

ROUNDTABLE

Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art

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Research into ego-documents has been going on around the world for several decades, especially in continental Europe. The Dutch historian Jacques Presser, the inventor of the term, used “ego-document” to refer to materials such as diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, and personal letters.¹ The term was first used in the English language by Peter Burke.² Some groups of historians, such as the one in Berlin under the leadership of Claudia Ulbrich, prefer to use the term “self-narrative” instead. Kaspar von Greyerz, leader of the Basel team and a leading critic, considers the term “ego-document” an unfortunate one on account of its connotation of Sigmund Freud’s concept of ego.³ He claims that early modern material does not reflect the inner psychological state of the writer but rather the formal, outward facade. Artificial periodization prevents us from understanding the nature and intellectual heritage of the human being.⁴ The question is, “What changed with the transition from premodern to modern when suddenly characters started to see themselves as historical figures worth talking about?”

After selecting nineteen *sergüzeştname*s (memoirs or autobiographies) from the 15th to the 19th century and analyzing ten of them in great detail, Haluk Gökalp concludes that giving value to their own lives and the events happening around them was the main motivation of these *sergüzeştname* authors.⁵ Examples from the 20th century can be cited to show that authors are reluctant to talk about their private

¹Jacques Presser, “Memoires als geschiedbron,” *Winkler Prins Encyclopedie*, cilt. 8 (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1958), 208–10; quoted in *Ego-Documents and History: Autobiographical Writing in Its Social Context since the Middle Ages*, ed. Rudolf Dekker (Hilversum, Netherlands: Verloren, 2002), 17.

²Peter Burke, “Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes,” in *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), 21. See Rudolf Dekker, “Jacques Presser’s Heritage: Ego-Documents in the Study of History,” trans. Diederik van Werven, *Memoria y Civilization* 5 (2002): 14.

³Kaspar von Greyerz, “Ego-Documents: The Last Word?” *German History* 28: no. 3 (2010): 273–82. Von Greyerz suggests using “self-narrative” or “personal narrative.” R. Aslıhan Aksoy Sheridan suggests the exact opposite (see her contribution to this roundtable).

⁴A recent discussion problematizing the category “early modern” and proposing emphasis on continuity instead is a positive development. See Virginia H. Aksan, Boğaç A. Ergene, and Antonis Hadjikyriacou, eds., “Chasing the Ottoman Early Modern,” *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 7, no. 1 (2020): 7–86. I do not know what Palmira Brummett means exactly by saying that the notion of “early modern” does not match self-narratives. See Palmira Brummett, “Marking Time on the Early Modern: Kings, Conquests, Commune, Continuum,” *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 7, no. 1 (2020): 14; Beshara Doumani, “Epilogue 2: The Limits of Knowledge Production as a Subversive Practice: The ‘Early Modern’ in Ottoman Studies,” *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 7, no. 1 (2020): 85. If she means that the medieval-early modern-modern periodization has little potential for an elaboration on the nature of ego-documents, I am in agreement.

⁵Haluk Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeşt-Nameler* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2009), 604. For the list and descriptions of these nineteen *sergüzeştname*s written in verse, see 12–26. This is not the full list. New materials are being gradually revealed by researchers. One example is the *Tuhfetü’l-İhvan* by the Bosnian poet and author İntizami (d. after 1611). See Bosnalı İntizami, *Tuhfetü’l-İhvan: XVI. Yüzyıldan Bir Katibin Sergüzeşt*, ed. Cihan Okuyucu and Sadık Yazar (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2020). *Sergüzeştname*s are not always in verse. I can cite two 16th-century examples written in prose. One, by Hacı Ahmed Efendi (d. after 1542), is full of dream records and contains his hajj journeys. See Hacı Ahmed Efendi, *Sergüzeşt: 16. Yüzyılda Bir Otobiyoğrafi ve Ravzatü’t-Tevhid: Zeynilik Tarihine Işık Tutan Sembolik Bir Eser (İnceleme-Metin-Tıpkıbasım)*, ed. Mertol Tulum (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2014), 131–72. The second is *Arz-ı Hal ü Sergüzeşt-i Gilani*, written by poet Mahfi-i Gilani around 1557–58. See Gülşah Taşkın, “On Altıncı Yüzyıla Ait Otobiyoğrafik Bir Eser: Arz-ı Hal ü Sergüzeşt-i Gilani,” *Turkish Studies* 8, no. 4 (2013): 1339–50.

