oluşu, Osmanlı tebaası olup vergi vermek yerine imtiyazlı ticaret yapmayı seçme öyküsü değil, kimlik sorunu olarak ele alınmıştır (s. 197).

Yukarıda da değindiğimiz gibi çalışma, birçok farklı çalışmaya kapı açacak zenginlikte belge ve bilgi üzerine kuruludur. Ancak çalışmada kimi zaman konu ile doğrudan ilgisi olmayan noktaların ön plana çıkarılmasından kaynaklanan sorunlara rastlanabilmektedir. Örneğin, tezkerelerin incelenmesinden, konu ile doğrudan bağlantılı olmayan, 1850'ler Osmanlı toplumunda çekirdek aile yapısının hâkim olduğu sonucu çıkarılmaktadır (s. 137). Verimli tartışmaları mümkün kılacak kimi noktalara ise kısaca değinilmekle yetinilmiştir ki, sınıf vurgusu bunlar arasındadır. Örneğin devletin "erbâb-ı fesâd" olarak gördüklerinden bazılarının, iş bulmak amacıyla göç etmek zorunda kalanlar olduğu belirtilmiştir (s. 200). Ancak, kanımca, benzer örnekler üzerinden konu Osmanlı'da alt sınıfların ve işsizlerin sosyal yaşantıları üzerine tartışmayı mümkün kılacak bir zemine taşınabilir. Alt ve üst servet gruplarının tezkereler bağlamında yaşadıkları deneyimler, belki de mürûr ekonomisinin tartışıldığı son bölümde Osmanlı'nın son döneminde değişen sınıf profillerini gösterir biçimde analiz edilebilirdi. Diğer taraftan çalışma, mürûr tezkerelerini yalnızca devletin bakış açısıyla değil toplumun çeşitli katmanlarının, kendilerini devlete karşı ve devletle ilişki içerisinde konumlandırarak biçimlendiren eylemlerini takip etmek açısından değerlidir. Kitabın ayrıntılı arşiv çalışmasına dayalı yapısının özellikle göç konusunun sınıfsal ve sosyal olarak analizinde yeni araştırmalara öncülük edeceği kuşkusuzdur.

Gül Karagöz Kızılca

H. Erdem Çıpa and Emine Fetvacı (eds.),

Writing History at the Ottoman Court: Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future,

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013, 181 pp., ISBN 978-0-253-00864-0

A collection of essays treating Ottoman primary sources in detail is particularly welcome at a time when thematically and chronologically driven monographs dominate Anglophone academic publishing. Linguistic and paleographical obstacles prevent non-specialist historians from gaining familiarity with Ottoman

sources, and for that reason this volume contains particularly valuable insights. In spite of the fact that few manuscripts survived from the first three centuries of the empire, there is still a dearth of scholarly output regarding the authorship, context, style and structure of the invaluable sources which do exist, as well as the historical circumstances under which they were created. This book is an attempt to fill this historiographical gap on early modern Ottoman history writing.

The edited volume tries to address this lacuna with seven articles, six of which cover Ottoman histories produced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The articles are the product of a symposium held at Indiana University, Bloomington on October 30, 2009, entitled "Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future: Historiography of the Ottoman Empire." The novelty of the book is that it offers new methodological insights for studying contemporary Ottoman history. First of all, instead of simply mining sources for factual evidence, as was the case with previous studies, articles in this book are concerned with the different contexts of writing and focus on the sources' literary and stylistic dimensions. Secondly, instead of presenting a monolithic ideal, they strive to show different strands of opinion regarding the Ottoman state, society and identity, articulated by individuals, social groups and power cliques. Thirdly, instead of just a straightforward historical approach, they resort to different fields of inquiry such as art history, philology and cartography.

The first article, by Dmitris Kastritis, deals with *Ahvâl-i Sultân Mehemmed bin Bâyezîd Han,* an anonymous *menâkıbnâme* produced at the court of Mehmed I, describing the Ottoman Civil War of 1402-1413 between the sons of Bayezid I. As one of the earliest surviving Ottoman histories, this work is unique because unlike other early works covering the same period, it describes the events immediately after they had taken place. The author carefully scrutinizes the *Ahvâl* which could only survive as incorporated into two other works --the first is an early draft of Neşrî (*Codex Menzel*) and the other is a manuscript named *Oxford Anonymous Chronicle*. Kastritis strives to delineate the relationship between the rest of these works and the *Ahvâl.* He carefully examines the chapters' structure as well as the stylistic and linguistic characteristics of the work, analyzing the *Ahval*'s content in numerous ways by trying to link several narrative strategies and topoi with the historical circumstances under which Mehmed I operated. Moreover, the author tries to establish a connection between the *Ahvâl* and a poem on the Battle of Çamurlu, penned by the author of the *Halilnâme*, Abdü'lvâsî. Created around the same time and at the same court, both works relay the same political argument: Mehmed I eradicated the discord created by his brothers and thus he was not

