

to provide deeper insights into the points mentioned earlier. This criticism notwithstanding, Philipp Wirtz's *Depicting the Late Ottoman Empire in Turkish Autobiographies: Images of a Past World* helps broaden our understanding of late Ottoman social history, popular and intellectual perceptions of the late Ottoman Empire in republican Turkey, and the connections between these two periods. Considering the growing literature on those issues, recently with Christine M. Philliou's *Turkey: A Past against History* and Nicholas L. Danforth's forthcoming *The Remaking of Republican Turkey: Memory and Modernity since the Fall of the Ottoman Empire*, one should say that Wirtz's book offers us an exciting and valuable introduction to that field.

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V.L. MÉNAGE (edited with additions by COLIN IMBER):

Ottoman Historical Documents: The Institutions of an Empire.

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The present work possesses a long history. It began life as a series of translations of (mainly) Ottoman historical documents, dating (again, mainly) from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, which were made with great care by the late Professor V. L. (Vic) Ménage (1920–2015) for a course on ‘Ottoman Institutions’, which he delivered at SOAS. On retirement (in 1983) he gave the typescript to the present reviewer, with instructions to “do whatever you like with it”. Characteristically, and modestly, Ménage did not suggest its publication, but the potential of the collection for teaching and study purposes was manifest, and the original intention which the other Colin and I formed was that he and I, together with Dr (later Professor) Michael Ursinus, should jointly edit and publish it as a collection of “Ottoman Historical Documents”. It was a noble plan, but one which in the circumstances of those times seemed destined never to come to fruition.

Decades later, as Colin Imber writes in his Preface, an impetus to publication was provided by a Manchester colleague, who recognized the importance of the collection not only for Ottoman historians, but equally for historians of late medieval and early modern Europe. Push, as it were, came to shove, and thanks to a team of willing helpers, enumerated by Imber in his Preface, and to the willing support of Edinburgh University Press, Ménage's impeccable translations, now supported by Imber's insightful editorial apparatus, have finally been made available to a new generation of students and readers.

Ménage's translations were originally intended as a teaching aid; his commentaries, now lost, were delivered in a classroom setting. The present work, divided into ten chapters which correspond to the ten-week teaching term then current, harks back to its SOAS origins. The chapters are topical rather than chronological in their sequence, and the translated extracts from Ottoman documents and chronicles, and other sources, are presented as what used to be termed “gobbets”, or short and significant extracts inviting commentary.

To take an example Chapter I, entitled by its editor “The Dynasty: Legitimation and Titulature”, compresses into 12 pages no fewer than 22 “gobbets”, beginning

with two versions of the dream of Ertogrul, and progressing through multiple goblets from a wide range of sources on the titulature of Ottoman rulers. To this chapter, as to the others, Imber supplies a useful, page-long introduction, contextualizing the individual goblets, and a bibliographical end-note which provides a full listing of the sources from which the extracts have been drawn.

Subsequent chapters are constructed to a similar pattern. Chapter II (pp. 14–25) deals with the Ottoman dynasty as a “family firm”, dealing with the appointment of princes, from the early fourteenth century down to the accession of Ahmed I in 1603. A large part of this chapter (Section 3, pp. 19–24) is devoted to what may perhaps be termed the Ottoman dynasty’s “peculiar institution” of fratricide.

Chapters III (The Dynasty: Recruitment into the Sultan’s Service, pp. 26–38) and IV (The Vizierate and the *Dīvān*, pp. 39–55) further develop the picture of the central institutions of the Ottoman state, including the *devşirme* levy. Chapter V (pp. 56–70) encompasses the provincial administration and the *tımār* system, with some valuable extracts from a series of *tapu ve tahrir* defters. In Chapter VI the emphasis shifts to the religio-legal institutions of the state, with a useful collection of translated extracts from *fatwas*, and from *sicill*-entries. Chapter VII continues the treatment of legal matters with a series of extracts from *kānūnnāmes*, beginning with an extract from the so-called “Kraelitz text”, first published in the *Mitteilungen zur osmanischen Geschichte* in 1921–3, and ending with extracts from the general *kānūnnāme* of circa 1500, and from *kānūnnāmes* from the reign of Süleymān I.

Chapter VIII’s main feature is a lengthy extract from the memoirs (*Recollecta*; post-1475) of the Genoese man of affairs, Iacopo de Promontorio de Campis, active at Mehmed II’s court in the later years of his reign. Iacopo’s *Recollecta* had been edited by Franz Babinger in the mid-1950s. Ménage and the present writer managed to procure a microfilm of the unique manuscript in the 1970s, a close reading of which demonstrated the weaknesses of Babinger’s edition. We planned but failed to complete a new edition. The extract published here (§1a, pp. 122–7) shows what it might have become.

Chapter IX (pp. 141–58) consists of a very useful compendium on *waqfs*, their founding and the legal problems associated with administering them; a final chapter (X; pp. 159–74) deals with Ottoman foreign relations, beginning with the Genoese treaty of 1387 with Murād I (using a translation kindly supplied by Dr Kate Fleet, which she first published in 1993), and ending with a translated extract of the Latin text of the treaty of Zsitva-Torok, 1606.

The book is rounded off by an extensive Glossary of technical terms (pp. 175–83); a comprehensive Bibliography (pp. 184–95), and a full index. A series of colour plates, taken from a manuscript in the John Rylands University Library, Manchester, offers portraits of Ottoman dignitaries from the grand vizier downwards, but the only document illustrated is a solitary unattributed firman (Fig. 2, p. [xxiii]) bearing the *tugrā* of Ahmed I.

The work of Dr Imber in bringing to fruition and of the Edinburgh University Press in publishing this attractive volume merits considerable praise. In the year following the centenary of his birth it honours the memory of Vic Ménage as both a consummate Ottoman scholar and – if one may be permitted to recall – an inspiring teacher, and it provides an illuminating documentary insight into the challenging historical enigma that was the Ottoman state.

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