Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies
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Edited by Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh
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Some books have remarkable stories behind their creation. This one does not. It was conceived about three years ago, when we realized that there had not been many recent studies of dreams and visions in Islamic societies and that we had something to say about this topic. We decided to collaborate with those who also had the same interest. Initially, we came together in Washington DC, at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association, in fall 2008 to share our ideas about this fascinating subject. Carl Ernst and Jonathan Katz expanded our intellectual horizons through their perceptive discussion of the papers presented at our panel. In spring 2009, we had a follow-up conference on this subject in Ann Arbor, and it was then that the concept of this volume took its final shape.

Many individuals and institutions helped us over the course of the past three years. We are thankful for the financial and logistical support provided by the following institutions at the University of Michigan: The Islamic Studies Initiative, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, Armenian Studies Program, Center for Russian and East European Studies, and Rackham Graduate School. We would like to express our appreciation to Sylvia Meloche of the Islamic Studies Initiative for her outstanding work that ensured the constructive and productive outcome of our conference in Ann Arbor. We also are grateful to Kathryn Babayan who served as a co-chair, along with Alexander D. Knysh, at this conference, Derek Mancini-Lander and Sarah Mirza of the University of Michigan, and Walter G. Andrews of the University of Washington for their insights and suggestions. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the authors of this volume for their commitment to and boundless enthusiasm for this intellectual venture. If this volume has any merits, then the credit for this should be shared by everyone who has made it a reality.

Editors
Note on Transliteration

Because the authors of this volume have made use of Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish, and Urdu texts, the reader should not look for consistency in transliteration. We have adopted a slightly modified transliteration system used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES)*, a major professional publication in the field of Islamic studies. For example, in the chapters that quote Arabic texts, we use q for qāf, whereas in the quotations from Ottoman Turkish texts, we use k to convey the same letter. Because the IJMES chart lacks the nasal n and the dot above the letter ghayn, we used ṇ and ǧ to transliterate words and names in Ottoman Turkish.
Abbreviations


Elr  *Encyclopedia Iranica*, ed. E. Yarshater, New York, 1985–.


MW  *The Muslim World*, Hartford Seminary, Connecticut, 1934–
Introduction

Alexander D. Knysh

Writing in the early thirteenth century CE, the great Arab mystic Ibn [al-]'Arabi (1165–1240) suggests that "The only reason God placed sleep in the animate world was so that everyone might . . . know that there is another world similar to the sensory world." Elsewhere, he states that "Dreams have a place, a locus, and a state. Their state is sleep, which is an absence from manifest sensory things that produce ease because of weariness which overcomes the soul in this plane in the state of wakefulness." By means of the faculty of imagination, Ibn 'Arabi argues, a dreaming individual is capable of seeing disembodied intelligible entities in the form of corporeal, sensory objects. This is the world of dream-imagination in which the mysteries of God and his creation, otherwise impenetrable to the human intellect and sense perceptions, are unveiled. In seeking to substantiate the importance of dreams as a cognitive tool, Ibn 'Arabi frequently invokes the Prophet's saying that "People are asleep, and when they die, they awake." In his interpretation, the implication of this saying is that "[People] will never cease being sleepers, so they will never cease being dreamers." In other words, dreams are an indispensable instrument of cognition: People should dream in order to grasp the true state of affairs in this world and the next and to remain tuned to the ever changing modes of divine self-disclosure in the objects and phenomena of the empirical universe.

Although many Muslims, including some thinkers examined in this volume, may not have agreed with Ibn 'Arabi's assertions, they would no doubt unanimously concede the vital importance of dreams and waking visions for Muslim life. The reasons for this are manifold.
Writing from outside the Islamic tradition, the renowned American historian of Islamic civilization, Marshall Hodgson (1922–1968), offers the following explanation of dreams' importance for premodern Muslim societies:

Both waking and dreaming visions can form a very fruitful resource for personal mythic formation. . . . Such myth formation need not serve merely the delights of a free fantasy. We are learning that there can be dreams of special urgency which can be pointers to areas of crucial importance to the growth of the personality; and this at all levels of that growth, not merely in its correction of elementary neurosis. Dreams readily take on a colouration, in their symbols and format, from social expectations surrounding the dreamer; but they will give those social expectations a profoundly personal relevance, perhaps more so than can readily be achieved in waking consciousness.6

According to Hodgson, premodern Muslims did not consider dreams to be simple expressions of the dreamer's repressed phobias, aspirations, and sexual drives, as well as some other types of neurosis, as asserted by Sigmund Freud in his theory of psychoanalysis.7 Rather, they were concerned with what dreams could tell them about "the world outside the dreamer, things that could not otherwise be known."8

Like Ibn 'Arabi, medieval and modern Muslims have considered dreams to be windows into the hidden mysteries of both this world and the next. In this respect, dreams are akin to, and part of, prophecy itself—a notion based on several prophetic statements to this effect cited throughout this volume.9 For instance, the Prophet is quoted as declaring that with his death "the glad tidings of prophecy" would cease, whereas "true dreams" would endure. This statement implies that dreams and visions are, in the words of one Western scholar, "a form of divine revelation and a chronological successor to the Koran."10 This is indeed how they have been perceived by many Sufis. As one of the contributors to this volume argues, by virtue of "having access to a persisting suprasensible and suprapersonal knowledge through the medium of dreams and dreaming," the Sufi master or "friend of God" is but a "transposition" of the Prophet.11

This is not to say that veridical dreams and visions are necessarily the prerogative of Muslim mystics or society's spiritual and intellectual elite in general. In principle, "each good Muslim could expect guidance from God in dreams."12 The amazing pervasiveness
of dreams and dream-lore at various levels and among different
classes of Muslim society is demonstrated by Part I of this volume.
Its chapters discuss the ways in which dreams have been deployed in
a variety of non-Sufi contexts: historical, prosopographical, theologi­
cal, anthropological and multimedia. Given the great importance of
dreams and waking visions for mystical Islam, it is only natural that
Part II is specifically devoted to their roles in various Sufi communi­
ties. As the authors of the chapters in Part II show, the Sufis have
put dreams and dream-lore to a broad variety of uses, from training
Sufi disciples and prognostication to confirming the special status and
authority of individual Sufi masters as well as authenticating spiritual
genealogies and mystical orders.

The recognition of the general availability of truthful insights to
mystics and nonmystics alike often is offset by the widely held belief
that special training and expertise may be required to unravel dreams'
subtle symbolism, unless, of course, they are clear and unequivocal. Indeed, very early on, interpreting dreams became a special art, even a
profession. Originally, relatively uniform and homogenous, by the end
of the tenth century CE the tradition of dream interpretation became
fragmented into “a number of competing legacies, each grounding [it]
on a distinctive epistemic foundation.” Some were strictly Islamic (“shari‘a-minded”) in that they consistently traced their origins back
to the beliefs and practices of the first Muslim community under the
Prophet’s leadership. Such methods of interpreting dreams tended to
legitimize themselves by reference to the Muslim scriptures. Others
were more cosmopolitan, creatively combining traditional Islamic
beliefs with dream-lore derived from non-Islamic sources (Greek,
Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, and Hindu). Naturally, the Sufis forged
their own, distinctive oneirocritic tradition, as the chapters collected
in Part II finely demonstrate.

On the whole, dreams and the art of their interpretation are
so intimately intertwined that on occasion it is impossible to draw
a clear distinction between the two without damaging their organic
cO-existence in various sociocultural contexts. This is hardly surpris­
ing because the very account of a dream or vision by a dreamer or
visionary already constitutes their initial interpretation.

As we emphasize the social and cosmological aspects of dreams
and visions, we should keep in mind that they were, and still are, seen by Muslims not only as divinations and explanations of outside
events, that is, messages from the unseen world of divine mystery,
but also as reflections of the inner world of the dreaming person.
Dreams and visions thus offer “a constant balance between the private
world of latent images, fears and hopes, and outside reality, cosmic as well as social."17 To divine the implications of dreams and visions for any given individual, Muslim experts on dream interpretation have stressed the necessity of taking into account the dreamer's personality, gender, social status, trade, depth of faith, and other personal circumstances. For, as some of these interpreters have cogently argued, the same symbol may portend different things for different people under different circumstances.18

As "expressions of both inner and outer voices," dreams in Islamic contexts are intimately linked to society's aesthetical, ethical, and social values. In a two-way process, these values both mold and are being molded by dreams and dream-lore. Likewise, dreams shape, and are decisively shaped by, personal and collective notions of self and society.19 The reciprocity of the process of shaping and being shaped cannot be emphasized too strongly.20 Seen from this vantage point, dreams and visions constitute an essential part of society's functioning and self-perception.

Although "dream cultures"21 may vary from one Muslim society or epoch to another, the prophetic endorsement just cited and the unequivocal evidence found in the Qurʾān itself22 have assured the continuous relevance of dreams and visions for Muslim communities worldwide. The chapters collected under this cover are an eloquent testimony to both diversity and cultural specificity of dream-lore. At the same time, they show the continuing importance of dreams for Muslims regardless of their social, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.

Muslims' preoccupation with dreams, visions and their interpretation has successfully withstood the test of time. It is almost as profound at present as it was in the past. No wonder, therefore, that the recent decades have seen the growing interest among academics in various aspects and roles of dreams and dream interpretation in Islamic societies. Beginning with a seminal volume on dreams edited by G. E. von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois in 1966,23 there has been a constant stream of publications on the subject by Western and Western-trained scholars of Islamic societies and cultures. The most recent ones place special emphasis on dream interpretation as a means of empowerment, education, and spiritual guidance, on the one hand, and subversion of societal conventions and authority contestation, on the other.24 Although complementing these earlier studies, the chapters gathered in this volume place more emphasis on dreams as such rather than on how they have been perceived and explicated by oneirocritic professionals. Furthermore, the chronological scope of this study is broader in that it encompasses uses of dreams and dream-lore in contemporary Islamic societies and on the Internet.
by his society and poetic peers. Dreams accompany the protagonist throughout his entire life from early childhood to his eventual promotion, "sanctioned in heaven," to the rank of the foremost poet of his age. Significantly, these dreams appear at and determine the critical turning points of his spiritual and artistic journey. In the words of Mancini-Lander, "they facilitated the transmission of simulacral, yet practical, even somatic, forms of knowing," thereby enabling "total reorientations" not only in the poet's external existence, but in his poetic craft as well. In this way, dreams serve as an effective and indispensable means of the poet's personal and professional growth and self-identity.

In his chapter on "Dreaming 'Osmañs," Gottfried Hagen addresses the role of dreams in premodern Ottoman dynastic historiography. He shows that although modern historians of the Ottoman Empire have routinely dismissed dream narratives found in imperial chronicles as "obvious fiction," premodern Ottomans took dreams very seriously indeed. For them, dreams were as real as the historical events they predicted or attempted to explain. Dreams were, in Hagen's words, "taken for real by the actors in the narrative, by [the] author of the account, and, finally, by his audience." As such, dreams possessed "high explanatory value" for both Ottoman chroniclers and their audiences. In attributing meaning to seemingly senseless historical events and catastrophes, they helped the Ottoman populations, or at least the empire's learned elite, to find "orientation in a world that would otherwise be experienced as chaos" and, in so doing, to come to terms with inexplicable dramas (and traumas) of historical process.

With the emergence of Islamic modernist and reformist thought in the latter part of the nineteenth century CE, some Muslim scholars adopted a more cautious or even outright critical attitude toward dreams and dream interpretation. Fareeha Khan's chapter "Sometimes a Dream is Just a Dream" examines the ambivalent approach to dreams characteristic of the reformist Deobandi movement that originated in northern India in 1867. Its major representatives up to the present have felt that Indian Muslims put too much faith in dreams, visions, and all manner of premonitions at the expense of fulfilling their basic religious obligations as outlined in the manuals of the Deobandi school. As long as dreams were conducive toward the overriding goal of improving and reforming the beliefs and practices of the subcontinent's Muslim masses, the Deobandi leaders were prepared to accept them as sources of "absolute guidance." If, however, for one reason or the other, dreams or visions were perceived as an impediment to or distraction from this all-important objective, the Deobandi
scholarly elite demanded that they be dismissed as inconsequential or even outright harmful. By espousing this selective view of dreams and visions, the Deobandi leaders have effectively harnessed them to their overarching task of inculcating in their audiences sober reformist attitudes in which the miraculous and fanciful had no major role to play. In a sense, the Deobandi ambivalence toward dreams and visions is articulated in opposition to what they considered the overzealous and uncritical acceptance of dreams within traditional Sufi circles, which are the subject of Part II.

The last two chapters of Part I address the role of dreams and dream interpretation in contemporary Muslim societies. Leah Kinberg’s chapter, “Dreams Online,” shows how the ancient Muslim belief in the veracity of dreams in which the Prophet appears to the dreamer is played out in the age of the Internet. The vigorous rejection by high-ranking religious scholars of certain dream narratives circulated via Internet blogs and forums indicates that something vital is at stake here. Wittingly or not, such narratives floating in cyberspace can challenge or even undermine the authority of official Muslim scholars as the sole legitimate exponents of “correct” Islam. In this way, dream accounts posted on the Internet become a means and sites of subversion and contestation of the traditional structures of religious authority.

Part I concludes with Muhammad alZekri’s chapter on female dream interpretation in present-day Dubai (the United Arab Emirates [UAE]). It shows how the ability to interpret dreams used to be a means of empowering the otherwise disenfranchised female half of the population of this Gulf state, only to be supplanted gradually by male-dominated Salafi TV forums and telephone “hot-lines” seeking to disseminate “politically correct” religious guidance among the UAE’s younger audiences. As increasing numbers of Muslims in the Gulf region gain direct, unmediated access to the Muslim scriptures, thanks to the rapid spread of mass education, the art of dream interpretation becomes ever-more deeply rooted in textual sources, such as the Qurʾān, hadith, and their exegesis. As alZekri vividly demonstrates, this text-based approach inexorably supersedes and marginalizes the folkloric, oral methods of making sense out of people’s dreams that were predominant in the not-so-distant past. Nonetheless, the rapid spread of new information technologies and direct access of the public to media outlets have not marginalized or discredited dreams and dream-lore as such. They continue to play a vital role in the Muslim societies of the Gulf and beyond.

