

issue in Turkey in the near future, with the winner of this conflict to become the next hegemonic power.

In the conclusion to the book, Abbas rakes together all the chapters' general claims to argue that, while Turkey has undergone a rapid transformation over the last two decades, there is much that is still unfolding at the present. The rise of one-man authoritarianism has been feeding off of ethnoreligious policies and discourses and instrumentalizing both old and new enemies within the state. At the very end of the book, the author briefly mentions the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016 and how it was subsequently instrumentalized in order to increase sociopolitical pressure on all opposition groups.

Although, given Abbas' observations of daily life and social relations from the micro to the macro level through the lens of the social sciences, it is rather difficult to be optimistic about the future of democracy in the so-called "New Turkey," he nonetheless ends his book on a positive note, emphasizing how it is the people and not the politicians who make history. As such, he argues that the Turkish people will carry their own country toward brighter days. In this regard, and leaving aside the author's sometimes excessive optimism and his repetitions of the previous literature, overall Abbas' study is a remarkable opus for an understanding of contemporary Turkey in terms of state-society relations. What makes it remarkable in spite of the stated flaws is that, first of all, it offers a general and clear picture of the AKP period, which is a very complicated one difficult to comprehend in one study. Secondly, Abbas proceeds by means of a solid multi-disciplinary approach combining sociological, political science, and sociohistorical points of views, making the book quite multidimensional overall. And lastly, the book is exceedingly well written, very readable, and lucid.

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Metin Coşgel and Boğaç Ergene. *The Economics of Ottoman Justice: Settlement and Trial in the Sharia Courts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, xv + 346 pages.

Metin Coşgel and Boğaç Ergene's *The Economics of Ottoman Justice: Settlement and Trial in the Sharia Courts* investigates legal practice and temporal changes in court functions and in the legal interactions among varied gender, religious, and socioeconomic groups in the late seventeenth- and the eighteenth-century

Ottoman Empire. This work provides a new analytical framework by employing a sophisticated quantitative approach to the Ottoman court records (*sicils*) of the provincial town of Kastamonu, located in north-central Anatolia. As a rare example of collaborative and multidisciplinary work in the field of Ottoman legal history, particularly the combination of law and economics in engagement with anthropological literature, the book successfully opens new methodological paths for Ottomanists. The authors challenge earlier quantitative research on Ottoman court records by incorporating into their analysis the tools and insights of the discipline of economics. As such, this work provides a quantitative answer to the key methodological question of how to study Ottoman court records, which has been a major concern in Ottoman historiography since the 1960s. The authors argue that systematic and quantitative analysis of court records provides verifiable data that demonstrates who went to courts, how often, and for what purpose, as well as helping to define the main parameters affecting the litigation and trial processes.

Throughout the expertly interwoven four parts and ten chapters, Coşgel and Ergene show how the legal practice and functions of the Ottoman court shifted from the seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries. The authors delve into the “unique legal, contextual, and linguistic characteristics” (p. 4) of the sources with the aim of offering new categories for evaluation of the empirical data. For instance, the usage of such honorific titles as *Efendi* and *Ağa*, along with the patronymic for members of prominent families (*-zade*), reflect socio-economic distinctions among different social segments of Ottoman society. According to the authors, such honorific titles are markers that not only distinguish court clients based on their socioeconomic status, but also provide details about their representation at the court. Furthermore, based on probate estate inventories (*tereke*), the authors show the major economic disparities that emerged in Kastamonu in the eighteenth century. This economic polarization also affected the composition of an underexplored group of legal actors: witnesses to proceedings (*şühudülhal*). Prominent individuals and families frequently appeared as witnesses in court proceedings, and Coşgel and Ergene relate this phenomenon to the increased reliability of the court’s verdicts as well as to communal supervision over the court (pp. 101–102). Based on their comprehensive investigation of court entries from litigation to amicable settlement (*sulh*) to contractual arrangement, the authors note that the court became more active in eighteenth-century Kastamonu, probably because of the decreasing cost of applying to the court. It is also important to note that courts’ notarial function surged during this period as well.

As part of their quantitative approach to court records, the authors identify the characteristics of parties relying on the court through the categories of honorific titles, gender, religion and religious marker, and family affiliation.

