It would be interesting to have more information in the book about the audience and popularity of lay chronicles. Sajdi does engage with this issue, arguing that, given the scarcity of existing archival material and the dominance of oral culture at the time, what matters was not the chronicle's audience, but its sheer existence (p. 113). However, in order to support the author's argument for the existence and importance of nouveau literacy in the Ottoman Levant, there is a need to show that the barber's chronicle, as well as the other examples of lay chronicles provided, were not exceptional cases. Moreover, to show that these works represented a trend in the changing world of the eighteenth century, their audience and circulation in oral and written culture should be discussed somewhat more extensively.

Leaving aside these few issues, the book is a fine example of interdisciplinary research that speaks to both history and comparative literature. It is a pioneering study that introduces the world of laypersons in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Levant. Although the book engages in complicated issues of the cultural and social history and the literary studies of the eighteenth century, Sajdi's writing style is easy to follow, and her use of clear arguments and the fluidity of her language is impressive. The book represents a major contribution to microhistorical studies of the Ottoman world and will likely become a classic read by students of the cultural and social history of the Ottoman Levant in the early modern era.

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Betül Başaran. *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in İstanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014, xiii + 281 pages.

Betül Başaran's *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in İstanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order* is a most welcome contribution to the newly emerging scholarly literature on social control and policing in the late Ottoman Empire. In the last decade, Ottoman historiography has seen an increase in the number of studies on violence, criminal justice, and social control, with the majority of these studies sharing the common premise that the late Ottoman Empire witnessed a gradual change in administrative practices and mechanisms directed at controlling society. Başaran's book fits into this

broader context by trying to trace a detectable shift in the implementation of the already well-established practices of social control; namely, suretyship (*kefalet*) and the detection and expulsion of unwanted individuals from İstanbul. Başaran's study focuses on the early part of Selim III's reign—namely, the period from 1789 to 1793—by drawing our attention to the Ottoman administration's changing attitudes toward social control and surveillance under the new sultan. Başaran considers the early 1790s to be the period of origin of the "neo-absolutist" policies that would go on to characterize the reigns of Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839).

As Başaran shows in Chapter 2, the Ottoman administration's concerns over containing immigration to İstanbul and controlling transient populations were nothing new. Especially after the 1730 and 1740 revolts and certain other minor uprisings, the ruling elite's growing anxiety over immigrants went beyond economic and fiscal concerns. The strategies employed by the Ottoman administration to regulate immigration and transient populations also served to emphasize and consolidate sultanic power. Başaran clearly points out the dilemma of the Ottoman administration: on the one hand, they were attempting to contain immigration to İstanbul for the sake of social stability, while on the other hand they tried to sustain the city's need for a workforce that depended on newcomers from the countryside. This practical dilemma probably explains why, throughout the eighteenth century, all the implemented administrative measures and mechanisms failed to prevent immigration to İstanbul. In Chapter 3, Başaran argues that the early 1790s witnessed an unprecedented emphasis on policing and surveillance in the Ottoman capital. The aggressiveness of the social regulations and punishments enacted under Selim III signaled the evolution of a new way of governance in the Ottoman Empire. According to Başaran, innovative uses of traditional mechanisms and institutions—consultative councils, the practice of suretyship, exemplary and random punishments—revealed the changing mindset of the sultan and his advisors. Selim III and his ruling elite put emphasis, ostensibly for the sake of the public interest, on the systematic enforcement of state authority and the control of society. One sign of the increasing control over society was the constant repetition of imperial decrees on sartorial laws. However, in her discussion of sartorial and sumptuary laws and their application during the reigns of Selim III and Mahmud II, Başaran might be criticized for relying too much on Madeline Zilfi's *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire*, which not only fails to contextualize the sultanic decrees on the subject, but also provides no evidence for their implementation.[1] In fact, unlike Zilfi, Başaran hints at one possible way of contextualizing the sultanic

1 Madeline Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

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decrees when she points to the probable relationship between sartorial legislation and an emerging middling class. The absence of detailed monographs on the reigns of Mustafa III (r. 1757–1774) and Abdülhamid I (r. 1774–1789) also presents an obstacle for Başaran, since she thereby lacks a yardstick to fathom and compare the change in Selim III's early reign. Thus, she oscillates between arguing both the novelty of and the traditional character of the administrative practices of Selim III's government.

In reference to the increase of surveillance and policing in the early 1790s, Başaran convincingly argues that, as Selim III put pressure on his officials to enact harsher punishments and prosecute those who violated the regulations, certain segments of İstanbul's population became more prone to police violence and abuse. Başaran cautions the reader not to take the ominous threats and angry words of Selim III's decrees lightly, as they led to harsher justice against the sultan's poor and marginalized subjects. For example, she shows that hundreds of men were expelled from İstanbul between 1791 and 1793 for failing to meet the criteria for staying in the city (p. 96). Moreover, Selim III's new limitations on submitting petitions and complaints to the sultan during the Friday prayer processions can be interpreted as infringing on the basic rights of his subjects. Thus, Başaran's analysis of Selim III's autocratic attitudes further elaborates on the criticism of popular assumptions of the sultan's lenient and sentimental personality.[2]

