



EMEL AKPOLAT, İŞİN GÜNAY

TERRA INCOGNITA IN ISTANBUL, A BYZANTINE DWARF FROM MARMARAY PROJECT

ABSTRACT: *In the year 2004 the Project has been started in Istanbul, ancient Constantinople. The Project is named the Marmaray Rail Tube Tunnel and Commuter Rail Mass Transit System. The Project provides an upgrading of the commuter rail system in Istanbul, connecting Halkalı on the European side with Gebze on the Asian side with an unin the systematic excavations the secret history of the city came out. Mainly, from Archaic terrupted, modern, high-capacity commuter rail system.*

During Greek to Classical Greek and Hellenistic, Late Roman and Byzantine eras were emerged site by site. All archaeological remains are well-preserved that repeating the history of the city and its peninsula with ancient harbours, ships wrecks and their goods.

The Project has very significant importance both archaeological and anthropological data. In the Anatolian side, ancient name Scudari, Üsküdar station excavation the archaeologist reported an apsidal form of a probable monastery. In this apsidal form there have been 80 individuals found out. They are dated Late Romans and Byzantine era. Among these individuals one of the adult female probably 30–35 years old has been observed as a dwarf. The post- cranium of the individual did not have any pathological forms and her extremities were very regular whereas the height of the skeleton was calculated according to Pearson was only 1.39 cm.

KEY WORDS: *Dwarfism – Marmaray Project – Scudari – Chrysopolis – Phagoura – Simeon Theologos – Orthodox Monastery Life – Orthodox Patriach*

INTRODUCTION

Railway tracks in both sides of Istanbul Strait will be connected to each other through a railway tunnel connection under the Istanbul Strait. The line goes underground at Yedikule, continues through the Yenikapı and Sirkeci new underground stations, passes under the Istanbul Strait, connects to the Üsküdar new underground station and emerges at Söğütluçesme (*Figure 1*).

Indeed, this is definitely an urban archaeology project and somehow the archaeologists have been faced many

struggles to identify the exact stratigraphy of the site. The total range of the excavated area is limited by many daily routine things such as the roads, modern architectural settlements, occupation zones, traffic system, etc.

The excavation area of the Marmaray consists of two main part, European side and Anatolian side. In Anatolian side, at the first step of the excavation, the archaeologists found out monoblock stones with Horosan concrete that was typical medieval quay architecture. The artefacts both ceramic sherds and other glass objects have been dating Roman and Byzantine periods exactly. The area which had been already dug out in

Üsküdar today starts the fountain of III. Ahmet and ends toward the underneath of the mosque of Mihrimah Sultan in the public square of Üsküdar.

The Marmaray Excavations are carried out by Istanbul Archaeology Museum and their officers. The Anatolian part of the excavations and their anthropological surveys, significantly Üsküdar, are our responsibilities with permission of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey therefore we have very careful attitude to our study.

During the systematic excavations of this Project Greek, Hellenistic, Early Roman, Late Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman eras were come out. This shows the potential of Anatolian stratigraphy. In the Anatolian side of the city, the station excavation of the town Üsküdar, the archaeologists reported an apsidal form of a probable monastery. In this apsidal form there have been 80 individuals found out. They are dated Late Roman and through the Byzantine Empire eras.

Üsküdar is a large and densely populated municipality of Istanbul on the Anatolian shore of the Bosphorus. It is bordered on the north by Beykoz, on the east by Ümraniye, on the southeast by Ataşehir, on the south by Kadıköy, and on the west by the Bosphorus, with the areas of Beşiktaş, Beyoğlu, and Eminönü on the opposite shore. It is home to about half a million people. Üsküdar is also the usual name for the historic centre of the municipality.

THE APSIDIAL FORM

To explain the apsidal structure we need to know the location of the Byzantine Üsküdar in history. In 12th century A.D. the Salacak Point as known Damalis in old records, there were a palace which had been used by Emperor Manuel Komnenos (1143–1180) in summer times to gain his health again. In 1203 the forces of the fourth Crusaders invaded Escutaire.



FIGURE 1. The route of the Marmaray Rail Tube Tunnel System.

