

REFORMULATING  
THE *GAZI* NARRATIVE:  
WHEN WAS THE OTTOMAN STATE  
A *GAZI* STATE?

“Onion or garlic?” was how Cemal Kafadar posed the problem of the nature of the early Ottoman state.<sup>1</sup> Was it the product of a single impulse whose nature can be discovered if we peel away enough layers, or was it formed from competing impulses, all of which left traces in the sources? Lacking definitive contemporary information, scholars have debated the true nature of early Ottoman identity, and particularly the definition and role of *gaza* in it, for some time without closure. It is not enough to protest that we can no longer regard the early Ottomans as zealous warriors for the faith whose purpose was to offer to the infidel Islam or the sword. To banish the stereotypes, we also need a new narrative of early Ottoman history, one that although tentative can be used not just as a springboard by specialists but also as a framework for teaching and textbooks.

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<sup>1</sup> C. KAFADAR, *Between Two Worlds: the Construction of the Ottoman State*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995, p. 90. An earlier version of the present paper was presented at the New England Medieval Conference, “Crusade, Jihad and Identity in the Medieval Mediterranean World,” Dartmouth College, Hanover NH, Oct. 3-4, 2008. The paper pays tribute to the work of Keith Hopwood, historian of pre- and early Ottoman Anatolia, who died suddenly in early 2008.

The historical narrative told at the beginning of most textbooks on Ottoman history identifies the Ottomans as *gazis* from the start: Türkmen tribesmen come down from the hills, motivated by *gaza* (and more recently population pressure), to raid and then to conquer the unprotected remnants of Christian Byzantium, first in Asia Minor and then in the Balkans.<sup>2</sup> Although challenged as early as 1929 by Hasluck's work on syncretism, so far this narrative has not been replaced; Beldiceanu in *Histoire de l'empire ottoman* merely reports Aşikpaşazade's story of Ottoman beginnings, and even Finkel's *Osman's Dream* leaves the role of *gaza* in Ottoman identity as an open question.<sup>3</sup> The resolution offered by Kafadar, that *gaza* meant different things to different groups in Ottoman society, partially explains the existence of contradictory evidence.<sup>4</sup> Research over the past two decades has revealed that in early Ottoman times there existed a variety of answers to the question "What is *gaza*?" Because of that, scholars have come to contradictory conclusions about the early Ottomans as *gazis*, some seeing them as engaged in an orthodox Islamic activity and some as heterodox and radically inclusive, while others fail to see them as *gazis* at all except as a later reconstruction.

Kafadar's other thesis, that *gaza* was not synonymous with *jihad* and could be pursued for non-Islamic reasons, is more problematic. Although supported (as he showed) by evidence from Syria and Anatolia in the 12th-14th centuries, the *gaza-jihad* distinction was not a universal one. *Jihad*, which had originally meant offensive warfare designed to conquer the world for Islam, was redefined in the 12th century, during the Crusades, as defensive warfare, leaving *gaza* to refer to offensive incursions into the lands of the infidel.<sup>5</sup> But by the 15th century, Ottoman chronicles once again used *gaza* and *jihad* as synonyms, as they were in most other

<sup>2</sup> The relationship between *gaza* and population pressure was discussed by H. İNALCIK, "The Question of the Emergence of the Ottoman State," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 2, 1980, p. 71-79.

<sup>3</sup> F. W. HASLUCK, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1929, reprint. New York, Octagon Books, 1973, 2 vols.; I. BELDICEANU, "Les débuts: Osmân et Orkhân," in R. MANTRAN (ed.), *Histoire de l'empire ottoman*, Paris, Fayard, 1989, p. 15; C. FINKEL, *Osman's Dream: the Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923*, London, John Murray, 2006, p. 5-6 and p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> KAFADAR, *op. cit.*; cf. also L. T. DARLING, "Contested Territory: Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Context," *Studia Islamica* 91, 2000, p. 133-163.

<sup>5</sup> H. DAJANI-SHAKEEL, "A Reassessment of Some Medieval and Modern Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," in H. DAJANI-SHAKEEL, R. A. MESSIER, A. S. EHRENKREUTZ (ed.), *The Jihād and its Times*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1991, p. 41-70.

parts of the Muslim world at most other times.<sup>6</sup> Any new narrative must explain both scholars' diversity of interpretations and the diversity of the evidence on which it rests. Until now, the scholars have tended to treat the entire 14th century as possessing a single ethos and then argued about what it was. The resulting contradictions could only be resolved by disregarding some findings in favor of others.<sup>7</sup> In his final chapter, Kafadar proposed a reformulation of the standard narrative that depicted the growth of the Ottoman state as an effort of centralization pitting the institutions and personnel of the state against the inclusive and antinomian *gazis* and their powerful leaders. He and others also argue convincingly that the Ottoman Empire was a multiconfessional society, but centralization alone does not account for the constant religious jingoism that accompanied Ottoman tolerance and that was not a lapse on the part of a few individuals but another pervasive feature of Ottoman identity.<sup>8</sup> Both tolerance and intolerance, assimilation and interconfessional strife, have to be accounted for. These problems can be addressed by linking the evidence to a chronology.

We can reconcile these contradictions further if we consider that the role of *gaza* in Ottoman military activity and identity evolved over time in response to specific circumstances. Moreover, Ottoman rulers found different uses for the ideology of *gaza* as the conquests progressed. This essay proposes a reformulation of the narrative to account for these evolving attitudes: the Ottomans arose in a largely multiconfessional context, but subsequently first the military forces and then the Ottoman state adopted both *gazi* legitimation and a more exclusive religious

<sup>6</sup> M. C. MENGÜÇ, *A Study of 15th-Century Ottoman Historiography*, Ph. D. dissertation, Cambridge, Cambridge University, 2008, p. 140-148; DARLING, *art. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> For instance, comparing the evidence in KAFADAR, *op. cit.* with that in H. W. LOWRY, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2003, gives the impression that they were researching two different histories.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., F. ADANIR, "Religious Communities and Ethnic Groups under Imperial Sway: Ottoman and Habsburg Lands in Comparison," in D. HOERDER, C. HARZIG, A. SHUBERT (ed.), *The Historical Practice of Diversity: Transcultural Interactions from the Early Modern Mediterranean to the Postcolonial World*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2003, p. 54-86. D. NIRENBERG, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, 1996, argues that the function of interconfessional violence was the boundary-marking that made coexistence possible. Nirenberg considered all interconfessional violence in 14th-century Spain religious, "because religious status determined legal status ... the motives of participants, then, were not the most important factor ... their religious identity was" (*ibid.*, p. 31-32). The 15th-century Ottoman chronicles reference a parallel situation, but 14th-century Anatolian interactions suggest that their analysis does not apply to Osman's society.

posture. A conquest that did not start out as a *gaza* became one over the course of time.

This paper does not delve into the details of Osman's ancestry or movements but seeks to characterize the society he and his contemporaries and descendants created from the late 13th to the early 15th century. Rather than adding new evidence while ignoring the evidence presented by others, it integrates the evidence we already have, reshaping the historical narrative around it. After a brief historiographical overview (summarized, in the light of the more extensive overviews in the works of Kafadar and Lowry), it examines Ottoman society's relations with its Christian neighbors at the time of the empire's foundation and discusses the role of *gaza* in the reigns of successive Ottoman rulers.<sup>9</sup> This reconstruction acknowledges its debt to those who have done the detailed work in the sources but aims to be more generally useful, charting broad social changes rather than rehearsing contested details of the conquest. It cannot tell the entire story, but it creates a framework on which a more detailed story may be hung. This chronological exposition clarifies how in the 14th century Ottoman identity evolved from an accommodationist position toward a more exclusionary *gazi* stance, and how as a result of 15th-century events chroniclers established the early Ottomans as *gazis* for all time.

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#### THE *GAZİ* QUESTION

The earliest scholarly exponent of the Ottomans' *gazi* identity was P. Wittek, whose pioneering explorations of early Ottoman sources in the 1920s and 1930s stimulated research even by those who disagreed with his view of the chronicles as establishing the *gazi* ethos of the early Ottomans.<sup>10</sup> Wittek developed his *gazi* thesis to counter arguments that the early Ottoman state had either a Byzantine or a Turkish tribal foundation.<sup>11</sup> In later decades, views of those chronicles that went beyond

<sup>9</sup> KAFADAR, *op. cit.*, p. 29-59; LOWRY, *op. cit.*, p. 5-13.

<sup>10</sup> P. WITTEK, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, London, Royal Asiatic Society, 1938.

<sup>11</sup> The Byzantine argument was made by H. A. GIBBONS, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1916; the Turkish tribal argument by M. F. KÖPRÜLÜ, *Les Origines de l'empire ottoman*, Paris, E. de Boccard, 1935; M. F. KÖPRÜLÜ, *The Origins of the Ottoman Empire*, trans. G. Leiser, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press, 1992.

or even contradicted Wittek's thesis multiplied. Scholars such as V. L. Ménage, H. İnalçık, and J. Shinder drew attention to the role of the chronicles as 15th-century propaganda pieces in the conflict between Cem and Bayezid over the legacy of Mehmed the Conqueror, and in the reaction to Sultan Bayezid I's defeat by Timur in 1402; in both cases the chronicles reflected the Ottomans' development of new legitimating ideologies, including *gaza*.<sup>12</sup> Other researchers in the 1980s noted details from the chronicles that complicated or even contradicted Wittek's *gazi* thesis, such as the fact that many of the "warriors for Islam" appear to have been Christian.<sup>13</sup>

The argument then shifted to the meaning of the term *gaza*; the studies by Kafadar and Lowry downplayed its religious associations, emphasizing instead its original definition of tribal raiding. Both argued that the question was not whether the Ottomans were *gazis*, but whether *gaza* really meant holy war or whether it was a more secular concept whose implications ranged from freelance raiding to a sort of ecumenical conquest in which men of all faiths could join. Both emphasized the diversity of early Ottoman society and the different uses of the term *gaza*, but the evidence he used led Kafadar to agree that the Ottomans were indeed *gazis* of some sort, while Lowry concluded that they were not.

We today undoubtedly tend to separate the political from the religious in a way that would have been incomprehensible in the 14th century, but that we find valuable, and this whole controversy hinges on such a separation. The secular definition is, however, problematic: while *gaza* did originally mean stock rustling among the pre-Islamic Arabs and while there must have been a wide range of ideas among the fighters themselves as to the meaning of their combat, it is impossible to deny its religious implications in the Ottoman period after centuries of Islamic

<sup>12</sup> H. İNALCIK, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," in B. LEWIS, P. M. HOLT (ed.), *Historians of the Middle East*, London, Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 152-167; H. İNALCIK, "How to Read Āshik Pasha-zāde's History," in C. HEYWOOD, C. IMBER (ed.), *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Professor V. L. Ménage*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 1994, p. 145-146; V.-L. MÉNAGE, "The Beginnings of Ottoman Historiography," in B. LEWIS, P. M. HOLT (ed.), *Historians of the Middle East*, London, Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 168-179; J. SHINDER, "Early Ottoman Administration in the Wilderness," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, 1978, p. 497-517.

<sup>13</sup> G. KÁLDY-NAGY, "The Holy War (*Jihad*) in the First Centuries of the Ottoman Empire," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3/4, 1979-1980, p. 467-473; R. C. JENNINGS, "Some Thoughts on the Gazi-Thesis," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 76, 1986, p. 151-161; cf. also R. P. LINDNER, "Stimulus and Justification in Early Ottoman History," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 27, 1982, p. 207-224.

history and numerous explications by Muslim poets and clerics.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the effort of redefinition did lead both Kafadar and Lowry to seek out a broader range of sources to fill the void left by the absence of 14th-century Ottoman chronicles and to supplement the existing chronicles' claims with other kinds of evidence. Their and others' research cited below employs a close critical reading of the chronicles themselves, other written sources such as Byzantine, Persian, Venetian, and non-Ottoman Turkish texts and documents, coins, architectural inscriptions, and examination of battlefields and terrain. This evidence points in several different directions and does not provide a single unequivocal answer to the question of early Ottoman identity.

When we disaggregate the evidence, we see an emerging Ottoman polity that was in tension among a number of identities whose prominence changed over time. One of these was certainly a *gazi* identity defined as Islamic, but whether that meant a holy war demanding conversion or death, a holy war demanding only subjugation of nonbelievers, or simply interreligious warfare legitimized by Islamic doctrine is not clear, since it was never understood the same way by all Muslims. Another common identity was that of nomad raider (*akıncı*), governed by Turco-Mongol cultural norms rather than Islamic ones, often identified with that of the *gazi* but essentially secular and economic (and which I will refrain from calling *gazi* in this paper). Other strands of identity included an imperial identity as a traditional Middle-Eastern state like that of the Seljuks, the Abbasids, and the pre-Islamic empires (Islamic enough for most Muslims but sometimes not for zealous *gazis*) and an assimilationist, syncretic cosmopolitanism that never had a name but that drew from Byzantine and Turkish cultures alike. These identities, appearing in changing relations in the sources, were held by different groups in Ottoman society, and were used for different purposes at different times.

