

contributions are missing a distinct claim for further change in Turkey. Though every village has a school, every household has a television set and every large city has a university, access to and success through higher education depend to a great extent on financial background. Though there is an enormous economic growth, inflation rates and IMF's policy are a threat to certain social strata. And, last but not least, the conference did not focus on Turkey's human and minority rights issues. But who if not these distinguished intellectuals should address questions of human rights and domestic conflicts?

Sabine Strasser

### **Rise of the Young Turks: Politics, The Military and Ottoman Collapse**

Naim Turfan

I. B. Tauris, London 2000, pp. xx+490.

In recent years there has been a growing interest among Middle Eastern historians and social scientists to understand the role of the young Turks in the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a modern state. This trend is partly perpetuated by the fact that the Young Turks dominated politics in the final years of the Empire. One of the most important elements in their supremacy was the Party's hold over the country. The book under review is a welcome addition to the ever-increasing number of studies on late-Ottoman history as well as a tribute to a lifetime's efforts by the late M. Naim Turfan.

The strength of the study lies not only in its deep analysis and illuminating evaluation but also in the variety of sources in many languages and archives. Dr. Turfan uses sources from different countries which are mostly inaccessible to other researchers. The book starts with a prologue and consists of four chapters and an epilogue. Part One, entitled "On military politics", which includes Chapter One, offers a theoretical framework discussing in depth the nature of power politics and the military as a key political institution. Concerning the role of the military, the author rightly says that "there is no escaping the admission that the political resources available to the military are the sources of its power" (p. 5). Moreover, he argues that the military is an influential institution which may ultimately determine the distribution of political power.

The degree to which the Ottoman army fits into this evaluation is the subject of Chapter Two, where the rise of the military as an organised force in the formative period of the Ottoman state is analysed. Here Dr. Turfan informs his readers of the military tradition in the Ottoman Empire and assesses its role in the state apparatus as well as in shaping Ottoman society. The army, according to Dr. Turfan, had always been one of the chief actors in Ottoman history and initiated all innovations. He argues that "there has always been a military compound in every significant historical

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

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

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

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

Azmi Özcan

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

by Halil Sahillioğlu

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

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