concerns but eager to mention those of their friends. Erdal İnönü (d. 2007), son of Turkey's second president, İsmet İnönü (d. 1973), may be cited as an example of this.⁶

Terminology

In the Ottoman case, some contemporary terms can be included within the concept of ego-documents. These are: *ceride*, *yevmiye*, and *tarih* referring to diaries; *hatırat* referring to memoirs; *sergüzeştname*, for works positioned between memoirs and autobiography; *tercümeihal* referring to a curriculum vitae, and *vakiat* and *düşname* referring to dream records. A more general term, *mejmua*, is used when referring to any kind of autobiographical account. The Ottoman Empire was multiethnic and multilingual; however, its secondary literature suffers from the domination of Ottoman Turkish as a language and Anatolia as its geographical center. There are, of course, ego-documents in Arabic, Persian, Greek, Armenian, and Bulgarian, and specific terms in these languages to describe ego-documents. In a recent article Suraiya Faroqhi described this polyglot nature of Ottoman belles lettres and presented samples of particular ego-documents in these languages.⁷

In the case of Ottoman literature the terms “ego-document” and “self-narrative” can be employed interchangeably, and there seems to be no problem with using ego-document to describe Ottoman material. As an example of this, Susan C. Karant-Nunn offers material written by Martin Luther (d. 1546) and argues that this material is sufficiently personal to warrant using ego-document as the best word to describe it.⁸ The same may be said for the hundreds of dream letters written by Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–95) as well as the diary of Niyazi-i Mısri (d. 1694). The letters (*Kitabü'l-Menamat*) of Murad III (d. 1595) to Şeyh Şüca Dede (d. 1588), as well as the diary of the aforementioned 17th-century mystic, also are personal enough to use ego-document as the best term to describe them.⁹ Since there is, as yet, no inventory of Ottoman ego-documents, one may claim that there may be other accounts, such as those of Murad III and Mısri, in manuscript libraries in Turkey and abroad.¹⁰ As long as human beings have existed, be they Eastern or Western, they have given voice to their emotions. Why therefore is it necessary to associate the term “ego” exclusively with Freud? It is perfectly feasible to use the term in its literal meaning as the equivalent of the I-figure, without the baggage associated with it in psychology and psychoanalysis.

Scope

The scope of the term ego-document is a subject for debate in European historiography. Winfried Schulze's attempt to include even court interrogations under this name triggered one discussion that resulted in Schulze being accused of making the term amorphous.¹¹ The task is to determine what can and what cannot be considered an ego-document in an Ottoman context. For instance, can we include travelers' accounts as ego-documents? Is the extent to which Evliya Çelebi (d. 1684?), one of the most famous Ottoman travelers, talks about himself in his account of his travels enough to consider the work an ego-document?¹² Not in my opinion. The autobiographical elements scattered throughout

⁶See Erdal İnönü, *Anılar ve Düşünceler*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: İdea Yayınları, 1995); vol. 2 (Istanbul: Yorum Yayınları, 1998); and vol. 3 (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2001). I thank İsenbike Togan for bringing İnönü's memoirs to my attention, and showing that he mostly talks about the people around him rather than himself.

⁷Suraiya Faroqhi, “Padişahın Toplumsal ve Siyasal Seçkinlerle Karşı Karşıya Gelen Sıradan Tebaası: Hikayelerini Ortaya Çıkarabilir miyiz?” in *İmparatorluğun Öteki Yüzleri: Toplumsal Hiyerarşi ve Düzen Karşısında Sıradan Hayatlar*, ed. Fırat Yaşa (Istanbul: KÜY, 2020), 13–49.

⁸Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Personal Luther: Essays on the Reformer from a Cultural History Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 1 n1.

⁹*Kitabü'l-Menamat: Sultan III. Murad'ın Rüya Mektupları*, ed. Özgen Felek (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014).

¹⁰A recent discovery presents the deep sorrow of a clerk, Yazıcı Mustafa, upon the death of his son Muhammad in 1720. See Mustafa Demir, “Sergüzeşt-i Aşık Yazıcı Murtaza (İnceleme-Metin)” (MA thesis, Hitit University, 2020), 19, 49–50, 56–69.