to blame for having eliminated his siblings. Even though there were examples of fratricide, in the early fifteenth century the practice had not yet become the norm. At a time when dynastical power sharing was still a viable political option, such propaganda was of utmost importance in legitimizing the rule of Mehmed I. This effort of legitimization is at the core of the the *Ahvâl*. Another interesting observation of the author is that the concept of *devlet* proved itself to be a useful tool to explain why Mehmed I, who was only a young boy, should succeed his father and not his older brothers, Süleyman and İsa. Equating military success with the divine right to rule, *Ahvâl* argues that primogeniture is irrelevant; the right to rule is God-given and belongs to the person to whose side the *devlet* turns, i.e. who prevails with the help of the God in the battleground. A final point worth mentioning is that according to Kastritis, the *Ahvâl* could be read not only within the framework of the political rivalry among the Ottoman princes bidding for the same throne, but also within that of the rivalry among the Ottoman viziers such as Bayezid and Çandarlı Ali, each of whom supported a different prince and the different background of each (the former of *kul* and the latter of *ulema* origin) gives us a clue of their diverging ideas on how the Ottoman polity should evolve.

In an article in which he displays his exceptional methodological rigor, Baki Tezcan demonstrates how the depiction of the Ottomans' relationship with their Mongol overlords shifted overtime. According to Tezcan, Ottoman chronicles penned more than a century later than the emergence of the Ottoman polity conveniently erased the traces of early Ottoman links with the Mongols who controlled most of Anatolia at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In an attempt to create a collective memory that would better suit the political atmosphere of the time, Ottoman chroniclers created a fictive relationship of vassalage between early Ottomans and the Anatolian Seljuks. What Tezcan brilliantly demonstrates, however, is that some of the earliest Ottoman chronicles, if read carefully, tell us a different tale --one where the Ottomans and the Mongols were cousins. Thus, in order to legitimize their rule, the Ottomans did not need to rely on the blessing of the feeble Seljuk Sultans, mere puppets of the Mongolian Ilkhanids. According to the author, stories linking the Ottomans and the Mongols were taken out of Ottoman histories in the fifteenth century as the Mongolians lost their political relevance in Anatolia; if not for Âşıkpaşâzade who had access to Yahşi Fakih's history from the 14th century, they would be forgotten forever. Through a careful cross-reading of Ottoman chronicles, Tezcan makes a breakthrough discovery: the earliest Ottomans considered themselves close relatives of the Mongols until the disastrous Timurid invasion of Anatolia forced them to revise their chronicles'

representation of the Mongols. With the Mongol power waning in Anatolia, a new type of representation targeted Turcoman groups by forging a link between the Ottomans and the Anatolian Seljuks. The Ottomans were not the only ones in Anatolia who sought legitimacy by capitalizing on the Seljukid legacy; other Turkic principalities embraced it as well. Such a legacy further served the empire's political purposes when the sixteenth century paved the way for the Sunnization of the Empire and its refashioning as the political representative of Sunni Islam. A fictive relationship with the Seljuks who in 1055 saved the Abbasid caliph from the clutches of the Buyids, Shi'ite just like the Ottomans' archenemies, the Safavids, would be more politically correct than the one with the Mongols who sacked Baghdad in 1258 and ended the Abbasid caliphate.

In his article, Kaya Şahin concentrated on *Koca Nişancı*'s *opus magnum Tabakâtü'l-Memâlik ve Derecâtü'l-Mesâlik*. Rather than attempting to use the latter work, considered by many an official history, in a positivistic and empiricist manner, Şahin reads it as a multilayered text and focuses on the political, cultural and ideological concerns shaping the text. Notions of alterity, imperialism and religion, omnipresent in *Tabakât*, were products of sudden changes in the sixteenth century that had serious economic, political, religious and cultural consequences. The new Ottoman imperialism in the face of threats from the Habsburgs and the Safavids paved the way for the formulation a new political theology, a process in which Celâlzâde played a fundamental role. His state-, Ottoman- and Sunni-centric vision of Ottoman history has affected many generations of literati to come. Addressing an expanded audience of intellectuals in the sixteenth century, this high-level bureaucrat who spent years next to the Sultan and gained intimate knowledge of the workings of the Ottoman administration simply played the role of the architect of this new Ottoman imperialism; it was him who determined the empire's correct historical and religious position in relation to its rivals.

