

**Arařtırma Makalesi/ Research Article**

**Disability in History and Islam's Perspective on Disability**

**Vesile ŐemŐek\***

(ORCID: 0000-0002-9800-4557)

**Makale G6nderim Tarihi**  
12.05.2025

**Makale Kabul Tarihi**  
29.09.2025

**Atf Bilgisi/Reference Information**

**Chicago:** ŐemŐek, V., "Disability in History and Islam's Perspective on Disability", *Vakanüvis-Uluslararası Tarih Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, 10/ Özel Sayı: Vakanüvis 10. Yıl Özel Sayısı (Special Issue for the Decennial of Vakanüvis), (2025): 1180-1206.

**APA:** ŐemŐek, V. (2025). Disability in History and Islam's Perspective on Disability. *Vakanüvis-Uluslararası Tarih Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, 10 (Özel Sayı: Vakanüvis 10. Yıl Özel Sayısı (Special Issue for the Decennial of Vakanüvis)), 1180-1206.

**Abstract**

In the history of Islamic civilization, the issue of disability is evaluated within the scope of the value that Islam places on human beings. This clearly demonstrates the positive attitude of Islam towards individuals with disabilities and those in need. However, even today, we are far from achieving this ideal. It is regrettable that in most Muslim countries, reaching this level remains very challenging. In our country, some remedial steps have recently been taken for parents of children with disabilities, widows, and the elderly. For example, the state provides regular financial support to families with disabled children. Such improvements undoubtedly bring happiness to those

---

\* Assoc. Prof. Dr., KırŐehir Ahi Evran University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Islamic History and Arts, Türkiye, vsemsek@gmail.com.

Doç. Dr., KırŐehir Ahi Evran Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakóltesi, İslam Tarihi ve Sanatları Bölümü, Türkiye.

affected. However, the shortcomings of the policies implemented so far should be addressed, and new employment policies should be developed. This study emphasizes the importance of social assistance in Islam and highlights that individuals have different physical, mental, and spiritual abilities. It is crucial not to overlook these differences when formulating policies and social support systems.

**Keywords:** Islamic History, Disability, The Prophet, Humanity.

### **Tarihte Engellilik ve İslam'ın Engelliliğe Bakışı**

#### **Öz**

İslam Medeniyet Tarihinde engellilik konusu aslında İslam dininin insana verdiği değer kapsamında değerlendirilmektedir. Bu da İslam'ın özürsü ve muhtaçlara karşı takınmış olduğu olumlu tavrı açıkça ortaya koymaktadır. Kuran'da bedensel ve zihinsel hastalıklar; dini, ruhsat bildirme, tedavi olma, Allah'a dua etme, Allah'ın hastalıklara şifa vermesi ve insanın nankörlüğünü beyan etme bağlamında geçmektedir. Henüz günümüzde bile bizim bu seviyeye ulaşmaktan çok uzakta olduğumuz açıktır. Eşle belirtmek gerekir ki; çoğu Müslüman ülkelerin bu seviyeyi tutturması hayli zor görünmektedir. Ülkemizde son dönemlerde engelli çocuk sahiplerine, dul ve yaşlılara yönelik bazı iyileştirici adımlar atılmış bulunmaktadır. Mesela; engelli çocuğu bulunan ailelere devlet düzenli olarak aylık ödemelerde bulunmaktadır. Bu tür kişilere yönelik yapılan iyileştirmeler insanı şüphesiz mutlu etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, bugüne kadar uygulanan politikaların eksiklikleri giderilmeye çalışılmalı ve yeni istihdam politikaları bulunmalıdır. Bu çalışmada İslam'da sosyal yardımlaşma önemini öne çıkararak ve insanların fiziki, zihinsel ve manevi açıdan sahip oldukları çalışma yeteneklerinin farklı oluşunu unutturmamak gerektiğini vurgulamaktır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** İslam Tarihi, Engellilik, Hz. Peygamber, İnsanlık.

#### **Introduction**

It is known that the conditions of individuals considered disabled improved significantly with the emergence of divine religions, which promote messages of love, brotherhood, and peace, while encouraging cooperation within society. Before Islam, pagan beliefs were dominant on the Arabian Peninsula, and Arab society was structured around separate tribes. Tribal life required its members to be strong, as the future and well-being of the tribe depended on its physically capable

individuals. Consequently, there was little place for people with disabilities. Additionally, as strength and power were central to Arab society, tribes took pride in the health and physical abilities of their members.

Disability is a social reality that has existed since the beginning of humankind. Throughout history, this reality has undergone changes within the social structure, leading to transformations in both its theoretical framework and practical applications. In the historical process, the theoretical perspective on disability was initially moral, later became medical and treatment-based, and today it is designed around the social model and human rights model. Generally, while all these theoretical backgrounds emerge almost simultaneously in a society, the dominant idea and model take precedence, shaping and continuing to shape approaches and practices regarding disability.<sup>1</sup> Define the concept of disability as "a form of limitation or inadequacy in performing the tasks and roles expected of an individual in a social environment." According to them, "these tasks and roles are organized within the domains of life activities such as self-care, education, family relationships, leisure activities, economic life, and employment." As seen, everything related to human life should naturally be considered within the scope of disability, and the primary emphasis should be on the fact that disabled individuals are human beings first, rather than focusing solely on their impairments or types of disabilities. From a historical perspective, we observe that individuals with disabilities have been evaluated based on the types of impairments they have. However, the acceptance that they can become active participants in society through education and employment did not emerge in the early periods.

Disability is a social phenomenon with both individual and societal dimensions. <sup>2</sup> state, "...all definitions of a social phenomenon are temporary and dependent on cultural and situational factors." This study, which explains the transformation of values regarding disability and the corresponding practical changes, examines how the perception of disability has fluctuated throughout history and how perspectives on

---

<sup>1</sup> Howards, Brehm, and Nagi (1980, p. 32)

<sup>2</sup> As Oliver and Barnes (1998, p. 15)

it have evolved. When analyzing the historical development of disability in the world and Turkey, it appears that formulating a single definition of disability that applies to all historical periods is not feasible. However, in this study, I emphasize that the individual dimension of disability is addressed through the concept of impairment, whereas the societal dimension is expressed directly by the concept of disability itself.

