

Book Review/ Kitap Tanıtımı

Freitag, Ulrike, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi, and Florian Riedler, eds. *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity*, New York: Routledge, 2011

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This book has been edited by German academics Ulrike Freitag, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi, and Florian Riedler. The editors share a common research focus on urban history. Ulrike Freitag is an early modern historian and an expert in Islamic Studies, with a particular focus on the history of the Ottoman Empire’s Arab provinces. Malte

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Fuhrmann specializes in Ottoman-German relations and has conducted research on German cultural colonialism within the Ottoman territories. Nora Lafi has worked extensively on the societies of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East, and North Africa, with a specialization in urban history. Florian Riedler, on the other hand, has researched "Opposition and Legitimacy in the Ottoman Empire."

This book has been compiled from the papers presented at the workshop titled "Migration and Urban Institutions in the Late Ottoman Reform Period," organized in May 2007 as part of the research conducted at the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin by the aforementioned editors. The contributions in this volume focus on migration and settlement policies in the Ottoman Empire. In general, Ottoman migration movements are examined not merely as a demographic process but also in their social, economic, and political dimensions. The book includes a total of 13 studies, which are presented below along with their titles and authors:

Chapter 1: U. Freitag, M. Fuhrmann, N. Lafi and Florian Riedler, "Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity in the Ottoman Empire and Beyond"

Chapter 2: N. Lafi, "The Ottoman Urban Governance of Migrations and the Stakes of Modernity"

Chapter 3: Tetsuya Sahara, "The Ottoman City Council and The Beginning of the Modernisation of Urban Space in teh Balkans"

Chapter 4: Florea Ioncioaia, "Foreigners in Town: Urban Immigration and Local Attitudes in the Romanian Principalities in the Mid-nineteenth Century"

Chapter 5: Wolfgang Kaiser, "Mobility and Governance in Early Modern Marseilles"

Chapter 6: Nelida Fuccaro, "Pearl Towns and Early Oil Cities: Migration and Integration in the Arab coast of the Persian Gulf"

Chapter 7: Christoph Herzog, "Migration and the State: On Ottoman Regulations Concerning Migration since the age of Mahmud II"

Chapter 8: Pascale Ghazaleh, "Governance in Transition: Competing Immigrant Networks in Early Nineteenth-Century Egypt"

Chapter 9: Florian Riedler, "Armenian Labour Migration to Istanbul and the Migration Crisis of the 1890s"

Chapter 10: Dilek Akyalçın-Kaya, "Immigration into the Ottoman Territory: The case of Salonica in the late Nineteenth Century"

Chapter 11: Irene Fatsea, "Migrant Builders and Craftsmen in the Founding Phase of Modern Athens"

Chapter 12: Ulrike Freitag, "The City and the Stranger: Jeddah in the Nineteenth Century"

Chapter 13: Malte Fuhrmann, "'I would rather be in the Orient': European Lower Class Immigrants into the Ottoman Lands"

The first paper in the book is *"Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity in the Ottoman Empire and Beyond,"* co-authored by the book's editors. This chapter examines migration not only as a component of social history but also as a phenomenon that influences various historical fields shaped by social history. As is well known, the Ottoman territories witnessed migration movements throughout history due to various internal and external factors. Within this framework, the chapter develops an analysis based on specific questions related to migration and migrants. Some of these key questions include: How did migrants arrive in cities, and in which areas did they settle? How did they integrate into the local labor market? Did they have access to urban property? How did migration impact the ethnic composition of certain neighborhoods or even entire cities? How were migrants received by urban institutions, and what was their legal status? Did they acquire citizenship rights? How did the notion of a marginal migrant identity emerge? This chapter focuses on migration movements and migrant communities in the Ottoman Empire, particularly from the eighteenth century onward. By addressing these questions, it explores the phenomenon of migration from a broad perspective, incorporating the viewpoint of the migrants themselves.

