THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

TURKEY

VOLUME 3

The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839

EDITED BY
SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

TURKEY

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Volume 3 traces the history of the later Ottoman Empire from the death of Mehmed III in 1603 to the proclamation of the *Tanzimat*, the administrative reconstruction of the Ottoman state, in 1839. This was a period of alternating stability and instability when trade between the empire and Europe flourished and, wartime apart, merchants and pilgrims could travel in relative security. However, despite the emphasis on the sultan's role as defender of the faithful and of social order, tensions did exist between the ruling elite in Istanbul and their subjects in the provinces, not least because of the vastness of the empire and the unpropitious natural environment with which those subjects struggled on a daily basis. This theme is one of the central motifs of the volume, where contributors look at the problems provincial administrators faced when collecting taxes and coming to terms with local soldiers and the politically active households of notables. Other sections focus on religious and political groups, non-Muslim minorities, women, trade, handicrafts, life in the Ottoman countryside and, importantly, music, art and architecture. The history sets out to demonstrate the political, cultural and artistic accomplishments of the Ottomans in the post-classical period, which runs contrary to traditional and still widespread notions that this was a period of stagnation and decline.

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

TURKEY

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The Cambridge History of Turkey represents a monumental enterprise. The History, comprising four volumes, covers the period from the end of the eleventh century, with the arrival of the Turks in Anatolia, through the emergence of the early Ottoman state, and its development into a powerful empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, encompassing a massive territory from the borders of Iran in the east, to Hungary in the west, and North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula in the south. The last volume covers its destruction in the aftermath of the First World War, and the history of the modern state of Turkey which arose from the ashes of empire. Chapters from an international team of contributors reflect the very significant advances that have taken place in Ottoman history and Turkish studies in recent years.

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THE CAMBRIDGE
HISTORY OF
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VOLUME 3

The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839

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Edited by

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

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Contents

PART I

BACKGROUND

PART II

AN EMPIRE IN TRANSITION

Contents

Illustrations

Maps

Tables

Contributors

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A note on transliteration

Given differing conventions in the various scholarly traditions to which the contributors belong, it is all but impossible to achieve consistency in transliteration. Modern Turkish spelling has been used in principle, except for Arabic and Persian words that do not occur in the Ottoman vocabulary, where the system of *The International Journal of Middle East Studies* has been adopted. In the chapters by Tülay Artan and Hatice Aynur (chapters 19 and 20), where we find quite a few manuscript citations, long vowels in Arabic and Persian loanwords have been indicated throughout, except in place names still used today. However, for the sake of consistency, long vowels in Ottoman names / terms, even if of Arabic / Persian origin, have not been indicated in the index. In their chapters on the Arab world (chapters 7 and 9), Dina Rizk Khoury and Bruce Masters have followed the system proposed by *The International Journal of Middle East Studies* with some slight modifications.

Chronology

1703	in the 'Edirne event' Mustafa II loses his throne and Şeyhülislam Feyzullah his life
1703–30	reign of Ahmed III
1710–1711	Russo-Ottoman war; the Russian army narrowly escapes annihilation
1718	by the peace of Passarowitz/Pasarofça, the Ottomans lose Belgrade to the Habsburgs
1718–30	the grand vizierate held by Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Paşa
c. 1720–1732	Levni, the last major Ottoman miniaturist active in Istanbul
1720–1	Yirmisekiz Mehmed Efendi visits Paris and Versailles as the ambassador of Ahmed III
1724	Ottoman invasion of the dissolving Safavid Empire
1725–9	Ottoman occupation of Tabriz
1726	Damad İbrahim Paşa founds a mosque and town centre in the village of his birth, renamed Nevşehir
1730	a rebellion of soldiers and artisans in Istanbul (Patrona Halil revolt) costs Ahmed III his throne and Damad Ibrahim Paşa his life
1734	Grand Vizier Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa founds a major complex of mosque, library and other charities
1739	Ottoman reconquest of Belgrade
1755	the Nuruosmaniye, built under Mahmud I (r. 1730–54), completed under Osman III (r. 1754–7)
after 1767	mosque and mausoleum of Mehmed II rebuilt in 'Ottoman baroque' style after destruction in an earthquake
1768–74	Russo-Ottoman war
1770	Ottomans lose the battle of Çeşme; Russian landing in the Peloponnese
1774	peace treaty of Küçük Kaynarca obliges the Ottomans and Crimean Tatars to accept the 'independence' of the Crimea, now turned into a Russian sphere of influence
1781	Russian annexation of the Crimea
1789–1807	Selim III
1794	attempted reform of the janissaries, establishment of the 'new model' army Nizam-ı Cedid
1798	Napoleon Bonaparte conquers Egypt
1798–1801	Napoleon's occupation of Egypt, later commanded by Kléber and Menou
after 1801	Mehmed Ali of Kavala re-establishes Ottoman rule in Egypt
1803	conquest of Mecca by the Wahhabis; Ottoman pilgrimage caravans turned back
1804–13, 1815	Serbian uprisings, initiated under Karadjordje Petrović
1805	Mehmed Ali Paşa governor of Egypt
1807–8	deposition and murder of Selim III
1808–39	Sultan Mahmud II
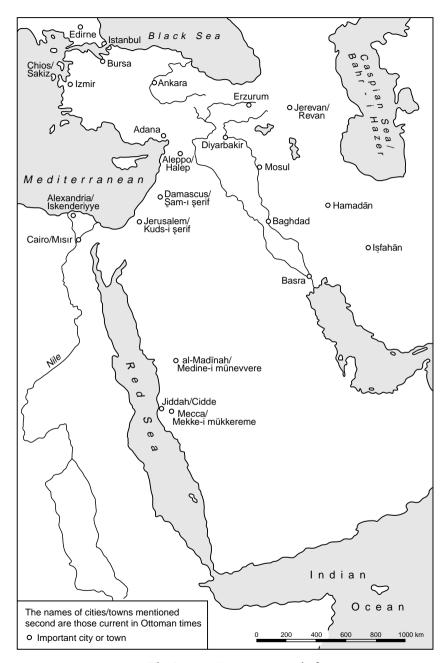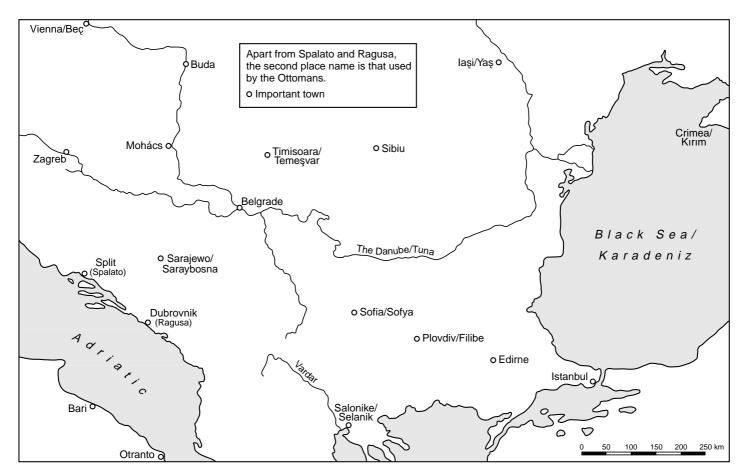
1813	Mehmed Ali Paşa re-conquers the Hijaz
1821	Greek uprising in the Peloponnese, Moldavia and Wallachia
1821–6	uprising in the Peloponnese defeated by Mehmed Ali Paşa
1826	janissary corps abolished by Mahmud II
1827	Ottoman–Egyptian fleet destroyed by Russian, British and French naval detachments
1828–9	Russo-Ottoman war lost by the Ottomans: loss of the Danube delta and of Caucasian territories
1830	treaty of London: foundation of the kingdom of Greece in Attica and the Peloponnese under Russian and British patronage
1831–3	Mehmed Ali Paşa, dissatisfied with Ottoman conduct during the Greek war and its aftermath, occupies Syria
1833	Mehmed Ali Paşa's forces occupy Kütahya; Russo-Ottoman alliance against Mehmed Ali Paşa
1839	Ottoman army defeated by Mehmed Ali Paşa's son İbrahim Paşa at Nizip
1838	Anglo-Ottoman treaty of Balta Limanı allows the importation of British goods at low customs duties; abolition of all monopolies
1839	promulgation of the administrative reforms known as the Tanzimat

Map 1 The Ottoman Empire in Asia and Africa

Apart from Spalato and Ragusa, the second place name is that used by the Ottomans.

o Important town

Vienna/Beç

Buda

Iaşi/Yaş

Zagreb

Mohács

Timisoara/Temeşvar

Sibiu

Crimea/Kırım

Belgrade

The Danube/Tuna

Black Sea/Karadeniz

Split (Spalato)

Sarajewo/Saraybosna

Dubrovnik (Ragusa)

Adriatic

Sofia/Sofya

Plovdiv/Filibe

Vardar

Edirne

Istanbul

Bari

Salonike/Selanik

Otranto

0   50   100   150   200   250 km

Map 2 The Ottoman Empire

P A R T   I

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BACKGROUND

Introduction

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

Massive size and central control

It is by now rather trite to emphasise that the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stretched from what were virtually the outskirts of Vienna all the way to the Indian Ocean, and from the northern coasts of the Black Sea to the first cataract of the Nile. But the implications of this enormous presence are so significant that in my view the risk of triviality must be taken. As a recent work on British imperial history has shown, even in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries, King and Parliament wished for the sake of Britain's trade and power in the Mediterranean to live at peace with Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, even though quite a few British subjects rowed on the galleys of these cities.[1] This conciliatory stance was not only due to the fortifications maintained by the three 'corsair republics', or even to the power of their navies, but resulted mainly from wider political concerns. Given the precarious situation of bases such as Gibraltar, angering the Ottoman sultan, who was after all the overlord of the North African janissaries and corsair captains, might have had dire consequences for British trade and diplomacy. Certainly in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, any number of European authors wrote books on the imminence of 'Ottoman decline'.[2] But when it came to the judgement of practical politicians, before the defeat of the sultan's armies in the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74, the power of that potentate was taken seriously indeed.

In this same context, it is worth referring to the relative peace that prevailed in most of Ottoman territory for most of the time. Even if the sultan's writ ran but intermittently in border provinces, or in mountainous areas, deserts

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1 Linda Colley, *Captives, Britain, Empire and the World 1600–1859* (New York, 2002), pp. 70–1.
2 On the early stages of this process: Lucette Valensi, *Venise et la Sublime Porte: la naissance du despote* (Paris, 1987).

and steppes, what was by the standards of the time a reasonable degree of security was the general norm. This allowed foreign merchants, pilgrims and even Christian missionaries to travel the highways and byways of the Balkans, Anatolia and Syria. These activities were often considered so important in Versailles, The Hague or London that accommodation on the political level, with the Ottoman central government but also with a variety of provincial potentates, seemed in order. Compromises with the sultan were deemed necessary in order to effect repairs to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and to allow Franciscans or Jesuits to attempt to persuade Orthodox or Armenian Christians who were also Ottoman subjects that they should recognise the supremacy of the Pope.[3]

But above all stood concerns of trade. Thus allowing the Ottoman ruler to use European ships active in the eastern Mediterranean for the wartime provisioning of his armies and towns seemed a reasonable quid pro quo when the French, British and Dutch governments considered the value of their respective subjects' Ottoman commerce. Apart from the customs and other duties paid by Levant traders in Marseilles, London or Amsterdam, there were important industries, especially in France, that depended on supplies from the Ottoman realm. Marseilles's soap factories, a major eighteenth-century industry, could not have functioned without inputs from Tunis or Crete.[4] The manufacture of woollens was another case in point. When at the end of the eighteenth century the Ottoman market collapsed, the formerly flourishing textile centre of Carcassonne near Montpellier reverted to the status of a country town, its inhabitants now resigned to living off their vineyards.[5]

Once again, the Ottoman Empire was of great size, and moreover its socio-political system had put down deep roots in most of the territories governed by the sultans, whose subjects profited from this situation in their commercial dealings. This becomes clear when we take a closer look at the caravan routes. In the 1960s and 1970s it was customary to emphasise the rise of maritime communications through the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and to conclude that the Ottoman Empire could scarcely avoid declining because it was increasingly

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3 Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around it, 1540s to 1774* (London, 2004).
4 Boubaker Sadok, *La Régence de Tunis au XVIIᵉ siècle: ses relations commerciales avec les ports de l'Europe méditerranéenne, Marseille et Livourne* (Zaghouan, 1987); Patrick Boulanger, *Marseille marché international de l'huile d'olive, un produit et des hommes, 1725–1825* (Marseille, 1996).
5 Claude Marquié, *L'Industrie textile carcassonnaise au XVIIIe siècle, étude d'un groupe social: les marchands-fabricants* (Carcassonne, 1993).

marginalised by world trade.[6] This view is widely held even today. However, if I am not mistaken, there are good reasons to be somewhat wary of this interpretation, at least with respect to most of the period studied here. First of all, we have come to see that even though land routes – or combined land–sea routes such as the connection from Aleppo to India – now handled a smaller share of overall traffic, what remained in the hands of Ottoman merchants, Muslims, Christians and Jews taken together was still substantial. Second, a relatively declining demand in Europe for raw silk and other goods from the Balkans and the Middle East gave Ottoman manufacturers a 'breathing space' before, in the early 1800s, they were exposed to the full force of the European-dominated world market: an advantage rather than a disadvantage.[7] It is therefore not so clear that the Ottoman economy was in fact being marginalised before the mid eighteenth century, and in consequence unable to service the sultan's armies and navies. Fernand Braudel's conclusion, in the later phases of his career, that the Ottoman Empire maintained itself well into the later 1700s due to its control of the overland trade routes is therefore well taken.[8]

Linkages to the European world economy

However, even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, certain regions of the Ottoman Empire maintained close and even intimate contact with European traders. Evidently the olive-growers of Crete and Tunisia depended on French demand for their oil. There is also the example of Izmir: this city had been of no particular importance in the 'classical' urban system of the sixteenth century, and only grew to prominence when that system lost some of its solidity after 1650 or thereabouts. Here, French, English and Dutch merchants established themselves over long periods of time, profiting not only from the transit trade in Iranian silk but also from the export of cotton and raisins, trades which were sometimes legal and at other times not. Certainly Izmir remained a primarily Muslim town, with locally prominent families constructing khans and renting them out as investments. Yet the city's economy by 1700 certainly

6 Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago and London, 1973), p. 81.
7 Murat Çizakça, 'Incorporation of the Middle East into the European World Economy', *Review* 8, 3 (1985), 353–78.
8 Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle: économie et capitalisme*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1979), vol. III, pp. 408–10.

was geared to trade with Europe; and when Iranian silk fell away after 1720 or so, once again locally grown cotton was available to fill the gap.[9]

Thus until about 1760 the Ottoman centre remained in control of its overland routes. Local production, which until this catastrophic decade had managed to prosper in quite a few places, was mainly geared to domestic markets. After all, before the advent of steamships and railroads it was not a realistic proposition to import consumer goods for ordinary people. Even after the 1760s, especially once relative security had been restored under Mahmud II (r. 1808–39), many local producers competed reasonably well with imported goods.[10] But even so at this time certain regions were becoming increasingly integrated into European commercial networks. Further links were established during the second half of the eighteenth century, when the need for financial services and the concomitant lack of Ottoman banks allowed French traders especially to engage in financial speculation and export money from the Ottoman Empire, an undertaking not usually profitable in earlier times.[11] While the Ottoman central government resorted to foreign borrowing only in the course of the Crimean war, at least some of its provincial representatives had become implicated in the financial dealings of European merchants about a hundred years earlier.

The attractions of eastern neighbours

Well-to-do Ottoman consumers did not limit their purchases from foreign lands to European goods, and thus Ottoman merchants traded both with the East and with the West. In Cairo around 1600, there were even some merchants who, through their trading partners, maintained contacts in both directions.[12] Spices from South-east Asia were consumed in the Ottoman lands: in the years before and after 1600, when Yemen was an Ottoman province, certain ports paid their dues in the shape of spices, more valuable in Istanbul than they would have been on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The quantities of pepper kept in the storehouses of Anatolian pious foundations indicate

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9 Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550–1650* (Seattle and London, 1990); Necmi Ülker, 'The Emergence of Izmir as a Mediterranean Commercial Center for French and English Interests, 1698–1740', *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 4, 1 (1987), 1–38; Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700–1820)* (Athens, 1992).

10 Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 1993).

11 Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 1999).

12 Nelly Hanna, *Making Big Money in 1600: The Life and Times of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Egyptian Merchant* (Syracuse, 1998), pp. 64–5.

that this was a popular condiment even in medium-sized cities. Moreover, just as eighteenth-century consumers in Europe came to prefer the sweetness of cinnamon to the sharpness of pepper, the Ottoman court, though otherwise conservative in its tastes, also switched to cinnamon at about the same time.[13] All this demand made Ottoman merchants into active participants in the Asian spice trade. In addition there were Indian cottons, with imaginative designs in bright, durable and washable colours, that enchanted the better-off Ottoman consumers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries just as much as their counterparts in early modern Europe. Indian producers of printed cottons thus worked simultaneously for the European, African, South-east Asian and Ottoman markets, entering some 'Turkish' motifs into their repertoires.[14]

Most goods from South-east Asia entered the Ottoman Empire by way of Cairo, but the Cairene merchants did not often venture further south than Jiddah. In consequence, the importation of these spices meant that Indian merchants, usually Muslims, appeared not only in Cairo or Istanbul, but occasionally even in small Anatolian towns. Unfortunately for our understanding of these connections, Indian merchants did not count on support from their respective home governments. There was thus no diplomatic correspondence of the type that has allowed us to evaluate, at least to some extent, the implications of the French, Dutch and English presences in Istanbul, Izmir or Sayda.

Rather more information is available on Iranian Armenians, from documentation produced by these traders themselves, but also from Safavid and diverse European sources; that these merchants also have found their way into Ottoman records is less well known.[15] Trade with Iran was often disrupted by political conflict; in certain years of the early eighteenth century it ground to a virtual standstill when war brought silk production to an end.[16] Yet even so, Armenian merchants subject to the shah are documented not only in the major port cities, but also in minor provincial towns. Thus we must assume that at least some of them traded in other goods apart from silks; perhaps the far-flung connections of the Armenian trade diaspora allowed certain of its members

13 Christoph Neumann, 'Spices in the Ottoman Palace: Courtly Cookery in the Eighteenth Century', in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph Neumann (Istanbul, 2003), pp. 127–60.

14 Vijaya Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers in Medieval South India* (Delhi, 1985), p. 123.

15 Concerning the eighteenth-century privileges of these people: Başbakanlık Arşivi-Osmanlı Arşivi, section Maliyeden müdevver (MAD) 9908, p. 268; MAD 9906, pp. 581–2.

16 Neşe Erim, 'Trade, Traders and the State in Eighteenth-Century Erzurum', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 5–6 (1991), 123–50.

to bring in Indian fabrics. While Ottoman trade connections to India and Iran are thus more difficult to document than their European counterparts, at least some of them have come out into the open and, with some patience, more can surely be unearthed.

In addition, the study of these eastern trade connections also has made us understand that the different commercial centres of the empire did not all provide the same conditions for trade. Certainly the Ottoman central power had adopted principles of administration valid throughout its territories, to wit a tendency to orient itself according to precedent if at all feasible, a concern with provisioning the consumers' markets at low prices and, most importantly, an inclination to consider economic action unremittingly and exclusively as a source of fiscal revenue (traditionalism, provisionism and fiscalism, according to the formula invented by Mehmet Genç).[17] But this general framework did not prevent trade conditions in Cairo or Aleppo, where long-distance merchants were accorded considerable leeway, from differing vastly from those prevailing in the sultans' rather over-administered capital.[18]

The perils of war

However the size and – until the 1760s – still impressive power of the Ottoman Empire was relevant not only to traders, but above all to sultans, viziers, kings and ministers – including the Estates General of the Netherlands.[19] It is often forgotten that while the Ottoman sultans by the mid sixteenth century had reached more or less permanent frontiers against Habsburgs and Safavids, they were, over a century later, still quite capable of major conquests from second-order states such as Venice and Poland. According to recent research, the seventeenth-century Habsburgs at their eastern fronts used technology and tactics reflecting the early modern military reformation; and since down to the late 1600s, the Ottomans held their own against the emperors' armies, their own procedures were less old-fashioned than they have often been made out to be.[20] Thus very large cannons, so often viewed as a sign of Ottoman

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17 Mehmet Genç, 'Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics and Main Trends', in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey 1500–1950*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 1994), pp. 59–86.
18 Hanna, *Big Money*, p. 166.
19 Mehmet Bulut, *Ottoman–Dutch Economic Relations in the Early Modern Period, 1571–1699* (Hilversum, 2001).
20 Gábor Ágoston, 'Ottoman Warfare in Europe 1453–1826', in *European Warfare 1453–1815*, ed. Jeremy Black (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 118–44 and 262–3.

military inefficiency, were apparently produced 'for show', while just as in European armies the real job of fighting devolved upon medium-sized and small guns.

Thanks to a number of studies both of individual campaigns and of Ottoman warfare in general, the strengths and weaknesses of the sultans' armies now can be evaluated with a degree of confidence. Well into the seventeenth century, one of the Ottomans' strongest points was the commissariat. While the miseries of war were universal, the sultans' armies were on the whole somewhat better supplied than their European counterparts.[21] Peasants provisioned the stopping-points along army routes, and craftsmen were drafted to accompany the soldiers, so as to obviate recourse to urban markets, where military discipline would have been difficult to maintain. Of course this arrangement had its disadvantages; peasants were paid little if anything for their services, and artisans also could not hope to recover their costs. Thus wars exacerbated the difficulty of capital formation, even under normal circumstances the Achilles' heel of the Ottoman socio-economic set-up, and the collapse of the army supply system in the second half of the eighteenth century seems to have been at the root of the military debacle of those years.[22] When food, clothing and tents were no longer supplied, soldiers attacked townsmen and villagers in order to provision themselves 'at source'. Even worse, Orthodox villagers taxed beyond the limits of endurance now tended to side with the Tsar, while in previous centuries, projected incursions into Ottoman territory on the part of Christian rulers had in most cases attracted but minimal support from the sultans' non-Muslim subjects.

In all probability the supply system collapsed when it did due to overload. It had long been customary in the Ottoman realm to demand deliveries for the military at prices that in many cases did not even cover production costs. Artisans responded by lowering the quality of their goods, and presumably the grain supplied at stopping-points by hapless peasants must often have been inedible.[23] Yet down to the late seventeenth century, the problems involved presumably remained manageable because the quantities of food and clothing demanded remained within – admittedly often rather wide – limits. But by the second half of the eighteenth century, if not earlier, military demand had reached a level that was simply too high for Ottoman taxpayers to support any

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21 Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500–1700* (London, 1999), p. 85.
22 Mehmet Genç, 'L'Economie ottomane et la guerre au XVIIIe siècle', *Turcica* 27 (1995), 177–96.
23 Genç, 'Ottoman Industry', p. 69.

longer. Perhaps this collapse was comparable to the war-induced crises that France for instance suffered in the years around 1700, and it was the Ottomans' misfortune to be confronted at this particularly dangerous moment with the empire of Catherine II.[24] After all, even if Russian resources were mobilised at but a minimal level, Russia possessed far greater supplies of wood, metals and other raw materials than were available in the Balkans or the Middle East.

Supplies apart, a number of studies have focused on military manpower. Already in the second half of the sixteenth century, the importance of cavalry armed only with swords and lances was on the wane, and this process continued during the 1600s. In order to recruit the large armies that the major empires fielded during their assorted wars, the sultans, like many European rulers, came to rely on musket-wielding mercenaries hired for a single campaign only.[25] By contrast, the holders of tax assignments (*sipahi*), who owed cavalry service and were counted as members of a privileged corps of men serving the sultan (*askeri*) were gradually phased out. Musketeers hired on a short-term basis throughout the seventeenth century mutinied with some frequency, usually because of their rivalries with the established military corps. After all, the latter possessed a job security unattainable to the mercenaries, who did however own the weapons with which they might force the provincial governors who had originally recruited them to lead them in their rebellions. In their turn the pashas themselves, as contenders for the grand vizierate, might need little prodding.

Particularly during the early seventeenth century, these mercenary rebellions were extremely destructive to Anatolian taxpayers in town and country. Entire regions were laid waste for many years, as the inhabitants fled to walled towns or barricaded themselves in rural fortresses. From the central government's viewpoint, this situation meant that no taxes could be collected; yet official attempts to repopulate abandoned villages met with mixed success at best. The desertion of the more arid regions of central Anatolia, especially of the plains and valleys, dates from this period and was only reversed from the late nineteenth century onwards; this catastrophe must be viewed as an indirect consequence of the transition to mercenary warfare.[26]

24 Niels Steensgaard, 'The Seventeenth-Century Crisis', in *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Geoffrey Parker and Lesley Smith (London, 1978), pp. 26–56.

25 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337.

26 Wolf Dieter Hütteroth, *Ländliche Siedlungen im südlichen Inneranatolien in den letzten vierhundert Jahren* (Göttingen, 1968), p. 201.

The central power and provincial society: the advantages of decentralisation

Recent work concerning Ottoman provinces, often focused on the Arab world, has permitted us to better understand the dynamics inherent in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century decentralisation, which can no longer be regarded as a manifestation of 'Ottoman decline' and a precondition for proto-nationalism.[27] At the basis of regional power in the hands of resident magnates we often find tax-farming, especially the acquisition of the lifetime tax-farms (*malikâne*), instituted in 1695, which sometimes became quasi-hereditary. In addition there was the power to distribute taxes levied on an entire province among individual settlements, with the possibilities of patronage this implied. We have also come to understand that at the beginning of 'our' period, or even in the sixteenth century, the central administration's power never controlled its territories in any uniform fashion. Thus in Syria local lords living in rural fortified houses dominated the countryside for over a century after the Ottoman takeover. A bout of centralisation only occurred in the 1630s, but by 1700 a local family had managed to establish itself as governors of Damascus retaining this position for over half a century.[28] Given the importance of Syria, both because of its inherent productivity and because of its strategic location on the pilgrimage route to Mecca, it is obvious that we have, in the past, rather exaggerated the dominance of the Ottoman centre at any time in its history.

Yet decentralisation did not mean disintegration, but is today often viewed as a rather effective means of government in an age before telegraphs and railways.[29] Holders of lifetime tax-farms had a vital interest in remaining subjects of the sultan. For if a province were to become detached from the empire the tenants of *malikâne*s, of course apart from the single family that turned itself into the new ruling dynasty, would have had no guarantee that their claims would continue to be honoured. There was moreover enough rivalry among the holders of major lifetime tax-farms for the Ottoman central administration to practise a policy of *divide et impera*: often when in the years around 1800, the sultan wanted to eliminate an overly powerful magnate, he only needed to let loose the latter's local competitors. This combination of deadly rivalry

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27 Ariel C. Salzmann, 'An Ancien Régime Revisited: "Privatization" and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *Politics and Society* 21, 4 (1993), 393–423; Ariel C. Salzmann, *Toqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden, 2004); Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997).

28 Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, *Provincial Leaderships in Syria, 1575–1650* (Beirut, 1985).

29 Salzmann, 'An Ancien Régime', *passim*.

and common interest forms the backdrop for the 'agreement of unity' (*Sened-i İttifak*) which powerful provincial dynasts concluded in 1808, and to which the newly enthroned Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) had to acquiesce even though he found it highly objectionable. For while in signing the *Sened-i İttifak* the magnates vowed to remain loyal to the sultan, it was a loyalty on their own terms and not on his.

That decentralisation could have its advantages for the stabilisation of Ottoman rule has also become apparent from certain studies concerning the mid-nineteenth-century reconstruction of the Ottoman state (Tanzimat). Quite often these books and articles deal in some detail with the preceding state of affairs, which bureaucrats bent on enforcing a modern-type centralisation by 1850 were anxious to abolish. Thus in Albania, eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Ottoman governments had often incorporated mountaineer tribesmen as mercenaries into their armies. Apart from the pay, this employment gave prestige to the men concerned and inculcated loyalty to the sultan, whose officials rarely interfered with the highland communities themselves. By contrast, what the Tanzimat administration aimed to achieve was a disarmed society, whose members would pay taxes just like villagers and townspeople anywhere else, and whose young men could be drafted into the army. Groups refractory to this kind of discipline were classed as 'uncivilised' and penalised accordingly: this policy contributed substantially towards undermining loyalty to Ottoman rule.[30]

Another case in which the eighteenth-century Ottoman government attempted to reintegrate an 'outlying' and 'difficult' society by means of local privileges, i.e. by instituting a form of decentralisation, involved the Peloponnese (Ottoman Morea) after it had been re-conquered from the Venetians in 1714–15. Here local notables were encouraged to present their views by means of an assembly known as the senate, an organisation not otherwise current in the Ottoman administrative practise of this time. But the central government proved unable to control the mercenaries who put down the 1770 uprising, when Russian troops had briefly invaded the peninsula and found local support. The incoming Ottoman soldiers had not been paid, and tried to collect overdue sums of money 'directly at source'; brutal exploitation resulted, and this attempt to rebuild the sultan's legitimacy by means of consultation with local notables ended in failure.[31]

30 Maurus Reinkowski, *Die Dinge der Ordnung. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung über die osmanischen Tanzimat im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2005).
31 Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 73–5.

Research on the power bases of provincial magnates in some cases has also focused on their wives, daughters and sisters. Apart from female members of the Ottoman dynasty on the one hand and townswomen – at least in certain places – on the other, this is the one category of Ottoman women on whom a quantity of information is available. Just as Ottoman princesses through their often multiple marriages formed ties between the dynasty itself and its high-ranking servitors, so the pashas of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Baghdad married off their daughters to their prominent freedmen. Such an alliance enabled a young member of the pasha's household to better his position, but it also might sanction a previously gained prominence. A similar practice was common among the Mamluk heads of households who in the later 1700s came to control Egypt after having evicted their rivals whose power base had been the paramilitary corps of Cairo.[32] In some cases the women concerned were able to use this situation in order to gain power and status in their own right. At least in Baghdad, some of them controlled significant amounts of resources, including tax-farms, with which they founded mosques and charitable institutions. For reasons that are not as yet well understood, the women of Anatolian and Balkan magnates do not seem to have enjoyed the same opportunities.

Political culture . . .

Greater or lesser roles allowed to women as well as the obligations of household members – who included slaves and freedmen – towards the heads of their respective households are all part of the cultural context of Ottoman political activity. This latter problematic has been studied with special intensity where Istanbul and Cairo are concerned. Households of assorted grandees, who in some instances were already sources of power in the sixteenth century but whose role increased in the seventeenth and eighteenth, were held together by the subordination and deference of junior to senior members and (as a general rule) of women to men.[33]

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32 Thomas Lier, *Haushalte und Haushaltspolitik in Bagdad 1704–1831* (Würzburg, 2004), pp. 73–88; Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *Women and Men in Late Eighteenth-Century Egypt* (Austin, 1995).

33 Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'The Ottoman Vezir and Paşa Households 1683–1703: A Preliminary Report', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94 (1974), 438–47; Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford, 1993), pp. 119–49; Margaret Meriwether, *The Kin who Count: Family and Society in Ottoman Aleppo 1770–1840* (Austin, 1999).

In the case of Mamluk households, mutual loyalty was expected from people who were on the same level hierarchically, if the men in question, all manumitted slaves, had been raised together in the same household. Otherwise loyalty was due mainly to socio-political superiors, even though there were some significant exceptions to this rule: thus an Ottoman gentleman, no matter how high he might rise, was expected to show loyalty and deference to his former teacher without regard to the latter's position. This practice explains why the erstwhile teachers of princes might acquire high office if their former charges ascended the throne.[34] As loyalty on the household level was taken for granted, it made sense for eighteenth- or nineteenth-century high officials to see to the promotion, within the bureaucracy, of people raised in their own households: such a person could be expected to further the interests of his patron. In this context sultans were merely the most eminent of household heads, whose court formed the model for all others. Thus the culture of the Ottoman palace, about which sources are most plentiful, was presumably imitated by vizieral and other politically significant households.

Given the great political importance of the military and paramilitary corps, it is surprising that so little work has been done on the 'barracks culture' into which these men were socialised, and once again, what we know concerns Istanbul and, above all, Cairo.[35] Symbols such as the 'sword of 'Ali' played a powerful role as foci for corporate military identity: they were depicted on banners, and stories were told about them that occasionally have come down to us. Another aspect of barracks culture, less edifying and even more poorly documented, involved the strong-arm tactics by which janissaries and others inserted themselves into the urban markets. Here there was doubtless a link to the culture of the street people about whose behaviour Ottoman townsmen not rarely complained in the kadi's court.

. . . and culture *tout court*

Certainly there is no longer a 'black hole' into which Ottoman cultural history of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can be said to have fallen. But it is still true that few poets, authors of chronicles, architects or even political figures who flourished during those centuries have been studied

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34 For a somewhat different interpretation compare Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984), pp. 52–3.
35 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge, 1997); Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen* (Albany, 2003).

with the intensity devoted, for instance, to the age of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66) and its immediate aftermath.[36] Yet in terms of the arts, this period is now understood to have been very productive.

In the construction of monumental mosques and charitable institutions, admittedly, there was something of a hiatus between 1616, when the Sultan Ahmed mosque was completed, and the reign of Ahmed III (1703–30). But the latter commissioned a grand complex in Üsküdar, in the name of his mother, and most of the later sultans and some of their viziers followed suit. Quite often these eighteenth-century structures were remarkable not for their size and monumentality but rather for their elegant design; in certain instances the central mosque was rather downplayed in favour of the adjacent schools, libraries and even drinking-fountains.[37] Inscriptions were now more often written in Ottoman Turkish, and their authors were permitted a degree of poetic licence in celebrating the merits of the relevant pious foundation and its patron.

Certain dignitaries broke with the established custom of building almost all of their mosques and schools in or around Istanbul. Thus Ahmed III's long-term grand vizier, İbrahim Paşa, raised the Anatolian village of his birth to the status of a town: Nevşehir is today a thriving provincial centre, and the foundation complex built by İbrahim Paşa still forms its monumental core. It can be surmised that this resumption of official benevolence was part of the rebuilding of the Ottoman state structure that took place after the peace of Passarowitz / Pasarofça (1718). Disadvantageous to the Ottomans though the latter agreement may have been, it did inaugurate fifty years in which there were only short wars on the western and northern fronts, and during those same years the central government did make a concerted effort to rebuild its legitimacy, especially by enhancing its religious aura. Widely visible charities were probably intended to demonstrate that the sultan did not only demand sacrifices from his subjects, but was willing to offer something in return.

An interesting feature of eighteenth-century provincial building was the inclination of certain patrons to revive elements of local pre-Ottoman traditions. Thus a major khan, built in Aleppo in the late seventeenth century, features stylised felines of the kind that had been used in Mamluk heraldry.[38] Near the town of Doğubayazit on the Iranian frontier, a local magnate family

36 Gül İrepoğlu, *Levnî: Nakış, şiir, renk* (Istanbul, 1999); Esin Atıl, *Levni and the Surname: The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival* (Istanbul, 1999).
37 Ayda Arel, *18. Yüzyılda İstanbul mimarisinde batılılaşma süreci* (Istanbul, 1975).
38 Heghnar Z. Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden, 2004).

built a palace, soon abandoned but still extant, whose style was visibly inspired by Seljuk architecture.[39] However, the best-known examples occurred in Cairo, where numerous buildings were put up that featured elements reminiscent of Mamluk building.[40] Unfortunately, in the absence of written sources about building practice we can only surmise, but do not really know, what patrons may have intended by adopting this 'historicist' style.

While the merits and demerits of architecture were not usually discussed in writing, the expansion of domestic consumption in well-to-do households was subject to considerable public dispute. This phenomenon has been observed not only in Istanbul itself, but also in provincial towns. Post-mortem inventories as well as surviving items show that walls decorated with frescoes, larger quantities of textiles, jewellery for women and decorated arms and horse-gear for men all became more abundant in the course of the eighteenth century. Fine woollens were often imported from France or England, and good-quality cottons from India, but in addition local products were in demand, such as the silks produced in Bursa and on the island of Chios. Miniatures and sultanic decrees also document the interest of wealthy urbanites in fashion changes. In reaction, many sultans attempted to enhance their legitimacy by decreeing sumptuary regulations, echoing the complaints of less well-capitalised artisans who could not easily adapt their products to changing tastes.[41] In addition, this increase in consumption was criticised by certain authors who deplored the outflow of precious metal to India, the 'uppity' ways of better-off Jewish and Christian males, as well as the – supposedly – increasing financial demands made by women upon their spouses. But all these complaints and prohibitions do not seem to have prevented the establishment, in the course of the eighteenth century, of what might be called an early form of 'consumer culture' among well-to-do Ottomans, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

In conclusion

It is against the backdrop of the research briefly outlined here that the present volume has been put together. Emphasis has been placed on those topics

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39 Hamza Gündoğdu, *Doğubayazit İshak Paşa Sarayı* (Ankara, 1991).

40 Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'The Abd al-Rahmân Katkhudâ Style in 18th Century Cairo', *Annales Islamologiques* 26 (1992), 117–26.

41 Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Goods in the *Mahalle*: Distributional Encounters in Eighteenth Century Istanbul', in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922: An Introduction*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 2000), pp. 289–312; Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Whose Laws? Gendering the Ottoman Sumptuary Regime', in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph Neumann (Istanbul, 2004), pp. 125–41.

reflecting current concerns. Thus the eighteenth-century growth of private, domestic culture is a relatively new discovery closely connected to the history of women, and both these issues therefore have been accorded special attention.[42] In the last two decades the historiography on Ottoman non-Muslims also has greatly developed, allowing us to regard Ottoman society as more pluralistic, and also more conflict-ridden, than in the past.

In addition, the study of provincial history has permitted us to reassess the operation of Ottoman state and society as a whole, the centre not excluded. Local sources, both chronicles and archival documents, have shown that the central administration's perceptions of its subjects were not necessarily shared by the latter; and that, on the other hand, decentralisation did not always mean political decline. This change of perspective through the use of locally produced sources remains valid even though these records only afford us a view of the aims and strategies of urban and sometimes rural notabilities. It is a sobering thought, all too often repressed, that the hopes and fears of peasants and nomads almost always continue to escape us. Here it may be useful for historians of at least the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to link up with ethnologists, an approach that has proved fruitful to Europeanist historians but has so far been shunned by scholars concerned with the Ottoman Empire.

On the other hand, the present volume has obvious gaps: thus the eighteenth century saw a growing interest in the sciences, especially medicine, among both Ottoman Muslims and non-Muslims, and also a concern with European Enlightenment ideas among a certain number of scholars from an Orthodox background.[43] Due to limitations of space these issues have not been treated here, although they should have been. In the same vein, Ottoman involvement with the sea, including both maritime trade and naval wars, has received rather a stepmotherly treatment. The Ottoman Empire in this volume appears as a solid land mass, which is true enough but not the whole story: after all, the sultans did, with some justification, claim to reign over both land and sea. Thus a great deal remains to be done, and some of it will be attempted in the near future, *insha'allah*.

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42 Zilfi, 'Whose Laws?'.
43 Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, 'Ottoman Educational and Scholarly-Scientific Institutions' and 'The Ottoman Scientific-Scholarly Literature', in *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, ed. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 2001, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 361–515 and 519–603.

2
Ecology of the Ottoman lands

WOLF-DIETER HÜTTEROTH

Area and period

This section deals with the centuries of long-term contraction and stagnation of the Ottoman Empire, following the splendid period of Süleyman the Law-giver (1520–66). In the time-span treated here the Ottoman Empire lost several provinces situated on its fringes, while stability and security within its boundaries also declined. These two-and-a-half centuries were a period of internal stagnation, in which the empire's connection with contemporary European developments was lost. On the Ottoman side there was hardly anything to compete with the modernisation and increasing power of Austria and later of Russia. Down to the Tanzimat period, the Ottoman Empire more or less remained a medieval state.

Nevertheless, in the 1600s the empire retained impressive power, continental extension and enormous diversity. From the northern Carpathians (southern Slovakia), the south-western Ukraine and the Caucasus, the sultans' domains extended all the way to southern Arabia, upper Egypt and along the North African coast to Tunis and Algiers. Cool, wet mountain forests on the shores of the Black Sea and in the Balkans formed part of the realm, as did the steppes of Anatolia and Syria. Mediterranean evergreen forests extended from Albania to Greece, southern Anatolia and the Syrian coastlands. They were all part of this empire, and the same applied to the empty deserts of Arabia and North Africa.

We know the reasons for the empire's decline in its later history. The disconnection of the Ottoman state from Europe and the latter's modern development has often been held responsible, and the relevant arguments need not be repeated here. We will rather consider how the empire fitted into the physical landscape, and which political and social developments in the course of time changed the appearance of the various lands under Ottoman rule. We will discuss mutating patterns of settlement and rural production – and their

effects on the landscape – and attempt to establish why they occurred. Which changes in settlement location and distribution had physical reasons, perhaps attributable to administrative or military acts of the ruling class, and which ones were more indirect consequences of latter-day Ottoman government? We also have to include natural events such as the plague, which, however, had only indirect influence on the economic potential of the Ottoman state.
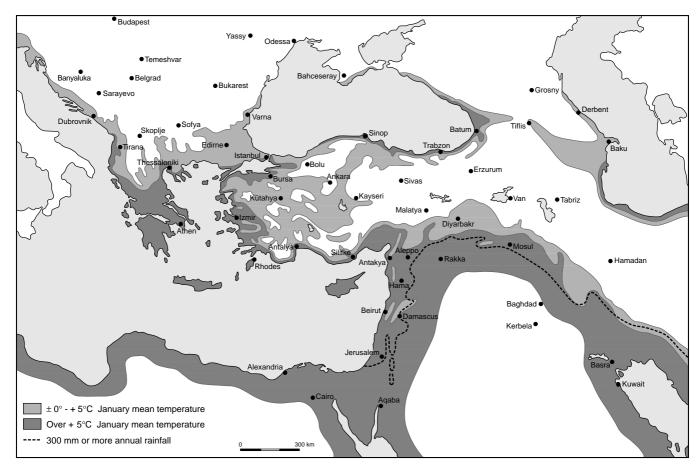
A fluctuating population in a stable climatic environment

We know that the degree of settlement density prevalent in early Ottoman times could not be maintained everywhere during later centuries. Information about the population numbers and density prevailing in the first Ottoman centuries is not absolutely reliable, but it is at least available, thanks to the government's custom of conducting periodic censuses of the tax-paying population and agricultural production (*mufassal defter*). The first of these registers were produced soon after the Ottoman conquest, and they continued to be compiled throughout the sixteenth century. Much credit also is due to the efforts of generations of officials who ensured the survival of these registers down to the present time. Different parts of the empire showed vastly differing patterns. In the Danube regions, population apparently diminished due to emigration, despite considerable new settlement by ethnic Turks.[1] On the other hand, in the Arab provinces there seems to have been a rise in population and a certain expansion of settlement due to better administration, compared with that of the Circassian Mamluk sultans before the Ottoman conquest of 1516–17. For large parts of Anatolia, as well as for Syria, the sources show an increase in population during the sixteenth century.[2] For present-day Greece and Bulgaria demographic developments as yet remain unclear; however, we may assume that, broadly speaking, the Ottoman lands were inhabited by one-tenth to one-twentieth of the present-day population.

From the sixteenth-century Ottoman surveys, the astonishing fact emerges that in most of the empire the proportion of nomads was not very high. Even in the steppe sub-districts (*nahiye*s) of central Anatolia and Syria, nomads seldom numbered more than about a quarter of the total population. Certainly not all nomads could have been counted in these fringe areas of settled agriculture;

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1 M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Rumeli'de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-ı Fâtihan*, (Istanbul, 1957).

2 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, 'Research on the Ottoman Fiscal Surveys', in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. M. A. Cook (Oxford, 1970), pp. 163–71.

Map 2.1 Most important climatic zones

Legend:

± 0° - + 5°C January mean temperature

Over + 5°C January mean temperature

- - - - 300 mm or more annual rainfall

0   300 km

Cities labeled: Budapest, Yassy, Odessa, Temeshvar, Belgrad, Bahceseray, Banyaluka, Bukarest, Grosny, Sarayevo, Derbent, Varna, Dubrovnik, Sofya, Sinop, Batum, Tiflis, Skoplje, Baku, Tirana, Edirne, Trabzon, Thessaloniki, Istanbul, Bolu, Bursa, Ankara, Erzurum, Sivas, Kütahya, Kayseri, Van, Tabriz, Izmir, Malatya, Athen, Diyarbakr, Antalya, Silifke, Aleppo, Mosul, Hamadan, Rhodes, Antakya, Rakka, Hama, Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, Kerbela, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Basra, Cairo, Kuwait, Aqaba

but the information provided by sixteenth-century bureaucrats is confirmed by our calculations that according to the grazing potential of these marginal lands, there could not have been many more. In the European part of the empire there were even fewer nomads, despite the immigration of Turkish Yürüks and the persistence of the well-known Koutsovlach, Aroumani and Sarakatsani transhumant populations.

Climatic reasons are frequently held responsible for the stagnation and occasional decline in population after about 1600. Decreasing mean precipitation or slightly declining temperature averages are accepted as reasons for worsening agricultural conditions in the course of the sixteenth century. But up to now arguments of this kind have not been convincingly proven. The slight climatic deterioration during the first half of the seventeenth century showed itself in Europe mainly through glacier progression in the Alps and other high mountains. Certainly, parallels in high Anatolian mountains do exist, but a long-lasting influence on vegetation in lower altitudes has not been demonstrated.[3]

Even in central Europe this drop in temperature was a climatic oscillation, which did not influence the conditions of agricultural production to any measurable degree. Of course, fields high up in the mountains were an exception. Probably during this time – long before the first instrumental observations – there were some minor variations in the averages for temperature and precipitation, of the kind which also happen in our own time. Historical information about cooler summers and cold winters are frequent for the sixteenth century as well, and the slight expansion of the Caspian Sea points in the same direction.[4] Even the frequency of bad wine harvests increased during those years.[5] But no general shift in agricultural zones occurred, and thus a general and long-lasting climatic change cannot be deduced from the available observations.

Nevertheless, the view, based mainly on western European and North American examples, that a 'Little Ice Age' occurred in the sixteenth century is widespread.[6] On the other hand, we must keep in mind that most agricultural products of the plains, as well as those of Mediterranean coastlands

3 Sırrı Erinç, 'Changes in the Physical Environment in Turkey since the End of the Last Glacial', in *The Environmental History of the Near and Middle East since the Last Ice Age*, ed. W. C. Brice (London, 1978), pp. 87–110.

4 Hermann Flohn, 'Klimaschwankungen in historischer Zeit', in *Die Schwankungen und Pendelbewegungen des Klimas in Europa seit dem Beginn der regelmäßigen Klimabeobachtungen 1670*, ed. H. v. Rudloff (Braunschweig, 1967), pp. 81–90.

5 Ibid., p. 87.   6 Jean M. Grove, *The Little Ice Age* (London and New York, 1988).

or mountains, have a certain range of climatic tolerance. Contemporary observers must have had difficulties in recognising long-term changes, given the absence of recorded yearly precipitations and temperatures. Even today, normal differences from year to year are overinterpreted by the average lay observer.

Before 1942–3, Gustav Gassner and Fritz Christiansen-Weniger investigated hundreds of central Anatolian tree-rings, and their work showed that no major changes had occurred during the previous few centuries.[7] Catastrophic years, either too dry or else too cold, were not absent, but the dendro-chronological evidence showed no general changes of climate. From other parts of the Ottoman Empire or neighbouring regions no contrary observations have emerged either. All known oscillations of climate have been situated within the range of the long-term averages for the last three millennia at least.

Certainly there were some exceptionally cold winters in the sixteenth century, in which the Bosporus supposedly froze over.[8] Yet even if reliably reported, these events are not evidence for a general change of climate. A southward shift of the circulation belts by a few degrees was probably responsible for lowering average temperatures in Europe and increasing cyclonal activity in the Near East. A further possible explanation, alternative or additional, is the atmospheric dust caused by strong volcanic activity around the earth during this period.[9] Archaeologists working on the Near East have taken it for granted that 'no major changes of climate [have occurred] since Assyrian times'.[10] The geographer Xavier de Planhol and the vegetation historians Willem van Zeist and Sytze Bottema have concurred.[11]

Further evidence against long-term climatic deterioration is phytological. There are well-known climatic limits for several agriculturally relevant plants, and their geographic spread does not seem to have changed noticeably. The average line of precipitation of 300 mm per annum was the approximate limit of rain-fed agriculture against the dry steppe, and so it remained until the

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7 Gustav Gassner and Fritz Christiansen-Weniger, 'Dendroklimatologische Untersuchungen über die Jahresringentwicklung der Kiefern in Anatolien', *Nova Acta Leopoldina N. F.* 12, 80 (1942/3).

8 Xavier de Planhol, *Kulturgeographische Grundlagen der islamischen Geschichte*, trans. Heinz Halm (Zurich and Munich, 1975).

9 Flohn, 'Klimaschwankungen'.

10 Peter J. Ergenzinger, Wolfgang Frey, Hartmut Kühne and Harald Kürschner, 'The Reconstruction of Environment, Irrigation and Development of Settlement on the Habur in North East Syria', in *Conceptual Issues in Environmental Archeology*, ed. John Bintliff, Donald A. Davidson and Eric G. Grant (Edinburgh, 1988), pp. 108–28.

11 De Planhol, *Kulturgeographische Grundlagen*; Willem van Zeist and Sytze Bottema, 'Late Quaternary Vegetation of the Near East', *Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*, A-18 (Wiesbaden, 1991).

present days of mechanised agriculture.[12] This is valid at least for those areas where rains fall mostly in the winter, a characteristic of Mediterranean and Near Eastern climates. In areas where most rain falls in the summer this value must be raised to about 400 mm, because a larger proportion of the available rainfall is lost by evaporation. As to the small share of the tropical summer precipitation zone, which the Ottoman Empire held in Yemen, these possessions were lost in the 1630s and not regained until after the end of 'our' period.
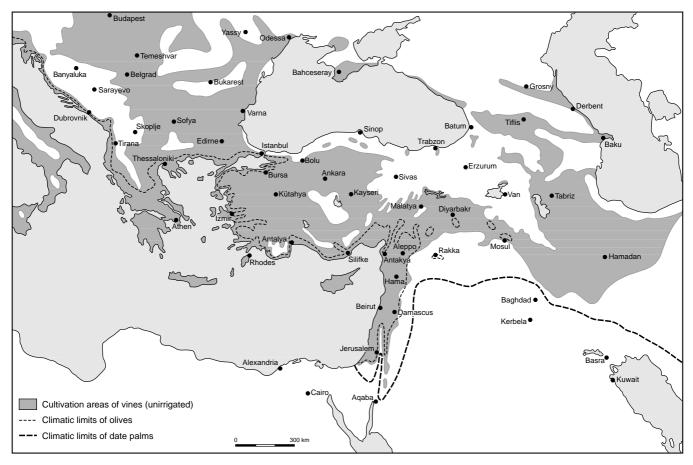
Rain-fed agriculture in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries was not practised at an annual precipitation below 300 mm, while by the late 1900s, grain agriculture had progressed almost to the 200 mm line in most parts of the Near East. But the reason for this divergence is very simple. Present-day farmers under these conditions accept that they will have good harvests in certain years, and bad ones or even none in others. But this was not an alternative for the peasant of pre-modern times, due to the lack of security and the impossibility of storing grain for several years. Nor was it profitable to transport grains over a distance of more than a few days. Beyond the precipitation limit of about 300 mm agriculture has been precarious at all times, and peasants of the early modern period selected their settlement sites accordingly.

Thermal conditions, especially the limits separating the Mediterranean climate from cooler zones, also do not seem to have changed during the last centuries. Mediterranean agriculture[13] is limited by the $+5\,^{\circ}$C January temperature line.[14] This was and is found on the southern slopes of the Taurus, at the foot of the northern Greek mountains and on the coast of Dalmatia. Inland or north of this line the olive tree, this old characteristic of a Mediterranean climate, does not occur. Only a few isolated and sheltered places on the Turkish Pontic coast or in the southern Crimea do have some. Many other Mediterranean plants follow these climatic limits, citrus fruit being slightly less tolerant of winter cold and figs (*Ficus carica*) somewhat more so.[15]

Human habits in the consumption of edible fats coincide with this distribution of ecological possibilities. This is most evident in the coincidence of the Mediterranean climatic zone with the popular custom of olive-oil consumption. In the wet forests of the Black Sea the hazelnut has long been the traditional provider of edible fats. Near the borders of the dry belt in northern Arabia pistachio nuts fulfil the same function. The winter-cold areas of central Anatolia and the Balkans, however, are the natural domain of animal fats, where butter is clarified because in this state it is better preserved during the

12 See map 2.1.   13 See map 2.2.   14 See Map 2.1.
15 Van Zeist and Bottema, 'Quaternary Vegetation'.

Map 2.2 Main cultivation areas of olives, date palms and vines

hot summers. This distribution has survived into the twentieth and perhaps even into the twenty-first century. Often traditions of food consumption are more influential than modern production facilities, with the increasing popularity of olive oil in Europe during the last two centuries the exception that proves the rule.

The Balkan zone to the north of the Mediterranean is often called 'sub-Mediterranean' in climate, although, because of its cold winters, it is hardly comparable with the traditional sub-Mediterranean areas of western Europe. From Macedonia and Thrace to Slovakia and the Crimea, the summer months at least are warm enough for the widespread cultivation of crops sensitive to cold; after all, winter temperatures do not touch them. In Ottoman times things were no different. Given sufficient water, rice could and can be cultivated in this area and products of the vine, such as raisins, were an integral part of the food economy even in Ottoman times.[16] The Ottoman Turks and Islamised Balkan populations cultivated vines although they did not produce wine. Grapes were consumed fresh, as raisins or concentrated into syrup (Turkish *pekmez*).

In later centuries maize (corn) had one of its European centres of cultivation in the Balkan peninsula and in Danube countries. The climate of these regions corresponds to the thermic conditions of southern North America. There are sufficient summer rains in the Anatolian Black Sea region and the western Caucasus as well. Here a typical European / Near Eastern maize zone developed, whose limits remained stable down to the introduction of hybrid corn species since the mid-twentieth century.

Remnants of ancient forests

Given the dependence of human beings on trees for fodder and fuel, the distribution and especially the composition of locally available forests is very important. Expanding into the Balkans and to the Danube, the Ottomans by about 1400 had reached those areas in which oak trees (*Quercus frainetto*, *Q. macrolepis*, *Q. trojana*) naturally predominate, from the plains up to the mountains of medium height. This fact had consequences which cannot be overestimated, as the most important use for oak forests since ancient times has been the pasturing of pigs. Yet for Muslims it is forbidden to slaughter or eat pigs, and even to touch them. Local villagers who converted to Islam were therefore confronted with a dilemma: getting rid of the pigs, as demanded by the Islamic faith, would have destroyed their way of living and their economic

16 Map 2.2.

existence.[17] In such situations, religious conversion necessitated a total change in the prevalent way of life and economic system. To a certain extent the survival of the Christian faith in the Balkans and the Danube countries must have been due to this simple fact.

By contrast, pig-breeding was without any importance at all in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Anatolia, for example, where wooded areas are rare, has mainly forests of different pine and juniper species (*Pinus silvestris*, *P. brutia*, *P. halepensis*; *Juniperus foetidissima*, *J. excelsa*, *J. phoenicea*). The evergreen oaks of the Mediterranean region (*Quercus ilex*, *Q. coccifera*) are not attractive for pig-rearing. Furthermore, throughout the millennia they have been reduced by the overgrazing of goats and largely replaced by pine forests.[18] While oaks are not absent in the broadleaf forests of the Black Sea coast, it is beeches (*Fagus orientalis*) that prevail in this region. In the southern parts of the Ottoman Empire – Iraq, Egypt and North Africa – oaks and, for that matter, forests of any kind are of no significance. Certainly the mountains of Iraq, Iran and Algeria do have oak forests, but here the Muslim faith has such ancient roots that pigs can never have been bred in this area during Ottoman times.

Uncontrolled tree cutting in the forests was practised down to the late Ottoman period. In areas with some forests or forest remnants, especially in eastern Anatolia, the use of firewood was doubtless predominant among the wealthier inhabitants. For the winter cold of these regions made firewood a valuable and expensive product, far higher in price than the commonly used *tezek* (dried dung of cows). Even the last forests of central Anatolia have progressively been degraded during Ottoman times. In the surroundings of Ankara, on the Elma Dağı, the Mongol emperor Timur is said to have hidden his war elephants in the pine forests before the battle against Bayezid I in 1402 AD. Only a single, century-old pine supposedly remains of these forests today.

Nevertheless, we must view the preservation of great parts of the Anatolian and Syrian forests in connection with the process of 'nomadisation' which took place in the Middle Ages. Nomads use the mountain forests far less than settled villagers; moreover, the population density of villagers is usually far higher than that of nomads.[19] Furthermore, settled peasants need firewood in winter when nomads will have moved to the warmer coastal plains. The conservation of Mediterranean mountain forests then is to a certain extent a

17 De Planhol, *Kulturgeographische Grundlagen*, S. 330.

18 Herbert Louis, *Das natürliche Pflanzenkleid Anatoliens, geographisch gesehen* (Stuttgart, 1939).

19 Xavier de Planhol, 'Les nomades, la steppe et la forêt en Anatolie', *Geographische Zeitschrift* 53, 1–2 (1965), 101–16.

result of medieval nomadisation. Another consequence of this process is the low upper limit of permanent villages: in 'nomadised' areas we do not find permanent settlements at higher elevations, even in places where agriculture was and is possible. The southern mountains of present-day Turkey are a typical example; new villages were not founded at these heights in sizeable numbers before the twentieth century. The forests of the Anatolian Black Sea area likewise experienced a loss of settlement and population density, with a relative increase of nomads, after late Byzantine times, and this gave them a chance to regenerate.[20] Not only bushes, but a quasi-natural timber forest of broadleaf type reappeared in these mountains.

In eastern Anatolia conditions are too dry for forests below 1,500–2,000 m and too cold above 2,500–3,000 m.[21] Due to the narrow band of potential forests (mainly of the *Juniperus* species) there must have been extreme use and over-use of wood at all times, resulting in the degradation and even destruction of all forests. The last wild trees had disappeared probably even before Ottoman times. On the southern slopes of the Taurus, under conditions better suitable for tree growth, intensive branch- and leaf-cutting for fodder has led to progressive degradation in our own time.

In the Turkish Black Sea region and in the western Caucasus, on the other hand, forests could survive to a great extent. In this area of humid climate, the difficulties of clearing, and especially of keeping agricultural lands free of new forest growth, reduced agricultural expansion. It was not before the middle of the twentieth century that hazelnut plantations all along the southern and eastern Black Sea coast, tea in the eastern coastlands and potato fields higher up in the mountains marked the beginnings of modern agriculture. The increase of population during the last decades of the twentieth century has been partly responsible for moving the limits of agriculture further up the hills.

In the Pontic mountain range, the higher Balkan chains and the western Caucasus, the Alpine zone of vegetation offers remarkable possibilities for the survival of humans and their animals. Thanks to precipitation all year round we find here not the thorny, summer-dry highland steppes of most Mediterranean mountains, but rich green pastures of fresh grasses throughout the summer months, similar to the corresponding zone of the Alps. Compared to regions further south a greater number of sheep per square unit may be grazed here. On the other hand, frequent fog and precipitation make life

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20 Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth, 'Yığılca kazasında Karadere vadisi', *İstanbul Coğrafya Enstitüsü Dergisi* 7, 12 (1961), 166–9.

21 Louis, *Pflanzenkleid Anatoliens*; Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Volker Höhfeld, *Türkei* (Darmstadt, 2002).

under tents uncomfortable, and immigrating nomads have quickly become accustomed to life in wooden houses. Oriental-type nomadism therefore never conquered these wet and misty mountains between the Carpathians and the Caucasus. Even the Rhodopes, the Rila mountains and those of Bosnia and today's northern Greece – then a domain of Aroumani and Sarakatsani – were characterised more by transhumance than by traditional nomadism. All over the Balkans the immigrant Turkish Yürük had difficulty retaining their traditional nomadic way of life.

In the wooded hills of the Balkans the use of the local forests developed along different lines. According to Islamic law, forest was state land, free for public use and, at least officially, not to be turned over to private enterprise. In the core lands governed by the sultans, the small tenant's occasional forest use was at first not regulated, unless the area had been reserved for the use of the navy or of the ever timber-hungry capital of Istanbul. Nobody organised the exploitation of forest lands for the collection of firewood or grazing. A regulated forest economy and tree planting, common in central and western Europe at least since the early 1800s, was missing in the Islamic lands down to the twentieth century. But the mountain forests were cleared and the uplands were more commonly used in Ottoman times than before: the indigenous population, emigrating or fleeing from the plains, began to colonise the mountain forests despite their very limited agricultural potential.[22]

Different conditions characterise the regions of indirect Ottoman government on the borders of the empire. Wallachia and Moldavia, the core of present-day Romania, as well as the south-western Caucasus, are typical examples. Since the seventeenth century, Ottoman supremacy, exploitation by local lords and near-permanent conflict with neighbouring states had led to severe insecurity, and the recovery of settlement ensued much later than in the Habsburg lands. Only in the late nineteenth century did the regular re-colonisation of the southern plains of Wallachia become possible. An interesting symbol of backwardness was the survival of the aurochs (*Urus* or *Bos primigenius*) in Moldavia down to the eighteenth century and of the European buffalo (*Bison bonasus* or *B. europaeus*) in Svanetia down to the present time – symbols of low settlement density, remoteness and survival of the last European primeval forests.

However, in areas by nature rather unsuited for woodland, such as the Hungarian basin, southern Wallachia or in the interior sections of the central

22 Herbert Wilhelmy, *Hochbulgarien I: Die ländlichen Siedlungen und die bäuerliche Wirtschaft* (Kiel, 1935).

Anatolian plateau, as well as on the fringes of the Fertile Crescent, the uncontrolled use of the few forest remnants must have stripped the land of wild trees altogether. Here are the 'anthropogenic steppes' of early modern times. A regional atlas clearly shows the areas of naturally forest-free lands in Pannonia and Wallachia: yet without the influence of man, during Ottoman times and thereafter, outright steppe lands would have been much rarer.[23] Only with the new tree plantations after 1950 has this picture changed to some extent.

Yet in more humid areas of the Balkans, especially near the Austrian frontier, the forests were very well preserved. They could even extend because of the desertion of villages in this zone of permanent frontier strife.[24] Later a new clearance phase and Austrian resettlement projects of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries combined to introduce planned villages with their individual, parallel strip fields. Later on, chequerboard villages with regular bloc fields became the norm, first in those areas conquered by the Austrians and later also in independent Romania and the Ukraine.

The role of the *çiftlik*s

In addition to the poor mountains and hilly areas, there were and are the fertile basins, the Turkish *ova* and the *polje* of the southern Slavs. Such lands had a special role to play in the later centuries of Ottoman rule. With their deep, often fertile soils they offered the best possibilities for agriculture, at least in their non-swampy parts; for in the mountainous regions, even if the climate was favourable, the available pieces of land were not large enough and moreover too much broken up, or else the soil was too shallow for profitable agriculture.

From the seventeenth century onward the southern Balkans and the lands along the Danube or around the Aegean Sea were marked by a particular agrarian development, unknown in the Ottoman lands at least since antiquity. Down to the sixteenth century these basins had contained big villages owned to a large extent by the sultan himself. In other regions, less favourable for agriculture, the lower ranks of the Ottoman administrative and military hierarchy became landholders. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the

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23 Josef Breu (ed.), *Atlas der Donauländer* (Vienna, 1970–89).

24 Adolf Karger, *Die Entwicklung der Siedlungen im westlichen Slavonien. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeographie im westlichen Slavonien*, Kölner Geographische Arbeiten, 15 (Wiesbaden, 1963).

feudal tax grants (*timar*s) of early Ottoman times collapsed and were replaced by a tax-farming system.[25] Influential Ottoman notables claimed large tracts of land, and a new type of rural settlement was created.

*Çiftlik*s were exploited partly in the Mediterranean manner, namely by sharecropping, or else by tenants with heavy obligations; in other cases some kind of servile labour was used.[26] They were founded mainly in areas from which the product could be transported to market without great difficulties. Proximity to large towns, frequently used military roads or waterways such as the Danube or the Aegean was favourable for the establishment of *çiftlik*s. Nevertheless, these farms were much smaller than the estates typical of eastern and east-central Europe.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries *çiftlik*-holders increasingly concentrated on animal breeding. Flocks with a few herdsmen promised higher profits than grain or any other crop requiring more labour. A second motive was the fact that the large labour force needed for grain agriculture required a degree of security that was often lacking in the countryside of the later Ottoman centuries.

Centres of distribution and consumption of the agricultural goods produced on *çiftlik*s were the cities of the Ottoman west, especially Istanbul, and of course the region close to the north-western frontline against Austria. Furthermore, throughout our period there was an important official or unofficial animal trade from the Pannonian basin to Central Europe and Italy, which was supplied mainly by *çiftlik*s. In the Asiatic parts of the empire the main markets were Aleppo and Cairo.[27]

Çiftlik dominance in the basins favourable to agriculture had important consequences, determining the distribution of settlements for centuries ahead. With agriculture becoming less profitable and sheep- and cattle-breeding more

25 Halil Inalcık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms, Çiftliks: State, Landlords and Tenants', in *Contributions à l'histoire économique et sociale de l'empire Ottoman*, ed. Jean Louis Baqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Paris, 1983), pp. 105–26.

26 Leonhard Schultze-Jena, *Makedonien – Landschafts- und Kulturbilder* (Jena, 1927); Richard Busch-Zantner, 'Agrarverfassung und Siedlung in Südosteuropa, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Türkenzeit', *Beiheft 3, Leipziger Vierteljahrsschr. f. Südosteuropa* (Leipzig, 1938).

27 Lázslo Makkai, 'Der ungarische Viehhandel 1550–1650', in *Der Aussenhandel Ostmitteleuropas 1450–1650*, ed. Ingomar Bog (Cologne and Vienna, 1971), pp. 483–506; Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth, 'Aleppo. Historische und geographische Beiträge zur baulichen Gestaltung, zur sozialen Organisation und zur wirtschaftlichen Dynamik einer vorderasiatischen Fernhandelsmetropole', *Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients*, Reihe B 58 (Wiesbaden, 1984), pp. 269f.

so, it seemed no longer necessary to take care of the soil. Extensive grazing on rough pasture was and is possible on land that is not cared for. In consequence, drainage seemed unnecessary and was often neglected. But the result, in the long run, was increasing soil degradation by swamp formation; the relevant vegetation came to be less useful to human beings, and even the pastures lost productivity.

Once large swampy areas had appeared, they were difficult to restore to agricultural use by the individual small tenant. Furthermore, malaria became more widespread. The plains increasingly lost their attractiveness, compared with the overcrowded but safer mountains. Thus the opposition between empty plains and densely populated mountains increased. Put differently, in the Ottoman lands there came into being an opposition between plains and mountains unknown in extra-Mediterranean Europe: an extensive use of agriculturally optimal areas contrasted with marginal lands that were used intensively. From Hungary to Greater Syria and further to the desert fringe in present-day Jordan this pattern of settlement distribution was dominant, although in the south-eastern parts of the empire security was a more important reason than the decisions of *çiftlik* landholders. This pattern of land use moreover became the precondition of many resettlement processes and rural migrations in modern times.[28]

While settlement patterns of this type are characteristic of south-eastern Europe and the whole Near East, they are in absolute contrast to European developments outside the Mediterranean and Balkan worlds. In western Europe for more than a thousand years, we find a steady increase in the density, size and stability of villages – with exceptions in times of plague – and the plains are more or less the centres of this development. In the Mediterranean region and the Near East, including the Ottoman Balkans, however, it was the fertile plains that were given up and the mountains became the centres of population. Such was the structure of the agrarian landscape down to the nineteenth century in the Danube countries, and even to about 1930–50 in the eastern Mediterranean lands and certain parts of Italy. Consequently, during modern times in these countries settlements descended from mountains to plains, thereby moving into areas with a more favourable climate and better soils. An early example is the emigration of Greek settlers from the overcrowded Aegean islands to western Anatolia in the early nineteenth century.

28 Compare map 2.3.

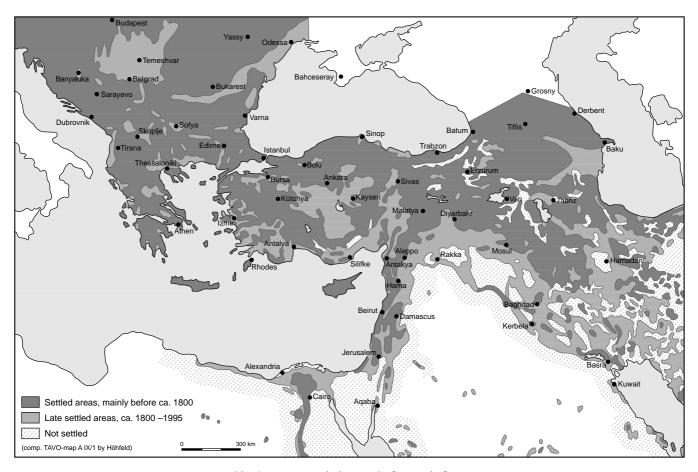# Desertion, resettlement and their ecological consequences

In all the coastal areas of the Mediterranean widespread piracy was a special danger. This phenomenon continued far longer in the eastern Mediterranean than in its north-western parts, occasionally even to the end of the nineteenth century. Coastal settlements adapted to this danger: all older maps of Greece, Asia Minor or the Levantine coast show the characteristic position of human settlements somewhat – but not too – distant from the seashore, in more or less elevated, secure positions.[29] Direct coastal locations were avoided not only because of danger from the open sea, but also due to the fear of malaria, always more threatening in the plains; this pattern went back to pre-Ottoman times and was considered natural by the local populations.

It was not until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that this traditional preference for hidden mountain sites began to change. Increasing security in modern times and, of course, tourist facilities have induced the local populations to move into new coastal settlements and even into scattered individual houses near the shoreline. In the former Ottoman lands, however, this process happened at least one century later than in the more favoured parts of Italy and the western Mediterranean.

The most widespread changes, however, concern the distribution of settlement, which happened at least twice during and since the Ottoman centuries. Vast regions deteriorated between 1600 and 1850, and here the majority of villages were abandoned.[30] But on the other hand, even greater regions were reclaimed and resettled in the nineteenth century and thereafter. This translated at first into a re-extension of steppes and forests, followed later by renewed reclamation for agricultural use.

Depopulation of the plains in particular was due mainly to irregular demands for tribute and taxes. The plains could easily be controlled by military men and tax-collectors arriving on horseback; their exactions gave villages small chances of survival. In addition, there were numerous wars between states; these included confrontations of the Ottoman Empire with Austria, Poland and later Russia. Moreover, in Anatolia and the Fertile Crescent there were powerful quasi-independent nomadic tribes, which fought against each other or against government forces, and these conflicts also militated against the survival of villages. Resettlement, on the other hand, did not begin before the nineteenth century, and became more intensive in post-Ottoman times.

29 Necdet Tunçdilek, 'Türkiye iskan coğrafyası', *İstanbul Coğrafya Enstitüsü Dergisi* 49 (1967).
30 Compare map 2.3.

Map 2.3 Older/younger settled areas (before and after *c.* 1800 AD)

Legend:
- Settled areas, mainly before ca. 1800
- Late settled areas, ca. 1800 –1995
- Not settled

(comp. TAVO-map A IX/1 by Höhfeld)

0   300 km

By contrast, sites in wooded or mountainous areas and in places difficult of access offered natural protection; their poverty also made them appear less attractive to booty-seekers. This had severe consequences for the Ottoman state: after the sixteenth century it was mainly the poorer villages that survived, while the once preferred sites in the plains lost their attractiveness or were reduced to become *çiftlik*s belonging to a privileged but mostly absentee class of landholders.

Both developments were unfavourable for the treasury. Reduced agricultural tithes led to the increase of extraordinary taxes in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. This again made life in the countryside less attractive. Rural taxpayers were exploited more and more, while the towns survived and partly managed to develop; even industrial innovations were not unknown.[31] The result was a widespread emigration of rural population, the early stages of which, around 1600, have been described convincingly by Mustafa Akdağ.[32]

Village desertion, for most of the Ottoman Empire, can be dated only by approximation. In the mid-sixteenth century, the foundation of new villages and the extension of old ones was common. The tax registers of the sixteenth century show increasing population in all provinces of the empire. This statistical increase may be partly due to increasing completeness and perfection in registration. Nevertheless, it is obvious that there was real progress as well. But in the seventeenth century, systematic censuses were no longer undertaken, except in a few newly acquired provinces. By this time the decay of the agricultural landscape must already have been noticeable. Villages and the rural population were reduced in Palestine as well as in the Pannonian basin, in Wallachia as well as in central Anatolia.

Among the results of the Ottoman occupation there were remarkable ethnic changes, especially on the Balkans and in the Pannonian basin. The northward expansion of the Serbs is typical of this process, which extended to the Austrian territories and later to the *Militärgrenze*, the military frontier zone along the southern limits of Habsburg territory. During pre-Ottoman times there had not been any Orthodox population at all so far to the north-west. Furthermore, the eastward expansion of the Albanians, Islamised since the seventeenth century, to the Kosovo area is part of this movement, as the latter region had previously been abandoned by most of the original Serbian population. Another significant ethnic change resulted from the slow southward

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31 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Notes on the Production of Cotton and Cotton Cloth in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Anatolia', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 262–70.
32 Mustafa Akdağ, *Celâlî isyanları (1550–1603)* (Ankara, 1963).

movement of the Aroumani, penetrating into the mountains of the Peloponnese. In addition, it is little known today that in the early twentieth century the Greeks were far from forming a majority in Macedonia and Thrace. Jovan Cvijic's ethnic map may demonstrate this for the years shortly before the First World War, although as H. R. Wilkinson has shown, in some respects his mapping appears suspect.[33] Last but not least, the Hungarian population was diminished by several wars to such a degree that later on the Austrian state had to fill the depopulated areas of southern Hungary with settlers from present-day Serbia. Romania, Germany and Croatia.

A fair part of south-eastern Europe's ethnic mixture goes back to the period of Ottoman rule, but the later Austro-Hungarian policy of resettlement had very similar results. Language, in contrast to religion, did not have very much importance down to the nineteenth century. People of different backgrounds were needed for recolonisation projects; this led to a population medley which later became explosive. But in the time between the Austrian reoccupation and the mid-nineteenth century nobody spoke of ethnicity. National states were not part of the political programme, perhaps not even thought of, and nationalisms were not in evidence before the institution of obligatory elementary schooling.

Nevertheless, there is generally an important difference between deserted regions in the Asiatic and the European parts of the Ottoman Empire. Apart from the basin plains previously mentioned, in the European regions it was predominantly war-torn areas such as Hungary, Bosnia or western and southern Romania that were depopulated. In the Asiatic regions, in Anatolia, Syria and Iraq, however, there had not been any general war for centuries and as we have seen, desertion rather affected those areas that were difficult to defend against nomads and bandits or which did not promise reliable good harvests.[34]

Natural catastrophes and their effects on settlement

In addition, there were natural catastrophes, about which, however, we do not know very much. Most important in this respect must have been the plague, which came over people as an unpredictable natural disaster.[35] Something is known about the extent of population losses in the empire's European provinces during the second half of the sixteenth century.[36] Conditions in

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33 J. Cvijic, *La Péninsule balkanique: géographie humaine* (Paris, 1918); H. R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool, 1951).
34 Compare map 2.1.
35 Peter F. Sugar, *South-Eastern Europe under Ottoman Rule 1354–1804* (Seattle and London, 1977), p. 108; Daniel Panzac, *La peste dans l'empire ottoman, 1700–1850* (Leuven, 1985).
36 Fernand Braudel, *Sozialgeschichte des 15.–18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1986), vol. I, p. 483.

the Asiatic provinces cannot have been very different, but little is known about them. Istanbul was a major centre of infection; the rat population was plague-ridden on a long-term basis and the sickness often spread outward from the Ottoman capital. The plague, however, affected a population whose density – compared with the present situation – was rather low, especially in most rural areas.

Well into the early twentieth century another serious danger was the often-repeated invasions of locusts. Provinces at the fringes of the Arabian desert including Cyprus, Syria and Mesopotamia were especially affected. Swarms of locusts must have invaded these localities every few years. But Anatolia too was hit rather often and in some cases the swarms even proceeded to the European parts of the empire.[37] Plagues and locusts are of course independent of political and demographic developments. But they certainly influenced the demography of the regions affected.

The formation of badlands, which is so dangerous today in all areas with easily eroded soils, occurred without any important countermeasures being taken during Ottoman times. The main reasons were overgrazing and bare, uncovered soils, where the sudden run-off of heavy rains could wash away the top soil and incise rills in many slopes. But to the beginning of the twentieth century population increase was limited and, consequently, animal density and grazing intensity were also less than those observed today. In the Middle Ages extensive devastation of agricultural land probably occurred from the Balkans to the Near East, because of the well-known general insecurity and the influx of new populations still unused to the conditions of their new habitats.[38] The quasi-natural devastation of agricultural land, especially due to the abandonment of riverside slopes and terraces, was partly due to neglect during the Middle Ages.[39] The widespread accumulation of fluvial sediments in riverbeds corresponded to the devastation of the adjacent terraces. However, these processes seem to have occurred mainly during the pre-Ottoman period.

In the Ottoman centuries, by contrast, the process of soil erosion apparently stabilised, more or less. This period is characterised by the sedimentation of

37 Flohn 'Klimaschwankungen', p. 86; Gilles Veinstein, 'Sur les sauterelles à Chypre en Thrace et en Macédonie à l'époque ottomane', in *Armağan, Festschrift für Andreas Tietze*, ed. Ingeborg Baldauf, Suraiya Faroqhi and Rudolf Vesely (Prague, 1994), pp. 211–26.
38 Doeke Eisma, 'Stream Deposition and Erosion by the Eastern Shore of the Aegean', in *The Environmental History of the Near and Middle East since the Last Ice Age*, ed. W. C. Brice (London, 1978), pp. 67–81.
39 Günter Hess, 'Akkumulation und Erosion im Gebiet der Flüsse Gediz, Kücük Menderes und Büjük Menderes (Westanatolien) in historischer Zeit', doctoral thesis, Erlangen University (1989).

silt and clay, indicative of smoother sedimentation processes. Consequently, the present surface of valley floors consists mainly of clay, not of pebbles. All this points to a vegetation cover which was not much disturbed down to the 1800s. The present danger of soil erosion began rather recently, not before the twentieth century, when rapid population increase began and consequently soil erosion reintensified, causing badlands once more. The dreaded rill erosion reappeared, especially on the widespread marls of the younger tertiary age. This process probably started in the Balkan countries many decades before it reached its peak in the Near East. This has nothing to do with a hypothetical change of precipitation, as often stated. Recent erosion is simply a result of the rapid run-off, caused by the degradation of vegetation, which is in turn due to population increase and the overuse of agricultural lands.

Agricultural products

Our information about the agricultural products of the Ottoman period is incomplete. In many cases we have to draw inferences from limited and not necessarily contemporary data. For the sixteenth century the plants cultivated and the quantitative level of agricultural production – as officially assessed – are reasonably well known, since we possess contemporary statistical data.[40] But then there is a gap, and only in the mid-twentieth century do we again have at our disposal plausible and detailed information, in addition now to economic maps. As to the period between 1600 and the 1930s, information is patchy. We have to rely on plausible indirect inferences, travellers' reports, trade statistics and the like. Perhaps the reliability of all regional economic statistics increases roughly from south-east to north-west – but this statement is just as imprecise as most of our knowledge of pre-modern Ottoman agriculture.

While there was a long-lasting continuity in agricultural techniques and crops cultivated in the Asiatic parts of the empire, things were somewhat different on the European side, including the western coast of Anatolia, where more innovations must have occurred.[41] At the beginning of the nineteenth century the southern Balkans very much resembled central Anatolia as documented more than fifty years later: the two-field system prevailed, grain alternating

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40 Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Kamal Abdul Fattah, *Historical Geography of Palestine, Transjordan, and Southern Syria in the late Sixteenth Century* (Erlangen, 1977); Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800* (Cambridge, 1981); Nenad Moačanin, *Town and Country on the Middle Danube 1526–1690* (Leiden and Boston, 2006).

41 Schultze-Jena, *Makedonien*.

with fallow; the sickle had not as yet been replaced by the scythe; agricultural machines were unknown; and the watermill with horizontal wheels still predominated, as is true in some parts of Anatolia and Syria even today. Great water-lifting wheels for purposes of irrigation were common in the Balkans, as even today in a few places in the Near East. The water buffalo was of great importance, both as a draught animal and for ploughing. The simple hook-plough was used, and is still found in some peripheral parts of the Near East. Furthermore, pack animals prevailed, while wheeled traffic was still uncommon. As to house construction and even male and female rural costumes, the nineteenth-century parallels between south-eastern Europe and Anatolia are quite striking.

In most of the empire grain predominated, in terms of the area sown and also by value. Only in relatively small areas where olives, rice or vegetables were cultivated was it of lesser importance. In the sixteenth century the amounts of wheat and barley as officially assessed were almost equal in terms of volume. But as barley was definitely cheaper, the wheat crop was always more valuable. Rye and oats occurred in some areas of the Balkans and even in east-central Anatolia, but in most of the empire these cereals were without importance. An exception was perhaps sorghum in Yemen, as is still true today.

Among agricultural innovations, most important was the introduction of rice, which probably was brought to south-eastern Europe by the Turks. This agricultural product was highly esteemed, and most early Ottoman provincial laws contained some regulations relevant to its cultivation. Despite a few small villager-owned fields, rice plantations were usually a kind of state enterprise with special labourers, such as headmen, people responsible for regulating the irrigation and draining of the fields, as well as rice-threshers. These men received their salaries from the state, in the form of rice rations of different sizes.[42]

According to Ottoman official records, rice appeared about 1470/80 in the valley of the Maritsa (Meriç), and about 1533 in the basin of Sofia.[43] In the following decades it must have spread remarkably, but we do not yet have more exact information. In later Ottoman centuries, rice cultivation became more and more a private enterprise practised by influential people. It certainly expanded in the eighteenth century, when large *çiftlik*s were established in many basins of the Balkans, with local notables the driving force.[44] These men owned the necessary lands in the plains, they had the money – the

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42 Nicoară Beldiceanu and Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Riziculture dans l'empire ottoman (XIVe–XVe siècle)', *Turcica* 9, 2–10 (1978), 9–28; Halil Inalcik, 'Rice Cultivation and the *çeltükci-re'âyâ* System in the Ottoman Empire,' *Turcica* 14 (1982), 69–141.
43 De Planhol, *Kulturgeographische Grundlagen*.   44 İnalcık, 'Emergence'.

preparation of fields for rice cultivation was expensive – and often they had dependants whom they could set to cultivate their rice plantations. Rice was always grown with the market in mind, and those who consumed it possessed a certain wealth. This high esteem of rice was characteristic of the Ottoman Empire and later of Turkey as well, while in South-east Asia, rice is typically a poor man's food.

Apparently the introduction of silkworms was another innovation, the earliest information about silkworm-breeding dating from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Later, especially in the 1800s, raw silk production especially in north-western Anatolia experienced a real boom, with Bursa expanding its role as a silk-reeling centre. In the twentieth century, with artificial silk and nylon products on the market, Anatolian natural silk lost its importance, but mulberry trees are still cultivated for their fruit.

Another important agricultural innovation was maize (corn), which has revolutionised the agriculture of the Balkans and some parts of the Near East as much as the introduction of potatoes in central and eastern Europe. Exact dates are not known. The word for maize in Turkish is *mısır*, derived from the term for Egypt, but whether this fact has any relevance for the history of this crop in the Mediterranean lands remains unclear. The relatively exact tax lists of the sixteenth century contain no tax for maize, but in the Black Sea region we do encounter a crop known as *lazot*, a term that in later times was used for maize.[45] Lists of products cultivated in nineteenth-century Thessaly show maize being cultivated in the mountains of Macedonia.[46] Everywhere in the world agricultural innovations are first introduced by large farmers, and the holders of *çiftlik*s were the first to try the cultivation of maize. But soon afterwards the crop was adopted by villagers who consumed it while saving their wheat for sales and the payment of taxes in kind.

Another arrival from the New World was tobacco, the introduction of which contributed to agricultural diversification in those parts of the empire with some summer rainfall. It was known as early as the early seventeenth century, when janissaries were having it cultivated in central Anatolia.[47] Most

45 Traian Stoianovich, 'Le Maïs dans les Balkans,' *Annales Economies Sociétés Civilisations* 21, 5 (1966), 1026–40; Huricihan İslamoğlu and Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crop Patterns and Agricultural Production Trends in Sixteenth-century Anatolia,' *Review* 2, 3 (winter 1979), 401–36, see p. 422.

46 R. I. Lawless, 'The Economy and Landscapes of Thessaly during Ottoman Rule', in *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, ed. Francis W. Carter (London, New York and San Francisco, 1977), pp. 507–33.

47 We await the dissertation by Fehmi Yılmaz, recently completed, which will certainly provide us with the details.

tobacco-producing areas are situated in landscapes that are not fully Mediterranean; probably this was true in previous centuries as well. Yet warm summer temperatures, as in a sub-Mediterranean climate, also are desirable for this crop. Consequently, the Turkish Black Sea coasts near Samsun have developed into centres of cultivation, along with Macedonia, eastern Bulgaria and the Crimea. Tobacco is and was a true product of the family farm, since it requires a lot of hand labour and individual care. This characteristic continues to the present, even if marketing usually is monopolised by the state. The main boom of tobacco cultivation, however, seems to be over. The reason is a widespread change of taste in Europe, beginning after the Second World War, with customers now favouring Virginia tobaccos.

Cotton had been known in Anatolia and other parts of the Orient since antiquity, but its mass production, its cultivation on very large fields, came about more or less simultaneously with the emergence of market-oriented *çiftlik*s. The advance of the Ottoman Turks in south-eastern Europe facilitated the spread of cotton cultivation, but down to the sixteenth century there were no large farms cultivating cotton on a large scale. Carefully built canals were necessary to take the water to the fields for summer irrigation, but their construction and maintenance were expensive and only wealthy people could afford this investment. Consequently, cultivation by small farmers was not the rule, although it was certainly not unknown. In general cotton became a *çiftlik*-based crop, typically cultivated for the market: auto-consumption was limited to the fillings of cushions and the like, while the amount of cotton ginned in villages was negligible. Southern Egypt apart, Ottoman cotton was of the short-fibre variety and thus less versatile compared to the long-fibre cottons in use today. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries the increasingly refined tastes of the upper classes, together with rising demand in Europe and the possibility of legal or illegal trade to the West, must have provided a strong impulse for cultivation. Ottoman cotton even reached the manufactures of France and England before the importation of 'sea cotton' from America.[48]

Cotton cultivation needs certain climatic conditions. It is a summer plant, and therefore the low winter temperatures of the Balkan lands do not prevent cultivation. However, a dry period is imperative at the time when the bolls are opening, when the plant is 'flowering', otherwise the cotton deteriorates because the fibre is dirtied. This dry period during the summer is, however, not guaranteed in the northern Balkans. Furthermore, cotton needs very good

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48 Gilles Veinstein, 'Ayan de la région d'Izmir et le commerce du Levant (deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle)', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 20, 2 (1975), 131–46.

alluvial soils, only found in the flat parts of the basins, and here cotton growing was common. The plain of Serres was well known for this crop, which was also cultivated in the basins of Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace. The valley of the Maritsa/Meriç, the Kosovo *polje* in southern Serbia and the coastal plain of Albania also were used for cotton growing.[49] Further to the north, however, cotton cultivation does not thrive because of wet summers. In the Asiatic parts of the empire, cotton was produced in some river valleys and inland river deltas with dry summers and possibilities for irrigation. Wherever these conditions obtained cotton was cultivated, at least for local consumption. The main producing areas were not the central sections of the large plains, where cotton growing is often concentrated today, for in historical times irrigation and drainage in these places was often far too difficult.

It should be noted that many agrarian innovations of the later Ottoman centuries concern products needing good soils and at least in part irrigation as well. The latter being possible only in the plains, these were preferred for 'modern' agriculture. On the other hand, this statement seems to contradict the often-repeated observation that large parts of the basin plains were used only for extensive sheep- and cattle-breeding. This contradiction can be explained, however, by the history of land use. During the 1600s and perhaps the early 1700s as well, *çiftlik*s specialising in agriculture were profitable. Later on, with an increasing exodus of labourers, this ceased to be true at least in the case of grain cultivation, while as we have seen, sheep and cattle breeding was cheaper and offered a higher profit. Furthermore, *çiftlik* agriculture, even in its best time, occupied only a limited part of the plains.

All other agricultural products have not greatly changed their distributions in the course of time. One exception may perhaps be sesame, which in Ottoman times extended into south-eastern Europe and was later given up by the cultivators of this region. But it is remarkable that in some parts of the former Ottoman Empire, the agricultural products of early Ottoman times can still be found, e.g. rice, cotton, vegetables and olives. Sometimes local specialties have persisted over the centuries, as is apparent from the regional tax lists compiled about 500 years ago. Such continuity would not be astonishing if we were comparing sixteenth-century data with crop patterns of the nineteenth century, when auto-consumption was still widespread and only a limited percentage of all produce could be taken to market. But this stability is in fact remarkable if we compare the patterns of the 1500s with those of the late twentieth century, and it can only be explained by the remoteness

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49 İnalcık, 'Emergence', p. 115.

and conservatism of certain places, such as south-eastern Anatolia before the building of the great dams, eastern Syria or southern Arabia. The contrast to the more dynamic agriculture of the Aegean lands, the Levantine coast or certain Balkan regions is indeed striking.

In the realm of animal breeding, however, there must have been an important change during Ottoman times. The use of the camel for long-distance transport even as far north as the Danube countries was a novelty for this area. Since the European climate is far too cold and wet, the Arabian dromedary could not be used at all. But a cross-breed between the dromedary and the Bactrian camel, the *tulu* in Anatolian parlance, was commercially viable at least during the summer months. There remains, however, the question of the extent to which the use of the camel in Ottoman Europe indicates an increase of long-distance trade. From the merchants' perspective, camels possessed the immeasurable advantage of being able to travel even in the absence of roads. Only a few routes of Ottoman Europe were accessible to long-distance wheeled traffic, so pack-animals and mounts were essential to traders.[50] Small markets were also supplied by camels, at least when longer distances were concerned. Only in the flatlands of central Anatolia and certain plains of the Balkans and the Near East was there a primitive two-wheeled cart in general use, and Tatar nomads used wagons. As far as climate allowed, the camel was thus a reasonable solution for the traffic problems of pre-modern times.[51]

Conclusion

Relations between people and their natural environment in Ottoman times were characterised by a double shift: from the seventeenth century onward the main settlement areas were first moved from the plains to the mountains and later, from the nineteenth century onward, they returned to the plains. This general tendency prevailed from the Arabian provinces all the way to Hungary. Of course there were regional differences in the vast empire, and the actual reasons for desertion varied from place to place. But this general pattern of relations between human beings and nature or, from another viewpoint, between human beings and the landscapes they inhabited, differed in

50 Olga Zirojevič, 'Zur historischen Topographie der Heerstraße nach Konstantinopel zur Zeit der osmanischen Herrschaft', *Etudes Balkaniques* 1 (1987), 81–106; Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle: économie et capitalisme*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1979), vol. III, p. 133.

51 Richard Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (Cambridge, MA, 1975); Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Camels, Wagons, and the Ottoman State", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 14 (1982), 523–39; Halil Inalcik, 'Arab Camel Drivers in Western Anatolia in the Fifteenth Century,' *Revue d'Histoire Maghrebine* 10, 31–2 (1983), 247–70.

a remarkable fashion from that which prevailed in western, northern, central and even eastern Europe. For in the latter regions historical development was less dramatically interrupted and thus optimal soils in the plains and basins remained under occupation and cultivation, with no significant break from the early or high Middle Ages onward.

During the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, the growing influence of the market economy made itself felt in those parts of the Ottoman realm with easy access to the world market. In coastal areas or in those parts of the interior with good traffic connections the export-oriented economy took off. Previously cultivated products such as cotton and rice expanded and new items like tobacco and maize were introduced. The seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were perhaps a time of less security and central government control, but certainly not a time of general economic stagnation.

Where a demand for agricultural products was not effective, however, rough pasture lands remained dominant down to very recent times. From the Balkans to Ottoman south-west Asia this was apparent from the very late introduction of effective forest and range control. As long as traditional Islamic law prevailed, no attempt was made to plant trees for future forests on any public or state lands. Grazing areas were not fenced in, nor was privatisation and parcellisation of public pastures and forests introduced under Ottoman domination. Unlike Europe or North American practice, the greater part of the land remained in extensive and uncontrolled 'public' use. This seems to have been one of the main reasons for the slow rate of rural progress during the later Ottoman centuries.

Political and diplomatic developments

CHRISTOPH K. NEUMANN

Ottoman political history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is curiously under-researched. On the other hand, this sub-field of Ottoman studies was the first to receive systematic expert interest in Catholic and Protestant Europe. Moreover, Ottoman historiography also excelled in this domain. Paul Rycaut,[1] Demetrius Cantemir,[2] Mouradgea d'Ohsson[3] and even the young Joseph von Hammer[4] all treated the empire as a contemporary polity with a meaningful and functioning administrative structure. They tended to contextualise political and diplomatic affairs by reference to military matters, while military men such as Raimondo Montecuccoli[5] or Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli[6] discussed military problems while also showing an informed interest in politics and administration.

Cantemir and Marsigli, who were of Ottoman extraction or else had spent a considerable amount of time in Istanbul, often shared a sentiment expressed by Ottoman chroniclers and political authors – namely, that the empire was in a state of decline. This idea, partly boosted by the influence of Edward Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1782–8), was to fascinate Western authors; unfortunately it was to prove detrimental to their understanding of and interest in the post-sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

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1 Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, enlarged ed. (London, 1686).
2 Demetrius Cantemir, *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire*, trans. N. Tindal (London, 1734–5).
3 Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1787–1824).
4 Joseph von Hammer, *Des osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1815).
5 Raimondo Montecuccoli, *Della Guerra col Turco in Ungheria* (Cologne, 1704), p. 45.
6 Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, *Stato militare dell'Impèrio Ottomano incremento e decremento del medesimo* (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1732).

Only in the last few decades has the paradigm of 'Ottoman decline' been subjected to criticism. This debate has been informed by neo-Marxism, post-linguistic-turn social science, modernisation studies and, above all, the debate triggered by Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (1978); however, Said himself had considerable difficulty when it came to dealing with the Ottomans. This debate has resulted in the widespread (but not unanimous) rejection of the decline paradigm and also in the wholesale transformation of Ottoman studies. Social, cultural and provincial history have become prominent; by contrast, matters of philological interest and political history have receded into the background, and only in very recent years has a reintegration of political and social history been attempted. Therefore, we cannot avoid introducing a number of questions that, for the present, remain largely unresolved.

Politics in an early modern empire, 1603–1703

The composition of the political elite

Large-scale rebellions in Anatolia marked the end of the rural prosperity and relative peace so crucial for the well-being of an agricultural empire. These so-called Celali uprisings culminated in the 'Great Flight' *(Büyük Kaçgun)* between 1603 and 1610. Driven away both by robbers and by the troops fighting banditry, peasants largely deserted the Anatolian plains. Anti-bandit militias commanded by provincial governors often were recruited from the same uprooted Muslim male youths who made up the rebel bands. While such *levend* or *sekban* were unlikely to return to a farmer's life, the transition between rebel and militia-man (and back) was easy to accomplish.

Young ex-peasants became employable as soldiers due to the spread of hand-held firearms that made the prebendal cavalry (*sipahi*s) largely redundant as a battle force. This transformation of the military had grave repercussions for the composition of the state elite. Holders of provincial prebends, often members of families privileged in earlier Ottoman history, certainly were not being denied access to high office; but relatively speaking, they lost their previous prominence. From the late 1500s, governorships were increasingly given to men with a background in the *kapıkulu* (military slave) class, who had served either in the palace or the janissary corps.[7]

Somewhat paradoxically, the *devşirme* (levy of boys drafted as future *kapıkulu*) lost much of its importance for the recruitment of janissaries and

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7 Metin Kunt, *Sancaktan eyalete: 1550–1650 arasında Osmanlı ümerası ve il idaresi* (Istanbul, 1978), pp. 58–84.

palace officials. Sons of *kapıkulu* were given access to the ranks of the central army, which was, to an increasing degree, supplemented by 'outsiders'. The size of this standing army grew rapidly from 29,000 men in 1574 to 76,000 in 1609. Afterwards, it remained more or less stable; in 1670, 70,000 men were on record.[8] The *kapıkulu* and especially the janissaries thus became one of the prime political forces in the empire – but the *kapıkulu* cavalry was frequently embroiled in violent rivalry with the janissaries. *Kapıkulu* garrisons in the provinces often developed a high degree of localism, turning into important power-holders on the provincial level. In Algiers and other places,[9] they came to dominate local political structures, while in Damascus,[10] conflicts between local janissaries and troops sent from Istanbul became endemic. *Kapıkulu* and local artisans became so closely intertwined that in the course of the seventeenth century it became impossible to tell them apart.

As a result, the political elite of the capital after 1603 was dominated by factions of palace officials and janissaries, joined by high religious and legal scholars (*ulema*) who formed patronage networks of their own.[11] The provinces saw the ascendancy of political households centred on a grandee and the network of his patron–client relationships. These households provided much of the security and administration earlier offered by prebendal cavalrymen. While most heads of such households, the so-called *ayan* (Arabic *a'yān*), remained of local or regional influence, some of them, including the Köprülü family, were to hold the highest offices and become major players in Ottoman politics.[12]

Wars and rebellions, 1603–39

In 1603, confrontation with the Safavids added to the difficulties of the Ottoman administration, already overburdened by the Celali rebellions and the ongoing 'Long War' against the Habsburgs. That war was terminated in 1606 with the peace of Zsitva Török, a diplomatic settlement that continues to pose historiographical problems. Although it determined the territorial border between the two empires according to the status quo (without defining it more exactly), the peace did not clarify the relative status of the two rulers, nor did it explicate the nature and limits of Transylvanian sovereignty.[13] Yet the

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8 Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500–1700* (London, 1999).
9 Tal Shuval, 'Cezayir-i Garp: Bringing Algeria Back into Ottoman History', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 22 (2000), 85–114.
10 André Raymond, *Osmanlı döneminde Arap kentleri*, trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul, 1995), p. 42.
11 See Madeleine Zilfi's contribution to this volume (chapter 10).
12 See Carter Findley's contribution to this volume (chapter 4).
13 Gustav Bayerle, 'The Compromise at Zsitvatorok', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 5–53.

settlement may be regarded as the most successful in the long Ottoman–Habsburg rivalry, as it ended the 'Long War' and introduced a peace that lasted until 1663. Thus the Ottomans used diplomacy just as expertly as their Habsburg counterparts when it came to 'damage limitation' in times of crisis.[14]

Repeated wars against the Safavids (1603–12, 1615–18, 1623–39) thus were the chief military preoccupation of the Ottomans down to 1639. Shah 'Abbâs I (r. 1587–1629) had introduced so-called *ghulām* units, an infantry modelled partly on the Ottoman janissaries and designed to cut back the military and political influence of the Turcoman *kizilbāş* troops in the Safavid state. After regaining the Caucasian territories lost to the Ottomans in 1590, Shah 'Abbâs captured Baghdad in 1624 and made it into a Shiite city. He had parts of the Sunni population massacred and the tombs of Abû Hanîfa and 'Abd ul-Kâdir Gaylânî demolished. Only in 1638 did the Ottomans regain Baghdad, and the Ottoman–Safavid peace of Kasr-i Shîrîn of 1639 roughly re-established the borders of 1555.

The unrest in Anatolia caused the Ottoman government serious problems; and at certain times Celali troops even entered Iranian service. Rebellions by provincial governors in Syria and Anatolia further undermined the Ottoman position. In 1606 the Celali leader, Kalenderoğlu Mehmed, and Canpoladoğlu Ali, the governor of Aleppo, coordinated their military operations. It needed the imperial army to crush them. Like Ali Paşa, the Druze emir Ma'noğlu Fakhr al-Dîn found allies in Italy, and like the Egyptian Mamluk leader Çerkes Muhammad Beg a century later, he even travelled to Europe to mobilise support.[15] Ma'noğlu's rebellion lasted especially long (1613–35), and ended in his execution. In most other cases, including those of Kalenderoğlu and Canboladoğlu Ali, rebellious governors could negotiate new posts after defeat by the central army. However, often their execution was only postponed by a number of years.

This was also the fate of Abaza (the Abkhasian) Mehmed Paşa. He had revolted in order to take revenge for Sultan Osman II 'the Young', assassinated by janissaries in 1622. His rebellion was directed primarily against the janissary dominance in Istanbul politics and the influence officers and dignitaries from the capital had in the realm at large. Mehmed Paşa acted in the interest of the *sekban* troops employed by provincial grandees.

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14 Petr Štěpánek, 'War and Peace in the West (1644/5): A Dilemma at the Threshold of Felicity?', *Archiv Orientalní* 69, 2 (2001), 327–40.

15 Albrecht Fuess, 'An Instructive Experience: Fakhr al-Dîn's Journey to Italy, 1613–18', in *Les Européens vus par les Libanais à l'époque ottomane*, ed. Bernard Heyberger and Carsten-Michael Walbiner (Beirut, 2002), pp. 23–42.

In 1621 Osman II, energetic and ambitious, had personally led an unsuccessful campaign against the stronghold of Hotin on the Dniestr. Conflict between the Ottomans and the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth concerned suzerainty over Moldavia and Cossack marauding on Ottoman territory. With this war the Ottomans had opened a new frontier in the north.

Osman's apparent hostility against the janissaries and his military zeal were instrumental in his downfall. He attempted to win over the *ulema*, marrying the daughter of the *şeyhülislam*, and planned to combine a campaign against Ma'noğlu with performance of the pilgrimage. But he lost first his throne, then his life, in a janissary rebellion.[16] A coalition between janissaries and prominent palace circles headed by Kösem Sultan, the most senior member of the harem, was to dominate Ottoman politics for some time. Kösem had been Ahmed's I (r. 1603–17) favourite (*haseki*), and as neither Osman nor Mustafa I had a surviving mother, Kösem filled this important position under several rulers.

The period between the death of Süleyman the Magnificent in 1566 and the ascendancy of the Köprülü household in 1656 has been characterised as the 'Age of the Queen Mother'.[17] The sultans' mothers enjoyed high influence and great prestige; for beginning with Sultan Süleyman, the ruler's position had become ever more exalted, and as a corollary this implied his growing seclusion in the palace and an increasing influence on the part of palace circles. The sultan's mother was comparable to the *kul* (non-*ulema* members of the elite) by her slave origin, but unquestionably legitimated through her relationship to the ruler. Inevitably she was well connected with the leading members of the sultan's household. The queen mother's influence was even more important when rulers were mentally disabled, such as Mustafa I (r. 1617–18 and 1622–3) or İbrahim (r. 1640–8) or else still children: coming to the throne in their early teens, Ahmed I and Osman II 'the Young' were relatively old when compared to Murad IV (r. 1623–40) or Mehmed IV (r. 1648–87).

From Murad IV's personal rule to political strife, 1632–56

Only very energetic rulers could attempt to sideline the vested interests of their military and *ulema* supporters. Where Osman II had failed, his step-brother Murad IV succeeded. In 1632, after a number of crises connected with Abaza

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16 Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley, 2003), pp. 9–29.

17 Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford, 1993), pp. 91–112.

Mehmed Paşa's rebellion and the situation on the Safavid frontier, Murad shook off the domination of the janissaries who periodically had come to dictate the political course of the empire. Like Osman II, Murad IV participated in campaigns, but unlike his predecessor he had the luck to become a conqueror: in 1635 he entered Erivan, a short-lived gain, and in 1638 it was the turn of Baghdad. In the latter city, the Sunni monuments demolished by the Safavids were restored to their old splendour, and two pavilions in the Topkapı Palace were erected to commemorate Murad's martial accomplishments.

Murad IV tried to control the social forces that formed the basis of his political power by imposing strict control. In doing so, he cooperated even with the relatively obscurantist ultra-orthodox movement of the so-called Kadızadeliler who aimed at the 'restoration' of the Sunna as it purportedly had been in the Prophet Muhammad's time. Their pressure allowed him to persecute the consumers of coffee and tobacco, to close the taverns (then officially open only to non-Muslims) and to insist on distinguishing dress codes. Moreover, Murad was known for arbitrary executions of frequently scandalous character. It is characteristic of the political thought of the time that he has nevertheless come to be remembered as a ruler who reinvigorated the state rather than as an oppressive tyrant.

Murad's positive image is also linked to the fact that the most influential Ottoman chronicles dealing with this period were written in the second half of the seventeenth century, when the Köprülü household wielded enormous influence. Praising the oppressive rule of Murad thus served an ideological purpose: his reign could be described as a legitimate forerunner of the regime established by the Köprülü 'dynasty', whose members were certainly not averse to the shedding of blood in internal conflicts.

By contrast, the years between Murad's early death and Köprülü Mehmed's appointment as grand vizier are described as a time of chaotic instability and state decline. The setting that Ottoman chroniclers prepare for the emergence of the Köprülü household includes two sultans, one of them mad (İbrahim, r. 1640–8) and the other a child (Mehmed IV, r. 1648–87); strife between two queen mothers (terminated by Kösem's murder in 1651); frantic sequences of appointments and depositions in high state offices; venality; nepotism; favouritism that allowed redoubtable figures such as the exorcist Cinci Hoca to gain substantial influence; financial difficulties; and, finally, a less than successful war against Venice. A grim picture indeed, and more than just a historiographical fiction.

Even so, there was no real political or military breakdown throughout these years that, as a 'dark period', have so far attracted little research interest.

Evidence derived from tax rates[18] or consumer prices[19] does not indicate that – wartime stringency apart – political conflict led to severe economic crisis. With regard to the volatile political situation and the occasionally quite eccentric court life, it might be meaningful to ask whether these features were not also typical of the political culture of seventeenth-century European monarchies. To what degree was this kind of court life part of the world shared by the Ottoman elite with its French, Italian, Habsburg and other counterparts?

The Köprülü period

An undeniably acute military crisis precipitated the appointment of Köprülü Mehmed Paşa as grand vizier. The Venetian fleet had blocked the Dardanelles and occupied Lemnos, Samothrace and Tenedos (Bozcaada). In this situation, Mehmed Paşa was able to negotiate terms of office. The sultan agreed not even to listen to proposals in conflict with his grand vizier's policy. Military fortune did help: the Venetians had to lift the blockade of Istanbul after a lucky hit into the powder magazine of their admiral's vessel, and after that the war with Venice became a drawn-out and costly but still controllable affair.

Mehmed Köprülü succeeded in establishing a veritable dynasty of grand viziers: from his death in 1661 until 1703, members of other families held this office for only a few years, while Mehmed Paşa's two sons, two of his sons-in-law and a nephew headed the government; further descendants played a prominent role in politics throughout much of the eighteenth century. Mehmed Paşa himself and his first son, Fazıl Ahmed, used their power and military prestige to rather ruthlessly curb political rivals, thus putting an end to the dominance of the janissaries in Ottoman politics.

The Köprülüs, however, were only one of several 'political households', albeit the most important one.[20] Organised around a high dignitary with his extended family, such households included clients and servants of all kinds. Increasingly, affiliation to a household became more important than being a military slave (*kul*), although the two statuses were not incompatible.[21] As for the transition from the more or less single-centred patrimonial administrative structure of the sixteenth century to a set-up dominated by numerous

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18 Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 110–14.
19 Şevket Pamuk (ed.), *İstanbul ve diğer kentlerde 500 yıllık fiyatlar ve ücretler, 1469–1998* (Ankara, 2000), p. 13.
20 Rifa'at 'Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984), pp. 31, 88–93.
21 See Carter Findley's contribution to this volume (chapter 4).

households all mirroring that of the sultan, it entailed a fair amount of political crisis.

'Political households' were successful because their heads were militarily effective. The Ottomans not only terminated the long war against Venice with the conquest of Crete (1669),[22] they also performed well on the northern and western borders. In 1657–8, George Rákóczi, the duke of Transylvania, aspired to full sovereignty and the Polish crown. Despite a simultaneous large-scale rebellion in Anatolia against Köprülü Mehmed Paşa's harsh policy (its leader, Abaza Hasan Paşa, was executed in 1659), the Ottomans reduced Transylvania to a dependent tributary, and in 1660 annexed the region around Oradea. Although the Ottoman army was routed in the battle of Szentgotthárd, a war against the Habsburgs was concluded in 1664 with – minor – territorial gains. Finally, in 1672 the Ottomans conquered Podolia in today's western Ukraine and attempted to establish a Cossack buffer state against Poland and Muscovy. A few years later, a short war against the Muscovites ended with a stalemate.

All these gains, however, were more than reversed after the second Ottoman siege of Vienna (1683), an event that has long been regarded as a turning-point in European history. Led by grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa, the campaign had been motivated by long-standing conflict about Hungary, where the Ottomans supported an uprising of Protestant magnates led by Emre Thököly. From the Ottoman perspective, it was a major military catastrophe that a relief army of Habsburg allies under the command of the Polish king Jan Sobieski defeated the Ottoman army close to Vienna at the battle of Kahlenberg, just a few days before an assault that probably would have succeeded. Even graver were the consequences: in a kind of roll-back, a Holy League formed by the Habsburgs, the Pope, Venice and Poland captured Buda and most of central Hungary (1686). One year later, Russia joined the alliance. In 1688 Belgrade fell; the Peloponnese had been lost to the Venetians even earlier. Grand vizier Fazıl Mustafa, Köprülü Mehmed Paşa's second son, fell in the battle of Slanka-men (1691). After the Habsburg victory at Zenta, the Ottoman defeat was final.

On the domestic level, the failure at Vienna cost Kara Mustafa Paşa his life and Mehmed IV his throne (1687). The financial burden of the long and unsuccessful war sparked a political crisis. While during the peace talks at Karlowitz in 1699, the Ottomans still acted as a self-confident great power,

22 Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Mulims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, 2000), pp. 13–44.

they had to cede Hungary to the Habsburgs, the Peloponnese to the Venetians, Podolia to the Poles and a year later Asow on the Black Sea to Russia. However, they managed to avoid a dictated peace.[23]

The 1703 'Edirne Incident' and Ottoman political thought

The loss of territory to non-Muslim rulers was a severe blow to the government's prestige. Sultan Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703) apparently tried to profit from the situation by curbing the influence of the established political households. To this end, he allowed his *şeyhülislam*, Feyzullah Efendi, from a renowned *ulema* family of the eastern Anatolian town of Erzurum, to build a new power base. In an attempt to protect itself from the inhabitants of Istanbul, among whom the janissary corps remained influential, the court mostly resided in Edirne.

Feyzullah Efendi's attempt to establish a political household that would allow him and his offspring to surpass even the grand viziers proved a fatal mistake. In an uprising that spread from Istanbul to Edirne the *şeyhülislam* and his son were lynched and their corpses desecrated. In the wake of this 'Edirne Incident' Mustafa II was dethroned and, after a period of unrest, the political order based on grandee households was re-established.

This outcome indicates that Ottoman critical political thought, which had flourished throughout the seventeenth century, had by 1700 lost much of the influence it had possessed in the earlier 1600s. This thinking was expressed in numerous 'mirrors for princes' treatises (*nasihatnâme*) whose authors addressed not only the sultan and leading politicians but often a wider readership as well. In the seventeenth century the perspective of Ottoman political literature was overwhelmingly domestic, and Ottoman statehood was discussed entirely in its own terms, not in connection with its linkages to the outside world. The legitimacy of Ottoman rule was never questioned; indeed, for these authors no alternative was even remotely imaginable.

The writers of these treatises often came from those sections of the Ottoman elite that had dominated the sixteenth century: they were *ulema*, *kul* or had a background in the provincial cavalry. This fact, and the generally conservative make-up of Ottoman culture, meant that much of the *nasihatnâme* literature took the shape of complaints: things were not as good as they used to be

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23 Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'Ottoman Diplomacy at Karlowitz', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87, 4 (1967), 498–512, esp. pp. 511–12.

in the Golden Age of Ottoman history, which most writers located in the time of Süleyman the Magnificent. Typically these authors insisted on the re-establishment of old rules, old privileges and the old intra-elite distribution of labour.

However, Ottoman political authors such as the historian Naima (d. 1716) began to discuss their society differently, namely in terms of change. Naima was an apologist of Köprülü politics and wrote partly in order to justify the role of the political households.[24] This position implied a silent shedding of established ideological features such as the ideal of the sultan as a warrior for the faith taking the field in person (*gazi*) – this claim already had proved counterproductive in Osman II's case but had been successfully put forward by Murad IV. After 1700 the prestige of rulers no longer had anything to do with their ability as military commanders.

The Ottoman Empire at the margins of Europe, 1703–68

New elements in the Ottoman elite

It is now known that the career paths of the military, the palace, the bureaucracy and the specialists in religious learning were not as clearly demarcated as had been assumed during the first half of the twentieth century.[25] Men with a palace background could become military commanders, others switched from the ranks of the *ilmiye* (religious scholars; experts in Islamic law) to the central bureaucracy. Such changeovers had always been part of Ottoman life, but after 1700 we observe an increasingly marked tendency towards aristocratisation. We still lack comparative studies between these new-style Ottoman elites, both within and outside the court, and their European counterparts.[26]

In the provinces local notables, the so-called *ayan*, formed a social layer mediating between the interests of the inhabitants and those of the provincial government. Among the *ulema* the development of an 'aristocracy'[27] of great

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24 Lewis V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, ed. Norman Itzkowitz (New York, 1972); Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, pp. 176–83.

25 Norman Itzkowitz, 'Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Realities', *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962), 73–94.

26 Tülay Artan, 'From Charismatic Leadership to Collective Rule: Gender Problems of Legalism and Political Legitimation in the Ottoman Empire', in *Histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman et de la Turquie (1326–1960): Actes du Congrès international tenu à Aix-en-Provence du 1er au 4 juillet 1992*, ed. Daniel Panzac (Louvain, 1995), pp. 569–80.

27 Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, 1988), *passim*. See also the same author's contribution to this volume (chapter 10).

families can be observed from the seventeenth century. By 1730 a limited number of families had come to dominate the upper echelons of the *ilmiye* hierarchy.

Finally, an Orthodox state elite evolved. Most important were the Phanariotes, so called after their usual place of residence, the Fener/Phanarion quarter in *intra muros* Istanbul. These families claimed Byzantine origins and by the seventeenth century some of their members were employed as translators in state offices, most conspicuously in the bureaucracy of the imperial *divan*. After 1711 the governors (*hospodars*) of Wallachia and Moldavia were also chosen from among these dignitaries.

Despite aristocratisation the meritocratic principle was far from dead, for at the same time the bureaucrats, a relatively modest sector of the state apparatus, gained considerable influence. The eighteenth century was also an age of the 'men of the pen' (*kalemiye*). As early as the 1600s the transformation of both the tax system and military organisation had required tighter surveillance and a greater amount of paperwork: to a degree, accounting took the place of the control exercised by the earlier personalised dependence of the office-holder upon the ruler. The bureaus attached to the imperial *divan*, headed by the *reisülküttab*, acquired new functions. Beginning with Rami Mehmed, the Ottoman negotiator at Karlowitz, the position of the *reisülküttab* became a stepping-stone for high office. Throughout the eighteenth century, of the forty-three incumbents six were to become grand viziers, while another seven attained vizieral rank.[28] Some of the most important Ottoman politicians of the age had begun their careers as scribes in the *divan*.

Peace and war: relations between the Ottomans and the West in the first half of the eighteenth century

The peace of Karlowitz had not solved the conflicts in south-eastern Europe – in an age when limited war was an integral part of foreign policy, it had probably not been meant to do so. Likewise, the war had demonstrated that the Ottomans' military superiority was a matter of the past; but this did not mean that they were no longer a serious military power.

However, the government of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) did not dare to wage another war against the Habsburgs when, in 1703, Francis II Rákóczi headed

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28 Recep Ahıshalı, *Osmanlı devlet teşkilatında reisülküttâblık, XVIII. yüzyıl* (Istanbul, 2001), p. 38.

an uprising in Hungary, and merely sheltered the refugees after their rebellion had failed in 1711. At that time the Ottomans had already been host to another famous figure: Charles XII of Sweden. He had taken refuge on Ottoman territory after his misconceived campaign in the Nordic war had ended in defeat in the battle of Poltawa.

The Ottomans briefly intervened in this war, and took back the fortress of Asow (1711). Thereafter conflict with Russia would be perennial, in addition to periodic confrontations with the Habsburgs and Iran. In 1736 Asow was again lost, along with the exclusive right to trade in the Black Sea. Until 1746 the empire was involved in wars with variable results. In 1715 the Ottomans regained the Peloponnese from the Venetians, whose role in Mediterranean politics thus came to an end. Two years later, after a serious defeat at Petrovaradin (Peterwardein), the Ottomans lost Belgrade in the peace of Passarowitz (Pasarofça), and regained it, along with parts of Wallachia, in 1739. Moreover, the downfall of the Safavid dynasty in Iran and the ensuing political disorder motivated the Ottomans to intervene in the Caucasus and even to agree with Russia on mutually recognised spheres of influence. Territories in Iran were lost and won until, in 1746, a peace settlement with Nadir Shah restored the old borders, but frustrated the shah's hopes for a treaty that would have overcome the divide between the Sunnis and the Twelver Shia.

On balance, the wars between 1710 and 1746 were not very advantageous, but with the significant exception of the battle of Peterwardein, neither triumph nor catastrophe prevailed. Eighteenth-century warfare proved, however, to be both costly and unpopular. In 1730, Ahmed III lost his throne after bad news from the Iranian front triggered an urban uprising in Istanbul by the long-lived coalition of janissaries and artisans.

Throughout the 1700s various Ottoman elite groups responded to Europe in a manner that differed considerably from that of the two preceding centuries. European technology and court culture became, to a degree, fashionable, a development that mirrored the predilection for *turqueries* among the elites of contemporary Catholic and Protestant Europe. Elite interest formed the channel through which in 1727 a printing-press was introduced to Istanbul: it functioned as a monopoly enterprise licensed by the state mainly for the dissemination of historical and geographical texts in Ottoman Turkish. Likewise, a fast-shooting light artillery was introduced by a European aristocrat, Claude Alexandre Comte de Bonneval (1675–1747), who joined the Ottoman forces after a brilliant though turbulent military career under Louis XIV and Eugène de Savoie. Both Bonneval, who became Humbaracı Ahmed Paşa, and

the Hungarian Unitarian who had introduced the printing-press[29] converted to Islam; this was notable, as since the late fifteenth century the inclusion of converts of foreign origin into the Ottoman elite had been quite rare. On the other hand, non-Muslim elites such as the Phanariotes in their own way appropriated European knowledge and, more cautiously, manners as well. Throughout the century, Greek scholars and educationists attempted a harmonisation of modern scientific with Aristotelian worldviews.[30] It is still open to debate how deeply the appropriation of Western knowledge influenced society at large.

Some remarks on centralisation and decentralisation

Local power-holders never had been absent from the Ottoman polity. Curbing their influence and allowing for hereditary or quasi-hereditary status in border areas had figured prominently on the agendas of sixteenth-century central administrations. The 1700s seemingly saw the erosion of these principles, with local notables (*ayan*) occupying an essential position in the empire's economy and fiscal regime. The ascendancy of local families controlling districts or even whole provinces began in the first half of the eighteenth century but gained momentum later on. Political historians have conventionally regarded this process as part of imperial decline. More recent research, however, has demonstrated the interdependence between local power-holders and central administrations. These close links did not however prevent, in times of conflict, the administrative labelling of a given local notable as a *derebeği* (illegitimate 'lord of a valley') or *mütegallibe* (oppressor).

More often than not, rather than destroying the empire's political and sociocultural framework, localism made use of it. This was especially true in times of external pressures. Throughout the eighteenth century, Muslim power-holders did not pursue a policy of independence or allegiance to non-Ottoman powers.[31] Conflicts between central administrations and provincial leaders

29 This man is known as İbrahim Müteferrika: Niyazi Berkes, 'İlk Türk matbaası kurucusu-nun dinî ve fikrî kimliği', *Belleten* 26, 104 (1962), 75–137; Niyazi Berkes, *Yazmadan basmaya: Müteferrika, mühendishane, Üsküdar*, ed. Turgut Kut and Fatma Türe (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 5–8, 21–65; Kemal Beydilli, *Mühendishâne ve Üsküdar matbaalarında basılan kitapların listesi ve bir katalog* (Istanbul, 1997), pp. 1–7.

30 Dimitris Dialetis, Kostas Gavroglu and Manolis Patiniotis, 'The Sciences in the Greek-Speaking Regions during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in *The Sciences in the European Periphery During the Enlightenment*, ed. Kostas Gavroglu (Dordrecht, 1999), pp. 41–71.

31 On a remarkable exception see Jane Hathaway, 'Çerkes Mehmed Bey: Rebel, Traitor, Hero?', *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 22, 1 (1998), 108–15.

concerned the financial and military obligations of the latter. During the last twenty years or so these issues have become clearer, as eighteenth-century provincial politics continue to be a favourite subject for research.

Generations of crisis, 1768–1838

Until the war against Russia in 1768 the Ottoman Empire lived through a period of relative tranquillity and prosperity. Yet it did not manage to organise a large standing army, regularly drilled, of the kind that constituted the main military asset of contemporary absolutist territorial states. It is fruitless to speculate whether a less provisionist approach to the economy might have enabled the central administration to finance such a modern army; after all, the costs of eighteenth-century war-making contributed greatly to political crisis in France, Russia and other states that embraced the new methods of warfare. In the two decades prior to 1768, military improvements were certainly no motor of Ottoman transformation.

The defeat by Russia in the 1768–74 war was a turning-point in Ottoman history. From now on there existed an 'Eastern Question' – a relatively weak Ottoman Empire became the object of the political as well as territorial aspirations of the European great powers. With the sultan no longer an important agent at the margins of the diplomatic and military 'balance of power' game played by the European states of the 1700s, his territories were turned into bones of contention for Russian, Habsburg, English and French ambitions.

A second consequence of this defeat was that certain power-holders or social groups now began to contemplate leaving the Ottoman framework. Third, in consequence of this defeat and its repercussions the Ottomans embarked on a process of transformation that grew ever more comprehensive over time. These three tendencies would shape the political developments of the decades between 1774 and 1838. Both elite and non-elite Ottomans must have experienced this age as a series of extraordinarily violent military and political crises.

Conflicts with the Great Powers: the initial phase of the 'Eastern Question', 1768–1812

The peace of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) resulted in the loss of Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimea. To cede a region inhabited mainly by Muslims to a Christian power was probably of more significance politically than heavy war

indemnities, the right to sail the Black Sea now ceded to Russia, and the protection of all Orthodox Ottoman subjects secured by the Russian tsarina. To a degree this latter stipulation was countered by the swift reinvention of the old and venerable title of caliph as 'spiritual leader of all Muslims'. Thus the Ottoman sultan could claim some kind of leadership over the Muslims under Russian rule. The caliphate, of only minor importance up to 1774, was to experience a largely symbolic but significant reappraisal that lasted until its abolition in 1924.

The independence of the Crimea was only a first step. Following repeated conflicts around the person of the new khan Şahingiray, Russia annexed the peninsula in 1783. Catherine II's famous 'Greek project', an attempt to secure a kingdom in south-eastern Europe for her grandson Constantine, led to another war against Russia and the Habsburgs, with further territorial losses. The treaty of Jassy (1792) defined the Dniestr as the Ottoman–Russian frontier. In 1812 this frontier was moved back to the Pruth, as Bessarabia had now also been lost by the sultans.

The Ottomans were generally defeated, and often in a humiliating way, whenever they saw themselves forced to go to war with one of the great European powers, or whenever an adventurous general such as Napoleon Bonaparte on his Egyptian expedition of 1799–1802 saw an opportunity to attack without risking serious reaction in Europe. Only the English naval expeditions against Istanbul and Egypt in 1807 ended with some kind of Ottoman success. Otherwise the sultans' armies on their own were never again in a position to efficiently defend Ottoman territory.

Seeking viable alliances therefore became a matter of survival for the empire. From 1794 the Ottomans maintained permanent embassies in the most important European capitals. Shifting alliances – with Prussia, Sweden, England and France – often served to ward off military attacks. At the same time, however, they served as a means for Western powers to gain economic influence and extraterritorial status for their merchants.[32] To open up Ottoman markets for trade interests became one of the leading motives of European policy toward the empire, culminating in the treaty of Balta Limanı (1838), which guaranteed Britain a free-trade regime.[33] Similar agreements with other powers were soon to follow.

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32 See the contribution of Edhem Eldem in this volume (chapter 14).
33 On the convention of 1838, see the special issue 7 (1992) of the journal *New Perspectives on Turkey*.

Provincial aspirations to independence

Yet Ottoman alliances with Western powers did not provide protection against European support for political movements in various provinces that increasingly aimed at separation from the empire. Separatist movements were a relatively new feature in Ottoman history, caused by the loss of the monopoly on legitimacy that the sultans had been able to claim at least since the time of Mehmed the Conqueror.

The Wahhabis of the Arabian Peninsula, a religious movement with the aim of abolishing all 'heretical' innovations introduced since the Prophet Muhammad's time, became an especially serious threat to Ottoman legitimacy. During the mid eighteenth century the Wahhabis had established a polity of their own in central Arabia under the leadership of the al-Saʿud family. In 1804 the Wahhabis conquered Mecca and Medina and destroyed much of the local sepulchral architecture, thus demonstrating that the Ottoman sultan could no longer be regarded as a functional 'protector of the sacred cities'.

Moreover, when Wahhabi influence was curtailed in the 1810s, it was not by the sultan's armies but by those of Muhammad Ali Paşa, governor-general of Egypt (d. 1849). Among Muslim power-holders, he was the most prominent and successful when it came to establishing a political base of his own. Starting as deputy commander of Albanian auxiliary forces, he brutally eliminated all his rivals in a process that culminated in the massacre of the heads of the leading *mamluk* households in 1811. His military power increased to a degree that on the one hand, the Ottoman government depended on his help in a number of cases and, on the other, Muhammad Ali was able to act like an independent ruler.[34] In several instances his measures became the direct models for Ottoman reform.

Muhammad Ali and his contemporary Tepedelenli Ali Paşa (1744–1822) were powerful enough to find themselves in close contact, and occasionally conflict, with European states. Ali Paşa had established his rule over large parts of Greece and Albania.[35] In Serbia and southern Greece, the Ottomans experienced the first uprisings turning into struggles motivated by nationalist aspirations. The traumatic, disruptive, violent and politically highly complex developments in south-eastern Europe involved a continuous struggle. Contenders at various times were the Ottoman government; regional

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34 Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, his Army, and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 278–305.
35 Katherine E. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece* (Princeton, 1999).

Muslim power-holders; adherents of the national Serbian or Greek causes; Muhammad Ali defending sometimes Ottoman interests and sometimes his own; and last but not least, intervening foreign powers. The establishment of a Greek kingdom on the Peloponnese (1832), Serbian autonomy and Russian territorial gains in the peace of Edirne (1829) did not terminate the crisis. In the following years Muhammad Ali Paşa defeated the Ottomans on the battlefield, extended his rule over Syria and secured himself a hereditary governorship of Egypt. Full Egyptian independence was prevented only by foreign intervention.

That any kind of political stability depended upon the strengthening of Ottoman political and military structures had thus been amply demonstrated. It had become equally clear that political strength required a comprehensive transformation of state and society. Indeed, this transformation had been under way since the late 1780s.

Military, administrative and educational reforms

Characteristically the Ottomans attempted to achieve this transformation from the top down, via central state power. Reform and finally modernity often clashed not only with conservative interests but also with those of certain sectors of society favouring other types of transformation. Little research has been done on why Ottoman society did not embark on a more holistic approach, and why there have been numerous Ottoman modernities rather than a single version of the modernity project.

Selim III (r. 1789–1807) had established a second, state-of-the-art army parallel to that of the janissaries and provincial troops. This 'new order' (Nizam-ı cedid) required a restructuring of state finances and administration. Its costs, together with inter-elite rivalries, caused its final demise in the crisis years of 1807–8, with their violent clashes and uprisings, coups and counter-coups. The only surviving male member of the dynasty, Mahmud II (r. 1808–39), bided his time, first abolishing the 'new order'. Both janissaries and, in the so-called 'letter of agreement' (Sened-i İttifak), local notables were guaranteed their social standing and political influence.

On the other hand, Mahmud II continued Selim III's attempts to establish institutions that enhanced state control over society, curbing the influence of many of the provincial power-holders whose positions he had confirmed in 1808. In a similar, but much more dramatic, move Mahmud II then annihilated the janissary corps, killing thousands of its members and abolishing the units

(1826). What Ottoman state ideologists called the 'Beneficent Event' (*vak'a-ı hayriye*) is often taken as the point from which the road to Ottoman state reform was begun.

   This view appears to be problematic in two regards. On the one hand, its adherents may underestimate the impact of the transformations prior to 1826. On the other, neither before nor after the *vak'a-ı hayriye* was state reform unified or unchallenged. There are few studies on the post-janissary Ottoman army and its military value, so we do not really know to what degree the military aspect of Mahmud's II reforms can be called a success. Clearly the troops of the central administration did not perform very well against the Egyptians during the 1830s, as Helmuth von Moltke's 'Letters from Turkey' reflect; at this time von Moltke was adviser to the grand vizier.[36] Seen from that angle, the 'Beneficent Event' perhaps takes on meaning less as a measure of military reform than as an attempt to discipline society by eliminating one of its best-organised groups.

   When the Ottoman Empire signed the treaty of Balta Limanı with England in 1838, Mahmud II and his elites had taken a number of measures strengthening state structures that once again made the empire resemble its Western counterparts to a much greater extent than both sides would have liked to believe. The central administration had embarked on its transformation towards what can be described as a Weberian-type of bureaucracy.[37] A 'translation office' (*terceme odası*), which had been founded in 1822, served as one of the main channels through which political knowledge was appropriated by a new group of French-speaking Muslim bureaucrats. Perhaps even more important were the state schools that began to train military men, physicians and bureaucrats. They primarily served the needs of the central government, and this left an opening for missionary and community schools, which continued to widen throughout the nineteenth century. Similarly, it was in the 1850s that printing and the press, whose emergence Mahmud II had actively supported, transformed themselves from institutions disseminating state-controlled information and instruction into forums of public debate.

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36 Helmuth von Moltke, *Briefe über Zustände und Begebenheiten in der Türkei aus den Jahren 1835–39*, 6th edn (Berlin, 1893); Helmuth von Moltke, *Der russisch–türkische Feldzug in der europäischen Türkei 1828–1829* (Berlin, 1877). To be read in conjunction with Ahmed Muhtar, *Türkiye devletinin en mühimm ve meşhur esfarından H 1244–1245 M 1828–1829 Türkiye–Rusya seferi ve Edirne muahedesi yahud vakıtsız sefer ibret ve intibah dersleri*, 2 vols. (Ankara, 1928–30).

37 Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922* (Princeton, 1980).

Experiments with a new form of statehood

The conservatism and traditionalism that had marked Ottoman politics since the age of Süleyman the Magnificent thus had largely been given up. The label 'age of reform', so often employed for the Ottoman nineteenth century,[38] is justified in this respect. Otherwise, this chapter argues for a history of the Ottoman Empire narrated not as a sequence of stages, but as transformations that allow for the simultaneity of conflicting tendencies, and in which external forces and internal dynamics both have their places. Seen in this perspective, Ottoman history is as much part of Western history as it is external to it.

The Ottoman state of the nineteenth century tried to be as authoritative as possible. Weak in comparison with European great powers, the sultan's administrators had to accept numerous and deep infringements of Ottoman sovereignty. Moreover, their legitimacy was challenged by a variety of social forces. In response, they attempted to control their populations as tightly as possible. Mahmud II's reign saw the introduction of a tax on wealth, a census and a pass regime aiming at controlling internal travel. New costumes for civil servants and military personnel – including the fez – were introduced, and so was an official gazette that also assumed propagandistic functions. The sultan himself repeatedly took to the road in order to inspect his domains, as well as to demonstrate largesse and splendour.

Thus when Mahmud II curbed the power of janissaries and notables, he did not do away with the patronage that sustained Ottoman society up to its very end. He did not tear down the social boundaries that separated confessional, linguistic, gendered or professional groups in the empire. Slavery was not forbidden, and the concept of a law valid for all Ottoman subjects would emerge only later on. Ottoman continuities remained strong, and Ottoman history was still far from its end.

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38 Donald Quataert, 'The Age of Reforms, 1812–1914', in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 759–946.

PART II

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AN EMPIRE IN TRANSITION

4

Political culture and the great households

CARTER VAUGHN FINDLEY

The Ottoman Empire was patrimonial in organisation and Islamic in ideals and values: it was an Islamic sultanate, which also belonged to a larger category of patrimonial monarchies, or states conceived on the model of vastly extended households.[1] At the centre, the Ottoman state consisted of the sultan and the dynasty, the ideas and values that legitimised the imperial system, the formal apparatus – organisational, regulatory and procedural – of government, and the elites who worked within that apparatus. The ruling elites were *askeri* ('military', whether all of them were literally soldiers or not), as contrasted to *reaya* ('flocks', subjects). Officially, the armed, tax-exempt status of the elites, as well as distinctions in dress, sharply differentiated between *askeri* and *reaya*, between state and society. All constituents of the government united in a political balance or imbalance that changed over time with important results, as did the equilibrium between state and society.

This complex system changed profoundly between 1603 and 1838. Scholars long envisaged these changes as a decline, following the empire's earlier rise and preceding its nineteenth-century reform era. However, if certain things fell in this period, others rose. These two centuries do not display a single upward or downward trend. Even shorter-term trends mask divergent trajectories followed by different parts of the imperial system. Analogously, the period 1603–1789 has been characterised as one of decentralisation and weakening state power. Yet the formation of new provincial power centres may have signified instead the emergence of new interlocutors between state and society and the creation of denser centre–periphery linkages, at least until late eighteenth-century crises provoked a trend back towards centralisation.[2] Understanding Ottoman political culture in this period requires examining change in the

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1 I thank Boğaç Ergene for research assistance in the preparation of this essay; Carter Vaughn Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom: A Social History* (Princeton, 1989), pp. 6–8.
2 Ahmet Tabakoğlu, *Gerileme dönemine girerken Osmanlı maliyesi* (Istanbul, 1985), p. 222; Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834*

governmental system, abuses and reflections on what to do about them, the rise of competing elite households within the state-as-household,[3] and the post-1789 return towards centralisation.

Transformations in imperial political culture

The period from 1603 to 1838 was one of crisis and change for all elements of the government. First among them, the sultan had historically been a warrior-patriarch ruling a state seen as a single patrimonial household: he was the household head, the dynasty was the family, the territory of the state formed the dynastic patrimony, the ruling class was the sultan's slave military retinue, and the subject peoples were the 'flocks' (*reaya*) whom God had entrusted to the sultan's care. The sultan's decree served as a major source of law, in supplement to the *şeriat* and custom. Rule by one sultan united the many territories. Dynastic succession perpetuated the state over generations. By dispensing justice, protecting the subjects and fulfilling religiously valued roles, the sultan provided the state with its focal point of legitimisation.

This period saw an uneasy transition from warrior-sultans, who ruled and commanded on campaign, to sedentary sultans, who reigned more than ruled, and again to dominant sultans – rulers but no longer warriors – between 1789 and 1839. Murad III (r. 1574–95), the last sultan to come to the throne by armed contest, was also the last to send out a son as provincial governor; thereafter, princes were reared in the imperial harem and not allowed to father children or acquire experience of the world before their accession. From 1617 the principle of contested succession and fratricide lapsed, and the succession process shifted to seniority among the males of the dynasty. Dynastic life became concentrated in the palace, the influence of the sultan mother (*valide sultan*) grew, and the sultan's sons-in-law (*damad*), high-ranking statesmen married to the sultans' daughters and sisters, emerged as heads of factional alliances that united powerful figures from the palace and the ruling elite.[4]

The sultans' powers became dispersed and contested. Instead of a state understood as one imperial household, power shifted among elite households

(Cambridge, 1997), pp. 44–8; Karl Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708–1758* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 65–107.

3 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 24.

4 Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford, 1993), pp. 21–5, 58–79; Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman*, 3 vols. (folio edition) (Paris, 1787–1820), vol. I, pp. 93–4, vol. III, pp. 315, 318–19.

divided by factional rivalries. Sultans periodically tried to revive the warrior-ruler role as late as the reign of Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703), in his case with disastrous results.[5] Six sultans were deposed, and in some cases murdered. Factional rivalries, janissary revolts, and *ulema* opposition were recurrent themes of these episodes. The eighteenth century confirmed the trend toward civil-ianisation, not just of the sultanate, but of the entire government.[6] Eventually, the sultans appeared as almost immobile figures in an endless pageant of court ceremony and religious ritual.[7] Yet none of the sultans' powers had been reduced in principle. When support for the over-mighty provincial households waned and dynamic sultans reappeared (Selim III, r. 1789–1807, and Mahmud II, r. 1808–39), the political balance shifted, opening an era of centralising reform.

The sultans' ritual functions were only part of the imperial legitimisation system, identified above as the second constituent of the imperial system. Originally acquired by force, sultanic power could only be legitimised through justice and other religiously valued functions. Ottoman sultans pursued these goals by assuming a series of religiously sanctioned roles and titles – warrior for the faith (*gazi*), Servitor of the Two Holy Cities (*hadim ül-haremeyn il-şerifeyn*), protector of the pilgrimage, by extension even caliph. In the palace treasury, they preserved relics of the Prophet Muhammad and his immediate successors, relics that had been acquired when Selim I conquered Egypt (1517). Important ceremonials revolved around these relics, and in this period the banner of the Prophet (*sancak-ı şerif*) was actually carried on campaign when the sultan or grand vizier commanded.[8]

While there was tension over whether justice meant strictly observing religious law or exercising imperial prerogative, the sultans provided justice through the councils (*divan*s) that they and high officials held and through the *şeriat* courts, which applied both Islamic law and that of the state (*kanun*). Sultans and other members of the dynasty patronised Islamic institutions on a scale their subordinates could not match, creating foundations (*evkaf*) to build and maintain mosques, charitable institutions and public works. Within its capabilities, the government provided pensions for former office-holders and for people whose goodwill it wished to consolidate.[9] With the trend from warrior-ruler to symbolic sultan, the focus shifted toward patronage and the

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5 Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984), p. 53.

6 Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1974), vol. III, pp. 55–8, 103–4, 127–30, 139–40.

7 D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. I, pp. 253–8, vol. III, pp. 311, 319–27, 328, 329–30, 332–3, 358.

8 Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 153–85; D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. I, pp. 261–8.

9 Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus*, pp. 77–81.

peaceful roles, a fact evidenced in the great emphasis on the pilgrimage and its security.[10] Yet old roles never lost all saliency. Sultans under whom wars were fought continued to take the title *gazi*. After 1774, catastrophic defeats called into question the sultans' claims as defenders of Islam, thus heightening incentives to open a new era of reform.

By then the length of Ottoman history had become another claim to legitimacy. When Nadir Shah (r. 1736–47) of Iran proposed an Islamic merger, in which the Ottomans would recognise Ca'feri Shiism as a fifth school of jurisprudence and Iran would become a 'branch' (*şube*) of the Ottoman Empire analogous to the Tatar khanate of the Crimea, the Ottomans were suspicious of the motives of the Iranians. They compared their hold on the caliphate and their 450 years as a *gazi* state with Iran's lack of *gazi* tradition and dynastic instability, calling Iran the 'faithless woman of the world who, marrying first one and then another, passes from hand to hand like a handkerchief'.[11]

Ottoman claims to legitimacy were part of an imperial cultural synthesis of vast integrative scope, including the Ottoman legal system, which, in a way unmatched in other Islamic states, maximised the importance of both Islamic and state law. In addition, sultans and high dignitaries patronised not only the *ulema*'s mosques and schools of divinity (*medrese*s), but also a wide range of dervish brotherhoods, and all refined forms of cultural production. Intellectuals expanded the literary culture of Ottoman Turkish, whose blend of Arabic, Persian and Turkish implicitly projected Ottoman claims to the entire Islamic cultural inheritance. Embellishing the theme that the empire fused religion and state, *din-ü-devlet*, they drew, too, on the Islamic political–philosophical tradition and its 'circle of justice', in which the sultan and ruling class provided the justice and protection that the subjects needed in order to flourish, while the latter provided the resources that the rulers needed in order to perform their functions.[12] After 1600, Ottoman thinkers continued to add to this philosophical tradition.

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10 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517–1683* (London, 1994); Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus*, ch. 3.

11 Ahmet Zeki İzgöer, 'Râgip Mehmed Paşa tahkik ve tahkik (tahlil ve metin)', MA thesis, Istanbul University (1988), pp. 58, 68, 82.

12 Yūsuf Khāss Hājib, *Wisdom of Royal Glory (Kutadgu Bilig): A Turko-Islamic Mirror for Princes*, ed. and trans. Robert Dankoff (Chicago, 1983), p. 107; R. R. Arat (ed.), *Kutadgu bilig* (Ankara, 1947), verses 2057–9, quoted in Halil İnalcık, 'Adâletnâmeler', *Belgeler* 2, 3–4 (1965), 49–145, at p. 49. Mustafa Naima, *Tarih-i Na'ima: ravzat ül-hüseyn fi hülaset ahbar ül-hafikayn*, 6 vols. (Istanbul, *c.* 1863), vol. I, p. 39, attributed the circle of justice to Ibn Khaldūn and said that the Ottoman philosopher Kınalızade got it from him.

Its very scope made the imperial cultural synthesis vulnerable in certain ways. Over time, many religious movements provoked official condemnation, their usual fault being opposition to the state rather than heterodox beliefs, which the state tended otherwise to condone.[13] At the other extreme, some Islamic movements, such as the seventeenth-century Kadızadeli movement[14] at the centre or the eighteenth-century Wahhabi revivalist movement in Arabia, opposed the Ottoman synthesis for its religious inclusiveness. As for the literary culture, only the elites could master one of such breadth. Indeed, it would be more exact to speak of different cultures associated with different elites: the religious studies of the *ulema*, the experiential orientation of the mystics, the philosophical–scientific tradition, and the worldly belletristic *adab* culture of the literary artists and scribal elite. Bridgeable to some spirits, the differences among these realms of thought caused conflicts for others, between religious thinkers who did and did not approve of mysticism, or between religious thinkers of either type and exponents of the philosophical or *adab* cultures, especially as the latter grew more responsive to stimuli from infidel Europe. Culturally, it was the westward extension of the interest of the scientific or literary intellectuals that launched Westernisation – and the cultural conflicts and shifts of political balance that it provoked in the nineteenth century.

The sultans presided over a governmental mechanism – the third element of the imperial system – that changed remarkably in this period. Previously, the central government had largely consisted of the palace, which housed the imperial family and had much of the central military and religious elites grouped in or around it. The differentiation of the palace into the *enderun* ('inside'), housing the sultan, his harem and their slaves, and the *birun* ('outside'), which housed government functions and was accessible to a wider range of people, showed how the imperial residence still included much of the government.[15] During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the government grew and differentiated, as various agencies moved out of the palace to new headquarters.