THE SITE

The town of Üsküdar ancient Greek Chrysopolis (Χρυσόπολις), medieval Scutari (Σκουτάριον)) was a city in Bithynia founded in the 7th century BC in a valley leading down to the Bosphorus shore, by the inhabitants of the Greek colony of Khalkedon and was first known as Chrysopolis ,city of gold , perhaps because it was a wealthy little port, or because of the way it shone when viewed from Byzantium at sunset (Walbank 2002).

As it's larger and more important neighbour across the Bosphorus grew, the town became a toll-booth for the Bosphorus and later became the first point of defence of Byzantium against the Ottoman armies. The name Skutarion came from the Byzantine soldiers stationed there, who were known for their thick leather shields, skuta (Gregory 2005). To no avail, however; by the time Constantinople was conquered by the Ottomans in 1453, Üsküdar had already been in Turkish hands for 100 years (Çiftçi 2008)

Until this time the site had been invaded in several times by Sasinies, Arabs and Turks. Indeed, in the time of Byzantine Empire the site was only known by the huge monastery complex. Janin, Khrysopolis and Philippikos could be the probable names of the monastery or given names a religion complex. Despite the different names, the complex should have been reoccupied again and again in different time span with an identical manner (Karakaya 2003).

On the other side the historian Kedneros said that the husband of Gordia, sister of emperor Mayrikios, adorned a monastery to Mother Mari. The husband of Gordia, called Philippikos had also a palace with fountains and huge magnificent garden which was nearest this adorned monastery. When Emperor Myrikios was murdered, Philippikos was hold in his monastery. After Philippikos was died in 610 A.D., he was buried in this monastery courtyard (Texier 2002). According to this knowledge or apparatus criticus, we assume that the site was occupied as religion centre from the foundation of Byzantine Empire and

Scudari, was considered as a vital religion complex and center throughout the centuries. Patriach Nikephoros (806–815 A.D.) narrates the beauty of this monastery of his writings. After the 10th century A.D. the name and location of this complex was disappeared in Byzantine archives. Also, we do not find any clue where this huge structure had been articulated definitely in Üsküdar (Eyice 1965).

Eyice (1976) and some other written sources tell us that the man who was called Phagoura roughly 1042 A.D. who donated a piece of a land in Scudari to Simeon Theologos the man who excommunicated by the patriarch. Simeon then restored the poor Hagia Marian Chapel by the help of Phagoura in Scudari. However, the location of this chapel is unknown. In historical record we only know about the monastery or the chapel near a bog and on the foot of a hill (Karagöz 2008).

In somehow this religion complex was disappeared in Byzantine historical scene in the 10th century A.D then emerged again in 14th century would be the evidence that the monastery was reused by different names with times and different scale as said above. Particularly, it became smaller and smaller than its foundation form. The salvage excavation of Marmaray, Üsküdar is our impetus to justify that this single-nave apsidal form could be related monastery, strongly Hagia Marina Monastery that was located foot of the hill (Eyice 1976).

Despite the tales of the city the responsible archaeologists reveal that the small planned Selman Ağa Mosque should have been the survival part this old monastery complex that come out today. In the rule of the Ottoman Empire this structure could have been converted to a mosque. Today, it has been still used a holy place for Muslims. In addition to, the opposed side of Selman Ağa Mosque, known as Üsküdar Small Hamam today is used as a market place may have been the related ayazma, the holy natural fountain, well or cistern in Orthodox belief, part of this Byzantine Monastery (Eyice 1998). If we consider the position of old geographic conditions of the Bülbul and the Çavuş Rivers this structure must have been one the Orthodox monastery traditionally located in the bay of the Bosphorous (Karagöz 2008).

Exactly the trepeza-dining hall of Kefeli Mesjid is same as our architecture form of Üsküdar. In Ephesus again we have same plan with a cemetery which is surrounded by an apse chapel (Texier 2002). Therefore, the site has to be said terra incognita, area for study that is placed in only written documents.

Our skeleton remains come from this apsidal form perhaps that is Hagia Marina chapel (*Figures 2, 3*). The grave goods of the individuals are not rich and sophisticated it can be the reason of religion identity of the individuals. The bronze crosses and some daily goods that we found with these individuals. However, some of the individuals have sea shell at their top of the heads could be the sign that they were sailors. The artefacts and also some of the skeleton remains were not found in situ. The construction of sewer system and communication structures and also water supply pipes damaged the excavation area in previous years.