Fifteenth-century Ottoman chronicles did represent the conflict between the Ottomans and the Eastern Christian powers as *gaza* in the sense of holy war.<sup>15</sup> The stereotype of *gaza* arises as much from these

<sup>14</sup> C. IMBER, "What Does *Ghazi* Actually Mean?," in Ç. BALIM-HARDING, C. IMBER (ed.), *The Balance of Truth: Essays in Honour of Professor Geoffrey Lewis*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 2000, p. 165-178.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. n. 11 above, and examples such as N. AZAMAT (ed.), *Anonim Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman, F. Giese Neşri*, Istanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1992; AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *'Âşuqpaşazâdeh ta'rihi: a History of the Ottoman Empire to A.H. 833 (AD 1478)*, ed.

sources as from the Westerners' encounters with the *gazis*. The chronicles were written, however, in the aftermath of the Ottomans' 1402 defeat by Timur (Tamerlane, 1370-1406), who proclaimed that he had refrained from eradicating the Ottomans only because of their primacy in *gaza* against the infidel. In 1402 this was a plausible argument, based on the Ottoman defeat of the Crusaders at Nicopolis and the siege of Constantinople, the goal of the Anatolian *jihad* since the 7th century.<sup>16</sup> For half a century, the Ottomans had led the warfare of the Turkish forces in Europe. Since their *gazi* reputation, not merely as raiders but as holy warriors, had just preserved them from Timurid annihilation, writers, starting with Ahmedî and Yahşi Fakih, developed *gaza* as a legitimization myth and applied it retroactively to all the Ottoman sultans since the beginning.<sup>17</sup>

The Byzantine chronicles are entirely different: except for those written by clerics, they depict Ottoman-Byzantine relations as a political rather than a religious conflict.<sup>18</sup> The Christian-Muslim divide was not

Âlî Bey, Istanbul, Matbaa-yi Âmire, 1332 [1914]; rpt. Westmead UK, Gregg International Publishers, 1970; M. NEŞRÎ, *Kitâb-i Cihan-Nümâ*, ed. F. R. Unat, M. A. Köymen, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1949-1957.

<sup>16</sup> M. BONNER, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War: Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier*, New Haven, American Oriental Society, 1996; P. FODOR, "The View of the Turk in Hungary: the Apocalyptic Tradition and the Legend of the Red Apple in Ottoman-Hungarian Context," in P. FODOR, *In Quest of the Golden Apple: Imperial Ideology, Politics, and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 2000, p. 96.

<sup>17</sup> H. AHMEDÎ, *History of the Kings of the Ottoman Lineage and their Holy Raids against the Infidels*, ed. and trans. K. Silay, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, 2004, p. 1-24; E. A. ZACHARIADOU, "Histoires et légendes des premiers ottomans," *Turcica* 28, 1996, p. 49; D. J. KASTRITSIS, *The Sons of Bayezid: Empire Building and Representation in the Ottoman Civil War of 1402-1413*, Leiden, Brill, 2007, p. 10 and p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Compare KRITIVOULOS, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. C. T. Riggs, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1954; DOUKAS, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, trans. H. J. Magoulias, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1975; or L. CHALKOKONDYLES, *Demonstrations of Histories (books I-III)*, trans. N. Nicoloudis, Athens, Historical Publications St. D. Basilopoulos, 1996, with the cleric SYMEON, *Politico-Historical Works of Symeon, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1416/17 to 1429)*, ed. D. Balfour, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979. Like Symeon's history, Byzantine martyrologies distinguished identity according to religion, and as Byzantine territory shrank identity lines hardened; B. K. BAYRI, *Martyrs and Dervishes as Witnesses: the Transformation of Byzantine Identity in the Lands of Rum (Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries)*, Ph. D. dissertation, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2010, p. 181 and p. 233. There is no evidence for the Ottomans' clerics, but Arab frontier clerics of two centuries earlier were vehemently preaching holy war while most rulers allied with either Christians or Muslims as they found it most expedient; cf. the Sermon of Ibn Nubata,

the important one for them; although a preference for co-religionists is detectable on both sides, in the Byzantine chronicles the significant aspect of foreign relations is the pattern of alliances. Most often, Christians and Muslims on one side were allied against Christians and Muslims on the other. The irrelevance of religious antagonism (which did exist) to explanations of Byzantine war and peace holds true both in chronicles written in Greek after 1453, whose authors presumably did not want to jeopardize their new standing as Ottoman subjects, and in that of the earlier author Pachymeres, who spent his youth in the Byzantines' Nicaean state (allied with the Seljuks) and who couched the conflict in terms of the Persian War of antiquity; he portrayed the Turks as terrible but did not mention their religion.<sup>19</sup> Not until the 16th century did Greek chronicles employ the term *gazi* for the Turks.<sup>20</sup> Lowry and Kafadar both tried to explain this discrepancy in the historical record by disavowing, in different ways, the religious nature of *gaza*, but this reconstruction sees it as further evidence of the changing place of *gaza* in Ottoman identity.

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WESTERN ANATOLIA BEFORE 1299:  
TURKS AND BYZANTINES TOGETHER

Whatever the truth about the conflicting stories of the Ottomans' initial migration and Osman's conquests, the Ottomans developed as part of a new society in post-Byzantine western Anatolia. During the period in which they were preparing to make their mark, the whole eastern Mediterranean was a contested zone where Turks and Byzantines found themselves allies as often as enemies. The relative religious neutrality of the Byzantine chronicles reflects the fact that for several centuries the region had seen, not a binary division between Muslims and Christians, but at

trans. M. Canard in A. A. VASILIEV (ed.), *Byzance et les Arabes -II- La Dynastie macédonienne (867-959), deuxième partie: extraits des sources arabes*, ed. H. Grégoire, M. Canard, Brussels, Éditions de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves, 1950, p. 292-294.

<sup>19</sup> G. PACHYMERES, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, trans. V. Laurent, Paris, Institut d'études byzantines, 1984, vol. 4, p. 368-369 and p. 452-453. Zachariadou points out another difference between the Byzantine chronicles, which take the imperial view, and the Ottoman ones, which write from the local scene (ZACHARIADOU, *art. cit.*, p. 67-68. Cf. also A. DUCELLIER, "L'Islam et les musulmans vus de Byzance au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Vyzantina* 12, 1983, p. 122-123 and p. 129.

<sup>20</sup> R. P. LINDNER, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, Bloomington, Indiana University, 1983, p. 5.



least a three-way split. The Crusades had pitted Latin Catholics against Muslims; the Eastern Christians in the middle were divided, some favoring the Catholic forces and some the Muslims, while others remained unaligned.<sup>21</sup> The original Turkish invasion of the 11th century, as a byproduct of the Seljuk conquest of Iran and Iraq, had not been religiously motivated. Its religious connotations were stimulated by the Crusaders' response in 1099 and were revived in the 13th century by the Mongol invasion, which introduced a pagan foe. Crusade and *jihad* ideologies, which developed rapidly in the eastern Mediterranean during the 12th century, seem to have been slower to penetrate Anatolia.<sup>22</sup> After the Byzantine defeat at Myriocéphalon in 1176, the Seljuks and Byzantines had shared the Anatolian peninsula in relative accord, both engaged in fighting more dangerous enemies.<sup>23</sup> The Seljuks of Anatolia were allied with the Byzantines during most of the 13th century, while the Latin Christians took Constantinople and the Morea away from them. Orthodox Christians displayed more religious anxiety over Catholicism, which demanded their conversion, than over Islam, which did not.<sup>24</sup>

In the Seljuk parts of Anatolia, despite a certain amount of religious and political antagonism, former Byzantines and Turks developed a shared lifestyle – in some cases quite rapidly. Cultural distinctions between Byzantines and Turks broke down as both sought security and livelihood in a disordered society. This common culture, almost a shared Anatolian identity, has to be pieced together, because the 15th-century chronicles covered it up. Chroniclers in Constantinople disparaged it and Ottoman chroniclers ignored it. Both portrayed a clear division between Christian conquered people and nomadic Turkish tribal conquerors, all but one Muslims, simplifying the situation by presenting an idealized

<sup>21</sup> N. NECİPOĞLU, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 4; A. DUCCELLIER, "Byzantins et Turcs du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: du monde partagé à l'empire reconstitué," in B. BENNASSAR, R. SAUZET (ed.), *Chrétiens et musulmans à la Renaissance. Actes du 37<sup>e</sup> colloque international du CESR, 4-9 juil. 1994*, Paris, H. Champion, 1998, p. 12 and p. 15-16.

<sup>22</sup> DAJANI-SHAKEEL, *art. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> HASLUCK, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 370; M. BALIVET, "Les contacts byzantino-turcs entre rapprochement politique et échanges culturels (milieu XIII<sup>e</sup>-milieu XV<sup>e</sup> s.)," in M. BERNARDINI, C. BORRELLI, A. CERBO, E. SÁNCHEZ GARCÍA (ed.), *Europa e Islam tra i secoli XIV e XVI*, Naples, Istituto universitario orientale, 2002, vol. 1, p. 525-547.

<sup>24</sup> M. BALIVET, "Le personnage du 'turcophile' dans les sources byzantines antérieures au concile de Florence (1370-1430)," in M. BALIVET, *Byzantins et Ottomans: relations, interaction, succession*, Istanbul, Éditions Isis, 1999, p. 32 and p. 36.

binary opposition in place of a very heterogeneous reality.<sup>25</sup> This heterogeneity, however, was part of Ottoman identity and remained so until the end.

Although the original Turkish invasion of central and eastern Anatolia in the 11th century had largely destroyed or expelled the Byzantine ruling class and clergy, most Byzantines had remained, and the return of peace made it possible for cultures and populations to merge and for integration to take place.<sup>26</sup> The 13th century in particular was a time of religious intermingling and syncretism in Anatolia. Many Seljuk subjects were former Byzantines from a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups, some converted and some not. While Christians continued to live in Turkish-controlled regions, Muslims in turn came to live in Byzantium.<sup>27</sup> The mystics Rumi and Hacı Bektaş had Christian as well as Muslim followers. Within and across political boundaries Seljuks and Byzantines visited each other, exchanged cultures, intermarried.<sup>28</sup> There was conversion to

<sup>25</sup> DUCELLIER, "L'Islam et les musulmans," *art. cit.*, p. 95; K. R. HOPWOOD, "Peoples, Territories, and States: the Formation of the Beğliks of Pre-Ottoman Turkey," in C. E. FARAH (ed.), *Decision Making and Change in the Ottoman Empire*, Kirksville MO, Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1993, p. 130-131. The one exception is, of course, the "Christian *gazi*" Köse Mihal. Turkish *menakibnames* (saints' tales), however, used the word *Rum* for both Byzantine and Turkish Anatolians, both Christians and Muslims; BAYRI, *op. cit.*, p. 219-220. Aspects of this Anatolian (Rumi) identity are discussed in C. KAFADAR, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas* 24, 2007, p. 7-25.

<sup>26</sup> S. VRYONIS JR., "The Byzantine Legacy and Ottoman Forms," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23-24, 1969-1970, p. 249-308; K. R. HOPWOOD, "Christian-Muslim Symbiosis in Anatolia," in D. SHANKLAND (ed.), *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: the Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 2004, vol. 2, p. 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> For Muslims in Byzantium, cf. C. BRAND, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43, 1989, p. 1-25; S. W. REINERT, "The Muslim Presence in Constantinople, 9th-15th Centuries: Some Preliminary Observations," in H. AHRWEILER, A. E. LAIOU (ed.), *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, Washington DC, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998, p. 125-150.

<sup>28</sup> K. R. HOPWOOD, "The Byzantine-Turkish Frontier c. 1250-1300," in M. KÖHBACK, G. PROCHÁZKA-EISL, C. RÖMER (ed.), *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica, Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums, Wien, 21-25. Sept. 1998*, Vienna, Institut für Orientalistik, 1999, p. 154; HOPWOOD, "Christian-Muslim Symbiosis," *art. cit.*, p. 13-30; N. NECİPOĞLU, "The Coexistence of Turks and Greeks in Medieval Anatolia (Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries)," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 5, 1999-2000, p. 58-76. For more details, cf. M. BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine et pays de Rûm turc: histoire d'un espace d'imbrication gréco-turque*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 1994. I refrain from calling the Byzantines "Greeks" (for their religious adherence) because it disguises their ethnic diversity to a modern audience.

Christianity as well as to Islam, and mixed marriages meant mixed families. Soon a substantial mixed population grew up that included sultans and elites as well as common people.<sup>29</sup> The identities “Byzantine” and “Turk” took on political rather than ethnic or religious connotations.<sup>30</sup>

The 13th-century Turkish invasion of western Anatolia occurred as a mass movement from the Seljuk region to the Byzantine coastal plain, largely by nomadic groups (including that of Osman) already displaced from the central Anatolia plateau to the mountainous fringes by the quartering of Mongol troops on the pasturelands of the plateau. Resisting Ilkhanid control, the nomads invaded the coastal plain and established independent principalities, or *beyliks*. In most cases the idea of *gaza* is not necessary to explain this movement; we do not need to see the invasion through the *gazi* lenses of the 15th-century chronicles or try to redefine *gaza* as not religiously based. In this period, in fact, economic raiding was known as *akin*; *gaza* was used for official warfare against the infidel and was legitimized, in the absence of caliphal sanction after 1258, by certain rituals such as the bestowal of a drum and a flag by the Seljuk sultans. At least until 1295, *gaza* more often applied to warfare against the Mongols than to raids on the Byzantines. The primary reason for nomadic migration and raiding was the inability of the mountains to provide sufficient grazing for the number of nomads taking refuge there; particularly in the northwest frontier region where the Ottomans originated, the hills are quite steep and wooded and the land is stony.<sup>31</sup> Despite

<sup>29</sup> R. SHUKUROV, “The Crypto-Muslims of Anatolia,” in SHANKLAND (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 138 and p. 151; S. VRYONIS JR., *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971, p. 176 and p. 227-239; O. TURAN, “L’islamisation dans la Turquie du Moyen Âge,” *Studia Islamica* 10, 1959, p. 137-152. Hopwood emphasized elite interaction: K. R. HOPWOOD, “Nicaea and her Eastern Neighbours,” in E. KERMELE, O. ÖZEL (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire: Myths, Realities, and “Black Holes”*: Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber, Istanbul, Isis Press, 2006, p. 42.

