

**THE MAKING OF SULTAN SÜLEYMAN:
A STUDY OF PROCESS/ES OF IMAGE-MAKING AND REPUTATION
MANAGEMENT**

by
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Submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

Sabancı University
June, 2009

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A STUDY OF PROCESS/ES OF IMAGE MAKING AND REPUTATION
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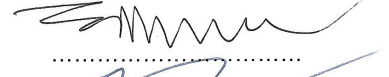
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DATE OF APPROVAL: 15.06.2009

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To My Dear Parents
Ayşegül and Özer Yelçe

ABSTRACT

THE MAKING OF SULTAN SÜLEYMAN: A STUDY OF PROCESS/ES OF IMAGE-MAKING AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

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Ph.D., History

Supervisor: Metin Kunt

June 2009, xv+558 pages

This dissertation is a study of the processes involved in the making of Sultan Süleyman's image and reputation within the two decades preceding and following his accession, delineating the various phases and aspects involved in the making of the multi-layered image of the Sultan. Handling these processes within the framework of Sultan Süleyman's deeds and choices, the main argument of this study is that the reputation of Sultan Süleyman in the 1520s was the result of the convergence of his actions and his projected image. In the course of this study, main events of the first ten years of Sultan Süleyman's reign are conceptualized in order to understand the elements employed first in making a Sultan out of a Prince, then in maintaining and enhancing the sultanic image and authority. As such, this dissertation examines the rhetorical, ceremonial, and symbolic devices which came together to build up a public image for the Sultan. Contextualized within a larger framework in terms of both time and space, not only the meaning and role of each device but the way they are combined to create an image becomes clearer. This dissertation argues that Süleyman started his sultanic career with the inherited elements of dynastic and divine legitimation. He took over an already established model, and put deliberate effort in the actualization of this model through pursuing an active and visible mode of sovereignty in the 1520s.

Keywords: Süleyman I, Ottoman History, 16th Century, Kingship, Legitimation

ÖZET

SULTAN SÜLEYMAN OLMAK: İMAJ YARATIMI VE İTİBAR YÖNETİMİ SÜREÇLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

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Haziran 2009, xv+558 sayfa

Bu doktora tezi Sultan Süleyman'ın tahta çıkmasından önceki ve sonraki onar yıl içinde imajını ve itibarını oluşturan süreçleri ve Sultan'ın çok katmanlı imajının oluşumunda etkili olan aşamaları ve unsurları incelemektedir. Söz konusu süreçlerin Sultan Süleyman'ın eylemleri ve kararları çerçevesinde incelendiği bu çalışmanın temel argümanı Sultan Süleyman'ın 1520'lerdeki itibarının eylemleri ile yansıtılan imajın birleşmesinden kaynaklandığıdır. Bu çalışmada öncelikle şehzadenin Sultan'a dönüşümünde, ardından sultanın imajının ve otoritesinin muhafazası ve geliştirilmesinde rol oynayan unsurların anlaşılması açısından Sultan Süleyman'ın saltanatının ilk on yılında meydana gelen temel olaylar kavramsal çerçeveye yerleştirilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu doktora tezi Sultan'ın kamusal imajını oluşturmak üzere bir araya getirilen retorik, törensel ve sembolik araçları incelemektedir. Bu araçlar zaman ve coğrafya çerçevesinde daha geniş bir bağlama yerleştirildiğinde, her aracın anlamı ve rolü kadar imajı oluşturmak üzere ne şekilde bir araya getirildikleri de aydınlanmaktadır. Bu çalışma ışığında, Sultan Süleyman'ın kariyerine hanedana ve ilahi desteğe dayalı meşruiyet unsurlarını miras alarak başladığı, 1520'ler boyunca aktif ve görünür bir hükümdarlık biçimi izleyerek devir almış olduğu mevcut modeli gerçekleştirmeye bilinçli bir çaba gösterdiği anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Süleyman I, Osmanlı Tarihi, 16. Yüzyıl, Hükümdarlık, Meşruiyet

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to many people for making this dissertation possible. Their valuable comments and suggestions improved this study. The faults, on the other hand, remain entirely mine.

First and foremost, I am greatly indebted to Metin Kunt, my dissertation advisor, who guided me throughout this long and tiresome journey patiently and encouragingly. I am grateful for all his suggestions, comments, corrections, kindness and time. I am also grateful for not letting me fall even in most desperate times. I will always be proud to have been “educated” by Metin Kunt and strive to live up to his example. The members of my dissertation committee spent long hours and much effort in the last two years to read and comment on my work. Without their contribution, this dissertation would not be possible. I am grateful to Tülay Artan for standing by me for many years, for all her intellectual and emotional support, and perhaps most importantly for teaching me not to be complaisant. I owe a lot to Jeroen Duindam for the genuine interest he showed to my work, for all the time and effort he put in this dissertation. His comments and suggestions not only helped me in writing this dissertation, but contributed greatly to my way of thinking. I would like to thank Hülya Adak for walking along with me step by step, and encouraging me throughout my research and writing, as well as her valuable comments and suggestions. I thank Hakan Erdem for introducing me to the alluring world of Ottoman chronicles in the first place. I am also grateful for his thorough perusal of my dissertation.

I would like to thank all faculty members at Sabancı University who provided me not only with knowledge but vision as well. I am forever indebted to Halil Bertay for trusting me in the first place; his influence contributed a lot to my academic standing as well as to my worldview. I am grateful to Bratislav Pantelic who made my experience as a teaching assistant a most enjoyable and efficient one; his support and guidance throughout the years we worked together have been invaluable. I would like to thank Pablo Sanchez Leon for helping me get acquainted with various theoretical approaches; and Ahmet Ersoy for teaching me the basics and niceties of Ottoman Turkish. I thank Fikret Adanır, Cemil Koçak, Hülya Canbakal, Akşin Somel, and Aziz Shakir for always having an open door for me to consult. I am thankful to Filiz Çağman for her suggestions and comments, especially in terms of discussion of artifacts. I would also

like to thank the administrative staff of Sabancı University, particularly İnci Ceydeli, Viket Galimidi, Ayşe Ötenoğlu, and Sumru Şatır.

The administrators and staff of various libraries and archives were very helpful during my research. In this regard, I would like to express my gratitude to the staff of Sabancı University Information Center. I am greatly indebted particularly to Hilmi Çelik who always made the impossible possible; and Mehmet Manyas for making available many books and articles without which this dissertation could not be written. The staff of İSAM [İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi] greatly facilitated my research not only through their help with sources, but also through accommodating my special needs as a researcher with limited mobility. I would also like to thank the staff of the British Library, Prime Ministerial Archives, Süleymaniye Library, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, and Topkapı Palace Museum Archives.

A large portion of the research relating to non-Ottoman contemporary sources in this study has been conducted in the British Library within the framework of a COST Short Term Scientific Mission within the COST scientific program on “Tributary Empires Compared: Romans, Mughals and Ottomans in the pre-industrial world from antiquity till the transition to modernity” (COST A36). I thank the members of the program, particularly Peter Fibiger Bang for giving me this opportunity and their assistance. As part of this grant, I was able to work with Mia Rodriguez-Salgado as my host in London. I am grateful for the interest she showed in my research and for her guidance. My research in Istanbul was partly funded by ARIT and the Turkish Cultural Foundation as an ARIT Turkish Cultural Foundation Fellow (2007). I am grateful for their contribution.

My family and my friends have been most supportive in all stages of this dissertation. I am particularly grateful to Verda-Celal Metin and Lale-Halil Gökman for standing by me and supporting me in all ways possible throughout each step of the way. I am indebted to Ayşe Altuncu and Jale Onur for everything they did and for being there for me every time I stumbled. My colleagues Sinem Arcaç, Aysel Danacı Yıldız, and Selçuk Dursun contributed in various ways to this dissertation, and I am thankful for every one of them. Nalan Babür listened to me for hours and restored my confidence in myself, for which I am grateful. I would like to thank Nusret Avhan, Neşenur Domanıç, Ahu Latifoğlu, Nancy Karabeyoğlu, and Ayşegül Yelçe for their encouragement and support, especially in proof-reading. I thank Uğur-Suna Yücelt, Özden Pelin, and Hale Duygun for their support and assistance, especially in procuring numerous heavy

volumes for my research from the United States. I thank Melis Dereboy and Feyza-Selim Erkan for being there whenever I needed them. I thank Erkan Değirmenci, Aysel Böcek, Sevil-İlhan Demir, and Süleyman Mert for making life easier for me as I was writing this dissertation.

I would like to express my gratitude to the late Sakıp Sabancı for the foundation of an institution which allowed me to pursue a dream. May he rest in peace.

I owe this dissertation to my parents, Ayşegül and Özer Yelçe, who contributed as much time and effort in this journey as I did. They trusted and encouraged me ever since I decided to leave my professional life behind to pursue an academic career at thirty years of age. Without their continuing belief in me and their unconditional love and support, I could never have made it this far. I am grateful to both for making my dream theirs and walking along with me to make it come true.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION	xv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Literature Review	3
Sources.....	12
Approach.....	22
CHAPTER 1 THE FELICITOUS PRINCE: <i>ŞEHZÂDE-İ CİVÂNBAHT</i>	31
1.1. Defining the Problem: The Role and Functions of the Princely Courts at Caffa and Manisa on the Way to Become a Sultan	31
1.2. Trabzon: A Prince is Born	33
1.2.1. The Name	34
1.2.2. The Mother	36
1.2.3. The Town.....	40
1.3. Caffa: The Long Road to the Throne.....	42
1.3.1. First Appointment	44
1.3.2. Factions at Work.....	47
1.3.3. Location.....	55
1.3.4. Legitimizing the Line	58
1.4. Istanbul: Waiting to be the Only Heir.....	61
1.4.1. Arrival	62
1.4.2. Departure	64
1.5. Manisa: Heir to the Ottoman Throne.....	67
1.5.1. Household.....	69
1.5.2. Administrative Duties	72
1.5.3. Guardianship.....	75
1.5.4. Meetings with the Father.....	83
1.5.5. End of Princehood.....	87
1.6. Conclusion.....	90
CHAPTER 2 “THE BLESSED SOVEREIGN”: <i>HÜDÂVENDİĞÂR-I KÂM-KÂR</i> 92	
2.1. Defining the Problem: Transference and Establishment of Sovereign Authority	92
2.2. Transference of Sovereign Authority: Accession.....	96
2.2.1 The Entry	97
2.2.2 The Announcement at the Camp: Shift in Authority	106
2.2.3 The Funeral.....	114
2.2.4 The Enthronement.....	129
2.2.5 Declaration of Accession:	139
2.3. Marking of Sovereign Authority	150

2.3.1 Making Things Right: Promoting Justice and Removing Oppression	151
2.3.2 Challenge Turns into Opportunity: The Challenge of Canberdi Gazali	159
2.4 First Impressions	170
2.5. Conclusion.....	176
CHAPTER 3 “THE WORLD-CONQUERING RULER”: <i>SULTÂN-I CÎHÂN-GÎR</i>	178
3.1. Defining the Problem: Consolidation of Sovereign Power and Building a Reputation for Sultan Süleyman	178
3.2. Waging War in Early Sixteenth Century	180
3.2.1. For the Sake of Glory	183
3.2.2. For the Sake of Religion.....	194
3.2.3. For the Sake of the Realm	210
3.3. Making War	219
3.3.1. Weighing the Opportunity.....	219
3.3.2. Strategic Targeting	229
3.3.3. Strategic Command	235
3.3.4. Appropriation.....	243
3.3.5. Ceremonial Occasions.....	250
3.4. Projection and Reception	257
3.4.1. Official Projection.....	257
3.4.2. Domestic Reception	265
3.4.3. Foreign Reception: Peaceful Lamb Turns into Fierce Lion	269
3.5. Conclusion.....	278
CHAPTER 4 THE PERFECT VIZIER: <i>VEZÎR-İ ASAF-NAZÎR</i>	280
4.1. Defining the Problem.....	280
4.2. Elimination of the Chief Competitor	282
4.2.1. Opportunity: Egypt After Hayrbay	283
4.2.2. Motive: Political or Personal?	288
4.2.3. Inversion of Meaning	292
4.2.4. Transformation of an Image: Hero or Villain?.....	301
4.3. Rise of İbrahim Paşa.....	310
4.3.1. Appointment to Grand Vizierate.....	312
4.3.2. Proving Ability and Merit	316
4.4. Official Projection and Public Reception	325
4.5. Conclusion.....	338
CHAPTER 5 “THE KING OF KINGS WHO CONQUERED HUNGARY”: <i>ŞEHİNŞÂH-I ENGÜRÜS-SÎTÂN</i>	341
5.1. Defining the Problem:.....	341
5.2. Identifying the Target	347
5.2.1. Motive	348
5.2.2. Opportunity.....	357
5.3. The Campaign	362
5.3.1. The Departure	363

5.3.2. The March	369
5.3.3. The Reaction.....	385
5.3.4. The Battle	394
5.3.5. The Capital	401
5.4. Projection and Reception	409
5.4.1. Official Projection.....	409
5.4.2. Domestic Reception	413
5.4.3. Foreign Reception.....	421
5.5. Conclusion.....	426
CHAPTER 6 SHELTERING THE WORLD: <i>PÂDIŞÂH-I 'ÂLEM-PENÂH</i>	430
6.1. Defining the Problem:.....	430
6.2. Controversies of Kingship	434
6.2.1. Janos Szapolyai: The Victim	436
6.2.2. Ferdinand: The Antagonist.....	444
6.2.3. Sultan Süleyman: The Protagonist.....	453
6.2.4. Supporting Actors: France and Venice and Poland	458
6.3. Making a King.....	462
6.3.1. Reception at Mohacs	462
6.3.2. Enthronement at Buda.....	468
6.3.3. In Search of the Villain at Vienna.....	471
6.3.4. The Crown of Hungary	479
6.4. Projection and Reception	483
6.4.1. Official Projection.....	483
6.4.2. Domestic Reception	486
6.4.3. Foreign Reception.....	491
6.5. Conclusion.....	502
CONCLUSION	503
APPENDICES	513
BIBLIOGRAPHY	533

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library
MK	Milli Kütüphane (National Library)
TSA	Topkapı Palace Archives
TSK	Topkapı Palace Library
TTK	Türk Tarih Kurumu

Bostan (MK) Bostan Mehmed Çelebî, *Târih-i Sultân Süleyman Hân*, Milli Kütüphane, Afyon Gedik Ahmet Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi Collection, 03 Gedik 18350

Bostan (TSK) Bostan-zâde Mustafâ Efendî Tirevî (d. 1560), *Cülûs-nâme-i Sultân Süleymân*, TSK, R.1283

İshâk (SN) İshâk Çelebî Üskübî [d.1536], *Selîm-nâme*, Milli Kütüphane, Adana İl Halk Kütüphanesi Collection, 01 Hk 791/3

KPZ, IX İbn Kemâl, *Târih-i Âl-i Osman: Târih-i İbn Kemal*, İstanbul Millet Kütüphanesi Ali Emiri Tarih 29, 930 [1529]

Sâlih (TSK) Koca Nişancı Sâlih b. Celâl (d.1566), *Târih-i Budûn*, TSK, R.1280, 936/1529-30

Nasuh Matrakçı Nasûh Silâhî b. Karagöz Bosnavî (d. 1563), *Dâstân-ı Sultân Süleymân*, TSK, R.1286

Sa'di (SN) Sa'dî b. Abd el-Mute'al, *Selîmnâme*, TSK, R.1277, Muharrem b. Ramazan Hanefi Kadirî (copyist), 1055 [1645]

Şükri (SN) Şükri Bidlisî, *Selîm-nâme*, Milli Kütüphane, Afyon Gedik Ahmet Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi Collection, 03 Gedik 17182, 937 [1531]

Ramazan Avcı, Necati; *Tabib Ramazan: Er-Risale el-fethiyye er-radossiye es-Süleymaniyye*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1993.

Celalzade (SN) Celâlzâde Mustafa, *Selîm-nâme*, Ahmet Uğur and Mustafa Çuhadar (eds), Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990.

Tabakat Celâlzâde Mustafa, *Tabakâtü'l-Memâlik ve Derecâtü'l-Mesâlik (Geschichte Sultan Süleyman Kanunis von 1520 bis 1557)*, Petra Kappert (ed), Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1981

Ali (KA) Gelibolulu Ali Mustafa Efendi, *Kitabü't-tarih-i künhü'l-ahbar: Kayseri Raşid Efendi Kütüphanesindeki 901 ve 920 No.lu nüshalara göre*, 1008/1600, Ahmet Uğurlu (ed), Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997

KPZ Kemalpaşazade, *Tevârih-i Al-i Osman*

Neşri Neşri; *Kitab-ı Cihan-nümâ – Neşri Tarihi*; Faik Reşit Unat and Mehmed A. Köymen (ed), Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1995

Sadeddin Hoca Sadettin Efendi, Tacü't-Tevarih, İsmet Parmaksızoğlu (ed), İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1979.

EI *Encyclopaedia of Islam CD-ROM Edition v. 1.0*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 1999. Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands

Kanunnameler Akgündüz, Ahmet; *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri*, İstanbul: FEY Vakfı, 1990

Letters and Papers Brewer (ed.), J.S.; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vols.3-4, London: Longman, 1867-1875

Münşe 'at Feridun Ahmed Bey, *Münşeâtü's-selatin*, İstanbul: Darü'ttibaati'l-amire, 1858, v.1.

Sanuto Sanuto, Marino; *I Diarii di Marino Sanudo*, Bologna: Forni Editore, 1969

SO Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, Nuri Akbayar (ed), İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı and Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

Turkish orthography are used to transliterate Ottoman Turkish words, regardless of their origin. Diacritical marks are used to indicate long vowels, *ayns* (‘) and *hemzes* (’). For well-known place names, English versions are used in spellings (such as ‘Aleppo’ ‘Egypt’) and the like, though there are exceptions to the usage. For the names of institutions, titles, and concepts both the English and Ottoman Turkish equivalents are given. Translations of quotes belong to the author of this dissertation, unless otherwise stated.

INTRODUCTION

Think of Tinkerbell; fairies do not exist if children don't clap their hands.¹

The main purpose of this dissertation is to uncover the process/es of image-making and reputation management for Sultan Süleyman within the two decades preceding and following his accession. Through delineating a contemporary “public relations”² program, a second purpose is to investigate how the image/s of the Sultan, as projected to the contemporary target audience, corresponded to his actions. The main argument of this study is that the reputation of Sultan Süleyman was the result of the convergence of these two aspects of his reign.

In the course of this study, main events of the first ten years of Sultan Süleyman's reign are conceptualized in order to understand the elements employed first in making a Sultan out of a Prince, then in maintaining and enhancing the sultanic image created. This task requires an examination of rhetorical, ceremonial, and symbolic devices which came together to build up a public image for the Sultan. When seen in isolation most of these devices may be viewed as mere pomp or flattery. The deeper and wider meanings concealed as a consequence often leave the impression of the “magnificence” associated with Sultan Süleyman to be a unique case. However, when contextualized within a larger framework in terms of both time and space, not only the meaning and role of each device but the way they are combined to create an image becomes clearer.

Sultan Süleyman's reign lasted forty six years witnessing numerous campaigns directed to both West and East, the relative fixation of the natural borders of the Ottoman realm, two major uprising as well as minor ones, two major scandalous assassinations sponsored by the sultan, an open internal struggle for succession and the

¹ Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (Dover: The Consortium Inc., 1992), p.49.

² The concept “public” is intended to mean “audience”, in other words those people or parties whom the projected image meant to influence and/or impress. In the context of the sixteenth century this would be the ruling elite and their clients, non-Ottoman representatives, non-Ottoman rulers whether they be hostile or friendly, tributary rulers, the soldiery in general, and only then, if at all, the ordinary subjects of the Sultan.

assassination of yet another heir to the throne as well the rise of orthodoxy both in terms of religion and law, increasing complexity of loyalties, networks and factionalism and the expansion of bureaucracy. Throughout the forty six years, various people and attitudes passed through the story, and only one remained from the beginning to the end, namely Süleyman. Acknowledging the fact that history did not happen solely by his agency, however, does not overshadow the fact that the story of these forty six years was largely related to what he represented, and that not as Süleyman but Sultan Süleyman. Therefore, I believe in the need to re-construct the image of Sultan Süleyman, the dynamics and the strategies underlying the image-making and management process. The unrealistic approach viewing Sultan Süleyman's 46-year reign as a fixed, non-mutable, massive block is gradually fading away. Rhoads Murphey has recently argued that "the early part of Süleyman's reign represents an era not of immutability, but of exploration, consolidation, and evolving imperatives formulated in response to pressures (both domestic and international) whose character changed and whose intensity fluctuated over time."³

Furthermore, although a surface reading of contemporary sources gives one the impression of a just and omnipotent ruler whose almost autocratic power is deeply felt by those around him, it is not possible to assume that things always went as smoothly and orderly as chronicles generally tend to reflect. A closer reading of these sources along with other documents such as imperial edicts and accounts of "others" brings forth an insight also about what was not running smoothly. Once put under question in this manner, it becomes possible to underline the main problems facing Sultan Süleyman and his closer circle, as well as identify the strategies they employed for dealing with them. The orderly appearance of a not-so-orderly world seems to have impressed, and at times misled, many generations of historians and I believe that observing the process/es of image-making and management contributes to our understanding of Sultan Süleyman's reign as well as to conceptions of change and transformation in later times.

³ Rhoads Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary: Ottoman Manifest Destiny or a Delayed Reaction to Charles V's Universalist Vision," *Journal of Early Modern History*, vol.5, no.3 (2001), p.197.

Literature Review

It was only in late 1980s that any serious thought was given to the image of Sultan Süleyman, with individual focus on the various components producing the overall image. In 1987 two conferences focusing on the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century were held at the University of Chicago and at Princeton University, coinciding with the large-scale exhibition “The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent” held at the National Gallery of Art. In 1990 a similar conference focusing on Süleyman the Magnificent and his times was organized at L’Ecole du Louvre in Paris accompanying an exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais. The proceedings of these conferences were then published as *Süleyman the Second and His Time*⁴ (1993) and *Soliman Le Magnifique et Son Temps*⁵ (1992) respectively. Both volumes besides approaching the reign of Sultan Süleyman from a variety of angles ranging from personal aspects and foreign policies to trade, literature and architecture pay considerable attention to the image of Sultan Süleyman. Another edited volume, *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, appeared in 1995. Inspired by another exhibition, namely “Süleyman the Magnificent” held at the British Museum in 1988, this volume brought together the proceedings of a seminar, organized by the University of Cambridge Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, focusing on Ottoman state and society; and of another seminar, organized by University of London School of Oriental and African Studies, on “The ‘golden age’ of Süleyman: myth and reality”. This volume is the first scholarly study to deliberately devote full attention on the process of image-making and idealism, strictly pronouncing the need for a re-evaluation of the period which has been regarded conventionally as a “golden age.”⁶ What these three volumes share is the

⁴ Halil İnalçık and Cemal Kafadar (eds), *Süleyman the Second and His Time* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1993).

⁵ Gilles Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman Le Magnifique et Son Temps* (Paris: Ecole de Louvre, 1992).

⁶ Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (London and New York: Longman, 1995). Published in Turkish as: *Kanuni ve Çağı: Yeniçağda Osmanlı Dünyası*, Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (eds), Sermet Yalçın (trans) (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 2002).

interdisciplinary and critical approach directed to the understanding of the reign of Sultan Süleyman, and through this approach they have heralded a re-orientation from the more empirical, document-based, and narrowly political approach which can be observed, for instance, in an earlier collection of articles like *Kanunî Armağani*,⁷ which too aimed at analyzing the reign of Sultan Süleyman.

The path-breaking study regarding the process of image-making, as far as Sultan Süleyman is concerned, is Gülru Necipoğlu's "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry". Necipoğlu presented a shorter version at the 1987 Princeton conference, and the article was first published in *The Art Bulletin* in 1989 before appearing in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*. The immediate impact of this study can be discerned from the fact that in 1991 this article won Necipoğlu the Ömer Lütfi Barkan best article prize awarded by the Turkish Studies Association. The article is actually about a Venetian-made helmet-crown commissioned by İbrahim Paşa for Sultan Süleyman, which was then taken along to the 1532 "German" campaign. Necipoğlu analyzes artistic policies, patronage networks, the relationship between art and power, change and transformation of artistic policies with the change of political focus and ideology. She suggests that around 1540's and 1550's cultural policies changed as to exclude internationalism with the deliberate intention to "attempt its unique identity". The article also introduces the phenomenon of cultural orientation at the time of İbrahim and thereafter.⁸ Necipoğlu's method is not conventional either. Although she draws solidly on documentary and empirical information, she adopts a problem-oriented approach addressing questions about the audience and the sources underlying the helmet-crown. She also dwells on the iconography of the helmet-crown, thus she manages to place the item into a clearer context. She contextualizes the whole issue so accurately that she builds a theory of change and orientation around one single item.

Necipoğlu pursues the matter of representation and ideology in other works as well. "A Kanun for the State, A Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical

⁷ *Kanunî Armağani* (Ankara: TTK, 1970). Although this volume follows the former approach, it has useful information to offer on the reign of Sultan Süleyman.

⁸ Gülru Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry," in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds), pp.163-194.

Synthesis of Ottoman Arts and Architecture,” brings into this picture architecture and decorative arts as sources through which identities and ideologies can be expressed. She traces the changes in the number and composition of court artists and the employment of artistic patterns in various media to track change in expression of ideology. In this article Necipoğlu also examines the dissemination of artistic change as it contributed to centralization and a unique and unified Ottoman style and a distinctive artistic vocabulary. She firmly comes to the conclusion that through a process of state formation and self-imaging by the ruling elite a transformation was on the go in mid-sixteenth century as fluid borders gave way to rigid borders and universalism to orthodoxy, so did the eclectic style in arts and architecture gave way to standardized form.⁹ As the title suggests, the article made a main contribution to the area by introducing a firm conceptualization of artistic policies. Necipoğlu’s perspective, further demonstrated by other indispensable works,¹⁰ has definitely contributed a lot to Ottoman image studies – if there is yet anything as such.

If one thread of thought stems from historians with a more artistic bent, a second thread is found in historians more concerned with ideology and mentality. This line of investigation stems from arguments about the so-called “decline” paradigm and the concept of the “golden age”. Late sixteenth and seventeenth century writers such as Mustafa Ali, Koçi Bey and Katip Çelebi generally believed that going back to the old way and doing things as they used to be done in the past would provide the solution to their problems. The ideas of these Ottoman writers, though not ignoring the problems faced especially during the later part of Süleyman’s reign, tended to promote his example as well as that of Selim I. In a way this literature can be taken as a reception of the image created during the reign of Sultan Süleyman. An authoritative representative of this thread would be Cemal Kafadar. In his article “The Myth of the Golden Age”, Kafadar challenges the application of the concept of “golden age” to the reign of Sultan

⁹ Gülru Necipoğlu, “A Kanun for the State, A Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Arts and Architecture,” in Veinstein (ed.) (Paris: Ecole du Louvre, 1992).

¹⁰ Some examples would be: *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape: The Collective Message of Imperial Mosque Complexes in Istanbul* (Ankara: TTK, 1996); *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991); *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Süleyman and discusses where the image of Süleyman stood in contemporary “decline” literature. And he arrives at the dual nature of Süleyman’s reign: “the paradigmatic balancing at between imperial magnificence and law-abiding justice vis-à-vis the subject” and the gradual breaking of that balance.¹¹ Kafadar’s article is enlightening with regards to the reception and re-creation of the image of Sultan Süleyman in later times.

Barbara Fleming’s “Public Opinion under Süleyman” may be considered a text-based “reception” study and it too has been presented at the Princeton Conference. Fleming warns against the temptation to idealize Sultan Süleyman’s reign as “a golden age” and suggests that his popularity declined in the 1540’s. She takes as her subject the *Câmi u’l-meknûnât* dated 1543 of Mevlana İsa, an unofficial voice. Fleming finds that the age of Selim I was hailed as a golden age in İsa’s work. A striking example was what İsa saw as the reason for the “first tribal disturbance”. Whereas official historians blamed Safavi disruption for the unrest in certain provinces, İsa thought the actual reason was “deportation and forced settlement”.¹² Such an example suggests that the projection or reflection of an image or message did not guarantee its reception as desired. This relatively brief article, though not exclusively on the image of Sultan Süleyman, helps pave the way for at least trying our hand at “reception” of the projected image.

Soliman Le Magnifique et Son Temps features at least three contributions to the study of the image of Sultan Süleyman, besides Gülru Necipoğlu’s article “A Kanun for the State, A Canon for the Arts.” Cornell Fleischer’s “The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman” directly addresses the dynamics of the image-making process. Aiming to re-evaluate the reign based on analysis of ideological and bureaucratic change, Fleischer challenges descriptions of Süleyman’s reign as “unified”, “unitary” and “coherent”. Instead of characterizing the period by “consistency of system or orderliness of actual process”, he argues for the

¹¹ Cemal Kafadar, “The Myth of the Golden Age: Ottoman Historical Consciousness in the Post Süleymanic Era,” in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds.), pp.37-48.

¹² Barbara Fleming, “Public Opinion Under Sultan Süleyman,” in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds.), pp.49-58.

validity of rapid change, innovation and experimentation.¹³ He contextualizes the issue through comparing strategies and legitimation processes of competitors Süleyman had in his claims on universal rulership. In this sense, Fleischer also draws on the messianic literature of the time which helped create an image of the sultan as a sacred and universal ruler. Fleischer's study presents a breaking point regarding the image of the Sultan. According to the author, this breaking point has to do with a change of policy after the death of İbrahim Paşa, suggesting to try looking at İbrahim as Süleyman's alter-ego. Tracing the use of titles, Fleischer puts forth the transformation of the image from that of the conqueror to that of the protector as the title *sâhibkırân* [conqueror of the world] lends its popularity to 'âlempenâh [refuge of the world].¹⁴

Another important contribution in the same volume is Alberto Tenenti's "la Formation de l'image de Soliman a Venise". Emphasizing the continuous cultural and commercial exchange between the Muslim and the Christian worlds in the sixteenth century, Tenenti draws on Venetian accounts to understand how an image for Sultan Süleyman in the Christian premises of Venice was built.¹⁵ "Sultan Süleyman: The Man and the Statesman" by Halil İnalçık in *Soliman Le Magnifique et Son Temps* is not directly engaged with the image of Sultan Süleyman, but is an attempt to compare Süleyman the man with Süleyman the sultan. "Süleyman gave the impression, or created the myth of, a perfect ruler," says İnalçık.¹⁶ Although introducing the main administrative elements and factions under Sultan Süleyman for most part, this article is worth mentioning.

Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age is a study divided into two parts, one focusing on state policies and problems faced, and the second on ideal rulership and its

¹³ Cornell H. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in Veinstein (ed.), pp.159.

¹⁴ Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," pp.159-177. The title *sâhibkırân*, which is often employed to signify world conqueror, means "master of the happy conjunction."

¹⁵ Alberto Tenenti, "La formation de l'image de Soliman a Venise (1520-1530)," in Veinstein (ed.), pp.39-49. Unfortunately, due to lack of sufficient knowledge of French on my side, I have not been able to make an accurate interpretation of the article yet.

¹⁶ Halil İnalçık, "Sultan Süleyman: The Man and the Statesman," in Veinstein (ed.), 89-103.

reflections. The second part seems to be a confirmation of the need to understand the appearance of the era and the dynamics of the process/es of idealization. The contributions of P.M. Holt, Colin Imber and Peter Burke provide models and critical approaches to the matter through examination of the Ayyubid and Mamluk models, the case of legitimation and ideals regarding the early Ottomans, and Renaissance perceptions of “golden age”. Through such a comparative approach the whole section aims to arrive at a more accurate approach to the image of Sultan Süleyman and his time. In the introduction to the second part, Christine Woodhead poses important questions as to when and how perceptions about the reign of Süleyman changed, why the age was perceived to be a “golden age” and the general discourse of the time.¹⁷ In her concluding article “Perspectives on Süleyman”, Woodhead examines both the process/es through which an image for the sultan was tailored and the resulting image. She also emphasizes Süleyman’s personal involvement and interest in his own image-making process. Woodhead suggests a multi-media approach to the issue by juxtaposing visual and verbal sources. In the second part of the article, the author investigates the representation of the image in the seventeenth century as reflected by Ottoman writers critical of their own times. She also underlines the impact of these reflections in the formation of the concept of a “classical” system, as well as the “rise, decline, fall” paradigm dominating Ottoman historiography in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In conclusion, Woodhead proposes a different perception of Sultan Süleyman as the first of those who lead the way to a new order of things rather than as one with whom a classical era came to an end.¹⁸ Through her statements Christine Woodhead opens the way for the search of a new paradigm regarding not only the way Süleyman’s reign is viewed but also the conventional periodization of Ottoman history following the reigns of individual sultans.

These studies seem to have provided an impetus for several PhD dissertations in the last few years, focusing on the various aspects of Sultan Süleyman’s reign. In his dissertation *The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Suleyman the Lawgiver (1520-1566)*, Hüseyin Yılmaz analyzes the formation of Ottoman political theory of the period, and traces the shift of focus from the person of the ruler to the

¹⁷ Christine Woodhead, “Giriş,” in Kunt and Woodhead (eds), pp.117-121.

¹⁸ Christine Woodhead, “Süleyman Üzerine Görüşler,” in Kunt and Woodhead (eds), pp.165-192.

governmental institutions and procedures. Yılmaz's study covers a wide range of contemporary works, and elements of legitimation put forth in these works.¹⁹ Sjezana Buzov's *The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers: The Role of Legal Discourse in the Change of Ottoman Imperial Culture* appears as one among a series of dissertations written at the University of Chicago. Through in-depth examination of specific legal documents, Buzov investigates the role of law, and its formation within the context of political discourse during the reign of Sultan Süleyman.²⁰ Another contribution from the same institution, Ebru Turan's *The Sultan's Favorite: İbrahim Paşa and the Making of the Ottoman Universal Sovereignty* explores perhaps the most influential figure of Sultan Süleyman's reign.²¹ Yet another contribution from Chicago is İbrahim Kaya Şahin's *In the Service of the Ottoman Empire: Celalzade Mustafa (ca. 1490-1567), Bureaucrat and Historian*, which examines yet another influential figure in the making of Sultan Süleyman's reign.²² As one of the major policy makers of Süleyman's era, Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi is also analyzed in Mehmet Şakir Yılmaz's '*Koca Nişancı*' of *Kanuni: Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi, Bureaucracy and 'Kanun' in the Reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566)*. Yılmaz examines Ottoman bureaucracy during the reign of Sultan Süleyman through the life of Celalzade, in the context of the development of a new political discourse strongly emphasizing justice and law.²³ It is not a coincidence that at least four out of these five recent studies share the twin concepts of law and

¹⁹ Hüseyin Yılmaz, *The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Suleyman the Lawgiver (1520-1566)*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Harvard: Harvard University, March 2005).

²⁰ Sjezana Buzov, *The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers: The Role of Legal Discourse in the Change of Ottoman Imperial Culture*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2005).

²¹ Ebru Turan, *The Sultan's Favorite: İbrahim Paşa and the Making of the Ottoman Universal Sovereignty*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007). I could not have access to this study.

²² İbrahim Kaya Şahin, *In the Service of the Ottoman Empire: Celalzade Mustafa (ca. 1490-1567), Bureaucrat and Historian*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007). I could not have full access to this study, either; however I thank Kaya Şahin for sharing his abstract and introduction.

²³ Mehmet Şakir Yılmaz, '*Koca Nişancı*' of *Kanuni: Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi, Bureaucracy and 'Kanun' in the Reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566)*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Ankara: Bilkent University, 2006).

justice as a main point of focus. By contextualizing and tracing the transformation of these concepts, both in terms of discourse and bureaucracy, these studies help move beyond the monolith view of Sultan Süleyman's reign as a static "golden age" empowered and identified with the almost extra-human "strong sultan."²⁴

Chapters on the reign of Sultan Süleyman in general histories tend to present the period as an apex. Stanford Shaw, for example, confirms the mystique of magnificence and lawfulness surrounding the time of Sultan Süleyman in his *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. The chapter title is "The Apogee of Ottoman Power," and the subtitle of the part talking about the reign of Süleyman is "The Peak of Grandeur: Süleyman I the Magnificent 1520-1566." The titles also suggest a sense of stability and continuity disregarding change and transformation. Shaw tells, for example, how Sultan Süleyman compiled and organized laws which were to put an end to arbitrary behavior as had been observed with his father Selim I and Mehmet II; how he spent most of his time in campaigns in order to pursue his father's efforts of establishing universal rule; how he proved his primacy in the Islamic world by defeating the Safavis in 1535 and how he re-established in some areas the "Sunni" institutions which the Safavis had destroyed. His account reads almost like a contemporary chronicle with the same discourse, and in conclusion he gets into the decline issue in a few words saying that although Sultan Süleyman's reign was the peak of Ottoman institutions and cultural achievement; the *devshirme* grew in power as to leave the sultan out of state affairs; the harem got involved in politics; financial and social troubles pressed hard, and could not be dealt with.²⁵ This book is apparently not intended for a scholarly audience, thus to expect a balanced account of Sultan Süleyman's reign in thirty pages would probably not be fair to the author. This example is cited not out of disrespect to a very respectable historian, but only to point out the general attitude toward the reign of Sultan Süleyman until 1990's.

One of the problems observed with modern secondary literature on Sultan Süleyman is posed by the epithets "Kânûni" and "Magnificent". A general search for

²⁴ A similar approach regarding the opposite paradigm of "decline" due to a "weak sultan" can be observed in an ongoing dissertation by Günhan Börekçi on Ahmed I.

²⁵ Stanford Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye I*, (Istanbul: E Yayınları, 1982). First published by Cambridge University Press in 1976.

Sultan Süleyman in any well-known bookstore or library would result in approximately twenty to thirty books featuring an aspect or a full account of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent or Süleyman the Lawgiver.²⁶ Some titles even do not seem to need giving the Sultan's name and leave it at "Lawgiver."²⁷ Although it is not the intention of this dissertation to suggest that Sultan Süleyman was neither magnificent in many aspects nor uninterested in law; it seems that these two epithets have been so much taken for granted that the complex dynamics which led to their formation are not given the attention they deserve, if we expect to have an accurate understanding of the reign of Sultan Süleyman. Another problem posed by the epithets is the inter-changeable use they seem to have acquired in our day. One gets the impression that, in some instances at least, the use of these epithets is designated by the country or language in which a study is published. Thus, *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age*, published in English originally, appeared as *Kanuni ve Çağı* in Turkish translation, without a deliberate decision or approval by the editors. Therefore, this study proposes to set aside for a moment these two titles, which have not been used widely by the contemporaries, if used at all,²⁸ and start anew by trying to make sense of the reign through the eyes of the contemporaries. In other words, this study proposes re-building the image-making program of Sultan Süleyman step by step as contemporaries did as circumstances required, and only then decide on which epithet to use, if any.

²⁶ For example, a general search for "Sultan Süleyman" in the catalog of Bilkent Library, which is reputed to be one of the best in Turkey, brings 79 results of which 50 contain either Magnificent or Lawgiver in the title. Eleven of these titles are not about Sultan Süleyman; four are general histories, and six are primary sources thus have their original titles. Three are Süleyman's collection of poems, the so called *Muhibbi Divânı*. Two are fiction works. One is the foundation deed of Süleymaniye. This leaves us with only Yaşar Yücel and Mehdi İlhan's *Süleyman the Grand Türk* (Ankara: TTK, 1991).

²⁷ An interesting example would be: Hüseyin G. Yurdaydın's *Kanuni'nin Cülusu ve İlk Seferleri*, (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, 1961). I do not suppose that a scholar as meticulous as Yurdaydın would deliberately define Sultan Süleyman as "lawgiver" while still in the very beginning of his reign. Such cases strengthen the impression of "hollowification" of the epithet *Kanuni*.

²⁸ The closest I came to *Kanuni* till now is the terminology used at the inscription of Süleymaniye: "*Nâşir el-kavanin es-Sultaniye*" as stated in C. Çulpan, "İstanbul Süleymaniye Camii kitabesi," in *Kanunî Armağanı*. Cemal Kafadar, for example, has spotted the earliest popular use of the epithet "Kanuni" in Cantemir's work in the eighteenth century, see his "The Myth of the Golden Age," in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds), pp.37-48.

Sources

Contemporary Ottoman chronicles form the backbone of this study. As this dissertation aims to understand the current dynamics, values, and opinions that shaped Sultan Süleyman's image, sources have been deliberately limited to Süleyman's exact contemporaries. In other words, it was imperative that the authors employed in this study lived in the same world; as to have similar life experiences, access to similar circles of knowledge, and a shared vocabulary, as well as the opportunity of first-hand evaluation of the events. Such a view of a presumably shared mentality does not mean that the authors employed in this study were uniform in their views, evaluations, and opportunities. They were individuals from different backgrounds; they had different personal experiences; they pursued different life paths. However, each personally experienced Sultan Süleyman's reign along with Süleyman himself, as it happened.²⁹ While the authors employed in this study were insiders and often eyewitnesses, they were also semi-official voices with an agenda.³⁰ Therefore, caution is imperative when interpreting what they say, if one is trying to reach the historical "truth." However, for the purposes of this study, their somewhat restricted identities are for the better since they are more likely to present us the "image" of the Sultan. In other words, in their writings we shall be able to see what they *wanted* others/us to see, as well as the elements shaping the aspired ideal.³¹

²⁹ Later chronicles have been used in exceptional instances, whereby the author may have had a family member in the intimate circle of the Sultan, such as the case with Sadeddin [d.1599] whose father was a companion of Selim I. Feridun Ahmed Beğ [d.1583] has been referred to in a few instances although he only witnessed the later part of Sultan Süleyman's reign, he was in close contact with first-hand witnesses to the earlier years, and he had access to a wealth of documents.

³⁰ As Jeroen Duindam neatly puts it: "A dynastic history, often written at the sovereign's order, depicts the façade of court and kingship as impressively as possible: a never-ending tale of the monarch's glorious deeds and virtues. These writings were intended to prove and fortify the legitimacy of the sovereign and the dynasty, and this goal dictated both their content and appearance." Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994), pp.2-3.

³¹ *Ibid*, p.2.

Kemalpaşazade's [d.1534] *Tevârih-i Âl-i 'Osmân*, constituent of ten books, is one of the most frequently cited sources in this study. Born in 1468, Kemalpaşazade [Şemseddin Ahmed b. Süleyman] came from a family of military career. Although the author started his own career in the military, he changed paths and pursued a career in the learned establishment. Serving under Bayezid II, Selim I, and Süleyman, Kemalpaşazade was a first-hand witness to major events. Not only his own experience and observations at the Ottoman court, but his influence in the education – and works – of many other authors employed in this study make him an invaluable source on sixteenth-century Ottoman mentality. Furthermore, in his capacity as chief-judge [*kadıasker*] and *mufti*, and as a member of the closer circle of the sultans, he was one of the major figures shaping both the policy and the image of Sultan Süleyman. His history of the Ottoman House was initially commissioned by Bayezid II. Covering the period until 1508 [914], the initial commission includes seven books. The last three books were commissioned by Sultan Süleyman. While the seventh and eighth books relate the events starting from four years before Selim I's accession and covers his reign, the tenth book is an account of Süleyman's deeds starting from his accession. However, the tenth book is more like a compilation of individual campaign chronicles rather than a single history of the reign of Sultan Süleyman.³²

Another policy and image-maker whose work is intensively used this study is Celalzade Mustafa [d.1567]. Born around 1490, he was the son of a middle ranking judge. Starting his career as a protégée of Piri Mehmed Paşa, the author was appointed as court scribe [*divân kâtibi*] in 1516. He served as private secretary [*tezkîreci*] first to Piri Mehmed Paşa, then İbrahim Paşa, as each became grand vizier. In his capacity as private secretary, he accompanied İbrahim Paşa to Egypt in 1524, and was appointed chief scribe [*re'isü'l-küttâb*] on the return to Istanbul. In 1534, he was appointed to the post *Nişancı*, which he kept until his retirement in 1557.³³ Celalzade Mustafa's

³² The manuscript of Book IX used in this study: *Târih-i İbn Kemal*, İstanbul Millet Kütüphanesi Ali Emiri Tarih 29. For the published copies of the other books used in this study, please refer to the Bibliography.

³³ Published copy used in this study: Celalzade Mustafa, *Tabakât ül-Memâlik ve Derecât ül-Mesâlik (Geschichte Sultan Süleyman Kanunis von 1520 bis 1557)*, Petra Kappert (ed) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1981). For his life, see, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Onaltıncı Asır Ortalarında Yaşamış Olan İki Büyük Şahsiyet: Celâlzâde Mustafa ve Salih Çelebiler," *Belleten*, vol.22, no.87 (July 1958), pp.391-422;

Tabakâtü'l-Memâlik ve Derecâtü'l-Mesâlik covers the major events of Sultan Süleyman's reign from his accession to 1557. Although the author seems to have composed the work after his retirement, his inclusion of certain documents, which were originally written by him, implies that the *Tabakât* was based on life-long experience. Furthermore, Sehi Beğ's biographical dictionary mentions his composition of a "book relating the ghazas directed to the East and the West and to *Hind* and 'Arab, as well as campaigns, in the beginning of the reign of His Majesty Sultan Süleyman Şah, in order to express his glory and power."³⁴ His career provided the author a high degree of proximity to the Sultan and the highest levels of imperial administration as a confidante. In this sense, he not only had the opportunity to witness and evaluate critical moments, but also to shape them. Yet a third feature of the author's role in Süleyman's story is his reflecting the Sultan in an idealized manner. Thus, Celalzade's triple role as observer-maker-reflector has made *Tabakat* an indispensable source for many generations of historians.

Another chronicle on Süleyman's reign used in this study was written by Bostan Mehmed Çelebi [d.1569], a member of the religious establishment. Born in 1498, Bostan first entered the service of Kemalpaşazade in 1519, and then transferred to that of the Sultan's teacher Hoca Hayreddin. He served as instructor [*müderris*] in various institutions, and he eventually promoted to the post of chief judge of Rumelia in 1547.³⁵ The extant copies of Bostan's work with different timeframes and completion dates

Yılmaz, 'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni: Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi. Celalzade has served a second tenure at the post of Nişancı during 1566-1567.

³⁴ Edirneli Sehî, *Tezkîre-i Sehî* (Kitâbhâne-i Âmed, 1325), p.33: "Sultân Süleymân Şâh hazretlerinin taht-ı saltanata vâki' olan ibtidâ-yı cülûslarında Şark ü Garb ve Hind ü 'Arab câniblerine itdikleri gazâları ve her diyâra itdikleri seferleri ve kendilerinin 'azametini ve kudretini beyân etmek için bir kitâb te'lîf idiüb ve yazub, târih tasnîf eyleyüb 'Tabakâtü'l-memâlik ve derecâtü'l-mesâlik' diyü tesmiye olunur." Sehi Beğ composed his work in 1538 [945], and presented it to Sultan Süleyman. The author died in 1548 [955], before Celalzade even retired.

³⁵ The manuscripts used in this study: Bostan Mehmed Çelebî, *Târîh-i Sultân Süleyman Hân*, Milli Kütüphanesi, Afyon Gedik Ahmet Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi Collection, 03 Gedik 18350; Bostan-zâde Mustafâ Efendî Tirevî, *Cülûs-nâme-i Sultân Süleymân*, TSK, R.1283. For his life and various copies of his work, see, Hüseyin Gazi Yurdaydın, "Bostan'ın Süleymânname'si," *Bellekten*, vol.19, no.74 (April 1955), pp.137-202. In this article, Yurdaydın clarifies the attribution of the various extant copies of Bostan's histories of Sultan Süleyman, which were formerly attributed to authors as Ferdi and Şehzade Mustafa.

imply that the author composed the work as he lived through the events. Although he was not positioned in the intimate circle of the Sultan, his education with Kemalpaşazade and Hayreddin, as well as his being an almost exact contemporary of Süleyman, deems his account on the reign of Süleyman a useful source. One of the chronicles of Süleyman's reign used in this study was written by a military man, Matrakçı Nasuh [d.1563]. Nasuh's work, which was probably completed in 1538, covers the years 1520-1537. The author was educated in the Palace School [*Enderûn*], which he probably entered in the last years of Bayezid II. He started writing activities during Selim I's reign with a treatise on mathematics. Nasuh was a man of many capabilities; he was a swordsman, a writer, a translator, and a painter.³⁶ His wide-ranging interests and his court attendance throughout the period makes him a suitable source for the purposes of this study, although in some parts of his account he draws much from Kemalpaşazade. Another source extensively used in this study is the dynastic history by Lütfi Paşa [d.1564], another man of military origin who climbed up to the grand vizierate. Probably born in late 1480s, Lütfi Paşa, like Nasuh, was educated in the Inner Palace during the later years of Bayezid II. He served Selim I under various palace offices such as head-taster, master of the banner and the like. His provincial appointments started with governorship of Kastamonu. His first-hand experience and observations at the Palace, at the provinces, and at the campaigns make his work indispensable for our research.³⁷ Lastly, a quite detailed *Selimname* by an obscure author Sa'di b. Abd el-Mute'al has been used extensively in this study.³⁸ The work which was completed in 1548 covers the period 1512-1524. Although the text starts with the accession of Selim I, it dwells on his succession struggle through flashback. This work provides detailed accounts regarding various ceremonial events, and is noteworthy

³⁶ The manuscript used in this study: Matrakçı Nasûh Silâhî b. Karagöz Bosnavî, *Dâstân-ı Sultân Süleymân*, TSK, R.1286. For his life, see, Nasuhü's Silâhî (Matrakçı), *Beyan-ı menâzil-i sefer-i 'Irakeyn-i Sultan Süleyman Han*, Hüseyin G. Yurdaydın (ed.) (Ankara: TTK, 1976), pp.1-30.

³⁷ Published edition used in this study: Lütfi Paşa, *Tevârih-i Âl-i 'Osman*, Kayhan Atik (ed) (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2001). For his life, see, *ibid*.

³⁸ The manuscript used in this study: Sa'dî b. Abd el-Mute'al, *Selimnâme*, TSK, R.1277, Muharrem b. Ramazan Hanefî Kadirî (copyist), 1055 [1645], Halep. Based on the father's name, Franz Babinger suggests that the author was of non-Muslim origin, probably from Rumelia. Franz Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, Coşkun Üçok (trans.) (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1982), pp.67-8.

especially in providing some information on Süleyman's princehood. The official history of Sultan Süleyman, namely the *Süleymânnâme* of Arifi [d.1561/2], the first official *şehnâme* of the Ottoman sultans, was not an appropriate source for this study, because it was composed at a much later point of Sultan Süleyman's reign when his priorities seem to have changed. In this sense, it does not represent Süleyman's image in-the-making during the 1520s.

Due to their communicational nature official documents such as imperial edicts, law codes, proclamations, and diplomatic correspondence have proved useful in identifying the main elements making up the image of the Sultan. A huge corpus of documents pertaining to Sultan Süleyman's reign is available in print. Archival research undertaken for this study, in the Topkapı Palace Archives and the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, has not produced additional documents which could have considerable contribution to the arguments presented in this dissertation.³⁹ A major compilation of Ottoman diplomatic correspondence by Feridun Ahmed Beğ dates back to the time of Orhan Beğ. Although the authenticity of earlier documents cannot be taken for granted, the compilation known as *Münşe'at* contains copies of many of the important documents pertaining to the reign of Sultan Süleyman. Among these are the proclamation of accession, official proclamations of victory, campaign diaries, and various decrees.⁴⁰ Ottoman correspondence found in the Venetian archives has been published in Arabic alphabet by Tayyip Gökbilgin in two parts.⁴¹ Habsburg domestic and diplomatic correspondence relating to the Ottomans has been compiled by Antal Gevay [d.1845] in the nineteenth century. The compilation contains letters between Charles V and Ferdinand I, as well those with their sister and aunt, in addition to

³⁹ The inefficiency of archival research stemmed partly because a long list of documents which looked promising on the catalogue of the Topkapı Palace Archives was inaccessible, except for a few items. While the collection at the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives have much to offer to a student of economic or institutional history, documents which might have contributed to this study, both in terms of type and date, have not yet been transferred from the Topkapı Palace.

⁴⁰ Feridun Ahmed Bey, *Münşe'atü's-selâtin* (İstanbul : Darü'ttibaati'l-amire, 1858)

⁴¹ Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Vesikalar Külliyyatında Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Devri Belgeleri," *Belgeler*, vol.1, nos.1-2 (1964); and "Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Bazı Türkçe Belgeler Koleksiyonu ve Bizimle İlgili Diğer Belgeler," *Belgeler*, vols.5-8, no.9-12, (1968-1971).

correspondence with various officials as well as letters of instruction.⁴² A similar work in French is Charriere's *Négociations de la France dans le Levant*, which also includes comments and evaluations by the author.⁴³ Legal and administrative regulations, and law codes, have been published by Ahmet Akgündüz. These volumes contain simultaneously the transcriptions and facsimiles of a wide range of documents related to legal and administrative issues.⁴⁴ Among the literary sources poetry also offers insight to the ultimate reflection of the sultanic ideal and contemporary values.⁴⁵

Sultan Süleyman's reign is also rich in accounts by ambassadors and travelers. Venetian correspondence provides valuable insight to the contemporary perceptions of Sultan Süleyman and his actions. Regular reports by the resident Venetian bailos in Istanbul, and of envoys to the Ottoman court offer very detailed accounts.⁴⁶ Many of these accounts have fortunately been either summarized or recorded in full by a contemporary Venetian official Marino Sanuto [d.1536]. The author's meticulous recording activity from 1496 to 1533, not only Ottoman affairs but everything going on in the world day by day, renders the fifty-eight volumes of *I Diarii* an indispensable source for any study on early sixteenth century. The information found in Sanuto's entries range from diplomatic correspondence and treaties between states to current gossip and friendly conversations, from festivities to funerals. Sanuto's sources of

⁴² Antal Gevay, *Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte der Verhältnisse zwischen Oesterreich, Ungern und der Pforte im XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderte. Erster Band. Gesandtschaft König Ferdinands I. an Sultan Suleiman I. 1527-1532* (Wien, 1840 [1838]-42).

⁴³ Charriere, E.; *Négociations de la France dans le Levant*, (New York: Burt Franklin, 1965).

⁴⁴ Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri*, vols.3-6 (İstanbul: FEY Vakfı, 1990).

⁴⁵ For poetry as a tool in politics, see Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.10: "In the days before the advent of media, the poet had an important role in the field of propaganda and of what we nowadays call public relations, and poetry could often be an important weapon of political warfare." One major limitation on the use of poetry as primary source is the difficulty involved in dating, thus this kind of source has been used only in cases whereby the date of composition was predictable.

⁴⁶ See Appendix 1, for the list of bailos and envoys in Istanbul within the timeframe of this study.

information were as wide ranging as his interests. Venetian resident ambassadors and envoys to major courts of Europe, officials and merchants abroad, friends and families of foreigners living in Venice, passers-by from all over were sources for Sanuto. While such a variety of sources no doubt increased his information flow, it also introduced ambiguity and inconsistency to his records, thereby reducing their credibility. As Sanuto himself occasionally complained about the inconsistency about the various accounts he laid eyes on,⁴⁷ the reports in his entries may not reflect the whole truth. However, they do provide invaluable insight to contemporary opinions, attitudes and feelings.⁴⁸ Another important source, in this sense, is the compilation of English correspondence under the title *Letter and Papers*, covering the reigns of individual kings and queens of England. However, this is a compilation of copies or summaries of documents, thus does not have the personal tone of Sanuto's diaries. Yet, the range of the documents in terms of subject-matter, authorship, and locality makes *Letters and Papers* indispensable.⁴⁹

A major compilation of Western narrative sources on the Ottomans written during the reign of Süleyman is Francesco Sansovino's [d.1586] *Dell'Historia Universale dell'Origine et Imperio de' Turchi*, published in 1560. Sansovino was an amazed observer of the Ottomans who found the need understand their expansion, as he explains in the beginning of his work.⁵⁰ Works by contemporary European observers

⁴⁷ See, for example, an entry dated 8 November 1529, Sanuto, 52:201: "Letters come from many; I will have copies of some of them, because some write one thing and other another."

⁴⁸ Marino Sanuto, *I Diarii di Marino Sanudo* (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1969). For a discussion on Sanuto, see, Robert Finlay, "Politics and History in the Diary of Marino Sanuto," *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol.33, no.4 (Winter, 1980), pp.585-598.

⁴⁹ J.S. Brewer (ed.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vols.3-4 (London: Longman, 1867-1875).

⁵⁰ Francesco Sansovino, *Dell'Historia Universale dell'Origine et Imperio de Turchi I* (Venetia: 1560-1), n.p: "Tra i Principati del Mondo de quali noi habbiamo qualche notizia, ho sempre stimato degno di molta considerazione quello del Signor Turco, percioche la sua infinita grandezza, la somma obediienza del popolo, e la felice fortuna di tutta la nation Turchesca è cosa mirabile a dice in che maniera et come facilmente sia venuta crescendo in poco spatio tempo a tanta altezza di gloria e di nome. Et se cominciando noi dall'origine sua verremo di scorrendo con diligenza le cose loro fatte cosi in casa come fuori, diremo et forse con verità, che la disciplina della milittia et la obediienza et la fortuna de Romani dopo la rovina di quella Repubblica sia trapassata a questa generatione."

referred to in this study are included in Sansovino's compilation. Benedetto Ramberti's [d.1546] *Libri Tre delle Cose de Turchi* is based on his observations during his journey to Istanbul in 1534, as he accompanied Venetian envoy Daniele Ludovici. The author describes Istanbul, Sultan Süleyman's court, and his administration. The work was first published in Venice, and printed many times in Italian in 1540s, as well in German in 1543.⁵¹ Theodore Spandounes [Thédoro Spandugino Cantacusino], who claimed blood ties with the famous Byzantine family of Cantacusini, came to Istanbul in 1499 in pursuit of his heritage, and stayed until 1509. His work is an attempt at explaining the origins and customs of the *Turks*. His treatise on the *Turks* was reproduced several times from 1519 onwards in various European languages. The author's own last revision is dated 1530. Although he was not a first hand witness to Süleyman's reign, he does provide interesting information. The treatise was also included in Sansovino's compilation.⁵² Luigi Bassano was another traveler to Istanbul, his journey lasting from 1537 to 1540. Bassano wrote his impressions in *I Costumi et i Modi Particolari de la Vita de' Turchi*. The work was published in Rome in 1545. Sansovino included the work in his compilation. Bassano's work was published several times in Venice during the second half of the sixteenth century.⁵³ Giovanantonio Menavino's *I Cinque Libri della Legge, Religione, et vita de' Turchi* is another Italian work which was widely circulated in German and Latin as well as Italian, especially in the second half of the sixteenth century. This treatise, too, eventually found its way into Sansovino's compilation.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Benedetto Ramberti [d.1546], *Libri Tre delle Cose de Turchi*, (Vinegia: 1539). For Ramberti's journey, see, Stephane Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs Dans L'empire Ottoman (XIVe - XVIe siècles) Bibliographie, Itinéraires Et Inventaire Des Lieux Habités* (Ankara: TTK, 1991), p.181.

⁵² Theodore Spandounes, *Dell'origine de Principi Turchi, e de' costumi di quella natione* in *Dell'Historia Universale dell'Origine et Imperio de Turchi*, Francesco Sansovino, parte prima, Venetia, 1560, pp.82-106; *On the origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, Donald M. Nicol (trans) (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997); Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs*, pp.124-5.

⁵³ Luigi Bassano, *I Costumi et i Modi Particolari de la Vita de' Turchi*, (Roma: J.A.Dossena, 1545); Francesco Sansovino, *Dell'Historia Universale dell'origine et imperio de' Turchi parte prima* (Venetia: 1560-1561), pp.19-52; Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs*, p.193.

⁵⁴ Giovanantonio Menavino, *I Cinque Libri della Legge, Religione, et vita de' Turchi* in *Dell'Historia Universale dell'origine et imperio de' Turchi parte terza*,

Paolo Giovio [d.1552] was a major figure who observed Ottomans from afar, yet with great concern. “Giovio was ahead of most Europeans in his knowledge of the Turks, gained from extensive reading and questioning of travelers and merchants,” says his modern biographer Price Zimmermann.⁵⁵ While he tried to understand the strengths of the Ottomans, as well their weakness, as a detached historian, he nevertheless propagated unification between Christian rulers to oppose them.⁵⁶ Giovio composed *Commentario de le Cose de’ Turchi* at a time when talks of a crusade gained impetus, and presented the work to Charles V on January 22, 1531. He aimed to keep his text as simple as possible to present Charles the reality as it appeared to him. The Ferrarese envoy is reported to have remarked, upon reading the treatise: “Your Excellency will learn in a short time what he would not perhaps learn even in a very long time without the book.”⁵⁷ The work was printed and in circulation by August 1532, and being circulated. *Commentario* was printed several times during the course of the sixteenth century. Other than Italian editions, a Latin translation by Francesco Negri was printed in Wittenberg, Antwerp, and Paris in the second half of 1530s. It was also published in German in 1537.⁵⁸ Eventually, Giovio’s *Commentario*, too, found its way into Sansovino’s compilation.

Ceremonial and ritual events can also be regarded as a sort of primary source with a dual nature. While they are visual representations for contemporary audiences, they are also converted into verbal representation for they were recorded in histories and embassy reports thus being transmitted even to those who were not actually there to

Francesco Sansovino (Venetia: 1560-1561), pp.17-64; Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs*, p.125-6.

⁵⁵ T. Price, Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio: The Historian and the Crisis of Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Ewing, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), p.29. Zimmermann also notes a relative engaged in trade in Istanbul as one of Giovio’s sources. Giovio’s career placed him in the center of the contemporary network of high politics. Giovio studied medicine and liberal arts at Pavia. In 1523, he became resident papal physician, which meant he became a member of the Pope’s official household. More importantly, this office gained him access to the intimate circle of the Pope. He was in Rome at critical times, such as the fall of Rhodes in 1522, and the sack of Rome in 1527.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio*, p 121.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

witness and perceive the image and the message/s for themselves. We can learn about ceremonial only through written accounts and relatively few miniatures depicting scenes from festivals. Such limited or even guided access has its disadvantages. At best, we find ourselves reading an eyewitness account, yet the eyewitness is also a “text-maker.”⁵⁹ Therefore, evaluating ceremonial instances to understand their contribution to the image of the Sultan requires a dual task of interpretation of ritual through interpretation of text. The various ceremonial occasions such as weddings, circumcision festivals, royal entries, campaign processions, religious holiday celebrations, Friday prayer processions, festivities upon victories appear as tools for legitimation, display of sultanic power and majesty, demonstration of the continuity of the dynasty and the established order, as well as the dynastic claim on authority. In a sense, the festivals and ceremonies can be considered as the visualization of “state” and “power” with its various components and aspects. The festivals also serve to confirm the silent contract between the sultan and his officials, as well as integrating them once again into the dynastic system. The repetition and recurrence observed in individual ceremonies and the festivals as a whole mark the values and messages transmitted through these events.

The reader shall notice the limited use of visual sources such as illustrations in illuminated manuscripts, Western visual representations, and architectural demonstrations of the Sultan’s image. This limitation is posed by the scope of this study in terms of time. Major projects involving visual demonstrations of power such as the building of the Süleymaniye Mosque [1550-1558] and the commissioning of illustrated *Süleymânâme* [1555] of Arifi remain beyond the timeframe of this study. These projects reflect a different phase of the image making process, therefore not evaluated in this study. However, the absence of large scale architectural and artistic activity during the first ten years of Sultan Süleyman’s reign should be regarded as a contemporary statement on its own. During the timeframe examined in this study, Sultan Süleyman and his image-makers seem to have been more concerned about military success and

⁵⁹ The scholarly debate of Roger Chartier and Robert Darnton woven around Darnton’s “The Great Cat Massacre” makes a stimulating discussion on the author as text-maker/eye-witness and the larger methodological debate on ritual as text: Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Roger Chartier, “Texts, Symbols, Frenchness,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Dec., 1985), pp. 682-695; Robert Darnton, “The Symbolic Element in History,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Mar., 1986), pp. 218-234.

administration of justice as main elements of reputation. Various scholars have pointed out a breaking point after 1540s through which Sultan Süleyman's imperial display found a new expression which was marked by visual elements.⁶⁰ The reasons underlying the absence of large scale artistic activity to support the Sultan's image in the 1520s still remains to be uncovered. Various trophies of war and ceremonial artifacts, on the other hand, have been evaluated through the course of this study.

Approach

The task attempted in this dissertation requires a chronological journey through contemporary texts and visual sources we have access to. In this respect, a combination of perspectives applied by scholars such as Peter Burke, Quentin Skinner, Roger Chartier, Robert Darnton, Natalie Zemon Davis, Stephen Greenblatt in their various works provided the theoretical framework to formulate some of the main questions of this study – some aspects of the theories of Clifford Geertz and Norbert Elias have also been inspiring. My approach has been largely inspired by Peter Burke's total history approach. In his *Fabrication of Louis XIV* Burke argues for the necessity of bringing visual and textual representations in order to “see the royal picture as a whole” and to render change more visible. Burke regards his work as a contribution to the “history of communication, production, circulation and reception of symbolic forms” and as a case-study of the relations between art and power, and more specifically of the “making of

⁶⁰ Rhoads Murphey, for example, attributes conscious effort on Süleyman's part to build an image of greatness for the posterity to the last third of his reign. Murphey, “Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary,” pp.200-1. For cultural re-orientation after 1540s, also see, Necipoğlu, “Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power,” pp.163-194; and Necipoğlu, “A Kanun for the State,” p. 195: “Commissioned by Süleyman when he was already an old man, the Süleymaniye projects a confident self-image expressed through a distinctive Ottoman visual vocabulary that was very different from the eclectic syncretism characteristic of artistic expression in the early years of the sultan's reign.” Christine Woodhead attributes the large scale project of the *Süleymânnâme*, by an official court *şehnâmecî* and court artists, to the troubled position Süleyman found himself in the 1550s, with the pausing of impressive victories of his youth and dynastic struggle already surfacing. Christine Woodhead, “An Experiment in Official Historiography: The Post of Şehnâmecî in the Ottoman Empire, c.1555-1605,” pp.172-3.

great men.” The chronological approach, he argues, gives the opportunity to see whether change takes place at the same time in different media. If we put it in another way, any simultaneous change would imply a deliberate change in the image as a whole.⁶¹ Burke’s insistence on the concept of “representation” also provides different angles of inquiry and interpretation.⁶² Burke admits drawing on Erving Goffman,⁶³ and one can get the sense of the Geertzian perspective in Burke’s application of the dramaturgical perspective. I would not go so far as to apply the Geertzian “theatre-state” model to Süleyman’s state, but I still believe that although the “power” of a “king” may be taken for granted by modern observers, we need to keep in mind that power consists and consisted of various components, and it was necessary to demonstrate this compilation from time to time. As Geertz puts it, “At the political center of any complexly organized society, there is both a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing.” Symbolic expressions were one of the means of “marking the center as the center” and a means for the center to justify its claims and existence.⁶⁴

There are two levels of inquiry and interpretation involved in this journey. The first has to do with understanding what various concepts meant for the contemporaries. The second level of interpretation involves due care to the motives and intentions of the contemporary authors, as well as the overall “performance” of their messages. In this level of inquiry, applying some of the principles of Quentin Skinner’s contextualization theory would be very helpful. Skinner’s method can be briefly defined as contextualizing conceptions: “... what a writer may have been doing in using some particular concept or argument, we need first to grasp the nature and range of things that could recognizably have been done by using that particular concept, in the treatment of

⁶¹ Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp.2-3.

⁶² *Ibid*, pp.8-9.

⁶³ *Ibid*, pp.7-8.

⁶⁴ Clifford Geertz, “Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power,” in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics Since the Middle Ages*, Sean Wilentz (ed) (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania University Press, 1985), pp.13-38.

that particular theme, at that particular time.”⁶⁵ Skinner mainly argues that texts are not written in a vacuum and without purpose, so the historian – if s/he wishes to arrive at a relatively sound interpretation – should be able to see the contexts they were written in and the uses they were put into.⁶⁶ Skinner’s main idea lies in his belief that “all serious utterances are characteristically intended as acts of communication.” In this respect, it becomes important why something is said if we want to understand what it means. This also requires us to presume an existing or ongoing argument in the context of which a particular remark has been made. Thus intentions become an inevitable issue to trace when trying to make sense of contemporary accounts.⁶⁷ In this sense, this dissertation argues that statements about Sultan Süleyman did not merely reflect his authority, but helped construct and maintain it.

At this point, we probably should make it clear that we are faced with a dual process of image-making. There is the Ottoman side trying project a viable omnipotent image for the Sultan. There is the “others” like ambassadors, rival rulers, accidental passers by trying to transmit how they perceive what is presented to them and thus getting engaged in another process of image-making. In this respect, Roger Chartier’s appropriation theory provides a suitable model for investigation. Although he means his method for reading practices in general, overall principle of reception is aspiring regarding other sorts of sources as well. Chartier’s theory re-orient meaning production from a passive process to an active one which requires the participation of various parties, or factors, involved in meaning production. Following his lead, this study takes into consideration the audience toward which the image is intended with their diverse characters and dispositions, their multiple abilities and expectations and thus tries to approach the issue from the point of view of meaning production, too.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Quentin Skinner, “Motives, intentions and interpretations,” in *Visions of Politics, vol. I: Regarding Method* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.102.

⁶⁶ Quentin Skinner, “Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas,” in *ibid*, pp.57-89.

⁶⁷ Quentin Skinner, “Interpretation and the understanding of speech acts,” *Visions of Politics I*, pp.103-127.

⁶⁸ Roger Chartier, “Texts, Printings and Readings,” *The New Cultural History*, Lynn Hunt (ed) (California: University of California Press, 1989), pp.154-175; for a similar argument of meaning production as an active process applied to a visual source:

A wide range of approaches from various disciplines have been consulted throughout this study. Theoretical frameworks from political science, international relations, conflict resolution, and psychology provided useful conceptual tools in discussing individual issues related especially to war-making and rebellion. Classical theories of war, as delineated in the works of Machiavelli [d.1527]⁶⁹ and in the writings of nineteenth-century strategists such as Clausewitz [d.1831] and Jomini [d.1869],⁷⁰ provided a general understanding of the strategies involved in various phases of war making from the decision to wage war to termination. Rationalist – or Neorealist – explanations of war added to my understanding of possible origins of war. Such explanations attribute conflict to a lack of an overarching hegemonic power to arbitrate between states, which gives rise to competition and conflict between individual political identities. In such an environment, each actor must provide for its own security and interest. An actor amassing instruments of war to defend its territory and/or power soon becomes a perceived threat itself to the security of another.⁷¹ The role of the perception of threat, even when there was none, has been one of the questions underlying my examination of wars throughout this study. Approaches combining anthropological and psychological perspectives on war have provided conceptual tools to understand the symbolic significance of certain types of behavior and discourse related to the different

Randolph Starn, “Seeing Culture in a Room for a Renaissance Prince,” in *ibid.*, pp.205-232.

⁶⁹ Machiavelli, Niccolo; *Art of War*, Christopher Lynch (trans) (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005); and *Discourses on Livy*, Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (trans.) (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁷⁰ Presented in comparative perspective in Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, 3rd edition (London: Frank Cass Publications, 2001).

⁷¹ The “anarchy” approach was systemized by Kenneth N. Waltz in *Man, The State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959). For a brief summary, see Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 18, no. 4, The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (Spring, 1988), pp. 618-9. Also see, Jeremy Black, “Introduction,” in *European Warfare*, p.3,11; James D. Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization*, vol.49, no.3 (Summer, 1995), pp.384-5, 401.

phases of the campaigns investigated in this study.⁷² Conflict theories, on the other hand, was consulted to conceptualize the rebellions and their representations.⁷³

While following a chronological event-based approach for uncovering the dynamics of the image-making and reputation management process/es, a few sets of questions were applied to the material/event under examination at each step of the way in order to contextualize the issue as well as to offer different view points. By bringing out the details which might not seem particularly significant on their own, and fitting them in the bigger picture, recognizable patterns can be observed. In this sense, the first set of questions involves the issue in question: What is the issue at its face value? What was at stake? How did the contemporaries regard the issue? If a problem, how did they plan to solve it? This will give us a picture of what the contemporaries thought to face. Then we can try our hand at interpretation at various levels through other questions and try to figure out any ideological and/or symbolic meaning possibly attached to the matter.

A second set of questions investigates the relevance of timing: When is a certain event happening? Does it have former history? If so, do contemporary sources dwell on that former history and how? What is happening elsewhere? What kind of a context does this provide? Such an investigation illuminates the context, possible motives, and possible advantages.

A third set of questions involve the people around the Sultan: Who are the main actors appearing at a specific time/event/period of the Sultan's life? What are their functions? Do their functions change over time, if so how and why? How are they related to the Sultan? Do their relations change, if so how and why? How are they represented? Do their representations change over time, if so how and why? These questions help gain an insight about issues related to how networks function, about general appointment and dismissal policies as well as an overview about the people

⁷² I.J.N. Thorpe, "Anthropology, Archaeology, and the Origin of Warfare," *World Archaeology*, vol. 35, no. 1, The Social Commemoration of Warfare, (Jun.,2003), pp. 145-165, Simon Harrison, "The Symbolic Construction of Aggression and War in a Sepik River Society," *Man*, New Series, vol. 24, no. 4 (Dec., 1989).

⁷³ Collier, Paul; "Rebellion as a Quasi-Criminal Activity," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol.44, no.6 (Dec. 2000) pp.839-853; Gurr, Ted Robert; *Why Men Rebel*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

around the Sultan, and their capability to influence him. Furthermore, the representations of major figures contribute to the general image of the Sultan.

The fourth set of questions dwells on “precedence”: Are there repetitions in the handling of similar situations? Are these repetitions a matter of legitimation through referral to ancient custom, or are they practical solutions to deal with a given task or situation? If there are repeated patterns, are there deviations at specific instances? Are these deviations specific to the situation, or do they imply any signs of deliberate change of strategy? Does what appears to be a deviation at a specific instance repeat itself in later episodes? These questions help identify recognizable patterns of behavior, as well as established elements of legitimation. The fifth set of questions investigates the significance attributed to analogies and honorifics: Which analogies and honorifics are used at different times? Do they follow a pattern, or are they randomly chosen from an already available repertoire? Are new elements added to the repertoire? If so, when? What do they imply? What kind of judgment values are attached to them? Such questions shed light on the aims and claims as well as value judgments; not only about the Sultan but also about value judgments directed at his opponents, as often times Süleyman’s image and reputation is reflected in opposition to his adversaries.

The last set of questions, but not the least, aims at a comparative perspective: How did previous rulers or other contemporary monarchs react in similar circumstances? How were they represented in similar events? Does the image/s of Sultan Süleyman, at a certain phase, possess stability regardless of the identity of the audience in terms of reflection and perception? Or is it possible to trace different representations directed to or produced by different parties? The quest for the formation and reception of meaning requires an understanding of the contemporary significance of the concepts employed in the image of Sultan Süleyman. For a concept to function in the image, it had to be legible to all parties involved. Thus, a major component in the making of an image is communication. Even a basic text book definition of “communication” would clarify the point: “Communication is the act of transmitting information, ideas, and attitudes from one person to another. Communication can take place, however, only if the speaker and the listener (called the *sender* and *the receiver*) have a common understanding of the symbols being used.”⁷⁴ In order to understand the process, I had to

⁷⁴ Dennis L. Wilcox, Philip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee, *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, 3rd edition (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), p.188.

understand, to some degree at least, what various concepts meant to the contemporaries and what concepts were available to them.⁷⁵ Ottoman political culture drew from various sources. It was a Persian-Islamic synthesis, on one hand. On the other hand, it claimed to inherit the Roman Empire. These in return often appeared in the texts as references to a legendary world of Hellenic and Sassanid origin, idealizing its subjects as heroes from the *Shahnama*. Sultan Süleyman acquired his power from God, and achieved his deeds through God's favor. But so did Charles V, for instance. In this respect, this study traces certain practices, concepts, and symbols through various cultures and periods. The aim is not to make comparisons to see who was influenced by whom, but to see under what context similar concepts have been employed. Similarities shed light on the functions of particular elements making up the image, while differences or absences led to the question whether such a function was not necessary or was fulfilled through other means. Furthermore, lately, more and more scholars have voiced the need for proper knowledge of the Ottoman-Habsburg-Valois confrontation to understand sixteenth-century European history.⁷⁶ Likewise, I believe that it is necessary to view the reign of Sultan Süleyman in the context of this confrontation as well as in comparison to other contemporary court cultures.

This study examines the making of Sultan Süleyman and his contemporary image chronologically in six parts. Chapter 1 dwells on the period up to Süleyman's accession. This chapter aims to demonstrate the various aspects of his princehood in relation to his membership of the Ottoman dynasty. Süleyman started his dynastic careers as one of the many potential claimants to the throne, and eventually found the way to the throne through a shared struggle alongside his father Selim I. As his father ascended the Ottoman throne, his dynastic role and his image related to this role changed, too. As

⁷⁵ My approach has been very much influenced by the approach of Quentin Skinner's approach to interpretation of texts and Roger Chartier' approach to reception of texts; and many concepts of Pierre Bourdieu esp. habitus. Roger Chartier, "Texts, Printings and Readings," in *The New Cultural History*, Lynn Hunt (ed), California: University of California Press, 1989. Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, vol. I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2002).

⁷⁶ Gabor Agoston, "Ottoman Warfare in Europe, 1453-1826," in *War in the Early Modern World, 1450-1815*, Jeremy Black (ed.) (Florence, KY, USA: Taylor & Francis, Incorporated, 1998), p.118.

such, this chapter argues that the process of the “making” of the Sultan was one which started long before his accession.

Chapter 2 examines the process of transformation of Süleyman from a prince to a Sultan. This transformation consists of two consecutive processes. Firstly, he inherits sovereign authority, as well as the royal prerogatives and titles, from his father. This is marked by the accession, which is evaluated as a process in itself. While accession ritually marks the transference of sovereign power, the issues investigated in the second part of this chapter, consolidates the authority vested in the title of sultan in the person of Süleyman. If accession marks the short-term transference of power, the following acts related to the twin concepts of *‘adâlet* and *siyâset*, which are considered to be the main building blocks of sovereign authority, establish Sultan Süleyman’s authority on his own right.

Chapter 3 discusses the first two large scale projects of Sultan Süleyman after his accession, namely the campaigns of 1521 and 1522. With their aggressive and ambitious nature, these two campaigns are investigated as strong statements made in the beginning of the process of the “making” of Sultan Süleyman. This investigation involves an understanding of the significance of military skills, as part of contemporary political culture. These campaigns are also investigated in relation to Süleyman’s self-positioning within the dynastic tradition. In this respect, the specific targets chose for initial action demonstrate the dual nature of Süleyman’s relationship with the dynasty. On one hand, these targets imply an attempt to complete the unfinished business of his forefathers to glorify the dynasty. On the other hand, they imply the ambition to surpass his predecessors. This chapter also takes the opportunity to explore current conceptions of warfare, and how Sultan Süleyman’s actions corresponded to them. At the end of the two years investigated in this chapter, the image of the almighty Sultan Süleyman emerges.

Chapter 4 investigates the power relations at the highest levels of Ottoman imperial administration, and traces the significance of İbrahim Paşa in the process. The appointment of İbrahim Paşa as grand vizier is evaluated within the context of Süleyman’s building himself a household with his own ranks. This chapter also explores the rise of İbrahim Paşa in relation to its contribution to the overall image of Sultan Süleyman.

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 are related to the maintenance and enhancing of the image Sultan Süleyman. Chapter 5 is an examination of the 1526 campaign, through which the dynamics and rules of war-making are analyzed. Through this analysis, Süleyman emerges not only as a proud victor, but as a “law-abiding” commander. Chapter 6 investigates the campaign of 1529 as an enterprise aimed at “restoring Hungary to her legitimate King.” This investigation involves the contemporary care devoted to the legitimation of Janos Szapolyai through the process. As such, Süleyman emerges as the “refuge of the world”.

CHAPTER 1
THE FELICITOUS PRINCE: ŞEHZÂDE-İ CİVÂNBAHT

1.1. Defining the Problem: The Role and Functions of the Princely Courts at Caffa and Manisa on the Way to Become a Sultan

This chapter aims to trace the career of prince Süleyman as a potential candidate to the Ottoman throne. The period under examination covers the years between his birth in 1494 [900] and the death of his father in 1520 [926]. Throughout this period Süleyman served as district governor in two different posts and assisted his father's campaigns by guarding Rumelia while stationed in Edirne. These tasks were standard procedure applied to all Ottoman princes up to the late sixteenth century. In this sense, this chapter focuses to some extent on the institutional character of princehood within the concept of dynastic monarchy. On the other hand, since Süleyman was a member of the third generation of the dynasty at the time, his princely career was inevitably linked to that of his father. In this respect, this chapter focuses on those elements, concepts and events which paved the way to the making of Sultan Süleyman through the agency of his father Selim. Such an approach is also provoked by the way contemporary sources reflect Süleyman as a prince. While the *Selimname* literature pays considerable attention to the deeds Selim I accomplished as a prince, the *Süleymanname* literature starts with the accession of Süleyman. More general chronicles on the history of the House of Osman mention certain points of Süleyman's princehood but only in relation or tied to Selim's story. The fact that the main body of *Selimname* literature dates back to the reign of Sultan Süleyman himself⁷⁷ suggests that this mode of projection and perception was deliberate on the part of Süleyman and his contemporaries.

⁷⁷ Hakkı Erdem Çıpa, *The Centrality of Periphery: The Rise to Power of Selim I, 1487-1512*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University,

It is a universally acknowledged fact that Ottoman succession was based on the dynastic principle. As far as Ottoman tradition goes, sovereignty was heralded not only to Osman but to his whole house through a dream.⁷⁸ Following a practice that can be traced back to many Turco-Mongolian states, the worthiest son of a deceased ruler would be recognized as his legitimate successor. This would usually entail a fierce fight between the candidates but whoever gained supremacy would be considered to have God's blessings and be regarded as legitimate sovereign.⁷⁹ Despite the seemingly smooth succession of Sultan Süleyman to the throne,⁸⁰ he was the key figure in his father's succession struggle which can be regarded as his own way to the throne. The first two sections of this chapter examine the first two phases of Süleyman's princehood, namely his childhood in Trabzon and his first post in Caffa [Feodosiya, Kefe] as a third generation Ottoman prince among many. Whether in Trabzon or Caffa, Süleyman's story in these years of his life is inseparable from his father's.

The third section dwells on an intermediary phase when Süleyman transforms into the sole heir of the Ottoman throne. This transformation is reflected in his reception in Istanbul following his father's enthronement in 1512 and his departure for a new post after his father eliminated the remaining claimants. The fourth section examines the Manisa post in more institutional terms. As such it demonstrates not only the subordinate but also the complementary status of the princely court as far as the duties

2007), p.126. Çıpa excludes the works of İshak Çelebi, Adâ'i and İdris-i Bidlisi based on the possible dates of completion.

⁷⁸ KPZ, X:92. For an earlier account, see Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri I*, N. Atsız Çiftçioğlu (ed), (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1947), p.95: "Oğul, Osman! Sana muştuluk olsun kim Hak Ta'âlâ sana ve neslüne pâdişâhlık verdi. Mübârek olsun."

⁷⁹ For a detailed discussion on succession methods see Halil İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession and Its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty" in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1993), pp.37-69; Joseph Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 3-4 (1979-1980), pp.236-251. On the dynastic concept see Metin Kunt, "Sultan, Dynasty and State in the Ottoman Empire: Political Institutions in the Sixteenth Century," *The Medieval History Journal*, vol.6, no.2 (2003), pp.217-230.

⁸⁰ The peaceful accession of Sultan Süleyman in 1520 created the impression that Süleyman's succession did not involve a war of succession because he was an only son. See, for example, Joseph Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire," p.249. For contemporary impressions, see Chapter 2, p.172.

and actions of Süleyman as the sole heir until his father's demise are concerned. This last section also points at the function of the princely post as a base where the prince started forming a household for his possible future career,⁸¹ although the Ottoman princely court was not allowed to be a "government-in-waiting."⁸²

1.2. Trabzon: A Prince is Born

Süleyman was born in Trabzon, where his father was governor, in 1494 [AH 900]. His birth does not seem to have caused any extraordinary occasion. Contemporary narrative sources do not mention his day of birth. Neither do they attribute any "auspicious omens" related to his birth,⁸³ unlike the attribution of a legendary prophecy

⁸¹ Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.46; Rhoads Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800*, (London and New York: Continuum, 2008), p.111, 118.

⁸² Metin Kunt, "A Prince Goes Forth (Perchance to Return)," *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol.12, nos.1-2 (Fall 2007), p.70.

⁸³ His year of birth would come to carry important associations for his image later on. Writing after the death of Süleyman, Mustafa Ali points out that his birth date in the beginning of a century was a sign to the soldiers of Islam and that it was a proof that the religion of Muhammad would strengthen and many conquests would be realized. Gelibolulu Ali Mustafa Efendi, *Kitabü't-tarih-i künhü'l-ahbar: Kayseri Raşid Efendi Kütüphanesindeki 901 ve 920 No. lu nüshalara göre, 1008/1600*, Ahmet Uğurlu (ed), (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997), p.1058: "Ve re's-i miede vücûda gelmeleri 'asâkir-i İslâm'a bir âyet-i kübrâ olub, 'inna'llâhe yeb'asü li-hâzihi'l-ümmeti bir-re'si külli mietin men yüceddidü lehâ dinehâ' hadîs-i şerîfinin mazmûnına mazhar-ı mutahhar idükleri tuyıldı ve bu delîl-i celîl-i nusret-sebilin müceddeden takvîyet-i din-i Muhammed kılub niçe fütühâta bâ'is olmaları taayyün buldı." Ottoman writers usually underline the importance of his year of birth in relation to *hayru'l-kuruni karni*. This concept refers to one hundred year intervals. According to this theory, one great figure is sent to earth every hundred years to reinforce and vitalize the religion. For a contemporary explanation, see Lütü Paşa, pp.145-7, whereby the author introduces Selim as the "one". A mainstream expectation during the reign of Sultan Süleyman was that the end of the world would come in the tenth century A.H. with the arrival of the *Mahdi*. In this case, Süleyman would be the last universal ruler or even the *Mahdi* himself. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah," pp.159-177 (especially pp.169-171). However, these apocalyptic or messianic views of Sultan Süleyman were not based on his year of birth.

surrounding the birth of his father Selim.⁸⁴ On the other hand, the “auspicious” element of Süleyman’s birth was in his name, which was one of the “given” aspects of his existence. The second “given” in this sense was his mother. It is probably a posthumous legend-making process that caused Princess Hafsa to be regarded often as “the last noble bride to the Ottoman court, daughter of the Crimean Khan Mengli Giray.”⁸⁵ However, just like the contemporary disinterest in the year of birth, the identity of Süleyman’s mother seems not to have occasioned any excitement for his contemporaries. The third “given” is the city of Trabzon where Süleyman spent his childhood in his father’s court. Contemporary chroniclers seem to have been interested in Trabzon, though not for the sake of Süleyman’s childhood. The city was relevant to the advancement of Selim and his branch of the dynasty due to its frontier nature. This brief introduction to Süleyman’s childhood demonstrates that he mattered only in two instances: first when he was named by his father and second when his father requested a *sancak* appointment for him. In other words, until that point, his dynastic identity was one with his father’s.

1.2.1. The Name

The name chosen by Sultan Selim for his son seems to have provided the main building block of the image of Sultan Süleyman. As Süleyman ascended to the throne, his name gave occasion to numerous associations. According to tradition, as Süleyman [سلیمان] also reads Selîmân, Selim meant “the little Selim”. In other words, Selim named the newborn Selîmân, as a diminutive of his own name. According to Sa’dî, this decision of the Sultan reflected tenderness, while also implying a pun.⁸⁶ According to

⁸⁴ According to Kemalpaşazade, on the day Selim was to be born, a dervish prophesized that a son would be born to the Ottoman House. He would ascend to the throne of his father. He would have seven moles, heralding Selim I’s victories over seven “glorious lords” [‘âlî-şân beğler]. KPZ, X:28-9. Celâlzâde reproduces the legend in his *Selimname* through quoting Kemalpaşazade’s story. Celâlzâde (SN), pp.35-6.

⁸⁵ İlber Ortaylı, “Süleymân and Ivân: Two Autocrats of Eastern Europe,” in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds), p.203.

⁸⁶ Sa’dî (SN), 115b: “Rivâyet olunır ki nûr ü nihâl-i vücûdları açılıb, hadika-i ‘ömr-i nâzenînleri ârâyış itdikde, ya’ni oğulları hazret-i pâdişâh vücûda gelicek, ism-i mübâreklerine kur’a-i ihtiyâr salmak istida’sı olıcak, anı kendi nâm-ı mübâreklerinin

the seventeenth-century writer Taşköprizade Kemal, when asked how he would name his son, Selim said “Selîmân from Selim.” Upon this, the humorous Murad Paşa explained the name as being a diminutive [*tasgîr*] version of the Sultan’s name; signifying the prince, it meant: “He is my miniature [*küçüğüüm*].”⁸⁷ Such an account supports Süleyman’s admirable qualities by making him a replica of his much-adored father. It also reflects an expectation that the son would inherit the glory of the father, rule the realm as well, and conquer as many lands. Relating the accession of Süleyman, Kemalpaşazade employs the pun to imply both Selim and Solomon as models for the new Sultan.⁸⁸ A later historian Hasan Beyzade has employed the pun as to include Sultan Süleyman’s son Selim as well, using the dual significance of the word *Selîmân*: “Both the father is Selim and the son is Selim, between the two Selims is Süleyman.”⁸⁹

Another tradition refers to the legendary king Solomon. The association of the prince with the most ideal king of all times implies yet another expectation, if not glorification. One of the foreigners dwelling on this analogy is Giovio, the Italian observer. According to him, all “sophisticated Turks” attributed the name of the Sultan to the prediction of the felicity he would bring. Giovio goes on to make a comparison of the names of father and son. He finds it ironic that while his name meant docile, peaceful and a maker of peace; Selim himself was a terrible man who was inclined to cruelty and who turned out to be the most warlike of all Ottoman rulers. To prove his point, the author emphasizes that more blood was shed in the eight years of Selim’s reign than that of the thirty years of Süleyman up to the time of writing. He points out that the name Süleyman [*Solimano*] signifies “King Solomon of the history of Moses who was known for his wisdom.” However, assessing by the number and importance of

tasgîri birle müşfikâne Selîmân lafzın buyurub, san‘at-ı tecnîs mürekkebinde Süleymân ism-i hümayûnına işâret itmişler idi.”

⁸⁷ Taşköprizade Kemal, *Tarih-i Saf*, (Istanbul: Terakki Matbaası, 1287), p.70.

⁸⁸ KPZ, X:31: “سليمان دیر چü terkib-i سليمان / İki denlî oliser bu sultan”

⁸⁹ Hasan Beyzade Ahmed Paşa, *Hasan Beyzade Tarihi*, Şevki Nezihi Aykut (ed), (Ankara: TTK, 2004), v.2, p.1: “*Hem peder[i] Selîm, hem oğul[u] Selîm / İki Selîm arasında da Süleymân*” I would like to thank Hadi Hosainy for helping with the translation of the couplet from Persian.

Süleyman's victories, Giovio comes to the conclusion that Süleyman's deeds would be more compatible with the "fame of his father" than those of the sage king.⁹⁰

1.2.2. The Mother

The identity or the ethnic and religious affiliation of Süleyman's mother Hafsa Sultan has always been controversial.⁹¹ One tradition claims that she was the daughter of the Crimean Khan.⁹² Challenging conventional views, based mainly on Hammer's belief that Hafsa Hatun or another one of Selim I's women was the daughter of the Crimean Khan, Çağatay Uluçay refutes the royal origin of Süleyman's mother. Based on the absence of relevant documentation, Uluçay finds it unlikely that Süleyman's mother was a Crimean princess. Uzunçarşılı's findings of a record naming her "Hafsa bintü Abdülmûin" strengthen Uluçay's argument, for the paternal name indicates slave

⁹⁰ Paolo Giovio, *Gli Elogi: Vite brevemente scritte d'huomini illustri di guerra, antichi et moderni* (Vinegia: appresso Giovanni de' Rossi, 1557), p.336: "I più eleganti Turchi dicono, ch'a Solimano fu posto questo nome, per l'impresa felicemente preveduta, la quale hebbe felice riuscita altrimenti di quel che intervenne al padre, il quale dal contrario senso fù chiamato Selim, cioè, mansueto e piacevole, e autore della pace; il quale fu il più terribile ingegno, e più inclinato alla crudeltà, e finalmente il più bellicoso di tutti i Principi Othomanni. Percioche se noi vorremo ritornarci a memoria i fatti dell'uomo, e dell'altre, i quali habbiamo raccontati nell'histoire, certo noi confesseremo, che si sparse più sangue in otto anni che regno Selim, che in questi trenta che Solimano è stato Signore. Et questo nome vuol dire Salomone Re nell'histoire di Mosè, famoso per la gloria della sua sapienza, mutando le sillabe. Ma se noi vogliamo paragonare i fatti di Solimano, si puo giudicare ch'habbiano pareggiato il nome della fama del padre, quando giustamente vogliamo misurare i numeri e l'importanza delle vittorie."

⁹¹ For a short biography of Hafsa Sultan, see Necdet Sakaoğlu, "Hafsa Sultan," *Osmanlı Ansiklopedisi I*, Ekrem Çakıroğlu (ed), 2nd ed., (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), pp.506-7. Sakaoğlu points out the controversial nature of the issue. Alan Fisher also brings forth the discussion and favors Çağatay Uluçay's argument that Hafsa Sultan was not a Crimean princess. Alan Fisher, "The Life and Family of Süleyman I," in İnalcık and Kafadar (eds.), p.9.

⁹² See, for example, Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi II*, Nilüfer Epeçeli (trans.) Kemal Beydilli (trans. ed.) (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), p.262; and Ortaylı, "Süleymân and Ivân," p.203.

origin.⁹³ In a later work, Uluçay establishes her slave origin based on a document recording her name as “Hâtûn binti ‘Abdü’l-hay”.⁹⁴

Contemporary accounts do not provide grounds for assuming royal Crieman origin, nor has a document supporting this assertion been uncovered yet. Apparently, the origin of Süleyman’s mother did not have much relevance in the eyes of the contemporaries. Although Süleyman is not referred to as being related to the Crimean Khan in any way, there a few implications which point vaguely at a marriage of an Ottoman prince to a daughter of the Crimean Khan, in other words an ally and tributary of the Ottoman Sultan. When Selim is taken to be the prince in question, the issue becomes relevant in terms of a kinship power group within the ensuing succession struggle.

Accounts suggest that inter-dynastic marriages were already regarded as highly unfavorable by the sixteenth century. Leslie Peirce argues that as the Ottoman claims to being a world empire became stronger, they did not see other powers worthy of a bond as intimate as marriage. Peirce associates this stance with the “consolidation of empire” and with it to the claim of “a preeminence that dictated a disdain for alliances with lesser powers.”⁹⁵ Peirce traces the same trend in both male and female marriages; in other words, Ottoman princesses were neither taken nor given in marriage.⁹⁶ Seen in this perspective, a marital arrangement involving a daughter of the Crimean Khan and the reproduction of an offspring seems unlikely.

Uluçay argues that another son of Bayezid II, namely Mehmed who was governor in Caffa, was married to a daughter of the Khan.⁹⁷ A contemporary Venetian observer Jacopo Contarini mentions that Bayezid’s son in Caffa was related to the Crimean Khan

⁹³ Çığatay Uluçay, *Pâdişâhların Kadınları ve Kızları*, 4th ed. (Ankara: TTK, 2001), pp.29-30; Uluçay, “Bayezid II’nin Ailesi”, *Tarih Dergisi*, vol.10, no.14 (1959) p.105.

⁹⁴ Çığatay Uluçay, “Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar,” in *Kanuni Armağanı*, (Ankara: TTK, 1970), p.230, 253. Uluçay published the transcription of the relevant document dated [BA, Tapu Defteri, no.398, fol.31].

⁹⁵ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p.30.

⁹⁶ For the marriage of princesses with high ranking officials and not other dynasts, see Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, p.66.

⁹⁷ Uluçay, *Bayezid II’nin Ailesi*, p. 105.

through marriage.⁹⁸ Kemalpaşazade reports that a marriage between Bayezid's son Mehmed and a daughter of Mengli Giray Khan was indeed planned to cement the "affectionate association" between the prince and the Khan. However, the plan never materialized because the pair was "incompatible" and the marriage "inappropriate".⁹⁹ It is possible to trace the reasons of the "inappropriateness" of such unions in contemporary sources. According to a Venetian account, while in Trabzon, Selim wished to arrange a marriage between one of his sisters and Shah Ismail [*Ardevelli*] so that he could make use of the latter's forces for his own purposes. Thus, Selim convinced Ismail to send a messenger to his father to ask for the hand of the princess. However, Sultan Bayezid was far from pleased and declined the proposal, saying that it was against their custom to give their daughters to foreigners, that the daughters could only be wed to his own subjects and slaves. According to this report, Bayezid's refusal gave rise to a political crisis, although the marriage was initially intended for political alliance. Probably to prevent a crisis, a suitable bride from among the daughters of those nobles loyal to Bayezid was found for Ismail. As far as we can understand from various Italian accounts, the chosen bride was the daughter of Alaüddevle.¹⁰⁰

An inter-dynastic marriage is still implied in some sources. Andrea Foscolo, the Venetian bailo in Istanbul, wrote in a letter dated 18 June 1511 that Selim had sons and that one of these sons was a valiant man. Moreover, he said that the *imperator di tartari* has given him one of his daughters as wife and that this was a great favor.¹⁰¹ In late August 1511, Foscolo's letters mention Selim being with "his brother-in-law, the son of the Crimean Khan."¹⁰² An anonymous chronicle reports that Selim's intention was to

⁹⁸ Sanuto, 7:13.

⁹⁹ KPZ, VIII:240: "... *Emmâ şiiirle şîrûin imtizâcı ve melik-i melek-sûretle Moğol-ı gul-sûretüin izdivâcı makbûl ü ma'kûl olmamağın ol tertîb ü terkîb olan mevâdd-i ittihâd sûret-i intâca girmedî.*"

¹⁰⁰ Sanuto, 7:14-5. His name is given as Abdula, Haludil, Anadulli, etc. in different accounts or even in the same account. This inconsistency makes it hard to identify the man in the first instance. The marriage, however, was never realized. In his history of Trabzon, Mahmut Goloğlu mentions Shah Ismail's intention to marry one of Alaüddevle's daughters. The author argues that Ismail attacked Anatolia when his offer was declined. Mahmut Goloğlu, *Trabzon Tarihi* (Trabzon: Serander Yayınları, 2000), p.33.

¹⁰¹ Sanuto, 12:508.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 13:47: "... *et [Selim] è con suo cugnado fiol dil gran Tartaro.*"

engage Süleyman and a daughter of the Khan at Caffa.¹⁰³ According to an anonymous Greek chronicle, written in late sixteenth century, Selim took the Khan's daughter as wife when he was in Caffa.¹⁰⁴

These references demonstrate the rumors circulating at a time when Sultan Bayezid's sons were already competing for the throne, and probably reflect the impression of the contemporaries regarding the nature of the relationship between the Khan and Selim. The only remote documentary clues that can be put forth as to a "wife" of Selim of Crimean origin are a few letters from Selim I to the Khan where the former addresses the latter as "my father [*babam*]." One such letter is the one Selim sent the Khan upon his enthronement, whereby he informed Mengli Giray of his accession and requested that Süleyman be sent to Istanbul.¹⁰⁵ Another example is the proclamation of victory sent after Çaldıran, Selim's first major victory against another ruler. In this letter, too, Selim addresses the Khan as "my father [*babam*] Mengli Giray Han."¹⁰⁶ Since none of the later letters to the Khan refer to him as such,¹⁰⁷ it is more likely that Selim meant the address more as a show of respect than a familial title. Considering the Khan's support of Selim's acquisition of the Ottoman throne, Selim's tone of address seems to stem from a sense of sincere gratitude rather than kinship.

¹⁰³ Richard F. Kreutel, *Haniwaldanus Anonimi'ne Göre Sultan Bayezid-i Veli (1481-1512)*, (Istanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı Yayınları, 1997), p.47.

¹⁰⁴ Şerif Baştav, *16. Asırda Yazılmış Grekçe Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi (1373-1512)*, (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1973), p.185.

¹⁰⁵ For partial transcription of the letter [TSA, E.6185] see Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 7/10, p.127. He also refers to Süleyman as "your son" [*oğlunuz*], definitely not implying that Süleyman was literally Mengli Giray's son.

¹⁰⁶ *Münşe'at*, I:388.

¹⁰⁷ In the later Kemah proclamation of victory, for example, Selim does not address the Khan as "my father". *Ibid*, I:410.

1.2.3. The Town

Selim was appointed to Trabzon in 1481 [886]. He was the second prince to be appointed to the recently acquired district following his older brother Abdullah.¹⁰⁸ Although Selim's appointment to Trabzon can be regarded as a sign of unpopularity at court because it was very distant to the throne,¹⁰⁹ it was not contradictory with the early Ottoman practice of stationing princes in newly conquered or troubled regions.¹¹⁰ Selim's princely *sancak* was on the Georgian border. Trabzon was also the border first to Akkoyunlu, then to Safavi territory. The frontier nature of the district of Trabzon is worth dwelling upon for it made it possible for Selim to gather enough funds, men and prestige to pursue the long road to the throne. Such a critical location presented Selim with both an advantage and a disadvantage. While the prospect of raid and booty offered an opportunity to establish a firm powerbase, the location of Trabzon signified constant threat from the newly prospering Ismail the Safavi. With the rise of Shah Ismail and the fall of the Akkoyunlu, the triple border around Trabzon was in a chaotic state. In 1501, Selim offered refuge to Akkoyunlu commanders who survived Safavi attacks. At around this time, Selim directed raids into Georgia, moving as far as Kutaisi [*Kütayis*], conquered Rize in 1509 and moved on to Batum. He also moved against Ismail to Bayburd and Erzincan.¹¹¹

Selim's location at a critical frontier at a critical time gave him the opportunity to carry on raids and earn prestige as well as material gains. Along with these gains came local alliances which strengthened his powerbase. The opportunity of ghaza, offered by the local frontier circumstances, provided Selim with the warrior-hero image

¹⁰⁸ Fahrettin Kırzıoğlu, *Osmanlıların Kafkas Elleri Fethi (1451-1590)*, (Ankara: TTK, 1993), p.83. Çıpa establishes the appointment date as 1487. Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.20

¹⁰⁹ Çıpa, *The Centrality of Periphery*, p.20.

¹¹⁰ Haldun Eroğlu, *Osmanlı Devletinde Şehzadelik Kurumu*, (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınevi, 2004), p.104.

¹¹¹ Kırzıoğlu, *Osmanlıların Kafkas Elleri Fethi*, pp.84-6; Goloğlu, *Trabzon Tarihi*, p.36.

encountered in various accounts. Ottoman sources often praise his raids against the Georgians and the prosperity such activity brought to the region. When talking about Selim's deeds at Trabzon, Kemalpaşazade notes that Trabzon was a stronghold of Islam on the border of Georgia. The author further emphasizes that when the "prince of good fortune" entered the land of the Georgians, "a sea-full of booty poured" to Trabzon.¹¹² Kemalpaşazade emphasizes not only Selim's raids into Georgia but also his seizure of former Akkoyunlu castles – some peacefully and some by force – to add to his land [*mülk*]. The author mentions the local commanders of these regions joined Selim as he captured Bayburd and Kemah.¹¹³

At this point, Selim's conflict with Shah Ismail seems to have been a competition for the former Akkoyunlu castles. Selim saw the growing power of Ismail as a threat, especially with the association of unrest in Anatolia with the followers of Ismail. According to the Venetian bailo Contarini, Ismail started his recurrent excursions into Ottoman lands with the excuse of chasing the man who wronged him, namely Alaüddeve. According to what Contarini heard from one of Selim's men, Ismail got as close to Trabzon as 1.5 days distance. Suspecting Ismail would attack him, Selim arranged a raid to Ismail's camp, causing him to retreat. Upon this, Bayezid II sent a messenger to Selim to say that he could leave Trabzon and go wherever he chose. Selim declined the proposal on the grounds that he wished to live and die there. According to Contarini, at one point, Alaüddeve even sought refuge in Trabzon with Selim.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, while mentioning the excursions of Ismail chasing Alaüddeve, Ottoman sources emphasize that he did not violate Ottoman soil. While Kemalpaşazade reports that Alaüddeve insulted Ismail's messenger, Lütfi Paşa does not provide a specific reason for the animosity.¹¹⁵

Selim's actions against Georgian and Safavi territories also seem to have displeased Bayezid II. Following the Georgian raids of 1508, Shah Ismail sent an envoy to Bayezid II to complain about the destruction caused by Selim around Erzincan and Bayburd. Upon this complaint, Bayezid II forbade further raids. Furthermore, he warned

¹¹² KPZ, IX:7a. Also see, Celâlîzâde (SN), p.61.

¹¹³ KPZ, IX:4b-5a.

¹¹⁴ Sanuto, 7:22. For another threat by Ismail to Trabzon, see *ibid*, 166-7.

¹¹⁵ KPZ, VIII:251; Lütfi Paşa, p.195.

against taking in former Akkoyunlu commanders because their integration caused scarcity of fiefs. Another reason put forth by the Sultan was the provocation of envy on the part of other princes.¹¹⁶ While the accounts of Kemalpaşazade and Celâlzâde praise the deeds of Selim and reflect the raids as a device to increase prospering, contemporary correspondence shows otherwise. In an undated letter of complaint to his father, Selim expressed his wish to conquer and destroy “the enemy”, as well as complaining of the constant enemy attacks which hindered agricultural growth. He wrote that even basic subsistence items such as barley were scarce. He compared his precarious condition and his ghaza efforts with the peace and prosperity his brothers enjoyed in inner parts of the realm.¹¹⁷

It was within this frontier environment that Süleyman grew up and spent his childhood, while his father pursued activities which served to build a powerbase. While Süleyman was too young to join his father’s military enterprise or administrative function, with its recently acquired status, the city of Trabzon probably offered the young prince a natural understanding of the composite nature of the Ottoman realm, as discussed by Heath Lowry. Lowry points to the frontier nature of the city and its influence on Süleyman, and argues that the multi-cultural characteristic of the city endowed the young prince with an “awareness of the multi-national, polyglot nature of the state which one day he would rule.”¹¹⁸ In 1509, as his father decided that Süleyman should step into the imperial administrative system through a post of his own, Süleyman’s succession struggle began.

1.3. Caffa: The Long Road to the Throne

Süleyman’s appointment to Caffa signifies his political coming of age and can be regarded as the first instance of Süleyman being officially incorporated to the imperial

¹¹⁶ Kırzioğlu, *Osmanlıların Kafkas Ellerini Fethi*, pp.94-5.

¹¹⁷ TSA, E.5437. The document has been partly published in transcription in Uluçay. Uluçay, “Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?” 6/9, pp.75-6.

¹¹⁸ Heath W. Lowry, “Süleyman’s Formative Years in the City of Trabzon: Their Impact on the Future Sultan and the City,” in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds), p.33.

administration. It also signifies his active involvement in the succession struggles. Ottoman princes were appointed to districts when they reached the appropriate age. The average age of *sancak* appointment for an Ottoman prince ranged between 12 and 15.¹¹⁹ This practice had various purposes. First of all, *sancak* posting was part of the training of a prince through which he acquired administrative experience. Secondly, the administration of a district, especially in newly acquired or troublesome regions, by a member of the Ottoman house was regarded to enhance the security of the realm. Thirdly, the presence of a prince in a provincial post strengthened the dynastic presence in the region in question.¹²⁰

It is generally assumed that Süleyman came to the throne without a succession struggle and fratricide because he was an only son. However, his appointment to Caffa and the years he spent there prove otherwise. Süleyman's struggle for the throne was fought long before his succession. The period between 1509 and 1512 is actually the time when he fought his succession struggle, as part of that of his father's. Selim's competition for the throne and following elimination of the rival claimants signified a familial struggle rather than a personal one. It is this process that shall be covered under this section. In 1509, Süleyman had several uncles and numerous cousins with theoretically similar chances to acquire the throne after the death of Sultan Bayezid. In this sense, his father's struggle was actually Süleyman's own road to the throne.¹²¹ Throughout the succession struggle of Selim,¹²² Süleyman appears to have been a valuable asset to his father. Firstly, his *sancak* appointment gave Selim the opportunity to step into succession struggle. Secondly, his son's presence at Caffa gave Selim the opportunity to acquire the support of the Crimean Khan to strengthen his powerbase.

¹¹⁹ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri," *Belleten*, vol.39 (1975), p.667; İnalçık, "State, Sovereignty, and Law," p.78; Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.104.

¹²⁰ Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.104. Eroğlu emphasizes a fourth reason: taking financial weight off the imperial treasury through princely fiefs.

¹²¹ For a similar discussion see, Kırzioğlu, *Osmanlıların Kafkas Elleri Fethi*, pp.50-1.

¹²² For a detailed account of Selim I's struggle for the throne based on documentary evidence, see the series of articles by Çağatay Uluçay. Çağatay Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Dergisi*, vol.6, no.9, (March 1954), pp.53-90; vol.7, no.10, (Sept 1954), pp.117-142; vol.7, nos.11-12, pp.185-200; and Çıpa, *The Centrality of Periphery*, 2007.

The distant location of Caffa signified a safe refuge both for himself and for his son during the process. We shall now consider the main issues involved in this process.

1.3.1. First Appointment

The issue of Süleyman's appointment figures as a pretext for the surfacing of the conflict between Bayezid II's sons Ahmed and Selim. Contemporary sources reflect a premeditated plan on the part of Selim as he requested a *sancak* for his son who was old enough for appointment. According to Şükri, Selim presented the *sancak* request without anyone being aware of his intentions. Selim's request, as Şükri has it, was based on the argument that his son Süleyman was a servant [*bende*] of the Sultan. Since he grew to be not only a young man [*civân*] but also a strong one [*pehlivân*], the Sultan was expected to grant him a *sancak*.¹²³ Sa'di says that "with the help of God" the viziers could not realize Selim's intentions and Süleyman was granted Caffa. Moreover, they were convinced that since Selim got his son land on the Russian border [*Urûs*], though he might have plans to make himself a state to rule, he did not have his eye on the throne.¹²⁴ Later correspondence demonstrates that this was actually among the rumors at the time. When Mevlana Nureddin [d.1522] was sent to negotiate with Selim at Caffa, he reported back to the Sultan that as far as he could understand, Selim's intention was to acquire the castles between the land of the Crimeans and the Russians with the help of the Khan. He would then gather more men from the vicinity and reside there.¹²⁵

In his *Selimnâme*, Celâlzâde summarizes the episode, taking the opportunity to praise Süleyman as a young man and to emphasize how lucky Selim was to have been

¹²³ Şükri (SN), 20b.

¹²⁴ Sa'di (SN), 18b: "... âhir bunların bahânesiyle vâlid-i büzürgvârları 'Urûs'a devlet-kenâr idiüb kendüye devlet-i saltanat yaratsa gerek, 'ömleri payîdâr ve uğurları üstüvâr ola. Dâd ü rahş Hakkındır. Bunda pâdişâhlık dahli olmaduğı zâhirdir..."

¹²⁵ TSA, E.5490: "Ve kendü Kefe'ye geçdükde fikrin böyle anladuk ki Kefe'ye gelicek Hânı kendüye muvâfık kılub ve mabeynlerinde karâbet ümîd idiüb, bilâhere ol cânibde Hân ile vilâyet-i Rûs arasında Çerkes Kermân ve Man Kermân nâm hisârlar vardur ki Rûs'a tâbi'dir, anları Hân kuvvetiyle varub feth idiüb ve etrâfdan buldığı levendi cem' idiüb ol yerde temekkün ide." The document has been published in transcription in Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 6/9, pp.81-2.

granted by God a son like him.¹²⁶ He starts his account by telling that the greatest gift God could bestow on a man was a son. And He definitely had given Selim a superior one. Finally, he grew up and it was time for him to get a *sancak* of his own. Selim sent a request to Bayezid. The first two requests were rejected because of proximity to Ahmed. As Celâlzâde has it, Caffa came to be the ultimate solution. Meanwhile, the “cruel” viziers had their minds set on making Ahmed sultan. When their intentions came to surface, Selim left Trabzon and set sail to Caffa.¹²⁷ Although Celâlzâde does not go into as much detail as Sa’di and Şükri do, he gives us enough clues to assume that the appointment of Süleyman was the first major incident to trigger an open succession struggle between Selim and Ahmed.

Süleyman was appointed to Caffa on 6 August 1509 [18 Rabi II 915]. According a document written after his accession, Süleyman was given flag staff and some textiles.¹²⁸ The list of the items given to Süleyman’s cousin Osman b. Alemşah upon his *sancak* appointment in 1507 [912], on the other hand, included more items. Likewise, an undated and unidentified list of items given to princes on their first appointment consisted of not only more items but specifically of various horse gear.¹²⁹

An account book partly published in transcription by Uluçay gives the names and numbers of the people making up Süleyman’s retinue at Caffa in September 1511 [Rajab 917]. The list demonstrates a full household with the presence of key officials organized in regiments. Among these were four eunuchs [*tavaşiyân*] and 24 pages of the inner palace [*gulâm-ı enderûn*] of Albanian, Circassian, Georgian and Russian origin. There were also those whose salaries were paid monthly [*müşâherehorân*] among whom were Süleyman’s teacher Mevlâna Hayreddin, head gate-keeper [*ser-bevvabîn*], head-taster [*ser-zevvâkîn*], master of the horse [*mirahur*], head falconer [*ser-şâhinciyân*] and others. The prince had a group of men of “distinguished” status [*müteferrika*]

¹²⁶ Celâlzâde (SN), p.63.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p.64

¹²⁸ TSA, E.98 as quoted in Uluçay, “Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?” 6/9, p.77: “*Sa’âdetliü pâdişâh-ı âlem-penâh hazretleri sa’âdet ü i[sti]kbâlle Kefe sancağı olduklarında (?) bir kıt’a ‘alembaşı ve yirmi zira’ çifte nafte virilmiş. El-vaki’ fi on sekiz Rebiülâhir sene 915.*”

¹²⁹ For the facsimiles of these documents, see, Uzunçarşılı, “Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri,” figs.12-13 [TSA, 6510] and fig.1 [TSA, 5892], respectively.

including an *imam*, a *muezzin* and scribes. The prince also had a regiment of artisans, tent-tenders, guards and the like among his household.¹³⁰

Sa'di's account regarding the reception of Süleyman in Caffa gives a sense of the dynastic claim. Although the author does not mention anything about the dynasty, Süleyman's arrival in Caffa "with the help of God," his being likened to "Simurg of the Mount Qaf," the beautiful textiles spread on his way reflect previous accounts on royal entries in various cities on various occasions. According to Sa'di, the people of Caffa were joyful because "that eminent favored bird of heaven" was to provide his shadow over them. So he was expected to protect the city and guard the realm; he not only met the expectations but also spread justice.¹³¹

Selim's choice of camping in the country rather than entering the town as he came back to Caffa after being chased from Edirne by the imperial army might suggest the exclusive nature of *sancak* administration. According to Sa'di, Selim met his son at Caffa but did not enter the town. He felt relieved to see his son in good health and thanked God. Meanwhile, his surviving followers who were scattered around started to gather around him once more.¹³² Whether Selim camped outside the town for practical reasons, such as keeping the soldiers out of the town, or because he respected his son's authority is hard to say. Contemporary sources are silent on the reasons Selim might have had.

Selim's keeping his distance may be taken as a superficial demonstration of the institutional and administrative nature of Süleyman's first post as a prince. The registry of the retinue provides documental evidence in this respect. Sa'di's comments on the "shadow" and good administration of the prince, on the other hand, imply the contemporary perception of the princely *sancak* as an individual administrative unit for which the prince was personally responsible. At a deeper level, this seemingly regular administrative and educational post appears as a base for factional power-building with Süleyman's presence as the keystone.

¹³⁰ Uluçay, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar," pp.237-9.

¹³¹ Sa'di (SN), 22b.

¹³² *Ibid*, 37a.

1.3.2. Factions at Work

A court is not a single identity. It functions with the involvement of other households.¹³³ This definition of the court can be regarded as the main dynamic which gave direction to the struggle between Ahmed and Selim. The enmity between the two princes from 1509 to 1512 was not only rivalry acted out by two princely households in the narrower sense of the term. Each of these princely courts had their “subsidiary courts” primarily in their son’s courts. As such, it would be possible to talk about not only princes but familial factions competing for the throne. Each of these kinship factions was supported by various other households and/or groups of influence.

Süleyman appears as an accessory to Selim’s motives throughout the 1509-1512 period. His participation in the episode, as related by contemporary chroniclers, remains largely passive. Actually, he seems like an asset on Selim’s side to support him in his struggle. Contemporary accounts emphasize the significance of having a son. In other words, having an heir to take over the throne when the time comes seems to have been a serious advantage in the claims of succession. Kemalpaşazade, for example, not only praises Bayezid II for the abundance of his sons upon his accession but also tries to demonstrate that each of them was perfectly fit to rule.¹³⁴ Sa’di underlines the fact that Ahmed had many offspring, all of whom ruled their own districts.¹³⁵ In contrast, Sa’di explains, prince Korkud – though perfectly fit to rule – was sterile and did not have a son to succeed him. Therefore, since succession to the throne was by heredity, Korkud did not think the army would prefer him. So he tended towards peaceful seclusion.¹³⁶

¹³³ Adamson, “Introduction,” p.7.

¹³⁴ KPZ, VIII:54-6. In the beginning of his ninth book, the author once again praises the three sons of Bayezid II, who outlived him. KPZ, IX:3a-5b.

¹³⁵ Sa’di (SN), 13a: “[Ahmed] mahrûse-i Amasya’da şehzâde-i bahtiyâr olub kesret-i evlâd ve vefret-i isbât ibtilâsına dahi mübtelâ idi, ki her biri bir merzbûme tâcdâr idi.” Also see KPZ, IX:2b.

¹³⁶ Sa’di (SN), 13a: “Sultan Korkud hazretlerinin dahi gerçi kârgâh-ı âferinîşleri mürettib-i idrâk ve vefret-i kiyâsetle mu’allîm idi, âsmân-ı vücûd-ı ‘âlî-âşiyânı tuhm-ı tâbdârdan mu’arrâ olub, ‘akîm olmağın kendülerden sonra yâdigâr olıcak bir halef-i nâm-zâdi olmadığı ecilden saltanat-ı Rûm irsle intikâl idegeldiğı kânunı leşkerinin hücum-ı cem’iyyet ümîdin turgurub gayr ihvânı var iken kendü hakkında hilâf-ı ma’hûd bir vaz’ı mesdûde sülûk idiceklerin ihtimâli ba’id eğlerdi. Lâ-cerem mizâc-ı nâzikleri

While praising Korkud for his high moral and intellectual qualities, Kemalpaşazade too dwells on his lack of an heir and the disadvantages of not having a son.¹³⁷ The echoes of concern about the availability of a son to succeed the father can be found, for example, in the stories of *Book of Dede Korkud*. In the first story of the book, we witness a banquet given by Bayındır Khan whereby he ordered three different tents to be set: the white one for those who had sons, the red one for those who had daughters and a black one for those who did not have any children. Dirse Khan, a notable who had neither son nor daughter, was placed in the black tent and was very much offended by this.¹³⁸ This episode clearly suggests that offspring, and preferably male offspring, may be regarded as an asset for the ruler or any man of importance.

As the only son of the youngest of Bayezid's sons, Süleyman was in a delicate position before his father succeeded to the throne. The appointment to Caffa marked the beginning of his involvement in his father's succession struggle which actually turned out to be his own. Theoretically, he had an equal claim and opportunity to the throne with all other contestants of his generation. While Selim struggled to eliminate his rivals and clear the path to the throne, his son's future was inevitably linked to his own. In this respect, we can view the princely household as a faction with a political claim. From 1509 on, two generations were involved in the succession struggle. The first generation, in other words the immediate stakeholders, consisted of Bayezid's sons Ahmed [Amasya], Korkud [Manisa], Şehinşah [Konya], and Selim [Trabzon]. The second generation consisted of Ahmed's three sons, namely Murad [Bolu], Alaeddin and Süleyman; Şehinşah's [d.1511] sons Mahmud [d.1510] and Mehmedşah, Alemşah's [d.1502] son Osmanşah [Çankırı]; Mahmud's [d.1507] sons Orhan [Sinop] and Musa [Kastamonu].¹³⁹ After Süleyman's appointment to Caffa, Ahmed's sons were repositioned with Alaeddin in Bolu, Süleyman in Çorum and Osman in Osmaniçik.¹⁴⁰ We can even talk about a fourth generation involved in the conflict; Murad's sons, in other

ferâgat tarafına artuk ma'il olub ekser evkâtın kesb-i fezâ'il ve iktisâb-ı ma'arif nahvına sarf eylerdi."

¹³⁷ KPZ, IX:3b.

¹³⁸ *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri*, Semih Tezcan and Hendrik Boeschoten (eds), (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001), p.35 and p.201.

¹³⁹ Uluçay, "Bayezid II'nin Ailesi". Also see KPZ, VIII:276; and KPZ, IX:8.

¹⁴⁰ Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.20.

words Ahmed's grandsons Mehmed and Mustafa were in Amasya on behalf of their grandfather in 1512-13.¹⁴¹ Although Korkud did not have sons, he did have sons-in-law who could have assisted him. Two of his daughters were married in 1506 [912]. One of the sons-in-law was Malkoçoğlu Ali Bey, a member of an influential family. The other was Mustanseroğlu Ali Bey who was the governor of Karesi, which was on the way to Istanbul if Korkud decided to pass through Gallipoli [Gelibolu].¹⁴²

During the later years of his reign, Bayezid's deteriorating health seems to have become a serious issue. According to Kemalpaşazade, Bayezid's declining health meant the end of his conquering days. The author asserts that the sedition in Anatolia was because of the decline of the personal military prowess of the Sultan.¹⁴³ As early as 1507, rumors circulated on how the viziers sent for his oldest son Ahmed in Amasya because of the death of Bayezid II. In his entry dated 14 August 1507, Sanuto emphasized the expectation of such an event although nobody knew for certain what happened.¹⁴⁴ In 1508, there was already speculation on who the new sultan would be. An Italian report brought forth "the second son" as the favorite candidate and claimed that he would be the next sultan.¹⁴⁵ Venetian ambassador Jacopo Contarini, who left Istanbul in August 1506, reported that the two sons of Bayezid were at war with each other. He mentioned that one of them was "the one at Caffa".¹⁴⁶ Although he does not provide a name, he must be talking about Mehmed. However, Mehmed was already dead in 1506. Since no princely governor was assigned to Caffa between Mehmed and Süleyman, Contarini probably referred to a situation pertaining to earlier than 1504

¹⁴¹ Nabil Al-Tikriti, *Şehzade Korkud (ca. 1468-1513) and the Articulation of 16th Century Ottoman Religious Identity*, PhD Dissertation, (University of Chicago, 2004), p.316. Tikriti also offers a framework on the "geographical concentration" of the princely *sancak* posts which makes the family-factions more apparent, see *ibid*, 323-327. For rather comprehensive information on the posts of individual princes, see Uzunçarşılı, "Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri," p.663. See Appendix 2 for a geographical sketch and genealogical chart.

¹⁴² For Korkud's sons-in-law, see Uluçay, "Bayezid II'nin Ailesi", p.114.

¹⁴³ KPZ, IX:14b-16a.

¹⁴⁴ Sanuto, 7:130.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 7:569. The writer should be referring to Ahmed.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 7:13.

when Mehmed died. The next son Contarini mentioned is the one in Trabzon; the ambassador, however, does not refer to the mortal war between the princes again.¹⁴⁷

According to Sa'di, in 1509 [917] Sultan Bayezid had already made up his mind to abdicate in favor of one of his sons. When the clients of the princes present with the Sultan in Edirne learned of his plans, each warned his patron. This was how the competition for the throne began, according to the author, as each prince started to prepare for military action wondering whom "fortune would favor."¹⁴⁸ Sa'di's account continues with Selim's plans and the involvement of Süleyman as part of them. As such, when Selim realized that the highest officials favored his brother Ahmed, he determined that their intentions could not be changed except by the sword. He knew that he had to get access to Rumelia in order to pursue his struggle. Conveniently, his son Süleyman was not yet assigned a *sancak*; Selim made a plan to request Caffa for his son so that he himself could pass on to Rumelia by using this post as cover. According to Sa'di, his aim was to reach his father's palace in Edirne so that he could inform his father of the intentions of his "enemies". He also planned to tell his father that the land was being destroyed and something had to be done to stop it. However, before asking for Caffa, he asked for Sivrihisar [sic]¹⁴⁹ or Bolu, both of which were between Amasya and Istanbul. In other words, they were both on Ahmed's way to the throne, and Selim knew his brother would oppose this proposal. When the request was communicated to Bayezid, officials supporting Ahmed told the Sultan of the necessity to inform Ahmed before making the appointment. They thought that doing otherwise would cause conflict since both districts were located on areas of importance to Ahmed. When Ahmed was informed of the situation, he got very angry. He thought Selim's purpose was to hold the road to the throne and keep imperial correspondence from him.¹⁵⁰ When Selim's initial request was denied as planned, he sent another request without delay, this time asking for Caffa.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 7:22.

¹⁴⁸ Sa'di (SN), 14b.

¹⁴⁹ The actual *sancak* in question is Şebin Karahisar, there was no *sancak* as Sivrihisar. See, for example, Şükri (SN), 21a; Celâlzâde (SN), p.63.

¹⁵⁰ Sa'di (SN), 15b-17b.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, 17b-18a.

The process involving the designation of Süleyman's post clarifies the role and function of princely households as competing factions. Süleyman's appointment to Caffa triggered the surfacing of the succession conflict between Selim and Ahmed. According to Şükri-i Bidlisî, when Ahmed heard that Süleyman was given a *sancak* close to his own, he objected strongly, wondering whether Sultan Bayezid was not aware of the mutual dislike between them. Since being neighbors required friendship and affection, having an enemy as neighbor would not bring any good.¹⁵² His vizier Yular Kasdı Sinan Paşa [d.1514], on the other hand, tried to warn Ahmed about the danger of rejecting this appointment. He told that having the enemy close by would be much better for observing his motives and actions, thus allowing him to take precaution.¹⁵³ Although Şükri wrote his *Selim-nâme* when Süleyman was already on the throne, the enmity is strongly felt and articulated. Regardless of whether Ahmed expressed such feelings or not, such enmity seems to justify the path taken by Selim. Other than Ahmed's expression of the "mutual dislike", Şükri's Sinan Paşa repeatedly refers to the "enemy" [*adû, düşmen*]. Moreover, he clearly identifies the sides: "Two rams are two enemies / One is you, one is Süleyman son of Selim".¹⁵⁴ In Şükri's account, Ahmed appears quite confident in terms of the possession of the throne: "I am shah after the Shah; I merit the crown and the throne."¹⁵⁵ Kemalpaşazade attributes Ahmed's conception to his "devilish and ill-intentioned" advisors. According to the author, Ahmed aspired for the sultanate believing that the "state/fortune" [*devlet*] was his and his sons.¹⁵⁶

Şükri relates that Ahmed welcomed the Caffa appointment with confidence. His vizier Sinan Paşa, on the other hand, was wise enough to see the consequences. He told Ahmed that he now destroyed his own house by giving "them" access to *Rûm*. Now that Süleyman was to have Caffa, Selim would be able to gather armies, cross the sea, conquer the world and take the throne of *Rûm*. And then Ahmed would have no choice

¹⁵² Şükri (SN), 21a-b: "*Bilmedi mi şâh-ı bahr ü berr anı / Anları men sevmezem onlar meni / Konşılık mihr ü mahâbetden geliür / Konşı kim bed-hâh ola andan n'olur*".

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 21b.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 22a: "*Şâhdan sonra menem şâh / Tâc ü tahta men sezâvârım*."

¹⁵⁶ KPZ, IX:16a.

but to obey.¹⁵⁷ Şükri employs a similar rhetoric as he tells about Süleyman's journey to Caffa, this time from Selim's point of view. Those to whom Ahmed referred to as "them" now become "us" as he puts the lines in Selim's mouth. It is now "us" who would bring order to the world and challenge the enemies of the religion as the "pride of the House of Osman."¹⁵⁸ These verses emphasizing "us" versus "them" reinforce the idea of a faction formed by the "House of Ahmed" in opposition to Selim and Süleyman.

Kemalpaşazade, on the other hand, does not comment on the triggering effects of the appointment. Kemalpaşazade probably regarded the appointment as a regular one since he goes on telling that the sons of the other princes were given posts in various parts of the realm and lists where each young man ruled.¹⁵⁹ He reflects the Caffa appointment merely as a consequence of Selim's success against the Georgians. According to the author, Selim was so successful in his raids to the bordering Georgians that, as a token of his appreciation, Bayezid granted Selim's son [*ferzend-i ercümendine*] Caffa as was his wish.¹⁶⁰ In this respect, the father is rewarded through the son, thus suggesting once again a sort of unity formed by the father and son. Again, we can clearly see that father and son are viewed together, almost as a single will and entity. In many Venetian accounts, Selim is referred to as the governor of Caffa and Süleyman only as his son.¹⁶¹

Sa'di provides a detailed account of the events that followed Süleyman's appointment. According to the author, as Selim started to become more active, Ahmed realized that he had not foreseen the consequences of his approval of Süleyman's appointment to Caffa. He was furious when he heard of Selim's movement. Relying on the support of the viziers, he gathered troops and planned to go to his father. Observing all of these developments, the other brother Korkud assembled his troops and waited to see how events would fold out, only to get on the move if opportunity arose. All men of

¹⁵⁷ Şükri (SN), 22b.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 23a-b.

¹⁵⁹ KPZ, VIII:276.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 275; KPZ, IX:7. However, in the second manuscript the age of Süleyman is given as ten, although he was actually around 15 years old.

¹⁶¹ Sanuto, 12:507-512.

some influence and power had sided with one of the princes. The Rumelian commanders, their sons, their town commanders and cavalry sided with Selim.¹⁶² At this point, Sa'di tells that both Selim and Ahmed headed for Sultan Bayezid. Grandees accused Selim of rebelling against his father. Arguments followed about whether to have Bayezid abdicate or not and, if so, who to have on the throne got more ardent. Selim won over the Rumelian commanders while Ahmed started losing followers. According Sa'di, ultimately Selim came face to face with the imperial army and was forced to flee, whereas Ahmed was told to go back to his district.¹⁶³ According to Celâlzâde's version of the story, Ahmed came to the capital to meet with his father. The intention of the viziers was to have him kiss his father's hand, to proclaim him *ser'asker* [general commander of the army] and send him after Selim.¹⁶⁴

The course of events brought forth heated discussions about the abilities of each prince as to which one was more capable of taking over the throne. Ahmed's failure to cope with the rebellion in Anatolia, known as the Şahkulu rebellion, became an important argument. His inability to get rid of "a handful of Turks" who threatened his land caused the Janissaries to redirect their loyalties towards Selim.¹⁶⁵ According to Celâlzâde, since janissaries were influential in matters pertaining to the state, it was only natural for them to express their standpoint. They supported Selim because when he was in Trabzon, "his good fortune and sense of justice had become clear to all". On the other hand, Ahmed "indulged in eating and drinking day and night" and was notorious for his injustice. Their displeasure rose to the degree of a revolt whereby they attacked and pillaged the houses of Ahmed's supporters.¹⁶⁶ Celâlzâde uses this argument various times in his *Selimname*. He reproaches Ahmed for having talked over ambitiously for the sake of winning the throne, being obsessed with the love of

¹⁶² Sa'di (SN), 23a-b.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 29a-36a.

¹⁶⁴ Celâlzâde (SN), pp.89-90.

¹⁶⁵ Sa'di (SN), 35b; Celâlzâde (SN), p.91.

¹⁶⁶ Celâlzâde (SN), pp.89-90. Reflection of rivals as idle men doing nothing but making merry often appears in especially earlier chronicles. Such a device is often used to legitimize the claim of the winning side. A vivid example can be found in the succession struggle of Mehmed I, whereby Emir Süleyman was reflected as such. See, for example, Neşri, I:461.

sultanate, gathering around him a “sky-full” of soldiers but yet not being able to extinguish “the fire kindled by a few feeble-minded Turks.” For Celâlzâde, this was enough for the Muslim folk to realize that Ahmed was not fit to rule.¹⁶⁷

Interestingly, documentary evidence shows that Ahmed actually tried his hand at suppressing the rebellion. He was stopped by Vizier Ali Paşa, who told him not to pursue the rebels any farther for he himself would go after them. It seems that though Ali Paşa stopped Ahmed, he took along his son Alaeddin. An undated letter reports that Alaeddin tried his hand at battle but his banner fell and he had to flee.¹⁶⁸ On the other hand, no attempt to ease the unrest on this occasion can be observed on the part of Selim, who was famous for chasing *kızılbaş* during his governorship in Trabzon. While the Şahkuli rebellion shattered Anatolia in 1511, Selim seems to have been busy pursuing his own future. Curiously, sources seem to ignore the absence of Selim in Anatolia during the rebellions. In the first instance, such almost self-centered inactivity on Selim’s part makes one wonder why his reputation did not suffer from his non-action. However, when we think about the *sancak* system, Selim had already dealt with similar problems around Trabzon. The immediate problem posed by the Şahkuli rebellion stretched from Teke to Sivas through Kütahya and Ankara.¹⁶⁹ In other words, the rebellion started around Korkud’s district, i.e. Antalya and affected the areas closer to the districts of Ahmed and his sons. Furthermore, the task of suppressing the rebellion was given to Ahmed as governor of Amasya and Mehmed as governor of Niğde, along with the governor-general of Anatolia Karagöz Ahmed Paşa.¹⁷⁰ Ahmed already had trouble accepting Selim’s son in his vicinity; having Selim himself suppress a major revolt right in the middle of his jurisdiction would probably be out of the question. Though this is only speculation, if remotely true, it provides an example for how the princely household and *sancak* networks functioned.

¹⁶⁷ Celâlzâde (SN), p.75.

¹⁶⁸ For partial transcriptions of the report [TSA, E.6352] see: Uluçay, “Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?” v.6/9, p.73.

¹⁶⁹ For the range and scope of the rebellion, see Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, pp.24-35.

¹⁷⁰ Uluçay, “Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?” 6/9, p.66.

The persistence of princely factions is observed after the accession of Selim. While Selim stationed his son in Istanbul in his absence,¹⁷¹ Ahmed employed his sons as well. According to Kemalpaşazade, he first sent his son Alaeddin to Bursa with troops. Invading Bursa, Alaeddin had the *hutbe* called in the name of his father, issued coins, and “administered law as the custom of sultanate required.”¹⁷²

1.3.3. Location

Caffa provided Selim a convenient departure point and a promising base for putting together a considerable military force before he set on the road to challenge the status quo. It also provided a safe refuge when things did not turn out exactly in his favor.¹⁷³ It seems that Selim found an asylum to heal his wounds and regain his strength in Caffa. Although sources are silent about the matter, we can probably assume that Süleyman had a role in keeping that asylum/base safe and available during his father’s absence. We could also say that Caffa provided a safe shelter to leave an inexperienced heir in his absence.

Caffa was conquered in 1475. The Ottoman-Crimean alliance dated back to 1454 when the Crimean Khans became tributaries of the Ottoman Sultan. Mengli Giray Han, who was Khan at the time of Süleyman’s appointment to Caffa, was put on the throne with the support of Mehmed II.¹⁷⁴ Süleyman was the second Ottoman prince to be appointed to Caffa, following his uncle Mehmed [d.1504]. Although princes were not appointed to districts out of Anatolia, Caffa was probably a special case. Öztürk argues that the main function of the district was to monitor the Crimean Khanate. Secondly, it was a regulating post to pursue diplomatic relations between the Ottoman court and Russia, which began during the principality of Mehmed at Caffa.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ See section 1.4.1. below.

¹⁷² KPZ, IX:26b-27a.

¹⁷³ For a similar discussion see, Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.149.

¹⁷⁴ Yücel Öztürk, *Osmanlı Hakimiyetinde Kefe, 1475-1600*, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000), p.3, 21, 40.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p.49.

In addition, Süleyman was an asset to his father who had the claim to the throne. It seems like he served as instrument in acquiring Selim a stepping stone to Rumelia. If the location of Süleyman's first provincial post triggered the open struggle between Selim and Ahmed for succession, his appointment to Caffa provided Selim the opportunity to build a power base to pursue his own interest. Caffa was remote enough from the core lands of the imperial administration and far enough from Ahmed's control. It provided access to Rumelian provinces without having to cross either Ahmed's or his sons' districts; therefore, Selim could go to Istanbul and avoid possible intervention.¹⁷⁶ In Caffa, Selim would also be able to find allies for his cause as his association with the Crimean Khan following his arrival demonstrates. As we can see from Sa'di's account, he finds a legitimate excuse through Süleyman to go to Caffa on his own and probe for himself the opportunities which Caffa and the Khan could offer.

We shall again follow Sa'di's account as he offers a detailed story which allows an understanding of the significance of Caffa in Selim's struggle. Sa'di's account is also noteworthy because it offers slightly more clues to Süleyman's presence at Caffa. Although this is not to say that all that he mentions is absolutely true, it is an indicator of contemporary perception. According to the author, Selim was very happy when he received the approval of Caffa for his son. He immediately sent some of his men to Caffa for an initial inspection. He stayed in Trabzon until a thorough inspection was completed. Then he sent a request to the capital to go to Caffa and see things personally before he sent his son there. He said that he wanted to make sure that it was a suitable place for his son. Sa'di emphasizes Selim's insistence that "it was not fit to let his future on the sea only to be drawn into trouble." Leaving Süleyman in Trabzon, he left for Caffa without waiting for the approval.¹⁷⁷ According to the author, Selim found Caffa to be a beautiful place and he was greeted enthusiastically by the people of Caffa on his arrival. Many people gathered on shore to meet him and they were happy to have him there. He was well aware that if he intended to pass to Rumelia, he would need the support of the Khan. Therefore, he sent gifts to Mengli Giray Khan to which the Khan

¹⁷⁶ According to letters from Edirne and Istanbul to Venice, dated February 1511, the son who was governor of Trabzon was in Caffa and had no intention to leave because it was close to Constantinople. Sanuto, 12:71.

¹⁷⁷ Sa'di (SN), 19a-b. Such an explanation seems to be an excuse on the part of Selim for Caffa was already a princely *sancak* as his brother kept the post until his death.

reciprocated.¹⁷⁸ However, neither seems to have dared to arrange an open meeting. The Khan made the first move by “incidentally” chancing upon Selim on the hunt. Forming “immediate mutual friendship”, Selim opened up to the Khan to reveal his intentions. The Khan promised to do his best to help him.¹⁷⁹ Selim stayed in Caffa for a while to make preparations for the journey. When he was ready to leave, he sent for his son to come and take over the district as soon as possible, informing him of his departure for Edirne.¹⁸⁰ According to Sa‘di, Süleyman he left for Caffa as soon as he received the news. On his arrival, he was greeted by the people of Caffa waiting on the shore. They spread beautiful textiles under the feet of his horse as he went directly to the palace. Busying himself with “the protection of the city and the realm”, he made everyone talk about his justice. Meanwhile, he was waiting for his father, wondering what the events would bring.¹⁸¹

Selim, at some point, was worried that the Khan might have changed his mind about helping him. Upon receiving the Khan’s letter which stated that he would help Selim in any way he could, Selim left Caffa for Istanbul. The son of the Crimean Khan Saadet Giray accompanied him.¹⁸² According to Celâlzâde’s version of the story, the second departure of Selim was a response to Bayezid’s order for him to come and take over. In this version, the opinions and actions of the janissaries force Bayezid to take such action.¹⁸³ However, we should keep in mind that Celâlzâde’s *Selimnâme* has an apologetic tone in general. His task, as he states in the beginning of his work, was to write about the truths about the accession and reign of Selim I. His aim was to challenge the accounts on how Selim rebelled against his father and how he was defeated by his father’s army.¹⁸⁴ On the contrary, he sets out to prove that Selim did not have the

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 20b-21a.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 21b.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 22a.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, 21b-22b.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, 37b-38a.

¹⁸³ Celâlzâde (SN), pp.92-93.

¹⁸⁴ It is not possible to identify which works Celâlzâde refers to. Surviving Ottoman works do not actually identify Selim’s struggle as outright rebellion, which is not surprising. Erdem Çıpa, points out that in the *Selimnâme* literature, efforts to reflect Selim I as the obedient son are observable. On the other hand, Çıpa cites several

slightest intention to revolt against his father, and that if he did, he could easily have overcome his father with so many able followers under his command.¹⁸⁵ Thus, Celâlzâde's account on how Bayezid sent messengers to call Selim to Istanbul could be regarded as an attempt to legitimize Selim's second journey from Caffa. Nonetheless, what matters for our purposes is Selim's employment of his son's *sancak* as a quasi-permanent power base.

Documents show that the Khan did support Selim. According to reports sent to Bayezid II, the youngest son of the Khan accompanied Selim in his move to Rumelia in May-June 1511 [Rabi I 917]. The number of troops provided by the Khan ranges between 300 and 1,000 in the reports.¹⁸⁶ The Khan seems to have supported Selim not only with troops but also with his influence in Bayezid II's court. In an undated letter to Sultan Bayezid, he seems to have intervened on behalf of Selim whom he referred to as his son [*oğlum Sultân Selîm Şâh*]. In this letter, The Khan informed the Sultan that Selim left Caffa for Rumelia upon hearing that "Sultan Ahmed had Anatolia under his command." He requested that Selim be given the Rumelian districts previously offered as to prevent sedition in the realm.¹⁸⁷

1.3.4. Legitimizing the Line

As Selim's struggle for the throne was Süleyman's own succession struggle, the body of histories of Selim written during the reign of Süleyman to legitimize Selim's way of acquiring the throne can also be considered as a device to legitimizing Süleyman's succession. Erdem Çıpa asserts that "the corpus of *Selîmnâme* literature can

anonymous chronicles which define Selim's departure from Trabzon as *hurûc*, signifying "a political bid", and which emphasize the forceful nature of his succession as *cebren* [forcefully]. Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.65, 62, 71.

¹⁸⁵ Celâlzâde (SN), pp.24-27.

¹⁸⁶ For partial transcriptions of the reports [TSA, E.8917 and TSA, E.6329] see, Uluçay, Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 6/9, p.83. For such documents, also see Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.39. Crimean support to Selim is often mentioned in Venetian correspondence; for such examples, see Sanuto, 12: 293, 509, 511; 13:47, 357-8, 521.

¹⁸⁷ TSA, E.6691/7.

be considered a conscientious project of early-modern Ottoman revisionist historiography initiated and supported by Süleyman I in order to clear his father's name and, by extension to further emphasize his own legitimacy."¹⁸⁸ A brief look at Selim's entry to Istanbul to be enthroned demonstrates the pain taken to reflect Selim's accession as legitimate and just.

According to Sa'di, when Ahmed heard of Selim's departure, leaving his oldest son Murad in Amasya and sending his other son Alaeddin to Bursa with some of his men, he left for Istanbul and stopped in Ankara. On the other hand, worried about what was going on, Korkud left his Manisa seat and went to Istanbul. Keeping silent up to this point, Korkud decided to try his hand at the race and claimed that it was he who gave the throne to his father; therefore, he would not let any other have it if his father decided to abdicate. His claim was based on the fact that he guarded the throne until his father came to assume it on the death of Mehmed II.¹⁸⁹ Meanwhile, janissaries were on the road and expecting the arrival of Selim. It was clear now that Selim was to acquire the throne. Although Selim himself did not care for worldly dominion, he had to accept the throne to preserve the order of the realm.¹⁹⁰ Selim's entry into the capital reads like a royal entry. From the textiles spread on the roads and the canopies prepared, we can sense that this was a pre-planned welcoming. Even Korkud was there to greet his brother on horseback. Sa'di emphasizes that they greeted each other and showed their mutual affection on horseback, whereby they resembled "two dragons mounted on lions, and like the Twins they went towards the city side by side."¹⁹¹ Sa'di probably refers here to the famous astrological twins Castor and Pollux, or the Gemini, who were known as tamers of horses.¹⁹² With this analogy Sa'di emphasizes the brotherly

¹⁸⁸ Çıpa, *Centrality of Periphery*, p.126. Çıpa excludes the works of İshak Çelebi, Adâ'i and İdris-i Bidlisi based on the possible dates of completion.

¹⁸⁹ Sa'di (SN), 39b-40b.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 39a-b.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 41b-42b: "Sultan Korkud hazretleri dahi istikbâl idüb ol kamereyn-i ezhereyn at üzerinde birbiriyle mülâki olub, felek-zeyn üzere süvâr iken musâfaha itdiler, gûyâ ki iki ejder-i şîr-süvârlar idi ki tev'emân gibi hem-'inân olub şehri cânibine doğru revâne oldılar."

¹⁹² David Leeming, "Castor and Polydeuces," *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) through Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. Date of access: 5 March 2007.

affection between Selim and Korkud, which is somewhat ironic since he and his readers already knew what happened later on. His aim was probably to imply that there was no enmity between the two brothers until Korkud misbehaved. This analogy also serves the purpose of exaltation, for what Sa'di makes is a very relevant celestial reference.¹⁹³

Sa'di's account continues with Selim's entry in the city from Topkapı and a ceremony held at Yeni[kapu]bağçe. The janissaries encircled Selim's tent "as the custom of Ottoman sultans required." Then came the hand kissing ceremony, followed by Selim distributing rewards.¹⁹⁴ All this, according to Sa'di, was done before Selim went to the Palace and paid his respects to his father. After Selim's visit, Korkud visited his father and kissed his hand. At this point, Sa'di likens Bayezid to Jacob and Korkud to Joseph.¹⁹⁵ Then followed a conflict between Selim and those who still secretly supported Ahmed. They suggested that Selim be proclaimed *ser'asker*. However, Selim protested and asserted that the realm needed a *pâdişâh*. He also told them to bring in Ahmed and make him *pâdişâh* if they so wished, and that he would strive to help under his command, too, because the realm suffered because of their struggle. He reproached them for ignoring the inactivity of Ahmed when he sat idle in Anatolia and now they were asking him to go and clean up his mess.¹⁹⁶ Celâlzâde, on the other hand, turns the story round. According to his version, Selim accepted to be *ser'asker* since his father

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t208.e292>
Such divine twins are also found in other Indo-European cultures, such as the twin horse gods Ashvins who are the sons of the sun and a mare in the Hindu epic Mahabarata in India, the children of the goddess Macha in Ireland, Horsa and Hengist in Britain. David Leeming, "Ashvins," *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) through Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. Date of access: 5 March 2007

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t208.e155>

¹⁹³ For some remarks on astrology in the Islamic/Persian world and on some references to the Gemini, see for example: David Pingree, "Classical and Byzantine Astrology in Sassanian Persia," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 43, 1998, pp.227-239, esp. p.233; David A. King, "The Astronomy of the Mamluks: A Brief Overview," *Muqarnas*, vol.2, 1984, pp.73-84; and Joseph M. Upton, "A Manuscript of *The Book of the Fixed Stars* by 'Abd Ar-Rahman As-Sûfi," *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, vol.4, no.2 (Mar. 1933), pp.179-197, especially pp.192-3.

¹⁹⁴ Sa'di (SN), 42b. Also see Celâlzâde (SN), p.96.

¹⁹⁵ Sa'di (SN), 43a.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 43b.

commanded so. However, the janissaries did not consent to this, insisting that they would offer their services only if Selim ascended the throne.¹⁹⁷ This climatic moment culminates on the agreement between all on the need of a new sultan; the only one fit for the job would be Selim. Sa'di tells us that although Sultan Bayezid felt the same way from the beginning, he had to postpone his plans to ease the unrest of the other princes. Thus, Bayezid immediately proclaimed Selim *pâdişâh* to the land of *Rûm* in his stead on 7 Safar 918 [24 April 1512] which happened to be an "auspicious Friday."¹⁹⁸ Celâlzâde's Bayezid is not so light of heart, though. First he rejects the idea on the grounds that he himself was still healthy enough to hold the throne. He only gives in when the viziers express their concern about the possible consequences of rejecting the janissaries.¹⁹⁹

1.4. Istanbul: Waiting to be the Only Heir

Selim's accession marks the end of Süleyman's days in Caffa. Having secured the seat of the throne along with its main influence group, Selim probably did not need such a strong hold on Caffa any more. The Khan's friendship would suffice from then on. Caffa seems to have served its purpose for the time being, so has Süleyman's presence there. Now his father needed him elsewhere. So he was called to Istanbul where he was welcomed festively.

The ceremonial reception of Süleyman in the capital seems to be his first imperial public appearance. Although a solemn reception was held on the young prince's arrival in Caffa three years earlier, the imperial quality of the reception is highly questionable since it was a local greeting and his father was only one of the candidates to the throne. Before elaborating on the significance of this initial reception for the various parties concerned, it would be useful to have a brief look at the background against which it took place. After a long struggle Süleyman's father Selim finally acquired the Ottoman throne with the abdication of his father Sultan Bayezid. He was officially, or rather

¹⁹⁷ Also see Celâlzâde (SN), pp.97-98.

¹⁹⁸ Sa'di (SN), 44b-45b.

¹⁹⁹ Celâlzâde (SN), p.98.

semi-officially, enthroned in Istanbul on 24 April 1512 [7 Safar 918]. With his father out of the way, Selim was ready to confront his brothers who also aspired for the throne. The most serious threat to Selim's claims was posed by his brother Ahmed and his sons who held a power base in Anatolia. Selim's throne was not safe until his rivals were eliminated; his claims were not fully legitimate either. Set on securing his claims on ultimate power, Selim called for his son Süleyman from Caffa. In the letter Selim sent to the Crimean Khan, he informed the Khan that he was enthroned with the blessings of his father and requested his son Süleyman be sent to Istanbul to guard the city if the need to go on campaign arose.²⁰⁰ It is upon this order that Süleyman rushed to Istanbul as an heir to the throne.

1.4.1. Arrival

Upon the arrival of a messenger, Sultan Selim ordered urgent preparations to be made for a grand welcome for his son. All dignitaries were to be present as the prince was greeted on the shores of Üsküdar. Ships, boats and galleys, big and small filled the sea. Following the order of the Sultan, all were there to welcome the prince as he reached the shore. They greeted him with thunderous cannon fires, making it known to all that the felicitous prince arrived. As the prince came out of the ship and let his face be seen by all those gathered, they were impressed by the handsome countenance and the comely stature of the young man. Dignitaries saluted the prince as ancient custom required, kissing his hand before he was taken aboard another galley which would take him to the abode of his father. On the other side of the sea, yet other servants of the Sultan, the cavalry and the infantry, were ready to welcome the prince on shore. They greeted him on his debarkation and had him mount an elegant horse bedecked with a silver saddle. As he marched to his place of accommodation, people of the capital filled the roads spreading beautiful textiles under the feet of his horse. The whole city was in a festive mood. Thus, the eighteen year old prince, Süleyman, was welcomed at the

²⁰⁰ For a partial transcription of [TSA, E.6185] see Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 7/10, p.127. A Venetian letter dated 18 June 1512 from Ragusa reported the departure of the armada kept at Caffa to Istanbul. Sanuto, 14:464.

capital in the summer of 1512 as the only son of the newly enthroned Sultan of the Ottoman realm.²⁰¹

This reception can be approached in various ways. This is the first glimpse imperial dignitaries have of the young prince; it is also the first glimpse Süleyman himself has of the imperial world. Therefore, the significance of this event must have been great for Süleyman and for his later career. Although he already held a *sancak* [district] of his own for three years, it is hard to assume that he was really an important part of imperial administration or imperial protocol. Furthermore, during his Caffa years, his father was not the only heir to the throne. With as many uncles and male cousins as Süleyman had, the road to the throne probably seemed quite long in 1509.²⁰²

On his arrival in the capital in the summer of 1512, things were different. His father had started to clear the way and his prospects were now definitely brighter. He was in this struggle with his father and now he was called to assist him further. If his father managed to succeed, Süleyman would remain the sole heir to the throne of the House of Osman. If his father failed, he too would be destroyed. The appearance on the shores of Üsküdar reflected this mutual destiny in a way. More solidly, it reflected a strong faction with a strong claim. Taking hold of Istanbul, “the abode of the throne” [*tahtgâh*], was a vital phase in acquiring the throne.²⁰³ In this sense, leaving the city under his son’s protection was both a practical and symbolic act on the part of Sultan Selim. Even if Selim’s reason to bring his son to Istanbul seems to be more practical than symbolical, this show-off displayed Selim’s dynastic potential and capability. There was the ruler adored by the janissaries because of his courage to fight the “heretics” and “trouble makers” and here was his “auspicious son” who would ensure the continuity of the dynasty and the order of the world associated with it. The reception also seems to signify the acceptance and confirmation of Selim I’s claims by the imperial establishment.

