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A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism by Bobby S. Sayyid (London and New York: Zed Books, 1997). Pp.185. $19.95 (paper). ISBN 1856494128.

Hauntology has been employed to explain a problematic succession of power. Jacques Derrida's use of the concept owes much to the psychoanalytical approach of Jacques Lacan on funeral procedures in various cultures. In this sense, a ghost is something that has passed away from this world yet still retains some connection with it, perhaps returning to take vengeance on those who violated its rights when it was alive or during the funeral ceremonies. In addition, the ghost may be merely a perception of wrongdoing, like the remorse suffered by a murderer or fear of the victim's return. Unjust appropriation can increase this effect, with the ghost as a natural product of

guilt. This concept can be useful in discussing the long-term effects of the Ottoman or Islamic legacy on Turkey. The Ottoman identity was suppressed together with all its components, the Islamic one in particular.

One becomes inclined to think in this way while reading Bobby S. Sayyid's fascinating approaches in *Fundamental Fear*, for he employs a kind of hauntology to conceptualize some Western moods in the context of the Islamic revival. For Sayyid, Islam is something that should have passed away with the modernist declaration of the death of God. It almost represents the revival of something eliminated from history since the end of the First World War. One important consequence of this world is the defeat of the Ottoman state and the elimination of its Islamic character through abolishing the caliphate and some other Islamic institutions. In this way Islam was deprived of the organic elements that constituted the conditions of its bodily existence. This resulted in marking Islam with a condition of disembodiment, like some kind of body without organs. This also determined a diasporic mood among Muslims, which underlined all political discourses of Islamic movements. On some occasions it seems to be articulated by a jargon of a revenge to be taken on the West as its murderer.

According to Sayyid, the most important part of conceiving Islamic revival (does not the term "revival" contain connotations of a "ghost"?) as a kind of ugly ghost is caused by some inner anxieties in Europe about the revival of God whose death had been tragically declared by the triumph of modernity (Nietzsche).

> The West sees in Islam the distorted mirror of its own past. It marks the rebirth of the God they had killed so that Man could live. The Islamic resurgence marks the revenge of God; it signals the return of faith, the return of all that puts into question the idea of the progressive liberation of humanity [p.4].

That is why it should be characterized by a "*Fundamental Fear*." It is very akin to the murderer's fear of the revival of his victim.

In Sayyid's study, the best Western instrument for eliminating the Islamic political body has been Kemalism, which was practiced first in Turkey and constituted a model for all Islamic countries. The abolishment of the Caliphate in Turkey rendered it very significant in terms of being the alternative center for the Eurocentric world-view order. In his very profound outlook at the process, Sayyid identifies the ambiguity within the conception of Islam(s) in revival. After a penetrating analysis of the plurality of the conception of Islam, trying to question the claims for or debates about the authenticity within all these kinds, Sayyid concludes that Islam represents a "master-signifier" for Muslims—it represents everything that is "good." It also provides the Muslims with a vocabulary for resisting against everything "bad."

Sayyid's work concerns us because of his insistence on Turkey as the "site of the ghost" that is to revive from the spirit of the Ottoman political body. His contribution to the hauntological literature is maintained by Şaban H. Çalış in his recent book *Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler*. Çalış, too, proposes to employ a hauntological vocabulary to understand what is happening in the recent formation of the Turkish international role and debate. With the end of the cold war and the emergence of new possibilities in Euro-Asia, the former hinterland of the Ottoman Empire witnessed a parallel emergence of a kind of Neo-Ottomanism. Having being pronounced so evidently by Turgut Özal, it also deserved to be named Özalism. It implied that Turkey aspired to penetrate once again the areas formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire.

Çalış, however is not complaining about the specters of the Ottoman. Employing Derrida's work, he concludes that we always need a version of the Ottoman image or, if not, at least one of its ghosts. Just as Derrida declared the need for a Marxist image, or at least for one of the specters of Marx, in order to be able to cope with the apparent triumph of liberalism, Çalış draws attention to the social calling for the spirit of the Ottoman in Turkish society. In this sense, the specter is not something to be feared but to be asked for help. Yet in Çalış's hauntology, there is also something wrong in such a call, as it becomes an idealization of the Ottoman Empire and a Golden Age, which is supposed to return and solve our problems. Çalış claims that such imaginations of the Ottoman are natural consequences of the existing social-economical and intellectual crisis of Turkish society, but provide no plausible framework for any useful historiography of its Ottoman past. Indeed, what we need is a functional spirit/ghost of the Ottoman that would improve, acquiring a "good level" in the direction of human or political development.

Çalış's work about the proliferation of discourses on Ottoman history comes out of the rich campaign of stimulating interest that followed the 700th anniversary of its foundation, celebrated magnificently in Turkey in 1999. However, the foundation of modern Turkey was based on the corpse of the Ottoman state. There has always been a tense relationship between the buried Ottoman and the gravedigger Republic in Turkey, whose own 75th anniversary was celebrated the previous year. The Ottoman state was the symbolic capital for opponents of the Republican regime; the Republic forged a new identify on a negative image of the Ottoman identity.

This confrontation is, in fact, a matter of the present, with views of Ottoman history based on current issues and ideas. Those who seek a highly centralized, strong state in Turkey imagine a homogeneous structure in Ottoman society. Those who wish to build a civil society draw attention to Ottoman tolerance toward different social, religious, ethnic and cultural elements. The studies of both Sayyid and Çalış shed light on the formation of these specters rather than themselves trying to judge among them.

YASİN AKTAY
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