In sum, alZekri’s and Kinberg’s studies show that, as in the premodern and early modern age, nowadays dreams and dream
interpretation remain both sites and means of asserting and contesting religious and social authority, with modern information technologies facilitating and "democratizing" the process.

Part II opens with a concise survey by Jonathan Katz of the perceptions of dreams and visions in Islamic mysticism as articulated by its major representatives from the premodern epoch. The author then proceeds to discuss "how reportage of dreams, either by the [Sufi] shaykhs themselves or their disciples, was instrumental in securing popular reputations for sanctity" and in validating Sufi "claims to religious and political leadership." Katz's chapter demonstrates that "the most intimate and private of noetic experience—the dream and vision—could also, paradoxically, serve a most public role." This, argues Katz, is particularly true of the dreams in which the Prophet himself appears to Sufi masters to confirm their veracity and their status as guides of their constituencies. According to Katz, such prophetic appearances in Sufi dreams place "the dream at the very heart of communal religious experience."

Whereas Katz's chapter focuses on the dreams of some major Sufi masters from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North Africa, his conclusions easily can be extrapolated to other parts of the Muslim world. This is made clear by Erik Ohlander's study of the claims to "post-prophetic heir-ship" that the Sufi shaykhs of the Muslim East have consistently substantiated by reference to their revelatory experiences in dreams and visions. In sum, as both Katz and Ohlander convincingly show, in Sufi communities worldwide, dreams and visions fulfill the task of indispensable image-, authority- and status-building devices.

The theme of the superiority of Sufi gnosis, often obtained through dreams and visions, is explored in Elizabeth Alexandrin's chapter on the mystical exegesis of the twelfth-century Sufi gnostic Shams al-Din al-Daylamî. In al-Daylamî's narrative, the Qur'ân, or rather, a specific selection of Qur'ânic verses, serves as the "primary touchstone" by which the veracity of dreams and visionary experience can be ascertained. For instance, al-Daylamî is fully convinced that the Qur'ân supports the notion that certain elect individuals (such as prophets) can obtain "the vision of God" already in this life. In al-Daylamî's view, this ability does not disappear with the cessation of prophecy. Rather, it is now transferred to Sufi "friends of God" whom God has granted "the vision of the heart." By virtue of this intuitive faculty, the Sufi visionaries can contemplate subtle immaterial entities that ordinary human beings are incapable of seeing, including the light of the Universal Intellect, glimpses of the Afterlife, and even of God himself. Unlike the dreams and visions of ordinary people, the Sufi
visionaries cannot err in either their dreams or their interpretation, because they draw their revelatory insights from their meditation on the esoteric aspects of the Qur’ân, which contains nothing but truth.

Shahzad Bashir’s chapter on dream narratives from Persian Sufi hagiographies dating back to the Mongol and Timurid periods explores the pedagogical role of dreams in mediating relationship between Sufi masters and their disciples. The appearance of the former in the dreams of the latter fulfills more than the purpose of guidance, admonition, and instruction. It also serves as a means for the disciples to receive and for the masters to provide protection at the time of need. Furthermore, by furnishing sophisticated and often surprising explanations of their disciples’ dreams, the shaykhs assert their authority as infallible guides of human consciences. Bashir links dreams to the Naqshbandi practice of râbi'âta (“bond”) that requires the disciple to constantly visualize the master in his mind’s eye in order to imprint the master’s image on his consciousness. As an essential pedagogical tool and means of communication, Bashir argues that in Naqshbandi Sufism seeing the shaykh in reality or a dream is not a passive activity but one that “needs to be cultivated through deliberate practice.” Once obtained, this “televisual” communication between the master and his disciple does not cease with the master’s death. No longer available in the flesh, the shaykh and his guidance can now be accessed through his appearances in the disciple’s dreams. In this way, argues Bashir, dreams serve as the vital, incessant “continuation of the relationship as it existed before the master’s demise.”

The theme of royal dreams with a mystical slant is explored in Özgen Felek’s chapter on the self-fashioning of the Ottoman sultan Murâd III (r. 1574–1595). In the epistolary accounts of his dreams submitted to his spiritual preceptor, the Sultan portrays himself as a universal Islamic ruler and an accomplished Sufi. The latter identity, argues Felek, is not static—we see the Sultan evolve from a humble novice to the self-appointed deputy of his master followed by his visionary promotion to the rank of the spiritual “pole” of the universe. In a similar vein, he transforms himself into Ḫūzir, Muḥammed, and ʿAlî, thereby asserting his claim to be the supreme spiritual and temporal Muslim ruler of the age and the unifier of Islamdom. As Felek cogently demonstrates, although [self-]image was as important for early modern Muslims as it is for us today, we would hardly take seriously an image built on one’s own dreams. This was certainly not how Murâd III saw things. For the Sultan, dreams were a powerful and effective way to fashion his image for both his contemporaries and the generations to come.
Meenakshi Khanna's chapter, which concludes the "Sufi part" of the volume, addresses the legacy of Sayyid Hasan Rasūlnumā (d. 1692), an Indian Sufi whose principal claim to fame was his ability to maintain constant contact with the Prophet in his dreams and waking visions. No less importantly, he was capable of "showing" the Prophet to his disciples in their dreams—a gift that he had acquired by cultivating the Uwaysī style of mystical experience, namely one that dispenses with long apprenticeship under a living Sufi master by putting its practitioner in direct contact with the Prophet himself. In the context of seventeenth-century India, Sayyid Hasan's claims to be able to keep and put others (his disciples) in touch with the Prophet allowed him to compete—successfully it seems—with the traditional Sufi orders that derived their legitimacy and high social standing from their venerable spiritual genealogies and institutions built around them. As the Prophet's direct and unmediated interlocutor, Sayyid Hasan's authority was unimpeachable, for, according to the Prophet's often cited saying: "Whoever has seen me in a dream, has seen me in truth, for Satan cannot impersonate me in a dream."25

In summary, the reader is invited to enter the fascinating world of dreams and visions as experienced and described by Muslims of vastly diverse intellectual and social backgrounds living in different historical epochs. The contributors hope that their collective study will pave the way for future research on this important and as yet understudied subject.

Notes


2. Chittick, *The Sufi Path*, 120.


4. Although this saying is commonly attributed to the Prophet in Sufi literature, it is not found in any of the standard hadith collections; see Chittick, *The Sufi Path*, 396, n. 7.

5. Ibid., 231.


Introduction


9. See, for instance, Erik Ohlander’s chapter in this volume.


11. See Ohlander’s chapter in this volume.


15. Ibid.


19. Ibid., 104.


22. Such as the story of Joseph (Yūsuf) in sūra 12 that depicts this Biblical prophet as the model interpreter of dreams (see verses 36–55; cf. verses 4–5).


24. Marlow (ed.), *Dreaming*; and Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim*; see also Chapter 4 in Ze’evi, *Producing Desire*.

teren, ama tabuta eşlik eden gondolcuya (meyyit ile giden kapudan) verilen bahşiş ve kazma küreğe kadar her masrafi terekeden ödeyecek kadar gerçekçi ve hesabını bilen biri olan Hâcê Ahmed bin Kas-sab ve Müslüman tüccar cemaati de beş gondola (beş kondelye) bиндiler. Kafîle, Hâce Hızır bin İlyas oğlu Ayaşlı sof tüccar Hüseîn Çelebi’nin gömüldüğü meşhul mezara doğru Venedik’in sazlık lagunalarından yola çıktı.

Mütereddît Bir Mutasavvîf:
Üsküplü Asiye Hatun’un Rüya Defteri
1641-1643

Tarihçi, ele aldığı kişilerin zamanlarının büyük bir kısmını uyuyarak geçirdiklerini, uyurken de rüya gördüklerini gözden kaçırma tehlikesi altındadır.¹

ÇEŞİTLİ ÜLKELERDE süregiden tarihçilik tartışmalarını izleyenlerin bileceği gibi, yeni tarihçiliğin en belirleyici yanlardan biri yayılmacılığı, yani eskiden araşturma dışı kalan birçok konuyu sahiplenerek incelemeye açması: Bir yandan tarihın altın sayfalarının kenar çizgisinin dışında kalan sosyal kümler (deliler, fahişeler, eşcinseller, çalgıcılar, gruplar olarak değil karmaşık kişiler olarak işyançilar, vb.), bir yandan toplumun her kesiminden insanların zihniyet ve duyarlıklarını, ölçüleri güç, hatta gizli kapaklıları iç dünyaları (duşleri, korkuları, ölüm konusunda tavırları, okuma alışkanlıklarını, zaman anlayışları, atasözlerine yansıyan derin zihniyet kalıpları, vb.), bir yandan da hüsnâlık ya da Hindistan’ı arakan Amerika’nın bulunması gibi “garip vakalar” (Reşat Ek-rem Koç’un okurları açısından pek büyük bir yenilik yok yani.) Bu bağlamda tarihi kavrayışını en köklü şekilde değiştiren öğelerden birisi, aynı anlamda marjinleştirilmiş olmasalar bile ancak satı aralarında yer verilen, kadınlardan ve çocuklardan da tarihe katıl-

¹ Peter Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, AD 150-500 (Londra, 1971), s. 49 (Türkçesi: Geç Antik Çağda Roma ve Bizans Dünyası, çev. Turhan Kaçar, İstanbul:
MÜTEREDDİT BİR MUTASAVVIF

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MÜTEREDİT BİR MUTASAVVIF

Bir tek Asiya Hatun’un rüya defterinden yola çıkarak, bu farkı, yazarların kadın veya erkek olmasının ekserinde açıklamak aceləcilə olur, ama kadın elinde kişinin bildiğimiz tek hatira metninin bu özelliği kesinlikle dikkat çekici. Bunun cinsiyetlerin toplumdaki değişik konum, rol ve güçlerile ilişkili olmasının düşünmek zor.


Mümteşihin kimliği beli değil; bu yüzden pek seuleşmedik tür- den bir metin olan bu rüyalarla ilk yazılarında yakaşışa alımsız yılan sonra neden ilgilendigini kestirmek güç. Asiya Hatun’un kendi- sini değil bile ailesini tanmış olduğu düşünülebilir. Daha açaik olan, mümteşihin Asiya Hatun gibi Halveti tarikatına mensup olduğu; çünkü istinsaha başlamadan önce rüyada kısacık girişi, hatunun "tarık-i hakka süyük" ettiğini belirtir ki sonundan metinde bunun Halveti’lik olduğunu öngreniyor. Bir ihtimal, Asiya Hatun’un Halveti yolundaki olumlu tecrübelerini böyle bir metin aracılığıyla yayaraktan genişletilmiş ve bir kopyaşını elinde bulundur- mak istemiş olabilir. Metni bir mümteşih olduğu kadar bir "müs- tensiha"ya borçlu olabileceği ihtimalini de gözardı etmemeli.8


mecmua ve cônk adımı verdiğiniimiz derlemelerin çığo, derleyiciler açlarında "okuduklarından notlar" ya da "en sevdiği şiirler" gibi kategoriler içinde ele alınarak, anı türünün akrabası sayılabilir.

Asiya Hatun'un hayat ve ailesi hakkında metinde verilenlerde öte bir bilgiliz yok şimdilik. Babası Kadri Efendi büyük bir ihtimalde iyi yönlüdemir ve 1630larda ailesiyle Üsküp'e yaşamaktadır. İlkinci Viyana kuşatmasından sonra büyük demografik çalkantılar yaşayan olan Üsküp, bu devirde birçok Balkan şehri gibi çögu- 
vułu Müslüman olan bir ahaliye sahiptir, 17. yüzyılın ortalarında 50-60 bin tahmin edilen nüfusuyla, bölgesinde idari ve ilmi bir mer- kez rolü oynadığı gibi, ibikiinden fazla kâğırlık dikkânıyla ve üzerinde 
akan hatırain sahibi ticaretle kendi çapında önlenmiş bir üretim 
vaz așırıdır. Gerç 17. yüzyünün ilk yarısında Makedonya dağ- 
larında hayatlar cirit atmaya başlamış; mesela 1611 yazında Po- 
lonyali Simeon'un Venedik'e gittiğine kervan, "levend ve haramlar yu- 
zânden yollar korkulu" olması dolayısıyla on iki gün Üsküp'e kon- 
aklamak zorunda kalır.Ancak, bunların yerleşimi merkezlerinde- 
ki giindiği hayatu ne kadar etkilediği tan olarak bilememek de, bu 
devrin belgelerini daha sonrakilerle karşıştırdığımızda, etikleri- 
nin sarsıcı olmadığını tahmin edebiliriz. Elimi ziyâdalarından 
yâlasık yirmi yıl sonra Üsküp'te bulunan Eviya Çelebi, on bini aşan 
kiremit damlı evleriyle oldukça mamur bir şehir tablosu çizer.11

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11. Seyahatname, 5. cilt (İstanbul, 1899), s. 553-62. Bu ve diğer kaynaklar içinde daha geniş bir değerlendirme için, bkz. Nazif Hoca, "Üsküb", İslâm An- 
sıklopedisi ve E. A. Vakalopoulos, History of Macedonia, 1354-1833, çev. P. M. 
menn (Selanik, 1973), s. 220-1 (ve dizin). On yediinci yüzylından başlayarak Ma- 
nastır ve Üsküb yörelерinde asayişizliklerle ilgili Osmanlı belgeleri (A. Mat- 
kovski tarafından) yayımlanmıştır. Turski izvri ve ajatustyo i aramistvo vo 
Ayrca bkz. A. Matkovski, "Haiduken-aktionen in Mazedonien in der ersten Hälfte 
inin bazı okunu/ceviri yamınlarının düzeltildiği ve kullanılan belgelerden bir 
kismını oluşturlan Manastır (Bitola) kadi sicillerinin daha etrafı olarak yayımlan- 
diği, dolayısıyla daha dengeli bir tablo veren bir derlemeye için bkz. V. Boskov vd., 
hab., Documents turcs sur l'histoire du peuple macédonien (İstanbul 1963)'den bâg.