Finkelstein's (1998) approach to the nature of disability aligns more closely with the topics covered in this study. Rather than providing a single definition, Finkelstein explains how disability is approached. He (1998, pp. 32–33) identifies that the knowledge field concerning the nature of disability is divided into three areas:

### **The Concept of Disability**

The terminology used to describe disability is often confusing, with various terms sometimes being used interchangeably. For example, words such as "blind," "visually impaired," and "low vision" have distinct meanings but are sometimes used synonymously.<sup>3</sup>

In Arabic, different terms have historically been used to refer to disabled individuals. In the past, the word *مقعدين* (meaning "decadent") was used, later replaced by *هاتذوي العا* (meaning "disabled") and *ال عاجز* (meaning "powerless" or "crippled"). Today, as societal perspectives on disability have become more positive, the term *معوق* (meaning "prevented" or "hindered") has been used.<sup>4</sup>

### **Disability in the Early Islamic Period**

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (d. 55/696) once expressed a sense of superiority over disabled individuals in the Prophet's presence. In response, the Prophet intervened, saying: *"If Allah helps you and provides sustenance, it is only for the sake of the weak among you."* Additionally, the Prophet

<sup>3</sup> İbrahim Karagöz, *The Qur'an's Approach to the Disabled*, *The Reality of the Disabled in Our Country and Islam*, D.İ.B. Yayınları, Ankara 2003, 171-172.

<sup>4</sup> İbrahim Sarıçam, *The Prophet in the Fight Against Poverty. Prophet, Dimensions of Poverty Problem Reached in 2000*, Ed.,

stated: "*Allah has helped this Ummah through the prayers, devotion, and sincerity of the weak among them.*"<sup>5</sup>

This hadith implies that the weak and helpless are often more sincere in worship and obedience because they do not place great value on worldly pleasures. Such statements demonstrate Islam's humane attitude toward disabled individuals. During the periods of the Rashidun Caliphs, the Umayyads, and the Abbasids, the treatment of disabled individuals followed the example set by the Prophet. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (d. 23/644) is particularly noteworthy for establishing the first social insurance institution for orphaned and poor children. As the Islamic state expanded, he ensured that its budget covered the needs of the most vulnerable. Umar also implemented a census and ensured that every citizen received financial support from the state treasury, regardless of their financial status.<sup>6</sup> Small children received 100 dirhams, which increased as they grew older. He believed he was responsible for any hardships faced by his subjects within the Islamic territories.<sup>7</sup>

These historical examples highlight the positive attitude of Islamic civilization toward disabled and needy individuals. However, even today, most Muslim countries struggle to reach this standard. In Turkey, recent measures have been taken to support families with disabled children, widows, and the elderly, including regular government payments. While such improvements bring happiness, the existing policies need further enhancement, and new employment strategies must be implemented.<sup>8</sup>

Islam views human beings as the most valuable and distinguished creatures on Earth, both physiologically and psychologically. This is because humans are endowed with unique qualities, such as intellect,

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ali İmran 3/10*

<sup>6</sup> *İbrahim Ateş, Aid and Education Foundation for the Poor Culture Publication, Ankara 2001, 35-37.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ahmed Bin Hanbel, el Müsned, 2 Cilt, Haz: Rifat Oral, Ensar Yayınları, İstanbul 2004, "Zuhd", 64.*

<sup>8</sup> *İbrahim Sarıçam, The Prophet in the Fight Against Poverty. Prophet, Dimensions of Poverty Problem Reached in 2000, Ed., İbrahim Ateş, Aid and Education Foundation for the Poor Culture Publication, Ankara 2001, 35-37.*

knowledge, and willpower, and have been made caliphs (stewards) on Earth by divine decree. The Quran states: "Indeed, We created man in the best form. Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds. For them is an uninterrupted reward."<sup>9</sup> Another verse affirms: "We have certainly made human beings honorable."<sup>10</sup> In Islam, a person's value and superiority in the sight of Allah are determined by their spiritual commitment rather than their physical attributes. Unlike other creatures, humans have been granted reason, knowledge, and free will, which enable them to distinguish between good and evil. The Quran states: "The worst of creatures in the sight of Allah are those who disbelieve, for they do not believe."<sup>11</sup> This indicates that Allah evaluates people based on their faith, good deeds, and moral conduct rather than their race, color, gender, language, lineage, or physical condition. In Islam, all individuals—whether healthy or disabled—are respected.

It clearly reveals the positive attitude of Islamic civilization towards the disabled and needy. It is clear that even today we are far from reaching this level. It should be noted with regret that; It seems very difficult for most Muslim countries to achieve this level. In our country in Turkey, some remedial steps have been taken recently for the owners of children with disabilities, widows and the elderly. For example; The state regularly makes monthly payments to families with disabled children. Improvements made for such people undoubtedly make people happy. However, the deficiencies of the policies implemented so far should be tried to be eliminated and new employment policies should be found.

The Situation of the Disabled in Pre-Islamic Abrahamic Religions and the Arabs of ignorance It is known that the situation of these people, who were considered disabled in a way, improved positively with the advent of the heavenly religions, which contain messages of love, brotherhood and peace and encourage the cooperation of the members of the society among themselves. It is known that the belief

---

<sup>9</sup> *Quran 95:4-6*

<sup>10</sup> *Quran 17:70*

<sup>11</sup> *Qur'an 8: 55*

of paganism was dominant in the Arabian peninsula before Islam. The Arabs lived in separate tribes. The tribal life prevalent in these lands required the tribesmen to be strong. Because the future and well-being of the tribe depended on the strong members of the tribe they raised, there was no place for disabled people in the tribe. On the other hand, since the feeling of strength dominated the structure and thoughts of the Arabs, each tribe took pride in the health and disability of its members.<sup>12</sup>

In societies before the Islamic civilization, disability is generally seen as a bad luck and a reward for the evil done by the disabled's parents. To put it more clearly, an evil committed by the parents was combined with the belief that Allah created their children with disabilities, and a direct relationship was established between the evil and the disabled child. From ancient times to the 16th and 17th centuries, the main cause of disability was the evil spirits, demons and their negative effects, which were considered to exist in the environment. In the order of living beings on earth, which Aristotle (Aristotle, 384-323 BC) put forward, the disabled are shown in the lowest layer. According to him, the most appropriate order should be as follows: The highest layer is the position of God, and the lowest layer is the position of the devil. Intermediate layers are reserved for Angels, animals, humans, and the disabled, who form the lowest layer of humans.<sup>13</sup>

### **Human Value in Islam**

Undoubtedly, human is the most valuable, superior and distinguished creature, both physiologically/biologically and psychologically, among the creatures created on earth. This is because this being, which we describe as human, is endowed with superior qualities and features than other living things, has been made the caliph on earth by the spirit of Allah, and has even been favored above the angels, and has been elevated to the position of the most honorable

---

<sup>12</sup> Süleyman Eripek, *The Disabled and Their Education*, Anadolu University, Eğt. Fak., Journal, c.5, issue: 1-2, Eskişehir 1992, 121-123.