Eventually, the governmental organisation included three or four branches following divergent developmental paths: the military; the religious elite; the scribes; and perhaps even a distinct palace service. The old military forces had

13 Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı toplumunda zındıklar ve mülhidler (15.–17. yüzyıllar)* (Istanbul, 1998), pp. 329–31; Saim Savaş, *Onaltıncı asır Anadolusu'nda bir tekkenin dini ve sosyal tarihi: Sivas Ali Baba zâviyesi* (Istanbul, 1992), *passim*.

14 Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, trans. Geoffrey Lewis (London, 1957), pp. 98–9, 132–5 and *passim*; cf. Naima, *Tarih*, vol. VI, pp. 218–20, 226; John J. Curry, 'A Comparison of the Kadızâdeli and Wahhâbî Movements' (unpublished paper).

15 D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 284–94, 294–304.

been in crisis by the beginning of this period, for reasons such as the *sipahi* cavalry's resistance to the adoption of firearms or the janissaries' numerical growth and disciplinary decay; reliance on mercenary forces (*sarıca*, *sekban* and the like) had grown as a result.[16] The religious elite (*ilmiye*), in turn, faced such challenges as the Kadızadeli revivalist movement at the centre, later the Wahhabi movement in Arabia, and the onset of Westernising reforms after 1789. The hierarchies of judges and *medrese* professors only reached the full elaboration of their ranks and privileges after 1700, but this was more a matter of aristocratisation at the top than scholarly achievement.[17] By the 1790s, the Ottomans' increasing need to pursue their interests by diplomatic rather than military means had opened an era of Europeanising reform that would marginalise the *ulema* in the councils of state.

Organisational change proved more beneficial for the scribal and palace services. Once only a few score record-keepers for the imperial *divan*, the scribes came to staff large organisations outside the palace, notably the grand vizier's headquarters (Bab-ı Âli or Sublime Porte, literally, 'exalted gateway', 1654), or the treasurer's (Bab-ı Defteri). By the 1790s, the financial department as the largest scribal agency employed perhaps 650 scribes, out of a total of 1,500–2,000, in twenty-five or so offices.[18] As many functions moved outside the palace, finally, its inside service evolved into something like a distinct branch of the ruling class. Emblematic of this change was the emergence out of the *mabeyn* ('what is between', specifically between the imperial harem and the rest of the inside service) of a palace secretariat in charge of the sultan's communications with agencies outside the palace. A function for which there had once been no need had become a critical node in governmental communications.[19]

Change in governmental organisation meant change in the social fabric of the ruling class, the fourth constituent of the imperial centre. Among the military, the dysfunctionality of *sipahi* cavalry and janissary infantry and the recruitment of armed *reaya* as mercenaries eroded the distinction between ruling and subject classes. As the janissaries merged with the urban population, and as ordinary men and women bought janissary pay tickets to gain income

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16 Virginia H. Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries? Mobilization for the 1768–1774 Russo-Ottoman War', *War in History* 5, 1 (1998), 23–36.

17 Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, 1988), chs. 2, 5.

18 Carter Vaughn Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 53, 56; Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, p. 22; Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı Maliyesi*, pp. 40–4.

19 D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 295–6, 302, 304.

and the tax exemption of the *askeri* class, a process of corporate organisation and privilege-seeking occurred that had counterparts throughout eighteenth-century Ottoman society.[20] Among scribes, numerical growth was accompanied by increased hierarchisation and upward mobility. While lower scribal ranks retained guild-like patterns of recruitment, training and promotion, higher scribal officials saw their upward mobility prospects expand to include provincial governorships and sometimes the grand vizierate, posts dominated throughout the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the slave-military elite. Drawn irresistibly into the household-based factionalism of the other elites, these '*efendi*s-turned-pashas' embodied the 'civilianisation' of government.[21] In the palace, recruitment of young boys through the child levy (*devşirme*) died out in the early seventeenth century, and the palace school became something like an exclusive preparatory school.[22] Meanwhile, the dynastic politics of arranging marriages between members of ruling elites and women from the imperial harem created densely webbed relationships between the dynasty and its servants.

Abuses in governance and philosophical reflections on them

Its structure had always made the Ottoman government subject to abuse, and new abuses were added to old ones in this period. The most critical new problem was the spread of cheap firearms and the arming of the *reaya*. Mercenaries of *reaya* background, recruited for campaigns and afterwards dismissed, would plunder the countryside. Another development in the early seventeenth century, condemned because it implied dilution of the sultan's authority, was the growing political role of palace women, especially the sultan's mother, and sometimes other palace functionaries, notably the chief black eunuch. Prominent among the old problems, the great extent to which office-holders' compensation took the form of fee and revenue collection rights, rather than salaries, had always created opportunities for excessive exactions. Military and economic crises and the necessity for governors and commanders to recruit mercenary forces caused seismic shifts in the way taxes were assessed and

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20 Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, p. 14.

21 Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, pp. 78–100; Rifaʿat ʿAli Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991), p. 41; Norman Itzkowitz, 'Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Realities', *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962), 73–94.

22 Ibrahim Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York, 1983), pp. 76, 97; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 299–300; Tayyarzade Ahmed Ata, *Tarih-i Ata* (Istanbul, 1293/1876), vol. III, pp. 106–7.

collected.[23] Indicative of these shifts were temporary levies, which later became permanent parts of a mounting tax burden under such names as '*divan* levies' (*avarız-ı divaniye*), 'impositions' (*tekalif*) of different types, and 'aids in wartime' and 'in peacetime' (*imdad-ı seferiye, imdad-ı hazariye*). Tax-farmers collected such revenues, pocketing the difference between what they took from the subjects and what they forwarded to the treasury.[24] Government functionaries would also descend on villages with large parties, requisition food and fodder, and make large demands in cash or kind (*salgun*). Supposed to provide justice, even the kadis abused their right to collect fees for the transactions they performed and made 'rounds' (*devre çıkmak*) to 'inspect' for income opportunities. Faced with such gaps between their ideals of justice and their agents' predations, sultans issued stern warnings 'not to ruin the country', threatened the 'harshest punishment' (*eşedd-i siyaset*) against violators, and even called their subjects to arms (*nefir-i 'am*) against abusive officials. Still the abuses continued, leading to revolts, peasant flight into the cities or across Ottoman borders, and reversion of agricultural lands to nomadism.[25]

Debates on what to do about such problems provide insights into Ottoman political culture in this period. A new sub-genre of political philosophy known as 'advice books' (*nasihatname*) emerged, contrasting the corrupt present with an idealised past, visualised in revisionist terms that reflected the authors' preferences more than earlier realities. This literary strategy had the effect of valorising the earlier image of the state as one great household made up of the sultan, his slaves and his 'flocks', and de-legitimising the new politics of multiple, rival households. The fault-line between these two alternatives and the values assigned to them has survived in modern writing on Ottoman history, even though many of the abuses attacked were already old by 1600.

While these treatises are only one source for the much-contested view that the Ottoman Empire declined between 1600 and 1800 – the empire's military fortunes and the writings of non-Muslim contemporaries like Dimitrius Cantemir[26] also did as much to shape that view – these treatises are 'declinist'.

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23 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 82–93; Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden, 1996).

24 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337, at p. 331.

25 İnalcık, 'Adâletnâmeler', pp. 70, 123–25, 135–39); Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', pp. 300–11; Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı maliyesi*, pp. 217–18, 228–34; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 25, 41; Ebubekir Ratib, 'Sefaretname' (Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, Ms. Esad Efendi 2235), fol. 227a (*c.*1792).

26 Cantemir's title is significant: Dimitrius Cantemir, *Historia incrementorum atque decrementorum Aulae othomanicae,* first published in English as *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire*, trans. N. Tindal (London, 1734–5).

They denounce the dispersion of the sultan's power, the infiltration of *reaya* into the elites, the spread of corruption, the sale of offices, women's political influence, the diversion of *timar* incomes to support others than cavalry officers and the ruination of the subjects through oppressive taxation such as had 'never happened in any ruler's country before'.[27] Different writers had different emphases. But all the authors of this period shared conventional Ottoman Islamic assumptions, idealising the sultan's authority and justice and denouncing what they saw as reprehensible 'innovations' (*bid'at*).[28] They focused, too, on the elites more than the subject populations.[29]

In time, more forward-looking views appeared. Technical works such as Katib Çelebi's *Cihannuma*, or some embassy narratives, beginning with that of Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi (1720–1), helped to increase responsiveness to European culture.[30] An innovative line of thought appeared in works inspired by Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*, studied by Katib Çelebi (1609–57) and later authors and partially translated into Ottoman by Pirizade Mehmed Sahib (1674–1749). Ibn Khaldun's theory of how states rose and fell over several generations riveted several authors' attention.[31] The Ottoman Empire having already lasted longer than this theory predicted, they manipulated it to find explanations. Katib Çelebi and Naima (d. 1716) saw restoring earlier institutions as the antidote to decline.[32] Contemplating European societies that were also old but still dynamic, late eighteenth-century diplomats went further, metamorphosing Ibn Khaldun's last phase of the life cycle – originally senility – into a transition

27 The treatise of Koçu Bey, quoted in Pál Fodor, 'State and Society, Crisis and Reform in 15th–17th Century Ottoman Mirror[s] for Princes', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40, 2–3 (1986), 217–40, at p. 232; Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', 283–4; Ahmed Akgündüz, *Osmanlı kanunnâmeleri ve hukukî tahlilleri*, 9 vols. (Istanbul, 1996), vol. IX (early seventeenth-century treatises); Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, pp. 20–40, 73–89; Robert Anhegger, 'Hezarfenn Hüseyin Efendi'nin Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair mülâhazatı', *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 10 (1951–53), 365–93; Rhoads Murphey, 'Solakzade's Treatise of 1652: A Glimpse at Operational Principles Guiding the Ottoman State during Times of Crisis', in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye sosyal ve iktisat tarihi kongresi: tebliğler* (Ankara, 1990), pp. 27–32; Rhoads Murphey, Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpay Tekin (eds.), *Kanûn-nâme-i Sultânî li 'Azîz Efendi: Aziz Efendi's Book of Sultanic Laws and Regulations: An Agenda for Reform by a Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Statesman* (Cambridge, MA, 1985).

28 Akgündüz, *Osmanlı kanunnâmeleri ve hukukî tahlilleri*, vol. IX, pp. 152, 263–8; Fodor, 'State and Society', p. 229.

29 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, p. 40.

30 Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, p. 11; Mehmed Efendi, *Le Paradis des infidèles: relation de Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi, ambassadeur Ottoman en France sous la Régence*, trans. J.-C. Galland, ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris, 1981); Fatma Müge Göçek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1987).

31 Ibn Khaldûn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 3 vols., trans. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd edn (Princeton, 1967), vol. I, pp. 247–310.

32 Cornell Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and "Ibn Khaldûnism"', *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 18 (1983), 198–220, p. 200; Naima, *Tarih*, vol. I, pp. 33–43.

from war to peace and the cultivation of prosperity. In search of the means to achieve these goals, the diplomatic writers crossed an invisible threshold into a new era of Westernising reform.[33] Before discussing the return towards centralisation that followed, we must say more about the household factionalism of the era in which the treatises were produced.

Patrimonial household factionalism

Because they shaped the politics of the period, the great households have commanded scholarly attention, even though they cannot account for the elites' entire social experience. For example, lower scribal bureaucrats inhabited a different milieu, insulated from the political turmoil of their superiors and characterised by guild-like traits,[34] which reappear widely, even among the women of the imperial harem.[35] A full account of the Ottoman elites' social realities must take account of this diversity and more. However, the social setting of greatest political significance was the great household.

The formation of elite households within the ruling class, known in earlier periods, became more common in this period for many reasons.[36] Those who rose highest in the sultan's service enjoyed great power and the steeply increased incomes needed to maintain large establishments. Yet high officials also faced distinctive problems, to which the households served as a response.

Because the Ottomans' military expansion had virtually ended by 1670, and because their territories and revenue base began to shrink with the treaty of

33 Virginia H. Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing, 1768–1808', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25 (1993), 53–69; Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700–1783* (Leiden, 1995), pp. 59, 186; Ahmed Cevdet, *Tertib-i Cevdet ez-Tarih-i Cevdet*, 12 vols. (Istanbul, 1309/1891–2), vol. V, p. 362; Gümeç Karamuk, *Ahmed Azmi Efendis Gesandtschaftsbericht als Zeugnis des osmanischen Machtverfalls und der beginnenden Reformära Selim III.* (Bern, 1975); Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Etat et droit dans la pensée politique ottomane: droits de l'homme ou *Rechtsstaat*? A propos de deux relations d'ambassade', *Etudes turques et ottomanes: documents de travail* 4 (1995), 39–50; Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Osmanlı siyasal düşüncesinde devlet ve hukuk: insan hakları mı, hukuk devleti mi?' in *XII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Bildiriler* (Ankara, 2000), pp. 1195–1202; Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Ebu Bekir Ratib's Vienna Embassy Narrative: Discovering Austria or Propagandizing for Reform in Istanbul?', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 85 (1995), 41–80, p. 52 n. 23; Z. Fahri Fındıkoğlu, 'Türkiyede İbn Haldunizm', in *60. [=Altmışıncı] doğum yılı münasebetiyle Fuad Köprülü armağanı: Mélanges Fuad Köprülü* (Istanbul, 1957), pp. 153–63, at pp. 160–1.
34 Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, pp. 93–100; Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, pp. 57–70.
35 Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 133–4; Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, p. 30; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 305–7.
36 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 24, 33–44, 45–7, 65, 67; Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 65–79.

Karlowitz (1699), a pervasive problem was the excessive number of aspirants to high position.[37] Many distinctive problems followed from this one. Rapid mobility, up and down, had always prevailed in government service. Even though most members of the elites were no longer literally recruited as slaves, entering the sultan's service still put a person in the status of slave (*kul*) in relation to him. However, this differed from an ordinary slave's status, it meant that the sultan had the right summarily to discipline his official slaves.[38] The word *siyaset*, which now means 'politics', still referred to the sultan's power to punish arbitrarily, a power exercised over his slave elites but not, in principle, over his subject 'flocks'. The sultan was legally heir to his slaves, and routinely confiscated their estates after death or disgrace. Inspiring protective strategies, such as founding family *vakıf*s, the confiscations became more common in the eighteenth century.[39] Among the elites, only the *ulema* enjoyed relative security.[40]

By the mid-seventeenth century, a system of annual reappointment (*tevci-hat*), usually with long waits between appointments, had come into existence, compounding the instability of high office.[41] Lucky officials might be reconfirmed, but only for a year at a time. Ranks alone might be conferred on those for whom there were no places. Important economic interests surrounded this system. Officials had to pay fees, if not also bribes, for each appointment – fees that formed a major part of their superiors' incomes. Office-holders' efforts to recoup the costs of appointment further corrupted Ottoman administration. As affluent provincials began to invest in office, the historical distinction between rulers and subjects became further blurred. Office was becoming commoditised, and many sources speak of sale of office.[42] Yet those who 'purchased' posts subject to annual reappointment acquired no rights that lasted more than a year. A hybrid form bridging public office and private investment, tax-farms were auctioned to bidders, both officials and non-officials, for

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37 Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı maliyesi*, p. 78; Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, pp. 100–3; Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, pp. 68–70.

38 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 41–2, 45, 76; Naima, *Tarih*, vol. I, pp. 34–5.

39 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, pp. 48–9, 57; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernisation and Social Change* (Oxford and New York, 1996), pp. 56–8, 65–6, 92, 95, 97; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 117, 228, 334.

40 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, pp. 46–7; Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion*, p. 80; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. II, pp. 288, 334, vol. III, p. 355.

41 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 70–6; Halil Inalcik, 'Centralisation and Decentralisation in Ottoman Administration', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 27–52, at p. 30; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. I, pp. 294–5, vol. III, pp. 350–4.

42 Anhegger, 'Hezarfenn', p. 392.

a set period of years (*iltizam*), usually three, until the introduction of life-term tax-farms (*malikâne*) in 1695.[43]

High dignitaries formed households in response to such problems. The relationships used to form elite households mirrored those seen at the palace. Indeed, marriage to a princess was the most valuable relationship for any household head. Household formation required both maximising ties of kinship by blood or marriage and extending them with ties of slavery and clientage. A household head would rely first on his sons and sons-in-law, then on male slaves or other dependants educated in his household (on the model of the palace school), selecting young men of promise as protégés and candidates for closer integration into his household through marriage. Household heads also sought alliances between households, between branches of service, or between Istanbul and provincial centres.[44] Military solidarity groups, even entire military units, became important adjuncts of elite households.[45]

As the princess brides illustrate, women's roles proved critical in forming and maintaining households. Marriages could be concluded between households on a footing of equality. However, it was common to imitate the dynasty, which, having long ceased to recognise any other household as its equal, married its daughters to high-ranking men from its ruling elites, who then became household heads themselves. Imitation of this pattern at all social levels made it common for young men to enter the households of their fathers-in-law. In extended households, the senior women might acquire power reminiscent of the sultan mothers'.[46]

Using kinship and surrogate kinship to enlarge their networks of dependants, household heads strove to protect their interests by appointing retainers to strategic posts.[47] The perquisites of high office included extensive patronage and facilitated expanding elite households to include hundreds of people, even thousands.[48] Growing reliance on mercenary forces made an 'elaborate' household (*mükemmel kapı*) a prerequisite for appointment to provincial

43 Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 18–21 and *passim*; Darling, *Revenue-Raising*, pp. 120–1.

44 Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, pp. 139–64.   45 Ibid., pp. 19–21.

46 Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 65–79, 105–11, 241–57; Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, pp. 109–24; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, pp. 313–16.

47 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 34, 68.

48 Ibrahim Metin Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa, Vezir and Entrepreneur: A Study in Ottoman Political-Economic Theory and Practice', *Turcica* 9, 1 (1977), 197–214, at p. 203; Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, pp. 89–93; Evliya Çelebi, *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman: Melek Ahmed Pasha (1588–1622) as Portrayed in Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels*, trans. Robert Dankoff (Albany, 1991), *passim*.

governorships or military commands.[49] Major household heads became 'contractors', taking charge of revenue collection, military recruitment and provisioning for the state. Combining high offices with revenue-farms consolidated this trend.[50] Ottoman dignitaries recognised government finance, particularly tax-farming, as the best route to wealth; and the posts of their collection agents (*mütesellim*, *voyvoda*), held first by household retainers but later often by notables (*ayan*) of local origin, became provincial power centres.[51] Literary sources contrast the opulence of the households with the rapid mobility that might transform a slave into a statesman and son-in-law of the sultan before – even more suddenly – his severed head would be displayed at the palace as a warning to others.[52]

The old vision of the state as the sultan's all-inclusive household yielded to one in which there were 'slaves of the slaves' of the sultan and many households within his.[53] A distinctive politics also developed, in which, by modern standards, policies or issues remained secondary to the unconditional personal loyalties on which the households were founded. In poetry, a large proportion of eulogy and satire reflects the hope and despair of competing for reward in such a political environment.

For those in high office, political advancement depended on intrigue and appeals to the sultan's favour.[54] Uncertain tenure in high office and the way proximity to the sultan actualised the dangers of the officials' slave status compounded the dangers of this high-stakes game. Occasionally, a single official would achieve a temporary monopoly of influence. Thus Mahmud II's favourite, Halet Efendi, nearly monopolised influence in Istanbul just before the Greek revolution began (1821).[55] In the provinces, monopolies of influence by notable families, sometimes lasting for generations, became common in the eighteenth century.[56] At other times, two households, or groups of households, duelled for pre-eminence. The last great scribal rivalry in Istanbul, between Âkif and Pertev Paşas in the 1830s, caused upheaval that helped precipitate reform in conditions of service, thus rewriting the rules of the game. Âkif could only topple Pertev's factional conglomerate by allying with Husrev Paşa, minister of war but also kingpin in the factionalism

49 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, p. 89.
50 Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 44–62, 114–33.
51 Inalcik, 'Centralisation and Decentralisation', pp. 31–40.
52 D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, p. 240.   53 Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*.
54 D'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, vol. III, p. 354.
55 Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, pp. 38–9; Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Selim III, 1789–1807* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), ch. 20.
56 Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus*, pp. 56–64; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 57–8.

that precluded unity of command in the Ottoman military. Harmful in that sense or in its brutal outcomes, bipolar factionalism focused conflict in a patrimonial polity somewhat as a two-party system does in modern electoral politics.[57]

While the great households need further research, some stages in their evolution are discernible. With the end of the princely governorate around 1600 and the re-concentration of dynastic life in the palace, the influence accruing to the sultan mother as the senior member of the dynasty sited many rivalries in the imperial harem, whence references to the early seventeenth century as 'the sultanate of women'. By 1656, this pattern had reached exhaustion; and the sultan mother, Turhan, engineered the appointment of Köprülüzade Mehmed Paşa as grand vizier with full powers over policy and high appointments, which the sultans had normally controlled.[58] A response to crises foreign and domestic, this was also an attempt to reassert central control by empowering one household to dominate all others. The Köprülü family dominated politics and patronage for fifty years, although sultans periodically vied to reassert themselves as commanders and heads of the one great household. Patterns of appointment to high office wavered between periods of household dominance and episodes when appointees were drawn from the palace, military and central administration.[59] With the failed second siege of Vienna (1683) and the territorial losses ratified at Karlowitz (1699), both the Köprülüs and the attempts to reassert palace control faltered.

The role of the households grew thereafter. The upper *ulema*'s aristocratisation exemplified this trend. Eventually, even notables of *reaya* origin formed households and acquired high positions. Once governorships had been combined with tax-farms and big provincial tax-farmers began to buy governorships, men of *reaya* origin began to acquire the elites' highest titles (*bey, paşa*).[60] The introduction of life-term tax-farms (*malikâne*, 1695) and a 1726 decree, ending *sancakbeyi*s' appointment from the centre and providing for provincial notables' appointment to those posts, made the local notables into the government's chief provincial interlocutors.[61] Within a few decades, some such

57 Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom*, pp. 70–80; Avigdor Levy, 'The Military Policy of Sultan Mahmud II, 1808–1839', Ph.D. thesis, Harvard (1968), pp. 411, 473–9, 644–6; Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory, and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen* (Albany, 2003).

58 Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 255–7.

59 Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion*, pp. 10, 31, 43–8, 51–6, 82, 87, 90.

60 Inalcik, 'Centralisation and Decentralisation', pp. 39–40, 48–52; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, p. 43.

61 Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı maliyesi*, pp. 222–6; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 56–7, 123.

men had become warlords, dominating entire provinces. By 1808, one group of notables, led by Bayraktar Mustafa Paşa, had grown strong enough to stage a coup, enthrone Mahmud II, and get his reluctant assent to a 'deed of agreement' ratifying their powers and implicitly limiting his.[62] By then, however, a return towards centralisation had begun.

Back towards centralisation

Reverses such as the Russian war of 1768–74, the loss of the Crimea (1783) and the French invasion of Egypt (1798) pushed the Ottomans into a new age of reform. A reassertion of sultanic leadership under Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) marked its first phase. Selim was overthrown in 1807; but Mahmud II revived his initiatives after destroying the janissaries in 1826.[63] Their centralising efforts were of a piece and should be considered together.

Ottomans saw military reform as their foremost need. As in other states, however, a better military required more revenue. Both sultans attempted improvements in government finance; and Mahmud's 1838 attempt to abolish tax-farming and centralise government finance, if successful, would have done more than anything else to provide the material resources for Ottoman revitalisation. By the 1790s, it was also clear that military and financial reform could not succeed without overhauling and rationalising government completely. The open-ended way in which Selim III solicited his advisers' recommendations before launching his 'New Order' and the wide range of reforms that were debated (many more than were implemented) implied a fundamental change in thinking, replacing deference to custom with planning and systematisation.

The evidence on Selim's 'New Order' reflects an emerging Ottoman awareness of the 'systematising spirit' for which the European Enlightenment was known. Selim's adoption of permanent, reciprocal diplomatic representation instead of the old temporary embassies exemplifies the range of his reforms. His ambassadors' reports also convey vast information about contemporary Europe and, in notable cases, advocate the reformist agenda in terms that merge Ottoman and Enlightenment ideas.[64] More than the military and fiscal

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62 Bernard Lewis, 'Dustur', *EI 2*, pp. 640–1.   63 Levy, 'Military Policy', pp. 27–171.
64 Findley, 'Ebu Bekir Ratib's Vienna Embassy Narrative', 41–80; Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Mouradgea d'Ohsson and his *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman*: Redefining the Self by Defining the Other', in *Making Sense of Global History: The Nineteenth International Congress of the Historical Sciences, Oslo 2000, Commemorative Volume*, ed. Sølvi Sogner (Oslo, 2001), pp. 169–88.

reforms, this change in thought signifies the growing Ottoman engagement with modernity.

After Selim's fall, Mahmud had to wait for years before he could revive the reformist agenda. By 1820, he had regained control over much of Anatolia and the lower Balkans. Provincial support had shifted in some places from the warlords towards a revitalised sultanate implementing a 'politics of notables', in which cooperative local notables retained major roles.[65] The Greek Revolution of the 1820s and the Egyptian crises of the 1830s left no doubt about the need for decisive action from the top. Mahmud responded by founding both a new army and a new civil officialdom. He established schools to train new elites; resumed diplomatic representation abroad; reorganised the central government into ministries; standardised the tables of military, civil and religious ranks; abandoned the system of annual appointments; introduced salaries; and abolished some of the disabilities of official slavery. The last measure followed the upheaval caused by the fall of Pertev Paşa (1837), whose protégés would become the leading statesmen of the next period. Proclaimed shortly after Mahmud's death, the Gülhane Decree (1839), critical in improving officials' lot, extended its guarantees of rights and due process not just to the elites but equally to the subjects. An autocratic centraliser, Mahmud even abolished the grand vizierate (1838) and divided its functions, a short-lived change reversed after his death.

The age of the households had ended. A new age had begun, characterised by strong sultans during some reigns and consistently by new elites, civil and military. Ironically, despite Selim and Mahmud's desire to replace the households with better-educated elites loyal to the sultan, some of these elites would shift their loyalty to an abstract ideal of the state instead.[66] In time, the constitutionalist opposition to centralising authoritarianism would emerge from their midst.

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65 Avigdor Levy, 'Mahmud II', *EI 2*, vol. VI, p. 58; Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 166–78; Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar, Karaosmanoğullar üzerinde bir ınceleme* (Ankara, 1997), pp. 23, 52–8, 193; Albert Hourani, 'Albert Hourani and the Politics of Notables', in *The Modern Middle East*, ed. Albert Hourani *et al.* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993), pp. 83–109.
66 Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, pp. 45, 67.

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War and peace

VIRGINIA AKSAN

Introduction

Writing the history of Ottoman warfare and diplomacy from 1603 to 1838 is charting much unknown territory, and combating long-held assumptions about Ottoman obscurantism, paralysis and obstinacy in the face of defeat, shrinking borders and European incursion. In many ways, the era can be characterised by a slow, imperceptible tilting towards European-style diplomacy, as Ottoman bureaucrats came to terms with fixed borders and the potential power and sometimes debilitating limitations of negotiations, what J. C. Hurewitz long ago called 'the Europeanization of Ottoman diplomacy'.[1] The eighteenth century, in particular, saw a hundredfold increase in the use of diplomatic initiatives, including the sending of special envoys to Europe, increasing emphasis on foreign affairs in the bureaucracy, establishing permanent embassies in Europe in the latter part of the period under study, and the sometimes adroit, sometimes maladroit manipulation of the large and unruly European diplomatic community in Istanbul.

Ottoman warfare is not as easy to characterise, as studies of so many of the major campaigns of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (and of the 1800s as well, for that matter) have yet to be undertaken from the Ottoman point of view, a striking lacuna for an empire whose single *raison d'être* is almost invariably described in military terms. Much of the debate on military reform, or lack of it, in the Ottoman context has been influenced by western European historiography, which pits rational and progressive against religious and regressive societies, accounting for the spectacular success of the West and, by-the-by, for the failure of the Ottomans to make the transition to a modern-style army. Legitimate attempts to reframe that picture in recent years, European or otherwise, have been hampered by a singular lack of interest in the

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1 J. C. Hurewitz, 'Europeanization of Ottoman Diplomacy: The Conversion from Unilateralism to Reciprocity in the Nineteenth Century', *Belleten* 25 (1961), 455–66.

history of warfare in the late Ottoman Empire within the field itself, with some notable exceptions.[2] Thus the chance to discuss a two-hundred-year sweep of the empire in terms of the intricate interdependence of warfare, diplomacy and the economy, as well as the impact of these factors on Ottoman society and legitimacy, comes at an opportune moment.

In very general terms from a military point of view, the seventeenth century represented the eclipse of the fief-based (*timariot*) provincial military, and the complete desuetude of the *devşirme* levies of tributary children, while the eighteenth century accelerated alternative systems, from militias to state-contracted and financed regiments, predecessors to Selim III's (r. 1789–1807) Nizam-ı Cedid, or 'New Order' army. As it became necessary to count on the countryside for men and supplies there was a realignment of ruler and ruled. In turn this change created opportunities for aggrandisement and the consolidation of power which, similarly to European developments from 1660 to 1760, characterised these 200 years of the empire's history.[3]

In this chapter three main areas will be emphasised: changing techniques, primarily of continental warfare in a comparative context, including a description of the campaigns which serve as signposts in that regard; concepts and tools of diplomacy, highlighting significant treaties, and alterations to Ottoman diplomatic strategy; and finally, the political and social effects of military defeat, which by the end of the period under discussion were profound enough to encourage nineteenth-century reformers to reconstruct the empire along western European absolutist lines.

Changing techniques of warfare

Between 1650 and 1800, European warfare altered in ways that are still the subject of debate, but which seem to have radically changed the face of war as well as the government organisation and financing required to maintain a continual

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2 Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990–1990* (Oxford, 1990); David B. Ralston, *Importing the European Army* (Chicago, 1990); Jeremy Black, *European Warfare 1660–1815* (London, 1994); Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, 1991) all include the Ottomans and comment on the paucity of studies. Notable exceptions include, for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the work of the Hungarian scholars Gyula Káldy-Nagy, Géza Dávid and Gábor Ágoston. See also Palmira Brummett on the representations of warfare; Caroline Finkel's study of the Long War (1593–1606); Mark Stein on seventeenth-century fortresses; Rhoads Murphey on the Baghdad campaign (1638/9) and on warfare 1500–1700; Önder Küçükerman on military manufacturing, and Virginia Aksan on the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768–74 (see bibliography).

3 Goldstone, *Revolution*, pp. 3–4.

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cycle of violence and control over local populations. The war and state formation arguments effectively asserted by Charles Tilly, Brian Downing, William McNeill and Jeremy Black have considerably enriched the earlier, but equally enlightening, 'military revolution' debates of Michael Roberts, Geoffrey Parker and their critics. Succinctly put, the ideas relevant to this context include the fundamental contribution of warfare to modern state formation, in a cycle of indebtedness and growth of bureaucracies forcing the rationalisation of the military systems as well as the credit required to maintain them.[4] By 'military systems' is meant mobilisation and supply as well as the technology of warfare, the latter in earlier decades of the debate the primary indicators of military reform. Examples might include the introduction of small firearms, or the evolution and influence of mobile, lightweight field artillery. Additionally, the transition to modern armies required structural and behavioural changes, such as convincing well-organised and disciplined soldiers to stand fast in opposing ranks and open fire at one another, not breaking ranks in spite of friends and comrades falling all around.[5] More generally, the period under discussion saw the move away from a plethora of autonomous militias to a (national) standing army, and the introduction of command-and-supply structures, as regimental and contractual logistics were replaced by the military bureaucracy of the state: in sum, a gradual monopolisation of the control over violence.

The same theoreticians of territorial warfare delineate a separate trajectory for naval empires – namely, Britain, France and the Netherlands in the period under discussion. Certainly the requirements of naval warfare and supply are worthy of that kind of distinction, while the end result tended towards the monopolisation of violence on the oceans of the world. However, this analysis remains incomplete if the Ottomans, who struggled to maintain both an army and navy with predictable effects on state budgets, are not taken into account. Historiographically speaking, the Ottomans have never been allowed a naval 'policy', restricted as their naval endeavours were to the Mediterranean littoral. The long debilitating engagement around the island of Crete, from 1645 to 1669, as part of the Venetian–Ottoman war, strains all credibility about the lack of policy on the Ottoman side. But this spate of naval warfare does indeed point to the technical and strategic impasses of the period, and also to the eclipse of

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4 Brian Downing, *The Military Evolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, 1992); Michael Roberts, *The Military Revolution, 1560–1660* (Belfast, 1956); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1996); Tilly, *Coercion*, Black, *European Warfare*.

5 William McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power* (Chicago, 1982), p. 133.

both Venetians and Ottomans as substantial naval powers.[6] Ottoman attitudes to the navy certainly included the protection of harbours and the freedom to transport supplies; after all, feeding the armies on the battlefront and the population of Istanbul had absolute priority in Ottoman political and strategic thinking. Similar considerations were paramount in the maintenance of the Black Sea and Danubian fleets. For these purposes contractual and client relationships with local power-holders were often utilised, although in the late eighteenth century significant naval reforms became a concern of the bureaucracy, as exemplified in the lengthy and very colourful career of Admiral Gazi Hasan Paşa.[7]

In the war and society debate just sketched, the Thirty Years War (1618–48) and the Napoleonic wars act as beginning and end of a particular kind of warfare which led to an impasse in all military systems of Europe just prior to the French innovations by which the state-under-arms became a reality. Siege warfare had proved its ineffectiveness, as soon as fortress construction and the fire-power of cannon reached an equilibrium. The ability to sustain long campaigns, and feed and care for upwards of 100,000 men, their equipment and transportation, had reached a breaking-point. Massive open confrontations, while effective in the flush of victory, were proving less so in influencing diplomatic policy at the negotiating table, although standard military historiography once masked the long-term effects of the spectacular successes of Frederick the Great. The impact of that kind of warfare on the populace at large was reflected in rebellions and desertions of villages, and often also in resistance to taxation and billeting. This unrest, as well as the responses of the elite groups – central and provincial – to the opportunities represented by the upheavals of constant warfare, are two points of comparison that also work well in the Ottoman context.

The Ottomans and the 'military revolution' debate

Due to the relative lack of monographs the Ottoman Empire has for the most part been excluded from modern war and society debates. But this gap is also due to the fact that historians have assumed the sultanate to have been incapable of keeping pace with the technicalism and functionality of the

6 For more information on the debate about the Ottomans and the Mediterranean, see works by Palmira Brummett, Andrew Hess, Salih Özbaran and Kenneth Setton in the bibliography; see also İdris Bostan, who has written on the imperial naval dockyards of the seventeenth century and on the Ottoman navy in general.

7 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, 'Sadrazam Halil Hâmid Paşa', *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 5 (1935), 213–67, and Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire Under Sultan Selim III, 1789–1807* (Cambridge, MA, 1971).

developing state system in Europe. Similarly, an assumption about a cultural divide has long hampered a recognition that warfare is a great leveller of social behaviour, even though local cultures of course contribute powerfully to the organisation of – and negotiation around – the military ethos of any particular society.[8] John Keegan's *History of Warfare*, for example, argues strenuously for two styles of warfare, Eastern and Western, relegating the Ottomans once more to their tents in Istanbul, indolently allowing the centuries to roll by.[9] The issue of culture and military reform has been more intelligently approached in David Ralston's *Importing the European Army*, which suggests that the first stage of reform involved the assumption by local elites that imitating the technology of the victorious enemy was the key to success on the battlefield, without the recognition that a cultural revolution was also required to create the well-organised and disciplined troops of the new armies of Europe. The complete rationalisation of military planning is as closely tied to the secularisation of society as it is to the control of state finances.

In that context, a comparison between the two massive territorial empires of the period, Russian and Ottoman, is revealing. Similar environments, similar battlefronts, similar populations led to different and – in the Ottoman case, devastating – results. In both cases it is possible to analyse the economic strains imposed by warfare on large, agrarian societies, as well as the new centre–periphery alliances that emerged, a road to the centralised, Europeanised absolutist state of the latter-day Ottoman experience. Even though we still lack detailed knowledge of the Ottoman context, it is possible to examine the difficulties of and developments in military organisation with respect to the battlefield environments of the 1603–1838 period.

The arena of warfare, 1603–1838

It has often been claimed that the Ottomans were a one-front army with a two-front empire. In the period under discussion, they did indeed have two regular battlefronts, with a third being added by 1800, but that did not mean that mobilisation could not occur on other fronts, although absorption on one front could often lead to the neglect of another (and respite for local populations). Multiple theatres of war also account for the increasing Ottoman systematic reliance on and tolerance of semi-independent provincial lords, who managed such territories in the name of the sultan.

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8 John Guilmartin, 'Ideology and Conflict: The Wars of the Ottoman Empire, 1453–1606', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1988), 746.
9 John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York, 1993), pp. 39 and 182.

The first and most often visited arena was and remained the Danubian battlefront, as to the chief enemies initially they were Venetian and Austrian. By 1699 the relevant borders, with some minor give and take, were essentially fixed. Latterly, the loci of major campaigns against the chief enemy of the later 1700s and early 1800s, the Russians, became the mouth of the Danube and the northern shores of the Black Sea. The Danube and its tributaries deserve a monograph in and of themselves as the primal determinants of all warfare in the area. Moving troops across the vast expanses of this region was a constant preoccupation, where disease-inducing marshes and floods decimated troops and animals alike.[10] Major Ottoman military disasters of the period invariably included scenes of soldiers drowning in one river or another as they tried to escape a surprise attack by the enemy. The Ottomans were always adept at siege warfare, and remained so in this period. Once the Danube region had come to serve as the primary Ottoman border after 1700 its fortress system became the focus of siege warfare between the sultans and their enemies. Russian and Austrian military corridors and fortress systems were likewise developed in the period under discussion.[11] Once the Ottomans were forced to establish military headquarters on their own territory, south of the Danube, they experienced the lack of supplies and the resistance of hostile populations that characterised much of the campaigning of the eighteenth century. Quartering troops on home territory was a situation strenuously avoided by European commanders.

Distance to the front was another factor which influenced campaigning in both the Danubian arena and on the eastern frontiers, the second of the regions in which the Ottomans were forced to fight in the period under discussion. The Russians too were constantly plagued by the great difficulties of distance, and losses of 25 or even 50 per cent of all soldiers were not uncommon.[12] The enemy in the east was first the Safavids, Shiite Muslims, and then Nadir Shah, the Afghan leader who conquered Iran after the fall of the Safavid dynasty, followed by the Russians in the later period. Here the terrain was far more inhospitable than even the Danubian arena, parts of which after all

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10 John Stoye, *Marsigli's Europe, 1608–1730: Life and Times of Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, Soldier and Virtuoso* (New Haven, 1994); Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History* (Oxford, 2004).

11 Carol Belkin Stevens, *Soldiers on the Steppe: Army Reform and Social Change in Early Modern Russia* (Dekalb, 1995); Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The Military Border in Croatia 1740–1881: A Study of an Imperial Institution* (Chicago, 1966); Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1800* (Bloomington, 2002).

12 This includes plague, famine and desertion. John L. H. Keep's *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia 1462–1974* (Oxford, 1985) has no equivalent in the Ottoman context; no reliable statistics have yet been established.

served as the Ottoman bread basket. Nomadism played a significant role in the eastern context, as Tatar, Cossack and Kurdish bands all necessitated different techniques of warfare, where horse and cold steel were more effective than the sustained siege. Even Selim I (r. 1512–20) had had trouble convincing his troops of the need for wintering over at such distances, the janissaries proving unhappy with fighting fellow Muslims and with the prevailing style of slash-and-burn warfare, which inevitably crippled the supply systems. Logistics in this arena were paramount, and account for success in the mid-seventeenth-century retaking of Baghdad.[13]

A third frontier, at the very end of the period under discussion, was Egypt and the Hijaz. Here Muhammad Ali's threat, growing out of the French invasion of 1798, forced major reconsideration of the entire military and diplomatic system. Nomadism in the Hijaz potentially interfered with the lucrative caravan and pilgrimage trade, and initially the relationship between Muhammad Ali and Istanbul was positively affected by his ability to quell the Wahhabi rebellion and protect both the access of pilgrims to the holy cities and the transit trade. Egypt had long played the role of client, supplying troops to Ottoman campaigns elsewhere, and responsible for providing most of the annual subsidies accorded by Istanbul to Mecca.[14] By the end of our period, with the virtual independence of Muhammad Ali, Greater Syria and Palestine had become a buffer zone; until 1918 this became a place to play out both the internal and external challenges to the Ottomans, with a predictable impact on local populations and resources.

Ottoman military, circa *1600*

The wonder remains that the Ottomans survived the assaults on the territory and hegemony of their empire at all. While it is easy enough to argue that they were never in fact hegemonic in the period under study, operating as they did with a considerable network of clienteles and vassals, it is nevertheless impossible to write them off as an 'arrested civilization', as Toynbee would have it.[15] The answer lies to some degree in the Ottoman success at allowing for,

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13 Rudi Mathee, 'Unwalled Cities and Restless Nomads: Firearms and Artillery in Safavid Iran', in *Safavid Persia: The History and Politics of an Islamic Society*, ed. Charles Melville (London, 1996), pp. 389–416. Rhoads Murphey's telling of the 1639 Baghdad campaign is unparalleled: 'The Functioning of the Ottoman Army under Murad IV (1623–1639/1032–1049): Key to Understanding of the Relationship Between Center and Periphery', Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago (1979).

14 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge, 1997); Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517–1683* (London, 1994).

15 Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridged by D. C. Somervell (London, 1946), pp. 171–8.

without truly acknowledging, the access to power represented by the military organisation as it evolved. Until the introduction of modern-style ministries in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government was represented as the sultan's household, in an intricate system of patriarchal and patrimonial alliances. Included in the army on the march were not just the fighting men, but members of all the guilds of the empire, as part of their service to the war endeavour. The countryside, too, expected – and dreaded – to be mobilised: peasants provided manpower, food, transport, pack-animals and the like. One observer likened Süleyman I's (r. 1520–66) army to a wedding party, while another, 200 years later, complained that headquarters resembled a grand bazaar, with more camp followers than combatants.[16] Making war was simply part of the scenery of early modern empires, and military headquarters just another venue for the small entrepreneur.

At the beginning of the period under discussion, the traditional or Süleymanic military organisation was in the process of transition. The *devşirme* system still provided the manpower for the core of the janissaries, but increasingly that standing army was enlarged by the enlistment of provincials for whom enrolment meant attaining the privileges of the corps, particularly enlistment in the muster rolls (*esame*), an entitlement to janissary pay and benefits. Furthermore, while historians have insisted on the strict distinction between *timar*-holding *sipahi*s and janissaries, the blurring of the boundaries probably began far earlier than is generally conceded. The failure of the *timariot*s to appear or to perform adequately in the 1593–1606 Long War between Habsburgs and Ottomans, in part because of a decline in the monetary value of such assignments, triggered massive reform from the centre. Now erstwhile military fiefs were reassigned in large numbers to palace (and janissary) officials. This reform could well represent a belated official recognition of a trend already well under way. Quantitative data are hard to come by, as surviving statistics about the janissaries took into account only those stationed in the capital or posted to the numerous garrisons across the Ottoman territories, but not the *timariot*s. Inherent in the conflict and collusion of provincial janissary forces and local notables so representative of the Ottoman seventeenth- and eighteenth-century countryside we discern a competition for access to the lucrative tax-farming contracts by which the Ottomans gradually altered their revenue-generating process.[17]

16 Andrina Stiles, *The Ottoman Empire 1450–1700* (London, 1989), p. 72; Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700–1783* (Leiden, 1995), p. 137.
17 Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden, 1996); Ariel C. Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the*

Ottoman military historians still know very little about the myriad alternative countryside systems, which, when mobilised, brought thousands of cavalry and infantrymen to military headquarters for a particular campaign.[18] The introduction of firearms, resisted by the traditional forces – both janissary and *kapıkulu sipahi* cavalry, who found the cumbersome muskets and pistols undignified – meant the organising of alternative infantry groups, a process which brought about the use of militias, as in Europe, small bands of 500–1,000 men organised on the local level, as part of the taxation system, or by designated individuals, from provincial governors down.[19] Such groups go variously by the names of *sekban*, *sarıca* or *levend*, the latter term in particular reflecting the manpower source of these non-janissary soldiers, the term initially synonymous with strongman, bandit or vagrant. They make an appearance in this period, but the rapid acceleration of the use of *levend* regiments in the eighteenth century is one of the significant evolutionary aspects of the military system.[20]

The condition of the artillery is better known. Thanks to recent studies by V. J. Parry and Gábor Ágoston, it is now apparent that the combination of foreign technical advice and native production that characterised Mehmed II's triumph over Constantinople set the pattern for the later empire.[21] This, too, is comparable to the Russian experience, where it was not raw materials that were lacking as much as native expertise.[22] New campaign preparations invariably began with the repair and fortification of the garrison embattlements, a signal to neighbouring countries of Ottoman intent. Attention to and improvement of the artillery corps was a constant, with predictable moments of neglect, but with significant renewal from the early eighteenth century through the end of the period under discussion. Thus artillery came to be the military branch with which Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) could finally defeat the janissaries.[23]

Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State (Leiden, 2004). See also the contributions of Fikret Adanir (chapter 8), Linda Darling (chapter 6), Dina Khoury (chapter 7) and Bruce Masters (chapters 9 and 13) to the present volume.

18 Caroline Finkel, *The Administration of Warfare: The Ottoman Military Campaigns in Hungary, 1593–1606* (Vienna, 1988), p. 24.

19 Ibid., pp. 30–1.

20 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337; Virginia H. Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries? Mobilization for the 1768–1774 Russo-Ottoman War', *War in History* 5, 1 (1998), 23–36. See also the work by Gülsoy and İnbaşı in the bibliography.

21 V. J. Parry, 'Bārūd, iv. The Ottoman Empire', *EI2*; works by Gábor Ágoston listed in the bibliography.

22 Thomas Esper, 'Military Self-Sufficiency and Weapons Technology in Muscovite Russia', *Slavic Review* 28 (1969), 185–208.

23 Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600* (London, 1973), p. 83.

It is not necessarily the lack of interest in technology as much as the lack of corporatism and capital investment that distinguishes Ottoman from European warfare of the period. After the economic recovery of the mid-1700s had been nullified by recurrent wars with Russia by 1800, the empire was on the brink of bankruptcy.[24] While information about budgets and expenditures remains elusive, and may never be available with any degree of certainty, recent economic studies of the period between 1600 and 1840 have demonstrated that expenditures doubled during campaigns. Extractions from the countryside were increased accordingly, but other sources of revenue were tapped as well. Examples might include confiscation of wealthy estates, which continued until abolished by Mahmud II at the end of his reign, as well as stricter controls on the exports of much needed supplies, such as grain and the like. Here, as elsewhere, more micro-studies of revenue and supply systems for particular campaigns are needed for a greater understanding of Ottoman practice.[25]

Finkel's study of the 1593–1606 Habsburg–Ottoman struggle in Hungary is just such a micro-study, an account of the Ottoman military system in action. The Danubian borderlands remained the scene of cross-border skirmishes, but until 1590 the Ottomans were preoccupied on the eastern front in an attempt to establish what turned into an elusive hegemony over Azerbaijan, the Caucasus and parts of the eastern Crimea. Thereafter, attention returned to the Danube.[26] The principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and the territories of present-day Poland and Ukraine, served as frontier marches between Ottoman and Habsburg-held Hungary, where differences among Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant contributed to divisiveness just as much as the issue of Ottoman or Habsburg sovereignty. The conflicts and difficulties raised by this war are symptomatic of warfare in the area for at least the next hundred years. Border skirmishes between the Uskoks[27] and Bosnian militia led to significant Ottoman raids on Habsburg territory and a retaliation by the emperor who broke the treaty, and routed the Ottomans at Siska in 1593, a *casus belli* to which the Ottomans responded by declaring war that year. Ottoman troops were initially successful in 1593 and 1594, saving Estergom from an Austrian

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24 Mehmet Genç, 'L'Economie ottomane et la guerre au XVIIIe siècle', *Turcica* 27 (1995), 177–96, trans. from a Turkish version which appeared in *Yapıt* 49 (1984), 52–62; Şevket Pamuk, 'Money in the Ottoman Empire, 1326–1914', in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 947–80.

25 Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım ve değişim dönemi (XVIII.yy' dan Tanzimat'a mali tarih)* (Istanbul, 1986); Genç, 'L'Economie ottomane et la guerre'.

26 Finkel, *Administration*, p. 9.

27 Catherine W. Bracewell, *The Uskoks of Senj: Piracy, Bandits and Holy War in the Sixteenth Century Adriatic* (Ithaca, 1992).

attack and capturing the fortress of Györ (Yanik) further west, but the war continued for another twelve years, criss-crossing the Danube, and punctuated by successive captures and surrenders of many of the principal forts of the area.

The issue of contention continued to be the vassal territories of Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia, who turned to the Habsburgs for protection in this round of confrontations. In 1595 the Austrians regained the advantage, but a thrust of the entire Ottoman force in 1596, with the new sultan (Mehmed III, r. 1595–1603) at its head forced a major confrontation and success at Mezö-Keresztes. Warfare continued and by 1605, Wallachia (1599), Moldavia (1600) and Transylvania (1605) had rejoined Ottoman vassalage, favouring Ottoman chances for a satisfactory conclusion of events. That advantage was offset by the need to mount a campaign in the east against the Safavid Shah ʿAbbâs (d. 1629), and by a very considerable Anatolian rebellion of mercenaries, doubtless resulting from the strains of war.

The final 1606 treaty of Zsitva Török by which the Habsburgs conceded Kanija and Eger to the Ottomans and confirmed the sultan's possession of the strategic fortress at Estergom, represented minor gains for an effort which left both sides exhausted. Yet Ottoman reacquisition of control over the principalities, major suppliers of foodstuffs to Istanbul, formed an important achievement.[28]

The Long War (1593–1606) is of multifold significance to Ottoman military history. If the years of fighting against Persia are added to those of the war against the Habsburgs, the Ottomans were constantly in the field between 1579 and 1612, and in quite a few years were engaged on two fronts. Mercenary (Celali) revolts were exacerbated by the demobilising (and desertion) of Ottoman troops after Mezö-Keresztes. Some of the unemployed soldiers fled to Anatolia, joining revolts already in progress. In Istanbul itself there was a major confrontation between the janissaries and cavalry contingents in the service of the palace, ending with the latter's defeat in 1603. Further action was taken against the provincial Celali rebels in 1608, but uprisings of this nature, often snowballing into major threats to the dynasty, thereafter became endemic in many provinces.[29]

An interesting military development of the period was the recruitment of peasants first against the Celalis, and then as regiments of irregular infantrymen

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28 Finkel, *Administration*, p. 20.
29 Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca and London, 1994), *passim*.

(the *tüfenkendaz*) that were sent to the Austrian front.[30] Halil Inalcik has rehearsed the different socio-economic factors contributing to the emergence of these militias but, in the end, has highlighted the government's growing demand for irregular mercenaries as a principal cause. The collapse and impoverishment of the traditional *timariot* class in the years before and after 1600 obliged the Ottoman administration to adopt a wholesale decentralisation policy.[31] The new-style recruitment offered both a cheap solution to battlefront needs and control over countryside violence, thus establishing a practice also adopted by all pre-modern armies of Europe.

The janissaries continued to be a formidable fighting force in this period; their effective number probably hovered somewhere around 40,000.[32] The long years of unrest saw an increasing influence of janissary and palace factions on Ottoman affairs. The premature death of Osman II (r. 1618–22) at the hand of the janissaries inaugurated a long power vacuum at the centre, and another major revolt, that of Abaza Mehmed Paşa in eastern Anatolia, threatened to bring down the empire entirely. In 1623 Murad IV took the throne, at the greatest moment of crisis in the history of the empire to date. He was the fourth sultan in six years, and each accession had meant concessions and coronation bonuses to the janissary corps, with predictable results for the state treasury.

Traditionally the blame has been placed on factional rivalries at the Ottoman court, or on the competition between different military corps, as soldiers recruited by the 'levy of boys' (*devşirme*) opposed forces of Anatolian background; this supposedly often meant the converted Christian versus the native (Muslim) Turk.[33] The impact of battlefront needs has received less attention, and adds an interesting dimension to the historiography, when we consider that Osman II reputedly wished to draw on the militias described above to reform the regular army. When we compare Ottoman to Russian mobilisation practices for the late 1500s and early 1600s we observe striking similarities between the Celali rebellions and the events of the 'Time of

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30 Cengiz Orhonlu (ed.), *Telhisler (1597–1607)* (Istanbul, 1970), pp. 51–72, *passim*; Finkel, *Administration*, p. 37; Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı tarihinde levendler* (Istanbul, 1965); Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries?'.

31 Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', pp. 287 and 288.

32 Inalcik, 'Istanbul', *EI2*, p. 242, mentions a total of 37,000 janissaries (1609), 34,825 total *kapıkulu* after attempts at reform in 1672, *c*. 40,000 janissaries in the eighteenth century, although more than 160,000 claimed to be members of the corps countrywide.

33 A. H. Lybyer, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (Cambridge, MA, 1913).

Troubles' (1598–1613), prior to the consolidation of the Muscovite state under the Romanovs after 1613. Other events inviting comparison include the later reforms of Peter the Great, who eliminated the traditional *strel'tsy* musketeers in 1699, but whose new standing army was modelled on the long-standing practice of hiring substitute militias, and thereby circumventing traditional elites.[34] The major difference in military reform in Russia, of course, was that the troops so raised were conscripted from the serfs, whereas volunteerism, or mandatory village contributions, seem to have persisted far longer as methods of recruitment in the Ottoman context. Conscription only came in during the late 1700s, as a product of the reforms of Selim III. The Russian Pughachev rebellion, which began in 1773 among the Cossacks, Kalmyks and Bashkirs, but developed into a major challenge to the regime of Catherine II (r. 1762–96), could be seen as the Celali revolts of tsarist Russia – countryside resistance to the establishment of centralised order after a century of almost continuous recruitment for the armies of the south.[35]

John L. Keep argues for a pre-1800 Russian state order based on a credo of preserving and extending the true religion, Orthodox Christianity, rather than strict militarism.[36] Similarly, the use of the sacred banner of the Prophet Muhammad for the first time in the Ottoman campaign in Hungary (*c.* 1593) signalled an acknowledgement of the growing complementarity of Muslim religion (*din*) and Ottoman state (*devlet*), by which the Ottomans sought to bolster their legitimacy.[37] As the sultans' ability to expand – or even to defend – their borders grew weaker, the calls to jihad and its icon, the Prophet's banner, only grew in prominence. Many descriptions of latter-day routs focused on the protection and defence of this Ottoman emblem.[38]

Nowhere was the sultans' Muslim legitimacy more challenged than on the eastern frontier, where the Shiite Safavid dynasty (1501–1721), bolstered by the popularity of Shiism and antinomianism among local nomads, continually challenged Ottoman attempts at establishing orthodox Sunni Islam. A temporary respite on the northern border, as central Europe was embroiled in the Thirty Years War, allowed Murad IV to recapture Baghdad in 1638–9, the city remaining in Ottoman hands thereafter. Murphey's close study of records

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34 Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, pp. 97–102.

35 John Alexander, *Autocratic Politics in a National Crisis: The Imperial Russian Government and Pughachev's Revolt, 1773–1775* (Bloomington, 1969); Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, pp. 172–4.

36 Keep *Soldiers of the Tsar*, p. 1.   37 Finkel, *Administration*, p. 35.

38 John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna* (New York, 1964), p. 264; Aksan, *Ottoman Statesman*, p. 121.

and narratives concerning this campaign documents the mobilisation and supply system of the Ottoman military at mid-century. Contemporary critics saw clearly that the restoration of order relied entirely on the discipline and reform of the standing army.[39]

A military establishment organised around careful *devşirme* round-ups was no longer adequate to supply the manpower needs for the capital, far-flung provincial garrisons, and specialised auxiliary units such as the gunners (*topçu*s) and explosive experts. Recruitment then became a less regularised affair, with the untrained inflating the muster rolls, beginning a process of the 'fictionalisation' of the effective fighting forces which plagued all armies (and military historians) of pre-modern Europe. One estimate for this period suggests that one man in three on the payroll actually presented himself for duty, the pay for the remainder going into the pockets of regimental officers and bureaucrats.[40] The infiltration of the unworthy, lack of discipline and of leadership are the three leitmotifs of all critics of army organisation from the mid-seventeenth century forward.

The Ottomans had in place a system of taxes in cash and kind (*bedel-i nüzül* and *sürsat*), the former generally referring to regulated and taxed supplies, or their cash substitute (*bedel*), the latter to forced contributions brought to camps by which the government sought to guarantee that supplies reached the army. An elaborate system of state contractors, accountants and commissaries in way-stations and garrisons saw to the acquisition and shipment of supplies, kept the accounts and managed the difficult job of distributing the goods upon arrival. In addition, great care was taken to maintain the road systems; this was no less true in 1638 than during the time of Süleyman.[41]

The janissary rations were highly regulated, including clothing allotments and special funds for equipment. Individual regiments often had a provisions fund, contributed by the members themselves, which served the common good. The *timariot*s were expected to feed and outfit themselves, but were often given a grain ration, or its cash equivalent, at the beginning of a campaign.[42] A gratuity often preceded a major battle, and certainly rewarded the especially valorous afterwards. Complaints about the lateness or non-arrival of these

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39 Murphey, 'Functioning', p. 6; Douglas A. Howard, 'Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of "Decline" of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of Asian History* 22 (1988), 52–77; Virginia H. Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing 1768–1808', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25 (1993), 53–69.

40 Yaşar Yücel, *Kitâb-i müstetâb*, (Ankara, 1974), p. 16.

41 Murphey, 'Functioning', pp. 100–1.

42 Gilles Veinstein, 'L'Hivernage en campagne talon d'Achille du système militaire ottoman classique: à propose des *sipāhı* de Roumélie en 1559–1560', *Studia Islamica* 58 (1983), 109–48.

'fringe benefits' were used as excuses for failure to show up on the battlefield,[43] universal problems in all early modern military contexts.

The actual rations included, first and foremost, biscuit (*peksimed*). For the Baghdad campaign, almost 5,000,000 kilograms of biscuit were requisitioned, based on an assumed consumption of 700 grams a day for 80,000 men. Biscuit appears in the records for both the 1593–1606 Hungarian campaigns and for the 1768–74 Russo-Ottoman war, when some 22,400,000 kilograms were requisitioned in 1769.[44] The baking and shipment were privately contracted, or, more often, formed part of the taxation responsibilities of villagers throughout the empire. Of the over 200,000 sheep collected for the Baghdad campaign, 60 per cent were cash purchases, while the other 40 per cent was drawn from *sürsat*.[45] Meat rations of this quantity were a rarity on European battlefields.

With respect to the care and feeding of the standing army, much remains to be investigated, and even less is known about the feeding of the provincial troops. The verdict is still out, therefore, on the advantages and disadvantages to village and urban life as stimulated by campaigning on the frontiers. Descriptions from the nineteenth century of desolation, disorder, depredations and oppression are generally applied anachronistically to the previous two centuries, and have prevented us from forming a clearer picture of Ottoman 'middle-period' military life.

Ordnance accompanied the army, including gunpowder, shot and actual weapons, in a bewildering variety of size and standard; this resembled the deployment of artillery in western Europe, where standardisation also did not fully occur until the eighteenth century.[46] The largest piece in the Ottoman arsenal, the *balyemez* cannon, was hauled overland by twenty pairs of water buffalo, in addition to the transport costs for the cannonballs and gunpowder its use required.[47]

The Ottomans could hold their own regarding artillery and the siege at least until 1700. Nevertheless, the cost of lengthy campaigns, even if victorious, was high. Between 1660 and 1700 the Ottomans were deeply involved with the Christian powers of eastern Europe, concluding a twenty-year peace with the Habsburgs after the disastrous defeat at St Gotthard (Szentgotthárd) on the

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43 Murphey, 'Functioning', pp. 121–2; Finkel, *Administration*, pp. 169–72; also Virginia H. Aksan, 'Feeding the Ottoman Troops on the Danube, 1768–1774', *War and Society* 13 (1995), 1–14.
44 Murphey, 'Functioning', pp. 120–5; Finkel, *Administration*, pp. 169–72; see works by Aksan listed in the bibliography.
45 Murphey, 'Functioning', p. 132.
46 David Chandler, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Marlborough* (London, 1976), p. 142.
47 Murphey, 'Functioning', pp. 134–5.

Raab in 1664. In a contest with Russians, Poles and Cossacks for the Ukraine (1671–99) they briefly acquired the province of Podolia, while subduing the Venetians in the siege of Candia/Crete between 1645 and 1669.[48]

The last sustained Hungarian campaign, the Ottoman–Habsburg war of 1683–99, with its emblematic defeat at the second siege of Vienna in 1683, and another at Zenta in 1697, serves as a prime example of the considerable strengths of the Ottoman military system, as well as of its many limitations. Much of the battlefield upheaval is reflective of the struggle in the capital, as the austerity and successful reforms of the talented Köprülü family over the previous half century were dissipated by the ambitions of their successor, Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa (1676–83). Of all the Ottoman campaigns, this one has received perhaps the most attention, the most reliable study still being that of John Stoye, who adroitly notes that it was easier to control the more rebellious soldiers whenever a large army had been fielded for an imminent campaign.[49] This must have been a powerful argument with the Ottomans, who regularly chose war over peace. Figures on the Ottoman army at full strength remain unreliable, but a number of estimates survive. Marsigli estimated 30,000 janissaries and 155,000 provincial cavalry and infantry, a figure including *timariot*s, household militias and the Tatars.[50] The vanguard of the army, which arrived in Osijek in June of 1683, was composed of 3,000 janissaries, 500 *cebecis* (armourers), 20,000 cavalry and 8,000 Tatars, the latter particularly effective at raiding and harassing enemy troops. One estimate of supplies reckoned that 32,000 pounds of meat and 60,000 loaves of bread were required per day.[51] Moving those supplies in the marshes of the Danube and Drava required an intricate system of pontoons and bridges, a task at which the Ottomans apparently excelled.[52] They were joined in Osijek by Emre Thököly of Hungary, allied with the Ottomans after 1681.

The siege of Vienna, by which the Ottomans literally came within inches of breaching the formidable walls of the city, demonstrates the perseverance and talent of the Ottoman forces for sustained entrenchments and sieges. In the end, however, the timely arrival of the Poles from the rear, and the obstinacy of Kara Mustafa in failing to defend that rear, resulted in a rout of the entire army. Thereafter the failure to regroup and defend Estergom signalled

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48 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crisis and change, 1590–1699', in Inalcik and Quataert (eds.), *Economic and Social History*, pp. 411–636, at pp. 424–31.

49 Stoye, *Vienna*, p. 30; Cevat Üstün, *1683 Viyana seferi* (Ankara, 1941).

50 Luigi F. Marsigli, *Stato militare dell'Impèrio Ottomanno incremento e decremento del medesimo* (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1732), pp. 20–8.

51 Stoye, *Vienna*, pp. 20–2.   52 Ibid., p. 21.

to the Poles and Habsburgs the deep flaws in Ottoman military leadership and strategy, which continued to be predicated on two principles. The first was the political manoeuvring of clientele relationships among the empire's Christian vassal princes. The second was the refusal to share positions of military command with the very provincial groups now so essential to survival: these included countryside militias and their local masters, governors of sub-provinces (*sancak*s), tribal chieftains and the emerging provincial aristocracies.

Even so, the Holy League, by 1697 comprising Austria, Venice, Poland, the pope and Russia, was slow to take advantage of the evident weakness in the Ottoman command structure. These hesitations reflected mistrust and ineptitude in their own ranks, as well as possible new Western conflicts, which soon became apparent in the War of the Spanish Succession. The battle of Zenta was decisive, however, when outnumbered imperial forces routed the Ottomans, resulting in 30,000 Ottoman casualties out of an estimated total of 100,000, many of whom drowned while crossing the river Tizsa.[53] The 1699 Karlowitz treaty meant the end of Ottoman control over Hungary, recognised the equality of the European dynasties and inaugurated a new Ottoman approach to diplomacy. The new Ottoman–Austrian border, however temporary in the minds of Muslim theorists, was paced out along the Tizsa and Sava by Marsigli and İbrahim, Austrian- and Ottoman-appointed commissioners, respectively.[54]

Ottoman military, 1700–1838

In terms of micro-studies covering the sultans' campaigns, the 1700s comprise perhaps the most neglected of all Ottoman centuries. A long conflict between sultan and tsar resulted in a spiral of defeat for the sultan and a relentless southward march of the border. Yet these campaigns were punctuated with a few successes, just enough to have blinded Ottoman administrators to the necessity for overhauling outmoded fighting styles and cumbersome supply systems. Economically, the century is again a mixture of success and failure, its first half characterised by prosperity at least partially due to lengthy periods of peace. The four wars with Russia, starting in 1768 and ending in 1828, however, brought near bankruptcy at a time when investment in military technology was imperative. Nevertheless, at least one historian has acknowledged that eighteenth-century fiscal innovation was intensive enough to demonstrate that the Ottoman government was perfectly capable of 'moving with the

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53 Chandler, *Art of Warfare*, p. 302.   54 Stoye, *Marsigli's Europe*, pp. 170–91.

times'.[55] The reforms influencing military recruitment include the placing of tax collection in the hands of local men, and the concentration of both mobilisation and supply in many of the same officials, collectively known as *ayan*s or 'committees of notables'.[56] A further innovation regarding the military was the the *imdad-ı seferiye*, or campaign-assistance tax, which became a regular, annual imposition after 1718. The revenues of the *imdad* were assigned to local officials and inadvertently contributed to the ongoing empowerment of provincial grandees.[57]

A final, interesting development is the issuing of *esame*, the pay tickets of the janissary muster rolls, as promissory notes, which were sold and traded like securities: 400,000 of them may have circulated by the end of the century.[58] This figure never represented the actual number of 'active soldiers', who probably numbered no more than 10 per cent of the 400,000. Moreover, reform of the janissary corps became considerably more difficult, as the circulation of such pay tickets benefited the entire Ottoman administration. It is all the more remarkable that the agendas for reform that Selim III requested from his entourage in 1789 invariably included reform of the *esame* as an essential measure to recover control over the military.[59]

In terms of mobilisation, 1768 is a key date, marking the point at which recruitment of the *miri levendat* (state-financed infantry and cavalry regiments) in great numbers became a standard aspect of Ottoman campaigning, evolving into Selim III's Nizam-ı Cedid, or 'New Order' in the 1790s. Such provincial levies were raised by local magnates cum officials, but paid for from the central treasury, and distinguished both from the janissaries and the magnates' own household troops (*kapı halkı*).[60] One of the most interesting aspects of current research into eighteenth-century Ottoman history is the emerging consensus on the conflict and negotiation of grandee families over exactly these new sources of provincial wealth. A similar argument has been made for the reconciliation of monarchy and nobility as an essential component of the rise of French military power after 1650.[61]

A final word needs to be said about military reform and Ottoman obscurantism. When separated from Muslim ideological rhetoric of 'infidel

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55 Bruce McGowan, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699–1812', in Inalcik and Quataert (eds.), *Economic and Social History*, pp. 637–758, at p. 710.
56 Ibid., p. 659.   57 Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, pp. 53–8.
58 McGowan, 'Age of the Ayans', p. 716.
59 Shaw, *Between Old and New*; Enver Ziya Karal, 'Nizâm-ı Cedide dair lâyihalar', *Tarih Vesikaları* 1, 6 (1942), 414–25, 2 (1942/3), 104–11, 342–51, 424–32; also Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, p. 142.
60 Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries?'.
61 Black, *European Warfare*, pp. 88–92.

innovations', Ottoman pragmatism concerning the centrality of the artillery corps to the eighteenth-century battlefield becomes clear. From the reign of Mustafa III (1757–74) until the dissolution of the janissary corps in 1826, consistent attention was paid to the artillery corps, although it continued to suffer from under-investment. The cost of maintaining parallel armies, and a resistance to sharing power in ways which would consolidate investment around military technology, are far more cogent reasons for Ottoman failure to keep pace than religious fanaticism.

Significant campaigns, 1700–1838

With raw recruits, fractious elites, incompetent leadership and obsolete equipment the Ottomans faced Austrian and/or Russian troops on the Danube frontier in 1711, 1716–18, 1737–9, 1768–74, 1787–92, 1806–12 and 1828–9. Invariably, any successes by the Ottoman side are ascribed to luck – Austrian lack of central command and incompetence in leadership, Russian over-extension and distances from sources of supply – or to the difficulties involved in coalition warfare. Western European military historiography is dismissive of pre-Napoleonic warfare in general,[62] and making even shorter shrift of the Ottomans, who by that assessment never faced any significant enemies until Peter the Great reformed the Russian military system. More recently, an understanding of the societal costs of mobilising the countryside, and the direct and indirect impact of war on rural populations, has led to a re-appreciation of the relationship between the monopolisation of violence and the development and centralisation of the modern European state system.[63] Similar forces were at work in the Ottoman context as well, eroding sultanic legitimacy to a significant extent by the end of the period under discussion.

Peter the Great is credited with the creation of the modern Russian standing army, which confronted the Ottomans on the Pruth in July 1711. During his reign, there were 53 levies of 300,000 recruits, at the rate of 1 recruit per 20 households, lifetime sentences for the serfs.[64] By contrast, the Ottomans had begun to operate the *miri levendat* system, volunteerism was still very much in evidence, and participation was limited to a single campaign, renewable thereafter dependent upon the situation.[65] One estimate pits 260,000 Ottoman forces against the Russian 40,000, the former figure including the ubiquitous

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62 Ibid., p. 70.
63 Tilly, *Coercion*, *passim*; also Downing, *The Military Evolution*.
64 Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar*, pp. 103–7.
65 Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries?'.

100,000 cavalrymen, probably mostly Tatars. With a six against one ratio, small wonder that Peter the Great found himself surrounded and forced to surrender certain fortresses including Asow, which the Russians had conquered in 1696. This restoration of the line of fortresses extending from Belgrade eastwards to Asow satisfied Ottoman negotiators.[66]

However, the brief Venetian–Austrian–Ottoman war of 1716–18 resulted in a major defeat, as Eugene of Savoy, probably the most brilliant commander ever to face the Ottomans, succeeded in routing an army three times the strength of his own imperial Habsburg forces. In August 1717 he captured Belgrade, the linchpin of Ottoman European fortresses. Casualties for the Ottomans here, as throughout the century, were heavy, an estimated 20,000 Ottoman versus 5,400 imperial troops.[67] The 1718 treaty of Passarowitz added Serbia and part of Wallachia to Habsburg territory along with Belgrade, but the Ottomans recovered the Morea from the Venetians.

The Ottomans remained committed to siege warfare, and had consolidated the Danubian fortress line early in the century.[68] It is in the entrenched positions at the major fortresses that the janissaries excelled, and one of the reasons they so hated eastern campaigns, where the horse and sabre still ruled supreme. From 1723 to 1746, sporadic revolts and some extended campaigns occupied Ottoman troops in the Caucasus, in the never-ending struggle against the Safavids, the Afghan rulers of Iran and finally Nadir Shah (r. 1736–47). Russian imperial aims, namely the desire to subdue the Tatars and gain control of the Black Sea coast, were already apparent, but the difficulties of campaigning in truly hostile and distant territories defeated their efforts until the late 1700s. The Ottoman forces were successful in the 1720s, and signed an agreement with the Russians that gave them control over Georgia, Shirvan and Azerbaijan, while recognising Russian suzerainty in the Caspian provinces of the Caucasus.[69]

Nadir Shah and the Afghans upset the tenuous balance of power in Iran, however, forcing the Ottomans to mount another major campaign. This was the catalyst for the tumultuous Istanbul revolt of 1730, the Patrona Halil revolt, among the assembling army, a newly emerging coalition of dissatisfied soldiers and disenfranchised *ulema*, resentful of the excesses of the court of Ahmed III

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66 Chandler, *Art of Warfare*, p. 305. Necati Selim, *Prut [1711]* special issue of *Askeri Mecmua* (Istanbul, 1931) includes maps of the battlefields.
67 Chandler, *Art of Warfare*, p. 305.
68 McGowan, 'Age of the Ayans', p. 639; Rothenberg, *The Military Border*; Stevens, *Soldiers on the Steppe*.
69 Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1976–7), vol. I, pp. 238–46.

(r. 1703–30).[70] The revolt, generally viewed as a reaction to Westernisation by intransigent conservatives, could just as creditably be argued as exemplifying a significant social transformation driven by the exigencies and deprivations of warfare, much like the long reaction to Selim III at the end of the century.

By 1735, Nadir Shah controlled the Caucasus and had made peace with the Ottomans, who were meantime distracted by the western front once more. The extended diplomatic manoeuvring around the Shiite–Sunni tangle on the eastern frontier has recently been given some attention, as has the impact of these campaigns on local elites in Baghdad and Mosul, but the campaign histories have yet to be written.[71]

The 1736–9 Austro-Russian–Ottoman War illustrates in many ways the difficulties which the Ottomans now faced.[72] War was declared in May 1736, after a Russian ultimatum which denounced the Ottoman inability to control continuous Tatar raids in violation of the Pruth treaty. Russian successes at Asow (1736) and Ochakov (1737) were later reversed by stiff Ottoman resistance at Bender. Disease and logistical nightmares forced the Russian evacuation of the Crimea in 1738. Reputedly, 100,000 Russians out of 240,000 were lost in the extended campaigns.[73] As for the Ottomans, slow to mobilise, they struggled to keep control of the Danube fortresses, once the Austrians moved into Serbia; 1737 was pivotal, as Austrian and Ottoman fought over Niş and Bosnia. During 1738 and 1739, the Ottomans re-established the Danubian defence line by besieging Belgrade, even as the Russians crossed into Moldavia and captured Hotin in the summer of 1739. Austrian disarray, especially after the battle of Grocka (Hisarcık), and rising concern about protecting the western frontier drove the Habsburg ruler to sign a separate peace in September, abandoning both Belgrade and his Russian allies. The Russians, in fear of winter conditions and a renewed Ottoman campaign, were disappointed by the non-occurrence of an anticipated general uprising against the Ottomans, signing their own treaty in October 1739. The Danube and Sava were re-established as Austrian–Ottoman

70 Robert Olson, 'The Esnaf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730: A Realignment in Ottoman Politics', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 17 (1974), 329–44; Rifaʻat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984).

71 Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman–Persian Relations, 1718–1743* (Bloomington, 1975); see also works by Khoury, E. Tucker and Özoğlu listed in the bibliography.

72 Cevat Erbakan, *1736–39 Osmanlı–Rus ve Avusturya savaşları, Askeri Mecmua* special issue (Istanbul, 1938).

73 Lavender Cassels, *The Struggle for the Ottoman Empire 1717–1740* (London, 1966), p. 103; Black, *European Warfare*, p. 127.

boundaries. The Russians were forced to surrender Asow and abandon their own trade and warships in the Black Sea.

Recapturing Belgrade and Asow reinforced the Ottoman sense of superiority, masking the true state of their forces, the continual underinvestment in firepower, and the increasing tenuousness of border areas such as the principalities. Here loyalties of Christian and Muslim alike were determined by the survival strategies of lords and peasants, but Ottoman and Russian policies were also crucial. Mistrust of local rulers by the Ottomans after 1718 led to the appointment of governors from among the Phanariote Greek families of Istanbul, thereby exacerbating local disaffection. For the Ottomans, the principalities were first and foremost clients and vassals; for the Russians, in spite of much protestation about the protection of Orthodox brothers, the aim was always territorial expansion and hegemony. The victims were, in the long run, Poland, the Tatars and Cossacks, with Poland ceasing to exist, the Tatars becoming a significant exile community after 1783 when Catherine II annexed the Crimea, and the Cossacks, co-opted into the Ukraine, settled on what became new Russian lands. That was the legacy of 1739.

The long era of peace until 1768 meant that the Ottomans missed out on another round of military innovations on the battlefields of the Seven Years War of 1756–63, innovations which included the use of highly trained and disciplined regimental formations, mobile firepower with rapid-fire regiments and small-calibre cannons, and the use of the socket bayonet to counteract cavalry forces.[74] Russia was a full participant and eager student of the new tactics which Field Marshal Rumiantsev put to good use in the 1768–74 Russo-Turkish War.

In the 1770 war a single massive confrontation took place at Kartal (Kagul) just north of the Danube, when 40,000 Russian troops scattered between 100,000 and 150,000 Ottoman soldiers. The achievements of the Russian navy were astonishing as well: sailing from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, the fleet of Catherine II picked up some English admirals along the way, attacking and destroying the Ottoman navy at Çeşme near Izmir (1770). Before the end of the war, the Russians penetrated south of the Danube, hoping to end the war and capture Istanbul/Constantinople; the latter aim became part of the Orthodox rhetoric which Catherine II adroitly manipulated.[75]

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74 Charles de Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry; by the Prussian Major General of Hussars, Warnery: Translated Ed from the Original* (London, 1798).

75 Hugh Ragsdale, 'Evaluating the Russian Aggression: Catherine II and the Greek Project,' *Slavonic and East European Review* 66 (1988), 91–117; Hugh Ragsdale, 'Russian Projects of Conquest in the Eighteenth Century', in *Imperial Russian Foreign Policy*, ed. and trans. Hugh Ragsdale (Washington, DC, n.d.), pp. 75–102.

The Küçük Kaynarca treaty, signed in haste after the complete collapse of the Ottomans at Şumnu in late spring 1774, was the single most humiliating treaty the Ottomans had yet signed. The Russians gained ports on the Black Sea (Kilburun, Kerç and Yenikale), freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and Mediterranean, and could now claim the right to protect the interests of the Orthodox Christians of the empire. Much against their will the Crimean Tatars were declared independent, and the Ottomans had to pay a tremendous indemnity of 4,500,000 roubles.[76]

In addition to the carnage of the battlefield, the population suffered from war-induced riots, shortages and famines as well as disease – still a primary cause of death, both in Istanbul and the hinterlands: in 1786, a major outbreak is said to have killed one-third of the population of the city.[77] Disease also was a constant consideration in the Danubian theatre of war.[78]

While Ottoman statesmen were completely aware of the implications of the territorial concessions of the treaty, the Ottoman public was most incensed about the loss of the Tatars and their territory; after 1783 especially, when the Peninsula was unilaterally annexed by Catherine II, a vociferous Tatar exile voice was added to the discontents of Istanbul. This was the primary cause of several futile efforts to recapture northern Black Sea ports, and of the 1787–92 war. The campaigns of 1787–92, when the uneasy allies Austria and Russia once again faced the Ottomans on the Danube and Crimean littoral, ended in complete defeat of the Ottoman forces at Maçin in 1791, with the Austrians in Belgrade and the Russians in Bucharest. The grand vizier Koca Yusuf Paşa was based in Niş with 86,000 troops, 6,000 artillerymen and 300 cannons; 27,000 were stationed in Bosnia, 7,000 at Hotin, 40,000 at Ismail and 12,000 at Ochakov, while the Russians fielded 150,000: 80,000 on the eastern shore of the Bug, and 70,000 in Moldavia. There were an estimated 25,000 Ottoman casualties at Ochakov alone. While the actual figures vary, they do indicate two aspects of Ottoman Danubian strategy: deployment across considerable distances; and the concentration of forces in Bosnia and Bulgaria, the last-ditch defence of Edirne (Adrianople) and Istanbul.[79] There were separate treaties with Austria, at Sistova (August, 1791), which restored the status quo, and with Russia at Jassy in January 1792. The latter treaty recognised the Dniestr as the border and surrendered Ochakov, but otherwise reiterated the provisions of Küçük Kaynarca; this war had exemplified most

76 Aksan, *Ottoman Statesman*, p. 167.
77 Justin McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks* (London, 1997), p. 280.
78 S. D. Sheremetev and A. I. Viazemski, *Archiv kniazia Viazemskago. Kniaz' Andre Ivanovich Viazemskis* (Moscow, 1981), p. 8 (written in November 1774).
79 Michael Hochedlinger, *Austria's Wars of Emergence, 1683–1797* (London, 2003).

graphically the utter futility of the traditional warfare still perpetuated by the Ottomans.

Ottoman campaigning in the later 1700s was determined by the intractability of the janissary corps, which by this time probably numbered no more than 40,000 actives, and the increased use of countrywide mobilisation as an effective alternative; the latter provided perhaps 100,000 recruits in the 1768–74 war.[80] The janissaries still required their pay, drawn on the basis of the estimated 400,000 pay tickets then in circulation; the provincial militia (*levend*s) recruits were paid sign-on bonuses, six-month campaign wages and rations. These were financed by the central treasury, although theoretically supported by the local *imdad-ı seferiye*. Given limited productivity in agriculture and crafts, this was an expensive way of going to war. Sustaining it meant considerable underinvestment in other aspects of warfare, such as artillery. It also meant that each campaign required mobilising inactive forces, and adding completely raw recruits to assembling regiments.

The Tatar khan, who joined the 1768 campaigns with his horsemen, received incentives and pay for himself and his entourage, yet another heavy burden on the treasury. Supply systems had to be reactivated after the long period of peace, and the principalities and Bosnia, located near the borders, bore the heaviest load. However, biscuit was requisitioned from as far away as Crete and Egypt by state-appointed commissioners (*mübayaacı*) and local officials.[81] Collaboration and negotiation around different aspects of warfare had the unintended result of aggrandising the many gentry families, so evident in the local quarrels of the latter eighteenth century; but much more work is required to determine the real impact of the sustained and all-inclusive warfare of those years.

Three decades of futile campaigns had left the Ottoman state on the brink of bankruptcy, significantly impeding Selim III's attempts at the creation of an alternative corps, his Nizam-ı Cedid. Still, before the revolt which ended in his own downfall, some 22,700 troops and 1,600 officers had been conscripted and established in their new headquarters in the Selimiye barracks in Istanbul, organised and trained in the Western manner. Much of Selim III's reign was taken up with the problems resulting from Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, with considerable countryside revolts on all fronts, in pre-Napoleonic Egypt and the Hijaz, and also in significant sections of Serbia and Greece.[82]

With the French invasion of Alexandria, a new era of relations with Europe began, which in nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography reduced

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80 Aksan, 'Whatever Happened to the Janissaries?'.
81 Aksan, 'Feeding the Ottoman Troops'.
82 Shaw, *Between Old and New, passim*; McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks*, pp. 185–91.

the sultan and the empire to second-class players, waiting to be rescued by their imperial protectors: Russia, Britain and France. In fact, Mahmud II did call on Russia at the very end of our period to help save the Ottoman dynasty from Muhammad Ali and his son, İbrahim. These two founders of the Khedival dynasty of Egypt first had fought very ably for Mahmud II in the Morea before challenging him on his very doorstep. Due to the lack of monographs for the military historian, it is very difficult to write a history of the Ottoman forces after 1826, when Mahmud II eliminated the janissary corps. The process of reorganising the military has been largely ignored by Western and Turkish historians.[83] More is known of Muhammad Ali, whose astonishing conscription of Egyptian peasants, as much as 10 per cent of the eligible population at the peak of his military activities, has been studied with more care.[84]

The destruction of the janissaries (mid-June 1826) was possible because of the loyalty of both the Ottoman navy and of the artillery corps to the sultan. The elimination of the obsolete corps was also possible because Mahmud II cultivated a climate of opinion which enjoined change in the Muslim context, as exemplified in his own new troops, the 'Muallem asakir-i mansure-yi Muhammadiye' (the Trained Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad). He also worked very carefully to create a cadre of young bureaucrats committed to reform, such as Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the product of the scribal corps who served three times as foreign minister and six times as grand vizier in the reformed Ottoman administration (1837–9).[85]

The new troops Mahmud II stationed in Istanbul numbered 12,000 recruits, aged between 15 and 30 years, divided into 8 regiments and 12 companies each of musketeers and artillerymen. The *esame* system was replaced with accurate muster rolls, and barracks were built on the old sites of Davud Paşa, Levend and Üsküdar. Later, provincial regiments were added, the battalion became the basic unit, and the number of soldiers rose to 27,000. Reformed corps were also established in the provinces: thus a cavalry corps at Silistre on the Danube

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83 Önder Küçükerman, *Türk giyim sanayii tarihindeki ünlü fabrika 'Feshane' Defterdar fabrikası* (Istanbul, 1988), discusses military manufacturing and contains many pictures of the new troops and their uniforms. See also Mübahat Kütükoğlu, 'Sultan II. Mahmud devri yedek ordusu: Kedîf-i Asâkir-i Mansure,' *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12 (1981–2), 127–58, and Kemal Beydilli, *Türk bilim ve matbaacılık tarihinde mühendishâne, mühendishâne matbaası ve kütüphanesi* (Istanbul, 1995).

84 Most recently: Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, his Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge, 1997).

85 Shaw and Shaw, *History*, vol. II, pp. 20–7; Avigdor Levy, 'The Military Policy of Sultan Mahmud II, 1808–1839', Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University (1968); Geoffrey Goodwin, *The Janissaries* (London, 1994), chapter 10 should be used with great care.

was made up of Tatar, Turk and Cossack horsemen. An effort was made to unify artillery and infantry units, in the coordinated European manner, but equipment and discipline always lagged behind.[86]

Time was against Mahmud II and his reformers, however, as the crisis of dissolution of the empire engulfed any possibility of sustained training. It is this situation that led to the complete inability of the Ottoman forces to stop the better-trained and experienced conscripted army of Muhammad Ali at Konya in 1833, and drove the sultan to request the aid of Russia, even after two recent wars on the Danube, in 1806–12 and 1828–9. Both involved continued Russian aggression in the principalities; both exacerbated revolts already in progress against Ottoman (janissary) oppression; both were played out against the rivalries of the imperial powers during the Napoleonic era and after. The treaty of Bucharest in 1812 gave Bessarabia to the Russians, and returned Moldavia and Wallachia to Ottoman suzerainty, but inaugurated the Serbian struggle for independence. Here, the janissary troops who had failed to halt the Russians effectively served as a check on local provincial desires for autonomy, but not for long. Following the destruction of the Ottoman fleet at Navarino in 1827 by France and Britain, now determined to free beleaguered Greece, the second Russo-Ottoman war of the period was fought at both ends of the Black Sea. Given the fact that Mahmud II's army was in a process of reorganisation after 1826, the 1828 campaigns on the Danube could only go badly for the Ottomans. In the east, the Russians advanced as far as Kars. In 1829, they took both Erzurum in the east and Edirne in the west. With Istanbul in a panic, Mahmud II signed the treaty of Edirne, which gave the Russians control over the mouth of the Danube and large parts of the Caucasus.

Throughout this period military reforms continued. The army treasury, which swallowed most state revenues, became the central treasury after 1838, situated in the new ministry of finance. Prussian advisers were viewed as the least suspect; and Helmuth von Moltke along with several others, aided Mahmud II from 1833 to 1839. Mahmud II also created a national army reserve in the *redif* militia law of 1834, and by 1836 there were thirty-two battalions.[87] The new forces, created to restore Ottoman greatness, could, however, only serve to contain the dissolution of what remained of the Ottoman Empire. They thus battled extended uprisings in the Balkans from the 1790s to the 1830s and, from the 1830s, served in the Syrian provinces.[88]

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86 Shaw and Shaw, *History*, vol. II, pp. 23–5.   87 Ibid., pp. 41–5.
88 Helmuth Von Moltke, *Essays, Speeches and Memoirs*, vol. I (New York, 1893), p. 293, five small pieces originally published in the *Augsburger Allgemeinen Zeitung*, 1841–4.

Von Moltke commented elsewhere that what was required to modernise the empire was a generation of reformers of Muslim background; the role of outsiders could only be that of catalysts. As more recently stated, the creation of the new social group of reformers in the military schools led to the emergence of a 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie', and the conflict between the members of this group and the largely non-Muslim mercantile bourgeoisie was to lead to the demise of the empire.[89]

Concepts and tools of diplomacy, 1603–1838

Fluctuating borders, besieged fortresses, disrupted agriculture and dislocated and rebellious populations are the realities of early modern warfare, especially acute in the Ottoman Empire after 1700. More elusive is the corrosive impact the accumulating losses must have had on the legitimacy of the dynasty – especially given its status as a Muslim empire in a permanent state of warfare, real or imaginary, against the infidel, exemplified in the often-repeated formulas 'ever-expanding frontier' and 'ever-victorious army'.[90] No permanent peace was possible, in so far as it was ever possible, when the *shari'a* mandated that all agreements with non-Muslims were merely temporary truces. This in part accounts for the Ottoman maintenance of wide frontier zones for far longer than the Christian states of Europe, a practice changing rapidly in the period under discussion.[91]

The Ottomans merged Muslim with Central Asian notions of empire and world domination in a potent ideological mix which worked in their favour until 1683 at Vienna, when a coalition of European powers checked what had seemed like the inevitable Ottoman march west. The 1699 treaty of Karlowitz forced a transition in Ottoman diplomatic strategies from dictation to negotiation with equals, and the gradual rationalisation of diplomatic relations on European terms. In order to do so, the Ottomans had to argue that nothing had changed, for as Abou-El-Haj has so acutely noted, to do otherwise would have irremediably damaged the legitimacy of Ottoman rule.[92] While protesting all the way, and maintaining the fiction of the dynasty 'stretching

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89 Ibid., p. 272; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (Oxford and New York, 1996), p. 44.

90 Aksan, 'Ottoman Political Writing'; Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago, 1988), *passim*.

91 Rothenberg, *The Military Border*; William McNeill, *Europe's Steppe Frontier, 1500–1800* (Chicago, 1964).

92 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'Ottoman Attitudes Towards Peace-Making: The Karlowitz Case', *Der Islam* 51 (1974), 131–7, p. 136.

into eternity',[93] the Ottomans adjusted to the new environment, and became tenacious negotiators. Translation from and into Ottoman Turkish provided frequent opportunities for the subversions of meanings.[94] Ottoman preference for orality – that is, that the spoken agreement might actually be more authoritative than over the written – has been less considered.[95] Perhaps more importantly, capitulations became a regular aspect of treaty negotiations, permanent and far more comprehensive after 1740, allowing one historian to argue that diplomatic reciprocity only became a necessity once the economic balance had shifted in Europe's favour.[96]

The eighteenth century is characterised by two significant developments in Ottoman diplomacy: the bureaucratisation of foreign affairs in the scribal bureaucracy; and increasing contacts with Europe, arguably out of necessity. However, the latter were also determined by Ottoman foreign policy in European capitals, as exemplified by Selim III's first permanent embassies after 1793. Many factors militated against the travels of Ottoman subjects in Europe, for the sultans' representatives were often subjected to humiliating quarantine conditions, which were not introduced in Ottoman territory until the nineteenth century. Second, contrary to the Ottoman custom, Ottoman ambassadors abroad were generally not supported by the court they were visiting, leading many to complain about the parsimony of their hosts. They conducted negotiations through mediators, the much-maligned dragomans, as learning French only became part of diplomatic training under Mahmud II.[97] Cultural restrictions, especially religious dietary and prayer obligations, were equally a problem, as they remain today. Still, of the thirty-four surviving reports of embassies of eighteenth-century diplomats, only eight do *not* deal with Europe.[98]

Istanbul remained the essential centre of Ottoman and European diplomatic activity. The post was considered a hardship, and European dispatches are full of tales of financial woes and endless ceremonials and humiliations to which

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93 Ibid., p. 136.

94 Roderic Davison, 'The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca: A Note on its Italian Text', *International History Review* 10 (1988), 611–20.

95 Abou-El-Haj, 'Ottoman Attitudes', p. 134.

96 Thomas Naff, 'Ottoman Diplomatic Relations with Europe in the Eighteenth Century: Patterns and Trends', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Cardondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 88–107, esp. p. 92.

97 Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York, 1982), *passim*.

98 Aksan, *Ottoman Statesman*, pp. xvii, 34–46. The only systematic list of all Ottoman embassies is the flawed and incomplete *Osmanlı sefirleri ve sefaretnameleri* (Ankara, 1968) by Faik Reşit Unat.

the representatives were treated.[99] Until the early nineteenth century, the representatives of foreign powers were considered the legitimate hostages of their governments, and frequently locked up in the Seven Towers fortress of Istanbul as a signal that hostilities were about to begin. Behind the posturing and cacophony, the equalisation and later subjugation of the Ottomans continued, as 'the terror of Europe' of the 1650s evolved into the 'sick man' of the 1850s. For purposes of this discussion, the periods bounded by the treaties of Karlowitz and Belgrade (1699–1740), and those of Küçük Kaynarca and Balta Limanı (1774–1838) will be used to illustrate some aspects of the passage outlined above.

The year 1698 was notable for a number of changes in Ottoman strategy: first, Grand Vizier Amcazade Hüseyin Köprülü indicated a desire to pursue peace on the basis of *uti possidetis*, which after the disaster at Zenta and Eugene of Savoy's penetration of Bosnia meant a considerable concession of territory to Austria. Second, the English ambassador, Paget, was drawn in as mediator, a role that England would play throughout the eighteenth century. Third, a bureaucrat was placed in charge of negotiations instead of the military men *in situ*; this signalled the emergence of a staff specialising in foreign relations, one of the significant trends of the century. A conference was finally organised at Karlowitz, with Anglo-Dutch mediation, and Ottoman representation by Plenipotentiary Rami Efendi, an appointee from the new generation of diplomats intent on pursuing peace, and Alexander Mavrocordato, chief interpreter. The first meetings took place in a capacious Ottoman tent (mid-November 1698). By late January 1699, the Ottoman–Habsburg treaty had been signed, which ceded Hungary and Transylvania to the Habsburgs, Podolia to Poland and the Morea to Venice, but maintained the Ottoman province of Timişoara, slightly enlarged.[100] Thus the definition of the frontiers with Europe, and the transition to reciprocal diplomacy, had begun.

The period between 1699 and 1740 continued that trend, punctuated by the brief confrontation with Peter the Great on the Pruth in 1711 and the war with Venice and Austria ending in the treaty of Passarowitz in July 1718. The former was complicated by Charles XII of Sweden and his bid for power on the northern frontier of Russia, and was not finally settled until 1713; the latter saw the loss of Belgrade to the Austrians. In Istanbul's factional politics and revolts, caused in very large measure by mobilisation and diplomatic

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99 Cassels, *Struggle*, p. 67 n. 13, p. 211; Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, 'XVIII. yüzyılda Osmanlı devletinde fevkalâde elçilerin ağırlanması', *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları* 27 (1989), 199–231.
100 Stoye, *Marsigli's Europe*, pp. 164–82, *passim*; Abou-El-Haj, 'Ottoman Attitudes', pp. 136–7.

intrigue, it is possible to see the emergence of a peace party, and a call for the rationalisation of warfare and negotiations, especially during the vizierate of Damad Ibrahim Paşa (1718–30), adviser to Ahmed III (r. 1703–30). British and Dutch mediation continued, as it would throughout the century. The reign of Ahmed III is important for Damad Ibrahim's significant diplomatic initiatives, especially the embassy of Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi, formerly one of the plenipotentiaries for the Ottomans during the Passarowitz negotiations. His investigative embassy to Paris in 1720–1 is symbolic of the new age of Ottoman and European diplomacy.[101] Of equal note was the very considerable effort to build and rebuild the fortresses along the Habsburg and Russian borders, indicative of a new defensive outlook from behind the increasingly 'permanent' frontier.[102]

Recovery of the Morea was achieved in the Passarowitz treaty; recovery of Belgrade was the strategic and diplomatic triumph of the 1736–9 Russo-Austrian–Ottoman war. Once again, the office of the *reis efendi*, or chief scribe, which increasingly proved to be the springboard for the grand vizierate, provided the plenipotentiaries, in this case, the *reis* Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi, and the later famous Koca Ragıb Paşa. Both had gained experience during long negotiations with Nadir Shah of Persia, in the endless round of struggle over the empire's eastern borders. A temporary peace had been drawn up in 1736, the Ottomans anticipating a campaign with Russia, and Nadir Shah, as noted, was diverted to India.[103]

Ottoman success at regaining Belgrade has been attributed to French ambassador Villeneuve, who acted here as chief mediator. Ottoman tenacity and manipulation of the distrust among their – supposedly allied – opponents is the dominant impression, even as Ottoman officials themselves were at the mercy of court intrigues and 'public opinion' in Istanbul.[104] The Ottomans insisted on the return of Belgrade, which they achieved, and less realistically on the destruction of Asow, the two fortresses strategically located at the western and eastern extremes of their defensive corridor. Villeneuve's reward was the renewal of the French capitulations by the Ottomans in 1740.[105] Throughout, the Ottomans argued for the dual application of scripture and reason to the proceedings, a first according to witnesses, and the Russians pressed the claim that they were as yet denied, but which would become a reality by the

101 Fatma Müge Göçek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford and New York, 1987).
102 Shaw and Shaw, *History*, vol. I, p. 243.
103 Ibid., pp. 238–46, *passim*.   104 Cassels, *Struggle*, pp. 135, 141–3, 169.
105 Compare the chapter by Edhem Eldem (chapter 14 in this volume).

end of the century: surrender of Kuban and the Crimea as well as free passage in the Black Sea.[106]

The period intervening between 1740 and 1768 was an astonishing era of peace in Ottoman territories, and an attempt to establish new alliances, notably with the Prussia of Frederick the Great, in a lengthy series of negotiations that ended only in a capitulatory treaty in 1761. As Beydilli has demonstrated, the caution and perspicacity of Grand Vizier Koca Ragıb (1757–63) led the Ottomans to maintain a pacifist stance, even as revolutions in European diplomacy such as the Franco-Austrian alliance of 1756 affected Istanbul diplomatic circles.[107] Played out against European absorption in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–8) and the Seven Years War (1756–63), Ottoman diplomatic endeavours are generally sketched as part of Frederick the Great's larger theatre of diplomatic feint and parry. An earlier offer by Mahmud I (r. 1730–54) to mediate in the War of Austrian Succession, however, is a further indication of new strategies on the part of the Ottomans, although ignored by European diplomats.[108]

The transition from expanding to fixed and finally to shrinking borders had an effect on internal balances of power, and forced considerable innovation on the part of the Ottoman house, which conceded control over countryside wealth and influence, but steadfastly refused to share power in Istanbul. As the dominance of the new-style foreign affairs and its officials eclipsed the power of *ulema* and janissary alike, there were spates of unrest in the capital. Absorption in this kind of realignment diverted attention, and finances, from much-needed military reform.

For our purposes 1774–1838 represents the final phase of the Europeanisation of Ottoman diplomacy. The treaty of Küçük Kaynarca has been perhaps justifiably scrutinised as the inaugural document of the Eastern Question, although clearly the Russian agenda was in the air much earlier. The unquestionable success of Catherine II's army under General Rumiantsev gave the demands of the battlefield the backing they had lacked in the earlier period, however, and forced the humiliating treaty on the Ottomans. Clearly the Ottomans knew it, as initial attempts to stop a costly war dragged on in negotiations for over three years in two phases (1771–3): first with Prussian and Austrian mediation (1771–2),

106 Robert W. Olson, 'The Patrona Halil Rebellion and Ottoman–Persian Wars and Eighteenth Century Historiography', in *Turkic Culture: Continuity and Change*, ed. Sabri M. Akural (Bloomington, 1987), pp. 75–82.

107 Kemal Beydilli, *Büyük Friedrich ve Osmanlılar: XVIII yüzyılda Osmanlı–Prusya münasebetleri* (Istanbul, 1985).

108 Virginia H. Aksan, 'Ottoman–French Relations 1738–1768', in *Studies on Ottoman Diplomatic History*, ed. Sinan Kuneralp (Istanbul, 1987), pp. 41–58 at pp. 50–2.

which was refused outright by the Russians; and then direct Russo-Ottoman meetings from 1772 to 1773.

The negotiations broke down over the question of Tatar independence, over the two fortresses of Kerç and Yenikale, and free navigation in the Black Sea and the Bosporus. Yet in the end the Ottomans, whose army fell completely apart in the spring of 1774, were forced to accept all these conditions. Both sides invoked their rights over their own co-religionists, articles which have since been the subject of long debate, as the Russians would continue to press their right to 'protect' the Orthodox citizens of Ottoman territories well into the nineteenth century.[109] The Tatar question was only settled by Catherine II's annexation of the Crimea in 1783, and not truly accepted by Ottoman diplomats and the public until the treaty of Jassy in 1792, which ceded more territory to the Russians, confirmed the annexation, and otherwise reiterated the clauses of Küçük Kaynarca.

The period of 1798–1838 is perhaps the most tumultuous of all in the long history of the Ottoman house. Discussions of the diplomacy of the period are invariably driven by the Eastern Question paradigm, a historiographical cliché so familiar that it will be avoided here in an effort to assert the Ottoman point of view. Reform of the financial and military system was played out against desperate economic conditions, and against formidable internal challenges both in the Balkans and the Arab provinces. In certain regions this latter drama unfolded largely without European intervention. However, the need to combat Muhammad Ali's challenge to the survival of the Ottomans served as excuse to the Great Powers to establish themselves in territories they coveted, but were unwilling or unable to annex outright.

Selim III began the reform of the military in 1793, a process which was completed by Mahmud II in 1826, when he eliminated the janissary corps. In a sense, the latter's destruction signalled the end of dynastic rule in its long-familiar form, for the next stage involved the inauguration of European-style bureaucracies and administration. This, however, led to a complete overturning of the fragile social order, inequitable and unjust as it had become. That essential dilemma was spelled out on the streets by the 'fanatics', the displaced and disenfranchised Muslims, who rebelled against the 'innovations of the infidels'.

The treaty of Bucharest in 1812, ending a further round of Russo-Ottoman confrontation, illustrates another trend of the era, namely the blending of international diplomacy and the emergence of nation-states such as Serbia,

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109 Aksan, *Ottoman Statesman*, pp. 163–7; Roderic Davison, 'Russian Skill and Turkish Imbecility: The Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji Reconsidered', *Slavic Review* 35 (1976), 463–83.

later Greece, and finally Bulgaria. Adroit exploitation of the international context by both nationalist groups and the Ottomans themselves should not be discounted in the Serbian context, and the same applies to the occasional Ottoman ability to regroup and recentralise, even in this transitional period. Regional histories have tended to obscure the persistence of 'Ottomanism' as a countervailing force, preferring the nationalist narrative over the transitional one. Serbia finally became autonomous in the treaty of Edirne in 1829, at a moment when the Russians stood poised to enter Istanbul.

From 1829 to his death in 1839, Mahmud II was indeed struggling to keep the empire intact, establishing a new military order and manipulating the international powers. This collusion pulled France and Great Britain into the mix more intensely than before. Mahmud II created his own nemesis in Muhammad Ali of Egypt and his son, Ibrahim, by calling on their much-needed military skills against the Greek revolt in the Morea. He then had to call on Russia to help defend Anatolia against the threat of the upstart, as the new Ottoman army was as yet unprepared to face the modernised troops of Muhammad Ali. On each occasion, Mahmud II and his successor, Abdülmecid I (r. 1839–61), conceded more of Ottoman sovereignty to international claims, most notably in the treaty of Balta Limanı, when the British acquired free trading rights in all Ottoman territories. The Egyptian question was finally resolved in the treaty of London of 1840, which recognised the hereditary rights of Muhammad Ali, now known as the Khedive, and the Straits Convention of 1841, which closed the Black Sea and Straits to foreign warships, temporarily equalising the balance of power in the eastern Mediterranean.

Whether or not one agrees with the trajectory of progress assumed by Western historiography, there is little doubt that adaptation of Western systems of violence and discipline in the Ottoman case compromised the basis of rule. Reform was costly, required the rationalisation of structures of finance and administration alike and ultimately meant the permanent indebtedness of the empire, inescapable by the end of the Crimean War. It also meant the granting of equality of citizenship, taxation and conscription, especially in the 1839 and 1856 edicts. Generally the latter were attributed to foreign influence, as dictated by Ottoman military and financial collapse, but they were just as genuinely desired by new generations of the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' described above.[110] Unquestionably, the Tanzimat period inaugurated the new European-style absolutism of the empire, but it was preceded by a hundred-year struggle of the Ottoman dynasty and its affiliated households to preserve

110 Lewis, *Muslim Discovery*.

the old order as recast to recognise the new balance of power between centre and periphery.

Political and social effects of military defeat

Many of the political and social effects of continuous defeat on the Ottoman population have already been alluded to in the previous discussion. The Danubian frontier saw a full campaign at least once a decade, if not more frequently; moreover, the Ottoman–Iranian frontier, pacified between 1639 and the early 1700s, was nonetheless never truly stable, particularly after 1699, when Russia threatened from the north. In addition, by 1800 the Syrian–Egyptian corridor also became frontier land, punctuated by frequent large rebellions, and later by wars between the Ottoman sultan and his rebellious commander Muhammad Ali. As a result the populations in the territories described faced numerous dangers and uncertainties.

Equally, the cycle of indebtedness that larger and larger campaigns engendered in the early modern world has been well documented in both West and East. Polities that learned to harness the forces of warfare through the development of systems which rewarded large investors with considerable profits, whether in military technology, conscription or supply, were the survivors of the large confrontations of eighteenth-century Europe. This applied notably to the English, the French and the newly emerging Prussians, but not to the Ottomans or the Austrians, nor, in the final analysis, the Russians.

Violence, too, had its own rhythms in early modern absolutisms, as dynasties struggled to balance internal and external violence by creating armies out of the landless and unemployed. The Ottoman patrimonial state formed a prime example of this dynamic, rewarding and punishing at will while keeping the revolving door open for future coalitions. This state refused the amassing of wealth among its taxpayers, and also the development of corporatism that would truly have challenged its dominion. A coalition did make that challenge, when Selim III's overthrow and Mahmud II's accession to the throne (1807–8) required a compromise with provincial notables, tenuous though it may have been.[111]

How does one account for the state appointees who turned rebels, as Muhammad Ali did? Or how evaluate the case of Kahraman Paşa, commander of Albanian troops in the same war, who was released from prison to bring those troops to the front, and then accused of disruption and desertion

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111 Halil İnalcık, 'Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayûnu', *Belleten* 28 (1964), 603–22.

of the battlefield, and summarily executed?[112] The exigencies of manning the fortresses and fields of battle, which should have broadened the Ottoman base of rule, did so only on very temporary, tenuous grounds. They produced the small militias, with local power bases, whose extractions of countryside produce and wealth, legal or illegal, were the only available expression of power. The pattern repeats itself over and over again in the Ottoman countryside, as indicated by new research, especially in the *shari'a* court records. Warfare as one of the primary stimulants of local economies, however, remains under-emphasised even in the new regional histories that are emerging.

Grain production and distribution can serve as an example of the problem. Its importance to the military endeavour cannot be overstated, as it was the one staple which all early modern armies required, for men and horse alike, and the potential for war profiteering and black marketing must simply have been enormous. An army of 60,000 men, with wagoners, drovers, craftsmen and other such personnel, required 90,000 kilograms of bread per day.[113] For the 1768–74 war the record is clear: a catalogue of hoarding, adulterating and profiteering, but equally of supplying, shipping and storing grains or hard tack – in fortress warehouses, in particular, as well as along the route to the battlefields, and on board ship. This meant considerable control over harvests, as evidenced in the archives in Istanbul.[114]

Two things ought to be noted: first of all, Ottoman officials generally had the welfare of the individual soldier in mind, however abstractly, and bent the taxation rules accordingly; and second, military supply was another route to wealth in the countryside, often but not always in the hands of the local officials cum military men described above. That is neither to deny the oppression and forced extraction that was a constant of latter campaigns, nor the alienation of large parts of the population. It is simply to suggest that there were beneficiaries as well. Who they were and how they related to the state is still very little known.

Attention to reform of the military was usually driven by setbacks on the battlefield, no less a causal factor in the Ottoman Empire than in Europe.

112 Virginia H. Aksan, 'Mutiny and the Eighteenth Century Ottoman Army', *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 22, 1 (1998), 116–25.

113 G. Perjes, 'Army Provisioning, Logistics and Strategy in the Second Half of the 17th Century', *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16 (1970), 1–51, p. 4.

114 Aksan, 'Feeding the Ottoman Troops'; Lütfi Güçer, *XVI.–XVII. asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda hububat meselesi ve hububattan alınan vergiler* (Istanbul, 1964); Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800* (Cambridge, 1981); Veinstein, 'L'Hivernage'; Salih Aynural, *İstanbul değirmenleri ve fırınları, zahire ticareti* (Istanbul, 2001).

The sultans and grand viziers of the 1600s and 1700s consistently sustained an artillery corps, on the one hand, and relied on foreign advisers, military renegades and technicians, on the other. The depth and breadth of reform, whether of the janissaries or of their auxiliary corps, was limited by the gradual erosion of financial stability, and the resultant underinvestment in military technology. As we have seen, the Ottoman dynasty preferred not to broaden its financial base by allowing wealthy subjects to invest in the military endeavour on a scale comparable to that observed in early modern Europe; for that would have involved a sharing of power. The Ottomans had ancient taxation privileges that they continued to exploit and manipulate in innovative ways, and which populations resented, but saw as the right of the dynasty. To a degree this practice protected the individual peasant family and the village community from would-be aristocracies. European monarchs, by contrast, were forced to impose taxation on unwilling populations, which required the creation of new kinds of privileged classes, whose members both invested in and benefited from collusion with their rulers.

Only when it was no longer profitable – financially or psychologically – to go to war, either as an individual soldier or, for example, as a local militia, guild, or even the imperial army itself, do we observe a realistic reassessment of Ottoman state ideology, and a challenge to the iconography of the dynasty and its pillars, the janissaries. Arguments can be made in favour of earlier dates, but the true psychological dilemma for the masses of Muslims began with the loss of the Crimea and the Tatars (1774), part of a worldwide dissolution of Muslim power in general. It is no small coincidence that non-Muslim religious identities, in their new nationalist guise, asserted themselves simultaneously, abetted by the ambitions of the Russians.

When and how the elites of the empire, religious or bureaucratic, began to articulate reform agendas has long been a contentious issue. It is generally agreed that bureaucrats criticising the government were part of the Ottoman system from the sixteenth century onward. But the particular 'golden age' rhetoric used by Ottoman historians masked the various readings of contemporary malaise which have survived until the present. The verdict is still awaited as to when Ottoman critics recognised the danger – not just the obvious one of defeat, but the more substantial challenge to a whole way of life. While new evidence continues to emerge, the parameters and chronological boundaries of an Ottoman reform agenda remain unsatisfactorily articulated.[115]

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115 Aksan, *Ottoman Statesman*; Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Hajj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991); Beydilli, *Mühendishâne.*

The Balta Limanı treaty of 1838 is an appropriate end to this study, and to the present volume, as it represented the complete capitulation of the dynasty to Europeanisation in all of its cultural dimensions. It could easily be argued that this was in fact the end of the Ottoman Empire. In terms of military reform, it is worth remembering that the transition from patrimonial, Central Asian and Muslim dynastic absolutism to its European-style counterpart occurred in the years 1789 to 1839 or, more realistically, in 1856. This was less than half the time it took for Russia to make a similar transition, from Peter the Great through the reign of Catherine II, and a quarter of the time that European states experienced passing through the long military revolution from 1550 to 1750. In both the Russian and Ottoman Empires, the effects were catastrophic, as entire populations rose to resist the new controls over their lives, most notably in the Russian Pughachev rebellion (1773–4). Similar events occurred in the lands under Ottoman control, although less apparent due to a multiplicity of agendas.

Certainly we do not wish to exclude other factors, i. e. Great Power politics, religious intransigence and nationalism, which to date have dominated Ottoman historiography. However, we do wish to argue the contribution of internal dynamics to the military history of the empire between 1600 and 1800, as has been similarly observed for agrarian societies in general. Militarism, as argued by Michael Mann, 'has not always been merely destructive or parasitic', but has driven social and economic development, either because the subjects have been forced by violence to cooperate or else because there has been a 'normative pacification' through ideology.[116] However one wishes to define 'Ottomanism', it is the view of the present author that throughout our period this conceptualisation of state and society continued to further social cohesion. This was in fact a '*transcendent* vision of social authority', or an 'immanent morale' of the imperial ruling class, potent until a time when the fiction of military superiority could no longer be sustained.[117] The reforms of Osman II, Murad IV, Ahmed III, Mustafa III and even Selim III renegotiated the contract between ruler and ruled in a loosely maintained federation; but those of Mahmud II redefined centralised rule and the very basis of the social structure, thus breaking the bonds forever.[118]

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116 Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1986–93), vol. I, p. 519.
117 Ibid., pp. 519–20.
118 Many of the subjects discussed here are more fully developed in the author's forthcoming 'Ottoman Wars: An Empire Besieged 1700–1870' (London, 2007).

6

Public finances: the role of
the Ottoman centre

LINDA T. DARLING

In the post-classical period, the Ottoman central finance department's primary role changed from supplying the household of the sultan to paying the military forces. The transformation of the army from a force of mounted bowmen with tax assignments (*timar*s) to one of foot-soldiers with firearms moved the major burden of military support from the in-kind to the cash portion of the taxation system and put tremendous demands on the Ottoman budget. Even during the sixteenth century the number of people salaried by the state grew from 41,000 to 91,000,[1] and during the seventeenth century it increased again; in 1630 military wages formed 77 per cent of the Ottoman budget, and in 1670 62.5 per cent.[2] These demands were exacerbated by the price revolution of the sixteenth century and subsequent coinage devaluations.[3] Since the military received quarterly wages, every three months the government had to hand out massive amounts of silver coin. But most taxes were paid on an annual basis, and because of the discrepancy between the solar and lunar calendars, every thirty-three years there was a lunar year in which payments had to be made but no taxes were assessed; in times of financial difficulty the resulting deficits were carried over from year to year.[4] Moreover, many taxes were traditionally paid in kind. In the first half of the seventeenth century the finance department faced and met the challenge of altering the taxation system to a cash basis, although it was not able to solve the deficit problem until the eighteenth century.

1 Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, 2 vols. (London, 1957), vol. I, pt. 2, p. 25.
2 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, '1070–1071 (1660–1661) tarihli Osmanlı bütçesi ve bir mukayese', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 17 (1955/6), 304–47, at pp. 321–5.
3 Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 112–25, 135–42.
4 Halil Sahillioğlu, 'Sıvış Year Crises in the Ottoman Empire', in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East: From the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. M. A. Cook (London, 1970), pp. 230–54.

With the debasement of the *akçe* in the late sixteenth century, the nominal value of *timar*s suddenly doubled. An empire-wide re-survey made in the 1590s probably adjusted many *timar*s downward to compensate for this shift in values. Continued fluctuations in the value of silver coins in the early seventeenth century must have discouraged further re-surveys. At precisely the same time, the military revolution made the large *timar*-holding cavalry force largely obsolescent. Quite rapidly, the government abandoned the *timar* system as the basis for military finance (although some *timar*s and *timar*-holders continued to exist) and turned to new sources of revenue and new methods of collection and allocation. These new systems were never as successful as the *timar* system at uniting administrative organisation and economic control with political legitimisation and the social hierarchy.

Traditionally, tax levels were more or less fixed, but changes in the relationship between gold and silver allowed the government to raise nominal tax rates set in silver *akçe* while keeping them fixed in terms of gold. By this means the *cizye* (head-tax payable by non-Muslims) was raised from 50–80 *akçe* in the mid-sixteenth century to 240 *akçe* in the mid-seventeenth; the latter figure was supplemented by sheep and wine taxes and salaries for the collectors to a total of 325 *akçe*. Throughout the sixteenth century the *cizye* had usually been assessed in the course of preparing the tax registers (*tahrir*s) and recorded by kadis in separate registers, but when *timar* surveys stopped being made on a regular basis after the 1590s, the kadis made new independent *cizye tahrir*s, sometimes as often as annually, as the number of tax-paying households fluctuated owing to births and deaths, immigration and emigration.[5]

The series of taxes called *avarız-ı divaniye ve tekalif-i örfiye* changed from an occasional levy in the sixteenth century to an annual tax and the government's largest single revenue source in the seventeenth. Part of this levy was assessed in cash and part in kind or services; the cash figure was raised from 60–80 *akçe* in the mid-sixteenth century to 300–400 or more in the mid-seventeenth. *Avarız* assessments were initially based on *timar* and *cizye* surveys, but in the seventeenth century the tax was extended to more of the empire's subjects, beginning in 1600 with former military units (*yaya* and *müsellem*) returned to *reaya* status, and moving to other Muslim communities after 1620. The finance department made efforts to increase the number of people paying this tax; a series of *avarız* surveys made in the 1640s attempted to include the whole empire. These surveys were initially made by kadis, but after 1620 by finance

5 Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden, 1996), chs. 2–5.

scribes and military officials as well, following the model of the *cizye tahrir*s. As the incidence of occasional taxation increased, provincial officials began to collect their own version of the extraordinary levy called *tekalif-i şakka*, which was illegal but tolerated because of the old Ottoman tradition of allowing governors to collect their own revenues. Another locally collected tax was the *imdad-ı seferiye* (campaign assistance), collected by provincial officials and notables to reimburse themselves for wartime loans to the government or to pay for additional provincial troops.[6]

Revenues formerly collected by *timar*-holders were dealt with differently. Vacant *timar*s, instead of being reassigned, were often added to the sultan's *hass* (crown lands) and farmed out for collection to the highest bidder under the *iltizam* system, like other leased revenue sources (*mukataa*s) of the empire. The tax-farmer (*mültezim*) contracted to collect the surveyed revenues for the government, plus a percentage that he could keep as his salary. If he was unable to collect the total amount of revenue for which he contracted, he agreed to pay the deficit from his own funds. At times of financial need he was required to pay in advance and recompense himself later, allowing the state to borrow his funds on a short-term basis. The *iltizam* system had been used throughout the empire's history to collect income from state enterprises such as mines and mints, or fluctuating revenues such as customs dues, but now it began to be used more extensively for normal agricultural revenues, and by mid-century it was extended to taxes such as *avarız* and *cizye*. This system gave the *mültezim*s – wealthy *reaya*, soldiers, officials and palace personnel – a financial stake in the empire's prosperity and tapped revenues generated by rising prices and increased production. However, although the peasants had the right to appeal to the ruler against attempts to collect more than the officially assessed amounts, problems multiplied especially on agricultural lands. As long as the government did not interfere, the *mültezim* could demand from the peasants whatever he liked, retaining any surplus over the amount contracted for. Tax-farmers with short tenure rarely concerned themselves with the long-term viability of the *mukataa*; if its prosperity declined, they simply lowered their bids or transferred to another revenue source. In the absence of intensive central government supervision or an educated and politically active populace, this system often led to overexploitation and peasant flight.

Even in the sixteenth century, most taxes had been collected by military men, either *timar*-holders or, for non-*timar* taxes, members of the standing army: the

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6 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337, at pp. 318, 323–7.

müteferrika guardsmen, the cavalry regiments of the Porte and the janissaries. The remainder were officials and retainers of prominent men or employees of tax-farmers and pious foundations (*evkaf*). This remainder diminished until by 1630 nearly all tax-collectors, even those in the *iltizam* system, were soldiers. Assigning tax collection to members of the military augmented their salaries in a period of severe budgetary deficits and provided the central government an effective, if temporary, enforcement arm in the provinces. After 1630, however, many taxes began to be collected by agents of a provincial finance supervisor (*muhassıl-ı emval* or *voyvoda*). After 1650 the role of the military in tax collection was visibly decreasing.

The seventeenth century also saw the creation of new taxes, some legal and some illegal. As the extraordinary levies became ordinary, new 'extraordinary' taxes were levied in times of extraordinary need – that is, during wartime. *Nüzül* (provisions), *sürsat* (contributions) and *imdadiye* (assistance, demanded from officials as well as wealthy subjects) were irregular campaign taxes.[7] *Timar bedeli* was a tax paid by *timar*-holders who did not serve on campaign. Provincial governors, increasingly responsible for day-to-day expenditures in the provinces, were sometimes allowed to assess an extra sum (and sometimes did so without official permission). *Salgun* (epidemic) well described levies made by unscrupulous collectors employing force, who arrived with armed men, admittedly necessary to protect their collections in an age of bandits, and requisitioned the villagers' supplies or doubled their taxes. The decline of the *timar* system decreased supervision in the countryside, and although janissaries garrisoned the provinces and governors' entourages were increasing in number, they were stationed in the cities, often leaving rural peasants without local protectors.

Up to that point, the finance bureaucracy had adapted in an ad hoc fashion to the needs of the period. As the centrally controlled taxes gained in importance, the central bureaucracy grew to accommodate its increased workload. From about sixty-five salaried members, the staff expanded to approach 200 by the mid seventeenth century. Its organisation also changed, as bureaux dealing with *cizye*, *avarız* and *iltizam* increased in number and accounting and communications tasks intensified. Procedures developed for assessment and collection of the *cizye* were applied to the *avarız*; survey and assignment registers of the two taxes bear a close resemblance. The department also attempted to control tax-farming centrally through appointing governmental and military personnel as *mültezim*s, allowing central appointments to supersede local ones, and

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7 Ibid., pp. 323–4.

intensifying the inspection of records and operations. To control the amounts collected, the finance department gave tax-collectors and *mültezim*s copies of the survey registers and audited their books when collection was completed. Even in a changing system, collecting taxes according to the registers formed the basis of just administration. With the decline in the number of *timar*-holders and the shift to a more centrally controlled tax system, peasants increasingly addressed their complaints to the kadis or the central government itself, and the finance department became more important in adjudicating problems and keeping the peace. By adapting time-honoured procedures to new situations, and by maintaining the peasants' productive capacity through its judgments, the finance department supported the legitimacy of the state and its procedures in a time of turmoil and change.

We know less about the government's expenditures than we do about its income. The biggest expenditure item was, as stated above, military salaries, presumably paid quarterly but in fact often in arrears.[8] Arrearages of pay were most dangerous during wartime, when soldiers might refuse to fight if unpaid, or in the capital, where unpaid soldiers could and did threaten high officials, and even the sultan himself. The chroniclers record numerous pay revolts by the standing army or the army in the field, the first serious one being in 1586 when the government attempted to pay the soldiers in newly debased coinage worth only half of its former amount. A revolt in 1600 protested against the granting of tax-farms to wealthy civilians instead of cavalrymen as well as the payment of salary arrears in debased coin. Similar complaints, together with Sultan Osman II's plans to reduce or eliminate the standing military forces, ignited the revolt of 1622 that ended in the sultan's deposition and death. From then on, arrearages and uprisings became more and more frequent until the mid-seventeenth century. Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Paşa (grand vizier 1638–44) was able to bring the budget briefly into balance, but after his elimination the growing deficits could only be met by borrowing from the sultan's inner treasury.

The presence of other competitors for tax revenues besides the treasury and the military forces made it more difficult for the central government to meet its expenses. Tax-collectors making their rounds were entitled to bed and board from the villages they visited, but their entourages tended to grow and their stays to lengthen. Discharged military men, such as *timar*-holders who failed to appear at muster or men enlisted only for a single campaign, took up lives

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8 Alphonse Belin, *Essais sur l'histoire économique de la Turquie, d'après les écrivains originaux* (Paris, 1865).

of banditry, either stealing tax revenues outright or imposing extra levies on peasants and villagers.[9] Provincial governors and local notables took their share of the revenue as well, using it to build up their own military forces. Even the kadis, who represented the rectitude of the state, could sometimes be found subverting the system of which they were the ultimate guardians.[10] When taxpayers complained to the sultan, orders to rectify the situation went out to provincial officials who might themselves have been part of the problem. These unruly elements were not trying to overthrow the state but to be incorporated into it and to share its benefits.[11] But without extensive training in the 'Ottoman Way' or a regular and predictable career path,[12] they formed an unreliable element in the ruling class, supporting or leading factional divisions and turning against the government if they failed to get what they wanted.[13]

Factionalism in the ruling class reached its peak in the middle of the seventeenth century, consuming vital resources and derailing necessary reforms. Mehmed Köprülü's appointment as grand vizier in 1656 did much to re-centralize Ottoman finances. His suppression of factional infighting retrieved significant sums diverted into the coffers of high officials or used to pay their large retinues. His re-establishment of peace in the countryside improved the safety of tax collection and revenue transfer. He paid the army in full, on time and in good coin, which improved morale and permitted an extension of the war with Venice (finally won in 1669). By the time he died in 1661, the Ottoman budget was back in balance.

His son Köprülüzade Fazıl Ahmed (grand vizier 1661–76) presided over a rearrangement and systematisation of the finance bureaucracy. The adaptations and experiments of the first half of the seventeenth century now culminated in a finance department centred around the tasks of allocating and accounting for tax-farms. Through the device of tax-farming, Ottoman tax collection was monetarised in advance of the stabilisation of the coinage or the full monetarisation of the economy. Within the finance department, the geographically labelled bureaux left over from the *timar* system were

9 Halil Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 27–52.

10 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanic Legitimation (1570–1650)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 35 (1992), 1–39, pp. 18–20; Darling, *Revenue-Raising*, pp. 202–3.

11 Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca and London, 1994).

12 Norman Itzkowitz, *The Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (Chicago, 1972).

13 Belin, *Essais*; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Ritter Joseph von Hammer (London, 1834).

retained, but their responsibilities were no longer allocated by province. Most bureaux oversaw the collection and disbursement of the revenues from specific tax-farms, while the largest bureaux were responsible for producing overall revenue accounts and auditing the work of the other bureaux. The new organisation endured from the 1660s through the early nineteenth century, its personnel expanding to over 700. Despite military campaigns in Austria, Poland and Russia, this system was successful in erasing part of the deficit until the war with Austria in 1683–99, a war that severely depleted the Ottoman treasury.[14]

At the same time, central control over provincial finances became more indirect. Provincial revenues controlled by the central treasury were delegated to an agent called *muhassıl-ı emval*, who replaced the provincial *mal defterdarı*, but with some governing authority. The *muhassıl* in turn might delegate his role to a *mütesellim* or deputy. Provincial revenues granted as salaries, pensions or stipends were collected by agents of the grantees known as *müsellim, mütesellim* or *voyvoda*. Revenues belonging to provincial governors were also collected by a deputy called *müsellim* or *mütesellim*. These agents and deputies came originally from the retinues of the office-holders, but in the later seventeenth century some of them were appointed from among the local notables (*ayan*). In this way local notables became directly involved in provincial finance.[15] The *ayan* were also consulted regarding the allocation of taxes and military recruitment because of their familiarity with local conditions.[16] They were able because of their wealth to act as suppliers to the government and to employ lesser notabilities as tax-farmers, reinforcing their own local power. Thus central control was increasingly exercised in negotiation with provincial powers rather than in a top-down fashion. These negotiations became particularly critical in Rumeli when the government was raising funds for the war with Austria, and after the Ottoman recapture of Belgrade in 1690 efforts were made to control the Balkan notables by providing urban councils through which they could exercise their newly gained influence under government auspices.[17]

Financing the war on Austria demanded still more changes in the fiscal system. Arrears of military pay had caused soldiers to mutiny, and shortages of ammunition and supplies led to defeats in battle. Revenues from regions

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14 Sahillioğlu, '*Sıvış*', pp. 243–4.

15 Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization', pp. 29–32.

16 Michael Ursinus, '''Avâriz Hânesi' und 'Tevzi Hânesi' in der Lokalverwaltung des Kaza Manastir (Bitola) im 17. Jh', *Prilozi za Orijentalnu Filologiyu i Istorija Jugoslovenskih Naroda po Vladavinom* 30 (1980), 481–93; Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997).

17 Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *The History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1976–7), vol. I, p. 221.

captured by the Austrians were lost; agricultural production suffered from conscription of military-age men. A heavy campaign tax had to be levied, and the unrest it caused resulted in the deposition of Sultan Mehmed IV in 1687. His successor, in order to regain popular support, eliminated the campaign tax, coined new copper and silver money, and transferred the *cizye* paid by residents of *evkaf, hass* and *ocaklık* properties to the state budget.[18] The rate of the *cizye* was made the same throughout the empire and set according to Islamic law at one, two, or four gold coins for people of low, medium, and high income respectively (plus collection charges).[19] The reform began in 1690–1 in the regions close to Istanbul, but in 1700–3 it was extended to the Balkan frontier provinces and in 1734–5 to eastern Anatolia and the Arab lands. Because population and wealth had altered greatly but could not be resurveyed in the middle of a war, a new collection method was devised. *Cizye* receipts were prepared for an agreed-upon number of high-, middle- and low-income households and were distributed in return for appropriate payments until all the receipts were gone. In order to ensure an even flow of revenues for salary payments, collectors were required to distribute receipts and make collections in advance in the more distant provinces and to make quarterly deposits to the treasury. By these means, *cizye* income quadrupled; *cizye* came to comprise over 40 per cent of the Ottoman budget in the first half of the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, *avarız* totals decreased, and the *avarız* dropped to around 10 per cent of the budget. Unless the amount of *avarız* concealed in the category of farmed revenues increased proportionately, in these years a greater portion of the financial burden of empire was transferred to a shrinking non-Muslim population.[20]

At the same time the Ottomans began minting a new large silver coin, the *kuruş*, which became the main coinage in the region by the mid-eighteenth century. Its value remained relatively stable for the first two-thirds of the century, although in the last third it dropped by half. Several new gold coins were also minted but were driven out of circulation by lower-quality gold coins from Egypt; only the lower-value gold coins survived. Bills of exchange increased in circulation and were heavily used in the growing trade with Europe. Istanbul became one of the hubs of the international finance network

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18 Ibid., p. 219; Pamuk, *Monetary History*, pp. 155–8; Ahmet Tabakoğlu, *Gerileme dönemine girerken Osmanlı maliyesi* (Istanbul, 1985), p. 92.
19 Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı maliyesi*, pp. 137–9.
20 Ariel C. Salzmann, 'Measures of Empire: Tax Farmers and the Ottoman Ancien Régime, 1695–1807', Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University (1995), p. 144.

in the Mediterranean.[21] The prosperity of mid-century was destroyed by two wars in the late 1700s. The Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74 is often seen as a catastrophe for the Ottomans, but financially more disastrous was the war with Russia and Austria in 1787–92. To finance it Sultan Selim III debased the *kuruş*, tried to buy up gold and silver at below-market rates and fixed prices, creating food shortages in the capital.[22]

Even greater changes occurred in tax-farming. In 1695 an edict instituted the system of *malikâne* (life-term tax-farming) on agricultural lands in the provinces of Damascus, Aleppo, Diyarbekir, Mardin, Adana, Malatya, Ayntab and Tokat.[23] The justification for the change was that greed for short-term profits typical in tax-farms of one to three years' duration furthered over-exploitation, thus reducing long-term productivity. The annual amount to be paid by the *malikâne*-holder *(müeccele*, postponed payment) was set in advance and would not change during his lifetime; thus the state would be able to predict its income, while the *malikâne*-holder would be motivated to increase the *malikâne*'s profitability, since he could keep any additional revenue. He also paid an amount in advance (*muaccele*, prompt payment), which was originally set at three years' revenue but could be altered by bidding. The holders exercised administrative (but not judicial) rights in their *malikâne*s, usually through their agents or *mütesellim*s.[24] These agents, in the eighteenth century often local notables, were thus able to strengthen their hold on revenues and labour in their area, occasionally to the point of obtaining governorships.[25] Like the reformed *cizye*, this change theoretically preserved the central government's authority over the award of tax-collection rights and the state's role as guardian over the lands and people in its care, as well as being compatible with Islamic law. In reality, however, the state lost control over both the transfer of revenues between holders and the behaviour of tax-collectors toward the revenue producers, since the holders could entrust the management of their properties to others, could rent them out, sell them or give them away.[26] Later regulations injected some control measures as well as a transfer fee to make up for the

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21 Compare the chapter by Edhem Eldem in this volume (chapter 14).

22 Pamuk, *Monetary History*, pp. 160–71.

23 Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı maliyesinde malikâne sistemi', in *Türkiye iktisat tarihi semineri*, ed. Osman Okyar and Ünal Nalbantoğlu (Ankara, 1975), pp. 231–96, at pp. 285–8; Avdo Sućeska, 'Mālikāna (Lifelong Lease of Governmental Estates in the Ottoman State)', *Prilozi za Orijentalnu Filologiyu* i Istorija Jugoslovenskin Naroda po Vladavinom 36 (1987), 197–230, pp. 203–4.

24 Sućeska, 'Mālikāna', p. 207.

25 Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization', pp. 33–4.

26 Sućeska, 'Mālikāna', p. 219; Murat Çizakça, *A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships: The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives* (Leiden, 1996), p. 163.

state's inability to alter the annual returns and an extra tax (*cebelü bedeliyesi*, 'armed man substitute') during wartime. The *malikâne* system constituted a form of long-term borrowing by the state, secured against tax revenues.

The rising prices of the early 1700s made the *malikâne* system extremely profitable for the holders, whose obligations remained static while their profits grew. The practice quickly expanded beyond its original boundaries. By 1703, 1,442 holders had invested 361,835 *kuruş* in the Syrian and eastern Anatolian provinces named in the edict, 322,278 *kuruş* in the Balkans and 213,592 *kuruş* in western Anatolia, amounting to about 40 per cent of total farmed revenues.[27] Not only agricultural lands but flocks and tribal taxes, customs dues and industrial revenues were all subject to *malikâne*, and it also spread to revenues other than the sultan's. The *hass* of the commander of the border defences at Temeşvar was being given in *malikâne* as early as 1704.[28] The majority of *malikâne*-holders were members of the central state elites based in Istanbul, but most of the sub-farmers with whom they worked were local officials and notables; through these financial ties the *ayan* in the provinces improved their access to central power politics. At the same time, the crucial roles in what became a gigantic financial and credit structure were reserved for state elites, who held the largest *malikâne*s.[29] Since the latter seemed like private property, the holders often refused to pay to the treasury the revenues that were due. Sub-farmers, unknown to the state, took their shares from the revenues as well, unduly increasing the burden on the taxpayers. The *malikâne*s were *serbest*, or free from government oversight, and peasants could not hope for protection from government personnel.[30] Because of abuses such as these, the grand vizier in 1715 eliminated all *malikâne*s except those mentioned in the original edict, returning the revenues to the regular tax-farming system.

In 1717, however, the *malikâne*s were reinstated and expanded, and rising levels of prosperity permitted the government to raise the amounts due as well. Total sales in 1722 (measured in *muaccele*) amounted to 1.45 million *kuruş*, in 1745 to 4.34 million, in 1768 to 9.78 million, and in 1787 to 13.16 million.[31] This wealth supported the luxury and brilliance of the Ottoman court in the Tulip Era and funded the several small wars of the period without budgetary deficits. In 1741, 58 per cent of *malikâne* investments were in the Aegean and Balkan

27 Salzmann, 'Measures', pp. 172–3; of these 1,442 holders, 222 invested in the Balkans, 180 in Anatolia, and 1,040 in the rest of the empire.
28 Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım ve değişim dönemi (XVIII. yy' dan Tanzimat'a mali tarih)* (Istanbul, 1986), p. 43.
29 Salzmann, 'Measures', pp. 149, 168. 30 Belin, *Essais*, pp. 179–80.
31 Genç, 'Osmanlı maliyesinde malikâne', p. 282.

regions and 42 per cent in Anatolia and the Arab lands. The large and lucrative Aegean and Balkan investments came mostly from janissaries and central state elites, while the smaller Anatolian and Arab investments were held by a wider mix of local Muslim elites. Non-Muslims were not permitted to hold *malikâne*s, but continued to participate in state finances as ordinary tax-farmers. The most profitable investments were the customs dues and excise taxes, whose high levels of return reflect the growing prosperity of the mid-eighteenth century, the dividends of peace and the increase in trade with Europe. Eighty per cent of this wealth was controlled by a few hundred members of the central elite whose large households, extensive provincial connections and ability to amass capital and credit made them the major players in the *malikâne* field.[32] To spread the risk, these large holders began to sell shares of their lifetime tax-farms to others and to diversify their holdings among a number of *malikâne*s as well as other forms of investment.[33] Credit was handled by a group of non-Muslim moneychangers (*sarraf*), who registered with the treasury as guarantors of the lifetime tax-farmers' payments; they also handled loans and fund transfers via bills of exchange.[34]

The *malikâne* system in some cases encouraged greater investment in the income-producing properties of the empire. Examples include the establishment of a dye-works in Tokat by the holder of the stamp tax on cloth and improvements to the dye-house of Aleppo.[35] But it was often true that holders in Istanbul could not be brought to care about affairs in a distant provincial *malikâne* or used their lifetime tax-farm merely as an investment receptacle for wealth from other sources.[36] As shareholders multiplied, they gained the right to manage their own shares of the *malikâne* or farm them out to still more managers, further distancing the state from the productive classes. The participation of local notables in the system strengthened the involvement of provincial urban residents in the rural economy, but mainly through debt patronage rather than agricultural investment.[37] In urban areas artisanal taxes

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32 Ibid., p. 282.   33 Çizakça, *Comparative Evolution*, p. 171.
34 Salzmann, 'Measures', pp. 195–202; Pamuk, *Monetary History*, pp. 200–4.
35 Mehmet Genç, 'Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics, and Main Trends', in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500–1950*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 1994), pp. 59–86, at p. 61; Jean-Pierre Thieck, 'Décentralisation ottomane et affirmation urbaine à Alep à la fin du XVIIIème siècle', in *Mouvements communautaires et espaces urbaines au Machreq*, ed. Mona Zakaria et al. (Beirut, 1985), pp. 117–68, at p. 129.
36 Çizakça, *Comparative Evolution*, p. 172.
37 Ariel C. Salzmann, 'Privatising the Empire: Pashas and Gentry during the Ottoman 18th Century', in *The Great Ottoman Turkish Civilisation*, ed. Kemal Çiçek, 4 vols. (Istanbul, 2000), vol. III, at pp. 132–9, pp. 135–6.

were sold as *malikâne* to janissaries in return for protection; the cost of this practice encouraged the formation of craft monopolies and closed guilds that discouraged expansion and innovation. Production and experimentation were driven to the rural areas where finance and transportation were difficult to obtain and where export industry was prohibited by the state.[38] Production investment seems to have had a low enough rate of return to discourage efforts to overcome these hurdles in most cases, even though productive and commercial activity was growing rapidly in the first two-thirds of the century. Profits from *malikânes* on trade, on the other hand, were substantial, varying from 20 to 40 per cent in the eighteenth century.[39] This revenue system apparently facilitated the development of a commercial and *rentier* economy dependent on the capitalist world system. In this century the finance department was better able to keep the government's budget in the black but less successful at maintaining the legitimacy conferred by just taxation.

Because the state was unable to alter the conditions of *malikâne* contracts, over time the treasury received a lesser share of the profits, a third to a fourth, according to Çizakça.[40] Moreover, the 1763 defeat of the French, the Ottomans' largest trading partner, created a financial crisis in Mediterranean trade, and the treasury's precarious stability was further threatened by the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74. A new mode of state financing was developed in 1775, the system of *esham* (shares). In this system, the estimated annual profit of a revenue source was divided into a large number of shares which were sold to the public at five to six times the annual profit.[41] The government retained control of the revenue source, so it kept any additional profits and was better able to maintain productivity. The revenue was collected by state agents or tax-farmers and used to pay the dividends to the shareholders as well as the expenses of the revenue source and the payments due from it. As the profits of a revenue source increased, or as other revenue sources were added to it, more shares could be sold. For example, as the profit on the Istanbul Tobacco Customs Mukataa went from 400,000 *kuruş* to 760,000 in the period 1775–1806, the number of shares grew from 160 to 303.[42] Shares were also subdivided and fractional shares sold to smaller investors. The shares themselves were supposed to be valid only for the life of the buyer, but when buyers began

38 Genç, 'Ottoman Industry', pp. 62–3.
39 Mehmet Genç, 'A Study of the Feasibility of Using Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Financial Records as an Indicator of Economic Activity', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge; 1987), pp. 345–73, at p. 358 and fig. 16.1.
40 Çizakça, *Comparative Evolution*, pp. 165–6.
41 Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım*, pp. 79–80.   42 Ibid., pp. 83, 108.

to sell and bequeath them as property, they once again escaped the state's control.[43] The state first placed a 10 per cent tax on such transfers and then turned the designated shares into bearers' shares, similar to bonds, so that they could be transferred freely. This system did succeed in broadening the group of people lending to the state and involving themselves in public finance; even women and non-Muslims became shareholders.[44] As *malikâne*-holders died, their holdings were incorporated into the *esham* system, so that by 1827 the level of investment in *esham* was triple that in *malikâne*. The *esham*, like *malikâne*s, were equivalent to a long-term loan, making it possible for the Ottomans to stave off foreign indebtedness until the nineteenth century.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s the French Revolution, wars in eastern Europe, the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt and the rise of British power in the Mediterranean created an ongoing financial crisis. At the same time, Selim III introduced military and administrative reforms that demanded additional funds. In 1793 he created a new treasury, the İrad-ı cedid hazinesi, to manage the revenues dedicated to his New Order Army, the Nizam-ı Cedid. This new treasury managed revenues from *esham* and from the abrogated *malikâne*s, as well as taxes on wool and cotton. As the central *malikâne*-holders were eliminated, the state depended more heavily on the officials and notables who controlled the wealth of the provinces. The provincial notables were nearly successful in parlaying that influence into permanent political power. In 1808 they signed the *Sened-i İttifak* (document of agreement) agreeing to collect taxes and recruit for the military strictly in accordance with the law, in exchange for the sultan's respect for their autonomy and his promise to govern justly.

The new sultan, Mahmud II (r. 1808–39), however, refused to restrict his authority in this way. Hampered by a conservative reaction to past and proposed reforms, he refrained from making significant changes until he was able to gain control over strong political forces in the bureaucracy and the military. The destruction of the janissary corps in 1826 finally enabled him to move forward with the re-centralisation and reform of Ottoman administration. To fund military reform he took over the imperial foundations, gaining control of all their surplus funds. He re-centralised all the large tax-farms for his military treasury and began the long process of replacing tax-farmers with central government tax-collectors (*muhassıls*). He established a new market tax and stopped payment on janissary pensions. He ordered a new census of Rumeli

43 Çizakça, *Comparative Evolution*, p. 180.   44 Pamuk, *Monetary History*, pp. 170–91.

and Anatolia, which was carried out in the 1830s. He also revitalised the postal system and began building better roads, facilitating the transport of revenues to the treasury. These reforms, asserting once again the central government's control over and concern for the countryside, were continued after his death during the subsequent period of reorganisation, the Tanzimat.

THE CENTRE AND
THE PROVINCES

The Ottoman centre versus provincial power-holders: an analysis of the historiography

DINA RIZK KHOURY

The seventeenth century ushered in a period of crisis for the Ottoman state. Plagued by a series of debilitating rebellions in Anatolia, Egypt, Baghdad and Mount Lebanon, war on its European and Eastern frontiers, and fiscal troubles brought about by the twin evils of inflation and war, the Ottoman central government found itself under increasing pressure to change the ways in which it administered its provinces. The Köprülü vizieral dynasty instituted a series of measures to stave off further erosion of imperial control in the provinces in the second half of the seventeenth century. By the first half of the eighteenth century, the government had reorganised its provincial administrative structure and attempted to regularise tax-farming practices to allow it more access to the taxable income of its subjects. The prosperity brought about by the expansion of regional economies and trade with Europe in western Anatolia, Syria, Egypt and Iraq during the first half of the eighteenth century allowed for the development of a modus vivendi between local elites in the provinces and the Ottoman government.