¹¹Winfried Schulze, “Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte? Vorüberlegungen für die Tagung ‘Ego-Dokumente,’” in *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte*, ed. Winfried Schulze (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996), 11–30; quoted in von Greyerz, “Ego-Documents,” 279.

¹²Suraiya Faroqhi considers Evliya's account to be an ego-document. See her “Padişahın Toplumsal,” 16. In the same way, Okuyucu and Yazar assert that travelers' accounts are a subcategory of ego-documents, “the most common one.” See

the ten-volume account are neither chronological nor systematic.¹³ For instance, at some point in the Istanbul part of the account he names the artisans of Istanbul occupation by occupation, shop by shop. In the last part he talks about cities in Egypt, mosque by mosque, quarter by quarter. What motivates Evliya here is his aim to map the cities rather than to describe himself.¹⁴ An ego-document is motivated by the desire to write about oneself. The life narrative of a shaykh written down by a student in the shaykh's own words is not an ego-document. The creator and the subject of the text has to be the same person.¹⁵ Overall, every work contains something of its author, but this is not enough to make it an ego-document.

There also are genres that fall between the categories. For instance, some known texts describe places but also contain sufficient references to the author to lead specialists to call them autobiographical: Abdurrahman Bistami's (d. 1454) *Dürretü Tacir-Resail* (The Pearl in the Crown of Treatises) written in 1441–42, Yazıcı Murtaza's *Mecmua* (Collection) written between 1706 and 1709, and Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi's *Tevarih* (History) written in 1834 are examples of this.¹⁶ The last one here was published as the autobiography of Kabudlu by Jan Schmidt even though the author mainly writes about cities.¹⁷ The primary motivation of Kabudlu may not have been to write an ego-document and, on looking at such examples of secondary literature, it is apparent that the researchers had a hard time classifying certain works as belonging to a definite genre.

Form and Content

Form also is important in that it helps us to define the scope. The best, easiest, and most valuable ego-document to classify is one that is self-evident, that is, a document in which the motivation to write about self stretches from cover to cover. Other forms of ego-document exist, for example, partial ego-documents, that is, works in which authors only write about themselves on one page or block of pages anywhere in the document. As an example, in his voluminous *Süllemül-vüsul ila Tabakati'l-Fuhul* (Ladder Leading to the Strata of the Eminent), Katip Çelebi (Hajji Khalifa; d. 1657) inserted one page in which he talks about his life. The same is true of his *Cihannüma* (View of the World) and *Mizanül-hak fi İhtiyari'l-ehakk* (Scales of Truth in the Choice of the Righteous One).¹⁸ If

İntizami, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvan*, 28. Okuyucu and Yazar are generous enough to include embassy documents under this category. See İntizami, *Tuhfetü'l-İhvan*, 29.

¹³Mine Mengi emphasizes how hard it is to discover Evliya's ego in his works. See Mine Mengi, "Seyahatnamenin Otobiyografisi/Sergüzeşt-i Evliya Bölümleri," *Hikmet-Akademik Edebiyat Dergisi* 2, no. 5 (2016): 87–95.

¹⁴*Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, vol. 1, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul: YKY, 1996); vol. 2, ed. Zekeriya Kurşun, Seyit Ali Kahraman, and Yücel Dağlı (1999); vols. 3–4, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı (1999–2001); vol. 5, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, and İbrahim Sezgin (2001); vols. 6–7, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı (2002–2003); vols. 8–10, ed. Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, and Robert Dankoff (2003–2007).

¹⁵The "autobiographies" of the famous 16th-century architect Sinan (d. 1588) are an example. It is accepted that, even if they were not written by him, they were prepared under his direction or the narrative was dictated and taken down verbatim by a person such as his contemporary and friend Sai Mustafa Çelebi (d. 1595–96). See Uğur Tanyeli, *Mimar Sinan: Tarihsel ve Muhayyel* (Istanbul: Metis, 2020), 238–79. For the texts, see *Sinan's Autobiographies: Five Sixteenth-Century Texts, Introductory Notes, Critical Editions and Translations*, trans. Howard Crane and Esra Akin, ed. Gülrü Necipoğlu (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006).