<sup>13</sup> Osman Çetinkaya, *Positive Discrimination in Disability Policy, The Reality of Disabled People in Our Country and Islam*, D.İ.B. Yayınları, Ankara 2003, 30-31.

creature. <sup>14</sup>This truth is described in the Quran as follows: "Verily, We created man in the best form, then We brought him down to the lowest of the lowest, except those who believe and do good deeds. There is an uninterrupted reward for them" "We have certainly made human beings honorable" <sup>15</sup> According to the Islamic understanding, a person can preserve his value and superiority in the sight of Allah only in proportion to his devotion to spiritual values. <sup>16</sup>Human unlike other living things in this world, has been granted spiritual possibilities such as mind, knowledge and will in addition to material and biological blessings. These virtues are the hallmarks that distinguish humans from other living things. Therefore, this value, honor and superiority is his; It is because he is equipped with reason, idea and will, has the ability to distinguish good from bad, right from wrong, right from wrong, good from evil, he is given divine trust/responsibility and is made the addressee of divine offers. This superiority of man is not related to his material and physical structure, but is related to his spiritual and spiritual structure. <sup>17</sup>

The factor that renders man worthless and worthless in the eyes of Allah is his lack of spiritual values: The verse that means "The worst of creatures walking on earth in the sight of Allah are those who disbelieve, because they do not believe" indicates this truth. Therefore, Allah evaluates people in terms of their faith, good deeds, good morals, worship and obedience or whether they have denial, shirk, hypocrisy, rebellion and bad behavior, taqwa or oppression; does not evaluate them in terms of their race, color, gender, language, lineage, physiological structure, disposition, disability or health, or wealth. As a matter of fact, it is not important in Islam whether people are healthy or disabled, because every person is respected. <sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Çakmaklı, Mahmut, *The Iceberg of Modern Medicine: Medical Errors*, New Turkey, Health II, Ankara 2001, 40-41.

<sup>15</sup> Surah Tin, 95, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmed b. Şuayb Nesaî, Sünen, Çağrı Pub., İstanbul 1981, 34-36.

<sup>17</sup> Nuran Akdemir, *Rehabilitation Services*, New Turkey, Health I, Ankara 2001, 39-40.

<sup>18</sup> Uzunoğlu, Nurettin. *The Holy Quran Meaning*, TDV Yayınları, Ankara 2019, 45

## **The Attitude of Prophet Muhammad Towards People With Disabilities**

During the time of Prophet Muhammad, he showed great sensitivity and care towards companions with disabilities (chronic illnesses). The Prophet rescued those who had no social status and were marginalized by society with his compassion. There were also companions during the Prophet's time who were tested with chronic illnesses (disabilities). The Prophet was the first to apply positive discrimination towards individuals with various impairments. He interacted with them, showed special affection and attention, and included them in social life. This sheds light on a lesser-known aspect of the lives of the Prophet and his companions.

As is well known, the people who lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, saw him, and had the opportunity to engage in his blessed atmosphere and conversations, are called "companions" (sahabah). Many of us have grown up listening to their stories and taking their lifestyles as examples. These companions, having benefited from the spiritual light of the Prophet, attained the highest ranks in terms of closeness to Allah. Among them was a group that most of us might not be aware of—companions who physically differed from others due to orthopedic, visual, or auditory impairments.

The Prophet honored and showed kindness to people with disabilities, joked with them, facilitated their participation in social life, and provided them with new opportunities in terms of employment and professional skills. For example, he assigned Abdullah as both a muezzin and an administrator. Muadh ibn Jabal, who had a leg ailment, was personally appointed by the Prophet as the governor of Yemen.

One of the disabled companions, Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, was known for his short stature and thin legs. Despite his frail body, he boldly went to the Kaaba where the Quraysh polytheists gathered and recited the Quran publicly. Even after being severely tortured, Ibn Mas'ud repeated the same courageous act as soon as he recovered. Imran ibn Husayn, who was bedridden for thirty years due to a chronic illness and needed constant care, responded to a friend who asked how he endured such suffering by saying: *"If health or illness pleases Allah, then it pleases me too! I have found*

*great peace in myself for the past thirty years.*" Due to his patience, Imran ibn Husayn reached such spiritual heights that he could hear the glorifications of the angels. The angels would send him greetings every day as a means of consolation.

Another example is the companion named Zahir, who had a physical condition that made him self-conscious and led him to live in the desert rather than in the city. The Prophet, recognizing his struggles, suggested that they collect herbs from the desert together and sell them at the market in Medina. Not only did he assist Zahir in his business, but he also uplifted his spirits by saying: "*Zahir is our desert, and we are his city.*" One day, while Zahir was in the market, the Prophet approached him from behind, covered his eyes, and playfully asked the surrounding people: "*I have a slave to sell! Who will buy him from me?*" Zahir, feeling unworthy, replied: "*O Messenger of Allah, who would buy a sick and worthless slave?*" At this point, the Prophet stopped joking and addressed the people with full sincerity: "*O Zahir, by Allah, in the sight of Allah and His Messenger, you are priceless! That is why we love you.*"<sup>19</sup>

Nusaybah bint Ka'b, a female companion, served as a nurse during the Battle of Uhud. When she saw the Prophet in a difficult situation, she fearlessly defended him despite being a woman, fighting against the enemy and sustaining several injuries. After returning to Medina, it took a year for her wounds to heal, during which the Prophet frequently visited and prayed for her. Even in her old age, during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, she participated in the Battle of Yamama, where she was severely wounded again and lost one of her arms. Upon the army's return to Medina, Abu Bakr visited her and arranged for her to receive a stipend from the treasury.<sup>20</sup>

Another prominent companion with a disability was Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, who was blind. He was among the first believers in Mecca and was later sent to Medina by the Prophet to teach people the Quran. Bara ibn Azib, another companion, said: "*The first two*

<sup>19</sup> See: *Shamailur-Rasul, Ibn Kathir, translated by N. Erdoğun, p. 92 ff.*

<sup>20</sup> (*Bayt al-Mal*).

