

## PAPER DETAILS

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event" (p.69). This is a valid assessment of the political position and the impact of the Ottoman military; a tradition which marked late-Ottoman history and reached its peak during the Empire's last phases. One can also argue that this legacy was passed on to the modern republic.

Chapter Three examines the political processes involving the military intervention in 1908 and the rise of the army as the ruling group. This period of Ottoman history is full of complex episodes and the available data is confusing and difficult to use effectively. It seems that Dr. Turfan overcame these impediments to draw an accurate picture of the era, or at least he convinces the reader with quite efficient arguments and with an enormous number of supporting footnotes and sources. Here it again becomes clear that on the road to World War I it was the army which determined the outcome of events.

Chapter Four focuses on the lamentable story of the officers' corps, who regarded themselves as the sole and true custodians of the interests of the state, but who dragged the nation into an endless conflict. The predominance of the officers' corps had been the destiny of the state, a destiny which in many ways was predestined. In order to complete the picture and relate the tradition to modern Turkey, Dr. Turfan adds a useful epilogue. Here he concludes that "no military institution remains outside 'politics'. The Ottoman Imperial and by projection the Turkish national militaries have never been out of politics, they have at times been pushed or voluntarily stood back" (p. 440).

The final words of the book touch upon the Turkish military interventions of 27 May 1960 and 12 September 1980. These remarks thus make the study even more relevant to our present day. In any case this voluminous attempt represents a remarkable achievement, and both the writer for his tremendous efforts throughout the years and his wife for her faithful work in putting the book together after the demise of her husband, deserve recognition and praise.

Azmi Özcan

### **Studies on Ottoman Economic and Social History**

by Halil Sahillioğlu

Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul 1999, pp. IV+221. ISBN 92-9063-084-1.

In recent decades, there has been a growing interest in Ottoman studies, particularly in the United States, the Arab World and the Balkan countries as well as in Turkey. Coupled with this growing interest, the opening of the Ottoman archives to researchers after the 1980s has made a great impact on the production of scholarly works in various fields of Ottoman scholarship. On the occasion of the 700th anniversary of

the foundation of the Ottoman State, we have witnessed the culmination of an ever-growing interest in the field. The six-centuries-long statehood drew attention from various fields of scholarship such as history, economy, sociology and politics. To commemorate the occasion, not only on the academic level but also on the political level, many different cultural activities including conferences, exhibitions, and ceremonies were organised. Prof. Sahillioglu's project was one of these cultural activities.

Despite the growing interest, however, Ottoman scholarship is still a developing area of study. While the size of the Ottoman State and the number of archival sources related to its heritage generate enthusiasm among young scholars, such complexities cause confusion for the inexperienced. Prof. Sahillioglu is one of a few eminent scholars who offer guidance to young researchers. With more than half a century's experience in the Ottoman archives, he may be considered a guide for those who find them bewildering.

The book under review is a collection of Sahillioglu's articles in different fields of Ottoman social and economic history. Since the author is an expert on Ottoman monetary and fiscal history, the articles are mainly related to the Ottoman economic system. The first article, "Sivış Year Crises in the Ottoman Empire", is on the *sivış* (skip) year crisis which resulted from the use of a dual calendar in the Ottoman fiscal system. Throughout the centuries of Ottoman fiscal history, expenditures were made according to the lunar calendar, while the solar calendar was used for the collection of most taxes and other income because of the agricultural character of production and trade, as well as the seasonal nature of mining. As a result of approximately eleven days' difference per year between these two calendars, thirty-two years' income on a solar-year basis was spent, corresponding to thirty-three lunar years, with the missing year being called the '*sivış* year'. The article analyses the crisis resulting from this skip year and provides detailed information on the instruments of fiscal policy used to solve the problem. A French translation of the article is added at the end of the book.

The second article deals with the role of the international monetary and metal movements in Ottoman monetary history for the period 1300-1750. Here, the author offers a very useful summary of Ottoman monetary history and analyses the international movement of precious metals, including American silver, and its effects on the Ottoman monetary system. The tables in this article provide a detailed picture of the Ottoman monetary system.

The next article, "The Income and Expenditures of the Ottoman Treasury Between 1683 and 1740", analyses inventories of the income and expenditure of the Ottoman treasury for the period. The author briefly describes the archival sources and their contents, which are mainly preserved in the Ottoman Archive. The technical terms used in the records are also listed and explained. The author tries to understand whether or not the total of the daily records reflects the total income and expenditure of the State, and makes a comparison of the daily records with the figures in the budgets. A more detailed explanation of the tables and graphs would have made for a better understanding of the subject.

The fourth article concerns the introduction of machinery in the Ottoman mint. Starting with primitive minting techniques, the adoption of mechanical processes and its consequences are analysed. Some official documents on the subject and illustrations of the instruments for engraving the coins are also given.

The fifth article, "Slaves in the Social and Economic Life of Bursa in the Late 15th and Early 16th Centuries", is a very useful and detailed analysis of the subject. The introduction gives a brief account of Ottoman slavery and detailed information on the sources. The nature of the data, taken mainly from the court records, and the terminology used in the slave trade, are also carefully explained. Following this introduction, the slave market of Bursa is analysed in detail. The article gives us valuable information about the volume and importance of slavery in the economic and social life of the city, and informs us about the situation of the slaves such as their ethnic and religious origins, qualifications, prices with a comparison with real estate prices, purchase and sale transactions, education, etc.

The sixth article, "A project for the Creation of Amman Vilayet (1878)", is an official document dated 1878 concerning a project for the creation of the Amman *vilayet* as a provincial centre that is the capital of modern Jordan. The aim of the project was to provide security for travellers on the way to Medina. The original form of the document and its Arabic translation are also given. It is a good example of the formation and development of the Ottoman provincial system in the Tanzimat period.

The last article is a summary in translation of an article on Ottoman book legacies. This article is based on the information given in the legacy records of a court record of Bursa for the last decade of the fifteenth century. The author describes the books, their contents and prices that are found in 512 legacy records. However, there is no mention of the original version of the article. It would have been useful if the original form of the article had been provided in the book.

Based on meticulous archival studies, this collection of articles is a very useful source of information on Ottoman economic and social history. It is true to say that most of the articles were the first of their kind when they first appeared and they still are. I strongly recommend this book to historians and other academics in related fields. In passing, it is unfortunate to note that Sahillioglu is not a prolific writer despite his vast experience. We Ottomanists would like him to write more on the same subjects. Finally, needless to say, publishing such an important study without even a short index, which could help the reader tremendously, is one of the main shortcomings of the book.

Tahsin Özcan