

Muslim-Christian Borders during the Modern Age

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The creation of shared borders between sovereign states means that both rulers acknowledge the possibility of living in peace with their neighbour and admit the right of the other to exist. From a Muslim point of view, the creation of a border with an infidel country means that the Muslim ruler has set aside the strict dichotomy between the notions of *dār al-Islām*, the abode of Islam, and the *dār al-ḥarb*, the abode of war. According to this thesis the world is divided into two parts fighting each other and only a truce (*hudna*) can interrupt the war between them for some while. However, in the end, the *dār al-Islām* will win, while the *dār al-ḥarb* will disappear. Little by little, after the great period of Islamic expansion, which took place before 1000 AD, the model of Muslim everlasting expanding frontier was set aside, while infidel armies began to win regularly the warriors of Islam. In the Middle Ages, in Spain, for instance, a line of fortifications (the *tuḡur al-muslimīn*) was created against the expanding Christian frontier even if no real borderline was then created.¹

The idea of a Muslim border with an infidel land appeared later, in the Modern Age, when almost all the Islamic part of the Mediterranean Sea belonged to the Ottoman sultan. In 1517 Selim I conquered the whole kingdom of Egypt, which comprehended also Syria, Palestine and the Holy cities of Mecca and Medina. In 1518 the pirate Hayreddin gave him Algiers, receiving the government of that region and the title of *beylerbeyi* (governor) in exchange. At the end of a long war with the Habsburgs, in 1574, also Tunis became definitely Ottoman

1 E. Manzano Moreno, *La Frontera de al-Andalus en epoca de los Omeyas*, Madrid 1991; T. Bianquis, *Les frontières de la Syrie au XIe siècle*, in *Castrum 4. Frontière et Peuplement dans le Monde Méditerranéen au Moyen Âge*, Rome-Madrid 1992, pp. 135-150; A. Miquel, *La perception de la frontière chez les Géographes arabes d'avant l'an Mil*, in *Castrum 4*, pp. 129-133; M. Bonner, *The Naming of the Frontier: 'Awāšim, Thughūr, and the Arab Geographers*, «Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies», 57/1 (1994), pp. 17-24; E. Manzano Moreno, *Christian-Muslim Frontier in al-Andalus: Idea and Reality*, in *The Arab Influence in Medieval Europe*, ed. by D.A. Agius-R. Hitchcock, Reading 1994, pp. 83-99; P. Sénac, *Islam et chrétienté dans l'Espagne du haut Moyen Âge: la naissance d'une frontière*, «Studia islamica», (1999), pp. 91-108; E. Manzano Moreno, *The Creation of a Medieval Frontier: Islam and Christianity in the Iberian Peninsula, Eight to Eleventh Centuries*, in *Frontiers in Question, Eurasian Borderlands 700-1700*, ed. by D. Power - N. Standen, London, Macmillan Press, 1999, pp. 32-35; P. Sénac, *La frontière et les hommes (VIIIe-XIIe siècle). Le peuplement musulman au nord de l'Ebre et les débuts de la reconquête aragonaise*, Paris 2000, pp. 109-114; K. Ota, *Migration and Islamisation in the Early Islamic Period: the Arab-Byzantine Border Area*, in *The Concept of Territory in Islamic Law and Thought*, ed. by H. Yanagihashi, London-New York 2000, pp. 87-99.

land. Only Morocco remained out of the sultan's reach. Thus, in order to speak of Muslim Mediterranean lands in the Modern Age one has to take into consideration, first of all, the Ottoman Empire.