²⁰¹ Sa’dî (SN), 51b-52b; İshâk (SN), 94b-95b; Celâlzâde (SN), p.105; Sadeddin, IV:145-46; Ali (KA), p.105.

²⁰² Dwelling on the issue years later in his *Tacü’-t-Tevarih*, Hoca Sadeddin said that Süleyman found consolation in the administration of Caffa and, although he anticipated his future destiny, he did not dare think about it. Sadeddin, IV:9.

²⁰³ On the significance of Istanbul in this respect, please see the relevant section in Chapter 2.

In Sa'di's account, the main focus is on the meriting physical appearance of the prince, along with his resemblance to his father. Such a description is employed to prove that the prince merited the throne as did his father.²⁰⁴ In Ishak's account, a more celestial aura surrounds the arrival of the prince which has more to do with a sort of divine favor upon the prince. Ishak likens the arrival of the prince to a herald from the "invisible world" [*gâ'ib*]. Furthermore, the author likens the ship bringing Süleyman to the throne of Solomon with "winged feet" which brought about miracles.²⁰⁵

On the other hand, the reception of Süleyman in Istanbul is also a public demonstration of the re-confirmation of loyalty to Sultan Selim, just like any other figure in the Ottoman military/administrative system. Ishak, for example, mentions the invitation sent to Süleyman ordering him to come from Caffa while relating the decrees sent to Rumelian commanders to come to pay their respects.²⁰⁶

1.4.2. Departure

In mid-April 1513, Selim was on the verge of eliminating all his rivals and securing the throne once and for all. In late March 1513 [Muharram 919], he wrote a letter to Süleyman who was guarding Istanbul. He asked his son to go to the location he designated on the outskirts of Istanbul without delay. Süleyman was required to inform his father of his arrival at the designated location and wait for his instructions. Meanwhile, Selim left Bursa in chase of his brother Ahmed for a final settling of accounts.²⁰⁷ Eleven days later, Selim and Ahmed came up against each other in Yenişehir. Ahmed was trapped and caught on flight to Izmit. Although he asked to be allowed to see his brother, he was executed without being given the opportunity. His body was brought to Bursa to be buried. Meanwhile, his son Osman who was in Amasya was captured by Selim's forces. Both Osman and Murad's son Mustafa were

²⁰⁴ Sa'di (SN), 52a-b.

²⁰⁵ Ishak (SN), 95a-b.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 91b-92a. Both the commanders and Süleyman were "invited" [*da'vet*] through a "decree" [*hüküm*].

²⁰⁷ TSA, E.6185/18. See Appendix 3. For the transcription of the document, see, Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 7/11-12, p.197.

strangled on 14 May 1513 [8 Rabi I 919]. Their possessions were confiscated along with those of Ahmed.²⁰⁸

All his rivals finally eliminated, Selim was now the sole possessor of the throne and his son the only rightful heir. A report from Nicolo Giustiniani, the Venetian bailo in Istanbul, dated 15 May, informs that Selim arrived in Gallipoli and feasted with Hersekzade Ahmed Paşa. Giustiniani reported that some of the troops were sent towards Edirne with the purpose of preparing an attack on Hungary. It was expected that the Sultan would move on to Edirne after meeting his eighteen year-old son who was in Istanbul and he would grant his son a *sancak*.²⁰⁹ Ottoman sources tell a similar story about Selim's return from Bursa through Gallipoli [*Gelibolu*]. There, he was greeted by the grand vizier Hersekzade Ahmed Paşa who possessed a farm in a nearby village and enjoyed a feast given in his honor by the grand vizier on his property. After sending some of the troops to Edirne and staying for a few days himself, he moved on to Istanbul, hunting on the way. These accounts note that meanwhile his son Süleyman was stationed in Istanbul to guard the Rumelian provinces in the absence of his father. Thus, he set off from Vize, where he had spent the winter, to meet his father on the way and paid his respects.²¹⁰

Süleyman was ready to leave for his new post after another hand-kissing ceremony where his father gave him precious advice. Then the son left for Manisa through Gallipoli and the father for Istanbul in the opposite direction.²¹¹ However, Kemalpaşazade contradicts Sa'di's story and says that the prince set off from Istanbul

²⁰⁸ Uluçay, "Yavuz Sultan Selim Nasıl Pâdişâh Oldu?" 7/11-12, p.198-9.

²⁰⁹ Sanuto, 16:375.

²¹⁰ Sa'di (SN), 61a-b; and KPZ, IX:34b-35b.

²¹¹ Sa'di (SN), fol.61a-b: "...hazret-i şehzâde-i civan-baht ol kışı sa'âdetle Vize'de kışlamış idi. Yol üzere geliüb dest-i şerîflerin bûs idicek cemî' kemâlâtın ramî-i merâkî görüb hakkında mezîd 'inâyetlerin zuhura getürdiler. Mahruse-i Mağnisa sancağın ihsân idiüb ol şîr-i pîşe-i ikbâli ... mîrsâd ü hâne-i merzbân eylediler. Tekrar mübârek ellerin bûs idiüb sancaklarına 'azm itmelü olıcak, hazâ'in-i nesâ'ih ü pendlerin meftûh buyurub şehzâde-i kâmrânın gûş-ı hûşına bu gevher-i girân-mâye-yi takub ârâyış-i cihân eylediler... Andan cûybâr-ı bağ-ı 'ömrinin serv-i âzâdın hüdüya ısmarlayub kendüler devletle İstanbul'a, anlar sa'âdetle Gelibolu'dan Mağnisa'ya doğru revân oldılar."

and that Selim went to Edirne, his favorite location because of hunting opportunities.²¹² Celâlzâde does not give details on where the meeting took place or from where Süleyman set off for his new post; however, he says that Selim came to “*dârii’s-saltanatü’l-‘aliyye*” after he eliminated his brothers and nephews.²¹³ From this statement, we can assume that Selim did come to Istanbul before sending his son to his provincial post. The above-mentioned letter ordering Süleyman to go to the appointed place and wait for Selim shows that Süleyman was not actually in Istanbul at the time, nor did his father order him to go in the city: “When my royal decree reaches,” wrote Selim, “go to a healthy place near Istanbul and get close to Istanbul without delaying an hour, important things have happened and write to me when you arrive in the appointed place and do whatever I order you thereafter.”²¹⁴ The reference to Vize, as mentioned above, also suggests that Süleyman did not remain in Istanbul proper.

“A prince’s departure for his provincial capital was the occasion of a ceremonial marking his political coming of age,” says Leslie Peirce.²¹⁵ In the case of Süleyman’s departure for Manisa, sources do not provide elaborate accounts of the ceremonial. This lack of detail may result from a number of reasons. The number of the audience could have been very limited to allow eye witness accounts or even hearsay. However, the sources I have consulted have been written during Süleyman’s reign and at least two of the authors knew Süleyman closely and had the opportunity to hear about the occasion

²¹² KPZ, IX:35b: “*Şehzâde-i ercümend mahrûse-i İstanbul’dan çıkub sancağına gitdikden sonra Sultan Selim dahi Edirne cânibine geçüb, sarây-ı semâ-simâsında karar itdi. Ol diyârın kenarları sayd ü şikâra mülâyim olmağın ziyâde severlerdi.*”

²¹³ Celâlzâde (SN), p.110: “*Cümle şehzâdeler ahvâli ber-taraf olub husus-ı saltanatda müzahim ü münâzi’ kalmayub... Sa’âdet ü ikbâl ile göçüb, dâru’s-saltanatı’l-‘aliyyede taht-ı ikbal-baht-ı hümayûnu teşrîf itdiler.*”

²¹⁴ See Appendix 3. TSA, E.6185/18: “*... hükmi-i hümayunum vusul bulduğı gibi kat’â bir an ve bir sâ’at te’hîr itmeyüb Istanbula karîbbir tendürüst mahal görüb Istanbula yakın gelesin ki mühim maslahat düşmüşdür. Emrim üzere İstanbul’a yakın geldiğün yazub sa’âdet-me’âbıma bildüresin. Sonra yine emri celîlü’l-kadrım ne vechle sâdır olur ise mûcibi ile ‘amel idesin. İşbu Muharremü’l-harâmâtın yigirmi yedinci günü ki düşenbih günidir ben dahi yümn ü ikbâlle mahrûse-i Brusadan göçüb Allahın ‘inâyeti ile Sultan Ahmedün üzerine müteveccih oldum. Şöyle bilesin. ‘Alâmet-i şerîfe i’timâd kılasın. Tahriren fi evahir-i Muharremü’l-haram 919.*”

²¹⁵ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p.46

from him personally.²¹⁶ We know that the prince kissed his father's hand, an act of filial reverence for one's father as well as of confirmation of submission at the political level. When it comes to other ceremonial elements such as the identity of participants in the procession, if there was one at all, behavior of participating individuals or groups, the location and hierarchical relationships of these elements are absent in these accounts. Comparing the accounts of this departure with those on his initial arrival in Istanbul – and to the departures of those after him – the ceremonial aspect appears to be rather faint. We hear of no viziers, no servants of the sultan, no beautiful textiles spread on the roads. Speculatively, if Süleyman's departure for Manisa was not celebrated with as big a ceremony as his arrival in Istanbul or even if a possibly larger event was slighted in the accounts, perhaps the contemporaries attributed less significance to this particular departure. Süleyman's Manisa appointment and his departure were somewhat different from previous and future cases. He belonged to the third generation when he had his first provincial posting. In other words, he had already "come of age" politically. His departure to Caffa, his first *sancak*, was from Trabzon, thus not a ceremonial event in the imperial scale, but one at the provincial level if at all. Since his father – yet a prince himself – had already left Trabzon, it would have been impossible for Süleyman's first departure to follow the appropriate course of ceremonial. However, his ceremonial arrival in Istanbul in 1512 seems to have covered the void and probably signifies his "political coming of age" at the political and imperial level. In this respect, the 1513 departure might not have posed a more elaborate ceremonial occasion since it might have been regarded as a change of post rather than a political change of status.

1.5. Manisa: Heir to the Ottoman Throne

Manisa was Süleyman's first post in terms of imperial significance and in terms of his being on his own to the extent that a member of the second generation would be allowed. More significantly, this was his first post as the only heir to the throne, which

²¹⁶ There is no mention of the departure even in *Tacü't-Tevârih* of Hoca Sadeddin although he likes to tell all sorts of anecdotes that he has heard. Sa'di, who describes Süleyman's entry in Istanbul in 1512 in detail, is also silent when it comes to the departure.

seems to be reflected in the items given to him on his departure. The list contains one million aspers in cash, various robes, garments and textiles, a ceremonial sword and dagger, a gold-plated knife. The list also contains ten servants [*gılmân*], five of them with *üsküflü keçe*. The Prince was also given fifteen horses and two seals.²¹⁷

Manisa functioned as a princely *sancak* from the beginning of its Ottoman past after the conquest around 1390. The first prince to be appointed to the city was the son of Bayezid I, Ertuğrul. After the governorship of Mehmed II, the district hosted princes without interruption. Feridun Emecen argues that in the earlier periods, princes were stationed in Manisa according to ancient Turkic custom which involved increased security and easier adaptation by the local population. This theory is also supported by the earlier frontier natures of cities such as Amasya, Sivas, Konya, Kastamonu and Trabzon. By the second half of the sixteenth century, the importance of Manisa increased because of its proximity to Istanbul.²¹⁸ Whatever Selim's thoughts were when he sent the afore-mentioned letter to his son, he was by then ready to send Süleyman to a *sancak* of his own. The Sultan's choice rested on Manisa [Saruhan]. Kemalpaşazade, who mentions that the province had always hosted great rulers, emphasizes the princely status of Manisa.²¹⁹

The news of Süleyman's new appointment was soon heard. Francesco Arimondo, the commander of Napoli di Romania, wrote on 24 July that "the son of the *Signor* has gone to *Magnesia*, where his father gave him the governorship".²²⁰ Letters from Chios [Syo], dated 2 and 3 July, stated that the son of the *Signor* went to reside in *Mengrissia*.²²¹ Süleyman had officially become a subject of international reporting by now.

²¹⁷ TSA, 9706/4 as quoted Uzunçarşılı, "Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri," p.684, figs.16-17. The list includes the items given for the use of his mother.

²¹⁸ Feridun Emecen, *XVI. Asırda Manisa Kazası*, (Ankara: TTK, 1989), p.26. For information on Ottoman princes who served at Manisa until Süleyman, see *ibid*, 22-31.

²¹⁹ KPZ, IX: 35a: "*Saruhan vilâyeti kadîmden içinde mülûk-ı 'azîmü's-şân tura gelmişdi, ferzend-i ercümendi olan sultân-ı selâtinü'l-'Arab ve'l-'Acem, kâhirü'l-mülûk ve kahramânü'r-Rûm, mefahir-i dûdmân-ı Âl-i 'Osmân Sultân Süleymân'a erzâni görildi.*"

²²⁰ Sanuto, 16:651.

²²¹ *Ibid*, 658.

1.5.1. Household

A separate household was prepared by the Sultan to accompany Süleyman in Manisa. This attests to the dependent status of the princely court in relation to the imperial court. The main officials such as the *lala* who acted both as a political advisor and tutor to the prince, the *defterdar* [treasurer] and the *nişancı* [head of chancery] were supposed to be trusted men of the sultan. Their duty was two-fold: while they served as officials of the newly-formed princely household, they would also keep an eye on the prince in the interest of the sultan. Such a practice signified a control mechanism implying dependence and connection.²²² Ottoman princely *sancak* appointments were modeled on the practices of earlier Persio-Islamic/Turco-Islamic states. The *lala*, in this respect, mirrors the Saljuqid practice of “atabegate”. The attachment of an *atabeg* to a prince on his provincial appointment served both a social and a political function. The *atabeg* would be responsible for the education of the prince and prevent his potential rebellion.²²³ The same functions seem to have continued in the *lala*. The *lala* designated by Sultan Selim for Süleyman, Kasım Paşa, was an experienced member of Ottoman bureaucracy. He descended from an established family of bureaucrats of Arab origin. He served as *nişancı* and vizier under Bayezid. For a while he was governor of Caffa.²²⁴ According to Celâlzâde, when it came to appointing a *lala* to send along with his son, there were two prospects for the job: Piri Paşa and Kasım Paşa, who were both “most superior and wise.” Finally, Kasım Paşa was appointed along with a *defterdar*. A household consisting of *ağas*, *çavuş* and guards was brought together for the prince. All necessary equipment was prepared according to “Ottoman custom”. A treasury and munitions were added.²²⁵

²²² Petra Kappert, *Die Osmanischen Prinzen und Ihre Residenz Amasya im 15 und 16. Jahrhundert*, (Istanbul : Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1976), p.11.

²²³ A.K.S. Lambton, “The Internal Structure of the Saljuq Empire” *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol.5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.239. For the *lala* as a monitoring figure, also see, Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.131.

²²⁴ İnalçık, “State, Sovereignty, and Law,” p.78.

²²⁵ Celâlzâde (SN), pp.110-1.

The pay registers pertaining to Süleyman's governorship in Manisa demonstrate that his court as a prince was a miniature version of the imperial court and household.²²⁶ While Süleyman's household consisted of 458 persons in Caffa, the number rose to 746 in Manisa.²²⁷ A comparison of the pay registers pertaining to Caffa dated September/October 1511 [Rajab 917]²²⁸ and pertaining to Manisa dated March-April-May 1513 [Muharram-Safar-Rabi I 919]²²⁹ demonstrates that the princely court was transferred to Manisa with additional staff. A comparison of the registers also demonstrates a raise in the allowance of the prince. While he was allocated 600 aspers *per diem* in Caffa, in Manisa this amount rose to 1,000 aspers. The same holds true for the various members of his court. His teacher Mevlana Hayreddin's salary, for instance rose from 20 aspers to 60 aspers. Similarly, the salary of the master of the horse rose from 10 to 35 aspers.

In Manisa, Süleyman probably had the opportunity to start building a courtly circle of his own, including various sorts of people who would accompany him in Istanbul after he ascended the throne.²³⁰ One such person was the Halveti sheikh Musa Muslihiddin, known as Merkez Efendi [d.1552]. Süleyman is said to have frequented his convent during the years he spent at Manisa. After his accession, Süleyman appointed him preacher to Hagia Sophia.²³¹ An analysis of the registers of court artisans

²²⁶ Çağatay Uluçay has published partial transcriptions of two registers pertaining to Süleyman's governorship in Manisa: TSA, D.10052, and TSA, D.8030. "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar," in *Kanuni Armağanı*, pp.243-5 and pp.245-9 respectively.

²²⁷ Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.134.

²²⁸ For a partial transcription of the document [TSA, D.743] see Uluçay, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar," pp.237-9.

²²⁹ TSA, D.10052. See Appendix 4. For a partial transcription of the document, see Uluçay, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar," pp.243-5.

²³⁰ In *Selimnâme*, Celâlzâde dwells on this issue in the context of Bayezid II, though rather critically. According to him, Bayezid II had prematurely promoted some of his men who had served him when he was prince in Amasya. He had even promoted some to vizierate. However, they were not clever men and lacked the level of knowledge to take part in administration. This, according to Celâlzâde, was a major fault on Bayezid's part. Celâlzâde (SN), p.55.

²³¹ İnalçık, "State, Sovereignty, and Law," pp.71-2.

dated 1526 [932] demonstrates that at least thirty one members of this group came to Istanbul from Manisa with Süleyman.²³² A cross-examination of Palace registers dating to late 1530s or early 1540s published by Barkan suggests the possibility of tracing some men who came from Manisa with Süleyman and continued to serve him in Istanbul in late 1530s.²³³ Despite the absence of family names or other such indicators, one could suggest the continuing service of for example an Iskender. In the Caffa register, there is an Iskender who is the chief of a regiment [*ser-silâhdâr*] with a salary of 9 aspers. In the first Manisa register, there is an Iskender who is the “commander” of the sons of the cavalry [*ağ-a-yı ebnâ-yı sipâhiyân*] with a wage of 33 aspers; in the imperial register, there is an Iskender with a wage of 68 aspers who is defined as *ser-silâhdarân-ı köhne*. This İskender is also recorded to have come from Trabzon with the Sultan.²³⁴ One obvious example would be the physician Mevlana Ramazan who appears with a daily wage of 40 aspers in the undated register pertaining to Manisa.²³⁵ In the later imperial register, published by Barkan, the wage of Mevlana Ramazan the physician is 120 aspers. The entry includes the explanation of “he came together with his Majesty” [*Hünkâr hazretleriyle bile gelmiştir*]. This explanation is provided for four more medical personnel.²³⁶ Barkan’s list also includes musicians, scribes and a messenger.

²³² For a list of the names and occupations of these artisans, see Appendix 5. Calculation is based on the transcription of the register [TSA, D.9306/03] in İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, “Osmanlı Sarayı’nda Ehl-i Hiref (Sanatkarlar) Defterleri,” *Belgeler*, vol.15 (1986).

²³³ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “H.933-934 (M.1527-1528) Mali Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe Örneği,” *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, vol.15, no.1-4, (1955), pp.314-329.

²³⁴ Uluçay, “Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi,” p.238 and p.244; Barkan, “Bütçe Örneği,” p.320.

²³⁵ For a partial transcription of the document [TSA, D.8030] see Uluçay, “Kanuni Sultan Süleyman ve Ailesi ile İlgili Bazı Notlar ve Vesikalar,” pp.245-9.

²³⁶ Barkan, “Bütçe Örneği,” p.321.

1.5.2. Administrative Duties

Exactly what Süleyman did during his residence in Manisa is hard to say; however, he seems to have been involved in administrative routine. Tayyip Gökbilgin mentions that Süleyman gave Kapu Ağası Ali Ağa a farm as property and issued a charter [*berât*] exempting the sheikh of the convent of Bozköy from charge payments.²³⁷ However, as Emecen demonstrates based on documentary evidence, Süleyman had to inform the imperial court of such distributive actions and get approval.²³⁸

An administrative regulation was sent to Süleyman in Manisa upon his request. The document opens with a titular address where Selim confirms that he has granted the *sancak* of *Saruhan* to his son Süleyman Şah. The text indicates that Süleyman requested recommendations regarding the discipline and punishment of the criminals in the district. Among the crimes and punishments were abduction and forceful marriage, unlawful affairs with women, murder punishable with death, numerous thefts punishable by execution, selling women punishable by scorching the forehead, maintaining stolen property, pick-pocketing and wounding with a knife punishable by amputation of the hand, murdering of parents, arson punishable by execution by hanging if intentional. The text also includes a clause on the inn-keeper. He should be someone trustworthy. The gates of the inn should only be opened after he makes sure that everyone's belongings are safe and secure. If anyone was released before this was done, the inn-keeper would be responsible for the compensation of any losses. There is also a separate clause regarding theft committed by a cavalry man, in which case the thief should be imprisoned and the Sultan informed. If someone was murdered in public and the murderer not found, the crowd would be imprisoned and Sultan informed. Another clause on theft requires the judge to handover the thief to military authorities for execution either by hanging or by amputation of hand at the crime scene.²³⁹

²³⁷ Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Süleyman I," *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, v.11, p.100.

²³⁸ Emecen, *XVI. Asırda Manisa Kazası*, p.40.

²³⁹ Ahmet Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnameleri*, v.3, (Istanbul: FEY Vakfı, 1990), pp.192-3; Enver Ziya Karal, "Yavuz Sultan Selim'in Oğlu Şehzade Süleyman'a Manisa

Though this text reads like an ordinary law code, the initial request of such a document seems interesting. By the time Süleyman established his administrative unit in Manisa, he had already served for three years in Caffa in a similar administrative position. He had even stayed for almost a year in Istanbul where he presumably had access to all necessary information on *sancak* management. Moreover, Manisa was a princely *sancak* before his arrival, thus a system must have existed already. With his experience and the district's past, it is hard to say why he needed instructions from the center. This was probably some kind of a renewal process occasioned by the appointment of a new prince to the district. Considering that the previous princely governor of the district Korkud was also involved in the succession struggles, it might be speculated that the district had been neglected. According to Kemalpaşazade, the area was troubled ever since Korkud's demise. With the arrival of the prince, the province would be safe and prosperous again.²⁴⁰ Kemalpaşazade's rather cliché praise stating that the roads were free of criminals after the arrival of the prince may not be an ordinary cliché considering the regulations cited above.²⁴¹

The image of the just ruler which was constantly projected after Süleyman ascended the throne appears in the descriptions of his princely administration at Manisa as well. Sa'di says that when Süleyman arrived in Manisa, the people of the district gathered to welcome him in joy. As he set foot before them, they all bent down to put their faces on the ground his horse stepped on. They had seen the "glowing star of fortune" in him and offered him their full obedience.²⁴² Accounts emphasize that the district flourished in safety and security under Süleyman's just administration.²⁴³

During his principality in Manisa, Süleyman fathered three sons between 1515 and 1520. Now another function was added to his dynastic duties: procuring the future of

Sancağını İdare Etmesi İçin Gönderdiği Siyasetname," *Belleten*, vol.6, (1942), pp.37-44.

²⁴⁰ KPZ, IX:35a: "*Merhûm Sultan Korkud feterâtından berü ol vilâyet bir kaç gün karişub cûybâr-ı pür-âşûb ve şûr ü şerr taşub bulanmışdı, yine turıldı.*" Korkud was executed on 9 March 1513. Emecen, *XVI. Asırda Manisa Kazası*, p.31.

²⁴¹ KPZ, IX:35a: "*Harâmi kalmadı râh-ı revânda.*"

²⁴² Sa'di (SN), 62a.

²⁴³ KPZ, IX:35a; Sa'di (SN), 62a.

the dynasty. Leslie Peirce argues that once a prince got reproductively active, the duty of dynastic reproduction became his duty:

The prince's political/reproductive maturation initiated a change not only in his mother's role – to the onset of her public political career – but in one of his father's as well. From the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror on, and perhaps earlier, the sultan's reproductive function ceased when that of the sons began. Whereas earlier sultans tended to continue producing offspring even after their first sons were well grown, Mehmed and his descendants ceased fathering children after a healthy number of sons had survived childhood and could themselves assume the function of reproducing the dynasty.²⁴⁴

Süleyman's first son was born in 1515. The news of the royal birth reached Istanbul on 19 October [11 Ramadan], that is shortly after Süleyman's departure from Istanbul. The baby was named Murad according to the wish of Sultan Selim. Two days later a congratulations letter was sent to Süleyman.²⁴⁵ However, either this first boy did not live long or the author is confusing the baby with Mustafa who was also born in 1515 [921].²⁴⁶ On the other hand, Süleyman did have a son named Murad who died in 1521 when he was only two years old. Another son, Mahmud, also died in 1521 when he was nine.²⁴⁷

On 7 February 1514, Antonio Giustiniani, who was in Istanbul on an ambassadorial mission, reported that Sultan Selim had a seventeen year-old son named Selim [sic]. He also mentioned that the Sultan did not wish to have any more children so he did not engage with women.²⁴⁸ Alvise Mocenigo in his audience in Venice on 4 June 1518 said that Selim had only one son who was 20 years old and was residing in Edirne

²⁴⁴ Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, p.53

²⁴⁵ *Münşe'at*, I:470: “Onbirinci gününde şehzâde-i civânbahtın oğlu doğduğu haberi geldi. Kapucular kethüdâsıyla murâd-ı hân olmağın Sultan Murâd tesmiyye olundu.”

²⁴⁶ For the birth of Mustafa, see Şerafettin Turan, *Kanuni Süleyman Dönemi Taht Kavgaları*, 2nd edition, (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1997), p.22; and Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani I*, Nuri Akbayar (ed), (Istanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı and Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p.30.

²⁴⁷ Turan, *Kanuni Süleyman Dönemi Taht Kavgaları*, p.22.

²⁴⁸ Sanuto, 17:537: “... et ha uno fio di anni 17, qual è nominato Selim, e non vuol aver più fioli, zoè non se impaza più con done.”

at the time. Mocenigo, too, emphasized that Selim did not want any more children.²⁴⁹ Although the references are rather brief, it is apparent that there was an impression that Selim did not care about reproducing the dynasty anymore. Considering that Süleyman had fathered at least two sons by this time, the duty of reproducing the dynasty was probably his job now.

1.5.3. Guardianship

It was customary for the princes to assume the role of *Rumili Muhafızı* [Guard of Rumelia] when the sultan was away on war. The prince would assume administrative and diplomatic charges such as correspondence with foreign authorities and the sultan himself.²⁵⁰ Other than administrative duties, this procedure was intended to prevent enemy attacks during the absence of the sultan and the imperial army. It was Murad I who first employed the method, when he left his son Bayezid in his tent to protect Anatolia when he went on to Gallipoli in 1375. In 1385, as Murad I led a Rumelian campaign, Bayezid was stationed in Kütahya, Yakub in Karesi, and Savcı in Bursa for protection. When Mehmed II went against the Akkoyunlu in 1473, he left his son Cem in Edirne for the task.²⁵¹ As we shall see, the prince's main function at this post appears to be being the eyes and ears of the sultan in the Western part of the realm. The duty of guardianship also provided the prince with an understanding of the situation at the borders and the relations with other rulers. The prince's sojourn in Edirne must have provided an opportunity to get a thorough understanding of the imperial administrative mechanisms, as well as a familiarity with various administrative figures.

In such circumstances, princes were not stationed in Istanbul for fear of a possible scheme to depose the father in favor of the son.²⁵² This view has been challenged recently by Haldun Eroğlu who suggests that princes would be stationed in

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 25:440: "... non vuol più fioli, à uno solo di anni 20 nominato Soliman, stà in Andernopoli."

²⁵⁰ Kappert, *Die Osmanischen Prinzen und Ihre Residenz Amasya*, p.13.

²⁵¹ Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, pp.159-160.

²⁵² Kappert, *Die Osmanischen Prinzen und Ihre Residenz Amasya*, p.14

Edirne to guard Rumelia if the Sultan marched east, and in Istanbul if the Sultan marched West to protect Anatolia. According to Erođlu, “the ruler would not leave a prince either in Edirne in Rumelia or in Istanbul in Anatolia if he suspected any act against himself.”²⁵³ This proposition can easily be invalidated, for sixteenth century Istanbul can not be regarded as Anatolia. More importantly, the one example of a prince stationed in Istanbul for guardianship, on which Erođlu builds his theory, is anachronistically Mehmed II. Misreading the relevant source, Erođlu asserts that Murad II “advised his son to stay in Istanbul and protect the throne.”²⁵⁴ The relevant part of the source, however, has Murad II tell his son Mehmed to stay at Edirne to “protect this throne from the infidels of Istanbul.”²⁵⁵ Süleyman’s placement in Istanbul when Selim I marched into Anatolia in 1512 also contradicts Erođlu’s theory. If the prince was supposed to guard Rumelia, he should have been stationed in Edirne according to this theory. Furthermore, Süleyman’s guardianship in Istanbul was a unique case, required by circumstance and not by choice as discussed above.

Süleyman’s princehood lacked one duty that his predecessors had. Ottoman princes often joined imperial campaigns and engaged in military activities. In the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, the sons of Murad I, namely Bayezid and Yakub, commanded the right and the left wings of the army, respectively. In 1473, when Mehmed II fought against Uzun Hasan, prince Bayezid commanded the right wing and prince Mustafa the left wing. The practice of such command was abandoned during the reign of Bayezid II, initially due to the young age of his sons. When his sons were old enough, Bayezid had already stopped leading campaigns personally. Being an only son, Süleyman did not

²⁵³ Erođlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.159, fn.98.

²⁵⁴ Erođlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.160: “... *Istanbul’da kalıp tahtı kafirlere karşı koruması öđüdüni vermişti.*” This argument is probably an unfortunate slip of the mind on the part of Erođlu or his editors, as his article on the pre-1453 Ottoman sieges of the city does not include such an error. Haldun Erođlu, “Osmanlıların 1453 Öncesi Osmanlı Kuşatmaları” *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, vol.22, no.35, (2004), pp.89-101.

²⁵⁵ Anon.; *Gazavât-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehemmed Han*, H. İnalçık and M. Oğuz (eds) (Ankara: TTK, 1978), p.50 [facsimile, 45b]: “... *sen bu tahtı İstanbul keferesinden hıfz ide gör...*”

attend any campaigns with this father. However, he took his sons along various times, though they were not given large scale military command.²⁵⁶

Unlike his predecessors, Süleyman never engaged in military action before he came to the throne. Throughout the sources used in this study, only one reference of Süleyman actually fighting on the border was found. In the letters he wrote in May 1515, Nicolo Giustiniani reported that Süleyman was in Edirne with his court and was expected to go on campaign against Hungary. Then Giustiniani reported that Süleyman defeated Hungarians around Smederevo [Semendire]. Four captured Hungarian captains were being transported to *Constantinopoli* to be presented to the Sultan.²⁵⁷ However, this is probably not Süleyman himself fighting but the Rumelian frontier commanders. Süleyman was probably involved in coordinating the frontier activity and keeping an eye on developments as he did in 1517.

In 1514, Süleyman was ordered to go to Edirne as his father decided to lead a campaign to fight the Safavis. According to Celâlzâde, heeding the vital importance of guarding Rumelia which was adjacent to the “lands of the infidel,” Selim ordered his son to go to Edirne to protect Rumelia.²⁵⁸ When Sultan Selim decided to pursue another eastern campaign in 1516, Süleyman was called to guard Edirne once again. According to the campaign diary, in the council meeting summoned in Edirne on 3 April 1516 [29 Safar 922], it was decided that the household as well as Ahmed Paşa, Rumelian chief judge and Anatolian *defterdar* and *nişancı* should stay in Edirne with the prince. Selim and his dignitaries probably wanted to make sure that the borders would be safe while they were away so establishing peace with Hungary was already decided in this meeting. A few days later, news of the death of the Hungarian king arrived.²⁵⁹ On 20

²⁵⁶ Uzunçarşılı, “Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri,” p.676. In 1538, Süleyman’s sons Mehmed and Selim went along. In 1541, Selim and Bayezid accompanied Süleyman. In 1553, Selim joined the army as Bayezid guarded Edirne.

²⁵⁷ Sanuto, 20:385.

²⁵⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.132: “*Vilâyet-i Rûmili ki küffâr-ı hâksâr ile mülâsık, ‘abede-i esnâm-ı nâr-kârıla hem-civâr u ulaşıkdur, lâcerem muhâfazası mühimm ü lâzım olmağın şehzâde-i cihân-penâh, güzîde-i havâkîni sa’âdet-destgâh sultân Süleymân Şâh – e’azze’llah ensârahu – vilâyet-i Saruhan’dan kalkub mahmiye-i Edirne câniblerine gelüb, Rûmili’nin hıfz ü hırâsetinde olalar, deyü anlar cânibine emr-i ‘alî sudûr ü bürûz eyledi.*”

²⁵⁹ Vladislas II died on 13 March 1516.

April [7 Rabi II], Selim left Edirne for Istanbul. One week later, a new command was issued: the prince was to move towards Edirne together with his *defterdar* and Mustafa Paşa, the district governor of Bosnia, was to accompany him. The judge and treasurer of Rumelia were also to stay with the prince. These commands seem to have been revoked at a council meeting ten days later with the decision that the prince should stay put in his *sancak* Saruhan.²⁶⁰ However, later correspondence shows that the initial decision was implemented and Süleyman actually stayed in Edirne during Selim's absence. In order to understand the purpose of such a temporary re-positioning, we should take a brief look at what kind of activity Süleyman undertook during his stay in Rumelia. There are no sources directly giving an account of the days he spent there. However, it is possible to acquire a few clues from accounts talking about the deeds of Selim and the campaign in general. We shall now try to isolate these few instances before going on to analyze the role of the prince as the guard of Edirne.

On 25 July 1517 [6 Rajab 923], messengers from Süleyman informed the council that the voivode of Moldavia was dead. The messengers also conveyed the news that Süleyman had detained the Hungarian ambassador who had come to Edirne.²⁶¹ According to a letter dated 18 June 1517 by Leonardo Bembo, the Venetian bailo in Istanbul, the Hungarian ambassador was placed in a *caravaserà* and closely watched by guards. He was not allowed to speak with another Hungarian ambassador who had been in detention for four years.²⁶²

On 9 August 1517 [21 Rajab 923], Mesih Beğ received a command from Süleyman which ordered him to stay put in his post at Vidin. Four days later, Süleyman's chief of guards [*solakbaşı*] set off by sea to convey a message to the Sultan. On 7 September [10 Şaban], the messenger was given a reply, ordering Mihaloğlu

²⁶⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:475-7.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, I:491. Bogdan III died on 20 April 1517.

²⁶² Sanuto, 24:505. According to a letter from the Venetian ambassador at Buda, Alvise Bon, dated 11 September 1517, the person taken into custody in Edirne was not an ambassador of the Hungarian king but a servant of the Cardinal Istrigoniense [probably Ippolito d'Este] sent to the Hungarian ambassador who had been detained there for years. See, *ibid*, 700.

Mehmed Beğ and governor of Inebahtı Hüseyin Beğ to remain in their districts. The reason was to have them lead the *akıncı* in case of an attack by the “infidel.”²⁶³

On 6 December 1517 [22 Dhu'l-Qada 923], we encounter yet another messenger from Süleyman in the camp of Selim. This time, he conveyed the news of the death of the governor of Zvornik [Izvornik] in a battle with the “infidel.” Upon this news, it was decided that the governor of Çirmen Mahmud Beğ of the Mihaloğlu family should replace the deceased. Süleyman’s *lala* Sinan Beğ was ordered to go Istanbul and stay there.²⁶⁴ On 12 February 1518 [1 Safar 924], a messenger of Süleyman brought news of the death of the above-mentioned Mesih Beğ and the discord among the infidel. Upon this news, replacements were made and the district of the deceased Mesih Beğ was given to Mustafa Beğ, son of Davud Paşa.²⁶⁵ On 25 March 1518 [13 Rabi I 924], a new *defterdar* was appointed to Süleyman, he was also ordered to examine the situation at the borders and let the Sultan know.²⁶⁶ According to Spandounes, while Selim was in Cairo, he got news from his son that Pope Leo X had preached a crusade in Rome “inciting all Christian princes. Upon hearing this Selim appointed a viceroy in Egypt and left for Constantinople”.²⁶⁷

We also find references about the armada and the involvement of Süleyman with its transfer. According to Şükri, Selim sent a messenger to Süleyman telling him to prepare the ships and send them to Egypt fully equipped together with district governors and the captain [*kapudan*]. Receiving the order, Süleyman commanded the designated governors to leave their districts, meet with the *kapudan*, prepare munitions for their ships and set off.²⁶⁸ According to a letter from Corfu dated 5 May, Süleyman, who was

²⁶³ *Münşe‘at*, I:491. For the Hungarian attack on the border where the mentioned governor died, see Celâlzâde (SN), p.208.

²⁶⁴ *Münşe‘at*, I:494; Celâlzâde (SN), p.208.

²⁶⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:495.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 497.

²⁶⁷ Theodore Spandounes, *On the origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, Donald M. Nicol [trans], (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), pp.64-5. An entry recorded by Sanuto on 7 December 1517 confirms this. According to the oral report of Tomaso Venier, who had returned from Alexandria where he stayed for five years as consul, Süleyman has written to Selim to inform him that after he had acquired Cairo, Christians had united. See Sanuto, 25:124.

²⁶⁸ Şükri (SN), 202b-203a.

in Edirne, had received news from his father in Cairo which informed on the large number of casualties on each side. The letter also mentions that the armada had just left Constantinople.²⁶⁹

Selim sent at least two proclamations of victory to Süleyman during the first Eastern campaign; one following the battle of Çaldıran and the other one following Kemah.²⁷⁰ They were both detailed accounts of the battles. They both ordered the prince to make celebrations for the victory. The second one also informed Süleyman that Selim was on his way back to Istanbul. In reply to the first letter, Süleyman summarized the content of his father's letter and informed him that the victory was celebrated for a week. In reply to the second letter, he did not repeat the content of the received proclamation to the extent he did before. He informed his father that alms were distributed as ordered. This letter also indicates that the master of the horse was sent to present his gifts along with a detailed letter.

Selim sent his son a proclamation of his victory from Cairo in February 1517 [Muharram 923]. The letter is a lengthy account of the second phase of the campaign starting with the death of Qansuh al-Ghuri. Selim informed his son of the victory achieved by “the soldiers of Islam” and the defeat suffered by “the Circassian gang.”²⁷¹ The wording suggests a legitimization process at work: the victory was granted by God [bi-‘inâyetullah-ı te‘âla] to the soldiers of Islam [*leşker-i Islâm*], whereas the defeated party was referred to as the Circassian gang [*gürûh-ı Çerâkese*]. As a cliché, such a phrase legitimated both the initial attempt to go against a Muslim ruler – who is not an outright “heretic” as the Safavi Ismail, and who held the honorable service of Mecca and Medina – and the victory itself. Thus, it is not surprising to read on to find that al-Ghuri's head was brought to Selim and hung upside down before him. This is followed by the episode regarding the successor of al-Ghuri, namely Tumanbay. We also learn how this new so-called Sultan “gave” Damascus to Gazali, how Sinan Paşa was sent to fight Gazali and how he managed to escape to Egypt in order to unite with Tumanbay. Meanwhile, Selim himself came close to Cairo. The letter provides details about the order of the battle fought on 23 January 1517 [29 Dhu'l-Hijja 922]. Among the

²⁶⁹ Sanuto, 24:331-2.

²⁷⁰ For the Çaldıran proclamation and reply, see *Münşe‘at*, I:387-8; For the Kemah proclamation and reply, see *ibid*, 409-10.

²⁷¹ *Ibid*, 427.

commanders were Hayrbay and Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ of Dulkadır. The letter continues with the ending of the battle to the advantage of the Ottomans and the flight of the enemy. On 9 February [7 Muharram], Tumanbay returned at night and entered Cairo in secret. The letter also gives details about the nocturnal street fighting between Ottomans and Circassians. When Tumanbay attempted to escape, Rumelian governor-general Mustafa Paşa, the newly crossed-over Gazali and Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ were sent after him. Tomanbay was finally captured and brought to Selim in bonds. Although he was offered the chance to repent, he insisted on his old ways and was executed. Thus, according to the letter, in longitude Egypt, Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo, Upper Egypt, Abyssinia, Yemen till Morocco and in latitude the Hejaz, Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem entered the domain of the Ottomans. We also learn that the son of the *şerif* of Mecca was on the way to pay his respects, while Arabian sheikhs already came to present themselves to affirm their loyalty. They were granted robes and gifts. Saying that he was sending this “fortunate proclamation of victory” with his taster [*çaşnigâr*], Selim ordered his son to spread this “good news” all around as well as to make joy and festivity. They were instructed to fire guns and cannons from the castles, decorate the streets and have the people pray for Selim in celebration of this event. Süleyman was also expected to inform Selim about the situation in Rumelia and to expect his arrival.²⁷²

In all three reply letters, Süleyman’s choice of words shows submissiveness and loyalty to a sovereign. In the first letter, he refers to himself as *bende-i kemter* [feeble servant], in the second as *bende-i bî-irtiyâb* [indubitably (your) servant] and in the third as *bende-i bî-iştibâh* [doubtlessly (your) servant].²⁷³ While announcing and glorifying the victory of the Sultan, these proclamations could have served as teaching devices as well – intentionally or not. For a prince who has not been on the battle field himself, these detailed accounts probably had instructive value.

Another purpose of sending the proclamation to the prince is apparently to have him officially spread the news. A letter from Ragusa to Venice, dated 28 September 1516, gave information about the arrival of a messenger from *Signor Sultan Suliman*, son of *Signor turcho*. The messenger brought letters which had his seal on them. These

²⁷² *Ibid*, 427-30.

²⁷³ For the Çaldıran proclamation and reply, see *ibid*, 387-8; For the Kemah proclamation and reply, see *İbid*, 409-10; for the proclamation from Cairo and reply, see *ibid*, 427-30.

letters conveyed news about his father's victory against *Signor Soldan* on 27 August on the outskirts of Aleppo. Festivities were to be organized as the letters ordered. The writer noted that festivities were already under way all the way to Albania.²⁷⁴ According to Sanuto's entry, the letter from Ragusa reached Venice on 24 October. The contents were the talk of the day on 25 October, with Sultan Selim being a second *Alexandro Magno* as the conqueror of Syria. The Venetian government immediately started to plan a diplomatic mission.²⁷⁵

When he received the victory proclamation regarding Egypt in 1517, Süleyman again sent letters all around spreading the word, just like his father told him to. Sanuto has reproduced the copy of the letter sent by Süleyman to Chios:

To the lords [signori] of Chios! I have received a commandment from the Gran Signor in Cairo, the commandment is as follows: With the grace and favor of God I have acquired sovereignty of Arabia; then in Aleppo, I have engaged in a great battle with the moors, and I have won, and I have beheaded their sultan, named Tomon bei, and we have fought with him five or six times, and then we have fought with the mamluchs for three days and three nights, and their sultan Tomonbei fled to Sayto. And then I announced around Cairo that "should anyone know where this sultan, or the mamluchs indeed, escaped and did not bring them to me, I would burn down their houses, their sons and their farms". The sultan was not found, and 2,040 mamluchs were brought in with their hands tied; these did not know where the sultan or others were; I beheaded all 2,040 of them. Then I sent the governor of Aleppo, Canberdi Gazali who was always with me; those I have sent to Upper Egypt have taken the sultan with some his close men. I beheaded some of the men; I had the sultan tortured so that he revealed the location of his treasury and he did. Then I had him paraded around Cairo, then I had him hung from his neck on a gate in Cairo. Then, all the land, all the Arabs, 12-13 thousand men, came and offered fidelity. I have restored all places acquired, presented them with robes, since we have in our power Aden and all provinces of Mecca and Bagilari and the provinces acquired in Calcutta. I have sent word to all the lords about these things so that they are informed, and also to my son, who will send messengers to all lands of the Ottomans [Otomangli] and the Europeans [Franchi] to inform them. And for this reason, I Sultan Soliman write this and send my man Mehmed, so that you who are our friends, will make joy and festivity, and send back my man soon and pay him respect.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Sanuto, 23:109.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 110.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 24:645-6. The letter is dated 15 July.

Looking at these activities, we could cite Süleyman's guardianship tasks in three categories as monitoring, informing, and coordinating, whereby he not only supported his father's enterprise but had the opportunity to acquaint himself with issues and people at the imperial level.

1.5.4. Meetings with the Father

Rumelian guardianships seem to have provided Süleyman with an opportunity to meet his father and his household, including the highest ranking officers. These meetings also seem to have served to enhance the image of dynastic coherence since Süleyman's ceremonial behavior re-confirmed his loyalty to his father.

Süleyman came to Istanbul and spent time with his father following Selim I's return from the campaign in 1515. According to the diary recorded by Haydar Çelebi and reproduced by Feridun Ahmed Beğ,²⁷⁷ Süleyman arrived in Istanbul on 26 July 1515 [14 Jumada II 921]. He was greeted by the viziers, chief judges, treasurers, other troop commanders, council members, household troops and janissaries. He was taken to the residence of Iskender Paşa who left the premises so that the prince could stay there.²⁷⁸ While everyone was busy welcoming the prince, Sultan Selim had gone to Eyüb with his standard-bearer and master of the horse, taking only a few people along. As Süleyman passed through the Silivri Gate, one of his flagstaffs hit the gate and broke. A temporary solution was found, they tied the broken pieces back together with

²⁷⁷ For the whole text see *Münşe'at*, I:458-500. The work covers Selim I's reign starting with his Persian campaign and ending with his death. The reference to the authorship of the work is based on the entry for Rabi II 922: "... *râvî-yi kitâb ki, divân kâtibi olan Haydar Çelebi'dir,*" *Ibid*, 477. However, the term *râvî* denotes not necessarily the actual author but may imply the source of information. The work has been published in modern Turkish by Yavuz Senemoğlu who attributes authorship to Haydar Çelebi, the court scribe. Senemoğlu's edition includes additional letters and individual diaries of the campaigns which can be found in the *Münşe'at* as separate entries. *Haydar Çelebi Ruznâmesi*, Yavuz Senemoğlu (ed.) (Tercüman 1001 Temel Eser, n.d.).

²⁷⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:466. The author also calls the residence "Yahya Paşa evleri". TSA, E.5805: Yahya Paşa Evleri. Iskender Paşa was executed either shortly before or shortly after Süleyman was there. Bailo Alvise d'Armer's letter from Corphu dated 7 September reports the execution of Iskender Paşa. Sanuto, 21:143

whatever rope they could find on the spot.²⁷⁹ How this was perceived we do not know but the author does not imply any bad omen. Three days later, there was a council gathering. Süleyman came over to present his gifts and kiss the Sultan's hand. His gifts consisted of various textiles, silver cups and nine horses. On the next day, his *lala* Kasım Çelebi, his treasurer Sinan Beg and his teacher Hayreddin attended the council to kiss the Sultan's hand. They were followed by others who came to pay their respects to the Sultan such as the envoy of the Crimean Khan and Ramazanoğlu Mahmûd Beğ. The rest of the day was reserved for the Sultan's hunting. Similar ceremonies were held on the following days with various people attending. On 19 August [9 Rajab], Süleyman once again visited the council to ask for permission to leave.²⁸⁰ Three days later, Süleyman was ordered to stay for a few more days in the council meeting. His *lala* and treasurer were summoned to the council and were asked to present the account books. On 26 August [16 Rajab], Süleyman's *lala* and treasurer attended the council meeting and read the account books to the Sultan.²⁸¹ Following the council meeting and lunch, on 4 September [25 Rajab], Süleyman was escorted to the boat to cross to Üsküdar, through the Hippodrome [*At Meydanı*], accompanied by the viziers and troop commanders.²⁸²

Apparently, Süleyman stayed in Istanbul for more than a month in 1515 while his father was also in the city. Süleyman's presence in the city reflects the dual character of his relation with his father, the Sultan. He was greeted with due pomp on his arrival as a prince and potential heir to the throne. Special accommodation arrangements were made for the prince at the premises of a vizier.²⁸³ The fact that the palace reserved for the prince was the palace of not only a vizier but a royal groom suggests that a residence

²⁷⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:466.

²⁸⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:466-7: "... *Dokuzuncu gününde divân oldu. Şehzâde-i civân-baht icâzet için ve hem virgüsü için gelüb el öpdü.*"

²⁸¹ *Ibid*, 468

²⁸² *Ibid*: "*Yiğirmibeşinci günde divân oldu. Ol yimekten sonra heman kalkub ve şehzâde devletle iskeleden kadırgaya binüb At Meydanı'ndan getirülüb cemî' vüzerâ ve ağalarla gönderdi. Kadırgaya bile girüb Üsküdar'a bile gitdiler.*"

²⁸³ Though such visits were rare, accommodating the prince in a vizieral residence seems to be the conventional procedure. When Korkud guarded Istanbul following Mehmed II's death until the arrival of his father, he stayed at the palace of Ishak Paşa. Uzunçarşılı, "Sancağa Çıkarılan Osmanlı Şehzadeleri," p.680.

that was already dynastic property was allocated to the accommodation of the prince. In other words, Süleyman's household was regarded to be different than that of his father's, yet inseparable from the dynastic sphere. Contemporary sources do not mention whether Süleyman spent any casual time with his father but he surely performed his role in the ceremonial occasions. If his first role was that of the son of the Sultan, an equally important role was the loyal servant of the Sultan.²⁸⁴ Like a good subject of the Sultan, we see him kissing hands. Once again we are face to face with what might be regarded as a public display of submission. If Selim, or anyone else for that matter, had suspicions regarding Süleyman's intentions, these acts of loyalty probably also served to appease such concerns.

When Sultan Selim was on the way back from the Egyptian campaign, he sent for his son who was on guard in Edirne. They met near Kırklareli [*Kırk Kilisa*]. Süleyman presented gifts to his father, kissed his hand, and paid his respects. As Lütü Paşa has it, the Sultan observed and appreciated the countenance of his son.²⁸⁵ Considering that they have not seen each other for a couple of years, Selim probably saw that his son had grown into a fine man during these years. According to Lütü Paşa, Selim was convinced immediately that his son was fit not only to rule but also to become a world ruler [*sâhib-kırân*].²⁸⁶ According to the campaign chronicle, the meeting of father and son resembled the "meeting of the sun and the moon" [*cem' el-şems ve'l-kamer*].²⁸⁷ After this meeting on 23 August 1518 [6 Şaban 924], Süleyman was sent back to his district with gifts and a promotion of 500,000 aspers to his annual income.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ The conception of the prince as the loyal servant of the Sultan finds clear expression, for example, in Şükri's *Selîmnâme*; the author has Selim challenge those who warn him against visiting the Sultan without permission. Selim puts forth the argument that he [Bayezid II] was the Sultan and Selim his servant. As such, Selim sustained himself through his benefaction. He argues that there was nothing extraordinary in a servant submitting himself to the court of the Sultan: "*Dahi kim ol şeh ve men bendeem [sic] / Ni'met-i âsârîsiyle zindeem [sic] / Bende şâhın âsitânın itse yâd / Yok 'aceb kim ey hakîm pâk-zât / Yüz sürü uş varam ol dergâha men / Bendeem [sic] çün cân-ı dilden şâha men.*" Şükri (SN), 25b.

²⁸⁵ Lütü Paşa, p.241.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:498.

²⁸⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.210. Venetian sources indicate the rise in 1515 as 20,000 ducats. See Sanuto, 21:161.

However, being away from Istanbul and acting out the part of the “loyal servant” does not seem to have spared Süleyman of suspicion at all times. Having a father figure as powerful as Selim must have had some influence on the young prince. An anecdote provided by Giovio suggests that there were times when Selim was jealous of even his own son due to the throne. Once he was offended by his son’s bitter words and attempted to kill the young prince by a poisonous gown. However, the mother shrewdly saved the life of the prince by offering the gown to a servant.²⁸⁹ Although Giovio provides this anecdote as proof of the degree of cruelty Selim was capable of - a cruelty that reaches the point of not even sparing his own kin – it may be seen as a reflection of the fierce image Selim I had in the perception of Western audiences. Giovio talks about the poisoned gown and the danger Süleyman went through in the *Commentario de le Cose de Turchi* as well. According to Giovio, Selim was actually afraid that his son would do to him what he did to his father.²⁹⁰ The Venetian bailo in Istanbul, Nicolo Giustiniani referred to the poisoned gown in his letters dated 5 and 10 April 1515. In his account, it is not the mother but Süleyman himself who suspects the trick and has one of his men wear it.²⁹¹ A letter dated 7 September 1515 by Alvise d’Armer, bailo in Corphu, confirms that Selim’s suspicions – regardless of whether he actually had them or not – were in public circulation at that time. Selim was suspicious because he suspected that Süleyman could scheme against him together with the janissaries.²⁹²

Another anecdote recorded by Sanuto sheds light on what might have angered Selim so much. According to a letter from Cyprus dated 25 April 1515, Selim asked his

²⁸⁹ Giovio, *Elogi*, p.222: “Ancora che alcuna volta egli invidiasse a costui la ragion della successione e dell’heredità sua. Percioche si dice, ch’egli volle una volta far morire il figliuolo, con una veste avvelenata d’un crudelissimo veleno; per vendicare certe parole di lui troppo pungenti; ma che la madre con astuta misericordia rifiutando il dono di quella pericolosa veste, e in cambio di Solimano dandolo a un suo cameriere, prestamente salvò la vita al figliuolo.”

²⁹⁰ Giovi, *Commentario*, n.p.: “... gionse Soltan Selim a Constantinopoli ove havea lasciato Soliman sou unico figliuolo sotto il governo de Piri bassa huomo di gran fede, e di singular prudentia, e furno molti che dissero Solimano essere stato a pericolo grande di essere attosicato con una veste tinta di veleno quale il padre li mando temendo che il figliuolo non facessi a lui quello che esse fece a Soltan Bayazetto.”

²⁹¹ Sanuto, 20:225.

²⁹² *Ibid*, 21:143.

son for help against the *Sophi*. However, Süleyman did not consent to this and sent a reply to his father saying:

You have ruined our realm, you have perished the warriors we had, and you have lost them in defeat; there is neither a fortress nor a castle left that you have not destroyed; and now all this harm you have done does not suffice and you ask for the people who are protecting our borders, do you wish to lose all of our realm?²⁹³

According to this report, when Selim heard this reply, he supposedly said to his lords: “How true are my son’s words!”²⁹⁴ It is quite unlikely that Süleyman refused his father his own soldiers; however, Süleyman emerges as a sensible young man in this anecdote. He serves as a counter-balancing figure as opposed to his fierce father who is a man of his own mind. Both anecdotes are stories based on hearsay. Although it does not mean that Selim thought of killing his son, it does demonstrate the ambiguous contemporary perception regarding the relationship between the royal father and son. With such public concerns in circulation, the public demonstration of coherence between Sultan Selim and his only son Süleyman through the meetings appear to be vital devices for the dynastic image.

1.5.5. End of Princehood

Süleyman’s princehood in Manisa came to an end with his father’s death in 1520. Accounts on his reception of the news of the death of Sultan Selim dwell on three main issues: the vacancy of the throne, chaotic grief versus sensible order, and haste in relation to responsibility.

The news of his father’s death reached Süleyman as he was hunting. According to Nasuh, he was contemplating at a *mürgzâr* [shooting ground].²⁹⁵ The letter sent by the viziers to Süleyman consists of three parts. Firstly, the death of Sultan Selim was announced. Secondly, Süleyman was informed that it was now his turn to succeed his father. Thirdly, he was informed on what he should do next. Each of these parts can be

²⁹³ *Ibid*, 20:272. The account mistakenly places Süleyman in Istanbul.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁹⁵ Nasuh, 5b-6a; Sa’di (SN), 108a.

regarded as individual messages. According to Sa‘di’s account, the letter informed Süleyman of the death of the Sultan, expressing that the throne was left vacant. With this piece of information comes the announcement of Süleyman’s succession as the “hope of the world”. Thirdly, he is told to ride to Istanbul for enthronement in haste and discretion, as to prevent mischief until then.²⁹⁶ According to Adâ’î, the letter addressed Süleyman as the “possessor of the crown and the throne” and informed him that the throne was left to him, coins struck in his name, the “drum of state” [*devlet*] sounded for him. He was told to keep the secret. And he was asked to “renew” the world with the “fortune” of his foot. He should ride immediately because the throne was “vacant.” He was warned that if he delayed on the chaotic road, the head of the realm would “disintegrate.”²⁹⁷

Chronicles describe the extreme shock and pain Süleyman experienced as he heard his father’s death. According to Nasuh, he tore his clothes and beat himself. The two main emotions leading these acts are defined as “shock” [*hayret*] and “yearning” [*hasret*].²⁹⁸ The author expresses that the witnesses could not help but fall apart before such an “exemplary situation” [*hâlet-i ‘ibret-vâr*]. Nasuh describes the violent crying and self-beating of the witnesses as well.²⁹⁹ According to Adâ’î, Süleyman was so sad about his father’s death that he shed “tears of blood”.³⁰⁰ According to Sa‘di, upon hearing the news, Süleyman let out a painful cry, which was beyond his control [*bî-ihitiyârî*]. Sa‘di makes use of figures of speech rather than actual violent behavior when he says that Süleyman “bit the cheek of separation [*firkat yanağın*] with the teeth of yearning [*dendân-ı hasret*].”³⁰¹

²⁹⁶ Sa‘di (SN), 106b-107a.

²⁹⁷ Abdüsselam Bilgen, *Ada’i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi, Namesi (İnceleme-Metin-Çeviri)*, (Ankara: TTK, 2007), pp.187-8.

²⁹⁸ Nasuh, 6a: “...*derûnuna velvele ve ‘uyûnuna zelzele düşüb câmesinin giriyebânın dâmenine varınca dest-i hayretle pâre pâre ve sinesini müşt-i hasretle kâra kâra eyledi.*”

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 6b-7a. The ritual significance of such violent mourning is discussed in Chapter 2.

³⁰⁰ Bilgen, *Ada’i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.220 [Persian text, p.188].

³⁰¹ Sa‘di (SN), 107a.

Such over-emotional description of the reaction of both Süleyman and the witnesses to the moment of awareness of Selim's death suggests deliberate exaggeration of emotions on the part of the writers. The chaotic scene reflecting an exaggerated expression of grief immediately turns into a scene of resignation to the will of God which leads to Süleyman's full control over his emotions, and consequently over the situation. According to Nasuh, once he digested the news, Süleyman acted according to God's command of "forbearance" [*sabır*], and rode in haste to Istanbul.³⁰²

The sudden change of mood observed in the chronicles also implies a sense of a transformative process in the persona of Süleyman. This implication is first provided by the information that the news caught Süleyman while he was out in the country side either hunting or contemplating, in other words under relaxed and carefree circumstances. Passages describing violent grief are followed by expressions of the responsibility that fell on his shoulders with the death of his father. Nasuh, for example, expresses the transformative process quite clearly by saying that "he bid farewell to merriment and comfort, broke of his relation to tranquility and repose."³⁰³

Uninterrupted continuity of dynastic rule is another issue stressed in the accounts at this point. Nasuh explains Süleyman's haste to get to Istanbul with the purpose of the continuity of the sultanate.³⁰⁴ Sa'di employs the Solomon analogy to the haste and swiftness of Süleyman's journey: "He is the Solomon of the day, it is the storming horse that carried his golden throne."³⁰⁵ Although Sa'di describes the haste once Süleyman decided to go to Istanbul, he also reports a reluctance on the part of the prince to make this decision. As the author has it, Süleyman had to be convinced by his advisors to go Istanbul to take over the throne. Sa'di attributes this reluctance to Süleyman's lack of greed regarding worldly power, especially after contemplating on the lesson of the death of his father.³⁰⁶ Süleyman's hesitation to ride to Istanbul upon receiving the news also

³⁰² Nasuh, 7a. For Süleyman riding "like a storm" and reaching Istanbul in seven days, see Bilgen, *Ada'i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.221 [Persian text, p.188].

³⁰³ Nasuh, 7b: "*sürûr ü rahata vedâ' idüb ve huzûr ü istirahatden 'alâkayı inkıtâ' idüb...*"

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*: "*istidâmet-i saltanat ve istimrâr-ı hilâfet için*"

³⁰⁵ Sa'di (SN), 108a: "*Süleymân-ı zamândır; taht-ı zerrînin götüren esb-i bâd-riftârdır.*"

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 107b.

found echoes in Western works. Andrea Cambini, for example, notes that when Süleyman was informed of his father's death and of his being the ruler, he had a hard time believing it. He would not move until he was assured by Piri Paşa.³⁰⁷ The sort of reluctance exemplified in Cambini's account is different than that implied by Sa'di. While Sadi meant to appraise Süleyman for the virtue of not being greedy, the reluctance mentioned by Cambini is a rather practical matter related to unauthorized entry in Istanbul by a prince. In this sense, Süleyman probably wished to make sure that this news was not some kind of a scheme to eliminate him through having him perform an inappropriate action. The impression of reluctance in either case carries on the impression of the "obedient son" who would turn out to be a Sultan acting by the book, in other words a "law-abiding" monarch.³⁰⁸

1.6. Conclusion

The experience of Süleyman as a prince appears to be quite different from that of his father's. Selim's princehood was spent at the borders [*uc*], providing him the opportunity to build a name for himself as a warrior. Süleyman, on the other hand, was on more neutral ground. When in Caffa, he was monitored by his father and the Crimeans. The situation was too complicated to pursue his own glory. His second post in Manisa was in the core perimeter of the realm, not at all a suitable region for individual *ghaza* activity. Moreover, Süleyman spent most of his Manisa princehood in Edirne, "guarding" Rumelia. Though he served in coordinating some border activity, he was in no situation to actively pursue any attacks. His being an only heir to the Ottoman throne was probably one of the reasons of avoiding battle fields. While lack of military experience might have been a drawback, the administrative and diplomatic experience acquired during his princehood seems to have made up for his military inexperience.

On a physical level, Süleyman did not need to fight fiercely for his princely future. His father, on the other hand, had to fight his way for survival. For this end, he

³⁰⁷ Andrea Cambini, *Libro d'Andrea Cambini fiorentino della Origine de Turchi et Imperio delli Ottomani* (Firenze, 1537), p.75.

³⁰⁸ I would like to thank Metin Kunt for suggesting the term "law-abiding".

employed his son's career to push his way out, extend his possible living space and build a powerbase. As a kinship faction competing for the throne, while Selim pursued actively the succession struggle, Süleyman supported his father through the way and from behind the scenes. After Sultan Selim's accession, Süleyman continued to support his father's endeavors by serving as guardian of Rumelia.

When compared with his father Selim I, who appears very dynamic and active, Süleyman emerges as a more passive young man in terms of physical action. This impression also holds true when the two men are compared as sons of a ruler; Selim creates the impression of a well-intentioned son with a rebellious spirit while Süleyman is the always obedient son. Whereas Selim seems to be in almost constant rage and excitement, Süleyman seems more sensible and down to earth. In a way, one sees the warrior in the father and the administrator in the son.

CHAPTER 2

“THE BLESSED SOVEREIGN”: *HÜDÂVENDİGÂR-I KÂM-KÂR*

*A man becomes a king because he comes to be treated as a king.*³⁰⁹

2.1. Defining the Problem: Transference and Establishment of Sovereign Authority

This chapter examines the transference of sovereign authority from the deceased ruler to his successor and the consolidation of sovereignty in the person of the new ruler. In other words, this chapter tries to define when and how Süleyman the young prince became Sultan Süleyman. Contemporary evidence shows that it is impossible to define a single moment or a single ceremony which inaugurates the reign of Sultan Süleyman. Unlike his European counterparts, Sultan Süleyman did not ascend the throne with a coronation rite; he was not vested with a sacred and/or dynastic object by a single religious and/or temporal authority. Yet his accession to sovereignty was unchallenged and legitimized through a number of symbolic and ritual elements. This chapter is an attempt to uncover the dynamics underlying this process of legitimate succession of power whereby the new ruler personifies the state through various “state ceremonials.”³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p.25.

³¹⁰ For “state ceremonials” personifying the Crown/State, see Ralph Giesey, “Inaugural Aspects of French Royal Ceremonials,” in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, J.M. Bak (ed.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p.36.

An examination of any legitimized transfer of sovereignty involves three main questions: Who, when and how.³¹¹ Based on the principle of dynastic continuity, the absence of other candidates to the throne after Selim I's death leads one to assume that Süleyman – as the only living male member of the dynasty – automatically became sultan the moment his father died. However, the events following Selim's death show otherwise. Contemporary accounts show that Süleyman first had to come to Istanbul to take over the throne. The discretion on the part of the viziers regarding the death of Sultan Selim and their efforts to keep things in their normal course until Süleyman's arrival in Istanbul suggest that sovereign authority still rested with Sultan Selim, at least in appearance. Neither was coming to Istanbul sufficient, the deceased ruler's funeral rites had to be completed before Süleyman could perform the basic acts of sovereignty such as receiving the obedience of the household and other subjects, having the Friday prayer [*hutbe*] called in his name, issuing coins [*sikke*], distributing promotions, renewing offices and pacts. These acts of sovereignty themselves also appear to be constituent parts of the accession process.

Accession marks the transference of sovereign authority, but the process as narrated by contemporary sources seems to be a generic process more or less applicable to any Ottoman ruler. Contemporary mentality required a monarch to rule and watch over the people. According to the political wisdom of the time, society would fall into chaos in the lack of a ruler. Thus, kingship was a divinely sanctioned status to ensure the persistence of "world order" [*nizâm-ı âlem*]. The absolute necessity of the monarch was a well established belief for centuries, with arguments supported by verses in the Quran and by examples from histories of various states.³¹² Thus, in the course of his

³¹¹ For a discussion of these three critical aspects of rulership embodied in the coronation, see Giesey, "Inaugural Aspects of French Royal Ceremonials," p.35

³¹² Gottfried Hagen, "Legitimacy and World Order," in *Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp.60-1. The late fifteenth century Ottoman chronicler Tursun Beg, for example, starts his work with explaining the nature of mankind as living in society and thus the need for a single ruler. According to Tursun Beg, by nature people need each other so that they can cooperate. Therefore they have to live together. However, if they are left to their own devices or to their inherent nature to do this, conflicts would arise. They would not be able to cooperate, but would incite treason and destroy each other. Therefore, it had been necessary to give each a status/place so that each would be satisfied with his lot and not attack that of others'. Thus customary law [*örf*] had emerged. And there a king [*pâdişâh*] was needed at all times so that the order of things could be preserved: "Thus, the king's person was

accession, Süleyman seems to have fulfilled a generic role: a legitimate monarch from the house of Osman. Although chronicles provide us with ample praise on the person of the new sultan, what we actually see is the power of a sultan from the house of Osman. As such, he also ensured the continuity of the dynastic chain by becoming the next link.³¹³ In this sense, one of the most important aspects of Süleyman's accession would be the emphasis made on the continuity of the dynasty as well as its reconfirmation and glorification. Promoting the sense of dynastic continuity on one hand, the accession process simultaneously reflects the beginning of a new era. While Selim's death is conveyed as an end, Süleyman's accession is hailed as a new beginning. This effect is heightened by binary oppositions looming large in Ottoman accounts. The use of contrasting concepts such as setting sun/rising moon, night/day, grief/joy helps create the atmosphere of an era ending and a new one beginning. However, this opposition does not appear as an absolute break with the previous reign – or reigns for that matter. The initial sense of an abrupt end and beginning gradually turns into a renewal throughout the process of transference of power. The dynastic concept, along with the concept of ancient custom, is perhaps the most important element in this transformation. These two closely related concepts appear to be the most important factors in what Ernst H. Kantorowicz calls “the perpetuity of the head of the realm.” I would not take it as far as the concept of a “king that never dies” as seen especially in the case of French kings, but I tend to find Kantorowicz's assertion of the interplay between three factors applicable to the case at hand: namely dynastic continuity, corporate character of the

necessary for the desired order to be attained, without him the conditions for an honorable order would be impossible.” Tursun Bey; *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, Mertol Tulum (ed.) (İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, İstanbul, 1977), p.12-13. For some comments of Süleyman's contemporaries see: Bostan (TSK), 2b-3a; Nasuh, 5a; KPZ, X:6-7. For a discussion on the requirement of kingship in Perso-Islamic political thought, see A.K.S. Lambton, “Quis Custodiet Custodes: Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government,” *Studia Islamica*, No.5 (1956), pp.125-148.

³¹³ For the concept of “a link in the dynastic chain” see Kunt, “Sultan, Dynasty and State,” p.222. For a treatment of the concept in the context of English kings see Jennifer Loach, “The Function of Ceremonial in the Reign of Henry VIII,” *Past and Present*, No.142 (Feb. 1994), pp.51-2.

Crown, and immortality of the Royal Dignity as factors in the formation of the concept of perpetuity.³¹⁴

Considering accession as a process of transference of sovereign authority to the legitimate successor, the enthronement of Süleyman marks the first phase of this transfer in the short term. This phase delineated the main elements of Ottoman “normative legitimacy” as inherited from his predecessor. The second phase was to consolidate the inherited legitimation and the image of the Sultan in the person of Sultan Süleyman through his own actions. This phase involves the actualization of legitimacy and image in the medium term.³¹⁵ Two issues can be underlined which helped mark Süleyman’s – not *a* sultan’s but *his* – sovereign power or image of power following his accession. The first issue is his acts related to the administration of justice right after his accession. Justice being the foremost quality expected of a ruler, contemporary accounts give an almost identical list of the first deeds of Sultan Süleyman: sending those back home whom his father had brought in Istanbul after the conquest of Egypt, lifting the ban on Persian trade, inspection and execution of Captain Cafer Beğ due to complaints of oppression.³¹⁶ These “acts of justice” also suggest a reversal of some of Selim’s policies. If true, we can consider these acts as an attempt to mark a distinction with the previous reign. The second issue is the revolt of Canberdi Gâzâli, which I argue turned out to be an opportunity to confirm authority and ability rather than a threat to authority. Thus, we shall have examined the first four months of Süleyman’s rule which I believe transformed the prince into sultan in his own right. The last part of this chapter will provide an overview of the first impressions Süleyman left both domestically and externally.

³¹⁴ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.31. In the Ottoman context, the Crown could be translated into the Throne.

³¹⁵ For a discussion on “normative legitimation” and “factual legitimation” in the context of Ottoman dynastic monarchy, see Hakan T. Karateke, “Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate: A Framework for Historical Analysis,” in Karateke and Reinkowski, pp.13-52.

³¹⁶ *Tabakat*, 27a-28b; KPZ, X:37-44; Bostan (TSK), 5b-6a.

2.2. Transference of Sovereign Authority: Accession

The accession marks the transference of sovereign authority in the short term as a generic process. The ceremonial accession of Süleyman lasted two days, starting with his arrival in Istanbul and ending with the *divan* presumably held next day after his father's funeral. The ceremonial observed signified not only the taking over of the ruling authority, but also the symbolic meanings and the titles attached to that authority. As can be argued for any other ceremonial transference of power, Süleyman's accession should be considered a rite of passage whereby through a series of rituals he is "conveyed from one social status to another." This process transforms both the perception the society has of the individual and also the individual's self perception.³¹⁷

The following events shall be examined in this respect to understand how sovereign power attached to Selim was transferred to Süleyman. Such an exercise displays the means and elements involved in what is customarily called "accession" [*cülûs*], as well as providing a clear view of the transformation of the "felicitious prince" into the "blessed sovereign." Although one assumes that the principle of hereditary succession by default makes the heir the new ruler – especially when there are no legitimate competitors – the actual accession itself was not a momentary happening. Based on the action flow provided by contemporary accounts, we can categorize three phases toward the full transfer of authority in the short term. The first phase would be the new ruler's entry in Istanbul whereby as heir to the throne he claims the sovereign authority. The second phase would be the funeral of the deceased Sultan Selim whereby the previous authority leaves the scene. The third phase would be the actual hold on sovereignty through holding court and accepting obedience. Agreeing with Kertzer on the use of ritual in constituting power rather than just reflecting what already exists,³¹⁸ we shall now take a closer look at these three phases and try to see how the process as a whole endows the heir with actual ruling power and authority.

³¹⁷ For the transformative function of rites of passages see, Robbie E. Davis-Floyd, "Ritual in the Hospital: Giving Birth the American Way," in Grimes (ed), p.148.

³¹⁸ Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, p.25.

2.2.1 The Entry

If stripped off its symbolic and ideological content, a typical factual contemporary account of Süleyman's entry in Istanbul would read as follows: Süleyman arrived at Üsküdar on 30 September 1520 [17 Shawwal 926]. Boarding the galley prepared for him, he came ashore near the Palace around noon. He was greeted by the janissaries and other servitors along with the religious groups and inhabitants of Istanbul. This was the first instance that the death of Sultan Selim was made public. Surrounded by the janissaries Süleyman was taken to the Palace. The procession passed through the spectators who came to see him. He entered the Palace.³¹⁹

Looking at this flow, we can focus on three subsequent stages which can be considered as constituting the first ceremonial phase of accession: revelation of the death of the ruler, acceptance of the dynastic successor, appropriation of the abode of power. These stages can be identified with the arrival of the prince, the procession and the entry into the palace. This initial phase of the accession is characterized by movement from one place to another. If we are to take this phase as part of a rite of passage, we can see that Süleyman comes out of the separation phase as he arrives by boat and disembarks, goes through a transformation phase with the procession and finally enters the Palace where he assumes power.³²⁰

In contemporary mentality, the death of a sultan seems to be revealed to the public not verbally, but visually through the arrival of the successor. Kemalpaşazade's account of Süleyman's entry in Istanbul confirms the idea. Kemalpaşazade says that the household troops in Istanbul became aware of the death of Sultan Selim only when Süleyman reached the shore. It was only then that it became apparent that the life of the

³¹⁹ For contemporary accounts see: *Tabakat*, 25a-25b; Bostan (TSK), 3b-4a; Nasuh, 8b-9b; Sa'di (SN), 108a-b; Sanuto, 29:368-9. Celâlzâde gives the date as 11 Shawwal, but this is impossible given that the same author places the death of Selim on 9 Shawwal. *Tabakat*, 24a. This is probably a scribal error. Bostan and Nasuh give the date of accession [*cülus*] as 18 Shawwal. The decree sent to the Crimean Khan places the enthronement on 17 Shawwal. *Münşe'at*, I:502

³²⁰ For the phases of "rites of passage" see, Arnold Van Gennep, "The Rites of Passage," in *Death, Mourning, and Burial: A Cross-Cultural Reader*, Antonius C.G.M. Robben (ed) (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), pp.213-223. For the loci of a rite of passage and movement see, Jacques LeGoff, "A Coronation Program for the Age of Saint Louis: The Ordo of 1250," in Bak (ed.), pp.52.

deceased ruler had come to an end and that “the new holder of the crown [*tâc-dâr-ı cedîd*] became his successor at the throne of *hilâfet*.”³²¹ Sa‘di reports that nobody knew about the situation when Süleyman appeared at Uskudar.³²² Contarini, the Venetian bailo in Istanbul, immediately after learning about the death of Sultan Selim wrote his first impression of the arrival as such:

This morning [September 30] at one o’clock his son arrived with three vessels from Anatolia. He disembarked near the Palace and accompanied by the aga of the janissaries entered the Palace. There he heard the cries of the women and the populace because they had been informed of the death of his father *signor Selim Sach*. These people were worried about the possibility of being looted, but by the grace of God nothing happened for the good government of the viziers and the above-mentioned commander of the janissaries.³²³

Earlier chronicles also confirm that the death of the sultan was revealed with the arrival of the successor in the seat of government. For example, Neşri says that Mehmed I’s death was kept secret for forty days. When Murad II came to Bursa and sat on the throne, Mehmed I’s death became obvious instantly.³²⁴ When Murad II died, his death was concealed for sixteen days and people became aware only when Mehmed II came to Edirne.³²⁵

Although the death of Sultan Selim was kept secret until the arrival of Süleyman, accounts imply that some kind of preparation was made in Istanbul for the latter’s arrival. Sa‘di reports instant preparations by the commander of the janissaries on his own initiative. According to the author, nobody was aware of the death of the Sultan until Süleyman’s ship appeared on the shores of Üsküdar. As the people tried to make sense of the arrival of the ship, the commander of the janissaries, who was cautious, understood that it was the Prince arriving. Thus, he prepared the janissaries along with

³²¹ KPZ, X:21.

³²² Sa‘di (SN), 108a.

³²³ Sanuto, 29:357; also see *ibid*, 368-9. Contarini’s timing matches that of Kemalpaşazade’s timing mentioned above. Therefore, he means noon and not morning in the modern sense of the word.

³²⁴ Neşri, II:555.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, 683.

'ulemâ and *sâdât* for the greeting.³²⁶ According to Celâlîzâde, orders were sent to the Palace to clean up and prepare it for the arrival of the Sultan.³²⁷ Since no name was mentioned, those who were to proceed with the preparations probably thought it was meant for Sultan Selim. Selaniki provides insight on how the preparation mechanism worked in the case of Selim II's entry in Istanbul upon Sultan Süleyman's death. According to his account, a letter was sent to the Chief Gardner [*Bostancıbaşı*] ordering cleaning and preparations at the Imperial Palace. The letter commanded that the Palace should be handed over to its owner in good shape when he arrived [... *hidmetinde kusûr itmeyüb sâhibi geldükde teslim eylesiz*]. The letter also ordered to make sure that everything was in order at the other side [Üsküdar] because the Sultan wished to cross to his gardens when he came back. It was upon these preparations that Selim II arrived, and crossed to the Imperial Palace by boat. Although cannons were fired, and heralds announced that it was "the era of Sultan Selim" [*Devr-i Sultân Selim Hândır*], Selim had a difficult time entering the Palace because the guards were still not aware of the death of Sultan Süleyman.³²⁸ In this respect, the alertness of the janissary commander in Sa'di's account seems to have had vital contribution to the smoothness and ceremonial nature of Süleyman's entry in Istanbul.

Accounts on Süleyman's arrival convey a simultaneous feeling of grief and joy. Upon seeing the prince approaching the city, the on-lookers must have realized that something was wrong because princes did not enter Istanbul on their own under normal circumstances; this would be either outright rebellion or else it signified the death of the reigning sultan. So their grief must have been for the deceased sultan and the expectation of chaos related to the death of the ruler; on the other hand, their joy was over the new sultan and the expectation of order related to accession. Sa'di mentions that people felt pain upon seeing Süleyman and they were lost in thought imagining what this arrival entailed. Talking about the reaction of the janissaries in Istanbul upon hearing the news, the author tells that they were so shocked that "they could not

³²⁶ Sa'di (SN), 108a: "... Üsküdar'dan dâde-i halka 'ayân oldu. Henüz ol hâdise-i 'azmi agâh değillerdi. Nâgâh sâye salıcak halka bir mikdâr ızdırâb irişdi. Bunlar deryâ-yı fikre düşüb girdâb-ı tevehhümde ser-gerdân iken yeniçeri ağası mütenebbih olub şeref-i kûdüm ve şahîs-i vürûd-ı hümâyûn idiği ittilâ' idicek..."

³²⁷ Celâlîzâde (SN), p.221.

³²⁸ Selaniki, I:41-2.

differentiate between night and day.” They started wailing since they felt the grief of a “dark night” [*şeb-i deycâr*] and the joy of a “holiday” [*rûz-ı ‘iyd*] at the same time. Yet they knew that this “heavy grief” [*gâm-ı dîşvâr*] had no remedy other than this “digestive bottle” [*câm-ı hoşgüvâr*].³²⁹ Kemalpaşazade describes the complex and conflicting feelings of the people as such:

The gloom of sorrow and the misery of misfortune rushed in, from the other side came the splendor of a wedding. Now their eyes were filled with tears like the tip of the decanter and now their faces glowed [with happiness] like the surface of a goblet. At this instance was seen a depression which was to combine with joy, an anguish which was to excite cheer.³³⁰

While Ottoman writers poetize the situation and accord a more enduring sense of felicity following an event “as misfortunate as the death of the sultan”, the Venetian bailo has a more practical view of the situation. Contarini tells that the women and the people [*femene e populi*] started crying when the death of Sultan Selim was revealed. These lamenters, according to the bailo, were worried that they would be sacked.³³¹

It is tempting to view this course of events as a typical royal entry. It fits the two phases of rendering homage described by Lawrence M. Bryant regarding French royal entries. In the first phase the king would be static and the people mobile, while in the second phase the king would be mobile and the people static.³³² The coming to power of a Mamluk Sultan, too, involved a state procession. During this procession he rode through Cairo to the Citadel. He was accompanied by the commanders and preceded by the insignia.³³³ The greeting on shore renders Süleyman static while the janissaries and other servitors of the household pay their condolences and respect [*takdîm-i merâsim-i ta‘zîm ü iclâl*].³³⁴ Sa‘di’s account confirms an initial obedience ritual at this point.

³²⁹ Sa‘di (SN), 108a.

³³⁰ KPZ, X:21.

³³¹ Sanuto, 29:357.

³³² Lawrence M. Bryant, *The King and The City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual, and Art in the Renaissance* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1986), p.99.

³³³ For Mamluk state processions, see P.M.Holt, “The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 38, No. 2. (1975), p. 242.

³³⁴ KPZ, X:123; Sa‘di (SN), 109a.

According to the author, those who were worthy of kissing hands came up to Süleyman and kissed hands while he replied appropriately.³³⁵ Likewise, Contarini reports that the “janissaries and his slaves” were there to meet Süleyman, and that they promised him their services and obedience.³³⁶ This may be taken to signify the initial public acceptance of the ruler, as does the procession to the Palace with the accompaniment of the household troops.³³⁷ The procession, on the other hand, renders Süleyman mobile. The procession can be considered both as the appropriation of the city (the seat of government in this case) by the new ruler and as the acceptance of the subjects of this appropriation.³³⁸

At least two elements are missing define Süleyman’s arrival in Istanbul as a typical royal entry, though. The first element is the regalia. Some of the signifiers of sovereignty observed in Western courts were not applicable to the Ottoman court. The most obvious examples to these are the crown and scepter.³³⁹ The second absent element is a full household. At this point, we should keep in mind that Süleyman came to Istanbul in a hurry and discreetly. He came with as few servitors as possible to ensure

³³⁵ Sa’di (SN), 108b-109a: “Evvelâ lâîk-ı rikâb-bûs-ı hümayû-ı olan eşrâf-ı halâyıkdan â‘zam-ı ümerâ ve efâzıl-ı sâdât ü ‘ulemâ şeref-i mülâkâtına irüb katına vardılar, du‘â-yı devlet-i rûz-efzûnla bâ-serhum mübârek ellerin bûs idüb gözlerine sürdiler. Şâh-ı büzürgvâr ve yegâne-i rûzgâr dahi âdâb-ı hüsrevâne ve erkân-ı şâhânesi üzerü kadrlü kadrince merâsimi ta‘zîm ü tekrîmlerin yerine getirdi.” The protocol involving hand kissing was strictly determined in the 33rd article of the second part of Mehmed II’s law code. For the article itself, see Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, I:327.

³³⁶ Sanuto, 29:368-9 and 29:357-9.

³³⁷ An anonymous chronicle relates the frustration of the janissaries when Selim I went to the Palace upon his accession while the janissaries were busy escorting the deposed Sultan Bayezid out of the city. According to the author, what Selim I did was contrary to the ancient custom of the new Sultan being escorted to the Palace and seated on the throne by the janissaries. Kreutel, *Haniwaldanus Anonimi*, p.69.

³³⁸ H. Maxwell, “Uno Elephante Grandissimo con uno Castello di sopra: il Trionfo Aragonese nel 1423,” *Archivio Storico Italiano*, no.150 (1992), pp.854-5. Maxwell interprets Alfonso’s riding along the streets of Napoli through the ceremonial route as signifying a true and proper taking possession of the city. Similar to Süleyman, Alfonso was greeted on shore as he disembarked and people were gathered on the streets to see him proceed.

³³⁹ For the regalia in European courts see: Bryant, *The King and the City*, pp.101-115. For regalia in Mamluk state processions, see Holt, “The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan,” p. 242.

a fast and safe journey, leaving his household back in Manisa. As for the existing imperial household, many of them were still outside the city in camp. They were still unaware of the situation. Thus, they were not yet considered his household. We are informed by contemporary accounts that Süleyman sent for his family, which still resided in Manisa, after his accession was complete in ceremonial terms. According to Bostan, Süleyman's family arrived in Istanbul through Gallipoli in mid-November 1520 [beginning of Dhu'l-Hijja 926] and they were greeted ceremonially.³⁴⁰

Süleyman's arrival at the Palace is generally identified with ascending the throne. Kemalpaşazade ends the day saying "he ascended the sky-like throne, enlightened the East and the West like world-illuminating sun."³⁴¹ Sa'di ends the day in a similar manner by saying he entered the Palace and "on the 17 Shawwal, which was Saturday, he went on the throne of state and thanks be to God became blessed sovereign."³⁴² Nasuh talks about a gathering at the Palace on the day of arrival consisting of high officials, household troops and other men of valor in ceremonial order to present their dependability and loyalty.³⁴³

Ottoman accounts on Süleyman's first day in Istanbul make use of analogies to define him and what is going on. These analogies serve not only to glorify the new Sultan, but also to shape the public's perception. Associating him with already familiar and well known figures or phenomenon, people are provided with a ready-made image. In this respect, associating a new ruler with an already familiar one and the transformation with an already familiar natural phenomenon eases the transformation and acceptance process. During the process the unknown is replaced with the known. In this sense, the analogies constitute a tool of political communication as well as reflecting a set of expectations.

An inevitable analogy reflecting the transfer of sovereignty from Sultan Selim to Sultan Süleyman is the one referring to the biblical kings David and Solomon. In the

³⁴⁰ Bostan (TSK), 5b-6b.

³⁴¹ KPZ, X:23.

³⁴² Sa'di (SN), 108b: "*Şehr-i Şevvâl'in onyidinci günü ki yevmü'l-ahad idi, taht-ı devlete geçüb bihamdullah pâdişâh-ı kâmrân oldı.*"

³⁴³ Nasuh, 9a-b: "*Dârü's-sa'âdeye vusûl bulıcak, â'yân-ı erkân ve sudûr-ı dîvân ve kapuhalkı, sâ'ir dilâverân saflar ve alaylar bağlayub 'arz-ı istikâmet ü sadâkât için silk-i intizâmda râsıt turmuşlardı.*"

Perso-Islamic heroic tradition, King David often figures as the archetype of the royal adventurer and the initial owner of the coat of mail of the Prophet. His son Solomon, on the other hand, represents ultimate valor and splendor as the chief of monarchs presiding over prophets, kings and warriors.³⁴⁴ Being the father and son endowed with kingship by God, this couple would be a perfect way to associate dynastic succession and legitimate sovereignty in the case of Selim and Süleyman. Bostan, for example, refers to a Quranic reference as he relates the succession. The quote reads: “And Solomon was David's heir.”³⁴⁵ This reference not only creates a parallel between Süleyman and the exemplary king/prophet Solomon but also a parallel between Selim I and David, thus mirroring the current situation to a legendary succession which is assumed to have been conferred by God. Although Süleyman had the advantage of the name, the David-Solomon reference seems to be part of the common vocabulary of the sixteenth century political scene. During the progress of Prince Philip of Spain in 1548-1549 in the Low Countries, among the classical and biblical references employed we see Solomon crowned King of Israel at the behest of his father David.³⁴⁶ Again an appropriate and convenient analogy taking into consideration the aims of Charles V in having his son proceed around the realm.

The most favorite analogy employed by contemporary writers seems to be the “sun” analogy. The analogy of the “world-illuminating sun” can be viewed in two perspectives; first, in terms of a cosmological view of worldly order and secondly, in terms of “divine light” conferring divine kingship. Anthropologically speaking, royal rituals in many cultures involve association of society, royalty and astronomy. Such an association of cosmic and political order helps render royal authority “as a thing beyond challenge,” making it “an aspect of a whole which is beyond the mere creation of

³⁴⁴ John Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image: Themes in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1999), pp.100-1.

³⁴⁵ Bostan (TSK), 4b: “*Bu tâli’-i es‘ad ve sitâre-i ercümend ile serîr-i saltanata ve karârgâh-ı hilâfete cülûs-ı himâyûn gösterüb, masdûka-i kerîme-i ‘ve varis- Süleymân Davûd’ zuhûr buldı.*” The relevant Quranic verse is from “al-Naml” (The Ants), 27:16.

³⁴⁶ Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1984), p.88. Associating the ruler with Solomon was a common device in sixteenth-century monarchies. When the Treaty of London was signed on 3 October 1518, secretary Richard Pace lauded Henry VIII as a new Solomon. Glenn Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy: The Reigns of Henry VIII, Francis I and Charles V* (London: Arnold Publishers, 2002), p.74.

man.”³⁴⁷ Influential writers like al-Ghazali and Nizam al-Mulk considered that the ruler was bestowed with kingship and the divine light by God.³⁴⁸ In the mystic sphere, too, the imagery of light was formulated in terms of illumination. Suhrawardi’s philosophy had already well-systematized the concept of divine glory and divine light in the twelfth century.³⁴⁹ Thus, the analogy was already there for the Ottomans of the sixteenth century to employ. The same concept would also be observed elsewhere in the sixteenth century: “The *shamsa* [image of the sun]... is a divine light, which God directly transfers to kings, without the assistance of men; and kings are fond of external splendor, because they consider it an image of the Divine glory” Abu'l-Fazl would write in *A'in-i Akbari*.³⁵⁰ An interesting reference to the sun is found in the first book Kemalpaşazade as he relates an episode from the first days of the Ottoman dynasty. According to the episode, when Osman Beğ conquered Karacahisar he was told that the permission of the Saljuq sultan was necessary to say the first Friday prayer [*hutbe*] in his name. Osman Beğ defied the sultan and appropriated the right of *hutbe* for himself, basing his argument on superiority of descent. In this instance we see Osman Beğ arguing that his origin is the “sun” while that of the sultan is the “moon”, thus making his claim superior.³⁵¹

³⁴⁷ Maurice Bloch, “The Ritual of the Royal Bath in Madagascar: the Dissolution of Death, Birth and Fertility into Authority,” in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, David Cannadine and Simon Price (eds), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.283-4.

³⁴⁸ Yılmaz, *The Sultan and the Sultanate*, p.223; Lambton, “Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship,” p.105.

³⁴⁹ Yılmaz, *The Sultan and the Sultanate*, p.224.

³⁵⁰ As quoted in Milo Cleveland Beach and Ebba Koch, *King of the World: The Padshahnama* (London: Thames&Hudson, 1997), p.24. Chandarbhan Brahman, the Hindu court historian of Shah Jahan in the seventeenth century would address Shah Jahan as “the sun of the heaven of good fortune and the caliphate.” See *ibid.* p.113

³⁵¹ KPZ, I:112: “Sultân-ı zaman didiğiniz Melîk-i Yunân ise benim mülkimde anın ne tasarrufları var? Ol kimdir, ana ne, ol kim halkının ihtiyaçları ve ne hod benim mülkimin tevekküfları var, nesebde andan eksik değilim. Benim aslım güneşdir, anın ay, haseb hesâbı arayagelürse hod maslahat gerekmez, iş kolay. Anın nesli Selçuk’a irerse ger / benim dahi aslım Gök Alp’e çıkar. Gök Alp’i bilmeyen bilmez, bilen Selçuk’a nisbet kılmaz.” Compare Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman* p.103: “Ve ger ol Âl-i Selçûkvan der ise, ben hod Gök Alp oğluyun derin.” I thank Hakan Erdem for the reference to Aşıkpaşazade.

When describing the arrival of Süleyman and the procession to the Palace, Celâlzâde stresses the analogy by employing both the sun and the moon to refer to the Sultan. The author refers to Süleyman as “the sun illuminating the world” [*âfitâb-ı cihân-tâb*]³⁵² and the greeters as “the gracious servants of the threshold which is magnificent like the skies.” These greeters, then, encircle “the moon” like a halo.³⁵³ Kemalpaşazade describes the moment of enthronement in a similar manner: “He ascended the sky-like throne and illuminated the East and the West like the world-illuminating sun.” While the new ruler was the ascending sun for Kemalpaşazade, the coffin of the deceased sultan was associated with the “decline of the sun of sovereignty” [*magrib-i âfitâb-ı saltanat*].³⁵⁴ Kemalpaşazade also presented a panegyric on the occasion of the accession which revolved around the theme of the sun.³⁵⁵ Likewise, Sa‘di describes the first appearance of Süleyman on the shore of Uskudar as “the sun coming out of a curtain of clouds.” He likens the prince to the rays of the sun which “leave the candle light dim in broad day light.” He also says that while preparing the janissary troops for the royal greeting the commander of the janissaries informed the men about the “setting of the father and the rising of the new moon.” Upon hearing the news the janissaries were so shocked that “they could not differentiate between night and day.”³⁵⁶

Sadi’s choice of words is interesting as he describes Süleyman’s arrival. The author tells that a boat was prepared and sent to serve the “prince who is the refuge of the world” [*şehzâde-i âlem-penâh*]. As the town people and others [*şehürlü ve sâ’ir tavâif-i enâm*] saw the boat approaching, they realized that aboard was a “*sa’âdetlü*

³⁵² This is a very conventional analogy employed by contemporary writers when referring to the sultan. It becomes/is almost a synonym for the sultan. For a Persian use of the concept in the context of Süleyman’s accession see, for example, Bilgen, *Ada’i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.221 [Persian text, p.118]: “*hürşîd-i gîtî-firûz*”

³⁵³ *Tabakat*, 25a. The moon and halo reference implies that Süleyman was positioned in the middle. This position also brings to mind the underlying intention of a procession “to show which of the gloriously arrayed persons involved was, in fact, the king.” See Loach, “The Function of Ceremonial in the Reign of Henry VIII,” p.50.

³⁵⁴ KPZ, X:23.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 32-36. For example: “*Oldur ol Şeh kim külâhı kûşesidir mâh-ı nev / Oldur ol Han kim ana taht asuman efer güneş.*”

³⁵⁶ Sa‘di (SN), 108a-b.

pâdişâh.”³⁵⁷ Whether Sadi used the two titles deliberately is questionable, but it sure adds to the sense of a transformation taking place. Süleyman gradually turns from prince to sovereign ruler as he approaches closer to the seat of government. In *Selimname* Celâlzâde employs similar wording. According to the author, the news of Sultan Selim’s death was written to the “*hazret-i şehzâde-i âlem-penâh.*” Similarly the news of Süleyman’s approaching Istanbul was brought to the camp by a messenger of “*şehzâde-i civân-baht.*” On the other hand, on the day Süleyman arrived in Istanbul it was no more a prince but the “*pâdişâh-ı âlem-penâh*” who ascended the throne.³⁵⁸

2.2.2 The Announcement at the Camp: Shift in Authority

In an imperial monarchy heavily based on the military establishment, transference of authority without the integration of any part of the imperial army could never be complete. Some of the household troops were not present in Istanbul when Süleyman made his entry and appropriated the city. As such, they were not aware of the situation; and neither were they Süleyman’s men yet. Therefore, the announcement at the camp figures as an important part of the accession process of Sultan Süleyman. Although current mentality and circumstances probably did not allow for an alternative, the announcement leads to the transformation of the “servants” of Sultan Selim into those of Sultan Süleyman. In order to trace the logic beneath this transformation, we shall try to analyze the rather detailed account of Sa’di.³⁵⁹

The mood of end versus beginning is conveyed in Sa’di’s account of the reception of the news in the military camp where Sultan Selim passed away. According to this account, as Süleyman arrived in Istanbul to ascend the throne, a decree was sent to the camp to have the deceased Sultan’s body along with the equipment and treasury brought to the city. The camp dwellers were not yet aware of either the death of Selim or the accession of Süleyman. The soldiers were assembled around the imperial tent and the news was announced first to the troop of imperial guards [*solaklar*]. The announcement

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 108b.

³⁵⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.221.

³⁵⁹ Sa’di (SN), 109b-110a.

can be read in three parts, like the announcement to Süleyman discussed in Chapter 1. While the first part of the announcement focuses on death and thus an end, the second part heralds a new beginning. The third part of the announcement introduces what is to be done by the soldiers in the face of this transition:

Comrades, let it be known to you that the *Pâdişâh*, the refuge of the world, passed away a while ago leaving us orphans; from this temporal seat he is gone to that place of prosperity; his conquering soul departed gone on the campaign of the hereafter to reign over the army of souls. Currently, the felicitous prince [*şehzâde-i civân-baht*] has reached Istanbul and has become blesses sovereign [*pâdişâh-ı kâm-rân*] in his stead. It is required that his servants [*kulları*] report to his stately abode [*âsitâne-i devlet-penâh*] and fulfill the service of congratulation of his long-to-be reign, hence the need to go.³⁶⁰

The first part of the announcement, which announces the death of the ruler, emphasizes three messages. Firstly, the deceased has passed from the temporal world to a better place, which neutralizes the death of the ruler as a matter of course. It also seems to be a reminder of the destiny all mortals are to witness someday. It reflects a contrast between the mortal world and the eternal one, yet with an association between death and resurrection. In this sense, the divine nature of death gets on the scene. Regardless of the “stage of religious evolution”, death signifies the passage to another realm of being. This realm is often associated with the heavenly, usually a place where the “glorious fore-fathers” of the deceased have already gone. Death in this sense is to be followed by “resurrection into a superior life.”³⁶¹ Being the warrior sultan he was, in the author’s words Selim has not just passed away, but he has gone on a campaign involving the welfare of the hereafter. Thus, the warrior image of the deceased sultan is once more reminded. Thirdly, it conveys a sense of a familiar realm in which the Sultan

³⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 109b-110a: “*Yoldaşlar, âgâh olun ki hayliden pâdişâh-ı ‘âlem-penâh bizi yetim idiüb bu nişimen-i fânîden ol mekân-ı bâkîye ulaşmışdır, sizin tarafınızdan kâzâ-yı ... idiüb rûh-ı pür-fütûhı ‘asker-i ervâh içre saltanatlık arzusına sefer-i ahiret itmişdir. Hâliyâ gülbîn-i bağ-ı ikbâl ve serv-i cûybâr-ı celâl şehzâde-i civân-baht İstanbul’a geliüb yerine pâdişâh-ı kâm-rân olmuş, kulları âsitâne-i devlet-penâhına varub mübârek-bâd-ı saltanat-ı rûz-efzûnı hedemâtı yerine konulmak lâzım olmuşdır, gidilmek gerekdir.*”

³⁶¹ Robert Hertz, “A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death,” *Death, Mourning, and Burial: A Cross-Cultural Reader*, Antonius C.G.M. Robben (ed.) (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), pp.207-10. The letter sent to the Crimean Khan, for example, informs him that Sultan Selim passed from this temporal world to a better place; he has gone from the soil to the sky. *Münşe‘at*, I:502.

has gone. It offers the audience an opportunity to cope with the loss by presenting a “world analogous to ours... and of a society organized in the same way as it is here. Thus everyone re-enters again the categories of that he had on earth.”³⁶²

The loss reflected in the first part is compensated for in the second part of the announcement. The fact that the ruler’s death has left the army *orphan* reminds the role of the ruler as the father of his people. Actually, we can argue that this is the most immediate message for the intended audience since it directly involves their relation to the situation and vice versa. If we interpret this state of orphanage as remaining without a head of family or in a more general sense without a leading figure of authority, the next sentence informs that this authority has already been appropriately replaced suggesting that there is no reason to worry. This part of the announcement, as conveyed by Sa’di, is also noteworthy since it expresses Süleyman’s transition from a prince [*şehzâde*] to a sovereign ruler [*pâdişâh*] on his own. Sa’di’s account makes it clear that Süleyman became sultan in his father’s stead after he came to Istanbul. The specific mention of the name of the city strongly suggests that he was not considered as having taken over at the moment his father died, or even when he got the news at Manisa; but that he was required to present himself in Istanbul.³⁶³ According to Celâlzâde’s narrative in *Selimname*, when Piri Paşa called the troop of imperial guards [*solaklar*] and announced the death of Sultan Selim, he made it clear that “*Pâdişâh-ı âlem-penâh hazretleri* has fortunately ascended the throne in Istanbul.”³⁶⁴ Lütfi Paşa tells that

³⁶² Van Gennep, “Rites of Passage,” p.215.

³⁶³ This issue would create major problems on Süleyman’s death when his successor Selim, or those around him for that matter, could not agree on the manner or moment of actual succession. For a contemporary account of Selim II’s accession controversies, see Feridun Ahmed Bey, *Nüzhet el-esrar el-ahbar der sefer-i Sigetvar*, TSM, H.1339, and Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, *Tarihi Selaniki I (971-1003/153-1595)*, Mehmet İpşirli (ed.), vol.1 (Ankara: TTK, 1999), pp.40-58.

³⁶⁴ Celâlzâde (SN), p.221. However, Celâlzâde’s choice of wording is interesting when he talks about the letter sent by Piri Paşa to Süleyman in Manisa. The letter is sent to “*hazret-i şehzâde-i cihân-penâh*”, informing him of the passing away of Sultan Selim by the will of God. The letter then goes on to wish for the perpetuity of the reign of “*pâdişâh-ı âlem-penâh hazretleri*.” Then comes almost an order asking Süleyman to lose no time and go as quickly as possible to the throne. Even the mode of traveling is imposed: “go as a messenger.” This narrative suggests that the moment of the transition from a prince to a sovereign ruler is the moment when the prince is aware of his father’s death. Further more, it implies the principle of “the king is dead, long live the king.”

Süleyman came to *Islambol* from Manisa and ascended his father's throne.³⁶⁵ Such an expression again suggests that taking hold of Istanbul was a pre-requisite of accession.³⁶⁶

The third part of the announcement deals with what is to be done. They should go to congratulate as regular course of action. With this message comes the transformation. The mood of ending versus beginning is further observed in Sa'di's account of the soldiers' reaction to the announcement, as well as the transformation process. The first reaction we see in this account is a collective lamentation demonstrated by the throwing of headgear on the ground and crying out loud. After crying a while "their burning [ateş-sûz] bosoms found some tranquility with the downpour of tears [bâran-ı eşk]" and only then they realized that there was no use in crying because what happened was "destiny." They also realized that the same destiny provided them with a fortunate *pâdişâh* in place of the one they lost. Sa'di emphasizes that although Selim's death was a disaster, the soldiers would survive through "this dark night" with "the rising of the sun." With this realization also came the realization of the requirement to go to the new ruler to pay respects and present obedience.³⁶⁷ The contrasting concepts of fire/water and dark night/rising sun imply recovering from a troublesome situation. In addition to the sense of acceptance of destiny, there is the sense of hope of a new and bright beginning. And this beginning is implied to be occasioned through the agency of the new ruler. Once the new ruler comes to be seen as part of the destiny which brought along the death of Sultan Selim, in other words the destiny which brought an end, Süleyman seems to have become the Sultan in the eyes of the soldiers. Through this acceptance, the soldiers have been transformed from being the "servants of Sultan Selim" to being "servants of Sultan Süleyman."

³⁶⁵ Lütfi Paşa, p.243.

³⁶⁶ The confusion surrounding the accession of Selim II gives considerable insight into the pre-requisite of Istanbul for attainment of sovereign power. An incident related by Selâniki is rather interesting in this sense. As Selim II was still on the way to Istanbul upon the news of his father's death, some of his men ask for appointments and Selim II replies: "Have I yet arrived and ascended the throne, have I yet discussed with the officials of the state and learned about our condition? Has the House of Osman ever ignored anyone's labor till now? Is there amongst you no man who is familiar with proper conduct?" Selâniki, I:41

³⁶⁷ Sa'di (SN), 110a.

This transformation is not only a symbolic element underlying the process of accession, but is integral to the process of succession. In most of the accounts, the possibility of an insurrection of the soldiers upon being left without an acknowledged head figures as a serious concern. Cemal Kafadar explains this as janissaries considering the “original contract of allegiance” invalid, since all contracts are to be renewed with each ruler. Thus they find it a right “to go wild” in the lapse between the death of a ruler and the accession of a new one.³⁶⁸ This concern leads those in charge to conceal the death of the sultan until they are assured that the new figure of authority has taken matters in hand.³⁶⁹ For example, Kemalpaşazade asserts that since the death of the sultan was not known among the enemies no mischief occurred.³⁷⁰ Celâlzâde’s version of the events as narrated in his *Selîmnâme* starts even earlier, that is to say before the death of Selim. Celâlzâde expresses the concern through Selim’s last words. When Selim got ill on the way to Edirne, measures were immediately taken to prevent any mischief. “Because,” explains Celâlzâde , “from time immemorial in the realm of Rûm there has been the disapproved tendency during a change of reign [*tebdîl-i saltanat*], in the time of the absence of the shadow of God, to plunder the properties and possessions of Jews and Christians that were detested by the people.”³⁷¹

The significance of this concern is apparent in foreign sources as well. A letter dated October 11 from Ragusa to Venice informs that the death of Selim has been kept secret by the viziers in order to prevent trouble.³⁷² Cardinal Compeggio, writing to Wolsey in November about the death of Selim and accession of Süleyman, tells that janissaries plundered all Jews, Christians and others living at Constantinople.³⁷³ This

³⁶⁸ Cemal Kafadar, “Janissaries and Other Rifraff of Ottoman Istanbul: Rebels without a Cause?” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol.13, nos.1-2 (Fall, 2007), pp.113-134.

³⁶⁹ See, for example, Nasuh, 4a; Sa’di (SN), 106b-107a.

³⁷⁰ KPZ, X:19.

³⁷¹ Celâlzâde (SN), p.220: “Zirâ *tebdîl-i saltanat esnâsında kadîmden kâ’ide-i nâmerziyye diyâr-ı Rûm’da meslûk olub, zamân-ı hulüvv-ı zill-i ilâhîde mebgûz-ı enâm ü halk olan memlûk ü emvâl-i Yahûdâ ve Nasârâ menhûb ola gelmişlerdi.*”

³⁷² Sanuto, 29:306.

³⁷³ *Letters and Papers*, III:388.

piece of information seems to be the projection of the above mentioned expectation rather than what actually happened.

Concern about strife upon the death of a ruler is a general phenomenon not unique to the Ottomans.³⁷⁴ In England, for example, the matter extended into the seventeenth century. The concern over plunder and violence led to arguments about whether the king was actually a king before coronation. If not, then any act of violence against him would not be treason and thus not be charged. The contrary view was that coronation was only a “royal ornament and outward solemnization of the descent.” Sovereignty being transferred momentarily through descent would solve the problem of possible strife in the absence of a ruler.³⁷⁵ Already back in the thirteenth century there had been attempts at the principle of “full government begins with the day of a ruler’s accession” with monarchs like Philip III and Edward I.³⁷⁶ These concerns emphasized not only internal strife, but also foreign aggression. After the death of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, Henry VIII raised the issue in connection to the urgency of electing a new emperor: “The Holy Roman Empire, in consequence of the death of Maximilian, having been deprived of its governor, unless the Electors supply the vacancy, the peace of Christendom may possibly be endangered, especially as the sole object of the Turk is to enlarge his dominions, now dearly doubled by the acquisition of those of the Sultan.”³⁷⁷

Regardless of period or geography, there are many examples of disorder following a royal death. In his *The King's Body* Sergio Bertelli describes the disorder experienced in Cairo following Qayitbay’s death in 1496 whereby the streets were blocked, bazaars were locked down, and people robbed and devastated the town. Bertelli’s assertion regarding the urban violence during the election period following the death of a Pope is

³⁷⁴ Political scientist Harold D. Lasswell has pointed out in his *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930) that during a political crisis, “the unconscious triumphantly interprets [the fall of a leader] as a release from all constraint, and the individuals in the community who also possess the least solidified personality structures are compulsively driven to acts of theft and violence.” Quoted in Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p.163-4. For the “alarm of interregal disorder” on the death of a king, see Ralph E. Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Genève: E. Droz, 1960), p.41-2.

³⁷⁵ Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, p.317.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p.329. Since coronation was a ceremonial event involving the presence of the Church, accession and coronation were two different rites in many European courts.

³⁷⁷ *Letters and Papers*, III:30.

similar: “No chronicle of a conclave fails to call this [the interregnum between death and burial] a period of turbulence and riot, which made Rome a no man’s land where criminals roamed at will at the expense of the peaceful inhabitants.”³⁷⁸ An early eighteenth century traveler to Guinea tells that “as soon as the death of the king becomes public knowledge, everyone hastens to rob his neighbor without there being any means of punishment, as if with the death of the king justice also died.” But the violence came to an end as soon as the successor was proclaimed.³⁷⁹ Even more tragic was the situation at the death of William the Conqueror in 1087. It has been recorded that attendants of lower ranks looted his belongings and took all they could such as weapons, linen and furnishings. As the twelfth century chronicler Ordericus Vitalis reports: “So when the just ruler fell, lawlessness broke loose, and first showed itself in the plunder of him who had been the avenger of plunder.”³⁸⁰ As the urban disorder associated with the death of a ruler was not unique to the Ottomans, neither was violence being directed particularly to the Jews. On the coronation of Richard I in 1189 Londoners committed atrocities against the Jews for two days. In 1590, when Pope Sixtus V died, the synagogue and property of Jews were sacked in Bologna.³⁸¹

Concern about possible strife at the death of a sultan looms large in earlier Ottoman chronicles as well. According to the late fifteenth century chronicler Neşri, Mehmed I called his viziers when he fell ill. He told them not to announce his death before his son Murad arrived. He was worried that the realm would be harmed otherwise. Upon his death, viziers faked a campaign in order to keep the troops occupied. They also held regular council meetings and continued to issue promotions. Soon some of the aghas grew suspicious and wanted to see the sultan. Although the viziers managed to distract them for a while, they were worried that if the death of the sultan was heard the “household troops would loot the city, rebels would rise.”³⁸² A

³⁷⁸ Sergio Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2001), p.41.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p.46.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.44.

³⁸¹ *Ibid*, p.45.

³⁸² Neşri, II:551-3: “... *kûl taifesi şehri yağma idüb, memleketimize hâricî hurûc ider.*”

closer example in time was the disorder that broke out following the death of Mehmed II in 1481. Although officials had done their best to keep Sultan Mehmed's death a secret, news spread anyway. The janissaries began to get uneasy and urged to see their ruler. When no leave was given, they broke the gate and entered the Palace. Upon seeing the corpse of the Sultan, they killed the grand vizier Karamani Mehmed Paşa. Putting his head on a lance they paraded on the streets of the city. This was followed by a collective uprising of mobs attacking the houses and shops of especially the Jews and Christians. Venetian and Florentine warehouses were sacked. The violence could only be stopped when the commander of the janissaries promised them that once on the throne Bayezid would double their wages. With this proclamation they started shouting "Long live Bayezid!" Although the proclamation was made and violence appeased, officials still put Bayezid's son Korkud on the throne as regent until his father arrived.³⁸³ Kemalpaşazade, in his earlier work on Bayezid II's reign, mentions that the violence following Mehmed II's death was dated [886/1481] with the verse "Janissaries severe the head" [*yeniçeri başın keser*]. The author attributes the chaos in this occasion to the incapability of the grand vizier Karamani Mehmed Paşa. Yet, in this account, it is another vizier, Ishak Paşa, who tranquillized the mood through "proper" measures.³⁸⁴

The violence is clearly linked with the janissaries as Kemalpaşazade's above-mentioned account of the succession of Bayezid II demonstrates, hence the urgent need to re-integrate them into the system. Kemalpaşazade's holding the grand vizier accountable for such chaos also indicates the established role of the viziers in the transformation phase, hence the praises for Piri Mehmed Paşa following Selim I's death. Such collective memories must have made an impression in the minds of the contemporaries. As such, it is not surprising that the people expected trouble. On the other hand, they also expected the ending of this temporary disorder with the arrival of the new ruler. Celâlîzâde's emphasis that the Sultan ascended the throne and people

³⁸³ Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, William C. Hickman (ed.) Ralph Manheim (trans.), (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992), p.406; also see KPZ, VII:531-4. Korkud would later try to use this incident as a legitimating factor in claiming Bayezid II's throne. But his efforts would be in futile.

³⁸⁴ KPZ, VII:531-2.

were protected from mischief appears to be a conventional phrase.³⁸⁵ However, the fact that such trouble did not occur was to be one of the first building blocks of Sultan Süleyman's image as demonstrated by the impressions of his accession which shall be discussed at the end of this chapter.

2.2.3 The Funeral

The funeral of Sultan Selim, as part of Süleyman's accession, consists of four subsequent stages: receiving of the corpse, the funeral prayer, the burial, the return to the Palace. All of these stages are linked to each other through public processions which bring together various sectors of Ottoman society and imperial administration. All are marked with a sense of grief and mourning which disappears right after the funeral services are completed. The change of mood makes itself manifest with the accounts of piety and largesse of Süleyman after the burial. Metaphorical or actual change of attire and ending of uncontrolled forms of mourning behavior also figure as elements which emphasize the transformation. A funeral, after all, is a principal "rite of passage" in the sense that it is a crucial event for the transformation of the perception society had of the deceased. Through the ceremonial, Selim was transformed into an ancestor from being the ruler and Süleyman into his legitimate successor.³⁸⁶ As a "transition rite", the funeral is also a way to incorporate the deceased into the world of the dead, whereas the mourning involved is a transitional period for those left behind.³⁸⁷

In order to understand this process of transformation both for the deceased and for those left behind, we need to emphasize that the funeral is a kind of public spectacle. Accounts relating the various stages of the funeral resemble royal entries or other ritual processions where visibility and participation are important elements. A typical account of Selim I's funeral would start with Süleyman going out from the Palace, ride through

³⁸⁵ Celâlzâde (SN), p.221: "... pâdişâh-ı 'âlem-penâh hazretleri irişüb, serîr-i sa'âdete cülûs idüb, taht-ı hümayûn-bahtlarını teşrîf itdiler. 'Amme-i re'âyâ vü berâyâ fesâd ü fitneden masûn ü mahfûz oldular."

³⁸⁶ For an anthropological/sociological approach see, Hertz, "Collective Representation of Death," p.210.

³⁸⁷ Van Gennep, "Rites of Passage," p.213.

the city and go out of Edirnekapı to receive the corpse of his father. There the corpse is taken out of the cart and placed in a coffin. The procession enters the city back through Edirnekapı marching to the Mosque of Mehmed II where the funeral services are performed. Once the prayers are said, the procession heads to the place of burial which has been designated beforehand. There burial services are completed and more prayers are said. Süleyman orders a mausoleum and a mosque complex to be built around the grave. Food and alms are distributed to the poor and the needy. Once the burial service is over, the new Sultan rides back to the Palace.³⁸⁸ Throughout the event authors emphasize the great amount of crying and lamenting by the participants.

An anthropological/sociological approach which interprets the ceremonial aspect of death as “a collective representation of death” might provide a useful perspective to view the funeral. Robert Hertz argues that actions related to death can not be interpreted if death is seen only as a physical event. He also states that the death of an individual who is “attributed great dignity and importance” affects the collective conscience of a society. The death of a person who is regarded as the embodiment of a society suggests in the collective mind of that society its own death/demise. The society, then, tries to cope with the loss and the possibility of its own demise. Since society aspires to be immortal, it envisions its embodiments to be so too. When a figure thus loaded dies, the society needs a certain period of time to get over the shock, to adjust and to regain balance.³⁸⁹

One of the important elements of funerals is participation as in other ceremonial public events. Participation in a funeral is “one of the rights the deceased has over other Muslims”, as well as an opportunity for the participant to merit a reward for his own

³⁸⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.222; KPZ, X:23-4. For a Venetian account of the funeral see Sanuto, 29:385.

³⁸⁹ Hertz, “Collective Representation of Death,” pp.207-10. Similar arguments have been made by Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. Malinowski as he argues that funerary ceremonial functions to remove feelings of fear and dismay, helping re-establish group solidarity and morale. Radcliffe-Brown’s argument is that death brings about a “partial destruction of social cohesion” until an equilibrium is reached again. The concerns of riot associated with the “interregnum” between death and accession can be considered in this respect. See, Phyllis Palgi and Henry Abramovitch, “Death: A Cross-Cultural Perspective,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol.13, (1984), p.389-90.

afterlife.³⁹⁰ Participation also has to do with the way the deceased is remembered by the community. Various traditions of the Prophet demonstrate the connection between the public's view of the deceased and his salvation. In other words, "if four people testify to the goodness of a Muslim, Allah has him enter Paradise." Thus, funerals become markers of both public reverence and of divine approbation.³⁹¹ The divine approbation and public duty aspects of the funeral is apparent in declarations sent to provincial officials and other Muslim rulers. Hayrbay, the governor of Egypt, for example, was commanded to assemble as many people as possible from each sector of the society and have them perform the ritual prayer [*namaz*]. "In return," says the document, "God will bestow upon him [Selim] His benefaction." Furthermore, Hayrbay was ordered to send the news and the order to the regions under his power to do the same.³⁹² Hayrbay, in his reply, assured Sultan Süleyman that the ritual prayer was performed for the deceased in the mosques of Egypt and people testified to his meriting heaven.³⁹³ A similar request for a ritual prayer in the name of Sultan Selim was addressed to the Crimean Khan Mehmed Giray.³⁹⁴

³⁹⁰ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Death, Funeral Processions, and the Articulation of Religious Authority in Early Islam," *Studia Islamica*, no.93, 2001, p.28. For the right over other Muslims see the hadith narrated Abu Huraira in Sahih Bukhari, Translator: M. Muhsin Khan, Volume 2, Book 23, Number 332: heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The rights of a Muslim on the Muslims are to follow the funeral processions, to accept invitation and to reply the sneezer." Also see the hadith narrated Abu Huraira in Sahih Bukhari, Translator: M. Muhsin Khan, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 45: "Allah's Apostle said, "(A believer) who accompanies the funeral procession of a Muslim out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's reward and remains with it till the funeral prayer is offered and the burial ceremonies are over, he will return with a reward of two Qirats. Each Qirat is like the size of the (Mount) Uhud. He who offers the funeral prayer only and returns before the burial, will return with the reward of one Qirat only."" <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/bukhari/002.sbt.html#001.002.045> For a general summary of Islamic funeral requirements and customs see, Hayreddin Karaman, "Ölüm, Ölü, Defin ve Merasimler," in *Cimetières et traditions funéraires dans le monde islamique / İslâm dünyasında mezarlıklar ve defin gelenekleri*, Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Aksel Tibet (eds.) (Ankara: TTK, 1996), pp.1-15.

³⁹¹ Zaman, "Death, Funeral Processions," pp.46-7. The number of witnesses may vary according to the scholar, "four" is the number given by Bukhari.

³⁹² *Münşe'at*, I:505.

³⁹³ *Ibid*, 506.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 502.

The funeral also served to teach a lesson to the faithful that life is ephemeral and that all shall die one day.³⁹⁵ People were moved to contemplate on their own destinies upon seeing even the most powerful man of their world dead. Lütfi Paşa says that after the body was buried, everyone took a lesson for himself through self-contemplation.³⁹⁶ Kemalpaşazade stresses this point by saying that those who witnessed the funeral procession took a lesson. They were astonished to see that “the Sultan had changed his throne with a piece of wood.” Hence, they understood that even the lives of the most fortunate must come to an end and that the body was not eternal.³⁹⁷ Nasuh expresses this as such: “Those who made the people obey their orders have left behind the crown and throne and possessions, they descended under the earth.”³⁹⁸

The lesson taken by death is not unique to Ottoman or Islamic society; it is a universal notion independent of time or geography. Georges Duby, for example, describes the notion through the voice of an archbishop of the 13th century:

At the end of the funeral ceremonies, laid out on the bier before the open grave, the earl’s mute body spoke still. It instructed all those present, a countless horde, as had been expected. Before their eyes, this body offered itself as the image of what each of them would one day be. Inevitably. “Mirror” – that is how the archbishop defined it in the sermon he delivered for the edification of the crowd. “See, my lords, what the world comes to. Each man, when he has reached this point, no longer signifies anything but this: he is no more than a lump of earth. Consider this man who raised himself to the pinnacle of human values. We too shall come to this. You and I. One day we shall die.” Such is the way of all flesh. Here on earth, all is vanity.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁵ See Quran, 3:185, 21:35, 29:57: “Every soul shall have a taste of death.”

³⁹⁶ Lütfi Paşa, p.243: “*Ve herkes kendüsün öz nefsinde pend ü nasihât idüb...*”

³⁹⁷ KPZ, X:23-4: “*Cümmâze-i cenâze üzerinde görenler ‘ibret aldılar. Sultân-ı âsumân-serîr tahtın tahtaya deĝişmiş görüb hayran kaldılar. Bildiler ki, murâdatına süvar olub murâdatına iren şehriyarlar âhir semend-i zerrîn-zeynden inse ve merkeb-i çübîne binse gerek. Gûy-i arzûya çevgân urub meydân-ı safâda bir zamân cevelân iden kâm-rânların son evc-i devrânı tamam olsa ve peymâne-i ömri tolsa gerek. Nebât-ı vüçûdın sebâtı ve kabâ-yı hayâtın bakâsı yoktur. Rûz-gârın ‘ahdi üstüvâr deĝil, cihân-i pür-nakş u nigârın vefâsı yokdur.*”

³⁹⁸ Nasuh, 10b.

³⁹⁹ Georges Duby, *William Marshall: The Flower of Chivalry*, Richard Howard (trans.) (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), p.23.

Contemporary Ottoman chronicles convey a sense of heavy grief and mourning through uncontrolled behavior. Laments, wailing and violent acts of grief such as tearing one's clothes, beating one's chest, throwing soil on one's head is a way to cope with the transient stage of death in various cultures. Extreme manifestations of grief in funerals, extending even to communal suicide as in the case of a few Roman emperors, points at the "hiatus in the order of things", those left behind feeling "diminished."⁴⁰⁰ Such acts are practices that "suggest the dangers of crossing the threshold between the spaces of death and life" and mark "the reentry of a mourner into the world of ordinary life."⁴⁰¹ It is possible to trace exaggerated modes of mourning in various times and places. The public reaction in Nicomedia to the death of Constantine's death could be an example. As the corpse was on its way to Constantinople, people gathering on the piazzas and the roads are accounted to have broken into tears and screams, beating their chests.⁴⁰² Such accounts of violent grief are also seen in the *Book of Dede Korkud*. As legend goes when Beyrek's death was heard, a lament [*şivân*] broke in his house. His companions tossed their headgear on the ground and cried.⁴⁰³ According to a French report, soldiers reacted in a similar manner at the funeral of Mehmed II, they were "lamenting his death by crying, smearing their faces with dust, beating their breasts, and chanting songs about the chivalric exploits of their defunct master."⁴⁰⁴ The legendary Anushirvan, exemplary Sassanian king of the *Shahnama*, mentioned in his will that "it would be right if all who are noble and benevolent would weep for the death of their king."⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁰ Simon Price, "From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult: The Consecration of Roman Emperors," in Cannadine and Price (eds.), pp.62-3.

⁴⁰¹ Lila Abu-Lughod, "Islam and the Gendered Discourses of Death," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.25, no.2 (May 1993), p.190.

⁴⁰² Franchi de Cavalieri, "I Funerali ed il Sepolcro di Constantino Magno," *Melanges d'Archeologie et d'Histoire*, vol.36 (1916), pp.208-9. Gülru Necipoğlu points out the similarity between the funeral of Constantine and Mehmed II in *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape*, p.27.

⁴⁰³ *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri*, p.192.

⁴⁰⁴ As quoted in Necipoğlu, *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape*, p.26.

⁴⁰⁵ Abolqasem Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*, Dick Davis (trans) (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), p.716.

Such acts of extreme grief are related by contemporary writers. According to Nasuh, the crowd threw soil on their faces and beat their breasts upon seeing the coffin.⁴⁰⁶ Sa'di relates the lamenting people scratching their chests crying their livers out.⁴⁰⁷ According to Celâlzâde, the people participating in the funeral in Istanbul “cried a river.”⁴⁰⁸ Celâlzâde tells that when the guards at the camp learned about the death of Sultan Selim, they tossed their headgear on the ground and started wailing and lamenting. Moreover, the tents in the camp were turned upside down.⁴⁰⁹

Unlike the inappropriateness of heavy mourning behavior by the successor in some other courtly cultures,⁴¹⁰ Ottoman accounts demonstrate that it is perfectly normal for the successor not only to attend the funeral but to grieve. Contemporary accounts also give an impression of Süleyman’s conduct during the funeral. However, his mourning behavior is different from the violent demonstration of grief of others. Süleyman is never seen lamenting, wailing, beating his chest or in any other violent behavior. Having accepted his father’s death as the will of God, thus as something to be accepted and endured,⁴¹¹ he cries in a noble manner. The chaotic wailing of lamenters creates a contrast to the calm tears of Süleyman which suggests a contrast between

⁴⁰⁶ Nasuh, 9b.

⁴⁰⁷ Sa'di (SN), 112a: “... *ol renâneler tığlar çeküb bağırların pare pare, ciğerlerin şerha şerha eylediler.*”

⁴⁰⁸ *Tabakat*, 25b: “*mânend-i Nil*”

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 24b.

⁴¹⁰ The reason for this principle would be to disassociate the ruler from the idea of death. For example, Romans thought that the new emperor as representative of the state should be protected from the taint of death. Price, “From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult,” pp.66-8. Also see Bryant, *The King and the City*, p.86. Writing in 1594, Jacques de la Guesle, *avocat du roi*, argued: “The presence of kings must be accompanied with joy and happiness; for this reason they are not accustomed to be at the obsequies of their predecessors, not even the son of those of his father, it is not being fitting to their sacred persons to associate themselves with things funeral.” Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p.49. In Francis I’s funeral, for example, the new king watched the ceremonies hidden at a distance. In the French case, this resulted mainly from the conception that until burial the deceased king was considered alive. Thus, the new king needed to be invisible because the presence of two kings would create confusion. Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.45.

⁴¹¹ See, for example, Nasuh, 10a.

chaos and order. His behavior seems to be more in accordance with tradition of the Prophet⁴¹² compared to the violent mourning of others – though contemporary chronicles make no comments about this. Nasuh mentions that Süleyman “cried a river” as he met his father’s body.⁴¹³ Sa’di also mentions Süleyman’s crying in a very poetical way using the conventional “pearl” metaphor for tears.⁴¹⁴ However sincere these tears were, they should also be seen as “performative tears” meaning that they were shed at a “ritualized social situation” and had a discursive effect.⁴¹⁵ In this context, Süleyman’s tears places him in a social position where as a son he cries for the loss of his father. This serves as a way of marking dynastic succession emphasizing the father-son relationship. The nobility of his weeping as opposed to the violent grieving of others places him in a political position where as a ruler he is in control of himself. This contrast serves as a way of differentiating him from the common people who are unable to control themselves.

The transformative nature of the funeral can be traced through the timing of participants’ putting on and taking off of “mourning attire.”⁴¹⁶ The formal ceremonial nature of the funeral is stressed with the uniformity of costume. Black appears to be the symbol of mourning as this color is generally associated with sadness, fear, helplessness, death and total passivity in various cultures.⁴¹⁷ Analyzing the funeral representations in *Shahnamas* produced at various locations and times between the

⁴¹² As the tradition goes, when a son of the Prophet died, he cried. When people asked him “You, too?” he replied by saying that it was mercy and compassion, (upon death) the eye cries and the heart is sad, God tolerates that. See, Karaman, “Ölüm, Ölü, Defin ve Merasimler,” p.5. This article provides a useful summary of Islamic rules about funerals and mourning based on the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet.

⁴¹³ Nasuh, 10b.

⁴¹⁴ Sa’di (SN), 112a: “*Hazret-i padişah-ı ‘âlem-penâh yanına inicek, kulzum-ı çeşm-i zahârından bî-hadd alay-ı abdâr döküb, ser-i tabûtına eşk-i hasretten akçeler nisâr itdiler.*”

⁴¹⁵ On the discursive function of tears, see Gary L. Ebersole, “The Function of Weeping Revisited: Affective Expression and Moral Discourse,” *History of Religions*, Vol. 39, no.3 (Feb., 2000), p.214.

⁴¹⁶ The change in attire as a signifier of change of mood or status is also commonly employed in accounts of war. See, Chapter 5, pp.375, 407.

⁴¹⁷ Hülya Taflı, “Number, Color and Animal Mysticism in Beowulf and The Book of Dedem Korkut,” *Turkish Studies*, vol.3, no.1 (Winter 2008), p.107.

fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, Serpil Bağcı has come up with three colors of mourning: blue, purple and black. Bağcı demonstrates that although the colors of mourning are not necessarily mentioned in the texts of these works, the miniatures display consistency regarding color of mourning attire. She points to the clarity of the association of these colors with mourning in the common tradition and visual memory of the painters and readers alike.⁴¹⁸ It is possible to trace the association of black with mourning in former Turkic customs as well. The famous *Book of Dede Korkud* provides such instances; for example, when Uruz the son of Kazan fell prisoner and people took him for dead, Kazan told that his friends wore black as well as his wife.⁴¹⁹ Likewise, when the news of Beyrek's death reached his home, his wife and his companions wore black and blue.⁴²⁰

As far as the funeral of Selim I is concerned, Nasuh mentions that the ranking officers of the household troops wore black during the funeral. Nasuh also states that Süleyman also wore mourning attire. In the poem that follows, the author mentions that the Sultan was dressed in black.⁴²¹ Celâlzâde, too, describes Süleyman as “dressed in mourning attire.”⁴²² Kemalpaşazade describes Süleyman's attire employing conventional literary motifs like the tulip and the daffodil. The author tells that when Süleyman received the news of his father's corpse approaching the city, he changed

⁴¹⁸ Serpil Bağcı, “İslam Toplularında Matemi Simgeleyen Renkler: Mavi, Mor, Siyah,” in Bacqué-Grammont and Tibet (eds.), vol.2, p.163-8. Accounts on the funeral of Constantine the Great mention that his son Costanzo attended the funeral in mourning attire, without the diadem or any other insignia except for a soldier's cloak, Cavalieri, “I Funerali ed il Sepolcro di Constantino Magno,” p.231.

⁴¹⁹ *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri*, p.269: “[Seni bilen] beg ogulları / Ağ çıkardı, kara geydi [senün için] / Kaza benzer kız gelinüm / Ağ çıkardı, kara geydi seniün için.”

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*, p.192: “Kaza benzer kız gelini / Ağ çıkardı, kara geydi... / Kırk elli yigit kara geyüb gök sarındılar.”

⁴²¹ Nasuh, 10a-b: “... ve mâtem libâsların hemçün leyl giyüb durdı... ‘azâ-yı şâh için giymiş siyehler...” The word ‘azâ (عزاء) seems to function in two ways. According to *Redhouse*, the word means mourning and patience under a loss of death. Another meaning of the word implies the assertion of the relationship of a son to a person.

⁴²² *Tabakat*, 25b: “... libâs-ı mâtem ile mülebbes...”

both his outfit and his countenance.⁴²³ Putting on mourning attire or wearing black is also employed in the metaphorical sense to emphasize the sense of sorrow and grief. Ada'i, for example, mentions that "the golden-attired sun turned black."⁴²⁴

While accounts focus on grief and sorrow caused by loss and the implication of partial destruction of the social equilibrium, this sense of grief had to be removed to give way to the sense of a new beginning, or restoring of order. This has to do with asserting the belief of continuity which Maurice Bloch describes as "a reassertion of the vanquishing and victorious order where authority has its legitimate place."⁴²⁵ The removal of grief after the funeral is reflected in Celâlzâde's account, for example, through the change in attire: "they took off the mourning garments and were rewarded with kingly robes."⁴²⁶

This change of mood is observed after the burial. Accounts tell that a temporary tent was erected above the grave until a mausoleum was constructed.⁴²⁷ The domed tent is an ancient emblem of royalty. Temporary burial in a tent is a Turco-Mongolian custom, earliest known reference relating to the funeral of Attila in 453.⁴²⁸ It was also an Arabic custom. According to tradition, this was applied for the first time during the Prophet's daughter Zainab's funeral. It was so hot that they felt the need to protect the grave diggers from the sun. The practice followed on, for example, the widow of a grandson of Ali kept a tent over his deceased husband's grave for a year. When Abdullah b. Abbas was buried in the mosque at Taif, a tent was put over his grave.⁴²⁹

In dynastic monarchies, royal tombs function to commemorate, exalt, and legitimize the dynasty. Examples of huge edifices as such can be observed in various

⁴²³ KPZ, X:23: "... tagyîr-i hey'et ve tebdîl-i kisvet idiüb, şeb-i deycûr içinde mâh-ı pür-nûr gibi libâs-ı mâtemle lâle-veş-i sine-i pür-dûd ve nergis-vâr-ı dîde-i pür-nemle..."

⁴²⁴ Bilgen, *Ada'i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.222 [Persian text, p.189].

⁴²⁵ Palgi and Abramovitch, "Death: A Cross-Cultural Perspective", p.392.

⁴²⁶ *Tabakat*, 26a.

⁴²⁷ See, for example, Celâlzâde (SN), p.222.

⁴²⁸ Necipoğlu, *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape*, p.29.

⁴²⁹ A. S. Tritton, "Muslim Funeral Customs," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, vol. 9, no. 3 (1938), p. 658.

dynastic traditions both in the West and the East; however modes of representation vary. A major difference concerning the burial space between the Ottomans and the French, for example, highlights distinct approaches to the manifestation of dynastic continuity through ancestral tombs. St. Denis was the dynastic burial monument of the French kings. When Philip I [d.1108] chose to be buried at the Abbey of St. Benoit-sur-Loire, his decision was taken as a token of modesty. Abbot Suger, on the other hand, associated this preference not with modesty, but with the fear of being obscured among so many illustrious kings.⁴³⁰ Having one single dynastic burial monument may have been a way to emphasize the continuity of the dynasty,⁴³¹ but Ottomans resorted to a different practice. Tombs of Ottoman sultans have generally been built by their successors in the proximity of the mosque complexes they have founded during their lifetime. When we look at those built in Istanbul prior to the death of Sultan Süleyman, it is possible to see that they are lined up as to form an arch.⁴³² In other words, the message of dynastic continuity is not embodied in one single monument, but extends into a sequential group of monuments. As such they are considered proclamations of Ottoman dynastic legitimacy in architectural and ceremonial terms. Pointing out to the dissimilarity of this practice to other Islamic societies, Gülru Necipoğlu asserts that “unlike other Islamic tombs, often built by living monarchs to glorify their self-image, these tombs erected by reigning sons to commemorate the dead fathers served to accentuate a continuous chain of dynastic succession.”⁴³³ Ottoman sultanic tombs have also been interpreted as reinforcing the “commemorative character of the mosque” as a device to ensure that the memory of its founder lived on. Howard Crane argues that these imperial mosque complexes served as “settings for the expression of a set of legitimizing values.” Crane lists religious zeal, charity, justice, permanence, learning and wisdom among these values which he finds central to the political ideology of the Ottoman dynasty, pointing out that these values were also central to the Perso-Islamic

⁴³⁰ Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p.30.

⁴³¹ Bertelli, *The King's Body*, p.215.

⁴³² See Appendix 6.

⁴³³ Necipoğlu, *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape*, p.33. In the *Shahnama*, Anushirvan instructs his so to “build [him] a tomb like a palace.” Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.716.

ideals with “which the Ottomans sought to associate themselves.”⁴³⁴ Bringing together mosque, tomb and social complex also linked the deceased sultans with institutionalized Islam.⁴³⁵ Discussing the traditional proximity of the sultanic tomb to the imperial mosque complex, Crane asserts that this association reinforced “the appearance of the founder’s piety as well as make explicit the commemorative aspect of these ensembles.”⁴³⁶

In previous cases, all deceased sultans already founded their mosque complexes themselves. At this point, things get complicated regarding the founder of the mosque complex of Sultan Selim. Some modern scholars tend to agree that Selim I already begun the construction of the mosque.⁴³⁷ Stephan Yerasimos, on the other hand, qualifies the mosque as the first architectural work of Süleyman.⁴³⁸ While the inscription of the mosque implies that construction was begun with the order of Selim

⁴³⁴ Howard Crane, “The Sultan’s Mosques: Icons of Imperial Legitimacy,” in *The Ottoman City and Its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, I.A. Bierman, R. A. Abou-el-Haj and D. Preziosi (eds.) (New Rochelle, N.Y.: A.D. Caratzas, 1991), p.227.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*, p.208, 225.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid*, p.208.

⁴³⁷ According to Crane, construction of the mosque was begun by Selim I perhaps with the intention to commemorate his conquest of Egypt and with the intention of a larger scale complex. *Ibid*, p.181. Doğan Kuban agrees with this view saying that Selim I started the construction of his mosque himself, the mosque being completed by his son Süleyman in 1522. Doğan Kuban, *İstanbul Bir Kent Tarihi: Bizantion, Konstantinopolis, İstanbul*, Zeynep Rona (trans.) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p.237. Modern literature seems to have followed Evliya Çelebi on the matter. According to Evliya, Süleyman on his accession completed the unfinished mosque of his father, doing this in the name of his father. Evliya Çelebi, I:61: “Ba‘dehu İslambol’a geliüb[Selim] sene 926 tarihinde ‘ömr kemânın yasdı esâsa mübâşeret olunub nâ-tâmam kalan câmi’in mihrâbı önindeki kubbe-i mahbtı-ı pür-envâr içinde medfûndur... [Süleyman] vâlidî mâcidinin esâsında nâ-tamam kalan câmi’in itmâmına bezli ihtimâm itdi... pederi ‘azîzinin kabri pür-envârının kurbında pederi nâmıyla sene seb‘a ve işrin ve tisa-mi‘ede şürû itdi ve sene selâse ve selâsin ve tis‘a-miede itmâm olındı.”

⁴³⁸ Stefanos Yerasimos, *İstanbul: İmparatorluklar Başkenti*, Ela Güntekin and Ayşegül Sönmezay (trans) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000), p.250. Perhaps in line with this second line of thought, *Hadikatü’l-Cevâmi* states that the tomb was built along with the mosque, that the founder was Sultan Süleyman and that the mosque was completed in Muharram 929. *Hadikatü’l-Cevâmi*, p.54. According to this account, the complex included a soup kitchen [*imâret*], a kitchen [*tabhâne*], a school [*mekteb*] and a college [*medrese*].

I,⁴³⁹ contemporary chronicles agree and even stress that it was Süleyman who ordered the construction of both the tomb and the mosque complex. If we agree with Crane that imperial mosques were significant settings for various functions and values that the Ottoman sultans wished to associate themselves with,⁴⁴⁰ who gets the credit in this case? Judging by the accounts of the contemporaries, the credit was given to Süleyman at the time. Celâlîzâde simply informs that Süleyman later had a large dome, a mosque and a soup kitchen made at this father's burial place.⁴⁴¹ According to the account of Kemalpaşazade, over the burial place construction of a large dome was ordered, as well as a mosque, a soup kitchen, and a guesthouse nearby. Architects and builders were appointed for the job, materials were gathered and an "auspicious" hour was designated for the beginning of construction.⁴⁴² Bostan provides a similar account, placing the beginning of construction before the 1521 campaign.⁴⁴³ The author dates the completion and inauguration of the mosque of Selim I after Sultan Süleyman's return from the 1526 campaign. According to Bostan, on the first Friday of Ramadan the first prayer was called and the first public feast at the imaret given. The *hutbe* was also called in the name of the Sultan.⁴⁴⁴ Sa'di notes that the construction was still going on as he was writing. Although the completion date of Sa'di's manuscript is not known, it should be later than 1522 since his account continues till İbrahim Paşa's return from Egypt in 1525 and Hayrbay is mentioned as deceased [*merhûm*] in various places.⁴⁴⁵

⁴³⁹ Tahsin Öz, *İstanbul Camileri I-II*, vol.1, 3rd edition (Ankara: TTK, 1997), p.129: "*Emere bi-inşai hazel cami 2'ş-şerif Sultanü'l-âzam elekrem Seyyid-i selâtinü'l-'Arab ve'l-'Acem, mâlikü'l-berreyn ve'l-bahreyn, hadimü'l-haremeynü'ş-şerifeyn es-sultân ibnü's-sultân Sultân Selim Hân ibnü's Sultân Bayezid Hân ibnü's Sultân Ebu'l-feth Sultân Mehmed Han – halledaalahu mülkehu ve Sultânehu – ve temme zaliki'l-imaretü'l-mübareket fi gurre-i şehri Muharremü'l-haram liseneti tis'a ve işrin ve tis'amiye.*"

⁴⁴⁰ Crane, "The Sultan's Mosques," p.206

⁴⁴¹ Celâlîzâde (SN), p.222: "*Sonradan hazreti Pâdişâh[-ı] sa'âdet-intizâm üzerlerine kubbe-i 'âli ve câmi'-i cennet-makâm ve 'imâret-i güzîn-i hayr-encâm yaptılar.*"

⁴⁴² KPZ, X:24-5.

⁴⁴³ Bostan (TSK), 12a-b.

⁴⁴⁴ Bostan (MK), 79b.

⁴⁴⁵ For the continuing construction, see Sa'di (SN), 113a: "*hâliyâ yapılmaktadır inşallah.*" For Hayrbay as "deceased" see for example, *ibid*, 119b.

Some modern scholars have argued that the mosque and mausoleum of Sultan Selim is far away from the center of the city. In this respect, the location isolates the complex from the main axis stretching from the imperial palace through the Divanyolu to Edirnekapı.⁴⁴⁶ This ceremonial route passes along the major imperial mosques, namely Hagia Sophia, Bayezid I, Mehmed II and the later Şehzade. Although this assertion may seem reasonable, when seen in relation to the previous complexes along the route from the Palace, the location of the complex of Selim I completes an arch in the middle of which the later Süleymaniye stands. Furthermore, the complex is less than a kilometer far from the complex of Mehmed II; and it is clearly visible from the Golden Horn. Contemporary chronicles also place the location of the complex *in* the city.⁴⁴⁷ Later chronicles show that the so-called “isolation” of the mausoleum did not hinder new sultans visiting the tomb on special occasions such as the ancestral tomb visits on accession. Murad III, for example, first visited the tomb of Ayyub and then re-entered the city from Edirnekapı. He first visited the tomb of Selim I, followed by those of Mehmed II, Şehzade Mehmed, Süleyman, Bayezid and lastly his father Selim II’s tomb in Hagia Sophia.⁴⁴⁸ The Safavi ambassador who arrived in Istanbul following the death of Sultan Süleyman was kept in the city for three days before being transferred to Edirne to greet the new sultan. He was deliberately taken to see the mosques of Sultan Süleyman and Sultan Selim I.⁴⁴⁹ Such visits involving the mosque and the mausoleum

⁴⁴⁶ See, for example, Yerasimos, *Istanbul*, p.250.

⁴⁴⁷ Celâlîzâde (SN), p.222: “... *derûn-ı Kostantiniyye’de olan...*”; Sa’dî (SN), 111a: “*miyân-ı şehirde olan...*” The location of the mosque may also be significant in a symbolic sense, as the mosque and the mausoleum stand where the Byzantine Bonos Palace used to stand. Öz, *İstanbul Camileri*, v.I, p.130. Some contemporary chronicles name the palace *Mirza Sarayı*. See, Celâlîzâde (SN), p.222; Sa’dî, 111a.

⁴⁴⁸ Selânîki, I:106. The new sultan’s ritual visitation of the tombs of his ancestors following his accession was a ritual aimed at legitimating the deceased sultan’s successor by stressing his noble royal lineage “that turned the whole empire into the inherited legacy of a single family.” See, Necipoğlu, *Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape*, p.33. In this sense, the mosque and mausoleum of Selim I was an inalienable part of this legitimization ritual. Among the contemporary sources I have consulted, only Sa’dî talks about Süleyman visiting the tombs of his ancestors. This visit took place on the day he arrived when he also went to inspect the burial place of his father. Sa’dî (SN), 11a-b. Accounts on the accession of Selim II, which was far more complicated than Süleyman’s, mention the tomb visits. See, for example, Selânîki, I:43.

⁴⁴⁹ Selânîki, I:69.

of Selim I confirm the significance attached to the complex as an inevitable link in the architectural and ceremonial visualization of the dynastic chain.

If we regard the burial as a “rite of separation” with the markers of separation such as the coffin and the grave, the alms and meals offered after the funeral can be regarded as a “rite of incorporation.” Following Arnold van Gennep’s definition, the purpose would be “to re-unite all surviving members of the group with each other... in the same way that a chain which has been broken by the disappearance of one of its links must be rejoined.”⁴⁵⁰ The funeral is also associated with feeding the poor. In a universal sense, it is the duty of a ruler to make sure his subjects are fed properly. Thus, the meal after the funeral signifies one last attempt to provide for the needs of the people.⁴⁵¹ In return for the meal, prayers are ensured for the deceased. I shall once again to Georges Duby and the funeral of William Marshall:

The body is no longer seen. It has disappeared under the earth to rot there in peace, carefully boxed. However, though invisible it still manifests its power once again, and sumptuously so. In the most earthly manner – nourishing, presenting food and drink, giving others occasion to rejoice. According to custom, it presides over a final banquet, as the master of the house, the seigneur who is never better loved than when he distributes bread and wine. He has told his heir that he desires that one hundred poor men be present, and be fed. Let them eat and drink with him. Or rather, from him. For such indeed is the function of these posthumous *agapes*: the dead man’s soul requires that the living pray for it, and the food distributed after the burial can be regarded as the payment for these prayers, perhaps even more profoundly, as their equivalent.⁴⁵²

Public meals and distribution of alms following Selim I’s burial can be seen in this respect. These acts not only publicize the piety of the Sultan, but also suggest an implication of wealth and abundance at the beginning of a reign. All contemporary accounts emphasize the sense of prosperity after the distribution of alms. For example, according to Sa’dî, so much was distributed by the Sultan that day that no sign of

⁴⁵⁰ Van Gennep, “Rites of Passage,” p.220.

⁴⁵¹ During the funeral of Charles VIII of France in 1498, for example, as the procession of the king’s body marched to Paris, stewards served food to people on the way, “even as hitherto by the king in his life-time.” Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p.166.

⁴⁵² Duby, *William Marshall*, p.23-4.

poverty was left.⁴⁵³ Kemalpaşazade also underlines that after the alms and meals, there were no more hungry or needy people.⁴⁵⁴

Accession was generally legitimized only after the funeral of the deceased ruler.⁴⁵⁵ In this sense, the ultimate transference of sovereign power occurred thereafter. The *Shahnama*, for example, provides such an instance as “Dara grieved for his father’s death, and exalted the royal crown of Persia above the sun.”⁴⁵⁶ Following the *Shahnama* manner, Ada‘i asserts that “after Süleyman grieved for his father, he made the throne his seat.”⁴⁵⁷ There are implications in some chronicles about the transference of ruling power following the funeral.⁴⁵⁸ Lütfi Paşa, for example, after offering their condolences the people congratulated Sultan Süleyman on his acquiring sovereignty.⁴⁵⁹ Celâlzâde’s account, too, reflects the actual transfer of sovereign power only after the funeral:

After the burial was completed and that sun was placed under ground, the considerations of his majesty and valor reached the end, the universe turned into paradise with the joy-giving face of the young Shah and *Konstantiniyye* turned into a display of beauties with the smile-generating face of the blessed monarch [*Hüdâvendigâr-ı kâm-kâr*]. With the help of God, without any harm coming to peace and security, with everyone at peace, at the time of changing of the sultanate and transference of caliphate, with the eyes of mischief and strife asleep, the people were overcome by a festive mood and the people of the world rejoiced.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵³ Sa‘di (SN), 113a.

⁴⁵⁴ KPZ, X:24

⁴⁵⁵ Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.99.

⁴⁵⁶ Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.456.

⁴⁵⁷ Abdüsselam Bilgen, *Ada'i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.223 [Persian text, 189].

⁴⁵⁸ For a general discussion of sovereign power being actualized after the funeral, see Eroğlu, *Şehzadelik Kurumu*, p.99.

⁴⁵⁹ Lütfi Paşa, p.243: “Sultan Süleyman’a babası için ‘azâ şerâyetin yerine getirüb pâdişâhlık mübârek olsun didiler.”

⁴⁶⁰ *Tabakat*, 26a: “Tedfîn emri tamam olub ol afitâbı zîr-i zemîne pinhân itdiklerinden sonra, şevket ü şehâmetleri nihâyet ü encâma mü’eddi olub, ‘arsa-i cihân cemâl-i meserret-efzâ-yı Şâh-ı nev-civân ile cennet-âyin, gülizâr-ı cennet-etvâr-ı Kostantiniyye didâr-ı behcet-âsâr-ı Hüdâvendigâr-ı kâmkâr ile manend-i nigâristân ceyn oldı. ‘Înayetullah ile emn ü âmana fütur gelmeyüb, herkes kemâl-i huzûrda tebdîl-i saltanat ve tahvîl-i hilâfet eyyâmında ‘ayûn-ı fitne vü fesâd nâ’im olduğundan kalub enâma sürûr-ı tâm müstevli olub, halk-ı cihân handân ü şâdmân oldı.”

A eulogy written on the death of Sultan Selim and accession of Sultan Süleyman demonstrates the simultaneous grief and joy, occasioned by the demise of one and the accession of the other respectively. The poem starts by asking “where has Sultan Selim gone” and ends by saying “it is the era of Sultan Süleyman.” The first part of the poem is a praised remembrance of Sultan Selim whereby the poet lists especially the military qualities of the deceased sultan. Seeing Sultan Selim as a remedy to every trouble, the poet is apparently trying to cope with the loss, emphasizing this loss by repeating the phrase “*Kanı Sultan Selim kanı*” several times. As the poem moves on, we are introduced with a new hope; the poet states his good wishes for the son of the deceased sultan. At this point, he wishes a long life for the successor though not abandoning the sense of grief over the loss: “*Sultan Süleyman sağ olsun, kanı Sultan Selim kanı.*” Only in the last third of the poem does the poet leave the loss behind and hail the new era. Unlike the first two parts where Sultan Selim is appraised, the third part concentrates on expectations from the new sultan. These expectations are focused on the generosity of the new sultan, which can easily be associated with the accession. The eulogy comes to an end with the decisive phrase: “It is the era of Sultan Süleyman” [*Sultan Süleyman devridir*]. Thus, the transformation in the mind of the poet is complete.⁴⁶¹

2.2.4 The Enthronement

Enthronement marks the last ritual phase of Süleyman’s accession. The enthronement consists of two main stages. The first stage is when the various office holders and household members present their loyalty through kissing the hand of the sultan, the ritual ceremony of the *bi’ât*. The second stage is the issuing of the official proclamation to provinces and other interested parties, which registers the sovereign rights of the sultan.

A ritual ceremony is by default a formal event. As such the enthronement incorporates certain actions “performed by authorized people with respect to eligible persons or entities under proper circumstances in accordance with proper

⁴⁶¹ TSA, E.845/19, see Appendix 7. The author appears to be a member of the military who previously held a post in Rumelia, but was out of the office at the time. He takes the opportunity to ask for an office through the poem.

procedures.”⁴⁶² Besides being repetitive and stereotyped, a ritual is likely to occur at a special place⁴⁶³ which is the Palace in our case. Rituals also involve special objects. The main object defining the *bi‘at* as a ritual is the throne in our case. A scrutinizing reading of the narratives of the Ottoman chronicles brings to mind another question. So far we have dwelled upon the urgency to attain the throne which happened to be in Istanbul in order to attain the sovereign authority. This sounds pretty much as if the throne was the essence. On the other hand, the statements of contemporary authors reflect a valuation of the throne with the presence of its possessor. Celâlzâde, for instance, talks of Süleyman’s “honoring with his fortune-augmenting shade the throne which remained without soul” upon the death of Sultan Selim and “adorning the world-protecting throne and the felicitous Ottoman seat with his world-beautifying face.”⁴⁶⁴ Sa‘di describes the situation as “like his [Selim’s] body without soul and his figure without life, his throne and realm were left desolate.”⁴⁶⁵

We have mentioned previously that Süleyman did not ascend on the throne with a coronation or investiture rite. Contemporary Ottoman accounts do not provide a solid day for the enthronement. Defining and timing a single obedience ceremony is also rather difficult. However, it is possible to find a ceremonial moment of obedience in an enthronement event related by the chronicles. Although no exact date is provided for this event, the accounts of the enthronement follow that of the funeral; therefore it should have been taken place right after the funeral or on the next day. There seems to have been some kind of obedience ritual on the day of arrival.⁴⁶⁶ Sa‘di, for example, places the enthronement on the day of arrival. According to the author, Süleyman

⁴⁶² Rappaport, “The Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” in Grimes (ed), p.431. See also, Goffman, “Interaction Ritual: Deference and Demeanor,” in Grimes (ed.), p.269.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid*, p.428. For ritual space also see, Gregor T. Goethals, “Ritual Ceremony and Super-Sunday,” in Grimes (ed.), p.258.

⁴⁶⁴ *Tabakat*, 25a.