¹⁶İhsan Fazlıoğlu, "İlk Dönem Osmanlı İlim ve Kültür Hayatında İhvan'ın-Safa ve Abdurrahman Bistami," *Divan: İlim Araştırmalar* 1, no. 2 (1996): 239; Yazıcı Murtaza, *Arnavutluk'tan Basra'ya 18. Yüzyılda Kayserili Bir Katibin Seyahat Anıları*, ed. Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2020). Even though Ertaş calls this a travel memoir, the author himself called his text a *mejmua* (13). Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi Efendi, *Tevarih (Analysis-Text-Maps-Index-Facsimile)*, ed. Ömer Koçyiğit (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 2016).

¹⁷Jan Schmidt, "The Adventures of an Ottoman Horseman: The Autobiography of Kabudlu Mustafa Vasfi Efendi, 1800–1825," in *The Joys of Philology: Studies in Ottoman Literature, History and Orientalism (1500–1923)*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: ISIS, 2002), 165–286.

¹⁸Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, "Katip Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 37 (2002): 302, 303, 306. For the translation of autobiography in *Süllemül-Vüsul* see also Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Kendi Hal-Tercümesi," in *Katip Çelebi'den Seçmeler* (Istanbul: Devlet Kitapları, 1968), 202–3; Houria Yekhelef, "Katip Çelebi ve *Süllemül-Vüsul'u*" (PhD diss., Ankara University, 1996), 22–23. Gökyay also includes *Fezleke* and *Keşf-üz-zunun*, where his life and memoirs appear intermittently. See Orhan Şaik Gökyay, *Katip Çelebi: Yaşamı, Kişiliği ve Yapıtlarından Seçmeler* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1982), 1.

we were to say autobiographical fragments found in miscellaneous works make them ego-documents, an Ottoman ego-document inventory would be endless.

If a manuscript contains scattered passages concerning the life of the author, caution has to be exercised in placing it in the category of ego-document. It has been proved that even chroniclers' accounts have sufficient autobiographical material to reveal the character of the author. Mehmet İpşirli showed this in detail in the case of chronicles such as *Tarih-i Selaniki* (Selaniki's [1563–1600] History), *Tevkii Abdurrahman Paşa Vekayinamesi* (Tevkii Abdurrahman Pasha Vekayinamesi's [1648–82] Chronicle), and especially *Tarih-i Peçevi* (Peçevi's [1520–1640] History).¹⁹ Sometimes we see personal details in the marginal notes of manuscripts. These works cannot be included in an ego-document inventory as, in an ego-document, personal details are to be discerned within the text itself. Any work can be studied from the perspective of an ego-document; in other words, one can search for traces of the author's ego within a text, but this does not make the work an ego-document.

In the context of the ego-document the title the author gives the work is very important. If a work is called a memoir by the author or has the possibility of being called a memoir, the motivation is to write about oneself. Such authors may mention their appointments to certain posts or remark on some other personal matter. Take Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa Efendi (d. 1736), who may mention his appointment to or dismissal from various positions.²⁰ We see, however, that he divided the pages in his notebook into thirty categories (days), so he obviously planned to write about his life on a daily basis. He aimed to produce a daily record of his life, whereas Evliya Çelebi's writings are to be evaluated in terms of the grand format of a travel document. One may claim that some chapters of the latter's account are to be treated as an ego-document. Would mention of himself to a great extent in the part concerning his travels, say, in Egypt, suffice to describe the genre as an ego-document rather than a traveler's account? The same may be asked of Katip Çelebi's *Süllemü'l-vüsul*, a book of biography (*tabaqāt*) in Arabic. To be able to describe a source as an ego-document by looking at its form is at least as important as looking at its content; otherwise we would start to sift through the content to compute how much space the authors devote to writing about themselves. If it is apparent from the form that the primary motive is to create an ego-document, then authors should be allowed to write about their lives and the life around them in any way they choose.