İşte Asiya Hatun'un elimizdeki metni oluşturan mektupları bu noktada başlar. Kendisine "muh kemizdırær" veren bu iç çelişkisini bir mektupa "birarının" diye hitap ettiği, Uziçeli şeyhin Üsküpte halifesiyi olduğunu tahmin ettigimiz, Mehmed Dede adlı, ilmine güvendiği birine açıklar ve akıl danışır: Gönül alemindeki bu değişiklikler olumlu bir gelişmeye mi işaret etmektedir, yoksa bir neş oyunu mu? Hem bu değişikliği eski şeyhine nasıl açacağıını bilemez. Gelen cevapta Muslıhüddin Efendi'nin hatunun eski şeyhinden üstün olduğunu belirtir; eski şeyhin irşadı da bir işe yaramıştır ama bundan ilerisi Uziçeli şeyhent gonecekler. Bu yeni gelişmelerin izlenip yönendirilmesi için de makul olan hatunun rüyalarını yapış

zişmaların getirilip götürülmesinde Asiya Hatun'un kendine sırada bildiği bir "hâce kadın" aracılık yapar.


Şeyhlinin biri kendisini kucaklayıp sıkıştırığı görür, ama bu "Hazret-i Ömer İslâm'a gelikdâe Hazret-i Resûl (s.a.s.) Ömer'i böyle koşup" skimması gibidir. Bir başka kez birisi görünür ve nikâhtan sonra seyhiyle aralarında "mahremiyet olup mübarek elicile cismine" dokunmağı ve hatunun tüm beden marazzarlarının iyileşebil-ğini müjdelere; hatuna önce hicab gelir ama utanıp sıkılmasma gerek yoktur, çünkü "ol azide beşeriyet yokdur... râh-ı surfurd." Görlüdğı gibi, bu düsleri yazarken, hatta görüşken, yalnızlaştırılamba konusunda kaygılan ve bunu açıkça ifade eder. Ama yirmicinci yüzülde kendisini okuyanların rüyaları boy gösteren bazı motivate bambaşka kulular takablikeğinden elbette habersizdir. Bir rüya-nda otürmüş bir bahçe içerisinde yalanlar görüp kaza ile sokmalarından koraktuluğu, bir diğerinde şeyhin oturduğu sakhi tutan "diireğe dâyanmış, bir mertede hicâbâla... azize kati yakant" duruşunu, yorum-suz iletiir.12

12. Burada amacımız birtakım metinlerin anlaşılanında zaman içinde orta-ya çıkan kültürel değişiklikleri de içermektedir. kèm Efendimiz irtihâ.11


Hatun ama içine bakmayı becerememistiştir; oysa bu kez ayna kendi elindeyken uyanır, yanı gözleri gerçek anlamlıya açılmıştır artık. Rüyalaryla içi döş bir diğer Osmanlı'nın, yani Sultan III. Murad'ın, sonradan bestelenen şiirinde "uyan ey gözlərim gafletten uyan" derken derden işi uyamak da budur.


On üçüncü ve on dördüncü yüzüllereki Anadolu'dan Osmanlı tarihçlerini çok daha yakından ilgilendiren gelişmeler gözlenebilir. Bazi menakibnamelerde "faikregân" sörn edilir; daha da ilginci, 


derviş-tarihçili Aşıkaşpazade, defalarca zikredilen ama ancak son yıllarında bir yaşayan konu olan gözleminde, "müsafirin-i Rûm"'u oluşturdu dört tıfteden birisi olarak "bacyân-i Rûm"'u söyle."Baciyan"dan tam olarak kimlerin kastedildiği (ki diğer üç taife, yani gaziyân, ahiyân ve abdûlân da tam olarak anlaşılması değildir kanımca), bu baciyanın ne derece kadar kurumlaşma olduğu ve burada ele alındığı konu çerçevesinde daha da önemlisi, daha sonraki de
tirlerde değişik tarıktarla karşıma çıkan kadınlardan on üçüncü- on dördüncü yüzyılın baciyanları ile ne gibi bir devamlılık çizgisi içinde ele alınabileceği sorular daha araştırılmasında muhtaçtır.20

Kadınlardan tarikat eliinde yaşadığı hiç olmazsa anne, eş, kardeşe vb. olarak yer aldığı ve bu rolleriyle de tasavvuf geleneklerinin oluşması ve yayılması katkında bulunukları unutulmamalı. On beşinci
yüzyılın başlarında Sermek'te Eşref'llerin gelip yerleşen Şey
hülsislam Berdâ, damadı Şeyh Pir Mehmed Hüseyîn ve onun oğlu Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi'nin menkûbelerini anlatan eserin yazarı, kete
yadında kitaptaki bilgilerin kaynakını şöyle verir:

"Bu fakr-ı kesri't-taksır vâlide Nefsa Hâtnun ibnet-i Seyyid
Mehmûd Efendi bin eş-Seyh Burhân Efendi -kuddise erévahû-da
bêz-zât kavî-l-i sarih ve nakî-i sahih üzere, mezbur hâtnun dahi baba
sinin üvey vâlide Emini Hâtnun'dan istimâ'düidügûr. Mezbûr
Emini Hâtnun Hazreti Şeyh Burhân Efendi'nin mu'takası ve menkû
hesi, gayet makbulesi imiş. Temmet..."21

Zaman ve mekan açısından Asiya Hatun'a yaklaşırsak, Şeyh
Hasan Kâîrin'in (ö. 1679/80) sürûgine giderken yerine karısını ve
kil birakması ümmeginde görüldüğü üzere, on yedinci yüzyılin ikinci
yarisında Bosna'da kadın dervişlerin oldukça etkin oldukları bili
niyor. Bu konuda bir araştırma yayılmayan Hadzihâhîc'e göre, ba
çalar-arası bir teşkilatlarla bu şekilde oluşmuş, "gülbaç"lar Bos
na'nın çeşitli şehirlerine yayılmış ve 2. Dünya Savaşı'na kadar Sar
aybosna'da etkinlikleri süregelmis.22

Mc²-tupla irşad tasavvuf tarihinde pek de seyrek olmayan bir du
rum.23 Birbirinden uzak, olan şeyh ve mûridin bir süre bu yola baş
vurması doğaldır, ama Asiya Hatun gibi hiç görülmeyen şeyhiyle ilîş
kilerini mektupla başlatmak ve sürdürümek zoruna kalmak, daha


23. L. Garnett, Mysticism and Magic in Turkey (Londra, 1912), 175-7; Ayrıca aynı yazarın şu eserine bakınız: Women of Turkey (Londra, 1891), s. 507. Tek
teklerin kapitalmasından az önce yazılmış (Kütüphanecisi dostum Andreas Riedlma
yer'in diktişimi çektiği) bir yazıda, İstanbul'da Gümüşhaneli (Nâşibîndî-Halî
di) dergâhına bağlı bir kadınlar tekkessi hakkında bilgi ve dedikodular aktarı
tıktadır; Resimli Ay/I9 (Teşrininvel, 1340/1924): 27-8.
24. Örnek olarak bkz. Correspondence spirituelle échangée entre Nuroddin
çok kadınlara özgü bir durum olsa gerek. 26 Öte yandan rüyaların anlamını ve yorumu işsizliğin sistematik öğelerinden biridir. On altını yüzylın en önemli Halveti şeyhlerinden Sünbül Sinan Efendi’nin Tarikâtname’sinde mürəđe düşüyleriyle ilgili şu öngörüler verilir: “Her ne düş görürse şeyhe ‘arz eyleye; ta’bir iderse dinleye, imezte ta’biri nedir dimeye...” ve Sevheh gayriya våki’asın dimeye... ve Şefiye secara våki’asın dimeye... meger şey tah’in idip ta’bire izin virdiği adem ola, ana diye... ve şefkâadden onun våki’a ‘arz imeye, meger o almadi meclisinde ola yahud daha.”

Vahiy peygamberlere, keşif de emirlerine nasıpl olur, ama rüya nisbeten eşitliliklerdir, herkes tarafından görülebilir. Yine de tam anlamla "demokratik" olduğu söylenemez. İbn Arabi'ye aefedilerek yaygın olarak kullanılan bir tabirname, "daima nafakasını ve gün lük yiyecini düşünen ve akti ve fikri onuna mesgul olan" yoksulların rüyalarına fazla kulak asmasak gerektiği yazar.40 Ayrıca gayrimüslimler "rû'ya-i sâdika" görmekte mümin ile "müsterekler- dü" araç "nûr-i ilahi ile mü'eyyed" olan "rû'ya-i sâliha" göremezler "zîrâ ol nûbûveden bir düzünd... ve kafile hiçbir nûbûveden czû yoktur,"41 Ama konumuz açısından en dikkat çekici olan rüya seç kinciliği Mesnevi'de çıkar karşımıza. Aklı melekeleri görel olarak düşük olduğu için, kadınların düşünen de erkeklerinki kadar ger-


Öte yandan özellikle Hazreti Muhammed’in gördüğü rüyaların en çok üzerinde durulan ve yazılan rüyalar olması şaşırtıcı değildir. Çünkü "bir hadis-i şerifde daha buyurur ki: kim ki beni düşünde gördü, ol gerçek gördü, züra şeytan benim süretime girmez."

Sonra insanın düşü çok değerlidir, olur olmaz kişi akıt olarak gerekir. Çünkü rüya yorumlanmadığı sürece bir şey söylemiş sayılmaz, dolayısıyla insanın davranışına yön vermez, kaderini çizmez. "Rüya üçucu bir kuşun ayağı üzerindedir, tâbir olunmadıkça onun için istikrâr ve karâ yoktur."

Ancak yorumlandığı anda, yorumlayan istek bilgili ister cahil olun, ister hayra şeref yorsun, "ta’birinân hukm râ’yie sâbit olur."

Artık rüyanın mantığı yorumlandığı haliley işlerlik kazanır ve düşü nesnel bir dünyada yatsa bile bu, özüne rolünü yadamz; bilakis, bütün idealist düşünce sistemlerinde olduğu gibi, ancak bir özne tarafından algılanındığında ve anlamlanıldığında gerçekleş kazanır. Dolayısıyla aynı rüya değişik kıltsa tarafından gördüğünde değişik anımları taşıyabilir.

İşte Asiya Hatun’un rüyalarına ve ilgili yazışmalarına sınımsı olan ciddiyet ve ağırlık bir bütün bu kültürün oluşumunun. Ünlü antropolog Malinowski’nin, gelenegen belirlediği çizgiler çerçevesinde biçimlenen rüyalara verdiği isimle “resmi” rüyalardı bunlar. Asiya Hatun “serbest” rüyalar da görmüş olabilir ama o “ıçzıfe ve şerifân”leri yazmaktan kaçındığını varsayabiliriz.

Bir tarihi, hele hele psikolojik çözüme yapmaya niyeti ve eğitimi olmayan bir tarihi rüyalara niye ilgilenir? Bir kere görülenlerin ya da görmüş gibi anlatıların içerikleri bir yana, rüyalardan nasıl değerlendirilebilir ve yorumlanmalıdır, bir kültürde geleneki anlamları tümüyle belirli iki konuda önemli ipuçları verebilebilir. Yukarıda değilmişildiği gibi, modern toplumlar dahil her toplumda rüyaların yorumlanması/coğrulunmesi belirli metajizik ve epistemolojik manınlara göre biçimlendir.

40 Ayrıca tarih boyunca değişik toplum-

41. A.g.y., 24-a-b.
türünde "görsel" sanatların niteliği tartışırken belki de işe Osmanlıların göreme’ten ne anladığı ile başlamak gerek.


45. Antik çağda Yunanlının bu konulardaki inançları ve rüya metafiziğinin değişik bazı kültürlerdeki ortak yanıları için bkz. E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational (Berkeley, 1951), 4. bölüm. Daldians Artemidorus, The One...

MÜTEREDİT BİR MUTASAVFİV

yeni şartlar ve kavrulmaları başlamaları evrilerek. Örneğin, Avrupa ortaçağ tarihihde "on ikinci yüzyıl rönesansı" adı verilen, "dirençli derin yapıların devamılığı içinde [beliren] kültürle ve zihni iççrama" olgusunun bir boyutu da, Le Goff’un deyimile, Hristiyanlığın ilk binyılarda daha çok şeytan yani vurgulan "rüyannın yeneti", yavaş da olsa fizyolojik yanlarının daha ciddiyete ele alınmasıdır.46


meyan saltanatı şuradan bellidir ki, imparator II. Konstans (641-668) kendi özelle bir düşük yorumcusu tutar ve birkaç yüz yıl sonra Porfirogenitus’un (VII. Konstantin, 913-957) Bizans teşrifatını ele alan eserinde imparatorun sefere gördürüği kitaplar arasında bir de tabiynamye rastlanır.49

Düş anlattılarının siyasi yCOVERY’nin dişındaki kişisel ilişkilerde de karşılıklı bir düşük geçirmiş, birazarh araci olabileceğini güzel bir örnek, Asiya Hatun’un detleri. Hatun yanılışlarıyla konumunun değişirmiyo, bir yerlere varmayı umar (Bunu art niyetli, saniyetsizlik olarak görmediğim açıklar diyor). Bu uğrada yerle-


Asiya Hatun’un Muslihüddin Efendi ile yazışmaya başlamasında yaklaşıkt on yıl önce, aile ve meslek baskılardan kurtulmak ve dünyayı gezmek umidyile kivrnan İstanbul’lu bir gencin, derdini halletmesinde böyle bir stratejik rüyayı, hiç olmasa edebi açıklan, yardımına koşması bu sayedeılır. Gerci “şefaat” diyecekken “seyahat” demesini düş sıradasında dllının sürmesi gibi anlat Evliya Çelebi, modern okurlar da –kendimden ve okul sınavlarından beri bu ünlü düş anlatısını konuşma fırsatı bulduğum çeşitli arkadaşlarınız-

yola çıkarak bir genelmede yapmama izin verilirse– “bizi adelat

ını mı sanıyorsun?” diyebilți. Ama Evliya’nın niyeti kimseyi aldatmak değildir ya da hiçbir olmasa her iyi edebiyatçının yapıtı gibi aldatmacasına okuru da ortak ederek işi çetrefileştirir.

Düş anlattısının nasıl anlaşılmaya gerekleri konusunda okuyucuya çok ipucu verir, dolayısıyla rüya asıl metenden okuyan ve rü-


49. Calofonos, a.g.m.
Orhan Veli'nin Altındağlıları gibi, değişik sosyal katmanlardan ve cinslere gelenlerin de aynı rüyaları görmeyeceğini tabiidır. Kısacası rüya anlatları, görenin kimliğine, görülenin bağlamına ve yorumlanması göre değerlendirildiğinde, tarıçilerin ilgilendiği birçok sosyal ve kültürel meseleye ilişkin tutabilir.