*people to migrate to Medina were Mus'ab ibn Umayr and Ibn Umm Maktum. They taught the people Quran."*<sup>21</sup>

Despite being blind, Ibn Umm Maktum also served as a muezzin along with Bilal al-Habashi. Once, he requested permission from the Prophet to pray at home because his house was far from the mosque and he had no one to assist him in reaching it. The Prophet asked: *"Do you hear the call to prayer?"* Ibn Umm Maktum replied: *"Yes."* The Prophet then said: *"Then answer the call and join the congregation."*<sup>22</sup>

This not only highlights the importance of congregational prayer but also shows that the Prophet encouraged a blind person to be an active part of the community rather than isolating him.<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, whenever the Prophet left Medina for any reason, he would appoint Ibn Umm Maktum as his deputy to lead prayers in his absence. It is recorded that he was entrusted with this responsibility thirteen times.<sup>24</sup> In conclusion, the Prophet did not see people with disabilities (more accurately, those with chronic conditions) as helpless or burdens to society. Instead, he provided practical solutions for their challenges, assigned them responsibilities based on their capabilities, and consoled them with the promise of eternal blessings in the Hereafter.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Status of Disabled Individuals in Pre-Islamic Societies**

Before the rise of Islamic civilization, disability was often considered a form of bad luck or divine punishment for a parent's sins. Many societies believed that disabilities were caused by evil spirits, demons, or supernatural influences.

Aristotle (384–323 BCE) developed a hierarchy of living beings in which he placed disabled individuals in the lowest tier. According to his

---

<sup>21</sup> Bukhari, *Manaqib al-Ansar*, 46

<sup>22</sup> Muslim, *Masajid*, 255; Abu Dawud, *Salat*, 46)

<sup>23</sup> Mektûm (İbn Sa'd, IV, 207)

<sup>24</sup> See: Ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghabah*, IV, 264

<sup>25</sup> See: Prof Dr. Ali Seyyar, *Yıldızlar Engel Tanımaz-Bedensel Özürlü Sahâbilerin Hayatı*, 56-57

classification, the highest level belonged to God, followed by angels, animals, humans, and finally, disabled individuals at the very bottom.

### **The Situation of People with Disabilities in Pre-Islamic Abrahamic Religions and the Age of Ignorance**

In every period of history, in the Islamic society, unlike the western societies, the disabled were viewed as human beings, they were not seen as different from other people, and they were not mistreated. In the past, people with disabilities were mistreated in the Christian world, and they were not seen as human beings. For example, it is stated that the insane were left to die by starvation, and that they were even burned on the grounds that they were involved with demons. While mentally handicapped people were subjected to various tortures in the West, and were killed by being chained in the corridors and basements of hospitals, in many parts of the Islamic world they were accepted as patients in bimarhanes and treated with medical methods. It is accepted that around 200 million people died in the last century in ideological wars and massacres, including the two world wars. It is a fact that the number of injured and disabled people in such events will be several times the death toll. Western humanism was unable to prevent these negativities. According to the official data of Unisef, 2 million people were killed in the massacres around the world between 1991 and 2001 and 6 million children were either seriously injured or joined the group of the disabled.<sup>26</sup>

The investments made for the benefit of the disabled during the Seljuk period are not different from the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. The social welfare institutions, hospitals, lodges, inns and baths established in this period were very advanced and widespread. The oldest of the Daru'ş-Şifa's, which still maintain their splendor in Anatolia today, was built in Kayseri in 1205 AD and belongs to Gevher Nesibe Hatun. The hospitals built in Sivas, Divriği, Çankırı and Amasya show how much importance the Seljuk Turks attached to this issue. Hot water baths were established for the sick and paralyzed in Ilgın, Eskişehir,

---

<sup>26</sup> İbrahim Sarıçam, *The Reality of the Disabled in Our Country and Islam, Discussion Part of The Communique Named "Celebrities with Disabilities in the History of Islamic Culture"*. D.İ.B. Yayınları, Ankara 2003, 231-234.

Kütahya and Erzurum. Dormitories were established for the blind, disabled, widows and orphans. In addition, it is known that wet nurses are provided for orphan children at the age of suckling.<sup>27</sup>

Social assistance has an important place in Islam. It should not be forgotten that the working abilities of people physically, mentally and spiritually are different. For this reason, it should be the duty of the state to provide jobs suitable for each person's nature.

### **Investment on Disabled Individuals in Seljuk and Byzantine Sources in 11th-13th Century Anatolia**

The investments made for the disabled during the Seljuk period were similar to those of the Umayyads and Abbasids. Social welfare institutions, hospitals, lodges, inns, and baths were highly advanced and widespread. One of the earliest **Darüşşifas** (hospitals) still standing today was built in Kayseri in 1205 AD by Gevher Nesibe Hatun. Additional hospitals in Sivas, Divriği, Çankırı, and Amasya demonstrate the Seljuk Turks' commitment to healthcare. Hot water baths were established in Ilgın, Eskişehir, Kütahya, and Erzurum to treat the sick and paralyzed. Dormitories were built for the blind, disabled, widows, and orphans. Moreover, wet nurses were provided for orphaned infants.

Social assistance is a fundamental aspect of Islam, and it should be acknowledged that people's physical, mental, and spiritual work capacities differ. Therefore, it is the duty of the state to provide employment opportunities suited to each person's abilities.

Disability, one of humanity's most significant issues, can be simply defined as limitations in physical or mental functions, either congenital or acquired later in life. However, whether from birth or later in life, impairments in a person's mental and physical functions set them apart from other members of society, and unfortunately, this difference has often led to discrimination against disabled individuals.

---

<sup>27</sup> Council for the Disabled, *Contemporary Society, Life and the Disabled (Commission Reports, General Assembly Discussions), Prime Ministry Administration for the Disabled*, 132.

Throughout history, societies have approached this issue based on their cultural backgrounds, geographical conditions, and religious beliefs. Despite variations, people have generally perceived disability as a consequence of a wrongdoing or sin committed by the individual's parents, often associating it with misfortune. There were even periods when disabled individuals were believed to be possessed by demons. Consequently, many infants born with disabilities were killed in the belief that doing so would eliminate the demon. Those who survived were often isolated from society. Individuals with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties were usually labeled as insane. In some cases, however, disabled individuals were regarded as witches or sacred beings due to their unique conditions.