Literature to date

In Ottoman historiography, there are some works that have become part of the general world of ego-document research. Other material has, in one way or another, been discovered, transcribed, and published, partially or completely, but has not been integrated into ego-document research around the world.²¹ For example, Orhan Şaik Gökyay, a well-known specialist in the history of Ottoman literature, first discovered and transcribed some parts of Seyyid Hasan's (d. 1688) *Sohbetname*, but it was Cemal Kafadar who integrated *Sohbetname* into ego-document research throughout the world.²² Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, a renowned expert on the history of Turkish mysticism, was the first to make known the diary of Niyazi-i Misri, but it was Derin Terzioğlu who successfully related it to Sufi ego-documents and integrated it with European historiography.²³ Fazıl Işıközlü, an archival expert, first discovered the

¹⁹Mehmet İpşirli, "Osmanlı Vekâyiname Müelliflerinin Eserlerinde Kendileri Hakkında Verdikleri Bilgilerin Otobiyografik Değeri (XVI–XVII: Asırlara Ait Misaller)," in *XVII. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, vol. 4/1 (Ankara: TTK, 2018), 1–16.

²⁰Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711–1735) Üstüne Bir İnceleme* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013).

²¹Great credit goes to the person who first discovers new material, but integrating it into the research literature is of great importance for the particular discovery to find the place it deserves. If an ego-document is not related to world literature, and if it is not treated as a valuable source itself, then it becomes merely a source of information and not a source that has the potential to reveal the voice of an individual. For such a publication, I cite Kemal Beydilli's *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar ve Bir İmamın Günlüğü* (Istanbul: Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı, 2001).

²²Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Sohbetname," *Tarih ve Toplum* 14 (1985): 56–64; Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature," *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121–50.

²³Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "Niyazi-i Misri," *Şarkiyat Mecmuası* 7 (1972): 183–226; Derin Terzioğlu "Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyazi-i Misri (1618–94)," *Studia Islamica* 94 (2002): 139–65.

diary of Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa Efendi in the Ottoman archives and transcribed a few entries from it.²⁴ I myself published a book analyzing this source material.²⁵

Not all texts are that lucky. In Turkish historiography, many texts can be cited that were discovered years ago but have not yet received the attention they deserve, nor has a decent edition or analysis of these very interesting source materials been published. İsmet Parmaksızoğlu's article on the captivity memoir of Macuncuzade Mustafa Efendi is one such example.²⁶ Macuncuzade himself called his text *Bazgeşt-i Hakiri-i Malta: Sergüzeşt-i Esiri-i Malta* (Return of the Poor One of Malta: The Adventures of a Captive in Malta).²⁷ He was a qadı, a member of the scholarly class. His captivity occurred after he had been appointed qadı to the town of Paphos (Baf) in southern Cyprus. On his voyage there, he was captured by corsairs near Şirden Burnu (today known as Gelidonya Burnu in Antalya, Turkey) in 1597 and obliged to stay in Malta for more than two years.²⁸

Another nonmilitary captive was Abdi, a clerk of the imperial treasury who had been captured at exactly the same place seventy years earlier, in 1527, on his way from Reşid (Rosetta, a city 65 kilometers east of Alexandria in modern-day Egypt) to Antalya, Turkey. Abdi sent a lengthy twenty-one-page letter addressed to his brother explaining how the ransom money should be collected and who should be contacted for him to be freed.²⁹ Accompanied by his mother, he was taken under control of a Rhodian guard to the island of Sicily and imprisoned in a castle in Messina.

A long list of captivity memoirs can be given, but it is not the aim of this article to provide an exhaustive list.³⁰ An interesting captivity memoir is the one by Hindi Mahmud, who was captured by Crusaders

²⁴Fazıl Işıközlü, "Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivinde yeni bulunmuş olan ve Sadreddin Zade telhisi Mustafa Efendi tarafından tutulduğu anlaşılan H. 1123(1711)–1148(1735) yıllarına ait bir Ceride (Jurnal) ve Eklentisi," in *7. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, vol. 2 (Ankara: TTK, 1973), 508–34.

²⁵Karahasanoglu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü*.

