

Jürgen Osterhammel. *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014. xxii+1167 pages.

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Osterhammel's masterpiece, *The Transformation of the World*, can be summarized with a simple phrase as "the portrait of an epoch" (p. xvii). It sketches out the concepts, agenda, concerns and mentality of the nineteenth century, the longest century that all humanity has ever seen. The book has been influential both in academic and popular circles which gave birth to a number of reviews. What makes this review different from the previous ones would be that it handles the book with special emphasis on the Ottoman-Turkish history parts and passages.

The book was first published in German in 2009 with the title *Die Verwandlung der Welt*. Mandarin, French, Polish, and Russian translations followed. The English translation and edition appeared in 2014. It is not a source-based monograph, in the sense that it does not use the primary sources to explain any aspect of the nineteenth century. However, elaborating on the secondary sources, the author successfully constructs a coherent narrative. The language is elegant and academic, which the history graduate students can easily follow and enjoy. This is not merely a textbook to be read in world history courses, but it is an important departure point and reference guide for history graduate students, who are intended to study any history topic in any time period with global perspective. The bibliography section is really impressive, which one may consider it a separate monograph.

The portrait of the nineteenth century was sketched out not in "encyclopaedic manner" but in an "interpretive account" (p. xvii). Although the content of the book is subject oriented-each chapter indicate one aspect of the nineteenth century-the author took care to follow the chronological order in each chapter as much as possible.

The content of the 918-page-long book is highly rich, which makes it difficult for a book reviewer to present each chapter separately. It is possible to note that in the book the themes that come to the fore are population, migration, living standards, urbanization, empires and nation states, wars, revolutions, industry networks, religions etc. The most striking characteristic of the book is its contribution to a new trend of history with a global perspective (not Euro or Western-centric), which rejects to marginalize the history of any territory in the earth.

However, the author does refrain from following some extreme tendencies in the revisionist history writing of the recent decades. While taking the histories of non-Western geographies into account, he does not fail to recognize the reality that in nineteenth century, these histories were to a certain extent shaped by European powers. Thus, he develops revisions on the revisionist approach, and he thus uses Western rhetoric and narrative when reading the histories of the other geographies. It seems that this stance of the author is legitimate enough when thinking the characteristics of the time. It was a period when the European countries shaped the fate of the whole world, imposing their authorities on the territories outside of their Continent and; when the non-European geographies used European languages and paradigms even in defining themselves. Thereby, the European discourses became the international way of expression of the time.

Yet, Osterhammel's book does not recognize-as many other history books implicitly or explicitly do-the absolute supremacy of the European and/or Western values over the rest of the world. In addition, it rejects the idea of Western monopoly on the basic human values, indicating that these values belong to all humanity. For instance, while mentioning historical context of the "the rule of law," he underlines that this idea was not a "European invention," but could be traced in China and Islamic World. Still, he does not fall into trap of the other side of the extreme and notices that such value was institutionalized in political practises of England. (p.594)

In the academic literature, the nineteenth century world is usually depicted as the period of liberalism and globalization in the sense that worldwide flow of goods, capital, humans and ideas took place with almost no restrictions. This liberal aura, extended all over the globe, made the world more unified-life styles and consumption habits in different parts of the world began to resemble each other more than ever. Given this overall picture, historians pose a fundamental question of whether or not localities and/or peculiarities of different regions still mattered under this global world order. The answer of Osterhammel is "yes" with a crucial annotation. According to the author, between 1780 and 1914, the world became more "uniformed" however, "internally different." (p.xix)

Osterhammel indicates that the birth of the modern world was a slow process and could come to the completion only after 1890s. This argument

includes an implicit remark for historians not to believe mistakenly that the whole nineteenth century was a homogeneous time period. In addition, as he noted, he was inspired by Christopher Baily's approach of combining the study of "global connections" with "global comparisons." Osterhammel tried to implement Baily's approach in his book's chapters on migration, economics and environment.

As for the book's treatment of the Ottoman-Turkish history, a cursory look at the bibliography suffices one to say that the author succeeded in grasping the main academic sources, fundamental turning points and essential agenda of the Ottoman history. The Ottoman Empire occupies a good deal of space in almost all chapters. The author skilfully places the Ottoman-Turkish cases to related contexts. The special interest of the author to the histories of the city of Istanbul can also be noted-which can be seen both in bibliography and the main text. In the book, the Ottoman history does not appear at some chapters in Part III, including energy network, and labour. However this is not the fault of the writer but the shortage in academic literature on these realms.

The only criticism regarding the representation of Ottoman history in the book can be arisen as regards the financial history. The rich Ottoman financial history and historiography is omitted in the book, not only because the significant part of the literature is produced in Turkish language, but also the author skipped some crucial academic studies on this realm. For instance, while reading the sections on gold standards, export of capital and public debts, historian of the Ottoman Empire expects to see a discussion of the Ottoman finance and debts, which was one of the significant agenda of the time (pp.730-743). If the author could have a look at the accomplished works of Şevket Pamuk (especially his *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) he would not only fulfill the gap of Ottoman side of history, but also complete the crucial part of the overall world financial history.

Concerning the Ottoman history it is also worth noting that the book did not fall in the one trap that some of Ottoman historians usually do. These mentioned historians handles the Balkan and Arab territories, as if they were separate entities and independent from the Ottoman Empire while Osterhammel never gives a sense of this fallacy. Neither the writer handles the Ottoman history as unique and *sui genesis* history but place it successfully in world history which enabled him to make comparisons between the Ottoman case and the other local histories.

Besides, one important contribution of the writer in placing Ottoman history to world history can be seen in "ethnic cleansing" part in "Mobili-

ties” chapter (pp. 117-166). In this part the writer underlines the expulsion of Turkish and Muslim population from the Balkans, Caucasus and Crimea which had been wittingly or unwittingly neglected in most accounts of world history. Osterhammel’s indication of hundreds of thousands of Muslims and/or Turks (totally reaches to nearly 3 millions in the nineteenth century) who were either massacred or uprooted from their territories is important not for shedding light on lesser known historical reality but constituting a suitable base that may trigger other researchers to study these crucial topics. (pp. 139-42)

The author’s approach towards Kemalist revolutions is highly balanced. He does not praise the revolution for being democratic and opening the gate of freedom for people. Neither he slams on or underestimates Atatürk’s attempts for modernization of Turkey that is inherited from the late Ottomans. As he simply puts, Atatürk was “certainly not democrat” but also “not a warmonger, not a Turkish Mussolini” (p. 570). This dispassionate stance of his can also be regarded as a response to some non-academic and hysterical studies such as Stefan Ihrig’s “Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination.”

Overall, *The Transformation of the World* constitutes a good starting point for all historians who are at the early stages of their academic researches as well as for those academics who are searching for context and comparisons for their studies in progress.

Benjamin C. Fortna. *The Circassian: A Life of Eşref Bey, Late Ottoman Insurgent and Special Agent*. London: Hurst, 2016. xiv+256 sayfa.

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Eşref Kuşçubaşı geç Osmanlı ve erken Cumhuriyet döneminin dikkate değer şahsiyetleri arasında olup, aynı zamanda İttihat-Terakki ve Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa içerisinde oynadığı rol bakımından en tartışmalı olanlarından-