With the historical progress of societies in cultural and scientific advancements, as well as the influence of philosophers and religious leaders, the perception of disability began to change. Religious figures, including prophets, condemned the killing of sick children and instead encouraged their treatment. This shift not only increased the survival chances of disabled individuals but also improved their quality of life. The fundamental principle found in monotheistic religions—that all humans are equal before God—played a crucial role in shaping attitudes toward disabled individuals. For example, in Judaism, the equality of disabled individuals with other people is emphasized, and they are not regarded as incomplete humans. Although Christians in the Middle Ages saw disability as a shared curse of humanity, they did not completely exclude disabled individuals from society. However, efforts to integrate them into society and the church were minimal in medieval Europe. In Islam, human beings are considered the most valuable creations of God without discrimination, and while the Quran rarely mentions physical disabilities, it often focuses on the metaphorical or spiritual meaning of impairment. Additionally, a believing disabled person was considered more virtuous than a non-believer, and efforts were made to protect their rights, integrate them into society, and provide healthcare services.

How, then, were disabled individuals perceived in 11th-13th century Anatolia, where Christianity and Islam were the dominant religions under the rule of the Seljuks and the Eastern Roman

(Byzantine) Empire? Unfortunately, despite the widespread occurrence of disabilities due to birth defects, harsh living conditions, and warfare, historical sources contain very little information on this topic. Generally, only important figures or their relatives with disabilities were mentioned, or references were made if there were services available for the disabled.

For example, the Byzantine military aristocracy had high hopes for Emperor Isaac I Komnenos (r. 1057-1059) when he ascended the throne, but his policies soon became unpopular. Possibly affected by the political tensions, the emperor fell ill and suffered partial paralysis. Following the advice of the renowned scholar and statesman Michael Psellos, he abdicated and retired to a monastery in 1059. Matthew of Edessa, an important Armenian chronicler, described this event by stating, *"He realized that God did not approve of his rule. God did not forgive him for shedding Christian blood. Isaac Komnenos became partially paralyzed. Seeing this as a sign of God's wrath, he decided to retire to a monastery and wear a spiritual robe."*

In contrast, Niketas Choniates, a Byzantine historian, described the physical condition of Seljuk Sultan Kilij Arslan II (r. 1155-1192) as follows: *"Kilij Arslan II's physical structure was not perfect; on the contrary, several of his limbs were impaired. For instance, his hands were disabled, and both of his legs were crippled, so he traveled by carriage. Because of this, he was later mockingly nicknamed 'Topal Aslan' (Lame Lion) by Andronikos. However, despite his defective body—what could he do, nature had created him this way—Kilij Arslan became the ruler of a great state and gathered a strong force around him."*

As in modern times, speech impairments such as stuttering or difficulty pronouncing certain letters were also causes of discrimination in the past. A notable example is Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118), who reportedly had difficulty pronouncing the letter "r." His daughter Anna Komnena, in her historical work *Alexiad*, defended her father against such claims, writing: *"My father was only slightly hesitant when pronouncing 'r,' and his tongue would slip. But all other sounds flowed effortlessly from his mouth."* Disabilities, whether congenital or acquired, are also serious health

issues. Interestingly, the world's first known civilian hospital was established in Anatolia around 375 CE in Caesarea (Kayseri), Cappadocia. However, little information exists about how disabilities were treated in these hospitals.

One of the most significant historical initiatives for disabled individuals was undertaken by Emperor Alexios I Komnenos in Constantinople (Istanbul). While expanding the orphanage of Saint Paul in Acropolis (now Gülhane Park), he also built homes for the care of disabled individuals, funded by the imperial treasury. His daughter Anna Komnena described this project as a *"new city"* dedicated to Apostle Saint Paul, which spanned several kilometers and included hospices and care homes for disabled people. According to her, blind, lame, or physically dependent individuals were housed in separate quarters, and their caregivers lived nearby. She also observed that *"a young woman took care of an elderly woman, a sighted person guided a blind one, and an able-bodied person carried a crippled individual on their back."* The emperor and charitable donors provided for their food and clothing.

During the Seljuk period, numerous institutions were established to treat the sick and disabled under names such as bimaristan, bimarhane, and darüşşifa. The first known Seljuk hospital and medical school was founded in Nishapur by Nizam al-Mulk, the vizier of Sultan Alp Arslan (r. 1063-1072). The oldest surviving Seljuk hospital was established in Damascus in 1154 by Atabeg Nur ad-Din Zangi, using a ransom paid for a captured Frankish king during the Crusades. In Anatolia, Turkish Seljuks established medical institutions similar to modern medical faculties. These include:

- Gevher Nesibe Darüşşifa and Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev Medical School in Kayseri (1206)
- Izzeddin Keykavus Darüşşifa in Sivas (1217)
- Turan Melek Hospital in Divriği (1228)
- Pervane Bey Darüşşifa (Gökmedrese) in Tokat (1275)
- Atabey Ferruh Hospital in Çankırı (1235)
- Ali b. Pervane Hospital in Kastamonu (1272)

A distinguishing feature of these Seljuk medical institutions was their use of music therapy, particularly for mental health treatments. In addition to general hospitals, specialized psychiatric treatment centers were also established during the Seljuk period. Some of these continued operating into the Ottoman era. For instance, Darüşşifa-i Alai in Konya, built by Alaeddin Keykubad I, provided medical care for all, regardless of wealth or social status. Other psychiatric treatment centers existed in Afyon (Karacaahmet Tekke), Burdur (Onacak, Melek Dede Shrine), and Erzurum (Deli Baba village).

### **The Perspective on Disability in the Ottoman Period**

In the Ottoman Empire, individuals born deaf and mute were employed both within and outside the palace, performing various duties. Particularly within the palace, the deaf and mute communicated with each other and the palace residents using sign language. Those who were admitted to the palace learned this language with the help of experienced deaf and mute individuals already present and later passed it on to newcomers. However, this does not mean that they underwent a formal and structured education. Although deaf and mute individuals had been present in the palace since early times, the first attempt to establish a school for the education of people with disabilities took place during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Ferdinand Grati, an Austrian subject and the founder of the Hamidiye School of Commerce, submitted a petition to the Sublime Porte (Bâbiali) to take the initial step. His proposal caught the attention of the Minister of Education at the time, Münif Pasha, and efforts were accelerated, leading to the establishment of the *School for the Deaf and Mute* in 1889. Two years after its founding, a *School for the Blind* was also opened within the institution. Although this proposal was made much later than in Europe, it was positively received through the efforts of the Minister of Education of the time, Mehmed Tahir Münif Pasha, and the school commenced its educational activities on September 30, 1889. Two years later, a class for blind students was also added.