⁴⁶⁵ Sa‘di (SN), 107a: “*Taht ü mülki beden-i bî-rûh ve cism-i bî-cânı gibi hâli kalmıştır.*”

⁴⁶⁶ Ertuğ refers to the gathering in the first day as spontaneous. Based on the *Hünernâme*, she places the actual “enthronement” ceremony on the day after the arrival. Zeynep Tarım Ertuğ, *XVI. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Devleti’nde Cülûs ve Cenaze Törenleri* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1999), p.49.

ascended a pulpit [*kürsi*] and showed himself to the public.⁴⁶⁷ Celâlzâde mentions Süleyman being seated on the throne as he arrived in Istanbul, as well. According to the author, as Süleyman ascended the throne, Piri Paşa gave orders for the ‘ulemâ and the soldiers to be ready to kiss the sultan’s hand at the imperial *divân* next day. The next day, according to the author, after the prayer at dawn, the Sultan got out and sat on the exalted throne [*taht-ı mu‘allâ*]. Following “ancient custom” ‘ulemâ, müderrisîn, fuzûlâ and servants kissed his hand to salute his reign.⁴⁶⁸ Nasuh mentions that Süleyman “ascended the throne in his father’s stead on 18 Shawwal”⁴⁶⁹ signifying the day after his arrival. A letter from Ragusa dated 21 October to Venice, states that Selim’s son *Suliman* came to Constantinople peacefully and on the first day of October assumed the crown of the *Imperio* without anyone being harmed.⁴⁷⁰ A letter dated 4 October from Constantinople by the Venetian bailo Contarini confirmed the trouble-free accession Süleyman.⁴⁷¹ Contarini reports that Süleyman went to the Palace upon his arrival accompanied by his slaves and the janissaries. He rode between the *Agha* and the *Kadı*. He was presented with the obedience of those present, as well as that of the viziers who dismounted to present fealty. This, according to Contarini, was the day before the funeral.⁴⁷²

The ceremonial aspects involved in the event emphasize a renewal of the pre-existing political status quo as well as a reconfirmation of previous obligations and privileges. In other words, the “state” is renewed with the accession of each ruler, also implying a contractual mechanism. With the phase of the enthronement ceremony of Süleyman we witness the culmination of the accession process whereby the “cosmic order that the death of the previous monarch had broke was renewed.”⁴⁷³ A

⁴⁶⁷ Sa‘di (SN), 110b.

⁴⁶⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.221; *Tabakat*, 25a-26a.

⁴⁶⁹ Nasuh, 11a.

⁴⁷⁰ Sanuto, 29:342. Also see, Cambini, p.75.: “... *coronato senza opposizione alcuna Imperatore pacificamente con gratia grandissima, et universal di tutti popoli...*”

⁴⁷¹ Sanuto, 29:353.

⁴⁷² *Ibid*, 384-5.

⁴⁷³ For the renewal concept see, Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, p.36. For the Ottoman conception, see Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty*, pp.100-1.

contemporary expression of the dual concept of disruption and renewal of “state” in each period of succession exemplified clearly by Ada‘i. The author states that Selim’s person was the life of the realm, and the continuity of the contract of the realm depended on his presence. Thus, when he [Selim] was gone, “the body of the realm remained lifeless.⁴⁷⁴ Ada‘i stresses that “throne of the sultanate remained without a ruler” upon Selim’s death,⁴⁷⁵ he immediately informs that although “the father is gone; the world is left to the son, the rose garden left to the productive branch.”⁴⁷⁶ Then, Ada‘i expresses that “the state acquired validity when Süleyman sat on the throne.”⁴⁷⁷

Contracts often accompany rites of passage.⁴⁷⁸ According to Cemal Kafadar, *bi‘at* is not merely a matter of kissing hands, but the expression of a contract involving the higher ranks of the ruling elite.⁴⁷⁹ Ertuğ defines the homage as subjects approving the ruler individually.⁴⁸⁰ The *bi‘ât* [*bay‘a*] in Islamic monarchical tradition can be regarded as the counter part of the oath in Western coronations. On the accession of Mamluk sultans, for example, *amirs* and others would take an oath of allegiance to the ruler as sovereign after which the sultan would be enthroned.⁴⁸¹

The *‘bi‘ât* involves a very specific act of deference, namely hand-kissing. This is a bodily act which requires the participant to kneel down before the recipient. The participant is not merely stating his subordination, but physically displaying/visualizing it without leaving room for ambiguity. In other words, “[he] identifies his inseparable,

⁴⁷⁴ Bilgen, *Ada'i-yi Şirazi ve Selim-Namesi*, p.219 [Persian text, p.186-7]: “*Vücûdu ki bûd-ı himme cân-ı mülk / Bidû bûd pâyende peymân-ı mülk / Bereft ü ten-i mülk ez cân be-mâned.*”

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p.220 [Persian text, p.187]: “*Bî-şâh şiid taht-ı şehîn-şâhî.*”

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p.221 [Persian text, p.188]: “*Peder reft ve gîtî be-ferzend mâned / Gülistân be-şâh-ı berûmend mâned.*”

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p.221 [Persian text, p.188]: “*Neşet ü ez ü dîd devlet-revâc.*”

⁴⁷⁸ Le Goff, “A Coronation Program for the Age of Saint Louis,” p.48.

⁴⁷⁹ Cemal Kafadar, “Eyüp’te Kılıç Kuşanma Törenleri,” in *Eyüp: Dün/Bugün*, Tülay Artan (ed.) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1994), p.53.

⁴⁸⁰ Ertuğ, *Cülûs ve Cenaze Törenleri*, p.145.

⁴⁸¹ Holt, “The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan,” p.238 and p.241.

indispensable and enduring body with his subordination.”⁴⁸² Acts of deference, by definition:

contain a kind of promise, expressing in truncated form the actor’s avowal and pledge to treat the recipient in a particular way in the on-going activity. The pledge affirms that the expectations and obligations of the recipient, both substantive and ceremonial will be allowed and supported by the actor. Actors thus promise to maintain the conception of self that the recipient has built up from the rules he is involved in.⁴⁸³

An obedience ceremony dramatizes the transference of authority. As organizations can be represented symbolically, a person’s allegiance to an organization can be represented symbolically.⁴⁸⁴ Along with establishing who has the ultimate authority, this ceremony also defines the degrees of authority along the political and social hierarchy. In other words, it ritually defines and manifests the power relations between people.⁴⁸⁵ Participants in such a ceremony through acting as expected transmit two levels of messages, one “concerning their own current physical, psychic, or sometimes social states to themselves and to other participants” and one referring to “processes or entities outside the ritual” which reflects an enduring state.⁴⁸⁶ In this respect, when an official kisses the hand of the new sultan he demonstrates his allegiance to the new sultan as well as his acceptance of the set of ties and values the sultan represents. He demonstrates this allegiance not only to the sultan, but also to other participants. Thus, while on the first level the *bi’ât* indicates the confirmation of Sultan Süleyman’s right to rule, on the second level it is the confirmation and reproduction of the current political system and world view. The whole process is a public act of acceptance of a public order visible both to the witnesses and to the performer himself, which is not to be confused with the participants’ private states of belief. Ritual, in this sense shows the rule and the norm upon which public order is

⁴⁸² Rappaport, “The Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” p.434-5.

⁴⁸³ Goffman, “Interaction Ritual: Deference and Demeanor,” pp.271

⁴⁸⁴ Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics and Power*, p.16.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.104. The repetition of phrases such as *yerli yerinde* in Ottoman accounts attests to this fact beneath the surface reading of order.

⁴⁸⁶ For “indexical message” and “canonical message” see Rappaport, “The Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” p.429-30.

based. Theoretically, refusal to participate is always an option – participation resting to some degree upon choice.⁴⁸⁷ On the other hand, sixteenth century Ottoman politics would probably not leave much space for opting non-participation.

An indispensable part of the enthronement was the distribution of money, gifts and promotions which marked the renewal of the contract between the Sultan and his “servants.” As standard procedure, such distribution is exemplified in the *Shahnama*, for instance at the enthronement of Dara: “Then he opened his father’s treasuries, summoned his warrior, and distributed their pay. He raised the stipend of those who had received four coins to eight, paying one man with a goblet full of coins, another with a bowlful.”⁴⁸⁸

Modern research on gift-giving, in the very different context of consumerism, agrees that gifts are “agents of social exchange and communication” and are “used to establish or maintain social roles” as well as “help strengthen social ties.”⁴⁸⁹ Gift-giving in the context of pre-modern societies, furthermore function as a mode of redistribution⁴⁹⁰ and as a bonding device⁴⁹¹ to create moral obligation.⁴⁹² Being public

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.433-4.

⁴⁸⁸ Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.456.

⁴⁸⁹ Tina M. Lowrey, Cele Otnes and Kevin Robbins, “Values Influencing Christmas Gift Giving: An Interpretive Study,” in *Gift Giving: A Research Anthology*, Cele Otnes and Richard F. Beltramini (eds.) (Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1996), p.37; David Cheal, “Gifts in Contemporary North America”, in *ibid*, p.86 (pp.85-97); Mary Ann McGrath and Basil Englis, “Intergenerational Gift Giving in Subcultural Wedding Celebrations: The Ritual Audience as Cash Cow,” in *ibid*, p.123.

⁴⁹⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, “Selections from the *Logic of Practice*,” in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, Alan A. Schrift (ed.) (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), p.217; Cheal, “Gifts in Contemporary North America”, p.92.

⁴⁹¹ Cheal, “Gifts in Contemporary North America,” p.92; Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, L.A. Manyon (trans.), vol.1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p.163: “The liberality of the chief towards his war-companions seemed so essential a part of the bond between them that frequently, in the Carolingian age, the bestowal of a few gifts – a horse, arms, jewels – was an almost invariable complement to the gesture of personal submission. One of the capitularies forbids the breaking of the tie by the vassal if he has already received from his lord the value of golden solidus. The only true master was he who had given presents to his dependants.”

⁴⁹² Bourdieu, “Selections from the *Logic of Practice*,” p.219: “They cannot appropriate the labor, services, goods, homage and respect of others without “winning”

and visible, gifts in this context also legitimize self-assertion. The basic dynamic underlying these functions is that gift giving is a reciprocal practice. In our case, the reciprocity is not symmetrical. In other words, the Sultan offers something with an economical value whereas the recipient reciprocates with a moral obligation. This asymmetry, it has been argued, forms the basis of political authority. As the counter gift moves away from reciprocity, the proportion of counter-services offered by the recipient increase. Counter services figure as symbolic forms of gratitude like homage, respect, obligations, moral debt.⁴⁹³

The accession gratuity paid to the household troops signified “the renewal of the contract based on mutuality of ‘benefaction and service’ between the dynasty and the household.”⁴⁹⁴ We witness the virtue of such acts of largesse as a bonding device in former chronicles. Fifteenth century chronicler Neşri, for example, has Osman Beg advise his son Orhan “never to neglect gifts [*in‘âm*] and favors [*ihsân*] to his servants [*nöker*], because man is the slave of gifts.”⁴⁹⁵ In this sense, we are reminded that the virtue of liberality has been one of the building blocks of the Ottoman enterprise from the earliest times of its existence. Writing the earlier parts of his history during the reign of Bayezid II, Kemalpaşazade dwells on the matter in a similar manner. According to the author, when Bayezid arrived in Istanbul to succeed to the throne, he rewarded 2,000 aspers to each member of the household troops. Kemalpaşazade states that “the new ruler bonded the servants to himself through gifts” and “the gifts of the ruler tied

them personally, “tying” them, in short, creating a bond between persons. The transformation of any given kind of capital into symbolic capital, a legitimate possession grounded in the nature of its possessor, is the fundamental operation of social alchemy (the paradigm of which is gift exchange). It always presupposes a form of labor, a visible (if not necessarily conspicuous) expenditure of time, money and energy, a redistribution, in the form of the recognition granted by the person who receives to the person, who being better placed in the distribution, is in a position to give, a recognition of a debt which is also a recognition of value.”

⁴⁹³ Bourdieu, “Selections from the *Logic of Practice*,” p.215. For the “norm of reciprocity” in gift-giving see also, Cheal, “Gifts in Contemporary North America”, p.87-8.

⁴⁹⁴ Kafadar, “Eyüp’te Kılıç Kuşanma Törenleri,” p.54.

⁴⁹⁵ Neşri, I:147: “... ve dahi nökerine *in‘âmı*, *ihsânı* eksik itmeyesün ki *el-insân ‘abîdü’l-ihsândır.*”

the hearts of the soldiery to the throne.”⁴⁹⁶ According to Kemalpaşazade, when Süleyman ascended the throne, he distributed 2,000 *dirhem* to each member of the household. Ironically, the actual payment was made with coins issued in his father’s name [*Selîmhânî*].⁴⁹⁷ This should come as no surprise since the right to issue coins is part of the accession process and it would have been impossible to prepare coins in Süleyman’s name both in terms of time and perhaps “political correctness.” Other than the gratuity, the cavalry were given a rise of five *dirhems* and the infantry a rise of two *dirhems*. Office and fief holders also got raises.⁴⁹⁸

The amounts paid to the household troops and the raises they received were carefully recorded in Venetians reports, moreover these reports were sent from Venice to other “Christian princes.” According to these reports, 607 sacs were taken out of the treasury on 22 October for the purpose of these extra payments. Each of the sacs contained 50,000 aspers. In the report one ducat is calculated as 50 aspers, which results in a sum of 607,000 ducats.⁴⁹⁹ Contarini also mentions a quasi-negotiation in designating the amounts to be paid between the janissaries and the Sultan as the latter disembarked when he arrived in Istanbul.⁵⁰⁰

Gifts offered by the Sultan on accession have an economic value, thus can be viewed in the sense of redistribution. However, the occasion, the form and manner of giving separates it from economic exchange and creates a moral obligation rather than an economic one.⁵⁰¹ While the gifts – both given to and received from the Sultan – are a way of accumulating wealth in an economical sense, within the formal context of presentation they also create symbolic capital or rather symbolic power. Being public

⁴⁹⁶ KPZ, VII:533: “*În‘âm ü ikrâmla Şehriyâr-ı cedîd ahrâr-ı hüddâmı kendüye ‘abîd eyledi... ihsân-ı şâhî kulûb-ı sipâhiyi tahtgâha merbût kulub ol havâli mazbût oldı.*”

⁴⁹⁷ KPZ, X:31-2.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 31; Sa‘di, 119b. The figures given by Celâlzâde are different. According to Celâlzâde, the gratuity per person was 1,000 aspers. Household cavalry [*sipâhiler* and *silâhdarlar*] received five aspers raise, whereas the *gurebâ* received four aspers raise, and *ulufeciler* three aspers raise. *Tabakat*, 26b-27a.

⁴⁹⁹ Sanuto, 29:369. For releasing of prisoners at the time of coronations and royal entries see Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, pp.93-4.

⁵⁰⁰ Sanuto, 29:359.

⁵⁰¹ Bourdieu, “Selections from the *Logic of Practice*,” p.217.

and visible gifts, in our case, they can be regarded as “demonstrative expenditure” which Pierre Bourdieu defines a kind of “legitimizing self-affirmation.” In other words power and status becomes recognized and officialized through gifts.⁵⁰² Actually, this is “conversion of economic capital into symbolic capital, which produces relations of dependence that have an economic basis but are disguised under a veil of moral relations.” Through transforming “arbitrary relations into legitimate relations, *de facto* differences into officially recognized distinctions,” Symbolic capital contributes to the reproduction and legitimation of the prevailing hierarchies.⁵⁰³

The function of gift giving as a redistributive mechanism in Ottoman political life is exemplified in an account by Luigi Bassano as he talks about the giving of gifts regarding the ambassadors. The author emphasized that this was also a custom among Ottomans themselves. He listed the chain:

... this custom of gift giving is also current between themselves. The *gran Turco* often gives gifts to his viziers, and the viziers give to governors-general. These [give] to the aghas, aghas to governors, governors to the sergeants, sergeants to the voivodes, and the voivodes to the cavalry, and the cavalry to their inferiors, and like this it goes from hand to hand.⁵⁰⁴

Accession did not only have to do with giving but also receiving once again we are dealing with a universal notion.⁵⁰⁵ While members of the household “gave” their obedience in return for the gifts and favors; higher ranking members of the system and representatives of foreign rulers presented gifts to the new ruler as they came to pay

⁵⁰² *Ibid*, p.221.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, pp.216-221.

⁵⁰⁴ Luigi Bassano, *I Costumi et i Modi Particolari de la Vita de' Turchi* in Sansovino III, 48a.: “... questa usanza di donare è anchora tra essi. Peroche il gran Turco dona spesso a suoi Bassa, et i Bassa donano a Beghlerbegh. Questi all’Aghà, gli Aghà a Sangiacchi, i Sangiacchi a Ciaussi, i Ciaussi a Vaivode, et i Vaivode a Spacchi, et I Spacchi a loro inferiori, e cosi se ne và di mano in mano.” Bassano follows a hierarchy which need not be so, however the passage gives an idea of the redistributive function of gift giving.

⁵⁰⁵ Lawrence Bryant examining Parisian royal entry ceremonies says: “The king’s national advent gift came as a kind of recognition of a new ruler’s legal right to confirm, recognize and renew the offices and privileges granted by his predecessor.” Bryant, *The King and the City*, p.37.

homage and to reconfirm their status.⁵⁰⁶ The presentation of obedience by officials of various ranks or visits of the representatives of tributaries and other states can not be regarded only as a ritual of homage. Nor can they be defined as a single ceremony. In one respect, these also seem to function as a fund raising method. Contarini's report, dated 3 November, sheds light on the contemporary perception. According to the bailo, Süleyman was troubled about his financial situation after drawing out a substantial amount of money from the treasury to pay for the gratuities. When he shared his trouble with the grand vizier Piri Mehmed Paşa, the vizier's reply was: "Signor, do not be unhappy. All provincial governors will now come to make reverence and they will present you gifts. Thus you will have new income and this way the treasury will be full again."⁵⁰⁷ First of all, these words show that not everyone came on the day of the enthronement. This is hardly surprising since many of the high ranking officials were stationed in the provinces. Considering the time it took to communicate the news and the time it took for an official to travel to Istanbul, it would take days or weeks before an official came or sent a proxy to pay his respects. Although the ceremonial in Istanbul marked the transfer of authority immediately the day after the funeral, the same was not actually true for the provinces; and they were informed only after the enthronement. The traveling time and conditions in the sixteenth century taken into consideration, a subject in Anatolia learned of this transfer after a few weeks. For example, Carlo Prioli, the Venetian consul in Damascus, reports having received the news of Selim I's death on 23 October and having confirmed the news four days later.⁵⁰⁸ Once the official came to pay homage, kissed the sultan's hand and presented his gifts, it would be his turn to receive some kind of recognition. This would be the renewal of his contract/license

⁵⁰⁶ As the *Shahnama* has it, at Dara's accession: "Representatives bearing presents and tribute from all countries and kings, from India, China, Greece, and other lands, since no one felt able to stand against him." Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.456. For agents and ambassadors bringing accession gifts to Sultan Süleyman, see KPZ, X:32; Sa'di (SN), 119b.

⁵⁰⁷ Sanuto, 29:490. Although such a lively anecdote demonstrates the almost novelistic nature of Venetian reporting, the expectation of income at the beginning of a reign should not be dismissed either. Lütfi Paşa, in his *Asafname*, points out that on the accession of Süleyman the amount of income and expenditure were equal, whereas he emphasizes that income should have exceeded expenditure. Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, 4:272 [for the facsimile see p.287].

⁵⁰⁸ Sanuto, 29:508.

[*berât*], usually accompanied by a ceremonial gown. This solemnly marked the transference of the individual official to the Sultan's service from that of his deceased father and secured the individual's place in the system.⁵⁰⁹

As we have mentioned above, the second stage of the enthronement is the issuing of the official proclamation of accession. According to the chronicles, the day continued with the dispatch of decrees to the "well-protected domains" to inform the subjects of the painful news of the death of Sultan Selim and the joyful news of the accession of Sultan Süleyman in order to "mend the ruined hearts of the people." The same decree also ordered the *hutbe* and *sikke* in the name of the new sultan. This order would be valid all around *Rûm*, 'Arab and 'Acem. The subjects were also asked to pray for the "reign" [*eyyâm-ı devlet*].⁵¹⁰ The *hutbe* signified the formal declaration of accession as well as the legitimization of authority in the sacred sphere. The calling of the Friday prayer and the order to issue coins in the name of Sultan Süleyman along with the letters officially registered the full transference of sovereignty and power.⁵¹¹

2.2.5 Declaration of Accession:

The phases of accession analyzed so far took place in a specific place, namely Istanbul as the seat of the throne. No matter how discursive, the ritual elements which marked the transference of sovereignty were visible to a limited audience. For the accession process to be complete in the universal sense, it had to be declared to the wider world in a controlled manner. This was done through the official proclamations. Although the proclamation seems to be an imposition of an already materialized claim, the replies from the officials and the agreement confirmation requests from foreign states resemble a kind of contractual mechanism similar to that observed in the enthronement, at least on a theoretical basis.

⁵⁰⁹ For a discussion see Ertuğ, *Cülûs ve Cenaze Törenleri*, pp.78-9. For a contemporary treating of *tecdîd-i berâvât*, see Sa'di (SN), 119b.

⁵¹⁰ Sa'di (SN), 111a. Here, Sa'di employs the term *Rûm* to signify Anatolia and Rumelia.

⁵¹¹ Ertuğ, *Cülûs ve Cenaze Törenleri*, p.79; for *khutba* see, P.M. Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," p.245.

While some accounts just mention that proclamations were sent all around, others carefully list the various regions. Such an example can be found in Bostan's account where the author emphasizes that the proclamation reached as far as the limit of the "civilized world" [*nihâyet-i ma'mûre*]. Bostan's list includes Anatolia [*Rûm*], Arabia and Persia [*'Acem*] which he explains as comprising Hijaz, Yemen, the Arabian peninsula, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, Egypt, Damascus, Upper Egypt [*Sa'id*], Ethiopia, Diyarbekr, Kurdistan, Iraq, Armenia, Caramania, Anatolia, Rumelia, Greek lands [*arz-ı Yunan*]. Finally he mentions the lands [*diyâr*] of Europeans [*Efrenc*], Slavs [*Sakâlib*], Russians [*Rûs*] and the steppes [*deşt-i Kıpçak*].⁵¹² The wide spectrum of geographic locations point at the wide claim of influence, if not of actual ruling power. Such listings are found as legitimizing factors and manifestations of claim in previous political traditions as well.⁵¹³

The proclamation of accession issued right after the enthronement have a dual character. On the one hand, it is a declaration of accession; on the other hand it is a confirmation of the recipient's office. In order to understand the significance of the official proclamation of accession, we shall now try to analyze that sent to Hayrbay, the governor of Egypt.⁵¹⁴ The declaration of accession has a legitimizing nature whereby the main tenets of Süleyman's legitimate claim are introduced through the declaration of succession. The following confirmation of office reflects especially two aspects in terms of the renewal/confirmation process we are dealing with. Both these aspects of the decree can then be regarded as comprising two parts in themselves.

The declaration of succession contains two closely related, or rather sequential, messages: the death of Sultan Selim and the accession of Sultan Süleyman. These two messages convey a personal transition on one hand and a political transition on the other. First, Hayrbay is informed that Sultan Selim has died, in conventional words "passed from the temporal land to the eternal garden" [*arsa-yı fenâdan ravza-yı*

⁵¹² Bostan (TSK), 4b.

⁵¹³ For example, when Caliph al-Muntasir delegated power to al-Zahir Baybars, a list of territories was conferred on the sultan, including those he did not possess. P.M. Holt argues that the listing was not purely rhetorical, but aimed "to outline and publicize a programme of expansion." Another implication was demonstrating that he was not sultan in Egypt and Syria only, but was "the universal sultan of Islam." P.M. Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," p.244.

⁵¹⁴ For the text see, *Münşe'at*, I:503-6.

bekâya]. Then comes the consequence of this death: Süleyman’s accession.⁵¹⁵ This part of the announcement declares what has been entrusted to Süleyman by the “will” of God: keys to the administration of the land and the people, keys to the expansion of the religion and the state, reins of the affairs of the realm. According to the document, these responsibilities were entrusted to Süleyman’s “sword of power” [*kabza-i iktidâr*] and his “domain of will” [*havza-i ihtiyâr*]. The divine legitimation provided in the document through these elements are then further enforced by stating that the title of “caliph” was bestowed on him by God as well as the title of “the shadow of God on earth” [*umûm-i ‘âlemde es-sultân zıllullah fi’l-arz*]. This part ends with the date of the enthronement and a request for all to thank God for this favor.

Before listing the orders to Hayrbay, the letter refers to a verse from the Quran. This verse is related to the letter sent by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba asking for obedience. The quoted part refers to the letter being from Süleyman: “It is from Solomon, and is (as follows): ‘In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful’.” The next verse asks for obedience: “Be ye not arrogant against me, but come to me in submission (to the true Religion).”⁵¹⁶ Although this second verse was not included in the decree, the implication was probably quite obvious for the addressee. Rest of the decree, relating Süleyman’s orders to Hayrbay, reads almost like a manifesto of Sultan Süleyman’s understanding of good administration. The first order, in this sense, is to act justly and protect everyone. Hayrbay is reminded to respect all people with kindness without any discrimination of rank. He should make sure that all subjects are righteous and they do good deeds; he should employ cheerful manners and eloquent speech while doing this. Furthermore, he should “reinforce the regions of the nation” and “put in order the troops of the religion”, thereby removing treacherous and hostile cliques. Hayrbay is warned that negligence would not be tolerated regarding the protection of the realm and the men, due attention to righteousness and mischief, advise on the urgent affairs of the realm and the “nation” and attainment of the good will of all ranks of “religion and state.” Hayrbay is to take care in all matters regarding the high and the

⁵¹⁵ The letter to Venice dated 10 October also reflects the same notion of Sultan Selim passing on to “an eternal place”: “*Sia noto a la Vostra Serenita, come el beato nostro padre è morto, et è fatto beato, et ha lassato questo temporaneo mondo e andato in lo eterno, per il che nui con la misericordia di Dio celeste et cum la oratione di mei beati maggiori siamo sentadi ne la sedia de l’Imperio...*”

⁵¹⁶ Quran, 27:30.

low. It is stated that all people should be at rest under Hayrbay's "shadow of favor and benignity." Hayrbay should always be alert in improving justice and mercy, removing oppression. The last sentence summarizes what is expected: "Your caring eye and elevated favor should be on reinforcing the good/divine, and on ordering the garden of the Muslims, entering the righteous path and removing mischief."⁵¹⁷

Hayrbay replied to the official proclamation by sending a man along with his gifts and letter. In the letter, he first confirmed his knowledge of the accession with the grace of God. This statement can be taken as the acceptance of the legitimate transference of authority. Then he went on to list the consequences of Süleyman's accession, namely justice prevailing all around the realm and enemies distraught by his thrust. He confirmed that the Friday prayer and the issuing of coins were appropriately performed in the name of Sultan Süleyman. Furthermore, he informs that the proclamation was read on the day it was received and was announced all around Cairo and Upper Egypt. He then reports that Arabian sheikhs have sent their gifts to Cairo and that he sent these gifts along with his own.⁵¹⁸

A formal greeting and congratulation either personally or through proxy upon receiving the proclamation meant good will and peace, if not subordination.⁵¹⁹ Accounts mention ambassadors of various countries coming to present condolences for the death of Sultan Selim and congratulations for the accession. They presented gifts and kissed Süleyman's hand.⁵²⁰ We encounter various ambassadors received on the way to the Hungarian campaign in summer 1521. For example, the Florentine ambassador was

⁵¹⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:503-6. The text resembles the proclamation sent by Alexander as he succeeded Dara as the *Shahnama* has it. See, Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, pp.470-1.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid*, 506.

⁵¹⁹ For basic accounts on the reception of ambassadors and proxies, see for example, KPZ, X:32; Sa'di (SN), 119b where Sadi says all ambassadors were well received except for non-Muslim ones, they were vexed: "*küffâra inkisâr virildi.*" Neglecting to send an ambassador or messenger, on the other hand, could be regarded as defiance and cause a lot of trouble. One such victim would be Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ a few years later. Though he had sent a proxy, his failure to show up personally to present his obedience would be used as an excuse by an ambitious Ferhad Paşa to kill him. See, for example, Nasuh, 52b.

⁵²⁰ KPZ, X:32; Sa'di (SN), 119b. The dual aspect of the accession involving simultaneous and/or subsequent grief and joy is once again reflected.

received in the camp at Sofia.⁵²¹ Those who could not come themselves sent their gifts through “trustworthy” agents. Mehmed Giray Khan, for example, expressed his apologies in the letter he sent along with his gifts. In the same letter he also declared his servitude to Süleyman mentioning that the Ottoman court had always been a shelter for himself and his father from the time of Mehmed II.⁵²² The Venetian ambassador at the court of Henry VIII had to face accusations of “allying with Sultan Solyman to the annihilation of the Emperor” when the *ahdname* was renewed. Ambassador Antonio Surian had to explain to Cardinal Wolsey that “the mission of a Venetian ambassador to the Turk, it has always been the custom of the State to send one to every new sultan, to congratulate him, and confirm ancient treaties, and Sultan Solyman had sent an ambassador to Venice, announcing his accession.”⁵²³

The renewal of contracts with foreign powers also happened upon the reception of the proclamation. The whole process of the confirmation of peace with Venice upon Süleyman’s accession can be traced in detail from contemporary Venetian reports. This case is especially interesting because it involves a dual process of change of government. The process started with the accession of Süleyman as the agreement had to be renewed with each new reign. However, even before the Venetian ambassador had a chance to make his case before the Sultan, the Doge of Venice died. Under these circumstances, the documents in the ambassador’s possession became invalid; and new documents had to be produced for the ambassador to present the Sultan. The confirmation/renewal of the peace with Venice could only be realized in December 1521, more than a year after Süleyman’s accession.

The first on-site response to Sultan Süleyman’s accession in the name of Venice came from the Venetian bailo Tomasso Contarini who was stationed in Istanbul. In his report dated 15 October, Contarini wrote that he was asked by the viziers to come and kiss the hand of *Signor Suliman* on a given date. He went to the Palace on 6 October as required. He reported that he went “to congratulate His Majesty on his peacefully

⁵²¹ Sanuto, 31:239.

⁵²² *Münşe‘at*, I:503.

⁵²³ 'Venice: April 1522', *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice*, Volume 3: 1520-1526 (1869), pp. 218-224. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=94346&strquery=Turk>
Date accessed: 07 January 2009.

becoming *Signor* in place of his father with whom the Signoria had been in peace.” He also extended his wishes to keep the peace. Contarini wrote that Süleyman did not respond, but he kissed the Sultan’s hand congratulating him in the name of the Signoria. That day the Ottoman ambassador to Venice was designated. Contarini admits to having dinner with this person who seemed to be wise and prudent. He told Contarini that the purpose of his mission was to confirm the peace.⁵²⁴

The reception of the Ottoman ambassador in Venice is worth noting, for he was the first official contact Süleyman had with the outside world as reigning Sultan. The ambassador with his train of eight people seems to have reached Venice on 12 November 1520 without prior notification of arrival. Next morning twenty gentlemen were assigned to visit him and make excuses for not having known about his arrival. Otherwise they would have sent a suitable delegation to greet and honor him. They were also to pay for the expenses of the previous day. Thus the gentlemen, among whom Sanuto himself, visited the Ottoman ambassador and made arrangements to take him to Collegio the next day. On 14 November, twenty four gentlemen went to accompany the ambassador to the Collegio and to conduct him to the Doge. When he arrived, the Doge rose from his seat with the help of the pages, approached a little and reached the ambassador’s hand receiving him cheerfully.⁵²⁵ On November 14, the ambassador sent by Sultan Süleyman presented the Doge his letter dated October 10. The letter announced the death of his father and his entry in the “imperial seat” on September 29. In the letter, Süleyman stated that he sent his slave for maintaining the peace that was with his blessed father, so that merchants and subjects could live in peace.⁵²⁶ Venetians do not seem to be satisfied with this explanation. They send Andrea Gritti to the ambassador to inquire any disguised purposes. Sanuto emphasizes that Gritti was chosen for the job because he was experienced on Constantinople and the Turks. However, Gritti was unable to spot any other motive on the part of the ambassador. His mission was only to bring the letter to Venice, receive the reply and take it back.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁴ *Ibid*, 29:390-2.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid*, 384-5.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid*, 394.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, 397-8.

While Contarini's visit following the enthronement was acceptable as a first response, the tension caused by the delay of the Venetian ambassador attests to the significance of the process. Although the bailo paid the necessary visits of good will during the first days of his reign, Sultan Süleyman required an official envoy from Venice specifically sent to congratulate his accession and confirm peace. Venice, surely, did not wish to lose the Sultan's favor. Rumors had already started to spread that the Venetian peace was no more in effect because Venetians neglected to re-affirm it. When the expected envoy did not arrive for more than a year, Ottoman administration became more and more suspicious. In March 1521, Contarini wrote to Marco Minio that people were using "strange words" regarding the delay of the ambassador.⁵²⁸ The designated ambassador Marco Minio could not make it Constantinople before Süleyman left for the Hungarian campaign in May 1521. In his letter dated June 14, Contarini related the annoyance of the viziers due to the delay of the ambassador. He also drew attention to the fact that many started to believe that "the Signoria was not in peace with the Sultan anymore since nobody was sent to re-affirm it."⁵²⁹ In his letter dated 8 July, Contarini again warned the Signoria that many things were being murmured about the delay of the ambassador.⁵³⁰ There were even rumors that the Venetians were waiting for the result of the campaign.⁵³¹ Chasing after the Sultan, Minio still had not succeeded to find him by the end of July. In the meanwhile, Doge Loredan died in June; and Antonio Grimani was elected as his successor. On 28 July, the new Doge wrote Sultan Süleyman another letter to congratulate his accession anew. He apologized for not being able to deliver this earlier due to the death of the former Doge, Leonardo Loredan. He explained that the letter by the former Doge had to be renewed and thus the letter was delayed. He also begged that Süleyman believed his loyalty.⁵³² On 28 October 1521, after more than a year following Süleyman's accession, the Ottoman ambassador expressed that his master was much surprised that after his accession and his re-

⁵²⁸ *Ibid*, 31:240.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid*, 86: "... molti dicono la Signoria non ha più pace col Signor per non averla mandata a refermar."

⁵³⁰ *Ibid*, 238.

⁵³¹ *Ibid*, 86.

⁵³² *Ibid*, 105.

acquiring Syria the Signoria had been so late to send an ambassador. The Doge had to explain that it was not negligence that caused the delay, and that they had assigned someone immediately after Süleyman's accession. However, the ambassador was sick for a long while already in Venice and did not get any better either in Corphu or in Candia.⁵³³

Venice wrote a congratulatory letter to Süleyman and an envoy was assigned, as soon as the news was received. The letter addressed "the most serene and excellent lord *Solimano*."⁵³⁴ The letter starts with words of sorrow in the face Selim's death, who is referred to as a valiant, wise and just lord – and one who was on good and peaceful terms with Venice. The mourning mood suddenly changes in the next sentence which refers to the news of Süleyman's accession. This accession is defined as "happy" and "glorious" and as one which was met with satisfaction and joy by all *signori* and *popoli*. The letter goes on to say that the joy Venice felt on his accession was the more since the letters of the bailo confirmed the justness, goodness, wisdom, and valiance of "His Majesty." These virtues, believes the Doge, shall cause him reign for long years with prosperity regarding all his dominions and with content of his friends. The letter ends with words of congratulation and wishes of sincere and long enduring peace and friendship as in the time of Süleyman's father, informing on the mission of an ambassador for this end.⁵³⁵

Even though the above mentioned letter was written instantly, in early 1521 Venetians were still trying to designate the ambassador, and the nature and worth of gifts to be sent.⁵³⁶ Marco Minio, the ambassador in question, left Venice on 21 May 1521.⁵³⁷ By that time Süleyman had already marched off for the campaign. He reached

⁵³³ *Ibid*, 32:68. Marco Minio was elected for the mission immediately on 7 November 1520. He left on 21 May 1521, arrived Istanbul on 21 September, and left on 13 January 1522. Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs Dans L'empire Ottoman*, p.149-50.

⁵³⁴ Sanuto, 29:369: "*Serenissimo et excellentissimo domino Sulimano maximo regi et invictissimo utriusque continentis Asiae et Europae, Arabiam, Persarum imperatori plurimum honorando...*"

⁵³⁵ *Ibid*, 369.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid*, 654-6.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid*, 30:231.

Istanbul on 27 September;⁵³⁸ but he had to wait until Sultan Süleyman returned from the campaign. His first audience took place in the beginning of November.⁵³⁹ Minio's report demonstrates reluctance on where he should have found the Sultan. He seems to have planned to find him on the way; but then he waited in Istanbul. The ambassador's report also provides details of the reactions to his delay.⁵⁴⁰ It was only then that the agreement negotiations speeded up.

Although the text of the agreement closely resembles those of the former treaties,⁵⁴¹ Minio's accounts show that many rounds of negotiation preceded the final text. While the final agreement is considered to be a "renewal" of peace, earlier practice regarding the peace agreements [*ahdname*] demonstrates that these were not mere renewals or confirmations, but carefully negotiated documents. In the case of the 1503 treaty, for example, at least three documents were prepared through 20 months of negotiations: a preliminary Ottoman text, a Venetian text sealed by the Doge and the final Ottoman '*ahdname*'.⁵⁴²

The similarity of the texts both in terms of wording and content imply a strong sense of continuity and stability.⁵⁴³ Another factor providing the sense of continuity is

⁵³⁸ Eugenio Alberi, *Relazione degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato Durante il Secolo Decimosesto* (Firenze: Societa Editrice Fiorentina, 1855), 3:III, p.70.

⁵³⁹ Marco Minio, *Relazione di Costantinopoli di Messer Marco Minio anno MDXXI*, (Venezia: Tipografia di Alvisopoli, 1845), pp.8-9.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp.21. Also in Sanuto, 33:314-6.

⁵⁴¹ Three texts have been compared. These texts have been published by Tayyib Gökbilgin in "Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Bazı Türkçe Belgeler Koleksiyonu ve Bizimle İlgili Diğer Belgeler," *Belgeler*, vols.5-8, no.9-12 (1968-1971), pp.39-50. These are: The agreement by Bayezid II, dated January 1482 [Dhu'l-Qada 886]; by Selim I, dated October 1513 [Shaban 919]; by Süleyman, dated December 1521 [Muharram 928]. There is also fourth text by Selim I, dated September 1517[Shaban 923] (pp.47-50), which is a confirmation of the 1513 text. It is referred when necessary. For Minio's discussion of the articles see, Minio, *Relazione*, pp.28-31.

⁵⁴² Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th-18th Century): An Annotated Edition of Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Boston, Mass.: Brill, 1999), p.69.

⁵⁴³ Hans Theunissen argues that until 1567 each Ottoman-Venetian treaty had been a completely new text prepared specifically for the occasion. Hans Theunissen, "Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: the Ahd-names. The Historical Background and the Development of a Category of Political-Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents," *EJOS*, vol.1, no.2 (1998),

the reference all texts make to the peaceful relations during the reign of the previous ruler. Although there are only slight differences in wording, each document contains some unique articles not found in the previous one. This is hardly surprising since particular situations of the moment must have had some effect. On the other hand, Süleyman's text seems to possess a firmer stance compared to that of Bayezid II and the origin of this change of stance can be traced back to Selim I's text.

Selim's and Süleyman's texts begin with the same expression.⁵⁴⁴ Both Selim and Süleyman introduce themselves as "*sultânü's-selâtin, burhânü'l-hâvâkin Sultân ... Şâh bin Sultân ...*", whereas Bayezid introduces himself only as Sultan Bayezid bin Sultan Selim Şah. Bayezid's text informs about his accession and tells how rulers from all around came to him for treaties of peace. Bayezid mentions his father's friendship with the Doge of Venice and says that he himself saw that being in peace with Venice would be effectual in keeping the order of the realm.⁵⁴⁵ Neither Selim's nor Süleyman's text contain such an explanation or justification. Both texts directly mention that the Venetian Doge has sent an ambassador to the sultan's court to request "a renewal of peace" [*tecdîd-i 'ahd*] based on the friendship of the deceased father and that they (Selim and Süleyman respectively) accept the offer of friendship and peace.⁵⁴⁶ The vow which follows is quite simple in both texts: "I swear by God..." In the 1482 text, however, Bayezid swears on "[his] sword, the souls of his father and ancestors, the heads of [his] sons, [his] head and life, the reverence of the 124,000 prophets, the soul of the Prophet, the power of the Quran, [his] religion and the God." The numerous tokens put forth for a persuasive pledge in the 1482 text are absent in the latter two texts. This absence along with the lack of pre-meditation as to the usefulness of the agreement suggests two things. Firstly, the renewal agreement seems to have become a quasi-automatic device in the regular course of relations. Secondly, neither Selim nor

p.249. However, if we disregard the specific additions what remains is almost an identical text.

⁵⁴⁴ "*Nişân-ı şerîf-i 'âli-şân-ı sultânî, tuğra-yı gurra-yı gîfî-sitân-ı hâkânî, nasr bi'l-'avnü'l-rabbâni hükmi oldur ki...*"

⁵⁴⁵ Gökbilgin, "Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Bazı Türkçe Belgeler," p.39.

⁵⁴⁶ We need to note that an '*ahdname*' is by definition given upon request, thus conceptually a form of unilateral grant. See, Theunissen, "Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats" and Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*.

Süleyman felt the need to fortify their credibility through putting forward almost everything they valued. An oath by God seems to be assurance enough. It is also worth noting that the oath binds the Ottoman sultan before God and not before a Christian ruler.⁵⁴⁷

There are a few differences between the 1482 text and the later two. The 1482 text refers to the current Doge and the one who shall succeed him, while the 1513 and 1521 texts specifically mention the Doge by name and do not refer to successors. Thus, neither Selim I nor Süleyman bound their successors. This feature of the texts emphasizes the principle of renewal with each new sultan, and reinforces the idea that each reign is a new beginning.⁵⁴⁸ There is an article in all three texts pertaining to the inviolability of places Venice might acquire in the future. The 1482 text does not bring any limitations as to the nature of these possible conquests. The 1513 and 1521 texts, on the other hand, specifically mention that these possible conquests should not be Muslim lands, should not be within Ottoman borders and should not be Ottoman tributaries. The addition of such a warning demonstrates not only a precaution to avoid a possible *casus belli*, but also a demanding and authoritative stance by the Ottoman sultan. This demanding and authoritative tone becomes more and more apparent in the 1521 text, whereby it is stated that when Venetian ships chance upon any ship authorized by Sultan Süleyman, they should fold their sails to demonstrate their friendship and obedience. Another article in the 1521 text – but not in the former ones – requires that any prisoners taken from pirate ships should not be executed but sent to Süleyman alive. Another addition to the 1521 text relates to conflicts the bailo himself might be involved in while in Istanbul. According to this article, if somebody has a conflict with the bailo, the case shall be heard at the imperial council. If the sultan is away in campaign, the case shall be heard by the judge with the presence of the guardian of Istanbul. Such seemingly small details gradually add up to convey a more sophisticated and superior

⁵⁴⁷ Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, p.4.

⁵⁴⁸ In 1533, the Polish envoy to Istanbul brought with him two documents prepared by the royal chancery. One version extended the treaty on Süleyman's son [*filio imperatoris*]. In case this extension was not approved, the envoy had another document without the extension. Sultan Süleyman did not accept the extension as expected, stating in the '*ahdname* that they [Süleyman and Sigismund I] would be friends as long as they were alive, but that their sons would find the right path if they chose to follow the footsteps of their fathers. *Ibid*, p.71, 231.

image of the Sultan while the general content and wording keep the appearance of dynastic continuity.

2.3. Marking of Sovereign Authority

So far we have seen a generic accession process. At this point, it would be proper to talk about the medium-term consolidation of sovereign authority through which things start getting personalized. In other words, the generic transference of sovereignty from the deceased ruler to his legitimate successor is theoretically completed. From this point on, Süleyman takes over the authority as an individual person. This process, in the medium-term, is marked by two issues. Firstly, he demonstrates his capability of good government through the administration of justice. Secondly, he eliminates a major challenge to his authority. This section examines how these two issues contribute to his image in the medium-term.

Contemporary chronicles examined in this study all start with an account of the first deeds of Süleyman right after the accounts on the enthronement. Without exception these deeds are related to justice. Three of these deeds are conveyed in all accounts: the removal of the ban on Persian trade, permission for exiles to return, the execution of an oppressive officer. Accounts start with a generic explanation of how justice prevailed after the accession of Sultan Süleyman and then go into detail about the three deeds mentioned above. Thus, the new sultan moves gradually from being the new link in the dynastic chain to being an individual ruler.

The revolt in Syria following Süleyman's accession, at a time when he was yet to establish a firm standing of his own, may appear as unfortunate at first sight. This revolt, however, may also be viewed as a vital step in the process of consolidation and integration of a newly conquered region and a newly acquired authority. Selim I acquired the land of the Mamluks by military force, but apparently did not have time to establish firm Ottoman hold on the area. In other words, securing a firm Ottoman standing in the region was a task yet to be completed when Süleyman ascended the throne. This situation posed threat and an opportunity for Sultan Süleyman. The threat posed by the subsequent revolt was possible territorial loss and a blow on authority, which was fought back through military might. Looking back retrospectively, the revolt

provided an opportunity to strengthen Süleyman's authority through transformation of a political challenge to a political crime. Thus, once the rebels were suppressed through established means of violence, their actions would come to signify a crime against the political norm. Through the "order" brought by the Sultan as opposed to the "chaos" caused by the rebels, this political norm, namely the rule of the Sultan, would be confirmed and emphasized.

2.3.1 Making Things Right: Promoting Justice and Removing Oppression

Ottoman chronicles from earlier times onward begin to relate the reign of a Sultan with his administration of justice as soon he ascends the throne. Accordingly, it is possible to arrive at an understanding of contemporary meaning of justice. When sources talk about justice being the prime virtue, for instance, what do they actually mean and are they consistent about the meaning they reflect? The first deeds of Süleyman provide an interesting exercise, both in terms of defining justice and the way Süleyman appropriated it as a legitimating virtue. Justice [*adl*] is generally defined in relation to impartiality and in opposition to oppression [*zulm*]. Cafer Paşa was accused of cruelty and oppression towards the people, as justice required the removal of cruelty and oppression. The same justification holds for the execution of some household cavalry regimental officers [*silâhdâr ağaları*]. These incidents help define justice as the antithesis of oppression. The removal of the ban on Persian trade was also linked to justice because it caused a group of subjects, in other words some portion of the people whose welfare the ruler was responsible for, to suffer. This incidence brings to mind the concept of justice often emphasized by the "circle of equity" in "Islamic" texts as influenced by Persian tradition. According to this formulation, the world is perceived as a garden and the ruler as the fence defending the garden: "The ruler is supported by soldiers; soldiers are maintained by money; money is acquired from the subjects; the subjects are protected by justice and justice is maintained by the ruler."⁵⁴⁹ Justice taken

⁵⁴⁹ For the circle of equity and other concepts related to justice in Perso-Islamic political thought see A.K.S. Lambton, "Changing Concepts of Justice and Injustice from the 5th/11th Century to the 8th/14th Century in Persia: The Saljuq Empire and the Ilkhanate," *Studia Islamica*, no.68 (1988), pp.27-60 and A.K.S. Lambton, "Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship," *Studia Islamica*, no.17 (1962), pp.91-119. For a

out of this equation, we shall realize that subjects would not be protected, thus damaged subjects would not be able to produce income, such an outcome would disable the ruler to maintain soldiers and if there are no soldiers the ruler would not be able to defend the country and the whole order would collapse. These instances reflect a sense of collectivity involved with the concept of justice.⁵⁵⁰ All three instances have another common aspect which helps define the notion of justice. In all three cases, it is the common people who come up to the new Sultan with a complaint. Sultan Süleyman in return lends an ear to these complaints with impartiality, disregarding any notion of rank.

Kemalpaşazade's title for this section of his work clearly announces that the "Süleyman [Solomon] of the Age" abolished the unjust oppression and made the world prosperous through justice.⁵⁵¹ Starting with a reference from the Quran regarding justice,⁵⁵² the first few sentences of the account seem to be quite conventional. Kemalpaşazade says that the Sultan executed the orders of justice and thus made all places prosperous. According to the author, Süleyman removed and abolished oppression and cruelty from the regions under his protection through the light of justice and thus raised the banner of the religion of Muhammad up to the skies. Kemalpaşazade also refers to a very conventional phrase in the following couplet, expressing that noone remembered the name of Anushirvan in Süleyman's reign of justice.⁵⁵³ Numerous examples of reference to Anushirvan who was famous for his justice can be found in

discussion on Ottoman conception of the "circle of equity" and its relevance on "world order" see Gottfried Hagen, "Legitimacy and World Order," pp.65-7.

⁵⁵⁰ For a comparative discussion of the concept of justice in late medieval European and Islamic thought, see: Zeynep Yelçe, *Ideal Kingship in the Late Medieval World: The Ottoman Case*, Unpublished MA thesis (Istanbul: Sabancı University, 2003), pp.72-80.

⁵⁵¹ KPZ, X:36: "*Bu dâsitan sultân-ı cihân-bân, hazreti sâhib-kırân-ı Süleymân-ı zamânın cevr ü bî-dâdı ref' idüb, 'adl ü dâd ile 'âlemi âbâd itdüğün bildürir.*"

⁵⁵² Quran, 38:26: "... judge thou between men in truth (and justice)..." The beginning of the verse which the author does not include in his text reads: "O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth." Contemporaries surely knew the whole verse and the selection would allude to divine kingship exemplified by David in their minds.

⁵⁵³ KPZ, X:37: "*Nâm-ı Nûşirevân anılmaz devr-i 'adlinde anın*"

earlier chronicles as well.⁵⁵⁴ The fifteenth century chronicler Kemal in *Selatin-nâme*, for example, praised Bayezid II saying he was so just that the fame of Anushirvan was forgotten. He also related how the troubles of the people had been cleared and the realm prospered through justice.⁵⁵⁵

Sixteenth century writer Eyyubi dedicates a whole section to Sultan Süleyman's justice. According to Eyyubi, it is justice that gives order to the realm whereas oppression brings much harm to the world ultimately causing the demise of the realm.⁵⁵⁶ Sa'di emphasizes that the first thing Süleyman did was to ensure order in the realm. The author starts by a general praise of the Sultan's attention on justice and law, then goes on explaining the specific deeds. First of these deeds in Sa'di's account is the license granted to exiles Selim I brought back from the Egyptian campaign. The episode as conveyed by Sa'di does not really blame Selim for the suffering of the exiles, but puts the blame on the violation of an imperial order. In any case, according to the author, when Süleyman ascended the throne he saw how much these people suffered and let them go back to their homeland. People appreciated this merciful and fair act, showing their gratitude through prayers.⁵⁵⁷ Thus we are faced with not only a just ruler, but a merciful one as well. Sa'di's use of the word "specifically" [*hususen*] before each particular act of justice contributes to the individualization process of Süleyman as the Sultan.

⁵⁵⁴ The analogy is based on the *Shahnama*. As Ottoman chronicles were often modeled on the *Shahnama*, so were the rulers they were praising. A famous passage in the *Shahnama* on the advice of Anushirvan to his son brings forth justice as a cardinal virtue: "If you make men secure by your justice, you will also ensure your own security, and heaven will be your reward: great is the man who sows the seeds of righteousness... When a powerful man acts justly and from the heart, the world is happy in his reign, and he too is made happy." Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.715.

⁵⁵⁵ XV. Yüzyıl Tarihçilerinden Kemal: *Selâtin-Nâme (1299-1490)*, Necdet Öztürk (ed) (Ankara: TTK, 2001), p.12: "Olalı 'adli ol şâh-ı cihânun / Unudıldı adı Nûşirrevân'un / Cihanda 'adli şu resme kılır han / Hiç azdırmazdı insanı şeytan / Cihânı 'adlile ol kıldı ma'mûr / Kamu gamdan bu halk olumuşdı dûr."

⁵⁵⁶ Eyyubi, *Menakıb-ı Sultan Süleyman: (Risale-i Padişahname)*, Mehmet Akkuş (ed) (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1991), p.116.

⁵⁵⁷ Sa'di (SN), 118a-119a.

Bostan ties Süleyman's sense of justice to a Quranic reference.⁵⁵⁸ He then goes on with a generic description of the effects of Süleyman's justice on the realm. According to Bostan, through justice and care the realm attained such a level of security and order that the only danger left was the "dimples of the lover." As a result all classes were in good terms with each other, peace reigned so supreme that "the wolf and the sheep were friends."⁵⁵⁹

In May 1518 [Jumada II 924], Selim I had issued decrees to ban trade with Persia, effective especially on silk. Through another decree Persian merchants residing in Aleppo were exiled to Istanbul.⁵⁶⁰ On his death bed Selim is attributed to have said to Piri Paşa:

During the last years of my reign I have caused some oppression. My intention was the prosperity of the Muslims, my aim was the peace of the believers. God is a witness to this. Our inherited lands, which have been under our holding from the times of our forbearers and ancestors, were protected from the enemy. All circumstances related to *saltanat* are within our grasp. Inform my son about all.⁵⁶¹

Here we are faced with an admittance of a wrong-doing and regret. Whether Selim meant the confiscation of silk, we do not know. However, Celâlzâde's insertion of such a passage of remorse can probably be seen in the context of Süleyman's reversal of his father's policies.⁵⁶² Absence of references to the Safavis in Ottoman accounts

⁵⁵⁸ Bostan (TSK), 5b; *Quran*, 4:58: "[Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due;] And when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice."

⁵⁵⁹ Bostan (TSK), 5b.

⁵⁶⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:498.

⁵⁶¹ Celâlzâde (SN), p.220: "*Saltanat-ı kâmile-i mülûkâne ve hilâfet-i şâmîle-i hüsvânê husûslarında âhir-i 'ömrümde ba'zı mezâlîme sebep ü bâ'is oldum. Maksûd ü murâdım refâhiyyet-i müslimîn, netîce ve makâsıd ü âmâlim huzûr-ı mü'minîn idi. Hüdâ-yı müte'âl ol husûsa şâhid-i hâldir. Memâlik-i mevrûsemiz ki âbâ vü ecdâdımız zamanlarından berü mazbûtumuz olub, dest-i düşmenden mahfûz idi. Cümle hâlât-ı saltanata vukûfu ü ittulâ'in derece-i kemâldedir. Oğlum – tavvelâ'llâhu bekâ-hu – nun zamîr-i münîrini hâbir ü âgâh eyle.*"

⁵⁶² Such a reversal of policies can be observed on the accession of Bayezid II. When Bayezid II renewed the peace with Venice in 1482, one of the articles referred to the commissions which the Venetian bailo was supposed to pay for commercial activity of Venetians in Ottoman cities. This article states that Bayezid II nullified this application which his father put into practice, basing his own decision on the fact that

regarding the accession of Süleyman and its aftermath is also noteworthy in this respect. J.L. Bacque-Grammont sees the issue as the “totally different stand taken by Süleyman the moment he acceded to the throne,” in contrast to his father’s policy of open conflict.⁵⁶³ In Bacque-Grammont’s view, not being able to solve the problem through military means due to the resistance of the janissaries, Selim I was able to block possible conflict in Anatolia by a fatwa and closing the traffic. The embargo also meant cutting off Persia from the West.⁵⁶⁴ On the other hand, Süleyman paid care to the smooth operation of Mediterranean trade, as some of his later actions also indicate. The ban on Persian trade and confiscation of goods seem to have affected Venetian merchants as well. In his letter 4 October, Tomasso Contarini mentioned the matter of silk confiscated from Venetian merchants in Aleppo, reporting that the Sultan would release it.⁵⁶⁵ In his letter dated 30 April 1521, Contarini reported that the *Signor* ordered payments for the silk of the Persians, which his father had previously taken away to be put in his Treasury. Contarini also wrote that Süleyman gave license to return to many that were detained.⁵⁶⁶

Kemalpaşazade explains the silk ban in terms of an economical embargo. According to the author, Sultan Selim banned all kind of trade and travel between Anatolia and Persia with the aim of cutting Ismail’s resources. The ban would have two consequences; firstly it would block the flow of weapons to Safavid land. Secondly, Safavid finances would decline since their income depended on trade dues. Kemalpaşazade says that the ban grew more and more strict, thus creating many misunderstandings resulting in confiscation of even unrelated goods. Thus, Kemalpaşazade emphasizes, when the ban was reversed workshops started working

Venetians wished to be friends. See, Gökbilgin “Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Bazı Türkçe Belgeler Koleksiyonu ve Bizimle İlgili Diğer Belgeler,” p.41. Another such reversal of policy by Bayezid II can be found in his dealing with the “rents” which put in effect by Mehmed II because of his “ill-intentioned viziers.” As such, Bayezid II is attributed with the intention of making things right for the sake of justice. See, KPZ, VIII:3.

⁵⁶³ Jean-Louis Bacque-Grammont, “The Eastern Policy of Süleyman the Magnificent, 1520-1533,” in İnalçık and Kafadar (eds), p.219.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.220.

⁵⁶⁵ Sanuto, 29:358.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 30:321.

again, shops were back in business and merchants satisfied. He is actually talking about a revival of trade.⁵⁶⁷

Celâlzâde explains that in the days of Selim I, Persians acquired their weapons and other military needs from Anatolia. The author argues that the only solution Selim could find to wipe out the Safavis from Anatolia was to ban all kinds of trade and communication. However, not everyone obeyed the orders regarding the ban. Those who defied the order would be punished through confiscation of goods caught. According to the author, the orders remained susceptible to abuse around the border regions. Thus some officials seized the goods of innocent people, thus bringing about an oppressive practice. Those who suffered from these practices, the innocents as well as the merchants kept complaining but “the late Sultan would not lend them an ear, saying that they should be patient because this was a caution taken in the name of religion.” Celâlzâde then goes on to narrate how these aggrieved subjects came to Süleyman’s threshold and begged for mercy, how through clemency he ordered their goods to be returned, how the distribution was performed by the treasurers in full in a strictly equitable fashion and how these subjects prayed for the sultan in gratitude.⁵⁶⁸

While informing his readers about the removal of the Persian silk ban, Sa’di admits that a great amount of the goods of the Persian merchants were seized by the order of Selim I, although these merchants had documents entitling their trade which was supposed to protect their goods. The author attributes such action to the abuse of officials acting contrary to the orders of the sultan. However, he also says that such an act was brought about by the conditions of the time [*muktezâ-yı hâl ü müsted’â-yı zaman*]. Nonetheless, these merchants had become needy and troublesome. Süleyman returned the goods to their owners, thus ensured himself fame for forever, according to Sa’di. Regarding the exiles from Cairo, the author attributes the forced exile to the abuse of certain officials acting contrary to the orders of Sultan Selim.⁵⁶⁹ Kemalpaşazade also attributes the suffering of the exiles to the wrong-doing of officials. Although those who were brought to Istanbul were the descendents of the Abbasids caliphs, according to the author, Sultan Selim’s orders did not target them but the

⁵⁶⁷ KPZ, X:40-4.

⁵⁶⁸ *Tabakat*, 27a.

⁵⁶⁹ Sa’di (SN), 118b-119a.

trouble-makers. However, officials misapplied the order. Kemalpaşazade claims that though Selim realized the mistake afterwards, he chose to ignore the situation because he was embarrassed to admit that officials performed a deed contrary to his will. It was only upon his father's death that Süleyman became aware of the situation and remedied it by sending these people back. According to the author, it was clear to Süleyman that they should be sent back. Kemalpaşazade justifies his point by reference to a Quranic verse relating to the divine wisdom of Solomon.⁵⁷⁰

Hoca Sadeddin reports from his father's memories an interesting conversation between his father Hasan Can, Sultan Süleyman and İbrahim Paşa. As the anecdote goes, İbrahim told Hasan Can that Sultan Süleyman contradicted some of the deeds of his father and that he wished to learn about the reasons for these deeds. Süleyman interfered by saying: "It is not my place to oppose the acts of the deceased. You ask about your own doubts." Upon this remark İbrahim went on to ask whether a few of his deeds were not contrary to the customs of sultans: his imprisonment and execution of the envoys of the Shah, his marrying off Taclu Hanım to Taczade, his confiscating and transferring the property of the merchants, his imprisonment of a genuine *seyyid* like Mir 'Abdu'l-Vahhab. Hasan Can clarified the justification of each act. Süleyman appreciated the explanations and awarded Hasan Can with a robe.⁵⁷¹ This anecdote is perhaps one of the clearest indications of a policy change; yet the avoidance of Süleyman to directly challenge the decisions of his father indicates the subtle handling of the reversal. As the above-mentioned explanations of contemporary authors show, Sultan Selim was not blamed for his decisions, although the acts themselves were criticized. In this sense, it is possible to see Sultan Süleyman challenging his father's decision but not his father. In other words, distancing himself and blaming corrupted officials for the misapplication of orders, Süleyman emerges as a just ruler who removes oppression, yet does not tarnish the reputation of the main source of his legitimacy, namely his father.

⁵⁷⁰ KPZ, X:39-40. *Quran*, 21:79: "To Solomon We inspired the (right) understanding of the matter: to each (of them) We gave Judgment and Knowledge...." The notion of the ruler being bestowed with justice and knowledge by God was an already well-established principle of Perso-Islamic political thought by the time Kemalpaşazade was writing. Thus, the concept of justice associated with Sultan Süleyman on his accession also confirms his "natural" divine right to rule.

⁵⁷¹ Sadeddin, IV:212-4; Ali [KA], p.1103-4.

Chronicles place oppression as an anti-thesis to justice. Thus, it should come as no surprise that one of the first deeds of Sultan Süleyman was the execution of an oppressive officer. In contemporary accounts, the execution of Cafer Beğ figures as an example employed to demonstrate the justice of the Sultan through removal of oppression. Cafer Beğ was the governor of Gelibolu, and the admiral of the Ottoman fleet.⁵⁷² All chronicles agree that he was a cruel and greedy man who hurt subjects without justification. All accounts report that he took away people's possessions and killed men for no reason. Upon complaints he was first inspected, and then when his guilt was proved he was executed.⁵⁷³ Celâlîzâde introduces Cafer Beğ as a man "infamous for his oppressive ways, known for blood-shed and looting." According to Celâlîzâde's version of the story, it was one of his own agents [*kethüda*] who came to the Palace to inform about the misdeeds of his lord. Upon this information, Cafer Beğ was put under inspection. Once his illegitimate activity and oppressive behavior was proved contrary to common law [*kanûn-ı mukarrer*], Sultan Süleyman ordered his execution based on religious law [*şer'-i kavîm*]. This according to the author, the execution signified a warning for those prone to oppression, as well.⁵⁷⁴ Nasuh dates the execution in November 1521 [Dhul-Hijja 927]. He defines the captain's guilt as "having bothered the subjects with his coveting hands whereas he should have been protecting the honor of the law of the Prophet."⁵⁷⁵ The execution of the admiral of the fleet seems to have meant to serve as an example to other high ranking officers. "Seeing this execution," says Kemalpaşazade, "the officers were filled with fear, the poor subjects were filled with peace and joy."⁵⁷⁶ Bostan also gives this as an example of "oppression being

⁵⁷² *Tabakat*, 28a: "Gelibolu sancağı ile kapudânlık hizmetinde olan Ca'fer Beğ"; KPZ, X:37: "Mirlivâ-yı Gelibolu olan Ca'fer Ağâ"; Bostan (TSK), 6a: "Gelibolu beği olan Ca'fer Beğ".

⁵⁷³ KPZ, X:37; Bostan (TSK), 6a; Nasuh, 12b.

⁵⁷⁴ *Tabakat*, 27a.

⁵⁷⁵ Nasuh, 12b: "... sıyânet-i nâmûs-ı şer'-i nebevî serhaddinden tecâvüz idüb, dest-i ta'addi ve tasallutın re'âyâ-yı vilâyete ve ahâli-yi memlekete dirâz itmeğîn...." Contarini's letter dated 16 December emphasizes that the Sultan an able administrator and just, and that he did not want any income entering his treasury through indirect ways. Sanuto, 29:577.

⁵⁷⁶ KPZ, X:38.

removed from the face of the world.”⁵⁷⁷ According to Nasuh, Süleyman’s aim in ordering the inspection and the following execution [*siyâset*] was to remove oppression through justice.⁵⁷⁸ Cafer’s execution was also regarded as a sign of the fairness of the Sultan, in other words it was an indication that the Sultan did not favor his magnates over the common people and treated everyone on equal bases.⁵⁷⁹

2.3.2 Challenge Turns into Opportunity: The Challenge of Canberdi Gazali

“Just as purity requires dirt for its very existence, so do political ideas of national interest require those that would undermine them to periodically dramatize their very meaning,” argues Albert Bergesen.⁵⁸⁰ Extending Bergesen’s theory on the creation of subversives in order to reaffirm the position of the prevailing authority in the national state to include other types of regime, we may conceptualize more clearly the transformation of threat into opportunity posed by the revolt of Gazali. Bergesen argues that “the modern nation state manufactures subversives to create a ritual contrast with its set of collective representations. The function of creating this symbolic contrast with images of collective political purposes is precisely to dramatize and reaffirm the very meaning of the images of the corporate state.” While arguing that “subversives can be undermining the *people*, the *nation* or a particular *ideology*”, Bergesen defines some ways of creating opposition to the *nation* and to all that it stands for. One of the ways Bergesen defines of creating opposition to the *nation* and to all that it stands for is “ideological opposition”, whereby the deviants are, by definition, in opposition to the central ideology of their countries and this provides the necessary contrast with the

⁵⁷⁷ Bostan (TSK), 6a.

⁵⁷⁸ Nasuh, 12b. This follows the notion of the necessity and legitimacy of punishment in maintaining justice and order, as established by Islamic scholars.

⁵⁷⁹ See, for example, KPZ, X:37: “*Ra’iyyete ve leşkere, nökere ve beğlere ‘ayn-i ‘adlile yer yüzünden nazar eyleyüb ümerâyı ve fukarâyı insâf ü intisâfda berâber gördi.*” And *ibid*, 38: “*Fukârâ-yı zelîl-i bî-i’tibâr ümerâ-yı celîl-kadr-i ‘âli-mikdâr ile tarîk-i intisâfda hemvâr olub, azad ü kul bay-ı bühûl bâb-ı insâf ü intisâfda yeksân oldılar.*”

⁵⁸⁰ Albert Bergesen, “Political Witch-Hunt Rituals,” in Grimes (ed.), p.53.

nation's collective purposes. A second way is through attacking or undermining national security through use of traitors, spies and the like.⁵⁸¹

Seen in this context, the revoltees in our case are conflicting figures with the central Ottoman ideology and sovereignty. From the Ottoman point of view, as reflected in contemporary chronicle the “rebels” challenged the Ottoman sultan who was the representative of God on earth, who inherited the right of sword in the region concerned. Furthermore, they insulted the religion either by killing Muslims or looking up to the “*kızılbaş*” for help. They put the safety of the realm and the subjects, by both inviting the major political and ideological rival of the Sultan to meddle with their issues. Furthermore, they oppressed the people through exacting unjustified large sums of money thus ruining the land. Thirdly, although they earned their living through the Sultan, they betrayed him. This betrayal involved an attempt on the territorial sovereignty of the Sultan, as well as attacks on his soldiers, his treasury and his people.⁵⁸² Such charges transform the revoltees into villains and their actions to political crime which required severe punishment.

Canberdi Gazali was the governor of Damascus. After conquering Syria and Egypt, Selim I had appointed him governor of Damascus, placing Jerusalem and Gazza under his administration. A freed slave of the Mamluke sultan Qaytbay, Gazali was an influential lord of Qansuh al-Ghuri and Tumanbay. Upon Selim I's death, he defied Ottoman rule and announced his sovereignty in the region, marking his claim with the traditional signs of sovereignty, namely having his name called in the Friday prayer [*hutbe*] and minting coins in his name [*sikke*]. He also invited Shah Ismail and Hayrbay, governor-general of Egypt to join his scheme. Hayrbay not only declined the offer, but informed the Sultan about the situation sending along the letters written by Gazali. As Gazali laid siege to Aleppo, vizier Ferhad Paşa was sent to take the situation under control. The provincial troops of Anatolia, Caramania and Rûm were assigned to help Ferhad Paşa along with 4,000 janissaries and the troops of Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ of Dulkadır. Before Ferhad Paşa arrived, Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ defeated Gazali and removed the siege of Aleppo. Together with Karaca Paşa, the governor of Aleppo, he

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid*, p.54.

⁵⁸² Ottoman perceptions of the revolt and the charges directed at the revoltees shall be discussed below through individual accounts.

chased Gazali and defeated him once again. Gazali was ultimately defeated in February 1521 after the arrival of Ferhad Paşa.⁵⁸³

Ottoman sources evaluate Gazali's action as outright rebellion [*isyân*].⁵⁸⁴ Ottoman chronicles also regard Gazali as a man who awaited an opportunity to rebel. According to Nasuh, Gazali believed he found the opportunity when Selim died because he thought that there would be a power vacuum. According to Nasuh, Gazali either killed the Sultan's men or converted them to his cause.⁵⁸⁵ According to Lütfi Paşa, upon hearing Selim I's death Gazali broke his pact [*'ahd*] and openly rebelled.⁵⁸⁶ Bostan argues that Gazali suffered from pride and lost his capacity to think, thus he made manifest his rebellion. The words Bostan uses for Gazali's actions all have to do with oppression as well as rebellion.⁵⁸⁷ Chronicles also define his actions as "treason" [*hıyânet*].⁵⁸⁸ Chronicles often emphasize Selim I's employment of Gazali instead of executing him; thereby stressing the villainy of Gazali through not only revolt but betrayal as well.⁵⁸⁹ Sa'di's moves forth the issue of divine kingship to imply that Gazali's revolt not only targeted political authority but also God's will. The author argues that since God appointed one of His servants to the position of *pâdişâh*, thus making this select servant superior to others; Gazali rebelled against the authority of God.⁵⁹⁰ Referring to a

⁵⁸³ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi II*, pp.296-7; Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, pp.300-1; Hammer, v.3, p. 6-8. For Venetian reports on Hayrbay's role, see esp. Sanuto: 29:586-9.

⁵⁸⁴ Bostan (TSK), 7a; Nasuh, 13a and 15a; Lütfi Paşa, p.244-5.

⁵⁸⁵ Nasuh, 14b: "... *eyyâm-ı fursata nâzir ve hengâm-ı kudrete muntazır olub durmuşlardı ...*" and 15a: "*eyyâm-ı fetret ve hengâm-ı fursattır diyü...*"

⁵⁸⁶ Lütfi Paşa, p.244.

⁵⁸⁷ Bostan (TSK), 7a: *tagallub, istiklâl, bagy, 'udvân*. Nasuh uses the word *tuğyân* as well as *'isyân*. Nasuh, 15a. Damascene historian Ibn Iyas also says that Gazali "became light headed and thoughtless." However, one needs to keep in mind that Ibn Iyas, though not an official historian, was writing in Ottoman Damascus. See, David Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate: Why did the Ottomans Spare the Mamluks of Egypt and Wipe out the Mamluks of Syria?" *Studia Islamica*, no.65 (1987), p.137.

⁵⁸⁸ Sa'di (SN), 120a; Nasuh, 15a.

⁵⁸⁹ Nasuh, 13b-14a. The author argues that Selim spared Gazali in the first place because he was a brave man.

⁵⁹⁰ Sa'di (SN), 120a.

Quranic verse relating the insistence of the Pharaoh on keeping Egypt for himself and his ill-behavior towards Moses, the author draws a parallel between Gazali and the Pharaoh. He then goes on with the message Gazali sent to Hayrbay whereby he claims right of inheritance with regard to Egypt. Through first reminding the Pharaoh, the author nullifies what might otherwise be a legitimate claim based on ancient custom.⁵⁹¹ Similarly, Nasuh states that one who adhered to religion would resort to treason whereby the author associates the revolt with a breach of religion. Nasuh also mentions the role of pride in the “deviance” of Gazali.⁵⁹² The author likens Gazali to Dimna, the treacherous jackal in *Khalila wa Dimna*.⁵⁹³ Nasuh also refers to Gazali as “ill-natured demon-humored” [*div-nijâd-ı bed-nihâd*].⁵⁹⁴ Through such literary devices chronicles not only villainize but also demonize Gazali to some extent.

The effort toward the suppression of Gazali’s challenge is viewed as a campaign [*sefer*] and his defeat as a conquest [*feth*] in chronicles. Nasuh, for example, defines the suppression of the revolt not only as a conquest, but as the beginning of the great feats of the Sultan and as a manifestation of the legitimate sovereignty of the Sultan.⁵⁹⁵ Although Süleyman was not active in the feat, the success is regarded to be his anyway. Nasuh, for example, comments that the Sultan while himself sat on his throne like a lion succeeded to make the enemies suffer and change their ways through moving his troops against them. Thus, he succeeded in bringing peace and quiet to the subjects under his protection.⁵⁹⁶ All chronicles emphasize the fact that all this happened under harsh

⁵⁹¹ Sa’di (SN), 121b. See Quran, 43:51: “And Pharaoh proclaimed among his people, saying: “O my people! *Does not the dominion of Egypt belong to me, (witness) these streams flowing underneath my (palace)? What! see ye not then?*” Sa’di quotes the part in italics. Message to Hayrbay: “*Ma’lûmunuzdır ki memâlik-i ‘Arab kadîmî mülk-i mevrûsumuz iken nâgâh elimizden çıkdı, haliyâ avan-ı fursat olub mülk yine bize intikâl etdi.*”

⁵⁹² Nasuh, 33a.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid*, 15a, and 28b: “*Ol Gazali ki mekr ü âlle Dimne misâl idi.*”

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 15b and 32b.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 22a, and 33a-b: “*Bu fethi mübîn ki hazret-i sâhib-kırân-ı nusret-karînin fâtiha-yı asâr-ı devleti olub, hâtem-i risâletin hicreti tarihinin dokuz yüz yigirmi yedi Saferinin on yedisinde vâki’ olan âyet-i bâhire-i hilâfet-i hâkân-ı ‘asr zâhir olub, mehâbet-i saltanat-ı kâhire-i kahramân-ı zamânla cihân-ı Mısr doldı.*”

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 36a: “*Sultân-ı zamân, rahşân-ı cihân-bahş-ı civân-baht – ‘izz nasruhu – hazretleri serîr-i hümayûn-ı gerdûn-nazîrinde katb-vâr karâr idüb, mevâkib-i kevâkib-*

weather conditions.⁵⁹⁷ This, again, seems to be a reminder on how determined Süleyman was to remove any trouble or wrong-doing from the beginning of his reign on.

The vast territorial expansion achieved within a couple of years brought with it the immediate need of manpower to administer and control the area. Selim I's decision to solve this problem had been to letting the Mamluks survive and appointing a local governor rather than an Ottoman one.⁵⁹⁸ Although this decision was in keeping with former Ottoman conquests,⁵⁹⁹ it was not free of risk. The surviving Mamluks could still form a power base and attempt to re-establish Mamluk rule in their former territories overthrowing Ottoman rule.⁶⁰⁰ David Ayalon argues that the vast territory given to the jurisdiction of one single magnate was a very dangerous departure from the Mamluk policy toward the region. Under the Mamluks Syria consisted of seven provinces, each with its own governor or viceroy accountable to Cairo. Such an administrative organization made it almost impossible for any one of these men to get powerful enough to manifest any ambition to possess the whole region by eliminating all others.⁶⁰¹ According to Ayalon, the revolt was a direct consequence of Selim I's policy. He goes on to say that this was a fortunate event for the Ottomans as Gazali "gave the

şümârı harekete getürmek ile etrâf ü eknâfda olan â'dâ-yı bed-râya deryâ-yı pür-âşub gibi ızdırab ü inkılâb viriüb, hümmâ-yı himâyetinde olan 'amme-i re'âyâyâ sükûn ü ârâm viridi." The lion analogy re-emphasizes the *Khalila wa Dimna* reference Nasuh employed in the earlier part of his account. Thus, he draws on a long-known tradition making a parallel between Sultan Süleyman/Lion and Gazali/Dimna.

⁵⁹⁷ Bostan (TSK), 8a-b; Nasuh, 21b; Sa'di (SN), 122b.

⁵⁹⁸ Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," p.126-7.

⁵⁹⁹ For Ottoman policy of employing local magnates after conquest, see Halil İnalçık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," *Studia Islamica*, 2 (1954), pp.103-129.

⁶⁰⁰ Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," p.132. Ayalon describes Selim I's decision as "utter folly" for which Ottomans had to pay dearly soon after.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.135. Ayalon attributes the decision to Selim I's lack of understanding about the region, without probing into similar practices following conquests elsewhere around the realm: "Now Sultan Selim with complete lack of knowledge of the circumstances in Syria, destroyed this well-trying pattern in one stroke, merging six of the old provinces into one, thus leaving in Syria only two provinces instead of the earlier seven, and handling over the by far bigger of the two to a Mamluk."

opportunity to put an end to their Mamluk experiment in that country.”⁶⁰² Bacque-Grammont links the revolt of Canberdi Gazali to Selim I’s policy toward the Safavis rather than Süleyman’s accession. The author argues that Selim must have known about Canberdi’s communication with Shah Ismail or that Selim could even have schemed for the communication for a definite purpose. According to this proposition, if Canberdi appeared inclined to revolt, this would give Selim the opportunity to allure Ismail in to Syria to help the rebel. Ismail’s movement would then be considered as attack on Ottoman soil. In this case, the army would not feel the same way about attacking him. But, Bacque-Grammont argues, Selim’s sudden death complicated the scheme and Canberdi had to continue on his own.⁶⁰³ Selim I seems to have trusted Gazali with the safe-guarding of the Syrian territories against Safavid transgression.

Damascene historian Ibn Tulun [d.1546] reports that in February 1518 [Muharram 924] Selim I instructed the newly appointed governor Gazali to watch the Safavis and gather information about them. This was the first and only instruction by the Sultan to Gazali.⁶⁰⁴ According to one report, Gazali let Selim I know that any demonstration of his disobedience in the region would be just to make the *Sophi* believe so. Once Ismail came to believe in his fake rebellious intentions, Gazali would catch him.⁶⁰⁵ With or without the aim of drawing Ismail into conflict, it seems very probable that Gazali planned the insurrection with the intention of restoring Mamluk rule in the region before Selim I’s death. According to Sadi, for example, Sultan Selim was aware of the ill-intentions of Gazali but did not live long enough to eliminate him.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰² *Ibid*, p.134.

⁶⁰³ Bacque-Grammont, “Eastern Policy of Süleyman,” p.222.

⁶⁰⁴ Ayalon, “The End of the Mamluk Sultanate,” p.130. The instruction to inform about the developments on the borders should not be regarded as an instruction specifically required of Gazali. Ottoman administrative strategy required such informative reports by governors in the border zones and tributaries. For a discussion of the issue, see Viorel Panaite, “The Voivodes of the Danubian Principalities – As *Harâcgüzârlar* of the Ottoman Sultans,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol.19, nos.1-2 (Summer, 2003), pp.59-78.

⁶⁰⁵ Sanuto, 29:151: “... *el ditto Gazelli fa intender al Signor che tal demonstrazion che’l fa di non obedirlo in qualche parte, è per dar credulità al Sophi, azìò fidandose de lui el possi averlo vivo o morto a beneficio di lui Signor turco.*”

⁶⁰⁶ Sa’di (SN), 121a-b.

Nasuh's account on the revolt emphasizes that former mamluks, who were dispersed around the region after Selim I's conquest, kept gathering around Gazali.⁶⁰⁷ Damascene accounts also confirm the local popularity and support Gazali enjoyed. Local historian Ibn Iyas relates the issue as such:

When al-Ghazali revolted the people of Syria [*ahl al-Shâm*], including the commanders, the army, the bedouins and the semi-nomads joined him and said to him: 'get up and proclaim yourself Sultan. For there is none in front of you whom you have to fear. As for us, we shall fight by your side to death.' He was enticed by their words and proclaimed himself Sultan, and he became light headed and thoughtless. And how many a time haste was followed by regret! Thus he became Sultan in Syria, giving himself the title al-Malik al-Ashraf Abû al-Futûhât. People kissed the ground in his presence, and his name was mentioned in the Friday sermon in the Umayyad mosque and in the other pulpits of Damascus. When he became Sultan people told him: 'Go to Egypt, fight Khayrbak and take possession of Egypt, to which he answered: 'Egypt is in my grasp [*fî qabdat yadî*]. I shall [first] go to Aleppo⁶⁰⁸ and liberate it from the hands of the Ottomans, so that I shall not have to worry about my rear. Than I shall go to Egypt'. Had he marched on Egypt before having marched on Aleppo, it would have been better for him, for the army of the Circassian mamluks and the people of Egypt [*ahl Mîsr*] and all the bedouins would have risen against Khayrbak and would have joined him [i.e. al-Ghazali], for he was well-liked by the people [*fa-innahu kâna muhabban lil-ra'îyya*].⁶⁰⁹

Venetian reports prior to Selim I's death attest to the fact that Gazali was already well-liked and obeyed all over Syria "like a sultan." A contemporary Venetian observer believed that Gazali has much power, resembling that of a sultan. He reported that all the merchants were on good terms with Gazali, except for the governor of Tripoli.⁶¹⁰ Captain Bartolomeo da Mosto wrote from the east coast of Cyprus, Famagusta, as early as June 1520 that in Damascus Gazali could well be believed to be "sultan." Along with the fact that "slaves" continued to gather around him, the popularity of Gazali led the captain to guess that one day Gazali would bring about a change in Syria.⁶¹¹ A letter by

⁶⁰⁷ Nasuh, 14a-15a.

⁶⁰⁸ Aleppo had a major defensive function in the Mamluk defense system against both Ottomans and Safavis. Its role as defensive key point would continue after the conquest of Selim I who fortified the walls, towers and gates during his stay in the city in 1518. See Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," p.129, fn.7 and p.131.

⁶⁰⁹ As quoted in *ibid*, p.138.

⁶¹⁰ Sanuto, 29:151.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid*, 154.

Bartolomeo da Mosto, captain of Cyprus, dated 15 September 1520, gives signals of unrest in the newly acquired eastern provinces. The borders of the troubled region are clearly defined in the letter:

In all parts, starting from the Greater India and Lower Egypt at the mounts of Syria and over the Euphrates, Caramania, Anatolia, Persia and then in the Black Sea, this *Signor Turco* is feared, despised by all neighboring *signori*. If any opportunity comes up they shall rebel, likewise in the land he has acquired in Syria. Everyone is on the edge, even if a major war does not break out, they wish to keep on raiding until a better opportunity comes up.⁶¹²

Captain Bartolomeo's letter conveys the rumors in Cairo that Gazali would march against the *Signor Turco* because the Sultan was already aware of his schemes. Captain Bartolomeo stated that Gazali is well-liked by the Mamluks.⁶¹³ It is worth underlining that this is before Süleyman's accession. It is also unlikely that anyone in the eastern provinces would yet suspect the death of Selim I.

If Captain Bartolomeo was right in his observations, Gazali seems to have thought he found the "better opportunity" with the death of Selim I, as a letter dated 27 October by Carlo Prioli from Damascus demonstrates. Prioli says that the news of Selim's death reached the city four days before. He reports that Gazali called on him and said: "Consul, he who made everyone suffer and wished to make himself Emperor of the universe is dead. Now is the time to awaken and to assail these Turks." Gazali is also reported to have wanted to be lord of Syria and asked the consul what the Signoria would think about it. According to this report, Gazali sent messengers to Shah Ismail and to Hayrbay to tell them that it was time to act. Prioli also reports that Süleyman's letter of proclamation reached Gazali whereby he was informed about the accession of Sultan Süleyman and the renewal of his license as governor of Damascus.⁶¹⁴ By 6 November, the news Gazali's ambitions were the talk of the people in Beirut. A Venetian wrote to his father that "when the news of the death of the *Signor turco* reached Damascus on 14 October, it occurred to *signor Gazelli*, of slave origin, who held Damascus in the name of *Signor Turco*, to occupy the lordship of Syria for himself." He then tells about how Gazali's men took hold of Beirut and how the

⁶¹² *Ibid*, 366.

⁶¹³ *Ibid*, 367-8.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid*, 509.

inhabitants were forced to cooperate with him.⁶¹⁵ Damascene historian Ibn Tulun provides a slightly different timeline. According to Ibn Tulun two messengers arrived in Damascus on 24 October [12 Dhu'l-Qada] and broke the news of Selim I's death and Süleyman's accession. Gazali was in Beirut at this time. Three days later, on 27 October [15 Dhu'l-Qada], he returned to Damascus and declared revolt. Two days later he besieged the citadel. Ibn Tulun tells that once Gazali took hold of the citadel, he put on the Circassian dress and abolished the Ottoman dress, which conveyed that he wished to return to the "old ways" as soon as possible.⁶¹⁶

The Venetian bailo in Istanbul wrote to Venice about the revolt on 18 November, reporting that Gazali proclaimed himself "sultan" in Aleppo where he was situated with a huge number of people.⁶¹⁷ An uneasiness regarding Gazali was already murmured in Venice in the beginning of November 1520. Rumor had it that *Gazelli Signor di Damasco* who had many followers defied an order from the Porte concerning the minting of coins.⁶¹⁸ Although Ottoman accounts are silent on any such event, the timing of the rumors corresponds to Süleyman's accession. One wonders whether the defied order has anything to do with minting coins in Süleyman's name.

Various Venetian reports confirm that upon receiving the news of Süleyman's accession, festivities were held for three days in Damascus, Tripoli and Aleppo.⁶¹⁹ According to Zacharia Loredan, the general provider in Famagusta, at Tripoli the death of Selim I and the accession of his son Süleyman was announced on 21 October. Loredan confirms having heard that after performing three days of festivities, Gazali took hold of the castle of Damascus and killed all the *Turks* in the city, thus proclaimed himself *Soldan*.⁶²⁰ Refusal to participate in such an act of deference would be "a way of being told that open insurrection has begun."⁶²¹ Thus, through executing the

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid*, 523-4.

⁶¹⁶ Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," p.137.

⁶¹⁷ Sanuto, 29:509.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid*, 365.

⁶¹⁹ See, for example, *ibid*, 520-1, 524-5, and 528. Both letters confirm that Gazali left Damascus on 2 November for Aleppo.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid*, 526.

⁶²¹ Goffman, "Interaction Ritual," p.271.

celebrations Gazali performed the ritual act of “public acceptance” required of him and demonstrated that he knew the rules, which is not necessarily the same thing with “the invisible, ambiguous, private sentiment that is socially and morally binding.”⁶²² Theoretically, not acting up to the set of rules embodied in the celebrations, the rebellion becomes even sharper. On the other hand, if Ibn Tulun is right in saying that Gazali was not present in Damascus when the news came, the celebrations were performed without him thus do not have any demonstrative value on the part of Gazali. Ibn Tulun’s account brings Gazali in Damascus three days after the initial receipt of the imperial proclamation, by that time the celebrations would be over.

The revolt in Syria was not only an outright challenge to the authority of Süleyman, but also a threat to financial and commercial life in a vital area. If the rebellion had to be suppressed immediately to save damage to the Sultan’s prestige and authority, it had to be dealt with as soon as possible to eliminate insecurity in the region and revitalize trade. The concern with trade is especially apparent in Venetian accounts. In a letter dated 12 November 1520, Alvise d’Armer, the lieutenant of Cyprus, reported from Nicosia, that Francesco Zacharia left to bring the tribute due to the Sultan. However, because of the disturbances which occurred in Syria after the death of the sultan, he could not go beyond Tripoli. Thus he forsook handing the tribute and came back to Cyprus.⁶²³ The Venetian consul in Damascus reported more than once that Ferhad Paşa assured him that news would be sent to Cyprus informing that trade was safe and merchants could resume their trade without worrying about being harmed.⁶²⁴ Venetian merchants seem to have put on hold all their trading activity on the eastern Mediterranean. On 6 February, the governor of Tripoli lamented to the authorities in Cyprus over the exigency of robes which they needed to give to Arab magnates and others. The governor asked the authorities in Cyprus to convince merchants to come back to Tripoli. He assured them that it was safe and merchants would not be offended.⁶²⁵ Next day, the judge of Tripoli also wrote a letter confirming the words of

⁶²² Rappaport, “Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” pp.434-5.

⁶²³ Sanuto, 29:507.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid*, 30:78-9.

⁶²⁵ Sanuto, 30:82-3.

the governor.⁶²⁶ A Venetian in Aleppo expresses his concern about a possible attack by Gazali on the caravan to Mecca, which he thinks would bring great ruin.⁶²⁷

The letter of the Venetian consul, dated 15 February, confirmed that Ottoman forces defeated and killed Gazali on 5 February, and entered Damascus without any obstacles. Once the Ottoman troops were in the city, the consul reported, they started pillaging the city. The consul's house was also attacked; however he and his family were saved by an esteemed janissary. According to the report, once the pillaging was over the consul was summoned by Ferhad Paşa. When he went to the vizier together with some merchants, Ferhad Paşa related his misery over the unfortunate occurrence and promised to make up for the loss. The consulate also notes that the vizier stated that what was done against the Venetians was contrary to the wishes of the Sultan.⁶²⁸ Some Ottoman accounts reflect some trouble following the entry of imperial troops in Damascus. Nasuh reports that Ferhad Paşa executed an officer of a household cavalry regiment [*silâhdâr*] who behaved oppressively towards the inhabitants of the city. According to Nasuh's version of the events, the rest of the troops were so angry at this execution that they attacked the tent of the vizier to kill him. They were only stopped by the intervention of Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ.⁶²⁹ Bostan, on the other hand, defies any act of violence in Damascus. He says that on Ferhad Paşa's orders guards were sent in the city before hand. The city was so well protected that the soldiers never touched a thing belonging to the inhabitants.⁶³⁰ Through such accounts of remittal or smooth occupation demonstrating opposition against any kind of arbitrary act of violence, the Sultan's reputation of being "just" remains intact.

The head of Gazali was sent to Istanbul along with a proclamation of victory.⁶³¹ Italian reports sent to Venice about the incident suggest that the head was first displayed

⁶²⁶ *Ibid*, 83-4.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid*, 80.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid*, 79, 89.

⁶²⁹ Nasuh, 33b-34a.

⁶³⁰ Bostan (TSK), 10a.

⁶³¹ *Ibid*, 33b. In a letter dated 3 March, Contarini informs that on 26 February two messengers arrived from Syria and brought the head of Gazali to the Sultan along with the heads of two other captains. Sanuto, 30:137.

on a lance in Damascus for three days before being sent to Istanbul.⁶³² Through such an exhibition not only a lesson was given, but also the death of the “traitor” was made known to all for sure. This instance also served as an example of what happened to traitors, as a conventional maxim said: “Do not assume that a traitor can be successful / He is either decapitated or hung”⁶³³

While Gazali was executed as a “rebel” and a “traitor”, Hayrbay who refused to participate in the movement was rewarded. Venetian reports tell that the Sultan sent Hayrbay a richly embroidered robe along with a sword allegedly belonging to Sultan Bayezid. According to Venetian perception, these gifts signified the love Süleyman had for Hayrbay and meant that he regarded the latter as a father while offering himself as a son.⁶³⁴ By communicating Gazali’s invitation to rebellion to the court and thus obstructing Gazali’s intentions, Hayrbay was actually following Süleyman’s orders in the proclamation. Through advising on the “urgent affairs of the state,” paying due attention to “mischief” and thus helping “remove treacherous and hostile cliques” as well as “oppression” Hayrbay proves to be a loyal subject of the Sultan in this story. Sultan Süleyman, on the other hand, emerges as the overseeing ruler who brought order to the realm.

2.4 First Impressions

Many of the accounts stress the concept of “merit” in Süleyman’s accession,⁶³⁵ thus introducing his individuality. Merit, in this case, is based both on the divine grace involved in Süleyman’s sovereignty, and on his dynastic qualities. The emphasis on

⁶³² Sanuto, 30:308.

⁶³³ Lütfi Paşa, p.245: “*Hâyını sanma ki ber-hurdâr olur / Ya kesilür başı ya berdâr olur*” This reminds one the old wisdom on the decreasing life and livelihood of a rebel, see Emre, *Terceme-i Pendname-i Attâr*, Azmi Bilgin (ed.) (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1998), p.114. For an earlier use of the exact same couplet by an Ottoman writer see, Tursun Beg, *Tarih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, p.118.

⁶³⁴ Sanuto, 30:308.

⁶³⁵ See, for example, KPZ, X:36-7: “...*liyâkât ü istihkâk ile yer yüzünde hilâfet hil'âtini ve saltanat libâsını giydi...*”

merit, especially in earlier accounts, implies a legitimizing tone, or even a confirmation. According to Sadi, as the crowd gathered to welcome Süleyman on the day of his arrival into Istanbul they saw that he was a “Shadow of God” [*sâye-i Allah*]. He emphasizes this point by stating that “on his royal face, the blaze of state [*envâr-ı devlet*] and marks of sovereignty [*âsâr-ı saltanat*] were so apparent that the brightness of the rays of the sun appeared dim as a candle light in day light.”⁶³⁶ Describing the enthronement, Sadi mentions that looking at Süleyman’s face the onlookers saw “a youth with the mind of an old sage.” They also realized his likeness to Sultan Selim in terms of valor and magnificence [*şehâmet ü mehâbet*]. They liked and appreciated what they saw.⁶³⁷

The celestial signs inaugurating Süleyman’s sovereignty can also be observed in contemporary accounts. A featured aspect of Süleyman’s succession, in this respect, is his being the tenth “caesar” and sultan from the Ottoman dynasty.⁶³⁸ In the beginning of his account, Bostan makes astronomical/astrological designations. Looking at the location of the planets on the day of Süleyman’s arrival, he interprets the signs regarding the coming reign and states how auspicious it was to be. According to the author, Scorpio was on the rise and there was a conjunction of Jupiter, Venus and the Sun. Jupiter attested to the stability and endurance of fortune [*devlet*] and felicity [*sa’âdet*]. According to Bostan’s “astronomical” interpretation, the position of the planets attested to huge campaigns, as well as signifying that the new sultan would defeat the enemies of *din ü devlet* and all nations [*tavâ’if-i milel*]. The sun signified power and majesty, the moon meant that all people would reach prosperity. The ascending and descending nodes signified that his army would get stronger by the day and his enemies would fall. Through this cosmological reading, Bostan remains assured that Süleyman ascended the throne under a very auspicious sky.⁶³⁹

⁶³⁶ Sa’di (SN), 108b.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid*, 110b-111a.

⁶³⁸ Nasuh, 12b: “... *Onuncı kayseriyim mülk-i Rûm’ın...*”; KPZ, X:31: “*karn-ı saltanat-ı hümayunı ‘âşir-i kurûn olmağın karnuhu ‘aşir [926] cülûs-ı hümayûnuna tarih oldu. Eyyâm-ı devletinde ve hengâm-ı saltanatında ahkâm-ı şeri’ât temâm-ı ihkâmda ve metâ-ı mârifet ü kemâl tamâm-ı revnâk ü revâcda olmasına delâlet itdiğü için revnâk-ı şer’ [926] dahi muvâfık-ı hâl ve mutâbık-ı sâl tarih olmuştur.*”

⁶³⁹ Bostan (TSK), 3b-4b. In the first two chapters of *Akbarnama* Mughal court historian Abu'l-Fazl employs a similar device and relates the beginning of Akbar’s reign

Many of the contemporary accounts emphasize the peaceful succession in Süleyman's case. This was the first peaceful succession case Ottomans witnessed after that of Murad II in 1451. Nasuh underlines the fact that Süleyman became sultan without having to shed blood; he neither had to hurt his father nor fight and kill brothers. It was Sultan Selim who worked hard and suffered the troubles of the world without being able to enjoy the results. Sultan Süleyman, on the other hand, took over his throne and attained fortune.⁶⁴⁰ Although Sa'di remains silent about absence of effort or trouble on Süleyman's part, he emphasizes that the deceased sultan having crushed the enemy and having taken all kinds of trouble to correct the world, died without finding peace for himself.⁶⁴¹ Another author of the same conviction is Lütfi Paşa. He asserts that Süleyman ascended the throne without strife in the realm.⁶⁴² Lütfi Paşa goes on to state that Sultan Selim suffered the troubles of this world, turning it into an orchard by removing its mud and garbage. According to the author "Sultan Süleyman took possession of that orchard without effort and hardship, and enjoyed its fruits."⁶⁴³ The theme of enjoying the fruits of the efforts of the father appears to be part of the political vocabulary. Lütfi Paşa's phrase brings to mind Machiavelli's comments on succession following an extraordinarily successful father are noteworthy in this respect:

based on astrological signs: "Various delightful points arise from the consideration of this auspicious horoscope. The first is that in the tenth Angle, which is the house of sovereignty, the sun is showing increase of light. Now the main point for consideration with regard to the hour of an Accession is the propitiousness of the tenth house, viz., that there should be a propitiousness befitting the approach of a world-adornor. Imâm-Abû-l-Muhammad of Ghazni, who was one of the great masters of astronomical prognostication, has laid it down that it is good to have the Ascendant in Scorpio so that the tenth Angle may be Leo, the house of the sun. God be praised! Here we have the sun come of his own accord into the tenth house and diffusing the rays of auspiciousness and fortune!" *The Akbarnama of Abu'l-Fazl*, H. Beveridge (trans) (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1902).

⁶⁴⁰ Nasuh, 11a-b.

⁶⁴¹ Sa'di (SN), 113b.

⁶⁴² Lütfi Paşa, p.243. Lütfi Paşa uses the word "*râygân*" to describe the accession. The word can be translated either as "gratis" or as "abundant." Either way, it seems to be a heavily charged expression.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid*, p.243: *Ve memleketinde cenk ü cidâl olmadın, râygân tahta geçip oturdı. Güya ki, Sultân Selîm bu dünyânın zahmetün çeküb ve hâr u hâşâkın giderüb bağ u bostân eyledi. Ve Sultân Süleymân zahmetsiz ve meşakkatsiz ol bağ u bostânın yemişlerin tasarruf idüb, mütenâvil eyledi.*"

David was undoubtedly a man of the greatest excellence in arms, religion, and judgment; his ability was so exceptional that after he had conquered and overcome all his neighbors, he left to his son Solomon a peaceful kingdom, which Solomon was able to preserve with the arts of peace and not those of war, and Solomon was happily able to enjoy the fruits of his father's ability. But he was unable to leave the kingdom to his son Rehoboam, who, lacking his grandfather's ability and his father's good fortune, remained heir to a sixth part of the kingdom only with great effort. Bajazet, sultan of the Turks, although a man who was more a lover of peace than of war, was able to enjoy the fruits of his father Mahomet's labors; his father, like David, having beaten down his neighbors, left his son a secure kingdom that could easily be maintained with the arts of peace. But if the present ruler, his son Selim, had resembled his father and not his grandfather, that kingdom would have come to ruin, and it is evident that Selim is about to surpass the glory of his grandfather.⁶⁴⁴

Giovio explains that Selim killed his two brothers and many of his nephews so that he could leave the Ottoman throne to his son Süleyman without competition.⁶⁴⁵ Writing later, Mustafa Ali evaluates the absence of conflict on Süleyman's accession as a benefaction granted from God.⁶⁴⁶

As Selim I was perceived with awe in foreign political circles, the news of his death was well-received in the West. Actually it seems to have caused great joy among the rulers of Christendom. According to Paolo Giovio, Pope Leo was the happiest among all. Upon hearing the death of the *Soldano*, the Pope celebrated the *letanie* earlier, organizing processions in Rome. Leo X sent word all over Europe for organizing a campaign against the common enemy. "It was apparent to all," wrote Giovio, "that a fierce lion had left behind a mild lamb as successor, for Solimano was young, inexperienced and of very quiet disposition." But he also stated that later on many were to be deceived by this false appearance.⁶⁴⁷ According to Venetian reports,

⁶⁴⁴ Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella (trans.) (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.72-3.

⁶⁴⁵ Giovio, *Elogi*, p.222: "... perciò che egli haveva fatto morire Acomath e Corcuth, suoi fratelli carnali, e tanti figliuoli di suoi fratelli giovenetti di real presenza, per apparecchiare a Solimano suo figliuolo il seggio dell'imperio Othomanno libero da ognii concorrenza."

⁶⁴⁶ Ali [KA], p.1058

⁶⁴⁷ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diii. A sixteenth-century English translation of Giovo's episode reads: "Neverthesse as to wchye Soliman, it seemed to al men that a gentle lambe, succeded a fierce Lyon: seyng that Soliman hymselfe was but younge, and of no experience, and that he was besyde even of nature (as men did hym reporte)

Pope Leo X received the news while he was out hunting. Confirming what he heard with the letters from Venice, he is said to have congratulated the Venetian ambassador for such good news. He is attributed to have said: “He [Selim I] was a wicked man, we shall now be in peace and Christianity will be able remain secure.”⁶⁴⁸ Papal reaction to Selim’s death seems to be very similar to that of Mehmed II’s. When Pope Sixtus IV confirmed the death of Mehmed II through Venice, he organized a mass at the church of Santa Maria del Popolo to thank God with the attendance of all cardinals and ambassadors. The “happy news” was announced to the inhabitants of Rome with gunfires and bells and was celebrated with fireworks at night.⁶⁴⁹

On 11 November, Cardinal Campeggio wrote to Wolsey from Rome saying that he received news that the “sultan of the Turks is dead. Selim, the dread of the whole world has been cut off by pestilence, and Solyman his son has succeeded.”⁶⁵⁰ Another hopeful reaction came from Hungary. Venetian ambassador in Buda, Lorenzo Orio wrote on 18 November that “the death of the *Turco* has been confirmed there, as well as his son’s taking over the state.” Orio mentioned the general opinion on the new Sultan: “He’s peaceful and he will not be against Christians.” He also notes that this letter was written the day after Hungary received the “news of the coronation of Cesarea Maestà.”⁶⁵¹ The news reached France via Venice on 5 November. Badoer, the ambassador of Venice in France, wrote in a letter dated November 6 about the reception of the news in France. When Badoer gave Francis I the news, the king had already heard it but Badoer’s statement confirmed the ambiguous news. Present in the room were also the ambassador of the Pope and the admiral [*Armirajo*]. The admiral suggested that it was the best time to chase the Turk out of Europe.” Francis replied: “If the Pope permits that the other Christian princes do the same, I will be the first to start,

altogether given to rest and quietnes. But this false opinion begyled manye, and among theym Gazelles chefely.” Paulus Jovius, *A Short Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles, compyled by Paulus Jovius byshop of Nucerule, and dedicated to Charles the V. Emperour*. Pater Ashton (trans) (London: Fletestrete, 1547), fol.ci.

⁶⁴⁸ Sanuto, 29:342-3.

⁶⁴⁹ Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.407-8.

⁶⁵⁰ *Letters and Papers*, III:388. As Selim I did not die of pestilence, the report is also demonstration of how information often circulated in distorted forms.

⁶⁵¹ Sanuto, 29:452.

and if need be I shall go in person.” Badoer says that the king did not argue any further, but only asked about the qualities of the “son of the Turk.”⁶⁵²

The news of Selim’s death and Süleyman’s accession spread mainly from Venice.⁶⁵³ The news seems to have reached Venice on 21 October.⁶⁵⁴ On 2 November it was confirmed through a letter from Ragusa, dated 23 October, that “the son of the *signor Turco*, named *Sulaiman* peacefully became *Signor* in Constantinople.”⁶⁵⁵ The first piece of information to the world about the qualities of *signor Suliman* was from Tomasso Contarini in his letter dated September 30. Since the letter was written on the day Süleyman arrived in Istanbul, the bailo could not have seen or heard much about him yet. Nevertheless, he informed Venice that Süleyman was 25 years old, just and of perfect ability [*qualita perfeta*]. He also conveyed his hope that the new ruler would keep the peace with the *Signoria*.⁶⁵⁶ His letter, dated October 4, containing pretty much the same description was sent to other Christian rulers by the *Signoria*.⁶⁵⁷ His report dated 15 October provides further information since he had an audience with Sultan Süleyman by then. He was better informed. According to this report, the *Signor* was 25 years old. He was tall and lean. He had a delicate complexion. His neck was a little too long. He had a small face, a hooked nose, a thin mustache and little beard. He had a very agreeable face. His skin was white, but pale. Contarini reported the general opinion of the people that Süleyman was wise, prudent and liked to study. Contarini also heard people saying that he was a peaceful man who wanted to attend to his pleasure and thus wished that Piri Mehmed Paşa govern. The report also mentions Süleyman’s three sons. According to Contarini, everyone was hopeful of his good government.⁶⁵⁸ Contarini’s remark seems to reflect the general mood occasioned by Süleyman’s accession both domestically and in the foreign political arena.

⁶⁵² *Ibid*, 403.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid*, 313, 368.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 303.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 339.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 357.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 368-9.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 391-2.

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the issue of transference and marking of sovereign authority. In this context, we have tried to trace the transformation of Prince Süleyman into Sultan Süleyman through a process involving a set of ceremonial and symbolic devices rather than a single moment of accession. As we have seen, the process started with his arrival in Istanbul which has a dual significance. Revealing the death of Sultan Selim on one hand, the arrival manifests Süleyman's claim on and appropriation of the "throne." In this sense, we have interpreted the arrival as the initial phase of transference of sovereignty. In this initial phase, we have seen that appropriation of the seat of government along with the imperial household formed the basic elements of the transformation in question. This seemingly smooth appropriation was based on established norms emphasizing dynastic right and divine right of kingship. Yet the dominance of the sense of an end versus a beginning in contemporary accounts hinders an absolute perception of total transference of sovereignty. This takes us to the second phase of accession whereby the defunct sultan is transformed into a valued ancestor, giving way to the new ruler. Marked by the funeral of Sultan Selim, we have argued that this phase to signify the transition between the end and the beginning. The funeral ceremonial complete with the reception, the procession and the service at an imperial mosque served as elements of dynastic continuity in this transition. So did Süleyman's presence as a dominating figure helped break the sense of an abrupt end and beginning. The construction of a mosque and tomb complex further reinforced the point. Now that Süleyman was left as the sole claimant of sovereignty, we have identified the third phase with the quite ambiguous term of "enthronement." This phase marked the transference of sovereignty through presentations of obedience. While subjects, or dependents, of various ranks presented their loyalty through acts of deference, they also confirmed their acceptance of the transformation. When an official kisses the hand of the new sultan he demonstrates his allegiance to the new sultan as well as his acceptance of the set of ties and values the sultan represents. The ritual [*bi'at*] figures both as "symbolic representation of social contract" and as "consummation of social contract."⁶⁵⁹ This silent contract was confirmed by Süleyman

⁶⁵⁹ Rappaport, "Obvious Aspects of Ritual," p.434.

through bestowal of gifts and promotions, as well as renewal of offices. The transference of sovereignty was registered by yet other means in this phase; namely the official proclamations sent to interested parties emphasizing once again dynastic and divine right to rule along with the right of *hutbe* and *sikke*. With this the transference was complete and sovereignty now rested with Sultan Süleyman.

In the second part of this chapter, we have examined how Sultan Süleyman marked and established his sovereignty as an individual ruler in the first few months of his reign. As we have seen, the main notion employed in this sense appears to be justice. Justice as understood by contemporaries in opposition to oppression and in relation to impartiality is perceived as the main building block of “social order” in sixteenth century mentality. It is not only a virtue expected of the ruler, but a God-given characteristic of kingship. In other words, by performing deeds of virtue, Sultan Süleyman not only proves that he is an able ruler but also the divine sanction related to his rule is confirmed. We have also argued that a major rebellion turned out to be an opportunity to strengthen his newly acquired sovereignty rather than proving to be a threat to his authority. Through criminalizing an “independence” attempt, Sultan Süleyman was able to emerge as a liberator removing oppression.

CHAPTER 3

“THE WORLD-CONQUERING RULER”: *SULTÂN-I CİHÂN-GÎR*

*Power easily acquires titles but titles do not acquire power.*⁶⁶⁰

3.1. Defining the Problem: Consolidation of Sovereign Power and Building a Reputation for Sultan Süleyman

Having discussed acquisition of sovereign authority through ceremonial and conceptual means of in Chapter 2, this chapter examines consolidation of power vis-à-vis the person of Süleyman, most specifically through building a personal reputation based on military prowess and values attached to it. Sixteenth century was a time when the association between glory and military success was at the peak. Such an association in collective mentality required bold expansionist policies. The campaigns Sultan Süleyman personally led in 1521 and 1522 indicate how war making became a tool in consolidating *his* sovereign power and building a reputation at the beginning of a new reign. The underlying motives of the respective conquests of Belgrade⁶⁶¹ and Rhodes⁶⁶²

⁶⁶⁰ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.94.

⁶⁶¹ For a factual summary of the 1521 campaign see: *Resimli-haritalı Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, (İstanbul: İskit Yayını,1957) pp.794-8; Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol.2, Nilüfer Epçeli (trans), Kemal Beydilli (trans. ed.), (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), pp.312-5; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi II*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1949), pp.298-300. For contemporary Ottoman accounts of the 1521 campaign: KPZ, X:47-122; Lütfi Paşa, pp.245-8; Sa'di (SN), 123b-143b; *Tabakat*, 41a-65a; Bostan (TSK), 13a-27b; Nasuh, 36b-47a.

⁶⁶² For a factual summary of the 1522 campaign, see: *Resimli-haritalı Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.800-8; Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, vol.2, pp.312-5; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi II*, pp.301-4. For contemporary Ottoman accounts of the 1522 campaign, see Necati Avcı, *Tabib Ramazan: Er-Risale el-fethiyye er-rodossiye es-*

and were made compatible with justifying motifs, in other words legitimized. Codes of political behavior, military strategy, and ritual instances reveal how actions and processes were legitimized and rationalized. Lastly, we shall take a look at the official presentations of the two campaigns which themselves project the desired image. Comparison of domestic and foreign reception of the two campaigns provides at least some insight to the compatibility or incompatibility between projection and its reception as well as any differences or similarities between domestic and foreign perceptions.

Much of the manner in which Sultan Süleyman achieved his reputation in the medium term seems to be in line with Machiavelli's rhetorical, though also pragmatic, remarks on reputation building. According to Machiavelli, a man can build himself a reputation in three ways. Firstly, from his father, as people expect the son to resemble the father. However, this kind of reputation is risky because if the man does not live up to the expectations, it will soon collapse. Secondly, he can keep worthy company around him and people would think that a man who keeps such good company should be reputable. However, he still needs to prove himself or the goodwill will cancel out. Thirdly, one can perform some extraordinary deed to prove himself, which Machiavelli praises as the most effective and lasting method.⁶⁶³ Süleyman had the advantage of not only royal birth but that of being the unchallenged heir to throne and titles of an already acknowledged ruler, Sultan Selim. Furthermore, he inherited not only the realm and titles of his father, but his father's reputable men as well. In this sense, as we have discussed in the previous chapter, he already had a generic image before him which he could, or rather was expected to, appropriate. The enthronement, pledges, proclamations and even the suppression of a major rebellion on his account in the first few months following his accession completed the ceremonial and conceptual appropriation of this image in the short term. In the medium term, how was the image to be actively appropriated, maintained and enhanced? How was it to be transformed from the generic image into a tailor-made one? Retrospectively speaking, the most obvious device in transforming the generic image of a newly enthroned sultan of the House of Osman into

Süleymaniyye, Unpublished PhD Dissertation (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1993); KPZ, X:127-88; Lütü Paşa, pp.248-51; *Tabakat*, 74b-104a; *Münşe'at*, I:529-40; Sa'di (SN), 143b-159a; Bostan (TSK), 34b-42a; Nasuh, 63a-87a.

⁶⁶³ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.335.

a tailor-made image of Sultan Süleyman in the medium term seems to have been war-making.⁶⁶⁴

Utilizing the benefit of time, such an approach allows understanding how the underlying motives, norms and consequences of these campaigns function as constituent elements of the reputation and image of Sultan Süleyman.

3.2. Waging War in Early Sixteenth Century

War was an integral part of sixteenth-century mentality which inevitably brought with it the assumption that all princes should be skillful war leaders. Another current assumption was that all states must be prepared to fight at any time due to jealous and ambitious neighbors. Belief in cycles, whether fatalistic or moralizing, meant that total absence of war was not natural; it was either too good to be true or it meant luxurious degeneration.⁶⁶⁵ War in the sixteenth century was also a way to advance one's position in peace negotiations. If one could sufficiently damage the enemy or acquire some territory, he would have an upper hand at negotiations.⁶⁶⁶ Early modern states were military institutions to a large extent. In this sense, the capability to master military activity was a major expectation from the ruler. The honor and reputation gained therewith was vital. As Frank Tallett puts it:

⁶⁶⁴ This was true for Ottoman rulers in general as Halil İnalcık asserts: "It had been the custom of every Ottoman Sultan to begin his reign with a major victory or conquest, which was considered as a sign of his ability and good fortune." İnalcık, "State, Sovereignty, and Law," p.67.

⁶⁶⁵ Hale, "Sixteenth-Century Explanations of War and Violence," p.22.

⁶⁶⁶ Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchies*, p.3. In this sense, war itself is a means of negotiation. Modern political science is quite in agreement with such an approach, exemplified for instance by R. Harrison Wagner: "Although war and negotiation are usually presented as alternatives to each other, I shall claim that war is best understood as a process of negotiation. Thus, while adversaries can certainly choose to negotiate rather than fight; if they fight, it is because each sees fighting as a way to influence the outcome of negotiations." R. Harrison Wagner, "Peace, War, and the Balance of Power," *The American Political Science Review*, vol.88, no.3 (Sept. 1994), p.595. In this sense, military victory is not enough by itself, but needs to be consolidated by political and diplomatic means acceptable to the defeated party. Handel, *Masters of War*, pp.xviii-xix, 16.

Moreover, although monarchs saw it as their duty to maintain social harmony, promote trade and industry and see to the welfare of their subjects, their chief concern was with the pursuit of *gloire* which was attained chiefly through the waging of war; while the major task of their bureaucratic and fiscal apparatus was to procure the resources of men, money and supplies, which were the essential prerequisite of this pursuit.⁶⁶⁷

It is not surprising to see Süleyman waging war to a neighbor as one of the first actions of his reign. Not only did Islam impose the duty of *jihad*, but also the prevailing ideology of kingship required engagement in war. As was the case with his contemporaries,⁶⁶⁸ the power newly acquired by Süleyman required that the credentials be set right at the beginning of his reign, or else he would risk seeming weak and becoming victim to a neighbor. A keen observer of early sixteenth-century politics, Machiavelli not only emphasized that “nothing brings a prince more prestige than great campaigns and striking demonstrations of his personal abilities”⁶⁶⁹ but defined weak rulers as “those who are not engaged in preparing for war.”⁶⁷⁰ The honor and reputation obtained through war was the keystone of Charles V’s grand strategy, for instance.⁶⁷¹

Islamic theory regarded war to be a natural phenomenon in the context of the relations of Muslims to non-Muslims. This conception of war was based on the Islamic claim of universality. In other words, perpetual warfare was deemed inevitable until the entire world subdued to Islam. The division of the world as the Abode of Islam [*dârü’l-Islâm*] and the Abode of War [*dârü’l-harb*] is perhaps the most evident expression of the conception of war in Islamic political thought.⁶⁷² Fourteenth-century historian Ibn Khaldun [d.1406] was perhaps the first Muslim writer, other than jurists shaping Islamic

⁶⁶⁷ Frank Tallett, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe 1495-1715* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.188, p.241-2.

⁶⁶⁸ Rodriguez-Salgado, “Obeying the Ten Commandments,” p.17.

⁶⁶⁹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, Vittore Branca (ed) (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore S.p.A., 1994), p.98.

⁶⁷⁰ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.72.

⁶⁷¹ James D. Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.38.

⁶⁷² Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2006), p.200-2; W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp.91-2.

theory, who maintained that war was a natural social phenomenon caused by the self interest or emotional motives of men. He categorized war into four types: tribal wars, feuds and raids, jihad and wars against rebels and dissenters. While the first two types were not just, the last two were legitimate.⁶⁷³

Warfare was believed to be essential to leave a strong kingdom to successors. War also meant asserting personal power and demonstrating military prowess. In this respect, especially the first campaign a new ruler engaged in meant a lot in building and fostering a reputation. A monarch was expected to demonstrate his potential for both defense and aggression in the early years of his reign.⁶⁷⁴ Such expectations were further reinforced by works dedicated to monarchs at the beginning of their reigns or as they were about to embark on campaign. In England, for example, on the eve of Henry VIII's first war against France, Richard Pynson published a new edition of a chivalric treatise by Guido della Colonne, *The hystorye, syge and destrucyon of Troye*. The treatise was initially published in translation back in 1420 and dedicated to Henry V who was praised to be worthy of ancient heroes. The two supreme virtues praised in the treatise were success in battle and ruling justly in peace.⁶⁷⁵ Likewise, a treatise on martial arts was written by Nasuh el-Matraki in 1529, and was copied with additions in 1532. Both dates relate to two major campaigns undertaken by Sultan Süleyman. In *Tuhfetü'l-Guzât*, Nasuh dwells on the necessity to excel in the art of war, as well describing various weapons and their use along with historical explanations.⁶⁷⁶ Thus, war-making was promoted for and employed by sixteenth-century monarchs as a tool for consolidation and advancement of sovereign authority both internally and externally.

⁶⁷³ Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practices* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), p.6; Majid Khadduri, "The Law of War: The Jihad," in *The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims*, Andrew G. Bostom (ed.) (New York: Prometheus Books, 2005), p.314. For legitimate warfare in Islamic political thought, also see, "Muslim Theologians and Jurists on Jihad: Classical Writings," in *ibid*, pp.141-249; and Ebu'l-Hasan El-Maverdi, *Siyaset Sanatı : Nasihatü'l-Mülk*, Mustafa Sarıbiyık (trans.) (İstanbul: Ark yayınevi, 2004), pp.112-120.

⁶⁷⁴ Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, p.27; Mia Rodriquez-Salgado, "Charles V and the Dynasty," in *Charles V 1500-1558*, H. Soly (ed.) (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1999), p.78.

⁶⁷⁵ Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, p.27.

⁶⁷⁶ Matrakçı Nasûh Silâhî b. Karagöz Bosnavî, *Tuhfetü'l-Guzât*, 1532 [939], Süleymaniye, Esad Efendi, 2206.

It is possible to view motives, or rather origins, of sixteenth-century wars in three loose categories under glory, religion, and security of the realm. Although voiced frequently by contemporary rulers and writers, these motives were not necessarily the actual or the only reasons of war. These categories often functioned as legitimating guises. Now we shall try to define these categories in comparative perspective and see how these motives functioned in the “making” of Sultan Süleyman.

3.2.1. For the Sake of Glory

Dynastic or personal aggrandizement through warfare constituted a large part of the reputation package in the sixteenth century, no doubt. As we have seen above, glory mattered in the political world. The glory part of our problem reflects two sets of binary oppositions influent on the image of Süleyman: House of Osman versus others, and past versus present. These two sets of oppositions are intricately interrelated. On one hand, Süleyman’s efforts and skill are taken for granted as a member of the House of Osman. Thus, his success is linked to ‘the glorious past of the dynasty’ so that his success aggrandizes not only himself but the dynasty. In this sense, the glory of Süleyman re-legitimizes the dynastic claim and places the whole dynasty as superior to other ruling dynasties. On the other hand, Süleyman’s ability to acquire Belgrade and Rhodes, two targets attempted but not acquired by ‘his illustrious forefathers’, presents him as superior to them.

His contemporaries considered, Süleyman was not unique in hurrying to build himself a reputation through war. Ascending the throne in 1509, Henry VIII attempted to lead a campaign into France. As he saw it, he had to pursue glory on the battlefield to achieve “true majesty.”⁶⁷⁷ Though he sent some troops, he was not able to march in person for a few years. When in 1513 he pledged himself in a Holy League with the Pope, Ferdinand of Aragon and Margaret of Savoy on behalf of Maximilian I against King Louis XII of France, his intention was to invade Aquitaine, Picardy and Normandy in two months. Henry argued that his subjects would fight more willingly and

⁶⁷⁷ James Raymond, *Henry VIII’s Military Revolution: The Armies of Sixteenth-Century Britain and Europe* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), p.17.

successfully if they fought under their king. He was convinced that by embarking on his first military exploit in such an important war, he would be able to “create such fine opinion about his valor among all men that they would clearly understand that his ambition was not merely equal but indeed to exceed the glorious deeds of his ancestors.”⁶⁷⁸ As the memories of English victories over the French were still fresh in the minds of the people, Henry VIII was “determined to re-create the glorious exploits of the Black Prince and Henry V.”⁶⁷⁹ Martial ability of Henry VIII was promoted by a laudatory speech given by the royal secretary Richard Pace during the English-French peace talks in 1518.⁶⁸⁰

In the declaration against Luther, issued on 19 April 1521, Charles V undertook to defend the Church and faith against heresy. He reminded that his ancestors were loyal sons of the Holy Roman Church who have defended and augmented the Catholic faith. He now saw it as his duty to inherit the task of these illustrious ancestors among whom were the “most Christian emperors of the noble nation of *Alemania*,” the Catholic kings of Spain, archdukes of Austria and Burgundy. He argued that it was his duty to imitate them both by nature and heredity.⁶⁸¹

When Francis I invaded Italy in 1515, it was the first year of his reign. This move was a sort of continuation of the Italian wars begun by Charles VIII in 1494 with the intention of affirming territorial and dynastic rights. Through attempting to recover the lost territory and complete what had been prepared by Louis XII, Francis I would not only regain the land lost by his predecessors but also avenge their defeats as well as satisfying the expectations of the commanders and nobles.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁸ Polydore Vergil as quoted in Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, p.63. Also see, Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution*, p.17.

⁶⁷⁹ Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution*, p.14; Glenn Richardson, “Entertainments for the French Ambassadors at the Court of Henry VIII,” *Renaissance Studies*, vol.9, no.4 (December 1995), p.404.

⁶⁸⁰ Richardson, “Entertainments for the French Ambassadors,” p.406-7.

⁶⁸¹ Sanuto, 30:214-5. Also see, Karl Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V: Growth and Destiny of a Man and a World-Empire*, C.V. Wedgewood (trans) (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), pp.131-2.

⁶⁸² R.J. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 61-3. Also see, Tracy, *Emperor Charles V*, pp.41-2.

When we take a look at Süleyman's major eastern counterparts, we see that they not only embarked their careers with war, but built themselves kingdoms with their swords. Departing from his hide-out at Lahidjan in 1499, Ismail assembled an army at Erzincan a year later and lead a campaign into Shirvan. Defeating the Akkoyunlu army at Sharur and attaining control over Azerbaijan, Ismail was crowned in Tabriz in 1501. By 1503, he was ready move against the "enemies of state and religion" to destroy them.⁶⁸³ In India, on the other hand, Babur defeated İbrahim Lodi in 1526 gaining control of a large part of India. His next move was against the Hindu Rana Sanga in 1527. After this victory over the *kafir* at the Battle of Khanwa, Babur took the title of Ghazi. The narratives relating the battle are replete with references to the Quran.⁶⁸⁴

Süleyman's hunger for glory has often been emphasized by contemporary sources. An on-site observer of the siege of Rhodes, Fontanus, for example, pointed this out many times. In a speech supposedly made by Süleyman announcing the decision to attack Rhodes, Fontanus had him say: "I seek nothing for myself other than glory; to you [soldiers] I give the benefits."⁶⁸⁵ In his account, Fontanus had Süleyman declare to Philippe Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Grand Master of Rhodes: "I do not make war to acquire gold, or riches; but for glory, for fame, for immortality, and to enlarge my *imperio*."⁶⁸⁶

It seems as if Süleyman has deliberately chosen Belgrade and Rhodes for this purpose. These targets implied a total change of direction. Whereas Selim I concentrated on Eastern borders, Süleyman turned to the opposite direction. If we remind ourselves the reversal of Selim I's other policies as discussed in the first chapter,

⁶⁸³ Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü't-Tevârih*, p.77.

⁶⁸⁴ K.S. Lal, "Jihad Under the Mughals," in Bostom (ed.), pp.458-9.

⁶⁸⁵ Jacobus Fontanus, "Del Discorso della Guerra di Rhodi di Iacopo Fontano," in Francesco Sansovino, *Dell'Historia Universale dell'Origine et Imperio de Turchi*, parte seconda (Venetia, 1560), 95a: "*Io per me non cerco altro che gloria, a vuoi soli o compagni dono la utilità.*" Fontanus's [Jacques Fontaine] *De Bello Rhodio* was a widely circulated first-hand account of the siege and fall of Rhodes. For information on the editions of the work, see, Arthur Freeman, "Editions of Fontanus, *De Bello Rhodio*," *The Library*, vol.24, no.4 (1969), pp.333-6.

⁶⁸⁶ Fontanus, "Guerra di Rhodi," 122a. Fontanus emphasizes the point when he has Kurtoglu make a provocative speech to Süleyman to convince him to capture Rhodes. The captain says that they are ready to put their lives at stake to raise "our religion, your *imperio* and your name." *Ibid*, 94a.

this change of direction might bring to mind the possibility of the son challenging the policy of an over-powerful father. Though such an argument seems quite attractive, proof is impossible.⁶⁸⁷ If we approach the issue not as a change of direction, but as a deliberation of direction, supportable arguments do exist. Capturing these castles was a bold enough move in the general sense which would bring Ottoman dynasty glory. Ottoman chroniclers emphasize the strength of both fortresses both technically and historically.⁶⁸⁸ Such impregnability⁶⁸⁹ seems to make the ultimate conquest the more praiseworthy. Yet it was even a bolder move on the part of Süleyman's person because such an action implicitly challenged Mehmed II, already the epitome of Ottoman monarchy. Although Ottoman narratives do not specifically phrase the issue as such, references to previous failures clearly imply the point. As Kaldy-Nagy argues, people expected new conquests from the new Sultan, not only the keys to a few castles. The conquest of Belgrade meant a great triumph in the minds of people who still have not forgotten the unsuccessful siege performed by Mehmed II.⁶⁹⁰ Thus, targeting Belgrade as the first feat would contribute immensely to a starter's reputation. Mehmed II seems to have remained a terrifying memory in the minds of the Europeans during the first half of the sixteenth century. Even an aloof observer such Guicciardini paralleled Selim I and Mehmed II:

... he [Selim] was incited by the memory of his grandfather Mohammed, who with much weaker forces and a little navy sent to the kingdom of Naples, had by an improvised attack conquered the city of Otranto, and opened a door and

⁶⁸⁷ One rational motive of the change of direction toward the West would be the uneasiness of the army about fighting against other Muslim powers and the hardships endured during Selim's campaigns. See, Pal Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary, 1520-1541," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol.45 (1991), p.286. In this sense, a less problematic direction would have better suited the purpose of building solidarity and appropriation of the army.

⁶⁸⁸ Lütfi Paşa, p.247, 249-50.

⁶⁸⁹ The proclamation of victory makes it very clear that Belgrade was a target very hard to obtain, however Süleyman was able to capture it because he had God's favor and grace [*himmet-i şehriyâr-ı sa'âdet-şi'âra 'avn-i rabbani destgir olub*]. See, *Münşe'at* I:518.

⁶⁹⁰ Gyula Káldy-Nagy, "Suleiman's Angriff auf Europa," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol.28, no.2 (1974)

fixed a position from which he continuously vex the Italians (if death had not intervened).⁶⁹¹

According to Lopez de Gomera, sixteenth-century Spanish historian, Süleyman attacked the most important bastions of Christendom – Belgrade and Rhodes – to prove that he was the strongest and most important ghazi of the dynasty.⁶⁹² Jacques de Bourbon, who actively participated in the defense of Rhodes, was convinced that Süleyman engaged in the siege of island not only to secure the seaway to Syria, but also to continue the tradition of bravery set forth by his forefathers Mehmed II, Bayezid II and Selim I.⁶⁹³ A very experienced observer of sixteenth-century political arena, Sanuto himself was impressed by Süleyman’s deeds. In a conversation among friends, he emphasized that Süleyman had taken Rhodes when neither his father nor grandfather could.⁶⁹⁴ An anonymous French account of Rhodes, translated into English soon after the conquest, expressed one of the motives that led Süleyman to attack Rhodes as follows:

He might followe the doings of his noble predecessours, and shewe himselfe very heire of the mightie and victorious lord Sultan Selim his father, willing to put in execution the enterprise by him left the yeere one thousand five hundred twentie and one.⁶⁹⁵

⁶⁹¹ Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, Sidney Alexander (trans) (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p.300. Venetian ambassador to the Ottoman court, Antonio Giustiani, in his *relazione* dated 7 February 1514, emphasized that Selim I wished to imitate his grandfather Mehmed II. Sanuto, 17:539.

⁶⁹² Mia Rodriguez-Salgado, “La Cruzada sin Cruzado: Carlos V y el Turco a Principios de su Reinado,” *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane*, (Napoli: Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, 2001), p.229. Süleyman was not alone in his desire to equal or surpass his ancestors. His European counterparts often invoked the memories of those such as Charlemagne, Saint-Louise or Henry V of England. Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, p.36

⁶⁹³ Nicolas Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar: Doğu Akdeniz’de Savaş, Diplomasi ve Korsanlık*, Tülin Altınova (trans.) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2000), p.327, n.37.

⁶⁹⁴ Sanuto, 34:7.

⁶⁹⁵ “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes by Sultan Soliman the Great Turke,” in Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vol.2 (London: 1599), p.180. This work has been identified with the eyewitness account of Jacques de Bourbon, *Le*

Capturing Belgrade was thus not a novel idea when Süleyman ascended the Ottoman throne. The aspirations can be traced back to 1440 when Murad II wished God grant it to his offspring, seeing that the fortress was unattainable.⁶⁹⁶ Contemporary Ottoman sources usually draw a parallel between Mehmed II's unsuccessful siege and Süleyman's conquest of Belgrade. Similar comparisons abound in earlier Ottoman chronicles, though not necessarily on the basis of individual Ottoman rulers but Islamic rulers in general. Similar arguments can be seen for Mehmed II upon capturing Istanbul which was attacked by many rulers before him but would not surrender to anyone. Similarly, Oruç Beğ credits Bayezid II who captured Moton, an area never before captured.⁶⁹⁷ In this sense, reference to an earlier ruler to exalt the current Sultan constitutes neither novelty nor an unusual commendation. What empowers this comparison is the identity of the compared ancestor, since Mehmed II was seen by his contemporaries as the epitome of the Ottoman dynasty. Thus, challenging Mehmed II above all rulers further enhanced Süleyman's claim. Bostan, for example, reminds his readers that the conquest of this castle was not granted to any ruler before; not even Mehmed was able to capture it though he had fought hard.⁶⁹⁸ According to Kemalpaşazade, one of the driving motives for Süleyman to capture Belgrade was to wash away the embarrassment of Mehmed II's unsuccessful siege of 1456. The author first praises Mehmed II for acquiring various territories. However, the conquest of Belgrade had not been granted even to so "superior a ruler who had moved ships on

Grande et Marveilleuse et tres cruelle oppugnation de la noble cite de Rodes, initially printed at Paris in 1525. See, Freeman, "Editions of Fontanus," pp.333-6.

⁶⁹⁶ Oruç Beğ, p.61. Oruç Beğ also relates a legend referring to the recovery of the sword of Şeddat. Legend has it that the sword was transferred to *Yanko bin Madyan*, the legendary founder of Constantinople, and from him to Buzantin [Byzas]. By coincidence it was found in Hungary during the reign of Bayezid II and put in his treasury. Bayezid II took this as an omen that either he or his sons were destined to conquer Hungary with this sword. *Ibid*, pp.98-100. For the siege of Belgrade in 1440, see K. DeVries, "Lack of a Western European Military Response to the Ottoman Invasions of Eastern Europe from Nicopolis (1396) to Mohacs (1526)," *The Journal of Military History*, vol.63, no.3 (Jul., 1999), p.556. For the significance of such heirlooms in heroic tradition see Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image*, p.141: "Usually the hero comes into possession of such an emblem by sheer serendipity. He either practically stumbles over it, or wrests it from a rival, or simply inherits it from an earlier hero."

⁶⁹⁷ See Tursun Beğ, p.43, 50; and Oruç Beğ, p.198, respectively.

⁶⁹⁸ Bostan (TSK), 21a; also see, Sa'di (SN), 137a.

land to conquer *Kostantiniyye*.” He had tried nevertheless, and now it was mandatory for Süleyman to eradicate unbelief from this fortress and wash away the embarrassment.⁶⁹⁹ Celâlzâde does not miss the opportunity to praise Süleyman moving the failure of Mehmed II to the fore. He reminds his readers that the “infidels” prided themselves with the cannons Mehmed II had to leave behind at Belgrade. The author argues that restoring the cannons and saving Belgrade was a task reserved for Sultan Süleyman.⁷⁰⁰ Spandounes also dwells on the “embarrassment” saying that the “Turks were beaten off and their sultan withdrew in disgrace and with heavy losses.”⁷⁰¹

An examination of the reflections of Mehmed II’s siege of Belgrade in earlier chronicles demonstrates that the siege was not regarded as a major failure. This is not surprising, of course. Many of these earlier chronicles were presented to Mehmed II’s son Bayezid II. Even if some authors did see the 1456 siege as a failure or embarrassment, saying so in a work that was supposed to glorify the dynasty and impress the current ruler would not be very appropriate. Just as these authors had felt the need to glorify Mehmed II, Süleyman’s contemporaries needed to do the same for their monarch. To this end, they seem to have employed the 1456 siege as a failure which would exalt Süleyman over the most exalted member of the dynasty. Tursun Beğ, exemplifies a contemporary projection of Mehmed II’s siege of Belgrade. According to Tursun Beg, for example, it was because of the greed of the soldiers for booty that the army had to abandon the castle, although the simulated retreat tricked the enemy to the open field. The author describes the result of the battle as “a holiday for the Muslims” [*ehl-i İslama bayram*]. Emphasizing that the castle was “almost” conquered, Tursun Beğ goes on to explain that the “merciful *pâdişâh* was satisfied with this clear victory” [*pâdişâh-ı âtîfet-şi’âr bu fethi mübîn ile iktifâ itti*] because his soldiers were tired and wounded. The author justifies the return with the maxim “return is the best,” although he mentions that the Sultan intended to come back because he regarded Belgrade as his legitimate prey [*av kılınmış şikârumdur*]. Tursun Beg also projects the reaction of the Hungarian king to Mehmed II’s retreat. Allegedly, the “king” believed that “the Turk retreated in shame” [*terk-i nâmûs idüüb sindi*]. A few days later, he died because of a

⁶⁹⁹ KPZ, X:55-7.

⁷⁰⁰ *Tabakat*, 48b-49a.

⁷⁰¹ Spandounes, *On the origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, p.45.

wound caused by a ‘ghazi’. Tursun Beğ describes the death of Hunyadi as God’s punishment upon the oppressors. He also states that with the “king’s” death Mehmed’s primary intention, namely “the death of the rival” [*katl-i rakîb*] was realized.⁷⁰² The whole account shows that Tursun Beğ, a contemporary of Mehmed II who attended many of his campaigns, regarded the result not as a failure but victory, let alone as an embarrassment. On the other hand, the projected perception of the “Hungarian king” demonstrates that contemporary mentality considered retreat as embarrassment. In this sense, once the 1456 episode comes to be perceived as ‘retreat’ the abandoned siege is transformed not only into failure, but also ‘embarrassment’.

The conquest of Sabacz [Šabac, Bögürdelen] can be seen in a similar perspective. The fortress was built during the reign of Mehmed II by Ishak Beğ and his son Isa Beğ. As Ottoman chronicles saw it, although the castle fell into Christian hands later on, it was actually part of Süleyman’s inheritance. Ottoman sources regard the capture of Sabacz as “liberation” [*istihlâs*] rather than conquest. In other words, Süleyman captured what was already his. Furthermore, in Christian hands Sabacz was transformed into “a nest of rebellion and sedition.” Here we find a second justification for the conquest. Thirdly, Süleyman acquired it with his sword.⁷⁰³ Although Süleyman is

⁷⁰² Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu’l-Feth*, pp.79-83. Kritovulos states that Mehmed II’s actually conquered Belgrade, but lost it instantly due to the arrival of Hunyadi’s army as the Ottoman soldiers were busy plundering the city. Kritovulos, *İstanbul’un Fethi*, M. Gökman (trans.) (İstanbul: Toplumsal Dönüşüm Yayınları, 1999), p.144-5. Kivami justifies the failure to capture Belgrade in the beginning of his account through a pre-battle speech he makes Mehmed II utter. This speech emphasizes that it is not in the people’s hands to conquer a place, but it depends on God’s will. The argument is reinforced through a Quranic verse which says God gives the possession of a realm to whomever He wishes [3:26]. Although the author talks mentions defeat a few times as he recounts action, he declares the final result to be victory. Kivâmi, *Fetihname*, Ceyhun Vedat Uygur (ed.), (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), p.207-15. Aşıkpaşazade, however, attributes the failure to capture the castle to the “deception” of the Rumelian commanders who supposedly thought acquiring the castle would hinder their future raiding expeditions. Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*; in *Osmanlı Tarihleri I*, N. Atsız Çiftçiöğlü (ed) (Türkiye Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1947).

⁷⁰³ For the conquest of Sabacz see, Sa’di (SN), 131b-133a: “... *ağyâr eline düşmüş mülk-i mevrûs idi, devlet-i kahiresiyle feth ü istihlâs olundu*”; KPZ, X:72-4; *Tabakat*, 46a follows the muslim-infidel-saved cycle. For the initial building and loss of Sabacz, see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.323, 326 and 346-7 respectively.

reported to have remarked: “this is the first castle I conquered, it should prosper,”⁷⁰⁴ the fame acquired through more famous targets as Belgrade and Rhodes seems to have overshadowed the conquest of Sabac.⁷⁰⁵

The conquest of Rhodes functions similarly for building Sultan Süleyman’s reputation. Contemporary chronicles approach the conquest as great success because “the island never gave in to a ruler before.”⁷⁰⁶ Kemalpaşazade reinforces his argument further saying that “the hand of no groom of jihad has ever touched the skirt of the bride of conquest.”⁷⁰⁷ Rhodes also poses another challenge to Mehmed II. In 1480, an Ottoman armada unsuccessfully laid siege on the island for three months. The memory of Mesih Paşa’s unsuccessful attempt poses an opportunity for Kemalpaşazade, for example, to emphasize the intention on Süleyman’s part “to wash away the stain of embarrassment” of yet another failure.⁷⁰⁸ Writing in late sixteenth-century, Sadeddin relates his father’s testimony to a speech by Selim I in opposition to another attempt on the island. In this speech, Selim I allegedly scolded his viziers that he had not yet forgotten the “shame of Rhodes at the time of my great forefather Sultan Mehmed Han Gazi” and asked them whether they intended to “double that gloom.”⁷⁰⁹ The origins of Sadeddin’s anecdote can perhaps be traced back to the conception of the court physician Ramazan as he expresses some of the general opinions of his time, regarding why Ottomans before Süleyman did not capture the island through the speech he has Süleyman recite. According to this passage, although Ottoman sultans had conquered much farther lands, they did attempt on Rhodes because it was too strongly protected.

⁷⁰⁴ KPŞZ X:84, Bostan (TSK), 17b, *Münşe‘at*, I:508.

⁷⁰⁵ I owe this view to Metin Kunt.

⁷⁰⁶ For comments on previous attempts see, KPŞZ, X:131; Nasuh, 56a, 67b-69a.

⁷⁰⁷ KPŞZ, X:153; comp. *Tabakat*, 66b; Ramazan, p.98.

⁷⁰⁸ KPZ, X:128: “*Ol bâr-ı nâmûsı ve ‘ârı da yârî-yi Bâri ile ortadan götürmeğe Hazret-i Hüdâvendigâr-ı gerdûn-iktidâr ‘azm-i cezm eyledi.*” For Mehmed’s attempt see p.155. According to the author, Mehmed had wished to take the island from the religion of Christ and hand it over to Muhammad. See also *ibid*, 57 on Belgrade. Nasuh, 54b is an exact replica of Kemalpaşazade’s expression. Mehmed II’s contemporary Tursun Beğ, on the other hand, does not see the 1480 siege as an embarrassment at all. According to him, Mesih Paşa hit and destroyed Rhodes and returned with plenty of booty. Tursun Beğ, *Târih-i Ebu’l-Feth*, p.180.

⁷⁰⁹ Sadeddin, IV:353.

Rhodians possessed much defense equipment and knowledge of how to use it. Furthermore, their knowledge of the sea surpassed that of the Ottomans, and their united stance with no discord amongst themselves discouraged the Ottomans from attacking the island.⁷¹⁰ Seen in the light of Ramazan's comments, the perception of the late sixteenth-century writer Sadeddin confirms an established view of Süleyman's image in connection to the conquest of Rhodes. By the late sixteenth century, then, Süleyman was regarded as so successful a sultan that he could capture an island that even his most daring father would not dare to attack. Furthermore, "washing away the embarrassment" through this seemingly impossible feat, he was exalted over all the previous members of the dynasty.

Giovio informs his readers that Süleyman, a year after acquiring Belgrade, decided to capture Rhodes against the advice of Piri Paşa and other commanders who reminded him of the hardship suffered by Mehmed II when he undertook the task.⁷¹¹ Fontanus, on the other hand, claims that Süleyman did not expect the same outcome because he believed that Mehmed II was misadvised in calling Mesih Paşa back too soon.⁷¹² Süleyman, however, did not ignore the risks involved either. According to Fontanus, Süleyman [*Il Turco*] was described as a young man with excellent ability, whose wisdom seemed to be more than his years. Thus, the young Sultan saw the ability of Rhodians to oppose force with force, and was convinced that they would not be forced to obey as easily as did the Albanians. According to Fontanus, Sultan Süleyman did not rule out the possibility that what happened to his great-grandfather Mehmed could happen to him, that fortune and war could be deceitful.⁷¹³ In the same speech, Fontanus has the notorious Ottoman captain Kurtoğlu refer to the possible concern of the Sultan regarding the failure faced by his predecessors. However, the captain

⁷¹⁰ Ramazan, p.134. Tabib [physician] Ramazan wrote individual campaign chronicles of the campaigns in 1521 and 1522 in Arabic. He seems to have been present in both campaigns. He is probably the same physician Ramazan who was a member of Süleyman's household both during his princehood in Manisa and after his accession. See, Chapter 1, p.71.

⁷¹¹ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diii. For Piri Paşa also see, Fontanus, "Guerra di Rhodi," 95a.

⁷¹² Fontanus, "Guerra di Rhodi," 95a. The fact that it took Süleyman six months to capture the island, Fontanus's judgment may be worth noting.

⁷¹³ *Ibid*, 93b. Albanians, in this context, refers to the inhabitants of Belgrade.

encouraged him by reminding him of his predecessors' failure in capturing Belgrade, and his success in conquering the castle "regardless of the fact that it was stronger than ever."⁷¹⁴

There is also evidence of Selim I's planning a campaign on Rhodes, although never actualized.⁷¹⁵ According to the so-called Haydar Çelebi Diary, although preparations were completed for the siege of Rhodes in 1519 [926], the plans were abandoned. The diary provides two reasons for the change in plans. Firstly after a consultation, the affairs with Shah Ismail were considered more important than the conquest of Rhodes. Secondly, campaign season was over.⁷¹⁶ Some foreign accounts mention an expected attack on the island by Sultan Selim. According to Venetian correspondence, Francis I sent help to Rhodes for they believed that Selim would attack the island in June 1520. However, the armada never set sail.⁷¹⁷ Lütfi Paşa mentions that for Rhodes Süleyman made use of the ships his father prepared for a ghaza to Europe [*Frëngistân*].⁷¹⁸ Ramazan provides a parallel between Süleyman and his father in that through the conquest of Rhodes Süleyman opened the sea route for pilgrimage, as the latter had done for the land route.⁷¹⁹ According to a poem in Nasuh's account, the duty of capturing Rhodes passed on to Bayezid after Mehmed II, then Selim and finally Süleyman.⁷²⁰ The anonymous chronicler of the siege of Rhodes also mentions Selim's preparations and his death interfering with the plan. This author has supposedly seen Selim I's last will whereby he urged his son to capture Belgrade first and then Rhodes.⁷²¹

⁷¹⁴ *Ibid*, 94a. Through the words of Kurtoğlu, Fontanus also emphasized that Rhodes should have been dealt with years ago.

⁷¹⁵ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi II*, p.286 ; Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.322-5. Also see, *Münşe'at*, I:499.

⁷¹⁶ *Münşe'at*, I:499.

⁷¹⁷ Sanuto, 29:483. Also see, Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.104.

⁷¹⁸ Lütfi Paşa, p.248.

⁷¹⁹ Ramazan, p.173

⁷²⁰ Nasuh, 55b.

⁷²¹ "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.180.

Tabib Ramazan, as he thanks God at the end of his account of the siege of Rhodes, clearly expresses the superiority of Sultan Süleyman over his predecessors: “Thanks be to God who granted these two conquests [Belgrade and Rhodes] not to prior caliphs like Selim, Halim [Bayezid II] and Sultan Mehmed Han but to Sultan Süleyman Han.”⁷²² These words add another dimension to the superiority of Süleyman in terms of military prowess and ability as the author underlines throughout his account; such an expression poses Sultan Süleyman to be specially favored by God. Since Ramazan wrote his work to impress Süleyman and was not commissioned to do so by anyone. As such, he probably thought that this was what the Sultan would like to hear. Regardless of the author’s motive, the phrase demonstrates clearly that the concern for surpassing predecessors factored in Süleyman’s and/or his contemporaries’ minds, and that the motif was used to enforce his image.

3.2.2. For the Sake of Religion

Religion often appears as a causal factor in sixteenth-century wars; however it is actually a means of legitimizing pre-existing conflicts.⁷²³ In terms of the 1521 and 1522 campaigns, religion provides the most crucial binary opposition, namely Muslims versus “infidels”, employed in justifying warfare and enmity. The main tenets of the justification of warfare, in this respect, are found in Quranic verses and traditions of the Prophet. The most well known and most frequently used verse says:

Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.⁷²⁴

⁷²² Ramazan, p.196.

⁷²³ John F. Guilmartin, Jr., “Ideology and Conflict: The Wars of the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1606,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 18, no. 4, The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (Spring, 1988), p.743.

⁷²⁴ Quran, 9:29.

Süleyman was not alone in imposing himself as the “protector of the religion” either. His eastern counterparts Ismail and Babur also claimed the title.⁷²⁵ The early Safavi conception of ghaza seems to be similar to that of the Ottoman’s. In discussing a victory of Shah Ismail against Shirvan Shah, Hasan Rumlu explains how “the wind of victory and conquest blew toward the flag of the exalted *Hâkân* through the assistance of God and strong fortune” and how the possessions of the defeated were left on battle ground as booty.⁷²⁶ When Ismail decided to attack Azerbaijan, he “put on his priceless body the armor of Godly assistance” and aimed at “fighting those who were on the wrong path.”⁷²⁷ While it is very hard to come by instances of Ottomans praising or even acknowledging ghaza efforts of the Safavis,⁷²⁸ Ottoman claims to ghaza and glory find recognition in *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*. Bayezid II and his army, for example, are praised for fighting the “infidels.” The size of Bayezid’s army is described as more numerous than the sand in the desert and coined as “distinguished for success”, while his ships deemed excellent. Hasan Rumlu’s details on the ships assert that such ships were so expensive that they could only be built by *pâdişâhs*.⁷²⁹ On the other hand, in conflict between the Ottomans and the Safavids, Hasan Rumlu denotes the Safavis ghazis whereas he refers to the Ottomans as “Rûm.”⁷³⁰ In his *Memoirs*, for example, Babur mentions leaving Agra against Rana Sanga for the “Holy War.”⁷³¹ Babur’s claim to ghaza was recognized by the Safavids as long as the effort suited their interests. For example, when Ismail sent support to Babur against the Uzbeks, Babur and his soldiers are referred to as ghazis.⁷³²

⁷²⁵ In *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih* Ismail is continuously called as such while his followers and soldiers are called *ghazi*.

⁷²⁶ Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*, p.55

⁷²⁷ *Ibid*, p.71

⁷²⁸ Actually, Safavi claims to ghaza are often delegitimized in Ottoman sources. Lütü Paşa, for example, demonstrates an awareness of Safavi claims; however, he argues that they oppressed Muslims under the disguise of ghaza: “*Gâzîleriz iderüz diyü gazâ / Ehl-i İslâma iderlerdi ezâ.*” Lütü Paşa, p.148.

⁷²⁹ Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*, p.46-8

⁷³⁰ *Ibid*, p.153-5, 165. Such is the case, for example, as he relates the events of 1511-12.

⁷³¹ *Babur-nâma*, p.547.

⁷³² Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*, p.156.

Such accounts demonstrate the relevance of the ghaza in the reputation of a Muslim monarch. Through playing the ghaza card as he ascends the throne, Süleyman not only fulfills domestic expectations, but excels as a superior monarch committed to the duties imposed by Islam within the Muslim world.

Muslim monarchs were not the only ones to promote religion as a motive for war in the sixteenth-century. Their counterparts in Europe employed the concept of a “holy” war for their own ends. In the western world holy war, in other words crusade was generally defined as “a military expedition against infidels” who were enemies of the faith or the enemies of the Papacy.⁷³³ The ideal of a crusade against the Ottomans was not a new idea in the 1520s. With the Ottoman expansion in the fifteenth century, various crusading projects had been proposed. On one hand, Christian rulers of Europe wanted to stop the Ottoman invasion; on the other hand, some rulers dreamed of recovering Jerusalem. The conquest of Constantinople and rapid territorial loss in the Balkans further provoked such projects.⁷³⁴ Pope Leo X declared a universal peace among Christian princes on 6 March 1518.⁷³⁵ Apparently, the recent acquisitions of Selim I had intimidated the Pope who feared an Ottoman attack in Italy. The plan was to approach from three directions, the capital being the ultimate goal.⁷³⁶

Among contemporary monarchs, Charles V was perhaps the most insistent to employ the ideal of a crusade to further his reputation. Charles V constantly uttered his intention to fight the *Turk* – though never made a step toward its realization – in the first

⁷³³ Mia Rodriguez-Salgado, “La Cruzada sin Cruzado,” p.203.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid*, p.204; Robert H. Schwoebel, “Coexistence, Conversion, and the Crusade against the Turks,” *Studies in the Renaissance*, vol. 12 (1965), pp. 164-187.

⁷³⁵ At this point we need to keep in mind that Süleyman probably knew about the plan of Leo X. As mentioned earlier, he was in Edirne on Rumelian guard at the time and he informed his father who was in Egypt. See, Spandounes, *On the origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, p.65-6. See Sanuto, 25:124 for earlier suspicions. For Süleyman’s guardianship at Edirne during 1517 and his correspondence with his father, see, *Münşe‘at*, I:491, 494, 498

⁷³⁶ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, pp.300-1. For Leo X’s plan and memorandum to Christian princes, also see Geza Perjes, *The Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary: Mohacs 1526-Buda 1541*, Maria D. Fenyo (trans.) (Colorado: Boulder, 1989), pp.46-8. Leo’s plan involved voluntary financial contribution from all princes and a universal tax from all Christian peoples. As for the campaign itself, the Emperor along with Hungarian and Polish cavalry, German infantry; France, Venetians, other Italians, Swiss foot soldiers, Spain, Portugal, England would participate.

years of his reign, as a propaganda tool “to raise his reputation and diminish that of his rival.”⁷³⁷ Charles V himself grew up in an environment which cherished crusader ideals along with knightly values. Believing strongly that the crusade was an ideal that brought his ancestors great honor and reputation, Charles often emphasized his commitment to fighting the ‘infidels’.⁷³⁸ Pope Leo’s declaration gave Charles the opportunity along with others to prove his hand in the competition between princes to realize a crusade.⁷³⁹ During 1517-1520 Charles was trying to establish his authority in Spain. Pursuing aggressive policies towards the Muslims in the Mediterranean was already a popular approach. Charles’s advisors knew that associating the young king with a hero leading a holy war would strengthen his authority and reputation. Thus the projected discourse claimed that Charles wished to conserve peace with Christian rulers so that he would be able to fight the infidels, more accurately “enemies of [our] Catholic faith.” As far as this narrative went, he intended to move against the enemy employing all his kingdoms. Charles took it as his obligation to participate in this war for various reasons. Firstly, this was an opportunity to gain the “honor of God” and to defend his “holy Catholic faith.” Secondly, he was required by the Pope to participate. Thirdly, he would prove the world that he is a truly “Christian king.” Fourthly, he would show the world that he merited the heritage of “kings who had many and glorious victories against the infidels.” The claims and phrases employed reflected the “habitual vocabulary” of all Christian princes of the era.⁷⁴⁰

The approach of Francis I toward the idea of crusade was similar. In December 1515, Francis had already made up his mind to go on a crusade in person with all his might. Such a project would not only earn him honor and reputation, but would strengthen his hand in the future competition for emperorship. He also thought the timing to be convenient to pursue his ambition since France was in peace with most of

⁷³⁷ Rodriguez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.236.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid*, pp.212-3. In the Burgundian court where Charles was raised, the chivalric ethos prevailed. The ceremonies of the Order of the Golden Fleece involved the association between sword and honor. Before knights swore the Crusader’s oath and the Duke himself vowed to challenge the Sultan in single combat, the master would recite the same command to each: “Dear son, draw thou thy sword / For the glory of God and for thine own honour.” Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, p.30-1.