However, by the second half of the century the relatively trouble-free relations between the centre and the provincial elite began to fray. Saddled with problems of mobilisation for a disastrous war against Russia, and unable to easily muster the loyalty and support of its provincial power-holders, the government found itself fighting a number of rebellions by semi-autonomous provincial power-holders in the Balkans and the Middle East. Yet despite severe challenges to the supremacy and legitimacy of a much weakened sultanate at the end of the century, the Ottoman state was able to maintain a tenuous allegiance from a sector of the local elite in most of its Asian provinces and some of its European provinces well into the nineteenth century.

Why it was able to do so is a question historians are only beginning to grapple with. Part of the answer may be found in the changing relations between the

centre and those local elites not necessarily at the pinnacle of the provincial hierarchy of political power. Historians are now directing their attention to the relations between the central government and a more diffuse and less politically visible local elite whose members appear to have retained some loyalty to the state even as their provincial governors and warlords challenged its supremacy. Drawn from diverse social backgrounds, these elites constituted the backbone of Ottoman hegemony in the provincial setting.

Well into the 1970s the historiography of the Ottoman provinces allocated an inordinate amount of space to the spectacular rise and occasional rebellions of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century provincial power elite. The underlying assumption of many such studies was the view that early modern multi-ethnic empires with large territories were forever struggling to maintain a balance between the needs of the central governments for control and the limitations created by the relatively primitive level of the organisation of coercion. The early modern imperial state was no match for the modern nation-state in its abilities to create consensus and submission within its disparate populations. There is no disputing the fact that the Ottoman state devoted considerable resources and political capital between 1600 and 1800 in attempting to subdue or co-opt the powerful provincial elites that challenged its hegemony.

However, less spectacular than the disruptive machinations of powerful provincial elites, but perhaps more significant for our understanding of the ways in which provincial societies remained part of the Ottoman domains despite seismic political upheavals, were the ways in which the local and less visible elites transformed the provincial administrative and military establishment. By the end of the eighteenth century, local elites had usurped most of the administrative and military posts in the provinces, either through purchasing titles and membership into Ottoman military and administrative provincial establishment, or through becoming tax-farmers. Hence, to a significant degree the state 'made' provincial power elites, as much as provincial power-holders 'made' the state at the local level. Provincial elites 'localised' the hegemony of the state.

Scholars are not as yet agreed on how to characterise such 'localisation'. Until quite recently, most scholarship viewed the eighteenth century as one of decentralisation and loss of state hegemony to local power-holders. More recently, some historians have attempted to articulate this process as one in which a form of Ottoman political culture centred on elite household organisation was reproduced at the provincial level. They maintain that such 'localisation' of Ottoman political authority should not be viewed in strictly fiscal and

administrative terms – that is to say, as decentralisation – but as a more subtle and profound expansion of Ottoman forms of political rule to the provinces.[1] Whether such revisionist historiography is applicable to the empire as a whole, it is as yet too early to judge. At the moment, it might be safer to write a general narrative about the process of transformation for our period as one of 'localisation' of Ottoman administrative and military practices by urban groups.

The Ottoman conquest and control of vast territories depended to a large degree on the ability of the government to forge alliances with local power elites. To govern such widely divergent societies as settled peasants, pastoral nomads and urbanites, the government had to have the will and capacity to use local systems of control to its own advantage. Its success in doing so was determined by several factors. Geographical proximity to Istanbul and other major administrative centres was key. Thus in areas easily reached by the army and the administrative elites, the ability of the government to enforce its writ was stronger than it was in mountainous and remote regions such as Mount Lebanon, south-eastern Anatolia or Yemen. Equally important, however, was the centrality of certain provincial capitals to the maintenance of the empire's frontiers. In Bosnia, Damascus, Egypt, Tunis, Algiers, Baghdad and Mosul, all centres for control of the empire's frontiers against foreign powers and/or pastoral nomads, the government alternated between a policy of accommodation and suppression of local elites. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, as in many of these provincial capitals, strongmen challenged the central government, and the local elites acquired the upper hand in their dealings with their overlords. Finally, and perhaps most critical for relations between the provinces and the central government, was the local social matrix within which the prerogatives of the government were played out. Although we have as yet relatively few and unevenly distributed studies of provincial Ottoman history, what is available points to the centrality of local familial and group networks in shaping the central state's relations with provincial societies.

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1 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 24–31; Bruce Masters, 'Power and Society in Aleppo in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 62, 4 (1991), 151–8; Karl Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708–1758* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 13–56; Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 111–33. For the perspective of the central state, see Ariel C. Salzmann, 'An Ancien Régime Revisited: "Privatization" and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire', *Politics and Society* 21, 4 (1993), 393–424.

Problems in defining provincial power-holders

Attempting to identify and categorise the provincial power-holders of the Ottoman Empire is a challenging undertaking. This is partly due to the fluidity of the borders between those who held formal administrative positions, such as members of the military and judiciary establishment on the one hand, and those who could wield influence through their positions within local society, known loosely as the *ayan* (Ar. *a'yān*), on the other. Despite a clear division in Ottoman political theory between an administrative/military elite and the local representatives known as *ayan*, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a blurring in this distinction – much to the chagrin of concerned intellectuals at the centre.[2] Furthermore, it is difficult to make blanket generalisations about political power-holders applicable to the whole of the Ottoman Empire. Most studies focus on large urban and administrative centres, and it is from these studies that most of our conclusions about the identity of local elites and their changing relationship to the state are derived. With this caveat in mind, we can now turn to a discussion of the relations between the central government and the provincial elites.

The Ottoman government's views of local power-holders were at best ambivalent. On the one hand, the state needed their cooperation to maintain order in its provinces; on the other, it was at all times acutely aware of the tenuousness of its alliances with the local elites. While the central government often ordered its subjects to pay the taxes demanded by bureaucrats as well as by provincial elites, in the late 1500s and throughout the seventeenth century it frequently mobilised its population against the demands of its recalcitrant representatives in the provinces.[3] In other instances, the government promulgated a series of edicts known as *adaletname*, which addressed specific complaints by subjects against the exactions and corruption of bureaucratic, judicial and military officials.[4] When faced with outright rebellions by its provincial representatives, the government oscillated between a policy of accommodation and one of repression. The ambiguous and fluid nature of relations between

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2 For a discussion of this phenomenon at the central state level, see Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991). For Aleppo see Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600–1750* (New York, 1988), pp. 43–7; for Mosul see Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 114–20.

3 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum 6* (1980), 283–337.

4 Ibid., p. 307; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanic Legitimation, 1570–1650', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient 35* (1992), 1–39.

the local and the imperial meant that local elites were at all times keenly aware of their power to negotiate a position for themselves within the Ottoman provincial order. However, their power was circumscribed by the prerogatives of the sultan, who could intervene when his subjects appealed to him to end their exploitation by these elites.

Upon the conquest of new territories, the Ottoman government established three provincial centres of power, and the head of each was to report to the government in Istanbul. This division was codified in a series of provincial laws incorporating local practice and subsuming it under a generalised Ottoman law, known as the *kanun*. The administrative machinery of the province was headed by the governor, his lieutenant-governor, and a slew of other officials. At the head of the military establishment was the chief officer of the janissary regiments, who reported directly to Istanbul. The janissaries were subject to their own corporate law, and were given a series of entitlements ranging from food to access to animals and exemption from certain dues on consumer goods. The judicial cum administrative establishment was responsible for the implementation of Islamic law (Ar. *shari'a*; Turk. *şeriat*). However, its duties included a number of non-religious tasks as well. It was headed by a chief judge, usually appointed from Istanbul and residing in the capital of the province, with a number of district judges under his jurisdiction.[5] The judges were to administer both Islamic *shari'a* and state law, *kanun*. In addition, they had a number of other tasks, which ranged from enforcing the decrees of the market inspector to heading the mobilisation of local populations for war.[6]

From its inception, however, this system of provincial administration was subject to modifications when applied in certain provincial settings. Unlike Anatolia and the Balkans, for instance, in Egypt there was no rural military cavalry paid directly by the taxpayers and no set of tax prebends known as *timar*s, which also functioned as administrative units. Instead, a more centralised administrative system was adopted that incorporated the old military elite.[7] Furthermore, the *timar* system was not imposed in provinces with large and powerful tribal confederations, such as Basra.[8] Even in areas where the

5 Galal El-Nahal, *The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1979), pp. 12–15.
6 On the mobilisation of the peasantry and the role of the local judge see Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Town Officials, Timar Holders, and Taxation: The Seventeenth Century Crisis as seen from Çorum', *Turcica* 18 (1986), 53–81.
7 The classic account of the Ottoman administration of Egypt is Stanford Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517–1798* (Princeton, 1962).
8 Salih Özbaran, 'Basra beylerbeyliğinin kuruluşu', *Tarih Dergisi* 25 (1971), 53–72.

state imposed a distinctly Ottoman system of rural administration, the first century of Ottoman rule saw an attempt to incorporate the local rural elite.[9] These elites were drawn from men of the pre-Ottoman military and administrative establishment, as in the cases of Egypt and Syria, or from the tribal and religious notables with special abilities to control provincial populations. Nevertheless, the men who ran the provinces of the empire in the sixteenth century – the governor, lieutenant-governor, treasurer, head of local janissary regiments and chief judge of the province – were all central appointees brought in from other areas of the empire for a relatively short period of time.

In the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries the elites ruling the central state decided, for reasons elaborated on elsewhere in this volume, to expand the practice of farming out offices and revenues, and this new policy caused a rupture with the sixteenth-century administrative system. While in the seventeenth century the choicest of offices and revenues typically went to central state elite, early in the eighteenth century local owners of capital began to buy offices and revenues. They were able to do so largely because of the growth of regional economies based on the receipts of trade and the management of wars which necessitated transfers of men, money and goods from one region of the empire to the other.[10] Finally, the prerogatives of local elites were enhanced by a system of military mobilisation and tax collection which by the eighteenth century allowed local notables (*ayan*) and local judicial officers to play a pivotal role in the mobilisation of forces and the apportionment of taxes.

The administrative elites

During the sixteenth century the governors and officials attached to the provincial government were responsible for the collection of taxes, the recruitment of mercenaries and the defence of the province against the depredations of brigands. In frontier areas the defence of the empire's borders had top priority. However, by the seventeenth century, the hold of these personages, *ehl-i örf* in Ottoman parlance, had significantly weakened due to transformations in the system of taxation. The governorship had become a large tax-farm, purchased

9 For Aleppo, see Margaret Venzke, 'The Tithe as a Revenue Raising Measure in Aleppo', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 29 (1990), 239–334. For Palestine, see Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Kamal Abdul Fattah, *Historical Geography of Palestine, Transjordan, and Southern Syria in the late Sixteenth Century* (Erlangen, 1977), pp. 64f., 101f.; for Mosul see Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 25–33, 78–86.

10 Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare, 1500–1700* (London, 1999), pp. 35–103.

by or assigned to a class of provincial bureaucrats with large households and retinues, who were often unable or unwilling to take over the administration of the province for a short time. Rather than rule directly, they sent their representatives, or appointed interim agents (*mütesellim*), to run the province on their behalf. Furthermore, the allocation and collection of taxes was increasingly farmed out by the central government on a short-term basis to a group of local grandees and military men. While allowing the government more access to ready cash, this arrangement deprived the provincial governor and his bureaucrats of the ability to govern effectively. In the absence of a stable provincial leader, the janissary regiments and local notables became the real power-brokers in the major cities of the empire.

We have very few studies that allow us a glimpse into the workings of the system of provincial administration in the seventeenth century. In his study of three local dynasties in the seventeenth century, Ze'evi found that two of them began their careers in the service of the Ridwâns, a family recruited from the Istanbul military establishment which became entrenched as sub-provincial governors in Gaza and other parts of Palestine.[11] As to Lebanon, the Ottomans found that the only manner by which they could rule the province was to appoint local grandees such as the Sayfas and the Harfushes, and play them against their competitors.[12] In Basra, the Afrasiyabs, who were originally a military provincial household, ruled the city for a long time until the Ottomans sent an expedition to dislodge them in the 1660s.[13] In Baghdad, Aleppo and Damascus, the power of the governors was supplanted by that of janissary leaders and local notables. The leadership of the pilgrimage, the most prestigious and powerful position in the area, was assigned by the central government either to district governors or notable and janissary families in Damascus.[14]

In Egypt, the prerogatives of the provincial governor were taken over by Mamluk elites in the districts and janissary regiments in Cairo. Urban and rural taxes were collected by these tax-farmers whose control over rural revenues allowed them to all but determine the amount of taxes remitted to

11 Dror Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany, 1996), pp. 35–62.
12 Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, *Provincial Leaderships in Syria, 1575–1650* (Beirut, 1985), pp. 37–66 and 129–52.
13 Dina Rizk Khoury, 'Merchants and Trade in Early Modern Iraq', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 5–6 (1991), 53–86.
14 Peter M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922: A Political History* (London, 1966), p. 106.

the governor.[15] According to Nelly Hanna the weakening in the political and administrative controls of the state and its representatives in Cairo allowed local elements, merchants and *ayan*, to strengthen their position in the city.[16] Members of elite merchant families held the office of chief merchant and affiliated themselves to the janissary and administrative elites. Bruce Masters has found that in seventeenth-century Aleppo the power of the governor declined in tandem with the blurring of the dividing-lines between the military and the population at large, as individuals drawn from the military establishment engaged in trade.[17] In Damascus, the janissaries extended their influence to Aleppo and struck up alliances with local grandees in Lebanon in an attempt to extend their hegemony.[18] In Palestine, local notables became the real power elite after local dynasties such as the Ridwâns and Farrukhs were eliminated by the Köprülü reforming viziers.[19] In Baghdad and Mosul, the janissaries held sway over political life until the early eighteenth century.[20]

Hence by the end of the seventeenth century, provincial governors had to cope with restive urban military regiments whose members had become an integral part of the ruling establishment of almost all the administrative centres of the Asian part of the empire. The central government, occupied with wars in Europe and with Persia, could do little but deal with the provincial insubordination in an ad hoc manner, answering complaints by its subjects against the exactions of the governor's representatives, or issuing proclamations ordering the military to adhere to justice and Ottoman law. [21] However, after the conclusion of the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, the government attempted to reform its provincial administration by developing a two-pronged policy. It sought to augment the territorial and administrative reach of governors of key provinces at the expense of district representatives who had robbed both the treasury and the tax-paying population, and initiated a fiscal measure which allowed local

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15 Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society Under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798* (London, 1992), pp. 49–53, says that although the *kanunname* of Egypt allowed for only twelve beys, by the seventeenth century there were twenty-four, not all of *mamluk* origin, but dominated by Circassian *mamluks*.

16 Nelly Hanna, *Making Big Money in 1600: The Life and Times of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Egyptian Merchant* (Syracuse, 1998), pp.1–14, 100–18.

17 Masters, *Origins*, pp. 43–68.

18 Abdul Karim Rafeq, 'The Local Forces in Syria in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (London, 1975), pp. 277–307.

19 Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century*, pp. 35–62.

20 'Abbās al-Azzawī, *Tārīkh al-Iraq bayn Ihtilālayn* (Baghdad, 1953), vol. V, pp. 14–160.

21 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Political Initiatives "From the Bottom Up" in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Some Evidence of their Existence', in *Osmanistische Studien zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Hans Georg Majer (Wiesbaden, 1986), pp. 24–33.

elites drawn from all sectors of provincial society to buy lifetime, as opposed to short-term, tax-farms (*malikâne*); both urban and rural revenues could be farmed out as *malikâne*s.[22] The results of such policies were mixed. In frontier areas in particular, where the governors became responsible for the disbursement of funds for fortresses, the recruitment and provisioning of mercenary armies, their writ seems to have been effective in controlling restive populations. The Jalilis of Mosul and the governors of Baghdad were equally adept at subduing the janissaries and local elites by relying on household troops and access to rural and commercial resources.[23] In Baghdad the governor's control was expanded to include Basra in the south, Mardin in the north and the Kurdish areas in the east. As Baghdad became a centre for the defence of the eastern borders of the empire, Hasan Paşa a product of the schools of the imperial palace, and his son Ahmed Paşa brought the tribal hinterlands and border areas of the empire under central control. Relying on a combination of a *mamluk* army and tribal levies and a bureaucracy modelled on the imperial household, the governors of Baghdad laid the groundwork for a *mamluk* elite that were to rule the city and much of central and southern Iraq until 1831.[24] Karl Barbir has found that the ʿAzm family of Damascus was able to retain the governorship of the city as well as of southern Syria because it defended the pilgrimage route against tribal attacks. The family's local roots and access to vast rural resources helped it subjugate rebellious janissaries by recruiting their own forces.[25]

The government's attempts succeeded in frontier areas because it relied on elites who had successfully struck local roots while maintaining their loyalty to the central state. Where it was unable to do so, as in Aleppo, southern Mount Lebanon, Palestine (under the jurisdiction of the governor, first of Damascus and then Sidon), the governors' prerogatives remained limited. The Shihâbs of Mount Lebanon, Zāhir al-ʿUmar of Palestine and the Husainids of Tunis were autonomous grandees ruling their domains with token legitimisation from Istanbul.[26] In Aleppo, the governor's control was continuously challenged by the janissary regiments and the local *ashraf* (Turk. *eşraf*: descendants of the Prophet). The bloody history of eighteenth-century Aleppo was a result of

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22 Salzmann, 'An Ancien Régime'.   23 Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 44–72.

24 Tom Nieuwenhuis, *Politics and Society in Early Modern Iraq: Mamluk Pashas, Tribal Shaikhs and Local Rule between 1802 and 1831* (The Hague, 1981), pp. 13–107.

25 Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus*, pp. 13–65.

26 For a comparative analysis of different relations between state and urban centres of the Ottoman Empire see Dina Rizk Khoury, 'Political Relations between City and State', in *A Social History of the City in the Middle East*, ed. Peter Sluglett and Edmund Burke III, under review by Syracuse University Press.

three-cornered struggles between governors, janissaries and *ashraf*. In this struggle, none of the factions was able to dominate for a long period of time.[27] In Egypt the effective rulers were the Mamluk beys, who were the *shaykh al-balad* and *amir al-hajj* (leader of the pilgrimage), offices that defined the real power centres in the province. However, despite the apparent uniqueness and historical roots of the 'Mamluk beylicate', Jane Hathaway has shown that it should be understood as a local variant of a distinctly Ottoman form of political organisation based on the model of the imperial household.[28] While Michael Winter's assessment of the beylicate is somewhat different, he agrees with Hathaway in assuming that these households recruited elements from the provincial population, thereby creating a local backing for their own hegemony.[29]

Despite the tenuous nature of Ottoman control in these provinces, however, the eighteenth century was marked by lasting change in the composition of the provincial power-holders. While not immediately visible, the incorporation of local men drawn from different economic and social strata into the administrative hierarchy of the provinces through the purchase of tax-farms was accompanied by a transformation in the manner in which these elites organised themselves. As previously noted, the local power base of the latter was predicated on reproducing on a much smaller scale the political organisation of the imperial and provincial governor's households. Hathaway's work on Egypt and Khoury's work on Mosul address this issue directly. They have found in these areas a handful of local families that monopolised tax-farms and administrative positions, formed themselves into households with clients and military slaves and/or retainers, and subjugated the solidarities of urban populations to their political agendas. In Aleppo the elite *ashraf* as well as sections of the janissaries solidified their hold over the city by emulating the organisational culture of Ottoman elite households.[30] Schilcher's work on the 'Azms of Damascus and that of Nieuwenhuis and Lier on the Mamluks of Baghdad describe developments parallel to those elsewhere in the empire.[31] Thus by the end of the eighteenth century, despite rebellions by semi-autonomous

27 Herbert Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (Chapel Hill, 1963), pp. 103–39.
28 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, pp. 165–73.
29 Winter, *Egyptian Society*, pp. 40–6.
30 Bodman, *Political Factions*, pp. 99f. about the Tahazādeh family of *ashraf*, and pp. 55f. on the janissary networks of patronage; Jean Pierre Thieck, 'Décentralisation ottomane et affirmation urbaine à Alep à la fin du XVIIIe siècle', in *Passion d'Orient*, ed. Gilles Kepel (Paris, 1992), pp. 113–76.
31 Linda Schilcher, *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Stuttgart, 1985); Nieuwenhuis, *Politics and Society*; Thomas Lier, *Haushalte und Haushaltspolitik in Bagdad 1704–1831* (Würzburg, 2004).

power-holders such as Ali of Janina and ʿAli Bey al-Kabir of Egypt, larger sections of local elites had become incorporated into the administrative structure of the empire and had internalised the elite political culture of the centre.

Provincial military power-holders

In a letter addressed to Sultan Süleyman in 1533–4, the people of Aleppo complained of the depredations of the cavalry demobilised after a campaign, which had descended from Damascus on the Aleppine countryside, stealing goods and provisions.[32] In response to this and many other such complaints sent by subjects of the sultan throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ottoman government could do little but issue orders to governors and military commanders to protect its subjects from looting by cavalry, infantry and irregulars during periods of mobilisation and demobilisation. Whereas the mounted cavalry (*sipahis*) were the main culprits in the sixteenth century, they receded into the background as provincial infantry regiments (janissaries) and irregulars (*sekbans*, *gönüllüyan* and sundry other mercenaries) became the main scourge of rural and urban populations. However, it is important to keep in mind that such complaints often masked the complex nature of these different military forces in the provinces of the empire. As Halil Inalcik and Rhoads Murphey have posited, Ottoman society, like its European counterparts, was becoming increasingly militarised in the seventeenth century.[33] The almost constant mobilisation of rural and urban populations to wage war against enemies of the Ottoman state resulted in far-reaching changes in the position of the military establishment in provincial society. As local populations were recruited through their leaders to fight wars, the latter found a place for themselves among the Ottoman provincial elite. On the other hand, military regiments drawn from the various parts of the empire became integrated into provincial political and economic life, their leaders transforming themselves into a local power elite. Despite an Ottoman political ideology that drew clear lines between the military and subject populations, these lines were continuously redrawn and redefined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The state itself played an indirect role in the rise to prominence of local regiments in the seventeenth century. In an attempt to control the disruptive power of the janissaries in both Istanbul and the provincial cities of the empire, it often

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32 See the Arabic version of this complaint as translated by Adnan al-Bakhit in ʿAleppo and the Ottoman Military in the 16th Century', *al-Abhath* 27 (1978/9), 27–38.
33 Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation'; Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*.

called for a *nefir-i 'âm*, a general mobilisation of local paramilitary units to ward off the challenge to order mounted by janissaries.[34]

There are few studies of provincial military society in the seventeenth century.[35] Many of our conclusions about the role of the military in the different cities of the empire derive from a handful of studies on its Asian parts. There were three major military forces in the cities of the empire by the beginning of the eighteenth century: the janissary infantry regiments; the mounted regiments; and the paramilitary regiments composed of mercenaries and troops mobilised for specific campaigns. The apportionment of influence and power between these three components underwent profound changes during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The cavalry units, originally often transferred from other areas of the empire, had been the backbone of the military Ottoman presence in the countryside in the sixteenth century, but during the 1600s they were gradually infiltrated by provincial elites able to pay for the various rural tax-farms and willing to mobilise rural populations to fight in Ottoman campaigns. In seventeenth-century Egypt, for example, the *çavuş* and *müteferikka* military units, which were drawn from outside the janissaries and the *mamluk* elites, became the major provincial administrators and tax-collectors.

Michael Winter concludes that for the elite among these latter units, the appointment to provincial office often became a stepping-stone to the much higher position of the beylicate in Cairo.[36] However, Jane Hathaway finds that a major shift in Egypt's military society began in 1660, after the defeat of the beys, who had built their power on cavalry units and rural tax-farms.[37] It is at that point that Ottoman regimental officers stationed in Egypt began forming political households within the barracks, acquiring retainers and urban tax-farms. They became the new urban elite of Cairo, dominating its political life and controlling its revenues.[38]

In the Mosul countryside, local elites became major rural tax-farmers, dominated by two families who were able to mobilise a mercenary fighting force. Similar developments took place in Damascus, Aleppo and Palestine. Thus, as we have seen, the cavalry forces were led by local families, or families who had put down local roots, and were no longer rotated between various areas of

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34 Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation', 306.
35 The notable exception being Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*.
36 Winter, *Egyptian Society*, p. 43.
37 Jane Hathaway, 'Egypt in the Seventeenth Century', in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1998), vol. II, ed. M. W. Daly, pp. 34–58, at pp. 38–9.
38 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*, pp. 35–46.

the empire. Their effectiveness as a fighting force was further circumscribed by their ability to pay a replacement fee to the government in lieu of military service. The state, always strapped for cash to finance its ever-growing mercenary forces, encouraged this practice. The net result was that by the middle of the seventeenth century, mounted soldiers were led by local men who were often capable of challenging the authority of the state by relying on their own troops. More significant to the structure of power relations in the provinces was the ability of such military leaders to control rural resources in the form of tax-farms, and to establish closer and more permanent links with rural populations.

The movers and shakers of urban politics in Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, Mosul and Baghdad in the second half of the seventeenth century, were the janissary regiments. The *kanunnameler*, or provincial laws, drafted in the sixteenth century, had specified the number of janissaries stationed in of the cities and fortresses of the empire. During the sixteenth century the infantry regiments who policed the river ports and guarded the citadel were made up of men from the Balkans (Rumeli) and Circassians, while Bedouins as well as local people were excluded.[39] Pre-Ottoman elites were incorporated into Egyptian military society through the cavalry, whose members constituted the bulk of the military contingent in this province.[40] However, as early as the sixteenth century, Egyptians were incorporated into the standing army to fight wars in Yemen and Ethiopia. By the seventeenth century, conflicts developed between the *mısır kulları* and the *kapı kulları*, the local and imperial forces respectively, on issues of payments, corporate immunity from *shariʻa* court law and other privileges.

Initially these forces ranged from several hundred to a few thousand men, depending on the importance of the relevant city to the empire. The government tried to maintain strict control over the number of janissaries registered in its roll registers (*yoklama*) in an effort to curb the tendency, visible already in the late sixteenth century, for local mercenaries to enrol in these regiments in order to obtain salaries and other entitlements. These efforts proved futile as the janissary rolls swelled with local men anxious to obtain access to privileges and to the protection of the janissary regiments. Unable to pay its regiments because of fiscal troubles, the government overlooked the increasing tendency of the latter to finance themselves through involvement in trade and industry, or through rural and urban tax-farms. Particularly among the officers of these

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39 Winter, *Egyptian society*, p. 38.
40 Ibid., p. 39: about 10,000 soldiers in Egypt, with 8,800 Egyptians and 1,200 drawn from Turkish provinces.

regiments, the push to translate their military status into political power was overwhelming. In Damascus, Egypt, Aleppo and Mosul, eighteenth-century political elites were often drawn from the ranks of the janissary or paramilitary leadership.[41]

So far-reaching were the changes the Ottoman military establishment had experienced by the late eighteenth century that one scholar has called for a serious re-examination of the term janissary.[42] The inclusion of tribal foot-soldiers, a diverse conglomerate of mercenaries and sundry other paramilitary forces makes it difficult to use 'the military' as a viable category of analysis. What emerges from the few studies on the subject in the Arab world are several trends: in cities with large infusions of military and paramilitary elements drawn from different ethnic backgrounds, local politics became increasingly polarised around issues linked to the integration of these elements into society. In Damascus the local faction (*yerliyya*) opposed an imperial faction, called *kapıkul*. In Aleppo, the janissary factions were able to draw support from Kurdish and other paramilitary elements relatively new to the city. In Baghdad, where the janissary regiments were continuously challenged by newly recruited and ill-trained paramilitary Kurdish and Arab tribal elements, the janissaries were also competing with the new leadership of Mamluk military households that drew on their own recruits and slaves.[43]

The *ilmiye* and local *ulema*

Shortly after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517, the great sufi Sha'rani expressed his opposition to the new Ottoman order by writing:

> The spirit of the Revelation consists of the world order. If religious laws disappear, the secular rule replaces them in each generation in which they are lacking. This is what is meant by the term *kanun* in the Ottoman state. Its application is lawful in countries that have no religious laws. As for Egypt,

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41 For Damascus, see Rafeq, 'Local Forces', and Schilcher, *Families in Politics*. For Egypt, see Hathaway, *The Politics of Households*; Hathaway, 'Egypt in the Seventeenth Century'; André Raymond, *Le Caire des janissaires: l'apogée de la ville ottomane sous 'Abd al-Rahman Katkhudâ* (Paris, 1995). For Aleppo, see Bodman, *Political Factions*, pp. 55–110. For Mosul, see Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 120–49.

42 Virginia Aksan, 'Whatever happened to the Janissaries? Mobilization for the 1768–1774 Russo-Ottoman War', *War in History* 5, 1 (1998), 23–36.

43 For Damascus and Aleppo, see Rafeq, 'Local Forces'; Bodman, *Political Factions*. For Baghdad, see Dina Rizk Khoury, 'Identities in Flux: Tribe, Faction, and Neighborhood in Baghdad, 1760s to 1810s', unpublished paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association, Washington, DC, December 1998.

> Baghdad, North Africa, and the other lands of Islam, the application of the *kanun* is unlawful.[44]

Almost three centuries later, ʿAli al-ʿUmari, a Mosul scholar, expressed his disillusionment with the Ottoman government's attempts at reforming the fiscal and military system by attacking Ottoman secular law (*kanun*). The root of the sultan's troubles, according to al-ʿUmari, lay in his state's inability to enforce Islamic legal punishment (*hudud*). However, unlike the Egyptian sufi, al-ʿUmari did not question the legal edifice of Ottoman rule in the Muslim Middle East. He merely proposed reforming it in an attempt to withstand the threats of both European expansion and the legal and administrative reordering that had just begun in the Ottoman Empire.

Chosen perhaps arbitrarily, these views by two provincial scholars who lived in different societies and times frame the changing relationship between the central government and the local religious-cum-scholarly community in the major administrative centres in the predominantly Muslim parts of the empire during the first three centuries of Ottoman rule. While local religious scholars contested the new administrative regulations of the state in discursive tracts, they had, by the end of the eighteenth century, become adept at working within the framework of Ottoman administrative structures. How and why this happened is one of the least studied aspects of provincial society. Despite an abundance of biographical dictionaries and local histories, there is very little attempt to study the role of the judicial establishment and its relation to the *ulema* living in major administrative centres in the empire.

Galal El-Nahal and Abdul Karim Rafeq are among the few historians who have addressed the transformation in the local judicial establishment during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to El-Nahal, the judiciary in Ottoman Egypt was organised hierarchically and was free from the interference of other branches of the provincial administration, reporting directly to Istanbul. More importantly, and in contradistinction to its earlier role under the Mamluks, it administered both religious and secular law (*kanun*).[45] The chief judge of Egypt was almost always drawn from other provinces of the empire and appointed by Istanbul, as were the judges of all major cities. However, by the end of the seventeenth century, the provincial and lower-level judicial establishment (particularly offices of deputy judges) became the monopoly

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44 Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt* (New Brunswick, 1982), pp. 244–5.
45 El-Nahal, *Judicial Administration*, pp. 9–11.

of certain families, often of local origin. Rafeq's work on Damascus does not delve into the administrative structures of the judicial establishment with the same detail as that of El-Nahal. However, he does seem to think that by the seventeenth century, the process of 'localisation' of judicial office observed in Egypt also took place in Damascus.[46]

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century changes in the judicial establishment included the gradual encroachment of the Ottoman Hanafī legal school of thought over others, especially in issues of land tenure and taxation. Rafeq believes that, while the Shafiʿi school of legal thought persisted in Damascus, a number of *ulama* became Hanafis in order to obtain appointments to lower judicial offices.[47] In Egypt, however, the Shafiʿi school of thought remained more prominent, with a number of scholars vocally contesting the predominance of the Hanafis and the encroachment of secular law (*kanun*) on hitherto ill-defined areas covered by *shariʿa* law, such as rulings on marriage dues and the taxation of certain lands.[48] However, by the eighteenth century the peculiar marriage between *shariʿa* and secular law systematised by the Ottomans had gained wide currency among judicial administrators.

Second, the prerogatives of the judge (kadi) were expanded to include a wide range of administrative and legal matters. In addition to working with market inspectors to control quality of artisan production, judges were often involved in adjudicating conflicts between subjects and administrators on issues of urban security and taxation. The state even made kadis responsible for the mobilisation of troops in times of war. Judges, along with other officials, were asked to determine the number of troops that should be raised from each district, and were expected to help in the allocation of resources during campaigns. There have been no detailed studies of the specific ways the judges functioned in such situations, but the frequency with which the administration in Istanbul addressed its judges in such matters points to their centrality in mobilisation efforts.

In addition, by the eighteenth century, judges, along with local notables, were responsible for the allocation of taxes in both urban and rural areas. Through a system of apportionment called *tevzi*, judges were called upon to divide the burden of the provincial administration's expenditures, as well as other taxes, among the different districts of the province under consideration.

46 Abdul Karim Rafeq, 'The Syrian *Ulama*, Ottoman Law and Islamic *Shariʿa*', *Turcica* 24 (1994), 9–32.
47 Ibid.   48 Winter, *Egyptian Society*, pp. 111–12.

Judicial officers were thus increasingly involved in a wide array of administrative functions beyond what might be defined as strictly juridical.[49]

 Finally, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries court procedures were regularised in a fashion not seen in any of the Arab cities in pre-Ottoman times. This aspect of the judicial administration of the provinces has attracted most attention, as a number of scholars writing on social and legal history have mined the Islamic court records and demonstrated the frequency and regularity with which subjects of the sultan sought to settle their affairs at the court. Nelly Hanna, for example, has argued that by the seventeenth century the Islamic courts of Cairo were one of the favoured venues for merchants to transact their business. She views this as a relatively recent development, a consequence of the regularisation of legal practice brought about by the Ottomans.[50] Judith Tucker's work on women's use of the courts in the seventeenth century points to a parallel development in Palestine.[51] Hanna and Tucker's works are among the few studies on the court system in the seventeenth century. The literature about eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century legal and judicial culture is much richer. In Aleppo, according to Marcus, the court became the venue to air grievances against the government, and sometimes the support of the kadi himself was enlisted to stage a rebellion against a particularly oppressive governor.[52] In the more peripheral city of Nablus, Doumani has shown that the court was often the site at which local customary law and Ottoman judicial practice intersected, not always very harmoniously. The judge, in such cases, mediated between the writ of a remote central government and the practice of the city's inhabitants.[53] Thus, whether dealing with commercial, personal or administrative matters, the judge presided over a distinctly Ottoman judicial establishment with roots in the Mamluk period, but that had been transformed and regularised by the Ottoman central authorities.[54]

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49 On the administrative role of the judges in sixteenth-century Anatolia see Faroqhi, 'Political activity'. For Aleppo, see Bodman, *Political Factions*, p. 52; Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1989), pp. 101–20.

50 Hanna, *Big Money*, pp. 48–53.

51 Judith Tucker, 'The Fullness of Affection: Mothering in the Islamic Law of Syria and Palestine', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 232–52.

52 Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 88f.

53 Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1995), p. 152.

54 Wael Hallaq, 'The *Qadi Diwan (Sijill)* before the Ottomans', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61, 3 (1998), 415–36. Hallaq makes a strong argument against the assumption that the *shariʿa* court institution was a distinctly Ottoman development.

The *ayan*

Perhaps the most amorphous group among provincial power-holders, the *ayan* or notables of Arab cities appear to have been, if the local chroniclers are to be believed, the cement that held the urban order together; according to circumstances they legitimised or challenged the power of the state. Unfortunately, in the chronicles and Ottoman archival sources the term *ayan* is used in a wide variety of ways that belie any scholarly attempts to generalise about them. Often it denotes the coterie of strongmen that appeared in Anatolian and Arab cities in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, some of whom challenged the political control of the state. Bureaucrats used the term in a generic fashion to describe a group of local men drawn from prominent families or lineages, who helped in the apportionment of taxes, bought rural and urban tax-farms, sat on local governors' councils and mediated between state officials and provincial populations. Local chroniclers referred to *ayan* as members of the ephemeral category of *khassa*, or people 'who loose and bind'. That is to say, they were not defined by an administrative function, but rather by a fluid notion of social position and prestige. The latter could be derived from a large number of sources: it could be attached to holy or secular lineage, or else to wealth and patronage; or simply result from the ability, at crucial moments, to articulate the desires of sectors of the urban population when confronted with state representatives. This lack of consensus on the exact meaning of the term *ayan* makes it difficult for historians to trace the transformations of this social group.

Perhaps the clearest discussion of the changing role of the *ayan* in Arab cities is found in a seminal article written by Albert Hourani nearly forty years ago. Hourani's definition of these notables is derived from the Arab chroniclers of the period.[55] They were the people who 'loose and bind', and thus were able to retain their legitimacy as local power-brokers vis-à-vis the state. In this perspective the *ayan*'s power derived from their abilities to mediate between the local population and the central government. On the one hand, they positioned themselves as representatives of local aspirations and took it upon themselves to articulate such aspirations to the representatives of the state.

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55 Albert Hourani, 'Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables', in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. W. R. Polk and R. L. Chambers (Chicago, 1968), pp. 41–65; Halil Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 27–52. For Anatolia, see Gilles Veinstein, 'Ayan de la région d'Izmir et le commerce du Levant dans la deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle', *Etudes Balkaniques* 1, 3 (1976), 71–83.

Yet, according to Hourani, these notables lost their legitimacy along with their urban constituency when they became administrators and officials of the Ottoman state after the modernising reforms of the nineteenth century. Thus, while their earlier power had been based on pre-modern notions of notability, and had been closely bound to informal and fluid political networks, they lost this 'traditional' basis in the 1800s when they became agents of the state, executing its orders and deriving their standing in the urban community from their position in the state apparatus.

Hourani's ideas on urban notables have been challenged or refined by the work of several scholars. Thus Abraham Marcus disagrees with Hourani's view of the notables as mediators between the provincial state representatives and the urban populace, even in the eighteenth century. In his work on Aleppo he has found that urban notables were often oppressors of the local population, and at times in cahoots with the local governor.[56] Doumani, in his work on Nablus, has concluded that merchants and not notables were the representatives of local interests.[57] In a similar vein, Thieck's work on Aleppo has demonstrated the ways in which these notables' interests had become tied to the entitlements granted by the state, thus making it difficult to portray them as independent representatives of local interests.[58] Others point to the limitations in Hourani's '*ayan*' argument. They concede its usefulness for the cities of the Fertile Crescent, but find it difficult to apply in Egypt and North Africa, where a different political culture predominated.

While it is all but impossible to view the *ayan* as a well-defined social group possessing a clear political agenda, it is nevertheless possible to trace, somewhat tentatively, the transformations in their role within the provincial urban environment. Town-based *ayan* were not strongmen who could (and sometimes did) challenge Ottoman control. Rather, they were involved in the more mundane aspects of brokering power between their urban constituencies and the state. Several factors made the eighteenth century into the heyday of *ayan* ascendancy in the cities of the Fertile Crescent, as the weakness of state controls in the wake of the seventeenth-century crisis allowed certain local elites to accumulate wealth and purchase rural and urban tax-farms. At the same time, the gradual erasure of barriers between the servitors of the governor (*ehl-i örf*) and the general population allowed a number of the latter to join the administrative and judicial elites. Thus the 'Umarī family of Mosul, originally from an *ulama* background, acquired tax-farms and became leaders

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56 Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 85–6; Philip Khoury, 'The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited', *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Mediterranée*, 55–6 (1990), 215–28.
57 Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, p. 5.   58 Thieck, 'Décentralisation ottomane'.

in their quarters. The Tahazades of Aleppo were from a holy lineage and had become, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the largest holders of tax-farms in their province. The tribal leaders from the Ubaid-al-Shawi clan in Baghdad became tax-farmers, and held an official position as mediators between the governors of the province and tribal leaders in the hinterland.

The tax-farming system (particularly the lifetime tax-farm, *malikâne*) was instrumental in the ascendancy of the *ayan* in the eighteenth century. Equally important was the lowering of the barriers dividing the military from the rest of the population, which helped integrate the leaders of the local paramilitary establishment with the city's elite. Prominent families were now able to situate themselves as leaders of paramilitary regiments, and when unwilling or unable to do so, they recruited and mobilised paramilitary forces around their own agendas. For example, when the government called on Aleppine elites to mobilise troops against the French in 1798, Muhammad Qudsî Efendi, then the head of the descendants of the Prophet (*naqib al-ashraf*), was able to recruit some 5,000–6,000 followers around his household.[59] Other *ayan* found their niche among the expanding sector of tax-farmers in rural villages who monopolised grain and mutton delivered to the central city. In eighteenth-century Aleppo the urban populace suffered severely from artificial scarcities, so that rebels often demanded the punishment of the *ayan* for withholding wheat and barley.[60] Similarly, in Baghdad grain was often used as a weapon by the elite to subjugate the urban population. Hala Fattah believes that famine in the city was often fabricated by the elites who held the bulk of rural tax-farms.[61]

Finally, the *ayan*'s ascendancy was sanctioned by administrative policies. The system of taxation known as the *tevzi* allowed these men an inordinate amount of power in the allocation of the tax burden on rural and urban populations. How widely this system was practised in the empire's Arab provinces is hard to tell. Inalcik believes that it was instrumental in the rise of the *ayan* in Anatolia, and Khoury has shown that the same applied to Mosul.[62] If future research proves this practice to have been widespread in the Arab provinces, we will have identified yet one more of the myriad factors which helped 'localise' Ottoman authority in the eighteenth century.

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59 Bodman, *Political Factions*, pp. 118f. The *naqib* would not fight against the infidel before being promised the lucrative post of *qadi* of Cairo.
60 Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 86–101.
61 Hala Fattah, 'The Politics of Grain Trade in Iraq, c. 1840–1917', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 5–6 (1991), 151–66.
62 Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*, pp. 190–6.

However, we should not view even the eighteenth-century *ayan* simply as representatives of local interests, as Hourani once posited. While transformations in the provincial administrative apparatus did lead to the emergence of indigenous power-holders, it does not automatically follow that such developments challenged Ottoman authority. The *ayan* of the eighteenth century were more like a service gentry, their interests tied to a set of entitlements and administrative functions allocated by the state. When they did stand up to the state's representatives, as they often did in Aleppo, Mosul and other parts of the empire, they did so to negotiate a better position for themselves and their constituencies. Their challenges were minor, undertaken in the spirit of preserving an order, or of returning it to the practice of an idealised past. Unlike the semi-autonomous warlords that Masters discusses in this volume, they regarded themselves as subjects of the sultan.

Conclusion

Until the 1980s the historiography of the Ottoman Empire had emphasised the often conflict-ridden quality of relations between the central state and the provincial elites. Doubtless there is truth in the almost instinctive assumption that at all times and in all places there will be conflicts between a given central state and its provincial elites. However, it is important to note that by the eighteenth century there were fundamental changes in the relationship between the Ottoman state and its various provincial elites, and moreover these changes varied significantly from province to province. Some historians have argued that wider sectors of local elites had become 'Ottomanised' by the eighteenth century, positing that such 'Ottomanisation' acted as an antidote to the loosening of administrative controls so prevalent in the later 1700s.[63] Whether such arguments will hold true for a large part of the Arab provinces remains to be seen.

Such variations between provinces preclude sweeping generalisations about the extent of decentralisation and loss of administrative control by the eighteenth-century central state. But at present our most important result is that in some but not all areas of the Ottoman/Arab lands, centrally adopted

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63 Jane Hathaway (*The Politics of Households*; 'Egypt in the Seventeenth Century') does not use the term 'Ottomanisation', but she does argue for the transfer into Egypt of a distinctly Ottoman elite political culture and posits that it gradually pervaded the less exalted circles of the Ottoman provincial establishment. Bruce Masters (*Origins*) has discussed this group as an emergent Ottoman gentry, while Khoury (*State and Provincial Society*) has described the process as 'Ottomanisation'.

fiscal policies combined with localised socio-economic developments to allow a wider group of local men, from a variety of backgrounds, access to state resources and offices. To my mind, wider sectors of provincial elite society became Ottomanised and continued to provide a stable social base for Ottoman hegemony despite spectacular rebellions and political disruptions caused by political power-holders.

Semi-autonomous provincial forces in the Balkans and Anatolia

FIKRET ADANIR

Provincial elites as mediators

In the past, history writing on the Ottoman Empire tended to view the emergence of provincial forces as a challenge to central authority and therefore as a symptom of imperial decline. Historians drew mostly on source materials from the central state archives, such as the 'justice decrees' that had been issued in order to condemn predatory practices of rebellious administrators and bandits (*celali*) during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.[1] Moreover, such research remained more or less focused on the 'classical' Ottoman regime, subscribing thereby rather uncritically to what the Weberian archetypical concept of 'sultanism' implied – that is, a kind of patrimonialism that left little room for negotiated solutions on the basis of popular acceptance.[2] Thus early on it was rarely appreciated that a substantial group of provincial mediators between the ruler and the ruled existed, and even when taken note of, such persons' reputation was tainted with corruption, many of them being branded as usurpers (*mütegallibe*). But in recent decades a more subtly differentiating approach in

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1 Mustafa Akdağ, *Celâlî isyanları (1550–1603)* (Ankara, 1963); William J. Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion, 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Berlin, 1983); Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca and London, 1994), pp. 141–88; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Seeking Wisdom in China: An Attempt to Make Sense of the Celali Rebellions', in *Zafar-nama: Memorial Volume to Felix Tauer*, ed. Rudolf Vesely and Eduard Gombar (Prague, 1996), pp. 101–24; Halil İnalcık, 'Adâletnâmeler', *Belgeler* 2, 3–4 (1965), 49–145; Yücel Özkaya, 'XVIII'nci yüzyılda çıkarılan adalet-nâmelere göre Türkiye'nin iç durumu', *Belleten* 38 (1974), 445–91.

2 On Weberian sultanism and its earlier Enlightenment variant, 'oriental despotism', see Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie*, ed. Johannes Winckelmann, 5th rev. edn (Tübingen, 1972), pp. 133f.; Halil Inalcik, 'Comments on "Sultanism": Max Weber's Typification of Ottoman Polity', *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1992), 49–73; Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte* (Ithaca and London, 1993); Thomas Kaiser, 'The Evil Empire? The Debate on Turkish Despotism in Eighteenth-Century French Political Culture', *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 6–34.

Ottoman studies has gained prevalence. It is by now recognised that, despite the 'feudal' divide between the ruling estate (*askeri*) and the tax-paying subjects (*reaya*), the provincial population was able to articulate its gravamina in a politically appropriate and effective manner. For example, petitioning was an important channel through which even the peasantry could reach the ear of the sultan and ask for a redress of grievances.[3] Considering widespread illiteracy during that period, one can surmise that only a select few were in a position to put such formal requests on paper or to arrange for their conveyance to the imperial centre. Obviously we are dealing here with influential persons whom the sources designate as 'notables' (*ayan*).[4] Their ascendancy to socio-political pre-eminence in the provinces by the end of the eighteenth century forms the subject matter of this chapter.

The complex issue of provincial elites in the Ottoman Empire cannot be studied adequately without due attention to pre-Ottoman leadership groups and what had survived of them into the Ottoman period. With respect to some peripheral regions such as Yemen and North Africa, it is generally accepted that their administration was only loosely controlled by the imperial centre, local social groups having asserted themselves soon after the conquest.[5] Similarly, the tribal society of eastern borderlands facing the Safavid Empire was able to retain a high degree of autonomy well into the nineteenth century.[6] But even in the 'core' provinces of Anatolia, Rumelia or the Archipelago, the establishment of Ottoman rule did not necessarily mean a complete ousting of pre-Ottoman leadership groups. Whether in conformity with the policy of accommodation (*istimalet*) geared to win the subject peoples over to their side or out of concern for the manpower needs of their expanding state, the early Ottomans were

3 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Political Initiatives "From the Bottom Up" in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Some Evidence for their Existence', in *Osmanistische Studien zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Hans Georg Majer (Wiesbaden 1986), pp. 24–33; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanic Legitimation (1570–1650)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 35 (1992), 1–39; Halil İnalcık, 'Şikâyet hakkı: arż-ı ḥâl ve arż-ı maẓhar'lar', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 7–8 (1988), 33–54; Hans Georg Majer, *Das osmanische 'Registerbuch der Beschwerden' (šikāyet defteri) vom Jahre 1675* (Vienna, 1984).
4 Harold Bowen, 'Aʿyān', *EI* 2.
5 Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 225–30.
6 Tom Sinclair, 'The Ottoman Arrangements for the Tribal Principalities of the Lake Van Region of the Sixteenth Century' and Mehmet Öz, 'Ottoman Provincial Administration in Eastern and Southeastern Antolia: The Case of Bidlis in the Sixteenth Century', both in *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, 1–2 (Summer 2003), 119–44 and 145–56 respectively; Nejat Göyünç and Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth, *Land an der Grenze: osmanische Verwaltung im heutigen türkisch–syrisch–irakischen Grenzgebiet im 16. Jahrhundert* (Istanbul, 1997).

quite successful in integrating the indigenous elites.[7] In particular, groups who had been granted land in *pronoia* by Christian emperors and princes in return for military service were not disinclined to enter a similar relationship with the Ottomans. For example, after the conquest of Trebizond in 1461 some local Christians were assigned lands in the form of military fiefs, which remained in the possession of their (mostly Islamised) offspring in the subsequent centuries, even though in the meantime the military functions originally associated with the holdings might have disappeared. This type of hereditary landownership was clearly 'a carry-over from earlier Trebizondine–Byzantine practice'.[8]

The development in the Balkans showed many parallels. The *timar* system in the frontier province of Bosnia, for example, had by the sixteenth century been transformed into a system of hereditary landownership, primarily because the fiefs granted to local families encompassed lands that 'had originally been part of their old tribal heritages'.[9] And the existence of such *baština*s – a Slavic term that denoted hereditary title to land – in Bosnia as well as in other parts of the Balkans was again connected with the phenomenon of Christian *sipahi*s during the early Ottoman period. Later on, some of the latter lost their fiefs, but a number of them, whether they converted to Islam or not, continued to occupy an important place within the provincial society.[10]

Evidently, some degree of communal autonomy was conducive to the emergence of local leadership. Different conditions under which individual districts or towns had been conquered left room for the development of different degrees of dependency or autonomy. Towns like Janina (Ioannina, Epirus) and

7 Halil Inalcik, 'Ottoman Methods of Conquest', *Studia Islamica* 2 (1954), 103–29; Halil İnalcık, 'Rūmeli', *EI 2*; Speros Vryonis Jr., 'Byzantine and Turkish Societies and their Sources of Manpower', in *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (London, 1975), pp. 125–52; Heath W. Lowry, *Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities: Christian Peasant Life on the Aegean Island of Limnos* (Istanbul, 2002), p. 173.

8 Heath W. Lowry, 'Privilege and Property in Ottoman Maçuka in the Opening Decades of the Tourkokratia: 1461–1553', in *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, ed. Anthony Bryer and Heath Lowry (Birmingham and Washington, DC, 1986), pp. 97–128, at p. 115.

9 Avdo Sućeska, 'The Position of the Bosnian Moslems in the Ottoman State', *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 1, 2 (Autumn 1980), 1–24, at p. 2.

10 Halil İnalcık, 'Stefan Duşan'dan Osmanlı imparatorluğuna. XV. asırda Rumeli'de hıristiyan sipahiler ve menşeleri', in *Fuad Köprülü Armağanı* (Istanbul, 1953), pp. 207–48; Halil Inalcik, 'Timariotes chrétiens en Albanie au XVe siècle d'après un registre de timar ottoman', *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 4 (1951), 118–38; Branislav Djurdjev, 'Hrišćsani-spahije u severnoj Srbiji u XV veku', *Godišnjak Istoriskog Društva Bosne i Hercegovine* 4 (1952), 165–69; Bistra Cvetkova, 'Novye dannye o christianach-spachijach na Balkanskom poluostrove v period tureckogo gospodstva', *Vizantijski vremennik* 13 (1958), 184–97; Nicoară Beldiceanu, 'Timariotes chrétiens en Thessalie (1454/55)', *Südost-Forschungen* 44 (1985), 45–81.

Moschopole (Voskopojë, Albania), which had surrendered without resistance, or mountainous districts such as Mani in the Peloponnese or Souli and Himara in Epirus, which had never been completely subjugated, had self-governing bodies elected from among heads of local clans.[11]

The patriarchal societies of northern Albania and Montenegro were likewise only loosely tied to the imperial centre.[12] Here and especially in regions further north – Herzegovina, Bosnia and Serbia – a particular system of self-rule developed in which pastoral groups with the status of 'Vlach' (*eflâk*) played a significant role. The system was based on various statutes issued by the Ottomans as *eflâk kanunu*, adopted from the medieval 'Vlach rights' (*jus valachicum*).[13] As in pre-Ottoman times, the transhumant herders were again treated as separate from the peasant society at large and were subjected to a different regime of taxes and services.[14] The basic administrative unit of Vlach communal life was *katun* (Italian *cantone*, > Latin *cantus*), which in an earlier phase appears to have been rather an organisational concept, as well as a fiscal term. But later on it came to mean in many regions a rural settlement – in other words, a village.[15] The chiefs (*kmet*) of such communes were elected

11 Peter Bartl, *Der Westbalkan zwischen spanischer Monarchie und osmanischem Reich: zur Türkenkriegsproblematik an der Wende vom 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 124–31, 160–4; Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle and London, 1977), pp. 92, 237; Demos N. Mexes, *Hē Manē kai hoi Maniates: themata gia tēn historia tous, tē laographia kai tēn technē* (Athens, 1977); Loukia D. Polite, *To Souli tēs Ēpeirou: hoi oikismoi kai hē historia tous* (Athens, 1992).

12 Stojan Novaković, *Tursko carstvo pred Srpski ustanak 1780–1804* (Belgrade, 1906), pp. 191–204; Selami Pulaha, 'Formation des régions de selfgovernment dans les Malessies du sandjak de Shkodër aux XV–XVIIe siècles', *Studia Albanica* 13 (1976), 173–9; Peter Bartl, 'Die Mirditen: Bemerkungen zur nordalbanischen Stammesgeschichte', *Münchener Zeitschrift für Balkankunde* 1 (1978), 27–69; Branislav Djurdjev, *Postanak i razvitak brdskih, crnogorskih i hercegovačkih plemena* (Titograd, 1984).

13 On Vlach groups in the pre-Ottoman Balkans, see Constantin Jireček, *Staat und Gesellschaft im mittelalterlichen Serbien: Studien zur Kulturgeschichte des 13.–15. Jahrhunderts*, part 1 (Vienna, 1912), pp. 32, 69–70; Constantin Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben*, vols. I and II, 1 (Gotha, 1911–18), vol. I, pp. 154–7 and vol. II, 1, p. 32; Mátyás Gyóni, 'La transhumance des Vlaques balkaniques au Moyen Age', *Byzantinoslavica* 12 (1951), 29–42; Petre Ş. Năsturel, 'Vlacho-Balcanica', *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* 22 (1977–84, Athens, 1985), 221–48.

14 Nicoară Beldiceanu, 'Sur les Valaques des Balkans slaves à l'époque ottomane (1450–1550)', *Revue d'Etudes Islamiques* 34 (1966), 83–132; Branislav Djurdjev, 'O naseljavanju vlaha-stočara u sjevernu Srbiju u drugoj polovini XV vijeka', *Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 35 (1984), 9–34; Tom J. Winnifrith, *The Vlachs: The History of a Balkan People* (London, 1987), pp. 123–38; Matei Cazacu, 'Les Valaques dans les Balkans occidentaux (Serbie, Croatie, Albanie, etc.). La Pax ottomanica (XVe–XVIIe siècles)', in *Les Aroumains* (Paris, 1989), pp. 79–93.

15 Milenko S. Filipović, 'Katun u našoj istoriografiji' and Branislav Djurdjev, 'Teritorijalizacija katunske organizacije do kraja XV veka (katun-knežine-pleme)', both in *Simpozijum o srednjevjekovnom katunu (24–25 November 1961)*, ed. M. S. Filipović (Sarajevo, 1963), pp. 9–17 and 143–70, respectively; Aleksandar Matkovski, 'About the Wallachian Livestock

by the heads of extended families, and they in turn elected a *knez* or primate as the representative of their individual district (*nahiye*), which comprised a number of *katun*s.[16] By the end of the eighteenth century, the *knežina* system of local autonomy appears to have evolved into a virtual federation of 'village republics'.

In other areas self-rule resulted from the fact that certain occupational groups, such as miners, tar extractors, horse breeders, *derbendci* (guardians of mountain passes), saline workers or producers of gunpowder, had been exempted from certain taxes, and subsequently these 'privileges' were associated with their settlements as well. Thus the towns of Gabrovo, Koprivštica, Teteven, Trjavna, Kotel, Kalofer, Klisura, Loveč, Panagjurište, Samokov and Čiprovci in Bulgaria, which had developed from *derbendci* or *voynuk* villages of an earlier period, all had self-governing bodies.[17]

In larger towns with a more urban character individual *mahalle*s (quarters), craftsmen's guilds or confessional congregations served as units of local administration. In sixteenth-century Salonika, for example, there were twelve Jewish neighbourhoods, along with ten Greek Orthodox and forty Muslim quarters.[18] On account of their diverse geographical (Spain, Portugal, Italy and Germany) and socio-cultural origins, the Salonika Jews were divided further into smaller congregations, each of which sent a representative to the general Jewish council of the city.[19] In predominantly Muslim Anatolia, towns

    Breeding Organization in the Balkans with Special Attention to Katun', *Review/Glasnik* 31, 3 (1987), 199–221.

16 Branislav Djurdjev, 'O knezovima pod turskom upravom', *Istorijski časopis* 1 (1948), 132–57; Milan Vasić, 'Knežine i knezovi timarlije u Zvorničkom sandžaku u XVI vijeku', *Godišnjak Istoriskog Društva Bosne i Hercegovine* 10 (1959), 247–78; Avdo Sućeska, 'Tendencije u razvoju turske lokalne vlasti u Beogradskom pašaluku pred Prvi srpski ustanak', *Istorijski značaj Srpske revolucije 1804 godine. Zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa održanog od 3. do 5. juna 1980 povodom obeležavanja 175. godišnjice Prvog srpskog ustanka*, ed. Vasa Čubrilović (Belgrade, 1983), pp. 319–22; Stevan Pavlowitch, 'Society in Serbia, 1791–1830', in *Balkan Society in the Age of Greek Independence*, ed. Richard Clogg (London, 1981), pp. 137–56, at p. 138.

17 Branislav Djurdjev, 'O vojnucima (sa osvrtom na razvoj turskog feudalizma i na pitanje bosanskog agaluka)', *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu* 2 (1947), 75–138; Aleksandar Stojanovski, *Dervendžistvoto vo Makedonija* (Skopje, 1974); Aleksandar Stojanovski, *Raja so specijalni sadolženija vo Makedonija (vojnuci, sokolari, orizari i solari)* (Skopje, 1990); Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve voynuklar* (Ankara, 1989); Elena Grozdanova, 'Bevölkerungskategorien mit Sonderpflichten und Sonderstatus', in *Osmanistische Studien zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Hans Georg Majer (Wiesbaden, 1986), pp. 46–67; Stefan Andreev and Elena Grozdanova, *Iz istorijata na rudarstvoto i metalurgijata v bălgarskite zemi prez XV–XIX vek* (Sofia, 1993).

18 Vasiles Demetriades, *Topografia tēs Thessalonikēs kata tēn epochē tēs Tourkokratias 1430–1912* (Salonika, 1983), pp. 50, 82–3, 159.

19 Joseph R. Hacker, 'The Jewish Community of Salonica from the Fifteenth to the Sixteenth Century: A Chapter in the Social History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire and their Relations with the Authorities', Ph.D. thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1978);

such as Bursa, Ankara and Konya had from the fifteenth century onwards urban groups generically designated as *eşraf ve ayan* performing intermediary roles between the town-dwellers and the representatives of the central government. These groups comprised wealthy merchants, experienced craftsmen, respected religious men such as *ulema*, *imam*s and *seyyid*s, or resident military commanders. One of these 'notables' served as *şehir kethüdası*, an official who operated as the representative of both the central authority and the local community and in towns sometimes functioned as a mayor. Others served as trustees of pious foundations, assisted the kadi and market supervisor (*muhtesib*) in their duties, saw to it that the city's public buildings were in good repair and, not least, concerned themselves with issues of public security.[20] Contemporary Ragusan sources referred to similar people in Ottoman Bosnia as *primati*, *superiori et principali del paeze* or *principali dei luoghi*.[21]

Whether urban or rural in character, whether communal or occupational, any form of self-rule presupposed a certain degree of social cohesion which was assured in the Ottoman context largely through the institution of collective liability – another relic from the pre-Ottoman period.[22] By means of mutual warrants and guarantees the individual was compelled to act in solidarity with others of his group, and by belonging to a corporate community, the members of which were collectively liable to fulfil common duties, he acquired civil status. Thus collective liability appears to have been an important factor favouring the development of local autonomy.[23]

Whether a village, an urban neighbourhood, a religious congregation or a trade guild, each unit was represented by an elected body (of elders) meeting under a chief, headman, cleric or warden. A major task of these leaders was to negotiate within urban space or a larger division of provincial administration

Joseph R. Hacker, 'The Hispano-Jewish Society in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th Century', in *The Sephardi Legacy*, ed. H. Beinart (Jerusalem, 1993), vol. II, pp. 109–33; Mark Alan Epstein, *The Ottoman Jewish Communities and their Role in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Freiburg, 1980), pp. 72f.

20 Özer Ergenç, 'Osmanlı klâsik dönemindeki "eşraf" ve "a'yan" üzerine bazi bilgiler', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 3 (1982), 105–18. On the *muhtesib*, see the section written by Robert Mantran in the article 'Ḥisba', *EI 2*.

21 Avdo Sućeska, 'Bedeutung und Entwicklung des Begriffes A'yân im Osmanischen Reich', *Südost-Forschungen* 25 (1966), 3–26, at p. 7.

22 See Dragoljub Dragojlović, 'Institucija kolektivne odgovornosti kod balkanskih slovena u srednom veku', in *Običajno pravo i samouprave na Balkanu i u susednim zemljama / Le Droit coutumier et les autonomies sur les Balkans et dans les pays voisins*, ed. Vasa Čubrilović (Belgrade, 1974), pp. 419–25, at p. 419.

23 See Elena Grozdanova, *Bălgarskata selska obština prez XV–XVIII vek* (Sofia, 1979), pp. 119–25; Svetlana Ivanova, 'Institutăt na kollektivnata otgovornost v bălgarskite gradove prez XV–XVIII v.', *Istoričeski pregled* 46, 1 (1990), 33–44.

the amount of taxes to be collected from individual communities or groups as well as the intracommunal distribution of the tax burden. As representatives of their villages, neighbourhoods or guilds the leaders appeared before courts, for example, in order to ask permission to repair a church, mosque or synagogue or to resolve disputes with other groups.[24] To sum up, these leaders were in a precarious position, often torn between satisfying the authorities, on the one hand, and their communities or colleagues, on the other. Whereas the former urged them to better maintain law and order, to secure a smoother flow of taxes or to enforce more strictly the professional norms, the latter expected benefits.[25]

From local leadership to imperial prominence

The beginnings of semi-autonomous provincial forces in the Ottoman Empire were then embedded in a rather traditional matrix. In other words, these forces functioned not much differently from, for example, the so-called 'thematic' *archontes* of the late Byzantine period.[26] But today when students of the field speak about 'politics of notables' in connection with a certain period of Ottoman history, they surely have something much larger in mind.[27] What is implied is a novel socio-political role which accrued to these provincial leaders at a specific point in time, enabling them thenceforth to act, at first spontaneously and sporadically, but increasingly as a quasi-corporate body. Within Ottoman studies this significant shift in centre–periphery relations has not gone unnoticed, although the focus has been primarily on the Muslim

24 Elena Grozdanova and Svetlana Ivanova, 'Einige Parallelen zwischen den Dorfgemeinden und den Stadtviertelgemeinden in den bulgarischen Landen (16.–17. Jh.)', *Bulgarian Historical Review* 20, 4 (1992), 32–61, at pp. 44–9; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Between Conflict and Accommodation: Guildsmen in Bursa and Istanbul during the 18th Century', in *Guilds, Economy and Society: Proceedings of the Twelfth International Economic History Congress*, ed. Stephen Epstein et al. (Seville, 1998), pp. 143–52; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Urban Space as Disputed Grounds: Territorial Aspects to Artisan Conflict in Sixteenth- to Eighteenth-Century Istanbul', in Suraiya Faroqhi, *Stories of Ottoman Men and Women: Establishing Status, Establishing Control* (Istanbul, 2002), pp. 219–34. Cf. also Amnon Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 188–92.

25 Le'ah Bornstein-Makovetsky, 'Jewish Lay Leadership and Ottoman Authorities during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, ed. Aron Rodrigue (Bloomington, 1992), pp. 87–121, at p. 99.

26 See Michael Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204–1261* (London, 1975), p. 71.

27 Albert Hourani, 'Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables', in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. W. R. Polk and R. L. Chambers (Chicago, 1968), pp. 41–65; Philip S. Khoury, 'The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited', *Villes au Levant. Hommage à André Raymond. Revue du Monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 55–56 (1990), 215–28.

notables, especially the *ayan*, whereas their non-Muslim peers, *archontes* and *kocabaşı*s, have been rather neglected.[28]

The processes that propelled the traditional local leaders to regional or even imperial prominence were complex.[29] Underlying these changes, a transformation of agrarian relations from about the last quarter of the sixteenth century onwards can be diagnosed, which portended grim consequences not only for the cultivators of land but also for various groups of fief-holders. In particular, the *timar* system of land grants in return for military service was being rapidly undermined.[30] The causes of this change and the combination of circumstances that influenced it remain a matter of lively debate.[31] A well-established opinion points out the destabilising role of developments such as an increase in population, spectacular advances in military technology, the dumping of Spanish silver in the Levantine markets and protracted warfare. At the same time the feudal cavalrymen (*sipahi*s), who had been losing their military reputation given the extensive use of firearms in Christian armies, were also confronted with the devaluation of their *timar* holdings. Unemployed village youth sought new opportunities as mercenaries in the retinue of provincial governors. However, their payment was contingent upon the availability of funds at the disposition of governors, who resorted to new local levies for that purpose. More often than not, the mercenaries were disbanded as soon as a campaign was over, or, when kept, they were allowed to roam about and live off the peasantry. The results were the collapse of public order (especially in Anatolia), leading to peasant flight and a relative depopulation of the countryside, frequent rebellions of provincial governors and widespread banditry.[32]

28 Johann Strauss, 'Ottoman Rule Experienced and Remembered: Remarks on Some Local Greek Chronicles of the Tourkokratia', in *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, ed. Fikret Adanir and Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden, 2002), pp. 193–221, at p. 214.

29 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590–1699' and Bruce McGowan, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699–1812', both in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 411–636 and 637–758 respectively.

30 Nicoară Beldiceanu, *Le Timar dans l'etat ottoman (début XIVe–début XVIe siècle)* (Wiesbaden, 1980).

31 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Agriculture and Rural Life in the Ottoman Empire (ca 1500–1878): A Report on Scholarly Literature Published between 1970 and 1985', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 1 (Fall 1987), 3–34; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Ottoman Peasants and Rural Life: The Historiography of the Twentieth Century', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 18 (2000), 153–82; Fikret Adanir, 'Tradition and Rural Change in Southeastern Europe during Ottoman Rule', in *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, ed. Daniel Chirot (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), pp. 131–76; Fikret Adanir, 'The Ottoman Peasantries, c. 1360 – c. 1860', in *The Peasantries of Europe from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Tom Scott (London and New York, 1998), pp. 269–310.

32 Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı tarihinde levendler* (Istanbul, 1965); M. A. Cook, *Population Pressure in Rural Anatolia, 1450–1600* (London, 1972); Ömer Lûtfi Barkan, 'Les Mouvements

The seventeenth century thus appears as the period of profound crises that initiated the process of imperial decline.

Recent interpretations, on the other hand, are careful not to use the word 'decline' with respect to the Ottoman seventeenth or even eighteenth century. That great upheavals had taken place is not disputed. But it is argued that these were hardly different from, say, the rural rebellions that shook seventeenth-century France. Why then speak of 'decline' in the Ottoman case, while interpreting the crises in contemporary France as symptoms of a transformation that smoothed the way for the early modern state?[33] The so-called 'decline paradigm' in the field of Ottoman studies seems to have been chiefly inspired by the modernisation theories of the early post-Second World War period, supported by references to the *nasihatname* (mirrors-for-princes) type of treatises as its principal historical sources.[34] The validity of this approach was questioned first by historians trying to explain socio-economic and political change during the eighteenth century.[35] But a major breakthrough had to wait until the genre conventions of the *nasihatname* literature were recognised. Thus it could be shown that such texts should be read essentially as discourses on morality, reflecting the biases of the authors who, scandalised by social fluidity and disrespect for tradition in their own day, had tended to idealise the 'good olden times'.[36] In particular, the social levelling implied in

des prix en Turquie entre 1490 et 1655', *Histoire économique du monde méditerranéen 1450–1650: Mélanges en l'honneur de Fernand Braudel* (Toulouse, 1973), vol. I, pp. 65–79; Ömer Lûtfi Barkan, 'The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6 (1975), 3–28; Halil Inalcik, 'The Ottoman Decline and its Effects upon the Reaya', in *Aspects of the Balkans: Continuity and Change*, ed. Henrik Birnbaum and Speros Vryonis Jr. (The Hague and Paris, 1972), pp. 338–54; Halil Inalcik, 'The Socio-Political Effects of the Diffusion of Fire-Arms in the Middle East', in *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (London, 1975), pp. 195–217; Halil Inalcik, 'Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 27–52.

33 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991), pp. 2–11; Ariel C. Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden, 2004).

34 See, for example, Bernard Lewis, 'Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire', *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958), 111–127 (also in *The Economic Decline of Empires*, ed. C. M. Cipolla (London, 1970), pp. 215–34); Bernard Lewis, 'Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline', *Islamic Studies* 1 (1962), 71–87.

35 Norman Itzkowitz, 'Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Realities', *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962), 73–94; Roger Owen, 'The Middle East in the Eighteenth Century and "Islamic" Society in Decline – a Critique of Gibb and Bowen's Islamic Society and the West', *Review of Middle East Studies* 1 (1975), 101–12.

36 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'The Ottoman Nasihatname as a Discourse over "Morality"', *Mélanges Robert Mantran (Revue d'Histoire Maghrebine)* 47–8 (December 1987), 17–30; Pál

the phenomenon of uprooted peasants settling in the cities and taking up a trade 'with daily increasing gain', whereas their *sipahi*s did not get a penny in compensation for the revenue lost to them, seems to have been the crux of the matter.[37] Consequently, scholarly attention was directed to one big issue: the shift from taxation in kind to taxation in cash and the entailing changes in the composition of the ruling elite both at the centre and in the provinces.[38]

The replacement of feudal forms of revenue distribution went hand-in-hand with the spread of the practices known as *mukataa*, tax-farming techniques that had previously been in use only on some larger estates. This institution was now promoted methodically in order both to monetarise the tax system and maximise the revenue.[39] One aspect of the new system was the widening application of the *maktu'* method, i.e. tax levied not on a household basis, as in the traditional *çift-hane* system, but calculated for each commune as an annual lump sum.[40] The *maktu'* regime implied that members of a community undertook a collective liability vis-à-vis the tax-collecting agent of the state. Paying a fixed sum in cash, instead of a percentage of the produce in kind, was sometimes more advantageous to the taxpayers, especially if the group was numerically growing. By the same logic, however, the tax load each family had to shoulder would be heavier if the population was decreasing, and it seems that the Ottoman Balkans at least experienced a demographic contraction during the seventeenth century.[41] Another side-effect was the unmistakable inclination of the tax-farmers to overexploit their units, especially since they could not be sure of the duration of their tenures.[42] On the whole, the new regime had the effect of de-emphasising differences in social status, religious

Fodor, 'State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th–17th Century Ottoman Mirror for Princes', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40 (1986), 217–40.

37 Andreas Tietze (ed.), *Mustafā 'Alī's Councel for Sultans of 1581*, parts I–II (Vienna, 1979–82), part I, p. 57; Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire. The Historian Mustafā 'Âli (1541–1600)* (Princeton, 1986); Rhoads Murphey, 'Mustafa Ali and the Politics of Cultural Despair', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21 (1989), 243–55; Cemal Kafadar, 'Les troubles monétaires de la fin du XVIe siècle et la prise de conscience ottomane du déclin', *Annales Economies Sociétés Civilisations* 46 (1991), 381–400.

38 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, p. 15.

39 Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 119–60.

40 Halil Inalcik, 'The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600', in Inalcik and Quataert (eds.), *Economic and Social History*, pp. 9–409, at pp. 145–53.

41 See Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 86f. But cf. Maria N. Todorova, 'Was There a Demographic Crisis in the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth Century?', *Etudes balkaniques* 24, 2 (1988), 55–63.

42 Murat Çizakça, *A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships: The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives* (Leiden, 1996), p. 141.

affiliation and the urban or rural character of one's residence. The relationship between the state and the taxpayer became more fluid, and the land, the basic means of production in an agrarian society, became increasingly mobile, capable of being bought and sold.[43]

This development, which can be viewed as a successful centralisation and monetarisation of the revenue-extraction mechanisms of the state, took place against the background of a reshuffling of the provincial administration. The *sancak* districts typical of the by-now-obsolete *timar* system became gradually insignificant, whereas *eyalet*s, enlarged provinces of a more civilian character, emerged as the principal division of administration. More importantly, they were governed by persons selected from among the elite based in the centre. Paradoxically, however, these changes did not bring about a reinforcement of the central authority. On the contrary, factionalism within the ruling elite crystallising around vizier and pasha households boosted the tendencies towards further decentralisation.[44] Networks of patrons and clients soon became a characteristic trait of Ottoman socio-political life, both at the imperial centre and in the provinces.[45] Positions were filled less and less by men specially trained to serve as bureaucrats but rather by men who were associated through marriage or patronage with a household – a clear indication of the waning importance of personal rule by the sultans and the gradual consolidation of power by a civilian oligarchy.[46]

The new order was characterised by an increasingly commercialised everyday life which entailed the necessity for both the rulers and the ruled to have access to sufficient resources and, not least, viable mechanisms of credit. During the protracted war against Venice (1645–69), for example, when the drain on the imperial treasury was particularly heavy and the funds at the disposal of provincial governors were inadequate, extraordinary taxes of the *avarız* type began to be levied ever more frequently, becoming a severe

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43 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, pp. 58–60; Molly Greene, 'An Islamic Experiment? Ottoman Land Policy on Crete', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 11 (1996), 60–78, at p. 71.

44 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'The Ottoman Vezir and Paşa Households 1683–1703: A Preliminary Report', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94 (1974), 438–47; İ. Metin Kunt, *Sancaktan eyalete. 1550–1650 arasında Osmanlı ümerası ve il idaresi* (Istanbul, 1978), p. 116 and *passim*; Carter V. Findley, 'Patrimonial Household Organization and Factional Activity in the Ottoman Ruling Class', in *Türkiye' nin sosyal ve ekonomik tarihi (1071–1920)*, ed. Osman Okyar and Halil İnalcık (Ankara, 1980), pp. 227–35.

45 See, for example, Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis* (Cambridge, 1997); Tal Shuval, 'Households in Ottoman Algeria', *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 24, 1 (Spring 2000), 41–64; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'An Ulema Grandee and his Household', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 9 (1989), 199–208.

46 Abou-El-Haj, *Formation*, pp. 40f.

burden on the peasantry.[47] Widespread usury and growing peasant indebtedness are believed to have been the principal avenues of land appropriation, chiefly by the members of the ruling elite, such as governors or janissary officers in the provinces.[48] Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the situation worsened still further. Growing discontent in the countryside as well as dire financial necessity compelled the central government to seek remedy in new fiscal measures. Thus the *cizye* (poll-tax payable by non-Muslims), a levy traditionally imposed – at least in the Balkans – on households, was converted in 1691 into a personal tax incumbent on every able-bodied adult non-Muslim male.[49]

Even more important in the long run was the introduction of tax-farming on a life-lease basis in 1695, the so-called *malikâne mukataa*. Under this system, the tax-farmer undertook to make annual payments to the treasury in addition to a lump sum paid at the beginning that served as surety. As long as the conditions of the contract were observed, the *malikâne* had the benefit of full immunity from state intervention. Moreover, on the death of the tax-farmer the heirs enjoyed preferential rights of bidding, so that the transfer of the tenure within the family was more or less ensured.[50] Not surprisingly, the lion's share of the *malikâne* revenues accrued to a limited number of households controlling the high offices at the imperial centre or to persons associated directly with the palace. At the same time, these circles were connected, as it were, in a symbiotic relationship with non-Muslim (chiefly

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47 Avdo Sućeska, 'Die Entwicklung der Besteuerung durch die Avârız-i dîvanîye und die Tekâlîf-i örfiye im Osmanischen Reich während des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts', *Südost-Forschungen* 27 (1968), 89–130, esp. pp. 97ff.; Bistra Cvetkova, *Izvănredni danăci i dăržavni povinnosti v bălgarskite zemi pod turska vlast* (Sofia, 1958), pp. 1–39, 67–75; Lütfi Güçer, *XVI.–XVII. asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda hububat meselesi ve hububattan alınan vergiler* (Istanbul, 1964), pp. 69–135.

48 Cf. Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337, at pp. 307–9; Abdul-Karim Rafeq, 'Changes in the Relationship between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Syrian Provinces from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 53–73, esp. pp. 58f.; Eleni Gara, 'In Search of Communities in Seventeenth Century Ottoman Sources: The Case of the Kara Ferye District', *Turcica* 30 (1998), 135–62; Eleni Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500–1650. Menschen, Lokalgesellschaft und Verwaltung in einer osmanischen Provinz', Ph.D. thesis, University of Vienna (2000).

49 See Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, pp. 80–5. Cf. also Hamid Hadžibegić, *Glavarina u Osmanskoj državi* (Sarajevo, 1966), pp. 41ff.

50 On the *malikâne* system, see Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı maliyesinde malikâne sistemi', in *Türkiye iktisat tarihi semineri*, ed. Osman Okyar and Ünal Nalbantoğlu (Ankara, 1975), pp. 231–96; Ahmet Tabakoğlu, *Gerileme dönemine girerken Osmanlı maliyesi* (Istanbul, 1985), pp. 129–35; Çizakça, *Comparative Evolution*, pp. 159–78. Cf. also Avdo Sućeska, 'Mâlikâna (doživotni zakup državnih dobara u Osmanskoj državi)', *Prilozi za orijentalni filologiju* 8–9 (1958–9), 111–42.

Armenian) banking interests.[51] However, contrary to the initial expectations of the government, most *malikâne*-holders avoided investing capital in their semi-hereditary domains, preferring to remain an Istanbul-based absentee class of rentiers. Tax-farms were thus divided into smaller units and subcontracted to lesser entrepreneurs or managed in the name of the lessees by local agents. Whatever the arrangement, local notables were well placed to profit from this system, not only because they often functioned as tax-collectors in the name of the absentee contractors, but also because they controlled the apportioning of the tax load among the liable households. The latter role was to gain in importance, as the soaring costs of provincial administration – for example, taxes collected by governors to meet emergencies such as *imdad-ı seferiye* and *imdad-ı hazariye* – were also shouldered by the local population.[52] As the economic and political connections between urban centres and their rural hinterlands became stronger, acquisition of landed property became easier, and the provincial elites were able to establish themselves as a new gentry, controlling a significant portion of the arable land as *çiftlik* farms – that is to say, private or quasi-private property.[53]

With the peace concluded at Karlowitz in 1699, the empire entered a new phase of change, characterised not only by further commercialisation of the economy, but also by a mental shift away from the combative spirit of a frontier society to a more civilian culture with intensified interaction across social, ethnic and religious divides.[54] Increased visibility of non-Muslim populations in urban life was a distinct tendency of the period, as these people experienced a considerable demographic growth and also an upsurge in the volume and

51 Hagop Barsoumian, 'The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian *Millet* (1750–1850)', in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols., ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York and London, 1982), vol. I, pp. 171–84, esp. pp. 172–4; Salzmann, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 110–18.

52 Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı maliyesinde bunalım ve değişim dönemi* (*XVIII. yy'dan Tanzimat'a mali tarih*) (Istanbul, 1986), pp. 53–64; cf. also Evgenij Radušev, 'Les dépenses locales dans l'empire ottoman au XVIII siècle selon les données des registres de cadi de Ruse, Vidin et Sofia', *Etudes balkaniques*, 16, 3 (1980), 74–94; Christoph K. Neumann, 'Selânik'te onsekizinci yüzyılın sonunda masarif-i vilâyet defterleri: merkezî hükûmet, taşra idaresi ve şehir yönetimi üçgeninde malî işlemler', *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 16 (1998), 69–97.

53 Gilles Veinstein, 'On the Çiftlik Debate', in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, 1991), pp. 35–53; Adanir, 'Ottoman Peasantries', esp. pp. 298ff.

54 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'The Formal Closure of the Ottoman Frontier in Europe: 1699–1703', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 89 (1969), 467–75; Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, 'Ottoman Attitudes Toward Peace Making: The Karlowitz Case', *Der Islam* 51 (1974), 131–7.

diversity of artisanal production.[55] Interestingly in most of the Balkans by the 1720s, conversion to Islam either had come to an end or was about to do so.[56] Christians and Jews as members, along with Muslims, in confessionally mixed craftsmen's guilds had become a familiar aspect of urban life during the previous centuries.[57] The eighteenth century saw also the ascendancy of a non-Muslim merchant class eager and ideally situated to take full advantage of opportunities offered in the decades following the treaty of Passarowitz (1718), when new trade routes through the Danubian basin and further south, along the valleys of Morava and Vardar, supplemented the traditional arteries of the Levantine trade through the Mediterranean.[58] Provincial elites played a crucial role in this process; for example, their involvement in export trade facilitated the reorientation of the producers towards demand patterns of Europe. They promoted the cultivation of cash crops such as cotton, tobacco and maize, organised transport to the port cities and negotiated with foreign merchants in the name of their regions. Consequently, as the century progressed, the economic foundation of their socio-political influence grew ever stronger.[59]

A widening gap between centre and periphery

To what extent the Ottoman state contributed to the economic and social upswing of the eighteenth century is difficult to determine. On the one hand,

55 Zdenka Veselá-Přenosilová, 'Quelques remarques sur l'évolution de l'organisation urbaine en empire ottoman', *Archiv orientální* 42 (1974), 200–24; Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters (eds.), *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul* (Cambridge, 1999).

56 Anton Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans:* Kisve Bahası *Petitions and Ottoman Social Life, 1670–1730* (Leiden, 2004), p. 60.

57 See Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle: essai d'histoire institutionelle, économique et sociale* (Paris and Istanbul, 1962), pp. 349–423; Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem, passim*; Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 65–70.

58 Nicholas Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1956), pp. 180–5; Traian Stoianovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960), 234–313; Apostolos E. Vacalopoulos, *History of Macedonia 1354–1833* (Salonika, 1973), pp. 387–425; Viržinia Paskaleva, *Sredna Evropa i zemite po dolnija Dunav prez XVIII–XIX v. Socialno-ikonomičeski aspekti* (Sofia, 1986), pp. 50–79.

59 Gilles Veinstein, 'Ayan de la région d'Izmir et le commerce du Levant (deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle)', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 20, 2 (1975), 131–46; Elena Frangakis-Syrett, 'The Trade of Cotton and Cloth in İzmir: From the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century to the Early Nineteenth Century', in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany, 1991), pp. 97–111. Cf. also Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique*, pp. 245–55; Traian Stoianovich, 'Le Maïs dans les Balkans', *Annales Economies Sociétés Civilisations* 21, 5 (1966), 1026–40; Aleksandar Matkovski, 'Auftreten und Ausbreitung des Tabaks auf der Balkanhalbinsel', *Südost-Forschungen* 28 (1969), 48–93; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, pp. 43–4.

the early decades of the century experienced a state-sponsored industrialisation that utilised skill, manpower and capital, especially of the urban segments of society, Muslim and non-Muslim alike.[60] On the other hand, however, the early eighteenth century saw also intense inter-elite conflicts that at times bordered on civil war. Thus already the Edirne Incident of 1703 was indicative of an imminent realignment in the political life of the empire. The rise of the *şeyhülislam* Feyzullah Efendi during the reign of Mustafa II (1695–1703) brought into focus the increased importance of politicking among Istanbul grandees, whose fortunes were commensurate with their capabilities to squeeze out profits from every bidder for a tax-farm or a government office. Consequently, not only members of the traditional military and civilian bureaucracy but also merchants and urban craftsmen were alienated. The success of their protest, marked by the deposition of a sultan and the execution of a *şeyhülislam*, signified the dawn of a new era.[61]

Efforts to reassert imperial rule during the subsequent decades hardly eased tensions. Quite to the contrary, disturbances caused by pastoral groups in Anatolia and Syria, who defied enforced sedentarisation, or rebellions in the Balkans by semi-military groups such as *martolos*, *voynuk* and *derbendci*, who feared the loss of fiscal privileges, contributed greatly to insecurity in the countryside.[62] Social discontent deepened especially during the Tulip Era (1718–30) when military methods and innovations were imported from the West, accompanied by novel habits of consumption and foreign lifestyles.[63] It has been rightly pointed out that 'the widening of the gap between the center and the periphery' during this period was paralleled by disputes at the centre where

60 Mehmet Genç, 'Entreprises d'état et attitude politique dans l'industrie ottomane au XVIIIe siècle', in *L'Accession de la Turquie à la civilisation industrielle. Facteurs internes et externes*, ed. Jacques Thobie and Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (Istanbul, 1987), pp. 5–12; Mehmet Genç, 'Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics, and Main Trends', in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500–1950*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 1994), pp. 59–86.

61 Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984).

62 Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Anadolu'da Türk aşiretleri (966–1200)* (Istanbul, 1930), pp. 127–202; Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda aşiretleri iskân teşebbüsü (1691–1696)* (Istanbul, 1963), pp. 91–5; Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda derbend teşkilâtı*, 2nd edn. (Istanbul, 1990), pp. 94–6; Aleksandar Matkovski, *Otporot vo Makedonija vo vremeto na turskoto vladeenje*, vol. IV: *Buni i vostanija* (Skopje, 1983), pp. 570–606.

63 Ariel C. Salzmann, 'The Age of Tulips: Confluence and Conflict in Early Modern Consumer Culture (1500–1730)', in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922: An Introduction*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 2000), pp. 83–106. Cf. further John Carswell, 'From the Tulip to the Rose', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 328–55; Fatma Müge Göçek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford and New York, 1987).

individual members of the elite might at times side with rebellious mercenaries and townsmen.[64] Nor were the disputes in Istanbul or Edirne unconnected with provincial discontent: the craftspeople of Istanbul, including many janissaries, who were the moving force behind the Patrona Halil rebellion of 1730, had countless sympathisers in the provinces.[65]

The intense urban conflict in Sarajevo in the middle years of the eighteenth century, also known as the Morići uprising, displayed features characteristic of the era.[66] Its starting-point was a riot of the lower classes in the city in protest against excessive taxation. Other social groups, including the janissaries, incensed because of arrears in their pay, joined the movement. In the eyes of the rebels, the governor of the province was responsible for the whole evil. But when the janissaries and their auxiliaries began to roam about in search of plunder, the civilian population found itself the victim of violence. What the people were protesting against was not actually so much the political system as such, but rather the outgrowths of a corrupt administration. Therefore when the central authority intervened with the purpose of restoring order, it could count on a remarkable degree of support by the populace. The social dynamics that had brought about the resistance movement against the provincial authorities remained, however, effective, and in the long run the prestige of Ottoman rule suffered. The series of military defeats in the second half of the eighteenth century, in particular, along with the inability of the central government to suppress the banditry of marauding deserters or unemployed soldiers, plunged the empire into a crisis of political legitimacy.[67]

In such times of trouble, the local notables (*ayan*) distinguished themselves as responsible leaders of their communities, not least because the populace did not trust persons sent by the Porte and preferred instead to follow the guidance of local men, especially if these were able to offer some protection

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64 Ahmet Evin, 'The Tulip Age and Definitions of Westernization', in *Social and Economic History of Turkey*, ed. Osman Okyar and Halil İnalcık (Ankara, 1980), pp. 131–45, at p. 142; Robert W. Olson, 'The Patrona Halil Rebellion and Ottoman–Persian Wars and Eighteenth Century Ottoman Historiography', in *Turkic Culture. Continuity and Change*, ed. Sabri M. Akural (Bloomington, 1987), pp. 75–82.

65 Robert W. Olson, 'The Esnaf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730: A Realignment in Ottoman Politics', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 17 (1974), 329–44; Matkovski, *Otporot vo Makedonija*, pp. 618–30.

66 Avdo Sućeska, 'Seljačke bune u Bosni u XVII i XVIII stoljeću', *Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 17 (1966–7), 163–207; Muhamed Hadžijahić, 'Bune i ustanak u Bosni sredinom XVIII stoljeća', *Historijski zbornik* 33–4, 1 (1980–1), 99–137; Djenana Buturović, *Morići (od stvarnosti do usmene predaje)* (Sarajevo, 1983).

67 Markus Koller, *Bosnien an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Gewalt* (Munich, 2004), ch. 7.

from rapacious tax-collectors.[68] Economically potent enough to advance credit to needy peasants, they assumed in due course the role of 'fiscal protectors' (*deruhdeci*) of whole communes, thus establishing, at least in some parts of the Balkans, a certain control over village finances.[69] Even the central government seems to have appreciated their ad hoc leadership in the provinces. Especially in periods of war, when the countryside became easy prey for bandits or marauding deserters, the population was urged to participate in police missions under the command of local notables, and consequently, as more and more *ayan*s distinguished themselves during such operations, 'ayanship' (*ayanlık*) gained widespread acceptance as a quasi-official position. However, exactly when the institution was established cannot be ascertained. Yet it seems that from 1726 onwards the Porte was obliged to confer such important offices as that of a *sancakbeyi* (governor), a *voyvoda* (financial agent in a district), a *muhassıl* or *mütesellim* (intendant of a provincial treasury) on members of local families, even appealing, as in 1743, to leading *ayan*s of Anatolia to attend the Persian campaign with their armed retinues.[70]

The socio-political influence that came with the *ayanlık* made it a coveted instrument in the hands of local families aspiring to establish their rule over whole provinces. Struggles for supremacy led often to violent feuds between *ayan* factions, ultimately prompting government intervention for the sake of public order.[71] Those who defeated their rivals were expected to pay a substantial sum in order to receive the official confirmation (*ayanlık buyruldusu*) by the provincial governor. Once successfully installed in office, they could hope to recover their outlay through a surcharge called *ayaniye*, apart from attaining control over additional sources of revenue in the form of new

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68 Özkaya, 'Adalet-nâmeler', 447; Yücel Özkaya, 'XVIII. yüzyılın ilk yarısında yerli ailelerin âyânlıkları ele geçirişleri ve büyük hânedânlıkların kuruluşu', *Belleten* 42 (1978), 667–723, at p. 671.

69 McGowan, 'Age of the Ayans', 662; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, pp. 168–70; Michael Ursinus, 'Zur Geschichte des Patronats: patrocinium, himāya und der'uhdecilik', *Die Welt des Islams* 23–4 (1984), 476–97; Michael Ursinus, 'Mūṭafçi Aḥmed und seinesgleichen: zur Bedeutung des Der'uhdecilik in Manastir im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Proučvanija v čest na Profesor Vera Mutafčieva / Studia in honorem Professoris Verae Mutafčieva*, ed. by Evgenij Radušev et al. (Sofia, 2001), pp. 351–74.

70 Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda âyânlık* (Ankara, 1977), pp. 117–28. Cf. also Avdo Sućeska, *Ajani. Prilog izučavanju lokalne vlasti u našim zemljama za vrijema Turaka* (Sarajevo, 1965), pp. 79–97. See also Jean Deny and Metin Kunt, 'Sandjaḳ', *EI 2*; Carter V. Findley, 'Muḥaṣṣıl', *EI 2*; Fikret Adanir, 'Woywoda', *EI 2*.

71 Mücteba İlgürel, 'Balıkesir'de âyânlık mücadelesi', *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 3 (1972), 63–74; Antonis Anastasopoulos, 'Lighting the Flame of Disorder: Ayan Infighting and State Intervention in Ottoman Karaferye, 1758–59', *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 8, 1–2 (Spring 2002), 73–88.

tax-farms or *malikâne*s.[72] Thus, the quasi-feudal *derebeği* dynasties ruling Anatolia, still quite obscure in the early 1700s, could by the second half of the eighteenth century rely on the huge fortunes necessary to keep a paid retinue, finance a public postal service or, occasionally, even to provision an army in the field.[73] Their Christian counterparts, the *kocabaşı*s in the Balkans, had managed by this time to bring all sorts of revenue under their control. They too tended, once installed, to hold on to their positions, which prompted a contemporary Ottoman bureacurat to propose in respect to the Peleponnese that the *kocabaşı*s should be elected for one year only. A second term of office was to be allowed only after a lapse of five years.[74]

The central government, traditionally committed to protecting the taxpayer, could react only by issuing ever more 'justice decrees' which warned against abuses of public authority. *Firman*s sent to the districts in Anatolia in the mid-eighteenth century threatened that kadis, officers and the *ayan* would be held responsible for the damages incurred by brigands or the marauding soldiery; other decrees demanded, along with a reduction of retinues, more rigorous measures against oppressive acts, especially with a view to preventing the eviction of peasants from the land.[75] In the second half of the century, the Porte took more practical steps towards improving the situation in the provinces, not only out of concern for the difficult lot of the peasantry, but also with a view to curbing the influence of provincial magnates. Imperial rescripts of 1765 (for Rumelia) and 1766 (for Anatolia) stipulated that thenceforth honest and capable persons were to be suggested as candidates for the position of *ayanlık*, and that the grand vizer would appoint one of the proposed persons to the position. The incumbent was to risk the death penalty if he attempted to raise illegal fees. Indeed, in 1766–7 two *ayan*s in Macedonia were executed under such charges.[76]

But the outbreak of the war with Russia in 1768, and especially the 1769 campaign, during which the empire had 'great difficulty in adequately feeding

72 İnalcık, 'Centralization and Decentralization', pp. 46–7.
73 Özkaya, 'Yerli aileler', 667–723; Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Anadolu derebeyi ocaklarından Köse Paşa hanedanı* (Ankara, 1984), pp. 46–56; Johannes H. Mordtmann and Bernard Lewis, 'Derebey', *EI 2*; Bernard Lewis, 'D̲j̲ānīkli Ḥad̲j̲d̲j̲i ʿAlī Pasha', *EI 2*; Cengiz Orhonlu, 'Ḳarā ʿOt̲h̲mān-Oghli', *EI 2*. Cf. also Deena R. Sadat, 'Rumeli Ayanları: The Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Modern History* 44 (1972), 346–63.
74 Süleyman Penah Efendi, 'Mora ihtilâli tarihçesi', ed. by Aziz Berker, *Tarih Vesikaları* 2 (1942–3), p. 396, quoted in Yuzo Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa ve âyânlık müessesesi* (Tokyo, 1976), p. 44.
75 Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa*, pp. 31–6; Özkaya, 'Adalet-nâmeler', pp. 460–5.
76 Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, 'Aʿyanlık müessesenin düzeni hakkında belgeler', *Belgeler* 1, 2 (1964), 221–5, at pp. 221f.

the army',[77] compelled the central government to revert to a more conciliatory attitude. Given the need to mobilise, transport and supply the field army, it was deemed counter-productive to insist on the confirmation of an elected *ayan* by the central government. Thus a *firman* of 1769 specified that whoever was elected to represent the inhabitants of a town or district would be installed as *ayan* by the mediation of the local kadi.[78]

The regional role of the *ayan* gained further importance when in 1770 a revolt broke out in the Peleponnese, led, among others, by Panayote Benakis, the *kocabaşı* of Kalamata, who personally recruited an insurgent force of more than 400 men.[79] However, the majority of the Christian notables of the Morea remained loyal to Ottoman rule. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, who was entrusted with the suppression of the rebellion, appealed to the neighbouring *ayan* for troops. The central government itself sent instructions to Macedonia and Thessaly, ordering the local leaders to furnish troops. Indeed, when the rebels besieged Tripolis in April 1770, about 10,000 relief troops, mostly Albanian mercenaries, under the command of various *ayan*s reached the town; these irregulars, half bandits, half mercenaries, thus improved their chances of employment for decades to come.[80] Not only was the attack on the town thwarted, but the *ayan* were readily credited with the speedy suppression of the whole revolt, which improved the image of the *ayanlık* considerably. The institution was believed to have proved its worth, and the *ayan* received generous rewards, some of them even being promoted to the rank of vizier.[81] Given widespread inability to pay the mercenaries, however, the suppression of the rebellion soon turned into campaigns of organised plunder, and the central government did not dare to interfere effectively as long as the Russian war continued. Only several years after the peace of 1774 did the government attempt once more to reorganise the *ayanlık* institution. A *firman* of 1779 reintroduced the reform of 1768, requiring that *ayan* elections should be once again subject to central authorisation.[82]

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77 Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi 1700–1783* (Leiden, 1995), p. 138. See also Virginia H. Aksan, 'The One-Eyed Fighting the Blind: Mobilization, Supply, and Command in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774', *International History Review* 15 (1993), 221–38.

78 See Baykal, 'A'yanlık', 222–4; Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa*, pp. 36–8.

79 Gilles Veinstein, 'Le patrimoine foncier de Panayote Bénakis, kocabaşı de Kalamata', *Journal of Turkish Studies* 11 (1987), 211–33, at pp. 216f. Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa*, p. 45; Andreas Bode, *Die Flottenpolitik Katharinas II. und die Konflikte mit Schweden und der Türkei (1768–1792)* (Wiesbaden, 1979), pp. 69–86.

80 Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa*, pp. 53–5.

81 Ibid., pp. 60–3, 65f.   82 Baykal, 'A'yanlık', pp. 224f.

But the central government's dependence on the *ayan* continued to grow during the last two decades of the eighteenth century. On the one hand, the *ayan* were expected to recruit troops so as to secure law and order in the provinces or even replenish active units of the field army, and such an office required persons with a military background, preferably associated with the janissary corps. On the other hand, the *ayanlık* was the focus of intense inter-elite rivalries and therefore a major cause of internal anarchy, not least because the office was highly remunerative, since it entitled the incumbent to ask for reimbursement of his expenses, opening prospects for easy gains. The example of İzaklızade İbiş Ağa, who rose to the *ayan*ship of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık (present-day Tolbuhin north of Varna) in the last quarter of the eighteenth century illustrates well the points made above.[83] A landowning family of north-eastern Bulgaria, the İzaklızades had sought quite early to establish links with the janissary corps in order to profit from the latter's political and administrative privileges. At any rate, İbiş Ağa had since 1774 been responsible for public security in the district of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık. In the early 1780s, when the region experienced fierce political competition between a former *ayan* and his successor, İbiş Ağa was able to improve his position further, recommending himself as a possible candidate for the *ayanlık*. In the subsequent contest for local power he held quite a few valuable trumps. For example, his responsibility for public security enabled him to keep a large retinue of mercenaries as a police force which, if used shrewdly, could easily tip the balance to his own advantage. He was also charged with administering the *menzil* system of the district, procuring horses, messengers and guides along the route from the imperial capital to the Danubian principalities.[84] These were enough to make İbiş Ağa appear an indispensable local figure in the eyes of the central government. Thus, in 1786 he was asked to lead a militia of his district against the brigands of Deliorman who had once again interfered in the politics of the region, and the next year, when a new war with Russia and Austria broke out, he was entrusted with the implementation of a general mobilisation. Under conditions peculiar to

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83 For the following see Strašimir Dimitrov, 'Istorijata na edin ajanin', in *V čest na akademik Dimitar Kosev: izsledvanija po slučaj 70 godini ot roždenieto mu*, ed. Evlogi Bužaški et al. (Sofia, 1974), pp. 65–79.

84 On the Ottoman courier (*ulak*) and posting-station (*menzilhane*) network in the Balkans, see Colin J. Heywood, 'Some Turkish Archival Sources for the History of the Menzilhane Network in Rumeli During the Eighteenth Century', *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Dergisi, Beşeri Bilimler* 4–5 (1976–7), 39–55; Colin J. Heywood, 'The Ottoman Menzilhane and Ulak System in Rumeli in the 18th Century', in *Social and Economic History of Turkey (1071–1922)*, ed. Osman Okyar and Halil İnalcık (Ankara, 1980), pp. 179–86; Milka Zdraveva, 'The Menzil Service in Macedonia, Particularly around Bitolj, in the Period of Turkish Domination', *Etudes balkaniques* 31, 2 (1995), 82–8.

wartime, he was furthermore charged, in the early part of 1788, with the task of transporting all the cereals kept in the depots of tax-farmers to the ports on the Black Sea; in other words, he began to function as an agent that handled a state monopoly within the framework of the Ottoman command economy.[85] In the summer of the same year, İbiş was entrusted with the organisation of the defences of the whole coastal area against a Russian attack; he was even expected to erect new fortifications. From 1789 onwards, however, İbiş Ağa no longer carried out the orders he received to the Porte's satisfaction; moreover, he seems to have acted, here and there, on his own account. He was therefore asked to present himself before the grand vizier in Şumnu, where, in July 1790, he was executed, and soon afterwards all his property was confiscated.

The biographies of other provincial power-holders of the period, whether of greater renown than İbiş Ağa or of lesser standing, roughly conform to this pattern. The ability to furnish troops or to provision the field army, along with considerations of internal security, always played a crucial role in the *ayans*' relationship with the central government. Thus Canikli Ali Paşa was promoted to the rank of vizier as a reward for services he had rendered in various command positions during the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74.[86] Similarly, the loyal manner in which Ömer and Osman Ağa made themselves useful to the government during the next Russian war, of 1787–92, contributed to the entrenchment of the Karaosmanoğlus as the most influential dynasty in western Anatolia. In addition, members of this family officiated as *mütesellim* of Aydın, *muhafiz* (commander) of Izmir, *mübayaacı* (agent for the wholesale purchase of grain) of the quay of Izmir or *voyvoda* of Turgutlu, Menemen and Bergama. These offices were the bases for the dynasty's influence, enabling its members to encourage and organise the export of agricultural produce, the commissions received from such trade representing apparently the chief source of Karaosmanoğlu economic might.[87] By contrast, poor military performance on the front during the same war and some foot-dragging in carrying out the 1790 military draft in Anatolia cost the *ayan* Köse Mustafa Paşa his position.[88] Interestingly enough, the agents of the Porte who hurried to confiscate the fallen pasha's wealth were surprised to find out that he was already bankrupt.

Ali of Tepelen, a provincial magnate and later the pasha of Janina, managed to form a rather special relationship with the imperial government. This Albanian, long a notorious rebel, coerced the Porte into rehabilitating him in

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85 McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, pp. 11–15.
86 Lewis, 'D̲j̲ānīkli Ḥad̲j̲d̲j̲i ʿAlī Pasha', pp. 446f.
87 Orhonlu, 'Ḳarā ʿO̲t̲h̲mān-Og̲h̲lı', pp. 592–3; Veinstein, 'Ayan de la région d'Izmir'.
88 Sakaoğlu, *Köse Paşa Hanedanı*, pp. 67–81.

1784, by declaring his readiness to place himself, at the head of 1,000 men, at the disposal of the commander-in-chief in Sofia. In 1787 he acquired the very critical post of *derbendler başbuğu* (chief guardian of the passes), thenceforth the real basis of his power in Albania, Epirus and Thessaly, which he managed to keep in his hands for the next thirty years.[89]

Decentralisation and a growing loss of legitimacy

With the ascent of provincial power-holders of the stature of an Ali of Tepelen the decentralisation process in the Ottoman Empire entered a new phase. Decentralisation was no longer merely a matter of optimising the collection of taxes and allocating the tax load within a community or of setting up a militia to fend off some rural bandits. Increasingly this question also involved issues of sovereignty; in other words, decentralisation implied a direct threat to the political regime, which had already suffered a loss of legitimacy. The unstable international constellation during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and the dire financial straits in which the empire had found itself for decades brought internal tensions to the breaking-point, especially in the war years of 1787–92.

Even before the outbreak of the war, the situation, especially in Danubian Bulgaria, Thrace and Macedonia, had deteriorated into virtual anarchy. From 1785 onwards contemporary documents begin to speak of *kırcali eşkiyası* (kird-jali brigands), a term denoting a new type of banditry. These outlaws were mostly professional soldiers, but their companies included numerous local people, both Muslim and non-Muslim. In contrast to traditional brigands, who usually practised highway robbery, the *kırcali* preferred to attack settlements, plundering and destroying whole villages, towns and even cities and killing indiscriminately hundreds of people at a time. They did possess some sort of an ideology in the sense that they considered their actions to be directed against the political order of the empire. Finally, the *kırcali* phenomenon was connected with the fierce *ayan* infighting, as well as with recurrent rebellions against the Porte during the last decade of the eighteenth century.[90]

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89 Dennis N. Skiotis, 'From Bandit to Pasha: First Steps in the Rise to Power of Ali of Tepelen, 1750–1784', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2 (1971), 219–44. Cf. also Katherine E. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece* (Princeton, 1999), pp. 32f.

90 Vera P. Mutafčieva, *Kărdžalijsko vreme* (Sofia, 1977), pp. 53–8; Vera P. Mutafčieva, 'Feodalnite razmirici v Severna Trakija prez kraja na XVIII i načaloto na XIX v.', in *Paisij Chilendarski i negovata epocha (1762–1962)*, ed. Dimitar Kosev et al. (Sofia, 1962), pp. 167–210. Cf. also Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları (1791–1808)* (Ankara, 1983).

The roots of social discord that generated the *kırcali* phenomenon and pushed many a provincial magnate into opposition to the imperial regime should be sought in a series of military reforms which, once they succeeded, were also bound to promote the cause of administrative centralisation. After the shock of the 1774 debacle, some French instructors had been invited to recruit and train a new unit of field artillery. The project, however, had to be discontinued on account of strong janissary opposition in 1781. Under a more determined grand vizier two years later, this reform scheme was revived and even extended. Moreover, the government appeared in the meanwhile quite resolved to bring the provinces under closer central control. Thus in 1786 the *ayanlık* was declared abolished, all its functions having been transferred to the office of *şehir kethüdası* (a mayor-like urban executive). However, a new war that broke out the following year compelled the Porte in 1790 to revert to the previous arrangement.[91]

Selim III, on the throne since April 1789, seems to have been keenly aware of the need for change, not least because hardly any good news arrived from the front. In 1792 the sultan invited his advisers to prepare projects of reform. Most of the memoranda submitted were concerned with reorganisation in the military field.[92] But the new European-style infantry units, called Nizam-ı cedid ('New Order'), which were now established in quick succession, represented a direct assault on the vested interests of the janissaries and of social groups economically associated with them.[93] Not surprisingly therefore the opposition against the New Order was ferocious from the start. That the population at large also adopted a hostile attitude made the situation particularly embarrassing for the government. Popular discontent was largely due to new surcharges on commodities such as tobacco, wine, coffee, textiles, livestock and the like, introduced in order to obtain additional income to fill the

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91 Avigdor Levy, 'Military Reform and the Problem of Centralization in the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century', *Middle Eastern Studies* 18 (1982), 227–49, esp. pp. 235–7; Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda âyânlık*, pp. 288–98; Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i umûr-u belediye*, vol. I (Dersaadet, 1330/1914–15), p. 1657.

92 Enver Ziya Karal, 'Nizâm-ı Cedide dair lâyihalar', *Tarih Vesikaları* 1, 6 (Apr. 1942), 414–25, 2, 8 (Aug. 1942), 104–11, 2, 11 (Feb. 1943), 342–51, 2, 12 (Apr. 1943), 424–32; Enver Ziya Karal, *Selim III'ün hatt-ı hümayunları – Nizam-ı Cedit – (1789–1807)* (Ankara, 1946), pp. 31–41; Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal, 1964), pp. 72–81; Kemal Beydilli, 'İgnatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (Muradcan Tosunyan): Ailesi hakkında kayıtlar, "Nizâm-ı Cedîd"e dâir lâyihası ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğundaki siyâsî hayati', *Tarih Dergisi* 34 (1984), 247–314.

93 Karal, *Selim III'ün hatt-ı hümayunları*, pp. 43–81; Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Origins of Ottoman Military Reform: The Nizam-i Cedid Army of Sultan Selim III', *Journal of Modern History* 37 (1965), 291–305; Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789–1807* (Cambridge, MA, 1971).

'Treasury of New Revenue' (*İrad-ı cedid hazinesi*) that was to finance the new army.[94]

The first clash between the proponents of reform and the opposition occurred in Serbia. Since the beginning of the war in 1787 the province had been under the control of the local janissaries and their associates, but after the conclusion of peace with Austria in 1791, the Porte was resolute about reestablishing its authority in Belgrade. Hence the new governor, Ebubekir Paşa, was instructed to banish all unruly elements from the province and to rely instead on the local population, which was first to be reconciled with the reformed Ottoman rule. To this end, those Serbs who had collaborated with the enemy were amnestied, a Serbian militia was recruited, and the local *knezes* were authorised to collect the taxes in their districts.[95] The janissaries expelled from Belgrade found refuge in the neighbouring province of Vidin which during the war years had come under the control of Osman Pasvandoğlu, a local magnate with a janissary background who was determined to settle some old scores with the central government.[96]

Challenged by a growing opposition under the leadership of Pasvandoğlu, the sultan's reform scheme seemed to be in a precarious state. Vidin served as the basis for extended raids into Wallachia over the Danube and into Serbia in the west, as well as into districts lying eastwards, in Danubian Bulgaria and Thrace. Simultanously, very effective agitation was going on, with Pasvandoğlu declaring the sultan's reform project responsible for the anarchic situation in the countryside, abolishing the recently introduced Nizam-ı cedid taxes in the districts under his control and enforcing a remarkable degree of discipline among his own men. As pointed out in an Austrian diplomatic report of the period, the peasantry of Danubian Bulgaria were susceptible to such propaganda, many fleeing their farmsteads in order to place themselves under the protection of Pasvandoğlu, a development that aroused the jealousy

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94 Karal, *Selim III'ün hatt-ı hümayunlari*, pp. 81–93.
95 Dušan Pantelić, *Beogradski pašaluk posle Svištovskog mira, 1791–1794* (Belgrade, 1927); Dušan Pantelić, *Beogradski pašaluk pred Prvi srpski ustanak 1794–1804* (Belgrade, 1949); Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Ottoman Empire and the Serbian Uprising, 1804–1807', in *The First Serbian Uprising 1804–1813*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Boulder, 1982), pp. 71–94.
96 A. Cevat Eren, 'Pazvand-oğlu', *İslam Ansiklopedisi*; Fehim Bajraktarević, 'Paswan-oghlu', *EI 2*; further Grgur Jakšić, 'Notes sur Passvan-oglou, 1758–1807', *Revue slave* 1 (1906), 261–79, 418–29, 2 (1906), 139–44, 436–48, 3 (1907), 138–44, 278–88; Maria Teofilova, *Buntăt na Pasvant-Oglu i negovoto značenie za bălgarskoto osvoboditelno dviženie v XIX v.* (Sofia, 1932); Robert Zens, 'Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791–1807', *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 8, 1–2 (Spring 2002), 89–104.

of other *ayan*s of Rumelia.[97] Obviously, rivalry among local leaders was welcomed by the central authority, which played off one faction against the other in the hope of preserving a certain balance of power. Thus the other two foremost power-holders in northern Bulgaria besides Pasvandoğlu, Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail of Ruscuk and Yılıkoğlu Süleyman of Silistria (Silistre), distrustful of the rebel of Vidin and keeping a wary eye on the moves of pashas sent by the Porte, were at the same time in perpetual conflict among themselves. They thus inadvertently served as balancing elements at the disposal of the imperial centre.[98] Under these conditions, the Porte was able to restrain the forces of Pasvandoğlu, although the sultan's repeated orders to arrest, banish or even decapitate the rebel chief and his collaborators (Macar Ali, Gavur İmam, Sarıklıoğlu, Emincik) remained ineffectual.[99] In the meantime, the *kırcali*s continued to undermine what material and moral strength the empire still could rally, the brigands extending the radius of their forays further into Macedonia and eastern Thrace.[100]

By mobilising all available resources the Porte was able, by the beginning of 1798, to forge an impressive coalition of *ayan*s against Pasvandoğlu. About 80,000 soldiers were mustered in preparation for a siege of Vidin. By September of the same year, however, it was becoming clear that the siege would have to be lifted without result, Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt leaving the sultan hardly any other choice. In view of the probable dissolution of his army during the winter months, this turn of events may have permitted the sultan to save face. In early 1799 Osman Pasvandoğlu was not only pardoned, but appointed commander of Vidin and also granted the titles of vizier and pasha.[101]

With the French established on the Ionian Islands since October 1797, it was only a matter of time before the virtual civil war in Rumelia attracted Great Power attention. For the French, Pasvandoğlu was a prospective ally. The latter

97 L. I. Popov, 'Prinos za izučvane minaloto na bălgarskoto otečestvo', *Sbornik za narodni umotvorenija, nauka i knižnina* 24 (1908), 1–157, at pp. 6, 17f., 22. Cf. also Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları*, pp. 32–35.

98 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli âyanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yilikoğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa* (Istanbul, 1942), pp. 36f.

99 See the translations of various *firmans* of Selim III by D. Ichčiev, 'Turski dăržavni dokumenti za Osman Pazvantoglu Vidinski', *Sbornik za narodni umotvorenija, nauka i knižnina* 24 (1908), 1–128, at pp. 20–3, 43f., 65f.

100 Mutafčieva, *Kărdžalijsko vreme*, pp. 89–105; Matkovski, *Otporot vo Makedonija*, pp. 657–703.

101 Ichčiev, 'Turski dăržavni dokumenti', p. 122; Mutafčieva, *Kărdžalijsko vreme*, pp. 143–83; Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları*, p. 59; Zens, 'Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa', p. 99.

was sensitive to these overtures, because he feared Russian or Austrian interference as a result of the involvement of his lieutenants in Serbia and Wallachia, and also because he expected the two continental empires to eventually intervene in order to defend the sultan against revolutionary France. In contrast, Ali Paşa of Janina, the other great figure in the Ottoman Balkans, needed to be more wary of his French neighbours, who were obviously planning to use his territory as a springboard for further conquests in the east.[102]

The internationalisation of the conflict in Rumelia became almost inevitable once the events in Serbia evolved towards a general uprising, with Pasvandoğlu's janissaries playing a decisive role in the process. Taking advantage of the absence of the imperial army from the Balkans, the latter returned to Belgrade, demanded restoration of their former privileges and easily overcame the resistance organised by the governor with the help of the Serbian militia. In September 1801, the janissaries brought Belgrade under their control and in late December, they executed the governor, Hacı Mustafa Paşa.[103] The administration of the province was then divided among four of their leaders (*dayı*). This event signalled the end of self-rule in Ottoman Serbia. Selim III could react only by asking the Austrians to help isolate the usurpers in Belgrade and by hoping that his own man, Ebubekir Paşa of Bosnia, would successfully reestablish direct Ottoman control. He also invited the Serbs to join the Bosnian army. But the janissaries in Belgrade, their protector Pasvandoğlu Osman Paşa in Vidin and the opponents of Selim III's 'New Order' throughout the empire were determined to hold out. Thus, in January–February 1804, the janissaries massacred between a dozen and eighty Serbian elders, *knez*es and priests for having been involved in a subversive plot – an event that supposedly sparked off the first Serbian uprising.[104]

At first the Serbs fought as loyal subjects of the sultan against the *dayı* regime, their aim being the restoration of their old privileges and self-government. In cooperation with Ebubekir Paşa, they succeeded by early August 1804 in

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102 Mutafčieva, *Kărdžalijsko vreme*, p. 178. On Ali Paşa of Janina's early contacts with the French, see Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte*, pp. 78–94.

103 Hazim Šabanović (ed.), *Turski izvori o Srpskoj revoluciji 1804*, vol. I: *Spisi carski kancelarije 1789–1804* (Belgrade, 1956), pp. 129–47. See also Zens, 'Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa', pp. 100–2.

104 See the report (*arzuhal*) of the *dayı*s of Belgrade to Pazvandoğlu Osman Paşa, the *muhafiz* of Vidin, of the middle of February 1804, in Šabanović (ed.), *Turski izvori o Srpskoj revoluciji 1804*, pp. 161–3; Wayne S. Vucinich, 'Introductory Remarks: Genesis and Essence of the First Serbian Uprising', and Vladimir Stojančević, 'Karadjordje and Serbia in his Time', both in *The First Serbian Uprising 1804–1813*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Boulder, 1982), pp. 1–21 (at pp. 4f.) and 30–2 respectively.

ejecting the *day*ıs from Belgrade and forcing them to flee to Vidin.[105] But as they became increasingly successful against the rebellious janissaries, their leader, Karadjordje, a prosperous trader in livestock, and his men also began to defy the sultan's representatives, and in 1806 the Serbian movement took on the character of a general struggle against Ottoman rule. The Porte was obliged in the summer of 1806 to declare its readiness to recognise Serbia as an autonomous principality paying annual tribute. But the convention which defined the terms of this compromise solution, the so-called Ičko settlement, though approved by the Serbian national assembly in October 1806, was eventually torpedoed by Russia.[106]

By the terms of the Austro-French peace of 26 December 1805, France had acquired the whole Dalmatian littoral, compelling the tsar's government to re-evaluate its policy regarding developments in the Ottoman Balkans. In January 1806 Russian emissaries were sent to Bosnia and Epirus to frustrate any French schemes.[107] The Russian foreign minister was of the opinon that the Serbs, if defeated by the Ottomans, would place themselves under the protection of the French, and this would not be compatible with the interests of imperial Russia.[108] To preclude such an eventuality the government of Alexander I decided to pursue a more robust Balkan policy; consequently, in November 1806 the Danubian principalities were occupied, which induced the Porte to sever diplomatic relations with the Russian empire in December.[109] Once hostilities began, Serbia became a possible theatre of operations, and the insurgents, now encouraged by Russia, came up with a new political programme, demanding full independence.[110]

Thus, obviously both Napoleonic France and Russia exercised considerable influence over the configuration of relations between the sultan's government and his provinces.[111] In the constellation of 1806, French diplomacy appeared

105 Shaw, 'The Ottoman Empire and the Serbian Uprising', pp. 80–7.
106 Wayne S. Vucinich, 'Russia and the First Serbian Uprising, 1806–1809', in *The First Serbian Uprising 1804–1813*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Boulder, 1982), pp. 95–139, at pp. 96–103.
107 Sergej A. Nikitin (ed.), *Pervoe serbskoe vosstanie 1804–1813 gg. i Rossija*, vol. I: *1804–1807* (Moscow, 1980), pp. 194f.
108 Ibid., pp. 200–2. On Russian policy as regards Pasvandoğlu of Vidin, see D. Jocov, 'Materiali za Pazvant-Oglu, izvlečeni ot ruskite arhivi', *Periodičesko spisanie na Bălgarskoto knižovno družestvo* 68 (1908), 749–55.
109 Roger V. Paxton, 'Russian Foreign Policy and the First Serbian Uprising: Alliances, Apprehensions and Autonomy, 1804–1807', in *The First Serbian Uprising 1804–1813*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich (Boulder, 1982), pp. 41–70.
110 Dimitrije Djordjević and Stephen Fischer-Galati, *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition* (New York, 1981), p. 69.
111 Harald Heppner, 'Pazvandoğlu – ein Prüfstein der habsburgischen Südosteuropapolitik im Jahre 1802', *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 38 (1985), 347–55.

bent on supporting the Ottoman position against Russian encroachment. For example, in July 1806, Talleyrand, in an instruction to the French ambassador in Constantinople, expressed his hope that the Ottoman government would 'put an end to the revolt of Serbia in a decisive manner'; furthermore, the Porte should, by concentrating a sufficiently large number of troops in the Balkans, enhance the chances of success of an expedition against the Serbs, without fear of intervention from outside.[112] However, the French did not propose similar tactics in dealing with Pasvandoğlu, the rebel of Vidin. To the contrary, apparently they believed it would be shrewder to work for a reconciliation between Pasvandoğlu and the sultan. Therefore a special agent was sent to Vidin at the beginning of 1807; however, he arrived only after the death of Pasvandoğlu. This agent reported that İdris Molla, a former lieutenant of the deceased and now his successor in Vidin, had remained loyal to the tradition of defiance established by his master. İdris seemed prepared to defend the empire against Russian aggression, provided that the Porte accepted his status as the ruler of Vidin without reservation. Napoleon's agent recommended therefore that the French ambassador intervene at the Porte with a view to precluding any move against the status quo in Vidin.[113] Later on, between Tilsit (July 1807) and Erfurt (October 1808), the French emperor again had no qualms about proposing a partition of the Ottoman realm. The Balkan provinces should be divided among France, Russia and Austria, with France receiving Bosnia, Macedonia, Albania, Greece and Thrace, Russia the Danubian principalities and northern Bulgaria, and the Habsburgs Serbia.[114] After Erfurt, however, such plans lost their relevance. Napoleon's chief concern was once again to keep Russia out of the Mediterranean, an aim best accomplished by sustaining Ottoman authority in Rumelia.

In Rumelia, in the meantime, the intense struggles between various *ayan* factions, on the one hand, and between the *ayan* and the central government, on the other, continued to cause bewilderment and confusion. The rebellion in Serbia had fuelled the *kırcali* disturbances in the eastern Balkans as well.

112 Talleyrand to Sébastiani, 23 July 1806, in Grgur Jakšič and Bojislav J. Vukčović (eds.), *Francuski dokumenti o prvom i drugom ustanku (1804–1830)* (Belgrade, 1957), p. 10.

113 Mériage to Talleyrand, Vidin, 22 February 1807, in ibid., p. 21. Cf. also Auguste Boppe, 'La mission de l'adjudant commandant Mériage à Widdin (1807–1809)', *Annales de l'Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques* 1 (1886), 259–93; Vjekoslav Jelavić, 'Pazvan-Oglu od Vidina (Izvješće francuskog pukovnika Mériage)', *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu* 17 (1905), 173–216.

114 A. F. Miller, *Mustafa Pacha Baïraktar* (Bucharest, 1975), pp. 228–49; Fran Zwitter, 'Francuske revolucionarne ideje u zapadnim jugoslovenskim zemljama u vreme Francuske revolucije i Napoleona I', in *Jugoslovenske zemlje i Rusija za vreme Prvog srpskog ustanka 1804–1813*, ed. Vasa Čubrilović (Belgrade, 1983), pp. 65–87, at pp. 84f.

Selim III's hope of pacifying the region rested in the success of the Nizam-ı cedid army, which was for the first time sent into the field against the rebels in Rumelia. However, the appearance of this new army under the command of Kadı Abdurrahman Paşa of Karaman in Rumelia prompted a closing of ranks among the provincial power-holders of the region. Even Tirsinikli İsmail Ağa, who until then had been rather loyal to the sultan, now entered into an alliance against the government with Ali Paşa of Janina, the *ayan*s of Filibe (Plovdiv), Edirne and Pazarcik, İsmail Bey of Serres and Pasvandoğlu of Vidin. Actually this was a rebellion of the whole of Rumelia against the imperial centre.[115] The assassination of Tirsiniklioğlu in early August 1806 did not weaken the opposition. Alemdar Mustafa (also known as Mustafa Paşa Bayraktar), who took over Tirsinikli's *ayanlık* of Ruscuk, continued the anti-government line of his predecessor.[116] Finally, it was not the rebels but Selim III who had to make concessions. Through the mediation of İsmail Bey of Serres an agreement was reached between the sultan and the Rumelian power-holders. The Nizam-ı cedid corps was ordered back to Anatolia, and in September 1806, as a symbolic gesture, the ağa of the janissaries was appointed the new grand vizier. These developments prepared the way for the final reckoning between the provincial forces that rejected the Nizam-ı cedid and the reform-minded faction of the elite in Istanbul. While Bayraktar Mustafa was gathering all former *kırcali*s around himself in an attempt to hold the Danubian front against the Russian army, thus indirectly contributing to the solution of the chronic brigandage problem, the janissaries in Istanbul, supported by the populace, staged a revolt in May 1807, which ended with the deposition of Selim III[117] – an event that at the time appeared as a significant step towards the consolidation of the semi-autonomous provincial forces in the Ottoman Balkans.

115 Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda dağlı isyanları*, pp. 95–100.
116 Uzunçarşılı, *Tirsinikli İsmail*, pp. 45–58; Miller, *Mustafa Pacha Baïraktar*, pp. 124–35.
117 Ottokar Freiherr v. Schlechta-Wssehrd, *Die Revolutionen in Constantinopel in den Jahren 1807 und 1808. Ein Beitrag zur Reformgeschichte der Türkei* (Vienna, 1882), pp. 81–113; Uzunçarşılı, *Tirsinikli İsmail*, pp. 64–77.

Semi-autonomous forces in the Arab provinces

BRUCE MASTERS

Stretching from Algiers to Basra, Aleppo to Sanʿa, the Arab provinces constituted roughly half of the Ottoman Empire's territory at its height. Although most of the inhabitants of this expanse shared a common language, they were not heirs to a single political culture. More than language, local political conditions and limits, imposed by geography, on communication and control proved decisive in determining an Arab province's experience in the Ottoman centuries.

We can construct a model, consisting of concentric zones radiating out from Istanbul, to represent the degree of assimilation of the Arab domains into the Ottoman provincial system. The inner zone consisted of provinces in Syria and Iraq which were closest to the Ottoman heartland of Anatolia. These were fully incorporated into the empire, and the full measure of Ottoman provincial governance was implemented there. Provinces further afield were governed by men sent out from Istanbul. But they typically relied on local political elites to fill the lower ranks of administration. The Arab cities on the outer circle of empire rarely had Ottoman governors. In their stead, local warlords ruled, although they also professed fealty to the sultan and collected taxes in his name. Given the diversity in conditions that existed in the Arab provinces, the local forces making for autonomy differed widely in their origins. Nonetheless, every Arab province witnessed the rise of political movements or personalities who challenged the sultan's monopoly of power in the eighteenth century.

We can divide the origins of those elites into four broad categories: (1) tribal/clan-based groups (including the Wahhabis or Druze for whom religious and tribal/clan identities were conflated); (2) neo-Mamluks (both those obtained from the *darülharb* (non-Muslim countries) as slaves and free-born Muslim freebooters who attached themselves to Mamluk households[1]);

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1 Jane Hathaway, 'The Military Household in Ottoman Egypt', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27 (1995), 39–52.

(3) Ottoman military forces (whether locally recruited or from the capital); and (4) the local *ayan* (Arab. *a'yan*), or urban notables.

From the time of Ibn Khaldūn, it has been an axiom of Muslim political theory to posit a dialectical tension between nomads and settled populations. Although it is wrong to assume that this precluded peaceful interactions, nomadic peoples usually profited at the expense of the settled when the state's authority was weak.[2] In an Ottoman context, that model should be further modified along the lines suggested by Fernand Braudel for the Mediterranean world to include the various mountain peoples of the empire.[3] The Ottomans did not possess the will or the manpower to subdue the Bedouin, Kurds, Druze or Berbers completely. Never decisively defeated, the clans waited in the fastnesses of their mountain, or desert, strongholds and periodically reconstituted themselves to challenge the state.

The authority and legitimacy of both the provincial and the centrally recruited military establishments rested on the edge of their swords, to paraphrase an eighteenth-century Syrian chronicler.[4] The Ottoman military in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was in disarray. Financial crisis after crisis strapped the empire's ability to maintain an effective armed force throughout its domains. This was as true in the Balkans and Anatolia as in the Arab provinces. By necessity, Istanbul relied on locally recruited forces to keep order and the revenues flowing into the central treasury.[5] When the sultans' attentions were distracted elsewhere, that same provincial military moved to assert its autonomy. Ironically, when the state did intervene to billet its own troops in one of its far-flung domains, these might themselves become the locus of separatist tendencies.

The fourth category, the local *ayan*, emerged in carefully orchestrated balancing acts of consensus-building to govern some of the cities of the Fertile Crescent in this period. The *ayan* governors rarely controlled an independent military base, however. Given the fragility of their hold over the reins of power, they were seldom an immediate threat to Ottoman hegemony.[6]

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2 Dror Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany, 1996); Dick Douwes, *The Ottomans in Syria: A History of Justice and Oppression* (London, 2000).
3 Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World of Philip II*, 2 vols. (New York, 1974).
4 Yusuf Dimitri 'Abbud al-Halabi, 'al-Murtadd fi ta'rikh Halab wa Baghdad', ed. Fawwaz Mahmud al-Fawwaz, MA thesis, University of Damascus (1978), p. 111.
5 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337.
6 Albert Hourani, 'Ottoman Reform and the Politics of the Notables', in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. William Polk and Richard Chambers (Chicago, 1968), pp. 41–65.

Indeed, whenever they assumed a provincial governorship, their legitimacy rested upon the receipt of patents of investiture (*berat*) signed by the sultan's hand. Nevertheless, the political base that families such as the ʿAzms in Damascus or the Jalilis in Mosul were able to create for themselves potentially undermined the state's authority by providing sources of patronage more immediate to the inhabitants of those cities than was available from far distant Istanbul.

Although no region of the Arabic-speaking Middle East and North Africa witnessed the rise of representatives of all four categories, all witnessed the rise of at least one. While it is true that locally based elites challenged Ottoman hegemony in the Arab provinces during the eighteenth century more directly than before, the sultans' control over all their Arab domains had never been absolute. Rather, there was an ebb and flow in the Ottoman presence in the region, coinciding with the pattern of changes in Ottoman global strategic concerns and the ability of those who reigned in the capital to intervene directly in affairs in distant provincial centres.[7] With the notable exceptions of the tax revenues of Egypt and the prestige accruing to the House of Osman in its role as servitors of the holy cities of the Hijaz and Jerusalem, the Arab provinces did not engender a long-lived concern in the political imaginations of the Ottoman elite. The sultans might pass through Aleppo, Mosul or Baghdad on their way to campaigns against their enemies in Iran, but none visited the other major urban centres of their Arab domains after conquest.

The events that unfolded in the region in the eighteenth century were products of this indifference as local warlords, tribal chieftains, *mamluk*s, and even an occasional governor, all chipped away at the authority of the central government. Despite the very real threat posed to their rule by local forces, the boundaries of the Ottoman sultans' Arab domains remained largely as they had been created by Sultans Yavuz Selim (r. 1512–20) and Kanûnî Süleyman (r. 1520–66). No new territories were added, nor were any lost. While an invigorated regime in Iran occasionally threatened their hold over the provinces in Iraq, the Ottomans faced no other major external challenge to their hegemony over the Arab lands. This felicitous situation would disintegrate dramatically for the Ottomans in the nineteenth century. But until Napoleon's occupation of Egypt in 1798 demonstrated the fragility of the Ottoman hold over the

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7 See, for example, Palmira Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, 1994); Salih Özbaran, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Hindistan yolu', *Tarih Dergisi* 31 (1964), 65–164; Andrew Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago, 1978).

region, the sultans could take comfort from the fact that in the Arab Middle East and North Africa their patrimony was intact.

More importantly for the preservation of the sultans' realms, none of the local warlords in the eighteenth-century Arab provinces were able to gain permanent independence from Istanbul. The impotence of the local elites to achieve their political freedom arose out of their inability to construct an effective political base which could withstand the efforts of the central government to undermine them. Having won their autonomy through the building of a coalition of local interests, the provincial rulers found that they could not enhance their own power base without diminishing that of their sometime allies, be they local military or tribal leaders, in a zero-sum game of political power and alignments.

Invariably, once these governors had enjoyed a longer tenure and greater freedom of action than was considered good for the central state's interests, the sultans sought to destabilise such provincial upstarts through the often skilful manipulation of their ever-jealous local opponents. The longevity of the empire in the Arab Middle East was due to more than simple Machiavellian politics, however. The local dynasts proved unable to supplant the residual prestige that the House of Osman still retained among its largely Sunni Arab subjects, or to convince local elites that independence under an indigenous despot's rule would better serve their interests. This last factor explains the poor reception of Ibrahim Paşa by his erstwhile Syrian subjects in 1831 as representative of the nineteenth century's most successful provincial dynast, Egypt's Mehmed Ali.

Ayan and clansmen: the core provinces of Syria and northern Iraq

Throughout the Ottoman period geographical Syria and northern Iraq were linked both culturally and economically. They also shared similar political experiences. Three major caravan cities – Aleppo, Damascus and Mosul – dominated the region and after some initial indecision, the Ottomans created three provinces, centred on each. The rugged upland areas bordering the Fertile Crescent were inhabited by ethnic groups distinct from the Sunni Arab majority of the cities by virtue of their religions or languages. In northern Iraq, the Kurdish clans posed a perennial problem only mitigated by their own inter-clan rivalries. Along the Mediterranean, diverse peoples inhabited the coastal range of mountains and hills: ʿAlawis in what is today the Syrian Arab Republic, Maronites, Druze, and Shiites in Lebanon. All were capable of defying the sultan's writ.

In both Syria and Iraq, there were also the Bedouin. In the first century of Ottoman rule, the Mawali clan were bought off with gifts and were largely content to keep the peace in the desert. Increasingly, however, they became less compliant in the seventeenth century. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the far less tractable 'Anaza confederation migrated from the Arabian Peninsula, supplanting the Mawali and turning travel in the Syrian desert into a chancy proposition.

This periphery of the Fertile Crescent was historically difficult to govern for any city-based Muslim regime. The desert and mountain peoples were well armed and enjoyed deeply rooted ties of tribe or clan solidarity. Faced with the continuation of armed resistance and protracted wars, the Ottoman sultans treated these peoples gingerly. Rather than assigning the tribal areas to the jurisdiction of provincial governors located in the region's three main cities, the Ottomans constituted separate provinces, the *vilayet* of Şehrizor in Kurdistan, another one at Raqqa to control the Syrian desert, and a third centred in Tripoli in today's Lebanon; the latter was subdivided in the seventeenth century into the provinces of Tripolis and Sidon.

Having amputated these troublesome areas, the Ottomans introduced the *timar* system in the core provinces in the first decades following the conquest of 1516–17.[8] This method of administration, based on the distribution of tax-farms to cavalrymen, linked the economic and political experience of these provinces more closely to Istanbul than was the case elsewhere in the Arabic-speaking Middle East and North Africa. The governors appointed to the provincial centres of the Fertile Crescent were professional, Turkish-speaking, Ottoman military men who were rotated frequently to prevent their forming a local power base. The chief judges were trained in the Hanafi law tradition and appointed from Istanbul as well. The men who held these two offices came to personify the sultan's rule in his Arab realms. When they were just, the reputation of the Ottoman regime gained lustre, but when they were corrupt or cruel, it suffered.

The sixteenth century was a time of consolidation of Ottoman rule in these Arab territories, marked by the construction of major Ottoman-style public buildings in Aleppo, Damascus and Jerusalem. It also coincided with a period of general prosperity in the villages and countryside of the three provinces. Nonetheless, even at the zenith of Ottoman control over its Syrian provinces,

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8 Margaret Venzke, 'Syria's Land Taxation in the Ottoman "Classical Age" Broadly Considered', in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye sosyal ve iktisat tarihi kongresi: tebligler* (Ankara, 1990), pp. 419–34.

the Druze offered a continuing challenge to Ottoman hegemony. Several major campaigns were launched against them in the sixteenth century, but most of Lebanon was never permanently subdued.[9] The first serious threat to Ottoman rule in Syria, however, came not from tribal forces on the periphery, but from those who had control of one of its major cities, namely Aleppo.

As with many of the problems facing the Ottomans in their Arab domains, the revolt of Canboladoğlu Ali in 1606–7 had its origins in the inability of the central government to maintain a standing military force in the provinces which was both loyal and free from local partisan involvement. The Canboladoğlu were a Kurdish clan who dominated the market town of Kilis before and after the Ottoman conquest. Hüseyin, Ali's uncle, had come to the fore with his kinsmen in 1603, defending the city of Aleppo against Damascene janissaries who were plundering the province. In gratitude, Sultan Ahmed I appointed Hüseyin as governor of Aleppo in 1604. The family's fortunes soon changed for the worse, however, and Hüseyin was executed in 1605 on treason charges. In response, Ali rose in rebellion, threatening to establish a petty independent state in northern Syria. Despite rebellions elsewhere in the empire, the Ottoman forces rallied and Ali's forces were crushed in 1607.[10]

In 1657, another governor of Aleppo, Abaza Hasan Paşa, rose in rebellion. The governor of Damascus supported the insurrection which sought to bring down the new grand vizier, Köprülüzâde Mehmed Paşa, rather than create an autonomous Syria. The revolt ended in 1659 with the killing of the rebels in Ayntab / Gaziantep. Faced with the potential secession of one of its most strategic provinces, Istanbul assigned a new janissary regiment to Damascus. The pre-existing units, already largely infiltrated by local people, did not disband, however. This gave the city two competing, and often quarrelling, armed groups: the *yerliyya* (locals) and the *kapıkulları* (the sultan's men).

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9 Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, 'Problems in the Ottoman Administration in Syria during the 16th and 17th Centuries: The Case of the Sanjak of Sidon–Beirut', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24 (1992), 665–75.

10 Ali's revolt is one of the most frequently discussed episodes in Ottoman Syrian history: see Abu al-Wafa' ibn 'Umar al-'Urdi, *Ma'din al-dhahab fi al-a'yan al-musharrafa bi-him Halab* (Aleppo, 1987), pp. 306–13; Peter M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516–1922: A Political History* (London, 1966), pp. 103–5; William Griswold, *The Great Anatolian Rebellion, 1000–1020/1591–1611* (Berlin, 1983), pp. 61–156; Abdul-Karim Rafeq, 'The Revolt of 'Alī Pāshā Jānbulād (1605–1607) in the Contemporary Arabic Sources and its Significance', in *VIII. Türk tarih kongresi: kongreye sunulan bildiriler*, 3 vols. (Ankara, 1983), vol. III, pp. 1515–34; Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, *Provincial Leaderships in Syria, 1575–1650* (Beirut, 1985), pp. 24–7, 83–7; Muhammad Adnan Bakhit (trans.), 'Aleppo and the Ottoman Military in the 16th Century', *al-Abhath* 27 (1978–9), 27–38; Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization* (Ithaca and London, 1994), pp. 189–220.

The phenomenon of local men entering into the ranks of the *askeri* class was not unique to Damascus. Throughout the late 1600s and early 1700s a major transformation of political and economic life was under way in the Syrian provinces. Whereas political control had been vested in the hands of Ottomans in the first century-and-a-half of Ottoman rule, it was now devolving into the hands of those who could ensure order in the countryside and thereby the flow of revenues to the capital. Increasingly, these were local figures who could mobilise formerly marginal men – tribesmen, peasants, outlaws or freebooters from outside Syria – who had come to the large cities seeking employment or booty.

In Aleppo, these new arrivals typically enrolled in the janissary corps itself, while native Aleppines formed a paramilitary group, united behind the banner of the *naqib al-ashraf* (the chief of the descendants of the Prophet). The presence of such undisciplined, armed men in both Aleppo and Damascus caused political instability throughout the second half of the seventeenth and all the eighteenth century. A similar phenomenon occurred in Mosul as well. In the absence of effective governance by the Ottoman elite to counter these lawless elements, the 'politics of the notables' came to dominate in Aleppo, Damascus, Mosul and Jerusalem, as a small number of local families emerged to play an active role in their cities' political and economic life.[11]

The origins of these families were mixed. Some had well-established credentials as religious functionaries, i.e. legal scholars and administrators of *awqaf* (pious endowments), as in the case of the al-Muradi and the al-Bakri families of Damascus, the al-'Umari family in Mosul, that of the al-Khalidis and the al-Husaynis in Jerusalem or the al-Kawakibi and al-Taha families in Aleppo. Their numbers were augmented by Sunni merchant families with whom alliances of marriage and business were often formed. While such families had presumably exercised moral authority in their respective locales before the eighteenth century, changes in the Ottoman fiscal system provided them with a growing economic voice; as the state began to sell off the lifetime right to collect taxes (*malikâne*), members of these families bought them up.[12]

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11 Hourani, 'Ottoman Reform'; see also Philip Khoury, 'The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited', *Villes au Levant. Hommage à André Raymond. Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 55–6 (1990), 215–28.

12 Cf. the chapter by Dina R. Khoury in the present volume (chapter 7). The study of elite families in the Ottoman Arab provinces is still in its infancy, but ground-breaking works include the following: on Aleppo, Margaret L. Meriwether, 'Urban Notables and Rural Resources in Aleppo, 1770–1830', *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 4 (1987), 55–73; Marco Salati, *Ascesa e caduta di una famiglia di Ašraf sciiti di Aleppo* (Rome, 1992); Margaret L. Meriwether, *The Kin who Count: Family and Society in Ottoman Aleppo*

This shift in the local balance of power was legitimised by the central government with the repeated appointment of members of these families to the important provincial posts of *mütesellim* (acting governor) and *muhassıl* (chief tax-collector). In both Mosul and Damascus, families established in the province captured the local governorships as well, translating the *de facto* position held by notables in other provincial centres into a *de jure* one. Elsewhere, most notably in Aleppo and Jerusalem, effective political power did not accompany this increase of status. Rather than having one family to dominate the 'politics of the notables', the Muslim elite in Aleppo remained divided, allying themselves with the armies of the street, the janissaries and the *ashraf*, in what could be very bloody confrontations.

The elite families of Mosul and Damascus were equally divided. In those two frontier cities, one threatened by Iran and the other harassed by the growing restiveness of the 'Anaza Bedouin, the notables grudgingly acquiesced to the rise of the Jalilis in Mosul and the 'Azms in Damascus. Both families, lacking the distinguished origins of other *ayan*s, emerged in the political vacuum of their respective cities from rather humble origins. Whether the state was also active in creating these dynasties is a matter of dispute. Abdul-Karim Rafeq, citing contemporary chroniclers, has depicted the 'Azm's capture of the governorship of Damascus as a triumph of local proto-Arabist sentiments and a decisive move towards provincial autonomy.[13] Challenging that interpretation, Karl Barbir has pointed to Istanbul's calculating interference in the politics of Damascus, thus indicating that the autonomy of the 'Azm family was illusory. In Barbir's view, Istanbul suffered the relatively long-lived governance of the 'Azm pashas only as long as the *hajj* caravans were making it safely across the domain of the 'Anaza Bedouin. A similar explanation is suggested by Dina Rizk Khoury for the Jalili dominance in eighteenth-century Mosul. In this case, however,

1770–1840 (Austin, 1999); on Damascus, Linda Schilcher, *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Stuttgart, 1985); Colette Establet and Jean-Paul Pascual, *Families et fortunes à Damas: 450 foyers damascains en 1700* (Damascus, 1994); on Jerusalem, Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century*; Butrus Abu-Manneh, 'The Husaynis: The Rise of a Notable Family in 18th Century Palestine', in *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social and Economic Transformation*, ed. David Kushner (Jerusalem, 1986), pp. 93–108; on Mosul, Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997).