In Chapter 4, Başaran presents the reader with her main sources, the inspection registers of the early 1790s, to support her argument about social control. Her analysis and interpretation of the registers undoubtedly constitute the book's most original contribution to the literature on Selim III. The registers, which were prepared for the implementation of the suretyship system, provide valuable information not only on the spatial and social topography of İstanbul, but also on occupational and social networks at the end of the eighteenth century. Although individual registers exist for earlier periods, the registers of the early 1790s consist of a batch of twelve registers unprecedented in their regularity. Başaran considers the regularity of these registers as a sign of the experimentation in efficient control and surveillance of particular social groups, such as bachelor immigrants to İstanbul. In this chapter, she provides a detailed analysis of one register, utilizing correspondence analysis to interpret its contents. The complications of working with such registers notwithstanding, Başaran succeeds in presenting a snapshot of the workplaces and the workforce of İstanbul proper at the end of the eighteenth century. Başaran's analysis of the register also reveals the social and professional bonds and

2 For the role of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha and his history on the construction of the myth of Selim III's lenient personality, see Christoph K. Neumann, *Araç Tarih, Amaç Tanzimat: Tarih-i Cevdet'in Siyasi Anlamı*, trans. Meltem Arun (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999).

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networks connecting artisans, immigrants, and Janissaries at that particular point in time. It is a pity that the registers tell little about the actual process of surveillance and registration: one wonders how the inhabitants of İstanbul reacted to this process, what kind of resistance the scribes and their Janissary guards faced when conducting the surveys, and if there was anyone who attempted to use the system to their own benefit (such as getting rid of rivals or enemies). It is quite possible that the government's new policies provided opportunities for certain individuals, such as guild stewards and employers, to extend their influence and power over guild members and employees.

Chapter 5 approaches the issue of maintaining public order from an alternative angle. Here, Başaran inquires into the responses of common people in residential neighborhoods to the government's policies, arguing that the majority of İstanbul's inhabitants shared the official views and contributed to surveillance and policing at the neighborhood level. In the maintenance of public order, there was "a remarkable level of convergence between the goals of Istanbulites (from the bottom up) and the ruling cadres (from the top down)" (p. 168). By drawing on selected cases from İstanbul's court records, Başaran tries to prove that common people willingly contributed to the government's program to control transient populations and brought appeals to the courts for the banishment of undesirable residents (such as those engaged in the sex trade). According to Başaran, "people often agreed with power-holders when deep-down they felt they did not have any choice" (p. 213). The receptivity of the populace to administrative practices confirmed the political legitimacy of the sultan.

In examining the court records, Başaran underlines the problems and limitations concerning their use as historical sources. For example, the judges and their deputies who prepared these records were often concerned with the preservation of social order and harmony. Although we do somehow hear the voices of common people in court records, they are still heard only through the mediation of state officials. Moreover, we should keep in mind that commoners, as conscious actors, often chose to speak a language the administration could understand, using official concepts and terminology for their own ends. One can agree with Başaran that the majority of İstanbulites confirmed the administration's policies, but this should not deter us from looking for resistance and nonconformity in the remaining segments of the population. As Başaran points out, state policies in the early reign of Selim III most probably created tensions between the sultan and his subjects, and one can only guess that the policies of Selim III's New Order (*Nizam-ı Cedid*) further aggravated these tensions and paved the way for the failure of those policies.

Başaran's pioneering study represents a solid contribution to our understanding of the late Ottoman Empire. She offers a through and well-researched account of the mechanisms of social control. Whether or not one agrees with her arguments and positions, Başaran's book should stimulate debate and discussion

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on the formation of the modern Ottoman state apparatus and its reception by society. Overall, this book comes highly recommended for both specialists and non-specialists interested in the subjects of social control and policing.

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Frederick F. Anscombe. *State, Faith, and Nation in Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Lands*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014, xix + 323 pages.

This book is about the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the transition from Ottoman to post-Ottoman statehood in the Balkans and the Middle East, with a specific focus on whether ethno-national or religious identities have driven this process of transition and whether the regulation of state-society relations remained primarily Islamic or was somehow Westernized beginning in the early nineteenth century. The book was a pleasure to read and is to be recommended for any graduate course on Ottoman history, advanced courses on Balkan and Middle Eastern politics, and courses on nationalism in the Balkans and the Middle East. The book is ambitious and impressive in terms of its geographic and chronological breadth, covering all the lands from Bosnia to Jordan and extending from the early 1800s to the Arab Spring of the 2010s. It has two interrelated but analytically distinct main arguments, or grand themes, both of which are contrary to what the majority of the literature suggests about late Ottoman and post-Ottoman politics and society, which also contributes to it being an exciting read. However, it should be noted that the argument that is more original and fascinating is not the one that is emphasized by the author and the publisher in the title, on the back cover, and in the introduction of the book.

The author's primary argument, in his words, is that "the Ottoman state retained an Islamic political identity from its beginning to its end, that the populations under its control similarly identified themselves primarily by religious criteria in affairs transcending the purely local, and that nationalism has been essentially an artificial, post-Ottoman construction that has had from its inception fundamental weaknesses as a basis for long-term political stability" (p. 4). This is contrary to the prevailing view in the literature that Christian populations in particular (Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, etc.), but even non-Christian populations (Arabs, Albanians, etc.) as well, had developed an ethno-national identity as their primary identity by the late nineteenth century, and that moreover, even the Ottoman elite and the Ottoman state started to perceive itself primarily as an