FIGURE 2. The cemetery in apsidal form of chapel Monastery Hagia Marina.

In order to explain the whole plan of this form, archaeologists are waiting for the entrance part of the structure to dig out. However, this is as difficult as we said before. Indeed, this is an urban archaeology so they face many struggles such as rush hour of the Istanbul traffic, the street of Hakimiyeti Milliyet. As a result they are still waiting for the permission from Ministry of Culture and Tourism to expand the excavation portion to clarify their thesis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material is a dwarf female with inventory number ÜSK M20 (Arcini, Frolund 1996, Aufderheide, Rodriguez-Martin 1998). The skeleton is more or less complete although some parts are crushed or broken into pieces. The endocranial sutures are all closed, the teeth worn. Also, pubic symphysis has been used for estimating the age of the individual. When all this is taken into account, the age of the individual is estimated to be 40–45 years (Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994).

The morphological features of the skull used for sex determination (glabella, orbital margin and mastoid process) are very slender and smooth. The pubic arch, the sciatic notch of the pelvis and sacrum were also features used for the determination of sex. All features in this case are typical for a female (Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994), (*Figure 4*).

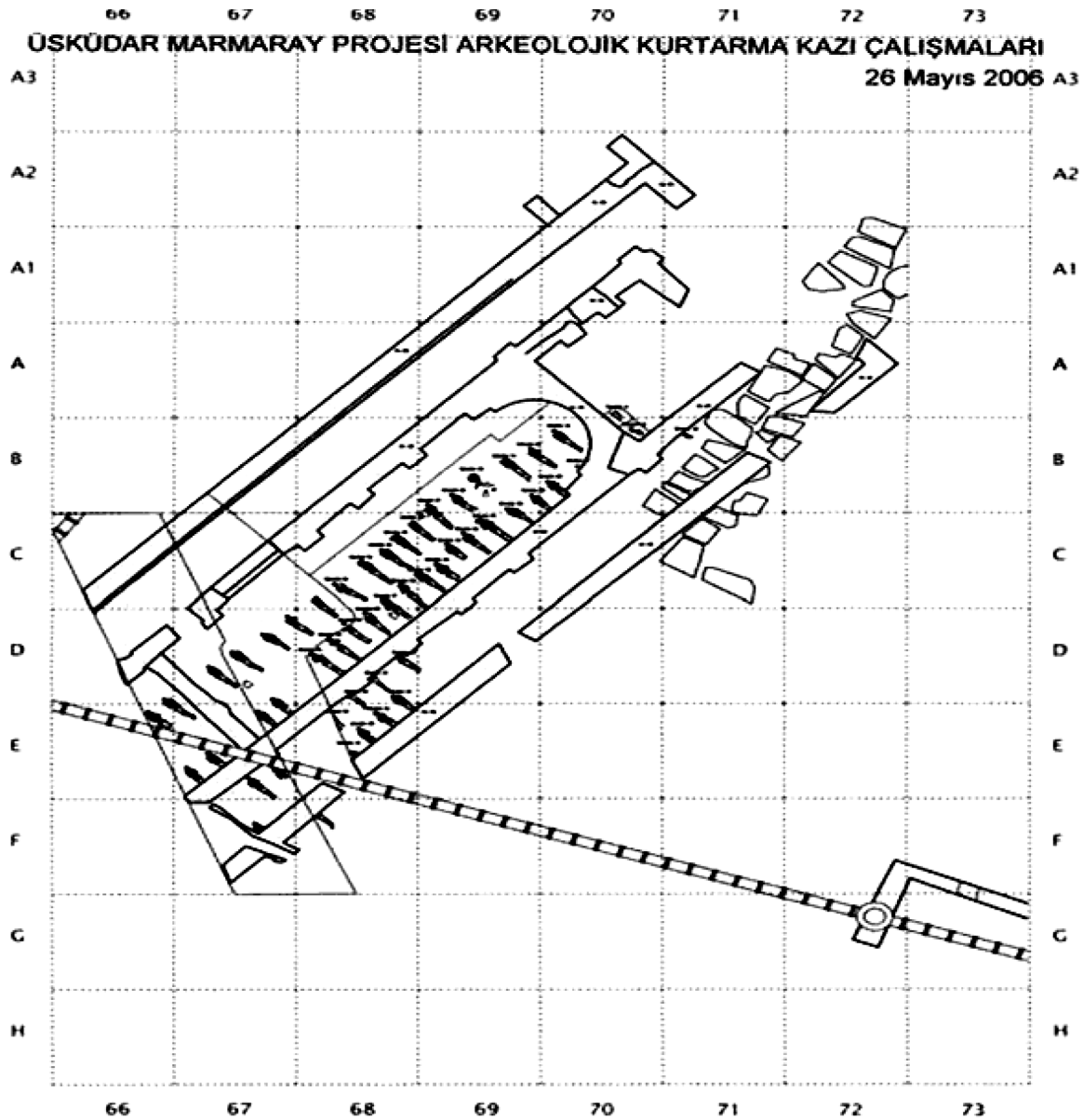