Ancak Asiye Hatun'un âdeti yerine getirmekten öte kayguları olduğu, kutsal metinle daha zihni bir çekilde de ilgilendiğini, bir de Ebussuud tefsirine sahip olmasından anlıyor. Bu kitabı da şey-

50. TSK, B304, 6b. Bu çok kullanılan şaheserin daha hâlâ saflar bir metnin farklı yazılmışımın olmasından dolayısıyla Abdülhamid devrinde yazılmışa başlayan matbu metnin, hatta matbu metne dayanan çeşitli sadeleştirilmiş, araçtırmaçlar tarafından çok kullanılmak olmasının bazıı biedir. âdet eten çeşitli tarıçiler gibi biz de burada değişim istiyoruz: Matbu metnin (s. 28) "istihâre" sözü]))) olan Nihal Arsız'ın bile, gerek bu sözü, gerek "uyku ile uyumluksa aradında belirlemesine, "gerekle ve üstad kabardan kurtulma" motifi metne alınız. Bu metnin ilk yazılanlarından bugüne kadar geçen zamanda merhum Yusel Dağ'ı ve Yedi Kredi Yayımlarını sayesinde bu boşluğ dolduruldu.


53. Mehmed Gülşen, "Kıllıç Kâşif-ı Hadâr" (İstanbul, H. 1338-40), s. 9. Gerçek Mahmud Hâdâr Efendi zekî biz bu rüyası hayata yayar: Sultanın kurulu toprağa değer, toprak kuvvetli, demek ki... Ama, sultanın ömrü boyu kaynaklara işi düsen rüyalarıyla gülü habere bakacak olursak, geçen cabarları olmasa olunsa, başka dedesini olmak üzere edaralarının şunu yakalacak bir hüküm olmamak kaygısı, III. Muradi'yeukularda bile pek rahatsız bırakmamıştır.

hine göndermisir ve bir rüyasında şeyhi kendisine muhabbetini ifade etmek için bu olayı haturlatır: "Bizé Eboüssüd tefsiri irdel eden Asiya Hâlûn. Sen ki benim muhibbem ve mahbûbemsin, tâlibem ve matlûbûnsem." 

Ayrca iyi bir müрид olmaya çalışırken bu konuda yazılım "el kitapları"ndan, yani tarikatnamelerden yararlanır. Daha ilk mektubunda eski şeyhinden soğuyup yeni bir seyhe meleyetçiliğini belirtirken, Mehmed Dedeye sorar: "Târikhatnamelerde görmüşüm ki bir kimse kendi şeyhinden gayri yere tabiati çekince bântı hazret-i váhidiyeye açılmaz. Acaba sultanım, kendi şeyhinden mi açılamaz yoksa hiçbir tarafından mi açılamaz?"

Bir mutasavvıfdan beklenençe üzere şiirle de ilgilenir Asiya Hatun. Özellikle Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi'nin yazdkalarına iyiçe aşın olmalı; şeyhi "âlem-i dünyâ bir hankâhullâhtir, hådam biziz" dediğinde düğ görmekteydir ama bu sözün Mevlana'dan alıntı olduğu hemen uyanar. Ayrca kendisi de beyit düzmekez aciz değildir; Ali'nin harikalara diyarızi diş çökmüşdür bunlar bir diğer düştünde, evinde mermer kapağı kaldırıp rastladığı merdivenlerde aşağıgi indikten ve kârışına çıkan çêmnenin suyunun içinde sona kendi Medine'de bulunca, Ravza-i şerifi yüz sürer ve içindeki şeyler taşar: "evvel â ahir vücutdendir sebebe devle / el-medad ey destir-i evvelin vâ ahirin / hasre tahâs etme sultanım şefaat-kârîn / âlem-i dünyada da ol destir-i âçizin."55

Okuduklarından ve rüya deffteri kaleme alıcılı bitiminden Asiya Hatun'un oldukça iyi bir görnüm görmüş olduğunu tahmin edebiliriz. (Üsküp gibi bir on haneye -ki bunun hepsi Müslüman olduğu-- 70 mektub, 9 dârûlkurra ve 6 medrese düşen bir şehrde, hele bir âlim kizi için, bu hiç şaşırtıcı olmamalı. Asıl şaşırtıcı olan, kadın-erkek Osmanlıların eğitimi hakkında ne kadar az şey bildiğim.) Arapça, Farsça sözcükler ve terimlerle hâkimdir. Ayrca görnümle pek ilgisi olmayan bir diğer açıdan da başarılı bir yazar sayılabilice: Gönl hallerini süsüz olduguna etkileyici bir dille ifade eder.


Mütereddât bir mutasavvif


Metnin yansıtdiği değerler dünyasını yorumlamak simulated çok zor. Gerek Asiya Hatun hakkında gerekse genel olarak kadınlar hakkında o kadar az şey biliyoruz ki. Her şeyden önce Asiya Hatun'un ne kadar tipik olduğunu biliyoruz. Çevresi onu ne gözle görüyordu? Takdir edenler olduğu gibi, acıyanlar, "vah zavallı, kendi bir şeyhe kaptırdı, evde kaldık," gibisinden değerendlirmeler yapanlar var mıydı? İsrara evliyi hakemle edinşi nasıl yorumlayacağiz? İslamiyet'te, Hristiyanlık'a olduğu gibi kesişişe toplundan uzaklaşmanın yüzeltimmediği, dolayısıyla kendilerine din bilimleri, din hizmetleri gibi alanlarde meslek seçenlerin, hatta mutasavvıfların bile evlenip çoğula çığça karışmasının garipmesmediği bilinir. Ancak İslamiyet'te Allah yolunda bekârlığın hiç olmadığını söyleyemeyiz.56 Asiya Hatun'un rüya deffterinde de, gelin olanacağı gün evden kaçaş uzun ömrünün sonuna kadar tek başına yașa-yan Afgan Mutasavvifi Hazret Babacan (ö. 1931) kadar radikal olmasa bile,57 tecridi yeğleyen ve bunu nefis mücadelene ve dünyayı reddetmenin doğal bir uzantısı olarak görmen bir tavır belirgin. Hele "sipah cinsinden" bir "âdem"e evlenirildiğini gördüğünü, kendisine bir sûre ele çektiren bir rüyası dikkat çekici. Alim kuzunun sipahiye varması özellikle istenmemeyin bir durum muydu acaba?

Sosyal zümre, tabaka ve sınıflar arası ilişki ve çelişkileri anlamak için birbirlerine karşı tavırlarının çok daha iyi bilinmesi gerekir; bu konuyu araştırmmanın en iyi yollarından biri değişik zümrelerin evlilik stratejilerine bakmak olsa gerek.


Asiya Hatun’un oluşunun yolu çokukların düşünmesi ve akla butterknife mümkün, güzel ve iradesiz bir kadın olduğu sonra uyguladığı gider地质 yaralı mı? Körü köründe bir şeyhe bağlanmadığı, mürsiden ne istedigini bildiği, bu konuda kaderine razı olmak bir ya da beklenmesi benli olur olsun. Ne kadar mutereddet olursa olsun, bu değişikliği yerine getirecek adımları kendisi atmış, mürsidi olmasını istedigi yaban bir şeyhe “bağı bağlı” adem göndermiş, ancak sonradan bu adımlara meşruyet kazandıracak şekilde desteklenmek ihtiyacı duymuştur. Belki de ilk bir “irşad uşlusu” hoşuna gitmesi miştir. Prof. Frederic de Jong, Türk Halvetiliğinde, bilhassa Karabaşı kolunda, şeyhin genellikle pasif bir rol üstlendiğini yazar; bu anlayışa göre, vücut için ruh neye, mür suicide için de şeyh odur. Karabaşlılar için de kendine bir yer edindiği düşünülürse, Asiya Hatun’un şuğudüğünü şeyhinin Üsküp Karabaşı Halvetilerinden olduğu aklı gelir, ama Halvetiğin bu kolunun o yörelere daha bu tarihe yerleşmiş olmasında pek iktidar verilemez. Zaten gayri-müdahelecı irşad sadece Karabaşılar has gelişdir; Halvetiğin içinde var olan bir eğilimi daha uca sürmüştür bu kolun izleyicileri. Öte yandan bir diğer Halveti, yani Musılıhmüedin Efendi, de Jong’un bu tasvirine uymayan, mürsiden yaptıklarına


ve ahvaline oldukça aktif bir şekilde karşılık bir şey izlenimi veriyor bu metinde.


Bunlar tartışmaktan amaçlımsı, Asiyе Hatun'un Osmanlı toplumundaki cinsler hiyerarşisini devirmeye yönelmiş bir prototipeminin olduğuunu iddia etmek değil elbette. İstemendi bir evlilik ilişkisine girmemekte birçok direnir, ama "safa ile" uyanmasını neden olan şeyhile nikahlamana rüyasında efendinin "hâtîn olup hizmet et ve yeleye yeceğinin farkındadır. Bir başka ruhunu anlatırken, daha çok Avrupa dillerinde rastlanan ve bugünlerde İncil'in yeniden yazılıması tartışmalarına neden olan bir "cins kayması" yapar, yani erkeklerin bir sızıczą herkes için kullanılabilir gibidir, düşine giren "bir hâbrâ hâtîn'un "Üsküb âdemine benzeme"ği zirin. Daha da ilgincisi, insannın tasavvuf yolunda ilerlemesini bayağı ihtiyaç ve heveslerle engelleyen "veiller aldayıcı" duygu, aynen erkek mutasavvıflarda (ve daha da kuvvetle Hristiyan âleminde) rastlanan bir imgeyle, bir "bedeçehre... a'mâ avret" olarak görür.

Belirli sosyal grupların tarihi çalışırken, o grupların konumunu bilişçili bir şekilde döngüluğumuz çabalarına (işçi hariçleri, kadın hariçleri, vb.) öncelik verilir genellikle. Ancak, bu tüm hareketlerin değişik toplumlarda nasıl biçimlendiğini veya başarılı olup olamadıkları sağlıklı bir perspektiften değerlendirilerek için gerekten ve toplum hayatının bütüncül bir şekilde anlamanın ça-

lisan tarihçinin er veya geç gündemine gelen daha mütevazi bir iş var: miskinlikle isyan arasındaki sahrada günbegün koşuşturulan sıradan insanların, kişiliklерini ve ilişkilerini yögürurken attıkları iddiasız ve gösterişsiz adımlarını izini süreberek, gündelik hayatta geleneksel rolleri yerine getirirken bile kişiliğe açık olan hareket alanlarını ve sınırları keşirerek ve bunlara zamanla ortaya çıkan küçük deprenmeleri örnek. Asiyе Hatun gibi (hiç olmasa şimdiye kadar bildiklerimiz kadaryla) tarihe yön çizme, toplumu yönetme veya dönüştümüne bir başı iddiası olmayan birinin kendisyle ve çevresiyle ilgili yazılarını okumamın en büyük yararı, bu alana ve özellikle Osmanlı toplum tarihindeki rolleri açısından çok az tanıdığımız kadının dünyasına, ufak da olsa, bir pencere açmasının da yatırılar sanırın.

METİN

Häzâ risâle Üskübî merhum Kadri Efendi kerimesi Asiye Hâtun ta\-rîk-i hakka sülük itdükde ‘azâzleri âhar diyar da olma\\ldots\r

Süre\-i mektûb, ‘İzzet\-i sa\-âdetli sultân\-um efendi hazretlerinin mübârek dest-i şeriflerin büs idâm ve\-l-i ta\’zîm birle du\’al\-ar \’azr ol-\ndukdan sonra: Benim sultânım, ma\r\-tûm-i şerif\-dûr ki bir ka\c{s} sene\-dûr tarîk-i hakka sülük bï-bïseb\-eb gendîmüz tâlib olmâ\-dın zühur it-\-mi\-ş idî.

Ben dah\-î mûmkin o\-ludâgî mertbê cehd eyledûm ve şeyhe ‘azîm muhabbet imâm idîm. Tari\-kat mucebênî emrine muri’ idîm. Her ne e\r\nr ite cândan kabül iderdim. Muhkem muhabbetüm ve iti\-mâ-\-dm var idî. Muhabbetüm ve itikâdum sebâbê az zamanda iki se-\ne mürûr itmedîn esmâ-i seb’âyî tana\-m eyledûm. ‘Avn-i ilahi ile her biri bir ve\chîle zühur itmişdür. Vel’hâ\-sâhî kalbüm gözi bir miktâr açmaga ba\-\l\-âmaşmî chî. Bu hâle iken hikmetullah şöyle iktizâ idî, şeyhûmûn muhabbetüm zâ\’îl oldû. Bï-bïseb. Anlarda zahirên ve bör-\-\nîn bir keder gelecek nesne yogykten gendî nefsîm kahabadan muhabbetüm teskîn oldû. Sâ’hâl hâtâm dah tenezzûl idî. Mesela zul-\mêdêe kalmiş, Ne kadar İslâm a\’lî idâm tabâsûmûn, mûmkin olma-

*Mern okurken karşla\-ştuğum giçle\-kler konusunda yardma\-\lunun eirut-\-geme\-yen Sayın Orhan Sa\-ï Gökçe\-y, Gönül Tekin, Şinasi Tekin ve Andreas Tietze\-ye ne kadar teşkût etsem azdr. Yine de merni tilîmyle mûphem ve yanlış okumalar bunda kurtaramadıysan, kahabad bunca himmetten yararlan-\musa\-mın bîlîmeyen bu acêmînîzîdî.

Bu risâle, Üskübî merhum Kadri Efendi’nin kızı Asiye Hatun hak yola girdiğinde, şeyhleri başka diyar da oldugu için rûyalarını mektu-\-pula ilemesi gerektiğinden, oldûğinde ûzây tahta\-sında sakladiği mûs\-vettel arastında kendi eli\zîسنة ile bulunan sayfalardan kopye edildi.

Mektup suretî: ‘İzzetî, saadetî sultanîm efendi hazretlerinin múba-\-rek elerîni ûper, nice hürmêterîe duvâlîr gönderiîm: Benîm sul-\tanîm, bîlîrisinîz ki birkaç senedîr hak yola giriș, ûyle kendilîginden, biz tâlîp olmâdan, gerçeke\-leştîştiîm.