<sup>30</sup> For Muslim Byzantines, cf. n. 26, and for Christian Turks, cf. K. R. HOPWOOD, “The Relations between the Emirates of Menteşe and Aydın and Byzantium, 1250-1350,” in T. BAYKARA (ed.), *CIEPO Osmanlı Öncesi ve Osmanlı Araştırmaları Uluslararası Komitesi, XIV. Sempozyumu Bildirileri, Çeşme, 18-22 Eyl. 2000*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2004, p. 306 and p. 308; E. A. ZACHARIADOU, “À propos du syncrétisme islamo-chrétien dans les territoires ottomans,” in G. VEINSTEIN (ed.), *Syncrétismes et hérésies dans l’Orient seldjoukide et ottoman (XIV<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Actes du colloque du Collège de France, 8-10 oct. 2001, Leuven, Peeters, 2005, p. 399-400; C. CAHEN, *The Formation of Turkey: the Seljukid Sultanate of Rûm, Eleventh to Fourteenth Century*, ed. and trans. P. M. Holt, Harlow UK, Longman, 2001, p. 124 and p. 129; NECİPOĞLU, *art. cit.*, p. 58 and p. 61.

<sup>31</sup> İNALCIK, “Question of the Emergence,” *art. cit.*, p. 71-79; K. R. HOPWOOD, “The

what Pachymeres claims, there were also sedentary refugees whose lands and revenues the Mongols had appropriated, and whose subsistence in the borderland was even more problematic. Some of these migrants, it appears, were not even Muslims.<sup>32</sup> Another reason for migration was political, the desire to establish independent states, initially (as we shall see) on the Ilkhanid model. Zeal to combat the infidel may have been involved at times, but in Lindner's terms, probably as justification rather than stimulus. The opportunity for this westward expansion was provided by a power vacuum resulting from the Byzantines' focus on European affairs, the Seljuks' enfeeblement by the Mongols, and the Mongols' own disregard of the western Anatolian borderland.<sup>33</sup>

When the border populations overflowed the mountain pastures and entered Byzantine territory, their main interest was economic: territory (especially routes and strong points), grazing grounds, animals, food stocks, and resalable booty, rather than the conquest of infidels *per se*.<sup>34</sup> In one sense, the idea of *gaza* must have been at the back of everybody's mind: Byzantine Anatolia had been the premier site of *jihad* since the

Social and Economic Context of the Establishment of the Ottoman Emirate," in *IXth International Congress of Economic and Social History of Turkey*, Ankara, Turkish Historical Society, 2005, p. 9-11. R. P. LINDNER, *Explorations in Ottoman Prehistory*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2007, p. 102-116, cites adverse weather in 1302 that decimated the flocks, although this explanation accounts only for the Ottomans and not for other *beyliks*, whose conquests were on a different schedule.

<sup>32</sup> PACHYMERES, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 32-35; I. MÉLIKOFF, "L'origine sociale des premiers Ottomans," in E. ZACHARIADOU (ed.), *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389), Halcyon Days in Crete I, Rethymnon, 11-13 Jan. 1991*, Rethymnon, Crete University Press, 1993, p. 136-137; I. BELDICEANU, "Péchés, calamités et salut par le triomphe de l'islam: le discours apocalyptique relative à l'Anatolie (fin XIII<sup>e</sup>-fin XV<sup>e</sup> s.)," in B. LELLOUCH, S. YERASIMOS (ed.), *Les Traditions apocalyptiques au tournant de la chute de Constantinople, Actes de la table ronde d'Istanbul, 13-14 avr. 1996*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1999, p. 21, n. 5 and 6; ZACHARIADOU, "À propos du syncrétisme islamo-chrétien," *art. cit.*, p. 395-403. The presence of non-Muslims among the invaders may account for some of the evidence that researchers have taken as indicating Islamic heterodoxy; cf., e.g., LINDNER, *Nomads and Ottomans, op. cit.*, p. 6. The 14th-century Persian chronicles portray all the border tribes as semi-sedentary.

<sup>33</sup> Lindner goes even farther, blaming "Palaeologan misrule ... framed against the dim memory of Lascarid prosperity" (*ibid.*, p. 13).

<sup>34</sup> PACHYMERES, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 344-345, p. 368-369, p. 456-457; in fact, booty seems to have been a significant element in intra-Byzantine and intra-Christian conflict as well; *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 88-89, p. 152-153, p. 240-241, p. 284-285, p. 302-303. Hopwood emphasized the looting of animals in K. R. HOPWOOD, "Nomads or Bandits? The Pastoralist/Sedentarist Interface in Anatolia," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 16, 1991, p. 187-188. The difficulty some of these nomads experienced in finding pasturage is remarked on by MÉLIKOFF, "L'origine sociale," *art. cit.*, p. 136.

7th century, and Turks had been involved in Islamic conquest since the 8th century. Crusaders had crisscrossed Anatolia for two centuries and had occupied Constantinople for over 50 years. The Baba'i revolt, which spread an aggressive mystical Islam into the borderlands, was within the memory of old men still living, and many of the nomads had recently waged *gazi* warfare against the pagan Mongols.<sup>35</sup> In another sense, however, fighting for Islam must have been the primary motive of only a small minority; most were fighting for subsistence, although some may have called it *gaza*. Their raiding was not holy war in the Western sense, and it fit the definition of Islamic *jihād* only to the extent that it involved seizing the goods of non-Muslims. In order to call it *gaza*, in fact, the invaders had to redefine *gaza* to mean something separate from *jihād*, since this movement did not fit *jihād*'s legal specifications. The new states established in western Anatolia did not initially have Islam as their organizing principle.<sup>36</sup>

The disruption of conquest and reconquest, though temporary, made security an important consideration as western Anatolian society reconstituted itself under Turkish leadership. In their new territories, the conquerors established the same kind of integrated relations they were accustomed to in the Seljuk territories, going well beyond the demands of *zimmēt*, the pact of protection that mandated for submissive *zimmīs* not an equal but a subordinate role, even one of humiliation. As the Byzantine army retreated from the coastal plain, some town dwellers resisted the Turkish invasion and some fled to Constantinople, but others surrendered, rebelled against the emperor, invited Turkish protection, or joined the Turkish forces. Cultural exchange became the order of the day; some former Byzantines abandoned the towns and turned to pastoralism, while some Turks settled down to farm or trade. Symbiotic relations developed between townsfolk and pastoralists; Turks and Byzantines, for example, shared the citadel of Sardis, divided by a wall with a gate in it to allow for trade, and Turkish protection allowed the Byzan-

<sup>35</sup> K. R. HOPWOOD, "Living on the Margin: Byzantine Farmers and Turkish Herders," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 10, 2000, p. 100. On the Baba'i revolt and its ideology, cf. A. Y. OCAK, *La Révolte de Baba Resul ou la formation de l'hétérodoxie musulmane en Anatolie au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1989.

<sup>36</sup> Ocak also argues that Islam formed the basis of Ottoman political and social organization beginning only in the 15th century; A. Y. OCAK, "Islam in the Ottoman Empire: a Sociological Framework for a New Interpretation," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9/1-2, 2003, p. 189.

tines to work outside the citadel undisturbed.<sup>37</sup> Some Christians moved from still-Byzantine areas to Ottoman-controlled ones in search of peace.<sup>38</sup> Sedentary Turks from central and eastern Anatolia and immigrants from other parts of the Muslim world also settled in the new *beyliks*, or principalities, and it is unclear how many of these “Turks” were actually former Byzantines or their descendants.<sup>39</sup> Other Turks occupied the border fortresses, resisting the Mongols but preying on the adjacent Byzantines.<sup>40</sup>

Astonishingly rapidly, this mixed population revived western Anatolian urbanism in a new cultural dress based on the Perso-Islamic civilization of the central Middle East. Within two or three decades from their foundation, the *beyliks* had acquired capital cities, literate administrations, coinages, markets, mosques and dervish lodges, schools, flourishing agriculture and trade, and diplomatic relations with the Byzantine Empire.<sup>41</sup> By the mid-14th century a composite “Byzantino-Seljuk” architectural style emerged, that was patronized by both sides.<sup>42</sup> The Ottoman chronicles enshrine a protest against this civilizational develop-

<sup>37</sup> K. R. HOPWOOD, “Mudara,” in A. SINGER, A. COHEN (ed.), *Aspects of Ottoman History, Papers from CIEPO IX, Jerusalem, 23-26 July 1990*, Jerusalem, The Magnes Press, 1994, p. 156; C. FOSS, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 82 and p. 123.

<sup>38</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 11; S. VRYONIS JR., “Nomadization and Islamization in Asia Minor,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29, 1975, p. 57; K. R. HOPWOOD, “Low-Level Diplomacy between Byzantines and Ottoman Turks: the Case of Bithynia,” in J. SHEPARD, S. FRANKLIN (ed.), *Byzantine Diplomacy*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1992, p. 154 and p. 157; HOPWOOD, “Peoples, Territories, and States,” *art. cit.*, p. 131 and p. 133-134; BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine*, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>39</sup> There were many of these sedentary Turks, according to HOPWOOD, “Christian-Muslim Symbiosis,” *art. cit.*, p. 18-19; cf. also F. SÜMER, “Anadolu’ya Yalnız Göçebe Türkler mi Geldi?,” *Bellekten* 24, 1960, p. 567-594.

<sup>40</sup> PACHYMERES, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 186.

<sup>41</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 42; A. AREL, “Menteşe Beyliği Devrinde Peçin Şehri,” *Anadolu Sanatı Araştırmaları* 1, 1968, p. 69-98; C. HEYWOOD, “The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths,” in D. POWER, N. STANDEN (ed.), *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, New York, Saint Martin’s Press, 1999, p. 228-250; C. FOSS, *Ephesus after Antiquity: a Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. 147, p. 157, p. 161; HOPWOOD, “Peoples, Territories, and States,” *art. cit.*, p. 132-134. In the Ottoman case, these constructions were funded by Orhan’s conquest of the rich coastal plain of northern Bithynia; I. BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, “La conquête de la Bithynie maritime, étape décisive dans la fondation de l’État ottoman,” in K. BELKE, F. HILD, J. KODER, P. SOUSTAL (ed.), *Byzanz als Raum: zu Methoden und Inhalten der historischen Geographie des östlichen Mittelmeerraums*, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000, p. 28-31.

<sup>42</sup> K. R. HOPWOOD, “The Use of Material Culture in Writing Ottoman History,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 18, 2000, p. 202-203.

ment that may not be totally anachronistic; their portrait of the early Ottomans as pure Turkish nomads is undoubtedly tendentious, but the nomads in particular must have experienced the ubiquitous tension between the attraction and the repulsion of “civilization”. All of the Turkish *beys*, however, were interested in ruling over bureaucratic states like those of the Seljuks and Byzantines rather than continuing either as tribally-organized nomadic groups or as the frontier forces of some hinterland state.<sup>43</sup> Farther east, the Ilkhanid part of Anatolia was undergoing a similar transformation around 1300; the Seljuk rulers were disappearing, but Ghazan Khan (1295-1303) in Tebriz was converting to Islam, reorganizing the state, issuing laws, and settling the nomads, while rebels against the chaotic and inadequate Mongol government of Anatolia were proposing ways to improve local administration.<sup>44</sup> The demand for order and good government in the peninsula was increasing, and this too became a central strand of Ottoman identity in later years.

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**WESTERN ANATOLIA AND THE AEGEAN, 1299-1362:  
HOLY WAR OR WORLD CONQUEST?**

The conditions of the Turkish invasion of western Anatolia outlined above do not resemble the narrative of “the terrible Turk” galloping over the hill and offering Islam or the sword. If they suggest that we cannot see the entire Turkish invasion of western Anatolia as *gaza* (certainly not in the sense of holy war), what does the evidence say for the Ottomans in particular? Beyond the chronology of the conquests, how should the society created by Osman (1280 or 1299-1326) be characterized? Here the chronicles are not very helpful. Already in the late 10th century the figure of the “founder king” had developed in the chronicle literature as “a humble soldier [...] who ruled a band of warriors, lived simply and justly”; in the following century stories about the Ghaznavid rulers established that the founder king also “was blessed by God through dreams” and “gained legitimacy through

<sup>43</sup> Cf. İ. H. UZUNÇARŞILI, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1937. The *beylik* of Aydın, for example, emerged when tribal forces from Germiyan who had conquered the plain behind İzmir cast off their subordination to the Germiyanid rulers; UZUNÇARŞILI, *op. cit.*, p. 104-105.

<sup>44</sup> L. T. DARLING, “Persianate Sources on Anatolia and the Early History of the Ottomans,” *Studies on Persianate Societies* 2, 2004, p. 136.

doing *ghaza*".<sup>45</sup> By the time of Osman, the presence of *gaza* in the literary image of the dynastic founder was not a reliable clue to his actual beliefs or activities. References in chronicles to the Ottoman warriors as *gazis* cannot be regarded as hard evidence for the ideology of an earlier period; in order not to beg the question, it is necessary to ignore the later adulation of Osman as a *gazi*.