FIGURE 3. The excavation area with a grid plan.

Humerus, radii, ulnae have abnormally short diaphyses. Therefore, they (specially humerus) appear robust (*Figure 5*). Osteoarthritis can be seen at both elbows (specially right side), particularly in the radiohumeral joints. The vertebral column is normal. There are osteophytes on the some lumbar vertebrae. The height of the skeleton is calculated according to Pearson is only 1.39 cm (Aufderheide, Rodriguez-Martin 1998, Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994).

Costoclavicular syndesmosis can be seen at right clavicular (*Figure 6*). Generalized stress of the pectoral girdle results in this lesion, particularly when the shoulders are bent forward while bending and moving heavy loads (Capasso *et al.* 1999).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Monasticism as practiced in the Christian churches had its origins in the Christian East, when St. Anthony first sought the solitude of the desert in order to be closer to God away from the distractions of the urban life of Egypt and in order to aspire to theosis, to become God-like (McGuckin 2008) (*Figure 7*).

During the early centuries of Christianity, the names of St. Pachomius, St. Athanasius, St. Basil the Great, and St. John Cassian became associated with the development of ancient sets of guidelines or rules for various forms or styles of monastic life, ranging from the hermetic, individual; the

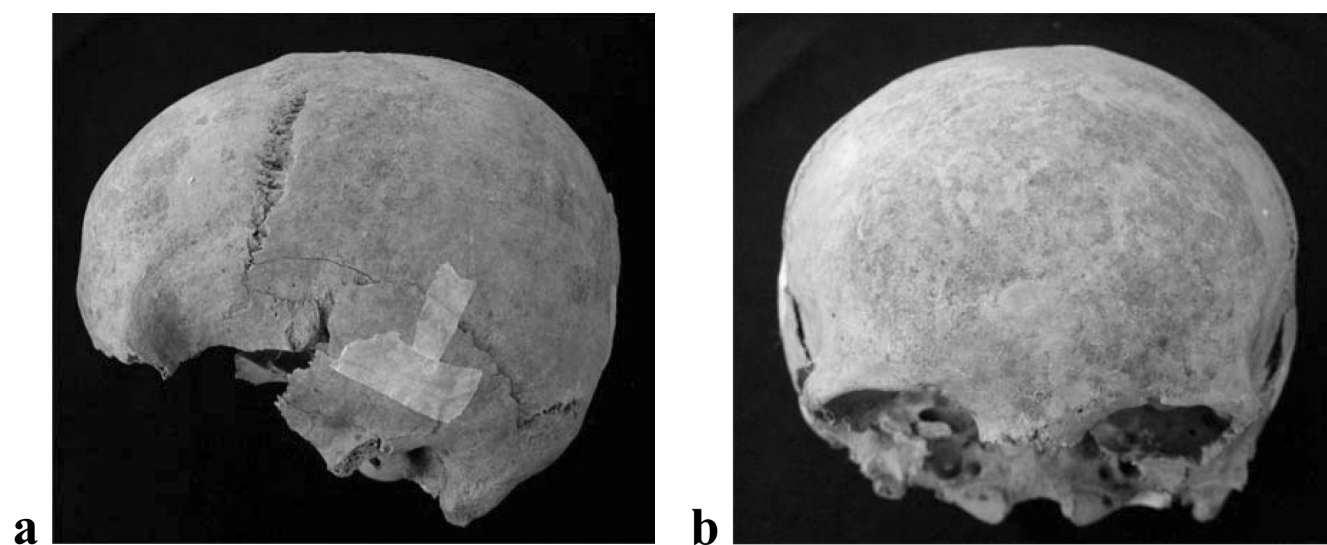


FIGURE 4. The cranium of individual ÜSK M20, a: lateral, b: anterior.