13 Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723–1783* (Beirut, 1966); Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *al-'Arab wa al-'Uthmaniyyun* (Damascus, 1974); Abdul-Karim Rafeq, 'Changes in the Relationship between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Syrian Provinces from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977) pp. 53–73; Shimon Shamir presents a less nationalistic interpretation, but one nonetheless coloured by the triumph of localism: 'As'ad Pasha al-'Azm and Ottoman Rule in Damascus (1743–58)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26 (1963), 1–28.

the family was indispensable due to its members' ability to resist Iranian aggression.[14]

Whatever the degree of effective independence from Istanbul, the Jalilis and the 'Azms represented an important transition in their respective cities' governance. Previously, governors had lasted a year or two at most before being transferred. Given the transitory nature of their appointments, they displayed little affection for their place of posting. Some governors had been just, but more had sought to use their position to advance their own careers. That required cash, which they wrung from the purses of the cities' inhabitants.

The 'Azms, who ruled off and on in Damascus from 1725 through 1783, and their Mosul counterparts the Jalilis, who controlled the province between 1726 and 1807, provided a breathing space for their cities' inhabitants from the rule of governors who had little interest in their well-being. Their patronage supported the construction of new public buildings and private mansions which helped to boost civic identity and pride. This was gratefully acknowledged by the local chroniclers. Indeed, the fact that eighteenth-century individuals chose to write chronicles placing these families at the centres of their respective historical narratives demonstrates a perception that the regimes in question were unusual.[15] But whether the production of such chronicles reflected local pride, simple relief to be rid of despotic government or some larger stirrings of Arabist sentiment seems unresolved.

Chroniclers from other towns did not always share the positive view of these local heroes. Yusuf Dimitri 'Abbud al-Halabi, for example, wrote of the enthusiasm with which his fellow townsmen in Aleppo greeted the arrival of Yusuf Paşa al-'Azm as governor in 1780. The Aleppines based their hopes for an enlightened regime on reports of the family's reign in Damascus; moreover, the governor who preceded him had been especially rapacious. They soon learned that the 'Azm family's reputation for justice was overrated as Yusuf instituted various illegal taxes.[16] The probable reason for Yusuf Paşa's

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14 Karl Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708–1758* (Princeton, 1980); Khoury, *State and Provincial Society*.

15 Percy Kemp, 'History and Historiography in Jalili Mosul', *Middle Eastern Studies* 19 (1983), 345–76; Rafeq, *Province of Damascus*, pp. 320–32; Bruce Masters, 'The View from the Province: Syrian Chroniclers of the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, 3 (1994), 353–62.

16 Al-Halabi, '*Murtadd*', p. 49. The Porte also took note of Yūsuf's extortion from Aleppo Christians who enjoyed European protection: Istanbul, BBA, Halep Ahkam Defterleri, vol. 3, pp. 84, 90.

ruthlessness in Aleppo was the realisation that his own tenure as governor in this province was highly unstable, coupled with the need to raise cash to secure the family's position in Damascus. In short, he was behaving in Aleppo just as previous Ottoman governors with short tenure had behaved. As to the people of Aleppo, the fact that he was a Damascene Arabic speaker rather than a Turkish-speaking Ottoman does not seem to have alleviated their misery.

There were clear limits to the politics of the *ayan*, however. Lacking a military power base of its own, the ʿAzm family could never challenge Ottoman hegemony directly. In consequence, its members depended as much as the sultan's other appointees upon maintaining the favour of the court. Should an ʿAzm governor refuse a sultan's command, he would be removed. While the Porte's manipulation of *ayan* politics prevented the rise of urban-based challengers to the hegemony of the House of Osman, governors with little military power could not do much to staunch the erosion of the sultan's authority on the fringes of the Fertile Crescent.

In the eighteenth century, the Ottoman hold over the Syrian periphery became increasingly attenuated. Ottoman provincial boundaries were never clearly defined, but fluctuated with the territory in which an official appointee could effectively collect taxes. The writ of the governors of Damascus could extend into the Galilee, the Hawran and the Jabal Nablus. But these areas were never completely pacified and the collection of their revenues required periodic armed tours of the region (*dawra*). Complicating matters for the Ottomans, Palestine and Lebanon increasingly attracted European commercial interest. As elsewhere in the empire, European merchants were ready to make agreements with local warlords. Indeed, they seemed to prefer deals made on the spot with the likes of Zahir al-ʿUmar in Palestine to those concluded with the distant Porte. The revenues created by the trade with Europe, in turn, gave the men who controlled them financial, and potentially political, independence from Istanbul.

The main challenge to Istanbul's authority in the seventeenth-century Lebanon had come from the Maʿn dynasty who claimed the Druze emirate. In the early eighteenth century, the dynasty's fortunes were in decline and the political future of southern Lebanon uncertain. Out of the chaos, Zahir al-ʿUmar, who had started off as a tax-farmer for the Ottomans in the Galilee, rallied his Sunni kinsmen of the Ziyadina clan to exert control over the disparate Druze and Mitwalli Shia clans of southern Lebanon. By the middle of the century, he could openly defy both Damascus and Istanbul. Later in the

century, the Sunni Shihabi emirs would reclaim much of the territory once dominated by the Maʿns, while on Mount Lebanon the sheikhs of the Maronite Khazin clan often challenged the Porte's authority, as demonstrated by their continued help to the Uniate Greek Catholics.[17]

Despite the military successes of these clansmen on the periphery, their ability to extend their zone of influence by alliances with the elites of the larger Syrian towns was limited by social prejudice. The urban population, whether Sunni Muslim or Orthodox Christian, viewed the rural tribesmen with deep suspicion and contempt. This was particularly true of the Druze, who were assigned to hell's fires by even such a normally tolerant figure as the Damascene mystic and legal scholar ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi.[18] A similar horror is also evident in the chronicle penned by the Damascene Christian Mikha'il Burayk. In his description of the Druze troops who occupied his city under the leadership of the emir Yusuf al-Shihab in 1772, he stressed their barbarism and lawlessness.[19] The appearance of Bedouin, Kurds or Turcomans on the fringe of the Damascus and Aleppo suburbs elicited similar feelings of loathing from the chroniclers and presumably the urban populations at large. Given this social chasm between city-dwellers and rural clansmen, the potential for clan-based leaderships to emulate the earlier success of the Canboladoğlus in Aleppo was indeed slim.

In the eighteenth century the Ottomans may have lacked the resources to control the entirety of their core Arab provinces as they might have wished, but the alternative political forces were not broadly based enough to replace them. It is one of the ironies of this period that as local military and political elites challenged the empire's continued hegemony in the Fertile Crescent, individual Arabs were becoming more dependent on the central government than ever before. *Ulama* families were increasingly called upon to interpret the sultans' laws, and local elite families were profiting economically from lifetime tax-farms. With these changes, the civilian elites in Aleppo, Damascus and Mosul developed a vested interest in the survival of empire as a counterweight to the dynastic families of governors. Simply put, faced with a choice between the sultan or the local dynast, many in this group opted for Istanbul.

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17 Richard van Leeuwen, *Notables and Clergy in Mount Lebanon: The Khazin Sheiks and the Maronite Church (1736–1840)* (Leiden, 1994).

18 ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi, *al-Haqiqah wa al-majaz fi rihlat Bilad al-Sham wa Misr wa al-Hijaz* (Damascus, 1989), p. 251.

19 Mikha'il Burayk al-Dimashqi, *Ta'rikh al-Sham, 1720–1782*, ed. Qustantin al-Basha (Harissa, 1930), pp. 94–6.

Neo-Mamluk regimes: Egypt, Palestine, Baghdad and Basra

In 1260 soldiers of slave origin seized control of Egypt and instituted a radically different kind of dynastic succession than any previously known in Muslim lands. Sultans with slave origins were not new to Islam. But rather than passing the sultanate to one of the sons of the previous sultan, the reins of power in Egypt now went to one of his slave/ex-slave protégés. Master and slave would often share the same ethnic origin, thus forming a special bond of socially defined kinship. As children born to Muslim fathers could never be *mamluk*s, Egypt's *mamluk*s by necessity established 'households' made up of clients who formerly had been their slaves. These households were inherently unstable as they not only competed with one another for the sultanate, but also as individual *mamluk*s within a given household conspired to become its leaders.

With the death of Sultan Qansawh al-Ghawri in 1516 and the Ottoman victory over the Mamluk forces at Raydaniyya in 1517, Egypt became an Ottoman province, but the institution of Mamluk households apparently did not come to an end: the institution survived – or was revived – probably the latter rather than the former.[20] This is not surprising. The Ottomans were inherently conservative in the Muslim regions they added to their empire, and therefore reluctant to replace the pre-existing elites without cause. In the case of the Mamluks, Jane Hathaway has suggested that their system of households was not so different in function and appearance from the households of Ottoman grandees and thus would have seemed familiar to the Ottomans.[21]

Following the conquest, Selim I appointed Mamluk governors to both Syria and Egypt. With the sultan's death in 1520, the governor of Syria revolted, and the suppression of that rebellion effectively ended the Mamluk regime in the Syrian provinces. In Egypt, however, Mamluks continued to administer the province under a governor appointed from the capital. The agricultural lands of Egypt were not divided into military tax grants (*timar*s) as they had been in Syria. Rather, individual Mamluks collected the tax revenues of the province's sub-districts and forwarded them to the governor of Cairo.

The Mamluk households in Ottoman Egypt recruited new members in the traditional manner, i.e. by the purchase of slaves. In the Ottoman period these largely came from the Caucasus and the Trans-Caucasus regions, Georgians and 'Circassians' probably forming the majority. But the Ottoman governors

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20 Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule, 1517–1798* (London, 1992).
21 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis* (Cambridge, 1997).

also enlisted Muslim freebooters, largely from Anatolia. As Hathaway suggests, this manner of recruitment renders it problematic to characterise these households as 'slave'. Gabriel Piterberg argues, however, that despite the blurring of recruitment strategies, there remained a distinction in hierarchy, implicit in the terms *mısırlı* (Egyptian) applied to those of slave origin and *serrac* (literally 'saddler') applied to Muslim recruits. In Piterberg's view, this distinction effectively prevented the latter from rising to the highest positions (the beylicate) in the Mamluk hierarchy.[22] Yet the career of Ahmed Cezzar, and possibly that of Mustafa Qazdağli indicates that this distinction did not always keep the *serraclar* from reaching for higher office.

Further complicating our understanding of the Mamluk households, other military officers in Egypt, most notably the janissaries, formed their own houses. These competed with the older households, recruiting new members in the same way as the Mamluks. Although all the Egyptian households, whether of *mamluk* or janissary origin, were culturally influenced by the Ottomans and a form of Ottoman Turkish was their language of choice, they shared an intense local identity centred in Egypt. Most importantly, this identity carried with it a memory of an independent sultanate in Cairo which had predated the establishment of the Ottoman dynasty. As a result, the Ottoman claim to be the undisputed leaders of the Sunni Muslim world carried much less weight in Cairo than in Damascus or Baghdad.[23]

Despite the existence of these military households, Ottoman control over Egypt remained secure throughout the seventeenth century. The local garrison, divided into five competing units, jostled with the households for power, and no one house emerged as triumphant. The tax revenues continued to flow to Istanbul and the sultan was acknowledged as sovereign in the Friday prayers offered in Egypt's mosques. The internal politics of the province was far from tranquil, however, as the century was dominated by the bloody competition between two great Mamluk households, the Faqariyya and the Qasimiyya. By the end of it, both were eclipsed by a household forming around Mustafa al-Qazdağli.[24]

When Mustafa Bey was killed in 1736 by the Ottoman governor of Egypt, his former steward, İbrahim, took control of the Qazdağli household. İbrahim

22 Gabriel Piterberg, 'The Formation of the Ottoman Egyptian Elite in the 18th Century', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22 (1990), 275–89.

23 Ulrich Haarman, 'Ideology and History, Identity and Alterity: The Arab Image of the Turk from the 'Abbasids to Modern Egypt', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20 (1988), 175–96; also Winter, *Egyptian Society*, pp. 30–7.

24 Hathaway, *Politics of Households*, pp. 52–87.

Bey, in turn, dominated Egypt's political life from 1748 to 1754, taking for himself the title of *shaykh al-balad*. This was a neologism harking back to an earlier Mamluk era and reflected his control over Cairo, even while an Ottoman governor nominally ruled in the city. After İbrahim's death, one of his *mamluk*s, Ali, later to be called Bulut Kapan (one who grasps the clouds) by his admirers and detractors alike, seized the position of *shaykh al-balad* twice, in 1760–6 and 1767–72. Ali Bey broke with the tradition, established by the Qazdağli household, of balancing the widening autonomy accruing to the *shaykh al-balad* with publicly offered fealty to Istanbul. In 1770, he replaced the Ottoman governor of Jiddah with an Egyptian *mamluk*, threatening the House of Osman's claim to be the guardian of the holy places. In an act of open rebellion in 1771, he ordered his forces to invade Syria, in combination with Zahir al-ʿUmar and with the support of the Russian fleet which bombarded and briefly occupied Beirut.

Ali Bey's lieutenant and *mamluk* Muhammad Abu al-Dhahab captured Damascus with the help of the Sunni emir Yusuf al-Shihab. But rather than declare his own open revolt against the Ottoman sultan, he withdrew into Egypt.[25] This led to the unseating of Ali Bey, as Muhammad Bey broke with his former master and sought the post of *shaykh al-balad* for himself. Another of Bulut Kapan Ali Bey's former clients, Ahmed Cezzar, moved to defeat the Ziyadina clan alliance with the Porte's blessing, emerging as the strongman in the Galilee and southern Lebanon.

Ahmed Cezzar's career serves as an example of the complex career lines and shifting alliances inherent in a Mamluk household of Ottoman Egypt. He was a Bosnian Muslim who had attached himself first to the household of an Istanbul grandee and later to that of Bulut Kapan Ali Bey. Having fallen out with Ali Bey, Ahmed Cezzar switched his loyalty to the sultan and was rewarded with the governorship of Sidon. He later briefly held the governorship of Damascus as well. He also succeeded in getting his own *mamluk*s appointed as governors in Tripoli, bringing all the southern Syrian provinces under his control at one time or another. Istanbul was well aware, however, of the potential danger inherent in his meteoric rise and managed to thwart his attempts to gain the governorship of Aleppo. Despite his apparent ambitions, Ahmed Cezzar was content to build up his own autonomous power base under the sultan's seal. He even halted the forces of Napoleon Bonaparte by his defence of Acre in 1798, which prevented the French from advancing beyond Egypt. But after

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25 Daniel Crecelius, *The Roots of Modern Egypt: A Study of the Regimes of Ali Bey al-Kabir and Muhammad Abu al-Dhahab, 1760–1775* (Chicago, 1981); Winter, *Egyptian Society,* pp. 23–8.

Ahmed Cezzar's death in 1804, the Porte quickly moved to dismantle his household.[26]

A Mamluk regime more long-lived than that of Ahmed Cezzar also emerged in Baghdad in the eighteenth century. Unlike Egypt, Baghdad had no tradition of Mamluk households, but due to Bedouin unrest, Iranian invasions and the resulting precariousness of Ottoman rule, long-reigning governors had become part of the province's political tradition.[27] One such governor, Hasan Paşa, proved able to control both the Bedouin and the Kurds and so retained the sultan's lasting favour, ruling as governor in Baghdad between 1704 and 1722. He was succeeded by his son, Ahmed, who served from 1723 to 1747.

Hasan Paşa and his son were Ottomans with no previous connection to Baghdad. Once established, however, the family began to recruit protégés into a ruling household. These men were typically Georgian slaves, following the cultural style established in the court of the Persian shahs. Although the model was Persian rather than Egyptian, a very similar household system emerged in Baghdad to that found in contemporary Cairo, supporting Hathaway's supposition about the inherently Ottoman nature of neo-Mamluk households. Ahmed Paşa married his daughter, Adile Hanım, to his father's former Georgian slave, Süleyman, who was known as Abu Layla. As Ahmed had no male heirs, Süleyman acceded to the governorship of Baghdad upon Ahmed Paşa's death in 1749. He ruled until 1762. Adile Hanım no doubt played a major role in getting her husband named as governor. She also engineered the accession of Ömer Paşa to the governorship in 1764. Ömer was a former *mamluk* in her father's household and was married to her younger sister Ayşe.

Ömer Paşa was overthrown and executed at the Porte's order in 1776, due to his perceived weakness in the face of military advances by Iran's new ruler, Karim Khan Zand. But another former slave in the household, Büyük Süleyman, served as governor from 1780 until 1802. Although the construction and function of the Mamluk household in Baghdad resembled very closely that of Cairo, the Baghdad establishment made no attempt to secede from the empire. There was no historical memory in this province of an independent sultanate and the governor's household there seemed content to guard

26 Amnon Cohen, *Palestine in the 18th Century* (Jerusalem, 1973); Hathaway, 'The Military Household'.

27 Stephen Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Ottoman Iraq* (Oxford, 1925); also Tom Nieuwenhuis, *Politics and Society in Early Modern Iraq: Mamluk Pashas, Tribal Shaikhs and Local Rulers between 1802 and 1831* (The Hague, 1981); Thomas Lier, *Haushalte und Haushaltspolitik in Bagdad 1704–1831* (Würzburg, 2004).

against those who would wrest Iraq from the sultans, be they Bedouins, Kurds or Iranians.

No doubt Baghdad's Mamluks also realised that an independent state would be quickly swallowed up by the shahs of Iran. Another crucial difference between Baghdad and Cairo was the fact that there only existed one Mamluk household in Baghdad, that of the governor. As a result Baghdad's citizenry was spared much of the internecine struggle between households that characterised politics in Cairo. Without the constant threat of overthrow, the Mamluk governors of Baghdad could demonstrate their beneficence and thereby win the acclaim of local chroniclers as did their contemporaries in Damascus or Mosul.

In the eighteenth century, the household founded by Hasan Paşa in Baghdad was able to extend control over Basra as well. Southern Iraq had initially been administered by Ottoman military governors. The strategic situation of Basra was even more delicate than was Baghdad's, however. Literally on Iran's border, open to Portuguese naval bombardment, and surrounded by the hostile Muntafiq confederation in the marshlands, Basra was a difficult place to be posted as an Ottoman governor. Responding to the challenge, by the end of the sixteenth century a local man named Afrasiyab rose to the governorship. Through a careful manipulation of Portuguese and Iranian interests, he established a dynasty that would rule until 1668. The governors of Afrasiyab's line acknowledged the Ottoman sultan as sovereign, but forwarded few, if any, tax revenues to Istanbul. Although the Ottomans were finally able to topple the dynasty, they could not replace it. Throughout much of the later 1600s the city was actually held by the paramount sheikh of the Muntafiq confederation. Defeating the tribes in 1708, Hasan Paşa of Baghdad won the right to name the governor of the city. For the rest of the century, Basra was ruled by members of his household. However, an increasing British presence in the guise of the East India Company gave Basra's Mamluk regime options for independent action not available to their cohort in Baghdad.[28]

Certainly the Mamluk households in Egypt and Iraq seemed remarkably similar. Yet one wonders whether if Ahmed Paşa had had sons, rather than only remarkable daughters, the regime in Baghdad would not have evolved into a dynastic one, along the lines of the Jalilis of Mosul, with the Georgian *mamluk*s serving as mere lieutenants. The recruitment of slave protégés into the households of governors, after all, could be found among the ʿAzm family

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28 Thabit Abdullah, *Merchant, Mamluks, and Murder: The Political Economy of Trade in Eighteenth Century Basra* (Albany, 2001).

in Damascus as well. Nonetheless, the fact that Ahmed Paşa did establish a Mamluk household raises very serious doubts, as Hathaway suggests, about any claim for the exclusively Egyptian origin of Mamluk households in the Ottoman Empire.

Freebooters and religious visionaries: the Ottoman Arab periphery

The extension of Ottoman control over the further reaches of the Arabic-speaking Middle East and North Africa in the sixteenth century came not as an attempt to add territory, but to block the extension of Western military and economic influence into those regions and to gain control of lucrative trade routes for the sultans. Seizing the Red Sea ports of Jiddah, Suakin, Massawa and Mocha, and also the taking of Basra, pre-empted the Portuguese who were aggressively expanding their markets and political control in both the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Similarly, Ottoman interest in the North African littoral was prompted by the strategic concern to offset the expansion of Spain. With the fall of the Muslim kingdom of Granada in 1492, the *reconquista* leaped across the Straits of Gibraltar and Spanish fleets threatened all the North African ports. The causes for Ottoman intervention in these regions thus differed markedly from those for the Ottoman expansion into Europe. In the European case, the main motivating factor was new lands which could be divided up as *timar*s among an expanding military. The quest for lands and revenue, as much as strategic concerns, motivated the Ottoman march towards Vienna. By contrast, with the exception of the revenues produced by the coffee trade of Yemen,[29] these new Arab provinces typically represented a loss for the central treasury, as local revenues did not suffice for the military and naval expenditures necessary to keep these territories out of European hands.

Ottoman interests in North Africa were tied to the expansion of the Ottoman fleet, needed both for the confrontation with Spain and to control Christian corsairs who were preying on Muslim shipping in the Mediterranean. As Ottoman control in the region was naval-based, the sultans' writ rarely extended beyond the narrow North African coastal plain. The Berber clans in the mountains of Algeria effectively resisted any incorporation into the empire beyond the occasional recognition of the Ottoman sultan as suzerain. Morocco, under

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29 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590–1699', in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 411–636, at pp. 538–40.

first the Sa'di and later the 'Alawi sultans, also repelled Ottoman incursions as vigorously as it did the Spaniards.[30]

Although centres such as Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers had Ottoman governors during the years when Hayreddin Barbaros was admiral (*kapudan paşa*) of the fleet, the sultans' control in these regions was problematic almost from the start. The absence of a routinised Ottoman presence in the North African ports engendered anarchy. Profiting from this power vacuum, the military in those cities created alliances with the local Muslim elites and soon began to govern in place of Ottoman officialdom. The military was largely Turkish in origin, either janissaries or, more commonly, freebooters from Anatolia and the Balkans. Here, as in Iraq, there was no pre-existing tradition of Mamluk households, but the military elite followed similar patterns of recruitment and household formation to those found in Ottoman Egypt. The major difference between the two societies was that the slave component of the North African military elite was very small and largely consisted of Christian renegades initially enslaved through acts of piracy.

At the start of the eighteenth century, military strongmen seized control in all the major North African ports. In 1705 Hüseyin Alioğlu established his rule in Tunis. His descendants, known as the Husaynis, would rule – nominally – as beys until 1957. In 1711 both Karamanlı Ahmed Bey in Tripoli and Sökeli Ali Bey in Algiers established their own dynasties. Although neither one was as long-lived as that of the Husaynis, descendants of the two beys controlled their respective cities well into the nineteenth century. All three centres were in intense competition for control of lucrative pirate enterprises. This led them to a continued reliance on Istanbul for legitimacy; reference to the sultan also allowed the beys to balance off their more immediate rivals. Despite this, Ottoman influence in the region remained limited.

In the 1718 treaty of Passarowitz, the Ottomans agreed to end Muslim privateering against Austrian shipping. This was resisted by the *dey* in Algiers who was branded a rebel by the *şeyhülislam* in Istanbul. In retaliation, the Algerians were barred from the *hajj* as long as they persisted in rebellion and, more seriously, were prohibited from recruiting Turkish soldiers and sailors in Anatolia. The standoff was ended in 1732, when war with Spain forced the sultan to re-embrace his wayward subject. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Husayni beys in Tunis were negotiating directly with the European powers and neglecting to send any payments to the Porte.[31] In theory, however, the

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30 Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*.
31 Andrew Hess, 'The Forgotten Frontier: The Ottoman North African Provinces in the Eighteenth Century', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff

sultan still reigned in all these territories, but his authority rather resembled that of the Abbasid caliphs in the waning centuries of their dynasty, a titular head whose orders went unheeded.

Although the Ottomans had expanded into the Red Sea for reasons rather similar to those that had prompted their advance into the western Mediterranean, there were important differences in the problems they faced when trying to control the provinces on their southern flank. Rather than ambitious freebooters who had ultimately to seek legitimacy from them in order to justify their rule, the sultans were faced with peoples who rejected the very claim of the House of Osman to govern. In 1567 the tribes of Yemen rose in rebellion behind the Zaydi Imams who claimed the *'ilm* (religious knowledge) passed down from 'Alī through the line of Muhammad ibn Ja'far al-Sadiq. Ottoman control over the province was reasserted in 1570, but the highland tribes remained restive, engaging in a guerrilla campaign they viewed as holy war. By 1636 they had driven the Ottomans into the lowland coastal towns of Zabid and Mocha. Although there would be attempts to reassert the sultan's suzerainty over the coffee-producing highlands, direct Ottoman control over San'a and the highlands did not return until the latter half of the nineteenth century.[32]

The Ottomans had better luck in maintaining their presence in Eritrea and coastal Sudan. Although a religious movement of resistance would coalesce around the personage of the Mahdi in the late nineteenth century, the region was quiescent in earlier times. In the Hijaz, the sultan's authority was mediated through the Hashimi emirs of Mecca. According to William Ochsenwald, the Ottomans needed the *sharif*s for their own legitimacy and the *sharif*s needed the Ottomans for the financial support they provided. A compromise was therefore worked out whereby the Ottomans held the governorship at Jiddah, regulating its trade and pilgrim traffic, while allowing the Hashimi emirs the autonomy and prestige of ruling in the sultans' name in the holy cities.[33] That arrangement seemed to work to everyone's benefit until Sharif Husayn ibn 'Ali raised the banner of the Arab Revolt in 1916.

While the *sharif*s of Mecca were willing to accept the legitimacy of the House of Osman as 'servitors of the two Holy Cities', elsewhere in Arabia the followers

and Roger Owen (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1977), pp. 74–87; Jamil Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib* (Cambridge, 1975).

32 John Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder, 1982) pp. 70–3.

33 William Ochsenwald, *Religion, Society, and the State in Arabia: The Hijaz under Ottoman Control, 1840–1908* (Columbus, 1983); İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Mekke-i mükerreme emirleri* (Ankara, 1972).

of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703–92) were not. Although the latter preferred the title *muwahhidun* (those who proclaim the essential oneness and unity of God), they were labelled Wahhabis by others. These Najdi tribesmen presented a potent combination of religious fervour and tribal solidarity. More importantly, with its emphasis on the return to *ijtihad* (interpretation) and the abandonment of the cultural practices of the preceding Islamic centuries as decadent, the teachings of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab undermined the very legitimacy of the Ottoman throne. Indeed, this scholar reiterated the Muslim tradition's abhorrence to those who called themselves *shahanshah*, a not-so-subtle dig at the Ottoman sultans who included the term *padişah* in their list of titles. The Wahhabis would not burst into the Ottoman consciousness until the beginning of the nineteenth century with their raids on the Shiite holy cities of Iraq in 1802 and their capture of Mecca in 1803. But they alone of all the autonomous forces which emerged on the Arab fringes of the Ottoman Empire offered an ideology which was both revolutionary and subversive. Significantly, when the ideological break with the Ottoman Empire was formulated by Arabic-speaking scholars in Cairo and Damascus at the end of the nineteenth century, they were openly indebted to the groundwork laid by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab.[34]

All the Ottoman Arab lands experienced a degree of political alienation from Istanbul in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as local elites tested the ability of the central government to limit their encroachment on the sultan's prerogatives. With the historical knowledge of the rupture between Turks and Arabs brought about by the rise of nationalist ideologies in the early twentieth century, these eighteenth-century attempts at autonomy might be interpreted as stirrings of proto-Arab nationalist sentiments. But similar movements aimed at devolution of empire were found in Anatolia and the Balkans as well. In the case of the Arab provinces, few of these elites, even while expanding their autonomy locally, contemplated a complete break with empire. The two that did, the Mamluk *shaykh al-balad* in Egypt and the tribal followers of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, are instructive in what they did not claim, i.e. legitimacy based in national identity. In the case of Egypt, there was undoubtedly a strong sense of localism present in the self-image of the Mamluk beys, but their struggle should be interpreted as dynastic rather than ethnic. Indeed, Mehmed Ali seemingly had ambitions not only to secure his line from Ottoman interventions, but to replace the House of Osman with his

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34 Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (London, 1970); David Commins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria* (Oxford, 1990).

own as paramount sultans in the eastern Mediterranean.[35] In the case of the Wahhabis, the motivations were religious. The sultans were to be overthrown because they had allowed Islam to be corrupted, not because they were Turks. There was, as yet, no call for a return of the caliphate to the Arabs, and the family best placed to promote that ideology – the Hashimi *sharif*s of Mecca – remained content to receive Ottoman patronage.

The emergence of autonomous Muslim forces, such as Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, the janissaries in Belgrade or the Bosnian beys, had the unintentional result of spurring on the rising of the Christian majority in the Balkan peninsula to overthrow Turkish rule (*tourkokratia*). In the peripheral regions of the Ottoman Arab lands, in North Africa, the Hijaz and perhaps even Egypt, the Ottoman presence had most probably never deeply intruded into the consciousness of the ruled. Thus it is doubtful whether this period of devolution had any long-term effect on the inhabitants' own sense of place and identity, as they never considered themselves to be Ottoman. By way of contrast, in the core regions of the Arab provinces – Syria, Mosul and perhaps even Baghdad – the rise of local elites to the governorship was accompanied by a devolution of economic resources, i.e. tax-farms, into the hands of urban Arabs. As expressed in the chronicles of the period, this combination of political and economic change led, ironically perhaps, to a widening of their identity to include the possibility of being Ottoman for the first time.

35 Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge, 1984).

SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL GROUPS

The Ottoman *ulema*

MADELINE C. ZILFI

The *ulema* in context

Generalisations about the character of the Ottoman religious and legal schol-ars (*ulema*) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries call for the kind of historiographical disclaimers that often accompany studies of early modern institutions – the narrative sources are elitist or formulaic, the documentary materials absent or uneven and the secondary literature thin or tendentious. The problem of sources can be offset by limiting the scope of generalisation – not all *ulema*, for example, but those who are retrievable or in some way rep-resentative of the sources if not of society. Most findings will still reveal more about the grand than the ordinary membership, and more about Istanbul and other major centres than about provincial and small-town scholars.

In Ottoman usage, 'the *ulema*' constituted an ever more exclusive voca-tional category. Until the modernising reforms of the nineteenth century, it also denoted an increasingly more privileged social caste. The Ottomans' unprecedented centralisation of *ulema* recruitment and functions, a process well under way by the mid-sixteenth century, and the restrictive application of the term itself, direct the historiographical gaze, now as in the Ottoman past, onto Istanbul and the central elites. The boundaries around 'the learned' explain a great deal about Ottoman values and anxieties in these centuries. Among other things, they suggest a profound investment in designating who would – and who would not – be the standard-bearers of Ottoman Islamic orthodoxy.

In the Ottoman Empire, as in Islamic states before it, the *ulema* occupied a singular place among the exemplars of faith and pious tradition: the *ulema* were viewed as the heirs of the Prophet, the repositories of the holy law. For the Sunni community, they were the guardians of the faith in the ages following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Under the later Ottoman regime, they were more than that, and less.

The Ottoman system, like previous Islamic regimes, called for a certain intimacy between ruler and guardians. Ideally, the *ulema* should be close enough to the centres of governance to advise the sovereign or his deputies, to ensure that the rulings of the latter were consonant with the holy law. As head of state, the ruler should provide for the *ulema*'s well-being, and as Commander of the Faithful he should guarantee their scholarly excellence and personal probity. Since the caliphal era of early Islam, legal scholars had served as authoritative experts, either in official positions or in unofficial community practice. The early *ulema*'s sense of the inherent corruption of official appointment, especially the office of judgeship (kadi), led many to shun office rather than risk contamination. Yet the magnitude of the Ottoman enterprise, and the fund of resources assigned to its religious institutions, discouraged holdouts against state service.

By the sixteenth century, virtually all legal scholars who presided over a *medrese* classroom or a *şeriat* court in the Turkish-speaking areas of the empire, along with imperial appointees everywhere, were ranked, graded and pensioned under central state auspices. Individuals continued to assert their independence on particular issues, especially those in which the sultan did not have an overwhelming partisan interest. However, the possibility of a self-sustained, independent body of *ulema*, near but not beholden to the wielders of state power, had faded. State sponsorship gave the legal system formidable range and centrality, but it also exposed the *ulema* to the compromising pressures of lay officialdom. Members of the *ulema* vied for influence with bureaucrats and janissaries, among other elite sectors, and also competed among themselves for the honours of their particular calling. In common with other official appointees, the *ulema* enjoyed *askeri* status, a privileged social and economic positioning superior to that of the ordinary, tax-paying population. It was the counsel of this vested body of religious office-holders that state authorities most consistently sought on the wider imperial stage, to advise on war, peace and social order, and on other matters apart from law or religion as such.

Efforts by the state to rein in the *ulema*'s capacity for independent action, and the religious institution's own urge to autonomy, are recurring themes in Ottoman history. The conflict between the religious and secular leaderships was ultimately about power, but the battle lines between the two shifted after the founding centuries. The scholarly integrity associated with the early *ulema* leadership yielded in later times to an undisguised preoccupation with status and remuneration. The voluminous biographical literature that tracked the religious learned throughout the Ottoman era described an admired *ulema* community in the earliest centuries. Many scholars were commemorated in

their own time for their simplicity and courage: thus Şeyhülislam Zenbilli Ali ('Ali of the Basket') was described as standing up to Selim the Grim on matters of life and death, or as unpretentiously placing his legal opinions in a basket lowered to petitioners. Admittedly the 'golden-age' nostalgia common to historiographical treatments of the pre-seventeenth-century empire whitewashed the early judiciary along with much else. In fact, ignorant and rapacious kadis troubled the provinces throughout the history of the empire. Nonetheless, the biographical testimonials taken together reveal the flashpoints in early *ulema*–state relations. With or without homely detail, the anecdotes identify the early struggles in the heroic terms of individual resistance. Almost invariably these stories revolve around two possible sources of corruption: the threat of the state's punishments and the seductiveness of its rewards. In later times, both had become integral features of the *ulema* calling, the *ulema* 'career' (*tarik-i ulema*), while dignity and social presence displaced personal courage in biographical memory, and *ulema* notability was represented more in terms of family and social status than in individual terms.

There were, of course, exceptions to the high standard of the early *ulema* leadership at all levels of the membership. Still, public perceptions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries drew heavily on the reputation of the *ulema*'s most esteemed members, long admired by the sultans themselves. Yet by the mid-seventeenth century, the *ulema* were increasingly seen as blind careerists, pursuing office more than learning. Contemporary biographical dictionaries, many of them written by *ulema*, reflected and probably encouraged the obsession with bureaucratic honours. Chronicles and histories, again many with *ulema* authors, also tend to focus on bureaucratic – rather than scholarly or religious – markers of achievement. Apart from the biographical minima of geographical origin, paternity and death, the subjects of these works were presented in vocational terms, as the sum of their offices and ranks. Many *ulema* continued in the tradition of the early exemplars, but bureaucratic careerism often eclipsed the merits that had bound career mobility more closely to religious knowledge (*ilm*).

The literature of the time plays with the term 'official *ulema*' (*resmi ulema*), denoting office-holding or state *ulema*, in opposition to the 'real' *ulema* (*ulema-i tarik* or *hakkiki ulema*), thus the *ulema* in name versus the genuinely learned. The biographical dictionaries make tired reference to this or that *alim*'s literary output: 'He wrote poetry'; 'He had a small collection of poems (*divan*)'; 'He wrote three treatises (*risales*).' Their perfunctory tone contrasts with the compliments lavished on the relatively few whose intellectual achievements, religious or profane, warranted biographical enthusiasm. Zekeriyazade Yahya

(d. 1644), about whose worth there was widespread agreement, is a rarity. He is lauded as 'one of the most distinguished Ottoman *şeyhülislams*', 'a man of true excellence' who, alone of his age, 'achieved the repute of [Sultan Süleyman's *şeyhülislam*] Ebussüud, with his choice poetry and his justice and integrity'.[1] Many others are praised in similarly expansive terms – including several scholars in each of the Uşakizade, Ebu İshakzade and Pirizade lines. But unlike Zekeriyazade or later Mınkarizade Yahya (d. 1678) they are presented more narrowly, as productive scholars, for example, but not particularly to be remembered for their performance in office. Sometimes the disconnection between scholarship and performance is stark, as with Şeyhülislam Erzurumlu Feyzullah (d. 1703), whose scholarly standing is forever stained by his personal failings. The nineteenth-century historian and legal scholar Ahmed Cevdet, a formidable *alim* himself, singles out the eighteenth-century *kadıasker* and memorialist Tatarcık Abdullah as a 'second Taftazani', yet Tatarcık's early years were marred by scandal.[2]

From the end of the sixteenth century, the *ulema* as an institution – the *ilmiye* as it was called – was subjected to the same economic and demographic pressures that impelled others of the central elites to protect their privileged status against new claimants. The intensified careerism of office-holders was the most conspicuous dimension of the *ulema*'s response in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But it was the ability of the richest among them to command the career for the benefit of their own families that subverted the promise of the open and subsidised education system.

The *ilmiye*

Ottoman territory was divided into *vilayet*s, and *vilayet*s into *sancak*s. Beneath these military-administrative layers, the Ottomans divided their empire into districts (*kazas*), and assigned to them a small army of kadis, jurisconsults (*müfti*s) and legal clerks. A comprehensive legal system, supported by an expanding array of colleges (*medrese*s) in a newly elaborated system for training legal personnel, was firmly in place in the late sixteenth century.

The Ottoman kadis and *müfti*s who dispensed justice in the courts, and the teachers (*müderris*es) who instructed future generations of *ulema* had

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1 Bab-i Meşihat, *İlmiye salnamesi* (Istanbul, 1334/1915–16), p. 443; cf. Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke-i tarih*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1286/1870), vol. II, pp. 231–2; Müstakimzade Süleyman Sadeddin, *Devhat el-meşayıh ma zeyl* (Istanbul, 1978), pp. 47–8.

2 Ahmed Cevdet [Paşa], *Tertib-i Cevdet ez-Tarih-i Cevdet*, 12 vols. (Istanbul, 1309/1891–2), vol. I, pp. 108–17, vol. IV, pp. 58, 256, vol. V, pp. 27, 34–9, vol. VI, pp. 227–8.

responsibility for clarifying the meaning of religious doctrine and regulating society according to the norms of the faith. Far more than *müfti*s and *müderrise*s, however, Ottoman kadis were on the front lines in the meeting between religious expectation and social practice. Their public role extended beyond the courtroom to make them adjunct officers of state. Kadis reported on the conduct of the sultan's secular administrators and supervised transactions in the marketplace. Price-gouging, hoarding, misappropriation, dereliction, and even impassable roads and downed bridges could fall within the kadis' charge.

The duties of the two *kadıaskers*, chief justices of the army for Rumelia and Anatolia, also combined religion and administration. These dignitaries applied the principles of inheritance law to the estates of the deceased, administered justice on campaign and constituted a court of appeals in the imperial *divan*, the highest formal consultative body. They also had responsibility for appointing the minor kadis in their jurisdictions – in the eighteenth century, close to 500 in all. And as permanent members of the *divan*, the *kadıaskers* sat with the grand vizier and the chiefs of the bureaucracy, chancery and treasury to advise on treaties and refugees, personnel and provisioning, budget and finance, as well as justice and morality. In the provinces, kadis performed similar roles.[3]

The *şeyhülislam*, the grand *müfti* of Istanbul, was superior in rank to all other *ulema* in this period. Since the late sixteenth century he had come to be regarded as head of the *ilmiye*, and was thus not merely pre-eminent, but bureaucratically responsible for the institution's operations and the conduct of its office-holders.[4] His primary religio-legal role, to render opinions on the *şeriat* legality of contested matters of law, served a critical function in an empire that increasingly framed the rhetoric of legitimacy in the idiom of social order and legalitarian Islam. Like other *müfti*s, the *şeyhülislam* issued *fetvas*, non-binding opinions on religious questions. Their responses were often gathered together for future generations and arranged into exemplary volumes, topic by topic, from ablutions and prayer to guardianship, divorce and property law. As grand *müfti* of the capital, however, the *şeyhülislam* had a special relationship to the state and the sultan. He was the foremost religious authority in the empire, the opinion-giver whose formal rulings were a judgement necessary for important state policies including the dethroning of rulers. As a high official whose calling virtually monopolised the representation of learning, his counsel

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3 The duties of the *kadıasker* varied over the course of these centuries, with the Rumelia *kadıasker*, the senior of the two, also emerging with the larger judicial role.

4 Richard C. Repp, *The Müfti of Istanbul* (London, 1986).

was also routinely sought by the sultan and his ministers on general matters of governance, whether or not legality was at issue.

The *şeyhülislam*'s role as jurist and statesman-administrator gave rise to the same ambiguities that troubled the roles of kadi and *kadıasker*. But the *şeyhülislam*'s dilemma was complicated by his unique relationship to the ruler. While the *şeyhülislam* gave voice to the holy law and the sultan was subject to the law's provisions, it was the ruler who appointed and dismissed the *şeyhülislam*. The balance between the theoretical supremacy of the law and the sultan's authority over the law's practitioners was always uneasy. But the rapid-fire dismissals of *şeyhülislams* at the turn of the sixteenth century put an end to any notion that the sultan's government refrained from tampering with the *ilmiye*'s moral authority. The office of *şeyhülislam* lost its life tenure. By the opening of the seventeenth century, incumbents were as vulnerable to political whim as any *ağa* or vizier. Memekzade Mustafa (d. 1656/7) served half a day. Cafer Efendizade Sunullah's (d. 1612) four terms averaged five months each. Although the *şeyhülislam*'s time in office could now be as brief as anyone's, it differed in having no set maximum. Zekeriyazade Yahya (d. 1644), Mınkarizade Yahya (d. 1678), Çatalcalı Ali (d. 1692) and Yenişehirli Abdullah (d. 1743) all served ten or more unbroken years. Swift turnover and loss of the sultan's or grand vizier's support, however, were by far the norm.

The limits of the legal learned

As in other eras, the men who rose to *ulema* status did not encompass the entire body of religious learned, much less the entire class of the empire's literate 'learned', religious or otherwise. The religious sciences of which the *ulema* were masters comprised the disciplines associated with *şeriat* law, particularly jurisprudence (*fikh*) and Qur'anic commentary (*tefsir*). Chroniclers, poets, biographers and other literati whose achievements lay mainly in profane letters were excluded unless they were also scholars of the law. Other religious specialists, if not trained in the law, were excluded by definition. Thus sufi sheikhs, as well as reciters of the Qur'an or of the canonical *hadith* compilations, were esteemed for their religious exertions, but they did not qualify as *ulema* – according to regular Ottoman usage – if their credentials did not reflect teaching mastery of the legal texts that underlay Sunni guardianship. To be sure, there was fluidity between these categories and vocations, since individuals moved between pursuits in the course of a lifetime. But apart from the sponsorship of a grandee, career movement tended to go out from rather than into the *ulema*.

The common pattern among the *ulema* themselves reflected avocational accomplishment in several fields. *Ulema* of various ranks offered up poetry, histories, calligraphic art and other emblems of broad cultivation. Şeyhülislam Zekeriyazade Yahya was celebrated for his poetry as much as for *ilm*. An eighteenth-century successor, Pırızade Mehmed Sahib (d. 1749), translator of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*, was equally well regarded. Mirzazade Salim (d. 1743/4) was a biographer and poet and a well-known though morally dubious kadi of rank. Historians were also plentiful – Şeyhülislams Kara Çelebizade Abdülaziz (d. 1658) and Çelebizade İsmail Asım (d. 1760), Kadıasker Mehmed Raşid (d. 1735), the *müderris* Çesmizade Mustafa Reşid (d. 1770), and the town kadi Şemdanizade Süleyman (d. 1779), among others. A fair number of *ulema* were also practising sufis, and some sufi sheikhs were experts in the law. But the elaborate set of hurdles required for *ulema* status deterred crossovers from other career paths, except in the case of men whom the sultan launched or promoted without regard to professional canons.

In the vast empire, language and geography posed important barriers to inclusion among the *ulema* elite. *Ulema* trained and employed in the Arabic-speaking provinces received recognition as scholars, but in general they were marginalised with respect to audiences and issues outside their home locales. To most non-Turkish speakers, this did not much matter. They possessed their own spheres of influence and approbation. As to the majority of Turkish speakers, they measured success exclusively in terms of the central institutions. Although talented provincials from the Arab and Balkan regions often braved the capital – the *kadıaskers* Muhaşşi Şehabeddin Ahmed of Egypt (d. 1659), the Bosnians Şaban (d. 1666) and Şabanizade Mehmed (d. 1692) and the Syrian Ebulfethzade Yusuf (d. 1647) were the most successful of their day – the governing reaches of the imperial system in these centuries was the domain of Ottoman Turkish speech.

The Ottomans always favoured the use of the term *ulema* to mean the officially recognised *ulema*, those either employed in high official capacity or fully qualified as such. In the 1600s, in tandem with the sixteenth-century expansion of the *medrese* system, the term was bestowed on incumbents at or above the entry-level teaching grade of the expanded hierarchy. The hierarchy commenced with twelve successive *medrese* grades, from the *İbtida-i Haric* to the *Darülhadis-i Süleymaniye*, and rose through a superior pyramid of the empire's most important kadi posts to culminate in the *şeyhülislam*ate (see tables 10.1 and 10.2). Hundreds of other *medrese*s, scattered throughout Istanbul and the region, were also in operation in these later centuries, but they tended to accommodate only the more elementary studies. Major Arab centres such

Table 10.1 *Müderris/medrese* hierarchy
(in descending grade order)

Darülhadis-i Süleymaniye
Süleymaniye
Hamis-i Süleymaniye
Musile-i Süleymaniye
Hareket-i Altmışlı
İbtida-i Altmışlı
Sahn-i Seman
Musile-i Sahn
Hareket-i Dahil
İbtida-i Dahil
Hareket-i Haric
İbtida-i Haric

Table 10.2 *Şeyhülislam*ate and judgeships (in descending order)

şeyhülislam
kadıasker of Rumelia
kadıasker of Anatolia
*büyük mevleviyet*s (great *molla*ships)
kadi of Istanbul
kadis of the *Haremeyn* (Mecca and Medina)
Erbaa grade: kadis of Damascus, Cairo, Bursa, Edirne
Mahrec grade: kadis of Aleppo, Eyüp, Galata, Izmir, Jerusalem, Salonika, Üsküdar, Yenişehir (Larisa)

as Cairo and Damascus were exceptions. As former capitals themselves, they possessed substantial pre-Ottoman endowments and maintained their own colleges to serve even the most advanced students. The Arab provinces also kept alive a vigorous scholarly third 'way', through the continued existence of an informal network of independent *ulema*, who attracted students as well as legal petitioners.[5]

The Istanbul system was the training ground for what can be called the imperial *ulema*. In the seventeenth century and thereafter, a young man reaching for a career as a hierarchy professor or judge had to pursue Istanbul's educational track. Students ascended from grade to grade – at least theoretically

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5 Judith E. Tucker, *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Berkeley, 1998).

mastering the texts of each – through the first five Istanbul grades, followed by some seven years in the capacity of advanced students (*danışmend*) and *Haric* candidates (*mülazim*). The configuration, comprising twelve grades in all, had been capped since 1557 by the new Süleymaniye grades (see table 10.1). The mark of *ulema* status, however, was not the completion of years of study. It was instead the receipt of the *rüus-i tedris* teaching permit and, with it, appointment to an *İbtida-i Haric medrese* (see table 10.1), for which candidates had to pass the *rüus* examination.

For some young men – their numbers are impossible to know – the opportunity to take the *rüus* examination never came, or so many years passed that they dropped out of the running. As a *rüus* candidate in 1704, the young Mehmed Raşid, later imperial historian and *kadıasker*, had spent eleven demoralising years – four more than the purported norm – awaiting his turn. He and the others who were turned away, some having waited up to eighteen years, were discouraged from continuing. 'Be an apothecary!' 'Be a grocer!' they were told.[6]

Even in prosperous times, most grades faced an oversupply of qualified candidates. New *müderris*es quickly realised that the *Haric* bottleneck they had just escaped was one of many to be endured. Too many *müderris*es of the Musile-i Sahn – popularly known as 'the bog' (*batak*) – qualified for the *Sahn-i Seman*, too many *Altmışlı*s for the Sülemaniye, too many Süleymaniye *müderris*es for entry-level judgeships, and so on. Those *ulema* who aspired to permanent teaching careers were happy to halt further office-seeking once they reached a *medrese* grade of their choice. For the rest, however, available posts and honours rarely satisfied the demand for advancement. Even worse, in this period the number of candidates was increasing at virtually every level, at a time of decreasing resources in a shrinking empire.

Despite longer examination intervals, the number of *rüus* recipients trebled between 1703 and 1839. The demand for posts was met in large part by expansionism, devaluation and compensatory honorific titles. Scores of 'quick-fix' *medrese*s were endowed in the form of *dersiye*s – *müderris* stipends assigned to an existing *medrese* or mosque. *Dersiye*s were ranked and graded like traditional, constructed *medrese*s, their grade depending on the status of their founder-donor.[7] Adding places for kadis was more difficult since new positions required new territory or the subdividing of existing *kaza*s. Inasmuch as the empire was

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6 Mehmed Raşid, *Tarih-i Raşid*, 6 vols. (Istanbul, 1282/1865), vol. III, pp. 119–20.
7 Madeline C. Zilfi, 'The İlmiye Registers and the Ottoman *Medrese* System Prior to the *Tanzimat*', in *Contributions à l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. J.-L. Bacqué-Grammont and P. Dumont (Louvain, 1983), pp. 309–27, *passim*.

losing territory, and since subdividing, although sometimes necessary, created its own set of problems, the solution ultimately took the form of honorary grades. Honoraries, scarcely known in earlier times, became a regular feature of kadi and *kadıasker* positions over the course of the seventeenth century. Each grade was effectively split in two, with a more prestigious and remunerative actual position as well as an honorary one. While there could only be one actual office-holder, there were sometimes a half-dozen titular equivalents. Despite smaller stipends, honorary ranks afforded access to imperial gifts and gift-givers.

Would-be *rüus* examinees who despaired of a chance of receiving their diplomas tried to make a living, temporarily or permanently, from the minor and dead-end jobs that made up the *ilmiye*'s infrastructure and patrimonial stock: as junior *müderris*es or small-town kadis; as judge-adjuncts (*naib*) or recording clerks (*katib*), assisting big-city 'Great *Mollas*' with the ample business of their urban courtrooms. Since some of the small judgeships of the sub-hierarchy also alternated as pensions (*arpalık*) or income for current and former *kadıasker*s and *şeyhülislam*s, drop-outs as well as active candidates found employment as judge substitutes for pensioned notables. Private tutoring offered another source of income, although again it is impossible to know how many aspiring *ulema* found work in this way.

The unusual personal diary of a young *rüus* candidate, Sıdki Mustafa, is an inadvertent guide to the links between a successful candidacy and successful clientage.[8] In 1752, Sıdki writes of his pleasure at becoming tutor to the sons of the Istanbul kadi, İvaz Paşazade İbrahim Bey Efendi. During his seven-year candidacy, Sıdki patched together a living through holiday bonuses and work as a private tutor, *medrese* assistant (*müid*), class drillmaster (*müzakereci*), *vakıf* administrator (*mütevelli*), town kadi or *naib* and estate office sinecurist in the *kısmet-i belediye* which oversaw the division of inheritances according to Islamic law. At various points during study, candidacy and advancement, however, men of limited means were not always so lucky, and had to scale back on their ambitions. Sıdki was clearly a promising scholar; he had scored among the top seven performers in his examination cohort. Still, it was his ties to Şeyhülislam Kara Halilzade Mehmed Said (d. 1755) and, after Mehmed Said's banishment, to the wealthy and well-placed İbrahim Bey Efendi (d. 1797/8), that saw him through his early years.

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8 Sıdki Mustafa [sometimes called Sıdki Mehmed], 'Vekayı-i yevmiye', İstanbul Üniversitesi, İnal Ktp., TY3580; Madeline C. Zilfi, 'The Diary of a *Müderris*: A New Source for Ottoman Biography', *Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1977), 157–74.

For successful examinees, the rise to a *Haric medrese* conferred economic security. By upper elite standards, the stipend was modest, fifty *akçes* daily. But it was regular pay, and together with sinecures picked up along the way, it was enough to support married life. *Haric* employment was also a matter of status. It separated out newly minted official *ulema* from the scores of candidates who stood by year after year, desperate to 'arrive' at the same distinction – 'Haric'e vardım,' they said when it happened. In 1754 the diarist Sıdki was one of ninety-nine candidates who stood for examination, only twenty-six of whom passed. And there were hundreds of others who, despite long years in candidacy, had not even made the examination cut.

Through promotions based chiefly on seniority, the *Haric* opened the way to the most prestigious and remunerative posts in the religious career. For a time in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, however, the seniority principle barely functioned. Palace and military officials plundered the *ilmiye*, auctioning off or giving away positions to blatantly unsuitable favourites. The rewards of higher office held out little promise to *ulema* unable or unwilling to partake in the spoils. In more orderly times later in the century, reciprocal gift-giving and favour as always played an important role, but not to the exclusion of seniority. The seniority rule, if it can be called that, kept the hope of promotion alive among those not blessed with wealth or influential patrons.

Promotion to or above the senior *müderris* ranks brought senior entitlements: a tenured social status supported by a living stipend even when not in actual office; low-rent or no-rent housing in one of the many urban structures dedicated to *ulema* use; notarial fees; remunerations for *vakıf* administration or for any of the myriad *vakıf*-supported subaltern posts and sinecures; and other perquisites, commissions and privileges that multiplied with high imperial office of every sort in the empire. Not incidentally, the personnel of the senior grades – the *ulema* of high ceremony – gained access to recognitions that only the sultan could bestow. As a student in 1749, Sıdki Mustafa accompanied senior *ulema* to the palace to view the Prophet's mantle during Ramadan observances. Without an invitation to enter the Mantle Chamber, he could go no further than the door. 'I pray that I too will receive an invitation to enter,' he wrote.[9]

Istanbul's religious foundations and posts had begun to eclipse their provincial counterparts almost from the moment of the conquest. The levelling down of the provinces, the 'outside' (*taşra*), as they were called, was a persistent

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9 Sıdki Mustafa, 'Vekayı-i yevmiye', fol. 4a.

pattern in the development of the capital. Over time, provincial centres were starved of cultural infrastructure in comparison to the endowment lavished on Istanbul. *Ulema* recruitment reflected the shift in resources. By the seventeenth century, graduates of most provincial *medrese*s no longer measured up to employment in the *ulema* hierarchy. In the eighteenth century, even the *medrese*s of Edirne, the previous Ottoman capital, lost most of their traditional parity. The empire's signature religious posts were thus almost exclusively – there were always exceptions – filled by the products of the 300 or so self-referenced teachers and classrooms that operated with imperial standing.[10]

The centralisation of recruitment for all practical purposes eliminated competition from regional scholars and reinforced the estate interests of the current religious elite. In a sense, the very concept of *ulema* was captured, not only for the capital's graduates, but for the career's insiders. *Ulema* grandees tightened their grip on the enormous resources of what was supposed to be an integrated and open imperial system. Since young provincials continued to be welcome as students in Istanbul, neither hierarchy appointment nor membership in the elite amounted to a closed system. Provincials could qualify for the *rüus* and a *Haric medrese* by pursuing their entire education in Istanbul or by topping off an education begun with hometown scholars. But the direct and indirect costs of moving alone to the capital – and the ability of incumbent *ulema* to implant their own offspring in the profession – in the eighteenth century drove down the percentage of provincial-born scholars to its lowest levels. When students did arrive from the provinces, they were wise to come armed with the names of potential *ulema* patrons.

The best hope for advancement lay with upwardly mobile insider patrons, but it was the patronage of a relative, especially a father, that increasingly guaranteed swift ascent. In discussing his own *Haric* success, Sıdki Mustafa notes with chagrin that four scions of prominent *ulema* families – 'two times two Dürrizade and Damadzade sons', he calls them – moved up to the *Haric* on the strength of their paternity, without examination.[11] Their leap was made possible by one of several family entitlements that in the eighteenth century became generalised over a widened field of patrons and male relatives. Such rules – *ulemazade kanunu*, *mollazade kanunu* – entitled *ulema* notables to vouch for the scholarly fitness of their own sons (*-zade*) at the entry level, or awarded older sons extra promotions. To their credit, many *mollazade*s stood for examination despite exemption. Many, however, did not, and it was the injustice of

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10 Zilfi, 'Ilmiye Registers', p. 324.   11 Sıdki Mustafa, 'Vekayı-i yevmiye', fol. 31a.

the rise of the latter that undermined the corporate as well as the learned *ilmiye*. In any case, all *mollazade*s qualified for extra promotions at various points in their careers. Not surprisingly, the youngest ranking *ulema* in the eighteenth century were *mollazades* who had risen on their fathers' coat-tails.[12]

Risks and rewards

In comparison to the official secular careers, the *ilmiye* remained a haven of stability. In comparison to its own past, however, *ilmiye* office-holding connoted vulnerability as much as security. By the mid-seventeenth century, tenure in office for all diploma-holding *ulema* became annual with the possibility of dismissal beforetime or, in the case of the *şeyhülislam*, completely indeterminate. In the seventeenth century, great *molla*ships dropped from two years to eighteen months, and finally to one year only. Extensions and immediate renewals were rare in both centuries, but repeat appointments were common at the level of Istanbul kadi, *kadıasker* and *şeyhülislam*. Lower kadi tenures eventually settled at two years, always with the possibility of extension or immediate renewal.

The insecurities of office-holding were aggravated in the seventeenth century by physical dangers. Provincial postings were always worrisome because of the hazards of travel, but in the seventeenth century there was also much to fear in the capital. Murad IV's seventeen years in office amounted to a reign of terror in themselves. Before and after Murad, violent factionalism convulsed the military and palace elites. Not surprisingly, members of the *ulema* were sometimes in the line of fire. Şeyhülislams Ahizade Hüseyin (d. 1634) and Hocazade Mesud (d. 1656) were executed, although their faults lay in missteps regarding their sultans more than in crime as such. In 1648, the *kadıasker* Musliheddin, called 'Mulakkab', 'he of the many epithets', was catapulted into office by imperial decree over the express objections of the *ulema* leadership. He was soon killed in a mob action in which *ulema* participated. Mulakkab's experience was an object lesson in the dangers of outside intervention, especially when flaunted in the faces of career colleagues.

In 1634, the hanging of the kadi of Iznik by Murad IV brought the matter of violence home to ordinary members of the religious hierarchy, who may not have identified with the Mulakkabs and Ahizades. In any case, high-level *ulema*, who witnessed and often authorised the executions of fellow officials,

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12 Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, 1988), pp. 43–65.

knowingly moved in dangerous circles in dangerous times. The kadi of Iznik, however, was an ordinary town judge, a minor *medrese*-trained cog in the mighty wheel of Ottoman government. His *medrese* training – probably only five or six years of it at that – could not have prepared him for the administrative chores that came his way. When he was executed, he suffered a secular officer's fate for failing at the more secular side of a kadi's charge, attending to the roadway over which the irascible Murad IV would pass. When the *ulema* eventually re-established their special immunities on the grounds of calling and tradition, such events were not far from their thoughts.

In 1703 Erzurumlu Feyzullah Efendi, incumbent of the empire's two chief spiritual offices, the *şeyhülislam*ate and imperial preceptorship (*muallim-i sultan*), was executed upon the overthrow of his patron, Mustafa II. Killed with him, or exiled for decades on his account, were numerous relatives and favourites to whom he had awarded *ilmiye* ranks beyond their due. Among those killed was his eldest son, Fethullah, on whom he had bestowed the rarely accorded rank of 'honorary *şeyhülislam*' – in effect, *şeyhülislam*-in-waiting.

Feyzullah's self-promotion was blatant and unapologetically materialist. He delighted in the role of potentate, complete with overbearing entourage clearing the streets at his approach. For his enemies in the *ilmiye* and among the secular factions, however, the danger of his pretensions grew out of his long intimacy with his former pupil and later advisee, Sultan Mustafa II. Although Feyzullah was an *alim* of considerable accomplishment, he was an outsider to Istanbul. He came to the *şeyhülislam*ate not through the ranks and clienteles of the *ilmiye* system, but laterally, on the strength of Mustafa's interventions. Nepotism was common throughout the elites, but Feyzullah's eight years as *şeyhülislam* seemed to be staking a permanent claim to the hierarchy and to elements of the state itself. For the *ulema*, Feyzullah's manipulations were deeply offensive not so much because he elevated relatives out of turn, but because he appropriated virtually all positions worth having. And the worth of such positions in large part derived from control of the patronage appointments that sustained clients and family. Feyzullah's dynasty-building had left little breathing room for rival dynasties, current and in the making.

The fall of Feyzullah usually reads as a story of violence and doomed ambition. An appointed official who seeks to combine in himself both religious and secular authority is struck down by the mob. With good reason, the story centres on the person of Feyzullah and his attempt at alternative dynasty-building. In a wider sense, it reaffirms the limits of *ulema* ambitions and points ahead to the stable *ilmiye*–palace consociation that came to characterise the eighteenth

century. In the aftermath of the Feyzullah episode, nepotistic advantage was condemned in so far as it promoted individualised, exclusivist extremes. It was upheld, however, as a class entitlement, an automatic perquisite of high station. A decade after Feyzullah, nepotistic and hereditary advantage became more systematically embedded in the career, especially for senior members.

The *ulema* were always of two minds about seniority versus favouritism. Seniority bolstered *ilmiye* autonomy, serving to discourage the interventions of outsiders. It also regulated the crowded ranks of office seekers and helped cut down on peer squabbling. One knew, barring special intervention, who was next in line. Whatever their inclinations in the abstract, however, individual *ulema* were happy to suspend seniority if an imperial decree – 'Let him be a *müderris*!'; 'Let him be an honorary *kadıasker*!' – worked in their favour. Rising *ulema* and the unconnected were more insistent on seniority and examination rules than those possessing high rank or strong patronage. The most successful career notables maximised advancement through a strategic mix of individual imperial rewards, seniority and the blanket privileges of rank.

Until the eighteenth century, class-based patrimonialism in the *ilmiye* had been gaining ground only episodically. Feyzullah's violent come-uppance was the last setback to its full flowering. Already favoured by the personnel and grade inflations of the seventeenth century, office-holding 'haves' pursued the recognitions acquired personally and individually by illustrious predecessors – typically *şeyhülislam*s and imperial preceptors – of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. With the support of various sultans and grand viziers, privileges of person – sons' stipends and premature advancements – were transformed into class prerogatives, first for the two or three highest grades, and then for great *molla*s generally. In the eighteenth century, *ulema* who attained a *molla*ship – irrespective of the route they followed to get there – could count on entitlements, not only for clients and relatives already associated with the career, but for pre-career offspring, even for infants. The numbing effects of upper-class advantage, either as a misuse of legitimate privilege or as an objective abuse, were roundly lamented in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century memorials. They were scarcely conceived of in earlier times.

Aristocracy and reasons of state

The supportive policies of sultans such as Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) and Mustafa III (r. 1757–74) paved the way for the eighteenth century's stable run of great *ulema* families. The eleven most durable families – Dürrizade, Ebu İshakzade,

Feyzullahzade, Arabzade, Damadzade, Mekkizade, Mirzazade, Paşmakçızade, Pirizade, Salihzade, Vessafzade – contributed half of all the *şeyhülislam*s in the period 1703–1839, and scores of *kadıasker*s and great *molla*s. A balance was struck between palace interventionism and *ulema* aristocracy. Their complementary patrimonialisms mutually guaranteed each other's right of access, and together set the conditions for others' entry. The partnership was fuelled in the first instance, however, not by the amicable division of *ilmiye* resources, but by shared interests in social conservatism and in the continuing paramount status of Islamic law in Ottoman governance.

The indulgence of aristocratic *ilmiye* leadership in the eighteenth century coincided with broad shifts in Ottoman statecraft and the regime's consequently greater reliance on the several roles of the *ulema*. The eighteenth century was a century of negotiation, and the diplomatic bargaining that preceded warfare, followed it and substituted for it after 1699 raised the premium on the skills of the literate. Although the *ulema* were not so central to the diplomatic process as were foreign-office functionaries, they often participated as negotiators, ambassadors, councillors and lawyers. They were indispensable whenever Ottoman legitimacy was at issue, or when theological expertise was required, both of which figured in the joint Iranian-Shiite–Ottoman-Sunni *ulema* assemblies to consider Nadir Shah's 'fifth orthodox school' proposal and, after the loss of the Crimea, in efforts to recast the Ottoman caliphate into a spiritual custodianship of Muslims outside as well as inside the Ottoman dominion.

It was on the domestic front, however, that the *ulema*–palace consociation was fully realised. In the seventeenth century, confronted by the activist puritanism of the Kadizadeli preacher movement, common cause sometimes took the form of *şeyhülislam*s helping to quell urban unrest by mediating between Kadizadeli vigilantism and targeted sufis.[13] Since the Kadizadelis also had in their sights the sufi connections and cosmopolitanism of some *ulema*, the latter had a vested interest in quashing Kadizadelis outbursts. Most sultans and their deputies, Murad IV a conspicuous exception, usually supported *ulema* centrism against the intolerance and exclusiveness that the Kadizadelis espoused. In any case, the bottom-up empowerment that Kadizadelis preachers promoted hardly fitted the palace's or the *ulema* elite's vision of social order.

The relationship between *ulema* and palace was cemented by the new political realities of the eighteenth century. Since the opening of the century, social

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13 Madeline C. Zilfi, 'The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45 (1986), 251–74.

stability had displaced warfare as the more visible and compelling ingredient of Ottoman claims to legitimacy. Social and cultural dissonance in this period came hand in hand with the new reliance on Western diplomatic intermediaries, European economic expansion and the inroads of market culture. Foreign Christians and the growing number of non-Muslim Ottomans attached to them moved in an alternative world whose powers, gifts and honours lay largely outside the sultan's reach. Efforts to combat the erosion of the domestic status hierarchy, to shore up Ottoman domestic imperial order and to hearten Muslims who perceived their own devaluation demanded the services of the *medrese*-trained. The *ulema*, the certified exponents of the law, employed the powerful rhetoric of religious prescription in the name of social stability and sultanic legitimacy. Despite the social cleavages within their own ranks and the divergent ways that their membership responded to this or that imperial policy, *ulema* and palace for most of the eighteenth century were part of the same ruling enterprise.

Muslim women in the early modern era

MADELINE C. ZILFI

Representations: women between 'East and West'

In the Ottoman East as in other societies, women's lived experience and society's representation of women seldom coincided. In early modern Istanbul and Damascus, as in London and Lyons, or for that matter ancient Rome and Athens, women's lives were more complex and varied than their contemporaries were ready to concede. In Western and Mediterranean literary traditions, women's daily lives, like the lives of most men, went unremarked. But unlike men, women tended to be aggregated into idealised or deplored versions of a collective self – women as they should be, set against the dire potential of the Eve within.[1] It is not that real women, individual and identified, lacked social validity in Ottoman consciousness. Rather, the integral category of 'womankind', though undifferentiated by class, vocation, or creed, was more fully realised and answered larger cultural needs. 'Womankind' comprehended a stock of images expressive of society's anxieties and aspirations. Sometimes very good, sometimes very bad, women as womankind were staples of moralists and belletrists alike. In those rare instances when ordinary women were permitted to touch ground in the literature, they were customarily limited to sexualised or domestic preoccupations.

For most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the depiction of Ottoman Muslim women did not differ significantly from their representation in earlier times. All in all, it was a story that was rarely told, at least for the written record. Even the genre of the privileged, that of illustrious women, is thin in comparison to its counterparts in early Islamic and contemporaneous European societies; few women are included at all, within a scant few categories

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1 Fatima Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil: Male–Female Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society*, rev. edn (Bloomington, 1987 [1975]); Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, 1992); Denise Spellberg, *Politics, Gender and the Islamic Past* (New York, 1994); and for Europe, Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe, Volume 1, 1500–1800* (New York, 1995), pp. 28–35, *passim*.

of representation. The pious benefactress, by definition a person of wealth and in practice one with political connections, stands out as the model of choice of Ottoman chroniclers and their audiences. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the philanthropic woman, usually a royal woman, was joined in the chronicles by the political queen mother (*valide*) and the helpmate princess counsellor. In the seventeenth century, the lives of the *valide*s Kösem and Turhan spilled over from the chronicles' commemorative necrologies to the centre stage of political events, because of their management – or, as it is reported, their misappropriation – of the sultanate. In the eighteenth century, the poet Fıtnat Hanım – non-royal and a woman with a calling – and a half-dozen sisters or daughters of Ahmed III, Mustafa III and Selim III all have their brief turn in the historical literature. To the extent that other stories about other kinds of women were told, women tended to appear as a category unto themselves, enclosed in narratives fixed on their sexuality. It was women's sexuality that gave force and malleability to the symbolism of 'womankind' to begin with.

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literary representations of Ottoman women occur in variant Eastern and Western forms. Both are in the main the product of male observation and, more problematically, of masculinist valuation. Like the societies that produced them, both representations are deeply invested in what historians of women have called 'the ideology of women's limited proper sphere'.[2] Ottoman moralists and the classical authorities they relied on conceived of women in domestic and sexual terms. 'Her contribution . . . is by both taking care of the house and by satisfying [her husband's] sexual desire,' al-Ghazâlî (d. 1111) says.[3] The sixteenth-century catechism writer Birgivi, probably the most influential moralist of the early modern centuries, declares that 'women's obligations are within the home, to bake bread, clean up the dishes, do the laundry, prepare meals and the like'.[4] Indeed, he maintains that responsibilities to the home are a matter of heaven and hell for a woman, for if 'she does not do these . . . tasks, she is a sinner'.[5] In more general terms, women are instructed to be obedient to male authority and to be unobtrusive – even invisible – to the unrelated public. Screened from outsiders, decent women should, and supposedly do, attend to the needs of husband,

2 Judith L. Newton, Mary P. Ryan and Judith R. Walkowitz, *Sex and Class in Women's History* (London, 1983), p. 10.
3 Madelain Farah, *Marriage and Sexuality in Islam: A Translation of al-Ghazali's Book on the Etiquette of Marriage from the 'Ihya'* (Salt Lake City, 1984), pp. 66–7.
4 Birgivi [Birgili] Mehmed, *Tarikat-i muhammediyye tercümesi*, trans. Celâl Yıldırım (Istanbul, 1981), p. 478.
5 Ibid.

family and household. As for the European image of the Ottoman woman, the traveller's-eye view was directed to the preoccupations, though not necessarily the meanings, that Ottoman society itself employed. The domestic woman, the obedient woman, the pious woman and their antitheses were templates for Europeans as much as for Ottomans.

Early modern travellers loved comparisons. Most also shared an inclination to superiority. Travellers to the Ottoman East routinely displayed an aptitude for the game, but by the late eighteenth century their accounts tended toward unrelieved disparagement. Over the centuries, European observers had shifted the weight of their criticisms away from armies and statecraft to economics and society itself. Their commentaries attacked Ottoman social practices and intimate family relations whether or not their authors or their sources had experienced such things directly. In the nineteenth century, travellers who took up the subject of women focused their animus on veiling, polygamy and the sex-segregation symbolised by the harem. The prototype of what has come to be called 'Orientalism' builds on the most negative outpourings of generations of memoirists – Sandys and Rycaut in the seventeenth century, d'Arvieux, de Tott and Habesci in the eighteenth, and countless Egypt-watchers in the nineteenth from the brother and sister Lane to Lord Cromer.[6] More often than not Muslim women are portrayed as men's chattels, boxed up in harems and repressed into ignorance and sexual depravity. The perception of women's condition as a signature Islamic or Eastern barbarity, and the articulation of a comprehensive Western critique of the Ottoman Islamic social system, however, came into their own only in the later nineteenth century.[7]

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6 George Sandys, *Sandys Travailes: Containing a History of the Originall and Present State of the Turkish Empire . . .* (London, 1652); George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begunne, Anno Dom 1610*, in Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas, his Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. (Glasgow, 1905–7 [1625]), vol. VIII, pp. 88–248; Sir Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Turkish Empire from the Year 1623 to the Year 1677 . . .* , 2 vols. (London, 1680); Sir Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Turks Beginning with the Year 1679 . . . until the End of the Year 1698 and 1699* (London, 1699); Louis Laurent d'Arvieux, *Mémoires du Chevalier d'Arvieux . . .* , 6 vols. (Paris, 1735); Elias Habesci, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1784); François Baron de Tott, *Memoirs of Baron de Tott*, 2 vols. (New York, 1973 [1785]); E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (New York, 1973 [1860]); Sophia Lane [Poole], *The Englishwoman in Egypt: Letters from Cairo, Written during a Residence there in 1842, 3, & 4, [and 1845–46], with E. W. Lane . . .* , 3 vols. (London, 1844–6); Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, cited and analysed by Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, pp. 152–63. See Judith Mabro, *Veiled Half-Truths* (London and New York, 1996 [1991]); Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918* (Ann Arbor, 1992).

7 See especially Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*; also Mabro, *Veiled Half-Truths*; Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis, 1986); Meyda Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies: Toward a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (London, 1998); Melman, *Women's Orients*; Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient* (Bloomington, 1986); Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism:*

Nonetheless, Ottoman society was not without its defenders. A minority of Western commentators, especially those writing before the mid-eighteenth century, put forward views that tended more towards curiosity and fascination than condemnation.[8] Given that Europe did not give up burning and hanging witches until well into the eighteenth century, it is perhaps not surprising that Ottoman gender practices raised fewer European eyebrows before the nineteenth century. European visitors before the modern era were not much interested in the legal status of women, still less with the question of whether, by this or that practice, women as women were being wronged. The conceptualisation of misogyny as an evil did not engage early modern European thought much more than it did the Islamic East, or more than abolitionism and the evils of slavery did in either place. Despite the tendency in recent historiography to impose the totalised East–West polarities of the later nineteenth century onto all European observations, the East–West divide of the early modern period was permeable and unsystematic.[9] Social practices were not seen as germane to the overall struggle, and were not often identifiable as Eastern or Western in any case.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's deeply felt consideration of Ottoman women, although standing alone in its sympathetic particulars, reflects the sort of cultural receptivity that was still possible in the early Enlightenment.[10] Her account is not always the wise first-person reportage that later readers and Montagu herself make of it, but it injects a ray of empiricism into the

Race, Femininity and Representation (London, 1996); Lisa Lowe, *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca, 1991); Mervat Hatem, 'Through Each Other's Eyes: Egyptian, Levantine-Egyptian, and European Women's Images of Themselves and of Each Other 1862–1920', *Women's Studies International Forum* 12 (1989), 183–98; Irvin Cemil Schick, 'The Women of Turkey as Sexual Personae: Images from Western Literature', in *Deconstructing Images of the Turkish Woman*, ed. Zehra F. Arat (New York, 1998), pp. 83–100. Although indebted to Edward Said's *Orientalism* (New York, 1978), all of these amend Said's male-referenced thesis.

8 Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq, *The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq* (Oxford, 1927); Antoine Galland, *Journal . . . pendant son séjour à Constantinople 1672–1673* (Paris, 1881); Ottaviano Bon, *The Sultan's Seraglio* (London, 1996); Alexander Russell, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, 2 vols. (London, 1794); Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans. Liz Heron (London and New York, 1998 [1979]), p. 197, notes 37–8; Albert Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 136–8; Bernard Lewis, 'Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire', *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958), 111–27.

9 John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester and New York, 1995).

10 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, 3 vols., ed. Robert Halsband (Oxford, 1965–7), vol. I, pp. 304–427; Elizabeth Craven, *Memoirs of the Margravine of Anspach, Written by Herself*, 2 vols. (London, 1826), pp. 166–7; Melman, *Women's Orients*, pp. 86–8.

study of Ottoman women – by which Montagu meant ladies of the privileged classes – and dispels the grosser misrepresentations of other accounts. Chief among these misrepresentations was the act of representation itself, Montagu argued, inasmuch as it was the product of male 'observers' who, lacking access and understanding, could only pretend to knowledge of Ottoman women.

Montagu takes exception to the Europeans' easy equation between veiling and enslavement. With her own class biases intact, she contends that the life of upper-class Ottoman women had much to recommend it – creature comforts, warm relationships with other women of the household, including servants and slaves, the possibility of loving marriages and advantageous protections afforded by the anonymity of veiling. In some of her musings, Montagu homogenises elite Ottoman women into veiled versions of European ladies, more sheltered and thus more prone to boredom, but similarly eager for diversion. Veiling, this 'perpetual masquerade', as she called it, was for Montagu the instrument of women's liberation, a way out of the harem's tedium through the protective disguise of anonymity.[11] Montagu's breezy cultural relativism overestimates Ottoman women's mobility and the value women of whatever class might have put on 'independence' and the freedom of the streets. Nonetheless, her imputation of advantage and utility to the veil, and of personality and individuality to 'harem women', is a humanising corrective to the usual story. It also gives women's social reality an uncustomary measure of complexity.

The value of the account lies not only in establishing these basic truths but also in suggesting the web of interests that made Ottoman women's sexuality a charged issue in the eighteenth century. Issues of visibility and invisibility loomed large over matters of status and power in pre-modern history. They were central to the gender system of Ottoman society. Cultural preconceptions and textual authority, as well as the gender and class dimensions of observation and representation, are all ultimately about 'seeing' women. The ideal of concealment and the correlation between the unseen woman, on the one hand, and female purity and social order, on the other, were increasingly invoked by Ottoman authorities in the eighteenth century. For societies that assume sexual incitement in the meeting between unrelated men and women, 'seeing' is at best the precursor, and at worst the equivalent, of carnal knowing. 'A look is an arrow of Satan', 'Looking constitutes adultery by the eyes' and 'Every eye is an adulterer' are among many widely cited Islamic traditions

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11 Montagu, *Complete Letters*, vol. I, p. 328.

regarding the perils of heterosexual seeing.[12] Orwell reminds us that seeing also constitutes an act of recognition.[13] Where women's place and space are subordinate to men's, seeing women in male space concedes them the right of access. The concealment offered by veils and *ferace*s, however, announced women's presence in male space as temporary and provisional.[14]

Pre-modern Eastern and Western narratives about Ottoman women converge on the theme of 'seeing' women – in the indigenous variant, the institutional exertions to keep women unseeable, and in the Western, the efforts of outsiders to see, know, or recognise. Whether or not Knolles, Rycaut and Hill 'and all his brethren voyage-writers' had misunderstood the harem and its denizens as much as Montagu and others contend, the problem of male travellers, and of their male hosts, was a certain inability to see women, literally or figuratively.[15]

Ottoman and other sexualities

Recent scholarship on European imperialism and on the Western view of Middle Eastern (Ottoman/Egyptian/Arab/Islamic) sexuality focuses on Western authorship of the sexually imagined 'Orient'. The image of the harem as a lascivious nest accordingly emerges as the outlandish product of Western imaginings.[16] To a large extent it is. A millennium of Christian (or Western or European) anti-Islamic polemic centres on accusations of depraved and unfettered sexuality. Most Western literary and visual renderings of the harem in the Ottoman era consider Middle Eastern, 'Oriental' women from the same line of vision. Disregarding the harem's familial, communal and spatial reasons for being, they dwell instead on sexual atmospherics – langorous women, carnality, undress. Nonetheless, imagining a harem in terms of sexually available women was not just a Western pastime. Westerners, however ill-informed or ill-intentioned, did not invent *ab vacuo* the carnal dimensions of the harem, much less of polygamy and concubinage. Gender and sexuality were fundamental to the organisation of societies everywhere. In the

12 Farah, *Marriage and Sexuality in Islam*, pp. 17, 75; Murtaza Mutahhari, *The Islamic Modest Dress*, trans. Laleh Bakhtiar, 2nd edn. (Albuquerque, 1989 [1988]), p. 78; Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, pp. 141–2; Leslie P. Peirce, 'Seniority, Sexuality, and Social Order: The Vocabulary of Gender in Early Modern Ottoman Society', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 169–96, at pp. 174–5, 178 and *passim*.
13 George Orwell, *Shooting an Elephant, and Other Essays* (London, 1950).
14 Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, p. 140 and *passim*; Fatima Mernissi, *Women's Rebellion and Islamic Memory* (London, 1996), p. 41 and *passim*.
15 Montagu, *Complete Letters*, vol. I, pp. 405–6.
16 Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, *passim*.

hierarchy-minded Ottoman system, they manifested themselves in strikingly concrete ways.

Sexuality was not a fit topic for polite Ottoman conversation, but it was a salient feature of Ottoman political and social governance. Institutions and practices that sought to remove things sexual from public consciousness inevitably trained a spotlight on them. Moralist insistence on sex segregation, veiling, strict gender codes and on female sexual purity as the measure of family honour was predicated on a dark vision of the dangerous volatility of heterosexuality. There was no allowance for innocence in the unsanctioned mixing of the sexes. According to Islamic tradition, when an unmarried man and woman are together, Satan is also present.[17] The regulation of women's clothing and physical mobility in the Ottoman seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well as in numerous other Islamic states gave voice to similar fears. Many such laws singled out economic targets as well as women, but the theme of social disorder was most consistently expressed in gender-specific terms. In al-Ghazâlî's foundational chapters on marriage and society, the calamity of social disorder follows from the failure to control women. It is women's irresistible and assertive sexual nature which, if left uncontrolled, destroys social – particularly male – equanimity; chaos then ensues.[18]

Al-Ghazâlî's was the most comprehensive pronouncement on women's potent sexual nature and his voice one of the most authoritative in the history of Islamic thought. He was widely read, or at least widely cited, in Ottoman learned circles, but the themes he sounded were particularly 'Ottomanised' through the assigned texts of the Ottoman *medrese* curriculum. Two of the mainstays of the curriculum, the Qur'anic commentary of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar Baydâwî (Turkish, Kadi Beyzavi, d. 1286?), and its gloss by Shihâbaddîn al-Khafâjî (d. 1659), take al-Ghazâlî's position on women's physicality a step further. For them, a woman's entire body is effectively pudendal (*'awra*). Thus women must be completely covered, face and hands included, except within the circle of permitted relatives or out of absolute necessity, such as for medical reasons.[19]

Men who undertook *medrese* training in the later Ottoman centuries were, by curriculum and vocational milieu, steeped in the twin traditions of gender segregation and male superiority. As budding exponents of the law, they

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17 Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, p. 42.

18 Farah, *Marriage and Sexuality in Islam*; Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ihya 'ulum al-din*, cited in Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, pp. 27–45.

19 Barbara F. Stowasser, *Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretations* (New York and Oxford, 1994), p. 94.

were invested in the continued regulation of gendered difference. Because of the centralisation of *medrese* education and of juristic employment – and unemployment – the *medrese*-trained were concentrated in the capital, which made them a potent force in both imperial and local politics. The moral and status interests of students and less well-off religious functionaries made the lower strata of the religious bureaucracy active players in the socio-economic disturbances of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet the *medrese* system was by no means the sole source of misogynist thinking; the poetry of the time afforded another arena for the inculcation of superior male virtues. Although the legal enterprise as a whole – *fetva*s, court cases, legal treatises, the appeals process – dispensed conflicting messages on the subject of women, the *medrese*s' uniform curriculum, their reliance on limited and limiting texts and the system's monopoly on education allowed little room in authoritative circles for a female-affirming counter-discourse.

As for the role of polygamy and slave concubinage in Ottoman women's history, many travellers can be faulted for overstating the incidence of those practices in the population at large.[20] The significance of polygamy and concubinage, however, was not a function of numbers. Their social resonance went well beyond the 5 or 10 per cent that polygamous households are thought to have represented.[21] Both polygamy and slave concubinage presumed a

20 Fanny Davis, *The Ottoman Lady: A Social History from 1718 to 1918* (New York and West-port, 1986), pp. 87ff.; Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'empire othoman*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1787–1824), vol. IV, pp. 341–3; Sir James Porter, *Turkey, its History and Progress*, 2 vols. (London, 1854), vol. I, p. 319, vol. II, p. 367; Charles White, *Three Years in Constantinople*, 3 vols. (London, 1845), vol. II, p. 299, vol. III, p. 7; Russell, *Natural History,* vol. I, pp. 110, 276–8; Lane, *Manners and Customs*, pp. 178–9; Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, pp. 106–8; Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Elite Circulation in the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26 (1983), 318–64, at p. 331; Iris Agmon, 'Women, Class, and Gender: Muslim Jaffa and Haifa at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (1998), 477–500.

21 Ömer Lûtfi Barkan, 'Edirne askerî kassamına âit tereke defterleri (1545–1659)', *Belgeler* 3, 5–6 (1966), 1–479, at p. 14; Colette Establet and Jean-Paul Pascual, 'Famille et démographie à Damas autour de 1700: Quelques données nouvelles,' in *Histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman et de la Turquie (1326–1960): Actes du Congrès international tenu à Aix-en-Provence du 1er à 4 juillet 1992*, ed. Daniel Panzac (Paris and Louvain, 1995), pp. 427–45, at pp. 443–5; Haim Gerber, 'Social and Economic Position of Women in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980), 231–44, at p. 232; Ronald C. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus, 1571–1640* (New York and London, 1993), p. 29; Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1989), pp. 199–200; Bruce Masters, 'The Economic Role of Women in a Pre-Capitalist Muslim Society: The Case of Seventeenth-Century Aleppo', paper presented to the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, 1983, p. 12; Hüseyin Özdeğer, *1463–1640 yılları Bursa şehri tereke defterleri* (Istanbul, 1988), p. 50; Said Öztürk, *Askeri kassama ait onyedinci asır İstanbul tereke defterleri* (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 110–13; Judith E. Tucker, 'Ties That Bound: Women and Family in Eighteenth- and

capacious male virility, and both sanctioned a special category of women –
enslaved outsiders – to serve that virility if free marriage, even multiple free
marriages, did not. Some polygamous households, perhaps most, were the
product of legal marriages to free women. In other households slave women
were their masters' mates – whether legally married, 'common law' or casual –
and sometimes the bearers of their children.[22] But even when slave women
were not sexually employed, they were critical accoutrements of great house-
holds and, given the elites' domination of early modern culture, of society
itself.

The labour of domestic slaves, like that of paid servants in less grand sur-
roundings, gave leisure to masters and mistresses. But the worth of domestic
slaves, especially of 'above stairs' slaves in the larger households, lay not in
raw physical exertions or in capital skills but in intimate service and display.[23]
Ultimately, the value of the luxury slave was owed to her – or, less and less
commonly, his – servile state.[24] In the upper-class harems that opened up to
Westerners like Montagu and, later, Julia Pardoe,[25] the slave girls who plied
visitors with sherbets, colognes and hankies created the signifying aesthetic
of their owners' class position. Despite, and to some extent because of, the
higher maintenance costs of slave labour as compared with labour for hire,[26]
slave ownership demonstrated wealth and consequence. As wartime opportu-
nities to acquire slaves diminished over the centuries, slave-holding more and
more became a mark of the upper classes, those already possessing the money
to make a market purchase. However, the seal of slavery's value to Ottoman

Nineteenth-Century Nablus', in *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven, 1991), pp. 233–53, at pp. 239–40.

22 Colin Imber, 'Eleven Fetvas of the Ottoman Sheikh ul-Islam 'Abdurrahim', in *Islamic Legal Interpretations: Muftis and their Fatwas*, ed. M. K. Masud, B. Messick and D. S. Powers (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp. 141–9; Yenişehirli Abdullah, *Behçet el-fetava* (Istanbul, 1266/1849), pp. 133ff.; M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislâm Ebussuûd Efendi fetvaları ışığında 16. asır Türk hayatı* (Istanbul, 1972), esp. pp. 121–4.

23 Judith E. Tucker, *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 168; Ehud R. Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and its Suppression, 1840–1890* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 280–1; Mary Ann Fay, 'Women and Households: Gender, Power and Culture in Eighteenth-Century Egypt', Ph.D. thesis, Georgetown University (1993); Mary Ann Fay, 'From Concubines to Capitalists: Women, Property, and Power in Eighteenth-Century Cairo,' *Journal of Women's History* 10 (1998), 118–40; Jane Hathaway, 'Marriage Alliances among the Military Households of Ottoman Egypt', *Annales Islamologiques* 29 (1995), 39–52 .

24 David Brion Davis, *New York Review of Books*, vol. 93 (17 October 1996), p. 53.

25 Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultans and Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836* (London, 1837).

26 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 278–80.

'prestige production'[27] was the long association between the Ottoman governing classes and slave-based households.

In wealthy households, where sex segregation was common practice whether or not the householder was polygamous, slave women were both screens against the outside and companions for the women within. In less wealthy families, a female slave might be the only full-time female servant in the household, in which case her role was more drudgery than adornment.[28] But in any household, or where there was no household or family at all, female slaves, whatever their function and irrespective of their owners' class or rank, were legally sexual objects; they were, for their male owners, 'what their right hand possesses'.[29] Contrary to some recent studies, a slave woman's marketplace designation as household labour rather than potential concubine did not relieve her of a sexual role if her master desired it.[30] Female slaves' sexual availability – men's slave alternative in a conjugal world – put all women on notice. The slave model of female obedience was no doubt only one of many calls to female propriety in Ottoman times, but it was enduring. The metropolitan nature of Ottoman slavery gave urban women a close sense of slaves' vulnerability.

The construction of slavery as domestic slavery, and domestic slavery as essentially female, although not unique to the Ottomans or to Islamic systems, are associated with the southern and eastern Mediterranean in recent centuries, most especially the last two or three centuries of the empire. In Ottoman urban society, the social and cultural weight of female domestic slavery had increased over the centuries. In terms of slaves for purely domestic uses, females increasingly outnumbered males in urban centres and in the eastern Mediterranean provinces generally.[31] But equally, the shift was conditioned on the status-affirming function of female slaves, especially in the light of the emulative drives of the rising bourgeoisie and, increasingly in the nineteenth century, the feminisation of domestic labour.

Female slavery's embeddedness in Ottoman society became a matter of record in the nineteenth century. Having gone along with the international ban on the African slave trade in the middle of the century, the Ottomans clung

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27 James L. Watson (ed.), *Asian and African Systems of Slavery* (Berkeley, 1980), p. 14.

28 Necdet Sakaoğlu, 'Esir Ticareti', *Dünden bugüne İstanbul ansklopedisi.*

29 Abdullah Yusuf Ali (trans.), *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (New York, 1988), 4:3; Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery* (Chicago, 1991); Claire Robertson and Martin Klein (eds.), *Women and Slavery* (Madison, 1983).

30 Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise* (London and New York, 1996); Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East* (Seattle, 1998).

31 Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade*, pp. 7–11, 13.

for decades longer to the Caucasus trade and to slavery itself, both of which revolved around 'the traffic in women'.[32] Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, the male ruling elites had gradually become decoupled from the enslavement process and, as a result of the nineteenth-century reforms initiated by Mahmud II and his successors during the Tanzimat, from the discourse of slavery itself. Government officials' freedom from confiscation and execution after 1838 pushed forward the conceptualisation of male persons as essentially free. Slavery as domestic labour, and women – especially women of the lower orders – as domestic labourers enjoyed no such transformation. The elision between female and slave was to some extent always in play in Ottoman Islamic culture, but it was in the later empire that the distinction between slave and male was asserted. Although wealth and class position shielded many women from the harsher labour implications of these processes, women prior to the nineteenth century were at least nominally subject to a common sexual culture. The gendered inequalities of slavery, inheritance rules and childhood marriage, and the conflation of women with sexual services in the language of marriage,[33] established a hierarchised sexual culture. Its everyday signs in the urban milieu were obligatory veiling and obligatory sex segregation.

It goes without saying that Ottoman society was not monolithic. The state sanctioned certain hierarchical dichotomies – *askeri* over *reaya*, male over female and Muslim over non-Muslim – but these masked numerous informal variations. The members of each of the ascendant groups were nominally equal and unified, but differences in wealth and privilege produced unacknowledged subsets of insiders and outsiders. For the majority of Ottoman Muslims, even for many *askeri*s, the finer things in life – meat and helva, or a new suit of clothes, or paid servants – were beyond reach most of the time. For most, too, luxuriant polygamy was culturally foreign, even exotic.

The polygamous confinement of women, which was favoured by wealthy Muslim families, was a matter of curiosity, envy, and sometimes resentment, for more than one category of indigenous have-not. The have-not factor was heightened for military and police affiliates. For one thing, apart from men with religious designations or titles – *hacı* (Arabic *hajj*), pilgrim; *hafız*, memorizer of the Qur'an; and *şeyh* (Arabic *shaykh*) – polygamy itself was more common – if

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32 See Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade*; Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*; Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*.

33 Colin Imber, 'Women, Marriage, and Property: *Mahr* in the *Behcetü'l-Fetava* of Yenişehirli Abdullah,' in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 81–104, at pp. 87ff; Shahla Haeri, *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shi'i Iran* (Syracuse, 1989), pp. 33–72; Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, pp. 86–7 and *passim*.

not most common – among military-administrative groups, especially the vizieral elite.[34] For Ottoman troops who were paid neither well nor punctually, female captives were sexually and economically as good as gold. In the Wallachian campaign of 1060 / 1650, fifteen slaves – worth about 45,000 *akçe*s – were captured for every two Ottoman soldiers; 81,000 captives were taken in the campaign of 1683 and 50,000 in 1788; many of these must have been female.[35] The tulip craze of the early eighteenth century notwithstanding, it was the price of slaves, especially female slaves, that routinely topped the market.[36] Even ordinary, not particularly 'beautiful', male and female slaves were like money in the bank. The female slave residents of great households, whether or not their owners intended them for sexual use,[37] must have been the stuff of dreams, for Ottoman males on the margins of that world, as much as for Western outsiders.[38]

Until the 1980s, the bulk of the work on women in the contemporary Middle East either collapsed the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries into an undifferentiated 'traditional' past, or read them forward into a prolonged nineteenth century of European domination and a reinforcing Orientalist 'gaze'. Both periodisations assumed knowledge of the early modern period that is even now elusive. Both also subordinated internal Middle Eastern processes to East–West foreign relations. In fact, in the seventeenth century and in much of the eighteenth, when Western hegemony was not yet in place, the common male gaze on women was as determining as national origins. But, whatever their national loyalties – or their gender, Montagu notwithstanding – most observers were not inclined to move beyond the received wisdom of polarities. The West's harem stories in the pre-modern era propose a binary world of East versus West. At the same time, they inadvertently put forward an alternative reading of one of the East's stories about itself. The East–West frame on the subject of women overshadows a common tradition in which the diversity of women's experience as social beings was not only unseen – which is to say unrecognised – but to a great extent denied.

34 Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family and Fertility 1880–1940* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 156–7.

35 Osman Çetin, *Sicillere göre Bursa'da ihtida hareketleri ve sosyal sonuçları (1472–1909)* (Ankara, 1994), p. 50; Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 30.

36 Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade*, pp. 63–7; İzzet Sak, 'Konya'da köleler (16. yüzyıl sonu – 17. yüzyıl)', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 9 (1989), 159–97, at p. 175; Sakaoğlu, 'Esir Ticareti', p. 202.

37 Ahmed Akgündüz, *İslâm hukukunda kölelik-câriyelik müessesesi ve Osmanlı'da harem*, 2nd edn (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 423–4.

38 Mernissi, *Women's Rebellion*, pp. 71, 77–90; also Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, p. 86, and *passim*.

Women and property

Until recently, the least recognised of women's activities arguably lay in the economic sphere. Studies in the kadi registers, however, have offered a sharp refutation of the unpropertied, economically inactive – in one word, negligible – woman. Ordinary women as well as women of the elites not only possessed moveable and immoveable property in appreciable amounts,[39] but actively tended to their property rights. Women made and dissolved contracts. They sold, bequeathed, rented, leased and invested property, and they did so in substantial numbers.[40] If women were not actively involved in safeguarding their wealth, as is sometimes argued, they need not have appeared in person in court, yet many women did so, often without male kin being present.

It is true that women were more often sellers than buyers of real property. Nonetheless, it is not clear that their behaviour weakened the potential for autonomy. On the face of it, women's divestment of real property appears to undermine female heirs' guarantees under the Islamic inheritance system by, in effect, facilitating the reversion of real property to male ownership. However, we do not know what unlitigated bargains women may have struck around such transfers. Female sellers may in fact have negotiated certain advantages as a result of their decision to sell. Women who transferred property to brothers or other male kin may have traded property for good will, in exchange for the right to make future claims to their siblings' support and protection. As Annelies Moors has argued, the loss of property rights 'often coincides' with gains in other areas, for example in marriage arrangements.[41] We are not surprised by a bargain for security, but the balance between choice and autonomy, on the one hand, and expectation and coercion, on the other, remains obscure.

A similar question of legal rights and social applications arises from dower right practices. Marriage contracts were sealed by the transfer or promise of transfer of a dower or *mehr* (also *mihr*; Arabic, *mahr*) to the new bride. In the Islamic East generally, it had long been the custom to divide the dower into two parts, the prompt *mehr* payable immediately, and a deferred portion,

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39 Fatma Müge Göçek and Marc David Baer, 'Social Boundaries of Ottoman Women's Experience in Eighteenth-Century Galata Court Records', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 48–65, at pp. 52–4, 61.

40 Ronald C. Jennings, 'Women in Early 17th-Century Ottoman Judicial Records – the Sharia Court of Anatolian Kayseri', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 18 (1975), 53–114, at p. 114; Jennings, *Christians and Muslims*, p. 21; Gerber, 'Social and Economic Position of Women', p. 233.

41 Annelies Moors, 'Debating Islamic Family Law: Legal Texts and Social Practices', in *A Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*, ed. Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker (Boulder, 1999), pp. 162–6.

generally a larger sum, payable upon demand, though usually upon divorce or the death of the husband or wife. The deferred dower held a number of advantages for the new couple in that the husband could start out married life with a future debt rather than a current deficit, and he could draw against the sum for the benefit of his married home. For the bride, her husband's debt to her represented a cash reserve, 'money in the bank', until some hardship, such as divorce, necessitated its use. If the dower remained unpaid in her lifetime, it passed to her heirs upon her death. *Mehr* amounts in most cases were modest. Even in *askeri* families, among those whose dowers were entered into the court record, *mehr* was under 2,000 *akçe*s. Women from lesser families were fortunate to have half that amount.[42] Since amounts were pegged to the bride's socio-economic status, they represented meaningful sums to the individuals involved. Among other things, a simple dwelling could be bought for 200 *akçe*s, and a considerably better one for 2,000.[43] Two thousand *akçe*s could also secure the services of two housemaids for a year with cash to spare.[44] And 4 or 5 *akçe*s per day provided for the daily upkeep of a child of the lower classes.[45]

Like most men, women acquired the bulk of their property through inheritance, usually as passed on to them from parents and spouses. Female heirs came into possession of as varied a range of inheritances as did men. Shares in shops and businesses, usufruct rights, and salary-bearing *vakıf* posts tended to be reserved in the first instance for male kin, but women are known to have inherited rights to all of these. In the case of *vakıf* posts, a wife, daughter or other female relative was sometimes a primary designee for the role of *vakıf* administrator (*mütevelliye*).[46] Not infrequently, the female line was specifically excluded, but overall these were outnumbered by inclusive designations.[47] And, of course, women were themselves *vakıf* founders. Yediyıldız's sample from the 6,000 new acts of *vakıf* recorded in the Vakıflar Müdürlüğü for present-day Turkey in the eighteenth century reveals that 17 per cent (18 per cent of

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42 Öztürk, *Askeri kassama ait*, pp. 221–2, 223–4 and 391–405; Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 205–6.

43 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Men of Modest Substance: House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-Century Ankara and Kayseri* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 121.

44 İstanbul Müftülüğü (hereafter İstM), 2/178, fol. 8a, and 6/404, fol. 62b.

45 Öztürk, *Askeri kassama ait*, pp. 407–14; Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*, pp. 117–19.

46 İstM, 2/178, fol. 23b, and 1/25, fol. 48b, both for mid-eighteenth-century Istanbul; Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf au XVIIIe siècle en Turquie* (Ankara, 1985), p. 188; Margaret L. Meriwether, 'Women and *Waqf* Revisited', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 128–52, at pp. 140–3; Masters, 'The Economic Role of Women', p. 14.

47 Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf*, p. 188; Meriwether, 'Women and *Waqf*', pp. 142–3; Tucker, *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*, p. 96.

cash *vakıf*s) were founded by women.[48] Women's share of charitable activities, however, varied widely over time and space. The stepped-up public presence of royal women under Ahmed III helped to raise the overall percentage of women's endowments to 27 per cent of all new *vakıf*s in that reign.[49] In Cairo, the figure for the eighteenth century as a whole was 25 per cent.[50] In Aleppo, women created 30–40 per cent of new *vakıf*s in the eighteenth century. For the late eighteenth century through the early nineteenth, women's percentage was 51 in Aleppo.[51] Most female founders in the major cities were members of the imperial family or represented *askeri* lineages. But in some locales, such as Harput in the early nineteenth century, the high proportion of non-*askeri* founders, including females, gives evidence of wider access to significant agricultural and commercial sources of wealth.[52]

Despite the disparities between the various studies' findings, and the fact that we do not know how meaningful the Aleppo data are for any part of the territory that is now modern Turkey, a number of common features of Ottoman *vakıf*s do emerge. First, there was an overall rise in new *vakıf*s between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Women's share as founders also seems to have increased relative to previous centuries. Yediyıldız calculates that the number of *vakıf*s had skyrocketed by the eighteenth century, with 82 per cent to be characterised as familial (*ehli*; Arabic, *ahli*) or semi-familial. These provided all or part of their revenues to the material comfort of the founder's family.[53] Women's *vakıf*s were part of the larger trend, although not always or everywhere in identical proportions with men's. As Yüksel argues, the rise in *vakıf*s generally, and the flight to family-aid *vakıf*s particularly, were tied to a concomitant rise in state confiscations (*müsadere*) of private property in the eighteenth century. The urge to protect family wealth was a response to the state's growing appetite for the fortunes of individuals whose estates were not legally subject to seizure.[54] Women's inclination to the *vakıf* solution, like men's, must be regarded in this light. The public side of endowments, however,

48 Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf*, pp. 148–51, 162.

49 Shirine Hamadeh, 'The City's Pleasures: Architectural Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul', Ph.D. thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1999), p. 99.

50 Mary Ann Fay, 'Women and *Waqf*: Property, Power, and the Domain of Gender in Eighteenth-Century Egypt', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 28–47, at p. 34.

51 Meriwether, 'Women and *Waqf*', pp. 131–2.

52 Fahrettin Tızlak, 'XIX. yüzyılın ilk yarısında Harput vakıfları', *Vakıflar Dergisi* 22 (1991), 69–75.

53 Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf*, pp. 13ff; Hasan Yüksel, 'Vakıf-müsadere ilişkisi (Şam valisi Vezir Süleyman Paşa Olayı)', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 12 (1992), 399–424, esp. p. 409.

54 Yüksel, 'Vakıf-müsadere', pp. 403–4.

cannot be discounted, even in the eighteenth century's familial age. Although the percentage of new, purely public (*hayri*) foundations had dwindled by the eighteenth century, a sizeable majority, 75 per cent, of eighteenth-century *vakıf*s were semi-familial, and thus at least partly charitable, in nature.[55] Their founders had more than just the security of their families in mind when they set up their endowments.

Among the occasional non-domestic functions available to them, women sometimes served as tax-farmers, most probably as a consequence of inheritance or, in the case of palace women, through imperial assignment. Like many males, women administered their tax-farms through subcontractors.[56] For women the decision was less a convenience than a necessity. Women's direct access to wealth in the public domain, in any event, was limited. Among other deterrents, they were barred from official government positions and the training institutions – schools, military units and the like – that led to them. Even when women served as *vakıf* administrators, they did so primarily on behalf of family *vakıf*s and smaller endowments in general. The great public *vakıf*s founded by men were on the whole out of reach; they were usually given over to the administration of an upright, titled member of the *ulema* or other official as specified in the *vakıf* charter. Since emoluments from imperial or vizier-founded endowments were considerable, women's lack of access to official hierarchy posts was doubly disadvantageous in terms of the control of wealth.

The pattern of men's superior access to wealth is evidenced by the much larger *vakıf*s that men endowed, and by the larger overall estates that men were able to leave to heirs. If the evidence for Istanbul and Aleppo is any gauge, even women's largest *vakıf*s and estates seldom approached the prodigious riches of any number of male testaments. In both regards, the very richest male estates were not only more numerous relative to women's in the highest brackets, but individually they were worth two or more times as much as the wealthiest female estates.[57] To be sure, men's and women's estates reflected a similar composition, with residential dwellings predominating.[58] The value of women's estates, however, cluster at the lower end of the range of values.

It is a common finding of studies of women and property that women's representation among the wealthy is inversely proportional to the amount of wealth at issue.[59] Women's control over property as both distributable

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55 Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf*, pp. 13ff.   56 Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, p. 301.
57 Öztürk, *Askeri kassama ait*, p. 139.   58 Ibid., pp. 163, 167.
59 Gabriel Baer, 'Women and Waqf: An Analysis of the Istanbul *Tahrîr* of 1546', *Asian and African Studies* 17 (1983), 9–28; Öztürk, *Askeri kassama ait*; Meriwether, 'Women and *Waqf*'.

wealth and the management of assets was markedly less than that of men. And regardless of how much or how little property women held, property ownership itself was hardly universal. Debate will continue as to whether women's visibility – that is, their now recognised economic and courtroom activities – alter the old view of women as not only unseen but powerless.

Family and identity

In the final analysis, women's social latitude was conditioned on their place in the family and household. The central social fact in the lives of women and men in Ottoman society of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was family – or, more accurately, was *still* family. Its configuration, its turns of fortune and most of all its loss or absence, more than any other feature of early modern experience, determined life's chances. Whatever else conspired to rearrange individual lives – and for men such possibilities were greater than for women – it was as a family member that an individual's social place was first reckoned.

The family, whatever its shape, was especially defining for women. It was in and of the family that women were truly seen. The natal family, and thereafter the marital family if they married – and most women did – were the source of women's social networks and their education in religion and social conduct, the only schooling that the overwhelming majority of women ever received. Family relationships were the key to identity, within and beyond kin and household. It was as the 'daughter of' or 'mother of' that a woman was accorded primary recognition and value. Even slaves gained protections and a measure of social existence to the extent that they were incorporated into families.

Family households were anything but stable. Families are by nature works in progress, sloughing off and gaining members with marriage, divorce and mortality.[60] Ideally the Ottoman family household grew from a parental pair and unmarried children to complex multi-generational arrangements of married and unmarried offspring, assorted spouses, maiden aunts and orphaned nephews – usually in a tumble of overlapping ages. In time all family households contracted. Some older or previously married women lived on their own, but they were few and far between. Economic dependency, the custom of male sponsorship and protection, neighbourhood concerns about unmonitored women and the tendency to remarry[61] kept the number of female-headed

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60 Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 195–201.
61 Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*, pp. 115–16, 129–30; Jennings, 'Women in Ottoman Judicial Records', pp. 95–6; Judith E. Tucker, 'Marriage and Family in Nablus, 1720–1856:

households low and their duration short-lived. Economic insecurity accelerated the rate of remarriage for both widows and divorcées, but those who were still in their child-bearing years held the marital advantage, with divorcées favoured over widows. Women of greater means seem to have had less appetite for remarriage, but the evidence is scattered and points to an inclination rather than a predictable pattern.[62] As for other incentives towards the married state, the near-universal conviction regarding the social and religious appropriateness of marriage and family worked against single householding for both men and women.

Court cases involving minor children offer abundant evidence of the elasticity of households. In disputes over child custody, the court acted not to validate household formations but to ensure that children had caregivers. Islamic law prefers males in the male line and stipulates precedence, starting with the paternal grandfather, for guardianship of the fatherless. Judges, however, frequently endorsed non-normative arrangements proposed by women. In Meriwether's study of Aleppo in the eighteenth century, mothers, maternal grandmothers and maternal aunts, among other women, were named child custodians more than half the time despite male and male-line priority.[63] Some decisions occurred when paternal relatives were dead or otherwise unavailable. A good many, however, took place despite males' availability. When the choice was between a close matrilineal relative and a more distant patrilineal one and the woman in question presented herself as a suitable person, judges might favour the matrilineal side as better for the child's interests. Since custodianship required the supervision of children's estates, some of which were substantial in Aleppo, Meriwether argues that the choice of female custodians reflected confidence in women beyond their capacity for nurturing.[64] A

Toward a History of Arab Marriage', *Journal of Family History* 13 (1988), 165–79, at pp. 175–6; Marcus, *The Middle East*, p. 207; Svetlana Ivanova, 'The Divorce between Zubaida Hatun and Esseid Osman Aga: Women in the Eighteenth-Century *Shari'a* Court of Rumeli', and Abdal-Rehim Abdal-Rahman Abdal-Rehim, 'The Family and Gender Laws in Egypt during the Ottoman Period', both in *Women, the Family, and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, ed. Amira Sonbol (Syracuse, 1996), pp. 112–25 and pp. 96–111 respectively, at pp. 116 and 110 respectively.

62 Meriwether, *The Kin who Count*, pp. 131–2; Ivanova, 'The Divorce', p. 116; Maria N. Todorova, *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern: Demographic Developments in Ottoman Bulgaria* (Washington, DC and London, 1993), p. 55.

63 Margaret L. Meriwether, 'The Rights of Children and the Responsibilities of Women: Women as *Wasis* in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770–1840', in *Women, the Family, and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, ed. Amira Sonbol (Syracuse, 1996), pp. 219–35, at pp. 228ff; Judith E. Tucker, 'The Fullness of Affection: Mothering in the Islamic Law of Syria and Palestine', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 232–52, at pp. 233–4, 237–8.

64 Meriwether, 'The Rights of Children', pp. 231–4.

subtext of class, wealth and contingent politics was no doubt in play here, but precisely how they mattered relative to male counter-claimants requires wider investigation. The claims of upper-class women and women of the wealthy commercial classes, for example, were aided by the standing of their families, but upper-class women – women of the governing elites – arguably lived more sequestered, male-mediated lives. Claims made in their names may say little about female agency or the judicial validation of women as a whole. What remains unknown in all these calculations is the role of local and individual circumstances when litigants were ostensibly of the same class or status group and a judge ruled for one guardian or family over another.

The circulation of children within the orbit of family networks ensured that household forms would be fluid and that extra-household family ties would have a certain amount of life in them. The law imposed a legal and moral reality on such ties whether or not they were otherwise operative. Patriliny was preferred, but matrilineal ties were far from negligible. Relatives on both sides 'counted', in Meriwether's phrase.[65] The legal preference for male custodians and guardians, even over the claims of mothers, however, reinforced the cultural importance of male kin and the patriarchal ideal of male-directed families and households.

Thus the male ideal was widely upheld in practice, but as can be seen in the case of children, when misfortune struck, a good many could not find new homes in line with legal preference. Wars and demographic storms killed parents, grandparents and other potential custodians. Children's gender was also consequential. In the broad-brush terms that become necessary in the absence of direct evidence, we are left to surmise that the cultural preference for boys and, with few exceptions, the higher economic value of dependent males left parentless girls more vulnerable than boys to neglect and other maltreatment. Girls were demonstrably more subject to child marriage, whose potential for abuse the *shari‘a* was at pains to prevent. The 'option of puberty' entitled girls upon reaching puberty to repudiate husbands contracted for them in their minority.[66] The option's affirmation of freely contracted marriage was nonetheless limited, since it did not extend to marriages arranged by a father or grandfather. If court records are representative, girls rarely challenged their

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65 Meriwether, *The Kin who Count*.

66 John L. Esposito, *Women in Muslim Family Law* (Syracuse, 1982), pp. 17–18; Çatalcalı Ali Efendi, *Fetava-i Ali Efendi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1283/1866–7), vol. I, pp. 56–7; Abdullah, *Behçet el-fetava*, pp. 61–2; Harald Motzki, 'Muslimische Kinderehen in Palästina während des 17. Jahrhunderts. *Fatawa* als Quellen zur Sozialgeschichte', *Die Welt des Islams* 27 (1987), 82–90; Dror Ze'evi, 'The Use of Ottoman Shari‘a Court Records as a Source for Middle Eastern Social History: A Reappraisal', *Islamic Law and Society* 5 (1998), 35–56 at 41–3.

marriages upon coming of age. In any case, when they did so, they were not always striking a blow for independence. For one thing, they were only children when in legal terms they came of age. No doubt many girls acted with the support if not the urging of their natal families, sometimes because a more advantageous match had presented itself.

For women who became mothers, any number of circumstances could trigger shifts in roles as well as in residence. A new bride typically left her parents' home for her husband's, but subsequent moves were not likely to be in lockstep with patriarchy or virilocality. The impact of mortality and fertility, the wishes of both female and male family members and the discretion of the courts widened the distance between norms and behaviour. And then there was the early modern world itself. Famine, rural flight, infant mortality and early adult mortality were joined in the two centuries by devastating wars fought and re-fought against Iran, Venice, Russia and Austria-Hungary. In Istanbul great fires occurred on an almost yearly basis, destroying the dwellings of tens of thousands. At least once in the period, earthquakes levelled Erzurum, Aleppo, Diyarbekir, Ankara, Izmir, Izmit, Bursa and central Istanbul along with scores of surrounding villages whose losses will never be known.[67] Lethal bursts of cholera, whooping cough, smallpox and plague swept thousands more away.[68] Survival as a society tested the limits of family and the Islamic ethic of community. In such times of trouble, 'family' was not so much a matter of form or kin as of wider social solidarities in making room and making do. The line between family and friends cannot have been sharply drawn in a society that knew such trouble yet nonetheless was well known for its social coherence.

Although no household structure was the overwhelming standard through-out the empire or even in Anatolia and Thrace, the patrilocal, multi-generational extended family household – of grandparents, one or more married sons and one or more generations of unmarried children – was the aspi-ration and ideal. That it comprised less than a majority of households has been demonstrated for a number of locales. Indeed, historians have argued that even if most people spent part of their lives in extended arrangements, they could not have done so for long given the ebbs and flows of mortality and divorce. Small households were a by-product of the comings and goings of complex

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67 N. N. Ambraseys and Caroline F. Finkel, *The Seismicity of Turkey and Adjacent Areas: A Historical Review, 1500–1800* (Istanbul, 1995), *passim*.
68 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Migration into Eighteenth-Century "Greater Istanbul" as Reflected in the Kadi Registers of Eyüp', *Turcica* 30 (1998), 163–83, at p. 165; Daniel Panzac, *La peste dans l'Empire ottoman, 1700–1850* (Louvain, 1985).

households. In urban areas, they were also a preferred structure in their own right. Duben and Behar have shown that small households – including the nuclear form – accounted for 60 per cent of all households in Istanbul by the late nineteenth century.[69] The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lack the nineteenth century's census data, but impressionistic evidence points to the pre-nineteenth-century prominence if not prevalence of small urban households in the cities of the central provinces.[70] Gerber has found no sign that extended families existed in Bursa in the seventeenth century 'or ever'.[71] Faroqhi's study of housing stock in seventeenth-century Ankara and Kayseri suggests the preponderance of smaller housing units in central Anatolia, and thus the early establishment and wide distribution in Ottoman Turkish society of the pattern of smaller families living under one roof.[72] In this regard, the principal Ottoman Turkish pattern – like Bulgaria's – bears a greater resemblance to much of western Europe – whose families of few children and few grandparents together were well established long before the Industrial Revolution – than to Russia and much of eastern Europe. Although extended families persisted in western Europe as they certainly did in Ottoman Turkey and among Bulgaria's Christian and Muslim populations, Russia and most of eastern Europe had an overwhelming preponderance of complex households.[73]

Within the family setting, the harsher face of women's subordination – of junior women generally and of outsider brides particularly – is associated with the gender and age hierarchies of intergenerational, complex or extended households, particularly in families that could not displace their regular labour needs onto servants and slaves. The existence of the nuclear family form, however, did not guarantee nuclear functioning, hardly practicable given that Ottoman legal and customary practice reinforced family mutuality and interdependence beyond the nuclear unit. The main lines of family law – custodial rights, inheritance rules and male divorce prerogatives – remained unchallenged prior to the nineteenth century.[74] Movement towards egalitarian marriage was also checked by the weakness of transformative

69 Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*, p. 75.
70 Alan Duben, 'Turkish Families and Households in Historical Perspective', *Journal of Family History* 10 (1985), 75–97, at p. 91; Duben and Behar, *Istanbul Households*, p. 243.
71 Haim Gerber, *State, Society, and Law in Islam: Ottoman Law in Comparative Perspective* (Albany, 1995), p. 151.
72 Faroqhi, *Men of Modest Substance*, p. 20.
73 For exceptions see Todorova, *Balkan Family Structure*, pp. 110–15, 121, 124.
74 Madeline C. Zilfi, '"We Don't Get Along": Women and *Hul* Divorce in the Eighteenth Century', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997),

economics at the level of the family.[75] Even when individual families differed from expectation, their behaviour was not generalised into a critique of the normative system itself. The extended or multiple ideal remained alive not just because families did often live in multiple arrangements, but because, irrespective of household structure, family ties and family-like ties had demonstrable utility for both men and women. Patterns of sociability, the obligations of relatedness, the many forms and expectations of parenting and care-giving, and religio-ethical values of inclusion and mutual responsibility were powerful arguments for investing in kin and fictive kin solidarities.

It can be argued that the family, broadly defined, was alive and well, but that marriage in the period was much less so. The added value placed on the extended family and on male priority within family relationships strained the conjugal bond. Middle Eastern society was a married society because early marriage, rapid remarriage and the idealisation of the married condition made it so, not because the conjugal bond was particularly strong. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *hul* (Arabic *khul'*), divorce, whereby a wife materially compensates her husband in exchange for his consent to divorce, was a common practice in the empire from Istanbul to Cairo and points in between.[76] There are no systematic counts of *hul* relative to divorce by male-initiated repudiation, *talak*, and the total number of divorces, i.e., *hul* plus *talak* dissolutions,[77] remains unknown since husbands could repudiate wives without mediation or registration by the legal system. Even without *talak* data, the abundance of known *hul* cases already tells us that divorce by any name was an inescapable feature of eighteenth-century life. It was more prevalent in the cities, it seems, although it was unevenly distributed across the urban environment. The vast majority of the cases involved Muslims, the predominant population of the area, although cases concerning Christians and Jews can also be found here and elsewhere. In Istanbul, about a hundred

pp. 264–96; and for somewhat different findings, Abdal-Rehim, 'The Family and Gender Laws', p. 105.

75 Tucker, *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*; Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Albany, 1988); Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800–1914*, rev. edn (London and New York, 1993 [1981]).

76 Jennings, 'Women in Ottoman Judicial Records', pp. 82–7; 'Divorce in the Ottoman Sharia Court of Cyprus, 1580–1640', *Studia Islamica* 78 (1993), 155–67; Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 205–7; Abdal-Rehim, 'The Family and Gender Laws', pp. 96–111, *passim*; Ivanova, 'The Divorce', pp. 112–25; Meriwether, *The Kin who Count*, p. 129; Judith E. Tucker, *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Berkeley, 1998); Tucker, *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*; Leslie Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley, 2003).

77 Jamal J. Nasir, *The Status of Women under Islamic Law and Modern Islamic Legislation* (London, 1990), p. 81; Esposito, *Women in Muslim Family Law*, pp. 35–6.

hul cases appear annually in the court registers for just the neighbourhoods adjacent to the Fatih Mosque. *Hul* cases are prominent in the records for Cyprus in the seventeenth century,[78] while in Aleppo in the eighteenth century, the annual figure for *hul* was also high, probably between 300 and 400 in a population of 130,000.[79]

The Fatih area of Istanbul, then as now, comprised some of the city's most crowded neighbourhoods. Population density, however, does not explain why women streamed into court from these precincts in order to end their marriages. Money problems were a chronic factor in marital breakdown. The Fatih area had numerous economic vulnerabilities, but it was not unique in these regards. The vocational make-up of the population, however, is suggestive. Many of the husbands were affiliated with imperial military or policing units. This observation reinforces the case for a distinctive military-caste ethos and subculture, intersected in marriage matters by economic problems. Among the military cadres, the marital bond appears to have been particularly tenuous, by reason of serial monogamy among the lower ranks, and concubinage and polygamy among the higher-ups.[80]

On the other hand, since *hul* is by definition female initiated, its high frequency implies a certain autonomy on women's part, with women seeming to act in their own interests by pursuing the divorce option when their husbands might have wished to continue the marriage. However, one cannot go too far with the presumption of female autonomy. It is clear that some *hul* divorces in fact reflected husbandly rather than wifely strategy. By ceding the initiative, husbands could be rid of unwanted wives without having to pay a divorce stipend (*nafaka*) or the delayed dowry (*mehr-i müeccel*), both of which were incumbent upon him if he initiated the dissolution by invoking *talak*. Freed of divorce debt, husbands would enhance their financial position in seeking out another mate. Apart from personal advantages to either wife or husband, it is also possible that the *hul* process was a popular alternative to *talak* for larger, social reasons, in that society seems to have preferred the mutuality and consensual dynamics of *hul* over *talak*'s blatant unilateralism.[81] There is good reason to believe that *hul* very often did operate as a disguised substitute for male-initiated *talak*.

The harmonious formulae of the *hul* declaration– 'We do not have a good life together . . . we acquit and absolve each other of any and all

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78 Jennings, *Christians and Muslims*, pp. 27–8.
79 Marcus, *The Middle East*, pp. 205–6, 338.
80 Zilfi, '"We Don't Get Along"', pp. 293–5.
81 Halil Cin, *Eski hukukumuzda boşanma* (Ankara, 1976), pp. 71–2; cf. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims*, p. 28; Jennings, 'Women in Ottoman Judicial Records', p. 114.

debts . . . we renounce all claims' – belie the fact that divorce broke families apart.[82] Hundreds of court entries make reference to bitter and prolonged disputes of the sort that have kept courts busy the world over: child custody claims and support payments; dower balances; and the division of marital property.[83] Ottoman women had reason to become cognisant of their legal rights. Newlyweds may not have entered marriage with such knowledge, but among families of ordinary means, women's and children's rights to financial support after divorce were matters of survival. A divorced woman's relatives, those who were to take her in, would have encouraged her in her entitlements when the need arose.[84]

Not all of the women and girls who used the courts – whether for domestic entitlements or property transactions – did so in their own interests and of their own volition. We must assume, though, that most cases are what they seem – that is, that domestic cases had primarily to do with the expressed issue even if other concerns were in play. What we cannot discern is where and how family strategies intersected with wives', sisters' and daughters' legal assertions. Be that as it may, contemporaneous calls to *shari'a*, raised in the expectation of justice and fair play, had a basis in fact in women's lives as well as in men's. Women, especially urban women of the middling and lower classes, were frequent users of the court's services. Their legal undertakings parallel those of men, except in the revealing realm of divorce-related disputes, which often represented the lion's share of female plaintiffs' cases in larger urban areas. In any event, women sought the court's intervention far more than strict sequestration and male sponsorship should have allowed, if both had regularly been practised. The high incidence of women's court appearances, the variety of cases that brought women there and their courtroom demeanour – often appearing on their own to make declarations directly – indicate confidence in the legal system and in their own standing as legal persons.[85] Although appeals to the law reflect the failure of private solutions, they nonetheless underline the vital role of the courts in supporting women's social well-being.

82 İstanbullu Hacibzade Mehmed b. Mustafa, 'Bizaat al-Hukkam fi İhkam al-Ahkam', ms. personal copy, fols. 72–3.
83 İstM, 2/178, fol. 3a, 2/184, fol. 17b, 6/403, fols. 2a, 9b, 6/404, fols. 72b–94b *passim*.
84 See İstM, 2/183, fols. 7a, 14b, 20a, 21a.
85 Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, pp. 252–3; Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, 'Ottoman Women and the Tradition of Seeking Justice in the Ottoman Empire, and Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crime, Women, and Wealth in the Eighteenth-Century Anatolian Countryside', both in *Women in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, 1997), pp. 253–63 and 6–27, respectively; Yvonne Seng, 'Standing at the Gates of Justice: Women in the Law Courts of Early Sixteenth Century Üsküdar, Istanbul', in *Contested States: Law, Hegemony and Resistance*, ed. Susan Hirsch and Mindie Lazarus-Black (New York, 1994), pp. 184–206.

It is difficult to assess the record of failed marriages against present-day claims that pre-modern society afforded women higher status and greater protections than in the modern era. Also, the reality of frequent divorce is not easily reconciled with the prescriptive literature's vision of male-headed families as stable, harmonious and, for women, protective. The historical record presents a complex picture, and the record is incomplete, even for the times and places for which ample evidence survives. Nonetheless, the dense divorce activity in urban centres, especially among military-linked elements, points to the importance of class and status-group segmentation. In addition to differences in levels of income and sources of accumulated wealth, the vocations of male breadwinners supported distinctive socio-economic solidarities and distinctive masculine subcultures. Given the evidence of divorce-inducing socio-economic environments, polygyny in the higher military-administrative ranks and perhaps serial monogamy in the lower, as well as the military's front-line access to captive women, the situation of women born or married into such families was more precarious than for the population generally, or even for non-military elements of the elite.

Old and new in family households

The size and mobility of urban populations made an eclectic mix of household types inescapable in the urban setting. At the same time that small-family households were on the rise, extended family lineages were pooling influence to dominate imperial and local provincial politics. Popular confidence in the extended family as a bulwark of security owes much to the durability and wealth of society's prominent large families. Family names – the famous -*zade* (son-of) designations of the mid-seventeenth century through the early nineteenth – marked the expanding grip of 'people with "known" names',[86] generation after generation of office-holders from the same family lines. The formalised valuing of family ties in male elite recruitment was remarkably pervasive after the late seventeenth century. It was not only the scale of the long eighteenth century's family enterprise, but the unabashed use of family ties, especially patrilineal ties, as necessary and sufficient qualification for high rank in the governing elites, that distinguished the period. The upper reaches of the government in this period endorsed family-right recruitment. At the same time, the dynasty took to projecting a familial sovereign image to suit

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86 Eric J. Leed, *The Mind of the Traveler* (New York, 1991), p. 273.

the aristocratic age and to reinforce the dynasty's reliance on family power and a legitimacy grounded in social stability.[87]

The centrality of primary ties eased the incorporation of royal women into a number of imperial projects. Royal daughters, sisters and nieces, whose births and marriages were extravagantly celebrated, played an enhanced role in Ottoman ceremony, court life and urban culture. Royal women's life passages figured prominently in the dynasty's self-representation. While the matings of the dynasty's males were palace affairs, the weddings of women of the Ottoman line, close relatives of the ruler, were for public consumption; they embodied, among other things, the dynasty's wider social claims as the first family among many. Blood members of the dynasty, princesses projected Ottoman sovereignty without posing a political threat. Showcasing the marriages of princesses – and publicly appropriating the political and material capital of vizieral bridegrooms – offered spectacle and perhaps conciliation to the urban public.

Shirine Hamadeh's study of architectural meaning in eighteenth-century Istanbul notes the transformative role of elite female 'patrons of the urban space'. Royal women's palaces were stylish residences, where sometimes before there had been no significant housing of any kind.[88] Beginning with the way they dressed their own male and female attendants and decorated their palaces, royal women were also style-setters for the nascent consumerism of the eighteenth century. Theirs was a social world validated by visits from the sultan and others of the royal household. Princesses' houses, with or without husbands in evidence, extended the imperial presence. Princesses Hadice, daughter of Mustafa III, and the two Esmas – the elder the daughter of Ahmed III and sister of Mustafa III and Abdülhamid I, while the younger was the daughter of Abdülhamid I – presided not only over their households but effectively over the surrounding neighbourhoods. The public fountains that royal women endowed also influenced urban settlement patterns. Both palaces and waterworks, Hamadeh suggests, contributed to an Islamising trend in the city's development. Muslims gravitated towards the new installations. In another sense, though, women's *vakıf* endowments, which frequently took the form of water provisioning, perhaps inadvertently reflected a wider, non-denominational, urban sensibility. Together with satellite courts, and dynastic

87 Madeline C. Zilfi, 'A *Medrese* for the Palace: Ottoman Dynastic Legitimation in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, 2 (1993), 184–91.
88 Hamadeh, 'The City's Pleasures'; Tülay Artan, 'The Palaces of the Sultanas', *Istanbul* 2 (1993); Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, 'Lale devrinde Osmanlı prensesleri', *Osmanlı*, ed. Halil İnalcık, Güler Eren *et al.*, 5 (Istanbul, 1999), 428–33.

celebrations that rivalled those prescribed by the religious calendar, much of women's architectural sponsorship pointed to the kind of secularist discourse that would dominate much of the nineteenth century.

Although royal women loomed large in the dynasty's family portrait, their role was not especially active, much less directive. Initiatives, and the resources to sustain them, belonged to male rulership. The realities of Ottoman patriarchalism were underscored by the betrothal of toddler princesses to viziers, a practice that had taken hold in the seventeenth century. Nonetheless, opportunities and agency for the adult royal woman expanded in the eighteenth century.[89] After a tentative start in the late 1600s, mature princesses commonly lived away from Topkapı Palace in mini-courts of their own. As in other centuries a number of royal women served as helpmates and counsellors to their reigning relative. Ahmed III's daughter Fatima is said to have encouraged the regime's francophilia, while his sister Hadîce, a long-time confidante, was at his side through several crises, even advising him on how to appease the rebels of 1730.[90] For his part, Mustafa III doted on a favourite niece, *the* Hanım Sultan of the 1760s. He visited her daily, according to reports.[91] The integrated eighteenth-century imperial family, although not without its own family quarrels and factions, stands in stark contrast to the internecine politics that destroyed the peace of the imperial household during most of the seventeenth century.

The greater visibility of the royal household mirrored the new prominence of non-royal elite families. Notwithstanding the longevity of elite lineages, little is known about wives, sisters and daughters. Charitable acts gave some women a public face. Otherwise the moneyed classes preferred obscurity for their women. The poet Fıtnat was a notable exception. Born Zübeyde, Fıtnat was the daughter, granddaughter, niece, and sister of *şeyhülislam*s in the illustrious Ebu İshakzade line.[92] She became a woman doubly famous, because of her family origins and because she had in her poetry a career of

89 Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı maliyesinde malikâne sistemi,' in *Türkiye iktisat tarihi semineri*, ed. Osman Okyar and Ünal Nalbantoğlu (Ankara, 1975), pp. 231–96, at pp. 236ff., noted in Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, p. 301; Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, pp. 148ff.

90 Ahmed Refik Altınay, *Fatma Sultan* (Istanbul, n.d.), p. 19; Anon., *Relation des deux rebellions arrivées à Constantinople en 1730 et 1731* (The Hague, 1737), cited in Joseph von Hammer-Purgstalls, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, 10 vols. (Graz, 1963), vol. VII, p. 382; M. Münir Aktepe, *Patrona isyanı (1730)* (Istanbul, 1958), p. 139.

91 Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, vol. VIII, p. 210.

92 Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 4 vols. (Istanbul, 1308–15/1891–7), vol. IV, pp. 24–5; Zihni Mehmed, *Meşahir el-Nisa*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1294–6/1877–9), vol. II, pp. 142–5; Cavit Baysun, 'Esad, Mehmed' and Ali Cânib Yöntem, 'Fıtnat Hanım', both in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı).

sorts. However, the little that is related about her personality and pastimes raises questions about her family as much as about the young woman who early on showed a flair for words. Fıtnat's natal family equipped her with an education and encouraged her poetry. She enjoyed a certain amount of recognition in her own time and apparently participated, in writing though not necessarily face to face, in the circle of celebrated upper-crust poets that included Haşmet Efendi and Mustafa III's grand vizier Koca Ragıb Paşa (d. 1763). Her marriage, to the son of another eminent *ulema* family, was by all reports unhappy. Indeed, the record of Fıtnat's personal life all but disappears in these later years, until her death in 1194/1780. Her story is in many respects one of stifled promise, with the nurturing latitude of the parental home reined in by the strictures of marriage and an unsympathetic mate.

In terms of the here-and-now of the eighteenth century, Fıtnat's biography also hints at differing cultural dispositions within the body of the Ottoman elite, one represented by the culturally engaged household of Fıtnat's father, a religious scholar, poet and patron of the arts, and the other reflected in the Feyzullahzade family into which Fıtnat had married, a family little known for pastimes outside the religious career track. Perhaps this is what the poet-kadi İzzet Molla had in mind when he referred to Fıtnat's husband as 'that ass Dervish Efendi'.[93] Marriage had the power to transform women's lives, in Fıtnat's case apparently for the worse.

Subcultural variations within the elite occupations arose in part from differing mixes of compensations and punishments. Members of the secular elites – grand viziers, provincial governors and janissary commanders – had access to greater fortunes and power. However, banishment, execution and the confiscation of property were daily hazards in their world. Property comprised all forms of wealth, including slaves. The widely used confiscation process rent the fabric of home and household. With confiscation, the estates of disgraced masters, including any human property, were sold or distributed to others. Even legal wives and offspring were not always exempted from maltreatment. Until the reforms of the nineteenth century, forced dispossession occurred even when officials left office or died peacefully and honourably. In the worst of circumstances, when the urban mob or rural band acted out its version of justice, legal wives, well born or not, shared the fate of slaves. One of the most outrageous incidents occurred in 1688, when an Istanbul military mob, not satisfied with Grand Vizier Abaza Siyavuş Paşa's removal from office, stormed his house and seized his harem of ninety-two women, including his wife. The

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93 Cited in E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, 6 vols. (London, 1958–67).

women were maimed and paraded through the streets. Siyavuş's wife was freeborn, a member of the eminent Köprülü family, and guarded by armed servants and a courageous husband, none of which spared her from violation.[94] Such outbursts were reminders of the fact that in extreme cases no official, irrespective of rank, was immune, and neither were his womenfolk.

The eighteenth century and legislative restraints

The connections between the vitality of the elite patriarchal family in the eighteenth century, the wave of social restrictions on women in the same period and the early inroads of market culture require more disentangling than can be attempted here. However, it is clear that women – metaphorical, productive and reproductive – were central to these processes or at least to contemporaneous perceptions of these processes. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the sumptuary regulations of the eighteenth century. Most of these decry consumer excess and visual disturbances to public order. True to the generalising mode of the prescriptive genre, they address women as a group – *taife-i nisvan*. Only then do they proceed to distinguish between Muslim and non-Muslim. The theme of the legislation was ostensibly women's morality – the lack of it among some women and the need for it among all women. The textual detail, however, circles around the problem of communal boundaries and religious identity.

In the decrees, norms of modesty and simplicity are invoked for all women. Muslim women, however, are particularly called to account for sartorial and behavioural transgressions. Whatever the perceived faults – and these vary between reigns – women's behaviour is denounced in both moral and social terms.[95] Insisting upon the preservation of external distinctions between Muslim and non-Muslim, the decrees rebuke 'believing women' for adopting clothing resembling that of non-Muslims. Those who deviate from Muslim women's street uniform dishonour themselves, it is said, and by obscuring the boundary between religious communities, transgressors threaten the believing community itself. The various restrictions on women's mobility in the eighteenth century are of a piece with the denunciations of women's dress in that period. Regardless of the contingencies that lay behind individual regulations,

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94 Silahdar Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Silahdar tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1928), vol. II, pp. 325–35; Yüksel, 'Vakıf-müsadere'.

95 Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Whose Laws? Gendering the Ottoman Sumptuary Regime', in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph Neumann (Istanbul, 2004), pp. 125–41.

sumptuary restrictions speak volumes about social anxiety. Apparently women's transgressions were regarded as especially provocative by some, yet females were only one of many politically marginalised groups, including native Christian and Jewish merchants, whose physical presence – through new forms of dress or uncustomary visibility or mobility – increased social dissonance. Urban women – or, more accurately, women of the middle and upper urban classes, whose disposable wealth enabled them to experiment with fashion and leisure time – were a principal target of the legislation. Women certainly represented an old point of tension. But in the eighteenth century women from the emerging middle classes became visible in increasing numbers, representing a new element of social assertion. As for the laws, they inadvertently testified to women's different, and changing, social realities. While the language of the law pronounced women a unified category bound by a single moral standard, with every new issuance the law's own prescriptions repeatedly offered evidence of women's diversity and society's propensity to change.

The Ottoman Jews

MINNA ROZEN

The people

In the early seventeenth century,[1] Ottoman Jewry comprised immigrants from the Catholic world as well as members of indigenous communities, which the Ottomans inherited together with the countries they conquered. Some of these countries were Muslim and others were Greek Orthodox. The indigenous Jewish communities of the Muslim world usually spoke Arabic, while those of the Greek Orthodox world were generally Greek speakers. The members of the immigrant communities that grew up in the empire from 1492 on usually spoke a Castilian dialect of Spanish, but also a southern and Sicilian dialect of Italian, as well as Portuguese.

During the seventeenth century, the flow of Jewish refugees from Catholic Europe to the Ottoman Empire came to a virtual standstill. This was because the pool of 'New Christians' in Spain and Portugal who still wished to live in 'a Jewish place' had dried up. Another, more compelling, reason was the rise in international trade, which led various Catholic countries to suffer the presence of 'New Christians' who secretly observed – or openly reverted to – their former Jewish religion, for their commercial contribution. In certain places, such as Leghorn (Livorno) (in 1593), such Jews were even awarded rights very similar to those granted to Christians.

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the globalisation of commerce led to Jewish immigration of another kind; the new immigrants were Jews who held on to the nationality of their Catholic countries of origin and settled in the empire for economic reasons. These were placed under the

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1 Avigdor Levy (ed.), *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, 1994); Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, 1984); Stanford J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic* (New York, 1991); Walter F. Weiker, *Ottoman Turks and the Jewish Polity* (Lanham, 1992).

protection of the French consulates, and later other European consulates. The 'Francos', as these Jews came to be called by the local Jews, were absolved from paying taxes to the Ottoman authorities.[2] Although numerically small, in the course of time they became extremely influential in Jewish society. These Jews spoke Portuguese, but also Italian. From the early eighteenth century to the 1880s, the stream of Jews from the lands of Christendom to the Ottoman Empire dried up completely.[3]

The Ottoman state vis-à-vis the Jews

The Ottoman state was first and foremost a Muslim state, based on the teachings of Islam. It was based on a belief in the supremacy of Islam and Muslims over other religions and their adherents. Indeed, the protection that Muslim rulers extended to members of the monotheistic religions was contingent on their recognition of the pre-eminent place of the Muslim faith within the empire. As a Muslim state, the empire allowed Jews and members of other religions to conduct their internal affairs as they saw fit. Since Islamic law applied primarily to Muslims, the Muslim ruler did not intervene in the affairs of non-Muslims, except when necessary. The Ottoman Empire extended its protection (*zimmet*) to all its monotheistic subjects inside and outside its borders, as long as they were obedient and submissive.

The Ottoman state, however, was not merely a Muslim state, but an amalgam of cultural and political traditions. Some of these originated from the Central Asian culture of the forebears of the founders of the empire, while others derived from the imperial traditions of the Middle East and Asia Minor. In the light of the above, the empire considered it a given that all state resources, human or otherwise, were the sultan's property. Likewise, obedience to the sultan and the supremacy of the *askeri* – in other words, the

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2 Franco = free, in Spanish. Another possible explanation is that the Jewish definition is derived from the Ottoman Turkish, a language in which the word *frenci* meant someone from Catholic Europe.

3 Minna Rozen, 'Collective Memories and Group Boundaries: The Judeo-Spanish Diaspora between the Lands of Christendom and the World of Islam', *Michael* 14 (1997), 35–52; Minna Rozen, 'Strangers in a Strange Land: The Extraterritorial Status of Jews in Italy and the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries', in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, ed. Aron Rodrigue (Bloomington, 1992), pp. 123–66; Minna Rozen, 'Contest and Rivalry in Mediterranean Maritime Commerce in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century: The Jews of Salonika and the European Presence', *Revue des Etudes Juives* 147 (1988), 309–52; Minna Rozen, 'Tzarfat vi-Yhudei Mitzrayim: Anatomyah shel Yehasim, 1683–1801', in *The Jews of Ottoman Egypt (1517–1914)*, ed. Jacob M. Landau (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 421–70.

military–administrative cadre – and of the Muslim judicature over the *reaya* (the simple taxpayer), irrespective of denomination, were taken for granted, and so was the use of Turkish as the language of government. The other side of the coin, however, was that the sultan considered himself obliged to rule all his subjects, including Jews, justly, and to see to their needs. This meant that while the Jews of the empire, as *zimmi*s, could never be *askeri*, since this implied dominion over Muslims, all other occupations were open to them. In their dealings with the institutions of government they had to speak Turkish, but in their day-to-day lives they continued speaking Judeo-Spanish or Arabic and, to a lesser extent, Greek and Aramaic, but almost never Turkish.[4] Within these parameters, the Jewish community led a peaceful existence, with the government intervening only when called upon to do so by one of its Jewish subjects.

During the sixteenth century wealthy Jews from the lands of Christendom, people such as Mosheh and Yosef Hamon, Yosef Nasi, Don Shelomoh ibn Ya'ish, the Soncino family and others, achieved wealth and political influence that transcended their *zimmi* status. This phenomenon diminished during the seventeenth century, and ceased altogether in the course of the eighteenth.[5]

Unlike their predecessors, the Jewish plutocrats of the empire's intermediate period did not engage in commerce or intervene in its European foreign policy, but were holders of various government monopolies: court bankers (*sarraf*); provisioners of various army regiments; and managers of the affairs of the *askeri* top brass.[6] They were not ostentatious, their homes looking very simple from the outside, and unlike their predecessors were careful not to infringe the restrictions placed upon them as member of an inferior faith. Those who failed to do so paid not only with their possessions, but also with their lives.[7]

4 Minna Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community of Istanbul: The Formative Years (1453–1566)* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 16–34.

5 Ibid., pp. 209–14.

6 Avraham Ya'ari (ed.), 'Mas'ot Rabbi Yeshayah mi-Zalazitz', in *Mas'ot Eretz Yisrael*, ed. Avraham Ya'ari (Ramat Gan, 1973), p. 390; Yitzhaq Ben Tzevi, 'The "Mas'ot Sasson Hai ben Qastiel"', in *Mehqarim u-Meqorot*, ed. Yitzhaq Ben Tzevi (Jerusalem, 1966), p. 469; Minna Rozen, 'La vie économique des juifs du bassin méditerranéen de l'expulsion d'Espagne (1492) à la fin du XVIIIe siècle', in *La société juive à travers les âges*, ed. Samuel Trigano, vol. III (Paris, 1993), pp. 341–3, and notes 561–4.

7 Minna Rozen, 'Tzarfat ve-Yhudei Mitzrayim'; Thomas D. Philipp, 'The Farhi Family and the Changing Position of Jews in Syria, 1750–1860', *Middle Eastern Studies* 20, 4 (1984), 37–52; Jacob Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315–1791* (New York, 1938), pp. 15–19 (see also on the internet: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1772-jewsinislam.html).

The Jews vis-à-vis the Ottoman state

The sultan's authority, and the importance of the Ottoman Empire in the life of its Jewish subjects, were perceived in the seventeenth century as an incontrovertible fact. This was not due to any recollection of the goodwill the empire showed in welcoming the Spanish expellees and Portuguese refugees, as was commonly argued during the period of Abdülhamid II.[8] There was no such recollection, or evidence thereof, during the three centuries leading up to the Hamidean period. The duty of loyalty and obedience was accepted unquestioningly by the Jews, both because it was the key to their survival and because, throughout the period in question, obedience to the state and its rulers was closely bound up with obedience to the community's economic elite. Since this elite was closely connected with the *askeri* class, it was eager to cultivate obedience and loyalty to the Ottoman regime. Thus, for example, when it looked as if the Ottoman government might construe the Sabbatean movement (1666) as revolutionary, the Jewish elite in politically sensitive places such as Jerusalem and Istanbul rejected Sabbatai Sevi.[9] The Jews never explicitly or emphatically voiced their dissatisfaction with the corruption or incompetence of the Ottoman regime. Thus, for example, when Salonika's Jews were unhappy with the tax burden imposed on them in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, they simply chose to migrate to other cities in the empire, or sought the protection of foreign states.[10]

The Jews vis-à-vis the ambient society

The Ottoman state's acceptance of the right of 'others' to be different fostered diversity. The result was that throughout the centuries under discussion, Jewish society, like other religious and ethnic groups in the empire, was subjected to two opposing forces: one tended towards the reinforcement of individuality and diversity, and the other towards cultural assimilation. On the one hand, everyday life worked towards the creation of a common cultural infrastructure, even if no one was prepared to admit it. On the other hand, Jewish society was allowed to foster its individuality, and maintain its own religion and language.