During its early years, the School for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind achieved significant success with the support of some statesmen. However, in later years, it gradually fell into decline. The primary

reason for this decline was the lack of a dedicated building for students' education. Although five classrooms in the Hamidiye School of Commerce were allocated for the school, it underwent a building change in its second year. Subsequently, the school was continuously relocated to new places, which were often old, with crumbling plaster and unsuitable for education. Another reason for the school's failure was that it only provided daytime education. Since the school did not have boarding facilities, deaf and mute students from outside the city were not admitted unless they had a place to stay. Wealthy families who were unable to send their children as boarders took advantage of private lessons from the director and teachers of the Deaf School instead. Additionally, another shortcoming was that the educators at the school came from different professional backgrounds and only used the methods they had learned from Grati Efendi. Another factor contributing to the decline in student enrollment was the difficulty that graduates faced in finding employment.

In the Ottoman Empire, only a small number of individuals born with disabilities held positions within various state institutions. Some of these individuals served in the palace, while others were assigned to duties outside the palace. The majority of those admitted to the palace were deaf and mute.<sup>28</sup> For security reasons, the deaf and mute were employed in the Ottoman palace, as they served high-ranking figures such as the sultan, members of the royal family, and state officials. This practice was adopted to ensure that important discussions would not be overheard and disclosed to others. The number of deaf and mute individuals employed in the palace fluctuated over the centuries, starting from the 15th century.<sup>29</sup>

The unique sign language used by the deaf and mute in the palace remained in use for centuries. Their ability to communicate using sign language, their literacy skills, and their training through a master-apprentice system suggest that they underwent a form of education,

<sup>28</sup> Kamuran Şimşek, *Disabled Individuals and Disability Policies in the Ottoman Empire during the Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909)* (Doctoral Dissertation, Pamukkale University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2017), p. 49.

<sup>29</sup> Abdülkadir Özcan, "Dilsiz" (*Encyclopedia of Islam, Ankara: Turkish Religious Foundation, 1994*), Vol. IX, p. 304.

though its exact scope remains unclear. However, this does not mean that deaf and mute individuals outside the palace received formal education. Those admitted to the palace learned sign language with the help of more experienced individuals. Unfortunately, there is no available information regarding how deaf and mute individuals in the broader society communicated with hearing and speaking people.<sup>30</sup>

In the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire faced numerous political, economic, and social challenges, both internally and externally. Despite these difficulties, Sultan Abdulhamid II took a personal interest in the state's educational affairs. With his efforts and those of the Ministry of Education, significant reforms were introduced in the education sector. Many new schools were established, and these institutions gradually expanded to other regions of the country.<sup>31</sup>

One of the most important schools founded during this period was the *School for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind*. This institution was crucial as one of the pioneering educational establishments aimed at providing education to individuals with disabilities within the Ottoman Empire and integrating them into society. The *School for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind* held a significant place as one of the pioneering educational institutions established to educate individuals with disabilities and integrate them into society within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>32</sup> Many new educational institutions were founded, and these schools gradually expanded to other parts of the country.<sup>33</sup>

### Comparison with Western Societies

Throughout history, Islamic societies have treated disabled individuals with dignity, unlike many Western societies, where they

---

<sup>30</sup> Ali Ufkî, *Life in Topkapı Palace – Memoirs of Albertus Bobovius or Santuri Ali Ufkî Bey*, trans. Ali Berktaş, ed. Stephanos Yerasimos & Annie Berthier (Istanbul: Kitap, 2012), p. 29;

<sup>31</sup> Ayşe Ezgi Dikici, "Different Bodies as Symbols of Sovereignty: Dwarfs and Mutes in the Ottoman Palace," *Social History* 248 (2014): p. 17.

<sup>32</sup> Fatih Demirel, *Education of the Deaf, Mute, and Blind in the Ottoman Empire – The School for the Deaf and Blind* (Istanbul: İdeal Kültür, 2013), p. 15

<sup>33</sup> Ramazan Günay - Halil İbrahim Görür, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sağır, Dilsiz ve A'mâ Mektebi", *OTAM* 53/32 (2013): 57.

were often mistreated. In medieval Christian Europe, disabled individuals were sometimes left to starve or burned alive due to beliefs that they were possessed by demons. While mentally disabled individuals were tortured and imprisoned in Western institutions, in the Islamic world, they were treated with medical care in bimaristans (hospitals). This compassionate approach was a stark contrast to the inhumane treatment in the West. Modern conflicts have also resulted in large numbers of disabled individuals. According to UNICEF, between 1991 and 2001, approximately 2 million people were killed in global conflicts, and 6 million children were either severely injured or became disabled.

Despite advocating human rights, Western societies have been unable to prevent such tragedies. Human dignity and superiority are determined by spiritual and moral values rather than physical or biological attributes. Since humans have no control over their birth conditions, it is unjust to view disabilities as deficiencies. Societies must reject prejudices against disabled individuals and recognize their potential.

The Prophet Muhammad exemplified a model of inclusivity by assigning significant roles to disabled individuals. If this perspective were followed today, issues related to disability would not be insurmountable. Societies must adopt a human-centered approach to ensure the well-being of both disabled and non-disabled individuals.

### **Disability in World Culture**

Not only in our Turkish language but also in the other languages there are several terms and words that meanings disabled and disability. It is also used different words that means the disabled people in Arabic. The people with disabilities must have equal rights and rule of law as well as every body. It is the most natural rights as human beings like everyone else. But unfortunately these people have been facing numerous challenges and difficulties in their daily lives because of their disability. For example: throughout the history suffered persons some breeds such blacks, and Jews, and women, belonging to religious groups or e.t.c. by injustices have been expressed by the publications more effectively. The main cause of disability from ancient times until the 16th and 17th centuries, the evil sprits that are

considered in around, demons and the effects of these negative. Some philosophers put forward that in the ranking living beings all of the earth, disabilities are as substratum. In this article it is examined the negative attitudes and behaviors of the societies against to the people with disabilities. We will be found the possibility and opportunity to make a comparison of those attitudes with the current position of those behaviors today. In addition it is dealt with the social situation of people with disabled people since the beginning of the ancient times to the present day specially Seljuk period and Islamic civilization of today. We will be offered some solutions related to current problems about them. Historically provided compassionate care and social support for disabled individuals.