²⁶As he himself revealed his identity: "Macuncuzade abd-i fakir, Kadı-i Baf, Mustafa-yı fakir." See Istanbul Hacı Selim Ağa Manuscript Library, Kemankeş, no. 234, 135a; İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, "Bir Türk Kadısının Esaret Hatıraları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 5, no. 8 (1953), 77–84. Fahir İz adapted the manuscript to printed Ottoman Turkish: Fahir İz, "Macuncuzade Mustafa'nın Malta Anıları: Sergüzeşt-i Esiri-i Malta," in *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yılığ: Belleten 1970* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1971), 69–122. Cemil Çiftçi adapted the text to modern Turkish; see Macuncuzade Mustafa Efendi, *Malta Esirleri: Ser-Güzeşt-i Esiri-i Malta*, ed. Cemil Çiftçi (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1996). For the original manuscript, see Istanbul Hacı Selim Ağa Manuscript Library, no. 234, 135a–162a. "Makale-i Zindancı Mahmud Kapudan" suffers from the same fate. Fahir İz seems to have had a certain interest in this kind of material, as he introduced another captivity narrative by freeman Yusuf and again adapted the original manuscript to Ottoman Turkish and had it printed. See Fahir İz, "Makale-i Zindancı Mahmud Kapudan," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 14 (1964): 111–50. Even though İz did not say much about this manuscript or try to define its genre, in subsequent literature it is cataloged among Ottoman captivity memoirs. This has to be taken cautiously. If freeman Yusuf is the narrator here and writes about somebody other than himself, in this case Zindancı Mahmud Kapudan, then this should not be treated as an ego-document. The narrative can be considered the story of Yusuf's own life from the time of his being kept in Alexandria due to severe weather conditions and afterward being conveyed to an island. After being released from the island by the coming of a corsair ship, Mahmud Kapudan appears and then Yusuf somehow becomes invisible. Moreover, another Yusuf, called slave Yusuf in the story, complicates everything. We do not know whether there is another Yusuf on the ship or whether, at some point in the narrative, Yusuf switches from first person to third. Of course, in the process of copying manuscripts the narrative may have undergone changes, and these points are hard to resolve. Yusuf's journey from Alexandria started in 1674, and the account we have today was copied in 1745. We cannot know at what points our copyist Süleyman bin Halil el-Giridi intervened and blurred certain details. Finally, this is not a standard captive's tale containing a master-slave narrative, but rather a corsair tale of the sea with a heavily fictive tone. Cemil Çiftçi adapted this text to modern Turkish: Yusuf Efendi, *Mahmut Kaptan'ın Anıları*, ed. Cemil Çiftçi (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 1996). For the original manuscript see Istanbul Köprülü Library, Hafız Ahmed Paşa, no. 214/2, 70a–108b.

²⁷Hacı Selim Ağa Library, Kemankeş, no. 234, 135a.

²⁸"Şilden Burnu" in Piri Reis's (d. 1553) *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. See Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Bülent Özükan (İstanbul: Boyut, 2013), 330–1.

²⁹Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Turc 223. The letter is between folios 61a and 71b in the manuscript entitled *Recueil de traités sur la correspondance officielle*. Halil Sahillioğlu, "Akdeniz'de Korsanlara Esir Düşen Abdi Çelebi'nin Mektubu," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 13, no. 17–18 (1962–63): 241–56. Sahillioğlu presents a full, professional transcription of this material but there is more needed to place this material in the genre of captivity narrative.

³⁰Irvin Cemil Schick is not being fair when he says that non-Westerners did not produce captivity narratives because there was no audience in those countries and no printing press to feed such an audience. He confines himself to citing the works of Temeşvarlı and Macuncuzade. See *Avrupalı Esireler ve Müslüman Efendileri: "Türk" İllerinde Esaret Anlatıları*, ed. İrvin

during the battle of Lepanto in 1571 and wrote his memoirs in verse in Rome. Traces of Hindi's account first came to light in 1960, but the text itself could not be positively located. Ahmet Karataş later found this account in Edirne in the Selimiye Manuscript Library and professionally transcribed it.³¹ A very well-known and relatively better-studied captivity narrative by Temeşvarlı Osman Ağa, who was captured in 1688 by Austrians in Lippa (Lipova), has been presented on its own in this roundtable (see Aksoy Sheridan's contribution). Another post-1683 captivity memoir, that of the Janissary Süleyman, found in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, is interesting in both form and content. It is in dialogue format and does not really reflect the tribulations of a captive, but seems more like an embassy document or the memoir of an Ottoman guest in Paris.³² A quick search through European libraries will provide us with more of such narratives.