Ben de mûmkin olunâda u\-şra\-tum ve şeyhe çok muhabbet göstermiştim. Tari\-katun kûrelarî gerekî emrine itaat ediyorûm. Her ne erâ\-retse cândan kabül ediyorûm. Çok sevgîm ve güvenim varû. Bu sevgi ve inanç sebêbîyle az zamanda, iki sene geçmedi\-nen, yedi ismi tama\-nalîdum. Allah’în yardumî ile her biri bir çekilde or-\-tuya çıkmâstir. Kısacâcasi, kalbimân gözi bir miktâr açılmaya başla\-\-mîstî. Bu hâldeyken, Allah’în hikmetî, ûyle icap ettî, şeyhîme olan muhabbetêm azalî. Sebêbsiz. Ölürânî ne aşp ne ortalı bana si-\-\nîntu verecek bu şey olmamışken, kendi nefûsîn kahabadën-\-den muhabbetên zayîfîdî. Sair ahvalîm de inûçe geçti. Sanki karanli-\-ka kalmiş gibi tabatıma çekidiîzen vermeye ne kadar álltûsîsîm-\-dan mûmkin olmâdû. Bu halde garm ve hüzûn içindeyken, Uziçê dê


"Estağfurullahi"l-azîm ellezi lä ilâhe illa hüve'l-hayyûl-kayyûm ve etibu ileyh"


Yine bir defə İsmullahə mödəxəmet iderken ke-enne bir kəse ile su getürdiiler. İşer gibi oldum. Nazar itdüm, kəse içinde su meğer altını imiş. Altını içdüm. Efendilər hazretleri buyurdular ki: "Siifətler 'əfiyətələr olsun". Ba'dehü Ramazan-i şerifən evvel gecesi teravih kilakken kalbüm əməeti idip fakirə ardında namaz kılaram. Çox cemət bile. Ba'dehü oturup tebih okurken efendi hazretleri kal-


Yine bir def'a: 'Aziz hazretlerinün vefatı haberî geldükden sonra bir gün 'âlem-i bânînda 'aziz hazretleri müsâhede idûp buyururlar ki: "Bizüm için elem çekme. Beşerîyet kaydîndan halâs oldum. Senûn her ahvânîn ile yine ke-zâliik takâyûd olûnur".

Ba'dehe yine bir gün kalbüm göziley 'aziz hazretlerin müsâhede idûp buyururlar ki: "Oğłum Hasanî itûba' eyle. Az zamânda bizüm mertebemîzê sûud ider".


Yine bir def'a: Aziz hazretlerinün vefatı haberî geldikten sonra bir gün iç âleminde aziz hazretlerini gördüm, buyururlar ki: "Bizim için acı çekme. Însanlık kaydîndan kurultдум. Senin her halin ile yine eskisi gibi ilgilenirim."

Sonra yine bir gün kalbüm göziley aziz hazretlerini gördüm, buyururlar ki: "Oğłum Hasan'a bağlan. Az zamannda benim mertebemîne yûl sececektir."
Yine bir def'ada ism-i sânîye müdâvemet iderken cemi' esyadan "hû" sadâsi gelir gibi oldı. Bu hâl bir kaç def'a váki' oldı.


Yine bir def'ada 'azîz hazretleri 'âlem-i bâtimda buyurular ki: "Bize i'tibâr itmez müsin? Ism-i sâlis, ki hû'dur, emr-i hakk ile, peygamber hazretlerinin mu'izzâtile sana ta'în oldı". Ve ba'zi zamânà gendüme meşgûl iken ke-enne cemi' esyadan "hû" sadâsi kâlbüme gelir gibidür.

Yine bir def'a dahi rû'yâda gördüm, "hû" ismine müdâ[ve]jet iderem.

Sonra bunlar zühür eyledi. Bir nice def'a vâkı' old. Imsullâha müdâvemet iderken gaybet vâkı' olup "hû" ismi kalbüme ilham olur. Bir nice def'a gaflet müstevfi olup 'aziz hazretleri zâhir olup "hû" isim telkin ider. Nice def'a vâkı' oldukda i'tibâr itmeyüp bir def'âda buyurular ki: "Bize i'tibâr itmez misin? Ism-i sâlis[i] sana ta'yi in eyle-düm."


Yine bir def'âda 'aziz hazretleri cânibinden kalbümne ilham oldi ki: "Evvel hû, âhir hû, zâhir hû, bâtûn hû. Benüm sultanum, bu halleri Çelebi efendiye yazup gönderün." Anlardan cevâbâ mûntazir iken 'aziz hazretleri cânibinden işâret oldi ki: "Oglum Hasan'dan haber gelince tavakkuf eyleme, Mehmed Dedêye ilâm eyle." İndi huzûrunuza ilâm olundi. Ne buyurursiz? Bunlar hâtira midur yoksa sa-


Bir def'a dâhî: 'Pençênbe gicesi rû'yâda gördüm ki Hazret-i Habîb-i Ekrem (salla'llahu 'aleyhi ve sellem) hazretlerinin nikâhîna dâhî olup Habîb-i Ekrem hazretleri ya'ni sahîh bana nikâh idüp hâtum olmuşam. Bir kimsê bana dir ki: "Bu zamânede peygamber hátûnlarandan hemân sensin. Şimdiden sonra senûn eliân elope." Genû hâtûme ta' accûb ideren ve bilûremon ki sahîh bana nikâh idüp anlar ile mülâkât olmusam. Ve elli hazret-i sultânû 'âyânün gördüümüz bilmem.


Yine bir def'a: Arefe gecesi muhkem sitmâ tutup şiddet-i harâretle iken öyle müsâhede ideren ki efendi hazretleri katı yakunumda. Ke-enne başuma yapışûp hâtûm sorar gibi. Da'hi buyurdular ki: "Bu sû-

Mütereddît bir mutasavvif


Bir keresinde de persecembe gecesi rûyada gördüm ki hazret-i pêygamber (s.a.s.) hazretlerinin nikâhına girmişim, yani peygamber hazretleri hakkatên bana nikâh edip hatunu olmuşum. Birisi bana dedi ki: "Bu zamanda peygamber hatunlardan başta sensin. Şim-diden sonra senûn eliân elope." Kendi halime şûnum ve öyle bildim ki gerçeken benîm nikâhlanmış ve onlarla buluşmuşum. Ama hazret-i peygamberi aşkça gördügümü sûleyemem.


Yine bir kere: Arefe gecesi siki bir sitmaya tutuldum, hararetim ﮏıddeti etkisinde öyle gördüm ki efendi hazretleri hemen yakunumda. Sanki başuma yanaşüp halimi sorar gibi. Hem buyurdu ki: "Bu
manun tahtundan çok fâ'ide vardur. Nice bil. Gündüz sâ'im gice kâ'im olsan buna vâsîl olamazdin.


sittmann altında çok yararlı şeyler var. Öyle bil. Gündüz oruç tut-san, gece namaz kılsan, bu yararlara ulaşamazdın.


Yine bir def'a: Ism-i șerife meşgül iken fakire "hû" didiçek 'aziz hazretleri "hakk" diyip buyurdular.


Yine bir def'a ism-i șerife müdâvemet idip "hû" didiçek ke-ene 'aziz hazretleri zâhir olup buyurdular ki: "Hakk'di. Hakk'dan buyuruldu".


Ve yine ol gice, Ramazânun ahir Cum'a gicesidir, nefsü'liyleden sonra sabaha karf otururken ke-ene bana didiler ki: "Hakk te'âlâ sana selâm eyledi". Amba kulağla sâdâ işitmek değil, hemân kalbûme ilham oldu.


mutereddît bir mutasavvif


Yine bir def'a: Ism-i șerife devam ederken fakire "hu" dediçek aziz hazretleri "hakk" buyurdular.


Yine bir def'a ism-i șerife demvala "hu" dediçek sanki aziz hazretleri görünüp "Hakk de. Hakk'tan buyuldu." buyurular.


Ve yine o gece, Ramazânın son Cum'a gecesi, geceyarsızdandın sonra sabaha yakın otururken bana sanki "Hakk teala sana selâm eyledi" dediler. Ama kulakla ses işitmek gibi değil, âdet kalbime ilham oldu.
Cevâb: Baci kadın, bâ-hadd ve là-yu'add selâm ve du'âlardan sonra: 
Allâhü te'âllâ mûbârek eylesün. Hûccet ve burhân ile ve her vechile 
hakkunuz olmûş. Bu 'âsi yüzi karanın içâzetine ihtiyacunuz yok, 
amma te'eddûb itmişisz. Allâhü te'âllâ adâbunuz ziyâde eyleyüp gün-
den güne terakkûnuz ziyâde ola. İcâzet olsun. İsm-i hakkı sürresiz. 
Bu yüzi käreyi daha du'âdan unutmayâsiz ve's-selâm.

Yine bir defa: Müşâhede iderem ki bir kaç muhteşem 'azîzler bir yi-
re cem' olup tevhîd iderler. Ba'dehe ismûllâh sürût "kayûm" ısim 
cekerler. Fakîreye daha hitâb ideler ki: "Sen daha 'kayûm' ısim 
sür". Şeyhûme 'arz itdim, "kayûm" ısim virdi.

Yine bir defa' ûd-i şerîf gicesi 'âlem-i [55a] bâtında görûrem ki ha-
bîb-i ekrem (salla'llâhu 'âleyhi ve sellem) hazretleri ve efendi ha-
zretleri bir yirde otururlar. Habûbullâhun mûbârek başında sîyâh dülb-
bend var. Üzerinde kisve-i mûbâreki 'aseli renk. Hilîye-i şerîfdeki 
şeklinde görûrem. Ba'dehe Habîb-i Ekrem hazretleri bir filori çika-
rup efendi hazretlerine virdiler. Anlar daha bu fakîreye virdiler. Sag 
elûme alup bu filori elîmde büyûdi. Bir büyük müdever âyine gibi 
oldu. Ammâ rengi altundur, likin âyine mesâbesindedir. Gâyet mü-
cellâ müsaffa ki ta'biri mümkin de güll. Elîmde tutarten hâturuma 
hütûr ûdî ki "gâlibâ bu âyinedir ki Cemal-i Hazretullâh müsâhede 
olınur" diyû. Âyine elîmde kaldî. Uyandım.

Cevap: Baci kadın, sınırsız ve sayısız selâm ve dualardan sonra: 
Allâhü teala mûbârek etsin. Her türlü kant ile hakkınız olmûş her 
âçidan. Bu asi yüzi karanın ızmire ihtiyacınız yok, ama edepilîk 
göstermişiniz. Allâhü teala edebinizi artırsın ve ilderlemeniz gün-
den güne çoğalsın. Bu ızin olsun, hakk ismini sürün. Bu yüzi kara-
yı da dualarınızda hatırlayan vessela.

Yine bir kere: Gördüm ki bir kaç muhteşem aziz bir yere toplanıp 
kelime-i tevhîd zikrediler. Sonra ismûllâh sürût "kayûm" ismi-
ni çekerler. Fakîreye de "Sen de 'kayûm' ismini zikret" derler. 
Şeyhûne sordum, 'kayûm' ismini verdi.

Yine bir kere: Bayram geçesi iç âleminde gördüm ki Habîb-i Ek-
rem (s.a.s.) hazretleri ve efendi hazretleri bir yerde otururlar. Habi-
bullâhun başında sîyâh tülbent var. Üzerinde bal renkli mûbârek 
giysisi. Hilyedeki şeklinde görünüyorun. Donna peygamber hazretle-
ri bir alumno parça çkarıp efendi hazretlerine, onlar da fakîreye verdi-
aña gibi oldu. Rengi âltın, ama âña gibi. Óyle sah, õyle parlaq ki 
anlatmasi mümkün değil. Elîmde tutaren akıma düştü ki "Galiba 
Hazret-i Allah'in cemalinin görüldüğü âyana budur." Ayna elîmde 
kaldı. Uyandım.
Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies

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Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh
CHAPTER 13

(Re)creating Image and Identity

Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murâd III’s Self-Fashioning

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In the early 1990s, when professional tennis player Andre Agassi, with his long hair and flamboyant outfits, boasted “Image is everything!” he reminded us of the fact that we, as modern individuals, had already been preoccupied by “image” for a long time. We live in a time when everything we wear, say, and do is considered part of our image. The image culture dictates even body shapes and hair colors. We have come to the point at which our physical appearance and personalities are not enough anymore; we also need to advertise our image by preparing embellished and even exaggerated resumes, curricula vitae, Web sites, and Facebook pages that all are part of our efforts to sell the image we would like to project to others. In the end, even a new kind of entrepreneur has emerged in order to assist us in this endeavor, the “image consultant.”

Although the obsession with image usually is seen as a modern trend, in this chapter I introduce the Ottoman Sultan, Murâd III (r. 982–1003/1574–1595), who made a concerted effort both for himself and for others. Yet, before examining how Sultan Murâd created his image and identity, it should be stated that he was not alone in this respect. As the Renaissance historian Stephen Greenblatt has demonstrated, there was an “increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process” in sixteenth-century England.1 What Greenblatt suggests for sixteenth-century
members of the English court appears to be true of Muslim rulers of the age as well. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Bābur (r. 932–937/1526–1530), the founder of the Moghul dynasty in India, penned his renowned memoir, Bābur-Nāma, in Chaghatay Turkish. In the second half of the same century, Shāh Ṭahmāsp (r. 930–984/1524–1576) composed his autobiographic Tazkira (between 1555 and 1576). Not long after Shāh Ṭahmāsp completed his work, the letters and dream accounts of Murād III that he shared with his spiritual master were collected under the title, Kitābü’l- menāmāt (“The Book of Dreams”) in 1003/1595.2

These three texts are particularly significant, for they indicate an “increased self-consciousness” similar to that which Greenblatt identified in sixteenth-century England. That the rulers of these three great Muslim empires took the time to explore their inner selves, in my view, suggests a deliberate and self-conscious effort that, in turn, testifies to a self-awareness in creating one’s own identity and image, which appears to have been a “global” fixation for sixteenth-century individuals in both the Muslim and Christian worlds.

Writing about one’s self requires a certain level of self-awareness. Murād’s dream writings, along with his poetry collection, suggest to us who he thinks he is, and how he wants to be seen by others. We see him being actively engaged in the shaping of his own image rather than leaving it up to historians or anyone else to do it for him. In this sense, what Murād seeks to achieve by having his dreams and visions recorded is not very different from what Shāh Ṭahmāsp and Bābur do. Each of these three sultans uses his dreams to construct his image.