⁷³⁹ Rodriguez-Salgado, “La Cruzada sin Cruzado,” p.212.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp.218-21.

the Christian princes and Ottomans were busy fighting in the east.⁷⁴¹ After Pope Leo X's declaration of universal peace and call for crusade, Francis organized a spectacular ceremony in December 1518. He told the papal legate that he would participate in the crusade.⁷⁴² Leo X had given absolution to France for a crusade which already announced on 4 January 1517. In March 1518, solemn processions were realized in Rome to invoke God's assistance against the *Turks*. Such demonstrations of intention posed Francis as the "Most Christian King" indeed.⁷⁴³ Even by early 1520, rumors still circulated that Francis would join the expedition against the *Turk* in person and that the Pope had sent money for the defense of Belgrade.⁷⁴⁴

Truth was, the death of Emperor Maximilian in January 1519 had put an end to immediate crusade plans. Competition for the title of emperor replaced the competition for the glory of the crusade. The election of Charles in June 1519 did not break the inactivity. Everyone was aware of the accumulation of great power in the hands of one monarch, but no one was sure whether he would be able to maintain it. The resistance in Spain, religious and social divisions in the imperial lands and the vulnerable situation of Italian lands were seen to cloud his capacity. Thus, all plans for a major crusade were suspended.⁷⁴⁵

Contemporary Ottoman chronicles all attribute the campaigns in 1521 and 1522 firstly to Süleyman's commitment to ghaza.⁷⁴⁶ Kemalpaşazade's almost romanticized introduction to his account of the 1521 campaign introduces serious contemplation on Süleyman's part. According to the author, Süleyman gave much thought to what made

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.214. "Desde el momento que, por gracia de Dios gané la corona de Francia y aún antes, mi verdadera y natural inclinación era y siguiendo, y lo digo sin mentir ni disimular, el emplear mis fuerzas y mi juventud en una guerra por el honor y reverencia de Dios nuestro salvador, contra los enemigos de la fede."

⁷⁴² *Ibid*, p.222.

⁷⁴³ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.103-4. When Jean Thenaud dedicated the second volume of *Triumphes and Vertuz* to Francis, he referred to him as "the very great and very good, king of France, future Emperor and destroyer of the Turkish empire, invincible."

⁷⁴⁴ *Letters and Papers*, III:206. Campeggio to Wolsey [dated 1 February 1520, from Rome].

⁷⁴⁵ Rodriguez-Salgado, "La Cruzada sin Cruzado," pp.223.

⁷⁴⁶ *Tabakat*, 41b-42a.

the Ottomans superior than other rulers. After much contemplation, he realized that the answer lay in their efforts of jihad and ghaza, as well as the fame of success acquired by word-of-mouth.⁷⁴⁷ This line of thought is consistent with Machiavelli's argument that fear engendered by past victories help break the determination of the enemy.⁷⁴⁸ Kemalpaşazade legitimizes the attack on Hungary by the Quranic verse commanding fighting against unbelievers who are close by.⁷⁴⁹

Kemalpaşazade's use of jihad and ghaza in the same sentence may not be just another Ottoman rhetorical device. As various scholars have discussed in relation to the early Ottomans, although the terms have often been interchanged in modern scholarship, jihad is not the same as ghaza. Early frontier lore as well as canonical works makes this distinction. Recent scholarship emphasizes that jihad as a word does not mean "holy war" or "just war", but "striving." Classical Islamic theory identifies four types of jihad: by heart, by tongue, by hands, by the sword. By heart means fighting the devil against temptation; this is the greater jihad. Second and third types have to do with supporting the right and correcting the wrong. The fourth is actual war with unbelievers and enemies of the faith.⁷⁵⁰ In sources the term "jihad" is usually followed by the phrase "in the path of God" [*fi sabil Allah*]. Thus even when this phrase is not used, by association jihad comes to denote fighting for the sake of God. On the

⁷⁴⁷ KPZ, X:48-9. For Süleyman's wish for ghaza would and his decision to target to Rhodes, see p.127. Süleyman's commitment to ghaza as soon as he ascends the throne reminds of Mehmed II's commitment as related by Tursun Beg. As he ascended the throne Mehmed II "*lillah fi sebilillah kılıç kuşandı. Hınk-ı azimet arkasına zîn-i himmet sahip, inân-ı zafer-ıyânı nahv-ı gazâyâ sarf eylemeği kendüye farz-ı ayn bildi.*" Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, p.37.

⁷⁴⁸ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.61.

⁷⁴⁹ KPZ, X:53. Quran, 9:123. This Qurabic sura is on fighting pagan groups, breachers of agreements, etc.

⁷⁵⁰ Majid Khadduri, "The Law of War: The Jihad," pp.307-8; Tibbi, "War and Peace in Islam," in Bostom, pp.329-30. A clear distinction between the two kinds of jihad is observed in Tursun Beg's account of Mahmud Paşa's activities during a month of Ramadan. The author claims that while the vizier engaged in fighting his *nefs* in looks, he was fighting the infidels. Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, p.98: "*Bu ayda eğerçi hazret-i Paşa sûretâ mücâhede-i nefse mübâşir idi, ammâ zımnen mücâhede-i küffâr ile çalışmakta idi.*"

other hand, the term “ghaza” comes from the Arabic *ghazw* which denotes pre-Islamic booty attacks. Thus the association of the term with raiding and plunder is inevitable.⁷⁵¹

Scholars have also suggested that jihad had a defensive quality whereas ghaza had a proactive nature. In other words, jihad is understood to be a military undertaking, in the narrower sense of the word, when the whole community [*umma*] of Islam is under threat. Ghaza, on the contrary, is raiding activity which requires no immediate or potential threat to the community although the ultimate aim is associated with the expansion of Islam.⁷⁵² The Ottoman conception of ghaza evolved against the background of the earlier frontier conditions in Anatolia in late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries witnessed the weakening and gradual collapse of central authority as well as the struggle of principalities which initially served as frontier forces of the weakening central authority. In this respect, ghaza as a frontier activity combined religious motive with the prospect of booty through raiding. It is not within the scope of this study to dwell on how the Ottoman enterprise turned out to eliminate all major and minor competitors in the struggle of becoming *the* power in Anatolia; suffice it to say that ghaza as a unifying force in the earlier phases was a major factor.⁷⁵³ Defining ghaza as a “powerful and unifying device available to conquerors on the frontier, more so than tribalism, origin, religion, language, or culture,” Linda Darling emphasizes that as an ideology ghaza was “flexible enough to be represented as an orthodox Islamic activity to the *‘ulemâ*, an unorthodox

⁷⁵¹ Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, p.2; T.M. Johnstone, “Ghazw,” EI, II:1055a. Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p.81. Kafadar refuses to equate ghaza with holy war: “Even if it may have been a major force in the ideological matrix of medieval western Asian and eastern European frontier regions, the “championing of one’s faith” could never function as the sole concern of historical actors in that stage or as a single-minded zeal.”

⁷⁵² Linda T. Darling, “Contested Territory: Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Context,” *Studia Islamica*, No. 91 (2000), p.140; Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, p.79-80.

⁷⁵³ Darling, “Contested Territory,” pp. 133-163; Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, p.79-80; İnalcık, *The Classical Age*, pp.6-7.

activity to the antinomian Sufis, an economic activity to the tribesmen, and a political activity to the aspiring rulers.”⁷⁵⁴

Sixteenth-century political realities were different than those of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, of course. Thus, one would expect a transformation of the ghaza concept as employed by the sixteenth-century Sultan contemplating on how to proceed with his reign. Speculatively speaking, Süleyman's conception of ghaza must have been quite different than that of Murad I, for instance. Süleyman was not the ruler of a promising frontier principality competing with others like itself for territorial/ideological supremacy. Nor was he the head of a newly flourishing dynasty which needed to attract similar ones. He was the sultan ruling over a vast realm with a highly organized administrative and military system, which were inextricably linked. His rivals were not relatively petty frontier principalities or weakened kingdoms, but full-fledged and relatively powerful princes with well-organized administrative systems. His commanders were his subjects and slaves rather than powerful magnates.⁷⁵⁵ In this sense, his stake in ghaza differed from that of Murad I who had to employ ghaza for more practical purposes such as a unifying element for various parties, acquiring financial gain to re-distribute among his followers, and standing out among similar power holders. The Safavi conflict also required a different stance which brought religious argumentations of war to the fore. Süleyman was actually employing the claim made by Mehmed II when he wrote to the Mamluk Sultan that he was chosen by God to be the leader of Muslims in ghaza. When Selim I destroyed the Mamluks, he added yet one more claim Mehmed II's claim of leadership in ghaza, namely that of being the protector of the holy cities and the pilgrimage route.⁷⁵⁶ Thus, Süleyman inherited a very powerful ideological tool to build a reputation on and to justify his aggressive expansion

⁷⁵⁴ Darling, “Contested Territory,” p.157, see also p.142. Besides being a unifying factor, Darling demonstrates that ghaza was a legitimizing and organizing force for not only individual caliphs but for entire regimes. *Ibid*, pp.151-2.

⁷⁵⁵ The process of curbing down the potential resistance groups with influential power was already put into effect by Mehmed II. See, Halil İnalcık, “How to Read Ashık Pasha-zade's History,” in *Essays in Ottoman History*, (Istanbul: Eren, 1998), p.37.

⁷⁵⁶ Halil İnalcık, “Periods in Ottoman History,” in *Essays in Ottoman History*, (Istanbul: Eren, 1998), p.19; İnalcık, “How to Read Ashık Pasha-zade's History,” p.45. For the changing conception of ghaza, see also Colin Imber, “Erken Osmanlı Tarihinde İdealler ve Meşruiyet,” in Kunt and Woodhead (eds.), pp.149-50.

policy. On the other hand, whether the concept went through such a transformation in the minds of lesser individuals who were actually to do the fighting is less clear.⁷⁵⁷

As emphasized above, ghaza involved not only spiritual, but temporal rewards as well.⁷⁵⁸ Earlier Ottoman narratives emphasize the financial rewards of ghaza quite strikingly. Neşri, for example, explains that Osman had two motives when he decided to pursue the ghaza as his father did. He would thus “earn his bread” without having to depend on any sultan for his sustenance, and acquire both the temporal world and the eternal one.⁷⁵⁹ The *Gazavatname* of Murad II depicts incentives offered to the individual participants of a ghaza. Those who come and fight for the sake of Islam were to have whatever they want.⁷⁶⁰ While talking about one of the sieges of Mehmed II, Tursun Beg mentions that the soldiers of the sultan were moved by the idea of spiritual

⁷⁵⁷ For an illuminating discussion on personal motivation of Ottoman troops in regard to ghaza see, Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), pp.133-168.

⁷⁵⁸ This is true of any war of the early modern era. For example, writing in the fourteenth century Froissart relates that in one of the campaigns of the Black Prince aimed at the French, the English were so successful that those who participated all got rich. The prisoners they had taken were considered their own property, they could either free these prisoners or ransom them. They had also captured other possessions such as gold, silver and jewels. On the way back, “they were so encumbered by booty and valuable prisoners that they had no time or inclination to attack fortresses on their way home.” Froissart, *Chronicles*, Geoffrey Brereton (trans.) (London: Penguin, 1978), p.143-5. Timur also gave two reasons for his invasion of India: “My principal object in coming to Hindustan... has been to accomplish two things. The first was to war with the infidels, the enemies of the Mohammadan religion; and by this religious warfare to acquire some claim to reward in the life to come. The other was... that the army of Islam might gain something by plundering the wealth and valuables of the infidels; plunder in war is as lawful as their mother’s milk to Musalmans who wasr for their faith.” As quoted in K.S. Lal, “Muslims Invade India,” in Bostom (ed), p.433. Lal emphasizes that all Muslim invaders of India were led by these motives.

⁷⁵⁹ Neşri, II:53: “*Mahzâ etmeği gazâdan çıkarayın ve hiç bir melike ihtiyaç göstermiyeyin; hem dünya ve hem âhiret elüme girsin.*”

⁷⁶⁰ *Gazavât-ı Sultan Murad b. Mehemed Han*, p.14 [facsimile, 13a]: “*Şöyle ma’lum oluna kim, bu sefer-i nusret-me’âbıma gelüb dîn-i İslâm aşkına imdâd idüb bizimle ma’an sefere varanların her ne mürâca’atları var ise, katımda makbûl-i hümayûnumdur, eğer tumâr isteyene ve eğer ze’amet isteyene ve eğer yeniçerilik isteyene ve eğer sipâhilik isteyene ve eğer yöriüklükten çıkmak isteyene her birinin murâd(u) maksûdları makbûlumdür.*” Oruç Beg also dwells on the concept as he relates Murad II’s campaign on Thessalonici: “*fi-sebilillah Hak yoluna yağma.*” Oruç Beg, p.57.

reward of the ghaza and the hope of share of the booty.⁷⁶¹ While the overall emphasis on Süleyman's conception of ghaza is generally framed in a religious and ideological perspective, the material rewards attached to ghaza are by no means neglected; this dual significance of ghaza finds expression in contemporary accounts. Celâlîzâde, for example, tells about the material incentives offered to the soldiers during the Belgrade siege. A *sancak* was promised to the first ghazi who succeeded in erecting the flag on the castle as the leave for plunder was announced. Only then do we hear of the soldiers rushing to offer their lives in the name of religion.⁷⁶² The proclamation of victory also testifies to the relevance of material rewards as well as spiritual ones. The proclamation mentions that the soldiers headed for Belgrade only after acquiring goods in Syrmia [*Sirem*]. As for those who died fighting at Belgrade, the proclamation underlines that they went to heaven.⁷⁶³

Tabib Ramazan, a contemporary of Süleyman, explains his views of the concept of ghaza in his account of the conquest of Rhodes. He emphasizes that the spiritual reward of ghaza is similar to a holy day. If a man dies in action, his sins will be forgiven. Furthermore, he will be spared the interrogation on the bridge to Paradise and directly go to heaven to be accompanied by the holy creatures there. The author supports his views through well known verses of the Quran.⁷⁶⁴ Apparently, not even Ramazan, who appears to be a very devoted Muslim, was confident enough of the sufficiency of spiritual reward to secure the courage and efforts of men. He goes on to mention the material rewards promised by the Sultan. The first man to get to the castle would receive a *sancak*. Once in the city, soldiers were given leave to take anything

⁷⁶¹ Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, p.140.

⁷⁶² *Tabakat*, 60a. Mesih Paşa's failure at Rhodes was often attributed to his banning plunder. Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.399; Mustafa Ali, *Künhü'l-ahbar: Fâtih Sultân Mehmed Devri*, p.176. The driving force of promise of booty and plunder was not a uniquely Ottoman phenomenon either. For the significance of booty and plunder of early-modern European armies, see Tallett, *War and Society*, p.49.

⁷⁶³ *Münşe'at*, I:517.

⁷⁶⁴ Ramazan, p.152. Ramazan asserts that his views are confirmed in verses of the Quran and traditions of the Prophet.

they could; including goods, children and women, except for weapons.⁷⁶⁵ Speeches of encouragement constructed by Ramazan demonstrate that ghaza promised something for everyone. For the religious, there was the hope of spiritual ghaza; for the brave and ambitious the promise of glory. For the poor, there was the prospect of goods and slaves; for the rich, the promise of virgins to satisfy their desires.⁷⁶⁶ During Süleyman's siege of Belgrade, on the other hand, we witness specific instances of official declaration of plunder. One example is on 4 October [2 Dhu'l-Qada] when Süleyman commanded plunder and 'ulemâ encouraged the soldiers for jihad.⁷⁶⁷ At a call for plunder during the siege of Rhodes, the announcement stressed that the rocks and the soil belonged to the Sultan, while the rest to the ghazis. In other words, everything was open for pillage, but the land itself.⁷⁶⁸

The perception of ghaza as a religious duty of the ruler is demonstrated clearly through various proclamations. According to the proclamation of victory sent to the judges of the realm following the conquest of Belgrade, when Süleyman ascended the throne he knew that he had to direct his efforts to jihad and ghaza. Therefore, he investigated those who were in error [*erbâb-ı dalâl*] and found that the “desperate Hungarians” [*Engürüs-i meyûs*] were such.⁷⁶⁹ The proclamation of victory following the conquest of Rhodes to the same recipients about a year later elaborated the issue further with the God-given duty to “conquer and remove the signs of unbelief [*küfr*]” and “to remove and restrain the oppression of oppressors.” As far the document goes, it was for this reason that he continuously put “his sword to ghaza and jihad against the infidels.” Thus he set out to “save” Rhodes as was his ““pious kingly custom and accepted royal convention” [*adet-i hasene-i şahane ve sünnet-i merziyye-i hüsvêne*].⁷⁷⁰ According to Sa'di, Süleyman wished to attack the *infidel* every year so that he could wipe away

⁷⁶⁵ Ramazan, p.153. Along with Celâlzâde's mention of the promise of a *sancak* during the siege of Belgrade, Ramazan's report demonstrates that the promise of a *sancak* was a general mode of motivation.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.154.

⁷⁶⁷ *Tabakat*, 94b.

⁷⁶⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:533.

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 515.

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 522.

unbelief from the face of the earth. Rhodes was chosen, according to Sa'di, because it stood on the way of Islam.⁷⁷¹ Nasuh also dwells on the theme of jihad as a religious duty. His wording demonstrates not only a duty, but also the grace and spiritual guidance of God in the performance of this duty. According to the author, Hungary was chosen as the target of jihad because it was hostile to Islam and engaged in unbelief [*küfr*].⁷⁷² Celâlzâde's emphasis on the desire of the soldiers to pursue jihad⁷⁷³ reinforces Süleyman as the "rightful caliph" who should order and command the collective duty jihad. In such efforts, Süleyman was following the examples of previous Muslim rulers. For example, Mahmud of Ghazni (d.1030), as told by his court historian Utbi, saw his expeditions to India as "a *jihad* to propagate Islam and extirpate idolatry": "The chief of Thanesar was... obstinate in his infidelity and denial of Allah, so the Sultan marched against him with his valiant warriors for the purpose of planting the standards of Islam and extirpating idolatry."⁷⁷⁴

Reading the chronicles and correspondences, one can clearly trace how an issue of territorial and political supremacy translates into a matter of religion at stake. That the ghaza ideology is strongly emphasized in Ottoman sources is hardly surprising. In this context, religious motives provide a pretext to reinforce political power.⁷⁷⁵ Non-Ottoman sources reflect a similar effort on the part of King Louis II of Hungary, the adversary of Sultan Süleyman. Although it may not be appropriate to call these efforts as a call for crusade per se, we see that when King Louis approached European rulers, he did so by moving forth the "extreme danger Christendom faces." We meet many such instances in Venetian accounts. According to Lorenzo Orio's report dated 6 July, the King said that "this is a matter of great importance and Christendom should unite

⁷⁷¹ Sa'di (SN), 143b-144a.

⁷⁷² Nasuh, 36b-37b: "*inâyet-i ezeli rehnümâ ve hidâyet-i lem-yezeli pişvâ olub*"

⁷⁷³ *Tabakat*, 66a. For piracy as reason, see also, Bostan (TSK), 31a.

⁷⁷⁴ Andrew G. Bostom, "Jihad Conquests and the Imposition of *Dhimmitude*," in Bostom (ed.), p.82-3.

⁷⁷⁵ For how classical war theory handles the matter see Handel, *Masters of War*, p.121. For the deployment of religious ideology to legitimize warfare and territorial acquisition in the thirteenth-century Balkans and western Anatolia see Darling, "Contested Territory," p.138.

against this *Turco*.”⁷⁷⁶ The argument put forth to the Pope by the ambassador of King Louis in July 1521 is not much different: “You need to attend to moving the Christian princes to action, to make peace among themselves and to attend to the eminent danger to Christendom [*Christianità*].” Moreover he adds that it is the Pope’s duty as the head of Christendom to find a remedy to the discord and to direct their forces against the *Turco*.⁷⁷⁷ European power-holders, though not neglecting to employ the “Turkish threat” for their own purposes, were not keen on sending the help King Louis demanded for the “protection of Christendom.” The Pope blamed the French for being hostile and rejecting the possibility of peace in Italy so that Europe could attend to the “Turkish matter.”⁷⁷⁸ The news of Süleyman’s march into Hungary caught the European monarchs at Calais as Henry VIII was mediating peace talks between Charles and Francis. Charles and Francis reacted similarly to the news; both expressed his desire for peace and crusade, accusing the other of inciting and continuing the conflict.⁷⁷⁹ The Venetian ambassador in France wrote on 23 June 1521 that “the person of the *Turco* is belligerent and a great enemy of the Christians, he wants to make a campaign against Christians. The French king said he would soon see his end.”⁷⁸⁰ Charles V sent an ambassador, already too late, to inform King Louis that the king should not doubt that next time he would come to help in person.⁷⁸¹ In some sense, the European response to the threat posed by Süleyman confirms his claims to ghaza. In other words, as Süleyman reflects his military plans in relation to a religious duty, Western monarchs perceive the threat in religious terms as well. Thus both parties benefit from an ideological cover instead of appearing greedy in terms of territorial and/or political concerns.

We have argued that ghaza, or rather, associating warfare with a religious motive, brought forth a crucial binary opposition: Muslim versus the “infidel.” The projected conflict between the Muslim and the “infidel” easily becomes the struggle between good and evil, or right and wrong. A striking example of such an inversion can be found

⁷⁷⁶ Sanuto, 31:76.

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 106.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 185.

⁷⁷⁹ Rodriquez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.225.

⁷⁸⁰ Sanuto, 30:469.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid*, 31:132.

in Tabib Ramazan's account of Rhodes. Ramazan attributes the Rhodes campaign to the will of God. According to the author Süleyman went on this campaign because God answered the prayers of the prisoners at Rhodes. Otherwise, Ramazan thought that it was not appropriate to go on campaign every year.⁷⁸² In stark contrast to the godly intentions of Süleyman, Ramazan introduces the Devil as the moving force of Rhodians. According to the author, the islanders prayed for the graces of the Devil to survive the siege.⁷⁸³ As Ramazan's account moves further, the Devil speaks to them from within the idols, addressing the Rhodians as his "servants." According to the author, seeing that they were crying, the Devil told them to amend their ways if their crying was the result too much sin, rebellion and defiance of his orders. The devil added that he knew what has been happening and told them that they would be safe with him. Mimicking literary conventions as to make the argument more credible, he referred to the biblical story of Egypt and Joseph. Then he promised the islanders that when *Turks* entered the city, they would receive help. He assured them that his soldiers were more numerous than those of the *Turks*, even more numerous than those of Solomon. After explaining himself as such, the Devil went on:

Oh, those who worship none but me! Rejoice, oh those who wish to be with us in Hell and oh those who avoid mingling with Muslims in Heaven! Rejoice with complete happiness at all times and hours; do not grieve as do the residents of Heaven, and do not surrender the castle to Sultan Süleyman Han.⁷⁸⁴

Ramazan, then, announces the real aim of the Devil which was to have all the islanders killed so that he could torture them in Hell. Because, Ramazan asserts, if the islanders surrendered, many of them would come to believe in Muhammad and thus be saved from Hell. Furthermore, according to the author, "infidel" women would bear Muslim children who would curse the Devil.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸² Ramazan, p.97.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid*, p.109-10. On the other hand, such inversions were mutual in contemporary texts. Erasmus, for example, mentions rumors which accused *Turks* of sacrificing to demons, current in Europe as he wrote "A complaint of Peace" in 1517. Erasmus, "A Complaint of Peace," in Rummel (ed.), *The Erasmus Reader*, p.304.

⁷⁸⁴ Ramazan, p.184.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.185.

The episode constructed by Ramazan regarding the association of the people of Rhodes and the Devil is worth examining for the inversion of conception. The actions of the people are actually in accordance with common belief. They pray for salvation. However, the target and agent of salvation are inversed. In other words, a Muslim or a Christian would normally aim Heaven through worshipping God; whereas this conception is inversed in Ramazan's account as he defines the aim as Hell and the object of devotion as the Devil. According to Ramazan's construction, losing hope of saving the island as they see Süleyman re-building old Rhodes, the people go to the Grand Master to request that he kill them all because they were now desperate. According to Ramazan, Rhodians believed that they would not be able to go to Hell, join their ancestors and the Devil if they were killed by the *Turks*. Since they had no other option but death or enslavement, they were doomed to lose their chance to Hell. They saw as their only way to salvation death in the hands of the Grand Master.⁷⁸⁶ A similar narrative device of inversion can be found in Lütfi Paşa's account whereby he describes the people of Rhodes praying to St. Jean for salvation. The author evaluates the situation as the people hoping for help from an idol.⁷⁸⁷ Such narrative inversions pose Islam as the true religion of God while devaluing Christianity and thus moving Süleyman forth as striving in the name of the "true religion."

Ramazan's construction was probably not pure fiction, but an inversion of the actual Rhodian deliberation or their assessment of the current situation. An eye witness report from Rhodes, dated 16 March 1523, relates a Rhodian council deliberating on surrender. According to this account, seeing that things are going from bad to worse, on 8 December the Grand Master and the Council assembled to evaluate the current situation and to take measures. They dwelled on the impossibility to fight back any longer due to the lack of munitions, victuals, and men. Furthermore, some walls were already compromised making it possible for individual attackers to enter the city.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.178. A similar narrative of self-destruction whereby the natives burning down their city and killing their own families so that they are not made *Turk* or be enslaved is found in Oruc Beg's account of Bayezid II's conquest of Moton. Oruç Beg, p.202.

⁷⁸⁷ Lütfi Paşa, p.251. Eyewitness accounts confirm that as the siege neared its end, Rhodians have actually saw prayers to St. Jean as a hope. Gabriel Tarragon thought it was a miracle of St. Jean that they were spared in body and possessions just as they thought everything was over. Sanuto, 34:15.

External help, on the other hand, was nowhere in sight. Given these circumstances, they expected only the worst consequences: they would all be killed by the sword; women and children would be enslaved; many would be made *Turk* in which case the blame would fall on the administrators. Thus they decide to send an envoy for negotiation:

The great Turke would not oppresse us to forsake our faith, but only would have the towne, it were much better then, and tending to greater wealth to save all the iewels above sayde, that should be defiled and lost if they came in the handes of the enemies of the faith. And so to keepe so much small people, as women and children, that they would torment and cut some in pieces, others take, and perforce cause them to forsake their faith, with innumerable violences, and shamefull sinnes that should be committed and done, if the town were put to the sword, as was done at Modon, and lately at Bellegrado. Whereby they did conclude that it were better, and more agrreable to God, for to take the treaty, if it were proffered, then for to die as people desperate and without hope⁷⁸⁸

The state-of-mind reflected in Tabib Ramazan's account of the Rhodes campaign confirms fears of the people at the regions under attack in the face of expected atrocities by Ottoman soldiers. The author gives an account of the intentions of the soldiers on a night right before an attack on the city. According to Ramazan, those soldiers who were already rich were in a state of arousal; they did not sleep until the morning "entertaining themselves with the prospect of joys they were to have the next night together with the families and virgins of the infidels." Ramazan's description of the soldiers' entry to the castle next day maintains this state of mind:

Ghazis who were filled with joy over the thought of uniting with the female slaves and women of Rhodes upon conquest, came to the castle with a swift move reminiscent of that of Ferhad who cut through the Mount of Bistun thinking of uniting with Şirin.⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸⁸ Sanuto, 34:87-8. Also see, "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes by Sultan Soliman the Great Turke," pp.198-9.

⁷⁸⁹ Ramazan, p.154-5. Expectation of such atrocity was not new either. Various accounts circulated in Europe since Ottoman advancement in the Balkans began. In the Fifth Lateran Council in 1512, for example, the archbishop of Spalato [Split], listed the atrocities allegedly committed by the *Turks*. Among these were the snatching children from their parents' arms and babies from their mothers' breasts, violating wives in front of their husbands, abducting virgins, cutting down aged parents in front of their children, yoking young people to the plough, etc. DeVries, "Lack of a Western European Military Response," p.553.

3.2.3. For the Sake of the Realm

Territory was a dominant concern in the figurings of rulers in the sixteenth century: whether defense of land already held, or the acquisition of more land for its own sake or of land of perceived “vital interest.”⁷⁹⁰ Territorial motives were not projected as such but linked with some sort of threat or insult against the realm. Causes related to the safety of the realm and the order of the world figure as another major motive, or legitimating guise. Such causes – regardless of being actual, perceived or projected – introduce yet another crucial binary opposition: justice and oppression. By sixteenth century standards, whether Christian or Muslim, war had to be justified. War for the sake of expansion or mere glory was not acceptable and would not do well for one’s reputation. The European idea of “just war” had to do with a lawfully instituted government defending land, faith, goods, and liberty. War was only to be waged at the command of a legitimate authority, with moderate means and for the right intentions. In this respect war was legitimate not only in the case of direct threat but also several offenses such as reprisal for acts of piracy, avenging insults to ambassadors, defending allies or friends, reaction to a broken treaty by another party and stopping another supplying enemy with men, munitions or food.⁷⁹¹ The theory of “just war” had one fundamental purpose: “to examine all the possibilities and avenues whereby war could be controlled and turned into an ethically satisfactory means of justly settling the differences of the contending parties.”⁷⁹² Rulers took care to use a “universally recognized principle to justify aggression”: the defense of patrimony or faith; revenge for a wrong done to the dynasty or an individual; redress of breaches of peace; non-compliance of treaties. However, the idea of a “just war” was stretched as to include almost everything by the early sixteenth century.⁷⁹³ Erasmus criticized this elasticity,

⁷⁹⁰ Tallett, *War and Society*, p.19.

⁷⁹¹ Hale, “War and Public Opinion,” pp.19-20; Hale, “Sixteenth-Century Explanations of War and Violence,” p.7.

⁷⁹² José A. Fernández, “Erasmus on the Just War,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 34, No. 2. (Apr. - Jun., 1973), p.220.

⁷⁹³ Rodriquez-Salgado, “Obeying the Ten Commandments,” p.17; Peter Wilson, “European Warfare 1450-1815,” in *War in the Early Modern World, 1450-1815*, Jeremy Black (ed) (Florence, KY, USA: Taylor & Francis, Incorporated, 1998). p 183; Tallett, *War and Society*, p.239.

saying “Today if a neighboring kingdom is rather more prosperous throughout, it seems almost a just cause for starting war.”⁷⁹⁴ In *The Education of a Christian Prince*, Erasmus saw war only as the last resort: “The good prince will never start war at all unless, after everything has been tried, it cannot by any means be avoided.”⁷⁹⁵ Luther, on the other hand, admitted that it was a “Christian act and an act of love confidently to kill, rob and pillage the enemy, and to do everything that can injure him until one has conquered him according to the methods of war.”⁷⁹⁶

Thinking of Kemalpaşazade’s narrative on Süleyman contemplating, there is no evidence that either Kemalpaşazade or Süleyman ever read Machiavelli’s ideas on political and military power building. Yet, Süleyman knew that he had to keep up the military reputation. It would probably be safe to assume that sixteenth-century mentality and imperial logic brought similar conclusions:

Thus, anyone explaining the cause of such good fortune would find it quite easily, because it is certainly true that when a prince or a people achieves such a reputation that every other prince or people nearby is afraid to mount an attack alone and remains in a state of fear, it will always happen that none of them will ever attack unless driven by necessity, so that a powerful prince or people will have, as it were, the choice of waging war upon whichever of its neighbors it chooses, while holding the others at bay with its diligence. Such neighbors will easily be kept at bay, partly because they respect this power and partly because they are deceived by the means used to lull them to sleep. Other, more distant powers which have no dealings with them will consider these matters too remote to concern them; they will continue in this error until the fire reaches them, and when this occurs they will have no means of

⁷⁹⁴ Erasmus, “A Complaint of Peace,” in *The Erasmus Reader*, Erika Rummel (ed) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p.301.

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.281. Also see, “On the War Against the Turks,” in Rummel (ed.), p.319: “War is no more than judicial retribution meted out on a large scale, if there is no other way of punishing the crime... I also think that all other expedients must be tried before war is begun between Christians; no matter how serious nor how just the cause, war must not be undertaken unless all possible remedies have been exhausted and it has become inevitable. And, of course, if the war is inspired by such motives as the lust for power, ambition, private grievances, or the desire for revenge, it is clearly not a war, but mere brigandage.”

⁷⁹⁶ Martin Luther, “Secular Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,” in *Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings*, John Dillenberger (ed.) (New York: Anchor Books, 1992), p.398. However, this is a course of action to be taken only after an offer of peace has been refused by the enemy.

extinguishing it, unless they employ their own forces, and their own forces will be insufficient, since this one will have become extremely powerful.⁷⁹⁷

Islamic jihad did not imply limitless violence, either. The Quranic messages regarding fighting unbelievers are rather ambiguous. While some verses limit fighting with aggression from the other party, some imply direct attack. In the Islamic sense, expansion had a different significance as well. Since the ultimate aim of Islam was to have all people in a single community [*umma*], expansion through war was regarded as a way of reaching eternal peace rather than aggression. In this respect, it was also obligatory to invite the adversary to accept Islam before attempting aggression. Military coercion was justified only if the invitation was declined. The frequent employment of the term *fütûhât*, which denotes “opening”, rather than victory in contemporary accounts demonstrates this point.⁷⁹⁸ An Ottoman military officer himself Nasuh, in his *Tuhfetü’l-Guzât*, identified the origin of the concept of ‘ghaza’ as the second year of the Hegira. According to Nasuh, the first ghaza of Islam was that of Bedr. Even in this case, the aggression was caused by infidels attacking Hamza with no reason,⁷⁹⁹ rather than a direct attempt at Islamic expansion. Accounts relating to the causes of the 1521 and 1522 campaigns as seen through the eyes of the contemporaries demonstrate that neither King Louis of Hungary nor the Knights of Rhodes were targets of Süleyman’s aggression simply because they were “infidels” who had to be exterminated in the name of Islam.

As far as the 1521 campaign is concerned, Ottoman chronicles emphasize the “insurrection and rebellion” [*isyân ü tuğyân*] of the Hungarian king as a major factor in the designation of the target.⁸⁰⁰ According to Sa’di, Süleyman’s purpose was to achieve “victory in the conquest of the gate of jihad” [*nusret-i feth-i cihâd itmeğicün*] by conquering Belgrade. Sa’di explains further that Belgrade was not a random choice merely for the sake of jihad, but that the decision was based on the fact that they were attacking Islam and creating unrest. As Sa’di’s story goes, Süleyman’s ancestors had

⁷⁹⁷ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.154.

⁷⁹⁸ See, Bassam Tibi, “War and Peace in Islam,” in Bostom (ed.), p.328-9; Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam*, p.214.

⁷⁹⁹ Nasuh, *Tuhfetü’l-Guzât*, Süleymaniye, Esad Efendi, 2206, 8a.

⁸⁰⁰ *Tabakat*, 41b-42a.

tried to deal with it, but neither Bayezid II nor Selim I had the opportunity. Thus, those lands had found the chance to prosper. Belgrade was the key of the infidel lands [*mülk-i küffârın mißtâh-ı pâyidârı*]; by capturing the city Süleyman would cause great misery to the “infidel” [*küffârın bađrına dâđ-ı hasret ve hasâret*].⁸⁰¹ As Celâlzâde has it, while Selim wished to take Persia and Egypt under his dominion, Süleyman longed for ghaza. He had heard about the “insurrection and rebellion” of the Hungarian king. According to the author, King Louis of Hungary was one of the two people who sided with the Devil on Süleyman’s accession.⁸⁰² Lütfi Paşa explains the choice by referring to the breach of peace by the Hungarian king.⁸⁰³ According to Nasuh, not only was the Hungarian king an unbeliever but also physically hostile to Islam.⁸⁰⁴

Establishing the main motivation of the 1521 campaign as ghaza, Kemalpaşazade goes on to provide more solid reasons for attacking Hungary. The main purpose of the Sultan, according to the author, is to eradicate [*istisâl*] “infidel” presence around Rumelia. The most likely target in this respect was Hungary since it shared borders along many directions with Ottoman territory. However, geographic proximity was not the only factor. According to Kemalpaşazade, after the crushing defeats of Varna and Kosovo at the hands of the Ottomans, no further war was waged on them and their kings were not put to such tests. Growing too proud, they came to be quite unruly. After citing the general faults of the Hungarians against the Ottomans, Kemalpaşazade goes into specifics. The Hungarian king, whom the author describes as famous for his strength among the Christians, not only neglected to send ambassadors and gifts on Süleyman’s accession but would not agree to pay tribute, either. Süleyman had no choice but to attack as required by the rules of sovereignty.⁸⁰⁵ The passage suggests two main issues.

⁸⁰¹ Sa’di (SN), 123b-124b.

⁸⁰² *Tabakat*, 29a-b. The other was Gazali. Treating Gazali, a notorious rebel, and the King of Hungary as a pair reinforces the notion of “insurrection” by Louis. Thus, Süleyman’s superiority is once more established rhetorically.

⁸⁰³ Lütfi Paşa, p.245: “Üngürüs kralı dahi Sultan Selim’e olan ‘ahdini nakz idüb muhâlefet itdi.”

⁸⁰⁴ Nasuh, 37b.

⁸⁰⁵ KPZ, X:52: “... ne âsitân-ı sa’âdet-âşiyâna resûl irsâl idüb iysâl-i mâl iderdi ve ne kabûl-i bâc ü harâca ikbâl iderdi. Bünyân-ı eyvân-ı şevketini virân itmeđe samûm-i bâlden ‘azmi tasâmîm kıldı.” Lütfi Paşa attributes Süleyman’s decision to Louis II’s

Firstly, on the border of the Ottoman lands, Hungary may be seen as a perceived threat. Leaving territorial and political motives aside, one sideline view of the 1521 campaign would be the notion of encirclement. In other words, curbing down the power of a hostile neighbor would be a matter concerning the security of the realm.⁸⁰⁶ Positioned as guardian of Rumelia during his father's reign, Süleyman already had an opinion about possible hostile intentions of Hungary. He had not only imprisoned a Hungarian envoy during that time, but sent warnings to his father regarding Hungarian plans of aggression.⁸⁰⁷ Secondly, in the minds of the contemporaries the fact that the Hungarian king did not send an ambassador or gifts, or refused to renew an agreement, signified a slighting of the authority and power of the Ottoman sultan as they wished to conceive it.

Contemporary non-Ottoman correspondence reflects two main causes regarding the Hungarian campaign of 1521. The political instability and dissension among the lords of Hungary figure as a factor motivating Süleyman for action, rather than an opportunity. The trigger is given as the ill-treatment of Ottoman envoys in Hungary. The Venetian bailo in Istanbul, Tomasso Contarini, informed that the Sultan marched off to the campaign with all his forces and related the two opinions current among the residents regarding the motives beneath the campaign: "They say he went because of the dissension in the Kingdom of Hungary. Others say he went to avenge the two messengers he sent to the King who were not well-received and ill-treated."⁸⁰⁸ In this expression, we can find both opportunity and motive.

breach of the agreement with Selim I: "*Üngürüs kralı dahi Sultan Selim'e olan 'ahdini nakz idüb muhâlefet itdi.*" Lütfi Paşa, p.245.

⁸⁰⁶ The notion of encirclement has been used as an excuse many times by many rulers. For example, Francis threatened by Charles's power, employed the notion as an excuse for frequent attacks. Rodriquez-Salgado, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.18

⁸⁰⁷ Celâlzâde (SN), p.208. Andras Kubinyi suggests that Ottoman attacks on Hungary after the accession of Süleyman may have been provoked by Hungarian leadership based on the evidence of planned action by the lesser nobility against the Ottomans before 1519. Andras Kubinyi, "The Road to Defeat: Hungarian Politics and Defense in the Jagiellonian Period," in Bak and Kiraly (eds.), p.171.

⁸⁰⁸ Sanuto, 31:58 (29.05.1521) and 31:86 (14.06.1521). Andras Kubinyi argues that the ill-treatment of the Ottoman envoy as a cause of war was mere propaganda because "King Louis II had already informed the towns as early as 5 November 1520, that with the death of the sultan, the truce had expired and Ottoman attacks increased." Kubinyi, "The Road to Defeat," p.171.

The ill treatment of envoys as triggering aggression seems to be a universal excuse employed by many a ruler throughout history.⁸⁰⁹ Hungarian scholarship has designated that the Ottoman ambassador Behram Çavuş was already at Buda in December 1520.⁸¹⁰ Two strands of thought can be found regarding the visit of Behram Çavuş. The first argument is that Behram Çavuş was in Buda for the renewal of peace. According to Pal Fodor, the peace agreement involved either tribute or right of transit. In both cases, the Hungarian reaction would be to take the offer as injury to sovereignty and incompatible with external relations. A Ragusian historian mentions that an agreement dated 28 March 1519 containing the right of transit under certain conditions meant that the offer simply involved the renewal of the existing agreement.⁸¹¹ This assumption does not seem unreasonable since we know that a new accession rendered prior agreements invalid and that they had to be renewed. The second argument is that the envoy was only a trick by the Ottomans to buy time. The campaign decision was already made. The purpose of the envoy was to mislead if not provoke the Hungarians. Thus, the detention of the envoy was rather the pretext than cause. This argument is supported by the fact of the absence of the issue in the proclamation of victory.⁸¹² Neither do contemporary Ottoman chronicles mention the presence or ill-treatment of an Ottoman envoy at Buda. The involvement of the envoy becomes an issue in later

⁸⁰⁹ History and legend abound with examples of ill-treatment of ambassadors and consequences. One such example is Alexander the Great's invasion of Tyre. When Alexander offered the city terms for peaceful surrender, the city replied by saying that they were not ready to surrender. Alexander besieged for four months, then thought it was not worth his effort, decided to leave by making some kind of agreement. The envoy he sent for negotiation was murdered: "Indignant at this, Alexander turned to the assault with such force that he took the city and destroyed it and killed and enslaved its people." Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.230. Ill-treatment of envoys was a major offense by Turco-Mongolian standards. Judging by empirical examples, Vernadsky suggests that the inviolability of ambassadors was an important principle of Mongol law Geroge Vernadsky, "The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan's Yasa," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol.3, no.3/4, (Dec., 1938), p.346. For the 1521 instance see, Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," p.287.

⁸¹⁰ Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," p.287-8; Kaldy-Nagy, "Angriff" p.163.

⁸¹¹ Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," p.288.

⁸¹² *Ibid*, p.290.

accounts such as Ali's and Peçevi's.⁸¹³ On the other hand, the Venetian envoy in Buda Lorenzo Orio's letter in April confirms some kind of detention of the Ottoman ambassador. Orio informs Venice that the lords and barons were assembled in Buda to discuss the options of peace or war with *Signor Turco*. He mentions that they were armed. He also reports that the ambassador of the sultan is there and kept in custody as customary.⁸¹⁴

Accounts on Rhodes also dwell on the security and defense of the interests of the realm and the people. According to Celâlzâde, although Süleyman had his mind set on Buda, he was directed by the unrest caused by the *Efrenc* on the seas. Thus he decided on Rhodes to prevent them from hurting the merchants.⁸¹⁵ Among the reasons of the Rhodes campaign Kemalpaşazade mentions that Rhodes was home to the “infidel robbers who did not give in to anyone,” and yet they harmed everyone.⁸¹⁶ Ramazan gives the motives as conquering the island, freeing the prisoners and clearing the way for the pilgrimage.⁸¹⁷ An anonymous account circulating in England by 1524 saw the security of Levant for his subjects as one motive of Süleyman. According to this account, his subjects complained about the damages caused by Christian “men of war received into Rhodes.” Therefore: “He tooke conclusion in himselfe, that if he might put the seyde town in his power and subjection, that then he should be peaceful lord of all Levant, and that his subjects should complain no more to him.”⁸¹⁸

Fontanus puts the justification of the Rhodes campaign in the mouth of a naval captain, Kurdoğlu. Being a “man of war and fierce nature” Kurdoğlu was one of the few men who supported Süleyman's intention of capturing Rhodes. According to Fontanus,

⁸¹³ Kemalpaşazade, Nasuh, Sa'di, Bostan, Lütfi Paşa and Celâlzâde do not mention any involvement of an Ottoman envoy. Also see the comparison in KPZ, X:52, n.2.

⁸¹⁴ Sanuto, 30:196.

⁸¹⁵ *Tabakat*, 66a. Sanuto's observation is in keeping with Celâlzâde's view. On 21 October 1521, Halil Çavuş visited the Collegio as ambassador of Süleyman. He told the Venetians that the sultan would return with his army to avenge his greatest enemy Hungary because the damage he received from them was not little. Sanuto, 32:68. For piracy as reason, see also, Bostan (TSK), 31a.

⁸¹⁶ KPZ, X:129.

⁸¹⁷ Ramazan, p.99.

⁸¹⁸ “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes,” p.179-80.

it was this notorious captain who brought to the attention of the Sultan the sufferings of the people through the hands of Rhodians. As the account goes, he told the Sultan that people complained of being robbed, towns plundered, and animals slaughtered. Furthermore, they could not fight back those “Rhodian corsairs and *segnati* of the Cross” on their own. Fontanus reveals that the captain was not merely speaking his own mind, but he was asked by these people to ask the Sultan for help. Thus, it was on their behalf that he begged the Sultan “in the name of the Prophet” to free his people from the “cruel enemy” and slavery. Then comes the punch line: “Do not forget that it is not only people suffering, but your public honor and your name. Will you let some thieves and murderers destroy your camps, plunder your lands, kill your people and harass the whole of our sea?”⁸¹⁹

As Fontanus puts two speeches in the mouths of Kurdoğlu and Süleyman respectively, to justify the campaign, an Ottoman source Tabib Ramazan expresses his arguments through the alleged speech of the Sultan at Rhodes. The first argument he puts forth is that of proximity, causing concern to Süleyman because the island stands “in the middle of the conquests” of his forefathers. The second argument is the superior knowledge of the islanders the sea, which gave them the opportunity to get in the way of pilgrims and merchants, to take them prisoners, to exploit and abuse them under miserable conditions.⁸²⁰ The third argument introduces the issue of Cem Sultan. According to the speech, Rhodians imprisoned Süleyman’s great-uncle without fearing his grandfather Bayezid, causing his predecessors to suffer for not being able to save

⁸¹⁹ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” 93b-94a; *Münşe‘at*, I:523: “*madde-i ızrâr-ı misâfirân-ı behâr ve illet-i sefk-i dimâ-i tacâvuzvar olub...*” but nobody could dream of capturing it for it was very strong. Documentary evidence, put forth by Nicolas Vatin, confirms the harm given to Ottoman subjects and enslavement by corsairs much earlier than the accession of Süleyman. Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, e.g. pp.437-40, for the facsimile and transcription of a letter to the Palace in December 1518-January 1519 [TSM, E.6637].

⁸²⁰ Ramazan, p.133-5. Süleyman acting on the the suffering and prayers of the prisoners at Rhodes, on the other hand, is reminiscent of Aşıkpaşazade’s account of Mehmed II going to capture Mora on hearing the sufferings of Muslim women there. Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, p.199: “*Ol kişi doğru Edreneye gelmiş. Dahı padişaha buluşdı. Bu avratların habarların bildürdi. Bu gördüğü halları ona da aslıyile habar Verdi. Padişah bu habarı işidicek gayret-i islam galebe etdi. Heman dem cemi’leşkerini cem’etdi. Niyet-i gazâ edüb Mora vilâyetine yürüdi.*”

him. This suffering made them think that this was the one place that the infidels hit hard on the Ottomans.⁸²¹

Another projected motive of the Rhodes campaign was the freeing of Muslim prisoners on the island. The motif of liberating captives seems to be an important element in sixteenth-century image-making. Charles V's releasing of the captives in the Tunis campaign, for example, was depicted in the tapestries. The Latin inscriptions on the tapestry expressed the gratitude of these prisoners. The effect of this liberation reached as far away as Nuremberg, as demonstrated by a poem written by the shoemaker Hans Sachs. The poem emphasized that the Emperor had gone to Africa "in person", that he released Christian captives and that he "converted many heathen."⁸²² According to Tabib Ramazan's version of the Rhodes story, these prisoners prayed to God to send Sultan Süleyman to their rescue, just as He did in the case of Belgrade.⁸²³ An Ebu Bekir ed-Darani, who paid his way out of the island around 1503, expressed his amazement at the lack of reaction by the Sultan as far as Rhodes was concerned while saving the prisoners was a "duty of his just like praying and fasting."⁸²⁴ A letter to Selim I, probably dated March 1513, by a run-away Ottoman prisoner from Rhodes confirms the presence of Muslim slaves on the island as well as their hope of rescue by the Ottoman Sultan. The writer of the letter also informs the Sultan of the opportunity presented by the death of the grand master and the absence of the new one.⁸²⁵

⁸²¹ Ramazan, p.134. This is an interesting conception of Cem's captivity as it reinforces an almost romantic view of the affair; as if Bayezid did ever wish to save his brother. On the other hand, it introduces the impression of a dynastic feud into the picture.

⁸²² Peter Burke, "Presenting and Re-presenting Charles V," in *Charles V 1500-1558*, H. Soly (ed) (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1999), p.434.

⁸²³ Ramazan, p.97. Also see KPZ, X:129 for the prisoners; Lütfi Paşa, p.250 also prayer heard by the sultan; Bostan (TSK), 40a; Nasuh, 86a.

⁸²⁴ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, p.321.

⁸²⁵ For the facsimile and transcription of the report on Muslim slaves at Rhodes dated March 1513 [TSM, E.5799], see Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.419-22. For another incident of taking prisoners taken by Rhodians, see Palmira Brummett, "The Overrated Adversary: Rhodes and Ottoman Naval Power," *The Historical Journal*, vol.36, no.3 (Sept. 1993), p.526. Brummett dwells on the bargaining value of prisoners as Rhodians lack the power to exert political and/or military force on the Ottomans.

Although a minor consequence rather than a major motive in contemporary sources, as far as Rhodes is concerned, a potential pretender to the throne is an issue that also seems to have preoccupied Süleyman: Cem's son.⁸²⁶ According to a foreign observer who left the island with the Grand Master, through his viziers, Süleyman asked the Grand Master for the deliverance of Cem's son upon entering the city. Although the Grand Master tried to hide him, he was finally forced to submit. Piri Paşa had told him that "the Signor wanted him above anything else." When Adam requested the grand vizier to spare his life, Piri Paşa said that it was impossible.⁸²⁷ The campaign diary notes without comment that a son of Sultan Cem was found in Christian disguise and executed along with his son. His wife and daughters were sent to Istanbul.⁸²⁸ The proclamation of victory, on the other hand, remains silent on the issue.

3.3. Making War

So far we have tried to analyze the legitimating motives of the decision to wage war on specific targets. Now we shall try to understand the constituent elements involved in warfare as a *rational* and a *ritual* activity. As such we shall look at the strategic elements involved in specifying the targets, the significance of Süleyman commanding the campaigns in person, the ritual instances involved during various stages of the campaigns, the mode of appropriation of the towns concerned and the mode of termination of the campaigns. Since war-making is not violent action without any rules, each of these elements contributes to the overall image of a warrior monarch when played by the book, as Süleyman is projected to have done.

3.3.1. Weighing the Opportunity

⁸²⁶ Spandounes, p.67; Sanuto, 34:61; KPZ, X:179-80: "*sûret-i fesâda maddedir.*"

⁸²⁷ Sanuto, 34: 61: "*sichè il Signor si ha cavá etiam questo stecho di l'ochio cum farli morir.*" For the death of Cem's son, see *ibid*, 67.

⁸²⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:538.

Some scholars have moved forth the argument that until 1526 there was a lack of unified and organized Christian attempt to check Ottoman advance. Among internal strife and fear, an equally important factor in this lack of response was the belief in the ability of Hungary to defend itself. As long as it continued to serve as a buffer zone, European princes found no reason to engage militarily.⁸²⁹ It has also been argued that Hungary took pride in this role over a couple of centuries.⁸³⁰ Both modern scholarship and contemporary views agree that struggles within and among European states diminished their ability to compete with Ottomans. Especially the struggle between Charles V and Francis I seems to have directly helped Ottoman frontier advance. Religious dissention and strife also moved the focus away from the “Turkish threat.”⁸³¹

In 1520, Hungary was instable politically. The young king Louis II did not enjoy much authority among the nobles. The great lords were competing for power and tightening control over the peasants who as a result seem to have been indifferent to defending their land. Thus, the Hungarian army lacked the variety of participants Hunyadi had when defending Belgrade in 1456. Hunyadi’s army had students, peasants,

⁸²⁹ DeVries, “Lack of a Western European Military Response,” p.544-5, 555, 559. The author asserts: “The crusade of Nicopolis was the last crusade. After its failure, the western princes found that they were too busy with conflicts against their Christian neighbors or their own people, that the Turks as an army and as individual soldiers were too frightening and ‘evil’ to contend with, and that, at least for the short term, the Hungarians were doing a fine job of keeping the Turks out of the rest of Europe.”

⁸³⁰ Pal Fodor, “View of the Turk in Hungary: The Apocalyptic Tradition and the Legend of the Red Apple in Ottoman-Hungarian Context,” in *In Quest of the Golden Apple*, (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2000), pp.71-103.

⁸³¹ Andrew C. Hess, “The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (1517) and the Beginning of the Sixteenth-Century World War,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.4, no.1 (Jan., 1973), p.72-3. Hess argues that with Egypt in Ottoman hands, Süleyman ruled over a relatively uniform Muslim block, whereas the Papacy was not able to keep Christians unified. He argues that whereas in Europe rulers and urban classes clashed over the basics of faith, Ottomans were able to affect unified expansion against the “infidels.” However, as the rebellions of first Canberdi Gazali, then Ahmed Paşa demonstrate, Egypt was far from being integrated in the Ottoman system, and religious sects far from being crushed when Süleyman inherited 1520; and Süleyman had to work on this issue for several years to come.

craftsmen, and vagabonds.⁸³² It may be speculated that the popular support enjoyed by Hunyadi was not present.

The alleged indifference of Hungarian peasantry resulted also from a perceptual element. In the 1520s, Hungarian peasants believed that Ottomans were made of iron and hence invincible. The common belief was that resistance was useless because God had turned his back and the God of the conquerors was stronger for the time being.⁸³³ The economic depression followed by the death of Corvinus hindered the development of cities and caused an unfavorable balance of trade. This caused Hungary to be defined as “a rich land, poor country.” The Ottoman advance and threat required the maintenance of border castles which took almost all annual income for decades. With the collapse of economy, Corvinus’s reforms were abandoned. The Hungarian King was in dire straits. To solve immediate problems, feudal arrangements were re-introduced causing aristocracy to gain the upper hand. The authority of the crown declined along with coordinated defense efforts and centralized command.⁸³⁴ Many modern scholars put the blame of the loss of Belgrade on the King and his inefficient military machine. Ferenc Szakaly, for instance, charges “the unpreparedness of the king of Hungary’s military machine” regarding Ottoman success in Belgrade which he defines as a “strategically misguided and completely improvised campaign.”⁸³⁵ Another Hungarian scholar Andras Kubinyi blames the lords who did not respond to the call-to-arms because they would not give up harvest.⁸³⁶

⁸³² J. Held, “Peasants in Arms,” in Bak and Karaly (eds.), p.90, 95; Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.140; Schwoebel, “Coexistence, Conversion, and the Crusade Against the Turks,” p.171.

⁸³³ Fodor, “View of the Turk in Hungary,” pp.87-8. Such fatalistic perception should be considered within the framework of apocalyptic thought.

⁸³⁴ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, pp.60-2; Kaldy-Nagy, “Angriff,” p.167

⁸³⁵ Ferenc Szakaly, “The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System and Its Collapse,” in Bak and Karaly (eds.), p.152. Geza Perjes, on the other hand, establishes that Belgrade was the main objective of the campaign. Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.99

⁸³⁶ Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat,” p.171. It would not be quite accurate to attribute the unwillingness of the lords to compromise harvest only to greed, since they relied on the harvest for the maintenance of their forces.

Not only the weakened authority of the King, but the general decline in the border defense system, developed by Corvinus in the fifteenth century, seems to have reduced Hungary's military ability. The castles at the border were in bad repair. Unfavorable political, social and economic conditions did not permit renovation. No sign of change was apparent until 1521, there was not money anyway. Croatian-Bosnian border fortresses were mostly in decay. Hungarian garrison soldiers had already devastated the border areas in the beginning of the century.⁸³⁷ Around 1520, in a speech to the Diet, Istvan Werboczy described the situation as such:

... these confines have been destroyed due to the constant attacks by the Ottomans, peasants have been expelled from the estates of the castles; in many places, especially in Bosnia and Croatia, only desolate fortresses have remained, only desolate walls...⁸³⁸

The situation in Hungary did not improve much even after Süleyman left Istanbul. On June 28, the Venetian ambassador in Buda Lorenzo Orio wrote that the King requested help from the Pope, the Emperor and Venice, as well as King Ferdinand and the Wallachian king. Orio believed that even though soldiers and money were gathered at Buda, it was impossible for the Hungarians to defend themselves alone.⁸³⁹ Orio's observation probably echoed the common concern. In August, Sir Richard Wingfield wrote to Wolsey informing him of the visit made by a Hungarian ambassador to the Emperor. The ambassador had asked for help admitting that they would not be able to handle the situation on their own.⁸⁴⁰ By October the situation seems to have grown even worse. Luca Corvato, sent by the Venetian deputy of Friuli to explore the situation in the Hungarian camp reported that the Hungarian army was in no shape to pursue the enemy. They lacked order and were not united. Corvato pointed out to the discord between the people and the rulers stating that the king enjoyed little obedience.⁸⁴¹ Lorenzo Orio, who stayed there for 55 months and witnessed the Hungarian reaction to

⁸³⁷ Kubiny, "The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi," p.78-81; Geza Palffy, "The Origins and the Development of the Border Defence System Against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary," in David and Fodor (eds), p.13.

⁸³⁸ As quoted in Kubiny, "The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi," p.78.

⁸³⁹ Sanuto, 31:72.

⁸⁴⁰ *Letters and Papers*, III:631-2.

⁸⁴¹ Sanuto, 32:57-8.

the 1521 campaign at Buda, paints a rather gloomy picture of the situation. Relating his overall mission in December 1523, Orio reports that the King had no understanding of administrative issues and left the handling of finances in the hands of others. Although he tried to prepare an army to meet the Ottoman challenge in 1521, it was no use because Hungarian leaders [*capi*] let the case be lost for neglect and discord among themselves. Orio believed that if there were even one commander, Hungarians could have harmed the Ottomans.⁸⁴² Orio's secretary, Francesco Massaro, confirmed Orio's observations in a letter dated 5 October 1523 to the Doge. He reported that the Sultan saw much discord in Transylvania and Croatia, thus decided on a campaign to Hungary. Hungarians, on the other hand, preferred to flee rather than fight back because of the dissension among the nobles.⁸⁴³ Italian writer Guicciardini expressed that the Ottomans would eventually find an opportunity in attacking Hungary which was "weakened in the hands of a child-king governed by prelates and barons of the realm, who were in disaccord among themselves."⁸⁴⁴ Louis II seems to have tried everything he could to counter an expected Ottoman attack on Hungary. Venetian ambassador in Buda, Lorenzo Orio, reported in his letter dated July 16 that King Louis made the ultimate call for war:

He sent an unsheathed sword to all barons and others for them to come to camp with the people they are obliged to bring, and this is the ultimate authoritative command: a rare thing, nobody remembers this being done in this kingdom before.⁸⁴⁵

⁸⁴² Sanuto, 35:295-6.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid*, 99-100. Such comments on Ottoman attacks on Hungary were not novel. An earlier reference to internal dissension almost bringing a kingdom into ruin can be traced in the *Chronicle of the Hungarians*, for example. Concerns about the dangers facing a divided kingdom are expressed through the assumed plans of the Ottoman Sultan Murad II about Hungary: "When he heard that all the people of the kingdom of Hungary were devouring each other in civil wars, he reckoned that a divided people could do nothing to defend itself. He therefore decided to invade the kingdom of Hungary." Janos Thuroczy, *Chronicle of the Hungarians*, Frank Mantello (ed) (Bloomington: Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1991), p.121.

⁸⁴⁴ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.300.

⁸⁴⁵ Sanuto, 31:195. Also see, *ibid*, 35:100.

King Louis's efforts did not escape Ottoman attention either. On 4 August [29 Shaban], Bali Beg is reported have brought news about the preparations of an army by Hungarian King, upon which Süleyman ordered boats to go about the Danube to face the challenge if necessary.⁸⁴⁶ He also sent for help to every major court in Europe. Hungarian envoys were sent even to the Diet of Worms in April 1521. Basing their argument on being a buffer-zone between the Ottomans and the Germans, they asked for preventive help from German princes to repel the enemy if need be. However, German estates were not to be convinced. They only promised that they would not let Hungary stand alone if and when it was *actually* attacked.⁸⁴⁷ Interestingly, we find an abundance of accounts on how each wrote to another asking for support on behalf of the Hungarian king rather than directly providing military or financial help. The King of Poland, for example, wrote to the cardinals requesting that "they persuade the Pope to help Hungary against the *Turks* who have already entered the country."⁸⁴⁸ Nevertheless European rulers were hesitant to take action. Although all seemed very enthusiastic about an attack on the *Turk* two years earlier, the balance was now disturbed and everyone had his own issues to resolve. As Guicciardini put it:

Now, although these preliminaries were set in motion with great hopes, and although everyone accepted the truce, and everyone declared himself, with ostentatious and magnificent speeches, to be against the Turk and to be ready (if the others concurred) to lend all their strength to so just a cause, nevertheless, since each of them considered the danger uncertain and very far off, and relating more to one state than to another, and since it was very difficult, and required a long time to introduce such a sense of zeal and universal a union, private interests and advantages prevailed.⁸⁴⁹

The most likely candidates to support Louis II, namely Charles V and Ferdinand were engaged with their own issues. Charles V still had to consolidate his authority in his lands. He was in trouble with the French. In 1518, the Castilian Cortes had given him a demand list of composed of eighty-eight articles. He had even received a plea

⁸⁴⁶ *Münşe'at*, I:511. Süleyman was already before Belgrade for a couple of days.

⁸⁴⁷ Stephen A. Fisher-Galati, "Ottoman Imperialism and the Lutheran Struggle for Recognition in Germany, 1520-1529," *Church History*, vol.23, no.1, (Mar., 1954), p.51.

⁸⁴⁸ Sanuto, 31:316. The Hungarian ambassador was already in Rome when the letter was read.

⁸⁴⁹ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.301.

from the Cortes that he should learn Spanish.⁸⁵⁰ However, he received the ambassador sent to him by Louis II. Although he did not do much to relieve the concerns of his brother-in-law, he sent the ambassador to England to ask for support:

The bearer, the ambassador of my brother-in-law, the king of Hungary, has told me of the distress in which his country is, from the invasion of the Turk. Many towns have been taken, and the rest will be soon subdued, if aid is not given by other Christian princes. I have done what I can, considering the war which Francis has so unjustly commensed against me, and am determined to do more when my affairs will allow of it. The said ambassador has a commission to the King and yourself and has asked me to write to you in his favor. His petition is reasonable and necessary for the preservation of Christendom.⁸⁵¹

On 11 August 1520, Charles officially declared that Ferdinand would be the ruler of the Austrian territories. The settlement was negotiated throughout the following two years. The first settlement was signed at Worms on 23 April 1521. Leaving Austria, Styria, Carinthia and Carniola under Ferdinand's control, Charles distanced himself from the Ottoman threat. The arrangement met with resistance in Carniola and Carinthia which threatened to suspend "Turkish aid." In 1521, Ferdinand married the sister of King Louis, Anna, at Linz.⁸⁵² Ferdinand was perhaps the most likely prince to provide King Louis with help, not only because of his marriage to the sister of the Hungarian king; but also if Hungary fell, Ferdinand's territory would be the next target for the Ottoman army. However, when he arrived in Austria in 1521, Ferdinand had to face his own problems. The legal and administrative structures established by Maximilian were about to collapse. Being raised up in Spain, Ferdinand himself was not acquainted with local customs and organization. He was not even able to speak the language, when he had to talk at a meeting of the estates he had to use a translator. Furthermore, he had to face a hostile population and the growing challenge of Lutheranism with no firm financial base. Hostility was also directed to his advisors and his reliance on them.⁸⁵³ A letter dated 15 October 1523 by secretary Masaro, who accompanied the Venetian

⁸⁵⁰ Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, p.38, 136-7.

⁸⁵¹ *Letters and Papers*, III:661.

⁸⁵² Fichtner, *Ferdinand I of Austria*, pp.18-20; Rodriguez-Salgado, "La Cruzada sin Cruzado," pp.224; Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, pp.136-42.

⁸⁵³ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I of Austria*, pp.23-7. For the reforms of Maximilian, see Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, p.98.

ambassador Lorenzo Orio in his long Hungarian mission, reported Ferdinand's unpopularity among his subjects as well as among the Germans. According to Masaro, Ferdinand owed this strong unpopularity to his "tyrannical actions" such as the execution of several German barons and unusually high taxing. Furthermore, he was vindictive and not as liberal as he ought to be.⁸⁵⁴ In short, in the beginning of 1520s Ferdinand still had to establish himself as an independent ruler.

The crisis of Rhodes, too, came up at an unfortunate moment for European monarchs. Charles V and Francis I had newly begun to fight. Henry VIII had decided be involved in this war in favor of Charles. Pope Leo X died on 1 December 1521 and his successor Adrian VI did not arrive in Rome until 29 August 1522. In other words, the new Pope had neither time nor opportunity to organize Christian forces. The whole affair once again turned into a rhetorical demonstration of mutual accusations, each blaming the other for being unable to help Rhodes.⁸⁵⁵ The death of the grand master of Rhodes posed yet another opportunity. Allegedly, a knight named Andrew Merall, who aspired to be Grand Master himself, was so disappointed when not elected that he informed Süleyman of the opportunity at hand. According to his report, there was never a better time to capture Rhodes because the grand master was new, part of the walls were taken down, some Italian knights had rebelled against the new grand master, and "all Christian princes were busie warring upon each other."⁸⁵⁶ Whether such a report was ever sent to Süleyman is doubtful, however the arguments set forth seem to summarize the current situation quite accurately.

After the siege of 1480, the possibility of an Ottoman attack remained a major issue at Rhodian council meetings, putting the knights in a defensive position until the final conquest in 1522. Following grand master d'Aubussone's [d.1503] pleas to the Pope and various Christian rulers in 1501 for concerted action, many such attempts can be observed by the Rhodians who warned Europe of the risk and asked for assistance. Their pleas usually found rhetoric support, but assistance on military resources never actualized. Each change of reign seems to have triggered new fear of an Ottoman attack

⁸⁵⁴ Sanuto, 35:115.

⁸⁵⁵ Rodriquez-Salgado, "La Cruzado sin Cruzado," p.230-1.

⁸⁵⁶ "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.181.

on the island.⁸⁵⁷ Rhodes prepared for defense, for example, when grand master D'Amboise died in 1512, the same year Selim I acquired the Ottoman throne; fortunately for the Rhodians, Selim was busy elsewhere.⁸⁵⁸ In the case of the 1522 siege, rumors of a possible Ottoman attack were current in European courtly circles long before Süleyman set sail. Writing to Wolsey on 1 February 1520 from Rome, Campeggio mentioned that the *Turk* was preparing an attack against Rhodes.⁸⁵⁹ In a letter dated 24 July 1522, Charles de Lannoy warned Charles saying that Rhodes was the bulwark between the *Turco* and Christendom. If Charles did not help the island, warned Lannoy, it would be lost exposing Sicily to worse danger.⁸⁶⁰ These rumors were no doubt kindled by the communications of the Grand Master who was as sure of an attack as he was sure of Ottoman preparations. He requested help even from as far away as England. On 19 March 1522, he wrote to Wolsey for support, expressing his certainty of an Ottoman on Rhodes.⁸⁶¹ On 17 June, he wrote to Henry VIII sending the French translation of a letter by Süleyman and said that the Ottoman fleet was already in sight.⁸⁶²

Süleyman's stake at the internal conflict in Europe seems to have loomed large in the minds of foreign observers in both cases. Spandounes mentions that Süleyman was well aware that Christian princes were divided and fought among themselves as he seized the opportunity to attack Belgrade. He also emphasizes that the physical vacancy of the papal seat as Süleyman laid siege on Rhodes and the lack of French help to the

⁸⁵⁷ Rhodians feared an Ottoman attack when Grand Master d'Aubussone died in 1503. Furthermore, the next two grand masters, Ammerigo d'Amboise [d.1512] and Guido di Blanchefort [d.1513] were resident in France, thus absent rulers. Brummett, "The Overrated Adversary," pp.519-24. For renewed attempts at securing international help in 1515-1516, see *ibid*, p.539.

⁸⁵⁸ For the preparations in Rhodes for defense in 1512, see *ibid*, pp.536-7.

⁸⁵⁹ *Letters and Papers*, III:206.

⁸⁶⁰ Rodriquez-Salgado, "La Cruzado sin Cruzado," p.230.

⁸⁶¹ *Letters and Papers*, III:904.

⁸⁶² *Ibid*, 984. The English translation of a French account of the Rhodes campaign provides a copy of a letter to the Grand Master by Süleyman dated 1 June. Perhaps this is the letter Wolsey is talking about. The same account mentions that the Grand Master sent for help from the Pope and Christian princes on June 24. See, "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," pp.185-6.

island due to “harassment of other Christian princes” provided the Ottomans with opportunity.⁸⁶³ Venetian gossip reports a conversation between some Venetians and the viziers at Rhodes regarding the lack of external help to the island. The Venetians supposedly told the viziers that such a campaign could never be realized if Venice intervened in support of Rhodes. Rumor has it that the viziers concurred.⁸⁶⁴ Fontanus’s account brings forth the divided situation and the improbability of Christian help to Rhodes again in the alleged words of Kurdoğlu Süleyman:

And if you consider well, you will see that the Prophet Muhammad looking out for you, has given you a divine occasion; that is Christians are occupied among themselves in civil war, they have the mood for everything else other than you.⁸⁶⁵

Ottoman chroniclers do not suggest any such seizing of opportunity. However, Süleyman was already well aware of what went on in the West of the Ottoman realm long before his accession. It has been mentioned in the first chapter of this study that he served as guard of Rumelia during the Egyptian campaign of his father. Venetian intelligence shows that Süleyman was very interested in the condition of his Western neighbors and counterparts. Venetian accounts abound with conversations between the viziers, the bailos and the ambassadors on European affairs. Minio’s report, dated 28 February 1522, demonstrates careful deliberation on the destination of the next Ottoman target. The Venetian ambassador informs that the viziers kept asking him questions about the power of the Pope, his financial means, and the potential manpower of the Emperor and the French king. They were also interested in their mode of relations with Venice. Furthermore, they inquired about Rome specifically asking Minio how many days it would take to get to Rome from Constantinople and the easiest way to get there. They also wished to know whether Minio thought the Pope would help the Hungarians.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶³ Spandounes, pp.65-6. Leo X died in 1522, it took several months for his successor Adrian VI to arrive in Rome from Spain where he served in the name of Charles V. Though Adrian tried to procure help for the island when he came to Rome, it was already too late.

⁸⁶⁴ Sanuto, 34:16-7.

⁸⁶⁵ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” 94a. Fontanus then puts the same conviction in Süleyman’s mouth on 94b.

⁸⁶⁶ Minio, *Relazione*, pp.20-1.

3.3.2. Strategic Targeting

Modern scholarship has still not reached a consensus on whether Süleyman intended to occupy Buda and annex Hungary as he embarked on the 1521 campaign. The confusion is caused by two factors. The first factor is the inconsistency of contemporary Ottoman sources about the target of operation. While they leave no doubt as to targeting Hungary, Buda appears as a possible target along with Sabacz and Belgrade.⁸⁶⁷ This inconsistency keeps us from determining the intention for sure. The second factor detaining from a clear judgment on the matter is the fact that Buda was not occupied for the next twenty years, although Süleyman had the chance more than once. This ambiguity has resulted in two strands of thought explaining the choice of Hungary as Süleyman's first target, especially in Hungarian scholarship.⁸⁶⁸

The first strand, best represented by Pal Fodor, revolves around the theme of gradual occupation as the aim from the beginning in 1521.⁸⁶⁹ Fodor attributes the decision to march into Hungary on the onset of Süleyman's reign to the "one step eastward, one step westward" policy of the Ottomans. According to this argument, the East was already exhausted as a result of Selim I's campaigns when Süleyman ascended

⁸⁶⁷ The campaign diary mentions rumors in the Ottoman camp of heading to Buda during the siege of Belgrade, following a *divan* gathering on 13 August [9 Ramadan]. The campaign diary also demonstrates that Süleyman lingered at and around Belgrade for several days after the conquest holding court and hunting. The castle was captured three weeks later on 26 Ramazan and the Ottoman army left Belgrade on 16 Shawwal. On the other hand, the proclamation of victory of Belgrade to the judges of the realm explain that even though the target of the campaign was to destroy the King, based on the commanders' counsel the campaign was ended because of time restrictions. Such an explanation suggests the possibility of Buda being the initial target. See *Münşe'at*, I:512, 514 and 518, respectively. Pal Fodor emphasizes the ambiguity about the specific target and evaluates the discussions on the way not as discussions about whether to enter Hungary or not, but about the specific castles to be targeted and the route to take. Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," p.290. Judging by the competing targets of Belgrade and Sabacz as insisted on by Piri Paşa and Ahmed Paşa along with the simultaneous raiding going on in Srymia, Perjes asserts that the target was definitely neither Buda nor a decisive blow. Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.98.

⁸⁶⁸ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*; Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," p.272. For a brief summary of these approaches and their adherents, see *ibid*, pp.274-9.

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.272.

the throne. Heading westward would give the East some breathing space. On the other hand, the ruling elite and especially the janissaries were discontent with warfare among Muslims. Based on this argument, Fodor concludes that “Süleyman, intent on consolidating his power, had practically no other alternative, but to turn his back on his father’s political ‘testament’ that passed on to him the assignment of solving the Persian problem.”⁸⁷⁰ Seen through this perspective, Süleyman’s attempt on Hungary seems like the natural response to the current situation. Some scholars have defined Süleyman’s Hungarian policy in terms of gradual occupation. In keeping with Halil İnalcık’s thesis of methods of conquest, the process consists of four subsequent phases. The first involves devastation of borderlands which serves a dual purpose of wearing down the enemy and reconnaissance of territory. These raids are followed by a concentrated attack in the best possible opportunity after which the imperial army leaves the region to a pro-Ottoman administration. Ultimately, when the time is right, the region is annexed with a final campaign.⁸⁷¹ Following this strand, the 1521 campaign can be viewed as a performance of the first of these phases.

Whereas the second strand, led by Geza Perjes, argues that the occupation of Hungary was a gradual process due to the Habsburg threat. This line of thought concludes that Süleyman had no intention to occupy Hungary, but to preserve its territorial and political integrity as a buffer-zone as an anti-Habsburg measure.⁸⁷² When viewed in this perspective, the 1521 campaign may be viewed as coercive action to consolidate the borders and to gain an upper hand in relations with Hungary.

Pal Fodor dwells on the effect of the wishes of the political elite on Süleyman’s decision to attack Hungary. Fodor argues that from the start on the aim was to defeat

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.286.

⁸⁷¹ Ferenc Szakaly, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary: 1529-1534* (Budapest: Akademiai Klado, 1995), p.101; İnalcık, “Ottoman Methods of Conquest,” pp.103-129. Feridun Emecen also argues that Süleyman opted for a gradual conquest policy in Hungary keeping it as a buffer-zone rather than claiming absolute sovereignty. It was only when Szapolyai died that occupying Buda and claiming Hungarian territory became necessary. Feridun Emecen, “*Büyük Türk’e Pannonia Düzüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526,*” in *Muhteşem Süleyman, Özlem Kumrular* (ed) (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2007), p.47.

⁸⁷² Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.83 Perjes provides a brief literature survey on the matter, pp.84-5. For a brief summary of the competing strands of thought also see Emecen, “*Büyük Türk’e Pannonia Düzüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526,*” pp.48-9.

Hungary and occupy Buda, simply because Hungary was the neighbor.⁸⁷³ Tayyip Gökbilgin, on the other hand, dwells on the influence of wishes of a different sector of the political elite, that of the Rumelian commanders. According to this perspective, they were aware of the opportunity offered by the chaotic political and economical situation of Hungary.⁸⁷⁴

All these views are a result of knowledge of what happened in the next decades. As Feridun Emecen has warned,⁸⁷⁵ the benefit of time might cloud our judgment. Therefore, we shall go back to the contemporaries to understand how they perceived the situation – although some of them also knew what ultimately happened. The key to the ambiguity of target in the 1521 campaign perhaps crystallizes at the *divan* of Sofia where we find two competing views as to where to proceed. Each party during this meeting tries to reinforce his argument through presenting the safest way to acquire Buda eventually. Sa'di says that Süleyman's initial target was Buda because he meant to end the rule of the King with his sword by aiming his capital directly; but he was convinced to take Belgrade first because such a stronghold should not be left behind. According to Sa'di's version of the story, the viziers were also concerned about the risk involved in going too far. They were worried about possible unrest at the other end of the realm. Through the words of the viziers, the author emphasizes that the Sultan had newly ascended the throne.⁸⁷⁶ Sa'di's expression suggests that Süleyman had yet to consolidate his power. According to Celâlzâde, it was Piri Paşa who proposed to capture Belgrade at the council of Sofia. In the opinion of the grand vizier, Belgrade was the

⁸⁷³ Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," pp. 271.

⁸⁷⁴ Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Kanunî Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan ve Avrupa siyasetinin sebep ve âmilleri, geçirdiği safhalar," *Kanunî Armağanı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1970), p.6.

⁸⁷⁵ Emecen, "Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526," p.49.

⁸⁷⁶ Sa'di (SN), 136b-137a: .. kendisi zübde-i 'asâkir-i gerdûn-me'âsirle Tuna suyundan geçüb 'inân-ı zafer-kırânın doğru Kral-ı bed-fi'âlin tahtgâh-ı nuhset-nigâhu olan belde-i Buduna teveccüh eyleye, varub dâr ü diyâr ve şürûr ü emsârın mevâkıb-ı gerdûn-menâkıbın semm-i ahenîn mutâyasıyla lice-i deryaya vire, dest-i tuğ-ı suybarla defter-i şevketin dürüb tomar-ı saltanatın tayy idecek bi'z-zarûri cümle husûn ü kılâ'yı dest-i tasarruf-ı hüsvânisine dâhil ola... Henüz ibtidâ-yı cülûs-ı hümmâyûnz zamanıdır, devâ'ir-i memleket 'imâret-karîninizde iken dahi ba'id olmayalım, mebâd öbür taraftan nevâ'ir-i fitne vü fesâd iştigâl ide tâ def'ine dest-res müyesser ola." On the other hand, Sa'di has the target of Belgrade announced at Edirne. *Ibid*, 130a.

key to Hungary and the “obstructing barrier of the rebel and the corrupt” [*erbâb-ı tuğyân ü zelâlin sedd-i sedîdi*]. He foresaw that once Belgrade was captured, it would lead to many other conquests. But if they passed on to Buda before securing Belgrade, the enemy would have the chance to assemble there and pursue the Ottoman army.⁸⁷⁷ Nasuh is of the same opinion; it is not reasonable to go for the king before taking Belgrade.⁸⁷⁸

Belgrade was a stronghold of vital strategic importance. It stood on one of the two lines of the Hungarian-Croatian defense system going from Szöreny to Klis [Clissa] and Skradin [Scardona] at the Adriatic coast.⁸⁷⁹ While the possible fall of Belgrade was sure to create a huge breach in the defense system, it was a pre-requisite for a decisive attack on Hungary. By-passing would be impossible.⁸⁸⁰ Whether European or Ottoman, contemporary sources emphasize the key position of Belgrade. The significance of Belgrade as the “key to Hungary” reflects in Venetian correspondence numerous times.⁸⁸¹ Writing from Buda on 6 July 1521, Venetian ambassador Lorenzo Orio says that Belgrade is “the gate of this Kingdom” and asserts that once the Ottomans take it, they could go over the plains to “wherever they pleased.”⁸⁸² Writing almost two decades after the conquest, Giovio describes Belgrade as a stronghold of not only Hungary, but of all Christendom.⁸⁸³ According to the late fifteenth-century Ottoman chronicler Neşri,

⁸⁷⁷ *Tabakat*, 46b.

⁸⁷⁸ Nasuh, 43a.

⁸⁷⁹ Szakaly, “The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System and Its Collapse,” p.142-3. This line passed through Szöreny, Orsova, the lower Danube, Belgrade, southern Sava, Szabac, Tesanj, Sokol, Banja Luka, Jayce, Knin, Klis and Skradin. Also see, Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat,” p.171.

⁸⁸⁰ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.48.

⁸⁸¹ For example, Sanuto, 31:72: “*la porta di questa regno*”; *ibid*, 73: “*pol venir per pianura dove li piace*”; *ibid*, 315: “*scudo dil reame de l’hongaria et de queste altre provintie superiore*”; *ibid*, 480: “*chiave de l’Hongaria*”; *ibid*, 33:315: “*chiave di la Christianita*”; *ibid*, 35:286: “*chiave d’il regno di Hongaria*”

⁸⁸² *Ibid*, 31:72.

⁸⁸³ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diii. As early as 1459, Pope Pius II expressed the wide ranging opinion that: “If Hungary surrendered to the Turks, the door was wide upon into Germany and Italy.” DeVries, “Lack of a Western European Military Response,” p.555

when Mehmed II saw Hungary, he realized that Belgrade was the key. Therefore, he set his mind on “opening that gate.”⁸⁸⁴ Sa‘di identified the castle as a “throne on the way of ghaza” [*reh-güzâr-ı gazânın hârî*] and the “strong key to the infidel lands” [*mülk-ı küffâr-ı nâ-bikârın miftâh-ı payidârî*].⁸⁸⁵ It has been argued that Mehmed II’s siege of Belgrade in 1456 was aimed at subduing Hungary so that the Empire could extend into Eastern Europe. This aim has been considered as part of Mehmed II’s claim to universal rulership which involves the idea of One God, One Emperor. In this line of argument, Mehmed is believed to have considered that once he won Belgrade, he would have little trouble with the Hungarians later on. As Hungarian sources have it, “He would be in Buda, eating his evening meals in peace in two months.”⁸⁸⁶

Contemporary accounts suggest that this key role of Belgrade was the logic behind Piri Paşa’s insistence on the conquest of Belgrade. Ahmed Paşa, as the opposing party, insisted on capturing Sabacz because it was a Muslim castle which had fallen to Christians. He was appointed to ensure its “salvation” [*istihlâs*]. According to Ahmed Paşa’s plan, once Sabacz was acquired, they would go on to Buda, the seat of the throne of Hungary. Although contemporary chronicles seem to side with Piri Paşa in favor of Belgrade as the initial target, Ahmed Paşa’s insistence on Sabacz might not have been in vain, either. Some Ottoman sources mention that Sabacz was originally built in order to capture Belgrade.⁸⁸⁷ When Corvinus took the fortress in 1476, he believed that his realm would not be safe as long as this stronghold was in the hands of the Ottomans. Corvinus’s conquest of the castle was celebrated festively in European cities.⁸⁸⁸ In this sense, Ahmed Paşa’s initiative may be seen as a strategic move since re-capturing Sabacz would strengthen the hand of the Ottomans in attempts of further expansion.

⁸⁸⁴ Neşri, II:627. Tursun Beg also regarded Belgrade as the “key to the opening [*feth*] of Hungary” referring his explanation to a Quranic verse stating that each house has a door. Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu’l-Feth*, p.79, Quran, 2:189: “*li-küllin dârün bâbiün.*”

⁸⁸⁵ Sa‘di (SN), 125a. He identifies the castle as “*sânî-yi binâ-yı Şeddâd.*”

⁸⁸⁶ Held, “Peasants in Arms,” p.88; Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.45.

⁸⁸⁷ See, for example, Sa‘di (SN), 131a-b.

⁸⁸⁸ Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.348. For celebrations in Florence, Venice, Bologna and Rome when Mehmed II failed to capture Belgrade, see *ibid*, p.144.

Ultimately, with both strongholds acquired, Süleyman's chances for further expansion in Hungary were strengthened.

Rhodes was a place of both strategic and symbolic significance. Besides lying on the naval pilgrimage route to Mecca, corsair activity supported by Rhodes posed a threat to Ottoman commerce on the Mediterranean after the conquest of Syria and Egypt.⁸⁸⁹ Andrew Hess has pointed out the vulnerability to influence from Christian rulers that Arab provinces were exposed to after the Gazali incident. The Portuguese navy was also close by. So Süleyman's decision of Rhodes probably had to do with consolidation of his father's conquests. Furthermore, the revenue of Egypt, as well as the tribute of Cyprus, needed to be secured.⁸⁹⁰ Nicolas Vatin provides evidence of Rhodian involvement in the Gazali incident and communication with Ismail for anti-Ottoman initiatives. Such actions, as Vatin sees it, were a way to produce confusion in the Ottoman realm.⁸⁹¹ Even by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the strategic role of Rhodes was precarious. As Palmira Brummett expresses, "in 1503 Rhodes and Cyprus were the two easternmost bastions of Christian power in the Mediterranean. They served as centres of intelligence gathering, transit ports and military bases."⁸⁹²

While talking about the Rhodes campaign Ottoman chronicles emphasize protection of the sea routes for trade and pilgrimage as a duty, the conquest of Rhodes imply three main objectives: securing Mediterranean trade, consolidation of Syria and Egypt, preparing conditions for safer expansion. An eyewitness account relating the siege of Rhodes and the aftermath attests to the point. Gabriel Taragon, a merchant, tells about Ahmed Paşa's attempt to persuade him to stay. According to Taragon, Ahmed Paşa emphasized the convenient location of the island being situated between Syria, Cyprus, Constantinople, Candia and others. The vizier also mentions that the Sultan intends to make campaigns to Candia and Cyprus because he does not want to have

⁸⁸⁹ Rodriquez-Salgado, "La Cruzado sin Cruzado," p.228-9; Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, p.289; Brummett, "The Overrated Adversary," p.518.

⁸⁹⁰ Andrew C. Hess, "The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453-1525," *The American Historical Review*, vol.75, no.7 (Dec., 1970) pp.1912-14. Hess argues that the agricultural and tax sources of Syria and Egypt were vital for the maintenance of Ottoman expansion throughout the sixteenth century. Also see Hess, "Ottoman Conquest of Egypt," pp.71-2, 75.

⁸⁹¹ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, p.314.

⁸⁹² Brummett, "The Overrated Adversary," p.518

anyone else in this sea. “When this happens,” says Ahmed Paşa, “Rhodes will be very comfortable and appropriate place for merchants.”⁸⁹³

Guicciardini defined Rhodes as “a bulwark of Christian religion in those seas, although they were notorious for the fact that, spending all their days in piracy against the ships of the infidels, they also at times pillaged Christian vessels.”⁸⁹⁴ Venice itself seems to have suffered major damage from corsair activity sponsored or hosted by Rhodes, through direct pillaging or causing misinterpretation of culpability. When two Venetian vessels were captured by Rhodian ships in 1506, Venice retaliated by sending four galleys to attack Rhodian vessels. They did not necessarily have to pillage Christian vessels to cause harm to European trade. When Rhodian vessels seized a Genoese ship carrying 150 Muslims and valuable merchandise on the account of the Mamluk Sultan Qansuh al-Ghuri, the sultan reacted by confiscating all European goods and detaining the Venetians, French and the Catalans. As evidence put forth by Brummett shows that although these raids were not planned and carried out by the official navy, but through the efforts of individual Rhodians, they were regulated by the Order.⁸⁹⁵

3.3.3. Strategic Command

Following on the lead of Durkheimian theory, besides territorial gain, the campaigns of 1521 and 1522 have functioned to recreate a bond and a sense of renewed solidarity as the new Sultan ascended the throne. In the previous chapter, we have discussed the transformation of the “servants” of Sultan Selim into those of Sultan Süleyman in a rather conceptual and ritualistic manner. Throughout these two campaigns, these “servants” did serve their new master and were actually rewarded in

⁸⁹³ Sanuto, 34:15.

⁸⁹⁴ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.334. For corsair activity related to Rhodes in the first two decades of the sixteenth century, see Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.282-297. Vatin draws attention to Venetians, Ragusians and Florentines being victims to such activity from 1517 to 1520.

⁸⁹⁵ Brummett, “The Overrated Adversary,” p.527-9.

return. Thus, mutual ritual pledges were transformed into solid reality and became part of the regular flow of the bond between Sultan Süleyman and his army.⁸⁹⁶

Süleyman stayed at and around Belgrade several days after the conquest, holding court and hunting. During the courtly gatherings many officials were rewarded and promoted. Among the most prominent is Bali Beğ, who seems to be figure as a key actor during the whole campaign in contemporary accounts. First he was awarded a robe of honor along with 30,000 aspers on 2 September [29 Ramadan]; two weeks later he was appointed governor to Smederevo [*Semendire*] and Belgrade with a revenue of 900.000 aspers. Although the campaign diary does not mention any *bayram* ceremonial and leaves the entries of the first three days of Shawwal almost empty, we witness consequent promotions on the *divan* of 13 September [10 Shawwal]. A janissary officer [*sekbanbaşı*] was given a *sancak*, the janissary colonel [*kethüda*] was promoted in his place, and the almoner filled the vacant post. Several janissaries, imperial guards, and stable staff were either appointed to household cavalry regiments or given fiefs.⁸⁹⁷

Süleyman's presence in the 1521 and 1522 campaigns was significant in the sense that they were also instruments for him to appropriate the army.⁸⁹⁸ Although he served administrative roles during his princehood, unlike many of the previous princes-turned-sultans, he lacked firsthand experience in the battle field. The 1521 campaign was his first direct experience in warfare; even more importantly, it was his first experience with the army which was now his. Trust is a mutual issue; in this respect, this was the

⁸⁹⁶ Simon Harrison, "The Symbolic Construction of Aggression and War in a Sepik River Society," *Man*, New Series, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 1989), p.585. Although Harrison's argument is based on tribal warfare, his assertion that warfare "is a purposive attempt by men to establish and maintain groups" seems quite valid in our case. In this sense, the idealization of aggression in contemporary sources appear to be quite natural and to the point. The idea that war promoted solidarity was systemized by Adam Ferguson in the eighteenth-century. Dawson, "The Origins of War," p.4-5. Another issue to be emphasized would be the need for new fiefs to be distributed. Guilmartin, for example, has questioned contemporary awareness of the economic factor, in the sense of procuring new land for fiefs. Guilmartin, "Wars of the Ottomans," p.743. Ferenc Szakaly emphasizes the military nature of the Ottoman state with stability being based on land acquisition. Szakaly, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary*, p.99.

⁸⁹⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:514.

⁸⁹⁸ My assessment is based to some extent on the strand of thought usually labeled the "reproductive theory" that argues that war enables group formation. I. J. N. Thorpe, "Anthropology, Archaeology, and the Origin of Warfare," *World Archaeology*, vol. 35, no. 1, The Social Commemoration of Warfare, (June, 2003), pp. 145-165.

first experience of the commanders and the soldiers with Süleyman. Hence, the mutual need for demonstration of capability. Venetian gossip refers to Süleyman's anger as the siege of Belgrade continued without improvement. The prolongation of the siege period seems to have upset Süleyman; at least that is the impression Venetians had. Writing from Ragusa, Lorenzo Gritti communicated what he heard from a bread-seller who just returned from the Ottoman camp. According to this rumor, the Sultan had told his men that in the time of his father they had done great things; now they were being counter-attacked and achieved little honor in battle. This was perceived by another Venetian from Ragusa as Süleyman scolding his army for not knowing how to fight.⁸⁹⁹

Süleyman attended both campaigns in person, although we do not find him actually fighting with sword in hand. However, contemporary sources make sure to delineate his commanding and coordinating presence. We find platforms built at appropriate places for him to observe what goes on in the field and to command accordingly. In the 1521 campaign, according to the campaign diary, the Sultan personally oversaw the bridge preparations on the Sava after the conquest of Sabacz. He observed work done and gave orders accordingly, standing on a platform built for him, every day from the dawn to dusk.⁹⁰⁰ Likewise, he observed Belgrade from a hilltop as he arrived and, after examining the possible sites of battle, he ordered action. The campaign diary mentions him doing the same every day fighting takes place.⁹⁰¹ The campaign diary of Rhodes also presents Süleyman on horseback surveying the various parts of the island frequently and holding court to shape strategy.⁹⁰²

Tomasso Contarini wrote to Marco Minio on 8 May 1521 that the governor-general of Rumelia [Ahmed Paşa] did not want the Sultan to progress on campaign in

⁸⁹⁹ Sanuto, 31:394. Two reports dated 31 August 1521. "... *il Signor disse a li soi, che al tempo di suo padre fevano gran cosse, e che adesso vien rebatudi, et che a la bataglie li dete ave poco honor.*" The rumors may have some gist of truth in them, for the campaign diary relates an instance when Ahmed Paşa had to face all the enemy soldiers alone when two wings of the Ottoman army would not move due to confusing commands. According to the campaign diary, the castle was almost captured when this happened on, thus this turned out to be a lost opportunity. *Münşe'at*, I:511, 512.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 508-10.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 511.

⁹⁰² *Ibid*, 529-40. For the pavilion prepared for Süleyman at a hill-top at Rhodes for the purpose of observation, also see, "A Brief Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.188.

person, but that the viziers wished his presence to “provide reputation to the campaign.”⁹⁰³ If this account has any truth to it, the viziers seem to have been right, for a report from Buda dated June 28 confirms the fears of the Hungarians about the Sultan marching in person. The lack of confirmation seems to have augmented the fear.⁹⁰⁴ When he decided to go on campaign to Rhodes, Süleyman was warned that it was not safe for him to go in person risking powerful storms or hostile navies. “But *Solimano* who has heard from his father that victories are not complete if the *Signore* has not acquired them with his own hand, thus he decided to go on the island in person.”⁹⁰⁵ A foreign account calls the day of Süleyman’s arrival on the island as “unhappy for Rhodes. For his coming, his presence and continuall abiding in the fielde is and hath beene cause of the victorie that he hath had.”⁹⁰⁶ Contemporary significance of leading military enterprises in person is apparent in Machiavelli’s complaint that princes impose the duty of war on others and keep a distance to avoid danger, instead of engaging personally in war:

If we do occasionally witness a king of our own times go to war in person, we do not believe, nevertheless, that his actions will give rise to other methods that deserve higher praise. Hence, if kings engage in such an exercise at all, they do so with great pomp and not for any other laudable purpose.⁹⁰⁷

Although personal engagement by the ruler in war involved the danger of the collapse of the whole army in case he fell, Süleyman seems to have found a mid-point balance by being present but not actually fighting in his first two campaigns.

We have seen that Süleyman played by the book as the campaign decisions were made. His actions as commander during the campaigns demonstrate a similar concern to make things the correct way. Both peaceful surrender cases were justified on the Islamic

⁹⁰³ Sanuto, 31:240.

⁹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 74. Leading the army in person appears to be a maxim in early sixteenth-century warfare. Not only does it bring glory to the ruler, but it also removes any threats or suspicions about a commander gaining too much prestige or power as Machiavelli who criticizes contemporary rulers for not engaging truly in war in person discusses in his *Discourses*, supporting his argument through the example of Selim I as well as early Roman emperors. Machiavelli, *Discourses*, pp.86-7 and p.283-4.

⁹⁰⁵ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diii.

⁹⁰⁶ “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes,” p.188.

⁹⁰⁷ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.283.

law.⁹⁰⁸ As he set foot on Rhodes, Süleyman's first act was to offer peaceful surrender to the islanders. Kemalpaşazade refers to this act as the tradition of the Prophet.⁹⁰⁹ Islamic law prohibited forced conversion and unjustified violence. Thus before attacking the attacker had to offer a choice. The attacked could prefer to convert or accept the poll tax directly. Opting not to accept these terms meant that he would have to fight. Losing the fight entailed expropriation, slavery and even death. In either case, once surrendered or conquered he would acquire the *zimmi* status and could not be forced to convert. All schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence agreed on the lawful nature of jihad; however it was not lawful to make war on a people without first inviting them to join Islam.⁹¹⁰ Sheikh Burhanuddin Ali of Marghinan [d.1196] of the Hanafi school explains this as such:

... because the Prophet so instructed his commanders, directing them to call the infidels to the faith, and also because the people will hence perceive that they are attacked for the sake of religion, and for the sake of taking their property, or making slaves of their children, and on this consideration it is possible that they may be induced to agree to the call, in order to save themselves from the troubles of war... If the infidels, upon receiving the call, neither consent to it nor agree to pay capitation tax, it is then incumbent on the Muslims to call upon God for assistance, and to make war upon them, because God is the assistant of those who serve Him, and the destroyer of His enemies, the infidels, and it is necessary to implore His aid upon every occasion; the Prophet, moreover, commands us to do so.⁹¹¹

⁹⁰⁸ Sa'di (SN), 141 for Belgrade; Bostan, 39b, for Rhodes.

⁹⁰⁹ KPZ, X:150; Nasuh, 65b; Sa'di (SN), 150b. The campaign diary suggests an earlier offer of peaceful surrender. On 9 July [14 Shaban], as the Sultan was still around Kütahya, a messenger from Mustafa Paşa who was already at Rhodes informed that "there is no possibility of them giving up the castle voluntarily." *Münşe'at*, I:529. For a foreign version of the letter of peaceful surrender, see "A Brief Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," pp.184-5. This version dates the letter 1 June 1522.

⁹¹⁰ Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, p.90; Lambton, *State and Government in Islam*, pp.214; Bostom, "Jihad Conquests and the Imposition of *Dhimmitude*," p.27. For the formulation of Averroes [d.1198], see Averroes, "Bidâ'yât al-Mudjtahid," in Bostom (ed.), pp.153-5. Arthur Jeffery, "The Political Importance of Islam," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol.1, no.4 (Oct. 1942), pp.387-8. For related verses, see Quran, 8:61; 9:29; 2:256.

⁹¹¹ As quoted in Bostom, "Jihad Conquests and the Imposition of *Dhimmitude*," p.27. Also see, Sheikh Burhanuddin Ali of Marghinan, "The Hiadayah," in *ibid*, pp.184-5.

Not only Islamic commands, but also Turco-Mongolian conventions required a call to submission before attacking. Voluntary submission was the first principle of the Great *Yasa* of Cinghis Khan:

When (the Mongols) have need to write any letter to rebels, and they must send an envoy, let them not threaten with the great size of their army and their numbers, but let them say only, If ye will submit yourselves obediently ye shall find good treatment and rest, but if you resist – as for us what do we know? [But] the everlasting God knoweth what will happen to you.⁹¹²

Süleyman also seems to have taken care not to repeat the mistakes of his predecessors. Before marching into Hungary in 1521, he ordered the frontier commander Mihaloğlu Mehmed Beğ to meet with the Wallachian army and pass on to Transylvania to block possible external help to the Hungarian King.⁹¹³ The unsuccessful siege of Rhodes in 1480 had lasted three months. Although Selim I was advised to try once more to acquire the island for the security of the seaway from Syria and Egypt, the project was never materialized. Selim's furious objection to the attempt as told by Sadeddin was motivated by the insufficiency of gunpowder. Selim did not believe that four-month stock of gunpowder would be enough to get the island which he believed required double that time.⁹¹⁴ Süleyman must have given some thought to these examples since the materials landed on the island for the siege demonstrates that he was ready for a long and hard period of siege.⁹¹⁵

The size of the army seems to have been an important element in strategy, though not the only factor in evaluating force.⁹¹⁶ According to Ramazan, the large number of

⁹¹² Vernadsky, "The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan's *Yasa*," pp.334-5

⁹¹³ Sa'di (SN), 130b.

⁹¹⁴ Sadeddin, IV:352-4.

⁹¹⁵ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, p.330. For the facsimile and transcription of a record of equipment brought by the armada of Mustafa Paşa, dated 21 May 1522 [TSM, D.5643], see *ibid*, 448-53.

⁹¹⁶ Handel, *Masters of War*, pp.157-64. Byzantine emperor Maurice warns that wars are not won by courage and numbers alone, but with God's favor and tactics. Trying to mobilize large numbers of men would provide advantage only under the command of a very able man; otherwise large numbers would bring trouble and financial ruin. *Strategikon*, p.64. Talking about the preparations of the 1526 campaign, Lütü Paşa reports that Süleyman warned his officers not to exceed 200,000 soldiers in the army, for too much crowd was difficult to handle. Lütü Paşa, p.257.

soldiers he assembled for Rhodes was one of the two greatest strengths Süleyman depended on – the other was the council.⁹¹⁷ A Venetian observer who happened see the Ottoman camp after the truce was impressed by the number of “valiant men” Süleyman still had even after so many losses during the siege.⁹¹⁸ The Venetian captain-general Domenico Trevisan relating his opinions on Rhodes, on 30 March 1523, believed that *Turks* were not as expert as they thought they were. According to Trevisan, Ottoman army owed its success to their number rather than their “knowledge of conquering cities.”⁹¹⁹ Some foreign observers, on the other hand, were impressed not only by the size of the army, but the quality of men as well. An observer who left Rhodes with the Grand Master reported “never having seen more beautiful or orderly men before.”⁹²⁰

Methods used by the Ottoman army would make Machiavelli proud. Machiavelli praised Roman tactics which involved surrounding the city on all sides and attacking from all sides which made it possible to capture the city in a single assault. If this was not enough, they broke the walls, dug tunnels to go under the city, constructed wooden towers to level with defenders, put earthen embankments to reach the walls.⁹²¹ Süleyman’s army engaged all methods from time to time, but the last tactic catches attention especially in Rhodes where it came about after deliberation.⁹²² The victory of proclamation reports that the island was surrounded by all sides. The campaign diary

⁹¹⁷ Ramazan, p.136.

⁹¹⁸ Sanuto, 34:16. For the importance of the army size in classical theory of war, see Handel, *Masters of War*, pp.157-64. Size matters but it is not the only factor.

⁹¹⁹ Sanuto, 34:56. Trevisan cites other factors contributing to Ottoman success at Rhodes among which are the ample victuals the army had and the support from Egypt. Furthermore, he emphasizes the extraordinarily favorable weather conditions mentioning that it rained only twice during the long siege.

⁹²⁰ *Ibid*, 60.

⁹²¹ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.242.

⁹²² See for example, Sanuto, 33:513; KPZ, X:170. For eye witness accounts of the various tactics used by the Ottoman army during the siege of Rhodes, see KPZ, X:167-70; Sanuto, 33:513-8. These accounts are also worth noting for their tone since the observers understandably write from the viewpoint of those “defending themselves against the enemy.” And the enemy is commonly referred to as “these dogs” [*quelli cani*]. Zuan Bragadin refers to them as attacking like *cani rabiosi*. 33:569. *Münşe‘at*, I:524. Nasuh, 76b; Sa‘di (SN), 152b-154a; *Tabakat*, 88a-b; “A Brief Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes,” p.189.

cites an interesting anecdote about the force of the method digging tunnels to blow up the castle, which is one of the most conventional methods of the Ottoman army. As the story, the gunner of Rhodes promised not to let even a single man walk on the island. However, soon seeing that Ottoman soldiers were all around, the Grand Master scolded his gunners. The men replied by saying, “We did not know that the *Turk* would come from under the ground.”⁹²³ This anecdote reflects a pride in the method and the conviction that it was an efficient strategy which caught the enemy unprepared.

The surprise element seems to have played an important role in sixteenth-century warfare. Strange sights and sounds were used to surprise or even terrify the enemy.⁹²⁴ According to the campaign diary, the sound of cannons terrified everyone and prevented defensive efforts during the siege of Rhodes.⁹²⁵ Kemalpaşazade and Lütfi Paşa mention two elephants prepared by Sultan Süleyman for the 1521 campaign.⁹²⁶ Elephants have been reported to accompany the army to the 1526 campaign, too. We have observation of elephants also in the 1526 campaign. Kemalpaşazade mentions them walking like the graceful clouds [*sehâb-ı refîâr*] before the Sultan as he marched out of the city on 23 April 1526.⁹²⁷ The Venetian bailo at the time, Bragadin, also refers to two elephants walking in the procession as the Sultan departed ceremonially for the campaign.⁹²⁸ Luigi Bassano, in a more general manner, describes the role of elephants in the departures and arrivals of the Sultan in the city before and after campaigns.

⁹²³ *Münşe‘at*, I:531.

⁹²⁴ As Machiavelli puts it: “With respect to seeing strange sights, every commander should strive to make something appear while his armies are engaged in hand-to-hand combat that gives his soldiers courage and takes it away from the enemy... A good commander must, however, do two things: the first is to see if he can frighten the enemy with some of these strange inventions; the second is to be prepared, so that if they are used against him he will detect them and make them of no avail against him.” Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.295. For the use of elephants as disturbing factor also see Machiavelli, *Art of War*, p.91; *Strategikon*, p.84.

⁹²⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:523-4.

⁹²⁶ KPZ, X:67; Lütfi Paşa, p.245.

⁹²⁷ KPŞZ, X:228.

⁹²⁸ Sanuto, 41:533.

Emphasizing that this was an “honor reserved for the elephant,” the author describes entertainment involving elephants at such occasions.⁹²⁹

3.3.4. Appropriation

A short term process of appropriation followed the confirmation of military victory through submission of the besieged town in both of the cases under examination. This was a dual process whereby the conquered town was appropriated simultaneously in imperial and Islamic terms. The conversion of churches into mosques and the appointment of a judge marked the newly acquired status of the city as part of the realm of Islam. The ceremonial entry of the Sultan, leaving a garrison, ordering reconstruction, sending part of the local population to Istanbul constituted an imperial claim of the town’s newly acquired status as part of the Ottoman realm. The ceremonial involved in the process functioned in such a way as to reflect a synthesis of the Sultan’s dynastic, imperial and religious supremacy.

After the conquest we witness the generic post-conquest steps in Ottoman sources. In both cases since the castles ultimately surrendered; therefore, they were treated within the *âmân* [peaceful surrender] tradition. In other words, the keys were delivered; the lord of the castle paid his respects. In return, he was awarded a robe and the town with immunity from attrition.⁹³⁰ Celâlzâde talking about the conquest of Belgrade evaluates the *âmân* in return for surrender as a suitable act for the Sultan.⁹³¹ The Next day happened to be Friday. This is the day when Süleyman entered the town, or rather took possession of the town ceremonially. Celâlzâde’s account reflects a typical post-

⁹²⁹ Luigi Bassano, *I Costumi et i Modi Particolari de la Vita de’ Turchi*, in *Dell’Historia Universale dell’origine et imperio de’Turchi parte prima(-terza)*, Francesco Sansovino (Venetia: 1560-1561), pp.47-8: “All’elefante tra gli altri fanno questo honore, che quando il gran Turco fa l’entrata publica venendo della guerra, o per altro in Costantinopoli, gli si menano incontro piu di venti miglia amendue, et vi montano sopra de gli huomini et fanciulli, e vi fanno mille guochi, perche v’è spatio assia largo sopra le loro schiene, e cosi in ordinanza con gli altri entrano avanti che’l Signor loro nella città. E di questo egli si piglia gran trastullo .”

⁹³⁰ Sa’di (SN), 141a-b; *Tabakat*, 62b.

⁹³¹ *Tabakat*, 62b: “atıfet-i şâmîle-i şâhî, refet-i kâmile-i pâdişâhî, ki lâzıme-i hüceste-sıfat-ı ‘âlem-penâhîdir, el-‘afv zik ve’l zafer muktezasınca...”

conquest entry. Ottoman banners were erected on towers, and a call to prayer was made. The Sultan was praised. Churches were cleansed – meaning they were converted to mosques. Friday *salas* were called and finally Süleyman performed the Friday prayer together with his officials and the ghazis.⁹³² This was followed by the appointment of a judge and a castle keeper to each of the castles conquered.⁹³³ The entry in the campaign diary for 30 August [26 Ramadan] is as follows:

Today the castle of Belgrade was conquered with the help of God. After noon the gate of the castle opened and the infidels together with their possessions, women and children started to come out. Janissaries went in and erected the banner of their commander on the *hisar*. The *muezzins* of the sultan read the call for prayer on the walls. Piri Paşa and defterdar Mehmed Çelebi went to the tower to confiscate the treasury. Following them, Hüsrev Beg's – commander of Smederevo [*Semendire*] – banner was taken and the band played. In the afternoon, the council met and all household members were called to join the meeting fully armed. When everybody assembled, notable infidels along with the castellan of Belgrade came to kiss the sultan's hand. They were presented robes of honor. Heralding drums were sounded three times to announce the good news drums were beaten thrice. The janissaries' red and yellow banner was taken up to the fortress, there accompanied by the beating of drums. Infidels were transferred to ships until evening while the Serbians were kept at the lower castle. Thanks be to God, the conquest was achieved on a holy day, both *Kadir* and Friday night. It has been exactly thirty days since the fortunate [*devletli*] *padişah* arrived in joy [*sa'âdetle*] to Belgrade, the fortress was conquered on the thirtieth day.⁹³⁴

The most obvious symbolic act of appropriation right after the conquest is the conversion of the churches to mosques and the performance of the Friday prayer by the Sultan. Generally we see that sources symbolize the inclusion of newly conquered city in the Abode of Islam [*dârü'l-Islam*] through the conversion of the major church into a mosque. Once the Sultan performs the Friday prayer in the converted temple, appropriation seems to be complete. This process is often identified as a “cleansing” [*tathîr*] process. In the case of Belgrade, Süleyman entered the city the day after the actual conquest which happened to be a Friday. He performed the Friday prayer in a church converted into a mosque.⁹³⁵ The first royal entry in a captured city being on

⁹³² *Tabakat*, 62b; Sa'di (SN), 141b-142a; Bostan (TSK), 23b-24b.

⁹³³ *Tabakat*, 63b.

⁹³⁴ *Münşe'at*, I:513-4. Compare with Rhodes, in *ibid*, 538.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid*, 514.

Friday seems hardly like pure coincidence. According to the campaign diary, Süleyman entered Sabacz and Syrmia on Friday, 27 July [21 Shaban].⁹³⁶ The same thing goes true for Süleyman's entry in Rhodes. Ottoman troops went in the castle on 24 December [5 Safar]. Süleyman entered the town and performed the Friday prayer on 2 January [14 Safar].⁹³⁷ As the campaign diary reports, the first call to prayer was made on 25 December [6 Safar], the day after the entry of the troops, in the name of the Sultan; however this was not Friday and the Grand Master had not yet left town. Ten days were allowed for the islanders to leave as negotiations were completed on December [30 Muharram].⁹³⁸ Süleyman seems to have waited first until the grand master and the inhabitants – those who wished to – left the island, and then for the first Friday. In this sense, conversion is a two-fold event which is completed only after the Sultan attends the Friday prayer.

Ottoman sources dwell a lot on the church of St. Jean at Rhodes. Lütü Paşa explains the significance of the church for the Christians by relating a Christian belief that whoever asks for forgiveness at this church would be forgiven regardless of the severity of the sin committed.⁹³⁹ Ramazan uses the opportunity to devalue Christianity in opposition to Islam by associating the church with unbelief, idols and devil.⁹⁴⁰

When Süleyman entered the city, his banners were erected all around the town, according to Kemalpaşazade. The Grand Master wearing the robe of honor presented to him kissed the hand of the Sultan and was given leave. Talking about the conversion of the church of St John into a mosque, the author mentions that it was built by the revenue obtained from Bayezid II for Cem.⁹⁴¹ Foreign rumors have it that after Süleyman prayed in the church of Saint John which he converted into a mosque, and he boarded his ship and saw what his army has done to the city; he ordered the re-construction of the city

⁹³⁶ *Münşe'at*, I:510.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid*, 539.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid*, 538.

⁹³⁹ Lütü Paşa, p.250.

⁹⁴⁰ Ramazan, p.180

⁹⁴¹ KPZ, X:183-4. Also see, Nasuh, 85b-86a.

through joining it to a province and assigning janissaries.⁹⁴² According to the campaign diary Süleyman entered the city on 14 Safar, Friday, the day after the grand master and others left. The church of Saint John was converted into a mosque and he performed the Friday ritual there.⁹⁴³ The proclamation of victory also emphasizes the conversion of churches into mosques. The place was cleansed [*tathîr* and *tanzîf*].⁹⁴⁴ A similar argument of cleansing is found in the prisoners' prayer of Ramazan. This episode also associates Süleyman's actions with those of the Prophet by referring to Muhammad's "cleansing Mecca from idols and gloom."⁹⁴⁵ This can be associated with the Quranic verse associating unbelievers with impurity.⁹⁴⁶

Ottoman accounts on Belgrade also dwell on the customary practice of forced relocation.⁹⁴⁷ In keeping with this practice, a certain part of the local population was sent to Istanbul. According to Celâlzâde, inhabitants who wished to go to Hungarian soil left, and the rest were exiled to Istanbul.⁹⁴⁸ Sa'di even gives a number of the exiles as 500 houses and tells that they were settled around Yedikule.⁹⁴⁹ The campaign diary mentions that because "Hungarian infidels wished to go their own realm" the Sultan put

⁹⁴² Anon., *Summariu[m] der brief auß Candia, von geschichten der stadt Rodiß, wie dem Türcken übergeben ist worden*, s.1., 1523, p.5. One Venetian report cites 10,000 janissaries, 4,000 cavalry and 20 galleys. Sanuto, 34:8. Also see *ibid*, 14, 17.

⁹⁴³ *Münşe'at*, I:539; Bostan (TSK), 40a; Sanuto, 34:61, 90.

⁹⁴⁴ *Münşe'at*, I:525.

⁹⁴⁵ Ramazan, p.97.

⁹⁴⁶ Quran, 9:28. For the concept and Shiite emphasis see, Bostom, "Jihad Conquests and the Imposition of *Dhimmitude*," p.32.

⁹⁴⁷ For relocation as a routine Ottoman settlement policy along with other elements of appropriation such as leaving a garrison representing sultanic law, a judge representic Islamic law, see Virginia Aksan, "Ottoman war and warfare, 1453-1812," in *War in the Early Modern World, 1450-1815*, Jeremy Black (ed.) (Florence, KY, USA: Taylor & Francis, Incorporated, 1998), p.151: "It was Ottoman practice to leave a garrison, representing sultanic law, a judge, representing Islamic law, and Muslim preachers in all newly-conquered territories. Fortress and mosque symbolized the sultan's presence in these early cities, sometimes built within the Christian towns, but equally often built apart. Relocation of populations into Balkan territories and, after 1453, to the new imperial capital was a routine policy of Ottoman settlement."

⁹⁴⁸ *Tabakat*, 63b.

⁹⁴⁹ Sa'di (SN), 143a.

them on ships and sent them to Slankamen to be sent to “their lands.”⁹⁵⁰ Others on the other hand, who were defined as Serbians, were sent to Istanbul accompanied by a one of the lesser household cavalry regiment.⁹⁵¹ These expressions also point at one of the aspects of appropriation. Through the process of converting the “land of the unbelievers” into the “realm of Islam” those who were not willing to become part of the converted world order were disposed of. In this case, there seems to be an ethnic awareness relating to the ownership of the land. The “Hungarians” of the castle who did not belong in Belgrade anymore were sent to “Hungary” which is defined as their “vilâyet”; whereas those who were defined as “Serbs” were put through forced relocation. Both forms of deportation seem to be perfectly valid and legitimate according to the proclamation of victory.⁹⁵² In other words, while “Hungarians” were deported out of the Ottoman realm, “Serbs” were treated as Ottoman subjects through the customary application of relocation within the Ottoman lands.

Appropriation also involved securing the lives and possessions of the inhabitants of the conquered areas. Looking out for the immediate interest of the local population was a practical concern as well as an ideological tool devised for the demonstration of justice. Leaving aside the religious maxims, protection of the subject population was a practical concern for it was the tax base.⁹⁵³ Back in 1461, when Stjepan Tomasevic the King of Bosnia informed the Pope about his concern about Mehmed II attacking his kingdom, he was discouraged not only by the castles built by Ottomans in his realm but also by the sympathy he had from the peasants. He complained that Ottomans promised freedom to peasants who readily believed out of ignorance. Without the help of the peasants, feared Tomasevic, nobles would not be able to hold their castles which would open the way to Hungary and Venice after Bosnia.⁹⁵⁴ Various reports relating to the

⁹⁵⁰ *Münşe‘at*, I:514: “Engürüs keferesi kendü vilâyetlerine gitmek istemeğin devletlü pâdişâh cümlesine destûr viriüb, gemiler ile Tuna yüzünden kal‘a-i Islankamen’e Yahya Paşa oğluna gönderdiler ki andan öte memleketlerine gideler.”

⁹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵² This issue shall be discussed below.

⁹⁵³ See Inalcık, *Classical Age*, p.7

⁹⁵⁴ As related in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, p.216. For earlier Ottoman expansion through the Balkans through such policy, see Melek Delilbaşı, “Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Fetihlerine Karşı Ortodoks Halkın Tutumu,” *XIII*.

Rhodes campaign confirm careful attention to the safety of those who stayed on the island. Two reports by Ahmed Paşa to the Sultan after the conquest demonstrate that although there were a few isolated instances of misconduct, measures were taken to protect the lives and belongings of the inhabitants. Measures cited by Ahmed Paşa were directed at the security of both island and inhabitants. Smaller cannons were located in the fortress, whereas the mouths of the larger ones were directed at the mountains and the fuse holes downwards. A sufficient number of janissaries were left on the island for guard. The newly built port was also guarded by enough men. The stones, iron balls, etc. fired during the battles were gathered and stored. The surrounding villages and towns were put under protection. Ahmed Paşa emphasizes that “there shall be no oppression or assault on anyone under the reign of my sultan; the city and the surroundings are well under protection and security.”⁹⁵⁵ Relating the conquest of Rhodes a few years later, Sa‘di repeats the comment: “Under the reign of the *pâdişâh* refuge of the world nobody oppressed anyone, nobody broke his limits.”⁹⁵⁶ We also see that there was effort on the part of Ottomans to convince merchants to stay and to keep commerce flowing. There are also accounts stating that many of the local population of Rhodes preferred to stay.⁹⁵⁷

The terms of peaceful surrender offered to Rhodes are listed in many different sources, probably because they were found to be quite generous by contemporary standards as even foreign observers attested. Those who chose to remain on the island would be exempted from taxes for five years; this offer would be valid for those who wished to leave later rather than immediately with a three-year option. Those who stayed were promised immunity from military recruit [*devşirme*], this right would be

Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler, vol.3, part 1 (Ankara: TTK, 1999), pp.1-7.

⁹⁵⁵ For facsimiles and transcriptions of Ahmed Paşa’s reports to the Sultan [TSM, E.5681 and TSM, E.5600], see Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.459-73 and Şeraffettin Turan, “Rodos’un Zaptından Malta Muhasarasına,” pp.110-3: “*Sultanım devletinde kimesneye zulm ü ta‘addi olmaz; şehir ü etrafı tamam emn ü amandadır.*”

⁹⁵⁶ Sa‘di (SN), 150b: “*Pâdişâh-ı ‘âlem-penâh devletinde kimse kimseye ta‘addi idüb haddından tecâvüz eylemedi.*”

⁹⁵⁷ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.349-50. Also see, Sanuto, 34:15.

extended for their children and successors as well.⁹⁵⁸ Along with the promise of non-violence, it was stated that the Ottoman army would leave immediately with only Ahmed Paşa staying with a small force to protect the artillery. 25 knights would be handed in to the Ottomans as hostage.⁹⁵⁹ Rumors circulated that Süleyman had issued a letter declaring that all who wished to leave the island could do so without any harm and that all those that wished to stay would not be harmed either. Those who preferred to stay would be exempt from taxes for five years.⁹⁶⁰ There are many accounts mentioning that the *Turks* observed the pledges made.⁹⁶¹ This served in a way to demonstrate an example. In other words, the respect shown to the terms of surrender in Rhodes was to demonstrate others that if they were conquered, they had no reason to worry.⁹⁶² Conversely, many foreign accounts mention that the fall of Belgrade and the

⁹⁵⁸ Immunity from *devşirme* was a privilege. Not all peaceful surrender cases included such a promise. Vyronis, for example, argues that offers offer *devşirme* exemption was a way of Ottomans capitalizing on the general fear of losing one's children. Bostom, "Jihad Conquests and the Imposition of *Dhimmitude*," p.70; Vyronis, "Seljuk Gulams and Ottoman Devshirmes," *Der Islam*, vol.41 (1965), 245-7. For resistance toward *devshirme*, also see Vasiliki Papoulia, "The Impact of *Devshirme* on Greek Society," in Bostom (ed.), pp.558-9. Papoulia focuses on the religious sentiments of the parents who saw recruitment which entailed conversion as a doom because their sons lost the chance to enter heaven; whereas Bernard Lewis presents the institution as a path of social advancement. Bernard Lewis, *Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: Norton, 1982), pp.190-1.

⁹⁵⁹ For the terms of peaceful surrender see Fontanus, "Guerra di Rhodi," p.120b; "A Brief Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.204; KPSZ, X:177; Ramazan, 195-6; Sanuto, 34:66-7.

⁹⁶⁰ Anon., *Summariu[m] der brief auß Candia, von geschichten der stadt Rodiß, wie dem Türcken übergeben ist worden*, p.3.

⁹⁶¹ Sanuto, 34:8-9, 10, 14; Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.334; "A Brief Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.205. Merchant Gabriel Tarragon, for example, was one of those who left the island. Although he did leave, he could do so only after giving "silver and other precious things" to Piri Paşa and Ahmed Paşa as "present"; in other words he bribed his way out. Sanuto, 34:15. The account in Hakluyt emphasizes that although no sword was drawn in keeping with the Sultan's promise, houses and churches were plundered. The author mentions that he is not certain if this was the will of Süleyman or not.

⁹⁶² At least the merchant Tarragon sees it this way. Sanuto, 34:15-6: "*Ma veramente la fede servata per el Signor è state cum grande astuzia et consiglio, che havendo obiecto de procieder più oltra, più oltra, ha voluto dar exempio a tutti che chi venirano a la deditione, de li lochi tengono, haverano simil conditione, et serà servato la fede a loro come è stato a nui.*"

treatment of the inhabitants there were among the factors in the decision to surrender.⁹⁶³ Trevisan's report confirms that the conditions were observed by the Ottomans. He reports that everyone was able to leave without trouble and that some even went back for their belongings without the *Turks* intervening in any way.⁹⁶⁴

As the surrounding islands submitted their keys, Ahmed Paşa tells that they were also supplied with castle guards and commanders. Flags, banners, equipments, etc. were recorded down and the books were given to the commanders. Muslim prisoners in these islands were transferred to Anatolia.⁹⁶⁵ The conquest of the surrounding islands is justified by Kemalpaşazade with Kos [Istanköy] as home to pirates and Bodrum harming merchants.⁹⁶⁶

3.3.5. Ceremonial Occasions

The campaigns of 1521 and 1522 showcase several ceremonial occasions. These occasions serve various functions ranging from building solidarity and preparing participants face violence, to consolidating and displaying sovereign power. These ceremonial occasions bring together various aspects of ritual construction, which involve religious, imperial and dynastic messages to form a coherent and established image of the Sultan as well as his rule. The ceremonial occasions observed during the campaigns incorporate all three sectors of Ottoman society: the military establishment, the religious establishment and the subject population. These occasions provide an opportunity for interaction between the Sultan and the various sectors whether individually or simultaneously.

⁹⁶³ See, for example, "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.199.

⁹⁶⁴ Sanuto, 34:56.

⁹⁶⁵ For the facsimile and transcription of Ahmed Paşa's report to the Sultan [TSA, E.5600], see Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar*, pp.459-73; and Turan, "Rodos'un Zaptından," p.110-3.

⁹⁶⁶ KPZ, X:185.

Unlike his European counterparts, Süleyman never took on a “royal progress” *per se*, and neither did his predecessors.⁹⁶⁷ Examining European court cultures, one can see that the progress was a political weapon which served to consolidate support for a regime, to popularize its attitudes, to take these attitudes to the roots of local government. Moreover, the progress “made concrete the abstract of the crown in the actual presence of the ruler.”⁹⁶⁸ When viewed in the perspective of rite of a royal entry, this sort of reception gives the people the opportunity to identify with the power of the ruler. It also makes clear the subservience of local authorities to the central ruler. In this sense, the ceremonial observed can be considered an attempt to tie the periphery to the center.⁹⁶⁹ It is possible to say that hunting expeditions and campaign marches did the trick in the Ottoman case.

The march to Belgrade, especially, seems to have served as a kind of “royal progress” for Süleyman. We need to keep in mind that this was his first official appearance in the provinces as Sultan, a point well noted by Sa‘di.⁹⁷⁰ As he journeyed to Edirne, people were all over the roads along the way to see the Sultan. When he arrived in Edirne on 8 May [20 Jumada II] the people of the city welcomed him and presented their gifts. Two days later, Ahmed Paşa the governor-general and the commander of Rumelia came to present his gifts and kiss the Sultan’s hand along with other commanders.⁹⁷¹ On 10 June [4 Rajab], Ahmed Paşa greeted Süleyman at Plovdiv [Filibe] with the people of the town presenting their gifts. This is also when the Rumelian forces paraded before the Sultan.⁹⁷² A week later, as the sultan arrived in Sofia, the people of the town presented gifts.⁹⁷³ On 25-26 August [21 and 22 Ramadan],

⁹⁶⁷ Charles V, on the other hand, listed his peregrinations in his abdication speech: ten times in the Low Countries, nine times in Germany, seven times in Italy, six times in Spain, four times through France, twice in England and twice in Africa. See Strong, *Art and Power*, p.77.

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.77.

⁹⁶⁹ Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, p.22.

⁹⁷⁰ Sa‘di (SN), 129b: “*Henüz pâdişâh olalı üzerlerine sâye salmamış idi.*”

⁹⁷¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:507; Sa‘di (SN), 129b; KPZ, X:69; *Tabakat*, 45a.

⁹⁷² *Münşe‘at*, I:507.

⁹⁷³ *Ibid*; Sa‘di (SN), 131a [17 Rajab].

Şehsuvaroğlu Üveys Beğ and Karaca Paşa came to present their gifts and kiss hands, respectively.⁹⁷⁴ One interesting feature observed in the campaign diary is the participation of religious students [*suhte*] to the march from each major stop. On 2 June [25 Jumada II] students of Edirne are reported to have raised their banner and joined the ghaza. Those of Plovdiv and Sofia did the same, respectively on 12 June [6-7 Rajab].⁹⁷⁵ The march and the stops not only meant presenting gifts to the Sultan for the resident in towns on the route, but also an opportunity to present their complaints and grievances. The law code for Sofia, for example, mentions some subjects living at Sofia addressing the Sultan on his way to Belgrade in 1521 to present their complaints.⁹⁷⁶ During the march, Sultan Süleyman also accepted various envoys. The campaign diary mentions Moldovian 22 May [14 Jumada II] and Crimean 5 June [28 Jumada II] envoys visiting the Sultan to present gifts and kiss his hand, during the earlier phases of the march.⁹⁷⁷ Venetian reports mention a Florentine envoy visiting at Sofia.⁹⁷⁸

The campaign diary for the Rhodes campaign displays similar entries. On 1 July [6 Şaban], for example, Süleyman was greeted at Kütahya by the governor-general of Anatolia Kasım Paşa along with the commander of the janissaries Bali Ağa. The next two days witnessed hand kissing and gift-giving by the governor-general and commanders of Anatolia followed by the governor-general and commanders of Rumelia.⁹⁷⁹ The gathering at Kütahya, as the case was at Sofia in 1521, served not only as a demonstration of mutual loyalty, but also to set the strategy. Here Ramazan, for example, takes the opportunity to praise the sultan for taking counsel. According to the author, four main orders were given at the gathering: the enemy should be destroyed, the oppression over the subjects should be removed, assault or harm to anyone's family and possessions should be prevented, and everyone should keep to the duty he was

⁹⁷⁴ *Münşe'at*, I:507.

⁹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷⁶ Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler* 6:651 [facsimile, p.655].

⁹⁷⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:507.

⁹⁷⁸ Sanuto, 31:239.

⁹⁷⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:529. Other contemporary sources run parallel to the diary, see, KPZ, X:139-40; Ramazan, pp.118-121; *Tabakat*, 75b, Bostan (TSK), 33b.

assigned to.⁹⁸⁰ Tabib Ramazan takes the opportunity at this point to associate the Sultan with his namesake Solomon. According to the author, this gathering was so crowded that no king or ruler had seen such a huge gathering, except for Solomon and here were even more people.⁹⁸¹

On 11 August [18 Ramadan], as court was held at Rhodes, Hayrbay's gifts were present and the soldiers sent by him kissed the Sultan's hand. Another such occasion was the arrival of the captain of *Magrib* and the envoy who presented their gifts and kissed hands on 11 October [20 Dhu'l-Qada].⁹⁸² What we witness in these accounts is a kind of homage ceremonial, involving two different sets of audience/participants. Firstly, the newly ascended Sultan gets a chance to receive homage of the ruled population. Secondly, he gets a chance to bond with the provincial military members.

Visiting the tombs of ancestors was a conventional ritual event before any significant action. Before marching out of the city in 1521, Süleyman visited the tombs of his ancestors as well as that of Ayyub.⁹⁸³ Besides asking for help from the ancestors, Quran was read at these locations as well as distribution of alms to the poor and the needy.⁹⁸⁴ Süleyman seems to have been careful not to hurt the sensitivities of the people regarding the role of piety and invocation of saints in conquest. As the story goes, Mehmed II had asked for the spiritual assistance of men of *velâyet* before attempting the conquest of Constantinople. When he was confronted by a saint after the conquest, he boasted: "Mevlana, I have acquired it with my sword." Then when he set his mind on getting Belgrade and was on the verge of losing all hope, he once again turned to God

⁹⁸⁰ Ramazan, p.121.

⁹⁸¹ *Ibid*, p.118. Ramazan returns to the Solomon analogy as he relates the return journey. Given the harsh winter conditions, the author argues that such a journey could not have been performed voluntarily neither by a common mortal or a *jin*. But it could be done only by "Prophet Süleyman or a namesake of his, that is our Sultan, the Sultan of the two holy cities, Sultan Süleyman Han." Ramazan mentions that he completed his work on the day of the conquest which he gives as 7 Safar 929 [26 December]. See, *ibid*, pp.195-6. In this case, either the date is incorrect or he is making a projection on the return journey.

⁹⁸² *Münşe'at*, I:531, 534.

⁹⁸³ Bostan (TSK), 13a-b: "*istimdâd-ı himmet ve istida'â-yı kerâmet eyleyüb...*"; *her biri* "*menba'-i husûl-ı murâdât-ı dinî ve dünyevî ve ma'den-i is'âf-ı hâcât-ı sûrî ve ma'nevîdir.*"

⁹⁸⁴ *Tabakat*, 42b-43a.

and the prayers of the people only to be confronted by a *abdal* in the army camp who told him to “go get it with [your] sword.”⁹⁸⁵

The arrival of the Sultan at a specific location also called for some sort of ceremonial action. In the 1521 campaign, for example, Sultan Süleyman passed on to Syrmia among fires of cannons and guns, with banners before him. The diary emphasizes that such festivities were performed at wherever he passed.⁹⁸⁶ A festive greeting is noted upon Süleyman’s arrival at Kütahya on the way to Rhodes, where he was ceremonially received by the governor-general of Anatolia Kasım Paşa, the commander of the janissaries Bali Ağa and the commander of the irregular foot soldiers [*azeb*] Ali Ağa.⁹⁸⁷ Venetian sources emphasize the *festa* on the occasion of Süleyman’s crossing over to the island from the mainland with artillery and band playing.⁹⁸⁸ Such festivity is also recorded in the campaign diary whereby the passage of the Sultan to the island was celebrated by firing cannonballs from the ships. Only then did the fighting/war start.⁹⁸⁹ Ramazan takes the opportunity to describe Süleyman’s crossing employing ambitious Islamic imagery. The author associates the ship carrying the Sultan with the arc of Noah in terms of providing fast arrival at the target. It is also

⁹⁸⁵ *Tabakat*, 49b; KPZ X:318-9. The requirement for the assistance and favor of God on one’s side to ensure military success is a universal conception regardless of time and culture. Byzantine emperor Maurice [d.602], for example, believed that the most important concern of the general should be the love of God and justice; so that he can win the favor of God because it is impossible to overcome the enemy without the favor of God “for all things are ruled by the providence of God.” *Strategikon*, p.9, 74-5. In his *De Bello Turcico*, Erasmus moves relying on God’s protection rather than one’s own strength as a condition of a legitimate war against the *Turks*. Erasmus, “On the War Against the Turks / De Bello Turcico,” p.321. The need to make sure that the public understood the ruler’s attachment to God rather than his pride is also apparent in Babur’s diary whereby he often mentions that he trusted God for support and assistance. See, for instance, *Baburnama*, p.480.

⁹⁸⁶ *Münşe‘at*, I:510-1.

⁹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 529.

⁹⁸⁸ Sanuto, 33:566: “*Fu facto festa su l’arma dil Turco cum artellerie, bandiere; et vene da vele 50 dal Fisco, che era passato il Gran Turco.*” (*relazione* of Hironimo di la Torre, patron di nave). Also see, “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes,” p.188.

⁹⁸⁹ *Münşe‘at*, I:529: “... *Bugünden sonra cenge mübâşeret olındı.*” The campaign diary makes a similar mention on the arrival of the Sultan before Belgrade. It is only after Süleyman arrived, examined the grounds and gave orders for fighting that war actually began: “*Bugünden asli ile cenge mübâşeret olındı.*” *Ibid*, 511.

associated with the throne of Solomon, which reached the destination swiftly carried by the wind. His horse is associated with Burak, the horse which “swiftly” took the Prophet to God on the night of Miraç.⁹⁹⁰

At some points in the march, we witness demonstration of largesse on the part of the Sultan through bestowal of benefactions, collectively or individually. On 7 August [14 Ramadan], for instance, Ahmed Paşa was rewarded a robe of honor as well as a bejeweled sword and two thousand pieces of gold. Although the explanation for such rewarding in the middle of a siege is not provided, we may assume that it was because he had fought a difficult battle the day before.⁹⁹¹ On the way to Rhodes, a similar ceremony took place at Kütahya. Ramazan mentions that being appreciated by the Sultan encouraged the participants and “cats turned into lions.”⁹⁹²

Another occasion which provided a ceremonial opportunity was the *bayram* following the holy month of Ramadan. Interestingly, the 1521 campaign diary does not mention any sort of celebration,⁹⁹³ whereas that of Rhodes records that on 24 August [1 Shawwal], viziers and commanders of all ranks kissed the Sultan’s hand as was customary. Although the ceremonies did not last long and they resumed their positions around the castle, the *bayram* was not neglected. The campaign diary reports that the Sultan he sat on a golden throne [*kürsi-yi zerrîn*] after the morning prayer, and received his men. A banquet followed the hand-kissing ceremony, after which everyone returned to his assignment.⁹⁹⁴ The banquet as the “basic metaphor for re-distributive power and function of the sovereign figure”⁹⁹⁵ at such instances functioned both as a motivational device and a bonding tool.⁹⁹⁶

⁹⁹⁰ Ramazan, p.124. Lütfi Paşa uses similar imagery as he relates the crossing to Rhodes. Rather extravagantly and unconvincingly, he makes the claim that the ship carrying Süleyman across was made of the wood of Noah’s arc. Lütfi Paşa, p.248. For other references to the wind carrying Solomon, see Chapter 1, p.64.

⁹⁹¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:512.

⁹⁹² Ramazan, p.119

⁹⁹³ *Münşe‘at*, I:514.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 529; *Tabakat*, 90a.

⁹⁹⁵ Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty*, p.27.

⁹⁹⁶ For the significance of feasting as “ritual sharing of food” see, Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*, p.152.

Both campaigns coincidentally present us with yet another ritual opportunity, this time based strictly on the dynastic concept. Süleyman received the news of the death of his son on the way back from Belgrade. This was an occasion for solemn mourning whereby court was held for the grandees [*â'yân*] to kiss the Sultan's hand.⁹⁹⁷ Being the soldier he was, Nasuh says that though Süleyman was sad about the death of his sons, the happiness of the conquest prevailed.⁹⁹⁸ According to Bostan, after the ceremonial mourning at the army camp, Süleyman accepted the death of his son as God's will and endured the loss patiently.⁹⁹⁹ The Venetian ambassador Marco Minio wrote to Venice that on 30 October one of the sons of the sultan was buried. He was 9 years old. On the 17th, a daughter died. About five days before the arrival of Minio another son died. Informing that now there was only a two-year old son left, Minio says: "But the Signor is young, he can have other children. The pashas accompanied the deceased son to the sepulchre on foot and he will make great charity according to his custom."¹⁰⁰⁰ One happier ritual occasion occurred during the 1522 campaign: a son was born to the sultan. In a dynastic monarchy, this would no doubt mean very good news if not a blessing. The news of the birth of Prince Mehmed was received in the camp on 31 October [10 Dhu'l-Hijja]. The birth was celebrated in the camp with sacrifices and distribution of alms. The messenger who brought the news was rewarded a robe as required by "*salvet ü sürûr.*"¹⁰⁰¹ The bailo wrote that a son was born to the Sultan in the Palace.¹⁰⁰² According to Kemalpaşazade, the new born was named Selim after his grandfather. Nasuh, on the other hand, says that he was named after his royal ancestor Mehmed.¹⁰⁰³ The mistaken identification of Kemalpaşazade could be a scribal error or a

⁹⁹⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:514. Two days later, we find reference to Süleyman getting in the cart. For condolence and patience, see, Bostan (TSK), 26a-b, 28a.

⁹⁹⁸ Nasuh, 45b-46a.

⁹⁹⁹ Bostan (TSK), 26a-b. For Süleyman's grief over the death of another son, soon after, and the ceremonial mourning in Istanbul, see *ibid*, 28a.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Sanuto, 32:256. Marco Minio to his brother [dated 31 October 1521, from Constantinople].

¹⁰⁰¹ KPZ, X:163-4; Bostan (TSK), 35b-36a; Nasuh, 73a; *Münşe'at*, I:534.

¹⁰⁰² Sanuto, 33:510.

¹⁰⁰³ KPZ, X:163-4: "*Cidd-i hümayun ile cediti Sultan-ı 'azîmü'ş-şân Selim Han ismiyile müsemma oldu. Sırrü'l-esmâu tenzilu mine'semâ (isimler gökden inerler) simâ-*

careless slip of the pen. Either way, both accounts emphasize one common notion: dynastic continuation – and emulation.

Looking at the ceremonial occasions during the campaigns, the absence of one major ritual event strikes the eye, namely the triumphant entry. Süleyman seems to have entered Istanbul rather quietly on his return from both campaigns. He is recorded to have arrived by boat directly to the Palace both in 1521 and 1522.¹⁰⁰⁴ According to Venetian reports, Süleyman arrived in Istanbul on 19 October 1521 with three ships around midnight and went directly in the Palace. Grandees had gone out to meet him two days ago believing them he would arrive by land. But Süleyman, for some reason, had boarded the galley at Silivri. The next two days witnessed the arrival of three pashas and the governor general of Rumelia. The commander of the janissaries had arrived ten days ago and Ferhad Paşa a few days earlier. A ship was sent to Ferhad Paşa and the pashas went to greet him as disembarked.¹⁰⁰⁵

3.4. Projection and Reception

3.4.1. Official Projection

The main type of document which projects the official version of a campaign is the proclamation of victory [*fetihnâme*]. The proclamation of victory provides us with the key elements employed in the making of the image of the Sultan. In other words, they provide us with an ideal type image. The proclamation of victory strikes the eye as a clean-cut account of the campaign which legitimizes the intention of aggression as well as the actions taken, defines it as a glorious imperial victory, and justifies the return. Another document that could be considered in this category would be the campaign diary [*rûznâme*]. Being another sort of official projection of the campaign

yi pür-nûrında zuhûr buldı.” See also, Bostan (TSK), 35b-36a; Nasuh, 73a. However, both Bostan and Nasuh name the new-born Mehmed. Nasuh: “*cedd-i hümmâyûn ced Sultan Mehmed Han nâm-ı ismiyle müsemâmê oldı.*” Lütfi Paşa, p.248.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Münşe‘at*, I:515 and 540, respectively.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Sanuto, 32:255.

seems to be less rigid about appearing as sterilized. Intended for different audiences, the proclamation of victory was directed to the people of the realm, tributaries, and foreign power-holders or even to posterity. The campaign diary, however, was probably for the few to see on a need-to-know basis. It usually served almost as a guide-book, thus it contained several unpleasant instances such as deaths of large numbers of soldiers, errors committed by commanders during battles, disasters caused by unfavorable weather conditions and even occasions of wrath of the Sultan, which were not revealed in proclamations of victory. In this sense, the diaries of both campaigns appear as more mundane and relatively truthful accounts. In this section, we shall examine the proclamations of victory to understand the key elements making up the ideal image of the Sultan.

Süleyman seems to have showed great care to play it by the book through justifying his actions as clearly as possible. As we have discussed above, sixteenth-century warfare was not about unrestrained force, but required adherence to various norms.¹⁰⁰⁶ Although there was no central authority binding the supreme political actors of the sixteenth-century, failure to live up to these norms could tarnish one's reputation and claims of legitimacy. In a more practical sense, such a failure would also bring on the risk of resistance from the conquered populations. In December 1523, describing the Sultan as a good ruler who loved peace, Venetian ambassador Piero Zen reports that Süleyman said that he took Rhodes and Belgrade by force because of the "insolences they committed against his subjects."¹⁰⁰⁷ Spandounes repeats this view by mentioning that Süleyman attacked Hungary because of the injuries inflicted on him.¹⁰⁰⁸ Such was the projection of the official proclamations of victory in both campaigns.

The proclamation of victory of Belgrade¹⁰⁰⁹ sent to the judges around the realm reflects several messages legitimizing Süleyman's actions and implying God's grace on

¹⁰⁰⁶ For a cultural perspective on warfare focusing especially on the norms and rules of war throughout history, see Martin van Creveld, "The Clausewitzian Universe and the Law of War," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 26, No. 3/4, The Impact of Western Nationalisms: Essays Dedicated to Walter Z. Laqueur on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday, (Sep., 1991), pp. 403-429.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Sanuto, 35:258.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Spandounes, p.65

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:515-7.

the sultan. The proclamation opens with a Quranic verse. The first part of the proclamation defines the God-given responsibility of the Sultan to protect his subjects and the Muslims in general. This duty, inevitably, brings forth the issue of war against the unbelievers and Süleyman's decision to spare no effort on the way of ghaza and jihad. The issue is elaborated with the employment of Quranic verses and traditions of the Prophet. The second part of the proclamation introduces Hungary as the target designated after an "investigation of those in error" [*tetebbu'-ı tavâ'if-ı erbâb-ı dalâl*]. The choice is then legitimized in two ways. The most obvious reason is the non-Muslim status of Hungary, which provides the religious context of legitimation. The second reason provides a dynastic claim based on continued rivalry, namely that Hungarians were defeated by the Ottomans many times before. The third part of the proclamation comes like an interlude whereby another "deviant" is re-introduced. This section provides a brief summary of the Gazali incident, paralleling the Sultan's plans to fight unbelief. As Gazali is blamed for siding with the devil, the message of Süleyman fighting evil and unbelief is further reinforced. The fourth part of the proclamation resumes the plans on Hungary. The campaign is announced with a formal resolve to perform the religious duty of ghaza [*gazâ niyyetine*] which clearly differentiates the action taken from any ordinary act of aggression. The fifth part of the proclamation is a brief description of the various steps of the campaign, namely the conquest of Sabacz, river crossings on the way to Belgrade, raids in Syrmia, the siege of Belgrade by Piri Mehmed Paşa, the arrival of the imperial army and the conquest. These instances provide the opportunity to prove the supremacy of the Ottoman army and its commanders. Expressions of the strength of the castles in question, and the difficulty of the river crossing enhance the success ultimately obtained and transforms it into an almost impossible feat. These difficulties, as the text has it, were surpassed through the effort and zeal of the Sultan with the help of God [*himmət-i şehriyâr-ı sa'âdet-şi'âra 'avn-i rabbani destgir olub*], which again implies Süleyman's enjoyment of divine grace along with his own capability. Descriptions of the raids on Syrmia introduce the less-godly aspect of ghaza, namely the satiation of the soldiers in terms of booty. The sixth part of the proclamation explains what happened to both parties after the conquest. It is clarified that Ottoman soldiers who died during the siege went to heaven as martyrs. Thus, both the material and spiritual rewards of ghaza for individual participants are confirmed. As the proclamation goes on to explain the consequences of the conquest for "unbelievers" who survived, we see a thorough explanation to the

effect that all were treated according to the requirements of peaceful surrender. Some of them are reported to have “found the right path and converted to Islam” by their own choice. Other did not accept Islam, but were spared because they agreed to pay tax. For some, neither option applied, so they were “allowed” to leave to go to their king. Yet others were sent to the “realm of Islam” according to the maxim that everybody is Muslim at birth.¹⁰¹⁰ The text goes on to explain that although soldiers were “thirsty for infidel blood”, the lives of the survivors were spared based on the counsel of the *ulema* because killing them would be against the rules and customs of the religion. The last part of the proclamation is a justification of the return. At this point, the specific target of the campaign is mentioned, namely the destruction of the King. It is announced that the aim was not realized because the commanders who knew the region well thought it best to stop since there was not enough time left. On the other hand, it was also resolved that they would return at the best opportunity for revenge. This final part projects two important messages. Firstly, the termination of the campaign is rationalized based on the expected duty of the Sultan, namely taking counsel. Secondly, it is made clear that Süleyman has no intention of giving up his determination on ghaza.

The proclamation of victory of Rhodes¹⁰¹¹ written to the judge of Bursa follows a similar logic; however the tone of the text reflects a high degree of self-confidence and even self-assertion, apparently based on the success of the previous campaign. The text starts with a confirmation of Süleyman’s commitment to and success at ghaza and jihad with the grace of God. It is emphasized the conquests he has achieved were intended to remove “unbelief and oppression” [*küfr ü zulm*]. The action taken against Rhodes is first explained in terms of Süleyman’s “the pious kingly custom” and “the pleasant royal convention” [*âdet-i hasene-i şâhâne ve sünnet-i marziye-i hüsvânem*] of fighting the “infidels”, while the damage given by the island to sea voyagers and merchants is emphasized later in the text. Then comes the steps of the campaign starting with the sending of Mustafa Paşa followed by the Sultan himself. There is a sense of hurry in the narrative, also apparent in the Belgrade text, which reflects a sense of urgency and

¹⁰¹⁰ *Münşe‘at*, I:518. On the belief that “all human beings are born Muslim since it is the natural religion” and how it worked in the earlier Ottoman ghaza efforts, see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, p.81

¹⁰¹¹ *Ibid*, 522-5.

enthusiasm regarding the performance of duty on the part of Süleyman.¹⁰¹² The commands given to the viziers are reflected as decisions based on Süleyman's natural skill in good judgement [*'ayine-i celliye-i hüsn-i tedbîrimde mukarrer olan rey-i sevâb-nümâyim muktezâsınca*]. The strength of the castle and the impossibility of its conquest are emphasized; the castle is further defined as the "yearning of rulers" [*hasretü'l-mülûk*]. In other words, the proclamation of victory makes it clear that no famous ruler set foot on the island since the day Islam was born and many worthy kings yearned to take it without realizing their desires.

Such a narrative once more poises Süleyman as achieving a near-impossible feat and raises him above all past rulers of note. Then comes a lively description of war-making and military methods employed to tear down the castle whereby the defenders are associated with unbelief, devilish ways, and rebellion. Following the descriptions of damage caused to the city, the text asserts that the islanders had to resort to peaceful surrender, whereby this option is projected as the only way left for salvation. Accepting their request for surrender and the keys to the castle, Süleyman is presented as a kind ruler who has done the right thing by sparing their lives and possessions. According to the proclamation, he grants pardon to the survivors through "[his] royal greatness of favor and imperial highness of kindness" [*ulüv-i himmet-i şâhâne ve sümüv-i 'atf-i pâdişâhânemden ... amanı şerîfim ihsân olunub*]. The significance of his "kindness" is further supported by a Quranic verse. It is emphasized that after the pardon, inhabitants of the city were secured as Ottoman subjects.

This newly granted security reflects two messages. Firstly, they are now transformed into the subjects of the Sultan. Secondly, they were treated respectfully as the terms of peaceful surrender required. Then, Süleyman goes on to free the Muslim prisoners on the island. The text delineates that all of them, regardless of their age or status, were liberated. The expression brings to mind the proclamation of accession sent to Hayrbay which required all to be treated equally with no regard to rank. The proclamation then reflects on the "cleansing" process and the conversion of the island to the "realm of Islam." According to the text, Rhodes was "filled with unbelief and

¹⁰¹² Relating the 1521 campaign, the proclamation says: "...traveling long distances in a short time..." [*müddet-i yesîrede mesâfe-i kesîre kat 'idüb*]. Relating the 1522 campaign, the proclamation says: "not staying two days at one stop, marching continuously..." [*iki gün bir menzilde karar itmeyüb, muttasıl yürüyüb*]. *Münşe'at*, I:516 and 522, respectively.

corruption, but with the help of God and the efforts of the victorious soldiers of Islam, it was cleaned and purified.” The final step to this process was the conversion of the “temples of idolatry” into “mosques of the Muslims.” The names of the major towns that surrendered along with Rhodes are provided and it is noted that they were conquered with all their surroundings and lands becoming part of Süleyman’s “protected domains.” Having completed the essentials and the results of the campaign, the Sultan thanks God once again and expresses his wish to continue his conquests so that “the lands of Islam shall be well protected and enlightened through [his] conquering flags.” Finally, the judge is told to announce the good news around, to make festivities and to pray for the continuity of his reign. In this last part of the document, especially, Süleyman seems to have fully appropriated the character of sovereignty along with the responsibility that it entails. Not only the Ottoman realms are *his* domains, but he seems to take pride in them being *his protected* domains. He wishes for the continuity of his conquests not only because it is his duty and glory, but also because he takes on the responsibility for the protection and enlightenment of the lands of Islam. Even though such expressions are generally acknowledged to be rhetorical devices, the tone of the 1522 proclamation – in comparison to the 1521 one – seems to project a Sultan whose self-confidence and status-consciousness is based not solely on inherited titles of sovereign rights and duties, but on a sense of self-achievement as well.

These proclamations did not circulate only domestically, but were also sent to foreign rulers. While they served to inform them about the victory, they also had a reinforcing effect on the reputation of Süleyman and the Ottoman might in general. Through announcing the “glorious victory” achieved by the Sultan and his superior army, the message to be taken was probably “beware!” although it was not generally so expressed. The grand master of Rhodes, for example, was one contemporary who felt threatened and offended by such a proclamation. The proclamation of victory of Belgrade sent to Rhodes is generally viewed as Süleyman’s first letter to Rhodes. In this letter he presented himself as “Solimano Tsacco per Dio gratia Re de’ Re, Signor di Signori, grande imperador di Costantinopoli, e di Trabisonda, Re potentissimo de Persi, d’Arabia, di Soria e d’Egitto, Signore dell’Asia e dell’Europa, Principe di Mecca, di Aleppo e di Gierusalemme, Dominatore e possessor dell’universo mare.”¹⁰¹³ The letter reads like a typical proclamation of victory whereby Süleyman announces his victory

¹⁰¹³ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” p.93a.

and conquest of Belgrade. As Fontanus has it, while congratulating Adams on his new post, he tells him to rejoice over the conquest. The Grand Master takes the letter as a declaration of war.¹⁰¹⁴

Süleyman announced his victories in Belgrade and Rhodes to Shah Ismail, the Safavi ruler, in a letter which resembles a proclamation of threat [*tehditnâme*] rather than a proclamation of victory. He let Ismail know that these two castles were what kept him from attacking Ismail, emphasizing how strong these fortifications were. However, neither could endure the strength of his army and he was able to “liberate” [*istihlâs*] both. Thus “the center of idolatry became part of the realm of Islam, temples of idols were turned into mosques of the believers, and unbelieving ways were toppled down.”¹⁰¹⁵ The letter involves a dual purpose. While threatening Ismail to give up his sovereign rights to return to being a sufi sheikh, it also promoted Süleyman as the champion of Islam. The honor of transforming a region into a land of Islam through conquest was part of the collective Islamic mental vocabulary of the time. Süleyman’s Mughal contemporary Babur, for example, after his success at Chanderi against Medini Rai, proudly announced having “converted what for many years had been a mansion of hostility, into mansion of Islam.”¹⁰¹⁶

The proclamation of victory of Rhodes to Venice involves four main messages.¹⁰¹⁷ Firstly, it justifies the attack through the misdeeds of the islanders, namely hosting malevolent corsairs and harming both Muslim and Christian ships.¹⁰¹⁸ Secondly,

¹⁰¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.93.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:542. The conquest of Rhodes finds a rather neutral expression in *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*. The author justifies the campaign on the grounds that the “Rhodian infidels kept defying the ruler of Rum Sultan Süleyman.” He supports his argument with a Quranic verse, Rahman, 19. Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü’t-Tevârih*, p.221.

¹⁰¹⁶ Lal, “Jihad Under the Mughals,” pp.459. *Baburnama*, p.579, 576.

¹⁰¹⁷ For a translated copy, see Sanuto, 34:47-8. The letter is dated 29 December 1522 and Sanuto’s entry is dated March 1523. The Ottoman envoy presenting the letter to the Doge on 27 March 1523 repeats in person the argument that “the Grand Master caused great damage.” *Ibid*, 48.