By a careful reading of a wide range of literary sources such as *vilâyetname*, *menâkıbnâme*, *gazavâtnâme* and Ottoman chronicles, Tijana Krstić focuses on what Ottoman Muslims thought about the mixing of Muslims and non-Muslim through conversion. She warns the historians against a simplistic understanding of the oft-used term "syncretism" (she also wrote a separate article on that subject this year). Many historians use this most popular term of Ottoman history without taking into account the problems underlying the incorporation of non-Muslims and converts into the Ottoman military, administration and society. What Krstić seeks to demonstrate that the religio-cultural blending and inclusiveness were not smooth processes and that the incorporation of non-Muslims faced resistance

from Muslim Ottomans. More importantly, she tries to shed light on the gradual evolution of the debate on the issue of conversion, converts and their place in the Ottoman Empire and society in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Her account helps us perceive how different religio-political atmospheres affected the Ottoman Muslims' attitude towards converts. Different attitudes on conversion cannot be understood if studied solely within the context of the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims; one should first try to understand the social, religious and political landscape of the time as well as the broader religio-political trends of the early modern world that shaped this landscape.

Giancarlo Casale studies the famous *mappamundi* of Tunuslu Haji Ahmed, a woodcut map created in 1559 in Venice for an Ottoman market, one of the earliest world maps in Turkish. By concentrating on the visual representation in the map as well as the text that accompanied it, Casale tries to analyze how the creator of the map (either Haji Ahmed from Tunis or some Venetian, most likely the Public Dragoman Michele Membré) saw the Ottomans' place in the world and how his ideas resonated in the intellectual milieu of sixteenth-century Ottoman society. According to Casale, the author of the map promotes a link between Alexander the Great, characterized as exceptionally European, and the Ottomans who, like Romans before them, followed Alexander's lead. According to Casale's reading of the *mappamundi*, Ottoman Empire was the embodiment of Europe, the Sultan was the only legitimate successor to Alexander the Great, the Turkification of Anatolia resembled the Hispanization of the Amerindians in Peru, Turkish was the language that ruled the world and the Ottomans' rivals, the Safavids, whom the text exalted at length, were the Ancient Persians who, despite their many qualities, could not resist Alexander's might. If these conclusions seem to overreach, the author was not contented with just the above: Casale tries to locate the map's political messages within the general intellectual framework of the time. According to him, similar universalistic tones of an Ottoman cosmology could be seen in other artistic, historical and literary works such as the famous crown designed in Venice for Süleyman I (recall Gülru Necipoğlu's famous article) or the *Târih-i Ungurûs,* penned by the Ottoman dragoman Mahmud. Still, there is a problem that needs to be solved. As he remains unable to prove that a Tunisian and not a Venetian created the *mappamundi*, Casale needs an explanation to demonstrate the Ottoman character of the map. He accomplishes that goal by positing social links between Michele Membré, the proposed author of the *mappamundi*, and renegade Ottoman dragomans Mahmud and Yunus who shared a similar trans-imperial background with their Venetian colleague. Based on the hypothesis

that the three should have met each other in İstanbul or Venice, Casale claims that they constituted "an intellectual circle" in an effort to create a bridge between the intellectual worlds of Membré and the Ottomans. How they came to develop so strong ties as to constitute an intellectual circle in such a short time during which they met, if they ever did, is uncertain.

Finally, as these works' representation of Alexander is in a stark contrast with the usual representation of the mighty conqueror in Ottoman literary genres, Casale argues that two competing visions of Ottoman history produced two different Alexanders: The version that fashioned the empire as a New Rome pictured a "Hellenizing hero of Greco-Roman civilization" while the other that sought to accentuate its Islamic nature placed the story of both Alexander and the Ottoman dynasty within the general framework of Islamic history. Similarly, the choice between two forms of map-making, European-inspired *mappamundi* that shows the world in its entirety and the standard Ptolemaic map, *rub' al-meskûn*, that demonstrates only the inhabited parts of the world, arose as a product of the tension between these two historical visions. His provocative conclusions require the scrutiny of an expert on early modern cartography, which the author of this review is surely not; nevertheless, Casale's assertion that Seydî 'Alî's preference for the term *pâpâmundî* over *mappamundi* evinced his disapproval of using European-style world maps because it included the word *pâpâ,* the Pope, is hard to swallow. One can only hope his other stimulating conclusions rely on more solid argumentation.

