice which is open to justified objection, the fact remains that concerted attention to the presence of women within particular genres of writing is a fruitful work in progress. The first presentation of the session was delivered by Nilgün Dalakesen. In her presentation, entitled “Women in the Mughal Dynasty in the Light of Cihangir Shah’s (1569-1627) *Cihangîrnâme*”, Dalakesen took the audience outside of the Ottoman realm and focused on the well-known memoir of Cihangir Shah. By utilizing a self-narrative produced by the male ruler, Dalakesen maintained that this text is informative on the changing roles of men and women, accompanied by larger transformations in the social and political structure of the Mughal Empire. The next speaker was Ömer Rafi Çiçek whose presentation was entitled “As an Autobiographical Narrative Rereading Mihrî Hâtun’s *Dîvân*”. Female poetry, Çiçek argued, conveys a unique emotional depth while confirming the traditional patterns of the male dominated field. A closer reading gives the reader not only the life story of the particular female poet, but also and more significantly the whole set of societal gender roles and identity. The final presentation of the session

was delivered by Anıl Göç. The presentation, “Impressions of the Life of a 19th Century Ottoman Elite Woman: Emine Melek Hanım (1814-1873)”, utilized not only ego-document material--Melek Hanım’s exceptional two volume memoir--but also archival documents, periodicals, and contemporary publications. Göç traced the societal life of the post-Tanzimat era, more specifically that of women through the memoirs of an elite woman married to a high-ranking statesman.

The next session was entitled “Findings of the Project’s Team II” and was chaired by Selim Karahasanoğlu. This panel was the second part of presentations on the project’s interim findings. The first presentation was delivered by İbrahim Halil Ayten. In this presentation entitled “A Non-Muslim Ego-Document in the Ottoman Literature: The Autobiographical Family Narrative of Elias Hawwa b. Anton Butrus al-Mârûnî”, Ayten introduced a new finding. The notebook of this Maronite Christian family provides a detailed account of the author’s childhood including record of the births, baptism ceremonies, marriages, and deaths in the family. The notebook interestingly records solely those turning points in family members’ lives. The death of Elias, the original author, was recorded by his son and apparently, the notebook was owned and used by him afterwards. A large sum of correspondence between these family members was also discovered, adding a wealth of primary source material to the short notebook. The next presentation was delivered by Semra Çörekçi and entitled “An Ego-Document from the 16th Century: *Sergüzeştname* of Habibullah b. Mahmud”. Çörekçi focused on the autobiography of an Ottoman intellectual who sought to obtain a better position and favor by demonstrating spiritual advancement through the dreams he had. Çörekçi identified the ulterior ambition of the author behind the autobiography but also emphasized that this does not necessarily mean that the work is devoid of sincerity and real emotion. The next presentation was delivered by Gülşen Yakar and entitled “Saints, Holy Madmen and a Court Songster-Dervish: Enfi/Burnaz Hasan Hulûs (d.1724) and *Tezkiretü’l-Müteahhirîn*”. The presentation introduced the biographical compilation with a special focus on its qualities as an ego-document for the author wrote these hagiographies of sheikhs, saints, and holy madmen through his own personal acquaintance with them. The aim of the presentation was to encourage the reconsideration of texts that seemingly centered on lives of others as they might also contain autobiographical fragments.

The final speaker of the session was Özlem Özdemir-Kumbar, and her presentation was entitled “The Dreams of Mustafa Zeki, the Munajjim (d.1735): Desires, Fears, and Visions”. The text in question, *Mücerrebât*, is a work of astronomy, but a section of it is devoted to record many of the author’s dreams including their interpretation and even their fulfillment. Özdemir-Kumbar observed that the recorded dreams together with the short accounts about the author’s own life, reveal the author’s fears and hopes related to his family, career, and death. This session was followed by Elif Çakmak’s poster presentation entitled “The Captivity Narrative of Macuncuzâde Mustafa Efendi, Qadi of Paphos as an Ego-Document: The Sergüzeşt of a Maltese Captive”.

The second and final keynote address was delivered by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, founder of the Center for Microhistorical Research and editor of *The Journal of Microhistory*. In his presentation, “Egodocuments and Microhistory: The Story of Bíbí in Berlín”, Magnússon informed the audience about the organizing perspective and methodology of the Icelandic school of microhistory, and maintained the central importance of ego-documents in microhistorical analysis. To illustrate this point Magnússon presented the gripping case of Bíbí, a woman who suffered a serious illness as a baby and lived her entire life in isolation after being labelled “feble-minded” by her family and community. And yet Bíbí’s story was preserved in an autobiography, much to the surprise of her contemporaries who had not realized the outcast was also literate.

Cemal Kafadar delivered the closing remarks of the third meeting on Ottoman ego-documents. Kafadar, pioneer of the Ottoman ego-document studies, has attended the previous meetings and carefully observed the field’s development over the years. He expressed his contentment in the growing scholarly interest in the field and the diversity of the sources being used. Kafadar concluded that the presentations delivered over the course of the meeting proved the earlier assumptions about the lack of Ottoman ego-documents wrong by showing that Ottoman men and women found many mediums and utilized a number of strategies to write about themselves. He also asserted that the field is now mature enough to pursue more in depth and specialized enquiries such as analysis on employed pronouns or the conception and reflection of inner and outer selves. Kafadar stressed the significance of interdisciplinary approaches to ego-documents and remin-

ded the attendees that ego-documents are literary products as well as historical sources, thus requiring researchers to master both fields. He concluded his speech by presenting examples of self-narrative elements in folkloric lullabies.