For a long period scholars said that Ottomans have not agreed to create a real borderline with another state till the peace of Karlowitz in 1699.² They stated that till that period the Ottoman Empire had only an active expansion frontier and that the idea of a border came from Europe. Paul Wittek's argument that the Ottomans remained the guardians of the spirit of *gāzīs* (the warriors on the frontiers of Islam) for centuries, even when they reached the core of Europe, probably influenced this perception. After the Second World War, Wittek became the most authoritative scholar in Ottoman history and his students, who filled almost all the scanty posts in this discipline in Europe and USA, avoided intellectual criticism against his ideas. Only after his death, in 1978, the so-called «*gāza thesis*» began to be blamed and the pragmatic behaviour of the first Ottomans began to be praised. However, scholars went on studying above all the Habsburg-Ottoman zone, which was really an expanding frontier from both sides till the end of the 17th century. A series of fortress existed in the Ottoman land, while, in front of it, the Emperor created the *militärgrenze*, that is to say a military zone inhabited by soldiers, with their families, who had the task of protecting the Empire from every attack coming from the Muslim side.³ Scholars' perception of the Ottoman frontier changed when they began to focus on the Venetian-Ottoman relations. At this point, historiography discovered that, since the second half of the 15th century, the sultans created sea and land borders with some of their neighbouring states. At the end of the 17th century, after the peace of Karlowitz (1699), when a new Habsburg-Ottoman border was created, only the complete closure of Ottoman lands was achieved.⁴

To live in peace with their neighbours Ottomans developed the concept of *dār al-'ahd* (the abode of the covenant) or *dār al-ṣulḥ* (the abode of peace). It referred to territories conquered by Muslims whose inhabitants has established an agreement with the new rulers and accepted to pay them taxes (usually a collective *ḥarāğ*, or capitation tax), on keeping local autonomy. The *dār al-'ahd* was included within the *dār al-Islām*, even if it was different from it, because it could easily become *dār al-ḥarb*. This category was created by some late Medieval al-

2 Rifaat A. Abou-El-Haj, *The Formal Closure of the Ottoman Frontier in Europe: 1699-1703*, «Journal of the American Oriental Society», 89/3 (1969), pp. 467-475; C. Heywood, *The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths*, in *Frontiers in Question*, pp. 228-250.

3 G. Ágoston, *The Ottoman-Habsburg Frontier in Hungary (1541-1699): a Comparison*, in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*, I, pp. 287-296; N. Moacanin, *Some observations on the "kapudans" in the Ottoman Northwestern frontier area 16-18 c.*, in *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica*, Wien 1999, pp. 241-246; G. Pálffy, *The Origin and Development of the Border Defence System against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (up to the early Eighteenth Century)*, in *Ottomans, Hungarians and Habsburgs in Central Europe. The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, ed. by G. Dávid and P. Fodor, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2000, pp. 3-70; K. Hegyi, *The Ottoman Network of Fortresses in Hungary*, in *ibidem*, pp. 163-194.

4 M.P. Pedani, *Dalla frontiera al confine*, Roma, 2002, pp. 39-58.

Šāfi'ī theorists. Ottomans were mainly hanafi, but in this specific field they seem to follow al-Šāfi'ī's school of *fiqh*.⁵ Thus, they could admit autonomous principalities within their Empire, such as Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania. Even small places, such as the city of Dubrovnik or the island of Chios, could retain their autonomy by paying special taxes. The former paid 500 ducats p.a. in the 14th century for permission to trade, 1,000 ducats p.a. in 1440 as tribute, 1,500 in 1459, 9,000 in 1471 and 12,500 before 1579. The latter paid 4,000 ducats p.a. in 1415, 6,000 in 1453 and 10/12,000 by 1558. In the 16th c. even the Hasburgs gave 30,000 ducats to the sultan every year for Imperial Hungary.⁶

