

structured along the notion of Holy War or *gaza*; it has also been argued, in sharp contrast, that the concepts of Holy War and of the *gazi* warrior were imposed much later on a group of tribal soldiery with syncretistic mentality; still others have suggested that the notion of *gaza* had connotations more similar to plunder than to religion. Certainly, by Orhan's reign a settled economy, state-like administration, and layer of educated scholars offering their services in a competition with heterodox dervishes, had already emerged; among these scholars, Byzantine sources even record Jewish and Christian renegades able to engage in debates on the superiority of the Muslim faith.<sup>6</sup> One may certainly argue that the conflict between the old warriors who were trying to defend their interests, on the one hand, and incoming scholars seeking to impose the imperial visions of the Persian and Seljuk traditions, on the other, was the ideological representation of this political and social conflict between the *gazi* (or *akıncı*, if one prefers this term) military environment and the expanding imperial hierarchy, which was becoming increasingly powerful in the Ottoman state at the time.

As such, the first section of this chapter seeks to detect the political ideas of the former in a somewhat reversed way, by examining the opposition to Mehmed II's imperial plans after the capture of Constantinople. Indeed, in the plethora of general histories composed during the reign of his successor, Bayezid II, almost all bear the mark of this sultan's "reactionary" policy (the term belongs to Halil İnalçık); although none speak ill of Mehmed II, they tend to obliquely criticize his imperial policy and what they perceive to have been his "greediness", by which they mean his seizure of private and *vakf* (*waqf*) lands and their transformation into "state" land (*miri*).<sup>7</sup> These measures, as will be seen in the following chapter, harmed both the old warlords and the dervishes, i.e. exactly the groups that had emerged in the first period of the emirate and which were struggling to keep pace following the establishment of an administrative and ulema hierarchy.

6 Vryonis 1971, 426ff.; Zachariadou 1992; Balivet 1993.

7 İnalçık 1962, 164–165 (but cf. the cautionary remarks by Mengüç 2013). On this transformation see Özel 1999 (recapitulating the older literature), who argues that the reform had a fiscal rather than a land character. Özel also maintains, based on a register of the Amasya region, that the scope of the reform was much smaller than is usually thought, but admits (243) that the image may be different as far as it concerns the Western Anatolian and Balkan lands.

## I Opposition to Imperial Policies as an Indicator of *Gazi* Political Ideas

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Apart from a few Byzantine authors, there are no contemporaneous sources for the first, formative years of the Ottoman Emirate, a lacuna that has led scholars such as Colin Imber to speak of "a black hole" concerning early Ottoman history.<sup>8</sup> With the exception of some anonymous chronicles (*takvim*), the oldest extant narrative of Ottoman history is the account by Yahşi Fakih, son of Orhan's imam. This deals with events up to the time of Bayezid I (1389–1402) and was incorporated into Aşıkpaşazade's Ottoman history, composed towards the end of the fifteenth century. Aşıkpaşazade included Yahşi Fakih's chronicle in his work (Aşıkpaşazade had been a guest in Yahşi Fakih's house in Geyve during an illness in 1413) and supplemented it with a continuation up to 1478, while around the same time Uruc Bey (as well as an anonymous "History of the House of Osman") seems to have used a summary of it, along with other sources (mainly folk narratives centered around specific *gazis* or saints, *evliya* and *dede*), to compose his own chronicle. Aşıkpaşazade's and Oruç's additions, which cover most of the fifteenth century, seem to stem from different sets of sources, with the former more reliant on his own, personal experiences. On the other hand, Halil İnalçık showed that the second-earliest extant source, Ahmedî's *İskendernâme* (composed between 1403 and 1410), used another, now lost narrative, on which other mid- or late fifteenth-century authors such as Şükru'llah, Ruhi, and Neşri also relied.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1 *Yahşi Fakih and Aşıkpaşazade*

Thus, our first written sources for the ideas circulating during the early phase of the Ottoman Emirate are Yahşi Fakih's chronicle (as far as we can discern it from Aşıkpaşazade's history), on the one hand, and Ahmedî's versified history, on the other, both of which were composed soon after the defeat at Ankara. These sources are very different from each other, in regards to both the milieu in which they originated and their expected audience. The first is a product of the old generation of *gazi* fighters, and thus seeks to praise their role in the formation of the Ottoman Emirate and to cement their place in the structure of the empire-in-the-making, while the second is a product of a former courtier of another emirate (the Germiyan) who wished to secure his position in

8 Imber 1993.

9 On early Ottoman historiography see the detailed accounts by İnalçık 1962, Ménage 1962, and Ménage 1964.