8 Minna Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond: The Jewish Community of Turkey and the Balkans 1808–1945*, 2 vols. (Tel Aviv, 2005), vol. I, pp. 98–9; Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, 1992), pp. 1–3.

9 Gershom Scholem, *Sabbetai Sebi* (Princeton, 1973), p. 233; Jacob Barnai, 'Messianism and Leadership: The Sabbatean Movement and the Leadership of the Jewish Communities in the Ottoman Empire', in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, ed. Aron Rodrigue (Bloomington, 1992), pp. 167–82, at pp. 169–70, 174–5.

10 Minna Rozen, 'Contest and Rivalry', p. 338.

The ambient society, whether Muslim or Greek, was not necessarily perceived as dangerous or hostile, but as 'alien' and apart. Excessive involvement in the ambient society was frowned upon as reflecting low moral standards. This was particularly true of the middle classes, especially in relation to women. A Jewish woman who spoke Turkish – or, at the end of this period, even Greek – was assumed to be mixing in the wrong circles.[11] The distinction between the *haremlık*, or the private section of the house, and the *selamlık*, or public section, adopted willingly by the Jewish community, was a cornerstone of the Jews' attitude toward the ambient society. The wish to protect women and young children of an impressionable age from external influences made it possible for generations of Jews in the Ottoman lands to reinforce their linguistic and cultural distinctiveness.

On the other hand, this tolerance of difference made it extremely difficult to maintain an absolute separation between Jewish society and the ambient society. Some traits of assimilation of Ottoman culture were common to great parts of the empire. The impression of Turkish music, decorative arts, fashion in dress and furniture was widespread.[12] On the other hand, in Istanbul, the Jewish–Turkish acculturation also happened in the opposite direction, especially in one field, the performing arts. Jews took an active part and an important role in all branches of the performing arts, and their influence is to be traced especially in the Karagöz plays.[13] The mutual influences between Jewish and Muslim circles of mystics should also be taken into account.[14] The degree of separation and of assimilation of tastes and mores varied from place to place. In Salonika, for example, where Jews formed the largest religious

11 Rabbi Yosef Ibn Lev, *Responsa*, vol. III (Amsterdam, 1725), sec. 4:3a; Rabbi Yosef ben Mosheh mi-Trani, *Responsa*, 2 vols. (Lvov, 1861), vol. II, sec. 244:46a, responsum from 1619, sec. 33:51b.

12 Tova Be'eri, 'Shelomoh Mazal-Tov ve-Nitzanei Hashpaʿatah shel ha-Shirah ha-Turkit ʿal ha-Shirah ha-ʿIvrit', *Pe'amim* 59 (1994), 65–76; Andreas Tietze and Joseph Yahalom, *Ottoman Melodies Hebrew Hymns: A Sixteenth Century Cross-Cultural Adventure* (Budapest, 1995); Edwin Seroussi, 'Musika ʿOsmanit Qlasit be-Qerev Yehudei Saloniqi', in *Ladinar: Mehqarim ba-Sifrut, ba-Musika u-ba-Historiah shel Dovrei Ladino*, ed. Judith Dishon and Shmuel Refael (Tel Aviv, 1998), pp. 79–92; Edwin Seroussi, 'The Turkish Makam in the Musical Culture of the Ottoman Jews: Sources and Examples', *Israel Studies in Musicology* 5 (1990), 43–68; Minna Rozen, *Hasköy Cemetery: Typology of Stones* (Tel Aviv, 1994), pp. 393–430; Minna Rozen, 'Classical Echoes in Ottoman Istanbul', in *Hellenic Arts and Jewish Arts*, ed. Asher Ovadiah (Tel Aviv, 1998), pp. 393–430.

13 İlhan Başgöz, 'The Waqwaq Tree in the Turkish Shadow-Play Theatre: Karagöz and the Story of Esther', in Levy (ed.), *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 549–57.

14 In the meantime, see Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, 1988), pp. 153–6; Jane Hathaway, 'The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah: The Sabbatai Sevi Controversy and the Ottoman Reform in Egypt', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 117, 4 (1997), 665. See also M. Idel, 'Mistiqah Yehudit ve-Mistiqah Muslemit', *Mahanayim* 1 (1992), 28–33.

group, a Jew could live his entire life without having to exchange more than a few sentences in a language other than Judaeo-Spanish. This fact was significant not only in cultural-linguistic terms, but also in terms of self-definition. A Jewish inhabitant of Salonika, for example, considered himself a Salonikan par excellence, and members of other religious groups as expendable aliens. If he related to anyone from this alien culture, it was to members of the ruling Muslim Turcophone class only, with whom he had dealings, and whose protection he enjoyed.[15] The Istanbul Jew, on the other hand, had a different attitude towards the ambient society. Since Jews formed a tiny minority of the capital's enormous population, and since the city's economy revolved to a large extent around the royal court, the Jewish community there was far more enmeshed with the ambient Muslim society than in any other place in the empire. It was far more interested in the fate of the empire and its rulers than was any other Jewish community in the empire, and the tendency to emulate Muslim society was more pronounced here than elsewhere. This was particularly evident among the Jewish elite, whose life was a downscaled version of that of the Ottoman elite.[16] At the other end of the social spectrum, boatmen and fishermen, owners of coffeehouses and other marginal groups were also more involved with Gentile society.[17] In general, Istanbul Jewish society spoke more Turkish than any other Jewish community in the empire, although by the end of the eighteenth century the vast majority of Jews here also spoke Judaeo-Spanish among themselves and, to a much lesser extent, Greek.

Jews who lived in the provincial towns of the empire were also forced to relate more to Gentile society. As a very small percentage of the population in medium and small towns, Jews were forced into constant contact with the ambient society, and this left its mark. The effects varied according to the ambient society – the Jewish community appeared more Slavic, if the ambient society was Slavic, more Greek if the ambient society spoke Greek. This sheds light on the Judaeo-Spanish saying: 'The provincial [Jew] is half Christian' 'Kasaliko – medio kristianiko'.[18] In Izmir, 'the city of heretics', home to many Greeks and Christian foreigners, Jewish life was affected by ties with Christian Europe and the ambient Christian society.[19]

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15 Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century*, vol. I, ch. 7.   16 Rozen, *History*, pp. 216–20.
17 Rabbi Mosheh Benvenisti, *Responsa: Penei Mosheh*, vol. I (Istanbul, 1669), sec. 42, p. 105a.; Rabbi Yehiel Bassan, *Responsa* (Istanbul, 1737), sec. 23:14a–b (testimony from the summer of 1666).
18 Rozen, *History*, pp. 281–2.
19 Hayim Benvenisti, *Responsa Ba'yei Hayai*, vol. I (Salonika, 1791), secs. 2:1b (1654), 13:10b (1662); Hayim Benvenisti, *Sheyarei Kenest ha-Gedolah: Orah Hayim* (Istanbul, 1729), p. 64b;

These developments found expression in geographical variations in the Judaeo-Spanish vernacular. In Arab-speaking countries, the language incorporated Arabic words, while in Bulgaria, Serbia and Bosnia, it included Slavic words. The Judaeo-Spanish spoken in Istanbul had far more Turkish words than did the Judaeo-Spanish spoken in Salonika.[20]

The ambient society vis-à-vis the Jews

Since the society in which the Jews of the empire lived was heterogeneous, it is impossible to speak of a uniform attitude towards them. Moreover, the attitude towards Jews was not governed solely by religious considerations, but also by ethnic and class factors. Within Turcophone Muslim society, Jews as a group were perceived as useful, trustworthy and loyal to the state. On the other hand, they were portrayed as cowardly and contemptible.[21] The same was true in Arabophone Muslim society, with one exception: attempts by the local Muslim elite to consolidate its hold on Jerusalem and the Holy Places led it to perceive all non-Muslims, Jews and Christians alike, as an alien, not to say hostile, element, whereas the local Ottoman administration regarded them as a legitimate channel for the transfer of funds from the lands of Christendom to its own pockets.[22]

Christian society in the empire, irrespective of ethnic affiliation, perceived Jews as a group implanted by the Ottoman conqueror, and as the sultan's loyal servants. Even before the rise of the nationalist movements in the Balkans, this perception was sufficient to single out Jews as the enemies of Christian society in the empire. Since the Muslims' superiority was uncontested, Jews

Hayim Abul'afia, *Hanan Elohim* (Izmir, 1736), sec. 30. Cf. Jacob Barnai, *Shabta'ut: Hebetim Hevratiyim* (Jerusalem, 2000), pp. 65–8.

20 David Bunis, *Leshon Judezmo: Mavo li-Lshonam shel ha-Yehudim ha-Sefaradim ba-Imperiyah ha-'Ot'manit* (Jerusalem, 1999), pp. 24–35; David Bunis, *Voices from Jewish Salonika* (Jerusalem, 1999), pp. 63–122.

21 Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century*, vol. I, ch. 6.

22 Minna Rozen, *Ha-Qehilah ha-Yehudit bi-Yrushalayim ba-Me'ah ha-Yod-Zayin* (Tel Aviv, 1984), pp. 21–63; Minna Rozen, *Jewish Identity and Society in the Seventeenth Century: Reflections on the Life and Works of Refael Mordekhai Malki* (Tübingen, 1992), pp. 8–12; Amnon Cohen, *Yehudei Yerushalayim ba-Me'ah ha-Shesh-'Esreh le-fi Te'udot Turkiyot shel Beit ha-Din ha-Shar'i* (Jerusalem, 1976), pp. 36–41, 50–1, 55–6, 59–60, 63–4, 67; Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam* (Cambridge, 1984); Amnon Cohen, Elishev'a Simon Pikali and 'Ovadiyah Salameh, *Yehudim be-Veit ha-Mishpat ha-Muslemi: Hevrah, Kalkalah ve-Irgun Qehilati bi-Yrushalayim ha-'Ot'manit, ha-Me'ah ha-Shesh-'Esreh* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 109–23, 155–8; Amnon Cohen, Elishev'a Simon Pikali and 'Ovadiyah Salameh, *Yehudim be-Veit ha-Mishpat ha-Muslemi: Hevrah, Kalkalah ve-Irgun Qehilati bi-Yrushalayim ha-'Ot'manit, ha-Me'ah ha-Shemoneh-'Esreh* (Jerusalem, 1996), pp. 145–9; Jacob Barnai, *The Jews in Palestine in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Naomi Goldblum (Tuscaloosa, 1992), pp. 84–6.

were the only sparring partner left. The Orthodox ecclesiastical tradition lent a moral imprimatur to this attitude. Many Greek, Macedonian and Bulgarian folksongs of this period portrayed Jews as cunning, avaricious and miserly, and accused them of abducting young women and Christian children for nefarious purposes.[23] Thus while the Ottoman Muslims saw Jews as clever, cowardly and contemptible, the Greek Orthodox saw the Jew as downright evil and dangerous.

The culture of the empire's Jews

The processes of change that overtook the Jews of the empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were significant at several levels. As long as immigration from Europe continued, even if on a tiny scale, Jewish society in the empire underwent a process of ferment and change. Once immigration ceased, the catalyst for change disappeared too and, increasingly, Jewish society became a microcosm of Ottoman Muslim society, which it attempted to emulate. The transition from international commerce to local commerce and business with the Ottoman ruling cadres was but one symptom of a general process of change that swept through Jewish society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This process was characterised by a tendency toward introversion, acquiescence and satisfaction with the status quo. For Jews to engage in international trade of any significance, they would have had to study foreign languages, and be involved in the politics, cultures and economies of foreign countries – all of which ran counter to their socio-cultural ethos at that point in time and place.[24] Such activities were left up to the 'Francos', who were considered 'lapsed Jews', desecrators of the Sabbath and outright heretics.[25] An interesting manifestation of this process of atrophy and apathy was the sale of numerous ancient manuscripts containing the works of Greek philosophers, both in the original and in translation, that had been brought over at tremendous risk from the 'lands of the expulsion', and that were now sold to French diplomats and European merchants. Not only did the indigenous Jews show no interest in these manuscripts, they failed to understand a word of them or their wider significance.[26] Jewish society had become extremely materialistic.

23 Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century*, vol. I, ch. 6.
24 Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, pp. 140–6.
25 Rozen, 'Contest and Rivalry,' p. 323, notes 66–7; Rozen, 'Collective Memories'; see also Tzevi, '"Mas'ot"', pp. 443–6.
26 Joseph R. Hacker, 'Kitvei ha-Yad ha-'Ivriyim shel Jan Batist Qolber ve-ha-Moreshet ha-Ruanit shel Yehudei ha-Imperiyah ha-'Ot'manit', *Zion* 62 (1997), 327–68.

This process of stagnation left its mark even on religious study and research, which had always been a cornerstone of religious identity. The focus changed from innovative and creative thinking to the study of cabbalistic and mystical literature. Possibly the Sabbatean episode had had a deterrent effect on innovation; but even without it, there were plenty of other pointers to this process. Moreover, whereas scholars of previous generations had focused on Jewish legal literature in an attempt to adapt it to constantly changing conditions, in the period under discussion research and exegesis came to a standstill. Even the rabbinical responsa of that period were merely a tedious repetition of former halachic rulings and were totally lacking in innovation or originality.[27]

The structure of Jewish society

Throughout the empire's existence, leadership of the Jewish community was vested in a small group of wealthy men whose power derived from their wealth, and from their ties with the local or imperial Ottoman administration. This was especially evident in the capital where, for generations, the community was led by the Tzontzin (Soncino), Hamon, Rosanes, ʿUziel and Vieliesid families,[28] and later the Ibn Zonanah, Ajiman and Carmona families,[29] and in provincial capitals such as Cairo, where the community was led by the family of the Jewish *sarraf başı* (court banker), and Damascus, where the Farhi family ruled the community for many generations.[30]

Likewise, in places where the Ottoman administration had a clear financial interest, there was a strong correlation between ties with the central government and leadership of the Jewish community. An interesting example of this phenomenon involved the Jewish community of Samokov in present-day Bulgaria. Samokov was an important iron-mining centre, and as such, vital to

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27 Jacob Barnai, 'Hayei ha-Ruʾah ve-ha-Yetzirah ha-Sifrutit shel Yehudei ha-Imperiyah ha-ʿOtʾmanit', *Siʾah* 14 (1980), 11–31; Barnai, *Shabtaʾut*, pp. 113–19; Leʾah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Sifrut ha-Halakhah be-Qushta ba-Shanim 1750–1900', *Ladinar* I (1998), 13–22; Leʾah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Sifrut ha-Halakhah be-Saloniqi ba-Shanim 1750–1900', *Ladinar* 2 (2001), 15–35; Leʾah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Sifrut ha-Halakhah be-Turqiyah Yavan ve-ha-Balqanim ba-Shanim 1750–1900', *Peʿamim* 86–7 (2001), 124–74.

28 Tzevi, '"Masʿot"', p. 469; Leʾah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Le-Toledot Qehilat Qushta be-Emtzaʿitah shel ha-Meʾah ha-Tet Zayin: Hakhameyhah ha-Sefardim ve-ha-Romaniotim', *Michael* 9 (1985), 27–54. See the tombstone of Sultanah, widow of the leader of Israel Yosef ʿUziel (d. 3 October 1710) (Diaspora Research Institute, *Documentation Project of Turkish Jewry*, computerised database (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University), *Hasköy cemetery*, tombstone 120, lot no. 4–12, film no. 56A (12 January, 1988)).

29 Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century*, vol. I, ch. 3.

30 Rozen, 'Tzarfat ve-Yhudei Mitzrayim', pp. 429–41; Rozen, 'La Vie économique', pp. 363–565, notes 558–61.

the imperial administration. The Ariyeh family, which monopolised the iron mining and marketing trade from 1772 onwards, were also leaders of the Jewish community of Samokov.[31]

Despite a certain turnover in the seventeenth-century community leadership, leaders of the community were not elected democratically, but rather through a process of co-optation. Participation in political life was restricted to taxpayers only, and those in the highest tax bracket wielded the greatest political clout.

Throughout the seventeenth century the Jewish communities in large cities such as Istanbul and Salonika underwent changes that reached their apex after 1700. One of the most important changes took place at the organisational level. As will be recalled, these large communities had evolved in the sixteenth century from separate congregations originating in Christian Europe or the Balkans. The members of these congregations lived near their synagogues, which served both as social and religious centres. They obeyed their leaders, venerated their rabbis, studied Torah under them, suffered their admonishments, educated their children together and supported each other in times of trouble.

Although this congregational structure helped the expellees and refugees overcome the trauma of displacement, it was very costly.[32] As long as the empire maintained its conquering momentum, Jews also enjoyed the economic benefits of the plunder and loot that flowed into its centres. However, the structural crisis of the late sixteenth and the monetary crisis of the seventeenth century led the Jews of the empire to rationalise their organisational culture. This process had already begun in the sixteenth century, when Ottoman taxation policy forced them to close ranks in order to obtain better terms from the authorities and to decide how best to distribute the tax burden among themselves. The congregations of the large communities were also forced to cooperate in social, welfare and educational matters. Throughout the empire, education had been the community's greatest expense, and since not everyone profited from it, it had always been a bone of contention. Educating poor children, who far outnumbered the rich, had always been a big headache for the wealthy, who financed the community's institutions. They were caught between the wish to cut back on expenditure and the recognition

31 Hayim Keshales, *Qorot Yehudei Bulgariah*, vol. I (Tel Aviv, 1971), pp. 411–12; Gavriel Arie, *Généalogie de la famille Arie de 1766 à 1929* (n.p., 1929).
32 Rozen, *History*, pp. 63–87; Minna Rozen, 'Individual and Community in Jewish Society of the Ottoman Empire: Salonika in the Sixteenth Century', in Levy (ed.), *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 215–74.

that, throughout history, education had always been the key to Jewish survival. Different localities adopted different solutions to this problem. In the early sixteenth century, the sultan (probably Selim I) had awarded the Jews of Istanbul a plot of land in the Eminönü area, where today's Yeni Cami is located, to serve the welfare needs of the city's Jewish population. A three-storey building was erected on this plot, to accommodate the capital's poor, who were supported by the various congregations. The third storey housed the Jewish school. We see from the above that, even if each congregation supported its own poor, they joined forces when the situation called for it.[33] The trend toward organisational centralisation, however, was precipitated to an even greater extent by the fires that were a common occurrence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[34] These fires caused Jews from the same background, who were members of the same congregation, to move to other neighbourhoods and congregations, where people spoke a different language and had a different historical memory. After the Yeni Cami was built on the charred remains of the Jewish neighbourhood, which was burnt down in 1660, the Jews of the old quarter, who had lived there since the beginning of Ottoman rule and even before, were forced to move to Hasköy and Balat.[35] With this move, it no longer made sense to maintain separate congregations, and with the decline in resources, the abolition of the congregational rabbinical courts and their replacement by district courts and tribunals was only a question of time. By the late seventeenth century, the organisational pattern of the Jewish community in the city had crystallised. The autonomous congregations with their separate rabbinical courts were replaced by three large district rabbinical courts, in Hasköy, Balat and Galata, governed by a supreme court presided over by the *rav ha-kolel*, elected from among the *dayanim* (judges) of the three quarters. This rabbinical court operated various tribunals, such as the *dayanei ha-hazaqot* (fixed assets tribunal),[36] the anti-vice tribunal which deliberated matters of morality – both of which dated back to the early sixteenth century[37] – and

33 Rabbi Betzalel Ashkenazi, *Responsa* (Venice, 1595) (in Hebrew), sec. 13:48b; Rabbi Eliyahu Ibn Hayim, *Responsa* (Venice, 1610), sec. 84:128a–130b.

34 Minna Rozen and Benjamin Arbel, 'Great Fire in the Metropolis: The Case of the Istanbul Conflagration of 1569 and its Description by Marcantonio Barbaro', in *Mamluk and Ottoman Societies: Studies in Honour of Michael Winter*, ed. David Wasserstein and Ami Ayalon (New York, 2005), pp. 134–63.

35 Uriel Heyd, 'The Jewish Communities of Istanbul in the Seventeenth Century', *Oriens* 6 (1953), 299–314; Minna Rozen, 'Public Space and Private Space among the Jews of Istanbul during the Sixteenth through Seventeenth Centuries', *Turcica* 30 (1998), 331–46.

36 Rozen, *History*, pp. 79, 86.

37 Le'ah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'The Va'ad Berurei Averot as a Judicial Body in Christian Spain and the Ottoman Empire', *Jewish Law Association Studies* 11 (2000), 117–40.

the *beit din isur ve-heter* (rituals tribunal, on matters relating to forbidden foods, personal status and related issues), which evolved in the seventeenth century.[38] A similar process took place in Salonika where, in the early sixteenth century, the Jews built the Talmud Torah ha-Gadol, a complex that included a hospital, a mental asylum, a soup kitchen, a hostel, a wool factory cum warehouse and a school. Unlike its Istanbul counterpart, Salonika's Jewish school catered to all the city's Jewish children, rich and poor alike. Poor children studied there for free, while the children of the wealthy paid fees. The poor children also received a set of clothes each year, paid for by the community. The school taught Torah studies to children aged four to thirteen. The most gifted students graduated to a higher yeshiva, located in the same compound, and went on to become rabbis, *dayanim* and teachers at the same institution, and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. This complex, which continued to function for several centuries, was remarkable not only as a social enterprise, but also as the antithesis of what the congregations of Salonika had striven to achieve throughout the sixteenth century – the preservation of their financial and judicial autonomy and sovereignty.[39] The existence of the Talmud Torah ha-Gadol led to the establishment of a supreme rabbinical court for the Salonika community, in which the rabbis of the various congregations served in turn, presided over by the *rav ha-kolel*, a rabbi chosen from among their ranks. The economic decline of Salonika in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries led to the strengthening of the communal judicial institutions at the expense of the congregational ones. All that remained of the congregations was the neighbourhood synagogue, which served as a place of worship and also as a meeting place for debating topics of public interest, and as a house of study for the paterfamilias after working hours, although as we have seen, the level of religious studies declined during this period. The centralisation of the judicial system was accompanied by the centralisation of the administrative-fiscal system, with the focus passing from the congregation to the community. The leaders of the community, who were also its wealthiest members, were formally elected by the direct taxpayers, and formed an executive body in its own

38 Le'ah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Pinqas Memunei Isur ve-Heter be-Qushta Min ha-Me'ot ha-Yod-Het ve-ha-Yod-Tet', *'Alei Sefer* 14 (1987), 99–124; Le'ah Borenstein-Makovetsky, *Pinqas Beit Din Isur ve-Heter shel Qehilat Istanbul 1710–1904* (Lod, 1999); Minna Rozen, 'A Pound of Flesh: Meat Trade and Social Conflict among the Jews of Istanbul, 1700–1923', in *Crafts and Craftsmen in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Randi Deguilhem (London, 2005), pp. 195–234.
39 Y. R. Molkho and A. S. Amarilio, 'Yalqut Haskamot Saloniqi be-Ladino', *Sefunot* 2 (1958), 27–60; A. S. Amarilio, 'Hevrat Talmud Torah ha-Gadol be-Saloniqi', *Sefunot* 13 (*The Book of Greek Jewry* 3) (1971–8), 273–308.

right. In reality, as noted above, these leaders were usually co-opted whenever there were openings due to death, resignation or emigration.

In the course of the eighteenth century, the rich members of the large communities (Izmir, Salonika and Istanbul) attempted to reduce direct, progressive taxation, and raise the indirect taxation imposed on food products that required a ritual seal, such as wine, cheese, matzah and, above all, meat. Their success meant that the financial burden for public services to the community was transferred from the rich to the poor, who henceforth had to pay taxes from the first *kuruş* they spent. In order to maintain this situation, the plutocrats had to buttress their leadership positions and obfuscate the financial affairs of the community as far as possible. By equating the communal order with the imperial order of things, they implied that acceptance of the community leadership was tantamount to acceptance of the sultan's authority.[40] The Francos, for their part, tried to avoid paying communal taxes, for political as well as financial reasons. For them, paying taxes symbolised their acceptance of the sultan's rule over them, and placed them in the same category as all other non-Muslim subjects, something they wished at all costs to avoid. They therefore preferred charity to paying taxes. The struggle between them and the local community usually ended in monetary settlements that satisfied both parties. In Izmir, however, this struggle continued well into the nineteenth century, and tore apart the community's social fabric.[41]

The Jews of the empire and the economy

At the time of arrival the Jewish immigrants were considered an economic asset to the empire, because of the new skills they brought with them as well as their economic ties with their countries of origin. Consequently, throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Iberian expellees and refugees integrated easily into the empire's economic life. They practised a wide range of trades and were active in all branches of commerce, including tax-farming and government monopolies.[42] The decline of immigration in the mid-sixteenth

40 Rozen, 'A Pound of Flesh', pp. 218–24; Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century*, vol. I, ch. 5.
41 Rozen, 'Strangers in a Strange Land', pp. 146–54; Rozen, 'Collective Memories and Group Boundaries'; Jacob Barnai, 'Rabbi Hayim Benvenisti ve-Rabbanut Izmir bi-Zmano', in *Yemei ha-Sahar*, ed. Minna Rozen (Tel Aviv, 1996), pp. 151–91; Jacob Barnai, 'The Development of Community Organizational Structures: The Case of Izmir', in *Jews, Turks, Ottomans*, ed. Avigdor Levy (Syracuse, 2002), pp. 35–51. Avner Levi, 'Shav'at 'Aniyim: Social Cleavage, Class War and Leadership in the Sephardi Community: The Case of Izmir, 1847', in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry, Community and Leadership*, ed. A. Rodrigue (Bloomington, 1992), pp. 183–202.
42 Rozen, *History*, pp. 222–43.

century, the severance of ties with the lands of Christendom and the integration of the immigrants' offspring into the socio-economic fabric of the Ottoman Empire did away with the relative advantage enjoyed by the first generations of immigrants. International trade, the forte of the sixteenth-century immigrants, was taken over by Greeks and Armenians, as Jewish entrepreneurs favoured business ties with the sultan's administration rather than private initiatives in areas that had become foreign to them. They preferred to be tax-farmers, hold government monopolies or handle the affairs of the ruling class. For the eighteenth-century Jewish *homo economicus*, the ideal was to be engaged in a safe local trade, preferably one that involved ties with the Ottoman authorities.[43] Implicit in this ideal was the importance of stability and preservation of the status quo. Any divergence from the status quo or innovation was considered forbidden and dangerous territory. Even an entrepreneur such as Sasson Hai of the house of Qastiel, who spent his whole life travelling to India and South-east Asia on business, marketing gems and pearls on an international scale, felt that he had wasted his life, since his quest for wealth had estranged him from home and heritage and the purpose of life, which was to study Torah and raise children to do likewise.[44]

Most Jews of the empire during this period worked as petty tradesmen and artisans, hired workers or retailers. Tax- and customs-farming was reserved for the economic elite, and the latter had to compete fiercely with Armenians and Greeks.[45] The only Jews who engaged in commerce in a big way were the Francos, who controlled a large part of the empire's trade with Italy and, in the mid-eighteenth century, also began trading with Basra, which served as a passageway to India and Iran.[46]

Another aspect of the economic life of this period was the emphasis on professional specialisation, as the guilds of each religion tried to preserve their monopoly over certain professions. While the structure and work methods of the Jewish guilds largely resembled those of their Muslim counterparts, there was very little cooperation between the guilds belonging to different groups.[47]

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43 Rozen, 'La vie économique', pp. 324–43.   44 Tzevi, '"Mas'ot"', pp. 436, 451, 470–1.

45 Daniel Goffman, 'Jews in Early Modern Ottoman Commerce', in *Jews, Turks, Ottomans*, ed. Avigdor Levy (Syracuse, 2002), pp. 15–34.

46 Rozen, 'Strangers in a Strange Land', pp. 147–53 and notes.

47 Minna Rozen, 'Boatmen and Fishermen's Guilds in Nineteenth Century Istanbul', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 15 (2000), 72–93; Yaron Ben Na'eh, 'Bein Gildah le-Qahal: ha-Havarot ha-Yehudiot ba-Imperiyah ha-'Ot'manit ba-Me'ot ha-Yod Zayin – ha-Yod Het', *Zion* 63 (1998), 277–318; Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 47–51.

In conclusion, the economic situation of the Jews of the empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was characterised by ethnic introversion, fear of initiative and innovation, and the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.

The family life of the Ottoman Jews

The Ottoman Jewish family adopted many of the values of the Ottoman Muslim family. This process of assimilation was neither hard nor traumatic, since to a certain degree the family values of the two societies had coincided from the beginning; thus assimilation largely involved a shedding of customs adopted in medieval Spain or Italy. The leitmotif of the family in both Muslim and Jewish cultures, since time immemorial, was the preservation of the name and memory of the male branch of the family. In Jewish culture, this theme gave rise to a body of inheritance laws favouring boys over girls, brothers over sisters, and even the father's family over that of the mother. A Jewish woman who turned to a *shari'a* judge was likely to get a better deal there than in the rabbinical courts. Another consequence was the preference – particularly on the part of males – for marrying relatives.

An interesting expression of the Jews' assimilation of Ottoman norms of behaviour was the readiness with which the Spanish immigrants discarded the amendments to the Jewish law of succession made in Christian Europe, regarding a husband's right to inherit his wife's estate if she died childless (the Tulitulah (Toldedo) Regulation). Earlier customs were rapidly re-adopted. The Romaniot Jews, on the other hand, influenced by Greek society, continued upholding their own version of the Toledo Regulation. The impact of local customs was also visible in the imposition of restrictions on a woman's freedom of movement and contact with members of the opposite sex, a matter concerning which the Spanish expellees had been fairly liberal. These restrictions were the norm in Ottoman high society, and fitted in with the Jewish ideal of 'All glorious is the king's daughter within the palace'. The Jewish middle- and upper-class home, like its Muslim counterpart, was divided into the *haremlik*, where the family lived and which was barred to male visitors other than relatives, and the *selamlık*, where male visitors were received, and which was barred to women at such times. A 'self-respecting' Jewish woman, like her Muslim counterpart, went out only for family visits, ritual immersion or pilgrimage to a holy site. Even then she was accompanied by attendants

or male relatives. Ordinary women, on the other hand, did not enjoy such 'privileges'.[48]

There thus developed a huge divide between the perception of the family by the early expellees and that which had become dominant after two-and-a-half centuries of Jewish existence in the Ottoman Empire. This is apparent from the criticism the rabbis of the empire levelled at the Francos settling in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the seventeenth century. Two customs that elicited particularly harsh reactions were the custom of Franco women walking alone in public, and the habit of Francos to go out in the company of their wives and daughters.

In certain areas change was unnecessary. In Jewish as well as in Muslim society, for example, juvenile marriage was the norm, particularly for women: twelve was considered an ideal age for girls to get married. This was no doubt also a function of the short lifespan characteristic of that period.

In conclusion

From all perspectives the 1600s and 1700s were the most 'Ottoman' centuries for the Jews of the empire. In this period the integration of the Jewish immigrant society into the ambient culture reached its height, and most of the cords that tied it to Christian Europe were severed. Virtually the only remaining link was the Judaeo-Spanish language and its literary tradition. Along with religion, language continued to serve as a dividing line between the Jews and the ruling Muslim society, which the former otherwise looked up to and wished to emulate. Yet it was the Jewish community's success in integrating within the Ottoman order that diminished its ability to contribute something new to the ambient society. The loss of this innovative potential was one of the main reasons for the deterioration of the Jewish community's political status on the eve of the Tanzimat.

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48 Rozen, *History*, pp. 105–91; Ruth Lamdan, *A Separate People: Jewish Women in Palestine Syria and Egypt in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 2000); Le'ah Borenstein Makovetsky, 'Taqanot Qushta bi-Yrushah u-Vituyan be-Hayei ha-Hevrah ba-Tequfah ha-'Ot'manit', in *Hevrah ve-Qhilah: Mi-Divrei ha-Qongres ha-Bein Le'umi ha-Sheni le-Heqer Moreshet Yahadut Sefarad ve-ha-Mizrah*, ed. A. Haim (Jerusalem, 1991), pp. 3–24; Le'ah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Nisuin ve-Gerushin ba-Hevrah ha-Yehudit be-Istanbul ba-Me'ot ha-Shemoneh-'Esreh ve-ha-Tesh'a 'Esreh', *Michael* 14 (1997), 139–69; Le'ah Borenstein-Makovetsky, 'Ha-Mishpahah ha-Yehudit be-Istanbul ba-Me'ot ha-Shemoneh-'Esreh ve-ha-Tesh'a-'Esreh ki-Yhidah Kalkalit', in *Eros, Erusin ve-Isurim: Miniyut u-Mishpahah ba-Historiyah*, ed. Israel Bartal and Yesha'ayahu Gafni (Jerusalem, 1998), pp. 305–33.

Christians in a changing world

BRUCE MASTERS

Christians constituted a significant minority of the population of the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although their actual numbers is a matter of scholarly speculation.[1] The obscurity in the historical record reflects the deterioration in the regularity and accuracy of the registration of individual adult non-Muslim males for taxation (*cizye*) from the practice of the previous century when the central government was in a better position to maintain its authority and to count its subjects.[2] Nevertheless, we can be reasonably sure that Christians were in the majority in the European provinces, with the exception of some Albanian *kaza*s. They were also clearly in the minority in Anatolia and the Arab provinces, even if they were present in most cities and regions, and were perhaps the actual majority in mountainous regions such as Mount Lebanon, Sasun and the Tur Abdin, which had long served as places of refuge. It was only in the sultan's possessions in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa that they were completely absent.

Most Christians in those two centuries were either peasants or numbered among the urban poor. As such, the rhythm of their lives differed little from that of their ancestors of a century before. Among the elites of the various Christian communities, however, significant changes were occurring. In the seventeenth

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1 Youssef Courbage and Philip Fargues, *Christians and Jews under Islam*, trans. Judy Mabro (London, 1997), pp. 99–109; Oded Peri, *Christianity under Islam in Jerusalem: The Question of the Holy Sites in Early Ottoman Times* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 10–24; Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 53–60.

2 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, 'Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'empire ottoman aux XVe et XVIe siècles', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1 (1957), 9–36, at p. 20; Charles Issawi, 'Comment on Professor Barkan's Estimate of the Population of the Ottoman Empire, 1520–1530', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1 (1957), 329–31; Dennis Hupchick, *The Bulgarians in the Seventeenth Century: Slavic Orthodox Society and Culture under Ottoman Rule* (Jefferson, 1993), pp. 13–18; Ronald C. Jennings, 'Urban Population in Anatolia in the Sixteenth Century: A Study of Kayseri, Karaman, Amasya, Trabzon, and Erzurum', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7 (1976), 21–57.

century, the fortunes of Christian merchants and bankers were on the rise in the capital and in many of the provincial centres, often at the expense of Ottoman Jews. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Christian merchants had come to dominate the export trade of the empire in cooperation, or at times in competition, with the western European trading companies.[3] Furthermore, Western and Western-influenced education was increasingly an option for the children of the Christian elites, whether abroad or at home in schools first established by Roman Catholic missionaries and, increasingly as the eighteenth century progressed, in academies funded by wealthy merchants who sought secular rather than spiritual results.[4]

Most importantly, these two centuries witnessed the intense political struggle that created the *millet*s wherein religious identity for many of the empire's Christians became contested and was ultimately rearticulated. All three trends were interrelated and contributed to an emerging power struggle through which the Christian elites in the capital sought to extend their hegemony over their co-religionists in the provinces while local elites sought to resist the pull of the centre.[5] Istanbul's Greek Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic Christians had succeeded in their ambitions by the middle of the eighteenth century with the definitive establishment of the Armenian and Greek Orthodox *millet*s, backed by the sultan's writ. Their victory had, however, only accentuated the grievances of the Christian laity in the empire's provincial centres, and these would re-emerge in the nineteenth century, recast in the rhetoric of nationalism.

With the establishment of the *millet*s, the Christians of the empire were recognised by the Ottoman bureaucracy as existing in a social hierarchy governed either by the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical patriarch from his see in the Phanar/Fener district of the capital or by the Apostolic Armenian patriarch of Istanbul, housed in Kum Kapı. The Christians of the Asian and African provinces who were neither Orthodox nor Armenians – Copts, Jacobites, Maronites and Nestorians – were officially placed under the political, if not spiritual, direction of the Armenian patriarch although that authority was

3 Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 83–91, 170–82.

4 Richard Clogg, 'The Greek Mercantile Bourgeoisie: "Progressive" or "Revolutionary"?', in *Balkan Society in the Age of Greek Independence*, ed. Richard Clogg (London, 1981), pp. 85–110.

5 Hagop Barsoumian, 'The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian *Millet* (1750–1850)', in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols., ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York and London, 1982), vol. I, pp. 171–84.

typically exercised only in the defence of traditionalist clergy against Catholic sympathisers. Although the term *millet* was ultimately derived from the Arabic *milla*, 'nation', the *millet*s were configured to be religious communities, not nations in the modern sense. But the ordering of the non-Muslims of the empire into vertically segmented social groups contained the beginnings of a transformation; a religiously based identity changed into a national one. In the two *millet*s, religious hegemony would also be invoked in the eighteenth century to impose linguistic conformity to the tongue of the Holy Mother Church, whether it was Greek or Armenian. The *millet*s had, therefore, both a cultural and a political function, in addition to their more transparent spiritual role.[6] Each was headed by a cleric who was appointed by the sultan from a list of names submitted by the church leadership; this dignitary would reside in Istanbul. The patriarchs were, however, largely free to order the affairs of their respective communities as long as they remained loyal to the sultan. In return, the *millet*'s leadership could, in theory, rely on the civil representatives of the sultan, i.e. governors and kadis, to implement its will over an errant flock in the provinces.[7]

The emergence of the *millet* system lay in the ambitions of the Orthodox Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople to secure his authority over all the Orthodox faithful in the sultan's realm, called simply, if somewhat ambiguously, the *Rum* in Ottoman Turkish. By a tradition dating to Constantine the Great, all Christians in what had been the Eastern Roman Empire were under the spiritual stewardship of the church in Constantinople, represented by the Ecumenical patriarch. The Arab conquests of the seventh century had greatly reduced Constantinople's influence in the other Orthodox patriarchal sees – Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria – but did not eliminate it. That tenuous connection was, however, severed in the Mamluk period when synods in Constantinople appointed nominal patriarchs for the 'lost' sees, but these rarely visited the places they represented in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The exception to this rule was Jerusalem, a city that figured too prominently in Orthodoxy's spiritual geography to be abandoned to home rule.[8] In the absence of patriarchal supervision, Orthodox Christians outside the Byzantine Empire

6 Victor Roudometof, 'From *Rum Millet* to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453–1821', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 16 (1998), 11–48.

7 Masters, *Christians and Jews*, pp. 61–5.

8 P. J. Vatikiotis, 'The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism', *Middle Eastern Studies* 30 (1994), 916–29; Peri, *Christianity under Islam*, pp. 98–9.

developed their own traditions for the selection of their church leaders who, unsurprisingly, were usually local in origin. Ironically, the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople and the subsequent conquests of Syria, Egypt, Cyprus and Crete created a new geo-political reality wherein most of the Orthodox faithful in the Mediterranean basin were once again the subjects of the same political ruler. This provided the opportunity for the church in the sultan's newly proclaimed capital to reassert its authority over its distant flock.

Partisans of the centralisation of church authority in the see of Constantinople claimed in the eighteenth century that they were simply returning to a precedent long established by Mehmed II (the Conqueror), if not by Constantine himself. There is, however, little historical evidence to support this claim.[9] Theoleptos, patriarch of Constantinople, informed Sultan Selim I in 1519 that his grandfather Mehmed the Conqueror had granted to Gennadios Scholarios the right to maintain churches in the newly constituted capital of the Ottoman Empire and the spiritual stewardship of all of his Orthodox subjects. This seems to be the earliest documented invocation of the origin myth of the *millet* system. But Theoleptos was unable to present a *firman* confirming his claim, saying that there had once been one, but that it had been destroyed in a fire. He did, however, present three aged janissaries who supported his assertion with their oaths.[10] In 945/1538–9, an unnamed patriarch repeated the claim. On that occasion, two Muslims gave supporting testimony, saying that they had been present when Fatih Sultan Mehmed had granted those rights to the 'monk' Gennadios. Perhaps sensing the implausibility of their testimony, the writer of the question submitted to the *şeyhülislam*, Ebu's-suûd Efendi, added that one witness was 130 years old and the other 116.[11] Although in both cases the urgency for advancing the claim was to forestall the conversion of Orthodox churches in Istanbul to mosques, the invocation of a tradition dating back to 'the time of the conquest' would underpin the debate over the legitimacy of the *millet* system and its prerogatives. Undoubtedly inspired by the Greek appeal to the legitimacy of the past, Armenian loyalists in Istanbul advanced the claim in the eighteenth century that Mehmed the Conqueror had bestowed authority over all the Armenian faithful on Bishop Yuvakim

9 Benjamin Braude, 'Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System', *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols., ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York and London, 1982), vol. I, pp. 69–88.

10 Theodore Papadopoullos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination* (Brussels, 1952), pp. 4–5.

11 M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislâm Ebussuûd Efendi fetvaları ışığında 16. asır Türk hayatı* (Istanbul, 1972), p. 104.

in Bursa before the conquest of Istanbul, establishing a precedence over the Orthodox in the antiquity of their myth of origin.[12]

If Mehmed II had indeed thought to centralise the spiritual lives of his Christian subjects under one authority, his successors in the sixteenth century gave little thought as to whom their Christian subjects should hold their spiritual allegiance as long as their temporal allegiance was to themselves. That they did not always favour the Ecumenical patriarch is illustrated by the conversion of the formerly autocephalous metropolitan see of Peć to an independent patriarchate in 1557. This came at the request of Sokollu Mehmed Paşa and it was his brother, Makerije, who was elevated to the post. By creating a wholly Slavic church hierarchy, Sultan Süleyman I undoubtedly calculated that a Slav Orthodox patriarch friendly to the House of Osman would help secure the Balkans at a time when the Holy League sought to wrest the region from the empire.[13] With a similar concession to political advantage over religious orthodoxy, Ottoman officials often intervened at the request of the merchant princes of Dubrovnik to protect Roman Catholic clergy who were seeking to proselytise Orthodox Christians in the Balkans in the seventeenth century.[14]

The poaching of the Orthodox faithful by Catholic missionaries led the patriarchs in Istanbul to seek a broader role in the empire at large, a process that initiated the struggle to establish the *millet*s. In the sixteenth century, the Orthodox patriarchs of Constantinople had been open to contact with Latin Catholics in the capital,[15] but attitudes changed as the number of Catholic clergy in the empire increased and their actions became more aggressive. As Ottoman law prohibited their mission to the empire's Muslims, the missionaries concentrated their efforts on wooing the allegiance of local Christians from patriarch to pope. Following the example of Latin missionaries already at work in the Polish–Ukrainian borderlands among the Orthodox faithful, Catholic priests and friars created what came to be known as 'Uniate' churches, i.e. in communion with Rome.

In 1627 as an opening salvo in the defence of Orthodoxy, Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris gave his blessing to the establishment of the first Greek-language

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12 Kevork Bardakjian, 'The Rise of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople', in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols., ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York, 1982), vol. I, pp. 89–100.

13 George Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology since 1453* (Belmont, 1976), p. 251.

14 Daniel Goffman, 'Ottoman *Millets* in the Early Seventeenth Century', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 11 (1994), 133–58, at pp. 144–6.

15 Charles Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453–1923* (London, 1983), p. 29.

printing-press in Istanbul. The press began to print anti-Catholic polemics, a development that angered the French, who convinced the Ottoman authorities to dismantle the printing-press the following year.[16] Throughout the next two decades, the French intervened in the politics of the patriarchate of Constantinople, trying to place men sympathetic to the Catholic cause in the see. Similar machinations occurred throughout the century in the Orthodox see of Antioch, housed in Damascus, and that of the Armenian catholicos of Sis, located after 1601 in Aleppo.[17] However, these intrigues only inspired a newly galvanised Orthodox clergy to seek to expand the prerogatives of the patriarchate.

The vacillating attitudes of the sultans toward Catholic missionaries operating in their realm reflected the ambivalence of Islamic law that held that doctrinal differences among Christians were of no concern to Muslims. That indifference evaporated in 1695, however, after the Venetians attempted to seize the island of Chios. The local Catholics collaborated with the invaders, giving the Ecumenical patriarch the proof he needed that Catholicism made for disloyal subjects.[18] From then until 1830, when French pressure led Sultan Mahmud II to recognise the Armenian Catholic *millet*, the sultans consistently sided with the Ecumenical patriarch and his ally the Apostolic Armenian patriarch against the attempts by Catholic clergy to win over the loyalty of the empire's Christians to the pope.

Despite the shift in the sultans' attitudes towards them, Catholic missionaries continued to operate under French protection and increasingly local clergy, trained in Rome, were able to preserve and propagate the Catholic mission.[19] The result was schism. By the middle of the eighteenth century, there existed a parallel Catholic hierarchy to that of the traditional clergy in every Eastern-rite church. The rituals changed little, but the new 'Uniate' churches pledged their fealty to the pope in Rome and gained a connection to Catholic Europe. In this way, the Melkite Catholic Church split from the Greek Orthodox in the see of Antioch, the Chaldean Catholic Church grew out of the Nestorians, the Armenian Catholic Church from the Apostolic Church and so on. All of these churches were illegal by the sultans' writ, but local Muslim authorities were often amenable to bribery and the sultans' commands were not universally applied. Pockets of newly minted Catholics flourished in the port cities of

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16 Ibid., pp. 92–3.
17 Masters, *Christians and Jews*, pp. 80–8; Robert Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society: An Interpretation* (Westport, 1970); Bernard Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique* (Rome, 1994).
18 Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, p. 368.   19 Ibid., pp. 405–31.

Palestine and Lebanon, in Aleppo and even on the sultan's doorstep in Istanbul, where Armenian merchants doggedly supported the Catholic cause, often at great expense to their treasure and lives.[20]

In the Balkans outside Bosnia, the Catholics had little long-lasting success in winning the lasting spiritual loyalty of Orthodox Slavs or Greeks.[21] But the Ecumenical patriarchs' fear of the Catholic challenge led them to attempt to centralise the church hierarchy under their control wherever possible. In the case of Crete or Cyprus, this simply meant replacing local clergy with men from the capital. [22] But in the Slav lands, centralisation meant Hellenisation. This was accomplished politically with the abolition of the independent patriarchate of Peć in 1766 and the archbishopric of Ohrid a year later, both of which had nourished Slavonic Orthodox culture. This power grab enhanced the role of the independent Serbian archbishopric at Sremski Karlovci in the Habsburg-ruled Vojvodina. When the patriarchate of Peć was abolished, the patriarch simply moved into the Habsburg lands. From that point on, the ambitions of Serbs to reclaim their church and eventually their nation were nurtured outside the sultan's control.[23] For Orthodox Bulgarians, the centralisation of all church authority in the hands of Greek speakers sparked a revived interest in the history of the Bulgarian kingdom and in the development of a literary Bulgarian language in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Local clergy fostered a parallel awakening of interest in history and the vernacular language in Wallachia among peoples who were yet to become Rumanians in their collective imagination but who had become restive with a Greek-controlled church and economy.

The struggle over the centralisation of church authority in both the Orthodox and the Armenian *millet*s had inadvertently sparked the growth of ethnic consciousness that would emerge as the Romantic nationalisms of the nineteenth century. In the case of the Armenians, it had a unifying effect by providing divine sanction to one literary language, as many who were Armenian in their religious loyalties had long been subsumed into the larger Turkish- or Arabic-speaking linguistic communities among whom they lived. For the Orthodox, it had the opposite effect of splintering a community of the faithful, some of whom preferred literacy in their mother tongues to that of the Mother

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20 Masters, *Christians and Jews*, pp. 80–95; Vartan Artinian, 'The Formation of Catholic and Protestant Millets in the Ottoman Empire', *The Armenian Review* 28 (1975), 3–15.

21 Hupchick, *The Bulgarians*, pp. 74–83.

22 Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, 2000), pp. 191–4.

23 Dennis Hupchick, *The Balkans from Constantinople to Communism* (New York, 2002) pp. 200–1.

Church. Whether in Syria, Bulgaria, Rumania or Serbia, the attempts by the Ecumenical patriarch to consolidate his authority gave rise to a resistance by local clergy who increasingly voiced their opposition in the local vernaculars, unintentionally creating the basis of a national consciousness.

The politics behind the creation of the *millet*s required a great deal of money. The triumph of the Ecumenical patriarch would not have been possible without the financial support of the Orthodox merchants in the capital. These were collectively labelled the Phanariotes, after the district of the city which housed the patriarchate and where many chose to build their homes. The Phanariotes were often descended from Byzantine noble families with strong ties to the Ecumenical patriarch. They supported the upkeep of churches, monasteries and the priesthood, while their relatives filled the ranks of the higher clergy. By the eighteenth century, the Phanariotes controlled much of the wealth and trade of the Ottoman Balkans. Using that wealth, they were able to convince the Ottoman officials that a Orthodox *millet* centred in the capital would stop the erosion of Ottoman authority in the Balkans.[24] Similarly the Uniate movements, where successful, and the monks of the Balkans who were writing national histories and definitive grammars for what would become 'national' languages, were supported by local merchants who resented the idea that they might lose influence in their local churches, the only political institution in which they had any voice.

Orthodoxy won the '*millet* wars'. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Ottoman state stood ready to assist the guardians of 'tradition' against the innovation of Catholicism and the traditions of local autonomy that had emerged in the absence of a centralised Mother Church. That victory had come at a cost, however. The Christian communities of the empire had experienced a struggle that affected not only the elites but ultimately all the laity. Which language to pray in had become an issue of fundamental political importance, and equally political was the question of which authority could claim the ultimate spiritual allegiance of the faithful. Coming to a decision on these matters would ultimately reshape the identities of Ottoman Christians.

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24 Dimitrije Djorjević and Stephen Fischer-Galati, *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition* (New York, 1981), pp. 45–57.

PART V

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MAKING A LIVING

Capitulations and Western trade

EDHEM ELDEM

Western trade in the Ottoman Empire: questions, issues and sources

The issue of Western trade and that of its legal framework, the capitulations, has always been viewed as crucial in the understanding of certain transformations undergone by the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The implicit argument behind these statements is that, in the long run, Western trade and economic presence in the Levant has worked towards the gradual integration of the Ottoman Empire into an economic system that came to be dominated by Western powers. This integration, in turn, has generally been described in rather negative terms, ranging from (Ottoman) passivity to signs of an impending domination of the Ottoman economy by the commercial and industrial supremacy of Europe. In that sense, it is rather striking that most scenarios concerning the evolution of Western trading activity in the eastern Mediterranean basin tend to reinforce the often-criticised vision of decline applied to the Ottoman Empire as a whole and, more particularly, to its military and diplomatic performance against the growing power of Western nations. Political and diplomatic in essence as it may have been, the Eastern Question is inextricably linked to the outcome of over three centuries of commercial interaction between Europe and the Ottomans.

This, one may argue, is even truer of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While the sixteenth century is generally associated with the emergence of the Ottoman capitulatory regime and the granting of the first commercial 'privileges' to the French and the English, the implicit understanding is that these treaties were granted out of a combination of a self-assured magnanimity and a desire to forge durable political alliances with certain Western powers. However, from the seventeenth century on, this image of Ottoman superiority and autonomy is gradually tempered by the sense of an increasingly aggressive encroachment of European trading activity on the Ottoman domains.

The development of the already existing French, Venetian and Genoese trade, the rising competition of the English on the same turf and the appearance of yet another maritime power – the Dutch Provinces – all confirmed the notion that the Western 'miracle' – of which the 'rise of the Atlantic economies' was one of the most blatant signs – was about to change the *rapports de force* that had until then characterised the economic and commercial relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

In that sense, the eighteenth century could only be the logical consequence of this gradual transformation. A confirmation of the preceding trend, it signalled the predominance of Western nations – mostly the French – over Levantine trade and prefigured the watershed of the nineteenth century and the total domination of Ottoman markets by Westerners. The transformation undergone by Western trade was both quantitative and qualitative: not only had it grown in volume, it had also acquired a typical pattern of unequal exchange, with European manufactured goods flooding an Ottoman economy which was forced into the subservient role of feeding the growing Western industries with raw materials. In three centuries of relentless effort, Western traders had been able to subdue the Ottoman economy, together with its principal actors, and to prepare the ground for the violent onslaught of European capitalist expansion in the last century of the empire's existence.

Needless to say, this rather mechanistic scenario has long been criticised for its tendency to oversimplify what was in fact a much more complex process – from the broader perspective of relative underdevelopment – and a much more marginal and therefore less determining one – within the narrower context of commercial domination. Yet, despite the obvious shortcomings of this model, one has to account for the undeniable fact that the terms under which trade was conducted between Europe and the Ottoman Empire evolved from a situation of equality or even of relative Ottoman superiority to one that is best described as an effective domination or influence of Western economic actors over Ottoman markets, production and consumption.

This raises the question of the coexistence of the somewhat paradoxical notion of a marginal position and influence of Western trade in the empire eventually developing into a full-fledged domination of a quasi-colonial type. Combining these two notions requires, therefore, allowing for a non-linear and complex chain of causality linking the rather mild level of penetration that characterised the Levant trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the dramatically violent kind of unequal exchange witnessed throughout the Tanzimat period. The major explanation that can be advanced in the direction of this non-linear plot is the fact that the situation that seems to have

crystallised after the 1840s was not necessarily the outcome of a smooth and cumulative process of a purely commercial and economic nature. On the one hand, one could easily argue that much of the development of Western trade during the period went hand in hand with diplomatic and political processes whose incidence on trade was in no way negligible. Supported by the growing power of their respective states, relayed by the embassies in Istanbul and a wide consular network in the provinces, Western traders were thus able to compensate for their potential weakness and limitations on the local market through the use of extra-economic means of negotiation and, eventually, persuasion. On the other, one should keep in mind that, even from a strictly economic perspective, it is rather likely that what prepared the ground for the quasi-colonial situation of the nineteenth century took place at the very end of the period under study, namely during the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth. In other words, to assume a cumulative and gradual effect of penetration from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth is quite akin to building a scenario that would describe an undifferentiated continuum of economic development for western Europe during the same period. If the initial phase of the Industrial Revolution, say from the 1760s to the 1820s, resulted in the drastic transformation of the most developed areas of the Western world, to the point of relegating the preceding period to the status of an economic *ancien régime*, one should all the better be able to accept the idea that most of the preconditions of 'peripheralisation' of the Ottoman economy were not to emerge before the maturation of an industrial Europe with an actual capacity to dominate the Ottoman markets.

The aim is not to negate the existence of a gradual pattern of domination inherent to the widening and development of Western trade in the eastern Mediterranean, but rather to put this process into a wider, and possibly more realistic, perspective that would allow for a combination of several factors in explaining its complexity. At any rate, for the period under study, the argument that Western trade was much more marginal than was previously thought, both in terms of its volume compared to Eastern and domestic trade and, consequently, in terms of its possible influence on Ottoman markets and production, has gained wide recognition throughout the field. Apart from bringing about a fruitful discussion about the alternative dynamics and timing of later integration on unequal terms, this argument has been characterised by a notable absence of rigorous and convincing quantitative data to support it. Indeed, the discovery of the 'marginality' of European trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although aimed at a quantitative countering of the alleged dynamics of domination during the period, has relied on a surprisingly

thin layer of evidence. Based on hunches, on certain qualitative indications and on an evident amount of common sense, this 'revisionist' assessment of Western trade is still begging for extensive research into the 'other' – and now admittedly more important – trades of the empire, namely the domestic and Eastern trades.

Interestingly, the same obstacles that make it difficult to assess the magnitude of non-Western trade in the region were originally at the basis of the distortion that tended to overemphasise and exaggerate the importance of the Levant trade in the economic downfall of the Ottoman Empire. These obstacles are, generally speaking, directly related to the nature of the sources available and, as its logical consequence, to the historiographical tradition that has developed around the exploitation of these sources. Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of this area of investigation is that it has almost systematically developed thanks to the use of Western sources, and in a direction that could often be qualified as an extension of Western economic history. In other words, a number of European sources – produced by state administrations, chambers of commerce, diplomatic and consular missions and agents, and occasional traders – have helped constitute a rich historical literature of European presence and trade in the Levant with little, if any, concern for, or insight into, Ottoman dynamics and responses to the process. To illustrate this trend, one need only look at the wealth of research conducted on French commercial involvement in the region during the seventeenth and, most particularly, the eighteenth centuries: most of this literature treats French trade as an extension of the 'metropolitan' economy, with a minimal amount of Ottoman documentation to use against – or in complement with – the overwhelming mass of reports, statistical tables and correspondence emanating from the Quai d'Orsay archives or from the archives of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce. With an Ottoman Empire defined more as a geographical area than a complex socio-economic entity, the chances of grasping the 'local' dynamics are evidently low, assuming, of course, that such an intention should have ever existed. Ottoman dynamics are thus often relegated to a rather superficial and stereotypical account, generally mediated by contemporary Western observers, or, in the best case, by a genuine effort at deducing or reconstituting them from patchy evidence from the Ottoman archives.

The preceding paragraph is not a diatribe against Eurocentrism or some economic variant of Orientalism. True, there is little doubt that some authors of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century had little concern or curiosity for things Ottoman, beyond the somewhat exotic stage they provided for a staunchly Western narrative of adventure and success. However, apart from

the fact that it is, after all, perfectly legitimate to treat Western trade in the Ottoman Empire as a European phenomenon and to study it from a Western perspective and within a Western problematic, one can hardly ignore the fact that practically no Ottoman archival material was available at that date for any consistent study of these phenomena. For later periods, this excuse may no longer have been true. Yet one should keep in mind that the harsh reality of the limits and nature of the available documentation can be a serious obstacle to the realisation of a historically balanced and impartial analysis. In this respect, there is a blatant discrepancy between European and Ottoman contemporary sources that can hardly be ignored. On the European side, the most characteristic aspects of the documentation relating to the Levant trade are its concentration in homogeneous and continuous series, its tendency to exhaustiveness and an 'economic' nature derived from the usage of statistics, of serial data, of (relatively) exact units of measurement and categories of classification and, most importantly, of a terminology denoting the adoption of a relatively modern economic logic in the treatment of these data. Last, but not least, European documentation includes an impressive number of private collections of papers, correspondence and reports, which, patchy as they may sometimes be, provide an invaluable insight into the more intimate practice of trade at an individual level, generally not covered by state and institutional archives. The overall outlook of Ottoman sources on the same subject seems diametrically opposed: no concentration, but rather a dispersion throughout a large number of series and sub-series;[1] a general patchiness that makes it impossible most of the time to constitute any consistent series of information or data over a sizeable period of time; a general lack of 'economic consciousness' which is generally replaced by a fiscal(ist) one, often favouring a succinct listing of taxes, dues or customs without entering any of the constitutive details about the amount, quantity, size or value of the objects of the fiscal survey; finally, an almost total absence of private papers, whether in the form of correspondence or of accounting and reports on trading activities. Thus, while European sources – especially for the eighteenth century – will enable researchers to draw continuous statistical tables of the major elements of trade and complement this information with a parallel flow of observations, comments and projections derived from reports and correspondence, Ottoman

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1 With the notable exception of the *ecnebi defterleri* (register books of foreigners), which regroup the answers given by the Porte to petitions and memoranda of foreign envoys: see Suraiya Faroqhi, 'The Venetian Presence in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–30', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 311–44, at pp. 317–18.

sources will require them to deal with a patchwork of imperial edicts, selected entries from court records, occasional surveys of customs activity and notes and memoranda addressed to and by the representatives of foreign powers in the Ottoman lands. Harsh as this statement may sound, it appears that although Western sources may be responsible for a number of biases in the perception of the history of Western trade in the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman sources, on their own, will simply not allow for such a history to be written.

These differences between European and Ottoman documentation have a logic of their own. From the perspective of most European states, the conduct of trade in the Levant was a matter of crucial importance that was managed by either a department of state or some corporate body such as a trading company or chamber of commerce. The concentration of documentation witnessed in the archives therefore only reflects the manner in which this trade was conducted. In similar fashion, the abundance of statistically and economically minded documents has to be understood within the logic of the aggressively mercantilist position of the European states of the time, for whom the tracing of the quantitative evolution of their foreign trade and the use of methods of accounting compatible with the simplistic logic of the balance of trade were top priorities. In the Ottoman case, on the contrary, a dominantly fiscalist view of trade justified the neglect of commercial record keeping, replacing it with the much more useful – from the state's perspective – tracking down of fiscal revenues generated by this trade. Nor could one expect a state with no real mercantilist concerns, or even conceptions, to draw a clear line between different types of trade; from the Ottoman state's perspective, Western trade never deserved any 'special' treatment that would have justified the constitution of a separate bureaucratic entity and of a parallel effort at record-keeping. Diverging state policies regarding trade, different record-keeping traditions, variations in the nature and degree of involvement in, and perception of, economic matters were altogether responsible for major differences in the image produced by the two parties of the same commercial reality, with the Ottoman vision remaining far more sketchy and incomplete than the Western one.

It appears then that the weakest point of Western documentation is not its distortion of the reality it describes, even though some inherent biases may be traced in the ways figures are handled and interpretations are made of the daily practice of commerce. On the contrary, European sources provide an unrivalled and rather accurate vision of Levantine trade during most of the period. However, there is no denying that this documentation is responsible for a major, yet indirect, distortion, due to the illusion it may create of an

exhaustive coverage of commercial activity in the empire. The near perfection of the description these sources give of Western trade in the region has tended to blot out the notion that the trading activity of the empire may have consisted of more than just the exchange of commodities with European traders.

True, an increasing number of studies based on Ottoman documentation have shown, albeit with much less detail and precision than European sources on the Levant trade, the extent to which domestic and Eastern networks of trade by far exceeded the importance of trade with the West. With respect to this particular branch of trade, however, Ottoman sources still remain comparatively silent, providing little more than a broader and more 'local' perspective to an already well-established scenario. This is not to imply that this widening of the scope of study is insignificant or marginal, or that the future exploitation of Ottoman sources – a great quantity of which still remain untapped – will not yield a precious complement of information to a still unbalanced narrative. However, for the moment one may argue that the relative silence of Ottoman sources on the issue is in itself one of the major counter-arguments against an exaggerated and distorted vision of the incidence of the Levant trade on the Ottoman economy. In other words, even if one has to allow for the existence of a different and somewhat less clear perception of this trade from an Ottoman perspective, the dispersion and marginality of local sources on the subject clearly convey the message that what to European cabinets and trading companies was a major issue took, at the Ottoman level, the proportions of a rather small fish in a considerably larger pond.

The early seventeenth century: the scramble for capitulations

One of the most remarkable developments of the end of the sixteenth and of the beginning of the seventeenth centuries was the gradual 'internationalisation' of the Levant trade with the official entry of the English and the Dutch into the eastern Mediterranean. What had until then remained a Mediterranean matter was thus widened to include the two foremost representatives of the rising maritime and trading powers of a changing Europe. Genoa had been the first nation to be granted a capitulation, as early as 1352, followed by Venice in the late 1380s. Throughout the fifteenth century, the capitulatory regime had remained an Italian affair, with successive confirmations of the documents granted to the Genoese and the Venetians, and their eventual extension to the Florentines under Mehmed II (r. 1451–81), and to the Neapolitans under

Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512). The sixteenth century had witnessed the entry onto the Levantine scene of the first 'outsiders' – the French, who, as early as 1517, had obtained the confirmation of the capitulation they had previously obtained from the Mamluk state. The development of a Franco-Ottoman alliance under the reigns of Francis I and Süleyman I had almost led to the issuing of an independent capitulation in 1536; however, this document, long thought to be the first French capitulation, was never ratified, and it was only in 1569 that Claude du Bourg, treasurer of the king and ambassador to the Porte, obtained the first capitulation of eighteen articles granted to the French state. This grant came as a useful confirmation of a de facto establishment of a few French traders and consuls in a handful of Ottoman ports which went back to the 1540s. However, what really triggered the development of French commercial interests was the war with Venice (1570–3) which left a considerable vacuum in trade that could be filled by the newcomers.[2] At about the same time, England, an even more distant 'outsider', was investigating the possibilities of trading directly with the Levant. Indeed, Venice had long served as a relay between the eastern Mediterranean and England, sending its ships laden with oriental goods to English ports until the late 1580s. However, the vicissitudes of the sixteenth century had impeded the Serenissima from fulfilling its role to the full satisfaction of its northern client. By the 1510s, English ships had started to sail in the eastern Mediterranean, calling at ports in Sicily, Crete and Chios. An Englishman by the name of Jenkinson had even ventured into the Ottoman domains in 1553, settling in Aleppo, and succeeding in obtaining, so it seems, equal treatment with Venetian and French traders. Nevertheless, these attempts had remained of a sporadic nature, until two English merchants, Sir Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, obtained a safe conduct for their factor, William Harborne, with the intention of securing capitulatory privileges for English traders. Arriving in Istanbul in 1578, Harborne finally obtained this document in 1580, thus inaugurating the competitive context of Western trade that would characterise the seventeenth century.[3]

Competitive indeed, since from then on, Western European nations, most particularly the French and the English, would literally enter a race for capitulations, trying to secure the most advantageous terms, preferably to the exclusion of their rivals. No sooner had Harborne left the Ottoman capital than the French ambassador obtained, through influence and persuasion, the repeal and cancellation of the English privileges. Harborne did not yield; he

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2 Paul Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1896), pp. xiii–xvi.
3 Mortimer Epstein, *The Early History of the Levant Company* (London, 1908), pp. 1–12.

came back in 1583, armed with credentials from Elizabeth I appointing him ambassador to the Porte, and obtained the renewal of the precious document. Parallel efforts in England had led to the creation of the Turkey Company and of the Venice Company, in 1581 and 1583, respectively. These two monopolistic companies aimed at the exploitation of the Mediterranean trade within the respective domains of the Serenissima and of the Ottoman Empire. Their charters having expired in 1588 and 1589, respectively, they were finally united in January 1592, under the name of the Levant Company. Dealing mostly in the rich currant trade of Patras, Zante and Cephalonia, the company prospered; but as it did so it also attracted the wrath of its opponents, who obtained its dissolution in 1600. It was, however, revived at the very end of 1601, and in 1605 received from James I its first perpetual charter. The document clearly spoke of the relation between the capitulations and the Levant trade: 'especiallye for that those Islands havens Portes creekes and other places of marchandizing have theire peaceable and safe trafique against the Turkes Galleyes by reason of the capitulacion of intercourse holden by us with the Graund Signior and by the residence of our Ambassador within his Domynions'.[4]

The rivalry between the French and the English had by then reached its peak. In 1581, just after he had obtained the cancellation of the English capitulation, the French ambassador, Baron de Germigny, had been granted a new capitulation that confirmed previous privileges, including the precious advantage of forcing other nations to sail under the French flag. The English, however, did not respect this clause, and obtained a renewed capitulation in 1583. In 1597, it was again the turn of the French to negotiate a renewal, with additions such as the right to export previously prohibited commodities such as hides and cotton yarn. However, the sultan had refused this time to force the English and Venetians to sail under the French flag. The only advantage the French were left with was that neither could give their own protection to other ships. In 1601 the English obtained a reduction of customs dues from 5 to 3 per cent. In 1603 the French struck back, finally obtaining the confirmation of their old right to extend their protection to all other nations, even though the English never abided by this obligation. During this first decade of the seventeenth century, the French and English had reached a sort of stalemate that had an undertone of a division of labour. While the former had obtained a number of political privileges, including protection from the Barbary pirates and, most importantly, the protection of pilgrims and settlement of monks in the Holy Land, the latter had obtained a series of commercial advantages

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4 Ibid., pp. 156–7.

which most of their rivals would not be able to match before the end of the century.[5]

It was obvious that the gradual attraction exerted by the Ottoman lands on western Europe would not be complete without the participation of the newest and most enterprising trading nation of the time, the Dutch Provinces. Dutch traders had already been in contact with the Ottoman economy through the Genoese outpost of Chios and, in the north, through the Polish port of Lwów. From the 1570s on, they had started establishing direct contacts with the empire, sailing and residing under the protection of either the French or the English. Following the truce signed with Spain and the birth of the Dutch Provinces, the time had come for the establishment of more permanent relations through a capitulatory agreement. In 1612 Cornelius Haga, ambassador extraordinary, was sent out to Istanbul to negotiate such a capitulation. Despite obvious opposition from the French, English and Venetian ambassadors, Haga was able to achieve his goal. The political expectations of the Porte from a powerful and staunchly anti-Catholic nation of Europe had played an important role in the process. The Dutch capitulation put the traders of this nation on equal footing with their French and English rivals, including the 3 per cent customs rate, which the French and Venetians had still not been able to obtain.[6]

The capitulations: nature and purpose

Within a period of some fifty years, a genuine 'rush' for capitulations had taken place, with no less than eight being granted to the ambassadors and envoys of the three rising economic and political powers of western Europe. The phenomenon was evidently a sign of a growing interest in the region and in the commercial and diplomatic advantages that could be derived from a closer relationship with the Ottoman Empire. In particular, this series of Western attempts at securing privileges and advantages seems to signal the beginning of a long process of integration through which the Ottoman lands would be gradually sucked into the ever-widening network of trade dominated by western Europe. However, one should not be too hasty in equating the granting of capitulations with a proto-colonial process of commercial expansion or, from

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5 Masson, *Histoire du commerce français au XVIIe siècle*, pp. xviii–xxi; Linda T. Darling, 'Capitulations', in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, 4. vols., ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford, 1995), vol. I, pp. 257–60, at p. 258.

6 Halil Inalcik, 'The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300–1600', in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 9–409, at pp. 372–6.

an Ottoman perspective, of gradual subservience. The undeniable fact that the capitulations did eventually develop into instruments of domination is in itself the cause for an a posteriori reading of their true intent and context. The most common error is to assume that these were commercial treaties through which the Ottoman state surrendered a number of its rights and prerogatives, thus yielding to the desire of the nation that made the request, which would in effect place its subjects above the law. In actual fact, the capitulations were not treaties;[7] they were not commercial in essence; and the rights that they gave to their beneficiaries were not a form of exclusion from the law but, on the contrary, an attempt at bringing them into a manageable legal structure.

A proper understanding of the logic behind the capitulations requires some technical references to the Islamic legal notion of the *aman* (pardon, amnesty, or safe-conduct), and to the consequent practice of the *ahidname* (pledge or covenant). The concept of *aman* is applied to describe a safe conduct granted to any individual living in a land not under Islamic rule wishing to pass through or temporarily reside in an Islamic country. It could be granted to an individual or to a group, by any member of the Islamic community or by its rulers, and was, in theory, limited to a lunar year, after which the *müste'min* (beneficiary of an *aman*) would have either to leave the territory or accept the status of *zimmi* (Arabic, *dhimmī*) (non-Muslim living under Islamic rule).[8] The real problem behind the issue had to do with the legal status of the *müste'min*s. The law of an Islamic state being religious in essence, it could not be applied to them unless they converted to Islam. In other words, if one is to compare the situation with that of Roman law, Islamic states – including the Ottoman Empire – had a *jus quiritium* for their Muslim subjects, but no equivalent of the *jus gentium* to regulate the life of non-Muslims.[9] In the case of subject non-Muslims, the solution found was the *zimmet* (Arabic, *dhimma*), which, in return for the acceptance of a status of allegiance and subjection, granted these communities the right to administer themselves according to their own

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7 One notable exception is the 1536 French 'capitulation', which, although never ratified, was designed as a bilateral treaty between Süleyman I and Francis I, and dependent upon mutual ratification: 'Premièrement, ont traité, fait et conclu bonne et sûre paix et sincère concorde aux noms des susdits grand seigneur et roi de France, durant la vie de chacun d'eux Item, que le grand-seigneur et roi de France manderont l'un à l'autre, dans six mois, la confirmation du présent traité en bonne et due forme,' quoted in Ignace de Testa, *Recueil des traités de la Porte ottomane avec les puissances étrangères depuis le premier traité conclu, en 1536, entre Suleyman I et François I jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. I (Paris, 1864), pp. 16, 20.

8 For a detailed discussion of the *aman*, see Joseph Schacht, 'Amān', *EI 2*.

9 For a detailed discussion of the origins and legal nature of the capitulations, see G. Pélissié du Rausas, *Le régime des capitulations dans l'Empire ottoman* (Paris, 1902), pp. 1–23.

legal practice. When it came to foreigners, however, the only solution, other than assimilation into the status of *zimmi*, was to transform the temporary status of *müste'min* into a more permanent one through a secular legal device. This device, whose origin can be traced back to the Crusades, was that of the *ahidname* or pledge, generally referred to by Ottomans as *ahidname-i hümayun* (imperial pledge). It was thus possible to apply the status of *müste'min* to non-Muslim foreigners of a specific subjection who wished to settle in the empire. For those foreigners whose state and/or ruler did not have any such pledge from the sultan, protection by a ruler who did became a sufficient condition to obtain the same status.

These *ahidname*s known in the West as capitulations, were not bilateral treaties, since they did not require the signature of the receiving party. They were simply granted unilaterally, in an effort to provide a legal framework to the individuals covered by this pledge or collective safe conduct. Nor did they include any explicit reference to reciprocity, even though such a meaning can be ascribed to the systematic reference to 'mutual friendship and good-will'. However, more importantly, these documents were not commercial in essence, since they provided legal coverage for all subjects of a certain ruler, regardless of their occupation. Thus the first Ottoman capitulations dealt with trade and traders only in very general terms of freedom and protection, without any specific reference to customs, duties, commodities or any other specific issue that one would expect to find in a typical commercial treaty. In fact, one may well argue that the initial format of the capitulations lay somewhere between a recognition of the legal status of foreign residents in the empire and their gradual assimilation into the status of *zimmi* subjects of the sultan. Thus, the *ahidname*, dated 1 June 1453, which was granted to the Genoese colony of Galata, following their peaceful surrender to the Ottomans, consisted of a formal pledge of the sultan to respect the property and lives of all the residents of Galata, to guarantee their right to trade and travel, the preservation of their fortress, churches and rites, to exempt them from extraordinary taxes, from the levy of children for the janissary corps and from forced conversion, and to confirm their autonomy under the leadership and administration of their own elected bodies. However, this document also stated explicitly that they would be submitted to the *cizye* (poll-tax) 'as other non-Muslims do'. It appears, therefore, that the Genoese of Galata were in fact assimilated to the status of *zimmi*s, or ordinary tribute-paying subjects of the empire. As a matter of fact, this situation was due to the confusion, in the text, of two distinct categories of Genoese subjects: the residents of the city, labelled as 'the people of Galata' who were actually incorporated into a

zimmi status similar to that of the other non-Muslim subjects of the empire, and the Genoese merchants, described as such, who did not reside in Galata but came and went between Galata and Genoa for purposes of trade.[10] The distinction made between the resident and non-resident Genoese suggests that the status of *müste'min* was linked to the temporary nature of the *aman*, and that, whenever permanency of residence was involved, foreign subjection was disregarded and obliterated by the imposition of a status of *zimmi*. The Venetian capitulation of 1454 confirms this attitude, by evoking the protection of the subjects of the Serenissima only within the context of trade and navigation, i.e. as linked to the temporary status of *müste'min*s.[11] In fact, it was not before the first draft treaty with France, in 1536, that some progress was made in the matter – at least in theory – as French subjects were exempted from being reduced to the status of *zimmi*s during the first ten years of their residence.[12] Full status of *müste'min*, regardless of the length of residence, was obtained by Europeans for the first time in 1569, through the capitulation granted, again to the French, by Selim II.[13]

The general belief that these documents were essentially commercial in nature stems from the fact that traders had always held a prominent position among the beneficiaries of the capitulations and that, consequently, their commercial content and scope increased in the following centuries, as a result of the European courts' growing concerns about the development of trading activity in the Levant. In actual fact, and from the viewpoint of the authority that issued them, these *ahidname*s were first and foremost legal devices of integration, which had evolved from a marked tendency to assimilation to a gradual recognition of a form of extraterritoriality. That the capitulations were primarily designed as a legal framework does not, however, exclude the fact that they were also used by the Ottoman state as a political instrument. The notion of a reward for past services or, even more frequently, of an incentive

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10 For a detailed analysis of this document, see Halil Inalcik, 'Ottoman Galata, 1453–1553', in *Première rencontre internationale sur l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie moderne, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales; Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 18–22 janvier 1985. I: Recherches sur la ville ottomane: le cas du quartier de Galata. II: La vie politique, économique et socio-culturelle de l'Empire ottoman à l'époque jeune-turque*, ed. Edhem Eldem (Istanbul, 1991), pp. 17–116 at 17–31.

11 Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'empire othoman*, 7 vols., (Paris, 1787–1824), vol. VII, p. 446.

12 Ibid., p. 470; Testa, *Recueil*, p. 20: 'Qu'aucun des sujets du roi, qui n'aura habité dix ans entiers et continus ès-pays dudit grand-seigneur, ne doive ni ne puisse être contraint à payer tribut, *kharadj, awari, khassab'ye*.'

13 Testa, *Recueil*, p. 94: 'Art. 9. De France et des lieux à elle soumis, les hommes qui habitent nosdits pays et cités, mariés ou non mariés, faisant trafic de marchandises ou autre exercice, de ceux-là ne sera demandé tribut.'

for future cooperation was inherent to the logic behind the granting of these 'privileges'. This aspect of the question can be traced back to the first such document granted by the Ottomans to the Genoese in 1352 as a common move against Venice, and to the way in which, during the fifteenth century Ottoman rulers kept alternating between Venice and competing Italian states (mostly Genoa and Florence) in their granting of trading privileges.

There is no doubt, then, that the 'scramble' for capitulations of the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries was due to a combination of pull and push factors, the Ottoman state promoting the capitulations as a diplomatic instrument in the forging of alliances and in the securing of political sympathies from Western powers, while European states tended to view them as a tool for commercial implantation and expansion, alongside the obvious diplomatic advantages they presented. The Ottomans certainly were not impervious to the same commercial dimension: promoting the development of the East–West trade transiting through the Ottoman dominions had always been a major concern of the Ottoman state, which clearly saw the fiscal advantages it could derive from the development of this commercial activity. Nevertheless, there is no denying that Ottoman motivation in this respect lagged far behind the trade-consciousness of their western European partners whose diplomatic moves were almost always coupled with some explicit concern for things commercial, or with the direct participation of traders.[14] In that respect, the position of the distant nations of the West, whose dealings with the Ottoman Empire were much less tainted with military and political concerns than those of Venice and other Italian states, was partly responsible for a gradual 'commercialisation' of the capitulations, at least from a Western perspective. This evolution explains, therefore, that these documents should have been dominantly perceived by historians as 'commercial treaties', while they preserved, from an Ottoman perspective, their legal and diplomatic essence.

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14 A case in point is that of the English, whose first ambassador, William Harborne, was a factor representing the interests of a group of merchants. In the same vein, the royal charter granted to the Levant Company made a clear connection between the possible impact of the discovery of the new trade routes on the Levant trade and the political alliances sought with the Ottomans:

The late discovery of the trade of the East Indies wherby manie spices druggs silks and marchandize which formerlie weare brought into this realme of England and the Domynions thereof by the trade of Turkey that therefore for the repayre of the said trade it weare convenient that all the Islandes havens ports creekes and all other places of trade and traffique within the Levant or Mediterranean Seas should be annexed and united unto the Priviledges and gouvernement of this trade of the Signiory of Venice and the Domynions of the graund Signior.   Epstein, *Early History*, p. 156

Perhaps the most pervasive cliché that still clings to the capitulations is the general notion of domination and privilege that is associated to it. True, these were privileges, in the sense that they offered a 'normal' treatment to individuals who, under other circumstances, would hardly have been tolerated. Moreover, it is also true that the status granted by the capitulations did guarantee to the *müste'min*s certain elements of extraterritoriality and quasi-immunity that were unavailable to Ottoman subjects, especially to non-Muslims. Nevertheless, one cannot help but notice that the notion of privilege associated with the capitulations is often perceived as a form of proto-colonial status of exception. The very word used to describe them in Western languages is probably not unrelated to this misconception. Indeed, the temptation is great to read in the word 'capitulation' the meaning of 'surrendering'. In fact, the real etymology of the term is linked to the Latin *capitulum* (chapter), simply because these documents were divided into articles or chapters.[15] There is more, however, to this misinterpretation than a simple misunderstanding of its meaning. What really dominates this misconception is the fact that, at least from the eighteenth century on, the capitulations had clearly become an instrument of commercial penetration imposed on the empire through political and military pressure and leverage. Thus a posteriori knowledge is responsible for this interpretation, and has eventually led to a renaming of these documents in Ottoman Turkish in the late-nineteenth century as *imtiyazat* (privileges) or *imtiyazat-ı ecnebiye* (foreign privileges). Thus, when the capitulations were unilaterally abolished in 1914 by the Young Turk government, the event was publicised as *imtiyazat-ı ecnebiyenin lağvı* (the abolition of foreign privileges). What seems more surprising, though, is that traces of a political reality of the end of the empire should have survived in some scholarly works which use the term *imtiyazat* instead of the original term of *ahidname*, even in reference to a pre-nineteenth-century situation.[16]

Western trade in the seventeenth century: general trends

Compared to the wealth of information available for the eighteenth century, there is very little on which any substantial analysis of trade can be built for the end of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries. In this 'pre-statistical' age of the Levant trade, one has therefore to rely on scanty, patchy

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15 Testa, *Recueil*, p. 6; Pélissié du Rausas, *Capitulations*, vol. I, pp. 1–23.
16 Halil İnalcık, 'Imtiyāzāt: The Ottoman Empire', *EI 2*; Darling, 'Capitulations', p. 257.

and mostly qualitative material to try to assess the nature of the commercial operations undertaken by Western traders in the Ottoman dominions. At the end of the sixteenth century, France and Venice were, without any doubt, the two major actors involved in the Levant trade. Both nations enjoyed a long experience of trade in the region, and a direct involvement of their respective states in the protection of their commerce. Venice, particularly, despite frequent interruptions due to open conflicts with the Ottomans, maintained a prominent position in the Western trade of the empire, with a solid implantation in major urban centres and a predominance of its high-quality cloth on the local market for luxury textiles. Far more important, however, was the export trade from the empire, which consisted of a large variety of products, of local or Eastern origin. Pepper and silk were the major items that originated from further east. As for local products, they included textiles, such as cotton from western Anatolia and mohair yarn from the region of Ankara; dried fruits, such as currants from Greece and the Ionian islands; dyestuffs, such as galls from south-eastern Anatolia and Iraq, soon followed by a new commodity, Arabian coffee, exported through Cairo and Damietta. Not to be forgotten, the Levant – as it was often called – also exported a number of manufactured goods, primarily textiles. Thus a certain Towerson was sent out to 'Angurie of Azia' (Ankara) by the English ambassador cum trader Harborne, to buy 'water chamblets, moccados & grogerins', of various colours and qualities.[17]

One of the major changes observed during this period was the gradual shift in the Levant trade from the domination of the Mediterranean powers of Venice and France to the newcomers from the Atlantic seafront, namely the Dutch and the English. Conscious of the power of both local and Mediterranean competitors, Harborne had warned his commissioned trader that 'you must make acoumpt you are amoungest yor enimyes for that nether Jew greeke or venetiane but will be pricked with envie at yor beinge all whome therfore you cover the same for they be all subtill malytious & vnfaithfull people whom you must over com throughe gods grace with wisdom & paytience'.[18] Yet, malicious and unfaithful as they may have been, the Venetians were seriously losing ground in the Levant trade from the 1600s on. The

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17 Chamlets or camlets (French *camelot*) was the name given to mohair fabrics. The 'watering' of such textiles gave them a wavy or moiré finish. Moccado or mockado (Italian *mocaiardo*), also called mock-velvet, described a piled cloth of silk or wool. Grogerins (French *gros grain*) were coarse fabrics of mohair and wool: see David French, 'A Sixteenth Century English Merchant in Ankara', *Anatolian Studies. Journal of the British Institute of Archæology at Ankara* 22 (1972) (special number in honour of the seventieth birthday of Professor Seton Lloyd), 241–7, at p. 245.

18 Ibid.

French were still present, but would experience a similar withdrawal from the Levant market by the mid-century, due to the negative impact of war and political instability on France's commerce and industries, and to notable weaknesses in the latter's consular and commercial implantation in the Ottoman lands. The decline of the French presence in the Levant would, however, remain a temporary phenomenon, prolonged until the last decades of the seventeenth century, when France would gradually recover lost ground and, eventually, dominate the Levant trade throughout most of the eighteenth century.

English success in the early seventeenth century was in its greater part linked to the ability of English merchants to trade their woollen broadcloths against local products. Previously, the Levant trade had represented a severe drain on the metallic stock of English traders, as most of the Ottoman products were purchased against silver coins or bullion, for lack of a sufficient quantity of exports that would have balanced this trade. However, the decline of Venetian commercial presence in the Levant – most particularly with respect to cloth exports – opened a new and fruitful avenue of trade for the English.[19]

Among all products exported from the Levant, silk held a prominent and sometimes almost exclusive place. Aleppo, in northern Syria, was the main centre from which Europeans were able to tap this rich trade. Brought to the city through a caravan trade dominated by Armenian merchants, Persian raw silk was then bought by French, Venetian and English factors, who exported it back to their respective countries. It is estimated that in the 1620s, some 90 per cent of the 230 tons of raw silk consumed in Europe originated from Aleppo. During that period, silk accounted for over 40 per cent of European imports from the city. The French led this trade with some 140 tons out of a total of 200, leaving the rest to the Venetians and the English. However, the situation was soon to change: by the 1660s, English imports of silk had reached 150 to 200 tons, while the Venetians and the French had virtually disappeared from the market.[20]

By the end of the 1660s, English trade in the Levant had reached an absolute peak – of over £400,000 – which it would not surpass before the nineteenth century. In a rather paradoxical way, this predominance over the Levant markets masked a gradual shift of English commercial interests from the eastern Mediterranean to America and Asia. The share of the Levant in English

19 Ralph Davis, 'English Imports from the Middle East, 1580–1780', in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, ed. by Michael A. Cook (Oxford, 1970), pp. 193–206, at p. 195.
20 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590–1699', in Inalcik and Quataert (eds.), *Economic and Social History*, pp. 411–636, at pp. 499–503.

overseas trade was steadily decreasing: from 16 per cent in the 1620s it had dropped to 12 per cent towards mid-century and to only 7 per cent at the turn of the eighteenth century. From then on, the Levant would constantly remain a negligible destination for English exports and a very marginal provider of imports (see table 14.6). Silk imports, which remained more or less stable at their 1660s level until the 1720s, gradually started to drop to about half that level by the 1750s. Clearly, this phenomenon was directly linked to the emergence of new sources of raw silk, namely Italy and India (particularly Bengal silk), which put an end to the Levant's almost exclusive grip on this textile raw material (see table 14.9). The same was true of the major English export to the Levant, broadcloth. Until the first decades of the eighteenth century, this item had maintained itself at a comfortable level of 18,000–20,000 pieces per year. From then on, it had steadily dropped, almost disappearing by the 1760s (see table 14.1).

It is clear then that English supremacy over the Levant trade – to a certain extent shared with the Dutch – was partly accidental, in the sense that it resulted from a combination of half-hearted success on the English side and of a failure of Venetian and French traders to maintain their former hold on the market. The situation as depicted in the 1680s by the French themselves spoke for itself: the English and the Dutch, controlling 43 and 38 per cent of the Levant trade respectively, had left less than 20 per cent of the market to the French (16 per cent) and the Venetians (3 per cent) (see table 14.3).

Yet despite these rather discouraging figures, the French were intent on claiming back their past role as the leaders of the Levant trade. Colbert, conscious of the importance of this trade to the realm, had made a decisive attempt at reviving it, by granting a franchise charter to the city of Marseilles in 1669. The idea of a Marseilles-based monopoly of trade with the Levant was more than appealing to the trading community of the city, whose vision had long been focused on the eastern Mediterranean. The franchise was perceived by most traders as a de jure recognition of a de facto situation of pre-eminence in the 'natural' direction of the city's commercial thrust. Soon enough, following several unsuccessful attempts by Colbert to found companies styled after the Levant Company, the oligarchic structure of a community of powerful Marseilles merchants, under the aegis of the chamber of commerce of the city, came into being, setting up the rules and regulations of a systematic exploitation of the trade channels to the Levant.[21]

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21 Robert Paris, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, vol. V: *De 1660 à 1789. Le Levant* (Paris, 1957), pp. 9–24, 44–71.

Apart from the promotion of Marseilles to the status of a chartered port, the revival of French trade in the Levant depended mostly on a major shift in the international policy of Louis XIV. Franco-Ottoman relations had been on the verge of a severe rupture, due to the aid granted by the French to the Austrians at Saint Gotthard, and to the Venetians during the Cretan war. Viewing French dreams of hegemony over northern Europe with great fear, many European states made substantial efforts – including Leibniz's scheme of a conquest of Egypt – in order to exploit this breach and divert Louis XIV's attention towards the Levant. However, the French crown was intent on maintaining its aggressive policy against the Dutch Provinces, while it tried to mend its differences with the Ottomans. In 1673, while French troops dismantled the Netherlands, the ambassador, marquis de Nointel, obtained the renewal of the French capitulations, which once again put France on an equal footing with England, and provided the basis of the revival of French trade in the Levant.[22]

The French recovery was slow, but efficient. By the first decade of the eighteenth century, they were able to match the broadcloth export figures of the English; by the 1730s, the trend had been decisively inverted, as French cloth reached the level of 30,000 pieces per year, against 10,000–15,000 for the English (see table 14.1). By mid-century, the French could boast that they had effectively conquered the market, with a share of over 65 per cent against a mere 15, 3 and 16 per cent for the English, Dutch and Venetians respectively (see table 14.3).

Western trade in the seventeenth century: Ottoman passivity?

The analysis and study of Western trade in the Ottoman Empire has often tended to be viewed unilaterally, from the perspective of the major Western nations and traders whose commercial ventures have come to be identified with the Levant trade. Yet such a view of trade obviously constitutes only one side of the picture, and tends to overlook the complex issue of Ottoman participation in this trade. Moreover, Ottoman participation in the Levant trade, more often than not, has been considered from the perspective of the 'receiving end' of the channels of trade, that is in terms of the process of integration of local merchant communities into the commercial networks established by

22 Albert Vandal, *L'Odyssée d'un ambassadeur. Les voyages du marquis de Nointel (1670–1680)* (Paris, 1900), pp. 77–112.

their Western counterparts and, more generally, in terms of the impact of Western trade on Ottoman markets, whether in terms of production, distribution or consumption. The Ottomans are thus more or less systematically assigned a 'passive' role, whereby they are depicted as hosts – or even victims – of trading activities beyond their own control.

That the Levant trade was not a unilateral business exclusively conducted by Western traders has now been proven beyond any doubt. Sixteenth-century records of Ottoman traders circulating in the Mediterranean and exporting their own commodities to Western markets are frequent enough to allow for a vision of the Levant trade as a two-way avenue between the western and eastern Mediterranean basins. In that respect, Venice probably constituted the principal centre of Ottoman commercial deployment in the area. The attribution, in 1621, of the famous Fondaco dei Turchi to 'Turkish' merchants by the administrators of the city – after several other locations – was a clear sign of the need to accommodate, as well as to segregate, an important community of traders originating from the Levant. Although it is certain that many of them were Greeks and Armenians, the arrangements made for the refurbishing of this former *palazzo* made it clear that a number of these merchants were Muslim subjects of the sultan.[23] The discovery of the estate of an Ottoman Muslim trader in the Venetian archives,[24] or the confiscation, by the Senate, of the property of some seventy-five Ottoman Muslim merchants in 1570,[25] further confirms the notion that Ottoman commercial entrepreneurship was not only active in the Mediterranean, but that, contrary to most beliefs, it included a considerable number of Muslim subjects of the empire. Similar findings exist in the case of Poland, Lithuania and Muscovy, which were often visited, especially during the sixteenth century, by Ottoman traders – including Muslims – who exchanged their mohair fabrics and precious stones for the much-prized furs produced in these regions.[26]

However, despite the fact that these Ottoman commercial incursions beyond the western borders of the empire are well documented, one should bear in mind certain factors which reduce to a large extent the incidence of

23 Agostino Sagredo and Federico Berchet, *Il Fondaco dei Turchi in Venezia* (Milan, 1860); Giorgio Vercellin, 'Mercanti turchi e sensali a Venezia', *Studi Veneziani* 4 (1980), 243–75.
24 Cemal Kafadar, 'A Death in Venice (1575): Anatolian Muslim Merchants Trading in the Serenissima', *Raiyyet Rüsûmu. Essays Presented to Halil İnalcık on his Seventieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students. Journal of Turkish Studies* 10 (1986), 191–218.
25 Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nations: Jews and Venetians in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1995), pp. 65–7.
26 Gilles Veinstein, 'Marchands ottomans en Pologne-Lituanie et en Moscovie sous le règne de Soliman le Magnifique', *Cahiers du monde russe* 35, 4 (October–December 1994), 713–38.

these ventures from the perspective of the reciprocity of trade between the Ottoman Empire and the West. First of all, most of these occurrences took place in the sixteenth century, and appear to have ceased by the second half of the seventeenth. Moreover, the limits of this commercial expansion have been clearly defined: Venice, and occasionally Ancona, in the Mediterranean, and Lwów in Poland seem to have constituted the westernmost limits of Muslim willingness to venture into the abode of war (*darülharb*) for commercial purposes.

The situation was not much different in the case of non-Muslim Ottoman merchants – Greeks, Armenians and Jews – whose involvement in international trade on Western turf remained rather limited throughout the period. This was especially true of Jewish merchants, whose vigorous participation in trade with Venice and other Italian cities in the 1500s had almost completely disappeared in the following century.[27] Armenian commercial networks were still extremely powerful, especially in the trade between India, the district of New Julfa in Isfahan and Anatolia; yet their activity west of the Ottoman boundaries, even though it extended as far as London, Amsterdam or Scandinavia, remained more fragile and, at any rate, could hardly be labelled as Ottoman. Ottoman Armenians, although connected to this greater Armenian intercontinental network, remained much more local – at the level of the empire – in their commercial and financial ventures.[28] The same was true of Greeks, who mostly focused their trading activities on Anatolia, the Aegean Islands and the Balkans, despite a diaspora established in major European urban centres.[29]

Another example of the limited direct and active involvement of the Ottoman Empire in international trade may be found in the vicissitudes of trade in the Dalmatian city of Ragusa (Dubrovnik). This tributary state benefited from a strategic location on the Adriatic Sea and from substantial rebates on customs dues, which ensured it a position of a near-free port on the fringe of the Ottoman domains. As such, it had enjoyed a rather prosperous period of commercial expansion during the first decades of the sixteenth century, but from the 1530s on, its volume of trade had dropped in a most drastic way. In

27 Arbel, *Trading Nations*, *passim*.

28 On Armenian networks, see, for example, Levon Khachikian, 'Le registre d'un marchand arménien en Perse, en Inde et au Tibet (1692–1693)', *Annales* 22, 2 (March–April, 1967), 231–78; Michel Aghassian and Kéram Kévonian, 'Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17e et 18e siècles', in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dans l'Océan indien et la mer de Chine: 13e–20e siècles*, ed. Denys Lombard and Jean Aubin (Paris, 1988), pp. 155–81.

29 Traian Stoianovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960), 234–313; Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change', pp. 517–19.

fact, it appears that the city's commercial activity was revived only in times of Ottoman conflict with Venice, when its main adversary was banned from direct contact with the sultans' territories through its commercial outpost of Spalato (Split). Throughout the seventeenth century, Ragusan trade was therefore of no consequence, with the exception of the 1645–69 conflict over Crete and the 1683–99 Austro-Ottoman wars, when the city experienced a formidable, but short-lived, revival of its commerce.[30]

It is therefore safe to claim – without assuming total Ottoman passivity in the matter – that most of the trade conducted between the Ottoman Empire and European nations was initiated by the latter. Ottoman participation and interference in – or even control of – this trade was mostly limited to commercial activity taking place within the empire's boundaries. Several explanations can be suggested to explain this unbalanced situation between the two parties. Maritime control and technology was probably one of the most important, as the Levant trade was heavily dependent on transportation by sea between the eastern Mediterranean basin and European ports. Against the mastery of the Western seafaring nations, whose commercial and military fleets ensured the regular servicing and patrolling of Ottoman waters, the Ottomans could not benefit from a proper westbound transportation network or from a naval presence to protect it. Until well into the nineteenth century, a rather clear-cut division of labour seems to have characterised European and Ottoman participation in the Levant trade from the perspective of transportation: the sea routes – between European and Ottoman ports – belonged to the Europeans, while Ottomans – and other 'Orientals' – controlled land transportation and inland distribution networks.

Moreover, it is rather obvious that the Ottoman state never attained a level of concern similar to that of European states for the development and promotion of international trade conducted by its own subjects. Contrary to the mercantilist policies of Western states, which deployed charters, monopolies, diplomacy, consular services and naval protection for their subjects, the Ottoman government never showed any similar intention to set up an infrastructure that might encourage, service or support its few expatriate merchants. The occasional *çavuş* sent out to Venice or to some other Western city to protest against the mistreatment of merchants or to promote the interests of a state-sponsored trader was certainly not comparable to the constant support displayed by the English, French or Dutch states towards their own merchants.

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30 Francis W. Carter, *Dubrovnik (Ragusa): A Classic City-State* (London and New York, 1972); Faroqhi, 'Crisis and Change', pp. 520–5.

Yet all these 'concrete' reasons for a marked reluctance of Ottoman traders to reach out to Western markets should not let us overlook what seems to have been one of the most important causes behind this aloofness: the marginal character of this trade when compared to the bulk of Ottoman commercial activity. In the absence of any reliable figure for this pre-statistical age, only rough guesses can be made about the proportional share of Western trade to the total volume of commercial activity in the empire. At any rate, it seems unlikely that this trade should have represented more than 10, or even 5, per cent of all trading activity. Not only dwarfed by a thriving domestic trade, but also clearly outdistanced by the Eastern trade with Persia and India, Western trade had little to offer to Ottoman commercial entrepreneurs, who found much more satisfaction – and much less trouble – in exploiting domestic channels of trade. The combination of a relative inability – and unwillingness – of Ottoman traders to implant themselves on Western markets with the obvious attraction of a rich, wide, and diversified local market resulted in a situation almost diametrically opposed to that of the trading nations of Europe. To the English, the Dutch, and to a certain extent the French, foreign trade often bore enormous promises of wealth in comparison to the opportunities offered by a much smaller domestic market. From this situation stemmed a much more dynamic thrust toward overseas trade, which involved both the private initiative of traders and groups of traders, and the parallel support provided by the state and its mercantilist policies.

Ottoman reception of merchants: the political and economic dimensions

With the Ottomans snugly settled at the 'receiving end' of the Levant trade, it becomes easier to set aside the question of understanding why local merchants did not reciprocate, and to concentrate on the impact of this trade on the empire. It has often been argued that the main impact of Western trade on the Ottoman economy has been a gradual process of (passive/dependent) incorporation into the world economy.[31] Some signs of this process have been discovered as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,[32] as in

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[31] See, for example, Immanuel Wallerstein, Hale Decdeli and Reşat Kasaba, 'The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World-Economy', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, ed. by Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 88–100; Murat Çizakça, 'Incorporation of the Middle East into the European World Economy', *Review* 8, 3 (1985), 353–78.

[32] Ömer Lütfi Barkan, 'The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6 (1975), 3–28.

the case of the Bursa silk industry, which collapsed under the impact of the 'price-scissors' resulting from increasing raw-silk prices triggered by a growing Western demand, and the competition of imported cloth against local textiles.[33] However, there is some doubt as to the effectiveness and durability of Western penetration of certain Ottoman markets at such an early date, especially if one considers that most local industries – including the Bursa silk industry – seem to have thrived during much of the eighteenth century.[34] It appears that much of the 'incorporation model' stems from the combination of an *ex post facto* anticipation of incorporation patterns projected from the nineteenth century backwards, and a still insufficient amount of information available on the economic performance of local industries and trades. Indeed, it seems unlikely that the impact of a still marginal Western trade should have caused structural transformations of the Ottoman economy. A more plausible interpretation, for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, would be to view such crises as isolated and short-term changes that did not necessarily threaten the strong resilience displayed by the Ottoman economy.

Yet another 'crisis' induced by European trade in the mid-seventeenth century may shed some light on the way in which the Levant trade could disrupt – again, for a short period of time – some of the most basic equilibria of the Ottoman economy. The introduction in the Ottoman lands of French five-*sol* coins (*pièces de cinq sols*) in the early 1650s had met with such great success that French and other nations' traders had soon begun to exploit and abuse this new commercial opening by shipping increasing quantities of counterfeit and debased coinage, which eventually flooded the Ottoman markets. The Ottoman economy was thus being drained of its good coinage, which was shipped back to southern France and northern Italy, only to be re-minted into baser versions of the five-*sol* coins. This counterfeiting scheme lasted for almost two decades, until the Ottoman state decided in 1669 to de-monetise this coinage.[35] This surprising monetary aberration, long interpreted as a

33 Murat Çizakça, 'Price History and the Bursa Silk Industry: A Study in Ottoman Industrial Decline, 1550–1650', *Journal of Economic History* 40, 3 (1980), 533–50.

34 Mehmet Genç, 'A Comparative Study of the Life Term Tax Farming Data and the Volume of Commercial and Industrial Activities in the Ottoman Empire during the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century', in *Les villes balkaniques et sud-est européennes et la révolution industrielle de l'Europe occidentale* (Sofia, 1976), pp. 243–80; Mehmet Genç, 'A Study of the Feasibility of Using Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Financial Records as an indicator of Economic Activity', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 345–73; Mehmet Genç, '18. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Sanayii', *Dünü ve Bugünüyle Toplum ve Ekonomi* 2 (September 1991), 99–124.

35 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 132–4; Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 149–55.

European abuse of an economically naïve population, in fact finds its explanation in the drastic dearth of coinage experienced in the Ottoman lands since the 1640s.[36] Yet it also points at a rather typical attitude of a government that saw no real ill in the circulation of foreign coinage, and no immediate reason to intervene against an obvious and protracted disruption of the market. This attitude, confirmed by other signs of a rather lenient approach to foreign trade unthinkable in the context of a mercantilist state, have led to the conclusion that Ottoman economic policy was essentially anti- or non-mercantilist, and thus constituted the Achilles' heel of the empire's economy in its confrontation with Western commercial expansion.

Indeed, this argument has generally been developed as a corollary of the directing principles of Ottoman economic policy – provisionism, fiscalism and traditionalism. These three terms, used in an effort to pin down the directing principles of Ottoman economic policy, refer to the obsession of the state with ensuring a constant and secure flow of commodities to consumers, most particularly to the population of Istanbul (provisionism); to the state's constant drive to acquire additional sources of revenue – mostly fiscal – and its vision of the economy as subservient and instrumental to the fiscal needs of the treasury (fiscalism); and to a marked preference for the preservation of the status quo in all matters relating to politics, society and economy, with a consequent animosity towards any innovation – other than the state's own – that might disrupt the 'natural' order of things (traditionalism). This economic ideology, an offshoot of the 'circle of equity', has generally been interpreted as the basis of a pre-modern command economy, in which lay the major reason for the non-mercantilist – or even anti-mercantilist – Ottoman attitude. Its provisionist nature led the state to encourage imports, as they were a way to provision the population; its fiscalist character also encouraged it to do so as imports constituted one of the most attractive sources of revenue through customs dues.[37] Although somewhat overrated, especially with respect to their actual implementation in everyday economic life, these principles seem to have played an important role in determining the permissiveness and casualness with which the Porte addressed issues relating to the Levant trade. This was particularly true with respect to the absence of protectionist measures in favour of local industries. However, once again, it appears

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36 Pamuk, *Monetary History*, pp. 150–1.

37 Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı Imparatorluğu'nda devlet ve ekonomi', in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye sosyal ve iktisat tarihi kongresi. Tebliğler* (Ankara, 1991), pp. 13–25; Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı iktisadî dünya görüşünün ilkeleri', *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyoloji Dergisi* 1 (1989), 176–85.

that the Ottoman government's attitude stemmed more from the marginality and reduced incidence of Western trade on the economy than from an ignorance of mercantilist and protectionist principles. In other words, the Ottoman state chose to adopt a non-mercantilist – rather than anti-mercantilist – attitude because the threat constituted by the import of Western manufactured goods was far less than the advantages that could be derived from a fiscalist exploitation of customs revenues.[38] At any rate, Western traders were perfectly conscious of the fact that there was a 'communion of interest' between their own goals and the traditional policies of the Porte, and this knowledge was reflected in the rhetoric they used in formulating their petitions, constantly appealing to the provisionist fears, fiscalist greed and traditionalist stand of the state.[39]

With the Ottoman state their ally – at least in principle – and the Ottoman market open to penetration – although marginally from the central government's viewpoint – one could be tempted into believing that the Ottoman Empire was a safe haven for the expansion of European trade. Indeed, in many respects, the Ottoman lands proved to be fertile ground in which, throughout the seventeenth century, Western traders were able to develop their activities and sow the seeds of long-lasting commercial ventures. One of the most striking examples of this fruition was probably the rise of Izmir as one of the main emporia of Western trade in the empire. What was characteristic of this western Anatolian port city was that, unlike most other Ottoman cities where Western traders grafted themselves onto a pre-existing economic structure, Izmir developed almost entirely thanks to the presence of a community of foreign merchants, eventually diverting the Anatolian silk trade from its previous itinerary.[40]

Yet this favourable environment was offset by a number of 'resistances' which hampered the smooth evolution of Western trade in the Ottoman lands. Some of these were directly linked to Westerners themselves: fierce competition among traders of a single nation or else among merchants of different nations, clashes among consular authorities and traders, repercussions of political conflicts in the motherland and so on.[41] But from an Ottoman perspective,

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38 Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600–1750* (New York, 1988) pp. 190–3; Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 267–72.

39 Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 272–7.

40 Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550–1650* (Seattle and London, 1990).

41 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 288–93; Niels Steensgaard, 'Consuls and Nations in the Levant from 1570 to 1650', *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 15, 1–2 (1967), 13–55; Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire 1642–1660* (Seattle and London, 1998).

there were two major obstacles in the way of a full-fledged development of Western commercial potential: the resistance of the economy to penetration and the impediments arising from the political system, which often combined to create a hostile environment that constantly surfaced in the complaints and petitions of traders.

The commercial obstacles set by the local economy graphically illustrated the marginality and superficial implantation of Western traders in the empire. Generally confined to a few port cities, where they were almost segregated in a certain district, or sometimes in a few khans, European traders had only limited access to redistributive networks across the hinterland, or even within the structure of the city that hosted them.[42] The limited market for the luxury commodities they imported – generally broadcloth – further reduced their commercial autonomy, as these products were usually in competition with cheaper local, or higher-quality Oriental, goods. The same was true of the purchases they made of local products. Most of these commodities – silk, cotton, fruits, dyestuffs – had to be purchased from well-established local traders, who had much greater access to, and control over, the provisioning networks. Even when Westerners tried to procure some of these products from the producers – as in the case of wool or cotton in western Anatolia – they had to rely on the services of local factors and brokers. As most transactions were conducted on the basis of barter and long-term credit, and the value of local purchases almost always exceeded the income derived from the sales of Western products, European traders became even more subservient to their local counterparts, and were obliged to conduct business on terms generally favourable to the latter. This situation may be viewed, to a certain extent, as the expression of a pattern of domination whereby, contrary to most expectations, Ottoman merchants had a clear ascendancy – at least within the limits of their market – over Western traders.[43]

Yet, despite the obvious hindrance created by the comparative advantages of local traders, most of the complaints of Western traders concentrated on a very different type of 'resistance', that of political pressures exerted on the trading communities by a wide spectrum of Ottoman authorities, ranging from the government in Istanbul down to local authorities or paramilitary

42 For a comparative analysis of Western merchant communities in three different urban contexts, see Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (Cambridge, 1999).

43 Michel Morineau, 'Naissance d'une domination. Marchands européens, marchands et marchés du Levant aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles', in *Commerce de gros, commerce de détail dans les pays méditerranéens [XVIe – XIXe siècles]. Actes des journées d'études. Bendor 25–26 avril 1975* (Nice, 1976), pp. 144–84.

groups in the provinces. The reason for this emphasis on political rather than economic factors may be interpreted in several ways. First of all, it is more than probable that Western traders knew better than to complain about what was, after all, fair play in a situation of commercial interaction. Moreover, a situation of relative inferiority and subordination did not exclude the possibility for Western traders to make substantial profits and to enjoy their own comparative advantages deriving from their control over the channels and terms of trade between the empire and Western markets. In short, if the essence of Western complaints tended to concentrate on political action and reaction, it was, on the one hand, because these hindrances were perceived as arbitrary and illegitimate – a point further strengthened by Western stereotypes about Ottoman despotism and Islamic fanaticism – and because they knew well that their own implantation on the Ottoman market depended mostly on political and diplomatic action, which found its most concrete expression in the capitulations.

Political abuses, generally lumped under the generic term of avanias, covered a wide range of actions and demands, from harassment to bribes, and from disregard of the capitulations to outright violence. Some were considered to be of a 'structural' nature, such as the gifts and donations expected by most individuals in power, from the sultan and the grand vizier to the local kadi or customs officer of a provincial town. Bribes, as long as they did not stem from outright blackmailing or threats of violence, were also perceived as normal – indeed, typical of the alleged rapaciousness of Oriental officials. The real complaints were therefore linked to all sorts of physical abuses or threats – imprisonment, ransoming, expulsion – and to various actions that constituted blatant breaches of the capitulations – excessive taxation, forced and often unpaid loans, unjustified fines, etc.[44]

There is no doubt that many of the abuses described were exaggerated for various reasons and, most of all, that they were much more exceptional than the correspondence of traders and consuls might suggest. However, a certain degree of insecurity, of arbitrariness and of political encroachments on the market were certainly part of the overall conditions of trade in the Ottoman lands. The relative autonomy enjoyed by provincial authorities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was partly responsible for this situation, and the capitulations and other agreements reached between the ambassadors and the Porte in Istanbul were often extremely difficult to implement in provincial towns where the local balance of power between trading communities and

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44 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 294–310.

officials tended to determine the rules of the game.[45] What European traders did not report – or at least complain about – was that the flexibility of the system very often worked to their own advantage, and that it opened the path to the circumvention or outright disregard of those rules and regulations that imposed constraints on their own trade.

At any rate, without ceasing completely, the complaints of European merchants started to fade away rather visibly in the eighteenth century. Western trade in the 1600s had been characterised by much turmoil, instability and insecurity. The rise and fall of several trading 'nations', long periods of war and their negative impact on trade, internal conflicts and insecurity in the empire had all contributed to a somewhat erratic and unstable evolution of the Levant trade. In contrast, the eighteenth century was characterised by a much more regular growth of this trade and, most of all, by a gradual normalisation of the conditions under which it was conducted. For those nations who were able – and willing – to maintain their presence well into the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire would prove to be a much safer and more reliable environment. In fact, much more than an increase in the volume of trade, the most important change that the eighteenth century brought to the Levant trade was a gradual 'taming' of a half-hostile and hardly controllable world into a collaborative and eventually dominated one.

The eighteenth century: the French conquest of the market

If the seventeenth century had been marked by a notable domination of English traders, the eighteenth would turn out to be French. The first signs of this reversal had been witnessed in the late 1600s. The French were preparing a comeback, putting serious efforts into the amelioration of their diplomatic relations with the Porte, but also increasing their implantation in the Ottoman Empire and developing a textile industry in Languedoc that might compete with the English cloths much demanded in the Levant. The Dutch threat had been pushed aside thanks to the combined efforts of the English and French crowns through a series of wars that had greatly reduced Holland's naval power. True, the English still remained the first and most powerful actor on the Levant market, but the first signs of a gradual disengagement from the Ottoman Empire could already be felt in the last two decades of

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45 Daniel Goffman, 'The Capitulations and the Question of Authority in Levantine Trade 1600–1650', *Journal of Turkish Studies* 10 (1986), 155–61.

the seventeenth century. The Levant Company now operated in a much less propitious climate: competition with the East India Company over the silk and spice market along with the notable impoverishment of Ottoman consumers following almost twenty years of warfare combined with the systematic efforts of French traders at underselling English cloth; and all these factors had started to seriously threaten English pre-eminence on the Levantine markets. Yet what really ensured a decisive victory for French mercantilism was the incipient shift of English commercial capital and interests towards the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.[46] By 1730 French trade reigned supreme, and would remain in this position until the last decade of the eighteenth century.

Throughout the 1700s French trade rose steadily: from some 10–15 million *livres tournois* at the beginning of the century to almost 50 million at the end. Typically, as had been the case with English trade in the preceding century, exports from the Ottoman Empire by far exceeded imports from Marseilles. During the second half of the century, the French trade deficit represented approximately one-fifth of the total volume of trade, with exports to the Levant standing at about 70 per cent of imports (see table 14.12). This deficit, however, was based on the balance of trade, and did not take into account the balance of payments, including the 'invisibles' of trade – freight, insurance, profits accrued from monetary transfers; moreover, it was magnified by the tendency of contemporary statistics to inflate the price of Ottoman goods relative to that of French exports. All in all, it appears that throughout the century, French trade evolved in a fairly balanced way, without causing any major haemorrhage to the French monetary stock.[47]

Unlike English trade, which mobilised only a limited number of traders and ships, French trade in the eighteenth century developed in a most intensive way, spreading to a large number of port towns and cities – the *échelles du Levant* – involving the participation of a large number of traders, administrators and dependants (no less than 1,211 men and women, according to a census taken in 1769),[48] providing employment for a multitude of ships – a yearly average of 130 (see table 14.5) – and mobilising the administrative and diplomatic efforts of a huge bureaucracy, from the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce to the Ministry of the Navy in Paris. Yet another sign of the massive involvement of France

46 Paul Cernovodeanu, 'The General Condition of English Trade in the Levant in the Second Half of the 17th and at the Beginning of the 18th Century', *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes* 5, 3–4 (1967), 447–60.

47 Charles Carrière and Marcel Courdurié, 'Un sophisme économique: Marseille s'enrichit en achetant plus qu'elle ne vend (Réflexions sur les mécanismes commerciaux levantins au XVIIIe siècle)', *Histoire, Economie et Société* 3, 1 (1984), 7–51.

48 Eldem, *French Trade*, p. 206.

in the Levant trade was the great diversity of goods that were exchanged. While English trade had narrowed down to silk imports and cloth exports, French trade covered a much wider range of products: cotton, wool, mohair, oil, dyestuffs, hides, beeswax, and even textiles. In addition to the bulk of cloth exports, the French marketed sizeable quantities of colonial products: coffee, sugar, indigo and cochineal (see table 14.12).

French traders were disseminated throughout the empire. While this had previously been because of disorganisation and instability, by the eighteenth century this dispersal allowed the development of a rather efficient trading network monitored by Marseilles, sometimes via Istanbul. The great diversity of French commercial implantations had created a momentum of its own, with *échelles* specialising in particular trades, and complementing each other in financial and administrative matters. A multitude of small *échelles* whose main function it was to export local products made up the French network in the Levant; these were not able to sell enough French goods to finance their purchases. Smaller centres were always connected to major *échelles* – Aleppo, Cairo, Izmir, Istanbul, Salonika – whose much more balanced trade gave them greater power and autonomy. Some stood out from the mass, due to their powerful and particular position. Izmir, already one of the major emporia of the Levant trade in the preceding century, had become the wealthiest *échelle* of all, draining products from its rich hinterland and beyond, and serving as a centre of redistribution of French commodities throughout Anatolia. Istanbul, the major consumption centre of the empire, played a somewhat different role. It swallowed a formidable quantity of European products – mostly cloth, sugar and coffee – without any redistribution into the hinterland, yet came second only to Izmir as the major outlet of the Levant trade. This huge level of consumption dwarfed the few exports that could be made from the city: some wool from the regions south of the Marmara Sea, occasional shipments of silk from Bursa and of mohair from Ankara, some beeswax, some hides and so on. As a result, large amounts of specie accumulated in the hands of the French 'nation' of Constantinople, a phenomenon unique enough to single out Istanbul from all other *échelles* in the empire.[49]

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49 Quite a number of studies deal specifically with European trade in some of the major *échelles*: N. G. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1956); Ralph Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square: English Traders in the Levant in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Melbourne and Toronto, 1967); Masters, *Origins*; Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700–1820)* (Athens, 1992); Eldem, *French Trade*.

The differences in the nature and volume of trade conducted in different *échelles* made it necessary to organise integrative and collaborative mechanisms. Care was taken to avoid any risk of competition between two neighbouring *échelles*, either by operating jointly on purchases and sales, or by adjusting price levels. More importantly, a rather sophisticated network of financial transfers was developed that allowed the consumption-oriented *échelles* – especially Istanbul, with its huge surplus of specie – to finance the export-oriented ones, which could not balance their purchases of local products with the sale of Western imports. The system was simple, and had been in use since at least the seventeenth century: traders in Istanbul would remit part of their profits to their correspondents in the peripheral *échelles* through bills of exchange. The counterpart of these remittances was met by the sums local Ottoman officials – governors, tax-farmers and the like – had to transfer to the imperial treasury. The same sum would thus be paid by local officials to European traders in the provinces, and by European traders to the treasury in the capital, providing the integration of the *échelles* among themselves and, to a certain degree, that of Western trade with Ottoman financial and political networks.[50]

Prelude to domination: a growing influence on the economy

The massive (re-)entry of the French – or rather the Marseillais – into the Levant trade was of crucial importance to the direction in which trade would eventually evolve. The Levant trade had once represented over 15 per cent of English foreign trade, but by the beginning of the eighteenth century this proportion had dropped to less than 7 per cent. For most of the century, it remained somewhere between 1 and 2 per cent (see table 14.7). Towards the mid-eighteenth century, the Levant's share in the trade of Marseilles was almost 36 per cent, and would only drop to 33.5 per cent in the 1770s.[51] The figures were much lower, of course, for French foreign trade in general – the Levant had dropped to 5–9 per cent of all French foreign trade at the end of the 1780s[52] – but the stakes of this trade for Marseilles and the surrounding region were high enough to justify the deployment of tremendous efforts to ensure its development, particularly the diversification of this trade. One of the first articles of commerce to benefit from this policy had been cloth, which, in order to compete with its superior English rival, had been given particular attention. The first attempts made in the 1670s and 1680s to increase

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50 Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square*, pp. 189–206; Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 113–47.
51 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, p. 3.   52 Ibid., p. 578.

the volume and quality of cloth production in Languedoc had gradually borne fruit, and by the 1710s French cloth – particularly the famed *londrins seconds* – had come to be sought after by most members of the Ottoman elite, including the palace.[53] Yet, apart from ensuring their control over what had been for long the staple European export to the empire, Marseilles traders had also been able to add new products to their exports, or to develop previously marginal ones. This was particularly the case with sugar, coffee, indigo and cochineal, all of which were imported from the French Antilles and from South America.[54] The diversification of French exports was coupled with a parallel development with respect to products imported from the Ottoman Empire. The English had gradually abandoned the Levant trade partly because Ottoman and Iranian silk had been displaced on the market by Bengali, Chinese and, most of all, Italian silk.[55] The French, although they were also confronted with the marginalisation of Levant silk, were able to maintain and increase their import trade by developing their purchases of other products: wool, mohair, camel hair, beeswax, hides and, most of all, cotton. It was for this last product that the most formidable growth was registered throughout the century, from a value of a mere 1.5 million *livres* at the beginning of the century to almost 13 million at the end (see table 14.12).

The impact of this expansion and diversification on the Ottoman economy was considerable. True, even under the pressure of French trade, Western commercial activity still remained marginal in the empire. However, the impact of some of these developments cannot be discarded: as more cloth was imported its price decreased and, in consequence, its consumption in some of the major urban centres expanded. The impact of the massive irruption on the Ottoman market of daily consumption goods such as sugar and coffee was even greater. While Western cloth, because of its higher quality, did not really threaten directly local producers of coarser textiles, the situation was totally different in the case of sugar and coffee. American sugar was of higher quality – and, most of all, better refined – than the local Egyptian and Cypriot product; its spread throughout the Ottoman market represented a direct encroachment on local production, the consequences of which could be felt even in the producing regions themselves.[56] In the case of American coffee, the impact was not only economic, but also symbolic. Coffee had been the local product par excellence, exports of which had played an important role in the Levant trade throughout the seventeenth century. The development of coffee production

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53 Ibid., pp. 543–5.   54 Ibid., pp. 557–64.
55 Davis, 'English Imports', pp. 198–9.   56 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 557–9.

in America had not only put an end to all coffee exports from the Levant; after the first imports in the 1730s, it had started to replace the Yemeni product on the Ottoman market itself. Local tastes and 'protectionist' measures – such as the prohibition of mixing Yemeni and 'Frankish' coffee during the process of torrefaction – could hardly offset the fact that American coffee was, on the average, two or three times cheaper than the local product. By the second half of the century, the invasion of the market by American coffee had transformed this commodity into a much more 'democratic' beverage, consumed in remote towns and areas of Anatolia and Rumelia.[57] In short, the eighteenth-century expansion of Western trade – with the French leading – resulted in a still modest, but rather emblematic, penetration of the Ottoman market by European goods.

As French traders developed and diversified Ottoman exports the empire's economy at large was also affected, even if this effect, as in the case of imports, remained limited and irregular. Every local product for which Western demand was created or grew significantly in the eighteenth century represented a new avenue of Western penetration into production and distribution networks throughout the empire. This was particularly true of the period, since, unlike silk in the preceding century, the major export items of the eighteenth century were almost all local products. Western traders knew well that for such products, the best conditions could only be obtained by establishing direct contact with the producers. Consequently, Western traders dealing in these products sought ways of avoiding wholesalers and middlemen in the *échelles* by moving into the hinterland. The development of a community of Western traders – mostly French – in landlocked Ankara for the sole purpose of dealing directly with mohair producers was a typical example of this trend. True, direct access was not always easy – or even possible – since Westerners had to deal with the obstacles set by traders and authorities on the spot, or to recruit local factors to ensure their provisioning. Yet, by and large, the process did result in a substantial increase of the level of integration of Ottoman producers with the European economy, although as yet the demand of Western merchants and of their factors was limited by later, nineteenth-century standards. In the case of cotton, the process was amplified by a sudden boom, due to demand by the thriving textile industries in France: the quantity of raw cotton exported from the Ottoman lands to Marseilles increased more than twenty-fold during the century. Moreover, this boom had been accompanied by a concentration on two particular regions: by the end of the century, 70 per cent of all Ottoman raw

57 Ibid., pp. 559–61; Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 75–81.

cotton was exported from Izmir and 22 per cent from Salonika. Growth and concentration had led to an increasing commercialisation of the commodity and to a growing impact on the local economic and social equilibria. One of the most striking aspects of this process was the role played by the local *ayan*s of Rumelia and of western Anatolia in the organisation of this trade. Combining their occasional control over the land with their social and economic power over the peasantry and with the political and fiscal advantages they had wrested from the state, these local notables played a crucial, if ambiguous, role in this trade, acting variously as middlemen, power brokers, suppliers, protectors or abusers. To view them systematically as large landowners, and as actors in a process of integration of the Ottoman agrarian sector into the Western economy, would certainly be an exaggeration; but there is no doubt that their 'participation' in Western trade came to constitute one of the principal bases of their power in the second half of the century.[58]

Local resistances

If Western trade, under the leadership of Marseilles traders, was making considerable progress in terms of mastering local conditions and strengthening its grip on certain aspects of production, distribution and consumption, it still had to face formidable potential for resistance from local economic actors. Most of the conditions already described for the seventeenth century were still valid fifty or a hundred years later. European exports, although highly appreciated by elite consumers, remained expensive, and their hold on the market was still very superficial. Even at a time when they could boast about how they had ousted their English, Dutch and Venetian rivals thanks to the quality and price of their cloth, French traders were conscious of being squeezed between the consumption ceiling they seemed to have reached and the constant threat of competition from coarse local, and fine Indian, fabrics. At any rate, the fragility of this trade would eventually be demonstrated by the substantial slump recorded in the volume of cloth exports to the Levant in the last quarter of the century. Several reasons were put forward to explain this failure: a decline in quality due to a slackening of controls in France; and growing competition from German and English cloth. But once again, one of the most fundamental causes had been the impoverishment of the Ottoman consumer,

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58 Traian Stoianovich, 'Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy', *Journal of Economic History* 13, 4 (1953), 398–411; Gilles Veinstein, 'Ayan de la région d'Izmir et le commerce du Levant (deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle)', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 20, 2 (1975), 131–46.

suffering the effects of long years of disastrous wars. With its low price elasticity, French cloth could hardly adapt to such a situation. True, part of this loss had been alleviated by coffee and sugar exports. Supplanting – albeit partly – local coffee with an American ersatz, and promoting the consumption of colonial sugar were certainly positive developments, but this bulky trade was far from bringing the same profits and satisfaction as the cloth trade.[59]

For exports and imports alike, the major weakness of Western traders had to do with their relative dependence on Ottoman merchants and intermediaries. Sales were made to powerful groups – often corporations – of wholesalers, through the mediation of brokers on site; purchases, in the best of cases, had to rely on the services of local factors or, if not, were made from local merchants. Retail trade was off limits, leaving most of the profits to wholesalers who were Ottoman subjects; except in Istanbul, purchases and sales were often integrated into a complex system of barter and anticipated transactions, conducted on terms generally determined by local merchants. As long as both parties found mutual profit in any operation or transaction, things would move on smoothly. Yet, whenever Ottoman traders felt threatened in their commercial interests, the ensuing conflict could result in serious damage for the foreign trading community. Typical examples of the intimidation or aggression by local merchants could be found in the numerous boycotts of foreign commodities designed to force Western merchants to lower the price of their goods. With the knowledge that unsold stocks were a painful hindrance to foreign merchants who worked with little capital, that one nation could be played off against another, and with the possibility of ensuring a strong implementation of the boycott thanks to the solidarity structures of the corporation system, Ottoman merchants were almost always capable of imposing their will on their Western counterparts. Similar tactics were often used by local suppliers to raise the price of their commodities by creating an artificial shortage until the discouraged Westerners finally yielded to pressure. Interestingly enough, when, in the 1720s and 1730s, the French nation of Istanbul was confronted with such a boycott on its cloth stocks, it was able to counter this move only by imposing on its members a very strict solidarity structure – the *arrangements* – whereby traders were forced to adopt what was, in fact, a rather faithful imitation of the Ottoman corporatist system that was used against them.[60]

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59 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 542–52; Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 244–6.

60 C. Roure, 'La réglementation du commerce français du Levant sous l'ambassade du marquis de Villeneuve, 1728–1741', in J.-P. Filippini, L. Meignen, C. Roure, D. Sabatier and G. Stéphanidès, *Dossiers sur le commerce français en Méditerranée orientale au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1976), pp. 33–101; Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 249–50, 260–3.

It was obvious then, that Western traders, if they wished a firm and secure implantation in the Ottoman market and a profitable development of their trade, needed more than just commercial success. Their economic leverage over the market and its local actors was simply not sufficient to impose their own conditions. The best they could hope for – and which they generally obtained – was to conduct their trade with some success, as long as they did not overstep the limits set by local merchants or enter into open conflict with them. In cases of conflict, or simply when Western traders wanted to impose conditions which seemed unacceptable to their Ottoman counterparts, the only solution the foreigners really had at their disposal was to resort to political action. Political action could take a wide range of forms. In the provinces, obtaining the support of a local official, or even of a local bandit or *ayan*, providing he was powerful enough, was often quite sufficient to ensure some protection or leverage to European traders. But this kind of political power was fickle, and rarely reliable enough in the long run to protect them from reversals of fortune and changes of allegiance. What they needed most, then, was a strengthening of the capitulatory regime, both in juridical and in practical terms. From a juridical perspective, the capitulations still lacked the clarity and precision required for their systematic application to commercial matters. From a practical point of view, they needed to be enforced more efficiently than had previously been the case, especially in areas removed from the protection and mediation ensured by the ambassador. This goal was finally attained when in 1740 the French ambassador, Villeneuve, obtained from the Porte the renewal of the capitulations. The French obtained thereby an instrument of domination much more efficient than all the commercial tactics they had so far used.

The capitulations of 1740 and patterns of domination

The successful mediation of the marquis de Villeneuve had led to the signing of the treaty of Belgrade, which gave back to the Ottomans some of the self-confidence and self-esteem they had lost during decades of defeats. The 1740 capitulations were granted as a way of paying back this debt, as the text explicitly said – even though, strangely, in the middle of Article 55 rather than in the preamble.[61] Thus the capitulations of 1740 differed from all previous capitulations in that, for the first time, they were born of an Ottoman political

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61 Testa, *Recueil*, p. 200.

'obligation' and thus came close to the erroneous meaning that has often been ascribed to the word.

The exceptional nature of the 1740 capitulations was not limited to the process that led to their ratification. The titles granted to the French king had been modified to include, for the very first time, the appellation of 'friend', which implied full recognition of the equality of status between the two sovereigns.[62] Most importantly, Article 85 included the radical innovation of granting permanent and perpetual status to a type of document which until then had been limited to the reign of the signing sultan.[63] As a result, the capitulations would remain in force, without any need for a renewal, until their abolition in 1914. As to commercial clauses, there was nothing radically new in the articles of the 1740 capitulations. However, great care had been taken to avoid any ambiguity and vagueness – so typical of earlier texts – and to bring as much precision to the text as possible. As a result, they contained no fewer than eighty-five articles, almost double the number found in the previous capitulations of 1673. This change in the nature and spirit of the capitulations had radically transformed them into what the French had always longed for: an official recognition of privileges, combined with a commercial code applying to French subjects residing in the Ottoman Empire.

Obviously, the signing of the 1740 capitulations did not change the conditions of trade overnight. Yet when combined with the growing influence and prestige of the French ambassadors, they gave traders a considerable amount of freedom and power to back their claims by referring to their specific clauses. Nothing had really changed in the essence of the process, but the growing dependence of the Ottoman state on Western diplomatic support and approval no longer allowed it to disregard some of the provisions of the capitulations, or to treat their implementation by local authorities lightly. The mere toleration of the Western commercial presence was evolving into a situation in which European traders were able to impose themselves on the political and economic system of the empire.

The impact of this changing balance of power was best felt in the domain of the relations between foreign and local traders. As foreign traders secured the support of the Ottoman bureaucracy through the capitulations, Ottoman traders lost much of the leverage they had so far enjoyed. Under the combined pressure of European mercantilism, on the one hand, and of Ottoman 'liberalism', on the other, they were gradually forced to abandon their competitive – and even aggressive – policy, and to opt for a more cooperative stand

62 Pélissié du Rausas, *Capitulations*, p. 79.   63 Testa, *Recueil*, p. 210.

altogether. This radical shift in the attitude of local economic actors found its fullest expression in the rapid spreading of the status of protégé – *beratlı*, in Turkish – to a large number of non-Muslim traders of the empire. This status, originally defined as, and limited to, the position of dragomans and interpreters for ambassadors and consuls, provided its holders with assimilation to the status of foreigners, with consequent enjoyment of the privileges granted by the capitulations. The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed an actual boom in demands for this status, as well-to-do traders flocked to the embassies and consulates to obtain – often against cash payment – the precious documents that would free them from Ottoman subjection and grant them equal footing with their former rivals. This, more than anything else, was a clear sign that local merchants, losing any hope of competing against foreign traders, saw no other solution than to entrust their commercial destiny to those who had often been perceived as a major threat to their interests.[64]

Throughout the last decades of the century, as the Ottoman state was plagued by warfare and its diplomatic standing at the lowest, European – especially French – traders, diplomats and observers had come to agree that, in the same way that the Porte had surrendered to Western diplomacy, the Ottoman market had fallen under European control. The French ambassador, Choiseul-Gouffier, had even gone as far as to claim that the Ottoman Empire had become 'one of the richest colonies of France'.[65] About a century of commercial expansion and growing political influence seemed to have swept aside most of the obstacles and resistances that had, until then, characterised the Ottoman economy in its confrontation with Western trade.

Western economic domination: illusion and reality

There were many signs confirming the correctness of Choiseul-Gouffier's somewhat provocative statement. Ever since the end of the seventeenth century, Western trade had steadily increased its level of encroachment on the Ottoman economy, exploiting a growing number of local resources, and opening new avenues of consumption for the products of Western industries and colonial re-exports. The qualitative evolution of trade further confirmed this

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64 Ali İhsan Bağış, *Osmanlı ticaretinde gayri Müslimler. Kapitülasyonlar – Avrupa tüccarları-beratlı tüccarları – Hayriye tüccarları (1750–1839)* (Ankara, 1983).
65 Paul Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1911), p. 279.

impression. Raw materials had always dominated Ottoman exports to the West, but by the second half of the eighteenth century, the almost exclusive concentration of exports on textile raw materials certainly evoked colonial patterns of trade. The most striking example was probably that of cotton. Against a twenty-fold increase of the volume of raw cotton exported from the empire the exportation of cotton thread, once the dominant item in the cotton trade, had been reduced by almost 50 per cent.[66]

True, the transformation of the empire into a raw-materials basket for Western industries was not coupled with a corresponding flooding of its market by Western manufactures. In fact, their proportion in imports had tended to decrease towards the end of the century, as part of the cloth trade was replaced by a trade in raw materials or half-processed goods, such as sugar, coffee and dyestuffs. Nor were Ottoman raw materials re-entering the economy in a processed form: imported cloth was made of Spanish wool, and the huge quantities of cotton exported never came back in the form of cotton fabrics. The actual penetration of the Ottoman market was still in its infancy, leaving much space for local industries to thrive on a vast market of modest consumers. Indeed, marginal as they may have been compared to the bulk of Ottoman exports, local cotton textiles still figured among the shipments made from Aleppo to Marseilles (see table 14.2).[67] Similarly, the increasing quantities of indigo and cochineal imported from Marseilles towards the end of the century can only be interpreted as a sign of the resilience – and possibly the development – of Ottoman textile industries making use of these dyestuffs in their fabrics.

However, there were some sectors that did seem to surrender almost entirely to Western penetration. This was particularly the case with maritime transportation, where French ships – the *caravane* – established a near-monopoly on coastal shipping between Ottoman ports, contributing to a very substantial reduction of the alleged trade deficit of France with the Levant.[68] The same was true of the rich and brisk financial trade that developed between the Ottoman Empire and the West from the 1760s on. Combining shipments of silver coinage from France, Italy and Austria – mostly in the form of Spanish *piastres* and Austrian *thalers* – with a dense network of bills of exchange drawn on the major financial centres of Europe – Vienna, Venice, Leghorn, London, Amsterdam – foreign and local traders were able to realise handsome profits

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66 Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, p. 511.
67 Katsumi Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant d'Alep à Marseille* (Paris, 1987).
68 Daniel Panzac, *Commerce et navigation dans l'empire ottoman au XVIIIe siècle* (Istanbul, 1996).

in a trade that was often much more attractive than the cumbersome trade in commodities.[69]

All in all, then, it was clear that the overall outcome of commercial expansion in the eighteenth century had been favourable to Western traders, and that the French, in particular, had reaped substantial profits and advantages from this situation. With an expanded volume of trade, a growing integration of local production with the needs of Western industries, a still limited but growing penetration of consumer markets, and with local resistances reduced through the diplomatic leverage of ambassadors and the partial co-optation of local traders, patterns of domination had indeed started to appear clearly in the relations between Western economies and the empire. However, most of the economic and commercial advantages greatly depended on political leverage and influence. As a result they were also fragile and volatile in the medium and long run, as certain events that took place in the last decades of the eighteenth century and in the early 1800s would soon prove.

This was particularly true of French commercial interests, which started to be seriously threatened by certain transformations of the 1770s and 1780s. The treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the opening of the Black Sea to foreign navigation in 1783 and the outcome of the 1788–92 conflict with Russia had lowered the former political and diplomatic preponderance of France at the Porte, and created a forced rapprochement between the Ottomans and the Russian and Austrian empires. Certain local communities had benefited from this shift in the diplomatic balance of power. Greek and other Balkan merchants, who already participated in a thriving trade with central Europe, increased their power in those regions and routes where French presence had always been limited.[70] Greek shippers, obviously harmed by the rapid development of the French *caravane*, found new avenues of expansion into the Adriatic and the Black Seas, making use of their Austrian, Balkan and Russian connections.[71] Most emblematically, French trade finally collapsed, almost disappearing from the Levant, in the wake of the political cataclysm that shook France after 1789. The Revolution had already harmed the image of France in the empire, reducing its political prestige, credibility and influence; but the real crisis emerged in 1792–3, when political and economic chaos in the motherland irreparably

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69 Charles Carrière, Marcel Courdurié, Michel Gutsatz and René Squarzoni, *Banque et capitalisme commercial. La lettre de change au XVIIIe siècle* (Marseilles, 1976); Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 174–202.
70 Stoianovich, 'Balkan Orthodox Merchant'.
71 Traian Stoianovich, 'Pour un modèle du commerce du Levant: économie concurrentielle et économie de bazar, 1500–1800, Istanbul à la jonction des cultures balkaniques, Méditerranéennes, slaves et orientales', *AIESEE Bulletin* 12, 1 (1974), 61–120, at p. 95.

destroyed what remained of the presence and organisation of French trade in the Levant. The vacuum created by the disappearance of the major trade partner of the empire was easily filled, partly by Western competitors, but mostly by local traders who enjoyed, until the end of the Napoleonic wars, a revival of their trade and shipping.[72]

Conclusion: an ambiguous picture

A general evaluation of Western trade in the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is bound to consist of half-measures and half-truths. The dearth of Ottoman archival material to be put to use as a counterpart to the wealth of Western sources on the Levant trade is partly responsible for the feeling of doubt and inconclusiveness that surrounds many of the issues raised. Nevertheless, even in the light of this imperfect and unbalanced documentation, certain trends do emerge that allow for a global assessment of the period. That this assessment involves quite a number of conflicting and paradoxical aspects should not be viewed as a defect, but rather as a consequence of the coexistence of diverging – and sometimes opposing – trends in a world best defined as a pre-capitalist social and economic environment.

Economic and commercial leverage as well as patterns of domination are probably the most striking aspects of this immaturity. Over two centuries, Western trade increasingly encroached upon the economy of the empire; yet, so marginal and superficial were these commercial and economic advances that they barely posed a threat to the dynamics of the formidable – and some-what archaic – host economy. The Ottoman economy and its major actors, even if they occasionally felt threatened by the growing presence of Western traders, had, until the nineteenth century, enough leeway to navigate between a multitude of actions and reactions, ranging from outright resistance to temporary collaboration. European traders were partly fooled by their relative success into believing that they had achieved some degree of domination over this foreign environment, but their own pre-industrial economies were not yet equipped with the tools that would allow them to transform their advantages into victory. They saw relations of domination: the relations were there, the domination was not. Patterns of integration had been set, but integration itself was yet to come.

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72 Charles Carrière, *Négociants marseillais au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Marseilles, 1973), vol. I, pp. 109–52; Bruce McGowan, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699–1812: Trade', in Inalcik and Quataert (eds.), *Economic and Social History*, pp. 637–758, at pp. 727–9, 737–9.

Nevertheless, even in the absence of domination and integration, the patterns themselves were important and significant enough. Relations with local traders were a case in point. The French had been able to subdue Ottoman traders through political influence and by offering them a dependent, but gratifying, role within their commercial network. The Dutch had done exactly the contrary, allowing their trade to be 'conquered' by local merchants, who acted as proxies to absentee traders.[73] In both cases, however, from the perspective of the empire there was a common loss. What disappeared was the allegiance of a commercial elite – perhaps a would-be bourgeoisie – which chose to dissociate itself from the Ottoman commonwealth through foreign protection or, as in the case of many eighteenth-century Greeks and Armenians, through expatriation.

Independently of the vicissitudes of the commercial, economic and political conjunctures, the tone had been set for what was to come in the nineteenth century. Western trade had matured enough in its format, if not in its impact, to prefigure the turn it would take in the following century. All it would take, then, is the final comeback of an industrialised power, Britain, whose massive irruption on the Ottoman market would soon be followed by others.[74]

For the period under study, those developments were still far away. However, one particularly important – indeed, dramatic – development, generally masked by the emphasis on the local dimension of trade, needs to be underlined. Perhaps the most important and decisive development of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, much more than the terms and conditions of trade, was the inexorable process of marginalisation to which the Levant – in fact, the entire Mediterranean – was exposed during this period. With the explosion of commercial routes and overseas trade throughout this period, the Ottoman Empire had found itself relegated to a completely marginalised position in global trade. Marseilles, itself a victim of the same process, could well boast of its 'conquest' of the Levant; in fact, both sides were the real losers in the rapidly changing economic and commercial world of the time. This marginalisation, more than anything else, would be one of the major causes of the vulnerability of the Ottoman economy to the expansion of the capitalist world system. At the time of its integration, it had long lost the position of pre-eminence that had characterised it two centuries earlier.

73 Gerard R. Bosscha-Erdbrink, *At the Threshold of Felicity: Ottoman–Dutch Relations during the Embassy of Cornelis Calkoen at the Sublime Porte, 1726–1744* (Ankara, 1975), pp. 202–11.
74 Halil Inalcik, 'When and How British Cotton Goods Invaded the Levant Markets', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 374–83.

Table 14.1 *English and French broadcloth exports to the Levant,*
1666–1789 (in pieces of broadcloth)

	England	France
1666–1671	13,672	
1672–1677	20,075	
1678–1683	19,652	
1684–1690	17,543	
1691–1695	12,895	
1696–1700	15,122	
1701–1705	18,836	5,550
1706–1710	18,300	6,800
1711–1715	14,560	13,047
1716–1720	18,611	11,299
1721–1725	14,805	12,235
1726–1730	15,673	20,708
1731–1735	14,706	26,979
1736–1740	11,865	29,327
1741–1745	6,986	23,782
1746–1750	9,897	28,722
1751–1755	8,259	31,850
1756–1760	3,210	27,246
1761–1765	3,618	31,925
1766–1770		41,389
1771–1775		47,083
1776–1780		44,529
1781–1785		35,650
1786–1789		29,686

Sources: Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square*, p. 42; Archives de la
Chambre de Commerce de Marseille (ACCM), H 171–3, Etats des
draps expédiés en Levant. French figures, originally in *demi-pièces*
(half-pieces) have been divided by two. Data are missing from the
French series for the years 1706 and 1707.