In the 16th century Ottomans legal thought went on further and every foreign state that paid a tribute, even it was given only to have the possibility of trading, was officially considered part of the Ottoman Empire. The foreign ruler did not obviously imagined to be part of the *Memaliki Mahruse* (the Imperial divinely protected dominions). This theory explains some words used in Ottoman letters addressed to foreign rulers. For instance Süleyman the Magnificent wrote a *name-i hümayun* (imperial letter) to Francis I, *France vilâyeti'nin kralı* (the king of the province of France), while the *doge* of Venice was sometimes called *zabit* (official) by Ottomans, *harāğ* was the tribute paid by the Most Serene Republic while *fethinames* (letters announcing the sultan's victories) were sent to Venice as well as *beylerbeyis* or voivodas of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania. This could be because France had asked for the sultan's help, while Venice non only used to pay large sums of money to obtain free access to Ottoman markets but had also to deliver a yearly tribute to the sultan for the island of Cyprus and Zante (Zakynthos). These lands were officially part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1427 king Janus Lusignan (1398-1432) of Cyprus was held prisoner in Cairo and to gain freedom he was compelled to pay 8.000 ducats in cloths every year to the Mamluks. The following rulers inherited this obligation: in fact in 1489 queen Caterina Cornaro gave the island to the Republic of Venice which went on paying the tribute first to the Mamluks and then, after 1517, to the Ottomans. On the other hand, Zakynthos was delivered to Venice by Bayezid II in 1484 in exchange of 500 ducats every year; in 1573 they became 1,500; only in 1699, with the peace of Karlowitz this tribute was suppressed and the island became Venetian under every aspect.⁷

In Ottoman a borderline was called *sınır*, with a word of Greek origin, or *hudud*, from the Arabic, and the documents issued by the sultan to establish a border are called *sınırname* and

5 M.P. Pedani, *La dimora della pace*, Venezia, 1996, pp. 6-7; D. Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 2002, p. 46; M.P. Pedani, *The Border from the Ottoman Point of View*, in *Tolerance and Intolerance on the Triplex Confinium. Approaching the 'Other' on the Borderlands Eastern Adriatic and beyond 1500-1800*, edited by E. Ivetic and D. Roksandic, Padova, 2007, pp. 195-214.

6 D.E. Pitcher, *An Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire*, Leiden, 1972, p. 133.

7 M.P. Pedani, *Le prime "sottoscrizioni a coda" dei tesoriери nell'impero ottomano*, «Quaderni di Studi Arabi», 8 (1990), pp. 215-228; M.S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili (Diplomatik)*, İstanbul, 1994, p. 150; M.P. Pedani, *La dimora della pace*, p. 38.

hududname. The first word is the most ancient one and it was used in the 15th century imperial documents, but in the 16th century it refers above all to «international» borders, while *hudud* was used for inner borders between regions or provinces of the Empire⁸

The first Ottoman-Venetian border agreements were made in the second half of the 15th century. The praxis developed slowly. In the most ancient period the sultan used to send one of his men to establish it and then he issued an imperial letter about this subject, called *sınırname* or *hududname*. Later, according to the European praxis, a joint commission began to be created by the two rulers, to go on the spot and decide where the borderline had to pass. The first Ottoman-Venetian borders were established in Mora, but then they were created also between the Ottoman provinces of Bosna and Rumeli and the Venetian Dalmatia and Albania. Three borderlines were created in 1671 (the so-called Nani border), 1701 (Grimani border) and 1721 (Mocenigo border). In Venetian sources they were called with the family names of the Venetian official charged of establishing them: Battista Nani, Giovanni Grimani and Alvise III Mocenigo. The difference between them is only of some kilometres in some places and they were used, after the dissolution of old Republic of Jugoslavia, to establish the borders among the new states which were created in 1992.

The task of an Ottoman-Venetian border joint commission was to establish the border, to mark the line and to produce official documents, and eventually maps. First of all, the nature of the land itself could suggest the place where establish a borderline. Only at the beginning of the 20th century, British and French politicians agreed on establishing borders for the new states they were creating in the Middle East by drawing a line on a map by means of a ruler, careless of mountain, rivers, houses and peoples living there. Only at the end of the same century new walls were created to divide countries in a definitive way. In ancient times a river or a mountain was often chosen as borderline since it could not be moved even if the place was not controlled by a state for years. Usually the line run in the middle of a river, half way from both sides. A mountain too could be chosen to sign a border. In this case the commission often agreed to establish the line on its edge, when it was impossible to reach the top, even if some marks were usually left at its feet. This was the case of the Venetian-Habsburg agreement of 1778 about the Marmolada glacier. The joint commission drove some stone pillars at the feet of the mountain, but in the written document it clearly said that it meant the edge.⁹ In the

8 M.P. Pedani, *The Ottoman-Venetian Frontier*, in *The Great Ottoman Turkish Civilization*, ed. by K. Çiçek, 4 voll. Ankara, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 171-177; D. Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th-18th century). An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2000, p. 58.