¹⁰¹⁸ Protecting the sea routes from the disturbing effects of piracy was a common theme in various cultures. The first Roman Emperor Augustus, for instance, took pride in having “freed the sea from pirates.” Kenneth J. Atchity (ed.), *The Classical Roman Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.160. Beside the practical concerns, effort to prevent of uncontrolled corsair activity seems to be giving order to chaos.

a sense of power is conveyed through the mention of terrible battles and the damage done to the defenders. Thirdly, the merciful and just nature of the Sultan is conveyed through the acceptance of surrender and Süleyman's order that nobody should be harmed in any way. Fourthly, Süleyman is projected as the legitimate ruler of both Muslims and Christians in his realm through the statement of letting those Rhodians who wish to remain on the island live peacefully as Christians in other parts of the Ottoman realm do. As a whole, the document balances the Islamic claims of Sultan Süleyman and poses a more universal projection.

As far as such universal projection is concerned, it is to be noted that Süleyman was not solely the protector of Islam as the Servitor of the Holy Cities, but also the protector of the Orthodox Church, a role inherited from Mehmed II when he captured Constantinople. Furthermore, the majority of Süleyman's subjects in the Balkan lands were Christians.¹⁰¹⁹ The universal projection of the proclamations can be observed partly in the booty taken from the conquered regions. Among the booty Süleyman brought back from Belgrade were some Christian relics. According to Contarini's report, dated 30 November 1521, among these were two remains belonging to saints, one a hermit and the other a queen. There was also a figure of Virgin Mary made by San Luca along with many crosses and other sacred objects. Contarini reports that the Sultan handed these over to the Patriarchate and Christians went with great devotion to see them.¹⁰²⁰ Spandounes confirms the story, though he says that the Christian population had to pay dearly to buy these relics from the Sultan.¹⁰²¹ A report from Candia relates Süleyman's handling of the treasury of St. Jean in Rhodes. When he requested the treasury from the Grand Master, he argued that the treasury belonged to the temple and not to the Grand Master, therefore it was not part of the possessions allowed to be taken from the island. However, the Grand Master "gently begged him to leave the *tesoro*, in other words the relics." Upon this, Süleyman took only a golden *Nonciata* with angel inscribed *ave maria gratia plena* in gold.¹⁰²²

¹⁰¹⁹ In the period 1520-1525, there were 195,000 Muslim households, and 863,000 Christian households. İnalçık, "State, Sovereignty, and Law," p.85.

¹⁰²⁰ Sanuto, 32:257.

¹⁰²¹ Spandounes, p.66. According to Spandounes, Süleyman was going to throw the relics in the sea if the Patriarch did not buy them.

¹⁰²² Sanuto, 34:13.

Before we continue with the reception of the campaigns and Süleyman's image in relation to them, we should note that Süleyman's proclamations were not created from scratch. They employed an already existing set of codes and terminology already meaningful to their audience. A comparison of both proclamations with an earlier sample of Ottoman victory proclamations demonstrates that the individual codes constituting the overall message of the text are basically identical. The proclamation of victory of Lepanto¹⁰²³ from the reign of Bayezid II, for example, is a rather brief text but includes all the relevant elements which we usually consider to have become rhetorical usages. The Venetians, as the enemy, are defined as "sinners and unbelievers" who have tended towards "sedition" through engaging in "diabolical preoccupations." Thus, in the first part of the text the attack itself is justified through vilifying the attacked, as is the case also in the proclamations of 1521 and 1522. This is followed by a very brief account of Bayezid's decision to go on campaign and the victory obtained. Once military victory is established, the text explains the peaceful surrender of the enemy and Bayezid's granting pardon thereupon. The wording emphasizes surrender as salvation, as we have seen in Süleyman's proclamations. Just as in the 1521 and 1522 proclamations, the lives and possessions of the survivors are spared through the pardon granted which stems from the "imperial kindness" of the Sultan [*vüfûr-ı eşfâk-ı pâdişâhânemden*]. As expected, the castle then becomes part of the protected domains of the Sultan. Finally, the judge is told to announce the news. As seen through this example, the proclamations of 1521 and 1522 reflect an already existing set of codes understandable by the community they were addressed to. However, the narrative structure of the latter texts appears to be more repetitive, detailed and even exaggerated. These aspects seem to provide the texts with a more intense feeling of glory and majesty, along with a sense of righteousness.

3.4.2. Domestic Reception

The domestic reception of the campaigns is harder to uncover. The chronicles and documents we have in hand have their own agenda at least partly clouding the sincere

¹⁰²³ *Münşe'at*, I:337.

opinions of their writers. Nevertheless, they do reflect a mentality of the time and certain common values and codes in relation to war making.

Feridun Beğ's compilation of documents provides the reactions of two prominent Ottomans to the 1521 campaign. The writers of the two replies to the proclamation of victory of Belgrade come from two different origins of the Ottoman military. Ferhad Paşa¹⁰²⁴ was a man of *devshirme* origin who happened to be on guard in the Eastern provinces during the campaign after subduing the Gazali rebellion. In his reply to the *fetihname*, Ferhad Paşa first defines the enemy as "the sinful party of cursed infidel Hungarians" [*fecere-i firka-i küffâr-ı Engürüs-i menhûs*] describing it as "[those] unbelieving the prophetic mission Muhammad" [*münkirân-ı risâlet-i Ahmedî ve mu'ânnidân-ı nebevet-i Muhammedî*]. He repeats a brief summary of the campaign taking the opportunity to praise the sound judgment of the Sultan in his commands and to emphasize the strength of the castles captured. He emphasizes the importance of Belgrade as the "key to the lands of the infidels and source of evil" as well as rebellion and sedition [*fitne vü fesâd*]. He also underlines the fact that the predecessors of Süleyman had not been able to conquer it. He wishes that this conquest would herald others.¹⁰²⁵ Ferhad's letter very much resembles the proclamation in the sense that it is almost as clean-cut and organized. It clearly reflects the status of the enemy as "unbeliever" which re-projects the first aspect of legitimation of aggression. It also re-projects the legitimation of the individual targets as not only centers of unbelief, but of sedition as well. Through referring to past failures, it glorifies Süleyman within the dynastic chain. And lastly, it projects the promise of future success.

The writer of the second letter Şehsüvaroğlu Ali Beğ,¹⁰²⁶ on the other hand, was a local magnate who became an Ottoman during the reign of Selim I, only a few years before these campaigns. His reply seems to be less rhetorical and calculated than Ferhad

¹⁰²⁴ Of Albanian origin, he was raised in the palace and served as janissary commander. His other posts were: governor-general of Rumelia (922/1516), governor-general of Damascus (927/1521), third vizier (930/1524). He was relieved from vizierate in 931/1524-5 and appointed governor to Smederevo, only to be executed in 932/1525. S.O. 2:517.

¹⁰²⁵ *Münşe'at*, I:520-2: "kilid-i memâlik-i kâfir-i bed-nihâd ve melce-i şeytanât-ı mu'râd ve melâz-ı ehl-i fitne vü fesâd."

¹⁰²⁶ Being a member of the Dulkadır dynasty, he sought refuge in Selim's service upon his father's death. S.O.: 1:248.

Paşa's. Ali Beğ asserts that the Hungarians were not able withstand the attacks and strength of the Sultan. He confirms the enemy's rebellious behavior as he expresses that all the mischief they have done "fell on their heads with the cannons." He defines the captured strongholds as places of "unbelief" and "polytheism."¹⁰²⁷ Through this brief narrative, he reflects his perception of the strength and success of Süleyman and the legitimacy of the campaign. The rest of the letter is more interesting in the sense that it is a declaration of loyalty. One would remember that although he had sent his gifts in proxy, he was not present in person during the accession ceremonies a year ago. The pain he takes to convince Süleyman of his loyalty and enthusiasm to serve him is almost heart-breaking. His insistence to take part in future ghaza projects suggests some sort of disappointment. While this disappointment could be caused by the missed opportunity of spiritual reward of ghaza, it seems more likely that Ali Beğ probably felt left out the game, and as such left out of favor and confidence. Through seizing the chance to congratulate the Sultan on his victory, Ali Beg was actually seizing the opportunity to (re-)locate himself within the imperial power structure.¹⁰²⁸

In Ottoman accounts we see many analogies and references to ideal kings. Nasuh, for example, associates Süleyman with Darius [*Hüdâvendigâr-ı Dârâ-serîr*] as he relates the return from Belgrade.¹⁰²⁹ Sa'di, on the other hand, cites twice the Quranic verse regarding Solomon's army as tells about the preparations and departure in 1521,¹⁰³⁰ as does Bostan in describing Sultan Süleyman's campaign departure.¹⁰³¹ Although these analogies may appear as mere praise and exaggeration when the texts are considered in isolation, putting them into an intertextual context demonstrates a meaningful construction process. In the previous chapter, we have taken a look at the letter sent to Hayrbay announcing the accession.¹⁰³² The letter started with a reference

¹⁰²⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:519.

¹⁰²⁸ That he was killed by Ferhad Paşa, soon after, supports his probable concern.

¹⁰²⁹ Nasuh, 47a.

¹⁰³⁰ Sa'di (SN), 127b-128a: "*ve haşri li Süleyman cünûduhu min el cin ve'n-nâs.*"

¹⁰³¹ Bostan (TSK), 14b.

¹⁰³² See Chapter 1, p.141. For the text see *Münşe'at*, I:503-6. While in Süleyman's case, being namesakes name doubled the effect, association with Solomon was by no

to the letter sent by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba. Continuous use of such analogies in various texts produced for various purposes by different authors help create an image in the long run, based on shared codes.

Another element observable in some contemporary accounts is the spiritual rewards Süleyman earned for the campaign. As far as Islamic thought goes, in order for a holy war to be realized, permission and supervision of the caliph or imam is required. Furthermore, according to prophetic tradition “The warrior gets his reward [*ajr*], and the giver of the wage [*ju'l*] gets his reward, plus that of the warrior.”¹⁰³³ Thus, Süleyman receives full credit for giving the opportunity of holy war for the individual salvation of others as well as for the collective duty of jihad to the community.¹⁰³⁴ This point is emphasized especially by Ramazan. Ramazan cites several others reasons for spiritual rewarding of the Sultan as well. According to the author, among these were the liberating of the prisoners and alms given to them, the opening of the sea route for pilgrimage, saving of Rhodes from idols and making it a Muslim land, removing the oppression which no one was able to before, spending a lot of personal wealth for the conquest, providing lots of food for the soldiers.¹⁰³⁵

means unique to him. Another Quranic verse on the army of Solomon was employed by Tursun Beg, for example, to associate Mehmed II with Solomon. Tursun Beg, *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, p.39, 140. Quran, 27:18: “*lâ yahtumnekum Süleymanü ve cünûdühü.*”

¹⁰³³ Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, p.50, 53.

¹⁰³⁴ Averroes, for example, dwells on the collective obligation dimension of jihad in his *Bidayat al-Mudjtahid*. The argument of compulsory and collective obligation is supported with the Quranic verses 2:216, 9:112, 4:95. Averroes, “*Bidayat al-Mudjtahid*,” in Bostom, p.147-8. See also, Khadduri, “The Law of War: The Jihad,” p.309; Rudolph Peters, “Jihad: An Introduction,” in Bostom (ed.), p.322. On the other hand, associating Süleyman’s role in leadership solely on the basis of Islamic views would be misleading. As Michael Handel argues: “Ultimately, the logic and rational direction of war are universal and *there is no such thing as an inclusively ‘Western’ or ‘Eastern’ approach to politics and strategy*; there is only an effective or ineffective, rational or non-rational manifestation of politics or strategy.” Classical theorists war who assert that the basic logic of strategy is universal, just like that of political behavior, state that every war has to be decided on and directed by a political leadership. It is the duty of the political leadership to develop a coherent policy and clear objectives to be executed by a subordinate military group. Handel, *Masters of War*, p.3, xvii.

¹⁰³⁵ Ramazan, p.177, 196.

3.4.3. Foreign Reception: Peaceful Lamb Turns into Fierce Lion

Süleyman's aggressive moves aiming at the long-expected – yet somewhat taken for granted – strongholds of Christendom almost as soon as he ascended the throne have rather rapidly produced an image of a dangerous and destructive foe at a universal level. As Muslim rulers generally regarded all Europeans under one title,¹⁰³⁶ namely *Frenk*, European observers seem to have confirmed the conception through a collective notion of Christendom. The above-cited description of Guicciardini of Rhodes as “a bulwark of Christian religion,” and Lannoy's remark to Charles V reminding the island's role as “bulwark between the *Turco* and Christendom,” reinforce the mutuality of meaning, which appears also in Fontanus's description the Rhodians as “defenders of the borders of the Christian Empire in the East.”¹⁰³⁷ If Rhodes was regarded as the bulwark of Christendom in the East, a similar role was attributed to Belgrade in the West.¹⁰³⁸ Sultan Süleyman's acquisition of both in the first two years of his reign seem to have produced great awe among European audiences.

Selim's death and Süleyman's accession were received quite optimistically in Europe. Ironically, Selim I never attacked any European target in person, yet he was considered to be a dangerous threat. Thus, European rulers were relieved to see his seemingly “pacifist” son take his place. The campaigns of 1521 and 1522 changed this expectation. Pope Leo's crusade efforts were suspended not only because of discord among Christian princes, but also by the relaxing effect of Selim I's death. Guicciardini reflects the mood when saying that Selim left his “great empire to Suleiman, his son, a young man but reputed to be more mild-spirited (although the results demonstrated otherwise) and not disposed to make war.”¹⁰³⁹

¹⁰³⁶ For the treatment of the Mamluk sultan Qansuh al-Ghuri as such, see p.238.

¹⁰³⁷ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” p.92: “*difensori in Oriente de confini dell'Imperio Christiano.*”

¹⁰³⁸ For previous references, see p.232.

¹⁰³⁹ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.302. For a modern comment on Süleyman's contemporary European reception initially as “a weakling completely devoid of initiative” and the immediate change of view, see Fisher-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” p.46.

By the time Marco Minio returned from his mission in Istanbul, Süleyman had already left a quite a different impression through the Hungarian campaign and the conquest of Belgrade. When the Venetian ambassador Minio was asked by the viziers why Hungarians did not come to the defense of Belgrade, he admitted that nobody actually believed that the *Signor* would go that far. It was why, Minio argued, the Hungarian king was caught unprepared.¹⁰⁴⁰ Minio's contact with the Sultan was after the conquest of Belgrade, thus his impression of Süleyman differed greatly than that of Tomasso Contarini more than a year earlier. While Contarini talked about a "peaceful man who wanted to attend to his pleasure,"¹⁰⁴¹ Minio thought that "a *Gran Signor* such as this one can do great things in a short time."¹⁰⁴² The impression Süleyman left on Minio, who saw him after the return from Belgrade for the first time, was of a greatly powerful ruler who by now should scare Christendom. He warns that Süleyman will not be peaceful, but on the contrary quite belligerent. Minio's *Relazione* reflects a perceived boost of confidence on the part of Süleyman based on the capture of Belgrade: "The expedition he made to Belgrade has given him the expectation that he can win every great campaign." Minio asserts that not only Süleyman, but all high ranking officials seem to possess the keys to Christendom because they got Belgrade. These high-ranking officials, according to Minio, think that they can easily penetrate into the heartlands of Christendom and that they believe the Sultan will not launch any campaigns on anyone but the Christians: "He seems to have in his hand the key to Christendom for having conquered Belgrade. Mustafa Paşa, governor-general of Rumelia who is a friend of ours clearly says that he wants to make war in Hungary."¹⁰⁴³ An anonymous account points out the influence of this boost of confidence on the part of Süleyman on his decision to attack Rhodes: "The sayd Solyman having this victory, being swollen and raised in pride and vain glory, turned his heart agaynst Rhodes."¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰⁴⁰ Minio, *Relazione*, p.21.

¹⁰⁴¹ Sanuto, 29:391-2.

¹⁰⁴² Minio, *Relazione*, p.21.

¹⁰⁴³ Sanuto, 33:315. Minio, 8 April 1522. Minio, *Relazione*, p.17-20. Minio also talks of the feeling of glory in Istanbul for having captured such an important place like Belgrade. Sanuto, 32:256. 30 November 1521, to his brother.

¹⁰⁴⁴ "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.180.

The fall of Belgrade alarmed Europe. On 30 August 1521, Georgius de Eggi, captain of Gorizia [Gorica, Gurize], wrote to Vincenzo Capello, deputy of Udine, that he was terrified to hear the “mournful” news by way of Graz. The news was that “the malignant Turk captured Belgrade, which is the shield of the realm of Hungary and these upper parts, through his unending force and power.”¹⁰⁴⁵ On 10 October, Clerk wrote to Wolsey from Rome: “... the Turk has destroyed Belgrade; – much fear for Hungary, as the King is young and his council divided. If there be war in Hungary, in Italy and in France, the earth will be satiated with Christian blood...”¹⁰⁴⁶ The report of the Venetian envoy Lorenzo Orio, dated 11 September 1521, reflected the general mood at Buda after the fall of Belgrade. According to Orio, everybody at Buda believed that the *Turk* would not be satisfied unless he extinguished Christians.¹⁰⁴⁷ On 30 March 1522 a letter from the ambassador in Rome was read in Venice. Cardinal Grimani thought that the Turk wanted to dominate Christendom and had to be faced. It was due to the dissension among Christian princes that he had taken Belgrade and he wanted to dominate the Kingdom of Hungary.¹⁰⁴⁸

Letters from Hungary to Venice at the end of 1521 demonstrate a confusion of opinions as to the intentions of Süleyman. While some believe that he has returned to settle thing with the *Sophi*, others are convinced that he will return to Hungary with great force. Yet some others expect that he will lead an army up to Dalmatia with the hope of acquiring Italy. Many are convinced that he “has the desire to dominate.”¹⁰⁴⁹ On the other hand, the significance of this perception should not be exaggerated, for the rumors of “desire to dominate” were not exclusive to Süleyman in the 1520s. In October 1523, secretary Masaro attributed the same desire to Ferdinand. According to Masaro,

¹⁰⁴⁵ Sanuto, 31:315. Georgius de Eggi, captain of Gorizia, 30 August 1521 to Vincenzo Capello, deputy of Udine.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Letters and Papers*, III:690.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Sanuto, 31:480.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 33:102

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 32:195. Sanuto’s summary of letters dated 30 November 1521. Lorenzo Gritti writing from Ragusa on 12 September cites Dalmatia as a possible target for the Ottoman army next spring. Sanuto, 31:494.

Ferdinand was so obsessed with power and aggrandizing himself that he wished he could dominate the earth and the skies.¹⁰⁵⁰

Not only post-conquest accounts and rumors but also those during the actual fighting also give insight to how public opinion was built. Zuan Antonio di Bonaldi writing from Rhodes, as early as 26 June 1522, referred to Süleyman as “this dragon who thinks of swallowing the Christian people” and hoped for God’s help.¹⁰⁵¹ On 10 October 1522, he wrote that Süleyman had enough force to destroy not only Rhodes but the whole world.¹⁰⁵² A captain writing from Rhodes, on 10 August 1522, did not only place his hopes on God’s help but also on help from Christian princes. He believed that it was their debt to provide help to destroy “this great dog,” for if they did not help it would ruin their faith.”¹⁰⁵³

Charles V was well aware that if he did nothing, he would lose prestige. He told one of his men, La Chaulx, at the end of August 1522, that he had to demonstrate clearly that his only desire was to employ all his forces to destroy “these malevolent infidels” just as expected of “the principal Christian prince, protector and defensor of the holy Christian faith and religion.” To break the inactivity, he sent Lannoy who spoke of a huge rescue force to Rome with the mission to organize a contra-campaign to defend the island. Lannoy arrived in Rome in December. While the islanders were nearly consumed, Lannoy presented obedience to the Pope and started negotiations.¹⁰⁵⁴ Charles’s efforts were too late, which brings to mind the possibility that he was only pretending to do something rather than spending genuine effort. According to one strand of thought, saving Rhodes was not the same thing as a crusade. Furthermore, Rhodes was known to be close to France. In either case, neither Francis nor Charles wished to divide their forces to spare some for Rhodes. Confronting the Ottoman army would require a huge force indeed. Ottoman army was estimated to consist of 300,000 men and 400 ships. Christian wars were fought with smaller armies. Moreover, the island

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 35:115.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid*, 33:387.

¹⁰⁵² *Ibid*, 515.

¹⁰⁵³ *Ibid*, 459.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Rodriquez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.232.

was well-fortified and defended itself with dedication.¹⁰⁵⁵ In the meanwhile, European powers kept blaming each other for the situation. On 18 December 1522, Gattinara wrote to the Pope complaining about Francis keeping Charles from fighting the Ottomans:

As Francis bestirs himself to collect an army, he compels the Emperor to do the same... When the Turk sees these things, he will turn his arms against the Two Sicilies, will find them unprepared, conquer them, strike a blow at Rome, and subvert the Holy See, unless God in His mercy, interfere to save it.¹⁰⁵⁶

In spite of all warnings, the fall of Rhodes created yet another shock. The first rumors of the fall of Rhodes reached Venice on 24 January 1523. In Napoli, for example, people did not believe the news and they bet 20 for 100 that it was not lost..¹⁰⁵⁷ A letter from Split [Spalato] informs that the news was not given credit for until the Turks living nearby celebrated the conquest of Rhodes with festivities and fireworks.¹⁰⁵⁸ Eyewitness accounts of merchants and knights soon started to circulate around Europe. These accounts were translated in various languages and printed in many countries. One such account was translated from French into English in 1524 through the commission of a Lord Thomas Dockwray, a Prior of the order of Jerusalem in England. The introduction of the work describes Süleyman as “cruell bloodshedder, enemie of our holy Christian faith, Sultan Soliman, now being great Turke...”¹⁰⁵⁹

Pope Adrian VI seems to have been much concerned about the loss of Rhodes and Belgrade. He sent a letter to Wolsey in February 1523 telling him to inform the king and queen of the “unfortunate loss” of Rhodes. The Pope was worried that now these two “outworks of Christendom” were lost, the *Turk* would easily conquer Hungary, Sicily and Italy. Adrian VI stretched the threat as far as England. According to the instructions of the Pope, Wolsey had to “show what a disgrace it would be if the see of the vicar of God were taken by them, owing to the dissension of the Christian princes.”¹⁰⁶⁰ Pope

¹⁰⁵⁵ Rodriquez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.232-3.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Letters and Papers*, III:1146.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Sanuto, 33:615.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 631.

¹⁰⁵⁹ “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes, p.179.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Letters and Papers*, III:1196.

Adrian issued a three-year cease-fire demand to prepare a crusade in March and April 1523. It was also declared that those who did not respond to the defense of Christianity would have to suffer special sanctions.¹⁰⁶¹ On June 1523, Pope Adrian wrote to Francis to settle his private quarrels, and engage in united action against the *Turk* who “has committed much wrong, and stands ready at the door to do much worse.”¹⁰⁶²

The conquest of Rhodes seems to have caused great concern in Hungary as well. Louis II wrote to Charles V asking for help on 16 April 1523 saying that the *Türckisch Kayser* would definitely attack Hungary now that he won Rhodes which was a most strong state. Louis refers to Süleyman as the tyrant.¹⁰⁶³ Charles’s reaction in the Cortes of Castile in 1523 was announced on his behalf. Playing on the agony Charles felt on the fall of Rhodes, the announcement also took the opportunity to proclaim him as a “catholic and just king”¹⁰⁶⁴ Not only was a stronghold which was believed to be able to hold on forever lost, but the submission of the city coincided with Christmas.¹⁰⁶⁵ Giovio relates a strange happening on the day of the conquest. As Pope Hadrian was about to enter the chapel for Christmas ceremonies, the marble architrave over the door of the chapel fell down injuring some guards and scaring the Pope greatly.¹⁰⁶⁶ Recording the

¹⁰⁶¹ Rodriquez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.235.

¹⁰⁶² *Letters and Papers*, III:1303. On Pope Adrian’s reaction and pressing for peace; and mutual blames of Charles V and Francis I, also see Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, pp.203-4.

¹⁰⁶³ *Des Königs von Hungern sendprieff an Kayserlich Statthalter und Regiment, Zugesagter hillf gegen Türkisher Tyrannei merung etc.*, 1523. Accessed through Universität Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek Digitales Document Archiv [02/IV.13.4.142angeb.03].

¹⁰⁶⁴ Rodriquez-Salgado, “La Cruzado sin Cruzado,” p.201.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Anon., *Summariu[m] der brief auß Candia, von geschichten der stadt Rodiß, wie dem Türcken übergeben ist worden*, p.3. Various letters cited in the summary dates Süleyman’s entry into the city as 26 December and the departure of the grand master as 1 January. Also see, *Von der statt Rodiß wie dem grossen Türcken uffgeßen ist worden*, Freiburg, 1538, p.iii; “A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes,” p.205. For some entries of Sanuto mentioning Christmas, see Sanuto, 34:9-12; 61; 90. Sources cite different dates for the actual surrender of Rhodes. 1 Safar in KPZ, X:183; Nasuh, 84b. 5 Safar in *Tabakat*. 6 Safar in *Münşe‘at*; Bostan (TSK), 40a. 7 Safar in Ramazan, p.192; Sa‘di (SN), 158a.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diiii.

fall of Rhodes as “the most unhappy event at the end of the year 1522, to the greatest infamy of Christian princes, by Suleiman Ottoman,”¹⁰⁶⁷ Guicciardini wrote:

Once they had departed from Rhodes, Suleiman, for the greater contempt of the Christian religion, made his entrance into that city on the birthday of the Son of God; on which day, celebrated with endless songs and music in Christian churches, he had all the churches of Rhodes, dedicated to the cult of Christ, converted into mosques dedicated to the Mohammedan religion, and according to their custom all Christian rites exterminated. Thus ended the year 1522, ignominiously for Christendom; such fruit reaped the discord of our princes, which would have been tolerable if at least the example of the harms suffered had served them as a lesson for the future. But the disagreement among our princes continued, and therefore the troubles of the year 1523 proved no less than before.¹⁰⁶⁸

The offer made to the Grand Master of Rhodes and the way he was allegedly treated by Süleyman seem to have impressed European observers. Süleyman, reportedly, presented the Grand Master with a robe which he took during a campaign. Furthermore, he was also provided with biscuits for the journey.¹⁰⁶⁹ Fontanus’s version of the meeting between the Sultan and the Grand Master envisions an even more compassionate Süleyman and a very humble Grand Master:

The Grand Master, either by the recommendation or the order of Achimeto, dressed in humble garments (those fit for the conquered) came out in the camp to the chambers of the *Tiranno* with a few of his *cavalieri* in company. After six months of fatigue... The Grand Master having had nothing to eat and drink until the middle of the day, under the rain, waited in the chambers of the *Tiranno*. Finally he was taken to the presence of the *Signore*, dressed like a slave by the *Barbari*. They stared at each other in amazement and wonder, they looked and contemplated. The *Maestro* was the first to salute, kissing the hand [of the sultan].¹⁰⁷⁰

This part of the account introduces a humbled and almost humiliated commander in the person of the Grand Master. The author chooses to refer to Süleyman as the

¹⁰⁶⁷ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.334.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.335.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Sanuto, 34:11. According to this report from Candia, dated 4 January, the Grand Master presented Süleyman with a golden basin bedect with jewels which cost 30,000 ducats. Also see, *ibid*, 67.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” p.121a. The campaign diary in *Münşe‘at* spots two visits of the grand master: 7 and 13 Safar. See also, Sanuto, 34:67, dating this meeting on 26 December.

tyrant, thus aggravating the situation further by covertly invoking deep-rooted prejudices. Between the lines, one gets the feeling that the actual villain may turn out to be Ahmed Paşa rather than Süleyman himself. In other words, the humbled situation of the grand master has not directly been linked to any order of the sultan himself; but it is justified through the possible acts of Ahmed Paşa and the code of honor requiring the “conquered” to humble themselves. The physical fatigue suffered by the grand master adds to the tension. Only then does the author introduce the expected “tyrant” who turns out to draw a rather different figure than prejudice would have it as the “conquered” performs one final act of submission through the kissing of hands. Süleyman’s reaction to this act of submission and to the humbled man is interesting:

I would have been glad not to see you under these conditions... I am justly the winner [*vincitore*], however I have decided not only to be pious and merciful to those who do not deserve it, but also to be most liberal...¹⁰⁷¹

Süleyman then offers him to stay on the condition that he repents his faults and sins. As unexpected may his behavior may be, the reaction of the Grand Master to this “merciful” offer is totally expectable for a Christian audience. Addressing Süleyman as “great and merciful *Imperadore*” and humbling himself further, the grand master renounces the offer based on the principle that he cannot change sides.¹⁰⁷² The episode ends with Süleyman confessing to the Grand Master that his behavior is not a consequence of the enmity he felt toward the latter, but of his “desire to dominate.”¹⁰⁷³ Another foreign account reflects Süleyman as a down to earth ruler:

The morrow after Christmas day, the reverend lord great master went to the great Turkes pavilion for to visite him and to be assured of his promise, the which lord he made to be wel and graciously received. And he signified unto him by his interpreter that the case so happened to him was a thing usuall and common; as to loose townes and lordships, and that hee should not take over much thought for it: and as for his promise, he bade that he should not doubt in anything, and that he should not feare any displeasure to his person, and that

¹⁰⁷¹ Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” p.121a. For the hand kissing and submission see also, Anon., *Summariu[m] der brief auß Candia, von geschichten der stadt Rodiß, wie dem Türcken übergeben ist worden*, p.4.

¹⁰⁷² Fontanus, “Guerra di Rhodi,” p.121b.

¹⁰⁷³ *Ibid.*

he should goe with his people without feare. With these words the sayd lord thanked him, and tooke his leave and departed.¹⁰⁷⁴

Foreign observers have taken this episode to envision Süleyman as a man who had compassion.¹⁰⁷⁵ A 1546 English translation of Giovio's *Commentario* relates the episode with the side note "the gentle heart of Soliman":

Furthermore, Viladame sayde hym selfe that when as he came the second tyme to Solyman to ask licence to depart, y he was so gently and kindly recevued, that Solyman turning himself to Hebraim Bassa (whom he loved entirely, whom also had at y present tyme with him only) sayd these wordes: Trulye I can not but be sad to se and behold this unfortunate old man, thrust out of his own house, to depart hence with so hevy chere.¹⁰⁷⁶

Nicolas Roberts, who was one of those who were sent to Süleyman's presence when the pact was made, wrote to England on 15 May 1523 relating his observations. According to his report, Süleyman was very wise and very discreet for his age – an observation shared by Fontanus. They were taken to his presence in a red pavilion. On each side of the pavilion stood two sumptuous gold lions. In the pavilion Süleyman sat on a gold chair surrounded by his guards [*sulaky*].¹⁰⁷⁷

¹⁰⁷⁴ "A Briefe Relation of the Siege and Taking of the Citie of Rhodes," p.205.

¹⁰⁷⁵ See, for example, Sanuto, 34:61. One can come across rumors of how Süleyman saved the Grand Master from the Greeks who wanted to kill him for surrendering the island. *Ibid*, 9.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Jovius, *A Short Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*, fol. Cviii; see also Giovio, *Commentario*, Diiii; Anon., *Summariu[m] der brief auß Candia, von geschichten der stadt Rodiß, wie dem Türcken übergeben ist worden*, p.5: "Disem alten elendē man (hat den hochmaister gemaint) sol es on zweyfell herzlich wee thun, vō hinnen also zuschayden das er alle sein herligkait also hat verlorn, mich beiamerz dannocht." Sanuto, 34:9-10: "Mi dispiace che l'ho veduto perder la signoria, et sia vecchio."

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Letters and Papers*, III:1272-3. *Münşe'at*, I:529; the campaign diary confirms two men from the castle coming out to kiss the sultan's hand on 22 Muharram. +p.538. The lion imagery can be traced in various regal cultures. It is known that Leonardo da Vinci constructed mechanic lions for Louis XII and Francis I of France on various occasions. The significance of these mechanic beasts could differ from submission of a certain town to the God-given power of the king to subdue a destructive force according to the occasion. Jill Burke, "Meaning and Crisis in the Early Sixteenth Century: Interpreting Leonardo's Lion," *Oxford Art Journal* (29 Jan. 2006), pp.77-91. In the 1509 case, it probably meant Venice who was recently beaten by France.

The success of Süleyman in two years also caused many fanciful rumors. In October 1523 Margaret of Savoy received news from Rome that the *Turk* already conquered most part of the land of the *Sophy* and would soon have all of it. Then he would “have nothing but attack Christendom.”¹⁰⁷⁸

3.5. Conclusion

We have argued that by embarking on these two campaigns at the beginning of his reign, Süleyman performed a duty expected of a ruler that demonstrated to his household and subjects his commitment to the defense of the religion and the protection of the welfare of his realm. Moreover, through leading both campaigns personally, he found the chance to prove himself militarily, demonstrating that he was in charge of his army and had the skill necessary to command it. These two campaigns worked ritually to make solid the ceremonial appropriation of the army we have mentioned in the previous chapter. Furthermore, his leadership and command during the two campaigns, as he played by the book, demonstrated the image of an ideal warrior-king crafted with codes of behavior based on previous and/or legendary examples. These codes were not only legible to the Ottomans but were generally part of the universal political vocabulary of the sixteenth century. The specific targets chosen for his initial campaigns made a statement in terms of both dynastic and personal glorification. Through acquiring the two targets his predecessors were not able to capture, he actually moved to the front stage the forgotten “stains” on the honor of his house which could now be conveniently used to promote his own reputation. In other words, choosing to start by completing unfinished business, under the guise of “washing away the embarrassment” in the name of the dynasty, he found the opportunity to glorify his own name. Through these achievements he found the opportunity not only to prove himself to be equal to his predecessors, but to excel them. In acquiring Belgrade and Rhodes at the start, he consolidated the borders of his realm as to allow him further expansion in practical terms. However, also he proved that he was capable of achieving things that none before him could. In this sense, while his achievement glorified the dynasty on one

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Letters and Papers*, III:1442.

hand, it glorified Süleyman himself as the most superior member of the dynasty on the other, giving the sense of a deliberate challenge to the very lineage of which he was part of. Throughout these two years, Süleyman's image in the Western world changed dramatically through these two military exploits and the resulting military victories. While in 1523 he appeared to be a most powerful monarch aspiring to destroy Christendom at any cost, this image was not solely dependent on sheer use of force. On the contrary, beneath the image lay a complex network of shared codes and conventions based on precedence and religion.

CHAPTER 4

THE PERFECT VIZIER: *VEZÎR-İ ASAF-NAZÎR*

*The good vazir enhances the fame and character of his sovereign; and the kings who have become great rulers of the world and whose names will be blessed until the resurrection, have all been those with good vazirs.*¹⁰⁷⁹

4.1. Defining the Problem

This chapter examines the rise of İbrahim Paşa, often defined as the “alter ego”¹⁰⁸⁰ of Sultan Süleyman, through a series of domestic challenges to authority that Sultan Süleyman had to resolve in the early years of his reign. In this respect, we shall try to understand the underlying dynamics of various “rebellions” during the earlier years of his reign. Rather than providing detailed accounts of these various challenging moments, this chapter mainly focuses on what we might define as the consolidation of sovereign power in the person of Süleyman in the long term. This process entails the gradual replacement of the former officials whom the Sultan overtook from his father’s reign by Süleyman’s *own* ranks. Such a discussion inevitably follows like an account of the rise of İbrahim Paşa, Sultan Süleyman’s famous grand vizier.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Nizam al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings: The Siyar al-Muluk or Siyasat-nama*, Hubert Darke, (trans.) (Surrey: Curzon, 2002), p.173.

¹⁰⁸⁰ See, for example, Fleischer, “The Lawgiver as Messiah,” pp.166-7; Fleischer defines the tenure of İbrahim Paşa as an experiment, and as a joint enterprise whereby İbrahim emerges as the alter ego of Süleyman. While İbrahim Paşa was invested with unprecedented authority and prerogatives, his enhancement also signified elevation and glorification of the Sultan. Also see, Murphey, “Süleyman’s Eastern Policy,” p.242; Necipoğlu, “Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry,” p.168.

Süleyman took over the chief figures of his administrative ranks from his father's reign. Süleyman's first grand vizier Piri Mehmed Paşa was Selim I's grand vizier and kept the post as Süleyman came to the throne. Vizier Mustafa Paşa had acquired the post in 1519, as well as Ferhad Paşa was first made governor-general of Rumelia under Selim I and promoted to vizierate almost instantly. Vizier Ahmed Paşa was governor-general of Rumelia at Süleyman's accession. Himself a fast climber Ahmed was not even governor-general of Anatolia in 1519. By 1529, none of these figures were on the political scene any more.

The transformation of Sultan Süleyman's high-level military-administrative ranks runs parallel to series of rebellions through which İbrahim gradually emerges as the "alter ego" of Süleyman. Analyzing the various phases of this process, this chapter aims to trace the formation of the image of the "ideal couple" in Süleyman and İbrahim as Solomon and Asaf.¹⁰⁸¹ Such an analysis follows two simultaneous strands. On one hand the personal turning points in the career of İbrahim Paşa shall be examined, which will provide an overview of the mechanisms involved in his abrupt appearance in the political scene and the public demonstration of such an unprecedented imposition. On the other hand, contemporary acts of rebellion shall be examined in relation to the opportunity they provided for İbrahim Paşa to showcase his capability as well as granted-authority. These revolts shall be handled as indicators of opposition to central imperial administration, following the argument of Rhoads Murphey who sees the revolts from 1520 onwards as an opposition and resistance Ottoman domination and centralization by local power holders who wished to maintain their former regional power and status – taking into consideration the scattered nature of the rebellions. In this respect, the rebellions were not regional expressions of discontent, but pointed at a more universal and serious problem Süleyman had to deal with.¹⁰⁸² In this respect, taken

¹⁰⁸¹ The creation of the "ideal couple" mirroring Solomon and Asaf has two significations. On one hand, through likening Süleyman and İbrahim to a well-known and already idealized pair, public perception is shaped as to perceive the Sultan and his grand vizier as ideals themselves. On the other hand, such an analogy involving a "positive ideal" helps define opponents in terms of a "negative ideal. See, Diederik A. Stapel and Russell Spears, "Guilt by Disassociation (and Innocent by Association): The Impact of Relevant and Irrelevant Analogies on Political Judgements," *Political Behavior*, vol.18, no.3 (September 1996), pp.289-309.

¹⁰⁸² Rhoads Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary: Ottoman Manifest Destiny or a Delayed Reaction to Charles V's Universalist Vision," *Journal of Early Modern History*, vol.5, no.3 (2001), p.203.

as instances of crisis-management, the suppression methods employed in these revolts and the impressions in the chronicles thereof shall demonstrate the dynamics beneath the partnership of Sultan Süleyman and İbrahim Paşa.

4.2. Elimination of the Chief Competitor

In the beginning of the year 1523, no Ottoman would probably anticipate a relatively low-level servant of the Sultan to be appointed grand vizier. If experienced officials predicted a change in the highest level of Ottoman imperial administration, their bets would probably be on Vizier Ahmed Paşa. Having ‘graduated’ from the Inner Service of the Palace as janissary commander, Ahmed Paşa was an experienced official and commander who served under both Selim I and Süleyman. He was promoted to vizierate following his post as the governor-general of Rumelia. His contemporaries often praised his capability on the battlefield, as shall be seen below.¹⁰⁸³ The grand vizier at the time, Piri Mehmed Paşa, though not of military background, was an experienced man who climbed his way step by step to the top.¹⁰⁸⁴ Before him, the viziers of Selim I also were men who entered military-administrative careers with posts of similar rank to that of Ahmed Paşa and they served as governor-generals to Anatolia and/or Rumelia. In this respect, Ahmed Paşa had every reason to expect the post of grand vizier at some point in life.

In this context, Ahmed Paşa’s elimination from competition through his revolt is a vital part of the story of the rise of İbrahim Paşa. Although this is not to say that İbrahim eliminated Ahmed through various intrigues, Ahmed Paşa’s rebellion probably prevented the formation of an influential anti-İbrahim faction. In order to come to an understanding of the significance of Ahmed Paşa’s revolt in regards to the rise of İbrahim Paşa and in association with Süleyman’s authority, various issues involved in the realization of the rebellion need to be considered.

¹⁰⁸³ For a short biography of Ahmed Paşa, see SO, 1:211. Also see, Halil İnalçık, “Ahmad Pasha Kha’in,” *EI*, I:293a.

¹⁰⁸⁴ For a short biography of Piri Mehmed Paşa, see SO, 4:1335. Also see, Franz Babinger, “Piri Mehmed Pasha, *EI*, 307b.

Ahmed Paşa's revolt can be defined as an act of political violence. As such, it follows the three usual observed phases of political violence. The first step to be examined in this respect would be the initial formation of grievance, or rather discontent, which shall be treated under first two sub-sections below. We shall first take an overview of the situation of the Egyptian province following the death of Hayrbay to see how possible local discontent might have prepared a convenient base for Ahmed Paşa's revolt. This is to be followed by a discussion of the motives of Ahmed Paşa, taking into consideration his personal discontent and possible links with faction struggles. While the motives of an highest level Ottoman official gives insight to the faction formations within the Ottoman power structure, the political background of the region gives insight to the opportunities which made such behavior possible. Politicization of discontent and its transformation into violent action, which form the second and third phases of political violence, are to be discussed in the third sub-section. Such a discussion shall demonstrate that the rebellion was marked by a total inversion of terms and symbols of sovereign authority; while the suppression and its aftermath by the re-insertion thereof. In other words, the actions which signify rebellion and lead to the total defiance of imperial authority can be regarded as inversion of meaning. In this respect, the measures taken to subdue the revolt and to pacify the region in the short term can be regarded as a re-inversion of meaning to re-establish Sultan Süleyman's authority in the region concerned. Finally, we shall trace the transformation of Ahmed Paşa's image through the process in contemporary perception. Contemporary perception on Ahmed Paşa not only enhance our understanding on how a major challenge against the authority of the Sultan by a trusted member of his inner circle was dealt with, but also delineate the key political values of the time, which were then reflected on İbrahim.

4.2.1. Opportunity: Egypt After Hayrbay

In the second chapter we have already discussed the problem of consolidation of Ottoman rule in Egypt as one of the first challenges before Sultan Süleyman as he ascended the throne. As David Ayalon argues, the revolt of Gazali provided an opportunity for the new Sultan to reduce the Circassian population to Egypt where they

were easier to keep under control.¹⁰⁸⁵ After the appointment of an Ottoman governor in Syrian provinces and the demonstration of loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan, the region at large seems to have been pacified and a certain degree of stability established for a while.¹⁰⁸⁶ However, that balance was shattered following the death of Hayrbay. Both Ottoman chronicles and foreign correspondence display unease and tension building up in the region. In order to understand the local conditions which allowed for Ahmed Paşa to undertake an uprising, we shall first take a brief look at the political situation of the region following the death of its last local governor Hayrbay. In the process, we shall be able to see that appointment of highest level Ottoman officials was the initial strategy tried by Sultan Süleyman.

Celâlzâde makes it clear in his account that the choice of a vizier to be sent to Egypt to take control on the death of Hayrbay was a deliberate decision as the Sultan regarded the order of Egypt as a very important matter.¹⁰⁸⁷ This deliberation seems to contradict the policy of Selim I. Celâlzâde relates in his *Selimname* that following the conquest Selim I's grand vizier asked for the newly conquered province. Selim did not find it appropriate to appoint so high an Ottoman official to the post along, and he had personal suspicions on the character of the then grand vizier Yunus Paşa. Selim tested the intentions of his vizier by seeming to approve at first. After confirming his suspicions, he had Yunus Paşa executed.¹⁰⁸⁸

The first Ottoman official to be appointed viceroy to Egypt following the death of Hayrbay was vizier Mustafa Paşa, a well-trusted and experienced member of

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," pp.132-3.

¹⁰⁸⁶ A traveler to Damascus in early 1522, for example, reported a city with a rich scene of commerce. Furthermore, "Now a governor has come again to Damascus, and he rules the country justly. The same is the case in Jerusalem and Safed, and the previous functionaries have been removed because of their evil deeds." Observations of an Italian Jew making a pilgrimage to Palestine in 1521-1522 as quoted in Bernard Lewis, "A Jewish Source on Damascus just after the Ottoman Conquest," *BSOAS*, vol. 10, no.1, (1939), p.184.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Tabakat*, 97b: "... diyâr-ı celilü'l-'itibâr Mısr'ın intizâmı cümle-i vâcibatdan oldığına binâ'en vüzerâdan birisi ol cânibe gönderilmek vala (?) görildiği ecilden fermân-ı gâtî-sitân muktezâsınca ol hizmete müşarileyh Mustafa ta'yîn olunub..."

¹⁰⁸⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.207. Celâlzâde wrote *Selimname* in 1560s, in other words long after the revolt of Ahmed Paşa. His view of the incident may be a backward projection of Ahmed Paşa's actions.

Süleyman's highest level political circle, as he was the general-commander of the 1522 campaign.¹⁰⁸⁹ Kemalpaşazade's account implies that Mustafa Paşa's appointment was temporary; he was to look over the region until the Sultan decided on the most capable person for the post.¹⁰⁹⁰ Celâlzâde lists the first tasks performed by the vizier at Cairo as sending news of his presence in Egypt to the Arab cities, presenting robes to local power holders within the province of Egypt, confirming offices [*yerli yerinde mukarrer kılındı*]. One final task in Celâlzâde's account strikes the eye: Mustafa Paşa gave salaries [*'ulûfe*] and allowances [*câmegî*] to the cavalry [*ciüندی*] who held fiefs from Hayrbay and to his servants [*kûl*].¹⁰⁹¹ This act suggests an attempt to secure the loyalty of the remnants of the Mamluk military, as well as an attempt at their final transformation and integration in the Ottoman system. The list taken as a whole, on the other hand, suggests a protection of the status quo while implying the ultimate power of Sultan Süleyman as overlord. In other words, the list reflects a preservation of the regular course of things which can be regarded an attempt of smooth transition to central administration based on the allegiance of existing power structures. On the other hand, considering the fact that the Sultan and the majority of his forces were engaged at Rhodes at the time, any other kind of reaction by the center at this point would probably destabilize the precarious balances in the region and put Sultan Süleyman in a vulnerable position.

The following turbulence in the region, however, suggests that the strategy of appointing a vizier did not work immediately and as efficiently as Süleyman seems to have presumed. The first major turbulence after the death of Hayrbay was the rebellion of local administrators [*kâşif*]. The practice of dispatching local administrators called *kaşif* from Cairo to keep the Bedouins in Upper Egypt under control was in use since the Mamluk period. By late fourteenth century these commanders were already powerful and influential figures in the region. At the time of Selim I's conquest in 1517, they had presented their allegiance to the Ottoman sultan.¹⁰⁹² By definition of the office,

¹⁰⁸⁹ He was replaced with Ahmed Paşa during the course of the campaign, though. See below, p.306.

¹⁰⁹⁰ KPŞZ, X:166-7.

¹⁰⁹¹ *Tabakat*, 104b.

¹⁰⁹² J.C. Garcin, "Al-Sa'id or Sa'id Mısr," *EI*, VIII:861b.

the *kâşif* were well-linked with both the Bedouins and the former Mamluks, which explain the relative ease with which an anti-Ottoman faction could be built so rapidly.¹⁰⁹³

Led by Cânım Kâşif, who was a former commander of the pilgrimage route, some of the local administrators blocked the roads and started “taxing” the rural population, as well as killing Ottoman [*Rûmî*] soldiers and pilgrims on the roads. Mustafa Paşa’s solution to the problem was to attract Arabian commanders and notables to the Ottoman side through some degree of compromise. In return for allegiance to the Sultan, tributes were reduced and they were presented robes. As Mustafa Paşa sent all imperial forces to fight the rebels, Cânım Kâşif entered Cairo on 19 June 1523 [5 Shaban 929] with the intention of declaring himself sultan.¹⁰⁹⁴ A letter by Zacharia Loredan, Venetian captain, from Famagosta dated 16 July 1523 relates information acquired through various sources around Alexandria and Beirut about the capture of Cairo by the commander of Upper Egypt [*Sayto*]. Loredan emphasizes that the occupation involved no bloodshed or pillaging, and that the populace accepted the occupation willingly.¹⁰⁹⁵

Celâlzâde attributes the turbulence to the ill-intentions of the “Circassian crowd.” According to the author, although the former Mamluks acted as if they were pleased with the fiefs they were given upon Ottoman conquest of the region, they never actually gave up their aspirations to hold independent power. They accepted Hayrbay’s governorship only because they regarded him as one of their own. Once he was dead and an Ottoman vizier came to execute the law, they lost their hope of ever attaining independent government. The author traces local reaction to the introduction of central rule back to a conspiracy which aimed to recover Egypt designed by three men of Hayrbay. However, Mustafa Paşa was informed about the conspiracy before they were able to act it out. The conspirators were caught and executed. Ottoman sources

¹⁰⁹³ Venetian reports mention “Arabs, Mamluks and Turks” taking part in the rebellion. Sanuto, 35:40-2. Piero Zen reported from Constantinople in July 1523 that there were suspicions of certain slaves trying to realize a coup [*far novita*] together with the Arabs in Cairo. Two commanders along with two thousand janissaries were sent to take things under control. One would take control of the city, the other the surroundings. *Ibid*, 34:384-5.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Tabakat*, 106a-107a. Also see, Sa’di (SN), 160b; Bostan, 46b. For Venetian correspondence, dated 14 July 1523, confirming the blocking of the roads, and the killing of the *Turks* “by the lord of Sayto”, see Sanuto, 35:40-2.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Sanuto, 35:40-2.

emphasize that the conspirators intended to kill all “Ottomans” [*‘Osmânîler / ‘Osmânlu*] in Egypt.¹⁰⁹⁶

Celâlîzâde defines the rebels as “the rebellious/wicked crowd” [*ta’ife-i bâgî*], “enemies of the religion” [*â’dâ-yı dîn*], “enemies of the overpowering state of the sovereign” [*â’dâ-yı devlet-i kâhire-i hüsvânî*]; whereas the Ottoman forces are identified with “triumphant banners of the Ottomans” [*râyât-ı zafer-şi’âr-ı ‘Osmânî*] and “victorious flagstuffs of Süleyman” [*â’lâm-ı nusret-nigâr-ı Süleymânî*]. According to Celâlîzâde, their actions disturbed the order of the realm causing the people to suffer.¹⁰⁹⁷ Again we can observe the conventional projection of adversaries as evil whereas imperial suppressive reaction is regarded not only merely as a breach of the authority of the Sultan, but a necessity for the protection of the subjects.

The final verdict of Celâlîzâde about the incident is: “In truth, the Arab lands were conquered and subdued with the help of God this time.”¹⁰⁹⁸ However, this does not mean that the anti-Ottoman faction in Egypt was wiped out overnight. Factions, by definition, tend to be relatively simple and unstable structures formed around an individual. The individuals constituting a faction are tied to the leader with personal and informal ties. The legitimacy of the leader often depends on short-term interests. A faction thus formed then struggles for power in opposition to a similar group. The faction exists as long as the political struggle attached to it continues.¹⁰⁹⁹ Celâlîzâde himself mentions that although “Circassians” at Cairo were killed by the Ottoman forces suppressing the revolt in June 1523, some managed to escape by getting in veils “like women.”¹¹⁰⁰ Ahmed Paşa would have found the necessary power base within this group of men, now left without a leader but probably not without purpose. Venetian reports from Istanbul voiced the opinion that being a “man of war and experienced in

¹⁰⁹⁶ *Tabakat*, 104b-105b; Lütî Paşa, pp.251-2.

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Tabakat*, 107a-108b.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 108b: “*Hakikatâ, diyâr-ı ‘Arab bi-‘inâyetü’l-melikü’r-râb bu def’a meftûh ü müsehher oldı.*”

¹⁰⁹⁹ Ralph W. Nicholas, “Social and Political Movements,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 2 (1973), p.64; Robert Shepard, “Court Factions in Early Modern England,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol.64, no.4 (1992), p.722. Definitions of faction, in the context of the Tudor court, based on personal interest and on ideological or religious aims, see *ibid*, p.730.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Tabakat*, 109a.

government” Ahmed would not have engaged in such an enterprise without some kind of foundation.¹¹⁰¹ While Sa‘di identifies the opportunity employed by Ahmed Paşa with the remoteness of the area to the imperial court and the customary inclination of the region to sedition,¹¹⁰² a later source comments that he “proclaimed sultanate through the rebellious and the wicked accompanied by thousands of rabbles and traitors.”¹¹⁰³

4.2.2. Motive: Political or Personal?

The turbulent condition at Cairo and surroundings along with an already existing powerbase seem to have prepared the convenient grounds for Ahmed Paşa to act as he did. The question is why did he choose to mobilize this powerbase for a very risky enterprise instead of enjoying the benefits of a post with a high lucrative potential? What Ahmed Paşa hoped to achieve through rebellion is also unclear. An institutional way to look at the issue could be to see the revolt in relation to faction struggles. However, contemporary narrative sources do not provide any clues on of correspondence or prior scheming with already existing power groups in and around Egypt, or on support from persons in Istanbul. Thus, the whole issue gives the impression of a rather personal affair in which an already existing power-base was activated.

Contemporary accounts relate more or less the same story relating to the tension between Ahmed and İbrahim. According to Celâlzâde, Ahmed Paşa expected grand vizierate for himself and was very upset when İbrahim was granted the post. He became very much grieved and envied İbrahim.¹¹⁰⁴ Ahmed Paşa’s discontent seems to have materialized while still in Istanbul through his rejection of İbrahim’s appointment to grand vizierate in the imperial council. Bostan explains the demonstration of the tension between İbrahim and Ahmed through a council meeting whereby Ahmed behaved rather

¹¹⁰¹ Sanuto, 36:100.

¹¹⁰² Sa‘di (SN), 164b.

¹¹⁰³ *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî, Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî ve Şemleli-Zade Ahmed Efendi Şive-i Tarikat-i Gülşenîye*, Tahsin Yazıcı (ed.) (Ankara: TTK, 1982), p.390.

¹¹⁰⁴ *Tabakat*, 111b.

roughly. According to the author, such insolent behavior required that he be sent away.¹¹⁰⁵ Nasuh, too, accuses Ahmed Paşa of ill-intentions caused by his envy for İbrahim. According to the author, the Sultan being troubled by the tension caused by Ahmed, sent him to Egypt.¹¹⁰⁶

Many contemporaries seem to be convinced that İbrahim used his influence on the Sultan to send Ahmed away so that he himself could become grand vizier. Piero Zen shared this view, and interpreted it as İbrahim's capability to have everything he wanted done.¹¹⁰⁷ A Venetian letter, dated 13 February 1524, named İbrahim as the cause of Ahmed's appointment to Cairo. The letter also mentioned that the older slaves, who were displeased by the rise of İbrahim, blamed İbrahim for the revolt of Ahmed Paşa. According to this report, were pleased with the revolt because they believed that being regarded as the reason behind the revolt would tarnish İbrahim's reputation and status since he was the cause of Ahmed Paşa's appointment to Cairo.¹¹⁰⁸

Contemporary accounts attribute Ahmed Paşa's behavior to his jealousy of İbrahim Paşa, as well as to his ingratitude and greed. Considering the risk involved, these explanations tend to sound too simple and may easily be taken as rhetoric excuses to vilify Ahmed Paşa while elevating İbrahim, and Süleyman for that matter. Even if

¹¹⁰⁵ Bostan (MK), 48b-49a: “*Amma ki Ahmed Paşa ol mahal vezir bulunub müşarileyh İbrahim Paşa ile divân-ı ‘adâlet-‘ünvânda cem’ olub, inâm-ı mesâlihe mübâşeret eylediklerinde bî-edebâne ba’z evzâ’ın ve erbâb-ı hâcâta hadden ziyade hiddetin müşâhede eyleyüb ol sebeble mezbûr Ahmed Paşa’nun dahi südde-i sa’âdetden ref’i lâzım gelüb ve hem vilâyet-i ‘Arab bir tünd ü tîz kimsenin makâmı olub ol sebeble diyâr-ı Mısır iskelelerinden mâ‘da cemî‘-i mahsûlâtı ile mezkûr Ahmed Paşa’ya ‘inâyet olunub evâhir-i Ramazan’da gemilerle deryadan ol canibe müteveccih oldı.*” Such an episode is reported by *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî* whereby Ahmed Paşa leaves the council upon the Sultan's introduction of İbrahim Paşa as grand vizier whom he appointed directly from the inner service. See *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.386-7: “*... Rûmda İbrahim Paşayı Sultan Süleyman içerüden çıkarub, cümle vüzera üzere takdîm itdi; Ahmed Paşa rıza virmeüyüb, divândan kalkub, gider; pâdişâh Mısır’a paşa idüb gönderdi.*”

¹¹⁰⁶ Nasuh, 89a: “*...vezîr-i sâni Ahmed Paşa sû-i fikri kârâne-i kazâ vü kadrde kârgîr olmaduğundan sûret-i nifâkı ma’nâ-yı vifâka mübeddel ve basr-ı basîreti hakd ü hasedle mütehalhal oldı. Hüdavendigâr mezkûr sû-i fikr-i nâşi olan mefâsidinin mülâhazasıyla bî-huzûr olub hemandem mîzân-ı ‘adâlet izân-ı hâtırı cebr ü niksâna meyl idüb mansub-ı vezâret ile Mısra vâli-yi vilâyet ve hâkim-i memleket idüb gönderdi.*”

¹¹⁰⁷ Sanuto, 35:258. [dated 6 December 1523, from Constantinople.]

¹¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 36:100.

taken literally, greed and envy are not factors to be taken lightly.¹¹⁰⁹ Thus, acknowledging envy and greed as actual factors underlying Ahmed Paşa's behavior helps understanding the dynamics which led him to direct such a large scale demonstration of protest, though not illuminating his expectation from the revolt.

Studies on the advancement paths of Ottoman military-administrative officials demonstrate that a man of slave or *devshirme* origin educated in the Palace, such as İbrahim, would typically go through two consecutive career phases. Firstly, he would need to climb his way up in the Inner Service of the Palace through the Lower and Upper Chambers respectively. Then he would "graduate" as a ranking household officer such as janissary commander, gatekeeper or the like. After some time in the Outer Service, he would be given a *sancak*, thus moving on to the second phase of his career whereby he would advance his career through the ranks of the provincial military-administrative system. In time, he had the chance to be a governor-general and vizier. From vizierate he could rise to grand vizierate.¹¹¹⁰ Based on this model, and Lütfi Paşa's seemingly uncritical comments, İbrahim skipped not only steps on the path advancement but a whole phase. Ahmed Paşa, on the other hand, appears as a perfect fit to demonstrate the model.

If we try to look at the issue from Ahmed Paşa's point of view, he probably felt justified in his actions since a post he believed to have merited by contemporary standards was denied to him. In this sense, he was not treated justly and that gave him the right to react. Although, personal sense of justice is not marked in the chronicles, Ahmed Paşa, the second vizier at the time, is not reported to have either oppressed anybody or disturbed somebody's welfare in the various accounts relating previous instances with his involvement.¹¹¹¹ If we accept the importance paid to ancient custom in matters of state, then we should also expect that the next post for a second vizier should have been that of grand vizier. So it should come as no surprise that Ahmed Paşa expected the post for himself. However, Süleyman made a very unconventional move

¹¹⁰⁹ Studies have shown that greed can often be a more important predictor of rebellion than grievance. Collier, "Rebellion as a Quasi-Criminal Activity," pp. 839-40.

¹¹¹⁰ Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government 1550-1650* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p.34; İnalçık, *Classical Age*, p.82.

¹¹¹¹ A significant exception is Celâlzâde as shall be discussed below.

when he appointed his chamberlain – if we can use the word – and companion İbrahim to the most elevated and important position in the system. The elevation of an inexperienced companion must have caused anxiety and disapproval among the ruling elite as Lütfi Paşa stresses, elsewhere, his own provincial experience before he was rewarded with grand vizierate.¹¹¹² When we read between the lines, we can get a sense that the candidate for grand vizierate was expected to go through a certain route of advancement; and İbrahim’s career line at the time lacked many steps of the route.

What contemporary sources define as envy on the part of Ahmed Paşa – which translates into personal discontent – can be explained, under these circumstances, in terms of relative deprivation and relative loss of power. Relative deprivation is the discrepancy between the expectations of a person and his capability of attaining them. If expectation rises and capability does not, the result is discontent. Likewise, if expectation remains the same and capability decreases, discontent increases.¹¹¹³ Expectation signifies not mere hope of attaining something, but is justifiable. In other words, the person who has an expectation believes or has reason to believe that his expectation is within his reach.¹¹¹⁴ The amount of effort put in attaining or maintaining the expectation affects the intensity of the expectation. Thus, the more effort spent toward the goal, the higher is the expectation. In case of failure to reach the goal, both discontent and frustration are higher. Another factor in the equation is the number of opportunities, as well as the number and range of alternative courses of action men have for attaining their conception of a good life. Likewise, if another person or group achieves the goal while the expectant still feels entitled to it, discontent rises.¹¹¹⁵ The next question would be on how the resulting discontent and frustration translates into rebellion. Ted Robert Gurr argues that men “rebel in order to adjust their power or status position to their rising economic position because the lack of power or status appears to threaten the gains they have struggled for.”¹¹¹⁶ A worse scenario involves

¹¹¹² Lütfi Paşa, p.284.

¹¹¹³ Gurr, *Why Men Rebel?*, p.13.

¹¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.27: “Value expectations are defined with reference to *justifiable* value positions, meaning what men believe they are entitled to get or maintain, not merely what they faintly hope to attain.”

¹¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp.71-3, 111.

¹¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.112.

relative loss of power involving “elite aspirants” who desire political power. In this context, being denied access to the central locus of political power has the potential to frustrate such aspirants to the point of revolt.¹¹¹⁷

Assuming that Ahmed Paşa’s expectation was the grand vizierate, and there is not much reason to assume otherwise, we have already seen that his expectation was justifiable based on his career path. Thus, his value capability was rather high when Piri Mehmed Paşa was discharged leaving the post vacant. Already occupying the post of second vizier, Ahmed Paşa did not have many alternative routes of promotion. The highest position he could hope to achieve was the grand vizierate. However, things did not work out as he expected. He was deprived of a post which he worked hard for and for which he had the right credentials. As theory goes, even this discrepancy would be enough to motivate discontent on the part of Ahmed Paşa. As if these were not enough, a person who did not possess half his credentials attained the post. Furthermore, the appointment to Egypt signified relative loss of power since he was being sent away from the locus of political power, namely the imperial court. In this sense, losing direct and easy access to the Sultan would mean loss of influence and status, thus power.

The resulting “envy and greed” of Ahmed Paşa were neither alien nor unexpected to contemporary minds. Among Selim I’s reasons for executing Yunus Paşa who was denied the governorship of Egypt, Celâlzâde mentions the Sultan’s concern about the disappointment of the grand vizier of having been deprived of the post. The Sultan thought that no good would come from Yunus Paşa because the rejection would have transformed his heart.¹¹¹⁸ With such an example at hand, why Süleyman chose to send Ahmed Paşa to Cairo also remains to be investigated.

Seen through Ahmed’s perspective, the envy attributed to Ahmed Paşa can be regarded as the manifestation of protest in the face of a personal sense of injustice. It can also be regarded as a critical manifestation of protest against a breach in the system, committed by the one person who was required to protect it.

4.2.3. Inversion of Meaning

¹¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.146

¹¹¹⁸ Celâlzâde (SN), p.207.

The mode in which Ahmed Paşa's discontent came to be politicized and transformed into political violence can best be traced through a comparison between what he was expected to do in his new post and what he is said to have done. Ahmed Paşa's appointment to Egypt was confirmed by a decree, very similar to that sent to Hayrbay on Sultan Süleyman's accession,¹¹¹⁹ which listed the tasks expected of him as viceroy of Egypt, his prerogatives, and actions he was to avoid. The post also entailed the revenues of the province excluding the ports, as recorded in the decree.¹¹²⁰ Accordingly, his first and utmost task was to abide the imperial orders and to execute them as required, because doing so was a condition of service to the Sultan as well as a duty of obedience. His duties in general consisted of ensuring order, bringing prosperity, abasing perversion, bonding the estranged, protecting the realm, providing security, guarding the steps of state and religion, removing oppression and rebellion, exalting the word of God, safeguarding the minds of the Muslims, arranging the regulations of the subjects, organizing offices and posts. In return, he would be recognized by all as the "ruler by merit and absolute governor" [*hakim bi'l-istihkâk ve vâli ale'l-ıtlâk*]. Those who were to be subject to his government were listed as groups. Whether members of the military or religious sectors, or ordinary subjects, these sectors were to obey, revere, and honor him. They were to consult him in all matters. Whatever he saw fit, they were to recognize willingly as if it were the order of the Sultan himself [*benim emr-i şerîfim biliüb*]. Likewise, those who opposed his orders would be treated as if they defied the orders of the Sultan himself. The document reminded Ahmed Paşa that the subjects were entrusted to governors by God, so it was required that he protected and defended them with equity. He would not oppress anyone and let others do so. He was also to regulate the inspection of the borders, guard the pilgrimage route as well as other roads, keep the ports in good shape and provide for safe traveling of merchants both by land and by sea. He was also ordered to be on the watch for any

¹¹¹⁹ For the decree to Hayrbay, see Chapter 2, pp.141.

¹¹²⁰ "*Sevâbık-ı eyyâmdan hâssa-i hümayûnum cânibinden zabt olınan İskenderiyye ve Reşîd ve Dimyâd ve Berles [?] iskelelerinden gayrı kâffe-i tevâbi'-i levâhukı ve 'âmmе-i merâfık ü tarâyiki ve bilâd ü emsârı ve tilâl ü enhârı ile tevcîh ü taklîd eyleyüb, ve zimâm-ı hall ve 'akd-i umûr-ı cumhûr kabz ü bast ve nazm ü rabt-ı cumhûr-ı umûrı keff-i kudret ve kabza-i irâdetine teslîm ü tefvîz kılub dahi eline işbu berât-ı haşmet-âyât ü sa'âdet-simâtı virdim ve buyurdum ki...*" For the facsimile of the decree of appointment preserved in Bayezid Kütüphanesi, Veliyüddin Efendi, no.1969, fols.116b-170b, see Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, 6:76-80. Also see Bostan (MK), 49b.

signs of sedition, disloyalty, oppression, and lack of service. The decree of appointment clearly defined his relationship with the finances of the province. He was reminded that the revenues of the province signified the “order of the realm.” He was to send the designated amount along with the designated commodities, such as sugar, to the imperial treasury. He was to pay the salaries of the imperial troops stationed there, the various local officers at the fortress of Cairo and the Circassians employed. He was entitled to use the remaining amount as he saw fit “like the vizieral fiefs he formerly held.” He was also to guard the imperial revenues in the province.

Ahmed Paşa’s acts at Cairo which signified rebellion were actually reversal of the articles of the imperial decree. Such “rebellious” acts as the confiscation of the imperial treasury at Cairo, murdering of Ottoman soldiers, collection of undue taxes from the subjects and other sorts of “oppression” were typical acts of defiance. As we have seen already in the case of Gazali, such actions were regarded to be direct intrusions on the established order.¹¹²¹

When we look at Ahmed’s actions, we see that he employed all means and prerogatives of sovereignty. The imperial decree of appointment was rather specific on the nature of Ahmed Paşa’s function as a representative of the Sultan. While giving him considerable authority, it was made clear from the start that he was to obey the Sultan’s orders. However the whole significance of the revolt lays in his defying this basic principle and appropriating sultanic prerogatives for himself, including the title of Sultan, the right of *hutbe* and *sikke*. According to Bostan, Ahmed Paşa had the *hutbe* called in his name thus claimed sultanate.¹¹²² Celâlzâde relates how Ahmed Paşa re-entered Cairo and declared himself Sultan after eliminating potential imperial resistance. He changed the coins and the *hutbe*, becoming a “follower of the Devil” as the author puts it.¹¹²³ Venetian correspondence provides details on Ahmed’s conduct in Egypt. When he proclaimed himself *soldan*, relates one observer, he appointed four viziers for himself, one of whom he hanged upon one of the city gates.¹¹²⁴ Hanging a

¹¹²¹ For Gazali, see Chapter 2.

¹¹²² Bostan (MK), 51a. For Ahmed’s issuing of coins, see *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.393.

¹¹²³ *Tabakat*, 113b. Also see Sa ‘di (SN), 165a-b.

¹¹²⁴ Sanuto, 36:433, [dated 10 April 1524, from Baffo].

vizier on a gate for all to see can be evaluated as a public declaration of his appropriation of the right of execution which by default belonged to the ruler. In a way, this kind of a demonstration linked rite and rebellion on the part of Ahmed.¹¹²⁵

Nasuh, in couplet, states that by choosing the road to treason [*huyânet*], Ahmed Paşa actually prepared his own end. The specific act of treason in this couplet constitutes of proclaiming himself Sultan of Egypt.¹¹²⁶ These few words by Nasuh also reflect the contemporary understanding of treason. By proclaiming himself the Sultan of Egypt, Ahmed actually attempts to appropriate the dominion of a territory under the possession of Süleyman. In this sense, he is not only defying the authority and the right to rule of Sultan Süleyman, but he is forcefully and unlawfully taking something that belongs to Süleyman.¹¹²⁷

The decree emphasized Ahmed Paşa's task to guard "religion and state" as well as "Islamic law and ancient custom." Celâlzâde describes Ahmed's crime as "deviation of the religious path and averting to defection through removing Egypt from the laws of the House", in other words deviation from the existing order.¹¹²⁸ Sa'di defines it as "separation of Egypt from religion and state."¹¹²⁹

Another issue very strongly emphasized in the decree was prevention of any kind of oppression. Contrarily, contemporary sources reported a wide range of oppressive acts by Ahmed Paşa, which had percussions in terms of both cultivated areas and trade. He took goods from the subjects by force; he oppressed the people.¹¹³⁰ Reports from

¹¹²⁵ Kertzer draws attention to the essential nature of symbolism in efforts to change political systems, and argues that especially when a rebellion lacks large scale political organization, "rites provide a basis for common identification and communication, for a new definition of political relations, and the delegimating of the existing political order." Kerzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, pp.168-9. Such quasi-ritual public demonstrations can also be evaluated in these terms in the case of Ahmed Paşa.

¹¹²⁶ Nasuh, 90a.

¹¹²⁷ This line of thought shall also be observed in the reflections Süleyman's conflict with Ferdinand I, as we shall see later.

¹¹²⁸ *Tabakat*, 113a: "Mısır muhâfazasında kânûn-ı 'Osmâni uslûbından çıkarub münharif-ı nazm ü intizâm-ı şer'-i kavîm havâ-yı nefis-i sakîme munsarif oldu."

¹¹²⁹ Sa'di (SN), 164b.

¹¹³⁰ Bostan (MK), 51b.

Alexandria convey the opinion that Ahmed was a “cruel man.” According to a letter dated 14 April 1524, after seizing a hundred thousand ducats from the people, he still wanted one thirds of the wealth of every man. When a man lacked the funds, he tortured him greatly.¹¹³¹ The same observer dwells on the oppressive conduct demonstrated by Ahmed, emphasizing that the people suffered a lot because of his actions, especially the Jews.¹¹³² Reports from Cyprus and Alexandria also confirm the damage given to trade by Ahmed through the mistreatment of merchants.¹¹³³ The report of a Damascene merchant who confided in Celâlzâde when he was there with İbrahim Paşa in 1525 demonstrates the point. This merchant was actually not from Damascus, but trusting in the just administration of the Sultan he had put a lot of money into trade in Damascus. However, he was soon disillusioned by the fact that former oppressive administrators found a way to confiscate his goods and fortune through falsely accusing him of a crime.¹¹³⁴ According to another Venetian account, Ahmed lost his case because of “bad government.”¹¹³⁵ There were also rumors that he meant to flee to India with the treasury. There he planned build himself a new city, after destroying Syria and Egypt.¹¹³⁶ The ports were specifically left out of his jurisdiction with an article in the decree granted to Ahmed Paşa on his appointment. This, too, he reversed with the

¹¹³¹ Sanuto, 36:435. For oppression of merchants by Ahmed, see also Lütfi Paşa, p.252.

¹¹³² Sanuto, 36:433. The writer mentions that the Jews were asked to provide Ahmed with two million pieces of gold. When failed to meet the demand, their quarters were plundered.

¹¹³³ Sanuto, 36:433 and 36:435, respectively. These accounts mention that if he lived a couple of days more, the merchants would have been totally destroyed. For the decrease in the quantity of eastern goods off-loaded in Venice in times of disturbance in Syria and Egypt, see Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.135. The table reproduced by Perjes shows that while the quantity of eastern goods off-loaded in Venice shows a decline after a high point in 1520. Reducing to an almost negligible amount in 1524, trade pulls up after 1526, which implies rising stability in the region. It is only in 1531 that the level of 1520 is reached.

¹¹³⁴ *Tabakat*, 124b.

¹¹³⁵ Sanuto, 36:433.

¹¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 435-6.

attempt to capture the port of Alexandria. According to Bostan, he used the armory of the galleys at Egypt to decorate his own ships.¹¹³⁷

Another important task Ahmed Paşa was entrusted with was preventing sedition in the region and bringing those who were estranged from Ottoman rule into obedience. His actions reversed this expectation as well. As we have discussed above, rather than securing the loyalties of the groups formerly in opposition to Ottoman administration, he seems to have used them as a powerbase for his own intention. According to Bostan, he provoked sedition.¹¹³⁸

According to the decree, Ahmed Paşa was responsible for the imperial and local troops stationed at Cairo. In this sense, he was supposed to command them in the interest of the imperial administration and provide for the safety of both the troops and the finances/equipment related to them. Instead, he killed non-cooperating janissaries along with their commander. He confiscated their goods, weapons and horses.¹¹³⁹ Along with the general acts of defiance, accounts mention specific crimes directed at specific agents of the Sultan. Such is his treatment of Musa Beğ sent by the Sultan to handle the problem. As Celâlzâde has it, Musa Beğ was sent to replace Ahmed Paşa in Egypt as soon as the latter's intentions were known in Istanbul. Expecting counter-measures from the imperial court, Ahmed had already taken control of the port. In the meanwhile, he also got possession of an imperial decree addressed to Musa Beğ for his execution. As soon as Musa Beğ arrived, he captured and killed him before he could get hold of the decree and realize his mission. Then he killed those who were still loyal to Sultan Süleyman.¹¹⁴⁰ Rather detailed versions of the story are found in Italian correspondence. According to various reports by Venetians residing around the region, Musa Beğ was killed by Ahmed Paşa who fabricated a false decree ordering the execution of Musa Beğ. In this way, he was able to move on with his design without arousing suspicion

¹¹³⁷ Bostan (MK), 51b.

¹¹³⁸ *Ibid*, 50b.

¹¹³⁹ *Ibid*, 50b-51a.

¹¹⁴⁰ *Tabakat*, 113a-b; Bostan (MK), 50b-51a. Muhyi-i Gülşeni mentions a Musa Beğ coming to inform the Sheikh about the rebellion of Ahmed Paşa and to ask him to send the Paşa advise because Musa Beğ thought they would not be able to contain Ahmed Paşa on their own. *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.388.

among imperial troops.¹¹⁴¹ An episode in the *Menâkıb-ı İbrahim-ı Gülşenî* also mentions a forged decree which Ahmed Paşa read to the Sheikh. This document supposedly said:

Although we have appointed you to Egypt as vizier, we have realized that if he who holds the dominion of the region is not an independent sultan, the affairs of that province would not be in order. Now that my imperial favor finds it appropriate to grant the affairs of the sultanate of that region to you independently, do as you like.¹¹⁴²

This episode in *Menâkıb-ı Gülşenî* puts the Sheikh along with other religious figures from the “four sects” in Ahmed Paşa’s tent as his insurrection is manifested. As the story goes, the forged decree did not convince the Sheikh who insisted that Ahmed repent before it was too late. The “vizier” [*hâmânı olan vezîri*] of Ahmed warned the Sheikh to refer to him as “sultan” and “padişah” instead of “paşa.” Unlike the Sheikh, the other religious figures seem to have been convinced that since the Sultan granted the right, it would now be required to obey Ahmed Paşa as Sultan. The Sheikh responded by saying that if such were the order of Sultan Süleyman, it would have been inevitable to accept it. However, the Sheikh implied that the trust put in the document by the others resulted from the gifts Ahmed gave them.¹¹⁴³ Regardless of the author’s intention to glorify the Sheikh as a model of ethics and insight, this episode sheds light on local relations of power and faction.

Despite Ahmed Paşa’s strong hand in faction building, the revolt was suppressed by the pro-Ottoman faction in the region before the imperial troops sent by Sultan Süleyman had a chance to reach Cairo. Celâlzâde attributes the suppression of the revolt to a Mehmed Beğ. A former companion of Mengli Giray, he was maintained at the

¹¹⁴¹ Sanuto, 36:161-2; 163-5. Ahmed Paşa seems to have been careful to disguise his intentions to avoid imperial intervention before he realized his aim. According to Sa’dî, he waited until winter to declare his intention so that the roads would be closed and the imperial army would not be able to intervene. Sa’dî (SN), 165a.

¹¹⁴² *Menâkıb-ı İbrâhîm-ı Gülşenî*, pp.391-2: “gerçi sâbıkâ seni Mısr’a paşalık ile irsâl itdik, amma ma’lûm itdik ki ol diyâra hâkim olan istiklâl ile sultân olmasa ol vilâyet ahvâli muntazam olmaz imiş. İmdi ‘avâtıf-ı hüsrevânem zuhûr idüb, ol diyârın istiklâl ile umûr-ı saltanatın sana tefvîz itdim. Nice bilürsen eyle ‘amel idesin.”

¹¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.392: “... ama ol ki Sultan Süleyman tefvîz itdi, itâ’at vâcibdir, didüğünüz sû’al eğer cebinizde olan surralar ve arkanızda olan çukalar ve soflar kabûl itmezden evvel ideydiniz, umûr-ı saltanat tefvîz tasallutına icâzet değildir, diyü cevâb virirdim.”

court of Selim I when he came in a diplomatic mission. His career path at the Ottoman court followed posts in the chancery and treasury until he was finally given a *sancak* of his own. He was assigned to accompany Ahmed Paşa when the latter was sent to Egypt. As Celâlîzâde has it, when Ahmed Paşa declared himself “Sultan”, he chose Mehmed Beğ as his vizier while he himself spent his time in entertainment. However, Mehmed Beğ waited for an opportunity to end this affair and he kept in touch with those still loyal to Sultan Süleyman. Following various attempts, Mehmed Beğ finally succeeded capturing and executing Ahmed Paşa while the imperial army led by Ayas Paşa was still on the way around Kütahya.¹¹⁴⁴

Mehmed Beğ episode illustrates the organization of those household troops loyal to the Sultan as well as the persistence of a local pro-Ottoman faction in Egypt. Bostan’s account explains the resistance of the janissaries positioned at Cairo as well as some local officers to Ahmed Paşa’s designs. The author also mentions the role of those who preferred to cooperate with Ahmed Paşa. Bostan’s account implies that the resistance formed around the figure of Mehmed Beğ was a clandestine movement involving some sort of bonding based on oath.¹¹⁴⁵ Bostan’s account demonstrates that Mehmed Beğ employed various means to attract men to the pro-Ottoman faction. His methods involved the employment of a number of symbolic and traditional devices which were legible to the group of men he targeted. One such device was raising the banner under which imperial supporters would gather. As this resistance movement gained some success, Ahmed Paşa’s followers started to change sides and assembled “under the banner of the Sultan” [*taht-ı livâ-yı pâdişâhî*].¹¹⁴⁶ Bostan also relates that Mehmed Beğ announced “license for pillaging the treasury at the palace” to encourage the people.¹¹⁴⁷

¹¹⁴⁴ *Tabakat*, 114a-115b; Bostan (MK), 51b-53b. On Mehmed Beğ also see Nasuh, 89b-90a; Sanuto, 36:161-3. On the suppression of the revolt also see, Sa’di (SN), 167a-168b.

¹¹⁴⁵ Bostan (MK), 51b: “... *dergâh-ı mu‘alla kullarından iki yüz nefer mikdârı çeri... birbiriyle hafiyeten mülâkat eyleyüb, mezbur Mehmed Beğ dahi setrle buluşub, yemîn ü misâk ile ittîfak idüb nice gün olmuşdı ki intihaz-ı fırsat iderlerdi.*”

¹¹⁴⁶ Bostan (MK), 52a.

¹¹⁴⁷ Bostan (MK), 52b: “... *livâ-yı pâdişâhide olan halkı tergîb-i maslahat için sarayda olan Mısır hazinesin yağma diyüb...*”

Bostan's account shows that Mehmed Beğ was assisted by some local magnates through this counter-movement. When Ahmed Paşa escaped from Cairo to take refuge with Bedouin chiefs, Mehmed Beğ sent Canım Hamzavi after him. Shortly thereafter, he stationed Canım Hamzavi to safeguard Cairo as he himself went after Ahmed. Ultimately, Ahmed was handed in to Mehmed Beğ by a Bedouin sheikh with whom he tried to take refuge.¹¹⁴⁸

The career of Canım Hamzavi illustrates the role and position of local magnates. Canım Hamzavi came from a powerful Mamluk family. His grandfather was a mamluk in the household of a local magnate who served as governor of Damascus and Aleppo under the Mamluk sultans. His father was raised in this household and served as commander of Pilgrimage route before moving to Cairo. His mother was the daughter of an Aleppan notable and the sister of Hayrbay. Serving in his uncle's court, Canım Hamzavi was already a familiar figure in Ottoman circles. He visited Selim I in Istanbul for various missions. He was the one who brought the accession gifts to Süleyman on behalf of Hayrbay. He was also trusted with the family of Hayrbay and Egyptian notables held in Istanbul by Selim I when they were released by Süleyman. He also commanded one of the regiments sent to Rhodes by Hayrbay. Through his role as agent of Hayrbay at the imperial court, he managed to establish and extend a powerbase of his own both in Egypt and in imperial circles. When Hayrbay died, he was already an influential and powerful man. He accompanied Mustafa Paşa through the procession at Cairo when he arrived. He accompanied Ahmed Paşa on his arrival and was appointed "an authoritative adviser and pillar of the realm," probably to keep an eye on him.¹¹⁴⁹ Looking at the career of this local magnate who was one of the leaders of the pro-Ottoman faction in Egypt, one can see that his stakes lay with the victory of the imperial

¹¹⁴⁸ Bostan (MK), 52b-53a. The presence of the pro-Ottoman faction in Egypt is also apparent in *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, pp.393-4: "*Pâdişâha mutî' olanlar itâ'at itmeyüb,mukâteleye başlarlar,Musa Beğ Gülşenî hizmetine gelür, 'asker cem' ider, Sultan Ahmed üzere gitmeğe icâzet ister. Şeyh sabr eyle, ta cânib-i hakdan ne tulû' ider, görelim, diyü cevâb virür. Her gün halkda muhârebe ve mukâtele vâki' olur; hatta İskenderiye kal'asının zabtına adem gönderir. Sâbıkâ mezkûr olan Bayezid Beğ anda bulunur ve erini temkîn itmez. Nice gavgadan sonra bir gün Gülşenî hazretleri Musa Beği çağırub eydür ki bu gün var, firsat senindir inşallah, eğer az adem ile dahi olursan vâki'ada gördüm ...*"

¹¹⁴⁹ P.M. Holt, "A Notable in an Age of Transition: Janım Bey al-Hamzâwi," *Studies in Ottoman History in Honor of Professor L. Menage*, Colin Heywood and Colin Imber (eds) (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1994), pp.107-115.

troops. P.M. Holt describes him as “a successful opportunist who passed from Mamluk to Ottoman rule, acquiring in the transition both a higher status and increased wealth.”¹¹⁵⁰

The revolt which broke out in February 1524 was suppressed within a month, resulting in the death of Ahmed Paşa. A dispatch dated 28 May 1524, from Sampson the English ambassador to Charles V to Wolsey, contained news of a rebellion “against the Turk”, informing that the ringleader was slain and his head sent to Constantinople.¹¹⁵¹ There are also reports on Ahmed’s severed head being brought to Cairo first, and displayed to the public.¹¹⁵² Such a display served two purposes, namely making an example, and convincing potential supporters of the death of the leader.

4.2.4. Transformation of an Image: Hero or Villain?

It should be no surprise that Ottoman historiography coined Ahmed Paşa “the Traitor” throughout centuries. Treason was a capital crime in all major sixteenth-century royal courts, punishable with execution, and specifically with decapitation.¹¹⁵³ The main factor beneath this perception in Islamic political cultures was the partnership between religion and state. As such, the ruler as the viceroy of God on earth had to be obeyed. Failure to do so not only offended the rights of the monarch, but was regarded as a direct challenge to God.¹¹⁵⁴

¹¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.114.

¹¹⁵¹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:145.

¹¹⁵² Sanuto, 36:433 [dated 10 April 1524, from Baffo]. Also see, *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.394.

¹¹⁵³ Some rulers have indicted harsher modes of punishment when treason aimed their own person directly. Mughal ruler Babur, for example, severely executed a group of conspirators against his life when he acquired the rule of India in 1526. Among those responsible for an attempt to poison him, Babur had the cook skinned alive and the taster cut to pieces. One of the women involved in the conspiracy was thrown under an elephant; another was shot with a match-lock. *Baburnama*, pp.542-3.

¹¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Bernard Lewis, “Some Observations on the Significance of Heresy in the History of Islam,” *Studia Islamica*, no.1 (1953), pp.43-63. In the *Siyasatnama*, Nizam al-Mulk explains the link with an incident. Yaqub ibn Laith rebelled against the Abbasid caliph, his announced crimes consisted of attempting to

Ahmed Paşa's "treason" probably came as a greater shock than previous attempts on "religion and state." The shocking thing was that the rebel was not an ordinary person, but one from the household of the Sultan. Süleyman was reported to be furious because such a thing never occurred in the Ottoman house.¹¹⁵⁵ I have not been able to find precedence to such a revolt. Although there are plenty of examples of rebellion in the Ottoman realm, they are initiated either by power holders of native origin such as Iskender Beğ of Albania in 1460s or Gazali in 1520, by actual or pseudo members of the dynasty such as Selim in 1512 (though I would not term it as rebellion) and Mustafa in the 1420s, religious claimants and/or pretenders such as Sheikh Bedreddin in 1416 or Şahkuli in 1511. One can also cite examples of mutiny by the janissaries based on dissatisfaction over wages or gratuities. Ahmed Paşa's cause actually does seem to be the first case of rebellion or serious challenge by a member of the imperial household aiming independence. Considering the lack of success of the above mentioned challenges and the absence of major household member protest, contemporaries probably did not see it coming.

When he wrote from Candia on 17 March, Marco Minio was very much surprised that the *Turks* would rebel against their *Signor*.¹¹⁵⁶ Only a few years earlier Marco Minio was equally amazed when he witnessed the absolute obedience to the Sultan exemplified in the execution of Silahdar Paşa. What surprised Minio back then was the lack of any protest or defense on the part of this influential official who himself was in a position to hold many slaves of his own. According to Minio's version of the story, some sergeants [*çavuş*] were sent from the Palace to the house of the official who was to be executed. They told him that it was the Sultan's decision that he be executed. Minio emphasized that no act of defense came either from him or his slaves, members of his household only accompanied him in tears as he was taken to be executed. Minio perceived the lack of defensive response as the impossibility of opposing the Sultan

eradicate the dynasty, to capture the throne for himself, to destroy the *sunna* of the Prophet, and to introduce harmful innovation [*bi'dat*]. In other words, by opposing the "caliph of the Prophet of God" he opposed God himself. *Siyasetname*, p.12; Nizâm al-Mulk, *Book of Government*, p.16-7. The argument is based on Quran, 4:62.

¹¹⁵⁵ Sanuto, 36:100, 215.

¹¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 215: "*cosa nova che turchi habbino rebellato al suo signor.*"

based on ultimate obedience.¹¹⁵⁷ The traces of a tradition of not resisting imperial execution can be found in the laws of Chinghis Khan: “Any officer, even of highest rank, must accept without recalcitration, any punishment administered to him by the special messenger of the khan (even if the messenger is of the lower rank), including death sentence.” Such obedience was associated to the principle of universal bound service.¹¹⁵⁸

Ahmed Paşa was raised in the Palace and “graduated” from the Inner Service as janissary commander. He participated in the 1521 campaign as governor-general of Rumelia, after which he was appointed third vizier. Upon İbrahim Paşa’s appointment to grand vizierate in 1523, he was sent to Egypt as governor-general upon his own request.¹¹⁵⁹ Following leads on Ahmed Paşa in contemporary Ottoman chronicles is an interesting task. While he appears as the hero in the accounts of the 1521 and 1522 campaigns, he figures as the absolute villain in the accounts of his rebellion. This is actually understandable to some extent for obvious reasons. What is surprising is the undermining of his prior abilities following his rebellion. Talking about his promotion to vizierate on the retirement of Kasım Paşa, Nasuh praises him for his “adequate measures” and “sensitivity” as well his valor.¹¹⁶⁰ We see him as a prominent military man whose skills saved the day and were rewarded many times during the 1521 campaign.¹¹⁶¹ In the official proclamation of victory of Belgrade, he is presented as an ideal warrior.¹¹⁶²

Accounts of the Rhodes campaign generally praise Ahmed Paşa. In the *fetihname* of Rhodes to the judges of Bursa, Ahmed Paşa was praised not only in the customary terms fit for his vizierial post, but also personally for his valor, bravery, wisdom and

¹¹⁵⁷ Minio, *Relazione*, pp.18-9.

¹¹⁵⁸ Vernadsky, “The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan's Yasa,” p.348.

¹¹⁵⁹ SO, 1: 210-1.

¹¹⁶⁰ Nasuh, 48a. See 29b for retirement; 71b and 72b for the incident with Ayas and İbrahim at Rhodes.

¹¹⁶¹ See, for example, *Münşe‘at*, I:511-2.

¹¹⁶² *Ibid*, 516: “*şehsuvâr-ı mu‘âreke-i serbâzi ve ser-rişte-i silsile-i serverâzi.*”

prudence.¹¹⁶³ In his account of the Rhodes campaign, Kemalpaşazade praises his braveness, experience and effort,¹¹⁶⁴ as does Tabib Ramazan.¹¹⁶⁵ In the speech of the Devil he constructs, Ramazan has the Devil say to the Rhodians: “I know all about what Ahmed did” and lists. He also has the Rhodians admit that Ahmed removed all the external obstructions which protected the town, thus giving much credit of the Rhodian campaign to Ahmed Paşa.¹¹⁶⁶ Various Italian observers also give credit to Ahmed Paşa following the conquest of Rhodes. While a letter from Candia attributes the victory to Ahmed Paşa, a letter by Gabriel Taragon says that “the *Signor* does little by himself; Piri and Ahmed are governing all.”¹¹⁶⁷ After analyzing various letters Sanuto himself comes to the conclusion that it was Ahmed Paşa who gave the victories of Belgrade and Rhodes to the Sultan.¹¹⁶⁸

Sa‘di informs his readers that Ahmed Paşa was not a trouble maker at the time of his appointment to Egypt, though he names him “the deceased Ahmed the traitor” [*merhûm Ahmed-i hâ‘in*]. Talking about the revolt, the author argues that Ahmed must have been an ill-witted man from the beginning since if a man has evil in him it will surface upon opportunity.¹¹⁶⁹ Writing much later than the above cited authors, Celâlzâde blames and vilifies Ahmed from the start. Celâlzâde is sure of Ahmed’s evil nature prone to rebellion and sedition, only that this nature was concealed.¹¹⁷⁰ Sheikh İbrahim

¹¹⁶³ *Münşe‘at*, I:523: “*destûr-ı mükerrem, müşîr-i mufahham, fâris-i meydân-ı şeca‘ât, mübâri-i mu‘arek(e)-i celâdet vezirim*” and as he inspects the island: “demonstrating the valor inherent in his nature” [*cibilletinde olan celâdet ü merdâneliği ve şehâmet ü ferzâneliği zuhûra getirüb*]

¹¹⁶⁴ KPŞZ, X:159-60: “*Vezir-i râbi‘ Ahmed Paşa ki, câr erkân-ı divân-ı Süleymân-ı zamanın biriydi, çeri mukaddemlerinin içinde cerî vü mikdâmidi, makâm-ı cerâet ve ikdâm-ı celâdet ü ihtimân onun yiriydi, neyl-i cinâna meyl-i cenân ile ve rağbet-i cân ile zeyl-i hidmeti miyân-ı tetimmete sokub leyl ü nehâr hisarın teshîri tedbîrine iştigâldeydi.*”

¹¹⁶⁵ Ramazan, p.145. Ramazan parallels Ahmed Paşa with the legendary hero Ferhad on pp.164-5 giving him much credit.

¹¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.178, 181.

¹¹⁶⁷ Sanuto, 34:13, 16.

¹¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 36:102.

¹¹⁶⁹ Sa‘di (SN), 164a-b.

¹¹⁷⁰ *Tabakat*, 110a.

Gülşeni's reaction to Musa Beğ's call for help, as related by Muhyi-i Gülşeni, demonstrates a similar opinion. The Sheikh tells that Ahmed's mind tended towards sedition and there was no way to correct it.¹¹⁷¹ Bostan, although attributing appointment of Ahmed Paşa to Egypt to the fact that he had to be sent away because of his inappropriate behavior, nevertheless supports the appointment that Egypt required a "fierce and hasty man" as to govern.¹¹⁷²

While the revolt does not seem to have tarnished the perception of contemporary authors regarding Ahmed Paşa's reputation relating to the 1521 and 1522 campaigns, a very sharp difference is observed in Celâlîzâde who presents Ahmed as a villain in all his accounts. The author demonstrates distrust in Ahmed Paşa in a retrospective manner. Celâlîzâde's approach to the issue probably not stems only from the fact that he was writing thirty years after the incident, but also from his connection to İbrahim Paşa. When Celâlîzâde talks about the death of Selim I in *Tabakat*, he says that while Piri Paşa trusted the body to Ferhad Paşa and the treasury to Mustafa Paşa who were both viziers at the time, they saw it fit to send Ahmed Paşa to Edirne to guard the city. The death of the sultan was concealed from Ahmed Paşa who was the governor-general of Rumelia when Selim I died. The reason for his dispatch to Edirne was to prevent him from learning the truth. He was already believed to be ill-bred and impudent, so Piri Paşa thought he would never be able to keep the secret.¹¹⁷³

According to Celâlîzâde, Ahmed's character flaw, namely jealousy, started long before İbrahim's promotion. He was first jealous of Mustafa Paşa. Discrediting him at the Sultan's sight he gets Süleyman to dismiss Mustafa from the general command of the campaign and to appoint Ahmed.¹¹⁷⁴ According to Venetian reports dated 13 February 1524, after Ahmed was sent to Egypt, Mustafa Paşa kept trying to tarnish his reputation [*non ha mai cessato de tuorli la reputation*]. Many complaints arrived at

¹¹⁷¹ *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.388: "Anın dimâğı fesâda varmışdır, islâh olmaz amma bize tenbîh lâzımdır." Also see p.389: "Tuğyân senin kalbinde merkûzdır, cehd ile zuhûra gelmeye."

¹¹⁷² Bostan (MK), 49a.

¹¹⁷³ *Tabakat*, 25a.

¹¹⁷⁴ *Tabakat*, 83a. Giving an account of the 1521 campaign, Celâlîzâde describes him as "bî-akl ü bî-edeb," "câhil ü Gürce-neseb," "mağrûr-ı câh ü devlet," "müfsid ü şerîr," "sâki-i bedbahî". *Ibid*, 46b.

court against Ahmed Paşa. He was suspected of having sent all good janissaries back to Constantinople. Mustafa, on the other hand, used the advantage of being close to the Sultan. As the report has it, Süleyman's initial thought was to send Ahmed as governor-general to the Safavi border. In the meanwhile, Ahmed received a secret message informing him of the plans of the Sultan to remove him from Cairo. He gathered the aghas in Cairo. He killed one of them along with four notable persons saying that such were the orders of the Sultan.¹¹⁷⁵ Celâlzâde mentions that Mustafa Paşa knew that Ahmed Paşa was up to something, but was not sure about its extent.¹¹⁷⁶ According to the author, Mustafa Paşa feared what Ahmed could do to him. Thus, avoiding rising suspicion, he went to pay his respects to Ahmed even though he was superior in rank.¹¹⁷⁷

Accounts on the rebellion itself aside, between-the-lines reading of Celâlzâde's work brings out Ahmed's conflicts with his peers during the previous campaigns. First, there is an opposition between Ahmed Paşa who insists on capturing Sabacz to pass on to Buda in 1521 and Piri Paşa who insists that the first aim should be Belgrade.¹¹⁷⁸ Ahmed's hostility toward Piri Paşa causes the latter's actions to be disapproved by the Sultan and puts the whole Belgrade operation under risk. Ultimately, Piri Paşa convinces Mustafa Paşa on the necessity of capturing Belgrade, who then convinces the Sultan. During the process we see Piri Mehmed Paşa being accused of disobedience several times.¹¹⁷⁹ Other sources, on the other hand attribute both Sabacz and Belgrade decisions to the Sultan himself, with no mention of a quarrel.¹¹⁸⁰ A similar reflection is observed in Celâlzâde's account of the 1522 campaign, whereby Ahmed Paşa is often seen blaming others with no valid reason. First he provokes the Sultan to discharge Mustafa Paşa from the general command of the army accusing him of incapability. According to Celâlzâde, the actual reason of his ill-speaking was the jealousy and envy he had toward Mustafa Paşa because he wanted to be in command of the campaign.

¹¹⁷⁵ Sanuto, 36:99-102. For another report, see *ibid*, 35:472-3.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Tabakat*, 109b, 112b.

¹¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 112b.

¹¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 46a-b.

¹¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 53b-57a.

¹¹⁸⁰ Nasuh, 38a, 38b; Sa'di (SN), 131b-132a; KPŞZ, X:72, 77-8.

Through provocation, he ultimately did succeed.¹¹⁸¹ During the first days of the siege, Celâlzâde introduces yet another conflict between Piri Paşa and Ahmed Paşa over the method of siege. While Piri Paşa suggests employing another method since cannon fire was not efficient in the case of Rhodes, Ahmed insists on cannon fire. As in Belgrade, Piri Paşa goes on to do what he thinks best, namely the artificial hills. According to Celâlzâde one month was lost because of Ahmed's insistence.¹¹⁸² Such conflicts with peers also appear in the work of Bostan. The author mentions that Sinan Paşa was discharged from *Rûm* because of the false accusations of Ahmed Paşa.¹¹⁸³ It is during such a conflict that Kemalpaşazade introduces İbrahim Paşa in the scene, through an incident involving the sultan's wrath on Ayas Paşa during the 1522 campaign. Ayas Paşa was incarcerated because Ahmed Paşa blamed his inability in Rhodes to the Sultan. İbrahim interfered, begged the Sultan to spare the commander. Kemalpaşazade describes İbrahim as a leading man of the private chamber of the sultan.¹¹⁸⁴

Interesting instances are found in the *Menâkıb-ı İbrahim-i Gülşenî*, written by a follower of the Sheikh. Though Muhyî-i Gülşenî wrote his work at a later period [1569-1604], his constant contact with various Ottomans of note makes his work an illuminating source. According to his story as he confirms from two sources, when Ahmed Paşa visited the Sheikh, he was lecturing his followers on the requirement to obey [*inkıyâd*] the *imam* of the time. When the Sheikh was informed that Ahmed Paşa had come along with his troops, the Sheikh commented on the oppressive behavior of contemporary administrators. Offended by this, Ahmed Paşa reminded the Sheikh that his troops were crowded while the dervishes were few. Sheikh said: the troops of the Pharaoh were numerous, but Moses broke their necks with a walking stick. He threw at

¹¹⁸¹ *Tabakat*, 83a.

¹¹⁸² *Ibid*, 86a, 88a.

¹¹⁸³ Bostan (MK), 49b-50a.

¹¹⁸⁴ KPŞZ, X:154-162. According to Celâlzâde, too, Ayas Paşa was punished because of Ahmed Paşa's accusations, *Tabakat*, 95b. The campaign diary relates the incident without reference to either Ahmed or İbrahim. It simply mentions that Ayas Paşa was incarcerated through the wrath of the Sultan because he was late to march on the day of the battle. However he was set free and returned to his duty the day after. *Münşe'at*, I:533. Also see, Nasuh, 72a-b.

Ahmed which made his headgear fall from his head. This was taken as a sign that he would be decapitated.¹¹⁸⁵

Contemporary Arab historian al-Ghazzi repeats the story of Ahmed being jealous of İbrahim's grand vizierate causing him to revolt. According to the author, Ahmed offered the *Franks* the retrieval of Rhodes in return for support, as well as establishing relations with the Safavi Shah. Al-Ghazzi also informs that Ahmed came under the influence of a Shi'ite religious man and became a follower of Shah Ismail. The author attributes the atrocities he committed in Egypt to his hatred of the Sunnis.¹¹⁸⁶ Celâlzâde is also of the opinion that Ahmed became a follower of the Safavi Shah because he needed religious leadership.¹¹⁸⁷ Ahmed can not hold on for long against the might of the *Turk*, especially that the latter is in peace with the *Sophi*.¹¹⁸⁸

A frequent criticism to Ahmed Paşa's behavior is based on the concept of ingratitude to benefaction. The specific term used in the sources for the kind of benefaction Ahmed Paşa received from the Sultan is *ni'met*, which also signifies bread. The term used for fiefs, *dirlik*, which constituted the building block of Ottoman provincial administration literally meant "livelihood."¹¹⁸⁹ In this sense, each Ottoman official earned his living and the "bread" on his table as a benefaction from the Sultan.¹¹⁹⁰ Through this he was to serve the Sultan obediently. Accounts relating the distribution of fiefs and other posts as well as promotions express this act generally with the word *ihsân*. The word means to bestow or to grant, signifying the Sultan being the active agent of the act as if the recipient of the grant was only a passive receiver who was required to be thankful. Of course, there is the fact that "disgranting" the benefaction was also up to the Sultan, in case he was unsatisfied with the service

¹¹⁸⁵ *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, pp.387-8.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate," p.142.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Tabakat*, 113b: "Emr-i hilâfetde pişvâ vü hem-tarîk ve bir şeyh-i üstâd-ı şekâvet-refîk lazımdır diyü Kızılbaş'a iktidâ idiüb, tâc-ı zelâlet-revâc giderdi."

¹¹⁸⁸ Sanuto, 36:100 [dated 11 March 1524, from Ragusa].

¹¹⁸⁹ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, p.9, 24.

¹¹⁹⁰ The concept can be traced in other societies as well. For example, the Anglo-Saxon tradition referred to the lord as *hlaforð* [bread-guardian] and his dependent as *hlfaeta* [bread-eater], see Roy Strong, *Feast: A History of Grand Eating*, (Florida: Harcourt, 2003), p.58.

provided by the recipient. In this respect, the contemporaries saw in Ahmed a man who was appointed to Egypt with his own initiative, but yet rebelled. As such he was a traitor who paid with his life as necessary. According to Lütfi Paşa, for example, he rebelled disregarding the fact that he ate the sultan's bread, and that he was created by the Sultan.¹¹⁹¹ Bostan attributes Ahmed's rebellion to the sense of pride and vanity as he came in possession of wealth and troops. According to the author, attaining of such power was what allowed for his Pharaoh-like-nature come to the surface. Consequently, his ill-conduct caused him to defy the favor and *ni'met* showered on him by the Sultan.¹¹⁹² İbrahim-i Gülşeni is attributed to have lectured Ahmed Paşa many times against the dangers of rebelling against one's benefactor [*velinimet*].¹¹⁹³ These two accounts actually pose a certain code of honor current in the sixteenth century. In the beginning of his history, Lütfi Paşa dwells on the issue several times. While he accuses the Ghaznavids with betraying their rulers [*pâdişâhlarına küfrân-ı ni'me olub*] and rebellion; he emphasizes that members of the House of Osman took care not to commit such behavior. Referring to earlier histories, the author asserts that Osman Gazi did not claim sovereignty because "the Saljuqs were in dominion."¹¹⁹⁴ A contemporary of Lütfi Paşa, Hasan Rumlu employs the same code when relating the rebellion of Seyit Süleyman against Shah Ismail. He, too, was convinced that a man who opposed his benefactor was doomed.¹¹⁹⁵

¹¹⁹¹ Lütfi Paşa, 252: "Ahmed Paşa Sultan Süleyman'ın terbiyetin yimiş iken ve Sultan Süleyman'ın bu kadar inamın ve ihsanın görmüş iken ve bu kadar ali mansıblar virüb vezir eylemiş iken cümlesin unudub ve isyanın izhar idüb hain oldu." In an earlier chronicle by Oruç Beğ, for instance, we use of the term "yemek" meaning to enjoy the revenue of a province: "Semendire'yi yiye..." In this sense, the *sancak* as a fief [*dirlik*] directly provides for the livelihood of the officer. Oruç Beğ, p.150. For an example of the notion in Perso-Islamic political culture, see, *Book of Government*, p.16: "From him we have received our subsistence and by virtue of service to him we enjoy the prosperity which we have. Whatever he has done we have done."

¹¹⁹² Bostan (MK), 50b.

¹¹⁹³ *Menâkıb-i İbrâhîm-i Gülşenî*, p.389: "Velî-i ni'metine 'isyândan hazer eyle ki tâgy vü bâgy baş kurtarmaz." However Ahmed Paşa does not understand why the Sheikh keeps warning him.

¹¹⁹⁴ Lütfi Paşa, pp.144-5.

¹¹⁹⁵ Hasan Rumlu, *Ahsenü't-Tevârih*, p.172.

The accusations directed at Ahmed Paşa for ingratitude and treachery create a sharp contrast with expressions of gratitude and loyalty in describing İbrahim Paşa. Contemporary chronicles do not compare the two men directly. However, the intertwined nature of the rise of İbrahim Paşa and the fall of Ahmed Paşa allows for a clear understanding of contemporary values. Although it is possible to trace clues about the reactions and factions against İbrahim Paşa in the writings of the contemporaries, total vilification of Ahmed Paşa gives the opportunity to avoid blaming the Sultan for his unprecedented decision. In this sense, a vice of one is corrected into a virtue in the other enhancing the image of the ideal vizier in İbrahim and the ideal couple in İbrahim and Süleyman.

4.3. Rise of İbrahim Paşa

The year 1523 witnessed the rise of İbrahim, “the darling of *Signor Turco*” as the Venetian bailo in Constantinople Prioli described him as early as 9 April 1523.¹¹⁹⁶ However, viewing İbrahim’s promotion merely as the raising of the royal favorite to the pinnacle of the state would be an inaccurate viewing of the situation in 1523. İbrahim rose to grand vizierate directly from *hasodabaşı* and *iç şahinciler ağası*.¹¹⁹⁷ The simultaneous appointments and displacements suggest a larger process at work, namely a process of re-structuring of high level imperial administration.

A re-arrangement of offices in the immediate aftermath of major victories is a case often observed in Ottoman administration. Such re-arrangement is usually employed to reward those who contribute to the success of the campaign in question. On the other hand, based on the levels of officials involved the case in 1523 seems more like a re-structuring rather than a re-arrangement. Between 1521 and 1523, subsequent waves of appointments can be observed.¹¹⁹⁸ This re-structuring activity concentrates around three main underlying factors: post-conquest rewarding, faulty behavior by

¹¹⁹⁶ Sanuto, 34:186. He mentioned that Ahmed has “*gran potere con quei Embrain Aga ch’e il cuor dil signor Turco.*”

¹¹⁹⁷ Bostan (MK), 48b; Sa’di (SN), 163a.

¹¹⁹⁸ See Appendix 8.

current officials, vacancies through death of officials. The first wave of promotions started around 18 November 1521 [17 Dhu'l-Hijja 927] with the retirement of vizier Kasım Paşa due to old age. His retirement left one vizierate vacant which was filled by Ahmed Paşa whom Sultan Süleyman took over from his father as the governor-general of Rumelia. The general-governorship of Rumelia was granted to the governor of Anatolia [Ayas Paşa] and his post was given to Kasım Paşa.¹¹⁹⁹ The second wave following Rhodes involved a general shifting of assignments which can be regarded as the usual post-conquest rewarding mechanism whereby those who performed well were promoted.¹²⁰⁰ A third wave seems to have been caused by the faulty behavior of Ferhad Paşa who was discharged from vizierate and appointed to Smederevo, while the current governor thereof [Yahyapaşazade Bali Beğ] was transferred to Vidin.¹²⁰¹ Around the same time, complaints about the governor-general of the province of Rûm [Sinan Paşa] caused his discharge from office. The captain of the armada [Behram Paşa] was appointed in his place. Another factor in this wave was the death of several officials such as the governor-general of Karaman [Şadi Paşa] and governor-general of Damascus [Ferhad Paşa]. Karaman was granted to the governor of Trabzon [İskender Beğ], who was vizier Ahmed Paşa's uncle. The governor-general of Tripoli [Hürrem Paşa] was transferred to Damascus.¹²⁰² The fourth wave began with the withdrawal of

¹¹⁹⁹ Nasuh, 48a-b.

¹²⁰⁰ Bostan (MK), 45a.

¹²⁰¹ As Bostan has it, Ferhad Paşa ill-handled the cases of both Canberdi Gazali and Şehsuvaroğlu Ali Beğ. According to the author, he stole from the belongings of Ali Beğ. In the case of Gazali, he was faulty in the protection and ordering of Damascus because he executed innocent men and thus brought conflict among the soldiery. Bostan (MK), 45a-b. In his *Selimname*, Celâlzâde traces Ferhad's ill-conduct to his initial intervention on the sedition in the region at the time of Selim I. Mentioning unjust executions and confiscations committed by Ferhad, the author says: "Many incidents happened in this region because of Ferhad Paşa's ignorance." Celâlzâde (SN), p.218. Also see, *Tabakat*, 130b.

¹²⁰² Bostan (MK), 45b-46a. Bostan mentions that in place of Şadi Paşa, İskender Beğ (governor of Trabzon) – who was Ahmed's uncle – was appointed. However other sources do not mention such a connection. Goloğlu's modern research on Trabzon provides information on the career of İskender, and does not mention any relation between him and Ahmed Paşa. For references to İskender Beğ's career, see, Goloğlu, *Trabzon Tarihi*, p.39, 42-3, 45. For Ferhad's death and replacement by Hurrem, see Antonio Fabris, "Due relazioni inedite di consoli Veneziani a Damasco," *EJOS*, VII (2004), no.20, pp.1-11. The report is dated 6 March 1525, by Francesco Bernardo, the

Mustafa Paşa from Egypt to actively resume his vizieral duties. The governor-general of Anatolia [Kasım Paşa] was appointed to Egypt with vizierate, causing a chain of promotions. Above mentioned Behram Paşa was made governor-general of Anatolia leaving the governorship of Rum vacant. The post was filled by the above mentioned governor-general of Karaman [İskender Paşa] upon his own request. The captain of the armada [Lütfi Paşa] was appointed to Karaman, while the chief of the inner treasury [Süleyman] was made captain. The governor-general of Rumelia [Ayas Paşa] was given vizierate.¹²⁰³ Through each wave, it is possible to see a chain reaction of which only the highest levels are accounted for in the accounts. Although it seems like a complicated network of names, the appointee climbs one level with each appointment. In other words, up to this point appointments seem to have followed an established route of promotion rather than the whims of the sultan. Contemporary accounts confirm the merit-based promotion route as Bostan, for example, defines the process as “required by the levels of merit” [*merâtib-i istihkâk muktezâsınca*].¹²⁰⁴ These waves finally lead to the change at the top level whereby İbrahim becomes grand vizier. It is this wave that we shall examine now.

4.3.1. Appointment to Grand Vizierate

İbrahim was appointed grand vizier in 1523. Old age and inability to please the Sultan figure as the most popular explanations on the discharging of Piri Mehmed Paşa from the office. Bostan attributes the discharge of Piri Paşa on the faults he made during the two years he served Sultan Süleyman.¹²⁰⁵ According to Celâlzâde, Süleyman was not pleased with his performance during the siege of Rhodes, leading to the grand

Venetian consul at Damascus. He describes Hurrem Paşa as a greedy man, *ibid.* p.5. Bernardo had arrived on 13 May 1522. Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs*, p.153.

¹²⁰³ Bostan (MK), 47b-48a.

¹²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 46a.

¹²⁰⁵ Bostan (MK), 48b.

vizier's fall from favor.¹²⁰⁶ Venetian sources imply Süleyman's discontent with Piri Paşa starting with the siege of Belgrade. The Venetian ambassador Marco Minio reports, in his relation dated 28 February 1522, the rumors in Istanbul about the danger of Piri Paşa's dismissal "due to the affairs related to Belgrade." These were the rumors as the Sultan returned to Istanbul, but the grand vizier was still in his post.¹²⁰⁷ According to a bread-seller who had been to the Ottoman camp in August 1521, Piri Paşa launched an attack without informing the Sultan and his assault was repulsed by the defenders, thus costing the lives of many Ottoman soldiers. This, according to the Venetian, made the Sultan quite upset towards the grand vizier.¹²⁰⁸ On the other hand, Piri Paşa was getting old and his health was probably deteriorating. On 27 March 1523 [10 Jumada II 929] Piri Mehmed Paşa retired due to his loss of energy for old age. According to Nasuh, the aged grand vizier wished to retire himself because he thought he was not able to perform the tasks required by the office any more. From then on he wished to spend his time in worship as to find salvation in the world to come.¹²⁰⁹

Although Celâlzâde praises İbrahim Paşa and his rising star,¹²¹⁰ his promotion did not follow the customary path of rank and file. Contemporary Ottoman sources do not let their surprise show, but it is possible to sense minor implications between the lines. Although Lütfi Paşa says that no words are enough to explain İbrahim's grandeur as grand vizier, he does seem to hint at the unusual path İbrahim has climbed.¹²¹¹ Elsewhere Lütfi Paşa stresses his own provincial experience before he was rewarded

¹²⁰⁶ *Tabakat*, 109b. This comment of Celâlzâde's is worth noting because the author blamed Ahmed Paşa for insisting on cannon fire instead of the more efficient method proposed by Piri Mehmed Paşa. See note 1182 above.

¹²⁰⁷ Minio, *Relazione*, p.20.

¹²⁰⁸ Sanuto, 31:394.

¹²⁰⁹ Nasuh, 88a-b. According to the campaign diary, during the siege of Rhodes, for example, he had to leave his place to Ayas Paşa for a week because he had trouble in his feet. *Münşe'at*, I:533.

¹²¹⁰ *Tabakat*, 115b.

¹²¹¹ Lütfi Paşa, p.252, "Ve İbrahim Paşa'yı oda başı iken çıkarub vezîr-i â'zam edindi. Bir 'azamet ile vezîr-i â'zam oldı ki, dillere vâsf olunmaz." Sa'di, too, implies the unusual path of promotion of İbrahim when he mentions that İbrahim was "yet" [*henüz*] the inner service when was taken out as grand vizier and governor-general of Rumelia. Sa'di (SN), 163b.

with grand vizierate. When we read between the lines, we can get a sense that this was the normal course of progress to the grand vizierate.¹²¹²

In the *Siyasetname*, Nizam al-Mulk dwells on the disadvantages of appointing a companion of the ruler to high office and states the differences between a boon companion and a vizier:

A king cannot do without suitable boon-companions with whom he can enjoy complete freedom and intimacy. The constant society of nobles such as margraves and generals tends to diminish the king's majesty and dignity because they become too arrogant. As a general rule people who are employed in any official capacity should not be admitted as boon-companions nor should those who are accepted for companionship be appointed to public office, because by virtue of the liberty they enjoy in the king's company they will indulge in high-handed practices and oppress the people.¹²¹³

İbrahim's appointment to the post of grand vizier has been told in various ways. Contemporary accounts mostly start with a general explanation on the need for a vizier, going on with the specific motives and expectations of Süleyman in choosing a new vizier. After these justifying explanations, they continue by telling why İbrahim was the perfect man for the job. Following their lead, we shall first take a look at why a vizier was needed and what qualities were required for the job. Then we shall try to see through the eyes of the contemporaries why Piri Mehmed Paşa no longer satisfied the need and the required qualifications. Finally, we shall examine what made İbrahim the "right" person for the job and how he acquired the post.

As far as motives are concerned, accounts imply a tendency on the part of Süleyman to replace the ranks he overtook from his father with his own men. According to Sa'di, Süleyman wished to appoint someone who was raised in his own household so that he would know his nature.¹²¹⁴ Such a vizier, whose judgments and opinions

¹²¹² Lütü Paşa, p.284, "*İstanbul'da taun-ı ekber olub Ayas Paşa vezîr-i â'zam taundan fevt olub, pâdişâh-ı âlem-penâh Sultan Süleyman vezîr-i â'zamlığı bu târihin mü'ellifine viricek bunun mü'ellifi taşrada, yani sancaklarda ve beğlerbeğliklerde hayli zeman olub...*"

¹²¹³ Nizam al-Mulk, *Book of Government*, p.89; *Siyasetname*, pp.64-5.

¹²¹⁴ Sa'di (SN), 163a: "... *kendü terbiyyet-i âli-nihâdıyla mürebbî olub her vechle muktezâ-yı tab'-ı latîfine vâkıf bir bende-i kâr-dânun intihâb eyleye.*"

Süleyman trusted, would then be responsible for the protection of the realm, and the affairs of the state.¹²¹⁵

One of the common notions in the accounts is the grooming [*terbiyyet*] of İbrahim at Süleyman's own court. This notion is important in two respects. Firstly, there is the issue of loyalty. It has been argued in the context of the Mamluks, "those Royal Mamluks a sultan had himself recruited, trained, and manumitted felt loyalty to him as their *ustadh* rather than as their monarch, while no such bond existed between the sultan the royal mamluks of his predecessors."¹²¹⁶ The issue of obedience is connected with the practice of *devshirme*, a method devised to ensure well-trained and loyal troops to be employed in military-administrative ranks. The practice was based on the Islamic near eastern mamluk system which also allowed for the prevention of the development of landed blood nobility. The main assumption was that the recruits were cut off from their roots, so their loyalty to the ruler would be absolute, an assumption disproven by Kunt through the instances of involvement of family relations.¹²¹⁷ On the other hand, every now then one comes by a reference to the mother or father of İbrahim Paşa in Venetian sources. There are numerous references to his father's *sancak*.¹²¹⁸ Though this seems like a special favor, we must admit that familial relations did not come to a stop when a non-Muslim entered Ottoman service as *devshirme*, or climbed up the career path entering as a prisoner or slave; though it is more so with brothers rather than parents. During the 1526 campaign, for instance, a proclamation of victory after Mohacs was sent to Egypt to Mehmed Beğ, brother of Ayas Paşa. We learn from the campaign diary that his brother was one of the privileged members of the imperial household [*müteferrika*].¹²¹⁹

Ottoman accounts strongly emphasize the proximity to the Sultan which worked in İbrahim's advantage to achieve the confidence of Süleyman. İbrahim had been in the

¹²¹⁵ Sa'di (SN), 163a.

¹²¹⁶ Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," pp.248-9. Holt says recruitment and training of a mamluk household was a long business.

¹²¹⁷ Kunt, *Sultan's Servants*, pp.32-3.

¹²¹⁸ Sanuto, 37:143. Zen talks about İbrahim's father's having a *sancak* but not staying there. He also mentions that the father came to visit Zen saying that he was a subject of theirs.

¹²¹⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:562.

private service of the Sultan for a long while. He was well-liked by Süleyman. According to authors such as Sa‘di and Nasuh, through his private services and his demonstration of absolute loyalty and affection, İbrahim became very close with Süleyman. Hence, Süleyman’s decision on İbrahim as the ideal candidate for vizierate.¹²²⁰

A huge wedding festival in imperial scale was organized for İbrahim Paşa within a year of his appointment to grand vizierate. The celebration constituted a spectacular public demonstration and imposition of the status and power granted him by the Sultan. Shortly after İbrahim Paşa was sent to Egypt “to regulate” the affairs of the region with full authority.

4.3.2. Proving Ability and Merit

İbrahim’s mission to Egypt involves many issues which go beyond the scope of this study. Among these issues, we shall focus on those which are relevant to the perception of Süleyman’s imperial image. The issue of the vizier becoming the “alter ego” of the Sultan through taking on imperial duties as proxy inevitably relates to the issue of representation and legitimacy. We shall now try to uncover the dynamics of this process whereby the exaltation of İbrahim and exaltation of Süleyman fuse into one single issue.

İbrahim Paşa was accompanied by a host of well-versed and experienced officials in this mission, most notably Iskender Çelebi and Celâlzâde Mustafa. Although the chronicles covered in this study attribute the whole “success” of the Egyptian mission to İbrahim, the accompanying group probably had a major role to play.¹²²¹

According to Lütfi Paşa, Kasım Paşa wrote to the Sultan from Egypt that the income of the region did not cover the costs. He recommended that someone who would

¹²²⁰ Nasuh, 88b-89a; Sa‘di (SN), 163a.

¹²²¹ Ebru Turan draws attention to the account of a contemporary author and eyewitness to the grand vizier’s visit in Egypt. Writing after the death of İbrahim Paşa, Diyarbekri argued that if it were not for İskender Çelebi “no business could be completed.” Ebru Turan, “Voices of Opposition in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman: The Case of İbrahim Paşa (1523-1536),” in *Studies on Istanbul and Beyond*, Robert G. Ousterhout (ed.) (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2007), p.29.

be able to take control of Egypt should be sent there. In that case, some revenue could be spared and sent to Istanbul. Upon this Süleyman sent İbrahim to inspect the situation and to see if this was actually true.¹²²²

According to Sa'di, troubled by the unease around Egypt, Süleyman thought of sending someone to regulate the affairs and pacify the region. Among the list of characteristics of the person to be sent were good knowledge about administration, and ability to control himself, as not to rebel since he would stay there for a while. It turned out that İbrahim fit the description. İbrahim himself proposed to go. As Sa'di has it, İbrahim told Süleyman that the Sultan does not need to go there in person. He can order the performance of this honorable task to his servant İbrahim who would go there with the “dignity of the fortune of the grace of the sovereign” [*‘izz-i yümn-i himmet-i pâdişâh-ı gerdûn-bârgâh*]. He would do such a good job in those provinces that it would be known until the end of time. He would execute the enemies of his magnificence if the Sultan would allow him.¹²²³ Süleyman appreciated İbrahim’s offer and decided to send him. He was to return to his tasks of grand vizierate as soon as he put things in order in Egypt.¹²²⁴

According to Nasuh, although various officials were sent to Egypt they all came back without being able to put things in order. Therefore the subjects in the region kept suffering, which troubled Süleyman. He discussed the situation with the viziers.¹²²⁵

According to Bragadin’s reports dated 19 October 1524, İbrahim’s itinerary included Alexandria, Cairo, Damascus and Syria. Bragadin reported that İbrahim went “to regulate the affairs” with “full authority of the Signor himself” [*con tutta quella autorità come la persona dil Signor*]. The bailo also emphasizes that the affairs in those regions deteriorated after the death of Hayrbay.¹²²⁶

¹²²² Lütü Paşa, p.253.

¹²²³ Sa'di (SN), 170a.

¹²²⁴ *Ibid*, 170b; Nasuh, 91b. In Nasuh’s account, too, İbrahim asks for the job himself.

¹²²⁵ Nasuh, 91a.

¹²²⁶ Sanuto, 37:268.

İbrahim left in September 1524 [Dhu'l-Hijja 931].¹²²⁷ İbrahim's departure from Istanbul was also a memorable occasion. Among all the grandees who went along to say farewell was the Sultan himself. Bragadin provides an impressive picture of the farewell of Süleyman and İbrahim whereby the Sultan not only accompanied him for some miles on the sea, but the two men exchanged kind and sweet words, along with touching head to head. The bailo also mentions the amazement of governors and commanders present before such a demonstration of affection.¹²²⁸ Such esteem for İbrahim on the part of Süleyman as he accompanies the vizier for some miles on the sea is confirmed by Ottoman sources.¹²²⁹

Süleyman went to Edirne after İbrahim's departure, with Ayas Paşa, part of his household, his mother and the *sultane*. He meant to stay until İbrahim's return.¹²³⁰ According to Sa'di, his main intention in residing in Edirne at this time was engaging in hunting as it was the perfect season for the exercise.¹²³¹

The imperial decree given to İbrahim for the mission was read at Gelibolu, hereby the infantry chiefs were informed of the situation.¹²³² The decree gave İbrahim the license to appoint and discharge all sorts of officials in the "Arab" provinces.¹²³³ One interesting stop on the way to Egypt appears to be Chios, whereby the Christian notables of the island [*Nasara beğleri*] presented gifts to İbrahim and threw feasts in his honor.¹²³⁴

¹²²⁷ Sa'di (SN), 170b. Nasuh, 92b: Early September 1524 [early Dhu'l-Qada 930].

¹²²⁸ Sanuto, 37:269: "... *abrazamenti e tochar de man basandoli la spala et tocharsi testa con testa.*"

¹²²⁹ *Tabakat*, 121b.

¹²³⁰ Sanuto, 37:269. For Piero Zen's similar observations see *ibid*, 142.

¹²³¹ Sa'di (SN), 171b-172a.

¹²³² *Tabakat*, 121b.

¹²³³ Bostan (MK), 54b.

¹²³⁴ *Tabakat*, 121b.

The pompous arrival of İbrahim Paşa in the Southern provinces seems to have impressed all observers.¹²³⁵ Celâlzâde relates that he entered Cairo on 2 April 1525 [8 Jumada II], and was greeted with cannonball fires from the fortress and festivities.¹²³⁶ A quite detailed eye witness account of İbrahim's entry into Cairo is provided by a Venetian resident at the city who watched the procession in a shop together with the vice-consul and other merchants. Entering the city with great pomp, İbrahim Paşa was greeted by the Circassians [*zercassi*], cavalry and janissaries stationed in the city, five thousand in total. The procession ran through the main street of Cairo. They were followed by the thousand janissaries who came with İbrahim. Each hundred had a commander on horseback, handsomely dressed. These were followed by his own men also handsomely dressed. Little behind them was İbrahim by himself. The writer describes him as a man smaller rather than grand. He was dressed in gold and had a *fessa* on his head. He rode a white horse with golden trappings. The horse was also ornamented with jewels, mainly rubies, diamonds and turquoise. It was said that the trappings was given to him by the Sultan and cost 170 thousand Venetian ducats. İbrahim passed through the crowd saluting everyone. Then came three of his pages [*garzoni*] dressed in gold and jewels, then the treasurer. All were dressed in ceremonial gowns. Then came his cavalry troops all well-dressed with their lances and banners with his coat-of-arms in blue and white con. Before him the janissaries carried his standard which was made of gold. After these cavalry troops passed, more men on horseback followed. Little behind them followed the *garzoni dil signor*, all dressed in gold, then came the Circassians. Then two red covered carriages passed, in which the observer thought were most beautiful boys [*garzoni*]. The scene is described as "so much pomp and magnificence that not Sultan Ghuri or anyone before him entered so magnificently." İbrahim went to the castle in this fashion, where a rich banquet was prepared for him. He dined with all present, after the banquet everyone left. The gatekeepers were ordered not to let anyone into the castle other than the designated audience days, as the custom

¹²³⁵ Sanuto, 38:167, letter dated 2 March 1525 by Domenego Capello, deputy of Cyprus; *Ibid*, 39:43-45, letter dated 14 March 1525, by Beneto Bernardo to his brother from Cairo.

¹²³⁶ *Tabakat*, 125b. İbrahim Paşa's entry into Cairo, as well as those before him, seems to have mimicked the state processions of the former Mamluk sultans. For Mamluk state processions, see Holt, "The Position and Power of the Mamluk Sultan," p.42.

of the Sultans. İbrahim is evaluated to be just in administration, and liberal toward the poor. The writer mentions that they have not yet been to “kiss his feet” because he was still tired from the journey; they were visit him the next day with gifts.¹²³⁷

The whole episode of ‘İbrahim Paşa distributing justice’ involves the concepts of representation and legitimation. As Sa‘di has it, İbrahim Paşa announces to the people that whoever has been oppressed should let him know. He also lets them know that he represents the “chain of justice” of the Sultan and that the orders of the Sultan are at his discretion. The responsibility to move that chain belongs to the people and the responsibility to act thereon to remove oppression belongs to İbrahim.¹²³⁸ Relating this call to complaints, Celâlzâde emphasizes Süleyman’s insistence on the execution of the laws. This is also a proclamation of Süleyman’s role as the “defender and applier of the law of God.”¹²³⁹ The notion of the “chain of justice” in this episode seems to draw heavily on the legendary chain with bells which Anushirvan had set up in front of his courts, so that people with grievances could easily reach him.¹²⁴⁰

İbrahim Paşa’s dealings in Egypt are evaluated as tasks for the providing of order. He seems to have performed the task through elimination of anti-Ottoman figures, integration of former anti-Ottoman forces, establishment of Ottoman law, securing loyalty of influential sectors of the society, tranquillizing the ordinary subject population. Kemalpaşazade praises the justness of İbrahim in his dealings in Egypt and Syria. According to the author, he gave “order and arrangement” [*nizâm ü intizâm*]

¹²³⁷ Sanuto, 39:43-5. It should also be noted that Mustafa Paşa, too, was greeted with a ceremonial procession when he arrived at Cairo in 1523. Celâlzâde tells about the festivities organized in his honor, the gifts he was presented by the notables. *Tabakat*, 104a-b.

¹²³⁸ Sa‘di (SN), 174b: “... *tenbîh-i temâm itdi ki kimden te‘addi ve güç görmüş ise geliüb pâdişâhumuz – ‘izzullah ensâruhu – nun, ki zamânın Süleymân’ı ve devrânın Nuşirvânıdır, zincir-i ‘adli gerdûn-ı ihlâsımda müstahkem olub, infâz ü evâmir-i hüsrevânisi mufavvaz-ı keff-i iyâdi kudretimdir. Ol zinciri tahrîk idüb ‘ilâm-ı muhâyîf itmek sizden, ihtimâm idüb irgâm-ı ünûf-ı zulmet-i devrân itmek benden diyü...*”

¹²³⁹ *Tabakat*, 126-127a.

¹²⁴⁰ Nizam al-Mulk, *Book of Government*, p.40. According to Nizam al-Mulk this system worked so well that soon the bells stopped ringing because everyone was served justly. Years later, when the bells rang again officials found a donkey shaking the chain. Anushirvan undertood that the donkey had a grievance, found its owner, and had him take better care of the animal. Nizam al-Mulk employs the story to illustrate the exemplary justness of Anushirvan.

through the “custom of justice and rules of equity” [*âyin-i ‘adâlet ve kavânîn-i nusfet*]. As a result, according to the author, he succeeded in providing order in the region, regulated the affairs of sailors and villagers, made those who meant sedition obey, and attracted those rebelled to submit under his protection.¹²⁴¹ Bostan emphasizes the justness of İbrahim not only through his inspections and “distribution of justice” all along the way, but the care paid to not hurt the subjects in any way. Over and over again Bostan mentions that horses and camels were rented or bought from the locals who realized the transaction willingly.¹²⁴²

Celâlzâde’s conversation with the Damascene merchant, mentioned above, also puts light on the nature of İbrahim’s mission. When İbrahim Paşa came to administer justice in town, the merchant in question attests to have gotten back what was his. As a way of thanksgiving, the merchant decided to spend part of the money he recovered on charity for the sake of the “continuity of the fortune and happiness of the just Sultan who sent the Vizier” and the “increasing of the eminence and fortune of the Vizier.”¹²⁴³ This episode is very illuminating in the sense that it clearly reflects the nature of the relationship between the Sultan and the Vizier, as well as how a subject should perceive that relationship. First and foremost, the source of trust is the Sultan himself. However, he is represented by his officials in the provinces. This signifies that a malicious act committed by an official shakes directly the trust put on the Sultan himself. Likewise, a beneficial act on the part of the representative directly reinforces the trust on the Sultan. In this case, although İbrahim Paşa is praised for his good deeds, the final credit goes to Süleyman since he is the one who initially solved the problem by sending a capable and just delegate.

This issue finds a parallel in another episode of Celâlzâde based on his conversation with İbrahim Paşa at Cairo. As İbrahim frees some prisoners as charity, he makes it clear to Celâlzâde that this pious act belongs to the Sultan and that the Sultan should be credited for it in the sight of God. Then he goes on to explain the reasoning: “This humble servant of his was less than an insignificant particle; and reached such a

¹²⁴¹ KPŞZ, X:201.

¹²⁴² Bostan (MK), 55b-56a.

¹²⁴³ *Tabakat*, 124b.

high degree of fortune and glory through his world-illuminating gaze.”¹²⁴⁴ This point of İbrahim’s power descending from Süleyman is emphasized in the account of Nasuh as İbrahim asks to be sent to Egypt in the name of the Sultan. İbrahim argues that being a humble servant of the Sultan he has been raised by him to the top. If people there saw this and his obedience things would be in order. He also alludes to other servants of the Sultan who have acted otherwise there.¹²⁴⁵

İbrahim seems to have followed the itinerary mentioned above. He has been to Aleppo and Damascus before moving on to Cairo. In both cities, he investigated those prone to sedition and deals with them. According to Sa’di, he “marked the justice of the Sultan” and “put the Sultan in the minds of the inhabitants.”¹²⁴⁶ According to Celâlîzâde, it was a favor from God that İbrahim had to go by land because of stormy weather on the sea. By going through land, he was able to observe the injustice and oppression taking place in the provinces. Thus, everywhere he passed by, he had *divân* and distributed justice. Those who were oppressed were relieved, while those who oppressed were punished and executed.¹²⁴⁷

İbrahim Paşa seems to have employed various means of pacification and regulation. In some instances, we see him applying harsh measures like direct execution; in others covertly intimidating potential resisters. Yet in others, we see him negotiating. He was to use a similar strategy to end the series of rebellions which broke out in Anatolia at large during 1526-1528.¹²⁴⁸

¹²⁴⁴ *Tabakat*, 128a: “*Bu bende-i hakîrleri zerre-i nâcizden kemter iken pertev-i âfitâb-ı enzâr-ı ‘âlem-tâbları ile bu mesâbede ‘izzet ü sa‘âdete makrûn oldum.*”

¹²⁴⁵ Nasuh, 91b-92a: “*Mukaddema ol diyârın etvâr-ı sagâr-ı ü kibârı pençe-i düstûr-ı ‘azimet-destûra tefvîz olunub sûd ü ziyânları ‘arıza-i ‘arsa-i âsitân-ı celâlet-âşiyân olmuştur. Bu çâker-i şebnem-i bağ-ı vezâ‘at iken ‘âric-i mu‘âric-i evc-i ‘izzet olmak, pertev-i mihr-i ‘âufetinden olduğu kâl’eş-şems fî nısfü’n-nehâr enzâr evvelü’l-ebsârda rûşen ü âşikâr idiüb bu nev‘ ‘avâ’id-i mevâ‘id-i in‘âmla iğtinâm idiüb, şükrin bilmeyen...*”

¹²⁴⁶ Sa’di (SN), 174a.

¹²⁴⁷ *Tabakat*, 123a-b; Nasuh, 93a-b.

¹²⁴⁸ Although these disturbances were of a very different nature, İbrahim Paşa’s tactic was quite similar. Designating the cause of discontent of rebel crowds, he made concessions; thus he was able separate those who actually meant sedition and those who expressed their grievance through participating in the revolts.

An example of execution would be the case of an Arab commander Ömeroğlu Şeyh Ali, who had an issue with obeying the Sultan. Celâlzâde states that he was the actual reason of İbrahim's mission. This commander had not come to the previous governors, thus it was thought that he would reel eventually. Before İbrahim's arrival he was sent an invitation and letter of goodwill [*istimâletnâme*]. This time, he came out of fear of İbrahim Paşa, but because of suspicions he was executed upon arrival.¹²⁴⁹

The harsh measures İbrahim took in Syria and Egypt did not escape the attention of foreign observers. A letter written from Tripoli by the merchant Pasqualin Negro on 10 February 1525 talked about the fear caused by İbrahim. Negro also reported that he killed many *subassi* and judges. Negro also voiced public expectation about İbrahim rebelling "and doing what the other one has done."¹²⁵⁰

An example of covert intimidation would be the case of a commander of Aleppo, who presented İbrahim Paşa precious gifts. Aware of the commander's misdeeds, İbrahim spread word that he would not be tricked by such gifts and the commander would be executed upon a single complaint about his oppression. Upon hearing this, the commander gave back to the people what he had unlawfully got from them.¹²⁵¹

İbrahim Paşa's ultimate deed at Cairo is the renewal of the law code¹²⁵² in relation to the complaints by the people upon his call. He summons the former law codes. He goes over those of Qaytbay, Qansuh al-Ghuri, Hayrbay and Ahmed Paşa. He puts away the innovations set by the latter. As a result of meticulous work, a law code protecting the interests of both the subjects and the imperial treasury is compiled. This was accompanied by the preparation of an imperial law code relating to the affairs of central

¹²⁴⁹ *Tabakat*, 125b-126a; Nasuh, 94b. For a more generic account on İbrahim executing oppressors and seditious Bedouin sheiks, see Bostan (MK), 57a.

¹²⁵⁰ Sanuto, 38:169. A letter from Cyprus dated 21 March, confirms the executions and justifies them based on malpractice on the part of the deceased. Also see *ibid*, 167.

¹²⁵¹ *Tabakat*, 124a.

¹²⁵² For a recent treatment of this lawcode see Buzov, *The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers*, pp.28-45. Buzov argues that the preamble is a political manifesto as well as the "earliest text that bears witness to the emerging political and legal discourse of the Ottomans, the discourse that would become fully articulated in the second half of the sixteenth century."

administration.¹²⁵³ The law code prepared during İbrahim's mission at Cairo is a rather insightful document. It dwells on a number of issues including legitimization of Selim I's conquest of Egypt, the accession of Süleyman, the need for the post of vizierate and justification of İbrahim's selection for the post.

In keeping with the imperial decree, we see İbrahim making the necessary appointments before he left Cairo. He also promoted and rewarded the imperial troops stationed in the region, promoted those whose services were appreciated. The *'ulemâ*, sheiks and the poor of Cairo were also rewarded "on behalf of the Sultan" [*tasaddukât-ı pâdişâhîden*].¹²⁵⁴ These acts of largesse probably signify more than usual demonstration of imperial favor. They should probably be seen in connection with a systemized attempt on İbrahim's part to secure the loyalties of the region and to prevent the bases for future anti-Ottoman faction formation.

The reports of the Venetian bailo in Constantinople emphasize the affection Süleyman had for İbrahim when the latter was in Egypt. Initially, according to Bragadin's report dated 19 October, his mission in Egypt would last six months, since the Sultan "cannot live without him."¹²⁵⁵ Süleyman not only sent him gifts throughout his absence, but wrote to him with his own hand twice a month.¹²⁵⁶ Furthermore, there were rumors that the Sultan did not want to return to Istanbul until İbrahim did.¹²⁵⁷ Giovo also emphasizes that the Sultan could not be without İbrahim so he called him back from Egypt.¹²⁵⁸ These reports are verified by Ottoman sources to some extent. Bostan, for example, mentions that Süleyman did not trust the other viziers in the absence of İbrahim; therefore council meetings were done twice a week instead of the usual four meetings. The author also relates immediate call-for-return made to İbrahim Paşa upon a janissary mutiny which broke in Istanbul.¹²⁵⁹

¹²⁵³ *Tabakat*, 127a; Nasuh, 96a-b.

¹²⁵⁴ Bostan (MK), 57a-b.

¹²⁵⁵ Sanuto, 37:269.

¹²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 38:56 [dated 29 January 1525].

¹²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 38:163 [dated 4-7 March 1525]. He was in Edirne in a great hunt.

¹²⁵⁸ Giovo, *Commentario*, p.diiii: "non potendo sofferire il Signore l'absenza sua, richiamato con favorite lettere torno à Constantinopoli."

¹²⁵⁹ Bostan (MK), 58a, 59a.

4.4. Official Projection and Public Reception

The official projection of İbrahim Paşa's rise can best be traced in the long preamble to the law code of Egypt prepared during İbrahim Paşa's mission there provides a rather clear understanding of the significance of vizierate and the nature of his authority.

The preamble of the 1524 law code presents the contemporary understanding of the post of vizierate. First of all, it was imperative that the Sultan should entrust the affairs of the realm to a capable and insightful vizier. This person was expected to be someone approved and accepted by those whose consensus mattered. He should be a wise man with a reasonable mind. He should be privy to the secrets of the sultanate, in other words a confidante of the Sultan. He was expected to remedy the wounds of those inflicted by oppression. Such a candidate for the post had to be free from the vices of anger and bribery. He should be one who went through the upraising the Sultan and grew with his favors. He should also be an ethical man who abided religious rules. Other than being a loyal servant of the Sultan, the ideal candidate would need to be courageous on the battle field as well as capable of strategic thinking.¹²⁶⁰ Sultan Süleyman, according to the law code, found the appropriate candidate in İbrahim through God's inspiration. The text brings out a parallel with Abraham through citing a related Quranic verse: "O Fire! Be thou cool and a means of safety for Abraham."¹²⁶¹ The analogy of Abraham [Halil] continues with the statement of İbrahim's closeness and loyalty to the Sultan: "When, with sincere servitude, day by day, he obtained the exclusive devotion of closeness, his Excellency the caliph of the Glorious Lord granted the exalted position of the friendship like the one of Halil."¹²⁶²

¹²⁶⁰ Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, 6:94, 146 [for the facsimile of the document preserved in Süleymaniye, Ayasofya, no.4871, fols.118a-157b, see Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, 6:141-176]. For an English translation, see Buzov, *Lawgiver and His Lawmakers*, pp.216-7.

¹²⁶¹ Quran, 21:69.

¹²⁶² As translated in Buzov, *Lawgiver and His Lawmakers*, pp.216-7. For the Ottoman text, see Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, 6:146 [facsimile]: "İhlâs-ı 'ubûdiyyetle yevmen fe yevmen ihtisâs-ı kurbet tahsîl itmeğîn Hazret-i Halîfe-i Rabb-ı Celîl rütbet-i vâlâ-yı Halîl erzânî kılub..."

Through such closeness, according to the document, Süleyman had the chance to realize the capability of İbrahim in terms of solving the problems of the realm and eliminating the enemies of the state. At this point, the idealness of İbrahim for the post is reflected through a poem [*mesnevi*], which simultaneously glorifies Süleyman as well, and thus establishing the concept of the perfect couple often employed by future authors:

Reason says, o Shah of pure character,
May the throne of equity be adorned, justice has triumphed
While such a pillar of the state stands upright
It is a sin to give the vizierate to anybody but him
Is it reasonable that, while that pure rose exists
The rose garden of justice be filled with thorns and sticks?
You are Solomon; it suits you to have Asaf
At your gate men and jinn stand in ranks
While in his hand both pen and sword are obedient
It is unjust for others to be grand viziers
While every commander is obedient to his command
The position of high commander [*beğlerbeği*] going to others would be unjust
No king had come to rule like you
Nor has this court seen a slave like him.¹²⁶³

The diploma of general-command [*ser'askerlik berâti*] granted to İbrahim Paşa in April 1529 is perhaps the best self-expression summarizing the issue.¹²⁶⁴ The composer of the document, Celâlzâde explains the basic need for a general commander with the over-expansion of the territories under the rule of the Sultan.¹²⁶⁵ While the title of the post implies a military position, the tasks involved and the list of people to obey suggests an overall delegation of responsibility and authority. The document is written in the first person, thus reinforcing the impression of a statement of self-projection. The first part of the document asserts Sultan Süleyman's divine right of kingship through

¹²⁶³ As translated in Buzov, *Lawgiver and His Lawmakers*, pp.219-20; For the Ottoman text, see Akgündüz, *Kanunnameler*, pp. 95-6, and p.147 [facsimile].

¹²⁶⁴ For the text of the document, see, *Tabakat*, 180a-182b; *Münşe'at*, I:544-6. For a comparative transcription of the text, see, Yılmaz, 'Koca Nişancı' of Kanuni: *Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi*, pp.234-246.

¹²⁶⁵ According to the author, the Sultan told him to prepare a diploma of general-command because it had become impossible to handle the affairs of the realm on his own due to the fact that his "realm expanded by the grace of God." *Tabakat*, 179a.

numerous Quranic verses.¹²⁶⁶ After establishing the Sultan's divinely appointed duties of administration and conquest, the text clarifies that the order of the world was entrusted to his sovereign power. This point is emphasized through expressions such as "He [God] stretched the board of the degree of my majesty and prosperity to the highest summit of Sultan the shadow of God on earth" [*bisât-ı merâtib-i şevket ü ikbâlimi zirve-yi 'ulyâ-yı es-sultân zıllullah fi'l-arz da bast eyledi*]. Then follows a statement about the over-expansion of the realm: "The land of sultanate and dominion is rather wide, the limits of the dominion and the districts of the country are very extensive" [*arsa-i saltanat ü cihândâri temâm-ı fûshâtde, dâ'ire-i mülk ve hutta-i iklîm kemâl-i vüs'atdedir*]. Emphasizing that this is an ongoing situation, the document dwells on the requirement to be thankful to God. The second part of the document is a general justification of the appointment based on precedence, modeling on an abstract notion of past rulers. This part is also supported with verses from the Quran.¹²⁶⁷ The third part announces the name of İbrahim Paşa as general commander who is appointed for the "guard and protection, and control and preservation of the lands and paths under [my] dominion."¹²⁶⁸ However, before this announcement, the suitability of İbrahim Paşa for the job – and grand vizierate – is demonstrated through a long list of his characteristics, which is very similar to the list provided in the preamble to the law code of Egypt. As grand vizier, İbrahim Paşa is expected to take over a long list of duties: restoring laws of justice, marking customs of clemency and equity, ordering the affairs of the realm, arranging and strengthening the foundations of borders and roads, closure and distention of the affairs of the realm and the people, fastening the decisions of the land, putting in order urgent affairs of caliphate, and diminishing observances of oppression and corruption.¹²⁶⁹ With this diploma the whole population seems to be placed under İbrahim Paşa's command. Although the document first cites various military ranks, the following terms such as "natives of the realm and residents of the region" [*kuttân-ı memâlik ve vuttân-ı vilâyet*] and "the high and the low in total, and all mankind"

¹²⁶⁶ Quran, 3:26; 35:2; 2:105; 19:57; 4:59; 12:38.

¹²⁶⁷ Quran, 2:130; 2:251; 21:101; 37:164. These verses reinforce Sultan Süleyman's position as divinely appointed ruler.

¹²⁶⁸ *Tabakat*, 181b: "kalem-rev-i iklîm-i saltanatımda vâk'i olan memâlik ü mesâlikin hıfz ü hırâseti ve zabt ü siyâneti için."

¹²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 180b.

[*muhasılân havâss ü ‘avâm ve kâffe-i enâm*] reinforce the overall effect. The document calls for over-all and all-time obedience to İbrahim Paşa in his capacity of commander-general [*her zamanda ‘umûmen ser‘askerim biliüb*]. As such, he was to be treated with utmost reverence. More importantly, what he said was to be regarded as if the Sultan’s spoken word. He was to be obeyed absolutely in every matter pertaining to the “state.”¹²⁷⁰ The diploma gives all responsibility of campaigns to İbrahim Paşa, as well, even those realized with the presence of the Sultan. The document ends with warnings against disobeying the decree and resist İbrahim Paşa.¹²⁷¹

Ottoman narrative accounts are full of references to the epitome of vizierhood Asaf in relation to “Solomon of the time,” and to İbrahim [Halil] the beloved companion of God, as well as Aristotle in relation to Alexander. In this respect, contemporary writers seem to have found the perfect couple in Süleyman and İbrahim.¹²⁷² The analogies not only praise İbrahim as the ideal vizier, but Süleyman as well, since the rulers associated with these viziers were ideal kings themselves.

In Sa‘di’s words, upon his appointment to grand vizierate, İbrahim became the “Asaf of the age” to the “Solomon of the time.”¹²⁷³ Implicit or explicit references to the perfect couples of the past can be traced in disguise throughout Sa‘di’s account. An implication probably quite legible to the contemporary audience was İbrahim’s offer to go to Egypt. Although neither Sa‘di nor any other contemporary author took the job of a Sultan as lightly, the reasoning put forth and responsibilities to be delegated in this instance are reminiscent of the words of Buzurjmihir to Anushirvan as related in the *Shahnama*:

¹²⁷⁰ *Tabakat*, 182a: “*her ne der ise ve her ne vech görürse benim lisân-ı düerer-bârımdan sâdır olmuş kelâm-ı sa‘âdet-encâm ve emr-i vâcibü’l-ihirâmum biliüb, sözünü semm‘-i tahkik ile ısgâ ve hüsn-i kabûl ile telakkî eyleyüb, devlet-i kâhire-i sâhib-kırânîye müte‘allik olan cümle-i mehâmm-ı umûr ve kâffe-i mesâlih-i cumhûrda emrinden ve sözünden tecâvüz ü ‘adûl ve inhirâf ü zühûl eylemeyeler.*”

¹²⁷¹ *Ibid*, 182b.

¹²⁷² For a typical Perso-Islamic treatment of such perfect couples, see Nizam al-Mulk, *Book of Government*, p.173. Among those perfect couples listed by Nizam al-Mulk are Solomon and Asaf, Moses and his brother Aaron, and Anushirvan and Buzurjmihir.

¹²⁷³ Sa‘di (SN), 163b. According to Sa‘di, İbrahim never favored or disliked anyone without reason, but administered justice as circumstances required. Furthermore, he not only regulated the affairs of the realm, but served for the good of the Sultan in both worlds.

However glorious a king might be, it is his vizier's job to be an ornament to his court. The king's business is hunting and warfare, wine and rejoicing, generosity, justice, and feasting; he knows how his predecessors reigned and follows their example. It is the vizier who must accumulate wealth, maintain the army, combat gossip, and hear suppliants for justice; it is his heart and soul that are troubled by worries about the administration and treasury.¹²⁷⁴

Kemalpaşazade's introductory passage to his account of the 1526 campaign provides an almost formulaic expression of the relationship between Sultan Süleyman and Grand Vizier İbrahim Paşa: "Never has such a sword-bearing Sultan cast his shadow on the exalted throne of the caliphate, nor has such a unerring [*sâyib-i tedbîr*] vizier stepped on the office of vizierate [*dest-i sadâret*]."¹²⁷⁵ In a way, they seem to make a perfect team. Before expressing his formulaic view, Kemalpaşazade answers the self imposed question: Through whose efforts do the ghazis achieve their desire of ghaza? In the answer, we see that the Sultan now has a partner in the credit taken for providing the opportunity for ghaza, in other words a road to spiritual salvation for those participating.¹²⁷⁶ While expressing this partnership, one of the references defining İbrahim Paşa is "semiyy-i Halîlü'r-Rahmân." Halîl signifies both the prophet Abraham and a loyal friend; and not only any loyal friend but that of God. Through a verbal pun, Kemalpaşazade reinforces the significance of İbrahim Paşa in relation to Sultan Süleyman. The reference to Halîlü'r-Rahmân, in a way, exalts Süleyman himself almost to a divine status. Another interesting play of words reflects the relationship each has with ghaza. Kemalpaşazade refers to Süleyman as the "granter of the victory-bringing banners of victorious Islam", whereas to İbrahim as the "raiser of the flags of ghaza." While the first expression seems to imply a more passive yet administrative and organizational responsibility, the second expression suggests action.¹²⁷⁷

¹²⁷⁴ Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, p.714. After his visit to the Ottoman court in 1524, the impression of Piero Zen was that Süleyman was more into the joys of life than making war. Sanuto, 37:142.

¹²⁷⁵ KPŞZ, X:196: "*Ne ancılayın Sultân-ı sâhib-i şimşîr-i 'arş-serîr pâye-i hilâfete sâyê salmuşdır ve ne buncılayın Vezîr-i sâyib-tedbîr dest-i sadârete ayak basmışdır.*"

¹²⁷⁶ See Chapter 3, p.268.

¹²⁷⁷ KPŞZ, X:196: "*nâsıb-ı râyat-ı nusret-âyat-ı İslâm-ı zafer-encam*" vs. "*râfi'-i livâ-yı gazâ.*"

As his narrative goes on, Kemalpaşazade comments further on the pair. Süleyman is referred to Melik Şah and İbrahim as Nizam al-Mulk.¹²⁷⁸ The referral to Nizam al-Mulk has a dual significance. On the one hand, İbrahim is likened to the epitome of vizierhood. On the other hand, he is described as the “order of the realm” [*nizâmü'l-mülk*]. The author describes İbrahim’s qualities again in a two-fold manner. His ability in the battlefield is matched with his sound strategies [*sâyib-i tedbîr*]. Thus he is described as a young man with this warrior skills and an old man with this administrative abilities.¹²⁷⁹ This dual-qualification is emphasized in his handling of the Egyptian matter. When he was sent to these provinces with the order of the Sultan, he handled the matter with “good strategy” [*hüsn-i tedbîr*] and “blow of sword” [*darb-ı şimşîr*].¹²⁸⁰ The same dual-qualification is also found in Kemalpaşazade’s referral to Süleyman. He is the “world-conquering Sultan” [*Sultân-ı cihân-güşâ*] and the “order-issuing Hâkân” [*Hâkân-ı fermân-fermâ*].¹²⁸¹

The sense of partnership reflected in Kemalpaşazade’s account is also demonstrated by a rumor Bragadin has heard while he was in Istanbul. In his letter dated 5 February 1526, the bailo summarizes a prophecy supposedly discovered in a book by Süleyman and İbrahim when they were children. According to the prophecy:

... some day one will come out of the Palace who would not have had any prior office and will be first vizier and governor-general of Rumelia and his name would be *Imbrain*. The Ottoman Sultan of his time will do many things which his [ancestors] could never do...¹²⁸²

Performance of two ceremonial departures from Istanbul on the occasion of the 1526 campaign demonstrates contemporary questions regarding the perception of this partnership. Firstly, İbrahim Paşa left with the army on 14 April [2 Rajab]. He returned

¹²⁷⁸ KPSZ, X:200: “*Nizâmü'l-Mülk olmuştur o düstûr / Cihân mülkinde olaldan Melik Şâh / Bu düstûra Nizâmü'l-Mülk şâgird / o sultân-ı cihâna kul Melik Şah,*” and “*Pâdişah-ı mihr ki sipîhr-bârgâh ü sitâre-sipâhdur, başına zerrîn külâh urunub bu zeberced serîre çıkaldan, anun nazîri vezîr mesned-i müşeyyed-i vezârete ayak basmamıştır.*”

¹²⁷⁹ KPSZ, X:200.