Table 14.2 *Ottoman exports of cotton textiles to Marseilles, 1700–1789 (in* livres tournois)

	1700–1702	1705–1714	1732–1740	1750–1754	1766–1772	1786–1789
Aleppo	108,000	179,400	827,700	1,326,000	1,400,500	1,696,000
Istanbul		96,300	4,800		3,100	
Izmir	82,000	40,900	19,200	16,000	4,200	70,000
Sayda		18,800	2,700		10,400	
Tripoli		15,700	25,200		100	
Egypt	156,000	13,800	302,700	242,000	290,700	480,000
Cyprus		10,000	25,600		2,900	
Greece		1,200	1,300		800	
Crete		200	100		400	
other	39,150			131,820		283,752
total	385,150	376,300	1,209,300	1,715,820	1,713,100	2,529,752

Sources: for 1700–2, 1750–4 and 1786–9: Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, p. 534; for 1705–14, 1732–40 and 1766–72: Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant*, pp. 21–6.

Table 14.3 *Shares of the major European nations in the Levant trade, 1686–1784 (in* livres tournois *and percentages)*

	France	England	Holland	Venice	Austria	Others
1686	1,519,290	4,184,700	3,697,440	246,900		
(per cent)	15.7	43.4	38.3	2.6		
1749–50	2,550,868	595,850	134,164	637,421		
(per cent)	65.1	15.2	3.4	16.3		
1776–78	13,448,791	7,432,045	4,300,901	2,875,279	872,018	861,973
(per cent)	45.1	24.9	14.4	9.6	2.9	2.9
c. 1784						
(per cent)	36.5	9.2	18.3	12.0	24.0	

Note: In 1776–8, 'others' include Sweden, Russia and Leghorn. Sources: for 1686: Archives Nationales (AN), Affaires Etrangères (AE), BIII 241, pièce 12, Etats du commerce des Français, Anglais, Hollandais et Vénitiens à Constantinople, n.d.; for 1749–50: AN, AE, BIII 241, pièce 35, Etat général ou total du commerce des étrangers à Constantinople comparé à celui des Français pendant les années 1749 et 1750; for 1776–8: Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône (ADBR), 41 E 4, Fonds Ollivier, Cahier de réductions de poids et mesures, opérations de change, etc., n.d.; for 1784: McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, p. 28.

Table 14.4 *Geographical distribution of Marseilles trade (end of the seventeenth–end of the eighteenth centuries) (in* livres tournois *and percentages)*

	End of the seventeenth century		End of the eighteenth century	
	l.t.	per cent	*l.t.*	per cent
Terra Nova	2,000,000	2.6	6,000,000	2.4
United States			4,000,000	1.6
Caribbean			56,000,000	22.4
North	6,000,000	7.7	12,000,000	4.8
West Coast	4,000,000	5.1	12,000,000	4.8
Spain and Portugal	8,000,000	10.3	20,000,000	8.0
Barbary	8,000,000	10.3	16,000,000	6.4
African slave trade			6,000,000	2.4
Italy	20,000,000	25.6	40,000,000	16.0
Levant	30,000,000	38.5	64,000,000	25.6
Austria			4,000,000	1.6
East Indies			10,000,000	4.0
Total	78,000,000	100.0	250,000,000	100.0

Source: Carrière, *Richesse du passé*, pp. 40–1.

Table 14.5 *Ships entering the port of Marseilles from the Levant and the Atlantic, 1710–1794*

	Levant	Atlantic
1710–1714	128	79
1720–1724	113	50
1730–1734	135	149
1740–1744	131	195
1750–1754	135	262
1760–1764	83	189
1770–1774	172	502
1780–1784	158	298
1790–1794	114	356

Source: Carrière, *Négociants marseillais*, pp. 1046–7.

Table 14.6 *British trade with the Levant, 1621–1856 (in £000s)*

		Imports from the Levant					Exports to the Levant		
	manuf. goods	text. mat.	foodstuffs	dyestuffs	other	total imp.	manuf. goods	raw mat.	total exp.
1621, 1630, 1634		107	65	5	72	249			
1663, 1669		245	79	58	39	421			
1699–1701		276	8	13	17	314	217	17	234
1722–1724		326	7	7	16	356	190	19	209
1752–1754		114	11	1	26	152	137	15	152
1784–1786		241	8	–	24	273	38	40	78
1794–1796		285	16	47	30	378	49	83	132
1804–1806		37	66	73	65	241	105	65	170
1814–1816	2	96	127	113	78	416	175	141	316
1824–1826	7	842	78	148	79	1,154	590	117	707
1834–1836	3	279	83	161	452	1,274	1,203	181	1,384
1844–1846	33	940	257	361	207	1,798	2,893	373	3,266
1854–1856	321	2,594	2,142	541	711	6,309	5,694	1,384	7,078

Sources: for 1621–69: R. Davis, 'English Imports', p. 202; for 1699–1754: Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square*, p. 31; for 1784–1856: Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade*, pp. 88–93, 110–125.

Notes: Export figures are not available for the period 1621–69. For import figures from 1621 to 1754, a small number of manufactures (mainly textiles) may have been included in the 'other' category. Export figures for 1784–1856 include re-exports. In the 1784–1856 statistics, the Levant covers the Balkans, Anatolia, Egypt and the Russian Black Sea ports.

Table 14.7 *Regional distribution of British trade, 1784–1856 (in percentages)*

	Europe		Asia		N. America		S. America		N. East		Africa	
	imp.	exp.	imp.	exp.	imp.	exp.	imp.	exp.	imp.	exp.	imp.	exp.
1621	77.8				6.4				15.8			
1663, 1669	64.3				23.7				12.0			
1699–1701	58.6				34.7				6.7			
1784–1786	43.8	46.2	24.3	12.4	29.8	36.5	0.1	0.1	1.3	0.5	0.7	4.3
1794–1796	43.8	38.4	21.4	12.6	32.3	45.5	0.8	0.3	1.1	0.5	0.6	2.7
1804–1806	45.8	44.2	15.8	6.5	34.6	43.2	2.5	2.6	0.5	0.4	0.8	3.0
1814–1816	35.1	58.4	18.2	5.3	35.3	30.8	9.6	4.3	0.6	0.5	1.1	0.7
1824–1826	40.6	46.1	19.3	10.0	31.4	28.9	5.5	12.2	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2
1834–1836	37.5	44.1	16.4	9.4	36.6	32.3	4.8	9.5	1.8	2.4	2.9	2.2
1844–1846	36.8	44.3	17.2	15.1	34.2	24.6	6.0	8.8	2.2	4.7	3.5	2.4
1854–1856	36.3	40.1	17.0	11.4	32.7	32.8	6.4	7.5	4.2	5.7	3.4	2.4

Source: computed from Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade*, pp. 55, 88–93; Davis, 'English Imports', p. 202.
Notes: up to 1701, figures for Asia, N. America and S. America are grouped under N. America. The West Indies and Australia have been included in 'North America'. The Near East covers the Balkans, Anatolia, Egypt and the Russian Black Sea ports.

Table 14.8 *French trade with the Levant, 1671–1789 (in livres tournois 000s)*

	Imports from the Levant					Exports to the Levant			
	manuf. goods	text. mat.	dyestuffs	other	total imp.	manuf. goods	foodstuffs	dyestuffs	total exp.
1671–1675					6,676				
1681–1685					5,804				
1691–1695					6,644				
1702–1704	385	5,457	206	2,272	8,320				
1711–1715					13,920				
1721–1725					9,480				4,597
1731–1735					12,000				4,499
1741–1745					13,372				18,452
1750–1754	1,716	11,439	757	9,119	23,030	8,553	1,820	2,330	12,683
1761–1765					16,841				16,439
1771–1775					27,800				17,977
1781–1785					25,160				16,700
1786–1789	2,530	19,145	1,909	5,405	28,989	6,712	5,145	3,608	15,465

Sources: ACCM, I 19, Etats des marchandises envoyées en Levant et Barbarie (1748–1769); I 20, Etats des marchandises envoyées en Levant et Barbarie (1776–1779, 1786–1789); I 26, Etats estimatifs des marchandises venant du Levant et de Barbarie (1700–1747); I 27, Etats des marchandises venant du Levant et de Barbarie (1725–1759); I 28, Etats des marchandises venues du Levant (1776–1789); J 1560, Etat estimatif du commerce d'entrée et de sortie du Levant depuis l'année 1726 jusques et compris 1777, extrait des etats particuliers déposés dans les archives de la Chambre du Commerce de Marseille, 1779; Masson, *Histoire du commerce français au XVIIe siècle*, appendix IV, p. xiii; Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 600–1; Eldem, *French Trade*, pp. 13–15.
Note: export data from Marseilles to the Levant are missing for the years 1671–1725, 1756, 1759–60, 1762 and 1770–5. The export figure for 1721–5 is in fact the figure for 1726–30; that for 1771–5 is the average of 1766–80 and 1776–80.

Table 14.9 *English silk imports, 1590–1856*

	Levant		Asia		Italy		Other	
	£000s	lbs. (000s)	£000s	lbs. (000s)	£000s	lbs. (000s)	£000s	lbs. (000s)
1621, 1630, 1634	73							
1663, 1669	172	264	1		19		−	
1699–1701	219							
1701–1705		216						
1706–1710		194						
1711–1715		280						
1716–1720		258						
1721–1725		240		84		21		−
1722–1724	274							
1726–1730		259		126		20		9
1731–1735		181		156		32		28
1736–1740		135		138		19		42
1741–1745		145		116		60		17
1746–1750		135		59		76		33
1751–1755		111		159		101		32
1752–1754	81							
1756–1760		132		109		136		25
1761–1765		113		73		202		46
1784–1786	33		568				617	
1794–1796	9		448				704	
1804–1806	10		504				1,288	
1814–1816	78		833				1,646	
1824–1826	235		1,145				2,103	
1834–1836	544		2,094				1,745	
1844–1846	367		1,983				1,652	
1854–1856	1,404		4,229				1,331	

Sources: For 1621, 1630, 1634, 1663, 1669 and 1701–65, Davis, 'English Imports, pp. 199, 202; Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square*, pp. 42, 139; for 1784–1856, Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade*, pp. 110–25.
Note: figures in lbs. are given in 'great pounds' of 24 oz. 'Asia' describes mainly India, with the addition of China after 1834. 'Other' generally includes Italy until 1784; from that date on, north-western Europe takes the lead. For the 1784–1856 statistics, the Levant covers the Balkans, Anatolia, Egypt and the Russian Black Sea ports.

Table 14.10 *Major Ottoman exports to Marseilles, 1700–1789 (in* livres tournois*)*

	1700–1702	1750–1754	1786–1789
silk	2,416,000	2,095,000	1,638,000
cotton wool	225,000	3,760,000	9,853,000
cotton thread	1,303,000	1,924,000	2,939,000
sheep's wool	737,000	911,000	2,257,000
camel-hair	173,000	879,000	1,021,000
mohair	639,000	1,835,000	1,437,000
hides	537,000	318,000	966,000
dyestuffs	208,000	746,000	1,919,000
olive oil	743,000	1,451,000	3,261,000
beeswax	250,000	387,000	753,000
wheat and barley	725,000	3,489,000	409,000
textile products	385,100	1,715,820	2,529,752
other	1,628,900	2,289,180	3,042,248
total	9,970,000	21,800,000	33,025,000

Source: Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 504–41, 600–1.

Table 14.11 *Major Ottoman imports from Marseilles, 1700–1789 (in* livres tournois*)*

	1750–1754	1786–1789
cloth	8,243,000	5,767,000
other textile products	290,000	945,000
sugar	980,000	1,620,000
coffee	840,000	3,525,000
dyestuffs	2,330,000	3,608,000
other	1,917,000	2,015,000
total	14,600,000	17,480,000

Source: Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 542–66, 600–1.

Table 14.12 *Major Ottoman exports to, and imports from, Marseilles, 1700–1789, and French balance of trade deficit (in* livres tournois*)*

	1700–1702	1750–1754	1785–1789
exports			
silk	2,416,000	2,095,000	1,638,000
cotton wool	225,000	3,760,000	9,853,000
cotton thread	1,303,000	1,924,000	2,939,000
sheep-wool	737,000	911,000	2,257,000
camel-hair	173,000	879,000	1,021,000
mohair	639,000	1,835,000	1,437,000
hides	537,000	318,000	966,000
dyestuffs	208,000	746,000	1,919,000
olive oil	743,000	1,451,000	3,261,000
beeswax	250,000	387,000	753,000
wheat and barley	725,000	3,489,000	409,000
textiles	385,100	1,715,820	2,529,752
Other	1,628,900	2,289,180	2,457,248
Total	9,970,000	21,800,000	32,440,000
imports			
cloth		8,243,000	5,767,000
other textile products		290,000	945,000
sugar		980,000	1,620,000
coffee		840,000	3,525,000
dyestuffs		2,330,000	3,608,000
other		1,917,000	2,015,000
total		14,600,000	17,480,000
French balance of trade deficit		7,200,000	15,765,000

Source: Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 504–66, 600–1.

Table 14.13 *Distribution of French trade among the major* échelles, *1700–1789 (in livres tournois)*

	1700–1702	1750–1754	1786–1789
Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria, Rosetta, Damietta)			
exports to Marseilles	2,183,500	2,532,000	2,822,000
imports from Marseilles		1,929,000	1,364,000
Syria and Palestine (Sayda, Acre, Beirut, Tyre, Tripoli)			
exports to Marseilles	1,446,000	3,705,000	1,399,000
imports from Marseilles		841,000	824,000
Aleppo			
exports to Marseilles	818,000	2,074,000	3,515,000
imports from Marseilles		2,366,000	2,130,000
Izmir (Smyrna)			
exports to Marseilles	2,342,000	5,089,000	14,221,000
imports from Marseilles		4,059,000	6,166,000
Istanbul (Constantinople)			
exports to Marseilles	906,000	842,000	2,554,000
imports from Marseilles		3,101,000	4,769,000
Salonika			
exports to Marseilles	282,000	1,399,000	2,873,000
imports from Marseilles		1,243,000	1,696,000
Other (Cyprus, Crete, Aegean Islands, Morea)			
exports to Marseilles	1,993,000	6,159,000	5,056,000
imports from Marseilles		1,061,000	531,000
Total			
exports to Marseilles	9,970,000	21,800,000	32,440,000
imports from Marseilles		14,600,000	17,480,000

Sources: Paris, *Histoire du commerce*, pp. 377–495, 600–1.

Guildsmen and handicraft producers

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

The place of craftsmen in Ottoman society

Handicraft producers were linked to each other – and also to their suppliers, wholesalers and ultimate consumers – by a variety of social, political and 'economic' ties. The latter term is here used in the sense of 'mediated by the market'. Throughout the period which concerns us here, 'economic' activities were more or less tightly controlled by the political authorities. Few if any economic historians would assume that in the Ottoman world the market can be treated as an autonomous sphere, in which buyers and sellers alone agreed on prices, and the state or religious authorities did not intervene.[1] Quite to the contrary, established wisdom has always treated the Ottoman Empire as a social formation in which the state dominated both production and distribution, determining even the range of profits permitted to a craftsman.[2] Political, social and economic aspects of craft organisation are thus inextricably linked – both in 'reality' and in the image drawn by historians.

Quite a few authors, especially those who at some point in their lives were inclined toward the concept of an 'Asiatic mode of production', have visualised Ottoman society as consisting 'in principle' of tax-paying peasants and a tax-collecting elite.[3] Not much place, in this picture, was allowed to merchants and craftsmen. This is an obvious distortion. But the dearth of information on craftsmen, particularly in seventeenth-century documents, does at times encourage this kind of misconception. Unless army, navy, court or capital demanded the products of craftsmen, Ottoman officials do not seem to have

1 Mübahat Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda narh müessesesi ve 1640 tarihli narh defteri* (Istanbul, 1983).
2 Halil Inalcik, 'Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of Economic History* 29, 1 (1969), 97–140; Nelly Hanna, *Making Big Money in 1600: The Life and Times of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Egyptian Merchant* (Syracuse, 1998).
3 Niyazi Berkes, *100 soruda Türkiye iktisat tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1969), vol. I, pp. 11–13.

monitored the day-to-day problems of artisans.[4] In consequence, Ottoman bureaucrats have left us only a limited amount of documentation on craft affairs. On the other hand, as the near totality of all primary sources has been produced by members of the Ottoman elite, it is not surprising that the latter's viewpoint should have long dominated, and to a degree continues to dominate, Ottomanist history writing. Occasional sources telling the story 'from below' are few and far between, and even local chronicles or saints' legends, in which members of the lower urban strata do find a place, were not usually composed by craftsmen.[5]

Merchants were often enough considered by officials as a potentially disruptive element, even though at the same time their services were visualised as necessary for providing court, army and capital with foodstuffs and raw materials. Artisans did not normally possess the economic power of merchants, and therefore were accorded even less attention. When they do show up in normative texts, they formed part of the 'poor subjects' (*reaya fukarası*), who should adhere closely to established precedent and not attempt to enrich themselves. After all, in this perspective, enrichment could only be achieved at the expense of the consumer. Perhaps because the elite were not producers themselves, officials tended to look at the world from the consumer's point of view.[6]

Artisans and villagers

A central question, but one which we have great trouble answering, concerns the links of Ottoman craftsmen to the countryside. Wool, hides, cotton, grain and other indispensable raw materials were produced not in the towns themselves, but in the surrounding villages. Some craftsmen may have provisioned themselves directly 'at source'. This arrangement is documented for the Jews

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4 Ottoman documents on artisans can be found in the Registers of Important Affairs (Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme Defterleri) and the Complaint Registers (BA Şikâyet Defterleri). In addition, for those cities for which they survive, we have the kadi registers. For the eighteenth century, we possess the Provincial Registers of [Sultanic] Commands (BA Vilayet Ahkâm Defterleri). For a broad selection of mid-eighteenth-century material on Istanbul, see Ahmet Kal'a et al. (eds.), *İstanbul Külliyatı: İstanbul Ahkâm Defterleri* (Istanbul, 1997). The BA Maliyeden Müdevver section contains numerous individual commands, preserved as register copies.

5 Bruce Masters, 'The View from the Province: Syrian Chronicles of the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, 3 (1994), 353–62; Paolo Odorico et al., *Conseils et mémoires de Synadinos prêtre de Serrès en Macédoine (XVIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1996); Suraiya Faroqhi, 'The Life Story of an Urban Saint in the Ottoman Empire', *Tarih Dergisi* (special issue in memory of İsmail H. Uzunçarşılı) 32 (1979), 655–78, 1009–18. The saint in question trained as a shoemaker.

6 Inalcik, 'Capital Formation', pp. 97–8.

of Salonika, who wove the woollen cloth out of which janissary uniforms were sewn. In the seventeenth century, as in earlier periods, the state ensured the weavers' access to raw wool by forbidding merchants to enter the market before the weavers' needs had been taken care of. Moreover, in small towns on the southern coast of Anatolia it was customary, throughout the period in question and often down to the present, for townsmen to migrate to the mountains during the summer. Certain craftsmen set up shop in the new location, supplying not only their fellow migrants but also peasants and nomads frequenting the fairs (*panayır*) which can be documented in this area from the second half of the sixteenth century.[7] Presumably these artisans also bought their supplies of wool, hides and skins from the primary producers.

Apart from this special situation, there are occasional references in certain kadi registers to urban craftsmen doing work for villagers. Thus by the beginning of the nineteenth century, and possibly even earlier, peasants from the countryside around Nablus came to town to purchase the textiles needed for new clothes, which were *de rigeur* at weddings.[8] In the late sixteenth century, estates of peasant women living near Konya and owning some jewellery have been encountered, also indicating market links.[9]

But such direct commercial exchanges between craftsmen and rural dwellers were probably the exception rather than the rule. Peasants must have produced most of the goods they needed at home, while many artisans bought through their guilds and/or from tax-farmers, and thus did not do their purchasing directly from villagers. In most cases, peasants presumably earned cash mainly to pay their taxes, and not to purchase ready-made goods. Town artisans, on the other hand, served the needs of the governing class and their retainers, and also of merchants and other artisans. But as we have seen, there were quite a few exceptions to this rule.

Organising the supply of raw materials

From the craftsmen's point of view, purchases normally were arranged through the guild authorities, and constituted the main responsibility of the guild

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7 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Sixteenth Century Periodic Markets in Various Anatolian *sancaks*: İçel, Hamid, Karahisar-i Sahib, Kütahya, Aydın and Menteşe', *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient* 22, 1 (1979), 32–79.

8 Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1995).

9 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'The Peasants of Saideli in the Later Sixteenth Century', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 8 (1983), 216–50.

wardens (*kethüda*).[10] Masters were assigned their shares of whatever raw materials were available; in principle, though perhaps not always in practice, these shares were equal. Purchasing by the guild therefore functioned as a device for equalising the chances of masters, and therefore presumably was favoured by the poorer artisans. But in practice, monitoring the masters may have been a complicated business. In seventeenth-century Bursa, individual craftsmen were frequently accused of offering higher raw material prices than their respective guilds, thereby cornering more than their fair share of scarce inputs.[11]

Common purchasing by means of guild officers enhanced the guildsmen's bargaining power vis-à-vis peasant producers and, whenever semi-finished goods were needed, other craftsmen as well. But most importantly, collective purchases constituted the base for apportioning minerals serving as inputs, such as silver, salt, copper or alum. Mines were normally farmed out to the highest bidder, and to ensure that the mineral produced was actually sold, the empire was divided into zones (*örü*) whose inhabitants were supposed to buy only from the source to which they had been assigned. On the other hand, artisans who normally used alum or some other mineral as inputs might be required to purchase a certain quantity at prices fixed by the tax-farmer, regardless of their actual needs.[12] Such arrangements could only work if distribution was centralised in some way, and even then there were difficulties. For in cases in which a given mineral could be procured more cheaply from outside the *örü* in question, smuggling was rife. Unfortunately we do not know whether guilds were willing to act as illegal purchasers, or whether such matters were left to the initiative of the individual artisan.[13]

The division of labour

The most visible and therefore best-documented manufacturers were doubtlessly those organised in guilds. In small towns, craft structures might be relatively simple, with, for example, only one type – or at most a very few types – of tailors who made up fabrics into ready-to-wear garments. But in larger cities, producers were highly specialised. Thus distinct though similar goods might be

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10 Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700* (Jerusalem, 1988).

11 Ibid., pp. 48–51.

12 Lütfi Güçer, 'XV–XVII. Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda tuz inhisarı ve tuzların işletme nizamı', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 23, 1–4 (1962–3), 97–143; Heidemarie Doğanalp-Votzi, *Der Gerber, der Kulturbringer: Politik, Ökonomie, Zivilisation im osmanischen Vorderasien* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), p. 114.

13 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Alum Production and Alum Trade in the Ottoman Empire (about 1560–1830)', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 71 (1979), 153–75.

produced by separate guilds. There might be four or five different varieties of shoemakers, who each procured leather from the tanners of their own town. Or else they were supplied through the shoe merchants; the latter put out work to artisans and specialised in the marketing of different kinds of shoes.[14] If a new type of shoe became popular among customers, these shoemakers might turn to the authorities for a decision as to which guild was permitted to manufacture the new item.[15]

We imagine the 'typical' artisan as working in a small shop, which might constitute his freehold property, or else be rented from a pious foundation. But craftsmen of a single guild, or a few closely related guilds, might also work together in a common workshop, where they pooled their investments to procure the implements needed. The premises of such large workshops would normally belong to a pious foundation. This type of organisation recommended itself especially when implements were costly, as in the case of the copper vats used by dyers. It seems that this arrangement gained in frequency during the late seventeenth and particularly the eighteenth century – unfortunately at present, this impression cannot be verified or disproved statistically.[16] Possibly because of the high rate of inflation prevailing throughout the eighteenth century, foundations discovered that their revenues were being eroded, and built rent-producing real estate to make up the difference. As many foundation administrators had access to the central authorities, they could procure sultanic commands ordering artisans to work in these commercial buildings, regardless of the preferences of the latter.

But apparently in some cases, collective workshops were considered desirable by the more substantial craftsmen themselves. Thus the famous saddlers' compound of Istanbul, the Saraçhane – an 'old' collective workshop as it went back to the time of Mehmed the Conqueror – burned down in 1693.[17] While the more modest craftsmen used this opportunity to scatter all over the city, the wealthier saddlers made sure that the compound was rebuilt, and it remained in use until destroyed by a fire in 1908. If this case in fact conformed to a general pattern, then the more influential guild members (who often, but not necessarily always, were also wealthier than their colleagues) presumably saw the

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14 Doğanalp-Votzi, *Der Gerber*, p. 173 and elsewhere.

15 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 164.

16 Mehmet Genç, 'Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics, and Main Trends', in *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500–1950*, ed. Donald Quataert (Albany, 1994), pp. 59–86, at p. 63.

17 Çağatay Uluçay, 'İstanbul Saraçhanesi ve saraçlarına dair bir araştırma', *Tarih Dergisi* 3, 5–6 (1951–2), 147–64, at p. 148.

collective workshop as a convenient means of social control. For even more than the 'craftsmen's street' allotted to a single trade (*çarşı*), the collective workshop lent itself to a close monitoring of every member's comings and goings. Up to the present, no cases have been found of artisans who used the collective workshop as a convenient site for dividing up the work process by stages, and established manufactories in which the product was passed from shop to shop until completion.[18] Certain craftsmen might exert 'influence' in the collective workshop, but nobody could presume to control the productive activities of his fellows.

However, this sphere of relative autonomy shrank whenever artisans were associated in a partnership (*şirket*). Such arrangements were common among merchants, and the studies undertaken so far concentrate upon the mercantile aspect.[19] But occasionally we find artisans working in a dye-house associated not only through membership in a guild but also, even more intensively, as a *şirket*. Here the monitoring of fellow guildsmen was probably even closer than elsewhere, and those excluded for whatever reason had a hard time obtaining any kind of work as dyers. However, in such a case the capital invested and a share of current profits was paid out to the man leaving the shop. At present we cannot tell how common it was for craftsmen to organise themselves in partnerships.[20]

There also existed another, more 'modern', kind of labour division. A complex product such as silk, velvet or fine leather shoes might go through the hands of many different craftsmen before reaching the consumer. When many artisans worked together to produce, for instance, a sophisticated piece of silk cloth out of undyed raw silk, outsiders might come to control and coordinate the process. In seventeenth-century Bursa, silk manufacturing was controlled by the silk merchants (*kazzaz*), who owned the imported Iranian silk, an essential input, and passed it on to twisters, bleachers and dyers. These craftsmen owned their equipment and operated their own shops, but probably they did not possess the capital required to procure raw silk. Possibly they also lacked the contacts needed to market the finished product. Thus Bursa silk

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18 Genç, 'Ottoman Industry', p. 63.

19 Murat Çizakça, *A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships: The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives* (Leiden, 1996); Fethi Gedikli, *Osmanlı şirket kültürü XVI. ve XVII. yüzyıllarda mudârebe uygulaması* (Istanbul, 1998).

20 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Ortak işliklerle özel evler arasında XVIII. yüzyıl Bursa'sında işyerleri', in *Bir masaldı Bursa . . .* , ed. Engin Yenal (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 97–104; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'The Centre of Urfa in the Eighteenth Century', in *Tarihten günümüze Anadolu'da konut ve yerleşme*, ed. Yıldız Sey et al. (Istanbul, n.d.), pp. 278–83.

production during the seventeenth century has been classed as an example of an urban putting-out system run by the *kazzaz*.[21]

Information on rural artisans working within such a context is even less abundant. 'Putting out' arrangements existed in the environs of Ankara, where peasant women were spinning for merchants by the mid-sixteenth century, and doubtlessly continued to do so during the seventeenth. During the last years of the sixteenth century, the villagers of İstanos (Zir), Miranos and Erkeksu petitioned the administration for exemption from the barley dues normally levied upon Ottoman peasants, as they were weavers and not agriculturalists.[22] From this same period dates a sultanic command referring to the mohair producers in small towns west of Ankara, who were unable to provide coins acceptable to the tax-collectors because they were habitually paid in debased coin; this phenomenon probably occurred in later decades as well.[23] From the seventeenth century properly speaking (1678–9), we possess casual references to merchants controlling the production of cotton cloth in western Anatolia. Fabrics woven in Denizli, Buldan or Manisa were transported to Tire for dyeing, before the construction of dye-houses in the producing localities themselves rendered this procedure unnecessary. In an equally casual fashion, we learn of the existence of a putting-out textile manufacture in the villages surrounding Bursa.[24] Apart from the Ankara countryside, in none of the documented cases does the evidence allow us to assume the existence of a fully-fledged proto-industry, in which, by the accepted definition, the lives of the villagers were conditioned not by the size of the harvest, but by the prosperity or decline of a dominant local manufacture.[25]

Categories of workers

While working for a merchant in an urban setting was compatible with guild membership, most rural artisans were probably unorganised. This makes rural craftsmen virtually invisible to the modern historian; their very existence must be deduced from documents mainly concerned with other matters.

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21 Gerber, *Bursa*, p. 65.
22 Özer Ergenç, '1600–1615 yılları arasında Ankara iktisadi tarihine ait araştırmalar', in *Türkiye iktisat tarihi semineri*, ed. Osman Okyar and Ünal Nalbantoğlu (Ankara, 1975), pp. 145–68, at p. 154.
23 Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, p. 143.
24 Inalcik, 'Capital Formation', p. 118; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Merchant Networks and Ottoman Craft Production (16th–17th Centuries)', in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480–1820*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 169–92.
25 Franklin F. Mendels, 'Protoindustrialization: The First Phase of the Industrialization Process', *Journal of Economic History* 32 (1972), 241–61.

With a few exceptions, the same thing applies to female workers, who played an important role, especially in Bursa. When in 1678 a count of the roughly 300 spinning-wheels in this city was undertaken, it turned out that half of them were operated by women. During those years, a tax rebate was requested for the not inherently implausible reason that the labour force consisted largely of poor women.[26] But in Ankara as well, female participation in mohair manufacture was far from negligible. Dyeing was practised by Bursa women as a cottage industry, much to the chagrin of the guild-organised dyers. Candle-making also was a domestic craft, and established candle-makers (*mumcu*) sometimes complained about competition from housewives. In 1720, women married to blacksmiths working for the navy arsenal prepared and sold a dish called *paça*, made out of lambs' trotters, even though the guild of *paça*-makers tried hard to get rid of these competitors.[27] Rural women also must have worked at crafts, but the surviving documentation deals with urban producers only.

We know very little about the manner in which such craftswomen marketed their goods. Some may have sold informally to their neighbours; no records enlighten us about this practice. Others may have entrusted their products to itinerant saleswomen who visited the female members of wealthy households to show them the latest novelties. At least in Bursa there were some who sold their own products in the women's market. Even though competing craftsmen were less than happy about this situation, the tax exemption of this market was confirmed because 'poor women' must be allowed to maintain themselves.[28] Apart from women working on their own, there must have been those who aided their husbands; in both Ankara and Bursa, this was facilitated by the fact that many looms were located not in workshops but in private homes.[29]

How workshop labour was trained and recruited is but imperfectly known. Apprentices served for a variable number of years, and probably were obliged to help out not only in the shop, but also in the master's home.[30] According to a sultanic command from the year 1622, Bursa velvet-makers found their workmen at weekly outdoor gatherings. Recruitment took place under the supervision of experienced masters (*ehl-i hibre*), and only those who had been

26 Haim Gerber, 'Social and Economic Position of Women in an Ottoman City: Bursa 1600–1700', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980), 231–44.

27 Başbakanlık Arşivi, Istanbul, Şikâyet Defteri 85, p. 399 (1132/1720).

28 Gerber, 'Social and Economic Position of Women', p. 238.

29 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Mohair Manufacture and Mohair Workshops in Seventeenth Century Ankara', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 41, 1–4 (1982–3), 211–36 (Turkish version: 'Onyedinci yüzyıl Ankara'sında sof imalatı ve sof atölyeleri', 237–59).

30 Faroqhi, 'Urban Saint'.

properly trained were supposed to enter employers' shops. However, this rule was often more honoured in the breach than in the observance. When workmen were scarce, not only did masters hire low-grade labourers, the latter also demanded advance pay; they might then disappear in the middle of the week, before their allotted tasks had been completed.[31] It is notable that these employees of the velvet-makers were called not journeymen but simply labourers (*işçi*); whether the master velvet-makers employed journeymen in addition to this floating labour force remains unclear.

The guilds as intermediaries between craft masters and the state

Guilds had the double function of serving the interests of the masters and, from the state's point of view, securing supervision and the payment of artisans' taxes. Masters were concerned about controlling access to their crafts; this desire was usually expressed in the form of complaints about improperly trained workmen trying to set up shop. Unless a given artisan himself belonged to the wealthy members of his guild, he would also try to eliminate competition from his richer or more enterprising colleagues. Apart from the disputes over raw material procurement we have already encountered, richer masters attracting customers by allowing them easy credit also constituted a bone of contention. Guilds also took a hand in price-fixing. In provincial towns the kadis usually determined by administrative decree only the prices of a few essential goods. In most other cases, leading guildsmen were called upon to decide what should be charged. Even where the kadi did officially make these decisions, the advice of senior guild members was needed, if only because unrealistic prices would merely have encouraged the black market.

On the other hand, given the weakness of urban police forces, the Ottoman state also used the guilds as a means of controlling the urban population. This included both the procurement of services needed by the army and navy, and securing the payment of taxes and dues. In every campaign, a certain number of craftsmen were drafted to supply the soldiers with boots, coats and tents; the necessary investments had to be made by the relevant guilds.[32] This could become an explosive issue. In 1730, the rebellion of Patrona Halil, which

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31 Fahri Dalsar, *Türk sanayi ve ticaret tarihinde Bursa'da ipekçilik* (Istanbul 1960), p. 40.
32 Gilles Veinstein, 'Du marché urbain au marché du camp: l'institution ottomane des *orducu*', in *Mélanges Professeur Robert Mantran*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi (Zaghouan, 1988), pp. 299–327.

brought down Ahmed III and his grand vizier, Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa, found adherents in part because artisans who had spent money on equipping their fellows for a campaign were frustrated at seeing the sultanic army settled in Üsküdar, and the money which they could ill afford to lose being wasted in consequence.[33]

Another service demanded from certain types of guilds concerned the dock-yards and navy. Until galleys were finally phased out in the course of the seventeenth century, rowers needed to propel them were recruited in advance of every campaign. Partly in order to improve security, 'free' oarsmen were interspersed with the criminals and prisoners of war who normally performed this service. 'Free' oarsmen were supplied at least in part by waterfront workers, such as the boatmen who linked Üsküdar, Galata and the Bosporus villages to *intra muros* Istanbul.[34] We have no data on the life expectancy of rowers on Ottoman navy ships. But since conditions seem to have paralleled those on other Mediterranean galleys, on which we do possess some information, risks to life must have been quite high. Moreover, any naval campaign necessitated a spate of ship-building. Artisans ordinarily working for private customers were drafted for this purpose, and usually paid wages far below what they would have received in the regular market.

Guildsmen under state supervision

Where the capital was concerned, the quantity and quality of goods available was of direct relevance to the political fortunes of rulers and viziers. This explains why fairly mundane problems involving Istanbul craftsmen were often discussed in the afternoon meetings of the grand vizier and his advisers, and occasionally even in the presence of the sultan himself. This phenomenon is well known from the sixteenth century, and continued throughout the period under discussion.[35] Routine supervision apart, a sultan or grand vizier might institute a special drive against a particular abuse, such as short weight for bread or defective lengths for cloth sold by the piece.

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33 Münir Aktepe, *Patrona isyanı (1730)* (Istanbul, 1958), p. 39.

34 İdris Bostan, *Osmanlı bahriye teşkilâtı: XVIII. yüzyılda tersâne-i âmire* (Ankara, 1992), p. 202.

35 Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Onuncu asr-ı hicrî'de İstanbul hayatı (1485–1591)* (Istanbul, 1988); Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Onbirinci asr-ı hicrî'de İstanbul hayatı (1592–1688)* (Istanbul, 1988); Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Onikinci asr-ı hicrî'de İstanbul hayatı (1689–1785)* (Istanbul, 1988); Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Onüçüncü asr-ı hicrî'de İstanbul hayatı (1786–1882)* (Istanbul, 1988); Salih Aynural, *İstanbul değirmenleri ve fırınları, zahire ticareti* (Istanbul, 2001).

In seventeenth-century Istanbul, the role played by the *muhtesib*, who, in the Ottoman context, dealt largely with market regulation, was still considerable.[36] This functionary enforced the officially decreed prices (*narh*), which, in the capital with its large number of politically privileged consumers, applied to a larger variety of goods than elsewhere.[37] In addition, the *muhtesib* collected taxes from craftsmen – which, from the seventeenth century onwards, he often farmed. In the eighteenth century, this official generally seems to have played a less prominent role, possibly because his concerns were now so often purely fiscal. Mutual supervision on the part of craftsmen therefore increased in importance, and it is probably not by chance that the numerous documents recording reciprocal control of artisans through their guilds largely date from the eighteenth century.[38]

Guilds and (para)military corps

From the second half of the seventeenth century onward, Muslim artisans frequently joined the military corps stationed in their places of residence (janissaries, artillerists, explosives specialists, etc.), which by this influx became paramilitary, militia-like organisations.[39] This process has been studied in detail for Cairo, but is documented also for Syria and the Balkan towns. Admittedly the soldiers' pay, to which militiamen were also entitled, was reduced to almost nothing by heavy inflation that characterised the entire eighteenth century. But from the craftsmen's point of view, belonging to a corps still meant freedom from many taxes demanded from ordinary Ottoman subjects. Moreover, while money was taken out of their estates on behalf of the corps, artisan militiamen could expect the remainder to pass on to their legitimate heirs, and not be confiscated on one pretext or another. As to the military service involved, a certain number of the men enrolled in the corps were actually called up for campaigns. However, the military value of these inexperienced craftsmen-soldiers was often low.

Well before artisans joined the corps in significant numbers, the commanders of many military units were already in the business of collecting protection dues (in Cairo, *himaye*). Thus the notion of craftsmen affiliated with a given

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36 Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle: essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris and Istanbul, 1962), pp. 299–348.

37 Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda narh müessesesi, passim*.

38 Mübahat Kütükoğlu, 'Osmanlı esnafında oto-kontrol müessesesi', in *Ahilik ve esnaf, konferanslar ve seminer, metinler, tartışmalar* (Istanbul, 1986), pp. 55–86.

39 André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1973–4), vol. II, pp. 666–726.

military corps was well established by the late seventeenth century; however, craftsmen did not necessarily join the corps to which their guild paid protection money. Corps commanders derived significant authority from the fact that a large share of the Muslim urban population was, technically speaking, under their command. On the other hand, members of the military – or paramilitary – corps might be inclined to enter a craft or trade guild. In Cairo it was often difficult to distinguish craftsmen who had become part of a militarised organisation from soldiers who had joined a craft guild. Due to the low pay they received, soldiers were forced to work for a livelihood, especially if they were married.

In some places, however, adhering to a military corps was not an option open to the ordinary artisan. Thus in eighteenth-century Mosul, only the leading figures of each craft joined the janissaries, and social differentiation within the relevant guilds increased in consequence.[40] While monographs on the relationship between guildsmen and military corps exist for certain towns and regions, the issue has not yet been studied from a comparative point of view.

Artisans and sultanic festivals

The participation of artisans in festivals organised by the Ottoman palace was probably less burdensome than logistical support for the army or navy on campaign, or actual military service. Yet this phenomenon is worth studying for the light it sheds on the relationship between certain Ottoman sultans and those of their artisan subjects who happened to live in cities such as Istanbul, Cairo or Edirne. When a prince was circumcised and / or a princess married off, it was customary to celebrate the event by a parade of artisans, who were expected to make the sultan fairly sumptuous presents. Similar parades were held, at least in certain cases, when the army was about to leave the Ottoman capital for a campaign.[41] Special lists of participating craftsmen recorded the event for posterity, samples of which were available to Evliya Çelebi when in the middle of the seventeenth century, he tried to enumerate the guildsmen of Istanbul and Cairo.[42] While the official documents used by Evliya seem to

40 Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 20.
41 Mantran, *Istanbul*, p. 352–3.
42 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 yazmasının transkripsiyonu – dizini,* 9 vols., vol. I, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul 1996), pp. 220–316; Mantran, *Istanbul*, pp. 349–424; Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi* vol. 10, *Mısır, Sudan, Habeş (1672–1680)* (Istanbul, 1938), pp. 358–86.

have been lost, similar lists survive for other artisan parades of the time. These show that Evliya's account, while sometimes exaggerated, in many respects mirrors seventeenth-century realities quite well.

Moreover special 'festival books' (*surname*) sometimes recorded the celebrations. In two cases these books were lavishly illustrated, but even the more mundane texts provide evidence concerning the different guilds participating in sultanic festivals.[43] Apparently the relatively detailed official records of artisan participation, which formed the source basis for the more literary texts, were meant to serve as precedents in the hands of officials organising celebrations at a later date.[44] Thus the woollen-cloth-sellers of Istanbul in 1675–6 had contributed to Mehmed IV's celebrations along with the so-called merchants of the covered market (*bedesten*), and members of these guilds were required to follow the same routine in 1720.

Apart from the gifts to the ruler which formed part of the ritual of artisan processions, craftsmen were required to build floats, often quite elaborate, illustrating the activities of their respective guilds. In many cases these three-dimensional scenes, drawn on wagons or carried on the shoulders of porters, featured miniature reproductions of the workshops in which the craftsmen in question plied their respective trades. Even if one allows for stylisation and simplification – and transportation on Istanbul's narrow streets did constitute a limiting factor – these floats provide some of the rare visual evidence concerning the appearance of pre-nineteenth-century craftsmen's shops. This was an opportunity to emphasise the guildsmen's skill, as producing a shoe or sewing a vest while precariously balanced on a moving cart must have been a challenge in itself. Moreover, if Evliya Çelebi's account is reasonably realistic, guilds seem to have used this opportunity to emphasise their honourable status by references to their holy patrons.

Studies of Ottoman festivities to date have usually limited themselves to the shares of various performing arts in the festive *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or else to the philological and art historical study of individual *surname*s.[45] As a result, the debates among specialists of European early modern festivals have but rarely attracted the attention of Ottomanists. Yet some of these discussions are

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43 Esin Atıl, 'The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival', *Muqarnas, an Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture: Essays in Honor of Oleg Grabar* 10 (1993), 181–200; Gisela Proházka-Eisl, *Das Sûrnâme-i Hümayun: Die Wiener Handschrift in Transkription, mit Kommentar und Indices versehen* (Istanbul, 1995); Nurhan Atasoy, *1582 Surname-i hümayun: An Imperial Celebration* (Istanbul, 1997).

44 İstanbul Bab Mahkemesi 124, fol. 204a (1132/1720).

45 Metin And, *Osmanlı şenliklerinde Türk sanatları* (Ankara, 1983).

of importance for the historian of Ottoman craftsmen as well, particularly the question whether festivals constitute a means of (temporarily) palliating social conflict. Or else, the festive locale may be viewed as a site on which political and social contradictions are acted out. Presumably artisan parades were organised by the Ottoman administration as a means of ensuring the loyalty of its urban subjects, who were supposed to acknowledge the legitimacy of the ruler by contributing to his glorification. That such parades were sometimes made to take place in the stressful times preceding a campaign rather confirms this assumption. However, it is possible that artisans did not always go along with official policy, and invented their own scenarios. Or at the very least, they may have used the venue of a festive parade to act out inter-guild rivalries.

Guild officials

We are only beginning to understand the extent to which Ottoman guild leadership evolved during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This task is not made any easier by the fact that interregional and inter-urban diversity was considerable.[46] It has been suggested that at least in seventeenth-century Istanbul, the heads (*şeyh*s) of the guilds, whose office retained considerable religious connotations from its late medieval past, were eclipsed by the *kethüda*s and *yiğitbaşı*s, whose responsibilities were purely administrative.[47] Only in the case of the tanners did the *şeyh*s of the Ahi Evren *tekkesi* in Kırşehir maintain their prestige throughout the eighteenth century, and tanners' guilds throughout the empire wrote to the Kırşehir *şeyh*s in order to have their officers confirmed.[48]

On the other hand, Cairo guilds were normally headed by a *şeyh*, who did not, however, claim the religious prestige seemingly attached to this title in the central Ottoman provinces. In the Cairo context, a *şeyh* was not always the wealthiest man of his guild, nor did his example necessarily determine the decisions of the masters under his jurisdiction. When it came to joining this or that military/paramilitary corps, a *şeyh* would most probably be the first member of his organisation to take this momentous step. But ordinary

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46 Marcus Koller, 'Handwerk und Handwerker in Istanbul im 18. Jahrhundert', unpubl. MA thesis, Ludwig-Maximilians-University (1998); Aynural, *İstanbul değirmenleri ve fırınları*; Suraiya Faroqhi and Randi Deguilhem (eds.), *Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East: Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean* (London, 2005).

47 Mantran, *Istanbul*, pp. 352–7.

48 Franz Taeschner, 'Ein Zunft-Ferman Mustafas III.', in *Zünfte und Bruderschaften im Islam: Texte zur Geschichte der Futuwwa* (Zurich and Munich, 1979), pp. 550–6.

guildsmen might sign up for a different corps, rather than following their *şeyh*.[49]

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Istanbul, and probably in other Turkish-speaking cities as well, the daily responsibility of running the guild lay with the *kethüda*. A guild master attained this office by a complex process, the first step of which in many cases involved ensuring at least the passive consent of his fellow guildsmen. Recording the candidacy in the kadi's office was the next step; the judge, or his deputy (*naib*), would then inform the central government of the application. Subsequently, a specialist scribe wrote an endorsing petition, based upon this letter from the kadi's office. The grand vizier would order an investigation, and if no impediment was found, an order (*buyuruldu*) was issued in the name of this high official. In turn, the *buyuruldu* formed the base for an order to issue the relevant appointment document.[50] This last item finally confirmed the *kethüda*'s tenure, but did not guarantee a lengthy period in office. At least in eighteenth-century Bursa, it was not rare for masters to complain of the failings of their *kethüda* to the kadi's court, and suggest a replacement. Apparently the courts often acted according to the masters' wishes, even though the complaints submitted might be quite trivial. This happened even in instances in which the masters were non-Muslims wishing to change their Muslim *kethüda*. Rudeness, old age or the failure to be actively engaged in the trade at issue all constituted valid reasons for deposing a guild officer.

Those *kethüda*s who had farmed their office, or who had secured appointment by foregoing the payment of an official salary which otherwise would have been their due, may have had greater security of tenure. It was not rare to find a *kethüda* renouncing his position for the benefit of someone else. In such cases, the *kethüda* in question obviously possessed some kind of right to his position, whether by purchase or for other reasons. Where this was the case, guild masters should have found it more difficult to influence the selection of their *kethüda*, especially if a *kethüda*ship had actually been purchased from the central administration. For, in that case, the new candidate needed to possess enough wealth to indemnify his predecessor, and in addition often to pay a supplementary sum of money to the sultan's treasury. But even so the turnover among *kethüda*s remained substantial, and sometimes we hear that dissatisfaction among the masters had been the cause of a guild officer's resignation. However, the negotiations and power struggles that doubtless went

49 Raymond, *Artisans*, vol. II, p. 666.
50 Halil Inalcik, 'The Appointment Procedure of a Guild Warden (*Kethudâ*)', *Festschrift Andreas Tietze, Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (1986), 135–42.

on in such cases for the most part remain obscure, and in particular we do not know very much about the evolution of the *kethüda*'s office over time. But as a working hypothesis, we can assume that, by and large, his position with respect to the guild masters was strengthened in the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

While in the Ottoman central lands, the devotional rituals evolved by late medieval *ahi*s were taken over by many guilds, the religious component in seventeenth or eighteenth-century guild organisation should not be overrated.[51] There were quite a few guilds with both Muslim and non-Muslim members, which meant that religious and communitarian allegiances remained distinct from the loyalties binding masters to their guilds. Thus in 1720 a list of bakers operating in Istanbul contained Muslim, Armenian and a few Greek masters. Jewish bakers were not listed, which may have been due to the fact that bread baked according to Jewish ritual would have been more expensive than 'ordinary' bread, and therefore of no interest to non-Jewish customers.[52] In Cairo, many goldsmiths were Copts, but this did not mean that no Muslims practised this craft. Admittedly, as Cairo guildsmen were often organised according to the location of their workplaces, practising the same craft did not automatically imply membership in the same guild.[53] In this respect as in others, the differences between cities and regions seem to have been considerable.

While the *kethüda*s of mixed guilds were always Muslims, and we also find Muslim *kethüda*s heading non-Muslim guilds, non-Muslim guild members often were represented by a non-Muslim *yiğitbaşı*. It is too early to decide whether all *kethüda*s were Muslims, regardless of the religion of the guild membership. Unfortunately, little is known about the day-to-day activities of these lower-level functionaries. Association of Muslim workmen and non-Muslim masters within a workshop might occur; but this was strongly disapproved of by some Muslim religious authorities, because a worker was expected to show respect to his employer. If Evliya Çelebi is correct, however, this view was not shared by Sultan Selim I; for his son, the later Süleyman the Magnificent, was supposedly apprenticed to a Greek goldsmith of Trabzon, and obliged to submit to a punishment his master had decreed.[54] In Bursa an opinion by

51 Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, 'Şeyh Seyyid Gaybioğlu Şeyh Seyyid Hüseyin'in fütüvvetnamesi', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 17, 1–4 (1955–6), 27–72; Mantran, *Istanbul*, p. 366.

52 Istanbul Bab Mahkemesi 124, fols. 151b–152a, 162a (1133/1720–1). I owe this suggestion to Minna Rozen.

53 Raymond, *Artisans*, vol. I, p. 228.

54 Heath Lowry, 'Süleyman's Formative Years in the City of Trabzon: Their Impact on the Future Sultan and the City', in *Süleyman the Second and his Time*, ed. Halil Inalcik

a jurisconsult (*fetva*) was recorded which forbade Muslim velvet-makers to work for Christian employers (1595). As the people who had solicited this opinion were velvet-makers themselves, competition for workmen, in addition to religiously motivated propriety, may have been at the root of the case.[55]

Changing organisational features: the *gedik*

When comparing the level of organisation in Ottoman guilds and the manner in which it changed over time, we can base ourselves primarily on findings concerning Cairo from the late seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth centuries, two monographs concerning seventeenth-century Istanbul and a further study dealing with seventeenth-century Bursa.[56] Some work has been done on the towns of present-day Bulgaria. Ankara and Konya have been covered by a monograph dealing with the years around 1600, while an unpublished dissertation discusses Tokat at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.[57] Where the cities of Syria are concerned, information can be gleaned from the sizeable number of urban monographs undertaken during the last thirty years or so. But as in many cases there are great gaps in the primary sources, Ottoman guilds have been covered in a rather patchy fashion. Such generalisations as have been attempted here therefore apply mainly to Istanbul cum Bursa, on the one hand, and to Cairo, on the other.

The crucial topic in the history of late Ottoman guilds is the *gedik* (*kedek* in Syrian sources). This term has two distinct meanings: on the one hand, the right to follow one's trade in a given locale; and, on the other, the implements and raw materials needed to pursue the trade in question. Both kinds of *gedik* could be inherited by the sons of a master if they were competent to exercise the craft in question. If no such successor was available, the oldest journeyman often had a right to the *gedik* against payment of a sum of money. *Gedik*s were thus alienable only within the relevant guild. When the term *gedik* is used in the sense of 'the right to exercise one's craft in a given place' we normally have to deduce this meaning from the context. By contrast, when the mere

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and Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul, 1993), pp. 21–36, at pp. 32–3. Presumably the point of this arrangement was to teach the young prince humility toward his elders.

55 Dalsar, *İpekçilik*, p. 321.

56 Mantran, *Istanbul*; Raymond, *Artisans*; Gerber, *Bursa*; Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden, 2004).

57 Nicolaj Todorov, *La ville balkanique aux XVe –XIXe siècles: développement socio-économique et démographique* (Bucharest, 1980) (with strong emphasis on the eighteenth century); Özer Ergenç, *Osmanlı klasik dönemi kent tarihçiliğine katkı, XVI. yüzyılda Ankara ve Konya* (Ankara, 1995), pp. 89–108; Yüksel Duman, 'Notables, Textiles and Copper in Ottoman Tokat 1750–1840', Ph.D. thesis, Binghamton University (1998), pp. 216ff.

combination of implements and raw materials is at issue, the meaning is often explained in eighteenth-century official documents. We can thus assume that the second use of the term was the less familiar one.

In seventeenth-century Ottoman records, and even in texts from the early 1700s, references to *gedik*s are quite rare. When, as we have seen, Istanbul bakers selling underweight bread were to be punished by the confiscation of their implements and shop inventories, and the sale of these items to other bakers on behalf of the imperial treasury, there was no reference to the loss of their *gedik*s (1720). It is hard to imagine that in this context, the term could have been avoided if it had been applicable at that time. Therefore in this important Istanbul craft, *gedik*s probably were not of major importance in the early eighteenth century. In the case of seventeenth-century Bursa, guild organisation seems to have been even looser; apparently the main criterion for membership was the fact that a master paid his taxes along with his fellow guildsmen. In the course of their active lives, certain craftsmen might even belong to more than one guild.[58] This sort of flexibility obviously became impossible once the exercise of a given craft was normally tied to the holding of a *gedik*.

Even in the sixteenth century, established craftsmen had attempted to make entry into their crafts difficult to newcomers.[59] But these attempts probably became even more frequent in the second half of the eighteenth century, after the prosperity that many craft sectors had enjoyed between the 1720s and the 1760s ended abruptly with the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768–74.[60] Thus it has been suggested that growing demands for rent on the part of pious foundations, which, as we have seen, so often owned the shops occupied by Istanbul craftsmen, constituted a major reason for *gedik* formation.[61] With the support of urban kadis, craftsmen thus supposedly developed a new form of property, alienable only within a small circle of people. By limiting demand for shops and workshops, this arrangement made rent hikes more difficult, albeit at the price of limiting labour mobility. But then all processes enhancing labour mobility always had seemed rather threatening to Ottoman (and other) guildsmen. Moreover, the frequent holding of spaces in collective workshops, discussed above, along with the intensified mutual control which this entailed, may also have furthered entry restrictions. Whenever the exercise of a given

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58 Gerber, *Bursa*, pp. 35–7.   59 Inalcık, 'Capital Formation', pp. 116–17.
60 Mehmet Genç, 'L'Economie ottomane et la guerre au XVIIIe siècle', *Turcica* 27 (1995), 177–96.
61 Engin Akarlı, '*Gedik*: Implements, Mastership, Shop Usufruct, and Monopoly among Istanbul Artisans, 1750–1850', *Wissenschaftskolleg-Jahrbuch* (1984–5), 223–32.

craft was limited to a certain khan or collective workshop, the guild could easily exclude those masters without a 'place' in this facility.

But apart from the key institution of the *gedik*, guilds of the eighteenth century, at least in certain localities, developed other devices promoting social cohesion. In both Istanbul and Bursa, we now often hear of pious foundations instituted by guilds, a phenomenon which had not been much in evidence in the sixteenth or even the seventeenth centuries. Such foundations were meant to sponsor the recital of a religious poem (*mevlid*) and/or finance a common meal of the guild masters. At least in Bursa during the late eighteenth century, such foundations held all their assets in money, which was lent out at a fixed interest (usually 15 per cent), and for which the foundation administrator owed a regular account to the kadi. In this city, many of the more important guilds had instituted pious foundations of this type, protected against the rampant inflation of the times by recurring capital injections. It is likely that members of the founding guild had the right of first refusal when the relevant foundation offered loans. But often enough, craftsmen from outside the guild also borrowed money from this source, so that guild foundations helped to establish links between the craftsmen of different guilds. This observation is important, because it has sometimes been assumed that the loyalties of Ottoman townsmen were limited to their religious community, guild and quarter, without any overarching concern for the town as a whole.[62]

The results of recent historiography: a combination of different guild roles

In the perspective of the first researchers concerned with Ottoman guilds, these organisations possessed close links to the dervish orders, and also to the urban brotherhoods known in fourteenth-century Anatolia as the *ahi*s. This view has not disappeared from the agenda, but given the relative lack of novel documentation, it is now more important in Turkish political discourse than in scholarly research. In the former, the *ahi*s have quite often been instrumentalised in order to promote religiously motivated solidarities, as opposed to class conflict. Contradicting this emphasis on religion and artisan morality, certain historians have preferred to regard the guilds as mainly a means of state control.[63] Such an approach has been facilitated by the fact that this aspect of

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62 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Ottoman Guilds in the Eighteenth Century: The Bursa Case', in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480–1820*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 93–112.

63 Gabriel Baer, 'Guilds in Middle Eastern History', in *Studies in the Economic and Social History of the Middle East*, ed. Michael Cook (Oxford, 1970), pp. 11–30, at p. 29.

guild activity is by far the best documented; thus service to the state continues to play an important role in recent monographs as well.

However, perhaps in consequence of the growing emphasis on 'civil society' in the political discourse ever since the 1980s, researchers dealing with Ottoman guilds have ceased to view them exclusively as 'tools of the state'. Moreover, some Ottomanists have become concerned with comparative history, and are therefore less inclined to stress the *sui generis* aspects of the Ottoman polity, including the notion of an Ottoman state whose unprecedented power stifled all social development.

Granted the – undeniably – strong position of the Ottoman state, this new perspective allows us to see artisans who did try to defend their interests within the guild framework. The masters attempted to control access to raw materials, workplaces and auxiliary labour. This defence of masters' interests almost never expressed itself in urban rebellions against the power of merchants, contrary to the movements of late medieval craftsmen in Europe. Yet Ottoman artisans certainly did participate in popular movements against provincial governors, viziers and – upon occasion – even sultans. On the basis of these observations, some contemporary historians have come to view the day-to-day manoeuvring of eighteenth-century Ottoman guildsmen as so many attempts to wield the 'weapons of the weak'. Present-day anthropologists have shown us that craftsmen or peasants may become quite expert at manipulating for their own purposes the structures which the powerful of their society have instituted in order to better control them.[64] In the present text, we have tried to look at the condition of Ottoman artisans from such a perspective.

64 James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, 1985).

Declines and revivals in
textile production

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

Textiles as indicators

In the Ottoman Empire as in most pre-industrial societies, the manufacture of textiles constituted one of the most significant, and also best documented, of industrial activities. In consequence, by discussing silk, wool and cotton manufactures we may shed some light on Ottoman craft activity as a whole. Internal trade in manufactured goods was largely a trade in textiles and, to some extent, Ottoman fabrics were also exported. Thus textile production furnished occasions for economic integration in a way that was true of few other crafts. However, a caveat is in order: in the 1960s and 1970s, historians writing the history of a single textile tended to assume that the growth and decline of the relevant industry mirrored Ottoman craft activity as a whole.[1] A comparison of the trajectories of different handicrafts in medieval and early modern Europe has, however, shown that such industries typically follow a parabola curve: an impressive expansion is usually followed by an equally rapid decline.[2] Industrial collapse may be caused by the competition of rival production centres, but also by wars, excessive taxation and other non-economic factors, which may originate both within and without the state at issue.

Thus it cannot be assumed that an industry, once established, will last for centuries. From that point of view, the growth and eventual decline of Ottoman manufactures conforms to an accustomed pattern, and the fate of a single industry should not be taken to reflect the dynamic of the totality. Only when no new centres of urban or rural production develop to replace

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1 Murat Çizakça, 'Price History and the Bursa Silk Industry: A Study in Ottoman Industrial Decline (1550–1650)', *Journal of Economic History* 40, 3 (1980), 533–50; Benjamin Braude, 'International Competition and Domestic Cloth in the Ottoman Empire 1500–1650: A Study in Undevelopment', *Review* 2, 3 (1979), 437–54.

2 Fernand Braudel, *Civilization matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XVe–XVIIIe siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1979), vol. II, pp. 268–9; Domenico Sella, 'The Rise and Fall of the Venetian Woollen Industry', in *Crisis and Change in the Venetian Economy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Brian Pullan (London, 1968), pp. 106–26.

the defunct ones can we conclude that the state or region studied has really suffered a decline. However, since Ottoman documentation tends to highlight urban as opposed to rural craftsmen, determining whether a given region as a whole did in fact suffer deindustrialisation may not be a simple task. What artisans of the larger towns lost may well have been the gain of their rural competitors.

Primary sources on textile manufacture

Quantitative data originating from within the Ottoman polity are all but limited to tax-farming contracts and the correspondence leading thereto. For the textile industry, stamp taxes (*damga*) are especially relevant, but in the case of silk, weighing dues (*mizan-ı harir*) are also of importance.[3] Mohair cloth production can be measured on the basis of a tax levied on the presses (*cendere*) which gave the finished fabric its attractive sheen. Taxes levied from dye-houses (*boyahane*), present not only in towns but sometimes also in villages, constitute a valuable source of numerical data on both urban and rural textile production.[4] Where the dyeing of wool (and, to a lesser degree, of cotton) is concerned, data on alum mines also serve as valuable indicators, as alum was an indispensable ingredient in this process.[5]

Until 1695 the Ottoman financial administration concluded short-term contracts with tax-farmers, often of three years' duration. However, if a higher bidder emerged at any time, the officiating tax-farmer might need to relinquish his contract, or else make up the difference to the sultan's treasury. Assuming that prospective tax-farmers had some advance information on the productivity of the revenue source they intended to take over, the amounts of money paid for the right to collect dye-house dues or stamp taxes should indicate whether the relevant textile industry was flourishing or not.[6] Or else, whenever customs registers are available in the Ottoman archives we may glean some information on the importation of textile fibres, especially Iranian silk.[7] After 1695, the frequency of lifetime tax-farms (*malikâne*) makes the data

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3 Murat Çizakça, 'Incorporation of the Middle East into the European World Economy', *Review* 8, 3 (1985), 353–78.
4 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 125–55.
5 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Alum Production and Alum Trade in the Ottoman Empire (about 1560–1830)', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 71 (1979), 153–75.
6 Çizakça, 'Incorporation'.
7 Neşe Erim, 'Trade, Traders and the State in Eighteenth-Century Erzurum', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 5–6 (1991), 123–50.

on yearly tax-farm revenues useless, as the tax-farmer now paid a fixed sum for the remainder of his life. However, the entry fine, levied whenever a new tax-farmer took over, should still allow us to determine whether textile production was expanding or declining.[8] In the case of industries with heavy state demand, such as the manufacture of sailcloth or fabric for military uniforms, orders for textiles may provide a rough notion of productive capacities. Lists of administratively fixed prices, especially for Istanbul, provide some indication of the fabrics originating from provincial towns available in the markets of the capital, and thus also about internal trade in textiles.[9]

As for raw cotton, silk or mohair exports, figures are available from English, French and Dutch sources. If we possessed some idea of overall production of these essential raw materials, which in most cases we do not, we would know where, and to what extent, scarcities due to excessive exportation crippled Ottoman artisan production. However, European documents also contain a fair amount of information on prices, which may be useful when we wish to judge the production costs of Ottoman craftsmen.[10] Admittedly, caution is in order, as Ottoman textile producers might live closer to the source of raw material than exporters, and therefore pay lower transportation costs. Or else they might enjoy privileged access to materials such as raw wool, as was true of the Jewish artisans of Salonika.[11] Certain qualities of fibre even might be reserved for local producers exclusively, as in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was the rule in the Ankara mohair industry.[12] Yet given the relative scarcity of such information in Ottoman documents, these data gleaned from European sources, whatever their limitations, still constitute worthwhile indicators of textile production in the lands bordering the eastern Mediterranean.

In addition, qualitative evidence should not be neglected. Disputes between textile-producing artisans and tax-farmers, between the former and the administrators of pious foundations renting out workspace, and, last but not least, among fellow guildsmen themselves, provide useful information on the conditions under which production took place. Artisans' attempts to hold their own

8 Mehmet Genç, 'Osmanlı maliyesinde malikâne sistemi', in *Türkiye iktisat tarihi semineri,* ed. Osman Okyar and Ünal Nabantoğlu (Ankara, 1975), pp. 231–96.

9 Mübahat Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda narh müessesesi ve 1640 tarihli narh defteri* (Istanbul, 1983).

10 Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700–1820)* (Athens, 1992).

11 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Textile Production in Rumeli and the Arab Provinces: Geographical Distribution and Internal Trade', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 1 (1980), 61–83 at p. 68.

12 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Mohair Manufacture and Mohair Workshops in Seventeenth Century Ankara', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 41, 1–4 (1982–3), 211–36.

against the members of local power structures are also highlighted in Ottoman documents. In some cases, foundation records inform us about the administration of common funds, and thus provide information on relations between the different textile-producing guilds. And where information is really scarce, as is often true of the smaller textile centres, casual references to fabrics being traded, given away or stolen may provide precious indicators. Such references are common in the registers kept by local judges (*kadı sicilleri*) and the central administration itself (*ahkâm defterleri*).

The downs and ups of the seventeenth century: supply and demand

For some of the better-known branches of Ottoman textile production, the early seventeenth century was a period of difficulties. On the supply side, Iranian silk, as yet the principal raw material in the manufacture of Bursa silk stuffs, had become more expensive, due to increasing English and Italian demand. However, because of political constraints – the palace was apt to dictate prices – producers were unable to pass on the price increase to their customers. That many potential buyers had sustained losses in income due to the financial crisis of the early 1600s did not help matters. This situation resulted in a 'profit squeeze', which forced many manufacturers to suspend operations. Others tried to expand their market by producing lighter and cheaper fabrics. But apparently pressure from power-holders, who continued to demand the old heavy fabrics, prevented such innovators from gaining legitimacy and establishing an equivalent of the English 'new draperies' in the Ottoman market.[13]

A development similar to that observed in early seventeenth-century Bursa occurred, a little later, in the Salonika production of woollen cloth. Weaving medium-quality woollens was a specialty of the Sephardic Jews settled in this town by Sultan Bayezid II.[14] Down to the middle of the seventeenth century, this craft had produced both for the market and for the janissaries, supplying the woollen cloth from which the outer garments of the corps members were made. In this case, Venetian and later French demand for Balkan wool, inferior though this raw material may have been when compared to the Spanish or English product, tended to drive up prices, while imports of finished cloth from England limited the consumers' market. Moreover,

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13 Çizakça, 'Price History'.
14 I. S. Emmanuel, *Histoire de l'industrie des tissus des Israélites de Salonique* (Paris, 1935); Braude, 'Undevelopment'.

well into the sixteenth century the Ottoman state had paid a modest price for the uniform cloth delivered. But from 1600 onwards, these deliveries were increasingly viewed as taxes pure and simple, thus forcing the producers to depend on a shrinking market for their entire livelihoods. This situation explains why many Salonika manufacturers attempted to leave the city in spite of official prohibitions, settling in places as remote as Izmir and Manisa.[15]

Difficulties connected with the growth of raw material exports were also experienced in the cotton industry. Although in the sixteenth century Ottoman state officials had often regarded cotton as a strategic raw material whose export was strictly prohibited, this attitude changed by the early seventeenth century. Possibly because diminished naval activity in the Mediterranean had reduced the administration's concern about sailcloth, the export of raw cotton by Venetian merchants was now tolerated; the need for customs revenue may have played a part as well.[16] Unfortunately, no production figures for raw cotton survive; so it is difficult to determine whether in the long run, the supply of raw cotton in the Aegean coastlands, Thessaly and other cotton-growing areas caught up with increasing demand.

In areas close to the major ports and entrepôts, such as Istanbul, Izmir, Salonika or Aleppo, competition from European woollens added to the difficulties of textile manufacturers. While the Ottoman state frequently intervened to protect the raw material sources of its textile-manufacturing subjects, imports of foreign fabrics were generally regarded in a positive light. Imports appeared to supply the market with needed goods, thus lowering prices, and were not usually curtailed.[17] From the late sixteenth century onwards, the Levant Company thus could import large quantities of English woollens into the Ottoman Empire to balance its purchases of Iranian raw silk in Aleppo or Izmir. These fabrics were sold at bargain prices, as the Levant Company's principal profits came out of the resale of Iranian silk in Europe.[18] It was mainly the Ottoman producers of medium-quality woollens who suffered, particularly the Salonika weavers. For the 'mass market', such as it was, even moderately priced imports were too expensive. Thus local manufactures of the cheaper goods survived and even thrived: the decline of the Salonika industry was balanced to a certain

15 Feridun M. Emecen, *Unutulmuş bir cemaat, Manisa Yahudileri* (Istanbul, 1997), pp. 35ff.
16 Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, p. 136.
17 Halil Inalcik, 'The Ottoman Economic Mind and Aspects of the Ottoman Economy', in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. M. A. Cook (Oxford, 1970), pp. 207–18.
18 Braude, 'Undevelopment'.

extent by the seventeenth-century expansion of rough woollens (*aba*) in the area of Plovdiv (Ottoman Filibe).[19]

Ottoman textile producers of the seventeenth century also faced competition from Indian cottons.[20] Apparently Ottoman consumers were just as much impressed by the quality of the textiles and the beauties of their designs as were those in Europe.[21] South Indian cotton manufacture was geared to export markets and highly specialised; the 'Arabian' (i.e. Ottoman) customers' tastes were carefully taken into account. Indian cottons reached Ottoman territory by way of Jiddah and Basra, and the mart of Aleppo by caravan. Wealthy merchants of Cairo found this trade, along with the better-documented importation and re-exportation of coffee, lucrative enough. Thus coffee and Indian fabrics compensated for the decline in the spice trade from present-day Indonesia, which by the seventeenth century was increasingly being monopolised by the Dutch.[22] High-quality Indian cottons competed with silk, while more modest customers might wear quilted garments stuffed with cotton wool as a convenient substitute for woollens. The popularity of these textiles resulted in certain Indian technical terms for cotton fabrics entering the Ottoman language as loan words.[23]

The impact of politics

Economic factors apart, seventeenth-century political problems aggravated the difficulties of Ottoman textile producers. In the years down to 1640 at the very least, the unrest known as the Celali uprisings and the activities of rebellious governors frequently made the roads impassable, so that textiles produced for anything but the local market remained unsold for long periods of time. Destruction of cotton fields and wool-bearing flocks must have further limited supplies. Some textile towns, such as Bursa, Urfa, Ankara or Tosya, were attacked and/or occupied by the rebels, with wholesale plunder the result.[24] Northern Syria was at the same time affected by the rebellion of Canboladoğlu Ali Paşa, and the grand vizier Kuyucu Murad Paşa's campaign

19 Nicolaj Todorov, *La ville balkanique aux XVe–XIXe siècles: développement socio-économique et démographique* (Bucharest, 1980), pp. 225–7.
20 Sinappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650–1740* (Delhi, 1986), pp. 95–102.
21 Halil İnalcık, 'Osmanlı pamuklu pazarı, Hindistan ve İngiltere: pazar rekabetinde emek maliyetinin rolü', *METU Studies in Development* (1979–80, special issue), 1–66.
22 André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1973–4), vol. I, p. 135.
23 İnalcık, 'Osmanlı pamuklu pazarı', pp. 22–41.
24 Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, p. 140.

to subdue it. Military activity must have led to a contraction in the supply especially of silk, for peasant women in flight could not care for their silkworms. In the case of the Iranian product, the numerous Ottoman–Iranian wars down to 1639 formed a major cause for production decline. This probably was not compensated for by the loads of silk Ottoman soldiers occasionally managed to carry off as booty. While we lack the figures that would permit us to weigh the impact of war damage in contrast to that caused by economic conjunctures, the impact of both internal and external warfare must have been considerable. Çizakça, in his study of the Bursa silk industry, assigns the principal responsibility for the crisis of local manufactures to European demand for raw silk.[25]

Survivals, revivals and new departures

There were, however, some compensations. With Iranian silk becoming more costly, raw silk production in the Ottoman lands expanded, especially in the Bursa region.[26] Mulberry production had been of no great significance in the sixteenth century, but, around 1700 or 1730, reasonably prosperous inhabitants of this city, including many women, owned mulberry orchards; even though mulberries are edible, and the leaves can be used as fodder, it is still likely that the primary motivation for growing this tree was the cultivation of silkworms. Farming land, and, in exceptional cases, even built-up real estate was converted for this purpose. Mulberry growers were not necessarily identical with silkworm raisers, as sales of mulberry leaves are on record. In the eighteenth century, silk cultivated in the Bursa region remained at the disposal of Ottoman artisans. While Syrian silks were sought out by foreign merchants, this does not seem to have been true of the Bursa product; before 1815, French merchants who attempted imports to Marseilles found demand rather slack.

Bursa silk taxes revived as early as the 1620s, once the disruption of the civil wars had somewhat abated.[27] Costs were cut by employing poor free people, now quite numerous in this populous city. We no longer encounter the slaves who had manned many looms in the sixteenth century, and who needed maintenance while they were being trained for unfamiliar and often demanding work. In all probability less expensive silk fabrics were turned out

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25 Çizakça, 'Price History'.
26 Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 81–4.
27 Çizakça, 'Incorporation'.

in sizeable quantities and absorbed by a largely local market.[28] Apparently the transition from high-luxury fabrics to those appropriate for well-off but not very rich urban customers went quite smoothly. A careful monograph of seventeenth-century Bursa does not record major distress occasioned by a decay of the city's silk industry.[29]

In the wool sector, the most prosperous trade, apart from the *aba*s of Plovdiv / Filibe, seems to have been carpet manufacture. Surviving carpets are notoriously difficult to date, but both Ottoman and European sources indicate the buoyancy of this craft. Moreover, unlike what seems to have happened in the silk industry, seventeenth-century producers did not yet feel impelled to sacrifice quality to quantity.[30] The main centre of commercial manufacture was apparently Uşak. An Istanbul register of administered prices, dated 1640, indicates that Uşak rugs were common on the Istanbul market. Often they were ornamented with a *sofra* (flat surface on which food was served) in the centre, and thus must have corresponded to our medallion Ushaks.[31]

Evliya Çelebi, who visited Uşak in 1671–2, is the only author, Ottoman or non-Ottoman, to have described the town at the time of its florescence.[32] Camels and carts brought in quantities of wool, and lively sales took place in the town's business centre. A root from which red dye was manufactured grew in the nearby village of Boyalı, and served local producers. Uşak carpets were found as far afield as the Armenian monastery of Jerusalem in the east and Transylvania in the west.

Evliya's comparison of Uşak rugs with those of Isfahan and Cairo is not mere rhetoric. Uşak carpets are characterised by elaborate scrollwork, rather different from the geometrical designs and stylised animals we associate with Anatolian rugs down to the sixteenth century. Presumably this change in taste radiated from the palace, where Safavid court rugs with their exuberant decorations seem to have made a great impression. Among the products of the little town of Kula, Evliya also records carpets, in addition to red and multi-coloured kelims.[33]

28 Gerber, *Bursa*, p. 66. Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Bursa at the Crossroads: Iranian Silk, European Competition and the Local Economy 1470–1700', in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480–1820*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 113–48.

29 Gerber, *Bursa*.

30 Kurt Erdmann, *Europa und der Orientteppich* (Mainz, 1962); Onno Ydema, *Carpets and their Datings in Netherlandish Paintings, 1540–1700* (Zutphen and Woodbridge, 1991).

31 Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda narh müessesesi*, pp. 71, 72, 178.

32 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi*, 10 vols. (Istanbul, 1314 / 1896–7 to 1938), vol. IX, p. 39 and elsewhere.

33 Ibid., p. 52.

Cairo, which in the sixteenth century had possessed a major reputation for its 'Mamluk-style' carpets, continued to produce in the seventeenth century. Jean Thévenot, who visited the city in 1657, maintains that many carpets sold in Europe as 'Turkish' had in fact been woven in Cairo. Thévenot is one of the very few authors to have left a description of a workshop producing 'classical' Ottoman carpets. He witnessed young boys working under the supervision of a master, who came to every loom from time to time with a pattern in his hand. From this paper the master read off the number of knots in a given colour required by the design, and Thévenot was much impressed by the rapidity of the process.[34]

Anatolian carpets had apparently been exported, to Tibet as well as to Mediterranean Europe, ever since the thirteenth century. However, due to the ambitions of Dutch seventeenth-century painters in the documentation of worldly riches, more is known about the types favoured by northern European buyers than is true for any previous period. That the export of carpets attracted the attention of certain Ottoman *ulema* is proven by a sultanic command, dated 1610–11, which forbade the manufacture of rugs with prayer niches on them.[35] It was taken for granted that rugs were often sold to infidels, and therefore it was forbidden to decorate them with religious symbols; however, given the numerous rugs with prayer niches in European collections, this admonition does not seem to have produced any concrete results.

Scattered information indicates the continuing (or renewed) prosperity of textile manufacturing in western Anatolia, but especially in the hinterland of Aleppo and in Egypt. Jewish refugees from Salonika brought the manufacture of woollen cloth to Manisa; this was probably lower in quality than that supplied to the janissaries but appealing to a modest local clientele.[36] Evliya Çelebi emphasises the mid-seventeenth-century prosperity of Ayntab (Gaziantep), which had added six or seven new quarters to the urban fabric between 1648 and 1671–2, apart from a sizeable number of khans, shops and mosques. Ayntab produced 'coloured' (*elvan*) cotton cloth, probably one of the mainstays of its commercial activity.[37] The Nuremberg merchant Wolffgang Aigen, who lived in Aleppo between 1656 and 1663, considered this city a centre of the long-distance trade in cotton and cotton yarn. His principal concern being with goods that might profitably be exported, Aigen emphasises that cotton cloth

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34 Jean Thévenot, *Voyage du Levant*, ed. Stéphane Yérasimos (Paris, 1980), p. 232.
35 Ahmed Refik Altınay, *Onbirinci asr-ı hicrî'de İstanbul hayatı (1592–1688)* (Istanbul, 1988), pp. 43f.
36 Emecen, *Manisa Yahudileri*, pp. 35ff.
37 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. IX, pp. 353, 359.

from Kilis reached Aleppo for sale to exporters, and mentions the manufacture of silk velvets, atlas and a fabric called *tabin* by the Orthodox Christians of Aleppo.

Camlets woven from mohair also figured among the goods exported from Aleppo during the middle of the seventeenth century.[38] By the late 1600s, Nablus cotton cloths were being traded in Cairo.[39] Presumably many of these textiles had been produced in earlier centuries as well, and thus should not be regarded as novelties demonstrating a hypothetical dynamism of local industries. But even so, northern Syrian manufactures apparently recovered quite well from the disturbances of the early seventeenth century.

In Cairo the manufacture of silk cloth employed a sizeable number of artisans during the last twenty years of the seventeenth century; they appear to have concentrated on the more modest qualities. Around 1700 Egyptian textiles were much in demand, both in North Africa and in Syria, but some varieties also found their way to European customers. Cairo constituted a major locus of production, while its suburb Gizeh had acquired a reputation for indigo-dyeing. Evliya recorded the presence of a workshop for textile printing. Turbans from fine fabrics, intricately ornamented, also figured among the luxury goods which down to the end of the seventeenth century generated respectable profits for Cairo's artisans.[40]

Eighteenth-century developments: French purchases and the cotton industry

Beginning a new period in Ottoman industrial history around 1700 is less arbitrary than might be assumed at first glance. During the Ottoman–Habsburg war of 1683–99, trade had often been interrupted, as few resources could be devoted to the security of the roads. Craft industries selling regional and interregional markets must have been adversely affected, as had happened a century earlier during the Celali uprisings. However, in the early eighteenth century a concerted effort was made to remedy this problem. On the route linking Istanbul to central Anatolia and Syria, new khans were constructed, old ones repaired and the ancient institution of pass-guards was thoroughly restructured.[41] With communications more secure, the first sixty years of the

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38 Wolffgang Aigen, *Sieben Jahre in Aleppo (1656–1663): Ein Abschnitt aus den 'Reiß-Beschreibungen' des Wolffgang Aigen*, ed. Andreas Tietze (Vienna, 1980), fols. 36v, 61v, 118v and elsewhere: compare index.

39 Raymond, *Artisans*, vol. I, p. 323.   40 Ibid., pp. 323–5 and elsewhere.

41 Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda derbend teşkilâtı* (Istanbul, 1967).

eighteenth century saw a return of prosperity to many Ottoman textile producers.[42] Concerning cottons, much of our information comes from the documents generated by Marseilles merchants. Until 1688 these traders legally imported cotton fabrics from the eastern Mediterranean. At the time, this trade accounted for about one-tenth of the value of all goods imported into Marseilles from the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman cotton fabrics generally seem to have been of ordinary quality, while the finer qualities came from Iran and India.[43] In 1688 the importation of cottons into France was forbidden in order to protect French textile manufacturers, but enforcement was often quite lax. Smuggling was probably facilitated by the fact that importation for resale to Italy and Spain remained licit.

A large share of the imported fabrics consisted of white cottons destined for printing or the confection of shirts and underwear. These commodities increasingly were used even by poorer Frenchmen during the eighteenth century. This resulted in a demand for cheap cottons, which was satisfied either by the products of local cotton weavers or else by smuggled cloth. White fabrics known in French commercial parlance as *demittes* and *escamittes* were produced in Izmir, Sayda and Cyprus, and also in the northern Egyptian town of Reshid/Rosetta. Similar was the quality known as *boucassin* (Ottoman *bogası*), which in Izmir was used particularly for printing. Moreover, Egyptian linens constituted a manufactured export of some significance, as attested by the numerous names of textiles recorded in French commercial documents. Most of them were of relatively coarse quality, meant to clothe sailors or serve as bedspreads. Many of these linens were white, but blue was also a popular colour.

With respect to coloured fabrics, Aleppo equally specialised in indigo-dyed cottons, the colouring matter being imported at first from northern India, and then from the Antilles. On a smaller scale, this industry also flourished in Tokat, but during the latter part of the century, fluctuations in the price of indigo caused great difficulties.[44] Red cottons, presumably those dyed by processes unknown in Europe until about 1800, also figured among the specialities of Aleppo. Moreover, there were finer cottons, often with admixtures, which were not exported to Marseilles in significant quantities, but consumed by

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42 Mehmet Genç, 'XVIII. yüzyılda Osmanlı ekonomisi ve savaş', *Yapıt* 49, 4 (1984), 52–62 and 50, 5 (1984), 86–93; French version: 'L'Economie ottomane et la guerre au XVIIIe siècle', *Turcica* 27 (1995), 177–96.

43 Katsumi Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant, d'Alep à Marseille* (Paris, 1987), pp. 15–69.

44 Yüksel Duman, 'Notables, Textiles and Copper in Ottoman Tokat 1750–1840', Ph.D. dissertation, Binghamton University (1998). I am grateful to the author for allowing me to consult his work.

wealthier Ottomans: *alaca*s / *allaya*s out of linen and cotton, in addition to the Aleppo textiles known to the French as *herbages* and *bourres*, mixtures of silk and linen. Among these luxuries or semi-luxuries, one might also mention the striped fabrics known as *ikate*.[45]

In 1703 the prohibition on the import of cottons into France was abrogated. This makes more meaningful the data in the Marseilles archives, on which we must rely for much of our information on the geographical distribution of Ottoman cotton production.[46] English commerce had been of major importance in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire. But in the early eighteenth century, this trade largely fell away. English commercial houses therefore moved on to other business and eighteenth-century English records tell us much less about Ottoman textile manufacturing than their French counterparts. Even though cotton fabrics only made up 4 per cent of all French imports from the Ottoman Empire, they were significant in the trade of certain ports, such as Istanbul and Izmir. It is difficult to establish what is meant by *indiennes de Constantinople*, which figure prominently in the Istanbul accounts, but were also sometimes exported from Izmir. Presumably prints made in Istanbul itself were consumed by the city's inhabitants and not available for export. Some of the fabrics in question may have been manufactured in Izmir, Bursa and other Anatolian cities, and merely traded in the Ottoman capital.

In the exceptional year of 1717 *indiennnes de Constantinople* exported to Marseilles were valued at 585,400 *livres tournois*. But apart from this windfall, even in other years preceding 1720, *boucassins* and printed stuffs exported from Istanbul were not insignificant.[47] In later years, however, Istanbul became quite negligible as a source for exportable cotton cloth, and even Izmir declined precipitately. By contrast, Aleppo, even in 1705–14 the principal source of cotton fabrics exported by Marseilles merchants, constantly expanded its market share, so that by 1772–6 only this city, and to a much lesser degree Alexandria, were of any significance as suppliers to France. Ayntab (modern Gaziantep) counted as an important producer of so-called *ajami*s, which were sold to French traders both indigo-dyed and white. But the distribution of French purchases should only be taken to mean that Aleppo and Alexandria marketed the products of a vast hinterland, and in no way that these were the only cotton-cloth-producing centres in the Ottoman Empire. Thus Thessaly and some of the Aegean islands

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45 Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant*, p. 20.

46 Ralph Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square: English Traders in the Levant in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Melbourne and Toronto, 1967). Compare also the chapter by Edhem Eldem in the present volume (chapter 14).

47 Fukasawa, *Toileries et commerce du Levant*, pp. 21–6.

manufactured significant quantities of such fabrics, even though their products were not exported.[48]

In the Greek-speaking provinces, the best-known textile manufacture was, however, located in the remote hill-town of Ambelakia. Here cotton yarn used by the nascent textile industries of Vienna, Buda and the German lands was hand spun and dyed, often to the 'Turkish red' so popular among consumers of the time. Organised as a kind of joint stock company, the spinners and dyers of Ambelakia prospered especially during the last decade of the eighteenth century.[49] However, with the resumption of English trade on the continent after 1815, the producers of Ambelakia were forced to compete, under increasing difficulties, with the English machine-spun yarn that was now reaching their customers.

Imitating Indian (and Iranian) cotton prints

In the early eighteenth century, Indian prints which had reached Ottoman markets by way of Jiddah or Basra occasionally figure among the fabrics exported by French merchants, and the same applies to Iranian cotton prints. As we have seen, Ottoman consumers had also developed a taste for these light, durable and brightly coloured fabrics. However, in 1783 the Ottoman government issued one of its very first decrees attempting to protect local manufactures. Aiming at the widespread use of Indian cottons, the sultan threatened those who consumed foreign manufactures with dire punishments. This measure had been advocated by no less a figure than the official historian Naima earlier in the century, and had probably been discussed intermittently by Ottoman bureaucrats of the eighteenth century.[50] It is in this context that we must view the attempts to imitate Indian textiles on Ottoman territory.

After 1730, the export of Indian textiles to France through Ottoman ports came to an end; but during the early eighteenth century, printed cottons (*indiennes chafarcani*) from Diyarbekir began to attract the attention of French exporters. As the name indicates, the *chafarcani*s replicated Indian manufactures, with white floral designs on a red or violet ground. Some of these fabrics may have been of Iranian provenance, but most were probably imported from

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48 Ibid., p. 25.

49 Traian Stoianovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960), 243–313, at p. 257.

50 Ahmed Cevdet, *Tertib-i Cevdet ez-Tarih-i Cevdet*, 12 vols. (Istanbul, 1309/1891–2), vol. II, pp. 359–60. I owe this reference to Dr Yüksel Duman.

India.[51] If a border formed part of the design, it was violet if the ground was red, or else the reverse. Red hues were obtained by dyeing with madder root and alum, while an iron-based mordant allowed the dyers to produce violet fabrics, the *chafarcani*s being noted for their rich and durable colours. Apparently the style had originated in northern India, and may have been brought to the Ottoman Empire by Armenian traders. But the fabric of Diyarbekir seems to have been coarser and more solid than the delicate Indian product, and French purchasers often used it for cushions, curtains and bedspreads.

Both *chafarcani*s and plain cottons of the *ajami* type seem to have flourished well into the 1760s and even 1770s. But at this time, the economic depression which hit so many sectors of the Ottoman economy also engulfed this manufacture.[52] Natural calamities led to famines and scarcities of raw cotton, so that the cotton fabrics produced in northern Syria and Mesopotamia became more expensive and less attractive to exporters. In addition, constant warfare in Iran affected the economy of northern Iraq as well. Detailed information on imitations of Indian cottons became scarce when French merchants gave up on exporting them. However, quite possibly some of those manufacturers producing for an Ottoman market survived, or at least revived after a while, for records concerning the forced sale of Diyarbekir cotton cloth to the Ottoman central administration show that even in 1815–17 such cloth was delivered in appreciable quantities.[53] In 1815–16, the English traveller James Buckingham, detained in the south-eastern Anatolian town of Urfa due to the insecurity of the roads, noted that even though many bazaars were now closed, under 'normal' circumstances cotton manufactures flourished in this town.[54] After having discussed recent developments in the British cotton industry with one of the more substantial local producers, Buckingham was even offered a job as a kind of 'technical adviser'. Obviously his prospective employer hoped that the market would again expand once the political situation had stabilised.

Cotton manufactures as reflected in Ottoman records

The particular attraction of eighteenth-century French sources consists in the numerical data they contain, which allow us to chart the progress or decline of a

51 Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant*, p. 48.
52 Genç, 'Osmanlı ekonomisi ve savaş'.
53 İbrahim Yılmazçelik, *XIX. yüzyılın ilk yarısında Diyarbakır (1790–1840)* (Ankara, 1995), pp. 312–13.
54 Compare Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Al-Ruha', *EI 2*.

given manufacture. By contrast, Ottoman data are often qualitative. Moreover, recent studies of urban life on the basis of local records will often play down economic aspects in favour of cultural and socio-political ones. As a result, even those few primary sources informative on the subject of textile production and referred to in the secondary literature have not been analysed as closely as they might otherwise have been.

In this context it has emerged that eighteenth-century Mosul was a centre of cotton manufacture directed largely towards local markets. As the population expanded during this period, demand also increased, and workers outside the guilds, especially women, came to hold an important position as spinners.[55] Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century kadi registers also show that the Palestinian town of Nablus focused on cotton manufacturing. In this hillside town, fairly remote from the ports of both Sayda and Beirut, cloth was manufactured for a peasant clientele demanding sturdy fabrics in accustomed designs. Given low-cost labour and simple implements, locally produced goods had an edge over their foreign competitors.[56] Moreover, long-term links between cloth merchants and their peasant customers also meant that even if the former distributed 'old-fashioned' stuffs, the latter would not be as likely to switch to other suppliers as would 'unattached' urban customers. On the other hand, unlike other rural sites, where home weaving and auto-consumption dominated, the Nablus countryside was by no means an insignificant market. Demand was buoyant; at weddings, it was considered appropriate not only for the bride and groom but also for the guests to appear in new outfits. Nineteenth-century documentation on peasants going to town in a holiday mood in order to make such purchases is fairly ample.[57] Apart from the insecure years at the very end of the eighteenth century, the same custom probably prevailed in earlier times as well. Unfortunately the kadi registers do not seem to contain any evidence on the elaborate embroideries which must have decorated the clothing of at least well-to-do brides, and which survive in respectable quantities from the nineteenth century. It is likely that embroidered holiday clothes were worn in earlier times as well, even though the designs may well have been different.

Where the Tokat manufacture of cotton textiles is concerned, we know rather little about its period of florescence, apparently in the late seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. But the city's kadi registers

55 Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul 1540–1834* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 137–8.
56 Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1995), pp. 95–130.
57 Ibid., p. 29.

provide a good deal of evidence on the crisis period which the manufacture experienced from the 1770s onward, in common with so many other branches of Ottoman trade and industry.[58] As the manufacture declined, the local market was supplied with printed cottons from Istanbul and Malatya, Maraş, Antep and Diyarbekir. This would indicate that cottons from south-eastern Anatolia and northern Syria, though themselves in difficulties, held up better than those of Tokat. Rising indigo prices seem to have played a significant role in the problems of the Tokat industry. As profit margins contracted, merchants with cottons to dye came to prefer small towns such as Köprü, where presumably dues were lower. Thus the khan of the Tokat cotton printers, built by a high Ottoman dignitary in more optimistic days, now stood deserted. A petition from a local notable in 1764 points to non-economic factors as a reason for the decline of the industry: even before the crippling taxation of the Russo-Ottoman war (1768–74) spread economic crisis all over the empire, the Tokat printers had been driven out of town by heavy irregular dues. However, the last years of the eighteenth century witnessed a degree of recovery. This may partly have been due to the willingness of Tokat entrepreneurs to risk manufacturing new types of fabrics, particularly chintzes (*mücessim, değirmi*). But they had no monopoly on these stuffs, which were also being woven in the smaller towns of the region. Moreover, the heavy taxes imposed on vegetable dyes in order to fill the coffers of Selim III's new-style army corps did not exactly help the industry.

Ottoman silks of the eighteenth century

These have always had a poor press among art historians, who favour the intricate 'cloud' and floral designs of the sixteenth century, and regard eighteenth-century Ottoman silk weaving as a decaying craft. Historians with a 'statist' slant have suggested that the lower degree of centralisation typical of the eighteenth century inevitably had negative consequences for the arts.[59] Judging that the 'decline' in Ottoman silk weaving began as early as the late sixteenth century, Fahri Dalsar has suggested that lively demand, which could not be satisfied with the limited number of workers available, was at least partly responsible for a decline in quality. The same author has noted that Ottoman silk weaving revived in the late eighteenth century, but that at this period Ottoman silk manufacturers worked largely for local markets. It has also sometimes been

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58 Duman, 'Notables'.

59 Fahri Dalsar, *Türk sanayi ve ticaret tarihinde Bursa'da ipekçilik* (Istanbul, 1960), pp. 291–307, esp. p. 307; Tahsin Öz, *Türk kumaş ve kadifeleri*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1951), vol. II, p. 42.

suggested that the decline in Ottoman luxury textiles was caused by a shift towards French silks. But a perusal of the clothing of sultans and princesses preserved in the Topkapı Sarayı shows that in the eighteenth century, identifiable French manufactures constituted the exception rather than the rule.[60] Most fabrics have not been assigned a specific origin by the cataloguers and other experts, and must therefore be presumed of Ottoman origin. A distinct change in taste is, however, visible: plain silks, decorated with appliqué work or embroidery had become popular, or else we find small designs, often arranged in stripes. Apparently these fabrics were both lighter and less difficult to weave than their predecessors from the 'classical' period.[61] New names for silk stuffs were also becoming popular, such as the different varieties of a silk fabric known as *hatayi*.[62]

Among manufacturing centres, Bursa remained of considerable importance. Apparently a fair share of the silks produced were consumed locally. As a perusal of kadi registers dating from the 1730s shows, it was not unusual for urban women to own several silk dresses, silk shirts were not unknown, and velvet cushions appear among the possessions of both women and men. This would mean that though silk no longer linked Bursa to foreign markets to the same degree as had been true in the sixteenth century, producers had adapted by bringing onto the market cheaper fabrics accessible to a larger number of local consumers. A document of 1777 refers to a labourer who had woven *kutnu* on behalf of his employer; this was a mixture of silk and cotton used by women of modest social status.[63]

Already in the seventeenth century, the island of Chios had been known for its manufacture of atlas and *kemha*, those silks which had been dyed red with *kırmız* being assigned the highest value.[64] By the eighteenth century, raw silk from Bursa was also used in this manufacture. Presumably the silk industry was able to develop in part because the profits of Greek sea captains made investment capital available. In particular, the silk belts woven and embroidered on the island developed into a well-known luxury item, with which the pages of the palace were issued on special occasions. This prominence of Chios silks in the consumption of the eighteenth-century palace also explains the fact that while Ottoman fabrics with legible inspection stamps (*damga*) are not very common, the Topkapı Palace contains some items with well-preserved

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60 Hülya Tezcan, Selma Delibaş and Michael Rogers, *Topkapı Sarayı-Museum: Textilien* (Herrsching am Ammersee, 1986), pp. 169–70.
61 See the miniatures of Levnî (1720): Öz, *Kumaş ve kadifeleri*, vol. II, p. 43.
62 Ibid.   63 Dalsar, *İpekçilik*, p. 322.
64 Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda narh müessesesi*, p. 116.

*damga*s of Chios. Remarkably enough, the island with its largely non-Muslim population also gained a reputation for its prayer rugs.[65]

   Further silk manufactures were located in Istanbul itself; Istanbul *dibası* is often mentioned in eighteenth-century records.[66] A sultanic command dated 1754 provides some information about the production process.[67] It was issued in response to a complaint from the silk spinners (*ibrişim bükücü esnafı*) working for the foundation supporting the library established by Ahmed III in the third courtyard of the Topkapı Palace.[68] This guild, which possessed Muslim as well as Christian members, claimed that in the past, the merchants bringing raw silk into the capital had sold this item to the petitioners, who manufactured the yarns known as *ibrişim* and *bürümcük* – the latter when woven give a fine, crinkly fabric. The undyed yarn was then sold to the silk merchants, who had it dyed and put it up for sale in their shops. But recently some entrepreneurs had sent the silk to be spun in the Bosporus villages, Bursa, Edirne and even Tokat, presumably because prices were lower in these smaller settlements. How much silk was then woven in the localities in question and how much was delivered to Istanbul weavers remains unknown. This practice was now prohibited; we must assume that in our text raw silks arriving from localities other than Bursa were at issue. It would not have made sense to forbid silk-spinning in the latter city, where this craft had a long history. Unfortunately there is no positive information on the sources of the raw silk under dispute. Some Iranian silk may still have reached the Ottoman capital, though probably not a great deal. The Peloponnese and Syria may well have formed the main source of the raw material used by the Istanbul silk spinners.

The manufacture of woollens

During the eighteenth century, the manufacture of rough woollens (*aba*) in present-day southern Bulgaria expanded beyond the confines of the Filibe (Plovdiv) region to which it had been limited in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Tatar-Pazardzik, Pirdop and Koprivstica in their turn took up the manufacture of woollens and also of the braid (*gaytan*) used in large quantities when making up the fabrics into cloaks. Moreover, the industry, which

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65 Öz, *Kumaş ve kadifeleri*, vol. II, p. 43.   66 Ibid., p. 53.
67 Ahmet Kal'a et al. (eds.), *İstanbul Külliyatı: İstanbul Ahkâm Defterleri* (Istanbul, 1997), p. 82.
68 Mübahat Kütükoğlu, 'Osmanlı esnafında oto-kontrol müessesesi', in *Ahilik ve esnaf, konferanslar ve seminer, metinler, tartışmalar* (Istanbul, 1986), pp. 55–86; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Ortak işliklerle özel evler arasında XVIII. yüzyıl Bursa'sında işyerleri', in *Bir masaldı Bursa . . .*, ed. Engin Yenal (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 97–104.

previously had been entirely urban, now began to draw in the labour of peasants working in their spare time.[69] Thus this region constituted one of the few parts of the Ottoman Empire which may be called proto-industrial; here the inhabitants of outlying hill villages with little agricultural land lived largely by textile manufacture.[70] While local wool was used, this did not satisfy demand, and traders started to bring in extra raw material from Moldavia and Wallachia.

Both Istanbul and Anatolia served as markets for this product. Merchants from Filibe or Koprivstica often took surnames referring to the towns in which they did business; judging by this evidence, Bursa, Amasya, Izmir, Kayseri, Erzurum and Diyarbekir furnished opportunities for enterprising *abacıs*. But some merchants found ways of reaching the remoter markets of Syria and even India. An eighteenth-century company of *abacıs* was represented in Damascus and other Syrian cities, while in the early 1780s another company was dissolved that had traded with the eastern Indian port of Calcutta. Presumably in the hot climate of Bengal, *aba* was used not for clothing but for tents and other furnishings.

In conclusion

As research undertaken during the last twenty-five years or so has demonstrated, the old assumption that Ottoman textile manufacturing lacked all dynamism after the end of the sixteenth century is no longer tenable. Admittedly, luxury and semi-luxury cloths were indeed negatively affected by European competition for scarce raw materials, quite apart from wars leading to the closure of trade routes. Fashion changes also took their toll, as the fine Indian cottons which caught the attention of well-to-do Ottoman customers must have lessened the demand for silk, just as occurred in contemporary Europe. However, even in this high-value sector, the export of rugs and carpets thrived, to witness the almost 1,000 depictions which have been found in seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. Moreover, in the eighteenth century, the silk-weaving industry of Chios was able to attract the custom of Ottoman court dignitaries.

But it does appear that eighteenth-century textiles especially were geared less to the wealthy than to middle-income and, in some instances, even to modest consumers. The markets for cloth intended for a more modest clientele were usually protected from import competition by the limited accessibility of

69 Todorov, *La ville balkanique*, p. 208.
70 Michael Palairet, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800–1914: Evolution without Development* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 66ff.

the Anatolian and Balkan provinces. Moreover, in spite of the poor condition of the roads, some producers such as the weavers and merchants of present-day southern Bulgaria built up far-reaching distribution networks which no foreign importer could hope to rival. This confirms Fernand Braudel's observation, now over twenty years old, that the Ottoman Empire down to the end of the eighteenth century was able to protect its overland trade routes from foreign interference, and thereby remained a 'world economy' in its own right.[71] Viewed from the manufacturers' angle, textile producers adapted quite rapidly to the falling away of the luxury market, and built up alternative clienteles.

Seen from the taxpayers' point of view, the inhabitants of most Ottoman provinces would have had few choices. With significant sums of money transferred to Istanbul every year, provincials needed to sell goods outside of the region (preferably to the capital, where tax moneys tended to accumulate) in order to earn the money needed for the next round of taxes. It is possible that this process became more difficult when so much of textile production was oriented toward local, middle-range consumers. In the absence of sales figures, it is impossible to be sure. But we must take note of the fact that so much of this textile production disappeared when land became more readily available in the Balkan states after independence, and the tax load was lightened. Peasants, when given a choice, apparently preferred self-sufficiency to production of textiles for the market. Urban craftsmen, with their custom shrinking, emigrated to Istanbul or Salonika, or else reverted to agricultural pursuits. This shows that much of the eighteenth-century's expansion of market-oriented production was in fact state induced, even though in this period Ottoman bureaucrats took only occasional and haphazard measures to protect local industry.[72]

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71 Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle*, vol. III, pp. 403–408.
72 Christopher A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770–1870* (Cambridge, 1983); Palairet, *Balkan Economies*, pp. 357–61.

Rural life

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI

Births, marriages, deaths and migrations

While the vast majority of Ottoman subjects lived in the countryside, mostly as peasants or else as nomads, it is impossible to be precise about numbers. Few tax registers of the type for which the sixteenth-century Ottoman administration had become famous were compiled after 1600, and those that were have often survived only in fragments. To fill the gap researchers have attempted to estimate rural population on the basis of the 'tax houses' made up of several families that in the seventeenth century, in place of 'real' households, formed the basis for assessing the payments and services known as *avarız*. But 'tax houses' comprised a highly variable number of real households, and it is only if the sources give us equivalencies that these registers become usable for population estimates; however, this information is by no means available in all cases.

Moreover, in the eighteenth century so many taxes came to be collected by lifetime tax-farmers that counts of the taxable population became irrelevant. Therefore, throughout the period treated we can only estimate population for certain limited regions. Only shortly after our period had ended, in the 1840s, was a further set of counts initiated, which appears promising for demographic studies, but as yet the critical evaluation of this material is only in its beginning stages.[1]

In Anatolia and some parts of Greece, as well as in Palestine, certain areas lost population in quite a dramatic fashion during the political troubles and climatic irregularities of the early seventeenth century, with a low point around 1640–50. In some instances there seems to have been a regrouping of population in areas that were more secure or else advantageous from a climatic point of view: in Palestine, settlements close to the desert were abandoned when the state no

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1 Kayoko Hayashi and Mahir Aydın (eds.), *The Ottoman State and Societies in Change: A Study of the Nineteenth Century Temettuat Registers* (London, 2004).

longer protected villagers against Bedouin attacks.[2] However, a resettlement of the coastal strip, emptied for security reasons since the Mamluk period, was undertaken during those same years.[3] Numerous villages of the central Anatolian plains were abandoned at the same time, but there was immigration into the coastal area around Manisa and Izmir as, in spite of all prohibitions, the exportation of locally grown cotton, raisins and wheat became highly profitable.[4]

For the non-Muslims the registers of head-tax payments (*cizye*) have been used as a basis for population estimates, although some researchers consider it impossible to use tax data for such a purpose. While in the seventeenth century, villages had sometimes been assessed lump sums, this was changed in the 1690s so as to make the *cizye* into a true poll tax, payable by all male non-Muslims past the age of puberty.[5] There being but few rural Jews, the *cizye* registers should thus have reflected the Christian village population with more accuracy than had been true in earlier times. However, it is unclear how we should interpret the seventeenth-century drop in Christian households recorded especially for the Balkans.[6] If there was in fact a population decline, then plague and typhus epidemics qualify as possible causes, especially with respect to Epirus, where plague was endemic.[7] During the last years, researchers have, however, concluded that what appeared as a single taxpayer might in fact be two or more, so that it is difficult to use even the late seventeenth-century figures as demographic sources. In addition, the idea that lump-sum *cizye* assessments were common in the sixteenth century has also been challenged.[8]

Thus it is highly doubtful whether, and if so, to what extent, the seventeenth-century decline in *cizye* payers reflected a decrease in population. Quite possibly conversions to Islam accounted for at least part of the difference, especially in what is today Albania. There also remains the unanswerable question whether

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2 Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Kamal Abdul Fattah, *Historical Geography of Palestine, Transjordan and Southern Syria in the Late Sixteenth Century* (Erlangen, 1977), pp. 56–9; Machiel Kiel and Friedrich Sauerwein, *Ost-Lokris in türkischer und neugriechischer Zeit (1460–1981)* (Passau, 1994), pp. 46–50.

3 Antoine Abdel Nour, *Introduction à l'histoire urbaine de la Syrie ottomane (XVIe–XVIIIe siècle)* (Beirut, 1982), pp. 61–5.

4 Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550–1650* (Seattle and London, 1990), pp. 20–1, 82–3.

5 Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 80–104.

6 Ibid., pp. 82–7.

7 Daniel Panzac, *La peste dans l'empire ottoman, 1700–1850* (Leuven, 1985), p. 109.

8 Nenad Moačanin, *Town and Country on the Middle Danube 1526–1690* (Leiden and Boston, 2006).

certain provincial magnates did not prevent the production of accurate records so as to enhance their own status as patrons of their peasantries, to say nothing of the possible financial advantages to themselves if the villagers were taxed less by the central state. By the eighteenth century the number of non-Muslim taxpayers began to grow once more; but once again we will need much more research before we can make any claims about the demographic relevance of these data.

Some of the best records date from the 1830s – in other words, the very end of our period. Covering a number of Catholic Bulgarian villages whose priests kept registers of baptisms, weddings and funerals in the style demanded by the post-Tridentine church, these registers continue until the 1870s.[9] Here some family reconstitution has proven possible, showing that marriages took place between the ages of eighteen and twenty for women and at the age of twenty for men, while child-bearing began as soon as possible afterwards. There were only the faintest traces of birth control and mortality was very high, for infants as well as for their mothers. Marriage was universal, and the presence of Catholic religious women residing with their families was not widespread enough to be reflected in the population structure even of these small settlements.[10] The urban style of later marriage, particularly for men, had not as yet spread to the countryside.

In the Ottoman Empire peasants were not supposed to settle outside their villages without permission from their local administrators. In the eighteenth century, the state sought to enforce this rule with considerable stringency when immigration into Istanbul was to be prevented. Guardsmen checked travellers at road barriers, and even the entry of people wishing to lodge official complaints was restricted.[11] And yet many migrants slipped through nonetheless. Quite a few trades in the capital were 'colonised' by rural/small-town immigrants who brought in their relatives to succeed them, and among the Istanbul market gardeners in particular there were numerous migrants from Balkan villages.[12] A substantial immigration of slaves, most of them originally of rural background, is also on record.

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9 Maria N. Todorova, *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern: Demographic Developments in Ottoman Bulgaria* (Washington, DC and London, 1993), pp. 29–70, 90–2.

10 Felix Kanitz, *Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan: Historisch-geographisch-ethnographische Reisestudien aus den Jahren 1860–1876*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1877), vol. II, pp. 168–9.

11 Münir Aktepe, 'İstanbul nüfus meselesine dair bazı vesikalar', *Tarih Dergisi* 9, 13 (1958), 1–30.

12 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Migration into Eighteenth-Century "Greater Istanbul" as Reflected in the Kadi Registers of Eyüp', *Turcica* 30 (1998), 163–83.

Nomads and semi-nomads

Many regions of the Ottoman Empire contained substantial proportions of nomads and semi-nomads, whose modes of life were extremely diverse. Thus the camels that merchants needed to transport their goods throughout Anatolia, Syria and Egypt were often owned by nomads, who spent time in towns and were closely linked to urban economies. A large number of the sheep without whose meat, milk and wool Ottoman society could not have survived were also bred by nomads; exchanges with settled villagers might take place at local fairs. At the other extreme there were those tribal people who inhabited the heart of the Syrian deserts, whose contacts with the outside world were limited to a few villages and oases beyond the purview of Ottoman officials, where these Bedouins might go in order to trade and raid.

Yet in spite of their economic and also political importance, not much research has been undertaken on nomads and semi-nomads. After all, these people occurred in Ottoman documents much less often than sedentary folk, who were easier to approach and to tax. Often information only becomes available when there were major crises. Thus when in 1671 a punitive expedition was dispatched against a Şerif of Mecca and his Bedouin associates in rebellion against the Ottoman authorities, this campaign was vividly described by the Ottoman world traveller Evliya Çelebi, of course from the Ottoman and not from the Bedouins' point of view.[13] Another such document-generating crisis occurred when the 'Anaza tribesmen inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula moved northwards in the mid-eighteenth century: the governor of Damascus sought to accommodate them, but not the smaller tribes that the 'Anaza had displaced in the course of their migrations. This policy was to prove fatal to the pilgrimage caravan returning from Mecca in 1757, which was virtually annihilated with great loss of life.[14] As to the ordinary relations of the state apparatus with Bedouins living close to the *hajj* route, we have records concerning the grants-in-aid (*surre*) that the Ottoman government made to selected Bedouin tribesmen in order to ensure the safety of the pilgrimage caravan.

Other records are linked to the Ottoman authorities' attempts to control the movements of their subjects, particularly those living in Anatolia. Apparently before the 1580s, when population had been on the increase, many former

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13 Evliya Çelebi b Derviş Mehemmed Zıllı, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 306, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Pertev Paşa 462, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Beşir Ağa 452 numaralı yazmaların mukayeseli transkripsiyonu – dizini*, vol. IX, ed. Yücel Dağlı, Seyit Ali Kahraman and Robert Dankoff (Istanbul, 2005), pp. 266–410.

14 Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723–1783* (Beirut, 1970), pp. 199–200, 214–15.

nomads had taken up agriculture, though possibly the Ottoman tax registers were sometimes over-optimistic in declaring that this or that tribal unit had turned itself into a village. Whether or not settlement generally involved the loss of tribal affinities remains unclear; but nomads who continued to migrate and yet were detribalised to a degree, and organised in military fashion instead, did exist in the Balkans.[15] During the early seventeenth century, when the population in certain parts of Anatolia declined significantly, new tribal units migrated westwards from the lands close to the Iranian border; some of them even crossed over into the Aegean islands.[16] These movements must have caused many conflicts, and lacking horses and military experience, the villagers were usually at the losing end.

The Ottoman administration reacted to these and other rural disputes by demanding that those who had been accused of disturbing the peace promise to refrain from so doing in the future; these people and also their fellow villagers/tribesmen had to pledge major sums of money (*nezir*), which fell due if the promises were not kept. In this context, there are references to routine complaints about nomads/semi-nomads who supposedly damaged fields and gardens while travelling between summer and winter quarters. But pitched battles between local administrators and tribesmen are also on record, the backgrounds of which remain obscure.[17] Eighteenth-century official attempts to enhance the security of major routes involved a militarisation of the 'pass guards' (*derbendci*), villagers responsible for the protection of travellers along a given stretch of road; these people often were embroiled with migrant tribesmen.[18]

Yet Anatolian nomads most often found their way into official documentation because of the authorities' intermittent attempts to settle them. A first major project of this type was initiated in the 1690s, in order to establish mainly Turkish-speaking nomads in south-eastern Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia. Though much state power was brought to bear, the project

15 M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Rumeli'de yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-ı Fâtihan* (Istanbul, 1957), p. 42.

16 Xavier de Planhol, *Les fondements géographiques de l'histoire de l'Islam* (Paris, 1968), pp. 235–40.

17 Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Räuber, Rebellen und Obrigkeit im osmanischen Anatolien', *Periplus* 3 (1993), 31–46; Işık Tamdoğan, 'Le *nezir* ou les relations des bandits et des nomades avec l'état dans la Cukurova du XVIIIe siècle', in *Sociétés rurales ottomanes*, ed. Muhammed Afifi et al. (Cairo, 2005), pp. 259–69.

18 Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda derbend teşkilâtı* (Istanbul, 1967), pp. 111–28.

failed, as the new settlers were given no help to tide them over the critical transition years. Moreover, the places to which they were assigned had been selected according to military rather than agricultural criteria.[19] In consequence, many former nomads and semi-nomads abandoned their settlements, and in the absence of other means of livelihood, frequently robbed villagers and caravans. Orders to local pass guards to detain the fugitives usually proved impossible to enforce. Yet in the eighteenth century further attempts of this kind were undertaken, and they increased in intensity when towards the end of our period Mahmud II subdued the Kurdish principalities of eastern Anatolia.[20]

Modalities of land tenure

Throughout our period Ottoman officialdom continued to assume that agricultural lands, and also woods and open steppe, were the property of the state (*miri*). Individuals, families, institutions or communities could rent this land in order to cultivate it; or else an official or a pious foundation might be assigned the right to collect taxes and dues from the local peasantry. Details of these transactions fell into the province of sultanic law (*kanun*). Legally speaking, state land could not be sold. If it was to be passed on to third parties against payment of a fee, as happened quite frequently, the consent of the local administrator was needed. In such cases, what was being alienated was the right of possession (*tasarruf*), not the ownership of the land itself. By contrast, houses, gardens, vineyards, orchards and vegetable patches were private property (*mülk*), and Islamic religious law governed the modalities under which these lands could be sold, rented or inherited.

However, the application of officially promulgated rules in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was less clear-cut than had – mostly – been true in the 1500s. On the one hand, we observe a growing impact of Islamic inheritance law on the manner in which peasant *tasarruf* was passed on to the next generation. Originally only a single son had been considered the rightful heir of his father's tenure; and if there was more than one surviving male descendant, all the brothers were jointly responsible for the relevant taxes, in a manner that the *kanun* did not specify. However, around 1600, at least in some regions daughters

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19 Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda aşiretleri iskân teşebbüsü (1691–1696)* (Istanbul, 1963); Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *XVIII. yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun iskân siyaseti ve aşiretlerin yerleştirilmesi* (Ankara, 1988).

20 Martin M. van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheich und Staat: Politik und Gesellschaft Kurdistans* (Berlin, 1989), pp. 235–44.

were allowed to take over after payment of a special tax (*resm-i tapu*) in cases where there were no sons.[21] By the early nineteenth century, *miri* lands and private property came to be governed by very similar rules, except for the fact that no one could inherit *miri* lands from his/her mother, while this was perfectly possible where private property was concerned.[22]

As the right to *tasarruf* could be transferred to third parties for a monetary consideration, it was possible for non-peasants to control agricultural lands. Such holders might turn over their fields to sharecroppers or have them cultivated by a few slaves, aided by hired labour during harvest time. Members of the Ottoman elite often possessed such holdings in the vicinity of Istanbul or Edirne. They might have acquired rights of possession by driving away local peasants, or else due to the 'sale' of these rights by hopelessly indebted holders.[23] But more frequently Ottoman dignitaries seemingly established their farms on uncultivated lands, which perhaps had been given up during the mercenary rebellions that convulsed much of Anatolia during the early seventeenth century. Such holdings were often recorded as mills or other items that might legitimately be considered private property.[24] Some local magnates farmed lands belonging to pious foundations, at rents disadvantageous to the latter but, on the other hand, such personages also established numerous mosques and other charities, which were often located in the countryside.[25] From the late seventeenth century onwards, lifetime tax-farmers and other local dignitaries were in an advantageous position when it came to appropriating peasant rights to land. For as they distributed taxes first assessed as lump sums among individual settlements and taxpayers (*tevzi*), there was plenty of opportunity to bring to bear the appropriate 'influence'.[26] Islamic religious law in its Hanafi form had been developed in such a fashion as to protect the interests of landholding elites at the expense of cultivating tenants.[27] Even so, landholdings in non-peasant hands could not be

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21 Compare the 'Kânûnnâme-i Karaman' in the Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, Kuyudu kadime, No. 104, fol. 3a (992/1584).

22 Ömer Lütfi Barkan, 'Türk toprak hukuku tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi', in *Türkiye'de toprak meselesi, toplu eserler* I, ed. Ömer Lütfi Barkan (Istanbul, 1980), pp. 291–375, esp. pp. 312–16.

23 Baber Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent: The Peasants' Loss of Property Rights as Interpreted in the Hanafite Legal Literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (London, 1988), pp. 88–93.

24 Halil İnalcık, 'Adâletnâmeler', *Belgeler* 2, 3–4 (1965), 49–145.

25 Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar, Karaosmanoğulları üzerinde bir İnceleme* (Ankara, 1997), pp. 89–163.

26 Halil Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 6 (1980), 283–337.

27 Johansen, *Land Tax and Rent*, p. 116 and elsewhere.

passed on to legal heirs; at the deaths of the possessors, they were confiscated and recorded, only to be 'sold' in due course to other members of the elite.

Before about 1980 scholars often linked the emergence of landholdings in non-peasant hands (*çiftlik*s) to expanding export markets. But empirical research on the distribution of these holdings has considerably modified this view. At least before 1750, in the relatively market-oriented coastlands to the west of the Black Sea and in Aegean Macedonia, such non-peasant farms were documented in significant numbers, but quite a few of them were located in areas not open to foreign trade before 1774. Such *çiftlik*s, often of modest size and worked by sharecroppers, must have been producing for the consumption of Istanbul – if indeed they had any connection to trade at all – and were not simply devices by which office-holders skimmed off a larger share of peasant production for their own benefit.[28]

Peasants were legally considered freemen, and were even entitled to bring disputes with local administrators to the kadis or else to the authorities in Istanbul. The Ottoman central administration never recognised the debasement of peasant status in law, but regarded it as an abuse to be remedied whenever possible. On the other hand, the peasants' obligation to stay in their villages and provide certain services upon demand placed them at a disadvantage when confronted with members of the Ottoman elite. Yet in practice, villagers – and even townsmen – often responded to serious pressures by flight to distant provinces. Others migrated to the towns, trying to make a living by waged labour. Such refugees sometimes sought service as mercenaries, at times eking out a meagre livelihood by brigandage.

Taxation, debts and the loss of peasant holdings

Very often the loss of *tasarruf* rights was caused by peasant debt. Indebtedness might be due to the vagaries of climate; thus in the years around 1600, Anatolia suffered from a lengthy period of subnormal rainfalls.[29] While some taxes demanded from agriculturalists were proportional to the harvest and – at least in principle – payable in kind, others involved fixed sums of money and might thus cause serious liquidity problems whenever the harvest failed. Even worse from the peasants' perspective, in the seventeenth century the *avarız* tax became one of the major revenue sources available to

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28 McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, pp. 76–7.
29 Peter I. Kuniholm, 'Archaeological Evidence and Non-Evidence for Climatic Change', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* A330 (1990), 645–55.

the central administration. Services, deliveries of grain and of course monetary payments all formed part of the *avarız*; the latter varied with fiscal needs, which were always considerable.[30] Therefore fiscal demands did not necessarily relate to the cultivators' ability to pay, even though the tax was graduated according to income. Peasants whose grains were not needed in a given year might be asked to pay substantial sums of money instead; and these were hard to procure in a cash-poor environment. Or else the obligation to transport grains to a military stopping-point might generate expenses quite out of proportion to the quantities of wheat or barley actually demanded. Official couriers also might descend upon villagers demanding food and fodder. As to the sultans' purchasing agents, they depleted peasant purses by demanding local products at sub-market prices for the court, army, navy and capital.

Payments due to the sultans' servitors as a compensation for their activities as tax-collectors were considered legitimate by officialdom. Yet there were also demands from local governors and other power-holders whose legitimacy was regarded as dubious but which villagers had to pay nevertheless. After all, by the seventeenth century, governors were expected to largely finance their own administrations, and often succeeded in appropriating enormous sums of money.[31] Given relative decentralisation of power local strong-arm men might collect further dues without any legal basis whatsoever, to say nothing of villagers who found themselves in a war zone, where they were ruined by the demands of regular soldiers, deserters and other brigands at least as much as by the consequences of enemy action.[32]

Sources of 'legitimate' credit were limited: in the larger cities of Anatolia and the Balkans, some pious foundations lent out money at 10–15 per cent interest, but they normally served urban and not rural needs. Peasants sometimes borrowed from shopkeepers who sold them necessities.[33] In the area of Karaferye (modern Verroia) seventeenth-century villagers were lent money by local Muslim notables. Contrary to the prescriptions of Islamic religious law, which requires that at the death of a person, all his/her debts be paid and

30 McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, p. 112.
31 Ibrahim Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650* (New York, 1983), pp. 91–2.
32 Sofroni von Wraza, *Leben und Leiden des sündigen Sofroni*, trans. Nobert Randau (Leipzig, 1979).
33 Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1995), pp. 150–1; the author minimises the significance of the debt nexus.

all credits be called in, these debts were carried on over the generations, with every member of the village community taking over a share along with his farm.[34] Studies covering the Bursa region show that money-lending to a mixed clientele of villagers and townsmen had by the 1730s become a major source of income both for urban artisans and servitors of the central administration. Unlike what has been observed for seventeenth-century Kayseri, where lending had typically been small scale, these were significant operators with occasionally hundreds of debtors. Some apparently preferred to appropriate the gardens and vineyards of insolvent owners, while others must have sold the relevant properties and used the money to enlarge their businesses. Lenders might resort to a variety of tricks in order to prevent borrowers from paying off their debts; this enabled them to continue pocketing the interest. These practices indicate that credit was tight and that even in fairly commercialised areas, local notables may sometimes have been hard put to find investment opportunities for their cash.[35]

Rural crafts

The extent of rural craft production remains unclear; but it seems that in the narrower sense of the term, i.e. the replacement of agriculture by a craft as the principal source of income for a village community, proto-industry remained limited to a very few places. A well-known example is the village of Ambelakia, today in northern Greece, that during its heyday in the late eighteenth century turned itself into a small town for a few years.[36] Local cotton spinners produced yarn destined for the weaving industries of Austria, which greatly expanded during the years before and after 1800. Even today elegant houses in the style favoured by wealthy Ottomans demonstrate the brief prosperity of this town. Eighteenth-century Chios became a producer

34 Eleni Gara, 'Lending and Borrowing Money in an Ottoman Province Town', in *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica, Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums*, ed. Markus Köhbach, Gisela Proházka-Eisl and Claudia Roemer (Vienna, 1999), pp. 113–19.

35 Ronald C. Jennings, 'Loans and Credit in Early 17th Century Ottoman Judicial Records: The Sharia Court of Anatolian Kayseri', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16, 2–3 (1973), 168–216; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'A Builder as Slave Owner and Rural Moneylender: Hacı Abdullah of Bursa, Campaign *mimar*', in *Mélanges Prof Machiel Kiel*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi, *Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies* 19–20 (1999), 601–15; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Indebtedness in the Bursa Area, 1730–1740', in *Sociétés rurales ottomanes*, ed. Muhammed Afifi, Rashida Chih, Nicolas Michel, Brigitte Marino and Işık Tamdoğan (Cairo, 2005), pp. 197–213.

36 Olga Katsiardi Hering, *Associations of Greek Artisans and Merchants between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires* (in press).

of silk cloth; given the island's limited urban development, this must have been in large part a rural industry as well. Eighteenth-century Balkan muleteers also sold the woollens that their families wove during the winter season. But the largest centre where such fabrics, usually of modest quality, were produced, was Filibe / Plovdiv. While it was originally an urban craft, local peasants soon played an important role, first as suppliers of wool and later also as spinners and weavers. In addition to heavy fabrics (*aba*) and the braid sewn onto the finished cloaks made of this material (*gaytan*), after 1800 weavers also produced a finer quality cloth known as *şayak*. After the suppression of the janissaries in 1826, these rural–urban manufacturers obtained contracts to clothe the Ottoman army; they found ready labour in the numerous places where holdings were too small to support peasant families.[37]

This arrangement conforms to the theory that peasants in case of population pressure will not automatically farm soils of ever poorer quality. Instead, they will look to more labour-intensive kinds of agriculture and also to rural industry as supplementary sources of income.[38] Moreover, these manufactures have often proved quite resilient, with producers finding niches for their goods even in the face of competition from European imports.[39]

Agricultural products for the domestic market

In their own understanding peasants must have worked to feed themselves and their families; and much of their labour must have been devoted to cereals and vegetables for daily consumption. Presumably many other goods in common use were either grown / manufactured at home or exchanged among relatives and fellow villagers. But in spite of its importance, our sources have little to say about this aspect of rural life. Only when goods left the subsistence sector and were sold in the market, or were turned over to members of the elite in the form of taxes and dues, have they left traces in Ottoman documents.

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37 Nikolaj Todorov, '19.cu yüzyılın ilk yarısında Bulgaristan esnaf teşkilatında bazı karakter değişmeleri', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 27, 1–2 (1967–8), 1–36; Michael Palairet, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800–1914: Evolution without Development* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 69–73. Compare also Chapter 16.
38 Huricihan İslamoğlu, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 1994), pp. 157–71.
39 Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 1993).

Urban demand mostly affected the productive activities of local villagers in the hinterlands of important cities such as Istanbul, Bursa, Aleppo or Damascus. Here peasant livelihoods were significantly affected by the presence or absence of cash crops, and by the prices that the latter commanded; for quite a few agricultural products were marketed by the peasants themselves. Before the second half of the eighteenth century, export-oriented crops were relatively less significant than those intended for the domestic market; if export has long been privileged by historians, this is merely due to the abundance of documents concerning European trade. Yet we have noted that the connection between export-oriented farming and the emergence of *çiftliks* was less close than had at first been assumed. Given the relative ease with which members of the provincial elites could pocket surpluses by taxing the peasantry, in addition to the norms enforced – more or less – by the Ottoman state, these prominent personages were frequently prevented from appropriating agricultural lands outright. Thus to a significant extent, the Ottoman Empire remained a land of peasants.[40]

In the closing years of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, grain was brought to the Ottoman capital from the eastern regions of modern Bulgaria and also from Wallachia and Moldavia. This trade was in the hands of Istanbul merchants, closely supervised by the state; beyond the delivery of wheat and barley, rural dwellers had no share in it. As to the prices paid, they depended upon the character of the deliveries in question: some were seen as a service to the state, others were at least in principle commercial in character. Often enough production costs were not covered, especially since it was difficult to evade the numerous controls ensuring an affordable and certain supply of bread to the inhabitants of Istanbul.[41] The difficulties suffered by the cultivators were not really taken into consideration, and this must have discouraged the people concerned from major investment in their holdings.

Other kinds of commercial agriculture, once again for the domestic market, were practised in the vicinities of larger cities, where they sometimes gave rise to the development of veritable hierarchies of rural and semi-rural markets: we possess studies, among other places, on Bursa, Istanbul and Damascus. Around Bursa from the early 1600s onwards, the cultivation of mulberry trees and silkworms had established itself as the importation of Iranian silk became

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40 İslamoğlu, *State and Peasant*, pp. 243–9.
41 Salih Aynural, *İstanbul değirmenleri ve fırınları, zahire ticareti* (Istanbul, 2001), pp. 7–16.

more expensive and uncertain. By this time mulberry groves, which counted as private property, belonged to the patrimonies of many townspeople. Old trees were often replaced, an investment justified by profitably selling off the leaves to the growers of silkworms.[42] Orchards and groves were often preferred to arable farming. As both water and a certain amount of investment capital were available in the relatively prosperous Bursa region, the construction of large watermills was also common, some of them including dams and perhaps short canals. However, there is no evidence of mills for other industrial uses.[43]

In the vicinity of Istanbul the growth of the Anatolian suburb of Üsküdar promoted the transformation of fields and meadows into gardens and vineyards. On the Bosporus during the eighteenth century, vineyards were cultivated by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, with the former sometimes selling grape juice to the latter for the production of wine. This activity seems to have prospered during the second half of the century.[44] Beyond the land walls there were numerous farms producing milk, eggs and yoghurt (*mandıra*). By the 1700s, moreover, specialised gardeners had emerged, cultivating plants that were sold to wealthy urbanites for their gardens; these rich people also generated enough demand to support an active flower market.[45]

Eighteenth-century Damascus, along with the nearby port of Sayda, profited from the relative decline of its age-old rival Aleppo, but also from a surrounding oasis producing fruits and vegetables in significant quantities.[46] Mount Lebanon (Cebel Lübnan) with its incipient urban development also formed part of the Damascene hinterland, and this area was known by the early 1600s for its mulberry groves and the raising of silkworms.[47] Even the inhabitants of the port town of Sayda drew their livelihoods more from cotton, oranges, lemons and raw silk than from commerce. In the hinterland the situation was at times critical: thus the Baalbek region, previously prosperous, was devastated

42 Haim Gerber, *Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa, 1600–1700* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 81–3.

43 Ibid., pp. 76–8.

44 Domenico Sestini, 'Beschreibung des Kanals von Konstantinopel, aus dem Italiänischen', trans. C. J. Jagemann, in *Neue Sammlung von Reisebeschreibungen, Achter Teil* (Hamburg, 1786), pp. 48–94.

45 Ahmet Hezarfenn, '18. yüzyılda Eyüp'te lale yetiştirenler', *Tarih ve Toplum* 137 (May 1995), 300–2; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Supplying Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Istanbul with Fresh Produce', in *Nourrir les cités de la Méditerranée, antiquité–temps modernes*, ed. Brigitte Marin and Catherine Virlouvet (Paris, 2003), pp. 273–301.

46 Abdel Nour, *Introduction*, pp. 341–60.

47 Wolffgang Aigen, *Sieben Jahre in Aleppo (1656–1663): Ein Abschnitt aus den 'Reiß-Beschreibungen' des Wolffgang Aigen*, ed. Andreas Tietze (Vienna, 1980), pp. 15, 19.

by local conflicts in the eighteenth century and thus lost much of its former importance.

Agricultural products for export

Export-oriented agriculture was often concentrated in areas close to the seashore; this was especially true of the cottons cultivated (and sometimes spun) in the vicinity of Izmir and Manisa, and also in the Sayda region; many of these exports were destined for Marseilles. Macedonia's cotton production more than tripled between 1740 and 1790, largely because of demand from the Habsburg Empire.[48] The Ottoman authorities had prohibited the export of cotton in the sixteenth century, but around 1600 these prohibitions were relaxed. This was done in an ad hoc fashion, so that cotton might be available one year and contraband the next. Cotton cultivation apparently increased as a result of the demand generated by exporters and, as a result, by the 1700s exports were regular.

Seventeenth-century Tunisia exported large quantities of grain to Marseilles, Leghorn and Genoa; evidently the prohibitions enforced in the Ottoman central provinces did not apply here.[49] Much of the olive oil used in the soap manufactures of Marseilles was produced in Crete, where after the Ottoman conquest (1645–69) olives had replaced grapes as the major commercial crop. In the Tunisian coastlands olive groves also became numerous; here local governors sold export licences and themselves traded in oil.

In other parts of the eighteenth-century empire, agricultural products were sold by local magnates, who had acquired them as part of the peasant taxes they had farmed from the central treasury. In addition, these personages also acted as brokers for the crops sold by the peasants themselves. While a fee was probably paid for this latter service, cultivators must have obtained better prices as a result.[50] Both magnates and more modest notables in coastal regions acquired landholdings in order to benefit from the rising European demand for cotton, tobacco and wheat. The latter commodity was in special demand during the wars following the French Revolution and Napoleon's seizure of power (1792–1815). As armies and navies were mobilised, grain prices reached

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48 Katsiardi Hering, *Associations*.

49 Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, 2000), pp. 130–40; Boubaker Sadok, *La Régence de Tunis au XVIIe siècle: ses relations commerciales avec les ports de l'Europe méditerranéenne, Marseille et Livourne* (Zaghouan, 1987), pp. 109–29.

50 Gilles Veinstein, 'Ayân de la région d'Izmir et commerce du Levant (deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle)', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et la Méditerranée* 20 (1975), 131–46.

an all-time high, and Anatolian, Macedonian and North African wheat was consumed by Napoleon's subjects. Even grains from isolated regions that up to this time had not been involved in foreign trade came to be highly sought after.[51] Although the demand for Ottoman grain receded again after 1815, this was indeed a prime example of full-scale integration of a large Ottoman region into the European world economy.

51 Traian Stoianovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', *Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960), 234–313.

PART VI

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CULTURE AND THE ARTS

The Ottoman musical tradition

CEM BEHAR

The earliest period to which we can trace back the inception of a specifically Ottoman/Turkish musical tradition is the second half of the sixteenth century. In and shortly after the 1550s we observe an extremely important threshold in the musical life of Ottoman cities. Unfortunately, due to the lack of sources – and particularly of any musical notation – we do not really know what the 'antecedent' musical traditions of royal courts and city-dwellers may have sounded like. It may well be, as has sometimes been advanced, that this existential caesura was precipitated by the musicians that Selim I (r. 1512–20) brought to the Ottoman capital from the lands he had recently conquered – in other words, from Tabriz, Syria and Egypt.[1] Other musicians, though probably much fewer in number, were brought in by Süleyman the Magnificent from Baghdad after the Ottoman conquest of 1534. These musicians, whose practices were grafted onto the pre-existing musical traditions of Istanbul, probably contributed to the elaboration of a new and original imperial musical synthesis. A few of the compositions these musicians brought with them survived into later periods and were attributed to 'the Persians' (Acemler, Acemiyan) or 'the Indians' (Hinduyan).

Whatever the particulars of the case, the mid-sixteenth century did indeed witness the birth and establishment of an original musical tradition. This involved the establishment of new cultural centres, musicians/composers and *makam*s (modes), in addition to the invention of original musical forms, styles and genres. Above all, there was a new language – namely Turkish – that from then on was widely used in the vocal repertoire in place of Arabic and Persian. An independent repertoire of Ottoman art-music thus seems to have emerged only after the mid-sixteenth century.

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1 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, 'Osmanlılar zamanında saraylarda musiki hayatı', *Belleten* 41 (1977), 79–114.

This mainly urban musical tradition extended over a cultural area centred on the capital city of the Ottoman Empire, also striking root in major cities such as Edirne, Bursa, Izmir and Salonika and extending eastwards into south-eastern Anatolian cities such as Urfa and Diyarbekir. This tradition, which we now name Ottoman / Turkish classical music, was kept alive, without any *major* discontinuity, well into the twentieth century. The changes observable between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries are minor compared to those that occurred between the 1500s and 1600s, and we thus possess extensive evidence of a continuity within a well-established musical tradition. Put differently, the beginnings of Ottoman music as we know it today go back to the years around 1600.[2]

The chronological and sociological details of this fundamental shift in urban and courtly musical traditions cannot as yet be satisfactorily accounted for. Clearly enough, however, it is totally incorrect to posit a strictly mechanical parallelism between the political–military rise and fall of the Ottoman empire and the fortunes of its culture and music. An original and synthetic Ottoman musical tradition took shape only *after* the Empire had achieved its – almost – maximum extent and reached the zenith of its political power.

Teaching and transmission

In stark contrast to the overwhelming importance of the written word in other areas of Ottoman culture and in the polity at large, Ottoman / Turkish traditional music was always taught and transmitted orally. Many European travellers, scholars and writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including Antoine Galland, Carsten Niebuhr, Giovanni Battista Donado, Jean-Benjamin de Laborde, Gianbattista Toderini, Charles Fonton and Ignace Mouradgea d'Ohsson were struck by the absence of written notation. Some of these writers expressed their admiration for the feats of memory that this situation implied, but others mistook the absence of written notation for a lack of musical theory.

Until quite recently in the Ottoman / Turkish tradition, the systematic use of written notation within the musical training process was really frowned upon. The first examples of musical notation were printed and published only in the late 1870s, about a century and a half after the first Ottoman printing-press

2 Owen Wright, *Words without Songs: A Musicological Study of an Early Ottoman Anthology and its Precursors* (London, 1992), p. 284.

had been established by İbrâhîm Müteferrika.[3] The most important form of Ottoman musical literature had always been the manuscript song-text collection, the *güfte/şarkı/ilahi/ayin mecmuaları*, of which hundreds have survived to this day.

Meşk was the name given to this oral teaching and transmission process.[4] Its existence and operation can be documented as early as the latter part of the sixteenth century. The musical education of the pages (*içoğlanı*) attached to the Topkapı Palace was around 1630 centralised in a single *meşkhane*.[5] Wojciech Bobowski (also known as Albertus Bobovius and Ali Ufkî Efendi), who wrote in the 1640s and 1650s, gave a detailed and vivid account of musical teaching and practice, and also of daily life, in this palace music school.[6]

Meşk did not only involve the teaching of musical theory, of various techniques of performance, or of a particular musical instrument. It was simultaneously a means of transmitting the whole musical repertoire itself – instrumental or vocal, religious or secular. It was based on the memorisation and reproduction of the repertoire with, necessarily, a face-to-face relationship between master and pupil(s).

Meşk became, with the passing of time, much more than a simple pedagogical method. Musical mastery, for instance, was – and, to a certain extent, still is – contingent upon the commitment to memory of as large a number of compositions as possible. A new composition could be taught, disseminated and performed only through oral transmission. The process fostered a web of chains of transmission connecting generations of composers and performers; in the process it gave rise to a particular *esprit de corps*, to real or imagined solidarities.

Teaching and transmission by *meşk* also moulded particular performance styles, and eventually created a social/ethical and musical code of conduct, some of whose basic tenets are still followed today.[7] Oral transmission and the degree of freedom it gave to each particular performer also made possible, or even inevitable, the production and dissemination of different versions or variants of the same work, while the 'original' forms of quite a few compositions

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3 Cem Behar, 'Transmission musicale et mémoire textuelle dans la musique classique Ottomane/Turque', *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Mèditerrannée* 75/76 (1996), 91–102.

4 Cem Behar, *Zaman, mekân, müzik: klasik Türk musikisinde egitim (meşk), icra ve aktarım* (Istanbul, 1993); Cem Behar, *Aşk olmayınca meşk olmaz*, (Istanbul, 2003 [1998]); Behar, 'Transmission'.

5 Uzunçarşılı, 'Osmanlılar'.   6 Cem Behar, *Ali Ufkî ve mezmurlar* (Istanbul, 1990).

7 Behar, *Zaman*.

are now perhaps irretrievably lost.[8] Selection through random attrition was also certainly unavoidable, although its overall influence on the size of the repertoire is nowadays often exaggerated.

Music and society

Musical training and performance went on in private homes, mosques, dervish lodges (*tekke*s) and even coffee-houses. The social basis of the Ottoman musical tradition was far from being limited to the palace or its immediate entourage. Music therefore could and did survive independently from the impetus and patronage provided by the ruling group.

In contrast to the antecedent musical traditions, Ottoman/Turkish music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was no longer the preserve of an urban professional elite. Nor, as we have seen, was the court the only centre of music-making.[9] The following occurrence may serve as *a contrario* evidence: when two successive sultans, Osman III (r. 1754–7) and Mustafa III (r. 1757–74), both strongly disliked music and chose to disband the Topkapı Palace *meşkhane*, thus ending all musical activity in the royal palace,[10] this rash decision had no disruptive effect on the practice of music in the city. Twenty years later, Selim III (r. 1789–1807), himself a patron of the arts and a great composer, had no difficulty whatsoever in quickly reconstituting in the palace a retinue of masterly musicians and composers. In other words, the tradition was already sufficiently diffused and ingrained in the urban social tissue and resilient enough to survive the effects of any random change in the musical tastes, whims and preferences of the ruler.[11]

This view is confirmed by the information given by Şeyhülislam Esad Efendi (d. 1753) in his important biographical collection *Atrab ül-âsâr fi tezkire-ti urefâ' il edvâr*, covering seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century composers and musicians. The social diffusion indicated by the names and titles of the approximately 100 musicians cited in this text, probably written in the late 1720s, certainly suggests that a very wide cross-section of the urban population took part in musical activities. Certainly some dignitaries including religious officials of various ranks were present, as apparent from their titles (*paşa, efendi, bey*), as well as members (*şeyh*s and dervishes) of various sufi orders. But many more musicians were of much humbler origins, as is apparent from names such as

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8 Owen Wright, 'Aspects of Historical Change in the Turkish Classical Repertoire', *Musica Asiatica* 5 (1988), 1–109.

9 Wright, *Words without Songs*, p. 204.   10 Uzunçarşılı, 'Osmanlılar'.

11 Behar, *Zaman*, pp. 28–9.

Tavukçuzade (son of the chicken-seller), Taşçızade (son of the stone-cutter), Sütçüzade (son of the milkman) or Suyolcuzade (son of the builder of water conduits). And many other musicians who made their livings as silk-weavers, street vendors, tanners or stonemasons were accorded honourable mention in Esad Efendi's biographical dictionary.[12]

For a later period we have the patent example of İsmail Dede Efendi (1778–1846), perhaps the most remarkable of all Turkish composers. A Mevlevi dervish, İsmail was born in Istanbul as the son of the owner of a public bath. During his lifetime he was therefore usually called 'Hamamcıoğlu İsmail' or 'Derviş İsmail'. It is only later idealisations and nostalgic yearnings for an aristocratic musical past in republican Turkey that have transmogrified his name to 'Hammamîzâde İsmail Dede Efendi'. Wide participation from all classes of society, and not class- or wealth-based exclusivity, seems to have been the rule in the musical world of Ottoman Istanbul. It is also certain that the sufi lodges, and especially those of the Mevlevis from the very early seventeenth century onwards, functioned as important centres of musical training and transmission, making wide selections of the religious and secular repertoire accessible to all classes of people.[13]

Religious/ethnic minorities such as Greeks, Jews and Armenians were also amply represented, especially in the latter part of our period. For the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the most famous non-Muslim composers were certainly the Greek Orthodox Zaharya (d. 1740?), most probably a church cantor, and the Jewish musician İsak Fresko Romano (1745?–1814), composer and *tanbur* (fretted long-necked lute) teacher to Sultan Selim III. Yet another one was a rabbi, Moshe Faro (d. 1760), also known as Musi. The share of non-Muslims probably increased after the mid-nineteenth century reorganisation known as the Tanzimat. Throughout the period in question, the liturgical music of churches and synagogues was in many ways affected by the mainstream Ottoman/Turkish urban musical tradition.

Notated music and written sources

The two collections of written notation that have survived from the seventeenth century were not coincidentally both written by 'foreigners' – that is, by musicians with a Western cultural and musical background. One of these collections is by Ali Ufki Efendi (1610?–1675), who was captured during one of

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12 Wright, *Words without Songs*, pp. 204–5; Behar, *Zaman*, pp. 36–7.
13 Sadeddin Nüzhet Ergun, *Türk musikisi antolojisi, dinî eserler* (Istanbul, 1943/4), vols. I and II.

the Ottoman/Crimean Tatar sieges of Kameniecz-Podolski in the early 1630s. Bobowski spent the rest of his life in Istanbul, and almost twenty years of it in the Topkapı Palace, where he was employed first as a page and musician and then a translator.[14] Ali Ufki's collection, in Western staff notation, but written from right to left, contains around 480 pieces, both vocal and instrumental.

Of the latter, about 100 are also present in the second collection, compiled around 1700 by the Moldavian prince Demetrius Cantemir (1673–1723).[15] Kantemiroğlu, as he is better known in Turkey, was as a boy brought to Istanbul where he lived for almost twenty years as a princely hostage. His notational system uses combinations of Arabic letters to denote various pitches.