9 Venetian State Archives, *Commemoriali*, reg. 33, c. 57; *I libri Commemoriali della Reubblica di Venezia. Regesti*, a cura di R. Predelli - P. Bosmin, 8 voll., Venezia 1876-1914, vol. 33, n. 13 all.

'90s of the 20th century two Italian provinces, Veneto and Trentino, began to quarrel about the property of this glacier and its important touristic resources, founding their rights on the ancient borderline between the Republic of Venice and the Habsburg Empire. Trentino won the trial on showing the ancient pillars still on the ground. Nobody thought of reading ancient documents and Veneto lost, even if the Marmolada once belonged to the Most Serene Republic and not to the Habsburgs.

It is interesting to note that, by chance or not, some devices used by Ottomans to sign a line could find an explanation in ancient Turkish customs. In origin Turks were nomads and for this reason a very important symbol of their ancient religion was the pike: once driven into the ground it created a circular holy zone all around it and put in contact the Earth with the everlasting Heaven. A population settled in a town or a village could build temples to worship God, but nomads had to re-create a holy space at every stop. Mountains and trees were considered the *axis mundi*, i.e. the element which could put in contact Earth and Heaven. Till the end of the 16th century Ottoman uses were still strongly influenced by Central Asia traditions. Only at the end of that century, Islam gained so strong an influence on common people to wipe off ancient beliefs, and only with the 18th century, European ideas about international politics began to be assumed also by the sultan's Empire.

Rivers and mountains were very important for ancient Turkish peoples from a symbolic and ceremonial point of view. They were the places where peace agreements were signed and where khans and strong warriors were buried. It was not probably by chance that the place where the Ottoman-Habsburg peace of 1606 was signed was Szitvatorok, where the Sztitva (Žitava) river flows into the Danube. The same happened centuries before. For instance the Venetian agreement with the Tatar khan Özbek was signed on the red bank of the Koban River in 1332 (the year of the monkey).¹⁰ On the other hand, in summer 1699, the Venetian Giovanni Grimani, Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, who represented the Habsburg emperor, and the Ottoman İbrahim *efendi* and Osman *ağa*, *kapıcıbaşı*, met near Knin and Otton in Dalmatia, to establish the place where the three states had to meet, that is to say the *Triplex confinium*. At a certain point Marsili pointed out the hill of Medviata Glavica, on the mount Debelo Brdo, as the right place. Grimani was not convinced at all, but he was not able to refuse. After two hours of discussion, Osman, Marsili, İbrahim and Grimani threw the first stones to build the heap of stones to mark the border, while the Imperial soldiers fired in salvoes; then they embraced each other, exchanged «the kisses of peace» as Marsili says, and went all together to eat. In the following days the Venetian government refused to subscribe the decision of the joint commission. In fact it gave many lands, which were actually in Venetian possession, to

10 Mas Latrie, *Privilèges commerciaux accordés à la République de Venise par les princes de Crimée et les empereurs mongols du Kiptchak*, «Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes», Année 1868, Vol.e 29, Num. 1, pp. 580-595; *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum*, a cura di G.M. Thomas, 2 voll., Venetiis, 1880-1899, vol. I, n. 125.

the other two states. No solution was found at the moment and for about one century the three states officially met in a place where they actually did not, while an «unofficial» borderline called «the shepherds' border» went on to be used. Apart from this fact it is interesting to note that a hill on the top of a mountain was chosen as a significant place in a discussion about borders.¹¹