The few early sources are equally inconclusive. A 14th-century poem on fighters was written during Osman's reign, but it called the warrior hero by the steppe term *alp* rather than *gazi*, listing his characteristics as a stout heart, a strong arm, zeal, a faithful horse, his own armor, a bow and arrows, a sword, and good companions. This was the description of a secular hero; the hero of religion, the *alp-eren*, was characterized by purity, unworldliness, contemplation, contentment, trust in God, spiritual knowledge, and religious zeal.<sup>46</sup> Whether he was also a *gazi*, a fighter, is unclear. When this poem was composed, the Ottoman forces probably did contain fighters for the faith, as well as radical Sufi *şeyhs* preaching *gaza* in the religious sense. Osman may even have used the idea of *gaza* to recruit such fighters to his forces. These forces, however, also included adventurers and subsistence fighters; we cannot assume that *gaza* was the foundational motive of Osman's conquests or of the state he founded. Osman received the titles of "Sultan of the *Gazis* and Holy Warriors" and "Osman Han *Gazi*" in a *vakfiye* of 1323 by Aspurça Hatun, the third wife of Orhan, but the Turkish version of this *vakfiye* that remains to us dates from 1796 and was probably translated in the 1550s, when this was routine titulature for the Ottoman sultan and would almost automatically have been inserted if it were absent from the original; its presence here does not guarantee 14th-century usage.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> A. ANOOSHAHR, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam: a Comparative Study of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, New York, Routledge, 2009, p. 74-75.

<sup>46</sup> AŞIK PAŞA, *Garib-nâme (Tıpkıbasım, Karşılaştırmalı Metin ve Aktarma)*, ed. K. Yavuz, Ankara, Türk Dil Kurumu, 2000, p. 550-571; H. İNALCIK, "Foundation of Ottoman State," in H. C. GÜZEL, C. C. OĞUZ, O. KARATAY (ed.), *The Turks -III- Ottomans*, Ankara, Yeni Türkiye, 2002, p. 61; H. İNALCIK, "Osmanlı Beyliği'nin Kurucusu Osman Beg," *Bellekten* 71, 2007, p. 493. İnalçık argues for the identity of the *gazi* and the *alp-eren*, but his evidence tends to support the present reconstruction. According to Imber, the 14th-century Sufi hagiographical work *Menakibü'l-Ârifin* envisioned saints as *gazis* in order to exalt the saint (the spiritual warrior) over the already well-respected fighter; IMBER, "What Does *Ghazi* Actually Mean?," *art. cit.*, p. 172-173.

<sup>47</sup> The titles were *sultan al-guzat ve'l-mücahidin* and *Osman han gazi*; İNALCIK, "Osmanlı Beyliği'nin Kurucusu Osman Beg," *art. cit.*, p. 521; İ. ULUDAĞ, "Osman Gaziye dair Mühim bir Vesika: Aspurça Hatunun Vakfiyesi," *Uludağ* 26, 1940, p. 64;



Stripped of the *gazi* rhetoric, the Ottomans' initial conquests look less like holy war than like the early stages of the Mongol world conquest – or perhaps less controversially, that of Alexander the Great. Although unwilling to acknowledge Ilkhanid precedents and, like other Anatolian *beys*, tracing their legitimacy to installation by the Seljuks, the early Ottomans did employ Ilkhanid institutions and imitate Ilkhanid practices, since the Ilkhanids presented the most recent and most successful model of the conquering state.<sup>48</sup> Chingiz Khan organized his conquests by awarding positions of responsibility to individuals of varied origins and assigning defeated groups to different branches of his troops. They became part of the Mongol army, took the name of its leader, followed his laws, and adopted his ideology (though not necessarily his religion). Their leaders became his non-tribal companions or retainers (*nöker*).<sup>49</sup> Osman likewise incorporated Byzantines into his army as *nökers*, made them landholders and administrators, and protected their towns and villages. Individuals and entire towns joined the Ottoman enterprise voluntarily. The fact that the villages in the area around Söğüt long sent their own soldiers (*müsellem* and *yaya*, horse and foot troops) to the army, rather than supporting a *timar*-holder, confirms their status as Ottoman

I. BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, *Recherches sur les actes des règnes des sultans Osman, Orkhan et Murad I*, Munich, Societas academică dacoromână, 1967, p. 78-81. Emecen in 1995 suggested a study of the use of the title of *Gazi* in diplomatic correspondence and correspondence manuals, but this has not yet been done; F. EMECEN, "Gazâya Dâir: XIV. Yüzyıl Kaynakları Arasında Bir Gezinti," in *Prof. Dr. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız Armağanı*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995, p. 195-196.

<sup>48</sup> İNALCIK, "Osmanlı Beyliği'nin Kurucusu Osman Beg," *art. cit.*, p. 479-537, and K. R. HOPWOOD, "Osman, Bithynia and the Sources," *Essays on Ottoman Civilization, Proceedings of the XIIth Congress of CIEPO, Prague, 9-13 Sept. 1996*, Prague, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 1998, p. 154-164, provide reconstructions of Osman's organization and early conquests. For the idea of world conquest among the Ottomans' predecessors, cf. O. TURAN, "The Ideal of World Domination among the Medieval Turks," *Studia Islamica* 4, 1955, p. 77-90; M. BAYRAM, "State Formation among the Seljuks of Anatolia," *Mésogeios* 25-26, 2005, p. 137-155. On relations with the Ilkhanid state, cf. DARLING, "Persianate Sources on Anatolia," *art. cit.*, p. 139-140.

<sup>49</sup> U. ONON (trans.), *The History and the Life of Chinggis Khan (the Secret History of the Mongols)*, Leiden, Brill, 1990; or F. W. CLEAVES (ed. and trans.), *The Secret History of the Mongols: for the First Time Done into English out of the Original Tongue and Provided with an Exegetical Commentary*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1982, vol. 1, pars. 209-256; H. İNALCIK, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," *Studia Islamica* 2, 1954, p. 120, n. 2. Lindner calls this incorporation "joining the tribe": R. P. LINDNER, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?," *Comparative Studies of Society and History* 24, 1982, p. 700-703. Balivet calls it a "composite society": BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

auxiliaries rather than “conquered people”.<sup>50</sup> Byzantines and Latins were among Osman’s close companions, and when he confronted the Byzantine army in 1302 he sought support from both Turkish and Greek lords in the area.<sup>51</sup> He developed cooperative relations with the Bithynians, some of whom had been interacting with Turkish forces for decades.<sup>52</sup> He established *timars* on the Ilkhanid model, and Orhan later minted coins in Ilkhanid denominations.<sup>53</sup> The goal of world conquest, symbolized in the story of Osman’s dream and islamized by the frame story of Edebalı recruiting Osman to the *gaza*, remained a prominent element in the Ottomans’ identity throughout their existence.<sup>54</sup>

People incorporated into Osman’s enterprise seem to have been treated not as subjected enemies but as allies. Such conciliatory policies were quite successful in winning over the local population.<sup>55</sup> The description of Osman’s state in the chronicles indicates a level of accommodation between Ottomans and former Byzantines that was high enough to surprise outside observers, accustomed to the greater subordination of non-Muslims in the other Turkish principalities.<sup>56</sup> Aşıkpaşazade found diffi-

<sup>50</sup> BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, “La conquête,” *art. cit.*, p. 24, citing registers from the 15th and 16th centuries. Cf. also the Christian functionaries identified by LOWRY, *op. cit.*, p. 86-89 and p. 131.

<sup>51</sup> K. R. HOPWOOD, “Tales of Osman: Legend or History?,” in *XIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Ankara, 4-8 Ekim 1999, Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2002, p. 2056; H. İNALCIK, “Osmān Ghāzī’s Siege of Nicaea,” in ZACHARIADOU (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 80; HOPWOOD, “Low-Level Diplomacy,” *art. cit.*, p. 153; ZACHARIADOU, “Histoires et légendes,” *art. cit.*, p. 81-82. On the *nökers*, cf. İNALCIK, “Question of the Emergence,” *art. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>52</sup> HOPWOOD, “Social and Economic Context,” *art. cit.*, p. 8; Osman’s father had had a long-term relationship of amity (or perpetual friendship, *daim dostluk*) with the nearby Byzantine commander of Bilecik. For Osman’s network of relations, cf. K. BARKEY, *Empire of Difference: the Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 45-58, esp. fig. 1.

<sup>53</sup> P. N. REMLER, “Ottoman, Isfendiyarid, and Eretnid Coinage: a Currency Community in Fourteenth Century Anatolia,” *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 25, 1980, p. 169 and p. 187; L. T. DARLING, “The Development of Ottoman Governmental Institutions in the Fourteenth Century: a Reconstruction,” in V. COSTANTINI, M. KOLLER (ed.), *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, Leiden, Brill, 2008, p. 17-34.

<sup>54</sup> Osman’s dream of the world-tree growing from his belly with all kinds of birds nesting in its branches is related in AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> LOWRY, *op. cit.*, p. 56 and p. 68-69. Pachymeres maintained that the regions overrun by the Turks were “ruined”, but he appears to have meant that they were lost to the Byzantines, abandoned by the elites, disorganized, rather than uninhabited or destroyed; PACHYMERES, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 424-425.

<sup>56</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 14. Hopwood describes the society of the Seljuk-Byzantine border as “staunchly Moslem yet welcoming”; HOPWOOD, “Christian-Muslim Sym-

culty explaining this degree of accommodation, labeling Osman's good relations with neighboring Christians "feigned friendship" (*mudara*) and implying that Osman conciliated them only in order to make their conquest easier. But he also mentioned several times the Ottomans' enmity toward powerful Germiyan, the nearest *beylik*. Osman's friendship with the Christians may not have been feigned at all but may instead have been impelled by the desire to bolster his forces against a stronger foe.<sup>57</sup> The first result of his friendship with the Christian lord of Harmankaya, Köse Mihal, was their joint capture of Eskişehir from the Germiyanids.<sup>58</sup> The Ottomans' conciliatory behavior has been called the first step to domination, but it is better described as a substitute for domination on the part of a state too small to dominate by force. Ottoman confrontations with the Byzantine state were minimal in this period.

This situation perceptibly changed during the reign of Osman's son Orhan (1324-1362), when the evidence indicates an emerging tension between the accommodationist policies of the earlier period and the exclusionary logic of *gaza* as holy war.<sup>59</sup> This tension first appeared not in the Ottoman *beylik* but further to the south. Orhan may have been the first Ottoman ruler to use the titles of *Gazi* and "Sultan of the *Gazis*", but that title did not appear until a dedicatory inscription dated 1337, although it suggests that some among the Ottomans were calling their raids *gaza* before that date.<sup>60</sup> Until then, their use of *gaza* was not impor-

biosis," *art. cit.*, p. 27. Balivet goes so far as to speak of a "melting-pot" identity among the emerging Ottomans; BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine*, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>57</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 4 and p. 8. Hopwood argues on other grounds that the concept of *mudara* was introduced by 15th-century Ottoman chroniclers to explain a relationship of accommodation that by then had become inexplicable, and that nomads' friendship with sedentaries was necessary for their own security and commerce; HOPWOOD, "Mudara," *art. cit.*, p. 154-161.

<sup>58</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 11; or Karacahisar, as Lindner maintains: LINDNER, *Explorations*, *op. cit.*, p. 57-80, where he also discusses the strife with Germiyan and the way the chronicles disguised Ottoman-Christian cooperation against other Muslims. Imber, while accepting the existence of unnamed Byzantine followers of Osman, declared Köse Mihal a mythical figure; C. IMBER, "The Legend of Osman Gazi," in ZACHARIADOU (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *infra*; even Ahmedī states that it was only in the reign of Orhan that "the holy raid [*gaza*] became a sacred obligation"; AHMEDĪ, *History*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>60</sup> For details on the meaning of this inscription, cf. LOWRY, *op. cit.*, p. 33-44, where he also shows that the inscription is probably authentic; LINDNER, *Nomads and Ottomans*, *art. cit.*, p. 7; I. BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, "Analyse de la titulature d'Orhan sur deux inscriptions de Brousse," *Turcica* 34, 2002, p. 223-240; C. HEYWOOD, "The 1337 Bursa Inscription and its Interpreters," *Turcica* 36, 2004, p. 215-232; L. KALUS, "L'inscription de Bursa au nom du sultan Orhan, datée de 738/1337-38: comment faut-il la lire?," *Turcica* 36, 2004, p. 233-251.

tant enough to make an observable mark; the poet Ahmedī says that in Orhan's day *gaza* was known as *akın*, "raiding".<sup>61</sup> By 1337 the Ottomans' *gazi* identity had become significant enough for Orhan to boast of it in this inscription. The mere existence of the inscription, irrespective of its contents, is indicative of the rising pace of Islamic institutional development in Orhan's reign, which surely contributed to the growing tension between Islamic and other ideologies of conquest.<sup>62</sup> Still, many of the foot soldiers Orhan recruited were Christian, and he also sent his troops into service as Byzantine mercenaries, aided the Genoese in their war with Venice, and captured the Muslim *beylik* of Karesi; none of these acts sounds much like holy war.<sup>63</sup> Orhan's proposal to marry the Byzantine emperor's daughter promised that he "would no longer be an ally and a friend, but a son".<sup>64</sup> His interaction with the Byzantine state was more intensive than Osman's, but it had positive as well as negative components. During Orhan's reign, claims to conquest of infidels in the name of Islam coexisted and competed with conquest in the name of the Byzantines, conquest of fellow Muslims, and conquest without any religious connotations whatsoever.

Further south, however, in the *beyliks* of Menteşe and Aydın, the Turks were definitely involved in holy war.<sup>65</sup> Menteşe in the southwest confronted the Hospitalers on Rhodes, who were continuing the Crusade through piracy, blockading the Mediterranean trade route from Anatolia to Egypt. Menteşe traded with Italian merchants but at the same time made *gazi* warfare on the Knights of Saint John and their allies. The *beylik* of Aydın, based around Izmir, developed a large fleet that cruised the Aegean islands and the coasts of Greece and Thrace, carrying on a rich and growing trade with the Italian city-states but also engaging in

<sup>61</sup> Ahmedī, quoted in LOWRY, *op. cit.*, p. 45. Lindner suggests that the Turks abandoned pastoralism for agriculture because it would support a larger army and calls *gaza* a justification after the fact for the then-sedentarized Turks' disreputable past as nomad raiders; LINDNER, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?," *art. cit.*, p. 708-709.