Some other publications worth mentioning are those by Aslı Niyazioğlu, Özgen Felek, and Dana Sajdi. As well as several articles, Niyazioğlu contributed greatly to Ottoman dream literature with her monograph, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective*.³³ Özgen Felek contributed to the same field with her publication of the dream letters of Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–95), *Kitabü'l-Menamat* (Book of Dreams).³⁴ Rather than relying on Ahmad Izzat Abd al-Karim's 1959 edition of *Hawadith Dimashq al-Sha'm al-Yawmiyya* (The Daily Events of Damascus), Dana Sajdi first worked on the original Dublin version of this interesting 18th-century diary of a barber, Ibn Budayr from Damascus.³⁵

A Genre?

Even at this early stage there are instances that enable one to talk of a genre or even genres of ego-documents in Ottoman literature.³⁶ Ottoman intellectuals were very familiar with the genre in previous Arabic and Islamic writings. While writing his own autobiography Katip Çelebi was well aware of that of Celeleddin es-Süyuti (d. 1505), as well as of others.³⁷ He cites the names of several Arab and Ottoman writers who wrote autobiographies, seemingly as a justification for writing his own. In the same way as his predecessors, he embodies this justification for daring to write, especially to write about the self, as an expression of his gratitude to God for all the blessings he bestows.³⁸ This is of benefit in that it leads him to list the preceding sources he had in mind when considering continuing in this genre. Coşkun rightfully points out that many Ottoman writers justified their desire to write by receiving encouragement from external sources and the convincing persuasion of friends.³⁹

Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2005), 9 n2. In 2005, several more captivity narratives were found, as elaborated in the present article.

³¹Hindi Mahmud, *Sergüzeştname-i Hindi Mahud: İnebahtı Gazisi Hindi Mahmud ve Esaret Hatıraları, Beyan Ola Cihanda Sergüzeştüm (İnceleme-Tıpkıbasım)*, ed. Ahmet Karataş (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2013), 13–14.

³²Kafadar, "Self and Others," 132–33. For a version of the entire text in Turkish using the Latin alphabet, see Belkis Altunış Gürsöy, "Siyasetname Hüviyetinde Bir Esaretname," *Erdem* 60 (2011): 77–141.

³³Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2017).

³⁴See footnote 9.

³⁵Al-Hallaq Ahmad al-Budayri, *Hawadith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya, 1154–1175*, ed. Ahmad 'Izzat 'Abd al-Karim (Cairo: Matba'at al-Jam'iya al-Misriyya li-l-Dirasat al-Tarikiyya, 1959); Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013). Long before the publication her book, Sajdi introduced the original manuscript from Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. See Dana Sajdi, "A Room of His Own: The 'History' of the Barber of Damascus (fl. 1762)," *MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (2003).

³⁶My talks with Derin Terzioğlu in Berlin in 2016–17 helped shape my ideas, especially as to whether the material was a genre or even multiple genres in Ottoman literature.

³⁷Sarıcaoğlu, "Katib Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," 298–99; Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Katip Çelebi: Hayatı-Şahsiyeti-Eserleri," in *Katip Çelebi: Hayatı ve Eserleri Hakkında İncelemeler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 3. For Süyuti's autobiography see Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 202–7. For Katip Çelebi taking Süyuti as a model, see Sarıcaoğlu, "Katib Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," 299 n6.

³⁸For this justification, see Sarıcaoğlu, "Katib Çelebi'nin Otobiyografileri," 302.

³⁹Vildan Serdaroğlu Coşkun, *"Sergüzeştüm Güzel Hikayettür": Zaifi'nin Sergüzeştame'si*, 2nd ed. (Istanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2013), 18. Writers seemed to need to emphasize that they did not aim for self-praise when sharing experiences of their life

I myself studied the diary of Sadreddinzade Telhisi Mustafa Efendi and saw that Sadreddinzade himself described this material as a *ceride*. It seems that this term refers to a kind of notebook that records daily events happening around a particular individual and contains entries both personal and general in nature. In Sadreddinzade's account there are indeed many nonpersonal entries (one-quarter of which are news of appointments and dismissals). Sadreddinzade's noting the appointments of qadis throughout the whole Ottoman Empire can be considered normal, in that the world of a qadi is wholly concerned with the idea of obtaining a further appointment. A century later, a person named Sadık somehow acquired Sadreddinzade's diary, again calling it a *ceride*. Not satisfied with commenting on several entries by Sadreddinzade, Sadık very interestingly wrote his own diary with exactly the same format and content on pages that Sadreddinzade had prepared and but did not live long enough to fill. Sadık's motivation and desire to write his own diary on the blank pages of Sadreddinzade are evidence that the Ottoman literati were familiar with such a genre and eager to contribute to it.⁴⁰