For an expansionist state like the Ottoman Empire, managing a dynamic process such as migration held significant importance in many respects. Accordingly, U. Freitag argues that developments related to migration in the late Ottoman period serve as a key to understanding many aspects of the post-Ottoman era. The author's perspective on this issue should be noted: *"There is a rich historiography on migration in the Ottoman Empire; however, the scope of these studies is often fractured either phenomenologically or regionally."* In contrast, this

book aims to provide a more comprehensive, empire-wide perspective by bringing together migration studies that encompass cities from different regions of the Ottoman Empire as well as areas in contact with the Ottoman world. The primary objective of this work is to examine migration movements as a dynamic process and to introduce new perspectives to the study of migration history. Additionally, it analyzes various waves of migration within the Ottoman Empire, focusing on the status of migrants and their impact on the social structure.

Ulrike Freitag and Malte Fuhrmann focus on the themes of migrant status and identity, seeking to answer questions regarding the conditions of migrants and how their identities were defined. In particular, the urban identity of settled migrants constitutes one of Ulrike Freitag's central research questions.

In her study titled *"The Ottoman Urban Governance of Migrations and the Stakes of Modernity,"* Nora Lafi, within the framework of the French Annales school, defines migrants as *"the voiceless actors of history."* In this context, she considers the micro-level examination of migrant history as one of the finest examples of the Annales approach, in contrast to traditional historiography, which primarily focuses on the history of rulers, administrators, and local elites. Building on this perspective, she emphasizes the necessity of analyzing migrants within the micro-social dimension of a vast empire. Highlighting the richness of Ottoman social urban history, Lafi argues that while studying migration in the Ottoman period, scholars should avoid adhering strictly to conventional historiographical traditions and instead adopt a much broader perspective on migration.

The studies indicate that although intense migration movements took place across the Ottoman territories from the late eighteenth century onward, for many years, there was no dedicated research on migrant movements. However, over time, the growing need to address the challenges posed by migration and to integrate migrants into productive (land-based) occupations led to more systematic efforts in this field.

The other chapters of the book elaborate on the Ottoman Empire's settlement policies, the integration processes of migrants, and the economic impacts of migration. The study particularly examines the

state's forced settlement policies and their effects on local populations. Specifically, from the late sixteenth century onward, the Ottoman administration engaged in extensive settlement activities. Freitag explains the state's settlement efforts as a *"methodological and interpretative link between the social and institutional spheres."* In this way, she considers migration and urbanization as interconnected phenomena. Freitag, Fuhrmann, Lafi, and Riedler, rather than focusing on the process of Ottoman settlement policies, emphasize their outcomes. According to their findings, migrants in the Ottoman Empire were subjected to strict controls and were integrated into cities through new mechanisms. These forced migrations contributed to the regularization of urban populations and the expansion of commercial activities. New laws were also enacted to prevent the migration of undesirable groups. The authors describe these developments as *"another facet of the state's modernization."* However, Freitag and Fuhrmann highlight a different point. They argue that among the migrants, those who were active and wealthy were granted citizenship more swiftly, whereas others had to follow traditional paths such as joining guilds or marrying into local communities to secure their place in urban society.

In addition to state-controlled settlement activities, several significant migration movements took place across the Ottoman territories until the 19th century. Among these, the migration of Muslims fleeing Russian expansion, the population movements following the Balkan Wars, and the displacement of people escaping colonial rule in North Africa stand out. In this context, Lafi highlights another crucial point: that the migrations occurring in Ottoman lands during the 19th century were shaped by the influences of nationalism, modern warfare, industrialization, and urbanization. According to her, the institutionalization of migration studies within the Ottoman Empire paralleled the *"political modernization"* process that developed following the Tanzimat era. During this period, the need for comprehensive regulations to address the problems and needs of migrants increased. Consequently, various legal measures were introduced concerning settlement, subsistence, health, and housing. During this transformation, the Ottoman administration developed a

new perspective on migration and settlement issues, adapting its policies to the changing political and social dynamics of the time.