The primary concern of the present study is to examine how Murād III fashioned an image of himself through accounts of his dreams and visions. Dreams have been studied from sociological/anthropological, religious, psychological, historical, mystical, and scientific perspectives, yet there is, to my knowledge, no study that examines dreams as a means of self-fashioning. I argue that Murād, like other individuals of his epoch, turned his dreams into narrative tools through which he also conveyed an image that he wanted people to have about himself at a time when true dreams were seen by his contemporaries as one of the forty-six parts of prophethood. Although Murād made use of other means to paint his self-image, the focus of this study is on his dreams and visions. Before examining Murād’s dreams and visions as an image-making device, I first situate him and his Kitābü’l- menāmāt in their historical context.
Sultan Murâd was born on 5 Cumâda 1 953/4 July 1546 at Bozdağ Yayla near Manisa where his father Şehzâde Selim, the future Selim II, served as sancakbeyi (provincial governor). Following Murâd’s ceremonial circumcision in 965/1557, his grandfather, Sultan Süleyman I, appointed him sancakbeyi of Akşehir. Then, in 966/1558, when he was eighteen years old and residing in Manisa, the Sultan appointed him sancakbeyi of Saruhan. When he ascended to the throne on 1 Ramazân 982/15 December 1574, following his father’s death, he was twenty-eight.³

Murâd’s early life is very nondescript. It is when he had a dream right before his ascension to the throne that his story becomes interesting for us. Seeking its interpretation, he sent it to those who were known for their skills in interpreting dreams. Eventually a poor dervish named Şücâ, who made his living as a gardener in the vineyards in the Manisa area, is said to have interpreted it as predicting the death of Murâd’s father and his own subsequent enthronement.⁴ After the interpretation of Şücâ had come true within a few days, Şücâ Dede was on his way to the position of hünkar şeyhi (spiritual advisor to the sultan). Later on, after his enthronement, Murâd invited Şücâ Dede to Istanbul.⁵ Over the years, Şücâ Dede received not only the position of hünkar şeyhi, but also a regular salary from the treasure of the dynasty.⁶

Şücâ Dede is a mysterious figure who has received mixed reports in the Ottoman chronicles. We know little about this obscure man, who was in a position of influence over a powerful ruler for some thirteen years. What is known is that he was one of the disciples of Şâbân Efendi of Kastamonu from the Halvetî order. Historians provide contradictory accounts of him. Although some treated him as a respected Sufi figure and praise his knowledge of Sufi legacy, despite his illiteracy,⁷ a contemporary historian sounds pleased with his death and moreover accuses him of being a charlatan who took advantage of sultan Murâd.⁸

The disciple–master relation between the two men lasted until Şücâ Dede’s death in 996/1587–1588. Within this time period, Murâd apparently sent accounts of his dreams and visions to Şücâ Dede in letter form. Murâd presumably penned these undated letters between 982/1574 and 990/1582 or 996/1587.¹⁰ The letters were compiled, under the title Kitâbü’l- menâmât, in 1001/1591–1592, right after the end of the first Islamic millennium, by Mîrabûr Nûh Ağa, the Master
of the Horse to Murad and another disciple of Şüca Dede. Although we cannot know with absolute certainty whether or not Murad commissioned Nur Ağa to compile his dream letters, the existence of a fine, gilded, and bound copy of his dreams prepared about three or four years before Murad’s death suggests his interest in this project.

Kitâbü'l-menâmât is a 259 folio-bound manuscript, of which the first page is illuminated with gold. The text consists of not only the letters in which Murad relates his mystical experiences, but also of letters, which deal with Murad’s daily life as well as political and social affairs.

The relationship between Murad and Şüca Dede appears to have evolved almost entirely through written communication. In more than two thousand letters, only once is a face-to-face communication between Murad and Şüca Dede mentioned. Although only one letter from Şüca Dede has been located up to this time, Murad’s statement, “no letter from you has arrived for the last few days,” indicates that their written correspondence was two-way.

Although, in one letter, Sultan Murad scolds Şüca Dede for sharing his letters with others, Nur Ağa, in his introduction to the text, states clearly that the text was intended to be available to Sufi circles: “O seeker of the Knowledge and the desirer of the Truth! Know and be aware of that...” Furthermore, the compilation of these letters in a clean copy suggests the intention to preserve these accounts for posterity.

Dreams and Visions as a Means of Self-Fashioning

Being a sultan required following prescribed social behavior in the theater of life as witnessed by others. Hence, it was scripted like any other code of social behavior. In his self-fashioning, Sultan Murad was encountering a script handed down to him by generations of sovereigns before him.

The script prescribing how an Ottoman sultan should behave had been socially, culturally, and religiously constructed by many diverse components of group life, including teachers and tutors in the palace, religious scholars and leaders, poets, storytellers within the oral and written culture. The ideal script of the Ottoman sultan became manifest from stories about certain prominent and exemplary figures in Islamic history and well-known heroic figures of the Islamic literature. Although storytellers (kâşa-hâns, şehmâme-hâns, and meddâhs) and kâside poets employed brave, generous, merciful characters in their stories...
and poems in portraying the ideal sultan, Ottoman chroniclers played a significant role in constructing the image of the ḡāzī (holy warrior) sultan as a culturally fashioned form of sultanhood. This image was even visually presented in numerous illustrated texts, which not only functioned to legitimize their subjects as great sovereigns who perfectly followed the script, but visually portrayed, for following generations, how the ideal Ottoman ruler should act. Following this script, Sultan Murād was taught to play his roles within the theater of the court.

The script of ideal Ottoman ruler required Sultan Murād to stand out with his bravery as well-skilled in battle and hunting, as well as with his piety, intellectuality, and traits of justice, generosity, and mercy to his subjects. It is with these expectations in mind that Ottoman chroniclers evaluated his performance as a ruler.

In the eyes of the Ottoman chroniclers, Murād III seems to have been a sultanic figure who deviated from the script of a typical Ottoman sovereign in some major ways. Murād’s alleged failure in terms of some aspects of this masculine identity was discretely alluded to by the contemporary chroniclers. Murād did not follow the warrior script and “actively” abandoned the traditional ḡāzī role of the Ottoman sultans. Not only did he forgo the tradition of leading military campaigns, but he withdrew from public interactions as well. He preferred to stay in his palace in the company of a limited number of people and watch performances by dwarves and buffoons. Furthermore, his early alleged sexual failure was interpreted as impotence by the Ottoman chroniclers. Nevertheless, after he became very active sexually, following a treatment, the chroniclers went from depicting him as impotent to depicting him as a sex addict. His close relationship with the Sufis of his time was highlighted by the chroniclers. Although Sultan Murād’s general interest in Sufism and his relationship with Sufis seem to have been well accepted, the historian Muṣṭafā ʿAli, for example, expresses his disapproval of certain aspects of Murād’s Sufism, in particular, his cult-like submission to Şeyh Şücâ. Although contemporary historians emphasized Sultan Murād’s failure to follow the traditional script, Sultan Murād seems to have taken pains to show how he interpreted the “script” to suit his personal self-image. His desired image was drawn by Seyyid Lokmān, the court historiographer, Naḵkāṣ ʿOsmān, the court painter, and Nūḥ Ağa, who collected his dream letters. What follows demonstrates how he, by turning into a storyteller, fashions himself according to what he conceives as the script of ideal Ottoman sultanhood, by using his dreams and visions as a means to that end.
Murâd the Storyteller

Indeed, every dreamteller is a storyteller. What differentiates him from the storyteller is the liberty that he has as the only one who knows the story he is narrating. Likewise, Sultan Murâd turns into a storyteller when he narrates his dreams to an audience. Here, it is noteworthy that when referring to his dreams, Murâd prefers the word vâk.ı, which literally means event in Arabic, instead of the words, rüyâ or düş, more commonly used for “dream” in the Ottoman dream books and interpretations. Murâd the dreamteller’s consistent and insistent use of the word vâk.ı throughout his letters blurs the line between dream and reality. I have discussed Murâd as a storyteller elsewhere in detail. Given the connotations of his dream accounts in which he himself is a storyteller, Murâd the dreamteller’s transformation into a storyteller becomes obvious in an illustration painted by Ahmed Nakşî sometime between 1003/1595 and 1008/1600, right before or soon after Sultan Murâd’s death (Figure). In the illustration, Murâd is represented as seated on his throne, surrounded by two dwarves, two janissaries, and two pages, holding a book half-open in his left hand.

By placing himself in the position of storyteller, Murâd first splits his self into self and object. The self, as narrator, distinguishes himself from the object, the fictive Murâd whom he observes in the ālem-i misâl, the World of Ideal Images/Forms. Then, he tells us about the adventures of this fictive Murâd. The position of narrator provides him with the power and control to shape his stories and characters, and presents his own idealized self-portraiture in narrative form, just as other story and dream tellers do. In a way, Murâd is, as Bonnie Melchior would put it, the “self-fashioner . . . who become[s] split by that self-consciousness into a self-who-is-observer and a self-who-is-observed—that is, an observing self who constructs the other self, which becomes a fiction, an artifact or a kind of “Other.”

Now, to make it clear: We have two Murâd figures in the text. The first one, the protagonist of Nûh Ağa, serves as the dreamteller, who reports his own mystical experiences to his Sufi master. The second one is the protagonist of this first-person narrator’s narratives in his dreams and visions accounts. In the following passage, the italicized typeface refers to Murâd the storyteller, whereas the regular typeface refers to the main character in his story:

My fortunate father, after bowing my face to the dust at your feet, the observation of this poor one was that I was standing on a bridge. Underneath it flows a huge river. This poor
one was throwing some objects like wood and fruits to the
water, and the water was taking them away. And then my
mother arrived and said “Is it time for the afternoon prayer?
I have not performed the noon prayer yet.” The command
belongs to my sultan.25

These two Murâds are quite different from one another through-
out Kitâbü'l- menâmât: Murâd the storyteller is a submissive and
modest character who puts aside his sultanic identity in addressing
his Sufi master. He starts almost all the dream accounts, for example,
with the phrase “My fortunate father, after bowing my face to the
dust at your feet . . .” and ends with another one “. . . the command
belongs to my sultan.” Yet, Murâd the protagonist appears to be an
accomplished Sufi, the Kuţiâl-akîb (the Pole of Poles), and, beyond
this, pâdîşâh-ı ıslâm (the Sovereign of Islam).

Murâd the Sufi

The Ottoman chroniclers describe Sultan Murâd as a faithful disciple
to Şüccâ’ Dede. However, Kitâbü'l- menâmât places him in a higher
position than a weak and submissive novice. The text mainly func-
tions to relate Sultan Murâd’s noble deeds and adventures in the
‘âlem-i misâl and establish his image as a true Friend of God (velî; pl.
evliyâ”). It starts with Murâd’s first meeting with his spiritual master
through a mysterious dream, revealing Murâd as a divinely chosen
figure. As a humble aspirant at the outset, he advances, step by step,
to the rank of the Spiritual Pole of Poles (Kuţiâl-akîb), the head of
saints, the highest level a human being can reach. Each account in
the text serves to strengthen Murâd’s image and identity as a Sufi,
to emphasize his mystical qualities, virtues, miraculous gifts, and
actions, and to increase his fame and reputation in the public mind
as an accomplished, sanctified Sufi. Thus, Kitâbü’l- menâmât takes on
an increasingly marked hagiographical character, and could thus be
renamed as Menâkâb-nâme-i Sulṭân Murâd HECK (“The Exemplary Virtues
of Sultan Murâd HECK”).

His progress in the realm of Sufism can be traced by following
two different readings of the material in Kitâbü’l- menâmât. First, the
Sufi dream interpretations can be used as helpful manuals to follow
the journey of the soul from the first state of the soul to the last one.
A reader/audience familiar with the Sufi dream culture can grasp the
progress of Murâd the Sufi by observing the signs such as objects,
animal and human figures, places, actions and deeds of Murād, and the colors of lights he experienced. However, even a reader unfamiliar with the Sufi dream symbols can still have a sense of the advancement of Murād the Sufi from Murād the novice to Murād the Pole of Poles. This demonstrates that the image of Murād the Sufi is apparently evident to different types of audience members.

In analyzing Murād’s Sufi identity through his dream narratives, it is important to understand how Sufis approach dreams. In the Ḥalveti order, dreams function as a means of communication between the disciples and their spiritual masters. By looking at the dreams of the disciple, the master realizes where his disciples stand and what step they should take next. He decides whether the disciples are ready to pass to the next level, or need a reduction or increase in their daily assignment. Not only specific signs, figures, and actions, but also colors in dreams are examined. Although there are differences in interpreting dreams by different Sufi orders, there is enough agreement that by observing these symbols, one can clearly trace the progress of a Sufi through his dreams.

By using a Ḥalveti Ta‘bīr-nāme, the Ta‘bīr-nāme of Şeyh Kurd Muḥammed Efendi el-Ḥalveti, a sixteenth-century Ḥalveti master well known for his talent at interpreting dreams, as our guide, we can map out Sultan Murād’s journey on the Sufi path. In his Ta‘bīr-nāme, one of the earliest of a few Ḥalveti dream interpretations in the Ottoman context, Kurd Muḥammed Efendi examines signs in dreams in accordance with the generally accepted seven states of the soul (nefs) by looking at certain signs and discusses in which the level of the nefs the dreamer stands. Each of these states also corresponds to a specific color. Even though it is impossible to argue that Sultan Murād was familiar with Kurd Muḥammed Efendi’s text, an audience familiar with Ḥalveti dream understanding can trace these stages in Murād’s dream narratives.

In his dream narratives, the signs of each of the stages outlined therein may help us to chart the progress of Murād the Sufi from the earliest stage to the highest. The first stage is the Nefs-i Emmāre (the Soul/Self that Dictates Evil), which is the lowest level, and which includes küfr (disbelief) and širk (polytheism). This is the nefs that directs its owner toward wrong actions, for it resides in the world of senses and is dominated by şehvet (earthly desires) and passions. Not surprisingly, the signs of this stage rarely appear in the dream narratives of Murād the storyteller. Of the animals that represent this stage, only elephants and camels emerge in the dream narratives of Murād, but they function to indicate his ability to converse
with animals, just like the prophet Süleymân, who is known for his miracle of understanding the speech of animals, and some great Sufi figures who are reported to have been able to converse with animals and birds. There is no mention of the color of blue which indicates the first state.