Through a comparative approach and by scrutinizing the miniatures included in the first volume of the five-volume universal history *Shâhnâma-yi âl-i 'Osmân*, Fatma Sinem Eryılmaz demonstrates how the work's text and visual representations differ from their counterparts in similar genres in so far as they served a political agenda. Just as the miniatures in the first volume of the work, *Anbiyanâmâ*, underline the dual nature of Adam's authority, spiritual and political, as well as his quality as a teacher and guide, the fifth volume presents Suleiman I as the ideal prophet-king, the last mythic king of the Shâhnâma, the last ruler who combined the two forms of authority, heavenly and earthly, and the reformer of the true religion, *mujaddid*. Studying Ottoman history within the framework of a universal history gave the author the chance to promote Suleiman's messianic propaganda; if his work started history with the first prophet-king Adam, then the end of history should coincide with the coming of the last prophet-king Suleiman. Arif's work should be analyzed within the framework of Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry and both dynasties' quest for ultimate authority over the world. Prepared for an exclusive

audience, the Sultan and his court, one of Arif's aims was to "create a common culture and a shared imperial identity;" to this end, he engages in several literary strategies, all in the name of forging a mythic Ottoman history.

In the only article that does not focus on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Hakan T. Karateke tries to explain the background to paradigm shift in history writing. According to him, the nineteenth century brought a new method of writing history and inagurated "a new phase in Ottoman historical consciousness". For centuries Ottoman historians followed established Islamic models and wrote universal histories by relating the rise and fall of the individual dynasties in chronological order, taking the Creation as the beginning of history and other religious events such as the Flood and Prophet Muhammad's appearance as historical turning points. The new method followed, without much questioning or adding anything original, the European periodization of world history in three eras: "Ancient", "Medieval" and "New". The above, for him, was the manifestation of a new worldview. With modernization underway, Ottoman historians, eager to replicate a scientific historiography, started to approach historical sources with a positivist perspective; in other words, they could no longer write a history based on sacred texts. Moreover, a new notion of universalism based on progress replaced a view which considered Ottoman history to be the final phase of Islamic, and world, history. Finally, the democratization of historical writing as well as the monarchy's decline in popularity paved the way for the rapid expansion of this new historical methodology which greatly impacted twentieth-century Turkish historiography.

The articles summarized above offer new avenues for dealing with early Ottoman historical writing and cover an impressive diversity of early Ottoman sources. Each article has the potential to spark lively academic discussion and offer alternative vistas in Ottoman historiography which lags behind its European and Russian counterparts in originality. Such ground-breaking edited volumes will set the intellectual agenda for future studies as long as they adopt a rigorous methodological approach, as this volume clearly does.

By way of criticism, given that some of the articles (Casale's and Eryılmaz') can only be understood with recourse to images (maps, miniatures, etc.), they should have been published in higher resolution; one might expect more from a prestigious university publishing house. It is also unfortunate that the work did little to connect Anglophone and Turcophone Ottoman historiography. Given that transliteration as well as analysis of Ottoman manuscripts is single-handedly the most popular area of historical study among historians teaching in Turkish

universities, the expert opinion of certain historians and art historians could have been included in a couple of articles. Regrettably, the book misses the opportunity to introduce Anglophone readers to the rich scholarship emergent from decades of engagement by Turkish scholars with these hard-to-analyze primary sources.

Emrah Safa Gürkan

John-Paul Ghobrial,

The Whispers of Cities: Information Flows in Istanbul, London and Paris in the Age of William Trumbull,

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 208 pp., ISBN 978-0-19-967241-7

There are a significant number of books written about how early modern Europe perceived the Ottoman Empire, i.e., what decision-makers, scientists, artists, authors and the common people knew about this exotic land whose "otherness" played a great role in the shaping of Europe itself. John-Paul Ghobrial takes a more innovative approach to the issue of encounters between the "East" and the "West" when he shifts his focus from what people living in Europe knew about Ottoman Empire to how they actually knew what they knew. This required him to concentrate on "information flows" between Istanbul, Paris, and London, with a focus not on flows themselves, but on the people who made these flows happen. Given that there was no printing press in seventeenth-century Istanbul, he is thus faced with the hard task of tracing the myriad forms of oral communication that took place every day between an exclusive group of individuals whose personal interactions were the starting point for a long "process that carried information originating in Istanbul to audiences in London and Paris through the circulation of oral, scribal and printed media" (p. 6).

How to recover oral communication that took place more than four centuries ago? Ghobrial's approach is to follow a microhistorical methodology and a 'microscopic approach' by studying small details as windows into wider general realities. To be able to penetrate the "actual mechanics of everyday communication across geographic and language barriers" in the Ottoman capital, he uses a source of exceptional length and depth, the personal notes of Sir William Trumbull, the English ambassador to Istanbul between 1687 and 1692. A typical English diplomat,