While progress has been made in modern times, especially in some Muslim countries, further efforts are needed to enhance social and employment policies for disabled individuals. By following the principles of social justice in Islam, societies can create a more inclusive and equitable environment for all individuals, regardless of their abilities. The criteria that make the human being, created as Asraf-i creatures, valuable and superior, are not the physical/biological qualities of the person, but spiritual universal values. Man, who did not come to this world by his own will, was not created equally with other people, like the products of a factory, in terms of both material and spiritual possibilities. Man has no involvement in the things that he is born with.

### **The Perspective of Religion on Disability**

Religion has used a rich vocabulary in literature to define a person's disability. Factors such as which part of the body is affected and how the disability occurred have been considered. Individuals have been described based on these factors. Both statesmen and disabled individuals in society have been referred to by nicknames emphasizing their distinguishing characteristics. In this way, the person became known in society and was addressed by their nickname. Disabled individuals did not have difficulty emphasizing their disabilities. They signed their petitions with their disability status along with their names and requested assistance in this manner. By doing so, they not only expressed their condition but also conveyed their need for help. People

were also given nicknames based on their disabilities. These nicknames were used for many years and, in some cases, even became family names that have survived to the present day. Even after the adoption of the Surname Law, some families continued to use the nicknames inherited from their ancestors as their surnames.

The establishment of a school for the education of children with hearing, speech, and visual impairments in the Ottoman Empire took place during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. The idea of founding a school for disabled individuals was proposed by Ferdinand Grati, the director of the Hamidiye School of Commerce. Although this proposal came much later than in Europe, it received a positive response thanks to the efforts of the Minister of Education of the time, Mehmed Tahir Münif Pasha, and the school began its educational activities on September 30, 1889. Two years later, a class for blind students was also added to the school.

During its early years, the Deaf, Mute, and Blind School achieved significant success with the support of some statesmen. However, in later years, it gradually fell into neglect. The most important reason for the school's decline was the lack of an independent building for students' education. Although five classrooms in the Hamidiye School of Commerce were allocated for the school, a change of location occurred in its second year. Subsequently, the school was continuously relocated to new places, but these locations were very old, with peeling plaster and unsuitable conditions for education. When examining the historical change and development of disability, it is observed that in most studies or practices, disability has been addressed as a "social problem." This perspective presents a very inadequate approach in the formulation of social policies related to disability, as well as in social service interventions and applications. Considering disability as a social problem has led to efforts in solving the issue and, of course, to the advancement of medical interventions and treatments related to disabilities. However, it has significantly delayed the development of studies, individualized education, and inclusive education approaches for types of disabilities that have no medical cure.

In fact, a developmental approach focusing on "the social problems of disabled individuals and their families" would lead to more

progressive studies on disability. Additionally, the reality that disability is a social phenomenon must be accepted by all members of society. Only in this way can environmental, cultural, and attitudinal barriers be eliminated. This study also concludes that Turkey needs a disability model that draws support from its historical and cultural richness while incorporating contemporary approaches. Only with the emergence of such an original model can legal regulations be functional in terms of implementation.

When examining the theoretical and conceptual changes in disability throughout history, an individual with a disability can now be described as "a person with any impairment who experiences difficulties in participating in social life due to societal, environmental, and behavioral barriers." In other words, there has been a shift both theoretically and conceptually, as well as in the value system, from the individual perspective of "I am disabled" to the societal perspective of "We are being hindered, and therefore, we are individuals with disabilities." The conclusions reached in this study, which examines the historical change and development of disability in the world and Turkey, can be summarized as follows:

**1. The Growing Disability Movement** – The expanding disability movement has influenced both the theoretical background and practical applications of disability, leading to significant turning points in its conceptualization. As a result of this influence, the terms and definitions used by societies to describe disability in their own languages have evolved. Over time, there has been a shift from viewing individuals as merely in need or defined solely by their impairment to understanding how environmental and behavioral barriers to accessing social spaces contribute to making individuals with impairments disabled.

**2. Changes in the Value System (Paradigm Shift)** – There have been shifts in the value system related to disability, bringing about discussions on how disability should be evaluated and how differences in perspectives and attitudes toward disabled individuals should be implemented in social policies.

**3. Impact on Practical Fields** – This change in the value system has influenced all practical areas related to disability studies, leading to increased efforts to enhance the participation of disabled individuals in social life. A primary focus of these efforts has been on improving the educational achievements of disabled individuals and increasing their workforce participation rates.

**4. Institutional Rehabilitation and Social Support** – From a historical perspective, institutional rehabilitation and care services for disabled individuals, as well as social support and assistance provided to them and their family members, have always maintained their significance.

As a result of these influences, the terminology and conceptual framework used to describe disability in societies have changed. The perspective has shifted from viewing an individual solely based on their impairment to recognizing how environmental and behavioral barriers hinder individuals with impairments. The change in the value system has impacted all practical fields related to disability studies, increasing efforts to promote social participation. In these efforts, particular emphasis has been placed on enhancing educational achievements and workforce participation among disabled individuals. Moreover, institutional rehabilitation and care services, along with social support for disabled individuals and their families, have continued to hold value throughout history

### **Conclusion**

Islam, unlike many pre-Islamic and Western societies, introduced religious rules for disabled people. Islamic teachings emphasize the dignity and worth of every human being, regardless of their physical or mental condition. Since man does not pay anything to Allah when he is born, it is not correct to claim/conceive the point that the things that come from Allah are incomplete or small. The fact that a person does not consent to the innate states and acts in rebellious attitudes and behaviors will bring nothing but self-harm. Because man is a servant, a creature, a helpless being in need of everything. Throughout history, there has always been a certain amount of disabled people in every society. In the time of the Prophet, there were a certain number of

disabled people. The Prophet never discriminated people according to their physical/biological structures or their innate differences, and he reacted to those who were in such a mistake. Therefore, a person with a disability who has spiritual universal values is better than a healthy person who does not have spiritual values. The relations of the Prophet with the disabled were completely human and moral. The best indication that he values them is that he has given them high-level public duties. What matters to him are qualities such as competence, merit and morality. There should be no harm in assigning high-level duties such as district governorship and governorship to the disabled by following the same path today. This understanding and perspective was valid in the society, and we are of the opinion that if the Prophet had been taken as an example, an insurmountable and unsolvable problem regarding the disabled would not have remained. Negative attitudes and behaviors towards the disabled have no place in Islam. The way to ensure that the disabled in the first degree live a humane life is to value them as human beings. It is not possible to solve the problems of even normal people in societies that do not have a human-centered understanding and thought of the world. What needs to be done, then, is to make revelation-centered changes in understanding and thinking.