Horses and camels, among the signs of the second stage, the Nefs-i Levvâme (the Self-reproaching Soul), are the most commonly appearing animals in Murâd’s dream accounts.30 In the state of the Nefs-i Levvâme, the Sufi still struggles between the Şeytân (provoked by the Satan) feelings and desires and Raḥmânî lights stemming from the Divine. Of the places that signify this state of the soul, such as stores, houses, palaces, and even ships,31 houses and ships appear only in few dream accounts of Murâd.32 Besides, the color of the Nefs-i Levvâme, yellow, is not mentioned in his dream narratives. The relative lack of motifs and symbols from this stage indicates the dreamer’s very brief passage through the second state.

The “Arab” motif, which indicates the Nefs-i Müllîme (the Inspired Soul),33 is apparent in Murâd’s dream accounts.34 It is in this state that the Sufi’s dreams do not include animal figures any more; rather he dreams of Arabs, women, and human beings with deficiencies, indicating that the dreamer’s soul is still deficient. Although we don’t see the representative color red in Murâd’s dream accounts, the open areas such as gardens and his being able to walk on water and fly in the air in his dreams correspond to the third stage.35

Arches and bows, respected people (i.e., prophets, sultans, learned men), respected places (i.e., the Ka‘be, mosque, or the cities of Madina and Jerusalem), books and the Qur’ân, which all correspond to the fourth state, the Nefs-i Muṭma’inne (the Satisfied Self), are the most commonly appearing motifs in Murâd’s dream accounts. We observe him reading the Qur’ân and some books in numerous dream accounts. Additionally, dreaming of the Ka‘be, mosque, the city of Jerusalem, the prophets (ʾĪsā, Mūṣâ, Yaʿkûb, Ibrahîm, and Muḥammed), and the sultans suggests he has completely liberated himself from worldly ties and reached the state of the insan-i kāmil (perfect human being). He, again, walks on water and flies in the air in his dream accounts. As for the color symbolism, there seems to have been a disagreement on the colors of white and black between the Ḥalvetî and the other Sufi orders: Whereas white symbolizes the Nefs-i Muṭma’inne for the Ḥalvetîs, it is black that indicates the Nefs-i Muṭma’inne for other orders.

The fifth state, the Nefs-i Râziyye (the Consenting Self), indicates that the Sufi has been able to abandon all his worldly desires and
carnal passions, and has submitted himself to the Divine will. That is, he is now at the level of angels and hūrūs. We don’t see green, the color of this stage, in Murad’s dream accounts, but his walking on water, and flying in the air indicate he has reached the level of angels. Yet, because these motifs are considered as the signs for the third and the fourth levels as well, the importance of consulting with an expert, mürşid, on dreams rather than simply looking up dream interpretations and trying to figure out the hidden meanings behind the symbols becomes clear.

It is in the sixth state, the Nefs-i Maržiyye (the Consent-given Self), that the Sufi dreams of seven skies, the Sun, stars, fire, lit candles, lightning, thunder, and such. A flame that comes out from him and wraps around the belly of a horse, and a big fire that appears during his circumbulation around the Ka‘be suggest that the soul of Murad has reached the Nefs-i Maržiyye, the sixth state. For the Ḥalveti, white is the color of the Nefs-i Maržiyye.38

Ultimately, Murad’s dream accounts include rain, snow, a black sea and a white sea next to each other, and the colorless light which are considered as the signs of the seventh, last, and most advanced state of the soul, the Nefs-i Şafiyye, also called Nefs-i Tezkiyye (the Purified Self).40

However, it is not that easy to argue what each of these signs and symbols refer to. As the dream interpreters emphasize, each dream account deserves a unique interpretation based on the social, cultural, religious, and economic background of the dreamer. For example, some dream narratives include symbols and motifs that may belong to different levels of the self. Obviously, such complex and mysterious dreams can reveal their meanings only to those who are experts on the Sufi dream culture. Thus, not everyone who has the access to these manuals can easily claim to locate where the dreamer is standing in his spiritual journey. This indicates that being able to use these dream manuals requires a specific talent and training process. Therefore, as this specific dream account demonstrates, it is not easy to locate which state Murad has reached, but it is meant to be obvious to a certain kind of audience members.

Moreover, each Sufi order has its own understanding of symbols in dreams, and dreams require an independent and unique interpretation. Sultan Murad’s dream accounts thus would be interpreted differently by representatives of different Sufi orders. However, by looking at the Ḥalveti dream interpretations, the states Murad the Sufi passes through can be detected in accordance with the dream culture within the Ḥalveti circle, for his şeyh, Şücâ Dede himself, was a Ḥalveti.
Although these Sufi dream experts could identify the symbols in Muråd’s dreams, much of the intent of his dreams easily could be followed even by those not familiar with this symbolism. Muråd’s evolution in the spiritual hierarchy clearly can be traced not only through the symbols, metaphors, or colors, but also through the deeds and actions of Muråd, the protagonist of Muråd the storyteller. In short, Muråd can be observed in three different states of sainthood: mür¥d (disciple), ḫalife (successor of a spiritual master), and the Ḥu†bu’l-akṭāb (the Pole of Poles).

The first phase of Muråd as a Sufi is as a disciple, mür¥d, which is the beginning step of the process. As a mür¥d, Muråd appears to be a submissive and modest disciple. His relationship with Şüçå˜ is in the mode of regular mür¥d-şeyḫ relationship. Sometimes they appear in a face-to-face setting during which Muråd receives advice and instructions from his şeyḫ; sometimes some mediators, who are probably other disciples of Şüçå˜, bring instructions from the şeyḫ. Yet, for the most part their communication is through letters as it was in real life.

Their relationship occasionally goes beyond verbal instruction, and turns into a physically controlling one. When Muråd is in the state of vecd (ecstacy), for example, Şüçå˜ Dede, as his spiritual master, holds him tightly, suggesting the physical manifestation of Şüçå˜’s spiritual authority over Muråd.

The second phase of the evolution of Muråd as a Sufi is when he takes on the role of spiritual mentor to his sisters, as the “successor” (ḥalife) of his şeyḫ. With the spiritual authority he received from his şeyḫ, Muråd the ḫalife, provides them with instructions regarding the spiritual path. He teaches them how to perform zikr, and even commands them to bring their dreams to him for his interpretation, which demonstrates his maturity, placing him now as an advanced Sufi master over them in the hierarchical structure of Sufism.

Your majesty had given dest-i tevbe (hand of repentance) for my sisters and appointed this poor one as the successor (ḫalife) over them. You told me to interpret all of their dreams, and left. I gathered all of them around me, and said, “Now, each of you, tell me. Each of you, go and find an empty place and occupy yourself with, ‘There is no god but God.’ And whatever dream you have, come and tell me. But never take your dreams to someone else. Bring them only to me. Beware! Otherwise you become infidels.” I advised them in this manner.
In fact, Muråd, the Sufi master or ḥalîfe of women, appears again when he gives specific assignments to some women whose identities are not clearly stated. Upon reaching the level of “veliyullâh” (a friend of God), Muråd finds himself in the realm of the invisible hierarchy of saints, and he is even elevated to a highest position in the Sufi hierarchy by a written statement given to him in a dream. It validates his position as the Pole of Poles (Kūṭbu’l-akṭāb), the highest spiritual rank in the invisible hierarchy a saint can hope to attain. After being called “the crown of the saints and the superior of the purified ones/saints,” confirming his status, he is ultimately turned into Ḥizir, one of the four pillars (evtâd) in the Sufi spiritual hierarchy.

His being granted the position of Kūṭbu’l-akṭāb is vividly depicted, in his words, in a “strange” dream scene in which he “observes” that all the saints on the earth have gathered in a dome and are sitting with the current Pole of Poles:

and then I arrived. When I approached the Pole of Poles, he embraced me. Once he held me tightly, a drop of sweat came out of his right cheek, and I drank this drop. Another drop of sweat came out again, and I drank that one too. A drop of sweat came out from his left cheek, and I also drank that one. And then the Pole of Poles said, “Now, it [your sainthood] has exceeded mine and that of the other saints.” Then, the Pole of Poles continued, “Both keep your sultanate and be the Pole of Poles.”

This dream account is obviously framed as a clear confirmation that Muråd is both the temporal ruler and the religious guide. His status of the Kūṭbu’l-akṭāb is further demonstrated through the pledge of allegiance (bî’at) of other Sufis who thereby submit themselves to him. An unnamed Sufi in a white dress, which symbolizes purity and heavenly acceptance, kisses his hand, and the celebrated Sufi Zü ’n-nûm-i Miṣrî prostrates himself at his feet. As the Kūṭbu’l-akṭāb, Muråd is granted the ā’ilm-i ledûnnî, the knowledge that is not learned but revealed by God only to his elect servants.

On the other hand, Muråd takes his claim even further by asserting to have received Divine revelation from God (vaḥy). He replaces the Prophet in the Islamic declaration of the tevhîd:

a letter fell down. It was written that “Messenger (Resûl)! Call people to Allâh. He who disobeys you will be sent to
Hell eternally.” Immediately after I read this, I woke up. There is no god, but God; Muḥammad is His Messenger. A *nidā* (call) came saying, “There is no god, but God; You are His Messenger.” This has happened a few times.55

Murād’s seeming assertion of prophecy, however, presents certain problems, because Muḥammed’s being the last prophet is one of the pillars of Islam. This assertion is clarified as sainthood in the same dream account by relating another visionary experience in which Murād is given the “possession of sainthood.”56 Furthermore, the obscurity over the meaning of “nübüvvet” (prophecy) is explicitly clarified without leaving any doubt in the following Divine inspiration that occurs in his heart:

What I mean by “I gave you prophethood” is that I merged the secrets of the saints and prophets in you. I gave you all of what I gave to the prophets and saints, except for the office of the prophethood (*nübüvvet*) and messengerhood (*risālet*). The prophethood and messengerhood are sealed. Yet, you are my chosen beloved. I merged the secret of messengerhood (*risālet*) and sainthood (*velāyet*) in you. All these states are in you. I gave you the observance and union that I gave them too.57

Murād’s claim to prophecy needs to be discussed in the light of Ibn el-ʿArabī’s understanding of sainthood, which encompasses *nübüvvet* and *risālet*.58 Seen from this perspective, this is not a declaration of prophecy, but rather reinforcement of Murād’s status as the foremost heir of the Prophet.59 In fact, these references identify Murād with the light of Muḥammed (*Nūr-i Muḥamediyeh*), the most exalted representation of his primordial substance, and the sublime reality of Muḥammed (*ḥakīkat-i Muḥamediyeh*).60

Sultan Murād’s spiritual journey, however, does not end with his arrival at the stage of messengerhood (*risālet*). He ultimately reaches the level of *valḥdet-i vücūd* (Unity of Existence or Oneness of Being), the ultimate goal of Sufi gnostics (*ʿarifūn*), in which God and the created world are united in one undifferentiated entity. In a flash of divine inspiration (*ilhām*), Murād the dreamteller declares that his hero has ultimately reached the stage of *valḥdet-i vücūd*: “O My beloved, you are Me, and I am you. There is no difference between Me and you,” “I am One, and you are One,” or “I am He. You are He. I am the True Reality [Haḳḳ].” Say, “I am the True Reality [Haḳḳ].”61
Murâd the Pâdişâh-ı İslâm

Throughout Kitâbû'l- menâmât, the protagonist of the narrative is described as the Sovereign of the Muslim world (pâdişâh-ı İslâm). It should be noted that, although the historical Murâd III kept the titles of the Şâhib-kârân (Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction) and the Zâll’ullâh (Shadow of God) as the Sultan of the Empire, Murâd the dreamteller ignores these titles, except for a single statement in which Murâd is called the Pâdişâh-î ‘âlem-penâh (Sovereign of the Refuge of the Universe). Rather, Murâd the protagonist’s role as the Sultan of the Muslim world is emphasized. Moreover, although Murâd is never named as the awaited Mehdî, he is implicitly portrayed as a messianic figure whose signs recur throughout the text.

In fact, Sultan Murâd had reasons to assume that he was the chosen one. When he ascended to the throne as the twelfth sultan of his Ottoman dynasty on 1 Ramazân 982/ 15 December, 1574, there were only seventeen/eighteen years left until the end of the first Islamic millennium. Due to a widespread belief that world would not last beyond one thousand years, throughout the sixteenth century certain Muslim groups were anxiously awaiting its last days. This millenarian worldview was vividly and imaginatively described in the pictorial Fâl-nâmâs (Books of Omen) “that can be read as one such manifestation of the millenarian history.” Such apocalyptic anxieties seem to have led people to anticipate the coming of a Mehdî, who would put the world in order and unify the mutually hostile strands of Islam. Murâd’s dreams make the Sultan Murâd the focus of apocalyptic expectations, as is evident from the following dream account:

I was given a book in which it was written “elif elif elif elif.” I was told that this is how much time was left before the end of the world. It was also written “elif be te şe cim (the first five letters in Arabic alphabet).” Then, a witnessing (müşâhede) occurred that I was traveling towards Jerusalem on a ship.

Murâd’s visionary journey to Jerusalem is crucial, since it mirrors the hadîth account, according to which the Mehdî and his men will travel to the city of Jerusalem on a thousand ships. However, Murâd encounters a major predicament, which his ancestors had faced earlier when they claimed the caliphate. The Mehdî has to be a descendant of the Prophet, which the Ottoman dynasty could not claim. Yet Murâd the dreamteller resolves this problem by establishing a spiritual
connection that verifies Murâd as the direct successor of the Prophet. The Prophet’s mantle is put on Murâd, along with the Prophet’s amulet, scimitar and copy of the Qur’ân, in an act that confirms his special status and the bestowal of prophetic blessings on him. He is ultimately called “the inheritor of the knowledge of the Prophet.” This is particularly significant because the Shi‘a tradition holds that before his death, the Prophet passed a sacred and secret knowledge (‘ilmi), inaccessible to ordinary human beings, as well as his political and religious authority onto ‘Ali, although the Sunnis deny this. It is through this knowledge that the Shi‘a imams claimed to have been the “the infallible interpreters of God’s will,” a claim that established them as the true authorities over the Muslim world. Our narrator, however, asserts that this authority and sacred knowledge was passed onto Murâd by the Prophet himself in his dream, reinforcing his claims to be the true political and spiritual leader of the Islamic world. Ultimately, his image as the living embodiment of the Muhammedan knowledge is completed by his transformation into the Prophet himself.