FIGURE 5. (right) The shortened and robust humerus, radius and ulna of the female dwarf. (left) Humerus, radius and ulna of a normal individual.

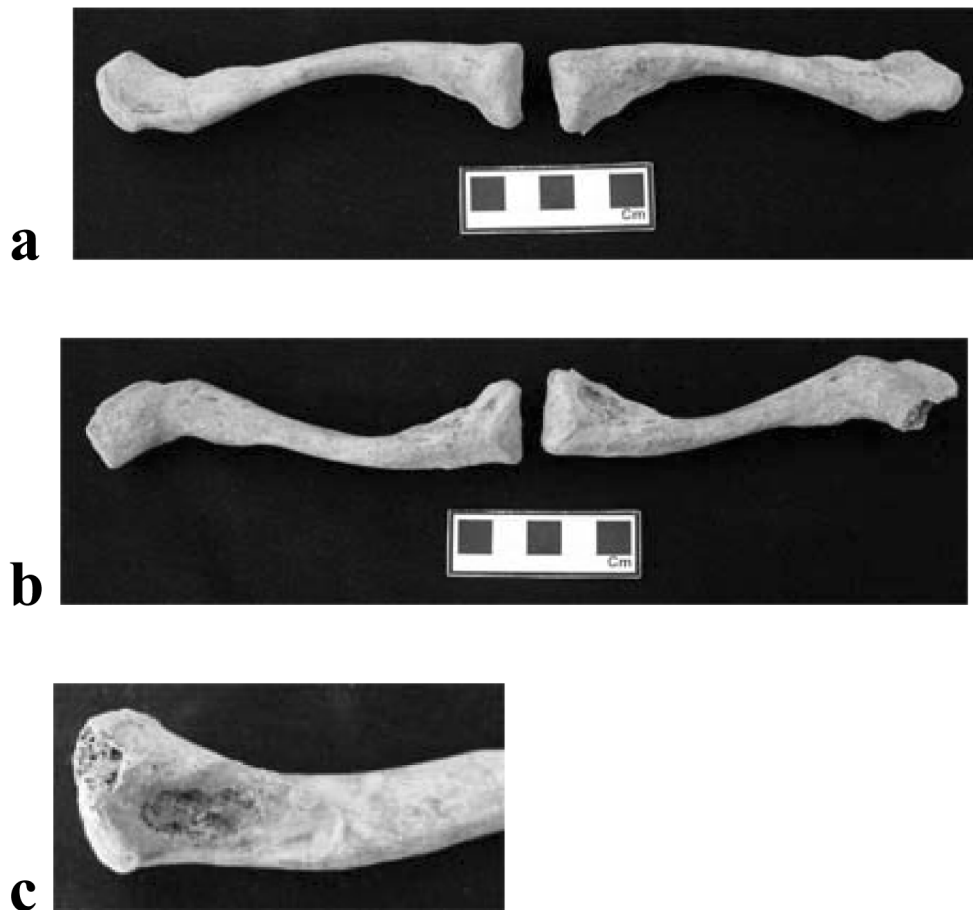


FIGURE 6. a: left and right clavicle, inferior; b: left and right clavicle superior; c: clavicular syndesmosis.



FIGURE 7. 11th-century Byzantine miniature representing Studion Monastery.

idiorythmic, gathering for meals and common prayer; the cenobitic, community sharing common life (Prokurat *et al.* 1996). Perhaps the most famous of these later revisions within the Byzantine tradition is that attributed to St. Theodore Studites, St. Theodore of the Stoudion monastery in Constantinople, which has had a significant impact on monasticism in the lands of the former Byzantine Empire; Greece, Turkey and the Middle East. Rules of one monastery often were and continue to be the basis of the rule of new monastic foundations, and thus a considerable amount of commonality of practice, if not uniformity, can be found among the practices of most Byzantine monasteries (Page 2008).

