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insight into a subject previously condemned to speculation due to scarcity of Ottoman sources and the focus of the Byzantine ones on Ottoman expansion and Byzantine politics. Instead, in the Introduction, the author presents us with a detailed account of the rich and largely unused Genoese state archives. Notary deeds and *cartulare* (bound collections of deeds) as well as the financial records and the accounts of the commune in the Archivio di San Giorgio, the Antico Comune and the Archivio Segreto are used in the book alongside other published Western sources, mainly Venetian. She critically examines previously known sources in Western, Ottoman, Byzantine and Arabic languages. Her aim is to display economic activity in Turchia (using a term from Western sources, to refer to Turkish-ruled Asia Minor and, after the Ottoman advance in Europe, to the European section of today's Turkey) as an integral part of trade in the Mediterranean basin. The book is structured, thus, in a manner most suitable for this aim.

Chapter i is a historical outline of Ottoman advances and briefly depicts Genoa's policies towards the Turkish principalities in view of its long lasting rivalry with Venice. As Dr Fleet argues, the Genoese policy being largely dictated by the Genoese in the colonies was much more pragmatic than the Venetian one. The epitome of this policy was the success of the Genoese of Pera in maintaining relations with the Turks while, simultaneously, siding with the defenders of Constantinople during the 1453 siege.

In chapter ii the many types of currency which predominated in the Eastern Mediterranean are discussed. Western merchants adopted various methods of payment, such as cash and bartering. According to the author, the establishment of banking in Italian cities, chief among them Genoa, expanded to the Eastern Mediterranean as well. She provides us with many notary deeds dealing with bills of exchange between Italy, Constantinople, Bursa, Gelibolu and Edirne. Such a novelty was not, however, without difficulties, as sometimes receivers refused to accept them.

Chapter iii gives a full account of commodities traded by Westerners and Turks in Turchia such as soap, aromatic mastic, gems and glass, horses and livestock, furs, foodstuffs and timber. The author discusses, based on a series of documents, the places of production and export, prices, and taxes imposed on them in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Chapters iv–ix concentrate on the most important commodities in Genoese–Turkish trade, that is, slaves, grain, wine, alum, cloth and metals. In chapter iv the author deals with 'a trade in which Turks took part both as traders and as trade items, slavery'. Although slave prices were difficult to establish since they varied according to the condition at purchase and the availability of merchandise, the author, acknowledging such a handicap, uses a series of documents to shed some light on trading centres and pricing. Another source of income generation, ransom, exercised through either official or private channels, is also discussed. The author brings to our attention the security risk presented by Turkish slaves in places like Rhodes or Crete and the number of rules

resulting from such fear. Chapters v and vi deal with the grain and wine trades respectively. Types of grain mentioned in Western sources are viewed critically. Dr Fleet, after giving details on prices and taxation, concludes that there is a relationship between tax increases and Ottoman expansion. As for wine, there are both imports and exports in Turchia. Again the author critically revises the view that wine was a state monopoly in Menteşe and Aydın and explores the meaning of the term *namatari*. Chapter vii deals with the alum trade, the mining, production and export of which was in Genoese hands. The author, after discussing trading and production centres, pricing and taxes, reconstructs the view that the Ottoman take-over of Kütahya in 1381 led to a complete paralysis of the alum trade in Menteşe and Aydın. She concludes instead that Ottoman political strength resulted in price increases. In chapter viii the export of raw material and luxury silk and the import of European cloth is discussed. Such a lucrative trade did not leave traders short of attempts to defraud tax officials. The last commodity to be discussed is metal. Apart from the gold and silver trade, iron, copper and lead were part of a circular movement, the extent of which is difficult to determine owing to lack of evidence. Despite constant Papal bans of the selling of war materials like metals to 'infidels', it seems that it was a persistent trade.

Genoese–Ottoman relations after the fall of Constantinople are presented in the final chapter. The author concludes that the Genoese remained present during Mehmed II's reign. Their decline was due partly to the loss of their trading colonies but also to a developing interest in the markets of the New World. This critical work is supplemented by rather useful appendices and a very handy glossary as well as an extensive bibliography.

In the words of Dr Fleet 'to the early economic structure of the Ottoman state the Genoese brought their world and their know-how'. One of the main virtues of the book is to view Genoese–Turkish relations not on the basis of 'a religious scruple but rather based mainly in profit'.

EUGENIA KERMELI

ALMUT WIELAND-KARIMI: *Islamische Mystik in Afghanistan: die strukturelle Einbindung der Sufik in die Gesellschaft*. (Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung, Südasien Institut, Universität Heidelberg, Band 182.) ix, 263 pp. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998. DM 90.