They demonstrate how these variables influenced the likelihood of legal interaction between different parties at the court, as well as determining the proportions of agreements and disputes between these parties. Using regression analysis, the authors offer an analytical framework drawn from law and economics to explain these interactions. They also provide an economic model of dispute resolution, which reveals complex processes of litigation and settlement and is illustrated in the appendix attached to Chapter 6 (pp. 161–163). Overall, Coşgel and Ergene clearly show that “litigation is not an isolated event that can be studied on its own” (p. 161). They strongly support this claim by providing descriptive and analytical statistics showing the likelihood of disputes according to case type and period, along with the outcomes of the cases as affected by titles and markers. For instance, according to the authors, “trial rates were lower in disputes between men with titles and between two women, compared to those between titleless men” (p. 316). Through such empirical analysis, Coşgel and Ergene reveal “the relational nature of court experience, the fact that decisions made by legal actors are sensitive to the identities of their counterparts” (p. 124).

After analyzing the court, its actors, and dispute resolutions in Ottoman courts in the book’s first three parts, the authors devote the final part of the book to litigation. Here, they analyze the rules of litigation in Ottoman courts as seen through various legal texts, including the twelfth-century *Hidaye* of Burhaneddin Merghinani and the nineteenth-century Ottoman Civil Code (*Mecelle-i Ahkam-ı Adliye*). The authors make particular use of the latter to compare the legal prescriptions codified in the nineteenth century with earlier judicial texts, thereby tracking shifts in legal practice and jurisprudential opinion over several centuries. In terms of examining the bases of legal decisions in trials—including admission (*ikrar*), witness testimony, and oath—the authors systematically analyze these legal texts so as to reveal in depth the nuances existing among these different sources.

Furthermore, they also examine the litigation process step by step, focusing especially on evidentiary procedures. In this part, the reader follows how Coşgel and Ergene analyzed the litigation process in Ottoman courts through three permutations of litigant positions: defendant’s denial, defendant’s rebuttal, and plaintiff’s rebuttal of defendant’s rebuttal (pp. 215–221). The authors prove these permutations by providing several cases drawn from the court records of Kastamonu. Moreover, in addition to the details given about such evidentiary tools as admission, witness testimony, and oath-taking, the authors also focus on *fetvas* and on representation by third parties (*vekalet*), including their effects on litigation processes, as supported by further examples from the court records. In the final two chapters, the authors turn their attention to the factors influencing trial outcomes in Ottoman courts by implementing insights obtained from economic analyses of trials. Here, Coşgel

and Ergene examine the plaintiff's chances of success and continue with a detailed elaboration of "who won" in the court of Kastamonu. Based on their preliminary analysis, the authors argue that holding a prominent title and being knowledgeable about the legal procedures of Ottoman courts were the key factors in winning trials (p. 303).

Although the chapters of this work are built upon and support each other well, it must be admitted that some parts of the book are repetitive. Since the work contains many tables and analysis of empirical data, the authors have chosen to frequently summarize the arguments and remarks from preceding chapters in order to keep the reader on track. While it is of course quite reasonable to engage in such repetitions considering the abundance of data tackled in the book, these reminders still carry the potential of distracting the reader. Moreover, the inclusion of a glossary of the legal terms involved would have been beneficial for those unfamiliar with Ottoman legal terminology.

All in all, Coşgel and Ergene's quantitative analysis of the court records of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Kastamonu, as well as their application of legal and economic approaches, fill a significant gap in Ottoman legal history. In addition to providing theoretical insights drawn from the literatures of law and economics and introducing analytical categories and quantitative techniques, the authors have also achieved their goal of demonstrating the verifiable patterns of empirical data hinged on court records. They boldly evaluate the possibilities of the value and wealth of the information that the court records provide, as well as pointing out these records' limitations. More importantly, this collaborative and multidisciplinary work analyzing the court "as a local venue in which social differences and hierarchies were revealed" (p. 319) persuasively opens up new perspectives on the research of Ottoman court records for various localities in the Ottoman Empire.

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A. Kadir Yıldırım. *Muslim Democratic Parties in the Middle East: Economy and Politics of Islamist Moderation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016, x + 279 pages.

Recent developments in the Middle East—such as the military takeover in Egypt, the civil war in Syria, and the rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria—have