The chapter written by Tetsuya Sahara examines the developments in urban areas in the Balkans following the Tanzimat Edict of the 19th century. This section examines the roles of those who were settled or migrated to the Balkans in the urban modernization process during the 19th century. Urban activities in regions such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria are addressed on a city-by-city basis. The author discusses the impact of Ottoman municipal reforms on the modernization of Balkan urban spaces. According to Sahara, Balkan cities underwent significant changes in various aspects during the 19th century. He attributes the urban population growth in the Balkans to the increased activity of non-Muslim merchants and craftsmen in the cities, which in turn enhanced their commercial activities.

Sahara argues that after the Ottoman Empire's dominance, the Balkans lost their image as the "flourishing ancient urban civilization." According to Sahara, the Balkan cities, after the Ottoman conquests, adopted urban culture from the Middle Eastern Islamic civilization. Following the Ottoman conquests, Ottoman rule began to spread across the Balkans, and gradually, waqfs (charitable foundations) emerged. In this section, Sahara examines how financial infrastructure was provided for the economic activities of Muslim merchants in the Balkans and how towns transformed into trade and production centers. Sahara then shifts focus to the reasons behind the economic decline that occurred in the 17th century, in contrast to the rapid growth of Balkan cities in the 15th and 16th centuries. He explains the changes in the nature of urban populations after the 17th century through migration movements.

In the continuation of the chapter, Sahara places emphasis on the urban transformation of the Balkan cities after the 19th century. At the beginning of the 19th century, a group of bureaucrats and intellectuals in the Balkan cities recognized the need to improve the urban space. In this context, in 1858, the Ottoman government took the first steps toward creating a modern urban policy. Municipal councils began to engage in activities such as public services (health, security, road

maintenance, and the construction of social spaces) and infrastructure development. Alongside the centuries-old mosques and baths, the city centers began to be adorned with European-style buildings. According to the "Vilayet Municipality Law," which remained in force until 1930 and constituted the legal framework for municipalities in the provinces, municipal services expanded to cover many regional services. For such efforts, administrators under the Ottoman Empire, taking into account the need for Balkan cities to be "self-sufficient," tried to reduce financial burdens and implement municipal reforms. In this section of the book, Sahara seeks to evaluate how successful the administrators were in implementing these reforms. To do so, he begins his study by examining the regions where city councils were established and the provincial yearbooks (*salnameler*). While yearbooks were not published regularly in every city, they serve as an important source of information regarding the activities of the municipal councils.

Sahara, in the 19th century, conducted a comparative study of the councils and council populations in Balkan cities such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia, and based on this data, made several evaluations about urban reform measures. He notes, for instance, that it is striking that reforms were less advanced in regions with a high Muslim population, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the first half of the 19th century, significant Muslim opposition to the Tanzimat reforms was reported in the western provinces. Based on this, Sahara argues that the 'key' obstacle to reform was the Muslim reaction. Therefore, he asserts that, due to Muslim opposition, reforms were very weak in regions with a large Muslim population. According to Sahara, Ottoman reformists aimed to 'improve' both the Muslim and non-Muslim populations, and one of the first principles of Tanzimat was established based on these events. He emphasizes that municipal reforms are among the best examples of the Tanzimat and Islahat Edicts. In the continuation of the chapter, Sahara delves into the social services provided by municipalities such as Edirne, Manastır, Bosnia, Thessaloniki, Plevna, and Plovdiv in detail.

With the declaration of the Tanzimat Edict, a significant transformation in Ottoman social life began. The principle of "equality" emphasized in this period aimed to establish a balance between the

Muslim and non-Muslim populations. In the 19th century, not only in Anatolia but across the entire Ottoman geography, there was a clear need for "administrative modernization." The traditional Ottoman city administration, where local services were provided by the people and the charitable foundations (vakıfs) gradually lost their financial and social power, led to the emergence of the need for a more organized structure, namely municipal institutions, to manage urban services. With the Tanzimat Edict, the Ottoman administration sought to regulate the governance of the provinces and increase the financial income of cities. In this context, the establishment of municipal councils in certain Balkan cities was facilitated, aiming to create social order in the cities. These reforms contributed to the development of trade and the regulation of social life in the Balkan cities. The Tanzimat not only aimed at administrative reform but also sought to transform the social and economic structure. This process marked a crucial turning point in the modernization of Ottoman cities.