Stretched between once mighty political neighbours and surrounded by areas with a strong indigenous cultural identity—the Indian subcontinent to the south-east, Persia to the west and the Central-Asian republics to the north—the modern nation-state of Afghanistan has received little attention as an independent and

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separate cultural entity in modern scholarship. This is especially true in the wider field of Islamic studies and more particularly regarding Sufism. This is partly due to the complex and heterogeneous cultural reality at the periphery of the core areas of Islamic culture that characterizes this country which lies between the Amu Darya river in the north and the barren Baluchi desert in the south, the heights of the Khyber pass in the east and the endless plains of Khorasan in the west.

With the intention of at least partially filling this gap the author of the present book, in a revised version of her Ph.D. thesis, sets out to 'sketch the religious landscape of Afghanistan' focusing particularly on the question of 'how Islamic mysticism is integrated into Afghan society', both in the past and, more particularly, in recent history since the Soviet invasion of 1978-79 and the following years of war. To achieve this declaredly sociological purpose, Wieland-Karimi begins her analysis in the first of the three major sections of her work by trying to assess the overall importance of the Sufi tradition in Afghan society over the centuries as the one underlying element of unity based on Islamic principles and the extent to which this has been interwoven into the daily reality of a society still largely organized along tribal lines of loyalty, authority, honour and respect. Before and since the introduction of Islam into that mountain-rugged, multi-ethnic country, its geographical position at the crossing of numerous trading routes has kept it in contact with a large number of different traditions, accounting for the diversity of its religious landscape. In contrast to the state sponsored religious ideology of Shiism promoted by the Safavid dynasty in Persia from the sixteenth century, the Afghan region, along with other areas, mainly in South and Central-Asia, maintained and developed its own, predominantly Sunni, identity that reflects in its multiple shades the composite ethnic nature of the territory. However, modern Afghanistan, the basis of which was laid down in 1747 with the proclamation of Ahmad Abdali as ruler of a large area situated at the edge of the crumbling Safavid and Mughal empires and which in its present shape is very much the result of colonial interests fought out between Russia and Britain in the nineteenth century, struggled to find a definition that would justify its existence as a nation—Islam being the only unifying factor that could act as a means for forging a common identity.

Although—or perhaps because—the Afghan territory lacks a central Islamic focus with extensive authority in essential religious and legal matters, in section II of her work the author identifies the existence of and qualifies the structure of a social network created and kept alive over time by Sufi authorities of different orders (among these the author mentions the Chishtiyya, Qādiriyya, Suhrawardiyya and the Naqshbandiyya as the most important and widespread, thus reflecting the close affinity with the reality in the neighbouring Indian subcontinent during the past two centuries). This network extends from the ruling élite in the urban centres down to the rural population in the remote valleys and manifests itself in a deep-rooted sense of piety expressed through veneration of the saints (awliya'), the master-

disciple (pīr-murīdī) relationship and the pilgrimage to the tombs and shrines of revered holy men, as well as through the production of a vast body of poetry, music, spiritual practices and healing methods. In an interesting yet general fashion the author delineates the close coincidence and reciprocal interdependence between religious, scholarly, economic and Sufi networks, which are often supported by a collective group of followers and which serve mutual purposes and interests.

Finally, section III, the most original part of the work, focuses on the instalment of an indigenous communist regime and the Soviet military invasion that provoked years of resistance involving large sections of the Afghan population have affected the socio-religious structures described previously. While singling out in some detail the role of Sufi authorities and their network in the formation of the organized resistance against the communist and atheist foreign intruder that developed largely around the Islamic concept of jihad, Wieland-Karimi stresses the cultural and religious heterogeneity of the tanzimat or 'organizations of resistance', thus identifying the fragmentation of Afghan society within the unifying folder of Islam. In perhaps one of the most enlightening parts of her book, the second part of this section then tries to throw some light on the devastating impact the last 20 years, first under a communist regime and then under the Taliban (fundamentalists guided by puritanical interpretations of Islam) have had on the functioning and subsistence of the Sufi network. Ironically it thus emerges that while it was the Sufi infrastructure based on the unifying Islamic element in the country's society that provided the base and inspiration for a well co-ordinated and ultimately successful rejection of an ideology that proved too alien to Afghanistan's profoundly religious population to set its roots, it was that very structure that suffered most from the consequences of the reaction it supported.

Owing to the unsettled political circumstances that made research directly in the field impossible, the author unfortunately had to rely exclusively on a wide range of Afghan informants living in exile, mostly in neighbouring Pakistan and in her home country Germany. This is perhaps the main constraint of this work and limits its reliability to a considerable extent. Although of undoubted interest in its intention and in the choice of its topic, this book will, however, leave somewhat disappointed all those who expected to gain some valuable insight into the subtle reality of Sufism in that part of the world.

THOMAS DAHNHARDT

YASIN DUTTON: *The origins of Islamic law. The Qur'an, the Muwaṭṭa', and Medinan 'Amal.* (Culture and Civilization in the Middle East.) xiv, 264 pp. Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999. £40.

The question of the role of the Quran in the development of Islamic law is a fundamental