<sup>62</sup> HEYWOOD, "Frontier in Ottoman History," *art. cit.*

<sup>63</sup> Cf. L. T. DARLING, "Christian-Muslim Interaction on the Ottoman Frontier: *Gaza* and Accommodation in Early Ottoman History," in K. KARPAT, Y. YILDIRIM (ed.), *The Ottoman Mosaic: Exploring Models for Peace by Re-Exploring the Past*, Seattle, Cune Press, 2010, p. 103-118.

<sup>64</sup> Kantakouzenos, quoted in C. IMBER, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1481*, Istanbul, Isis Press, 1990, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> H. İNALCIK, "The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451," in K. M. SETTON (ed.), *A History of the Crusades*, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 1989, vol. 6, p. 222-254.

piracy and naval raids on Venetian possessions.<sup>66</sup> Both *beyliks* acquired Greek sailors and shipbuilders when the Byzantines disbanded their navy in 1282, and they also recruited fighters from the other *beyliks*.<sup>67</sup> Mehmed Bey of Aydın (d. 1334), Orhan's contemporary, was the real "sultan of the *gazis*" in this period.<sup>68</sup> His forces under his brother Umur Gazi raided Italian positions in the Aegean, and it may have been to compete with Aydın's prestige, or to try to obtain the banner of *gaza* after Mehmed's death, that Orhan began to use the title. Because of Umur's depredations, the Western Europeans actually proclaimed a crusade against Aydın in 1332 and won a major victory. A decade later, Aydın's attacks on Venetian possessions in the Aegean brought on another crusade that captured the naval base of İzmir; Umur died trying to retake it in 1348.<sup>69</sup> It is not surprising to discover that a *gazi* literature (with Umur Gazi as one of its outstanding heroes) emerged in the western Anatolian *beyliks* in the first half of the 14th century.<sup>70</sup> The Turks of Aydın were probably its best audience. The question still remains how broadly the Ottomans of the same period shared the *gazi* impulse; Orhan became a Byzantine son-in-law and vassal even as his forces continued the conquest of formerly Byzantine lands in Europe.

Although Aydın's forces fought holy wars against the Venetians, like the Ottomans they also hired themselves out as mercenaries to Byzantines and Serbs. The Turkish leaders of the early 14th century were obvi-

<sup>66</sup> E. A. ZACHARIADOU, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydın*, Venice, Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1983; H. İNALCIK, "The Rise of the Turcoman Maritime Principalities in Anatolia, Byzantium, and the Crusades," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 9, 1985, p. 179-217.

<sup>67</sup> E. A. ZACHARIADOU, "Holy War in the Aegean during the Fourteenth Century," in B. ARBEL, B. HAMILTON, D. JACOBY (ed.), *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, London, F. Cass, 1989, p. 216-217; K. FLEET, "Early Turkish Naval Activities," *Oriente Moderno* n. s. 20, 2001, p. 129-138.

<sup>68</sup> EMECEN, "Gazâya Dâir," *art. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>69</sup> ZACHARIADOU, *Trade and Crusade*, *op. cit.*, p. 21-62; FOSS, *Ephesus after Antiquity*, *op. cit.*, p. 151-152.

<sup>70</sup> On this literature, cf. KAFADAR, *op. cit.*, p. 62-73; I. MÉLIKOFF-SAYAR, *Le Destân d'Umûr Pacha*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1954, p. 27-35. The *Destân* knows little or nothing about Osman (he merits only six verses devoid of concrete information, and his conquests are attributed to his father), but it gives Orhan five pages and makes the link with Umur Gazi; ENVERİ, *Fatih Devri Kaynaklarından Düstürnâme-i Enverî: Osmanlı Tarihi Kısmı (1299-1466)*, ed. N. Öztürk, Istanbul, Kitabevi, 2003, p. 22-27. For Enveri, the most important Christian foes were not the Byzantines but the Franks, the Europeans; BAYRI, *op. cit.*, p. 201-202. The Byzantines considered Umur an educated man and a noble knight; A. DUCÉLLIER, *Chrétiens d'Orient et islam au Moyen Âge, VII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1996, p. 342-343.

ously able to differentiate between the Byzantine and Balkan Orthodox Christians, with whom they intermingled and intermarried (and also fought), and the Latin Christians with whom they conducted only trade and crusade. An Ottoman inscription in the citadel of Thessaloniki had different labels for these groups, calling them “Christians” and “Franks” respectively.<sup>71</sup> For most Europeans crusade was ideologically primary and trade an interference – certainly for the Pope and the Hungarians, if not for the Venetians, for whom trade often outweighed crusade in importance. The Turks, even more than Venice, aimed first at political and economic expansion. Two crusades in the space of 11 years, however, must have raised the religious profile of the conflict for all those involved in it. This crusading warfare was not about the Byzantines *per se*, but it did have repercussions on the treatment of Christians in the southern *beyliks*, which was much harsher than that described for the Ottomans. There are many more reports of pillage, destruction of churches, dispossession, expulsion of town dwellers, and molestation and harassment of Christians, both natives and European merchants.<sup>72</sup> This difference suggests that in mid-century the Ottomans did not feel the pressure of holy war to the same extent as the *beyliks* to the south.

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MURAD I'S REIGN, 1362-1389:

THE GROWTH OF AN OTTOMAN *GAZI* IDENTITY

After the mid-14th century, the development of an Ottoman *gazi* identity became much more likely. In the 1340s and 1350s, the Ottomans were invited to Europe as mercenaries for the Byzantines and the Genoese of Pera; based in the fortress of Çimpe/Tzympe, they soon began making conquests for themselves under the leadership of Orhan's son Süleyman, joined by warriors from other *beyliks*. At that point men with the title of *Gazi* appear in conquest accounts heading bodies of fighters. In mid-century, the fighters from Aydın, with their experience of crusade, must have had a more well-defined *gazi* identity than the Ottomans. Did the Ottomans struggle to keep up ideologically? The first anti-Ottoman

<sup>71</sup> H. W. LOWRY, *The Shaping of the Ottoman Balkans, 1350-1550: the Conquest, Settlement and Infrastructural Development of Northern Greece*, Istanbul, Bahçeşehir University Publications, 2008, p. 89.

<sup>72</sup> FOSS, *Ephesus after Antiquity*, *op. cit.*, p. 148 and p. 153; Barkey reaches the same conclusion; BARKEY, *op. cit.*, p. 56 and n. 72.

crusade in 1359 must have hastened the process along.<sup>73</sup> The fluctuating attitudes of the Byzantine rulers toward the Ottomans generated corresponding fluctuations in their relationship, and from 1359 to 1371 both the Byzantines and the Ottomans justified their warfare against each other religiously, which they had not earlier done.

Moreover, the Turkish forces in Europe, made up of men from the southern *beyliks* (Aydın, Saruhan, Karesi) as well as Ottomans, now faced new opponents who were generally not prepared to accept Turkish conquest gracefully. The European Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians had not lived side by side with Turks for decades or centuries like the Byzantines of Anatolia. For them the encounter with the Turks was new and largely negative, coming as it did on the heels of two centuries of warfare and efforts to escape Byzantine and Latin domination. Although the invading forces were partly of Christian origin and probably still somewhat Christian in faith, to the Christians of Rumeli they all appeared to be “Turks” and presumably Muslims, so that the religious divide became the most salient one for the Balkan Christians, although it had not been so for those in Anatolia.<sup>74</sup>

A third factor that may have heightened the *gazi* identity of the Turkish forces at this time was the conversion of Christian fighters to Islam, whether these were recruits from Anatolia or captives from defeated armies and conquered cities in Rumeli. It has often been remarked that converts may be more zealous for their new faith than those born into it. Archbishop Gregory Palamas discovered this when in 1354 he was captured by the Turks; in captivity he met converts who pointed to his capture as evidence of the ineffectiveness of Christianity compared to Islam.<sup>75</sup> For such converts, especially those from crusading armies, world conquest may have been less compelling than holy war as a motive for battle and a guide to relations with the defeated Christian culture.

A fourth motive for the development of a *gazi* identity was provided by the nature of military leadership in the European context. Osman led his

<sup>73</sup> İNALCIK, “Ottoman Turks and the Crusades,” *art. cit.*, p. 237-238. Kafadar locates this change during the reign of Orhan (KAFADAR, *op. cit.*, p. 90), but as we have seen, although the claim was made at that time, it encountered substantial opposition.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. also BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine*, *op. cit.*, p. 94. This is despite the fact that many of the invaders, both former Byzantines and Turks, spoke Greek; DUCCELLIER, “L’islam et les musulmans,” *art. cit.*, p. 131. The difference in attitudes helps explain the existence of differing reports on the Ottomans.

<sup>75</sup> G. G. ARNAKIS, “Gregory Palamas among the Turks and Documents of his Captivity as Historical Sources,” *Speculum* 26, 1951, p. 106.

own forces and made conquests in his own name, as did Orhan, and Süleyman made his conquests in the name of the family of Osman. After Süleyman's death and during the reign of Murad I (1362-1389), however, many of the Turkish forces in Europe were under the command of frontier *beys* such as Hacı İlbegi or Gazi Evrenos, some of whom were not of Ottoman origin and did not identify strongly as Ottomans.<sup>76</sup> They were supported by Sufi *şeyhs*, throughout Islamic history the group most concerned about conversion.<sup>77</sup> When the forces in Rumeli were without sultanic leadership, a stress on *gaza* rather than dynastic aggrandizement as the ideology of conquest would unite the army and give the frontier *beys* and Sufi *şeyhs* increased authority. This motive applied to the whole period after 1354 but acquired greater relevance when no members of the dynasty were present, such as in 1357 after the death of Süleyman and after the 1366 seizure of Gallipoli by Amadeo of Savoy; at both these times Murad was in Anatolia. Moreover, Amadeo's taking of Gallipoli was part of a new crusading venture, which made its reconquest, along with the capture of other Balkan cities in that period, a matter of religious competition.<sup>78</sup> As İnalçık has noted, the breakup of tribal units and the mixing of tribes and peoples in the Turkish mercenary forces in Europe also encouraged the development of *gaza* as an ideological glue holding the army together.<sup>79</sup>

Yet another motive for the Ottoman state's adoption of a *gazi* stance may be its own achievement of dominance during Murad's reign. After

<sup>76</sup> Cf., e.g., I. BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, "La conquête d'Andrinople par les Turcs: la pénétration turque en Thrace et la valeur des chroniques ottomanes," *Travaux et mémoires* 1, 1965, p. 446-453; KAFADAR, *op. cit.*, p. 115-117 and p. 139; V. DEMETRIADES, "Some Thoughts on the Origins of the *Devşirme*," in ZACHARIADOU (ed.), *The Ottoman Emirate, op. cit.*, p. 26 and p. 29. The power and autonomy of these frontier *beys* is demonstrated by their roles in the succession struggles after Bayezid's death; cf. R. MURPHEY, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800*, London, Continuum, 2008, p. 46-47.

<sup>77</sup> M. G. S. HODGSON, *The Venture of Islam -II- The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1974, p. 535; cf., e.g., R. YILDIRIM, "History beneath Clouds of Legend: Seyyid Ali Sultan and his Place in Early Ottoman History according to Legends, Narratives, and Archival Evidence," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 15, 2009, p. 21-57. Conversion by Sufis is reported to take place mainly outside the lands of Islam, or in cities; BAYRI, *op. cit.*, p. 188 and p. 195.

<sup>78</sup> H. İNALCIK, "Polunya (*Appolunia*): Tanrı-Yıkıldığı Osmanlı Rumeli Fetihleri Kronolojisinde Düzeltilmeler," in Z. T. ERTUĞ, *Prof. Dr. Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu'na Armağan*, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 2006, p. 29-33.

<sup>79</sup> İNALCIK, "Question of the Emergence," *art. cit.*, p. 75. On the other hand, after 1371 the presence of Byzantine vassals at the Ottoman conquest of Byzantine territories might have diluted the Ottomans' *gazi* identification.



the battle of Çirmen in 1371 the Byzantine, Serbian, and Bulgarian rulers all became Ottoman vassals. In moving from being the Byzantines' vassals to being their overlords, the Ottomans were virtually required to adopt a somewhat more orthodox, more routinized posture, of which adherence to the rules of *gaza* may have been a part. The letters of the future emperor Manuel II, written while on campaign with the Ottoman army two decades later, refer to scenes of "feasting and fighting" which Manuel found distasteful and undignified.<sup>80</sup> It is not hard to imagine that he and other Byzantines frequently urged the Ottoman rulers to act in a more regularized and rule-bound fashion. We do not know how such Byzantine influences affected Murad, but the young prince Bayezid seems to have been more open to change. Moreover, the confrontation of cultures at the topmost levels of the two states involved high-level clerics on both sides in what became a contest between the official representative of Christianity in the region and the most powerful representative of Islam.

One more circumstance that contributed to deepening the religious identification of the Ottomans was surely the Black Death, which struck Constantinople and the seaports of Anatolia in 1347-1348 and interior cities a year later. It was estimated, perhaps exaggeratedly, that as many as 2/3 of Constantinople's people died, and this loss of population has been cited as the reason for the hiring of Turkish mercenaries. The collapse of the southern *beyliks* with seaports on the Mediterranean and Aegean coasts, the decline of indigenous Christian communities in Anatolia and Thrace, and the weakness of the southern Balkan states have all been blamed on the Black Death, while the nomads are thought to have been less affected by it. The resulting ease with which the conquests could be pushed forward must have seemed a sign of divine approval. As in western Europe, the virulence of the plague doubtless increased popular religiosity in general and particularly the religious connotations of warfare.<sup>81</sup> It probably also stimulated conversion.