¹²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 201.

¹²⁸¹ *Ibid*. Please note the Islamic title of *sultan* for war-related reference, and the more secular and Turkic title *hakan* for administration related matter.

¹²⁸² Sanuto, 41:95.

next day after putting the army in the charge of the Rumelian *kethüda* and *defterdar*, only to re-depart with the Sultan later. His *tabl ü 'alem* were also given to these; and they were given command to move towards Sofia for the general assembly of the army.¹²⁸³ This double departure has brought various explanations. While some contemporaries attributed İbrahim's return to the inseparability of İbrahim and Süleyman on the personal level,¹²⁸⁴ others explained the first departure as a requirement of his post as governor-general of Rumelia and the return as a necessity of grand vizierate.¹²⁸⁵ Salih Çelebi combines the two opinions. According to Salih Çelebi, İbrahim had to leave in advance for the assembly of the Rumelian troops in his capacity of governor-general of Rumelia, according to "ancient custom." However, he was called back by the Sultan. His presence was required alongside the Sultan because their separation was impossible.¹²⁸⁶

¹²⁸³ Nasuh, 100b. Celâlzâde mentions that İbrahim came back on 23 April [11 Rajab]. *Tabakat*, 133a.

¹²⁸⁴ Kemalpaşazade mentions that İbrahim was both grand vizier and general commander of the Rumelian army, but the main emphasis of the text is on the inseparability of İbrahim and Süleyman. KPZ, X:224-5. Nasuh follows Kemalpaşazade's views on the issue and repeats in a linguistically less complex manner, Nasuh, 100b-101a: "*Kendünün imâm-ı mehâm cumhûr-ı enâma müte'allik umur-ı 'azâmın masaddur-ı saltanatdan sadrı ve zuhurı huzurına mevkûfdı. Anın şu'ûrı ve vukûfı olmadın bir maslahat vukû' ve şuyû' bulmazdı. Makâm-ı halvetde ve hengâm-ı salvetde pâdişâh-ı 'âlem-penâh anlar ile muhâvere ve müşâvere iderdi. Ol sebebden bâb-ı hilâfet-me'abdan infisâle mecâl ve cenâb-ı kâmyâb-ı afitab-menziletten iftirâke ihtimâl yoğidi. Ana binaen 'inân-ı yek-rân râm-licâmı zıkr olan menzilden makam-ı siyâdete ve makarr-ı sa'âdete ki kemân gibi kuc görenlerin makaridi döndürdi.*"

¹²⁸⁵ Bostan (MK), 62a-b: "... Rumili Beğlerbeğliği vezîr-i â'zam İbrahim Paşa'nın 'uhdesinde olub hem vezîr hem beğlerbeği olmağla bir rûz-ı firûz zerrîn 'alem açub şevket ü haşem güürûh-ı hadem ile mahrûse-i Kostantiniyye'den hurûc idüb, bir hûb mürgzâra nüüzül gösterüb 'alem-i zafer-peykeri Rumili kethüdâsına ve defterdarına ısmarlayub, leşker cem'ine göndarub vezâreti muktezâsınca girü kendü südde-i sa'âdete geldi."

¹²⁸⁶ Sâlih (TSK), 19a-b. Salih Çelebi's expression gives the impression of a more administrative link rather than a personal one: "*İlm-i 'âlem-ârây-ı muhît idi ki der-i devlet-penâhdan infikâkı devlet ü ikbâl gibi bir an ma'kûl değılidi.*" Salih Çelebi [d.1565] is the younger brother of Celâlzâde Mustafa Çelebi. Born in 1493, Salih pursued a career in the learned establishment. He started as a student of Kemalpaşazade, and transferred to the Sultan's teacher Hoca Hayreddin upon Süleyman's accession. In 1520, he was also appointed to an institution in Edirne with his first *müderris* post. In 1524, he was appointed to İstanbul. In 1540s he served as judge in Aleppo, Damascus, and Egypt. For his life, see, Uzunçarşılı, "Celâlzâde Mustafa ve Salih Çelebiler," pp.422-439.

İbrahim Paşa's rise was far from being a smooth transition to power. Although Sultan Süleyman did his best to demonstrate the favor he bestowed upon his favorite, contemporary accounts are replete with acts of discontent toward the grand vizier. There are various instances of mutinous behavior especially on the part of the janissaries which revolved around the person of İbrahim. While these instances point at the discontent directed at İbrahim Paşa, they simultaneously provide hints about Süleyman's authority.

According to Celâlzâde, the anti-İbrahim faction in Istanbul was relieved by his departure to Egypt. They thought he would stay there forever; however when he was summoned back by the Sultan, "their hearts were filled with hatred" and many envied him. Their intention was to keep İbrahim away and so they provoked sedition. The author relates that in the guise of janissaries some "irregulars" [*levend*] and "mischief-makers" [*müfsidîn*] rebelled in Istanbul on 16 May [23 Rajab], targeting the houses of Ayas Paşa and Abdüsselam the treasurer. Houses and shops of the Jews were plundered. Next night, İbrahim's house was targeted. The night after that, janissaries assembled at the Palace to inform the janissary commander that they had nothing to do with the sedition. Not only did the janissaries deny involvement in the mutiny but demanded that those responsible be found. When the ringleaders were found, Celâlzâde informs us, the janissaries themselves left the mutineers no escape but killed them. The commander of the janissaries Mustafa Ağa was blamed for the mutiny and was executed by the order of the Sultan.¹²⁸⁷ According to Bostan, on the other hand, the misconduct of the janissaries was the result of mismanagement of the viziers. The author does not directly associate the unrest with İbrahim. As Bostan has it, the janissaries were angry because the Sultan did not come to the Palace on his arrival from Edirne but went to his palace on the Anatolian side. To demonstrate their dissatisfaction, they attacked the "houses of the viziers" [*paşaların evleri*]. Upon hearing the mutiny, the Sultan immediately crossed the Bosphorus. Janissaries quieted down on his arrival at the Palace. The commander of the janissaries, Mustafa Ağa, was executed for triggering the mutiny.¹²⁸⁸

Both of these accounts suggest an effort on the part of their writers to distance the Sultan from the mutiny. Putting the blame on the mismanagement of the viziers,

¹²⁸⁷ *Tabakat*, 129a-130a. Also see Lütfi Paşa, p.253.

¹²⁸⁸ Bostan (MK), 58b-59a.

Bostan avoids attributing any sort of inability in government to the Sultan. In Celalzâde's account, on the other hand, not only the Sultan is disassociated from the mutiny, but his army as well by pointing at the irregulars.¹²⁸⁹

As mutiny is a demonstration of discontent and grievance on the part of subordinates, any link between the mutineers and the "servants" of the Sultan would damage his image. Mutiny also signifies a challenge to and a divergence from the existing order of things. As Süleyman's main duty as sultan was to maintain order, any failure to do so would again weaken his reputation. Furthermore, Elihu Rose, for example, defines a mutiny as "antithesis of discipline." Discipline being the foundation of the military, and military representing the monopoly of the legitimate instruments of violence which is the *sine qua non* of statehood, a mutiny signifies a self-inflicted challenge on the state's control over its military and thus a challenge on the existence of the state itself.¹²⁹⁰ Palmira Brummett argues in a similar manner as she defines mutiny in the Ottoman context as "an idea which expressed divergence from the ideals of righteous exercise of authority and loyal obedience."¹²⁹¹

Venetian reports also relate some discontent about İbrahim Paşa. Piero Zen attributes the web of jealousy around İbrahim to his immense influence on the Sultan.¹²⁹² According to Piero Bragadino's letter dated 21 May, janissaries attacked and

¹²⁸⁹ Later on in his work, Celâlzâde reports a mass-execution of irregulars, who were often accused of starting unrest, on 24 February 1528 [3 Jumada II 934]. The incident started with the plundering of a house and the murdering of the inhabitants near the hospice of Sultan Selim; irregulars were instant suspects. In order to put a stop to trouble provoked by this sector, all idle non-Muslim levends [*bî-kâr ve bî-zan'ât levendlik üzere olan kefere-i fecere*] found in the streets, bazaars, taverns of Istanbul were arrested and executed publicly. Celâlzâde says that eight hundred of them were thus killed. According to the author, this was done to be a lesson to those who intended to provoke sedition. *Tabakat*, 176a.

¹²⁹⁰ For a theoretical discussion on mutiny, see, Elihu Rose, "The Anatomy of a Mutiny," *Armed Forces and Society*, vol. 8, no.4 (Summer 1982), p.562-3: "Mutiny is antithetical to an ethos whose fundamental tenets are duty, loyalty, honor, and patriotism, and the unit that participates in a mutiny brings discredit upon itself, its officers, and its service."

¹²⁹¹ Palmira Brummett, "Classifying Ottoman Mutiny," *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, vol.22, no.1 (1998), p.94. Brummett emphasizes that "these acts of rebellion signified the gap between expectations and realities in the Ottoman hierarchy. They served to illustrate the degree to which the state could tolerate rebellious behavior and the degree to which that behavior was perceived to put the state at risk."

¹²⁹² Sanuto, 37:143.

pillaged İbrahim's house, killing his mother.¹²⁹³ Unfavorable attitudes toward İbrahim are also observable through Venetian gossip from Istanbul. One such rumor was that when the commander of the janissaries complained that the state now had two heads, implying the excessive power of İbrahim, Süleyman had him strangled.¹²⁹⁴ Given the trust put on İbrahim by Süleyman, it seems quite natural that people were confused about the nature of authority which the Sultan appeared to share with his grand vizier. In a society for which old wisdom mattered, the appearance of a two-headed state was probably incomprehensible.¹²⁹⁵ Another rumor has it that the Sultan had an astrologist drowned because he spoke malevolently about İbrahim.¹²⁹⁶

Not even a strict proclamation such as the 1529 general-commandership decree prevented occasional protests. During the campaign of 1529, the janissaries challenged İbrahim Paşa in person. They managed to detain him in a church and insulted him. They wanted him to ask for gratuities from the Sultan on their behalf. They did not release him until he promised to do so, although he initially declined their request. Several officers were hurt in this minor mutiny.¹²⁹⁷ On the other hand, such mutinous behavior should perhaps not be over interpreted since there are other instances whereby vizieral

¹²⁹³ Sanuto, v.36:105. Palmira Brummett dwells on a similar situation when janissaries burned down the house of the grand vizier of the time, another taking justice in their own hands. Such violent behavior directed to the highest levels also signifies that high status did not mean safety and protection. Brummett, "Classifying Ottoman Mutiny," p.97.

¹²⁹⁴ Sanuto, 41:293.

¹²⁹⁵ Old wisdom dictated that "the house with two mistresses remains unswept; with two masters it falls to ruins." Nizam al-Mulk, *Book of Government*, p.158.

¹²⁹⁶ Sanuto, 39:268. Bragadin, 30 June 1525.

¹²⁹⁷ Lütü Paşa, p.267-8; *Münşe'at*, I:571. On the other hand, such behavior could be observed in any army of the time. In 1515, for example, Lord Mountjoy, the governor of Tournai, had a similar experience when discontented troops gathered in front of him shouting. For this instance, see Gervase Phillips, "To Cry 'Home! Home!': Mutiny, Morale, and Indiscipline in Tudor Armies," *The Journal of Military History*, vol.65, no.2 (Apr.2001), pp.318-9. Consequently, compromises were made and the mutineers were treated relatively mildly. Phillips asserts that military discipline very much based on negotiation. A few months later another mutiny occurred at Tournai over pay. This time troop captains and some soldiers remained on the side of the authorities. This time the town council had more strength in negotiations. Ringleaders were identified, arrested, and seven were executed. They were judged on individual basis rather than collectively. Majority was pardoned.

residences were attacked by groups of household regiments. One such example would be in the early months of Sultan Süleyman's reign. As Celâlzâde has it, some members of the cavalry regiment went to the houses of some viziers to create mischief, but the ringleaders were executed as soon as the Sultan heard of this.¹²⁹⁸

In his relation to the Signoria on 4 November 1524, Piero Zen dwells on the affection Süleyman has toward İbrahim, mentioning that they have been together since they were children. Zen describes İbrahim as a 29 year-old man "who does everything and what he wants is done."¹²⁹⁹ On the other hand, İbrahim was not the only grandee of the time who was attributed with so much power; his contemporary counterpart Wolsey has often been credited with almost monopolizing political power due to Henry VIII's trust in him.¹³⁰⁰ Later in the sixteenth century, Leicester's dominance at the court of Queen Elizabeth I was described as such: "[His] reign is so absolute in this place (as also in all other parts of the Court) as nothing can pass but by his admission."¹³⁰¹

The *relazione* presented by Piero Bragadin, who served as bailo in Istanbul, in Venice on 9 June 1526 is full of details on the person İbrahim Paşa and his relationship with Sultan Süleyman. Although his report includes all sorts of rumors and hearsay, it provides current perceptions on İbrahim exactly because of this uncritical feature. It is also noteworthy that the bailo has observed the formation of discontent with İbrahim Paşa's sudden rise and the gradual acceptance based on the favor and affection of the Sultan. Bragadin, describes İbrahim as "the heart of the strength of the *Signor*." According to the bailo, whatever İbrahim wished to do, he did. The Sultan would not do anything without his counsel. Bragadin says that İbrahim is of Parga, thus a Venetian subject.¹³⁰² According to the bailo, İbrahim was an elegant man, who took delight in many things; he read books on the Romans, the life of Alexander the Great, Hannibal,

¹²⁹⁸ *Tabakat*, 28b: " 'Atabe-yi 'ulyâ silâhdârlarından baz'-ı eşkiyâ cem'iyet ile paşalardan baz'ının evi üzerine varub nev'-i fesâda mübâşeret itdikleri bârgâh-ı 'âlempenâh-ı pâdişâh-ı sa'âdet-destgâha ma'rûz oldukda ağaları ma'zûl olub beş nefer silâhdâra siyâset buyrıldı."

¹²⁹⁹ Sanuto, 37:142.

¹³⁰⁰ Shepard, "Court Factions," p.741.

¹³⁰¹ As quoted in Adams, "Favourites and Factions at the Elizabethan Court," in Asch and Birke (eds), p.271.

¹³⁰² Sanuto, 41:526. Bragadin's relation, 9 June 1526.

history, wars, and philosophy; he liked to compose music with a Persian residing in his house. He liked to be informed about the rulers of the world, of sites, lands, and other things. Bragadin believed him to be well-educated, and reported that he was well-versed in the laws of faith. The bailo mentions that İbrahim bought “every fine object that he could.” He reports that İbrahim and the Sultan have been together since they were six years old; and dwells on the Sultan’s love toward İbrahim and how he cannot remain without him. As Bragadin has it, İbrahim frequently slept in the Palace with the Sultan on a bed next to his, and they were together everyday. The Sultan wrote him notes with his own hand and sent with a mute of his; in reply İbrahim either came in person or wrote him what to do. Bragadin also informs on the income of İbrahim, saying that the 150,000 ducats income consisted of two parts: 100,000 because he was vizier, and 50,000 because he was the governor-general of Rumelia. The bailo seems to have been impressed by the number and appearance of İbrahim’s slaves. Numbering 1,500, these young men, who carried gifts on their heads, were dressed in gold garments and silk and scarlet. The bailo mentions the “beautiful house” given to İbrahim by the Sultan, mentioning that it was restored after being partly ruined by the janissaries. Bragadin provides some family information saying that he was married but did not have children. His mother and two brothers were at the Palace. The mother, “who turned Turk” [fata turca] and stayed in a house nearby, did many favors to Christians. The father had a *sancak* near Parga with an annual income of 2,000 ducats. Defining him as friend of the Signoria, Bragadin describes İbrahim as a just and wise man. The bailo reports that İbrahim brought much jewels from Cairo, and presented some as gifts to the Sultan. As Bragadin has it, when the Sultan sent him to Cairo, he wanted to grant that land to İbrahim; but the grand vizier declined the offer, and administered the region rightly as he stayed there. He was first despised by many, but now that they have seen the Sultan likes him very much, they all made friends with him, just like the mother and the wife of the sultan, as well as the other two viziers.¹³⁰³

The “information” provided by Bragadin on İbrahim’s family members cannot be verified in Ottoman accounts. In this sense, the rumors on the family members can be regarded as demonstration of the perceived power and influence of İbrahim Paşa.

In his letter from Istanbul, dated 17 April 1529, Piero Zen reports that the Sultan made İbrahim Paşa “governor of his Empire” [*governador del suo imperio*]. This

¹³⁰³ *Ibid*, 527.

diploma gave İbrahim the authority to dismiss governors and governors-general. Along with the diploma, he was rewarded with a stable of horses, gowns and money.¹³⁰⁴

Two years after the 1529 diploma, Paolo Giovio's comments in his *Commentario* provide an instant impression of the "perfect couple":

I have heard from trustable people that he often says he has the right to the Roman Empire and the West by virtue of being the successor of Emperor Constantine who transferred the Empire to Constantinople; and be informed, Your Majesty, that he remains resolute on Christian affairs and minutely informed, and holds the disposition and forces to take on more fights in one stretch; he has marvelous understanding of everything, and is adorned with many virtues; he lacks the signs of vices of cruelty, avarice, and infidelity which were present in his predecessors Selim, Bayezid, Mehmed; furthermore, he is religious and liberal, with these two he will easily go to Heaven because the religion preaches that justice, temperance and liberality wins the hearts soldiers, and plants hope of some reward in all conditions of humanity who seek to enhance fortune; also gifted with the same virtue is İbrahim Paşa, who with exceptional and unprecedented authority governs everything; he is just in every action, and of unpretentious nature, and chaste, patient, and resolute in audiences; and the other Paşas honor him like a patron, and one can say that his authority is almost equal to that of the Signor both in affairs of war and in civil matters.¹³⁰⁵

İbrahim's famous speech to Hieronymus von Zara in 1533 perhaps illustrates best the position of the grand vizier and the point where his partnership with Süleyman:

¹³⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 50:248-9.

¹³⁰⁵ Giovio, *Commentario*, np: "*Inteso da huomini degni di fede, che spesso dice che à lui tocca di ragione l'Imperio Roma, et di tutto Ponente per esser successore di Constantino Imperatore qual transferrì l'Imperio in Constantinopoli, et sappia V.M. che delle cose Christiane ne resta risoluto, et minutamente informato, et tien'animo, et forze per imprendere piu guerre in uno tratto, ha sentimento meraviglioso di tutte le cose, et ornato di molte vertu, et manca di quelli segnalati vitii di crudelta, avaritia, et infidelta, quali sono stati in Selim, Baiazetto, et Mahometto, suoi antecessori, soprattutto è religioso, et liberale con le quali duoi parte facilmente al Cielo, perche la religione partorisce giustitia, et temperantia, et la liberalita compra gli animi de soldati, et semina speranza di certo premio in tutte le conditioni de gli huomini quali cercano per virtu salire à miglior fortuna,*¹³⁰⁵ *di simel vertu anchora dotato Hembraim Bassa qual con singular, et inaudita auttorita governa il tutto, costui in ogni attione è giusto, et di natura sobrio, et casto, paziente, et risoluto alle audentie, et gli altri due Bassa l'honorano come padrone, et si puo dir che di auttorita sia quasi eguale al Signore tanto nelle facende della guerra, quanto anchor a nelle cose civili.*" For a very similar passage, see "I Fatti di Solimano dopo la Presa di Rhodi fino all'anno XDXXXIII," in Sansovino, II, p.127. The similarity of discourse, even same wording at some passages, imply the influence of Giovio's work in later writings on Sultan Süleyman.

It is I who govern this vast empire. What I do is done; I have all the power, all offices, all the rule. What I wish to give is given and cannot be taken away; what I do not give is not confirmed by anyone. If the ever great Sultan wishes to give, or has given anything, if I do not please it is not carried out. All is in my hands, peace, war, treasure.¹³⁰⁶

These words sound rather bold and vain to be uttered by a servant of the Sultan, no matter how favored he is. İbrahim's biographer Jenkins argues that "İbrahim seems to have lost his head" in uttering such dangerous words; however these words actually echo those in the diploma of general-command. As such, this diploma implies more full delegation of sovereign responsibility rather than sharing of sovereign authority. The authority that is invested in İbrahim Paşa, in this sense, should be regarded as a necessity that comes along with the responsibility rather than bestowal of extraordinary power. Sultan Süleyman delegated responsibility and authority in regional terms starting with the beginning of his reign, as exemplified with the cases of Hayrbay and of Ahmed Paşa in Egypt. The uniqueness of İbrahim Paşa's diploma of general-command lies in its scope, which covers the whole realm. As such, this document is a demonstration of the self-positioning of Sultan Süleyman, with the contribution of his image-makers, above everything. This self-perception appears to be the foundation supporting the claims on universal sovereignty pursued in the 1530s, not least with the influence of İbrahim Paşa.

4.5. Conclusion

The process we have tried to uncover in this chapter shows that Sultan Süleyman gradually formed a team of his own by replacing men he overtook from his father with those he saw fit. The fact that he did not instantly attempt such revision suggests that he observed and evaluated the men around him through the course of his first couple of years, and that he tried to make informed choices. In the process, he would gradually come to delegate his imperial authority and responsibility to a man of his own choice. This process of gradual delegation of authority ultimately ends up almost in sharing the authority almost as equals.

¹³⁰⁶ As quoted in Jenkins, *İbrahim Paşa*, p.82.

In this chapter, we tried to trace the rise of İbrahim Paşa in the context of the major challenges faced by Süleyman during the first decade of his rule. İbrahim's sudden and unusual rise has been associated with the growth of the authority of the Sultan to an unprecedented level as to almost ignoring social and political norms. Ebru Turan argues in a recent study:

The sultan could disregard merit and competence as conditions of social mobility and constitute ranks and status through his own favor. In this way, the sultan's will and personal power came to supersede everything else, and he came to be defined as the sole force in the formation of public order.¹³⁰⁷

At first sight, it may seem as if this sort of empowering a “favorite” was regarded a natural right by Sultan Süleyman and reflect his “absolute” authority. On the other hand, the process we have tried to trace points at a gradual evolution whereby we see Süleyman *imposing* İbrahim on the relevant audience step by step – and over and over again – before actually creating him as his own “alter-ego.” The employment of a rhetoric aimed at persuasion along with successive ritual instances imply that Süleyman's seemingly arbitrary decision was not expected to be taken smoothly and willingly. His mission to Egypt, shortly after a wedding on imperial scale, appears as a device to consolidate the image of a powerful vizier through providing the opportunity to prove his meriting the position. The following campaign in 1526, as we shall see in the next chapter, proves İbrahim's military capability. By the return of this campaign, his handling the problems in the provinces provides the last step to the full transformation of the Sultan-Vizier relationship projected by the general-commandership decree of 1529.

İbrahim Paşa's rise involves a dual process whereby both he and Süleyman as his master rise. The appointment of İbrahim Paşa, in this respect, can be regarded as a self-confident move on the part of Sultan Süleyman to impose in full his own power and authority on the system that depended largely on precedence and conservation of convention. The preamble of the law code for Egypt can be regarded as a written statement of the level of self-confidence and self-positioning achieved by Sultan Süleyman at this point. In this sense, the document does not only serve to justify the unconventional rise of İbrahim Paşa, but also to impose, herald, and shape the evolving image of Sultan Süleyman. The extension of İbrahim's responsibilities and prerogatives

¹³⁰⁷ Turan, “Voices of Opposition,” p.32.

to cover the whole realm with the diploma of general command in 1529 seems to be a powerful expression of not only the sense of partnership between the two men, but also of the self-image of Sultan Süleyman as an all-powerful monarch above everything.

CHAPTER 5

“THE KING OF KINGS WHO CONQUERED HUNGARY”:

ŞEHİNŞÂH-I ENGÜRÜS-SİTÂN

*You know that new events bring new counsels.*¹³⁰⁸

5.1. Defining the Problem:

This chapter examines the 1526 campaign of Sultan Süleyman into Hungary. Known as the Mohacs campaign, the movement of Süleyman’s army has been the focus of many scholarly arguments. The defeat of the Hungarian army at the battlefield and the death of King Louis II as a consequence have led historians to regard the battle as a watershed in European history. This view has put the battle itself in the center of the campaign, as well as transforming the two hours of fighting into the reason of the “fall of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary.” In this respect, the “Mohacs campaign” came to be one of the building blocks of nationalist histories, either lamenting the “dreadful Turkish occupation of Hungary” or exalting the “glorious deeds of the Turks in Europe” depending on the window one prefers to look through.

Refraining from both discourses, this chapter argues that the 1526 campaign aimed neither at the total destruction of the Kingdom of Hungary nor the direct annexation of Hungarian lands into the Ottoman realm. The near-annihilation of the Hungarian army and the demise of Louis at the battle of Mohacs, as a consequence, brought Sultan Süleyman a new degree and type of power and prestige which was not

¹³⁰⁸ Charles V to Ferdinand I, dated 25 June 1525, from Toledo. William Bradford (ed.), *Correspondence of the Emperor Charles V and His Ambassadors at the Courts of England and France* (New York: AMS Press, 1971), p.137.

foreseen. In this respect, this chapter aims to examine the dynamics that led to the 1526 campaign, the motives and opportunities involved, the strategies employed as things developed. Observing the development of the campaign through the intentions, expectations, strategies and impressions of the various parties concerned, we shall try to arrive at a more complete picture and to see how this picture functioned within the image building process of Sultan Süleyman.

Until recently Hungarian historiography has often vilified the “Turks” and blamed Süleyman’s military machine for the “misfortune” and “sufferings” of the Hungarian “nation” for 150 years of “servitude”. Although many Hungarian historians have dwelled on the internal chaos and the inefficiency of contemporary Hungarian administration, the resulting analysis generally projected a tragedy caused by a terrorizing tyrant who took advantage of the weakness of his neighbor. In a volume published in 1982, Laszlo M. Alföldi, for example, simplified the issue to reflect an army of obedient and fanatically religious slaves under the command of an absolute ruler who was “able to command all the resources of his empire, human and material alike” defeating a greedy and self-centered European nobility which “wasted its energy on pleasures and Renaissance intrigue.” Alföldi also identified the battle of Mohacs with the famous Cannae, as “a modern battle of envelopment and annihilation with Sultan Süleyman appearing as the sixteenth-century Hannibal.”¹³⁰⁹ Leslie S. Domonkos, in an article in the same volume, spoke with an even more romantic nationalist tone asserting that after Mohacs the nation was divided, the country was mutilated and maimed, Hungary was no longer master of its own destiny and was dependent for its very existence.¹³¹⁰

Turkish historiography, on the other hand, has taken the accounts of Ottoman chronicles at face value and developed a glorifying approach which mirrors the epic approach mentioned above. In this version of the story, the 1526 campaign figures as a breaking point as well, often implying Ottoman supremacy in Europe achieved through the genius of Sultan Süleyman. The most recent example of such an approach can be

¹³⁰⁹ László M. Alföldi, “The Battle of Mohacs, 1526,” in Bak and Karaly (eds.), pp.190-1, 197.

¹³¹⁰ Leslie S. Domonkos, “The Battle of Mohacs as a Cultural Watershed,” in Bak and Karaly (eds.), p.213. Although there may be some truth in the judgment of Domonkos, a wide range of correspondence before, at, and after 1526 suggest the presence of an already divided “nation”.

found in the work of Muhittin Kapaşahin on the western policy of Sultan Süleyman.¹³¹¹ Based solely on a verbatim reflection of contemporary and near-contemporary Ottoman chronicles, Kapaşahin explains Sultan Süleyman's purpose in waging the 1526 campaign as "termination of the evils caused by neighboring states" and "ending Hungarian oppression, removing enemy threat from the lands of Islam, performing the duty of jihad, and taking the sun of Islam to farther lands."¹³¹² Tayyip Gökbilgin, a modern Turkish scholar who is an expert on the Süleymanic era, has suggested expanding the argument with the inclusion of the international issues of 1520s. Gökbilgin mentions the imperial diets, especially the Diet of Speyer in 1526 and the discussions on Hungary at these diets, Papal-Hungarian relations, other diplomatic relations, Hungary's internal condition saying that all these factors can help shed light on the issue in an expanded context. However he, too, dismisses them arguing that they are only background issues which did not have direct influence on Ottoman politics.¹³¹³

Such quasi-nationalist approaches simultaneously exalt and demean both parties.¹³¹⁴ Instead of adopting an ideologically loaded approach which inevitably revolves around a victor versus victim duality, this chapter considers various viewpoints to get closer to the actual view as contemporaries saw it in 1526. In this respect, the approach of recent scholarship, which has broken the restricted viewpoints of nationalist discourses and explanations revolving around Ottoman expansionist imperial discourses, has been insightful in the main argument of this chapter. Studies by Rhoads Murphey [2001] and Feridun Emecen [2007] have approached earlier evaluations with caution, warning against analysis which look through the lens of 1541 and what happened thereafter. Instead, their work was prompted by the context and prevailing

¹³¹¹ Muhittin Kapaşahin, *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Batı Politikası*, (İstanbul: Gökkuşbu, 2008). Kapaşahin ultimately emphasizes that "It was Sultan Süleyman who added Hungary, an esteemed part of Europe, and spread Ottoman fame of glory in the world through the application of a strong policy against Charles V, a [ruler] to whom all Europeans submitted," *ibid.*, p.349.

¹³¹² *Ibid.*, pp.94, 208, respectively.

¹³¹³ Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan Siyaseti," p.12.

¹³¹⁴ For a brief summary of such approaches and the drawbacks of such approaches, see Emecen, "*Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzüklerini Açan Savaş Moğaç, 1526,*" pp.45-6. Another quite valid criticism voiced by Emecen is the neglected nature of military and political history in favor of social history.

conditions pertaining specifically to the 1520s. These scholars conclude that Süleyman's actions in Hungary were not based on a premeditated grand design that would intentionally lead to eventual annexation and direct rule, but were decided as situation required.¹³¹⁵ Feridun Emecen emphasizes that although the battle of Mohacs has come to be regarded as a "frequently referred beginning" which determined the framework of the gradual development of Ottoman administration and policy in Hungary, it should nevertheless not be forgotten that the direct result was the fall of the "ancient Hungarian Kingdom" and not Ottoman occupation.¹³¹⁶ Rhoads Murphey argues that Süleyman's Hungarian policy was more a situationally developed one, rather than a grand design to occupy Hungary. He suggests that the main element of Ottoman success in the Balkans from 1430 onwards was their adopting the role of the protector of Orthodox population against a potential Latin invasion. In this respect, Murphey argues, Süleyman took care not to offend his Christian subjects by engaging in direct offensive action without good reason and/or provocation/justification.¹³¹⁷ According to Murphey, the aim in the aftermath of Mohacs was not annexation, but "pacification and stabilization of the frontier through nurturing concessionary regimes."¹³¹⁸

The place of the Battle of Mohacs in terms Ottoman policy on Hungary has been evaluated differently in the debate between "buffer-zone" and "gradual incorporation."¹³¹⁹ Perjes problematizes the issue by rejecting what he coins the "Mohacs Complex" prevailing in Hungarian historiography which links the fall of the kingdom with one single battle. Perjes opposes this "fixation on one event" along with the humiliation, suffering, loss of life and goods that preceded and followed it; and proposes looking at the wider context between 1521 and 1541 to see that the initial Ottoman intention was not to destroy and annex Hungary but to make it a "buffer

¹³¹⁵ Emecen, "*Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526,*" pp.45-92; Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary," pp.197-221.

¹³¹⁶ Emecen, "*Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526,*" p.48

¹³¹⁷ Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary," p.199.

¹³¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.211-2.

¹³¹⁹ Please refer to Chapter 3, pp.229-30.

state.”¹³²⁰ Geza Perjes defines the Ottoman objective to force Hungary into peace through destroying its army and occupation of its capital.¹³²¹ After detailed analysis Perjes concludes that although Mohacs was a military victory, it was a political defeat. Since the King was dead, the road to peace negotiations had come to a dead end, clearing Ferdinand’s road into the midst of Hungary.¹³²² In accordance with Perjes, Gustave Bayerle argues that the 1526 campaign was a “punitive expedition” which did not aim at major territorial expansion. Bayerle is guided by the fact that the campaign came to a halt and Ottomans returned. In his view, the campaign accomplished more than what was expected.¹³²³ Halil Inalcık argues that the initial Ottoman intention was to keep Hungary as a vassal state like Moldovia since direct rule would be too difficult and too expensive.¹³²⁴

Pal Fodor, on the other hand, argues that Ottomans intended to occupy Buda as early as 1521. He evaluates the 1526 campaign as part of the gradual annexation strategy of the Ottomans, arguing that a vassal state would cost more than direct occupation.¹³²⁵ The decision to take Buda, according to Fodor, had a dual intention: “the conquest of the country through the occupation of Vienna and the diminution of the excessive financial costs caused by the sustenance of a vassal in Hungary.”¹³²⁶ Following Fodor’s position, Szakaly sees the 1521-1541 period as gradual conquest.¹³²⁷

¹³²⁰ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p. xv.

¹³²¹ *Ibid*, p.76. Here Perjes also introduces a theory of “Süleyman’s offer” which intends to make Hungary a vassal state to use for transit.

¹³²² *Ibid*, pp.270-1.

¹³²³ Gustave Bayerle, “One Hundred Fifty Years of Frontier Life in Hungary,” in Bak and Kiraly (eds), p.227.

¹³²⁴ Inalcık, *Classical Age*, p.35. If Lütfi Paşa is correct in saying that 20,000 men were left at Buda in 1541, the point can be well-understood. The point is also emphasized in the 1541 proclamation of victory. *Münşe ‘at* I:551.

¹³²⁵ Fodor, “Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary, 1520-1541,” p.271-2. Also see Peter Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship: The Integration of Hungary into the Habsburg Monarchy in the 16th Century,” *The World of Emperor Charles V*, Wim Blockmans and Nicolette Mout (eds.) (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2004), p.253, whereby the author evaluates the open conquest of Buda in 1541 as “presumably that was his intention from the beginning.”

¹³²⁶ Fodor, “Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary,” p.272.

He suggests that Ottoman occupation of Hungary started in 1526 with the occupation of Syrmia:

Consequently, the occupation of Syrmia by the Turks should be considered as an event of great moment in the history of the Turkish occupation of Hungary. To such an extent that in our opinion, it would be more appropriate if Hungarian historiography in the future, dated the beginning of the Turkish rule over Hungary from the occupation of Syrmia, rather than that of Buda. That is, from 1526 rather than 1541.¹³²⁸

Looking back from 1541, the period 1521-1541 actually gives the impression of “gradual conquest”. However, if we try to move along with the historical conditions building on from 1520 on, the huge step of the establishment of the province of Buda in 1541 should be seen not in terms of Ottoman ambitions of expansion *per se*, but in the context of Habsburg confrontation. After 1526, Süleyman’s imperial action in Hungarian soil is closely parallel to Ferdinand’s attacks. Caroline Finkel, for instance, asserts that Ferdinand’s intentions on Buda and the Hungarian crown have caused a change of direction in Ottoman policy toward Hungary. Finkel states that the death of Louis II at Mohacs has brought the Ottomans face to face with Habsburg power while they expected to deal with an independent Hungary.¹³²⁹ The same seems to have been true in 1541. The difference is that finding a legitimate and powerful local magnate was not as easy this time. Therefore, they had to stay to block Ferdinand.

Ottoman chronicles mention the performance of the usual post-conquest actions regarding Buda only after the 1541 campaign, which clearly targeted Buda itself. Lütfi Paşa, for example, lists the usual steps taken: appointment of janissaries and others for protection, procurement of victuals and arms, conversion of churches into mosques. According to the author, with the appointment of a governor-general, Buda was directly turned into an Ottoman province.¹³³⁰ The general tendency in European conquests was tying the conquered town or region to the province of Rumelia. In this sense, the creation of a separate province and the appointment of a governor-general [*beğlerbeği*]

¹³²⁷ Szakály, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary*, p.101.

¹³²⁸ *Ibid*, p.106. He also argues that the tri-partite division of Hungary should be dated to 1526.

¹³²⁹ Caroline Finkel, *Osman’s Dream* (London: John Murray, 2006), pp.123-4.

¹³³⁰ Lütfi Paşa, p.294. Drawing upon these actions, Fodor sees 1541 as the turning point. Fodor, “Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary,” p.274.

rather than a governor [*sancak beği*] for Buda was out of ordinary practice. Geza David explains this seeming anomaly through the conviction that only an official at the level of governor-general could match the power of Habsburgs, both in military and diplomatic terms.¹³³¹ David's findings about the lack of *hinterland* and unpreparedness of the treasury for the appointment of a governor-general¹³³² reflect a spontaneous decision rather than a step in a decades-long plan.

In this chapter, we shall examine the 1526 campaign in three respects to understand both the contemporary dynamics shaping the western policy of Sultan Süleyman, and the impact of the 1526 campaign on the image and the reputation of the Sultan. An examination of target identification shall provide insight into current political dynamics and Süleyman's position within the current conjecture. An examination of the campaign itself shall help highlight the situational – though not coincidental – nature of the campaign. This will also let us see that each phase is loaded with meaning. Lastly, we shall look at how this campaign was projected and perceived by contemporaries.

5.2. Identifying the Target

A brief survey of contemporary Ottoman sources points at a specific geographical target, namely Buda.¹³³³ However, since authors of these accounts were already aware of the result of the campaign, naming of Buda as target seems to be backward projection

¹³³¹ Geza David, "Ottoman Administrative Strategies in Western Hungary," in *Studies in Honour of Professor V.L. Menage*, Colin Heywood and Colin Imber (eds), (Istanbul, 1994), p.32. Soon the standard procedure changed with the addition of more provinces through the end of the sixteenth century, as David explains them all. And the situation was not unique to European provinces, for the number of provinces in 1520 was six, and at the end of Süleyman's reign there were 16. Inalcık also explains that the establishment of a province [*eyâlet*] was a long process. The case in Bosnia, for example, lasted from 1463 to 1580. This process was governed by military conditions Inalcık, *Classical Age*, p.105.

¹³³² David, "Ottoman Administrative Strategies," p.32. David suggests that this was because there was not always harmony between political decisions and financial considerations.

¹³³³ *Münşe'at*, I:554; Bostan (MK), 60a; Lütfi Paşa, p.258.

rather than an ultimate target deliberately planned. The campaign diary, for example, introduces the intention of the campaign under the title of “destruction of Buda” [*kasd-i tahrîb-i Budin*].¹³³⁴ Although, the diary sets the destination as Buda at the beginning of the text, it is later mentioned that Süleyman decided to move on to Buda on 30 July [20 Shawwal], after the fall of Petervarad [Varad, Varadin, Petrovaradin].¹³³⁵ Such inconsistencies and *ex post* nature of the accounts call for an examination of the reasoning beneath the strategic targeting process as well as the various discursive and situational factors involved in order to better understand the motives of the 1526 campaign.

5.2.1. Motive

The motives of the 1526 campaign, as reflected in contemporary Ottoman accounts, can be examined on two levels. The first level involves what we might call legitimizing motives while the second level involves the more practical or situational motives.

On the first level, authors define two main driving forces under the decision to wage war: “the sake of religion” and “the sake of the realm.”¹³³⁶ These two legitimizing motives seem to complement each other in the accounts, as they are listed starting from the generic moving on to the specific. In other words, Süleyman was primarily ‘moved by the wish to perform jihad’ in the general sense. Once this was set, then it was obvious to contemporary authors that he would wish to pursue the effort against Hungary because of ‘its proximity and the imminent danger it posed to the Ottoman

¹³³⁴ *Münşe‘at*, I:554. However, we should keep in mind that the campaign diary also reflects the end-result rather than the initial intention. There are several reports in Sanuto as early as February and March naming Buda as the destination, see for example: Sanuto, 41:139 from Šibenik, 24 March, as information received from Bosnia. But, then, some reports name Puglia, Transylvania, and even Rome. The reports of Zen and Bragadin from Istanbul in April 1526 name the target as Buda. According to Zen, on 16 April, the Sultan carried with him 1,200,000 ducats. According to calculations already made, the army would be in Buda in 86 days. *Ibid*, 409.

¹³³⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:559. Kemalpaşazade places the decision after the conquest of various Sarmian castles. KPZ, X:277.

¹³³⁶ For a discussion on these conceptual categories, see Chapter 3.

realm'.¹³³⁷ Similar to the cases of 1521 and 1522, the repetition of these discursive motives at the beginning of contemporary accounts suggests that these were inevitable elements in the maintenance and enhancement of the image of the Sultan.

On the second level, we find the more practical and situational motives involved in the decision of the 1526 campaign. Ottoman accounts reflect two main motives, or rather causes, on this level: liberation and avenging of King Francis of France, and initiating offensive action in the face of a potential united Christian offense. Both claims have to do with the political scene of the time. Although there is no direct evidence that the growing Habsburg dominance was perceived as a major threat by the Ottomans at this point, the fact that both claims involve Habsburg presence suggests that the campaign may partly be regarded as a precaution taken against Habsburg domination.

French provocation as a motive underlying the 1526 campaign may at first sight seem like a romantic story with a propagandistic touch. 'A quest to save a major European ruler who is imprisoned by an invader' functions as a noble cause for waging war. On the other hand, contemporary evidence reflects the larger issue at hand. We shall now look at the contemporary sources to understand Sultan Süleyman's position in the political turmoil of Europe in the context of Habsburg-Valois rivalry, as well as the impact of this rivalry in the Ottoman decision to attack Hungary in 1526.

Ottoman accounts introducing the French connection as a more specific reason of the campaign dwell on the nature of the conflict between Charles V and Francis I, which eventually led to the involvement of Sultan Süleyman.¹³³⁸ According to the

¹³³⁷ According to Kemalpaşazade, Sultan Süleyman's intention was to clear the surroundings of the Abode of Islam from "unbelief". The author takes up the the theme of "clearance" throughout the text by references to "cleansing" [*pâk*] as fortresses are taken along the way. KPZ, X:201. Bostan also marks this as the grand aim of the campaign. He explains the motives of the campaign beginning from the general to the specific. In other words, he starts with Süleyman's commitment to jihad, presents the target of Hungary as part of the jihad efforts and then specifies Buda as the target. Bostan (MK), 60b. Celâlzâde attributes the campaign decision to a general wish for ghaza and the objective as the "destruction of the land of Hungary." *Tabakat*, 132a. The theme of the "destruction of Hungary" is one that figures frequently in foreign comments as well as Ottoman ones. Even right after the acquisition of Belgrade, we find the claim to return for the destruction of Hungary. On 21 October 1521, Halil Çavuş visited the Collegio as ambassador of Süleyman to Venice. He told the Venetians that the Sultan would return with his army to avenge his greatest enemy Hungary because the damage he received from them was not little. Sanuto, 32:68.

¹³³⁸ KPZ, X:219-20; Nasuh, 98b-99a; Sâlih (TSK), 11b-13a.

author, the Sultan has promised to save the king of France from the king of Spain. This promise was given upon the French King's request from the Sultan because "he demonstrated his devotion to the Sultan."¹³³⁹ Kemalpaşazade's account, which echoes in those of Nasuh and Sâlih, starts with an explanation the significance of the imperial crown. The author describes the struggle between the two kings over the crown going on from the death of the "Çesâr" [Emperor], as well as over the associated territories. According to Kemalpaşazade, as part of the ongoing wars "the lord of Spain" [*İspanya beği*] had victory over the "lord of France" [*França beği*] with the help of Hungary. The author, mistakenly, relates that Francis I managed to escape, and took refuge in a castle where he was trapped.¹³⁴⁰ After explaining the context of the French appeal, Kemalpaşazade dwells on the decision of Francis I and his advisors to approach the Ottoman court to ask for help to "overcome and avenge the enemy" through a "demonstration of attachment" [*izhâr-ı intisâb*]. The author also relates Francis's proposition that the Sultan should deal with Hungary [*def' ü ref'*] so that the French would be strong enough to fight the force of Charles.¹³⁴¹ Salih Çelebi dwells in length on the nature of the imperial crown and bases the Habsburg-Valois conflict on the claims of each party on the crown. The author relates the pressure on Francis I due to the plans and actions of Charles V, with the cooperation of Louis II, to occupy his land. According to the author, the French King appealed to the Sultan for assistance in this matter.¹³⁴² These accounts reflect a deep-rooted conflict which has been going on for decades both in terms of titular and territorial claims. Although Francis I is not acknowledged as the "prisoner" of Charles V, he is presented as being trapped without

¹³³⁹ KPZ, X:218. Also see Emecen, "Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526," p.51-3; Timothy Hampton, "Turkish Dogs: Rabelais, Erasmus, and the Rhetoric of Alterity," *Representations*, no.41 (Winter, 1993), p.63; Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan Siyaseti," pp.9-10; Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, pp.245.

¹³⁴⁰ KPZ, X:220: "Bâzû-yı savleti sınıb bârû-yı şevketi yıkıldıktan sonra kendüsi kaçmış, kâr u bâr-ı karârı saçmış, varmış bir hisâr-ı üstüvâra girmiş, sûr içinde mahsûr olmuş kalmışdı."

¹³⁴¹ *Ibid*, 220-1. Nasuh follows this account. Nasuh, 98b-99a.

¹³⁴² Sâlih (TSK), 11b-13a. The author does not mention the Battle of Pavia, or Francis's imprisonment.

the capability to resist. The appeal to Sultan Süleyman, in this respect, positions the Sultan as the only power with the capability to challenge Charles V.¹³⁴³

One of two French envoys sent to Istanbul, following Pavia and the imprisonment of Francis I, was killed on the way around Bosnia; but the second envoy Jean Frangepán managed to reach Istanbul in December 1525 with a letter requesting the Sultan's help.¹³⁴⁴ Secondary literature attributes the authorship of the letter to Francis I's mother, Louise of Savoy, who was regent at the time of Francis's imprisonment after the Battle of Pavia. The letter asked for the cooperation of the Sultan to block the growing power of Charles V. Süleyman is said to have promised her a campaign on Hungary, which was an imperial ally, to break the Emperor's power. However, Francis's captivity was over by then and he supposedly sent a letter of thanks to the Sultan rejecting the offer of help.¹³⁴⁵

One contemporary source points at the involvement of the Queen Mother. The report of Ferdinand's envoys to Istanbul in 1533, Jerome de Zara and Cornelius Schepper, relates that İbrahim Paşa told them how the Queen Mother sent a letter to the Sultan informing him about the captivity of his son and how she asked for Süleyman's help to restore his son, the "King of the Franks". The letter has not survived; the claim is based on the words of the envoys.¹³⁴⁶ On the other hand, Süleyman's letter of reply to the French approach, published in Charriere's *Negotiations*, is addressed to Francis himself. This letter is dated February 1526 [Rabi II 932]. It clearly expresses that a French envoy named *Frankipan* has come to the Sultan's court, bringing news of an

¹³⁴³ The ongoing nature of the struggle for emperorship, as projected by Ottoman authors, is one of the reflections of Ottoman rejection of Charles V's status as Emperor.

¹³⁴⁴ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.117.

¹³⁴⁵ Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan Siyaseti," pp.9-10. In this letter, Louise of Savoy pointed out to the fact that unless the Sultan helped, Charles would "become the master of the world." Also see, Jenkins, *İbrahim Pasha*, pp.59-60; Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.245.

¹³⁴⁶ E. Charriere, *Negotiations de la France dans le Levant*, vol.1, (New York: Burt Franklin, 1965), p.114 : "*Post hæc tempora accidit quod rex Franciæ captus fuit. Tunc materregis ad ipsius Cæsaris Turcarum majestatem scripsit hoc modo: Filius meus rex Franciæ captus est a Carolo rege Hispaniæ, speravique ipse liberaliter ipsum dimitteret, quod non fecit, sed injuste cum eo egit. Configumus ad te, magnum Cæsarem, ut tu liberalitatem tuam ostendas, et filium meum redimas. Tunc magnus Cæsar commotus et iratus, Carolo Cæsari cogitavit omni modo ipsi inferre bellum.*"

enemy assault on Francis's land. Furthermore, through the envoy Süleyman learned that Francis was in captivity and that he requested the Sultan's help for his "liberation" [*halâs*]. In the letter, Süleyman first consoles Francis on the grounds that what happened to him was not an anomaly, for it was a normal thing for rulers to be defeated and to be taken prisoner.¹³⁴⁷ The rest of the letter is an expression of Süleyman's ever readiness for war, both to drive the enemy away and to conquer new lands as he followed the footsteps of his predecessors.¹³⁴⁸ Although the letter does not explicitly talk about attacking Hungary, it does hint at some military action on behalf of the French king if necessary. We should also note that the honorific "bestower of crowns" [*tâc-bahş*] figures among the titles listed for the Sultan.

The presence of a French envoy in Istanbul to ask for assistance against Charles V is also confirmed by the reports of the Venetian bailo Bragadin, dated 29 December 1525. According to Bragadin's report the initial preparations for a campaign were already on the way by then. Bragadin informs about the commands sent to the provinces to organize for the march, as well as the issuing of extraordinary tax of 15 aspers per person to be collected throughout the realm. The bailo also mentions the presence of a French envoy, who urged the campaign. The French envoy, according to this report, proposed to wage war both by land and by sea to "liberate his King." If the Sultan did not help, the envoy argued, his King would have to accord with the *Imperador* who would then become the "ruler of the world."¹³⁴⁹ The French were probably not entirely wrong in having this impression. The victory at Pavia and the imprisonment of the French king seem to have accelerated the efforts of Charles's advisors to make him the *monarch* of the world. In a letter to Charles after the battle of Pavia, Ferdinand wrote

¹³⁴⁷ A similar instance, between Timur and his prisoner Bayezid I, is found in sixteenth-century chronicles. An anonymous chronicle presents Timur thanking God for bestowing him kingship and power. Timur, then, argues that what happened to Bayezid may have been because of his neglect of gratitude to God. But then he consoles his prisoner reminding that fortune can be recovered as long as one is alive: "*İy karındaş, gam yime, âdem ki sağ ola devlet bulunur deyiüb teselli eyledi.*" *Anonim Osmanlı Kroniği (1299-1512)*, Necdet Öztürk (ed) (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2000), facsimile p. 27b. For a similar version of the episode, see, Lütfi Paşa, p.168.

¹³⁴⁸ Charriere, *Négociations*, I:118-9

¹³⁴⁹ Sanuto, 40:824. Next day, Bragadin wrote that the Ottomans did not want to give leave to the French envoy before the arrival of the Venetian ambassador. *Ibid*, 894. For the concerns about Charles V becoming the "ruler of the world" as attributed to Louise of Savoy, see note 1345 above.

him that he was now the “*señor*” of the whole world.¹³⁵⁰ In his report dated 8 January 1525, the imperial envoy to the Pope stated that the only way to solve the problem of the Lutherans and to deal with the *Turks* was to increase of His Majesty’s power. Gattinara, too, found this to be true.¹³⁵¹ In his official report on Pavia, Alfonso de Valdes, an influential Latin secretary in the imperial chancellery, referred to the Spaniards as the “elect people of God.” According to Valdes, the victory at Pavia set Charles free to attack the *Turks*, to recover Constantinople and Jerusalem. In this way, Charles was to become the one shepherd of the one flock. In his consultation in July 1526, Gattinara also urged Charles V to this direction.¹³⁵²

In a later report, Bragadin informs that the French envoy was sent back in the beginning of February 1526 with a commandment with gold seal in a crimson sack. He was given 10,000 aspers and a robe of honor.¹³⁵³ Bragadin’s letter is dated 5 February 1526, coinciding with the date on the official letter to the French king. An entry by Sanuto on 28 March 1526 is worth noting in this respect. Sanuto mentions meeting a man named *Zuan di Frangipani*, a relative of Christopher Frangepán, who was in Constantinople in the name of the French king. According to Sanuto, he was now on his way to France to present the letter of the Sultan to the King. According to the above-mentioned Frangepán, the Ottomans wished to have two armies, one against Italy and one against Wallachia. However, in his registry Sanuto notes that this information was not true because it contradicted the bailo’s letter dated 5 February.¹³⁵⁴ This Zuan di

¹³⁵⁰ Rodriguez- Salgado, “Obeying the Ten Commandments,” pp.42-3. The letter is dated 2 April 1525.

¹³⁵¹ John M. Headley, “Germany, the Empire and *Monarchia* in the Thought and Policy of Gattinara,” in *Church, Empire and the World: The Quest for Universal Order, 1520-1640* (Vermont: Ashgate Variorum, 1997), p.VI:28.

¹³⁵² Headley, “The Habsburg World Empire and the Revival of Ghibellinism,” in *ibid*, p.V:104.

¹³⁵³ Sanuto, 41:96.

¹³⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 119: “*Dapoi andoe in palazzo col Principe i Consieri e parte dil Collegio con Il Capi di X, et alditeno uno Zuan di Frangipani fo fiol di conte Andrea, zerman dil cnte Bernardin, padre dil conte Cristoforo et nobile nostro, alozato in caxa de sier Nicolo Michiel qu. Sier Francesco è a la Raxon nuove, per esser suo parente, el qual vien da Constantinopoli, stato lì per nome dil re di Franza, partì il Zuoba grasso che saria a di 8 Fevrer et va in Franza a trovar il Re, porta li mandati e lettere dil Signor scritte et in panno d’oro bollate.*”

Frangipani whom Sanuto met in Venice at the end of March is no doubt Jean Frangepán – or *Frankipan* – identified in the sources mentioned above. Since he was personally involved in the discussions at the Ottoman court regarding the issue, his information may well reflect the initial plan which seems to have engaged a more direct way to block Charles V. The impact of the letter to Sultan Süleyman is also apparent in terms of motivation, even if it is not the reason underlying the 1526 campaign. Although Francis I was still captive while negotiations continued, the Treaty of Madrid was signed in January between Charles and Francis. The French king was free in March 1526, which would have given Süleyman time and opportunity to cancel the campaign if the sole motive was the liberation of the King of France. In other words, the first proposition of the approach which was to liberate Francis I was invalidated by the time the Ottoman army departed.¹³⁵⁵

The second proposition which was to prevent Charles V from growing over-powerful as to “become the ruler of the world” was still valid, though. The gradual recognition of the Habsburg problem is apparent in Kemalpaşazade’s description of Charles V. According to the author, Charles was the “Lord of Spain” [*İspanya beği*] as well as the “King of the realm of Germany” [*melik-i mülk-i Alaman*]. He possessed much wealth and many brave soldiers. He was so oppressive that other rulers complained from him and could not stand him. According to the author, he was always ready for war, both on land and sea. Furthermore, he was always ready to attack on Muslims and *Rûm*, only waiting for an opportunity.¹³⁵⁶ On one hand, this account points at the threat posed by Charles V on the Ottomans. On the other hand, it introduces him as a universal problem. In this respect, Süleyman takes the center stage in the solution of not only an Ottoman problem but a universal one.

¹³⁵⁵ In the beginning of April, Venice sent a letter to her ambassador in Istanbul informing him about the liberation of the King of France. Sanuto, 41:141. Speculatively, the letter may not have arrived before the army set off and it might have been too late to cancel the whole operation when it did. But if we consider Jean Frangepán’s testimony to Sanuto which mentioned two destinations – Puglia and Wallachia – with the removal of the immediate objective of liberating Francis, Süleyman might have preferred concentrating on Hungary through Wallachia with full force.

¹³⁵⁶ KPZ, X:218-9. The author also points at the potential threat and the vanity of that threat through analogy; as he talks about a past Crusade relating how the “Germans” passed through the Bosphorus, how they fought with Kılıç Arslan at Konya, and aimed at Jerusalem, and how the effort came to be unsuccessful as their king died.

The involvement of a French envoy and the presence of a letter of proposed cooperation harbors little doubt under the light of these clues. The authorship of the letter, on the other hand, will probably remain a puzzle until the original document is found – if ever. So far modern research has taken Charriere’s publication as evidence. If the letter was actually written by Louise of Savoy, it should be seen as part of the queen’s efforts to save his son rather than a direct attempt at Ottoman alliance or provocation for that matter. It should be noted that Süleyman was not the only major contemporary power holder she applied to. She also got in touch with England, Venice and Rome during the same period. In June 1525, she proposed an alliance to the Pope and Venice to drive the imperial troops out of Italy to put pressure on Charles to release Francis. Although Venice seemed to agree eventually, the Pope drew back. From Henry VIII she got a promise that he would influence Charles to liberate Francis.¹³⁵⁷ In the letter to Süleyman, the Sultan is actually positioned as a figure of counter-balance. In other words, Süleyman is presented as a major player in the political arena, who is the only one that can face the power of the Emperor. In this sense, Süleyman figures not as the “cruel infidel tyrant” but a powerful legitimate monarch who is expected to restore the power balance in Europe.

The second practical or situational motive of the 1526 campaign seems to be initiating offensive action in the face of a potential united Christian offense. According to Lütü Paşa, after the conquest of Rhodes, Rhodians who took refuge in Europe blamed Europeans for not helping them and letting the “religion of Christ” be crushed by the *Türk*. Upon this the power holders of Europe contemplated that as the *Türk* already captured Belgrade and Rhodes, he would move further unless he was stopped. Thus they made peace and asked for three years to prepare. They sent to the King of Hungary to let him know that they wanted him as “leader” [*baş ve buğ*] in their efforts to “erase the *Türk* from the face of the world.” France, Spain, the Pope and all Christendom would provide him with soldiers and goods. They expected him to recover Rhodes [*Sencan*]. Thus a general call-to-arms [*nefir-i ‘amm*] was announced. The people contributed much to these efforts; even women sold their stools and yarn to contribute saying “*el-gaza*”. Upon hearing these preparations, the Sultan decided to

¹³⁵⁷ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.244.

move on ghaza himself.¹³⁵⁸ Lütfi Paşa's employment the word *Türk* to refer to the Ottomans parallels contemporary European accounts which refer to the Ottomans as *Turk*. Using the word several times as he relates the united plans of Europeans, Lütfi Paşa seems to have authenticized the episode in contemporary mentality. In other words, he employs the common European terminology to denote his own society. On the other hand, he uses the word *gaza*, in other words Ottoman-Islamic terminology, to denote the military plans of Christians against his own society. This can be taken as a case of mirroring conventional terms and values by Lütfi Paşa to emphasize the scale of the threat posed by Hungary through the possibility of a united Christian initiative; which eventually justifies Süleyman's military action as a preventive precaution.

Ottoman concern about the intentions of Charles V and Clement VII was not totally rootless. Not only did Charles play for world monarchy, but he targeted the Ottomans to achieve this end, as the above stated evidence exemplifies. One of the first actions of Pope Clement as he ascended the papal throne had been to send papal legates to European courts to urge them to stop fighting each other and unite against the *Turk*.¹³⁵⁹ After the battle of Pavia, Charles V is said to have confessed to the Polish ambassador that "now that he had the upper hand, he hoped to secure peace in Christendom so as to join Ferdinand and the King of Poland in their fight against the *Turk*."¹³⁶⁰ A letter from Madrid to Venice, dated 7 April 1525, reports a Papal envoy to Charles offering to unite for defense against the common enemies. Charles was sympathetic to the offer; furthermore he replied that he was not only pleased to unite in defense but also in offense against the common enemy.¹³⁶¹ Among the clauses of the

¹³⁵⁸ Lütfi Paşa, pp.254-6. For a reference of the intentions of the Grand Master of Rhodes to go against the *Turk*, see Sanuto, 40:272. The news is from Toledo, dated 16 October 1525.

¹³⁵⁹ Rodriguez-Salgado, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.39. Clement VII was elected Pope in November 1523 and the legates were sent in March 1524.

¹³⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.43. The Polish King, on the other hand, would sign a treaty with the Ottomans soon. The three-year treaty was signed on 18 October 1525 [1 Muharram 932] and it was to be confirmed three years later in October 1528, extending it for another five years. None of the clauses in the text imply an extraordinary situation, it reads just like any *ahdname*. For the text see, Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Venedik Devlet Arşivindeki Vesikalar Külliyyatında Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Devri Belgeleri," *Belgeler*, vol.1, no.1-2 (1964), I:2a; Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, 222-26.

¹³⁶¹ Sanuto, 38:299.

peace agreement between Charles V and Francis I, there is one referring to the Pope's convening all Christian princes to make universal peace in order to go against the *Turk*.¹³⁶² In March 1526, both Charles V and Clement VII were sending envoys to European courts to ask for anti-Ottoman support for Hungary. Although this is a defensive measure taken by the emperor and the pope, Ottoman authors may have perceived it as war preparation. The truth was far from the building of a united Christian front against the Ottomans. A front was building all right, but this was an anti-Habsburg front consisting of France, Pope, Venice, Florence and Francesco Sforza who eventually came together under the League of Cognac on 22 May 1526.¹³⁶³

5.2.2. Opportunity

The political situation in Hungary and in Europe in general seems to have provided an opportunity for Sultan Süleyman to probe going further in the west. The loss of border castles, internal strife, and financial hardship were factors weakening the potential of Hungarian resistance to an Ottoman attack. With Charles V and Francis I continuously in conflict, the prospect of foreign help was not much promising either. As in 1521, the struggle going on in Europe provided an opportunity for an Ottoman attack. Peter Wilson explains the conflicts in 1520s as follows:

Before 1530 the incomplete nature of European states affected the international context of war. The distinction between civil, or internal, and international, or external, wars remained ill-defined, while the spread of confessional strife created new links between domestic and foreign conflicts. Nonetheless, the Reformation did further the division of Europe into distinct political units by shattering the traditional concept of a universal Christendom and elevating feuds between individual princes, aristocrats and cities to inter-state wars.¹³⁶⁴

With the fall of Belgrade and Sabacz the outer line of the Hungarian defense system almost collapsed totally. The defense system established by Corvinus consisted of two lines of fortresses. The outer defense line was aimed to ward off direct attacks,

¹³⁶² *Ibid*, 40:891.

¹³⁶³ Rodriguez-Salgado, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.54.

¹³⁶⁴ Wilson, "European Warfare 1450-1815," p.183.

whereas the inner defense line functioned to mobilize troops. Along the line Zimony [Zemun, Semlin] and Szabacs were already lost in 1521, followed by Orsova, Knin and Scardona in 1522, Szöreny [Severin] in 1524. Sirmium fortresses of Petervarad and Slankamen [Szalánkamen] fell in 1526. The fall of these fortresses meant not only the loss of strongholds, but also the soldiers and the material sources attached to them. With the collapse of the southern defense line, the zone which was to protect and defend the kingdom was lost.¹³⁶⁵

We have already discussed the precarious position of Hungary in political, financial and military terms. When King Louis II succeeded his father King Vladislav in 1516,¹³⁶⁶ royal authority was already weakened as well as finances. King Louis also inherited the hostility between various classes in the country which did not help remedying the situation. The “bloody peasant uprising” of 1516 had been put down savagely by the landlords, not enhancing the royal image. Furthermore, the queen Mary of Habsburg and her German advisors, many of whom were sympathizers of Luther, were resented by the Hungarians. King Louis’s career in Bohemia was not much brighter; even though Bohemia enjoyed better resources social dissension was a barrier before efficient employment of these resources.¹³⁶⁷ Kubinyi describes the period between 1521-1526 as one of “polarization of internal conflicts,” defining three centers of power each with a primary objective of fighting the *Turk*: the King, the higher nobility and the lesser nobility.¹³⁶⁸

¹³⁶⁵ Kubinyi, “The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi,” pp.81-83; Palffy, “The Origins and the Development of the Border Defence System,” p.13-4; Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.48; Szakaly, “Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System,” pp.142-3. The point is also emphasized in contemporary sources. Talking about strongholds acquired in 1521, e.g. Zimony and Sabacz, Celâlzâde refers to each of them as being “locks of the realm of Hungary” [*kilid-i müllk-i Engürüs*], *Tabakat*, 63a. When Szöreny fell in 1524, it was seen as a major development. Venetian ambassador at Vienna, Carlo Contarini, defined the loss as being even more important than Belgrade. Correspondence from Constantinople confirmed the importance given by the Ottomans. Sanuto, 37:96 and 37:361, respectively.

¹³⁶⁶ The news of the death of King Vladislav arrived as Selim I was about to march for campaign, leaving Süleyman as custodian of Rumelia in Edirne. We might assume that Süleyman was privy to detailed information about the progress of the young king’s reign from the beginning on.

¹³⁶⁷ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, pp.41-4.

¹³⁶⁸ Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat,” p.172.

After 1521, Europeans also seem to have harbored serious doubts about Hungary's potential to block Ottoman advance on its own. A letter by Massaro, secretary to Lorenzo Orio the Venetian ambassador in Buda, written in 1523 demonstrates the author's belief that Hungary was destined to doom because of the vices inherent in the characters of the nobles. Massaro reported that they were the cause of every misfortune the country suffered because they liked neither other nations nor those of their own. Each thought of his own interest and robbed the people; although they seemed to be friends they hated each other in private. They were always in dissension and plotted against each other. According to Massaro, it was only the innocence of the King that divine justice did not let Hungary be destroyed by now.¹³⁶⁹ Carlo Contarini informed from Vienna, in a letter dated 15 October 1524, that Hungarian nobles protested to the King to do something before the kingdom fell into pieces at the hands of the *Turco*. The King, in turn, protested that he would do so, if only they would cooperate. And finally, the King's intention to go against the *Turk* was publicly announced.¹³⁷⁰ Giovio underlines the deterioration of reputation suffered by Hungarians after King Matthias, both in terms of military discipline and general order. The Italian observer describes the situation as such: "The Hungarians of Louis did not have anything but the appearance of bravery, not based on the true practice of arms; and with beastly intrepidity, all of them presumed to smash the Turks into pieces at the first encounter."¹³⁷¹

Ottomans closely monitored the strength of Hungary. An undated report from Yahyapaşazade Bali Beğ to the Sultan mentions the gathering of Ottoman troops from Bosnia and Herzegovina as commanded by the Sultan. In his report the Rumelian

¹³⁶⁹ Sanuto, 35:111.

¹³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 37:96. For a detailed report from Buda, dated 13 March 1525, concerning the discord among Hungarian nobility, the weak position of the king, and his unpopularity see, *ibid*, 38:375-7.

¹³⁷¹ Giovio, *Commentario*, n.p.: "Gli Ungheri di Ludovico non haveano se non una fazza braura, non fondate ne la vera pratica de l'arme, e tutti con una bestial fierenza presumeano de fracassar' li turchi al' primo incontro."

commander also informs the Sultan that “Hungary has no position or strength that would have to be taken into consideration.”¹³⁷²

Ottomans were well aware of the turmoil in Europe as well, as discussed in Chapter 3. Not only the Venetians, but also the reports of the frontier commanders and French agents were links of the information chain.¹³⁷³ The capture of Francis I in the battle of Pavia also seems to have interested the Ottomans. Bragadin informs Venice about the Ottoman reaction in his letters written in early April 1525. The news reached Constantinople through Ragusa on 26 March. Bragadin seems to have waited for the letter from Venice, which arrived a few days later, for confirmation. When the bailo communicated the news to vizier Mustafa Paşa, he did not believe easily. Sending the news to Edirne to the Sultan, Mustafa Paşa took this to be important news and wondered whose side Venice would take.¹³⁷⁴ Bragadin seems to have informed İbrahim Paşa as soon as he got the news. He wrote, on 30 March, that he spoke with İbrahim and told him about what happened in France.¹³⁷⁵ In July 1525, the Venetian bailo kept answering Ottoman questions concerning the Pope and the potential allies of the Emperor, wondering most whether Venice sided with him or not. They were also informed about Luther through various channels. Bragadin informs that the governor of Bosnia sent a priest who told that “Martin Luter is made Pope against the Pope in Rome.” Interestingly, Ottomans found a common link between their faith and Luther’s in that “he does not want figures to be put in the church just like us.”¹³⁷⁶

In early 1526, European efforts to balance the power of Charles began to escalate. At the end of March, Venetian and Papal envoys visited Francis I to convince him to join an anti-Habsburg league. On 10 May 1526, Lannoy was officially informed that France would not give Burgundy. This meant the defying of the agreement between

¹³⁷² For the document [TSM.E.6146/2], see, Appendix 10. Translation here as quoted in Fodor, “Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary,” p.335. The document has been published by Fodor who dates it to 1524-1525.

¹³⁷³ Hess, “Road to Victory,” p.180. For information gathering as a duty of tributaries, see Panaite, “The Voivodes of the Danubian Principalities,” pp.59-78.

¹³⁷⁴ Sanuto, 38:277.

¹³⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 39:148.

¹³⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 368-9: “... dicendo el vien in la nostra opinion, che'l non vuol si tegnì figure in chiesa come non tengimo nui.”

Charles and Francis. Francis argued that the agreement was not valid anyway because it was exerted under force and his subjects would not permit giving away part of the patrimony. The Holy League of Cognac was formed on 22 May 1526. The League brought together France, Rome, Venice, Florence and Francesco Sforza in Milan to counter the power of Charles V in Italy.¹³⁷⁷ With the involvement of Venice in the League and the preceding negotiations, we may safely assume that the Ottomans were well aware of these developments as well.

Another opportune situation, if not opportunity, was the relatively peaceful position with regard to the Safavis. Shah Ismail died, and his 12 year old son who had to deal with his own issues succeeded him in 1524. Before then a stalling strategy seems to have continued for some time between the Ottomans and the Safavis, in disguise of diplomatic dialogue. In September 1523 an envoy sent by Ismail was received. Tajeddin Hasan Halife offered condolences for the death of Selim I and best wishes for the accession of Süleyman in the name of Shah Ismail.¹³⁷⁸ The Safavid diplomatic mission in 1523 has been carefully observed by Piero Zen in Istanbul. From Zen's reports we understand that the Safavi envoy, who arrived in September, was not received by the Sultan until late October. Zen reported that the envoy entered the Ottoman realm with 500 horsemen, however no more than twenty were allowed to go further. When he was finally given an audience, Sultan Süleyman told him that if his master wished for peace, he should hand in Baghdad.¹³⁷⁹ In his letter dated 29 November 1523, Zen informed that the peace was finally concluded in late November 1523. The envoy was presented his gifts including a fully equipped horse bedecked with gems, and a golden robe of honor. Following the presentation of gifts, the Safavi envoy went to İbrahim's residence for a banquet.¹³⁸⁰ In the meanwhile, Shah Ismail is reported to have proposed to Charles V and Louis II alliance and unified military action against the Ottomans. In this letter, he expressed his intention to attack in April 1524.¹³⁸¹ Shah Ismail's proposal of concerted

¹³⁷⁷ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, pp.253-7.

¹³⁷⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:525-7.

¹³⁷⁹ Sanuto, 35:177, 258, 274.

¹³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 326.

¹³⁸¹ Copies of these letters seem to have circulated around the major courts of Europe. Venetian ambassador at Rome Foscari sent copies of both letters to the

action is confirmed with a report, dated 28 May 1524, to Wolsey from his agent at the Imperial court: “It is hoped that the Turk’s love of pleasure will hinder his enterprises. The Sophy has sent an ambassador to seek the Emperor’s alliance with him.”¹³⁸² However Shah Ismail died in May 1524. His son Tahmasb was only 12 years old, and had to face internal conflict before he could plan any attack on his neighbor.

5.3. The Campaign

This section examines the campaign itself to see the various phases involved and identify the function of each phase in terms of the contribution to the public image of the Sultan.

Briefly, Sultan Süleyman left Istanbul on 23 April 1526. He followed the usual route through Edirne to Sofia where the different wings assembled to form the Ottoman army. Marching through Niš to Belgrade, the river Sava was crossed. While the frontier forces attacked and subdued some of the Syrmian fortresses, İbrahim Paşa was sent to besiege Petervarad which gave in after a siege of two weeks. The army marched on to cross the Drava to reach Buda. Meanwhile King Louis with the Hungarian army marched to Mohacs where the two armies collided on 29 August. With the Hungarian army destroyed, the Ottoman army advanced to Buda without encountering resistance. Sultan Süleyman entered Buda. Two weeks later Ottomans left without taking any permanent measures to keep the city or its surroundings. The Ottoman army marched back in two wings as it plundered the country side. Sultan Süleyman was back in Istanbul on 13 November 1526.¹³⁸³

Signoria in May 1524. These letters, as Foscari reported, contained the wish of the *Sophi* to go to war with the *Turks*. Sanuto, 36:318. Bacque-Grammont suggests the possibility of orchestrated action with Ahmed Paşa who revolted in January 1524.

¹³⁸² *Letters and Papers*, IV:145.

¹³⁸³ For detailed chronology of the campaign see, Emecen, “*Büyük Türk’e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526*,” pp.57-77; Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, pp.202-224, Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, v.2, pp.332-40; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.311-6; *Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.823-32.

5.3.1. The Departure

The departure of the 1526 campaign provides a colorful instance to examine various ritual, symbolic, and spiritual elements, often observed in Ottoman campaigns in general. Employment of each of these elements functioned to enhance Süleyman's image, as a Sultan enjoying the grace of God through performing the expected pious actions, and caring for established spiritual symbols and values. Military ritual, on the other hand, reinforced the ideal of order that is associated with the presence of the Sultan.

Sultan Süleyman departed on 23 April 1526 [11 Rajab].¹³⁸⁴ The exact day was carefully designated by astronomers,¹³⁸⁵ and it was no ordinary day but the day of *Hızır* and *İlyas* [Khadir and Elijah].¹³⁸⁶ The sixteenth-century Ottoman *Hızır* was a fusion of the Islamic prophet, the pre-Islamic Turkic sage, and St. George of popular Byzantine Christianity.¹³⁸⁷ This fusion as a more general process is defined by two dynamics by John Renard, namely Islamization and Indigenization. In other words, an already existing non-Muslim hero figure is adopted and internalized by the Islamic tradition while an already Islamic figure takes on local character.¹³⁸⁸ These two dynamics were clearly at work in Anatolia much earlier than the sixteenth century. Speros Vryonis explains the link as follows:

¹³⁸⁴ *Tabakat*, 133b; KPZ, X:225; Nasuh, 101b; Bostan (MK), 62b; Sanuto, 41:533.

¹³⁸⁵ *Tabakat*, 132a: “*erbâb-ı takvîm ü nücûm*”; *Münşe‘at*, I:554.

¹³⁸⁶ *Münşe‘at*, I:554: “23 Abril”, “*rûz-ı Hızır ü İlyas*”. KPZ, X:226: 11 Rajab. Bragadin mentions that this was the St. George day. Sanuto, 41:533. A runaway slave of İbrahim Paşa, Jurco Vladanovich tells Venetian officials at Zadar [Zara, Jadra] that he left Constantinople with İbrahim Paşa and 70,000 men on Saint George's Day. *Ibid*, 43:82-4. [dated 24 September 1526, from Zadar/Zara.]

¹³⁸⁷ For the corresponding of the day of *Hızır* and of St. George, see Bruce W. McGowan, *Sirem Sancağı Mufassal Tahrir Defteri* (Ankara: TTK, 1983), p.526. For the pre-Islamic Turkic notion of sages fusing into *Hızır*, see Bahaeddin Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi II* (Ankara: TTK, 2006), pp.89-99. For the handling of *Hızır* by the Ottomans within Islamic tradition and Alexander-related mythology, see Metin And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitolojisi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), pp.201-6.

¹³⁸⁸ Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image*, p.153.

The most vital element in Byzantine popular Christianity was hagiolatry, a phenomenon which markedly affected popular Islam, the Muslims tending to absorb the cults of certain saints by equating the saints with particular Muslim holy men: St. George and St. Theodore with Chidr Elias, St. Nicholas with Sari Saltik, St. Charalampos with Hadji Bektash. Other saints were approached in times of need and peril even if they had no rationalized relationship with a Muslim saint (as for instance St. Amphilochius-Plato, St. Eugenius, St. Phocas, St. Michael, St. Photeine, St. Mamas, St. John Roussos, etc).¹³⁸⁹

Hızır is usually known as a saint of last minute rescue and requests. It is believed that once a year, on 23 April – or 6 May – he receives requests, following which these requests are granted through the following year. Hızır is most probably transformed from an ancient Middle Eastern god associated with vegetation and water. The Arabic *al-kidr* means “the green man” referring to a hadith of the Prophet which reports the appearing of grass behind Hızır as he sat on dry ground. One myth associates Hızır with the Old Testament prophet Elijah. While *Hızır* was the protector of Muslims on land, *Ilyas* was the protector on the seas. On *Hızır-İlyas Day* these two would come together to “reaffirm their agreement about the parts of the world in which each would serve as last-minute rescuer and patron of travelers.”¹³⁹⁰ Another important aspect of the figure of Hızır is his companionship to both Moses and Alexander. Especially important is the role of Hızır as Alexander’s guide in the *Shahnama* tradition. As the “world-conqueror” heads for the Land of Darkness in search for the Water of Light, he finds an excellent guide in Hızır who leads the way guiding the army by day and vanishing at nightfall. When their paths diverge, Alexander loses his way whereas Hızır follows the right path to God.¹³⁹¹ Another legend brings Hızır and Alexander together in the building of a protective wall for an innocent and weak clan against the attacks of the mythical tribes of Gog and Magog.¹³⁹² Whether Süleyman or his advisors made the connection is a

¹³⁸⁹ Speros Vryonis, Jr., “The Byzantine Legacy and Ottoman Forms,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol.23 (1969-1970), p.289.

¹³⁹⁰ Warren S. Walker and Ahmet E. Uysal, “An Ancient God in Modern Turkey: Some Aspects of the Cult of Hızır,” *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol.86, no.341 (Jul.-Sept 1973), pp.286-9; And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitologyası*, pp.201-4.

¹³⁹¹ Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image*, p.153.

¹³⁹² And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitologyası*, p.206; Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image*, p.89.

matter of speculation, but considered in relation to the “French proposal” suspecting an implication of a symbolic attribution seems tempting.

Ironically, St. George was the patron saint of the Order of the Garter, the most prestigious princely order in the sixteenth century. Founded by the English king Edward III in 1348, Saint George was an appropriate patron because of his crusading associations. The 25 knights of the Order met annually on 23 April, the day of the patron saint. By 1526 both Charles V and Ferdinand were already admitted in the Order. Francis I was admitted around 1527.¹³⁹³ The military support associated with the saint must not have slipped the minds of the Hungarians either in 1526; the planned date of assembly for the Hungarian army also happened to be St. George’s day, as Burgio wrote to Rome a month earlier.¹³⁹⁴

Before marching off, Süleyman seems to have completed three main requirements. Following Celâlîzâde’s account,¹³⁹⁵ we can define these three requirements. Firstly, he declared his intention for jihad. In other words, the campaign was legitimized from the start in religious terms as a duty rather than being an aggressive action *per se*. Secondly, he resigned himself unto God. In other words, he demonstrated his belief in the contemporary conviction that God’s will occurred whether he was victorious or not. While such a demonstration signified Süleyman’s strength of faith on one hand, on more practical terms it also pre-diminished the risk of blame on the Sultan in case of defeat. Thirdly, he prayed on the soul of the Prophet. This can be seen as an indication of the continuation of jihad from where the Prophet left off. It is also another reinforcing factor as the prayer not only honors and commemorates the Prophet but is an invocation.

¹³⁹³ See, Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, p.39.

¹³⁹⁴ *Letters and Papers*, IV:925. This was the day when the diet voted on the time and place of the assembly. When the King called the nobles for the diet, Burgio must have assumed that it was to form a proper army at the designated date. The day of Saint George, still has connotation in folk culture; according to a Slovene legend, for example, King Matthias [*Kralj Matjaz*] will awaken on 23 April. Marcus Tanner, *The Raven King: Matthias Corvinus and the Fate of His Lost Library*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p.212. As far as the military connotations of St. George are concerned, in England, for example, the celebrations of St George’s Day on 23 April became major festive occasions during the reign of Elizabeth I. The queen and his knights would march in procession in splendid robes. Strong, *Art and Power*, p.69

¹³⁹⁵ *Tabakat*, 132b. The same three actions are also found in the proclamation of victory. *Münşe‘at*, I:547.

These actions seem to have been performed by Süleyman's person, not necessarily as public demonstrations. It is through the written accounts that they become public demonstration of the piety of the Sultan. Another set of actions completes the public demonstration phase of this assertion, namely the tomb visits. As we have seen in the 1521 and 1522 campaigns, the Sultan visits the tombs of his ancestors for their support and favor [*istima'â-yı himmet ü 'inâyet*], and that of Ayyub calling on him for conquest and victory [*istimdâd-ı feth ü nusret*]. The distribution of alms and prayers to secure victory are again standard procedure.¹³⁹⁶ On one hand, the tomb visits emphasize Süleyman's image as a ruler who puts his trust on God as a pious ruler should do. On the other hand, they underline the dynastic tradition.¹³⁹⁷ An episode in Feridun Ahmed Bey's account of the last campaign of Sultan Süleyman in 1566 specifically underlines the obligatory nature of tomb visits. According to the author, these visits were required by Ottoman tradition and by royal custom. This may seem like a conventional cliché employed in many passages for various issues. However, in this case, Süleyman did not feel well enough to complete the route and resigned to the Palace after visiting the tomb of Ayyub. The grand vizier of the time [Sokollu Mehmed Paşa] completed the visits, the related Quran-recitals, and alms-giving activities in his stead.¹³⁹⁸

Süleyman's departure appears to be a diligently orchestrated event, showcasing both majesty and order.¹³⁹⁹ According to Celâlzâde, the household troops assembled at the second courtyard [*divân meydanı*] of the Palace. 12,000 janissaries stood in ceremonial order composing two wings. The household cavalry corps also stood in line. Viziers, other military commanders and officials were ready in rank and file to the appearance of the Sultan. The author describes imperial guards and the spare horses as well as the preparation of flags and banners. With sunrise, the Sultan appeared. At his appearance the halberdiers [*çavûş*] shouted praises and the imperial band started playing.

¹³⁹⁶ *Tabakat*, 132b.

¹³⁹⁷ For an example of Selim I doing the whole tour as *pâdişâh-I İslâm* before his campaign against Shah Ismail, see KPZ, VIII: 47a.

¹³⁹⁸ Feridun Ahmed Bey, *Nüzhet el-esrar el-ahbar der sefer-i Sigetvar*, TSM.H.1339, fol.9b.

¹³⁹⁹ We shall follow Celâlzâde's rather detailed account. *Tabakat*, 133a-135b. For other accounts, see, Sâlih (TSK), 20a-22a; Bostan (MK), 62b; Nasuh, 102a-102b; KPZ, X:223-228.

The flags and banners were untied, and the flag-staffs started moving. The musketeers shot fires. As the Sultan and his company left the Palace and marched in procession through the city towards Edirnekapı, people had already filled the streets to see the Sultan. As Sultan Süleyman passed through, people prayed for the “continuity of his state” [*devâm-ı devlet*].¹⁴⁰⁰

Now, let us consider the symbolic elements employed in Celâlîzâde’s account. The author employs the expression “*tâpûya nâzır oldılar*” as he relates the waiting at the courtyard for Süleyman’s appearance.¹⁴⁰¹ The word *tâpû* can be perceived in two ways; either as an “exalted person,” or as an “act of homage.” In this case, if we assume that this term was deliberately employed to reflect both meanings, then we can talk about a confirmation of loyalty before the Sultan sets off for the campaign. In the poem cited before this description, Celâlîzâde takes the opportunity to remind that the janissaries and members of the household cavalry corps were “slaves of the Süleyman of the day” [*Süleymân-ı zamânın kûllarıdır*]. The Sultan appears only at sunrise, and like the sun itself.¹⁴⁰² The sun analogy, as one would instantly realize, keeps coming up with each appearance of the Sultan as we have seen in his arrival to Istanbul back in 1520 and in the various phases of his previous campaigns. While such recurrent employment of the analogy may give the impression of a merely rhetorical device, the symbolic connotations discussed in previous chapters suggest otherwise. In other words, while the sun analogy exalts Süleyman on one hand, on the other hand it poses a responsibility on his person. As all evil vanishes under the light of the sun, Süleyman as the sun is expected to drive away all evil on the world, in this case evil being unbelief.¹⁴⁰³ The

¹⁴⁰⁰ *Tabakat*, 133a-135b. A letter from Piero Zen to Venice, dated 22 June, reports the arrival of two messengers with the Sultan’s orders to perform prayers to God for victory. Sanuto, 42:348. Zen reports on 3 August that an oration is performed everyday at Saint Sophia and other mosques for the success of the campaign. *Ibid*, 581.

¹⁴⁰¹ *Tabakat*, 134a.

¹⁴⁰² *Ibid*, 134b. Another contemporary significance of associating the Sultan’s actions with the movements of the sun is exemplified by a janissary poet Ferdi. The poet, in a couplet, emphasizes the constant dynamic stance of the Sultan through likening him to the “day”: “*Hiç yerde gökde yok zerrece yokdur kararımız / Hercâ’i oldu gün gibi şehriyârımız.*” Edirneli Sehî, *Tezkire-i Sehî*, Kitabhane-i Âmed, 1325, p.132.

¹⁴⁰³ The concept is explained by Kantorowicz: “Undaunted, the Sun with its appearance triumphantly sets evil spirits to flight, and chases the demons of darkness.” As quoted in Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, p.139. Bertelli also points at the cult of the sun at the time of the Achaemenian kings of Persia. On New Year day the king would be

emphasis on ceremonial order, with everyone in his place according to his rank, reinforces the general ideal of the “order of the world” in the presence of the Sultan. This sense of order contrasts sharply with Kemalpaşazade’s description of the procession in town, whereby people gathered on the streets to watch. Kemalpaşazade describes a rather noisy and chaotic atmosphere, with trumpets and drums sounding. However, the author also describes officers [*yasavul*] shouting and pushing people to clear the way,¹⁴⁰⁴ implying the sense of order. The gathering of the inhabitants of the city on the streets, along with their prayers, suggests not only the display of the might of the Sultan’s household, but also a collective enterprise inclusive of the people of the realm. As such, Sultan Süleyman appears to enjoy not only the loyalty of his subjects but their spiritual assistance.

Venetian bailo Bragadin and ambassador Zen have watched Süleyman’s ceremonial departure. In his *relazione*, Bragadin talked in detail about the “departure of the army, in other words the Household [*Porta*], of the Sultan from Constantinople with great pomp.” According to his observations, the viziers were in the front with Mustafa Paşa in the litter [*leticha*]. The Sultan was dressed in gold as was İbrahim. The bailo mentioned that İbrahim was even better dressed than the Sultan, and wore many pieces of jewelry. He described the luxurious attire of other grandees and officers. The bailo also noted the two elephants accompanying the procession. Bragadin informed his audience about the camp, set some miles from the city with 1500 tents. He also explained that all people of the region, and those from far away, had come to see the *Porta*.¹⁴⁰⁵

raised above the heads of the men on his throne: “He rose on that day like the sun, the light beaming forth from him, as though he shone like the sun. Now the people were astonished at the rising of two suns.” Bertelli, *The King’s Body*, p.140-1.

¹⁴⁰⁴ KPZ, X:226-7. Both Kemalpaşazade and Celâlzâde associate this atmosphere with Doomsday, mainly in terms of the scale of the crowd. This association also implies the punitive and the purifying intention of the campaign which is being launched. KPZ, X:228; *Tabakat*, 133b-135a.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Sanuto, 41:533. Before in his account Bragadin already explains the reason why İbrahim is often better dressed than the Sultan. This is because the Sultan wishes him to. *Ibid*, 529.

5.3.2. The March

The march brings forth the three aspects which are indispensable in the public image of the Sultan. Firstly, his role as the administrator is reflected in the dispensation of justice and rewards on the way. Secondly, his role as the supreme authority is reflected in various ceremonial occasions such as hand-kissing and rewarding ceremonies, and presentation of prisoners and castle keys. Thirdly, his role as the commander is reflected through the strategical orders he gives throughout the march. As such, we find the opportunity to understand further the elements which mark Süleyman as ‘magnificent’ and ‘just’ warrior sultan. We should also note that through the successful execution of Süleyman’s orders, İbrahim takes center stage. In this respect, we find the opportunity to dig a little deeper into the nature of their relationship.

We have already talked about the campaign march functioning as some kind of a royal progress. The same function is observed in 1526. Contemporary chronicles project the Sultan distributing alms to needy people along the way, accepting the thanks and the complaints of subjects, and giving public feasts. As he administers justice wherever he goes, according to Kemalpaşazade for example, he makes the subjects happy.¹⁴⁰⁶ The same is true on the return march, as well. Kemalpaşazade emphasizes once again that the Sultan gave joy to those on his way through “showers of favor” [*bârân-ı ihsân*].¹⁴⁰⁷ The choice of the word “*bârân*” is worth noting with the favorable and sacred connotations it has in both the Islamic and the Turkic traditions.¹⁴⁰⁸ The emphasis on the Sultan feeding the subjects along the way and solving their grievances, in a way, covers the destructive potential of an army on the march. In this respect, the march which can actually involve unfavorable consequences for the population on the route becomes not devastating but rewarding.

Ceremonial departures and entries can be observed throughout the campaign. The first such example is the departure from Halkalı Pınar, the first stop, to Edirne.

¹⁴⁰⁶ KPZ, X:230-1.

¹⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 354.

¹⁴⁰⁸ See Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, pp.266-274.

Celâlzâde relates that the action of “*tâpû*” was performed by the viziers and officials, after which flags and banners were untied, drums were beaten and the band played.¹⁴⁰⁹ In a way, we see the whole process of setting on the march, which took place only a day earlier, being repeated. We could interpret this repetition as the Sultan’s departure with the army.

Another element of the march is the assembly of the army. We can identify three main points of assembly through which the various wings of the army come together to make a whole. The first point of assembly is the first camp at Halkalıpınar where the Sultan with his household joins the Rumelian troops who were already taken there by İbrahim. The Sultan and the army halted at Edirne for five days, whereby the governor-general of Anatolia along with other commanders came to pay their obedience to the Sultan through gift-giving and hand-kissing.¹⁴¹⁰ On 5 May [23 Rajab], the envoy of Moldavia [Karaboğdan] brought the tribute. He and the envoy from Chios presented their gifts and were well treated.¹⁴¹¹ Such ceremonial instances observed at the camp at various phases of the campaign, in a way, imply the moving of the Sultan’s “palace” together with his army. This impression is emphasized not only by accounts likening the camp to paradise, but also with associating the camp with the city.¹⁴¹² Such an association is noteworthy both in symbolic and strategic terms.¹⁴¹³

We see that the Ottoman army generally becomes one single entity at Sofia. In 1526, the assembly of the Ottoman army took place at Sofia, as it did in 1521. The imperial army reached Sofia on 28 May [16 Shaban]; next day the commanders of Rumelia and Anatolia joined the *divân* for the hand kissing ceremony,¹⁴¹⁴ whereby they officially joined the imperial campaign. The army halted at Sofia for five days, whereby

¹⁴⁰⁹ *Tabakat*, 136a.

¹⁴¹⁰ Bostan (MK), 63a.

¹⁴¹¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:554; KPZ, X:231; Sâlih (TSK), 26b.

¹⁴¹² For an example see, *Tabakat*, 135a.

¹⁴¹³ Machiavelli dwells on the necessity of the camp to appear like a “mobile city” for the sake of order, as to prevent confusion. In this way, the camp would be set in the same mode at every stop, so that everyone would know exactly where to find his encampment. Machiavelli, *Art of War*, p.125.

¹⁴¹⁴ Nasuh, 103a-b; KPZ, X:231.

the commanders of Rumelia came to pay obedience with gifts and hand-kissing.¹⁴¹⁵ Kemalpaşazade tells that it was through İbrahim Paşa's command that the army remained there for a few days for the preparations.¹⁴¹⁶ Salih Çelebi mentions an initial reception whereby the Rumelian commanders greeted İbrahim Paşa and were favored in return. The hand-kissing ceremony involving the Sultan was then realized on 1 June [20 Şaban].¹⁴¹⁷

Another important aspect of the march is the inspections at key points. Especially the river crossing poses an opportunity for an assessment of forces before the campaign focuses on armed action. Such an inspection also serves to determine if all equipment is in order.¹⁴¹⁸ The first inspection seems to have taken place at Edirne whereby the household troops were inspected upon the Sultan's orders.¹⁴¹⁹ We observe another such inspection at Sofia.¹⁴²⁰ Salih Çelebi provides a vivid description of the process. This time both Rumelian and Anatolian troops were inspected on two separate days. Salih Çelebi describes the Sultan riding through the two wings of the Rumelian army. This inspection seems to have earned İbrahim the appreciation of the Sultan. A similar inspection is recorded for the Anatolian army.¹⁴²¹ Another inspection occurred during the Sava crossing at Belgrade before the actual crossing upon the orders of the Sultan before the grand vizier. Süleyman reached Belgrade on 29 June [19 Ramadan].¹⁴²² We see that the final preparations and assembly of the army including ships and heavy artillery took place at Belgrade, where the Sava was crossed. The *martolos* and *azeb*

¹⁴¹⁵ Bostan (MK), 63b; Nasuh, 103b.

¹⁴¹⁶ KPZ, X:234. Nasuh, 103b; *Tabakat*, 136b.

¹⁴¹⁷ Sâlih (TSK), 26a. The campaign diary notes the same day for the ceremony. *Münşe'at*, I:555. It is perhaps worth noting that it was Friday.

¹⁴¹⁸ The inspections performed at key points seem to reflect a discrepancy between the functioning of the Ottoman and Hungarian armies. Perjes, for example, argues that King Louis II did not know how many men he had. Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.224

¹⁴¹⁹ Sâlih (TSK), 24a.

¹⁴²⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:555; Bostan (MK), 63b-64a.

¹⁴²¹ Sâlih (TSK), 26b-27a.

¹⁴²² Nasuh, 105b; KPZ, X:241.

from Smederevo, Zvornik and Vidin as well as frontier *azeb* and *kürekçi* joined the army at Belgrade. At this point, the household army was distributed weapons.¹⁴²³ According to the campaign diary, İbrahim Paşa personally stood by the bridge and inspected the soldiers before they crossed. Those who were not equipped as necessary were beaten and their fiefs were taken.¹⁴²⁴ Bostan's account of the inspection and the crossing provides some clues on both the practical and symbolic significance of the Sava crossing at Belgrade. While the inspection served strategical purposes as to assess the condition of the army and designate any insufficiencies in terms of arms and men, it also provided an opportunity for commanders to demonstrate their skills in maintaining armed forces. As Kemalpaşazade has it "they presented their forces with the zeal of honor."¹⁴²⁵

On 8 July [28 Ramadan], the frontier lords [*akıncı beğleri*] came to the camp for festivities. The Sultan decided to perform the holiday marking the end of Ramadan [*îd-i mübârek*] at Belgrade. On 11 July [1 Shawwal], at the time of night prayer İbrahim Paşa's ceremonial band played. All commanders, except for those charged with guarding the camp, were present. A huge banquet was served.¹⁴²⁶ We should note that this is Süleyman's first time in Belgrade after the conquest. As such, the timing of the march as to stop at Belgrade appears to be a deliberate choice. As the presence of influential and reputable frontier commanders, such as Hüsrev Beğ and Bali Beğ, is specifically mentioned in the accounts, the location of Belgrade as a convenient cue point for various segments of the Ottoman army may also have played a role in this decision. Such a celebration at a critical juncture of the march functioned as a motivational device, as well.¹⁴²⁷

¹⁴²³ Bostan (MK), 64b-65b; KPZ, X:242.

¹⁴²⁴ *Münşe'at*, I:556: "Cebe cevşende noksanı olanlar döğilüb ve tımarları alınub öte yakaya geçürdiler." Also see KPZ, X:241-6; Bostan (MK), 65b-66a.

¹⁴²⁵ KPZ, X:245: "gayret-i 'ırzla 'arz-ı ceyš idüb."

¹⁴²⁶ *Münşe'at*, I:557. Bostan explains the significance of the *bayram* as the day of giving alms [*yevm-i fitre*]. He says that it was celebrated as required. Bostan (MK), 66a. Another ceremonial occasion found in the campaign diary is the holy night known as *Kadir Gecesi* [Night of Power], which was celebrated festively on the night of 27 Ramadan.

¹⁴²⁷ For the significance of such festive occasions and banquets during the march, and before battle, see, Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*, p.152.

River crossings, at least as far as the 1526 campaign is concerned, also reflect a passage to the enemy territory, in other words a transition from peace to war. The distribution of arms at Belgrade during the Sava crossing implies that from this point on the army should be ready to fight at any time; in other words, it implies a kind of transition to the war-zone. Bostan, for example, probably does not expect us to take the implication; he makes the transition quite clear as he informs us that the commanders “changed from the gowns of feasting to those of fighting.”¹⁴²⁸ Once the crossing is completed, Bostan states that the army now moved in the Abode of War [*dâri’l-harb*], in other words “the quarters of the enemies of the faith” [*â’dâ-yı dîn*].¹⁴²⁹ This crossing at Belgrade signifies the passage to the enemy soil. Kemalpaşazade’s statement that İbrahim entered the realm of unbelief [*dâri’l-küfr*]¹⁴³⁰ implies Belgrade as the border.

A similar transition is found at the Drava crossing at Eszék [Osijek, Esseg, Ösek]. After the conquest of Petervarad, as the army headed for Buda, the river Drava had to be crossed.¹⁴³¹ Once everyone crossed the Drava at Eszék the bridge was destroyed, along with the town, its houses, churches and gardens.¹⁴³² The underlying motive was to prevent soldiers from going back.¹⁴³³ Bostan explains the reason as cutting the link

¹⁴²⁸ Bostan (MK), 65b: “*ümerâ-yı saf-ârây bezm kaftanlarından rezme haftanlarına girüb*”; KPZ, X:242: “*bezm kabâsından çıkub libâs-ı be’s-i rezme girdiler.*”

¹⁴²⁹ Bostan (MK), 66a.

¹⁴³⁰ KPZ, X:241.

¹⁴³¹ Sultan Süleyman crossed on 21 August [13 Dhu’l-Qada]. *Münşe’at*, I:560; Bostan (MK), 69b-70a. Others mention different dates, probably because the crossing of the whole army took three days. Sâlih (TSK), 40a-b: 11 Dhu’l-Qada [19 August]. Nasuh, 120b: 12 Dhu’l-Qada [20 August]. KPZ, X:278: 2 Dhu’l-Qada [10 August].

¹⁴³² *Münşe’at*, I:561; Nasuh, 120b-121a. A similar strategy is employed in 1529 after the crossing of the Drava. For the 1529 case, see, *Münşe’at*, I:569; and Sanuto, 51:518.

¹⁴³³ Lütü Paşa, p.258; Nasuh, 120b; KPZ, X:283. Although Nasuh frequently draws on Kemalpaşazade almost verbatim, in this case while Kemalpaşazade attributes the decision of destruction of the bridge at Eszék to İbrahim, Nasuh gives the credit to Süleyman himself. This is one of the many instances where one can observe the transition of İbrahim’s status from “*makbûl*” to “*maktûl*” within the course of less than a decade. This is also a striking instance of the need for caution when interpreting the data provided by chroniclers. Kemalpaşazade’s account of the campaign was completed in March 1529 when İbrahim was at the peak of his power, whereas Nasuh’s account was completed after the death – and disgrace – of İbrahim. In other words, Kemalpaşazade

between the Abode of Peace [*dârü'l-enn*] and the Abode of War [*dârü'l-harb*]. This way, the soldiers would be in unity both in intention and fate, they would think only of fighting the enemy.¹⁴³⁴ Nasuh takes the explanation to an even clearer level stating that with the destruction of the bridge it would be clear to the soldiers that the only way for their survival was to fight.¹⁴³⁵

The Drava crossing not only demonstrates the mobile nature of the Abode of War as it moves further with the advance of the Ottoman army, but also provides another instance of strategic decision making, as the bridges are burnt down. According to Machiavelli, ancient commanders understood the power of necessity to make soldiers fight stubbornly; for this purpose “they often opened to the enemy a path that they could have closed to him, while to their own troops they closed a path they could have left open.”¹⁴³⁶ The *Strategikon*, too, warned against trapping the enemy without leaving room to escape because trapped soldiers would fight better than usual if they felt they were fighting for survival.¹⁴³⁷ In this case, this rule of the thumb is reversed to ensure superior effort on the part of the attackers making it absolutely necessary to fight.

Contrarily, the bridge at the Sava crossing at Belgrade was not destroyed, but troops were assigned for its protection.¹⁴³⁸ The renewal of strategy at the Drava crossing can perhaps be explained by the news of Hungarian activity that reached the Ottoman

had his reasons for giving the credit to İbrahim in many instances, just like Nasuh had his own limitations for not doing so.

¹⁴³⁴ Bostan (MK), 70a: “*nehr-i Drava üzerinde olan köpriyi bozub dârü'l-enn ve dârü'l-harb mabeyninden ‘alâka kat’ olına; ta ki ‘asâkir-i hüceste-hisâl yekdîl ü yekbaht fırka-i zelâl ile harb ü kitale ikbâl eyleyeler.*”

¹⁴³⁵ Nasuh, 120b: “*Zilkâdenin on ikisinde cîsr-i mezbûrdan yümn ü ikbâl ve nusret ü iclâl ile ‘ubûr idiüb, ‘asker-i zafer-rehber nehr-i meşhûrı tamam geçdikden sonra bu tedbîri sevâb gördi ki ol cîsr-i kuveyyü’l-esâs kasr-ı düşmen-i nekbet libâsın gibi harab ola, ta ki râh-ı halâs ü menâs mesdûd ü meşdûd olduğın hadem ü haşem biliüb, cây-ı cidâl ü kitâlde ve tenknâ-yı gîr ü dârda karâr idiüb, kadem-i sebât üzerine muhkem duralar.*”

¹⁴³⁶ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.289. Seventeenth-century writer Montecuccoli suggested destroying roads and bridges after the army passed in order to force them to fight. This way, according to the author, they would be “deprived of all hope and every means of saving themselves through flight.” Tallett, *War and Society*, p 48.

¹⁴³⁷ *Strategikon*, p.108.

¹⁴³⁸ Bostan (MK), 66a. KPZ, X:241. The author says that the bridge remained intact until the army returned.

camp at this point. Until the Drava crossing, the Ottoman army moved without encountering much resistance, and the Hungarian army was nowhere to be seen. However, as the Ottoman army reached the Drava around Eszék, several instances of alarm caused by enemy movement can be detected from the campaign diary.¹⁴³⁹ In this sense, the awareness of a nearing confrontation and of Hungarians intentions to stop the Ottoman army on the Drava crossing may have caused Ottoman leadership to take harsher measures to avoid foreseeable risks.

In his account on the destruction of the bridge after the Drava crossing, Kemalpaşazade demonstrates his awareness of the Hungarian plan to destroy the bridges in order to kill the Ottoman soldiers. He says that the King sent *Tümûr Pavlî* [Pal Tomori] for the task. However, the King was at a loss to understand the nature of the ghazis. The author claims that the ghazis were not afraid to die; on the contrary they actually looked forward to become martyrs on the “path of ghaza.” He also mentions the surprise of the King as he heard that the bridge was already destroyed, and “the road of escape” blocked. The author claims that this information terrified the King, as he saw that the Ottoman soldiers were not to leave.¹⁴⁴⁰ This episode taken with the reason of the destruction of the bridge introduces three ‘roads’: the road of escape [*râh-ı firâr*] which is the bridge; the road of salvation [*râh-ı halâs*] which is fighting the enemy; and the road of ghaza [*gazâ yolu*] through which the first two roads converge to create a binary opposition. In other words, what the Hungarian king is attributed to regard as the blocking of the chance to survive is inversely reflected as the opportunity for salvation both in worldly and spiritual terms. Interestingly, this episode also seems to negate the above mentioned reason for the destruction of the bridge as cited by all of our Ottoman sources. In other words, we are faced with a dilemma. On one hand, we have leaders

¹⁴³⁹ *Münşe‘at*, I:560. The diary records several instances of precaution during the period between the arrival at Eszék and the completion of the bridge. On 12 August [4 Dhu’l-Qada], there seems to have been some concern at the Ottoman camp about an enemy threat, an announcement was made to prevent anyone to move further on his own. The command for getting in marching order was also given. Next day, as the army camped by the Drava, the soldiers stayed on their horses in marching order until the imperial tent was erected. The diary also mentions the coming and leaving of about twenty *infidels* across the water. On 18 August [10 Dhu’l-Qada], when the bridge at Eszék was completed, İbrahim Paşa called the commanders for counsel on horseback. Someone who arrived from Buda told them that they would meet the King in five days march.

¹⁴⁴⁰ KPZ, X:283-4. Nasuh repeats the story, Nasuh, 121a-b.

who believe that the soldiers were willing to escape from the battle field. On the other hand, we have soldiers who were more than willing to die for the sake of ghaza, let alone considering escape. Rather than attributing this dilemma to the confused minds of Kemalpaşazade and Nasuh, it should probably be seen to reflect the actual challenges faced by Süleyman and the efforts made to render these challenges invisible to various domestic and foreign audiences by disguising under a veil of order and religious zeal.

River crossing is not only an important part of military strategy but is also part of the symbolic baggage. The river does not only pose a geographical border but a symbolic one as well. Since it is related with unfavorable conditions such as vulnerability, cold, illness, injury and even death, crossing over successfully signifies survival. Ottoman accounts often identify river crossing with the legendary bridge to Paradise [*Sırât*].¹⁴⁴¹ It is the commander who “enables” men to cross over without harm. The prospect of anger, frustration and despair that may be caused by the unfavorable conditions mentioned brings along the risk of mutiny, as well as loss of lives. In this respect, a difficult crossing is not only a test in the strategical skills of the commander but also represents the degree of authority he has over the men.¹⁴⁴² It is possible to trace this concept to pre-Islamic Turkic tradition which associated the successful crossing of a river with the permission of God. This was deemed especially noteworthy during wars because it reflected the commander’s ability to find some point to cross. This was based on the idea that even those rivers which were believed to be uncrossable could be crossed at some point. Once this point was found, the army would be led across where the enemy would have no preparations. As his inscription demonstrates, The Göktürk vizier Bilge Tonyukuk, for example, has taken pride in having crossed uncrossable rivers.¹⁴⁴³ We have already mentioned that the bridges were built by İbrahim at the orders of Süleyman, and that İbrahim oversaw the crossing of the army. The fact that each crossing was successful, with the bridge at Belgrade, for example, “not falling

¹⁴⁴¹ See, for example, Sâlih (TSK), 29a-b, as Salih Çelebi describes the crossing at Belgrade.

¹⁴⁴² Palmira Brummet, “The River Crossing: Breaking Points (‘Metaphorical’ and ‘Real’) in Ottoman Mutiny,” in *Rebellion, Repression, Reinvention*, pp.216-9.

¹⁴⁴³ Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, p.326, 386.

apart or even shake,”¹⁴⁴⁴ demonstrates the skills not only of the Sultan, but perhaps even more that of his grand vizier.

Subtling this part of our discussion as “the march” might be misleading, as it might suggest a differentiation between the campaign and the marching of the army. In other words, the term “march” might imply movement towards a specifically pre-determined spot which would determine the result of the “campaign”. However, we have argued for the non-existence of such a pre-determined spot and proposed a situational development for the final destination. In this respect, the march is actually the campaign itself which involves raids, sieges and territorial acquisition. In the proclamation of victory sent after the battle of Mohacs, this multiple nature of the campaign is reflected through the summarizing expression of “totality of conquests” [*fütûhât-ı külliye*].¹⁴⁴⁵

Throughout the march, we see two sorts of acquisition: by force of arms – which is not to be confused with forceful conquest, – and by will – which is not to be confused with peaceful surrender. The first sort of acquisition applies to those fortresses acquired after a siege like Petervarad, Eszék, Bács [Bač, Bâc], Szeged [Segedin, Szegedin, Shegedino] as well as others taken by the frontier commanders. The second sort of acquisition applies to those towns or castles which have voluntarily surrendered without resorting to aggressive means. These two sorts of acquisitions are interrelated, though. Throughout the campaign we see minor castles submitting their keys whenever a major stronghold nearby falls following a siege. Ultimately, the number of towns and castles acquired in this way exceeds by far those conquered through siege. For example, when Ilok [Ujlak] gave in after a siege on 8 August [29 Shawwal], other castles surrendered as well. In order to see how this works, we shall take a very brief look at the timing. While Petervarad was under siege, the commander of Bosnia Hüsrev Beg along with Mihaloğlu Mehmed Beg were sent further along the Danube for raid and they took some towns.¹⁴⁴⁶ Petervarad asked for peaceful surrender on 27 July [17 Shawwal] and submitted next day. Ilok was besieged on 1 August [22 Shawwal], only a few days after the fall of Petervarad. On 7 August [28 Shawwal] Ilok asked for peaceful surrender,

¹⁴⁴⁴ KPZ, X:241.

¹⁴⁴⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:551. For raiding activity between Mohacs and Buda, see KPZ, X:313-4; Sanuto, 42:406-7.

¹⁴⁴⁶ *Münşe‘at*, I:558; KPZ, X:256-7; Nasuh, 111b-112a.

followed by other castles handing their keys next day.¹⁴⁴⁷ A reflection of the persuasive value of both forceful submission and peaceful surrender by example is found in Kemalpaşazade's account. According to the author, as a result of the peaceful surrender cases during the raids of the frontier forces inhabitants of the conquered towns were not harmed.¹⁴⁴⁸ When İbrahim Paşa besieged Ilok, the commanders therein held a council. They argued that İbrahim would not leave unless he took the fortress. They thought of Petervarad and decided to surrender in order not to end up like it.¹⁴⁴⁹

Two manners of movement are observable in these acquisitions. The army moves either raiding and pillaging, or observing the ban on pillaging. These manners again seem to be dictated by situational factors. Throughout the 1526 campaign, we see the army marching through two different paths. This strategy is linked to the two manners of movement mentioned. If the situation requires an aggressive approach to convince the enemy towns or castles to surrender through scaring them, separating the army in two wings allows for extending the range of territorial damage and the chances for booty. This approach is exemplified in the return march whereby Sultan Süleyman and İbrahim Paşa follow different routes back to Petervarad from Buda. Both pillage and acquire fortresses as they march.¹⁴⁵⁰ On the other hand, some situations require a more peaceful way to advance. In this case, a ban is imposed to prevent harm to the

¹⁴⁴⁷ Although the numbers stated in the sources are not stable, it is clear that the siege of Ilok involved more acquisitions. *Münşe'at*, I:558: 2 castles; KPZ, X:274-5: 4 castles; Nasuh, 119a: 3 castles; Bostan (MK), 69b: 10 castles, Sâlih (TSK), 38b: 12 castles. For additional castles acquired in relation to Petervarad, see Sanuto, 42:417-8; 512, 547, 561.

¹⁴⁴⁸ KPZ, X:256-7.

¹⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 268-273; Nasuh, 117b. A letter from Buda dated 14 August reports that after the fall of Petervarad two other castles submitted because they realized that they were not strong enough to resist. And in return they were not harmed. Sanuto, 42:561.

¹⁴⁵⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:564-5; KPZ, X:329-35 and Sâlih (TSK), 63a-64b. Salih Çelebi explains that different routes were used to return because the areas through which the Ottoman army marched up to Buda were all destroyed. The new routes, on the other hand, were well-cultivated. Salih (TSK), 60b. For İbrahim's feats and conquest of Titel, see, KPZ, X:329-335. For Süleyman's feats and conquest of Bács, see, KPZ, X:336-7; Sâlih (TSK), 64b-66a. For a similar tactic of returning through multiple routes in 1529, during the return from Vienna, see, Sanuto, 52:202. Dividing the army in two strands to have each advance and plunder was an age old strategy for large armies. See *Strategikon*, p.125.

countryside. Such is the case when the Ottoman army advances on its own soil.¹⁴⁵¹ Ottomans took the ban seriously and those who failed to observe it were punished. One soldier was beheaded, for example, because his horse stepped into somebody's cultivated land; and two others because they stole horses.¹⁴⁵² Another situation which requires sparing the countryside is when surrounding towns or castles are inclined to submit. In this case, a ban on pillaging both prevents possible aggressive reaction and makes Ottomans appear as acceptable overlords, not to mention the protection of the potential agrarian base.¹⁴⁵³ This approach is exemplified by the general ban on plunder and destruction between the conquest of Petervarad and of Ilok. The ban was announced more than once, especially when news came that nearby villages planned to surrender.¹⁴⁵⁴ After the conquest of Petervarad, Bostan mentions the distribution of provisions to the soldiers and says all were happy with this. The author reports another such distribution on the way back.¹⁴⁵⁵ Salih Çelebi, too, dwells on the difficulty of

¹⁴⁵¹ Bostan explains the reason of this strategy as not harming the places that the army goes through. Bostan (MK), 63a, 64a. Nasuh defines this as a "good method" devised by İbrahim: "*vech-i ahsen üzere*" Nasuh, 103a. Salih Çelebi attributes this strategy to the large number of people involved and the incapacity of the roads to accommodate such a crowd all at once. According to the author, this logistic decision was made after seeing the large number of soldiers at the Sofia inspection. Sâlih (TSK), 27a. This is an ages old strategy employed by various states. The *Strategikon*, for example, emphasizes to avoid keeping the whole army at one single place for three main reasons. The first concern is the difficulty of provisioning both in terms of men and animals. The second concern is to conceal the size of the army from the enemy, which does not figure as a main concern in Ottoman sources. *Strategikon*, p.21.

¹⁴⁵² *Münşe'at*, I:554, 555; Sâlih (TSK), 26a. In every major campaign, one comes by a couple of such cases. In 1529, too, a cavalry was executed because his horse stepped into a field. *Münşe'at*, I:568.

¹⁴⁵³ The protection of cultivated fields was a very basic rule in war-making in state formations that relied largely on agriculture for the maintenance of the political economy. See for example, *Strategikon*, pp.18-21, for the need to protect fields and tax-payers during campaign marches and the punishment of offenders.

¹⁴⁵⁴ *Münşe'at*, I:559.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Bostan (MK), 69a, 76a. Provisioning of the army was one of the vital aspects of campaign planning. Although there are no extant *mühimme* registers for the period under examination in this study, later records in Sultan Süleyman's reign display elaborate logistic planning. The campaign diary of 1529, for instance, reports the execution of a judge on the route for abusing grain and funds reserved for the army camp. *Münşe'at*, I:567. The Byzantine manual stated: "The commander who fails to

provisioning such a large army and thanks God for the plenty of crops on the cultivated fields on the route.¹⁴⁵⁶ Although Bostan's remark may give the impression of a gesture to boost up the motivation of the army, the distribution is in keeping with the ban of plunder. If the soldiers are not well provided for, they will have no choice but pillage. In this sense, distribution of provisions seems to be a deliberate logistic decision at this point of the campaign.¹⁴⁵⁷ A similar distribution of flour is reported around the same region during the 1529 campaign. This was accompanied by a decree disallowing burning of villages and holding on to prisoners, though permitting confiscation of food items.¹⁴⁵⁸ This kind of attitude is reported in a letter after the battle of Mohacs and the occupation of Buda. It is reported that the *Turco* announced that Christians residing at the conquered areas should not leave because they would be well-treated and not be charged more than one ducat per year.¹⁴⁵⁹

A major phase reflected in the chronicles is the conquest of Petervarad. The siege of Petervarad on its own was just like any other Ottoman siege, therefore there is no need to go into detail. The fortress is described quite conventionally as an unattainable stronghold.¹⁴⁶⁰ Accounts emphasize its position as a block on the campaign route, more symbolically on the "path of ghaza."¹⁴⁶¹ Such expressions once again underline the

provide his army with necessary food and other supplies is making arrangements for his own defeat, even with no enemy present." *Strategikon*, p.84.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Sâlih (TSK), 39a.

¹⁴⁵⁷ The amount of victuals needed should have been huge. For the relationship between provisions and plunder, see Tallett, *War and Society*, p.54-5: "The provisioning requirements of even a small force were enormous: when the army reached 60,000 they became staggering. To meet its ration allocation an army of this size required 45 tons of bread, over 40,000 gallons of beer and the meat from 2– 300 cattle every day. Its animals consumed 90 tons of fodder (the equivalent of 400 acres of grazing) and each of its horses needed 6 gallons of water per day to remain healthy."

¹⁴⁵⁸ *Münşe'at*, p.569.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Sanuto, 42:754 [dated 26 September; from Friuli].

¹⁴⁶⁰ Sâlih (TSK), 30b. Some foreign reports also attest to the strength and importance of Petervarad. See, for example, Sanuto, 42:410-1, 417-8. Although reports of legates suggested that it stood almost unguarded in the spring of 1523, it was probably fortified and reorganized after Pal Tomori took possession of the fortress. Kubiny, "The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi," p.102.

¹⁴⁶¹ Sâlih (TSK), 30b; Nasuh, 107b; *Tabakat*, 138b. Nasuh and Celâlzâde define Petervarad as "a stone on the path of ghaza."

determination of Süleyman on pursuing ghaza. On the other hand, the case of Petervarad raises questions on the nature of leadership which could enhance our understanding of both the role of the Sultan in general and the nature of the relationship between Süleyman and İbrahim in particular. While some accounts give the credit of the conquest directly to the Sultan,¹⁴⁶² others leave the impression that the conquest was İbrahim's victory through attributing the military action, granting of the pardon and the following submission to the grand vizier.¹⁴⁶³ These two seemingly conflicting points of view lead to questions such as: Was İbrahim, as the general commander of the army and the siege, entitled to these privileges? Or was he acting as proxy to the Sultan representing his will and authority? Or was he already a larger than life figure? Although the pro-İbrahim accounts reflect a sense of the castle surrendering to İbrahim at first sight, a reading-between-the lines suggests that it is the Sultan's power that is reflected through the acts of deference directed at İbrahim, as observed in his Egypt mission previously. Now we shall take a look at the accounts to figure out the dynamics underlying the process.

Contemporary sources used in this study agree that it was the Sultan who decided on besieging Petervarad and sending İbrahim to realize the deed.¹⁴⁶⁴ But then we meet subtitles directly attributing the conquest to İbrahim.¹⁴⁶⁵ This tone is clearly evident in the accounts of Kemalpaşazade [completed in 1529] and Salih Çelebi [completed in 1530], which read almost like a *gazavatname* of İbrahim Paşa rather than an epic of Sultan Süleyman. This should not be surprising since İbrahim was at the apogee of his power at the time. Both authors attribute not only success to İbrahim, but a very aggressive sort of ambition. Salih Çelebi tells that İbrahim wanted to “hunt down” the enemy on his own.¹⁴⁶⁶ Kemalpaşazade explains that at Petervarad İbrahim wished to put

¹⁴⁶² *Tabakat*, 140b; Lütfi Paşa, p.258.

¹⁴⁶³ KPZ, X:261, 266.

¹⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 266; Lütfi Paşa, p.258; *Tabakat*, 138b; Sâlih (TSK), 30b.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Sâlih (TSK), 32b: “*Hazret-i Paşa-yı kâmkâr elinde ... feth ü istihlâs olduğın beyân eyler.*”

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 34b: “... *kasd eyledi ki bu sayd-ı simîni kendü şikâr eyleyüb...*”

up such a fight and make for himself such a reputation that the “epic in the pages of *Şehnâme* would lose validity.”¹⁴⁶⁷

On 17 Shawwal [27 July] Petervarad asked for peaceful surrender.¹⁴⁶⁸ We again see the call for peaceful surrender in the case of Petervarad. Kemalpaşazade makes a specific note of the invitation basing it on the Quranic verse of “remove evil with goodness” [6:125] and on the practice of the Prophet. The refusal of the invitation, then, signifies “rebellion.”¹⁴⁶⁹ Accounts on who granted the pardon and to whom the castle submitted remain ambiguous. Kemalpaşazade directly attributes the pardon to İbrahim Paşa basing his decision on the maxim that “pardon is the alms of victory” [*el-‘afvü zekâtü’z-zafer*]. The author justifies İbrahim’s decision with three sources of legitimation: God’s decree, ancient sayings of the Prophet and ancient law of the Sultan.¹⁴⁷⁰ The wording of the account in the campaign diary gives the impression of victory of and submission to İbrahim:

The commander of the janissaries came on behalf of the Paşa and announced the pardon. About thirty infidels came out and kissed the hand of the Paşa. The banners of the Paşa were immediately erected on the mentioned tower. Imperial band was sounded many times. Festivities were realized.¹⁴⁷¹

Interestingly, the proclamation of victory differs from the campaign diary in attributing the pardon to the Sultan, as does Celâlzâde.¹⁴⁷² According to Lütfi Paşa,

¹⁴⁶⁷ KPZ, X:250: “... *bir nâm koyaydı ki sahâyif-i pür-letâ’if-i Şehnâme’de mezbûr ü mestûr olan dâsitân-ı pür-destân mensûh ola gideydi.*”

¹⁴⁶⁸ *Münşe‘at*, I:558. As the campaign diary has it, the request for peaceful surrender came after a fierce attack on the castle, whereby many defenders were killed by the ghazis. This was triggered by a call to plunder.

¹⁴⁶⁹ KPZ, X:255. The invitation to peaceful surrender directed at the fortress before the full siege is emphasized by Bostan based on the tradition of the Prophet. Bostan (MK), 67a-b.

¹⁴⁷⁰ KPZ, X:265. Nasuh, who closely follows Kemalpaşazade’s account, also attributes the acceptance of the surrender to İbrahim Paşa, based on the same maxim.

¹⁴⁷¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:558: “... *Paşa kablınden Yeniçeri Ağası gelüb vire idüb cümle otuz nefer mikdârı kefere varub Paşa’nın elini öpdiler. Derhâl kulle-i mesfûrede Paşa’nın sancakları dikilüb, nice def‘a nevbet-i şâhi çalındı. Şenlikler ve şâdlıklar oldı.*”

¹⁴⁷² *Ibid*, 548: “*Cenâb-ı celâlet-meâbımdan kar‘-ı bâb-ı istismân itdiklerinde el-afv şükrü’z-zafer mûcibince mezbûrlara aman-ı şerîfim ihsân olunub*”; and *Tabakat*, 140a-b.

when the Sultan asked for Petervarad; rather than submitting they challenged him to take it by sword if he could. In consequence the ghazis captured the castle upon the orders of the Sultan.¹⁴⁷³ In Bostan's view the castle "surrendered to the destroying force of the Sultan."¹⁴⁷⁴ In some foreign accounts, too, İbrahim is on the foreground. A letter from Zagreb, dated 28 August, reports the fortress of Petervarad submitting to İbrahim. İbrahim, however, took the commander and the representatives of the town to the presence of the Sultan where they were given robes. The grand vizier, set them free to go after taking them to his camp. And these Hungarian officers went to the camp of King Louis.¹⁴⁷⁵ A report from Buda, on the other hand, reports that the Sultan waited until less than a hundred people remained in the castle and then invited them to submit. Upon this invitation Petervarad gave in.¹⁴⁷⁶ The expression which clarifies the situation comes from the account of Salih Çelebi: "The conquest-producing victory-proclaiming Paşa gave the noble pardon of the Pâdişâh, the refuge of the universe."¹⁴⁷⁷ Through this expression, we can uncover the intermediary position of İbrahim Paşa through the process. Even though his active performance may imply direct attribution of victory, he seems to be acting on behalf of the actual power-holder rather than executing a right or duty of his own. Salih Çelebi's evaluation of the peaceful surrender case of Ilok sheds further light to the issue as the author regards the granting of pardon as the performance of a requirement dictated by religion [*muktezâ-yı şer'-i şerîf*], rather than a royal prerogative. In this instance, Salih also mentions that İbrahim Paşa announced the pardon of the Sultan, as he entered Ilok, and had the banners of the Sultan erected on a tower.¹⁴⁷⁸

¹⁴⁷³ Lütü Paşa, p.258.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Bostan (MK), 68a: "*kuvvet-i kâhire-i pâdişâhîye müsellemlub*"

¹⁴⁷⁵ Sanuto, 42:657.

¹⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 419.

¹⁴⁷⁷ Sâlih (TSK), 36a.

¹⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 37b-38a. Salih Çelebi's account of the conquest of Ilok provides another interesting case regarding İbrahim Paşa's position. According to the author, after İbrahim entered the town, he sat on a golden throne [*kürsi-i zerrîn-nihâd*] with the inhabitants of Ilok surrounding him while he announced the pardon of the Sultan. For Ilok also see, KPZ, X:268-273. Nasuh presents İbrahim Paşa as the hero in the conquest of Ilok. Nasuh, 117b: "*Vezîr-i Asaf-ârâ-yı şâm meydan / Halîl-i halvet-i Sultân Süleymân.*" The castle surrendered on 29 Shawwal, Sultan Süleyman arrived 5 Dhu'l-

Some accounts relate that immediately after the surrender of the castle, the churches were converted into mosques, the call to prayer was voiced and Friday prayer was performed.¹⁴⁷⁹ At first sight, this short account of post-conquest appropriation is perfectly normal. However, Süleyman is not there yet. In previous conquests we have seen that the Sultan entered the city for the first time for the Friday prayer. The performance of the Friday prayer without the presence of the Sultan complicates the symbolic picture. While İbrahim Paşa was before Petervarad on 12 July [2 Shawwal] to start the siege, Süleyman arrived only on 22 July [12 Shawwal], to watch what was going on from a distance.¹⁴⁸⁰ On 28 July [18 Shawwal], İbrahim met and greeted the Sultan, presenting him both the severed heads and the prisoners. They came to the imperial tent with pomp and circumstance, after which the Sultan went to inspect the castle.¹⁴⁸¹ The presentation of prisoners and severed heads seem to signify a symbolic delivery of the victory to the Sultan. A similar instance can be found in the conquest of Sabacz in 1521, whereby Ahmed Paşa, as the commander of the siege, had the severed heads lined up on the road as he welcomed the Sultan, and kissed his hand.¹⁴⁸²

On 30 July [20 Shawwal], we witness a major ceremonial whereby many are rewarded for the conquest of the castle. Commanders of Rumelia who were entitled to more than an annual fief of 400,000 aspers were awarded 30,000 aspers in cash along with a gown [*haftan*]. Those with fiefs lower rewarded 20,000 aspers and a gown. The commanders of Smederevo and Zvornik were awarded 30,000 aspers in cash along with a robe [*hilat*]. The *kethüda* of Rumelia was awarded 12,000 aspers and a robe, the Rumelian *defterdar* 10,000 aspers and a gown.¹⁴⁸³ This ceremony is again a dual-

Qada. Nasuh, 117a-118b; *Tabakat*, 141a-b; Bostan (MK), 69a-b. Bostan dates the surrender on 29 Shawwal and Süleyman's arrival on the next day. He lists other castles who surrendered at this point.

¹⁴⁷⁹ Nasuh, 114b-115a.

¹⁴⁸⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:558. Also see, KPZ, X:249, 265-6; and Nasuh, 113a, 115a.

¹⁴⁸¹ *Münşe'at*, I:558; KPZ, X:266.

¹⁴⁸² *Münşe'at*, I:508.

¹⁴⁸³ *Münşe'at*, I:559. See *Tabakat*, 140b for the ceremony. Also see Bostan (MK), 68b. Nasuh and Kemalpaşazade put this ceremony on the day after the conquest. Nasuh, 115a; KPZ, X:266.

ceremony. While the Sultan awards those who have served well in the siege, they congratulate the Sultan for the conquest through hand-kissing.

The siege of Petervarad appears to be one of the three major highlights of the whole campaign, others being Battle of Mohacs and the invasion of Buda. Ottoman chronicles dedicate pages to the conquest of this fortress, perhaps to the point that if the Sultan decided to end the campaign at this point, it would have been regarded as a big success considered along with the submission of surrounding towns and castles.

5.3.3. The Reaction

The situational character of the 1526 campaign calls for attention to the Hungarian reaction before and during the campaign. We can put forth two levels of reaction which adds to our understanding of the motives, opportunities and dynamics related to the campaign. The first level consists of three categories of diplomatic action: between the Ottomans and the Hungarians; between Hungarians and others; between others.

The series of diplomatic attempts prior to the 1526 campaign bring to mind the question of whether military action was the final solution, through the Ottoman mirror, to the problem of subduing the Hungarian king to the will of the Ottoman sultan. Studies so far have established the presence of an Ottoman envoy at Buda in 1524. While Perjes argues that an Ottoman envoy was at Buda in February 1524, negotiating the proposition of tribute and right of transit,¹⁴⁸⁴ Fodor finds it more likely that this envoy was the one sent in 1520. Fodor argues that since he had been detained for years, all he could do when he was called to Louis II's presence in 1524 was to repeat the proposal of 1520 which did not necessarily reflect the Ottoman intentions in 1524.¹⁴⁸⁵ Whichever the case, an Ottoman envoy was at Buda and Louis II did not disregard the prospect of negotiation. A Venetian letter from Buda, dated March 1524, reports the presence of an Ottoman envoy who was there for an agreement. The envoy, however, was kept under custody while the King was negotiating peace because he saw that other

¹⁴⁸⁴ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, pp.108-110.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Fodor, "Ottoman Policy Towards Hungary," pp.289-90.

Christian princes were of no help to him.¹⁴⁸⁶ Secretary Vincenzo Guido reports great confusion at Buda in his letter dated 29 March 1525. He mentions the arrival of an envoy of the Polish King who has already reached an agreement with the *Turco*. The mission of the envoy, as Guido has it, was to convince King Louis to do the same.¹⁴⁸⁷

The intention of negotiating with Süleyman on the part of Louis II is also apparent in his foreign correspondence. He seems to have used this as a bargaining chip as he, once again, pressed for help transforming the immediate territorial threat to one of religion. In February 1525, he sent Stephen Brodericus and Franciscus Marsupinus to the Pope with a letter whereby he warned that the *Turk* was preparing to attack him in the spring. He reminded that Hungary was “the bulwark of Christendom against the Turks” but the kingdom could not be saved without the help of the papacy. Furthermore, the king emphasized that the disputes among Christians was to the advantage of the enemy. He also moved forth the offers made to him by the Ottomans and his refusal on the expense of suffering the harassment for the last three years. A similar letter was sent to Charles V, whereby Louis II in addition reminded Charles to look after the interests of his brother by protecting his realm.¹⁴⁸⁸ Thus, the letter to Charles V now introduced the dynastic card in addition to the theme of “faith endangered.” Reports from Rome, dated 13 May 1525, attest to the pressure Louis II must have felt on his shoulders. The report mentions a Hungarian ambassador at Rome protesting the lack of support Hungary received from the Pope or other Christian princes. The ambassador informed Rome that under the circumstances the King of Hungary was going to come to an agreement with *Signor Turco* and “become a tributary” [*facendosi suo tributario*].¹⁴⁸⁹ A letter written in 1525 to Cardinal Sisto voices the opinion that the *Turk* would gladly make alliance with Hungary, but Hungary declined such offers. So the Sultan was expected to wage war on Hungary in person if he could make truce with the *Sophi*.¹⁴⁹⁰ Piero Zen reports, on 16 April 1525, that news

¹⁴⁸⁶ Sanuto, 36:116.

¹⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 39:64.

¹⁴⁸⁸ *Letters and Papers*, IV:463. Both letters are dated 4 February 1525, from Poszony [Bratislava, Pressburg].

¹⁴⁸⁹ Sanuto, 38:302.

¹⁴⁹⁰ *Letters and Papers*, IV:463.

arrived that the king of Hungary sent envoys to the Sultan to make peace.¹⁴⁹¹ Ambassadorial visits and messages conveyed reinforce the idea that diplomatic attempts were taken seriously before resorting to aggressive means.

A similar round of correspondence between Louis II, Pope and European monarchs is observed in February and March 1526.¹⁴⁹² This alarm stems from the reports of the papal legate at Buda, Burgio and letters from Louis II to all. Alarmed by his legate's reports, the Pope made a meeting with six cardinals and sent letters to Christian princes for urgent assistance. In the letter sent to Henry VIII, for example, the Pope stated that his help was expected so that "the other Christian princes may know that he is truly called the Defender of the Faith."¹⁴⁹³ One such letter was also sent to Charles V, of course. His reaction to this request as reflected in a letter to his brother dated 25 March 1526 is noteworthy: "Such reports are so often spread; I know not what to believe."¹⁴⁹⁴ In either case, Charles probably did not want to take the risk of not realizing an immediate threat on time and wrote to the courts of England, Hungary, Poland, Denmark, Portugal, and Scotland as well as to the Swiss, the Italian princes, his aunt Margaret and his brother Ferdinand. He asked them to take action against the Ottomans.¹⁴⁹⁵ As for Ferdinand, he brought up the issue at the Diet of Speyer which opened on 25 June 1526. The Ottoman army was already a few days away from Belgrade, and it was clear by now that Süleyman would not stop there. Ferdinand updated the German princes on *Turkish* news, and succeeded to secure a small subsidy from the princes against the Ottomans. However, German princes brought up the issue of religious concessions in return for promising aid to Hungary.¹⁴⁹⁶

¹⁴⁹¹ Sanuto, 41:409.

¹⁴⁹² For a Latin copy of the letter from Louis II to Venice dated 25 March 1526, see Sanuto, 41:297-8. A papal legate has also brought a letter by Louis II as well as one from the Pope requesting help against the Ottomans. *Ibid*, 302, entry dated 6 May 1526.

¹⁴⁹³ *Letters and Papers*, IV:883

¹⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 922.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Rodriguez-Salgado, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.53.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Fisher-Galati, "Ottoman Imperialism and the Lutheran Struggle," pp.56-8. Karl Brandi, the modern biographer of Charles V, argues that the Diet of Speyer caused the German princes to realize the power they would have if united. This brought along the awareness that the Lutheran issue was not solely a confessional one but a political one as well. Brandi comments that rather than assembling troops to go against

Hungarians were sure of an attack by the spring of 1526, though Süleyman's target was again subject to speculation. Hungarian defense plans started to be formed in March 1526 as reports arrived from the ban of Transylvania Janos Szapolyai and the Archbishop of Kolocsa and the commander of the southern frontier Pal Tomori. Janos Szapolyai also seems to have warned Louis II in a letter dated 16 March. The voivode informed the King on Ottoman preparations and requested help both in terms of men and guns since he was sure of an attack on Transylvania. He expected Ottoman occupation of the Alps in a month.¹⁴⁹⁷ Tomori also presented a report in March on the expected Ottoman invasion on 26 March at Buda. Upon this Louis II summoned the Diet. On 23 April, the date and place of the assembly of the army was voted on. Accordingly, noble levies as well as Moravian and Bohemian troops would assemble at Tolna on 2 July. Janos Szapolyai, the voivode of Transylvania, was ordered to cross the Carpathians and invade Wallachia. This was supposed to distract Süleyman's attention. But this plan was never executed since Szapolyai was called to join the King before long.¹⁴⁹⁸ Reporting from Buda as early as March, the papal legate Burgio wrote that the Turk was expected to approach Buda. Analyzing what he has been hearing and looking at the bridges being built, he suggests three points of entry: Transylvania, Petervarad and Slavonia.¹⁴⁹⁹ Writing from Buda on 26 July, Antonio di Zuane still tried to guess the next step of the Sultan as the siege of Petervarad continued. One guess was that he would destroy Syrmia and then retreat for the time being. Another expectation was the

Süleyman's army or to secure the Austrian border, Ferdinand went to Innsbruck. The author asserts that even with the news of Mohacs, Ferdinand was more engaged with the imperial struggle over Milan than on the Ottoman threat. This according to Brandi, demonstrated Ferdinand's loyalty to his brother and his ambition for Milan as an imperial fief. Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, pp.245-7.

¹⁴⁹⁷ *Letters and Papers*, IV:914. Both Tomori and Szapolyai seem to have been quite experienced and active in intelligence gathering as their messages to Buda in 1523 show. Kubinyi emphasizes the inability at Buda to figure out the difference between fake news and actual ones. He argues that the confusion in 1526 regarding the reports is similar to that in 1523, and that Szapolyai's proposals were not taken into consideration. Kubinyi, "The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi," pp.94-100.

¹⁴⁹⁸ Alföldi, "The Battle of Mohacs, 1526," p.193, 197.

¹⁴⁹⁹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:924-5. Sanuto, 41:223. A meeting of the Pope and the cardinals on 21 April 1526 over the news from Hungary and from Ferdinand names these three points of entry: Transylvania, Transalpina, Slavonia.

conquest of Petervarad after which the Ottoman army would leave the rest for later, as was done in the case of Belgrade.¹⁵⁰⁰

In March 1526, the general opinion on the capability of King Louis II to counter the Ottoman threat was under serious suspicion. Much of this suspicion was based on the discord between Hungarian nobility and their loyalty to the king, or rather the lack of his authority. Burgio reporting from Buda to Rome seems to be perplexed at the lack of organization and preparation. He is much surprised by the fact that although the army was supposed to assemble in 28 days, the place of assembly was still not deliberated. Besides, Hungary had a serious financial problem and those who saw no money coming resigned their offices. Another thing that greatly caused concern for the papal legate was that everyone spent all of their time in deliberation and mutual accusations, as well as accusing the king of not listening to their advice. All the king did in return was to tell them that he had already spent all he had. Burgio says that the king told him that he was “more afraid of the Turks of Hungary than of the Turks of Turkey.” Burgio’s final judgment on the condition of Hungary in March 1526 is: “The King is disliked by all. There is no preparation, no order, and what is worse, many have no wish to defend themselves.”¹⁵⁰¹ As the campaign progressed foreign observers gave no chance to Hungary. The Venetian ambassador at Rome wrote, at the end of May, that in June the Ottomans would have possession of Buda.¹⁵⁰² The precarious condition of Louis II is reflected in the words of the papal legate at Buda. In June 1526, as the campaign already advanced, seeing the dismal situation of Louis II, Burgio was at a loss on what to do:

As for me, God knows, my lord, I do not know what to do. If the King sets on the road, I do not know if it will be either honorable or safe following him through the ride. It will not be honorable because they will say that I gave him unsafe advice, because without any doubt, whether the voivode has intelligence with the Turk or not, if the King does not end up secure, his

¹⁵⁰⁰ Sanuto, 42:339.

¹⁵⁰¹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1433. The anonymous writer of a letter from Rome in April 1526 shared these opinions. He believed that Süleyman would move through Hungary without having to draw his sword. He also said that if he were İbrahim, he would directly aim Italy, arrive at Hostia by sea, and directly to *San Pietro* by land. He hoped to avenge the enemies of Italy, even if through the *Turk*. Rather ironically, he proposed provisioning Ottoman attire. Sanuto, 41:265-6.

¹⁵⁰² *Ibid*, 466.

people will mistreat him because everyone blames the King and those who counsel him for the loss of the Kingdom. If His Majesty goes as far as the Drava, he can not leave without disorder. And I see another danger beside the enemy, there is the danger of an internal sedition because everyone is displeased with the King, and because of the suspects around the voivode, and because the King will be compelled to do there what he cannot here: escape. And either way, going with the King is going for the most apparent perdition.¹⁵⁰³

As İbrahim Paşa reached Belgrade with part of the Ottoman army on 29 June [19 Ramadan],¹⁵⁰⁴ the prospect of the Sava crossing seems to have created some panic at Buda. The reports sent by the papal legate Burgio from Buda to Rome provide insight to the situation at the capital. Writing from Buda on 30 June, he informed of the arrival in Buda of news that the Ottoman army has passed the Sava and was now camped in Hungary.¹⁵⁰⁵ The date of the letter provides an interesting clue to the sense of panic and despair in the face of Ottoman advance. Neither Burgio nor anyone else in Buda could have been informed on the actual transfer of the Ottoman army across the Sava because the actual crossing started on 30 June.¹⁵⁰⁶ By contemporary standards not even the fastest messenger system could get the news from Belgrade to Buda on the same day. Furthermore, the river took days for the whole army to cross. In other words, the arrival of the Ottoman army at Sava seems to reflect the public opinion that they were going to cross the river anyway. According to Burgio, the hopes of resisting at the passing of Sava were gone. Hungarians were preparing ships and artillery to go against the enemy,

¹⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, 42:239: “Di me, Dio sa monsignorche non so quel che fare. Se il Re si mette in rota non so come sia onorevole nè sicuro seguirlo per li monti; solo onorevole non sarà, perchè si dirà che io li donai tal consiglio mal sicuro, perchè senza un dubbio, o intelligentia habbi il vayvoda con il Turco o non, il Re, se non scampo, capiteria male in mano de li populi sui, perchè apertamente ogniuno dona la colpa di la perdita del regno a la Maesta Sua et a quelli che lo consigiano. Se la Maesta Sua esce in campo insino al Drava, non porà uxire se non disordinamente. Et vedo che ultra lo pericolo de li inimici, pò ci è lo pericolo di la seditione intestina, per essere ognuno mal contento del Re, et per la intelligentia che si sospetta che have il vayvoda, et serà constretta la Maesta Sua di fare de là quello che non farà di qui, cioè fugire: et in ogni eventa andare cum il Re et andare in perditione manifestissima.”

¹⁵⁰⁴ *Münşe‘at*, I:556; KPZ, X:240-1, Nasuh, 105b-106a.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Sanuto, 42:236-7.

¹⁵⁰⁶ *Münşe‘at*, I:556. The campaign diary dates the crossing between 20-23 Ramadan [30 June-3 July].

but the King was still at Buda although four months had passed since he first intended to depart and camp. He was still expecting for the funds acquired through the melting of churchbells around the country. Burgio also mentioned that peasants did not want to go to war and they would not be convinced to do so by the authorities either. The nobles, on the other hand, also refused to go unless the King went along. Burgio's tone reflects despair regarding Petervarad, even before the fortress was besieged. Given the current situation of King Louis II, Burgio personally expected everything between the Sava and the Drava to be lost to the Ottomans. According to Burgio, if the King had not been so late to depart, he could have defended the area at least for the time being. In his personal opinion, Burgio thought that if the King withdrew: "we shall lose what we have."¹⁵⁰⁷ Burgio pointed at the fact that all other princes have called their ambassadors back because they took the situation to be hopeless. He also believed that the Pope had done his share and there was nothing more that could be done.¹⁵⁰⁸

Burgio's letter written ten days later is even more pessimistic. He reported that the King intended to depart but was afraid to do so; and the barons would not depart without him. He complained that in Buda there was not a single thing needed for war. According to Burgio, the enemy, however, had it all: captains, money, counsel, ships, order, and victuals. He noted that that the army had still not assembled. On the other hand, Burgio is quite pessimistic about the odds of success even if it did assemble, and set on the road; because he believed that not much could be achieved without money and sufficient provisioning. And this time we see the legate, having lost all hope, begging to be allowed to return to Rome. "In short," the papal legate summarized, "the affairs in Hungary are most desperate; and Your Sanctity may be assured that this year there will be left in Hungary only what the enemy wishes to leave."¹⁵⁰⁹

Burgio's concerns are confirmed by the Archbishop of Kalocsa [Tomori] in his letter to Louis II, written in June. The archbishop informs that Süleyman was at Belgrade, and his camp consisted of 3,000 tents. He believed that it was now too late to stop the Ottoman army before it crossed the Sava, as the King planned to do. He also

¹⁵⁰⁷ Sanuto, 42:238: "*Io piu presto inclino in quello opinione che la Maesta Sua si risolverà ritirarsi, et noi perderemo quanto ci è.*"

¹⁵⁰⁸ For the letter, see *ibid*, 236-41. Also see, *Letters and Papers*, IV:1063-4.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Sanuto, 42:270-1.

stated that there would be no resistance at Kalocsa due to lack of money and food to give the soldiers.¹⁵¹⁰

A more optimistic resident at Buda, Ludovico Morello, hoped that “His Majesty will have victory with the help of God.” Neither the fact that the *Turco* was coming in person nor that “the unlimited number of men in his army” seem to have tarnished his hope. According to Morello’s letter dated 11 June 1526, the King would overcome the enemy because he was very brave and he was assembling a huge army. Morello was not only sure that the King and the barons were intent on going against the enemy, but he himself was quite enthusiastic about going along. He reported that they were all going to be at camp on the Day of the Visitation [2 July], because it was ordered so.¹⁵¹¹ Less than three months later, the hopeful and enthusiastic tone of Morello has changed into one of gloom and frustration. In his letter dated 27 August, Morello now sounded convinced that the *Turks* had come to “destroy this poor kingdom” and that they had enough men to conquer the whole world. He informed that the King departed to challenge the enemy, but no action was yet taken because of the discord among the

¹⁵¹⁰ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1033. Post-Mohacs news circulating around informs that the head of the bishop of Kalocsa was put on a lance and erected in front of the Sultan’s tent. *Ibid*, 1147.

¹⁵¹¹ Sanuto, 42:153-4. The Ottoman army was around Niš around this time. There was still hope for the Hungarians to block the Sava crossing. However, on 2 July neither the King nor the nobles, not even the enthusiastic Morello himself, was at Tolna. Louis II left Buda on 20 July while the Ottomans were still engaged in the siege of Petervarad. Four days later he reached Tolna where the Hungarian army was to be assembled. On 15 August, he left for Mohacs to counter the Ottoman army. Half of his army consisted of peasants. The rest were compiled from the troops of Esztergom, Szekesfehervar [Ístolni Belgrad] and other Hungarian regions as well as Bohemian and German auxiliary forces. Emecen, “*Büyük Türk’e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526,*” pp.61-2. Alföldi introduces a slightly different chronology. He argues that the king left Buda only after Petervarad fell, and arrived at Tolna on 2 August. Upon the warnings of Tomori, an order was given to attempt a blockade at the Drava; but again the majority of the nobles refused to march under the Palatine, pleading their “privilege and baronial duty to serve under the king’s standard alone.” Thus, Süleyman was able to cross the river without encountering opposition. Alföldi, “The Battle of Mohacs, 1526,” p.193. Perjes introduces yet a different timing, arguing that Louis II arrived Tolna on 6 August and left on 13 August. Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.211.

Hungarians. Morello believed that they were thinking of fighting each other before fighting the enemy. He also blamed the Venetians for secretly helping out the *Turk*.¹⁵¹²

Hungarian preparations for defensive action also echoed in Ottoman chronicles, in terms of information received on the march. Throughout his account, Kemalpaşazade mentions the preparations of the King of Hungary, and Ottomans aware thereof through spies and prisoners. According to Kemalpaşazade, King Louis was informed by a spy of the advance of the Ottoman army, and assembled a council to discuss what to do. They decided to send envoys to the Poles and Czechs [*Leh ü Çeh*] to ask for help, in addition to that from Germany and Austria. Their plan was to block the rivers Sava and Drava to avoid a major Ottoman attack.¹⁵¹³ According to the author, the King had marched out of his capital only after he heard Sultan Süleyman's crossing of the Drava.¹⁵¹⁴ According to Nasuh, when Louis II heard that the Ottoman army was already assembling at Sofia, he called all the nobles for a council. He announced that "the destroyer of heroes came with the soldiers of the seven climes and the army of seven-headed dragon."¹⁵¹⁵ Upon this announcement, they decided to fight. According to Nasuh they were overcome by pride, thus were not able to think modestly. A general call-to-arms [*nefir-i 'amm*] was announced. They also wrote for help to the Polish and Checks who agreed to help along with Austria and Germany. They assembled a huge army and prepared for war.¹⁵¹⁶ Bostan adds to this information that the Hungarians decided to move to Mohacs with

¹⁵¹² Sanuto, 42:417-8. Since the letter is from Buda, we might presume that his enthusiasm did not get him very far. He also mentions that Petervarad, being a very strong and great stronghold, was taken by force along with two others. The fall of the castle seems to have been a factor changing the mood of Morello. Both letters are addressed to Francesco Contarini. Morello was not alone in his suspicions about Venetians. For a 1525 view on "these good Christians" informing the Turk, see *Letters and Papers*, IV:463.

¹⁵¹³ KPZ, X:236-7.

¹⁵¹⁴ *Ibid*, 278-9.

¹⁵¹⁵ Nasuh, 104a: "*Sultân-ı kâhir-i kahramân leşker-i heft-kışverle bölük-i ejder-i heft-serle üzerimize yürüdi.*" Nasuh uses conventional Ottoman terminology through the speech of the Hungarian King, thus reinforcing the reputation of the Ottoman army as well as of Sultan Süleyman.

¹⁵¹⁶ *Ibid*, 104a-b. Also see Sâlih (TSK), 41b-42a. For the general call to arms in 1526, see Andràs Borosy, "The *Militia Portalis* in Hungary Before 1526," in Bak and Kiraly (eds), p.67.

the intention of fighting the Ottoman army.¹⁵¹⁷ Hungarian preparations reach the Ottomans through the prisoners taken by the raiders, of especially Bali Beğ, through the various stages of the march. One such instance is during the siege of Petervarad, for example.¹⁵¹⁸

We shall now pass on to the ultimate reaction given by the Hungarians, namely the Battle of Mohacs.

5.3.4. The Battle

The battle of Mohacs is the only major open battle fought by the Ottoman army under the leadership of Sultan Süleyman personally; also the only instance we see Süleyman fighting in person. Now we shall take a look at some aspects of the battle to see the role of the Sultan and that of his adversary.

The first issue of importance is how the decision to engage in open battle was made. The credit of the decision to engage in open battle belongs to Hungarian leadership. As we have seen above, Louis II left Buda after the fall of Petervarad to counter the Ottoman army and block its advance. Logically, this made an open confrontation inevitable on both sides. The final decision to fight at Mohacs was reached on 16 August at Bata following the debates at Tolna where the Hungarian army assembled in the beginning of the month.¹⁵¹⁹ By this time, Louis II probably was no other way out to simultaneously block Ottoman advance and internal strife, as his speech at Tolna as related by Brodarics demonstrates:

¹⁵¹⁷ Bostan (MK), 66b.

¹⁵¹⁸ Nasuh, 115b-116a. For another such instance informing the march of Louis II, see *ibid*, 119b-120a. This is between 13-20 August. For Bali Beğ's prisoners at Nis, also see, Sâlih (TSK), 28a. Prisoners captured with the specific purpose of obtaining information about the enemy were referred to as "tongue"[*dil*].

¹⁵¹⁹ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.213: "Whatever was debated at Tolna, major decisions were not made until the discussions at Bata on 16 August. The King summoned Tomori, who was stationed at the Karassó, and appointed him with György Szapolyai as commanders-in-chief, with the proviso that should János Szapolyai and Frangepán arrive, they would take over. The council also reached final decision about fighting the battle at Mohacs."

I can see that everyone is using my person as an excuse... I accepted this great danger personally, exposing my own life to all the fickleness of fortune, for the sake of the country and for your welfare. So that none may find an excuse for their cowardice in my person and so that they would not blame me for anything, tomorrow, with the help of God omnipotent, I will accompany you to that place where others will not go without me.¹⁵²⁰

The Hungarian war council at Mohacs seems to have faced competing views. While some insisted on waiting for the forces of Szapolyai and Frangepán, others opted for peace in return for tribute to the Sultan. Yet those who argued for direct armed confrontation won over the argument.¹⁵²¹ An eyewitness reports that although Louis should have waited for German and Transylvanian support, the nobles did not want to share the glory.¹⁵²² Commenting on Louis II's action a few years later, Giovio states that the King acted the way he did by necessity and not through any logic of war or any hope of actually winning. He thought by acting immediately he would lose some land, but if he waited for the troops of Szapolyai he could lose all he had.¹⁵²³

Chronicles dwell on the cautiousness of the Ottomans, and explain the decision to wait for a day to see what action the enemy would take. According to Lütü Paşa, Hungarians mistook this precaution for fear and assumed that Ottomans would ask for pardon; so they grew "over-proud" and attacked.¹⁵²⁴ Kemalpaşazade describes Ottoman hesitance, in the sense of not engaging in immediate attack, as a deliberate strategy. According to the author, during the pre-battle council Süleyman had with İbrahim and Bali Beğ, İbrahim warned against taking the enemy lightly. Bali Beğ explained the usual tactic of raids: to wait, split when the enemy attacks and when they pass enter from the middle. But he warned that the situation was different now. İbrahim, then, suggested simulating a fake camp settlement. When the enemy thought the Ottoman army settled, they would swiftly enter the battle field and catch the enemy in surprise.

¹⁵²⁰ As quoted in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.212.

¹⁵²¹ Emecen, "Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526," p.62; Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, pp.216-7; Alföldi, "The Battle of Mohacs, 1526," p.194. According to Alföldi, it was Tomori who insisted on starting fighting instantly not to suffer shame.

¹⁵²² Sanuto, 42:647.

¹⁵²³ Giovio, *Commentario*, n.p.

¹⁵²⁴ Lütü Paşa, p.261.