On a flat land a commission could use some devices to mark a borderline. For instance stones were heaped up or a stone pillar was stuck into the ground. Even a huge tree could be used as a mark. On the Ottoman-Polish border on one side a heap of stones with the cross was often built while, on the other, a heap of wood with the shape of a turban. Letters or figures were sometimes carved on stones or trees. Since the Middle Ages European countries had used to carve crosses to mark borders. Venice often used St. Mark's lion, above all in the Modern Age. Ottomans began to carve half-moons only in 1699. This was only one of the several symbols used by Turkish peoples. For instance, one of the first half-moons used on a building was that put on the Armenian cathedral of Ani by the Seljuk ruler Alp Arslan in 1064, after the conquest of the city. To mark the Venetian-Ottoman borders the cross was considered enough for both sides in Dalmatia in 1671, near Šibenik in 1546 and near Zadar in 1576. In winter 1699 Grimani and Osman *ağa* thought it was not fine to use it also for the Ottomans and they decided to use the half-moon to mark some stones which lain at the feet of a huge mountain near Herceg novi and Risan. That time they too could not reach the top of the mountain, covered by ice and snow, but wrote on the documents their decision.¹²

To create a sea border was more difficult. The ancient Roman law established that water belonged to all mankind. For this reason it was so difficult for many European states to accept the idea of sea borders. Italian maritime Republics (Amalfi, Genoa, Venice, and Pisa) were not deeply influenced by Roman law and they believed that sea waters could belong to a ruler. Venetians considered the Adriatic as their own Gulf and they did not allow foreign war ships to sail there. On the contrary, from an Islamic point of view, there was no problem for a sovereign to rule on waters.

Waters could be divided into three categories: inland waters directly under a state; maritime belts and zones where a ruler could exert his rights; lastly there were high sea waters,

11 M.P. Pedani, *Das Triplex Confinium: Diplomatische Probleme nach dem Karlowitz Frieden*, «Croatia Christiana Periodica», 48 (2001), pp. 115-120; D. Roskandic, *Ottomans, Venetian and Habsburg: «Triplex Confinium»*, in *The Turks*, ed. by H.C. Güzel - C.C. Oğuz - O. Karatay, 6 voll., Ankara 2002, vol. 3, pp. 415-425; A.J. Rieber, *Triplex Confinium in Comparative Context*, in *Constructing Border Societies on the Triplex Confinium*, ed. by D. Roksandic - N. Štefanec, Budapest 2000, pp. 13-28.

12 Kolodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, p. 62; Pedani, *Dalla frontiera al confine*, p. 46.

beyond the reach of a Muslim ruler.¹³ At least since the times of the great historian ibn Haldūn (1332-1406), the Mediterranean sea was considered by Muslim writers only a series of water enclosures divided by larger or narrower straits: the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea were two of them. Ottomans behaved in the same way. Since the Ottoman-Venetian peace agreement of 1419 Ottomans decided to exert on the Marmara Sea the same power Venetians exerted on the Adriatic. In the meantime the Black Sea too became a kind of Ottoman inner lake. In the Mediterranean the situation was different since its coasts belonged to different countries. Ottoman thought it was possible to divide the waters of a gulf, or a channel, or also a fishing-pond, between two states. In 1481 the agreements made by the Ottomans with the knights of Rhodes began to quote territorial waters. In the Venetian-Ottoman agreement of 1480 the sea channel between the Venetian island of Santa Maura (Lefkåda) and the Ottoman mainland was divided into two zones of influence. On the contrary, in the 1701 agreement, Santa Maura channel was considered a Venetian-Ottoman *condominium*.¹⁴

It is not possible to mark a border on a liquid plane as well as on a desert. Sand and waters have the same unstable nature and, for this reason, the same devices were used for both. In a desert the borderline usually is halfway from two oases, on waters it runs halfway between two lands. The main problem was to establish the width of coastal waters and the beginning of the high sea. In 1154 the Arab geographer al-Idrīsī (about 1099-1164) considered it of six miles since a sentinel from the top of a tower could see the enemy approaching from that distance. In Europe, in 1621, the cannon-range was used for the first time. The same measure was used in the Ottoman-Venetian agreement of 1670, after the war for Crete (1644-1669).