As the only existing musical notations from the pre-modern repertoire in the whole Middle East, the cultural and historical significance of these two collections can hardly be overestimated. They are first-hand sources of incomparable importance. However, Cantemir's technical prowess was certainly forgotten soon after his departure from Istanbul. As to Ali Ufki, he was, due to his ability to write music, considered a wizard of sorts during his stay in the music school of the Topkapı Palace. Soon after his death, however, his two manuscript collections of notations were brought to London and Paris respectively by John Covel and Antoine Galland. Neither Cantemir nor Bobowski had any emulators in Istanbul and their manuscripts of notations were not copied, an incontrovertible indication of general indifference. Cantemir's collection of notations, containing 356 pieces, has only recently been transcribed and published in its entirety.[16] As to Ali Ufki, his two most important musical manuscripts have not yet appeared in a critical edition.[17] Only a facsimile of one of the manuscripts is currently available.[18]

Two other inventors of notational systems had similar fates. Of a well-known Mevlevi şeyh and composer named Osman Dede (d. 1729), his contemporary Esad Efendi[19] tells us, as if it were a great curiosity, that he was able to 'write down melodies'. But no relevant manuscript of Osman Dede

14 Behar, *Ali Ufkî*.
15 Demetrius Cantemir, 'Kitab-ı ilm ül musiki ʿalâ vech ül hurûfat', Istanbul Üniversitesi Türkiyat Enstitüsü, MS Y. 2768.
16 Owen Wright, *Demetrius Cantemir: The Collection of Notations* (London, 1992), vol. I.
17 Behar, *Ali Ufkî*. Manuscripts: (1) London, British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections [Ms. Sloane 3114]; and (2) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits Orientaux [Turc 292].
18 Şükrü Elçin, *Ali Ufkî-Mecmûa-i saz ü söz* (Facsimile, Istanbul, 1976).
19 Esʿad Efendi, 'Atrab ül-âsâr fi tezkire-ti urefâ' il edvâr', Istanbul University Library, MS T. 6204.

has survived. Osman Dede's grandson, another Mevlevi *şeyh* by the name of Abdülbaki Nasır Dede (1765–1821),[20] was encouraged by Sultan Selim III to devise a notational system based on the *ebced*, the numerical values attributed to the letters of the Arabic alphabet. In this manner Abdülbaki Nasır Dede wrote down four pieces, three of which had been composed by his royal patron in a new *makam* (Suzidilara) the sultan himself had just invented. However, royal encouragement brought with it no peer recognition and no emulators, and Abdülbaki Nasır Dede's manuscript ('Tahririye'), dated 1794, remained a *unicum*. His system of notation was never employed in later times.

The only notation that met with a certain degree of success was that of Hampartzum Limoncuyan (1768–1839). Devised around 1813–15, it was mainly inspired by the symbols (neumes) already in use for the notation of Armenian liturgical hymns (*sharakan*). The simplicity of this shorthand-type notation system, and the fact that it was already known to many Armenian musicians in Istanbul, contributed to its relative success.[21] Often used in conjunction with Western staff notation, the Hampartzum notation allowed its practitioners to preserve many works from oblivion. Numerous collections in Hampartzum notation exist, in both public and in private libraries.

Secular and *tekke* music

The roots of the liturgical music of the various sufi orders are traceable to the early seventeenth century. With time this music was much diversified, and progressively gained in sophistication throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As far as musical output is concerned, the most influential dervish orders were the Halvetis along with their Celveti and Gülşeni branches, and somewhat later the Mevlevis as well.[22]

Works produced in the dervish milieu are of a stunning diversity. They range from the plain, unadorned Bektaşi hymns, named *nefes*, which have a simple melodic structure often lacking a middle section (*meyan*) where modulation to a new *makam* would otherwise occur, to the long, complex and highly codified oratorio-like Mevlevi religious compositions (*ayin*).

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20 Abdülbaki Nasır Dede, 'Tahririye', Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS Nafiz Pasa 1242/2.
21 H. P. Seidel, 'Die Notenschrift des Hamparsum Limoncuyan', *Mitteilungen des deutschen Gesellschaft für Musik des Orients* 12 (1972/3), 71–119.
22 Ergun, *Türk musikisi antolojisi*, p. 13; Walter Feldman, 'Musical Genres and Zikir of the Sunni Tarikats of Istanbul', in *The Dervish Lodge-Architecture: Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, ed. Raymond Lifchez (Berkeley, 1992), pp. 187–202; Walter Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court: Makam, Composition and the Early Ottoman Repertoire* (Berlin, 1996).

Some *tekke*s were centres of musical activity by the early seventeenth century, and it seems that individuals connected with a dervish order were those who reached greatest prominence, both in religious and secular music. About one-third of the musicians whose short biographies are recorded in Esad Efendi's *Atrab ül-âsâr* indeed show that kind of connection.[23] The music sung and played in the *tekke*s was usually the product of the *zakir*s; these musically gifted dervishes led the *zikir* ceremonies, in which the name of God was invoked as part of the mystical way. There was nevertheless a considerable degree of interpenetration and overlapping between the religious and secular spheres. Master musicians were appreciated in both and moved back and forth between the two. The palace, for instance, was always careful to select the prayer leaders (*imam*s) who officiated in the presence of the monarch from among those who were musically most gifted and had beautiful voices.

Among the better-known composers of *tekke* music, there is ʿAziz Mahmud Hüdai (d. 1628), who was also a key figure in the development of the Celveti order in Istanbul and trained many other *zakir*s. Sütçüzade İsa (d. 1627), who was a well-known singer, and 'Küçük İmam' Mehmed Efendi (d. 1674) also produced religious pieces. But one of the most famous was yet another Mehmed Efendi, nicknamed Hafiz Post (d. 1693) who set to music, among other things, many poems written by the Halveti mystical poet Niyazi-i Mısri.[24] Hafiz Post is in fact one of the best-known composers of the seventeenth century, and the author of one of the first specifically Ottoman song-text collections (*güfte mecmuası*).[25] As analysed in detail by Owen Wright, this collection turned into a model for the genre.[26]

As to Buhurcuoğlu Mustafa Efendi, better known as Itri (1640?–1712), his compositional range is astonishing. Probably a pupil of Hafiz Post and himself a Mevlevi sympathiser (*muhib*), Itri is one of the key figures in Ottoman/Turkish music. He composed for the Mevlevi ritual and for other sufi orders as well as for the secular public. Some of Itri's religious compositions have become so popular that they have almost exhausted the dynamic of their own genre by becoming, so to speak, canonical. Some Islamic rituals in mosques in Turkey are unthinkable without the singing of Itri's *salât-i ümmiye*. Moreover, the *naʿt* (eulogy of the Prophet) he has composed on a Persian text by Celaleddin Rumi, the founder of the Mevlevi order, has become the unavoidable, almost compulsory, opening piece of any performance of a Mevlevi *ayin* in any *makam* whatsoever. It is certainly due to Itri's stature as a composer, to his influence

23 Behar, *Zaman*, p. 37. 24 Ergun, *Türk musikisi antolojisi*.
25 Hafiz Post, ʿMecmuaʾ, Topkapı Palace Library, MS Revan 1724.
26 Wright, *Words without Songs*.

and prestige, that the Mevlevi musical ritual acquired the form and structure it has had ever since. Perhaps Itri's influence also ensured that the Mevlevis, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century, came to take precedence over all other dervish orders in terms of musical production.

The musical form most widely used in the liturgical realm was the *ilahi* (hymn). This is a broad term comprising many sub-types, one of which was sung during the *zikir* ceremony. [27] *İlahi*s had fixed rhythmic cycles (*usul*s) and their language was normally Turkish, *ilahi*s in Arabic being called *şugl*. There were, as far as we can judge, no clear formal or stylistic differences between the *ilahi*s sung in Halveti, Cerrahi or Kadiri *zikir* ceremonies, and the hymns composed by a member of any of these orders could very well be sung in other sufi *tekke*s. Many collections of *ilahi* texts in fact contain pieces 'belonging' to a wide variety of dervish orders.[28]

The non-*zikir ilahi*s were called *tevşih*, *tesbih* or *cumhur ilahi*. These last two types were also often sung in mosques. However, contrary to the practice of most dervish orders, the singing of *ilahi*s in mosques was always done *a capella* and never admitted of any instrumental performance or even of rhythmic accompaniment. There were also some dervish liturgical songs that like the *ilahi* were pre-composed but – exceptionally – lacked a given rhythmic cycle. These were the *na't* and the *durak*. The *durak*s were sung at certain particularly solemn pauses of the *zikir* ceremony or during a reading of the *mevlid*, a poem in praise of the Prophet Muhammad often recited in pious company down to the present day.

Probably from the very beginning the liturgically and musically most complex sufi ritual was that of the Mevlevis. The Mevleviyye is the only Sunni order without a *zikir* ceremony of any sort and no liturgical singing of *ilahi*s. Its liturgy consists only in the musical performance of a pre-composed *ayin* in a certain mode, to accompany the dervishes' cosmic ('whirling') dance, the *sema*, the whole ceremony being called a *mukabele*. Internal evidence concerning the *ayin* texts and the rhythmic cycles used to set them to music suggests that the oldest of these long liturgical suites, the three anonymous compositions now called *beste-i kadim* (ancient compositions), cannot have been composed – or fashioned – before the early 1600s.[29] With the later adjunction of Itri's *na't*, the Mevlevi *ayin* took its final form, most probably in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

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27 Feldman, 'Musical Genres'.
28 Yusuf Ömürlü (ed.), *Türk musikisi klasikleri-ilahiler* (Istanbul, 1979–91), vols. I–VIII.
29 Wright, *Words without Songs*, p. 7.

In fact, the Mevlevi *ayin* is the longest and most complex pre-composed musical form within the Ottoman / Turkish tradition. Probably from the early seventeenth century onwards, the details of its performance were highly formalised. An *ayin* always began with the solo singing of Itri's *na't*, followed by an improvisation on the flute (*ney*), the order's sacred instrument, in the *makam* of the *ayin* to be performed that day. A strictly defined ritual included the succession of vocal and instrumental pieces and the choice of sacred texts to be set to music, the different rhythmic cycles used in the various parts (called *selâm*) of the *ayin*, as well as the prayers and invocations to be read at the very end. Apart from the musical aspect, the various movements and postures of the *şeyh*s, dervishes, instrumentalists and dancers, and even the smallest details of their dress and headgear, were part of a minutely arranged ritual performance.[30]

The complexity and length of the Mevlevi *ayin*s must indeed have seriously challenged the skills of all master musicians and composers. This is probably an important reason why the Mevlevihanes were always considered as de facto music schools. As the Mevlevis acquired musical pre-eminence in Istanbul after the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a wealth of new *ayin*s were composed.[31] There are now more than sixty *ayin* compositions extant, only ten or twelve of which predate the nineteenth century.

Groups, instruments and performers

Ottoman / Turkish music was essentially a 'chamber music' in terms both of general performance styles and of the number of performers usually involved in various ensembles. There is ample historical evidence to support this view.[32] The only known exception was the royal military band, the *mehter*, which performed martial music and added pomp and splendour to special ceremonial occasions. The sound it produced had therefore to be as 'loud' as possible. But this whole *mehter* genre, the instruments used therein – mainly the *zurna* (shawm), cymbals and brass drums of various sizes – and most probably its repertoire were all significantly different from Ottoman / Turkish art music at large. Europeans often tended to identify the *mehter* with Turkish music, as it was much in vogue in eighteenth-century Europe. In Ottoman terms, however, *mehter* instruments and performances were often qualified as 'rough

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30 Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Mevlânâdan sonra Mevlevilik* (Istanbul, 1953).
 31 A. Rıfat et al. (eds.), *Mevlevî ayinleri* (Istanbul, 1934–9), vols. VI–XVIII.
32 Behar, *Zaman*, pp. 119–38.

melodies' (*kaba saz*), in opposition to 'delicate melodies' (*ince saz*), a term often used in the eighteenth century to denote mainstream classical Turkish music.

Otherwise, music-making in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – and also later – was essentially based on the skills of individual performers, who addressed themselves to a relatively small and intimate audience. Performing ensembles were small, usually comprising one or two singers and a handful of instrumentalists, all of whom demonstrated their art by frequently performing solo passages, improvised or not. Performing and singing were always an individual affair, even if they took place within a group. Therefore the concepts of chorus or orchestra never emerged. The emphasis was on the display of individual virtuosity and personal creativity, and not necessarily on collective discipline. Lastly, the absence of written notation and of the notion of a musical 'model' to be 'reproduced' at each performance excluded standardisation. Whenever music was played, what took place was a recreation more than a straightforward execution.

The largest musical ensemble ever to have been recorded by a bona fide historical source was the one which performed a *fasıl* in the presence of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) on 5 Rebiʿ I 1239/9 November 1823. This group comprised all in all twelve singers and instrumentalists, most of whom were attached to the palace.[33] No other musical ensemble in early nineteenth-century Istanbul could have been much larger than that mustered by a music-loving monarch. Large musical bodies, however, were progressively to replace the traditional small and intimate ensembles in republican Turkey, thereby contributing to a radical change in the aesthetics of performance of classical Turkish music. But that is quite a different matter.

An intimate atmosphere, encouraging artistic communion between the audience and the performers, was probably the general rule in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There were of course no pre-established settings for a musical performance, no stages or concert-halls. The audience, never totally passive, participated in the musical creation by frequently making its reactions known. Moreover, there was as yet no divorce between composers, performers and teachers of music, a master musician having to be a bit of all three. As in all Near Eastern music throughout the ages, singing had a primacy over instrumental performance. This is reflected in the repertoire of Turkish music. Exclusively instrumental pieces make up no more than about 10 per cent of the total number of extant compositions.

33 Ibid., p. 124.

As to the musical instruments known or used in Istanbul in the seventeenth century, these have been listed in great detail by the erstwhile courtier and later world traveller Evliya Çelebi.[34] Evliya lists no less than seventy-four different names of instruments. Many, however, are obviously variants, only very slightly different from a single generic instrument type. Other visual sources such as miniatures and prints, as well as written sources such as Fonton and Toderini, show that the most frequently used instruments were quite restricted in number. Fonton, whose work is the closest one can hope to get to an 'insider's view' of the mid-eighteenth-century musical world of Istanbul, gives details on four instruments only (the *ney*, the *tanbur*, the *miskal* and the *keman*, in that order).[35]

The *ney* (end-blown reed flute) was the main wind instrument, and it is perhaps the only item that underwent no significant change after the second half of the sixteenth century. The *cenk* (smallish harp) was much in vogue in the 1500s and 1600s but had already been completely abandoned by the end of the eighteenth century. The *miskal* (panpipes), still in use in the 1750s,[36] went out of fashion around 1800. More or less the same thing happened to the *'ud* (lute), an instrument of major importance in Arabic music, but dethroned in Turkey by the *tanbur*. As for the *kanun* (zither) and the *santur* (dulcimer, cembalum), they also fell into neglect in the mid-eighteenth century, but, unlike the *miskal*, these three instruments were reintroduced in musical circles and regained popularity about a century later.

The *tanbur* or *tanbur-i türki* temporarily ousted the *'ud* from public favour during the whole of the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries. The 1700s saw the rise of the *tanbur*, which notwithstanding the later return of the *'ud*, has remained ever since 'the favourite instrument of the Turks'.[37] A precisely fretted long-necked instrument, it eases the definition, performance and differentiation of distinct microtonal intervals and may, if need be, serve as a standard, as a kind of monochord. Apart from the deep and touching tone of the *tanbur*, which also contributed to its popularity, there must have been a need for an instrument with such practical advantages. For the 1700s were a period when the basic tonal system of Ottoman/Turkish music was

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34 Henry George Farmer, *Turkish Instruments of Music in the Seventeenth Century, as Described in the Siyahat Nama of Ewliya Chelebi* (Glasgow, 1937).

35 Charles Fonton, 'Essai sur la Musique Orientale comparée à la Musique Européenne – 1751', Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits Français, Nouvelles Acquisitions 4023.

36 Ibid.

37 Rauf Yekta, 'La Musique turque', in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du conservatoire*, ed. A. Lavignac (Paris, 1922), vol. V, pp. 2945–3064.

probably undergoing major changes and new *makam*s (modes) and *terkib*s (modal compounds) were constantly being created.

As for bowed and stringed instruments, there was basically the *keman* or *kemance*, a vertically held viol with two or three silk strings and a spherical sound-chest. It was later to be renamed *rebab*. In the late eighteenth century, there was a new acquisition, the viola d'amore, baptised, in opposition to the *keman*, *sinekemanı* or chest-violin. For percussion, essential to performances of *tekke* music, the *kudüm* (double copper kettledrums), its smaller version, the *nakkare* and the *bendir* (vertically held large frame-drum) were already available in the seventeenth century.

As to the musicians themselves, whether singers or instrumentalists, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even later very few could be considered 'professionals' in the contemporary sense of the term. The amateur–professional distinction was usually blurred. Relatively few musicians recorded in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historical sources seem to have earned their living mainly through their art and/or to have been socially perceived as musicians only. Less than a quarter of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century musicians found in *Atrab ül-âsâr* are on record as having had, at one time or another, some kind of appointment in, or financial connection with, the palace. The number of musicians attached to the palace, even during the reign of Selim III, that most musical of rulers, never exceeded fifteen or twenty.[38] Non-governmental sources of income for musicians were also probably scanty and irregular, since the teaching and transmission of music did not usually involve any direct financial reward, considered unethical in many instances.[39]

Secular forms and the *fasıl* suite

Of the pre-sixteenth-century Middle Eastern compound form, the *nawba* or *nevbet* and its various components (*kavl, gazel, terane, fürudast*, etc.), not much seems to have been directly transmitted to the Ottoman/Turkish musical tradition.[40] Even in the 1650s the Ali Ufkı collection of notations shows that the new Ottoman/Turkish vocal forms – the *nakış*, *semai* and *murabba'* (or *murabba 'beste*) – were already well established.[41] This collection also contains a substantial number of *ilahi*s and of folk forms like the *türkü* and the *varsagi*. Only

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38 Uzunçarşılı, 'Osmanlılar'.   39 Behar, *Zaman*.

40 Wright, *Words without Songs*, p. 154.

41 Ali Ufkî, 'Mecmua', Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits Orientaux, MS Turc 292; Ali Ufkî, 'Mecmua-yi saz u söz', British Library, MS Sloane 3114.

fifty years later, the *fasıl* suite, as performed by an ensemble of instrumentalists and singers, was described in detail by Cantemir.

The *fasıl* is an articulated compound form, a sort of concert suite that includes a fixed sequence of different types of pieces, with modal unity. It begins with a *taksim* (instrumental improvisation) introducing both performers and audience to the 'ethos' of the *makam* selected. Then comes an instrumental prelude (*peşrev*), usually composed of three or four parts (*hane*) each followed by a refrain (*teslim*). The *fasıl* ends with another instrumental piece, a *saz semai*, which has a similar form but most often features an *aksak* rhythm of 10/8. Between these two instrumental pieces are placed various vocal genres: a *kâr*, one or more *beste*s, *semai*s and *şarkı*s, most often in that precise order. Improvisations, vocal or instrumental, may also be woven into the middle section of the *fasıl*.

The structure of the *fasıl* was not as rigid as it may seem, and the performers were always allowed to skip certain items, or else multiply one or more of the component forms by adding pieces of their own choice. Some other formal characteristics of the *fasıl* took shape only at the end of the eighteenth century and probably during or immediately after the reign of Selim III. A sequence of two *beste*s and two *semai*s gradually became an established sub-structure within the vocal section of the *fasıl*. The first *beste* was to have a relatively long and the second a shorter rhythmic cycle. As to the *semai*s, the first, called *ağır semai*, had a 10/8 rhythmic pattern and was to be played before the other, called *yürük semai*, which had a 6/4 or 6/8 ternary rhythmic cycle. This sub-structure of two *beste*s and two *semai*s came to be called a *takım* (a team) in the nineteenth-century, and musicians started composing whole *takım*s in the same mode.

Other nineteenth-century developments include, for instance, the sequencing of the various *şarkı*s (lighter songs) within the *fasıl* according to the number of time-units in their rhythmic patterns. Those *şarkı*s having the longer pattern and/or those with a slower tempo were to be played first. The *fasıl* has, in the late nineteenth century, also accommodated some imported lighter instrumental forms such as the Greek *sirto* or the Romanian Gypsy *longa*, which now often replace or complement the final *saz semai*. The adjunction of a *köçekçe* (a light song-suite for dancing) after the *şarkı*s and just before the *saz semai* is also a nineteenth-century development. Even the sacrosanct principle of modal unity in the *fasıl* could eventually be abandoned, provided a transitional instrumental improvisation (*geçiş taksimi*) was appropriately inserted.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries span a crucial period in the long, creative and heterogeneous history of Ottoman/Turkish art music. The

end of this period coincides with the beginnings of the so-called process of 'Westernisation'. In the early 1800s, during the reigns of Selim III and Mahmud II, two music-loving rulers who were themselves musicians and composers, some European impact on musical forms and styles was already being felt. In general, however, the various European influences were assimilated and integrated into the already well-established musical tradition much more easily and with more self-confidence than is usually imagined. For the 'golden age', so to speak, of the Ottoman/Turkish musical tradition was indeed the nineteenth century.

Arts and architecture

TÜLAY ARTAN

Painting in the provinces and in the capital

A provincial perspective: patronage and subject matter in Baghdad

In the Ottoman lands before the mid-nineteenth century, miniature painting was the principal site at which the heroic deeds of sultans, as well as lesser human beings and even landscapes, could be depicted; it was patronised by the sultan's court first and foremost. Many of the surviving manuscripts were commissioned either by the rulers or by members of their immediate circles. Provincial schools of painting were rare, although this impression may in part be due to accidents of survival.[1]

In the early seventeenth century, miniature painting flourished once again in Baghdad, where this art had a long and distinguished pre-Ottoman history. This was due to the patronage of locally established Mevlevî dervishes, who mainly commissioned illustrated sufi biographies.[2] This revitalisation of Baghdad painting also was due to an ambitious patron, the governor Hasan Paşa (in office 1598–1603), son of the illustrious grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed and a renowned Mevlevî himself, who extended his protection over several dervish lodges. Hasan Paşa's aspiring and resourceful patronage of the arts was blamed for inviting comparison with that of his sultan, as the governor ordered a variety of costly objects, including a silver throne decorated with fruit trees and flowers. Among the manuscripts illustrated during his tenure in Baghdad there was the *Câmîü's-siyer*, a history of Islamic prophets, caliphs and kings, which included a miniature showing Mevlânâ Celâleddîn Rûmî's

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[1] Günsel Renda, *Batılılaşma döneminde Türk resim sanatı 1700–1850* (Ankara, 1977).

[2] Nurhan Atasoy and Filiz Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting* (Istanbul, 1974), pp. 55–63; Filiz Çağman, 'Mevlevi dergahlarında minyatür', in *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, Erol Şadi Erdinç and Kemal Eraslan (Istanbul, 1979), pp. 651–77; Rachel Milstein, *Miniature Painting in Ottoman Bagdad* (Costa Mesa, 1990).

fateful meeting with Molla Şemseddîn Tebrîzî, which was to make a scholar from the central Anatolian town of Konya into a world-famous mystic and poet (Fig. 19.1).

The miniatures of the Baghdad school differ from the courtly productions particularly in their depiction of figures with outsized heads and vivid facial features. Groups of people, from many walks of life and in a variety of costumes, mingle in large crowds, while individual figures are scattered all over the page. Altogether, most Baghdad miniatures stand in striking opposition to the colour schemes and stiff, rigid, conventional arrangements typical of the palace school. Even the landscapes are dramatised. At times there is a degree of experimentation with perspective: horses are depicted from the rear, while human figures are but partially visible between landscaping elements.

Although nearly thirty illustrated manuscripts and a number of detached folios have survived from the period between 1590 and 1610, very little is known about the way in which they were commissioned, apart from the activity of Hasan Paşa himself. Patrons favoured religious works, for example *Hadîkatü 's-süe'dâ*, *Maktel-i Hüseyin* and *Ahvâl-i Kiyâmet*. Apart from Mevlevîs and a few governors of Baghdad, it was probably the local gentry who were interested in illustrated accounts of the Karbala tragedy – the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Husayn in battle. Of this and other events constitutive of Shiism down to the present day we possess quite a number of manuscripts with images, and this version of Islam remained important in the Baghdad region throughout the Ottoman era. Even a cursory examination of the productions of the Baghdad school in their striking originality reveals that not all artistic innovations were necessarily initiated by the Ottoman centre.

Illustrated genealogies, or royal portrait albums, were '(re)invented' during the reign of Murâd III (r. 1574–95) and came to be known as *Zübdetü't-Tevârih* and *Şemâ'ilnâme* (*Kıyâfetü'l-insâniye fî Şemâ'ilü'l-'Osmâniye*). While no longer produced in Istanbul after the death of Murâd III, two *Şemâ'ilnâme*s were illustrated in Baghdad under his successor, Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603). *Silsilenâme*s also appeared in this period, written by scribes living in Baghdad.[3] These works contained the images of prophets recognised by Islam, caliphs and Muslim dynasties of the pre-Ottoman period, and finally the sultans ruling from Istanbul, thus conveying the message that the Ottomans were the last of the legitimate dynasties to rule the world before the end of time. Several such *silsilenâme*s from Baghdad made their way into the Topkapı collections,

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3 Serpil Bağcı, 'From Adam to Mehmed III: Silsilenâme', in *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, ed. Selmin Kangal (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 188–201.

Figure 19.1 Mevlânâ Celâleddîn Rûmî's encounter with his consecrator Şemseddîn of Tabriz, a 'wild' mystic, in Konya: *Câmîü's-siyer*, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 1230, 112a.

presumably intended for Ottoman statesmen. The latter provided the models directly from the court ateliers of Istanbul, and the finished works wound up either in their own treasuries or else were passed on as gifts to the sultan, high-ranking palace officials and even other Islamic courts.

The sudden end of miniature production in Baghdad must have been brought about by turmoil in the area after a partial Iranian blockade of the city in 1605 and a rising of the Shiites in Karbala. Çerkez Yusuf Paşa, then governor, had commissioned an illustrated *Sefernâme* or campaign logbook; it was left unfinished as the patron had to abandon his post. Likewise, the Shirazi productions, which had been reaching the Ottoman capital via Baghdad, were no longer available after the turn of the century: none of the volumes today in the Topkapı Sarayı are dated later than 1602.

Nakkâş Hasan Paşa, or the artist behind the statesman

Artistic patronage also receded in seventeenth-century Istanbul, if not as abruptly as in Baghdad; this phenomenon remains unexplored in its wider dimensions. Military and economic setbacks come to mind as explanations, but the decline observed in courtly production is rather more complicated than that. Compared to artistic output dating from the sixteenth century, the number of manuscripts illustrated for the Ottoman court after 1600 is minimal. Moreover, the number of artists/artisans retained for palace service (*ehl-i hiref*) and employed in the arts of the book also decreased.[4] It has been suggested that as military success became increasingly rare, miniatures in the *şehnâme* tradition disappeared because Ottoman imagery was confined to historical texts glorifying the sultan and his military vigour. However, there was more to Istanbul miniatures than just this one tradition: seventeenth-century albums and manuscripts survive in large enough numbers to show that outside the palace milieu, there were aspiring artists and patrons determined to enjoy painting and other arts of the book. Further study is evidently required.

Akin to the Baghdad productions, miniatures attributed to Nakkâş Hasan reveal a change in style under Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603).[5] In the crowded design office (*nakkâşhâne*) Nakkâş Hasan worked together with his older colleague Nakkâş ʿOsmân, but he does not appear on the payrolls of the *ehl-i hiref*;

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4 Rıfkı Melül Meriç, *Türk nakış saʾnatı tarihi araştırmaları I: Vesikalar* (Ankara, 1953–4).

5 Zeren Akalay (Tanındı), ʿXVI. yüzyıl nakkâşlarından Hasan Paşa ve eserleriʾ, in *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, Erol Şadi Erdinç and Kemal Eraslan (Istanbul, 1979), pp. 607–26; Zeren Tanındı, ʿNakkâş Hasan Paşaʾ, *Sanat* 6 (1977), 14–125; Banu Mahir, ʿHasan Paşa (Nakkâş)ʾ, in *Yaşamları ve yapıtlarıyla Osmanlılar ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1999), p. 541.

for while he was active in the palace workshop, Nakkâş Hasan was on duty elsewhere as well. At the Ottoman court this type of double employment was becoming routine: military men or bureaucrats also known as artists were numerous among the palace personnel, most notably among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architects.

In the power struggles that followed the enthronement of Murâd III in December 1574, Nakkâş Hasan did well for himself: he is recorded as a gate-keeper (*kapıcı*) in 1581, when he also assisted Nakkâş ʿOsmân. When Mehmed III became sultan in January 1595, and the power structure of the new regime took shape, Hasan was appointed keeper of the ruler's keys, then was put in charge of the sultan's turban in 1596, and became the chief stable master (*büyük mîrâhūr*) a year later. Apparently he graduated from the palace as a senior gatekeeper (*kapıcıbaşı*) in the spring of 1603, obtaining the position of superintendent (*nâzır*) at the imperial gun-foundry, Tophane. After Ahmed I (r. 1603–17) had ascended the throne Nakkâş Hasan was appointed janissary commander, training troops for a campaign in Hungary.[6] In June 1604 he left for Belgrade. At the onset of winter Nakkâş Hasan, now Hasan Paşa, returned to Istanbul, and was appointed a vizier in February 1605. At this time, just before Ahmed I visited Bursa, Hasan Paşa undertook the restoration of the local palace and designed a lantern. A few months later, he served as the deputy grand vizier (*kâymakâm*) preparing a campaign against rebellious mercenaries, distributing wages and overseeing military exercises; by December 1608, he appears as the fifth vizier in meetings of the imperial council. Early in the reign of Ahmed I, he was married to one of the many daughters of Murâd III. He was sent to Budin as the governor-general in November 1614, and was promoted to fourth and then to third vizier soon after the enthronement of ʿOsmân II. He participated in the Polish campaign, returning to the capital with the other members of the imperial council in September 1621, dying of an illness the following year.

Thus, despite what has been claimed in the secondary literature, Hasan Paşa had an active military–bureaucratic career, and the cape where his water-front palace once stood was called Nakkâşburnu in his memory. In spite of his numerous political responsibilities Nakkâş Hasan Paşa's hand has been identi-fied in over twenty manuscripts with historical and literary themes, including a *Divân-ı Fuzûlî* and a copy of Firdausî's *Şahnâme*. Nakkâş Hasan also illuminated a *tuğra* of Ahmed I and signed his name on the lower left of this large panel.

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6 Abdülkadir Efendi, *Topçular kâtibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi tarihi (metin ve tahlîl)*, 2 vols. (Ankara, 2003).

Panic, prophecy and metaphysics: the end of Ottoman heroism

At the turn of the seventeenth century many Ottomans saw themselves as living in times of uncertainty and stress, increased by the apocalyptic fears that for some people accompanied the Muslim millennium. Fortune-telling became popular even among certain members of the elite, and this led to a fashion for translations of the appropriate works from Persian and Arabic originals.[7] A few such books were illuminated for the court. Each of the two copies of the translation of el-Bistâmî's *Cifru'l-câmî*, commissioned by Mehmed III and Ahmed I respectively, has been embellished by some fifty miniatures from the hands of different artists.[8] Here the style of Nakkâş Hasan predominates: outlines are bold, colours do not mix, and hair is represented with extra care. Figurative representations of ordinary persons are rather experimental, but mythological creatures are standardised, with only their costumes varying (Fig. 19.2).

Şerîf b. Seyyid Muhammed, the translator of the text, revealed that the chief of the white eunuchs, Gazanfer Ağa (executed in 1602/3), took an interest in the translation, and perhaps the latter chose the tales to be illustrated. Since the *Cifru'l-câmî* included stories both from 'popular' and Orthodox Islam, its production may reflect the factional rivalries at court that finally cost Gazanfer his life. Soothsaying had been a respectable profession in pre-Islamic Arab cities, but fortune-telling is forbidden in orthodox Sunni Islam. However, the Shiites believed that the Prophet's son-in-law 'Alî and his descendants had the knowledge of all happenings until the end of time. Compilations of signs and numbers, along with the relevant explanations, served in this environment to calculate the timing of doomsday.

The second part of the manuscript recounts the supernatural occurrences or natural disasters that were regarded as signs of doomsday, apocalyptic prophecies being much on the agenda around 1000/1591–2. These included the coming of the Mehdî/Saviour/Messiah, a feature which had been appropriated by the Muslims and was viewed as yet another sign of the Apocalypse. In due course the Ottoman sultan was associated with this Saviour-figure. Hence the conquest of Constantinople was reinterpreted, identifying – at least by implication – Mehmed II with the Prophet. Furthermore, scenes from the reign of Selîm I (r. 1512–20), including battles against the rulers of Iran and Egypt, were also added to el-Bistâmî's text. The frequency with which Selîm I

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7 Banu Mahir, 'A Group of 17th Century Paintings Used for Picture Recitation', in *Art Turc: 10e Congrès international d'art turc* (Geneva, 1999), pp. 443–55.

8 Hüsamettin Aksu, 'Tercüme-i Cifr (Cefr) el-Cami' Tasvirleri', in *Yıldız Demiriz'e armağan*, ed. M. Baha Tanman and Uşun Tükel (Istanbul, 2001), pp. 19–23.
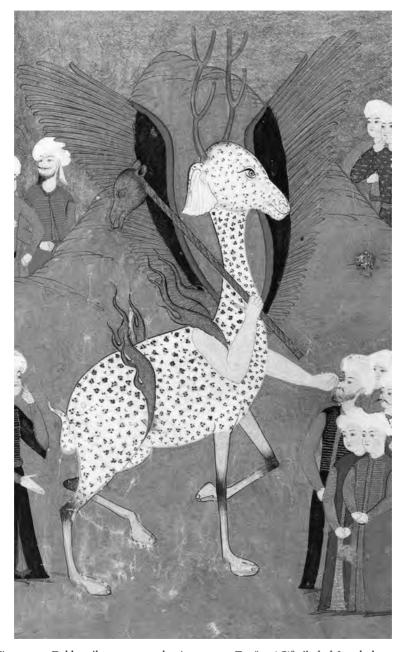
Figure 19.2 Dabbetu'l-arz, an apocalyptic creature: *Tercüme-i Cifru'l-câmî*, Istanbul University Library, T. 6624, 121b.

recurs makes it seem probable that in certain court circles he was recognised as the Mehdî. Later on, Murâd IV (r. 1623–40) also appropriated the title. Not only in Ottoman popular beliefs, but also in factional struggles at court the precursors of doomsday were linked to political figures and events of the time: thus the writer Gelibolulu Mustafâ ʿÂlî chose his arch-enemy Sinân Paşa, five times grand vizier, as his personal Deccâl, the Islamic version of Antichrist.[9] It is known that the translator of *Cifru'l-câmî* was close to Gelibolulu ʿÂlî.

Belated Ottomanisation

Although the translator claimed that an illustrated version of *Cifru'l-câmî* in Arabic was available in the sultan's treasury, some of the extant illustrations, including images of the Mehdî, had no iconographic precedents and were based on free interpretations of the text by the artists and/or their patrons. In some other scenes where precedents were in fact available, they were adjusted to Ottoman versions of millennial beliefs, including the comet of 1577 and the saviour sultan.

Accordingly, at the end of the *Tercüme-i Cifru'l-câmî*s, we find displayed the portraits of the first thirteen rulers, the series concluding with those of the patrons, Mehmed III and Ahmed I, respectively. The text does not contain a description of the rulers' physical features, otherwise common in books of this type, but refers instead to thirteen historical and/or religious – perhaps apocalypse-associated – figures. Presumably the sultans have been linked to these mysterious personages in order to further legitimise the dynasty.

In the miniatures of the *Tercüme-i Cifru'l-câmî* Istanbul is depicted with refinement and attention to detail, thus making visible once again how the artists 'Ottomanised' their models. The Hippodrome is decorated with the famous copper equestrian statue of Constantine, and the Obelisk and the Serpents' Column which still adorn this place are depicted as standing in the vicinity of Hagia Sophia. However, unlike earlier miniatures this latter structure is represented as a mosque, as evident from the addition of a minaret and a gallery to accommodate late-comers to Friday prayers: another example of the Islamisation and Ottomanisation of the Istanbul cityscape.[10]

More prophetic revelations: the enigma of Kalender Paşa

Travel, business, partnership, marriage, sickness, the attacks of enemies and the pangs of jealousy, all are human experiences fraught with uncertainty, and

9 Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafâ ʿÂli (1541–1600)* (Princeton, 1986).
10 Metin And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslâm mitologyası* (Istanbul, 1998).

as such were of interest to the compilers of *fâlnâme*s, books of divination usable as aids by the would-be fortune-teller. Less frequently, propositions were made to the anxious reader concerning the move into a new house or household, purchasing animals or slaves, weaning a child, starting a religious education or visiting powerful people and asking for their help.

Two large-size books of divination dealing with topics of this kind survive from the early seventeenth-century palace milieu, and one of them was put together by another vizier of Ahmed I: Kalender Paşa was a benefactor of the arts and himself a noted master of manuscript illumination, and he himself trimmed, resized, ruled and glued papers to make up elegant albums (*vassale*).[11] Kalender Paşa first worked in financial administration, and in due course was appointed second finance director (*defterdâr*). As *şehremîni* he participated in the committee that surveyed the area where the construction of Sultan Ahmed's great mosque complex was scheduled to take place, and later he operated as a senior administrator on site; this responsibility continued even after Kalender had been returned to the position of second finance director. In the fall of 1612 he attended meetings of the imperial council together with his fellow artist Nakkâş Hasan; and by December of the same year, he had been promoted to the rank of pasha while continuing to oversee the construction of the Sultan Ahmed mosque. However, Kalender Paşa did not see it completed, as he died in the late summer of 1616.

It is quite possible that Kalender Paşa was known by this particular name or pen-name, which in Ottoman parlance refers to antinomian mystics, because of his association with some of the less officially recognised dervishes of his time. But it is also possible that Kalender originally had made his way to high office as an immigrant from the lands governed by the shahs, serving in the household of an Ottoman dignitary. Quite a few officials and patrons of Safavid-style manuscripts had managed to insert themselves into the ruling group in this manner, and literati, artists and craftsmen who relocated in the Ottoman territories after the Ottoman–Safavid war of 1578 had done the same. Evidently the *fâlnâme* of Shah Tahmâsb provided a model for all the books of apocalyptic and prophetic revelations esteemed by the Ottoman court at that time, and an early connection with Iran may have induced the statesman–artist known as Kalender to experiment in this field.

For the Ottoman *fâlnâme*, Kalender Paşa not only penned a preface in Turkish and wrote the captions for each illustration, but also executed the gilt

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11 Banu Mahir, 'Kalender Paşa', in *Yaşamları ve yapıtlarıyla Osmanlılar ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1999), p. 692. See also Abdülkâdir Efendi, *Topçular kâtibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi tarihi*, vol. I, p. ii.

decorations himself. Characteristic of this compilation are a thick brush and bright colours, in addition to an emphasis on decorative details. The themes chosen for illustration are especially noteworthy; for the manuscript includes thirty-five oversize miniatures on religious and symbolic themes, from both the Old and New Testaments, in the shapes these stories took when incorporated into Islamic mythology. There were also legends rooted in the ancient Near East, such as traditions relating to the Wonders of the Creation, the planets and constellations of the Zodiac, as well as the deeds and miracles of prophets, saints and holy personages. Thus the manuscript was turned into a shorthand compendium of the iconography of biblical legends in Ottoman painting, fantastic figures being depicted with considerable visual bravura. This kind of artwork retained a devotional colouring although it was not sanctioned by the religious authorities and consequently conveyed no message connected to formal religion.

Among the miracles of prophets and saints, several scenes from the Old Testament were included in the *fâlnâme*s. Only a selection of the prophets recognised by Islam found their way into these manuscripts, probably singled out because of their particular importance to the sufi movement. Sufi writers and artists brought novel interpretations to these stories and initiated new iconographies, typically emphasising the moments just before the crucial miracles. As Muslim rulers greatly respected Solomon / Süleymân as the ideal king and were in awe of his supernatural powers, both the sufis and the most orthodox authors often referred to tales involving Solomon, and the same applied to the miracles of Moses. Kalender Paşa's *fâlnâme* also contained a depiction of Jonah, rescued by Cebrâîl / Gabriel from the stomach of the fish (Fig. 19.3); this story too was reinterpreted by the sufis, especially by Celâleddîn Rûmî. On the other hand, the only New Testament character recast in the *fâlnâme* was Mary breastfeeding the infant Jesus. Islamic miniatures portraying the life of Jesus normally showed only his birth and execution, in the latter instance avoiding the depiction of the cross. These episodes were not treated in sufi literature, and as no alternative iconographic motifs were available the artists probably utilised European models.

The dervishes and their adherents introduced elements of mysticism and spirituality into the sagas of their heroes' lives. While the different dervish orders all had their favourites, these specific preferences cannot be detected in our manuscripts. Rather, it was the intellectual and spiritual motifs common to quite a few sufi orders that penetrated the iconography of the miniatures. Such texts found a ready audience at the Ottoman court of the years around 1600, when sultans were reputed for their piety and often inclined to listen to
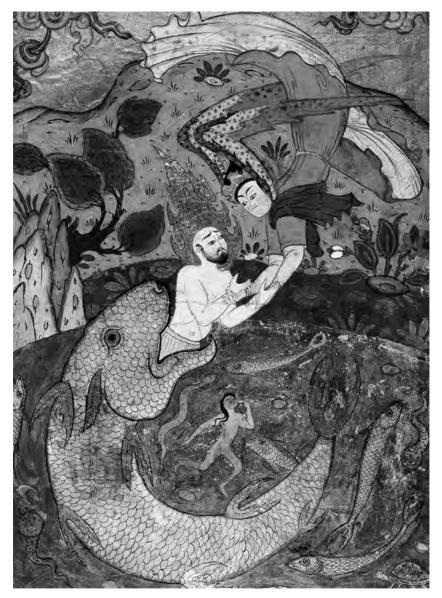
Figure 19.3 Jonah being helped out of the belly of the fish by an angel: *Falnâme*, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 1703, 35b.

the advice of dervish sheikhs. These books evidently provided what many elite Ottomans needed most at the time: prophecy and magic, if not necessarily faith.

In addition to the *Tercüme-i Cifru'l-câmî*s and the *fâlnâme*s, two copies of the anonymous *Ahvâl-i Kıyâmet* (concerning God's judgement and the afterlife) deserve attention. This text is a Turkish adaptation of eschatological treatises in Arabic and Persian, listing the evils in this world which lead to punishment in the next. Although simple in execution, the two copies of *Ahvâl-i Kıyâmet* are noted for their inventive illustrations and iconography. While the themes are identical to those of the *Tercüme-i Cifru'l-câmî* and the two *fâlnâme*s, neither copy of *Ahvâl-i Kıyâmet* conveys any mystical content. While the two latter manuscripts were both produced in Istanbul, a few detached folios that apparently formed part of an iconographical cycle similar to one of the manuscripts in question are stylistically akin to the Baghdad school.

Exhaustion, fatigue and torpor: the rise of album paintings

There had been a moment in the last quarter of the sixteenth century when the partnership of Nakkâş 'Osmân and the writer seyyid Lokmân had brought the art of miniature painting to major florescence at the Ottoman court. After 1574, Murâd III and Mehmed III certainly were hard pressed in the face of military demands and economic stringency; yet they persisted in artistic patronage. Ahmed I, on the other hand, channelled his resources into an ambitious architectural project, the complex bearing his name, largely leaving the patronage of all other art forms to his statesmen. That the central design office, originally at the entrance to the Hippodrome, was moved for the construction of this complex may indicate the ruler's relative lack of interest in the pictorial arts. At this time, court production of miniatures was in crisis, as teams of artists now fought out fierce rivalries for diminishing patronage resources, but also struggled against fatigue and lassitude.

The appearance of album paintings in the early 1600s may indicate that patronage for more encompassing projects was currently unavailable. Thus a compilation known as the album of Murâd III but including more recent work contains single portraits of dervishes, women, warriors, young men, a prisoner and members of the Safavid court, in addition to a hunting scene and animals.[12] A well-known miniature from this album depicts the interior of a coffee house, an early appearance of genre painting in the Ottoman visual repertoire. In striking contrast to the languor and nervous exhaustion of the

12 Vladimir Minorsky, *A Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts* (Dublin, 1958), p. 439.

court ateliers, the artists represented in these albums negated, reinvented and expanded conventions, which they were able to do because they apparently worked on subjects of their own choice.

Other albums, known as *murakka'*, also date from the early seventeenth century. One of them, probably compiled by Kalender Paşa upon the sultan's request, contains earlier miniatures and single figures, but is of special interest for the scenes reflecting social life in the reign of Ahmed I.[13] All these items were the work of anonymous artists, reflecting the distinctive style of the period and including some fifty portrait studies of a variety of social and ethnic types. Sultans' portraits, from 'Osmân I Gâzî to Murâd III were represented, but we also find nude women, while among the 'exotics' there were Jews, Europeans and Iranians. In the introduction the sultan's feelings towards art and artists were described – perhaps, as previously noted, not in an entirely realistic fashion. Then the preparations for the album and the types of paper used were detailed by the compiler, for whom this should not have been the first assignment of its kind. Together with the large-size pictures especially made in this period to facilitate the recitation of stories and fortune-telling, the album of Ahmed I defined the parameters of artistic production in years to come (Figs. 19.4 and 19.5).

Ahmed Nakşî, or was there any room for sarcasm?

Nevertheless, among the noted illustrated manuscripts of the early seventeenth century we still find representatives of the Ottoman historical tradition: thus the *Şehnâme-i Nâdirî/Hotin Fetihnâmesi* (*c.* 1622, completed before the murder of 'Osmân II) was the last representative of the Ottoman tradition of topographic painting; and copies of an Ottoman version of Firdausî's great work, the *Tercüme-i Şehnâme*, represent 'Osmân II and his court among selected themes from Iranian epics. Even so, royal portraits dominated courtly production at this time. Images of sultans were included even in popular Islamic classical genres, for example in a copy of Qazvînî's *Acâibü'l-Mahlûkât* (*c.* 1622), and the same thing applied to the two illustrated copies of Hoca Sa'deddîn's (d. 1599) dynastic history *Tâcü't-tevârîh*, both dated 1616.

But this fashion for portraiture is most apparent in an early seventeenth-century translation of Taşköprülüzâde's (d. 1561) biographies of several hundred eminent Ottoman scholars and sheikhs, known as the *Tercüme-i Şakâyık-i*

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13 A. Süheyl Ünver, 'L'Album d'Ahmed Ier', *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli* (1963), pp. 127–62.

Figure 19.4 Miniatures from the Album of Ahmed I: Topkapı Palace Museum Library, B. 408, 16b.

Nu'mâniye (*c*. 1619). This volume includes miniatures showing these long-dead luminaries either alone or else along with their colleagues, students or the sultans of the times – always seated, and preferably outdoors. The artist responsible for the illustrations of the *Tercüme-i Şakâyık-i Nu'mâniye* has identified himself as Nakşî (Ahmed) Bey (d. after 1622) in connection with a miniature at the end of the volume, in which the artist had represented himself together
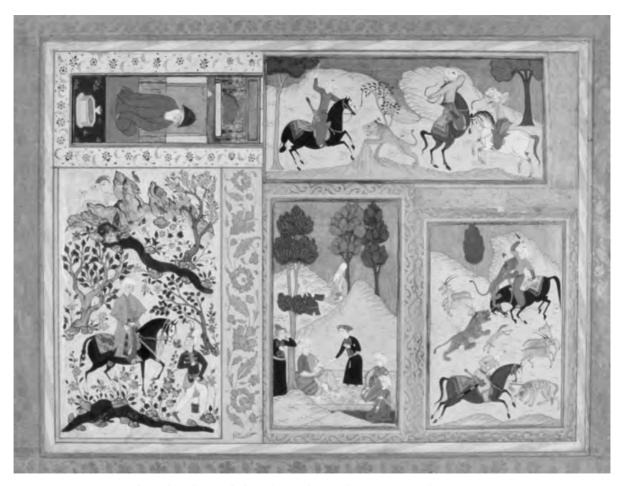
Figure 19.5 Miniatures from the Album of Ahmed I: Topkapı Palace Museum Library, B. 408, 17a.

with the translator and the deputy grand vizier.[14] Apparently around 1600 some artists, enjoying high status and esteem, had begun to take pride in representing themselves.

Like his peers Nakkâş Hasan Paşa and Kalender Paşa, Nakkâş Ahmed did not appear on the payrolls of the artisans and artists retained by the palace. Contemporary sources identify him as a poet and an astrologer (*müneccim*), who officiated as the time-keeper/horologer (*muvakkit*) of the Süleymaniye mosque; he seems to have lived in the Istanbul quarter of Ahırkapı and worked for the court as a freelancer. But this position as a relative outsider may not have precluded high official esteem. In this context it is worth noting that the manuscript ends with a note to the effect that it was completed through the efforts of two Mehmeds and two Ahmeds, identified as the translator Muhtesibzâde Mehmed Belgrâdî, the grand vizier Hâdım Mehmed Paşa, the author Taşköprülüzâde Ahmed Çelebi and Ahmed Nakşî himself; in the secondary literature Hâdım Mehmed Paşa has been misidentified as ʿOsmân II. As documentary evidence further indicates that the painter worked solely during the brief reign of ʿOsmân II, it seems plausible that Ahmed Nakşî was caught up in the tragic end of the sultan in 1622. Ahmed Nakşî's work has been identified in over 100 miniatures, most of which are found in six manuscripts and three albums.

Ahmed Nakşî had established a partnership with the court biographer, (Gânîzâde) Mehmed Nâdirî (d. 1627) – in line with the previous partnerships of ʿOsmân and Lokman, and later of Hasan and Taʿlîkîzâde. Born into a family of literati and married to the daughter of Şeyhülislâm Sunʿullâh Efendi, Nâdirî figures prominently in a variety of sources. However, various poems that he presented to the sultan and court dignitaries are full of complaints about his rivals and enemies. In this tension-ridden environment Ahmed Nakşî illustrated the *Dîvân-ı Nâdirî*, compiled by the poet himself with support from the chief of the white eunuchs, Gazanfer Ağa. Ahmed Nakşî must have had access to the sultans' collections of illustrated manuscripts, and presumably he was also exposed to some late sixteenth-century European engravings available at the palace library. Thus such new artistic development as occurred during the reign of ʿOsmân II was due to this highly original painter.

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14 A. Süheyl Ünver, *Ressam Nakşi: hayatı ve eserleri* (Istanbul, 1949), p. 25; Esin Atıl, 'Ahmed Nakşi, an Eclectic Painter of the Early Seventeenth Century', in *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art, Proceedings*, ed. Géza Fehér Jr. (Budapest, 1978), pp. 103–21.

Ahmed Nakşî contributed to a *şehnâme* intended to glorify the martial valour of 'Osmân II, and his work is exceptional for the energy and excitement of the Polish campaign that it transmits to the viewers. The artist's compositional schemes are distinguished by great numbers of figures, each with a discernable physiognomy, experimentation with perspective – particularly when depicting architectural details – a refined and delicate brushwork and a preference for rich colours. In his landscapes, the artist has utilised various techniques to strengthen the feeling of depth and expand the space beyond the picture frame: for this purpose, trees, minute figural compositions and architectural complexes are depicted in the background. Ahmed Nakşî shows a marked sense of perspective, especially noticeable in the depiction of vaults, arched windows and doors. His figures, with their gestures and shaded renderings of drapery folds, indicate his familiarity with Western art. He prefers to position each figure in such a way as to stress individual facial features, or else he shows people and horses from the rear in a manner reminiscent of Andrea Mantegna. In the miniatures of the *Dîvân* and in those of the *Şehnâme*, crowded compositions are preferred, as opposed to the single figures and occasional buildings in the *Şakâyık*, which may represent the artist's early work.

Moreover, a whimsical attitude can be detected in the painter's inclusion of animated rocks, and also of books, scrolls and pieces of paper with legible messages. Even when portraying Murâd III and 'Osmân II in traditional compositional schemes, Ahmed Nakşî still reveals his characteristic eclecticism and humour. To the procession celebrating Murâd III when leaving the Topkapı Palace, he has added a curious gate-keeper peeping from behind the imperial gate and a pickpocket being caught red-handed by a guardsman [Fig. 19.6].

Equestrian portraits and the hunt: a false front?

One of the most interesting sets of miniatures dating from this period concerns horsemanship, veterinary science, chivalry and the hunt, and is known as the *Tercüme-i Umdetü'l-mulûk*, by Emîr Hâcib 'Âşık Timûr.[15] In the 1610s this work was translated from Arabic into Turkish for Ahmed I, himself a passionate hunter. The Ottoman version includes 164 miniatures illustrating breeds of horses and mules, their trappings and riders, as well as a number of fantastic creatures, featuring direct borrowings from Timurid and Turcoman models [Fig. 19.7].

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15 Esin Atıl, 'The Art of the Book', in *Turkish Art*, ed. Esin Atıl (Washington, 1980), pp. 137–238, at p. 212.
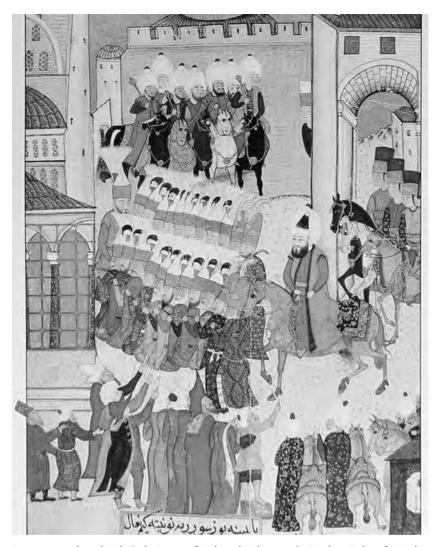
Figure 19.6 Ahmed Nakşî's depiction of Mehmed III leaving the Topkapı Palace for Friday prayers: *Divân-ı Nâdirî*, H. 889, 4a.

Elegant horses are also found in a small album, possibly produced for lesser patrons.[16] The equestrian portrait of ʿOsmân II in this album has been copied

16 Banu Mahir, 'Portraits in New Context', in *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, ed. Selmin Kangal (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 298–335, at p. 322, see also pp. 317–18.
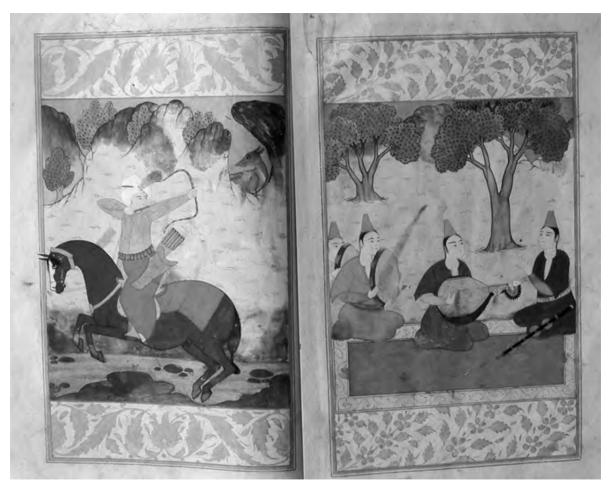
Figure 19.7 A group of musicians at a hunting party: *Kitab-i Tuhfetu'l-mülûk*, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 415, 241b–242a.

into other manuscripts; its inclusion can be attributed to this ruler's reputation as an accomplished horseman and a horse-lover. In fact, ʿOsmân II has always been portrayed on his beloved grey horse, which was later distinguished by a gravestone with a dedication. This portrait of ʿOsmân II has been attributed to Ahmed Nakşî, and the colour scheme, representation of nature and attention to detail do point to the school that developed under the latter's guidance.

While equestrian portraits of ʿOsmân II were only painted during the sultan's short lifetime, those of his brother Murâd IV were all posthumous. Sultan Murâd's equestrian portrait, depicting the long-deceased ruler as a military hero, was included in two albums prepared in the second half of the seventeenth century, which originally contained eighteen large paintings to be used as aids for the recitation of stories.[17] Out of the eleven surviving sultans' portraits, five depict the rulers on horseback. By the early seventeenth century this mode of depiction was favoured by Ottoman painters in addition to the traditional model showing the enthroned sultan. The rulers deemed suitable for representation as riders were not necessarily selected for their actual talents of horsemanship. Thus Sultan İbrâhîm (r. 1640–8) appeared on horseback, but his son Mehmed IV, a great Nimrod, to our present knowledge was never depicted in this manner.

Murâd IV, Evliyâ Çelebi and the decline of palace craftsmen

In stark contrast to his predecessors Murâd III and Mustafâ I, Murâd IV embarked on several military campaigns, mainly against the Iranians. While enjoying one victory after the other, he was still unsure of the permanency of his successes against the Shiite Safavids of Iran. It is also true that his patronage was constrained by economic difficulties and military priorities; moreover, Sultan Murâd died when still young, and this probably explains why he did not commission accounts of his campaigns in the style favoured by his ancestors: İbrâhîm Mülhemî, who narrated Murâd IV's life and achievements, was the last official *şehnâmeci* on record, but there were no illustrations. We learn from his former page Evliyâ Çelebi that the sultan had commissioned an illustrated history of the Revân campaign from a certain Pehlivân ʿAlî, but such a book has not come to light.[18] Antoine Galland, who arrived in Istanbul in 1672–3,

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17 Mahir, 'A Group of 17th Century Paintings'.
18 Evliya Çelebib [Derviş Muhammed Zıllı], *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 yazmasının transkripsiyonu – dizini*, vol. I, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 291–2.

recorded that he saw a chronicle of Murâd IV's reign with five or six miniatures in the bazaar, but this book has not been located either.[19]

Evidently under pressure from the Kâdîzâdeliler, religious fundamentalists whom Murâd IV even seems to have cultivated for a while, the number of artists and artisans employed by the palace dropped dramatically.[20] In 1605 there had been ninety-three *nakkâşân* recorded in the *ehl-i hiref* registers; the next year the number dropped to fifty-seven and then to fifty-five. In 1624 only forty-eight men were left, and the name of their chief was not even recorded. The next available document is from 1638, when thirty-three artists / artisans were on call, headed by the *ser-bölük* 'Alî. Until 1670 the number varied between forty and sixty, and dropped to less than ten after this date. These figures seem to refer only to those artists and artisans stationed in the capital; there may have been others working in Edirne on an ad hoc basis. In 1690 a certain Hasan Rıdvân was listed as the head of this group, while from 1698 to 1716 this same personage was on record as the former chief, but he does not seem to have had a successor. Thus apparently the practice of retaining Istanbul-based experts for palace service was on the way out.

Evliyâ Çelebi's remarks can help us make sense of the rather limited data furnished by the registers: this author recognises three categories of artists active in Istanbul: the *nakkâşân-ı üstâdân* working for the court; the *nakkâşân-ı musavvirân*, who were experts in figural representations; and the *fâlcıyân-ı musavver*, or painters cum fortune-tellers, working at a shop in the Mahmûd Paşa bazaar, who used paintings by several masters on huge sheets of Istanbul-style paper.[21] Perhaps the first-named produced various decorations, which might consist of flowers, geometrical ornaments, landscapes or architectural representations; members of the second group by contrast may have painted portraits or compositions of human figures on single folios later to be collected in albums. These paintings depicted prophets, sultans, heroes, sea and land battles, as well as love stories. Evliyâ reported that in addition to the court ateliers, located on the top floors of the sultans' menagerie (Aslanhâne), there were 100 other workshops spread out over the city, while yet further artists worked in their homes; he estimated that the total number reached 1,000. The portrait painters had four workshops and their number was limited to forty, and the only representative of the *fâlcıyân-ı musavver* was Hoca Mehmed Çelebi, who used to tell stories of sea and land battles, prophets, sultans, heroes and romantic lovers found in medieval Iranian epics, basing his tale

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19 Antoine Galland, *İstanbul'a ait günlük hatıralar (1672–1673)*, ed. Charles Schefer (Ankara, 1987).

20 Atıl, 'The Art of the Book', p. 216.   21 Mahir, 'A Group of 17th Century Paintings'.

on the painting that his customers might choose. Evliyâ did not mention any of the court painters by name, but he did note Miskalî Solakzâde, also known for his history-writing and musical performances, as well as Tiryâkî ʿOsmân Çelebi and Tasbâz Pehlivân ʿAlî of Parmakkapu as the renowned *musavvirân* of his times, specialising in battle scenes. Murâd IV's commissioning of an illustrated history of the Revân campaign to Pehlivan ʿAlî probably indicates the latter's status as a freelance painter affiliated with the court – the miniaturist was evidently not a member of the official workshop. An oversized equestrian portrait mentioned previously, which showed the sultan as an Arab warrior and was later included in an album, should probably be assigned to one of these artists.

Apart from Ahmed Nakşî, miniaturists active after 1600 have mostly been considered inferior to their predecessors; yet this judgement is probably unfair, as time and again we encounter examples of bold experimentation with conventions and symbols entailing significant pictorial innovations. As a good example, there are the illustrations decorating a manuscript called *Tercüme-i İkd al Cuman fi Târîh Ehl-ez Zamân*. This translation of ʿAynî's (d. 1485) history of Islam, originally composed in the Mamluk period, incorporates cosmography and geography. Copied in three volumes in 1693–4, the first volume features allegorical miniatures of planets and constellations, represented as nude females probably modelled on European prototypes. These same motifs recur in a later copy of *İkd al Cuman* dated to 1747–8, this time showing bold figures of naked men and women together with a variety of animals, inspired by the illustrations in Western European atlases. Until recently it had been assumed that after 1650, court commissions for high-quality miniatures more or less disappeared. But this has proven to be inaccurate as well, now that we have come to appreciate the creativity of the painter Levnî and that of his teacher Musavvir Hüseyin, also known as Hüseyin İstanbulî, who worked on *silsilenâme*s and costume albums at the court of Mehmed IV in Edirne.

We probably must take Evliyâ Çelebi's account of the library of the Kurdish ruler of Bitlis, Abdal Hân, with a grain of salt.[22] According to the traveller, this ruler owned more than 6,000 manuscripts and albums, including samples of calligraphy and illuminated Qur'ans. Supposedly Abdal Hân possessed 200 European books as well, mostly on scientific subjects, many with

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22 Michael Rogers, 'The Collecting of Turkish Art', in *Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Collection of Nasser D. Khalili*, ed. Alison Effeny (Geneva and London, 1995), pp. 15–23, at p. 15.

coloured illustrations, and 200 albums of miniatures, including many pages by the finest Persian and Ottoman artists. There was also a European painting of a sea-battle which, said Evliyâ, was so vividly depicted that it seemed the ships were still fighting. It has been argued that such a collection was beyond the capabilities and even dreams of Ottoman viziers, and inaccessible to the sultans as well. But granted that Evliyâ's account may be exaggerated, it shows what a highly educated Ottoman of broad interests might wish to collect. In addition, if the list of Abdal Hân's books has even some connection to reality, it must mean that the palace no longer monopolised illustrated manuscripts.

Patronage of grandees, or masking envy and rivalry

In fact, throughout the seventeenth century, state officials sometimes acted as patrons. We have already encountered the *Sefernâme*, which described an expedition undertaken by Çerkez Ağa Yusuf Paşa, the governor of Baghdad, from Istanbul to Basra in 1602–3. In addition, Malkoçoğlu Yavuz ʿAlî Paşa (d. 1604) sponsored the *Vekâyîʿ-i ʿAlî Paşa*, describing his journey to Egypt where he was to serve as governor in 1601–3. Kenʿân Paşa, one of the viziers of Murâd IV, commissioned the *Paşanâme*, a poetic account of his military and naval activities, including his 1627 campaign in the Balkans, and his subsequent victory over Cossack pirates in the Black Sea. All these accounts can be considered *gazavâtnâme*s – in other words, they presented the patron as a successful fighter, preferably (though not necessarily) against the infidels.

On stylistic grounds the miniatures accompanying the text of the *Sefernâme* have been attributed to the Baghdad school. It is the only known Ottoman *journal de voyage* with illustrations made during the lifetime of the traveller. The Mevlevî or Konya connection is evident from a miniature depicting the dance of these dervishes, and moreover the patron has been shown while paying a visit to the tombs of the Seljuk sultans located in this town. In the *Vekâyîʿ-i ʿAlî Paşa*, or *Vakʿanâme*, the scene showing Ali Paşa leaving the Topkapı Palace represents not only the grandeur of his retinue but also a remarkable artistic style. As to the *Paşanâme*, it is the last example of the illustrated Ottoman history of the kind so popular in the sixteenth century; unfortunately the artist is unknown. Possibly the *Paşanâme* was produced for Murâd IV by ʿAlî Paşa in order to inform the ruler of the exploits of his vizier. Since there are no surviving illustrated *şehnâme*s to glorify the victories of Murâd IV himself, it is surprising to find one of his viziers engaging in such a demonstrative gesture.

Palace dignitaries also sponsored illustrated manuscripts, with Gazanfer Ağa a particularly distinguished patron.[23] A Venetian by birth, and a member of the court that the later Sultan Selîm II maintained in Kütahya, he was brought to Istanbul when this prince acceded to the throne, and castrated late in life. He was the chief of the privy chamber (*hasodabaşı*) for twenty years, followed by another thirty as chief white eunuch and overseer of palace affairs (*babü 's-sa'âde ağası*). Gazanfer Ağa befriended the author Gelibolulu Mustafâ 'Âlî, who in turn praised his patron in his chronicle. An illustrated copy of the *Dîvân-ı Nâdirî* included two depictions of Gazanfer Ağa, together with the sultan at the victorious battle of Haçova, and another as the dignitary approached his still-extant theological school (*medrese*, built in 1596). The chief black eunuch, Habeşî Mehmed Ağa, and Zeyrek Ağa the Dwarf were also on record as patrons.

Lesser patrons: sponsoring early costume albums

Apparently in the seventeenth century, outsiders to the court first became interested in Ottoman illustrated manuscripts. With the rise of Oriental travel in the late sixteenth century, increasing numbers of Europeans visiting the Ottoman lands were inclined to purchase, as mementos of their trips, miniatures – preferably of a sensational character: bizarre-looking dervishes, erotic Turkish baths, executions and tortures, but also men and women of various stations in life. Freelance painters producing for the larger market in Istanbul were ready to satisfy tourist demands. It has been claimed that renderings of single figures, which we have encountered for instance in the album of Ahmed I, were due to increasing Western influence.[24] However, I would argue that the focus on vivid expression in the depiction of a variety of societal groups is not unlike that practised by contemporary poets such as 'Atâyî, Nâbî or Nedîm, who also were concerned with renditions of social reality, quite often undertaken in a critical spirit.

An album of single figures preserved outside the palace library is datable to the reigns of Ahmed I and 'Osmân II.[25] Apart from the aforementioned

23 Zeren Tanındı, 'Topkapı Sarayı'nın ağaları ve kitaplar', *Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 3, 3 (2002), 41–56.

24 Leslie Meral Schick, 'Ottoman Costume Album in a Cross-Cultural Context', in *Art Turc: 10e Congrès international d'art turc* (Geneva, 1999), pp. 625–8.

25 Güner İnal, 'Tek figürlerden oluşan Osmanlı resim albümleri', *Arkeoloji-Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* 3 (1984), 83–96; Nermin Sinemoğlu, 'Onyedinci yüzyılın ilk çeyreğine tarihlenen bir Osmanlı kıyafet albümü', in *Aslanapa armağanı*, ed. Selçuk Mülayım, Zeki Sönmez and Ara Altun (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 169–82; Günsel Renda, '17. yüzyıldan bir grup kıyafet albümü', in *17. yüzyıl Osmanlı kültür ve sanatı, 19–20 Mart 1998, sempozyum bildirileri* (Istanbul 1998), pp. 153–78.

portrait of the latter sultan, it features a series of young men and women. This delicate album, which in some of its best miniatures resembles the brushwork, colours and style of Ahmed Nakşî, was probably prepared for a distinguished Ottoman. Another well-known album, dated 1618, comes from the collection of Peter Mundy, an English traveller; it focuses on members of the court, including women. A further album datable to 1617–22, with depictions of the sultans, court officers, janissaries and commoners including women and foreigners, was appropriated by English travellers in the early seventeenth century and found its way into Sir Hans Sloane's grand collection. Especially noteworthy is the near-complete depiction of the palace personnel, with careful representations of their apparel as signs of office and rank.

Edirne and court patronage in the second half of the seventeenth century

From this period we possess two folders which once again contain depictions of popular religious stories, in addition to a series of sultans' portraits, including that of Murad IV; these images were probably intended to aid a narrator or fortune-teller in his task. Dated to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the sultans' portraits in these folders are notable for their uniformity in style: the images of Orhan, Murâd II, Mehmed II, Bâyezîd II and ʿOsmân II are based on the models shown in the illustrated *Tâcü't-Tevârîh* or in earlier *şemâ'ilnâme*s, while Murâd I, Mehmed III and Murâd IV are all depicted on horseback, the iconography of which dates back to the single portraits of Süleymân I. It has been argued, convincingly in my opinion, that the extant sultans' portraits do not form a complete series because only those rulers who were considered saintly or heroic were included in this collection.

It is highly probable that the paintings in question were presented to Mehmed IV during his circumcision festival in October 1649 or else during the festival of 1675, which that same ruler organised as an adult. Other evidence exists of artists who presented their work to Mehmed IV in search of recognition; thus the *Mecmûʿa-i Eşʿâr*, containing numerous miniatures, flowers rendered in watercolour and paper-cuts, was prepared single-handedly by Mahmûd Gaznevî and submitted to Mehmed IV in 1685.[26]

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26 Nurhan Atasoy, *A Garden for the Sultan: Gardens and Flowers in the Ottoman Culture* (Istanbul, 2003).

*A treasury count of 1680: what was there
to read and to look at?*

The small number of illustrated manuscripts dated to the post-1650s may suggest that Mehmed IV showed only a passing interest in illustrated books. But in spite of the anti-sufi, 'fundamentalist' inclinations of his entourage, some exceptional patrons of art were active nonetheless. It is unlikely that no miniatures, albums or manuscripts were prepared during the long sojourn of Mehmed IV in Edirne, for his court there was regarded as a lively place, with musicians and literati in attendance, who enjoyed perhaps not the patronage of the ruler himself but certainly that of his dignitaries. Evliyâ recorded instances of private enterprise in manuscript production and mentioned the rates charged by the copyists. Possibly salaried staff could undertake private commissions whenever there was not enough official work to occupy their time. Such a practice may have been invented in this period of limited patronage; but on the other hand, it may have occurred in earlier periods as well, and thus account for the duplicates of pictorial compositions by a single artist which have occasionally come down to us.

A treasury record from 1680 may give us an idea of the illustrated manuscripts kept in this especially protected section of the palace; these included literary and religious works, six of them *şehnâme*s; since some of the latter came in sets, there were altogether eleven volumes.[27] In addition to 'classic texts' in translation, there were genuine Ottoman manuscripts, mainly historical in character, such as for example *Zübdetü't-târîh* and a sixteenth-century work on the Americas known as *Menâkıb-ı Yeni Dünyâ*, probably the text that we today call *Târîh-i Hind-i Garbî*. The treasury also contained a book of festivities or *Sûrnâme*, a dynastic history of unknown authorship called merely *Tevârîh-i Âl-i 'Osmân*, in addition to an unidentified volume with illustrations. There were also four albums with miniatures, and others containing samples of calligraphy. Not all the manuscripts owned by the sultans were located in the treasury; there was a further supply in various kiosks and chambers scattered over the palace grounds. Some of the latter were probably taken to Edirne as examples for artists working in this city.

*In search of beauties: from the gardens of high-ranking ladies
to the covered bazaar*

Orientalists have often noted that the sellers of books in Istanbul's covered bazaar (*bedesten*) did not appreciate the value of their goods, but that whenever

27 Topkapı Palace Archives: D. 12 A and D. 12 B.

they found a prospective buyer they demanded huge sums. Yet foreigners and locals were able to find many books in the *bedesten* because of the numerous Ottoman–Iranian conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: for this was the destination of many books appropriated as the spoils of war. Quite often books left behind by deceased Ottomans were sold in the covered bazaar as well.

French collectors of the seventeenth century amassed significant numbers of illustrated manuscripts in Istanbul's *bedesten* and had them transferred to Paris; this elite group included Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin and, a generation later, Louis XIV and his minister Colbert. According to Antoine Galland, scholar, librarian and purchasing agent, the French ambassador, Charles de Nointel, bought a large-sized *Kitâbü'l- Mansûb*, a work on astrology including paintings of the planets and twelve constellations; the diplomat expressed his surprise at seeing the constellations depicted in the European symbolic language. Then a book-dealer in the Istanbul quarter of Mahmûd Paşa, possibly Evliyâ's Hoca Mehmed Çelebi, unearthed some Persian miniatures on illuminated / gilded folios – these pieces Galland found much too expensive. But he did purchase an album of floral paintings, a few volumes of Persian classics such as *Gülistân* and *Bostân* embellished with miniatures and / or illuminations, as well as a large-sized illustrated Ottoman history from Süleymân to Murâd IV.

Direct commissioning of Ottoman miniatures by European patrons is evident from the Cicogna album, a visual documentation of the tenure of the Venetian Bailo during the Cretan war.[28] This volume includes images by both Ottoman and European artists. In addition to the portraits of different sultans, by now de rigueur, there are courtly scenes, one of them depicting the young Mehmed IV attending a council meeting. Others focus on the harem, on the basis of what evidence is difficult to tell: the sultan's mother (*vâlide sultân*) is here shown in the company of musicians. Apart from the palace – possibly the Edirne complex is intended – we find landmarks of Istanbul and aspects of daily life in the capital. The horrors of war are much in evidence, including the punishments suffered by the letter-carriers who had served the Venetian Soranzo, and battle scenes abound. Presumably the Cicogna album had been conceived as a complement to another similar piece published by Franz

28 İstanbul İtalyan Kültür Merkezi, *İstanbul Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi ve Venedik Correr Müzesi koleksiyonlarından yüzyıllar boyunca Venedik ve İstanbul görünümleri / Vedute di Venezia ed Istanbul attraverso i secoli dalle collezione del Museo Correr Venezia e Museo del Topkapı* (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 223–94.

Taeschner.[29] The painters represented in both these albums are apparently identical; there is a marked attention to detail, a narrative gusto diametrically opposed to the formal and refined Persian-style pictorial art, in addition to humour and vivacity of observation. Some of the paintings may be compared to a faience plate possibly by a Greek artist, dated 1699, which represents an infidel taken prisoner by a janissary. It is believed that the Taeschner and Cicogna albums were commissioned by Mehmed IV upon the request of the Venetian Bailo.

A Paris connection is significant for certain albums whose origins remain unclear. French ambassadors in Istanbul, especially de Nointel, seem to have employed local artists producing for the market with considerable frequency. One of the albums thus commissioned – dated 1688 – was presented to the French king.[30] It includes the portrait of a sultan attended by his sword-bearer and stirrup-holder, perhaps Süleymân II because of the date on the album. But Mehmed IV is also a possibility, as the latter's beloved *haseki*, Gülnûş Emetullâh, figures in both albums with imperial grandeur (Fig. 19.8). The second album must have also been prepared in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Given the artistic quality, markedly higher than customary in this period, and also the painterly style of the Paris albums, it is probable that they were produced in Istanbul or Edirne for palace circles. These manuscripts include depictions of the grand vizier and other members of the court, together with commoners of all walks of life, including possibly a painter personally known to the artist. The women depicted, supposedly the suite of the *vâlide sultân*, are notable for their costumes and especially their headgears. Like the portraits of royalty in the previous albums, the painting is probably due to the refined brush of Mehmed IV's celebrated artist Musavvir Hüseyin, although a European in contact with Hüseyin's school cannot be ruled out either.[31]

Gold, silver and colour: the hallmarks of Musavvir Hüseyin

During the reign of Mehmed IV, portrait series in the *silsilenâme* tradition re-emerged, showing the figures in medallions and tracing the origins of the

29 Franz Taeschner, *Alt-Stambuler Hof- und Volksleben: Ein türkisches Miniaturen-Album aus dem 17. Jahrhundert* (Hanover, 1925).

30 Hans Georg Majer, 'Individualized Sultans and Sexy Women: The Works of Musavvir Hüseyin and their East–West Context', in *Art Turc: 10e Congrès international d'art turc* (Geneva, 1999), pp. 463–71.

31 Metin And, 'Sanatçı cariyeler, yaratıcı Osmanlılar', *Sanat Dünyamız* 73 (1999), 70–4.

Figure 19.8 Haseki Sultân with attendant, by Musavvir Hüseyin: Album, Bibliothèque
Nationale Od. 7, pl. 20.

dynasty back to Adam.[32] Curiously, this revival coincides with the catastrophic defeat of the Ottoman army before Vienna. Immediately before Kara Mustafâ Paşa set out in 1683, the portraitist Hüseyin depicted Mehmed IV on a tall throne reminiscent of the 'Arîfe Tahtı created for Ahmed I by the eminent architect and maker of decorated furniture Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa. That he combined the sultan on the throne with a circular medallion may indicate Hüseyin's familiarity with European portraiture, earlier depictions of seventeenth-century sultans on a similar throne being found in costume albums produced for the European market. Furthermore, the portrait of Ahmed I signed by a certain 'el fakîr Süleymân' and depicting the sultan on the sumptuous 'Arîfe Tahtı may have provided the model for later artists wishing to represent this spectacular throne. Possibly the artist Süleymân, who does not appear in *ehl-i hiref* registers, was a member of the privy chamber trained under Nakkâş Hasan Paşa, yet he seems to have worked for external patrons as well. Even Musavvir Hüseyin, who had painted the royal portraits preserved in the 1688 albums with such skill and success, apparently had links to workshops engaged in the mass production of albums for European customers.

Musavvir Hüseyin is known to us through two signed *silsilenâme*s – one of these is dated to 1682 – and by four others that have been attributed to him. Of the latter volumes two bear the dates 1688 and 1692. When the *silsilenâme*s were being produced, Musavvir Hüseyin must already have proved himself as a painter. Fully aware of his reputation, he not only signed his works but even sealed one of them, a unique practice among Ottoman painters. The portrait of Mehmed II in the manuscript today kept in Ankara proves that the artist had access to paintings in the treasury and was confident enough to abandon the Nakkâş 'Osmân tradition, embarking on a new interpretation of Sinân Beg's well-known portrait of Mehmed II. Moreover, the depictions of Adam and Eve at the beginning of both signed manuscripts reveal the artist's familiarity with Christian iconography. In particular, the inclusion of Eve is a novelty, as earlier genealogies had featured only Adam and the Archangel Gabriel.

32 Şevket Rado, *Subhatu'l-Ahbar* (Istanbul, 1968); Sadi Bayram, 'Musavvir Hüseyin tarafından minyatürleri yapılan ve halen Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü arşivi'nde muhafaza edilen silsilenâme', *Vakıflar Dergisi* 13 (1981), 253–338; Hans Georg Majer, 'Gold, Silber und Farbe', in *VII. Internationaler Kongress für Osmanische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte (1300–1920)*, ed. Raoul Motika, Christoph Herzog and Michael Ursinus (Heidelberg, 1999), pp. 9–42; Banu Mahir, 'Hüseyin Istanbulî', in *Yaşamları ve yapıtlarıyla Osmanlılar ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1999), pp. 585–6; Hans Georg Majer, 'New Approaches in Portraiture', in *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, ed. Selmin Kangal (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 336–49.

Quite possibly Musavvir Hüseyin was at one time attached to the retinue of the grand vizier Kara Mustafâ Paşa; for one of the multiple copies of Hüseyin's *silsilenâme* was included in this dignitary's personal belongings taken along to Vienna and remaining there as Habsburg booty. Kara Mustafâ Paşa was the last grand vizier mentioned in this text, while the sultan was highly praised as a conqueror and the final sentence wished him further conquests. Thus we may reasonably assume that the manuscript had originally been a present to the sultan that the latter passed on to his grand vizier, as a good omen for the Vienna campaign.

With regard to Mehmed IV's portraits in the two later genealogies it has been concluded that while this ruler was still on the throne, the painter had to adhere to an established format, thus keeping a respectful distance from his subject; this was less necessary after the dethronement of 1687. The later two volumes attributed to Musavvir Hüseyin have both been in France since 1688 and 1720 respectively, when they were rebound by local artisans. Presumably Hüseyin continued to work after the downfall of his patrons, and French diplomats were part of his new clientele. Although the artist deployed his remarkable mastery in the use of gold, silver and colour only when depicting the sultan, in his other works he relied on his fine brushwork and sophisticated colouration to give them distinction.

Levnî: poetry or painting?

The reputation of early eighteenth-century Ottoman miniatures rests solely upon the works of the painter Levnî, who has facilitated the task of historians by signing quite a number of his productions.[33] Possibly a Greek from Salonika by origin, Levnî had moved to Edirne while still quite young. He first worked as a *nakkâş*, gained experience in the decorative designs known as the *sâz* style, and then grew into a distinguished portraitist, having studied the work of Musavvir Hüseyin very closely. He was also a poet writing in Ottoman Turkish.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the demand for manuscripts seems to have declined; this has been explained by the foundation of the first Ottoman Turkish printing-press in 1729, or else, where illustrations are concerned, by the novel fashion of decorating domestic interiors with paintings of flowers, fruits and landscapes. But this tendency did not prevent the production of a few highly distinguished books: thus two volumes of a monumental

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33 Gül İrepoğlu, *Levnî: Nakış, Şiir, Renk* (Istanbul, 1999).

manuscript document the festivities in honour of the 1720 circumcision of the sons of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30).[34] Levnî also produced twenty-two sultans' portraits for a *silsilenâme* and an album of images showing individual men and women.

Apart from the aesthetic values involved, and the grandeur of the whole undertaking, the book of circumcision festivities illustrated by Levnî and known after the author of the text as the *Sûrnâme-i Vehbî* is important for the historian; it shows us how the men leading the Ottoman state viewed the society which they governed, and more specifically its cleavages along class and ethnic lines. In this respect, the processions Levnî depicted are of remarkable precision. Compared to the *sûrnâme* produced under Murâd III (1582) its eighteenth-century counterpart shows the festivities in much greater detail, and displays a particular interest in the depiction of various human types.

Some of Levnî's album paintings refer to Iranian subjects: certain people are identified as dignitaries from the Safavid court. Thus an elegantly reclining young man is identified as a favourite of Şah Tahmâsp by the name of Şah 'Osmân; the model for the album paintings was by that time about a century old, possibly from the reign of 'Osmân II. To these exotic figures Levnî added youths from Bursa; several of these must have been performers, also with Iranian connotations. A group of female musicians, a dancer, and women openly exhibiting their beauty and allure allow us a glimpse of how elite Ottomans perceived sexuality, masculinity, femininity and sexual 'normality' (Fig. 19.9).

Thus political and social challenges notwithstanding, costume albums continued to be produced after the court had moved back to Istanbul in 1703. While seventeenth-century painters of women had sometimes indulged a taste for the bizarre, now a playful interest in women predominated. Levnî's erotic portraits of young men and overtly sensual women were, however, very much in line with the graceful royal ladies painted by his teacher Musavvir Hüseyin. Attention to detail in the depiction of their costumes, including colours, patterns, materials and cuts, makes Levnî's album into an exquisite journal of women's fashions.

Also by Levnî are some genre paintings, now scattered in collections outside the Topkapı Palace, but originally part of a single album and probably executed

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34 Esin Atıl, *Levni and the Surname: The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival* (Istanbul, 1999); Stéphane Yerasimos, Doğan Kuban, Mertol Tulum and Ahmet Ertuğ (eds.), *'Surname': An Illustrated Account of Sultan Ahmed III's Festival of 1720* (Bern, 2000).

Figure 19.9 A dancing-girl, by Abdülcelil Levnî: Album, Topkapı
Palace Museum Library, 2164, 18a.

before 1723. Three miniatures occupy a double folio, two of them depicting ladies partying on the Bosporus (Fig. 19.10) and the other a gathering of young men.[35] Two further miniatures reflect a Mevlevî environment. One of them depicts a gathering of seven dervishes smoking and drinking coffee on the hills behind the shores of Dolmabahçe.[36] The second one depicts a ritual dance at the Beşiktaş Mevlevî lodge.[37]

Behind Levnî's productivity there stood the resourceful patronage of the ruler. Sultan Ahmed's love of books is well documented; he did not hesitate to appropriate the library of ʿAlî Paşa, once his grand vizier and son-in-law, and the ruler's interest in book-collecting was shared by many high officials. Among other things Grand Vizier Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa owned examples of calligraphy by Karahisarî and other famous practitioners of this art, an illuminated Persian Qur'an, an album of sultans' portraits, a volume of miscellaneous illustrations, an atlas of the Mediterranean, twenty-two other maps and eighteen items that were presumably maps used by the military. As it has proved impossible to locate any of the books once belonging to Grand Admiral Kaymak Mustafâ Paşa, it is only through his post-mortem inventory that we learn of his treasures: there was an illustrated *Şemâ'ilnâme*, several volumes filled with various illustrations and examples of calligraphy, six collections of portolans and two of prints. However, the grand vizier's *kethüdâ* had kept only fourteen volumes at home; this personage seems to have acquired books more for the sake of self-satisfaction than with a view to endowing a future library. So perhaps it is all the more significant that his small collection included a *Tabakâtü'l-ʿâşıkîn*, two volumes of the *Şehnâme*, an *İskendernâme*, a *Timurnâme*, all illustrated, and four more volumes with pictures merely described as *'musavver murakkaʿat'*.[38] Chief Black Eunuch Beşir Ağa (d. 1746) was also known for his passion for books, and a number of manuscripts in the palace library bear his stamp. He appears several times in the most precious illustrated manuscript of the period, the *Sûrnâme-i Vehbî*, but whether he had anything to do with its production remains unknown.

35 Nurhan Atasoy, 'Türk minyatürlerinden üç gündelik hayat sahnesi', *Sanat tarihinde doğudan batıya / Ünsal Yücel anısına sempozyum bildirileri* (Istanbul, 1989), pp. 19–22.

36 Jean Soustiel, 'Fransa sanat piyasasında Osmanlı el yazmaları ve minyatürler', *Antik & Dekor* 42 (1997), 84–92.

37 Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam* (New York, 1965), p. 113; Baha Tanman, 'Beşiktaş Mevlevihanesi'ne ilişkin bir minyatürün mimarlık ve kültür tarihi açısından değerlendirilmesi', in *17. yüzyıl Osmanlı kültür ortamı* (Istanbul, 1998), pp. 181–216.

38 Tülay Artan, 'Problems Relating to the Social History Context of the Acquisition and Possession of Books as Part of Collections of Objets d'Art in the 18th Century', in *Art Turc: 10e Congrès international d'art turc* (Geneva, 1999), pp. 87–92, at pp. 90–1.

Figure 19.10 A garden party of ladies along the shores of the Bosporus, by Abdülcelil Levnî: Album, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Georg Niedermeiser, J 28/75, Pl. 4301.

*Festivities, flowers and beautiful people: from
delight to conventionalism*

In the reign of Sultan Ahmed III Ottoman court society lived extravagantly, in a manner often compared to a *fête champêtre* of rococo France. Far more than in earlier centuries, court life involved feasting and entertainment in the kiosks, summer palaces and gardens along the waterfronts of the capital. Celebrations of royal births, circumcisions and marriages also appealed to some non-courtiers, and artists were encouraged to capture the pleasures of life for the patrons' delight. This can be deduced from the subject matter of contemporary poetry and miniatures which illustrate the worldly entertainments of people of all ranks. In miniatures illustrating the seventeenth-century work known as the *Hamse-i ʿAtâyî*, the intimate lives of Istanbul's newly rising elite are reflected, while the *Sûrnâme-i Vehbî* shows the people of the capital enjoying pageants, banquets and fireworks.

European artists domiciled in Istanbul were becoming prominent in this period. In 1699 the painter Jean-Baptiste Van Mour (1671–1737) came to the Ottoman capital with Ferriol, the French ambassador. He was commissioned to record landscapes and prepare sketches of exotic people and events, and we owe to him portraits, ceremonial scenes, and even a painting showing the rebels of 1730, whose revolt ended the reign of Ahmed III. Van Mour's portrayals of elite women complement Levnî's, detailing costumes and headgears with comparable gusto, and his studio was a cosmopolitan centre where an elegant society of foreign diplomats and their attendants mingled with Ottoman artists. Contacts of this type opened new perspectives for those Ottoman painters who previously had been suffering from a sentiment of monotony and torpor. Levnî may well have discovered perspective and moved towards an elaborate concept of space due to of his contact with this artistic circle. But even among lesser painters, the changeover to gouache-tempera by the middle of the eighteenth century suggests that locals were now working in the ateliers of Europeans in the capital or in other port cities. In these paintings, shadow and depth, largely unknown to miniaturists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, became the norm.

As to the female figures of the mid-eighteenth century painter ʿAbdullâh Buhârî, they present an iconographic novelty, for their noble status is powerfully stressed; this is especially true of a painting showing an elegant lady which bears the artist's signature and the date of 1745.[39] Buhârî's elite women

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39 Banu Mahir, 'Abdullah Buhari'nin minyatürlerinde 18. yüzyıl Osmanlı kadın modası', *P Sanat Kültür Antika Dergisi* 12 (1998–9), 70–82.

are rather doll-like, stout and grim faced. Some miniatures suggest that the artist may have been working from live models (Fig. 19.11). Buhârî's most famous work shows a woman in her bath; but here the novelty is not so great as one might think, for earlier models were available, especially a costume album from the 1650s which includes an analogous scene.

Among albums from the later eighteenth century, we might mention, for the sake of completeness, three items dated to the reign of ʿAbdülhâmid I (r. 1774–89) which reflect recent changes in the court and state apparatus. Some of the patrons are now known to us, for instance Stanislas Kostka, translator to the Polish ambassador in Istanbul. The manuscript came into the possession of the last king of Poland in 1779–80; possibly the order had originated with him.[40] A further monumental volume is the so-called Diez album, executed by order of ʿAbdülhâmid I for the Prussian ambassador General Diez, sent by Frederick II.[41] It was probably the practical purpose of such compilations to provide foreign envoys with an almost complete list of Ottoman ranks and officers, including the military and the attendants of the harem, with occasional glimpses of commoners thrown in. While one album includes single figures only, the other two deserve attention for their depiction of architecture: we encounter the exteriors and interiors of stately mansions, a public bath, a coffee-house, a fountain, a Mevlevî lodge and a mosque. The latter two albums also include rituals and ceremonies: ʿAbdülhâmid I girding the sword at his accession; the excursion of palace women in a carriage pulled by six horses; a reception of foreign ambassadors; the sultan attending Friday prayers; the procession of a high dignitary; and last but not least entertainments in the harem.

Possibly from the hands of the artists who painted the Diez Album we possess two sets of miniatures illustrating the *Zenânnâme* and the *Hûbânnâme* (1792–3). These long poems by Fâzıl Bey Enderûnî (d. 1809–10) detail the merits and defects of the women and men of different regions, with special emphasis on Istanbul and surroundings. Both albums are interesting due to their depictions of people from the lower classes of society and ethnic/religious minorities, with a number of foreigners added on. Much cruder paintings, collected in two other albums dated to the early nineteenth century, also

40 Tadeusz Majda and Alina Mrozowska, *Tureckie Stropje i Sceny Rodzajowe* (Warsaw, 1991); Metin And, 'Varşova'da bir çarşı ressamı albümü', *Antik & Dekor* 51 (1999), 62–7; Jolanta Talbierska, 'Turkish Garments and Scenes from the Collection of King Stanislaw August Poniatowski: İstanbul and Warsaw, ca. 1779–1780', in *War and Peace: Ottoman–Polish Relations in the 15th–19th Centuries*, ed. Selmin Kangal (Istanbul, 1999), pp. 273–323.

41 Metin And, 'I. Abdülhamit'in Prusya elçisine armağan ettiği Osmanlı kıyafetler albümü', *Antik & Dekor* 19 (1993), 20–3.

Figure 19.11 An elegant lady from Istanbul, by Abdullah Buharî: Album, Topkapı Palace
Museum Library, H. 2143, 11a.

illustrate people of modest estate hardly ever shown in other sources. More-over, the *Zenânnâme* includes examples of genre painting, such as an outing of ladies to a famous beauty spot, a lady giving birth, women in a bath and some wayward women; the artist seems to have been familiar with the lowlife of the capital. Probably there once existed many more miniatures of this type than have come down to us; unfortunately circulation patterns remain unknown.

However, most miniatures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth cen-turies were not of the same quality as the *Zenânnâme* and the *Hûbânnâme*; in fact, the demise of miniature painting should be dated to this period. Portraits of young men and women revealing knowledge of anatomy were signed by artists such as Konstantin, Rafail, Istrati and Mecdî; they all found their way into an album. It was also during those years that small format oil-paintings became popular: the Ottoman elite were entering into a different world.

Monumental architecture

The conventions of the imperial canon

We will abide by custom in discussing not the *architectures* of the Ottoman lands, but the totality of *Ottoman architecture*, even though this will at times mean that our account overstresses homogeneity and shows divergences less clearly than one might wish for. Yet the period to be discussed is marked exactly by major differences in styles between the provinces and the capital. In order to understand how these came about, it is crucial to visualise the ideological and material foundations of Ottoman architectural patronage.[42] It is well known that revenues derived from agriculture paid for the state's building enterprises, just as they made it possible to provision and equip the Ottoman army and pay the salaries of administrators. As the published Ottoman state budgets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not include any expenses linked to building activity, it has been argued that the sultan, members of the imperial family and high-ranking dignitaries paid for the construction of monumental socio-religious complexes from their personal funds.[43] Newer work on state budgets of the eighteenth century has not invalidated this argument.

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42 Tülay Artan, 'Questions of Ottoman Identity and Architectural History', in *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*, ed. D. Arnold, T. A. Erkut and B. T. Özkaya (London, 2006), pp. 85–109.

43 Mustafa Cezar, 'Ottoman Construction System in the Classical Period', in Mustafa Cezar, *Typical Commercial Buildings of the Classical Period and the Ottoman Construction System* (Istanbul, 1983), pp. 251–96.

Now it is possible to debate to what extent and under what circumstances Ottoman administrators distinguished between the rulers' personal funds and the state treasury; this question remains complicated and confusing. In the case of dignitaries and the female members of the dynasty the financial sources of architectural patronage came from the surpluses these people derived from their commercial and industrial enterprises or else from the state revenues assigned to them. It was almost always the latter, mostly in the form of rural/agricultural land held as revenue assignments (*dirlik*, *temlîk*) and tax-farms (*mukâta'a*, *mâlikâne*), that constituted the material base of construction activity. Such allocations came either as payment for office or else were meant to ensure the livelihood of the sultan's relatives.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, viziers, governors-general and provincial governors had been major recipients of revenue, and patronised almost all the major non-sultanic projects. Female relatives of the sultans also channelled a considerable share of their revenues into architectural patronage; unlike those of the governors, their projects were normally confined to the capital.[44] All such construction was supervised by the sultans' architects, officially appointed and on the state payroll.[45] In this kind of patronage system there was no room for stylistic differences between the centre and the provinces, between the acts of patronage due to the sultans themselves and those initiated by lesser mortals. The central canon, established in the capital for the public, monumental embodiments of imperial institutions, was disseminated virtually everywhere through mosques and mausoleums, baths, caravanserais, bridges, hospices and even graveyards. A plethora of state officials, both in their capacities as patrons and sometimes in their roles as artists and architects as well, became representatives of 'the Ottoman way'. Thus certain artistic canons, as well as rituals, ceremonies, codes and manners designed at the court and developed in the capital, were transported to the provincial centres, serving to spread the imperial image, to co-opt provincial elites and to legitimise Ottoman rule.[46]

44 Tülay Artan, 'Periods and Problems of Ottoman (Women's) Patronage on the Via Egnatia', in *Proceedings of the Second International Symposium of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies: Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule, 1380–1699, 9–11 January 1994*, ed. Elizabeth Zachariadou (Rethymnon, 1997), pp. 19–43.

45 A. Dündar, *Arşivlerdeki plan ve çizimler ışığı altında Osmanlı imar sistemi (XVIII.–XIX. yüzyıl)* (Ankara, 2000).

46 Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, '"In the Image of Rûm": Ottoman Architectural Patronage in Sixteenth Century Aleppo and Damascus', *Muqarnas* 16 (1999), 70–95.

Safiye Sultan and the palace factions

Around 1600 Istanbul's 'seven hills' were already crowned with the most magnificent monuments of Ottoman power and piety. Together with the Topkapı Palace, socio-religious complexes centred round a mosque, each commissioned by a sultan starting with Mehmed II the Conqueror, dominated the silhouette of the Ottoman capital. Since the city centre was also heavily built over, selecting sites for the two major architectural enterprises of the 1600s was rather difficult. Safiye Sultân, wife of Murâd III and mother of Mehmed III, made do with a problematic site on the waterfront, close to the tip of the peninsula, while the complex of Sultan Ahmed I ended up on a high point behind Hagia Sophia.

Other problems were even more serious: at the end of the sixteenth century, Mehmed III, like his father Murâd III, had avoided commemorating his name by an imperial project in Istanbul; lack of funds was only part of the story. Despite the conquest of the Hungarian fortress of Eğri in which he had led the army in person, Mehmed III's reign was not renowned for its military and political successes. Furthermore, it was long established that mosques commissioned by sultans should be built out of wealth acquired by conquest. Thus it was remarkable that Mehmed III made his mother stand in for him, so to speak, by encouraging her to build a major socio-religious complex; or else it was Safiye herself who wanted to augment her authority after the death of her predecessor, Nûrbânû.

Political careers for artists?

When Miʿmâr Sinân died at a very advanced age (1588) the inspector of water-mains, Davud Ağa (1575–82, 1584–8), an official of the second rank among the imperial architects, was appointed successor to the dead master.[47] The two had collaborated on many projects, beginning possibly with the Selimiye complex in Edirne. Perhaps their association was based on common origins in the janissary corps; according to the chronicler Selânikî, Davud had made himself a reputation as an engineer. Even during Sinân's tenure, especially when the older man was on the pilgrimage to Mecca, Davud had been responsible for certain projects, both in the palace and in the city, where he built a mosque and a public bath for the chief of the black eunuchs, Habeşî Mehmed Ağa (1586–7). While completing unfinished projects of Sinân's, Davud Ağa also

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47 Muzaffer Erdoğan, 'Mimar Davud Ağa'nın hayatı ve eserleri', *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 12 (1955), 179–204.

embarked on new ones, including two kiosks in the palace gardens, both commissioned by the grand vizier Sinân Paşa for Murâd III.[48] However, after his appointment as chief architect, Davud Ağa did not get to attach his name to the major projects of the period, such as the complexes of Gazanfer Ağa, the chief white eunuch, and Cerrâh Mehmed Paşa, the grand vizier, both completed in 1593–4. The two architects' contributions to monumental civic architecture, featuring marble revetments, monumental columns, Iznik tiles of a new colour scheme and precious building materials from afar, reflect a mature, centralised construction industry.

In the summer of 1597 Davud Ağa embarked on a mosque for Safiye Sultân, mother (*vâlide*) to the current ruler, Mehmed III.[49] But due to technical problems on site, and the need to spend money on the relocation of the Jewish Karaite community that previously had inhabited the area, the pace of building was slow. Davud Ağa drew up a plan that is a variation of that devised by Sinân for the Şehzâde mosque, both the prayer hall and the courtyard being square in shape. Reverting from the eight-pier plan perfected by Sinân at the end of the century to his earlier four-pier scheme, Davud Ağa seems to have avoided challenging his illustrious predecessor. When he died in 1599, perhaps from the plague, there were rumours that he had been executed for 'advanced thinking' – in other words, for heresy.[50]

On the other hand Safiye had made many enemies; as a result, the celebrations marking the commencement of work were postponed for several months. In 1600 her son temporarily moved her away from the seat of power to the Old Palace, because of her conflict with some palace grandees and janissaries over the money being spent on her charities.[51] In this period Safiye also took over the Cairo mosque of ʿOsmân Ağa, the chief black eunuch (d. 1602) and formerly her servitor; it was completed in 1605, after her own death. But during those years she was once again removed from power, and this time it was final: immediately after his accession in 1603 Ahmed I sent her away to the Old Palace. She could thus have had little hope of finishing her great project.

But for a while yet Davud Ağa's plan was pursued by his successor, Dalgıç Ahmed. The new chief architect had previously worked with both of his predecessors. He had already made a name for himself as a specialist in

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48 The projects completed by Davud are the mosques of Nişancı Mehmed Paşa (1584) and Mesih Mehmed Paşa (1586): Selânikî Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Selânikî*, 2 vols., ed. Mehmet İpşirli (İstanbul, 1989), vol. I, pp. 244–5, 320.
49 Ibid., vol. II, p. 761.   50 Ibid., pp. 763–4; Erdoğan, 'Mimar Davud', p. 185.
51 Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York and Oxford, 1993), p. 257.

mother-of-pearl inlay, an activity that apparently introduced him to geometry and, eventually, to engineering. Ingeniously managing the problems on site, he built stone foundations reinforced with iron and a series of bridges, possibly linking together a number of islets.[52] But when the construction had reached the level of the lower casements Ahmed I put a stop to the project, and Dalgıç Ahmed may have been dismissed at this time. In early 1606, Sedefkâr Mehmed had taken over his position. This was quite remarkable, for as the eighteenth-century chronicler Na'îmâ was to note, until about 1650 chief architects were normally appointed for life. Dalgıç Ahmed, however, now in the capacity of *binâ emîni*, a bureaucrat in charge of financial matters only, undertook the reconstruction of the bridges in Silivri (until October 1606). In this period, moreover, he joined the class of military administrators (*ümerâ*) and became the governor-in-chief of Silistre. He was on his way to join forces with Nakkâş Hasan Paşa, another artist cum military man sent out to suppress a major revolt of mercenaries, when he was killed in February 1608. By this time he already had established a pious foundation (*vakıf*), and thus must have achieved a degree of status and wealth.[53]

Along with that of Nakkâş Hasan, Dalgıç Ahmed Paşa's career exemplified a change in the recruitment of artists working for the palace; major figures were now required to prove their mettle in bureaucratic and military positions, in addition to devoting themselves to the arts of their choice. This changeover, rather than the deaths of geniuses such as Nakkâş 'Osmân or Sinân, was to determine seventeenth-century court art and architecture.

Sultan Ahmed the Pious and his mosque

Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, who designed the mosque complex that was to commemorate the young sultan's desire to serve his faith, had been educated in the palace. As a youth he had excelled in music and mother-of-pearl inlay; after presenting samples of his handiwork to Murâd III, he was rewarded by various official appointments. In later life, he had a military career, serving in the Arab and Balkan provinces and on the western frontiers. But more recently he had worked in Istanbul as the inspector of water-mains (1597–1606), an office that had become a springboard for the position of chief architect.[54]

Construction began in 1606, which was a particularly difficult year; there were uprisings in the capital following the treaty of Zsitva Török, which

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52 Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, p. 340.
53 Şehabeddin Akalın, 'Mimar Dalgıç Ahmed Paşa', *Tarih Dergisi* 9 (1958), 71–80, at p. 79.
54 Zeynep Nayır (Ahunbay), *Osmanlı mimarlığında Sultan Ahmed külliyesi ve sonrası (1609–1690)* (Istanbul, 1975).

ended a long and costly war with but minor territorial gains. Furthermore, the ongoing struggle against Anatolian mercenaries had created considerable stress. Thus Ahmed I must have decided to build in the accustomed fashion in order to legitimise his rule even though so far his reign lacked any spectacular political and military successes.

Choosing a location for the complex was the first problem: real estate of the appropriate size had become difficult to find in the increasingly crowded perimeter of Istanbul's walls, and it was also considered necessary for the new structure to form an ensemble with the already-existing public buildings. Presumably the proximity of Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, which at the time was used for public festivities, made the site of the medieval Byzantine palace seem desirable for the new pious foundation. The final decision was made by the sultan himself, who came in person to break the first sod.[55] From that moment onwards he devoted his life to the completion of the complex, but without abandoning his pleasures.

Several men of religion and specialists in Islamic law (*'ulemâ*) declared their disapproval; the *şeyhülislâm* in his hostility even provoked a revolt. It was falsely claimed that to exceed four minarets, as Ahmed I planned to do, was sacrilege; for this supposedly meant an impermissible competition with the Great Mosque in Mecca. Many dignitaries apparently agreed with the views of Gelibolulu Mustafâ ʿÂlî, who had felt that rulers should only establish major pious foundations if they had previously gained booty in successful wars.[56] After all, a concern about costs, both monetary and artistic, obviously made sense: the preparatory clearing of the entire south side of the Hippodrome involved the demolition not only of sizeable Byzantine ruins, but also of several palaces belonging to viziers and even to an Ottoman princess, some of them having been built by Miʿmâr Sinân in person.[57]

However, Ahmed I found a defender of his project in his prayer leader, Mustafâ Sâfî, who sharply contested Mustafâ ʿÂlî's views. Writing in 1611, when the mosque project was in full swing, Sâfî claimed that an excess of

55 Mustafa Sâfî Efendi, *Mustafa Sâfî'nin Zübdetü't-tevârîh'i*, ed. İ. H. Çuhadar (Ankara, 2003), p. 48b.

56 Howard Crane, 'The Ottoman Sultans' Mosques. Icons of Imperial Legacy', in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, ed. Irene A. Bierman, Rifaʿat A. Abou-El-Haj and Donald Preziosi (New York, 1991), pp. 171–243, at pp. 204–5; Rhoads Murphey, 'Politics and Islam: Mustafa Sâfî's Version of the Kingly Virtues as Presented in his Zübdetü'l-tevârîh, or Annals of Sultan Ahmed, 1012–1023 AH/1603–1614 AD', in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West*, 2 vols., ed. Colin Imber and Keiko Kiyotaki (London and New York, 2005), vol. I, pp. 5–24, at p. 8.

57 Orhan Ş. Gökyay, *Mimar Mehmed Ağa, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya armağan* (Ankara, 1976), pp. 158–63, esp. p. 159.

virtue was in itself impossible, and that the subjects needed to experience the ruler's generosity; it was this sentiment that formed a basic source of the state's well-being and a principal cause of the dynasty's preservation.[58] Sâfî also claimed that his ruler was just, pious and God-fearing, and tried to refute the accusation that the current construction projects indicated that Ahmed I was not exempt from the sin of pride. Sâfî conceded that in his everyday life the sultan was expected to set an example in frugality, especially given the difficult circumstances in which the people found themselves; but his construction of pious foundations should in no way be interpreted as a sign of vainglory. This emphasis on modesty and avoidance of pride was especially timely as major rebellions of mercenaries were still continuing in Anatolia.[59] With the same intention, Sâfî attempted to balance his coverage of high-profile and large-scale projects with accounts of more mundane undertakings targeting practical public needs.

Against all odds, a grandiose mosque complex was built, the last of its kind on the historic peninsula, involving both Mehmed Ağa as chief architect and Kalender Paşa, the well-known producer of miniature albums, first as the *şehremîni*, then as the *binâ emîni* and *binâ nâzırı*, all concerned mainly with financial matters. Construction began in late March 1610, and Kalender Paşa continued to supervise the construction of the Sultan Ahmed complex even after he had been promoted to the office of finance director. He died in the late summer of 1616, just before work on the mosque was finished (1617).[60] The chief architect, Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, managed to complete the project on his own, before his death in 1618.

Originally the Sultan Ahmed complex included a school of law and divinity (*medrese*), a public kitchen (*'imâret-tâbhâne*), a locale for Qur'an readers (*dârülkurrâ*), a hospital (*dârüşşifâ*), a public bath, a shop-lined street (*ârâsta*) and kiosks where drinking water was passed out (*sebîls*); these buildings were completed between 1617 and 1620. As Ahmed I had died in 1617, his mausoleum was added to the complex. These free-standing structures, many of which are no longer extant, conformed to urban architecture in that they created continuous façades opening into the surrounding streets, rather than into an inner courtyard, as had been the case in earlier complexes.[61] The mosque, while imposing, was conventional, and in spite of its harmonious and graceful exterior, dominated by six minarets, it did not show the tensions created by

58 Murphey, 'Politics and Islam', p. 8.   59 Ibid., pp. 11, 13–14.

60 Yılmazer (ed.), *Topçular kâtibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi tarihi*, vol. I, *passim*. See also Mahir, 'Kalender Paşa', p. 692.

61 For a plan: Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı başkenti İstanbul* (İstanbul, 2002), p. 190.

curvilinear and spherical masses, spaces and rhythms that are found in the Süleymaniye. Nor did it possess the quietude and classical proportions of the Selimiye in Edirne, that masterpiece of Miʿmâr Sinân's.

The interior of the mosque is a quatrefoil: a central dome flanked by four half-domes. Three of the half-domes are supported by three lesser domes, and the half-dome where the prayer niche is located is held up by two such structures. A novelty in Ottoman architecture was the royal pavilion, designed as a sumptuous space with a view of both the Bosporus and the Sea of Marmara. Here the sultan could rest and receive visitors before and after prayers. It was decorated with opulent furniture and objets d'art, some of which had been made by the chief goldsmith, Derviş Mehmed Zıllî, father to the traveller Evliyâ Çelebi. Later royal mosques were all provided with such a space.

While much appreciated, the blue tiles decorating the mosque could not match those used in the buildings of Sinân, and those decorating the mausoleum were of even poorer quality.[62] As the kilns in Iznik were closing down one by one, the potters introduced standardisation in order to cope with economic stringency and unpredictable demand; this meant that the same tile designs recurred in numerous buildings. Even so, however, the rich decoration of prayer niche, preacher's pulpit and royal loggia, together with the carpets, stained-glass windows, decorative painting, reading desks, ostrich eggs and lighting elements, impressively exemplified the arts of the period. Particularly sumptuous were the window shutters decorated with mother-of-pearl inlays, attributed to the architect Sedefkâr Mehmed in person.

Restoration work at the Kaaba, another major enterprise of Ahmed I and Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, was also a contested area. That the holy site was in disrepair had been known ever since the reign of Murâd III, and Miʿmâr Sinân had planned extensive repairs. But apparently some powerful ʿulemâ declared the repair work unlawful. As the Hungarian and Iranian campaigns were under way at this time, work was postponed in consequence.[63] Finally, after his pilgrimage in 1610–11, the former şeyhülislâm Sun'ullâh reported that repairs were urgently needed. Accordingly, Mehmed Ağa was commissioned to draw up new designs based on Miʿmâr Sinân's earlier suggestions.

Secular building

While his magnificent and controversial socio-religious complex was under way, the young sultan also pursued projects of urban renewal. In 1613

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62 Raby, '1600', p. 278.

63 Howard Crane, *Risâle-i Miʿmâriyye: An Early Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Treatise on Architecture*, facsimile with translation and notes (Leiden, 1987), p. 56.

water-mains were built to supply the Tophane district on the Bosporus, includ-
ing Fındıklı, Kabataş and Salıpazarı.[64] Then fountains were erected in a district
whose water supply came from a relatively distant source, prompted by the
widespread suffering caused by the drought of 1611.[65] During this period the
hills between Galata and Beşiktaş, to the north of the Golden Horn, were
first settled; the French ambassador, de Brèves, established one of the earliest
embassies in this area, also known as the vineyards of Pera.[66]

The architectural patronage of Ahmed I marked the shores of the capital:
apart from the Kasr-ı 'Âlî in the gardens of the naval arsenal on the shores
of the Golden Horn (1613–14), a seven-domed kiosk known as the Beşiktaş
Palace as well as the summer abode of İstavroz, located on both shores of
the Bosporus, were restored and revitalised under his reign.[67] Between the
Karabâli gardens and Beşiktaş, land was reclaimed from the sea; it is therefore
known as Dolmabahçe. Mansions of high-level dignitaries stretched along the
Bosporus waterfront as far as Ortaköy and Kuruçeşme. Defterdarburnu was
named after the seaside villa of the finance director, Ekmekçioğlu Ahmed Paşa,
the son of an affluent Albanian baker in Edirne.

In the winter months of 1613 and 1614 the sultan had renovated the Edirne
Palace for the use of his hunting parties, and also constructed a pleasure
pavilion (Kasr-ı Ahmed/Kasr-ı Hümâyûn) in the Topkapı Sarayı. Designed
by his chief architect, Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, this pavilion displays the last
fine examples of Iznik tile-work. The linings of the decorative wall niches
feature coiling scrollwork and flowers in vases, repeated higher up between
the windows of the upper row. Noteworthy is the abundance of inscriptions,
one of which bears the date of 1608–9; in addition to pious texts, we find verse
panegyrics of Ahmed I. The sultan, himself a renowned poet, was here praised
by the finest authors of his reign.[68] Small wooden writing-desks decorated
with mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell also located in this chamber may well
have been designed by Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa.

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64 Cengiz Orhonlu, 'Fındıklı semtinin tarihi hakkında bir araştırma', *Tarih Dergisi* 8, 11–12
(1955), 51–70.
65 Murphey, 'Politics and Islam', pp. 16–17.
66 Eremya Çelebi Kömürcüyan, *İstanbul tarihi, XVI. asırda İstanbul* (Istanbul, 1952), p. 252;
Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1717), vol. I, p. 181.
67 Tülay Artan, 'Aynalıkavak Kasrı', *Dünden bugüne İstanbul ansiklopedisi*, vol. VII, pp. 485–
6; Tülay Artan, 'Beşiktaş Sarayı', *Dünden bugüne İstanbul ansiklopedisi*, vol. II, pp. 164–5
and 171–3; Afife Batur, 'Beylerbeyi Sarayı', *Dünden bugüne İstanbul ansiklopedisi*, vol. II,
p. 206.
68 Kemal Çığ, S. Batur, C. Köseoğlu and Michael Rogers, *The Topkapı Saray Museum.
Architecture: The Harem and Other Buildings* (Boston, 1988), p. 34.

Mehmed Ağa and the Risâle-i Miʿmâriyye

The life of Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa is narrated in a biography, known as the *Risâle-i Miʿmâriyye*, and written by a certain Caʿfer Efendi who was a client of Mehmed Ağa. At first sight the *Risâle* appears as a rather bizarre collection of factual data and dubious insinuations, but it repays closer study because it is the only Ottoman treatise on an imperial architect and on architecture in general. It reveals the making of an important artist, who had been brought to Istanbul as a janissary recruit, possibly from İlbasan in central Albania; it also allows us to identify some of the works of Mehmed Ağa, including the fountain of Ahmed I on the shores of the Bosporus and his pavilion at the Topkapı Palace. Descriptions of a few elegant pieces with inlays in precious materials testify to the active interest that Mehmed Ağa continued to take in this art: these included the preacher's pulpit in the courtyard of the Great Mosque of Mecca (1611). Appended is a useful glossary of technical terms and architectural principles of measurement in Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

The *Risâle* reflected the anxieties experienced by educated Ottomans at the turn of the millennium (1000/1591). In the story of Mehmed Ağa's shift from music to geometry and mathematics, as told by Caʿfer Çelebi, we sense an inclination to take dreams and prophecies very seriously. Thus, after having dreamt of a band of gypsy musicians, Mehmed Ağa turned to a sheikh of the Halveti order of dervishes by the name of Vişne Mehmed Efendi (d. 1584), who was also a religious scholar. Upon this man's interpretation of his dream, he gave up the practice of music.[69] But Mehmed Ağa's biographer did not necessarily concur with his hero in this matter. On the contrary, the latter part of the *Risâle* contains a lengthy discussion of Ottoman music, which the author justified by a compositional necessity: as the book had begun with a discussion of Mehmed Ağa's involvement with music, it needed to end with a reference to this art, so highly esteemed at the Ottoman court.

Calculations indicating how many years had passed since the creation of Adam and other biblical events, and a prediction of the date of doomsday, indicated that Caʿfer Efendi, too, was concerned with preparations for the next world. All this was very much in line with the calculations in certain manuscripts illustrated for the Ottoman court at just this time. However, in the end, both the biographer and his hero decided to place their trust in the Muslim religion, convinced that it was this and nothing else that would save them from punishment at the Last Judgement.[70]

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69 Crane, *Risâle*, pp. 8, 24–9, 33.   70 Ibid., pp. 68–9.

Apparently religion was also a source of consolation for the tensions of the chief architect's professional life: Ca'fer Efendi recorded that many public buildings put up under previous holders of this position were actually the works of Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, who was thus deprived of the credit that should have been his due. At the time of writing (1614–15), the Sultan Ahmed mosque, to which Ca'fer Efendi gave special prominence, was not as yet completed.[71] But Mehmed Ağa was already quite weary and complained that the burden of work was weighing down on him. He also disapproved of the dignitaries of his own time, with the one exception of Kuyucu Murâd Paşa, conflicts among the *ulemâ* forming a special cause of disillusion.[72]

Mi'mâr Kâsım Ağa and his liaisons dangereuses

The reigns of Mustafâ I and 'Osmân II were brief and sordid, and the chief architects of the time deeply involved in the internecine struggles typical of that period. It is something of an enigma that in 1626 a chief architect named Kâsım Ağa had an impressive sarcophagus prepared for his own burial. On the face of it, this move may indicate that here a person of wealth prepared to meet his end in a suitably dignified fashion. However, our sources refer to a chief architect called Kâsım Ağa, nicknamed the 'old one' for his long life and tenure of office, whose story we can only trace from 1634 onwards. Thus either there were two architects called Kâsım Ağa, or else the man who prepared for death in 1626 escaped with his life after all. If the latter is true, Kâsım Ağa must have held on to his position until 1656, surviving to serve under Murâd IV, İbrâhîm and Mehmed IV.[73] However, due to his political involvements and perhaps also because of artistic deficiencies, he was deposed twice during this period (1635–8 and 1639–43).

As the document establishing his pious foundation indicated, Kâsım Ağa came from the region of Berat in Albania, and was thus a compatriot of the grand viziers Kemânkeş Kara Mustafâ Paşa (1638–44) and Köprülü Mehmed Paşa (1656–61). His political career was determined by the fortunes of the various grandees with whom he allied himself. Both Evliyâ Çelebi and Na'îmâ refer to his ambitions and his appetite for worldly riches. In early 1651, Kâsım Ağa attempted to become *kethüdâ* in the household of the *valide* Kösem Mâhpeyker, the mother of Murâd IV and İbrâhîm, and the grandmother of Mehmed IV. He finally managed to obtain this position only under her

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71 Nayır, *Sultan Ahmed külliyesi*, pp. 42–4; Crane, *Risâle*, pp. 10–11 after TSM Archives D. 205 and D. 4411.
72 Crane, *Risâle*, p. 43.
73 Semavi Eyice, 'Mimar Kasım Hakkında', *Belleten* 43 (1979), 767–808.

successor, Hadîce Turhan, at the same time intriguing to get his fellow Albanian Köprülü Mehmed appointed grand vizier. In this he also succeeded; yet after Köprülü's appointment Kâsım was no longer heard of, and not even the date of his death is known.

Given his concern with palace intrigues and also the lack of patronage, Kâsım did not have much opportunity to show his engineering or artistic skills – if any. Despite the destructive fires of 1633 and 1640, and an earthquake in 1648, construction and development in the historic peninsula languished. Exceptionally, Grand Vizier Kara Mustafâ Paşâ, one of Kâsım's many allies, sponsored a complex at Çarşıkapı (1641), while Kösem Sultân's khans remained the only examples of royal patronage in the central city.

However, there was some activity on a hilltop over Üsküdar, where Kösem commissioned the Çinili complex, a mosque, theological and elementary schools, twin baths and fountains. The mosque, completed in 1640, became famous for its good-quality Kütahya tiles, usually mistaken for Iznik manufactures: while the designs were praiseworthy, the colour scheme had been reduced to blues and greys.[74] All these features were strictly conventional. Shortly before her death in 1650, the young sultan's grandmother also ordered the building of the Valide Hanı, composed of two adjoining structures in the busy commercial centre of Eminönü, in order to create sources of income for the Çinili complex. In none of these can Kâsım's hand be detected.

Within the Topkapı Palace Murâd IV's contributions were significant. An elegant pavilion commemorated the conquest of Revân (Erivan, 1635–6), and a second one, equally sumptuous, was put up to celebrate the reconquest of Baghdad (1638–9). These kiosks were built by Hasan Ağa, thus confirming the impression that important commissions were not entrusted to Kâsım Ağa, the political appointee.

Both the Revân and Baghdad kiosks are cruciform in plan and possess central domes; they are surrounded by columned porticoes with broad eaves. As to the decoration, it consists partly of reused tiles from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and partly of newly commissioned items. Window-shutters and cupboard doors show inlaid work of good quality, and so do the stained-glass windows of the upper rows. Both kiosks, commanding a superb view of both the Bosporus and the Golden Horn, are faced with marble and tiles. Split marble panelling, a technique which involves the arrangement of symmetrical

74 Şerare Yetkin, *Kütahya dışındaki Kütahya çinileri ile süslü eserler* (Kütahya and Istanbul, 1981–2), pp. 83–110.

patterns out of thinly cut slabs, as well as other revetments in marble and porphyry, distinguish the Revân Köşkü. On the other hand, the portico of the Baghdad kiosk shows panelling in the Mamluk style of Cairo – why this model was selected remains unknown to the present day.

In addition, unprecedented care was given to the villages on the shores of the Bosporus, which since the 1620s were being threatened by Cossack raids. Close to the northern end the fortresses of Kavakhisar, Rumelikavağı and Anadolukavağı were constructed, and the number of waterfront mansions and gardens continued to grow.

Changing modes of legitimisation

Murad IV, although victorious and daring, did not embark on a monumental mosque-building project to leave his personal and dynastic mark on the cityscape. An explanation lies in the major economic setbacks marking the years after 1617. Financial stringency was further increased by the special payments that needed to be made to the soldiers at the enthronement of every new sultan; after the death of Ahmed I, these fell due four times within a very short period.[75] Possibly the 'fundamentalist' movement of the Kâdîzâdelis, with whom Murâd had allied himself in a curious way, also had an impact: these people professed contempt for worldly display, and their opinion may have discouraged the sultan from taking a more active role as a builder. Moreover, Murâd IV had never campaigned against the 'infidels', and it may have seemed doubtful whether the booty gained from fellow Muslims was appropriate for establishing a new pious foundation.

Apart from Murâd IV, seventeenth-century sultans were disinclined to risk their legitimacy by acting as commanders of campaigns whose outcomes could no longer be predicted with any confidence. With direct military leadership devolving more and more upon the grand viziers, these stay-at-home – or, at best, infrequently campaigning – sultans were not in a position to build imperial mosque complexes. By contrast, the palace kept growing, with each sultan contributing a pavilion or loggia of his own to symbolise his sovereignty and commemorate his name. But this was a relatively private affair, visible only to those privileged enough to be admitted to the restricted world of the Topkapı Palace. In the reign of İbrâhîm, the circumcision pavilion was given a new and prominent façade by mixing new and old tiles, including items from the privy chamber of Süleymân I. At the same time a marble terrace (*sofa-ı hümâyûn*)

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75 Nicolas Vatin and Gilles Veinstein, *Le Serail ebranlé: essai sur les morts, dépositions et avènements des sultans ottomans, XIVe–XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2003).

with an ornamental pool and fountain and the flimsy but sumptuous İftâriye kiosk were built (1641).

Simultaneously, sultans became concerned with the legitimisation of their rule through messages of dynastic durability. This must have been because many seventeenth-century sultans were very young when enthroned, and in some instances even mentally disturbed. Thus they did not possess the authority enjoyed by their sixteenth-century predecessors. At the same time, the rules of succession changed, with the oldest male member of the dynasty acceding to the throne; but for decades this process was anything but clear-cut. Perhaps because they were conscious of the fragility of the royal line, Ahmed I, ʿOsmân II and Murâd IV all visited Bursa to pray at the tombs of the early Ottoman sultans; Ahmed I also went to Gelibolu and paid his respects to the remains of Süleymân Şah and other fighters believed to have led the early Ottoman expansion into the Balkans. These novel customs indicate that in troubled times the sultans reassociated themselves with their illustrious and long-deceased ancestors, thereby demonstrating the continuity and legitimacy of the dynasty.

In mid-century the young Mehmed IV was removed to Edirne to avoid the capital's military rebellions and the food scarcities due to the Venetian–Ottoman war over Crete. Entrusted with extraordinary powers, the old grand vizier may also have wished to render the sultan inaccessible to rival factions. Edirne functioned as the de facto seat of government for nearly fifty years, although Istanbul remained the official capital. Like his predecessors Mehmed IV also visited the tombs of early Ottoman warriors in Gelibolu, at the same time profiting from the victories of his Köprülü grand viziers to commission a record of his reign (*vekâyîʿnâme*) as well as a book of festivals (*sûrnâme*) and an illustrated genealogy (*silsilenâme*). Thus rather than imposing mosques, it was ceremonies and an occasional patronage of manuscripts which now were expected to convey messages about the enduring power of the House of ʿOsmân.

From Eminönü to the Dardanelles: the sultans' mothers as patrons of architecture

In 1661 Hadîce Turhan Sultân, the mother of Mehmed IV, resumed work at Safiye Sultân's derelict mosque, after a fire had cleared the Jewish settlement which had in the meantime re-established itself in the area. This structure, the only imperial project dating from the reign of Mehmed IV, was completed within just two years. We do not know how much Mustafâ Ağa, the architect in charge, actually contributed to the project, and to what extent he reused

the plans of his predecessors. But he carried the ultimate responsibility for an interior dominated by a central dome flanked on the south–north axis by half-domes, similar to the arrangement of Sinân's Şehzâde mosque. As the half-domes were given the same diameter as the main dome, there was much less emphasis on the central space than in the Şehzâde mosque. Even so, given the height of the highest dome, a pyramidal silhouette was achieved, which provides a striking accent on the Istanbul waterfront.

However, the most innovative part of the vast complex and one of the most exquisite examples of Ottoman secular architecture is the royal pavilion, built over a high and deep arch abutting the mosque. It has a separate entrance and provides access to the spacious royal loggia (*hünkâr mahfili*) which is more enclosed than similar spaces in earlier mosques. Decorated with tiles, it was clearly meant to serve the sultan's mother. Dependencies include a shop-lined passage, the still-popular Mısır Çarşısı; in the mausoleum also forming part of the complex, five sultans and numerous other members of the royal family came to be buried.

At about the same time a disastrous fire at the harem of the Topkapı Palace necessitated major reconstruction: between 1665 and 1668, three courtyards along with numerous chambers were decorated with tiles in a novel colour scheme, featuring floral designs, bouquets in vases, cypress tress and verses from the Qur'an. The twin pavilions, also known as the princes' apartments, were also decorated in 1666, and epitomise the arts of the seventeenth century. Religious verses on tiles in a blue-and-white design form a band between the two tiers of windows, while inside the lower window-niches there are gilt verse inscriptions incised in marble, praising Mehmed IV and wishing him a long and fortunate reign. Rebuilding and restoration at the imperial palace was apparently due to Merzifonlu Kara Mustafâ Paşa, who in the 1660s served as a deputy to the current grand vizier.

The settlement of the court in Edirne did not generate much architectural activity. Evliyâ mentions a few palatial mansions; that of Musâhib Mustafâ Paşa seems to have surpassed even those of the grand viziers. (Re)construction work at the royal palace did not entail a single major project. Like its Istanbul counterpart, this complex grew in an organic, agglutinative way. Shortly after Mehmed IV's move to Edirne, a tower of justice was constructed according to the Istanbul model. In 1665, the imperial council hall and the audience hall were rebuilt and redecorated.[76] We can safely assume that the latter two

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76 F. Çetin Derin (ed.), 'Abdurrahman Abdi Paşa *Vekâyi'nâmesi (1648–1682)*', Ph.D. thesis, Istanbul University (n.d.), pp. 101, 158–9.

buildings, destroyed along with the remainder of the complex, resembled the twin pavilions in the Topkapı Palace.

Non-royal foundations and the Köprülüs as particular patrons of architecture

Building new mosques may have been less popular among seventeenth-century founders of public charities because the capital already contained so many of these structures. Thus when complexes of pious foundations were built after 1600, the size of the mosques was often reduced or they were even omitted altogether; this trend was to continue after 1700. In some instances the theological school came to function as the centrepiece of a group of smaller buildings, including the tomb of the benefactor. In the Kuyucu Murâd Paşa complex, the *medrese*, a *sebîl*, a mausoleum and shops were even joined into a single building. However, by the second quarter of the century, in the complexes of Bayrâm Paşa (1634) and Kemânkeş Kara Mustafâ Paşa (1642; no longer extant) the unified structure was once again abandoned, and the builders reverted to earlier models.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman elite came to consist of a limited group of families whose members reserved for themselves positions within one or another branch of the palace service or government bureaucracy.[77] This was a significant change from the conditions prevailing in the sixteenth century, when government service had involved much greater dependence on the sultan. Shifts in careers and fortunes notwithstanding, these families were now able to retain many of their privileges over generations. A significant example of this tendency was the history of the Köprülüs, who in the latter part of the seventeenth century produced six grand viziers, all significant patrons of architecture.

In Istanbul the complexes of this dynasty of viziers were small when taken individually, but highly visible when viewed as a group. Mehmed Paşa, the first to become grand vizier, had adopted the little town of Köprü/Vezirköprü near Amasya as his home, and married the daughter of a local dignitary. A major fire that had destroyed many buildings on the capital's prestigious artery of Divanyolu permitted the grand vizier to establish a complex at Çemberlitaş in 1661, just before his death. Originally it included a public bath, a theological school with an attendant mosque (*medrese-mescid*), a fountain and a dispenser of drinking water, in addition to the founder's tomb; the complex was serviced

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77 Rifaʿat Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991), p. 191; Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600–1800)* (Minneapolis, 1988), pp. 56–60.

by a number of shops. According to Mehmed Paşa's will his son Fâzıl Ahmed, grand vizier from 1661 to 1676, added on a khan and the Köprülü library, a novelty in Ottoman architecture because it was free-standing. Kara Mustafâ Paşa, a relative by marriage and grand vizier in 1676–83, commissioned a further complex on the Divanyolu (1690), completed only after his execution following the Vienna tragedy. Mehmed Paşa's second son, Fâzıl Mustafâ, grand vizier 1689–91, had completed the endowment of the Köprülü library in 1678, while Hüseyin Köprülü Paşa (1697–1702) built another complex close by, in the busy district of Saraçhanebaşı. Every one of these Köprülü complexes contained a theological school with attendant mosque, featuring an octagonal plan and a single dome. As to the porticoes that typically formed the entrances to the main buildings, they imparted a family resemblance to these different complexes.

When building in the provinces the Köprülüs did not necessarily adopt the imperial canon of their time, but felt free to mix and match: Fâzıl Ahmed Paşa's *medrese* at Vezirköprü, not part of a complex but rather a free-standing structure, was built according to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century models. Kara Mustafâ Paşa's *medrese* at İncesu (Kayseri) also deviated considerably from the plans then favoured at the centre. Furthermore, it was not covered in lead, as was typical of 'Ottoman' architectural style, but rather in masonry.[78] The same grand vizier's mosque at Merzifon (1667) and that which he commissioned in the village of his birth both have rectangular plans recalling fifteenth-century structures. In other instances the *medrese-mescid* scheme known from contemporary Istanbul recurred in the provincial complexes commissioned by members of the Köprülü family and also by lesser statesmen. Thus Köprülü Mehmed Paşa's mosque at Safranbolu (Kastamonu) and Kara Mustafâ Paşa's foundation at İncesu (Kayseri) had square ground plans with single cupolas, while tromps figured as transitional elements between walls and domes; in conformity with metropolitan usage, the main buildings were preceded by porticoes.[79]

Provincial building projects also included covered markets, urban khans and caravanserais in the countryside.[80] Architectural patronage in the capital and in the provinces was often undertaken by the same people. Thus once again members of the Köprülü family financed major examples of commercial architecture. In addition to Fâzıl Ahmed Paşa's Vezir Hânı in Istanbul,

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78 Aptullah Kuran, 'Orta Anadolu'da klasik Osmanlı çağının sonlarında yapılan iki külliye', *Vakıflar Dergisi* 9 (1979), 229–49.

79 Metin Sözen (ed.), *Türk mimarisinin gelişimi ve Mimar Sinan* (Istanbul, 1975), p. 261.

80 Ibid., pp. 271–9.

they commissioned the Köprülü Hân at Gümüşhacıköy (near Amasya), Kara Mustafâ Paşa's Taş Hân in Merzifon and the latter's caravanserais at İncesu and Vezirköprü; all these structures, while solidly built, were relatively modest and attuned to practical needs. Moreover, the Köprülü family also sponsored buildings in Crete, for whose conquest two of its members had been responsible: in Candia (Heraklion), the citadel, fountains, streets and squares were all given an Ottoman appearance due to the family's patronage.[81]

Ottomanisation: an ongoing practice

The Ottoman building programme in Crete was imposed on preceding Venetian structures: thus the former governor's palace in Candia became the seat of the grand vizier Köprülü Fâzıl Ahmed Paşa while he resided in Crete, and the loggia, once a meeting place for the island's nobility, was turned into the office of the *defterdâr* Ahmed Paşa. Furthermore, the Franciscan monastery church in Candia and the San Marco Basilica in the Fortezza of Rethymnon, both occupying the most prominent locales in the two cities in question, were converted into royal mosques. Situated on the highest hilltops, their minarets were visible from a distance, impressing the Ottoman presence upon travellers arriving by land and by sea.[82]

A variety of Ottoman dignitaries acted as sponsors to the new mosques; these included the mother of the sultan (*vâlide*), the conqueror of the city in question, as well as the commanders of the janissaries and other military corps. Yet the sultan was not represented as prominently as he would have been in conquered towns of the sixteenth century; thus the patronage of these new institutions indicated the shifts in power that had intervened within the Ottoman elite, with the members of vizier and pasha households gaining special prominence.[83] Despite major shifts in the power structure of both the capital and the provinces, accompanied by a considerable degree of infighting over the distribution of revenues, the Ottoman elite thus continued to appropriate its new conquests by architectural means. In addition, these socio-religious complexes served to acculturate a part of the local population and, in the long run, turn them into Ottomans.

Likewise, in the newly conquered city of Kam'janec/Kamaniçe in Podolia (1672), immediately after Mehmed IV's victorious entry to celebrate Friday

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81 Silahdar, *Silahdar tarihi*, vol. I, pp. 530–51.
82 Irene Bierman, 'The Ottomanization of Crete', in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, ed. Irene A. Bierman, Rifaʿat A. Abou-El-Haj and Donald Preziosi (New York, 1991), pp. 53–75, at pp. 58–9.
83 Ibid., p. 62.

prayers in the former Catholic cathedral, seven more churches were converted into mosques.[84] They were dedicated to the sultan, the latter's mother, the grand vizier Köprülü Fâzıl Ahmed Paşa, the second vizier and royal son-in-law Musahib Mustafâ, the third vizier Kara Mustafâ and the sultan's favourite preacher, Vânî Mehmed Efendi. All holy images and bells were removed, the corpses of the Christians buried in the churchyards were carried out, minarets were added and all the grandees were asked to create their pious foundations. In the following years two new mosques were also built. Religious establishments and public and private *vakıf*s played an important role in the – albeit temporary – Ottomanisation of the city; this topic still awaits further exploration.

In the seventeenth century a new kind of patronage emerged that made its first appearance in the provinces. In Aleppo the Khân al-Wazîr, built between 1678 and 1682, exemplified local building traditions and tastes. But it was the residential architecture of the rich that most visibly displayed the new aesthetics. In the Christian suburb of Aleppo known as Jadaydah some of Aleppo's finest seventeenth- and eighteenth-century houses flourished due to the patronage of a rising bourgeoisie. A magnificent example was the house of İsa b. Butrus, a broker. Built and decorated in 1600–3 according to a scheme in which the colour red predominated, its main room included inscriptions with texts from the Psalms and painted scenes from the Old and New Testaments, in addition to remarkable mythical creatures such as dragons, phoenix and qilin.[85] The artist Halab Shah b. İsa immortalised his name on the cornice. He was familiar with the late sixteenth-century *sâz* style, which he adapted with consummate skill and refinement, and he was also conversant with the iconography of Ottoman and Safavid court miniature.

Ahmed III and reinscription of the court in Istanbul

On ascending the throne in 1703, Ahmed III had been obliged to return to Istanbul along with his court, and was keen to add a room to the Topkapı Palace that would bear his name. Built in 1705, the walls of the new privy chamber in which the sultan may have taken his meals were decorated with lacquered wooden panels of flower vases and fruit bowls. The veneered woodwork, known as Edirnekârî, seems to have originated during the long sojourn of Mehmed IV in Edirne, and was from there brought to the capital. It diverges

84 Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia (ca. 1681): Defter-i mufassal-ı eyalet-i Kamaniçe* (Cambridge, MA, 2004), vol. I, pp. 51–7.
85 Julia Gonnella, *Ein christlich-orientalisches Wohnhaus aus dem 17. Jh. aus Aleppo (Syrien): Das 'Aleppo Zimmer' im Museum für Islamische Kunst* (Mainz, 1996).

from the earlier Syrian wall panelling both in its pallid hues and in artistic style. Naturalism was apparent in the depiction of fruits and flowers, a feature which has sometimes been interpreted as an incipient Westernisation. But it makes more sense to remember that the court painters of Ahmed III had previously worked in the Balkan metropolis of Edirne. The lacquer technique developed in the latter part of the seventeenth century was transferred from the decoration of buildings to bookbinding and related crafts, where a strikingly new colour scheme was best represented in the works of ʿAlî Üsküdarî. Similar decorations were copied in the mansions of the great, such as the waterfront palace of the last Köprülü grand vizier Amcazâde Hüseyin Paşa and the mansion of Tâhir Paşa at Mudanya.[86]

At about the same time, the sultan built himself a summer palace on the waterfront of the Topkapı Palace and ordered the restoration of the kiosk adjoining his Tulip Garden, known as the Sofa Kiosk. Ephemeral architecture that had flourished in Edirne during the last quarter of the seventeenth century may have inspired the lightness of this structure, a striking novelty in Ottoman palace architecture. It was obviously intended only for use in fine weather, as the sultan and his entourage were protected from the elements merely by curtains hanging from the eaves. According to the contemporary chronicler Râşid the ruler when putting up these new structures was inspired by Istanbul town houses.[87] Ahmed III quite visibly preferred residential to religious architecture and light wooden constructions to stone and lead (Fig. 19.12).

Waterfront palaces: an answer to a new crisis in legitimisation

A preference for light ephemeral buildings was adopted by members of the sultan's family and high officials as well and, as a result, the early eighteenth century was the golden age of the waterfront palace. Most famous were those located at Kâğıthâne, close to the western tip of the Golden Horn. The reconstruction of Saʿdabâd Palace in 1723 has been interpreted as a conscious effort to imitate European architecture. It is usually assumed that the project was initiated after the return from Versailles in 1721 of the ambassador Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi, who presumably brought with him architectural drawings or books on French gardens and palaces. However, the project at Kâğıthâne predates Mehmed Çelebi's visit to Paris, and whatever the interest aroused by French gardens and pavilions, any novel features inspired by their example were probably included only as an afterthought.

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86 Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Türk evi 3* (Istanbul, 1987), p. 42.
87 Mehmed Râşid, *Tarih-i Râşid*, 6 vols. (Istanbul, 1282/1865), vol. III, p. 307.
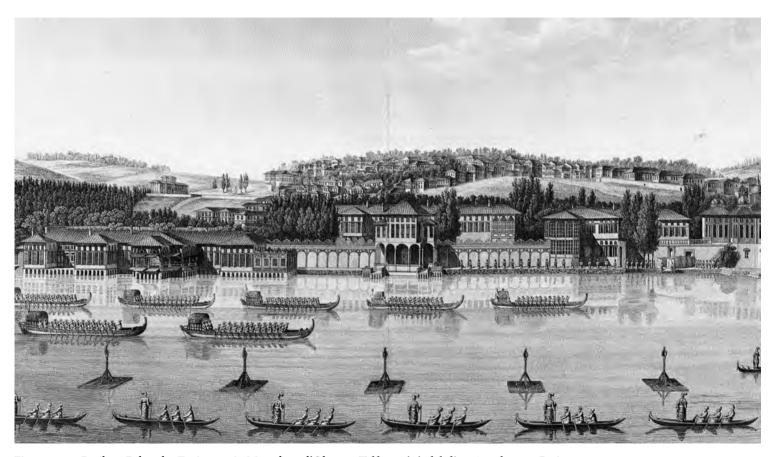
Figure 19.12 Beşiktaş Palace by Espinasse, in Muradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'empire othoman,* Paris, 1824.

Saʿdabâd's principal novelty lay in the fact that the ruler's palace was surrounded by some 200 private kiosks belonging to high dignitaries and placed on the hillocks overlooking the Kağıthâne stream. Landholdings on the latter's banks stretching from Sultâniye to Karaağaç were distributed to dignitaries as freehold property on the condition that they erect buildings in due taste and grandeur. Changes in the Ottoman elite's attitude towards nature were noteworthy in this context as well: for the sultan and his entourage accepted that man could and should modify nature, rather than adjusting to it; in due course even simple habits such as strolling were to change as a result.[88]

In form and function, waterfront palaces epitomised the transformation of the political values of the ruling dynasty whose members had hitherto been hidden in their inaccessible, mysterious palaces. In place of power, piety and charity we now encounter values such as uncontested succession by the dynasty's oldest male, power-sharing, and legitimacy. Certainly the Ottoman state was undergoing a crisis of confidence in the face of serious defeats, while at the same time there emerged a new class of high officials whose members could vie with the royal family in the display of wealth. Therefore it became necessary continually to remind the people of the enduring nature and rich magnificence of the Ottoman dynasty. As the Bosporus replaced the urban street of Divanyolu as the ceremonial axis, the sultans' outings on the water became favoured occasions for pomp and display.[89] As for the women of the ruling family, they too were assigned a significant role. After their marriages to high-ranking dignitaries, the daughters, sisters and nieces of the sultans took up residence in waterfront palaces on the Golden Horn and the Bosporus, thus ensuring that even though they themselves remained invisible, their presence would constantly make itself felt (Fig. 19.13).[90]

Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa as a patron

In 1719 an earthquake, followed by a devastating fire, marked a turning-point in Istanbul's history. Reconstruction coincided with the prolonged tenure of Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa as grand vizier, and targeted practical needs as well as the reinscription of court society in the social and physical space of the capital.

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88 Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Saʿdabad* (Istanbul, 1977).
89 Tülay Artan, 'Architecture as a Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth-Century Bosphorus', Ph.D. thesis, MIT (1989).
90 Tülay Artan, 'Noble Women who Changed the Face of the Bosphorus and the Palaces of the Sultanas', *Biannual Istanbul, '92 Selections* (1992), 87–97.

Figure 19.13 Hadîce Sultân's Defterdarburnu Palace by Antoine-Ignace Melling, in *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des rives du Bosphore*, Paris, 1819.

In 1722–4 the city walls were repaired.[91] Five aqueducts were added to the Kırkçeşme waters, and this permitted the construction of numerous urban fountains. In 1719–20 Leander's Tower, at this time a major symbol of the city, was rebuilt. In the historic peninsula, Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa built commercial structures such as the Çuhacı Hân. Among public buildings, the cannon foundry (Tophâne-i 'Âmire, 1719), the armoury (Silâhhâne-i 'Âmire, 1726–7) and the mint (Darphâne-i 'Âmire, 1726–7) all received new accommodations. Dignitaries were encouraged to participate in the restoration of public edifices, and in 1720 they also featured in a major festivity meant to serve as a theatre of collective rule – since Ahmed III had moved from Edirne to Istanbul, a new social contract between the sultan and the elite was evidently being negotiated.