Kemalpaşazade mentions that Bali Beğ approved the plan.¹⁵²⁵ According to Nasuh, Bali Beğ suggested the tactic of simulated retreat.¹⁵²⁶ Salih Çelebi attributes İbrahim's decision to ancient custom.¹⁵²⁷

Another important decision was the choice of location for the encounter. Perjes argues the Hungarian army had the advantage of deciding on the battlefield, but not a plan.¹⁵²⁸ It has been argued that the swamps, natural terraces and the streams surrounding the plain would give a hard time to the Ottoman army both during the march and the battle.¹⁵²⁹ Mohacs seems to be the logical strategic choice of the place of confrontation if Louis II wished to block the advance of the Ottoman army to his capital. Potential advantages of the location for the Hungarian army appear in some Ottoman accounts as well. Nasuh, himself a soldier, thought that the Hungarian army could easily be victorious if they had been stationed right. He stated that the King should have positioned his army along the marshes to resist and defeat the Ottoman army. But then, according to Nasuh, "he lost his foresight."¹⁵³⁰ What Nasuh suggests seems to be a basic classical strategy, as Machiavelli suggests:

¹⁵²⁵ KPZ, X:287-9. Kemalpaşazade's account reflects a Machiavellian strategy of wearing down the enemy through stalling: "If the enemy presents battle to you at an early hour of the morning, you can defer going out of your encampments for many hours. When he has been under arms enough and he has lost that first ardor with which he came, you can fight with him." Machiavelli, *Art of War*, p.94.

¹⁵²⁶ Nasuh, 123b. On the tactical discussions at the council, also see, *Tabakat*, 146a. The strategy of "simulated retreat and sudden return" decided thereby should have been known by the Hungarians. The Byzantines associated the strategy, already back in the ninth century, as one used by the "Scythians" meaning the Avars, Turks, and the like who aimed for "complete destruction." *Strategikon*, p.117.

¹⁵²⁷ Sâlih (TSK), 47a.

¹⁵²⁸ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.225. For a discussion of the location as battlefield, see, *ibid*, pp.225-233. Contrarily Emecen argues that the Hungarian camp was strategically positioned at the best possible point, and its strategy quite accurate. Emecen, "Büyük Türk'e Pannonia Düzlüklerini Açan Savaş Mohaç, 1526," p.62.

¹⁵²⁹ *Ibid*, pp.263-4.

¹⁵³⁰ Nasuh, 122a. Also see KPZ, X:284-5.

When you have few men in comparison to the enemy, you must search for other remedies, such as ordering your army so that you are covered on one side either by a river or by a marsh, so that you can not be surrounded.¹⁵³¹

As far as location is concerned, Mohacs was not only the midpoint,¹⁵³² but had symbolic significance for the Hungarian army as the location of a past victory. Ottomans, too, seem to be aware of this. Kemalpaşazade mentions that Hungarians have defeated the Tartars there; thus believed in its auspiciousness, and thought they would be lucky there.¹⁵³³ Celâlzâde introduces *İskender-i Zulkarneyn* as the opponent of the Hungarian King in this legendary war.¹⁵³⁴ While these accounts are clearly attempts at demystifying a myth, Kemalpaşazade's introduction of the subject brings to mind the contemporary strategy of employing fear produced by past victories to break the determination of the enemy.¹⁵³⁵ This strategy goes together with the idea that if the adversary is strong enough, such symbolic associations would fail, as Machiavelli sets forth through a Roman example:

The Praenestines, having their army in the field against the Romans, went off to set up camp by the Allia River, the place where the Romans were defeated by the Gauls. They did this to inspire confidence in their soldiers and to frighten the Romans by the ill fortune of the place. Although this decision of theirs was appropriate for the reasons discussed above, the outcome of the affair demonstrates, none the less, that true ability does not fear every minor circumstance.¹⁵³⁶

¹⁵³¹ Machiavelli, *Art of War*, p.86.

¹⁵³² Andras Kubinyi defines the road along the west bank of the Danube, stretching from Eszék through Mohacs and Tolna to Buda, as roughly 380 kilometers, the distance between Mohacs and Buda being around 200 kilometers. Kubinyi, "The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi," p.110. Considering that the Ottoman army crossed the Drava at Eszék and that the departure point of the Hungarian King was Buda, Mohacs is actually the midpoint.

¹⁵³³ KPZ, X:280. Kemalpaşazade talks about this war, taking the opportunity to include the Mongolian invasion of Anatolia, Ertuğrul Beğ, and the "*hanedân-ı Kayı Hân*" in his narrative.

¹⁵³⁴ *Tabakat*, 142b.

¹⁵³⁵ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.61.

¹⁵³⁶ *Ibid*, p.333.

According to the campaign diary, on 29 August [19 Dhu'l-Qada], battle was announced for the next day. On 30 August [20 Dhu'l-Qada] Ottoman army marched in order to the plain of Mohacs. İbrahim was leading, followed by Rumelian army, then the Sultan and Anatolian army, household cavalry and janissaries. The first cannon fire came from the Hungarians. Just as the Ottoman army was about to retreat to start afresh next day, Hungarians attacked in three wings, one against İbrahim Paşa, one against Hüsrev Beğ and one against the Sultan. The Battle of Mohacs is the only military feat we see Süleyman actually active on the field, the one time we see Süleyman actually on the battlefield and actually fighting a King – his most cherished wish. According to the campaign diary, it was Louis II who initiated the attack on Süleyman and the Anatolian army. The campaign diary relates how janissaries succeeded in defeating them, with the help of God, grace of the Prophet, and the support of saints. The Hungarians were not able to attack again.¹⁵³⁷

Placing Süleyman on horseback on the field with 10,000 soldiers Salih Çelebi describes the Sultan as “soul to the body” [*tenlere cân*].¹⁵³⁸ Bostan describes Süleyman’s position in the midst of his household troops likening the Sultan to “the moving soul at the heart of the army.”¹⁵³⁹ Based on the soul analogy, it can be said that Süleyman is not the remote observer or the brain beneath the operation in this case. But he is now actively in charge of military action. Salih Çelebi’s account gets more interesting as the battle draws closer. As the author has it, İbrahim Paşa approached the Sultan asking for permission to go first. He said that there was no need for Süleyman to be on the battle field, but the Sultan should remain behind as the “everlasting sun” [*gün-i pâyidâr*].¹⁵⁴⁰ This brief episode highlights the ambitious nature of İbrahim, though in a

¹⁵³⁷ *Münşe‘at*, I:561-2. The celestial support cited in the text corresponds to the prayers Süleyman performed before his departure; see, p.365 above. For an account based on Frangepán on the battle, see Sanuto, 42:742-3, This account describes the simulated retreat of the Ottoman army attracting the Hungarians to the end of the camp, and suddenly employing heavy artillery along with the attack of the janissaries together with İbrahim’s flank.

¹⁵³⁸ Sâlih (TSK), 43b, 44b.

¹⁵³⁹ Bostan (MK), 70b: “*Hazret-i sâhib-kırân-ı sa‘âdet-karân sūdde-i sa‘âdete mülâzım olan ‘asâkir-i piyâde vü süvâr mabeyninde rûh-ı revân gibi kalbgâh-ı leşkerde karâr idüb...*”

¹⁵⁴⁰ Sâlih (TSK), 45b.

positive manner, as well as underlining the usual distribution of tasks. In other words, İbrahim is suggesting that he do the fighting as Süleyman gives the commands. However, not even Salih Çelebi can deny Süleyman an active performance on the battlefield proper. He clearly relates an attack *by* Süleyman on the Hungarian army. He attributes Louis II's desperation and flight to the appearance of Süleyman himself on the field.¹⁵⁴¹ According to Lütfi Paşa, the King himself marched upon Sultan Süleyman who stood at the center. When Süleyman saw this he engaged in the fight in person, Lütfi Paşa lets us know through a poem.¹⁵⁴² Nasuh mentions the Sultan marching along with the troops into the battlefield. Nasuh's account shows that Süleyman stood on his horse all day along with the army the day before the battle.¹⁵⁴³ Kemalpaşazade, too, puts Süleyman on the field.¹⁵⁴⁴ Although foreign accounts do not mention Süleyman's heroic participation in the battle field, rumors were already circulating in August that Süleyman meant to take the kingdom and would not retire until he fought the King.¹⁵⁴⁵

When talking about the battle, some observers have dwelled on the greed for rapine on the part of the Hungarian soldiers. They were accused of not pursuing victory, but robbing horses and taking captives instead.¹⁵⁴⁶ A strategic mistake which is often attributed to Louis II concerning the battle is the haste in which he attacked. According to some accounts, the King actually wanted to wait until support arrived, either from Bohemia or Transylvania. The "greedy" nobles, on the other hand, wanted the "honor and glory" for themselves and refused to wait. Finally, the King who feared a mutiny in

¹⁵⁴¹ *Ibid*, 50a-52a.

¹⁵⁴² Lütfi Paşa, p.261; KPZ, X:303. Through this combat, Süleyman is no more the young administrator who watches from a distance under a canopy, but is a warrior in his own right. Louis runs when Süleyman's banner appears like the "world-illuminating sun". The theme of "drowning darkness with light" is observable in *Tabakat*, 144b, 147a-b, 148a; Nasuh, 127b.

¹⁵⁴³ Nasuh, 123a, 125a. Nasuh emphasizes Süleyman's equastarian stance among the army and the sense of awe this creates among onlookers in the poem following the account: "*Bu resme ceyš olub her-sû perişan / Tururken dahi at üzere Süleyman*," *ibid*, 125a.

¹⁵⁴⁴ KPZ, X:302, 306.

¹⁵⁴⁵ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1063.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Sanuto, 43:83.

the camp gave in to their wishes and ordered the attack.¹⁵⁴⁷ Among the critiques is Christoph Frangepán himself. Lamenting the death of King Louis, he blames the ignorance of his captains and their lack of knowledge of the military arts. They were to blame, according to Frangepán, because they were unable to organize, unable to determine the right time; thus giving all the advantage to the enemy they were defeated without defending themselves.¹⁵⁴⁸

Ottoman chronicles associate the defeat of the Hungarian army with the fall of its leadership. Bostan explains that when the King was wounded and escaped, the enemy's army was left without a head. Thus their flags fell, drums over-turned, artillery and cannons scattered, carts pillaged, chests and bundles sacked.¹⁵⁴⁹ Contemporary mentality regarded the commander as the indispensable element of an army. Salih Çelebi, for example, describes İbrahim's arrival at Sofia to take charge of the Rumelian troops as the "arrival of the soul to the body."¹⁵⁵⁰ Another contemporary asserts that "if the leader [*re'is*] is defeated, those attached to him are defeated by default."¹⁵⁵¹ Salih Çelebi emphasizes in his account that Louis II paid care to fleeing without his army being aware of it and so the Hungarians kept on fighting.¹⁵⁵²

Not surprisingly, an elaborated ceremonial occasion followed the victory at Mohacs, on 30 August [22 Dhu'l-Qada]. According to the campaign diary, a golden throne, which was supposedly brought from Istanbul, was set for the Sultan. He sat on the throne as the viziers and commanders came to kiss his hand. This was followed by a general council whereby the decision to go to Buda was confirmed. The prisoners taken

¹⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 226. Actually, Louis II seems to have followed an old strategy by launching a surprise attack, as he thought that the enemy was not ready or fully organized. This was an esteemed strategy especially if the opponent outnumbered one's own party. *Strategikon*, p.93.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Sanuto, 43:121-3. (Christoph Frangepán to Zuan Antonio Dandolo, Comprich castle, 29 September 1526)

¹⁵⁴⁹ Bostan (MK), 72b-73a.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Sâlih (TSK), 26a.

¹⁵⁵¹ Ramazan, p.198. Talking about Hungarians and Rhodians being defeated as leaders of unbelievers.

¹⁵⁵² Sâlih (TSK), 52a-b.

were beheaded. The campaign diary notes that the “priest” and other notables were also brought in and executed.¹⁵⁵³ This was to a public spectacle as well.

5.3.5. The Capital

After the military victory at Mohacs, the Ottoman march to Buda appears to be a rational choice in keeping with maxims of war. At this point, a decisive battle was won and the enemy army was crushed.¹⁵⁵⁴ In other words, the risk of marching further into hostile territory in terms of expected resistance decreased whereas the potential of expected gain increased. The prospect was of actually entering the Hungarian capital had never been so likely. Theoretically speaking, taking hold of the capital city, in other words “the seat” of the adversary would give Sultan Süleyman a strong hand if his intention was to bend Louis II into his will.¹⁵⁵⁵

Accounts suggest that Süleyman was not aware of the death of Louis II as he headed for Buda.¹⁵⁵⁶ It is noteworthy that two official projections of the campaign

¹⁵⁵³ *Münşe‘at*, I:562. Also see Sâlih (TSK), 55b-56a. This priest is probably the bishop of Kalocsa, whose head was displayed on the pole. Tomori was one of the two commanding generals, the other being György Szapolyai, brother of Janos. Alföldi, “The Battle of Mohacs, 1526,” p.194. Bostan (MK), 73b.

¹⁵⁵⁴ According to reports dated 20 September from Pettovia to the English court: “Those lords of Hungary who have escaped are not making any attempt to recruit the army, but are committing worse cruelties than the Turks, spoiling and burning their own domains.” *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114.

¹⁵⁵⁵ Based on Handel, *Masters of War*, pp.54-7; Tallett, *War and Society*, p.19; Wagner, “Peace, War, and the Balance of Power,” p.597. With the fall of Ilok, Ottoman accounts assert that there were no more worthy strongholds left along the Drava and the Danube. See, for example, KPZ, X:274. Salih Çelebi explains Süleyman’s decision to move on to Buda after the battle of Mohacs based on the Sultan’s intention to give a big blow to the Hungarians so that they would not be able to recover enough to act against the Ottomans. Sâlih (TSK), 58a.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Nasuh, 131a. In the proclamation of victory sent to Venice, there is no mention of the death of King Louis, but only of his escape and the destruction of his army. The document also mentions that Süleyman is on his way to Buda. Sanuto, 43:51-2. The proclamation sent to domestic audience does not mention the death of the king either, but specifically mentions that “it is unknown whether he is dead or alive” [*kendüsinin hayatı ve memâti mal‘ûm olmayub*]. If the date of the proclamation corresponds to the date given in the campaign diary, it should have been written on 9 September [26 Dhu’l-Qada], *Münşe‘at*, I:562.

remain silent on the death of Louis II and lack any reference to Ottoman appropriation of his kingdom. While the proclamation of victory mentions that the fate of the Hungarian King was unknown, the campaign diary lacks any reference. A letter from Carlo Contarini, dated 8 September from Innsbruck [*Yspruch*], shows that even though the news of the defeat of Mohacs reached the Austrian court, they were not yet aware of the king's whereabouts; at this point Ferdinand was still trying to find help for him.¹⁵⁵⁷ Foreign correspondence demonstrates that Louis's death was confirmed as public knowledge only towards the end of September.¹⁵⁵⁸ In a letter dated 15 September, the narrator himself at Udine believed that the King reached Buda by then.¹⁵⁵⁹ Sanuto's entry on 11 September seems to be the earliest news of Mohacs received in Venice. Initial information in this entry is based on a report from Petovia dated 3 September, through Udine. The merchant who was the source of information reported that the King had escaped, without mentioning anything about his death.¹⁵⁶⁰ Another letter from Petovia, dated 20 September, however provided a detailed account of the death of the King at the marshes.¹⁵⁶¹ The Ottoman ambassador reached Venice on 28 September to announce the victory.¹⁵⁶² A letter from Friuli, dated 26 September, reports the various rumors regarding the fate of the King. According to this report, some believed that the King went to Germany, while others thought he died at the battle, yet others claimed that the voivode of Transylvania had him killed because he wanted the crown for himself.¹⁵⁶³

The date of Süleyman's arrival at Buda ranges between 8 and 10 September.¹⁵⁶⁴ Both Ottoman accounts and Venetian correspondence display destruction and plunder at

¹⁵⁵⁷ Sanuto, 42:642.

¹⁵⁵⁸ See, for example, *ibid*, 704-5 [25 September].

¹⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 648.

¹⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 599.

¹⁵⁶¹ *Ibid*, 754-5.

¹⁵⁶² *Ibid*, 758.

¹⁵⁶³ *Ibid*, 754

¹⁵⁶⁴ For 8 September see, *ibid*, 43:58, 113, 227. For 9 September see, *ibid*, 42:754-5; *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114. For 10 September [3 Dhu'l-Hijja] see, *Münşe'at*, I:563; KPZ, X:316; Bostan (MK), 74a.

Buda and Pest,¹⁵⁶⁵ as well as confiscation of the royal treasury and armory along with the appropriation of the royal palace and hunting grounds. Taking the city almost without any resistance at all and appropriating royal spaces, the Sultan left in less than two weeks without any sign of political appropriation. We shall now take a look at the various aspects of Süleyman's stay at Buda.

The news of the defeat suffered by the Hungarian army must have caused great panic at Buda. According to the Hungarian historian Szeremi, it was a merchant who asked for the Sultan's "mercy for Christians" for handing in Buda and he was awarded with ten pieces of gold.¹⁵⁶⁶ According to Kemalpaşazade, not only the Queen and her retinue but most of the inhabitants of the town were already gone as the Ottoman army reached Buda; only those who wished to become subjects of the Sultan remained in town. The author reports that İbrahim Paşa arrived at Buda first, granted pardon to the remaining inhabitants, and presented the bolt of the castle lock to the Sultan. He later mentions that they were merchants and artisans.¹⁵⁶⁷ According to Bostan, when Süleyman reached Buda, there were only Jews since the majority of the non-Muslim population of Buda had already left the city "not trusting the strength of the fortress." The author explains that the request for peaceful surrender was directed to the Sultan by the Jewish population. Bostan gives the number of this population that was then sent to Istanbul as two thousand households.¹⁵⁶⁸ A Venetian agent, Antonio Boemo, reports that the Ottoman army entered Buda on 8 September, and destroyed the city. He

¹⁵⁶⁵ *Münşe'at*, I:563; KPZ, X:316-7; Bostan (MK), 74a-75a; Nasuh, 131b-132a; Lütfi Paşa, p.265; Sanuto, 42:754-5; 43:58, 113, 117-8, 227; *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114, 1147. Frangepán emphasizes that the Ottoman army entered Buda without any resistance, not a defensive arrow was shot. Sanuto, 43:122.

¹⁵⁶⁶ As quoted in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.264.

¹⁵⁶⁷ KPZ, X:315, 327.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Bostan (MK), 74a-b. Uzunçarşılı names the leader of the Jews as Salamanoğlu Yasef and says he was the one who handed in the keys. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol.2, p.314. Kemalpaşazade says that the merchants and artisans who willingly submitted to the Sultan were sent to the Ottoman realm. KPZ, X:328. Salih Çelebi mentions the presence of Jews and others, as well as their deportation to Ottoman lands. Sâlih (TSK), 58b, 60b.

mentions that the Sultan left for Constantinople with 8,000 captives of note, numerous children and 2,500 Jews, leaving 50,000 soldiers behind.¹⁵⁶⁹

Another aspect to dwell on regarding Süleyman's stay at Buda is his appropriation of royal spaces. Despite the destruction and pillaging at Buda, it is worth noting that the Royal Palace was spared.¹⁵⁷⁰ When Süleyman crossed to Pest, he ordered that the royal palace not be burned because he held court there.¹⁵⁷¹ Szeremi mentions a *divan* meeting to decide on the fate of Buda. Süleyman's advisers told him to burn the city, but spare the castle "so that all nations remember that the emperor of the Turks was here." Szeremi admits hearing from someone over dinner that the Sultan personally commissioned a man named Antal with the task of burning down the city.¹⁵⁷² Not only is the sparing of the royal palace rather illuminating, but also the alternating occupation of royal space. It is not only Süleyman's presence in these spaces, but his performance of the kingly activities therein which underlines the appropriation process. On 14 September [7 Dhu'l-Hijja] the Sultan went hunting in the King's grounds. On 15 September [8 Dhu'l-Hijja] he held a feast in the royal palace with music and conversation. He favored them with gifts. Next day, he again went hunting in the King's grounds. On 17 September [10 Dhu'l-Hijja], they celebrated the religious feast. Viziers and commanders came to the "exalted throne" [*serîr-i 'ulya*] and kissed the Sultan's

¹⁵⁶⁹ The provider of this information Antonio Boemo was sent to convey a letter to the Venetian ambassador Contarini who was supposed to be at Linz with Ferdinand I. Unable to find them at Linz, the agent followed them to Vienna. His report is based on what he heard from various sources during his journey. Sanuto, 43:227. The campaign diary confirms the deportation of Jews. Regarding the janissaries, 50,000 is an absurd figure in any case; it is doubtful whether any janissaries were left behind. The campaign diary mentions that the janissaries who were sent to guard the royal palace came back and joined the army a few days later. *Münşe'at*, I:562.

¹⁵⁷⁰ Lütü Paşa, p.265; Sâlih (TSK), 62b. Sanuto, 43:113, 227, 473-4.

¹⁵⁷¹ Sâlih (TSK), 62b; *Münşe'at*, I:564: "Kralın sarayında sohbet eyledikleri ecilden ihrâk eylemek mürvet değildir diyü ihrâk itdirilmeyüb nevetçi yeniçeri ta'yîn olındı."

¹⁵⁷² As quoted in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.264.

hand.¹⁵⁷³ On 18 September [11 Dhu'l-Hijja], Süleyman again held a feast in the royal palace, and festivities in the King's gardens.¹⁵⁷⁴

It is worth noting that “the exalted throne” is actually at the seat of Hungary in this case. Although the following attitude does not allow for suggesting political appropriation, the employment of royal space in its customary function can be taken as symbolic appropriation. In other words, Süleyman symbolically appropriates the rulership of Hungary through practicing royal courtly activities in the spaces that are assigned specifically as such. The elements of appropriation as recounted by the chronicles do not support an argument for political appropriation, because Süleyman seems to have taken over royal prerogatives without taking over royal duties as King of Hungary. The kingly activities performed on royal grounds attest to another symbolic transition, namely the transition from the zone of war to that of peace. We have already mentioned a transition at the Drava crossing expressed by the change of garments. At this point we see the reversal of that transition. “Fighting” [*rezm*] transforms into “feasting” [*bezm*]; the weapons and martial attire we saw being assessed at the Drava crossing, now become “equipment of joy and merrymaking.” The Sultan, too, goes through a similar transition as he comes to “scatter gold in the joyous halls” after “scattering heads” with the sword.¹⁵⁷⁵

The confiscation of the royal treasury and artillery at Buda appears to be a natural action by a conqueror. However, in this case the confiscation of the large cannons signify another highly symbolic claim. These particular pieces of artillery were believed to belong to Mehmed II. Kemalpaşazade, for example, explains that the two cannons in front of the palace were the ones Mehmed II had to leave behind when he besieged Belgrade. Following Mehmed II's return, they were taken to Buda and placed in front of the palace as a reminder of the Hungarian victory. People would come to see them to take pride and talk about what happened back then. That is why İbrahim had them removed.¹⁵⁷⁶ The recovery of Mehmed II's cannons, in a way, once more brings the two

¹⁵⁷³ *Münşe'at*, I:563.

¹⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.* For Süleyman's stay in Buda, the entertainments and hunting expeditions, also see, *Tabakat*, 150b-152a, KPZ, X:321-2.

¹⁵⁷⁵ KPZ, X:321-2.

¹⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 316-7.

Ottoman sultans in confrontation. Süleyman once again emerges as the superior one in the eyes of the contemporaries.

Süleyman brought many trophies to Istanbul from Buda. Apparently, among functional arms and artillery some of the martial belongings of the King's to Istanbul as well. A tournament helmet recovered in Istanbul in early 1900s, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, has been identified as belonging to Louis II.¹⁵⁷⁷ Such trophies seem to have been favored after Ottoman victories. A late fifteenth century turban-shaped Akkoyunlu helmet, now at the Metropolitan Museum, bears the mark of the Ottoman arsenal, signifying that this Shirvan-manufactured helmet was acquired as booty during the Persian and Caucasus campaigns.¹⁵⁷⁸

The statues which decorated the Hippodrome in Istanbul in front of İbrahim Paşa's Palace were perhaps the most famous among the trophies brought from Buda. Kemalpaşazade mentions the three "awe inspiring and impressing figures" [*sûreti garîb-heybet ü ibret-nümâ*] and their being placed on a massive stone base at the Hippodrome in Istanbul.¹⁵⁷⁹ Salih Çelebi provides a rather detailed description and explanation of these sculptures. He appreciates the artists who made these sculptures on the basis of exquisite handwork and huge size. Salih Çelebi also informs his readers that the sculptures were placed at the Hippodrome in Istanbul. Defining the Hippodrome as a "public route and promenade" [*güzergâh-ı halk-ı âlem and temâşâ-gâh-ı ben-i Adem*] he asserts that they were displayed there for glory [*nâm ü nişân*].¹⁵⁸⁰ Foreign accounts emphasize these and other royal artifacts as being Süleyman's trophies of victory. According to Giovio, when Süleyman departed as "vincitore of Buda and Hungary" in

¹⁵⁷⁷ Stuart Phyr, "European Armor from the Imperial Ottoman Arsenal," *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, vol. 24 (1989), p.102, 111.

¹⁵⁷⁸ "Helmet [Iranian] (50.87)" in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–).
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ho/08/waa/ho_50.87.htm.

¹⁵⁷⁹ KPZ, X:316-7; Also see *Münşe'at*, I:563; Bostan (MK), 74a-75a.

¹⁵⁸⁰ Sâlih (TSK), 61a-62a. He also relates an ancient Hungarian myth of a king who abandoned the country and the doings of his sons, through which he identifies the statues as representations of these figures. Salih Çelebi's story corresponds with Antonio Bonfini's [d.1503] identification of the statues with Matthias, his father Janos, and his brother Laszlo. As related in Tanner, *The Raven King*, p.14. Ramberti identifies one of the sculptures as Hercules, as he saw it at the Hippodrome in 1534. Ramberti, *Libri Tre delle Cose de Turchi* (Vinegia: 1539), p.12-3.

1526, he took along some excellently-crafted bronze statues which belonged to the “splendid” King Matthias. The author emphasizes that these were intended to be trophies of the Hungarian victory.¹⁵⁸¹ Another set of trophies carried back to Istanbul were the couple of chandeliers from a church which were placed in Hagia Sophia upon the order of the Sultan. Salih Çelebi mentions that they were inscribed with the name of the Sultan.¹⁵⁸² The inscription seems to reinforce the act of appropriation. The relocation of the chandeliers from a church to a “mosque” also implies a symbolic claim.¹⁵⁸³ Although, no reference is to be found in contemporary Ottoman accounts Süleyman also brought books from the library of Corvinus to Istanbul.¹⁵⁸⁴ This brings to mind Selim I’s appropriation of books from Tabriz and Cairo as he acquired to cities.¹⁵⁸⁵ Miklos Olah, Archbishop of Esztergom, who was at Buda during the battle of Mohacs, later related the pillage as follows:

After the death of Louis on the field of Mohacs on 29 August 1526, the Turks occupied Buda the following September... [They] tore up some books, while

¹⁵⁸¹ Giovio, *Elogi*, p.251: “... essendosi già partito Soliman, vincitore di Buda et d’Ungheria, portando seco a Constantinopoli, per ornare il trofeo della vittoria Ungheresca, alcune statue di bronzo d’eccellentissimo lavoro, le quali erano state dello splendissimo Re Matthia; con le quali rizzatole su le basi n’ornò il corso de’ cavalli.” For the bronz statues, also see *I Fatti di Solimano dopo la Presa di Rhodi fino all’Anno XDXXXII*, in Sansovino II, p.127; and Sanuto, 43:227.

¹⁵⁸² Sâlih (TSK), 61a.

¹⁵⁸³ According to Antonio Bonfini, Matthias’s court historian and translator, the chandeliers originally stood at the foot of the steps leading up to the audience chamber. As related in Tanner, *The Raven King*, p.14.

¹⁵⁸⁴ Atıl, *Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.67; Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.101. The lack of contemporary accounts are covered for partly in a series of correspondence regarding Abdülhamid II’s donation of thirty five Corvinian volumes to the University of Budapest. See Appendix 11 for details, exemplary documents including the list of books and a sample page with note of donation. For a study on the premises and decoration of the library, see Laszlo Urban, *Bilder aus der Welt der Corviniana*, Ladislaus Lang (trans.) (Budapest: Nationalbibliothek Szechenyi, 1990).

¹⁵⁸⁵ For Selim I’s acquiring the earliest version of the Turkish translation of Ferdowsi’s *Shahname*, for example, see, Atıl, *Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.66. This illustrated copy was initially made for Qansuh al-Ghuri in 1511 in Cairo. Carrying of libraries as trophy seems to have been a universal practice during this period. The Ferrante library at Naples, for example, was plundered by Charles VIII in 1490, and 1,100 books were carried off. Likewise, the Visconti-Sforza library at Pavia was taken to Paris by Louis XII. See, Tanner, *The Raven King*, p.10.

others they scattered far and wide, after stripping them of their silver and using it for other purposes.¹⁵⁸⁶

Buda seems to have formed some kind of a center of operation for numerous raids during Sultan Süleyman's stay at the city. Ottoman chronicles state the range of these raids as "as far as the realm of Austria" [*Nemse diyârına varınca*]¹⁵⁸⁷ and dwell on the destructive nature of these raids.¹⁵⁸⁸ These wide-ranging raids also produced an expectation of an Ottoman attack on Vienna in September 1526.¹⁵⁸⁹ The defeat of the Hungarian army at Mohacs and the occupation of Buda by the Ottoman sultan himself seem to have created a major commotion in the countryside. Italian observers describe large numbers of people on the run. The deputy of Udine Zuan Moro, for example, wrote in October, that many Hungarians were reported to be running to Vienna to escape the Turkish fury. Among them was one of the masters of the Queen. He reported that many families escaped to Vienna where they were maltreated. Moro emphasizes that the people were in fear.¹⁵⁹⁰

The raiding activity operating from Buda and the destruction of the city itself can be regarded as terrorizing activities to intimidate the enemy. In this respect, the lack of any long-term appropriation activity regarding Buda appears striking as even the conquest of the relatively minor stronghold Ilok was followed by the usual steps of appropriation: churches were converted into mosques, "devilish church bells" replaced by "sultanic drums." Thus the castle was "cleansed."¹⁵⁹¹ We need to wait until 1541 to

¹⁵⁸⁶ As quoted in *ibid*, pp.165-6.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Bostan (MK), 74b; KPZ, X:324: "*Diyâr-ı esâr'a vardular.*" The range of these raids expanding to the Austrian border is also reflected in foreign correspondence. See, for example, Sanuto, 43:56, 75.

¹⁵⁸⁸ Bostan (MK), 74b-75a; KPZ, X:327; Sâlih (TSK), 60a. See also Sanuto, 42:737, 755-6 with particular mention of "they will go up till the German border pillaging and raiding without meeting any resistance."

¹⁵⁸⁹ See, for example, Sanuto, 42:735, 43:12, 56, 60, 78, 79, 88.

¹⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 43:59, 78-9. Ottoman accounts confirm the fleeing of local populations even before the battle. Nasuh tells that the inhabitants of Sirmian castles such as Sotin and Vukovar left their houses as they heard the Sultan's approach. Nasuh, 119a.

¹⁵⁹¹ KPZ, X:273. The only exception among the 1526 accounts regarding the "cleansing" process is Salih Çelebi. He mentions the conversion of churches, the calling of prayer and performance of the rite. But he does not mention the Friday prayer either. See, Sâlih (TSK), 59b. One speculative reason to be found for Salih's account could be

see Buda “the seat of the throne” [*tahtgâh*] becoming part of the Abode of Islam. This time, unlike in 1526, the city was “cleansed” through the conversion of the “grand church” into a mosque, addition of pulpit and niche indicating Mecca, performance of the Friday prayer and recitation of the Quran. As part of the Abode of Islam, Buda was now to be regarded as part of the “protected domains.” Only after the city acquired this status in 1541 did the Ottomans find it necessary to “appoint a great commander to protect and keep it” as Celâlzâde reflects.¹⁵⁹²

5.4. Projection and Reception

5.4.1. Official Projection

Unfortunately, an overall *fetihnâme* of the 1526 campaign has not been found yet. Neither contemporary Ottoman accounts nor foreign correspondence provide any clues suggesting the presence of such a document. However, a proclamation of victory was issued following the Battle of Mohacs. This text published in Feridun Ahmed Beğ’s *Münşe‘at* and the shorter Italian text published in Sanuto’s *Diarii* provide insight to the official reasoning underlying the campaign.¹⁵⁹³ The composition of the Ottoman text is very similar to that of 1521. The text opens with legitimating war through Quran and dynastic example, goes on legitimating Süleyman’s action on personal basis, explains the choice of Hungary as target, relates the main phases of the campaign, reports the activity of the Hungarian king, describes the battle and finally orders festivities.

The first part of the proclamation reflects a legitimization process. The first message in the proclamation is a dynastic one. Through stating that “acquiring heavenly reward through ghaza and jihad was the habitual custom of his ancestors to the path of Islam” based on the “covert and open” declarations in the Quran regarding “killing

that Ottoman soldiers who were Muslims might have used some churches for personal worship. However, this would not be proper imperial appropriation without the Sultan performing the rite himself publicly.

¹⁵⁹² *Tabakat*, 344b-345b.

¹⁵⁹³ *Münşe‘at*, I:546-51; Sanuto, 43:51-2.

pagans” and “tormenting unbelievers,”¹⁵⁹⁴ Süleyman is posed as a link in this quasi-sacred grand struggle. Following this, the text mentions that God’s grace always lays on Süleyman and assists him; claims that through this the banners of the Sultan are linked to “conquest and victory.” These first few lines of the text provide the general legitimation of war-making as well as presenting Sultan Süleyman as an ever-triumphant ruler based on piety. Here we can sense a covert allusion to his previous victories. The picture of piety moves on with Süleyman putting his trust on God and having recourse to the miracles of the Prophet as he formally intends ghaza. In doing so, he has the personal expectation of “being worthy in both worlds.”¹⁵⁹⁵ Similar to the 1521 and 1522 proclamations, the text goes on to explain the choice of destination. As in the 1521 case, the choice of Hungary is defined based on its non-Muslim status. This reasoning is further explained through the conviction that Hungarians rejected the Prophet and that there was no hope of them finding the right path. Furthermore, Hungary was adjacent to the Land of Islam. Unlike in the case of 1521, the issue of continued rivalry is not present in this explanation.¹⁵⁹⁶ The Sanuto text, on the other hand, contains none of these messages. It opens with a list of titles of the Sultan. Legitimizing elements are totally absent in terms of religion, dynasty and protection. The nearest expression that can be found to demonstrate some kind of legitimation involves the dispatch of İbrahim Paşa together with the Rumelian army to Hungary “with the help of God, the omnipotent.”¹⁵⁹⁷ Assuming that the text published in Sanuto is not an abridged version of the original text, we might suggest that the religious associations were deemed irrelevant to a non-Muslim audience whereas they were significant in building and maintaining the domestic image of the Sultan.

The second part of the proclamation is an account of the march introducing İbrahim as leading the campaign based on the orders of Süleyman. The conquest of

¹⁵⁹⁴ *Münşe‘at*, I:546: “... *furkân-ı kerîmde kitâ-l-i müşrikîn ve ta‘zîb-i kâfirîn çün mestûr ü mübeyyen olmağın, âbâ-yı kirâm ve ecdâd-ı ‘azâmımın –enârullahu te‘ala burâhinuhum – ihrâz-ı mesûbât-ı gazuvv ü cihâd âyîn-i hidâyet-mut‘adları olub...*”

¹⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 547.

¹⁵⁹⁶ This absence can perhaps be linked to the fact that this was not Süleyman’s first attempt into Hungary. In other words, Süleyman now had his own experience and example whereas in 1521 he needed an origin for the conflict.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Sanuto, X:51.

Petervarad as well as the “cleansing” process following the conquest are explained and described in detail, as if it were the actual target. While Petervarad is defined as “a rock on the road of ghaza,” the Hungarian commander Pal Tomori is identified as the “priest who is a friend of the Devil.”¹⁵⁹⁸ The following description of the military actions involved in the siege reads like a heroic story which dwells on the binary opposition of the soldiers of Islam versus the rebelling infidels. As would be expected in such an account, the fortress is acquired by the help of God. The Sultan grants pardon on request of peaceful surrender. The usual post-conquest actions of conversion of churches into mosques, performance of the call for prayer and the Friday prayer are listed as the fortress “is conquered and subdued” together with its surroundings.¹⁵⁹⁹ This is followed by an account of the conquest of Ilok and twelve other castles each of which was “a key to Hungary” and “refuge of corrupt wicked men.” The same steps of granting pardon and “cleansing” are repeated.¹⁶⁰⁰ These cases demonstrate that the campaign is projected as a mission to remove wickedness, in other words as a struggle between the good and the evil in which the good ultimately wins. The Sanuto text offers no such dichotomies, but summarizes briefly the activity up to the battle of Mohacs. We again see İbrahim on the foreground. Being sent by the Sultan to Hungary, İbrahim is given the credit of the conquests of Petervarad and Ilok as well as fifteen other castles. Only then does Süleyman enter the scene.¹⁶⁰¹

The third part of the proclamation is an account of the Battle of Mohacs. This includes the preparation of the Hungarian army as well. Seeing that the Hungarian army is ready to fight, Süleyman once again resorts to God and the Prophet, and marches toward the Hungarians. We again see an almost epic account of war. Here the text takes the opportunity to praise İbrahim through the attack by Louis II directly on İbrahim who valorously fights back. Finally, the King escapes and the Hungary army scatters away.¹⁶⁰² The fleeing Hungarian soldiers are likened to the House of the Pharaoh.

¹⁵⁹⁸ *Münşe‘at*, I:547.

¹⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 548.

¹⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 549.

¹⁶⁰¹ Sanuto, 43:51.

¹⁶⁰² *Münşe‘at*, I:550. The presentation of İbrahim as the one actually fighting, in respect to the clear definition of the battlefield as Süleyman’s – as the employment of the term “my victorious battlefield” [*mu‘arekegâh-ı zafer-destgâhum*] displays – seems

Finally, in this part, the overall result of the campaign is expressed as the “banners of Islam” being victorious and the “enemies of the Religion” being defeated – a quite conventional expression. The text again takes the opportunity to remind the audience that such “praiseworthy conquests which were not granted to famous rulers and powerful monarchs, or even to the companions of the Prophet, fell to my lot with the help of God.”¹⁶⁰³ In the Sanuto text, Süleyman sets on the road and goes against the King of Hungary after the above mentioned castles are taken. The Drava crossing and the destruction of the bridge are mentioned. Then the battle is briefly described with the result expressed as: “... we combated for two hours, and with the help of God almighty, we broke him [the king] and we sliced his army into pieces.”¹⁶⁰⁴ The text employs first person plural, or rather the “royal we”, which suggests Süleyman’s presence on the battlefield. The Sanuto text diverges from the Ottoman proclamation as to the final result of the campaign. Whereas the victory of the “banners of Islam” was clearly announced in the Ottoman text, the Sanuto text heralds further movement. Süleyman hereby announces that he is going on to Buda.

The last part of the proclamation typically states the order of the Sultan to the recipient. Once the receiver gets the proclamation, he is supposed to announce the news of victory all around, make festivities and pray for the “continuance of the daily increasing eternal state” [*devâm-ı devlet-i ebed-peyvend-i rûz-efzûnum için*] of the Sultan.¹⁶⁰⁵ This conventional expression seems to be a simple copy-and-paste task standardly applied in such documents. However, when we consider the choice of words and what they signify, this seemingly conventional expression becomes a powerful statement of status and expectation. While the “state” of the Sultan is confirmed, the underlying message reflects that it is growing and getting stronger. In other words, not only is Süleyman already powerful and fortunate, but he will be more powerful and

to reinforce the idea of partnership between the two men. It also reflects the previous expressions attributing İbrahim’s deeds to Süleyman as observed in the former’s dealings, for example, in Egypt and in the conquest of Petervarad.

¹⁶⁰³ *Münşe‘at*, I:551.

¹⁶⁰⁴ Sanuto, 43:52.

¹⁶⁰⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:551. I use the word “state” for “devlet” here not to mean state in the modern sense, but to include all aspects related to the sixteenth-century connotations such as fortune, prosperity, power and God’s grace as well as government.

fortunate. The Sanuto text ends by reminding that this “good news” was sent to Venice based on the mutual friendship and peace as well as pronouncing the final result: “with the help of God the army of the Muslims was victorious.”¹⁶⁰⁶

5.4.2. Domestic Reception

The immediate domestic reaction to the outcome of the 1526 campaign was the festive mood as ordered by the Sultan. Piero Zen, the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, confirms in his letter, dated 29 September, the information he wrote three days earlier. This information consisted of: the victory of the *Gran Signor* against the King of Hungary, the destruction of the latter’s army and the festivities held in the honor of the victory. This letter is interesting in terms of the information it provides on how the ambassador celebrated the victory: “In order to demonstrate his joy over the victory, he covered the back of his house with golden clothes, built a fountain which dispersed wine, and decorated the courtyard with flags.” We also learn from this letter that İbrahim Paşa’s mother sent someone to congratulate him and to tell him that “she prayed Virgin Mary for his safe return.” The ambassador was also invited by the captain to watch the horse races he organized. Zen tells that the festivities cost him 80 ducats.¹⁶⁰⁷ Zen’s report demonstrates how the festivities ordered by the Sultan through the proclamation of victory were handled in daily life. In this respect, Kemalpaşazade’s rather generic account of the festivities do not seem so generic after all: towns and fortresses were decorated, inside the walls there was joy, Constantinople was bedecked as to turn into a wedding house, men and women laid their work aside and made merry for days.¹⁶⁰⁸ Salih Çelebi also dwells on the nature of celebrations, in line with Zen’s

¹⁶⁰⁶ Sanuto, 43:52.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Sanuto, 43:150: “*Scrive esso Orator, per dimostrar alegranza di la vittoria fece coprir davanti la sua caxa di panno d’oro et far una fontana che butava vin, et fece corte sbandita quel zorno. E la madre del magnifico Imbrain, mandò alegrarse con lui et li mandò a dir che la pregasse la Verzine Maria che’l tornasse a caxa sano; la qual è cristiana e stà lì a Constantinopoli in una caxa. Scrive questo capitano ha fatto corer cavali, regatar fuste, ha volesso esto Orator sia presente... scrive queste feste li costa 80 ducati.*”

experience. The author mentions that people displayed all their possessions [*tasarruf*] for the decorations.¹⁶⁰⁹

Celebrations of victory happened in many ways. A set of ceremonial military accessories, preserved at the Topkapı palace Museum, suggest commemoration of major victories through the crafting of such items. A sword [*yatağan*] in the Topkapı Palace (2/3776) by Ahmed Tekelü dated 933 [1526/7] was perhaps such a commemoration of Süleyman's victory in 1526. Identified by Atıl as a display piece, the sword is decorated with animated scrolls and combats between mythical creatures.¹⁶¹⁰ Such a commemorative dagger, dated 920 [1514], can be found in the Topkapı Palace (2/254) which celebrated Selim I's "conquest of Persia" [*feth-i 'Acem*].¹⁶¹¹ As well as being commemorative objects, such bejewelled weapons probably served to amaze visitors in special occasions such as ambassadorial visits.¹⁶¹²

Ottoman accounts of the 1526 campaign reflect the official proclamation of victory almost verbatim for most part. Being larger scale narrative accounts, they do employ more details and symbolism. The general message is the same, though: 'Islam won, infidels were destroyed.' On the other hand, there are more specific gains as well. Kemalpaşazade, for example, provides more specific results already in the beginning of his account. According to the author, the campaign resulted in the destruction of Hungarian territory as well as its capital, the demise of the Hungarian King, and the clearance of the conquered lands from the presence of the enemy. Furthermore, it put a

¹⁶⁰⁸ KPZ, X:312-3: " 'Umûmen şehirler ve hisarlar donanub surlar içi pür-sürûr oldu. Hümmûm ü gümmûmdan boşalub kurâ vü bilâdın sevâdı ferâh ü şâdla toldı, husûsâ mülk-i Kostantiniyye'nin içi pür-zînet olub beytü'l-arûsa döndi. Her kenârı pür- nakş ü nigâr âraste vü pirârste olub perr-i tâvûsa döndi."

¹⁶⁰⁹ Sâlih (TSK), 57a-b.

¹⁶¹⁰ Atıl, *Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, pp.148-9, 152-4; Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.146.

¹⁶¹¹ Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.144.

¹⁶¹² For the opinion of Nizam al-Mulk, for example, see, *Book of Government*, p.94: "Twenty special sets of arms, studded with gold, jewels, and other ornaments, must always be kept and stored at the treasury, so that on feast days and whenever ambassadors arrive from distant parts of the world, twenty pages finely attired can take these weapons and stand round the throne." According to Nizam al-Mulk such displays were necessary because "every king's elegance and finery must accord with his exalted position and lofty ambition."

check on the strength of the “lord of Spain”. As a result, the “lord of France” who was a prisoner won his freedom and recovered his army. Thus, he reached the top once again after hitting the bottom.¹⁶¹³

The Battle of Mohacs often figures as a battle between good and evil in contemporary Ottoman through the employment of established codes to reflect the binary opposition.¹⁶¹⁴ As such, Sultan Süleyman’s role of defender of not only the religion but the good seems to be reinforced. One of the striking expressions of the binary opposition between good and evil is reflected in a poem in Lütfi Paşa’s account. The author introduces two huge and mighty armies confronting each other. He defines them in opposition to each other in spiritual terms. While one is “the ocean of darkness” the other one is “the ocean of faith.” One is the “army of the Devil” whereas the other is the “army of the All-Compassionate.” While one is already assigned the “curse of God,” victory for the other comes from God. While the soldiers in one are esteemed at the door of God through the virtue of being ghazis, the others are absolutely repulsed because they are infidels. While one wholeheartedly praises and glorifies God, the other is lost in sin and wickedness.¹⁶¹⁵ In a similar manner, Nasuh likens the defeat of Louis II and the drowning of many to the defeat of the Pharaoh.¹⁶¹⁶ Thus, Süleyman and the Ottoman army are once again labelled “good” in opposition to the “evil” Hungarians.

Unlike many non-Ottoman contemporary views, Ottoman accounts attribute much strength to Louis II and the Hungarian army.¹⁶¹⁷ Various authors described King Louis

¹⁶¹³ KPZ, X:222.

¹⁶¹⁴ For a cultural approach emphasizing ritual and semiotic structures related to war, see Philip Smith, “Codes and Conflict: Toward a Theory of War as Ritual,” *Theory and Society*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Feb., 1991)pp.103-38.

¹⁶¹⁵ Lütfi Paşa, p.262: “İki deryâ yürüyüb şevket ile / Biri birine darb u heybetiyle / Biri deryâ-yı zulmet biri imân / Biri ceş-i Şeytan biri Rahman / Birinin mazhar [ı] kahr-ı celâli / Siyah-ı bahtını irmiş zevâli / Birinin sancağı “nasru mina’llâh” / Havâle birisine la’netu’llâh / Biri gâzi vü makbûl der-i Hâk / Birisi kâfir ü merdûd-ı mutlâk / Birisinin zebânı zıkr-i tevhîd / Dil ü candân ider tesbîh ü temcîd / Salib ü sencanı Hak-ı hem-râh / İdüb almış yedi şirk ü gümrâh”

¹⁶¹⁶ Nasuh, 131a. Also see, KPZ, X:309; Sâlih (TSK), 53b. Ironically, in 1530 Erasmus in his *De Bello Turcico* uses a similar means to emphasize the evil nature of the Ottomans likening the *Turk* to the frogs and lice God sent on Egypt as warning and punishment. Erasmus, “On the War Against the Turks,” in Rummel (ed), pp.316.

¹⁶¹⁷ This point has been emphasized by Bayerle, “One Hundred Fifty Years of Frontier Life in Hungary,” p.227.

II as one of the greatest of Christian kings. They also emphasized that he was a leading warrior who was known for his valor.¹⁶¹⁸ These comments may seem absurd when the various contemporary European views are taken into consideration. However, presenting Süleyman's rival as powerful as possible enhances the achievement of the Sultan. Kemalpaşazade refers to Louis as "the damned evil-doing king" in the customary manner and also refers to him as "the much-hated ancient enemy" [*hasm-ı kadîm-i pür-kîn*].¹⁶¹⁹ Salih Çelebi emphasizes that the Hungarians never submitted in war and dwells on the the strength of the Hungarian army. The author asserts that through such invincibility they gained such strength that they came to be "the strong wall of unbelief" [*sedd-i sedîd-i küfr*].¹⁶²⁰

Lütfi Paşa's account, on the other hand, reverses the hatred and revenge. According to the author, the Hungarian king was intent on "taking the nine hundred year-old revenge of the Christian people."¹⁶²¹ As Lütfi Paşa has it, the King knew that Süleyman was coming onto *him* the moment he heard of the Sultan's departure from Istanbul. He sent news to *Frenk* bans that "by the grace of Christ the man we want is coming to our feet!" The bans replied: "you are the hope of Christendom / you are the lock of the realm of unbelief."¹⁶²² In the poem, the author emphasizes the firm intent of

¹⁶¹⁸ KPZ, X:202; *Tabakat*, 31a; Nasuh, 99b-100a: "Mezbûr Engürüs menhûsın kral-ı bed-fi'âli ki selâtin-i taht-nişin-i küffâr-ı füccârın mu'azzamlarından idi, ve fevr-i 'aded ü huzûr-ı 'udud ile zuhur bulub, ceys-i bed-giş selâbet ü mehâbetle meşhûr olan dârü'l-küfr serdârlarının mukaddeminden idi. Hemişe ol bed-nihâdın gümrâh-ı emîrleri saydgah-ı gazâda mücâhidîn-i müslimîn ile buluşgelüb, vilâyetlerine yagy ayağın basdırmazlardı." While Kemalpaşazade praises King Louis for his valor and skills in the beginning of his account, he attributes the defeat of the Hungarian army on the inaptitude of Louis: "*basireti bağlandı*". KPZ, X:284-5. Bragadin's report from Istanbul, dated 9 June 1526, also demonstrates the strength attributed to the Hungarians by the Ottomans. The bailo mentions that the army departed for the campaign scared because they believed that the Hungarians were brave. Sanuto, 41:533.

¹⁶¹⁹ KPZ, X:210. A similar description is employed by Salih Çelebi: "*ehl-i İslama ezeli 'adû-yı gîne-cûy*." Sâlih (TSK), 7b.

¹⁶²⁰ Sâlih (TSK), 7b. Also see, *Tabakat*, 31a.

¹⁶²¹ Lütfi Paşa, p.259: "... tokuz yüz yıldan berü temâmet Nasara kavminin kinini alavuz."

¹⁶²² *Ibid*, p.258: "*Nasârâ kavminin sensin ümidi / Diyâr-ı küfrin olmuşsun kilidi*." This projection of Louis II corresponds to the various European comments on the role of Hungary in blocking Ottoman advance, cited throughout this study.

King Louis to fight Sultan Süleyman, and kill him or be killed himself.¹⁶²³ Fashioning Süleyman as *İslâm Pâdişâhı Sultân Süleymân*,¹⁶²⁴ Lütü Paşa directs the “nine hundred year-old revenge of the Christian people” to Süleyman, and has him take all the weight and historicity of the conflict between Islam and Christianity on his shoulders. Thus when Süleyman hears of the preparations of the Hungarian army on the way, he assembles his viziers for consultation whereby they say to him: “Today you are the hope of the Muslims.”¹⁶²⁵ In this account, each ruler is identified as *the* hope of their respective communities. Thus, in the mindset of Lütü Paşa the opposition of Süleyman and Louis II becomes the struggle between Islam and Christianity through which Islam will ultimately be victorious.

Referral to ancient enmity aggrandizes the mission of Süleyman as well as implying a covert reference of superiority to his predecessors. This covert effort is reinforced through summaries of past action relating to Hungary, especially in the accounts of Salih Çelebi and Kemalpaşazade. Both authors provide a historical summary on the situation of Hungary and what the previous sultans have or have not done about it, before they tell about the campaign itself. Salih Çelebi’s summary begins with the efforts of Murad II and Mehmed II, followed by factors which prevented Bayezid II and Selim I to accomplish the task.¹⁶²⁶ In Kemalpaşazade’s summary, the reference to Mehmed II’s failure to subdue Hungary is noteworthy, because the author says that the Sultan worked for it all his life, but could not achieve it because Hungary had a very powerful king at the time.¹⁶²⁷ In this respect, Süleyman seems to have set out to complete the unfinished business of his fore-bearers. Although both authors avoid presenting outright incompetency of the Sultan’s ancestors by providing each with an excuse; the final statement is that ultimately it is Süleyman who accomplished what none before him could. Through completing this task, Süleyman not only lives up to the memories of his predecessors, but proves his superiority over them, even tops those

¹⁶²³ *Ibid.*: “Kral eydür ki, ol meydan benümdir / bugün cenk itmeğe cevelân benümdir.”

¹⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.260: “Ey pâdişâh-ı ‘âlempenâh, bugün müslimânların ümîdi sensin...”

¹⁶²⁶ Sâlih (TSK), 8a-10b.

¹⁶²⁷ KPZ, X:203-9. For Mehmed II, *ibid.*, 204-5.

legendary figures like Mehmed and Selim. Here we see once again the rhetoric employed after the 1521 and 1522 campaigns. But this time, the achievement is perhaps even greater because the target reached is not a specific previous failure, but a furthering of an idealized continuity. This idealization seems to work in two ways. On one hand, the sense of dynastic continuity is reflected in the manner we discussed. On the other hand, the victory earned at the 1526 campaign forms a link within a chain of actions representing Süleyman's own achievements. Reference to the personal past of the Sultan is exemplified in the reference to Slankamen. It is reminded that the castle was destroyed during the "Belgrade" campaign. Also found in Venetian accounts, this seems to be reminder of the previous feat of the Sultan.¹⁶²⁸ An expression found in Kemalpaşazade's account as he defines the conquest of Belgrade and the raids into Sylvania in 1521 as "engagement bracelet to the bride of conquest"¹⁶²⁹ implies a linear and progressive chain of continuity of purpose, which contradicts, to some extent, with the situational motives provided in contemporary accounts.

Ottoman accounts of the 1526 campaign employ the theme of Süleyman's superiority over especially Mehmed II in a more subtle manner than accounts of Belgrade. Kemalpaşazade takes the opportunity to re-introduce Mehmed II's attempt on Belgrade and the anecdote related to it. We have already talked about the legend of Mehmed II's claim to get Belgrade by his sword alone.¹⁶³⁰ After repeating a version of the story, Kemalpaşazade reports a conversation he himself had with Sultan Süleyman when the Sultan was back from the campaign in 1526. When Süleyman told Kemalpaşazade about the campaign, the latter said it was with God's help and with the influence of His power. Süleyman approved this comment.¹⁶³¹ Considered along with the pre-departure visits to the tombs of Ayyub and the ancestors, the prayers to God and the Prophet, this quasi-instructive episode brings forth a dual nature of Süleyman's rule. Whereas Süleyman is represented as the bestower of favors and rewards throughout the various phases of the campaign, through total submission to God he becomes the

¹⁶²⁸ *Ibid*, 247; Sanuto, 42:340-1.

¹⁶²⁹ KPZ, X:209.

¹⁶³⁰ See, Chapter 3, pp.253-4.

¹⁶³¹ KPZ, X:319-20.

receiver. On the other hand, the fact that he receives not from any worldly authority but only from the celestial signifies his elevated status as Sultan.

This dual notion can be observed in some imperial artifacts as well. A gold-inlaid sword and scabbard made for Süleyman, datable to the second quarter of the sixteenth century, exemplifies the point. While one side of the sword is inscribed with Quranic verses, the inscription on the other side reads: “

This weapon is entrusted to the will of God and to the guidance of the Prophet and his descendants, and that this noble *hüsâm* [sword] is for the protection of the Sultan of mankind, Sultan Süleyman bin Selim, may God grant him victory.¹⁶³²

The Quranic verses inscribed on a jeweled and gold-inlaid small sword [*meç*] made for Süleyman in 1531/2 have been identified to contain the same Quranic verses as the above-mentioned set.¹⁶³³ The concern with consistency of message demonstrates how serious the concepts of God’s protection and the Sultan’s service in the name of God were taken. Yet another set consisting of sword and scabbard at the Topkapı Palace Museum (1/294), dated to the second quarter of the sixteenth century, has a Persian inscription which places Süleyman under the protection of God: “May the world be as you wish and heaven be your friend / May the creator of the world be your protector.”¹⁶³⁴ A similar protective measure can be observed in talismanic shirts. Although there is no extant talismanic shirt of Sultan Süleyman dating to the time range of this study, a letter by Hurrem points at the belief in such attire. Supposedly a holy man from Mecca saw the Prophet in his dream. The Prophet commanded the man to make a shirt to be worn in ghaza. The man made it and brought it to Istanbul. The shirt was then sent to Hurrem who sent it to Süleyman who was away on campaign, “with the

¹⁶³² Atıl, *The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, pp.154-5; Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, pp.148-9. The sword is now in the Topkapı Palace Museum, 1/463. Rogers and Ward date it c.1550.

¹⁶³³ Although these verses are recorded by Rogers and Ward to be the first two verses of the LXV sura [on divorce] of the Quran, such identification seems unlikely when the function of the sword is considered. The first two verses of the LXVII sura [*al-mulk*] related to sovereignty, however, is more likely. These two verses read: “Blessed is He in whose hand is the kingdom, and he who has power over all things / Who created death and life that he may try you – which of you is best in deeds; and He is the mighty, the forgiving.”

¹⁶³⁴ Atıl, *The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.156, 174 n.85.

urgent request that he wear it for her sake, for it had sacred names woven in it and would turn aside bullets.”¹⁶³⁵

The element of past references abound in Ottoman chroniclers. These relate to the ancient past, the dynastic past and personal past. Among the references to the ancient past, Kemalpaşazade’s notes on the first three major stops worth mentioning. The author describes Edirne as the “capital of Bulgaria” [*dârü’l-mülk-i Bulgâr*]; Plovdiv [Filibe] as the land of Philip the Greek, the father of the mother of Alexander; and Sofia as a famous city of the *Lâz*.¹⁶³⁶ Among the references to the ancient past, the Alexander analogy is a frequently employed device, as can be expected. Lütü Paşa, for example, reminds the confrontation of Alexander and Darius in reference to the confrontation between Süleyman and Louis II.¹⁶³⁷ References to the Turkic past are rather pronounced in the accounts of the 1526 campaign as compared to other ones. It is possible to highlight various references to the Oghuz warriors. Celâlzâde, for instance, relates how the ghazas of the Oghuz were told among the soldiers the night before the battle at Mohacs.¹⁶³⁸ Furthermore, the author introduces Süleyman as “*kâân*”, along with other titles such as *pâdişâh*, *hidîv*, *hüsrev*, *sultân*, *hâkân*.¹⁶³⁹ Kemalpaşazade often refers to the Rumelian troops as *Turks*, for example, when he talks about the assembly at Sofia.¹⁶⁴⁰ Salih Çelebi who describes the Anatolian troops as heroes who were not afraid of death likens them to Oghuz ghazis.¹⁶⁴¹ Considered along with the symbolic significance of the plain of Mohacs and the expressions of ancient enmity, these

¹⁶³⁵ Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, pp.175. For the letter, see, Çağatay Uluçay, *Osmanlı Sultanlarına Aşk Mektupları* (İstanbul: Ufuk Kitapları, 2001), pp.45-7. Uluçay dates the document to 1526.

¹⁶³⁶ KPZ, X:230-1.

¹⁶³⁷ Lütü Paşa, p.257: “*İki yüz bin süvâriyle Sikender / İdübdür Şâh Darâyı mükedder.*”

¹⁶³⁸ *Tabakat*, 144a.

¹⁶³⁹ *Ibid*, 132a-b. Another mention of the title is in the author’s narrative of the army leaving Halkalıpınar for Edirne. See *ibid*, 136a.

¹⁶⁴⁰ KPZ, X:231.

¹⁶⁴¹ Sâlih (TSK), 27b. The emphasis on Turkic heritage observed in the accounts of the 1526 campaign inspire a further research question: Why would they not compare the Battle of Mohacs with the Battle of Manzigert, and Sultan Süleyman with Alp Arslan?

references point at a claim acceding dynastic continuity, expanding it to a wider claim of heritage.

Salih Çelebi's evaluation of the 1526 campaign is one of the most powerful reflections of the achievement attributed to Sultan Süleyman through this campaign. While exalting him over the rulers of the past, between the lines the text associates Süleyman with an almost universal heritage:

It was such an excellent campaign that it effaced and embarrassed the glories of past sultans and legends of previous pillars of state. The works of the Caesars of Rome remained deficient; the status of the Chosroes of Persia remained humble. The Buyid House could not match its scale; the Sassanid kings never heard the sound of it. Neither did such a thing occur to the minds of the Himyarite kings of Arabia, nor emerge in the minds of Hindu Rajahs.¹⁶⁴²

5.4.3. Foreign Reception

Hungarian defeat at Mohacs and the following occupation by the Ottoman army caused grief in various European courts, but probably not much surprise. Among those who attributed the Hungarian defeat to the incapability of Louis II was Guicciardini. He believed that Hungarian temerity had as much to do with Süleyman's victory as his own forces. Guicciardini's view runs somewhat parallel to Ottoman arguments regarding the over-confidence of Hungarians in reference to the conditions of the past:

For although small in numbers by comparison with so great a foe, the Hungarians placed more confidence in the victories which they had often achieved against the Turks in the past, rather than in the present situation, and they convinced the King, who was young in years but in counsel even younger than his age, that he should not dim the fame and ancient military glory of his people; and without waiting for help which was coming from Transylvania, he should confront the enemy, not refusing even to fight in the open countryside, wherein the Turks are practically invincible because of the great number of their horsemen. The outcome therefore corresponded to his rashness and imprudence; the army, gathered of all the nobility and brave men in Hungary,

¹⁶⁴² *Ibid*, 70b: “Bir sefer-i ‘âla idildi ki mefâhir-i selâtin-i sâbika ve menâkıb-ı esâtîn-i sâlifeyi mahv idiüb utandırdı. Asâr-ı kiyâsere-i Rûm andan kâsir olub, ahvâl-i ekâsire-i ‘Acemî kasîr oldı. Âl-i Bûya anın boyına iremeyüb, mülûk-ı Sâsân sesini işitmedi. Akyâl-ı ‘Arabın hayâlüne hutûr itmeyüb, râyân-ı Hind’in re’yine müteallik olmadı.”

was shattered, a great many killed, and the King himself was slain, together with many of the prelates and barons of the realm.¹⁶⁴³

Another contemporary, Giovio, on the other hand, argued that Louis II had no other option. According to Giovio, “poor” King Louis was abandoned by all Christian princes, except for Pope Clement. The King’s decision to go against to enemy, Giovio commented, was pressed by fatal necessity although without the hope of victory. The author also dwells on the poor condition of Hungary after the death of Matthias Corvinus, emphasizing the annihilation of military discipline as well as lack of practice in arms.¹⁶⁴⁴ European accounts mention that even Süleyman was surprised that the King was mad enough to face such a huge army as his with so little men.¹⁶⁴⁵

Francis I expressed his grief over the death of the King of Hungary and the occupation of the country in a letter addressed to the Electors and other princes at Speyer. He also let them know about his concern that the Ottoman army would now move into Austria meeting no resistance. Such a move, according to Francis, would pose danger on Germany taking into consideration the religious strife going on there. Francis, too, takes the opportunity to justify himself through having offered Charles V peace with the latter not accepting his terms:

Has exhorted the Emperor to lay aside private quarrels, and form a league of Christian princes, offering to resign his just rights in Italy that there may be no impediment to peace. The Emperor says that he will refuse no fair terms of peace; but while he is wasting the time by various delays Christian fields and cities are being devastated and burnt. Does not know what other proposals to make to the Emperor, for it is impossible to rouse him, if the danger of Austria and Germany, and the miserable condition of his own sister, do not excite him. Desires them to impress upon the Emperor the present danger. Promises the assistance of himself and his kingdom in a war against the Turks. Beaugency, 6 Oct. 1526.¹⁶⁴⁶

Henry VIII also seems to have grieved much over the loss of Hungary. In a letter dated 23 October 1526 to Pope Clement VII, Henry says that he “greatly regrets the

¹⁶⁴³ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.370.

¹⁶⁴⁴ Giovio, *Commentario*, p.Diiii.

¹⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid*: “Solimanno forte si meravigliò della pazzia del Re, che con così poca gente avesse aspettato un campo di dugento mille persone.” Also see “I Fatti di Solimano dopo la Presa di Rhodi,” p.127.

¹⁶⁴⁶ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1136.

evils of the times” and that he “could not help shed tears” when he read the Pope’s letter dated 22 September. He attributes the loss of Hungary to the “dissensions of Christendom.” He repeats his pledge that “when other princes have agreed, he will not be behindhand in joining the crusade.”¹⁶⁴⁷ Henry VIII’s reply to Ferdinand’s envoy in March 1527 was in a similar vein:

... the king by the mouth of Sir Thomas Moore answered; that much he lamented the losse that happened in Hungarie, and if it were not the two great princes, he thought that the Turke would not have enterprised that acte: wherefore he with all his studie would take paine, first, to set an unities and peace throughout all Christendome, and after that, both with money and men he would be readie to helpe toward that glorious warre, as much as any other prince in Christendome.¹⁶⁴⁸

Another griever was Pope Clement VII who reacted to Mohacs by convening a crisis meeting. He assembled the cardinals and ambassadors. As Gregory Casale has it, in tears he told them to convince their masters to a truce. In this meeting, Clement VII suggested a meeting between Charles V, Francis I and Wolsey to devise a plan to kick the *Turk* out of Hungary. He would be present in person to bless them. According to Casale, the Pope believed that unless the princes came up with a remedy soon, “we shall forthwith see the Turks in Rome spoiling his palace.”¹⁶⁴⁹ According to Guicciardini, the Pope already foresaw the defeat of Hungary and tried to prevent it by urging peace between Christian princes. Guicciardini reflected the reaction of the Pope with these words:

As a result of this victory the Pope was greatly disturbed, it being considered certain that the Turk would take permanent possession of the entire Hungarian

¹⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 1145.

¹⁶⁴⁸ “An ambassage from Don Ferdinando, brother to the emperor Charles the 5. unto king Henry the 8. in the yeere 1527. desiring his aide against Solyman the great Turke,” in Richard Hakluyt, *The Second Volume of the Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, London 1599, p.206.

¹⁶⁴⁹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1119. Ironically, the Papal Palace was plundered the next day. On 21 September, Colonna’s faction entered Rome and invaded the city, humbled the Pope. See Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, p.250. According to Guicciardini, the invaders committed such ruthless plunder that “having no greater respect for the majesty of religion and no more horror at sacrilege than had the Turks in the churches of the kingdom of Hungary.” Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.374.

kingdom to the greatest detriment of all Christendom, for whom that realm had been a shield and rampart for many years.¹⁶⁵⁰

Charles V, as usual, seems to have lost no time to employ the Mohacs defeat and the death of Louis II for his own purposes. Venetian ambassador Andrea Navaier reported from Granada, in his letter dated 16 November, that the Emperor suffered a lot as he heard the loss of Hungary and the death of the King. He immediately wrote to the Pope that he would go there, let the Pope settle the differences between himself and the king of France, and make peace in order to make a campaign against the *Turk*.¹⁶⁵¹ In the meanwhile, Süleyman's move into Hungary seems to have benefited Charles V as a legitimating cause for the performance of the Treaty of Madrid. The negotiations were justified with the need for "the Christian commonwealth" to unite in order to be able to take action against "the tyranny of the unbelieving Turks" and the "extirpation of the errors of the Lutheran sect."¹⁶⁵²

The developments of 1526 also provided the opportunity to bring forth – or fabricate – an ancient prophecy discovered by the Chancellor to enhance the role of Charles V as the savior of Christendom. According to this prophecy the *Turk* would acquire Hungary, and march until the midst of *Alemagna*, only to be expelled by one from the German nation. Apparently, this German was none other than *Cesare* [Charles V] himself.¹⁶⁵³ On one hand, the loss of Hungary gave Charles V the opportunity to impose himself as the long-expected savior. On the other hand, it was also an opportunity to blame his arch rival Francis I and diminish the reputation of the rival for his own favor. Thus he instructed Mendoza, his ambassador at the English court, in November 1526:

... You are to request the King and Wolsey, for the love of us, to hear the whole matter that they may understand who is to blame for these wars now in Christendom. It is strange that every time the Turk searches the entry and the destruction of Hungary, and when we and our brother the infant Archduke

¹⁶⁵⁰ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.370

¹⁶⁵¹ Sanuto, 43:729.

¹⁶⁵² As related in Burke, "Presenting and Re-presenting Charles V," p.401.

¹⁶⁵³ Sanuto, 43:729.

have made preparations to resist the Infidel and suppress the Lutherans, we are forced to abandon so good business for our own defense...¹⁶⁵⁴

The shock of the fall of the Kingdom of Hungary seems to have transformed Sultan Süleyman to an actual person to be feared rather than the prototype of a distant threat. The English ambassador at Rome, Gregory Casale, wrote on 25 September about his fear that if the *Turk* gained a footing in Hungary, all Germany would go with him: “I never feared the Turk till now; but I shall fear him more if measures be not taken this spring which would make us secure.” Casale is one of the many who contemplated on how to get rid of the *Turk* and save Hungary. He suggested sending a large armada to Constantinople before the Ottoman army returned. Since Süleyman had no ships at Constantinople at the time, he would have to hurry back to save his capital. Thus both Hungary and Greece would be saved.¹⁶⁵⁵

A more favorable view comes from the chancellor of Hungary, in a letter dated 3 October from Poszony, addressed to the palatine and captain of Poland. This letter states that Buda was burnt contrary to the wishes of the Sultan, and that those who were responsible were beheaded. According to this letter, Süleyman did not think that the King was dead. Therefore he planned to offer an alliance, and keep Buda for Louis II – as a bargaining chip. According to this theory, the Sultan would keep Syrmia, and what is between the Sava and the Drava, for himself and give the rest back to Louis II. The letter also informed that important prisoners of war were well-treated, if they were recognized.¹⁶⁵⁶ Another hopeful letter is dated 26 September 1526, written from Friuli reporting current rumors. According to this letter, the *Turk* told Christians in the occupied areas not to leave, promising not to tax them more than one ducat per house per year. He made sure that they would be treated well.¹⁶⁵⁷

Foreign accounts attest to a confused perception about Süleyman’s intentions after the Ottoman army briefly occupied Buda and employed it as a base of operation. The

¹⁶⁵⁴ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1178.

¹⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 1118-9. Giovio makes a similar suggestion to Charles V in his *Commentario*.

¹⁶⁵⁶ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1147.

¹⁶⁵⁷ Sanuto, 42:754.

departure of the Ottoman army from Buda without any sign of direct occupation confused some observers, giving them the idea that the Sultan was dead:

... and this is taken to be certain because of the sudden retreat of the Turkish army from the Kingdom of Hungary, without taking anything other than Petervarad which he fortified. It is in Syrmia, meaning on the Drava; but there in Hungary he did not take anything, but only plundered the country.¹⁶⁵⁸

While some thought the Sultan would directly march on to Vienna as we have mentioned above, some thought he already got Vienna and would keep on going. Such are the rumors related by Wallop to Wolsey in a letter from Cologne, dated 16 October 1526, as he heard that:

...the seven electors, twelve earls and lords of the Empire or their ambassadors, and the spiritual lords will meet at Eslynge on December 1 to consider how to resist the Turk, who is reported have taken Vienna and will not cease from his invasion during the winter.¹⁶⁵⁹

While the major European courts reacted to the Hungarian defeat with grief and the usual talks of need for “universal peace” to face the “common enemy,” Ferdinand reacted by claiming the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary. He immediately devised plans to recover the lost fortresses. By mid-October, rumors started circulating that Ferdinand was on the road for this purpose.¹⁶⁶⁰

5.5. Conclusion

For the Ottomans in 1526, the victory at Mohacs and the occupation of Buda do not seem to have had the same implication they have for modern historians. While we approach the issue as “the fall of the Kingdom of Hungary” they seem to have regarded it as no different from other conquests. The nearest implication to an end of a kingdom, that came up in the sources employed in this study, was one phrase in the campaign chronicle which mentions that “it has been 4700 years since Buda was established and

¹⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 43:476.

¹⁶⁵⁹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1137.

¹⁶⁶⁰ Sanuto, 43:116.

Hungarian kings reigned there until King Louis.”¹⁶⁶¹ Such absence of reference to an “end” along with the eventual support given to Szapolyai as king of Hungary suggest that Süleyman had no intention of putting an end to this kingdom, or to any other for that matter, yet.

The accounts of contemporary Ottoman chronicles reflect an interesting case as far as the conquest of Buda is concerned. Although Sultan Süleyman emerges as an omnipotent royal figure with his destruction of the Hungarian army, and capturing its seat of government; the appropriation process at Buda lacks some of the most important elements of post-conquest actions such as the conversion of churches into mosques, calling of the *hutba*, performance of the Friday prayer by the Sultan, appointment of a judge, assignment of troops for post-conquest protection. Not only these actions are absent, but also the rhetoric that goes along with them. Ottoman chronicles do not talk about a “cleansing process” as we have observed in previous conquests. Even standard terms like “*teshîr*” [subjugation] or “*muzâfât*” [annexation] are absent for describing the post-conquest status of the city. Nowhere is it stated that Buda became part of the “Abode of Islam”. Süleyman seems to have occupied the city for a short while, appropriated the royal spaces and left without further consequences. Such absence of standard post-conquest rhetoric suggests not an intention of permanent long-term annexation, but an intention to weaken the opponent to accepting the will of the Sultan. This line of thought also suggests that conquest does not necessarily mean direct rule over a country, or even direct occupation. Among the honorifics Celâlzâde lists at the end of his account of the Mohacs battle is “the king of kings who conquered Hungary” [*şehinşâh-ı Engürüs-sitân*].¹⁶⁶²

If there is a need to place the immediate strategy following the 1526 campaign; that followed by Selim I after his brief occupation of Tabriz might be considered a more suitable model than the gradual annexation thesis.¹⁶⁶³ In both cases, the capital was occupied without resistance. The riches of the city were captured, and brought back to

¹⁶⁶¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:563.

¹⁶⁶² *Tabakat*, 148b.

¹⁶⁶³ Such an approach has been put forth by Kaldy-Nagy. The author emphasizes that the defeat of the Hungarian army at Mohacs had consequences for regarding Hungary only because Ferdinand I immediately used the situation for his own interest. Kaldy-Nagy, “Süleyman’s Angriff auf Europa,” p.176. Also see, Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.118.

Istanbul. Neither defense forces nor administrative units were appointed in the name of the Ottoman sultan. Neither territory became a vassal or tributary as a direct and immediate consequence. The analogy differs in one important respect, though. Çaldıran was not catastrophic for the Safavis in the same sense, because they lost neither the cream of their army nor their ruler; thus there was no internal need to re-organize. In this respects, Safavis were not as vulnerable as the Hungarians were, and this vulnerability seems to have given Ferdinand I the chance and opportunity to pursue his claim on Hungary. Consequently, it was this difference that seems to have shaped Sultan Süleyman's strategy and image, placing him in the midst of major European power politics.

In a more general sense, this chapter constituted an exploration of the phases of a campaign to delineate ritual instances, symbolic devices, rhetorical conventions, and basic strategic concerns which functioned as interconnected elements in maintaining Sultan Süleyman's image and reputation. In this sense, the campaign of 1526 has been investigated in four phases. The ceremonial departure involved two main messages marked with personal and collective ritual behavior. Süleyman's personal acts of devotion before departure, tomb visits, and praying accompanying the procession convey a religious message denoting both the piety of the Sultan and the divine favor bestowed on him. The processional departure, in this respect, transforms the war enterprise into a sacred one, whereby all participants – including the audience – can feel as part. The second message involves the sense of order and authority conveyed by the event. The second phase of the campaign is the march whereby several ritual moments repeating the messages of similar instances performed in the Palace. Such instances as hand-kissing and rewarding at various points imply the continuous re-enactment of mutual “contracts.” Ritual instances observed throughout the campaign also function as motivational tools to maintain and enforce the bond between the Sultan and his army, as well as that among the participants. The seemingly more strategic and practical concerns such as supplying victuals, crossing rivers, opting between violence, intimidation and persuasion have a function, even if indirect, in the maintenance of the image and the reputation of the Sultan in terms of the credibility of his authority. The third phase in the 1526 campaign is marked with the battle, whereby his personal active engagement is employed to emphasize the military prowess of Süleyman Süleyman. The final phase consists of the conquest of Buda, and its symbolic appropriation by Sultan Süleyman. His activity in Buda seems to be the simulation of typical courtly life

Süleyman would have pursued in Istanbul. As such, while his sojourn at Buda signifies symbolic appropriation of the city through temporary transformation into the “Abode of the Throne,” it also points at the uninterrupted nature of the Sultan’s “court” and all that it represents.

CHAPTER 6

SHELTERING THE WORLD: *PÂDİŞÂH-I ‘ÂLEM-PENÂH*

“A defeated king with Turkish support was actually stronger than a victorious one with no support at all.”¹⁶⁶⁴

6.1. Defining the Problem:

This chapter examines the campaign of 1529, widely known as the Vienna campaign. Sultan Süleyman’s 1529 campaign has been analyzed many times in many respects. This campaign has generally been coined the Vienna campaign for hundreds of years. Many of the scholarly and popular discussions have revolved around the military and political aspects of the campaign. It has been analyzed and contextualized within the framework of Ottoman imperial expansionist strategies. Contrary to the customary coining of the campaign, I argue that the campaign of 1529 entails issues more complex than the siege of Vienna or than the expansionist strategies of the Ottomans. When contemporary correspondence and comments are evaluated as a single bunch of information, the 1529 campaign appears to be a joint expedition rather than an ambitious attack on Vienna by Sultan Süleyman. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to examine the campaign within the wider context of Habsburg domination and reactions attached to it, as well as the role of the Hungarian issue in the image making process of Sultan Süleyman. Consequently, the campaign shall be analyzed through the lens of a joint venture between Süleyman and Szapolyai, along with lesser stakeholders such as Venice and France.¹⁶⁶⁵

¹⁶⁶⁴ Fisher-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” p.61.

¹⁶⁶⁵ See, for example, Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, p.249: “John Zapolya was not only Ferdinand’s rival in Hungary, he was a natural ally for all Ferdinand’s enemies

The campaign of 1529 has produced the radius of action theory. Based on statistical data such as distances, marching pace, seasonal conditions Perjes calculated what he calls the “radius of operation” of the Ottoman army. According to his calculations, “it was precisely in Hungary that the sphere of Ottoman machinery of conquest reached its outer limit.”¹⁶⁶⁶ His calculated estimate for the actual radius of action regarding Süleyman’s army is around 900 kilometers during a campaign season which lasted for 180 days. While Belgrade was 460 kilometers from Istanbul, Buda was 1450 kilometers, thus out of the range. Given the Habsburg rivalry and the proximity of Vienna, maintaining Buda by controlling directly from Istanbul was not a feasible option. Being 240 kilometers from Buda, Vienna could supply troops to Buda much faster than Istanbul could. Seen through this perspective, the Ottomans were faced with a dilemma. They could not annex all of Hungary, but could not leave it to the Habsburgs either. Keeping Buda under some kind of control not only had several advantages, but was probably vital. Through Buda, Ottomans could control the Danube and Habsburg attacks thereon. Buda being midway between Vienna and Transylvania would serve as an obstacle to possible Habsburg advance to the Ottoman realm. As such, according Perjes, keeping Hungary as a buffer zone against Habsburg power was much more feasible than establishing direct control at Buda.¹⁶⁶⁷

Vienna has generally been defined as marking the limit of Ottoman expansion as imposed by conditions of geography and climate. As the army moved further away from the center of operation, or usually Istanbul in the Ottoman case, the possibility of

in Germany, Italy and France.” Also see, Gökbilgin, “Kanuni Sultan Süleyman’ın Macaristan Siyaseti,” p.15.

¹⁶⁶⁶ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.50.

¹⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p.50-3. In his argument Perjes refutes Szakaly’s opinion that Ottomans were unaware of the significance of range of operations. Szakaly based his argument on the fact that Ottomans actually fought in further zones. Ottoman accounts of various campaigns, on the other hand, suggest that these further operations were raids with the intention to destroy, terrorize, and obtain booty rather than organized action with long-term intentions. Accounts on return decisions of various campaigns often attribute the decision to the difficulty involved in going further due to logistic and climatic concerns, which show some degree of awareness regarding the range of operations. The proclamation of victory of the 1541 conquest of Buda clearly states that the reason of granting Szapolyai kingship of Hungary was the distance and difficulty in establishing direct control there. *Münşe‘at*, I:551: “... *Engürüs vilâyetinin dârü’l-mülki olan Budin tahtı ki ol zamanda memâlik-i İslâmiyye’den ba‘îd ve zabtı ‘asîr olub...*”

procurement of supplies and labor decreased, as well as time.¹⁶⁶⁸ Hess agrees that with Vienna the limit of expansion was realized and this caused a strategic re-orientation.¹⁶⁶⁹ Guilmartin argues that the household troops could be efficiently managed only by the presence of the sultan during land campaigns; the season set a limit to the duration of the campaign. The campaign season was limited from spring to fall. A campaign had to be completed before winter due to hardship in transportation. Another factor Guilmartin emphasizes is the concern with economical dislocation, in other words, fief holders had to be back at their posts. Once Vienna reached, in Guilmartin's view there is no sense to go further. Up to Vienna, as far as the army could go, it was in Muslim hands and the rest was not viable for giving out as new fiefs.¹⁶⁷⁰

Many scholars have attributed the retreat from Vienna on miscalculation on Süleyman's part. It has generally been acknowledged that the harsh winter conditions and shortage of food forced the Ottoman retreat.¹⁶⁷¹ Briefly analyzing the time needed by the Ottoman army to reach the southern borders of Hungary from Hungary as "twenty-three summer weeks" Gustave Bayerle dwells on the late departure of the campaign. As a consequence of such delay and the time spent by harsh marching conditions and dispowering of minor fortresses, Bayerle argues, Ottomans did not have the opportunity to prepare a systematic siege required for a stronghold such as Vienna. By the time the army reached Vienna, it was already short of provisions and had to suffer winter climate.¹⁶⁷² Rhoads Murphey defines the Vienna decision as: "His misguided and impulsive decision, as a young and overconfident commander-in-chief,

¹⁶⁶⁸ Brummet, "The River Crossing: Breaking Points (Metaphorical and Real) in Ottoman Mutiny," p.219: "Indeed, when one looks at the campaigns against the Hapsburgs, one is tempted to say that it was not superior forces or a lack of valor that kept the Ottomans from taking Vienna but a combination of water and mud."

¹⁶⁶⁹ Hess, "Road to Victory," pp.185-6. The author adds that the conviction that land war was the best did not change. I tend to agree with Andrew C. Hess as he argues that "the Ottoman defeat of the Hungarian army committed the Turco-Muslim empire to a conservative pattern of terrestrial conquest at a time when Western Europe entered upon a more dynamic mode of economic expansion." *Ibid.* p.179.

¹⁶⁷⁰ Guilmartin, "Wars of the Ottoman Empire," pp.733-4.

¹⁶⁷¹ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.84.

¹⁶⁷² Bayerle, "Frontier Life in Hungary," p.229. Bayerle's opinion about the minor fortresses consuming Ottoman time and retarding arrival at Vienna seems to be supported by a comment by Celalzade. See note 1915 below.

to launch a late season attack against Vienna in 1529 gave him a bitter but therapeutic lesson in the lessons of over-extension, a lesson he was not soon to forget.”¹⁶⁷³ Similarly, Sahin-Toth sees the 1529 campaign, like 1532, as a “fiasco of the Sultan” revealing the limits of Ottoman military potential which gradually led Szapolyai to loosen the ties with Süleyman.¹⁶⁷⁴

With do respect to the radius of action theory,¹⁶⁷⁵ this chapter aims to demonstrate the dynamics of the 1529 which characterizes it as a joint anti-Habsburg venture with mission of stabilizing Szapolyai’s kingship as the vital element. This line of argument is very much linked with the Ottoman conception of Szapolyai, his claim to kingship as an Hungarian noble/lord and the legitimation of this claim by Ottomans.¹⁶⁷⁶ Ottoman narratives reflect Szapolyai as “a legitimate king who comes to ask for support and help from the sultan in pursuit of his legitimate cause.” This conception works in two ways. On one hand, the “legitimate” king of Hungary becomes dependent on the Sultan. On the other hand, by undertaking to provide protection and support to the “legitimate” king of Hungary, the Sultan emerges as a king-maker, thus proving one of his most important honorifics: *pâdişâh-ı ‘âlem-penâh* – refuge of the universe. We shall examine contemporary Ottoman narrative sources to trace the reception and perception of Szapolyai in the minds of the Ottomans in 1529. While discussing how Szapolyai – “a nobleman” – was transformed into “the legitimate king of Hungary”, we shall try to contextualize the process within the framework of the Ottoman political discourse of the time. In other words, we shall attempt to explore the dynamics through which support and legitimation provided for Janos Szapolyai translated into a certain image reflecting the “omnipotence and justness” of Sultan Süleyman.

¹⁶⁷³ Murphey, “Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary,” pp.201

¹⁶⁷⁴ Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” p.252.

¹⁶⁷⁵ Vienna as the limit of Ottoman radius of operation is quite logical. A very simple compass test with Istanbul as the central point proves the point. The circle acquired through such a test shows that Vienna and Tabriz are about the same distance to Istanbul, as well as Cairo and Caffa. In the East, Ottomans could not move further than Tabriz.

¹⁶⁷⁶ *Münşe‘at*, I:569, 575-6; Lütfi Paşa, p.265; *Tabakat*, 183a-b, 188a, 193a.

6.2. Controversies of Kingship

The conflict leading to Ottoman offensive military action in 1529 stems from the controversy revolving around the kingship of Hungary after the demise of Louis II in 1526. Sultan Süleyman's involvement in the controversy and the manner in which this controversy was employed in the making of his image is closely linked to the contemporary perception of the identity of the "legitimate king of Hungary." To uncover the dynamics leading to the 1529 campaign, some of which are often slighted by the involvement of Vienna in the picture, this section dwells on the background from the viewpoints of the parties involved. In order to arrive at a better understanding of the significance of contemporary debates on legitimacy in relation to the 1529 campaign, we need to understand the nature of the controversy which involves three main stakeholders. Ottoman viewpoint on the identity of these stakeholders is quite clear. Firstly, there is Janos Szapolyai who claims kingship of Hungary based on his Hungarian origin and his election by the majority of Hungarian nobles. And he appears as the victim in Ottoman chronicles. Secondly, there is Ferdinand of Habsburg who claims kingship of Hungary based on certain dynastic claims. And he appears as the villain who usurped a throne from a legitimate king. Thirdly, there is Sultan Süleyman who claims possession and power of disposal on Hungary based on the right of conquest. And he appears as the epic hero who fights for the legitimate cause of a rightful king, a cause directly linked to his own honor.

The demise of Louis II hit a strong blow on the political balance in Hungary which was far from being stable even before Mohacs, as we have seen in the previous chapter. Immediately after the death of Louis II was heard, Ferdinand and Szapolyai both claimed the Hungarian throne. The struggle between these two factions to get hold of the throne and the inconclusive nature of the struggle caused constant military action after 1526, which Murphey refers to as civil war.¹⁶⁷⁷

There were about fifty families whom we tend to call the nobility. These barons were the major decision makers of the kingdom. They enjoyed land privileges, the right to collect taxes, influence in the administration of justice which made them powerful figures in the patronage network. More importantly for our discussion, they had the

¹⁶⁷⁷ Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary," p.213.

privilege to name the king. As Peter Sahin-Toth puts it: “very quickly changing, amorphous aristocratic alliances or ‘parties’ ran the central government and not the royal authority which was a lot weaker than at the time of king Matthias.”¹⁶⁷⁸ Along with the greater nobility, the role of the lesser nobility most of whom were part of the greater patronage network through service began to rise after mid-fifteenth century. As they got more involved in the decision making process, their influence and sense of identity grew; and they had sympathy for Szapolyai as opposed to the foreign interference personified in Ferdinand.¹⁶⁷⁹ Only a minor sector of Hungarian nobility accepted Ferdinand as King of Hungary while the majority opted for Szapolyai. This sector saw no problem in going under the protection of the Ottoman Sultan in the face of Habsburg attack. As they observed in other Balkan regions, they would be permitted religious and political autonomy as well as being offered protection.¹⁶⁸⁰ Some German princes, who were uneasy about Ferdinand extending his power, also seem to have favored Szapolyai’s kingship. The Landgrave of Hesse and the Elector of Saxony, for example, did not support Szapolyai directly but refused to support Ferdinand unless he convinced them that he would not employ their support to fight Szapolyai.¹⁶⁸¹ Francis I, hostile to the Habsburgs for well known reasons, accepted Szapolyai as King of Hungary as did the Venetians.¹⁶⁸²

Before we go on to examine the issue through the perspective of each stakeholder, a very brief summary of what happened between 1526 and 1529 would be useful. After Szapolyai was elected king of Hungary by the majority of the nobles, Ferdinand sent military forces to acquire Hungarian fortresses. Defeated at Tokai, Szapolyai retreated to Transylvania and sent an envoy to Süleyman to ask for his support. This was followed by Ferdinand’s envoy to the Ottoman court in 1528. Ferdinand’s envoy asked

¹⁶⁷⁸ Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” pp.254-5.

¹⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp.255-6. He also argues the interest of the nobility in the controversy to further their positions. On the rise of the lesser nobility and its influence in intervening decisively in factional struggles, also see, Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat,” pp.164-7.

¹⁶⁸⁰ Rodriguez-Salgado, “¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el Turco,” in *Carlos V y la Guiebra del Humanismo Politico en Europa (1530-1558)*, vol.1, J. Martínez Millán (ed) (Madrid, 2000), p.490.

¹⁶⁸¹ Fischer-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” p.61.

¹⁶⁸² Rodriguez-Salgado, “¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el Turco,” p.490.

for the castles recently conquered by Süleyman, including those such as Petervarad, Ilok, Slankamen, and allegedly even Belgrade. As rumor has it, İbrahim Paşa was amused that he did not ask for Constantinople itself. While Ferdinand's offer angered Süleyman because it defied his right of conquest, Szapolyai's offer was accepted. In early 1528, Süleyman recognized and undertook to protect Szapolyai as king of Hungary in return for tribute. In the spring of 1529, Ferdinand's troops invaded Buda.¹⁶⁸³

6.2.1. Janos Szapolyai: The Victim

Janos Szapolyai was the greatest landowner in Hungary.¹⁶⁸⁴ In this respect Szapolyai, Sahin-Toth argues, "simply was one of the most influential magnates who was able to mobilize great numbers of average noblemen in order to achieve his political aims."¹⁶⁸⁵ In 1526, Szapolyai was the chief candidate for the leading faction who insisted on native kingship.¹⁶⁸⁶ One major demonstration of the influence enjoyed by Szapolyai would be the support of Nograd county in the Diet of 1505, when a decree was issued to the effect that from then on only Hungarians could be elected King.¹⁶⁸⁷ This decree was moved forth during the 1526 election in defense of Szapolyai's claim on the throne.¹⁶⁸⁸

During the siege of Belgrade in 1521, hopes of many Hungarians had rested on Janos Szapolyai. According to a Venetian in Buda at the time, this was because

¹⁶⁸³ Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan Siyaseti," pp.17-19; Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.80; Szakaly, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary*, pp.109-111; Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, v.2, p.340; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.315-6; *Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.835-8.

¹⁶⁸⁴ Kubinyi, "The Road to Defeat," p.173.

¹⁶⁸⁵ Sahin-Toth, "A Difficult Apprenticeship," pp.255-6. He also argues the interest of the nobility in the controversy to further their positions.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.51.

¹⁶⁸⁷ Kubinyi, "The Road to Defeat," p.16-7.

¹⁶⁸⁸ Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Macaristan Siyaseti," p.13.

Hungary “had no greater captain.”¹⁶⁸⁹ In the Diet of November 1521, one of the proposals accepted was the appointment of two captains-in-chief. Thus Janos Szapolyai was elected along with palatine István Bàthory. Though both had that office already, through this decree their restricted territorial authority now expanded to the whole country. In the Diet in 1522 they were given the title of “captains of His Royal Highness and the country.”¹⁶⁹⁰ During the Diet at Buda which opened in May 1523, we see a conflict between Louis II and Szapolyai over the return of the alienated royal properties. The order was given in 1518. Szapolyai had not complied and refused to do so in 1523, which did not have any serious consequences.¹⁶⁹¹

Following the death of Louis II at Mohacs, hopes still lay with Szapolyai. He was soon elected King of Hungary by the majority of the nobility, only days after Süleyman left Buda in late September 1526. Nicolo Ungaro, who was sent to Hungary to see what was going on after the arrival of Szapolyai, reported that Szapolyai ordered a diet to be held at Székesfehérvár [Alba Regia, Alba Regal, Ístolni Belgrad, Stolni Belgrad] on 5 November. According to Nicolo Ungaro’s report, Szapolyai first sent 200 horsemen and then went personally. Meanwhile, Ferdinand sent two official ambassadors to ask Hungarians whether they wanted him to come and be crowned as their king. However the envoys were not allowed to talk before the voivode was crowned. The administration of the election was left to the palatine Stefano Verbecio, who according to the author, was a wise man and always “stood by the kingdom against tyrants.” He said: “Signori, you know that you do not have a head, and the Most Serene Archduke of Austria wishes to be your King; say your opinion whether you want him or not.” They all replied in one voice that they did not want the Archduke as their King. Upon this reply Stefano asked them who they wanted as their King. They all shouted that they wanted the Voivode. Then they ordered themselves for the funeral of the late King Louis. On 10 November, Szapolyai was elected king of Hungary, and was crowned next day. Only then did he admit Ferdinand’s ambassadors and asked them what they wanted. Replying that they had nothing more to say, they asked for license to leave. The author informs that Szapolyai gave them leave and honored them. Then he sent Bishop

¹⁶⁸⁹ Sanuto, 31:352.

¹⁶⁹⁰ Kubiny, “The Battle of Szàvaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi,” pp.80-2.

¹⁶⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.90.

of Segna as ambassador to the Pope and to France. This letter also lists the immediate acts that are related to the administrative affairs performed by Szapolyai; first Frangepán was declared ban of Croatia and Slavonia as well as his captain-general. He also attended to bishop and archbishop appointments. He exempted all villages which were destroyed by Turkish attacks from taxes for five years. He proclaimed that all Hungarian nobles and barons should present their obedience in fifteen days; otherwise they would be proclaimed rebels. This proclamation, according to the author, was a means to provide that those few nobles who sided with Ferdinand to come back to Szapolyai's side, namely Stefano Bathor, palatine; Francesco Bachian, ban of Croatia; Alexio Turso, former treasurer; Thomaso, bishop of Vesprim. The author states that these nobles elected Ferdinand at Poszony [Bratislava, Pressburg] where the Queen was. Ferdinand now wanted to go to Bohemia and be crowned as king of Bohemia. After that he planned to come with a huge army and make himself King of Hungary if he could. Nicolo Ungaro also mentions an envoy by the *signor Turco* coming to Szapolyai to ask for a fifteen-year truce. The author believes that they would come to an agreement to be "friends with the other's friends and enemies with the other's enemies." They would give support to each other when one of them needed it. The author reports that Szapolyai was not worried because he has the voivode of Wallachia and the Sultan on his side.¹⁶⁹² A letter from Zagreb dated 8 January 1527 confirms the appointment of Frangepán, and repeats many of the things said in Nicolo Ungaro's letter. It conveys the popular opinion that there would soon be a great fight between Ferdinand and Szapolyai which would turn out to be a contest between the Germans and the *Turks*.¹⁶⁹³ Public rumors on the road expressed great love for Szapolyai by the Hungarians and their wish to make him King. These rumors also showed that they would in no circumstance tolerate the Hungarian crown going to Ferdinand.¹⁶⁹⁴

The Bishop of Segna Francesco da Fiume, mentioned by Ungaro above, was apparently commissioned to visit Venice on the way. Arriving with six men, he had

¹⁶⁹² For Nicolo Ungaro's report see Sanuto, 43:627-9. For the same report also see, *Letters and Papers*, IV:1247. For Szapolyai being crowned at Székesfehérvár by seven bishops on 11 November [elected 10 November], see Sanuto, 43:438-9. Kemalpaşazade notes that the voivodes of Wallachia and Moldovia were both called to alert as the Sultan prepared for the 1526 campaign along with Crimea. KPZ, X:214.

¹⁶⁹³ Sanuto, 43:704-5.

¹⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 79.

audience in the Collegio on 14 December 1526. Sanuto's account shows that he was treated as any ambassador in Venice, having been assigned lodgings and having been sent twelve gentlemen to accompany him.¹⁶⁹⁵ Szapolyai's letter to Doge Loredan was dated 16 November, Székesfehérvár "*civitate nostra*." His titles echoed his claim: "Joannes Dei gratia rex Hungariae, Dalmatie, Croatie, marchio Moravie, Lusatiae, et dux Slesiae etc."¹⁶⁹⁶ Szapolyai is described as a 36 years-old man who never wished to marry, and who wanted to pursue the path of King Matthias.¹⁶⁹⁷ We shall not list each and every envoy of Szapolyai's, however, one envoy sent to Venice in March 1528, as Ottoman support to Szapolyai came to be more and more clear, is rather interesting in the sense of the international recognition sought by Szapolyai. This envoy asked for a Venetian ambassador to be sent to King Janos to enhance his reputation [*darli reputation*].¹⁶⁹⁸

In the beginning, Szapolyai thought that Ferdinand would accept his claim, and that an agreement with the Sultan would buy him time to organize his forces.¹⁶⁹⁹ When Ferdinand was elected King of Bohemia, Szapolyai sent an envoy to congratulate him as well as offering to arrive at an understanding regarding the throne of Hungary. Among Szapolyai's offers to Ferdinand was also cooperation against the Ottoman threat. For this end, he went as far as offering to give up his claims to Silesia and Moravia, and to marry Mary of Habsburg in return for Ferdinand's recognizing him as King of Hungary. However, Ferdinand did not even give the envoy an audience.¹⁷⁰⁰

¹⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 438. The envoy was given leave along with a letter of congratulation on 14 February 1527. *Ibid*, 44:81.

¹⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 43:441

¹⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 439.

¹⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 47:77.

¹⁶⁹⁹ Peter Sahin-Toth, "A Difficult Apprenticeship," p.251.

¹⁷⁰⁰ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.60. Venetian ambassador Carlo Contarini's report from Ferdinand's court at Vienna, dated 8 December 1526, attributes the refusal of audience to the envoys' insistence on speaking Hungarian because they did not know Latin or German. According to Contarini, Ferdinand did not reject them but asked for a translator to be found. Sanuto, 43:475-6. This episode brings to attention the degree of alienation in the sense that Ferdinand claimed kingship of a country whose language he did not understand. He already had a similar problem in the German estates where he was disliked on the grounds that he was Spanish. *Ibid*, 44:383, Carlo Contarini, 29 March 1527.

Instead he resorted to military action in Hungary, invading even Buda itself, as well as diplomatic action presenting Szapolyai as an usurper and an accomplice of the Ottoman Sultan, as we shall see below.

Realizing the uncompromising attitude, Szapolyai first engaged in diplomatic action to clarify his intentions and to defend his cause. In the spring of 1527, he sent delegates to German princes and estates to convince them of his intention and capability to fight the *Turk*.¹⁷⁰¹ Trying to clear his name and to prove his right to the Hungarian crown, Szapolyai sent envoys to major courts of Europe. In the letters he sent, he emphasized his legitimacy through election and explained his reason to approach the Ottomans for support against Ferdinand. An example would be his letter to Henry VIII, dated 25 September 1528, in which he explained that after the death of Louis II he was elected king by all the peers, except for three who were “tricked by Ferdinand.” Szapolyai defended his initiative to ask for Ottoman help on the grounds that Ferdinand “invaded the country with great cruelty.” He complained that Ferdinand did not accept negotiators, and furthermore that he put a death sentence on all who called Szapolyai “king.” Szapolyai also accused Ferdinand of trying to form an alliance with the *Turk* against him. In Szapolyai’s view Ferdinand lost castles to the *Turk*, let alone recover them as he claimed to do.¹⁷⁰²

On the other hand, Szapolyai was accused by many of not arriving on time to help the king in 1526. Almost immediately in the aftermath of the Battle of Mohacs, the word of his accord with the *Turk* kept circulating. Antonio Boemo, for example, was about to leave Buda when he saw Szapolyai’s men arrive on 27 October. He reports that Szapolyai himself was expected at Buda with the treasury soon. Antonio Boemo reports that there was going to be a diet at Székesfehérvár on 5 November. He tells that Szapolyai wanted the crown and he had supporters. This report also defies the rumors of Szapolyai fighting the Turks, but contrarily presents him in communication. This view seems to be based on the presence of the voivode of Wallachia with Szapolyai, the former already being a tributary of the Sultan.¹⁷⁰³ By December, rumors extended to the

¹⁷⁰¹ Fischer-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” p.60.

¹⁷⁰² *Letters and Papers*, IV:2068.

¹⁷⁰³ Sanuto, 43:228, 241.

presence of an Ottoman envoy at the court of Szapolyai.¹⁷⁰⁴ There were even rumors that Szapolyai killed King Louis for he wanted the Hungarian crown for himself.¹⁷⁰⁵ Yet other reports mention that he was ready with 50,000 men, but “dares not leave his own country, for fear of the waywode of Wallachia, who, though a Hungarian, is half an Infidel.”¹⁷⁰⁶ Carlo Contarini, the Venetian ambassador at the imperial court, reported, in his relation of 29 March 1527, that he has heard that “the voivode king of Hungary” was in accord with the *Turk* and that “when the Turk came to destroy Hungary, he [Szapolyai] did not come on time, therefore the King was defeated and killed.”¹⁷⁰⁷

Others were sure he came to support the King. The runaway slave Jurco Vladanovich, who swears that he is telling the truth because he has seen everything with his own eyes, reports that the voivode of Transylvania not only arrived the day after the battle with 10,000 men but that he scolded the king because he did not wait for him.¹⁷⁰⁸ Although there is no truth to Szapolyai arriving and scolding the King – since basically the king was nowhere to be found – there is evidence that both he and Frangepán sent messages to Louis II not to move into battle prematurely, but wait until they arrived.¹⁷⁰⁹ In his letter dated 5 September Burgio, who left Buda on 30 August to Poszony with the Queen, mentions the rumors that the voivode was already at Buda with the intention to resist.¹⁷¹⁰ Various reports in mid-July point at Szapolyai’s preparations to join the King. Some riders who came to Udine from Buda, for example, report that the voivode of Transylvania has called even the priests to war.¹⁷¹¹ A merchant from Buda, who came to

¹⁷⁰⁴ Sanuto, 43:483, 620, 628. Also see *Ibid*, 44:43.

¹⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 42:753-4. This letter is dated 26 September 1526, from Friuli. The author did not even know what actually happened to Louis. Among the rumors were his death in combat and refuge in Germany, as well. For Szapolyai’s wanting the crown also see *Ibid*, 747.

¹⁷⁰⁶ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1125.

¹⁷⁰⁷ Sanuto, 44:384.

¹⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 43:84. His version of the events seem to be illusional. Sanuto, too, notes that none of these are true.

¹⁷⁰⁹ As related in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.215.

¹⁷¹⁰ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1098.

¹⁷¹¹ Sanuto, 42:147.

Trevisa, mentions that Szapolyai was ready with sixty thousand men.¹⁷¹² A report dated 25 September by Fazio di Savoia, who left Graz a week before, mentions the expectation at Buda of Szapolyai. According to this report, the voivode was gathering the scattered men and was going to be king in Buda with the “consensus of the Hungarians.”¹⁷¹³ A letter dated 17 October by the deputy [*locotenente*] of Udine mentions that the voivode of Transylvania together with four barons who supported him was on the move with 80,000 soldiers.¹⁷¹⁴ On 23 October 1526, Wolsey wrote to Henry VIII: “...a nobleman of great power there (John Zapol) has gathered a large army to oppose the Turk.”¹⁷¹⁵

The mixed nature of Szapolyai’s army in 1529 testifies to a lack of regional unity regarding the Hungarian army. It also reflects a sense of a greater picture of an eastern/central European unified attempt against Habsburg dominance. A letter by Gregory Casale to Wolsey, dated 9 July 1529, presents a survey of the current situation as seen from Rome. Among Casale’s informants are a secret agent of Szapolyai who often visits him, the Bishop of Zagreb and his servant in Buda. Casale reports that Szapolyai had a strong army including the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia. He was also supported by the Marquis of Brandenburg Albert who was the great master of Prussia and the leader of German forces. Casale’s report also demonstrates the mixed nature of Szapolyai’s army which consisted of Hungarians, Transylvanians, Slaves, Croats, Radians, Teutons, Moldavians, Wallachians, Polacks and Tartars. Casale’s report also demonstrates a series of shifting allegiances. Hungarians, Croats, Transylvanians and Slaves who were subject to Ferdinand have now joined Szapolyai. Casale also mentions rumors that Ferdinand’s chief commander Cozianer, a Croatian, has gone over to Szapolyai’s side after being rejected by the people for his “mismanagement.” Among Szapolyai’s commanders we also see Bohemians.¹⁷¹⁶ Written around the same time, on 27 June, a letter by the envoy of Szapolyai from Belgrade states that, “those lords who were initially with the archduke have come to

¹⁷¹² *Ibid*, 153.

¹⁷¹³ *Ibid*, 705.

¹⁷¹⁴ *Ibid*, 43:144.

¹⁷¹⁵ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1145.

¹⁷¹⁶ *Ibid*, 2570.

King John.”¹⁷¹⁷ These changing of sides are nothing new in 1529. The whole period between 1526 and 1529 appears to be defined by such shifts. Hungarian aid and support would tend toward Ferdinand when he made an attempt against an Ottoman stronghold or when Charles had success in his other military endeavors. This aid would then shift back to Szapolyai upon a failure of imperial troops in Hungary or upon French or Ottoman success over imperial troops.¹⁷¹⁸ A letter by a lieutenant of Christoph Frangepán [Cristoforo Frangipani], dated 22 October 1526, has a rather hostile tone regarding Szapolyai. The author of the letter introduces Frangepán as the savior and defender of Hungary, while presenting Szapolyai as “an unskillful coward who caused the fall of the Kingdom.”¹⁷¹⁹ In a letter to Antonio Dandolo, dated 1 September 1527, Frangepán himself refers to Szapolyai as “our *signor* and patron most serene Hungarian King John” and informs about those who went to Ferdinand’s side and others who came to Szapolyai.¹⁷²⁰ By summer 1528, reports attest to confusion as to which side to take. The march of the Ottoman troops in defense of Szapolyai seems to have added to this confusion. The letter of the deputy of Udine, dated 1 June 1528, dwells on this confusion and mentions that the barons [*signori*] do not want to go against Szapolyai.¹⁷²¹ Perhaps it is György Szeremi’s words that best reflect the slippery grounds on which the theater of conflict was performed: “The Hungarians have reached

¹⁷¹⁷ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2570. The elector of Brandenburg, Albert, did not attend the Diet at Speyer in 1529. Brandi attributes his absence to his “equivocal relations with the wife of Wolf Hornung.” Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, 298. This might be why he was suspected of uniting with Szapolyai or vice versa.

¹⁷¹⁸ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.73. Emphasizing the influence of such shifts on the instability of revenue production, Fichtner explains that between 1527-1536 Ferdinand had to give away thirty six roya castles to Hungarian landowners to pacify them. An early example of such slippery allegiances, often based on personal interest, is Simon Erdödy, the bishop of Zagreb who wanted the bishopric of Esztergom as well from Ferdinand. Esztergom already having a bishop, Ferdinand offered Eger to Erdödy. Finding Eger to be less prestigious Erdödy turned to Szapolyai and convinced Frangepán to do the same. *Ibid*, p.60.

¹⁷¹⁹ Sanuto, 43:274-81.

¹⁷²⁰ *Ibid*, 46:102-3.

¹⁷²¹ *Ibid*, 48:25-7.

the point where if a family has two growing sons, they encourage one to join the cause of Ferdinand, the other the party of King Janos.”¹⁷²²

6.2.2. Ferdinand: The Antagonist

Throughout the 1520s, Ferdinand is seen as trying to transform the defense of Hungary into a “cooperative venture” and a “universal cause.”¹⁷²³ Up to 1526 we find him offering support and cooperation to Louis II, in a way assuming the role of defender of Hungary. In 1521, he sent word to King Louis II stating that he would do anything in his power to help Hungary against the Ottomans.¹⁷²⁴ The fall of Belgrade probably provided him with an opportunity to press his point. It was around the same time that Ferdinand started to ask for anti-Ottoman help from Charles. In 1522, he negotiated with his brother to provide help to Hungary, arguing that assistance to Hungary was in fact assistance to his own lands.¹⁷²⁵ In 1522, he sent an envoy to King Louis to assure him that next time he would come in person to help him.¹⁷²⁶ Throughout the early 1520s, Ferdinand tried to reform the King’s court and administration though faced with resistance. By 1525, Hungarians seem to have loathed the German influence in their court, and demanded that the Germans at court be replaced with “Magyars.” They blamed Ferdinand and Mary for the German presence in their kingdom.¹⁷²⁷ In 1525, Ferdinand already had much trouble in his hand. There was a Tyrolean uprising whereby the estates demanded their own to be appointed to administrative posts. They wanted Ferdinand to have native advisors. In the fall of 1525 they asked for a general diet. Ferdinand called their representatives to Augsburg, feeling the need to negotiate.

¹⁷²² As quoted in Domonkos, “The Battle of Mohacs as a Cultural Watershed,” p.213.

¹⁷²³ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.46 and Rodriguez-Salgado, “Charles V and the Dynasty,” p.81.

¹⁷²⁴ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, pp.45-6.

¹⁷²⁵ *Ibid*, pp.45-6; Rodriguez-Salgado, “Charles V and the Dynasty,” p.59.

¹⁷²⁶ Sanuto, 32:132 [Lorenzo Orio, dated 26 October 1521, from Buda].

¹⁷²⁷ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.46-7.

Furthermore, Charles recommended him not to antagonize with his subjects because he would need to ask for their help against the “Turks.”¹⁷²⁸ Thus in 1526, when Ferdinand’s help was most needed by Louis II, he was in condition to help. He had to deal with peasant uprisings in Styria and Salzburg, as well as aid Charles in Italy. Ferdinand could only hope to convince the estates to send military assistance to Hungary, in return for freedom of confession in each estate until a decision was reached at the council. Upon this promise, on 18 August, the estates decide to send help.¹⁷²⁹ Throughout 1527-1528 Ferdinand tried to secure help from the estates. However, there were several reasons for their hesitance to accept Ferdinand’s pleas. Some did not trust him because they thought he would collect the money and transfer it to Charles’s Italian campaigns. Others regarded Szapolyai as a Christian ruler who could fight the Ottomans on his own.¹⁷³⁰

After the battle of Mohacs, Ferdinand regarded Hungary as his possession now that the King was dead.¹⁷³¹ His claim was not totally unfounded. The origins of the controversy can be traced back to 1463 when a treaty was signed between Emperor Frederick III [1440-1493] and King Matthias Corvinus [1458-1490]. According to this treaty, if Matthias died heirless either Frederick or his son Maximilian would inherit the Hungarian throne. When Maximilian claimed the right upon the death of King Matthias, Hungarian nobility opposed. Thus a new treaty was signed with Vladislas III in 1491 renewing the previous one. After another renewal in 1506, the alliance was reinforced by the plans of a double marriage between Ferdinand of Habsburg and Anna of Hungary, and between Mary of Habsburg and Louis II of Hungary. Neither the treaty nor the dynastic alliance meant much for Hungarian nobility, however, since the only legitimate ruler of Hungary could be the one elected by the nobility.¹⁷³² In other words,

¹⁷²⁸ *Ibid*, p.30.

¹⁷²⁹ *Ibid*, p.49.

¹⁷³⁰ Fischer-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” p.60.

¹⁷³¹ For a contemporary opinion see *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114 [dated 20 September, Pettovia].

¹⁷³² Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” pp.247-8. Also see, Fischer-Galati, *Ottoman Imperialism and German Protestantism*, pp.4-6; Brandi argues that Ferdinand stigmatized Szapolyai as an usurper based on right of inheritance and Maximilian’s treaty. The election by minority, Brandi argues, was a way to wive the formality of election. Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, p.249.

the hostility of Hungarian nobility towards the Habsburgs was present long before 1526. The Queen's influence on the Hungarian court and Ferdinand's immediate claims had reinforced this hostility.

Ferdinand learned of the death of Louis II ten days after the actual battle. He reacted quickly by claiming the Hungarian and the Bohemian thrones as the husband of the deceased King's only sibling. The claimed intention was to keep the "Turks" and potential "hostile rulers", namely the Polish King Sigismund and Janos Szapolyai far from the borders of the kingdom. Since Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary had many common borders, Ferdinand saw them as a unity which could be defended in whole against the Ottoman threat.¹⁷³³ In this sense, it might be argued that Ferdinand's claims were not based merely on dynastic ambition. The territorial take-over which entailed an economic take-over of the country would give Ferdinand the opportunity to defend Austria, in other words the patrimonial lands, from within Hungary and with Hungarian resources.¹⁷³⁴ Although defending his patrimonial lands through keeping Hungary as a buffer zone under his own control might have been a logical strategy, it proved quite infeasible in economic terms. According to the figures given by Fichtner, in 1528 Ferdinand's income from Hungary was only 9,000 guldens whereas the army he kept there cost him 90,000 guldens until May.¹⁷³⁵ In 1531, Ferdinand was to justify his motives to Charles in three strands. Firstly, he presented his adversary Süleyman as a tyrant, therefore a concord was impossible. Secondly, Hungary was important in the geo-strategic respect in terms of its resources. With its rich resources, it could either supply victuals and money to Christendom or enrich the enemy. In this sense, by acquiring Hungary Ferdinand would not only gain these riches for Christendom but prevent the enemy having more resources. In Ferdinand's mind, Hungary was still the "wall and defense of Christendom." Thirdly, his conscience and honor required that he

¹⁷³³ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.50-2; Also see Rodriguez-Salgado, "¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el Turco," p.490. The author argues that with a triple alliance between Ottomans, Poles, and Venetians Ferdinand's territories would be the first step of Ottoman expansion.

¹⁷³⁴ Sahin-Toth, "A Difficult Apprenticeship," pp.248.

¹⁷³⁵ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.73.

acquired the Hungarian throne because many Christians died protecting it against the *infidels*. Agreeing with the enemy now would be dishonorable.¹⁷³⁶

As much as Hungarians disliked Ferdinand, Ferdinand seems to have distrusted the Hungarians. The observations of a messenger sent by Marco Antonio Contarini to Vienna in August 1529 are rather interesting in this respect. The messenger observed that the army of Ferdinand's chief commander Cozianer consisted of Bohemians and Germans only because "the prince has little trust in Hungarians, he even sees them as enemies, because the said Hungarians prefer the lordship of the Turks over that of this *signor* since it seems to them that they will be more secure under the said Signor Turco."¹⁷³⁷ Ferdinand was perhaps not mistaken in his assessment. In a letter as early as 29 September 1526, Frangepán, a rather powerful Hungarian magnate himself at the time, mentions that "everyone, both the nobility and the people are of the same opinion that they would rather surrender to the Turk rather than be under the *Aleman*."¹⁷³⁸ This raises the question of how Hungarians were supposed to accept Ferdinand as their King when they could not even accept his advisors at the court of Louis II. Such attitude reflects a deep rooted anti-Habsburg sentiment. Furthermore, since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the leading faction in Hungary demanded a native king and in 1526 Szapolyai was the chief candidate.¹⁷³⁹

On 17 December 1526, the pro-Habsburg party assembled by Mary to name Ferdinand King of Hungary. A few weeks later Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia chose him king on the promise of defense. There was now a serious problem: Szapolyai's election had taken place before Ferdinand's. The Habsburg brothers first tried to counter the problem through legal means. Through a mandate he issued at Granada, Charles made a pledge to protect his sister's and brother's rights in Hungary and attacked the validity of Szapolyai's election on the grounds that the election could only be realized by a diet summoned by the Palatine. A counter argument was immediately put forth based on precedence; the diets which elected Matthias and Vladislav were not summoned by the Palatine. Understanding that the problem could not be overcome in

¹⁷³⁶ Rodriguez-Salgado, "¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el Turco," p.493.

¹⁷³⁷ Sanuto, 51:475.

¹⁷³⁸ *Ibid*, 43:123, 223, 378.

¹⁷³⁹ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.51.

constitutional terms and he did not have the financial resources to attract support to his side, Ferdinand thought that military action to kick Szapolyai out of Hungary would be the most efficient way to solve the problem. However, neither Charles nor the estates favored such a solution.¹⁷⁴⁰

In the winter of 1527, Charles sent Ferdinand 100,000 ducas for Hungary; however he told his brother not to engage in war, but wait.¹⁷⁴¹ At the end of July 1527, Ferdinand began offensive action in Hungary. On 20 August 1527, the Austrian camp was at Buda. Having been defeated at Tokaj by Nicholas von Salm, Szapolyai first went to Transylvania and passed on to Poland.¹⁷⁴² Though Ferdinand held Buda in 1528, his reputation among the people had not improved. It was common gossip that he did not have a single *duca*. Even worse, the rumor circulated that the funds he created by melting the silver collected from the churches for anti-Ottoman defense was already spent to pay for the soldiers fighting in Italy. Ferdinand left Buda for Vienna to ask for money from his “terre franche” that had no intention to give away any more money under the cover of anti-Turkish help, to make war against the Hungarians.¹⁷⁴³ Furthermore, it was again common gossip that Ferdinand was not well-liked by the Hungarians.¹⁷⁴⁴

When Ferdinand was elected king of Hungary, his supporters expected him to reside at Buda occasionally.¹⁷⁴⁵ The timing of his attacks on Buda does not seem coincidental. The Sack of Rome by imperial forces in 1527 provided Ferdinand the opportunity to re-direct his forces to Hungary since there was a temporary break in Italian wars. His armies won some victories in 1527 and 1528 which probably made him look as if he could stand against the Ottomans in defense of Hungary. Some of the nobles probably saw this as an opportunity and joined his side. His coronation at

¹⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.61-2. Also see Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” pp.250.

¹⁷⁴¹ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.63.

¹⁷⁴² *Ibid*, p.64.

¹⁷⁴³ Sanuto, 47:121-2.

¹⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 123. “*Et li disse ancora, che de gente ne haveano numero assai ma poco denaro, perche la mazor parte de la Alemagna, hessendo lutherana, non presta obedia al Principe.*” *Ibid*, 209.

¹⁷⁴⁵ Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” p.250.

Székesfehérvár on 3 November 1527 completed the so far missing symbolic demonstration of legitimation.¹⁷⁴⁶

After his coronation at Székesfehérvár on 3 November 1527, Ferdinand sent a proclamation of victory justifying his claim on Hungary. In this letter he declared Szapolyai as rebel and public enemy [*nostrum public inimicum*] and Süleyman as the “enemy of the Christian name and our faith” [*inimicum nominis christiani et fidei nostrae*].¹⁷⁴⁷ Italian news reaching England in early 1527 reflects papal opinion on providing Ferdinand help against Szapolyai. General concern was that if Ferdinand received support from England, or elsewhere for that matter, or attacked him, Szapolyai would feel compelled to ask for Ottoman support. One suggestion was to intervene in counsel and persuade Ferdinand to give Szapolyai his sister in marriage like the latter has asked before.¹⁷⁴⁸

Although Charles saw Ferdinand’s claim to the throne of Hungary well-justified, he also believed that antagonizing Szapolyai at this point would push the voivode to cooperate with the Ottomans and invade Austria itself.¹⁷⁴⁹ As soon as Ferdinand’s intentions on Hungary became clear in the aftermath of Mohacs, Charles seems to have raised his objections. By the beginning of November 1526, rumors were circulating that Charles had sent letters to Ferdinand telling to put off the Hungarian issue in order not to put his people in risk.¹⁷⁵⁰

In January 1528, France and England declared war on the Emperor. The war was projected as a struggle for the safety and the soul of Christendom, with Francis I and Henry VIII posing themselves as “saviors of the Respublica Christiana.” They argued that Charles brought suffering and bloodshed to Christendom. Therefore, they claimed, it was the duty of Christian princes to punish him and restore order. Furthermore, they claimed that Charles was unable to perform his primary imperial duty, namely that of safeguarding Christianity from infidels and heretics. It was because of his personal ambitions that Christendom was unable to set back *Turkish* attacks. Charles V replied

¹⁷⁴⁶ Sahin-Toth, “A Difficult Apprenticeship,” p.251

¹⁷⁴⁷ Sanuto, 46:383-5.

¹⁷⁴⁸ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1305.

¹⁷⁴⁹ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.63.

¹⁷⁵⁰ Sanuto, 43:223.

by putting the blame on Francis I because, he claimed, the French King was keeping him from dealing with the *Turks*. If it were not for this reason, he actually had a profound interest in a crusade. This interest he had demonstrated when he attached himself in the efforts of Pope Leo X in 1518. But with the intervention of the election and then the assaults of Francis he had to occupy himself with the protection of his own lands. Thus, according to Charles V, it was actually Francis's fault that the *Turks* were victorious and that Rhodes was lost.¹⁷⁵¹ The mutual accusations which were current after the fall of Rhodes were reanimated, Sultan Süleyman once again became a powerful propaganda tool.

Ferdinand not only resolved to armed contest, but diplomatic initiatives as well to reinforce his claim on Hungary. In a letter he sent to Henry VIII, dated 11 March 1527, from Prague, he asked for the support of the King of England in his cause, in other words in defending his rights. This support consisted mainly of recognizing him as the king of Hungary and providing him with consultation about "resisting the enemy." Ferdinand based his claims on two main lines of argument. Firstly, he de-legitimized Szapolyai's claims arguing his incapability and ill-will. He accused Szapolyai of unjustly invading the kingdom and of thinking nothing other than attaining the crown. Ferdinand blamed Szapolyai for the loss of the kingdom and the death of the king based on his "refusal" to help King Louis II first during the siege of Belgrade and then in his delay in sending forces to Mohacs, thereby causing the kingdom to fall. Secondly, he legitimized his own position through emphasizing his hereditary right on the kingdom through his wife and his capability of providing protection to the realm in question employing the help of both his numerous realms and his brother the Emperor.¹⁷⁵² Ferdinand's ambassadors arrived in England in March 1527. The envoy focused on the Süleyman's capture of Belgrade and Rhodes, and his killing of the Hungarian king. The argument emphasized the dichotomy of the "good seeds sown by Christ" versus the "evil seeds of Muhammad." After the envoy informed Henry VIII on the power, military forces and captains of the Sultan, he dwelled on the necessity of a great number of people to be able to overthrow him. "Wherefore, he most humbly besought the king

¹⁷⁵¹ Rodriquez-Salgado, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.75; Rodriguez-Salgado, "La Cruzada sin Cruzado," p.236; Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, pp.263-5.

¹⁷⁵² *Letters and Papers*, IV:1323.

as S. Georges knight, and defender of the faith, to assist the king his master in that godly warre and vertuous purpose.”¹⁷⁵³

Ferdinand’s diplomatic efforts to obtain support seem to have backfired in many instances. His requests of support to oppose the *Turk* were often regarded as a mask to finance his own agenda, as well as that of his brother. When ordered the silver in the churches to be removed to pay for the campaign against the *Turk* in October 1526,¹⁷⁵⁴ not everyone believed Ferdinand’s intentions. On the contrary, many believed that once he acquired the silver through this means, he would go to Hungary to be its king.¹⁷⁵⁵ Others accused him of spending one fourths of the funds, collected from the imperial lands as aid against the Ottomans for Italian wars. Therefore, they would refuse to provide aid because he used it against Christians.¹⁷⁵⁶ Following Ferdinand’s coronation at Prague as king of Bohemia on 24 February 1527, English ambassador Wallop informed Wolsey that Ferdinand would be unable to wage war upon Hungary because “he was obliged to take away the jewels in all his churches in Ostryge and Teroll, to pay for his coronation, at which the people grudged sore.”¹⁷⁵⁷ Not only his own subjects, but the rulers he approached doubted his purposes. In February 1527, Venetian ambassador in England reported that Henry VIII suspected that the funds gathered to make war against the *Turk* were being used for Charles’s war in Italy.¹⁷⁵⁸ The envoy of the Duke of Ferrara in Venice reported the suspicions of the Duke on the request made to him by Ferdinand. Informing the Duke about his concern about the *Turk* coming to

¹⁷⁵³ “An ambassage from Don Ferdinando, brother to the emperor Charles the 5. unto king Henry the 8. in the yeere 1527. desiring his aide against Solyman the great Turke,” p.206.

¹⁷⁵⁴ Sanuto, 43:145-6.

¹⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 229. 12 November 1526, Antonio Boemo’s observations on his way to Vienna after Contarini who is going there with Ferdinand. For another report on the funds being employed not against the Ottomans but against Christians, see *ibid*, 223.

¹⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 318 [dated 22 November 1526, Bergamo].

¹⁷⁵⁷ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1325. Secret letter. Wallop’s opinion is that the German nobles will not help either because they think he already has too much. For similar suspicions in Spain, see Sanuto, 45:63, 370. There were also others who believed that Ferdinand would never be victorious because he destroyed the silver from the churches. *Ibid*, 47:43.

¹⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 44:151.

“destroy him and Christendom, and to penetrate into *Alemagna*,” Ferdinand assured the Duke that he would do anything in his power to obstruct the threat. However, he needed help from Christian princes. The Duke, however, replied by saying that “his forces were not enough against the Christian whom he [Ferdinand] wished to offend, implying the Pope.”¹⁷⁵⁹

Ferdinand tried his hand in diplomatic efforts with the Ottomans to have Hungary for himself. The first diplomatic step of Ferdinand to this end following the occupation of Buda in 1526 was sending envoys to Upper Bosnia and to Belgrade to persuade the governors to refuse providing help to Szapolyai. He offered three to six thousand ducats for their alliance.¹⁷⁶⁰ He sent a legate to Süleyman hoping to turn things to his favor. Fisher-Galati attributes this move to Ferdinand’s total lack of understanding the situation. Ottomans would naturally not recognize Ferdinand’s claims over a conquered land which they intended to keep as a “buffer between East and West which would be ruled by a puppet, not by a leading member of a powerful western dynasty.” His envoy returned in February 1529 with unfavorable news. His offer was not accepted, and furthermore an Ottoman campaign in favor of Szapolyai was on the way.¹⁷⁶¹ Ferdinand’s envoys seem to have had a difficult time reaching Istanbul. Reports mention that they were held at the border until clear orders came from Süleyman to let them in. They are reported to have brought with them many gifts to the Sultan.¹⁷⁶² Piero Zen reported the arrival of two envoys by Ferdinand at Constantinople on 16 April 1528. The party consisting of one German and one Croatian were accepted by İbrahim Paşa to whom they presented a silver cup with gold worth 300 ducats. Along with them was a Hungarian whom İbrahim seemed to know. The Hungarian was admitted to the

¹⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 49:369 [dated 18 January 1529]. For earlier suspicions in this respect, see *Ibid*, 45:371.

¹⁷⁶⁰ Jenkins, *İbrahim Pasha*, p.62. Jenkins bases this argument on a letter from Ferdinand to the Chancellor of Lower Austria, from Prague dated 14 February 1527.

¹⁷⁶¹ Fischer-Galati, “Ottoman Imperialism,” pp.61-3. Meanwhile, Ferdinand issued a proclamation in November 1528 to call for a Diet at Speyer on 2 February 1529 to discuss the religious question as well as the issue of *Turkish* aid. The two issues were already inseparable since the Lutherans refused to negotiate on *Turkish* aid until the religious question was settled.

¹⁷⁶² Sanuto, 47:335, 471.

Sultan's presence on 29 April. Zen mentioned İbrahim's fury over Ferdinand's calling himself the King of Hungary.¹⁷⁶³

In July 1529, we see Ferdinand negotiating with Süleyman once more. In a way he tries to "buy off" Süleyman with a "pension"; the word "tribute" being carefully avoided. But the Sultan remains fixed in his intentions.¹⁷⁶⁴ Ferdinand's concern regarding the avoidance of "tribute" seems understandable by contemporary standards. Machiavelli, for example, explains that Venetians once thought they were so superior, but then had to make concessions to everyone and "they debased themselves to such an extent that they sent ambassadors to the emperor to become his tributary..."¹⁷⁶⁵

Ferdinand's letter to Süleyman from Linz dated 27 July 1529 was a recommendation letter for Nikolaus Jurischitsch. Ferdinand referred to Süleyman as the "Turkish Emperor at Asia and Greece," as well as "our dearest friend." His own titles, on the other hand, started with King of Hungary by God's grace, among others.¹⁷⁶⁶ Ironically, his claim to Hungarian kingship was what angered Süleyman in the first place.

6.2.3. Sultan Süleyman: The Protagonist

In the immediate aftermath of Mohacs, Sultan Süleyman has adopted a wait and see attitude. This can be regarded as both natural and logical because he did not have the means or even the opportunity to rule directly through occupation, as briefly discussed above. As Rhoads Murhey argues, he acted like Charles V to the trans-Danubian zone in staying at a distance to see what would happen. As Ferdinand stepped into the scene it was inevitable that Ottoman activity related to the region ran parallel to Austrian offensives.¹⁷⁶⁷ If we agree that Ferdinand was trying to defend his patrimonial

¹⁷⁶³ *Ibid*, 48:131.

¹⁷⁶⁴ Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.83.

¹⁷⁶⁵ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, p.329.

¹⁷⁶⁶ Gevay I, pp.30-1. For a contemporary translation of the letter, see TSA, E. 6348. Appendix 12.

¹⁷⁶⁷ Murphey, "Süleyman I and the Conquest of Hungary," p.212-3. Szakaly puts forth a similar argument as he says: "In fact, we believe that Suleiman's offensives

lands from within Hungary, the same could perhaps be said for Süleyman as well in terms of containing Habsburg power remote from his core lands. In the meanwhile, Süleyman was expected to proceed to Vienna even in 1526 after he got Buda.¹⁷⁶⁸ This expectation was probably related to the perceptions on Sultan Süleyman and his intentions.¹⁷⁶⁹ In this sense, as much as Ferdinand's aggressive moves into Hungary had to some extent to do with putting a check on Ottoman threat, the controversy of kingship of Hungary accompanied by Ferdinand's aggressive military attempts seems to be a main factor underlying Süleyman's 1529 campaign.

Contemporary Ottoman sources identify the target of the 1529 campaign as Ferdinand I. According to the campaign diary, the aim of the 1529 campaign was "to drive Ferdinand away from Buda."¹⁷⁷⁰ Chronicles cite as immediate reasons of the campaign the occupation of Buda and invasion of Hungarian territory by Ferdinand. They condemn Ferdinand's actions based on two reasons. Firstly, Hungary, especially Buda, belonged to the Sultan by the right of the sword. Secondly, the Sultan bestowed its kingship on "Yanoş Kral" [King Janos] who was already elected according to the Hungarian custom [10 November 1526],¹⁷⁷¹ and who had a right to the Hungarian throne by blood.¹⁷⁷² From the start chronicles associate the concept of "protection" with Sultan Süleyman. According to Lütü Paşa, who was the governor of Damascus at the time, Szapolyai approached Süleyman after Ferdinand captured Buda and drove him

against Vienna (in 1529 and 1532) by themselves give sufficient evidence that after 1526 the Sultan aimed to settle the Hungarian question simultaneously with the elimination of the power centre of the Habsburgs." Szakaly, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary*, p.100

¹⁷⁶⁸ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114; Sanuto, 42:754-5. At this point, there were even rumors that he took Vienna. *Letters and Papers*, IV:1137. Wallop to Wolsey [dated 16 October 1526, from Cologne].

¹⁷⁶⁹ Theoretically, perception of adversaries about each other's intentions figures as a factor in initiating wars. In other words, when one party believes that the other is more hostile than it actually is, the likelihood of conflict escalates. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "The Contribution of Expected Utility Theory to the Study of International Conflict," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol.18, no.4, The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars, (Spring, 1988), p.648.

¹⁷⁷⁰ *Münşe'at*, I:566.

¹⁷⁷¹ *Tabakat*, 183a; Bostan (MK), 85b; Nasuh, 148a.

¹⁷⁷² Lütü Paşa, 266f.

out. Upon this, Szapolyai sent an envoy to the Ottoman court offering the Sultan annual tribute [*harâc*] of one thousand pieces of gold in return for intervening on his behalf to drive Ferdinand out and giving the country to him instead. Süleyman was not pleased with Ferdinand's presence in Buda, so he set off with his army.¹⁷⁷³

Celalzade explains the reason of the 1529 campaign with Ferdinand's "invasion" [*istilâ*] of Hungarian territory [*Engürüs vilâyetleri*]. According to the brief background information given by the author, the Sultan "granted the kingship of Hungary to Yanoş Kral – who was the ban of Transylvania - after the battle of Mohacs."¹⁷⁷⁴ However Ferdinand, who is described as the possessor of the German and Czech territories nearby and the brother of the "Kaiser of Spain" [*İspanya çesârî*], coveted the lands of Hungary, and attacked and captured many fortresses. "Yanoş Kral", on the other hand, did not have enough power to resist him, so he had to let go of Buda. According to Celalzade, these actions signified Ferdinand's open hostility toward Süleyman.¹⁷⁷⁵ While introducing Ferdinand, the author mentions that European rulers [*selâtin-i Frenk ve havâkîn-i küfr-âyin*] were proud of him and he was often victorious against his enemies. According to Celalzade, based on these he desired to be Emperor [*Çesâr*].¹⁷⁷⁶ As such, Celalzade asserted that "imperial protection" [*hamiyet-i cihânbanî*] required that Süleyman destroy Ferdinand's "valor and might" [*şevket ü şehâmet*]. Secondly, Ferdinand's actions could extend into the borders of Süleyman's protected domains [*memâlik-i mahrûse-yi hakâniyye*]. Thus, Süleyman decided to proceed to Vienna.¹⁷⁷⁷ Celalzade's explanations imply three main motives for the 1529 campaign: the violation of Süleyman's right of sword; rivalry in terms of universal rulership; and the perceived need for pre-emptive strike. Celalzade uses the word "çesâr" which can be taken to mean Emperor. Taken within the context of Ferdinand's insistent efforts to acquire the title of King of Romans at the time, the author's argument sheds light on the contemporary power struggles and balancing attempts as well.

¹⁷⁷³ Lütü Paşa, 265.

¹⁷⁷⁴ *Tabakat*, 183a: "Mukaddemâ Engürüs-i menhûs ile sahrâ-yı Mohaç'da uğraşdan sonra Engürüs krallığı Erdel bânî olan Yanoş Kral'a ihsân eylemişlerdi."

¹⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 183a.

¹⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 183b.

Bostan attributes Süleyman's decision to take military action to the refusal of Ferdinand to offer tribute in return for the Hungarian territories he occupied.¹⁷⁷⁸ This is again taken as a violation of Süleyman's right of conquest. A soldier himself Nasuh, on the other hand, emphasizes that Ferdinand occupied Buda by force and forced "Yanoş Kral" out of the city. In a poem he adds to his account, the author focuses on the issue of "protection" [*hamiyet*] whereby providing protection is posed as a requirement of sovereignty and protecting Hungary also falls under this duty.¹⁷⁷⁹

Judging by contemporary standards, the appearance of "protection" as honorable motive is quite understandable. A similar instance of French occupation of Milan suggests that the reasoning provided in contemporary Ottoman chronicles was not mere words of justification but part of an established general code of honor. When Francis I triumphantly entered Milan on 26 October 1524, Ferdinand "reckoned the Emperor's 'honor, authority and reputation' was so seriously damaged by this that it required extraordinary measures."¹⁷⁸⁰ For Machiavelli, too, any attempt against the safety of an ally would be a cause that provoked a powerful state for war. A powerful state would be obliged to fight to protect its honor when an ally was under threat and asked for help.¹⁷⁸¹

Süleyman seems to have been in communication with Szapolyai from early on, as foreign correspondence shows. The news from Hungary dated 20 June 1527 reports the presence of an Ottoman envoy at Buda. He is said to have dined with Szapolyai and the barons on his arrival. He is also said to have had conversed with Szapolyai in private and left immediately, which was taken as a sign that Szapolyai came to an agreement with the Sultan.¹⁷⁸² By June, both Zen's reports from Istanbul and various rumors

¹⁷⁷⁸ Bostan (MK), 85b.

¹⁷⁷⁹ Nasuh, 149a.

¹⁷⁸⁰ Rodriguez-Salgado-, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.40.

¹⁷⁸¹ Machiavelli, Discourses, p.176. As usual he exemplifies his point through a Roman case: "... after the Campanians had placed themselves under Roman protection, the Romans were forced to defend them as if defending themselves, and to engage in a war they felt they could not honorably avoid. Thus, it seemed reasonable to the Romans not to defend their friends the Campanians against their friends the Samnites, but it seemed shameful not to defend them as subjects or as people under their protection, since they (Romans) thought that if they did not take up their defense, it would place an obstacle in the path of all those who might wish to place themselves under Roman power."

¹⁷⁸² Sanuto, 45:360-1.

demonstrate the intention on Süleyman's part to support Szapolyai.¹⁷⁸³ Zen reports on 28 January 1528 that Szapolyai's envoy arrived and asked for help against Ferdinand with the offer to become tributary to the Sultan. According to Zen, this was the fourth envoy sent by Szapolyai to Süleyman's court. The first two were said to be robbed and the third killed. According to the arrangements made, Süleyman would first send 12,000 mounted soldiers at the border zone, to be followed by the governor-general of Rumelia with 30,000 cavalry. Szapolyai was instructed not to engage in battle before the arrival of the Rumelian troops.¹⁷⁸⁴ Zen's reports until 27 April 1528 suggest an intention on Süleyman's part to handle the situation in person. This letter makes it clear that the support plan includes the personal presence of neither Süleyman nor İbrahim but involves Ottoman provincial troops marching in three strands up to the German borders.¹⁷⁸⁵

Zen's letter from Constantinople in early June 1528 reports the audience given to Ferdinand's envoys who asked for peace, or at least a truce. Süleyman, however, offered two conditions: to leave Hungary to Szapolyai and to have Charles make peace with France and Venice. Meanwhile, the Sultan sent decrees to the provinces to assist the "voivode."¹⁷⁸⁶ In early October, the envoys still could not obtain any favors from the Sultan. On the contrary, they were detained when they kept requesting the Hungarian fortresses, a request which evoked Süleyman's fury. According to Zen, the Sultan was so furious that he did not even hide his intention of a Hungarian campaign whereby he aimed to penetrate far into *Alemagna*. Such openness of intention seems to have surprised Zen who emphasizes that this was contrary to the customs of previous sultans.¹⁷⁸⁷ Piero Zen's letters dated 6 and 11 May, as he saw the Ottoman army leave

¹⁷⁸³ *Ibid*, 511, 580-1. For the expectation of Szapolyai's envoy in Istanbul in 1527, see *ibid*, 620.

¹⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 47:46-7. On the envoy and preparations, also see, *ibid*, 100, 118-9, 380.

¹⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 543.

¹⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 48:200.

¹⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 49:182. The envoys were finally permitted to leave at the end of November 1528. Petervarad appears among the requested castles in Zen's report dated 28 November. *Ibid*, 370.

Istanbul in 1529, report that the Sultan left the city with the wish of “putting King Janos the voivode in the kingdom of Hungary.”¹⁷⁸⁸

Venetian correspondence reflects total Ottoman awareness of the situation in Europe. Piero Zen’s letter from Constantinople, dated 11 March, demonstrates that Ottomans were closely informed about the coronation plans of Charles V and the tension caused by the Sack of Rome. Zen’s conversation with İbrahim Paşa as he relates it, implies genuine curiosity. According to Zen, İbrahim asked Ferdinand’s ambassadors whether their king was actually Christian. When the ambassadors replied in the affirmative, he said: “Why are you making war against your own Pope and make such great damage in Rome?” The ambassadors replied that the Pope should attend to ecclesiastical matters and leave the affairs of the state to the Emperor. Zen’s letter also demonstrates İbrahim interrogating him about the power of European princes. He inquires about the forces of the French king and asks Zen, “who are the other emperors beside my Gran Signor?”¹⁷⁸⁹ In a letter from the camp at Niš, Alvise Gritti reports having discussed with İbrahim Paşa informing him of the developments and handlings with the Emperor regarding the peace and the negotiations of the “two ladies at Cambrai for discuss peace.”¹⁷⁹⁰

6.2.4. Supporting Actors: France and Venice and Poland

Increasing Habsburg power was probably the most influential element in the political world of the 1520s in the decisions and strategies of various courts in Europe. Each power holder seems to have tried to resist this often aggressive power to protect its own interests. Although power can be useful in both war and intimidation, too much

¹⁷⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 50:471.

¹⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 175. Perhaps we could link this inquiry with the awareness of Charles’s imperial coronation plans with the increasing sense of universal kingship as Charles gets closer to it. But then the letter reports: “*et li dimandò ben l’Imperador vol venir in Italia a tuor la corona, bisognerà l’atenda ad altro.*” For earlier Ottoman opinions on the sack of Rome, see *Ibid*, 47:119.

¹⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 51:74. Sanuto’s entries include many such instances, as well as Gritti writing to Venice asking for information about the moves of the Emperor, e.g. 51:507 [9 September, 1529].

power brings along its own risks to states just like lack of power does. Not having sufficient power may invite an attack, as we have seen in the 1526 case, whereas greater power could dissuade an adversary from direct assault. On the other hand, when a political player has or perceived to have excessive power, it may become a reason for others to ally against the dominant power, as seems to have been the case with anti-Habsburg stance.¹⁷⁹¹

Following Mohacs and the election of Szapolyai, a rather complex network of diplomacy is observable. Such traffic points at efforts of attracting allies for each party involved in the controversy. Poland seems to have acted as a major negotiator in trying to reach a solution to the conflict. In February 1527, there are reports about the presence of envoys of Süleyman, Ferdinand and Szapolyai at the Polish court simultaneously.¹⁷⁹² It was around the same time when Francis I commissioned Antonio Rincon to win the support of King Sigismund of Poland for Szapolyai's cause.¹⁷⁹³ The English ambassador at Prague, wrote home to Wolsey on 12 March, that an ambassador of Poland arrived "to negotiate between the king of Bohemia and the king of Hungary."¹⁷⁹⁴

As early as 1527, we see Francis I taking Szapolyai's side. This should not be surprising since Ferdinand was no friend of the French King. In February 1527, Rincon was sent to offer French aid to Szapolyai. In Fall 1528, a Hungarian bishop came to Paris to sign an alliance with Francis. According to this alliance, Francis would provide financial aid to Szapolyai. In return, in the case that Szapolyai died childless, the kingdom would pass to the Duc d'Orleans. It is known that the French wanted the *Turk* to be powerful to undermine the power of Charles V.¹⁷⁹⁵ As the 1529 campaign came to a close, we can observe other parties who see Süleyman as a counter-balancing power.

¹⁷⁹¹ Waltz, "The Origins of War," pp.616-625.

¹⁷⁹² Sanuto, 43:80.

¹⁷⁹³ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.296.

¹⁷⁹⁴ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1325. For King of Poland as negotiator between Szapolyai and Ferdinand, also see Sanuto, 44:442.

¹⁷⁹⁵ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, pp.295-6. Also see, Jenkins, *İbrahim Pasha*, pp.63-4. In 1528, Süleyman confirmed the privileges of French merchants in Egypt, formerly given by Mamluk sultans and gave them permission to go to Cairo.. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron*, p.366, 370. Also see, Jenkins, *İbrahim Pasha*, pp.63-4.

A letter dated 20 October 1529 from Florence reflects mixed emotions related to the advance of the Ottoman army:

As for the ultimate remedy to the affairs of Italy we have come to the point of wishing for the prosperity and felicity of the Turkish affairs. Poor Christendom! Here and elsewhere we remain with our mouths open to see which great campaign of theirs will hopefully change the current evils.¹⁷⁹⁶

French-Ottoman relations seem to have continued through Venice during the 1526-1529 period. In August and September 1528, we see Zen and Contarini talking to İbrahim about Francis's concerns about the priors of Syon. Finally, on 4 October, Contarini is given two letters, one for the Signoria and the other for Francis. He is also told that he should not wonder about the difference of the sacks containing the letters, because: "the King is *mazor* than the Signoria."¹⁷⁹⁷

On 13 April 1529, J. Hacket wrote to Wolsey from Brussels about the mission of Ferdinand's envoys to Constantinople. The ambassador requested that the Sultan give up the towns and castles which he held in Hungary to Ferdinand. But Süleyman replied by saying he had already made an alliance with Szapolyai and that Ferdinand should give up what he held: "The ambassador also said that there are ambassadors with the Turk of the French king, the Venetians and the Waywode, who have all made an alliance with the Turk; and if the Turk comes into Christendom this year, it will be by their instructions."¹⁷⁹⁸ On 25 September 1529, Gregory Casale, who informed Wolsey of the Ottoman advance toward Vienna after having captured Buda, expressed common opinion that "the Venetians have invited him."¹⁷⁹⁹ Perhaps what Casale kept hearing was not totally unfounded. Piero Zen's conversation with İbrahim Paşa, reported in a letter dated 11 March 1529, suggests the presence of Venetian involvement in the campaign decision. İbrahim supposedly told the bailo that they were waging campaign, which was "more than what the Signoria urged for."¹⁸⁰⁰ Szapolyai himself, in a letter to Venice dated 15 June, thanked Venice for her friendship and expressed his hope that

¹⁷⁹⁶ Sanuto, 50:138.

¹⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 49:6, 24, 72, 181-2, 244; 50:133.

¹⁷⁹⁸ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2405.

¹⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 2659.

¹⁸⁰⁰ Sanuto, 50:175.

they “continue to give him favors.”¹⁸⁰¹ A letter from Verona, dated 11 September 1529, displays the feeling towards Venetians in Europe seeing them as the cause of *Turks*’ coming to Europe. The response to such criticism was that everyone was obliged to do everything in his power not to lose and not be subjected. What Venice did was to defend itself as best as she can. And when the point came that she can not defend herself she would accept the Turk’s offers. When the author of the letter asked what these offers were, he replied that when the *Turk* heard of “our war” he offered to give 40,000 paid infantry and 20,000 cavalry as well as victuals and the amount of money required. His words to the critiques are illuminating: “Be sure, you gentlemen, that the Signoria shall apply to these if need be; and how sorry you (will be) if the Signoria wishes to give help to the Turk.”¹⁸⁰² Piero Zen’s chaplain wrote from Constantinople on 24 August that he wished God “grant him [Süleyman] victory according to our heart’s desire.” According to the chaplain, Süleyman was a just man and was a friend of Venice. He believed that Süleyman would be victorious and that none could expect otherwise.¹⁸⁰³ On 26 October, Szapolyai’s letter in Latin to the Signoria is read. It is dated 15 September from Buda. In this letter Szapolyai thanks the Signoria for all that they have done for him and informs them that he has recovered his kingdom “mediante il Signor Turco.”¹⁸⁰⁴ On 2 November a reply is written to Szapolyai to congratulate him on the recuperation of his kingdom.¹⁸⁰⁵ On 10 January 1530, another envoy came to Venice from Szapolyai. This envoy, too, stated that Szapolyai “has recuperated his kingdom with the help and favor of the *serenissimo Signor Turco*.”¹⁸⁰⁶

¹⁸⁰¹ *Ibid*, 51:124.

¹⁸⁰² *Ibid*, 544: “*Facendovi certo vui signori che la Signoria se ne valerà in caso di un bisogno; et tristi voi se la serenissima Signoria volesse dar favor al Turco.*”

¹⁸⁰³ *Ibid*, 52:59: “*... che Dio li doni vitoria secondo el cuor nostro desidera, che l’è un iustissimo signor, et bon amico de la nostra illustrissima Signoria... et credo per tutto questo mexe questo Signor haverà vittoria, che altro nin si pol sperar.*”

¹⁸⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 136.

¹⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 166.

¹⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 479. Ferdinand is again said to have “occupied” the kingdom.

6.3. Making a King

The main argument of this chapter is that the campaign of 1529 mainly aimed to restore Buda under Janos Szapolyai's rule, and make him "legitimate King of Hungary. In this section, we shall examine the phases of this process through the campaign."¹⁸⁰⁷

6.3.1. Reception at Mohacs

Janos Szapolyai was already a familiar figure for the Ottomans by 1529, not only because he was a tributary by now but also because he was a well known commander earlier. He appears as an important magnate in the campaign diary of 1522 as "*Erdel bâni*", as messengers arrive at the Ottoman camp during the siege of Rhodes to inform the Sultan of a conflict between Transylvania and Wallachia.¹⁸⁰⁸ Kemalpaşazade, in his account of the 1526 campaign, talks about Szapolyai's non-participation at the battle. According to Kemalpaşazade's version of the story, on the return march from Buda, Sultan Süleyman came by the region known as "Erdel." The lords of this region, as the author goes on explaining, had been subjects of the Hungarian kings. At the time of Sultan Süleyman's attack on Hungary, this region was under the rule of a "wise man of sound foresight" [*pîr-i sâ'ib-tedbîr*]. As the Sultan and the King prepared for the battle, this commander who tended toward prudence chose the proper course and did not respond to the calls of the King, unlike the rest of the over-proud commanders. He sent his brother to the battle with some soldiers, while he himself remained peacefully on safe grounds. Kemalpaşazade explains Szapolyai's decision not to present himself in battle on the grounds that he knew "he would not be able to match the ghazis on the battlefield."¹⁸⁰⁹ Kemalpaşazade's account of the 1526 campaign was completed in early 1529, before the Sultan departed for Buda but after

¹⁸⁰⁷ For detailed chronology of the campaign Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, v.2, pp.340-6; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.315-9; *Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.2, pp.839-48.

¹⁸⁰⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:529, 535.

¹⁸⁰⁹ KPZ, X:340.

the decision of the campaign was made. In this respect, we may safely assume that he knew pretty well who Szapolyai was. However, he mentions neither the name of Szapolyai nor his claim on kingship. This should not be surprising since the author is relating a single campaign and probably is not interested in projecting the aftermath directly in this particular account. He drops a hint, nonetheless, perhaps because the campaign which is about to set out is directly related to him. What is worth noting in this account is the presentation of Szapolyai's nature before he was made king. He is presented as a prudent and reasonable commander who knows his limits. While bringing forth his ability to foresee the future success of the Ottomans, Kemalpaşazade does not cross the thin line which could have made a traitor out of Szapolyai.

We have already mentioned the accusations aimed at Szapolyai for abandoning Louis II and blaming him for the loss of the Kingdom in the first place. Such was the main tenet of Ferdinand's argument in proving Szapolyai a traitor and usurper. Talking with the English ambassador in Prague in March 1527, for instance, Ferdinand called Szapolyai a traitor and told about how Szapolyai betrayed the King for the sake of the crown."¹⁸¹⁰ Contrarily, in his efforts of legitimizing Szapolyai, Kemalpaşazade inverts the discourse of betraying one's king. By informing his readers of the voivode's sending his brother with an armed force Kemalpaşazade, between the lines, removes such suspicions and presents Szapolyai's absence on the battlefield not as a treacherous act but as deliberate act of prudence.

The first meeting of the Sultan with his Hungarian protégée took place on 19 August 1529 at Mohacs. The manner of holding the ceremonial reception was discussed at the council meeting two days before the actual event. The main focus of the meeting was how to organize the hand-kissing ceremony of "Yanoş Kral."¹⁸¹¹ On 18 August [13 Dhu'l-Hijja] Süleyman and the imperial army landed at Mohacs. The campaign diary takes the opportunity to remind that the plain is "where the battle with King Louis took place."¹⁸¹² Mohacs, the scene of Ottoman victory three years ago, seems to be an appropriate location not only symbolically, but also geographically since Szapolyai arrived from Transylvania. Ottoman accounts imply that Szapolyai was already nearby

¹⁸¹⁰ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1323-5. This conversation shall be elaborated further below.

¹⁸¹¹ *Münşe'at*, I:569: "Yanoş Kral'ın el öpmesi husûsî söyleşildi."

¹⁸¹² *Ibid.*

when the Ottoman army arrived, thus he came to greet the Sultan.¹⁸¹³ According to Lütü Paşa's version of the story, Szapolyai's men came to Süleyman as the Ottoman army marched toward Buda and asked for his orders on behalf of their master. Süleyman told them that he was on the way to Buda and asked Szapolyai to meet him on the way.¹⁸¹⁴ Süleyman arrived at Belgrade on 6 July. He wished to have a general army inspection after the Sava crossing.¹⁸¹⁵ The campaign diary, as well the chronicles, refers to Szapolyai [Yanoş Kral] as the former voivode of Transylvania who turned king of Hungary. According to the text, "the Grand Vizier together with 500 household troops and janissaries rode and met the King who also rode his horse on the way in the afternoon."¹⁸¹⁶ The importance given to Szapolyai or to what he represented is demonstrated by the fact that the famous grand vizier İbrahim Paşa himself went to meet and accompany him to the Ottoman camp.