<sup>80</sup> G. T. DENNIS (ed.), *The Letters of Manuel II Palaeologus: Text, Translation and Notes*, Washington, DC, Center for Byzantine studies, 1977, p. 46-50.

<sup>81</sup> U. SCHAMILOGLU, "The Rise of the Ottoman Empire: the Black Death in Medieval Anatolia and its Impact on Turkish Civilization," in N. YAVARI, L. G. POTTER, J.-M. RAN OPPENHEIM (ed.), *Views from the Edge: Essays in Honor of Richard W. Bulliet*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2004, p. 270-272. On the role of population loss in the rapidity of conquest, cf. K.-P. MATSCHKE, "Research Problems concerning the Transition to Tourkokratia: the Byzantinist Standpoint," in F. ADANIR, S. FAROQHI (ed.), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: a Discussion of Historiography*, Leiden, Brill, 2002, p. 82-92. On sub-

At the same time, Murad continued the process of conquering Muslim territories in Anatolia, which provided a reason for making *gaza* as holy war the justification for Ottoman conquest irrespective of the real motives of the conquerors. The invasion of other Anatolian *beyliks* demanded some defense in view of the religious prohibition against fighting fellow Muslims. Ottoman acquisitions in Anatolia were initially labeled the products of a marriage and a land sale, Germiyanid territory as the dowry of Prince Bayezid and Hamid as a purchase that bailed out a poverty-stricken ruler. When the *bey* of Karaman objected violently to the occupation of his near neighbor Hamid and marched against the Ottomans (calling their bluff, as it were), the Ottomans defended themselves by describing the Karamanid offensive as treason against the *gaza* and aid to the enemy.<sup>82</sup> They claimed that fighting against the Muslims of Karaman was legitimate because Karaman, by attacking the Ottomans in the rear, hindered their *gaza* against the infidel. The Ottomans then had to maintain that their conquests had always been religiously justified.<sup>83</sup>

In the later 14th century, then, a number of factors pulled the Ottoman military forces toward a stronger identification as *gazis*. In tandem with this development, Murad himself acquired a public image as a *gazi* who spent “the whole of his life fighting for the faith out of love for God”.<sup>84</sup> This heightening of the *gazi* identity encouraged the production of *gazi* literature and the sultan’s use of *gazi* terminology for legitimation, not only in the case of the Anatolian conquests but in the Balkans as well. Descriptions of Murad’s conquests in the 15th-century chronicles all appear to stem from a *Gazavâtnâme* written shortly after the events.<sup>85</sup> The crusade atmosphere was also intensifying, with interventions by the Papacy and the Hungarians and with Byzantine participation. The Byzantine acceptance of vassal status should have ended the *gaza*, but

sequent outbreaks of the plague, cf. H. W. LOWRY, “Pushing the Stone Uphill: the Impact of Bubonic Plague on Ottoman Urban Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 23, 2003, p. 93-132.

<sup>82</sup> H. İNALCIK, *The Ottoman Empire: the Classical Age 1300-1600*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973, p. 14.

<sup>83</sup> P. FODOR, “Ahmedî’s *Dāsītān* as a Source of Early Ottoman History,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica* 38, 1984, p. 51.

<sup>84</sup> H. İNALCIK, “The Origins of Classical Ottoman Literature: Persian Tradition, Court Entertainments, and Court Poets,” *Journal of Turkish Literature* 5, 2008, p. 28. For the central Anatolian historian Astarabadi as well, Murad I’s reign was the time of *gaza*; ANOOSHAHR, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>85</sup> İMBER, *Ottoman Empire, op. cit.*, p. 30; İNALCIK, “Origins of Classical Ottoman Literature,” *art. cit.*, p. 41-43; İnalçık identifies the author as Ahmedî.

because this acceptance was partial and half-hearted, relations between the two camps remained ambiguous. According to the *menakıbnames*, “what the dervishes or *gazis* understood [by] conversion was not actually a change of faith but submission to the symbol or representative of Islam.”<sup>86</sup> Socialization and even collaboration between Byzantines and Ottomans became more frequent, and a considerable party at the Byzantine court favored accommodation. We learn this, however, from the complaints of this party’s opponents, often those with economic ties to the Italians, who denounced the accommodationists and espoused undying hatred for the Turks, and whose rhetoric seems to have been adopted unquestioningly by later historians.<sup>87</sup>

Murad henceforth related to the Byzantine emperors politically as fellow monarchs and vassal subordinates rather than as despised infidels.<sup>88</sup> He was related to the Byzantine royal line, though often at cross purposes with them. His father had been a Byzantine ally and had married a Byzantine princess, and his mother was another Byzantine woman. Murad himself married a Bulgarian princess, whose sister married the Byzantine emperor’s son Andronicus. His son Bayezid married a Serbian princess.<sup>89</sup> Although they despised each other’s religion, Murad’s political competition with the Byzantine emperors was a family affair, especially visible when his son, Savcı, and his brother-in-law, Andronicus, jointly rebelled against their fathers in 1373 and were jointly punished.<sup>90</sup> For Murad,

<sup>86</sup> “Infidels”, then, were those who failed to recognize Muslim spiritual authority, whatever their ostensible religion; BAYRI, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

<sup>87</sup> NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 120, p. 124-126, p. 134-135, p. 231.

<sup>88</sup> Even Emperor Manuel II, who supposedly hated the Turks, wrote about the Ottoman army merely as fierce and distressingly uncultured warriors; DENNIS (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 46-50, p. 58, p. 74; E. A. ZACHARIADOU, “Manuel II Palaeologos on the Strife between Bāyezīd I and Kādī Burhān al-Dīn Ahmad,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43, 1980, p. 471-481. Manuel himself mentioned that he found a more congenial companion in a Muslim teacher (*müderriş*), who may be a symbolic figure representing the better-educated Muslims he had met; S. W. REINERT, “Manuel II Palaeologos and his Müderriş,” in S. ĆURČIĆ, D. MOURIKI (ed.), *The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire*, Princeton, Princeton University, 1991, p. 39-51.

<sup>89</sup> Cf., e.g., Z. YONCHEVA, “Orthodox Princesses in the Court of Ottoman Rulers,” *Études balkaniques* 36, 2000, p. 172; NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 121, n. 10. For the intermarriage policy of the Byzantine rulers of Trebizond, cf. BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine, op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>90</sup> CHALKOKONDYLES, *op. cit.*, p. 135-141; *Byzantium, Europe, and the Early Ottoman Sultans, 1373-1513: an Anonymous Greek Chronicle of the Seventeenth Century (Codex Barberinus Graecus 111)*, trans. M. Philippides, New Rochelle, NY, A. D. Caratzas, 1990, p. 19-20.

*gaza* functioned as a political instrument to be brought into play according to circumstances rather than as a personal identity.<sup>91</sup>

Murad's state at that time was becoming more islamized, not in the sense of religious intensity but of institutional development in the manner of the great bureaucratic empires of the Middle East. The institution of the *pençik* (the reservation of 1/5 of the booty of conquest for the treasury), which the chronicles attribute to Murad's time, symbolizes a more extensive adoption of historic Islamic administrative institutions and taxation practices during his reign.<sup>92</sup> Mosques, minarets, *medreses*, *zaviyes*, bathhouses, and other Islamic institutions dotted the landscape in the newly conquered areas, complete with multifunctional staffs and complex foundation documentation.<sup>93</sup> Islamic judges were appointed to the fighting forces, and the land tenure system became the well-known *timar* system we know from later evidence. Turkish translations of Middle Eastern literature, both religious and secular, made the civilization of the broader Islamic world more widely accessible.<sup>94</sup> The introduction of these typically Islamic features brought with it the tension, seen throughout Islamic history, between a ruler's Islam open to civilizational borrowing from non-Muslim sources and a cleric's Islam concerned primarily with the purity of Islamic practices and beliefs. If Murad rallied his

<sup>91</sup> The existence of a gap between sultanic and popular attitudes toward *gaza* is also visible in the period 1372-1375 when, despite the Byzantines' acceptance of vassal status, Ottoman soldiers entering Constantinople engaged in "horrible deeds", probably plunder and violence; NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 130 and p. 137.

<sup>92</sup> AŞIKPAŞAZADE, *op. cit.*, p. 54; DARLING, "Development of Ottoman Governmental Institutions," *art. cit.*, p. 17-34.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. LOWRY, *Shaping of the Ottoman Balkans*, *op. cit.*, esp. his statement, p. 88-89, that in the 14th century it was rare for the conquerors to make churches into mosques, whereas in the 15th century the first thing the Ottomans did on conquering a town was to turn its most prominent church into a mosque as a political statement of "new ownership". This practice may be due as much to the rapidity of conquest as to a wish to dispossess the Christians; leadership not by sultans but by frontier *beys*, without the resources to build their own mosques immediately, may also have played a role.

<sup>94</sup> M. F. KÖPRÜLÜ, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, İstanbul, 1926; rpt. İstanbul, Ötüken, 1986, p. 340-350; A. UĞUR, *Osmanlı Siyaset-Nâmeleri*, İstanbul, MEB Yayınları, 2001; P. FODOR, "State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th-17th Century Ottoman Mirrors for Princes," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica* 40, 1986, p. 220-221. At the same period there was considerable literary activity at the court of Aydın; cf. A. S. ÜNVER, "İlimler Tarihimizde Aydınoğlu İsa Beyle Şahsına ait Mecmuanın Ehemmiyeti Hakkında," *Bellekten* 24, 1960, p. 447-455; B. FLEMMING, "Fahris Hüsrev u Şîrîn vom Jahre 1367: eine vergessene türkische Dichtung aus der Emiratszeit," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 115, 1965, p. 36-64, which may have affected the portrayal of Umur as a cultured man.

troops on battlefields like Kosovo Polye by shouting: “*Hey, gaziler!*”, he himself was not a holy warrior but a conqueror and emperor. This tension deepened during the reign of Murad’s successor, Bayezid I (1389-1402).

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**BAYEZİD I (1389-1402) AND BEYOND:  
THE DEATH OF A COSMOPOLITAN IDENTITY**

Bayezid I, in contrast to his father, was a surprisingly enigmatic figure who confounded both Christians and Muslims. He conquered Christian kingdoms and Muslim *beyliks* alike. He not only used his Christian vassals to conquer Muslim principalities in Anatolia, but he also brought them to the siege of Constantinople and the Crusade of Nicopolis. He was always on campaign and was feared by all, yet his reign was noted for advancements in cultural and administrative sophistication. In his youth he had governed Kütayha, the cultural capital of western Anatolia, and had become acquainted with its writers and poets.<sup>95</sup> By Christians he was considered to be haughty, brutal, the merciless victor at the Crusade of Nicopolis (1396) who slaughtered “the flower of European chivalry”, and “a persecutor of Christians like no other around him”.<sup>96</sup> According to the Ottoman chronicles, however, he was in bed with the Christians: he had a Serbian wife, young virgin slaves of both sexes, and Christian advisors who taught him to drink and carouse.<sup>97</sup>

Bayezid’s record suggests that he intended the Ottoman Empire to be a hybrid, multi-religious and multi-cultural state, despite the fulminations of clerics on both sides.<sup>98</sup> He considered himself to be descended from

<sup>95</sup> İNALCIK, “Origins of Classical Ottoman Literature,” *art. cit.*, p. 28 and p. 42.

<sup>96</sup> DOUKAS, *op. cit.*, p. 62; REINERT, “Muslim Presence in Constantinople,” *art. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>97</sup> AZAMAT (ed.), *Anonim, op. cit.*, p. 31-32. For the corresponding pro-Turkish party in Constantinople, cf. BALIVET, *Romanie byzantine, op. cit.*, p. 94-98; BALIVET, “Le personnage du ‘turcophile’,” *art. cit.*, p. 31-47; NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 120 and p. 124-127. The history of the turcophiles has also been suppressed; no mention of such a party appears in G. OSTROGORSKY, “The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkan Peninsula: Byzantium as a Turkish Dependency,” in G. OSTROGORSKY, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. J. Hussey, New Brunswick NJ, Rutgers University Press, 1969, rev. ed., p. 533-552, or Donald MCG. NICOL, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium: 1261-1453*, London, R. Hart-Davis, 1972, p. 265-334. Some earlier instances of turcophilia are listed in HOPWOOD, “The Byzantine-Turkish Frontier,” *art. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>98</sup> This goal does not preclude a desire to expand militarily or to incorporate the vassal states more fully into the empire; cf. NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 30-33.