In these monasteries, there have been considerable community lived together and did their daily duties. Indeed, monasteries were all male participants with their own cells. For the female individuals mostly said to be "Child, take heed how you conduct yourself, for you are about to enter into midst of fire, for a woman in no ways enters a male monastery" as Marinos said (Talbot 1998). This sentence is like a written law, *lex scripta*, about the entrance or role of woman in the Byzantine monasteries. Therefore, we can reveal that our female individual points out that the individual got hired for kitchen and cleaning duties as other women in monasteries in very rare population frequency, *ipsissima verba*. Probably, she was under protection of this monastery. She had to be cleaning floors, washing up dishes, getting water from well, carrying water to kitchen and other things etc. While getting consider to these statements, the middle age and the monastic life have to be understood completely. Also, rowing shovel to get other side of the city another duty somehow daily function as today in Istanbul with modern vehicles. This is the reason why she was there; this is the result why her shoulders are bent forward, particularly right side. Also, if we think about that the founder of this monastery, Simeon Theologos, the man who excommunicated by the patriarch, the people who lived in this complex were against the legal religion authority, may be they considered themselves as speculators of new thought of the Orthodoxy therefore we can saw this female individual in this complex.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Firstly, special thank to Muammer Güler, the governor of Istanbul, for his trust and belief to us. Also, thank to Dr. Şehrazat Karagöz, Istanbul Archaeology Museum, the responsible archaeologist of Üsküdar, for her great performance and to all members of the project of Marmaray and the members of Istanbul governorship.

REFERENCES

- ARCINI C., FROLUND P., 1996: Two Dwarves from Sweden a Unique Case. *Int. J. Osteoarchaeology* 6: 155–166.
- AUFDERHEIDE A. C., RODRIGUEZ-MARTIN C., 1998: *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Human Paleopathology*. Pp. 252–256. Cambridge University Press, U.K.
- BUICKSTRA J., UBELAKER D. H. (Eds.), 1994: *Standards For Data Collection From Human Skeletal Remains*. Archaeological Survey Research Series No. 44, Arkansas.
- CAPPASO L., KENNEDY K. A. R., WILCZAK C. A., 1999: *Atlas of Occupational Markers on Human Remains*. Pp. 52. Edigrafital S.P.A. Teramo, Italy.
- ÇİFTÇİ M., 2008: *Üsküdar, Kaknüs Yayınları*. İstanbul.
- EYİCE S., 1965: İstanbul'un Bazı Semt ve Mahalle Adları Hakkında Bir Deneme. *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, XIV: 208–209.
- EYİCE S., 1998: İstanbul'da XVIII: Yüzyılda Mescide Dönüştürülen Son Bizans Kiliseleri. 17. *Yüzyıl Osmanlı Kültür ve Sanatı Sempozyum Bildirileri*, Pp.: 108
- EYİCE S., 2007: *Bizans Devrinde Boğaziçi*. Yeditepe Yayınevi, İstanbul.
- GREGORY T., 2005: *A History of Byzantium*. Blackwell Publishing, U.K.
- KARAGÖZ Ş., 2008: *Marmaray-Üsküdar Kazılarında Ortaya Çıkarılan Antik Khrysopolis Kenti*. Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv Araştırma Merkezi, İstanbul.
- KARAKAYA A., 2003: *Üsküdar'ın Bizans Devri Arkeolojisi*. İstanbul, 46: 74–83.
- McGUCKIN J. A., 2008: *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to the History, Doctrine and Spiritual Culture*. Blackwell Publishing, U.K.
- PAGE G., 2008: *Being Byzantine Greek Identity Before the Ottomans, 1200–1420*. Cambridge University Press, U.K.
- PROKURAT M., GOLITZIN A., PETERSON M., 1996: *Historical Dictionary of the Orthodox Church*. Scarecrow Press.
- TALBOT A. M., 1998: *Women's Space in Byzantine Monasteries*. Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University Press.
- TEXIER C., SUAT A. (Çevirmen), 2002: *Küçük Asya Coğrafyası, Tarihi ve Arkeolojisi, Cilt I*. Enformasyon ve Dökümantasyon Hizmetleri Vakfı.
- WALBANK F., 2002: *Polybius-Rome and The Hellenistic World*. Cambridge University Press, U.K.

Emel Akpolat
İşin Günay
Department of Anthropology
Faculty of Letters
Ankara University
06100 / Sıhhiye-Ankara / Turkey
E-mail: emelakpolat@hotmail.com