Florea Ioncioaia's study, titled *"Foreigners in Town: Urban Immigration and Local Attitudes in the Romanian Principalities in the Mid-Nineteenth Century"*, focuses on the urbanization process in the newly established settlements and trading hubs in Wallachia and Moldavia, which were generally lacking in industry and independent governance during the first half of the 19th century. The author demonstrates that while the cities experienced rapid demographic and economic growth during this period, this growth did not align with general economic development. A distinction emerged between trading centers and more institutionalized cities. In investigating the reasons for this rapid urbanization, the author concentrates on population growth and migration movements. According to the data obtained, Ioncioaia examines the causes of population movements in the cities and how immigrants transformed the economic and social structures of these cities.

In the article titled *"Migration and the State: On Ottoman Regulations Concerning Migration since the Age of Mahmud II"*, Christoph Herzog examines the issue of migration in historiography, particularly how it has been addressed from the perspective of nomadic groups. Traditionally, migration has been viewed as a sign of social

crises or the dysfunction of economic structures. Immigrants, however, have been excluded from academic studies and have primarily been the subject of political debates. In contrast, today, migration is accepted as a regular phenomenon in most socio-economic structures throughout history. Despite this, the author points out that there are still hesitations regarding the full integration of nomadic groups and nomadism into migration studies. In this context, the author aims to approach migration from the perspective of the state and reveals that, since the early modern period in Europe, nomadic groups have been regulated through laws and administrative pressures.

Before the 1950s, urban history research largely developed in the form of monographs with ethnic emphasis. However, from this point onwards, with the influence of Marxist social and economic historiography, the relationship between migration and urbanization began to be more thoroughly explored. In contemporary studies, migration is now addressed not through concepts of ethnic purity or threat but as a fundamental component of urbanization. *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity* is an important academic work that examines the role of migration in the development process of Ottoman cities. The book contains various articles that explore the complexity of Ottoman migration from different perspectives. In the first section, Freitag addresses migration processes in the Ottoman Empire, emphasizing that migration was not merely limited to population movements but also led to social transformations. Fuhrmann discusses the effects of migration on port cities, while Lafi focuses on the transformation of urban spaces. Riedler evaluates the place of immigrants in Ottoman society and analyzes the social dynamics of different waves of migration. In this context, the related writings compare the effects of migration on the modernization of urban spaces, the experiences of various migrant groups, and the migration policies of the Ottoman State.

The articles in the book primarily cover the following topics: The interaction between migration and the legal, administrative, and political frameworks of urban life is detailed. The relationship between urban governance and human migration in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century is explored, examining how cities became targets for

migrants in the modernization process. The legal, administrative, and political frameworks offer a new perspective on multiculturalism and coexistence in cities. Additionally, the diversity of migrant groups, including their ethnic, regional, and professional origins, is analyzed. Secondly, the state's migration policies and its efforts to manage and control migration flows are discussed. The book explores how increasing migration, driven by factors such as new transportation methods, military exiles, and economic factors, interacted with the Ottoman Empire's efforts to control population movements.

One of the notable aspects of the book is that migration is examined not only as an internal issue of the Ottoman Empire but also as a phenomenon related to international dynamics. The study discusses how migration movements shaped the relationships between different communities within the empire and the long-term impacts of these processes. While the experiences of migrants are approached from a "bottom-up" perspective, government policies are presented from a "top-down" viewpoint. While the book makes significant contributions to the understanding of Ottoman migration policies, it also serves as a methodological guide for detailed future studies. Further in-depth research on migration and urbanization can utilize the frameworks provided by this work to produce more detailed data on Ottoman migration policies and urban transformation processes. Although the book makes valuable contributions to the field of Ottoman migration policies, it could be argued that certain topics could be explored in greater detail. Nonetheless, it continues to serve as a valuable resource for scholars focusing on Middle Eastern studies, Balkan studies, Ottoman urbanism, and migration studies.