### Bibliography

Akdemir, Nuran, "Rehabilitation Services", *New Turkey, Health I*, Ankara, 2001.

Aydın, Mehmet, "The Reality of the Disabled and Islam in Our Country (symposium Evaluation Speech)", *D.İ.B.*, Ankara, 2003.

Ahmed Bin Hanbel, *El Müsned*, 2 Cilt, Ansar, İstanbul, 2004.

Balci, S., *Disabled Individuals and Disability Education in the Ottoman Empire: The School for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind*, Libra Publishing, 2013.

Barnes, C., 'Work' is a Four-Letter Word? *Disability, Work, and Welfare*, Cornell University Library, GLADNET Collection, 2003.

Braddock, D. L., & Parish, S. L., *The Institutional History of Disability* (F. B. Aydar, Trans.), In D. Bezmez, S. Yardımcı & Y. Şentürk (Eds.), *Disability Studies: A Social Science Perspective* (pp. 101-186). İstanbul: Koç University Press,

2011. (Reprinted from *Handbook of Disability Studies*, pp. II-68, G. L. Albrecht, K.D. Selman & M. Bury, Eds., 2001, London: Sage).

Burcu, E., *Disability Identity and the Personal and Social Discourses of Labeling*, Hacettepe University Faculty of Literature Journal, 23(2), 61-83, 2006.

Burcu, E., *Being a Disabled Individual in Turkey: Basic Sociological Characteristics and Issues*, Ankara: Hacettepe University Press, 2007.

Karagöz, İbrahim, "The Qur'an's Approach to the Disabled" (unpublished paper)", *The Reality of the Disabled in Our Country and Islam (symposium)*, D.İ.B., Ankara, 2003.

Çetinkaya, Osman, "Positive Discrimination in Disability Policy (unpublished paper)", *The Reality of Disabled People in Our Country and Islam (symposium)*, D.İ.B., Ankara, 2003.

Çakmaklı, Mahmut, "The Iceberg of Modern Medicine: Medical Errors", *New Turkey, Health II*, Ankara, 2001.

Dikici, Ayşe Ezgi, "Different Bodies as Symbols of Sovereignty: Dwarfs and Mutes in the Ottoman Palace", *Social History*, 248 (2014): p. 17.

Demirel, Fatih, *Education of the Deaf, Mute, and Blind in the Ottoman Empire – The School for the Deaf and Blind*, İstanbul: İdeal Kültür, 2013.

Eripek, Süleyman, "The Disabled and Their Education", *Anadolu University, Eğt. Fak., Dergisi*, vol. 5, issue: 1-2, Eskişehir, 1992.

Sarıçam, İbrahim, "The Reality of the Disabled in Our Country and Islam (symposium)", *discussion part of the communique named "Celebrities with Disabilities in the History of Islamic Culture*, D.İ.B., Ankara, 2003.

Sarıçam, İbrahim, "The Prophet in the Fight Against Poverty. Prophet, *Dimensions of Poverty Problem Reached in 2000*, Ed., İbrahim Ateş, Aid and Education Foundation for the Poor Culture Publication, Ankara, 2001.

Özyürek, Mehmet, *Attitudes and Changing Attitudes towards the Disabled*, Karatepe Pub., Ankara, 2000.

Ergin, Osman Nuri, *Turkish Educational History*, İstanbul: Eser, 1977.

Gök, Süleyman, *The History and Educational System of Schools for the Deaf and Mute in the World and in Turkey*, İstanbul: Hüsnütabiat, 1958.

Günay, Ramazan - Görür, Halil İbrahim, "The School for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind in the Ottoman Empire", *OTAM XXXII/53* (2013): 55-76.

Karakaş Özbayrak, İzi, *Social Assistance Policies Implemented During the Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909)*, İstanbul: Libra, 2013.

Mahmud Cevad İbnü'ş-Şeyh Nâfi, *History, Organization, and Operations of the Ministry of Public Education*, Edited by Mustafa Ergün, Tayyip Duman, Sebahattin Arıbaş, Hüseyin Dilaver. Ankara: Ministry of National Education, 2002.

Necati Kemal, *The Institution for the Deaf, Mute, and Blind*. Izmir: Marifet, 1926.

Özcan, Abdülkadir, "Mute", *Encyclopedia of Islam by the Presidency of Religious Affairs*. IX: 304-305. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1994.

Yıldırım, Nuran, "Education of the Deaf, Mute, and Blind in Istanbul", *Istanbul Tribute 3: Colors of Everyday Life*. Edited by Mustafa Armağan. 305-330. Istanbul: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Cultural Affairs, 1997.

Council for the Disabled, Contemporary Society, Life and the Disabled (Commission Reports, General Assembly Discussions), Prime Ministry Administration for the Disabled, Ankara 1999.

Günay, Ramazan and Halil İbrahim Görür, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sağır, Dilsiz ve A'mâ Mektebi", *OTAM* 53/32 (2013): 57.

Has, P., *The Understanding of Science in Islam and Christianity*, T.Ö.V. Yay., İzmir, 1991.

Uzunoğlu, Nurettin, *The Holy Quran Meaning*, TDV, 2019.

Şatbi, İbrahim b. Musa, *al-Muvâfakât*, trans., Mehmet Erdoğan, İz Yay., Istanbul, 1990.

Tirmidhi, Abu İsa Muhammed b. İsa, *Sünenü't-Tirmidhi*, Thk., A. M. Şakir-M. F. Abdülbâki-İ. A. Avad, Cairo, 1938; 23-24.

Şimşek, Kamuran, *Disabled Individuals and Disability Policies in the Ottoman Empire during the Reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909)*, Doctoral Dissertation, Pamukkale University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2017.

Özcan, Abdülkadir, "Dilsiz", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Ankara: Turkish Religious Foundation, 1994, Vol. IX, p. 304.

Ufkî, Ali, *Life in Topkapı Palace – Memoirs of Albertus Bobovius or Santuri Ali Ufki Bey*, trans. Ali Berktaş, ed. Stephanos Yerasimos & Annie Berthier Istanbul: Kitap, 2012.