However, both financial limitations and the decline of certain crucial industries made it difficult to pursue extensive construction programmes. Marble was brought in from the Marmara Island, but as the number of workers in the capital did not suffice, stone-cutters and carpenters needed to be called in from elsewhere. At times building materials from older constructions were reused, thus stone and lead for the library of Ahmed III were taken from the kiosk that once had stood in its place, and sixteenth-century tiles were also recycled. A scarcity of materials must have also have led to some changes in building traditions. Plasterwork and painted decorations replaced tile revetments as the Iznik workshops had stopped production, and the commands of Ahmed III were powerless to resuscitate them. Some tiles were secured from Kütahya, whose potteries in 1718–19 produced one of their most important commissions, the tiles for the Cathedral of St James in Jerusalem.[92] A fritware workshop was established in Istanbul under the aegis of Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa, but this revival had limited appeal to patrons, and the enterprise did not survive the grand vizier's death in 1730.

Eighteenth-century viziers sponsored the construction of small complexes of religious and charitable structures, of the kind that first appeared in the seventeenth century. Kaptan İbrâhîm Paşa built such a complex in Istanbul-Beyazıd (1708). Çorlulu 'Alî Paşa's ensemble in the immediate vicinity was also established in 1708, and in the very same year another mosque commissioned by Çorlulu was completed on the waterfront, in the proximity of the Arsenal. The irregularity of the sites then available led to asymmetrical layouts which became a characteristic feature of eighteenth-century complexes. In

91 Râşid, *Tarih-i Râşid*, vol. V, p. 160.
92 Julian Raby, '1600 – The Beginning of the End', in *Iznik*, ed. Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby (London, 1989), pp. 273–85, at p. 288.

1720 Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa established a pious foundation in the busy district of Şehzâdebaşı, including a *medrese*, small mosque, library and fountain. A row of shops was added to the complex in 1728–9; these were separated from the street by two rows of porticoes that survived until the nineteenth century, when the area functioned as a fashionable entertainment district. At this time the household of the grand vizier had finally separated from that of the sultan, a development which had begun in the late sixteenth century. To document this new-found independence Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa undertook the construction of a new palace that in the following decades grew into the Sublime Porte.

Like a number of his recent predecessors, Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa possessed revenue sources in Izmir. The viziers' patronage of commercial and industrial architecture in this busy port city seems to have motivated the local gentry and notables to emulate them. Innovative decorative motifs were soon to embellish mosques, fountains and gravestones.[93] Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa also undertook a really grand project when he transformed his village of origin into a town, now called Nevşehir.[94] With ordered streets and a long piazza between the market and the mosque this is a rare example of Ottoman town planning. Here too there was no trace of any European impact; rather, the grand vizier seems to have expressed his near-royal ambition to impose his own order upon space. Set on the slope of the citadel hill, the mosque complex contains a school of law cum theology and a library, all of excellent workmanship. The mosque does not at all resemble other provincial mosques of the classical type, but in view of its originality it is also doubtful whether we should call its style 'Anatolian baroque'.[95] Damâd İbrâhîm's great wealth and long tenure of office enabled him to engage in this remarkable feat of architectural patronage.

In certain provinces, particularly eighteenth-century Syria and Egypt, there was considerable building activity as well, particularly in the domestic sector. A great number of impressive private houses were put up, preferably on the shores of lakes, rivers or streams, as in the Cairo suburb of Azbakiyya; however, local building types were relatively unaffected by the changing Ottoman taste.[96] In Aleppo numerous richly decorated houses reflected the continuing

93 Ayda Arel, 'Image architecturale et image urbaine dans une série de bas-reliefs de la région égénne', *Turcica* 18 (1986), 83–101, figs. 1–24.

94 Kemal Anadol, *Nevşehir'de Damat İbrahim Paşa külliyesi* (Istanbul, 1970); İlknur Altuğ, *Nevşehir Damat İbrahim Paşa külliyesi* (Ankara, 1992).

95 Rüçhan Arık, *Batılılaşma dönemi Türk mimarisi örneklerinden Anadolu'da üç ahşap cami* (Ankara, 1973).

96 Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Azbakiyya and its Environs: From Azbak to Isma'il, 1476–1879* (Cairo, 1985).

importance of the city's major trades.[97] Domestic architecture also flourished in other provincial towns such as Hama, Tripoli, Jerusalem and Damascus, and many fine houses still survive in the coastal towns of Syria and Palestine as well as in the mountains of Lebanon. As to their counterparts in Anatolia and the Balkans (Rumeli), that were put up by local notables and the newly rising bourgeoisie, these structures were built out of perishable timber and the surviving examples mostly date from the very end of the eighteenth century.

The 'Age of Elegance': historicism vs. hedonism

In 1719 the library of Ahmed III (Enderun Kütüphanesi) was constructed within just six months. This type of building was without precedent inside the palace precinct, and its very presence indicated that Ahmed III was able to go against courtly tradition by highlighting his personal love for books. Grand Vizier Şehîd ʿAlî Paşa built another library in the centre of the old city, and the sultan himself commissioned a third, integrated into the complex of his grandmother Turhan Vâlide Sultân at Eminönü. Freestanding libraries in the city had been popular ever since the mid-seventeenth century and continued to be so to the end of our period; as examples we might mention the libraries of Mahmûd I (1756) in Fatih, of Defterdâr ʿAtıf Efendi (1741) in the vicinity of the Süleymaniye, of Grand Vizier Râgıb Paşa (1762) in Beyazıd and of Kadıasker Murâd Mollâ (1775) in Çarşamba. Libraries flourished also in the provinces, from Vidin to Midilli, Rhodes, Tire, Akhisar, Kayseri, Sivas, or Antalya. Both at the centre and in the provinces, the small-scale, often autonomous library buildings were easily recognisable by their compact square or rectangular plans, their domes or vaults and their alternating stone-and-brick masonry linked to medieval building traditions. Put together, these features characterised these small or medium-sized structures as rather distinguished edifices with a particular symbolic function; utility was important, but it certainly was not the whole story.

Fountains and chambers from which passers-by were offered a drink of water (*sebîl*) were also favoured by eighteenth-century patrons. The monumental fountain of Sultan Ahmed III (1728), located in close proximity to the Topkapı Palace, was the first of its kind and once again reflected the personal preferences of this ruler: his long poem in honour of water was set in the frieze among foliate and floral designs in low relief, with lavish use of paint and gilding (Fig. 19.14). Eighteenth-century fountains and *sebıls* in Istanbul often replaced

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97 Heghnar Z. Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden, 2004).
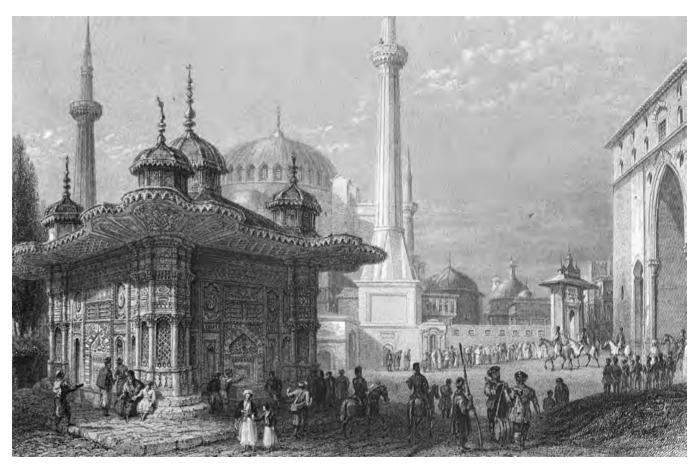
Figure 19.14 Fountain of Sultan Ahmed III and Square of St Sophia by William H. Bartlett, in *The Beauties of the Bosphorus* by Miss [Julia] Pardoe, London, 1838, pp. 62–3.

earlier structures of the same kind, but others were newly built in response to the rising water demand and in connection with recently built waterworks, the latter including aqueducts as well as water towers. Three royal fountains, namely Sâliha Sultân's at Azapkapı, Hekîmoğlu Alî Paşa's at Kabataş, and Mahmûd I's at Tophane, were built in a single year (1732–3). They all displayed a rich and cheerful floral decoration, recalling lacquer-work of the period. However, this water architecture had few parallels in the provinces. Only in late eighteenth-century Cairo were *sebîls*, typically located on the ground floors of primary schools, given remarkable architectural prominence through the patronage of a successful commander by the name of ʿAbd al-Rahmân Kathudâ.[98]

It has too often been assumed that artistic change in the Ottoman realm derived from external causes – in other words, historians have seen this phenomenon purely as a form of 'Westernisation'. Supposedly motifs from French and Italian art were taken up to form what has been called 'Ottoman baroque', meaning a mixture of Ottoman and European elements. Doğan Kuban, who has coined this particular term, has concerned himself with certain formal borrowings observed already in the so-called 'Tulip Age', the period between 1718 and 1730.[99] Yet this view of things is debatable, as changes in other artistic traditions, such as painting, music or literature, were often analogous to those taking place in architecture. Yet in these latter fields, there were as yet few traces of Westernisation.[100]

Ayda Arel, by contrast, has argued that European influence, introduced by way of the minor arts, was in the eighteenth century apparent mainly in the realm of architectural decoration; moreover, art forms adapted from baroque and rococo made their first appearances by mid-century and thus were not due to the patronage of Ahmed III and his grand vizier Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa.[101] Somewhat later 'classical' *muqarnas* were turned into volutes and the decorative shapes known as *rûmî*s mutated into arabesques. The patrons' interest in the adoption of Western forms has generally been overestimated by art historians: the new tendencies were not so much an imitation of European features as an attempt to enrich Ottoman architecture's overused norms and forms by exploring new possibilities; for around 1700, there seems to have

98 Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'The Abd al-Rahmân Katkhudâ Style in 18th Century Cairo', *Annales Islamologiques* 26 (1992), 117–126.
99 Doğan Kuban, *Türk barok mimarisi hakkında bir deneme* (Istanbul, 1954).
100 Rhoads Murphey, 'Westernization in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire: How Far, How Fast?', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999), 116–39.
101 Ayda Arel, *18. yüzyıl İstanbul mimarisinde batılılaşma süreci* (Istanbul, 1975), p. 10.

been a feeling among patrons and artists that the established art forms had exhausted themselves.

Developments leading to the emergence of the so-called Ottoman baroque included the adoption of decorative motifs stressing the third dimension, while earlier forms of decoration had definitely been two-dimensional. In architecture properly speaking, advances towards a novel aesthetic were more restrained but not totally absent; thus in the prominent complex of Hekîmoğlu ʿAlî Paşa in Istanbul (1735), buildings were arranged asymmetrically, and perspective was used to provide surprising vistas. By mid-century the grand complex of the Nuruosmaniye was the first mosque-centred socio-religious complex to show new planning features (1755). Later on, such elements were added to the Topkapı Palace as well. Even so, Arel found it difficult to accept the idea of a conscious stylistic change. Lesser foreign artists and freelance Armenian and Greek architects at work in the Ottoman capital may have been responsible for quite a few decorative details of Western origin; these men were perhaps using motifs from albums of drawings and engravings.

A wealth of socio-religious complexes, or else a decline?

Like his father, Ahmed III founded his one and only socio-religious complex of imperial proportions in the name of his mother, Gülnûş Emetullâh. The Yeni Vâlide complex in Üsküdar (1708–10) resembled earlier structures in that it contained, apart from a mosque, numerous appurtenances including a fountain, *sebîl*, elementary school and soup kitchen as well as a royal lodge. The composition of the façade which highlighted the *sebîl*, fountain and mausoleum was novel. However, even this majestic project could not escape the shortcomings of the age: an attempt was made to include revetments of tiles, but the quality was extremely poor.[102] Perhaps these tiles were the first products of the workshops that had recently been established in the capital, near the land walls at Tekfur Sarayı.

No other eighteenth-century commissions by grand viziers, including those of Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa, can compete in grandeur with the Hekîmoğlu complex. Built in 1735, it is prominently situated on the historic peninsula's seventh hilltop at Kocamustafapaşa, comprising a mosque, a tomb, a library, a *sebîl* and a fountain for ablutions (*şâdırvân*), in addition to several other fountains.[103] Even the most powerful grand viziers of the sixteenth century had not been

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102 Raby, '1600', p. 284.
103 Baha Tanman, *Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa cami'ne ilişkin bazı gözlemler, Aslanapa armağanı* (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 253–80.

allowed to dominate the skyline of the imperial city, the hilltops being reserved for the displays of the sultans. The mosque is impressive by itself and is considered to be a fine, final monument of the old order.[104] It has a classical plan with 'baroque' and 'rococo' decoration. Its tiles, featuring what were at the time considered modern motifs, such as large roses and tulips, came from the Istanbul workshops, a privilege that the sultan shared only with Hekîmoğlu. Moreover, the complex included a royal loggia and an entrance ramp, both of which were distinctly dynastic prerogatives and did not normally occur in mosques founded by viziers. In addition, Hekîmoğlu sponsored other pious foundations in the capital, and, last but not least, there was his mausoleum.

In 1748–55 Mahmûd I and his successor 'Osmân' III patronised the Nuruosmaniye mosque. By this time the Ottoman court had come to appreciate ornate and flamboyant forms. While most of the work had been completed before 'Osmân III acceded to the throne in 1754 the latter rather blatantly named the building after himself, under the pretext that the name could be interpreted as 'Light of the Ottomans'. In the crowded hub of the city, adjacent to one of the entrances of the covered bazaar, monumentality was achieved by raising the mosque and its inner courtyard on a base, to be reached by irregularly placed curved staircases.

It is the inner courtyard, daringly shaped like a horseshoe, the only one of its kind, that deserves special attention. Clearly reminiscent of Western architectural vocabulary, the rounded galleries seem to undulate around the central open space. The mosque itself is crowned by a large dome standing out among the many cupolas of the nearby bazaar and khans. Architectural elements are not disguised behind decorative details, and this by itself is indicative of a novel repertoire.[105]

In the second part of the eighteenth century, during the reign of Mustafâ III, three major projects were completed: the Ayazma complex at Üsküdar (1757–60), a second one known as Laleli and located in Beyazıd (1759–63), and finally the rebuilding of the mosque of Mehmed the Conqueror along with its dependencies. The newly completed Laleli mosque also took a battering in the earthquake of 22 May 1766, but the worst damage was at the Conqueror's mosque, of which only the courtyard and the north door survived.

Built on the Üsküdar hills, the Ayazma mosque is modelled on the Nuruosmaniye, but with a reduced scale and a simpler decorative programme. Though

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104 Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (London, 1981 [1971]), p. 376.
105 Ali Öngül, 'Tarih-i Cami-i Nuruosmanî', *Vakıflar Dergisi* 24 (1994), 127–46; Pia Hochhut, *Die Moschee Nuruosmaniye in Istanbul* (Berlin, 1986).

repeatedly noted for its 'Ottoman baroque' details, the crowded interior lacks decorative shells and foliation, otherwise characteristic of this period. A royal loggia shows that this is the foundation of a sultan. A separate timekeeper's room, a primary school and a public bath are included in the complex dedicated to the memories of the sultan's mother, Mihrişâh Emîne Sultân, and his brother Süleymân. Goodwin has rightly noted that the most interesting development at the Ayazma mosque is the very high gallery for latecomers (*son cemaat yeri*), approached by a circular grand stair.[106]

Even before the architect of the Nuruosmaniye and Laleli mosques had been identified as Simeon (Komyanos/Komnenos) Kalfa, the similarities between the two complexes were noted, particularly with respect to the monumental staircases leading up to the mosques.[107] The plan of the Laleli mosque, on the other hand, is similar to that of its counterpart in Üsküdar. While smaller than the Nuruosmaniye, the materials used and the quality of the interior are richer. Once again the royal lodge, the timekeeper's room, the courtyard and especially the monumental main entrance are the most remarkable elements.

Work on the Conqueror's mosque began in 1767. It was rebuilt on the old foundations, but the plan of the nearby Şehzâde mosque was once again adopted as the model. Nevertheless, rounded windows, debased Ionic column capitals and the royal loggia, approached by a typical eighteenth-century imperial ramp, are all characteristic of the period. Like its contemporary the Zeyneb Sultân mosque (1769), the Fatih foundation in its new guise does not bear any specific European characteristics, but rather exhibits variations on earlier Ottoman themes.[108] When all three imperial projects were under way, Mehmed Tâhir Ağa was the chief architect.[109] We know very little about his origins and personal history.

The legacy of Simeon Kalfa

At the end of the seventeenth century we observe a notable decrease in the number of non-Muslims among imperial architects; while earlier on 40–43 per cent had been Christians, this now dwindled to a mere 5 per cent. In

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106 Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, p. 387.

107 Ibid., p. 388.

108 Maurice Cerasi, 'The Problem Specificity and Subordination to External Influences in Late Eighteenth Century Ottoman Architecture in Four Istanbul Buildings in the Age of Hassa Mi'mar Mehmed Tahir', in *Proceedings of the 11th International Congress of Turkish Art, Utrecht, 23–28 August 1999*, ed. Machiel Kiel, Nico Landman and Hans Theunissen, *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 4 (2001), 1–23.

109 Muzaffer Erdoğan, 'Onsekizinci asır sonlarında bir Türk sanatkarı: hassa başmimarı Mehmed Tahir Ağa: hayatı ve mesleki faaliyetleri', *Tarih Dergisi* 7 (1954), 157–80, 8 (1955), 157–78, 9 (1958), 161–70, 10 (1960), 25–46.

the eighteenth century the number of non-Muslims once again increased.[110] Thus it is not possible to ascribe the changes in architectural style only to the impact of non-Muslim architects or workmen. Furthermore, the latter down to the late 1700s were still Ottomanised in their habits, and their interest in and knowledge of European building traditions remained quite limited. Given the penury of sources, the late eighteenth-century interest of Ottoman mosque architects in decorative masonry and architectural detail reminiscent of Byzantine styles, as reflected in the Zeyneb Sultan (1769) and Şebsefa Kadın (1787) mosques, must remain something of an enigma.[111]

The first prominent non-Muslim architect working on an imperial project in a position of responsibility was a Greek named Simeon Kalfa, who participated in the Nuruosmaniye and Laleli projects.[112] But there were others, even though our information on their activities is often unsatisfactory. One Greek Orthodox member of the official corps of architects has left a wood and papier-mâché model dated 1762, and intended for the Xeropotamou monastery on Mount Athos. It bears the name of the 'Architect Constantinos, architect of the Sultan's Court'; this personage may well have been involved in the design of the Laleli mosque as well.[113]

Certainly the use of architectural models by Ottoman builders is well known, even though only a few examples have survived. However, the catholicon of the Xeropotamou monastery presents a unique opportunity for comparing a model with an extant building. Constructed to scale and featuring gridlines, the model is made of wooden pieces covered with paper that can be easily removed to allow a view of the interior. The construction of the building itself (1762–4) was not supervised by Constantinos, but by a head mason called Chatziconstantis, and this can easily explain the differences between the model and the building as it stands. The church is of the cross-in-square type with side apses characteristic of Mount Athos. The decorations bear close resemblance to those found in mosques of this period, representing the style known as 'Ottoman baroque'. Both the architectural details and the building materials came from the capital as donations from wealthy Phanariotes.

110 Şerafettin Turan, 'Osmanlı teşkilatında hassa mimarları', *AÜ Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1, 1 (1963), 157–202.
111 Cerasi, 'Problem Specificity', 6–7.
112 Mustafa Nuri Paşa, *Netâyicü'l-vukuat III–IV*, ed. Neşet Çağatay (Ankara, 1987), p. 147; Kevork Pamukciyan, 'Nuruosmaniye cami'inin mimarı Simeon Kalfa hakkında', 'Üsküdar'daki Selimiye cami'nin mimarı kimdir?', 'Foti Kalfa'ya dair iki kaynak daha', all in *Zamanlar, mekânlar*, ed. Osman Köker (Istanbul, 2003), pp. 152–4, 155–9 and 160–1, respectively.
113 Miltiades Polyviou, *To Katholiko tis Monis Xiropotamou. Skhediasmos kai kataskevi sti naodomia tou 18 ou aiona* (Athens, 1999).

Another architect who specialised in the (re)-construction of ecclesiastical buildings was Nicolaos Komnenos (1770–1821), who repaired the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem after it had been damaged in a major fire in 1808. Originally from Mytilene/Midilli, Nicolaos Komnenos had established himself in Istanbul, where he restored several churches before receiving the prestigious Jerusalem commission. Possibly the title *basilikos* that he bore in an inscription referred to his membership in the sultan's corps of architects; his work in Jerusalem demonstrated his familiarity with the decorative repertoire of 'Ottoman baroque'.[114] Thus the churches built or rebuilt both in the capital and in the provinces during this period should be included within the corpus of structures displaying the stylistic innovations typical of late eighteenth-century Ottoman architecture.

Around 1800: the centre and the provinces

Because of financial difficulties in the reign of 'Abdülhâmid I (r. 1774–89), the ruling elite were encouraged to help in the construction and repair of fortresses and other public structures. This was something of a novelty, for down to the mid-eighteenth century military architecture such as fortresses or city walls had almost never been entrusted to individuals; the *vâlide* Turhan Sultân who fortified the Dardanelles must count as the exception proving the rule.[115] But in 1784 Grand Admiral Cezâyirli Hasan Paşa commissioned the new navy barracks (Kalyoncu Kışlası) in Kasımpaşa and paid for the construction out of his personal funds. At the same time, the sultan's entourage was considerably enlarged, and the delegation of architectural enterprise made an incorporation of new courtiers possible despite mounting military and political pressures. On the Anatolian shore, the Beylerbeyi mosque, with its courtyard situated on the waterfront and its veranda for latecomers a two-storey kiosk (1778), exemplified the new social atmosphere, in which the sultan was expected to meet a larger number of people.[116]

'Abdülhâmid I's reign was relatively poor in terms of architectural patronage, although he did build more than survives to the present day, and 'Ottoman baroque' really came into its own during this period. In the Topkapı Palace, the sultan ordered the construction of several chambers, whose decoration is

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114 Martin Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* (Phoenix, Mill, Thrupp and Stroud, 1999), p. 103.

115 Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, 'The Ottoman Fortresses of Seddülbahir and Kumkale', in *Aptullah Kuran için yazılar: Essays in Honour of Aptullah Kuran*, ed. Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, Lucienne Thys-Şenocak and Günhan Danişman (Istanbul, 1999), pp. 311–23.

116 Kevork Pamukciyan, 'Hassa mimarı Edirneli Agop Kalfa', in *Zamanlar, mekânlar*, ed. Osman Köker (Istanbul, 2003), pp. 146–8.

unfortunately difficult to date. By contrast, his successor, Selîm III (r. 1789–1807), was much more ambitious. Apart from rebuilding the Eyüp mosque (1798–1800), the reforming sultan commissioned one of his own on the hills of Üsküdar, the Selimiye (1804), close to the enormous barracks which also bear his name. This mosque should be regarded as part of the new movement in Ottoman architecture that had begun with the Nuruosmaniye.[117] A link to this latter building may also be due to family connections, for the architect, Foti Kalfa, was the son of Simeon Kalfa who had worked on the Nuruosmaniye; the two men claimed descent from the imperial Byzantine Komnenos dynasty, with what justification remains unclear.[118] Furthermore, Selîm and his sisters employed Antoine-Ignace Melling for a number of projects, including the manufacture of objets d'art and architectural enterprises. Apart from designing Hadîce's royal villa at Defterdarburnu, other palaces of the princesses were recorded by Melling in fine drawings. These included Beyhân's mansion at Akıntıburnu and Hibetullâh's at the far end of the Golden Horn. Melling also drew the sultan's Beşiktaş Palace, where he undertook rebuilding and renovations.[119]

Late eighteenth-century residential architecture: historicism in the provinces

Certain provincial building projects shared features well-known from imperial architecture; however, since the magnates sponsoring them have left no written documentation, we continue to puzzle over the meanings that may have been attached to such parallelisms. Thus in Aydın the Cihânoğlu mosque (1756) is approached by a grand staircase which resembles that adorning the Ayazma mosque in Üsküdar, begun a year later. The Cihânoğlu mosque is set obliquely on an artificial platform raised above low arcades with pointed arches. The ablutions fountain forms a decagon decorated with ten panels. The interior of the mosque is rather overwhelmed by stucco decoration with vegetal motifs and arabesques.

Provincial styles of the late eighteenth century allowed for an interest in local forms that had often preceded the 'classical' architecture that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century patrons had imposed. This predilection has been well

117 Arel, *Batılılaşma süreci*; Pamukciyan, 'Üsküdar'daki Selimiye cami'inin mimarı kimdir?'.
118 Pamukciyan, 'Foti Kalfa'ya dair iki kaynak daha'.
119 MM Treuttel and Würtz (eds.), *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des rives du Bosphore: d'après les dessins de M Melling, architecte de l'Empereur Selim III, et dessinateur de la Sultane Hadidge sa sœur* (Paris, 1819).

studied in the case of Egypt, but it existed elsewhere as well.[120] In Aydın this was a rather novel style marked with baroque and rococo embellishments of the so-called Italian school, but mixed with rather anachronistic Gothic forms, whose source remains completely unknown. Attributing this hybrid style to Greeks who had fled to western Anatolia before and after the Morean revolt of 1770, Arel has characterised this mixture as a 'family style' of the Cihânoğlu, whose mosques and mansions show remarkable similarities.[121] The fortified estates or manors of eighteenth-century western Asia Minor seem to be linked to indigenous medieval walled-in residential complexes featuring 'towers', which in unsettled times may have functioned as keeps or donjons. Such mansions were apparently adopted by the Cihânoğulları to document their local roots, while reserving the more official canon for their mosques.[122] By contrast the late eighteenth-century İshak Paşa Sarayı, on the Iranian border, harked back to medieval building traditions ingeniously combined with features derived from the Topkapı Palace.[123]

In the Ottoman architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the survival of established conventions was thus accompanied by the development of new elements and combinations of motifs. It makes sense to highlight the creativity of late Ottoman builders and patrons, who invented or imported architectural features whenever they felt that the 'classical tradition' had exhausted itself. This richness and complexity is not well described by the conventional catchall categories of Westernisation and decline; instead, we need to examine written texts to track down the often elusive motivations of patrons and architects.

120 Cerasi, 'Problem Specificity'.
121 Ayda Arel, 'Aydın ve yöresinde bir âyân ailesi ve mimarlık: Cihanoğulları', in *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e: problemler, araştırmalar, tartışmalar. I. uluslararası tarih kongresi 24–26 Mayıs 1993 (Ankara)* (Istanbul, 1998), p. 187.
122 Ayda Arel, '18. ve 19. yüzyıl Ege dünyasında ikonografik izlek ve kalıplar', in *Sanat tarihinde ikonografik araştırmalar: Güner İnal'a armağan* (Ankara, 1993), pp. 21–9, figs. 1–9.
123 Mahmut Akok, 'Ağrı-Doğubeyazıd'da İshak Paşa Sarayı rölöve ve mimarisi', *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi* 10, 2 (1961), 30–48; Y. Bingöl, *İshak Paşa Sarayı* (Istanbul, 1998).

Ottoman literature

HATICE AYNUR

Introduction

Productive writers and poets were numerous during this period; and many texts, literary approaches, forms and genres could rightfully be discussed. However, due to limits of space, we will here present merely a small selection.[1] As poetry was the literary expression par excellence in the Ottoman world, we will largely limit ourselves to poems. A contemporary Bosnian author by the name of Alâeddîn Sâbit (d. 1714) was much aware of the great popularity of poetry when he claimed that there was a poet under every paving stone.[2] We will pay only passing attention to prose, as it was less practised as an art form, and has been little studied by present-day scholars. The task of the literary historian becomes even more difficult because the history and cultural history of this period are still very little known.

In comparison with both the 1500s and the 1800s the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been much neglected.[3] It is generally assumed that the sixteenth century marks a high point in Ottoman literary life: at this time authors writing Turkish in both prose and verse stopped being simple imitators of their Iranian masters. As for the seventeenth century, we often read that apart from one or two gifted writers, the earlier level was not maintained. In the eighteenth century too we supposedly encounter a widespread dissolution or degeneration of the established literary forms, a process that announced the profound changes in mentality, form, genre

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1 For general information on Ottoman poets and writers, their works as well as the relevant secondary literature, see Agâh Sırrı Levend, *Türk edebiyatı tarihi*, vol. I: *Giriş*, 2nd edn (Ankara, 1973); Andreas Tietze and Georg Hazai, *Turkologischer Anzeiger* (Vienna and Budapest, 1975–); Hatice Aynur, *Üniversitelerde Eski Türk edebiyatı çalışmaları: tezler, yayınlar, haberler* (Istanbul, 1991–).

2 Bosnalı Alaeddin Sabit, *Divan*, ed. Turgut Karacan (Sivas, 1991), p. 306.

3 This relative neglect of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is apparent from the anthology superbly edited by Ahmet Atilla Şentürk: only twelve out of sixty-eight authors selected flourished during the period in question: *Osmanlı şiiri antolojisi* (Istanbul, 1999).

and topic that were to characterise Ottoman literature in the nineteenth century.

By comparison with earlier and later periods, Ottoman literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries presents some peculiar problems. To take but one example, we need to ask ourselves how literary intentions that in earlier times had been expressed by the frequent composition of poems of the *mesnevî* genre were translated into reality in our period. For by now few poems of this kind were being written, and those that did see the light of day differed substantially from their predecessors in terms of topic; as yet the fate of the *mesnevî* remains unstudied and the relevant problems unresolved.

At first glance, Ottoman literature may appear homogeneous; but once we look more closely, we encounter authors, works and topics that differ very much among themselves. Even completely contradictory positions and – obviously – people who detest one another are by no means rare. Change over time is certainly not absent, and cannot be described merely as 'decay and dissolution'. Thus from the seventeenth century onwards many writers show a tendency to refer to the environments in which they themselves lived, instead of taking these references largely from their literary models; thus it has been said that Turkish poems 'struck roots' in the Ottoman lands. Between 1617 and 1627 Nev'îzâde 'Atâyî wrote five *mesnevî*s, known as the *Hamse-i 'Atâyî*, which, in a manner not seen in previous examples of the genre, evoke the city of Istanbul and its inhabitants. On the other hand, the question of authorial personality is now more prominent. Thus we might expect Nedîm (d. 1730) and Levnî (d. 1732), who both maintained close contact with the palace during the reign of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30), to write poems in a similar vein. But in reality the words and forms that they favour, the symbols they refer to and the people about whom they write are all derived from quite different sources. To what extent may these variations be due to the authors' differing backgrounds and educations? To what extent may the fact that Levnî was a trained miniaturist, and thus had workshop experience, account for the special character of his poetry?

Ottoman Turkish as a language

Especially during the sixteenth century, one of the most important and striking changes experienced by the Turkish language involved the massive entry of Arabic and Persian words. At the time this certainly was considered an

enriching addition, even if today we may see this phenomenon in rather a different light.[4]

An interesting indicator of the change of linguistic taste among educated seventeenth-century Ottomans is the recasting of older texts by the writer Cevrî (d. 1654–5).[5] Cevrî had evidently studied in a school training people in Islamic law and theology (*medrese*), but it is less clear whether he ever entered state service.[6] He certainly made a living by his beautiful calligraphy, which was greatly esteemed by high-ranking Ottomans. Over a century after the writer's death, Selim III presented a *mesnevî* in Cevrî's handwriting to the poet Şeyh Gâlib, who expressed his joy and gratitude in a special *kasîde*.[7] Cevrî rewrote the work known as *Şemsiyye* by Yazıcı Selâhaddîn, dating from 1408, under the new title of *Melhame*; he also revised the *Selîmnâme* of Bitlisli Şükrî, first composed in 1521, in the latter case retaining the original title. In both instances Cevrî explained his procedure: the language of these works being 'ancient Turkish', everybody had long desired such a recasting, and therefore he had undertaken the job. Turkish words were replaced by their Persian or Arabic counterparts, the titles rendered entirely in Persian and the text was both abridged and extended. Evidently Cevrî felt that his predecessors' language was old-fashioned, and he substituted words of Arabic and Persian provenance that he had internalised and that had become common currency among the literati. His rewriting of the *Selîmnâme* in 1627 was encouraged or even commissioned by Köse 'Alî Paşa, who had felt that the words were true but that there was no spirit to the original verse, and that it was therefore

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4 Two authors, one from the sixteenth and one from the nineteenth century, both exemplify this point of view. In a text written in 1592, Gelibolulu Mustafâ 'Âlî had the following to say about the Turkish language: 'In fact the astonishing language current in the state of Rum, composed of four languages [West Turkish, Çağatay, Arabic, and Persian], is a pure gilded tongue which, in the speech of the literati, seems more difficult than any of these . . . and, in the view of those eloquent in Turkish, the use of simple Turkish should be forbidden': Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafâ 'Âlî, 1541–1600* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 253–4.

For the nineteenth century we will quote the opinion of Ziyâ Paşa, statesman, intellectual and literary figure (1825–80): 'Certainly Turkish is an incomparable language, but Persian has doubled its beauty, and the two languages are in perfect harmony. Two seas of knowledge and mystical inspiration have come together and have formed an even larger sea. In addition earlier on, Persian had been perfected by Arabic, so that now the three seas together formed an ocean; and this ocean was called the Ottoman language': Ziyâ Paşa, *Harâbât* (Istanbul, 1291/1874), vol. I, pp. 8–9 (Mukaddime, translation by the author).

5 Hüseyin Ayan, *Cevrî: hayâtı, edebî kişiliği, eserleri ve divanının tenkidli metni* (Erzurum, 1981).

6 Nuran (Üzer) Altuner, 'Safâyî ve tezkiresi', Ph.D. thesis, Istanbul University (1989), p. 140.

7 Sedit Yüksel, *Şeyh Galip: eserlerinin dil ve sanat değeri* (Ankara, 1980), p. 20.

impossible to derive any pleasure or instruction from the conquests described therein.[8]

It would, however, be mistaken to assume that all authors of the time covered here agreed with Cevrî; on the contrary, in the early eighteenth century we observe a renewed value being placed on spoken, everyday Turkish. Thus ʿOsmânzâde Tâʾib (d. 1724) took it upon himself to simplify the language of Gelibolulu Mustafâ ʿÂlî's *Mahâsinü'l-âdâb* (1596); in this case, the sultan himself had asked for such a recasting. In a *kasîde* introducing his work, Tâʾib defended his method, explaining that he disliked the language of this book, although he otherwise much admired the older writer. In Tâʾib's view, ʿÂlî with advancing years had become overly loquacious, favouring the repetition of words and rhyming prose, both of which made the work unnecessarily long. Tâʾib explained that he had abridged the text without changing the sequence. Thus he had given it a new value, and with the repetitions gone, ʿÂlî's words of wisdom could be better appreciated. Now collected in five sections, a comparison with the original showed that nothing had been lost, and in fact the work had profited from Tâʾib's interventions. Tâʾib's remarks may be viewed as indicators of yet another change: for this author, who lived in the reign of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) and Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa (active 1718–30), also known as the Tulip Age, referred to the Turkish spoken, read and written in his own time. In this period, numerous works were translated into Ottoman Turkish from Arabic and Persian, frequently with official support; probably members of the elite who knew these languages still wanted to read their favourites in Turkish.[9]

Biographical dictionaries cum anthologies (*tezkire*) often stressed that a given author was able to write poetry in Arabic and Persian; educated Ottomans had encountered major literary works in these languages as young students, and the texts studied then provided models for the literary works of their mature years. ʿOsmânzâde Tâʾib, when appointed 'poet laureate', wrote a *kasîde* in which he criticised those who dared to write poetry without having studied the *Gülistân* of the Persian poet Saʿdî. While we still have no detailed investigation of the literary texts learned in the *medrese*s, some indications can be gathered from Evliyâ Çelebi and Nebî Efendi-zâde ʿAlî b. ʿAbdullâh

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8 Ayan, *Cevrî*, p. 14. It is interesting that Bitlisli's work, not generally considered an especially successful example of the copious *selîmnâme* literature though containing some worthwhile historical information, was still being read in the seventeenth century. Indeed, in 1620, Çerkesler Kâtibi Yûsuf produced a prose version of this work.

9 Salim Aydüz, 'Lâle Devri'nde yapılan ilmî faaliyetler', *Dîvân: İlmî Araştırmalar* 2, 3 (1997), 143–70.

el-ʿUşşâkî (d. 1785–6).[10] In the normal course of things, the Arabic and Persian words learned during *medrese* training and imported into Ottoman Turkish, which increased in number from the sixteenth century onwards, were regarded as an enhancement of the language. As we have noted, this was the view of Mustafâ ʿÂlî in the second half of the sixteenth century and, 400 years later, Ziyâ Paşa agreed with him. Yet the number of Arabic and Persian words used in a literary text was linked to the education, profession and social milieu of the author, as well as to the audience he wished to address.

This state of affairs is especially apparent from the works of Nâbî (1642–1712), one of the dominant figures in the Ottoman literary world of the second half of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries. He has left ten books, four in prose and the others in verse. The late eighteenth-century poet Şeyh Gâlib has criticised the Persianised style of Nâbî's *Hayrâbâd*, and the English orientalist Edward Gibb has concurred with this evaluation. By contrast, the writers Ziyâ Paşa and Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, as well as the historian Fuad Köprülü, who have all concerned themselves with the origins of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary movements towards 'simplicity and localism', have discerned the beginnings of this trend in Nâbî's poetry.[11] Agâh Sırrı Levend has even felt that one may reasonably doubt whether Nâbî's poetry and his prose are really the work of one person.[12] Thus *Tuhfetü'l-haremeyn*, in which the writer discusses his pilgrimage to Mecca, contains quite a few sentences that with some slight changes can be considered Persian rather than Turkish.[13] After all, Nâbî was for a certain period secretary to a favoured courtier known as Musâhib Mustafâ Paşa, and thus was accustomed to all the turns of style expected of an accomplished scribe. When writing a continuation of the vita of the Prophet Muhammad by the well-known stylist Veysî, Nâbî also accommodated himself to the demands of both the genre and his predecessor's manner of writing. By contrast, in the *mesnevî* poems *Sûrnâme* and *Hayriyye*, as well as in his collection of Turkish poems (*dîvân*),

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10 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 yazmasının transkripsiyonu – dizini*, vol. I, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay (Istanbul, 1996–2005), pp. 102–3; Şükran Fazlıoğlu, 'Nebî Efendi-zâde'nin Kasîde fî el-kutub el-meşhûre fî el-ʿulûm . . .', *Kutadgu Bilig, Felsefe Bilim Araştırmaları* 3 (March 2003), 191–221, at p. 212. At the very least the following works were known: the rhymed dictionary of Şâhidî (d. 1550), known as *Tuhfe-i Şâhidî*; Hâfiz el-Şirâzî (d. 1390), *Dîvân*; Ferîdudîn el-ʿAttâr (d. 1230), *Pendnâme* and *Mantık el-Tayr*; Saʿdî (d. 1292), *Gülisiân* and *Bostân*.

11 Menderes Coşkun, *Manzum ve mensur Osmanlı hac seyahatnameleri ve Nâbî'nin Tuhfetü'l-haremeyn'i* (Ankara, 2002), pp. 85–6.

12 Meserret Diriöz, *Eserlerine göre Nâbî* (Istanbul, 1994), pp. 125–63; Agâh Sırrı Levend, *Nabi'nin surnâmesi: Vakaayi'-i hitân-ı şehzadegân-ı Hazret-i Sultan Muhammed-i Gaazi li-Nabi Efendi* (Istanbul, 1944), p. 17.

13 Coşkun, *Manzum ve mensur Osmanlı*, p. 98.

Nâbî has adopted a much simpler style, even declaring that 'a collection of *gazel*s is not an Arabic dictionary'.[14] Evidently new approaches are needed if we want to make sense of Nâbî's use of language.

As to the works known as *melhame* or *melahim*, they demonstrate once again how the quality of language and style was nothing preordained; rather, these features were determined by the readership the authors had envisaged. In these folkloric texts, the position of the stars as well as certain climatic and natural phenomena occurring in a given month or day are used in order to predict the future. This genre is remarkable because it reflects the daily concerns of ordinary people. Through *melhame*s we catch a glimpse of how these persons viewed their own material culture, and by the same token, it is possible to access popular notions of geography and even of the cosmos as a whole. Such texts are written in a Turkish close to the everyday language – and in one instance even the spelling has been simplified in order to speed up the process of writing.[15] In a different vein, a study of the language used in scientific works before 1839 has also demonstrated that apart from the subjects treated, the kind of readers that the authors of these books hoped to interest determined the number of Arabic and Persian words that they would use in their compositions.[16]

In spite of the occasionally quite heavy borrowing of foreign words, in this period the language of most written and oral literature, and also of ordinary communication, was Turkish, more particularly the dialect spoken in Istanbul. This had nothing to do with language-based nationalism; rather, people of different ethnicities became Ottomans by adopting Istanbul Turkish, and to be able to speak this language was seen as a privilege. In the *Risâle-i Garîbe*, an anonymous work probably written in the early eighteenth century, the author scolded people who 'have come to this great city, but have no idea why they are here. These asses spend fifty or sixty years [in Istanbul], yet they do not succeed in improving their language and learning [proper] Turkish. When what they mean is *yaprak* they will say *barmak*.'[17] These insults indicated how important it was in daily life to speak standard Istanbul Turkish.

For many years, Nâbî lived away from the capital, and in a poem he expressed the importance of Istanbul speech in his life:

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14 Ali Fuat Bilkan (ed.), *Nâbî Dîvânı*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1997), vol. I, p. 587.
15 Fikret Turan, 'Halk Osmanlıcası I: Melhameler ve bir on yedinci yüzyıl Melhamesi', *Bir: Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi, Prof. Dr Kemal Eraslan Sayısı* 9–10 (1998), 685–709.
16 İhsan Fazlıoğlu, 'Osmanlı'da Türkçe telif ve tercüme eserlerin dil bilincinin oluşumundaki yeri', *Kutadgu Bilig, Felsefe Bilim Araştırmaları* 3 (March 2003), 151–84.
17 Hayati Develi (ed.), *XVIII. yüzyıl İstanbul hayatına dair Risâle-i garîbe* (Istanbul, 2001), pp. 22, 28 (my translation).

> In the provinces the ear and the heart long for the sweet elocution of the people of Istanbul. A good way of expressing oneself, or amorous glances and elegance, pure faithfulness and every good thing are found to the highest and ultimate degree in this incomparable city. Can such heart-warming meanings and fine elegant expressions come into being in the middle of Arabistan?[18]

While living in Aleppo Nâbî wrote in another poem that his words had lost their flavour because he was so far from Istanbul.[19]

This sampling from different writers, which could easily be extended, shows that a thorough re-evaluation is indeed in order. Such a study will need to concern itself with differing attitudes towards Ottoman Turkish as a language, the demands of genre and subject, and also the social milieus in which the authors operated, as well as those inhabited by their readers.

Literary forms, genres and currents

As we have seen, Ottoman writers have produced works in verse and in prose, and also pieces that are a mixture of the two. Yet when surveying the collections of authors' biographies that Ottoman literati also produced, there is no doubt that the status of poetry was higher than that of the other two. When a writer such as Evliyâ Çelebi enriched his prose text by the addition of poetry, either composed by the author himself or else by others, the sections in verse might serve a variety of ends. Some verses might be called poetic decorations, as they served to make the text more profound and richer, but their removal did not result in any loss of meaning. In other cases verse might be used like proverbs – that is, to provide a brief, laconic summary of the major point. In a third configuration, verses might serve to express the feelings and thoughts of the author in a more concentrated and impressive manner than was feasible in prose.

Not much work has been done on the metres preferred in poetry; moreover, we are not well informed about the genres favoured by Ottoman authors. There are no detailed studies attempting to define individual genres, nor do we yet have discussions of what authors wished to achieve when preferring one of them to all others. Nor do we know how the different genres came to be adopted, and then developed, changed around and finally turned into other genres. We are just as little informed about the internal dynamics that might emerge within a given genre, and can only guess how different genres related to one another. Nor is there a consensus among the few scholars who have

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18 Bilkan, *Nâbî Dîvânı*, vol. I, pp. 119–20.   19 Ibid., vol. II, p. 981.

dealt with these matters. Yet for our understanding of the relationship between society and culture, and of the cultural needs of the Ottoman literary public, it would be most helpful to understand when the major genres emerged, in what periods and in which milieus they became most popular, and what their relative standing may have been.[20]

While many poets wrote in a variety of genres, depending on their educations and experiences, the compilers of poets' biographies cum anthologies *(şu'arâ tezkireleri)* generally only mentioned those in which they esteemed the writers in question to have excelled. We will follow this example by selecting certain genres that were of particular significance during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, namely *şarkı, hiciv, vefeyâtnâme, sûrnâme, bilâdiyye* and *menâkıbnâme*. The biographies of poets will also occupy us, as they are both an indispensable source and a genre to be studied in the present context. The same applies to the verses *(târîh manzûmeleri)* which contain the dates of a building or historical event, and that can be deciphered only if one knows the numerical values of the different letters of the Arabic alphabet *(ebced)*.

Halil Erdoğan Cengiz has defined the *şarkı* as a poem meant to be sung, or more generally as a poem with a melody; he thus views the *şarkı* as a literary form and not as a type of verse.[21] This kind of poetry can take the shapes known as *murabba, muhammes* and *müseddes*; the topic is often love and, compared to other types of poem, the language is rather simple. Nâ'ilî the Elder (d. 1666) is the first author to have included eleven *şarkı* in his collection of poems; it is these pieces that refer most obviously to the writer's environment, containing more local colour than his other works. In *şarkı*s written by poets, from Nedîm to Enderûnlu Vâsıf, we find references to Istanbul and the Bosporus, to love affairs that took place in these localities, and also to excursions and picnics.[22] The *şarkı* gained in importance in the course of the eighteenth century, as is apparent from the numerous references to this kind of poetry in the contemporary biographical dictionaries. When Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa was grand vizier and the appreciation of 'having a good time' was at its height, Mehmed Feyzî produced *şarkı*s that became famous, and one of them was set to music in the *makâm* Sabâ.

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20 Some of the major genres were *tevhîd, na't, mi'râciyye, münâcât, hilye, kısas–ı enbiyâ, kırk hadîs, kıyâfetnâme, gazavâtnâme, mersiyye, sâkînâme, sûrnâme, seyâhatnâme, sefâretnâme, vefeyâtnâme, menâkıbnâme, şehr-engîz, bilâdiyye, tezkire, hicviyye, lügaz and mu'ammâ*.

21 Halil Erdoğan Cengiz, 'Divan şiirinde musammatlar', *Türk Dili: Türk Şiiri Özel Sayısı* II *Divan Şiiri* 415–17 (July–September 1986), 291–429, at pp. 334–5.

22 Among the better-known authors of *şarkı*, we might mention the following: Nazîm (d. 1727), Sâmi (d. 1733), Rahmî (d. 1751), Fıtnat Hanım (d. 1780), Nâşid (d. 1791), Şeyh Gâlib (d. 1799), İlhâmî (d. 1808), Fâzıl Bey Enderûnî (d. 1810), Enderûnlu Vâsıf (d. 1824).

Writing satirical and often scurrilous poetical attacks (*hiciv, hezel*) was widespread among authors of this time. Thus the Mevlevi dervish Şânî, who succeeded his father as a prayer leader in Istanbul's well-known Ka'riyye mosque, was famous for his skill in this genre, and his verses, which followed the trend set by Rahmî Kubûrîzâde Havâyî (d. 1715) were frequently quoted all over town. But probably because this was not exactly a genteel type of writing, we do not find Şânî's name in the *Tezkire-i Şu'arâ-yı Mevleviyye*, a biographical dictionary of writers belonging to this order put together by Esrâr Dede, with the support of the famous poet Şeyh Gâlib. According to the biographer of the poet Rahîmî (d. 1727–8), the latter and his contemporary Nâbî engaged in amusing repartee, which became instantly popular among readers and listeners.

But the most prominent writer of satires aiming at individuals was surely Nef'î (d. 1635). In his collection of poems which he called *Sihâm-ı kazâ* ('the shafts of doom') we find not only harsh criticisms and threats, but also insults and even indecencies. His satire can be considered the exact opposite of *madh*, or panegyric, a genre he also occasionally practised, the mechanical reversal of the language of the latter automatically yielding the former. In his *hiciv* Nef'î used taboo words as weapons in order to lower the social or ritual status of his victims, who typically belonged to the politically powerful and scholarly milieu; the author did not spare even his own father. Fellow poets were also often his targets, and they might respond in kind. In the long run, Nef'î made quite a few enemies and, due to his lack of moderation, he lost his position. In the end he was killed because he did not keep the promise he had made to Sultan Murâd IV in person that he would not write any more poetic attacks; how exactly he met his end remains unclear.

Beginning with the seventeenth century, the biographical dictionaries tell us that some poets and prose writers produced works that they called *vefeyât*. These volumes contain the death dates of the people treated, and that is why they are referred to by a term derived from the word for death (*vefat*); otherwise, the books in question are short biographical dictionaries. Mehmed Selîsî from Bursa collected the biographies of religious scholars and dervish sheikhs that had died in Bursa under the name *Vefeyât*.[23] More ambitiously, Seyyid Hasîb-i Üsküdârî's (d. 1785) encyclopaedia begins with Adam and covers personages important for Islam, and especially the Ottoman world; his work is known as *Vefeyât-ı ekâbir-i İslâmiyye*; in a similar vein, Alaybeyizâde Mehmed Emîn (d. 1666) gathered the death dates and short biographies

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23 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 239, 346–7.

of about 7,000 people in his work called *Vefeyât-ı pür-'iber li üli'l-elbâbı men'ihteber*.

But the most original of the *vefeyât* writers was surely Hâfiz Hüseyin Ayvansarâyî (d. 1787).[24] In the janissary corps, he had filled the office of a *baltacılar kethudâsı*. Among other works he produced *Vefeyât-ı selâtîn ve meşâhir-i ricâl*, which featured many verses containing the death dates of the persons covered, hidden in the last line of the text. He also produced a second biographical dictionary named *Tercümetü'l-meşâyihin*, also known as *Vefeyât-ı Ayvansarâyî*. But this author is best known for his exhaustive reference work on the mosques and dervish lodges of the Ottoman capital, in which we find information on the men and women who had established pious foundations and the inscriptions that the latter so often featured. His anthology of verses (*Mecmu'â-i tevârih*) concealing dates is of special interest due to its numerous references to historical buildings that have since disappeared. Ayvansarâyî also edited a collection of poetry of the *müstezâd* type by different authors, to which he added similar verses of his own creation; the result was an *Eş'arnâme-i müstezâd*. Unfortunately, we still know too little about the literary history of the eighteenth century to explain how Ayvansarâyî came to work in such unusual genres. That his name is not mentioned in the standard biographical encyclopaedias may indicate that his work did not conform to the understanding of genre prevalent in the 1700s.

From the fifteenth century onwards, it had become customary to sing the praises of a given city in works known by the name of *şehr-engîz*; in the seventeenth century, we encounter compositions known as *bilâdiyye*, the term being derived from *bilâd*, the plural of *belde* (city). In these texts, written by authors such as Fasîhî (dates unknown), Ferdî (d. between 1708 and 1710) and Dervish 'Ömer (dates unknown), we find discussions of the relationship between the author and his town, and sometimes these pieces also reflect the writer's vision of his larger geographical environment.[25]

Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror initiated the custom of holding state festivities upon the occasion of dynastic events, such as the circumcisions of princes and the weddings of the sultans' daughters and sisters. These celebrations

24 Günay Kut and Turgut Kut, 'Ayvansarayî Hafiz Hüseyin b. İsmail ve eserleri', *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 33 (1980–81), 401–39; Hafiz Hüseyin al-Ayvansarayî, *The Garden of the Mosques: Hafiz Hüseyin al-Ayvansarayî's Guide to the Muslim Monuments of Ottoman Istanbul*, trans. and annotated by Howard Crane (Leiden, Boston and Cologne, 2000).
25 Cemal Kurnaz, 'Arayıcızâde Hüseyin Ferdî ve Derviş Ömer Efendi'nin bilâdiyyeleri', *Journal of Turkish Studies, Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 19 (1995), *In Memoriam Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı*, 2 vols., vol. I, pp. 299–316.

were important in several respects: increased consumption provided work for artisans and the palace was able to demonstrate its power and prestige, while for ordinary people a few days of celebration provided a welcome respite from the boredom and tensions of everyday life. Literary works describing these festivities are known as *sûrnâme*s. They were written in prose, in verse, or in a mixture of the two. The first such works were composed for the circumcision of Prince Mehmed, later Mehmed III, in 1582, and the genre continued to be productive until 1858; in almost 300 years, nineteen works were written to cover eleven different festivities. At times when economic crises or military defeats made life seem problematic, dynastic festivities were often celebrated with special pomp. Thus, of the eleven festivities covered by *sûrnâme*s, six were held during the difficult years of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and nine of the nineteen known *sûrnâme*s were concerned with these particular celebrations. Among the authors there were important literary figures such as Nâbî, ʿAbdî, Vehbî, Hazîn and Haşmet; thus these texts do not only contain pieces of information of interest to the social and economic historian, but should also be studied for their literary value.

It is worth noting that the *menâkıbnâme* genre, which described the vitas and miracles of famous dervish sheikhs, continued to be popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even experienced a certain revival, although there were at least partial changes of content. This predilection may be due to the fact that recurrent socio-economic crises made people more inclined to place their faith in the next world, and this in turn meant that dervish orders attracted numerous adherents. Quite a few *menâkıbnâme*s focused on Turkish sheikhs of the recent past, often resident in small towns. This ran counter to the tendency, otherwise widespread throughout the Islamic world, of composing the biographies of sufi sheikhs with a wide appeal both within and outside their orders. But interest in major figures, who may well have lived several centuries before their vitas were written down, certainly did not disappear: thus the well-known historian and poet Nevʿîzâde ʿAtâyî wrote the vita of ʿAzîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî (d. 1628), founder of the Celvetiyye order of dervishes; his work bore the title *Menâkıb-ı Şeyh Mahmûd el-Üsküdârî*.[26] As to the founder of the Şaʿbâniyye order, Şeyh Şaʿbân-ı Velî, he was immortalised in a vita written by another prominent member of his order, ʿÖmer b. Muhammed el-Kastamonî. The life and miracles of Niyâzî-i Mısrî (d. 1694), a

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26 Originally this biography was part of the author's broadly based biographical dictionary, *Hadâiki'l-hakâik fi tekmîleti'ş-şakâik*. It was later separated out to form a volume of its own.

famous mystic, were glorified in the *Vakı'ât-ı Mısrî* by İbrâhîm Râkım Efendi (d. 1750).[27]

A novelty of the eighteenth century was the emergence of biographical collections covering dervish sheikhs exclusively: previously saints' vitas had either discussed single individuals or else they were part of larger biographical dictionaries also encompassing scholars. In collections of this type the customs and polite manners specific to a particular dervish order might be discussed as well. Thus La'lîzâde 'Abdülbâkî Efendi (d. 1746), of the Bayrâmî-Melâmî order, composed the *Menâkıb-ı Melâmiyye-i Bayrâmiyye*, covering important fellow dervishes; and slightly later, the same subject was treated by Müstakimzâde Süleymân Sa'deddîn (d. 1787).[28]

It is worth stressing in this context that in the 1700s and 1800s there were three major literary currents: the so-called Indian style (*sebk-i hindî*); that of the poets associated with Nâbî; and finally the type of writing favoured by authors wishing to bring literary expression closer to contemporary speech. As representatives of the first group we might mention Fehîm-i Kadîm (1627–48) and Neşâtî, while Nâbî himself and Râmî Mehmed Paşa can stand for the second one; as to the third group, the most brilliant name is surely Nedîm.

A literary genre and a historical source: the biographies of poets

In the world of Ottoman letters, biographical dictionaries were omnipresent; thus even though we have already encountered a variety of examples we must now turn to those works that focus specifically on poets. Early collections of biographies tended to focus on the lives of people who in one way or another had formed part of the ruling group; thus their authors attempted to give an encompassing picture of the 'great men' in Ottoman society. However, by the eighteenth century, the fashion for specialised dictionaries had become more widespread. We have already encountered the dictionary of Mevlevî poets, the *Tezkire-i Şu'arâ-yı Mevleviyye*, which the author compiled because he felt that the importance of his order in the realm of poetry had not been sufficiently stressed in the more general encyclopaedias of poets.

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27 Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Kültür tarihi kaynağı olarak menâkıbnâmeler: metodolojik bir yaklaşım* (Ankara, 1992), pp. 62–5; Mustafa Aşkar, *Tasavvuf tarihi literatürü* (Ankara, 2001), pp. 186–200.

28 Aşkar, *Tasavvuf*, pp. 186–9.

The first Ottoman reference work focusing on poets was written by Sehî in 1538, and is known as *Heştbehişt*.[29] Due to the preponderance of poetry in Ottoman literature, the evaluations contained in works of this sort provide a key to the contemporary understanding of literature in general. Typically the *tezkire* writer will relay information about the poet's name and pen-name, place of origin, training and employment, while mentioning the more important teachers from whom the author at issue has received his training. There follows the date of the subject's death, with a reference to the location of the grave if known. At the end of the *tezkire* entry an anecdote or two may be recounted; we also find evaluations of the subject's literary skills, a list of his (very rarely her) works and a few sample pieces. This information will be more or less developed, depending on how close or how distant were the relations between subject and *tezkire* writer.

From the seventeenth century, seven collections of biographical sketches survive: Sâdıkî's *Mecma'ü'l-havâs* (completed 1602?), Riyâzî's *Riyâzü'ş-şu'arâ* (completed 1609), Fâ'izî's *Zübdetü'l-eş'âr* (completed 1620), Rızâ's *Tezkire-i şu'arâ* (completed 1640), Yümnî's *Tezkire-i şu'arâ* (completed before 1662), Âsım's *Zeyl-i Zübdetü'l-eş'âr* (completed before 1675) and Güftî's *Teşrîfatü'ş-şu'arâ* (completed 1658–60). Fâ'izî, Yümnî and Âsım are short on biographical information, so that their works rather resemble anthologies. Güftî from Edirne is unusual in that he produced a *tezkire* in 2,400 couplets of *mesnevî* verse; it contains information on 106 poets.[30] At the same time Güftî's work shares certain features with Nef'î's *Sihâm-ı kazâ*: the author does not hesitate to ridicule those among his colleagues whose personalities or poetry do not please him; due to the prevalence of jokes, satire and coarse language his work may also be classified with *hiciv* literature. From the eighteenth century we possess nine such biographical works, namely Mucîb, *Tezkire-i şu'arâ* (completed 1710), Safâyî, *Nuhbetü'l-âsâr min fevâdi'l-eş'âr* (completed 1721), Sâlim, *Tezkire-i şu'arâ* (completed 1721), Beliğ, *Nuhbetüi'l-âsâr li-zeyl-i Zübdeti'l-eş'âr* (completed 1727), Mü'minzâde Hasîb, *Silkü'l-leâl-i Âl-i 'Osmân* (completed 1730–4), Safvet, *Nuhbetüi'l-âsâr fî fevâdi'l-eş'âr* (completed 1782), Râmiz, *Âdâb-ı Zürefâ* (completed 1783), Silâhdârzâde, *Tezkire-i şu'arâ* (completed 1789), Âkif, *Mir'ât-ı Şi'r* (comleted 1796), in addition to the *Tezkire-i şu'arâ-yı Mevleviyye* (completed 1796) by Esrâr Dede, which we have already encountered.

In the eighteenth century we observe that *tezkire* authors go back to sixteenth-century models, and pay increased attention to the biographies of

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29 James Stewart-Robinson, 'The Ottoman Biographies of Poets', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 24 (1965), 57–74; Haluk İpekten *et al.* (eds.), *Şair tezkireleri* (Ankara, 2002).

30 Kâşif Yılmaz, *Güftî ve Teşrîfâtü'ş-şu'arâsı* (Ankara, 2001).

the writers they treat. This helps us to place certain pieces of information in their proper context: thus when Mehmed ʿUyûnî became a scribe in an office managing Istanbul's water supply, he wrote a work in verse that he called *Nev-ʿicâd*, in which he explained why dams and water reservoirs were a necessity; he also provided detailed information on the people who had ordered their construction.[31]

Among eighteenth-century collections of poets' biographies, the work of Mü'minzâde Hasîb (d. 1747) called *Silkü'l-leâl-i Âl-i ʿOsmân* is noteworthy for both content and form. To begin with, it is a general history in 18,000 couplets containing an important section on poets' biographies; in the sixteenth century, Gelibolulu ʿÂlî had organised his *Künhü'l-ahbâr* in a similar fashion.[32] Moreover, the writer has mentioned his sources more often than customary, yet interpreted them according to his own poetic skill and imagination. All the poets included, fifty-six in number, had lived in the earliest period of Ottoman literature, namely between 1389 and 1481.

Hasîb thought that in comparison with this early period, public esteem for poets had declined: in Mehmed the Conqueror's times, poets might be promoted to the vizierate, while in his own period they were not likely to receive more than simple praise from state officials.[33] The author made it quite clear that he had published his work in order to obtain the patronage of Sultan Mahmûd I (r. 1730–54), as he hoped for a position in the Ottoman state apparatus.

Versified texts of great length were normally *mesnevî*s, in which every couplet had its own separate rhyme. However, Hasîb's work took the shape of a *kasîde*, in which every section began with a rhymed couplet whose rhyme was then taken up in all the couplets comprising the relevant division of the work. The author employed the same metre throughout, thus hybridising different forms and genres.

A closer look at the collection of poets' biographies (*tezkire*) by Safâyî (d. 1725–6) gives us some idea of the genre conventions and social considerations that might motivate an author to compose such a work. In his preface Safâyî tells us that when reading collections of poetry in order to develop his literary style, he was struck with admiration at the biographers who through their works had preserved the memory of the poets of old. On discovering that no book of this kind had been written since 1050 / 1640, he decided to fill the gap. In

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31 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 591–4.
32 Mustafa İsen (ed.), *Künhü'l-ahbâr'ın tezkire kısmı* (Ankara, 1994).
33 Menderes Coşkun, *Manzum bir şairler tezkiresi: Hasîb'in Silkü'l-le'âl-i Âl-i ʿOsmân'ınındaki şair biyografileri* (Ankara, 2002), p. 29.

reality, five such biographical dictionaries cum anthologies had been written between this year and the writer's lifetime, but evidently he did not consider them important. In line with his admiration of early Ottoman literature, Safâyî proclaimed that he wished his book to resemble the *tezkire*s by Latîfî, ʿÂşık Çelebi, Riyâzî and Hasan Çelebi; in all these works the authorial contribution was significant, and the amount of sample poetry correspondingly limited.[34]

Safâyî had a busy official career, and his duties long prevented him from turning his notes into a definitive full-fledged book; he was only able to do this when he was out of office for a while. Later on he obtained the patronage of the grand vizier Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa and was appointed finance director (*defterdâr*) of the *şıkk-ı sânî* rank; he retained this office until his death. The author also managed to get eighteen of the foremost poets of the age to write comments on his work to be reproduced in the preface (*takrîz*); they all praised the writer's achievements.[35] However, these laudatory texts were not always without ambiguity: thus Sâlim, one of the *takrîz* writers, claimed in one of his other works that Safâyî was incapable of distinguishing the good from the bad, and also wrote in a very simple style. This was why he, Sâlim, had decided to write a *tezkire* in more ornate prose, even though the inspiration had probably come from the work of his predecessor. Yet Safâyî himself, when commenting on Sâlim's work, had only praise for his colleague's personality and achievements. In a similar vein, when the poet laureate Tâʾib selected Seyyid Vehbî (d. 1736) as his successor, the latter celebrated his elevation by a well-known *kasîde*; he also claimed that Safâyî's discernment was not equal to the task he had set himself. The poet Râmiz (1736–88), who also produced an encyclopaedia of poets, was just as critical of Safâyî's all-too-simple style, but praised his colleague for the reliability of the information provided.

What was the function of all these *takrîz* in the preface of Safâyî's work? Our sources describe this author as a somewhat naïve person. Possibly he had induced these eighteen literary figures to add their comments in order to deflect criticism of his enterprise in advance, but that question can only be answered when we know more about the customs of the literary world in that period. That the author was responsive to criticism is apparent from the long time that it took him to complete his work: within twenty-five years, he revised his encyclopaedia no less than four times, at least in part due to objections from his readers. How Safâyî went about soliciting aid can be guessed from his relations with Sâkıb Dede, an influential dervish sheikh from Kütahya. Upon Safâyî's request for a *gazel* to be included in his collection, Sâkıb Dede sent two

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34 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 1–31.   35 Ibid., pp. 1–32.

samples and added a letter. Safâyî claimed that he had included this missive in his collection in order to demonstrate the sheikh's skill in prose-writing, but it is quite possible that he really wanted to show off his good relations with this highly respected individual.[36]

Poetry, poets and patronage

It has often been said that Arabic and Persian poetry constitutes the living history of the peoples from whom the poets emerged. Even though the Ottoman practitioners of this art had learned so much from their predecessors, they successfully adjusted techniques, rhetorical devices, topics and genres to the conditions of their times, so that Ottoman poetry also is a mirror of Ottoman society and culture. From the seventeenth century onwards in particular, poets tended to increase the number of references to situations which they had experienced, and we can thus say that poetry in Turkish acquired a local flavour. Thus between 1617 and 1627, Nevʿîzâde ʿAtâyî composed the five *mesnevî*s known as the *Hamse-i ʿAtâyî*; here he foregrounded Istanbul and its inhabitants in a way unknown to earlier *mesnevî* writers.

In discussing what literate contemporaries thought about poetry, we will concentrate on the comments of Râmiz in the *Âdâb-ı Zürefâ*, his biographical work cum anthology that covers poets active between 1720 and 1784. Being able to write good poetry in Arabic and Persian was evidently grounds for high praise; for this meant that the author not only knew the two languages extremely well, but was also in control of the different skills needed for successful versification. If a writer had produced both poetry and artistic prose, his skills in these two modes of writing would be discussed separately. Râmiz praised successful *kasîde* writers as well, but in this case, he found it necessary to state for whom or for what reason the piece in question had been produced. Poetic works concealing dates and riddles were also mentioned, but here it was evidently skill rather than poetic inspiration that counted. Râmiz, however, had a high opinion of this ability: he frequently cited poems conveying dates as examples, or praised authors who produced elegant specimens of this genre.

If an author preferred satire or love poems, his contemporaries would take note of the fact; those who were able to write poetry differing in content and style from that of their colleagues were called *tarz sâhibi* (possessors of individual styles). Poets and writers read the work of their predecessors and contemporaries; thus a continuous evaluation was in process. ʿPopularity

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36 Ibid., pp. 138–9.

among one's peers', judged from the frequency with which the manuscripts of a given author circulated among knowledgeable people, was also a quality of which evaluators would take note: this applied for instance to both the poems and the chronicle of Râşid Efendi (d. 1735–6).[37]

A very broad notion of literary skill is reflected in a story that Evliyâ Çelebi (1611–after 1683), author of a famous seventeenth-century travelogue, has told about the manner in which he was introduced to Murâd IV (r. 1623–40).[38] When the sultan ordered him to recite something, Evliyâ responded by asking in which of the seventy-two climes of the Islamic world the ruler was interested; the young page cum litterateur could offer poems in Persian, Arabic, (contemporary) Greek, Hebrew, Syrian, (ancient) Greek and Turkish. Evliyâ also wanted to know whether Murad wanted to hear music of a particular *makâm* or poems of a given type; among the latter he mentioned *bahr-i tavîl*, *kasîde*, *tercî'-bend*, *terkîb-bend*, *mersiyye*, *'ıydiyye*, *mu'aşşer*, *müsemmen*, *müsebba'*, *müseddes*, *muhammes*, *gazel*, *kıt'a*, *müselsel*, *dü-beyt*, *müfred* and *ilâhî*. Obviously Evliyâ, who once claimed that he was capable of reciting the entire Qur'an in seven hours, was sure of both his knowledge and his memory. The sultan seems to have felt the challenge; he tested Evliyâ and became convinced that the latter's claims were true. Evliyâ's list, with its emphasis on types of poetry also practised in Arabic and Persian, tells us something about what, in the early seventeenth century, was meant by 'a broad knowledge of literature'.

Evliyâ had evidently followed the recommendations of all masters of literary theory and rhetoric throughout the Islamic world, who advised that the novice should memorise vast quantities of verses and model his own attempts upon them. An aspiring author was expected to develop his (or, in exceptional cases, her) skills by constantly re-reading the poetry of the great masters, especially those of the Iranian tradition.[39] As to the authors of biographical dictionaries, they frequently told us which particular master a given poet had learned by heart.

Poetry as a language conveyed through ornaments and architecture

In the Ottoman realm most poetry was recited or else written on paper; but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries especially, there were other

37 Sadik Erdem, *Râmiz ve Âdâb-ı Zurafâ'sı: inceleme-tenkidli metin-indeks-Sözlük* (Ankara, 1994), p. 110.
38 Evliyâ Çelebi *Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. I, p. 100.
39 Ömer Faruk Akün, 'Divan edebiyatı', *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1994), vol. 9, p. 413.

noteworthy substrata as well. Stone and marble occupied a special place. From the seventeenth century onwards, inscriptions, which in earlier times had simply recorded the person or persons responsible for the construction and the date at which a given mosque, school or fountain was completed, often came to consist of several couplets. In these verses the functions of the relevant building were spelt out in some detail. For a prominent structure, several poets might compose such verses; but only one of them, usually either from the ruling circles or at least close to the powers that be, was honoured by having his work thus immortalised. Even public competitions for such purposes were on record.[40]

Fountains were favoured sites for poetic inscriptions. Furthermore, numerous examples were to be found on gravestones, and quite a few of the poems cited by Râmiz had been derived from this very source. It was considered important to keep records of the people who wrote verses of mourning when a certain poet died, and also to specify which of these verses was chosen for the gravestone and which calligrapher was responsible for the writing. In the case of Fasîh Ahmed Dede a poem by Nihâdî, which indicated the date of death, had already been installed as a headstone when the Crimean khan Şâhin Girây, who used the pseudonym of Şâhî, sent another gravestone with his own verses already inscribed on it: thus having acquired two headstones, Fasîh Ahmed Dede was considered to have achieved great honour.[41] So many verses were written in order to figure in inscriptions that we can distinguish a genre of 'fountain and gravestone poetry'.

Other verses were written on items in daily use. The satirical poet Nef'î (d. 1635) devised the following couplet as an inscription for his own seal: 'The creator of the genre of rare works, 'Ömer who expresses divine secrets.'[42] It was also possible to write couplets for the clasps of belts; the poet Fahrî performed this service for Sultan Murâd IV.[43] Highly esteemed poetry was specially written out on tablets adorning the walls of private houses, dervish lodges or coffee-shops; thus for example Şâkir Feyzullâh wrote a couplet indicating the completion of the Nûr-ı 'Osmâniye mosque that was reproduced on such a tablet.[44] In the same fashion Şeyh Nûreddîn Efendi, the sheikh of the Koca Mustafâ Paşa dervish lodge, was honoured on the occasion of his death

40 Hatice Aynur and Hakan Karateke, *III. Ahmed dönemi İstanbul çeşmeleri: 1703–1730* (Istanbul, 1995), p. 176.
41 Mustafa Çıpan, *Fasih divanı: inceleme-tenkidli metin* (Istanbul, 2003), p. 25.
42 Fatma Tulga Ocak, 'Nef'î ve eski Türk edebiyatındaki yeri', in *Ölümünün üçyüzellinci yılında Nef'î* (Ankara, 1987), pp. 1–44, at p. 9.
43 Kudret Altun, *Tezkire-i Mucîb: inceleme-tenkidli metin-dizin-sözlük* (Ankara, 1997), p. 51.
44 Erdem, *Râmiz*, p. 171.

by a set of verses indicating the relevant date, written by a poet calling himself Kemter; this text was copied onto a tablet hung on the wall of the sheikh's mausoleum.[45]

Poetry was not merely a product of literary skill, taste and understanding, but could also be used by the authors to convey personal messages. Thus due to illness, Pîrîzâde Sâhib Efendi four times in a row was unable to attend the Friday meetings convoked by the grand vizier Râgıb Paşa. Pîrîzâde excused himself in a short poem, and the addressee, himself a poet, responded in kind, ensuring the author that his excuses had been accepted. It was also common practice to write a few congratulatory couplets when a friend had been promoted, or a child had been born to him. Conversely, criticism of one's colleagues also might be expressed in verse. Thus Hayâtî es-Seyyid İbrâhîm Efendi had been a judge in Cairo, and brought back from that period of his life a rather exaggerated notion of his own competence in Arabic versification; his colleague Mü'minzâde Hasîb Ahmed did not hesitate to prick that particular balloon.[46] All this meant that poetry became part of the fabric of everyday life; and even people who rarely had occasion to open a book might become familiar with verses because they saw them on the walls of fountains and coffee-houses, on the gravestones of their loved ones or even on official seals.

Poets: varying identities

It is often assumed that the identities of Ottoman poets were always closely bound up with the sultans' palace. But when we take a closer look at the poets writing in Turkish, it soon emerges that there was never a single identity that all poets accepted for themselves. In the reign of Ahmed III there was even a poet, at one time a courtier but later fallen from grace and banished to Thessaly, who used two pen-names and cultivated a double identity. Raised in the palace, skilled in horse-riding and in the use of arms, the author signed his *dîvân* poetry Vahîd (d. 1732).[47] At the same time this personage was also an accomplished player on the *sâz*, that archetypical instrument for accompanying 'folk' poems, and used the pseudonym of Mahtûmî whenever he wrote in this latter mode, which differs both in metre and in language from the *dîvân* poetry esteemed by the elite. Fuad Köprülü, to whom we owe the first study of the *sâz şairleri* (poets whose compositions were sung to the *sâz*) and whose studies still form the starting-point of all present-day investigations of this topic, did

45 Ibid., p. 259.   46 Ibid., pp. 76, 86.   47 Ibid., p. 268.

not notice that the Vahîd of his anthology was identical to the courtier of Ahmed III.[48]

Given the limited amount of research at hand, the present attempt to sketch the identities of Ottoman poets is necessarily incomplete. But we can at least discern three categories: the *sâz şâirleri*, also known as *âşıklar* (literally, lovers); the religious poets more or less tinged with mysticism; and the poets gravitating around the palace, whose works are most fully documented and therefore take pride of place in our study.

A poet defining himself as a *sâz şâiri* practised his art in public places such as coffee-shops, picnic grounds or fairs; if two poets of this kind happened to meet, they might improvise a dialogue in couplets. An artist of this kind always played the *sâz*, and the *dîvân* poets Sünbülzâde Vehbî (d. 1809) and Keçecizâde ʿİzzet (1785–1829) both described their discomfort when, on visiting provincial towns and finding themselves invited to the houses of well-to-do locals and expected to play, had to explain to their doubtless disappointed hosts that they were not 'that kind of poet'.[49]

Tensions between *sâz şâirleri* and *dîvân* poets were continuous: in the biographical dictionaries covering the latter, jokes abound about the poetic forms used by the former, and also about their unadorned Turkish prose. Poets gravitating around the palace often let it be understood that their 'popular' colleagues were debasing the poet's art. By contrast *sâz şâirleri* felt that they surpassed their genteel colleagues in the art of improvisation: an accomplished poet working in the mode of the *sâz şâirleri* had to be able to invent, on the spur of the moment, a poem on any given topic and using just about any rhyme. In *dîvân* poets, on the other hand, the capacity to improvise was considered a special quality, which the authors of biographical dictionaries did not omit to mention whenever it occurred, but it was not a *conditio sine qua non* for success. Nefʿî, the unfortunate seventeenth-century satirist, possessed this skill to the highest degree. When asked by Murâd IV to read a poem before the assembled company, Nefʿî took out a piece of paper and recited the famous thirty-nine-couplet Bahâriyye *kasîde*. When it was completed the sultan noticed that the paper was empty; Murâd IV was much impressed and rewarded the poet well.[50]

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48 Fuad Köprülü, 'XVIII. asır sâz şâirleri', in Fuad Köprülü, ed., *Türk sâz şâirleri II: Antoloji, XVI–XVIII. asırlar* (Istanbul, 1940), pp. 332, 366–8.

49 Fuad Köprülü, 'Türk edebiyatı'nda ʿÂşık tarzı'nın menşe' ve tekâmülü hakkında bir tecrübe', in *Edebiyat araştırmaları*, 2nd edn (Ankara, 1986), pp. 195–238, at p. 216.

50 Emîn Efendi, *Kethudâzâde Efendi'nin tercüme-i hâline zeyl-i ʿacizânedir* (Istanbul, 1294 / 1877), p. 100.

While all *sâz şâirleri* moved from one place to the other in search of patronage, their links to the literature written in palace circles might be more or less close. Those who were familiar with at least sections of *dîvân* literature were called 'poets of the pen' (*kalem şâirleri*), while the others went by the name of 'poets of the public square' (*meydân şâirleri*; the *meydân* also might refer to the meeting room of a dervish lodge). Overall, the most famous *sâz şâirleri*, who continued to be imitated well into the nineteenth century, were 'Âşık 'Ömer (1651?-1707?) and Gevherî (seventeenth to eighteenth centuries); their fame is apparent from the frequency with which their names appear in the complaints of palace-centred authors.[51] But the towering figure among 'popular' poets is doubtless Karacaoğlan, who probably lived in the seventeenth century.

Among the *sâz şâirleri*, those who had all their poems collected in a single volume are very rare. However, there do exist books known as *cönk*s that bring together the poetry of some of the more popular *sâz* poets. In *'âşık* circles it was, moreover, common to compose *şâirnâme*s or *dâsitân*s, in which the authors wrote about their colleagues both past and contemporary. From *cönk*s and *şâirnâme*s it is possible to determine the identities of many *'âşık*s / *sâz şâirleri* who otherwise would remain unknown, and to establish which poems were authored by which poets.[52] Yet it was these people who were close to ordinary folk and expressed the concerns of the latter; thus Temeşvarlı Gâzî 'Âşık Hasan wrote about the feelings of local Muslims when Buda was lost to the Ottomans in 1686.[53] Only in the nineteenth century, at a time when all standards and values came to be in flux, did these poets gain significant esteem in palace circles as well.

Religious poets normally viewed their work merely as a means of expressing their beliefs, and therefore tended to be casual about matters of form. We therefore often find them mixing elements from the repertoire of *dîvân* poetry with those derived from a more 'popular' tradition. Topics included the transcendent existence and unity of God, love for the Prophet Muhammad, his companions and the great saints, the preconditions and vicissitudes of the mystical way, the unity of all beings and the perishable quality of things. Less

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51 Sadeddin Nüzhet Ergun, *Âşık Ömer: hayatı ve şiirleri* (Istanbul, 1936); Şükrü Elçin, *Gevherî dîvânı*, 2nd rev. edn (Ankara, 1998).

52 Sabri Koz, 'Sermet Çifter Kütüphanesi'ndeki cönkler: I, derviş cöngü', *4. Kat: Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Araştırma Kütüphanesi Bülteni* 1 (April–May–June 2001), 18–23; Sabri Koz, 'Sermet Çifter Kütüphanesi'ndeki cönkler: VII, parçalanmış bir cönk', *4. Kat: Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Araştırma Kütüphanesi Bülteni* (January–February–March 2003), 39–44.

53 Doğan Kaya, *Şâirnâmeler* (Ankara, 1990); Doğan Kaya, 'Şairnâmelere ek', *Türk Bilimi Araştırmaları* 7 (1998), 61–97; Fuad Köprülü, *Türk sâz şairleri II: antoloji, XVI–XVIII. asırlar* (Istanbul, 1940), pp. 75, 127–8.

flexible than their colleagues from the palace milieu, religious poets, whose existence often focused on the dervish lodge, made few attempts to expand the circle of topics treated. Didactic purposes were much in evidence; accordingly, the language was relatively simple and even though most authors were graduates of theological schools, the number of Arabic and Persian words they employed remained limited. Among the major figures we must mention ʿAzîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî (1541–1648), ʿAbdülahad Nûrî (1594–1650), Nakşî-i Akkirmanî (d. 1654), Oğlanlar şeyhi İbrâhîm (1591–1655), Gaybî Sunullâh (1615–16), Niyâzî-i Mısrî (1618–94), Diyarbakırlı Ahmed Mürşid (d. 1760), İbrâhîm Hakkı Erzurumî (d. 1722), İsmail Hakkı Bursavî (d. 1724), Hasan Sezâî (d. 1737), Zâtî Süleymân Efendi (d. 1738), Üsküdarlı Hâşim (d. 1783) and Şeyh Gâlib (1757–99).

Human considerations apart, religious verses might also be composed and recited in order to gain God's satisfaction and succour. Thus ʿAbdülbâkî ʿÂrif wrote a well-known work by the name of *Miʿrâciyye*, and every year, on the night on which the ascent of the Prophet Muhammad to heaven is commemorated, he arranged for a gathering at the shrine of Eyüp Sultan just outside Istanbul. To this ceremony the poet invited religious scholars, sheikhs and other notables to a partial recital of his poem, distributing delicious refreshments among his guests. Safâyî in his biography of the author declared that the *Miʿrâciyye* was a great work that might well secure God's pardon to ʿAbdülbâkî ʿÂrif.[54]

A good deal has already been said about the poets working in and around the palace. The biographical dictionaries show that to be skilled in versification was part of the identity of a member of the Ottoman elite. Non-elite poets occasionally made it into these compendiums, but as an exception: thus Diyarbakırlı Hâmî was an autodidact, gained the support of Muhsinzâde ʿAbdullâh Paşa and obtained a high position among government scribes when his patron became grand vizier. Yet according to Râmiz, it was always apparent that the author had not received the fine polish of 'Anatolia and Iran'.[55] Poetic art was believed to be inheritable; at least, that is what we gather from the fact that some literati were described as having acquired their distinction due to the privilege of having had a distinguished father.[56]

Very few authors described in some detail how they became poets, and a most interesting example is that of İbrâhîm Râşid b. Nuʿmân (1812–92), who wrote his poetry under the name of Râşid. In the introduction to his collection of poems the author tells us that at the age of sixteen, he first found out the difference between a *gazel* and a *kasîde*. At the same time, he lost a father and

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54 Altuner, 'Safâyî', p. 562.   55 Erdem, *Râmiz*, p. 73.   56 Ibid., p. 235.

a brother, and friends had the youth invited to the poetic salon of Hoca ʿAynî Efendi, so that by learning to write, he might get his sorrows under control. Râşid began to study the much-admired verses of Münîf (d. 1743), and a *gazel* he wrote in the style of his predecessor was approved and financially rewarded by Mahmûd Nedîm Beyefendi, whose father was a vizier and a governor of Syria. Upon Mahmûd Nedîm's invitation, Râşid began to attend the young official's salon and became part of his retinue; when the poet finally decided to collect his poems in a *dîvân*, it was with the intention of making his patron a valuable gift by broadcasting the latter's generosity. With this idea in mind, Râşid asked future copyists of his work not to omit the brief introduction praising Mahmûd Nedîm; evidently he had not yet accepted the notion that his work would appear in print rather than being copied by scribes, although printing had become widespread by the time Râşid put together his *dîvân*, presumably by the mid-1800s.[57]

We still lack a systematic study of the salons in which poets presented their works and sometimes discussed them at great length: in an admittedly extreme case, we hear that 150 poetic responses (*nazîre*) were written to a single *gazel*.[58] And even if this figure is exaggerated, it is evident that there was much give and take between poets, and the social skills needed to establish oneself in the salon of a fellow author and/or important official formed a significant basis of a writer's livelihood. We need to find out more about the ways in which this and other elements making up a poet's identity changed in the course of time, for herein lies an important key to the understanding of Ottoman civilisation.

The vicissitudes and joys of a poet's life: execution, exile, patronage and the attraction of Istanbul

A number of noteworthy poets were sent into exile or even executed; the *tezkire* writers generally sympathised with the victims, and felt that they had deserved better. In particular Murâd IV's killing of Nefʿî (1635) and Vecdî's execution along with two of his friends – what is more, as a result of a false accusation (1661) – were viewed as blatant injustices. When Râmiz discussed the poisoning of Fâʾiz Efendi while the latter was an official in Egypt, he laid the blame squarely at the door of the local governor, Öküz Mehmed Paşa from Kayseri.

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57 Tahir Üzgör, *Türkçe dîvân dîbâceleri* (Ankara, 1990), pp. 530–7.
58 Sâlim Efendi, *Tezkire-i Sâlim* (Dersaʿâdet, 1315 [1897–8]), p. 79.

It is usually quite difficult to find out exactly why a given poet was exiled. Often disgrace was a consequence of having angered a high official or even the ruler himself, perhaps through the composition of aggressive satires.[59] But the victims rarely blamed either themselves or the persons who had ordered them into exile, but rather intermediaries of one sort or another. Thus Nevres-i Kadîm (1703–57), who spent about seven years as an exile in Bursa and on the island of Crete, obviously owed his disgrace to the fact that by his satires he had made quite a few enemies – and, moreover, offended many of his friends.[60] But of course the relevant poems do not appear in his *dîvân*. By contrast, exiled poets often tried to get themselves reinstated by writing the appropriate ingratiating poems and letters; sometimes this strategy worked, but at other times not.

In spite of the importance of patronage in the Ottoman world, no encompassing study of this institution does as yet exist.[61] High Ottoman officials and also the sultans themselves, many of whom wrote poetry, acted as protectors of poets. Both people born in Istanbul and newcomers from the provinces were on the lookout for patrons; thus İsmâ'il Belîğ (1668–1729), the author of an encyclopaedia covering the personages who had died in Bursa down to the year 1721, came to Istanbul, submitted his work to the grand vizier Damâd İbrâhîm Paşa and was well received. Scholars who had completed their studies and were capable of writing poetry also approached potential patrons in order to be appointed to office; literary skill was thus a career enhancement. We have two stories about how Alaşehirli Veysî in the early 1590s got himself appointed to the Benî Haram district in Egypt. The author wrote a satire in Persian that was well received and thus obtained his office. Or else his friends with a few well-placed remarks about the author's poverty supposedly showed his work to influential people: this proceeding proved successful. Veysî obtained office many times, and his admirer Evliyâ Çelebi claimed that every new composition netted the author a new appointment.[62]

In order to obtain elite patronage it was necessary to write the poetry appreciated in these circles. But how did 'popular' writers who are known to

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59 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 189–94.
60 Hüseyin Akkaya, *Nevres-i Kadîm ve Türkçe dîvân'ı: inceleme, tenkidli metin ve tıpkıbasım* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), vol. I, pp. 26–34.
61 Halil İnalcık, *Şâir ve patron: patrimonyal devlet ve sanat üzerinde sosyolojik bir inceleme* (Ankara, 2003) is the first attempt in this direction, but it is limited to the sixteenth century.
62 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 yazmasının transkripsiyonu-dizini*, ed. Yücel Dağlı, Seyit Ali Kahraman, İbrahim Sezgin, 9 vols. (Istanbul, 1996–2005), vol. V, pp. 300–1.

have had links to the palace obtain the latter's patronage? In this respect the case of Levnî (d. 1732) is of interest. He had come to the capital from Edirne and served an apprenticeship in the painters' workshop of Topkapı Palace, where he first trained as a specialist in gilding and later as a painter. Under Mustafâ II (r. 1695–1703) and Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) he was a palace artist, while under Mahmûd I (r. 1730–54) he was promoted to the headship of the painters' workshop.[63] From one of his poems we gain the impression that he was also a companion of the ruler, chosen for his elegance and wit.[64] His poetic activities evidently took second place to his role as a painter, and he owed his position in the households of three sultans to the latter and not to the former.

But even so, Levnî's decision to compose 'popular' poetry shows considerable independence of mind. He certainly paid a price: surviving only as individual pieces in various collections, his poems were never put together in a *dîvân* and his name does not occur in the collected biographies (*tezkire*s) of the day. Whether this means that poetically knowledgeable contemporaries did not like his work, or whether he himself preferred the company of the *sâz şâirleri*, remains unknown. The latter certainly took note of his writing, especially of a text of advice, written in simple language, into which Levnî had inserted a number of proverbs. When writing *şarkı*s the author focused on love, but also on war and heroic deeds. We are left to wonder whether Levnî really never met Seyyid Vehbî, a major poet who wrote the text of the book of festivities (*sûrnâme*) that the painter himself illustrated so lavishly. Or did the painter-poet never encounter Nedîm, with whose work Levnî's shows some affinity, and who was active in another section of the palace at the very same time? Perhaps such contacts were simply not considered worth mentioning, but it is also possible that a person's training determined the kind of people he would interact with, to the virtual exclusion of any other milieu.

Obtaining a powerful patron usually meant establishing oneself in Istanbul, and numerous young hopefuls flocked to the capital to try their luck. The poet Nâbî, who later became famous, travelled all the way from Urfa in south-eastern Anatolia, and after considerable effort found a place for himself. Others were not so lucky, and in this context, the biographer Râmiz quoted a couplet by Vecdî (d. 1661) that seems to have been famous in its time: 'Oh Vecdî, my heart feels such a desire for Istanbul that if I could I would fly to it: but what can I do, I have no wings.'[65] And when he discussed poets originating from the capital, Râmiz declared with a certain pride that not only was the person

63 Gül İrepoğlu, *Levnî: nakış, şiir, renk* (Istanbul, 1999).
64 Ibid., p. 43.   65 Erdem, *Râmiz*, pp. 65, 93.

in question born and bred in Istanbul, but that the same had been true of the latter's father as well.

As no research has been done on the relations between the established inhabitants of Istanbul and the newcomers, we can only suspect that at times there must have been some tension. Thus Sâlim (d. 1739 or 1743) wrote a *mesnevî* praising his own poetic accomplishments in which he referred to 'recently arrived Turkish country folk' who put on their new clothes and mixed with the urban population. Some even overestimated their accomplishments to the point of claiming to be gentlemen. But being a gentleman was not so easy: elegance, polite speech, cleanliness, descent from a genteel family and knowledge, whether in the realm of religious studies, science, calligraphy, spelling, poetry or artistic prose, were not so easily acquired, and the same thing applied to a good reputation.[66] The same writer also produced a versified letter in which he evoked, for the benefit of his relatives on official business in Egypt, the beauty spots of the capital currently favoured by the elite.[67]

As we have seen, there was a considerable increase in the number of poets in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and around 1700 Nâbî was the acknowledged *arbiter elegantiarum*, and people expected him to sort out the good work from the bad. Both newcomers and established writers deferred to his judgement, but after his death nobody could fill his position. For a while, Kâmî (d. 1723), who was known as an elegant and witty person, officiated as an – albeit contested – umpire. Many writers seem to have regarded the lack of a universally acknowledged master of their art as a sign that poetry had entered into a decline, and thus the decision of Sultan Ahmed III to appoint Tâ'ib poet laureate, and Seyyid Vehbî as his second-in-command, made many literati feel more comfortable. The judgements of these two poets were respected, for when Râmiz discussed a number of early eighteenth-century authors, the first thing he said about them was what Tâ'ib and Seyyid Vehbî thought of their work.[68] Nor was it just a matter of literary prestige: as poetic skill was a factor in the careers of religious scholars and other officials, these two authors exercised real power. Tâ'ib wanted Seyyid Vehbî to select the best poets from among different professional groups, and even suggested that there should be a penalty for bad verse.

Poets from Iran and other Persian-speaking lands who came to Istanbul for study and career development were often regarded highly by the authors of poets' biographies. Some of these men learned Turkish so well that they could

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66 Mirzâ-zâde Mehmed, *Sâlim dîvânı: tenkitli basım*, ed. Adnan İnce (Ankara, 1994), pp. 175–9.
67 Ibid., pp. 221–8.
68 Erdem, *Râmiz*, pp. 49, 114, 137, 144, 154, 156, 167, 203, 208, 239, 257, 262, 280, 282.

write verses in this language, and the latter were singled out for attention in the biographical dictionaries. Thus when the Nakşbendî sheikh Saʿîdâ from Bukhara came to Istanbul, he lived for a while near the shrine of Eyüp Sultan; his relations with religious scholars and high officials were so good that when he decided to return home, his travelling expenses were paid by his hosts. Even the famous 'master of the age' Nâbî decided to show his recent *Zeyl-i Siyer* to Saʿîdâ, and when the latter wrote some verses of recognition, they were entered into Nâbî's book at a place chosen by the distinguished visitor.[69]

Compiling a *dîvân*, or bringing together all the poems of one author in a single place

As in Arabic and Persian literary practice, it was customary in the Ottoman world to give the name *dîvân* to the collection of the entire poetic output of a given person, apart from any *mesnevî*s he / she might have written. A study of library catalogues and literary encyclopaedias shows that this was not an easy distinction to achieve, and possessing a *dîvân* was considered the crowning glory of a poet's life. Thus in Istanbul libraries, we find the *dîvân*s of 153 poets who flourished in the seventeenth century.[70] For comparison, we may base ourselves on the biographies of poets who died between 1621 and 1704, as written up by İsmâʿil Belîğ: in his work we find 353 persons, but only 61 could boast a *dîvân*.[71] In the biographical dictionaries of the eighteenth century a total of 1,322 poets have been located;[72] but only 168 of this number have achieved a *dîvân* surviving in Istanbul libraries.[73] While quite a few Ottoman poets wrote in Arabic and Persian, those able to collect their productions in these languages as a special *dîvân* were few in number. Nefʿî and Nâbî produced such volumes of their Persian poetry; regrettably those poems written in languages other than Turkish have usually been disregarded by scholars studying 'national literature'.

Some poets simply did not take the trouble to collect their works. According to Safâyî, Mehmed Fahrî had produced enough love poems to fill not one but

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69 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 353–6.
70 *İstanbul kütüphaneleri yazma divanlar kataloğu: XVII. asır*, vol. II (Istanbul, 1959), pp. 221–530.
71 The poets mentioned in Belîğ's work who died after 1704 have not been included in our count, while those whose date of death remains unknown have been regarded as seventeenth-century figures.
72 Halil Çeltik, '18. yy. tezkirelerindeki Divan şairleri', *Journal of Turkish Studies / Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları: Hasibe Mazıoğlu Armağanı* 22 (1998), 49–85.
73 *İstanbul kütüphaneleri yazma divanlar kataloğu: XVIII. asır*, vol. III (Istanbul, 1965), pp. 553–934.

several *dîvân*s, but because they had never been put together they were being dispersed and forgotten.[74] According to the same source, Seyyid Vehbî, who at the time of writing did not as yet possess a *dîvân* either, was negligent about bringing together his works; but if the poems in the hands of his friends were to be united in a single volume, the result would be perfect.[75] We are left to wonder how the friends of a poet preserved his works, whether they retained single slips of paper or whether they entered the poems into their own collections of diverse texts (*mecmû'a*).

How Nâbî's poems were collected is worth a separate discussion. When the author was living in Aleppo, Silâhdâr İbrâhîm Paşa, who was governor of the province for three years (1705–8), wanted to see such a volume appear. The pasha himself took the initiative in bringing together the drafts and arranging the poems in sequence; he felt that the collection would gain much if it were introduced by a *kasîde* in praise of the unity of God (*tevhîd*). Nâbî complied with the governor's wishes, specifying that the poem had been written at İbrâhîm Paşa's request. At the beginning of the section comprising his *gazel*s, Nâbî did something unusual: he inserted a poem of twenty-three couplets explaining how the collection had come into being. By the time of writing, the poet had been active for about sixty years, and looking back at the work of his youth, excused himself for the defects that he now saw in it.[76] However, even though this *dîvân* was already Nâbî's second one, an earlier one having been put together in Istanbul many years previously, it did not contain the very last works of this great writer: a full collection of his poems was only published in 1997.[77]

While normally a *dîvân* was to contain the entire life's work of a given poet, some authors preferred to include only a selection. Thus when in the early nineteenth century, the poet Surûrî wrote verses that concealed the date at which his second *dîvân* had been composed (1805), he explained that for this, his second effort, he had only chosen his best pieces. A few poets also divided their output among several collections; thus Ahmed Nâmî (1600–73) published that part of his poetry which dealt with the beauties of this world under the title *Hüsn-i Mecâzî*; after he had lost his position as a kadi and had withdrawn to a Nakşbendî lodge, he brought together his mystical poems under the title *Hüsn-i Hakîkî*. In his *Hüsn-i Mecâzî*, the poet included his *gazel*s and short informal poems (*kıt'as*) about worldly pleasures, including coffee and tobacco; there were also fifty poems concealing a date, a feature all but absent

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74 Altuner, 'Safâyî', p. 707.
75 Ibid., p. 1031. 76 Diriöz, *Eserlerine*, pp. 183–8.   77 Bilkan (ed.), *Nâbî Dîvânı*.

from *Hüsn-i Hakîkî*. The latter volume also did not contain any references to people of the author's circle, nor did the poet include responses to the writing of other authors; in brief, the focus was other-worldly.[78]

Sometimes friends and relatives of a deceased poet might bring out the latter's collected works after his death: thus the poetry of Râgıb Paşa was collected by his fellow author Müstakimzâde. But the latter did not succeed in bringing together his dead colleague's entire output. Thus a manuscript known as the *Mecmû'a-i Râgıb Paşa*, containing poetry and prose in three languages as well as the pasha's official and unofficial correspondence, held sixty-five *kasîde*s, most of which did not appear in the posthumous *dîvân*. Safâyî also told us that the works of the poet Remzî were collected and organized by his former disciple Rüşdî.[79]

What were the dominant considerations when poems were arranged in a *dîvân*? Normally only verses composed in the *arûz* – in other words, in metres consisting of sequences of long and short syllables – were considered worthy of entering a volume that was to ensure the writer's lasting prestige. Down to the sixteenth century poets sometimes complained that Turkish did not lend itself well to *arûz* compositions. In the seventeenth century such complaints ceased, because the numerous Arabic and Persian loanwords now allowed the poet a variety of alternatives. Down to the eighteenth century, poems in the *hece* metre used by the 'popular' poets, which is based on a predetermined number of syllables and pauses to each line, were not entered into *dîvân*s. The poet Nedîm was the first to break with this tradition.

As previously noted, *dîvân*s of the seventeenth and following centuries tended to contain more references to daily life than had been true in earlier periods. From the collected poems of Nâbî it is possible to compile his biography, while Cevrî was the first to mention palace women by name, particularly the ruler's powerful mother, Kösem Sultân. He also stated openly that some of his poems had been 'made to order'; thus he wrote verses concealing the foundation dates of various charities instituted by palace ladies and, upon the sultan's request, a *kasîde* evaluating the artistic qualities of singers performing in the sultan's presence.[80]

Kasîde, gazel *and* nazîre

The *kasîde* first appeared in Arabic literature, and from there passed into Persian and then into Turkish. It was often used for expressing praise or vituperation

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78 Ahmet Yenikale, 'Divan tertibine farklı bir yaklaşım: Hüsn-i Hakîkî-Hüsn-i Mecâzî', *İlmî Araştırmalar* 14 (2002), 209–19.

79 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 286–7.   80 Ayan, *Cevrî*, pp. 110–12.

of a given person.[81] This type of poem gained in popularity in the course of the seventeenth century, and the large number of *kasîde*s composed in praise of important people may indicate that relations between authors and members of the ruling group became closer in this period. Among seventeenth-century *kasîde* poets, the most prominent was Nef'î, who authored sixty-two such pieces.[82] A novelty was his Fahriyye *kasîde*, in which he praised the merits not of some patron but of his own poetry, and this work became a model for many of his successors.

In this period the range of topics that might be treated in a *kasîde* widened, as some poets including Veysî (1561–1628) addressed the social problems, economic difficulties, dubious policies and corrupt power-holders of their times. However, the latter poet preferred not to include his most critical *kasîde* in his *dîvân*, and from a marginal note in one of the manuscripts, we learn that Veysî, when asked about his authorship, preferred to deny it altogether.[83] At the same time the *kasîde* was considered suitable if an author wanted to ask a patron for a favour; thus Sâbit of Bosnia, not very successful in his official career and always impecunious, not only asked for gifts in this manner but also wrote a *kasîde* in recognition of the help given.[84] In the eighteenth century, Nedîm and Şeyh Gâlib were considered the foremost representatives of the genre; the output of Fâzıl Bey Enderûnî admittedly was larger, but its quality not beyond dispute.

The *gazel* was central to Ottoman poetry, and the success of a poet was largely determined by his success in this genre. In social life, the *gazel* might serve purposes akin to those for which *kasîde*s were used: thus authors might employ this form to pay their respects to potential patrons. Haşmet addressed both a *kasîde* and a *gazel* to Şeyhülislâm Kara Halîlzâde Mehmed Sa'îd Efendi, the head of the Ottoman hierarchy of religious scholars, and was rewarded with a professorship.[85] Or else the poet might make a present of a *gazel* to friends and aficionados of his art; this was also the most commonly recited kind of poem in convivial gatherings. However, in the eighteenth century, the prestige of the *gazel* may have declined: İsmâ'il Belîğ in his *Şehrengîz-i Burusa*

81 Stefan Sperl and Christopher Schakle (eds.), *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996); Walter Andrews, 'Speaking of Power: The "Ottoman Kaside"', in Sperl and Schakle (eds.), *Qasida Poetry*, pp. 281–300; Yaşar Aydemir, 'Türk edebiyatında kaside', *Bilig* 22 (Summer 2002), 133–68.
82 Aydemir, 'Kaside', pp. 140–1.
83 Günay Alpay Kut, 'Veysî'nin Divanında bulunmayan bir kaside üzerine', *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı: Belleten* (1970), 169–78.
84 Bosnalı, *Divan*, pp. 240–3.   85 Erdem, *Râmiz*, p. 78.

complained that it was now no longer appreciated, and that the younger generation preferred to listen to the 'popular' poetry of 'Âşık 'Ömer, or else to an amusing anecdote.[86]

From the seventeenth century onwards, *gazel*s made up of five couplets were the most widespread type, possibly because certain authors felt that brevity was of the essence; others, however, stuck to the older, longer forms. The Mevlevî dervish Sâkıb Mustafâ Dede (1652–1735) definitely preferred lengthy *gazel*s, perhaps because he lived during a period when his order was in crisis, and seized this opportunity to defend it.[87] Variations of the *gazel* might also come into being by a poet's adding lines to a text already in existence. This fashion (*müstezâd*) became more widespread in the eighteenth century: as a result the supremacy of the couplet broke down, and individual lines came to carry more weight; this development should be viewed as a major literary change.

*Gazel*s were very suitable when authors wished to write a poetic response to a composition they admired or that had at least attracted their attention: in this case the metre, rhyme and echo-rhyme all had to conform to that of the original (*tanzîr, nazîre*). In this period it was considered flattering if a *gazel* or other poem received many such responses, and the practice of *tanzîr* was part and parcel of a poem's afterlife. When Seyyid Uşşâkîzâde wrote a *gazel* in a novel style, it was said that contemporaries ornamented it by producing their own poetic responses.[88] But from certain remarks about authors excelling in this genre, we understand that writing such verses was considered not as a creative act, but rather as a show of mere literary skill, and in certain cases even as an indication that the writer's creative spirit was failing him. However, all literatures develop by reworking their own traditions, and the popularity of *nazîre* writing may simply mean that certain authors honed their own abilities by starting out from the poems of admired predecessors.

In our period, *gazel*-writing was dominated by the major figures of Nâbî and Nedîm, both of whom have given their names to specific poetic styles. Nâbî was famous for his 'dominant' type of writing, which he shared with his Iranian colleagues Şevket-i Buhârî (d. 1699) and Sâ'ib-i Tebrîzî (d. 1669–70). Nâbî considered that meaning should be given pride of place, and accused his predecessors of being unable to go beyond a standardised description of the figure and face of the beloved, which they compared to equally stereotypical images such as roses, cypresses and nightingales. By contrast, Nâbî himself

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86 Abdulkerim Abdulkadiroğlu, *Bursalı İsmail Beliğ* (Ankara, 1985), p. 151.

87 Ahmet Arı, *Mevlevilikte bir hanedanlık kurucusu: Sâkıb Dede ve dîvânı* (Ankara, 2003), p. 52.

88 Erdem, *Râmiz*, p. 168.

was quite willing to use terms from the marketplace and foreground his urban concerns; in so doing, he expanded the range of topics that could be treated in a *gazel*.

Nedîm's innovations were of a different sort. While he avoided all didacticisms and allusions to religion, focusing instead on love, pleasure and amusement, the 'beautiful people' he described were not merely the creatures of artifice, but real living beings. His language was closely modelled on the Istanbul speech of his day; he even included certain Arabic and Persian terms, not as they would have sounded in the original languages, but as they were pronounced by the people of the eighteenth-century Ottoman capital. This gave his language a flexibility that must have reminded the reader/listener of real speech. That Nâbî and Nedîm's modes of writing were highly successful becomes apparent from the large number of eager imitators that they managed to attract.

Mesnevî

When it came to judging a poet, many Ottomans thought that while the *gazel* was a witness, it was the *mesnevî* that really constituted the judge. In *mesnevî*s the metre does not change and every couplet has its own rhyme, with the pattern aa/bb/cc.[89] The number of couplets is potentially unlimited and the poet thus highly flexible in his choice of topic and narration; short poems of twenty to thirty couplets are possible, but also long love stories, or else mystical and moral tales consisting of thousands of couplets.[90] From the eighteenth century onwards it became current practice to write *kasîde*s and missives in *mesnevî* form. Thus in the collected verses by Mirzâzâde Sâlim (d. 1743), we find laudatory poems, including one in which the poet praised himself, and poetic letters to relatives and friends, all in the shape of *mesnevî*s; in older periods it had not been customary to include such works in a *dîvân*. While it is often believed that Ottoman poetry was governed by inflexible rules, we find poets who wrote *kasîde*s and *kıt'a*s where it would have been usual to prefer the *mesnevî*: thus Fâzıl Bey Enderûnî (d. 1810) composed a *çenginâme* as a sequence of *kıt'a*s. Perhaps these changes indicated a new-found flexibility in eighteenth-century literature.

Lengthy books in *mesnevî* form generally followed a pre-established plan, consisting of an introduction, the narration proper and the conclusion. While

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89 İsmail Ünver, 'Mesnevî', *Türk Dili: Türk Şiiri Özel Sayısı II: Divan Şiiri* 415–17 (June–September 1986), 430–63. Also see Ahmet Kartal, 'Türkçe mesnevîlerin tertip özellikleri', *Bilig* 19 (2001), 69–117.

90 Ünver, 'Mesnevî', p. 432.

the *mesnevî* had reached the summit of its popularity in the sixteenth century, it was, by the period under discussion here, becoming much less frequent. Did other genres fill the gap opened by the relative decline of the *mesnevî*? Were the examples we possess from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries really of the same kind as their predecessors, or was there a hybridisation with other forms? We need more research and debate on the implications of this development.

It is generally accepted that the *Hüsn ü ʿAşk* of Şeyh Gâlib is the last major work composed as a *mesnevî*, and it has aroused much interest down to the present day.[91] The difference in approach between Şeyh Gâlib and his predecessors has been summarised in the following fashion: almost all old stories have been recounted by several different narrators, reflecting the claim that the author of the 'traditional' *mesnevî* will have learned his tale from previous tellers. But in *Hüsn ü ʿAşk* the author does not posit a gap in time, impossible to measure, between the readers and his tale.[92] The mythical dimension of the story is thus reduced, and its immediacy enhanced.

On the other hand, *Hüsn ü ʿAşk* can be read at five different levels: on the first and simplest, it is a story of human love. But it should also be interpreted as a love rising to the celestial level and attempting the ascent to God. Seen differently, it is the account of the mystical way as followed by a Mevlevî dervish, and also a transmutation into narrative shape of the feelings aroused during a Mevlevî ceremony. Finally, in Mevlevî thought, it is the symbolic representation of the stages through which a human being will pass on his/her way to God.[93]

Verses concealing dates

Verses concealing dates, making use of the numerical values of the letters of the Arabic alphabet, had occasionally been written since the fourteenth century, but the genre gained in importance during the period under discussion. Nevres-i Kadîm invented a couplet in which twenty-four dates were hidden, and challenged others to do the same.[94] For such verses poets reserved special sections (called *tevârîh*) in their *dîvân*s, in which the poems were arranged

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91 The first of these is Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı (ed.), *Şeyh Galib, Hüsn ü Aşk: Önsöz, metin, bugünkü dile çevirisi, lûgatler, açıkama, Gâlib'in el yazısı ile Hüsn ü Aşk'ın tıbkı basımı* (Istanbul, 1968), the most recent Muhammed Nur Doğan (ed.), *Şeyh Galib, Hüsn ü Aşk, metin, nesre çeviri, notlar ve açıklamalar* (Istanbul, 2002). Victoria Holbrook, *The Unreadable Shores of Love* (Austin, 1994) is noteworthy for its distinctive approach.
92 Necmettin Türinay, 'Klasik hikayenin zirvesi: Hüsn ü aşk', in *Şeyh Galib Kitabı*, ed. Beşir Ayvazoğlu (Istanbul, 1995), pp. 87–122, at pp. 98–9.
93 Ibid.   94 Akkaya, *Nevres*, p. 109.

according to the importance of the personage they celebrated. Anthologies (*mecmû'a*s), recording the most ingenious inventions of different poets, also began to appear at this time, a famous one being due to the poet Surûrî (d. 1814). Almost all buildings of the time showed inscriptions with a date hidden in them. A broad selection of such verses has been recorded by the seventeenth-century travel writer Evliyâ Çelebi: about 500 items in the first four volumes alone. They commemorate events in the lives of sultans and important people, and especially the dates on which mosques and other buildings serving pious foundations, but also secular structures such as covered markets, had been completed. About half of these inscriptions were found in the vicinity of Istanbul.[95]

Specialists in the *târîh* genre included Ülfetî from Baghdad, whose official career was unsuccessful and who used to bore his contemporaries with his obsession with such verses. But since some of them had made his reputation, he was nevertheless accepted in polite society.[96] In the eighteenth century, Surûrî was doubtless the author who best represented the taste of his age. He concentrated all his energies in this genre, producing *târîh* verses not only for important people or events, but also to a suicide who threw himself from the top of a minaret, a theft of shoes from the entrance of a mosque, and even the death of a cat.[97] It is worth noting that in the nineteenth century, when European artistic forms became more and more widespread, poets and their public did not lose interest in verses carrying dates; the genre definitely deserves a closer study.

More than an appendix: women poets

To date we have only minimal information on palace women who wrote poetry, and only one princess is known to have sponsored a major poet. This was Beyhân Sultân, the sister of Selim III (r. 1789–1807), who was a patroness of Şeyh Gâlib and paid for the 'luxury edition' of the latter's *dîvân*. In return the poet wrote *kasîde*s and *târîh* verses for buildings belonging to the princess and also for those put up by the ruler's mother, Mihrişâh Vâlide Sultân.

In Ottoman *dîvân* literature as a whole, thirty-two female poets are on record, but only four of them lived during the period discussed here: Sıdkî Hanım (d. 1703), Fatma Fâ'ize Hanım, Ânî Fatma Hatun (d. 1710) and Fıtnat

95 Osman Horata, 'Evliya Çelebi seyahatnamesi'ndeki manzum kısımlar', in *Evliya Çelebi ve seyahatname*, ed. Nuran Tezcan and Kadir Atlansoy (Gazimağusa, 2002), pp. 155–67, at p. 159.
96 Sâlim Efendi, *Tezkire*, pp. 122–7.   97 Surûrî, *Dîvân-i Surûrî* (Bulaq, 1255/1839).

Hanım (d. 1780). All four of them were from the capital and had religious scholars for fathers. Sıdkî Hanım recurred in different guises: as Emetullâh Kadın, Sıdkî Emetullâh Hanım İstanbulî, Emnullâh or Sıdkî; in her poetry she used the pen-name Sıdkî. Fatma Fâ'ize Hanım and Sıdkî Hanım were sisters, their father being Kâmetîzâde Mehmed Efendi, who was twice judge of Istanbul. The name of Ânî Fatma Hatun's father is not known, but she was a member of the illustrious *ulema* family descended from Hoca Sa'deddîn Efendi. Fıtnat Hanım's given name was Zübeyde; her father was Ebû İshâkzâde Mehmed Es'âd Efendi (d. 1752), as *şeyhülislâm* head of the religious cum juridical hierarchy under Mahmûd I. Her grandfather İshâk Efendi (1679–1734) and her brother Mehmed Şerîf Efendi obtained the same dignity and were also known for their poetic skills. On the other hand, Fıtnat's husband Mehmed Es'âd Efendi, a grandson of Mustafâ II's *şeyhülislâm* Feyzullâh Efendi, was less knowledgeable than his spouse, and the marriage was not a happy one.

For Sıdkî Hanım, the biographer Sâlim has used the expression 'a manly woman'. Her biography not being very full, we have to guess what made Sâlim describe her in this fashion: presumably the fact that she applied to Himmet Efendi (d. 1684), founder of the Himmetî branch of the Bayrâmiyye order of dervishes, and succeeded in becoming a full member, must have played a role. Apart from composing successful *gazel*s, she also wrote verses with dates hidden in them for a sizeable number of persons. Of these, Sâlim provided a few examples; one of them referred to the death of her order's sheikh.[98] Safâyî reported having seen her *dîvân*, and also included samples of her work in his *tezkire*.[99] Apart from her volume of collected verses, the sources mention mystical poems (*Genc-i Envâr* also called *Kenzü'l-envâr* and *Mecma'ü'l-ahbâr*) in addition to a few ornate prose texts, as yet unstudied.

About her sister Fatma Fâ'ize Hanim the biographer Râmiz has provided some interesting information. He stresses that like her sister, she was a successful poet and prose writer, who admired the early Ottoman poetesses Mihrî Hatun and Zeynep Hatun. Fatma Fâ'ize's knowledge of Arabic was particularly esteemed. While the author claimed that only Sıdkî was considered a really successful poet, Fâ'ize was so clever in a variety of subjects that she gave rise to considerable envy. Interesting is Râmiz's remark that he was not qualified to evaluate the works of women, and therefore did not wish to say any more. The two sisters were buried in Istanbul's Edirnekapı cemetery close to their father's last resting place.[100]

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98 Sâlim Efendi, *Tezkire*, pp. 426–7.   99 Altuner, 'Safâyî', pp. 461–4.
100 Mübeccel Kızıltan, 'Dîvân edebiyatı özelliklerine uyarak şiir yazan kadın şairler', *Sombahar* 21–22 (January 1994), 104–69.

Ânî Fatma Hatun was so famous for her knowledge that her biographer called her *hâce-i zenân* (teacher of women); she was also a fine calligrapher.[101] Sâlim said that in writing the *nesih* and *ta'lîk* scripts, and also in her *gazels*, she surpassed quite a few males. The same writer also felt that Ânî Fatma was a better poet than Zeynep Hatun, the well-known sixteenth-century writer. It is worth noting that Sâlim, who seems to have thought highly of Ânî Fatma's *gazels*, did not, when it came to making a comparison with another personage of repute, set her against Nedîm or Nâbî, but against another woman. According to the biographer Sâlim, Ânî Fatma Hatun was the butt of at least one rather drastic joke involving a play on words, of the type common among men at the time. Whether Ânî Fatma Hatun found this 'joke' as funny as did her biographer must remain an open question, for it involved the irreversible defacing of her *dîvân* manuscript, doubtless written in good calligraphy.[102] Perhaps due to this damage, Ânî Fatma Hatun's collected poems apparently do not survive. The poetess married and had a son known as Emîrzâde who died in 1710 as a kadi of Yenişehir; supposedly he also was made fun of due to his mother's literary activities.[103]

But most attention seems to have been paid to Fıtnat Hanım. Her ready wit was apparent from the elegant jokes she exchanged with Koca Râgıb Paşa and Haşmet. Like other poets belonging to the Ottoman ruling group, she wrote *târîh* verses referring to events concerning the dynasty and the completion of public buildings; we also find poetic responses to the work of her predecessors.[104] Her poetry, in which the influence of Koca Râgıb Paşa, and thus indirectly of Nâbî, is apparent, corresponded to the expectations of the time not only in content but also in form; in other words, there was no trace of a female voice.[105] Obviously women had fewer chances than men when it came to achieving public recognition, and conformity to accepted standards may have been viewed as a *conditio sine qua non* for success. At

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101 A study of the Mîrzâzâde family, influential in the eighteenth century, contains some indication of the education that certain girls growing up in these high *'ulemâ* circles might receive. Neylîzâde Mehmed Efendi's (d. 1767) daughter Rukiyye Molla Hanım was active as a teacher. From a *târîh* verse upon the death of her aunt Safiyye, we learn that the dead woman had constantly read the Qur'an and studied the religious disciplines: Atabey Kılıç, 'Mirza-zadeler ailesinden Neylî-zade Mehmed Hamîd', *in Bir: Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi: Prof. Dr Kemal Eraslan Armağan Sayısı* 9–10 (1998), pp. 409–15, at pp. 413–14.

102 Sâlim Efendi, *Tezkire*, pp. 155–6.

103 Altuner, 'Safâyî', p. 59; Sâlim Efendi, *Tezkire*, pp. 15–56.

104 Fıtnat Hanım, *Dîvân* (Istanbul, 1286/1869–70).

105 Kemal Silay, 'Singing his Words: Ottoman Women Poets and the Power of Patriarchy', in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1997), pp. 196–213.

least we may hope that a more thorough study of the manuscripts in Turkish libraries will bring to light some female writers hitherto unknown: the woman dervish Asiye Hatun, whose letters have recently been found and edited, may be just one of those forgotten authors that present-day scholars try to recover.[106]

Prose

Until writers made contact with European literary forms in the nineteenth century, prose definitely took second place to poetry, and emphasis moreover was on style rather than on content. Prose writers tended to imitate forms previously pioneered by poets: we find religious texts, the early history of Islam recounted in a legendary mode, texts which told stories both religious and heroic, tales written for highly educated or else for 'popular' publics, accounts of heroic deeds, which might or might not have a recognisable basis in fact, histories of the Ottoman dynasty, biographical encyclopaedias of officials and poets, commentaries on older texts, travel and embassy accounts, and collections of samples of official documents (*münşeât*), intended for the education of aspiring bureaucrats. Hundreds of texts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries fit into one of these categories, and historical writing is especially abundant.[107]

Fahir İz has divided Ottoman prose into three categories. The first encompasses texts in a language approximating everyday speech (*sâde*). By contrast, the second contains texts with very few Turkish words, while Arabic and Persian terms, taken more or less arbitrarily from dictionaries, are employed according to the grammar of the languages of origin; rhymed prose is used widely and many of the verbal artifices of *dîvân* poetry occur (*süslü, inşâ*). As to the third category, it is also quite distant from everyday speech, but the author is concerned with content rather than with a demonstration of his literary skills (*orta*).[108] Texts of the first kind, such as fairy tales and simple didactic prose, are accessible to people without much formal education. In the second category, however, the style is not the means to an end, but the end itself, and the Arabic and Persian words used will be so rare that only very

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106 Asiye Hatun, *Rüya mektupları*, ed. Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul, 1994).

107 For information on Ottoman prose texts, genres and authors see Faik Reşat Unat, *Osmanlı sefirleri ve sefaretnameleri*, ed. Bekir Sıtkı Baykal (Ankara, 1987); Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi 1700–1783* (Leiden, 1995); Franz Babinger, *Die Geschichtsschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke* (Leipzig, 1927); Hasan Kavruk, *Eski Türk edebiyatında mensur hikâyeler* (Ankara, 1998).

108 Fahir İz, *Eski Türk edebiyatında nesir*, 2nd edn (Ankara, 1996), pp. v–xxii.

well-educated people can understand them. Constructions according to Persian grammar are long and elaborate, and the sentences long and involved. As for the third category, which has been described as 'popular Ottoman', it is intended for literate townspeople with a limited knowledge of Arabic and Persian linguistic features and poetry, in which there is room for elements from everyday Turkish as well.[109]

Ottoman prose writers that first come to mind are those who excelled in *süslü* prose. These men were basically poets, such as Veysî (1567–1628), Nevʿîzâde ʿAtâyî and Nergisî (d. 1635). Veysî's *Siyer-i Veysî* and *Ḫ'âb-nâme-i Veysî* especially were considered models by authors of the eighteenth century: the latter, unlike other poets who preferred Persian models, generally looked to their Ottoman predecessors. Most of the authors admired for their *süslü* prose were scribes in a variety of bureaux, or else had careers as judges, and the letters they wrote to their friends and patrons have survived as samples in manuals of style.

Due to limitations of space, we will single out only two prose works, the ten-volume travel account of Evliyâ Çelebi and the *Muhayyelât-ı ledünn-i ilâhî* of ʿAzîz Efendi (d. 1798). Both writers were esteemed not so much by contemporaries as by late nineteenth- and twentieth-century critics – Evliyâ because he described the geography and ethnography of the Ottoman world while showing a vivid appreciation of story-telling traditions, and ʿAzîz Efendi because his fiction formed a link to the stories and novels written by Ottoman authors in the second half of the nineteenth century.[110]

Evliyâ made use of almost all types of prose known to Ottoman writers, and employed numerous stylistic figures in order to avoid monotony.[111] Hendrik Boeschoten has divided Evliyâ's writing into four categories: the regular account; the author's inserted poems; quotations from other writers; and word samples taken from languages and dialects.[112] Evliyâ's colourful and

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109 Fikret Turan, 'Seyahatname'de sentaks, kelime seçimi ve ton', in *Evliya Çelebi ve seyahatname*, ed. Nuran Tezcan and Kadir Atlansoy (Gazimağusa, 2002), pp. 257–8.

110 Cavit Baysun, 'Evliyâ Çelebi', *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*; J. H. Mordtmann and Herbert Duda, 'Ewliyā Čelebi', *EI 2*; Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi* (Leiden, 2004).

111 For a facsimile edition of volume I, with indices, see Fahir İz (ed.), *The Seyahatname of Evliya Çelebi*, facsimile of TS Bagdat 304, part 1, indexes by Şinasi and Gönül Alpay Tekin (Cambridge, MA, 1989); selections with English translations have appeared in the series Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels: Land and People in the Ottoman Empire of the Seventeenth Century (Leiden, varying dates). The first nine volumes have appeared in Latin transcription: *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay et al. (Istanbul, 1996–2005).

112 Evliyâ Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbekir: The Relevant Sections of the Seyahatname*, ed. and trans. Martin van Bruinessen et al. (Leiden, 1988), pp. 81–2.

fluent style is due, apart from his talent and wide experience, to the careful training that he received in the palace as a page to Murâd IV.[113] His prose should be classed in the *orta* category put forward by Fahir İz.

'Azîz Efendi, the author of the *Muhayyelât-ı ledünn-i ilâhî*, was born in Crete and, as a young man, dissipated his inherited fortune, travelled to Istanbul and there achieved a successful career, first in the palace guards, and then in the bureaucracy. He was sent to Berlin as the first permanent ambassador to Prussia, where he died in 1798. At one point in his life he went through a crisis and turned to mysticism. Quite a few elements of his biography were reflected in the stories of the *Muhayyelât*.

'Azîz Efendi's work has been noted for its rich intertextuality: the *Thousand and One Nights* and other collections of this type have served the author as points of reference, as well as other collections of Middle Eastern tales; but we also find reminiscences of ancient Greek myths and Muslim saints' legends, to say nothing of *mesnevî* poetry.[114] The three major parts of which the work is composed are named *hayal* (imagination, illusion). The first section recounts the adventures of a prince and princess named Kamercân and Gülrûh, and later those of their children Asil and Nesil. In the second section we find an account of the mystical quest of a dervish called Cevâd, while the third is devoted to another mystical search, this time by Prince Nâcî, and later to the adventures of the latter's son Dilâgâh. In each section, a common frame unites several stories, which are linked so closely to one another that the whole resembles a novel. In this sense our text, though largely forgotten today, contains features that are considered typical of the late Ottoman novel as it emerged in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. 'Azîz Efendi's preface also is quite modern – indeed, post-modern – in atmosphere: the author claims to have re-worked an imaginary Persian original, in turn fictionalising it further, so that the reader is made aware of the fact that the stories are fictitious and yet the illusion that they might be real always looms in the background. Certainly the author wished to express the idea, so favoured by mystics, that the world is nothing but a product of God's imagination.[115]

'Azîz Efendi's work was reprinted five times after its first appearance in 1852, long after the author's death.[116] While some Ottoman critics found it

113 Mine Mengi, 'Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi'nin I. cildinde tahkiye', in *Evliya Çelebi ve seyahatname*, ed. Nuran Tezcan and Kadir Atlansoy (Gazimağusa, 2002), pp. 197–208, at p. 207.

114 Andreas Tietze, 'Aziz Efendis Muhayyelat', *Oriens* 1 (1948), 248–329.

115 Zeynep Uysal, 'Olağanüstü masaldan çağdaş anlatıya: Muhayyelat-ı Aziz Efendi', MA thesis, Boğaziçi University (1994).

116 Azîz Efendi, *Muhayyelât-i 'Azîz Efendi* (Istanbul, 1268/1852).

'too "eastern" in character and claimed that it contained too many old wives' tales', it was frequently read by nineteenth-century intellectuals, who seem to have found the stories inspirational.[117] Perhaps we have not looked enough at the local roots of late Ottoman novels: of course, the example of the French novelists was decisive, but it could scarcely have been taken up so readily if elements in the Ottoman tradition had not prepared the way.

117 Ahmet Kabaklı, 'Muhayyelât', in *Türk dili ve edebiyatı ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1986), vol. 6, 424–6; Aziz Efendi, *Muhayyelat-ı Aziz Efendi*, 2nd edn., ed. Ahmet Kabaklı (Istanbul, 1990).

Glossary

abacı   manufacturer of a rough woollen fabric known as *aba*

adab   worldly belletristic culture of the literary artists and scribal elite

adaletname   edicts addressing specific complaints by subjects against the exactions and corruption of officials

ağa   title of respect, for military men and palace personnel

ahi   member of urban brotherhood in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Anatolia

ahidname   pledge or covenant

ahkâm defterleri   registers of outgoing commands, organised by province and kept by the central administration

aman   pardon, amnesty or safe conduct

amir al-hajj   leader of the pilgrimage caravan to Mecca

arasta   covered street lined with shops, often rented out for the benefit of a pious foundation

archontes   provincial 'thematic' notables of the late Byzantine period

Aroumani   transhumant herders in the Balkans

arpalık   pensions or income for current and former *kadıasker*s and *şeyhülislam*s

arûz   metres consisting of sequences of long and short syllables

ashraf eşraf (sg. *sharif*)   'noble', used for descendants of the Prophet Muhammad

askeri   privileged corps of men serving the sultan, both military men and officials

avarız-ı divaniye   'divan levies' irregular taxes for campaign purposes that became regularised in the seventeenth century

ayan (Arabic *aʿyān*)   local notables; in the eighteenth century a district *ayan* was sometimes appointed

babü 's-saʿâde ağası   chief white eunuch and overseer of palace affairs

baltacılar kethudâsı   senior member of the corps of *baltacı*s, employed in everyday service in the palace

baština, baştina   a Slavic term denoting hereditary title to land, adopted by the Ottomans

bedel   cash substitute for a tax/service normally demanded in kind

bedesten   covered market

berat   patent of investiture, confirmed by the sultan's special sign (*tuğra*)

beratlı   protégé

bey   title given to high-ranking military men, especially governors

beylicate   the highest positions in the Mamluk hierarchy of Ottoman Egypt

bidʿat   innovations viewed as reprehensible in religious law

birun   'outside' section of the palace, which housed government functions

büyük kaçgun the 'Great Flight' (1603–10), culmination of the Celali uprisings

büyük mirahur chief stable master

cebelü bedeliyesi 'armed man substitute', tax payable by lifetime tax-farmers during wartime

Celali uprisings mercenary rebellions in Anatolia (late sixteenth–mid-seventeenth century) accompanied by widespread banditry, by soldiers unable to obtain paid positions in the Ottoman army

cizye head-tax payable by non-Muslims

cizye tahriri register of *cizye* payers

cönk collection of the most popular creations of different *sâz şâirleri*

çarşı street, covered or not, lined with shops, often allotted to a single trade

çavuş official Ottoman envoy / messenger

çift-hane system rural taxation and administration based on the family farm as the fundamental unit

çiftlik here: landholdings in the hands of provincial notables or high-level officials, often but not always exploited with a view to the market; the necessary labour obtained through sharecropping, tenants with heavy obligations or servile dependants

damâd here: the sultan's sons-in-law

damga inspection stamp, for which a fee was due

danışmend advanced student in a college for Islamic law and divinity

darülharb (Arabic *dār al-harb*) 'the abode of war': non-Muslim lands not paying tribute to a Muslim ruler

dawra, devre periodic armed tours of an outlying region for the collection of revenues

dayı (French *dey*) leaders of Belgrade janissaries (title also in use in seventeenth-century Algiers and Tunis)

defterdar finance director

derbendci guardian of mountain passes

derbendler başbuğu chief guardian of the passes

derebeği (illegitimate) 'lord of a valley', local magnate

dersiye *müderris* stipends assigned to an existing *medrese* or mosque, without the donor's undertaking new construction

deruhdeci 'fiscal protector' of a village or other community

devşirme levy of boys drafted as future *kapıkulu*

dirlik, temlik revenue assignment

divan in Istanbul, council presided over by the grand vizier, either in the sultan's palace or else in his own residence; in the provinces, governors also convened a *divan*.

dîvân collection of the poetry (ideally, all the poetry) of a distinguished poet

ebced numerical values assigned to the letters of the Arabic alphabet, which makes it possible to hide a date in verses or in prose

ecnebi defterleri register books of documents concerning foreigners

efendi educated official, a title often used for scribes

eflak, 'Vlach' transhumant groups governed by a variant of the *eflak kanunu* (*jus valachicum*)

ehl-i hibre experienced masters of a craft, with a knowledge of the traditions of the organisation

ehl-i hiref artists / artisans retained for palace service

ehl-i örf   the governor and his men, often viewed as the 'oppressors of the poor subjects'

enderun   'inside' of the palace, housing the sultan, his harem and their slaves

esame   pay tickets on the basis of entries in military muster rolls, in the eighteenth century commercialised and transferred like securities

esham   'shares', referring to lifetime tax-farms; the estimated annual profit of a revenue source was divided into a large number of shares, sold to the public at five to six times the annual profit; thus small investors could extend credit to the Ottoman government

eşraf   (provincial) notables

eyalet/vilayet   enlarged provinces of less military and more civilian character, by the seventeenth century the principal division of administration

falname   book of divination used as an aid by a fortune-teller, sometimes illustrated

fasıl   in Ottoman music, an articulated compound form, a sort of concert suite that includes a fixed sequence of different pieces, with modal unity, performed by an ensemble of instrumentalists and singers

ferace   cloak, in the 1700s worn by ladies and *ulema*

fetva   opinion on religious-cum-legal questions, taken seriously by judges but non-binding

firman   sultanic command

gazavatname   text presenting the hero/patron as a successful fighter, preferably though not necessarily against the infidels

gazel   poem of several couplets, with the first couplet rhyming; the same rhyme is then taken up in the second hemistichs of all the couplets that follow

gedik, kedek   the right to pursue one's trade in a given locale; also the implements and raw materials needed to pursue the trade in question

ghulām   Iranian infantry of the seventeenth century, modelled partly on the Ottoman janissaries

gönüllüyan   'volunteers': mercenaries

güfte/şarkı/ilahi/ayin mecmuaları   manuscript song-text collections

hacı, hajj   pilgrim to Mecca

hadd, hudud   Islamic legal punishment

hadith   sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad

hafiz   memoriser of the Qur'an

Hanafi   one of the four schools of Islamic law, favoured by the Ottomans; all four are considered as being of right belief although they diverge in matters of detail

haremlik   the private section of a house

hass   crown lands

hece   metre used by the 'popular' poets, based on a predetermined number of syllables and pauses to each line

hul, khul'   divorce whereby a wife materially compensates her husband in exchange for his consent to end the marriage

hünkâr mahfili   royal loggia, in a mosque

içoğlanı   pages attached to the Topkapı Palace

ijtihad   in Islamic law: doctrine, interpretation

'ilm   religious knowledge in Islam

ilmiye, 'ilmiyya   hierarchy of Ottoman religious cum juridical scholars

iltizam   tax-farms auctioned to the highest bidders, both officials and non-officials, for a period of usually three years

imam   prayer leader

imdad-ı hazariye   impositions, 'aids in peacetime'

imdad-ı seferiye   impositions, 'aids in wartime'

imtiyazat   privileges

İrad-ı cedid hazinesi   'Treasury of New Revenue' intended to finance the new army of Selim III

istimalet   policy of accommodating the subjects, especially in newly won provinces

işçi   labourer

kadı sicilleri   registers kept by judges

kadıasker   'army judge'; the two holders of this office ranked just below the *şeyhülislam*

kanun   law of the Ottoman state, intended to supplement religious law

kanunname   listing of regulations, for the empire as a whole or for a single province

kapı halkı   a vizier or magnate's own household troops

kapıcı   here: gatekeeper of the palace, often sent out to convey orders

kapıkulu   originally 'military slave', with the attenuation of servile submission to the sultan: 'soldier in the service of the palace'

kapudan paşa   chief admiral of the Ottoman navy

kasîde   poem made up of rhymed couplets whose rhyme remains the same throughout

kaza   district, especially one in which a kadi officiated

kazzaz   silk merchant

kethüdalar   wardens of various types, especially important among guilds; a high dignitary's *kethüda* functioned as his man of affairs

khassa   people of distinction, 'who loose and bind'

kırcali   eighteenth-century Balkan bandits, known for their attacks on settlements; they plundered and destroyed whole villages, towns and even cities

kısmet-i belediye   office concerned with the division of estates of people not in the service of the sultan (opposed to *kısmet-i 'askeriye*)

kızılbaş   'redheads', derogatory term the Ottomans applied to the Iranian and Anatolian Shiites

kocabaşı   non-Muslim notable

kul   slave-like servitors of the sultan, a term used for non-*ulema* members of the Ottoman ruling group

levend or *sekban*   mercenary soldier, often 'masterless'

mahalle   urban quarter

makam   'mode' in Ottoman music

maktu'   taxes payable as a lump sum from a group of people

mal defterdarı   provincial treasurer

malikâne   lifetime tax-farm

mamluk   military slaves or freedmen, organised in households

martolos   semi-military group operating close to the Ottoman borders

mecmû'a   collection of diverse texts, usually for the collector's private use

medrese   school of law and divinity, training future *ulema*

mehr   dower given to a wife at marriage; it was divided into two parts, one of them due immediately, while a (usually) larger sum was payable upon termination of the marriage

mehr-i müeccel   delayed dowry, due at the death of one of the spouses, or at repudiation

menâkıbnâme   text describing the vitas and miracles of famous dervish sheikhs

menzil   official messenger system; at the expense of local taxpayers, horses, messengers and guides were made available along the principal routes

menzilhane   posting-station

mescid   mosque in which no Friday prayers are pronounced, without a minaret

mesnevî   lengthy poem in which the metre does not change and every couplet has its own rhyme, with the pattern aa/bb/cc

meşk   teaching of Ottoman musicians and transmission of performance styles; *meşk* also aimed at creating a social/ethical and musical code of conduct

meşkhane   training school for Ottoman musicians

mevlid   recital, for devotional purposes, of a religious poem in praise of the Prophet Muhammad

mısır kulları   soldiers locally recruited in Egypt

Militärgrenze   the military frontier zone along the southern limits of Austria-Hungary, guarded by peasant-soldiers of free status

millet   officially recognised religious group; in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, religious identity for many of the empire's Christians became contested and was ultimately rearticulated

miri   property of the state: woods, pastures, agricultural land, taxes, etc.

miri levendat   state-financed infantry and cavalry regiments

muaccele   'prompt payment' paid by the incoming holder of a lifetime tax-farm

Muallem Asakir-i Mansure-yi Muhammadiye   'The Trained Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad', corps instituted by Mahmud II

muallim-i sultan   imperial preceptor

mufassal defter   register documenting the periodic censuses of tax-paying population and agricultural production, undertaken by the Ottoman central government during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

muhafız   fortress commander

muhassıl   intendant of a provincial treasury

muhassıl-ı emval   provincial finance supervisor

muhtesib   market supervisor

mukabele   ceremony of Mevlevi dervishes

mukataa   revenue source

musavvir (pl. *musavvirân*)   artist, designer, portrait painter

mübayaacı   commissioner in charge of procuring supplies for the Ottoman state, usually under market price

müderris   teacher in a college of law and divinity

müfti   jurisconsult

mülk   private as opposed to state property: in the Ottoman context, houses, gardens, vineyards, orchards and vegetable patches

mültezim   tax-farmer

münşeât   collection of samples of official documents, for the instruction of scribes

müsellem　soldiers, reduced to subject status in the late sixteenth century

müste'min　beneficiary of an *aman*

müteferrika　palace guardsmen, often recruited from distinguished families; military corps in Egypt

mütegallibe　'oppressor', 'usurper', a term often used pejoratively for local magnates

mütesellim　tax-collection agent, provincial treasurer

mütevelli　*vakıf* administrator

nafaka　stipend granted to orphans, divorced wives or slaves employed on sultanic construction projects

naib　judge-adjunct

nakkaş (pl. *nakkaşân*)　painter

naqib al-ashraf, nakibüleşraf　the chief of the descendants of the Prophet

narh　officially decreed price

nasihatname　'mirrors-for-princes'-type treatises whose authors addressed not only the sultan and leading officials but often a wider readership as well

nefir-i 'am　mobilisation of the taxpayers of a region, as a militia

nezir　late seventeenth- to mid-nineteenth-century usage: major sums of money pledged to the Ottoman government as guarantees for promises made by villages and other communities

Nizam-ı Cedid　the new army instituted by Selim III, disbanded after the defeat of this ruler by his 'pretorian guard', the janissaries

nüzül　provisions for the military, to be delivered by the taxpayers

ocaklık　revenue source earmarked for the pay of a given military corps, imperial enterprise

Phanariotes　Greek notables of Istanbul, sometimes descended from the Byzantine nobility, with strong ties to the Ecumenical patriarch; in the eighteenth century, governors of Wallachia and Moldavia

pronoia　Byzantine tax grant to military men

reaya　'flocks', used for all tax-paying subjects, as opposed to the sultans' servitors; in the nineteenth century used only for non-Muslims

reaya fukarası　'the poor subjects', term often used to denote Ottoman subjects in general

reisülküttab, reis efendi　originally the chief scribe in the service of the grand vizier; by the eighteenth century, bureau chief in charge of 'foreign affairs'

rüus-i tedris　teaching permit carrying with it an appointment to a low-level *medrese*

salgun　large, often illegal, demands in cash or kind

sarıca, sekban　mercenary forces

sancak　sub-province

sancakbeyi　governor of a sub-province

sarraf　(non-Muslim) moneychangers, both private and in the service of the court

sarraf başı　court banker

Sarakatsani　transhumant herders in the Balkans

saz　musical instrument whose strings are plucked; also ornament popular in the sixteenth century

saz şâirleri, aşıklar　poets whose compositions were sung to the *sâz*

sebil　kiosk where drinking water was passed out

selamlık　public section of a house, where male visitors were received

Sened-i İttifak   agreement by which, in 1808, the principal magnates pledged fidelity to Sultan Mahmud II

serbest   free from immediate government oversight

serıbölük   title borne by some of the palace gatekeepers

serrac   literally 'saddler': that is, non-slave recruits to the military corps of Cairo

seyyid   descendant of the Prophet Muhammad

sharakan   Armenian liturgical hymns

shaykh al-balad   neologism reflecting the control of a Mamluk head of household over late eighteenth-century Cairo, even while nominally an Ottoman governor ruled in the city

silsilename   genealogy, usually of sultans or dervish sheikhs, sometimes embellished with portraits

sipahi   holders of tax assignments, owing cavalry or more rarely administrative services; or else, horsemen in the service of the sultan's palace

siyaset   the sultan's power to punish arbitrarily; today, 'politics'

surname   'book of rejoicing', recording the details of festivities sponsored by the Ottoman dynasty

sürsat   contributions for the army on campaign

şadırvan   fountain for ablutions

şarkı   a poem with a melody

şehir kethüdası   official representing both the central authority and the local community, in towns sometimes functioning like a mayor

şehnameci   writer who narrated the lives and achievements of an Ottoman sultan in Persian verse, in a manner reminiscent of Firdausî's *Shahnâme*

şehr-engiz   literary text praising the beauties of a given city

şehremini   official responsible for the financial aspects of constructing sultans' buildings

şeriat, shari'a   Islamic religious law

Şerifs of Mecca   a dynasty of descendants of the Prophet Muhammad who had governed the Hijaz in pre-Ottoman times, and continued to do so throughout the Ottoman period

şeyh, sheikh   headman of a guild (in Cairo), senior member of a dervish order, elder of a tribe

şeyhülislam   chief jurisconsult (*müftü*); head of the Ottoman religious cum juridical hierarchy

şirket   commercial partnership

talak   male-initiated repudiation of a wife

Tanzimat   mid-nineteenth-century reconstruction of the Ottoman state in the administrative and military realms

tanzir, nazire   poetic response to an existing composition; the metre, rhyme and echorhyme all conform to that of the original

tarih manzumeleri   verses in which a date / dates is / are hidden, expressed in *ebced*

tasarruf   right of possession

tekalif-i örfiye   irregular levies

tekalif-i şakka   extraordinary levy, illegal but tolerated

tekke   dervish lodge

terceme odası   'translation office', founded in 1822, training school for a new group of French-speaking Muslim bureaucrats

tevzi   system of apportionment; judges and other local figures were called upon to divide the burden of the provincial administration's expenditures among the taxpayers

tezkire   biographical dictionaries of poets, often containing samples of their work

timar   tax assignment, whose holders owed cavalry or more rarely administrative service

timariot   holder of a *timar*, *sipahi*

tourkokratia   Greek: 'rule of the Turks'

tuğra   the mark that authenticates a sultanic edict or publicly used weights and measures; it consists of the name of the reigning sultan and that of his father, with the formula 'ever victorious'

ulak   official courier

ulema (sg. *alim*)   religious and legal scholars, usually of higher rank

ulemazade kanunu, *mollazade kanunu*   rulings entitling *ulema* notables to vouch for the scholarly fitness of their own sons at the entry level; older sons might be awarded extra promotions

Uniate churches   churches maintaining their own liturgical languages and rituals, but in communion with Rome

Uskoks   sixteenth-century Habsburg border warriors, noted for their piracy against both Ottoman and Venetian subjects

ümera   military-type administrators

vakıf, *waqf* (pl. *evkaf*, *awqaf*)   pious foundation

valide sultan, *valide*   mother of the reigning sultan

voynuk   non-Muslim horse-groom, serving in the sultan's army

voyvoda   tax-collection agent, also used for the dependent princes governing Moldavia and Wallachia

yaya   foot-soldiers, demoted to subject status in the late sixteenth century

yerliyya   troops that were at least at the outset recruited locally, serving in Damascus and elsewhere

yiğitbaşı   lower-level guild elder

yoklama   review of soldiers

Yürük   a term used by the Ottoman administration for Turkish-speaking nomads, especially but not exclusively in the Balkans

zakir   musically gifted dervish leading the *zikir* ceremonies, in which the name of God was invoked as part of the mystical way

zimmi (Arabic *dhimmī*)   non-Muslim living under Islamic rule

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Index