High seas were usually left aside from the Muslim-Christian discussions about borders in the Modern Age. They belonged to all the rulers who ruled on their coasts. However in the 18th century, when bigger ships were built, rulers became interested in them too. In a period of relaxed relations with the Maghreb provinces, the peace agreements of Karlowitz and Passarowitz obliged the sultans to establish limits also on the high sea waters to prevent the *leveds* from attacking European ships and mar the existing peace. In March 1720 (end *rebiyūlahır* 1132) the sultan prohibited the *beys* and *deys* of Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers and their privateers to attack Venetian ships within thirty miles from the Ottoman coast. That is to say: Ottoman territorial waters were considered of thirty miles. A little later, about 1742, France and Great Britain began a war and their ships began to fight also in the Eastern Mediterranean. At this point the great vizier invited European consuls and ambassadors to a meeting. He told them that already in 1720 a line on the sea had been established to protect trade and traders of every nation against privateers; now a new line had been established and it could not be crossed by war ships of every nation: it united the coast of Mora to the Gulf on

13 H.S. Khalilieh, *Islamic Maritime Law. An Introduction*, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 1998, pp. 133-148.

14 M.P. Pedani, *Spunti per una ricerca sui confini del mare: gli Ottomani nel Mediterraneo*, «Iacobus», 11-12 (2001), pp. 221-239.

the other side of the Mediterranean. In this moment, at least from the Ottoman point of view, the Mediterranean was divided into two parts.

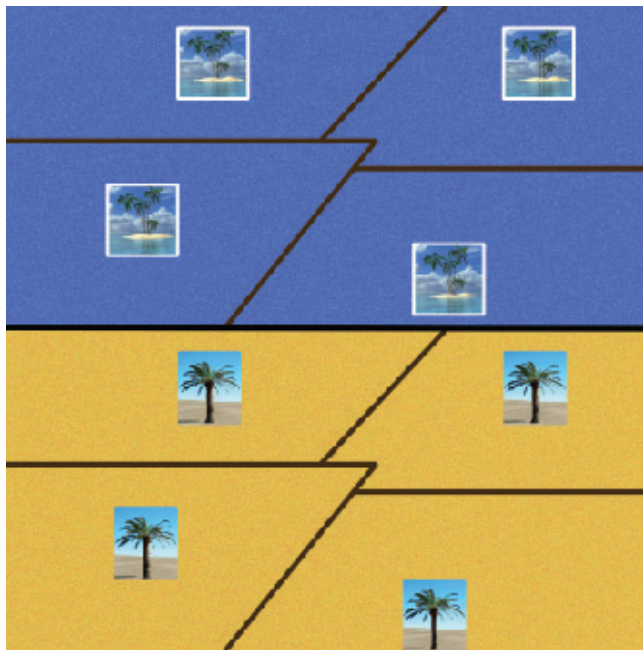
A third kind of border was often created because of sanitary reasons. That is to say that it had to prevent plague to pass from one country to another. This borderline was often the same as the political one, but not always. Moreover, special buildings were created to host for a certain period people coming from foreign countries in order to be sure they were not ill. Thus, the quarantine was created. The first city to create lazarettos for quarantine was Dubrovnik in 1377. In 1400 the Visconti family of Milan established the first sanitary border to prevent foreign pilgrims going to Rome to spread the plague. In 1423 Venice too began to create lazarettos and in 1424 sanitary borders. A Venetian sanitary border was created in Dalmatia after the fall of Constantinople. It was used from time to time, when there was the fear of epidemics and it became permanent only in the 18th century. It was used to control not only people but also cattle, goods and other things: envelops were purified, for instance, by means of smoke. In the Ottoman Empire, where plague had a great diffusion, these devices were not used at least till the 18th c. In this period in Tunis a lazaretto was established. In the same period, if there was risk of plague, the kingdom of Morocco considered valid the quarantine made in a Spanish port and allowed ships to enter its waters only if they had a Spanish certificate to have made the quarantine there.¹⁵

After the quarantine, persons and ships received a document. In those times, the health of a person was considered more important than the person itself. Lazarettos and hospitals were created by states and not by physicians, since plague was considered above all a social problem. In 1770 the Habsburgs too established a sanitary border, making use of the *militärgrenze*, the military zone created against the Ottoman Empire. In the Middle Ages to identify the group was more important than to identify the single person. With the introduction of sanitary borders, little by little, the ideas of personal identity and passport made their appearance, just for sanitary reasons.