Furthermore, Murâd is also transformed into ‘Ali, thus verifying his supremacy as a divinely ordained ruler in order to gather the Shi‘i Muslims as well as the Sunnis under his governance. First, the velâyet (Sainthood) and kerâmêt (Miracle working) that ‘Ali is believed to posses is passed onto Murâd. Then, just as he turned into the Prophet, he turns into ‘Ali. This allows him to establish himself as the hybrid of both the Prophet and ‘Alî, under whose authority both the Sunni and Shi‘i communities of Islam can be united. To these already impressive credentials, Murâd adds another one, that is his being the twelfth sultan in his Ottoman dynasty, identifying himself with the twelfth Imam who is believed to be the Mehdî in the Shi‘a tradition:

I was given a letter. It was written, “The Ottoman caliphs are supposed to be twelve. There have been eleven so far. The twelfth is ‘Hâzâ Murâду’l-Murâd.’ That is, it is you.” It was written: “May God grant goodness to you.”

These credentials make Murâd’s claims to be the awaited Mehdî truly unassailable. As the Sultan of Islam (and the awaited Mehdî), Murâd the dreamteller assigns two major responsibilities to his hero: He is both the protector and restorer of the religion. For example, a dream shows Murâd, in the middle of a desert, leading a prayer for more than ten thousand people. This scene establishes him as the foremost religious leader and authority of the age. Yet, he is not only the leader of the believers, but also the protector of Islam par
excellence. We observe him on the battlefield, fighting against infidels, or in the role of a fatherly figure taking the religion onto his lap, as described in the following dream account, in which the religion is symbolized by a beautiful little boy:

in a desert, there was a black curtain. I opened that curtain. A boy with a bejeweled crown on his head was sitting there. Yet, this boy was so beautiful that he could not be described. I took him and made him sit on my lap. While wondering who he could be, a voice came from the unknown, “It is not a boy, it is the religion of Muḥammed and the religion of Islam; it is the religion of Muḥammed.”

Not surprisingly, Murād receives Divine inspirations that promise him triumph and victory in the West and the East. He is even specifically granted “the disposal of all the sovereignty of the province of the Persian Lands.” These divine inspirations are particularly remarkable because they may have been the reasons behind Sultan Murād III’s insistence on relaunching military campaigns against the Safavids in 987/1578, despite the strategic disadvantages faced by the Ottoman armies and his viziers’ objections. In this way, Kitābü’l-menāmāt functions not only to create an image of Sultan Murād, but also to legitimize his political and military decisions.

As mentioned, Murād is also depicted as the restorer of the religion (müceddid), who is promised to the Muslims to arise in order to revive Islam at the dawn of each century. Given the fact that Murād’s letters were compiled toward the beginning of a new millennium, in 1001 A.H., Murād’s claims sound particularly pertinent, as the following dream account seems to suggest:

Just as the protagonist of Murād the dreamteller is symbolically presented as a restorer of the religion in this dream, the historical Murād III busied himself with the restoration of the Harem-i Şerīf (the Noble Sanctuary in Jerusalem). He ordered its domes to be covered
with marble, to clean the water channels, and to renovate the walls of the Ka‘be.\textsuperscript{86} In fact, it was not only for spiritual reasons, but also for political ones that Murâd sought to assert his supreme religious authority. Apparently, both outside and within the Empire, he was not alone in such claims. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Shâh Ismâ‘îl (r. 907–930/1502–1524), the Safavid monarch, claimed to have a semi-divine status. He also identified himself with the awaited Mehdi.\textsuperscript{87} Following the death of Shâh Ismâ‘îl, his son Shâh _TAHMÂSP (r. 930–984/1524–1576) abandoned his father’s claims to divinity, yet he continued to insist on having “a special stature (makhsûs, mumtâz) designed and protected by the grace of God to maintain temporal and moral order as the shadow of God on earth.”\textsuperscript{88} A few decades later, Shâh Ismâ‘îl’s great-grandson ’ABBâS I (r. 995–1038/1587–1629) abandoned his father’s claims to divinity, yet he continued to insist on having “a special stature (makhsûs, mumtâz) designed and protected by the grace of God to maintain temporal and moral order as the shadow of God on earth.”\textsuperscript{88} About the same time, another Muslim ruler, the sultan of the Moghul Empire, Akbar (963–1014/1543–1605) also was described as both the Spiritual Pole (kutb) and the Perfect Man (insân-î kâmil) of his time by his courtiers, who spoke of him as “the type-symbol of God, as the sun is His type-symbol in nature . . . the fulfillment of divine destiny,” as asserted by Ebû ‘l-Faḍl ʿAllâmî in his Akbar-nâma (“Book of Akbar”).\textsuperscript{90}

Conclusion

Like modern men and women, sixteenth-century individuals cared deeply about their image and self-representation. Unlike modern individuals, they employed dreams and visions to project the image they wished others to see. This study has analyzed how one of these individuals, the Ottoman sultan Murâd III, made use of dreams and visions to fashion himself.

This self-image stands in sharp opposition to the ways he was portrayed by the chroniclers who faulted him for deviating from the generally accepted script of sultanhood. Through his dream accounts, Murâd creates an image of a sultanic figure whose sovereignty is blessed and directed by God. He is a divinely ordained sultan, destined to restore Islam and unite the Muslim world under his sovereignty. Throughout the text, he turns into three major figures: Ḥızîr, Muḥâmmâd, and ʿAlî. His transformation into these three grand figures of the Islamic tradition, not only verifies him as the embodiment of velâyet, nûbûvvet, and risâlet, but also presents him as unifying all
Muslims under his sovereignty at a time perceived by some to be the end of the world.

We will never know if Sultan Murād indeed had these dreams and visions, or if he was deliberately creating this fictive character to further his spiritual and political career. Yet, these dream accounts were particularly useful for him, because in contemporary Muslim lore the sound dream (that is, a dream that comes true) of a righteous man was considered to be one of forty-six parts of being a prophet. By recounting his dreams to Şücâ Dede, his spiritual master, not only did he reach a certain audience, whom he perceived as receptive, but he also sought a confirmation of the authenticity of his dreams as “valid dreams.” It is true that, like other dreamtellers, he was the only one who knew what really happened in his dreams; however, his position among his subjects helped him to present his dream accounts as genuine and veridical. Which of his subjects would dare to assert that the Sultan of the greatest empire of the time, the Caliph of Muslims, the Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction (Sāhib-kirān), and the Shadow of God (Zil’ullāh), the Sultan Murād Ḥān, had not had any of these dreams? After all, did the Prophet not say that the worst lie is when “a person claims to have seen a dream which he has not seen”?

Notes

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4. Ibid., 249; Kitâbü’l- menâmât. Nuruosmaniye, nu. 2599, 1v–2r.


6. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 176r.


8. Çerçî, 248.

9. Ibid., 249.


11. Although we have no information about Nûh Ağâ’s mystical affiliations, the fact that he prefers the phrase “Ḥaẓret-i Şeyh” when he addresses Şücâ’î in the introduction of Kitâbü’l- menâmât suggests that he was also one of Şücâ’î Dede’s disciples (2r–2v).

12. Ibid., 159r.

13. Ibid., 13.

14. Ibid., 158v.

15. Ibid., 1r.


20. For a thorough discussion on the negative image of Murâd III and Şücâ’î Dede presented by the Ottoman chroniclers, see Chapter I in Özgen Felek, “(Re)creating Image and Identity: Dreams and Visions as a Means of Murâd III’s Self-fashioning,” Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2010.


22. See Özgen Felek, “Re-narrating Islamic Lore: The Dream Writings of Sultan Murâd III,” in Journal of Turkish Studies (eds. Cemal Kafadar, Gönül


28. For a detailed explanation of the association of colors with certain stages of mystical progress, see Yüksel, Türk İslâm Tasavvuf Geleneğinde Rüya, 190–212.

30. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 3r–3v; 4r; 7r; 12v–13r; 37v; 75v–v.
32. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 5v, 6v, 8v, 43v, 48r, 123r, 37r, 39v, 75v.
33. Tatçı and Çeltik, Türk Edebiyatında Tasavvuf Rüyâ Ta’bir-nâmeleri, 8.
34. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 13r–15v.
35. Ibid., 3r, 37r, 94r, and 137r.
36. Tatçı and Çeltik, Türk Edebiyatında Tasavvuf Rüyâ Ta’bir-nâmeleri, 10.
37. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 75r and 121v.
38. Ibid., 10–11.
39. Ibid., 49r, 36r, and 22v.
40. Tatçı and Çeltik, Türk Edebiyatında Tasavvuf Rüyâ Ta’bir-nâmeleri, 11.
41. Ibid., 3r–3v; 31v; 69v; 125v–126r; 137r–137v.
42. Ibid., 3v–4r; 88r–89v; 132r–v; 33v–34r; 36r.
43. Ibid., 52v.
44. Ibid., 73r–73v.
45. Ibid., 5v; 37v; 83v.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., 119r. The concept of the Kuth, literally “pole” or “axis,” was elaborated on by ibn el-‘Arabi. For a detailed discussion of the hierarchy of the saints, see Muhyi’d-dîn ibn el-‘Arabi, el-Futûhât el-Mekkiye (Beirut: Dâr el-Fikr, 1994/1414), vol. 3, 9. The ideas of ibn el-‘Arabi, about the kuṭb are at
some points contradictory and confusing. Michel Chodkiewicz did his utmost to systematize Ibn ‘Arabi’s thoughts regarding the concept of the Pole. See, Michel Chodkiewicz, Seal of The Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabi, translated by Liadain Sherrard (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993), 92. The kuṭb refers to either the Perfect Man (insān-i kāmil), or the Reality of Muḥammad (Ḥaḍīkhāt-i Muḥammadiye), which manifests itself in the Perfect Man (insān-i kāmil). Although neither in the Qur’ān nor in the earliest Sufi tradition is the term insān-i kāmil mentioned, it was developed by Ibn ‘Arabi, and it reached its perfect and finalized form in ‘Abd el-kerīm el-Jili’s (d. 820/1417) El-Insān el-kāmil. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, Universal Man Extracts, trans. with Commentary by Titus Burckhardt; English translation by Angela Culme-Semour (Paris: Beshara Publications, 1983).

49. Ibid., 102v; 12v. According to Ibn ‘Arabi, the other three are Ilyās, ʿĪsā and Idrīs. See Ibn el-ʿArabi, El Futūḥāt, vol. 3, 9. Ḥızır is also believed to be the spiritual guide of Moses. While Moses has the Șerʾat (Divine law), Ḥızır has the ʿilm-i ledūnī. Thus, Sufis perceive Ḥızır as not only their own spiritual guide, but also Moses’. For more, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocağ, İslâm-Türk İnançlarında Hzır yahut Hzır-İlyas Kültü (Ankara: Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 1985).

50. Kitābu’l- menāmāt, 119r.
51. Ibid., 127v.
52. Ibid., 60r.
53. Ibid., 8r; 255v.
54. Ibid., 85v.
55. Ibid., 21r.
56. Ibid., 112v.
57 Ibid., 90r.
58. Chodkiewicz, Seal of the Saints, 52.
59. For a discussion of saints as the heirs of the prophets, ibid., 74–88.
60. Quoted in Uri Rubin, “Pre-Existence and Light,” in Israel Oriental Studies 5 (1975), 62–119. For a thorough discussion about the light of Muḥammad (nūr-i Muḥammadi) and reality of Muḥammad (ḥaḍīkhāt-i Muḥammadi), and for the discussions on the nature of Muḥammad’s pre-existence, see Rubin’s “Pre-Existence and Light.”

61. Kitābu’l- menāmāt, 14r, 28v, 46r, and 74r.
62. Ibid., 142r.
temps, ed. G. Veinstein (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992), 159–177. I thank Erdem H. Çipa for bringing Subrahmanyam’s article to my attention.


65. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 39v.


68. On the ḥadîth accounts that establish the Mehdi as the descendant of the Prophet, see el-Muṭṭaṣîlî, Kitâbü’l-Burhân, vol. 2, 565–594.

69. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 14r. This dream account also alludes to the well-known story of Veysel Kâranî (Uveys el-Kâranî), a contemporary of the Prophet, who was desperately passionate for the Prophet, yet could not meet him in his life time. The Prophet, knowing Kâranî’s burning desire to meet him, sent his mantel to Kâranî. Ahmet Yaṣar Ocak, Veysel Karanî ve Üveysîlik (Istanbul: Dergâh Yaymlar, 1982); J. Baldick, Imaginary Muslims. The Uwaysi Sufis of Central Asia (London; New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1993).

70. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 75r; 96r.

71. Ibid., 96r.


73. Kitâbü’l- menâmât, 112v; 252r.

74. Ibid., 8r.

75. Ibid., 33r.

76. Ibid., 98r.

77. Ibid., 130v.

78. Ibid., 42r, 104r.

79. Ibid., 62r.

80. Ibid., 6v.

81. Ibid., 162v.

82. The historian Peçevî details the Grandvizier Sokullu’s efforts to stop the military campaigns against the Safavids. Peçevî, vol. 2, 37–38. Interestingly, this dream account reminds us of the divine inspiration that Meḥmed Çelebi mentions in his Şecâʿatnâme, commissioned by Sultan Murâd. The author justifies the military campaigns against the Safavids, saying it is not a result of Sultan Murâd’s personal insistence, but of a Divine inspiration Murâd had. Meḥmed Çelebi’s text is in a way a companion work to the Kitâbü’l- menâmât. Āsafi Dal Meḥmed Çelebi (Bey, Paşa), Şecâʿatnâme: Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa’nın Şark seferleri, (1578–1585) (haz., Abdülkadir Özcan) (Istanbul: Çamlıca Basım Yayin, 2006), 25.


84. *Ravzâ-i Reṣûl*, also known as *Ravzâ-i Muṭahhîra*, is the Garden of the Prophet, where the tomb of the Prophet is located in Medina.


88. Ibid., 324.

89. Ibid., 357.