In 1977, Madeline C. Zilfi discovered the diary of the religious scholar (*müderri*s) Sıdkı Mustafa, (d. 1790–1), qadi in Janina.⁴¹ And recently Semra Çörekçi discovered the diary of his grandson, Sıdkızade Mustafa Hamid (d. ca. 1850), qadi in Eyüp, Egypt (*qadi al-qudat* or chief qadi in Egypt, residing in Cairo) and Mecca.⁴² The extent to which the grandson's diary resembles his grandfather's in both form and content is astonishing. This shows that the grandson knew of his grandfather's diary and, more importantly, thought that writing in such a genre was worthy of being continued. İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnal (1871–1957) was the person who cataloged the diary of Sıdkı Mustafa as a *yevmiye*, from an Arabic word meaning diary (*yawmiyya*), in the Rare Manuscripts Library of Istanbul University. It is possible that İnal made a connection in his mind with the Arab diary genre in naming this text a *yevmiye*. İbnülemin himself wrote an ego-document, a dream notebook.⁴³ He represents an intellectual born during the time of the Ottoman Empire who later became a citizen of the Turkish Republic that replaced it. This also is true of Orhan Şaik Gökyay (1902–94). He had a certain interest in Ottoman ego-documents and he wrote his own autobiography in Ottoman Turkish.⁴⁴ Of course, these late Ottoman-early Republican intellectuals were not rootless “moderns” and benefited from their “early modern” antecedents.

Conclusion

When talking about the rarity of ego-documents in early modern times one has to think about the issues of limited circulation as well as the availability and cost of paper. We are talking here about the preindustrial production of paper. The first papermaking factory in the Ottoman Empire was established in Yalova in 1741 and survived for, at most, about ten to fifteen years.⁴⁵ The fact that there are relatively few ego-documents from early modern times may be related to practical reasons, such as the limited availability of paper and limited circulation, rather than the idea of oneself being an unworthy subject to write about.

Regarding the concept of self as important is common to all human beings. Even in the earliest times humans had a certain consciousness of self. To produce an ego-document, a certain level of self-

journeys. See `Ali Öztürk, “Bir Sufi Otobiyografisi: Şah Veli Ayıntabi'nin (v. 1013/1605[?]) er-Rihletü's-Seniyye'si,” *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 20, no. 2 (2020): 696.

⁴⁰Karahasanoglu, *Kadi ve Günlüğü*. At the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, Imam Hafız Mehmed Efendi also described his diary as a *ceride*. See Beydilli, *Osmanlı Döneminde İmamlar*.

⁴¹Madeline C. Zilfi, “The Diary of a Müderri: A New Source for Ottoman Biography,” *Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1977): 157–74.

⁴²Semra Çörekçi, “A Methodological Approach to Early Modern Self-Narratives: Representations of the Self in an Ottoman Context (1720s–1820s)” (PhD diss., Istanbul Medeniyet University, forthcoming). Çörekçi is working on a number of brand new sources. For her take on the understudied dream book of Kulakzade Mahmud Pasha (d. 1745), chief administrative official (*mutasarrıf*) for Awlonya (Vlorë), see her contribution to this roundtable. This source has been cited previously in several publications but without the author identified.

⁴³İbrahim Öztürkçü, *İbnülemin'in Rüyalari* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2018).

⁴⁴Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, Centre for Islamic Studies, Orhan Şaik Gökyay Evrakı, OŞG-1: *Gökyay'ın Otobiyografisinin Yer Aldığı Defterler ve Belgeler* (1930).

⁴⁵Osman Ersoy, *XVIII. ve XIX. Yüzyıllarda Türkiye'de Kağıt* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1963), 31–36.

consciousness is imperative, for it is impossible to create any personal text within a void. In closing, it also might be said that ego-documents should not be treated within the context of any specific religious or secular culture—Christian, Muslim, Western or Eastern—but should be treated as products of human beings within a global context.