In ancient times, language, dresses, features were often considered enough to establish the provenience of a person. In Modern Venice to wear a turban meant, for instance, to be a

15 D. Panzac, *La peste dans l'Empire Ottoman*, Louvain 1985, pp. 452-454; S. Speziale, *Oltre la peste. Sanità, popolazione e società in Tunisia e nel Maghreb (XVIII-XX secolo)*, Cosenza 1997, pp. 207-212; D. Panzac, *Politique sanitaire et fixation des frontières: l'exemple ottoman (XVIIIe-XIXe siècles)*, «Turcica», 31 (1999), pp. 87-108; R. D'Alberton Vitale, *Tra sanità e commercio: il difficile ruolo del Lazaretto Veneziano alla Scala di Spalato*, «Studi Veneziani», n.s., 39 (2000), pp. 253-288.

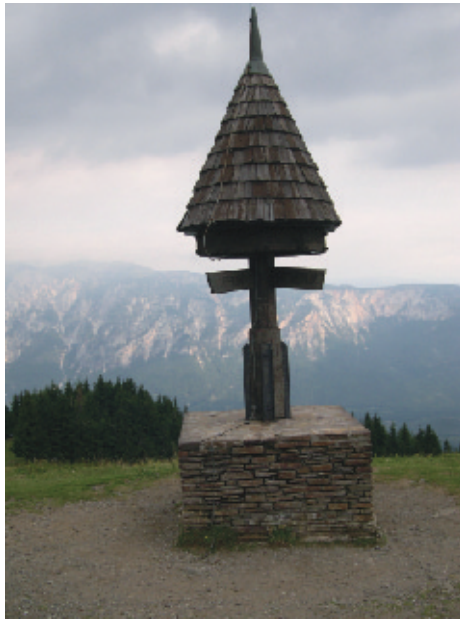
Muslim. In the Ottoman Empire colours were linked with religions: yellow caps had to be used by Jews, blue ones by Christians. In 1693, after a great fire in Istanbul, the *kaymakam*, the official responsible for the order in the city, ordered that all Christians had to use black dresses and shoes: thus English merchants began to use their national dresses, instead of the Oriental ones they had used till that moment. During the period of the Crusades, coats of arms too were created just to identify persons. Scholars still discuss if they were a European or a Near East invention. However, we must consider that nomadic Turkish peoples have used special signs to mark their cattle and things for centuries and, in the Middle Ages, many Muslim soldiers had a Turkish origin. A Mamluk heraldry, for instance, existed for some centuries side by side to a European one, even if it soon disappeared with the Modern Age. On the contrary the creation of a border between sovereign countries stresses the function of the state and put the group of persons into the shadow. In the high Middle Ages, in Europe, Barbarians nomadic tribes lived side by side with the heirs of the Romans. Each group followed its own law, even if they shared the same land. The same happened in Inner Asia, where Turkish nomadic peoples lived. In the Modern Age the creation of a border meant that the logic of tribe had been lastly overcome and that new modern states have seen the light.



Borders on sea waters and in a desert follow the same principle: the borderline runs in the middle between two lands or two oases.



Map of Dalmatia (1721), where three different Ottoman-Venetian borders are drawn: the Nani border (1671), the Grimani border (1701) and the Mocenigo border (1721) (Zadar State Archives, *Archivio del dragomanno*, b. 1, fasc. 10).



A modern boundary stone which marks the place where Italy, Austria and Slovenia meet.



Ancient boundary stone with St. Mark's lion.



Boundary stone on the mountains of Croatia; it marks the place where the ancient Ottoman-Venetian borderline run.