Alexander the Great, the hero of Christians and Muslims alike, and he possessed a set of tapestries portraying Alexander's life.<sup>99</sup> The Byzantine emperors were his vassals, but so were several Muslim as well as Christian rulers. It was the emperor Manuel II who, by attempting to stir up a crusade against the Ottomans, intensified the religious aspect of their rivalry, though not necessarily from religious motives; his goal was to keep the Byzantine Empire from incorporation by the Ottomans.<sup>100</sup> Other Christians supported Bayezid, not only because of his power but also because he conciliated them by marrying their princess, listening to their advisors, and adopting their customs. When he besieged Constantinople, the common people agitated in favor of surrendering to him and refugees from the city fled to him.<sup>101</sup> His regime employed a sophisticated fiscal/administrative system that drew from both Seljuk and Byzantine precedents; it was in his reign that the first provincial surveys of land revenue were carried out in Anatolia and the Balkans for the *timar* system.<sup>102</sup> Having acquired both the West Anatolian cultural capital of Kütahya and the Byzantine cultural center of Thessalonica, Bayezid had a stable of writers and abundant patronage and was poised on the threshold of a new cultural development joining the best of both worlds. There were even attempts to reconcile Islam and Christianity.<sup>103</sup>

The intervention of Timur in 1402 decisively changed all that, finally destroying the possibility of a hybrid identity and resolving the tension surrounding it, while introducing new fault lines in Ottoman society. For the legitimacy contest with Timur, Bayezid adopted a *gazi* rhetoric that would become the standard argument in the 15th century. Letters to Timur attributed to him described his descent from "Sultan Osman Gazi" who had made his conquests "with divine approbation".<sup>104</sup> They desig-

<sup>99</sup> KAFADAR, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>100</sup> In later bids for independence from the Ottomans, Manuel manipulated the sultan's relatives and his other Muslim allies in similar ways; H. İNALCIK, "Review of *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): a Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship*, by J. W. Barker", *Archivum Ottomanicum* 3, 1971, p. 272-285.

<sup>101</sup> NECİPOĞLU, *op. cit.*, p. 151, citing Chalkocondyles. While wealthy merchants and officials tended to favor the Venetians, many more modest tradesmen and minor officials favored the Ottomans; *ibid.*, p. 193 and p. 199.

<sup>102</sup> H. İNALCIK, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Süret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Arvanid*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1954, p. xv and p. 103; H. İNALCIK, "Arnavutluk'ta Osmanlı Hâkimiyetinin Yerleşmesi ve İskender Bey İsyanının Menşei," *Fatih ve İstanbul* 1/2, 1953, p. 155-156; and İNALCIK, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," *art. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>103</sup> LOWRY, *Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>104</sup> A. FERİDUN BEY, *Mecmu'a-i Münşe'ât-i Selâtin*, İstanbul, Dâr et-Tibâ'a el-'Amire,

nated warfare against Timur as *gaza* and the army *gazis*, like the forces of the “Great *Gazi*” of Aleppo, Nur al-Din Zangi; *gaza* against Timur was legitimate because he had made himself an apostate by attacking Muslim rulers, breaking promises, and violating women.<sup>105</sup>

Bayezid was discredited by his defeat, and with him the cosmopolitan state he had created. The Ottoman conquest, begun as a joint Muslim-Christian enterprise, was clearly no longer that – now it was a Muslim enterprise that could be tainted by too close association with Christians. The conquest of Christian territory and the subjugation of Christians became the *raison d’être* of the Ottoman state, saved from annihilation by Timur’s recognition of its *gaza*. To advance in Ottoman leadership it was still not necessary to be born a Muslim, but it now became necessary to convert to Islam. A primary site of Christian-Muslim interaction beyond the marketplace became the Sufi convent, a locus not merely of exchange but of conversion.<sup>106</sup> Later chroniclers deprived Bayezid of the title of *Gazi* because of his defeat and the subsequent breakup of the empire, despite his warfare against the Crusaders and Constantinople. They reinterpreted his conciliation of Christians and his attempts to integrate them into the functioning of the state as illicit intercourse with slaves. They associated his unpopular bureaucratic centralization with sin and corruption, as opposed to the purity of nomadic autarky and *gaza*. As the last in a Khaldunian cycle of rulers, Bayezid had to be portrayed as corrupt and over-civilized and his successor as a simple but pure warrior emerging to begin a new cycle. That this was a historical construction is revealed by the fact that other historians, who did not employ the cyclical dynastic concept, recorded both that Bayezid was not corrupt and did not drink, and that he was a *gazi*.<sup>107</sup>

Histories and epics written in the first decades of the 15th century embodied this dichotomy between *gaza* and corruption – or autarky and centralization – and it became one of the central features of Ottoman identity in later centuries. The epic poem of Ahmedî, the section of Aşıkpaşazade’s chronicle based on Yahşi Fakih, and the early 15th-century history of Çelebi Mehmed (later Mehmed I) by an anonymous author, all

1848-1849, 1:125, trans. in ANOOSHAHR, *op. cit.*, p. 125-126; Anooshahr suggests that Bayezid’s dispute with Timur occasioned this ideological formulation, but the letters may be a later composition.

<sup>105</sup> ANOOSHAHR, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>106</sup> LOWRY, *Shaping, op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. AHMEDÎ, *op. cit.*, p. 19-22.

products of the years immediately after 1402, exalted *gaza* not only in their own time but as a foundational Ottoman characteristic from the start. They all depicted the early 14th-century Ottomans as zealous *gazis*, offering to infidels Islam or the sword. According to Ahmedî, Osman would “attack realms and kill the infidel” and Orhan “plundered the infidel day and night ... [and] enslaved women and children, whomever they found”. In İznik he “annihilated the infidel”, and “wherever there were stains of polytheism”, as in Bursa, he “seized it, laying waste to all the churches there”, although in fact the city surrendered and its churches and people were preserved.<sup>108</sup> This depiction of *gaza* was not islamically correct; according to the laws of Islam, if Christians and Jews, “People of the Book” and not polytheists, refuse to accept Islam but pay the poll tax, they and their women and goods may not be molested.<sup>109</sup> The picture drawn by Ahmedî is not historically correct, either; the Byzantines in Ottoman territory had not been annihilated, destroyed, or killed under Osman and Orhan but were still there in large numbers in Ahmedî’s time, still Christian, and still treated as valuable members of the state, even as partners in its construction. There was real destruction and enslavement, but not of the total kind that Ahmedî described; conquest over, the Ottomans resettled, reincorporated, and restored. Ahmedî created an imaginary picture of legendary *gazi* heroes, autarkic nomads whose Islam was pure, with which to criticize the behavior of Bayezid I in adopting Byzantine sophistication and centralization and attacking fellow Muslims in Anatolia, resulting in their disaffection and desertion to Timur.<sup>110</sup> The depiction of *gaza* as all-destructive offers of Islam or the sword also appears in later chronicles, especially in their poetic sections. The stories of actual warfare in these same chronicles, however, are simply conquest – sometimes of Christians and sometimes of Muslims, sometimes in alliance with the Byzantines and sometimes not. Timur himself took a position as a fellow *gazi* and monarch of *gazis*, but he described his Indian

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5-6. For Yahşi Fakih, cf. ZACHARIADOU, “Histoires et légendes,” *art. cit.*, p. 49 and p. 55; for the anonymous chronicler, cf. D. KASTRITSIS (ed. and trans.), *The Tales of Sultan Mehmed, Son of Bayezid Khan*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, 2007, p. 1-39, or KASTRITSIS, *Sons of Bayezid*, *op. cit.*, p. 28-33.

<sup>109</sup> Ş. TEKİN, “XIV. Yüzyılda Yazılmış Gazilik Tarikası ‘Gâziliğin Yolları’ Adlı bir Anadolu Türkçesi Metni,” *Journal of Turkish Studies* 13, 1989, p. 144-145.

<sup>110</sup> FODOR, “Ahmedî’s Dâsitân,” *art. cit.*, p. 50. This picture also applied to the Christians the theme, drawn from earlier Seljuk chronicles, of the good Muslims and the wicked infidels (who in Seljuk times had been the Mongols); BELDICEANU-STEINHERR, “Péchés, calamités et salut,” *art. cit.*, p. 27-28, n. 54.



campaign as a delivery of the people from oppressive usurpers, while Nizam al-Din Shami's contemporary biography of Timur, the *Zafar-nama*, rewrote the sack of Delhi as a victory for monotheism and a cleansing from "the filth of the existence of unbelievers".<sup>111</sup> Whatever *gaza* was in reality, in literature it became a demonstration of Islamic purity and extremism.

It was the literary picture of early *gazis*, and not the actual history of accommodation, that formed the basis of Ottoman identity in the centuries to come. Subsequent chronicles distinguished the Ottomans from the other Turkish *beyliks* by their pursuit of *gaza* in Europe. The next two Ottoman rulers after the civil war, Mehmed I (1413-1421) and Murad II (1421-1451), although they continued the administrative and cultural development of the state and accepted Christians into the army, also employed Islamic legitimation for their struggles to reconquer former Ottoman territories and expand the empire; "the *gazis*" were the armies of the state, not the antinomian frontier raiders.<sup>112</sup> Ottoman competition with the Byzantines intensified as first the Ottomans, then the Byzantines found themselves fighting for their very existence. Both sultans – and the Byzantine emperor as well – stamped down on efforts still being made in some corners toward a Muslim-Christian partnership. The replacement of the Byzantines with the Timurids as the Ottomans' main ideological reference point reinforced a more exclusive "Turco-Islamic" identity rather than a cosmopolitan one.<sup>113</sup>

Mehmed I, under whose aegis the revenue survey system was revived, the first Ottoman mirror for princes was composed, and accounting manuals were copied in the bureaucracy, was clearly committed to the same administrative and civilizational goals as Bayezid I, though not to his cosmopolitanism.<sup>114</sup> Both from necessity and from policy, however, he spent

<sup>111</sup> ANOOSHAHR, *op. cit.*, p. 119 and p. 127.

<sup>112</sup> Both Çelebi Mehmed's anonymous chronicler and the author of the 1414 panegyric poem *Halîlnâme* portray him as endowed with the charisma of kingship and his forces as warriors for Islam, as well as using the rhetoric of Central Asian kingship; KASTRITSIS, *Sons of Bayezid*, *op. cit.*, p. 218 and p. 221; KASTRITSIS (ed.), *Tales of Sultan Mehmed*, *op. cit.*, p. 2ff.

<sup>113</sup> KASTRITSIS, *Sons of Bayezid*, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>114</sup> Mehmed doubtless did not reveal (or possibly did not espouse) these goals until after he gained the throne, since during the civil war among the sons of Bayezid he was supported by those who opposed imperial centralization and the expansion of the state; D. J. KASTRITSIS, "Religious Affiliations and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413," *Medieval Encounters* 13, 2007, p. 222 and p. 238; KASTRITSIS, *Sons of Bayezid*, *op. cit.*, p. 213-214.

most of his reign in the saddle, reconquering those parts of the empire that had become independent since the defeat by Timur and beating off attacks by the Byzantines and their allies. In his letters he positioned himself as a frontier *gazi* leader on behalf of, or in defiance of, the Timurids.<sup>115</sup> Murad II, in contrast, was a cultured man, the greatest Ottoman literary patron to date, and a Sufi mystic who preferred to abandon the sultanate for the monastery. He emphasized the religious meaning of *gaza* and pursued an aggressive policy toward the Byzantines and Serbians designed to enhance his legitimacy as a “*gazi* sultan”. Called out of retirement by his advisors on the approach of a crusading army, he led his troops to victory at Varna (1444); the *Gazavâtnâme* commemorating his exploits demonstrated that he had not resigned the throne out of weakness or lack of dedication to the *gazi* path.<sup>116</sup> *Gaza* at this point was clearly against Christians, had the purpose of establishing Islam as well as Islamic rule in the conquered regions, and led to the death, enslavement, or subordination of the Christian foe. The reaction against accommodation gained more strength from the Ottomans’ early 15th-century struggle against heresy and extremist Islam.<sup>117</sup> Histories written in the second half of the century make *gaza* the Ottomans’ purpose from the beginning. The identity conflict dominating history-writing at that point (and Ottoman society as well) was between the *gazis* as old-time frontier raiders perpetually fighting against the infidel, and a bureaucratic state trying to pull resources from those *gazis* to fuel a standing army (also called *gazis*) that would conquer Muslims and Christians alike in the name of Islam and the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>118</sup>

Vestiges of the initial accommodationist position still remained in Ottoman identity and society. From the 1430s, Ottoman merchants traded extensively with Constantinople; although they no longer lived in the city but across the straits at Üsküdar, they crossed over daily to the city’s markets and were visited in turn by Byzantines.<sup>119</sup> Christians who had submit-

<sup>115</sup> ANOOSHAHR, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>116</sup> H. İNALCIK, M. OĞUZ (eds.), *Gazavât-i Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1978; C. İMBER (ed., trans.), *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-45*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, p. 41-106.

<sup>117</sup> A. Y. OCAK, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler (15.-17. Yüzyıllar)*, İstanbul, Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998, p. 131-138.

<sup>118</sup> İNALCIK, “How to Read Āshik Pasha-zāde’s History,” *art. cit.*, p. 145-146; O. ÖZEL, “Limits of the Almighty: Mehmed II’s ‘Land Reform’ Revisited,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42, 1999, p. 226.

<sup>119</sup> NECİPOĞLU, *Byzantium*, p. 201-209; cf. p. 199-200. On the early Ottomans as tradesmen, cf. MATSCHKE, *art. cit.*, p. 88-96.

ted to Islamic domination were considered, even without conversion, not to be alien but rather participants in the Ottoman enterprise and potential *gazi* recruits. Christians were recruited for the *gaza* until at least the end of the century, Christian peasants protected the island of Limnos, and large numbers of Christians still held elite positions as *tumar* holders in both the Balkans and Anatolia.<sup>120</sup> Efforts to reconcile Islam and Christianity did not end with the 14th century; they popped up every now and then in Ottoman history. Before his execution in the early 15th century, Şeyh Bedreddin Simavni (product of a mixed marriage) and his disciple Börklüce Mustafa preached a synthesis of Islam and Christianity to their followers from both faiths in Dobruca and the Izmir region. The Hurufî sect from Iran, teaching the unity of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, spread widely among urban Christian and Muslim craftsmen in Anatolia and the Balkans despite heavy persecution for over a century after 1444. Even in the 16th century, Molla Kabız argued the superiority of Jesus over Muhammad before Sultan Süleyman and almost convinced him; he was only one of a number of Muslim “Jesus-lovers”.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, an elite Byzantine refugee, a relative of Murad II’s widow who lived in the Ottoman Empire in the late 15th century, tells us it was thought that the Ottoman Empire had emerged from an agreement among four lords in northwest Anatolia, two Muslim and two Christian, who together sought to replace the faltering Byzantine rule in Anatolia and elected Osman as their leader.<sup>122</sup> Even if the story itself is

<sup>120</sup> H. İNALCIK, “Timariotes chrétiens en Albanie au xv<sup>e</sup> siècle d’après un registre de timars ottoman,” *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Staatsarchiv* 4, 1951, p. 118-138; D. A. KOROBENIKOV, “Orthodox Communities in Eastern Anatolia in the Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries, Part 2: The Time of Troubles,” *Al-Masāq* 17, 2005, p. 17; LOWRY, *Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, *op. cit.*, p. 52-54 and p. 95-114.