The reception took place next day on 19 August [14 Dhu'l-Hijja]. The diary refers to the reception as "the matter of King Janos's hand-kissing." Two ceremonial tents were erected between the council tent and the army tents. The company was first admitted into the courtyard of the council tent. Beside them stood the servants. Next to the servants stood the fully equipped janissaries, lined up in two wings right and left. Behind the right wing of the janissaries stood the household cavalry. Next to these was the right wing of the Rumelian army. Behind the household cavalry stood the Anatolian

¹⁸¹³ *Tabakat*, 186a.

¹⁸¹⁴ Lütü Paşa, 266. Venetian correspondence confirms that this was a premeditated meeting. In his letter to the Signoria on 15 June, Szapolyai reported that the Sultan was expected at Belgrade and informed that he would go to pay his respects [*farli reverentia*], hoping that "the recuperation of his kingdom was close." Sanuto, 51:124. An envoy of Szapolyai waited for the Sultan at Belgrade. The letter written by the envoy a Venetian notary demonstrates that the envoy was sent by Szapolyai to find the Sultan. *Ibid*, 124-6. The envoy told the Sultan that Szapolyai wished to come to kiss his hand if he liked. The sultan replied that once they passed the river he could come. *Ibid*, 52:59.

¹⁸¹⁵ *Ibid*, 51:194. [dated 19 July, from Sebenico/Šibenik].

¹⁸¹⁶ *Münşe'at*, p. 569: "Ve sâbıkda Erdel Beği olub, ba'dehu Engürüs vilâyetine Kral olan Yanoş Kral 'askere mü'lâki olub, ikindü vaktinde Paşa Hazretleri yanlarında olan beş yüz nefer kapu halkıyla ve yeniçeri ile binüb, mezbûr Kral dahi ata binüb gelüb, yolda buluşdular." Bostan, 90a: "mukaddemâ Erdel bânu olan Yanoş Kral"; Nasuh, 150a: "Erdelbân." Nasuh does not refer to him as "Yanoş Kral" until after the re-capture of Buda.

army surrounding the imperial tent. Behind the janissaries on the left wing stood the senior household cavalry regiment, next to them was the left wing of the Rumelian army. They waited in an orderly fashion until the King arrived in the afternoon. Rumelian commanders and distinguished court officials greeted the King and accompanied him for a while until aghas standing further escorted him to the council hall. When the King approached, the Sultan stood up, took three steps and greeted him. Szapolyai kissed the Sultan's hand. Then he was seated on a chair along with İbrahim Paşa; while the other viziers Ayas Paşa and Kasım Paşa stood on foot. When he was taken outside, he was presented with four ceremonial gowns and three fully caparisoned horses with golden harness and trappings, after which he re-entered and kissed the Sultan's hand again.¹⁸¹⁷ The presence of 300 cannons, 12,000 janissaries, 20,000 household cavalry, 30,000 Anatolian troops, 60,000 Rumelian troops, and 40,000 frontier troops adding up to an army of 162,000 in ceremonial order – as listed by Bostan¹⁸¹⁸ – must have been arranged to make a lasting and powerful impression.

Ottomans themselves were probably pleased with the impression of this specific ceremonial arrangement. During the 1532 campaign, we find reference to this reception during the discussions of the reception of the French envoy at the camp at Belgrade: “The arrangements were made according to the manner in which King Janos formerly kissed the [sultan's] hand at the plain of Mohacs during the Vienna campaign. The French envoy came and kissed the [sultan's] hand. The envoys from Ferdinand were also given permission and they, too, kissed the [sultan's] hand.”¹⁸¹⁹ This reference is worth noting especially because Habsburg envoys were already received at Niš during the march in 1532 and were present at the reception of the French ambassador. Through

¹⁸¹⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:569; Nasuh, 150a-b; Bostan (MK), 89b. *Tabakat*, 186a-b.

¹⁸¹⁸ Bostan (MK), 89b: “*Ol mahall[de] 'âli dîvânlar olub, erkân-ı devlet ve â'yân-ı saltanat südde-i sa'âdete gelüb, 'asâkir-i deryâ-müşâkil külliyyen süvâr olub, ateş-i pür-tâb gibi harekete gelüb, üçyüzden ziyâde gerdûn-manend sâika-girdâr top 'arabaları iki cânibden tertîb olunub, on iki bin yeniçeri âlât-ı harblerile ve tüfenkçilerile ve yiğirmi bin mikdârı kapuhalkı tâzî atları ve hindî şâbtalarıyle ve mükemmel yaraklarıyle otâk-ı hümâyûn hudûdında gülizâr-ı bahâr gibi ârâste saflar ve alaylar gösterüb, ve otuz bin mikdârı Anadolu leşkeri ve altmış binden ziyâde memâlik-i Rumili 'asâkiri ve kırk bin mikdârı dahi akıncı çerisi saflar ve alaylar bağlayub...*” On the margin: “12,000 + 20,000 + 30,000 + 60,000 + 40,000 = 162,000.”

¹⁸¹⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:579: “*Sabıka Beç seferinde Mohaç sahrasında Kral Yanoş el öpdüğü nice tertîb olunmuş ise ol uslûb üzere tertîb olunub, França elçisi gelüb el öpdiler; ve Ferenduş'dan gelen ilçilere icâzet virilüb anlar dahi el öpdü.*”

showing the French envoy the best possible reception to honor him – more accurately his master King Francis – Ottoman intention was to degrade the Habsburg envoys to demonstrate their conception of friendship and hostility.

Ottoman sources associate the hand kissing ceremony with the bestowal of kingship upon Szapolyai. A typical account follows as:

After the ban of Transylvania King Janos came to the court of the shelter of the world and was gratified with the honor of kissing the ground; since it was perceived that there was a lack of friendship between the despicable infidels of the region and the Muslims, the kingship of the province of Hungary was bestowed upon the afore-mentioned on the condition of sending tribute.¹⁸²⁰

The culminating point of the reception seems to be the ceremony of ground-kissing [*bisât-bûs*] or the hand-kissing [*dest-bûs*] which involves a very specific act of deference, namely a bodily act which requires the participant to kneel down before the recipient. The participant is not merely stating his subordination in words, but is physically displaying/visualizing it without leaving room for ambiguity; as R.A. Rappaport asserts “[he] identifies his inseparable, indispensable and enduring body with his subordination.”¹⁸²¹ The kissing ceremony in the Ottoman case can perhaps be compared to the homage ritual observed in Western feudal political systems. In the feudal homage/vassalage context, kissing the foot implied the severe subordination of the inferior party especially in the case of armed persons who were previously enemies. This was a way to establish a hierarchy whereby the victor compelled the defeated to become a “man of his own.”¹⁸²²

When Szapolyai kneels before Süleyman and kisses his hand, we can identify a dual submission being demonstrated. On one hand, he as an individual becomes the man of Süleyman, in other words he becomes a client of Süleyman if we were to see the bond as equivalent to suzerainty and vassalage in European terms. On the other hand,

¹⁸²⁰ Nişancı Mehmed, p.224: “*Erdel bânı Yanoş Kral Mohaç Ovası’nda dergâh-ı cihân-penâha gelüb şeref-i bisât-bûs ile müstes’ad oldukda ol diyarda olan küffâr-ı li’âmin ehl-i İslâm ile ‘adem-i istinâsları ihsâs olunmağın Engürüs vilâyetinin krallığı harâc göndermek şartı ile mezkûra tevcîh ü ta’yîn olundu.*” The proclamation sent to Venice announces that Sultan Süleyman granted the Kingdom of Hungary to Szapolyai at Mohacs. Sanuto, 52:371.

¹⁸²¹ Rappaport, “Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” 434-5.

¹⁸²² S.B. Kulayeva, “Symbolic Gestures of Dependence as Part of Medieval Homage Ritual,” p.22.

his authority is placed under that of the Ottoman Sultan. He is perceived as demonstrating his allegiance as well as his acceptance of the set of ties and obligations that the Sultan represents. He demonstrates this allegiance not only to the Sultan, but also to other participants. Thus, while on the first level this act of deference indicates the acknowledgment of Sultan Süleyman's superiority on the part of Szapolyai, on the second level it is the confirmation and reproduction of a set of obligations. The whole process is a public act of acceptance of a public and political order visible both to the witnesses and to the performer himself – which is not to be confused with the participants' private states of belief.¹⁸²³

The employment of the conventional term of *müstes'ad* in all accounts needs to be underlined in order to understand the contemporary significance of the act. While the “bisât-bûs” is an act of deference signifying severe subordination of the inferior party on one hand, it is also clearly defined as an “honor” which gives a distinguished status to the recipient. In this sense, submission and allegiance becomes a privilege rather than a humiliation. The gifts and robes presented also emphasize this point. In the words of Nasuh: “the worth of his moon reached the skies.”¹⁸²⁴ In an account of the 1526 campaign, a member of the Ottoman religious establishment Celalzade Salih Çelebi provides insight to the empowering nature of hand-kissing as perceived by contemporary Ottomans. Within the context of post-Mohac ceremonial, the author describes İbrahim Paşa performing the hand-kissing ritual. The hand of the Sultan is described as the claw of the world-conquering lion as well as a hand which is the “granter of prosperity/felicity.” Thus, as İbrahim Paşa kissed and put on his head the hand of the Sultan, fortune and felicity was placed on his head through the hand of the Sultan. Furthermore, this was regarded as evidence of his valor and greatness.¹⁸²⁵ The ceremony goes on with other commanders performing the same action and receiving gifts and favors in return. Salih Çelebi, at this point, describes the hand of the Sultan as

¹⁸²³ The main tenets of this evaluation is based on the theories discussed in Rappaport, “The Obvious Aspects of Ritual,” Goffman, “Interaction Ritual: Deference and Demeanor,” Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*.

¹⁸²⁴ Nasuh, 150b.

¹⁸²⁵ Salih (TSK), 55b: “Mübârek elin, ki pençe-i şîr-i cihângîrdir, öpiüb başına koyıcak kendü dest-i sa'âdet-bahşıyla hazret-i paşanın ser-i devlet-nigâhına bir per-i hümmâ sokdı ki her yünü devlet göğününin mâh-ı hamı, sa'âdet tuğının perçemiydi. Kemâl-i şeca'ât ve vufûr-ı mehâbetine dâl ü güvâh eyledi.”

“bounteous as the sea.”¹⁸²⁶ This episode clearly reflects the mutual nature of the ritual. Even though the kisser seems to be the active performer and the Sultan the passive receiver at first sight, the expressions that follow show that once the kissing act is performed the kisser becomes a receiver whereas the seemingly passive receiver, the Sultan, transforms into the active performer through his “giving.” When seen through this perspective, the hand-kissing ceremony performed by Szapolyai appears not merely as a display of subordination, but also a demonstration of inclusion, recognition and even exaltation to some extent.

Some Christian observers seem to have been scandalized by this hand-kissing ceremony. A rather interesting anecdote attributes Ferenc Frangepán, a member of Szapolyai’s retinue at the time, with the defense of Szapolyai’s act in the face of the Bishop of Ravello:

You say, he kissed the hand of the Turkish emperor. Well, what is wrong with kissing the hand of a ruler? If we may kiss the foot of Christ’s lieutenant for but small consideration in return, why should we not kiss the hand of the lieutenant of Mehemmed, if so doing we can save many souls?¹⁸²⁷

6.3.2. Enthronement at Buda

The second phase in our process is the enthronement of Szapolyai at Buda. But before that could happen, Süleyman had to free Buda – the capital [taht-gâh] – from Ferdinand’s “forceful occupation.” Ottoman army arrived before Buda on 3 September [29 Dhu’l-Hijja]. After a siege of five days, the castle asked for terms for peaceful surrender on 8 September [4 Muharram].¹⁸²⁸ Buda had been an easy target for the Ottoman army once again. Casale’s report to Wolsey, dated 9 July, suggests that Buda was already evacuated, since he informs that Ferdinand’s forces and his guns were taken to Vienna.¹⁸²⁹ Ottoman chronicles refer to the capture of Buda as “re-

¹⁸²⁶ Salih (TSK), 56a.

¹⁸²⁷ As quoted in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.123.

¹⁸²⁸ *Münşe‘at*, I:571.

¹⁸²⁹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2570. The Hungarian envoy’s letter from Belgrade also mentions that none of Ferdinand’s men were left in Hungary. Sanuto, 51:125; 475.

conquest.”¹⁸³⁰ Four days later, on 12 September [8 Muharram], Süleyman himself entered the city. The diary mentions that this was the date when the sultan entered the city previously.¹⁸³¹ The governor of Elbasan [Ilbasan] and 50 janissaries were stationed to stay at Buda until the end of the campaign. On 14 September, a janissary officer and selected troops put “Kral Yanoş” on his throne. The King gave the leading official of the company 2,000 pieces of gold and 1,000 pieces of gold to the accompanying troops.¹⁸³² According to Celalzade, at this point: “He became king of Hungary; thus his wish came true.”¹⁸³³ The gifts of gold to the Ottoman officials and soldiers could perhaps be seen as a kind of enthronement gratuity [*cülûs bahşîşi*]. That Szapolyai’s enthronement was taken seriously is reflected in the *bi’at*-like ceremony performed at Buda with the presence of elected janissary troops. Hungarian historian Szeremi provides an eyewitness account of the actual ceremony, though rather awkwardly. According to the author, Szapolyai and his party were put on a ship of the Sultan’s from Pest after the Sultan departed for Vienna. The Ottoman troops accompanying him were ornately dressed and they escorted Szapolyai and his retinue to Buda very respectfully, although Szeremi admits to suspecting that they were all going to be killed. As the whole party entered the castle, Szapolyai was taken into the dining hall and told to sit on the chair which was prepared for him. The chair is described as a highly valuable and beautiful one, though rather different from the usual Hungarian high chairs. The commander of the troops told him to “sit down on that seat, because just as the emperor

¹⁸³⁰ *Tabakat*, 187a: “*tekrâr meftûh oldı.*” Also see Nasuh, 148a. Giovio, too, admits to Süleyman having taken the royal city of Buda twice: “*Buda città Reale due volte presa...*” Giovio, *Elogi*, p.336a.

¹⁸³¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:571. The campaign diary of 1526 dates Süleyman’s entry into Buda as 3-4 Dhu’l-Hijja 932, which corresponds to 10-11 September 1526. *Ibid*, 563.

¹⁸³² *Ibid*, 571: “*Sekbanbaşı yeniçeriler ile kral Yanoşı alub tahtına geçirdiler. Ve ziyade yağmur yağdı. Ve hisar fethi için cem’-i Rumili beğlerine ve kethüda ve defterdarlara haftan giydirildi, ve Kral Yanoş Sekbanbaşıya iki bin altun ve varan yeniçerilere dahi bin altun in’am viridi.*” Also see *Tabakat*, 188a.

¹⁸³³ *Tabakat*, 188a: “*Kal’a küşâd bulub, erbâb-ı fesâddan emn hâsıl olıcak, mezkûr Yanoş Kral ‘atabe-i ‘âlem-penâhdan temennâ-yı ‘inâyet ü ‘âtıfet ve ricâ-yı re’fet ü şefkat eyleyüb, Budun-ı zafer-makrûn gerü kendüye himmet ü ‘inâyet olunmak bâbında tevekkü’ vü tazarru’ eyledi... Engürüs kralı olub ber-murâd oldı.*” Although Celalzade does not provide a specific date, he mentions that the castle was conquered and all evil was removed when King Janos requested the Sultan that Buda be granted to himself.

[the Sultan] ordered us, so we must install Your Majesty in your royal office.” After grabbing and having him sit, they told him three times in Slavic language: “May the Most High God give you good luck and bravery in governing Hungary and in subjecting other provinces and estates to your rule.” This done, they knelt before him and said: “May the Almighty God permit us all to die under the hooves of your horse.” Then raising themselves, they cried *Allah Allah Allah* and left Buda to join the Sultan.¹⁸³⁴

While Celalzade bases the granting of Buda on request by Szapolyai, Bostan simply says that when Buda surrendered it was given to King Janos.¹⁸³⁵ Nasuh, on the other hand, further explains the reason of this grant. According to the author, Szapolyai was judged to be more informed about the condition of the enemy than other commanders and thus he was better equipped to block potential attacks. This was why he was appointed king to Buda. Nasuh also mentions that a sufficient number of Hungarian commanders were left with him. According to his version of the story, Szapolyai comes once again to kiss the hand of the Sultan to demonstrate his subordination in return for the generosity Süleyman showed him.¹⁸³⁶ The campaign diary mentions that on the same date Rumelian commanders and officials were rewarded with robes.¹⁸³⁷ In this sense, we can perhaps see a double-ceremony. Szapolyai actually becomes king of Hungary through enthronement, while his dependent status is once more confirmed.

In Nasuh’s story, once enthroned Szapolyai encourages Süleyman to attack Ferdinand. Ironically, the speech Nasuh places in the mouth of Szapolyai is full of Islamic references or codes. For example, he makes the Hungarian king address the Sultan as the “shadow of God” [*zıll-ı zalîlullah*] and talks about “divine confirmation” [*te’yîd-i rabbânî*]. Added to these are praises based on military strength. He addresses Süleyman as the “king of the seven climes” [*pâdişâh-ı heft-kişver*]. He assures the

¹⁸³⁴ As related in Szakaly, *Ludovico Gritti in Hungary*, pp.51-2.

¹⁸³⁵ Bostan (MK), 90b-91a: “.. *kala’a-i mezbûre kuvvet-i kâhire-yi pâdişâhîye müsellemler olub, Yanoş Kral’a teslîm olındı.*”

¹⁸³⁶ Nasuh, 155b: “*Andan sonra tığ-ı keser-nihâd gibi kasd-ı hûn-ı ra’iyyet iden düşmeni zebân-ı tığ-ı evliyâ-yı siyâsetle ol hatadan dûr itmek için Erdelbân pür-salâbetin hadâ’ik-i ahvâline sâ’ir ümerâdan elyâk ve erzânî görülmeğın Budin’e kral nasb olunub dahi ol şugul-ı hasîrde ana mu’ayyen ve zahîr olıcak mikdâr Engürüs-ı menhûsın beğlerinden bir nice yarar beğler koşulub Budinde alıkonuldu.*”

¹⁸³⁷ *Münşe’at*, I:571.

Sultan that if he favors him, these lands would be well protected, so he can go and take revenge from the enemy by attacking the capital of the “German” king, Vienna.¹⁸³⁸

Foreign observers seem to be puzzled by Szapolyai’s enthronement. A letter dated 2 October from Šibenik [Sebenico] reflects the disappointment of a priest Piero over Szapolyai’s kingship. According to this informant “the voyvoide of Transylvania became *Turk* and the Sultan left him as governor [*sanzaco*] of Buda.” He believed this news to be bad for Christendom, and he worried that all would turn *Turk* if not for divine assistance.¹⁸³⁹

6.3.3. In Search of the Villain at Vienna

The Ottoman offensive against Vienna in 1529 appears to be a punitive or even vindictive move rather than a firm attempt to actually take the city. Ottoman chronicles imply that the target of the march following Buda was Ferdinand’s person, rather than the conquest of Vienna. According to Bostan, for example, Süleyman desired to punish, or even kill, Ferdinand in this campaign. By marching to Ferdinand’s capital to destroy it, the Sultan would have accomplished damaging his power and giving him a lesson.¹⁸⁴⁰ According to others, it was Szapolyai who provoked Süleyman to attack Vienna to take revenge.¹⁸⁴¹ Accounts of the devastating effects of the surroundings before, during and after siege of Vienna support contemporary claims of intended destruction and harm rather than outright conquest. Relating how the surroundings of Vienna were destroyed violently, Bostan evaluates the devastation as “revenge taken from the mentioned

¹⁸³⁸ Nasuh, 156a. When he relates İbrahim Paşa’s Egypt mission, Nasuh employs a similar terminology in the alleged speech made by İbrahim. Likewise İbrahim addresses the Süleyman as “king of the seven climes” [*pâdişâh-ı heft-kişver*]. See *ibid*, 91b.

¹⁸³⁹ Sanuto, 52:56-7. Some thought not only Szapolyai but all Hungarians started to act like the Turks. A doctor writing from Augusta on 19 October expresses his view as such: “The Hungarians behave like him and they are as bad as the Turks.” *Ibid*, 169.

¹⁸⁴⁰ Bostan (MK), 91a: “*Amma hazret-i sâhib-kırân-ı bî-hemâl – ‘izz nasruhu – nun bu seferden murâdı Nemçe Kralı olan Ferenduş la’ine gûşmâl, belki la’in-i mezbûrın habis vücûdın sâha-i rûzgardan def’ eylemek kasdına niyyet-i kitâl idi.*”

¹⁸⁴¹ Nasuh, 156a; Lütfi Paşa, p.267.

accursed [Ferdinand].”¹⁸⁴² According to Celalzade, not a single infidel could have survived after these raids if it were not for continuous castles.¹⁸⁴³

In order to trace the devastation and fear caused by these raids and the siege of Vienna itself on the inhabitants of these regions, we shall now look at some on-the-road observations of Western travelers. These observations reflect a genuine sense of terror and the scale of destruction experienced as the Ottoman army marched to and from Vienna, convincing one that Ottoman chronicles were not simply exaggerating.

The feeling of terror caused by the expected penetration of the Ottoman army into Austrian territory mainly revolves around women and children. This terror probably stems from the rumors recently in circulation in Vienna about the *Turks* killing everyone but women and children following the occupation of Buda in 1526.¹⁸⁴⁴ The general opinion in the immediate aftermath of the occupation of Buda in 1526 was that great atrocities were committed by the *Turks*. One reporter said that the Turk entered Buda on 9 September and killed everyone over the age of fourteen, keeping no prisoners. Children were sent to *Turkey* and many cities were burnt down.¹⁸⁴⁵ Women and children were usually spared and taken prisoners to be sold as slaves. They would also be transferred to Istanbul either to be sold or to be relocated. Salih Çelebi, for example, gives a rather detailed account on the abundance of beautiful girls and boys who were sold in the army camp following the battle of Mohacs. The author talks about how these prisoners satisfied the desires of the soldiers at the camp, how they lined up along road sides because they were so many, how a soldier left a prisoner on the road when he found a better one.¹⁸⁴⁶ Apparently regarded as mere commodities in contemporary standards, women and children figure as the most vulnerable and endangered potential victims in such times of commotion. Therefore, it should not be surprising to see eyewitness accounts and rumors demonstrating that women and

¹⁸⁴² Bostan (MK), 92b.

¹⁸⁴³ *Tabakat*, 192a.

¹⁸⁴⁴ Sanuto, 43:117.

¹⁸⁴⁵ *Letters and Papers*, IV:1114.

¹⁸⁴⁶ Sâlih (TSK), 55a, 58a.

children were sent away from Vienna starting at least in early August.¹⁸⁴⁷ The account of a messenger who left Vienna on 17 August mentions that in Vienna some people were afraid and some were not, and he finds this to be typical. Although many in Vienna believed that Ferdinand would soon arrive, he reports that people were secretly sending away their wives and children.¹⁸⁴⁸ One such woman whose story resonates in Venetian by-passer accounts is the wife of Raymondo Rodumbergi counsellor of the Prince [Ferdinand] in Vienna. She left Vienna on 17 August and came to Friuli. Her status is further reflected through the visit made by general Cozianer to her house on the day she left to inform them on the loss of Buda. She escaped from Vienna with her only daughter, with an agile wagon and three mounted servants. Her sister was married to a citizen of the region. She told that all women were escaping from Vienna, taking with them whatever possessions they can. She also told that there were neither men of war nor provisions in Vienna. Her account also puts Ferdinand at Linz at the time and reflects the common expectation in Vienna that he would be there soon with German soldiers.¹⁸⁴⁹ A Venetian explorer who left Wiener-Neustadt on 22 September describes the various sorts of people he met on the way. At some point having trouble going further the Venetian attached himself to a company of two men and a woman who left Vienna two days ago, the woman being the wife of one of the men. Together they traveled to Trevisa. The account suggests that in Vienna although there were some number of armed men and victuals, people were in great terror and women and children were sent away.¹⁸⁵⁰

Not all women and children were as lucky. By October, we come by Venetian accounts talking about beautiful German girls being sold for fifty aspers.¹⁸⁵¹ Brutal

¹⁸⁴⁷ See for example, “Maneggio della pace di Bologna tra Clemente VIII, Carlo V, La Repubblica di Venezia e Francesco Sforza, 1529,” in Alberi, II:3:157-8. Sanuto, 51:291, Friuli, 7 August. Also see Sanuto, 51:523 and 526 for reports from Udine and Friuli dated 8 September; 578 from Friuli dated 18 September, 594 from Udine 21 September, 52:6 Udine, 29 September.

¹⁸⁴⁸ Sanuto, 51:475.

¹⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 478-9. “*Ha una sua sorella maridata qui in uno cittadino di questa terra, qual ha fatto examinar da suo cugnato persona acorta et dabene...*”

¹⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 52:40-2.

¹⁸⁵¹ *Ibid*, 56-7.

behavior as this although identified with the *Turks*¹⁸⁵² was not otherwise alien to the Europeans of the time. Only a few years earlier, the sack of Rome by the imperial troops had created a similar scandal. Not only contemporary reports and public rumors¹⁸⁵³ reflect genuine terror in the face of atrocities committed in Rome, but learned authors such as Guicciardini dwell on the violence of the imperial troops toward women:

Hearing the cries and miserable shrieks of Roman women, and nuns led in droves by the soldiers to satisfy their lust, one could not but say that God's judgments were beclouded and concealed from mortal men, inasmuch as he allowed the renowned chastity of the Roman women to be so miserably and brutally violated.¹⁸⁵⁴

An assault on Vienna was expected even by the early phases of the campaign. In his letter dated 9 July 1529, for example, Casale informed Wolsey that the Ottoman army crossed the Sava and was marching along the Drava. It was expected that the army would march to Vienna with the fleet following on the Danube.¹⁸⁵⁵ On a letter dated 24 August, the chaplain of Piero Zen, reported from Istanbul that an agent of Alvise Gritti who left the Ottoman camp for Constantinople at the end of July reported that the Sultan was about to cross the Drava. He also mentioned that from that point it would take twenty-four days to reach Vienna. It is assumed in the letter that the Sultan would have reached there around the time this letter was written. The letter is dated 24 August 1529.¹⁸⁵⁶ This piece of information suggests that targeting Vienna must have come up as an issue in the camp along the march.

While the Ottoman army was advancing to Vienna from Buda, Ferdinand was still trying to put together a plan. According to Venetian reports, he planned to plant a large garrison in Vienna. He would then come himself with the rest of the army which was to

¹⁸⁵² Some thought not only Szapolyai but all Hungarians started to act like the Turks. A doctor writing from Augusta on 19 October expresses his view as such: "The Hungarians behave like him and they are as bad as the Turks." Sanuto, 52:169. For a reference in a different context see, Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.374.

¹⁸⁵³ See for example, Sanuto, 45:163, 165-7, 167-8, 214-8, 219, 220-22.

¹⁸⁵⁴ Guicciardini, *History of Italy*, p.385.

¹⁸⁵⁵ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2570.

¹⁸⁵⁶ Sanuto, 52:59.

consist of 40,000 people stationed at Wiener-Neustadt between Buda and Vienna. Through this strategy he intended to block Süleyman's way to Vienna. Ferdinand depended on the marshy territory to hinder Ottoman cavalry's function. He hoped that this would buy him some time so that with the coming of winter the siege would be inoperable.¹⁸⁵⁷

Vienna certainly waited quite a long time for Ferdinand to come and defend the city. In August many a Viennese believed that Ferdinand would arrive soon.¹⁸⁵⁸ By late September, inhabitants of the city were greatly disappointed that Ferdinand was not coming as he promised. This non-show started to dishearten them.¹⁸⁵⁹ As the siege continued, information pouring from Neustadt, where Ferdinand's army was assembling convey common rumors that there was no valiant general at Vienna and that the Germans defending the city could abandon the city any time since they usually escaped from war.¹⁸⁶⁰ By 10 October there were even rumors that Vienna already fell.¹⁸⁶¹

Ottoman accounts regarding the lifting of the siege of Vienna on the absence of Ferdinand attest to the target of the attack being Ferdinand. Bostan, for example, attributes the siege decision on the presumption of Ferdinand's presence in the castle, and the lifting of the siege to the awareness that he was not. Winter does not seem to be a reason for retreat in Bostan's account, which mentions that the city was "granted pardon" as the inhabitants already requested it.¹⁸⁶² The campaign diary also attributes the lifting of the siege to the absence of Ferdinand. Although a final assault was planned and announced, according to the diary, on the designated day Süleyman learned that Ferdinand was not in the fortress; therefore he decided to grant pardon to the city and

¹⁸⁵⁷ Sanuto, 51:594. Udine, Marco Antonio Contarini, 21 September. 52:6. Such a strategy suggests that Ferdinand would not make the mistake attributed to Louis in 1526. In other words, he would use the marches to reduce the capability of Ottoman cavalry. See Chapter 5.

¹⁸⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 51:475.

¹⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 52:42.

¹⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 56, 63-4, 64.

¹⁸⁶¹ *Ibid*, 63-4.

¹⁸⁶² Bostan (MK), 92a. Also see Sanuto, 52:361-2. The author of the letter, Maximo Leopardi, tells that the Ottoman army left Vienna upon learning from two high-level German prisoners that Ferdinand was not there but at Linz.

have the soldiers retreat. The diary does not mention any request by the Viennese for peaceful surrender at this point, which is rather unusual since in the previous examples we have seen pardon was always granted upon request. However, the text reports a more proper process of pardon two days later, whereby the inhabitants of the fortress sent for peaceful surrender and Süleyman accepted.¹⁸⁶³ This piece of information regarding the pardon should of course be taken with caution. The episode of the fortress requesting peaceful surrender as told in the campaign diary does not make much sense, since the Ottoman army already started evacuation at this point. Logically, no defender would decide to submit when the attacker gave up. Even though withdrawal in the absence of the possibility of direct engagement with Ferdinand himself might be a reasonable action, not entering a subdued capital does not make much sense. Furthermore, by September it was common knowledge that Ferdinand was not at Vienna. Marco Antonio Contarini, deputy of Udine, wrote on 13 August that Ferdinand was back at Linz from Bohemia and that many German nobles volunteered to join a campaign against the *Turks*. So far 1500 men had assembled. According to Contarini Ferdinand did not expect so much support and was somewhat relieved.¹⁸⁶⁴ The captain of Venzon wrote on 29 July that four Bohemians who came from Baviera and Salzburg told that Ferdinand was at Linz and was heading for Prague to assemble the Diet for the Hungarian issue. They said the *Turk* was coming to Hungary, but they were not sure because Prague was far from Hungary. He asked for Bohemian help but they seem to have declined what he asked for.¹⁸⁶⁵ An account from within the Ottoman camp on Ferdinand's moves is the report of Alvise Gritti's men sent to Constantinople in late July. It shows that Ottomans were quite informed about Ferdinand's actions. They knew he left Vienna for Germany to procure help and was planning to return with a huge army.¹⁸⁶⁶ Taking into account the prisoners taken along the way to Vienna, Süleyman was most probably aware of the situation, as various Ottoman accounts also show.

¹⁸⁶³ *Münşe'at*, I:574. The agent of Marc Antonio Contarini, who left Vienna on 18 September, reports an Ottoman ambassador arriving in Vienna on the 17 September. Sanuto, 52:7.

¹⁸⁶⁴ Sanuto, 51:331-2.

¹⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 240.

¹⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 52:59. For Ottoman awareness of Ferdinand's expectation of German help, also see *Tabakat*, 188a.

According to Nasuh, for example, Ottomans were informed by some prisoners taken on the way to Vienna that Ferdinand was at Prague.¹⁸⁶⁷ According to Nasuh, it was Yahyapaşazade Bali Beg's idea to actually take Vienna once the siege started. Nasuh mentions that as the castle did not fall after nineteen days, the siege was lifted. The author does not see this as a failure on the grounds that "German" territories were destroyed and burnt down in the meanwhile.¹⁸⁶⁸ In this sense, the aim was fulfilled.

Another major reason for retreat provided by the Ottoman sources is the harsh weather conditions. Celalzade states that the soldiers could not endure such conditions and the Sultan caring for the well-being of his servants decided to return.¹⁸⁶⁹ Lütü Paşa's approach is similar in the sense of moving forth the caring nature of the Sultan. According to the author, seeing the hardships the Sultan thought that it was not worth "losing even a single man for ten such castles" and decided to return.¹⁸⁷⁰ The words Lütü Paşa attributes to Süleyman as he decided to lift the siege are almost identical to those the author attributes to Murad II when he decides to lift a siege during the Albanian campaign in 1449: "I would not lose a single man for fifty such castles."¹⁸⁷¹ Examples of this phrase can be found in any Ottoman source, for this or that campaign in various reigns.

The retreat decision was accompanied by a *divân* which is just like any other post-victory occasion. Along with this decision, the janissaries were also rewarded thousand aspers each. The commanders kissed the Sultan's hand and awarded robes. İbrahim Paşa was rewarded with a sword, four gowns, and five sacks of coins. The other viziers were presented with two gowns each.¹⁸⁷²

Initial accounts of foreign observers of the retreat are neutral reports just informing that somehow the Ottoman army left Vienna. They are not sure what to make

¹⁸⁶⁷ Nasuh, 159b. In a following poem Nasuh relates how Ferdinand escaped first to Linz [*Lança*], then further to Prague [*Brâga*] as heard of Süleyman's march. *Ibid*, 161a-b. Also see *Münşe'at*, I:571.

¹⁸⁶⁸ Nasuh, 163a-165a.

¹⁸⁶⁹ *Tabakat*, 191b-192a. Although it was yet October, Celalzade mentions thunder storm and snow, as does the campaign diary, *Münşe'at*, I:574.

¹⁸⁷⁰ Lütü Paşa, pp.265-268.

¹⁸⁷¹ *Ibid*, pp.182.

¹⁸⁷² *Münşe'at*, I:574. Also see, *Tabakat*, 192a.

of the sudden lifting of the siege.¹⁸⁷³ Several different assumptions are found in correspondences. While some see the retreat as a doing of God, some attribute it to Süleyman's fear of Ferdinand's preparations, yet others associate it with the arrival of winter and lack of victuals. An eyewitness account from Vienna, dated 18 October, relates that when they saw the Ottoman camp on the morning of 14 October, they thought there would be a great battle that day. But then as they saw the army start retreating, this eyewitness attests to wondering whether God did not wish for the battle to happen.¹⁸⁷⁴ A doctor in Augusta [Augsburg], reporting the news he had on 21 October about the last phases of the siege, informs that the Ottoman camp was removed on 13 October but he mentions that it was not known if the *Turk* left Vienna all together. Describing the lifting of the siege as "a miracle of God," his opinion is: "If God was not on our side, it should not be possible to keep the land."¹⁸⁷⁵ A letter from Bologna, dated 1 November, reflects the opinion at Bologna concerning Süleyman's retreat: He heard of Ferdinand coming from 50,000 Bohemians and that of the duke of Bavaria and decided to lift the siege.¹⁸⁷⁶ A letter dated 10 November from Friuli, based on the information by an eyewitness who left Vienna on 24 October, reports that Süleyman lifted the siege due to the lack of victuals, men and horses.¹⁸⁷⁷ One letter from Gradisca dated 30 October adds the cold to the reasons of retreat.¹⁸⁷⁸

¹⁸⁷³ See, for example, Sanuto, 52:163 [dated 31 October, from Bassan]; and 52:163-5 [dated 31 October, from Udine].

¹⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 226-228. This letter which actually is a siege diary was translated from German into Italian on 7 November and was sent to Venice by the purveyor [proveditor] of Friuli on 10 November. Another copy is found in *ibid*, 237-9. This one was sent by the captain of Raspo and is dated 8 November. The multiple copies and almost immediate circulation of eyewitness accounts such as this one attests to the sense of panic and confusion regarding the motives and actions of the Sultan.

¹⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 171. For another report describing the "salvation of the city as nothing else but a miracle of God," see *ibid*, 202.

¹⁸⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 171-2.

¹⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 225.

¹⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 229.

6.3.4. The Crown of Hungary

The next mention of Szapolyai is on 26 October [22 Safar] on Süleyman's arrival at Buda on the way back as "Kral Yanoş came to greet the Sultan the refuge of the world. All the viziers went to him and escorted him to the Sultan. He greeted the Sultan as the Anatolian army crossed the bridge on the Danube until midnight."¹⁸⁷⁹ On 29 October [25 Safar] Süleyman held court at Buda. Szapolyai came and kissed his hand, saying "May your holy victory be blessed" [*Gazânız mübârek olsun*] as Ottoman tradition requires. He was awarded ten robes of honor and three fully equipped horses.¹⁸⁸⁰ The performance of this typical post-victory ceremony expected of high level Ottoman officials and commanders reflects the inclusion of Szapolyai among them.¹⁸⁸¹

This visit to Buda marks the last phase of our discussion: the coronation. Although Yanoş Kral was enthroned, he was not crowned yet. Just like Süleyman had to retrieve Buda first in order to put Szapolyai on the throne, he had to retrieve the Crown in order for the coronation to be performed. Previously on 20 August [15 Dhu'l-Hijja] as the Ottoman army moved on to Buda from Mohacs, the governor of Zvornik Küçük Bali Beğ was sent with 500 household cavalry in addition to his own men to retrieve Peter Pereny, the guardian of the Crown. The campaign diary also mentions that Pereny was a prominent lord and that he was the one who put the *Corona* on the heads of kings. According to the campaign diary, Küçük Bali Beğ returned from his mission together with Pereny on 4 September [30 Dhu'l-Hijja].¹⁸⁸² Apparently, Bali Beğ was not only responsible for retrieving Pereny, but the Crown as well.

¹⁸⁷⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:575.

¹⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid*; *Tabakat*, 192b-193a.

¹⁸⁸¹ See, for example, *Tabakat*, 187b on the occasion of the capture of Buda, whereby the grand vizier, governor-generals and other commanders kissed the hand of the Sultan and "congratulated the ghaza" [*gazâyı mübârek-bâd itdiler*]. Salih Çelebi, in the account mentioned above, describes this ceremony as a "wise command and esteemed custom" [*emr-i ma'kûl ve 'adet-i makkûl*]. Salih (MK), 55b.

¹⁸⁸² *Münşe'at*, I:570. Nasuh, on the other hand, tells that Pereny was already put under custody by Szapolyai and Bali Beğ was sent to take him from the fortress he was being held. Nasuh, 151a.

On 31 October [27 Safar], Grand vizier İbrahim Paşa gathered the commanders on horseback, had the crown of Hungary brought and displayed, saying it dated back to the time of Nuşirevan – which denotes a reference to the ancient custom which is a basic legitimating concept for the Ottomans. Alvise Gritti, Peter Pereny and Archbishop of Esztergom Pal Varday were then sent to Buda to crown the King.¹⁸⁸³ Pereny’s presence in this company can also be viewed in terms of the shifting allegiances throughout the post-Mohacs period. While he seems to be captured on a special mission by Bali Beğ, earlier correspondence suggests that Pereny was not sure which side to take. John Lasco in his letter to Antonio Rincon dated 18 November 1528, mentions that although Pereny gave the crown to Ferdinand, he tended toward Szapolyai.¹⁸⁸⁴ A similar case is observed with the Archbishop of Esztergom, who is reported to have submitted on his own when the Ottoman army besieged the city on the way to Vienna.¹⁸⁸⁵ Varday mentioned in a letter that “Süleyman gave him a better welcome than one might expect even from a Christian ruler and promised mercy to all those who shifted their allegiance to John.”¹⁸⁸⁶

Although narrative accounts pose some degree of confusion as to when and how the crown was retrieved, Ottomans seem to be well aware of the conditions of ceremonial legitimization of the Hungarian king. The efforts taken to provide the crown and the archbishop of Esztergom – who had the sole right to crown Kings of Hungary – prove the point. Ottoman sources name the Archbishop as “Arşik.” The sounding of the name is reminiscent of St. Stephen’s Astrik. Considered along with the previous reference to Anushirvan, the ancient heritage of the Crown and the significance of coronation in legitimation are emphasized. The only condition not achieved was performing the rite at Székesfehérvár.¹⁸⁸⁷

¹⁸⁸³ *Münşe‘at*, I:575-6: “*Ve Paşa at üstünde beğleri cem’ idiüb, kralları gidiüğü Korona’yı getürdüb, Nuşirevan zamanından berü kalmış tacdır diyü beğlere gösterdiler... Ve Krala Korona giydirmek için Venedik beği oğlu ve Perin Petri ve Arşik nam beğler Budin’e irsal olındılar.*” Also see *Tabakat*, 193a; Sanuto, 52:370-2.

¹⁸⁸⁴ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2148.

¹⁸⁸⁵ *Münşe‘at*, I:573; *Tabakat*, 191a.

¹⁸⁸⁶ As quoted in Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.126.

¹⁸⁸⁷ This is somewhat confusing since the city already surrendered on the way to Vienna. See, for example, Nasuh, 158a-b. Helen Kottaner, wet nurse of Vladislav V, wrote in her memoirs: “There are three laws in the Kingdom of Hungary. They believe that if any one of them is disregarded, the claimant is not a legal king of Hungary. The

Although Ottoman succession itself is defined by accession to the throne rather than coronation, contemporary Ottoman perception of Hungarian succession seems to regard the throne incomplete without the actual crown. The significance attributed to the Crown by the Ottomans also shows the concern with the legitimacy of Szapolyai. Celalzade provides the contemporary Ottoman understanding of the Crown:

Those who are kings of the Throne of Hungary have a crown called the Korona. It is bedecked with various jewels and rubies; it is a priceless diadem. It had been taken from the treasury of Buda and kept at the imperial treasury of the Sultan. If he who became King did not have it in his possession, he would not be able to keep the realm under his rule, none of his subjects would obey his orders. According to their custom, respect came with the crown, validity of the king's orders depended on the crown. Therefore, Yanoş Kral humbly requested from the exalted threshold that the joyous crown to be granted to him. The generous benevolence of the Sultan was displayed. The bejeweled crown and the artfully crafted diadem were sent to him with the son of the Doge of Venice [Gritti], Peter Perenyi and the Archbishop, so that now of his royal majesty would be complete and he would become glorious and outstanding among rulers by following their tradition.¹⁸⁸⁸

Celalzade's opinion about the legitimizing character of the crown was not without foundation. Charles Robert I of Anjou had to be crowned three times until his rights were recognized through the right crown. He was first crowned as a claimant to the throne in 1301 by the archbishop elect of Esztergom but the crown was not the right one. Then in 1309 he was crowned with a crown tailored especially for the occasion when he was consecrated by the papal legate to Hungary. And finally in 1310, the traditional 'Holy Crown' was recovered from the adherents of other pretenders, because

first law is that which says the king of Hungary has to be crowned with the Holy Crown. The second is that he must be crowned by the archbishop of Esztergom (head of the Hungarian church). The third is that the coronation must be held at Székesfehérvár.” As quoted in Fügedi, E. “Coronation in Medieval Hungary,” in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, vol.3 no.13 (1990), p.175.

¹⁸⁸⁸ *Tabakat*, 193a-b: “Engürüs tahtına kral olanların Korona dimekle ma’ruf bir tâcları olub, envâ’i cevâhir ü yevâkit ile murassa’, zî-kıymet iklîl-i celîlü’l-kadr idi; Budun hazinesinden alınub hızâne-yi ‘âmire-yi pâdişâhîde mazbut idi. Kral olanlar ol tâca mâlik olmayınca memâlike hâkim olmayub, kimse emrine mahkûm ü râm olmazmış. Ayinlerinde ‘itibâr ol tâca olub, fermânlarının revâci anınla olduğu ecelden Yanoş Kral ‘atabe-i ‘atîfet-nevâlden ol tâc-ı behcet-ibtihâcı kendüye ihsân olunmak tazarru’ eyledi. ‘Atîfet-i ‘amîme-i hakani zuhûra getirülüb, mezkûr tâc-ı murassa’ ve iklîl-i musanna’ Venedik Beği oğlu, Engürüs ümerâsının â’yânından Pirim Petri ve sâbiken ‘atabe-i ‘ulyâya ita’at iden Arşık ile kendüye irsâl olunub gönderildi ki krallığı tamam olub, ka’ide-i kadimeleri mer’i ve meslûk olmağla beynü’l-mülûk müftehir ve serefrâz ola.”

the mighty barons of the realm refused to recognize the validity of either previous coronations.¹⁸⁸⁹ When the male line of the Arpads came to an end in 1301 with the death of Andrew, Venceslas III who was related to the dynasty through the female line was approached by the barons. However, being unable to stabilize his position, he left in 1304 taking the crown with him. The Archbishop elect of Esztergom excommunicated his followers because they helped carry away the “coronam sacram beati regis Stephani.”¹⁸⁹⁰ The first Christian King of Hungary, St. Stephen was crowned on Christmas day in the year 1000 AD. As tradition goes, the crown sent by Pope Sylvester II was used in the coronation ceremony which started the reign according to chancery records. In 1440, the legendary crown of St. Stephen, or crown of Hungary which was already a sacred property of the “nation” as Fügedi comments, was stolen. Ladislas V was crowned with this crown as a 12 week old baby. Only a few weeks after, Vladislas I, King of Poland, was elected by the majority of barons and his reign inaugurated.¹⁸⁹¹ But the absence of the Holy Crown created a big problem for Vladislas I back then too. Although he was elected king, he could not be considered legal sovereign until he put on the Holy Crown which was in the possession of the opposing faction. The solution was found in reproducing the crown based on the image of the reliquary of St. Stephen. A declaration was issued to support the reproduction announcing that the newly produced crown would have the same “signamentum, mysterium et robur” as the Holy Crown itself. According to the declaration the Holy Crown represented the whole nation and belonged to the whole nation. It also represented the nation’s right to find a suitable person to rule the country and wear its crown. On the other hand, the tension created by the conception that the Holy Crown was actually sent to St. Stephen by the Pope prevented full content with the reproduction. Therefore, the aim was to transfer “the virtues and the mystery” of the original crown to the new one. For this end, the new crown was modeled on the crown on the reliquary which actually touched the body of the saint.¹⁸⁹²

¹⁸⁸⁹ Fügedi, “Coronation in Medieval Hungary,” p.174-5.

¹⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.179.

¹⁸⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.159.

¹⁸⁹² *Ibid*, p.179-80.

Kings of Hungary were crowned at Székesfehérvár ever since the coronation of St. Stephen. Most of the kings were buried in the Basilica of the Holy Virgin in the city. Székesfehérvár was the center of the ruling dynasty's domains ever since the Hungarian conquest and until 1527 all coronations were held there except two.¹⁸⁹³ According to Nasuh, the castle submits of its own on the way to Vienna. Nasuh mentions that this is where the Corona is held as customary.¹⁸⁹⁴ But then he says the lords of Küçük Belgrad brought the *Korona* to the Sultan and presented it by kissing his hand. The Sultan sent it to Szapolyai with a chief sergeant.¹⁸⁹⁵

6.4. Projection and Reception

6.4.1. Official Projection

The proclamation of victory sent to Venice projects three main messages.¹⁸⁹⁶ Firstly, it reminds Süleyman's right on Hungary on the basis of his having previously defeating and killing the king of Hungary and thus acquiring his country. Once the right of disposition on Hungary is thus established, the proclamation goes on to explain that based on this right kingship was conferred on Szapolyai who requested it from the Sultan. The second point made in the proclamation is Ferdinand's usurpation of the country and the crown, thus defying the rights of conquest of Süleyman. Such a presentation legitimizes the campaign providing Süleyman not only valid reason for aggressive action but an honorable one too. The third message made very clear through the proclamation is Süleyman's granting kingship to Szapolyai. All three phases of the process of making Szapolyai king of Hungary, as we have discussed above, are reflected in the proclamation: the Mohacs meeting whereby Süleyman grants the

¹⁸⁹³ *Ibid*, p.161, 177.

¹⁸⁹⁴ Nasuh, 157a-b.

¹⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 167a-b.

¹⁸⁹⁶ For the letter of proclamation dated 13 November, from Belgrade, see Sanuto, 52:370-2.

kingdom of Hungary to Szapolyai as he comes to the Sultan's threshold; the appropriation of Buda and the chasing away of Ferdinand the usurper; the retrieval of the "ancient crown of Hungary" with the help of God since "nobody could be king without putting the said crown on his head." Written in the first person, the proclamation reads: "And I have donated the kingdom of Hungary to the prefect (prefato) John, according to the custom of my very great Majesty with all its places and lands, azio el daga carazo a la Porta di la Maesta mia." While the proclamation poses Süleyman as the supreme suzerain over Hungary and Szapolyai as the legitimate king of Hungary, it also moves Ferdinand out of the picture. The whole legitimation scheme for Szapolyai can be read in reverse as a de-legitimation of Ferdinand. Firstly, since the right of Hungary belongs to Süleyman by virtue of conquest, his granting the kingdom to Szapolyai and not Ferdinand alone could void Ferdinand's claims. Secondly, Ferdinand is chased out of Hungary which automatically voids his territorial claims based on military action. In other words, it is not Ferdinand who holds the capital now. Thirdly, Ferdinand is stripped off the powers of the legendary Crown of Hungary which could have supported his claims symbolically. After making all these points very clear, the proclamation states that the main intention of the Sultan was not to run after these things, but to find Ferdinand who tried to usurp Hungary and then ran away. He says he followed Ferdinand with his army, taking all the strongholds on the way up to the German border. He attests to reaching Vienna on 25 September [22 Muharram]. When he heard that Ferdinand had escaped to Bohemia, not knowing whether he was alive or dead Süleyman sent his men to devastate Ferdinand's realm, which they did.¹⁸⁹⁷ And he himself destroyed the rest through moving along the Danube. The Vienna episode passes with one sentence mentioning that the Sultan stayed before Vienna for 20 days. On the way back, he came to Buda, John kissed his hand, the crown was given to him and Süleyman was now on the way back to his imperial seat.

The main point of the proclamation of victory which is the "right of sword" should have been legible enough by Ferdinand as well as to others. In a letter he wrote to Portugal after the Battle of Pavia in 1525, Charles V laid similar claims on his right to decide on the fate of France since it "had been left 'orphaned, without its king and its armed forces,' and therefore he could as he willed with her."¹⁸⁹⁸

¹⁸⁹⁷ For some examples of the devastation see, for example, Sanuto, 52:93, 160-1.

¹⁸⁹⁸ Salgado-Rodriguez, "Obeying the Ten Commandments," p.46.

Janos Szapolyai was not the first to be confirmed and “made” king by Süleyman. As Kemalpaşazade has it, in 1521, on the return from Belgrade, Süleyman received the news of the death of the voivode of Wallachia, a “province/state under the protection of the sultan.” After electing the deceased voivode’s son as their ruler, the people of Wallachia sent for the approval of Süleyman. He received the request while at Smederevo, and ordered Mihaloğlu Mehmed Beğ to bring him to his presence. Tribute would be designated and he would be authorized as ruler of Wallachia upon his arrival. Only then would he go back to his throne and rule. Kemalpaşazade defines this authorization process with two symbolic actions: “wearing the robe of state” [*hil‘at-i emâret*] and “girding the belt of the sword of execution” [*kemer-i şimşir-i siyâset*]. This is to say, the new voivode was authorized to rule by the permission and the confirmation of the Ottoman sultan.¹⁸⁹⁹ Confirming kingship of Wallachia was not an action started by Süleyman. In 866, we see Mehmed II giving the rule of Wallachia to Radul, the brother of the executed voivode. Along with the confirmation Mehmed sent him *sancak*, *tuğ* and *kemer*.¹⁹⁰⁰

Süleyman does not list Hungary among his long list of possessions usually included in proclamations or letters addressed to foreign princes. Even in his letter to Ferdinand dated 17 November 1530, although he emphasizes having subjected and subdued the Kingdom and the King of Hungary with his own person and his own sword, Hungary is not mentioned in the titlature.¹⁹⁰¹

¹⁸⁹⁹ KPZ, X:113.

¹⁹⁰⁰ Tursun Beğ, *Târih-i Ebu'l-Feth*, pp.110-8.

¹⁹⁰¹ Gevay, 1530, pp.91-2. The letter, in loose translation, follows: “You have sent your man to ask for peace and friendship. You have also requested that the Kingdom of Hungary be given to you. The said Kingdom of Hungary I have conquered by virtue of God and by my sword. I wandered around that realm in person and with my army to see if there is anything there to conquer. And with treasure, and people and happiness [*alegreza*] I went until winter, and while I went and conquered every place in that province and nobody came against me. When a kingdom subjected by an emperor with his sword, he is the king thereof and it is his possession, and to anyone who comes to ask for it I shall say that ignorant King John came and inclined to my person, and asked for the Kingdom of Hungary which I have conquered with my own sword. That kingdom being mine, I have given it to him as I wished. And now you have sent your ambassador to ask for friendship and then in your letter you write that you are King of Hungary, the kingdom which I have conquered by my sword, and therefore it is not right to have friendship... It is the privilege of an emperor when he conquers a kingdom with his sword and his horse marches [*zampado*] on those territories, it is

6.4.2. Domestic Reception

As we have tried to underline so far, Ottomans employed every ceremonial and symbolic means to provide utmost legitimacy to Szapolyai's kingship. When Süleyman was ready to return, Szapolyai had everything he needed to be King of Hungary. He had the capital, the throne and the crown. He had all of these through legitimate and recognized means. As far as the Ottoman mind was concerned, Szapolyai's "public investiture of authority" was complete through the performance of the ritual instances required for the symbolic process of this investiture.¹⁹⁰² Thus, contemporary Ottomans had no doubt that he would be regarded as the rightful King of Hungary in the Christian world. There is one contemporary Ottoman, though, who seems to have felt the need to legitimize Szapolyai, or rather the support given to Szapolyai by Süleyman, in the eyes of the Muslim world. Lütfi Paşa relates a rather interesting conversation between Szapolyai and Süleyman. Whether such a conversation ever took place is rather questionable.

According to Lütfi Paşa, during the meeting at Mohacs Süleyman put forth the difference of religion between himself and Szapolyai. The Sultan wished to know why Szapolyai approached him for assistance while there was no friendship and affection between them due to this difference. Szapolyai supposedly replied: "Refuge of the universe has numerous servants both Muslim and Infidel. I come to join those servants. And I have a request to make him. I shall utter it, if allowed." Süleyman told him to utter his request assuring him that he would do his best to fulfill it. Szapolyai summarizes the conflict between himself and Ferdinand on the kingship of Hungary: "As to now, the Kingdom of Hungary has been vacant. I have blood ties [*karâbet*] to the Hungarian kings, I am not an obscure man, I have a right to the throne. Thus, I request that the *pâdişâh* drive Ferdinand's men out of Buda, give me the city and make me its lord in return for an annual tribute of one thousand pieces of gold. Furthermore, Vienna

known that it is his, and the Kingdom of Hungary is mine and by my grace I have given it to King John."

¹⁹⁰² For the symbolic and nature of "public investiture of authority, see Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, p.51.

[Beç] is close to Buda, if you could take that, too.” Süleyman promises to see to it once they get to Buda.¹⁹⁰³

This alleged conversation harbors several issues. The first issue it raises is the justifiability of a Muslim ruler helping out a non-Muslim one. Under normal circumstances, Szapolyai would be regarded an enemy by default because he is a Christian and has no intention to convert. This would normally require an action of *jihad*. On the other hand, he is willing to submit in return for tribute. This mode of negotiation is in keeping with the notion of peaceful surrender. The most widely known and most frequently employed Quranic verse related to *jihad* says: “Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.”¹⁹⁰⁴ In Lütfi Paşa’s account, through pledging himself a servant of Süleyman, Szapolyai acknowledges the Sultan’s – the Muslim ruler’s – superiority; through the promise of one thousand pieces of gold he demonstrates his state of subjection. In this sense, Süleyman’s intervention on behalf of a non-Muslim *upon request* is justified and legitimized. Szapolyai’s mention of Muslims and non-Muslims among the servants of the Sultan, on the other hand, poses Süleyman as a universal ruler. As such, Süleyman not only needs to confer with the Islamic rules in accepting Szapolyai’s allegiance, but has to make sure that he is the right candidate for the throne. Thus, a second issue of the episode has to do with legitimizing Szapolyai in the dynastic sense. The author needs to demonstrate Szapolyai’s right to the throne of Hungary in order to prove the justness of Süleyman’s cause. This is achieved by the emphasis on blood ties to the kings of Hungary.

Ottoman authors emphasize Süleyman’s position as king-maker frequently in their accounts. A couplet in Nasuh’s account, for example, summarizes the issue. Defining Süleyman as “the king of kings, world conqueror and bestower of the world,” he asserts that Szapolyai achieved “glory, prosperity, good fortune” as he was made King by the Sultan.¹⁹⁰⁵

¹⁹⁰³ Lütfi Paşa, 266-7.

¹⁹⁰⁴ Quran, 9:29.

¹⁹⁰⁵ Nasuh, 156a-157a: “Şehinşâh-ı cihângîr ve cihân-bahş / Felek-taht ve kamer-tâc ve fezâ-rahş / Kral itdi yine Yanoş’ı tahta / İrerdi ‘izzet ü ikbâl ü bahta.”

Süleyman's role as the "shelter of the universe" is further emphasized by the alleged reaction of submitting towns. The case of Pest in the account of Nasuh is an illuminating example. Whereas in his account of the 1526 campaign, the fear factor in the voluntary submission of various castles,¹⁹⁰⁶ the decision to submit in the case of Pest in 1529 reflects a yearning for order and security rather than fear.¹⁹⁰⁷ In this sense, Süleyman emerges as the one who will make sure that his subjects live in peace and order.

In the previous chapters we have regarded the campaign diaries as official sources which tended to be relatively neutral accounts. The campaign diary in 1529 reflects a somewhat different tone in comparison with the previous ones. Hardships suffered because of climatic and natural circumstances reflect in this particular campaign diary along with a harsh sense of suffering. A similar, yet much softer, attitude is vaguely sensed in the chronicles as well. One very clear change of tone is visible in attitudes toward the rain. The campaign diary of 1526 from time to time mentions instances of trouble caused by heavy rain as the roads were harmed as the Ottoman army advanced.¹⁹⁰⁸ These hardships due to weather conditions mentioned in passing in the campaign diary are employed by the chroniclers to the Sultan's advantage. Kemalpaşazade, for example, argues that the clouds were there to protect the Sultan from excessive sun and it rained to calm down the dust of his horse's feet.¹⁹⁰⁹ The rain also figures as a celestial purification symbol in the accounts of the 1526 campaign. Salih Çelebi mentions that a rain shower started on the instant when victory became clear at Mohacs. According to the author, this was "to wash away the dust of the battle

¹⁹⁰⁶ The peaceful surrender of Ilok would be an example, see *ibid*, 117b.

¹⁹⁰⁷ Nasuh, 152a.

¹⁹⁰⁸ *Münşe'at*, I:554-6.

¹⁹⁰⁹ KPZ, X:235; *Tabakat*, 148b. Bostan echoes this view. Bostan (MK), 64b. For an example of troubling rain see, *Münşe'at*, I:555-6. As the army approached Sofia it was raining hard which caused flooding, some tents were taken by the flood. The Sultan was much troubled by this and he too camped where İbrahim did. About ten days later as the army was near Niš it rained so hard that the soldiers were "desperate and perplexed" [*aciz ü hayran*]. For rain blocking the Morava crossing forcing them to stop and tents under flood, p.556.

field from the ghazis.”¹⁹¹⁰ This brief expression of purification suggests a reverse transformation. We have already mentioned in Chapter 3 that war is a violent activity which required an altered state of mind. In this case, the rain washing away the dust of the battlefield brings to mind a re-alteration of state of mind for the moment.

Contrarily, the rain in the 1529 accounts appears to be a hostile force of nature rather than a celestial blessing or a benevolent force of nature. Accounts show that rain caused serious problems throughout the campaign.¹⁹¹¹ The campaign diary starts reporting the hardships caused by heavy rain from the first day of the march from Istanbul. On the second stop, we see 30,000 aspers distributed to the imperial guards for the trouble they took through rain and harsh weather.¹⁹¹² Another disaster tale comes up at the Drava crossing at Eszék. The campaign diary reports several rain showers and thunder storms causing great damage. In one case, nine hundred janissaries are said to be hit by lightning.¹⁹¹³ The scale of showers which had to be faced is evident in accounts of soldiers who had to climb trees to survive.¹⁹¹⁴ Nasuh, too, notes the severe weather conditions and the snow, and mentions the “endless hardships” endured by the soldiers.¹⁹¹⁵ Celalzade talks about the “annoyance” [*infi’âl*] caused among the soldiers by heavy rain and harsh weather conditions. The author adds that “the Abode of Islam being far away, the victorious soldiers became uneasy on infidel territories.”¹⁹¹⁶ This

¹⁹¹⁰ Salih (TSK), 53b: “*Gâziler üzerinden gerd-i meydân-ı neberdi götürmeğiçün katrât-ı rahmet nüzûle başladı.*”

¹⁹¹¹ Foreign correspondence, too, displays the poor conditions of the roads and the destruction due to heavy rain almost all throughout the campaign. Rain and the roads being destroyed: Sanuto, 51:434 [dated early August, from Šibenik]; 434 [by Maximo Leopardi, dated 24 August, from Cliva]; 516 [dated 2 September, from Šibenik]; Sanuto, 51:576 [dated 6 September, from Šibenik].

¹⁹¹² *Münşe’at*, I:566. For extensive rain on the way from Istanbul to Edirne, also see *Tabakat*, 184a-b. A similar distribution is observed at Plovdiv in 1532. *Münşe’at*, I:578.

¹⁹¹³ *Münşe’at*, I:569.

¹⁹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 567. Celalzade gives a vivid description of Nakkaş Ali Beg climbing the tree to survive. *Tabakat*, 184b. This episode was even illustrated in *Süleymânnâme* in 1558.

¹⁹¹⁵ Nasuh, 165b.

¹⁹¹⁶ *Tabakat*, 190a.

uneasiness seems to have caused a sort of dissolving in the quasi-usual order of the Ottoman army. An episode in the campaign diary reflects even before the arrival before Vienna, Süleyman getting furious to see that not enough men assembled at one of the stops on the way to Vienna. He ordered the register of troops. The campaign diary notes that he was so angry that he decided to execute troop commanders. But they brought in the register and were saved.¹⁹¹⁷ Through these hardships we even find soldiers fleeing the Ottoman army. Nasuh provides an episode on the chase after these renegades, whereby they were caught and later pardoned by the Sultan upon their asking for forgiveness.¹⁹¹⁸ The tone of the diary gets even harsher on the return journey. It is possible to observe a constant emphasis on the snow and the troubles taken to march. Through the march we come by many instances where sacks, victuals, various sorts of equipment, artillery, tents, even horses and cannons being stuck in the marshes and lost.¹⁹¹⁹ The ultimate demonstration of the dissolving order in this account is probably Süleyman getting lost as soon as he left Buda on 30 October [26 Safar]. Apparently, there was no guide with the army, therefore the troops were not able to find the stop on their own and their wagons did not arrive. Süleyman himself passed the camp without realizing it. He went further for a while until İbrahim Paşa sent men to take him back. Meanwhile, the imperial tent was taken somewhere else and the Sultan had to wait for the tent to arrive. After this incident İbrahim Paşa who was supposed to watch the rear was assigned to lead.¹⁹²⁰ The campaign diary keeps reporting problems. A few days later, the imperial tent was lost once again. On the Drava crossing around Petervarad,

¹⁹¹⁷ *Münşe'at*, I:572.

¹⁹¹⁸ Nasuh, 165b-166a. Also see, *Münşe'at*, I:575.

¹⁹¹⁹ *Münşe'at*, I:574-5.

¹⁹²⁰ *Ibid*, 575: “Bugün otağlı kûlâğûz olmaduğı ecilden cemî’ ‘asker yol ezüb, konağı bulmayub, bulanların dahi ekserinin ağrığı gelmeyüb, hatta Hüñkar hazretleri dahi konağı geçüb gidiüb, nice zaman ilerü gitdikden sonra Paşa hazretleri adem gönderüb, girü döndirüb, otâk-ı hümayûna geldiler. ‘Askerde ziyâde muzayaka çekildi. Ve Pâdişâh hazretlerinin dahi otakları gayri yola gidiüb, Pâdişâhdan sonra otak gelüb kuruldu.” In having İbrahim watch the rear, the Ottomans probably followed an ancient strategy in which the commanding general stayed behind to make sure that the enemy was not close and that everyone has passed in a region which is hard to pass. On the other hand, the commanding general would assume the post of surveyor if the army marched through unknown territory. *Strategikon*, p.21.

the possessions of the “Muslims” were plundered.¹⁹²¹ Bostan attributes the problems faced around the Drava crossing to the insufficiency of victuals based on the prior destruction of the area and the unfavorable weather conditions.¹⁹²² All of these instances point at a confusion and loss of order which the chronicles either do not reflect or do so rather mildly. While the chronicles usually follow the campaign diaries in their narratives, in 1529 the case seems to be a little different. If we regard the contemporary authors as a receiving party, who simultaneously take on themselves a task of projecting, we are faced with a process of selective reception/projection.

One peculiar feature of the 1529 campaign diary is the referral to the 1526 campaign at certain points. We have already mentioned that Süleyman’s first entry into Buda in 1529 was reported to be the same date of entry in 1526 in the diary. Such references are found further in the text, especially after the army leaves for Vienna. It is noted, for example, that 25 September [21 Muharram] was the day when the order to return from Buda to Istanbul was given in the previous campaign. 30 September [26 Muharram] was the day when İbrahim Paşa reached Szeged in 1526.¹⁹²³ The text specifically notes that these dates were based on the solar calendar. This suggests due care to a seasonal concern rather than symbolic attribution. The mentioning of such notes as the army is about to start a very large scale siege operation under the given weather conditions imply an intention of guiding future operations. In other words, the author of the diary seems to have chosen these specific dates to compare with the return of the 1526 campaign to demonstrate that the operation in 1529 was too late.

6.4.3. Foreign Reception

Süleyman’s march into Hungary once again heated the debates over the urgency of peace among European powers. By the end of May, Rome seems to be in panic already. A report from Rome to Cardinal Campeggio, who was in England at the time for Henry VIII’s divorce, on 29 May underlines the perceived vulnerability of Europe

¹⁹²¹ *Münşe‘at*, I:576.

¹⁹²² Bostan (MK), 93a.

¹⁹²³ *Münşe‘at*, I:572.

against an Ottoman offensive: “This enemy is to be dreaded, especially as he finds the body of Christendom weak and bloodless, and Germany divided.” As the informant emphasizes Süleyman’s marching in person, he also reflects his fear through expressing that no sultan has ever made greater preparation for war than this: “I foresee ruin, unless God helps us.”¹⁹²⁴

Gregory Casale, who believes that peace among the Christians is the only remedy to stop Ottoman advance, voices his hopes that “perhaps this sudden movement of the Turk will cause Christian princes to make peace.” However, he is worried that the Emperor’s “obstinacy” will prevent such an option. He also links the situation to the Lutheran conflict referring to the Lutherans in arms to assist Swiss Lutherans. This is confirmed by the efforts of Ferdinand’s ambassador in Rome who is trying to raise troops. The ambassador’s efforts are based on the fact that the approach of the Ottoman army leaves no time to wait for an army from Germany.¹⁹²⁵

Neither the recuperation of Buda nor the siege of Vienna along with the destruction of its surroundings, seem to have affected Charles’s coronation plans.¹⁹²⁶ However, Charles’s circle was pretty sure that Süleyman would leave some forces with Szapolyai who would then keep destroying the land. Gasparo Contarini reported from Bologna, on 9 November, that due to this expectation “the Emperor showed a great desire for the peace of Italy.” Contarini’s personal opinion was rather pessimistic as he thought that the *Turkish* matter signified great danger and ruin for all Christendom.¹⁹²⁷

Pope Clement VII heard the lifting of the siege at Bologna. On 1 November, the Ognisanti Day, he did a solemn mass and performed *Te Deum laudamus* for the lifting of the siege.¹⁹²⁸ In December, he excommunicated Szapolyai for his alliance with the Sultan. This was probably a political necessity as the Pope was still a hostage of Charles V. Szapolyai, in return, defended himself arguing that he had no intention to hurt anybody, but wished to be allowed “to live in this much abused country of mine and

¹⁹²⁴ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2480.

¹⁹²⁵ *Ibid*, 2570.

¹⁹²⁶ For Charles’s arrival at Bologna on 5 November 1529, see Sanuto, 52:180-90.

¹⁹²⁷ “Maneggio della pace di Bologna,” in Alberi, II:3, p.160-1.

¹⁹²⁸ Sanuto, 52:169 [by Gasparo Contarini, dated 1-2 November, from Bologna].

serve God and Christianity.” He asserted that if he were not allowed to do that, he had to do his best to defend his country.¹⁹²⁹

By December 1529 rumors around Europe were that the Turk did not actually have with him the kind of artillery needed to destroy the city of Vienna. It was also said that the defenders of Vienna never lost the confidence that Ferdinand would come to help. But since all Germany turned away from their promises Ferdinand also left Vienna to the benevolence [*misericordia*] of God. In Vienna, when the capturing of Buda by Süleyman was heard they hoped: he lost many captains at Buda; he would not leave the city to conquer Vienna city in such a restricted time since winter was approaching.¹⁹³⁰

Foreign accounts emphasize the destruction of the Austrian countryside in the 1529 campaign. An anonymous compilation of the events of Süleyman’s reign till 1533 reports that Süleyman “ruined the province of Austria using all possible cruelty,” and turned it into a desert.¹⁹³¹

In 1529, as Pope Clement VII tried to work out a peace treaty between Charles and Francis, many people expressed their opinion through various channels. One such expression was an oration delivered by Claudio Tolomei. Tolomei repeats the same old argument that the division between Christians has rendered the Turks more powerful. He describes the Turks, in a conventional manner, as “most cruel and ferocious enemies of our name and faith.” And he goes on:

The most impure empire of Mahomet rises higher day by day; to our great damage and pain his borders extend further, clearly because of the little accord between the Christians. Just like this, due to the discord between Boemundo and Tancredo firstly, and between others thereafter Saladin drove our people out of Asia, and the immaculate/pure sepulcher of our true Savior Jesus Christ turned into the forces of the infidels. Just like this, when Paleologi and Cantacusini were fighting, a good part of Greece entered the possession of Murad I. just like when the princes of the West did not come to an agreement, it was left to Sultan Mehmed to win Constantinople and the name of the oriental empire extinguished with it. Just like this, other things happened, and the present Süleyman, most powerful and most superior Signore has won

¹⁹²⁹ Perjes, *Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p.129.

¹⁹³⁰ Sanuto, 52:349-50 [by Marc Antonio Contarini, dated 7 December, from Udine].

¹⁹³¹ “I Fatti di Solimano dopo la Presa di Rhodi fino all’anno XDXXXIII,” in Sansovino, II, p.127.

Belgrade, conquered Rhodes, sacked and destroyed Hungary, and now is plundering the “fortissimo” Ghiaiaza.¹⁹³²

Chapuy’s report to Charles V from London dated 25 October 1529 reflects the view of Henry VIII on the Ottoman intervention in Hungary and Charles’s attitude toward the matter. According to Chapuy’s report, Henry saw the Ottoman issue as Charles’s affair, which he could only be accomplished through a peace with the princes of Italy: “Between ourselves [said he] I think it is a great shame that whilst the Turk is in Austria, the patrimony of the Emperor, he should not rescue it, but make war upon Christians.”¹⁹³³

The period between 1521 and 1529 has been identified as a transformative period in regards to European theological approach to war.¹⁹³⁴ The 1529 campaign influenced the seemingly pacific men like Erasmus to modify their views on the war against the *Turks*. Erasmus wrote his treatise *De Bello Turcico* on the eve of the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 and it was published immediately. Erasmus’s pacific stance previously was based on his firm belief that God frequently sent *Turks* to warn the Christian community to amend their ways. Therefore, the problem could not be solved by military action, but through spiritual betterment. In *De Bello Turcico*, although Erasmus still does not encourage outright war, he does not condemn military action as strongly either, provided that it is accompanied by genuine spiritual effort. In this treatise, *Turks* emerge

¹⁹³² “Oratione di M. Claudio Tolomei” Francesco Sansovino, *Delle Orationi Volgamente Scritte da Molti Homini Illustri de Tempi Nostri*, Parte prima, Venezia: Francesco Rampazetto, 1562, p.8: “Cresce ogni giorno the most impure imperio di Macometto and con nostra danno grande e vergogna piu larghi distende i termini suoi, ne cosa è, che ne sia piu vera, ne piu chiara cagione che’lpoco accordo che è tra i Christiani. Così per la discordia di Boemundo e Tancredo prima, e poscia de gl’altri ancora scacciò il Saladino i nostri dell’Asia, e’l Sepulchro immacolato di Giesu Christo vero salvator nostro, novamente tornò nel le forze de gl’infideli. Così guerreggiando con Paleologi, i Catacusini, entrò Ammurate il primo in possessione d’una buona parte di Grecia. Così non s’accordano i Principi d’Occidente, lasciaron a Sultan Macometto vincer Costantinopoli, e il nome dell’imperio Orientale spegnere insieme. Così, trapassando molt’altre cose, ha il presente Solimano potentissimo e superbissimo Signore vinto Belgrado, espugnato Rhodi, saccheggiata, arsa, distrutta l’Ungaria, e pur hora del fortissimo luogo di Ghiaiaza spagliatoci.”

¹⁹³³ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2683. This is exactly what frustrates Süleyman as well.

¹⁹³⁴ Walter F. Bense, “Paris Theologians on War and Peace, 1521-1529,” *Church History*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Jun., 1972), pp. 168-185.

as “barbarians of obscure origin” who keep snatching away more and more. Without God’s help, warns Erasmus, that the remainder of the Christian world would soon be absorbed by them. The author blames the sins of Christians rather than the merit of the *Turks* in winning themselves an immense empire. Erasmus warns his readers that grieving for the lost portions of Christendom is not enough, but that they needed to provide two kinds of assistance: military and spiritual. Erasmus criticizes the manner of fighting saying, “we fight the Turks like Turks,” because it was guided by lust of power and riches, not in the name of Christ.¹⁹³⁵ At this point, Erasmus asserts that extreme views on war against the Turks were acceptable. He did not agree neither with those who wished to fight for all the wrong reasons nor with those who refused to fight when one had no other option:

Of course, not all wars against the Turks are legitimate and holy, yet there are times when failure to resist the Turks simply means the surrender of part of Christendom to these barbaric enemies, and the abandonment of those of our brethren who are already enslaved beneath their foul yoke. On the other hand, whenever the ignorant mob hear the name ‘Turk’ they immediately fly into a rage and clamour for blood, calling them dogs and enemies to the name of Christian; it does not occur to them in the first place that, the Turks are men, and, what is more, half-Christian; they never stop to consider whether the occasion of the war is just, nor whether it is practical to take up arms and thereby to provoke an enemy who will strike back with redoubled fury. They do not realize that the Church has no more dangerous enemies than sinners in high places, especially if they are in holy orders; finally, they do not understand that God, offended by our wickedness, from time to time uses the outrages committed by these barbarians to reform us.¹⁹³⁶

After criticizing the craze of fighting the *Turk* for no good reason, Erasmus goes on to challenge Luther for rejecting any kind of military action.¹⁹³⁷ He explains that war is a judicial retribution on large scale in the absence and or exhaustion of any alternatives to punish a crime. Thus, Erasmus now allowed for armed action against the Ottomans as long as several conditions were met. Firstly, such a war should be for the peace of Christendom, not for desire of power. Secondly, any such military effort

¹⁹³⁵ Erasmus, “On the War Against the Turks / *De Bello Turcico*,” pp.315-7.

¹⁹³⁶ *Ibid*, pp.317-8. Erasmus’s comment of *Turks* as half-Christian seems to be a popular thought at the time. A popular example shall be discussed below.

¹⁹³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.318-9: “Now I come those who agree with Luther’s contention that those who make war on Turks rebel against God, who is punishing our sins through them.”

should rely on God's protection and not one's own strength. Thirdly, such a war should be fought with regard for Christian principles. Fourthly, sins such as the corruption of the Church and the Italian wars should be corrected, as well as those like fraud, violence, rapine and imposture.¹⁹³⁸ This part of the treatise reads more like a criticism of the political arena of the time rather than a reaction against the Ottomans. Reminding that the aim was "to extend the kingdom of Christ rather than our own," Erasmus believed that killing the Turks only meant "increasing the kingdom of the dead."¹⁹³⁹ If we leave aside the pacifist stance of Erasmus for a moment, we can see a very clear picture of the contemporary problem. Erasmus also suggests an optimistic alternative, namely a hope that the *Turks* could be convinced through persuasion. His hope relied on three things. Firstly, *Turks* did not worship idols – in this sense, they were not absolute pagans. Secondly, their beliefs were half-Christian. Thirdly, the apostles had spread Christianity without using the sword – which implied that they could, too.¹⁹⁴⁰

Erasmus was neither the first nor the only person to criticize Luther for his passive stance. Luther was harshly criticized in 1521 for opposing armed action against the *Turk*. Luther's original argument was based on two elements. Firstly, armed action was contrary to Christ's teaching. Secondly, Luther saw the *Turks* as the "scourge of the Lord" who were sent to punish corrupted Christians. In 1529, Luther elaborated on the matter explaining that he disapproved religiously motivated crusades, he suspected that the papal calls for a crusade were a pretense for raising money for other purposes, and he did not believe in the efficiency of military efforts without a general repentance. On the other hand, he now approved of military action provided that it was led by the Emperor himself.¹⁹⁴¹

¹⁹³⁸ *Ibid*, pp.319-23.

¹⁹³⁹ *Ibid*, pp.324.

¹⁹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp.324-5.

¹⁹⁴¹ Bense, "Paris Theologians on War and Peace," p.170; Hampton, "Turkish Dogs," p.61. The notion of "Turks as scourge of God" is traceable in various works. Writing until 1540 Guicciardini, for example, mentions that following 1526, the Pope may have thought that God chose to give Christendom a lesson through the Hungarian defeat: "... since perhaps for some good end, it had pleased God that the body of Christendom should be wounded, and at a time when all other members of this body were distracted by other thoughts than those relating to the security of all, he [Pope] was forced to believe that it was the will of God that the curing of so great a malady be sought by other means." Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, p.371.

Some writers of the time assessed the situation through a more earthly perspective. Aventinus [d.1534] was one of those who blamed the Pope and the Emperor for the advance of the Ottomans. But rather than only blaming them in religious and political terms, Aventinus approached the matter in more practical military terms. “If only our soldiers had as many privileges and as much money as the priests and clerks,” he said, “the Turk would not be standing before Vienna.”¹⁹⁴² Aventinus saw the problem as one of misconception and mis-strategy. He evaluated the factors under the success of the Ottoman army. He saw that the success of the Ottoman army was due to its organization for permanent war. The border skirmishes weakened the border zones and compelled people to give in. Through such organization and strategy, the Ottomans did not take whole countries at a time, but subdued them piece by piece. The misconception of European power holders was in assuming the danger passed each time the Sultan went back. Aventinus’s suggestion is a standing army and a centralized organization. He suggests organization of military colonies on the border zones modeling on the Roman pattern. These colonies would serve as “advance guard of an offensive against the infidels.”¹⁹⁴³

In the aftermath of the 1529 campaign, while the “Turkish threat” was a bargaining chip in highest level European politics and subject to heated debates among the learned circles, interesting rumors circulated in the popular level. Some of these rumors, though they were amazingly far from reality, attest to the wishful thinking of more pacifist and optimist by-standers. Apparently, Europeans of various social levels were trying to come to an understanding of the “foe” who managed to penetrate right into the core of Christendom, but somehow stepped back. Publication of a letter allegedly by Süleyman to Charles V, dated 12 October 1530, is an example of many such attempts.¹⁹⁴⁴ The letter is addressed to “dear and beloved Emperor Charles” from

¹⁹⁴² Günther E. Rothenberg, “Aventinus and the Defense of the Empire Against the Turks,” *Studies in the Renaissance*, vol.10 (1963), p.64.

¹⁹⁴³ Rothenberg, “Aventinus and the Defense of the Empire,” pp.64-5. He wrote two essays between 1526-1532, both of which circulated widely in manuscript: “A Warning and Explanation Why the Lord has granted so many victories to the infidel Turk,” and “On the Military Establishment of the Ancient Romans.”

¹⁹⁴⁴ *Lettera nuoamente mandata dal gran Turco a la Sacra Maesta Cesarea dello Imperatore Carlo piena di admirabili secreti illuminati da Dio: e da la gloriosa Mostra donna data in Constantinopoli a li. xii de ottobre. M.D.XXX. Tradutta de spagnolo in Italiano: Colanoua, 1530 (?)*.

the “Gran Signor Emperor of Constantinople and Trabzon,” in other words to an emperor from another. The choice of Constantinople and Trabzon among a whole list of places Süleyman usually attached to his titulature probably served to add to the impression to the legacy of the Roman Empire. Süleyman emphasizes that God granted him a vast dominion to rule over and that from the beginning of his triumphant reign to the present day he has not brought shame to his power or lacked fidelity. However Süleyman believed that “humility was the true scale which made the magnificence of princes greater” and his humility was at the maximum. He then goes on to state that Christ is not hated by the Muslims but the sanctity of his doctrine is believed partly. At this point of the text, Süleyman tells about a dream he had for three nights, in which a lady dressed in white with a flaming sword in her hand appeared to him. She offended Süleyman’s power and defended justice. Süleyman takes this to be a celestial sign for him to hand over Jerusalem to Charles, based on the prophecies of sages and astrologers. But before presenting his interpretation of the dream, he mentions his conquests of Rhodes and Hungary. Contrary to contemporary views on the violent manner attributed to the Ottomans, the text claims that Süleyman intended to keep these places with the justice of the Roman Empire. Then he goes on to mention that under his territories Süleyman has many Christians as servitors and vassals whom he governs with justice. However they hope of Charles’s visit (*venuta*) and his union with the King of France. He also mentions the obstacle of the Lutherans of which the Sultan had many subjects. Süleyman proposes a mutual visit, Charles should visit Jerusalem and Süleyman Rome. Then he parallels baptism with circumcision both to wash away the original sin. No matter how absurd the text is, it reflects a hopeful set of mind. While the whole text reflects a deep sense of a longed-for peace, it poses Süleyman as a benevolent, wise and God-abiding man who is ready to compromise part of his worldly power to attain beneficence for the thereafter. He is projected as a powerful monarch who is ready to accept Charles V on equal basis. His treatment of Christians living under his government is projected as being just. Above all, the text is the projection of the possibility of peace, which must have seen quite impossible in 1530.

The campaign of 1529 seems to have influenced many opinions, but not Ferdinand’s. While we can talk about some sort of reception by everyone else, for Ferdinand the more appropriate term seems to be reaction. Appearing unaffected by the “lesson” almost immediately after Süleyman’s return, Ferdinand re-enters Hungary to re-collect the Hungarian territories. He seems to have decided recuperating Hungarian

territory as soon as he learned of the removal of the siege. His letter dated 21 October from Linz to Charles at Bologna mentions that he will send 60,000 cavalry into Hungary who will make great damage.¹⁹⁴⁵ News from Antwerp dated 23 October 1529 suggests that Ferdinand's march towards the *Turk* was not given much credit for success for his forces were small and the places Ottoman army left were well-fortified.¹⁹⁴⁶ There were reports that by December 1529 Ferdinand already re-captured Strigonia and Altimburg and was proceeding to Buda.¹⁹⁴⁷ Charles advised Ferdinand to make a truce with the *Turk* to buy time. Yet he had to be discreet about it and send a secret messenger and make it appear as if the Sultan started the negotiations. In this way, he would prevent the Turk from thinking that he was afraid and people would not see him as negotiating with the Turk.¹⁹⁴⁸

The 1529 campaign also gave pace to peace initiatives among European powers. On 29 June 1529, the treaty of Barcelona was signed between the Emperor and the Pope, whereby Charles recognized papal claims to Ravenna, Cervia, Modena, Reggio and Rubiera in return for the kingdom of Naples. This treaty was based on the mutual intention to unite against the *Turk* and against heresy. The Peace of Cambrai, often called Ladies's Peace, was signed on 3 August 1529 by Margaret of Austria, who was Regent of Netherlands and Charles's aunt, and Louise of Savoy, Francis's mother. With this peace, Charles renounced his claims to Burgundian lands, while Francis recognized Charles's rights to Flanders and Artois and renounced his own on Milan, Genoa and Naples. A marriage was negotiated between Francis and Charles's sister Eleanor.¹⁹⁴⁹ In October 1529, Francis laid out an anti-Ottoman war plan before Charles's ambassadors, offering to support Charles. The plan involved 60,000 men, cavalry and artillery. The

¹⁹⁴⁵ Sanuto, 52:170. [by Gasparo Contarini, dated 1-2 November, from Bologna.]

¹⁹⁴⁶ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2679. Ferdinand learned Süleyman's retreat from Vienna on 19 October, and started his own march in the middle of November to re-gain what he lost. See, Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, p.84 and Perjés, p.131. Also see, Sanuto, 52:315 for an Austrian force under Nicolo da la Torre trying to recapture some places between Vienna and Buda, letter dated 26 December from Friuli.

¹⁹⁴⁷ Sanuto, 52:350.

¹⁹⁴⁸ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2742. Also see Fichtner, *Ferdinand I*, 85; Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, pp.283-4.

¹⁹⁴⁹ Strong, *Art and Power*, p.78.

natural commander of the offensive would “of course” be the Emperor while Francis himself would lead the vanguard. Though he would not be able to provide financial support since he owed a lot to England, as imposed by the Treaty of Cambrai, he would be happy to meet Charles in Italy and help plan the campaign.¹⁹⁵⁰ On 21 January 1530, a commission was given to a group of English envoys “to treat with the Pope, the Emperor, the kings of France, Portugal, Denmark and Scotland, the doge of Venice, and the dukes of Milan and Ferrara, for a general peace, and for resisting the Turk.”¹⁹⁵¹ German princes so far aloof to the issue, seem to have decided to give some attention to the calls for support after 1529. In the Diet of Augsburg, the Hungarian issue was one of the three main issues in the agenda recorded in the Summons dated 21 January 1530, along with the religious question and the government of Germany.¹⁹⁵²

Although by the end of the 1529 campaign, Ferdinand seems to have transformed his designs in Hungarian territories into a universal cause – and not without foundation as we have tried to argue – soon he was to be blamed for provoking the *Turk*. Many contemporaries thought Ferdinand stirred up the Hungarian issue to further his own interests. In *De Bello Turcico*, even though Erasmus acknowledged that Ferdinand was the one most closely threatened by “these barbarians,” his tone in the quote above implies some blame on Ferdinand for provoking Süleyman.¹⁹⁵³ In March 1531 even his

¹⁹⁵⁰ Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, p.281.

¹⁹⁵¹ *Letters and Papers*, IV:2748. Contemporary Venetian correspondence, however, demonstrates that Venice spent quite some effort to play both sides. While she had to seem politically correct in the Christian world, the issue of not offending Süleyman took lot of attention. See for example, Sanuto, 52:362. Visiting the Ottoman camp at Belgrade on the way back, the Venetian secretary Maximo Leopardi assured İbrahim that the league was between the Emperor and France who had to sign the agreement to have his sons back and that Venice was not part of it because she did not want to be against the *Signor*.

¹⁹⁵² Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, 306-7. Charles wrote to his wife on 8 July 1530: “... the propositions were divided into three heads. The first and most important is the religious question. The second deals with Hungary and the Turkish trouble. The third concerns the government of Germany.” For an examination of the agenda, see Gottfried G. Krodel, “Law, Order, and the Almighty Taler: The Empire in Action at the 1530 Diet of Augsburg,” *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol.13, no.2 (Summer 1982), p.75.

¹⁹⁵³ Erasmus, “On the War Against the Turks / *De Bello Turcico*,” p.328. Erasmus gives a list of who should participate in a war against the Turks, by rank: The Emperor and his lieutenants, the French King, King Ferdinand and other princes – however, he warns, cardinals, bishops, abbots and priests should not. Thus, Erasmus turns war into a strictly worldly task.

brother urged Ferdinand to negotiate with Szapolyai and Süleyman. Even Charles could not help but wonder whether it was actually Ferdinand's fault to attract the *Turk*, putting Christendom into danger for his own interest.¹⁹⁵⁴

By 1529, Ferdinand seems to have succeeded in transforming the Hungarian issue into a "common cause of Christendom" in some contemporary minds, at least.¹⁹⁵⁵ Some contemporary observers expressed that Ferdinand had the right to the Hungarian throne. One such observer, though by no means objective/unattached, was Paolo Giovo. Praising Ferdinand after he was named successor to Emperor, Giovo asserts that Ferdinand truly had the hereditary right to the Hungarian kingdom:

You have truly seized the heredity of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was yours by right, because that Kingdom when deprived of its King belonged to the House of Austria both through ancient and new laws of agreements. However, the cruel Barbarian broke all rights, which were clearly yours. With the adulation of certain Hungarian barons he lifted a "new man" and made him King of Hungary with the condition that he recognized to be his tributary. Being defeated by you, he took on himself to defend and to give back the dishonor. While it seemed to him that keeping a vassal of his in state signified maintaining the honor of the House of Osman, at the same time it meant disdaining Christian armies which were vanquished many times by his elders.¹⁹⁵⁶

¹⁹⁵⁴ Rodriguez-Salgado, "¿Carolus Africanus?: el Emperador y el Turco," p.492.

¹⁹⁵⁵ For example, Sanga writing from Rome to Campeggio in London on 29 May 1529 says: "As it is the common cause of Christendom, the Pope would have liked to do more." *Letters and Papers*, IV:2480. Ferdinand's envoy was there praying for help. An envoy of Ferdinand was still at Rome in July asking cardinals for 50, 100, 200 gold pieces. *Ibid*, 2570.

¹⁹⁵⁶ Giovo, *Elogi*, p.332: "*Voi veramente havete preso l'heredità del Regno d'Ungheria, la quale di ragione era vostra, perche qual Regno privo del suo Re per l'antiche e per le nuove leggi delle conventioni apparteneva al sangue della casa d'Austria. Ma il crudel Barbaro v'interruppe in modo ogni ragione, la quale chiarissimament è vostra, che per l'importuna adulatione di certi baroni Ungheri, levando dal governo della Transilvania un certo uomo nuovo, le fece Re d'Ungheria con patto che lo riconoscesse come tributario da lui, et essendo egli poi con felici arme stato rotto da voi, lo prese a difendere e rimettere in casa in vituperio (shame, dishonor) dell'auttorità di Lamagna. Percioche gli pareva che fosse honore da casa Othomanna mantenere in istato un suo vassallo, e in medesimo tempo sprezzare l'armi Christiane vinti tante volte da suoi maggiori... Essendo voi dunque appaggiato solo nella virtu et nella possanza vostra, non pare in vano, ma con gran danno vostro sempre havete faticato, a combattere con questa fortissima et terribile bestia; e ciò sarà sempre impresa misera et lagrimosa a noi, se l'Imperatore vostro fratello quasi un'altro Hercole invitto non vi dà soccorso.*"

6.5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have tried to demonstrate that the 1529 campaign was a consequence of the controversy of kingship of Hungary after 1526. Throughout the campaign, we have identified three steps towards the legitimation and acknowledgement of Szapolyai as King of Hungary as confirmed by Ottoman authority: the reception at Mohacs, enthronement at Buda, the retrieval of the Crown and coronation. The first phase demonstrates a mutual acceptance through the bestowal of the land. The second phase theoretically gives the rule of the land to Szapolyai and the third phase completes the symbolic endowment of sovereignty.¹⁹⁵⁷ The care taken to legitimize Szapolyai in terms legible to the Hungarians and other Christian audiences demonstrates Süleyman's usual concern to do everything by the book, as we have seen in various instances up to this point. In this case, this concern involves even alien customs to be fulfilled. While legitimating Szapolyai through these acts, Süleyman legitimizes his presence in Hungary as well. By making Szapolyai a powerful figure, his position becomes even more stressed.

The case of 1529, when put into the context of the Habsburg rivalry, produces one ironic dichotomy on the international scene. While Ferdinand tried to take control of Hungary through transforming the issue to a "universal cause", Szapolyai's efforts had a "nationalist" tone to it. In this sense, the campaign reinforced the "protector of the universe" [*'âlem-penâh*] theme as far as Süleyman and his allies were concerned.

Interestingly, we see Charles V distributing kingship in Italy at around the same time. In 1529, he restored Milan to Francesco Gonzaga, which became a Habsburg dependency after his death in 1535. Charles also created the Gonzaga family dukes of Mantua in the same year. Two years later, in 1531, he put the Medici in Florence back as dukes. Writing in the context of Charles's imperial entries, Roy Strong asserts: "We are in the age of princes who, almost without exception, owed their domains and their titles to the Holy Roman Emperor."¹⁹⁵⁸ In this regard, too, we might say the Habsburg-Ottoman rivalry for universal kingship increasingly crystallized.

¹⁹⁵⁷ In a poem in his text Nasuh states that Sultan Süleyman has taken King Louis II's land, throne and crown. The three phases we have discussed also correspond to Nasuh's idea of what it takes to be King. Nasuh, 149a.

¹⁹⁵⁸ Strong, *Art and Power*, p.85.

CONCLUSION

*... ne creda V.M. che Soltan Solimano pensi in altro che di occupare li Regni vostri per esser di natura cupido di gloria, et fattosi ardito, et audace per le tante vittorie sue, et grandezza de l'Imperio.*¹⁹⁵⁹

This study has been an exploration of the multi-layered process of the “making” of Sultan Süleyman which involved the formation of his image, the projection of the formed image, and its reception. This process inevitably involved the performance of deeds and choices by Süleyman which gave credibility to his image and reputation. As such, this dissertation has followed these layers through first the making of a Sultan out of a prince, followed by the making of an established ruler.

Sultan Süleyman’s image was grounded on an intertwined set of concepts and values legible to contemporary audiences, in other words on an already established shared vocabulary. This vocabulary was used to create messages which were reinforced through repetition and consistency. By conforming to these messages in his actions and decisions, to a large extent, Sultan Süleyman seems to have contributed to the credibility of these messages. In other words, through playing by the book he seems to have achieved a balance between the image and the act.

Contemporary audience can be categorized in two main groups as domestic and external. The domestic audience consisted of sub-groups as far the dissemination of messages is concerned. The household of the Sultan, provincial military-administrative officials, and the provincial army in general seem to have formed the primary target audience. While this sector was the recipient of the projected image through various means, it also had a major part to play in the making and maintenance of that image through participation and representation. Members of the religious establishment can be considered to constitute a second group of audience. The cooperation of this sector was an important element of the rule of the Sultan since religious approval and acceptance lay beneath many of the elements and concepts legitimizing Süleyman’s decisions and

¹⁹⁵⁹ Giovio, *Commentario*, np. “... and do not assume, Your Majesty, that Sultan Süleyman thinks about anything other than occupying your Kingdoms; for he is by nature desirous of glory, and he has become fearless and bold because of his many victories and the grandeur of his Empire.”

deeds. Furthermore, this group stood between Sultan Süleyman's imperial administration and his subjects through its function of disseminating imperial messages to the general public by announcing the content of documents such as proclamations of victory and law codes. The third group of domestic audience was the subject population. The level of participation and influence of this group on the image of the Sultan is hard to assess; however protection and equitable government of the subjects figures as a major legitimating element in the maintenance of Süleyman's reputation. Not only written sources, but also various ritual instances demonstrate the presence of this sector throughout the process.

External audience can be categorized in two groups as friendly and hostile. Proclamations of victory, agreements, and ambassadorial visits relating to foreign states which were considered friendly involve more secular elements of the image of the Sultan. In this sense, it seems that the aim was projecting the image of a powerful ruler with whom they should keep good relations. A sense of veiled intimidation can also be discerned toward this group of audience. Although the divine favor on Sultan Süleyman is emphasized in the messages, the religious aspects of his deeds are not expressed. Ghaza, for example, does not figure as a legitimating element in proclamations sent to Venice. As for the rivals, who constitute the hostile group of audience, the messages are intended for direct intimidation.

The dynastic concept was one of the most important elements of the image of the Sultan. As a member of the Ottoman dynasty, he had a legitimate claim on the throne as all other members of his generation. The legitimating aspect of dynastic claim aside, this signifies that his "making" started long before he ascended the throne. The dynastic concept had yet other functions in the process. After his accession, Süleyman's relationship with the dynasty appears to have a dual nature. On one hand, he is reflected as acting to glorify the Ottoman dynasty as its latest representative. On the other hand, he is seen challenging his predecessors, especially Mehmed II. This claim is apparent not only in the writings of contemporary Ottomans, but also in his choices of Belgrade and Rhodes as first targets. His completion of "unfinished business" of his predecessors simultaneously enhances the reputation of the Ottoman dynasty and raises Sultan Süleyman above his predecessors.

An equally important element employed in the process is the concept of divine favor. This is a multi-faceted concept as well. As the reigning Sultan, Süleyman's rule is first and foremost justified through his being appointed by God. The point is made over

and over again in narrative sources through citations of the relevant Quranic verses. It is not only his divinely ordained appointment that plays a major role in his image, but also the sense of divine favor that is bestowed on him by God through his various deeds. In this sense, his military victories, for example, reflect as proof of divine favor. Considering the fatalistic tendencies of contemporary Ottoman chronicles, Sultan Süleyman's military feats were employed to project him as God's chosen to realize these deeds. Along with the advantages related with the favor of God, the issue also entailed a complex sense of responsibility imposed on the Sultan. In other words, divine favor bestowed on Süleyman was to be maintained through his actions. The basic condition to maintain the favor appears to be the protection of the subjects who were deemed to be entrusted to him by God. This notion of protection entailed the safety and security of the people through the maintenance of the "order of the world" by means of the application of justice and punishment. The other main notion to this end appears to be personal devotion to God which manifests itself in the concern to adhere to the "commands of God." This concern can be observed in both rhetorical explanations of decisions and ritual behavior. Ranging from solemn expressions of ghaza intention to praying to God for assistance, from legitimating grand vizieral appointment on God's command to justifying peaceful surrender as thanks-giving to God such behavior is emphasized throughout the narratives.

If dynastic claim and divine favor are the two main over-arching concepts in the "making" of Sultan Süleyman, the concepts of "justice" and "ghaza" appear to be the main building blocks employed in the process. Supporting and feeding both of the over-arching concepts, concepts of justice and ghaza are not mutually exclusive either. Justice is mainly defined as the anti-thesis of oppression. In this sense, the removal of oppression from the face of the earth appears as a common theme linking the individual concepts of justice and ghaza in the image of Sultan Süleyman. Taken as an individual concept, the function of "justice" has been traced in each phase of the process explored in this study. The theme of Süleyman's "just rule" has been employed in contemporary narratives starting with accounts of his princehood at Caffa. As he ascends the throne, the conventional rhetorical emphasis on "justice prevailing throughout the realm" is consolidated through specific deeds explained by the ultimate consideration Sultan Süleyman paid to the concept. The removal of the ban on Persian trade, the permission accorded to the exiles from Egypt to return, and the execution of the oppressive admiral transform the rhetorical presentation into individual instances of Sultan Süleyman's

personal intervention on behalf of justice. As such these instances help transform the generic image of the “just sultan” to the image of Sultan Süleyman. On one hand, these deeds convey the message that the Sultan is capable of fulfilling God’s command “to judge between men in truth and justice”¹⁹⁶⁰ and thus function as a supporting element regarding the issue of divine favor. On the other hand, the first two deeds being reversals of Selim I’s decisions pose a veiled challenge which points at Süleyman’s dual relationship with the dynastic image. While the first two deeds seem to dwell on the immediate interests of a portion of the people, the removal of the oppressive admiral suggests a grand example to prevent future instances of oppression in administrative levels. As such, this instance may perhaps be regarded as the first demonstration of Sultan Süleyman’s “intention to remove oppression from the face of the world.” Yet another aspect through which the concept of justice is presented as a main building block of the Sultan’s image is observed through the decrees and diplomas granted to various officials – as exemplified by those to Hayrbay, Ahmed Paşa and İbrahim Paşa – whereby they were commanded to administer the affairs with justice and impartiality, as well to remove oppression.

The theme of removing oppression can be traced in the functioning of the “ghaza” concept, as well, as exemplified by the explanations of the motives of the 1522 campaign which entailed harm and oppression by Rhodian corsairs. Sultan Süleyman’s firm resolve in the pursuit of ghaza in person figures as a vital element in the making of his image during the first decade of his reign. The concept functions through a fusion contemporary values and notions in a multi-layered context. Firstly, ghaza is projected as a religious duty which the Sultan was required to undertake and lead as the ruler of “the” Muslim community.¹⁹⁶¹ As such, through ghaza he fulfills a religious duty which is also a way of demonstrating his devotion to God. Secondly, performance of ghaza consolidates Sultan Süleyman’s position within the dynastic chain since precedence presents ghaza as one of the main identity markers of the Ottoman dynasty. As such, Süleyman fulfills a dynastic role in consolidating the established identity and reputation. Thirdly, ghaza gave him the opportunity to demonstrate his military capability in a

¹⁹⁶⁰ Quran, 38:26.

¹⁹⁶¹ Although the terminology employed in Ottoman chronicles might suggest leadership of one single Muslim community, this does not translate into political sovereignty over all Muslims in the world.

world where military skills mattered a lot. This demonstration functioned in his making in at least three levels; namely in positioning him in the face of dynastic precedence, in marking his status among contemporary rivals, and in consolidating his authority on his own army. Fourthly, ghaza provided a pretext for pursuing an aggressive expansionist policy.¹⁹⁶²

As the concept of “ghaza” figures as one of the major building blocks of the “making” of Sultan Süleyman; it also appears that the mode in which ghaza was pursued contributed to the process. Various major and minor issues involved in war making have been referred to throughout this study in order to trace the dynamics underlying the issue. Starting with justifications of decisions to wage war, it is possible to trace “correct” behavior on the part of the Sultan in each phase of a campaign. The “correct” way to proceed with military action seems to be guided by various sources of reference such as jihad formulations of Islamic political thought, conventional war strategies, and practical concerns.

The strategies employed in this respect can be categorized in relation to three main audience groups. Concern for abundance of food supplies, occasional distributions of largesse, ritual celebrations of religious days, concern for safe river-crossings, inspections at critical points, and hand kissing ceremonies on various occasions during the campaigns – and often the combination of these in a single occasion – are directed at the members of the Ottoman army. Such aspects of the campaign both impose the authority of the Sultan over and over again; they also ensure the loyalty and confidence of the army toward the Sultan. A second audience, in this respect, is the subject population residing on the campaign route. The marching of the Ottoman army could have devastating effects on the local population if the Sultan did not ensure order to prevent harm to cultivated lands. Besides practical economic concerns, the marching order had to do with Sultan Süleyman’s claim to remove oppression since any harm done by the Sultan’s soldiers to the subject population would be regarded as oppression. It is also worth noting that the campaign routes during the period under study were home not only to Muslim subjects but largely to non-Muslim ones. In this sense, Süleyman’s role as leader of ghaza is fused with his role of protector of the people regardless of religion. The third group of audience involved in campaign strategies is

¹⁹⁶² I use the term “expansionist” not in terms of strict territorial expansion, but rather to mean expansion of influence and resources.

the conquered populations. The violent and peaceful modes of behavior toward these populations are often justified according to Islamic political theory. Although intimidation frequently appears as a strategy to bend the will of the opponent, the majority of the conquests during this period reflect as instances of peaceful surrender. Such instances also provide an opportunity to demonstrate “correct” behavior on the part of the Sultan.

Frequent use of analogies figures as a vital device enforcing the image of the Sultan. Two main types of analogy can be discerned both in verbal and ritual projections. Firstly, references to the ideal kings of biblical and *Shahnama* traditions delineate the main elements of the image of Sultan Süleyman. His sense of justice is reflected through identification with Anushirvan. His military endeavors and the scale of his realm are emphasized through analogy to Alexander and Darius. His general majesty, wisdom, as well as the divine favor he enjoyed, are reflected through identification with Solomon. The name of the Sultan also proves to be an additional advantage in this sense. While he is often reflected as surpassing these ideal types, such identifications also reflect a sense of expectation. The second major type of analogy involves celestial or natural phenomena. The most frequently employed analogy of this type seems to be the sun analogy. This analogy, on one hand, projects the celestial order on to the rule of Sultan Süleyman. On the other hand, it imposes on him the duty of “illuminating” the world. A third kind of analogy brings forth stories of biblical history such as that of Moses and the Pharaoh. Such analogies emphasize both the divine favor bestowed on Sultan Süleyman and his position on the side of the “good” and the “right” while his adversary of the moment is vilified as “evil” and “wrong”.

The image thus formed was disseminated through established channels, or media, of presentation. In the rhetorical sense, the main media of official projection seem to be proclamations of victory, official documents such as decrees and diplomas, and law codes. The main arguments promoting an idealized image of the Sultan were publicized through these documents. As these documents were meant to be read in public signified that the messages they contained were often intended for a general audience. Campaign chronicles, not intended for the general public, seem to have been more neutral documents to record individual campaigns for future reference rather than aiming to enhance the reputation or glory of the Sultan. On the other hand, recording campaign decisions and behavior of the Sultan these documents also have a role to play, especially since many chronicles seem to follow them in varying degrees. Chronicles themselves,

on the other hand, not only reflect the elements making up the image of the Sultan but often exaggerate them almost to the point of turning them into clichés. However the consistency of the concepts employed in both the official and narrative projections, along with repetitive usage, seem to have served a performative function. In other words, rather than merely reflecting an idealized monarch prototype – or current “truth” – the consistent and recurrent messages functioned to enhance the authority and reputation of Sultan Süleyman.

The same performative function emphasized by consistency and repetition of message is observed in the second major channel of communication, namely ritual events. Various ritual occasions have been discussed in this respect throughout this study. These occasions targeted the various groups of audience either individually or in combination. The public greetings of Süleyman as he entered Istanbul or other cities in various instances, his father’s funeral, processional campaign departures along with the preceding mosque visits made him visible to all sectors of contemporary audience. The presence of town residents and foreign observers among the audience seem to have given these occasions a highly public character. It can also be assumed that such occasions produced the material for word-of-mouth dissemination of the Sultan’s image. Such occasions showcased not only the majesty of the Sultan himself, but that of his household as well the sense of order and authority he represented. Through acts of largesse involved in these events, such instances reinforced the element of liberality as an important aspect of image of the Sultan, through symbolically demonstrating that he provided for his people. Other ritual events such as the *bi’at*, hand-kissing and gift-presentation on various occasions, and ambassadorial audiences targeted a more restricted audience. Such ritual occasions were marked with acts of deference by the participant and acts of largesse by the Sultan. Such instances reenacted the bond and the relationship between the Sultan and the participants, almost as a reconfirmation of a silent contract based on mutual expectation and responsibility. Sources dwell on a variety of ritual instances to various extents; however one occasion is largely absent in the accounts, namely the entry in Istanbul after the campaigns. Given that the ritual involved in campaign departures gave a collective character to these enterprises, the silent return is puzzling. The silence of earlier sources on the behavior of earlier sultans returning from campaigns suggests the absence of ritual return greetings. However, the issue remains to be investigated within the context of later periods.

It is important to note some relative absences in the process of the “making” of Sultan Süleyman during the period under study. These are absences with respect to later employment of these “missing” aspects. The absence of large scale employment of visual media during the period under study is surprising for a modern student of history. Given the wide range of verbal and ritual channels of communication, as well as the presence of a well developed corps of salaried court artists and artisans, the absence of visual representations of the Sultan’s image is rather confusing. One exceptional project would be the *Selimnâme* of Şükri-i Bidlisi [TSK, H.1597-1598] presented to Sultan Süleyman around 1525. However, this work containing twenty-four illustrations can be regarded as emphasizing one aspect of Süleyman’s image, namely the dynastic concept. On the other hand, this work has been defined as “the first attempt at documenting historic figures and events.”¹⁹⁶³ As such, it could be speculated that the need for large scale projects involving visual representations was a later development, and the absence of such projects during the earlier years of Sultan Süleyman’s reign was perhaps not a “missing” element yet. The lack of large scale architectural activity raises a more puzzling issue, given the already well established tradition of huge imperial mosque complexes. Both issues remain to be further investigated in the context of the entire reign of the Sultan.

Another such “missing” aspect of Sultan Süleyman’s image during this period is the Sultan’s positioning vis-à-vis the Safavi Shah. Although contemporary sources refer to the Safavis from time to time, these references do not translate into the direct confrontation between Süleyman and Tahmasb observed in later periods nor do they assume the character of binary opposition between Selim and Ismail. Self-positioning in the context of Sunni-Shi’a rivalry seems to be a later addition in Sultan Süleyman’s image. On the other hand, Sultan Süleyman seems to be positioned vis-à-vis his Christian rivals during this period. Contemporary conflicts in Europe especially in the context of the Habsburg-Valois struggle, Hungarian internal strife, and Lutheranism appears to have provided Süleyman with both opportunities and elements of image-making. Careful observation, employment, intervention, and even manipulation relating to current power balances contributed to the “making” of Sultan Süleyman.

¹⁹⁶³ Atıl, *Süleymannâme*, p.46. Also see, Atıl, *The Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.81.

By the end of the year 1529, Sultan Süleyman had actualized the meanings implied in the most frequently used Ottoman royal honorifics through his own performance. Throughout this study we pursued the phases of Süleyman's becoming the Sultan he was, through his deeds and reflections thereof. The process of the "making" of Sultan Süleyman began on the day he was born, as a "felicitous prince" [*şehzâde-i civân-baht*] by default. By virtue of legitimate accession and his first acts of justice, he became the "blessed sovereign" [*hüdâvendigâr-ı kâm-kâr*]. Through his military enterprises, as ambitious challenges both in the face of the world at large and in the context of Ottoman dynastic precedence, he merited being the "conqueror of the world" [*cihân-gîr*]. Not only his intervention on behalf of Janos Szapolyai, but his confirmation of the rulership of tributary states, and actions justified with the protection of ruled populations including non-Muslims, fulfilled the implication of the title "refuge of the world" [*âlem-penâh*]. Throughout these years, his concern of justice and righteousness were emphasized by contemporary observers, both foreign and native, as well as the revision of regulations in various regions of his realm, thus earning him the definition of [*adâlet-şi'âr*]. In the process of proving himself "Solomon of the Age" [*Süleymân-ı zamân*], even the one move he did not play by the book completed the claim by introducing the figure of the "perfect vizier" [*vezîr-i Asaf-nazîr*] in the person of İbrahim Paşa. By 1529, Sultan Süleyman had become confident enough to rise above everything through delegating fully the sovereign authority invested in him.

The multi-layered image of Sultan Süleyman, in its fully formed structure, owed not only to his perseverance and law-abiding nature, but also to the contribution of a group of well-informed Ottomans, as well as the appropriate and efficient employment of an established repertoire of values. In this study, we have delineated the various phases and aspects involved in the making of this multi-layered image. We have argued that Süleyman started his sultanic career with the inherited elements of dynastic and divine legitimation. He took over an already established model, and put deliberate effort in the actualization of this model. While his ritual accession marked the inherited elements legitimating his sovereignty; the first acts of justice and the suppression of an immediate rebellion affirmed his power as reflections of the two customary building blocks of sovereign power: justice [*adâlet*] and punishment [*siyâset*]. We have argued that his ambitious military endeavors consolidated and maintained his authority and personal reputation. With these enterprises Sultan Süleyman challenged himself, his predecessors, and "invincible" rivals. We have discussed further imposition of his own

rule through composing his own ranks and regulations during the course of the period under examination. We have suggested that a saturating point can be observed in 1529 with the diploma of general-command granted to İbrahim Paşa, in terms of self-affirmation and self-imposition, whereby Sultan Süleyman's image ascends to its peak point in relation to his performance.

This study demonstrates that Sultan Süleyman pursued an active and visible mode of sovereignty in the 1520s. This seems to have evolved into an even more ambitious character in the 1530s with more emphasis on an ideological claim on universal monarchy, supported through campaigns directed both to the East and the West. Starting with mid-1540s, although universal sovereignty remained a discursive claim, Sultan Süleyman became more and more detached from the dynamic elements of rule. This detachment brought about a transformation in regards to both the elements emphasized and the tools employed in his presentation. Writers during his later years and after that often fused the different elements of the Sultan's image which actually pertained to different phases of his life; thus creating the impression of a monolithic forty-six years of glory which came to be regarded as an idealized "golden age" for centuries. In this sense, this study has aimed to delineate the major elements making up the image of Sultan Süleyman as he became an established Sultan in his own right, as well as the dynamics of the underlying process. As such, this study can be regarded as ground work for further research and analysis on the impact of these elements during the rest of the reign of Sultan Süleyman as well as their influence on later image-making processes of his successors. In a secondary sense, this study can be regarded as an experiment on the employment of theoretical approaches and perspectives borrowed from various disciplines to arrive at a better understanding of the concepts, values, elements, and underlying dynamics involved in the making of Sultan Süleyman.

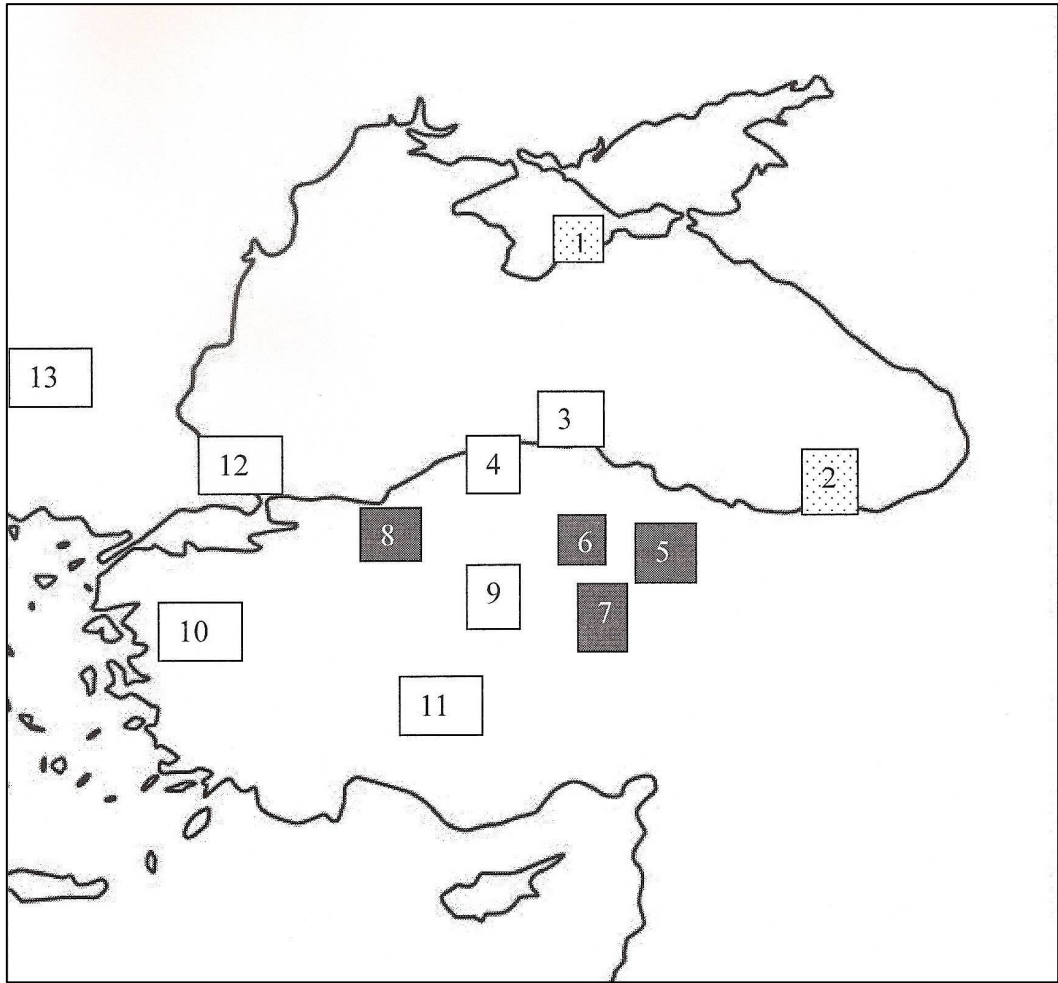
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: OFFICIAL VENETIAN OBSERVERS IN ISTANBUL¹⁹⁶⁴

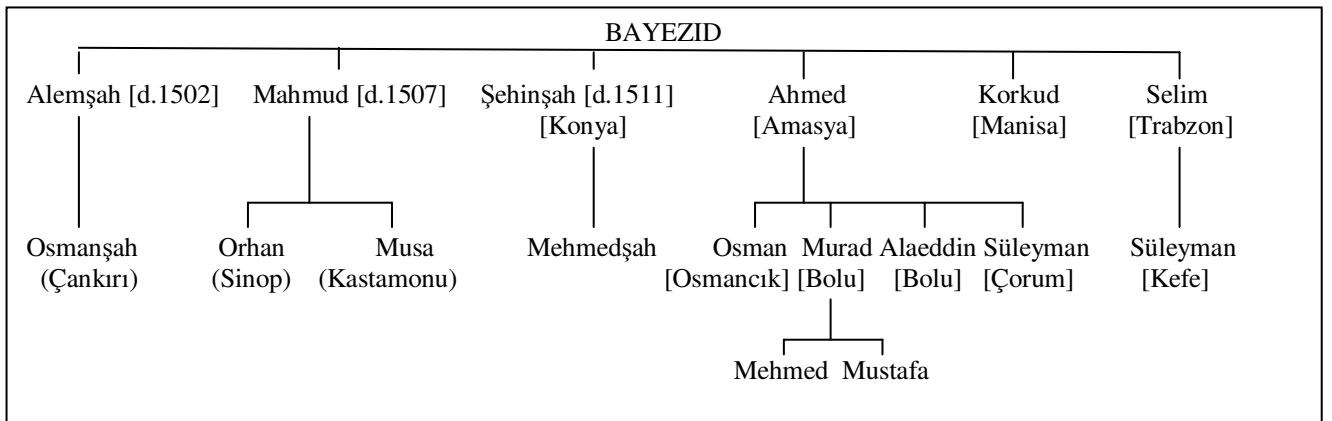
Person	Office	Election to Office	Reason
Andrea Foscolo	Bailo	9 March 1507	
Nicolo Giustinian	Vice-bailo	22 January 1512	Vacant bailohip
Antonio Giustinian	Ambassador	23 April 1513	Accession of Selim I
Leonardo Bembo	Bailo	24 August 1513	
Alvise Mocenigo	Ambassador	11 December 1516	Victory
Bartolomeo Contarini	Ambassador	11 December 1516	Victory
Tomasso Contarini	Bailo	9 January 1519	
Daniele Ludovici	Secretary to bailo	15 January 1519	
Marco Minio	Ambassador	7 November 1520	Accession exaltation
Andrea Priuli [d.1523]	Bailo	3 October 1521	
Pietro Zen	Ambassador and vice-bailo	4 March 1523	Conquest of Rhodes
Pietro Bragadin	Bailo	February 1524	
Pietro Zen	Vice-bailo	30 October 1525	Vacancy in bailohip
Marco Minio	Ambassador	1 October 1526	Hungarian victory
Tomasso Contarini	Ambassador	12 December 1527	Envoy for grain issue
Francesco Bernardo	Bailo	30 December 1529	
Tomasso Mocenigo	Ambassador	30 December 1529	Circumcision of the princes

¹⁹⁶⁴ Alberi, *Relazione*, III:III:XXII-XXIII.

APPENDIX 2: PRINCELY SANCAKS, 1509-1513



1 Kefe	5 Amasya	9 Çankırı	12 İstanbul
2 Trabzon	6 Osmancık	10 Manisa	13 Edirne
3 Sinop	7 Çorum	11 Konya	
4 Kastamonu	8 Bolu		



جماعت اول			
مولانا حمید الدین خواجه التمش	محمد عبدک بودی اوتوزلیش	مالک معلم اوتوزلیش	اسجادتک سربوایت اوتوزلیش
عربک سر بنا بایز اوتوزلیش	احمدک امیرحور اوتوزلیش	حزقک سروایت اوتوزلیش	حسنک شرفحان کرمی سکنه اچمه
اسکندرک افغانا سیاهانک اوتوزلیش	شانک سیدداران کرمی لیش	عمادک سردار کرمی دزت	محمدک سرخا کرمی اوج اچمه
حسنک چاوکان کرمی اوج	حسنک شاهنجان کرمی اچمه	علی ک سککان کرمی اچمه	شانک کتداو تیلین کرمی اچمه
سلیمان سر مهران اوتوزلیش	حسان سرداران اوتوزلیش	سید محمد سرداران اوتوزلیش	حضر سر ملکحان اوتوزلیش
اسکندر سر حاطین اوتوزلیش			
جماعت دوم			
محمد علامه در اوج اچمه	سید علامه در لیش	مرجان علامه در لیش اچمه	جلال علامه در الی اچمه
محمد علامه در اوج اچمه	اسکندر علامه در الی اچمه		
جماعت سوم			
یمش برنوا	پوز سکر اچمه		

جماعت کاشان خندان				جماعت چاوشان			
محمدی حاجی ایدی اون یدی	مصطفی الدین اون اکی	محمد اون درت	بنی اون برانچه	تسطن اون انچه	علی اون برانچه	دوردی اون برانچه	سنان اون برانچه
جماعت کاشان دیوان				خیرالدین اون انچه	محمدان زورین	علی بن اطفون انچه	قدم سکر انچه
فرح علی یکری انچه	مصطفی علی کانت دیوان اون یدی	سبحان اون بش	مصلح فانیم طفون انچه	بارند طفون انچه	ایاسر دیوانه اون انچه	جماعت ذواتین	
محمد حاجی اون بش	اکی نفر اون اوچر انچه ایلد	دردت نفر اون انچه	محمد حاجی سکر انچه	عیدی سکر انچه	اسکندر سکر انچه	حاجی سکر انچه	محمد حاجی سکر انچه
محمد ایدی				یوسف چکم سکر انچه	حیدر سکر انچه	محمد سکر انچه	جماعت اهل حرف
جماعت مدکورین				همه کلاه دور القی انچه	حاجی حراج دی انچه	حسن پوستان دور الت انچه	لاستفان دوان پوستان دور دردت
عمادین تکاب دی انچه	سلمان وزان یدی انچه	محمد کانت دور دی انچه	نورالله کما بکر اوج	یوسف سراج سکر انچه	محمد تورکر بش انچه	احمد تورکر بش انچه	عمادین تکاب دی انچه
اسخان کانت دور الت انچه	ابوبکر اون انچه	صدق معلم اون اکی	حضر یا حوج الت انچه	سنان طیب اون بش	حکمه حاون انچه	شاکردان اکی نفر انچه	عمادین تکاب دی انچه

APPENDIX 5: ARTISANS

NAME	FEE (aspers)	ARTISAN REGIMENT
Karagöz b Abdullah*	3.5	Cameşuyan (laundryman)
Kasım Arnavud*	4	Kazganyan (caster)
Kasım Çerkes*	4	Zergeran (goldsmith)
<i>Kasım Rus*</i>	6	Kazzazan (silk manufacturer)
<i>Behram Rus*</i>	6	Tirgeran (arrow maker)
Ferruh Çerkes*	6	Tirgeran (arrow maker)
Bayezid Rus*	6	Zergeran (goldsmith)
İlyas bin Ahmed*	6.5	Kazzazan (silk manufacturer)
Bali bin Mahmud*	6.5	Muzeduzan (boot maker)
Mustafa Boğdan**	6.5	Nakkaşan (painter)
Hızır Bali*	7	Külahduzan (hat maker)
Simon Gürci-i Gebr***	7	Siperduzan (shield maker)
Mehmed bin Hamza*	7	Şemşirgeran (sword maker)
Kemal Acem*	8	Küştegeran (wrestler)
Yusuf Arnavud*	9	Cameşuyan (laundry man)
Ali Rus*	9	Külahduzan (hat maker)
Pervane-i Ungurus*	10	Külahduzan (hat maker)
Hasan Lec*	11	Şemşirgeran (sword maker)
Nasuh Bin Uveys*	11	Zergeran (goldsmith)
Ahmed Kuş*	11.5	Harratin (metal lathe workers)
Hüseyin bin Ali*	12	Çilingiran (locksmith)
Yahya Trabzon****	12	Kazganyan (casters)
Toroz Gürci-i Gebr****	12	Siperduzan (hat maker)
Kasım Rus*	13	Tirgeran (arrow maker)
Ahmed bin Mehmed*	14.5	Muzeduzan (boot maker)
Kasım Ungurus*	14.5	Zerduzan (gold embroiderer)
Mehmed bin Haydar*	15	Kazzazan (silk manufacturer)
Ali Mahyacı*	16	Kazganyan (caster)
Celal bin Nevruz*	16.5	Şemşirgeran (sword maker)
Hacı Yusuf*	18	Cerrahin (operator physician)
Hasan Rus*	18.5	Postinduzan (boot maker)
Taşzade Kopuzî*	19	Sâztraşan (maker of musical instruments)
Murad Bosna*	24	Zergeran (gold smith)

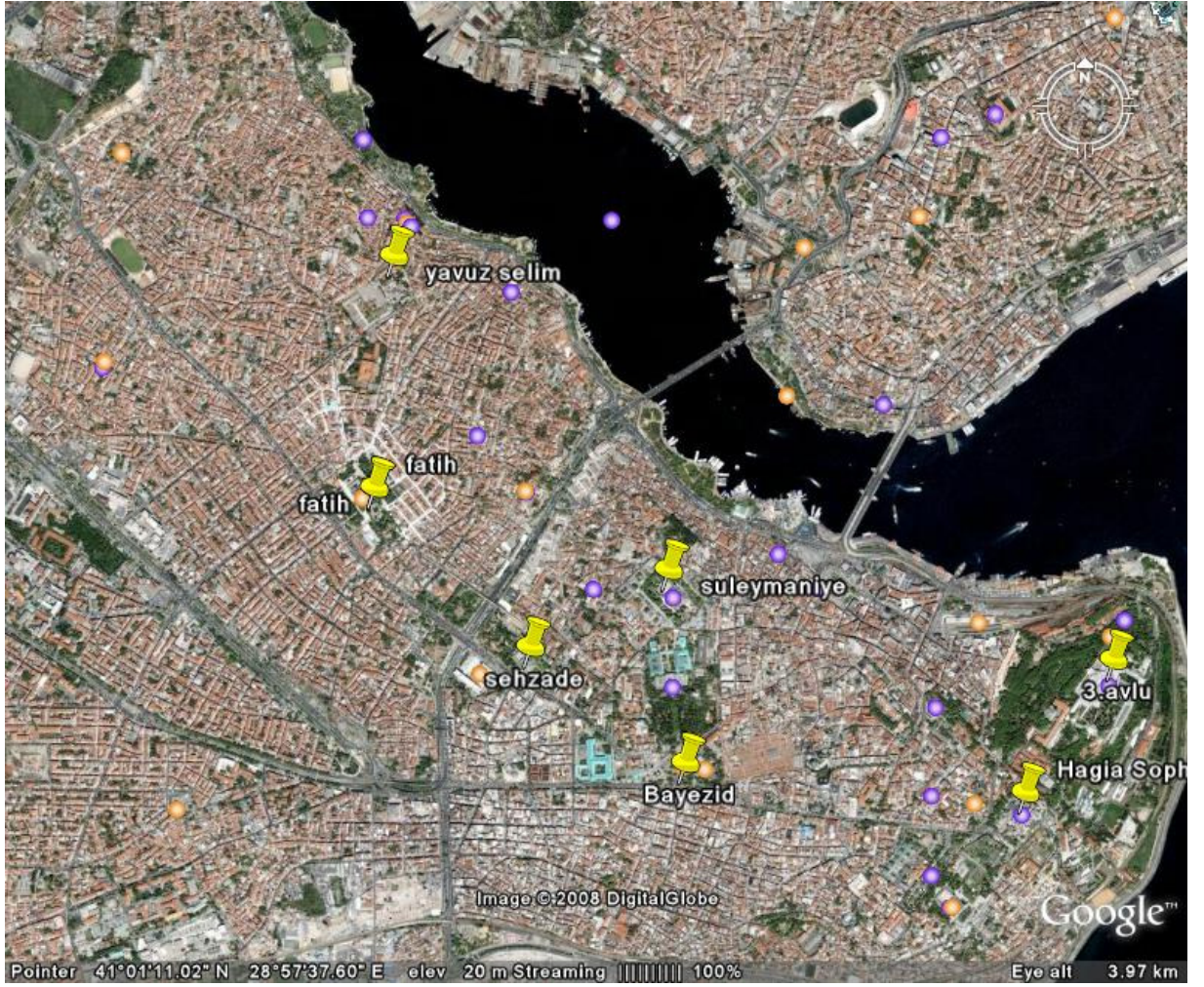
* Hazret-i pâdişâh-ı 'âlempenâh birle gelmiş [he came with the Sultan].

** Üstâdzâde kûl olub, Hüdâvendigâr hazretlerine (şehzâdeliğinde) virilüb cihet olunmuş. Fi Zilkade 929 (1523).

*** Sultan Selim Han zamanında Gürcistan'dan çıkmış.

**** Sultan Selim Han birle Trabzon'dan gelmiş.

APPENDIX 6: IMPERIAL MOSQUES



بیدریشلی سراورانی قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 عثمانی کوچک ارسلات قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 قلعیدون میدان کلان علی عثمان تحت الآت
 میدانہ او بیخی نز اولان قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 قهریام تیزیر ایرلر و وشمکنک بیدلرین قریلر
 قریلر یا شہ سنبام اور گیز قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 اور زنی عاتہ سلان یا شہی تریلیہ الآت
 چر کن دن قانسز الان قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 اوغلی اور تریخی جویخ اولسو بیدر اولمک بیدر اولسون
 سلطان سلیمان صاخ اولسون قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 علی ایدر سلان ایدر قان دادوش برقیلان ایدر
 در دوجن و رمان ایدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 برانی یا بیدر کلدر قویلسز او بیدر طاہر اولدر
 ار لیکر آندہ تمام اولدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 او کندوسی طاہر ایدر ہم بوفندہ حاضر ایدر
 ار ایدر کی ظاهر ایدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 او تو بیدر جو کمان میدانہ ار دو کمان قانی
 اول ایدر اولی سلطان مز قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 سلطان سلیمان اول باقی و ایم سکسون سون ساتی
 احسن ایام کوزت خلقی سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 قویخ اولوب و وریشانلر سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 کیم اوغلی ایدر خان فدی اولسون بولکده جانم
 سدی اسکندر سن سین بولکیز سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 عرب ان لکشی بیدر کلر احسان ایدر دن جو کلر
 بویا ایدر کلدر ستر و تر سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 خبر صور رسکو ویر لوم دولته دعا قلا لوم
 خضر یار هم بلا لوم سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 بیش بیدر یوز تیمارم سکر لچق اولسون دیروم
 بلا سبب آ و حارم سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 بر جعت دل بندر خلیق قنن ان بنوا انعام ای سلطان
 سکا عتایت ایدر بختان سلطان سلیمان دور دور

بیدریشلی سراورانی قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 عثمانی کوچک ارسلات قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 قلعیدون میدان کلان علی عثمان تحت الآت
 میدانہ او بیخی نز اولان قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 قهریام تیزیر ایرلر و وشمکنک بیدلرین قریلر
 قریلر یا شہ سنبام اور گیز قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 اور زنی عاتہ سلان یا شہی تریلیہ الآت
 چر کن دن قانسز الان قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 اوغلی اور تریخی جویخ اولسو بیدر اولمک بیدر اولسون
 سلطان سلیمان صاخ اولسون قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 علی ایدر سلان ایدر قان دادوش برقیلان ایدر
 در دوجن و رمان ایدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 برانی یا بیدر کلدر قویلسز او بیدر طاہر اولدر
 ار لیکر آندہ تمام اولدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 او کندوسی طاہر ایدر ہم بوفندہ حاضر ایدر
 ار ایدر کی ظاهر ایدر قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 او تو بیدر جو کمان میدانہ ار دو کمان قانی
 اول ایدر اولی سلطان مز قانی سلطان سلیم قانی
 سلطان سلیمان اول باقی و ایم سکسون سون ساتی
 احسن ایام کوزت خلقی سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 قویخ اولوب و وریشانلر سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 کیم اوغلی ایدر خان فدی اولسون بولکده جانم
 سدی اسکندر سن سین بولکیز سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 عرب ان لکشی بیدر کلر احسان ایدر دن جو کلر
 بویا ایدر کلدر ستر و تر سلطان سلیمان دور دور
 خبر صور رسکو ویر لوم دولته دعا قلا لوم
 خضر یار هم بلا لوم سلطان سلیمان دور دور
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 بر جعت دل بندر خلیق قنن ان بنوا انعام ای سلطان
 سکا عتایت ایدر بختان سلطان سلیمان دور دور

APPENDIX 8: LIST OF POSTS (1521-1524)

NAME	Initially	PRE-1520	1520	POST-BELGRADE	POST-RHODES	1524	1525	Ultimately
Kasım Paşa ¹	Scribe	Lala	Vizier	Retired				
Piri Mehmed Paşa	Religious establishment	Grand Vizier (1517)	Grand Vizier	Grand Vizier	Retired			
Mustafa Paşa ²	Head Gatekeeper	Vizier (925)	Vizier	Vizier	Vizier / Egypt	Vizier	Vizier	Vizier (d.1529)
Ferhad Paşa ³	Janissary Commander	Vizier	Vizier	Vizier	Smederevo	Executed		
Ahmed Paşa ⁴	Janissary Commander	Rumelia	Rumelia	Vizier	Vizier	Egypt / Executed		
Ayas Paşa ⁵	Janissary Commander (1517)		Anatolia	Rumelia		Vizier		Grand Vizier (1536)
Güzelce Kasım Paşa ⁶	Agha of the stirrup			Anatolia		Egypt	Captain	Vizier (1528/9)
Sinan Paşa ⁷				Rûm	Discharged	Rûm		
Behram Paşa ⁸				Captain	Rûm	Anatolia		

¹ Son of Nişancı Mehmed Çelebi; other posts include Anatolia and Rumelia treasury. See, SO, 3:875-6.

² Other posts include general governorship of Rumelia. See, SO, 4:1192.

³ Other posts include general governorship of Rumelia. See, SO, 2:517; Celalzade, *Selimname*, p.214.

⁴ See, SO, 1:211.

⁵ See, SO, 2:341-2.

⁶ Other posts include governorship of Adana and general governorship of Rumelia; he is said to be the son of one Bayezid II's men. See, SO, 3:875.

⁷ See, Bostan (MK), 46a.

⁸ See, Bostan (MK), 45b.

İskender ⁹ Paşa				Trabzon	Karaman ¹⁰	Rûm/ Trabzon		
Hürrem Paşa ¹¹	District Governor			Trablus	Damascus ¹²	Discharged		
Lütfi Paşa ¹³	District governor				Captain	Karaman	Damascus	Grand Vizier (1537/8)
Süleyman Paşa ¹⁴	Chief of Inner Treasury					Captain / Damascus	Egypt	Grand Vizier (1540)
İbrahim Paşa ¹⁵				Chief Falconer and Hasoda başı (?)	Grand Vizier and Rumelia	Grand Vizier and Rumelia	Grand Vizier and Rumelia	Executed (1536)

⁹ See, Bostan (MK), 50a.

¹⁰ Upon death of Şadi Paşa.

¹¹ See, SO, 2:678; Bostan (MK), 50a.

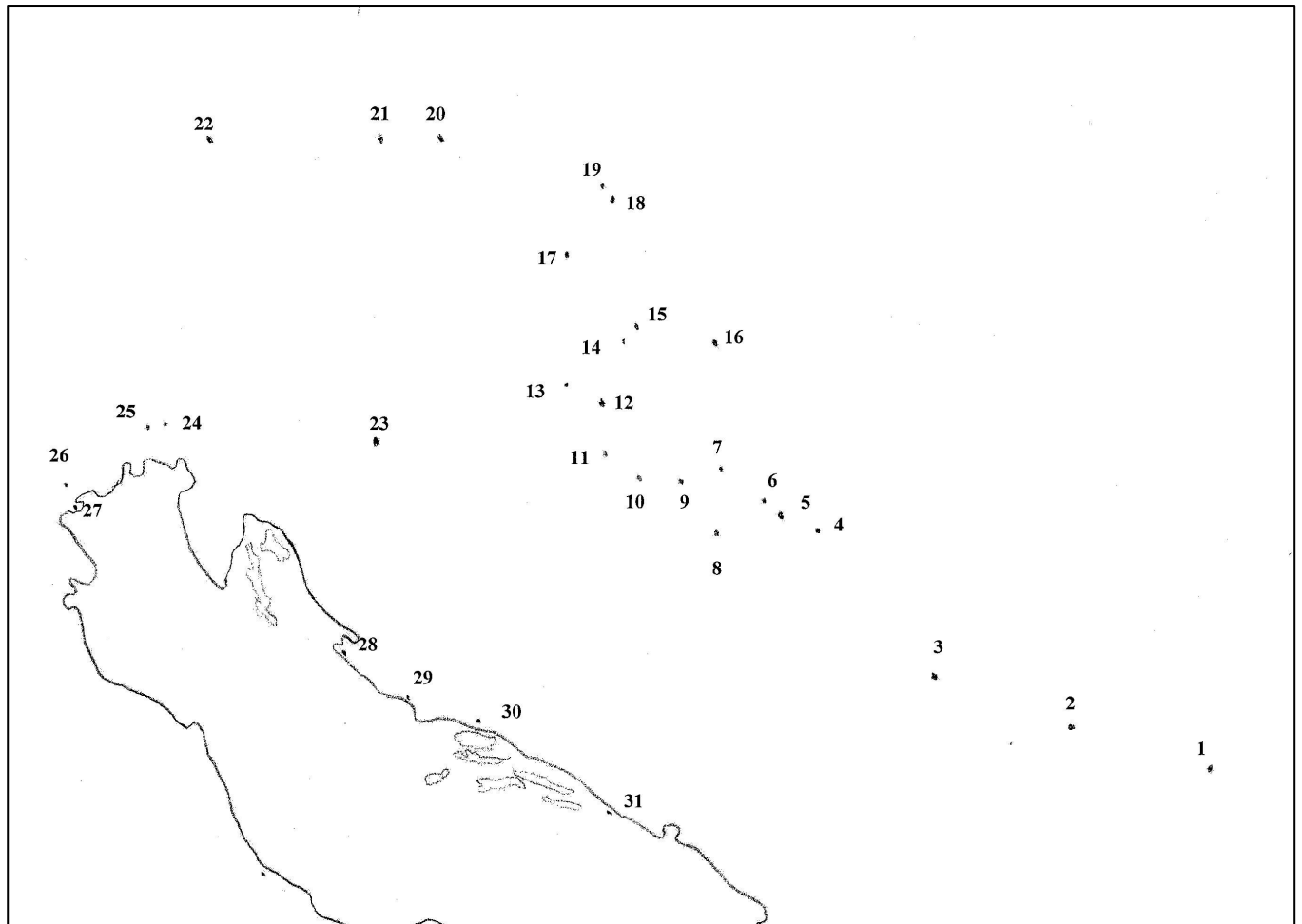
¹² Upon death of Ferhad Paşa.

¹³ See, SO, 3:903; Bostan (MK), 57b.

¹⁴ See, SO, 5:1548; Bostan (MK), 57b.

¹⁵ See, SO 3:777.

APPENDIX 9: FREQUENTLY REFERRED PLACES



- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Plovdiv | 17. Székesfehérvár |
| 2. Sofia | 18. Buda |
| 3. Niš | 19. Esztergom |
| 4. Smederevo | 20. Poszony |
| 5. Belgrade | 21. Vienna |
| 6. Zemun | 22. Linz |
| 7. Novigrad | 23. Zagreb |
| 8. Sabacz | 24. Friuli |
| 9. Ilok | 25. Udine |
| 10. Vukovar | 26. Treviso |
| 11. Eszek | 27. Venice |
| 12. Mohacs | 28. Zadar |
| 13. Pécs | 29. Šibenik |
| 14. Tolna | 30. Split |
| 15. Kalocsa | 31. Ragusa |
| 16. Szeged | |

6146

درگاه معلومه و بارگاه معلومه رفو الله تبارك و تعالیٰ فوق السموات الاعلیٰ عرض شد به در وجه بود که در عالم کمال
 مصنف عالمی است که اولاد بوسه است و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این
 شش هفت و هشت و نهم و دهم و یازدهم و بیست و یکم و بیست و دوم و بیست و سوم و بیست و چهارم و بیست و پنجم و بیست و ششم
 بلدره من حیوانان و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه
 که در این عالم کمال است که اولاد بوسه است و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این
 کتب اولاد بوسه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه
 عالم و قدرت بوی در حق و علا و تلو پالت اسمی چون بلای غم و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه
 چون که در کتب عدول و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه و درگاه معلومه
 اولاد که در عالم کمال است که اولاد بوسه است و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این
 لولا فاکر غارت که در عالم کمال است که اولاد بوسه است و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این
 بوسه است که در عالم کمال است که اولاد بوسه است و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این
 و هر سال بی غایت آنکه کل آنکه در عالم کمال جمع بود و در این بعد که کلمه نازل بود و در این

APPENDIX 11: LIBRARY OF CORVINUS

The library of the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus was the most celebrated library of Europe in late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The library is estimated to have contained around 2,000-2,500 volumes in Greek and Latin. The Papal collection in the 1480s had 3,600 books in 1480s. Milanese ducal library at Pavia had 988 volumes in 1426. Compared to these, Corvinus's library probably deserved the fame.¹ Many volumes were taken out of the library after the death of Corvinus, and by 1526 the library probably already lost its former splendor. Visiting the library in 1520, the Venetian ambassador Lorenzo Orio, for example, reported that all the good books were gone.² By the end of 1530s, volumes from the Corvinus Library could be found to be bought in Istanbul. One volume in the British Library [Lansdowne, 836] bears a note stating that it was brought back from Istanbul by Antonius Verantius [Vrancic] Bishop of Pecs [Fünfkirchen].³

In 1877, Abdülhamid II donated thirty five volumes to the newly founded Budapest University. The correspondence related to the donation is preserved in the Ottoman Archives. The number of original Corvinian manuscripts among the volumes has been identified between eleven⁴ to fifteen.⁵ The Ottoman agent Tahir Bey, who was assigned to deliver the books to the Rector of the university in person, was not allowed to pass to Budapest from Vienna by Austrian authorities. However, the books were sent with a delegation, and were ceremonially received on 29 April 1877.⁶

¹ Marcus Tanner, *The Raven King: Matthias Corvinus and the Fate of His Lost Library*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), pp.8-9.

² Tanner, *The Raven King*, pp.157-9, 171-2.

³ Rogers and Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent*, p.101. Rogers and Ward suggest that since it would have been impossible for such an item to be on the market, it should have been a gift from the Sultan on the bishop's departure from his ambassadorial mission, around 1555-1557. For other examples of mid-sixteenth century purchases, see, Tanner, *The Raven King*, pp.172-3.

⁴ I. Berkovits, *The Illuminated Manuscripts of Matthias Corvinus*, S. Horn (trans.) (Budapest: 1964), p.9. Berkovits provides a catalogue of the manuscripts as well.

⁵ Tanner, *The Raven King*, p.204.

⁶ Tanner, *The Raven King*, pp.204-6. For Ottoman correspondence see, BOA, Hariciye Nezareti, Siyasi, 176:1-18.

18/2

SUBLIME PORTE

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

Catalogue de la Corviniana.

S

à

N° G^t

N° S^t

Le

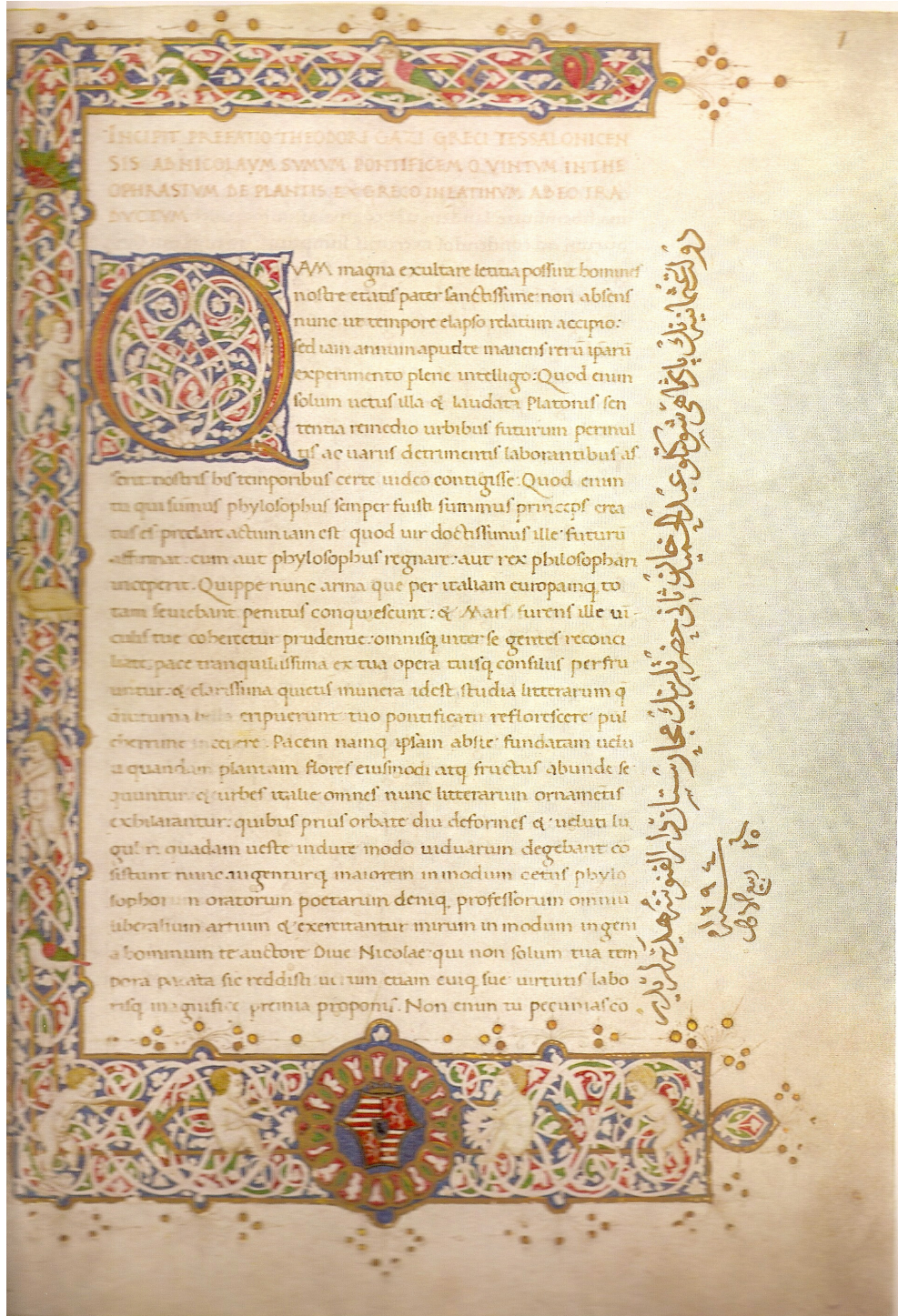
187

Objet.

- SP 1 Vitruvius et P. Candidus.
" 2 Paule de Venise sur Aristote et Agidius Romanus.
" 3 Grèce sur le mouvement.
" 4 Suetone, Vie des Empereurs. Les miniatures sont copiées.
" 5 Grammaire Latine.
" 6 Plutarque, vie d'Artide et de Latou en latin.
" 7 Mythologie.
" 8 Albertus Magnus de mineralibus.
" 9 Aelius Spartacus, Aemilius Probus.
" 10 Grammaire
" 11 Terence, Comédies.
" 12 Simon Jannensis Clavis sanationis.
" 13 Festus Pompejus.
" 14 Cicero
" 15 Plinius secundus, Panegyriques.
" 16 Grèce de Chirurgie.
" 17 Caesar de bello gallico & hispanico.
" 18 Collection des écrivains des Empereurs Romains.
" 19 Clémentius itinéraire de St. Pierre.

- № 20 Union Januensis, Synonymes.
- " 21 Speculum humanae salvatoris.
- " 22 Theophraste, histoire des plantes.
- " 23 Tertullianus contra Marcionem.
- " 24 Caecilius.
- " 25 Julius Stalius.
- " 26 Eusebius préparation Evangelique.
- " 27 Bible, manuscrit du 13^e siècle très ruiné par le temps.
- " 28 Livre religieux.
- " 29 Quintus Curtius, Alexander Magnus.
- " 30 Dante, Comedia Divina manuscrit contemporain de Dante.
- " 31 Aristote politique en espagnol.
- " 32 Eusebius chronique traduit par Jérôme.
- " 33 Historiographes.
- " 34 Livre de navigation en Italic.

BOA, Hariciye Nezareti, Siyasi, 176:18/1.



Theophrastus, *De historia plantarum*, fol.1a. (Budapest University Library, Cod Lat. I)

“Devlet-i ‘Osmânî’ nin pâdişâhı şevketlü Abdülhamid Hân-ı sâni hazretlerinin Macaristan Dârü’l-fünûnına hediyeleridir, 25 Rebiyyülevvel 1294 [9 April 1877].”⁷

⁷ From I. Berkovits, *The Illuminated Manuscripts of Matthias Corvinus*, S. Horn (trans.) (Budapest: 1964), Plate I.

6348

فرضاً ندوا للهك عنا سئله اوندكوس و جبر ملكندك قرالی واصپا نيه ملكندك و ایشا و ایشا
و بورغونديه و مورد اینه و تیرول ملكندك پادشاهی و انبره و درك سر لشکری

اولو و کمال درجه اوصولاً مه بو ایتمک اون بئند و اولو شعاعلو و کمال درجه
قولو انبره و در سلیموک مسلمانک و انطولی و روم ایلیوک پادشاهی که سوکلور و ستمور در
جواب بزوغند و بوند اول ابهر موزله مکتوبه موز سزلی کوندر برک و ابهر موزله جواب
بنه دیلی و سزلی بلم بز مشفق و مکتوبه سزلی بوصنه جاننگوندر لدر و بوار سالی اولان
صورتیه بی بیور و قلم ای صورت وخی برله اکرا اوله مکتوبه بر و اولو پادشاهی قاپوسه و کوندر
دو اولو پادشاهی اولو لغنه و سزلی و که دوزیر اقبعلی بلور و اصله شنبه سزلی وخی بوقدر که سزلی
دو اولو فزا و نیکار کلا اولو لغنه نقد اولو مصلحتی و سزلی و ارایه سزلی وخی دکولدر ایدر اولو
دو اولو پادشاهی بئمشدر بنوم نکر مه نه و ارایه سزلی معلوم اولور و بوزیم مصلحتی و اولو
اصول و که معلوم سزلی و عقله و تدبیر ایله جانگو کلدن تجریمی ویر نه اصل مصلحت اوله که سزلی
دو اولو فزا و نیکار کلا اولو لغنه توقع ایس سزلی اوله اوعیه شوله درجه مقبوله سزلی که اصله سزلی
لقد اولم و بونیم مکتوبه سزلی اجمعی اولور سکون نه قدر جانگو کلدن لدر برک
و بار شعلفی و ابو فو کستولفی دو اولو فزا و نیکار کلا اولو لغنه و فکر ایتمک سزلی بو مصلحتی جانگو کلدن
ایتمه و حقیق بلوریم که تمام ایدر سزلی بوند اوله ایلو کوندر دویدق و هر وقت سزلی نکر ایدر
اوله سیدق سزلی جانگو کلدن سو کوز استو مکتوبه سزلی بیلور و سزلی بیجه که دو اولو فزا و نیکار
اولو لغنی قسدر مقبول سکون و ایله پادشاه اکسند کیروب بیکل بلور بر اولو لغنه صلی جوق ایلو کوندر
و بو آرموس بو مکتوبه سزلی کوندر لدری شافی و بئین جواب ایله دو اولو فزا و نیکار کلا اولو لغنه
قطع جواب ایله دست حاکم ایله بن ارسالی ایدر سزلی آرموس قور قوسوز و تیزیم بر کاسه نه غمایت
اوله ان شارلله اک بر سبب ووشیک اولر سزلی بزم کولم سزلی کورتر مک لازم ووشتر کور سکون
و بو ایله که سزلی ایدر سزلی و سزلی قلمیه و بر غصه ایله موز که کلدر دو اولو فزا و نیکار کلا
قوسوز وخی اجمعی اکرا لغنه سزلی لدر و اوله کوندر بکوز ایلمدن سزلی اعلام الله کلا
مکتوبه سزلی جوبوندر کیریم او جند علسی بیجا بیک علیه السلام تاریخ نو کلا سزلی سزلی

کیریم طفورینه
بیشام
این سزلی
بئز لالی بو مکتوبه
اون بده کوندر

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