<sup>121</sup> DOUKAS, *op. cit.*, p. 120-121; A. GÖLPINARLI, *Simavna Kadısoğlu Şeyh Bedreddin*, Istanbul, Eti Yayınevi, 1966; İNALCIK, *Classical Age*, *op. cit.*, p. 182 and p. 190-193; more recently M. BALIVET, “Deux partisans de la fusion religieuse des chrétiens et des musulmans au xv<sup>e</sup> siècle: le turc Bedreddin de Samavna et le grec Georges de Trebizonde,” *Vizantina* 10, 1980, p. 387; M. BALIVET, *Islam mystique et révolution armée dans les Balkans ottomans: vie du Cheikh Bedreddin, le “Hallāj des Turcs” (1358/59-1416)*, Istanbul, Éditions Isis, 1995; KAFADAR, *Between Two Worlds*, *op. cit.*, p. 143; OCAK, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar*, *op. cit.*, p. 136-250. Some hypothesize a popular Jesus-sect: E. A. ZACHARIADOU, “Co-Existence and Religion,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 15, 1997, p. 122, n. 8 and 9. For later examples, cf. R. MANTRAN, “Écrivains, penseurs et novateurs dans l’Empire ottoman aux xvii<sup>e</sup> et xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles,” *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 37, 1988, p. 163-164; H. G. MAJER, “‘The Koran, an Ottoman Dester!’: Ottoman Heretics of the 18th Century,” in VEINSTEIN (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 299-310.

<sup>122</sup> T. SPANDOUNES, *On the Origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, trans. and ed. D. M. Nicol, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 15; cf. LOWRY, *Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, *op. cit.*, p. 55 and p. 64-65.

untrue, its retelling at that date indicates an attempt to justify an observed level of cooperation between people of both faiths in the leadership of the empire, perhaps in the face of contrary ideological winds.

The period after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 was one of cultural if not religious syncretism. Mehmed II (1451-1481), as lord of “the two lands and the two seas” and master of The City *par excellence*, saw himself as the heir to the Roman Empire as well as to that of the Seljuks and Ilkhanids, another “second Alexander”. In his new capital he housed a balance of peoples, preserving its urban fabric and many of its inhabitants and repopulating it with Christians, Jews, and Muslims from all over the empire. He surrounded himself with members of the Byzantine elite and former Christians of the *devşirme*. He also sought to create an imperial culture drawing from Byzantine as well as Islamic sources; he himself knew Greek, read Greek books, and had Greek friends and intimates. He built himself one palace in the Byzantine style and one in the Timurid style, issued a law code in imitation of Justinian’s, and employed Byzantine and Anatolian writers as well as artists working in the Italian, Greek, Persian, and Turkish traditions. To lure the stars of East and West into his service, he sent money to Davvani in Iraq and Jami in the Timurid capital and relayed offers of work to Gentile Bellini and Constanzo di Ferrara in Italy.<sup>123</sup> He gave Christians and Jews corporate recognition in the empire, and his land and tax policies disadvantaged the old-time *gazis* and frontier Sufi orders in favor of ex-Christian military recruits.

The reaction of a segment of Ottoman society against these Byzantine-style practices found an embodiment in the histories written during the reign of Bayezid II (1481-1512).<sup>124</sup> Aşıkpaşazade, whose chronicle became a source for most subsequent historical works, wrote for the group of old-time *gazis* who had lost land and revenue to Mehmed II’s military enlargement schemes and who saw the empire taking a course that offended their religious and perhaps cultural sensibilities. He used *gazi* images from the chronicles of Ahmedî and the other early 15th-century writers as a rebuke to Mehmed II’s evenhandedness and his

<sup>123</sup> H. İNALCIK, “The Policy of Mehmed II toward the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24, 1969-1970, p. 231-249; F. BABINGER, *Mehmed the Conqueror and his Time*, ed. W. C. Hickman, trans. R. Manheim, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978; L. T. DARLING, “The Renaissance and the Middle East,” in G. RUGGIERO (ed.), *A Companion to the Worlds of the Renaissance*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, p. 60-62.

<sup>124</sup> İNALCIK, “The Rise of Ottoman Historiography,” *art. cit.*, p. 164-165.

dispossession of the heirs of the *gazi* leaders and radical Sufi *şeyhs* in favor of a bureaucratic cosmopolitanism reminiscent of Bayezid I's. Aşıkpaşazade's history portrayed the earliest Ottoman conquerors as motivated by pure Islam and tribal culture. Neşri and other ulema historians, by contrast, described the empire's founding fathers as zealous but orthodox Muslims. Events in the 16th century – the conquest of the Muslim holy places in the Arab world and the competition with the Shi'i Safavids – reinforced the empire's identity as a state in which Sunni Islam was the dominant element. This militant state Sunnism was envisioned as continuous with the Ottomans' *gazi* origins as described by Aşıkpaşazade, containing them within itself and preserving them so that they could be revived in new forms when circumstances demanded.<sup>125</sup>

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## CONCLUSION

The recent research on the early period and the contradictory conclusions drawn from it demand the formation of a new narrative of the role of *gaza* in early Ottoman history. In place of a celebration of the Ottomans' *gazi* origins or an argument over whether the early Ottomans were or were not *gazis*, this narrative describes how an Ottoman *gazi* identity developed over time and outlines the circumstances that fostered this development. The identity of the original Ottoman state in western Anatolia was arguably one of accommodation and assimilation between Christians and Muslims, Byzantines and Turks. This original identity was not undisputed, and the dispute, fed by the circumstances of conquest in 14th-century Anatolia and the Balkans and by 15th-century politics in the capital, ended in the ascendancy of the more hierarchical and exclusionary identity of *gaza*. The *gazi* identification did not eliminate the accommodationist elements in Ottoman identity, but it made it impossible for them to prevail.

The presence of individuals who identified as *gazis* in the forces under Osman did not make the entire conquest a *gaza* or mean that the Ottomans must be defined as a *gazi* society. After the Ilkhanid state became Islamic, the impetus for embracing a *gazi* identity in western Anatolia came from the Crusader attacks, and it first affected the southern *beyliks*.

<sup>125</sup> This remained true even until the birth of the Republic, as shown by the award of the title *Gazi* to Mustafa Kemal.

During Orhan's reign the Ottomans could make claims to a *gazi* identity, but these claims were contested from several directions within Ottoman society itself. In Murad's time, however, ongoing success and fame in pursuit of the *gazi* path in the Balkans, or in leadership of those who pursued it, crystallized the centrality of *gaza* in the identity of the fighting forces, while *gaza* became an instrument of policy on the ruler's part. After being celebrated by Timur and immortalized in the chronicles and epic poetry of the 15th century, the *gazi* identity shifted to the state, where it was contained within the framework of imperial and Islamic institutions. "The *gazis*" were no longer merely autarkic frontier raiders but the disciplined army of the sultan, and the Ottoman state became a *gazi* state such as Osman's polity could never have been.

In the 15th century the concepts of *gaza* and *jihād*, which prior Anatolian authors had often distinguished from one another, came together again in the writings of historians. This is understandable in the light of Ottoman efforts during that period to present themselves as heirs of the Seljuks. If the caliphs alone could proclaim a *jihād*, and if the Seljuks as their heirs — and the Ottomans as *their* heirs — controlled the *gaza* as the latter-day manifestation of *jihād*, then the Ottomans *deserved* a leading role in the Muslim world and were preserved not by Timur's whim but by his recognition of their true position and value. Thus, the constitution of a *gazi* state can be considered as part of the Ottomans' 15th-century reformulation of their identity, which included also the alignment with the Seljuks and the search for Turkmen roots. That effort was barely a generation old when the conquest of Constantinople took the Ottomans in a different direction, and the cosmopolitan efforts of Mehmed II sparked another reconceptualization of Ottoman identity. It is less surprising, therefore, that this one did not fully succeed.

The reformulated *gazi* identity was highlighted for political purposes by later 15th-century chroniclers who opposed Mehmed's Byzantinization and its costs. Through the repeated employment of their chronicles as historical sources, subsequent generations came to consider it the foundational Ottoman identity. By another process of oversimplification, *gaza* became the dominant aspect of Ottoman identity in the eyes of Western Europeans, who knew nothing of the Ottomans' society and culture but who feared their military capability and their otherness. From the 16th century on, *gaza* shaped the standard narrative in histories and textbooks on both sides. It was always, however, only one thread in the complex identity of the Ottomans, and not at first the dominant one.

Although the Ottomans forged new identities over time, forgetting the old, the process of forgetting and remaking did not obliterate those older identities but absorbed them, creating a more complex and ambiguous whole. The Byzantines left us a very different image of their conquerors – as people with whom at times they could interact, intermarry, work, and live. Though less celebrated, this interconnection or accommodation also remained part of Ottoman identity for the life of the empire.

Linda T. DARLING, *Pour une reformulation du récit gazi : quand l'État ottoman fut-il un État gazi ?*

Les spécialistes débattent depuis un certain temps de la véritable nature de la première identité ottomane et, en particulier, de la définition et du rôle de la *gaza* dans cette identité. Il ne suffit pas d'affirmer qu'il n'est plus possible de considérer les premiers Ottomans comme des zélés combattants de la foi ayant pour but de donner aux infidèles le choix entre l'islam et l'épée. Afin de bannir les stéréotypes, nous avons également besoin d'un nouveau récit historique des débuts de l'Empire ottoman; ce récit historique, même approximatif, peut être utilisé non seulement comme un tremplin pour les spécialistes mais aussi comme un cadre pour l'enseignement et les manuels. À noter également que le rôle de la *gaza* dans l'activité militaire comme dans l'identité ottomanes a évolué dans le temps, en réponse à des circonstances particulières. Au fur et à mesure des conquêtes, les dirigeants ottomans ont trouvé de nouveaux usages de l'idéologie de la *gaza*. Cet article propose une reformulation du récit pour expliquer ces attitudes en continuelle évolution: les Ottomans sont apparus dans un contexte largement multiconfessionnel, mais, par la suite, d'abord les forces militaires, puis l'État ottoman ont adopté la légitimation par la *gaza* en même temps qu'une attitude plus exclusive sur le plan des religions. Une conquête qui n'était pas à l'origine une *gaza* en acquérait le caractère avec le temps. Loin d'être exhaustif sur l'ascendance d'Osman ou sur ses mouvements, cet article se donne comme tâche de rendre compte de la société que lui, ses contemporains et ses descendants ont créée de la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle au début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, en intégrant les données dont nous disposons à ce jour et en reformulant le récit historique à partir de là. À la suite d'une brève revue historiographique, il étudie les relations de la société ottomane avec ses voisins chrétiens au moment de la création de l'Empire et analyse le rôle de la *gaza* sous les règnes des souverains ottomans qui se sont succédé en dressant un tableau des changements sociaux plutôt qu'en revenant sur des détails contestés de la conquête. Cet exposé chronologique éclaire l'évolution, pendant le XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, de l'identité ottomane d'une position d'accommodation vers une attitude plus exclusivement *gazi* et montre comment les événements du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle amenèrent les chroniqueurs à faire des premiers Ottomans des *gazi* à jamais.

Linda T. DARLING, *Reformulating the Gazi Narrative: When Was the Ottoman State a Gazi State?*

Scholars have debated the true nature of early Ottoman identity, and particularly the definition and role of *gaza* in it, for some time. It is not enough to protest that we can no longer regard the early Ottomans as zealous warriors for the faith whose purpose was to offer to the infidel Islam or the sword. To banish the stereotypes, we also need a new narrative of early Ottoman history that, although tentative, can be used not just as a springboard by specialists but as a framework for teaching and textbooks. We must also consider that the role of



*gaza* in Ottoman military activity and identity evolved over time in response to specific circumstances. Ottoman rulers found different uses for the ideology of *gaza* as the conquests progressed. This essay proposes a reformulation of the narrative to account for these evolving attitudes: the Ottomans arose in a largely multi-confessional context, but subsequently first the military forces and then the Ottoman state adopted both *gazi* legitimation and a more exclusive religious posture. A conquest that did not start out as a *gaza* became one over the course of time. This paper does not delve into the details of Osman's ancestry or movements but seeks to characterize the society he and his contemporaries and descendants created from the late 13th to the early 15th century, integrating the evidence we already have and reshaping the historical narrative around it. After a brief historiographical overview it examines Ottoman society's relations with its Christian neighbors at the time of the empire's foundation and discusses the role of *gaza* in the reigns of successive Ottoman rulers, charting broad social changes rather than rehearsing contested details of the conquest. This chronological exposition clarifies how in the 14th century Ottoman identity evolved from an accommodationist position toward a more exclusionary *gazi* stance, and how as a result of 15th-century events chroniclers established the early Ottomans as *gazis* for all time.